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Heart of stone

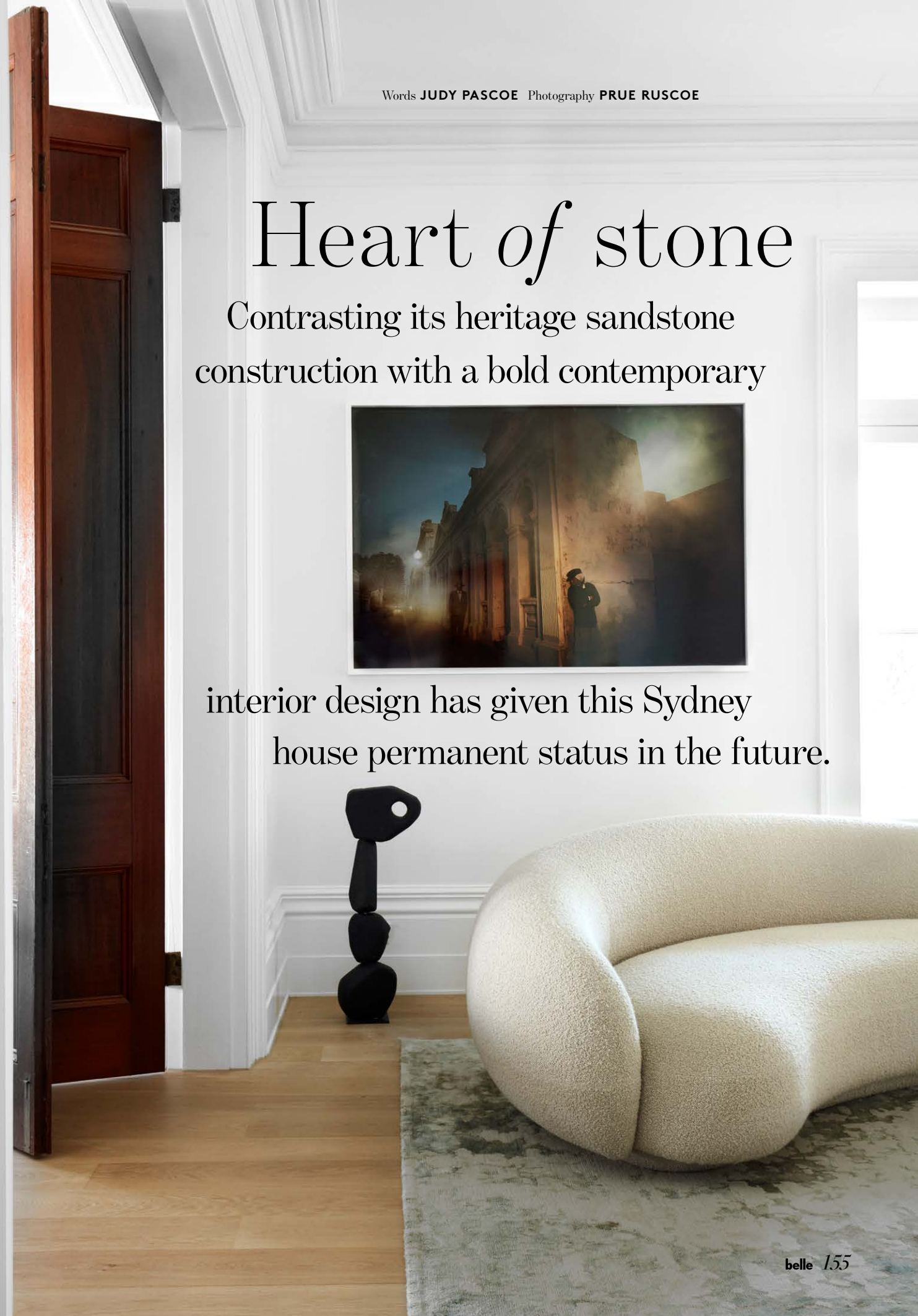
Contrasting its heritage sandstone construction with a bold contemporary



interior design has given this Sydney house permanent status in the future.



