

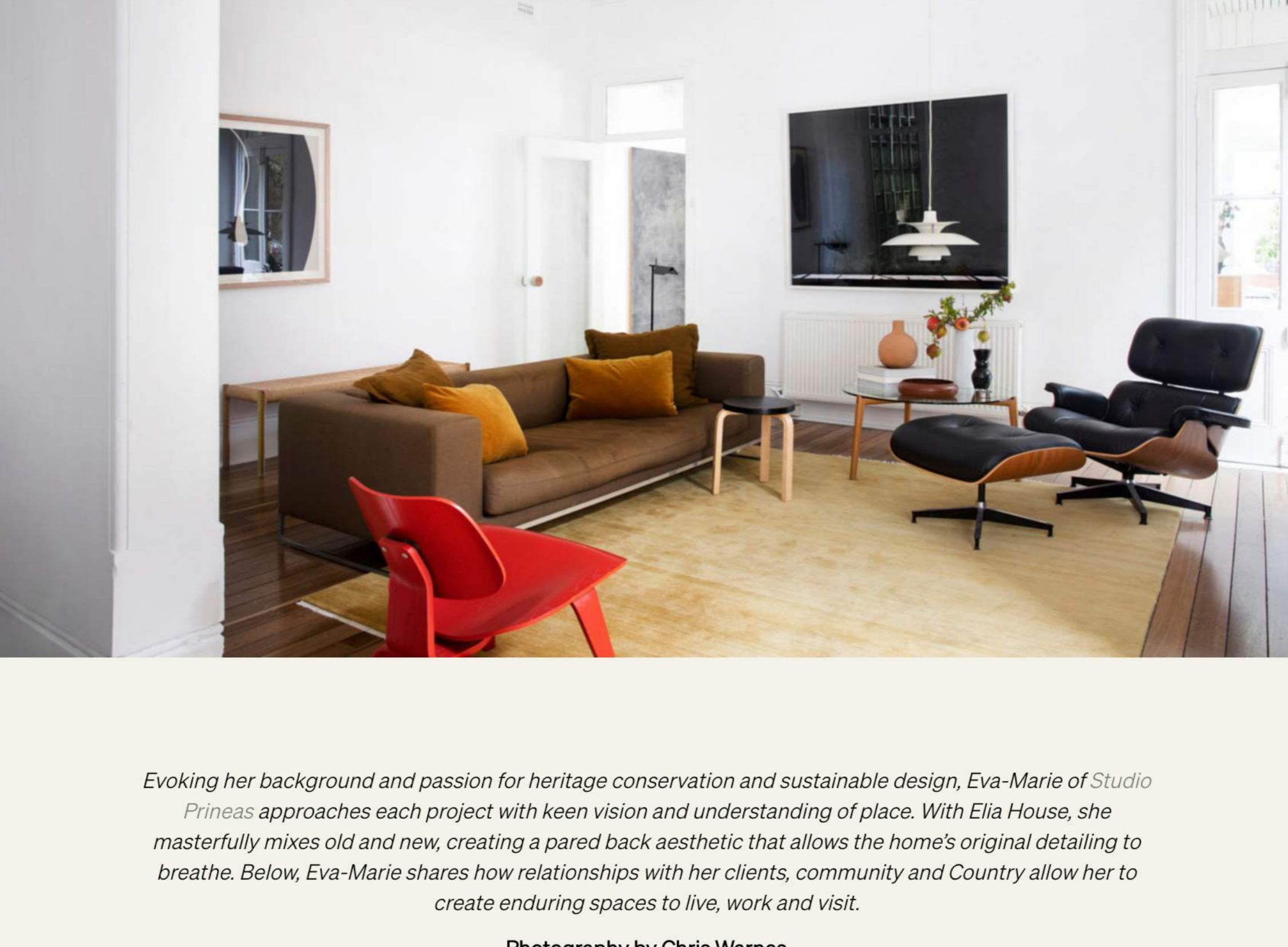
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