

JACQUES GRANGE

RECENT WORK

Text PIERRE PASSEBON Photography FRANÇOIS HALARD

Flammarion

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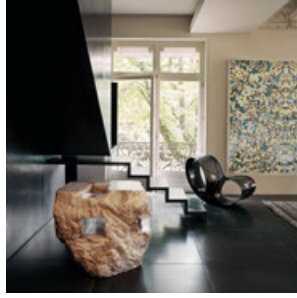
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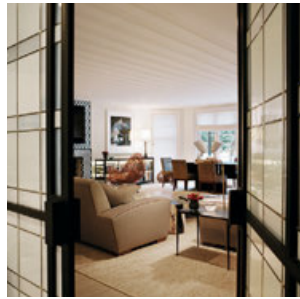
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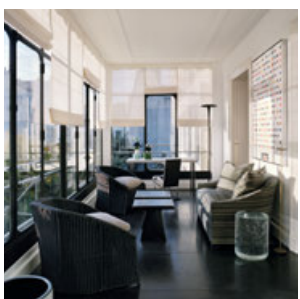
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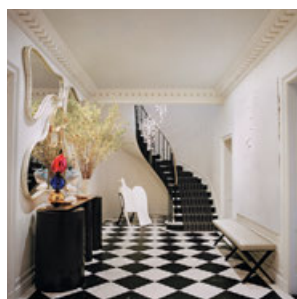
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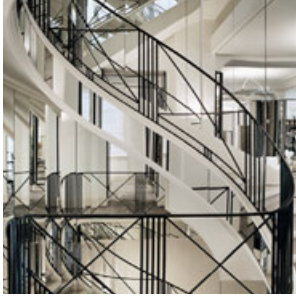
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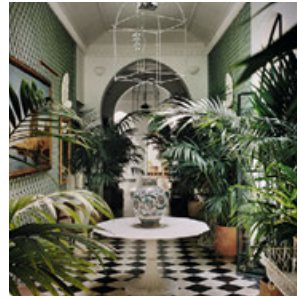
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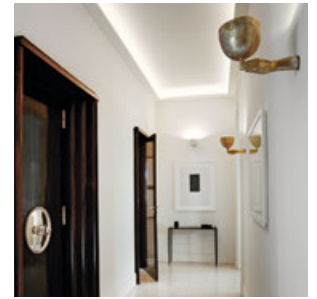
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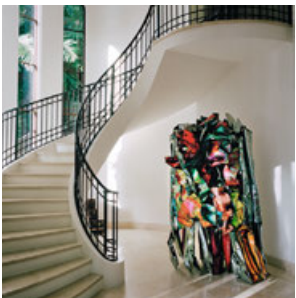
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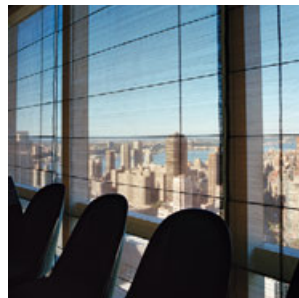
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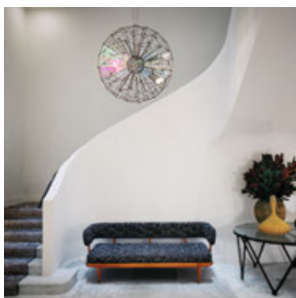
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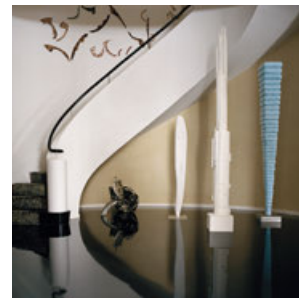
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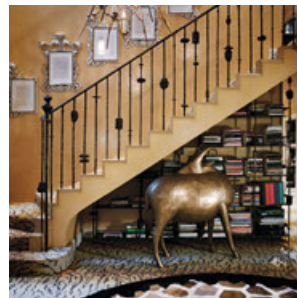
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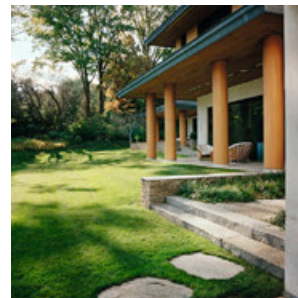
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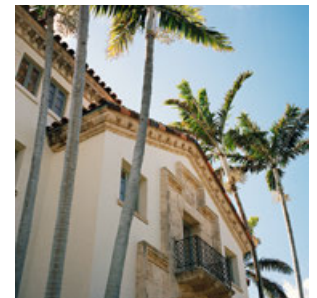
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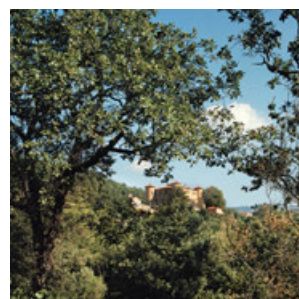
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A Refuge in Comporta



