

design anthology UK

# Jewel Box

London, UK

Achille Salvagni Atelier reveals its elegant, new London space designed to delight the senses



Some projects happen by chance. “We were quickly outgrowing our original atelier space in Mayfair and coincidentally the building we were in had sold, granting us plenty of notice that we would have to move,” remembers Achille Salvagni, who has been at the helm of his architectural practice, Salvagni Architetti, since 2002 and established Achille Salvagni Atelier in 2013. “I knew I wanted to stay in the

neighborhood as we had become a go-to location for collectors and design connoisseurs, and loved being surrounded by other prominent galleries like David Zwirner, Thaddeus Ropac, Gallery FUMI, Mazzoleni and Sprüth Magers.”





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Salvagni took this opportunity to look for a bigger space, where he could introduce new concepts in addition to his permanent collection of works. Once he found the perfect location, Salvagni started to completely reimagine it. "To turn it into the kind of dreamy escape we envisioned, we had to strip it all the way back to its raw shell and start again," he confesses. "From an architect's point of view, it was somewhat of a challenge – uneven flooring, crooked walls, and intrusive build outs...After a six-month-delay [due to the coronavirus outbreak], we were able to create the jewel-like space I had in mind."

Since the first sketches, Salvagni had a clear vision. He wanted to design a space that would be flexible to showcase every new collection and exhibition in a different way. "That being said, there are some aspects of the atelier that will remain," he says. "For



example, I chose to finish the arched windows in polished bronze. This material has been used since 3,000 BC and is constantly being used in new and innovative ways. For that reason, it's always present in my works and it's also something I love experimenting with."



With its high ceilings and abundance of natural light, the gallery area on the main floor gives the feeling of being in a grand living room while the ground floor, with lower ceilings and a blue backdrop reminiscent of the lapis blues of Early Renaissance Italian painter Fra Angelico, looks like the interior of a yacht, showcasing the different facets of Salvagni's work and projects. To complement the atmosphere where curvilinear shapes and saturated colours reflect a sense of warmth, calmness and comfort, Azzurro Cielo sky blue Argentinian marble was used for the staircase.

"My choice of materials is always intentional," Salvagni says. "I wanted the finishes to reflect those of my works. We've earned a reputation for our use of noble materials

(including bronze, exotic woods, and parchment), traditional craftsmanship and attention to detail, all of which can be seen and felt throughout the space in a fresh and contemporary way.” Designed during the lockdown last year, Salvagni’s latest collection of furniture and accessories was launched at the same time as the new 2,100-square-foot atelier. “The collection is my reflection of the re-emergence of the home as the epicentre of our lives,” he says.

Currently working on a gut renovation of an 8-story landmarked townhouse in New York, a modernist waterfront villa in Miami, a 40,000-square-foot residence in Mumbai and his own London home in a property designed by David Chipperfield – among others – Salvagni never stops to experiment and create.



Achille Salvagni

*Images* Simon Upton

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