

A HIDDEN *gem*

Playful creativity and artful ideas abound in Karen and Derek Noonan's interior-designed south Dublin city home

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FACT FILE

The Property Three-bedroom redbrick Victorian terrace house, with kitchen extension, approx 1,800 sq ft
Location Ranelagh, Dublin 4

Owners Karen Noonan, a solicitor and Derek Noonan, a marketing executive live here with their one-year-old daughter, Aifric and their French bulldog, Bastian

KITCHEN A beautiful starting point to design from, the plywood cabinets, terrazzo floors and dining furniture were here when the couple first bought the house, having been custom made and fitted by the previous owner, architect John Monahan of Noji Architects (Noji.ie). "When we first moved in, there was so much that was here already and that we loved, including this kitchen," says homeowner Karen "Our brief to the interior designers at KLD

(Kingstonlaffertydesign.com) was to inject more colour, life and a bit of fun." Lead interior designer Róisín Lafferty and her team did just that with this room, adding metal doors with ribbed glass insets and vertical triangular tiles to the splashback, to encapsulate a futuristic feel." The kitchen was the touch point for the whole house," says Róisín. "With this as inspiration we wanted to take its playfulness and inject a similar energy into the scheme overall."

"The colour palette and the forms and shapes used in this house are soft, feminine and fun, almost to the point of being toylife"



LIVING ROOM The design of this family home is all about maximising and updating period features, such as original fireplaces and architraves as well as embracing a contemporary feel. "We really wanted to create a sense of joy and happiness," says Róisín. "There is no doubt that no matter how grumpy you are entering this home, the soft and harmonious tones will brighten your day." Both beautiful and functional, a TV and bookcase is cleverly hidden behind the joinery here. The armchair is from Maison Dada (Maisondada.co) with Podia coffee table from Fermliving.com. The Alton rug is by Linie Design at Heals.com with five arm ceiling lamp from De-shop.com

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his was a really rare project for us in that it launched from a such a beautiful starting point," says Róisín Lafferty, lead designer at interiors firm KLD (Kingstonlaffertydesign.com) on bringing this Dublin family home into all its colourful glory you currently see. "The fact that the proportions and details of the period house were so intact and intricate in the first place was amazing, but also working with clients who have such open mindedness meant we could really let our imaginations go. Their encouragement and ideas were what brought such fresh results."

These creative clients are Karen and Derek Noonan, who had a vision themselves to create a family home in the right part of the city, near family, friends and work. They had spent two years looking for the right house and when they finally stumbled upon this Ranelagh property, which had already been extensively renovated but had lots more potential, it felt perfect.

"The parquet floors throughout the downstairs were a major attraction from the moment we viewed the house," says Karen "They were reclaimed from a grand house somewhere and were re-fitted here and they just flowed so perfectly with the rest of the house and the other period features, such as the arches. We loved the new extension and its plywood kitchen and ceilings also."

As the house had been lived in and worked on by an architect before them, it was turn-key ready and the couple could move in immediately. They then spent three years living here before making changes, explaining that the original brief to the interior designers was to inject colour, life and a bit of fun. They also wanted what every family needs - plenty of storage.

"We knew Róisín's work and particularly loved how she worked with paint colour and textures so we knew that she was the right person to bring this house to life for us," says Karen.

Walking into the house now, cloudy colours leading the eye from its entry and reflecting back portals and archways in peach mirror walls, the overall effect is simply mesmerising. To brief, there is also beautifully built-in cabinetry and hidden storage throughout. But how did the colour palette and materials come about and how much of the design choices were from the couple and how much was left up to the designers?

"It was definitely a collaborative effort," says Róisín "The idea really was to create a colour story that meandered through the home from start to finish, with forms and shapes informed by the wonderful architecture and geometric angles."

"In order to get to that point, we first had an idea to create a pastel palace but the more we worked up the detail, it felt too sweet and sugary," she says "So we took the essence of pastels and made them muddier and richer. At a glance this home has a sweet feel but actually all the tones are pushed to deeper and richer levels than they should be which adds a lot more depth to each room. There is an element of mystique and darkness to the tale and that is exactly what we wanted. As well as being playful and toylike the space is also mature and calm in a strange way."

While, the refurbishment didn't involve any major restructuring downstairs, reconfiguring the upstairs space did mean taking out a wall and running pipes to create the en-suite bathroom.

"When you start knocking walls in period properties, it gets messy very quickly," says Róisín "The other thing with these beautiful, characterful buildings is the lack of square angles and straight walls so getting perfect joinery and tiled arches was a challenge that involved a lot of patient trades."

The couple are delighted with the overall effect, which not only feels atmospheric, homely and cosy, it has also been the perfect home to enjoy the first year of Aifric's life, as well as all of the many months spent in recent lockdown.

