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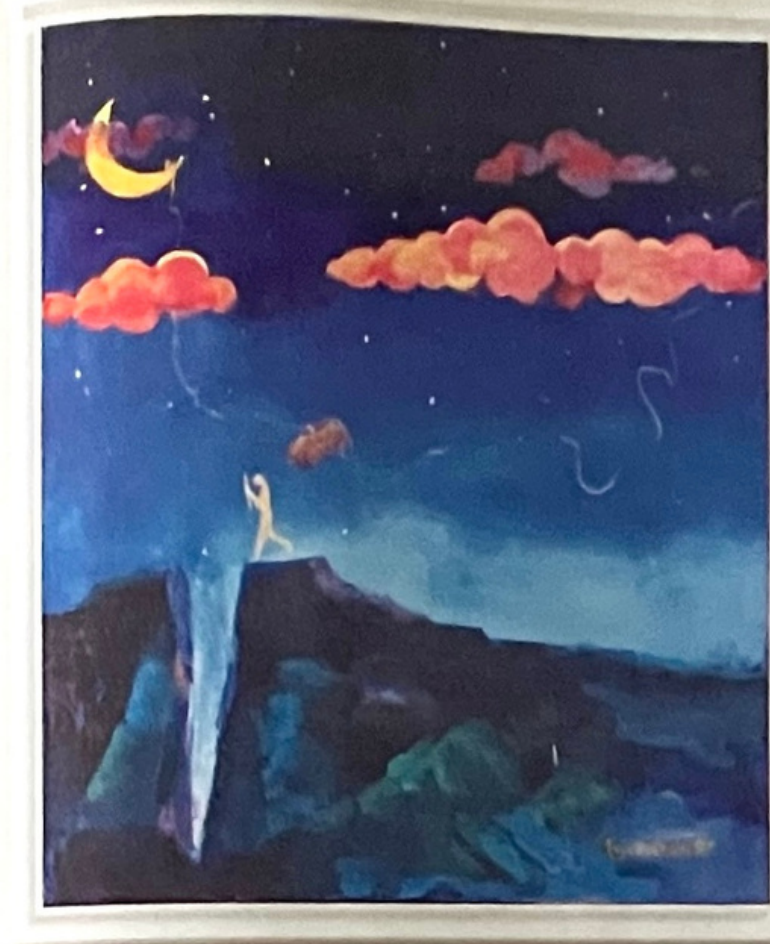
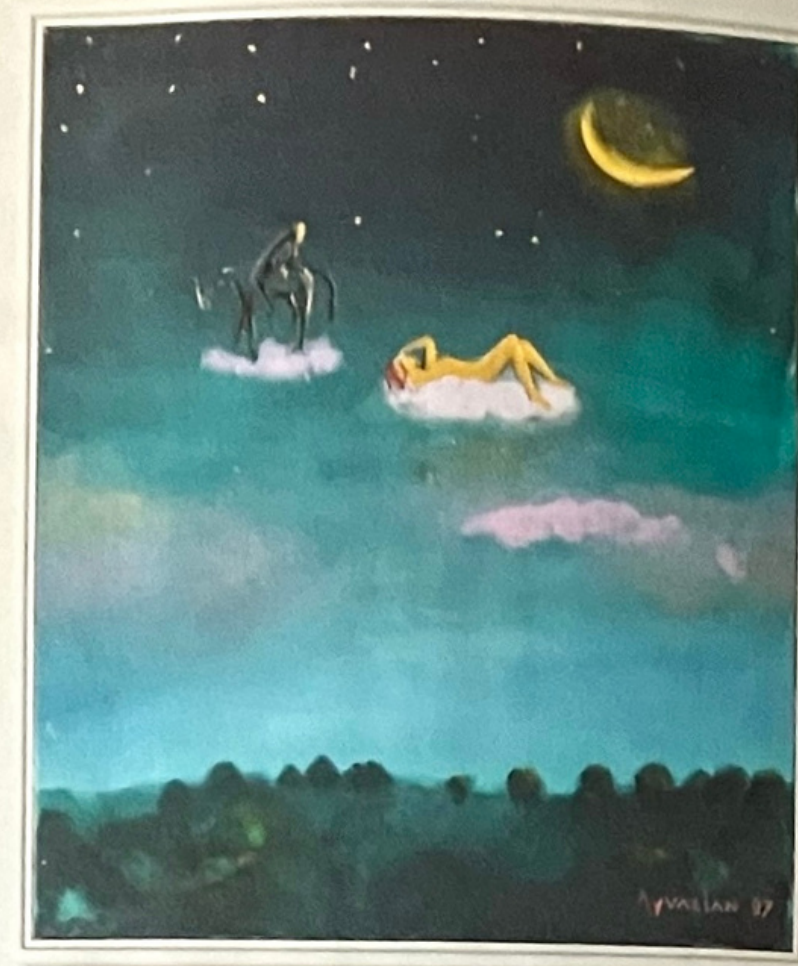
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# GOING FOR BOLD IN A LONDON SEMI