This page The c1860s home has an impressive sandstone construction that is enhanced by new gardens designed by Dangar Barin Smith. **Opposite page** Simplicity rules in the interior design of this home letting the heritage details shine. In the formal living room, a Pierre Augustin Rose 'Sofa 280' upholstered in Pierre Frey 'Louison' in Crème sits in front of an artwork, *The Arches* by Tracey Moffatt. Sculpture by Clementine Maconachie. Rug from Robyn Cosgrove.



While all home renovations require a pertinent response, some demand more sensitivity than others and this house in Sydney's inner west was just such a project. Dating from around the 1860s and of sandstone construction with a distinctive 'twin peaks' roofline, it was a home of significance and inherent beauty, and architect Nadine Alwill, engaged for the refurbishment, paid it due respect.

The owners had been renting the house while searching for a place to buy and had been captivated by a property nearby that Nadine had worked on. However they didn't buy that house and instead bought the one they had been renting.

They knew just who to approach to make the house suitable for themselves and their family of three children. "We got along really well from the beginning which was great," says Nadine. Having lived in the house, the owners had a clear idea of the functional aspects that needed to be addressed. "It had been renovated probably in the 1980s," explains Nadine, "but it had a lot of things done to it over the years and had not always been used as a home. The property was certainly in need of some love and a refresh."

While the owners gave Nadine free rein, it wasn't possible to achieve quite the radical transformation she sought because of the heritage component. "I really had to listen to the old »



These pages, clockwise from top left The formal living room has a Pierre Augustin Rose 'Sofa 280' upholstered in Pierre Frey 'Louison' in Crème with a pair of Christophe Delcourt 'Gum' armchairs in oak from Ondene. Ten10 travertine coffee table, with Neri&Hu for De La Espada 'Zhuzi' table and 'Lianou' stool, all from Spence & Lyda. Rug from Robyn Cosgrove. Artwork by Tim Summerton. The formal living room leads into the dining room with its De La Espada 'Elliot' oblong table and Artisan 'Neva' chairs, all from Spence & Lyda on a 'Qunita' hand-knotted linen rug from Robyn Cosgrove. Artwork by Raylee Williams. Totem sculpture by Pedro Wonaeamirri. Table sculpture by Carol Crawford. The kitchen is illuminated by Giopato & Coombes 'Soffio' pendant lights in brushed brass and glass from District. Custom-designed cabinetry by Alwill in walnut veneer made by Intermic Group, with solid walnut handles. Corian benchtop made and installed by Intermic Group. Brodware 'City Stik' mixer tap from Candana. 'Spine' stool in oak from Great Dane.





These pages, clockwise from left The expansive kitchen space was once occupied by a ballroom. The bank of arched windows that lend so much character are original. 'Brooklyn' dining chairs in leather and rattan attend an 'Arte' table in oak, all from Jordan. 'Sencillo' rug from The Rug Establishment. Tall sculpture by Clementine Maconachie. Custom-designed kitchen cabinetry by Alwill in walnut veneer, made by Intermic Group, with solid walnut handles. White vase on bench from Spence & Lyda. Giopato & Coombes 'Soffio' pendant lights in brushed brass and glass from District. The verandahs around the home were restored with new timber flooring and stone edging was sourced to match the original. 'Kettal' outdoor basket armchair from Mobilia. The family room was cleverly carved from a former poky pantry and study. On an 'Agra' rug in Marlin from Armadillo is a 'Vista' modular sofa in 'Isla' linen in Palm from Jordan. Artek 'Rope' chair from Anibou. Sculpture by Sophie Nolan.

« building and be more truthful to it. We had to keep many elements throughout the house that spoke of its history and original intent. But a lot of the rooms didn't make sense. The laundry, for example, was outside in the former stables," says Nadine.

The list of non-cosmetic jobs was long: the slate roof had to be restored, the timber floorboards on the verandah replaced, the sandstone cleaned and repaired, the footings fixed where the house had moved, a smashed window repaired and water issues resolved. But both architect and owners knew "the house was pretty special" with its striking peaked roofline, extensive sandstone and sizeable block of land affording harbour views.

