

'IT TICKS ALL THE BOXES'

BARBICAN, LONDON

Owned by Ken MacKay, 48
 (ARCHITECT)

"Originally, this was the Barbican development's estate office in the 1960s. It has an awful lot of space. All we've done since buying it is to put in a mezzanine, which is our bedroom, some partition walls for the kids' bedrooms, and a 75-case wine cellar.

Because it's a very theatrical space, we've been careful about the lighting. We have tried to light the columns with up-lighters to wash the concrete with light, so if anything it is underlit.

To compensate for the quantity of concrete, we have contrasted it with dark wood and white walls.

We made a feature out of the courtyard by installing a 25-ton steel staircase with a waterfall within. It's the biggest free-standing element in the Barbican, and had to be lifted into place in one piece by a crane.

Oddly, my favourite feature is the kids' bathroom. When we renovated, we found the original 1960s smooth concrete. That's architectural history.

The property ticks all the boxes for us, as an architectural masterpiece and a family home. Most people are shocked that we live on a major street in central London. They don't expect to see a home surrounded by banks and law firms." **JM** ▶

