

# and

## Mulcahy Apartment

Interiors for Architects and designers *May/June 2001* By Kieran Long

And-associates scored an interesting shell when it was commissioned to design the interior for a penthouse apartment in a new warehouse development at Shepherdess Walk in Hackney, east London.

And-associates was asked to provide two bedrooms, an open-plan kitchen and living area, with enough storage to contain the clients library and keep the apartment free of clutter in the 200 sq m space. Its solution was to create a wall of cupboards along the length of the shell, which cuts the shell in two. It also conceals a pantry by the kitchen, and has the effect of creating a reception space by the front door with a dramatic cantilevered stair of iroko treads with a simple steel handrail, which gives appreciably as you ascend.

The cupboards are cleverly cut to fit from MDF, with no external catches, preserving the illusion of a panelled wall. But the clients desire for an open fire means that an unsightly flue bursts through the top of the cupboards.

The mezzanine floor houses the two bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom. The main space is lined with plasterboard, and a poured vinyl floor completes the slightly surgical feel. The library is housed in a series of bookcases at mezzanine level, whose reverse side becomes the bed board.

This white interior provides a blank canvas for the client's collection of art and objets. The staircase looks good, and the clever use of storage means the acres of space in this flat should stay pretty clear. The fit-out budget was £140,000, and the shell probably cost about 10 times that – rich clients seem to be keeping young architects in business at the moment, but one wonders whether many of the resultant projects, despite their proficiency, are of much consequence.