LEFT The residence of Marie-Laure de Noailles on place des États-Unis in Paris, decorated throughout in art deco style with wall panels designed by Jean-Michel Frank in 1926.

As a child, Jacques was a dreamer who just liked to draw. His schoolwork suffered as a result, but, curiously, his teachers would tell his mother over and over that she didn't need to worry about her son's future. Even so, she carried on worrying and, against his father's advice, enrolled Jacques at the École Boulle, the college of fine arts and crafts in Paris. He was fifteen, and for him it was bliss. All the weight of his high school studies was lifted, and in its place came a burgeoning interest in the subjects taught at his new school: cabinetmaking, tapestry weaving, model making, engraving, drawing, perspective, and art history. After graduating four years later, he enrolled at the École Camondo to specialize in interior design.

Jacques's parents were from a generation for whom it was usual to furnish a home for life when they got married, at a time when divorce was rare. With the exception of the occasional magazine article, decoration and interior design were far removed from his world. One of his student friends was Michel-Yves Bolloré. When Jacques first saw the interiors of the family's opulent *hôtel particulier*, decorated by the interior designer Henri Samuel, it came as a shock. Impressed by his friend's house, Jacques came to the realization that interior design was a profession in its own right. Years later, after graduating from the École Camondo, he asked Michel-Yves's mother, who was very fond of him, to ask Henri Samuel if he would take him on as an intern. And he did.

Working as assistant to Henri Samuel was an exhilarating experience. Jacques was involved in the impressive restoration of the Grand Trianon at Versailles, commissioned by the Minister of Culture, André Malraux, for President de Gaulle to entertain his prestigious guests. Then came commissions to decorate the Château of Armainvilliers, owned by Edmond de Rothschild, and the apartment belonging to Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, with its remarkable bronze bookcases by Diego Giacometti. Henri Samuel was skilled in mixing the classical and modern by introducing works by contemporary artists such as Guy de Rougemont, Philippe Hiquily, François Arnal, and Diego Giacometti. Jacques's job was to oversee all these commissions,

which were numerous, to keep a careful eye on them. He remembers with amusement his visits to Diego Giacometti. The sculptor was charming and easy, but he tended to give priority to any attractive female client who happened to come along, a chivalrous approach that was exasperating for other clients and their deadlines. These projects taught Jacques how to sustain traditional French workmanship by respecting the highest professional standards and the astonishing skills of French craftsmen and women.

Henri Samuel closed down Maison Alavoine, and Jacques's internship came to an end. He was twenty-four, and Paris was one big party. At night, people from all different backgrounds mingled happily at Régine's, Castel, and Le Sept. Jacques was out every night, having fun with a group of friends: Karl Lagerfeld, Jacques de Bascher, Yves Saint Laurent, and Pierre Bergé.

The difference between generations was collapsed, and age was now counted in attitude rather than years. Those who had known Dada in the 1920s rediscovered the spirit of rebellion and freedom that was to flower again in May 1968. It was taken up by Louis Aragon, Madeleine Castaing, and Marie-Laure de Noailles. Meeting Madeleine Castaing, "La Magicienne," was a turning point for Jacques. From her he learned the principle that was to inform his entire career: "In decoration, you should always evoke, never reconstruct." Where Madeleine's references were literary, Jacques's were drawn from the world of cinema.

