

# MANSION GLOBAL

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## First Impressions: Front Entries That Are More Than Functional

Whether your space is small or large, you want it to feel welcoming and set the tone for the rest of the home

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Anna Lloyd-Jones, creative director at ALJ Studio, created an eclectic and memorable entry space by using large-scale artwork and curio.  
COURTESY OF ALJ STUDIO

*Each week, Mansion Global tackles a topic with an elite group of designers from around the world who work on luxury properties. This week we look at how to create a chic front entry.*

A front entry has one of the most important jobs in a home: It immediately sets the tone, proving a preview for what's to come. And it can be a make it or break it moment. While the space is often more about form than function, it gives a glimpse of the homeowner's sense of style and tells a little something about how they like to live.

Instead of treating it as a no-man's land or a repository for a disorderly pile of shoes, giving it a stylish point of view will immediately greet guests with a warm welcome. Follow these tips from the pros on how to make a grand entrance.

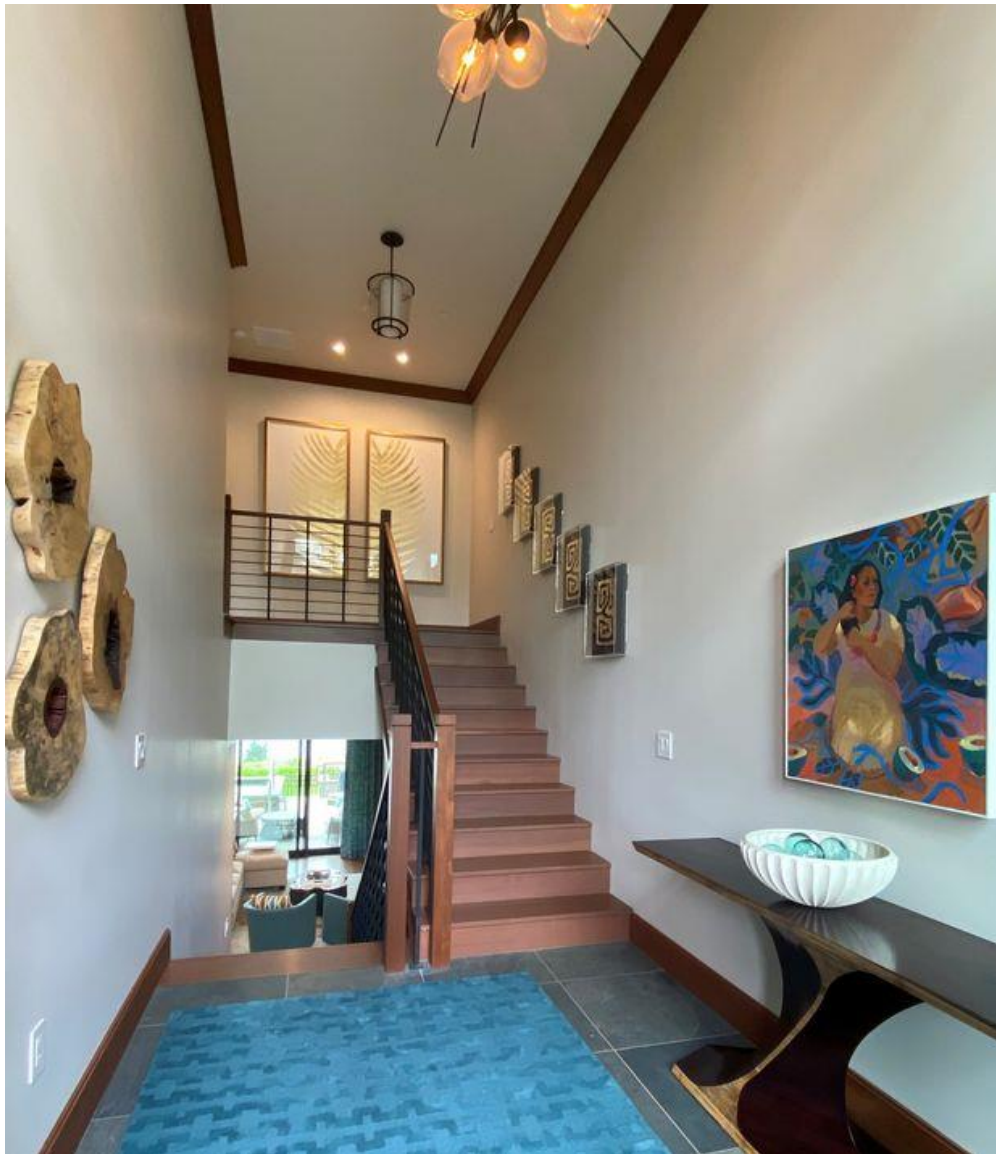
## **Add Interest**

"The entrance is the first space anyone sees, and so you want to start the story there—of who you are, how you live—and set the tone for the rest of the property.

"Even in the smallest of entrances, we aim to fit in a console, mirror, storage or wardrobe. These spaces are often narrow and small, so it's key for them to be functional and thought-through. We often opt for a bespoke slim floating console with a simple drawer. Even if it's small, it can still neatly store your essentials, such as keys, wallets, dog leashes, et cetera. Nowadays it's a great space to keep the sanitizer and masks. A large-scale mirror will brighten up the area and will visually add more space. A wardrobe or storage is also a must, since you don't want coats ending up on the backs of chairs or draped over your living room sofa.

"It's important to create a focal point when you walk in—something to make the eye wander and seek more, moving from object to object. You can pick one or two key objects (for example artwork, pendants, statement architectural details or furniture) and complement them with secondary items like accessories, textures of materials in the area or even pops of color. Anything that adds additional layers of interest works. The ideal scenario is when your hallway opens up into a larger area. Even if it's not seen immediately, it will allow the eye to follow the space and promise more interest on the other side."

