

Deborah Oropallo

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My Favorite Room: Peter Paige's loft is 'gentlemanly' with touches of the provocative

By R. Daniel Foster
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Peter Paige opted for a gentlemen's-club look for his Hollywood loft — the kind that British upper-crust chaps frequented in the 19th century.

The writer, director and producer began with a wall of art, tucked inside a modernist Hollywood building fit with skewed windows and splashed with a jaunty yellow.

"I wanted something a bit warmer, with more tension between the building and the space," said Paige, 48, co-creator and executive producer of Freeform's "The Fosters" and an actor known for his character Emmett Honeycutt on the Showtime smash "Queer as Folk."

Paige's look begins with a chesterfield sofa set before a titanic bookcase that lends a baronial air to the hangout, cheered by a peacock-blue rug.

What's your favorite room?

Everything is one room, so it's all my favorite room. I sit on the floor, right here by the coffee table, and write, so it's been a productive space for me. I feel really warm here and creatively inspired.

How would you describe your aesthetic style?

A little bit provocative, a little bit gentlemanly. Welcoming, I think. Friendly and approachable.

What's an example of something in the room that's provocative?

The newest piece I bought, by Deborah Oropallo, about what gender means. She takes a masterwork painting with strong masculine energy; in this case it looks like a federalist soldier with a horse. She lays over these provocative sexualized feminine images over the male, in this case a woman in fishnet stockings and boots.

And the bookcase you designed — it's a commanding presence.

There's something kind of aspirational about the bookcase. You could argue it's ambitious, and I've certainly been described as ambitious, even though I don't think of myself that way. I love looking at it. There's something kind of Harry Potter-magical about it.

Where do we find the essence of Peter Paige in this room?

I certainly think that you see me in the art on the walls, in all these sorts of faces presented to the world. In this exploration of masculine and feminine. Portraiture ... my own fascination with the human condition and how we present ourselves to the world.

The paintings, the faces — the loft seems packed with meaning. Can we dig deeper?

Well, I'll say this. This is a midcentury table, a marble table. It's broken. It did not come that way. I sat on it. I broke it. It was this perfectly rectilinear table, and I liked it better with this organic crack going through it. It became a far more interesting piece. So I think that's pretty representational of me.

How so?

I'm interested in the ways that we're all broken.

Your former character on TV, the glittered Emmett Honeycutt — what would his favorite room be?

I think Emmett would love the powder room. The wallpaper is real images of Victorian gentlemen's fashion advertisements that we blew up to larger than life-size, on three walls. Emmett would love being surrounded by leering Victorian gentlemen.