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GOLDEN TICKET

Once home to a mining pioneer, an historic property welcomes a timely update that boldly marries old and new to stunning effect.

Photography SHARYN CAIRNS Words JACKIE BRYGEL



This page Formerly a saddle tack room, this is now a light-filled relaxation domain. Upholstered in sheep's wool, the curvaceous 'The Tired Man' arm chair from Fred International is grounded by a rug from Cadrys. Artworks by Clinton Naina from Gallerysmith. Opposite page In the entry, More Bang by Nigel Sense & Mike Chavez from Fox Galleries boldly presides over a 'Handvärk' bench from Fred International. Atop 'Monolith' pedestals by MT Studio for Modern Times, striking sculptures – Any Day Now by Martin Smith and Black Head by Hugh Ramage – contrast with the formal heritage detailing.



Balancing a tantalising dose of nostalgia with a keen sense of anticipation, Studio Tate co-founder Alex Hopkins embarked on the inspired rebirth of this historic home in a leafy inner Melbourne suburb. Fifteen years prior to being tasked with this significant restoration and redesign project, the then interior architecture student happened to have spent many hours in the stately Victorian home. Alex could have only dreamed in those days of how she might one day draw on the house's immense potential to create an alluring exchange between past and present. Now, the opportunity presented itself.

"I've had a long and wonderful association with the clients," says Alex, Studio Tate design director. "In my teenage years, I grew up in the street where the family had been living and I'd regularly babysit their three young children. The family moved to this home when I was a university student and I continued to stay in touch and visit. In 2014, they approached me to design some joinery for one of the children, who are now all teenagers, and this led to our full refurbishment of the home."

The dwelling as it stood five years ago "featured a late-1980s rear renovation and extension by the previous owners," explains Alex. "It was quite liveable, but not particularly sympathetic to the prestige and beauty of the original property. There was a lack of functionality and a somewhat dated and generic palette. Fortunately, the front rooms of the house were generally in good condition and simply required a refresh by introducing a more sophisticated and timeless palette."

Pioneering mining magnate and former BHP director Anthony Edwin Bowes Kelly constructed the house in 1899. Happily, the property's heritage facade, leadlight windows, exquisite entry archways and geometric motif ceilings had remained untouched, informing Studio Tate's thoughtful and cohesive design narrative.

"It was necessary to improve the home's spatial planning by making significant changes to the rear and side of the property, as well as transforming all the hard finishes and wet areas of the house," says Alex. "I feel very close to the family and personally committed to the project. It was extremely important to me, as it is with all Studio Tate clients whose best interests are at the forefront of our minds, that we delivered a great result."

Providing a dramatic link between the main house and an original saddle tack room – converted by Studio Tate into a luminous family dining and living zone – a glazed walkway today sweeps daylight and verdant vistas into the home. In the communal spaces, expansive steel-framed doors and windows allow a seamless interaction with the lush garden, refreshed and replenished by landscape designer Stephanie Lazar.

Beckoning from the kitchen and casual dining space, a reconfigured arbour by Eckersley Garden Architecture drips with seductively cascading Boston ivy. "The house is now truly surrounded by greenery," says Alex. "It was also very important to the clients that the natural light infiltration throughout the day be maximised, and we worked to achieve that."

Yet perhaps most indicative of the success of the project is that while the house can slip with ease into the role of consummate entertainer, its inner sanctum remains beguilingly intimate and inviting. Somewhat unexpected, too, is the fact that it is far from

"Expansive steel-framed doors and windows allow a seamless interaction with the lush garden."



"This page Artworks by Heath Newman from Otomys gallery inject a sense of drama. "Soul" table by Nonn from District with Fritz Hansen "Sammen" chairs from Cult illuminated by the Lambert & Fils "Laurent 03" pendant light from Living Edge. A B&B Italia "Charles" sofa from Space is paired with a custom cushion by D&C Design. Opposite page, from top Under the entry archway, Faye Toogood's "Roly Poly" armchair from Hub makes a shapely statement. Iconic "LC4" chaise longue in cowhide by Le Corbusier and Charlotte Perriand from Cult. Monochromatic Passive Aggressive artworks by Clinton Naina from Gallerysmith.



This page: Luxuriant Boston Ivy hangs from the showstopping reconfigured arbour, by Eckersley Garden Architecture. Opposite page, clockwise from top: Striking steel-framed glazing, custom-made freestanding ebonised timber veneer joinery, and Tundra limestone from Signorino on the island bench top enhance the sense of light and space in the kitchen. Artworks by Phil Hunter (above pedestal) and Heike Davies. Gubi 'Beetle' stools from Luke Furniture. On the dining table, the grouping of stoneware from Modern Times is by Tessey King. Both sculptures flanking the window are by Tarryn Gill from Sophie Gammon Gallery.



This page A sense of reserve and serenity defines the master bedroom. Lambert & Fils pendant light from Living Edge and Ateljé Lyktan table lamp from Angelucci 20th Century. Musei Reali Torino #1 artwork by Wayne Fogden from Fox Galleries. Opposite page, from top Honed 'Montecarlo 128' tiles from Signorino's Terrazzo range line the bathroom floor, with matt 'Helsinki' tiles, also from Signorino, encasing the walls. Glazed stoneware Lynda's Bottle by Tessa King rests on the marble vanity. Navy and cream striped bathmat by Loom Towels. Fritz Hansen 'Ro' easy chair from Cult. Sumptuous velvet drapes by D&C Design.



devoid of delight and fun. While the house is undeniably purist in style and design, with a restrained palette of materials providing a sense of tranquillity and unity, joyous surprises present around almost every corner. Within the walls of the home, the family's cherished collectibles – including an assembly of contemporary artworks – inject playful bursts of colour, wit and whimsy.

"The house does feel very family friendly and cosy, but because of the volumes of space it has an almost gallery-esque feel that lends itself well to displaying the family's beautiful pieces," says Alex. "It's certainly a project that will always resonate with me. To think that I've known the family for so many years and now my practice has designed this beautiful refresh of their home, that's very special."

Indeed, for the family and all involved in the project, the home's latest metamorphosis pays respectful homage to its storied past, while priming it for a fresh new chapter – one that signifies the exultant realisation of a long-held dream. **18**

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SPEED READ

» Clients with a long personal history with Studio Tate design director Alex Hopkins approached the interior architecture practice to design a bold and beautiful extension to their stately Victorian residence in inner Melbourne. » Breathing sophisticated new life into the original rooms, the main house was dramatically linked with a former saddle tack room – converted by Studio Tate into the family's core living space – by a glazed walkway that floods light into the home. » In the inviting communal spaces, the lush garden beckons through expansive steel-framed doors and windows. » While a restrained palette of materials provides a sense of unity and serenity, contemporary artworks inject bursts of playful colour. » In an inherently joyous project for all concerned, the home is gloriously primed for a fresh new chapter.

