

Designer living

The living area of the terrace has an abundance of natural light and bright splashes of colour. OPPOSITE Genevieve Lilley in her living room.



COMBINING SENTIMENTAL
PIECES FROM THEIR TRAVELS
AND COLOURFUL, UNIQUE
ARTWORKS, THIS HOME IS
QUITE THE TREASURE TROVE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VANESSA LEVIS
WORDS BY KATE SPIES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Genevieve Lilley, 41, architect and jewellery designer, lives in this refurbished, three-storey terrace in the Sydney suburb of Paddington with husband and business partner Kingsley Wallman, 44, and their two children Sebastian, five, and Charmian, four.

In 2004, after living and working overseas for more than a decade, Genevieve and Kingsley found themselves at a crossroads. The couple had been living in San Francisco for a year and it was time to decide whether to move back to London, where they met and began their life together, or relocate to Australia, where they were both born and raised.

Just months before Genevieve was due to give birth to their second child, the duo packed up their life in the United States and returned to their homeland. Of her return to Sydney, Genevieve says, "I think it's very rare that you get these complete junctions in life where you have a chance to decide what you are going to do for the next decade or so. This was one of those moments for us."

Upon their return, Genevieve and Kingsley had baby Charmian, bought their Paddington home, launched their jewellery line Venerari (for which Genevieve designs most of the pieces), and opened a store in Sydney's Strand Arcade. Their plans to renovate their home were put on hold while Genevieve concentrated on designing →

A TABLE WOULD TELL A GOOD STORY AFTER 30 YEARS ... IT'S NICE TO HAVE THINGS WITH SENTIMENTAL VALUE

the Venerari store: "We bought the store and refurbished it in a six-month period and it took us a while before we gathered enough energy to tackle the house ... It needed a lot of work."

The walls and roof of the original structure were kept, as were the historical details on the front of the terrace, but extensive changes were made elsewhere. The terrace is on a steep site and this was the catalyst for the most dramatic change made to the building: "We tipped the house upside-down, so all the bedrooms are on the entry level, the living rooms are on the first floor and we have a guest area on the second floor," Genevieve says. "It didn't make sense to have the living area downstairs and then have to go upstairs to the garden."

Genevieve's love of modern design, colour and her work as an architect-cum-jewellery-designer are evident throughout her home. Clean lines and muted tones allow statement pieces – such as the huge tapestry of Prince Charles hanging in the living room – to shine.

With both furniture and jewellery, Genevieve likes pieces with a story behind them, or which mark significant moments in people's lives. "Furniture is almost like a favourite pet or a friend of the family: it hangs around," explains Genevieve. "A table would tell a good story after 30 years and I think it is nice to have things around which have sentimental value and have seen a bit of life."

WHAT SHE LOVES

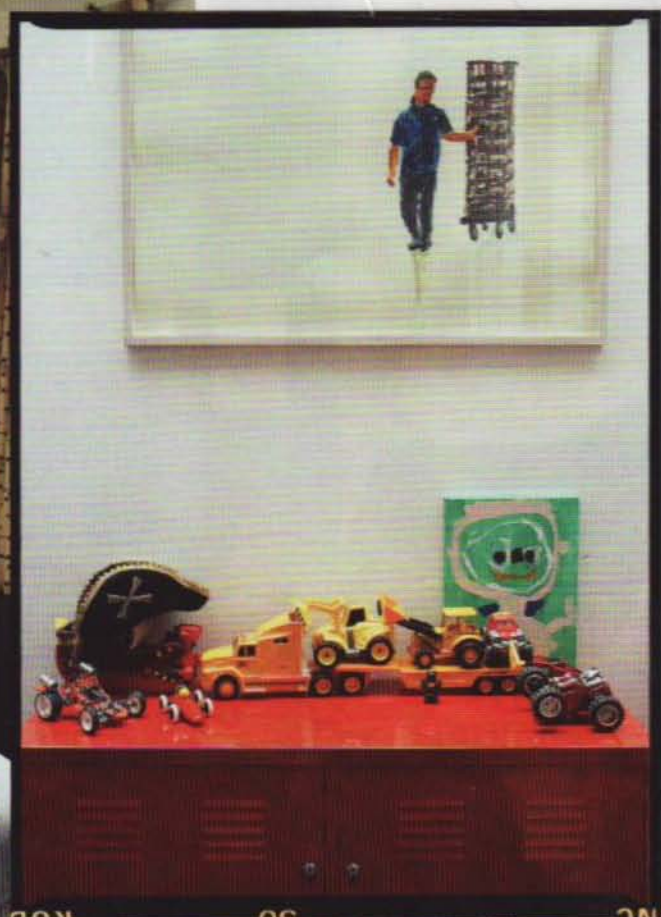
Her collection of remarkable pieces, from light fixtures to artworks to rugs. Much of the artwork was bought in the UK while the couple were living in London, and not a wall in the home is bare. Genevieve's favourite piece – the first artwork she bought with Kingsley – hangs in the study. "We call it the 'black glitter painting'," she says. "It's significant because we had no money when we bought it, so we had three sticks of furniture and a black glitter painting. We bought it for £1000 and it spawned a house full of art, a business and all sorts of things." →



