



In the open-plan sitting room/kitchen, the sofa is from Sofa Workshop (01798 343400), while the dark-brown leather armchair was bought from littlebookof furniture.com. Oak units in the kitchen were stained to imitate wenge, while a large splashback area was covered in Madagascar mosaic tiles from Bisazza (020 8640 7994)



# SULTRY OPULENCE

Rich colours, mirrors and sparkling tiles create a special interior in Stephen Fletcher's modern apartment

Words GREG COOK Photography BRUCE HEMMING

When architect Stephen Fletcher bought his flat in central London, in 2002, he knew he wanted to make a bold statement. 'It was the convenience of the location rather than the aesthetics of the building that attracted me,' he admits. 'The flat was what you'd expect from this sort of new-build – boxy rooms, minimum allowed ceiling height and a magnolia paint job,' he continues. 'I had to use my experience as an architect and designer to make something out of nothing.'

Stephen approached the alterations in three stages. 'It developed organically,' he says. 'It was an interesting experience, as it's not how I work for other people.' The first stage was to knock together the two small bedrooms to create a good-sized master suite. 'Nearly everything I've

#### The owner

**Stephen Fletcher, who is an architect**  
Previous homes  
*'This is the first place I've owned outright, which is why I wanted to make it special,' says Stephen. 'Before I moved here, I rented a flat in a pretty nondescript early Edwardian building.'*

#### The property

A one-bedroom apartment in a recently completed block in London Blooms. Open-plan kitchen/sitting/dining area, bedroom, dressing room/guest room, bathroom  
Purchased 2002







The Sarang rattan chair in the sitting/dining area was from Habitat (0845 601 0740). The artwork above the table was bought from Heal's (020 7636 1666)



*'I ran the same wallpaper through the hall and right into the sitting room – it creates a feel of continuity'*



done in here has been about making a modest space seem larger,' he explains. 'In the bedroom, I incorporated an opaque sliding screen, which enhances the length of the space and makes one half of the room a dressing area that can also be guest accommodation when it's closed.'

Stephen then refitted the kitchen. 'I suddenly realised that I wanted it to be part of the sitting/dining space, to create another better-proportioned open-plan area.' So a partition wall was taken out, and the same technique of replacing this with a sliding panel was employed. 'It means that I can still totally seal the kitchen off from the rest of the room if I want to,' says Stephen.

The last room he tackled was his small bathroom. 'Again, this was about maximising limited space,' he explains. 'I turned the bath around 90 degrees and put the

sink and loo opposite the door to create as much room as possible on entering. The walls and floor were all clad in travertine, which helps to blur the edges, and two downlit niches were made in the wall. All these elements make a small room feel as large as possible.'

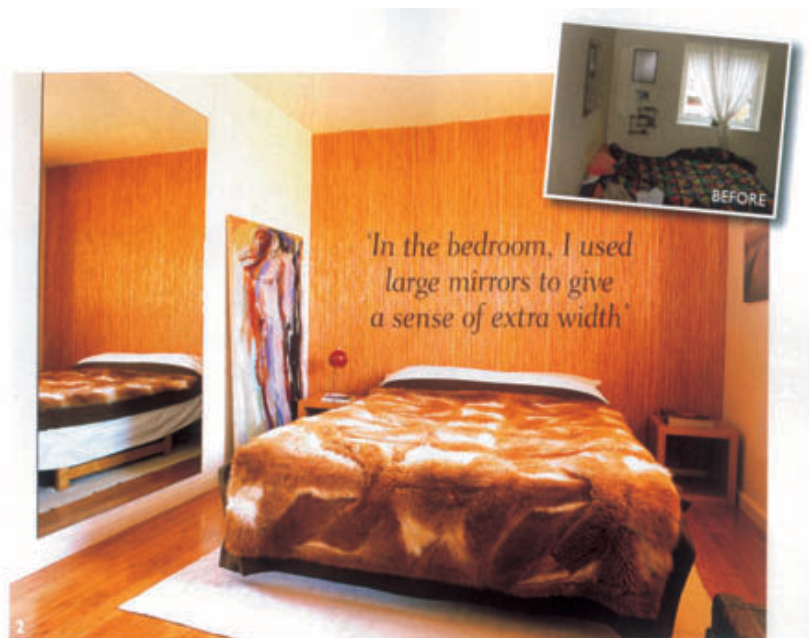
But where he has really stamped his unique seal is in the decor. 'As the long corridor runs all the way down one side of the apartment, I used bold-coloured, textured wallpaper, which carries into the living space to make a feature wall,' he says. 'I was surprised how dark my overall palette was when I'd finished, with the purple wallpaper and the stained oak. I love it because it feels so rich. But I have to admit, it was never a completely conscious decision to make it like this,' he chuckles. 'It was probably more of a subconscious reaction to the magnolia!'

1 Bamboo wallpaper by Vescom (01295 273644) lines one wall of the hall. The console table was made by Adam Williams Design (01749 830505). John Cullen Lighting (020 7371 5400) sells track lights

2 In the master bedroom, a faux-fur throw complements the brown straw and cotton wall covering behind the bed

3 The Antique Beige travertine on the bathroom walls came from Mica Schist (020 7602 8915). Ideal Standard (01482 346461) supplied the sink

4 Opaque screens separate the master bedroom from a dressing/guest room



### Stephen's STYLE SECRETS

Nature vase (left), £40; Crumple vase £60.



Monty tower, £425.



John Reeves four-poster Louis bed, £1,495; Nara TV table, £550; Cowhide rug £450; Circles bed linen, from £40 for a pair of pillowcases.

