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FROM A **SUSSEX** FARMHOUSE TO A **MANHATTAN** APARTMENT
AND COUNTRY-HOUSE STYLE IN RUGGED **NEW ZEALAND**

Open to ideas

The owners' love of Russian art and mid-century furniture helped design firm Waldo Works personalise the interior of this west London house, previously transformed from six flats

TEXT DOMINIC LUTYENS | PHOTOGRAPHS TOM MANNION



BOTH PAGES The open-plan sitting and dining room is full of the mid-century modern furniture that Georgy and Maria are passionate about, including the 'Serpentine' sofa by Vladimir Kagan and a 'TRG' revolving coffee table by Willy Rizzo, combined with modern designs like the 'Cloud' pendant light by Molo above the dining table

Georgy Djaparidze and Maria Kondrashova were on a quest to find a new, modern family home with plenty of entertaining space, which, in 2011, led them to this five-storey house in Notting Hill. Dating from the 1860s, the house had been radically redesigned and modernised in 2008 for its previous owners by architects Michaelis Boyd. 'The property had been divided into six flats,' recalls Tim Boyd. 'We opened up the space, made its rooms flow better, brought in more light and installed a modern staircase that connected each of the levels.'

That said, Georgy, an investment manager, and Maria, who works for an events and PR company, wanted to make some of their own structural changes and decided it made sense to ask Michaelis Boyd to undertake this work, too. A first-floor sitting room was converted into the main bedroom, a dressing room and bathroom, and a steam room on the second floor became another bathroom.

While the house's interior was now pleasingly clean-lined, Georgy and Maria, who have a baby daughter, Ava Sophia, felt it needed more character. Enter interior design firm Waldo Works. 'When we first saw the house, it felt sterile – as empty, converted houses can do,' says Tom Bartlett, the founder of Waldo Works. 'The architecture was impressive, but we wanted Georgy and Maria to move into a house that reflected their personalities. The biggest challenge in an open-plan conversion is how to soften it, set moods and choose paint colours as the spaces merge.' The couple had sharply divergent tastes. 'Georgy didn't want curtains anywhere,' recalls Tom. 'Maria's brief was for a softer, more feminine look. We spent a long time choosing a precise shade of blush for her bathroom.'

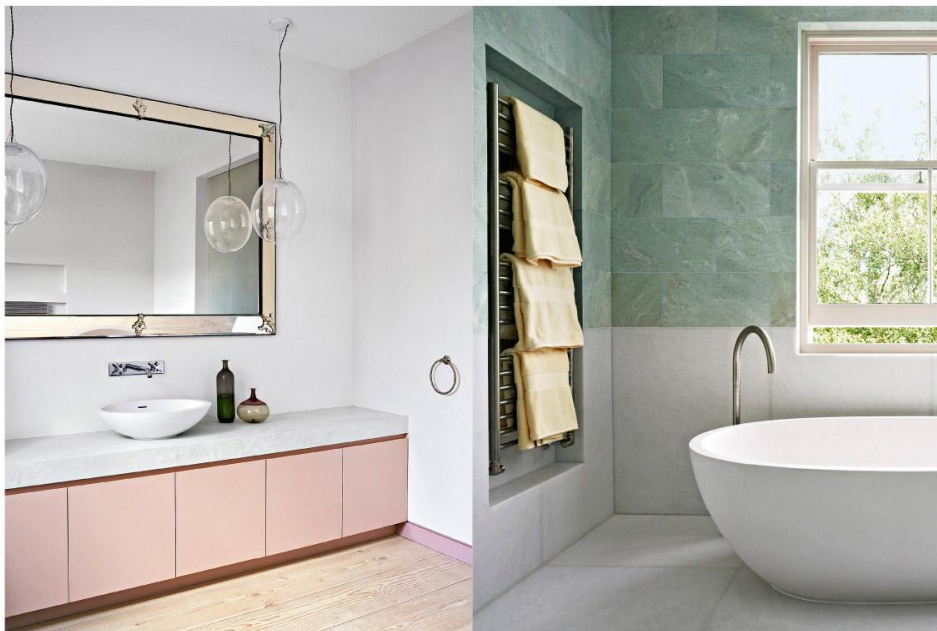
Georgy and Maria, originally from Saint Petersburg, are passionate about design, in particular mid-century furniture and contemporary art, and wanted to avoid the impersonal feel of a house in which, as Georgy puts it, 'someone else has imposed their ideas. We wanted a home that's "liveable in" – somewhere not too done up by designers – and a space that would fill up gradually over time.' He had met Tom through a good friend, and felt he understood what they wanted.

