



A quiet word

These complementary powder rooms provide a guest with more to think about than the straightness of his tie, or the curve of her eyeliner

Above: This minimalist powder room provides some celebrated words to think on. The space has an emphasis on sculptural form, high-lighted by a soft-curve vanity that looks like a free-standing object when seen in reflection. A wall-mounted toilet adds to the abstract effect, as does the muted palette of granite floors, a chocolate brown wall and an overall décor of white.

It would be fair to say that a powder room, by its nature, creates a captive audience of one. An architect might take this spacial opportunity to amuse with form, ambience, or even the written word.

The two powder rooms on these pages are by architect Bjorn Skaptason. Both are adjacent to entertaining spaces in an expansive 1890s residence that Skaptason has remodeled throughout.

Both spaces feature floor-to-ceiling mirrors that double their size visually and provide the reflective utility a powder room requires.

"The sculptural look of the washstands was another impetus to introduce wall-sized mirrors,"

says Skaptason. "Seen in reflection, they have the appearance of freestanding, sculptural forms – an impression heightened by the minimalist, gallery-like ambience of the two rooms."

In keeping with this artistic sensibility, a dark chocolate-colored feature wall in one bathroom is graced with the words of literary wit Oscar Wilde and given the high-end nature of the remodel, they are more than appropriate.

The other powder room also gives the written word pride of place, with a quote from artist Pablo Picasso. The words: "everything you can imagine is real", are inspirational but could also call to mind

the way they are presented. Set on a sheet of glass with a film of water running down the front of it, the quote has a shimmering, ethereal quality.

"The entire waterfall effect is intended to call to mind the nature of powder rooms and their everyday reliance on water," says the architect. "Everything about these rooms can be seen as reflective – either literally or figuratively."

Matching the basins in the powder rooms, the elliptical toilets also have a sculptural quality. These are wall-hung, furthering the abstract impression.

"To install wall-hung toilets, the cisterns and plumbing are all recessed away in a cavity," says

the architect. "This is achieved by building in a false wall and then setting the plumbing behind it. In the powder room with the waterfall, the extra hidden space claimed by the false wall is further utilised to create a niche recess along that wall."

The decorative niche is back-lit, adding to the ambient glow cast by other spot lights strategically dotted around the room.

"Curved feature ceilings in both powder rooms echo the soft curves of the fixtures," says Skaptason. "Together with the expansive mirrors, feature walls, and the waterfall, the ceilings help occupants view the spaces as a sculptural whole."

Above: A niche shelving alcove cut into a false wall, provides a point of difference that helps draw the eye in this powder room. A sliding aluminum door with frosted safety glass provides entry to the room. Granite floor surfaces are in keeping with the inclusion of high-end materials and fixtures used throughout the remodel.



everything you can imagine is real

-pablo picasso

Architect, interior designer:

Bjorn Skaptason,
Atelier Arkitekta (Cambridge,
MA)

Builder: S & H Construction

Basins, toilets:

Laufen Bagno Alessi set
by Oras

Faucets, shower fittings:

Laufen Bagno Alessi
in chrome by Oras

Hot water systems:

Viessmann indirect

Wall coverings: Painted plaster

walls by Andrews Painting

Lighting:

Wever + Ducreé Plano 2 in matt
white

Ventilation: Lifebreath HRV

(heat recovery ventilation)

Flooring:

Espresso polished granite
from Patina Belics

Blinds: Lutron

Waterfall: Custom by

Bjorn Skaptason

Photography by

Jamie Cobeldick

Left: The sound of running water down this sheet of glass provides the occupant with a gentle reminder of the value of cascading water. A fact essential to daily ablutions. A curved ceiling element is repeated through much of the home and in both powder rooms. This provides visual interest and has the added advantage of making the room look taller.