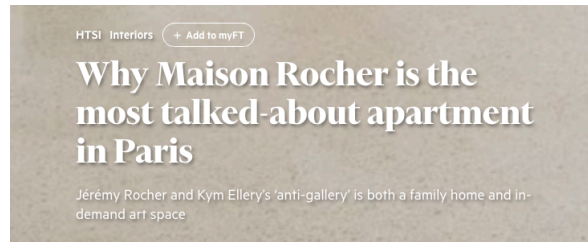


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Par Alice Cavanagh



You never know what kind of scene you might arrive at when walking through the front door of [Maison Rocher](#) in Paris, the private address of French entrepreneur Jérémy Rocher and his family. Last year, 40 people chatted at a long banquet table in the white calm of the vaulted, 220sq m salon to launch the city's new design fair Matter and Shape. More recently, the ambience switched to intimate and hushed with the installation of candlelit tables at a dinner to launch the Danish design brand [Frama](#)'s collaboration with [Beni](#) rugs.



A recent exhibition at Maison Rocher featured this West Coast table by Martin Szekely (from Carpenters Workshop Gallery), Künstlerstuhl chairs by Franz West (David Zwirner Gallery), Basil vessel (on table) and Acqua Chiara vase by Ettore Sottsass (Galerie Romain Morandi) and New Wave console by Lukas Cober (Galerie Gosserez). On the walls (from left) are Locis Tenues by Rafaël Y Herman and Aquarius by James Turrell © DePasquale+Maffini



Jerémy Rocher and Kym Ellery with their children Amaia and Armand © DePasquale+Maffini

The apartment was transformed again last month by an exhibition curated by the art adviser Étienne Macret and Carpenters Workshop Americas' former director Ashlee Harrison during Art Basel and Design Miami Paris. A mix of art, collectable furniture and design objects from galleries such as David Zwirner and Carpenters, the pieces were arranged in situ as they might be in a home – among them coffee tables by Vincent Dubourg and [Vincenzo De Cotiis](#) nestled with a Marzio Cecchi Serpente sofa, and Martin Szekely's aluminium-rimmed West Coast dining table (once owned by Karl Lagerfeld) complemented by six hyper-colourful Franz West chairs.

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**The curved forms have a cocooning effect**

But outside of such events (which have cemented Maison Rocher as one of the city's most talked-about venues), it is indeed a real home: one that Rocher shares with his partner, the Australian designer [Kym Ellery](#), their two young children and their rescue dog, Miso. On a rainy Sunday, you might find Ellery seated on a long sofa, eight-month-old Amaia napping next to her, while Armand, two, performs toddler body slams into the padded sofa cushions. Above them, a calming blue glow emits from a sphere-shaped James Turrell on a wall.

“The idea with this apartment was to have a space where you are disconnected from the city. The curved forms have a cocooning effect,” says Rocher of the vision and an aesthetic – monastic and minimal but also enveloping – that sits outside the typical Parisian canon. From the antechamber, empty save for a peachy-hued draped wax sculpture by the French artist Juliette Minchin, a series of arched openings leads into the vaulted salon. The long room curves around the corner of the building and is flanked by 10 floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking a park – the leafy outlook lends to the feeling of being perched in the trees. Everywhere, lightness abounds, supercharged by the reflective terrazzo flooring.



The façade of the apartment building housing Maison Rocher © DePasquale+Maffini

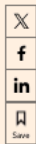


From left: No'3 Dismontable chair by Beat Frank (Galerie Romain Merandi), Owen stool by Céline Salomon (Galerie Gosserez), Serpente sofa by Marzio Cecchi (Sceners Gallery), DC2101 coffee table by Vincenzo De Cotitis (Carpenters Workshop Gallery), Archæa vase by Raphaël Groëly (Maison Raphaël Groëly) and Oculus wax sculpture by Juliette Minchin at Maison Rocher in Paris © De Pasquale + Maffini

Rocher bought the property six years ago, though he and Ellery only moved in last year. "It's funny, the property was on the market for six months because people didn't see the potential behind it," he says of what was formerly two office spaces fitted with partition walls, false ceilings and carpeting. "Even the windows and skylights were hidden," he adds, pointing skyward. We're seated at an immense island bench in the kitchen – big enough to plate up a sit-down dinner for 40-plus people – just off the living room. In contrast to the glowing white of the main space, the bench is cut in jewel-like Patagonia granite that also covers the floor. Around us full-height oak cabinets meet ceiling panels framing a series of skylights.

