



color-lover, and stripe enthusiast. "As kids, our world is curated to be full of color and playfulness, from bath time to bedtime to our classrooms. I think color triggers joy in my brain because it reminds me of all the playful and carefree times I had as a kid." She's certainly not alone in that regard. Many of the interiors in this book are laced with an element of childhood nostalgia—especially for kids who grew up in the ultra colorful '80s and '90s.

Valetta House, featured on page 58, is a home in London that blurs the boundaries between child- and adult-friendly into one cohesive narrative. It's full of little stories—a staircase inspired by snakes and ladders, four yellow-framed, arched windows to represent each of the clients' daughters. The architects, Office S&M, are fierce proponents of color, viewing it as a building material, not an afterthought. Co-founder Hugh McEwen describes their approach as "unapologetically joyful."

"Once you see color as an essential part of the design of a space, you start to realize how powerful it can be," says Catrina Stewart, who founded the practice with McEwen in 2013. "You can extend space, you can make space larger, you can make space smaller, you can even change the weather." That's especially true for their Mo-tel House, a London refurbishment that uses pastels to amplify natural light. The result? A lower-ground-floor apartment that doesn't feel like it's lower ground.

*Today we're increasingly seeing an intertwining of different aesthetics that feel fresh, colorful, and full of play. There are many names for it: high camp, maximalism, Memphis revival.*

When we look at color, there are often links between what we see and what we feel. Studies have hypothesized a connection between color and perception: bright, warm colors like yellow, orange, pink, and red tend to be considered "happy colors," while pastels also have the power to lift the spirits. Yellow and orange tones incite appetite, while some prison cells are painted pink in the hope that color will reduce aggression. Tones of gray are viewed as mature, responsible choices. But as common as a neutral gray is in the built environment, it isn't necessarily known for its tendency to spark joy.

A good example can be found on Thessaly Road in London, which was a drab, concrete underpass until British-Nigerian artist Yinka Ilori was asked to intervene in 2019. As part of an initiative to improve the public realm, he installed panels in 16 different colors that, according to color theory, have a positive impact on happiness and wellbeing.

Ilori is part of a movement that the artist and designer Adam Nathaniel Furman coined New London Fabulous. Furman, whose home accessories and public installations come in dazzling palettes, noticed the streets of his home city were changing, as artists and designers increasingly injected color into a notoriously gray metropolis.