

Gable ties

Influences from bygone eras and *forgotten trades form lasting connections* in this early 1900s home, deftly unified via a sophisticated monochrome palette.



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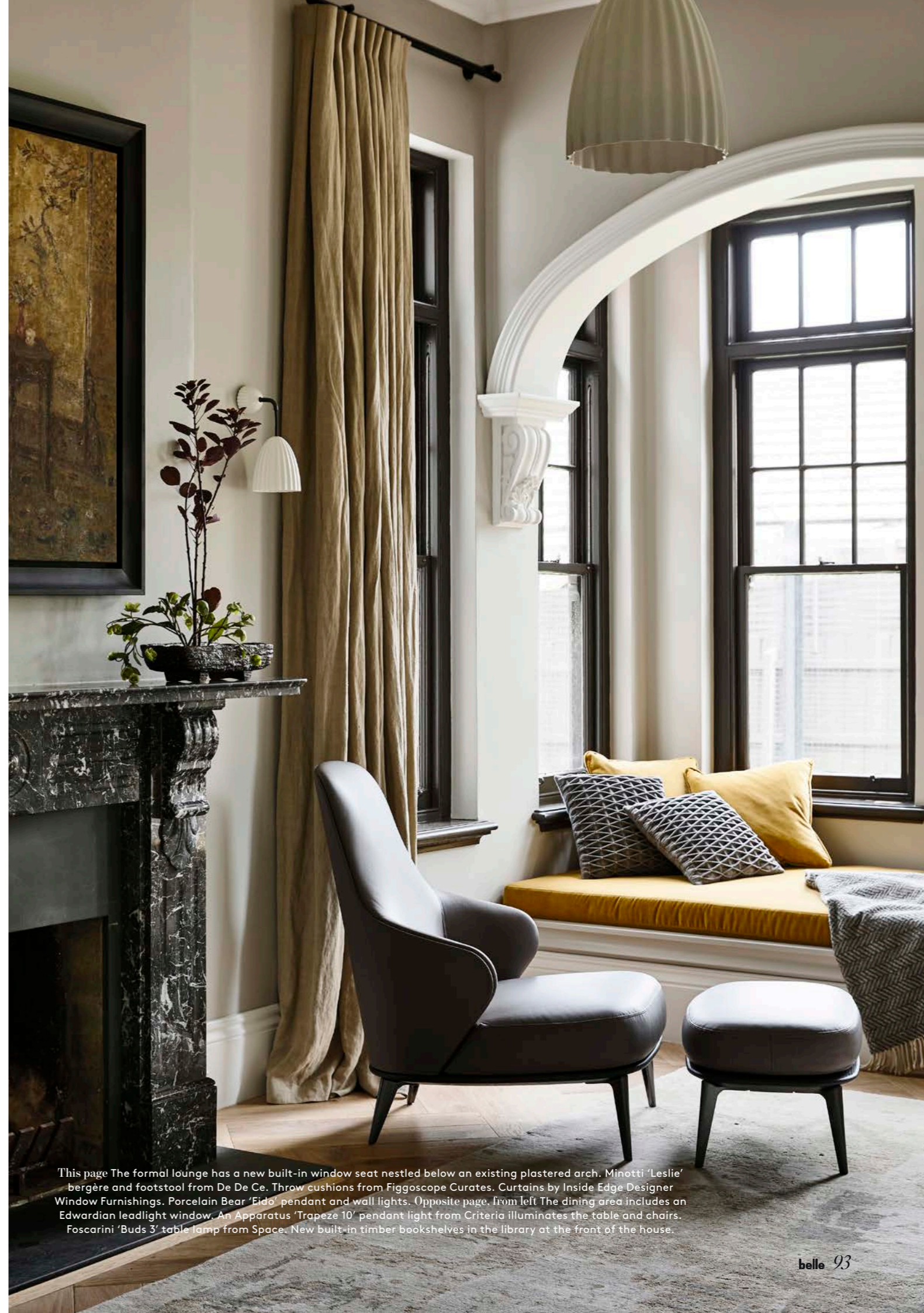
This page The 1980s pavilion has been thoughtfully updated including painting the walls a soft grey and the distinctive ceiling in off-white. 'Klara' chair from Hub. Minotti 'Andersen' sofa from De De Ce with an SP01 'Mohana' side table and SP01 'Etoile' coffee and side tables, all from Space. Articolo 'Lumi' pendant light. Apparatus 'Trapeze 2' brass wall light from Criteria. Opposite page Period embellishments have been retained in this renovation. Zuster 'Contour' console in Mink black-stained American oak conceals Blum drawer runners. Porcelain Bear 'Eido' wall lights.

With its Flemish-style facade, including a Dutch gable, this unusual house in the Melbourne bayside suburb of Brighton regularly slows traffic. Located in a heritage-listed streetscape, the c.1909 home combines a number of styles, including Edwardian, Federation, Queen Anne and Dutch Renaissance. “We weren’t really looking for a house. Our focus was on scaling down to an apartment from a large property at Berwick (25 kilometres from the CBD),” says owner Georgina, who lives in this house with husband Mark and one of their three adult children. The couple could have easily missed this opportunity if it weren’t for interior designer Fiona Austin, founder of Austin Design Associates, who brought the unrenovated home to their attention. “She arranged a builder to come with her on our first inspection and one week later we signed the documents,” says Georgina.

