A HOME OF TWO HALVES

This Australian abode has been imaginatively extended
by a dynamic architect and decorator collaboration

PHOTOGRAPHY Tom Blachford
STYLING Simone Haag
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LIVING ROOM

The spaces in the original part of the Federation Queen Anne house 'have evocative colour selections that play off light and scale, refining their beautiful features,' says architect David Neil

Ducale **rug** by Cristina Celestino; Seline **coffee table**, both Artemest. Wave **sofa**, Daniel Boddam. Pelican **chair**, Finn Juhl. Lennon **daybed**, Christian Siriano. Umanoff **side tables**, Designstuff. **Pendant**; Abatjour **wall lamp**, both Dimorestudio. Banksia Symphony **artwork** by Kate Elsey. **Walls in** Black Olive, Haymes Paint

r adiating serious olde-worlde charm, the facade of this Melbourne home showcases many of the elaborate hallmarks of Australia's distinctive Federation Queen Anne architecture. But don't let its quaint turrets and decorative flourishes fool you – beyond the historic frontage lies a boldly modern interior that's as inviting as it is unexpected. Once inside, a sober palette of cool tones envelops the original rooms, bridging the gap between the ornate period features and the careful selection of furniture and art that helps define this reinvigorated home's new identity.

Pass through the study and living room to the rear of the house and a striking contemporary extension unfolds – the work of Neil Architecture. The architects drew heavily from the history of the building, as well as the landscape, for both parts of the project. 'Evocative colour selections for the existing rooms play off light and scale, refining their beautiful features,' says David Neil, whose team devised the tonal schemes and brought texture and warmth into the newly built spaces through the use of natural stone, pale timber and deep-brown tiles.

The expert behind the nuanced selection of furniture and artwork is Simone Haag, who evolved the spaces in response to Neil Architecture's distinctive colour palette, as well as the new architectural interventions and the owners' love for abstract art and mid-century design. 'We needed to create a sensitive dialogue with the Federation details, while imparting an air of modernity,' she says of the brief, which aimed to highlight the differences between the two structures, rather than downplay them.

Testament to Simone's exacting eye, each design has been selected to create harmony with nearby elements, through similarities in tone, texture, form and composition. 'One big idea came from a tapestry in the entry, which the owners adore,' she says, referencing a tactile piece by Krjst Studio. 'It anchors all the other pieces in this space, signals a moment of arrival and sets the tone for the whole home.' Compared to the moody, cocooning rooms in the original part of the house, the light-drenched living area and kitchen offer a different experience. 'Filled with warmth, it's a place where the family can come together,' says Simone of the open-plan space, which features a purple-hued B&B Italia sofa. And, despite the plethora of carefully chosen artwork, covetable furniture and bespoke commissions that fill this house, it's this notion of togetherness that provides the real driving force for the project. 'For all its design features, the home remains deeply aligned to those who live there,' says Simone. 'The pieces we chose were those that resonated with the clients, while the spaces were, above all, conceived to enable everyone to congregate and enjoy time as a family.'

neilarchitecture.com.au; simonehaag.com.au

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THE DESIGNERS
This historic home in Melbourne has been updated for a young family by Neil Architecture, which redesigned the original interior and added a bold new extension. Interior decorator Simone Haag was then tasked with selecting a considered mix of furniture and artwork that bridges the architectural gap and speaks to the family's taste and lifestyle.

THE PROPERTY
The original portion of this single-storey home contains a study, living room and main bedroom with an en suite and walk-in wardrobe plus a WC. At the rear, the two-storey extension has an open-plan kitchen and dining area that flows into a living space overlooking the garden. There are also three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

KITCHEN

The use of natural stone and pale timber brought texture and warmth to the extension. 'It's really chic,' says Simone. Yet it still feels as inviting as the older parts of the house.

Dining table, Living Divani.
Ceiling pendant, Le Klint.
Wire **dining chairs**, Overgaard & Dyrman. Saddle **bar stools**, Walter Knoll at Living Edge

LIVING AREA

'We chose a generous sofa for this convivial open-plan space, which brings the family together and allows for conversation to flow between the kitchen, living and dining areas,' says Simone.

Camaleonda **sofa**, B&B Italia. Reeno **chair** (left), Grazia & Co; upholstered in Boussac's Ziggy Marine fabric, Milgate. Double Tier **side table**, BZIPPY. Cestita Alubat **table lamp** (on floor), Santa & Cole. Geen-A **floor lamp**, Kartell. **Rug**, Rug'Society

THIS HOUSE LEANS INTO BOLD EXPRESSION,
COMBINING A MYRIAD OF ERAS AND STYLES TO
CULTIVATE INTRIGUE AND AUTHENTICITY

STUDY

'The homeowner describes this room as akin to a 1930s parlour. It's a grown-up, calming space that offers an element of sanctuary within the house,' says Simone.

Rug, Cadrys. W171 **pendant**, Wästberg. **Lounge chair** by Osvaldo Borsani for Tecno. **Ceramics** and **objects** on shelving, client's and stylist's own. Custom **desk**, Neil Architecture. Cooperage **chair** (at desk), Fort Standard. Governor **table lamp** (on desk), Fred International. **Walls in** Amazon, Haymes Paint

ENTRY

A tapestry by Krjst Studio sets the luxurious tone.

Wall **tapestry** by Krjst Studio at Kolkhoze gallery. Silk hand-tufted **rug**, Whitecliffe. Custom **bench**, Made Studio; upholstered in Loggia Mineral fabric, Pierre Frey. Triple tier **side table**, BZIPPY. The Bouquet **pendant**, Sinja Svarrer Damkjær for Le Klint. **Ceramics**, Gallery Midlandia. **Wall in** Wistow, Dulux

MAIN BEDROOM

'There was a lot of back and forth about the window area,' says Simone. 'The owner envisioned a chair there, so I was pleased we were able to work with her vision.'

Bart swivel **chair**, Moooi. Serpente **floor lamp**, Elio Martinelli for Martinelli Luce. Custom **bed**, Neil Architecture; upholstered in Levant Terrazzo fabric, Métaphores. Cliff 06 **wall light**, Lambert & Fils at Living Edge. *Barcelona Memory* series **etching** by Robert Grieve. Small 1990s **marble sculptures** (on bedside), Paul Jencik. **Ceramics** (on mantel), Ella Bendrups. **Bed linen**, Sheet Society

EN SUITE

'Neil Architecture designed this bathroom,' says Simone. 'They selected a natural quartz tile for the floor, which extends up to cover a portion of the walls.' Above, painted v-groove panelling meets the ceiling.

Paloma **bath**, Moda. **Tap**, Faucet Strommen