

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AUTHORITY

MAY 2016



Escape!

DISCOVER
STYLE AROUND
THE WORLD

I HAD A DAY NURSE AND A NIGHT NURSE
WHEN I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL. I HAD A DAY
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AS THE HOSPITAL. I HAD A DAY NURSE



Just outside Paris,
architect Charles Zana
tailors a midcentury
house to suit its owners'
dazzling collection of
contemporary art

A MODERN MIX

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD POWERS
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A deep-red Anish Kapoor sculpture greets visitors in the entrance hall of a Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, house designed by Charles Zana for a couple with a blue-chip contemporary-art collection. The text painting is by Richard Prince, and the console is by Eric Schmitt; a dramatic glass-bead sculpture by Jean-Michel Othoniel dangles from 30 feet above. For details see Sources.



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rench architect and designer Charles Zana is an avid collector. He started acquiring art books from secondhand dealers in Paris's Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighborhood as a teenager and bought his first objet d'art at 25—a piece of 1950s blue Venini glassware. Today, three decades later, he has accumulated some 300 vases, as well as a wealth of other objects and furniture, mainly by Italian masters like Ettore Sottsass and Andrea Branzi. Over the years Zana has also made a specialty of creating homes for fellow collectors. A house in the chic Parisian suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine is a perfect case in point.

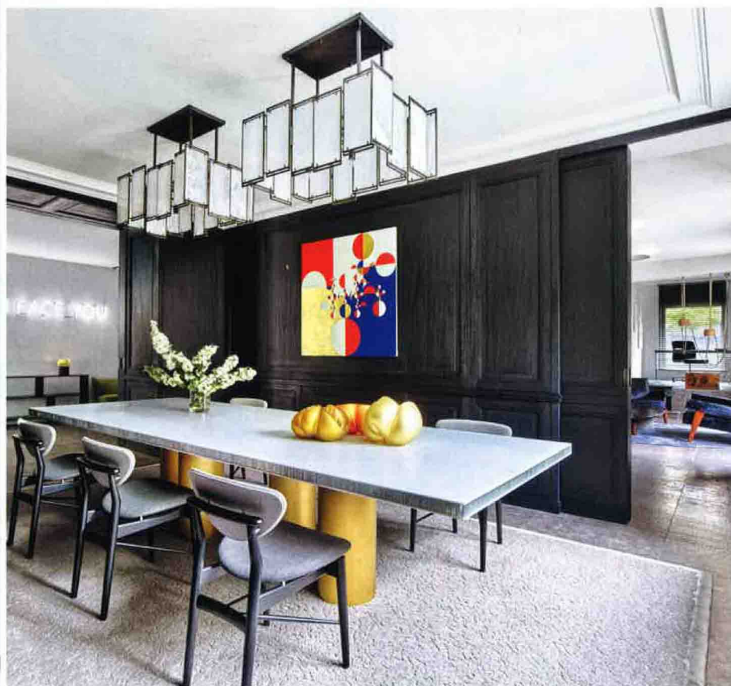
Belonging to a fashion-industry couple with four grown children, the property contains an assortment of blue-chip contemporary artworks. Inside the front gate, two Antony Gormley statues stand guard. A concave scarlet wall sculpture by Anish Kapoor makes a striking impression in the entrance hall. "It's a kind of welcome sign," enthuses Zana. "It really draws you in." Takashi Murakami's *Oval Buddha Silver* oversees the double living room, and a paint-stick drawing by Richard Serra hangs on a landing. Elsewhere are works by Christopher Wool and Allan McCollum, among others.

The original three-story dwelling dates from the '50s and had been modified in a rather discordant way since then. "There was no sense of harmony," Zana notes. "Our task was to create the ideal house that should have been there." Inspiration came from the modernist buildings of Robert Mallet-Stevens, famous for his unornamented geometric façades. For the front, Zana commissioned a stained-glass window and door reminiscent of the work of Louis Barillet. The rear now features rhythmic rectangular windows and a series of stepped terraces. An extra story was added to provide a study for the wife.

Much of the furniture was made specifically for the residence, too. There are several bespoke pieces by Christophe Côme (the owners became fans after spotting one of his credenzas in a Chanel boutique). The Eric Schmitt console in the entrance hall was sized to fit perfectly under the space's large Richard Prince text painting, and the dining room's Martin Szekely table was equipped with a brass base to echo the golden tones of a Gabriel Orozco canvas on one wall.

