

TRUE COLOURS



This page Originally a duplex, the now unified house sports a new entrance and staircase which floods both levels with natural light. The design of the original balustrade on the balcony is echoed throughout, including in the internal staircase and on an overhead kitchen shelving unit. 'Palissade' outdoor furniture from Hay. **Opposite page** 'Can' sconces by Anna Charlesworth and custom stair runner in red with an ivory silk border from Halcyon Lake. Tinos green marble flooring from The Stone Boutique.

The white exterior of this inner-city art-deco gem belies the luxurious jewel box of colour and textures of the interiors by Flack Studio.

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This page A 'Fantasma' floor lamp by Tobias Scarpa for Flos is an integral feature of the main living room. The artwork behind in the main hallway is by Seth Birchall from Sullivan+Strumpf. A large 'Song' sofa from Maker&Son sits below a bold artwork by Brent Harris from Tolarno Galleries. The 'Karelia' lounge chairs in velvet by Liisi Beckmann for Zanotta are from Castorina as is the 'Bulle' glass side table by Lucas Recchia for Studio Cas. The sculpture next to the fireplace is by Sanné Mestrom from Sullivan+Strumpf. 'Flocca' linen blanket from Hale Mercantile Co. Vintage rug from Halcyon Lake. **Opposite page** Custom cabinetry by Flack Studio with an artwork by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran from Sullivan+Strumpf. The ClassiCon 'Diana B' side table in yellow is from Anibou.

When David Flack was approached to design this house in Princes Hill his firm, Flack Studio, was a fledgling business with just a handful of projects to its name. That was in early 2016. One of those projects, however, was an apartment development for a property developer who just happens to be the owner of this house. The owner was determined, he says, that when the time came to renovate the rundown art deco duplex he'd recently purchased it would be David who would design it.

"This was a very early commission for us," says David. "I was really excited about it and thought it would be built really quickly but here we are in 2023 and it's just finished." Covid delays, heritage issues and building costs made the project somewhat of a slow burn.

Originally two apartments, the building was in disrepair when it was bought by Michael who wanted to turn it into a freestanding family home. "We moved in and rented out the top unit for a number of years while we saved up to do the renovation," he says. When they bought the house he and his wife had no children but on the day they moved in they welcomed their second child.

"Whenever I start a project, I always want to honour the original architecture and the existing building, but obviously play around with them as well," says David. "What I love about this house is that it's got a weight to it. It just feels so permanent." One of the biggest tasks he faced in transforming the two apartments into a single three-bedroom home was getting as much light as possible into the interiors. A double-height window at the rear of the house, which is part of a new extension, floods the dining area and kitchen with natural light. To connect the two levels of the house the original exterior staircase was encased in milky glass to allow for even more light. Flack Studio worked in collaboration with Freadman White architects on the built elements of the renovation.

"We love working with other designers," says Ilana Freadman. "This is very much an inner-city dwelling with a narrow site and one of our biggest challenges was to bring in more light and keep the connection to the park opposite while maintaining privacy."

David says integrating the new interior spaces into the heritage building in a seamless way was also a challenge. "There was one room that had coved ceilings. We loved how the walls just >



« turned into the ceiling and had no cornices. So we retained that detail and ran with it. When you are inside it's just so beautiful and it blurs the line between what is original and what is new.”

A rumpus room that can double as a guestroom is on the ground floor, as well as a study and powder room, and is connected to the rear dining and kitchen area via a cosy living room with an original fireplace. Upstairs is a main bedroom with a large dressing room and ensuite along with two bedrooms, a bathroom and a laundry. A new garage with a loft by Freadman White stands at the rear.

“I'm particularly interested in having that bite of strong colour coming through in the hard materials,” says David. Stones such as Carrara and a deep-green Tinos marble are seen in the entrance, bathrooms and kitchen complemented by mid-grey terrazzo floor tiles in the bathroom, kitchen and entry. The kitchen is clad in a rich walnut timber and its built-in joinery feels more like a custom piece of furniture. In contrast, the scullery joinery is painted in Dulux ‘Collard Green’. The rangehood and an overhead shelving

unit in brass echoes detail on the balustrade and front balcony. “The joinery handles are a reference to Jean Prouvé and his cabinetry,” says David. “The scullery is carved out of the kitchen. It's as if you're biting into an apple and biting into the colour.”

Throughout, texture and colour create a sophisticated and layered palette. Soft grey and beige leather on the kitchen banquette mixes with black leather ‘Cab’ dining chairs, a vintage Italian travertine table and Murano glass chandelier. In the living room plush armchairs in a dusty purple velvet combine with a white linen sofa, a vintage rug from Halcyon Lake and custom joinery with fluted panelling.

