



# MODERN LOVE

Tucked away behind a high fence, this tailor-made Melbourne home provides a beautiful backdrop for its modernist-leaning owners.

STORY VANESSA WALKER / STYLING HEATHER NETTE KING / PHOTOGRAPHY EVE WILSON

Artwork by Howard Arkley.



**This is the life**  
 This is the first home Meagan and Steven have built together and they couldn't be happier with the result. Meagan, a former Sydneysider, says having a custom-built house has made her feel at home in her adopted city. "I love having a garden to tinker with and the freedom the pets have," she says. And Steven is surrounded by the mid-century designs he admires. Both enjoy the luxury of an indoor-outdoor lifestyle while retaining their privacy.

**LIVING ROOM COURTYARD**  
 / Bluestone pavers set among kidney weed (*Dichondra repens*) lead the way from the living room through one of four courtyards. The cladding is Pacific teak on a Woodform Architectural Concept Click system.  
**KITCHEN** / A colourful vignette in the kitchen. Bowls from Angelucci 20th Century. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.



A year after Meagan and her husband Steven missed out on their dream home at auction, they bought this block in Melbourne's inner north. The existing house had no redeeming features, however, so was swiftly demolished in preparation for the couple to build anew. "I told my book club and they said the first thing I had to do was get an architect," says Meagan. "I didn't know what one was." They dutifully furnished her with a list of their favourites.

Meagan and Steven chose Steffen Welsch, principal of Steffen Welsch Architects, because he seemed down-to-earth. What they didn't realise was how well-suited he was to them personally. "He is German, calm and a minimalist," says Meagan. And, as it turned out, that both aligned with, and encouraged, their nascent design ideas.

Top of Meagan's wish list was personal security, for both their beloved pets – Julia and Cordelia the Russian blues and Harry the spoodle – and themselves. She also wanted indoor-outdoor flow and lots of light. Steven simply wanted not to feel hemmed in by four walls: he envisaged high ceilings, sliding doors and a courtyard.

Today, after a two-year, faultless build by Lee Gordon, they reside in a highly liveable, divinely detailed, two-bedroom home. Tucked behind high fences, they enjoy not one but four courtyards as well as floor-to-ceiling glazing that bathes the home in natural light. ▶

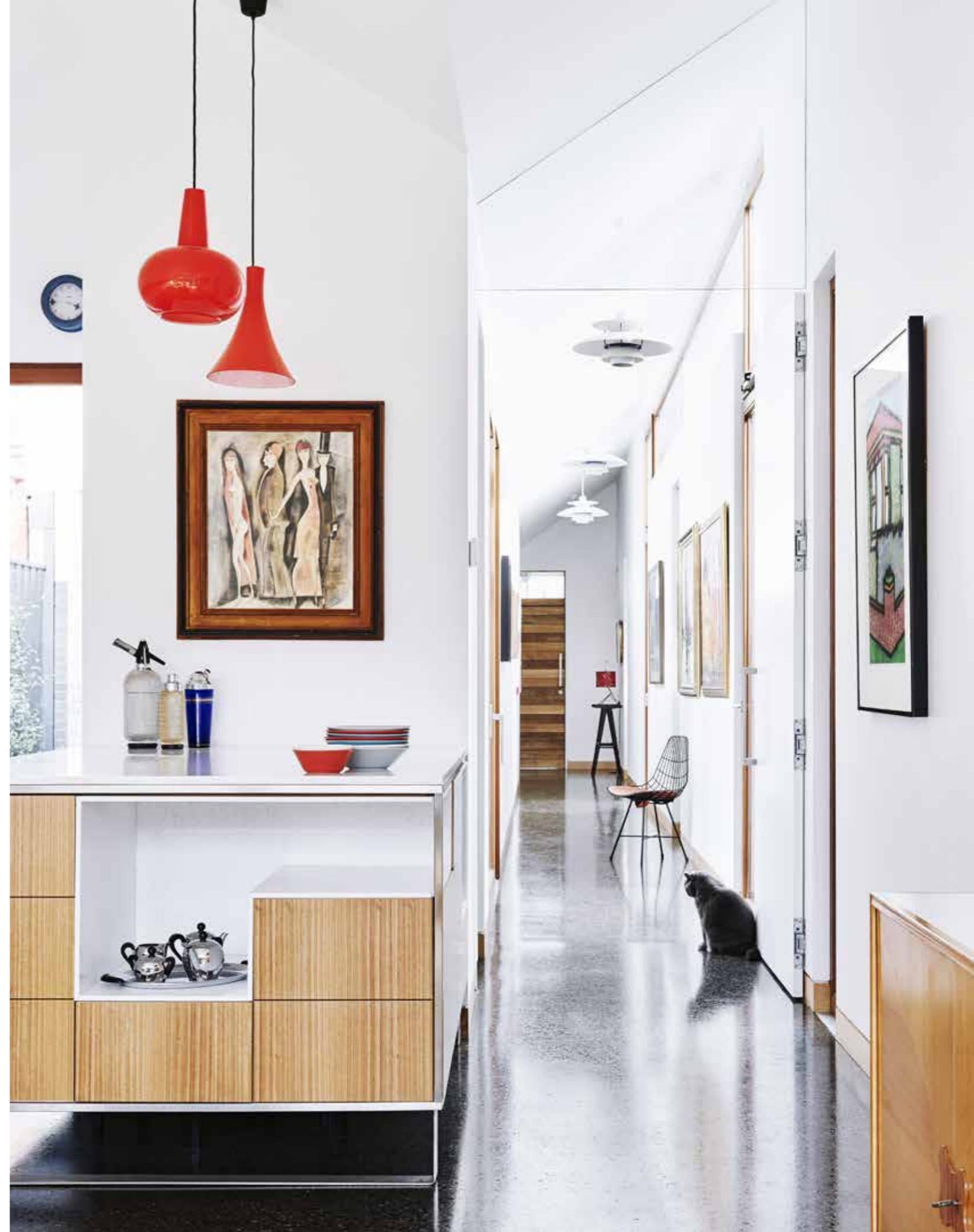
*'I love the way the house has been custom made for me and Steven.'* Meagan

**KITCHEN** / Printed on glass, an Alex Hotchin illustration is transformed into a deeply personal, one-of-a-kind splashback. Joinery in Tasmanian oak topped by Corian work surfaces.