Art shows flourished. Marie-Laure de Noailles was not only an enlightened patron of the arts but also a writer, musician, and painter. On the same day every year, she would hold an exhibition of her paintings on rue des Beaux-Arts. Intrigued by this flamboyant figure, Jacques went along to her private view, which ended with a select group going back to the Noailles residence on place des États-Unis. Marie-Laure liked to surround herself with artists and young people. Unconventional and freethinking, she was uncompromisingly modern in her outlook. She could not have been unaware of the revolution then taking place among students and in French society. As soon as

“JACQUES IS A MASTER OF THE ART OF SETTING UP A DIALOGUE BETWEEN DIFFERENT ARTISTS. PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THIS, AND IT’S PART OF HIS GREAT TALENT.”

PIERRE PASSEBON

he crossed the threshold Jacques was dazzled: on the walls were paintings by Goya, Rubens, Watteau, and Delacroix, rubbing shoulders with others by Picasso, Dalí, and Miró. Immensely wealthy and discerning, Marie-Laure and Charles de Noailles enjoyed the freedom, the eclectic tastes, and the means to give free rein to their imaginations. From their collection of Renaissance bronzes to Marie-Laure’s Soviet car compressed by César, Jacques found all his studies in the history of art now springing to life around him. The legendary residence built by Marie-Laure’s father in the late nineteenth century had been given a new lease of life by the young couple. To accomplish this, they had called on the services of Jean-Michel Frank. His rigorous approach and unerring sense of proportion fascinated Jacques. Jean-Michel Frank was both classic and modern at once, pared back and timeless: an example for Jacques to follow.

Later on, Jacques discovered art deco while on vacation with the Noailles at Hyères, in their modernist house commissioned from Robert Mallet-Stevens in 1925, with furniture by Pierre Chareau, Djo-Bourgeois, and Mallet-Stevens. Life there was carefree and fun. Recognition of these artists was beginning to pervade the Paris art gallery world, launching a fashion that continues to this day.

After Marie-Laure’s death, Jacques’s relationship with Charles de Noailles continued. A great horticulturalist and passionate gardener who created a magical garden around his villa overlooking Grasse, Charles also took a close interest in the work of young interior designers. He would tactfully offer them advice. Jacques remembers that he expressed reservations about the 1970s craze for ceiling spotlights. “Avoid the pitfalls of fashion,” was his most valuable counsel.

Jacques still enjoys a close relationship with the Noailles family. A friend of Natalie Perrone, the youngest of the children, he is also close to her son Carlo and his wife Polissena, who recently asked him to refresh the salons at the Ermitage de Pompadour, the prestigious residence that bears witness to the influence of the Noailles.

Like Carlo Perrone at the Ermitage de Pompadour and the family apartment in Rome, Pierre-André Maus, too, asked Jacques to

decorate his houses, just as his parents Bertrand and Micheline had before him with their various commissions.

Princess Caroline's sons, Pierre and Andréa, remembering their childhood homes decorated by Jacques for their mother, naturally turned to Jacques, with the support of their partners, for the decoration of their own homes. It was a similar story with Aerin Lauder, Megan and Laura Englander, and Stavros Niarchos in the United States.

Jacques is delighted that this new generation also appreciates his style.

In 1968, at the Biennale des Antiquaires et des Décorateurs in Paris, Jacques was drawn to Didier Aaron's polyhedron-shaped stand, designed by his associate and interior designer Alain Demachy.

Jacques was looking for work. He managed to get an interview with Didier Aaron, who, on the spot, gave him a job as Alain's assistant. Soon after he gave him his first clients as an interior designer. While respecting Jacques's need for freedom, he was to be a constant and tireless source of encouragement and fatherly kindness.

Jacques's first major client, Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, twin sister of the Shah of Iran, was looking for a new interior designer for two projects, her Paris apartment and her villa in the south of France. Pleased with these first two commissions, she then invited him out to Iran.

