

The London Magazine

Luxury lifestyle, prime property

Inside:
PEAK SKI
CHALET
CHIC

ART DECO

100 YEARS OF
DESIGN INSPIRATION

Gen Z wish list
What young homeowners
really want

Divorce rings
Jewellery to celebrate
makeups and breakups

Daniel Mays
One of London's best
actors hits the big time

FEBRUARY 2025 £5.50



9 771350 360052
thelondonmagazine.co.uk

THE RIGHT NOTE

WHETHER IT'S A SETTING FOR A GRAND PIANO OR A SOUNDPROOF DEN FOR A DRUMMER, CREATING A PITCH-PERFECT MUSIC ROOM IS AN ART, DISCOVERS TALLULAH RUSHAYA



Think of a music room and you'll conjure up images of a harpsichord in a stately abode. While it wasn't commonplace to have a designated music room, according to house historian and author Melanie Backe-Hansen (house-historian.co.uk), they were a feature in royal palaces and homes of the aristocracy. As

musical instruments found their way into homes by the 18th century, the music space evolved. "The terraced houses of affluent London, such as Mayfair, Bloomsbury, and Marylebone, might include a piano or harp in the drawing room or possibly the parlour," says Melanie. The novels of Jane Austen further illuminated this image of ladies exhibiting their talents for visitors.

Flash forward to the 21st century, and designers are configuring layouts around the piano or a separate hobby room for musicians, rock aristocracy and music enthusiasts. Audrey Carden and Eleanor Cunietti, founders of Carden Cunietti (carden-cunietti.com), have designed homes for household names in rock 'n' roll, bands, singers and DJs. Projects have included

AUDIOPHILE STYLE This page, left to right: This music-score wallpaper, including bars by Schonberg adorns the walls of a Wimbledon home designed by Eleanor Taylor-Roberts; Zulufish collaborated with HUX London to turn this space into a homage to the owners' musical taste, as well as effective vinyl and book storage **Opposite:** The grand piano takes centre stage in The Conrad, 9 Millbank, which is on sale through UK Sotheby's International Realty.



creating space for decks, solutions for vast vinyl collections and in-house studios that integrate soundproofing. The latter, Eleanor remarks, are paramount for drummers. "We can use felt or wool to pad out the 'boom room' but the artist would normally hire a professional studio installation company to make sure it's perfect, especially if it's being used for recording," she adds.

The grand piano is often the centrepiece for design ideas and practical effects. Heavy-duty shelving is used for vinyl or book storage, and modular furniture company Vitsoe (vitsoe.com/gb) can display gold discs, album covers and awards. On a recent Carden Cunietti music-room project, the design unfolded around the grand piano, "with only an artwork above a custom-made fireplace, a colourful photographic work and a Luke Irwin rug to compete for attention," says Eleanor.

For Home at 45, a private members' apartment at Mayfair Park Residences on Park Lane, the grand piano took centre stage. A collaboration between Hospitality Projects' bespoke furniture (hospitality-projects.com) and Jouin Manku's interior design (jouinmanku.com/en), the piano complements the custom dining table and chandelier, setting an elegant tone for guests.

As with design, music is an expression of individual style. The gravitas of a rug within a music room, regardless of shape, design and size can create an impact. Charlotte Ford, Europe senior marketing director at Ruggable (ruggable.co.uk) recommends choosing a rug not only to reduce echo

PHOTOGRAPHY: GUY DE PERAY; FURNITURE: HOSPITALITY PROJECTS; THE BECKITT GROUP

INTERIORS

PERFECT SCORE Below clockwise: At the Mayfair Park Residences, designed by The Hospitality Project and Jouin Manku, a well-lit grand piano is on standby to soundtrack dinner parties; the basement den of this London residence was transformed into an interactive, entertaining-friendly music and wine room by Thorp; Kate Guinness created an appealing musical scene in this Hammersmith home with an upright piano, upholstered stool, wall lighting and framed art



and reverb, but to match your preferred genre of music. For example, a piece from its Iris Apfel collection for listeners of upbeat tunes.

Designer Kate Guinness (kateguinness.co.uk) urges us to not overlook the piano stool upholstery as a feature: "You may be able to use a pretty, vintage (usually less ergonomic) stool, on which you could try a fabric you love but wouldn't feel bold enough to try on a larger item". With the piano able to double as shelf space, she suggests dotting along photographs, flower vases and ornaments without cluttering. And an upright piano against a wall can present an opportune spot for art. "The resulting vignette of piano, artwork and candle sconces or wall lights is invariably lovely," she adds. For pianists, add a task lamp to help with reading music.

