

# preservation

The magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

## HOPE FOR MODERNISM

Will the loss of **Prentice Women's Hospital** galvanize support for a controversial building style?





# Traditional Arrangement

by  
**DON ARGENTO**  
photography by  
**DARYL HALL**

**YOU KNOW DARYL HALL** as the blond with the soulful voice in Hall & Oates, the No. 1-selling duo in music history. The band's chart-topping 1970s and '80s hits include "Out of Touch," "Rich Girl," "Kiss on My List," "Private Eyes," "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)," and "Maneater." These catchy pop-rock tunes are so memorable, you're probably humming one of them right now.

Hall has remained a powerful force in the music business since the late 1970s. He continues to write, tour, and mix it up on his popular TV and web program *Live From Daryl's House*. Until recently, the show was filmed at his restored Revolutionary War-era residence in Millerton, N.Y. (See page 40 for more details on the show and its current venue.)

Aside from his passion for music, Hall also is a self-confessed "history freak" with a penchant for saving and preserving old buildings. He grew up in a family of craftsmen outside Philadelphia, and history and pride of workmanship surrounded him throughout his youth. "Southeastern Pennsylvania was chock-full of early 19th-century houses," he recalls. Hall considers historic homes to be "giant antiques on their own that are a joy to restore and reconstruct."



## Musician Daryl Hall rocks a restoration in upstate New York.

Though these days he doesn't have much time to swing a hammer or glaze a windowpane, he's proud to point out his hands-on background. "I can do all that," he says. "I grew up on construction sites. My grandfather was a stonemason who built chimneys." Hall's specialized knowledge allows him to be a capable and diligent overseer. "I hire a general contractor, but I want to be the boss of the whole thing so I can step in and out," he says.

When it comes to the somewhat overwhelming scale of these restoration projects—conceptual planning, sourcing, building, and furnishing—Hall is excited about every phase. "I love all of it," he says. "To me it's a calling, much like music is." He does most of his own drawings and design, exerting painstaking efforts to make these houses look the

way they did when they were first built.

Since the early 2000s Hall has taken on several restoration or building stabilization projects, including an 1860s farmhouse in Millbrook, N.Y.; a 1740s residence in London on the River Thames; and the Bray House, built in the early 1700s in Kittery Point, Maine. Then there's the Millerton property, which he used for six-plus seasons as the location for *Live From Daryl's House*. It consists of a pair of post-and-beam houses moved from their original sites near Hartford, Conn., and connected by a new, double-height living room that served as one of the main settings for the show.

Both houses had fallen into disrepair, and were located on properties owned by people who did not intend to restore them. Having fallen in love with the distinct beauty of each, Hall purchased them, care-

### OPPOSITE:

White clapboard siding and 12-over-12 windows grace Daryl Hall's former residence in Millerton, N.Y.

### ABOVE, LEFT:

The house uses a mix of original and salvaged materials to maintain a period feel.

### ABOVE:

Hall jams in the library with fellow musicians T-Bone Wolk, Zev Katz, and Tom Higgenson and Mike Retondo of the Plain White T's.



**CLOCKWISE:**

The keeping room, just off the kitchen, adds to the 18th-century atmosphere of the house, as does the Dutch door in one of two entry foyers.

Hall, local restaurateur Sal Nicolosi, and Dustin “Duddy B” Bushnell and Jared “Dirty J” Watson of the Dirty Heads prepare a meal in the kitchen.

Hall built a little red recording studio next door to the main house.

A new barn-like living room connects the two original residences.

Hall uses period-style glass to restore windows whenever he can.

fully dismantled them, and then re-erected each structure on Flint Hill in Millerton. One of the houses had been part of a tobacco farm dating from 1785, and the other had been owned by the same family since it was built in 1773.

Hall salvaged as many of the existing building materials as he could. Items reclaimed from houses of similar vintage, such as wainscoting from a Massachusetts property, also make an appearance. Whatever he and his team of professionals couldn’t reuse, they reproduced as closely as possible. They carefully matched the new mortar to the old, and carbon-dated the original paint chips to ensure that they could pinpoint colors from the correct time period. As a bonus, the 1773 house’s attic contained a treasure trove of period furniture, much of which Hall decided to use.

When it comes to restorations, finding missing pieces that are true to the period can be difficult, but Hall susses out the details by capitalizing on the relationships he’s built in the preservation community. “If I need to find bolt doors or paneling, latches, or even old beams and posts, I have a loose group of people who know how to find these things for me,” he says. “I can make calls and find what I’m looking for. That’s the fun bit to me.”

