belle
AT THE OFFICE WITH
ACCLAIMED INTERIOR DESIGNER KATE NIXON
ELEGANT
ELEVATION
Homes that are *high* on style
SPATIALLY AWARE
SMART SPACES FROM AUSTRALIA'S TOP DESIGNERS

Poliform

SYDNEY | MELBOURNE
POLIFORMAUSTRALIA.COM.AU

SAINT-GERMAIN SOFA, DESIGN JM MASSAUD
POLIFORM.IT

A gold chair by Toni Matičevski x Fiona Lynch at Melbourne Design Week, part of an exhibit exploring beauty and illumination with repurposed fabric remnants.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KRISTINA SOLIC (PORTRAIT). TESS KELLY (MELBOURNE DESIGN WEEK). HAIR & MAKE UP: SAMANTHA POWELL

As we lean into the second half of the year, the design calendar continues to pulse with energy. In this issue of *Belle*, we embrace the full sweep of creativity at home and abroad. Melbourne Design Week is one of the most exciting dates in our cultural calendar, and this year's didn't disappoint. Creative director Lauren Camilleri visited and reports back on the work of emerging talents and established voices, such as Fiona Lynch, the *Belle*/Fanuli Interior Designer of the Year 2024. Once again, Melbourne demonstrates why it leads the national conversation around innovation, sustainability and aesthetics.

Steve Cordony, our ever-stylish man about town, shares his latest travelogue – an edit of his US Chic Agenda. With his unerring eye and timeless style sensibility, Steve captures the essence of American glamour. Kirstie Clements returns with not one but three inspired features. In her Luxe Files, she turns the lens on oversized, sculptural pieces that bring a sense of drama and grandeur to interiors. Then, we follow her to the lush landscapes of Sri Lanka for two transportive travel pieces. Benjamen Judd takes us on a journey to Oman for the festival of the rose harvest – a crucial ingredient of the unique Amouage fragrances.

We also mark a special milestone for one of Australia's most respected design figures – David Hicks – who celebrates 25 years in business. His impact on the local design scene can't be overstated, and we honour this with a look at his signature style and enduring influence.

This month's Smart Spaces feature is particularly compelling, profiling ingenious and beautiful designs from a mix of established names and rising stars, including Studio Prineas, Mim Design, Greg Natale and newcomer Madeleine Wood. Their interiors are proof that great design is not just about scale, but about vision, innovation and colour mastery.

The homes featured in this issue are as inspiring as they are diverse. From the soulful sanctuary of Naomi Tosic's home – lovingly designed by her late husband, Boris – to Carole Whiting's poetic reimagining of a Spanish Mission-style house in Melbourne. On Sydney's Northern Beaches, Madeleine Blanchfield delivers a masterclass in modernist elegance, while a former shop in Woollahra is given new life, thanks to the collaboration between architect Tanya Hancock and owner Ann-Maree Kerry. We also step inside the serene HQ of designer Kate Nixon, where beauty and function are in perfect harmony.

Finally, architects and interior designers, it's time to curate your shoots and prepare your entries for the *Belle*/Fanuli Interior Design Awards 2025 as entries close on August 22. And artists, we are calling for your masterpieces, too. Entries are also open for NEAP – go to nationalemergingartprize.com. Whether you're drawn to the bold, the beautiful or the quietly luxurious, we hope this issue of *Belle* inspires you to see your world – and your spaces – anew.

Tanya Buchanan

Tanya Buchanan, *Editor-in-chief*

Follow us #BELLEMAGAZINE FACEBOOK BELLEMAGAZINEAU INSTAGRAM @BELLEMAGAZINEAU EMAIL BELLE@AREMEDIA.COM.AU

Get access to Belle *digital on your device and enjoy more content anytime, anywhere! Visit magshop.com.au/digitalbelle to subscribe.*

1 Bankston x YSG 'Sensible Streaker' **pull handle** in Light Band, POA, Bankston. 2 2022 Nest Egg **syrah**, $99, Bird In Hand. 3 Amouage 'Existence' **eau de parfum**, $599 for 100ml, Myer. 4 Roma Spider high-performance **car**, POA, Ferrari. 5 LO Collections x Alex and Trahanas 'Olive Leaf' **drop earrings**, $430, Dinosaur Designs.

