

# A MASTERPIECE IN THE MAKING

A hundred-year-old Arts and Crafts house on the outskirts of Glasgow is ready for another century of gracious living

Photography Neale Smith Words Catherine Coyle Art Direction Gillian Welsh

## DETAILS

**What** A five-bedroom detached Arts and Crafts villa

**Where** Inverclyde

**Interior design** Anna Murray and Lee Sowerbutts, Rehab Interiors





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n the day that William Morris would have celebrated his 182nd birthday, it is rather a fitting tribute that this majestic house on the outskirts of Glasgow should take centre stage in this magazine. What's also heartening, though, is that despite the obvious Arts and Crafts architecture, the interior of the house has been treated to a carefully considered redesign that draws inspiration from a range of artistic periods yet still manages to work sympathetically with the building's heritage.

Greystones – so-called because of its commanding whinstone façade – sits in extensive grounds within a conservation area. Its owner, Lorraine Tracey, wanted to give the B-listed property the TLC that she knew it merited, and so, as its 100th birthday approached, a top-to-bottom refurbishment got under way.

"I had already had some plans drawn up with architect Stephen Govan," recalls Lorraine, "but I was struggling with how to pull it all together." Working on a project of this scale – from rooftop to under-floor heating, and across all 17 rooms – she knew she needed collaborators who would understand her vision and bring in the expertise that such an accomplished house deserved. Anna Murray and Lee Sowerbutts of Glasgow-based Rehab Interiors proved to be the perfect match.

"I liked the fact that Anna was a lecturer at Glasgow School of Art – I felt she'd understand what I was looking for," says Lorraine. "And, pretty quickly into the project, I felt as if Lee could read my mind! They gave me confidence, and I couldn't have done it without them."

With a deadline looming (Lorraine had promised her cousin that she could host her summer wedding at Greystones, with a huge marquee to be erected in the grounds), the pressure was on. The property wasn't in a poor state of repair – quite the opposite, in fact; but Lorraine was keen to enhance what was already there and, in the process, create the home she'd always wanted.

Lee was impressed with what he found there. "It's a particularly unique property," he remarks. "This part of the city has quite a few houses that were commissioned by incredibly wealthy merchants and architects both before and during the Arts and Crafts period. A lot of them wanted to show off their skills by experimenting and creating elaborate homes with huge grounds."

He and Anna had worked on properties from this period before, ►



[Above] The dining room, looking through a gently stylised arch into the kitchen. The graceful curving table and chairs are by Grange. The walls are papered in Ralph Lauren Home's Coco de Mer, and the painting is by Scottish artist Jason Davis. A pendant light by Terzani hangs above the table. [Previous page] A pair of Ralph Lauren Home armchairs and side table sit in the window space. The curtains are Matthew Williamson's Celestial Dragon pattern for Osborne & Little





[Above and below] A substantial island dominates the SieMatic kitchen. Clad in marble and stainless steel, it bounces the light from the garden into the interior. Allermuir bar stools and flooring from hardwood specialist Barham & Sons complete the look. [Opposite] A step down leads to the conservatory. The rug and sofa are both from Tojo, the cushion fabric is by Gaston y Daniela from Abbott & Boyd, the Pineapple lamps came from House of Hackney and the footstool was covered in Bute fabric by Glasgow upholsterers Bobbin & Fleck



but nothing on the scale of Greystones. Both admit that they “teared up” a little when they first walked into the reception hall because the house was “already so beautiful”, without any work even having been started.

The layout that Anna and Lee agreed with Lorraine is not vastly different to the original layout, but all three were keen to make this period home work for modern living. Traditionally, on arrival, visitors would have seen a series of doors behind which the servants’ working quarters were hidden away, so that attention would be focused on the grander reception rooms that had been designed to

impress. The way we live has changed, however, and kitchens have become a central hub in the home, while open-plan, flexible rooms are there to give a sense of connection rather than division.

