

# PIN-UP

Issue 7  
Fall Winter 09/10  
\$15.00

MAGAZINE FOR  
ARCHITECTURAL  
ENTERTAINMENT



ISSN 19339755



9 771933 975000

Featuring  
**SOPHIE HICKS,**  
**SHIGERU BAN,**  
**FREDRIKSON STALLARD,**  
**CYPRIEN GAILLARD,**  
and **RICARDO BOFILL.**

## A RESTAURANT IN LONDON

Since its ultra-low-key launch in the summer of 2008, The Pale Blue Door — artist and set designer Tony Hornecker's illicit, word-of-mouth speakeasy and restaurant — has become one of London's best worst-kept

confused here. Hornecker totally reconfigured and rebuilt the space, filling it with props, knickknacks, spindly staircases, tiny rooms, nooks, crannies, drapes, curtains, broken china, paintings, seemingly random planks of

BY JAMES ANDERSON

### THE MENU:

Panzanella with Mozzarella

---

Rare Roast Beef with Horseradish Creme Fraiche  
New Potato Mash  
Spring Greens

---

Rhubarb Crumble with Cream

---

Coffee / Tea

---

Tap Water

Half Bottle of Wine

£30 per head inc.  
(additional wine list available)

Hornecker's mouthwatering offerings always include a homemade crumble pie of either the apple or rhubarb variety.

## Tony Hornecker's colorful world lies behind a pale blue door.



An old door in Hornecker's house — a run-down former garage in East London — inspired the restaurant's name. © Ralf Obergfell

secrets, frequented by the city's more forward-thinking art, club, music and fashion scenes, all in thrall to the £30 set dinner of roast beef and apple crumble, prepared by former chef Hornecker himself. The Pale Blue Door is located in a scruffy cobbled alley in Dalston (East London) in a run-down former garage that also serves as Hornecker's home. It is tricky to discern where the home and work spaces divide — in fact they don't really, art and living being most pleasingly

wood, and clocks that no longer tick or tock. PIN-UP decided to find out more about Hornecker's plans for world domination, including moving his inspired and chaotic vision to New York next spring.

**James Anderson:** How long have you been living and working here?

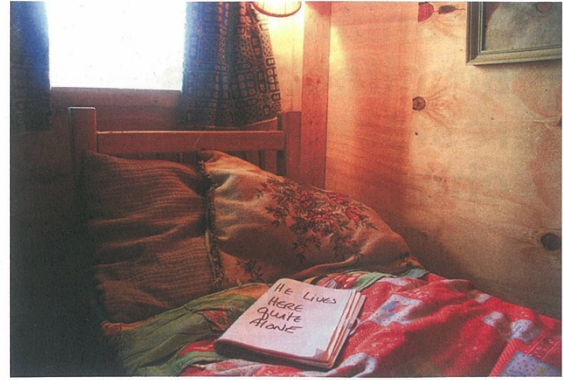
**Tony Hornecker:** I moved into the space seven years ago. It was a big dark garage, with a roller shutter door and nothing else. Previously it had been a blacksmith's and a

mechanics' garage. I'd never built anything before, but had recently watched someone put up a stud wall and thought, "My god! Stud walls equal houses! I can build houses!" Friends would come and look inside, and I would point out the bits of tape on the floor, telling them, "This will be the front door, this will be the kitchen," and so on. It was all rather naïve and those first few months were painful — living in the middle of winter in a building site, bathing in a bucket, eating yet another Breville toasted-cheese

sandwich. But after two months it was habitable. I'd cut into the attic and put some skylights in, most of the walls were up, and it was this big blank canvas which I have since never stopped fiddling with. Each time I think there is nothing else I can do, I find a way to keep building. It's pretty close to being my dream space. I'd always wanted to build a house within a warehouse, and when you wall into my workshop you are greeted by the wooden house I've built which is where I live, then there's the tiny dolls'



Hornecker — a former chef — turned his obsession for collecting knickknacks into a successful career as a set designer. © Ralf Obergfell



Guests are encouraged to use the host's bedroom, a quirky, oversized dollhouse complete with little girls' welly boots at the door. © Ralf Obergfell

house where I sleep. It's a collection of spaces really, each one with its own little identity. The roof is my latest venture: I'm planting grass there and considering getting a goat in addition to my chickens.

JA: What made you decide to turn your home into a restaurant?

TH: I was just really skint at

JA: In which ways did you redesign the interior of the space to become a restaurant?

TH: Hardly at all. I put tables in the installation in the attic, in my bedroom and lounge, and I just draped out my workshop a bit. You can still see it's a workshop. I didn't want to hide that. There are still brushes and tools and props everywhere. It's very

welly boots outside the door. Also, The Pale Blue Door's seven-foot tall waiter, the tranny waiters, lip-synching performers, occasional tarot readings, live entertainment, my love of wine served out of large mugs, the ladders with platters of beef, customers' trips to meet my three lovely chickens on the roof — all that adds to the scene and always

and collaborator Mr. Thom Murphy, we're planning to make The Pale Blue Door a global enterprise! I want to build shacks in warehouses as far afield as Tokyo, New York, Moscow, and São Paulo. I want to ship my collection of old plates and tablecloths made from old shirts and frocks around the world, throw lots of color into the mix, take the



Tranny waiters, tarot readings, and wine served out of large mugs — just another night at The Pale Blue Door. © Ralf Obergfell



Next year Hornecker plans to open an offshoot of The Pale Blue Door in New York City. © Ralf Obergfell

the time — the recession had caused work to dry up, and all of a sudden I was four months behind with the rent, eating onions and bits of old rice that I found in the back of the cupboard. My dog was eating Bisto and cornflakes — we weren't happy! But it also really appealed to me from a creative point of view.

much a studio, except now it's candlelit!

JA: Which elements of The Pale Blue Door do customers tend to be most fascinated by?

TH: They love my bedroom — I call it the Brazilian brothel. To get to it, you crawl up these tiny stairs into a wee dolls' house where I sleep, complete with a tiny row of little girls'

proves popular. So do those guests who bring poppers and practice fellatio.

JA: The Pale Blue Door has become a real London cult success, now under imminent threat of demolition. Has its popularity encouraged you to bring the concept to a wider audience?

TH: Together with my friend

team along, and serve roast beef and apple crumble to more delighted guests around the world!

— James Anderson is a London-based contributing editor to *i-D* and *Another Man*, and he regularly writes for *Fantastic Man*, *Arena Homme Plus*, and *Harrods*.