

the best-selling modern homes magazine

april 2022

# Livingetc

URBAN HOMES • KITCHEN RENOVATIONS • FRONT DOORS  
LANDSCAPING OVERHAULS • SAVVY SHOPPING • BATHROOMS

## BRIGHTER LIGHTER FRESHER

decorating ideas to  
make every corner shine

“MINIMALISM  
IS PERFECT  
FOR FAMILY LIFE”

JOHN PAWSON  
BREAKS THE RULES

37  
striking paint  
updates

\*THE FINISHES,  
THE COLOURS,  
THE ECO BRANDS  
TO KNOW

ORDER!  
ORDER!  
DESIGN YOUR  
WAY TO FEELING  
ORGANISED







## LIBRARY

The darkness of this central room was embraced with a blue shade that envelops the space to strike an atmospheric mood.

**Joinery**, Nicklin Furniture; painted in Stiffkey Blue, Farrow & Ball. [Source a similar handwoven rug](#) at RugVista



# passage of time

The modern classic good looks of this Victorian semi are designed to be desirable now and always

PHOTOGRAPHY Anna Stathaki

× STYLING Finkernägel Ross

WORDS Juliet Benning



# home profile

## THE DESIGNERS

Husband and wife team Felix and Catherine Finkernagel provided the architecture and interior design respectively. The pair co-founded Finkernagel Ross, a London and Hamburg-based architecture and design firm in 2004.

## THE PROPERTY

A Victorian semi in Hampstead. On the ground floor is a hallway and a living room leading to a library, kitchen, cloakroom and boot room. On the first floor is the main bedroom and en suite. Two half-landings contain a bedroom and study and on the second floor are the three children's rooms and bathrooms. At the rear of the garden is a studio with a bathroom.

**P**erfectionism is overrated' goes the saying and it certainly applies to the approach Catherine and Felix Finkernagel's clients adopted when specifying the materials for the renovation of their newly acquired Victorian home. Opting for unsealed wood and brass, they were eager that their home tell a story of the vigour of family life as it passed through the years with them. 'They're a husband and wife with three children and a dog and have a great eye for design. What was interesting about this project is that while we are often given a brief revolving around practicalities, they were concerned with how a space might feel and the atmosphere it would summon,' Catherine explains.

Referred to Finkernagel Ross by their new neighbours a few doors down, the couple asked Catherine and Felix to view the house alongside them before making a decision. 'We immediately reassured them that while the property would need a serious amount of love and attention, it would be worth their while. They were also enticed by the large garden,' says Catherine.

Inhabited by an elderly couple for over 40 years, the home had been well loved and while it retained many of its features, such

as cornicing and shutters, they would need restoring. 'The house had a warm feeling but it wasn't suitable for a modern family. The rooms were cellular in layout and the only connection to the garden was a pair of doors and one tiny window at the end of the galley kitchen. The middle reception room was dark and the space where the main bedroom is now had been split into two rooms ruining its proportions,' says Catherine.

As part of its improvements, the kitchen was extended into the garden providing an expansive view through windows that would reach the front rooms. The central space was transformed into a warm, inviting library that can be sealed with glass doors allowing containment while providing a visual connection. From here the kitchen beckons with its inviting fireplace and mellow reclaimed floors. 'It was important that the materials, such as the wood, leather and marble, feel natural and age over time. We used a horsehair fabric that has a striking texture to cover some of the cabinets and chose a green shade that would respond to the garden beyond,' Catherine says.

Upstairs, the two boxy rooms in the largest bedroom were dismantled so that the

former grandeur of the original proportions could reveal itself. Freestanding wardrobes were designed not to detract from the ceiling entablature. 'The larch wood was left unsealed so that you would start to read the usage of the doors through the gentle markings,' Catherine says.

Perhaps the most surprising architectural development has been the utilisation of former loft space. 'With three children on the cusp of adolescence, we had in-depth conversations about what usage they would want from their rooms. We realised that sleeping was only a fraction of it so decided to create mezzanine bed levels in the space of the former loft. This freed up the floor for drum kits and Lego, with each child advising us on their own colour schemes,' Catherine says.

Entirely configured to their needs, each individual space carries a strong character that will absorb the family's identity over time. With materials that become more distinctive as they patina, scratch and mark, the very life of this family will be absorbed into the skin of the home and become a huge contributor to the personality it continues to develop.

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[finkernagelross.com](http://finkernagelross.com)





## LIVING ROOM

'The bouclé chair is ridiculously comfortable and can be swivelled to allow for more flexibility,' says Catherine. Curves contribute to the comfort levels in here, too.