The work to the house took six months and was completed in 2013. The couple's collection of Russian art provided one fruitful starting point for the interior's schemes. 'Their collection was very inspiring,' says Tom. 'It led us to look at all sorts of influences, including Russian Constructivism.'

The first space you walk into is a high-ceilinged sitting room-cum-dining room with a storage unit running parallel to one wall, which creates a short, open-ended passage. Here, the couple have truly indulged their taste for stylish mid-century furniture. The room's two areas are subtly demarcated by a large yet unimposing Forties bookcase by Franco Albini used as a room divider. Albini used it in the same way in his Milan home. At the far end of the room, french windows open onto



An extension on the lower-ground floor houses a sequence of living spaces, including this dining area at the back of the house, which looks out onto a leafy terrace. A set of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Chinese bottles, bought at auction at Christie's, is arranged on the oak dining table, which is from Heerenhuis



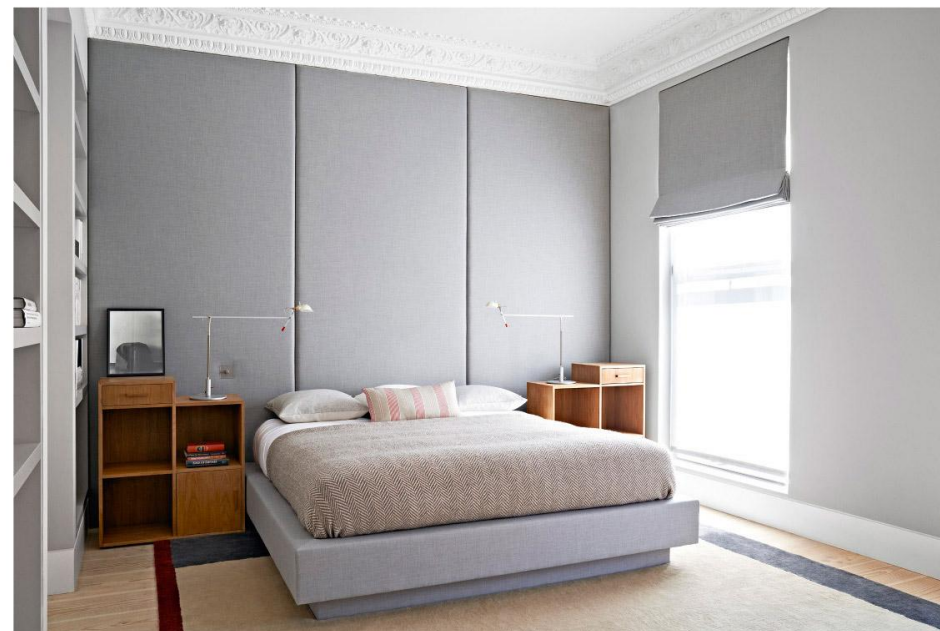
a balcony. This partially covers an extension containing an open-plan kitchen-cum-sitting room on the lower-ground floor – the family's favourite room. This area comprises a sequence of spaces: at the back of the house, a dining area has a floor-to-ceiling window overlooking a terrace and leafy square, in the centre is the kitchen and beyond that is a living area clearly defined by cushion-strewn chairs.

The influence of Russian Constructivism, which typically teamed red, black, white and grey, is most evident on the first floor. Near the top of the stairs is Georgy's white-walled study, which has a desk with a high-gloss scarlet glass top and ruby wall lights. 'It's influenced by the Russian Constructivist-inspired graphics of *The Face* magazine in the Eighties and by the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*,' says Tom. From here, a corridor leads to the main bedroom, with its predominantly grey scheme – enlivened only by a scarlet table lamp – and geometric furniture. Beyond this are a dressing room and a stark grey-and-white bathroom.

The understated take on opulence found in the main bedroom is also in evident in Maria's bathroom and adjoining shower room. The first has a vanity unit in a subtle pink, while the second has walls lined in a rare green marble.

Tom is full of praise for Georgy and Maria's adventurous taste: 'They were both interested in exploring a more idiosyncratic approach to interiors, and that helped us to design a house with character' □

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OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Maria chose 'Foundation' from Paint and Paper Library for the vanity unit in her bathroom. The adjoining shower room has green marble tiles and a minimalist bath from Agape. Dashes of red in Georgy's study include a glass desktop and a wall light from Zero. THIS PAGE The pared-back style of the main bedroom, including a wall lined in a fabric from Holland & Sherry, is reflected in the artwork from Laura Bartlett Gallery at the opposite end of the room