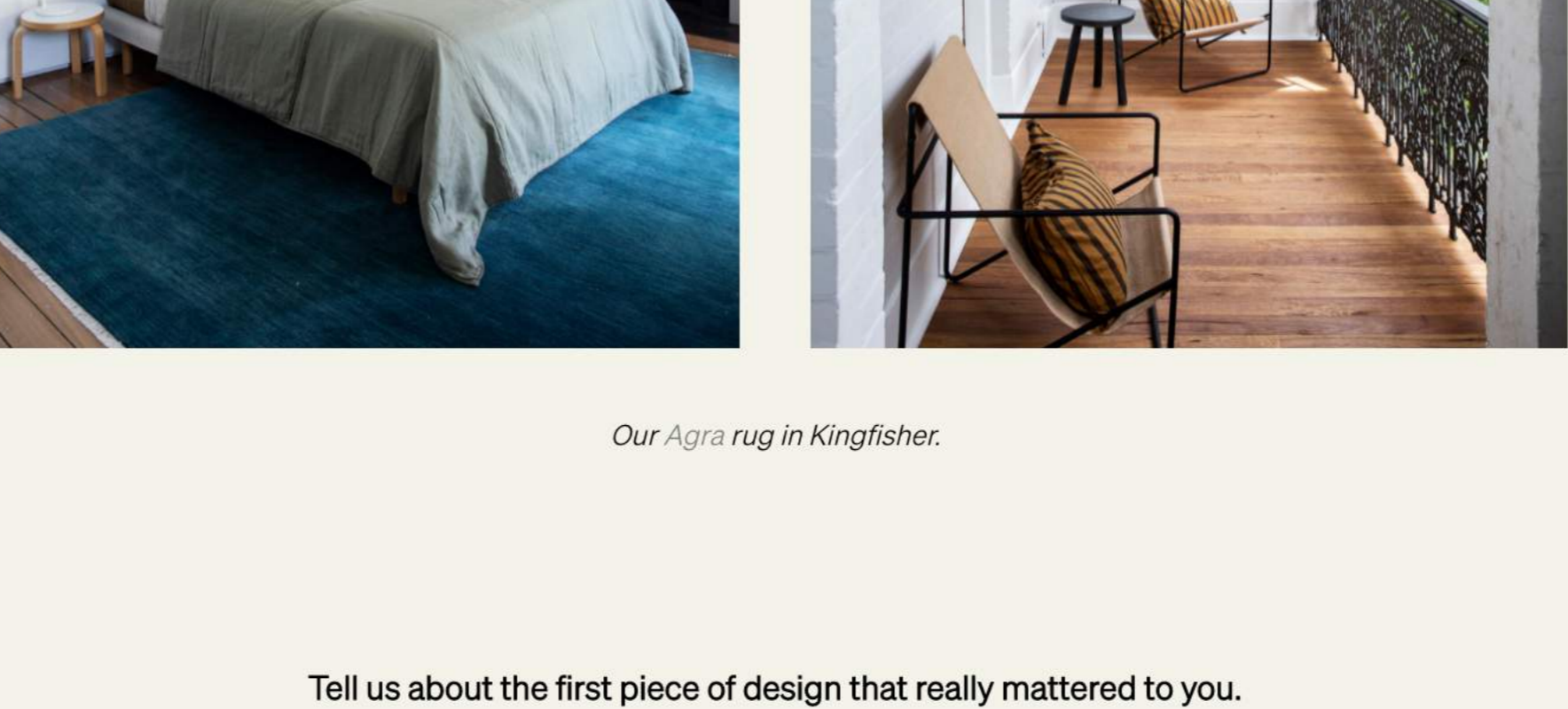
CONVERSATIONS

