



THE LIFE OF SAMMY DAVIS, JR.
LUXURY TOYS
ICONS OF THE 20TH CENTURY



APRIL RUSSELL

APRIL RUSSELL DESIGNS LTD

To enter April Russell's world is to be welcomed into a world of calmness. Her first rule of design is to keep everything simple, and then, like a painting, build layer upon layer to reflect the character and lifestyle of her clients.

April says that design has always been in her soul. Brought up in New York, and the youngest of four children, she grew up spending a great deal of time with her parents. They frequently entertained at home, and she quickly came to appreciate the skills needed to create a warm and welcoming interior. The fabulous homes she visited as a child didn't go unnoticed either, and to this day she sees the world with eyes wide open, unwilling to miss an unusual feature or tiny detail.

In the late 1970s, April came to London to cultivate her eye still further. After a year training at the Ingham School of Design and Sotheby's, she travelled



extensively in Europe, saturating herself in the fine and decorative arts, before settling back in London, where she has been based ever since.

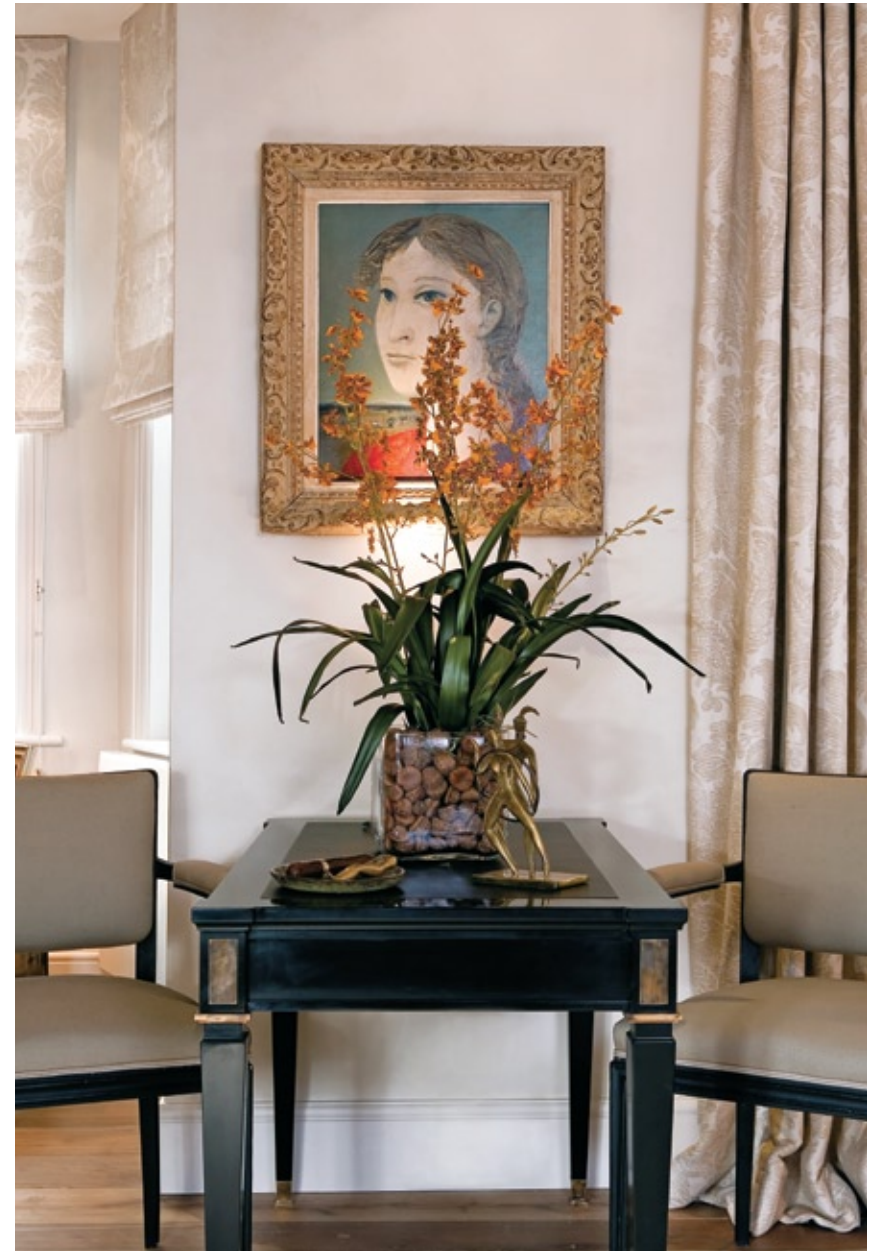
April overhauled her first London house—an investment property in Chester Square—in 1990. Her friend Piers von Westenholz picked up on her skill as a project manager and designer, and invited her to work for the interior design side of his business. She shone in her new role, and subsequently went on to work for Jane Morris at Percy Bass for seven years before setting off on her own.

ABOVE:

Thoughtful details greatly enhance the ambience of the open kitchen and dining area.
Photograph by Magdalena Plewa

FACING PAGE:

With furniture made specially by Christian Liaigre and upholstery by George Smith, the comfortable seating area is an ideal place for reading and conversation.
Photograph by Magdalena Plewa



By concentrating on five or six projects a year, April offers a boutique, personal service. Her look is luxurious but not pretentious, and everything appears as if it has been put together effortlessly. She has a light but sure touch, creating schemes of great subtlety by using understated paint finishes and beautifully crafted contemporary furniture, for example. Art is a great passion for her, and the paintings she chooses always add that extra dimension, bringing everything to life.

April wants to remain true both to herself and to her clients, which means coming up with something new, rather than slavishly treading the same old path. She says that interiors are like gardens: they grow. Unlike the designers

who create a scheme they expect to be timeless and immutable, she likes to add, subtract and adjust. Her clients' needs are always evolving, and so should the way they live.

ABOVE LEFT:

A collection of witty decorative art hangs in the guest cloakroom of a refurbished Chelsea flat. The soft texture of the walls blends with the blue Moleanos stone. The bronze crab reminds the clients of a trip to Vamizi Island off Mozambique.
Photograph by Magdalena Plewa

ABOVE RIGHT:

The mid-20th-century French table and chairs are used for frequent backgammon and card games; the bronze Italian nutcracker and French sculpture are of the same period. French artist André Marchand created the painting, which has been nicknamed Maud.
Photograph by Magdalena Plewa

FACING PAGE:

Once a large master bedroom and bathroom, the kitchen and dining area are infused with natural light. The table and benches are custom Christian Liaigre, while the useful display unit was bought at an antique shop in Pimlico. Mathers and Hirst fabricated the kitchen units, which have honed Nero Zimbabwe worktops.
Photograph by Magdalena Plewa

