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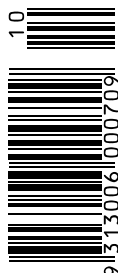
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# STORY TIME



With a palette that takes cues from eight-year-old twins' favourite hues, this house is a delight for adults and kids alike.

STORY *Carli Philips* | STYLING *Jade Lee Martin* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Armelle Habib*



**EXTERIOR** Twins Olivia (left) and Lucia sit on a Fermob 'Louisiane' bench from Classic with a Twist. Exterior painted Dulux Fair Bianca Half with Dulux Vivid White trims. Front door in Porter's Paints Plum Haze. Checkerboard stone floor tiles in Almada and Carrara, KWD & Co. Darlana wall lantern, The Montauk Lighting Co. Pietro Stoneware 'Anduze' urns, Kellock Pots & Planters.






“The house had character and we could see the potential.”

TENNILLE LAFORNARA, HOMEOWNER





A photograph of a family of four in a modern sitting room. A woman stands in the center, smiling, wearing a white tank top and blue jeans. To her left, a young girl sits on a patterned sofa, wearing a colorful floral dress. To her right, a man sits on the same sofa, wearing a white t-shirt and dark jeans, looking at the girl. Another young girl stands next to him, also in a floral dress. The room features a large window with a patterned curtain, a large abstract painting on the wall, and a patterned rug.

When they bought their home in 2013, Tennille Lafornera, a workers' compensation manager, and her husband Rob, the owner of fruit and vegetable wholesaler Bellarine Fresh, promptly leased it out with a view to renovating down the track.

Swayed by the prized location in Geelong, Tennille confesses that in hindsight, they likely had blinkers on when it came to the amount of work the property needed. "The house had character and we could see the potential, but I don't think we really envisaged the time and effort it was going to take to restore and update a period home, especially since Rob would be doing the building while working," she says.

The couple were right to worry they may have bitten off more than they could chew: it seemed everything needed to be touched, from ►

**SITTING ROOM** Olivia, Tennille, Rob and Lucia. Custom-upholstered Diane Bergeron sofa from Arthur G. Lotus artwork by Christopher Vine. Twin Border rug, Lucy Montgomery x Cadrys. Banquette upholstered in Lewis & Wood 'Tribal Kudu'. Bach blanket, Città. Ralph Lauren 'Marin Weave' wallpaper in Muted Lavender. Walls and pressed-metal ceiling painted Porter's Paints Rain Cloud; fire surround painted Porter's Paints Rococo. KWD 'Preston' armchairs upholstered in GP&J Baker 'Wild Things'. Qeeboo 'Turtle Carry' coffee table, Mr and Mrs Designer. Wave coupes, Fazeek. Aerin 'Cristol' tiered pendant, The Montauk Lighting Co. Parquetry tray table, round tray with handle and Meteor bowl, all Cromwell.





## THE PALETTE

Porter's Paints Rain Cloud  
(sitting room)

Porter's Paints Rococo  
(study)

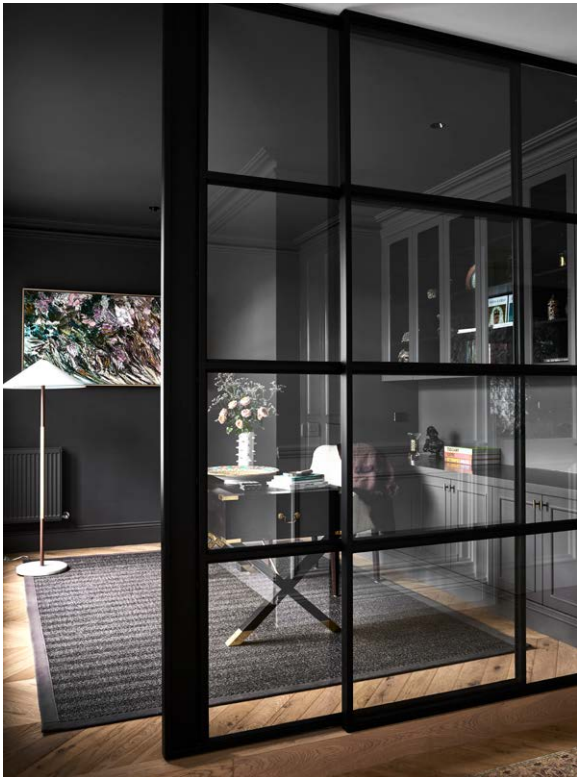
Porter's Paints Bayleaf  
(guest room)



