



Colour is a prominent feature throughout the property

Patterns and accessories play a role in the warm, welcoming feeling



LIVING LIFE TO THE MAX

It's known as The Apprentice home, but its designer Rebekah Caudwell reveals why this particular property on John Street remains close to her heart

Words MARK KEBBLE

Rebekah Caudwell's approach to design is simply made for TV. 'I suppose I am a maximalist and I rather love excess: of colour, of pattern, of detail,' she exclaims. 'You will probably not seek me out if you want a safe conventional design. However, every good maximalist has an inbuilt sense of what is too much. It is important not to overstep from

maximalism into unfettered chaos!' The home Caudwell designed on John Street is great fun and has a real sense of joy seeping out of its walls, so it was little surprise that makers of *The Apprentice* picked it up as the home for the would-be Sir Alan Sugars as they advanced through the TV reality show. Colour is clearly crucial to what Caudwell wanted to achieve through the

design. 'There is nothing quite as primary to our visual senses as colour. It instantly makes us feel: lifts the mood, calms, energises and so on,' she says, her words literally putting a smile on my face. 'It is also one of the things that makes the world beautiful. We are extremely lucky to be able to see in colour. It is a great gift and I like to celebrate that. Why have taupe interiors if we are capable of seeing

not have to work very hard at that,' Caudwell says on ensuring the past played a role in the design. 'The proportions, the large windows, the beautiful original panelling, cornices and exceptional ceiling in the master bedroom were all redolent of the past. And because I love antiques anyway, there was a nod in that direction.'

colour?' Pattern, too, is key. 'They are both my foundation stones and help me build the character of the project,' Caudwell says on pattern and colour. 'Pattern gives diversity and interest to the eye.'

Don't think for one second, however, that this eye-catching approach means the history of the property is ignored. 'I did

normally the one that takes centre stage: the master bathroom. It's ridiculously spacious and could easily be filled with countless accessories. 'I was actually planning to create a dressing room area,' Caudwell reveals, 'effectively creating a transparent partition with a beautiful laser cut glass floor to ceiling divide, to allow closet and bathroom to be separated, but still integrated. I also planned to use a round centrally backed ottoman, and to use a

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You could ballroom dance in the bathroom if you chose to. Our kitten loved sliding about

silk carpet in the dressing area. But the reality is we started to live in the wonderful expanse and it seemed such a luxury that you could ballroom dance in the bathroom if you chose to – we did not – that we just decided to keep this roominess. And,’ she adds with a laugh, ‘our kitten at the time loved sliding along the floors!’

How did she approach the design of the bedrooms? ‘All of the bedrooms have a slightly different mood and feel, albeit they are linked by colour and a generally similar treatment in the blending of furnishing styles and time periods,’ Caudwell answers. ‘For the master bedroom, the objective was to embrace its brightness and airiness and its huge



The master bathroom is blessed with an incredible amount of space

proportions. I did not want to overwhelm the room with either colour or too much furniture. I kept the rug almost entirely free of furniture to celebrate its beauty and the way it created a mini reflection of the ceiling plasterwork. And the colour scheme largely plays on a canon of blues. This is my version of restraint in colour!’

And given the fact we know this Islington property via the medium of TV, the perfect place to end is with the open plan lounge area, which looks like an entertainer’s dream. ‘That certainly would have been what was envisaged,’

Caudwell agrees, ‘and it served our purposes perfectly. I love oversized furniture, so decided instantly that we needed a corner sofa in there! To be able to cook, dine and lounge all in one space made this a perfect hub for the home. We had, on and off, around six different members of family and friends live with us while we were there, so it was a great congregating space!’

To see more interior design projects by Rebekah Caudwell, visit rebekahcaudwelldesign.com