



# FLATIRON HOUSE

DESIGN: FORM ARCHITECTURE

## HI-MACS® as the Backbone of Flatiron House, a “Staircase with Rooms”

*Architecture has the power to transform environments and create quality of life. This is the firm belief of FORM Design Architecture when it comes to shaping its projects; in this case, the remodelling of Flatiron House, a home located in London’s West End. The new functionality given to each of the property’s floors and the use of innovative, high quality materials such as HI-MACS® have turned this building into an amazing home.*



After their success with remodelling the *Bermondsey Warehouse Loft*, FORM Design Architecture again turned to HI-MACS® to execute a new remodelling project in the United Kingdom. This time it was for *Flatiron House*, an old, disused, and impractical office building that has been transformed into a house described as “a staircase with rooms”. The comprehensive refurbishment of the building represented a real challenge in converting the small building into a welcoming home. The result is a modern home built as a pied-à-terre in the city centre, where the project’s architect and designer **Mike Neale** played a key role.

**HI-MACS® Media contact for Europe:**

Mariana Fredes – LG Hausys Europe - Ph. +41 (0) 22 879 54 83 Mobile +41 (0) 79 693 46 99 – [mfredes@himacs.eu](mailto:mfredes@himacs.eu)  
High resolution photos available at [www.himacs.eu](http://www.himacs.eu)

Taking its name from its shape, the small triangular footprint of the two bedroom house predetermined its seemingly simple spatial arrangement, with one principle room on each of five floors, topped by a roof terrace. Kitchen, dining room, bedrooms, and a functional basement are the environments integrated within **Flatiron House**, where the central staircase is the backbone of the work.

The area inside the house is characterized by the apparent spaciousness of the rooms, the feeling of modernity and brightness that come from the whiteness of its walls and the HI-MACS® acrylic stone. “The devil is in the details, and considerable thought has gone into the subtleties of the layout and design at each level to ensure that every space works to its optimum, and that the vertical spatial flow between them, provided by a signature staircase, executed in HI-MACS®, feels natural and fluid,” explains Mike Neale.

### **The Central Element: the Staircase**



The banister, made from HI-MACS® acrylic stone in its Alpine White shade, reinforces the sinuousness and this flow of movement. It rises like a twisted and folded ribbon through the five stories of the house and framing a vertiginous 14-meter view from the glass roof to the basement. The piece’s three-dimensional triangular spiral effect was possible thanks to the thermoformable properties of the material, which make it possible to create all kinds of seamless shapes, thus transforming the banister into a piece formed in a single block. This element is the most distinctive in the project and becomes the piece that gives the home its unique character. The architect himself affirms that the staircase was the key element for the entire layout.

In the words of Mike Neale, “the triangular floor shape meant that the banister of the staircase had to twist and rise up at a very steep angle from its inner edge, followed by a sharp bend. HI-MACS® was one of the few materials that could take this shape, due to its ability to be bent at a very small radius. HI-MACS® allows the possibility to assemble the structure in very small sections and finish the assembly on site in order to create a continuous surface, since it wasn’t possible to work directly with a single piece given the dimensions of the space.”

### **A Modern, Functional Kitchen**

U-shaped and featuring curved and pure lines, the kitchen diner is one of the most eye-catching spaces in this apartment, after the staircase. Formed by a large countertop made from HI-MACS® acrylic stone that incorporates a hob and a sink, it is complemented by large upper cupboards to gain functionality and integrate perfectly into the curved, modern, and welcoming style of the rest of the house.

The extraordinary qualities of HI-MACS® have made it the most suitable material for responding to the needs that arose in designing this kitchen. The smooth, uniform appearance of the acrylic stone makes it easier to clean and ensures high resistance to heat sources and the regular use of household disinfectants. The kitchen is therefore completely hygienic and highly recommended for contact with food.



On the outside, the ugly faceted storefront has been replaced with a new curved double glazed window that now follows the shape of the curved prow of the building. The inside of the kitchen window on the ground floor is a curved screen also made from HI-MACS® Alpine White, which is perforated, allowing light to pass through to light up the interior of the kitchen diner, while maintaining privacy from the outside.

