

By VIRGINIA JEN Photographed by ANSON SMART

DIAMANTE BRILLIANTE

A **DETAIL-DRIVEN** renovation gives this elevated *Sydney* waterfront home a refreshed aesthetic and new life as a **COVETED JEWEL** in YSG's residential *crown*.

This page in the living area of this Mosman home, **cabinetry** designed by YSG and produced by Winchester Interiors in poplar burl with bronzed mirror and custom handles; **shelves** designed by YSG and produced by Élan; **stools** from Spence & Lyda; **6/10/11 artwork** by Ry David Bradley from Sullivan+Strumpf. *Details, last pages.*



These pages in another view of the living area from the dining area, BassamFellows Asymmetric sofa from Living Edge; Prime Time lounge chair from Great Dane; Martyn Thompson cushion and vintage String vases (on shelves) from Studio Alm; shelves designed by YSG and produced by Élan; wall panel in Nero Tumbled Natural Stone mosaic tiles from Bisanna Tiles; Foscarini Gioia Grande wall lamp in Pink from Space Furniture; Davide Groppi Nero Opaco pendant light from Dedec; vintage ceramic vase (by fireplace) and ceramic horse sculpture from Rudi Rocket; Transitory Vessel #5 glass vase (on shelf) by Liam Fleming from Sabbia Gallery; curtain produced by Simple Studio in Designs of the Time Manipi linen from James Dunlop Textiles; Boucher x Fragonard x NASA artwork by Sam Leach from Sullivan+Strumpf.



This page in the entry to the living area, **stairs** in Smoke timber floorboards from Antique Floors; **window** designed by YSG and produced by Promena Projects in Poesia Neutral and Poesia Golden Amber glass bricks; **railing** designed by YSG and produced by Promena Projects. *Opposite page* in the office, **cabinetry** designed by YSG and produced by Élan; **Disc Surface Mount wall light** in Pistachio/Reed Green from In Common With; *Meeting Time artwork* by Barbara Cleveland from Sullivan+Strumpf.



These pages in the dining and kitchen zone, dining table designed by YSG and produced by Élan; Arflex Elettra chairs from Space Furniture; island designed by YSG and produced by Mediterranean Marble in Brushed Magnesia stone from Artedomus and Nero Tumbled Natural Stone mosaic tiles from Bisanna Tiles with Poesia Aquamarine glass brick inset; screen designed by YSG and produced by Promena Projects in Poesia Smokey Quartz glass bricks; Cast floor lamp from Asaf Weinbroom; Iva bar stool from Grazia&co; vintage glass bowl from Rudi Rocket; Ginger glass tumbler in Sepia from Jardan; vintage black ceramic vase (on benchtop) from Studio Alm; Lunar Reflections artwork by Bettina Willner from Saint Cloche. In the alfresco area beyond, Andreu World cement Reverse table from Ke-Zu; Woven Chair Scene dining chairs in Purple/Brown Check from Studio Alm.



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ft-identified as the hub of the home, the kitchen may be a hustle-bustle zone but the beating heart within it is the island. It's where all the action takes place, where life gathers and flows. But in the case of designer Yasmine Ghoniem's latest residential project, a three-storey harbourside property in Sydney's Mosman three years in the making, it's emblematic of the scale of the dwelling's considered, refined and boundary-pushing renovation — but more on the specifics of this standout piece later.

The potential for the waterfront family home warranted dramatic spatial rethinking and structural re-imagining from its cookie-cutter '90s coastal aesthetic to something more heightened, layered and interesting. "We wanted to completely flip that narrative," says Ghoniem. The homeowners had specified inspiration from boutique hotels, a line of thinking that the designer has translated into a warm spirit of hospitality in this ambitious everyday retreat. "For me, still, when I go to a hotel, I get giddy because it's not home, and there's always something beautiful about it whether it's lighting or proportions," says Ghoniem over the phone from Bali, where the ever-busy creative is overseeing a project among several abroad. "What's attractive about hospitality is that sense of being comfortable and casual in a refined space. It's all about setting the scene for immediate relaxation, and the embrace of home as soon as you step in."

Of course, the now cool, calm and collected atmosphere of the Sydney home is at complete odds with how it came to be. "The project was incredibly tricky," says Ghoniem. "We had this very disjointed series of little rooms separating views between areas on that middle level. It was just a massive extension of the living space." Enjoying such a premium position and making the most of this enviable vantage point demanded a substantial and expensive change in the floor plan, something that was an undertaking from that start. "It took a lot of convincing, although the clients loved the idea," says the designer. Internal space was given back to the balcony to expand the alfresco entertaining area and utilise the formerly neglected barbecue zone. Partition walls were also swapped for steel posts worked into architecturally minded feature elements to further open up the home to its picture-perfect outlook. "Without removing them, it probably wouldn't have been worth doing the renovation at all," she says. Opening up the space also allowed more sunlight in, with a glass brick wall in the kitchen and dining area filtering this light, separated by sleek blue struts in a nod to the sea beyond.

