

SOUTH AFRICAN HABITAT MAGAZINE - REGENTS PARK, LONDON - 1986

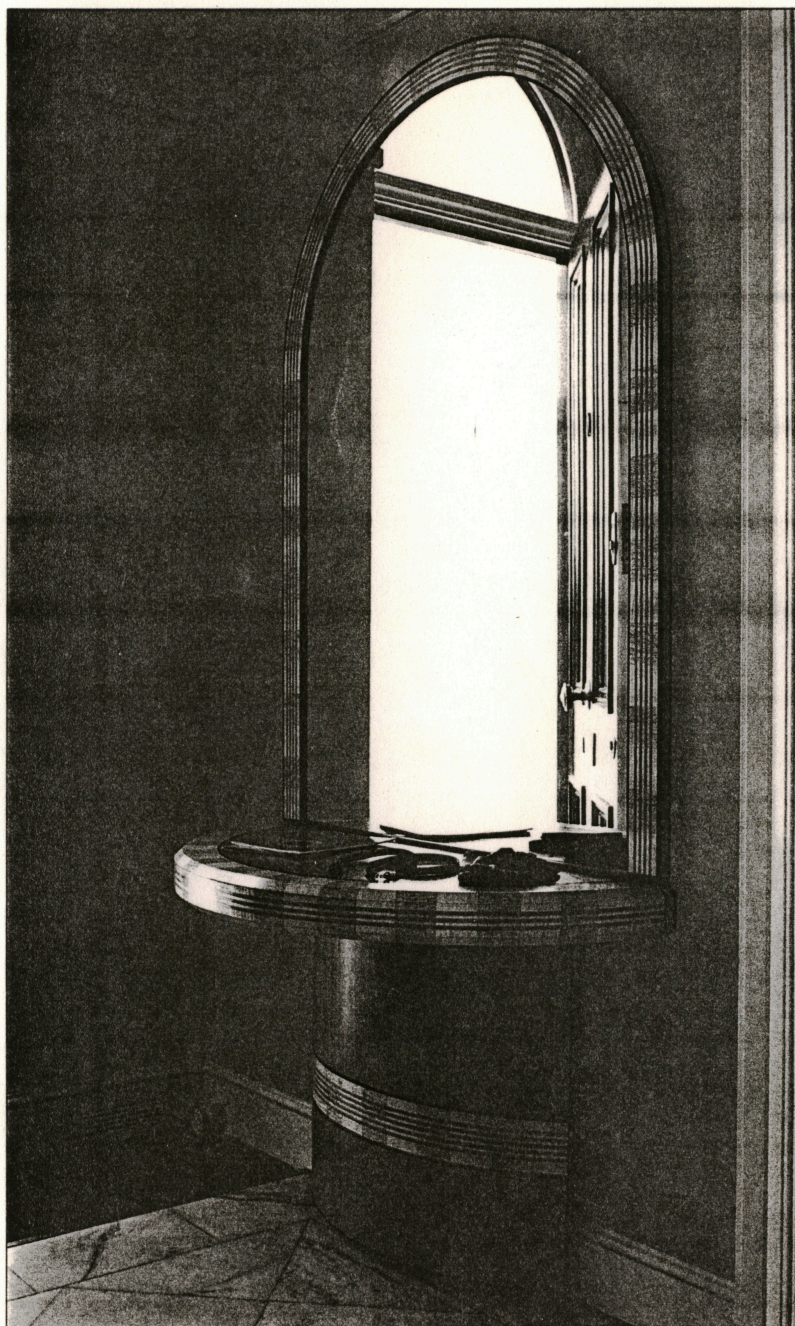
Client Howard Sacks / Jimmy Demetriou
Photography by Clive Frost

A NASH HOUSE IN REGENTS PARK LONDON

*interior design Derek Frost Associates Ltd.
photography Clive Frost.*

This young London designer has been in business for himself for two years. Formerly he was a design director at Mary Fox-Linton who was in turn associated with David Hicks. He now specialises in residential and commercial interior design but is beginning to concentrate on product design viz. fabrics, wallpaper and custom-made furniture.

Current projects in London include a range of fabrics and wallpaper for 'Today Interiors' and the complete re-design of a Queen Anne house for the former British Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. Edward Heath MBE. Editor Colin Sharp met Frost in South Africa when he was here to consult on the interior design and accessorising of a new hotel in Piggs Peak, Swaziland. He is working on the project from the outset and liaising closely with architects and design consultants; he comments 'This is the only way to do the job properly'.