Lorraine was keen to make a statement in the reception hall, where dark wooden panelling dominates, as soon as you step through the front door. By removing the dining-room door and making double doors from the existing kitchen door, visitors are greeted by a wonderful view through the kitchen and out to the gardens beyond the rear windows. The panelling has been expertly replicated so that Lorraine has the option of ►





**[Opposite]** The darkly dramatic study comes alive thanks to the armchairs' vivid Hermès velvet, from Abbott & Boyd, and the scarlet notes on the paintings by Alan King. Lorraine's desk was made bespoke by Chris Turner. **[Below]** Looking through the living room to the conservatory. A pair of custom-made armchairs upholstered in Bute Tیره contrast nicely with the caramel velvet sofa. The Deco Spiral rug is from the Rug Company. **[Right]** A close-up of the room's Osborne & Little Quill wallpaper



opening the double door to encourage movement and light, or to keep it closed in line with the original configuration.

There are three kitchens in this home. As well as a small catering kitchen and another in the semi-self-contained suite on the top floor, there's the spectacular main one on the ground floor. A SieMatic kitchen, it was installed to Anna and Lee's design by kitchen company Nicholas Anthony. "They didn't fight our control-freakery!" laughs Anna. The layout is simple: an island is clad in Carrara marble with stainless steel and Hi-Macs (a material similar to Corian) on the sides. There's a hidden extractor and a hob with both induction and gas capabilities. Lorraine's preference for German technology means Gaggenau appliances predominate. Wall-hung units are lined in copper-coloured glass to reflect the light coming in from the garden. The engineered parquet flooring, by Barham & Sons, picks out the rose tones from the copper accents and connects the kitchen space to the dining room. There, a Stream chandelier, by Terzani, makes a bold statement above the dining table.

This space, indeed the whole house, is designed to encourage entertaining and to accommodate friends and family. A neat connecting corridor has been

incorporated into the layout on the ground floor that leads from the main kitchen through to a rear porch where the catering kitchen is housed in what was originally the property's boiler room. It's discreet and allows larger events – such as Lorraine's cousin's wedding – to be catered for away from the central body of the house.

Connection continues between the reception hall, living room and conservatory, via a bespoke through-and-through fireplace that links the rooms. "The fireplace," Anna points out, "is now in a better position in the room, and the living room – which was once a bit cold and lost – is connected, both visually and physically."

The fireplace was designed by Anna and built by furniture-maker Chris Turner in bird's-eye maple and wenge wood. Its curved edges and black accents give the room an Art Deco flavour but it is nevertheless a wholly modern piece, ingeniously hiding a retractable TV screen. The bespoke sofa is upholstered in caramel velvet, while a Deco Spiral rug by Tim Gosling for the Rug Company mirrors the muted palette.

From the living room, guests are guided through to the conservatory. Here, to make it suitable for parties, the furniture is easily moveable. "There is ►





a change in level down to the conservatory,” says Anna, “but we designed and installed double leaf pocket doors so that there was the option of sliding them back to have the two rooms as a single space, or to close off the conservatory for a change of mood.” Curved archways gently reference the original architectural features of the property.

Lorraine’s fondness for the Art Deco period can be seen in gold, black and geometric touches throughout, but there are other recurring themes too. One is the profusion of pictures by her late uncle, Alan King. Her ground-floor study in particular pays homage to his work. “Alan’s paintings mean a great deal to me,” she says. “The dark walls in here really project them.”

The Scottish painter often featured red hats in his work, and these stand out brilliantly against the study’s black walls. A pair of club chairs, covered in a bleached velvet from Hermès, add a similar pop of colour to draw the eye to the art.

This room also contains a bespoke desk by Chris Turner, designed in collaboration with Lorraine. It’s a unique piece that makes use of four different kinds of wood – macassar ebony, purpleheart, American walnut and rosewood – along with copper for a hint of Deco.

