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04 >

BESPOKE SERVICE 01 Alice Boyle, interior designer and office manager **02** Chloe Young, associate **03** Abraham Tekle, project architect **04** Andrew Wood, managing director **05** Emily Wandless, project architect **06** Rosemary Burstern, finance manager

CURTIS WOOD ARCHITECTS

... IS AT HOME WITH INTERIORS

WORDS REBECCA HOH



Andrew Wood, the managing director of Curtis Wood Architects, says his clients' lifestyles lie at the very heart of his work.

'You can feel yourself being drawn into their lives as you empathise with your clients and what they need,' laughs Wood, who will spend an evening with a family to gain an insight into the particular 'culture' of their home. 'It's incredibly rewarding when you get the feeling that you've really nailed a brief that will hit all the emotional notes.'

The London-based practice was set up in 2000 by Wood and Jason Curtis, who had previously worked for Lord Foster and Sir Michael Hopkins. Curtis left the practice in 2003 and since then Wood has headed a team of six that divides its time almost equally between commercial and residential projects. It completes between 10 and 20 projects a year.

The family house it has just completed in Clapham is an example of a truly bespoke service. 'The couple barely saw each other so the master ensuite was enclosed in glass, which becomes opaque at the flick of a switch. This means they can still spend time together while one of them is in the bath,' Wood

explains, 'but it doesn't cause a problem if their teenage daughters walk in.'

Curtis Wood is now working on a greater variety of projects since it relaunched its website. The site now showcases all the practice's projects, not just a selection, and this diversity has appealed to prospective clients who want to replicate the work in their own homes. This year, Curtis Wood will embark on an enormous seven-bedroom house in Stanmore, a £6.5m house on the Wentworth Estate in Surrey and a 'fight club' called *Kombat* in King's Cross.

Although Curtis Wood is, of course, an architecture practice, it is very much in touch with interiors. 'Many architects don't do softs but we take the project as far as the client wants us to,' Wood explains. This means Wood's working week is packed with variety. 'I spend my time sketching, looking at tear sheets or creating adjustable staircases that are suitable for clients' children whose favourite pastime is jumping off things.' But at heart it is very much a building practice. Wood admits: 'I know this because I find myself shouting at builders most of the time.'



BLOCK PARTY

The team often designs crisp, white interiors mixing blocks of colour with interesting materials

TAKE THE PLUNGE

This staircase in a house in Queen's Gate is fully adjustable and is safe for daredevil children