**Walls in** Skylight, Farrow & Ball. **Art,** Formworks Studio. Source a mid-century **sofa** at 1stDibs. Brice swivel **chair,** Eichholtz at Sweetpea & Willow. **Travertine coffee table,** Ferm Living





## EXTERIOR

The paler brick denotes the newly extended sections of the house - the kitchen at ground level and the second storey addition of another bedroom.

Building work, MH Costa Construction

## DINING AREA

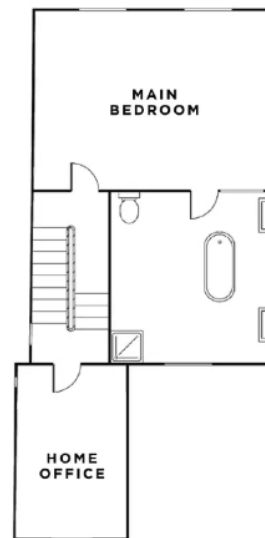
Floor-to-ceiling cabinets provide masses of storage and are covered with a beautiful textural fabric.

Source vintage cantilevered chairs at 1stDibs. Bespoke cabinets covered in horsehair, source at John Boyd Textiles

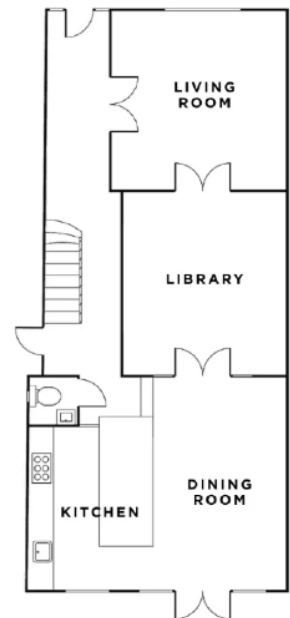
## the blueprint



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR





## KITCHEN

The warmth and grain of the wood dominate this space and will become more marked and characterful over time.

Bespoke **kitchen** supplied by Max Ratjen. **Artwork** by Noa Gammelgaard. **Marble**, Marble, Granite, Limestone **Warehouse**





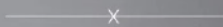
## MAIN EN SUITE

Unsealed brass will develop a beautiful patina. The central fireplace called for the bath to be positioned front and centre.

Bespoke **vanity stands** made by MH Costa Construction. **Mirrors**, Heal's. **Wall lights**, Astro. **Walls** in De Nimes, Farrow & Ball. **Bath**, Drummonds. **Artwork** by Philippa Anderson



“The house is full of contradictions  
between hard and soft shapes, sculptural  
planes and undulating curves”







## home truths

### THE ARCHITECT WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST?

Louis Kahn with his Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.

### ARCHITECTURAL PRIORITIES FOR THE DECADE AHEAD?

Sustainability in all aspects of design and construction but also wellness.

### YOUR STYLE IN THREE WORDS?

Impactful, bold and elegant.

### DESIGN OBJECT YOU WOULD LOVE TO OWN?

An Isamu Noguchi Akari floor lamp. One day.

### ASPECT OF VICTORIAN HOMES THAT HAS AGED THE BEST?

The detailing. Done for pragmatic reasons but nonetheless adding beauty, intricacy and scale to almost all Victorian spaces.

### CURRENT FAVOURITE COLOUR?

Masai by Paint & Paper Library is stunning.

### DREAM HOME?

The Farnsworth House by Mies van der Rohe as much for the house as for the setting.

### GO-TO PAINT BRAND?

Lime-based paints from Bauwerk Colour, both for their environmental credentials but also because of the depth and variation of colour they give to a room.

### MAIN EN SUITE

The clean lines of the shower area allow the beautiful period features to shine.