Visitors to his homes enjoy his loyalty to the period, too. “I didn’t expect it to be quite as authentic as it was,



like down to the nails they used in the floor and the hardware on the doors,” says Jake Snider, lead singer of the Seattle-based indie-rock band Minus the Bear, which appeared on the final episode of the sixth season of *Live From Daryl’s House*.

Hall doesn’t fret about achieving straight lines. “I like to leave things in their crooked way, especially if the house formed itself with floors that bend and twist. I leave it a little off plumb instead of straightening things out. That’s the romance in it.” He also prefers period-style glass. “I’m not big on storm win-



**“I like to leave things in their crooked way, especially if the house formed itself with floors that bend and twist. That’s the romance in it.”**

dows,” he says. “I don’t go completely nuts if I feel a little draft in the house.”

The challenge then becomes seamlessly fitting in modern amenities without compromising the home’s structure or visual appeal. “I want to live in this century when it comes to that, but I try to keep it as simple as I can,” Hall explains. “My kitchens are designed to look old, but are fitted with state-of-the-art Sub-Zero appliances. I have people who are masters at creating period-looking cabinetry. They’re basically old-new houses—you have to live in the real world.”

**IN 2013, HALL SOLD** the Millerton property, which meant he had to scout a new location for his show—and a place to rest his head. “I equate this a lot to making a record, though these restoration projects are a lot bigger than that,” he says. “I feel like I’m a producer and an artist all at the same time. I assemble a team just like I’m going to make an album. You know, you finish the album and you go on to the next one. I leave a part of myself in these houses, like my music, but I’m always looking ahead.”

The upcoming seventh season of *Live From*



**ABOVE:**  
T-Bone Wolk, Rick Jackett, James Black, and Hall play music on the lawn.

**ABOVE RIGHT:**  
The gabled form of a new outbuilding on the property harmonizes with the geometry of the main house.



*Daryl's House* was filmed at various locations, including the Millerton house and a Pawling, N.Y., bar and restaurant owned by Hall. And he has embarked on a restoration of a 1787 house he describes as “late Georgian-Federal style” in Sherman, Conn. This project is the subject of a new DIY Network show called *Daryl's Restoration Over-Hall*, which will air in May.

Daryl Hall is a bona fide rock star and history junkie with fastidious dedication to his restoration projects. This passion for preserving architectural

heritage by saving and inhabiting historic structures—and sharing them with the public through modern technology—has given Hall yet another outlet for his abundant creativity. Though restoring 18th-century houses requires his full attention, he views the work as an opportunity, never a burden. “It’s not only fun to do and aesthetically pleasing,” says Hall. “I think it’s culturally important.”

**DON ARGENTO** writes songs and magazine articles from his home base of Columbus, Ohio. Past stories include pieces on Billy Joel and Jay Leno for *BMW Motorcycle Magazine*.

## Performance Art

The award-winning show *Live From Daryl's House* began in 2007 after Hall had the idea of filming himself playing music with friends and putting the footage on the Internet. The program combines interviews, dinner banter, and jam sessions with legendary artists such as Joe Walsh, Nick Lowe, and Smokey Robinson, as well as contemporary stars like Jason Mraz, Rob Thomas, and Train's Patrick Monahan and Jimmy Stafford. And of course Hall's famed other half and longtime writing partner, John Oates, has made several appearances.

The show was filmed partway through season seven at Hall's restored 18th-century house in Millerton, N.Y. In order to preserve the integrity of the home's two post-and-beam buildings while also finding a way to connect them, he created a barn-like living room between the structures. At the time he had no idea he was even going to do a show, let alone one from that



specific location. But the musician in him was quick to realize that the space had perfect acoustics. “It just worked out by accident,” he says.

After Hall sold the Millerton house last year, he had the perfect replacement venue lined up. He purchased a bar and restaurant in Pawling, N.Y., named it *Daryl's House*, and filmed much of the show's seventh season there. The new episodes air in early spring 2014 on the Palladia network and at [livefromdarylshouse.com](http://livefromdarylshouse.com). He's also filmed a DIY Network show at another house he's restoring (left). Called *Daryl's Restoration Over-Hall*, it will air in May.

TOP LEFT: COURTESY MARK MAGLIO; BOTTOM: COURTESY DIY NETWORK