

S I N G A P O R E T A T L E R

# HOMES

LIFESTYLE MEDIA OF THE YEAR

## THE ART ISSUE

DESIGNING WITH A CREATIVE FLOURISH  
+ INTERIOR TRENDS TO WATCH



**TATLER  
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2019

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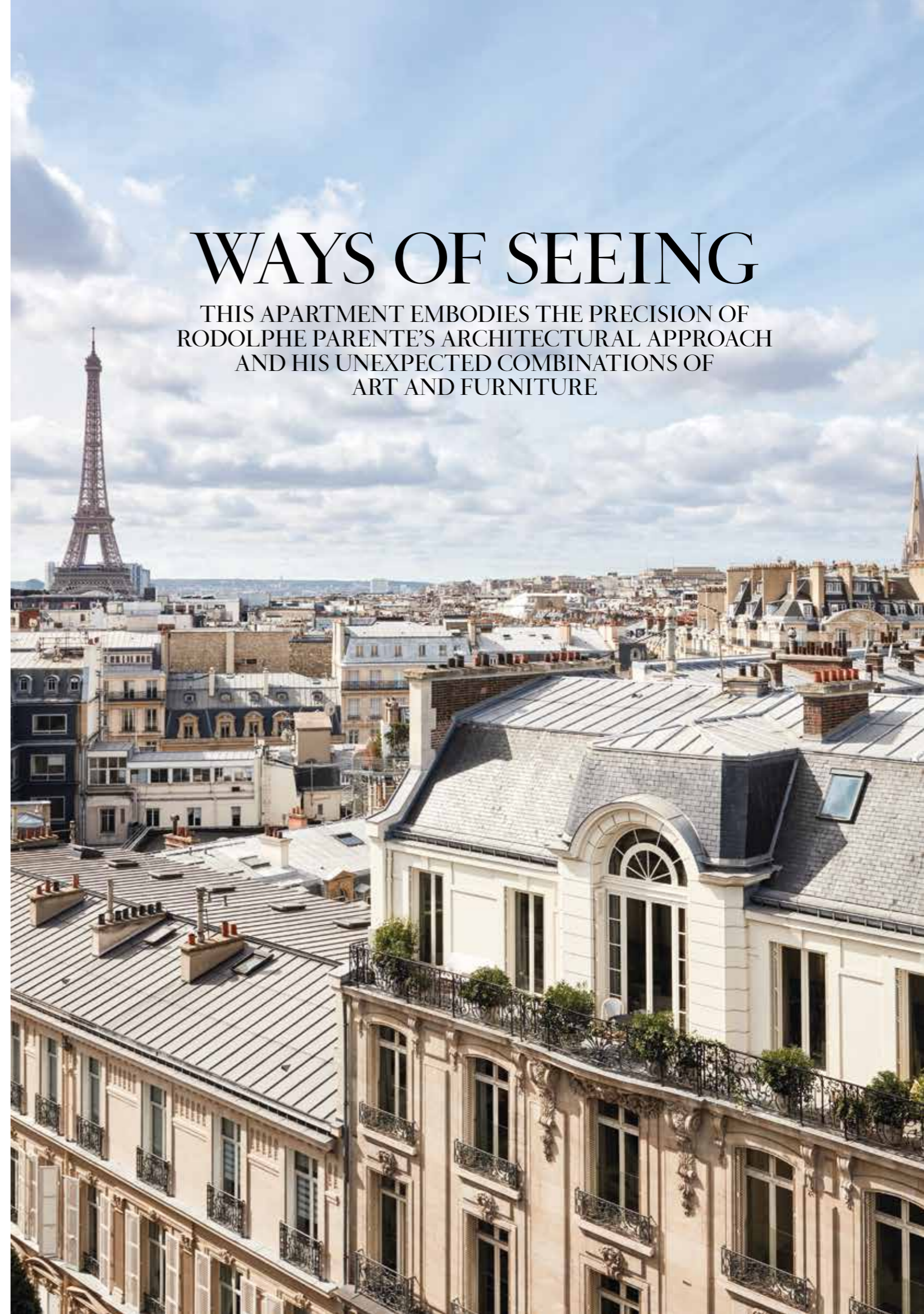




LEFT TO RIGHT  
The work of decorative artist Florence Girette takes centre stage on the ceiling; an expansive view of the Eiffel Tower and the fashionable avenues nearby

# WAYS OF SEEING

THIS APARTMENT EMBODIES THE PRECISION OF RODOLPHE PARENTE'S ARCHITECTURAL APPROACH AND HIS UNEXPECTED COMBINATIONS OF ART AND FURNITURE



BY IAN PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHAN JULLIARD

**F**rench interior designer Rodolphe Parente has very clear ideas of what constitutes elegance. “It’s a skilful mix of grace, attitude and irreverence, which is not linked to the notion of good taste,” he asserts. In his own work, he always likes to shake things up a little. “I try to incorporate something a little different, an unusual element that provokes dialogue,” he continues.