A precious collection of furniture and accessories informed the transformation of a characterless home that was in need of a little livening up...

WORDS DOMINIQUE CORLETT  
PHOTOGRAPHY GUIFRÉ DE PERAY AND ANNA STATHAKI



## LIVING ROOM

A quieter, more adult retreat than the main family room, this space was designed around the owners' sofas and art collection, including the two paintings above the sofa by Ara's uncle, **Sofa**, Roche Boagis, **Rug**, Jennifer Manners. Circular portrait in gold frame, Lorna May Wadsworth →



## HOME PROFILE

### WHO LIVES HERE

Widad Tachdjian and her husband Ara, who both work in financial services, and their two young children

### THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom Edwardian semi-detached house in Belsize Park, London



### LIVING ROOM

A bespoke shelving unit in ebony veneer, which reflects the Crittall-style panels in the back wall, showcases the couple's books and decorative pieces. **Ceiling light**, Circa Lighting. **Sofas**, Roche Bobois. **Cushions**, The Conran Shop

## INSPIRING HOMES

### DINING AREA

The Natuzzi table and chairs were much-loved pieces the family wanted to include in the design. A sofa and painting by Lorna May Wadsworth inject colour. **Pendant light**, Chaplins. **Candlesticks**, H&M Home



**W**hen Widad and Ara Tachdjian relocated from France with their two young children for Ara's job, they brought with them a small but much-loved collection of furniture and artwork. The dozen paintings, two sofas, dining table and chairs and other small pieces would barely fill one room of the substantial new four-bedroom house in north London they'd set their hearts on. But they held the key to the couple's vision for the warm, vibrant interiors they intended to create. 'We wanted our home to be filled with energy and colour, incorporating a mix of different styles that would reflect the pieces we've collected over the years on our travels and from our African heritage,' explains Widad. Before this could happen, however, there were a few other jobs to do, including remodelling the layout, which, despite the house's high ceilings and great bones, required a redesign to improve the flow and maximise its potential. And, having been stripped out previously, the period fireplaces, ceiling mouldings and skirting boards needed to be reinstated.

Located on a leafy residential street in Belsize Park, the house is unusual in its construction. It is semi-detached, but also connected at the back to another property facing the opposite →



A CLEVER INNOVATION OF THE REDESIGN WAS SETTING THE HOB ON THE ISLAND, WHICH WIDAD LOVES FOR ENTERTAINING



## KITCHEN AREA

**Above** Widad and Ara wanted a 'beautiful, bold kitchen' and love the denim blue of the units and the geometric floor tiles. The vintage yellow bar stools, which the couple brought with them from their previous home, provide the perfect contrast to the blue. Custom-built kitchen, Hux London. **Worktops**, Porcelanosa. **Tiles**, Terrazzo Tiles. **Lights**, Gallotti & Radice

way, creating a block of four houses. As a result, the couple's only garden is in front of the house and there are no windows at the back, so while the property is flooded with light from the two bay windows at the front, the back of the house is quite dark. The kitchen, located behind one of the reception rooms, only had light from a small side window, while the stairwell, behind the other reception room, had no natural light at all.

Deciding that they were going to need some help, Widad and Ara turned to Zulufish, a London-based interior design practice that also provides architectural design and build services. The first step, says Caroline Milns at Zulufish, was to 'create a lovely, big family space with plenty of light' on one half of the ground floor, to include a kitchen, dining space and lounge area, with a handy boot room at the back. They did this by removing the wall between the former kitchen and front reception, so light from the front window could fill the whole space, while the window at the side remained and was joined by a glazed door with access to the garden.

