

Knead a new-look house?



Jenne with his creations (above) and his new home (right)



Not content with redesigning their favourite bakers shop, Azman Owens Architects ripped out the innards of a dilapidated Georgian house for cake king Gerhard Jenne. **Marcus Field** visited the serene home created on London's South Bank

IT SEEMS only natural that the home of celebrated London baker Gerhard Jenne should be just as original and scrumptious as one of his famous fancy cakes. Designed by Azman Owens Architects, the interior of his modest Georgian house juxtaposes perfectly restored period features with sharp contemporary details and a couple of idiosyncratic touches that make it so peculiarly his.

Jenne, 37, is the proprietor of Konditor & Cook, the bespoke bakery and confectioner which he started in 1993. Mouthwatering savouries and delicately decorated pastries line the windows of his shop, a small period building which sits in an enclave of preserved early 19th-century London on the south bank of the Thames.

During his first year in business Jenne met American-born architect Joyce Owens, a customer who lived in the same street. A standing joke developed between them when she challenged the authenticity of his

recipe for pecan pie. He in turn laid down a challenge to Owens and her business partner Ferhan Azman to design him the perfect store. Together they set to work. They cleared out the twee tea-shop fittings, reordered the space and added details such as glass shelves to create a more sophisticated backdrop to the goods on sale. The success has been phenomenal and around 600 customers now come through the door each day.

After the completion of the bakery, Jenne asked the architects to redesign the bathroom in his Brixton flat. They thought he needed more than just a new bathroom and so showed him a house that they had recently gutted and remodelled in Islington, north London. The project made such an impression on the baker that he decided to ditch the bathroom and look for a whole house to transform instead.

Jenne's continental attitude towards homemaking meant he was not intimidated by the prospect of

taking on a complex building project. "It's quite a German thing to build your own house," he says. Instead he was more concerned about the scale of the Georgian building that would form the shell. "I looked at two which were like dolls' houses," he says, but finally he settled on a slightly run-down terraced house in Roupell Street, just a couple of doors down from the bakery, an ideal location because of his early morning starts.

What made this particular house ripe for intervention, says Owens, is that it was already "spoilt". Years of alterations, additions and accumulated layers of decor left little inside worth saving. Most importantly, the originally poky ground-floor rooms which would have been protected by the house's Grade II listed status had already been knocked together to make a large, bright living space.

Initially Jenne detailed his requirements to Azman and Owens and he then left them to develop their ideas

for the house. "I know that when I do a cake commission," he explains, "the worst customers are the ones who tell you exactly what they want. They are the ones who would really rather bake

'I asked the architects to make me a tidier person. And now I am. I enjoy moving the pots around'

it themselves." His trust in the creativity of his designers has paid off.

The architects' approach has been to remove the layers of accretions such as mock period fireplaces, varnished veneered partitions and flock wallpaper to reveal the house's pleasing simplicity. Luckily the original floorboards and staircases were intact and these have

been stripped and polished. A small portion of the original panelled partition between the hall and sitting-room has also been restored. To contrast with these Georgian relics, Azman and Owens have inserted a series of striking modern details including a plate-glass balustrade to the staircase and a polished maple bench in the sitting-room. Rather than fit a period fireplace, a simple opening has been left where Jenne can now light a fire without it looking too retro or old-fashioned.

Beyond the sitting-room a series of cramped spaces has been knocked together and rebuilt to form a dining-room and light, airy kitchen. Here, finishes are simple and functional, with a tiled floor and limestone work surfaces. Glistening stainless-steel shelves are set off against a cobalt-blue wall, crockery and kitchen appliances are meticulously arranged. "I asked the architects to make me a tidier person," says Jenne. "And now I am. I enjoy moving the pots around."



RICHARD WATTE

In the lobby off the dining-room the designers placed yellow wall-mounted letter trays, a tongue-in-cheek reference to German post-boxes.

In response to Jenne's wish to be in contact with the elements, Azman and Owens have glazed the entire rear wall and pitched roof of the kitchen so that it joins seamlessly with the outside (Jenne claims he once slept here so that he could gaze up at the stars). Beyond this they have continued the kitchen-floor tiles into the garden which is conceived as a further room to the house. A boon to Jenne's summer parties will be the discreet and carefully restored outside privy.

Jenne asked of the two female architects that this should be "a man's house" and upstairs a urinal has been fitted in the bathroom (apart from the novel appeal in Britain of having a urinal at home this has the added cachet of being ecologically friendlier as it requires less water to flush) and the entire wall behind the basin is mirrored to make

shaving easier. In contrast to the rather hard and cool finishes elsewhere, there is also a hint of humour here in the form of a purple rubber floor.