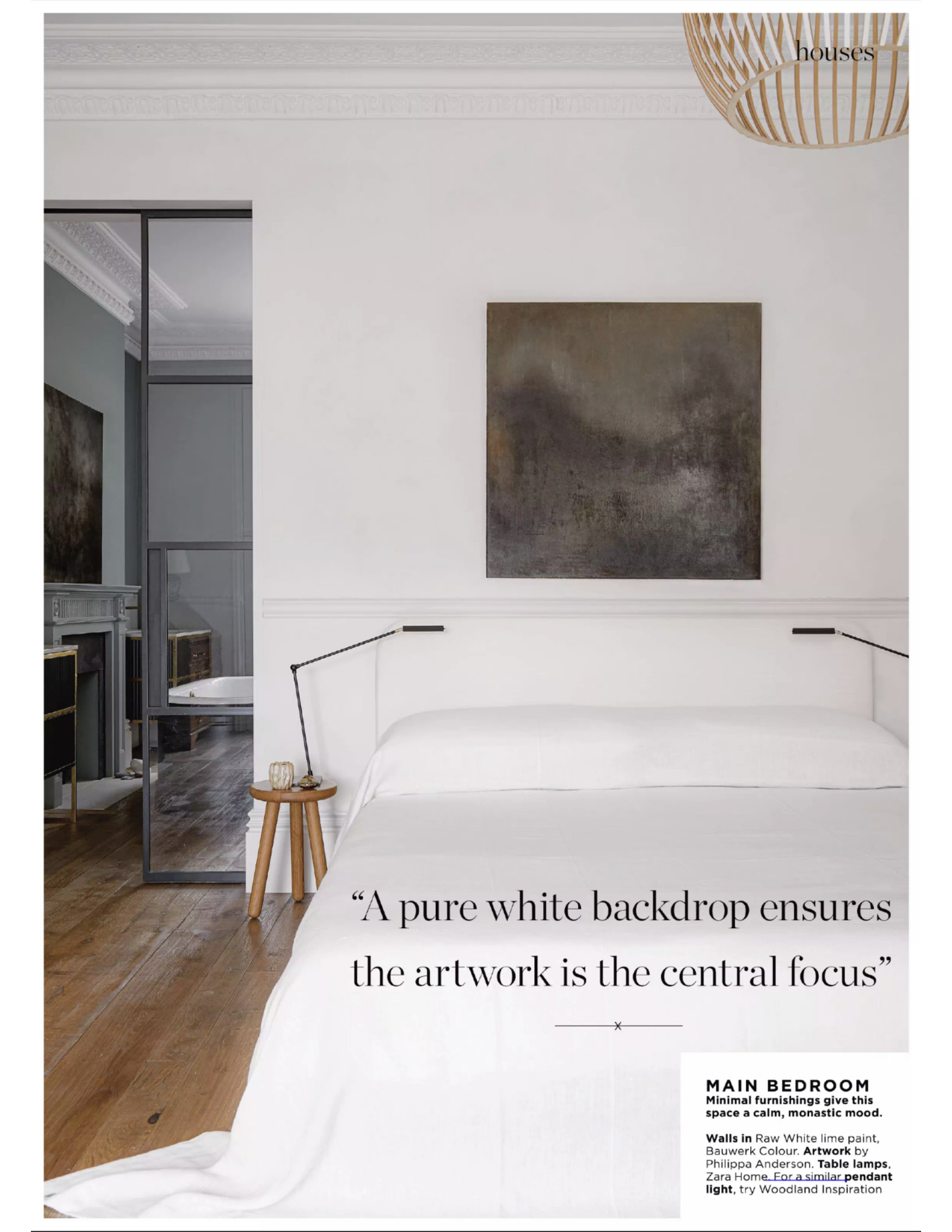
**Taps**, Vola. Calacatta Mont Blanc **marble**, Marble Granite Limestone Warehouse

### HALLWAY

Reclaimed oak herringbone was laid throughout the ground floor. The bench and pendant light bring a contemporary twist to the restored Victorian detailing.

**Flooring**, Walking On Wood. Arnaud **bench**, Eichholtz. **Pendant light**, Flos. **Painting** by Josefin Tolstoy





“A pure white backdrop ensures the artwork is the central focus”

**MAIN BEDROOM**  
Minimal furnishings give this space a calm, monastic mood.

**Walls in** Raw White lime paint, Bauwerk Colour. **Artwork** by Philippa Anderson. **Table lamps,** Zara Home. **For a similar pendant light,** try Woodland Inspiration



