

4 Bathrooms are deserving of a little decadence too – even children's ones. American interior designer Tamara Magel has made a wallcovering by Gucci the focal point of one lucky girl's sanctuary, underpinning the design's elegance with her choice of materials: marble, pale wood and brass (tamaramagel.com).

5 A Beaton-inspired interior doesn't have to be traditional. You can take a more abstract approach to his palette, as demonstrated by Batik Studio's Joséphine project. From the rug by Les Éditions de Tapis to the bespoke sofa upholstered in Pierre Frey fabric, there's a verdant but utterly contemporary mood (batik.fr).


6 The dreamy quality of Beaton's aesthetic lends itself well to a bedroom. This space in a project by Australian studio Handelsmann + Khaw deftly combines dusky-pink curtains with delicate, floral-like glass lighting (handelsmannkhaw.com).



6 Momentum II 'mirror' by Soo Joo, from £21,000, Studiowentyseven (studiowentyseven.com) **7** 'Utzon' stool by Jern Utzon, £1,099, Fritz Hansen (fritzhanzen.com) **8** Engraved teather 'tumblers', £260 each; 'pitcher', £720, all by Susanna Rath for Lobmeyr (lobmeyr.at) **9** 'Rose' hand-embroidered linen 'napkins' by Tat Firenze, £2,940 for a set of six (including tablecloth), Abask (abask.com) **10** 'Clay' armchair by Zanellato/Bortolotto, approx £3,499, Moroso (moroso.it)

A toast to nature

Eco-design and a drive for greater biodiversity combine in an ongoing collaboration between Formafantasma and champagne house Perrier-Jouët that we can all raise a glass to



Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin, founders of the thoughtful, research-based design studio Formafantasma, have long been interested in ideas that improve life for us all – and by that, they don't just mean humans. Instead, their focus is on sustainability and ecology, with a pivotal element being how we coexist with animals. Indeed, it is no coincidence that their recent collaboration with the French champagne house Maison Perrier-Jouët in Epernay is named 'Cohabitare'.

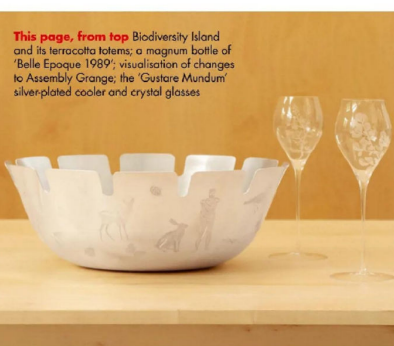
'We were invited to visit their grounds and discovered the advanced regenerative viticulture practices they are employing,' Farresin recalls. 'Avoiding any intensive processes, the entire production cycle has been rethought from a sustainable perspective. An approach

Formafantasma founders
(from left) Simone Farresin
and Andrea Trimarchi

update



'Our ambition is to transform these buildings into active spaces dedicated to the dissemination of environmental issues'



This page, from top Biodiversity Island and its terracotta totems; a magnum bottle of 'Belle Époque 1989'; visualisation of changes to Assembly Grange; the 'Gustare Mundum' silver-plated cooler and crystal glasses

that implies, for example, the elimination of pesticides and invasive ploughing techniques.' It was a change of course, made possible thanks to a team of experts – including naturalists and doctors of entomology and landscape ecology – commissioned in 2021 by Maison Perrier-Jouët to study the land and implement these new agricultural practices. Fascinated by the ecological process, Formafantasma decided to create a permanent project designed to encourage more species of animals and plants to flourish in the area.

Focusing on the enhancement of local vineyards, a multistep intervention was born, designed to develop over time following the rhythm of nature. The Biodiversity Island was the first step: a 285-square-metre plot of land that has been purposefully left uncultivated to be repopulated by birds, insects and plants, with the aim of also promoting soil fertility. 'To demarcate this plot, we created 74 totems, composed of terracotta modules produced in France, each including cavities for nesting insects,' explains Farresin. Using the same material approach, the studio will also take care of the Assembly Grange – 'a small building located in the fields and used by farmers as a tool shed' – which the duo will cover with ceramic tiles and include yet more cavities for nesting. A third element adjacent to the Grange will be the Observatory Tower. This will be a place inaccessible to humans, where Formafantasma will insert microarchitectures designed to house animals and plants. 'These latest realisations are still a work in progress,' they say, 'but our ambition is to transform these buildings into active spaces dedicated to the dissemination of environmental issues.'