Outside the bathroom the landing which links the two bedrooms is flooded with sunshine from a new skylight over the staircase. Combined with the sound of classical music which wafts around the house via a high-tech sound system, the overall effect is so serene and calming that it is easy to forget that the hustle and bustle of central London is just streets away.

And Jenne, how does he feel now that he has settled in to his bespoke new home? "I love it" says the contented baker. "When I come home it makes me feel regenerated and happy."

Marcus Field is the deputy editor of 'Blueprint'

□ Konditor & Cook, 22 Cornwall Road, London SE1 8TW, 0171 261 0456. Azman Owens Architects, 0171 739 8404

For Sales

THE DUFFLECOAT COMPANY

SALE



£129.95 plus p&p

The finest English dufflecoats made by Gloverall. This classic design is made to last and keep you warm. Navy, Cardinal Red (left). All at our sale price of £129.95 plus postage and packing £3 in UK. Also available in Conifer Green, Camel, Charcoal Grey and Teal. Sizes 32" to 48". Visa, Access, Amex. 7-day mail order despatch. Call for full brochure.

0171 498 8191



Made in England

The Dufflecoat Company, 140 Battersea Park Road, London SW11 4NB. Fax 0171 498 0990

You may be sent details of other offers. Please specify if you do not wish to receive these.

NORFOLK VELVET HAT

£24.50 Plus £1.45 p&p



Made In UK



We've used the very best velvet for this classic winter hat. The wide brim offers protection from the weather but still allows the hat to be folded flat for travel. Available in this season's striking colours; Ruby Red, Emerald Green, Chocolate Brown and Black. Sizes S 54-55cm, M 56-57cm, L 58cm and XL 59cm.

Amex, Visa, Mastercard

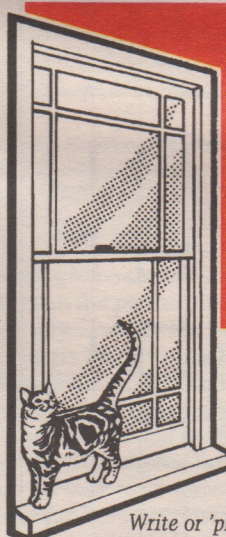
For 3 Day Despatch Call

0171 498 2099

Or send a cheque to Norfolk Hats, 140 Battersea Park Road, London SW11 4NB Fax 0171 498 0990

Please specify if you do not wish to receive details of other offers.

House and Home



Original BOX-SASH or HINGED WINDOWS, FRONT DOORS, FRENCH DOORS

The finest timber superbly crafted. Double glazed. The friendliest help and service.

Write or 'phone for free Handbook

The ORIGINAL BOX SASH WINDOW COMPANY (Dept. BH) FREEPOST 28, Windsor, Berks SL4 1BR.

Tel: (01753) 858196



Obb T-Shirts

Many designs on different coloured

T-shirts, in XL & L.

All 100%

heavyweight cotton.

FREE CATALOGUE

01426 972395.

P.O. Box 75,

Manchester M21 9RJ

House and Home

SOFA WORKSHOP DIRECT

RELIABLE, COMFORTABLE, AFFORDABLE, WASHABLE ...SIMPLY UNBELIEVABLE AT £399



Price includes VAT and delivery (UK mainland only). 10% deposit and interest free credit option available. See brochure.

Sofa Workshop has over twelve years experience of satisfied customers and a network of stores across the country. Workshop DIRECT is now able to offer a specially designed range of sofas, sofa beds and armchairs. They are not available in our stores but can be ordered direct from our workshop. They come with our 3 year comfort guarantee or 6 months interest free credit option and a price match money if you're not delighted after 21 days. They are more than comfortable.

Call 01443 238699 8am to 6pm weekdays or fill in the coupon below

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Send to: Sofa Workshop Direct, Coed Cae Llan, Pontyclun, Mid Glamorgan CF72 9JF

Licensed credit Brokers. Subject to status. Details available on request.

Just £399.



Chartwell 2-seater sofa

Now sit down and we'll tell you the shop price

Kirkdale offers an outstanding range of traditional craftsman made furniture in a large choice of colours and fabrics – including removable machine washable covers for some models – at what might be considered a silly price. For furniture of similar style and quality, you could pay over twice as much in a shop! We also give you a 21 day money back promise and 2 year craftsmanship & materials guarantee. A fact which should sit very comfortably with you. Tel: 01495 312233 or send the coupon for our FREE brochure today.

Name
Address
Postcode

Direct from
Kirkdale
Kirkdale Furniture,
Gwalia Works, Factory Road, Brynmawr,
Gwent NP23 4DP

To advertise in this section
please call Mike Glegg on 0171 292 2323
or Dawn Phillips on 0171 293 2344