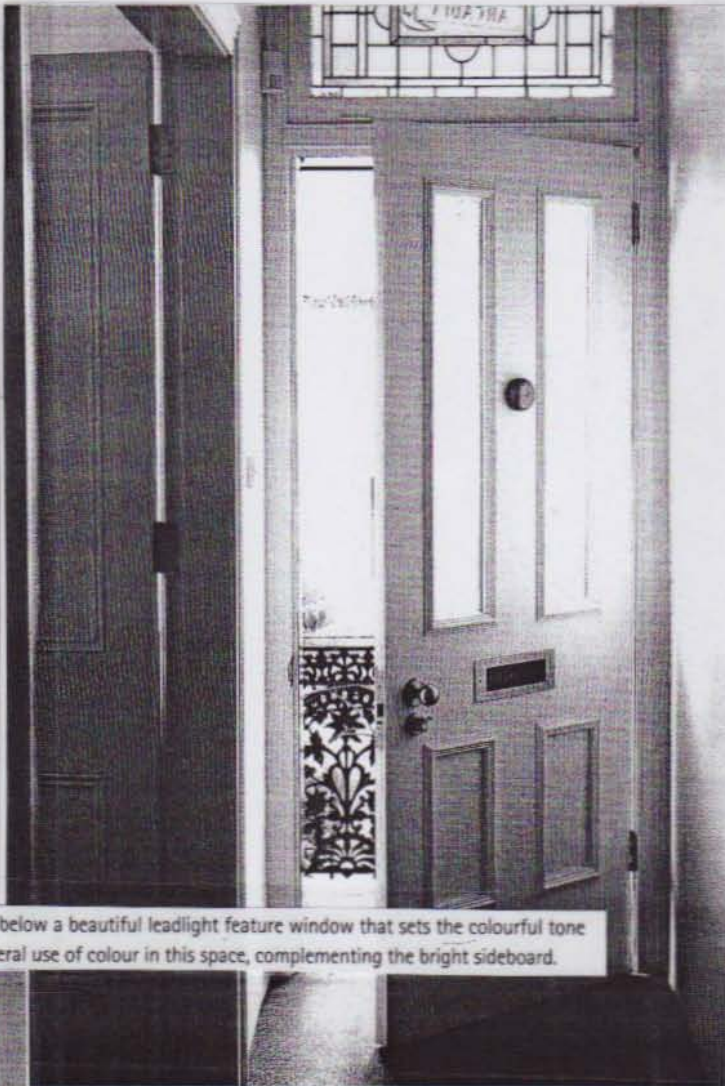
Genevieve enjoys spending time in her airy kitchen; Trinkets and treasures have been collected from across the globe.



LIVING



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The minimalist master bedroom; Kids' toys coexist with precious artworks; Light fantastic; Rings designed by Genevieve for Venerari; Most of the amazing artwork was bought while the couple were living in London.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE The contemporary main bathroom; The front door of the terrace sits below a beautiful leadlight feature window that sets the colourful tone of the house; An impressive tapestry of Prince Charles dominates the living room and invites liberal use of colour in this space, complementing the bright sideboard.



The home also exhibits a vast array of statement lights, from vintage to futuristic. Most of the lights were bought at auction in the UK or at second-hand furniture shops in Amsterdam. Both man-made and natural light are used to highlight the artworks and create certain moods in different rooms. The children's rooms on the ground floor have large skylights that flood the space with daylight.

Genevieve enjoys the fact that her home is an expression and celebration of the things she loves. It is fitting that the name of the couple's jewellery line, Venerari, is Latin for "to revere" or "to adore", as their home is built around that sentiment. "A house should be an expression, no matter how humble, of how you live and what you enjoy," she says.

WHAT WE LOVE

The imaginative use of colour throughout the home. There is no strict scheme: splashes of complementary and contrasting tones stand out against white walls and dark wood floors. The standout item of the bright living area is a multi-coloured rug that sits under the coffee table. "We found the rug in London and it is actually a patchwork of samples. It is shown to people to who are having a custom-designed rug made, so they can pick their shade," Genevieve says. "It appealed to us as we like colour, but not a specific one."

This adds to the feeling that, although the house is filled with artwork and decorative pieces, it is still a family home. "The kids roll each other up in the rug and lie upside-down on the purple chair, so it is certainly not an uptight household in that respect," Genevieve says. The family's home has the perfect combination of form and function: Venerari. **m**

Genevieve describes the open staircase as a "three dimensional sculpture, which is so strong right in the middle of this small terrace house. It links the different levels."

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