

# LIVING TREASURES

ARTFUL, ATMOSPHERIC, VIBRANT



VILLA GLEN

LUCY CLEMENGER ARCHITECTS

+  
GEORGIE BRUCE | HOUSE OWNER  
NATALIE JAMES | STYLIST  
CHRIS HADDAD | ARCHIER





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THE ELEMENTS OF THE PAST THAT HAVE A STORY MAKE ALL  
THE CONTEMPORARY PIECES WORK SO WELL.

— Lucy Clemenger | architect —

Lucy Clemenger is well known for her philosophy of refined sensibility. As the director of Lucy Clemenger Architects, her challenge for Villa Glen was to stitch many eclectic moments into a cohesive response that felt considered, yet highly distinctive.

‘It’s a really beautiful home full of the family’s living treasures, collected from their travels and journeys,’ she says.

The house owner, Georgie Bruce, engaged Clemenger to rethink the home’s clunky footprint and poor internal functionality and to create better sightlines by which to view her substantial collection of contemporary artworks, sculptures and objects collected in a lifelong dedication to art.

To create a new language for the house, Clemenger wound the clock back to 1931, connecting two significant moments in time.

Firstly, in that year, architect and painting luminary Le Corbusier had just published his great work *Le Corbusier: Polychromie architecturale*, a unique tool for colour selection made specifically for architecture interiors and presenting his ideas on how harmonious tones could embody spatial effects and arouse reactions. As a result, Le Corbusier designed two new colour palettes, in 1931 and 1959 respectively, comprising sixty-three shades overall. His theory centred on three key ideas: using synthetic pigments for contrast, employing natural colours for atmosphere and implementing transparent synthetic pigments to change surfaces without impacting how the eye sees spatial depth. They were systematic, with colours full of life, hugely intense and yet reservedly elegant.

Secondly, Villa Glen was built in 1931.

Clemenger’s design narrative was born.

Her first step was selecting from Le Corbusier’s 1931 palette, which, most interestingly, was designed to be combined in any manner. Together, she and Bruce chose core colours of green, blue and a pink base and then positioned the colours in rooms throughout the house, choosing pink tiles in the bathroom close to colour 32111 and blue bathroom tiles as close to colour 32030. Clemenger then photographed all of Bruce’s artworks and placed them in drawings to scale, to show their suitability alongside the selected colours. In this way, the colours, as a backdrop, were made to be as important as the art. They were complemented by subtle art deco accents in brass and marble.

‘I know Georgie likes to move things around all the time too, so when you go there, it’s totally changed, and you read the energy of the space differently,’ Clemenger says.

The result is a bold collection of artworks and spaces that differ wildly yet together appear seamless within Clemenger’s highly considered colour palette. It’s big, colourful and full of life – exactly as intended.

Lucy Clemenger selected several of Le Corbusier’s colours, including 32034 from his 1931 collection, used in the sitting room (top left and bottom right), crafting a platform for objects, including a Moooi Meshmatics chandelier (top right) and pebble oval pendant by Mark Douglass Design, which Georgie Bruce chose for the main bedroom (bottom left).

As a visual art consultant, art manager and curator of her business, GB Art Advisory, Georgie Bruce brings the same energy to her clients and business life – and into her Villa Glen home. For Bruce, art is energy. It gives life, stimulates conversation and engagement and tells different stories on multiple levels.

‘My style isn’t monochrome. We didn’t want a typical one-colour palette as a family,’ she says.

When planning her renovation with Lucy Clemenger Architects, she loved the idea of employing colour theory not only to evoke emotion based on science but also to help create better visual lines to experience her art.

Bruce spent months advising, hanging and placing each art piece, orienting furniture to optimise each room’s circulation and focusing on the finer details such as specific door types and heights. Her insight helped to inform how each piece might work with the colour palette, creating a richness to the reading of each space.

‘We approached the layout as if we were working on the temporary walls of a gallery and how you might view corridors and read the artwork,’ she says. ‘How do we create curated views across and between spaces?’

