





t first blush this home in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs, with its fretwork, gable and bay window, appears to be a traditional 1880s villa. But the pink render and a brise-soleil running along the roofline hint that this is no prim and proper Victorian. Away from the street, the house lets it hair down, thanks to an inspired extension crafted by architect Luigi Rosselli and interior designer Juliette Arent Squadrito of Arent&Pyke.

While the front reflects its origins, the back boasts a renovation with a dash of Italian brio. Inspired by his Lombardy upbringing, Rosselli added a second brise-soleil to allow generous glazing without compromising privacy and comfort. For him, this feature recalls grain sheds ventilated by *laterizio* (perforated brick) walls peppered across the Italian countryside. Instead of bricks, he recycled tiles from the dwelling's roof. "A brise-soleil creates an amazing space inside," he says. "The light is broken by warm terracotta tiles, full of texture and age." In further echoes of his youth, this home evokes a holiday villa overlooking Lake Maggiore and is named La Casa Rosa for its washed pink render — this, too, has been christened accordingly.

Such quirks delight the owners because they hired Rosselli to eschew the ordinary. "We chose him for his timeless vision and distinctive aesthetic," says one of the owners. "You can often pick a Rosselli house, even though each is different."

She and her husband bought the home in late 2015. "We loved the elegant facade, high ceilings and backyard with established trees," she says. But there the love ended. "The 1990s open-plan addition got very hot in summer. The garden was large, but on four levels.

We wanted to bring light into the back and connect the living areas with the garden."

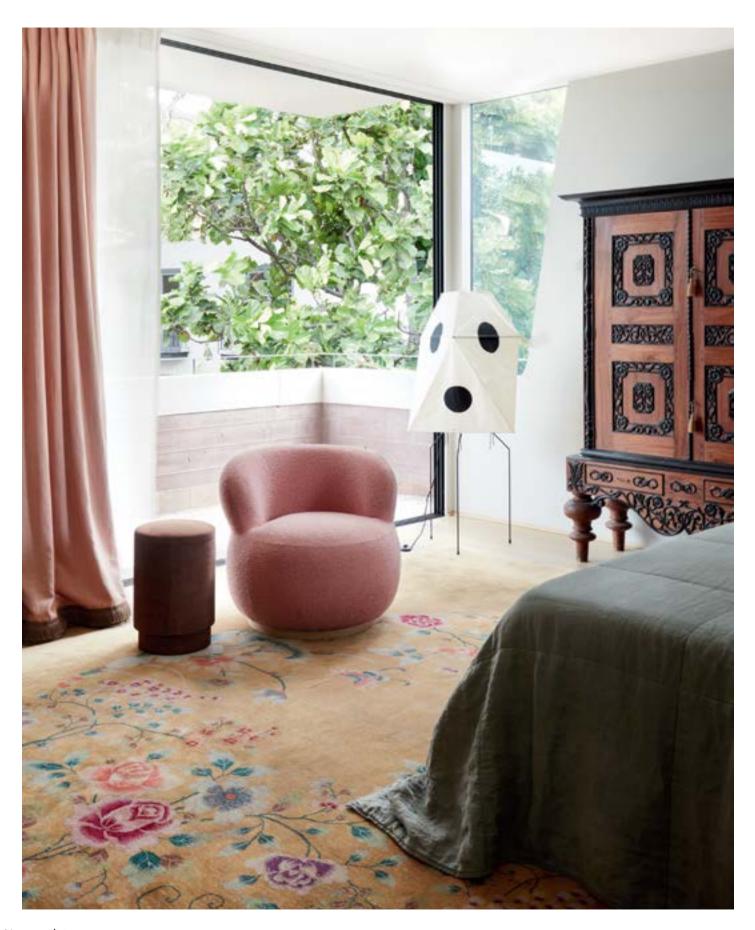
Rosselli shaved off that extension and replaced it with a light and breezy open-plan zone on the lower level while above, the ensuite boasting the brise-soleil and main bedroom soak up views of soaring eucalypts. Meanwhile, he utilised the existing roof cavity to accommodate a study — its clerestory windows sport the brise-soleil seen from the street. Downstairs, the original section comprises two bedrooms, a family bathroom and rumpus room.

