

HIDEAWAY HOME

A minimalistic approach to interior design has enabled Stacey Kent and Jim Tomlinson to focus on the music in their life

FEATURE JULIET BENNING | PHOTOGRAPHY ANNA STATHAKI

no. 11



INSPIRATION *'We love modern design, so we chose to use concrete wall panels'*



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Renovated period home

LOCATION North London

ROOMS Sitting room/dining area, kitchen, music room, games room, cloakroom, three bedrooms (one en suite), dressing room, bathroom, loft room

PURCHASED 2002

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

"We were both students living in rented homes," says Stacey.

SITTING ROOM

A mix of materials, including wooden flooring and concrete wall panels, adds interest. "The concrete has a lovely mustardy grey colour and the rough texture brings warmth to the room," says Jim. Concrete walls, price on request, Concrete LCDA. Vera armchairs, £3,061.70 each, Chaplins. Ikea's Lovbacken side table, £45, is a good alternative

DINING AREA

Chic statement pendant lights create an intimate atmospheric feel at the table after dark. For a similar light, try the Voronos III pendant, from £207, Tala. Walls in Shaded White estate emulsion, £49.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Latina dining chair in Ice Grey, price on request, Cassa Design



KITCHEN
Handleless units were chosen for a sleek look. Cabinets, price on request, Point 3 Kitchens. Pendant lights, price on request, Tala. Lem bar stools, £329.60 each, La Palma at Nurido



MAIN BEDROOM
A selection of rugs warms up the smoked oak floor. Walls in Purbeck's Stone estate emulsion, £49.90 for 2.5ltr; Farrow & Ball. Redondo small armchair, price on request, Moroso. Ukiyo side table, €452, Moroso at Ambiente Direct. Acapulco chair (on balcony) £109, Alice's Garden

LAST WORD *'The structural changes we made to the property mean that we now*

use the whole house from top to bottom – there's no space we haven't utilised'



When Stacey Kent and Jim Tomlinson bought their first home together, they knew it would need to be tranquil. As jazz musicians, the pair are frequently out on tour, meaning that the peace of their north London hideaway is all the more appealing upon returning. 'We were drawn to the location for its closeness to Heathrow – over the years we've travelled to over 55 countries,' says Stacey. As soon as they encountered what was to be their future home, Stacey and Jim were enamoured. 'We knew there was so much potential for us here,' says Stacey. 'Because of our hectic lifestyles, one of the things we were looking to create was this haven. The garden, with its mature trees and playing foxes really contributes to this – we feel surrounded by mother nature.' From the outset, Jim particularly loved the

generous proportions of the rooms. 'The spaces just feel great to be in,' he says. Living with the house in its original configuration until 2018, Stacey and Jim decided to invest in some architectural changes that would maximise enjoyment of their home. Enlisting the help of Charlie Avara of design and build firm, All Done Design, they extended their bedroom into an enclosed balcony space and knocked walls down on the ground floor to create a large open-plan sitting room and dining area. Floors were levelled and a loft room was created. 'We didn't need four bedrooms so we sacrificed one to make our bedroom larger and combine it with a bathroom overlooking the garden,' explains Stacey. 'Charlie's approach is to tailor the service to your needs. She facilitated everything, like sourcing finishes and was really open minded. We'd travel around and take

photos of things we saw out in the world and the team would listen to all our ideas and work out how to incorporate them.' Stacey says the fairly minimal decor is prompted in part by the couple's careers. 'When you're trained as a musician, you're encouraged to bring as little with you as possible while on tour, so we're really good at packing but we also have a very streamlined interior at home,' says Stacey. Jim agrees, saying, 'We like a visually quiet living space'. The pair chose a neutral backdrop of wall colours, which is enveloped with accent colours in the furnishings and sumptuous textures of fleece and velvet. Above all, this is a sociable house. 'We often have friends over and love sitting in the garden with the fire pit and the guitar,' says Stacey. One can't help but envy the neighbours who might overhear a world class jazz recital on any given evening. 🎷



BATHROOM
Recessed shelves make a practical storage space. For a similar freestanding bath, try the Verona, £599.95, Victorian Plumbing