**-Anna Lloyd-Jones, Creative Director at ALJ Studio, London**



Designed by Joni Vanderslice of J. Banks Design Group, the front entryway in a residence at Timbers Kauai at Hokuala creates an artistic impression.

*Courtesy of J Banks Design Group*

### **Set the Tone**

“A foyer should be gracious, giving people room to move throughout easily and gather as they are being greeted. An entry foyer should also give you a place to pause, to put down your keys or even leave your beach bag, towel or your jacket.

“A table in the entry not only allows a space to place keys or essential items, but give you a place for lamplight, which is essential when creating a welcoming atmosphere. A small chandelier also helps with atmosphere and for setting up the design.

“The artwork should also set up the next areas—in color, texture and subject matter. I prefer fresh flowers if they are available.

“These days, foyers are a great place to house a bowl with face masks, hand sanitizer and other Covidrelated items that you or your guests may need before heading out or upon entering.”

— **Joni Vanderslice of J. Banks Design Group in Hilton Head, South Carolina**



A front hall entry designed by Robin Strickler, founder and principal of Design Works, is as elegant as it is simplistic.

*Photography by Ryan Garvin*

## Store in Style

“A stylish entry foyer ... should immediately give people a sense of what your home is all about and what is important to you—whether that comes across in large-scale artwork, family photos, baskets for storage, fabulous lighting, et cetera.

“Probably the most essential item is a console that fits the length of the wall. A large mirror, baskets, lamp, books, accessories (think trays, stacked boxes), a runner and fresh flowers are always a nice touch.

“Depending upon the client, some like to keep the area very clean with simply large-scale artwork and a low bench and pillow, while others might have a bigger space to work with and incorporate a console, chair or lots of accessories. Styling the area really depends on the size of the space both in terms of length and width. If you have a short and narrow entry, you need to keep things simple. However, if you have huge ceilings and a long ‘runway’ you can incorporate more pieces.

“In terms of layout, usually you place the pieces to the left of the door opening—you don’t want guests to walk right into the entry pieces. When we have a really large space to work with, sometimes we’ll do a circular table in the middle of the entry with a big statement vase. That way when guests walk in, their eye goes directly to this stunning vignette.

“We love putting baskets under a console since it’s an easy way to hide shoes, toys, et cetera.”

— **Robin Strickler, founder and principal of Design Works, an interior design firm based in Irvine, California**