



Hilary has an impressive collection of artwork and prints she and Daniel have assembled over the years. Displaying them against a striking backdrop allows the designs to really pop and become a focal point in the room. **Sofa**, for similar try Sofa Workshop.

Taking on a period property in need of a total modern-day makeover, Hilary and Daniel Marconetto transformed their dated Nottingham semi into a family home with plenty of colour and an eclectic edge with bags of personality

Words and styling: Cassie Pryce Photography: Simon Whitmore

Blaah Blaah Blaah;

don't grow up it's a trap; less house more home; and pop – so say the typographical prints which envelop the walls of this Victorian semi-detached home and show off owners Hilary and Daniel Marconetto's sense of fun and creativity. Of course, the property wasn't always as contemporary as it is now. When they set eyes on it in 2013, they had to look past its then-tired décor and envision its potential as the modern, sociable family space they hoped to one day create. Keen to move to Nottingham's West Bridgford suburb, popular for good schools and a friendly community, the couple knew a doer-upper was the only way to afford the area.

"There was a huge amount of interest in the property, with 40 viewings on the open day – but luckily we managed to secure the sale in a sealed bid," recalls Hilary. ▶

“We knew how much work needed to be done, but we weren’t daunted by the prospect, as Daniel had recently completed a property renovation and was eager to tackle another.”

The previous owners had lived in the house since the 1940s, so it was crying out for a top-to-bottom overhaul including installing central heating, replastering the walls, rewiring, and extending both the downstairs and the loft to make it suitable for family living. Plus, the old kitchen was built in the 1960s and comprised of two small rooms which felt cramped and claustrophobic. “To make the most of the wasted space at the side of the house, we got planning permission from the local authority to create a side and back extension to form a generous open-plan kitchen-diner,” explains Hilary. Once work began, with the help of architectural practice Rick Cobham Design, Daniel project managed the renovation alongside his full-time job as a software sales manager. “Being pregnant with our third child – Florence, now four – and having our twins Ava and Alfie, who were four at the time, in tow meant it was quite a stressful few months. Luckily, we were able to live nearby with family while the major structural work was carried out.”

As a trained interior designer, Hilary had a clear vision when it came to putting together each room’s look. The newly created kitchen-diner provides a sociable space with an eclectic yet homely feel created through its design. “After endless research into the type of kitchen we wanted, from looking at magazines and Pinterest, we decided on painted wooden units in two different shades, with a large central island to act as the hub of the room,” explains Hilary. “We hired Woodcock of Nottingham, a local joiner, to make the bespoke cabinetry, and I chose granite worktops as a practical and hard-wearing solution with three children.” Engineered oak flooring was installed throughout the space, complete with underfloor heating, and Hilary incorporated open shelving alongside the cabinets to provide ample storage. Two large skylights flood the space with natural daylight, and bi-fold doors leading out onto the decking create a seamless flow to the garden during the summer months.

Upstairs, the master bedroom sits at the front of the house and newly fitted sash windows complement the period property’s original style. Positioning the bed to face the windows, Hilary hoped to open up the space and make the most of the leafy outdoor view. “Creating a calm and tranquil feel was a top priority, so I chose Farrow & Ball’s Setting Plaster on the walls, which is a soft, peachy hue,” she explains. “Wool-twist carpets provide a comforting texture underfoot, and we revealed and salvaged the original marble fireplace which had been boarded up by the previous owners.”

Continuing the work on the first floor, the existing bathroom was extended to create a shower enclosure, which involved moving a wall back into the spare bedroom on one side and taking a section from Florence’s bedroom on the other. The new layout is spacious and practical for the family of five and Hilary chose classic metro tiles in two colours to create a distinction between the two parts of the room. “When we moved in, the bathroom was covered in floor-to-ceiling dated pink tiles and felt very drab,” she remembers. “We were, however, lucky to inherit a beautiful cast-iron roll-top bath which fitted in perfectly with the traditional-meets-contemporary look I was hoping for.” To revive it, Hilary had the bath re-enamelled and Daniel painted it in Farrow & Ball’s Railings before adding new feet and taps.

Taking on such a large renovation was certainly a labour of love for Hilary and Daniel, but they say the end result is more than worth the wait. “Watching the structure of the house evolve during the works was a wonderful experience, and seeing it come together confirmed all the decisions we had made along the way,” she adds. As the print hanging in the dining area says, “less house more home” indeed.

