



GENERATION NEXT

With interiors by Jacket Interiors, this Sandton home keeps one design eye firmly on its future and another on its past, providing a well-balanced study in considered restraint – proving good things come to those who wait. Jacket's Ockert Snyman explains...

Words Josef Talotta

Photos Gareth Jacobs

The brief seemed easy enough: take a mid-90s era home and launch it firmly into the new millennium. There was, however, a slight catch. The new owner grew up in the house and – with her husband – bought it from her parents. The purchase brought about an interesting proposition, creating a scenario of one-part letting go and one-part hanging on.

Most people simply move into a new home without giving a second thought to the past lives – the laughter, tears, family dramas and celebratory milestones they intrinsically inherit. But, for the new owner of this home, any teenage angst or happy childhood memories might easily be conjured up – ‘It was on this very spot that I first heard...’ – with a simple sweep of her hand against the handrail, or a chance entry through a particular doorway.

The owner, of course, was well aware of any such challenges prior to purchase. “But it’s a great house,” she says, “and we knew it intimately; it’s light, airy and roomy enough to raise a family.” Design-wise, there was work to do. Says the owner, “Because I grew up here, we needed to do something to put the next generation’s stamp on it. Our design brief was for a contemporary classic home – livable with a relaxed feel. Oh, and child friendly. We have two young, fast-moving kids. We also entertain a lot and needed to designate easy areas for this – from family and friends to more formal entertaining and kids’ parties – so we also needed some flexibility.”

Their first logical step was to call in Jacci Samios and Ockert Snyman, the dynamic duo from Jacket Interiors. “It had a more classic feel to it before we got working on it,” says Snyman, “and it had a number of elements, like the dining room’s built-in server, that were already in place. Our first step was to paint the home the same colour throughout for visual continuity.”

The home packs a bold visual punch. Its architecture, visually informed by the 1980s, is modern with lots of angled glass and angular cement. That said, the Jacket team decided

not to play up the architecture, rather working with its scale to create visually 'open' rooms with a sense of understated sophistication.

"We opted for a light-coloured stone grey to create a clean, modern look," says Snyman. "Its previous incarnation used maplewood as an accent, with applications in the handrails and dining room server. We stained the maplewood a mahogany colour to add a modern sensibility while providing contrast against the stone-coloured walls. We also recarpeted the upstairs, put in new curtains, removed an indoor atrium in the entrance hall and changed all the brass door handles to matt silver. The first phase was simply to create a clean base from which to work, before installing the soft furnishings," notes Snyman.

"The previous look was creamier, with yellow-hued accents through its use of maplewood and brass, with a slightly feminine feel," says Snyman. The new look is neutral, with neither masculine nor feminine energies. "In many ways," he says, "it was quite an easy job – simply updating the look and creating visual continuity. We also looked at what was already in place and what we had to work with. There were a few Oriental pieces – tables, side tables, armoires – that complemented our installations, adding a visual twist to the overall look."

The home's generous proportions and muted wall colour provide a gallery-like backdrop against which the owners showcase a strong collection of contemporary South African art, with works by Robert Hodgins, Deborah Bell and Sam Nhlengethwa. "We just love Deborah Bell's work," says the owner, "she's our favourite."

The lesson here is twofold: working off the concepts of restraint and connection. The practice of considered restraint informs the home's 'big picture'. The owners are able to visualise the home's end result in a few years and are working towards it. For them, it's not a case of filling a home with furnishings all in one go, the instant fix 'drive-thru' take on design that so many homeowners opt for. Explains Snyman, "The owners are doing



It's not a case of filling a home with furnishings all in one go, the instant fix 'drive-thru' take on design that so many homeowners opt for

OPENING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Ockert Snyman, Jacket Interiors; aspect of living room with owners' original Oriental server, tablescape backdrop for crystal candlestick holders, and a potted orchid with flowerpot from La Grange; family room with owners' original chairs recovered in fabric from St Leger & Viney; exterior with its newly simplified garden by Hoy P'loy. **THIS PAGE** Aspect of living room featuring Andrew Martin chairs by Petit Designs, and side table by Head Interiors with William Yeoward crystal from Apsley House. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT AND RIGHT** The entrance hall features owners' original desk, with stool from La Grange, wallpaper by Ralph Lauren at St Leger & Viney and carpet from Paco Rugs; dining room with its built-in, custom-stained server; living room with its print chairs custom-made by Jacket Interiors





ABOVE The covered patio provides generous outdoor living space that flanks the dining room and pool, with furniture from La Grange. **CENTRE** New carpeting installed throughout the upstairs bedrooms and hallways provides the feel of a luxury hotel; the dressing room features an inherited ottoman, re-covered in a Warwick velvet from St Leger & Viney. **BOTTOM** Master bedroom with upholstered headboard custom-made by Jacket Interiors; throw from Cabbages & Roses, bedside lamps by Julian Decor and art by Sam Nhlengethwa

the home in phases, and started with the kids' rooms. It's a more considered approach, completing a few rooms at a time. They're doing things properly without compromising. Holding back a bit means they can invest in life-lasting purchases, and choose the 'best of' models."

A sense of connectivity drives the owners' stronger-than-usual bond with the space, informed by their long-standing history with it. Likewise, the Jacket team is connected as they've worked with the owners before, having strong insight into the owners' likes, dislikes, current needs and future plans. "They were existing clients," says Snyman, "so we had a head start on their needs. It has a glamorous undertone to it which very much suits the owners." Snyman also notes that the owner has an instinctive appreciation for interiors, "You can pop past at any time and things are in place. The cushions are just so, there's never a sense of clutter with bills, papers and old magazines piling up. Often you can return to an installation a week after it's complete and it's as if we were never there. Not so here, there are always fresh flowers and scented candles. And nothing's for the sake of 'show house' – they really enjoy it, as it's part of their lifestyle, but never take it too seriously."

Sums up the owner, "What I most enjoy about the 'look' is that it's sleek but doesn't have a stage-set feel, which a lot of decorators tend to do. You know, where you're almost nervous to sit on a chair. That would never work with our lifestyle." Indeed, to underscore her point, a giggling toddler whizzes through the living room on a toy motorbike as the photo shoot concludes. Real life prevails. And, ultimately, that's what counts. ☺