When highlighting the importance of musical instruments as "an essential part of family life", Jena Quinn of Studio QD (studio-qd.com) acknowledges that larger instruments can pose a challenge in a London home. For the finished look in a recent project, She oscillated between light and dark tones. Utilising space cleverly, Jena added a mirrored niche to allow generous seating. Golden hues with soft pastel tones from de Gournay wallpaper were used to enhance the black gloss of the piano.

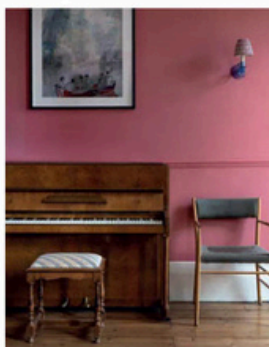


As part of a full house renovation, Caroline Milns, head of interior design at Zulufish (zulufish.co.uk), ensured her clients' musical taste was honoured. Presenting 12 of their favourite albums as bespoke wall art, in partnership with IIUX London, tailor-made storage also created space for music books and a dedicated spot for a record player. Tying the room together, Caroline says designing a custom piece of furniture helped conceal plugs and wiring, enabling the record

player to be the objet d'art of the room.

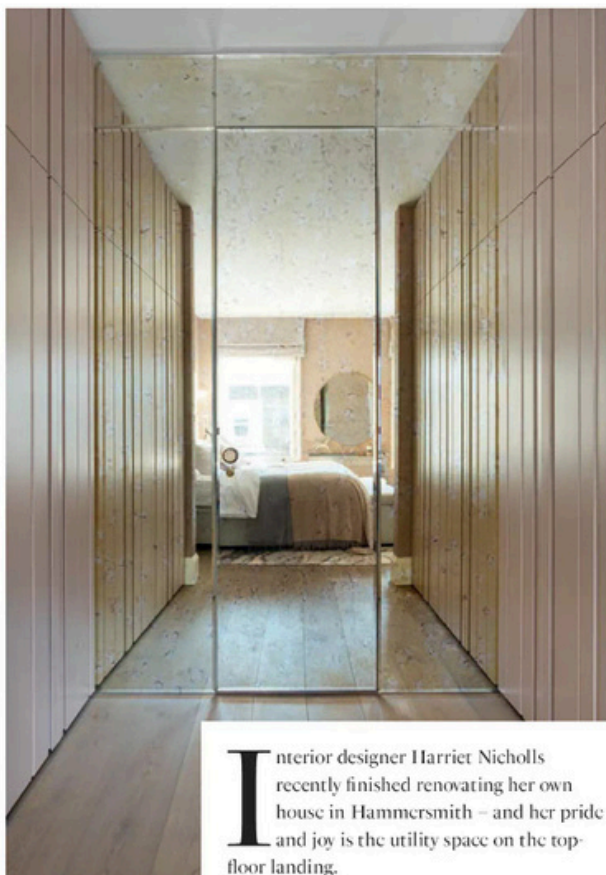
Premium materials and custom finishes add sophistication to a music room, according to Wiktoria Kopycka, lead interior designer on OBMI's London team (obmi.com). A place of sanctuary and wellness, integrated technology for lighting and sound create an immersive experience.

Blending beauty and function, antiques can create a connection to the rich history of music. LAPADA's (lapada.org) chief executive Freya Simms finds adding antique stools, stands or benches injects character. "These pieces not only enhance the aesthetic of the space but also connect the room to the rich history of music". Also looking at the beauty of music is design consultant Eleanor Taylor-Roberts: "Adorning walls with scores can light up a room. Details such as framed score sheets, or using antique marked or tea-stained scores as bespoke wallpaper will make walls truly harmonious". **1**



PHOTOGRAPHS: DOUGHERTY COLLECTION; RICHARD DOWLING; BEN STUBBS

INTERIORS



Interior designer Harriet Nicholls recently finished renovating her own house in Hammersmith – and her pride and joy is the utility space on the top-floor landing.

