



COURTYARD GARDEN This page and opposite Architect Georgina Wilson, daughter of the owners and mastermind of the much-loved home's recent sensitive renovation. Tribú 'Kos' armchair, Cosh Living. The steps are clad in sandstone pavers that were removed to make way for the lawn. New Guinea rosewood shutters and doors.



Portrait by Fiona Susanto.

Family TIES

Few on the verge of an empty nest would opt to build a *bigger* house, but one savvy Sydney couple did just that and found much to love in their own style of multi-generational living.

STORY Owen Lynch | STYLING Anna Delprat | PHOTOGRAPHY Anson Smart



FACADE Motorised cedar blinds, JWI Louvres.
LIVING Artwork by Leah Thiessen, Flinders Lane Gallery. B&B Italia 'Michel' sofas, Space. Throw, Montmartre Store. Flexform 'Este' coffee table and 'Kidd' side table, both Fanuli. HC28 'Bold' armchair, Domo. Agra rug, Armadillo. Heat & Glo 'Mezzo' fireplace, Classic Fires. The fire surround and joinery unit benchtop are made from Calacatta Oro marble from SNB Stone.

“FAMILY WAS ALWAYS AT THE CENTRE OF MUM AND DAD’S BRIEF. THEY WANTED A HOME THAT WAS SOCIAL AND GENEROUS FOR THIS NEXT PHASE OF LIFE.” Georgina Wilson

Back in 2000, Dr Margaret Kearns and Dr Richard Smith had three young-adult children soon to fly the coop. They began considering their options: downsize or stay put in their much-loved family home? The discovery of a 19th-century cottage a stone’s throw from Sydney Harbour put a third option on the table: buy something different for the next chapter in their family’s life.

Part of a row of impressive terraces on a dress-circle street in Sydney’s exclusive Double Bay, the cottage was set on an uncommonly large block for the area and enjoyed water views. But the house itself had seen better days. A lifetime of indelicate extensions had ruined its heritage credentials and rendered it uninhabitable.

Enter Georgina, the couple’s eldest, who was studying architecture at the University of Sydney and working part-time for renowned Sydney practice, Tzannes. It was Georgina who brought Alec Tzannes to her parents’ attention, championing the award-winner’s aesthetic as well as the logic and level of craftsmanship he invested in each build.

“Family was always at the centre of Mum and Dad’s brief,” says Georgina. “For the next phase of life, they wanted a house that was social and generous, so they really needed a designer who could take a site like this and enhance its value. I knew Alec could do it.” Richard and Margaret shared that belief, and invested in building a property that would accommodate themselves, their children and future grandchildren.

Since it was double the width of the adjacent properties, with both front and rear lane access, the site allowed for a handsome three-storey, five-bedroom home. Thanks to its careful scaling and thoughtful materials selection, it now sits proudly yet harmoniously alongside its older neighbours. ▶

