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Inside Tommaso Franchi's vibrant and eclectic Chelsea home

By EVE HERBERT

BIG PERSONALITY

Tommaso Franchi, founder of creative architecture and interior design studio Tomèf, and his husband, real estate consultant Marco Pasi, have taken their shared love of art and collecting to curate a vibrant and layered interior with a diverse selection of objects from around the world. The pair were first drawn to the home in Chelsea thanks to its high ceilings and original mouldings, large windows and abundance of natural light. A rental flat, it has been decorated to feel uniquely theirs with bright colour, bold pattern and an assortment of contemporary



Tommaso Franchi and Marco Pasi



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block-print quilt picked up on Tommaso's travels, and an embroidered Turkish runner and cushions from Ottoman Touch.

The open plan living and dining room area is bright, bold and eclectic. The 1970s dining table was bought from the Cambi auction house in Genova, and the dining chairs from Prague by the designer Jindrich Halabala have been reupholstered by Tommaso in tiger fabric from Clarence House. The vibrant artwork by Mario Schifano was purchased at auction from Bonhams, and a range of objects, including candlesticks from Fabio Salini, French urns from the 1810s belonging to Tommaso's family and a Mirko Basaldella sculpture on the mantelpiece add to the interior's distinct and eclectic character. In the centre hangs a Scheherazade chandelier from Fortuny in Venice.

In the adjacent living area, an armchair inherited from Tommaso's family has been reupholstered in cotton zebra fabric, which sits alongside armchairs in a domino velvet bought at Lots Road. The artisanal Indian side table and coffee tables are topped with books that encapsulate the couple's passion for art and design, Italian heritage and love of London. Above the sofa, a wooden artwork by Arte Povera artist Mario Ceroli titled 'Casa dell'architetto' (meaning 'the house of the architect') is of particular importance to Tommaso; it was the first piece of art he invested in, and its title seemed particularly well suited to the architect and interior designer.

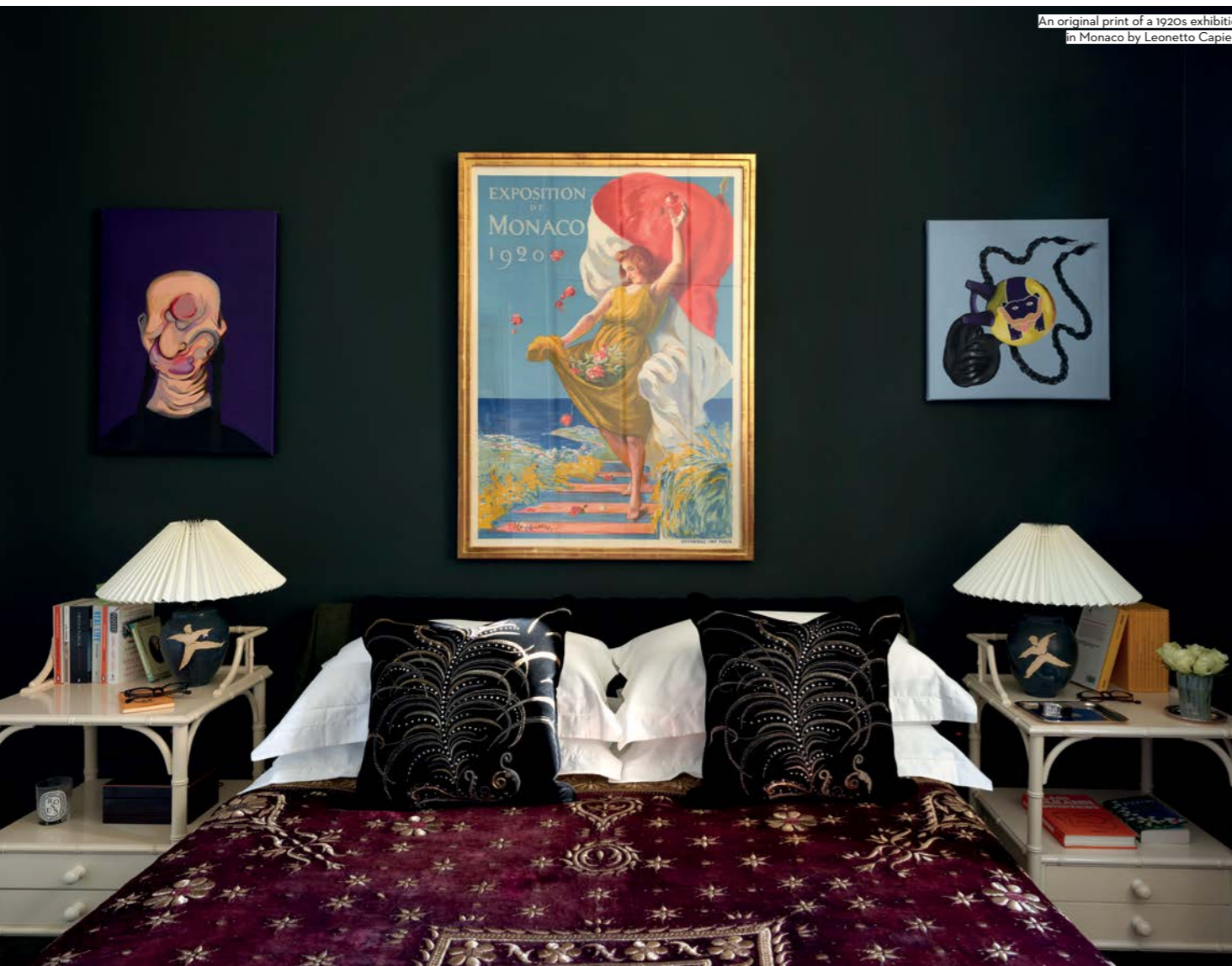
Imbued with rich and comforting colour, the bedroom is anchored by an 18th-century embroidered Indian quilt, topped with embroidered cushions by Susann Eschenfelder. French 1950s lamps with Indo-Chinese shades designs found at Toad Gallery in Southwest

