

Time for reflection

As evening descends on Henriette Reed and Gavin Harris's London apartment, the mirrored surfaces help create a special ambience

Words Alan O'Kelly Photography Tony Tommington

Best buy:
*'Our Gaggenau
hob and oven are just
the right size for such
a small flat'*

When Henriette Reed and Gavin Harris first stepped inside their 40-year-old apartment in the City of London, it was less of a home and more of an empty shell. The property was part of a show suite for the complex in which it is situated and, until the couple moved in, had never been occupied. Instead, it was used as storage space.

'There was no bathroom or kitchen, and the walls were so uneven they had to be replastered,' says Henriette. 'In addition,

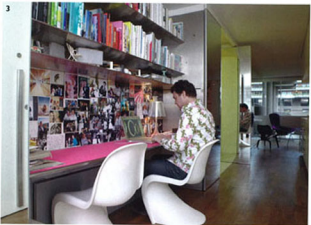
we needed to install electric and gas meters and even had to apply for a postcode.'

But along with the shortcomings there were definite bonuses. The flooring, which had received little use over the years, was in near-perfect condition. 'When we first saw the apartment it was fully carpeted,' says Gavin. 'But we had a peek underneath and were pleasantly surprised.'

Another major plus point was that there were two light-filled rooms, one at each end of a wide corridor. The first is now



1 Kitchen This compact space features a Gaggeneau (0870 125 4500) hob and oven; Kitchen Connections (020 8947 6180) supplies similar white-gloss cabinetry **2 Sitting room** Included in Henriette and Gavin's collection of iconic furniture are the Bertio Bird chair and stool, sourced from Knoll (020 7236 6655). They are in purple, the kind of bold colour statement Henriette likes to make. Mojo Interiors (0845 370 1711) supplied the coffee table and the pony-hide-covered Charles Eames lounge chair **3 Study** Gavin enjoys the comfort of his Verner Panton fibreglass seat; The Conran Shop (020 7589 7401) sells these



Meet the owners...

Henriette Reed and Gavin Harris, who are both designers

Previous home "When we moved to the UK from Australia, our first place together was a two-bedroom flat in west London," says Henriette. "We were there for two years before we bought this place."

Current property...

One-bedroom apartment in the City of London, built in the 1960s

Rooms Sitting room, kitchen, study, bedroom, bathroom

Purchased 2005

Henriette and Gavin's bedroom while the other is their sitting room. The corridor became home to the kitchen on one side, with a bathroom – complete with a floral design mosaic wall – and a compact study area on the other.

"On first walking through the flat, you would never know there's a bathroom here as it's hidden behind a mirrored wall," says Gavin. The rest of this corridor wall offers cleverly concealed storage space, essential in such a compact apartment. And, of

course, the place feels much bigger because of the mirrors – a clever ploy of Henriette and Gavin's, who took special precautions when installing them, knowing they would be in constant use. "They're just standard mirrors," says Gavin, "so we backed them with foam, which makes them less likely to crack if they're slammed."

Due to the dramatic 1960s design of the building, an ethereal atmosphere descends on the apartment at dusk. "During the evening, the neon glow of the city filters ▶




1 Bathroom Sourced from House of Mosaics (01789 765000), the Bszaza tiles, in a design entitled 'Summer Flowers', are teamed with a Philippe Starck suite: Duravit (0870 730 7787) sells similar Starck sanitaryware

2 Bedroom Henriette and Gavin go for Italian furniture in a big way. Reflected in the mirrored doors of the cupboards is the couple's stylish B & B Italia (020 7591 8111) bed. The chair features a highly original orange-diamond pattern and was designed by Patricia Urquiola for Moroso (moroso.it)

through the windows, particularly those at the back of the flat, which have striped frosted transfers on them,' says Henriette. 'The flat looks really amazing, and reminds me of the sci-fi film *Blade Runner*.'

The apartment's retro-futurist look is further enhanced by Henriette and Gavin's stylish collection of contemporary furniture, ranging from a pair of Verner Panton chairs in the study, to the lounge chair and stool, which were both designed by Harry Bertoina, in the sitting room.

Although the apartment is modern, it is not without smaller, more personal touches. Henriette, a keen artist, has lots of her paintings on display, including a self-portrait in the bedroom. 'The flat is a lovely place to work because of the abundance of light,' she explains. 'Friends often sit for me, and there are also rather a lot of self-portraits – but that's probably something to do with all the mirrors.' 



Inspired buys

Henriette and Gavin have filled their apartment with classic and contemporary pieces of designer seating. Our selection will make an equally stunning statement

Lenny swivel chair, £769, Barker & Stonehouse (01642 230988, barkerandstonehouse.co.uk)



Charles Eames Eiffel fibreglass chair in red, £189, Mojo Interiors (0845 370 1711, mojointeriors.co.uk)

Ole leather swivel chair in Tintoretto Cream (also available in brown), £395, John Lewis (08456 049049, johnlewis.com)

