

I'VE BEEN DRESSING THE SAME WAY for 30 years: a navy-blue crewneck T-shirt from James Perse with Japanese denim from Superstitch, Alden's classic cordovan leather shoes and a pair of Maison Bonnet's bespoke Le Corbusier 1965 black glasses. I like to be classic and not have to think about clothes too much.

THE LAST THING I BOUGHT AND LOVED was a Leica D-Lux 8. I love taking pictures when I travel, especially of architectural details – anything from a beautiful rope-shaped door handle on a cerulean-blue door in Greece to the interior of Carlo Scarpa's final work, the Brion tomb near Treviso in northern Italy. Its poetic silhouettes inspired the partitions and design at my recent furniture exhibition at 242 rue de Rivoli. When I come back to the office, I print the pictures out and stick them on the wall. But now I have the Leica I want to go back to printing properly like I used to as a student in the dark room.

THE PLACE THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME is Hydra. I'll never forget arriving on the Greek island, which sits between the Aegean and Myrtoan Seas, on a wooden sailing boat with friends 20 years ago. I try to go back two to three times a year. I often stay at the Hydrea, a small hotel in an old ship owner's house; visit Deste [June to October], a contemporary art foundation with a Jeff Koons outside; eat at Veranda, a taverna with an incredible rooftop terrace overlooking the harbour; then head to The Pirate Bar, an institution beloved by Leonard Cohen, for cocktails. I'm currently working on a large private house in nearby Porto Heli – the new structure is built in a Peloponnesian style by Greek craftspeople in local stone, marble and wood. In my imagination it will be a classic Greek modern house.

I'M WARY OF SOUVENIRS as they don't usually look as good at home. At design school we were taught the importance of being contextual. But I often buy handblown glass when I'm in Mexico – the architect Luis Barragán used it in every house and it changes everything in a room.

MY INTERIORS STYLE SIGNATURE is finding an instinctive way to be in a room. I don't like to arrange the furniture at right angles or against the walls. Things can sit at an angle. It has to be free. To be modern, you must take cues from the culture of the site, its location and materials. Rather than rules, it's about questions and solutions. Our style is also defined by the way we listen to our clients' stories. For an art collector client in Hong Kong whose apartment faces a wooded park, we created two zones – one dedicated to nature, the other to music and entertainment. The concept came from the way he wanted to live. You can learn a lot just by looking.

AND I AM INSPIRED BY the interiors of the French designer Jean-Michel Frank, whose career was ignited by the 16th-arondissement mansion – now the Musée Baccarat – of Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles, the early patrons of surrealist art. He was the first to mix 18th-century



Charles Zana

The French architect loves blueberries, Bruce Springsteen and his Maison Bonnet glasses

INTERVIEW BY AIMEE FARRELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES NELSON



French traditions with the modernity of the '30s, and his lines are so pure. In the salon he covered the walls in parchment, with off-white furniture and big wooden doors – everything was in harmony. He simplified everything, using very beautiful materials to create the most luxurious salon of the period.

THE BEST BOOK I'VE READ IN THE PAST YEAR is *Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli* by Annie Cohen-Solal. I love art biographies and this made a big impression on me. It tells the story of the Trieste-born art dealer whose New York gallery, opened in 1957, showcased pop art and minimalism. He paved the way for the modern gallery.

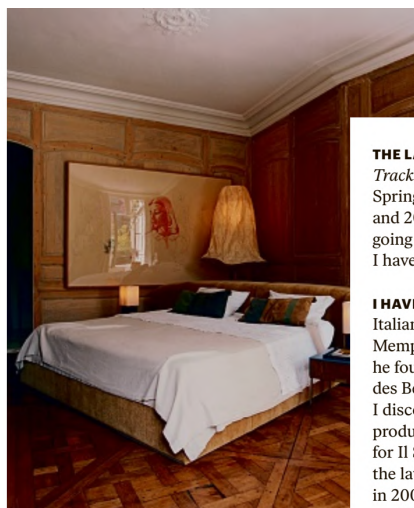
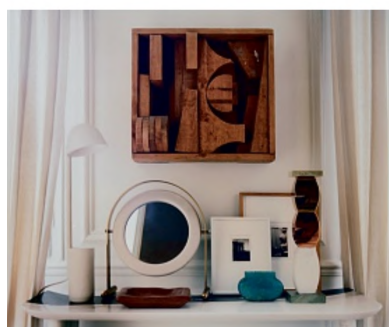
MY STYLE ICON is the American artist Cy Twombly. He had such a strong sense of style – slightly old-fashioned and over-dressed with this inner elegance and consistency. I always think of the Horst P Horst portrait of him standing in his apartment in Rome in a white suit.

LEICA D-LUX 8 CAMERA, £1,600



Top: Charles Zana at home in Paris. Left: the living room, with a painting by David Salle, cabinet and lamp by Ettore Sottsass, chairs by Jean Prouvé and (on right) a chair by Wharton Esherick. Above: the Charvet Egyptian cotton shirt and silk tie that he wore at his recent wedding

THE AESTHETE



Above: the bedroom with a Teddy headboard designed by Charles Zana, side table by Arne Jacobsen, Brasília table lamp by Michel Boyer and artwork by David Salle. Top left: Senza Titolo by Mario Ceroli hangs on the corridor wall. Left: Kaweco brass mechanical pencils from Esquisse and a vintage Montegrappa silver fountain pen



HIS GROOMING STAPLE: L'INSTANT DE GUERLAIN POUR HOMME, £113 FOR 100ML EDP



WHEN YOU DESIGN IT'S IMPORTANT TO LOSE YOURSELF AS THAT'S WHEN YOU FIND YOUR DIRECTION



Above centre: Zana with ceramics by Ettore Sottsass. Above far left: a ceramic by Sottsass and a 1957 pot from Danese. Left: the living room, with a red Elysée lamp by Pierre Paulin, vintage sofa and armchair by Carlo Scarpa and coffee table by Charles Zana. Above: homemade almond milk and cheese from Barthélémy

THE LAST MUSIC I DOWNLOADED was *Tracks II: The Lost Albums* by Bruce Springsteen. It is 83 songs – five hours and 20 minutes of classic Springsteen, going back to his folky, American roots. I haven't listened to it all yet.

