



INDOORS

Open wide, come inside...

BY Karen McCartney

ONE OF architecture’s most famous examples of bringing the outside in is the Frey House II, built in Palm Springs, California, in 1963. Swiss-born architect Albert Frey positioned the desert residence in the boulders of the natural landscape, allowing one spectacular rock to intrude into the interior. But a decade earlier, Australian architect Peter Muller was doing the same thing with a house on a bushy site in Sydney’s Pittwater, where a rock formation of particular beauty was incorporated into the sitting room.

These days, more than ever, there’s a palpable need for a connection to nature, says Decus Interiors’ founder Alexandra Donohoe Church. She channels this idea in a constantly

changing living artwork in her Killcare project on the NSW Central Coast. “That’s where the theatre happens,” she says, of the framed view (pictured). “It’s the one place in a room always in motion and therefore draws your eye.” She admits that while her interior colour and material choices were intuitive – from the green glass Bell table by Sebastian Herkner, to the light rust cushions and 1950s French chairs – they each visually connect with the natural vegetation. Her advice for getting it right? “Observe the space at all times of the day – morning, noon, sunset – before making decisions. The colours, tones, artworks, and even placement of furniture will be informed by the natural elements.”



↑
This kaleidoscopic floral print cushion on deep velvet combines the traditional with the contemporary.
DESIGNERS GUILD “KASHMIRI OCHRE” CUSHION, \$235
NOCHINTZ.COM



OUTDOORS

Pepo talk

BY Richard Unsworth

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER Nicola Cameron (above) is the founder of Pepo Botanic Design. The 48-year-old lives in Sydney’s east with her husband and two children. *First garden memory?* It was in our country garden, eating daisies when I was one or two years old. They seemed delicious and huge. *Who inspires you?* Intelligent, creative landscape designers such as Anton James, Vladimir Sitta and Kate Cullity, and English garden designer Dan Pearson. *Your plant loves?* Perennial planting such as *Miscanthus sinensis* always look beautiful. *Your plant hates?* *Yucca elephantipes*. *Favourite garden inspiration?* Travel and the arts. I have a visual arts degree, majoring in film, which enhances my passion for creating images, stories and memories. *Proudest garden moment?* Our Parsley Bay Garden [in Sydney’s Vaucluse] featured work by sculptor Francesco Petrolowas and was included in *Landscape Architecture Australia* magazine’s first publication dedicated to residential design. To be included alongside some of Australia’s best landscape architects was a great honour. *Ever had a design disaster?* In the early days, I used a creative approach to design a garden but I hadn’t asked if the clients were getting a dog. After it was installed, two Staffordshire bull terrier puppies had destroyed everything! *What are you working on right now?* A garden in Centennial Park, Sydney. The home is being restored based on the Arts and Crafts movement. We are using a patchwork of planting and sculptural elements to form a harmonious relationship with the house. *What else do you want to learn?* I recently visited Kew Gardens in London and realised how many plants I haven’t learnt about, so I would have to say ... more plants.

ANSOON SMART (ARCHITECT, SQUARE DESIGN); STYLIST: ALEXANDRA GORDON; KUSHANA BUSH, HARK (2018), GOUACHE, METALLIC PAINT AND PENCIL ON PAPER, 55CM X 88CM

STYLE

BY Anna-Lisa Backlund

Sydney has recently joined Melbourne as a city lucky enough to have a Rag & Bone store, with a new boutique in Westfield Bondi Junction. That’s where you’ll find this “Atlas” shoulder bag and its optional straps. As the name implies, it’s perfect for travel; the modular design means it can be unsnapped to lie flat in your luggage. **“ATLAS” BAG, \$835**
RAG-BONE.COM



← Australian label Jac + Jack has teamed with French sneaker brand Spring Court to create these cute summer kicks. Made with Italian canvas for men and women, they come with a choice of red or white laces. **SPRING COURT X JJ, \$220**
JACANDJACK.COM



→ Inspired by the plight of the Great Barrier Reef, men’s swimwear label The Coral Empire uses Econyl, a fabric made from recycled fishing nets and other abandoned nylon, in its products. This season’s “Heartbreaker” shorts take design inspiration from an aerial shot of Heart Island in the Whitsundays’ Hardy Reef. **“HEARTBREAKER” SHORTS, \$179**
THECORALEMPIRE.COM



← The National Gallery of Victoria’s summer show *Escher x Nendo* is an imagined dialogue between the 20th-century Dutch artist M.C. Escher and contemporary Japanese design studio Nendo, epitomised by this “Plank” cup, which features an oversized handle that juts into the saucer. **NENDO “PLANK SERIES” CUP AND SAUCER, \$40** STORE.NGVVIC.GOV.AU

ART

Kushana Bush

BY John McDonald



LIVES: **DUNEDIN, NEW ZEALAND**
AGE: **35**
REPRESENTED BY: **DARREN KNIGHT GALLERY, SYDNEY; NO MELBOURNE GALLERY**

Her thing. Small, exquisite paintings that echo Mughal miniatures, but with contemporary themes. *Our take.* Kushana Bush’s paintings can’t be fully appreciated at first glance. Like the Mughal miniatures they resemble, her gouaches are packed with tiny details that reward the closest scrutiny. Growing up in a house hung with Japanese prints and Indian paintings, Bush was naturally inclined to explore similar territory in her own work. Along with Indian and Japanese art, she has also been inspired by medieval illuminated manuscripts and the eccentric paintings of Stanley Spencer. It’s all fair game for an Anglo-Saxon Kiwi with a distinctly subcontinental name. There are many bigger, more spectacular works in this year’s Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, but Bush’s pieces have been extremely well received. This may be partly because of the surreal humour found in each crowded composition. In *Hark* (pictured above), what looks at first like the scene of some ancient battle

slowly surrenders a host of anomalous details. One of the prone bodies has a band-aid on its left buttock; another is wearing a T-shirt with a small Nike logo. There don’t seem to be any weapons apart from a long-handled broom and an umbrella, while the battleground appears to be covered in patterned linoleum. *Can I afford it?* It’s more a question of availability than affordability. Bush’s style is so painstaking that she only completes five to 10 paintings per year, so supply is limited. There are five works in the Asia Pacific Triennial display, the largest being *Hark*, at 55cm x 68cm, while the smallest is *In signs*, at 41cm x 54cm. All five pieces have been acquired for the permanent collection of the Queensland Art Gallery. One would imagine that, with such a slender output, Bush’s prices are pretty steep. But her all-time record is only \$11,000, for *In signs*. *Where can I have a squiz?* Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, until April 28; qagoma.qld.gov.au. ■