

KIT

AMAZING MAKEOVER

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SUPER CHIC

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DESIGN GURUS

Giulio Cappellini, Kelly Hoppen, Martyn Lawrence-Bullard

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MARCH-APRIL 2013 / ISSUE 06 / VOL 2

SPECIAL FOCUS
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LIVING ROOMS
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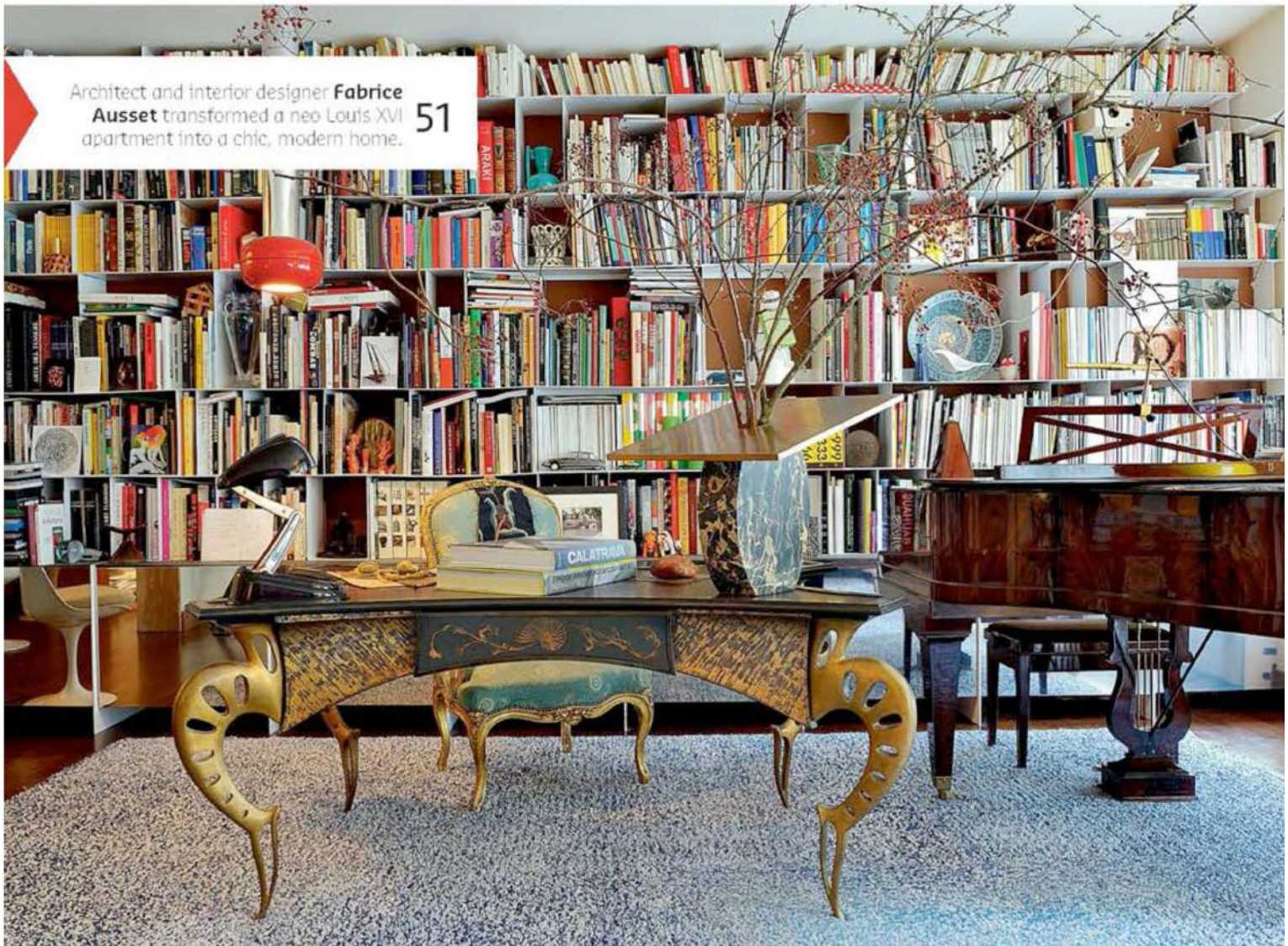
SENSATIONAL SPRING BUYS

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Art de Vivre

Fabrice Ausset's vibrant, polychromatic decor scheme enhances a stunning art collection.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VÉRONIQUE MATI



An avid collector and artist, Fabrice (above) has the chutzpah to team up with André Dubreuil desk with a Charles Cressent armchair (left)



In rooms with fewer art pieces, such as the kitchen and the bedrooms, bright, playful colours were used on the walls and bold patterns on the floor.