The house illustrated on these pages also has Southern African connections. The owner is a young South African businessman with international

interests who spends most of his time in either this London house or a newly-built Spanish-style villa in Sandhurst, Sandton.

The London property is a fine period house in one of those ▷



wonderfully impressive terraces that Nash conceived. It is set back from, and overlooks, Regent's Park and the façade is grand and very well preserved with white stucco and two storey high colonnading capped by immense capitals. It is a house on five levels with the interior retaining few of the original features.

The brief to the designer was to work in close association with architect/contractors P.J. Carroll Associates to completely re-define the volumes within the house in order to form the best solution insofar as a balanced architectural result was concerned.

Other pre-requisites were to insert suitable architectural detailing and completely re-service the lighting to include a sophisticated low-voltage display system. Further, the designer had to remove all traces of recent work completed by the previous owner, a Middle Eastern potentate. Lastly, the cli-

ent, being South African and used to the bright sun of the Highveld, wished the interior to draw in the maximum amount of natural light.

Says the designer 'My client required that the overall feel within these grand, period spaces should be one of comfort, simplicity and clarity. Decorative effects were to be kept to a minimum to better express a highly individual and growing collection of furniture, paintings and objects.

'In the entrance hall we lacquered the walls in Chinese Yellow and laid a white marble floor. Here I introduced one of my own custom-designed pieces: a console and pier glass mirror in stained grey sycamore with ebonised ash, fiddle sycamore and birch. This intricate marquetry was completed by Tim Deans.

'The white marble floor was continued into the dining room and on the floor to ceiling windows I used aluminium Venetian ▸



left: The designer is responsible for this console table and matching mirror which features marquetry in a variety of English woods. Walls here are Chinese yellow and the floors are of white marble.

right: The dining room is both classical and yet avant garde in concept. The metallic silver sheen in the room was achieved with special paint techniques; the table has a top of 25 mm plate glass.



this page: A second custom-designed piece from Derek Frost is this server of polished aluminium and perspex, the wall behind it is mirrored as is the area between the tall windows at the opposite end.

opposite: A pleasing mix of styles, this large L shaped sitting room is light and airy and more reminiscent of Johannesburg than London.



blinds and cotton Roman Shades. The walls and woodwork are finished in a combination of special treatment; a textured wall covering, eggshell paint and, more unusually, silver metallic cellulose motor car paint. The result is a sort of silver grey basic shell in which to install the quite simplistic furniture and objects.'

The dining table used here is another Derek Frost design and comprises a pair of polished steel and silver leaf triangles with a twenty-five millimetre clear glass top. A third custom-designed piece is the sculptural console table at the opposite end of the room to the windows, this is made up of a right angle of distressed aluminium resting on a clear perspex triangle.

It is interesting that the designer has used marquetry-inlaid Queen Anne chairs with these very con-

temporary classical pieces. It gives strength to the maxim that any pieces of good design can be successfully blended together in the right shell. Artwork too is important; in this case the large painting is by Michael Roberts and the bronze spectacled head by Liz Frink, this latter was purchased by the client from Everard Read Gallery in Johannesburg.

Says the designer of the drawing room 'This enormous L-shaped room enjoys great natural light from both ends. Again I used aluminium Venetian blinds to control the light and provide privacy and overhung these with festoon curtains in striped Indian silk. These provide a rather tailored, classical effect.

'We removed the existing fireplace and replaced it with a fine 18th century English example and hung a large mirror over the ▷