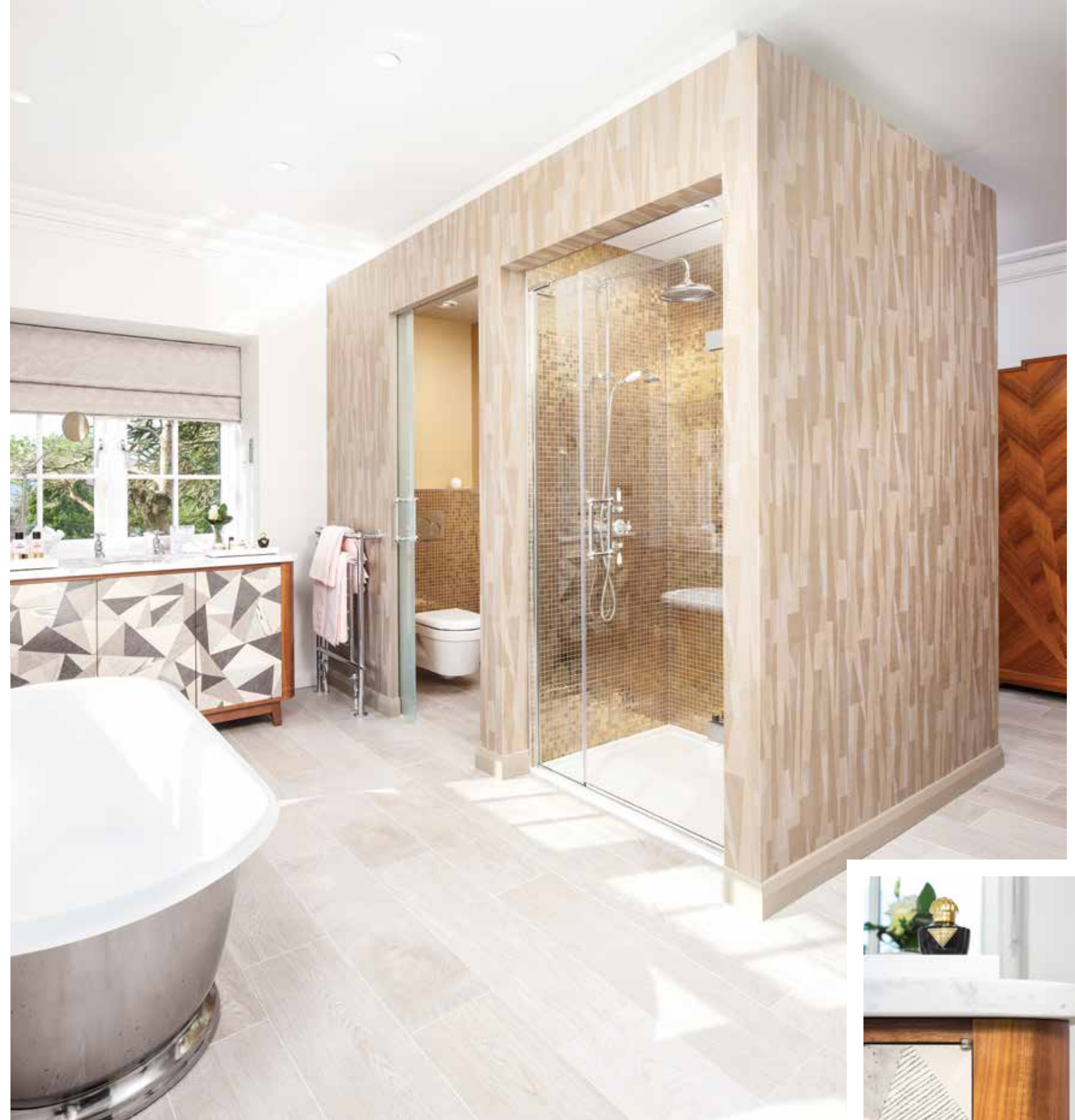
In the hallway, Lee and Anna knew the Gothic-inspired reception area needed something grand to pull the layout together. The carpet they chose, a Wilton design, took the team from Victoria Road Carpets a week to fit, so tricky was the geometric pattern to match, particularly on a staircase with several bends.

Upstairs, on the first floor, is the master bedroom – a luxurious suite of rooms that have been created to encourage a sense of flow. Lorraine wanted it to have a palette of greens and pale pinks to match a painting on the wall that she’d bought ▶