Travel has always been a source of inspiration and wonder for Jacques. Through the Pahlavi family he discovered Iran and India, and, most importantly, Mogul art, which for him remains one of the pinnacles of civilization. For Jacques the 1970s were a decade of travel and discoveries that were to influence fashion and decoration. Then came Morocco. During a stay with Yves Saint Laurent, he made the simultaneous discovery of both Marrakech and Andy Warhol. The result was an explosion of color: the colors of North Africa and the Middle East, and the colors of pop art. With them, his world became infused with color. Having an eye is a gift; having a style takes work.

Andy and Yves were both voracious collectors. In Paris, Jacques would accompany them on their shopping trips for the art deco pieces they made fashionable. Later on, his relationship with Yves and Pierre Bergé became professional. He was fortunate enough to decorate

all their homes: Yves's modernist studio apartment on avenue Breteuil; the apartment on rue de Babylone; Pierre's suite at the Hôtel Lutetia; the couture house on avenue Marceau and the accessories boutique on rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré; Château Gabriel at Deauville and its dacha; and in Morocco, Villa Oasis in the Jardin Majorelle in Marrakech and Villa Mabrouka in Tangier.

In interior design, Pierre invariably supported whatever Yves wanted and directed all his energies and generosity towards making it happen. Yves was an artist; he gave few specific directions, but suggested atmospheres. Jacques was the *metteur en scène* who gave form to his wishes. For the modernist studio apartment on avenue de Breteuil, his first commission, Yves's sole instruction to Jacques was: "Create an atmosphere *à la* Antonioni for me." Giving his ideas concrete form was not always easy. Happily, the connection between Yves and Jacques was strong.

In his work, Yves liked to surround himself with people whom he could trust and work with in harmony. Above all, he valued those who understood him without his having to spell things out, whether in fashion with Loulou de la Falaise and Anne Marie Muñoz or in interior design with Jacques. Like Yves, Jacques relies on the loyalty of his teams and artisans, often leading to firm friendships.

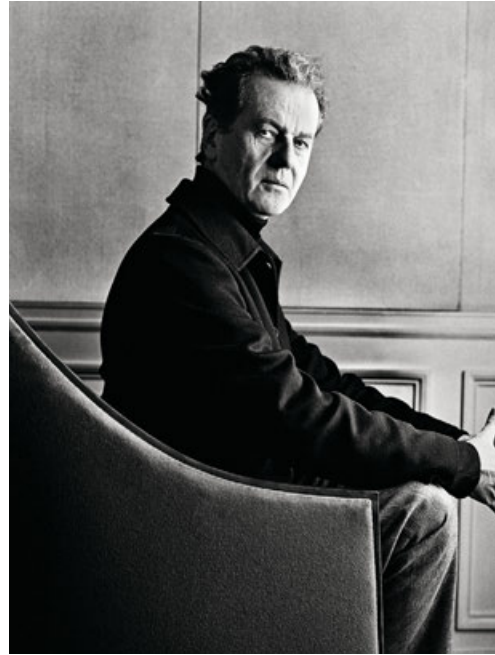
Sometimes the friendship comes first. He remembers meeting Terry de Gunzburg, founder of By Terry, when she was a young makeup artist and he a young decorator and they were both waiting patiently to meet clients. Complicity in the face of an ordeal grew up between them, along with a tendency to collapse in giggles that persists to this day.

Sadly, the laughter between Karl Lagerfeld and Yves Saint Laurent was silenced by the split between them imposed by Pierre Bergé. A collateral victim, Jacques was also obliged to distance himself from Karl. It was only after Pierre's death that Karl entrusted Jacques with the decoration of the haute couture Chanel salons on rue Cambon.

It was through his love for the work of Jean-Michel Frank, discovered with the Noailles and shared with Yves Saint Laurent,



LEFT AND BELOW Portraits of Jacques Grange in the late 1990s by Peter Knapp (left) and Jérôme Macé (below).



“MY RELATIONSHIP WITH YVES SAINT LAURENT AND PIERRE BERGÉ WAS FANTASTIC ON BOTH A FRIENDLY AND AN ARTISTIC LEVEL, AS WITH THEM I WAS ABLE TO CREATE EXTRAORDINARY WORLDS.”

JACQUES GRANGE

that Jacques met Ronald Lauder. Like Charles de Noailles, this art-lover and patron of the arts is passionate about interior design. The understanding that grew up between them was to consolidate Jacques’s success in the United States.

