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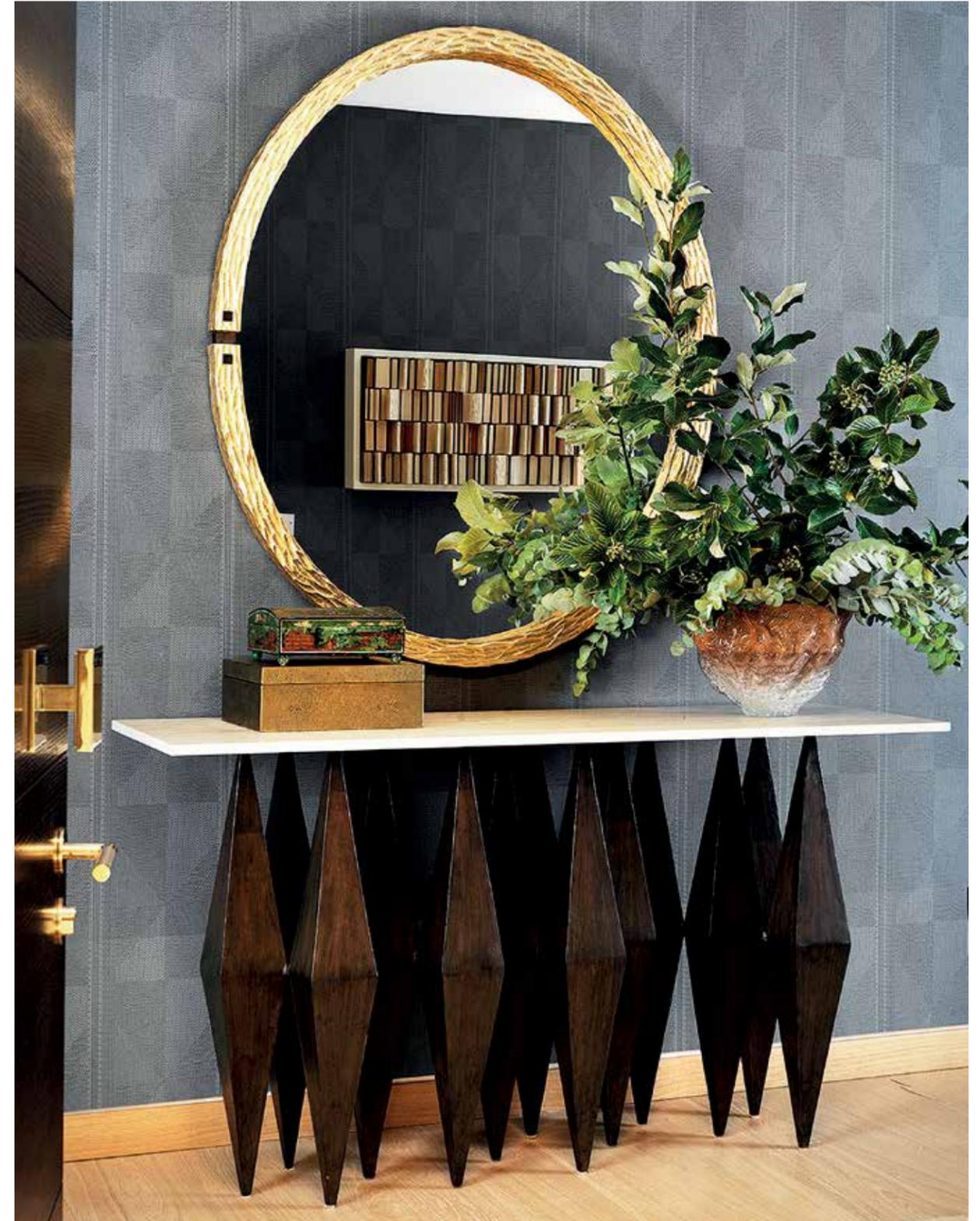




A home of texture and tone

Interior architect Natalia Miyar has created a beautiful urban escape in the heart of London, rich in pattern and contrast, inimitable custom pieces, and inspired craftsmanship

TEXT BY ELEANOR JOSLIN PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON BROWN



The narrow entrance hall of this Kensington apartment has a moody palette to magnify the experience of entering the spacious, light-filled dining-living room, opposite. The wallpaper is Pierre Frey, the console table is by Paolo Moschino and the mirror is by Marc de Berny.



PROFILE

THE DESIGNER Natalia Miyar founded her London-based luxury interior design and interior architecture practice, Natalia Miyar Atelier, in 2016.

THE HOME This high-end apartment is located in Kensington, London, with a spacious living-dining room, a kitchen, a den, four en-suite bedrooms, and generous terraced balcony areas.

This apartment is a personal favourite, as I love the result of the unusual textural combinations that we have put together,' says Natalia Miyar, interior architect and founder of her eponymous London-based design atelier, which she established two years ago.

'Materials are an important part of our work and they are a big inspiration for me and the homes we design, which we always try to make truly individual and bespoke.

'I think real luxury is something that is made just for you, something that no one else has, and that is why I like bringing contrasting fabrics, materials and textures together to create one-of-a-kind combinations.'

This four-bedroom apartment in Vicarage Gate House, a luxury residential building in the prestigious London borough of Kensington is a beautiful showcase of her work, with many furnishings custom-made and upholstered in tactile, vibrant

fabrics and prints from design houses like Rubelli, Dedar, Fortuny, Pierre Frey and Phillip Jeffries.

