

## NICOLA HOLDEN DESIGNS

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The owner of this house in Long Ditton, Surrey wanted to breathe life into his characterless new-build home. The design brief was to transform the middle floor living room and master bedroom into something with a contemporary Scandinavian style, incorporating bright colours and playful elements. Given that both rooms are visible from the central stairwell, the client wanted the design to be cohesive in terms of colour and style.

Furniture from the Nordic nations generally has a quiet, understated aesthetic. However, 'Scandi' design is far more than this. With much of Scandinavia being dark for long hours during the winter, the design aesthetic is about adding glowing moments to the shadows, for example the bright colours and bold patterns of Josef Frank's designs for Svenskt Tenn. I love working with beautiful colours and patterns because they remind me so much of the African wax prints that surrounded me during my childhood in Zimbabwe, and have fuelled my pattern passion ever since!

The starting point for the design was the existing dark wood floor throughout and the large lacquered bookshelf in the living room. On top of this I layered furniture and rugs in a palette of warm greys, incorporating a variety of textures to add interest to the scheme. A mix of high street and designer side tables breaks up any uniformity in the design, with the gold finishes adding a touch of sophistication, and the concrete bringing in a playful element. A beautiful, sculptural pendant hangs in one corner of the room, allowing this piece to stand on its own within the design. Finally, to incorporate the bright colours of the client's Keith Haring artwork, I added splashes of vibrant colour in the curtains and cushions.

The space within the living room lent itself to creating a reading area in front of the bookshelves. The elegant simplicity of the reclining chair, the floor lamp and the marble side table achieve this, bringing a sense of luxurious calm without distracting from the busy-ness of the shelves behind. The client's Danish Boyesen Monkey is the perfect

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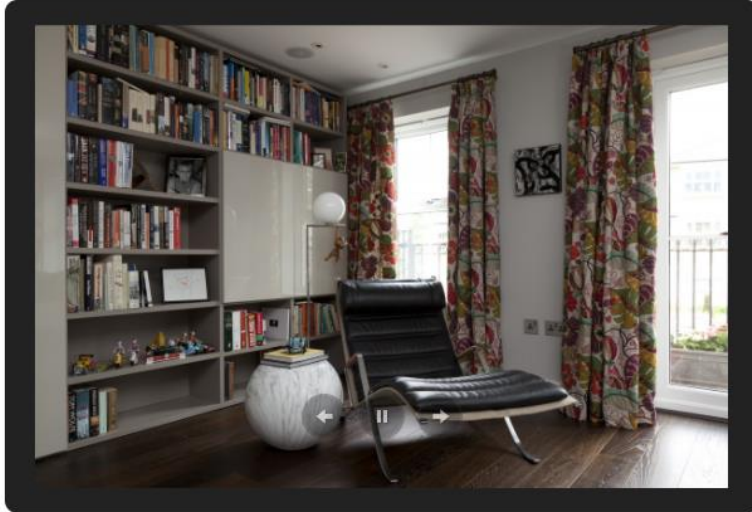
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Scandinavian accessory and adds another fun element to the scheme.

In the bedroom, the design evolved around the bright patchwork quilt that the client owned. To maximise the impact of this piece I chose beautifully textured fabrics for the bed and curtains, and layered these with lacquered bedside cabinets and matching dressing table. Again concrete makes an appearance in this room in the bedside pendants. The bed sits on an Angora shaggy rug which provides an exquisitely luxurious softness underfoot. To reflect the bright colours of the quilt I chose a playful, hand-painted dressing table stool, and finished the scheme with some simply styled Scandinavian mirrors.



The finished scheme is one of sophistication and elegance without taking itself too seriously!

Fiona Walker-Arnott for the photography.

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