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Drake, in a Kapital sweatshirt and 1017 ALYX 9SM pants, with Rafauli in the lounge.

MAGAZINE

Inside Rapper Drake's Manor House in Hometown Toronto

Superstar Drake goes home to Toronto to build his eye-popping pleasure dome

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April 8, 2020

SAVE

Remember the chintzy, pimped-out McMansions that were a staple of the long-running MTV series *Cribs*? The Toronto home of mega recording artist [Aubrey Drake Graham](#) is something else altogether. Measuring 50,000 square feet, with amenities such as an NBA regulation-size indoor basketball court crowned by a 21-square-foot pyramidal skylight, Drake's astonishing domicile certainly qualifies as extravagant. But instead of vast expanses of cheap drywall and mountains of ungainly furniture upholstered with a hot glue gun, stately Drake Manor, as envisioned by Canadian architectural and interior designer Ferris Rafauli, is a marvel of old-world craftsmanship, constructed of limestone, bronze, exotic woods, and other noble materials. Every detail of the sprawling property has been meticulously conceived and executed. And there isn't a *Scarface* poster in sight.



Two sculptures by Kaws flank the home's entrance. Custom bronze-and-solid-marble chandelier by [Rafauli](#); Escarpment Light and Nero Marquina marble cover the floor.

“Because I was building it in my hometown, I wanted the structure to stand firm for 100 years. I wanted it to have a monumental scale and feel,” Drake says of his passion project. “It will be one of the things I leave behind, so it had to be timeless and strong,” he adds.

Dubbed The Embassy, the house takes its cues from traditional Beaux Arts architecture, distilled and slightly abstracted to imbue the classic idiom with a more contemporary spirit. “In form, materials, and execution, the structure is a proper 19th-century limestone mansion. But the exterior profiles are more minimal and the lines are a bit cleaner,” says Rafauli, who heads his own namesake luxury design/build firm based in Ontario. “This isn’t stucco, paint, and fake gold. That’s not what Drake wanted, and that’s not what I do.”



Drake, wearing Tom Ford and sneakers by Nike, in his Toronto home. Fashion styling by Mellany Sanchez.

Rafauli describes the crazysexycool interiors as “modern Art Deco,” again referencing a classic historical style that has been tweaked and rejuvenated to mirror the spirit of the times as well as the DNA of his high-profile client. “Once you’ve chosen a certain style, you can dance within that style,” the designer observes. Drake insists, “It’s overwhelming high luxury. That message is delivered through the size of the rooms and the materials and details of the floors and the ceilings. I wanted to make sure people can see the work I’ve put in over the years reflected from every vantage point.”



A bespoke Bösendorfer concert grand piano designed by [Ferris Rafauli](#) and Takashi Murakami anchors the great room.

Indeed, the scale of the rooms sets the tone for the home experience from the moment one enters the vast entry hall, which is clad in solid limestone with beveled inserts of Nero Marquina marble beneath a faceted ceiling of antique mirror framed in bronze. The epic great room, which soars to 44 feet high, pumps up the volume even further. At one end of the space, a bespoke concert grand piano by the venerable Austrian piano maker Bösendorfer designed in collaboration with Japanese artist Takashi Murakami and Rafauli sits nestled within a portal defined by floor-to-ceiling panels of macassar ebony set alongside bronze screens fronting more antique beveled mirror. “Drake’s world completely revolves around music, so he wasn’t going to buy just any piano. This prized possession is an authentic marriage of artistry, craft, and quality,” Rafauli notes.



In the master bedroom, [Rafauli](#) incorporated a hummingbird tapestry by Alexander McQueen for [The Rug Company](#) into the bedding. Rafauli custom carpet by The Rug Company. The bed is by [Hästens](#) x Ferris Rafauli; pendants by [Jonathan Browning Studios](#).

The second jewel of the great room is a monumental iteration of Lobbmeyr’s iconic Metropolitan chandelier, originally designed by Hans Harald Rath for the Viennese maker to decorate the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in 1963. With more than 20,000 pieces of hand-cut Swarovski crystal, the dazzling light sculpture is the second largest installation of its kind in the world.



Over the pool, a backlit slab of Nero Assoluto granite offers interchangeable atmosphere lighting.

The designer's nods to Art Deco style become more explicit in the lavish canary-yellow lounge, which, like several other spaces in the house, can be glimpsed in Drake's videos for his songs "When to Say When"/"Chicago Freestyle" and "Toosie Slide." The room's crowning glory is a foliate ceiling of concentric backlit hexagonal panels wrapped in Alcantara faux suede, with a massive Venini-glass sunburst chandelier dropped from its center. The furnishings, here as throughout the home, were all custom designed by Rafauli in materials that range from dyed ostrich skin and mohair to macassar and bronze.



A backlit panel of brown agate semi-precious stone softly illuminates the studio lounge. Erwan Boulloud aluminum cocktail table; vintage Ricardo Fasanello chair. Drake's favorite spot in the house is his 3,200-square-foot master-bedroom suite, with an additional 1,100 square feet of covered terraces. "The bedroom is where I come to decompress from the world at the end of the night and where I open my eyes to seize the day," he says. "The bed lets you float, the shower lets you escape and gather your thoughts, and the closet makes you want to talk to yourself while you're getting dressed."



A suspended cantilevered block marble stair is adorned with chandeliers by [Rafauli](#).

As always, God is in the details. The bed and bed base, which weigh roughly one ton and cost more than many people's entire homes, is from Rafauli's new line for Hästens, called Grand Vividus. The headboard, accented with antique mirror and channel-tufted leather, encompasses a whiskey-and-champagne bar on the reverse side. The nightstands feature mother-of-pearl inlays, and the bedding incorporates an Alexander McQueen hummingbird tapestry from The Rug Company.



The official NBA-size court is painted with details inspired by Drake's lifestyle brand, October's Very Own.

The centerpiece of the master bath is a 4,000-pound tub of faceted black marble carved from a single block. Equally dramatic is Drake's two-story closet, adorned with amethyst hardware, rock crystal, and seating upholstered in diamond-tufted shearling with polished nickel studs. It's the perfect place to display the musician's extensive wardrobe, sneaker collection, and the array of precious Hermès Birkin bags that he has been amassing for years.



The master bath features a Nero Marquina marble vanity and tub. Custom chandelier by [Lumifer](#); [Brabbu](#) sconces; chair by [Rafauli](#).

And the hits keep coming. There's the world-class recording studio, which Drake likens to "eccentric 1970s studios mixed with Annabel's in London"; the well-used kitchen that features the first stove from Rafauli's new line for La Cornue; the awards room, which tells the story of Drake from his childhood to his years on the Canadian television show *Degrassi: The Next Generation* to his reign as a Grammy-winning artist; the hall of sports jerseys displayed in museum-like vitrines; and the indoor swimming pool sheathed in black granite.

Surveying the splendors of his Canadian pleasure palace, Drake takes the long view: "I think the house shows that I have true faith in myself to take on this task when I was just 27 and see it through," says the now 33-year-old superstar. "I also think the house says that I will forever remain solid in the place I was born."

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