

INTERIOR DESIGNER  
*David Hicks*  
**SCALING UP**  
[ Collingwood, VIC ]  
Photography TOM BLACHFORD



This page A long view of the living area showing the double-height volume.  
Opposite page Cassina 'Civil' bench from Mobilia. Vintage Murano Rostrato floor lamp from Nicholas & Alistair.



**A HIGHLY TAILORED DESIGN RESPONSE** was required for this Melbourne penthouse and David Hicks was the perfect creative for the job. He loved its exceptional sense of space and natural light, along with its industrial elegance: New York-style windows, exposed steel and original details. *How did you become involved with the project?* The client had secured the apartment as a raw shell, offering the rare opportunity to design without constraint. They were familiar with our work, having seen other residences we'd completed within the building, and were drawn to the level of detail and refinement. The brief was to build on that language – to craft something distinctive, elevated and deeply personal for them. *What was the brief for the interiors?* To create a generous, light-filled, inner-city home with five bedrooms, expansive living areas and an outdoor terrace with a pool, all while embracing the energy of urban living. Having relocated from the leafy suburbs, they were seeking proximity to the city's culture and dining scene. They wanted something classic and refined that made the most of

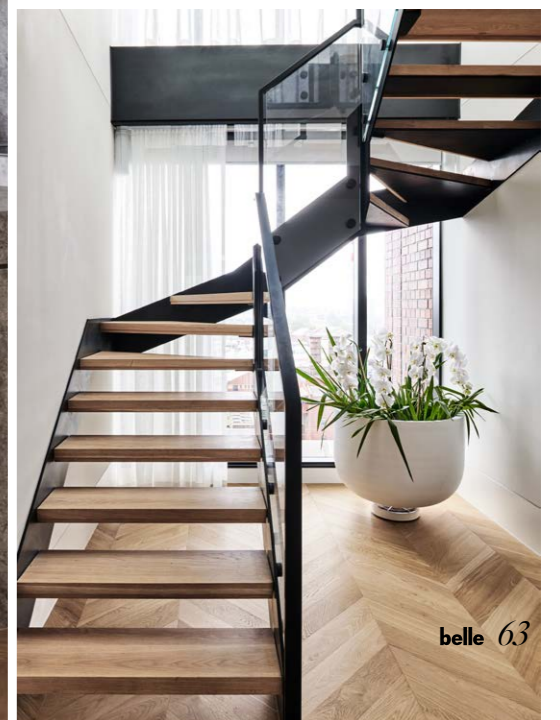
the views over East Melbourne and the impressive ceiling height. *What were the challenges of the space and how did you resolve them?* As with any interior-focused project, the key challenge was working within an existing structural framework. The entry and central corridor split the floorplate in two, which initially felt restrictive. Rather than fight it, we used it to our advantage, creating two distinct living zones. Locating the lift and feature stair presented another challenge: the ideal position upstairs made the lower level unworkable. Through careful spatial planning and iteration, we arrived at an outcome that felt cohesive, functional and true to the overall design intent. *Were there any devices employed to maximise the sense of space?* We introduced an upper level within the apartment's double-height volume to create a private main suite complete with bedroom, ensuite and walk-in wardrobe. Rather than occupying the entire footprint, we left a striking void above the kitchen and living area along the facade. This allowed for soaring full-height glazing, enhancing the sense of volume and drama. The decision to embrace negative space was



SMART SPACES



**Opposite page** The parquet flooring features natural solid oak in a chevron design, which flows throughout. The mint 'Nepal' rug is a custom design by Jan Kath from Cadrys. Vintage Italian table by Osvaldo Borsani from Nicholas & Alistair. Knoll 'Warren Platner' side table from Dedecore. The sofas are a custom design upholstered in white linen. Vintage Murano bubble vase from e Moderno. **This page** (from top) Custom Murano 'Messina' pendant from e Moderno. Minotti 'Lou' console and Knoll Saarinen 'Conference' chairs from Dedecore. 'Cityscape' dining table by Paul Evans from 1stDibs. Artwork by Sokquon Tran. // Gracing the kitchen is Duma honed limestone from Signorino. Aluminium rangehood coloured with Dulux Electro Scintillation. 'HydroTap' from Zip Water. Stools in leather from Contemporary Leathers. // The new staircase.





intentional; it invites natural light deep into the home while creating a feeling of generosity, restraint and elevated, architectural luxury. *What informed the selection of the fittings, finishes, furniture and art?* The approach to the materials was deliberately restrained. Classic timber flooring, tone-on-tone marble, chalk-painted walls and grey Venetian plaster lent the space warmth with an industrial edge. This minimal palette became the canvas for expressive moments: sculptural lighting, curated furniture and layered art. A mix of antique, custom, vintage and contemporary pieces brought depth and individuality, and bold touches – like an Yves Klein blue table or a Dale Frank painting – punctuated the interior with moments of colour, texture and personality. *Was colour important to this project?* Colour wasn't used in abundance, but where it appears it's intentional and impactful. The Yves Klein coffee table injects a burst of bold blue, breaking away from the otherwise neutral palette and drawing the eye immediately. *How would you describe the completed interior?* The completed interior is a study in considered contrasts – elegant yet playful, refined yet spirited. There's a sense of calm and vibrancy in equal measure, much like the energy of the city. Every element was meticulously planned to achieve this balance. A layered material palette of timber, stone, render, Venetian stucco and mirror sets a quiet foundation, elevated by expressive pieces: a Jeanneret bench, an antique games table, plush velvet sofas, a Paul Evans brass and chrome dining table, a Minotti sideboard and custom furniture. It's a space where tension and harmony come together in a uniquely personal way. I'm genuinely proud of how this project came together. *davidhicks.com*

## SMART SPACES

**This page** Vintage Italian console and Murano pendant from Nicholas & Alistair. Gubi 'FA33' mirror from In Good Company. Calacatta Viola plinth, custom. French marble bust, clients' own. **Opposite page** (from top) 'Table IKB' by Yves Klein from Artware Editions. Middle sofa in Zepel fabric. B&B Italia 'Soriana' chairs, vintage. Knoll Saarinen 'Tulip' side tables from Dedecce. Custom shag rug from RC+D. // Vintage Italian bamboo console from e Moderno. Artwork by Dale Frank.