'We created one big room, but we zoned it,' Caroline explains. Widad and Ara chose denim blue for the kitchen, which was built by Zulufish's sister joinery company Hux London, while the kitchen area was further demarcated by the use of blue graphic floor tiles. 'The clients wanted

a beautiful, bold kitchen, so that set the creative direction,' says Caroline. 'They're not afraid of colour and pattern, which you can feel from the liveliness of the interiors.'

The non-kitchen areas, meanwhile, have the same honey-coloured herringbone oak floor that was laid through most of the house (chosen, says Caroline, for its classic, timeless look), and this gives the dining and lounging areas a warmer atmosphere enhanced with rugs and tactile upholstery. The couple love modern lighting and have chosen globe lamps – a theme carried throughout. 'They were keen to respect the house's bones, but didn't want it to feel old-fashioned,' adds Caroline. 'It was great to be able to add modern pieces to juxtapose with the period setting.'

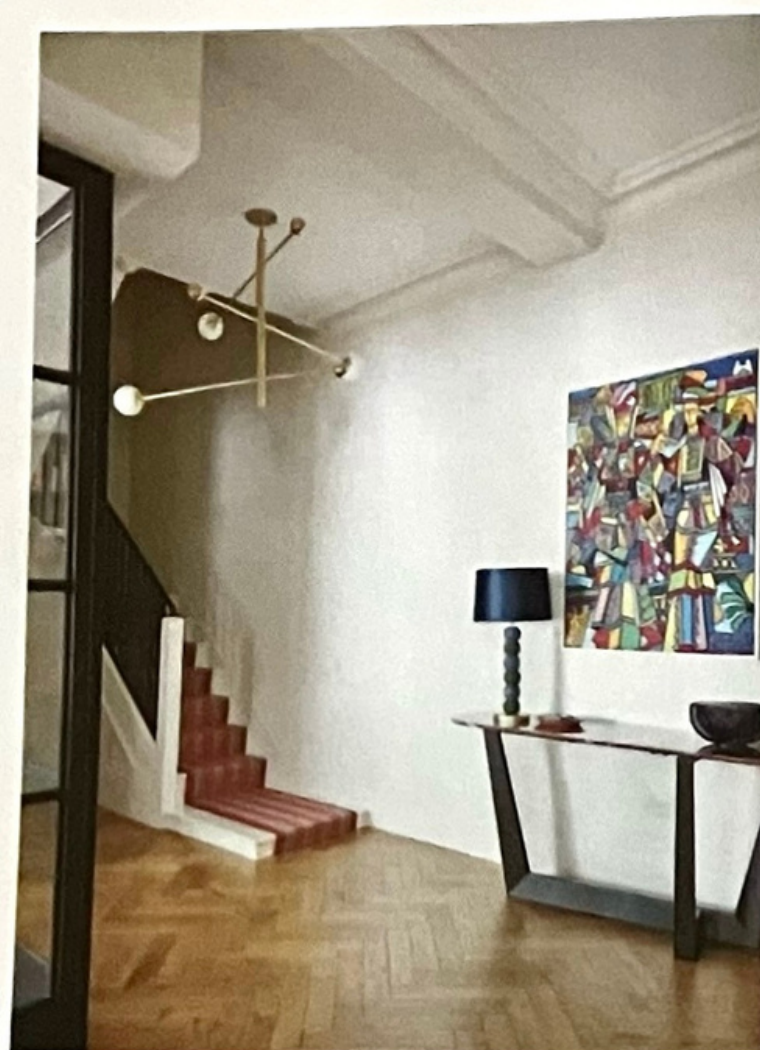
Among the many clever innovations that Widad picks out as highlights of the redesign – from setting the hob on the island, which she loves for entertaining, to introducing mezzanine levels in the children's bedrooms – there is one change that for her has had the biggest impact. This was the bold idea to remove the corner section – including half of the back wall – of the second reception room, and replace it with an L-shaped Crittall-style glass panel and double doors. 'This has meant that the previously dark hallway and stairs are filled with light. 'There is such a sense of openness, while still keeping the room separate and private,' explains Widad. The →



## OPEN-PLAN SPACE

**Top** This large area has been separated into zones. While the kitchen is delineated by geometric blue and white floor tiles, the dining and lounging spaces feature oak herringbone flooring, which feels warmer and more relaxing. **Above** A handy boot room area has been included by the back door. **Cabinetry**, Hux London





Crittall-style panels are referenced in elements in the kitchen, including the shelving, and in the second reception's enormous L-shaped bookcase, custom-made by Hux London in ebony veneer. This room is also home to the two velvet Roche Bobois sofas that the couple brought with them from France, one in midnight blue and the other in a graphic print. On the wall behind the blue sofa hang two favourite artworks – colourful depictions of fantastical landscapes painted by Ara's uncle. If the art and sofas look like they were made for this room, that's no accident.

