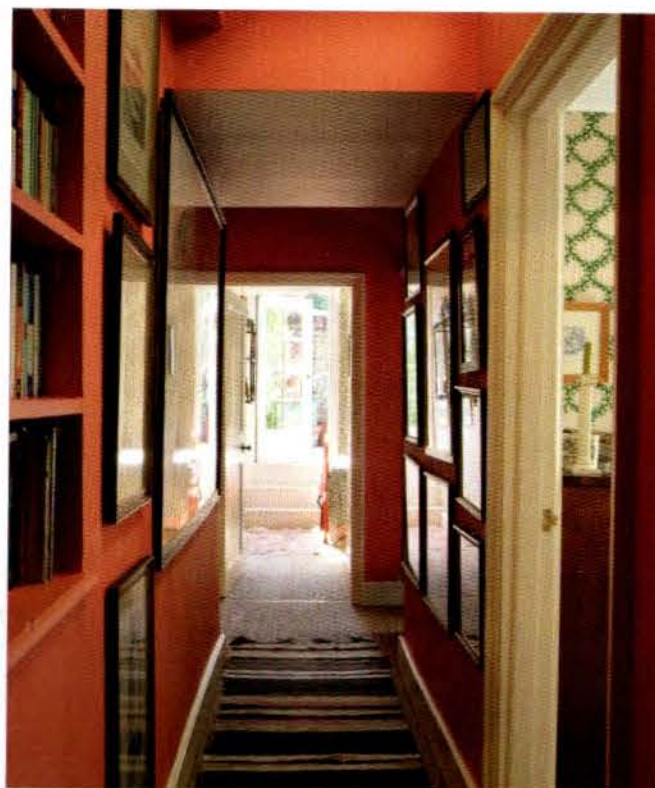


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THE WORLD OF INTERIORS





some space'. Then the tenant of the flat underneath them moved out, and suddenly they had an extra floor. They expanded downstairs into what had originally been the old house's top floor – with early to mid-Georgian panelling and fireplaces dating back to 1710 – in a hectic rush.

'We were more in Dorset and training dogs, so we painted the whole flat white,' says Ben. 'The flower room was green and I stuck the sink in; the bright white was pretty nice. After about two years we did the bedroom blue and moved our bed in, then Scotland happened [their ongoing restoration of a derelict bothy on the west coast] and we started clearing out tons of things and buying new stuff. The whole flat hit the buffers – cobblers' children have no shoes!' 'It's like, we grow loads of flowers, but we have no flowers,' Charlie adds.

Now both floors have evolved into one homogenous living space. Upstairs, in the main room, it feels quite calm with stripes and plains, greens and greys. Then you turn a corner and colour explodes on the back of the retina like a paintball. The corridor is coral, the duck-shit-green kitchen has gone orange and a Prince of Wales investiture chair designed by Lord Snowdon contributes an extra dollop of Heinz-tomato-soup red. Bathrooms have dense, all-over-pattern wallpapers and the David Hicks-designed paper in the downstairs dressing room carries a white pattern on hot chilli-terra-cotta. Only the burnt caramel on a guest bedroom's

Georgian panelling and the calm blue of the master bedroom have a more period decorum. The final beautiful touches come from Ben's most recent collaboration to recolour three dozen William Morris papers and fabrics for Morris & Co. Ben has named it 'The Queen Square' collection because Morris lived and worked at number 26, a few doors away from his own, for about 30 years. Some are chosen from a 1960s Sanderson archive pattern book and older Victorian patterns – 'there's an amazing colourway called daffodil for which we literally went back to the original from the 1860s' – but about two thirds are completely new.

He spent the first part of this year on the task. 'During the final month Charlie was in New Zealand and I was in Dorset looking after the doggies and I had everything pinned up around me for five weeks. You realise which ones are working and which ones aren't.' Like me, Ben grew up in a house wallpapered with Sanderson's tranquil, traditional 'Willow' and upholstered with ginger-ish 'Golden Lily', whereas Charlie's grandparents had chintz and his mother favoured tickings.

But the best decorators can achieve a perfect unity by inclusion, as is obvious all around us. 'And the dogs love it here,' adds Charlie ■

Ben Pentreath. Ring 020 7430 2424, or visit benpentreath.com. 'The Queen Square' collection, by Ben Pentreath and Morris & Co, is available from Style Library (020 3457 5862; stylelibrary.com)

Top left: a view along the spine corridor, a print gallery, to the third guest bedroom. Top right: Soane's emerald 'Seaweed Lace' wallpaper lines the second guest-room, whose bedside tables were designed by Pentreath & Hall for the Lacquer Company. Opposite: a Wedgwood lemonade jug rests on the windowsill of the bathroom, where black-and-white prints hang on a backdrop of Zoffany's 'Richmond Park'. The sconce is from Hector Finch