This apartment, which acts as a pied-à-terre for a French couple based in Singapore, is a perfect case in point. It is located in a building dating from 1910 in what is known as the Triangle d’Or, a highly sought-after part of Paris’s 8th arrondissement, bordered by the three stylish avenues: Montaigne, George V and the Champs-Élysées. The space previously housed the offices of a law firm, who had fitted it out with a series of large rooms and bright-red walls.

**NEW BEGINNING**

Parente completely reworked the layout, placing a luxurious master suite at its heart and a family room and two other bedrooms at the rear, accessed via a circular antechamber. “We realised we needed a breathing space and opted for a round form to make it more dynamic and enveloping,” he states.



**LEFT TO RIGHT**  
Interior designer Rodolphe Parente; a custom-made sculptural lighting piece by Parente adds visual interest to the light-filled living area

**OPPOSITE PAGE**  
A classical bust at the entrance to the building; a view into the apartment from the staircase; an alcove in the home features an array of decorative objects; asymmetrical details enliven the elegant tableau of the living room



Although he removed a number of existing fireplaces, he retained other architectural details, such as the cornice mouldings and delicately sculpted window and door frames. He also commissioned the Paris-based decorative artist Florence Girette to paint a cloudy sky on the vertiginous double-height ceiling in the sitting room, and sanded down the wainscoting to give it a lighter look; it had previously been a stodgy dark-wood colour.

The rest of Parente’s intervention is typical of his work, which is characterised by a rigorous, rectilinear approach. “I like precision and a certain graphic quality to my rooms,” he says. He cites design maestros such as Carlo Scarpa, Pierre Chareau and Peter Zumthor amongst his influences, and claims that the genesis of his style can also be traced back to his childhood.



*“I TRY TO INCORPORATE SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT, AN UNUSUAL ELEMENT THAT PROVOKES DIALOGUE”*





Parente was born in 1980 in Besançon, a city in the east of France that is overlooked by a fortified citadel designed by French military engineer Vauban in the 17th century. “The style of its architecture has stuck with me,” he notes. After graduation, he trained in the offices of Andrée Putman for five years before setting up his own eponymous firm in 2010. Since then, his projects have included residences in Paris and Monaco, a boutique for shoe designer Christian Louboutin in Milan and a furniture collection for Pouenat.

**PERFECT ORDER**

His goal here was to update the interior by adding a twist to the traditional Parisian framework. “The style of my intervention is quite austere and not particularly French”, he notes. “It’s closer to 1930s Italy and the Villa Necchi.” To anchor the sitting room, he imagined a voluminous fireplace made from tile and geometrically arranged blocks of marble. “I wanted something solid that would contrast with the finesse of the sculpted wood panelling,” he explains.

A certain order was given to both the dining room and study, where the walls are respectively accentuated with vertical lines and an oversized trellis pattern. And in Parente’s world, even colour is applied for its architectural qualities. “I don’t use it in a decorative fashion,” he explains. A perfect example is the family room, whose deep terracotta walls and ceiling more or less embrace the visitor.

His favourite rooms to design in any interior are the bathroom and kitchen, and both here are pure tours de force. The former in the master suite features a tub clad in green granite at its centre and an ingenious interplay of angular forms. The kitchen,

**THIS PAGE**

Walls in the study are clad in grey-stained cork; an abstract artwork by Shannon Ebner is hung above a Bernhardt sideboard in the apartment

**OPPOSITE PAGE**

The coral ceiling brings a dynamic energy to the cosy dining room





**LEFT TO RIGHT**  
The kitchen features enamelled lava countertops and Estremoz marble flooring; ribbed oak walls and mustard yellow stools add a cosy touch to the dining area in the kitchen; a circular antechamber in the apartment; the striking family room features walls and a ceiling painted in terracotta red



*“I LIKE PRECISION AND A CERTAIN GRAPHIC QUALITY TO MY ROOMS”*



**LEFT TO RIGHT**

A photo by Valérie Belin is the focal point of a guest bedroom; an abstract artwork by R. H. Quaytman adds a pop of colour by the desk; an array of textures contributes to the cosy environment of this bedroom; the master bathroom features a tub clad in green granite and a ceiling light from Ralph Lauren Home

meanwhile, is a master class in materiality. The breakfast nook is enveloped by ribbed-oak walls, the cabinetry is faced with a striking stone veneer while the countertops are in enamelled lava. Parente chose the latter partly because it reminded him of his grandmother's kitchen. "It's also really hygienic, durable and very contemporary," he adds. "Plus, it has a surface that's not completely flat. So, it creates wonderfully blurred reflections".

While Parente's architectural approach may be particularly structured and precise, the way he integrates art and furnishings into his projects tends to appear rather more arbitrary. He likes to create interesting juxtapositions between objects and will often not centre paintings on a wall. "It's important to have things that work well together and others that don't," he states. "There's nothing more unbearable than a space where everything matches too perfectly. You always need to give a room a touch of spirit." 📌

**LOCATION**  
Paris, France

**TYPE OF PROPERTY**  
Apartment

**PROPERTY SIZE**  
3,326sqft

**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
Rodolphe Parente  
Architecture Design

**TIME TAKEN**  
7 months