

Words JUDY PASCOE Photography ANSON SMART Styling CLAIRE DELMAR

Pastoral scene



This page The home enjoys a wonderful sense of openness. In the family dining area, a Studioilse for De La Espada 'Settle' bench and 'Together' table both from Spence & Lyda are paired with a 'No. 811 Hoffmann' chair from Thonet. Three artworks by Lucy Culliton hang above an Austrian serpentine oak commode from 1stdibs with a 'Shogun' lamp from Artemide. Vase from Studio ALM. Custom banquette window seat by Arent&Pyke with bespoke cushion in Lelièvre 'Tropical' fabric with Inge Holst brush fringe. **Opposite page** Restful views of the lake and surrounding landscape devised by Paul Bangay are enjoyed from all rooms of the house but especially from the wide verandahs furnished with a Sika Design 'Paris' rattan armchair from Domo.

Rich colour and a judicious mix of furniture create a brilliant contemporary take on a traditional country-house aesthetic in this regional NSW home.





This page An artwork by Lucy Culliton, *Tristan Honey and Denise*, sets the bucolic scene in the entry, positioned above a custom ottoman covered in sheepskin by Arent&Pyke. The Urban Electric Co. 'Urban Smokebell' glass pendant light in polished nickel illuminates the setting. **Opposite page, from top** The kitchen and family dining area is the busy hub of the house. The kitchen cabinetry painted in Dulux 'Briar' references the landscape, complemented by a Calacatta Vagli Oro marble benchtop from Artedomus. Vibia 'Flamingo' pendant lights from Koda Lighting add their delicate shape to the scheme. 'Dita' bar stools from Grazia&Co. Studioilse for De La Espada 'Together' table and 'Settle' bench from Spence & Lyda with 'No. 811 Hoffmann' chair from Thonet. In the powder room, a vintage mirror sits above a custom vanity by Arent&Pyke with 'Esmeralda' marble top. 'Nyhavn' wall sconces from The Urban Electric Co. Vase from Planet.

Bold and surprising, yet calm and serene” is a wonderfully evocative description for this house set on a generous parcel of land in regional NSW. It belies its new-build status with its traditional appearance of homestead-style lines and wide verandahs gently resting on a slight rise overlooking a lake. Inside, the generous proportions and considered interior design ensure a comfortable and sophisticated experience for the owners and their frequent guests.

For their weekender and holiday home for extended family, the owners were keen to create a different mood from their contemporary Sydney residence. Juliette Arent and Sarah-Jane Pyke, principals of interior design studio Arent&Pyke, along with landscaper Paul Bangay, were engaged early in the building process, ensuring a synchronicity between the interior and exterior.

“It is a very different sensibility creating a country home,” says Sarah-Jane. “The greatest luxury now is time and there is the sense in the country of being unhurried. You want the house to function brilliantly – to work hard and feel effortless so living there feels really easy.”

There is also the luxury of space and never-ending views of the surrounding landscape and this property has that in spades. The five-bedroom, seven-bathroom home has a linear layout surrounded by verandahs and is on one level except where it pops up at one end to accommodate two extra bedrooms. With expansive living spaces and a cross-section housing the generously sized master bedroom it has “a sprawling character”, says Sarah-Jane. »

This page A dramatic work by Ben Quilty is a highlight in the dining room furnished with a Neri&Hu 'Shaker' table in oak and Hans J Wegner 'Wishbone' chairs from Cult. An elegant Rubn 'Long John 5' pendant light from Fred International helps to create an intimate mood. Egyptian silk rug from Armadillo. Vase from Planet. Vintage Murano glass vase from Arent&Pyke. **Opposite page** The formal living room is positioned to capture the afternoon sun that bathes it in a wonderful golden glow. A custom sofa by Arent&Pyke is paired with a 'Fat Tulip' sofa by Adam Goodrum from Cult. Custom cushions by Arent&Pyke. Vintage rug from 1stdibs. Artwork by Ben Quilty.



