

INTERIOR DESIGN YEARBOOK 2018



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Apartment Living

By **Lucy Clark**

Founder and Creative Director, **Studio Clark + Co**

Studio Clark + Co was founded in September 2017 by Creative Director, Lucy Clark, as a new and exciting architectural interior design studio further to co-directing Olive Design Studio Ltd. As a fully trained interior designer with a History of Art Degree and more than 10 years' experience in the global luxury architectural interior design industry, Lucy has created a studio of talented designers, offering an inspiring level of creativity open to endless possibilities. The designers at Studio Clark + Co have extensive experience in the industry having worked with renowned interior designers such as Staffan Tollgard, Helen Green, Katharine Pooley and Todhunter Earle to name a few. Lucy and her team ensure that originality is at the heart of all Studio Clark + Co's design work. The company strives to interpret clients' aspirations accurately as possible to enable them to bring their ideas into reality, ensuring attention to detail at all times. "We believe that we have created a flawless, luxury interior when we have reached the right balance between all the elements, creating a truly bespoke, comfortable environment where our clients can relax and feel totally at home." Here, Lucy looks at the nuanced approach to apartment living.

We have designed a lot of apartments in London and the most reoccurring requests are creating more storage, both discrete and also as features. Lighting is also key to freshening and enhancing spaces as well as open-plan living and bespoke furnishings. Attention to detail is key in every element here. Every client's brief is very individual to their unique needs and lifestyle, which we always try and capture and implement as best we can. AV and intelligent lighting systems are increasing in their demand so it is important the infrastructure is considered, wiring up to CAT 5/6 so, should clients want to add AV down the line, it is easy to do so without



A prime central residential London apartment



A prime central residential London apartment, designed by Lucy Clark

chasing walls etc. Heating systems are also important to consider. We tend to conceal air conditioning units in joinery or lower ceilings to create coffer details and hide the pipework within these voids. With regards to FF&E, most of the furniture is made bespoke to ensure every space is carefully designed and planned. Clients also like having unique pieces that you cannot buy on the high street. We tend not to follow trends but to remain aware of them and listen to the inspirations that the clients bring to the table. Most of our clients come to us with cuttings from magazines, pictures taken in shops and Pinterest boards. It is our job to refine and pull together your ideas and inspiration and guide you accordingly. Our first main consideration as designers? The brief. Naturally, the brief is paramount, followed by careful spatial planning to ensure the best use of space. Should the apartment be listed, it is important to respect the period's integrity and enhance features alongside the listed planning officer. No single client has the same brief, so it is exciting to start

afresh on every project and be innovative with their brief, this then helps us evolve a design. One client came to us having chosen a stunning De Gournay wallpaper for a 'blank canvas' apartment she bought off plan from a developer. This was our starting point/inspiration. It is also important to keep in the loop on what is happening in our industry and I find Instagram and social media is such a wonderful tool for this, for designer and client. In terms of figuring out our clients likes/dislikes and budget requirements, we actually have a questionnaire we get clients to fill in, to establish absolutely all their needs and wishes; how they live, what is important to them, down to their favourite colour, texture or artist etc. it is all relevant. If you're looking to invest in an apartment, I would always say it is so important to get the right team of consultants on board from the start. Some clients like us to look at the property to give a PC sum before committing, which we tend to do with our contractor or quantity surveyor. We always look for potential in properties to see where we can

add value and enhance the interior architecture/reconfigure spaces. We also search for properties on behalf of clients to develop and add value for investment purposes. When working on a development it is important to keep the build and finishes timeless and add personality through the soft furnishings. Location is also crucial. For 2018, like I have been saying, every apartment design is personal to the client but it is key that the client's brief, property infrastructure and period integrity is at the heart of the design process, regardless of when or where it is being designed. All our projects are very unique and bespoke, hence why we describe our style as eclectic luxury. We love lighting features, opening up spaces, whether this be via screen partitions or crittall dividers and design bespoke furniture pieces. Open plan living is still very current and will continue into 2018 but also being able to close off spaces to create a more cosy/discrete space.

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