Hilary incorporated her love for both light and dark interiors by contrasting Farrow & Ball’s Cornforth White paint against the moody shade of Railings in the kitchen-diner. **Cabinetry, shelves, and worktops**, Woodcock of Nottingham; **sink and tap**, Franke; **barstools**, Amara; **pendant lights**, Rowen & Wren.



THE FACTS

Who: Hilary and Daniel Marconetto with their three children – twins Ava and Alfie, eight, and their little sister Florence, four
Where: Nottingham
What: A total house renovation, including a rear and side extension
Cost: Around £120,000. The kitchen cost £15,000, the bathroom £5000, and the bedroom £3000
Time: Between 10 months and a year



← A large decked area creates a sociable outdoor space to entertain friends and family. Hilary has styled it with assorted wicker furniture and deckchairs, as well as a weatherproof rug.

→ Habitat's Hester dining chairs, in a range of coloured frames, have a Mid-century appeal and fit in with the fun, mismatched yet curated look Hilary set out to achieve.



← Aluminium bi-fold doors from Window Concepts stretch the width of the extension and link the outdoor and indoor spaces. To improve the property's energy efficiency, the couple had underfloor heating installed throughout. Rug, Søstrene Grene; wall paint, Farrow & Ball. ▶



→ A trio of vintage-style **pendant lights** from Rowen & Wren provides direct lighting above the island. The tarnished finish gives a nod to industrial style.



“Create moodboards in advance for every room to help organise your ideas for both the structural and interior design decisions. I took inspiration from magazines and websites such as Pinterest.”
Hilary Marconetto,
 homeowner and interior designer



← A **bespoke shelving unit** was built by Woodcock of Nottingham to provide additional kitchen storage. The oak board backing complements the wooden drawers and adds a warm tone to the décor. **Tiles,** Mandarin Stone.

→ The separate sitting room is positioned at the front of the house. A soft palette of pastel shades gives it a modern edge, along with the bold feature **wallpaper** by Farrow & Ball. **Sofa,** Loaf; **rug,** for similar try Made; **pouffe,** Loaf; **ceiling light,** Tom Dixon; **floor lamp,** Habitat. ▶



↖ The Charnwood wood-burning **stove** creates a cosy setting in the winter months. Hilary salvaged and reupholstered the Mid-century armchair from one of Daniel's previous renovation projects. **Floor lamp**, Made.

← Hilary introduced plenty of soft textures into the bedroom, such as the upholstered bedframe, wool carpet, and delicate feather light fitting. Black accents worked into the peachy scheme keep the look from looking too pastel. **Bed**, for similar try Wayfair; **ceiling light**, Umage; **wall paint**, Farrow & Ball; **flooring**, Kings Carpets Nottingham.

↑ Contemporary angular **wall lights** from Made are ideal for bedtime reading and tie in with the minimalist **bedside tables** from Habitat.

→ The family bathroom combines both traditional and modern elements, brought together by Hilary's design choices. Simple metro tiles will stand the test of time and the statement freestanding bath gives a nod to the property's character. **Bath**, for similar, try Bathroom City; **side table**, HomeSense; **round mirror**, for similar, try Loaf; **tiles**, Topps Tiles. ▶



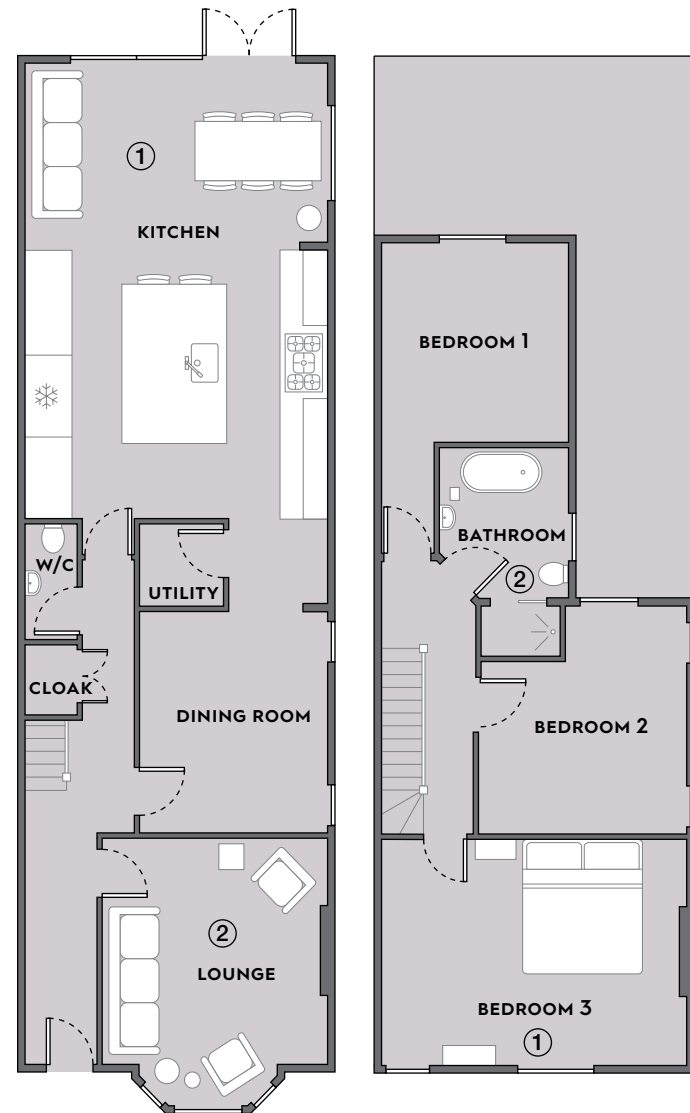
"We used independent plumbers, electricians, and joiners which, although juggling different tradesmen was stressful at times, helped keep costs down."
Hilary Marconetto,
 homeowner
 and interior designer