I HAVE A COLLECTION OF ceramics by the Italian architect Ettore Sottsass. I studied Memphis Milano, the design collective he founded in the '80s, whilst at École des Beaux-Arts, but it was only later that I discovered his ceramics. They were produced in collaboration with Bitossi for Il Sestante, a Milanese gallery, from the late '50s. I bought my first piece in Paris in 2000 – a black vase with a yellow and blue stripe from the 1957-59 Lava collection. It's like an addiction – I have more than 60 pieces. For me, he was the first architect to think more like an artist. He made his ceramics in the Etruscan way – simple and rudimentary yet unique in colour and form.

IN MY FRIDGE YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND almond milk made by my wife, Daphné; lots of blueberries and raspberries; a block of Italian parmesan from Barthélémy; and stewed apple made from a mix of apples – usually Pink Lady and Golden Delicious – for the perfect combination of tartness and sweetness.

I'VE RECENTLY REDISCOVERED lacquer. I spotted a beautiful lacquer chair by the Swiss-French artist Jean Dunand at Galerie Vallois, which specialises in art deco, on display at TEFAF Maastricht. It inspired me to create my own collection of lacquer objects and furniture. I particularly love lacquer of the '30s – it has this very matte finish, which I reproduced in my designs, including glossy tables in sage, saffron and brown. They're very pure, almost minimalist, and made by hand at a specialist studio in Paris.

THE THING I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT is my collection of big mechanical pencils. Whether in wood, brass or plastic, I find them reassuring, practical and I always have them to hand when designing. I've been buying them from Sennelier, a 19th-century art shop on the Left Bank, ever since I was an architecture student. It's my constant accessory.

AN INDULGENCE I WOULD NEVER FORGO is almonds. Natural and unsalted. I eat them morning and night. They're my daily pleasure – simple and moreish. If I'm in a bad mood they give me joy.

MY FAVOURITE WEBSITE is The Row. It is sober, elegant and beautifully conceived as a design object. The last thing I bought from there was a very simple white shirt that feels vintage – I wish they made more clothes for men.

MY FAVOURITE BUILDING is the Kimbell Art Museum designed by Louis Kahn in Fort Worth, Texas. It's a very unusual and cinematic space – and a masterpiece in calm, light and composition. My favourite piece there is *The Cardsharps* by Caravaggio – a youthful masterpiece that's more than a painting.

THE BEST WAY TO TRANSFORM A ROOM is to rearrange it. Sometimes when I bring a new ceramic or object into my apartment and rearrange the pieces around it, it changes everything. It's a question of energy and space. In this way design can transform the way we live. Sometimes it's about taking something away rather than adding to create the right balance.

THE LAST ITEM OF CLOTHING I ADDED TO MY WARDROBE was a classic, navy-blue tailor-made suit from Charvet in Place Vendôme – the ultimate in slow luxury. I had it made for my recent wedding in the south of France.

AN OBJECT I WOULD NEVER PART WITH is my father's Cartier Tank watch. It is a small, mechanical model with a brown leather strap. My father, who worked in publishing, wore it in the '70s and it always reminds me of him.

MY BIGGEST PET PEEVE IN A HOTEL is going into your room and finding your name flashing up on a big TV screen – I find it really invasive. At Chiltern Firehouse they handwrite your name in a book, which is much more charming.



THE LAST MUSIC HE DOWNLOADED

MY FAVOURITE ROOM IN MY HOUSE is my bedroom. I live in an 18th-century Louis XVI apartment in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. I stripped away the paint on the walls to reveal the original wood panelling, which has created a wonderful warm atmosphere for sleep. The bed sits at an angle, facing out towards the windows and the view into the courtyard below – it's my cocoon.

MY GROOMING GURU is hairstylist David Mallett. I go every few months to his Paris salon in a 17th-century *hôtel particulier* filled with antiques. He knows exactly what I need. I designed a New York outpost for him at The Webster in 2018 – we sourced antique sconces together from the Paris flea market and I custom-designed a table, brass mirrors and lighting, arranged alongside vintage Saarinen Tulip chairs from Knoll.

THE BEST WAY TO SPEND €20 is visiting Fondation Cartier in Paris. The new building in the Place du Palais-Royal, which just opened, is designed by Jean Nouvel. It's always an inspiring programme – I loved Bijoy Jain of Studio Mumbai's architectural installation last year; it included a bamboo hut, furniture and animalistic sculptures. It reconnects me with my love of art and thoughtfully conceived spaces.

IN ANOTHER LIFE, I WOULD HAVE BEEN a chef. As a profession it involves the same kind of alchemy as architecture – a blend of tradition, precision and inventiveness.

THE BEST BIT OF ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED was from one of my old professors at art school who told me never to ask for directions from someone who knows the way, or you risk not getting lost. When you design it's important to lose yourself as that's when you find your direction. **■HTSI**