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BRIDGE

FOR DESIGN





IN THE NICK OF TIME

It's not often you hear a client say they actually enjoyed the upheaval of having their home redesigned. But for a family that employed designer Maurizio Pellizzoni to work on their Belgravia townhouse, that's exactly what happened

PHOTOGRAPHS GIANNI FRANCHELLUCCI

design project



PREVIOUS PAGE: In the drawing room, a very soft colour palette was used to complement the orange artwork by Roberto Azank. Maurizio Pelizzoni, lead designer
THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The rug in the drawing room is from the Begravia collection from Colbourns that Maurizio designed where the inspiration was taken from the streets of Beigravia. The family room features the large luxurious Terzani chandelier made from interlacing metal chains and is the wow piece in this room. The master bedroom is full of texture and details, from the custom made chest of drawers and the console table, to the artwork chosen for this room.

That's not to say there wasn't pressure - the clock was ticking to get the work done before the birth of the couple's third child. 'We were going through a very busy time in our lives,' says the client. 'Maurizio and his team quickly understood that we were stretched and shielded us from all the admin happening in the background so we only had to focus on big decisions.'

The entire project took just six months, with any new items of furniture delivered in a narrow two-week window. Maurizio also knew that he was working on their 'forever home', and early 19th Century five-storey terrace that they wanted to combine period charm and contemporary living by blending art, design and family heirlooms. Also of note was the fact it's a corner house where light enters on three sides, which eliminated the dark zones typical of these properties.

There was no structural work to be done on the property, but there was a fair amount of art and furniture from previous homes for Maurizio and his team to work into the new one, which he admits was challenging.

The function of many rooms in the home also shifted. Part of the design brief was for three different lounge areas, with differing levels of formality. 'One of the first things we did was to take pictures of all the artworks and existing furniture that was to be re-used. The artwork was the most important aspect as we had to make sure the new fabrics used for upholstery and curtains worked in the room where the art was going to be hung,' explains Maurizio. 'We had weekly meetings presenting ideas and textures, but also took the client to all of the different suppliers to view some of the furniture,' he adds.

In the kitchen, the family wanted to keep the cabinets and appliances, but update everything else to make it more modern. To achieve this, Maurizio chose to change the worktop from wood to stone with a glass splashback, as well as using an oval dining table with slim lines to make sure it didn't look too

big in the space. 'It was important to use suitable materials for the metal door and wooden details, and we also carefully selected the fabric used for the two roman blinds to make sure it was part of the same colour scheme,' says Maurizio.

The living room was originally used as a dining area, connected by a double door, and it was this lounge that the family requested be used as an everyday space. It needed to be easy and comfortable, and Maurizio used modern elements such as the Terzani chandelier to match the modern style of the nearby kitchen, but also contemporary textiles for the upholstery and the curtains. The fireplace was an original feature, and was left to complement brickwork elsewhere.

In the master bedroom the brief was to re-use the client's existing bed and bedside tables, allowing Maurizio to choose all of the remaining furniture, the textiles and wallpaper. 'To be able to create something fun and unique we custom made the drawers and console table using different textures from antique glass, leather and lacquer finishing,' he explains. 'We used the fireplace as a reference point, planning the layout around it, with the existing en suite connected via a walk-in wardrobe.'

