

The colour-filled makeover of a Federation bungalow creates calm and harmony where once was disarray.



This page The snug at the front of the home is adjacent to the living room. 'Olio' armchair from DesignByThem. Mid-century sofa from Lunatiques. 'Cloud' coffee table by Paul Frankl from 1stDibs. Vase on coffee table from Connie & Vi. 'Hex' side table from Bzippy. 'Mano Block' side table from Tom Fereday. 'Petrine' double pendant from Nightworks. Rug from Cadrys. Wall hanging by Dior Mahnken. Painting by Vladimir Tretchikoff. 'Stylus Duo' table (in sunroom) from Stylecraft. Vitra 'Janet' chair from Vampt Vintage Design. Curtains in Alhambra fabric from Elliott Clarke by Coco's Soft Furnishings. Seat by EKD in Inge Holst fabric from Elliott Clarke. Opposite page In the hall is a painting by Joanna Logue. Nobilis 'SID120' sisal wallpaper from Redelman Fabrics. Table and Stoff Nagel 'BMF' candleholders, vintage.



This page (from top) Over the fireplace is an artwork by Robert Dickerson. // In the kitchen, the joinery is by EKD. Calacatta Viola marble splashback from Granite & Marble Works. Marine Blue tiles on island from The Art of Tiles. 'Silhouette' pendant lights from Ross Gardam. Roman blinds in Jab Fabrics 'Sporty Stripe' from Unique Fabrics by Coco's Soft Furnishings. 'Revolver' stools from Hay. **Opposite page** Looking towards the hallway and a floor lamp from 506070. Grandfather clock and table, both vintage finds. Walls painted in Dulux Snowy Mountains. Artwork above sofa by Polly Borland from Sullivan + Strumpf.



The journey through this technicolour home on Sydney's Lower North Shore is like an amble through an art gallery. The rooms are crafted canvases of colour, light and composition, which greet the eye at every turn, with the parting brushstrokes a picture window that frames the rear garden, turning the outlook into an ever-shifting masterpiece. "I saw the house like an art collection, with punches of surprise in colour and texture. Each room has a special moment, whether that's a rug, wallpaper or ceiling," says the home's designer, Brett Mickan of Brett Mickan Interior Design.

Drawn by water views and heritage elements, the owners bought the Federation bungalow in 2016. "We instantly fell in love with it, with its solid bones, northern aspect and generous garden. And I've always loved a traditional long hallway!" says the owner. But the bouquets ended there. Addition after addition after addition had left the bungalow with a labyrinth of random rooms, expressed in varying ceiling heights and angles, and haphazard architectural detailing, says Brett. "It was also back to front. The larger living areas were at the front in a closed-in, north-facing verandah, but they were rarely used, while a recent extension on the back had an undersized dining area and kitchen." Strangely, too, the family home had only one bathroom.

"My brief was to open up the spaces while retaining the sense of individual areas," says Brett, who also had to create three bathrooms and improve the connection to the yard. "We wanted an open plan at the rear that included the dining and family room spaces and led directly to the garden. The front sitting room with the sunny aspect was to remain our quiet space," adds the owner. Heritage features – cornicing, mouldings and marble fireplaces – were to be skilfully blended with contemporary design elements. »

These pages An area rug from Cadrys creates a warm base in the sitting room. 'Renn' sofa from Fanuli. &Tradition 'Fly SC11' end table from Cult. Brass table lamp from The Vault Sydney. 'Vivi' coffee table from Rachel Donath. Orange sculpture by Jan van Schaik. Massproductions 'Crown' chairs from District. Rubn 'Hunter Grand' floor lamp and Møbel Copenhagen blue stool from Fred International. 'Mano' glass table from Tom Fereday. Cushions in Inge Holst 'Brush Fringe' and Anna Spiro 'Tattie Check' from Elliott Clarke; in Aldeco fabric from Domestic Textile Corporation; 'Singing Bush Medicine' from Willie Weston; and 'Cruze' from Warwick, all by Coco's Soft Furnishings. Walls in Dulux Snowy Mountains. Artwork by William Boissevain. Chair on verandah from 506070.



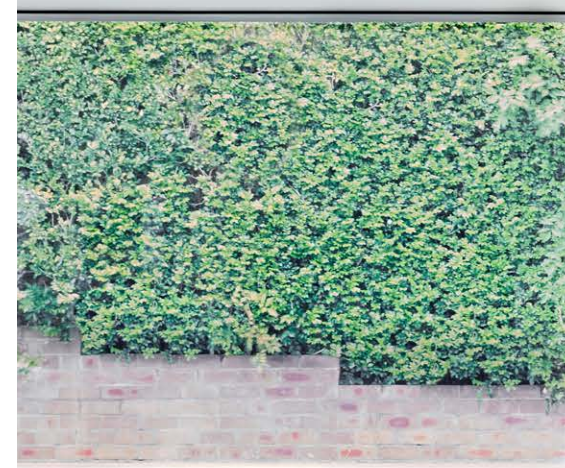


These pages In the rear open plan is a Zanotta 'Dove' sectional sofa from Cult. Møbel Copenhagen blue ceramic stool from Fred International. Leaf dish from Connie & Vi. 'Sidney' coffee table from Jordan. Dish from Fineworks. The Rug Company 'Jude Bright' merino wool rug from The Green Room. Dining table, clients' own. 'Husk' chairs from Zuster. Joinery by EKD. Shelves painted Dulux Happy Days. Walls in Dulux Snowy Mountains. Blue watercolour by Rakinic. Sculpture by Tim Silver from Sullivan + Strumpf. Assorted items from 506070.

