

photographs / JACK LOVEL
styling / HEARTLY
introduction / ANNABELLE KERSLAKE

AT HOME WITH MEAGHAN AND JAROD MILLS

Meaghan and Jarod Mills began planning their dream renovation before they had even purchased their historic Richmond villa. Experienced in building and renovating, the duo embarked on a collaboration with their chosen architect and interior designer to lovingly create a minimalist and welcoming home of which they can be proud. A home to enjoy and share with their growing family and friends for years to come.



THIS PAGE
01. Waka Dining Table from \$3,620,
tidedesign.com.au
02. Seb Dining Chair \$891,
jardan.com.au



DESIGN NOTES /

DAMIEN LUI /

HONTO ARCHITECTURE /

After purchasing a tired single-storey double-fronted villa on a typically tight inner-city allotment, the owners set a challenging brief to design their growing family a bright and modern double-storey home.

With the building considered contributory to an important heritage precinct of Richmond, the design required the preservation of the existing single-storey scale along the primary street frontage. The two original front rooms on either side of the central entry were restored, and perfectly proportioned to become a study/guest room and large bathroom.

Using the site's 1.5m fall from front to the rear, the design was conceived as a series of cascading platforms wrapped around a central light court. Directly accessible from the generous kitchen and meals area, this central zone was to become the beating heart of the new home. In contrast, the adjacent sunken lounge was created as a space of retreat and introspection, nestled amongst green surrounds with deliberately low horizontal windows to provide diffused light whilst preserving privacy from neighbouring sightlines.

The first floor footprint is clearly zoned between kids and parents, with the stairs and study nook acting as the transition point between the two zones. Rigid planning scheme envelopes were embraced and used to carve the first floor volume which was subsequently wrapped in an industrial ribbed metal sheet cladding – a final nod to Richmond's yesteryears.

HONTOARCHITECTURE.COM.AU

LOCATION OF THE HOME...

Richmond, Victoria. We have lived in Richmond on and off for over ten years and the area definitely feels like home.

PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELVES...

I'm *Meaghan*, a nurse, my husband *Jarod* is Sales and Marketing Manager for a property developer and we have two children, *Zoe*, three and a half years old and *Jack* who is two years old.

We are very busy working family with young kids who are close in age. I work part time at a local hospital so I'm lucky to spend lots of time with the kids. *Jarod* has a lot of autonomy and flexibility in his position so we are fortunate that he is able to be a very hands on dad. We love living inner city and are always out exploring all that Melbourne has to offer. With the Zoo, Museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens at our doorstep we are often out and about on a Melbourne adventure.

WHO WORKED ON THIS PROJECT?

We worked with *Damien Lui* from *Honto Architecture* and *Mikayla Rose* from *Heartly*. We had worked with *Damien* a few years prior on a previous renovation and loved his work. We engaged him to start working on design concepts for the building before we had even purchased the property.

We had been collecting interior inspiration images in the lead up to purchasing the property and most of them ended up being *Mikayla's* work. So we were thrilled when she was able to help us work through our interior spaces, polishing our concepts and bring our ideas to life. We walked away from our first meeting blown away with all of the suggestions made.

PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT HOW YOU CAME TO LIVE THERE...

The passion for building and design was instilled in us early with both our families involved heavily in construction. We had completed a renovation on another large Victorian house in Richmond and loved the entire process.

When we first saw the property it ticked almost every box. It is in a beautiful tree lined street filled with other character homes and there is a large park at the end of the street. It was an easy decision.

HOW DOES THE HOME'S DESIGN AND FUNCTIONALITY ENHANCE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE?

Having built a few times previously we had a very clear list of what we wanted in our new home. With our block only measuring 220 square metres and with quite a long wishlist, *Damien* certainly had his work cut out for him. The design needed to be really clever!

We had just found out we were expecting our first child and wanted to ensure the home would be suitable for a growing family. Four bedrooms were essential as we frequently host guests and family and we love entertaining so an oversized living room was also important to us. We frequently discussed the need for the rooms to have flexibility to be multipurpose and grow with our family's needs. Creating zones within the home was also essential. Like everyone, we wanted an open floor plan but we also wanted some separation to the spaces so that a sense of privacy and retreat could be achieved. The design quite frankly makes sense and we couldn't imagine it being any different.



DESIGN NOTES /

MIKAYLA ROSE /

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The interiors of *Rose St Workers Cottage* were inspired by the clever architectural design response determined by *Honto Architecture* to the historic setting and sloping site. Beautifully proportioned split levels wrap around a central courtyard. Snippets of greenery outside are framed through strategically placed windows.

A pared back approach to designing the interiors in order to not compete with these engaging architectural elements was necessary. A refined palette was developed, featuring timber, stone and concrete. This was applied throughout the home creating calm through consistency.

The client's brief required the kitchen to be seamless and streamlined. Large scale benches and storage were designed around integrated appliances. A strip of brass divides the intersection between the porcelain splash back and concrete wall above. Handmade ceramic lights by *Anchor Ceramics* soften the coolness of the surfaces.

The ground floor bathroom housed in one of only two remaining original rooms, immediately behind the weatherboard façade, is charming yet modern. A wet bathing area was designed, deliberately set back from the original north facing window. Dappled light through the crepe myrtle trees and plantation shutters gives life to the Blue Tundra marble tiles.

The sleeping areas are softened with pale grey wool carpets, crisp white linen curtains and warmth added in playful pops of earthy pink and dusty blue on the walls of the children's bedrooms and custom made bathroom steps.