Enduring Simplicity with Studio Prineas



Evoking her background and passion for heritage conservation and sustainable design, Eva-Marie of Studio Prineas approaches each project with keen vision and understanding of place. With *Ella House*, she masterfully mixes old and new, creating a pared back aesthetic that allows the home's original detailing to breathe. Below, Eva-Marie shares how relationships with her clients, community and Country allow her to create enduring spaces to live, work and visit.

Photography by Chris Warnes
Styling by Anna Delprat



Our *Agria* rug in Kingfisher.

Tell us about the first piece of design that really mattered to you.

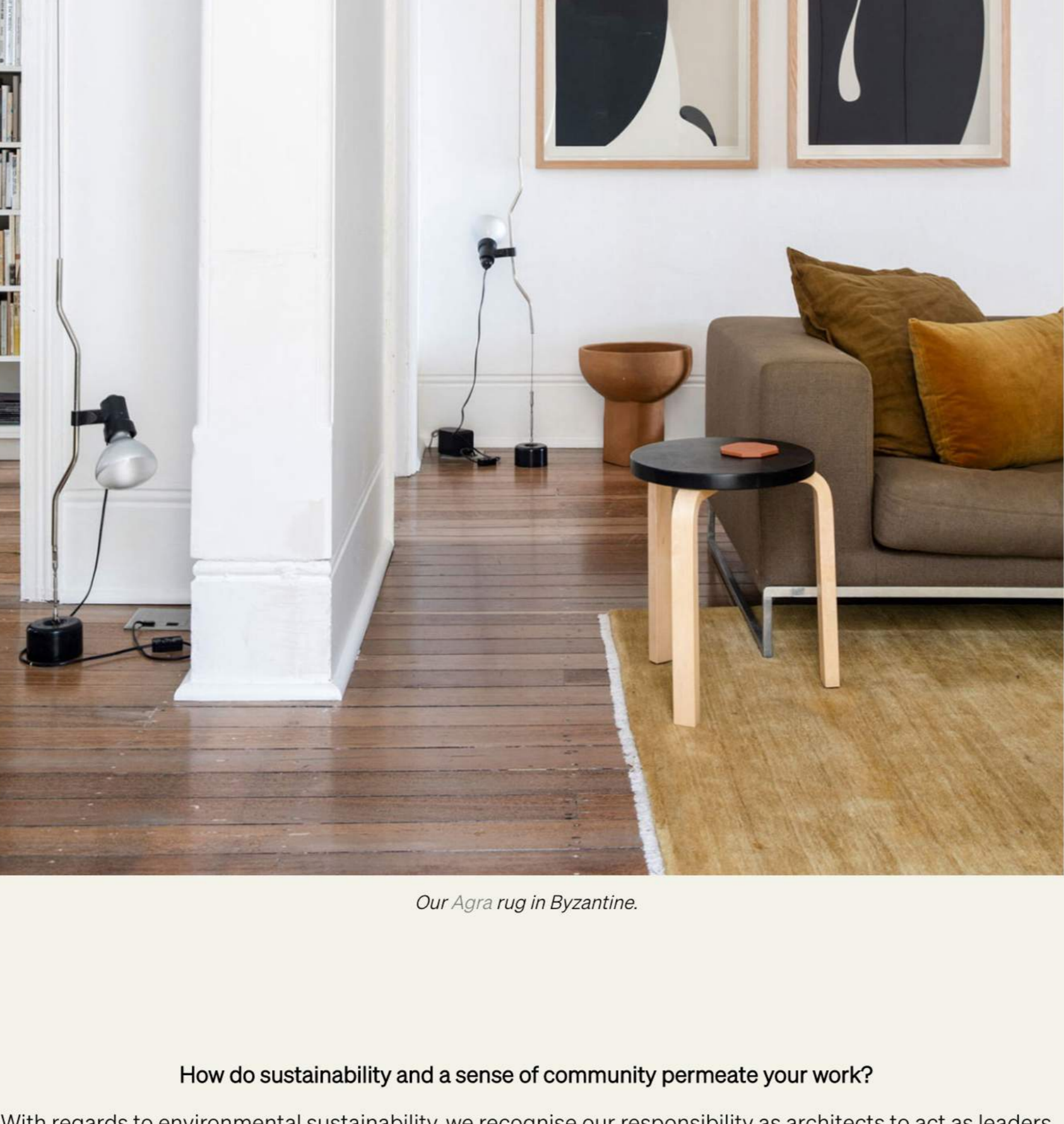
The work of architect Alvar Aalto became a major influence for me once I had finished my degree and went on a pilgrimage to Finland to study his work. From Opera Houses to residential projects and furniture, his work has given me such valuable learnings, and continues to do so today.

You set up your practice in 2004. Has there been a shift in what drove you earlier in your career versus what you are passionate about now?

In terms of the studio's progression, my earlier projects helped me understand what makes a great home – namely, providing uplifting space for gathering. We place a lot of importance on this in our work as a practice, and as the years have gone by, it's only become more important to us.

How would you describe the Studio Prineas aesthetic?