'It was important to incorporate these pieces, so we were very much designing with them in mind, making sure they'd fit within the layout, and that the colour schemes, in terms of the flooring, walls, joinery and extra furnishings, would all work with them,' explains Caroline. 'Actually, the used colours from the paintings for cushions and accessories. The fact that Widad and Ara had these items to build a scheme around really breathed life into this house.' As for Widad, she has achieved her dream of an eclectic, vibrant home, with pieces the family loves at its heart.

For more information about Zulufish, visit [zulufish.co.uk](http://zulufish.co.uk)

## HALLWAY

**Top left** The picture is one of many picked up on the couple's travels. **Stair runner**, Roger Oates. **Ceiling light**, Monologue. **Lamp**, David Hunt

## BATHROOM

**Above** Floor-to-ceiling porcelain tiles mimic marble, while the gold brassware and trims pick up their gold veining. **Sanitaryware and brassware**, CP Hart. **Vanity unit**, Scavolini

INSPIRING HOMES

## WIDAD WANTED A CALM AND SERENE AMBIENCE IN THE MAIN BEDROOM SUITE



## DRESSING ROOM

**Opposite, top right** The walk-in wardrobe has a dressing table area that continues the calm, muted palette used elsewhere in the main suite. Resembling a squishy marshmallow, the mushroom bouclé stool is a fun addition. **Wall lights**, Circa Lighting. **Stool**, SCP

## BEDROOM

**This page** Thanks to a palette of whites and layers of natural textures, the main bedroom suite has a serene ambience. A panelled wall separates the bedroom from the dressing room. **Rug and bedlinen**, Zara Home. **Cushions**, H&M Home →





'WE WANTED OUR HOME TO BE FILLED WITH ENERGY AND COLOUR'

#### OFFICE

**Top left** Widad and Ara have no fear of colour and pattern and Widad's study on the top floor is a bright, fun space with gold wallpaper and a mustard sofa. **Wallpaper**, Pierre Frey. **Table lamp**, David Hunt

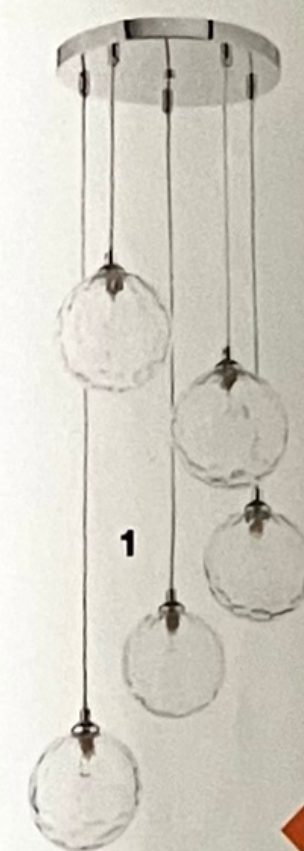
#### GUEST BEDROOM

**Top right** In this sweet room, a hot pink chair and desk provide

a colour contrast to the silver wallpaper and grey paintwork. **Wallpaper**, Romo

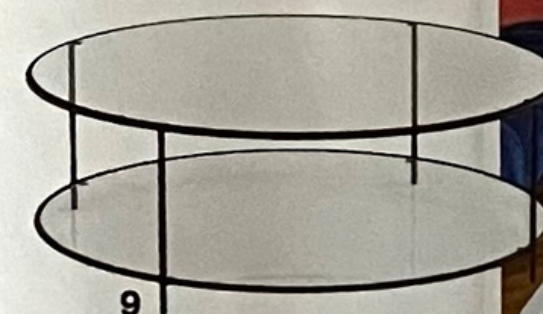
#### CHILDREN'S ROOMS

**Above** A starry wallpaper from Hibou Home and a tactile rug decorate their daughter's room (left), while in their son's room (right), pops of colour add lively touches. **Lamp**, David Hunt. **Bedlinen**, Zara Home



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## Get the look

Channel Widad's bold home style with vibrant colours and clean lines

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