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DECORATION

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Living room The sofa is from Ercol Concept and the glass-and-steel coffee table is a Paolo Piretti design. Try the Diba for a similar. The cork 'tori' lamp is factory-made in an example of the homonymous line of Japanese-style minimalist. Shoot details on page 1 ▶

THE HEIGHT OF SIMPLICITY

Pared-back decoration and low-slung furniture, a look inspired by the homeowners' time spent studying in Japan, emphasise the scale of this 19th-century Parisian apartment

Words **TISH LORINE** Photography **HELENO BARRETTA/LIVING INSIDE**



Situated in the bustling Le Marais district, this Parisian apartment, with its impressive high ceilings and ornate cornicing, is home to young architects Hugo Saunay and Charlotte De Tonnact. The couple moved in two years ago, drawn to the 19th-century building by its sense of scale and original features – such as casement windows, which flood the space with light – as well as its prime location in the village-like neighbourhood.

At 90 square metres, this is not a huge apartment, but it is cleverly laid out. A central corridor divides the private rooms – bedroom, bathroom and kitchen – from the couple's large open-plan living area and office, which they use as a base for their architecture practice, Festen. 'The business is starting to outgrow the space, but it's great to work from home,' says Hugo. 'Our clients sit in the living room with the cat. It feels as if we're entertaining family rather than working.'

The duo's interior style is all about respecting the existing architecture. 'We really care about the story of a building and want to remain true to its atmosphere,' says Hugo. In their own home, they have opted for a low-key look, but the interior isn't minimalist – there are worn vintage pieces and personal treasures scattered in clusters around the apartment. This pared-back approach is a reflection of the couple's time spent living and studying in Japan.

The simplicity of the design affords the couple room to breathe and the low-slung furniture, such as the leather gym mattress that serves as a divan on the living room floor, emphasises the height and ornate detailing of the ceiling. 'We like the loftiness of the space and didn't want to compromise this,' Hugo explains. The white walls are another considered choice. 'Colour tends to be fashion-led and we don't want to be influenced in this way,' says Hugo. 'We are more like landscape architects, because we think about our projects in the long term. Right now, we're not trying to capture the aesthetic of 2015 – we are looking to 2020 and beyond.'

This future-focused outlook also led the pair to pick natural finishes such as wood and leather, which will mellow with the patina changing over time. 'We like to use materials that will develop as the years go by. At the moment, we are not keen on our restored-wood floor, as it looks too new, but with sunshine and use, it will become perfect,' says Hugo.

A mix of old and new pieces helps to give the home a timeless look. A strikingly modern light by Michael Anastasiades and a glass-and-steel coffee table by Paolo Piva sit comfortably alongside the apartment's more traditional features. Hugo describes this approach as a reflection of the French capital. 'It's all about combining traditional Parisian style – such as the mouldings and parquet – with purist contemporary design,' he says. 'I love Paris and, in this home, we both feel as if we are part of the story of the city.' fatenarchitecture.com

Living room The couple's Eames lounge chair and ottoman from The Conran Shop is pleasingly well worn, as is the vintage 1950s leather gym mattress on the floor, which serves as a divan. A 'Tube' chandelier by Michael Anastasiades hangs in the corner of the room. **Stockist details on p254 ►**

'We are not trying to capture this year's aesthetic – we're looking to 2020 and beyond'





Office The couple work from home. Their desk, a large piece of wood mounted on trestle legs (by Tara for a similar trestle), is paired with a 'Meridiana' chair by Christophe Pillet for Driade. A Harry Bertola wire 'Diamond' chair for Knoll (above) provides extra seating for clients. **Living room** Parquet floors unite the living area and the office. The painting above the ornate fireplace is by Jean-François Stocklet (details on p254) ▶

'Our clients often come and sit with the cat. It feels as if we're entertaining family rather than working'





Hallway A transformed peacock is from market find purchases on Etsy and chairs by Harry Potter. The peacock has a light blue in the 'Van Dyke' pattern by Sara Burrows for the 'Vintage' collection. The peacock is a gift from a friend. The chair is from the 'New York' collection on p224.

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

The two pictures in our office were gifts. They are by Matthew Brookes, who is a client and a friend, and depict Casa Malaparte, a famous contemporary home in Capri that Charlotte and I both love.

The peaceful view from our living room is of a nearby church. It's beautifully framed by the window.

I enjoy spending time in the courtyard at the Musée des Arts et Métiers (arts-et-metiers.net). It's a short walk from our apartment.

The district of Le Marais is villagey, but retains a Parisian atmosphere - lots of shops, galleries and cafes.

There are some great bars in this neighbourhood. I like Candelaria (candelariaparis.com) on rue de Saintonge, which has a Mexican theme, and the typically French Le Saint Gervais along the rue Vieille du Temple. **I love visiting OFR gallery** (ofrsystem.com) on the rue Dupetit-Thouars. It always has cool stuff.



Bedroom The leather headboard is a vintage piece by Bill Lundberg for bespoke versions. The bed linen is by Marie Perle and the lamp is the 'Tobacco' lamp by Michele de Lucchi & Gabriele Fossati for Artemide. **Blackbird details on p224**