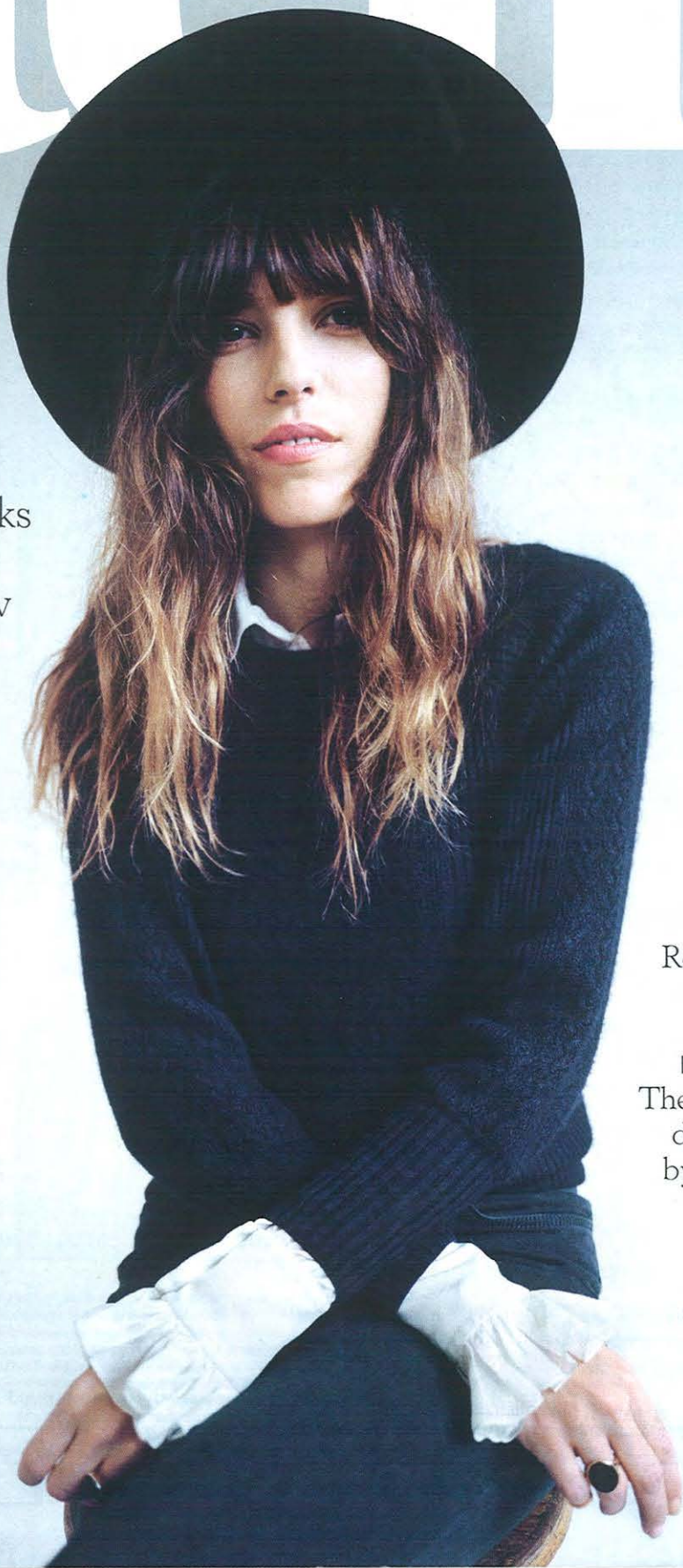


Stella

Baby Birkin

Lou Doillon breaks free from her mother's shadow



Stormin' Norman

Roland Mouret on his photographic hero

Love in an old climate

The highs (and lows) of dating in your sixties, by Deborah Moggach

Hello, sunshine

Sophie Dahl's summer fashion tips

FOOD

Diana Henry is full of (tinned) beans

Factory setting

Photographs by Paul Raeside

At first glance, this converted London factory seems to be an archetypal modernist-loving architect's home. But with its cache of *objets*, it's gratifyingly off-message, says *Dinah Hall*

The architect Tom Bartlett says something so shocking as we walk around his home that for a moment the world as we know it ceases to exist. He says – and those of a sensitive disposition should probably stop reading now – that the dark green/black walls in his television room are, 'Oh, I don't know, Dulux 496 or whatever. Certainly not Farrow & Ball. In fact, we've banned them in our office – you just end up looking like a Cotswold pub.' Welcome to the generation gap, and the news that Farrow & Ball is not the default choice for anyone under the age of 40. On the surface Bartlett's home, a converted factory in north-west London, is classic modernist territory with careful architectural 'insertions' that make a distinction between the existing building and modern additions. It could belong to any architect under the age of 60 – were it not for the amount of objects



The sitting-room has comfortable Le Corbusier armchairs (reupholstered by Bartlett) and an MDF Italia sofa facing a massive mirror-cum-fireplace, designed by Bartlett. A stuffed parrot and a vulture perch on an old draper's cabinet



