

Interiors

The designer's room

Thomson Carpenter has transformed a converted stable by artfully mixing old and new—as well as adding some playful touches

AFTER buying a converted Victorian stable block in the Surrey Hills, journalist Carole Annett called upon friend and designer Thomson Carpenter to help her transform the tired property into a modern country home. By stripping the house back to its bones, moving the staircase and adding an extension, they were able to rethink the ground floor, planning an elegant and welcoming sitting room as the heart of the space.

‘Our aim was to create a traditional, but not stuffy feel, suited to relaxed entertaining,’ says Mr Carpenter, noting the room’s fun and colourful touches, such as the leopard-print stool, kilim-covered ottoman and tiger-stripe cushion. A quintessential English-country-house Kingston sofa from Lorfor’s Contemporary (01666 318953; www.lorfor.com) makes the enticingly comfortable centrepiece and the choice of Wallace Vine linen by Jasper Fabrics at Jamb (020–7730 2122; www.jamb.co.uk) to cover the armchair adds a pretty and not entirely expected touch. ‘It’s a new-but-old look, created by layering modern and antique pieces, different prints and textures, without a matchy-matchy feel,’ he says. ‘Cohesion comes from a thread of similar golden colour running through the room, set against neutral off-white walls—which also act to brighten the space—and a chunky sisal rug that grounds the room.’

A double-sided wood-burning stove warms the sitting room and the next-door kitchen extension. It is built into a new fireplace, designed to add character to the room and look as if it has always been there. The same applies to the half-glazed door to the snug, built where the staircase once stood, and to the custom-made break-fronted bookcases. A sketch of Mrs Annett’s beloved lurcher, George, by Daisy Simpson (www.daisysimpson.art), hangs above a late-19th-century French commode, adding an intimate touch to this inviting space. 🐾

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