The most striking mix of colours and textures, however, is one of the simplest. The main bathroom's rich green marble is paired with Dulux ‘Recycled’, which in a less skilled designer's hands would be plain old brown, but Flack Studio has made it feel rich and sumptuous. ■

flackstudio.com.au; freadmanwhite.com



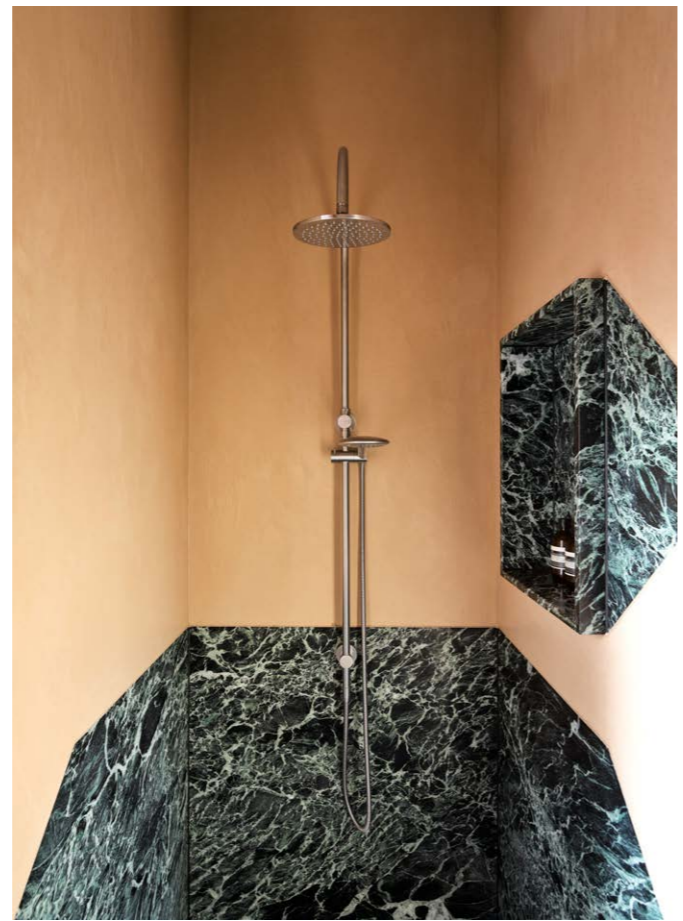
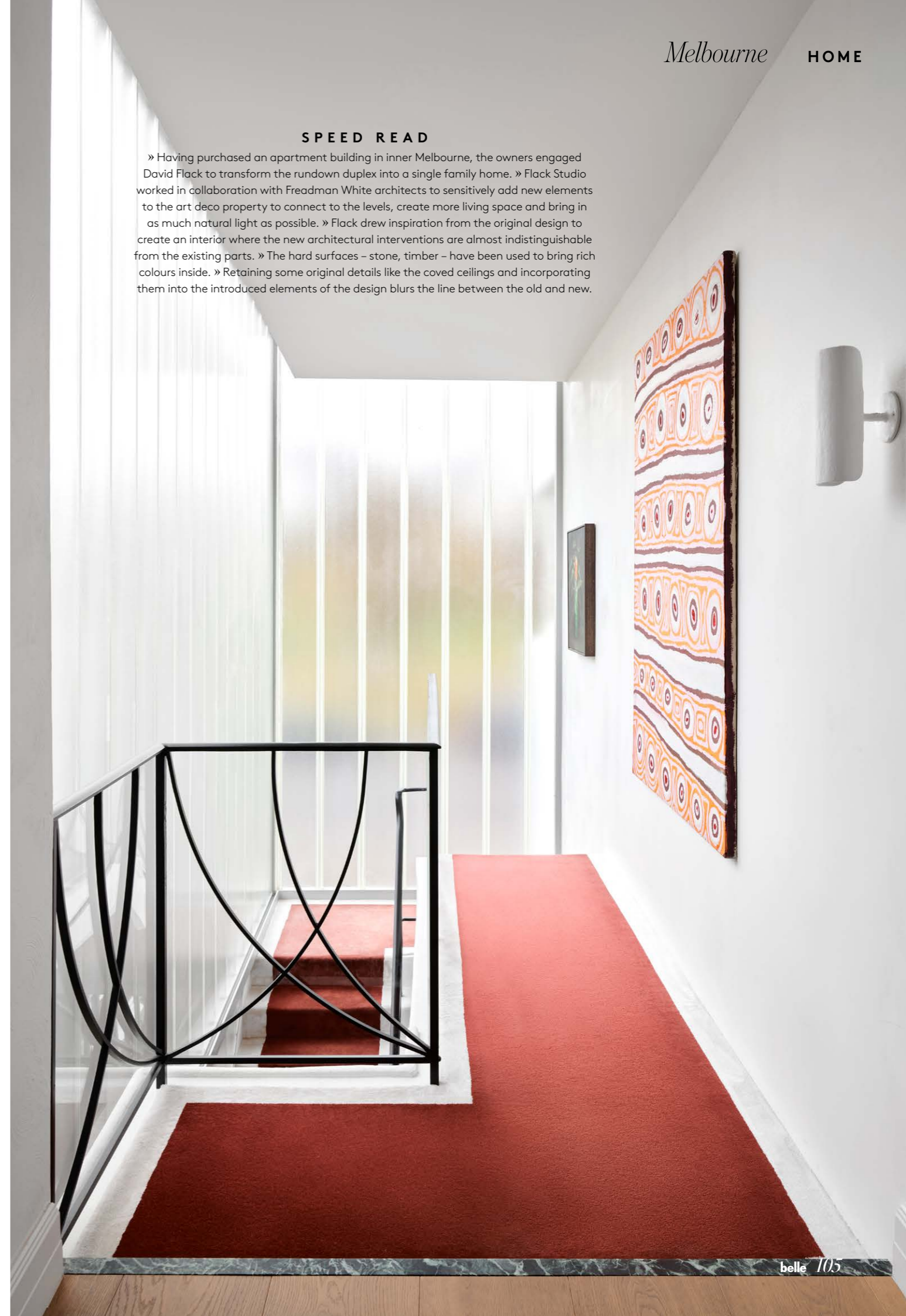
These pages, clockwise from left Vintage Italian travertine dining table from 1stDibs with ceramic artwork, *Dark Forest* by Lynda Draper from Sullivan+Strumpf. Cassina ‘Cab’ chairs by Mario Bellini from Mobilia. Flooring is a mix of engineered timber in Biscuit from Made by Storey and terrazzo tiles from Fibonacci. Tronchi Murano glass chandelier from Angelucci 20th Century. A custom light fitting in brass by Flack Studio sits on the walnut-clad wall outside the scullery. Splashback in Tinos marble from The Stone Boutique in the scullery, with cupboards painted in Dulux ‘Collard Green’. Artwork on top shelf by Tony Albert from Sullivan+Strumpf. Artwork on middle shelf by unknown artist from CCP. In the main kitchen, the benchtop is in Carrara marble from CDK Stone with cabinetry in walnut veneer from George Fethers & Co. Custom rangehood in brass by Flack Studio. Capellini ‘Morrison’ stools.

