



GLOBE TROTTERS' PAD

Inspired by the items collected during one's travels, this beautiful apartment boasts an eclectic mix of geographical and cultural influences.

TEXT: VANITHA PAVAPATHI IMAGES COURTESY OF JOHN GRUEN PHOTOGRAPHY



Most of the time, an interior designer's starting point is the client brief. But that's not the case for Matthew Patrick Smyth who had to imagine a muse for the Hearst Magazines Designer Visions showhouse programme that later serves as a setting for short films. His imaginary clients are two affluent gentlemen who live together as partners. One works in entertainment in Hollywood and the other works in finance mostly in London with frequent travels to the Far East. So New York is the midpoint where their primary home would be.

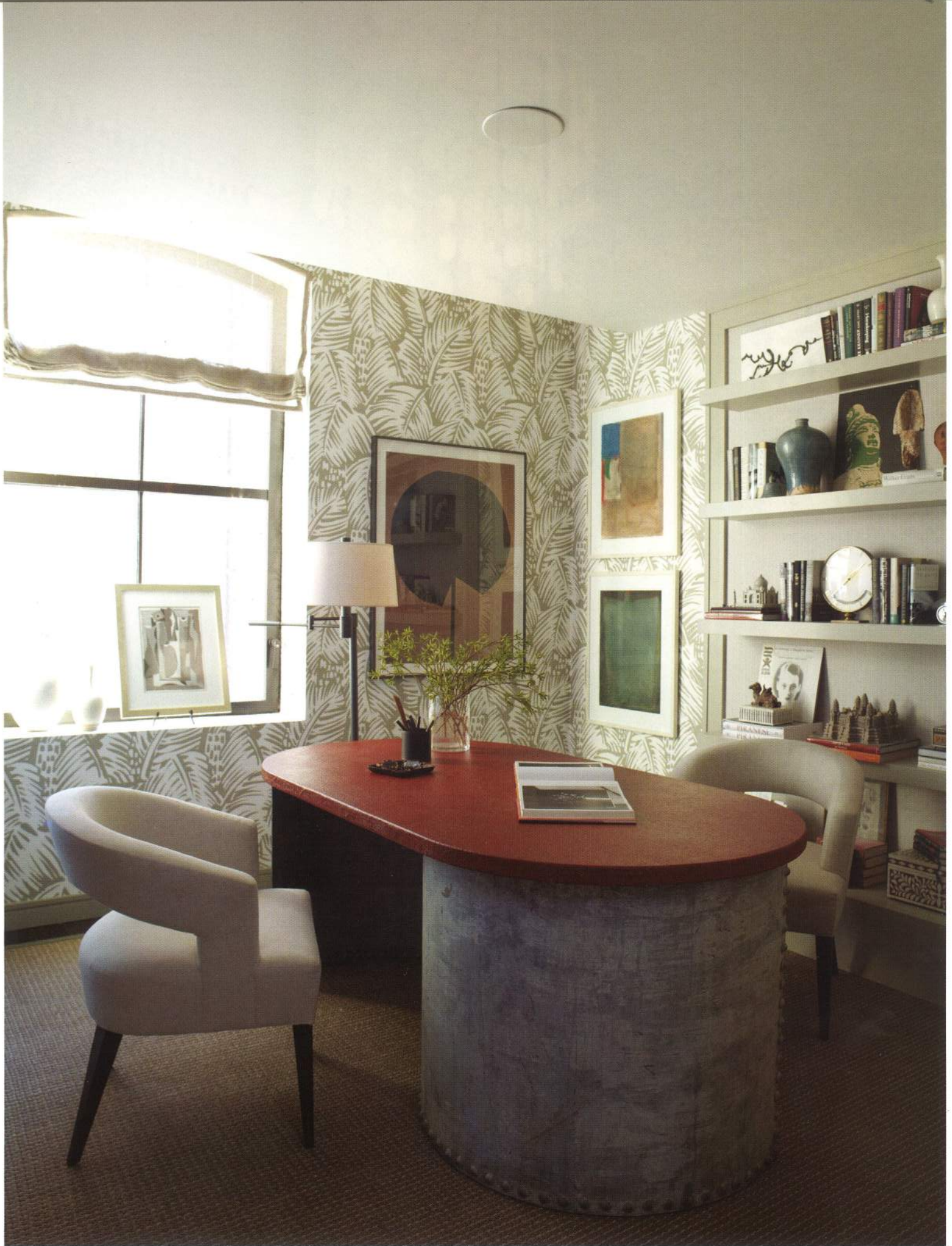
To make things more difficult, this former Manhattan warehouse that dates from 1906 boasts a series of design challenges. Certain structural elements like bearings and walls cannot be eliminated. Also, lighting is an issue as there are lack of windows and a room that is big enough to be a bedroom but can't be listed as one because it has no windows.