↑ A mirrored cabinet positioned opposite the window bounces light around the room and helps the space feel bright and airy. **Vanity units and taps**, Ikea; **wall paint**, Farrow & Ball.

THE PLANS

A side and back extension downstairs has allowed for a spacious, family-oriented kitchen-diner. Upstairs, the bathroom has been enlarged and modernised and the master bedroom has been given a cosmetic overhaul.



GROUND FLOOR

1 Kitchen-diner The new open-plan space was designed to be both practicable and sociable, to cater to family life.
2 Lounge Located at the front of the house, the living room features newly fitted sash windows in keeping with the property's age.

FIRST FLOOR

1 Bedroom Sitting at the front of the house, Hilary designed the master bedroom to make the most of the leafy views and generous daylight.
2 Bathroom Moving a wall and stealing a bit of space from Florence's neighbouring bedroom afforded the room space for a shower enclosure.

SOURCE BOOK

Interior design Hilary Marconetto Interiors 07795 498108, hilarymarconettointeriors.co.uk
Architect Rick Cobham Design 0115 870 8135, rickcobhamdesign.co.uk
Kitchen cabinetry Bespoke shaker-style units, Woodcock of Nottingham 0115 962 1696, woodcockofnottingham.co.uk
Worktops Solid granite, Woodcock of Nottingham, as before
Kitchen flooring Kahrs engineered oak, T&R Floor Covering Distributors 0115 925 7711, trflooring.com
Bi-fold doors Bespoke aluminium doors, Window Concepts 0115 970 1000, windowconcepts.co.uk
Bedroom flooring Wool twist carpet, Kings Carpets and Interiors 0115 925 8347, kingsinteriors.co.uk
 For full stockist information, see page 156

HOME STYLE



1 Eos large lampshade in light brown, from £199, Umage. umage.com **2** Santiago flamingo sculpture in antique bronze finish, £90, Artisanti. artisanti.com **3** Antique bronze metal pendant light, £165, The Farthing. thefarthing.co.uk **4** The Wandle bath by Martin Brudnizki, £5460, Drummonds. drummonds-uk.com **5** Black split shift two tiles, £5.88 per tile, Bert & May. bertandmay.com **6** Ink ombre cushion, £20, Graham & Brown. grahambrown.com **7** Acapulco chair in blue, £329, Boqa. boqa.fr/en **8** Flamingo head, £45, Cuckooland. cuckooland.com **9** Darcey shelf in multicolour grey, £349, Made. made.com **10** Oversized black frame mirror, £350, Cox & Cox. coxandcox.co.uk **11** Large Orla Kiely 60s stern ceramic hanging plant pot, £34.95, Hurn & Hurn. hurnandhurn.com **12** Brass crane lamp, £225, The Old Cinema. theoldcinema.co.uk **13** Normann Copenhagen form barstool in oak and grey, £230, Amara. amara.com **14** Lau dining table in light, £1789, Heal's. heals.com **15** Aura matte paint in Adriatic sea, £25 for 0.94 litres, Benjamin Moore. benjaminmoorepaint.co.uk **16** Flamingo candleholder, £7, B&Q. diy.com **17** Blue Stripe Red Dot ceramic jug, £30, Gisela Graham. giselagraham.co.uk

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