SMART SPACES

From full-blown colour to cosseting neutrals with a touch of glam, these projects have the spectrum covered.

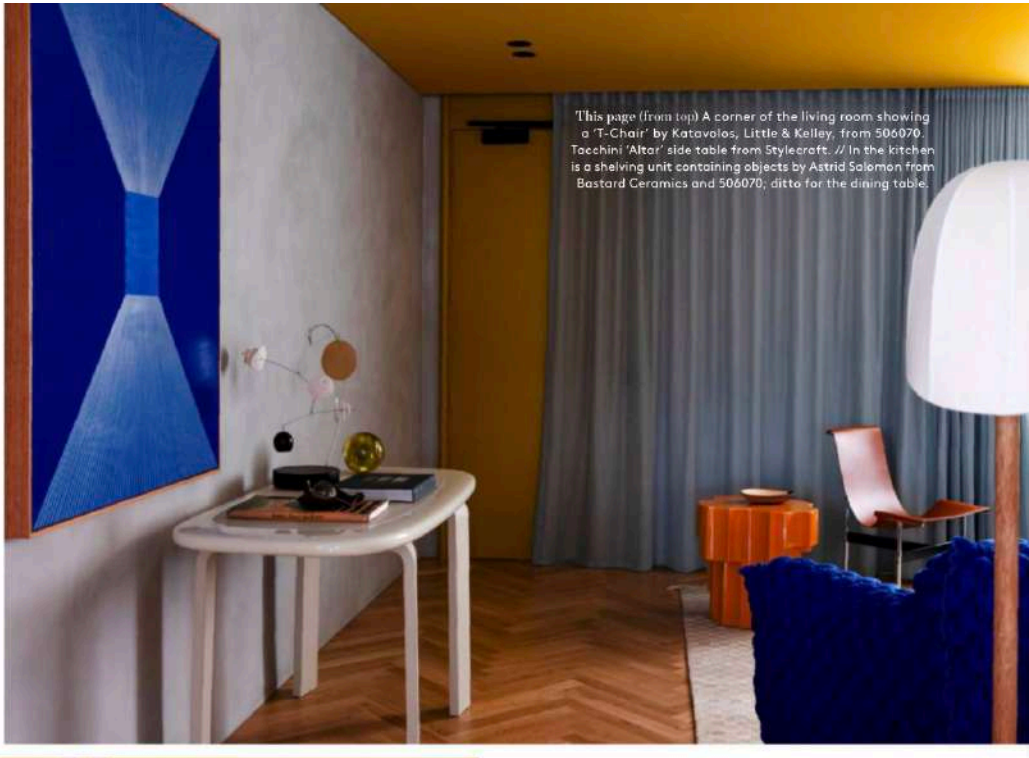
ARCHITECT/INTERIOR DESIGNER
Studio Prineas

PRIMARY FOCUS

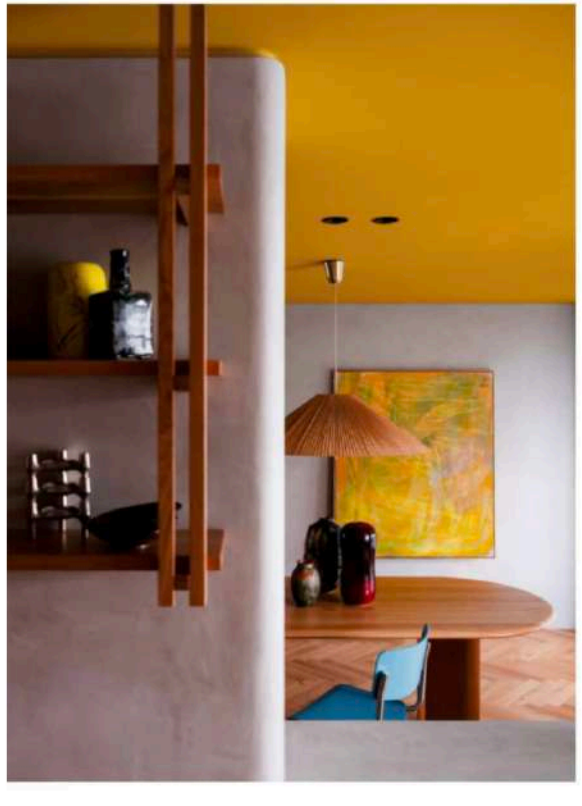
[Double Bay, NSW]

