



Spider

Bromley, London

Architect : Unagru Architecture Urbanism
Structural Engineer : Structures Made Easy
Contractor : Time To Refurbish Limited
Joinery : Progetto 172
Photographer : Attilio Fiumarella

Completion Year : 2018
Area : 170 sqm
Budget : < £300,000

The original rear ground floor of this large semi-detached Edwardian house in Bromley was extremely fragmented, resulting in small, dark spaces and little flexibility. Our proposal was to unite the three-and-a-half rooms forming the rear ground floor into one large space. Rather than simply knocking down walls and creating a single space, we have worked with clients on selecting the features worth preserving, with the aim of increasing rather than reducing the richness of the resulting space. We also decided we should record the intervention by exposing the new structure. The latter is conceived as a single object, with flush, continuous surfaces: an asymmetric portal reminiscent of LeCorbusier's Villa Savoye's entrance portal, Louise Bourgoise's sculptures, and Sol LeWitt's incomplete structures.

The Project

The portal is set 400mm beneath the ceiling level in order to preserve the trace of the original layout. One of the existing ceiling decorations is also preserved, with two new ceiling shapes playfully counteracting the traditional features. The floor design is also conceived to combine the clarity of the new design with the complexity of original fragments. The clients proposed to use a beautiful, traditional tile, together with a more typical engineered wood floor. The changes in materials coincide with the footprint of original rooms: the tiles denote the bay window area (now imagined as a greenhouse), and the breakfast room; the engineered wood outlines the original dining room and kitchen (with planks laid in two different directions).

The kitchen island is left free to cross the original partition lines: a very large, coloured, freestanding object. The entire kitchen was designed to wrap around the existing corner chimney breast and make the most of the high ceilings.

The result is a complex, but very clear and bright space composed of four volumes and enriched with four different ceiling shapes, and four different floor finishes.

Unagru also designed and participated at the interior design of the upper floors bedroom, closet and master bathroom.