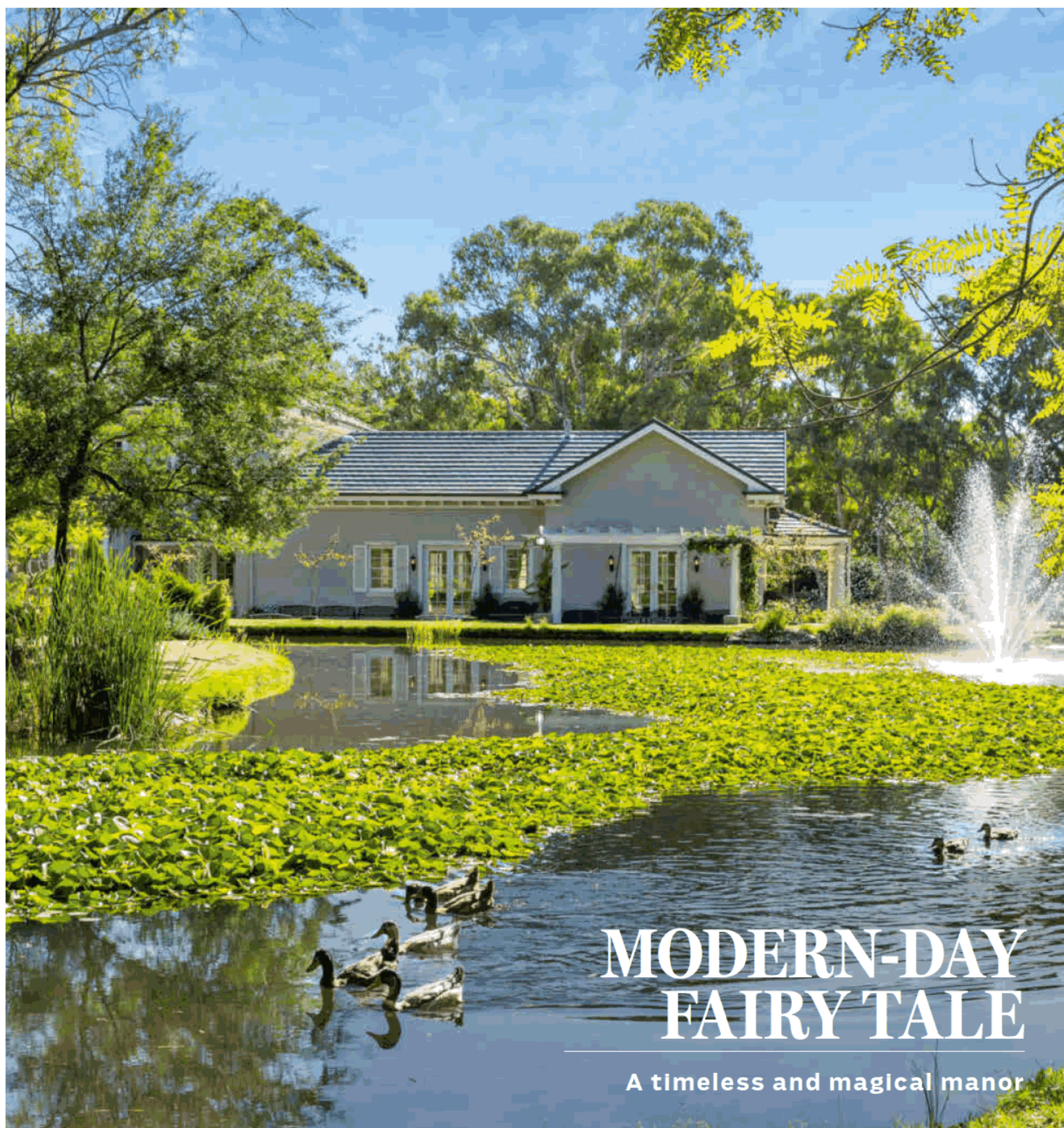


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**MODERN-DAY
FAIRY TALE**

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This modernist transformation is a ‘total vibe’

Perhaps, like me, you’re well aware of the Danish concept *hygge*. But did you know the Dutch have something similar called *gezellig* or, in its noun form, *gezelligheid*?

The two idioms are profound and share significant overlaps. While *hygge* embodies cosiness and comfort, *gezellig* is all about the connection to a place and people in it – but ultimately, they are both about feelings of contentment and overall wellbeing.

While English doesn’t have a direct translation for either, the Millennials give it a red-hot go by describing things as a “total vibe”.

Perhaps you’re now wondering where this is going? To Sydney’s upper north shore, where architects Studio Prineas transformed an original brick house into a forever home for their beloved clients – an older couple who spent their working lives in Europe, where they developed a profound appreciation for modernist design.

“From the minute we met Patrick and Elizabeth, we just clicked,” says Eva-Marie Prineas, principal of Studio Prineas.

“Our design meetings became longer and longer as time went on, as did any site meetings with the builder. By the end of the process, we were all very fond of each other – there was a wonderful atmosphere of sharing and togetherness, that we recognise as *gezellig*.”

Rightly named after this very concept, it’s pretty evident House *Gezellig* is indeed something special. With humility and modesty, this home embodies a sense of connection to the original architecture, favouring the quality of spaces over their size.

“Our client’s brief did not require the addition of floor space,” explains Eva-Marie. “Rather, it required we re-imagine the layout into a more functional plan that would accommodate everyday life with more ease and practicality, and create moments of beauty and connection to the garden.”



Studio Prineas paid close attention to understanding their clients' vision for living, enabling them to incorporate plenty of personal moments within the home.

For their primary source of inspiration, the studio looked to Californian modernist architects Craig Ellwood and Pierre Koenig.

"We sought to continue the language in the modesty and low-profile roof form, the beautiful lofty ceilings and the brick chimney structures that all reminded us of homes from the California modernist era," confesses Eva-Marie.

Similarly, their approach to the materials was all about maintaining continuity between the old and new, matching the original bricks in the addition while adding a new layer of external breeze blocks for screening.

Internally, the hero is the travertine floor that runs throughout, while a sandstone fireplace anchors the living space.

Crown-cut walnut panelling is another reference to the mid-century aesthetic, with clients' design classics taking centre stage – like the Eames recliner from Herman Miller, Louis Poulsen's PH5 pendants and Arne Jacobsen's Series 7 chairs – along with an art collection including pieces by Paul Ryan, a mobile by

“Our design meetings became longer and longer as time went on, as did any site meetings with the builder.”

Alexander Calder and a print by Joan Miro. In a final homage to the modernist greats, Studio Prineas came together with their client and the builder to collectively paint a mural on an external wall at the completion of the job.

Although a relatively small moment in this lovingly crafted project, the abstracted mural captures the vitality of House Gezellig.

I'm no millennial, but I'm sure you can agree when I say that House Gezellig is a total vibe. 🍷

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