



Natural Habitat

In the latest instalment of our self-styled portrait series, we photograph London's trailblazing interior designers and space-makers in their own homes

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EVA SONAIKE

HOME FURNISHINGS AND TEXTILE DESIGNER

I like experimenting and having fun with fashion, which is exactly what I do in my textile work. I'm surrounded by prints all day – right now I'm working on my first wallpaper collection – but although I love them, when it comes to my wardrobe I tend to choose solid colours.

I've always dressed colourfully and these days I value quality over quantity. My day-to-day style is practical but simultaneously quite glamorous, so in the evening I'll often stay in my day clothes and add killer heels or bold jewellery. I like to make a statement without showing too much flesh. Tamu McPherson is my style icon – she's effortlessly chic, wears colour and makes fashion look so easy.

For the daytime, I keep it simple and wear dresses. This pink one [left] was made for me by Nigerian designer Younass Collection, I found the silk fabric at a Nigerian textile house and fell in love with it.

My high-waisted green trousers [right] are, believe it or not, from H&M. I saw them on an Instagram story and had to buy them, they're the perfect showstopper. The off-shoulder top is by Johanna Ortiz, a Colombian designer I found on Net-a-Porter; I like the playfulness of the design and it makes me feel feminine.

I have a collection of about 20 coats – some vintage, some designer, some high street – in an array of colours, from lemon yellow to emerald green and bright red. These are some of my most treasured pieces. evasonaike.com



DAVID CARTER

INTERIOR DESIGNER AND 40 WINKS HOTEL FOUNDER



'Dandy-esque' is probably how most people would describe my style. I just see it as normal. I don't really have a defined approach to daywear and eveningwear because working as a creative frees me from the constraints of having to conform. That might mean a neo-Edwardian suit by day and something more casual in the evening, or indeed vice versa.

While there have been periods of experimentation, I think my taste and style has remained pretty consistent over the years, mixing classic and contemporary. I generally detest rules of any type: dressing to make yourself happy is the only thing that is important.

Probably my most treasured piece is an amazing Qi dynasty court robe. I remember seeing Bertolucci's movie *The Last Emperor* when I was very young and I've had an ongoing love affair with the costumes from that period ever since. I have a few original pieces, but I have also had some copies made which I can wear out without fear of damaging them.

I used to be obsessive about accessories... tie pins, cufflinks, handkerchiefs, ties and all sorts of all sorts of cigarette paraphernalia like cases, lighters and elegant holders. There was a long period when I wore detachable collars, which I had to send off to be starched and polished at huge expense. I'm much less interested in all that now but I still love hats and wear one most days.

I love people like Bunny Roger and Sebastian Horsley, both sadly now deceased. They both had great style but also possessed wit. A dandy with nothing to say soon becomes a bore.

I've been working as an interior designer now for 25 years and have recently decided to take some time out to open a new hotel in France. I have been very fortunate to have had lots of amazing clients over the years but I am looking forward to just having to please myself, although admittedly on a more modest budget than usual! alacarter.com





2 LOVELY GAYS

INTERIOR DESIGN DUO

Russell Whitehead (*on the right*) I want to feel comfortable for meetings, site visits and designing in the studio, so easy, chic pieces are key. We often end up dressing appropriately for each client, we're like chameleons in that way. Jordan loves fashion and we wear the same size in clothes and shoes, so I often go with his flow and add a twist of my own.

I like to colour-block my clothes and wear trainers, it takes the stress out of getting dressed in the morning. Layers help to dress the look up or down and I go for quality cuts with long lines where possible – I'm a broad guy, so anything that elongates me is good. I don't like unnecessary pockets or embellishments.

A relaxed suit with good detailing is so useful, and throwing a T-shirt on underneath shows that we don't take ourselves too seriously. For the evening I love a patterned shirt in a light material. I'm not really a jewellery person but I do have a porcelain chain in matte white made by an artist friend, William & Co, which I love.

Right now we're working on a brutalist apartment in Waterloo, an arts and crafts family home in the country, a Victorian house renovation with an eclectic vibe and a restaurant installation in Peckham. We're also launching our first furniture collection for a well-known brand early next year.

Jordan Cluroe (*on the left*) I'd say my style is experimental, or classic with a twist. I love brands like Vivienne Westwood, Acne and Paul Smith but team them with high street brands like Cos and Asos. My taste has become more expensive over time and I tend to buy less but spend more, although Russ would disagree with the first part! You can't beat a good navy suit and I love a leather biker jacket. Shoes are a real thing for me, too – I have them in every colour.

I tend not to think about day and evening dressing as such. We're experimenting with 'twinning' at the moment, where we dress the same for events but put our own slant on it. I love the idea of inappropriate dressing – a suit in the daytime, jeans to an evening event. It's fun to play with volume, too – a fitted sweater paired with some wide Westwood pants is effortlessly chic.



I still have my wedding suit, which I love – it's Vivienne Westwood with high-waisted pants and a short jacket. I collect watches but always end up wearing the one left to me by my grandfather, a Rotary with a gold face and brown leather strap.

I admire the way Eddie Redmayne wears British designers so well and I love the whole 1920s foppish style – I'd like to have lived during that time. 2lgstudio.com

BETHAN LAURA WOOD

MULTIDISCIPLINARY DESIGNER



I don't think there's much difference in my day and nightwear – I actually like dressing up in the middle of the day more than I do in the evening. These are my outside-of-the-workshop outfits as layers and drapey items don't mix well with power tools.

I recently went to Mexico and the black dress I'm wearing [left] is a typical dress from the Oaxaca area, picked up at a festival run by local artisans and craftsmen. The pom-pom shoes are Greek and a gift from my previous assistant.

Frida Kahlo had amazing style – I saw an exhibition of her clothes when I went to Mexico for the first time. My trips to that part of the world have definitely inspired me to experiment with a warmer colour palette and over time I've started to layer my clothes more.

I used to wear matador hats all the time and then my bag got stolen with a favourite hat inside, so I taught myself how to make matador hats from scratch to replace it. I wasn't ready to not have it.

I love an oversized “big mama” dress, and this pink design [right] that I picked up in New York has become one of my staple pieces this year – it's big, it's comfy and it's not too hot. The kimono I'm wearing over the top is one by Duro Olowu, who makes beautiful, high-end patterned pieces.

I've always collected things and accessories offer diverse ways of adding an accent to an outfit. I particularly like plastic and resin materials – these graphic disc-shaped earrings are last-season Missoni and I've worn them to death. The orange embellished flats are by Peter Pilotto, who I'm creating some glass flower lights for as part of a collaboration for the London Design Festival. bethanlaurawood.com

