HOMES

This Colourful Apartment in London Is an Artfully Layered Retreat in the Sky

Inside a reimagined Brutalist icon, this three-bedroom residence has an eclectic mix of furniture and art which draws its inspiration from the city's skyline

By Busola Evans

Photography by Taran Wilkhu

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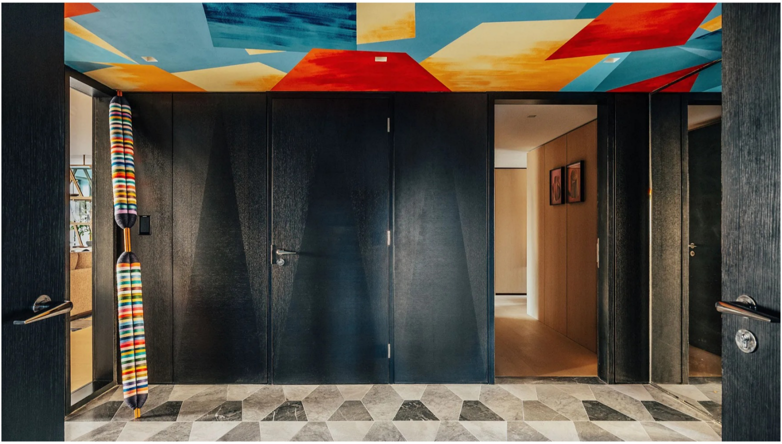

Brimming with colour and patterns, and brilliantly layered with natural materials to instil a sense of calm and composure, this USD10 million apartment in London is the pride of Centre Point, one of the most iconic buildings in the British capital, often described as the city's 'North Star' because of its focal point for navigation from across the city.

Situated at the intersection of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road, the 34-floor Brutalist skyscraper, which was designed by the late Swiss-British architect Richard Seifert, has enjoyed critical acclaim since it was completed in 1966 and in its early years was a symbol of London's modernity and progress.

For several years, Centre Point was largely office space until it was converted to residential use in 2015. Today, apartments in the building remain highly sought-after, but there is another key reason why this dual-aspect three-bedroom residence in particular, with a starting price tag of just over $ 10 million, garners more attention than most. For developers Almacantar, it was vital that this was not yet another bland, contemporary box and they were keen to showcase not just a space with personality but one that also speaks to its instantly recognisable external architecture.

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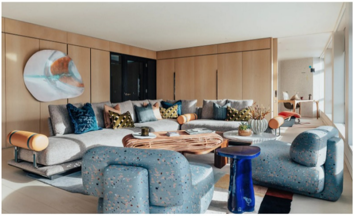
what they do is they form this very solid street wall along
this very solid street wall

"We started with who we knew would be attracted to living at Centre Point," explains Almacantar's executive director Kathrin Hersel. "They would be people interested in the building and the location, collectors of art and have a love for design. They are confident in what they like and it is definitely not beige. So we needed designers who would capture that kind of spirit for this unique apartment in London."



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To realize the vision they called on critically acclaimed design studio Angel O'Donnell and fortunately, it was a fortuitous meeting of minds. Co-founder and creative director Ed O'Donnell was instantly drawn to creating interiors that serve as a visual counterpoint but with subtle nods to its roots.

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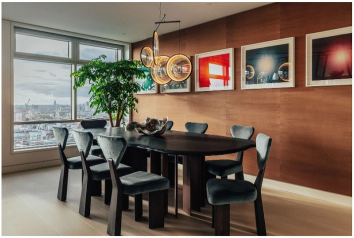
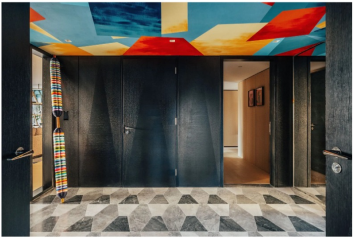
"The façade of the building is what really inspired us – the idea of taking a brutalist building and concrete and working out how to put that into an apartment and make it soft, liveable and homely," he explains.



This was achieved with a distinctive colour palette conceived from the city's skyline and its spectacular sunsets. So enter shades of sky blue alongside golden hues and an assortment of warm reds from brick to burgundy. "The way the colour would work in this apartment and with the surroundings was a massive part for us," explains O'Donnell. "It very much led the design narrative."



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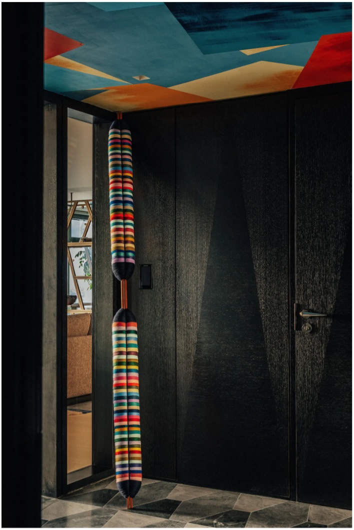

This is best illustrated on the painted ceiling of the entrance hall, with its colourful collage which echoes the geometric grayscale limestone floor tiles. Taking inspiration from an abstract moral on the ceiling of the upmarket pub The Audley in Mayfair, O'Donnell decided to reimagine the concept in a residential space. "We worked with the London Mural Company and it was just an interpretation of sunrise, sunset, being in the sky. and also a reflection of the tile on the floor."