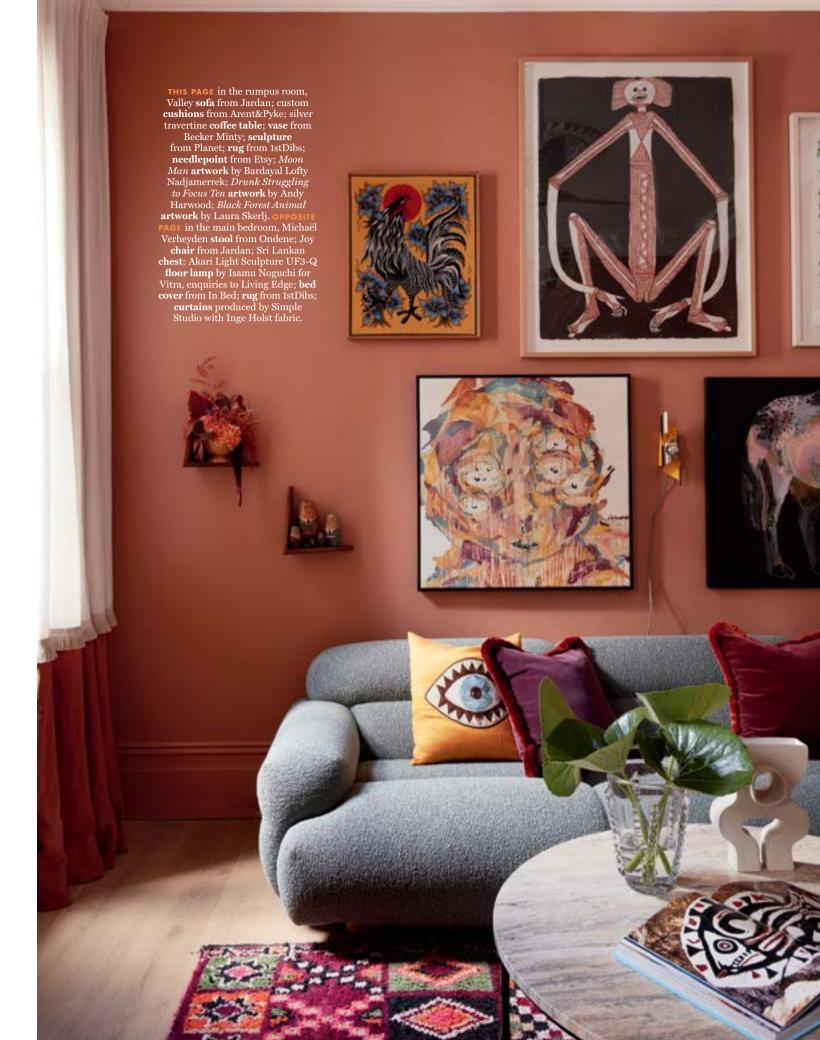
While the addition is startlingly different from the Gothic Revival front, it also pays homage to it. The extension embraces sweeping curves — a Rosselli trademark — in the vaulted living room ceiling, the fireplace wall, an arched kitchen window and the sinuous staircase. On the rear external wall, a curve sweeps into a cantilever. "It expands in the direction of the garden. I wanted that columnfree link," he says. Earthy formwork concrete in a Rosselli rosa hue echoes the textured render on the street side, while the arched window suggests the bay at the front.

The interiors were a collaboration, with Rosselli focusing mainly on the spatial aspects and Arent Squadrito on materials and furnishings, but with a toing and froing between both them and the owners. "The client was interested in how the house would make her feel, how it would engage the senses," says Arent Squadrito. "Our brief was modern but timeless, uncluttered but cosy, with drama in the materials and colour," adds the owner.

But that drama never sacrifices intimacy. With its oak panelling and rich hues, the original section is an exercise in colour and texture, but the palette at the rear is more neutral and often »









« moodier, while texture rules here, too, with a fluted marble kitchen island framed by inky-blue timber joinery, a caramel marble splashback and salmon pink terrazzo underfoot.

"Everything's matt, soft and muted, creating an earthiness that ties in with the concrete and brise-soleils," says Arent Squadrito. "It makes the kitchen feel part of the furniture, while glossy grey travertine in the bathrooms creates contrast for added interest." And crafted detail pervades, right down to the dressing room with its signature Faye Toogood wallpaper on its wardrobe doors.

Furnishings included statement splurges such as a squishy Edra sofa and a hefty Collection Particulière dining table. The owners specified a modular sofa for the living room to give the family space to relax, its rounded asymmetry emulating Rosselli's curves.

The couple's collection of bold artworks flows throughout, such as a Sri Lankan wall sconce made of, yes, screwdrivers near the front door. "It makes it a richer, more robust story when the clients bring in personal objects that we can weave in," says Arent Squadrito.

"Vintage rugs were among the first items we sourced with Arent&Pyke," adds the owner. "The other elements and colours fell into place after that. We went with our gut — whether we absolutely loved a particular rug or Murano pendant light and whether it would make us feel happy and inspired to have it in our home."

That dialogue between the wow and the cosy throughout is worlds away from the starchy formality of the bungalow's distant past. "We considered a bigger renovation, but we're so glad we didn't," says the owner. "We use every room every day, with no wasted space."

"The clients wanted an intimate house, favouring materiality over square metres," adds Arent Squadrito. "While there's an openness at the back, there's also a fabulous soft, inward quality." $\ensuremath{\mathsf{VL}}$ $\underline{arentpyke.com\ luigirosselli.com}$



