



DREAM BATHROOM

Inspired by the golden age of glamour, designer Justin Van Breda has used art deco influences to create this statement en suite



DESCRIBE THE SPACE

This bathroom is in a 1930s apartment block in London's Kensington. The owners combined two apartments, one above the other, and this main bathroom was created in what was once the hallway of the upstairs space.

WHAT INFLUENCED THE DESIGN?

The building's art deco heritage steered the choice of nickel fittings and luxury materials. Also, I share Edwin Lutyens love of symmetry and detail – I am a huge fan. However, the real eureka moment came from a black and white photo of a sculpted bath I saw in Philip Davies' book, *Lost London*. I showed it to the owners and they were immediately sold on the idea of recreating the design.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES?

The room itself was tricky. A former hallway, it had no plumbing and no natural light. To add to the spatial difficulties, it has three doors: to the dressing room, a separate WC and double-doors to the bedroom.

HOW WERE THEY SOLVED?

My prime concern was the lack of daylight. The porthole window idea was inspired by the opulence of the *Titanic*. I then designed mouldings for the walls, doors and porthole windows, repeating the circular reference point around the room for symmetry. The

multiple doorways only caused a problem on either side of the main double entrance, where space is tight. By designing bespoke vanity units that are narrow but with a generous bowed front, I created compact wash areas that are spacious without hindering access to the shower.

TELL US ABOUT THE BATH

To mimic the bath in the archive photograph, I commissioned expert stonemasons to hand cut each individual scalloped upright using carefully calculated dimensions, and these slotted together like a jigsaw. The stone is an Italian marble called Bianco Rhino, which is similar to alabaster but not the whitest white. It was traumatic to fit since just one wrong millimetre could unbalance the whole project, but the result is stunning. For the vanity cabinets we used sculpted wood with a silver leaf finish by DKT.

WHAT ABOUT THE COLOUR SCHEME?

I love white-on-white in bathrooms – it's soothing and elegant. My default white is Farrow & Ball's James White but, on these walls, it looked too magnolia. We repainted in Sanderson's Crystal White, then used James White for the woodwork and mouldings.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DETAIL?

When you enter from the bedroom the whole room looks monotone, but then you turn to the shower space and are hit by a surprise

burst of beautiful blue mosaics. Inspired by Moschino's Leaf Trellis fabric for Nicholas Haslam, which is used in the adjoining bedroom, the sparkling mosaics create a jewel box of colour in an otherwise white room. It's really magical.

WHAT IS THE KEY TO THIS BATHROOM'S SUCCESS?

For me, it's the bath. The flooring is in the same stone so it appears to rise up out of the ground. It is very monolithic and worth the anxiety of its creation. ■

FACT FILE

DESIGNER Justin Van Breda, 020 7751 4125, j-v-b.com.
BUDGET £15-20,000.
SOURCES Bath, Bette, 0844 800 0547, bette.co.uk. Basins, Villeroy & Boch, 020 8871 4028, villeroy-boch.co.uk.
Brassware, Lefroy Brooks, 01992 708316, lefroybrooks.com. **Mosaics**, Pierre Mesguich Mosaik, 020 7795 6253, mesguichmosaik.co.uk. **Vanity unit finishes**, DKT, 020 8682 8460, dkt.co.uk.
Stone flooring, bath surround and mirror, supplied by Justin Van Breda.
Light fittings, Vaughan, 020 7349 4600, vaughandesigns.com. **Television**, Aquavision, 01422 872665, aquavision.co.uk. **Paint**, (walls) Sanderson, 0844 543 9500, sanderson-uk.com; (mouldings and woodwork) Farrow & Ball, 01202 876141, farrow-ball.com.

FEATURE LINDA CLAYTON | PHOTOGRAPHS DARREN CHUNG