“The hard finishes were specified first, with the owner firmly fixed on featuring New York marble in the kitchen.” KATE WALKER, INTERIOR DESIGNER



**KITCHEN/DINING** Kelly Wearstler 'Precision' pendant lights (over island) and Ralph Lauren Home 'Rivington' billiard pendant (over dining table), all The Montauk Lighting Co. Tapware, Brodware. Moroccan tamegroute bowl, Greenhouse Interiors. Murano glass bubble vase, Rachel Donath (right). Lily counter stools, Classic with a Twist. Oven, Ilve. Cooktop, Pitt Cooking. Splashback in New York marble, benchtops in Negresco quartzite and Chevron engineered-European oak flooring, all KWD & Co. Pot plant, Kellocks Pots & Planters. Custom dining chairs upholstered in Schumacher 'Mini Leopard' fabric, available from Grant Dorman. Custom parquetry dining table. Oscar vase and Clifton console, both Boyd Blue. Table lamps (on sideboard), Florabelle. Gold candle, Trudon. *Picnic at Heide (Study)* artwork by Dani McKenzie. ►



replacing window frames to restoring heritage details and adding suitable, site-specific fixtures and fittings.

When design studio KWD popped up on Tennille's Instagram feed, she was instantly smitten with the firm's use of hard finishes, but Rob was hesitant to engage someone. "He straight up said no, but eventually, and reluctantly, I managed to drag him along to a meeting. Once we engaged KWD, our dreams grew and we asked the firm to design bespoke furniture, too."

For the interior palette, KWD took cues from Tennille and Rob's eight-year-old twin daughters, Olivia and Lucia, introducing their favourite pinks and purples. "Their bedrooms were the start of the colour story so we wove those hues throughout the house in various tones," says interior designer Kate Walker, director of KWD. "Upstairs, these shades are playful and childlike; downstairs they are carried through in a more sophisticated way. We didn't hold back - we saturated spaces head-to-toe with coloured wallpaper, paint and tiles. We committed to it."

Running along the left side of the house is a fern-green guest room followed by a mauve sitting room. Across the hall, a few rooms were combined to form a hotel-like main bedroom suite with an interconnected bedroom, wardrobe and ensuite. While she loves it now, the hummingbird wallpaper had a hesitant Tennille messaging Kate in the middle of the night. "I was really nervous about it but she encouraged us to just run with it, and we're so glad we did - it's very special," says Tennille. "We had lots of male tradies walking through saying how much they loved the delicate, feminine detail."

The last room of the original house - the main bathroom - features more subdued finishes to function as a "palette cleanser", says Kate. ►

**STUDY** This page Joinery and walls painted Porter's Paints Rococo. Artwork by Katie Wyatt. Campaign desk, Stuart Membery Home. Desk lamp, Lighting Collective. Vase, Greenhouse Interiors. Verona chair, Xavier Furniture. Rug, KWD & Co. **STAIRWELL** Custom stair runner, KWD & Co. Walls painted Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter. Wellington mirror and demilune console, both Cromwell. Vase (left) by Studio Mulders, Pépité. **GUESTROOM** Walls painted Porter's Paints Bayleaf. Bedhead in GP&J Baker 'Nymphes', Elliott Clarke. Luxor Guava cushions, Walter G. Studio VC 'Aspen' console lamp, The Montauk Lighting Co. **MAIN BATHROOM** Carrara marble floor tiles and benchtop, and Cambridge subway tiles, all KWD & Co. Joinery painted Porter's Paints Leadon. Aged Brass handles and knobs, Domino Brass. Murano glass vase, eModerno. Hand towel, Loom Towels. Tapware, Brodware. Wall mirror, Surrounding. Kate Spade 'Leighton' sconces, The Montauk Lighting Co. **HALLWAY** Lucia arranges some garden-fresh roses. Console and Milo vase, both Cromwell. *The Kiss* artwork by Dani McKenzie. Afghan Bamyar runner, Cadrys.