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art, family heirlooms, bespoke pieces and antique finds collected while travelling or at auction houses. Full of personality, the interior expresses the couple's shared Italian heritage, their life in the UK and a love of travel.

A small but well-considered hallway welcomes you into the home, creating an important separation from the main rooms. As well as a concealed wardrobe, the hallway features a marquetry chess table found in Morocco, on top of which stand traditional statuettes bought in China, and hung on the wall is a painting by Venetian contemporary artist Davide Battistin, giving a nod to the couple's Italian background and connection with the Italian lagoon city.

The spare room also functions as a dressing room and relaxation area, featuring bespoke wardrobes designed by Tomèf, with green Fortuny fabric behind latticed glass which fills the space with colour and light. On the daybed lies a vibrant Indian

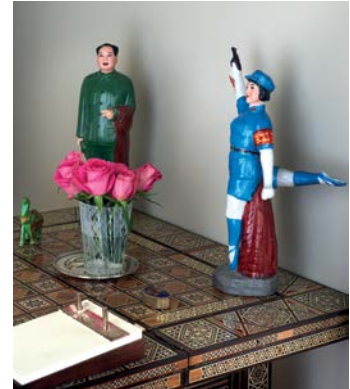


An original print of a 1920s exhibition in Monaco by Leonetto Capello





In the bathroom sits the second of a pair of Indian side tables



“A vibrant and layered interior with a diverse selection of objects from around the world”

London sit on faux bamboo Victorian bedside tables. On the wall, painted in Farrow & Ball’s dramatic Studio Green, two paintings by Argentine artist La Chola Poblete flank the bed, and in the centre hangs an original print of a 1920s exhibition in Monaco by Leonetto Capiello, a famous Italian and French poster designer known as ‘the father of modern advertising’.

In the bathroom sits the second of a pair of Indian side tables, also seen in the living room, and an art deco mirror hangs above the sink.

Tommaso Franchi says: “We’ve lived in this flat for five years and have enjoyed redecorating and making it uniquely ours by adding art, vintage pieces and one-off items collected on our travels that reference the different aspects of our lives. With my work in interior design, and Marco’s in real estate, we are both immersed in the world of art and design and have built our collection together. Although we are both Italian, we love London. I particularly admire the architecture and feel fortunate to live in a flat with such beautiful proportions and light.” tomefdesign.com



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