Demonstrating his skills as a versatile and innovative designer as well as to show off the flexibility of the apartment, Matthew transformed the "auxiliary" room into a dining room. Since the latter is only used at night, the lack of windows was no longer a problem. Injecting an Eastern flair to the space, all of the walls and doors are covered in Schumacher's Nazrid Palace Mosaic wallpaper which features repeating Moroccan star patterns, reminiscent of the tiles found in a Moroccan palace. The light fixture made from capiz shells and crystals strikes a perfect balance between casual and formal dining.

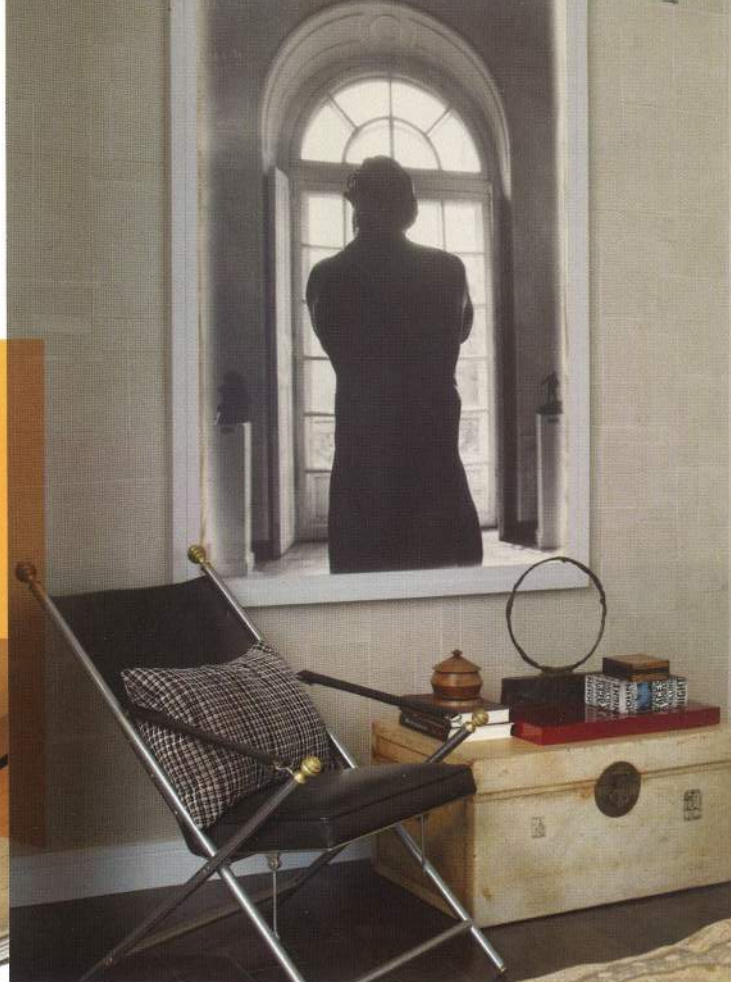
Designed to serve as a kind of scrapbook of the couple's modern day Grand Tour, the eclectic mix of fabrics, colours, furniture and accessories are thought to be brought back from their journeys which reflect the owners' interests in travel. As the award-winning designer likes the idea of having things collected over a lifetime, rather than just bought and installed for the purpose of furnishing this space, each piece has a story or meaning behind it.



THE DINING ROOM
IS ENLIVENED WITH
STUNNING WALLPAPERS
THAT EVOKE THE FEELING
OF BEING TRANSPORTED
INTO A MOROCCAN RIAD.



USUALLY SEEN IN MATTHEW'S
OFFICE, THE PAINTING OF
VENICE IN THE MASTER SUITE
CREATES A SENSE OF MYSTERY
AT THE READING NOOK.



Contrary to basic design philosophy, Matthew has always had the idea that dark walls make a room appear bigger and add instant glamour to a space. But really, it was the paint colour that urged him to dress the living room walls with this dark, pleasant shade, which allowed the architecture and furnishings to stand out. Not just for aesthetic purposes, the mirror above the sofa brings the view of the river into the living room when seen from the entryway or the vintage photograph of a young Indian bride that was blown up and divided into nine pieces, which could each stand alone.

Creating an interior that is modern with a historical bent, architecture is introduced to pieces such as the 19th century baroque door behind the bed with a mirror installed within the framework, adding a touch of modernity to the antique piece. This design approach further continues into the home office with a 19th century riveted galvanized steel drum that has been cut in half and added a top to form a desk. Not to mention, the walls covered in two wallpapers with nuance patterns from Hermès add dimension to the space.

Characterised by classic, clean lines and tailoring layered with rich colours, textures and finishes, this cosy apartment flawlessly illustrates Matthew's innate ability at creating subtly dramatic interiors, combining the best in classic style with comfort. ♦

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