



Inspiration

CLASS ACT

A CALL TO THE STAGE KICKSTARTED BRETT MICKAN'S DESIGN CAREER, INSPIRING THE CREATIVE INTERIORS HE IS SO WELL KNOWN FOR

Words LAURA BARRY

In his final year, Brett Mikan's high school guidance counsellor gave him a career survey to fill out. "On tallying my results, she announced that my ideal profession was an interior designer. I researched it and in doing so, decided she was correct," says Brett. "I was 17 when I began my first design course at what is now Design Centre Enmore. On completion, I transferred to the National Institute of Dramatic Art to study set and costume design. I then began my freelance design career, working at several Sydney theatres and many NSW regional theatres, movies and television," says Brett. "I soon found I could combine my passions and create interiors with a theatrical edge. In 1998 I moved to the US to practise in Miami, Florida." When Brett returned to Australia in 2006, he set up his own firm, Brett Mikan Interior Design, and has since become known for his layered interiors that tell a story about its inhabitants and are full of character. >



GET THE LOOK

From left: Gubi 'G10' floor lamp, \$1509, Surrounding. Menu 'Passage' stool in Oak, \$254, Finnish Design Shop. 'Colour Sketch with Acid Green and Turquoise' artwork by Emma White, \$880, Fenton & Fenton. 'Marbella' cushion in Saffron, \$169, Walter G. 'The Trees' heavyweight linen in Natural, \$229/m, Utopia Goods. Crystal cut pillar candle sticks, \$199/set of 2, Luxe Furniture & Homewares.

"I soon found I could combine my passions and create interiors with a theatrical edge"

BRETT MICKAN





SEAMLESS SPACES

"AS THIS ROOM IS CONNECTED TO THE GARDEN BY SLIDING DOORS, I WASHED THE WALLS AND KITCHEN JOINERY WITH A SOFT GREEN. THIS UNEXPECTED YELLOW-BASED COLOUR MERGES THE SPACES VISUALLY," SAYS BRETT. >

COLOUR CUES

"THE PALETTE FOR THIS SYDNEY HOME IS INFORMED BY THE ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS OF ITS FEDERATION LINEAGE. GREYS FROM THE SLATE ROOF AND CARRARA MARBLE STAIRS, AND THE WARMTH OF THE BRICK WALLS AND BRUSH BOX TIMBER," SAYS BRETT.



BUILDING CHARACTER
ALTHOUGH THIS SYDNEY HOME IS CONTEMPORARY, "THERE IS AN INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN DESIGN TO REFLECT THE CLIENT'S HERITAGE. THIS IS SEEN IN THE FOUR POSTER BED, CUSTOM HEADBOARD AND CUT CRYSTAL," EXPLAINS BRETT.

1

'Prince' side table in Walnut, Grazia & Co.



10

Maxalto 'Caratos' armchair, from \$5505, Space Furniture.



9

French cuisine at Restaurant Hubert in Sydney.

8

'Timeless' crystal wine glasses, \$16 each, DEA Store.



The bar at Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel & Spa in Sorrento, Italy.



Designer's notebook

BRETT'S FAVOURITE PLACES, SPACES, PEOPLE AND IDEAS TO INSPIRE, MOTIVATE AND CELEBRATE

What is the biggest difference between Australian and US design?

"In the US, most clients want me to create a home that represents them – they thrive in their individuality and want to show it off. In Australia, I've found this is not so common. The brave clients are here, however, I have many prospective clients coming to me wanting a certain look or style."

What's your advice for creating a beautiful home?

"Listen to your home. A design that has relevance to the architecture, no matter what style, has design longevity and continuity throughout."

What is the best part of having your own firm? "It's my aim to create beautiful, individual homes for my clients and in order to do this, they need to trust me to work with them to create this vision. Not all clients are able to do this, which is why having my own company was important."

Where do you find inspiration? "I'm inspired and influenced by Billy Baldwin and David Nightingale Hicks, and the contemporary designer Miles Redd. Their mastery of colour, mix of periods and influences have the ability to transform rooms into liveable, show-stopping moments."

Where do you go to relax? "The Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel & Spa (7) in Sorrento, Italy, or at a restaurant in the vineyards of McLaren Vale, SA."

Where do you like to dine? "Restaurant Hubert [in Sydney] (9) for a transformation to another time and country, with French cuisine."

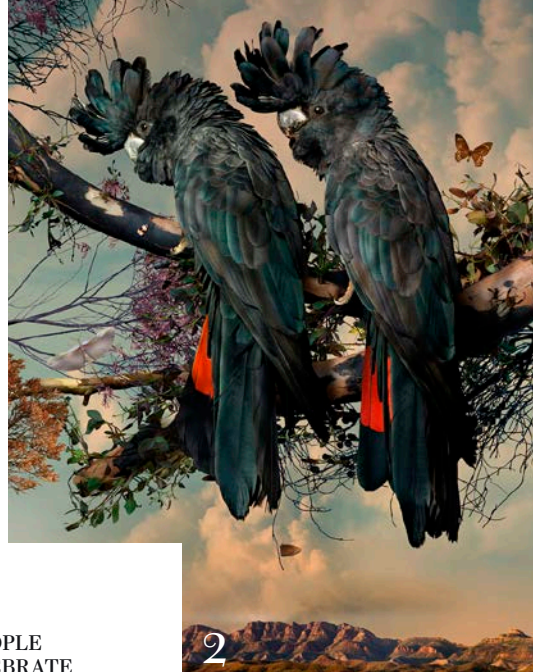
What is currently on your wish list? "Joseph McGlennon artwork from the Awakening Series (2), I already have the wall picked out to hang it."

There is a fabulous pair of Les Hommes metal-tipped ankle boots (5) I have my eye on, and I'm always on the lookout for distinctive eyewear, so the 'Buckley' pair from Jacques Marie Mage (4) is right up my alley.

Where do you love to shop? "For accessories I love the DEA Store (8) in Redfern. For fabrics, I get Aussie designs from Utopia Goods (6) or luxury from Dedar Milano. For furniture, the fabulous Gracia & Co (1) in Melbourne, Space Furniture (10) and Cult in Sydney (3)."

What's next for you? "Right now, it's my own home. This once-secret underground gambling den has undergone a major transformation into a hidden, inner-city luxury entertainer's paradise."

See Brett's work at bmid.com.au or @brett_mickan_interior_design. 📸



2

Awakening #3 – Red Ridge, 2020 artwork by Joseph McGlennon, \$4000/112cm x 80cm (unframed), Michael Reid.

3

The Cult store in Sydney, NSW.



4

Jacques Marie Mage 'Buckley' sunglasses in Argyle, \$1050, Wink Optometrist.



5

Les Hommes men's metal-tip platform ankle boots, \$1290, Neiman Marcus.



6

'Mottlecah' denim fabric, \$249/m, and 'Firewheel' small ottoman in Rust, \$1350, Utopia Goods.