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LIGHT FANTASTIC

A bright, open scheme in Knightsbridge, London, provides both a sociable family home and an elegant retreat from the bustle of the city



Philippa installed a glass wall between the sitting room and the corridor. The upholstered bench is covered in 'Cosma' (teal/aqua) by GP&J Baker. The small chairs are covered in silk velvet

(1937/15) by Kravet. The orange patterned cushions are by Galorah & Paul at Tissus d'Hélène. RIBA Bookshop supplied the books. John Carter designed the floral arrangements

Philippa Thorp is entirely at home amid her latest project, a flat in Knightsbridge. There are several reasons for this. For one thing, it belongs to one of her friends, a businesswoman based in the north of England. A second reason is that Philippa is familiar with every detail of the scheme – having supervised the property's structural and decorative transformation. But perhaps the most convincing explanation for Philippa's attitude is that this is simply a very

comfortable place – a bright, well-planned space enlivened by intriguing artwork (including pairs of paintings by Ivon Hitchens and LS Lowry) and softened with conspicuously good fabrics.

It is, says Philippa, a true reflection of her client's personality, which she describes as 'light, fun, intelligent, charming and achingly honest'. This inclusiveness and openness has been embodied in the layout. The living spaces (the kitchen, dining and sitting areas) have been unified;



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Philippa Thorp in the sitting room; the sideboard doors are wrapped in 'Moccasin Chamolis' by Maglite at Fox Linton. The designer selected a mellow palette for the master bedroom; the cashmere throws on the ottoman are in 'Shaded Cloud' (paler) and 'Blend Zen' from Loro Piana at Fox Linton; the ottoman is covered in 'Kamakura Willow' by Jed Johnson Home at Tissus d'Hélène; the 'Square Perspex Wall Light' is by Porta Romana. The walk-in wardrobe features extensive shoe racks and hanging space. The glass partition allows light into the corridor

a glass-sided corridor has been devised; the master bedroom now adjoins its dressing room. Light has been maximised throughout, offering a contrast to the flat's previous incarnation. 'Before, you entered a dark hallway,' says Philippa. 'The kitchen, sitting room and dining room were divided by walls.'

Philippa's brief had two separate, but compatible, priorities: 'The client has three children, so I wanted it to feel like a family home, but this is also a flat in central London, so I also wanted it to be chic and clean.'

She sourced much of the interior furnishings, fittings and accessories from Design Centre Chelsea Harbour. 'We totally rely on it,' says Philippa. 'It's one of the reasons we have our office in west London. Apart from the showrooms, we love the RIBA Bookshop – it's brilliant for research.'

A glance around the interior testifies to her enthusiasm. Lamps by Porta Romana adorn most rooms; fabrics from J Robert Scott are used for the curtains and sofa in the sitting room; sofa cushions and the ottoman in the master bedroom are covered in material sourced at Tissus d'Hélène.

Philippa's current projects are diverse – among them the construction of a new-build in America, the refurbishment of a villa in France and the reworking of a Queen Anne house in Newbury. 'I don't have a house style,' says Philippa. 'But on each project I do try to blend the clients' personalities with the locations. To me, it's all about creating perfect homes.'

Thorp Design (020-7731 6887; www.thorp.co.uk) □

In the dining room, the curtains are in 'Shimmer Stripe' by J Robert Scott. The dining table is laid with a handmade 'Decadence' dinner set from JVB Furniture Collection. Philippa designed the light fitting to echo the shape of the dining table

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A GLASS WALL NOW
BRINGS LIGHT INTO
THE CORRIDOR