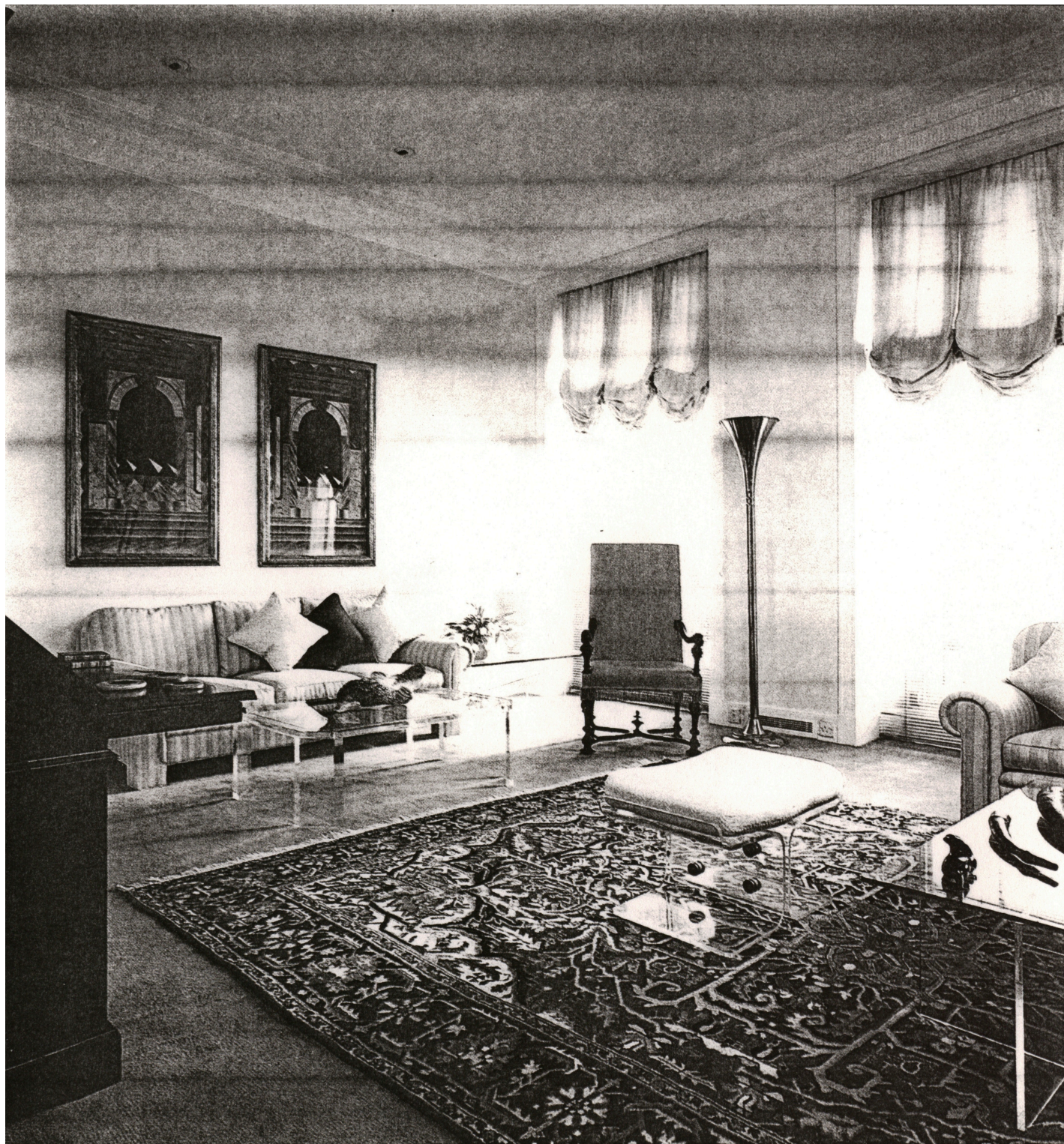
mantelpiece to provide extra depth and reflection which assists in bringing more natural light into the room. A large oriental carpet delineates the main sitting area and a Queen Anne walnut fall-front bureau is used with a pair of 18th century English hoop back chairs; walls are texture-painted in yellow and matt glazed.

'This room is filled with contradictions of period. A good example of this is the view of the wall opposite the fireplace where a pair of monochromatic mixed media drawings from Ian Brice are placed above an off-white roll-arm sofa. On the left of this grouping is an unusual relationship between a Louis 14th chair covered in yellow linen and an Art Deco chrome and

glass uplighter.

'At the rear of the drawing room, which is really a separate sitting area, another pleasing oriental carpet forms the basis for a second grouping. Here a pair of Ottomans and a sofa face a wall unit housing wet bar, TV/video and audio system and objects and art combine in an unusual marriage. There is a Hockney drawing, an 18th century painting of a sea captain, a custom-made surreal marquetry card table and a very characterful 18th century English Gainsborough chair. A collection of Lalique glass is housed in a corner unit which links the two areas together.'

In the main bedroom the designer has created a darker more ▸



above: Tall floor to ceiling windows aid the access of light to this long room. They are draped with festoon blinds in striped Indian silk and the traditional ambience is accentuated with a fine Oriental rug. Furniture is eclectic in both material and style.

opposite: In the short wing of the L shape a comfortable sitting area and wall unit provides almost a study ambience. TV and hi-fi are housed in a wall unit opposite.



this page: The master bedroom in mink exhibits more restrained decorating techniques. Walls are suede and the ambience is that of a traditional London townhouse.

opposite: A David Hockney painting hangs above a custom made table by Derek Frost. This area is the link between formal lounge and study/relaxation area.