After training as an artist, Fabrice Ausset later decided to graduate as an architect, before gravitating quite naturally to the world of interior design.

This should partly explain why his oeuvre is packed with widely diverse and atypical projects: a castle renovation, designs for luxury apartments, grand hotels, concept boutiques, and expositions for well-known brands.

A colourist who is passionate about contemporary art, Fabrice is also demanding, rigorous and involved in all his projects. As a designer, he believes his mandate is to bring back enchantment to everyday life; to create unexpected, playful spaces that will make their occupants' lives much happier.

Of all his projects so far, the one that best exemplifies this approach is the Parisian apartment that Fabrice decorated. What used to be a neo-Louis XVI apartment, with one bedroom and a study had to be transformed into a contemporary space, with three bedrooms and three bathrooms for an art-loving family. The clients wanted it to be a colourful and inspiring home, with a lot of natural light.

Before embarking on any project, Fabrice listens carefully to his clients. Each project demands a bespoke



approach, where usual design givens are questioned to transform the space.

It was the same with this apartment. First all the inner walls were taken down, and a new room layout was created from scratch. The kitchen was moved, and two bedrooms were carved out of the space, as well as two new bathrooms, offering clear circulation, separating reception rooms and private spaces. With the new circulation plan, it became a home that would be easy to live in. It also created interesting perspectives from one room to another.

Once this was done, Fabrice put the emphasis – rightly so – on the quality of the materials and the light.

The mandate was to enhance each art piece displayed in the rooms. Material, colours and lights were all dictated by the art in that space. So most of the rooms use a lot of neutral colours in the background (contrasting with the colourful art pieces), with a real attention to the textural quality of the materials: glossy zebrawood, wax paint with hints of silver, wool and silk rugs...

"Of course, in the living room, the attention is focused on the fascinating fresco behind the chimney created by the artist Franck Rezzak. This fresco's scale is such that

each time we look at it, we discover new and more intricate details," comments Fabrice.

As an artist and an enlightened collector himself, Fabrice is adroit at juxtaposing disparate pieces. In the living room, next to the Pleyel piano from the 30s is a whimsical desk designed by metal-worker André Dubreuil. The same room also has the *Odalisca* and *Burma* totems by Ettore Sottsass, and the furniture of American designer George Nelson.

For this particular project, he worked on the chromatic complementarity of the colours chosen as a background for the art pieces; for instance, a lighter toned wall behind the Sottsass totems, or textured wood behind ceramic and crystal vases.

Within the apartment, there are several museum-quality furniture pieces, accessories and artwork. One can marvel at the Charles Cressent armchair teamed with the Dubreuil desk, another Eero Saarinen chair, sleek and streamlined vases by Zaha Hadid and the Bouroullec brothers, and iconic lamps by Tom Dixon, Achille Castiglioni and George Nelson.

"If I could redo any part of the home, it would have to be the work on light; it would still be possible to en-



hance the quality of the lighting used to draw attention to the objects. This is a very subtle work, which requires a great deal of technical equipment to create whimsical effects."

In rooms with fewer art pieces, such as the kitchen and the bedrooms, bright, playful colours were used on the walls with bold patterns on the floor.

Fabrice draws his inspiration from different periods, on different continents, and multiple art forms. A master of many mediums ranging from painting, architecture, design, to literature and gastronomy, his passion for contemporary art, and use of historical and cultural references from faraway places serve as inspiration for his spirited aesthetic.

His firm, Zoevox, is currently working on several projects: a five-story residential building, an urban wooden house, the headquarters of an international company and several apartments. "We are also starting to develop our own furniture and several custom rugs," Fabrice informs. "Usually our clients appreciate that we use the language of intimate spaces even in public places: the colours, acoustics, temperature and furniture makes you feel at ease, at home, in each of our projects!"



▲ On the wall behind the chimney is a fresco by the artist Franck Rezzak. Zaha Hadid's vases grace the coffee table.



In the neutral-toned dining area (left) Fabrice chose Achille Castiglioni's iconic Taraxacum suspension light to illuminate George Nelson's modernist chairs. Background colours in the bedrooms (above) are bolder.