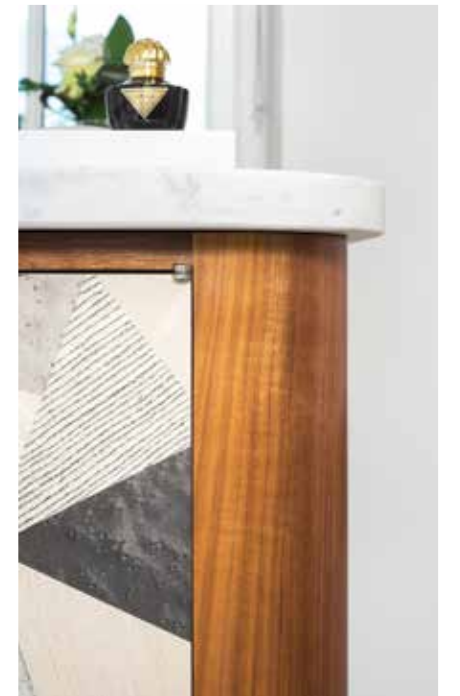


[Above, from right] The top floor is largely self-contained. It has its own kitchen, with walls painted in Farrow & Ball’s Churlish Green and a Beat wall light from Holloways of Ludlow. In the sitting area is a Barber Osgerby sofa from Tojo, with cushions by Matthew Williamson for Osborne & Little and Jean-Paul Gaultier for Lelièvre. Above the vintage pool table, which was re-covered by Scott McIntosh, is a Lean pendant light from Tojo. The Forbo flooring was fitted by Victoria Road Carpets





[Opposite page] The master bedroom suite is a luxurious retreat. Anna designed the headboard using a Gaultier fabric for Lelièvre and Casamance black velvet, and it was made by Bobbin & Fleck. The black lacquered bedside tables were custom-made and the carpet is by Louis de Poortere. [This page] The shower and WC are contained within their own spaces, letting the Drummonds bath take pride of place. The brass mosaic and floor tiles are both by Porcelanosa. The antique wardrobe in the dressing area was a find from the Old Cinema in Chiswick





“IF IT MAKES YOUR HEART FLUTTER, YOU’VE DONE THE RIGHT THING”

at the Chelsea Art Fair. A bold custom-made Jean-Paul Gaultier Tattoo design headboard works well against Tektura’s swirling Oil Punk wallcovering. On the floor is a rug by Diane von Fürstenberg, one of Lorraine’s favourite designers.

As well as the bedroom, the suite of rooms includes a bathroom and a dressing room, which can be converted into a guest room if needed. Anna describes the layout as “a conveyor belt, designed to encourage fluidity”. In the bathroom, the interior designers have created a cube in the middle of the room that houses a WC and shower. There’s also a freestanding bath by Drummonds and a bespoke vanity unit by Chris Turner.

On the top floor, the idea was to create something completely different to the rest of the house. The space, which has its own kitchen and bathroom, now feels like a self-contained apartment, with exposed beams in the central living room that maximise the height to the apex of the roof. “I think of it as a sorbet,” says Anna, “a palate-cleanser, if you like.” It’s a relaxed space where classic pieces of Jean Prouvé ▶



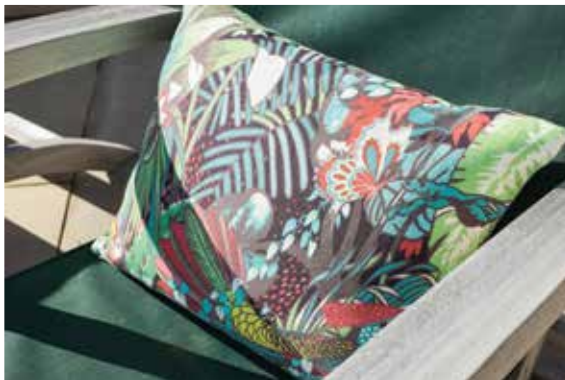
[Above and right] The wood-panelled hallway is floored with Porcelanosa tiles, with Farrow & Ball’s Shouchikubai paper on the walls. A Wilton carpet covers the stairs. [Below] The catering kitchen has been fitted out with stainless-steel fabricated units by Cavendish Equipment. The pink wall tiles are by HR Johnson. [Opposite] The house is surrounded by sizeable gardens







[Left and below] Lunch on the terrace is a pleasure, thanks to the Indian limestone used by 3D Garden Design in the landscaping scheme. A cushion covered in Osborne & Little's Jungle Beat fabric adds a colourful note



furniture sit next to a reconditioned pool table (covered in lush caramel baize) and the walls are covered in bright, dynamic paintings. Barber Osgerby sofas are dressed in Bute fabric – a pop of teal that stands out strongly against the pale Forbo Allura flooring.

“Although it is a big house, it’s not rambling,” says Lorraine. “I think it connects well and feels cosy and usable.”

Anna is philosophical: “The point of interior design is to make people feel happy. It’s not about impressing people, keeping up with the Joneses, or doing what you think you should.

“We’ve pulled together threads of a property that was eccentric before we even started, and have gone with the spirit of the house. Many of the decisions have been brave, but if it makes your heart flutter, you’ve done the right thing.” ■