## INSIDER GUIDE

## know your whites

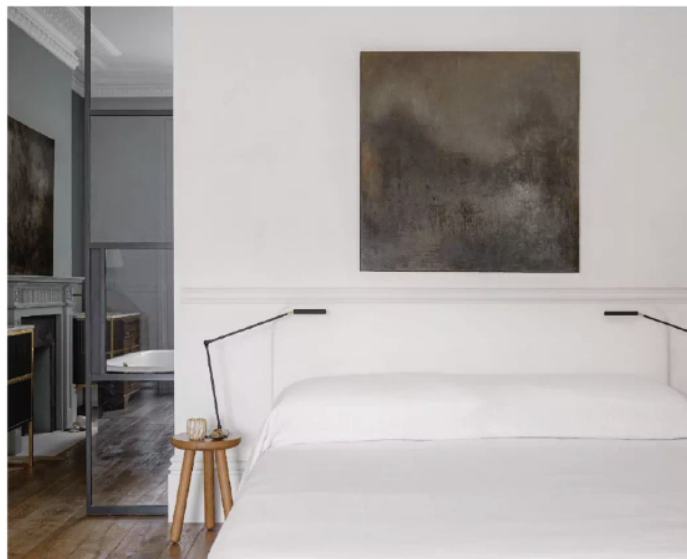
**INSPIRED BY THE HOUSE CATHERINE AND FELIX DESIGNED WITH ITS SWATHES OF NEUTRALS? LICK'S HEAD COLOUR SPECIALIST TASH BRADLEY SORTS THROUGH THE MANY OPTIONS TO FIND THE RIGHT WHITE FOR YOUR HOME**

We never see colour in isolation so when you want to observe variations in the white scale your starting point is the brilliant white of a sheet of printer paper. With so many shades on the market 'colour paralysis' is a huge problem, but understanding the make-up of white paint will help you make an informed decision. All whites split into two groups: cool whites – with a blue or grey undertone – and warm whites, which have a yellow or pink undertone. Cool whites evoke a fresh, uplifting, bright and lively feel, while warm whites are more cosy and mellow.

Room direction makes a huge impact on the tone of white I would recommend. North-facing rooms that suffer from a lack of natural light will immediately look dull and lifeless with a grey undertone, so instead it's best to try and balance this out with a warmer shade. Rooms with masses of sunlight can take a blue or grey base and this choice will make them feel crisp and breezy.

Of course in the end everything boils down to the homeowner's individual taste, but in general modern properties (which often have more glazing and, as a result, are brighter) are suited to cool whites – and choosing these will help to strike a clean contemporary note. These tones often group together with a more modern palette featuring greys, taupes and beiges. Period properties commonly have darker interiors and can usually benefit from a bit of warmth and a more subtle approach. While you may want to brighten rooms up, it's best to choose a colour that will sit softly alongside your other choices. For woodwork in a traditional scheme, I always recommend a warm undertone 'complementary' white. Your eye is always drawn to the brightest part of the room so using a brilliant white can mean the look ends up feeling disjointed – a calmer white will ease the transition between rooms.

Finally, if you are feeling a little dubious about the shade you've finally settled on, I always advise my clients to 'hold your nerve'. Walls will look very different after they are broken up when the artwork, furniture and rugs are added to the room – and if the worst came to the worst, unlike other big investment choices, such as flooring and sofas, you can always change your mind about a paint colour quite easily.



## setting the tone

**Moving along the scale from warm to cool, these nuanced white shades each strike a unique mood**

## FEELING COSY

A cosy, creamy colour that offers great coverage and a gentle pigmentation, this warm-toned white complements the rest of Lick's *Livingetc* palette of colours. Easy to apply and requiring few coats, Lick paints are durable and wipeable with no harmful chemicals and eco-friendly ingredients. *Livingetc* White 03, £38 for 2.5ltr, [lick.com](http://lick.com)

## SHADES OF GREY

With its slightest hint of grey, this was historically formulated with black pigment gathered from the smoke of burning oil lamps. Sitting well within a minimal scheme, this coolest of the Farrow & Ball whites works well in south-facing spaces with large windows. It's been used to striking effect in full gloss with stainless steel kitchens. Blackened, £52 for 2.5ltr, [farrow-ball.com](http://farrow-ball.com)

## IN THE PINK

Enjoying a huge surge in popularity, pinks are no longer the preserve of nurseries. This elegant pinky white from Little Greene's Stone collection has the merest hint of terracotta and evokes a gentle mood of relaxation. The intelligent matt emulsion has a 100% acrylic formulation that resists staining and provides exceptional washability. £48.50 for 2.5ltr, [littlegreene.com](http://littlegreene.com)

## GREEN SCENE

With just a hint of mint to strike a distinctly fresh note, this subtlest of green/white tones from the Paint & Paper Library sits alongside four shade strength variations in its scale and works well with other cool woodwork families like Slate or Salt. The company is known for paints finely tuned to balance colour, mood and light. £56.50 for 2.5ltr, [paintandpaperlibrary.com](http://paintandpaperlibrary.com)