



Smashing Pumpkins

KATE MALONE's open plan North London mews property takes the balance between life and work to new extremes. Step inside to meet the ceramicist and browse the work of her creative community.

PHOGRAPHY NICOLE MARIA WINKLER

STYLING VICTORIA SEKRIER

SET DESIGN HATTY ELLIS-COWARD

Above: Kate Malone wears coat and scarf **LOEWE**, Graham Malone suit and shirt **ANDREAS KRONTHALER FOR VIVIENNE WESTWOOD**.



Clockwise from top: works in progress — a large-scale commission awaits the firing process; one of Kate's classic pumpkins; Kate and Graham's bedroom and office space — the upper floor contains large doors that act as moving walls, allowing it to open completely onto the living space; a ceramic mold displays its own sculptural beauty.



Coat and belt
CRAIG GREEN
Quilt MATTHEW
ADAMS DOLAN



NO DOOR SEPARATES the open plan kitchen-dining area of Kate Malone’s North London mews house from the ceramics studio — her second ‘kitchen’. Moving from a colourful, comfortable dining area to a thousand-degree-oven in little more than a few steps might seem an affront to conventional domestic standards. But under Kate’s watch, the configuration feels natural and accommodating. The description she gives me of her ‘idyll’, where she is able to work on her pottery while her husband Graham cooks just meters away, is self-evident. The house has served them well in the twenty years since Graham, a keen builder, constructed it himself; and, like many of the best things, it was the result of a number of happy accidents.

“Serendipity”, Kate calls it, as we sit down to chat over a delicious salad of peppery greens from the garden of their new home in Kent, to which both family and studio are in the process of moving. It all began with the purchase of this, their first home — a tall, rust-bricked property typical of those populating their corner of north-east London. The couple spotted it whilst on a cycling recce in the ‘80s, and saw immediate potential. The dream, Kate tells me, was to create a “ceramics centre”: a space that would offer studios and support to talented ceramicists from all walks of life, and all corners of the globe. With community at its heart, this idea was typical of Kate’s optimistic, inclusive outlook on both art and life. With the help of an architect friend from Kate’s Royal College of Art days, and Graham’s hard work, the centre became a reality in the back garden of the terrace house just a few years later.

For 14 years after its construction the bright, unfussy building, with exposed breeze block walls and a gravity-defying railway sleeper staircase (Graham again!), was divided into individual studios, playing host to dozens of artists and artisans. “It was at a time when communal studios weren’t so big in London,” Kate tells me, “and it was run as a non-profit.” Around this time, Kate also began to catalogue the myriad glazes she was creating to give her ceramics their unique, almost iridescent finish. Her glaze archive, now the largest of its kind in the country, sits in a second property down the mews, awaiting contributions from members of Kate’s extended community of ceramicists.



Buffalo’s junior editor, Harald Smart, wears **MATTHEW ADAMS DOLAN** trousers, vintage **RAF SIMONS** sleeping bag courtesy of David Casavant Archive, **CHARLES JEFFREY LOVERBOY** boots, gloves stylist’s own.



Opposite: coat and dress ISSEY MIYAKE, yellow overcoat A.W.A.K.E., shoes ACNE STUDIOS.



Opposite: top and jacket **MARNI**, skirt and shoes **ACNE STUDIOS**, gloves stylist's own.





Despite the fact that the studio complex became Kate and Graham's home when they sold the terraced house, her role as a devoted champion of new talent never ended. The team of assistants she both employs and mentors are a second family, and their relationship is symbiotic. "I've always wanted them to do well, and to work on their skills," Kate tells me, "and then they'll go, which I'm terrified of, because they each offer something so important and unique." The breadth of this skillset can be observed in two of the team who are present on our shoot day at the house. At one end, Anna Barlow, who uses the finest porcelain, fired at immense temperatures, to create illusory, saccharine confections, and, at the other, Miray Mehmet, whose minimal vessels pay homage to the dark, elemental gravitas of her chosen medium: black clay. Both artists are long-term members of Kate's brood, eleven years in Anna's case, and both are living proof of her astute nurturing instinct. As we prepare to leave, Kate is keen to reiterate that fact: this is their home as well as hers. ●



Above, clockwise from top: Anna Barlow captures ice cream cones mid-melt; Miray Mehmet gives new perspectives on black clay; Enrique Perezalba Red unites East and West with his Minnie Mouse-dragon hybrid. Opposite: dark yet delicate floral chalices by Erika Albrecht.



Top **JIL SANDER**, coat **MARTA JAKUBOWSKI**, leggings vintage **HELMUT LANG** courtesy of David Casavant Archive, blanket **PRINGLE OF SCOTLAND**, shoes **ACNE STUDIOS**.

Photographer **NICOLE MARIA WINKLER** (D+V Management) photo assistant **FUMI HOMMA**, digital technician **LIRON WEISSMAN**, lighting and camera kit **PRO-LIGHTING**, set design **HATTY ELLIS-COWARD**, stylist **VICTORIA SEKRIER** (LaLaLand), styling assistant **MILLIE CULLUM**, hair stylist **YUMI NAKADA-DINGLE** (Home Agency using 'TIGI Bedhead'), make-up artist **ATHENA PAGINTON** (Bryant Artists using 'Nanshy'), models **TABBY** (IMG Models), **HARALD SMART** (Models1), casting **SOPHIE CASTLEY** (Lock Production), production **D+V Management**, producer **KENDAL SIMON**, production assistant **ELISE LEBRUN**.

