



HOME / MELBOURNE

Bold Statement

Accustomed to working on new builds, interior designer Simone Haag and her team didn't hesitate when the opportunity arose to work on this characterful Victorian home. After living abroad for a decade, the homeowners had returned to Melbourne and wanted to bring their family together in a space that worked for them as empty nesters and also as a place to host their grown children when they came to stay. They found the perfect fit in inner-eastern Armadale: a home with a second floor that could be dedicated to three bedrooms, a children's retreat and a roof deck.

'On my first visit, I was struck by the grandeur of the rooms with their historic features,' recalls Haag, who reimagined the informal living room, the entrance hall and the main bedroom. Between this heritage and the homeowners' well-developed tastes, the project was far from being a blank canvas: each space had already been painted a different tonal hue from floor to ceiling, which became the basis for the design concept. 'It was so exciting to walk into a home where the client was clearly confident with colour,' says Haag.

At the beginning of the process, one of the homeowners showed Haag some inspiration images, and it was immediately clear that client and designer were a perfect match. 'I already had in mind many of the pieces she showed me, like the Tacchini Five to Nine daybed,' says Haag. Placed in the entry hall, which starts out narrow and widens considerably, the piece sits

comfortably alongside Luciano Bertoncini's Gronda mirrored coat racks and a triptych by Antipodean artist Kirsty Budge. Throughout the project, every decision was made in concert, even when the designer and her clients couldn't speak in person due to pandemic restrictions.

Wool, mohair, suede, shearling and walnut combine throughout, the earthy tones echoing the client's personal style. 'In one of our meetings, we started with our usual conversation about her outfit, which led to a walk-through of her wardrobe,' Haag says. 'I could see that every piece of clothing she owned was khaki, mustard, olive or rust, and it was a natural springboard for the interior palette. In fact, we joked that if she wore a particular jumper while lying on the entry rug, she'd be camouflaged.'

Brown and khaki tones dominate the moody living room (dubbed the 'whisky room'), which is the ideal space for enjoying a drink or coffee. Here, one can sit on a bucket chair — reupholstered in a combination of olive-toned mohair and bouclé — with a drink in hand while listening to music from the record player that sits atop a Florence Knoll cabinet. 'This isn't a space to be reserved for special occasions, but one that can be enjoyed daily,' Haag says.

Contemporary with a touch of old-world ambience, this entertainer's home mixes vintage finds, Italian and American classics, and Australian art and craft pieces boldly, but in a way that honours the home's original character.

Text

Karine Monié

Images

Timothy Kaye

Styling

Simone Haag & Melissa Strauch

Previous page and facing page
Designed by Simone Haag, this Armadale home is striking even from outside thanks to the historic features that give it a distinct Victorian grandeur, while inside, spaces are defined by bold colours. Wrapped in earthy tones, the main entrance is all curves and lines, with a custom rug from Loom, a Tacchini daybed and a triptych by artist Kirsty Budge







Previous page
Brown and khaki tones dominate the whisky room, where a sofa by Vincenzo De Cotiis for Baxter, a salon wall of the owners' art and the wall lamp by SERVOMUTO for Artemest come together in a harmonious tonal ensemble

This page
Contemporary and vintage styles mix throughout. Here, textural lounge chairs form a welcoming nook by the parlour fireplace, while behind stand a glossy lamp from CCSS and a vintage wall shelf

Facing page
A bright corner in the moody room, by Lassen's Tired Man armchair and footstool are bathed in natural light





Facing page
In the kitchen, the heft of a marble kitchen island is juxtaposed with delicate Pelleossa stools by Francesco Faccin for Miniforms, while the painting by Gregory Hodge maintains the earthy colour palette

This page, left
The living room is anchored by two Organic Nesting coffee tables by Tigmi Trading, their curves echoed in Jan Ekselius's Etcetera lounge chair (also from Tigmi) and their colours in the art and accessories

This page, right
Surrounded by lush plants, the dining room has a more casual atmosphere with a wooden dining table and vintage artwork from the clients' own collection



This page
 In the dark green master bedroom, Piero Lissoni's Eda-Mame chaise longue for B&B Italia and Pierre Guariche's G1 floor lamp for Sammode Studio stand out for their timeless elegance

Facing page
 A trio of papier mâché masks by Bloeme van Bon en Geran Knol of Park Pardon pair perfectly with the clients' ceramic objet on the Orbit bedside table by Fanuli