The tone of the interiors scheme was influenced by the spacious living-dining room which spans the majority length of the apartment and is an unusually large room for a city apartment.

'This room determined a lot of the design strategy,' says the Mexico-born designer. 'Very rarely do you get this much lateral space in London and it was a challenge for us to determine how it should be used, and how best to divide it into different functioning spaces.

'Firstly, in an apartment this size you should have a separate dining room, so we created a floor-to-ceiling screen to give the impression of separate living and dining areas. We gave it a semi-transparent design with panels to work with the architecture and the open feel of the apartment, which has a stacked floorplan. Secondly, the layout also led us to use organic, homey shapes in ▶



Above and opposite Natalia says designing the bespoke shelves in the living room was a highlight of the project, accessorised with ornaments from British craftsmen. **Below** UK-based kitchen designers Smallbone of Devides were behind the apartment's luxury kitchen, accented with vintage rattan bar stools from Natalia's atelier. **Left** The bespoke gesso and bronze screen redefined this large open-plan room.





Clockwise from above Natalia added a custom-made screen in Zimmer + Rohde Powell Embroidery behind the bespoke NMA bed to give the large master bedroom added depth and tactility. The lounge area of the master bedroom is furnished in custom pieces upholstered in sumptuous jewel-tone fabrics from Rubelli and Alton Brooke. Ahmed Gomez's painting Instrumental Beauty IV complements the scheme in this guest bedroom. Natalia's love for textured fabrics is evident in this bedroom: the bedding is bespoke by NMA, the headboard custom-made in Dedar fabric, and the wallpaper is Phillip Jeffries' 3532 Metallic Paper Weaves Sulfur.



'This apartment is a personal favourite, as I love the result of the unusual textural combinations that we have put together'



the furniture and the fabric patterns, as it is a nice contrast to the very clean architectural lines of the building, which was designed by the architect Eric Parry. These organic shapes were the anchor for the whole scheme, and we carried the theme throughout.'

Based on the brief from the property owner, Natalia also created a narrative of a collector, not just of art but also of contemporary crafts. 'He wanted something that would feel like a very British showcase so there are lots of pieces that were made by craftspeople in the apartment, not just decorative items but pieces of furniture, too. It was a real labour of love to translate that into an authentic design.'

Such items accessorise a striking floor-to-ceiling shelving unit built as a decorative wall feature in the living room. The asymmetrical columns with a liquefied bronze-gold finish add a touch of drama to the space, and the collection of artisanal ceramics in neutral tones, made by British crafters, contrast effectively with the luxurious-looking columns.

A liquefied look can also be found in the custom-made Havana coffee table in the living room, with a design conceptualised by Natalia and given a surprise finishing touch by the furniture

makers, whom she regularly works with. The swirls on the resin table top were meant to evoke a map, and the furniture makers evolved the pattern into an outline of Cuba, where Natalia's parents are from.

The interior architect has a well-travelled, culturally-rich and highly qualified background, studying at Ivy-League Brown University, Rhode Island, then gaining a Masters in architecture in Miami – a city she says is like a second home – before establishing her atelier in London two years ago. In a short timeframe she's worked on projects all over the world, including Switzerland, America, Spain and Kenya, and her company has expanded from four to 15 employees. Recently, she's come to the attention of Middle East homeowners, with clients from Saudi Arabia and the UAE commissioning her to work on their London-based residences.

'It's been an exciting couple of years,' she says. 'Wherever they are, I like my projects to feel contextualised, but I wouldn't say we have a signature style as I like to create personalised spaces. Each project is an expression of what the client wants – not just how they live but their aspirations, too. This project was a particular ▶



joy to work on and see it come to life, as the client was so trusting and gave us a blank slate. Because of the proportions, we created many pieces custom so they would fit perfectly in the rooms, and we were able to be very creative.'

Each of the four en-suite bedrooms has its own identity, with textured wallpaper, bespoke bedding and distinct details, like custom-made screens and headboards upholstered in eye-catching patterns. The screen behind the headboard of the master bed is upholstered in a mosaic-patterned Zimmer + Rohde embroidery and gives the wall – already papered in a tactile, textured covering by Phillip Jeffries – extra character. The master bedroom is large enough to accommodate a lounge area and Natalia's inspiration for the bespoke teal sofa in a smooth Rubelli velvet came from a David Hockney painting she had recently seen at a London Tate art gallery.

While the project took just six months to complete, no detail was overlooked, as these unique background stories and sources of inspiration – which tie in wonderfully with the collector concept – reveal.

● nataliamiyar.com

Clockwise from left The interiors scheme continues seamlessly outside with a bronze table and vintage spun armchairs. The den is a cosy hideaway with twin chaises and cushions in a bespoke design by NMA, complemented by Studio Green No. 93 Farrow & Ball paint. The bathroom is a statement of luxury with marble surfaces, bronze details, sharp lines and symmetry.

STYLE FILE How to get the look

Tissu collection
Terrazzo 10739 fabric Nobilis, Dh579.75 per linear metre

Pilar cushion
Crate & Barrel, Dh145

Gold mirror room divider
Maisons du Monde, Dh1,082

INSIDE OUT AWARD WINNER

Maxalto Caratos chair
B&B Italia, Dh17,850

Mercury tea light holder
THE One, Dh65

Tresor velvet sofa
Marina Home, Dh3,900