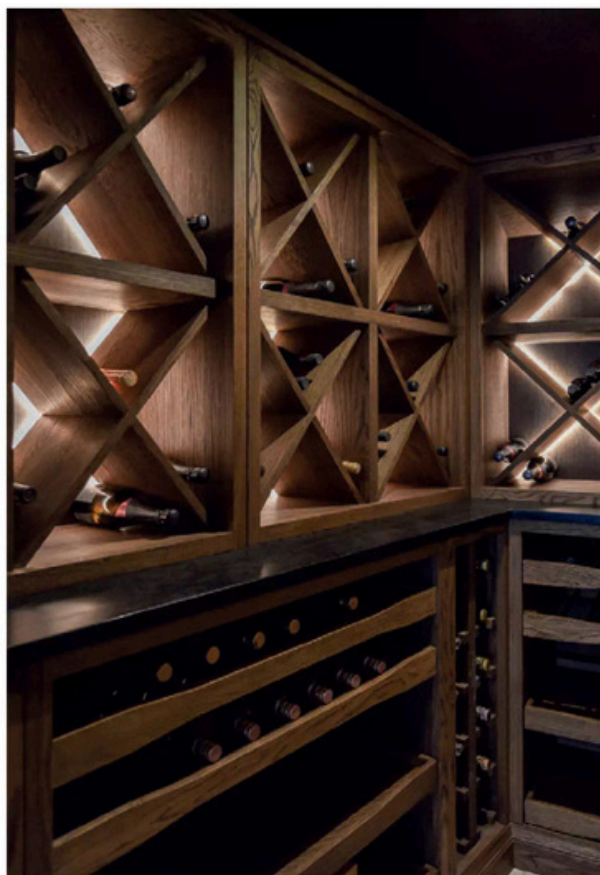
There's a drying rack above a radiator, a rail for shirts, and a bank of cupboards that fit the washing machine, tumble dryer, all household cleaning products, the iron, vacuum cleaner and travel cot. The area, which also includes a mini fridge and kettle, is multi-functional, intended for storage, middle-of-the-night baby bottle-making, or brewing morning teas for guests. And for laundry, of course.

"So much valuable square footage in London properties goes into stairs and landings and, where there's an opportunity to, I tend to promote the landing so that it almost becomes a room in itself," says Nicholls (harrietcholls.com).

Most London homes weren't built to accommodate the needs of modern life but architects and interior designers are constantly coming up with ingenious solutions to store everything from washing to Wellington boots to wine.

George Omalianakis, director of GOA Studio residential architects (goastudio.co.uk), says the answer to keeping clutter at bay is "creativity, lots of bespoke joinery and an eye for detail".

Omalianakis advises using natural recesses in period buildings, such as alcoves and between chimney breasts. "Then visualise a straight line across the room that cuts off that



'hidden' area and see if the rest of the room is still functional and feels generous," he says. "It becomes a bit of a Tetris game and you can have lots of fun trying to find what fits where."

Iwona Budnik, senior interior designer at OWN LONDON (ownlondon.co.uk), creates libraries or reading nooks in alcoves and under stairs. "Partner with a joiner to ensure every millimetre is put to good use and also so they can disguise doors architecturally with a matching ceiling cornice and a continuing skirting to trick the eye," she advises.

A hidden door creates intrigue, reminiscent of the wardrobe in Narnia, and it can also be a practical way of creating symmetry within a room where too many doors could make a space feel more like a thoroughfare, explains Felix Milns, managing director of HUX London (hux-london.co.uk).

"A bathroom becomes a wonderfully secluded, spa-like room and a playroom immensely more fun when accessed through a secret door," Milns says. Mirrors, meanwhile, can make spaces feel larger and hide hidden doors; Dominic Schuster (dominic-schuster.com) recently created a bespoke mirror for a client who wanted to conceal their television discreetly.

TUCKED AWAY

Opposite, clockwise from top left: As part of a Colette van den Thillart interiors project, mirror expert Dominic Schuster created this bespoke folding design to conceal the client's television; Studio QD, Zulufish and HUX London collaborated to fashion this trick bookcase-embedded bar, dedicated to a family's collection of rare whiskies and cigars, this custom bar designed by Elicyon was crafted to evoke a sense of excitement and discovery, from the rich marble backdrop to its rattan-panelled cabinet doors; constructed by Charlton Brown to blend seamlessly with the primary bedroom's classic panelling, this hidden door opens to reveal a secret spa-like en suite bathroom

TIGHT SPOTS

Previous page: Designed by Taylor Howes for an apartment in The Bryanston development, this hideaway bar grabs attention with its orange inset wall. **Above, left to right:** The specialist joinery skills of HUX London were called upon by Studio QD and Zulufish to help create this bedroom's hidden mirrored door; with built-in drawers and uplit shelving, this Herringbone House wine store is an ingenious use of space

PHOTOGRAPHING: JEFFREY PRAVETTER; STYLING: DOMINIC SCHUSTER; FURNITURE: JAMISON; CHARLTON BROWN

INTERIORS

