



# From the editor

'We've got to be able to make mistakes. If we don't, we haven't pushed ourselves.' It is a generally accepted truth (if not a much publicised one) that commissioning an interior designer or architect will not make your project immune to error – and amen to that! How can one possibly be original without making the odd blunder? Tempting as it may be to fall back on tried

and tested formulas, they will never result in a house that has pushed any boundaries.

The opening quote was a comment made to the architect William Smalley by his client. He had just taken on the remodelling and design of what is now a restrained and quietly beautiful family house in London (pages 86–95). William found her attitude reassuringly enlightened and it formed the foundation for a brilliant creative collaboration. Also in this issue, and in total contrast to the above, we have an unusual textured house, stamped with the unmistakable style of antique dealer and designer Christopher Howe (pages 76–85). Christopher originally advised his client against using a decorator: 'He has a great eye and might as well make his own mistakes rather than pay someone else to make them for him.' On the sliding scale of errors, there is without doubt a qualitative difference between those made by a skilled decorator and the ones generated by a floundering homeowner; when you pay for a designer's vision, you are also gaining a wealth of practical experience. Costly errors, whether creative or the result of bad planning, are a luxury not all of us can afford.

The kitchen is a room that benefits from a clear vision, and we have plenty on this subject in this issue. In part two of our 'Design ideas' kitchen special (from page 55), Elizabeth Metcalfe has filled the pages with inspiration and practical advice to help you make informed decisions that you won't regret. Elsewhere, Rémy Mishon has stacked up good-looking kitchen chairs for under £200 (page 27) and Ruth Sleightholme has created three striking kitchen schemes (from page 110).

We don't always know what went on in the run-up to the completion of projects we feature – the sofa that went back, the yellow room with a rainbow of other colours concealed beneath or the happy mistake that stayed – but whatever the journey, I'm sure you will agree the end results are a great success.

*Gabby Deeming*

## O N M Y R A D A R



We featured the house of Belgian artist ISABELLE DE BORCHGRAVE in our April 2015 issue, and I was reminded again recently of her brilliant work with paper, such as this elaborate light. [isabelledeborchgrave.com](http://isabelledeborchgrave.com)



ALIDAD's apartment in Mayfair is a warm and wonderful testimony to his skill as a decorator, so what could be nicer than to spend a day with the man himself in his home, learning his design secrets? The good news is you can. Visit [athomewithalid.com](http://athomewithalid.com) to find out how.



We are all in love with the eighteenth-century cotton prints from French fabric house LE MANACH and now you can go the whole hog with its wallpaper, too – launching in January. [pierrefrey.com](http://pierrefrey.com)



Good STRIPES should be everywhere, but for some reason, as soon as you want one, they're impossible to find. I love the breadth of this thick sateen 'Pringle Stripe' cotton, £162 a metre, from Ralph Lauren Home – it would look great on a long sofa. [ralphlaurenhome.com](http://ralphlaurenhome.com) □