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THE WORLD OF INTERIORS



GLAMOUR GANG'S GETAWAY:
Jackie Kennedy's Secret Holiday Hideout

SALVAGE MESSIAH:
One Man's Miraculous
House Built From Junk



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Top: in the bathroom, two 19th-century ebonised beech-framed mirrors hang above the double sink. Above: Jamb's 'St James' chimney piece was inspired by the mid-18th-century marble surround in the bedroom. The crewelwork bedspread is an early 20th-century copy of a late 17th-century English design. Opposite: the 1903 painting of a fish was a find at Ardingly antique fair, while the hippopotamus skull is a relic of Will's former flat

well, maybe one more thing...' The sale includes the contents of Will's previous flat (*Wol* June 2001) which he couldn't bear to part with when he sold the place: a combination of antique and modern pieces that created 'an amalgam of two worlds, very sparse, quite masculine in feel'. 'I think he was hoping to go back to his bachelor ways,' says Charlotte, 'so he kept his entire flat in a container.' 'It was perfectly preserved,' Will admits. 'I didn't find any ex-girlfriends in there, though.'

What remained in the house was mostly a matter of practicality. The dining table and the couple's brass bed were kept, even if chairs and sofas weren't ('We're going to have to sit on the floor for 30 years,' laughs Will). Perhaps to Charlotte's relief, much of the natural-history collection has gone, although Will flatly refused to part with his favourite antelope head. 'It was symbolic, a lucky charm,' he insists. 'I thought it had been stolen, so when I found it again it just didn't make sense to let it go. Things that have gone missing like that acquire a legendary status.' As had the kitchen clock that Will bought when he was 20 and was delighted to rediscover. 'I've been looking for it for five years, my life has been miserable without it,' he grins. 'But when I walked into the showroom, Christie's grabbed it.'

At least Christie's couldn't take the kitchen: a brick-tiled homage to 'the below-stairs, less sophisticated parts of grand country houses', and a larger version of the kitchen in Will's bachelor pad. While that earlier incarnation had a more industrial feel, with a Smeg cooker and metal cabinets, here there's an Aga, flagstones and an island fitted with custom-made wooden drawers. 'It makes far more sense here, because it's in a basement, and because of the date of the house,' Will explains. 'So it's appropriate, but it's also the most functional it could be. It gets the job done.' Georgian simplicity was the organising principle inside the house, but outside, says Will, grinning: 'Charlotte always says I became Liberace.' At the end of the garden – an 'actually kind of fabulous' tangle of brambles and climbing roses when the family first moved in – they created a gated classical water garden adorned with huge ferns and architectural fragments. In the deep pool, enormous koi carp move in slow, mesmerising circles, arresting even Will's attention.

His energy and enthusiasm are such that it's a fair bet that the house won't remain empty for long; as he is keen to emphasise: 'The sale isn't an ending, it's a beginning – or a freeze-frame, at least.' Charlotte agrees. 'Will will just carry on buying,' she says, 'but maybe this gives us a chance to take things more slowly. His first brief is to buy some new comfy chairs for his mum' ■

The Collection of Will Fisher will be sold at Christie's South Kensington on 2 Feb (020 7930 6074; christies.com). The lots can be viewed at Jamb, 107a Pimlico Rd, London SW1 (020 7730 2122; jamblimited.com), from 28 Jan to 1 Feb