

THE MODERN HOUSE



Bevan Street, London N1
Sold

Swarovski House

Designed by the acclaimed architect Sir David Adjaye, Swarovski House is a masterful example of contemporary intervention set within the proportions of an early Victorian townhouse. It can be found on quiet and leafy Bevan Street in Islington, within the Arlington Square Conservation Area. The period façade remains, while the interiors have been completely transformed with soaring double-height spaces clad in warm-hued timber and a wonderful glazed extension within the private garden at the rear. The house measures just under 1,200 sq ft internally and is arranged with two light-filled bedrooms.

Designed in 2001, the house was an early project by Adjaye and demonstrates the skilful manipulation of spatial volumes and natural light that has come to define his work. The current owners have conscientiously conserved the original design while installing an elegant new bathroom and creating a utility room/storage in the under pavement vaults; well-conceived additions that adapt the house for modern life.

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Adjaye's design reworked the internal plan to create various half levels connected by a beautiful timber staircase described by architectural writer Peter Allison as a "promenade architecturale", with unexpected openings providing views from one space to another. Entry is to the ground-floor living room, which retains its Victorian proportions and handsome front-facing sash window.

Timber cladding envelopes the kitchen and the two-storey dining space on the lower-ground floor. This is the centrepiece of Adjaye's intervention, creating strong visual warmth and striking geometric lines. The garden was landscaped with concrete steps and benches, and this material continues to form the lower walls of the house. The minimal palette of wood, concrete and glass serves to create a contemporary space as visually arresting as it is welcoming.

Also on the lower-ground floor is the second bedroom and an adjacent WC. The current owners opened-up the hallway to continue into a new under-pavement utility room, with is wonderfully light thanks to the addition of a glass door that opens onto the street-facing courtyard, where there is bike storage in the second vault.

On the first floor is the principal bedroom, and across the bright hallway is the family bathroom. This is arranged with a new walk-in shower and contemporary bath by Inbani. On the second floor is a wood-panelled home office/reading room, with a door to the roof terrace.

Swarovski House is so-called because it was created for a member of the Swarovski family (it has since changed hands). At the outset of his career, the architect was focused on producing dynamic private residences, and he was embraced by the artistic community in particular. More recently, Adjaye has turned his hand to major civic buildings, including Rivington Place and the Idea Store in London, the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver.

Bevan Street is a broad and peaceful residential street which runs towards the Regent's Canal and has access to the gardens and amenities of Arlington Square. Despite its quiet situation, the house is within easy reach of the shops, bars and restaurants of Upper Street, Shoreditch, Hoxton and Clerkenwell. Within a stone's throw of the house there are many good eateries, cafes and pubs; Pophams Bakery, The Duke of Cambridge and minutes along the canal is the Towpath Cafe.

The Underground is available at Angel (Northern Line), and Old Street and Essex Road stations are also close by. Numerous bus routes provide easy access to the City and West End. To the south, significant redevelopment and investment is taking place in the area around City Basin and Old Street's 'Silicon Roundabout', as it attracts tech companies and creative talent from around the world.

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.