Between private and public projects, a few years later he decided to set up a New York office at 57 West 57th Street. Now he could carry out major projects with art collectors, with whom he formed close friendships. The trust placed in him by Caryl and Israel Englander gave him the opportunity to build his first complete architectural project on a virgin site: three country houses in Greenwich, Connecticut. Crossing the Atlantic clearly offered him broader horizons. The new sites and new demands of these new clients led to a harmonious blend of French and American elegance. The success of the Mark Hotel, a commission from Izak Senbahar on New York’s Upper East Side, sealed his fame in the United States. It undoubtedly influenced Francis Ford Coppola to choose him for the refurbishment of his Italian hotel, Palazzo Margherita. His first contact was beguilingly self-effacing: “My name is Francis Ford Coppola, which probably won’t mean anything to you, but I’m Sofia’s father.” Francis had just bought the palazzo at Bernalda in southern Italy, from where his grandparents had emigrated to the United States. His beloved grandmother used to work there, so he wanted to buy it for his daughter, Sofia. At his request, Jacques converted it into a charming boutique hotel.

More hotels followed: the Hotel Cappuccino in Palma de Mallorca for Juan Picornell, the Villa Maïa in Lyon for Christophe Gruy, and, recently, the Cheval Blanc at Saint-Barthélemy for the LVMH group, which Hélène Arnault wanted to refresh in the style of Jacques’s cabanas at Comporta in Portugal. In all these public projects, Jacques endeavors to infuse these interiors with the feeling of a private house. When Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen entrusted him with the interior design of their New York fashion boutique The Row, this was the sympathetic approach they were absolutely looking for.

Jacques is drawn to inspiring places. He lives in the apartment that once belonged to the famous writer Colette. So, when the owners



FACING PAGE Jacques Grange refreshed the interiors of Charles de Noailles' house in homage to the family, adding contemporary touches such as this custom-designed carpet, while also respecting the original décor.

BELOW Jacques Grange is responsible for the restoration of the iconic Villa Santo Sospir, situated near Nice and listed as a historic monument in 1995. It contains drawings and furniture acquired for the villa's first owner, Francine Weisweiler, by the interior designer Madeleine Castaing, from whom Jacques Grange has often drawn inspiration for his own designs.

of Colette's childhood home at Saint-Sauveur-en-Puisaye wanted to turn the house into a museum, they naturally turned to him. In the absence of any archive photographs, he drew on Colette's descriptions of the house in her novels and other writings to create an interpretation that was free and poetic.

Ilya Melia, the new owner of Villa Santo Sospir at Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, famously "tattooed" with frescoes by Jean Cocteau and furnished by Madeleine Castaing, entrusted Jacques with its restoration. Jacques is a vector.

"My complicity with Pierre Passebon stretches back over thirty-five years. His eclectic tastes, his boldness and his intuitive approach fascinate me. His curiosity shakes up my creativity. He has an extraordinary ability to take frivolous things seriously and things that are too serious lightly. Our curiosity and our exchanges are a source of tremendous energy. He brings the same lively imagination and erudition to both the Galerie du Passage in Paris and the Stork Club in Comporta: two exhibition spaces filled with an air of freedom. His adventurous approach often provides a lasting impetus for emerging artists." (Interview with Jacques Grange, January 2021.)

Interior design is all about teamwork: without his loyal coworkers and the craftsmen and women whose outstanding skills entrance him, he could never have found expression for his ideas nor achieved such high standards. In their range and variety, his projects—from palaces and private houses to public spaces and restorations of historic sites—are all fascinating exercises for him. However opulent some of his designs may be, he has never lost his love of homes that are simple and welcoming. His passion for cabanas and wild places is widely shared at Comporta in Portugal, where his style has become a benchmark of fashion. Amazingly, he finds as much inspiration in a Portuguese thatched cabana as in a royal palace in the Emirates. He makes houses in the way others make poetry, music, or paintings.

As he says: "Give your home love, love works miracles!"

