

# all in the family

Past meets present in Nathan's childhood home, which has been reinterpreted to share with his wife and daughters

STORY KATRINA O'BRIEN STYLING LOUISE RASTALL PHOTOGRAPHY BRIGID ARNOTT



Louise and Nathan's family home draws from a mix of eras, with traditional Federation style at the front and a contemporary addition at the back. "We wanted to make that definition," says Louise. "We start the new from where the original house ends and it's nice to delineate that." The new living room (opposite) opens via bi-fold doors onto a landscaped backyard. Inside, angular shapes and sweeping curves abound, with every inch of space utilised: a sunny alcove is home to a bench seat in Woven Image 'Eclat Weave' fabric (top left), while a corner of the sitting room provides a workspace for budding artists Annabel and Charlotte (above left). Accessories in aqua and tangerine set the fresh colour scheme. >

**COMMON RENOVATING** wisdom says you should live in a house for at least a year before picking up a staple gun. That way, all the home's peculiar quirks – the sunniest little nook, that path rainwater always seems to find, the location of the creakiest floorboards – will be discovered, with any nasty surprises kept well and truly to a minimum.

For Nathan and Louise of Sydney's lower north shore, this part of renovating was easy: Nathan first moved into the home when he was just two years old. "He knew all the intricacies of the house," says Louise of the Federation Californian bungalow. "His dad said it was too much to maintain and he always thought it was a good family home," explains Louise.

While heritage restrictions meant that the home's facade could not be altered, Nathan and Louise, an interior designer, turned to architect David Boyle to help create a modern pavilion at the rear of the home, in place of a previous 1950s extension. The result is a striking addition that features irregular shapes and rooms, a double-height curved roof and dark wood joinery. Gone are the turn-of-the-century original

fireplaces and leadlight windows that grace the older part of the house: here colour, curves and clever joinery speak of contemporary form and 21st-century family functionality.

Louise opted for calming grey-blue walls to add warmth to the carefully zoned yet combined living, dining and kitchen areas and large light fittings to give a sense of scale. A visually arresting bathroom and ensuite clad in eye-catching mosaic tiles were also part of the addition. "It's different to what other people have done to these kind of homes," remarks Louise.

Today, the couple's girls, Annabel, five, and Charlotte, three, race up and down the same corridor their dad once did and sleep side-by-side in a bedroom that used to be his. Yet while the light and spacious rooms at the front of the house hark back to that treasured time, at the rear of the home, it's evident that a new generation has moved in.

As for Nathan's dad's opinion of his new, old home: "He loves it. He's proud. He comes in and he shows people around saying, 'Look at what they've done!' and I think he feels like he's done it too," says Louise. "He's pretty chuffed."



**DINING ROOM & KITCHEN** An extendable Lowe Furniture 'Atticus' dining table from Hub adds angular appeal, complemented by Eames dining chairs and large 'Caravaggio P' pendant lights from Cult. To continue the home's quirky form, architect David Boyle designed an irregularly shaped island bench with a Caesarstone top, creating space at one end for David Walley bar stools from Zenith Interiors. Floor-to-ceiling cabinetry, painted in the same Dulux Gamelan as the walls provides ample storage, while a stainless steel splashback reflects light. Louise's favourite feature is the beautifully warm suntrap in the corner of the room: "This is where I hang out, with all those spare moments I have, sitting around drinking coffee!" she jokes.



