

'Space is important; it clears the mind'



PHOTOS: RICHARD GOODING

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portions of his novel *Oliver Twist* here and it featured in the 1968 film *Oliver!* (inset below), while, more recently, it was in the opening scenes of *The World Is Not Enough*, as Bond shoots along St Saviours Dock in a speedboat.

'Apparently, I have mooring rights, but I haven't ordered the speed boat yet,' laughs Tom, a laid-back 42-year-old who is passionate about art and visiting foreign lands – as evidenced by the stack of *Lonely Planets* in his home office.

'All the apartments here were originally sold as shells and this one seemed to have escaped any significant development. When I first walked in, it was a single large space, slightly dilapidated, with



a bed in it.' Tom was close to buying something else and only came back to show a relative as a point of comparison. But the warmth of the brick gave it a homely feel and he convinced himself to buy it.

'Directly after buying it I did wonder what I'd done. The number one requirement was space; I find

open space clears the mind, it's great for painting and I love the history of London architecture. Combining those things can make you a bit restricted, but Shad Thames has old warehouses which are a great combination.'

The interior design and layout was left to Almas Shamsee, founder of Maisha Design (maishadesign.com), who was sent an inventory of all the weird and

wonderful things Tom collected while he was still living in the US. On one surface lies a dragon robe from Yangshuo, on the Li River; elsewhere, a MiG fighter pilot G-suit makes an unusual seat cover. 'I used to live in Budapest and found it in an underground bunker.'

A mannequin bought in America is draped in leaves and sports a paintball mask; an old Indian wardrobe sits in the main room, in a perpetual state of half restoration – open the thick doors and old nails are still roughly banged into the back. All the artworks are by Tom, including prints that he has had made for the walls.

'I didn't buy anything especially for the flat; it's about selecting things I like and that have artistic merit,' he explains. 'The paintings bring colour to the room so I am in control of that – it's easy to rotate them, so I can switch it up whenever I need.'



Eclectic: The home is full of pieces from Tom's travels, including a mannequin draped in leaves (left)

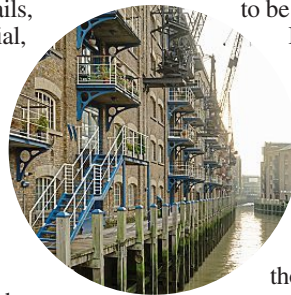
The original brick work is dressed with metal supports, fragments of wood and battered old nails, which gives it an industrial, almost rustic charm. Being on the river, it's also surprisingly quiet for central London, except, as Tom describes it, 'when the ducks have an episode'.

Much of the refurbishment was done while Tom was living in the US; there were frequent Skype calls and swatches had to be DPS-ed across the Atlantic. The kitchen was moved from near the front door into the main room, while the room it occupied became an office. An en-suite bathroom is now in the main bedroom and there is a second bathroom near the office. Large bespoke doors made from reclaimed wood were fitted to

the bedroom and office to keep that open-plan feel, but allow these spaces to be fully enclosed.

Because of the strict building regulations and layout of the plumbing in one corner, it was a difficult project, especially within his £100,000 budget. However, Almas is confident that even though the square meterage remains the same, the new layout has added more value than it cost.

'It was important to make sure the space worked,' she says. 'It wasn't about making it look pretty. Working with Tom, we wanted to create something that complemented the building, but wouldn't overpower all his artwork. We found the right canvas to display all of his pieces and



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'The paintings bring colour to the room... it's about selecting things I like and that have artistic merit'



Sleek: Tom Day in his stylish kitchen



Eye-catching: Bold artworks and bright vases add a pop of colour to the flat



Seasoned traveller: Some of Tom's prints and his many Lonely Planets in the office

added a few bits of colour, such as blue paint along the wall, to let it stand out without being too intrusive.' For now, Tom couldn't be happier,

but he hasn't ruled out wandering to another country in the future. 'I've lived in Singapore, Hungary and the US before coming back here and each

time I had a great experience,' he says. 'I plan to keep this place, though; walking along the river past Tower Bridge in the morning, I always feel

privileged to live here. What I'd really like to do one day is build my own grand design from scratch, or perhaps find an industrial building I can

convert into a unique home. Then, I'd have a great time filling it with interesting stuff.' And he certainly has plenty of that.



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