

TENDER BRUTALISM

The architectural lines of this Melbourne home give way to a gentle interiors palette that promotes togetherness

Words **TESSA PEARSON** Photography **DEREK SWALWELL**



The plump silhouette of Eléonore Nalet's 'Serpentine' chairs for Ligne Roset and the terrazzo 'Paloma' table by Globewest counter this home's bold architectural lines ▶

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ith its angular façade, clad in handmade Danish bricks and punctuated by deep-set windows framed by greenery, this Melbourne abode packs some serious kerb appeal. A two-storey structure that makes clever use of a challenging sloped site, the house is infused with a subtle brutalist quality that was inspired by the work of contemporary Belgian architects known for fresh takes on the style, from CAAN Architecten to Egide Meertens Plus Architecten.

Home to a couple and their three boys who had moved to Australia from Europe, the property needed to 'allow for both space and togetherness', explains Bear Agushi, founder of eponymous building firm Agushi, who spearheaded the project, enlisting the expertise of Webster Architecture. 'It needed to expand and contract to suit their needs,' agrees architect Dan Webster. The end result is a large open-plan kitchen, dining and living area that flows out on to a wraparound terrace at the back of the house, plus a more peaceful,

private sitting room at the front of the house and a snug, just for the kids, tucked away in the basement. 'Despite the scale of the larger spaces, we wanted to create a feeling of intimacy in each room,' he adds.

'From the outset, the idea was to make a strong architectural statement, and so the design had to rely on depth, layering and materiality to offset its boldness,' continues Dan. This included balancing its clean lines with softer, more relaxed furnishings, which is where both builder and architect turned to the expertise of Melbourne-based interior designer and stylist Simone Haag. Haag's studio was brought on board some 12 months before completion of the project, giving her the opportunity to create a fully tailor-made scheme. From custom-made lighting to bespoke items of furniture and a wealth of hand-picked art and ceramics created by talented Australian makers, every detail was considered.

For the homeowners, the living room is their favourite space, providing a little respite from the happy chaos of family life. Here, a gold-hued rug from Melbourne brand Loom decorates the floor, injecting a hit of muted colour into the calming and neutral scheme. A low-profile Moroso sofa is positioned by one of the home's many large windows, all of which look out onto the lush garden designed by landscape architect Nathan Burkett.

The relaxed elegance of this space reflects the mood through the house, which – thanks to a synergistic response to build, architecture and interiors – shuns extravagance in favour of effortless, understated luxury. agushi.com.au; websterarchitecture.com.au; simonehaag.com.au

Family room A vintage floor lamp from Smith Street Bazaar is placed beside the 'Sesann' sofa by Gianfranco Frattini for Tacchini, next to which is a stone-topped 'Molecule' side table by Barbera **Kitchen** Stained American oak cabinetry lines the walls in this glamorous eat-in kitchen, where the island, splashback and cooker hood are all clad in Fior Di Bosco marble. The 'City Stik' tap is from Brodware and 'Kashmir' bar stools from Resident feature customised two-tone leather upholstery by Simone Haag **Dining area** A custom teal-coloured dining table from Studio Thomas Lentini is paired with eight striking 'Venus' chairs by Konstantin Grcic for ClassiCon and two 'Seattle 2018' leather chairs by Jean-Marie Massaud for Poliform. The 'Ball And Shade' marble-topped pendant light is by Square in Circle. The geometric rug is from Loom ▶



Living room In this peaceful 'grown-up' space, a low-slung 'Gogan' sofa by Patricia Urquiola for Moroso faces a bespoke coffee table by Melbourne-based makers Studio Thomas Lentini that is decorated with a 'Silas' sculpture by Swedish artist Kristiina Engelin and two 'Brick' candleholders by Swedish Ninja. The rug is also from a local brand, Loom. Behind the sofa is a sculpture by Australian artist Holly Ryan and artwork by Atelier Plateau. The slender 'Balance' floor lamp is by London-based brand Square in Circle ▶



'FROM THE OUTSET, WE WANTED TO MAKE
A STRONG ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT'



Staircase Curving contours make a strong statement in simple white and wood
Bathroom Tundra Grey limestone lines both the walls and the raised bathtub in the homeowner's glamorous ensuite, which is enhanced by dramatic downlighting and a mirrored wall ▶



Dressing area At one end of the bedroom, a custom-made granite and oak vanity unit has been used to display a mirror by Paola Speranza for ESPI Design, art by Heidi Yardley and a ceramic piece by Kristy Hussey. The wall light is a bespoke piece by Douglas & Bec, while the chair is the 'Arcade' by Nanna Ditzel for Brdr. Krüger

Main bedroom Carefully chosen textiles add warmth in this pared-back space, namely the reupholstered Jordan bed and a custom rug from Loom. A 'Lunar' lamp by Pietro Russo and a ceramic vessel by Ignem Terrae sit atop the 'Anni' bedside table by L&L Studio for HC28 Cosmo. The artwork behind is by Heidi Yardley. A bespoke wall light by Douglas & Bec hangs above the built-in dressing table made from black and gold granite and oak. The 'Arcade' chair is by Nanna Ditzel for Brdr. Krüger and the table mirror is by Paola Speranza of ESPI design. The canvas is another work by Heidi Yardley

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