SPEED READ

» Having purchased an apartment building in inner Melbourne, the owners engaged David Flack to transform the rundown duplex into a single family home. » Flack Studio worked in collaboration with Freadman White architects to sensitively add new elements to the art deco property to connect to the levels, create more living space and bring in as much natural light as possible. » Flack drew inspiration from the original design to create an interior where the new architectural interventions are almost indistinguishable from the existing parts. » The hard surfaces – stone, timber – have been used to bring rich colours inside. » Retaining some original details like the coved ceilings and incorporating them into the introduced elements of the design blurs the line between the old and new.



This page, clockwise from top View from the hallway into the bathroom clad in Tinos marble from The Stone Boutique and paired with a custom terrazzo tile from Fibonacci. *Self-Portrait Scholar* artworks on wall (left) by Jude Warters. Lynda Drape artwork in recess (right) from Sullivan+Strumpf. Shower wall painted in Dulux 'Recycled' with shower tap set from Astra Walker. Custom sink in brass by Flack Studio. 'Pipe' wall-mounted mixer set from Boffi. Sculpture by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran from Sullivan+Strumpf. Custom wall light by Anna Charlesworth. 'Flocca' linen hand towel from Hale Mercantile Co. **Opposite page** Custom red stair runner from Halcyon Lake. Small Adam Pyett artwork from Jan Murphy Gallery. Large *Untitled* artwork by Alice Nampitjinpa. 'Can' wall light by Anna Charlesworth.



This page In the main bedroom, Elam armchair from Castorina & Co. 'Lino' curtains from Mokum by InVogue Blinds. Anna Charlesworth pendant light. Flos 'Gatto' lamp from Eurluce. Flocca linen sheets in Brun from Hale Mercantile Co with linen blanket in Bere. Kirsty Budge artwork from Daine Singer Gallery. 'Versailles 457' carpet by Tisca Tiara from Halcyon Lake. Opposite page Custom joinery by Flack Studio and wall lights by Anna Charlesworth. Arkana 'Tulip' chair by Maurice Burke and Eero Saarinen. Splashback in Tinos green marble with vanity in Carrara marble from CDK Stone and walnut storage unit by Flack Studio. 'Icon' wall taps from Astra Walker. Terrazzo tiles from Fibonacci.



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SIGNATURE STYLE
KEY PIECES



1 Julie Neill 'Vacarro' chandelier, \$6890, from The Montauk Lighting Co. 2 B&B Italia 'Charlotte' chair in Bordeaux, \$2720, from Space. 3 Verde Guatemala stone, POA, from Signorino. 4 Bespoke Italian Murano rostrato vase, from \$1650, from eModerno. 5 Vintage solid-travertine dining table, \$5393, from 1stDibs.