## Spaces for Relaxing

Continuing up the staircase to the roof we find the terrace, a space that becomes a unique area for comfort in the heart of the West End, providing the perfect spot for enjoying the home. Going down to the basement, the original damp and dingy vaults under the street have been transformed into a functional space. The remodelling has turned the basement into an area for entertainment and relaxation thanks to the huge flat-screen TV and backlit rack for storing wine.



FORM Design Architecture's aim is to create places that can be lived in and experienced by people in a natural, instinctive way. Pleasant places, with a harmonious sense of simplicity, that create a favourable and stimulating setting for living. This is once again how this project could be defined, where solutions have been provided for the potential layout and space issues, with an apparent simplicity that belies their underlying complexity.

## About FORM Design Architecture

FORM design architecture is an RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Chartered Architects practice based in London SE1. The practice offers a comprehensive range of services from feasibility and development analysis, through to full architectural/lead consultant roles and also interior design/space planning.

Individual solutions are developed for clients, providing an intelligent, inventive, and sustainable response to the complex matrix of issues that shapes each project. Solutions with a lucidity and apparent simplicity which belie their underlying complexity.

Listening, analysis, discussion, and clarification are at the heart of an inclusive approach that recognizes the fact that some of the best ideas are generated in the space between people rather than by individuals.

## PROJECT REFERENCES

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**Design:** FORM Design Architecture - [www.form-architecture.co.uk](http://www.form-architecture.co.uk)

**Architects:** Malcolm Crayton and Mike Neale

**Photos:** © Bruce Hemming

**Materials:** HI-MACS® Alpine White - [www.himacs.eu](http://www.himacs.eu)

## HI-MACS® by LG Hausys

[www.himacs.eu](http://www.himacs.eu)

HI-MACS® is a solid surface material that can be moulded into any shape. It is widely used for architectural and interior applications, such as sculptural and high performance wall-cladding or kitchen, bathroom and furniture surfaces, in commercial, residential and public space projects. It is composed of acrylic, natural minerals and pigments that come together to provide a smooth, non-porous and visually seamless surface which meets the highest standards for aesthetics, fabrication, functionality and hygiene – offering manifold advantages over conventional materials.

HI-MACS® provides limitless possibilities for surfacing solutions and inspires creative minds from all over the world. **Zaha Hadid, Jean Nouvel, Rafael Moneo, Karim Rashid** and **David Chipperfield**, among others, have completed fabulous projects using HI-MACS®, from kitchens to bathrooms, including decorative items, in hotels as well as in museums, shopping centres and on external façades.

LG Hausys' HI-MACS® uses a simple heating process to give three-dimensional thermoplastic forming capabilities, allows visually seamless designs, offers a virtually limitless range of colours and – for some shades - exhibits a special translucency when exposed to light. Although HI-MACS® is almost as robust as stone, it can be worked in a similar way as wood: it can be sawn, routed, drilled or sanded.

HI-MACS® is manufactured using a new generation technology, the **thermal cure**. The temperature reached during the manufacturing process sets HI-MACS® apart from other solid surfaces and creates a denser, even more homogeneous, sturdy, durable surface – with a better resistance and superior thermoforming performance.

As regards hygiene, HI-MACS® does not absorb humidity, is highly resistant to stains, and is easy to clean, maintain and repair.

Countless internationally recognized certificates attest to the quality of HI-MACS® in terms of ecological commitment, hygiene and fire resistance – being the first Solid Surface in the market to receive the official **European Technical Approval (ETA) for façades** – for Alpine White S728 colour.

HI-MACS® offers the longest warranty on the solid surface market with a 15-year warranty for products fabricated by a Quality Club Member.

### HI-MACS® The New Generation

#### Inspired by Architecture

For more information and to stay connected, visit our [website](#) and our [newsroom](#).

*Let's connect!*



\* **HI-MACS®** is designed and produced by **LG HAUSYS**, a world leader in the technology sector belonging to LG Group, and distributed by **LG HAUSYS EUROPE** based in Geneva (Switzerland).