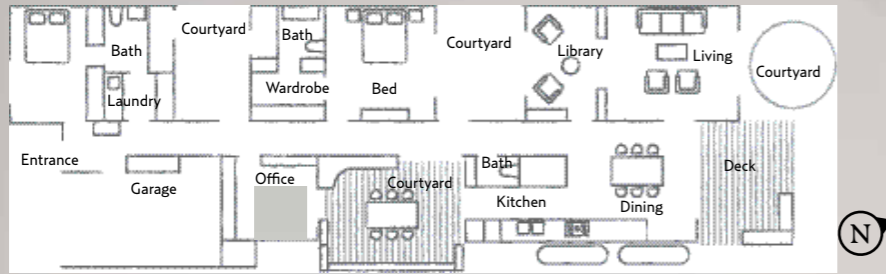
**HALLWAY** / Polished-concrete flooring positively glows in the art-lined hallway. Louis Poulsen pendants, 20th Century Scandinavia. Clement Meadmore chair. The red pendant lights are from Mode 707 and Steven bought the painting above the drinks unit in Berlin.

**DINING** / Steven has loved parquet floors since he was a teenager; Steffen had Australian beech parquet laid in the dining area, kitchen and as a 'rug' in the library. Dario Zoureff table and Jacob Rudowski chairs from Smith Street Bazaar. Cabinet and chandelier, Mode 707. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.**

Artwork by Howard Arkley.



THE LAYOUT



Happy hues

While Meagan and Steven's home furnishings are in typically subdued mid-century style, pops of colour come through in accessories such as lampshades and artwork. The colour hero of the home is the splashback illustration by Alex Hotchin, which details Meagan and Steven's matrimonial journey in Sicily, its painterly palette reflecting the main colours in the home. "The splashback cost \$2500 but to us it's priceless," says Meagan.



**LIVING** / Meagan gives Harry a tickle in the light-flooded living room. A display unit from Mode 707 showcases Steven's collected objets d'art, including a set of 1950s teacups from the USSR. Green chair and sofa, Nicholas & Alistair. Grant Featherston chair. Coffee table and Becco sconces, Mode 707. The artworks are by Lynne Naylor, the illustrator who co-created the *Ren & Stimpy Show*.

**BATHROOM** / The private block allowed for timber-framed glass external doors. Landscape designer Kate Seddon then created a series of vignettes to be enjoyed from inside. Here, a *Cupressocyparis leylandii* 'Leighton Green' has been planted for privacy. Das Fenster doors (throughout) from Timber Tech. Showerhead and towel rail, E&S Trading.

**Designer buy:** Dalsouple DalNaturel Pastille Mini Alpha rubber tiles (682x682mm) in Citron Vert, \$275/m<sup>2</sup>, iRubber.

**LIBRARY** / A quiet and cosy space to read and relax. Screened chair and ottoman (on right), chandelier (on left). Large artwork on left from Leonard Joel. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.





◀ It is the interior that really sets this home apart. The cathedral ceiling rises to 4.5m, giving the home a sense of uncluttered spaciousness. Steven had specified parquetry floors, which are rendered in Australian beech in the library, living and kitchen/dining areas. Meagan had admired an art-backed splashback at an open home, so Lee arranged for his sister-in-law, artist Alex Hotchin, to illustrate the journey Meagan and Steven took when they were married in Sicily; this was printed on glass and provides a stunning backdrop in the kitchen.

The aesthetic that Steffen bought to the home's structure consolidated Steven's love of mid-century modernism and over the course of the build he acquired prime examples from all the greats including Grant Featherston, Arne Jacobsen and Louis Poulsen.

Now the house is finished, Meagan says she feels an inalienable sense of home. And Steven couldn't be happier surrounded by his beloved design classics, although he's a practical man at heart. "What do I love the most?" he says. "Mowing the lawn. It's a handkerchief."

**H&G**  
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*'I love having a garden to tinker with and the freedom the pets have.'* Meagan

**MAIN BEDROOM / above left and right** Timber has been employed as a naturally beautiful element throughout the home, including in the main bedroom's Tasmanian-oak feature wall. Bedside table by Lee Gordon. Bedlinen, Moss River. Lamp and stool, Mode 707. A weeping Japanese maple provides autumn colour in the courtyard.

**COURTYARD /** Meagan and her faithful companion Harry. The fragrant Chilean jasmine growing over the pergola will one day shade the outdoor area. Silvertop ash decking. Architectural bricks in Ebony from Adbri Masonry. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 203.

THE PALETTE

*Dulux Vivid White*  
interior, throughout

*Dulux White Watsonia*  
exterior render

Try this accent

*Taubmans Lizard Green*

FEATURE PLANTS

**COURTYARDS**  
*Cupressocypris leylandii*  
'Leighton Green' Weeping Japanese maple  
Kidney weed  
*Parthenocissus sikkimensis*

Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

