



THE HAPPY CORNER

This Sydney terrace now enjoys a simplified floor plan, gallery-like internal spaces and a lush outdoor courtyard

WORDS LAURA BARRY PHOTOGRAPHY ANSON SMART



cheat sheet

Who lives here A couple with their young child and pet dog
Style of home A 1890s terrace house that's been extensively updated
Location Inner Sydney, on the land of the Gadigal and Birrabirragal people
🕒 The renovation was completed in just under a year, by October 2021

STUDIO LIVING A blue rug from Coth Living anchors this white-walled room. A 1868 Italo Campanella's sofa takes centre stage, with a Waymoore shelving system from Boffi and a pendant light from Cretina Collection playing supporting roles. Guitars: Gibson. A portrait of artist Tony Albert by Vincent Namatjira hangs above the fireplace. Other artworks by Tony Albert, Wayne Whalley, Pat Jurek, Dean Corso, Russel Koolathara, Mark Smith and Claudio Nicholson plus some other pieces from eBy FACADE (opposite). "Our design overcame the challenges of the sloping, wedged-shaped site and capitalised on the light and precinct views," says architect Bianca Potho.



The owners of this 1890s home in Sydney endured five years of dampness, pests and almost unbearable temperature conditions before they hired Bianca Pohio, director of Pohio Adams Architects, to bring this house into the 21st century.

"We had lived in the house for a while before we decided to renovate in October 2020," says the owner. "Every time it rained, water would run down our walls, and mice and insects would enter the house through large gaps under the doors. It wasn't insulated, so we would be freezing in winter and boiling hot in summer. The backyard was also a wasteland that I couldn't plant into, as the whole space was tiled and concreted."

Initially employed to develop a rear car space at the property, Bianca was then brought on to redesign the entire interior of the home. "Having last been renovated in the 1980s, the house was tatty and desperately in need of a tidy-up. The stairs to the lower ground level required a limbo dance and were very narrow, and the lower level was disjointed by split levels, multiple floor finishes and a poor visual and physical connection to the garden," says Bianca. "The brief evolved organically as the client developed an understanding of the project's true potential. A key aspect of the project was to create a much more functional lower ground floor that relocated the kitchen, reset the split-level floor, and drew the exterior spaces into the house. In addition, a refit of the upper-level bathrooms and reworking of the ground level to create a studio/study and laundry, were included in the scope."

In response, Bianca developed a scheme that is peaceful and gallery-like to accommodate the client's collection of art and objects. She has transformed the lower level into a contemporary kitchen, living and dining space by removing walls, enlarging transitional openings and removing the split-level floor, which allowed for a powder room and TV room on the same level. At ground level, she converted what was a forlorn study to a functional laundry, and made a studio out of the abandoned ground-floor balcony. That level's bathroom was stripped back to become a streamlined and clutter-free space that services a bedroom and second living area. The main bedroom, second bedroom and another bathroom are located on the first floor.

Bianca's modifications have a new set of stairs linking the lower level to the ground floor and an outdoor garden terrace adjacent to the kitchen/dining space. The floor on this level is white-oxide-tinted cement, which is also used on the plinth running the length of the room, supporting the living room fireplace, displaying objects and forming banquette seating.

Aesthetically, the house is almost unrecognisable now, its interiors awash with white expanses and black details. "A white backdrop with accents of black created a blank canvas on which our creative client could add colour and personality – with artwork, objects and various pieces of furniture and fittings."

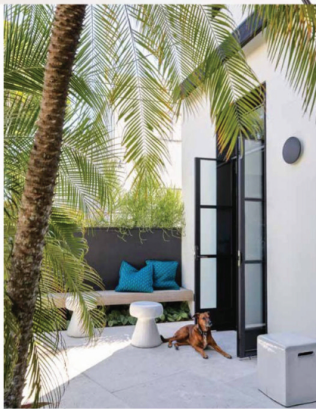
"A white backdrop with black accents created a blank canvas on which our creative clients could add colour and personality with artwork, objects and various pieces of furniture and fittings"

BIANCA POHIO, INTERIOR DESIGNER




SITTING ROOM/DINING AREA Carefully chosen items include the two-seater Yak sofa by LucidPevere from Boffi, a custom New York marble side table designed by Bianca and a Volker Häng wall light. Bianca also designed the dining zone's custom bench seat, upholstered in navy online leather from NSW Leather and accompanied by a ClassCon Palus table and Eileen Gray 'Roguebrune' leather and steel chairs from Anibou. Reggiani 'Incline' pendant, Eurodice. The three artworks above the table are stills taken from a video piece called 'Nardissus' by Angelo Tatta.





says Bianca. "Materials in shades of white, such as the white-oxide concrete flooring and the whitewashed timber floors, the waxed white Venetian plaster walls, the white-painted stairs and the predominantly white New York stone, were employed throughout to create a light and airy, gallery-like space."

However, it's the unusual wedge-shaped lower level that really steals the limelight in this gorgeous renovation. "The lower-ground level created a planning challenge as there were limited parallel walls," says Bianca. "But the irregular configuration offered an opportunity for the inclusion of unexpected sculptural forms, such as the trapezoid kitchen." This dramatic space has tongue-and-groove cabinetry fronts by Ital Furniture lacquered in matt black, with leather-finished Black Forest granite from CDK Stone on the benchtops and splashback. The extractor bulkhead has been wrapped in powdercoated metal and treated to a high-gloss car-lacquer finish.