Photography FELIX FOREST
Styling JACK MILENKOVIC

Microcement walls are the perfect foil for colour. 'Pallido' herringbone flooring from Havwoods. Tacchini 'Orbit' console from Stylecraft. 'Flare' floor lamp from Criteria. Gervasoni 'Nuvola 05' armchair from Anibou. Mobile by Odette Ireland from Curatorial+Co. Artwork by Kasper Raglus.



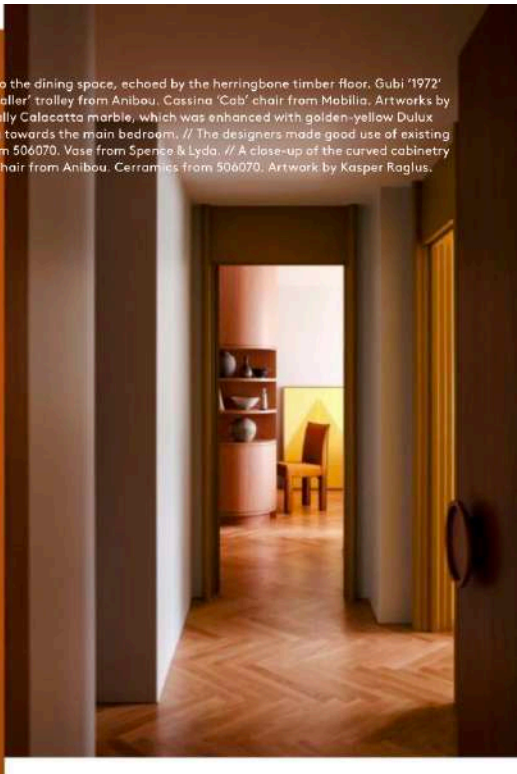
This page (from top) A corner of the living room showing a 'T-Chair' by Katavolos, Little & Kelley, from 506070. Tacchini 'Altar' side table from Stylecraft. // In the kitchen is a shelving unit containing objects by Astrid Salomon from Bastard Ceramics and 506070; ditto for the dining table.



COLOUR WAS INSTRUMENTAL in transforming a Sydney apartment into a joyful personal statement. Lived in by a young family, the design by Eva-Marie Prineas balances luxury with environmental responsibility. *What is the project and what made it attractive to you?* Embracing the ethos to 'think more, build less', we converted an unremarkable 1990s apartment in Sydney's Double Bay. Seeing new possibilities within the apartment's existing layout, we applied a reductive approach to 'rescale' its volume, modernise its expression and enhance its quality of light. *How did you become involved with the project?* We had a longstanding relationship with the clients, having designed several homes for their extended family before – this meant we had their trust to explore untrodden paths and create a completely unique outcome. *What was the brief or starting point for the interiors?* Despite the apartment's covetable harbourside location, its developer-driven design – with minimal ceiling heights and standard detailing – left much to be desired. Therefore, the redesign needed to be approached with an analytical and inventive mindset; ultimately, we were driven by our studio's hallmark sensitivity to places that are already special. *What were the challenges of the space and how did you resolve them?* Delivered under strict time constraints to accommodate the arrival of the couple's first child, the property now looks completely new, though its build produced minimal waste. By working within the apartment's inherent constraints, we were able to select, edit and piece together design elements to create a restrained yet spirited visual identity while transforming some of the most challenging

