

MANSION

BALANCE SHEET

Every Corner Counts in This Stuttgart Home

A German couple preserves original details of their landmark 1905 duplex, then adds a bold décor

BY J.S. MARCUS

ARCHITECT PETER IPPOLITO and his partner, textile designer Stefan Gabel, made small structural changes to grand effect when they transformed a humdrum duplex into a luxurious residence in Stuttgart, Germany.

The pair paid about \$1.17 million in December 2013 for the 3,120-square-foot unit, on the top two floors of a 1905 building in the city's central Heusteigviertel neighborhood. The price included a separate 860-square-foot unit that the couple rents out.

The two spent six months and more than \$427,000 redoing the duplex, moving in during the summer of 2014.

The building's landmark status meant they had to preserve traces of the original interior. They had more leeway with alterations made in postwar renovations, allowing them to tear out walls and flooring.

Their most dramatic choices, however, centered on the décor: digitally printed wallpaper that climbs up a wall and onto a ceiling in one nook, a hand-decorated ceiling in the dining room, and window art made of shades of pink rope.

"The apartment is all about objects," says Mr. Ippolito, 49, co-founder of Ippolito Fleitz Group, a Stuttgart-based company known for its residential and commercial interiors. Mr. Gabel, 50, is head of design at Germany's home-furnishings company, Zimmer & Rohde. Neither is a native of Stuttgart; Mr. Ippolito grew up in Nuremberg and Mr. Gabel in Heilbronn, north of the city.

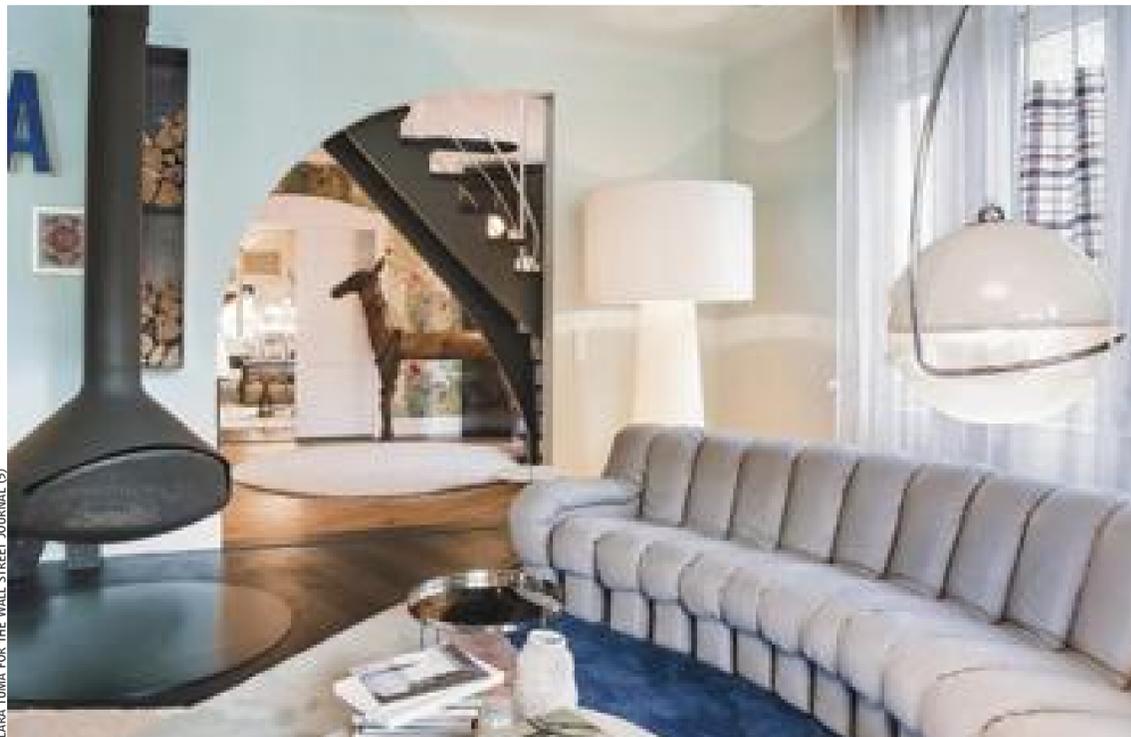
The two have distinct tastes, and view their home as collaboration.

"I am a little more Asian-influenced," says Mr. Gabel, "and Peter is more influenced by Italy. He loves a lush style, and I like a bit more calm."

The apartment's quirky trapezoidal foyer is now a fully decorated room, featuring a massive, 18-foot threshing bench from India, as well as an artificial rhino head acquired from celebrated Parisian taxidermist Deyrolle for \$2,700.

Elsewhere, the home retains its original curved doorways, updated with scratch-pattern glass on the doors but painted their original white. For contrast, the new floors are black-stained parquet.

The upper level maintains a



GO BOLD Stefan Gabel and Peter Ippolito, from left in inset, transformed their duplex by using dramatic touches, such as black parquet floors and oversized lamps. Above, the living room. Below, the dining room and the bedroom with library. Top right, the main entrance.

simple layout: a loftlike home office fashioned from a postwar attic conversion that is topped off with a corrugated skylight ceiling. It opens onto a spacious balcony. The decoration is also simple: various sculptural plants, including cactuses. They also installed a new steam bath on the floor, which takes the place of an old sauna downstairs.

Home life is centered on the lower floor, where inside doors are kept open. At the front of the apartment, the living and dining rooms, as well as a breakfast area, flow into each other. Big, bold objects in the living room include a long, snaking sofa and an oversized floor lamp from Italy's Cappellini, while the dining room's raw-silk wallpaper has a discreet, Asian flair.

In the living room, the pair jet-tisoned a sliding door in favor of a dramatic archway, which now frames a freshly wallpapered space surrounding the stairs. They added a large wooden horse sculpture from India to the space. The couple spent about \$23,500 furnishing the stairway area alone.

At the far end of the apartment, they converted three small rooms

into the home's sole bedroom: a large, book-lined room with adjoining walk-in closet.

A home gym on the same level has a Murphy bed that can turn the space into a guest room.

The couple spent \$60,000 converting previous full and guest bathrooms into two full baths. The lower floor bathroom now has shell-limestone floors and a free-standing bathtub from Germany's Bette. "It's kind of geometric but still soft," says Mr. Ippolito, of the sculptural tub. There is also a lower-floor powder room.

They decided to update the kitchen—including taking out an adjacent freezer room for storing game—at a cost of about \$26,000. It is now equipped with a new gas stove from Italy's Ilve.

The kitchen may get another makeover when the couple and their neighbors install an elevator. The elevator, a contemporary exception being evaluated by Stuttgart's landmarks commission, would create an entrance where there is now a small balcony.

Ralph Schenkel, owner of Von Poll Immobilien's Stuttgart office, says a similar unit in the same area could now fetch more than \$2.1 million.

"For us this is just a start," says Mr. Ippolito. "It's not like this a stage set and now we can say, 'We're all done.' It's more like living organism."



KEY COSTS

Kitchen
\$26,100

Bathrooms
\$59,600

Bedroom
\$12,800

Floors
\$41,500

Demolition
\$8,500

Heating
\$34,000

Living room:
\$63,800

Dining area
\$25,500

Stairwell area,
archway plus
decoration
\$23,400

Home gym
\$16,500

Electricity
\$23,400

Paint/plaster
\$51,100

Furnishings
\$41,400

TOTAL
\$427,600



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