KITCHEN
A striking corrugated iron ceiling is complemented by a cluster of pendants. Cabinetry designed by Spencer & Wedekind, and painted in Castle Gray estate eggshell, £60 per 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Davey Box Wall Lights, £438 each, Original BTC at Heal's

ARTISTIC LICENCE

A dash of imagination and a little help from their next-door neighbour enabled director Jonathan Munby and actor Martin Hutson to create the perfect city retreat

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE | **PHOTOGRAPHY** BÉNÉDICTE DRUMMOND

INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
Victorian mid-terrace cottage
LOCATION London
ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen, bedroom, study, bathroom
PURCHASED 2004
PREVIOUS PROPERTY
'We moved into this house from a basement flat nearby,' says Jonathan.

KITCHEN
**Painting the cabinetry and walls in the same
hue creates a seamless unified feel.**
Architecture White Matt wall tiles, £49.42sq m, Fired Earth.
French Gray floor paint, £66 per 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

FAVOURITE ROOM *'We love the light-filled kitchen and the wonderful view of the*

Trading a dark basement flat for a charming mid-terrace cottage was a lucky move for theatre director Jonathan Munby and his husband, actor Martin Hutson. And serendipity struck again when they found that their new next-door neighbour was an interior designer who shared their enthusiasm for rejuvenating the tired property.

'This lovely street in a quiet west London enclave sold the house to us,' says Jonathan. 'But the cottage's interior was very uninspiring. It was a bachelor pad with few redeeming features apart from a bright kitchen. But on the upside, we had a blank canvas to work with. Then we met our next-door neighbour Nicholas Spencer and his wife Sophie and everything slotted into place.'

Having spent some time settling into their home, the couple already knew that they wanted to modernise it and create room for their treasured artwork and books, while staying true to the property's period roots. 'When we found that Nicholas was an interior designer, asking him to get involved was a no-brainer,' explains Jonathan. Thus ensued many relaxed get-togethers where the trio cooked up ideas, finally settling on a look that introduced subtle industrial touches that would complement the creative details that reference Martin and Jonathan's life in the arts.

A palette of soft blues, greys and greens prevails throughout, enlivened by textural touches such as patterned wallpaper in the sitting room and bedroom, a painted runner on the staircase, tactile linens and rugs and plenty of rustic wood. But the pièce de résistance is the corrugated iron ceiling in the kitchen. 'It's something that we would never have thought of,' says Jonathan, 'but Nicholas persuaded us to give it a go. We were hesitant at first, but now, of course, we love it.' The
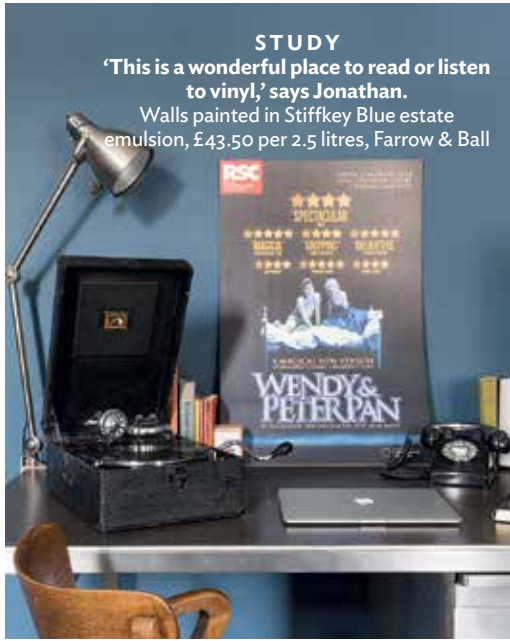
garden makes it a great place to entertain'

SITTING ROOM
**The pair made a bold choice by papering a wall
with this eye-catching print. 'It adds character
and is a great dramatic touch,' says Jonathan.**
Cow Parsley wallpaper, £76 per roll, Cole & Son.
Vintage drinks trolley, leather sofa and coffee table,
price on request, all The Old Cinema. Large
Kinvara mirror, £165, Oka

SITTING ROOM
**This cosy spot at the
rear of the house
is the perfect nook
for a work space.**
Vintage desk and
chair, price on request,
The Old Cinema. The
Barometer work lamp
has this look, £30, Ikea

STUDY
'This is a wonderful place to read or listen to vinyl,' says Jonathan.
Walls painted in Stiffkey Blue estate emulsion, £43.50 per 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

BATHROOM
The controlled palette and vintage fittings lend a modern yet period feel.
Millbrook double-ended cast iron tub, from £875, The Cast Iron Bath Company

decor's industrial elements came together naturally once the corrugated roof was installed and bring distinction to the relaxed palette. A collection of mismatched pendants with glowing exposed filaments sets off the look in the kitchen, a zinc desk in the study introduces an ergonomic aesthetic and the metal bedstead and rustic table lamps in the master bedroom add a utilitarian but welcoming note.

Best of all, neighbour Nicholas was on hand to offer the pair guidance when needed. 'It was great to source colours, fabrics and furniture with his input,' says Jonathan. 'Having him as a neighbour was also a bonus. He would come knocking at the door with tiles or swatches he loved and many of these were discussed over a glass of wine or a coffee – definitely the best way to

make creative decisions.' The result is an understated and deeply comfortable home filled with a carefully curated selection of Martin and Jonathan's favourite finds, from an extensive library of books in the study to framed prints showcasing productions that the pair have been involved in.

'It's a great space for entertaining, whether dinner for family and friends, relaxed Sunday lunches or barbecues in the summer,' says Jonathan. 'But it's also a fantastic retreat where we can sit and read, listen to records or cosy up with a film.' Next on the agenda is a possible loft extension or the widening of the ground floor. And of course should that happen, Martin and Jonathan won't have to cast their net too wide. Fortuitously, they need only look next door to realise their plan. 25

FUTURE PLANS *'We may consider extending into the loft or widening the kitchen'*

MASTER BEDROOM
An iron bedstead and exposed filament wall lights nod to the industrial style, while patterned wallpaper softens the look.
Garden Craft wallpaper by Morris & Co, £61 per roll, Fashion Wallpaper. Framed Butterfly Drawer from £160, Digs. Domeo table lamps, £95 each, Loaf