



HIGH DEFINITION Presented with a home that required a *rigorously detailed* renovation, DYLAN FARRELL DESIGN masterfully colours within the lines of restraint, lifting the eye *upwards* and out across Australia's EMERALD CITY.

By LINDYL ZANBAKA *Photographed by* PRUE RUSCOE



*This page* in the hallway of this Sydney home, **table** by Stephen Antonson from Liz O'Brien; recessed ceiling **niche** in white polished plaster by Di Emme; timber **flooring** from Woodcut; **rug** from Behruz Studio; contemporary Murano René Lalique-style glass **chandelier** from 1stDibs; **photograph** (left wall) by Bill Henson; **artwork** (rear wall) by Dale Frank. *Details, last pages.*



*These pages* in the living area, sofas from Dmitriy & Co; white chairs from House of Finn Juhl; console produced by Sem Milano from Hannes Peer Architecture; Bijou coffee table and custom bench, both by Dylan Farrell for After Editions; bronze side table (front left) from Elan Atelier; Erato side table (front right) from Cocobolo; side table (rear left) from Kimberly Denman; Zig Zag chair by Gerrit Thomas Rietveld from Cassina; leather side chair from Jean de Merry; rug from Behruz Studio; Flora Ottilia chandelier from Démiurge New York; vintage Tommi Parzinger table lamp from 1stDibs; BC Workshop Wedge floor lamp from Blackman Cruz; Maison de Vacances curtain fabric from Tigger Hall Design, made by Simple Studio; timber flooring from Woodcut, artworks all by artists unknown.





*This page* in the dining area, custom **dining table**, and **frieze moulding**, both by Dylan Farrell Design; **dining chairs** and **sofa**, all from Dmitry & Co; **rug** from Halcyon Lake; **chandelier** from Andrea Claire Studio; **Sail pendant light** (in wine cellar) by Dylan Farrell for After Editions; 1950s **wall sconces** by Max Ingrand from 1stDibs; soft grey microcement **wall finish** by Di Emme; **artwork** by Richard Misrach. *Opposite page* in the retreat, **Stilts table** by Dylan Farrell for After Editions; **sofa** from Montauk Sofas; **lounge chairs** from Holly Hunt; **coffee table** from Veermakers; **rug** from Behruz Studio; **pendant light** from High Style Deco; **wall sconces** by Allied Maker; white **artwork** by artist unknown; *O que é um museu?/What is a Museum? (Lina Bo Bardi - A Marvellous Entanglement) (2019) artwork* by Isaac Julien from Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery.





**T**he image of the laidback, salt-of-the-earth Australian might raise the eyebrows of those who've experienced Sydney at peak hour, but there is truth to the stereotype. Just ask Dylan Farrell. "There's an undercurrent of casualness in the Australian aesthetic. I find Australian clients are very curious, and they're much more willing to take a chance than Americans," says the designer from his home in New York City. Sitting beside him, his partner Nicolette Farrell nods in agreement. "I've never failed to identify when a project is Australian. You can feel it," she adds.

With a studio based in Sydney and careers that criss-cross hemispheres, the husband-and-wife founders of Dylan Farrell Design have an intimate understanding of what Australians want — Dylan likens the local mindset to "a T-shirt and tailored sportscoat attitude". That's not to say Australian clients don't come with an exacting eye. When approached by the owners of this four-bedroom home to completely overhaul the two-storey space, the designers knew the renovation would have to be as rigorously tailored as a Savile Row suit. "They are very detailed people, so it needed to be very polished," says Nicolette. "It needed to feel timeless, and not something you would see all the time in Sydney."

The Farrells' first visit may have revealed views of yachts sailing on the harbour, but inside "was almost like walking into the interior of a boat", says Nicolette. "It felt like you were moving through a maze of spaces, and in some cases the ceilings were almost a metre lower because it seemed like everything had been designed around the air conditioning unit." They needed to strip it back to the bare minimum and begin again, explains Dylan, who worked on the build with Beebo Constructions. "It was a complete gut of the entire structure."