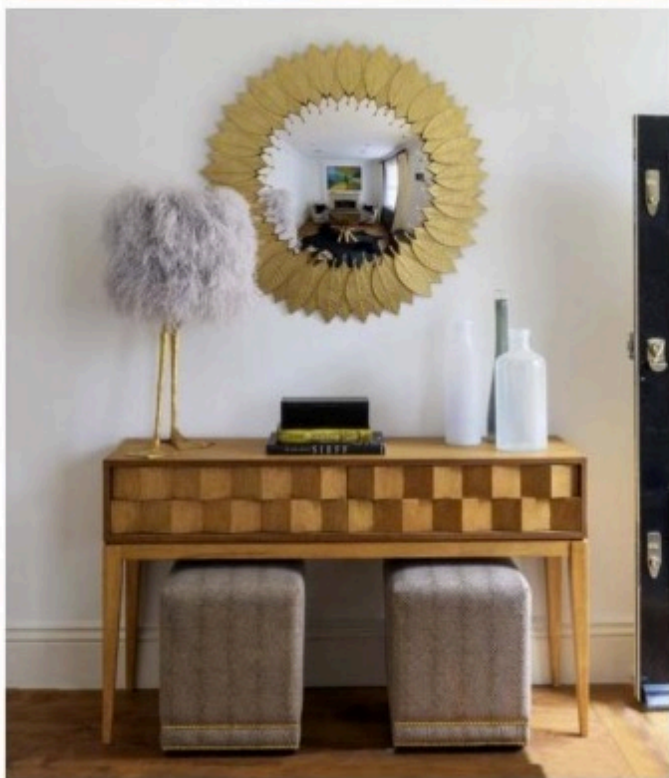
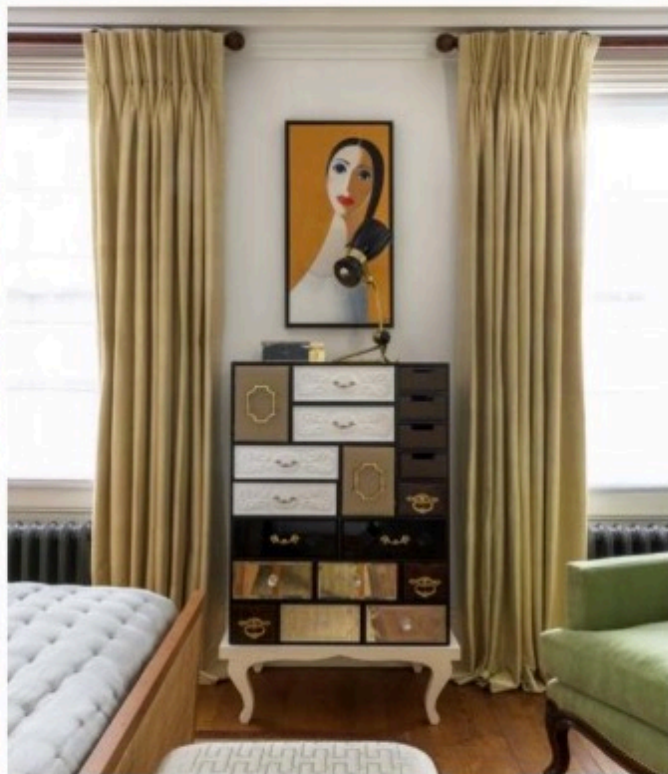
A further bedroom was funkier still. Maurizio used the initials of the child whose room it would be as bedside lamps, hung either side of the bed and custom made for this project. The team also used his favourite colours - blue and red - when choosing furniture and accents. They were even asked to dedicate a space for a drumkit.

Such a quirky list of requests, alongside the strict timeline, might have led to disagreements, but quite the opposite. 'Not only did we like Maurizio's ideas and style, but we also thought he was very professional in the way he executed the project,' the client remembers. 'He accompanied us all the way, from discussing the use of each room, to choosing furniture, incorporating our existing furniture, deciding on colour schemes and fabrics, up to the



ABOVE: The front of the five-storey, terraced, early 19th Century townhouse located in Belgravia, just off Eaton Square in busy London which homes a family of five

design project



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The wooden staircase features a cast iron handrail and connects the five floors of the house, but also the cinema room, which is on a different level between the drawing room and the master bedroom. The chest of drawers in the master bedroom was custom made for this project. Existing cabinetry was kept in the Kitchen but worktops were updated to stone. In the entrance hall, a console table helps achieve a welcoming feel to the home



ABOVE: An elegant artwork featuring a rose by Roberto Azark is mounted above the sofa and was the main source of inspiration for the overall colour scheme

last details of lamps, bedding and display of decorative items. The team were very generous with their time and towards the end Maurizio spent hours helping us decide on which wall or shelf to place art. Impressively, he kept the same patience and motivation until the end, to deliver a fully completed project.'

Maurizio for his part thinks there are a few tips that helped the project run smoothly - in addition to his professionalism. 'Make sure you create a detailed list of furniture, accessories and art to re-use in a new project. This will make the whole planning process easier,' he advises.

But he can't deny the success of this project. 'The main constraint was they needed the work done in record time. But the tight deadline had advantages - it made us make quick, intuitive decisions. We chose to use many of the furnishings the couple already had, transforming familiar pieces by re-upholstering them. Miraculously, the project was completed on schedule and on budget, which launched a friendship between the clients and us.'

MAURIZIO PELLIZZONI

T: +44 (0) 207 352 3887 | www.mauriziopellizzoni.co.uk