



BRIEF A studio for a professional artist, to be constructed as soon as possible. It was to offer an escape from distractions, with space to read and paint.

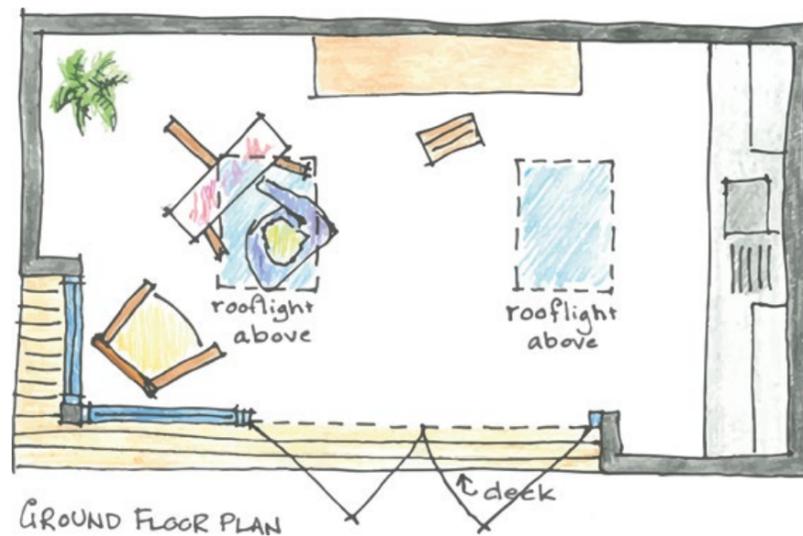
BIGGEST CHALLENGE Getting the right balance of ample natural light and plenty of wall space.

SUPPLIER JML Garden Rooms, www.jmlgardenrooms.co.uk

CASE STUDY A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

Photography Phil Wilkinson Words Caitlin Clements

[Above] The completed studio in its Edinburgh garden. The Western red cedar cladding is very durable and requires little maintenance. **[Right]** This sketch shows the position of two glazed panels that were inserted in the roof to allow even more light into the interior. **[Opposite]** The artist at work in her new studio



Kerri Stewart wanted a place to paint – and she needed it fast. “I had nowhere else to work,” explains the California-born artist. At first, she asked an architect friend to draw up plans for a studio annexe to her Edinburgh home, but it wasn’t long before she realised she would get much faster results if she hired a company that specialised in this sort of build.

Online research led her to the offices of JML Garden Rooms in Auchterarder and a chat with director John Langley and his staff. Viewing the rooms set up on site was also beneficial. “My questions were answered and I felt I was in safe hands,” she recalls.

Stewart needed a swift turnaround and she got it, with the company handing over the keys to the completed garden room within two months of her initial enquiry. In that brief time frame, a structure tailored to her specific requirements was created, delivered, built and finished.

Stewart had opted for JML’s Lowlander 2 design, which was then tweaked to better meet her needs. This meant putting in additional skylights, including one above where Stewart would work, but also removing the side window that comes as standard, to give her more space to pin up sketches. Another important element was a kitchen area ▶

with a sink for cleaning brushes and units for storage.

“Our client told us she needed a studio built as soon as possible and, being a professional artist, her priorities were ample natural light and as much wall space as possible,” says Langley. “Being able to escape all distractions was key to her.”

The team dispatched to build the room seemed to take direction and detail in their stride, much to Stewart’s delight. “I actually really enjoyed them arriving in the mornings: they were punctual, they communicated with each other so everyone knew what was going on, and they were polite, skilled at what they were doing and focused on getting things done right.”

And it had to be done right. The artist was planning on painting in her studio every day, so it had to work all year round and be well insulated. Lucky, then, that JML’s garden rooms are designed to withstand the Scottish climate. They’re made from SIPS (structured insulated panels), which gives them excellent thermal efficiency, resulting in lower energy bills and a very comfortable interior for the owner.

The structure’s external cladding is designed to be maintenance-free. “We predominantly use Western red

cedar or Siberian larch, which are high-quality timbers,” says Langley. Both are suitable for the Scottish climate (which is surely a world away from the one that Stewart grew up with on America’s west coast, although she has called Edinburgh home since 1993). Topping off the Lowlander 2 is its roof: a Firestone membrane that is built to last (it has a 20-year guarantee and an expected lifespan of 50 years). Materials are sourced locally where possible, and everything is cut and manufactured in JML’s Perthshire factory.

Internally, too, there is much to admire. Although the rooms can be finished with wooden floors and plasterboard, Stewart opted out. “I didn’t want to have to be precious about surfaces being splattered with paint,” she explains. The floors, walls and ceiling were left as chipboard, which she then painted white. “Now they’re all multi-coloured with various paint splashes,” she smiles. What started as a decision based on ease has produced an interior filled with character: this artistic space, visible through its large glazed panels, means that the room not only provides a sheltered sanctuary for the artist herself, but also becomes a gallery of beautiful works in progress when viewed from the garden. ■



“THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU INTEND YOUR NEW SPACE TO BE USED FOR, AS THIS CAN INFLUENCE ITS STYLE, SIZE AND ORIENTATION WITHIN THE GARDEN”



[Left] The Lowlander 2 design usually has a window here, but the client requested hers without it, preferring a solid wall on which to pin up works in progress. **[Top]** A high-level shelf makes use of every inch of space. **[Right]** A sink was added along with kitchen units for storing artist materials. **[Bottom right]** There’s plenty of room inside for canine art lovers