Completed in October 2021 after a fairly hassle-free build, the home now has many lovely spaces to enjoy. Unsurprisingly, the owner's favourite part is the lower level. "It opens out to a lush, tropical, north-facing garden that's like a sanctuary," says the owner. "Finally, the house feels solid and complete." 

Pohio Adams is at pohioadams.com and @pohioadams

KITCHEN (top and opposite) Beautiful granite and other high-spec inclusions define this eye-catching space. Appliances from Fisher & Paykel, V-ZUG and Wirsing are integrated into the cabinetry, which features handles from Joseph Gies. Bolero sink, Franke Vola tapware, Sydney Tap & Bathroomware, Flos 'Kap' ceiling lights, Euroleuc. Miter bar stools, Cult

DINING AREA (top left) As before, with beeswax bowl candles from ALM. **COURTYARD** (left) The landscaped design by Simon Howard of Dangar Blair Smith is flourishing. Bush-hammered limestone, Onsite. Metal-framed doors, Steel Windows Australia. Bench seat, ceramic stools and table, Anibou.



 **good news**

This home employs double-glazing to reduce heat gain and loss, and large, shop-style front awnings to reduce the effects of the hot western sun. In summer, ample cross ventilation ensures a cool breeze moves through the home and the lower-level concrete floors are cool. In winter, when the hydronic in-floor heating is running on minimal, low-peak power, the floors absorb and retain heat for maximum comfort.

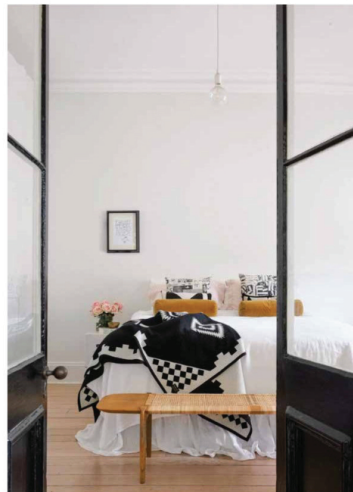


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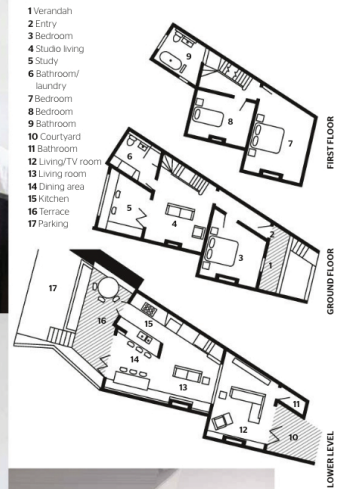
LESSONS LEARNT

“Don't rush into anything”^{HOMEOWNER}

“We learnt to be patient with the renovation process and, in some circumstances, to go with the flow.”



MAIN BEDROOM (left) Dulux Whisper White walls, whitewashed Oregon timber flooring and gloss-white cabinetry by Itai Furniture make the room feel spacious and light-filled. Bench, Torm Trading. **STAIRS** (bottom right) More Whisper White makes for a smooth transition between the old and new sections. PK22 lounge chair, Cult. **BATHROOM** (bottom left and opposite) What used to be a poky room with a low ceiling is now a glamorous 1950s-inspired bathroom with walls in Venetian plaster and New York marble from CDK Stone. Poplarn floor tiles, Oratile. Agippe bath, Arredomus. Voia tapware, sink and toilet, Sydney Tap & Bathroomware. Michael Anastassiades double wall sconce, Mobilia.



INSIDE HOME



COURTYARD (left) "Integration between inside and out was a big driver in this design," says Bianca. "The sub-tropical plants were selected to reference the owner's Samsan heritage." **LOWER LEVEL** (opposite) In the elevated formal living area at the back is a tan leather sofa purchased from Living Edge. Artwork on kitchen wall by Merdingkingathi Juwanda Sally Gabori.

"We introduced green jungle-like plantings in the outdoor space adjacent to the dining area." **BIANCA**



GREAT FINDS



CLOCKWISE (from top) Agape 'Vesque' metal and wood **bathtub**, POA, Arterdomus; Laguna Black Granite **surface**, POA, CDK Stone; Pogham Design 'Pentagon' **tiles**, POA, Onsite Supply + Design; Pallas powdercoated metal **table**, POA, ClassiCon; Palina **vase**, \$27, Luxe Floral + Home Co; Utensil **vase** in Milk, \$108, Mud Australia; Stolt Ridge **vase**, \$39, Scandinavian Design; Roquebrune leather **chair** in Black by Eileen Gray, POA, ClassiCon; Ascant handmade wool **rug** in Blue, from \$17495, Zanui; B&B Italia 'Camaleonda' modular **sofa** in Beta Walnut leather, \$54175, Space Furniture; Flos 'Find Me I' **pendant light**, POA; Euritace Story Place King Alfred's Country Ink on paper; **artwork** by Merdingkingathi Juwanda Sally Gabori (60cm x 45cm), \$350, Accastan Gallery; U **vase** 01223 in Brass, \$350, ACV Studio; Miller High upholstered **stool** from \$2050, Cult; Michael Anastassiades' DS150 **wall light**, \$1340, Mobilia.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCES: PALOMA, GABRY