« “There is a real sense of openness,” she says. “We weren’t trying to blur the lines between indoor and out, but rather to create an element of cocooning inside. The climate is harsher than Sydney and colder, so while there are French doors from each room opening onto the verandah, there’s a more distinctive indoor outdoor relationship with visual access to the garden from everywhere.”

Expansive spaces call for expansive gestures and the chance to create something bold and different was exploited. As the build was delayed, the designer and client relationship grew. “The schemes became more daring,” says Sarah-Jane. Between design intent and execution the client became more confident and the call was made to “explore colour”. The kitchen, originally designed to be white, took on a greeny-black hue with cabinetry painted in Dulux ‘Briar’. But it is in the master bedroom where depth of colour really reigns supreme. Because of the scale of the room the

designers were able to employ richness in colour, detail and elegant layering. With the lavish de Gournay ‘L’Eden’ wallpaper as a starting point they selected one of the dominant hues – a deep blue – to paint the remainder of the room. The result is dramatic yet calming. “We could have pulled any colour from the wallpaper – such as ochre or mustard – but the room gets a lot of light so it would have become a big, beautiful glowing box. Instead we wanted to create a calm and meditative feel,” says Sarah-Jane.

The bedroom’s cosy sitting area, stone fireplace and bathtub set into a bay window speak to the luxury of time the owners allow themselves in the country. “There is the sense that here you can enjoy those things,” explains Sarah-Jane. “The house is doing the hard work so everything else feels easy.”

Furniture and finishes play into the easy living approach with a mix of pieces selected to look as if they have been >



These pages, from left With no neighbours in sight and a sweeping landscape of more than 15 hectares laid out for viewing, the home feels intensely peaceful and connected to nature. In the formal living room an artwork by Ben Quilty presides over the setting that includes a custom sofa by Arent&Pyke and a 'Fat Tulip' sofa by Adam Goodrum from Cult on a vintage rug from 1stdibs. Ercol 'Easy' chairs from Salbini upholstered in Dedar 'Karakorum' fabric. Custom bronze coffee table with stone top by Daniel Barbera.



This page The master bedroom suite exudes a meditative calm with the large bathtub set into a bay window affording restful views of the countryside. Kelly Wearstler 'Melange' flush-mounted light from Bloomingdales above the bath. Walls painted in Dulux 'Hatstand' complement the de Gournay 'L'Eden' wallpaper behind the bed. Opposite page, clockwise from top left The sitting area underlines the luxury of time the owners enjoy in their country home. Custom daybed in Chivasso 'Stonewashed' linen with Gubi 'Sejour' armchairs from Cult. 'Tolomeo' floor lamp from Artemide. Apparatus 'Triad' pendant light from Criteria. Miniforms 'Soda' glass side tables in Petrol Green and Amber from Design Nation. Artwork by Amanda Parer. Custom bedside tables and bedhead in rust-coloured velvet. Apparatus 'Lariat' wall sconce from Criteria. Society Limonta bedlinen from Ondene. Ceramics from The DEA Store. The mud room, an essential part of a country house, has custom cabinetry painted in Taubmans 'Saxby Blue' with the wall panel in 'Shindig'. 'Alchemy' hooks from The Society Inc. Leather handles from MadeMeasure.



« accumulated over many years. “If an interior is too stitched up and perfect it can feel a bit restrictive,” says Sarah-Jane. So vintage chests of drawers and timber tables from auction houses sit alongside iconic designs such as the Ercol ‘Easy’ chairs as well as contemporary and bespoke pieces. “That gives it the lovely feeling that it didn’t all just arrive today – that it has grown up over time,” adds Sarah-Jane. “It also gives the clients permission to switch things around and add to it. You need a mix – a bit old, a bit new, a bit contemporary and a bit classic – to make it a more natural and comfortable space to be in.”