The owners were open to different ideas for the renovation but they were clear about the essentials: a kitchen and bathrooms that function well and for the house to work thermally, as there was no insulation in the attic and it was very hot. They also wanted a contemporary interior to contrast with the heritage exterior. "The

existing fabric of the building – the sandstone and the old timber doors – did enough to keep the character," says Nadine.

To make the house flow and work better for the family, Nadine decided to move the swimming pool from the front of the property to the side. "As an intervention on the site it gave the old house a platform to stand on and allowed other areas to become activated. It opened up the beautiful water views and the rooms sang more. Now everyone moves around the balcony and the kids hang out there rather than just being at one end of the property in the kitchen and family room. It maximised use of the house in relation to the garden."

The home now has a fairly traditional layout with the formal living and dining directly ahead from the front entrance, the family room, kitchen and laundry to the right, and the study and children's area to the left. Upstairs are the sleeping quarters, each with an ensuite bathroom. The attic level that houses »



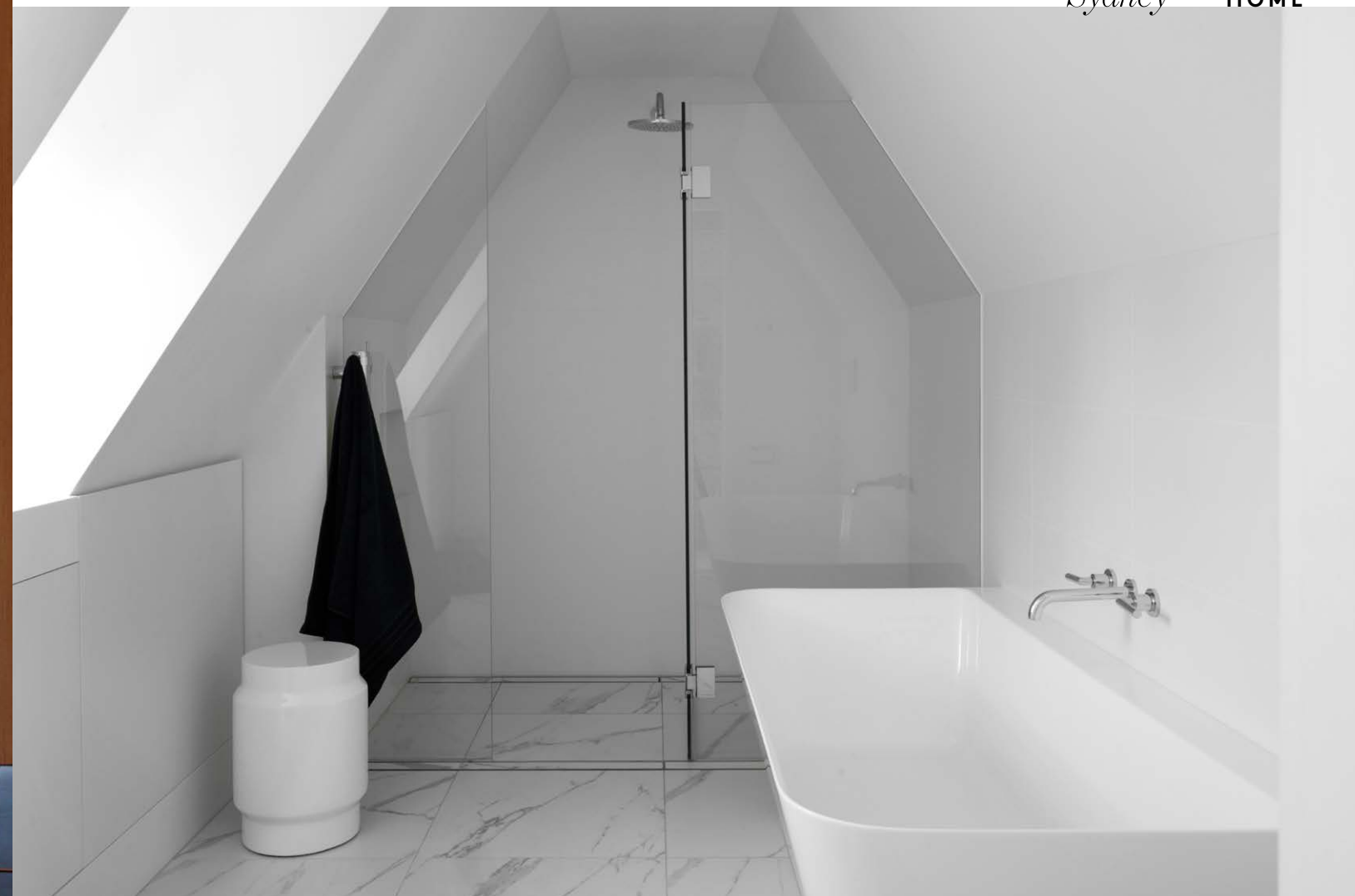


This page, from top The study, which opens out to the outside, features a Karakter 'Domo' table lamp in brass from Cult. The verandahs extend the living space into the garden and beyond to the pool. 'Kettal' outdoor basket armchairs from Mobilia. Landscaping by Dangar Barin Smith. Opposite page The swimming pool was re-sited from the front of the property to the side.



SPEED READ

» Impressed by the design of a home renovated by architect Nadine Alwill these owners approached her when they purchased their heritage sandstone property in Sydney's inner west. » Although the c1860s house was not derelict it had last been renovated in the 1980s and was in need of a refresh. » Heritage restrictions meant Nadine could not carry out the radical transformation initially planned, however her interventions, plus the interior design and furniture selections by her sister Romaine Alwill, have given the home a chic contemporary overlay. » A major change was the re-siting of the pool from the front of the property to the side that opened up the beautiful harbour views from the kitchen and new outdoor terrace and facilitated circulation around the home.



