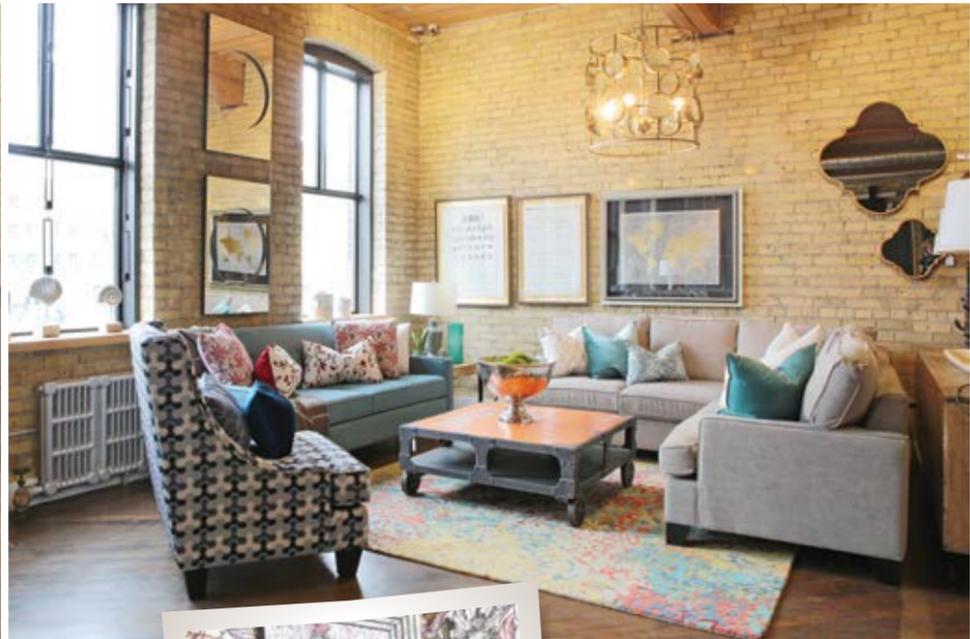


PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE

# ARCHITECTURAL *inspiration*



**THE SPACE:** Rebecca Courey thinks the time is just right for a new furniture and design store, especially since **Design House London** occupies one of the city's landmark buildings, the former Gardner Galleries on York Street. "The building inspired me to create this amazing space," Rebecca says of the historic location and its magnificent architectural presence. "It is a dream come true." In 2017 Rebecca and Ken Demelo bought the century-plus building, then set to work on extensive renovations. The work took just a year to complete though the experience felt like 10, recalls Rebecca with a chuckle. New HVAC, plumbing and electrical went on behind the scenes while sandblasting yellow brick walls, reviving original woodwork and retaining a portion of the original Anaglypta-clad ceiling have added character to new elements of the building's light-filled interior spaces. There now are two spacious floors displaying furniture vignettes, accessories and



Front: Nicole Leak, Rebecca Courey. Back: Suzanne Steele, Vanessa Hicks, Lindsay Bennett, Destiny Schipper.



fabric samples. There is also a design services floor and a loft-like special events floor.

**IN ESSENCE:** Rebecca has ample retail experience and has worked as a designer for some time. In fact, full-service interior design services are a big part of the story at Design House London. That's why she describes the new showroom as a "business within a business." The store is open to the general public, offering a range of accessories and giftware in addition to major furniture pieces, and it also provides a way for Design House clients to see, touch and feel furnishings and fabrics during the design process. The opportunity "to touch and feel" is precisely why Rebecca says bricks-and-mortar retail spaces are a timely antidote to the craze for online home and design retail sites. She says Design House will inspire visitors and clients to properly curate their homes to their personal tastes. This is a layered process, she explains, adding, "Anyone can build a box, but not anyone can create an experience."

**TRENDING:** Mixing patterns and textures in all areas. Wall detailing like shiplap and applied mouldings.

**FAVOURITES:** "We have an obsession with finishing touches like cushions, vases and table centrepieces," says Rebecca.

**FUN FACT:** Winner of an Architectural Conservancy Ontario London Branch award.

**GET THERE:** 186 York St., London  
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