« Brett successfully replaced the rear addition with an open plan that connects seamlessly to the backyard, thanks to a wall of ultra-slimline Vitrocsa sliders. He removed walls between the hallway and the living spaces at the front, creating a second open plan that encompasses an unused formal dining room repurposed as a sitting room.

Much of the renovation's essence lies in the detail. Brett used cornicing to connect the spaces, and routed the kitchen joinery to resemble panelling on the verandah. "There's a consistency in the detail and materials but they are all different, so they feel like part of a whole but are separate, too," he says. In the front bay window, he installed a banquette to make it the star; in the erstwhile dining room he extended the stained-glass window to bring in more light; and in the hallway, he removed a false ceiling to reveal original plasterwork in its full glory.

Archways and openings were matched "for symmetry and simplicity" and the window looking out to the pool was framed in Vitrocsa steel "like its own artwork". »





This page 'Montecarlo' carpet from Fyber reinforces the Nobilis 'SID103' Sand sisal wallcovering from Redelman Fabrics in the main bedroom. Joinery by EKD. 'J-Pull' hardware from Manico Me. 'Lap' nightstand from Blu Dot. French armchair from Antiques on Consignment. Vintage lamp from The Vault Sydney. European landscape paintings by unknown artists. Abstract artwork on wall beyond bed by unknown artist. **Opposite page** The tiled walls of the main ensuite are 'Lucida' Flamingo from Perini Tiles. Mink penny round floor tiles from The Art of Tiles. Brushbox-veneer vanity by EKD. Quantum quartz benchtop from Granite & Marble Works. 'J-Pull' hardware from Manico Me. Brodware 'Zeko' towel rails and 'City Plus' tapware in polished gold PVD from Sydney Tap & Bathroomware. 'Mano' recycled amber glass stool from Tom Fereday.

« Bold colour, one of Brett's trademarks, forms a major part of the story and palettes have been taken from the original stained glass, the timber floors and the owners' art collection. "Starting with the smoky-blue hallway, colour is everywhere," he says. "I use it to direct the eye and create cohesion." The blue of the hallway is reprised in joinery at the rear, while the pink-tiled bathroom creates its own serene statement. "There are no primaries, just warm grey hues for softness." Colour has been used in surprising ways, such as in the front sitting room with its ochre ceiling. "It envelops and cuddles you." Calacatta Viola marble in the kitchen echoes the pinks and browns of the rest of the house.

The gallery concept recurs, says Brett. "The collection of furniture, including retro and contemporary pieces, is like art – it holds its own." For the chequerboard coffee table in the back room, he drew inspiration from the patterns created by dappled sunlight. Meanwhile, the front room's curved sofa, a reupholstered vintage find, is "cossetting". The bold yellow armchair has a special resonance – fortuitously, it was designed by the owners' daughter – and the massive 'grandma rug' in this space echoes the colours of the stained-glass windows.

From a visual jumble, Brett has created harmony in these calming and charming spaces. And paradoxically, energy too. "The window seat in the front is my happy place," says the owner. "It is so comfy and bright, and open to the garden and sitting room. The so-called snug beside it, with our daughter's bright yellow chair, is another special place. At the back, the large picture window with its slim black metal frame connects the pool to the living room so well. And our Vitrocsa sliders are the best!"

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SPEED READ

» When the owners bought this 1910 bungalow on Sydney's North Shore, it was an incoherent jumble of rooms, thanks to successive renovations. » They asked Brett Mickan of Brett Mickan Interior Design to open up the living spaces both front and back to create an internal flow, while also forming a better connection to the garden. » He demolished the old rear extension and replaced it with an open plan and Vitrocsa slim-profile sliders reprised in a wonderful picture window. In the original section, he knocked out walls to create a smoother flow. » Brett used colour cleverly to create individual spaces but eschewed primary hues, opting instead for smokier and more calming palettes.



1 'Mano' glass block in Amber, POA, Tom Fereday. 2 'Petrine' pendant in Whiskey Brass \$1785, Nightworks. 3 Massproductions 'Crown' armchair, from \$2545, District. 4 Johanson 'Champ' stool, POA, Fred International. 5 'Jude Bright' rug, about \$5770, The Rug Company.