And then there is that island. This is no mere paint-by-numbers piece, of course, masterminded by someone best known for her instinctive expression of tone and materiality. Ghoniem could have easily created "an all-in-one form, but I felt like I wouldn't be doing that space justice," she says of the impressive plinth crafted in leathered quartzite with a tumbled stone mosaic feature. "I dislike islands where you sit and cook at the same time, so I always like to try and separate those functions, because I feel like people then use those spaces more. They're intended just for one task, purely just for someone to sit and enjoy a cup of tea while talking to somebody cooking."

In a confident showcase of her sixth-sense understanding of colour and texture, Ghoniem connected the two island zones with "a poppy turquoise and we inserted glass blocks in the middle as a fun way to hold oils and sauces for the cooking station". Surrounding jacarandas informed the hero hue in the lounge section of the living area. Bringing in such tonal elements has echoes of a traditional Milanese apartment, where each feature makes a statement yet somehow fits seamlessly into the overall scheme. The glass element also lends levity to the island's visual weight, while linking it to the glass brick wall. It's a gesture demonstrating how Ghoniem never loses sight of the whole, no matter how focused she is on the detail.

"I love texture, it's an important part of palettes," says the designer. "And I kind of start backwards. I look at all the materials first and then figure out how I'm going to apply them." This finely tuned blending of tonal palette with character plays earthy in the middle living level, to bold in the lower level — home to a rumpus room, laundry, guest quarters, office and cellar — while the upper main suite revels in a lighter selection of pure sand and plaster shades, recalling the home's coastal contemporary style in a heightened, tactile way.

Reworking the internal envelope by unpicking the seams, marking new hemlines and creating a fresh narrative thread determined the project's new direction and philosophy. "The main area and the way it was spaced and planned is probably my favourite in the home," says Ghoniem. "What I love more than anything, more than details or textures or overall aesthetics, is if somebody uses a space they didn't use before, then I've done my job. The reworking of the plan allowed every inch of it to be used in a very effective way. As hard as this project was, it was worth every push." ■ *ysg.studio*

This page in another view of the office, custom-finished desk designed by YSG; vintage lamp from Studio Alm; Tall Pod vase, Small White 2 Footed Pod vase and Large Green 2 Footed Pod vase, all by Emma Young, *Devil Head sculpture* (on desk) and Japanese ceramic plate, all from The DEA Store; teacup from Spence & Lyda; Hello Sonia! rug by Studiopepe for Cc-tapis from Mobilia.





This page in the landing of the upper main suite, La Caravane Kungbo wallpaper in Le fruit d'un Savoir Faire from Elitis; **cabinetry** designed by YSG and produced by Winchester Interiors. *Opposite page* in the powder room, **vanity** designed by YSG and produced by Mediterranean Marble in honed Tiberio stone from Artedomus; vintage **mirror** from Studio Alm; New Assemble Dial **tapware** in Tuscan Bronze from Astra Walker; Leo Joinery Pull **towel rail** in Antique Brass from Pittella; **wall and floor** in Tumbled Rosso Travertine from Bisanna Tiles; *Sunrise Nightfall* **sculpture** by Bettina Willner from Saint Cloche.





This page in the main suite lounge area, **banquette** designed by YSG and produced by Rematerialised in Métaphores Arundo Roseaux fabric from Boyac and Tessellate fabric in Ivory/Beige from Kelly Wearstler, enquiries to Becker Minty; **cushion** (on left) from Spence & Lyda; Joaquim **side table** from Stylecraft; **sheer curtain** produced by Simple Studio in Designs of the Time Guarani linen from James Dunlop Textiles; **blockout curtain** produced by Simple Studio in Mokum Satori Stonewash in Nude from James Dunlop Textiles. *Opposite page* in the main bedroom, Flocca linen **bedhead** in Brun from Hale Mercantile Co.; **bedside table** produced by Mediterranean Marble in honed Verde Bardini stone from Artedomus; PSL **handle** in Blackened Bronze by Studio Henry Wilson; Viabizzuno Roy **wall light** from VBO Australia; Goodmoods **table lamp** from Studio Alm; Ce-tapis Orizzonti **rug** in Dune from Mobilia; ceramic **dish** by Kazuhiro Fukushima from The DEA Store; *Aardwolf sculpture* (on shelf) by Georgia Harvey from Saint Cloche. Builder Promena Projects. *Details, last pages.*