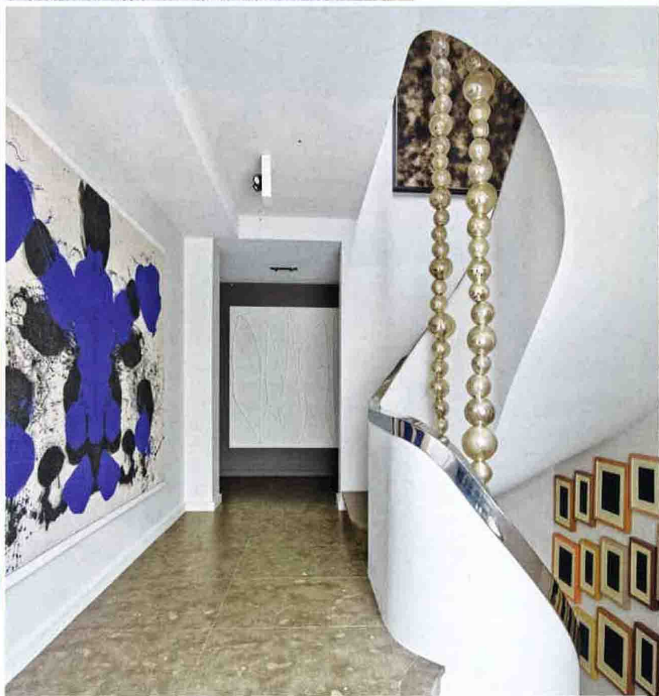
Yet such precise correspondences are exceptions in Zana's world. "I don't think you should necessarily look for direct links between the artworks and furniture,"

Above: A sterling-silver Takashi Murakami sculpture stands between the two sections of the living room; a pair of paintings by Glenn Ligon presides over the Jaume Plensa torso next to the fireplace. The stainless-steel chaise longue is by Christophe Pillet, the vintage sofas are upholstered in Dedar velvets, the glass-top cocktail table is by Perrin & Perrin, and the Tibetan carpet is by Fabien Baron for Elson & Co.



Left: Light fixtures by Christophe Côme hang above a Martin Szekeley table and Finn Juhl chairs in the dining room; the painting on the paneled wall is by Gabriel Orozco, the neon wall sculpture is by Glenn Ligon, and the carpet is by Tai Ping.

Below, from left: A Christopher Wool work fills a living room wall. The second-floor landing showcases a painting on carpet by Mai-Thu Perret, while a series of artworks by Allan McCollum is displayed along the staircase.

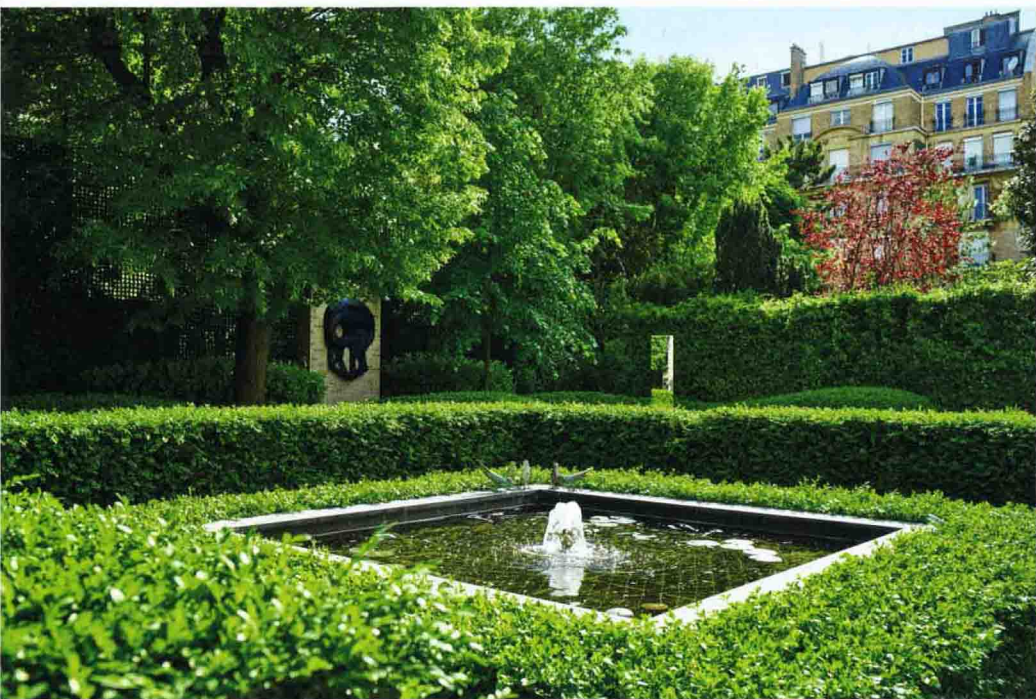




In the kitchen's dining area, a vintage Gino Sarfatti chandelier is installed above a table by Martin Szekeley and chairs by Jean Prouvé for Vitra; a photograph by Wolfgang Tillmans and a collection of 1920s Robj porcelain decanters are arrayed on the shelves.

