First *in* LINE

Combining vintage and custom pieces with an appreciation for classic Italian stonework, this European-inspired project saw Greg Natale bring more than a little bit of Milano to Mosman.

By Jake Millar
Photographed by Anson Smart

THESE PAGES in the rear entry of this Mosman house, custom **shelving** and **wall cladding** in American oak produced by Freestyle Joinery; aged brass **door** produced by Ginardi; Vesta and Bianca **vases**, Niemeyer **bowl** and Vedere **sculpture** (on shelf), all from Greg Natale; palladiana **flooring** produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble; **artwork** by Sarah Kelk. *Details, last pages*.

THIS PAGE in the downstairs bar and guest wing, **sofas** from Galerie Glustin; vintage hammered and abraded steel **coffee table** from Gerard Guignard Antiquities; palladiana **flooring** produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble; Modernism Fortuna **chandelier** from 1stDibs; vintage Italian travertine and brass **table lamps** from Conley & Co; **artwork** by Bec Smith. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the entry reception, vintage Italian **console** and Murano glass **mirror** from Conley & Co; Apollo **vases** from Greg Natale; palladiana **flooring** produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble; Harlow Spoke **chandelier** by Gabriel Scott from 1stDibs.

THIS PAGE in the dining area, custom **banquette** upholstered in shagreen leather from Spinneybeck; **dining table** designed by Greg Natale; Pamplona **dining chairs** by Augusto Savini for Pozzi from 1stDibs, upholstered in Chérie **fabric** from Dedar, enquiries to South Pacific Fabrics; **flooring** in American oak produced by Freestyle Joinery and Granito Louco stone from Nefiko Marble; Room Skins **wallpaper** in Travertine from Fromental; vintage **ceiling light** from L'Atelier 55; Bilia **table lamps** by Gio Ponti for FontanaArte from Gineico Lighting. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the central stairwell, **balustrade and staircase** produced by Ginardi with **stair treads** in Calacatta Oro marble from Nefiko Marble, **wall cladding** in American oak produced by Freestyle Joinery; custom **pendant light** from Christopher Boots.

When it comes to creating a dream home, sometimes the process can be a little fraught. Between client demands, deadlines and disruptions of all kinds, there are plenty of ways things can go off the rails. But hearing local designer Greg Natale talk about the home he created for a client in Sydney's Mosman, it's hard to tell who got the better deal: the owners or the man they entrusted to create it.

"I was really lucky with this house," says Natale of the five-bedroom, seven-bathroom home completed in August last year. "I was like a kid in a candy store."

In 2017, Natale was enlisted to design a sophisticated, marble-rich retreat that, although its foundations would be firmly planted in Mosman, had its heart very much in Milan.

"The clients laugh at me because they say I created this Italian palazzo!" says Natale. "Marble and stone were such a big part of the scheme. But the clients were amazing because they were really receptive to new things and they let me be really creative. They wanted a very light house with heaps of vintage pieces, and they wanted it to feel really European."

They certainly got what they wanted. From the powder rooms and hallways to formal dining and living spaces, marble is a defining feature, inspired by Natale's recent trips to the landmark Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan. "It was a big inspiration," he confirms. "So a lot of the marble portals you see in the formal living room, as well as the front and back doors, they're all inspired by Villa Necchi."

It also helped that this was Natale's second time working with the homeowners, which meant not just an understanding of each other's process, but they all went into it knowing they shared a passion for vintage furniture. "Usually the way a project works is that we storyboard everything and then we buy all the furniture," he explains. "With vintage, you can't do that. It takes a long time to search and buy because you're starting from scratch. But with this client, we were able to go really slowly and just build things up. She said to me, 'Let's go to Paris because I want all really unique, individual pieces', so it was just the dream client who let me go and collect vintage."

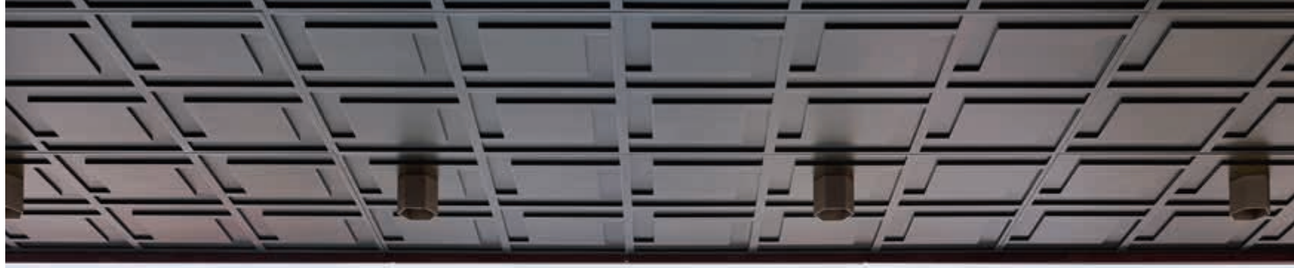
Natale spent about three years carefully sourcing just the right items from Parisian markets. But he was also keen to balance them with modern touches, such as the formal dining table designed by Natale himself. The custom items are among the designer's favourites, but he also has a soft spot for all the stone, which takes him back to his childhood. "I love all the palladiana, all the broken marble," he says. "It really does feel nostalgic for me because I grew up with all that stuff. We used to think it was a bit daggy in the '70s and '80s, but I love that it's back in vogue again."

