

Taran Wilkhu

Houses > City

A remarkable home in the last of London's 'big three' power stations to go residential

Interior design studio Angel O'Donnell steered clear of 'industrial chic' clichés to create a warm, characterful interior

BY [PHOEBE FRANGOUL](#) PUBLISHED: 02 DECEMBER 2025

London is full of former warehouses, factories and huge industrial buildings that have been converted into residential homes. The last of the city's 'big three' historic power stations to be transformed in this way is Chelsea Powerhouse, once described as a 'cathedral of innovation' that powered the London Underground. The first duplex to be unveiled at the development was designed by Angel O'Donnell studio, which, with projects in Centre Point and The OWO to name just two, has plenty of experience of working within iconic listed buildings, reimagining them for 21st century living.



Taran Wilkhu

The firm's co-founder and creative director, Ed O'Donnell says the team was in awe of the building's impressive industrial pedigree, but what struck them most was its beauty; 'towering chimneys, giant archways, intricate brickwork, and hundreds of decorative circles under the roofline – wow!'



Taran Wilkhu

The brief they were given centred on optimism and utility, not nostalgia, he says, explaining how they steered clear of 'industrial chic' clichés and instead embraced contemporary contours, lively patterns, cheerful colours, cosy textures and modern touches like a yoga-study studio. 'Each space had to work hard and look good – designing for wellbeing and quality downtime just as much as aesthetics. Every decision balanced form with function,' he explains.



Taran Wilkhu

He recalls the inevitable critical point that always occurs in the early design phase, ‘after you remove the rose-tinted specs and see the space for what it is – good and bad.’ In this case, he and the team identified two contrasting challenges: upstairs, an expansive open-plan living area, high-vaulted ceiling and vast bullseye window called for intimate zoning, warm-hued materials, and rich details; downstairs, small, clerestory windows and a warren-like layout demanded designs that celebrated cocooning cosiness.



Taran Wilkhu

Those clerestory windows were ‘a bit of a head-scratcher,’ he admits; while they created a cosy environment at night, by day they let in limited light – a small price to pay for living in an historic London landmark, but one they had to address all the same. The firm’s associate designer Tatiana Pietrangeli suggested oversized shutters lit by LEDs that would simulate the ebb and flow of natural daylight in real time. ‘It was an elegant solution that creates the illusion of large, light filled windows for a bright, uplifting ambience,’ notes Ed.



Taran Wilkhu

The material palette throughout the home is sensuous yet playful; at one end of the spectrum, visitors are invited to sink into carmine-red leather, moss-green velvet, honey brick, caramel walnut, sapphire glass and dusty pink walls. At the other, sunny yellow wood and Kermit-green lacquer lift the spirits. In the living room, warm slip bricks and cedar-red chevron wallpaper add texture and comfort, both a subtle nod to Powerhouse’s industrial heritage without ever being too literal.



Taran Wilkhu

Pendants by Belgian designers Muller Van Severen swing above a 'Harlequin' dining table and tactile leather chairs. Their looping cords draw the eye in different directions, inviting exploration, while a kinetic sculpture by Catherine Hicks celebrates the 'moving spirit of London' – a nod to Powerhouse's transport legacy.



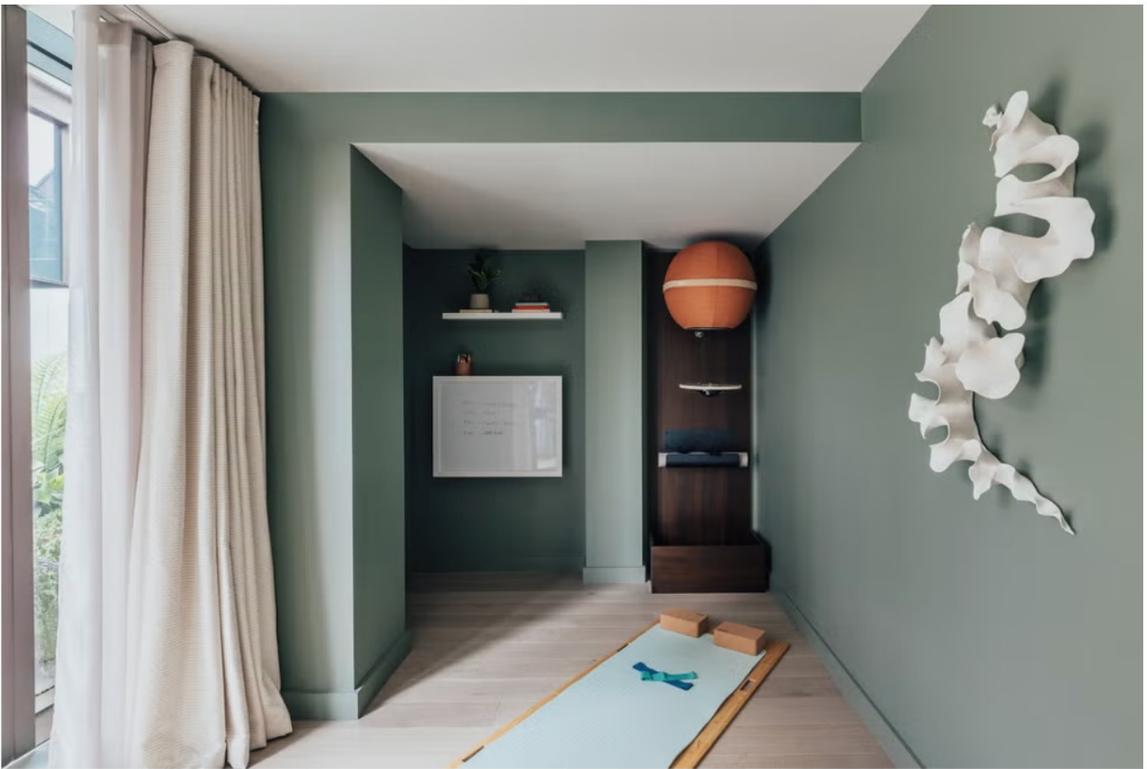
Taran Wilkhu

In the main bedroom, Élitis arch-relief wallpaper echoes the building's monumental façade. Bronze lamps, grooved walnut bedsides, and a bespoke Angel O'Donnell headboard upholstered in Métaphores 'Eden' tapestry add layered pattern and depth.



Taran Wilkhu

Guest bedrooms are no less inviting with bold, geometrically patterned fabrics, acid-bright dressing tables and lamps shaped like twisty marshmallows. Then there's the music room and yoga-study with their mix of rhythmic textiles, sculptural acoustic panels, mirrored barres and multi-use furniture. 'It's a wonderful mix for a vibrant, fun-loving family to enjoy,' notes Ed.



Taran Wilkhu

The studio enjoyed creating and curating many pieces for the project, notably the giant, hand-knotted rug in the living room – one of five Angel O'Donnell has crafted with Riviere Rugs. 'It sits perfectly with the moss-green sofa, Pierre Frey patchwork armchairs and bespoke shelving unit made from dark walnut and shimmering London Plane,' says Ed.



Taran Wilkhu

But it's the snug – formerly a windowless antechamber sandwiched between bedrooms – that he calls 'our triumph'. It has been transformed into a calming cocoon of colour and light, where soft petal-pink walls and plush furnishings drench the space in warmth. And the ultimate showstopper in this space? A bespoke ceiling mural that appears dappled and animated, like sunlight filtered through a leafy canopy. As Ed says, 'it's pure joy.' angelodonnell.com