



A portrait of homeowner Azra Popo as a child echoes the energetic colour palette in the hallway, creating a welcome entry space.



# CAPE COD CLASSIC

Art Edit just loves this Sydney home bursting in personality that balances family comfort and rustic sophistication. **Jessa Melicor** writes.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS DALHOFF

TOP LEFT: Soft grey walls make way for a sophisticated layering of pattern, colour and texture throughout the home.

A classic 1960s faux Cape Cod style home in Sydney's leafy north shore comes alive with bold pops of colour, contemporary art pieces and vintage charm. Working with his clients **Azra Popo** and her husband **Weyinmi**, while keeping their two children **Samuel** (10) and **Gabriel** (6) in mind, interior designer **Brett Mickan** helped to reinvigorate this family household into "a comfortable, sophisticated and original home with soul".

The clients wanted to redefine the open-plan spaces within the home. "The overriding request was for a meeting of styles with personality, art, and bold colour," says Mickan. The challenge was to utilise the existing architectural structure to create elegant yet snug living and family spaces. Whilst keeping the strong period influences, Mickan was mindful that, "given that the inhabitants are a young contemporary family, it was important to establish its place as a contemporary home, not a restoration."

Mickan utilised colour to provide spatial con-

text, unity and a fresh feel. He used tones in the Calacutta marble splash-back in the kitchen as a colour starting point, informing the palette choices throughout the home. A subtle grey chosen for the walls provided grounding, then bold colour and pattern was injected through window treatments, wallpaper, rugs and soft furnishings, "completing the sophisticated, eclectic aesthetic and sense of timelessness," says Mickan. Adding to this eclectic feel, the home is punctuated by a mix of modern, exotic and vintage accents: "By keeping the paint scheme simple we were able to incorporate a strong use of vintage, contemporary and Asian/tribal pieces to imbue the home with the personality the client desired."

Modern influences are found in the selection of artwork, from the bold graphic rhinoceros work by **Daimon Downey** in the living room to the large photograph of Bondi Beach, *Oasis*, by Aquabumps in the kitchen. Mickan's advice when placing artwork in the home is to "consider the

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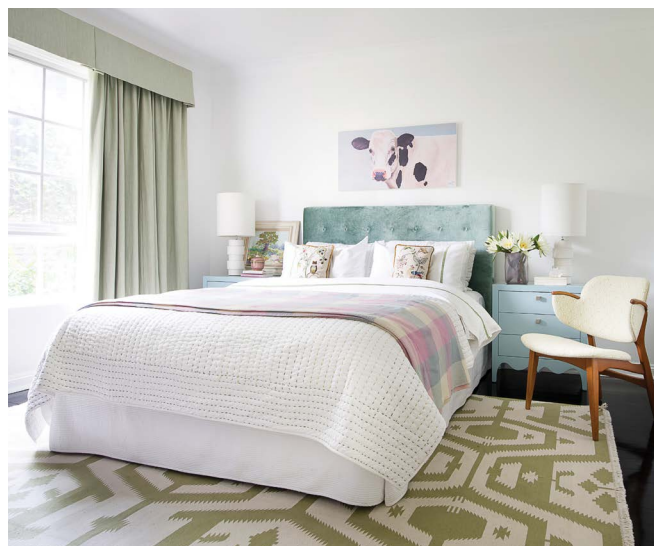
"Select art that makes you happy, not art that works with a scheme."

**Brett Mickan**  
ART EDIT DESIGN COUNCIL

TOP RIGHT: A portrait of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo by Terri Potoczan gives the living room a warm villa-style feel. The colours are mirrored in the choice of soft furnishings and accessories.







TOP LEFT: **Oasis by Aquabumps** adds beachy charm to the modern kitchen, combined with Erik Buch stools from Grate Dane.  
 TOP RIGHT: **A wall-papered feature wall combined with black and red bamboo chairs** gives an eastern flavour to the dining room.  
 ABOVE LEFT: **Damion Downey's rhinoceros** is used as a focal point in this open space, creating a fun and bubbly atmosphere.  
 ABOVE RIGHT: **Laura Carey's Cosmo** makes for a fun bedhead in the soft and subtle bedroom.

entire space and the combination of colours, texture and scale. I always regard the artwork as an integrated part of the space it inhabits." He continues: "Select art that makes you happy, not art that works with a scheme. I hang art as part of a considered balance of colour, space and movement; often used to define, focus or create interest to a vignette." In the case of the living room, Downey's rhinoceros is used as a focal point in an open space, creating a fun and bubbly atmosphere. "The placement is enhanced by the use of applied wall moulding and scale, and a connection to the back of the sofa, drawing you

in both visually and physically to this inviting setting," says Mickan.

A home is ultimately a place that you want to feel welcome in, where you can just be you. "I always believe your home should be a conversation of the inhabitants," says Mickan. "The most enjoyable part of working on this project was the relationship with, what became, very trusting clients." Through finding synergy between his clients and their design expectations, Mickan achieved a balance between family comfort and rustic sophistication, resulting in a warm home, bursting with personality.