« a bedroom, bathroom and TV room has wide views to the harbour thanks to a series of operable skylight windows. The separate studio “is one of those spaces that is a bit of everything – an office, guest house, gym, poolhouse”, says Nadine.

The kitchen is a standout – a huge space that used to be part of a ballroom, it has a bank of arched windows along one wall. “The windows make the room glow,” says Nadine. “We didn’t want to cover that up, but we had to make it work so it feels contemporary and fresh but still textured, not minimal or cold.”

Interior architect Romaine Alwill, Nadine’s sister and partner in Alwill, was tasked with the interior fitout and she selected an eclectic assemblage of pieces whose sleek lines sit comfortably in the spaces. From the curvaceous Pierre Augustin Rose ‘Sofa 280’, tactile dining chairs in leather and rattan and tables in oak and elm, there is an incredible lightness of being to the furniture underpinned by softly shaded rugs and kilims. Bathrooms too highlight the mix of heritage and contemporary with the sandstone backdropping marble tiling and glacier white cabinetry.

The project was interesting to manage from a contemporary design perspective, says Nadine, “and was about getting the balance right. The way the heritage and contemporary features sit together is pleasing. They complement each other and the [new] work is clearly independent of the heritage house.” Says the owner, “There is a wonderful sense of calm as soon as you set foot inside. It is an absolutely stunning home that is also functional and practical for our family life.” alwill.com.au; dangarbarinismith.com.au

This page The master bedroom has a Molteni&C ‘When’ side table and Viabizzuno ‘Roy’ wall lamp in copper and bronze from VBO. Custom bedhead in InStyle ‘Tundra’ leather in Wolf. Bedlinen from InBed. Throw from Bemboka. Opposite page, from top The attic bathroom and bedroom are graced with Harbour Bridge views. Soul 2 bath from Studio Bagno. Trilogy Calacatta floor tiles from Teranova. White porcelain wall tiles from Onsite. Brodware tapware from Candana. Neri&Hu for De La Espada ‘Lianou’ stool. Muuto ‘Tip’ table lamp from Living Edge. Custom-designed joinery by Alwill in walnut veneer from Intermic Group. ‘Brooklyn’ chair from Jardan.