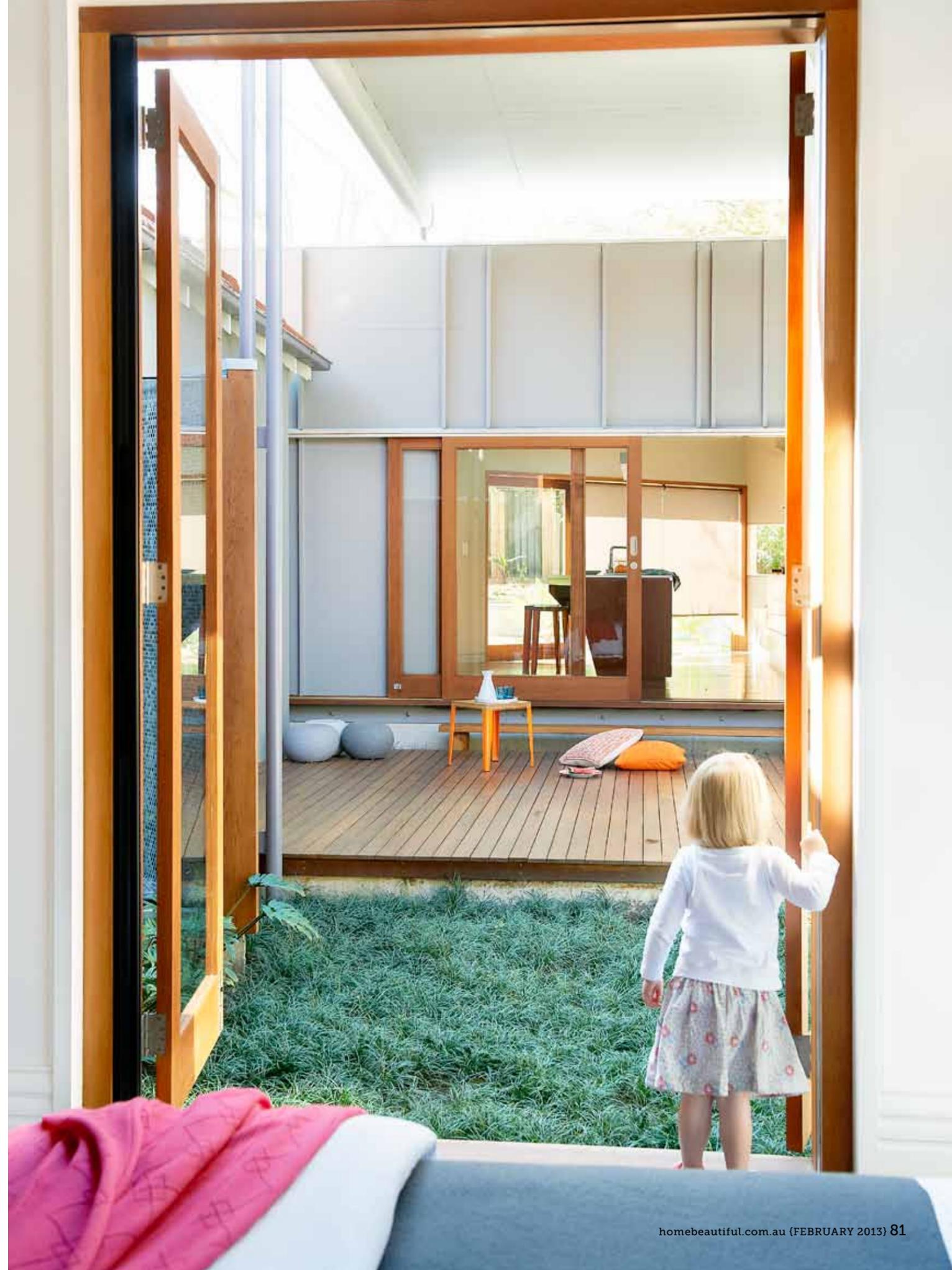
*"It's a home for our young family that's going to grow with us, which is handy, as we won't be going anywhere!" - Louise*

**LIVING ROOM** Louise initially thought about basing the style of the new extension on the Federation era of the original home but, she says, "When I started to do a bit of research, I just couldn't go with the colours – heavy burgundies and olive greens." Instead, she opted for a greeny blue-grey Dulux Gamelan on the walls, punctuated by vibrant cushions from Aura By Tracie Ellis and Emily Ziz Style Studio. Existing pieces, such as an Eames lounge chair that Louise gave Nathan for his 30th birthday and a print that originally belonged to Louise's mother, mix with retro-style timber joinery and floorboards – both in spotted gum – and a new Zenith Interiors coffee table. And that rug? "They're just commercial carpet tiles stuck together," says Louise candidly. "We got to the bottom of the list and I thought 'We can't afford rugs!' We chose the blue to tie in with the cushions we already had." >



