

# Inside Outside

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## COVER STORY

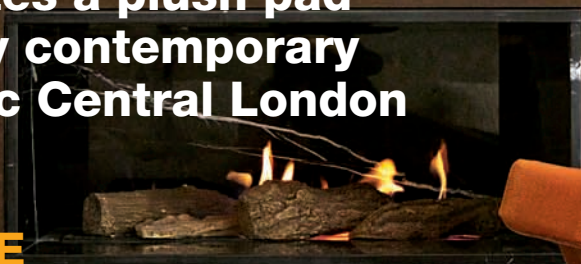
Rajiv Saini creates a plush pad in his customary contemporary style at an iconic Central London location

## RETROSPECTIVE

We delve into the work of legendary architect Raj Rewal

## ALSO FEATURING

Kapil Aggarwal  
Gaurav Roy Choudhury  
Umang Soni





A dug-out canoe from Kerala fits the size of the wall perfectly.





# Bachelor Pad

TEXT: DEVYANI JAYAKAR

PHOTOGRAPHS: PRASHANT BHAT



DHRUVA SAMAL

Dhruva Samal designs Uday Nanda's retreat in Breach Candy: a functional no-nonsense place, which is nevertheless a peaceful haven to return to, away from the noise and bustle of big city life in Mumbai.



Pictures taken by Uday during hiking expeditions adorn the walls of his home. Digitally printed on canvas, the peaceful memories they evoke are a pleasant refuge from the chaos and congestion of Mumbai.







A Kerala spice boat functions as an accent piece.





An old temple door is mounted on the wall between the office and the kitchen. 'It's from the client's family collection. We must have tried out 15 shades of red for the wall before we were pleased with the balance. The base of the dining table is an interesting conversation piece, with its cluster of twisted tree trunks.'







**I** would rather not see any faces when I return home. I've had enough of those in the world outside,' says Uday Nanda, explaining why the art on his walls only reflects scenes from nature – no human beings depicted here. Photography also happens to be his hobby, so it made perfect sense to select pictures taken by him during hiking expeditions, to adorn the walls of his home. Digitally printed on canvas, the peaceful memories they evoke are a pleasant refuge from the chaos and congestion of Mumbai.

Says Dhruva, 'Uday and I studied together in school and have been friends ever since, so I had an insight into designing a home which would be tailor-made to suit his personality. On some days Uday prefers to work from home, so one bedroom has been converted into an office-cum-den.

This 1,300 sq ft two bedroom apartment was totally dilapidated when we started work on it...old doors were covered with paint, which we had to strip off. The benefit was that there were 10 ft high ceilings.'

The office has wooden flooring in a pale colour embossed with graphic texts found on wine barrels. 'The original old mosaic wouldn't have been appropriate and a traditional dark coloured wood would not impart the young feel which I was seeking,' says Uday.





On some days Uday prefers to work from home, so one bedroom has been converted into an office-cum-den.











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The four poster is a design solution to the five doors which the room originally sported, before being reduced to a more acceptable three-door room. A four poster made perfect design sense in the resulting square proportions of the room.

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All the furniture was custom made in Chennai, from the family's trusted old supplier. Three carpenters took a week to assemble everything in the apartment. Across the entrance is a large metal sculpture of a group of men playing cards, made by Kiran Thapar, who has never exhibited or sold any of her work. She either gifts the sculptures she creates, or displays them at Shantiniketan.

The base of the dining table is an interesting conversation piece, with its cluster of twisted 'trunks'. A Kerala spice boat sits in front of one large wall, which Uday didn't want to use for a conventional entertainment system. 'The dug-out canoe fits the size of the wall perfectly and functions as an accent piece. Eventually, I may put some underwater photographs of fish and coral on the wall behind it,' he says.

The doors leading to the balcony have etched glass panels bearing what may be the sea-faring family crest of the original owners, Latin inscription et al – 'Consequitur Quodcunque Petit', translated as 'He obtains whatever he seeks.' Rather nice, even in the present context.



Perfectly functional, taking care of daily utilitarian needs as well as entertainment, this is a comfortable pad.



Says Dhruva, 'We paid a great deal of attention to the protection of these distinctive glass panels which held within them possible stories of past lives of occupants.'

The bedroom has a large modern four poster. Read really large, because it dominates the space with its 7.5 ft x 7.5 ft dimensions and the 18" border running around it. This was a design solution to the asymmetrical proportions of the room and its five doors. Originally, one door led to the outside, another to the living room, two accessed the balcony and one predictably connected to the bathroom. With this surfeit of doors, there was no place to put beds. So Dhruva closed the door to the outside, fronting it with a mirror. One of the doors to the balcony was also shut off. This resulted in a square space, in which a four poster made perfect design sense.

An old temple door is mounted on the wall between the office and the kitchen. 'It's from the client's family collection. We must have tried out 15 shades of red for the wall before we were pleased with the balance,' says Dhruva. The office has wooden flooring in a pale colour embossed with graphic texts found on wine barrels. 'The original old mosaic wouldn't have been appropriate and a traditional dark coloured wood would not impart the young feel which I was seeking,' says Uday.

Perfectly functional, taking care of daily utilitarian needs as well as entertainment, Dhruva has designed a comfortable pad for his school friend. 