Artworks from Korea, Japan and China are peppered amongst works by Indigenous Australian and contemporary artists, layered in harmonious groupings to create cross-cultural exchange, impact and engagement. Despite the pieces’ varying ages, mediums, artists and countries of origin, they present effortlessly through Clemenger’s Le Corbusier-inspired colour palette.

The home reflects Bruce’s life story: she lived in northern Asia for eleven years and has twenty-five years’ of experience in both Asian and Australian art.

‘We can now appreciate our beautiful collection and experience everything in one space, at the one time,’ she says.

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— Georgie Bruce | house owner —

TSANG Kin-Wah’s work, *Fucking Art Made by the Fucking People and for the Fucking People*, comprises botanical word art, creating lively conversations over the dining table as the words are deciphered.





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I’M DRAWN TO THE PEOPLE AND THEIR  
THINGS WHEN I WORK, BEFORE THE  
ARCHITECTURE AND THE LINES.

— *Natalie James | stylist* —

When Shannon McGrath recommended stylist Natalie James to collaborate with Clemenger on Bruce’s home, it was a perfect match.

‘I do love to bring colour to a project,’ James laughs.

James brings to her stylist work her major influences, being art – naming Henri Matisse for his bold colour, the places she has travelled to and her Polish heritage. She also draws on her passion for travel and a nostalgic sense of warmth and cosiness from her childhood home.

‘Villa Glen was about finishing the rooms’ sentences. Giving them a little more layering and creating more depth using the art as inspiration,’ she says.

Specifically, James focused on the dining room, introducing six differently coloured Osso dining chairs by Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec.

‘When selecting, there was only one of each colour, but I felt that was exactly what the room needed, to play on Georgie’s sense of fun, and adding a great conversation piece. A “happy accident”,’ she says.

In the lounge, she installed her personal and previously owned green velvet sofa, an original 1970s Fler modular, which she spotted on a hard-rubbish pile and had reupholstered. Other objects and ceramics were included to complement Bruce’s artworks and colour palette.

When James steps inside someone else’s home, her greatest joy is finding inspiration from the things they’ve collected to make a space feel more ‘meaningful’.

‘Often, people will say they don’t know what their style is. I say that your style is all the things that you love, and if you collect all the things that you love and put them together, they’ll probably work for you,’ she says.

For Clemenger, Archier's Capital pendant was the perfect choice to suspend above the 8-metre-long marble kitchen bench, to engage with as a sculptural object whether it was switched on or off.

It features a fluted brass profile and American walnut timber detailing and gives a subtle nod to art deco and New York design. Upon closer inspection, its design mirrors the building blocks of a building plan, as Archier co-director, Chris Haddad explains.

'It has a central extrusion of aluminium and LED lighting strip, which, using a building as an analogy, is akin to the service core, and then the outside extruded brass profile is like the cladding. The idea was to be able to interchange different cladding onto the central core, which would allow variations and bespoke pieces to be created easily.'

While busy with architecture and design work, Archier has never strayed from the immediate, hands-on nature of workshop production: prototyping, experimenting and making. The practice has two pendants in production: the Highline, a recessive light designed to let the architecture speak, and the Capital, its statement showpiece.

'The pendant has a distinct architectural quality that complements the building it is within, of quality and timelessness,' Haddad says.

The young, dynamic architecture and design studio is also led by Chris Gilbert, Josh FitzGerald and landscape architect Jon Kaitler. In addition to running a more traditional architecture studio, they have always had access to workshops and sculpture studio spaces where they can continue their focus on designing raw, subtle interior objects that contribute to a better quality of life.

For now, the practice is exploring design and technology with its timber prefabrication business and automation using robotics.

'While the industry is a slow adopter of new technologies, it's an exciting space,' Haddad says.

At Villa Glen, Clemenger, Bruce, James and Haddad have combined their design skill to craft a home that inspires conversations and lifts the art of living in colour to new heights.

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YOU ENGAGE WITH IT AS AN OBJECT.

— *Chris Haddad* | Archier —

Archier's Capital pendant is suspended elegantly over the island bench, under which sit timber Tractor stools.