HEARTLY.COM.AU





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01. Aksel 1 Light 250mm Pendant in Black/Clear \$219, beaconlightling.com.au

02. Magdaleneffjorden Original Framed Photograph by Brooke Holm from \$2,850, moderntimes.com.au

03. Menu Kettle Teapot 1.5L \$139, arrivalhall.com.au

04. Waka Dining Table from \$3,620, tidedesign.com.au
05. Seb Dining Chair \$891, jardan.com.au

06. Normann Copenhagen Krenit Salad Bowl in White \$60, simpleform.com.au

07. Asili x Città Salad Servers in Olive Wood \$79.90, cittadesign.com

HOW WOULD YOU BEST DESCRIBE YOUR AESTHETIC?

We like that our home is uncomplicated, minimalistic and calm – these factors are critical to our aesthetic. There are a lot of hard surfaces within the building but there is also softness and warmth with the inclusion of details such as timber and brass. We think *Mikayla* has balanced these elements perfectly. Everything has its own place with the abundance of storage.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER MOST IMPORTANT IN A HOME?

A sense of pride is important to us in our home. We have worked extremely hard to be where we are today and we think it shows. *Jarod* especially has spent years working long days at work then spending any free time either planning, building and labouring on our building site. We wanted a home that we could be proud to show off to our friends and family and make all our sacrifices worthwhile. We get a rush of exhilaration when new people walk though our front door, as they are always surprised. It has all been worth it.

WHICH ELEMENTS WITHIN THE HOME SUPPORT SIMPLE LIVING?

The refined palette is a good example of this. We wanted a sense of calm and a lack of clutter and distraction, this was a part of our brief to *Mikayla*. We also specified that we wanted everything to have a place. We did not want lots of freestanding furniture but rather to have everything built-in and a location determined for all the messy bits and pieces of life as a young family.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR LOCAL AREA?

Richmond is fun and exciting with an abundance of great bars and restaurants. We can easily jump on a tram or train into the city but also have the flexibility to walk most places in the area. We have everything so close to home. It's hard to imagine living anywhere else.

WHERE ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PLACES TO VISIT IN THE AREA?

We can be frequently found just down the road at Barkly Gardens Park with our family and friends. On weekends there can be hundreds of people lying around or having picnics, it a great social and family environment. The local primary school is just a few streets away so there are always families and kids to play with and new people to meet. There is a wonderful sense of community in the area.

We frequently visit the Melbourne Museum which is only five minutes away. There is so much to see and do for every age group.

We are so lucky to have some of the best cafes and restaurants within walking distance. We are definitely spoilt for choice but our go to café is 'My Oh My Espresso' on Swan Street. Their coffee is the best in the area!

DOES THE HOME HELP YOUR SENSE OF WELL-BEING?

Hydronic heating has had a significant affect on our health and well-being. Both *Jarod* and I have noticed a decrease in allergy symptoms and enjoy the comfort that the constant temperature has added.

The internal courtyard being in the centre of the building gives the home a wonderful feeling of space. The gardens and greenery can be seen throughout the entire ground floor giving our home a feeling of peacefulness and being close nature.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE ROOM IN THE HOME AND WHY?

We love our home and are very proud of the hard work and collaboration of our entire team. While the interiors in the kitchen and living areas are quite pared back there are many design details in each of the three bathrooms that make them so elegant. Each of these rooms are favourites.

It may sound strange, but we couldn't live without our garage! The property backs onto a wide laneway and the house is built almost boundary to boundary with the exception of a central courtyard and a light well. The garage doubles as a second living area. There is lots of natural light and the durable finishes allow it to be used for multiple purposes. It currently holds the trampoline, bikes and most of the toys! There is also a small laundry, storage and a workspace area.

ARE THERE ASPECTS OF THE HOME THAT HELP YOU KEEP ORGANISED?

Engaging an interior designer was essential. Day-to-day living especially relating to functionality and storage were discussed and planned in detail. We decided to remove the breakfast bar in the kitchen to increase our kitchen storage as the dining room is immediately adjacent and the additional seating was not needed. The additional cupboard space has been critical. We are so pleased we made this decision. All of the bedrooms have floor to ceiling wardrobes that are the perfect depth to fit plastic tubs. Toys, clothes and any other items are super organised and easily accessible. Our home is always tidy and we are training the kids to embrace a clean and uncluttered environment!



[EMI POD BY ANACA STUDIO]

IS REST AND RELAXATION ENHANCED BY ANY FEATURES IN THE HOME?

We love that the kids bedrooms are on the same level as the master suite but still have a degree of separation. This helps to minimise noise travelling throughout the home and encourages a peaceful environment to rest at night.

We wanted the guest bedroom to be separate from the other bedrooms to provide our guests with privacy and a quiet place to be. Everyone is welcome to stay and they do! We located this room downstairs in one of the original Victorian rooms of the house so it has lovely views out into the front garden.

HOW ARE CONNECTIONS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOSTERED?

Our large sunken lounge room is one of the most used rooms of the house. It was designed to be oversized so it can hold many people without feeling cramped. *Damien* designed the room with low feature windows to look out over our gardens, so it is definitely an interesting space to be in.

IF YOU HAD THE CHANCE IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE OR DO DIFFERENTLY?

Everything on our wishlist was achieved which is amazing considering the size of our land. We would have loved to fit in a mudroom to drop school bags and shoes but unfortunately we just didn't have enough room.



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01. Cushions, ninicreative.com
and jardan.com.au