That's a lot of good news for nature, and in turn us, but it's not the totality of the project. 'Gustare Mundum', also designed by Formafantasma, is a refined limited-edition wooden cabinet, an exclusive gift box including a magnum bottle of Perrier-Jouët 'Belle Époque 1989' and six lead-free crystal glasses, as well as a silver-plated cooler. The beautiful pieces are all produced by Austrian brand Lobmeyr and hand-decorated with subtle depictions of flora and fauna. 'Cohabitate' is the first expression of the artistic programme that the company intends to develop in the coming years,' concludes Caroline Bianco, the culture and creative director of Maison Perrier-Jouët. 'Our future collaborations will continue to enrich this story, contributing to the search for concrete solutions for nature.' formafantasma.com; perrier-jouet.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: © JAMES HARRIS/STUDIO JAMES HARRIS

at home with

Express yourself

David Collins Studio may be known for designing some of the world's most decadent bars and restaurants, but the Notting Hill house of its CEO and co-founder Iain Watson hums to a more laid-back tune

WORDS PHOEBE FRANGOUL
PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON UPTON



Portrait Iain Watson in the living room of his Notting Hill home. On the wall above him hangs a Steven Klein picture of Madonna and next to him is a string-wrapped side table by Anton Alvarez ►

at home with



For 40 years, David Collins Studio has been designing hotels, restaurants, bars and a few select private residences imbued with a sense of timeless, layered luxury. CEO Iain Watson founded the firm with David Collins, and their first project together was Marco Pierre White's white-hot restaurant Harveys; its success kick-started a trajectory that saw the studio dominate the London hospitality scene with landmarks such as The Wolseley, The Connaught Bar and Bob Bob Ricard. 'We like to say we redefined contemporary glamour in the spaces we've done,' says Iain. 'I've got a slightly more laid-back interpretation of that at home.'

'Home' has been Notting Hill for three decades or so. While the neighbourhood has changed, it still has the little pockets of the 'high/low buzz' that first drew Iain there. 'Near the top of Golborne Road is probably more the vibe of 30 years ago; you still have second-hand furniture, but you might see Le Labo in between people frying fish in the street!' Queensway's rebirth, with the new apartments and Six Senses Hotel in The Whiteley, is the next big development in the area. 'I'll be in that spa at the weekends!' Iain remarks. He has

lived in his current home for 15 years, sharing it with his partner and their Brussels Griffon Zoltan ('a big name for a small dog'). Designed by Future Systems – the architects of Birmingham's famous silver-clad Selfridges and the media centre at Lord's Cricket Ground – the apartment occupies the ground and lower-ground floors of a Victorian house. 'It was completely stripped

out. I liked the high ceilings and curved walls,' he recalls, adding: 'It was a bit bare in terms of finishes, all white lacquer and plywood – quite architectural, as you would expect.' He removed one wall to create a study on the lower floor, where the main bedroom and bathroom are also located, with a winter garden leading onto a terrace. The open-plan ground floor houses the kitchen, dining and living rooms.

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of something exquisite, nothing too over the top,' he says of his approach to the interior decoration. 'I cherry-picked some of the elements that the studio is known for, like an unusual marble and a hand-carved plaster finish.' Some of the fabrics the studio designed with Baker also appear on cushions and upholstery.

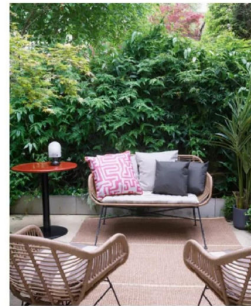
Living room There's an underwater quality to this elegant space, with walls painted in 'Pale Wedgwood' and the ceiling in 'Light Gold', both by Little Greene. Treasured pieces that Iain has collected over the years include the Jacques Adnet day bed by Hermès, which he purchased from Hemisphere Gallery, and a pair of 1910 Egyptian-revival French stools. The 'Galaxy' marble coffee table and low 'Bramham' chairs are by David Collins Studio for Promemoria. The chandelier is the 'Marianne Raitt' from Lobjanet.

While the studio is behind some of the world's most stylish bars, Iain admits that his own vintage drinks trolley doesn't see quite as much action as it should. 'I probably ought to entertain more,' he says, chuckling. For him, the home is more of a retreat, and he appreciates escaping to the study. 'When I go downstairs, it's to have my reading hour, away from screens, the kitchen and chores.' His furniture is a mix of contemporary pieces, some from the studio, as well as vintage finds from the 1930s, 40s and 50s. 'The layout is quite informal, which helps,' he adds. An elegant 1950s day bed by French designer Jacques Adnet for Hermès is a perfect example of Iain's everyday approach to beauty. 'It was likely my first antique purchase – I bought it 30 years ago from Hemisphere Gallery, which specialises in mid-century furniture,' he says. 'It's got sentimental value, but it's used every day.' He also cherishes a pair of chairs that are part of the studio's range, designed with ►

Kitchen A custom-made stainless-steel island is topped with Saint Laurent marble. The appliances are all Smeg. On one cupboard hangs a print by Gary Hume. **Drinks corner** A 1970s stainless-steel drinks trolley sits beneath a shelf holding Ettore Sottsass' black and white 'Chalice' vase and his 'Alzata Piccola' bowl for Bitossi. The nickel-and-leather scone is a contemporary design. **Living room** In the window looking onto the street stands Philippe Hurel's Macassar-ebony 'Kyoto' dining table with 1940s Jean Royère chairs. 'I love the whimsical design, which looks so modern. They were a gift from David Collins, so they have great sentimental value,' says Iain.