These pages An existing kitchen bulkhead was demolished to create a more open feel. The soft-edged island has a microcement top. Cabinetry in Navurban Classic American Oak from New Age Veneers. Splashback tiles in 'Senape' from Classic Ceramics. 'Hinterland' American oak stools by Daniel Boddam. Nemo Lighting 'Lampe De Marseille' wall light from Cult. Banquette in golden Warwick 'Victory' fabric. Missoni cushions from Spence & Lyda. BZippy 'Double Tier' ceramic side table from Criteria. Japanese bowl from Studio Gardner. Vintage vase from 506070.

features into memorable highlights. *Were there any devices employed to maximise the sense of space?* Seeing new possibilities within the apartment's existing layout, we applied a reductive approach. At the entry, a joinery piece was removed to convert a constrained dining space into a generous lounge area. A sheer, powder-blue curtain now spans its length, extending across the entry door, seizing the full width of the apartment to read as one room. This also allows for the odd-shaped window to recede as a secondary element behind the curtain, creating a beautiful backlit glow during the day. An existing kitchen bulkhead was demolished to create an open-plan feel, with a structural wall at its centre thoughtfully reshaped as a sculptural element, combining rounded edges and an adjoining curved island bench. Lining an adjacent bank of sliding doors, a floating day bed crafts a sunlit sitting spot overlooking the terrace. Throughout, the domestic scale of the existing interior doors was remedied by replacing the dated architraves with full-height, rounded frames and top panels, all painted in golden yellow. This approach brought a new reading to the doors, now seen as full-height, bespoke elements, enhancing scale and creating a repeated pattern language in the home's main hall. *Which colours were chosen and how were they used?* The apartment's original bathrooms, swathed in Calacatta marble, offered a springboard for the project's colour palette. The existing marble, featuring grey and gold veining, was in immaculate condition, which inspired a resourceful attitude and an exploration of ways to enhance its character. A golden-yellow hue was selected to highlight the material's warm veins, applied across the ceiling, joinery and doors, with complementary coloured tile grout for a cohesive, striking reinvention. Accents of grey microcement create a cooling reprieve, while existing tapware was retained and refinished in cobalt blue, offering an unexpected and joyful contrast. The vibrant ceiling colour extends through the apartment's main living spaces, where its warmth is mirrored by herringbone timber floors. The warm glow of the doors is accentuated by American oak cabinetry, brass hardware and bursts of yellow tiling, tempered by cool grey microcement walls and sheer curtains. *What informed the selection of fittings, finishes, furniture and art?* Furniture and art were selected to personalise this space with a whimsical energy, and we introduced the unexpected in the form of colour, scale and texture. As with all our projects, we love to support Australian artists [and pair their work] with vintage pieces and design classics. *Name some of your favourite elements* The golden-yellow ceiling throughout the apartment is its defining feature and imbues the project with an energy and delight that it previously lacked. The subtle golden glow elevates the experience of this home. *Were you happy with the result?* We are thrilled with the design outcome, which balances reinvention and refinement with minimal building waste. As lateral thinking has been the most important part of the process, there is immense satisfaction in seeing this resplendent finished home. *studioprineas.com.au*



Opposite page Painting the ceiling Dulux Balsam Pear has brought a vibrancy to the dining space, echoed by the herringbone timber floor. Gubi '1972' pendant from Cult. 'August' table from Jardan. Thonet 'S 43' chairs and 'USM Haller' trolley from Anibou. Cassina 'Cab' chair from Mobilia. Artworks by Gemma Smith. This page (clockwise from top left) Both bathrooms were originally Calacatta marble, which was enhanced with golden-yellow Dulux Balsam Pear and accents of microcement with new cobalt blue taps. // Looking towards the main bedroom. // The designers made good use of existing floor and wall tiles, regrouting them with a complementary colour. Side table from 506070. Vase from Spence & Lyda. // A close-up of the curved cabinetry in Navurban Classic American Oak from New Age Veneers. Gervasoni 'Saia' chair from Anibou. Ceramics from 506070. Artwork by Kasper Raglus.