"In fact being here in this beautiful environment, and both of us working from home, we have started working on a joint venture together," says Derek, who originally was working in marketing and has now gone freelance to start on a new project. At the end of her maternity leave, Karen won't be returning to work as a solicitor either - she will be joining Derek in the new property they are restoring nearby. Their idea is to create a hub which will act as a gallery, art space and wellness venue. If it is anything like their home, somehow we think it might be rather fabulous! **H**



SNUG The original Victorian fireplace has been contemporised with a grid-style tile patterned interior,

also found on the joinery walls. "We deliberately replicated patterns and forms to create a language of shapes

throughout," says Róisín. "Mainly this was done with the joinery which we had sprayed in different colours."



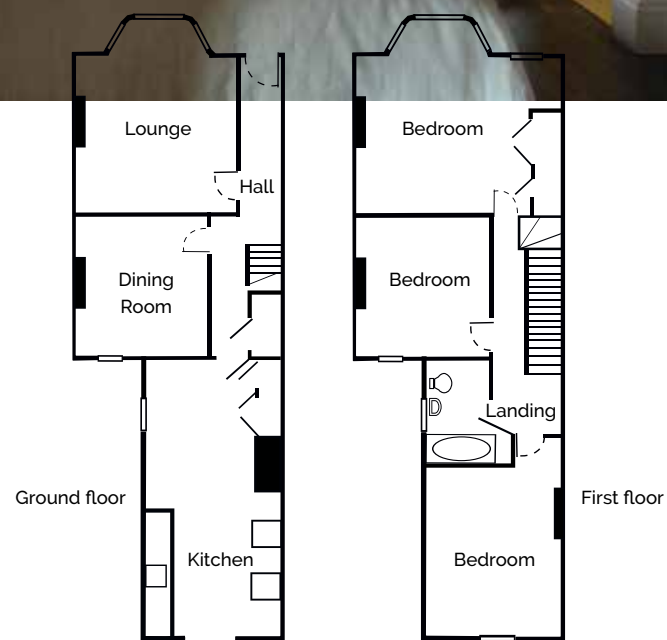
"At a glance this home has a pastel sweet feel, but actually all the tones are pushed to deeper and richer levels than they should be, adding to mystique and maturity"

HALL (ABOVE • RIGHT) "Bastian, the family's French bulldog kept the workmen on their toes during the design build," laughs Róisín. The 'Stay Glad' artwork, by Onestrongarm.com, is suspended from a metal track fixed just below the coving. The full wall of mirror sits below this. "We used leather straps to suspend the artwork from the track," explains Róisín. "As this is located in the ground floor entrance hallway which is quite narrow, we fitted a full wall

of mirror to open up the space entirely which creates an infinity effect of deliverance of art."

LANDING (RIGHT) The cinema seats, from an old Dublin picture house, were bought at a reclamation shop and have been given a new lease of life under the couple's favourite artwork. "I had this piece by Susan Loughnane commissioned. It is actually of our entire group of friends together and painted in a Victorian setting."





MASTER BEDROOM (ABOVE & RIGHT) In order to create this sumptuous master suite, two smaller rooms were knocked together and the bathroom re-configured. A custom-designed bed and storage wall was fitted containing pop-out doors. Behind the headboard is more storage space. "This room is hands down my favourite place to be in the house," says Derek "It is so calming and cosy and I love the fact we have so much wardrobe space - I have a ridiculous amount of shoes." A linen curtain acts as a divider

from sleep to dress zone without having a physical wall. "It is a softer feature to break up the room if one is still sleeping and one needs to get dressed," explains Róisín. The mirrors with a brass trim are custom-designed and fitted while the ceiling lamps are Ponz Design Studios (Ponzhomedesign.com) with wall lamps by Fleux.com.

ENSUITE The pattern of the tiles (which are from Roccacstone.com) creates a design flow from bedroom into the bathroom. The wash basin is from Alape.com



AIFRIC'S BEDROOM Renovations on the house were just finished when Karen brought baby Aifric home. Aifric is now a year old and enjoying her Stokke (Stokke.com) cot which sits in a bespoke velvet alcove under a cloud light. "Róisín designed this room with future proofing in mind, so not only is there lots of storage, we will also be able to put a bed here when Aifric is big enough," says Karen



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DON'T MISS THE DETAILS

Clockwise from top left: On the coffee table are a pretty selection of favourite accessories from Article in Dublin (Article.ie); Above the mantle are pictures by Chloe Early (chloeearly.com) and Jill Deering (find her at Hangtoughgallery.com); A glimpse underneath the arch in the stairs and you find a graffiti illustration by Jordan Nickel (Widewalls.ch); The custom upholstery window seat is in Zoffany fabric (Zoffany.com) and is the perfect perch for daytime reading