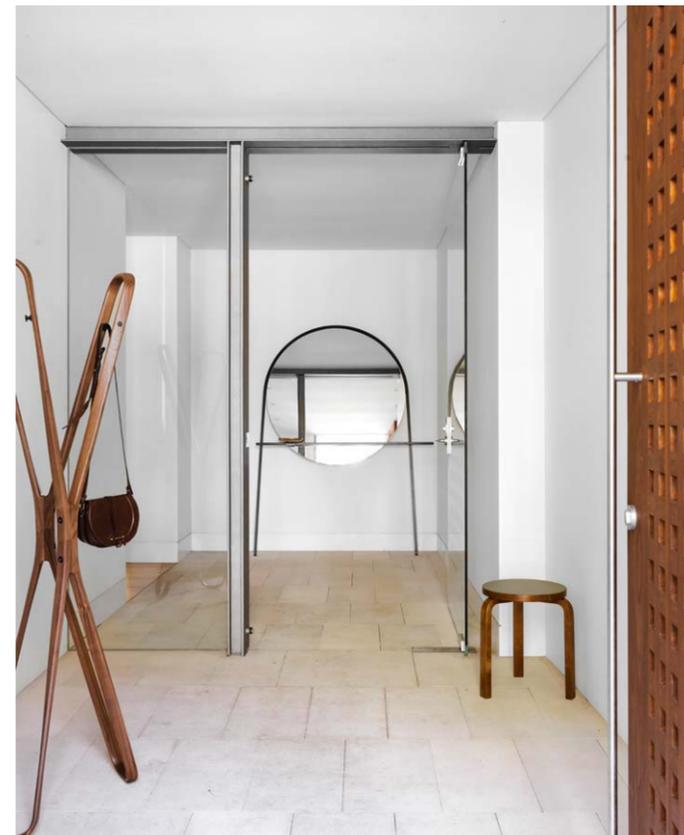


LIVING/KITCHEN *This page* Artwork by Leah Thiessen, Flinders Lane Gallery. HC28 'Bold' armchair, Domo. **KITCHEN** *Opposite top* Kitchen island, benchtops and splashback in Calacatta Oro marble from SNB Stone. Wolf 'Contemporary' induction cooktop and KWC 'Eve' gooseneck tap, both Winning Appliances. Island fascia made from New Guinea rosewood. Knoll 'Cesca' bar stools, Dedece. Blackbutt flooring. **BUTLER'S PANTRY/DINING** *Opposite, bottom right* Vintage dining table. Vintage Pierre Jeanneret dining chairs, Composition by Office Elias. Smeg double oven and Liebherr integrated fridge, both Winning Appliances. **ENTRY** *Opposite, bottom left* Classicon 'Saturn' coat stand and Artek 'Stool 60', both Anibou. Ligne Roset 'Geoffrey' entry console, Domo. Reconditioned sandstone pavers.



FESTIVE SPIRIT

On any given Sunday, dinner at Margaret and Richard's is attended by as many as 15 people. With Christmas just around the corner, the couple are excited to give the new alfresco dining gazebo a workout while their grandchildren play on the freshly turfed and beautifully planted courtyard. With plenty of family gatherings planned over the holiday the new built-in bar and butler's pantry will really come into their own. ▶





“The design was excellent,” says Georgina. “There is no doubt it has been wonderful for our family. I think my parents were quite enlightened for doing what they did, when they did it. The house has hosted weddings, christenings and family events. Between me, my brothers and our partners, there are now eight adults and nine grandchildren, plus various friends who periodically called the place home - all ages coming and going. It’s supported multi-generational living more than once!”

Though it had served Margaret, Richard and the extended family well for 20 years, the need for adjustments arose after the home was damaged in a hail storm. Outdated electrical services, too, demanded attention. “Those issues instigated the update,” says Georgina, “but when we started thinking about how to resolve those issues, we realised there was an opportunity to revisit some aspects of the house from a beautification and functionality standpoint as well.”

By 2020, Georgina’s own architectural and interiors practice, Georgina Wilson Associates (GWA), had been established for 10 years so she was well prepared to take on the task herself. Keeping it in the family, Georgina’s brother Peter Smith, also a member of the GWA team, was appointed lead project architect.

Addressing the storm damage and overhauling the electricals were the first priority. They took the opportunity to make it more eco-friendly, now using smart systems for lighting and security powered by solar energy stored in Tesla batteries. Next, the team remodelled the bathrooms and created a private retreat for Richard and Margaret on the top floor. The underutilised rear courtyard was also revamped to improve its integration with the adjacent open-plan living, kitchen and dining area.

A product of its era, the original internal finishes were rawer than today’s tastes. Introducing new blackbutt floors where carpet once lay, served to freshen the spaces

imbuing them with a tactility and warmth that Margaret and Richard concede was wanting. On the ground floor, a curvaceous kitchen featuring luxe Calacatta Oro marble now fans out from where hard-edged bulkheads once indelicately impressed on the great room.

To the rear, the four-car garage was redressed with New Guinea rosewood screens. A matching pergola and outdoor dining area flow onto a new lawn - the whole scene visible from the kitchen and living through reconditioned bifold doors and automated louvres.

“I really love the courtyard - it’s the best intervention we’ve made and it’s a simple one,” says Georgina. “But looking at the whole house now, the new works haven’t compromised the original home that I’ve always loved. I hope it’s enhanced it.”

