

# INNOVATION

By JENNY BROWN



Trafalgar Street renovation by Brett Mickan Interior Design.

THOMAS DALHOFF

## Colourful touches denote full story

Having bought a new Enmore terrace at the frame stage and having the timing and talent to specify everything about it, save the room layout and its industrial-flavoured foundations, interior designer Brett Mickan got to make a home, office and stylistic showroom under one roof.

Wanting to demonstrate his skills to clients who “come to me because they know I’m willing to take risks and make spaces that are dramatic and individual”, Mickan gave himself unbridled reign to do his full-on, non-beige thing.

In the two-bedroom, double-level building, where the third downstairs bedroom is now the office, he’s combined the objects, paintings,

rugs, furniture, fabrics, colours and wallpapers he loves into a scheme that, against superficial appearances, is meticulously curated.

He’s always moving things around “and I do a lot of taking away. What it demonstrates is my philosophy that your home should be a collection of your favourite things”.

So in the residence he shares with long-term partner Nick English, the decor is, what, maximalist? Everything has a story or provenance of fondly treasured memory. “Everything is precisely placed to have balance and not look like this is the home of a hoarder.”

With so much differing pattern, era, texture and colour together in contained spaces, it could easily have ended up as a Jackson Pollock of interior design. Yet, the bold success is that such a rich interfusion works:




“I use pattern and colour to control what I want the eye to look at,” he explains.

Mickan hangs paintings – many by friends – “to lead the eye from one space to another”.

But how is this knife-edge balance controlled when, for instance, in the dining room, Georgian-style Colefax and Fowler wallpaper “with 10 colours and lots of intricate detailing” meets dining chairs upholstered in men’s suiting fabric, meets “a dark fresco-blue” feature wall colour, and, to top it all off, a

1970s vintage Murano glass light hangs over the veneer-topped steel table?

The trick is the consistency to the pattern, he says. In the sitting room with its fat, comfy couch, “there is just as much pattern in the floor, the rugs, the furniture and the cushions.

“It’s all about balance.” It’s all about creating enveloping spaces filled with the stuff of a lifetime’s appreciative gathering, and this he hopes adds up to the implication “that I’ve had an amazing life”. 

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