Opposite: A Jaume Plensa sculpture stands in an allée of hornbeams in the garden; the grounds were designed by Wirtz International.





he says. "The common thread should be more a question of quality." In revamping the interiors, he opted for a sober and streamlined approach, with strong axes, a largely black-and-white palette, and a smattering of 20th-century design icons like Michel Boyer's Brasilia table lamps and a Jean Prouvé Visiteur fauteuil. As in many of Zana's projects, there are also elegant references to classic French architecture, such as the stylized black boiserie in the dining room and the parquet de Versailles in a guest room.

Another constant is the designer's desire to conjure environments where the art can evolve. To this end he installed spot lighting that can swivel and move to accommodate new pieces and avoided paneling the living room walls so as not to restrict what could be hung there. Some works, however, are unlikely to ever be displaced. One is the outdoor Thomas Houseago sculpture, which the homeowners had originally intended to mount on one of the house's façades. "Then we thought, That'll be great for the neighbors, but we won't have much opportunity to admire it," recalls the wife. So they fixed it

instead to a brick wall in the Peter Wirtz-designed garden in the back, where they can see it from the living room windows. There is also a giant string of glass beads by Jean-Michel Othoniel that dangles 30 feet down the middle of the house's spiral staircase. And an extremely heavy Jannis Kounellis sculpture in the top-floor study is now attached to an L-shaped stand anchored to the floor.

The study has a decidedly laid-back vibe, with exposed beams and a wood ceiling. The owners wanted it to feel like a studio and, at one point, even envisaged putting in a ballet barre. The room ended up being dominated by a huge boomerang-shaped oak-and-stone desk by Byung Hoon Choi and has an area for the couple's grandchildren to pursue artistic activities (under a Pierre Charpin chandelier, no less). A Cindy Sherman photo of a slightly unkempt woman with dreadlocks supervises the scene. "Every time I look at it, the Charles Aznavour song '*Tu t'laisses aller*' ['You're letting yourself go'] comes into my head," says the wife, laughing. "I stand there and think, You've really got to keep yourself together!" □

Above: Pigeon statues by François-Xavier Lalanne perch on the edge of a fountain; the sculpture on the brick wall is by Thomas Houseago.

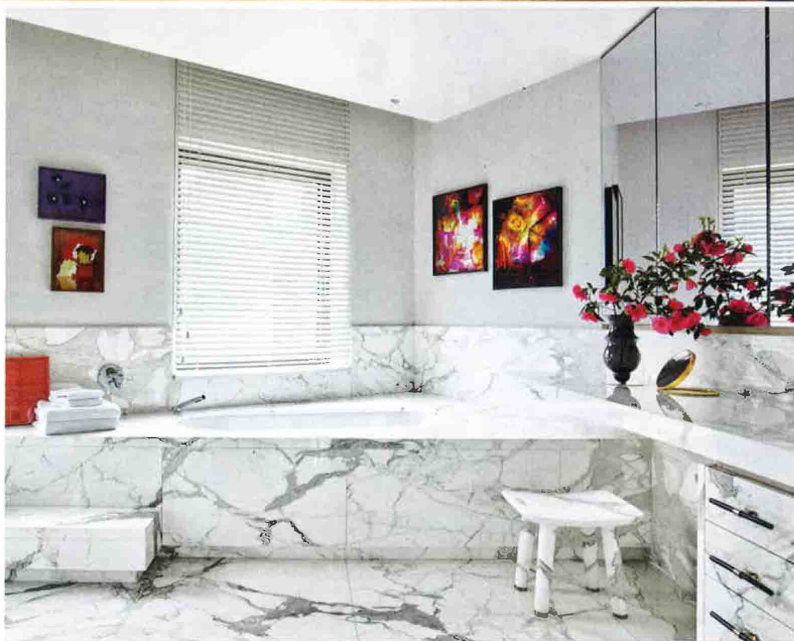
Opposite: A Cindy Sherman portrait surveys a sitting area in the top-floor study; the wood side table is by Christian Liaigre, the vintage chair was found at a Paris flea market, and the leather sofa is by de Sede.





Above: In a guest room, an Andy Warhol work overlooks a sculpture by Wim Delvoye; the shelving is by Rick Owens from Jousse Entreprise, the vintage armchair is by Jean Prouvé, the stool is by Charles Zana, and the curtains are of a Jim Thompson fabric.

Right: The master bath features an abundance of Calacatta marble, from the cabinetry, wainscot, tub surround, and floors to the Zana-designed stool; pairs of artworks by Elad Lassry (left) and Walead Beshty hang above the tub.



Among the master bedroom's artworks are pieces by Richard Prince (left) and Lee Ufan (center); the headboard, nightstands, and TV cabinet are all by Atelier Pierre Bonnefille, and the carpet is by Tai Ping.