PIERRE PASSEBON



FACING PAGE For his Paris apartment, formerly home to the writer Colette, Jacques Grange designed a magnificent metal and wood spiral staircase, inspired by Le Corbusier.
PAGES 14–15 With its collection of 1960s and 70s paintings and sculpture displayed in an immaculately eighteenth-century architectural setting, the dining room reflects the eclectic nature of Jacques Grange's world.

JACQUES GRANGE'S APARTMENT IN PARIS

In the very heart of Paris and with breathtaking views on the spectacular gardens of the Palais-Royal, this eighteenth-century residence has been home to Jacques Grange since 1990, and he has recently expanded and renovated it. Once home to the novelist Colette, in its location and history it encapsulates the essence of Parisian elegance. It also epitomizes more than any other of his interiors Jacques's inimitable and very personal approach to interior design.

In this art-filled apartment he effortlessly mixes the simple with the sophisticated and understated, combining old-world luxury with contemporary art and design. Against pale walls tinted with only the slightest of hues, his mastery of color is displayed by the carefully considered placement of a brilliant red console table by Hervé Van der Straeten, or a citron yellow painting by Carla Accardi surmounted by a pale blue canvas by Robert Motherwell. In the library/guestroom these same colors are revisited in a triptych by Christian Bérard, one of the designer's favorite twentieth-century artists.

The entire duplex is filled with tangible souvenirs of places, artists, and designers that have informed Grange's creative universe, including Colette's tufted chaise longue, African art and furniture, a delicate Viennese modernist cabinet, classical sculptures and bronzes, photographs of Marie-Laure de Noailles—the patron who first invited him into the exclusive salons of the Parisian art world—a set of eighteenth-century dining chairs covered in pale gray leather, a Géricault nude that once belonged to Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent, and a pair of nineteenth-century chairs from the collection of Madeleine Castaing. The kitchen and small alcove, meanwhile, are decorated with antique azulejos, recalling his love of Portugal, and furniture by French modernist masters such as Francis Jourdain, Jean Royère and Marc Newson.

Fine materials and craftsmanship also distinguish this storied residence: the master bath is clad seamlessly with burgundy and black-veined Palissandro marble. Occupying the middle of one of the apartment's central salons is a gorgeously crafted sculptural spiral staircase in metal, designed by Grange and inspired by Le Corbusier, exploding the classical frame of the apartment's architecture with a bold statement of pure drama.









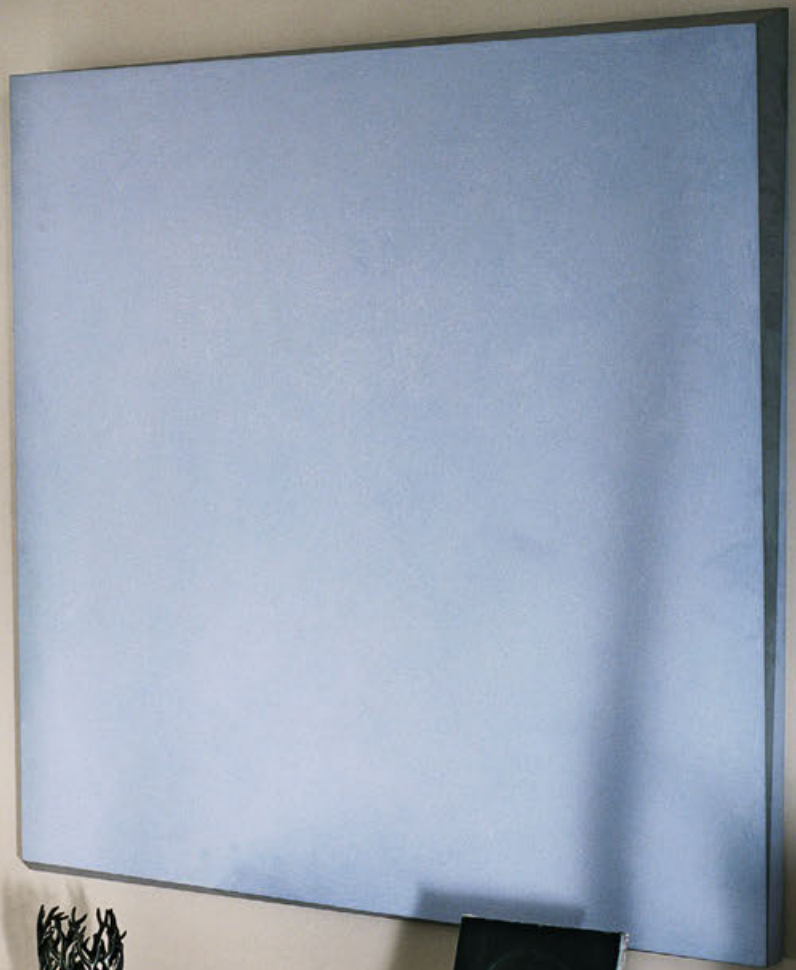
“WHEN I REDECORATED
COLETTE’S APARTMENT,
I OBSERVED THE LIGHT AND
THE COLOR OF THE LIGHT.
THAT’S WHY I WANTED TO
PAINT THE WALLS PALE GRAY.
I WANTED TO BRING
THE ‘VIEW’ DIRECTLY INTO
THE APARTMENT.”