The designer relied on brutalist touches, including the travertine and green marble feature wall in the courtyard, as well as the use of natural materials such as blond timber, to add warmth. "It helped ground and anchor everything," he says. "So I definitely think it still feels tailored."

Of course, wanting to create an Australian palazzo is one thing; designing one that still manages to look tasteful is quite another. Natale, who is known for his use of pattern and bold colours, doesn't hesitate when asked if he ever has to rein in clients who come to him full of imaginative ideas from their European travels. "Yeah, especially with my clients!" he says, laughing. "But what I hope people can see from this project is that it's really curated. I've been around for 21 years now, so there was definitely a look that I was known for, but with this new work I've tried really hard to break that mould and create something new. I hope the work feels fresher."

Natale celebrates this fresh aesthetic in his upcoming book, *The Layered Interior*, which features the Mosman home. "In the other books [2018's *The Patterned Interior* and 2014's *The Tailored Interior*], I was trying to show a lot of different looks and projects, but this time I brought it back so it's only eight projects, but they're really full and we've done everything on there — from interiors to the furniture, right down to the accessories — and it goes right into the details."

It's not just the new book, either. With his homewares range picked up nationally by David Jones and a bedding line just released, Natale is excited to see the interiors space picking up again. "It's going really well," he says of the various aspects of his business. "So it's keeping me really busy!" *This project is one of eight Australian homes featured in* The Layered Interior *by Greg Natale, due out later this year; gregnatale.com*



THIS PAGE on the outdoor terrace, Kettal **outdoor chairs**, **sofa** and Cala **side table** from Mobilia; Minotti Florida **coffee table** from Dedece; palladiana **flooring** produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble.

THIS PAGE in the hallway, **flooring** in Granito Louco quartzite from Gitani Stone; Another Day **ceiling light** by Damien Langlois-Meurinne from 1stDibs; Gioielli 03 brass and Murano glass **wall sconce** from Suite NY. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the kitchen, **island** in White Ice granite from Gitani Stone; **benchtop** in aged brass and brass from Astor Metal Finishes; Gabriel Scott Bardot **counter stools** from 1stDibs; Icona **sink mixer** in Matte British Gold from Rogerseller; American Oak **flooring** from Nash Timbers; vintage Italian Modernist **chandelier** in brass and convexed Murano glass from Peter O'Rourke at Alfies Antique Market.

THIS PAGE in the main bedroom, vintage Vladimir Kagan **swivel chair** from Flair Home Collection, upholstered in Gastón y Daniela Vasco fabric from Domestic Textile Corporation; Oeuffice Tuskan **side table** from with customised top through Matter from 1stDibs; custom Despres **rug** by Greg Natale from Designer Rugs; upholstered **wall panels** in Thema leather from Analu; **ceiling** detail in Greek Ajax Statuario marble from Nefiko Marble; American Oak chevron timber **flooring**; Brikmakers Lloyd Wright Collection Roman exterior **balcony bricks** from Midland Bricks; motorised **curtain** in Mare from Design Curtains. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in a guest ensuite, **vanity** in American oak and mirrored **medicine cabinet** designed by Greg Natale; Fantini Venezia wall-mount **basin set** with Murano glass handles from Rogerseller; palladiana **flooring** produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble; **walls** in Calacatta Viola Medium marble from Nefiko Marble; vintage **sconces** from Galerie Glustin.

THIS PAGE in the main ensuite, **vanity** designed by Greg Natale; Cosmo Moon **side table** from Kifu Paris; custom **bathtub** from Apaiser; Fantini Venezia **bath outlet** from Rogerseller; **walls** in Greek Ajax Statuario from Nefiko Marble; terrazzo **flooring** inlaid with Greek Ajax Statuario produced by Terrazzo Australian Marble. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the study, Venturi **side table** from Greg Natale; Delfino **armchair** and **pouf** from Arflex, enquiries to Space Furniture; custom **shelving** in American oak produced by Freestyle Joinery; custom Goulden **rug** by Greg Natale from Designer Rugs; Pierre Chareau Quart De Rond **ceiling light** from 1stDibs. *Details, last pages.*