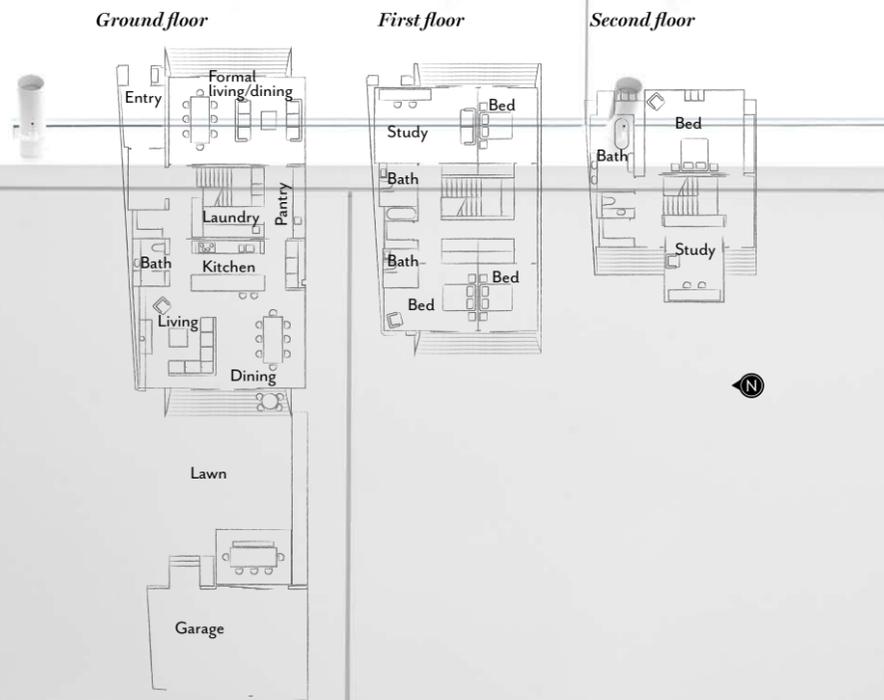
▶ *Georgina Wilson Associates, Double Bay, NSW; (02) 9363 9182 or georginawilsonassociates.com.au. Tzannes, Surry Hills, NSW; (02) 9319 3744 or tzannes.com.au.*

“I HOPE THE NEW WORK HAS ENHANCED THE HOME I’VE ALWAYS LOVED.” *Georgina Wilson, architect*

STAIRWELL Custom timber and steel staircase designed by Georgina Wilson Associates. **MAIN ENSUITE** Kaldewei ‘Classic Duo’ bath and Axor ‘Stark’ wall-mounted shower set, Sydney Tap and Bathroomware. City Stik bath filler and City Plus shower roses, Brodware. Wrong for Hay ‘Elephant’ stool. French Cream marble wall and floor tiles, World Stone. Astro ‘IO420’ wall light, Universal Lighting. Brushes, Oliver Thom. Towels, Loom Towels. Vase, In Bed.



THE LAYOUT



MAIN BEDROOM Right, below right and opposite Elliptical bedside tables, Fanuli. PH 2/1 table lamp, Cult Design. Bronze vide poche, Studio Henry Wilson. Bedlinen, In Bed. Riva 'Pegaso' side table and Flexform 'Tessa' chair, both Fanuli. Vintage painting. **MAIN ENSUITE** Tabour ottoman by Michael Verheyden, Ondene. Astro 'IO420' wall lights, Universal Lighting. Custom wall mirror. Bronze vide poche, Studio Henry Wilson. Santa Maria Novella fragrance, Casa by Kate Nixon. French Cream marble wall tiles and benchtop from WorldStone. ▶

"I THINK MY PARENTS WERE QUITE ENLIGHTENED FOR DOING WHAT THEY DID, WHEN THEY DID IT." Georgina Wilson



THE PALETTE

Dulux Natural White (interior, throughout)	Dulux Ferrodor Bridge Grey (steel trims)	Resene White Pointer (exterior)
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Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.





KITCHEN/DINING/LIVING AREA B&B Italia 'Michel' sofas, Space. Knoll 'Cesca' bar stools, Dedece. Chair 611 dining chairs by Alvar Aalto, Anibou. Vintage dining table. Tolix 'Fateuil A56' outdoor chairs, Thonet. **PERGOLA/GARAGE** Tribú 'Kos' dining table, bench seat and armchair, Cosh Living. Linen tablecloth, Ondene. Accessories from Bess Paddington, Office Elias and Lightly. Lampiok outdoor pendant lights by Roger Pradier, Universal Lighting. Custom spotted gum pergola. Custom New Guinea rosewood screens and louvres. Zinc roofing. Sandstone paving.



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THE SOURCE

Classic design pieces and a respect for heritage make for a comfortable, family-focused home.



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1 Christmas Collection 'Gabriel' candle, \$149, Trudon. 2 Thonet 'S 32 V' dining chair, \$1850, Anibou. 3 7-globe Branching Bubble pendant light, POA, Lindsey Adelman. 4 Perrier-Jouët Blanc de Blancs NV Champagne, \$140, Dan Murphy's. 5 Nigel footed fruit bowl, \$109, McMullin & Co. 6 Remer wall mirror (46x121cm), \$455, Harvey Norman. 7 PH 2/1 table light by Louis Poulsen, from \$1540, Cult Design. 8 Adda sofa by Antonio Citterio for Flexform, from \$18,590, Fanuli. 9 L'Avenue Summer Rust cushion, \$29.95, Harvey Norman. 10 Faux berry branches, \$59 each, Pottery Barn. 11 Kelly bedside table by Emmanuel Gallina, \$6345, Poliform. *For Where to Buy, see page 190.* H&G