'It's architecture for people who like things, rather than hiding them away in cupboards'



Clockwise from above A view from the study through to the hall, with an Ethiopian chair and floors of poured resin; a collection of yellow Swedish Holmegaard vases bought on eBay;

the study with its deep-greenish-black walls, a velvet Flexform sofa and a yellow Utrecht chair by Rietveld, re-edited by Cassina and edged in blanket stitch

everywhere. Bartlett is no minimalist. In fact, it would probably be fair to say that his company, Waldo Works, which has worked on projects for Jade Jagger, Garrard and Smythson, is about presenting space for objects. 'It's architecture for people who like things, rather than hiding them away in cupboards'. He bought the factory in 1998 when he was still in short trousers, architecturally speaking. Barely out of college, he had to borrow the money to pay for it, but it was, 'frankly, a steal'.

It was originally a factory where they made Kigu powder compacts: Bartlett has some lovely black-and-white photographs that show the space filled with rows of machinery and an improbable number of workers in the 1950s. Where there were once tooling machines there is now an array of choice designer furniture. Bartlett says that the Le Corbusier armchairs make him laugh since 'they were such "architects' chairs" in black leather - but absolutely not in these pastel colours'. Then there



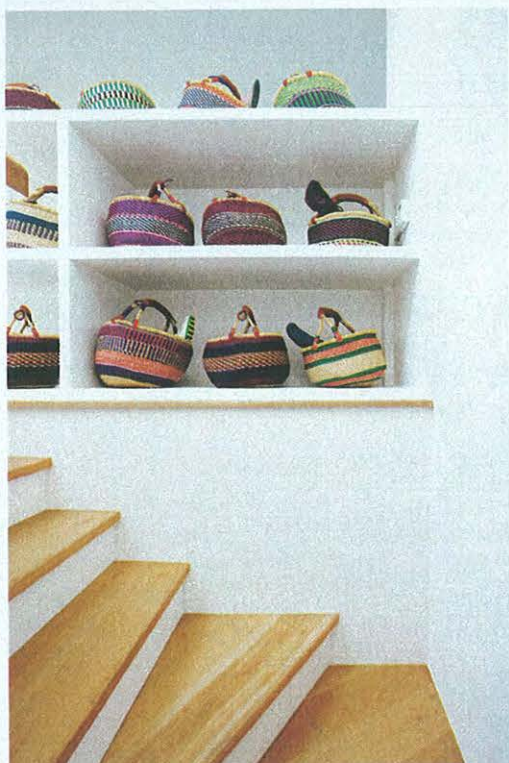
are the Marcel Wanders 'New Antiques' chairs that probably say more about Bartlett than any other, with their hybrid style. 'I like them because they remind me of the spindle chairs my granny had.'

Bartlett attributes his slightly off-kilter modernist stance to his upbringing. His mother was assistant to Barbara Hulanicki of Biba, 'and there was that magpie element; Mum always collected strange things'. He thinks that he reacted against this by becoming an architect: 'I'd always been interested in Bauhaus and early modernism, but then I still kind of enjoyed what I was brought up with.' Hence the Oxo tins in his kitchen: 'I collected them as a boy – that's my sordid little secret. I think it might have been because we were starving at prep school; we used to smuggle Oxo cubes for something to eat. Very odd.' Jolts of bright colour everywhere – from the bright citrine walls of the guest dressing-room to the bright red dining-table – are also traceable to his childhood. To sum up his dual mentality: intellectually he's a modernist, emotionally he's a magpie.

It's not so much objects themselves as what they say about the people who own them that fascinates Bartlett. 'When you're buying for clients you have to choose things that resonate about them, not you. Most people are too busy to do it themselves.' And then, of course, when they do choose their own there's always the danger that it might bring out a bit of the control-freak

Clockwise from top right The guest bed- and dressing-rooms, with framed skirts from Lake Titicaca; the home studio; the guest bathroom





Clockwise from top left On the stairs leading up to Bartlett's bedroom Bolgatanga baskets from Ghana contain his shoes; a collection of favourite objects is displayed

in the kitchen (including the Oxo tins that Bartlett collected as a boy); the fridge, washing-machine and white goods are all concealed in custom-made kitchen cabinets

architect in him. 'Yes, you do get quite... "Well, that vase isn't very nice,"' he says with a laugh.

The level of detail architects need to know about their clients' lives suits Bartlett's nosy nature but can surprise them. 'You're not my therapist; I don't have to tell you my future plans,' was one reaction to his questioning, but of course, he says, to an extent that's just what a good architect is: 'You need to know if someone plans to have children and what's in their drawer in the nightstand.'

The level of detail required in some of his more intricate residential jobs is ridiculous – sending a screw from New York to Belgium to be repatinated, for example – but it's not an attitude he brings home. 'I'm very, very unfussy about my own place. There's a lot of sadness in things not living up to expectation. I love providing that for other people, but I don't think it's reasonable to ask oneself to do it. I think I'd be eternally disappointed in myself.' ●

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