"We didn't hold back - we saturated spaces head-to-toe with coloured wallpaper, paint and tiles." KATE WALKER, INTERIOR DESIGNER





HOUSES **H&G**











**MAIN BEDROOM** Tennille and Olivia on the benchseat. Cole & Son 'Hummingbirds' Duckegg wallpaper. Custom curtains in Kyoto fabric and Manhattan carpet in Pewter, both KWD & Co. Custom ottoman in Colefax and Fowler 'Biot'. The original pressed-metal ceiling was restored. Aerin 'Mollino' chandelier, The Montauk Lighting Co. Slope-arm swivel chair covered in Brugge Cornflower fabric. Custom cushions on the bed in Cole & Son 'Hummingbirds', Icon Radford. Bedside chest, Bywater. Existing table lamps. Bedhead upholstered in Alhambra 'Aspen III' fabric. ►







At the end of the hall is a new glass-enclosed study, its orientation allowing whoever is at the desk to keep an eye on the kids in the swimming pool straight ahead. A left turn at the end of the corridor opens into a long, open-plan kitchen/dining/family area. While the extension absorbed most of the backyard and takes up the majority of the block, Tennille and Rob weren't too concerned as there's still a front garden, an oval at one end of the street and a park two doors up.

For the home's more traditional touchpoints, Kate was inspired by London's luxurious Firmedale Hotels, where the interiors by Kit Kemp feature eclectic mixes of patterned textiles and upholstery. In contrast, the kitchen has a more masculine appearance with monochrome finishes and an abundance of New York marble, the only material Tennille and Rob were wedded to. "The hard finishes were specified first, with the owner firmly fixed on featuring New York marble in the kitchen," says Kate. "Functionality was a priority, so generous storage meant a butler's pantry wasn't necessary – especially as they mainly store fresh produce Rob brings home from work."

Perforated-metal pendant lights and steel-framed doors leading to the patio add a touch of the industrial. Behind the meals area is a shared mudroom and powder room featuring a geometric tiled floor in sharp shades of pink.

The new upstairs addition was created especially for Olivia and Lucia, with bedrooms and glossy strawberry-pink tiled ensuites for each. "The colour schemes resonate with our children and every room speaks to us," says Tennille. "This house totally represents our family and there's not a thing I would change."

*KWD, Mount Martha, Victoria; (03) 5974 1800, [katwalkerdesign.com.au](http://katwalkerdesign.com.au) or [kwdandco.com.au](http://kwdandco.com.au).*

**MUDROOM** *This page* Pentagon floor tiles and Bianco Gloss wall tiles, KWD & Co. Tapware, Brodware. Towel, Sheridan. Joinery hardware, Domino Brass. Bench seat upholstered in Hanami 'Guava Linen'. Towel hook, Brodware. **LUCIA'S BEDROOM** *Opposite top left* Schumacher 'Minerva' wallpaper in Plaid Pink. Bedhead in Anna Spiro 'Camona'. Metro quilt cover, Bed Bath N' Table. Kensington throw, Temple & Webster. Asahi So bud vase, Craft Victoria. *Morning Routine* artwork by Jackie Anderson, Greenhouse Interiors. **GIRLS' BATHROOM** *Opposite, top right and bottom left* Picasso Blush wall tiles, Carrara marble floor tiles and Cristallo Pink quartzite vanity top, all KWD & Co. Blossom Wave towels, Loom Towels. Tapware, Brodware. Ferm Living 'Apple' basket and Asili soapstone vessel, both Designstuff. Custom joinery by Farmer's Doors. Aged brass knobs, Domino Brass. Julie Neill 'Alberto' sconce, The Montauk Lighting Co. Custom mirror. **OLIVIA'S BEDROOM** *Opposite, bottom right* Bedhead in Anna Spiro 'Flora' fabric in Summer's Day. Metro quilt cover, Bed Bath N' Table. Kensington throw, Temple & Webster. The bedside table and lamp are part of the family's existing collection. Steph Woods bud vase and *Sprezzatura* artwork by Leanne Daquino, both Greenhouse Interiors.



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## THIS IS THE LIFE

"It sounds corny but this project has seen Rob and I fall in love all over again," says Tennille. "It has brought life back to our family and relationship. The sitting room is so beautiful that every time I go past, I eye it off. Many people ask whether we use it because it looks quite sophisticated, but many nights after the kids go to sleep we have a drink in there. It's our spot."

**POOL AREA** Gunmetal Blue mosaic pool tiles and Amora limestone pavers, KWD & Co. Fermob 'Luxembourg' low table and low armchair, Tectona '1800' dining armchairs and dining table, all Classic with a Twist. Dinosaur Designs vase, Greenhouse Interiors. Halle wall lantern, The Montauk Lighting Co.