Our approach to design favours simplicity over complexity. We eschew trends, instead focusing on delivering tailored, enduring and resolved outcomes for our clients. We design homes to be lived in.



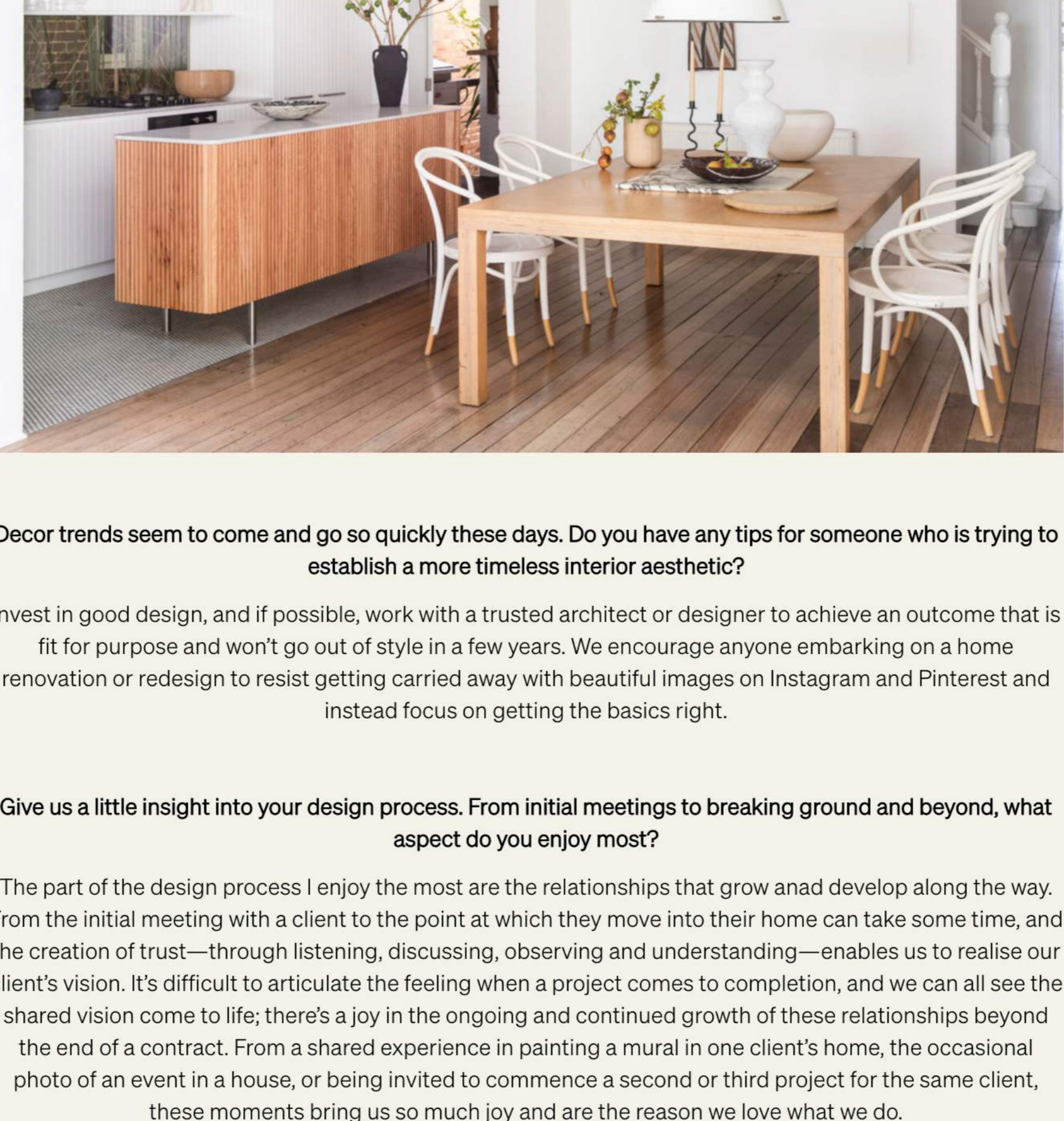
Our *Agria* rug in Byzantine.

How do sustainability and a sense of community permeate your work?

