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She's got the wow factor

How a top beauty director transformed three flats into one glamorous family home

REPORT Carolyn Astor PHOTOGRAPHS Roman Ford

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OSZOOY



Clockwise from far left: Sophie Bloomfield in her bedroom; Alvar Aalto Tank chairs; the utility room

Would you be surprised to learn that Sophie Bloomfield, the beauty director of *Harper's Bazaar*, has a spectacular bathroom? Probably not. But perhaps not for the reasons you might assume. It's not the range and volume of products that leave their mark (these are actually strictly edited down to a solitary shelf), but the glorious backdrop.

Part of the master suite that stretches over the entire first floor of the family home, the bathroom is decorated with handpainted wallpaper by artist Freddie Wimsett, whose work is also to be found in the homes of Kate Moss and Alice Temperley.

Further along is a master bedroom that is every bit as sumptuous: her cupboard doors have been covered in Bennison Wheat Flower fabric and the area has been declared a no-kid zone. Not that she is precious – she just knows the value of carving out her private space.

Bloomfield undertook the renovation of this large west London house, which she shares with her husband, Will, who works in the music industry, and their two sons, Leo, 6, and Zac, 4, with the help of her school friend, the interior



The master bedroom and bathroom stretch over the entire first floor, and have been declared a no-kid zone

designer Naomi Astley Clarke. Together they have converted what were three flats spread over five floors into a spacious home packed full of colour and individual touches.

Unusually, it was Astley Clarke's ability to carve up and define the space that Bloomfield valued the most. "I felt confident choosing the finish and the decoration, but most interior architects just care about whether your skylight has been installed correctly, not whether there is any flow or whether your furniture all works together," she says. Bloomfield ended up using an architect solely for the planning application, and tasked Astley Clarke with the rest.

The first change was to relocate the staircase. "Instead of coming down the stairs into the hallway, it felt more inviting to turn into the kitchen area," says Astley Clarke. This reconfiguration also allowed for a coat and boot cupboard to be built by the front door.



Clockwise from far left:
hallway coat cupboard;
painting by Sam Francis;
bespoke neon sign

Other canny uses of space included creating a two-way glass cabinet by the kitchen, which houses Bloomfield's collection of Astier de Villatte china and also throws light into the basement. An internal window in Will's study, situated on the landing of the master suite, also ensures that this room is neither dark or boxy.

Astley Clarke's input freed Bloomfield to do most of the sourcing: from the pineapple front-door knocker (because Astley Clarke had told her they were a Roman symbol of wealth) to the pair of mid-century flamingo pink, white and black chests that were found on a vintage Czech website. "They are just so wrong that they're right," says Bloomfield. "Plus, they were a bargain, so I don't stress about them being filled to the brim with Lego and dog leads."

Bloomfield says that she can think of no better way to spend an evening than on Italian eBay, and indeed that's where most of the Fifties Italian lighting or vintage ceramic hooks that are dotted throughout her house came from. She visits Ardingly market in West Sussex, as well as the Navigli antiques fair when she is in Milan for Fashion Week.

She has also been lucky enough to inherit a pair of Alvar Aalto Tank chairs in zebra print



from her father-in-law, as well as a sofa passed down from her grandmother that has been re-upholstered in a sumptuous yellow velvet from Turnell & Gigon. The sofa and chairs dominate the more formal sitting area, while the jumbo mohair velvet George Smith sofa that sits under the squiggle painting by James Nares is the one they kick back and relax in.

"I suppose the bones of my house are classic, but it's also quite colourful and uplifting," Bloomfield reflects. Most of the artwork was added after they had been living in the house for a while: the Bernard Jacobson Gallery is a favourite haunt, although many pieces came from Will's father, including the paintings in the kitchen by Alan Lowndes and Rachel Nicholson (daughter of Ben Nicholson) and the psychedelic mandala painting by Larry Smart, who famously painted Jimi Hendrix.

At the top of the house, the rooms and landings are just as well proportioned. "Naomi was joking that you need enough space in the corridor for kids to have a tantrum," says Bloomfield. "And she's right, because they do live up to their middle names of Wilde and Rascal." ■

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