



CASE STUDY EXTRAVAGANT PARTY PAD

Sally Mackereth, of architecture and interior design practice Studio Mackereth, discusses the creation of this industrial dream home

What's your USP? A delight in the use of high-quality materials to produce elegant details that are sublime, tactile and often playfully executed, as well as an underlying respect for pushing the boundaries of craftsmanship and making.

What are you currently working on? The Concrete House, which is wrapped around a secret garden in London's SW1, new-build apartment blocks in Mayfair, and a house in King's Cross, plus my new furniture and jewellery collections.

Most unusual request? A hydraulic wall that pivots open like the cliff-side door on *Thunderbirds'* Tracy island. When moved into a horizontal or 'open' position, it provides a canopy to shield the client's friends from the rain in the garden.

Dream project? I would like to design a hotel as a setting for total fantasy and escapism, ideally somewhere like Zanzibar. No glass required due to climate, no building regulations, no air-conditioning, just barefoot luxury.

Tell us more about this modern industrial build (above)... The client is an actor and property developer. He had secured planning permission to build a five-bedroom Mac Mansion but instead chose this spacious one-bedroom dwelling (above) instead. The building itself was an industrial relic; a former workshop for a major antiques restorer. We were keen to capture the memory of its past, so we retained and restored many of its features. studiomackereth.com

PICTURES: RICHARD POWERS (LIVING AREA, DINING ROOM, BATHROOM), WIL ECKERSLEY (PIVOTING WALL, EXTERIOR)



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1 Living area

This needed to be both a fabulous place for parties yet also feel comfortable when the client was alone. We created subtle boundaries (often using lighting) between the spaces so that they would work in both instances. There's an element of theatre to the room: we added surprises, such as long views and changes of volume. There's a glass floor panel beside the kitchen that you're only really aware of at night, when the light from the library below glows through.

1 Kitchen

A photo of Frank and Nancy Sinatra hanging out in a kitchen prompted us to design the island in this house as a cooking and social space. We varied the floor height so that you can sit on the island when you're lounge-side or step behind it, where the floor drops to allow for food (and cocktail) prep. Your audience can either help or watch.



2 Dining room

The winch above the table is a deliberately exaggerated celebration of the device's usefulness. Here it is used to lower the chandelier in order to create a more intimate space for entertaining. The specialist paint finish on the wall was painstakingly built up layer upon layer until it became like an artwork in itself, an homage to the original building's decay.

3 Pivoting wall

A theatrical device straight out of an old movie, this secret wall leads from the main space to the converted coach house. It adds an element of surprise as you transition from the social to the private area. When my son saw it, he asked why we didn't have one at home... I'm working on that. The herringbone flooring is sourced from the workshop next door. Restoring things costs more, but it preserves the building's atmosphere.



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SALLY MACKERETH'S FIVE GOLDEN RULES OF DESIGN

Want to achieve a super-stylish home with Sally's trademark style? Here, she shares her top tips

1 Always plan how you will arrange furniture and art at the outset of the build so that you can work out where the walls need to go and how to light the space.

2 Spend money on surfaces and objects that you touch, from the big things like floor finishes to small details such as door handles and light switches.

3 Do not pepper the ceiling with expensive down-lights. Table lamps on five-amp circuits are softer and allow the mood of the room to change from day to night.

4 Avoid buying your furniture all at once with a specific 'look' in mind. Mix it up and change your style frequently. A home needs to naturally evolve as a setting for life's treasures acquired along the way, not a 'get the look' feature from a magazine.

5 Consider the way the space could flow. A completely open-plan home isn't always the way to go. Separate rooms using full-height pocket doors and pivot walls as these will allow the flexibility for both privacy and an open-plan space as required.