The colours are a recurring theme – an iridescent copper seagrass wall covering from Arte adds warmth and zones the dining space while a deep red gives depth to the primary bedroom.

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O'Donnell agrees the crimson choice for a sleeping space could be seen as a daring move but balancing it with white walls softens the intensity. "Not everyone can have that colour necessarily in their room, but if you look around here, you can see it's all about the view. The thing is that you're not actually looking at the red when you're in bed, but when you walk into the room, you get that warm, homely feeling and a 'wow' effect." Hersel agrees: "I wasn't sure of the idea initially but it's my favourite room. It's beautiful and feels very calm."

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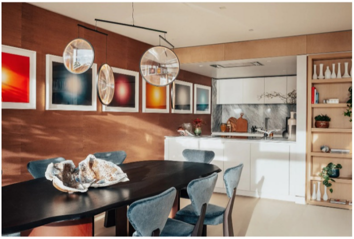
Art follows in the same vibrant vein – a colourful yarn-wrapped sculpture by Will Cruickshank helps set the tone on entering the apartment while a series of artworks by Anish Kapoor extends across the length of the dining room wall into the sleek kitchen.



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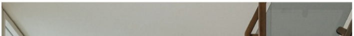

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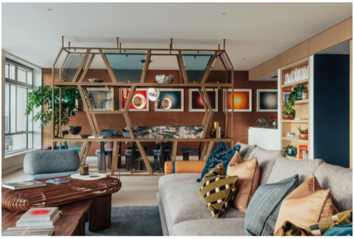
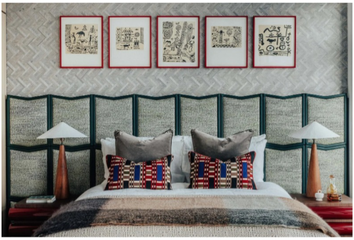
“One of the nicest things about this project was working on the art because there are so many different artists in the collection,” notes O’Donnell. “Finding pieces and talking to the artists has been a joy.”



The external architecture is used to inform many of the shapes in the apartment’s design – the hexagons found in the bedroom deliberately mirror the building’s honeycomb façade as does a bespoke sculptural partition to separate the living and dining spaces. In another bedroom, the zig-zag of the headboard references the shape of the windows, and a mix of geometric lines are drawn from the cityscape.



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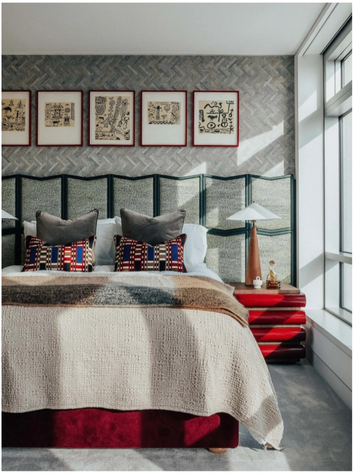

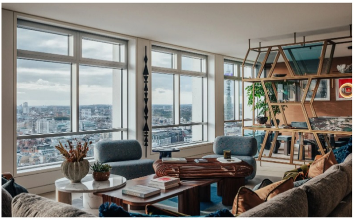

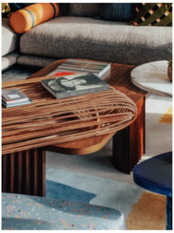

Furniture, many of which are bespoke, are considered and play on texture. In the living room, a custom-designed corner sofa holds a court alongside two sculptural chairs by Patricia Urquiola. A trio of coffee tables in rattan, walnut and marble have smooth semi-circular joints which gives a subtle nod to Centre Point's construction while the dining table base gives industrial notes with its base made of Corten steel. "I wanted pieces that had a story and leans into the architecture, whether directly or indirectly," says O'Donnell. "I always think that an interior will feel really authentic if you listen to the building and its surroundings, as well as who you imagine might be living there."

The true stars of the apartment, of course, are the extraordinary 360-degree views across the capital. The three ensuite bedrooms provide panoramas of the east while windows flank the entire length of the living and dining space and offer sight of Mayfair and Hyde Park to the west.

Furniture has been positioned to take full advantage of this unique focal point.. “We were keen that when you walk into the apartment, the view is the first thing you really notice,” says O’Donnell. And that is the ultimate magnetic pull which many fortunate to visit this home will find hard to resist.

A journalist for more than 20 years, British-Nigerian Busola Evans is an interiors specialist, covering everything from trend reports to profiling some of the industry's biggest names including Martin Brudnizki, Patricia Urquiola and Beata Heuman. Busola is also deputy chairperson of Women In Journalism, the UK's leading organisation for female... Read more

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