

SOUND DESIGN

Created to bring melodies to our ears, music rooms should be just as harmonious to our eyes, writes **Iyna Bort Caruso**.

Libraries beckon with books, home theatres lure with films, and music rooms summon with sound. For centuries in aristocratic households, music rooms were de rigueur, and a musical education was a cultural imperative. People met to play in rooms that took their decorative cues from the world's great concert halls.

Today, dedicated music rooms are rare, according to Frank de Biasi, a New York-based interior designer whose residential portfolio includes projects in Europe, the US and the Middle East. De Biasi says instruments are often integrated into studies or media rooms, or treated as objets d'art.

In residences where homeowners do dedicate space for acoustic experiences, the music room has been rebooted for the 21st century. Rooms are designed for multiple functions – from an intimate cocktail party for ten friends to a performance space for a hundred guests. For one client, de Biasi designed a space whose upholstered walls and dark stained finishes give it a nightclub feel.

At a Corte Madera estate, outside of San Francisco, music is part of the property's DNA. Once owned by concert promoter Bill Graham, of Grateful Dead fame, the estate now has a new residence designed by architect Sim Van der Ryn. Known as the Guitar House for the way a long corridor and music room are reminiscent of the instrument's silhouette, the home is co-listed by Isobel Wiener and Danielle Chavanon of Sotheby's International Realty. "The spirit of Bill Graham lives on," says Wiener. For Chavanon, "The way the passion for music is expressed in the property absolutely gives it another dimension." Indeed, for some homeowners, a music room may be the way to make their house pitch-perfect.

New York-based writer Iyna Bort Caruso has contributed to *The New York Times* and *Newsday*.

CHARLOTTE

NORTH CAROLINA

Painstakingly restored to its former glory over the past fifteen years, this classic historical estate features an impressive music room with English-inspired craftsmanship.

\$2,199,950 Property ID: JQS5V4 | sothebysrealty.com
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CHESTER

CONNECTICUT

This striking property blends classic architecture and modern amenities to create a warm and welcoming residence. It was designed for entertaining and referred to as The Casino in 1897, when it was built. Its focus on the arts, and especially music, is most evident in the large living room, which contains a stage with hand-painted backdrops, a piano and other features associated with musical performances.

\$1,180,000 Property ID: YJQCHN | sothebysrealty.com
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SEATTLE

WASHINGTON

Twenty minutes from the heart of Seattle, this traditional Georgian mansion was built for modern living. Details such as barrel-vaulted ceilings, massive crystal chandeliers, herringbone floors and leaded-glass windows enhance a remodelled chef's kitchen and fully equipped sound stage for music enthusiasts.

\$4,500,000 Property ID: Y2CWT5 | sothebysrealty.com
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