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# VERANDA





# SUBTLE HARMONIES

A LONDON DESIGNER AND A PRINCE OF PAINT  
SHOWCASE COMPLEMENTARY TALENTS AT HOME.



ARCHITECTURAL RENOVATION AND INTERIOR DESIGN BY VEERE GRENNEY  
ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE BY R. NORMAN SHAW  
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WHEN LONDON DESIGNER VEERE GRENNEY DISCOVERED THIS GRAND RESIDENCE, BUILT ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER THAMES IN 1879, MOST

of its Arts and Crafts heritage had vanished. Still, he saw the rich potential within. Collaborating with paint guru David Oliver, Grenney turned its enfilade of rooms into their handsome home, creating a modern aesthetic with intriguing allusions to an earlier era.

"It was quite a blank canvas in terms of architectural detail, but the feeling was very much London between the world wars," says the New Zealand-born Grenney, a former director at Colefax and Fowler. He decided to riff on a sophisticated 1930s look—in his own inimitable twenty-first-century style.

For the living and dining rooms, Grenney designed stunning travertine fireplace sur-

rounds that allude to the period. Above them, his tall, antiqued mirrored panels also nod to the past, as do the soaring fifteen-foot ceilings.

"What is so perfect about this apartment is that when you sit down or lie in bed, you look at the river and a park beyond," says Grenney. Oliver adds, "The light, especially reflected off the water, was a huge influence on my colors."

Oliver, design director of the Paint & Paper Library and creator of Colours paints for Stark, has devised an innovative system for coordinating his neutrals into five nuanced gradations. The resulting schemes are "theme and variation, like a melody played different ways on different instruments," says the Australian na-



Grenney designed the dining table to complement antique Viennese chairs.  
 OPENING PAGES: Mantel, mirrors, sofa in Claremont silk, lounge chair, coffee table and velvet ottoman, all custom. Patterned pillows in linen fabrics by Veere Grenney Associates (VGA). Karl Springer end table and lamp. Arts & Crafts stool, Liberty. Art above chair, Roger Hilton; above sofa, Alan Davie.  
 THIS PAGE: Chairs, Cove Landing, in Claremont silk. Jansen chandelier. Mantel and linen on walls, both custom. Art, Alexander Calder. OPPOSITE: Fauteuils in VGA linen. Regency commode. Robsjohn-Gibbings chairs. Empire table. Georges Leleu lamp.



Precision tailoring and upholstery add a crisp sense of order amid the myriad objects in the master bedroom. Bed, canopy, panels, sconces and side table, all custom. V&A linen fabrics for walls, bed and canopy. Antique French table lamp. Florence Knoll coffee table with marble top. Indian, Islamic and Egyptian art. Custom chair in Robert Kime cotton.







Billy Baldwin designed the Louis XV-style desk, made by Jansen. THIS PAGE: Antique desk chair. Antique English armchair in Colefax and Fowler fabric. Bookcase, fireplace and mirror, all custom. Curtains in VGA linen. All sisal rugs, Linney Cooper. OPPOSITE, FAR LEFT: Bugatti side table. Vintage French lamp. NEAR LEFT: Chair in linen and lamp, both vintage Italian.

tive. Dubbed the “rock star of color”—clients include Chelsea Clinton and Tony Blair—he chose a gray-white palette for this home, more “Moonlight Sonata” than “Jumpin’ Jack Flash.”

“People have paint analysis paralysis,” says Oliver, quoting from his book *Paint and Paper: In Decoration*. “They get the wall colors right and forget about the architraves and trim, the doors and adjacent room.” His Velvet Emulsion on the dining room ceiling works with his Porcelain Shell on the cornices, trim and doors.

“We changed the dynamic of the enfilade by having a painted room, a plain fabric-covered room, a patterned room and a specialist paint-effect room,” says Oliver. “At a quick glance, it looks monochromatic. But in fact, each room has its own unique personality.”

Grenney finesses a beguiling mixture of fur-

nishings that harmonize across the centuries. Eighteenth-century Viennese palace chairs sit under a more recent Jansen chandelier. An English chair circa 1760 shares space with a modern marble-top table by Florence Knoll. An Arts and Crafts stool winks at a Regency commode.

Essential to all of Grenney’s design schemes is art—in this case, his favorite English postwar painters and Oliver’s two Alexander Calders.

The design finale comes in the master bath, where antiques mirrors on the tub and vanity echo the silvery light rippling off the river.

Throughout, formality is played down by the use of unfussy linen for walls, curtains and furniture. As Grenney says, “Everything I do is very considered but still looks casual. Supreme elegance starts with comfort—the most important thing of all.” □





The 1930s decorator Syrie Maugham inspired the custom antiques mirrored tub surround and vanity. THIS PAGE: Fittings, Lefroy Brooks. Chandelier, Gareth Devonald Smith. Vintage Lucite chair. OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: Vintage French mirror. Lamp, Lars Bolander N.Y. Mink throw. VGA fabrics for walls and custom bed. TOP RIGHT: Vintage Italian desk. Custom lamp. VGA linen for curtains. BOTTOM LEFT: Josef Hoffmann chair. BOTTOM RIGHT: Custom vanity. Sconces, Gareth Devonald Smith. Mirror, FontanaArte.



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