

Ideal Home

A teenager living in care describes the home of his dreams.

Jason Malloy, 17, lives in a care home in Islington, north London. He is currently studying A-Levels in art, history of art and philosophy, and wants to become an architect. He was recently offered a summer position at Prado, the Italian design company, but was forced to turn it down in order to study for his A-Levels.

Describing his dream home a cross between Canary Wharf and St Pancras Station, Jason says that his design is inspired by his environment and knowledge of architecture.

"My dream home is large, palatial. I have planned it around the idea of space, volume and proportion," he explains. "I have built up a picture over time. I grew up around architecture - my father was studying for his architectural degree. London and Islington in particular is a diverse exhibition of architecture. It's inspiring.

"I would try to avoid sharp geometric corners in my dream home. I would like it to be smooth and curvaceous like the body. The most natural things are that way. I think it is unnatural to have solid square sharp objects.

"In everyday life each room has a certain feeling. The sitting room or the drawing room tends - for me - to be a masculine place with masculine colours like blue and red. The bedroom tends to be a more feminine area with more passive colours. I would like to keep to that principle, but where the rooms are typically associated with masculinity they would be muted - more harmonised.

"For my bedroom I would design a parquet floor and sink the bed into the floor. White walls, no window, with a glass door above floor level, 60 cm above the skirting board. My favourite room would be a massive white room with large walls, a glass ceiling and gravel on the floor. It would just be empty or full of sculptures.

"If I could place my home anywhere, it would be the Black Forest in Germany. I think it would be wonderful to be walking through the forest and all of a sudden you come to this spectacular building in the middle of nowhere.

"Living in care is a stressful experience. It can feel claustrophobic and suffocating. If you have a spacious environment, it alleviates those feelings. A house has to be conducive to love and evoke warm feelings like friendship and kindness. If it is all cluttered up and claustrophobic, the people who live there feel oppressed and repressed.

"What I like about the idea of building my own home is that I could customise it to my own preference. No one else is going to understand my feelings and preferences as much as I do. If I got bored with the house I'd built, I think I could recreate it, or redesign it. It's a never-ending possibility, really. The place where you live makes a difference to your life."

About the team

Interview by editor Anastasia Thomas, 14, and reporters Selina Gibson, 13, and Senab Adekunle, 14. It was published in the [Architects' Journal](#), in a special youth edition guest edited by Children's Express.

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