The owners had been collecting art for the house for years and the selection includes very apropos pieces, such as an oil depicting fat, contented pigs, *Tristan Honey and Denise* by renowned Australian artist Lucy Culliton. A substantial work by Ben Quilty that hangs in the dining room needed a wall built specially for it and informed the selection of the pared-back Neri&Hu ‘Shaker’ table, Hans J Wegner ‘Wishbone’ chairs and slim Rubn ‘Long John 5’ pendant light to create an intimate mood in the voluminous space.

Not forgotten in the scheme was a playful element and the designers referenced the classic country trope of tartan and chequerboard with the tiling in the bathrooms – all variations on a plaid theme, underlining the house’s inherent joyful spirit.

The owner had requested a “timeless country home that captured both sunlight and landscape views in every room” and the house could not be more true to the brief. “Through the design process it became much more than that. I fell in love with the design aesthetic before the build was even complete – it’s bold and surprising yet still feels calm and serene,” she says. #

Arent&Pyke: Interiors Beyond the Primary Palette (*Thames & Hudson, \$80*) is on sale now. arentpyke.com; paulbangay.com



SPEED READ

» A new build in regional NSW, this country house has a joyful and considered interior design scheme conceived by Arent&Pyke principals, Juliette Arent and Sarah-Jane Pyke. » With its traditional homestead appearance and wide verandahs, the house has a timeless appeal, echoed inside in its expansive rooms that seamlessly connect via French doors with the garden created by Paul Bangay. » A mix of vintage, iconic, contemporary and bespoke pieces lend unique character complemented by dramatic artworks collected over time by the owners. » Bold colour has been used judiciously throughout from the green-black of the kitchen cabinetry to the deep blue of the serene master bedroom suite.



This page, clockwise from top left The guest ensuite has a custom mirror and vanity by Arent&Pyke with joinery in Resene 'Shabby Chic'. Brodware 'Manhattan' wall mixer in brushed chrome. Original BTC 'Hector' wall light from Dunlin. Floor in Microtiles 'Plaid' in custom design from Di Lorenzo. Matte-white ceramic wall tiles from Teranova. Ian Monty cedar stool from Oliver Thom. *Hydrangea #2* artwork by Guido Maestri. Walk-in robe in multicoloured Arabescato honed marble and walnut. The master ensuite has floor tiles in Popham Design 'Hex Thirds' from Onsite and handmade ceramic wall tiles from Di Lorenzo. Artwork by Linda Keough. The stairway leads to two extra bedrooms. Sika Design 'Franco Albin' ottoman from Domo. Santa & Cole 'Cesta' table lamp from Mobilia on chest of drawers. Artwork by Mandy Hunniford. **Opposite page** The guest bedroom has a linen bedhead from Hale Mercantile Co. Society Limonta bedlinen from Ondene and Maison de Vacances cushion from Tigger Hall Design. GamFratesi 'Yuh' wall light from Cult.



MAKE NO MISTAKE, winner of Best Work with Colour Arent & Pyke plays a trick on us all. The interiors emit joy, comfort and whimsy and we believe it to be easily won. In fact, on close inspection, said interiors are carefully orchestrated as colours weave across a room, proportions are exacting and pattern meets texture in ways that soothe rather than jar. We are all seduced. The Legato House (see page 58) is a prime example of this melding with cross cultural references, from mid-century Scandinavian to Japanese minimalism and classic Mediterranean all represented to create something quintessentially Australian in this NSW Central Coast home. The emphasis on quality materials and craft often allows the natural tones of the selections to speak for themselves as peachy terrazzo and rich green marble play out in a balance with golden timbers, moody toned tiles and hard-wearing leathers. What Arent & Pyke understands about colour is the effectiveness of nuanced layers and an appreciation of how different materials contribute to the interior conversation. The end result never shouts but neither does it whisper – the timbre is always just right. *arentpyke.com*



INTERIOR DESIGN AWARDS
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Juliette Arent and Sarah-Jane Pyke

Photography JEM CRESSWELL

ARENT & PYKE