The house was in fairly original condition, with an architect-designed extension at the rear thought to have been completed in the 1980s. The rear addition consisted of a pavilion-style building, with another Dutch gable mimicking the original one. “One of the problems with that extension was the link between the original home and the new, given over to a kitchen and dining nook that simply wasn’t right for today, in particular for our clients who love to cook and entertain,” says interior designer Lauren O’Brien, co-director of Austin Design Associates, who worked closely with co-director interior designer Sylvanna Mitri. Other spaces also required »



This page Dark-grey drapes and furniture in the informal living area provide a strong accent against the pale oak floors. Minotti 'Andersen' sofa from De De Ce. Articolo 'Lumi' pendant light. Opposite page The dark and moody kitchen features a black granite island bench framed by black laminate joinery. Gubi 'Beetle' bar stool from Cult. Articolo 'Float' pendant lights. Wolf Contemporary oven and steam oven. Sub-Zero integrated refrigerator. Brodware Yokato kitchen mixer with pull-out spray.



« reworking, including the main bedroom, dressing area and ensuite bathroom, previously a series of small and enclosed rooms.

Rather than simply demolish the 1980s extension, including the link and the pavilion, with the latter now used as an informal living area, Austin Design Associates virtually retained the same footprint as they inherited, only widening the former link to create a kitchen and butler's pantry. Large floor-to-ceiling glazed windows were installed to take advantage of the garden and create a dialogue with the original black-stained timber windows in the original part of the home.

"The strength of the period home required a bold counterpoint from the new work," says Lauren, pointing out the black granite kitchen bench framed by black laminate joinery. Other design cues from the home were given a contemporary take, such as the timber battens used in the kitchen above the granite splashback, as opposed to the more traditional timber strappings used for the main bedroom. Texture was also at the forefront of Lauren's mind with this renovation, selecting European oak timber floors to complement the dark and moody charcoal-grey painted walls.

Every wall and floor has been touched in the renovation, along with a new terracotta-tiled roof. But every move has been strategically planned with the intention of retaining as much as possible of the original, as well as the 1980s addition. The 80s pavilion, for example, with its faceted timber ceiling, was painted off-white, and the walls tweaked along with the fireplace to create

a contemporary edge (with a simple black granite shelf above the fireplace). New bathrooms were also included: a guest powder room and a generous ensuite with a freestanding bathtub.

The direction was partially inspired by a design tour to Belgium that Fiona attended just as this project was starting. "There's a strong and dark moody feel to the place," says Fiona, who initially met some resistance from owner Georgina to using black for the internal window frames. "She was expecting white window frames and, initially, a lighter interior palette."

"We had renovated two previous homes with Austin Design Associates so you build up a level of trust over a long period of time," says Georgina, who is appreciative of the outcome.

The original home is oriented to the north, with the library and main bedroom enjoying the full sun. Likewise, the revamped pavilion looks down the entire block and benefits from a new north-facing timber deck. "Mark and I love open-plan spaces but, living here, you start to realise that there's something quite special about being in an enclosed space and enveloped by this unique period detailing," says Georgina, who has ended up with a four-bedroom home (two bedrooms are located on the first floor), but one that feels comfortable and intimate.

"For us, it's not just giving life to an old house. It's making spaces feel timeless in a sense and creating a design that has one 'voice' rather than two," adds Lauren. ■

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This page The formal lounge has a new built-in window seat nestled below an existing plastered arch. Minotti 'Leslie' bergère and footstool from De De Ce. Throw cushions from Figgoscope Curates. Curtains by Inside Edge Designer Window Furnishings. Porcelain Bear 'Eido' pendant and wall lights. Opposite page, from left The dining area includes an Edwardian leadlight window. An Apparatus 'Trapeze 10' pendant light from Criteria illuminates the table and chairs. Foscarini 'Buds 3' table lamp from Space. New built-in timber bookshelves in the library at the front of the house.

SPEED READ

» Originally seeking an apartment in Melbourne, this downsizing family made an about face when interior designer Fiona Austin of Austin Design Associates alerted them to this unusual house. » Their heads were turned by the 1909 building which sported a Dutch Renaissance gable along with heritage features from the Queen Anne, Federation and Edwardian styles. » Fiona reworked the 1980s extension to create a more functional living space with better flow, enhanced light and connection to the outdoors via floor-to-ceiling windows. » European oak timber floors complement the dark and moody charcoal-grey painted walls edged in crisp black and white which beautifully tie the disparate elements for a timeless ambience.



This page, clockwise from top left The bedroom suite is in keeping with contemporary living with Bedouin Societe bedding and throw cushion from Manon Bis. The main ensuite features Cote D'Azur marble on the vanity from CDK Stone. Apparatus sconce in brass from Criteria. The pavilion now leads to a large, north-facing timber deck furnished with a 'Paris' outdoor dining setting by Tom Fereday from Space. A simple palette of materials appears in the main ensuite such as the handmade Moroccan wall tiles from Tiles of Ezra. **Opposite page** In the master bedroom, Heatherly panelled padded headboard, shutters by Inside Edge Designer Window Furnishings and Egyptian rug in Starling from Armadillo & Co. Porcelain Bear 'Eido' pendant lights. Articolo 'Lumi' table lamp.

