

# GUIDED BY THE

Words CLARE SARTIN Photography PAUL RAESIDE Styling SANIA PELL

*Hidden behind a Victorian façade, this modern home celebrates the transformative effects of sunshine*

When this grand, tree-shadowed terrace was built in 1851, just off a busy street in London's Kensington, its original owners could never have imagined what would one day transpire inside the large house at the end of the row. And, standing on the front doorstep today, this property's traditional façade still conceals the secrets that lie within.

Step inside, however, and the five-storey family home, completely reimaged by Flow Architecture, makes a dramatic first impression. A double-height glass extension at the rear and two large skylights above bathe the main living space in light, while a swooping, sinuous staircase – with a balustrade constructed from ribbon-like 8mm steel – stretches the full height of the house. Flow Architecture's two partners, Vincent Nowak and Annarita Papeschi, both worked at Zaha Hadid Architects before setting up their own practice in 2013, and it is clear to see the influence of the landmark projects they worked on at play here, only on a more intimate, domestic scale.

For its owners, the most important elements of the build were to bring an abundance of daylight into this once dark home and create a greater connection with the outdoors. Now, as the sun moves throughout the day and the quality of the light changes with the seasons, this home transforms, its white walls taking on the shifting colours. 'On a grey day, everything is muted, but when the sun is low, you can really see that warmth,' explains Annarita.

The play of light is not all that decorates the walls in this home, though. Its owners are avid contemporary art collectors who have deliberated at length about the visual impact of every one of the pieces on display here. A large tapestry by Caroline Achaintre has been placed in the perfect spot, stretching between the ground-floor living area and the kitchen/dining space below. Many artworks haven't even made it onto the walls yet, their ideal locations still to be decided. Details are important here, from the edited palette of natural materials used (oak, walnut and Douglas Fir) to the way the sculptural lines of the architecture are referenced in the interior's details – from playful motifs carved into the cabinetry to the shape of the built-in shelving.

Furniture is treated in much the same considered way, with great care taken to ensure nothing distracts from the beauty of the build. However, as architect Vincent and the homeowners agree, some disruption is always a good thing. That's why, despite its large white expanses, this home will never be a sterile gallery-like space. There's personality here amid the perfect symmetry of its curving structure. [flowarchitecture.co.uk](http://flowarchitecture.co.uk)

**Living room** An 'Agio' sofa and 'Lever' table, both by Francesco Rota for Paola Lenti, are arranged with a 'Picot' pouf and 'Parallelo' rug, both also from Paola Lenti. The cushions and throw by Raf Simons for Kvadrat bring warmth. Ettore Sottsass's 'Pilastro' stool for Kartell adds a pop of red in the corner **Stockist details on p197 ►**













**Above** A tapestry, 'A.D.O.', 2017 by Caroline Achaintre, from Arcade, stretches from the living room into this seating area beside the dining room. The floor light is the 'North' by Arik Levy for Vibia and the sofa is by Paola Lenti **Opposite** An 'Ami' chair and 'Lever' coffee table by Francesco Rota for Paola Lenti are paired with a 'Safari' chair by Kaare Klint for Carl Hansen & Son and floor light by Serge Mouille. The 'Tabouret Berger' stool is by Charlotte Perriand for Cassina **Stockist details on p197** ▶