With regards to environmental sustainability, we recognise our responsibility as architects to act as leaders within the building industry, which we know is a major contributor to carbon emissions. In the work we do each day, there's an opportunity to make tangible change through the buildings we design and the products we specify. From being Carbon Neutral Certified to choosing products that are made and manufactured locally – leading by example and beginning with how we conduct our own practices has always been the most logical step.

Celebrating the idea of 'home' and creating spaces that embody a true sense of community and belonging is a large part of who we are as a practice. Our relationships with clients, collaborators and peers are characterised by empathy and human connection, and over the last years, we have begun embarking on a journey of learning about working on and connecting to Country, with deep respect for our First Nations people. We see this as a hugely important part of understanding the communities in which we live, work and visit.

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Decor trends seem to come and go so quickly these days. Do you have any tips for someone who is trying to establish a more timeless interior aesthetic?

Invest in good design, and if possible, work with a trusted architect or designer to achieve an outcome that is fit for purpose and won't go out of style in a few years. We encourage anyone embarking on a home renovation or redesign to resist getting carried away with beautiful images on Instagram and Pinterest and instead focus on getting the basics right.

Give us a little insight into your design process. From initial meetings to breaking ground and beyond, what aspect do you enjoy most?

The part of the design process I enjoy the most are the relationships that grow and develop along the way. From the initial meeting with a client to the point at which they move into their home can take some time, and the creation of trust – through listening, discussing, observing and understanding – enables us to realise our client's vision. It's difficult to articulate the feeling when a project comes to completion, and we can all see the shared vision come to life; there's a joy in the ongoing and continued growth of these relationships beyond the end of a contract. From a shared experience in painting a mural in one client's home, the occasional photo of an event in a house, or being invited to commence a second or third project for the same client, these moments bring us so much joy and are the reason we love what we do.



Our *Agria* rug in Kingfisher.

Your projects are often informed by their environmental context. With the *Ella House* as an example, how was the exterior and interior inspired by the natural landscape?

All our projects begin with an understanding of place, whether urban or suburban, and with a deep respect for the Country on which the building sits. Nestled in Sydney Inner West, on Gadi Land, *Ella House* is a contemporary reimagining of an 1890's Victorian Terrace. Unlike most terraces the home is detached on both sides, inviting in natural light and glimpses of the mature paperbark street tree, along with views of neighbouring gardens and the adjacent Church, as you move through the home. The pleasure of these borrowed landscape and contextual views, allows this terrace house to feel like an oasis of green within its urban setting.

The internal renovation has been designed with restraint and a pared back aesthetic which allows the homes original Victorian detailing space to breathe, in contrast to the wild landscaping, pebbled courtyard and chicken Coop of the rear external living spaces.

We're fortunate to have worked with you on a few projects. What considerations are front of mind when you are choosing a rug for a space?

A rug is such an important part of any room. We are lucky enough with most of our projects that they are quality, timeless pieces which we love and that are made to last, both in terms of aesthetic relevance and also in materiality. Investing in quality pieces, means investing in the designers, artisans and makers, as well as in the environment.

What doesn't vary project to project is that the rug must feel beautiful underfoot, be ethically made and have longevity. It will be the element that provides the aesthetic foundation on which the often eclectically sourced pieces of furniture and art of our client's collections sit.