Brightened by a health-giving intake of vitamin D, the home now opens out onto framed harbour scenes wherever possible. "We try to create long vignettes rather than dollhouse moments so the house feels experiential and not a micro-curation," says Dylan. Framed glass doors reset the palate upon entering each room. As Nicolette explains, each space feels connected, "but everything has its own flavour", meaning the designers sought opportunities to play with a different set of colours and textures in subtle ways. Dripping in a jewel tone, the blue stairway is the exception. "The client loves colour, but not everywhere," Nicolette clarifies. It was a tricky shade to nail — Nicolette went back-and-forth proffering blue samples over several days — but she insists they needed to get it right. "Making that staircase the centre of the home in a colour that's electric with diffused light coming through the shutters we created just feels like a glowing moment... it's really pleasing to change levels."

The ceiling heights have been raised and "detailed to the nines" with recessed niches finished in white polished plaster and sculpted borders that halo the newly expanded rooms. Nicolette readily admits lighting is her favourite thing to source, and great pleasure was taken in selecting the light fixtures that graze the walls and hang like air kisses. "We wanted a good mix of vintage and new... and we wanted to have moments where the lighting makes the space," she says, recalling days spent trawling for the perfect pieces, Dylan glued to Live Auctioneers. "I felt absolutely obsessed with making every surface shine with a sculptural light."

A contemporary Murano chandelier anchors an entry with the silent approval of Dale Frank and Bill Henson artworks. A plaster Atelier Démiurge chandelier orbits the living area. In the kitchen, Bianco Light + Space brass and glass pendants are mixed in with marble and custom cabinetry finishes to tempt cooks into putting away the cast iron pan and using the space to relax in. Nicolette is enamoured with the black and white pendants in the main bedroom; Dylan is drawn to the 1950s Max Ingrand sconces in the dining space. "They're just pretty hot," is his justification. The pendant in the adjoining wine cellar is a Dylan Farrell design for After Editions, a collection the couple are launching in Europe and the United States this year that also includes the living room coffee table and a table in the retreat — a room that provides space for contemplation as well as work.

Art is always a talking point in a Dylan Farrell Design project, and in this case the owners were very much part of the dialogue. "They like art, we like art. They had a huge role in curating the artwork, which was great because we didn't have to twist their arm," says Dylan, who brought in pieces and sifted through the clients' established collection. "They have an incredible curatorial eye," Nicolette confirms. "I'm excited when clients feel inspired by what we do, and they'll go to a gallery and find the perfect piece that accentuates what we're going for." Art both distils and expresses the designers' visual narrative, and the owners' participation resulted in spaces that feel conversational "rather than just some sort of set design" as Dylan puts it. "It's a collaborative art we're creating with the client," he says of the process. "The restraint is where it becomes an applied art." ■ [dylanfarrell.com](http://dylanfarrell.com)

*Opposite page* in the main bathroom, Antoniolupi Baia **bath**, and Axor Citterio **tapware**, all from Candana; Arabescato Corchia marble **benchtop, walls and flooring**, all by Euro Marble from Worldstone Solutions; recessed **ceiling niche** in polished plaster finish by Di Emme; custom beaded pearl **ceiling moulding** by Dylan Farrell Design; antiqued mirror **door panels** by Antique Mirror Glass; **vanity hardware** from Nest Studio Collection; 1950s Venini **pendant light** from 1stDibs; **wall sconces** from Waterworks.



*These pages, from left* in the kitchen, Brescia Royal marble **bench and surrounds** by Granite & Marble Works from Worldstone; custom **cabinetry** finishes by Di Emme; **stools** from Mark Albrecht Studio; **bench** from Holly Hunt; Gessi kitchen **mixer** from Abey; **pendant lights** from Bianco Light + Space; **artworks** by artists unknown. On the balcony, scalloped **coffee table** from Mecox; B&B Italia **outdoor sofa** and **chair** from Space Furniture; BZippy two-tier Cloud **side table** in Chrome Green from 1stDibs; **side table** from Roman Thomas.





*These pages* in the main bedroom, The Tired Man chair by Flemming Lassen from Fred International, covered in Rubelli fabric from South Pacific Fabrics; side table from Stahl + Band; custom bench by Dylan Farrell Design; blanket from Ondene; rug from Behruz Studio; CSLB Studio pendant light from The Invisible Collection; custom ceiling corbels and lower wall frieze; Zimmer + Rohde curtain fabric from Unique Fabrics, made by Simple Studio; photograph by Bill Henson. *Details, last pages.*