At first, the 40-year-old envisaged Maison Rocher as a potential commercial art space but loved it so much that he decided it could also work as a Parisian crash pad, given that he was living abroad (between Hong Kong and Milan) at the time.





The floorplan circles the building's inner stairwell, and the private quarters – three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a dressing room and a laundry – sit at the back of the apartment. They can be concealed by a secret door in the kitchen cabinet or, on the other side, by sliding partition doors designed to disappear into the walls.



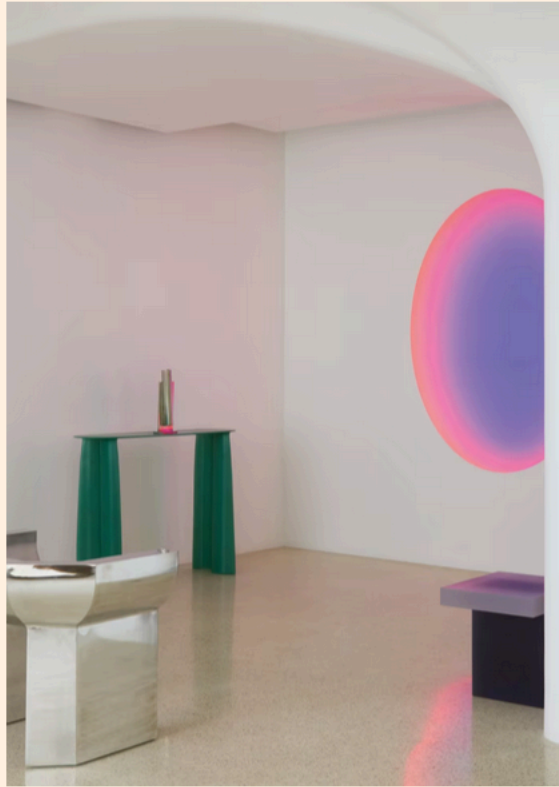
New Wave bench (in front of bed) by Lukas Cober (Galerie Gosserez) and, on the wall, Le Val des Brumes by Noémie Rocher (Kamel Mennour Gallery) © DePasquale+Maffini



A Toi et Moi love seat by Kym Ellery just off a staircase © DePasquale+Maffini



Rocher with packaged Coral Flower Lamp sculpture by OrtaMiklos, Iris by Juliette Minchin (on ceiling) and (behind him) New Wave console by Lukas Cober (Galerie Gosserez) and Acqua Chiara vase by Ettore Sottsass (Galerie Romain Morandi) © DePasquale+Maffini



Aquarius by James Turrell on the back wall © DePasquale+Maffini

Some of the works Rocher has acquired, like those by Turrell and Minchin, are now integral to the architecture – a permanent part of the experience. He gets his kicks, however, from mixing things up and seeing how collaborators interpret the space. “I want to incorporate more installation-based works to ensure the place evolves, and I love it when someone comes in with a different perspective and way of presenting,” he notes.

But the self-described minimalist – a necessity, he says, having lived in 13 apartments in 15 years – admits that flexibility will not be compatible with family life for long. Thus far, it’s proven to be a happy home. Ellery, in particular, loves the place: “There is loads of space, and the location is central, so we often have friends to visit,” she says, looking around the apartment. “But if you feel like hibernating, it’s also very cosy. I love to lie on the sofa in the sun and take it all in.” She has been teaching their son Armand that art is for looking at, rather than touching – especially the alluring light-dance of the Turrell.

“Armand also loves the bathtub,” says Rocher as he leads us into the main bathroom, which has a solid oval-shaped marble tub, a vibrant camo-hued slab from a quarry in the south of France. He likens the marble to a painting – although, weighing 500kg, it proved the most challenging work to install.

If the family outgrows the space, there may be an opportunity to take the immersive element to the next level. Rocher has acquired a tourism licence and is considering creating a highly curated overnight experience where guests live with bespoke selections of art and objects. “Today, there is a huge financial facet to the art market, but the original purpose of art is to bring us outside ourselves, to confront ourselves in its reflection and to create emotion,” he says. “It was never meant to be locked away in storage.”