

HOME / MELBOURNE

# Quiet Confidence





‘We love a project that presents an opportunity to reinstate lost charm, not just into the interior, but also into the neighbourhood,’ says Paul Hecker, co-founder of Melbourne-based multidisciplinary design practice Hecker Guthrie. Located in Carlton North, an inner suburb of Melbourne known for its wide streets and proximity to some of the city’s best gardens and parks, this two-storey, four-bedroom home offered exactly that.

The clients, a couple with children, approached Hecker Guthrie to renovate their new purchase, which sits on a 500-square-metre plot. The brief called for retaining the home’s original facade but designing a contemporary addition, which Hecker Guthrie undertook in collaboration with Brayshaw Architects, and then reinstating a sense of heritage into the home with a palette rich in materiality and textures. The entire renovation process was naturally collaborative from the start, and according to Hecker, both clients and designers ‘were very much aligned in what the end result should be: calm, discreet, charming and warm.’

At the heart of the project was the aim to restore the home’s original features, including the Victorian facade and period details, and inject new life into the original structure and adjoining extension in order to make the building relevant again. ‘We adopted a traditional and respectful approach, taking inspiration from Dutch

and Belgian design masters and infusing a deliberately timeless and classic expression of the original features,’ Hecker explains. ‘All spaces are designed to open outwards and are directed towards a landscape that purposely softens the built form and transition of edges.’

‘Architecturally, we’re drawn to materials that get better with age, like brick, timber and steel,’ Hecker continues. ‘Our approach to interiors is similar: a simple palette that doesn’t date.’ Through the generous use of white with chalky blues and greens, the designers achieved a warm and bright atmosphere that reflects cosiness and charm. ‘The colours we chose are strong, yet still have a neutral, calm quality,’ he says.

The designers curated a combination of traditional and contemporary objects, mixing Australian, Swedish and Italian designs with vintage pieces to create a home that is authentic in form and character.

The space is imbued with a sense of lightness and transparency thanks to the new addition, which is a well-studied interpretation that references the past through a contemporary lens. ‘I love the fact that the home is still discreet on the streetscape,’ says Hecker. ‘I wish more people would take this gentle approach with architecture, especially in our inner-city suburbs with strong architectural heritage. We were lucky to have clients who were very understanding of the area.’

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Previous page and facing page  
Hecker Guthrie took the opportunity to restore lost charm in this Melbourne home, creating a contemporary addition while preserving the original Victorian facade and architectural details inside, where the designers opted for a simple, timeless palette







#### Facing page

The designers are attracted to brick, timber and steel due to their appearance as they age. In the dining room, for example, timber features in the flooring and Grande dining table from Fogia, while metals come in the form of the Bouroullec brothers-designed Officina dining chairs for Magis and the Perf bar cabinet by Diesel Creative Team for Moroso, all of which is set against a white-coated brick wall

#### This page

The home is characterised by subdued colours and a combination of traditional and contemporary objects. In the kitchen, a palette of marble and white custom joinery is punctuated by green accents in the island and Hecker Guthrie-designed stools, with a Lean pendant from Örsjö, via Great Dane, hanging overhead





The living room is designed to open onto the courtyard. French doors accentuate the ceiling height and allow natural light to fill the room





Facing page  
Tom Stepp's Prime Time armchair and the Cloud sofa from Prostormia are inviting seating options in the living room. The low-slung YUKAR coffee table by Naoto Fukasawa for Conde House faces a custom plinth that doubles as a storage and display are

This page  
Gio Ponti's D.270.2 armchair for Molteni&C sits in front of a wood heater, together with the Halcyon Lake rug offering a cosy counterpoint to the cooler wall tiles and brickwork





Facing page  
The palette of chalky blues, greens and whites continues in the bedrooms. Here, accents come from the bedding, while the wall, curtains and Gubi lighting are kept neutral

This page, left  
In one of the bedrooms, a vintage mirror from Australian antique gallery Nicholas & Alistair hangs above an original fireplace, an unconventional display area for a painting by Robert Malherbe and Mark Howson's bronze Landscape Blocks

This page, right  
The material palette in the bathroom mirrors the rest of the home, with custom joinery by Hecker Guthrie echoing the furniture in the kitchen and terrazzo floor tiles adding subtle colour to the space