

BEAUTY IN BESPOKE

Camilla Wagstaff takes a tour of a Pymont apartment that conveys contemporary sophistication. Interiors by **Arent & Pyke**.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM FERGUSON





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JULIETTE ARENT

OPPOSITE PAGE: Bespoke furniture coupled with contemporary art enliven the space. The large feature artwork is entitled: *High Anxiety* by Kate Banazi (hand pulled multiple layered silkscreen on paper). THIS PAGE, TOP: A framed Tracey Emin print entitled: *Love is a Strange Thing*, sits on the custom designed desk. OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: In the main bedroom, custom screen with De Gournay willow wallpaper from Migate is placed as a bespoke feature wall. Lighting by Atelier Areti. Featured bamboo chaise: Cassina Tokyo chaise by Cult design. OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP RIGHT: At the entry way guests are greeted by the Apollo mirror by Ben & Aja Blanc and a custom built hall table. OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: Pendant lights by Ke-Zu, table by Dedece and chairs by DeDeCe knoll studio.

The professional couple that call this inner-city Sydney apartment home knew their space was in serious need of an update. The bones were no doubt there – three bedrooms, a spacious living area, plenty of light and views of Sydney Harbour – but the dark carpet and university-day furnishings not only lacked lustre, they didn’t reflect the couple’s vivacious and style.

It was time to create their grown-up space, one that brought together the couple’s gutsy eclecticism with contemporary sophistication. It was a challenge lauded interior designers **Juliette Arent** and **Sarah-Jane Pyke** were made for.

“Essentially, they needed to reconcile their home with their present life,” says Arent from her Surry Hills design studio. “They knew they wanted a home that felt them, but didn’t know how to start.”

Arent and Pyke first spent time getting to know the couple, understanding what their home truly meant to them. They discovered that a sense authenticity was just as important to their clients as the functionality of the space. The couple wanted their home to be a genuine embodiment of their life together; a life of collecting, art, travel and experience.

“We went on to create a home that reflected the expansive life experiences they’ve had,” says Arent. The resulting space teams an existing collection of art and key furnishings with new bespoke and contemporary pieces that, overall, feel like a cohesive assemblage gathered over a period of time.

Key to this process was the placement of art pieces throughout the space. Arent and Pyke moved pieces around the apartment so they and the clients could get a feel for how specific pieces felt in spaces, and where they felt most at home.

This is a good habit to get into when introducing new pieces to your space, suggests Arent. “Once you bring it home, move it about rooms just leaning it up against the wall and live with it in different locations prior to putting holes in the wall.” What you’re looking for is an emotional reaction; it might be a case of love at first sight, or you might find it grows on you more slowly over time.

“Artwork is always critical to a person’s home as this is the crux of their personality,” Arent continues. “We often lead clients to discovering artists, but it always has to be a piece that gives them an emotional response.” Brimming with sculptural form and colour, the artwork in this home helps to inform and complete the overall gutsy interior. Intentionally, there is no common thematic or fashion palette, but there is a tonal harmony about the interior that speaks to a natural evolution and individuality.

This harmony is epitomised in the master bedroom, the perfect sanctuary and Arent’s favourite room in the house. “Our client fell in love with the Cassina Tokyo Chaise both for a visual aspect and for comfort,” she says. The combination of the chaise, the De La Espada Laurel side table, the De Gournay oriental screen and the Atelier Areti Epic pendant light create a serene focal point that calms and soothes.

A vibrant embroidered wool work by an unknown artist above the side table that adds an interesting counterpoint to the dreamy scene. The couple picked up the back in their Uni days, making it the oldest in their collection and a real favourite. By matching the work with the more soothing elements in the room, the overall space becomes harmonious in its points of difference, cohesive in its contrasts.

Light streams into the combined living dining space, where cohesive contrasts again reign supreme. There’s a sense of play here, from the Vitra dolls sitting pretty on the custom marble window seat under a pair of brass Buddies wall lights, to the dynamic Paul Smith Split Bright rug, to the ash and white paper Stellarworks Kyoto floor lamp.

Kate Banazi’s hand-pulled multi layered silkscreen on paper titled *High Anxiety* becomes a focal point in the space, where it’s loosely paired with a blue metal sculpture that echoes tactility and form while being entirely distinctive in its own right. No single thread connects or matches the pieces together; rather, their materiality is used to define space and aesthetic.

Overall, what Arent and Pyke have done here is created a fresh, contemporary space that speaks to the personal journey of the owners. Through their considered placement of key artworks, furnishings and finishes, a house becomes a home; a home that reflects a lifetime of collecting.