JACQUES GRANGE

FACING PAGE Vibrant colors and an eclectic mix of furniture and styles are the distinguishing features of the entrance hall. Red console table by Hervé Van der Straeten. Fondation Maeght chairs in iron, bronze, and leather by Diego Giacometti, c.1962. Ceiling light in painted aluminum, a replica of the original by Man Ray, 1919.

BELOW AND FACING PAGE The sitting room is filled with mementoes of the places, artists, and designers that have inspired Jacques Grange and his use of space.









LEFT The salon windows enjoy outstanding views over the gardens of the Palais-Royal. The tufted chaise longue—one of the elements of Colette's original décor retained by Jacques Grange—faces toward a bust of the writer by Apelles Fenosa. A *Choupatte* by Claude Lalanne sits on an occasional table. The large coffee table is by Diego Giacometti, the pair of armchairs by Francis Jourdain.



LEFT AND FACING PAGE Aristocratic refinement meets the eclecticism of an insatiable collector. In the salon, details of part of Jacques Grange's collection of furniture and artworks. Left, a Thonet bentwood chair.



“THE SAME SOUNDS
AND THE SAME ATMOSPHERE
DESCRIBED BY COLETTE IN
THE BLUE LANTERN ARE STILL
PRESENT IN MY APARTMENT.”

JACQUES GRANGE

FACING PAGE The sculptural form of the bold staircase designed by Jacques Grange makes a dynamic presence in the central salon. A Dogon mask, a piece by François Morellet, and eighteenth-century chairs co-exist in perfect harmony.

PAGES 26–27 Displayed in the library are a triptych by Christian Bérard, one of the twentieth-century artists most valued by Jacques Grange, alongside portraits of Marie-Laure de Noailles and Dora Maar by Man Ray. Chairs with red latticework backs by Jean Royère.











FACING PAGE Jacques Grange's eclectic tastes are displayed here in a subtle association of furniture and works of art of a variety of periods and styles. ABOVE Jacques Grange designed the furniture and wall covering in the bathroom in Palissandro marble. On the wall, designs by Yves Saint Laurent for *Un Diable à Paris*, 1961.

“JACQUES IS NOT AN INTERIOR DESIGNER. HIS VISION IS MORE THAT OF A WRITER. HE HAS A VERY ASSURED FEELING FOR PROPORTIONS, WHICH DON'T NEED TO BE PERFECT, BUT ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT AND NATURAL. THEN THERE IS THE FREEDOM OF HIS STYLE, WHICH CAN ONLY DERIVE FROM THE INTUITION OF AN ARTIST WHO HAS COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN HIS EYE AND IS PERFECTLY AT EASE WITH GREAT WORKS OF ART.”

TOBIAS MEYER AND MARK FLETCHER

FACING PAGE The study, where Jacques Grange finds his inspiration. On the asymmetrical desk by André Sornay, with its chair by Gio Ponti, a Keith Haring vase and lamps by Alberto Giacometti. In the foreground, a Champignon floor lamp by Jean Royère.

