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Wallpaper

Ufficio Stampa La Cividina
0432 1746101
pr@carterandbennett.com

Exclusive behind-the-scenes footage of J Balvin's new home

For our May 2022 issue's cover story we visit Reggaeton superstar J Balvin's villa, designed by architects 5 Sólidos. Here, we peer into the shoot that took place in Medellin in February 2022. The May 2022 Design Issue of Wallpaper* is on newsstands from 7 April.

It is not every day that a music superstar welcomes us into their home, so when our Cartagena-based contributor (since 2008, no less) Rainbow Nelson helped us get this invite from Colombian Reggaeton legend J Balvin, we naturally jumped to the opportunity. Not least because this is a musical maverick of enormous talent and influence; but also as the new J Balvin home we were invited to see was created by one of the country's most exciting architecture studios, 5solidos, led by Daniel Correa, Maria José Fernandez and Elisa Ortega out of their Medellin office.



Our May issue's J Balvin home shoot

Nelson and acclaimed photographer and long term Wallpaper* contributor Stefan Ruiz made the trip to the leafy mountains of Medellin to explore the elegant residence and talk to its illustrious owner last February. Named Casa Aire, the architecture is 'zero flex', to put it in the reggaeton lexicon of its owner, Nelson writes.

‘I’ve lived in Colombia for 20 years and J Balvin has become something of a national treasure in that time,’ he says. ‘He’s absolutely huge here. He’s been one of the country’s most impressive musical success stories and Colombia loves a homegrown international success story. It was exciting to get the chance to meet him and see the outcome of his collaboration with 5Solidos - an impressive design and architecture studio that I’ve been following for a couple of years. Add to that the chance to impress my teenage boys who are big fans of Balvin and it was a story that I couldn’t resist.’



The architecture is of course, also striking - as is its location. Nelson continues: 'The view's incredible. Jose [Balvin] picked an amazing spot high up in the hills outside Medellin and the architects did a brilliant job of honoring the natural setting. It's a very peaceful place. I'd say my favorite spot would be one of the Restoration Hardware sofas staring out at the changing landscape.'

'It's really, really subtle, because one thing is the way I express myself as an artist, the other one is the way my soul expresses itself,' says Balvin, during the interview at Casa Aire. 'This is my soul here. I'm not about flexing. When I come back home, my soul rests. It's not about showing off, it's about creating something with nature. Like everything in life, the simple things are the most amazing.' *