*"The sheer curtains were a real bargain – we made them ourselves with fabric from Spotlight" – Louise*

**MASTER BEDROOM** Elegant greys and silvers lend a classic edge to the master bedroom, part of the original home. Unable to justify spending up on pricey sheer curtains, Louise made a pair herself using Spotlight fabric and an Ikea hanging system. Feltex Merito wool carpet in Pewter brings warmth to the room, while a crimson 'Luna' knit blanket from Little White Home and a No Chintz cushion pick up the maroon tones in the original leadlight windows. **DECK (opposite)** Wide doors with timber frames open the bedroom out onto a grassy expanse and covered deck, enlivened by Country Road cushions, fibreglass 'Aura Pebble' seats and a playful stool, all from Zenith Interiors. From here, Charlotte gazes across to the sunny kitchen. "It's interesting because from a lot of our rooms you have a visual interaction," says Louise. >





**MASTER BEDROOM (top left & right)** While a Kartell bedside unit from Space and industrial table lamp – Zaffero is a good source for similar designs – bring a dose of modern flair, Louise and Nathan were careful to maintain the heritage of the older rooms. As such, the existing fireplace was restored and re-tiled. Decorative touches include a 'Confetti' garland from Castle and an 'A Cashew Nut Love' cushion from No Chintz. **ANNABEL & CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM (above left)** As the original fireplace was removed, the couple found an antique piece to install in its place; try Heritage Building Centre for original period designs. The 'Wheely Bug' toy is available from Urban Baby. **MAIN BATHROOM (above right)** Stunning mosaics from Bisanna Tiles and a custom-built Caesarstone shelf create a washroom with serious wow-factor.



**GIRLS' BEDROOM** Bright accessories and tactile textures make Annabel and Charlotte's bedroom a fun place to be. To inject colour, Louise decorated with dots from The Wall Sticker Company – stuck at child-friendly height – as well as round velvet Castle cushions, Sally Campbell bed throws and an orange Kartell bedside unit from Space. Freshly painted walls in Dulux Natural White highlight the beautiful bay window. >

"It's nice having the girls sharing a room – for as long as possible they can stay here together" – Louise



**MAIN BATHROOM** Wrapping the bathroom in show-stopping grey mosaic tiles was a risk that's paid dividends. "I spent hours thinking, 'Are we going to regret this?'" recalls Louise. "But it's worked well. I don't think the tiles will date and they reflect what was used when the house was built." The simple fittings and tapware are all Rogerseller.



### INSIDE STORY

#### Who lives here?

Louise, an interior designer, 37, her husband Nathan, 35, a construction manager, and their daughters, Annabel, five and Charlotte, three.

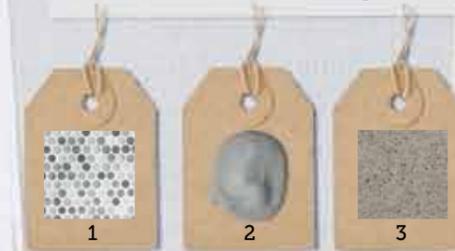
**Should you be brave when making decorating decisions?**  
Louise: "I think so, because you end up with a fabulous – and interesting – place to live."

**Are you quite selective about what pieces are on show?**  
"Not really – it's just what we have. You may as well use your pieces otherwise they're just going to be hidden in a cupboard."

**Next on the list?**  
"It would be nice to get some artwork. The only art we have is from the girls. I'll just have to put them to work to get more!"



The home's new extension is furnished with a nod to mid-20th century design.



### CONTACTS

#### Architect

David Boyle Architect,  
(02) 4360 1838,  
davidboylearchitect.com.au.

### THE DETAILS

- 1 Ensuite tiles**  
'Penny' round tiles in Grey Gloss Mix, \$105/sqm, Bisanna Tiles.
- 2 Living room wall paint**  
Wash & Wear 101 Barrier Technology in Gamelan, \$89.45/4L, Dulux.
- 3 Bathroom shelf**  
'Classico' engineered stone surface in Oyster, \$500/sqm, Caesarstone.

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### PLANS

