

## CASE STUDY

*Copenhagen, 21 August 2018*

### **modern heritage in residence**

AJ Levers and Knud Holscher hooks find a home in a sensitively renovated period Copenhagen apartment

In an old Østerbro apartment overlooking Copenhagen's beautiful Lakes, a British couple have created a quietly stunning home for their family.

The apartment mixes the couple's most treasured furniture and belongings from England, with classic Danish design pieces including the AJ Lever, and a palette inspired by one of Copenhagen's most iconic buildings.

Its owners are Adrian, a British illustrator, and his wife Kate, a half-Danish, half-English design writer. When they bought the late 1880s apartment a year ago, it was with a plan to adapt it to suit the needs of a modern family.

Says Kate: "Although there are many amazing new-builds in Copenhagen, constructed for noise elimination, light maximisation and sustainable living, we were always going to live in a period property. We're used to leaky, wonky English Victorian houses. Old buildings – with all their problems and charms – are what we know."

On first viewing the two-bedroom apartment, the couple immediately saw how they could adapt it for their busy young family: by converting the small existing kitchen into a third bedroom, and building a bespoke-designed kitchen with dining room in what had been the living room. The adjoining old dining room – also with a lake view – would then become the living room.

"We had no need for a huge dining room," explains Adrian. "To have an eat-in kitchen sharing an almost open-plan space with the living room means that our communal space is at the front of the apartment, where the light, open skies and views are. Meanwhile the bedrooms are in the back, where it's darker and more private. Moving things around also meant our two sons each having their own room."

To renovate and convert the space, they couple worked with architect Lotte Valentin, who is familiar with the quirks of these old Copenhagen buildings and could help them see possibilities and problems they may not have otherwise noticed, as well as project manage contractors – something that was daunting for the couple, whose first language is not Danish.

### **classic meets mid-century, british meets scandinavian**

Lotte helped the couple to treat the apartment's heritage features as they should be, suggesting they sand back a small area of the dark-stained herringbone floor in the kitchen where the units would stand, to see if the original oak could be reached. "We were thrilled when it came up so light," says Adrian. "We also had the original stucco ceilings carefully cleaned and painted on Lotte's recommendation."

The door handles were mismatched and shaky, leading to AJ Levers being fitted throughout. "I have always loved that door handle," says Kate. "And although we're usually

stainless steel people, Lotte explained that the brass is very much in keeping with the age of the apartment, and that it patinates beautifully. We didn't need convincing."

Stainless steel has instead chosen for a trio of the Knud Holscher Collection's Coat Hook ø25, which were hung behind the kitchen door at the height for tea towels. They coordinate with the kitchen's counter's dark grey veining, and the stainless steel sink and tap.

The kitchen's wall and unit colours were inspired by those of the SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen, the building that Arne Jacobsen designed the AJ Lever for back in 1961. "The greenish-blue wall above the counter changes shade right through the day with the morphing light," says Adrian, who chose the colours. "In the darker months it is almost a dark jade green, while in bright sunlight of the long summer evenings, it's very light blue."

### **mindful modernisation**

The apartment is eclectic, yet has a Scandinavian feel. Having lived there now for a year, the couple says that its mix of old and new, inherited and created somehow works. "Some things you live with," says Kate, "whether because of budget constraints or practical ones. But everything we've changed we've been so happy with. We were very mindful while doing it – of the history of the building, of our love of this city's design aesthetic and also of honouring where we came from."

"Because I'm half-Danish, our homes have always had a Scandinavian feel, so this one is not a huge departure from our norm. But we've made changes – both big and very small – with timelessness in mind. Nothing we've done is too crazy or trend-led, because we want it to work now and to keep working. We're really lucky to feel now that we have what the British interiors press calls 'our forever home.'"

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### **about d line**

d line is a heritage Danish design brand conceiving and hand crafting enduring architectural hardware, sanitary ware and solutions for barrier-free living. Its designs – which include its perfectly balanced lever handles – respond to needs, while pushing to evolve, innovate and lead in new areas.

Launched in 1971 with the coordinated line of stainless steel architectural products Knud Holscher created for St Catherine's College Oxford, d line has since collaborated with iconic Danish designers including Arne Jacobsen and Bjarke Ingels. The brand's ambition is to be universally known, coveted and admired for the uncompromising endurance of its design, craftsmanship and quality.

### **based in the UK?**

We have good news: you can now access d line more directly via its own sales force in the UK, known as d line eisenware. With offices in London and Birmingham, and representation across the country, the brand is excited to be where you are.

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#### **notes to editors**

- Photography by Norm Architects
- The AJ lever handle comes in brass and stainless steel (brushed or polished finish), as well as PVD Charcoal, PVD copper and PVD Gunmetal. Read more about the available finishes here: <http://dline.com/colours>
- The AJ lever handle is part of the Arne Jacobsen collection. Read more about the collection here: <http://dline.com/collections/arne-jacobsen-collection>
- Learn more about the Knud Holscher Coat Hook ø25 here: <http://dline.com/product/knud-holscher-collection-coat-hook-o25/>
- The full case study on the SAS Royal Hotel can be found here: <http://dline.com/cases/sas-royal-hotel/>

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