at home with



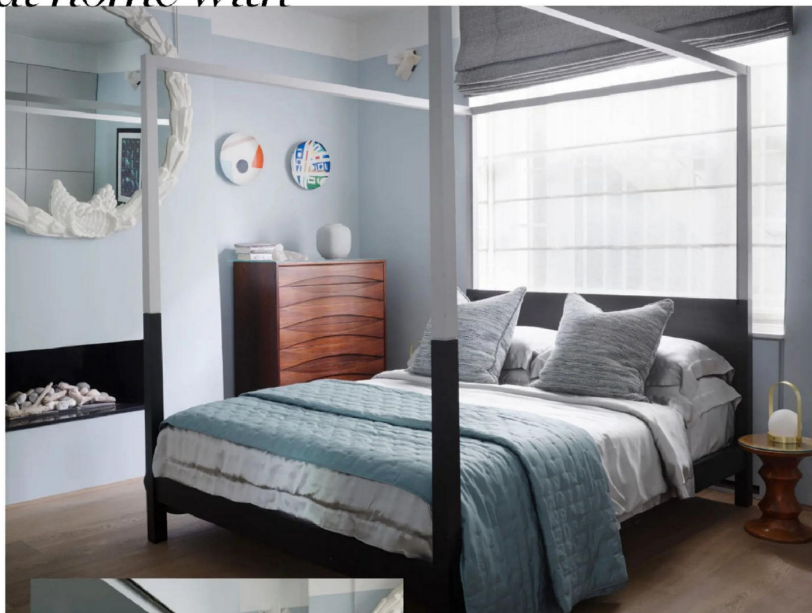
Study Iain's sanctuary (painted in Little Greene's 'Carys') features a vintage Eames desk chair and a chrome table positioned in front of an Eileen Gray 'Brick' screen (below). The white-lacquer timber sofa by Jonathan Adler is piled with cushions in 'Cracked velvet - Eggshell' and 'The Eileen - Blue' fabrics, both by David Collins Studio for Baker. Eye-catching treasures abound, from the snake print between a pair of Chinese Chippendale-revival pagoda mirrors to the vintage Fornasetti 'Fish' lamp on the desk. **Garden** A portable light by Gubi is perched on a side table from The Conran Shop; for a similar sofa and chairs, try Garden Trading's 'Hampstead' collection. The 'Reef Tropic Outdoor Cushion' is by Andrew Martin and the others are all Ferm Living. The outdoor rug is by Nordic Knots.

the Italian brand Promemoria. 'They are a special edition: the wood is dyed navy blue and we've brushed gold leaf into the grain. It's an architectural-looking chair - very refined and elegant. Luxury, colour and texture in one piece is what the studio loves to do.'

Those pillars of David Collins Studio's philosophy have been applied everywhere from spaces for Alexander McQueen and Jimmy Choo to the award-winning Mandarin Oriental Msheireb Downtown in Doha and the Nobu Hotel London Portman Square. While each has its own distinct character, rooted in the building and location, Iain believes they all carry a hallmark: 'There's a subtlety to it, but people see the commonality in the approach.' As he gears up for a celebratory year marking the studio's 40th birthday, Iain reflects on how the business has grown since he and David started out together, their skill sets perfectly complementing each other. 'He had the architecture training and I had the business background. I guess I had a sensibility for realising his dreams,' he says of the late designer, who died in 2013. The company became more established in the early 1990s and there are around 70 people working in the studio today. A turning point came 20 years ago when they broke America, thanks to a project for the legendary Manhattan department store Bergdorf Goodman. ➤



at home with



'That was a good entry point to the US,' Iain muses. 'I think our understanding of mixing periods, timelessness and glamour were well received in the States.'

Over the years, David Collins Studio has worked in 25 countries and currently has projects in 10 worldwide, from The Beverly Hilton in California to an expansion of a vineyard hotel outside Cape Town and a landmark historic hotel in London, where it is responsible for a number of signature elements as part of a complete refurbishment. Iain describes the latter as a 'jewel-box project' for the team, led by chief creative officer Simon Rawlings. 'Each decade has had a shift,' he says. 'Whether it's a focus on America, the Far East, the Middle East... My passion is for bringing creativity and commerce together – that's exciting.' Back in Notting Hill, his home will continue to evolve, too. 'You know what they say: an architect's house is never finished!' [davidcollins.studio](#)

Bedroom A custom four-poster bed dressed in silver-grey Gingerlily silk bedding with cushions in Toyina Sellers' iridescent tweed is the centrepiece of this room, which is washed in Little Greene's 'Bone China Blue – Paint'. The large round plaster mirror came from David Collins Studio's first ever project: Marco Pierre White's restaurant Harveys. In the alcove beside it stands a 1960s rosewood chest of drawers by Niels Clausen for NC Møbler. Above it are plates decorated by Iain and his partner at Darkroom's plate-painting workshop. 'We love that the plates we made reflect each of us so well!' **Bathroom** Separated from the bedroom by folding doors (with Måret Oppenheim's surreal bird-foot 'Troccia' table marking the transition), this space features walls covered in 'High Society Marble Rockefeller' tiles by Fired Earth, a Bette bath and fixtures by Vola. The mirror is by David Collins Studio and the 'Dioscuri' ceiling light is by Michele de Lucchi for Artemide [See Stockists page for details](#)