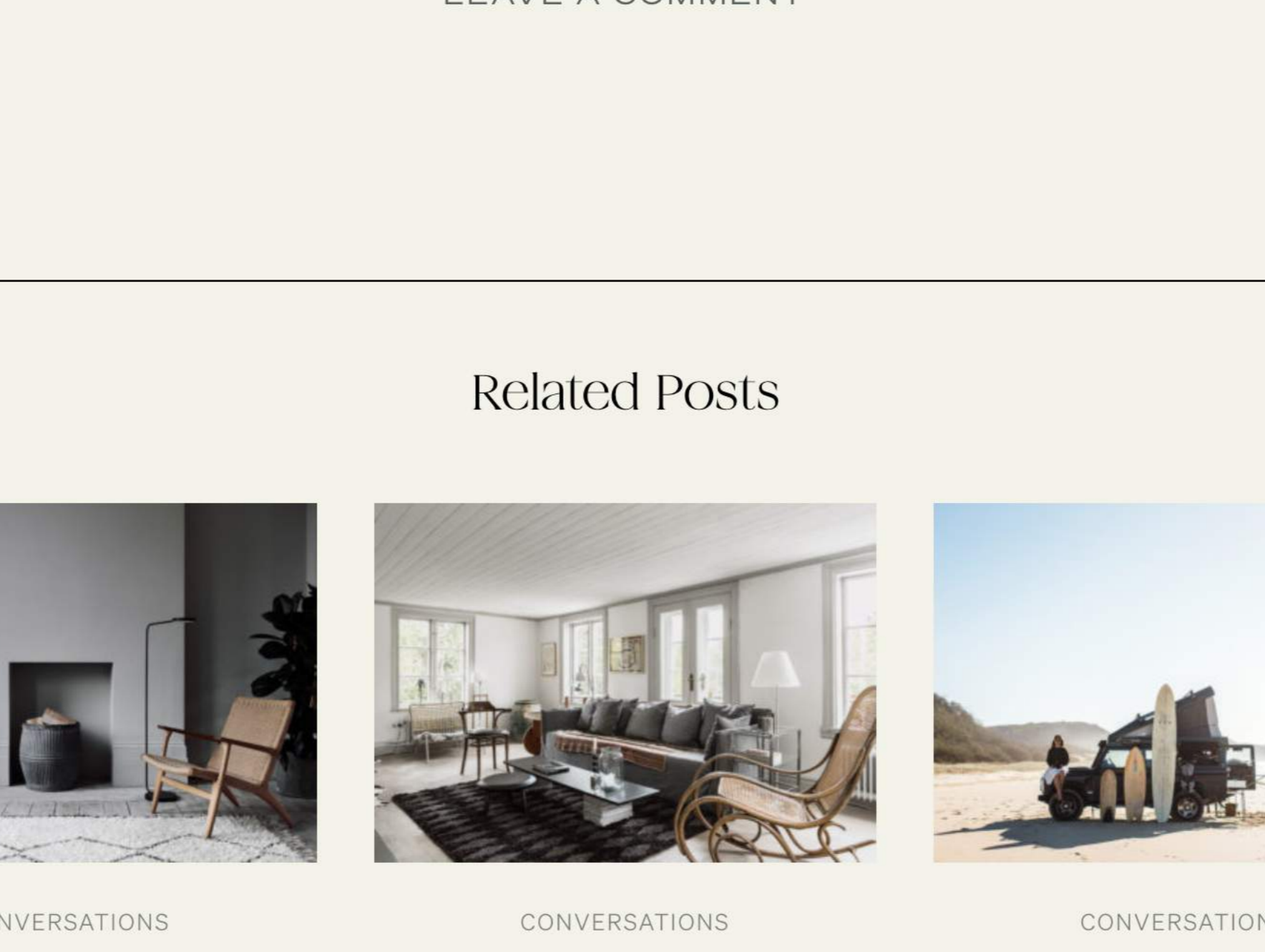
We strongly believe in buying fewer but better things. What are your own reasons for investing in quality pieces with real longevity?

In the same way that we eschew trends in architectural design, we personally – and for our clients – invest in quality, timeless pieces which we love and that are made to last, both in terms of aesthetic relevance and also in materiality. Investing in quality pieces, means investing in the designers, artisans and makers, as well as in the environment.

Inspiration is everywhere.

Do you have any go-to sources for inspiration?

I find inspiration in many places. Gathering with friends and family over a beautiful meal, observing both the small details and vast beauty of Country, in visiting galleries and museums, and visiting the work of master architects over time, along with the architectural work of my contemporaries and emerging practices. Inspiration is everywhere. It's good to pause and take it all in.



Our *Agria* rug in Byzantine.

You're a strong advocate and mentor for graduates and young professionals in the industry. What is your hope for the future of Australian architecture and design?

There are a variety of issues that could impact emerging architects as they embark on their career: peer registration, networking in the community, gaining CPD credits, stress management and meeting deadlines and even finding autonomy and empowerment in their own work. With the right support from their peers, employers and mentors, emerging architects have the opportunity to flourish and continue the another of our industry well into the future.

There is an immense opportunity for architects to play a more active role in supporting one another and supporting emerging architects too. Ultimately, the result of this is a stronger, unified industry of dedicated professionals who are passionate about driving our profession forward.

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