

DESIGNER'S WALK

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PHOTOS BY WILLIAM MACCULLUM.

L.A. NATURALS

**Earth. Wind. And Fire.
One designer captures
elemental nature.**

**Ever want to walk among the stars?
Or at least ever wonder how high-
profile personalities live and what
kind of décor surrounds them?**

Architectural designer to Hollywood's elite Steve Hermann gave FABULOUS FLOORS Magazine some insight into what it takes to "wow" A-List personalities like Courtney Cox, Jennifer Lopez, the Olsen Twins, Matthew Perry, Danny DeVito and others with custom living spaces.

Hermann was gracious enough to share with us the insights that went into designing Christina Aguilera's home featured in a photo tour on the next six pages. >>



Laminated beams are structural roof elements spanning from the rear of the house and reaching to the sky in front. Rattan seating was purchased personally by designer Steve Hermann on the Island of Bali in Indonesia.

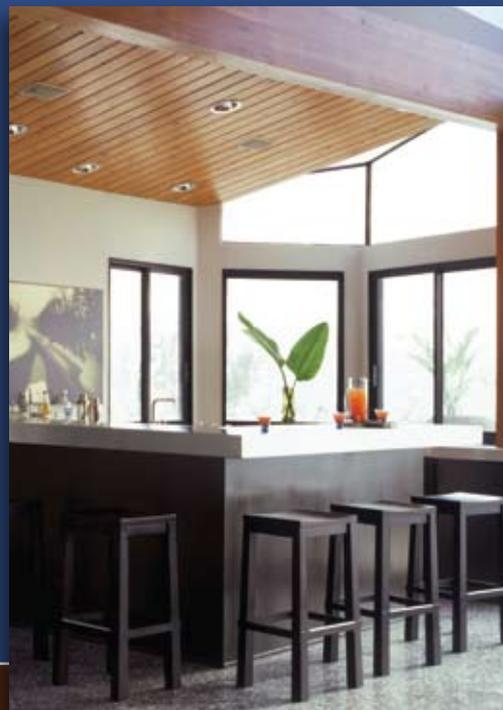


"People talk about dream homes so much that the phrase has almost become a cliché," Hermann said. "My job is to make that phrase meaningful again by making homes that truly move and inspire their owners and friends."

What you see here is the chic, \$5 million home purchased by pop music star Christina Aguilera, originally built in Los Angeles in the 1960s. Hermann "re-imagined" the home to include a home theatre and bar and incorporate cutting-edge technologies plus exquisite interior furnishings and details with vistas of the Hollywood Hills.

Hermann told FABULOUS FLOORS that "Flooring is very important to the overall design scheme. Flooring sets the mood for whatever you are trying to achieve visually. To begin with, it is one of the largest surfaces in a home. It is not covered with artwork as are the walls, so the floor is very visible. When deciding on flooring, you should give thought to what effect you want to create. If you want a space to look expansive, I might choose a light colored terrazzo or ceasarstone. In this case, because the floor is one uniform color without seams, it appears that the floor area is so much greater than it actually is. Often, I will continue the terrazzo out onto the decks to create a seamless indoor-outdoor feeling."

The entire living area features poured-in-place terrazzo. Original to the home, great pains were taken to restore it. Note how it surrounds the sunken living area which features retro white shag carpeting and the understated wood tables. The wall in the background is covered in hair-on-hide cowhides sheared short for a uniform appearance.



The home was designed to make use of tremendous amounts of natural light. "At night, it needed lighting, so we chose to use recessed cans for nighttime illumination," says the designer. The floor continues the walnut treatment, but because the ceiling is a structural element (therefore needing strength), poplar was used.



What materials does he like to work with?

"My favorite material for flooring is terrazzo at the moment. It is almost indestructible. When poured in place, it is seamless, which gives a very expansive look." In Hermann's view, "It harkens back to yesterday's 50s looks but has been modernized to simultaneously look very fresh and new. You can use it in living areas, bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms. In this regard, you can have one flooring surface for the entire house with area rugs in the living areas to warm it up a little."

"I like keeping flooring very simple and monotone. It should not be competing with the rest of the house but really be the background for it — beautifully accenting the other details of the house. Every time you have a surface change it portions off that space and makes it seem small and separated instead of flowing and interconnected."



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At top: The industrial brushed steel is a dramatic counterpoint to the walnut floor and chairs of African Wenge wood; below, another view of the living area, showing the fireplace wall and terrazzo hearth.



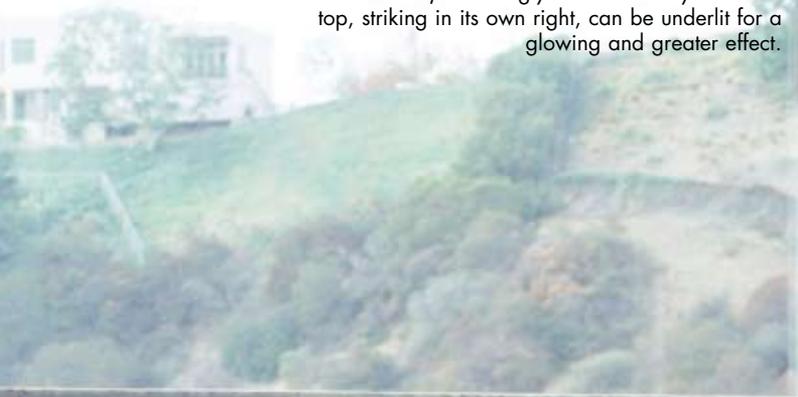
With so much at stake and such a creative mind, how does a star designer like Hermann get started?

"I look at every room as if I was a photographer. I ask myself what is the mood I am trying to create? When I approach a room, I look at the first visual picture you get upon walking in. That first visual image should be powerful, as it will be the one you remember long after you leave the space."

In that way, he is much like his clients, whose job it is to deliver a memorable performance.

Throughout Aguilera's home, you will find extensive use of walnut flooring and Hermann's touch of white shag carpeting, retro-reminiscent of the 70s. 🐾

This Calcutta marble floor (a type of carrera marble) is strikingly white. The onyx counter-top, striking in its own right, can be underlit for a glowing and greater effect.



Escape to this bath with floors of Calcutta marble, walls paneled in African Wenge wood and a tub made of white resin.

Here in the master bedroom, the walnut floor features a sheepskin rug throw. Chairs and foot bench are in leather. The painting is a self-portrait of New York artist Paul Richard. Bearing an uncanny resemblance to actor Christopher Reeid, it is entitled "Superman."



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Note the white shag carpet. Here and throughout the house, it was selected because it was a "fun way to introduce a bit of 70s vibe into the place," says designer Steve Hermann.

