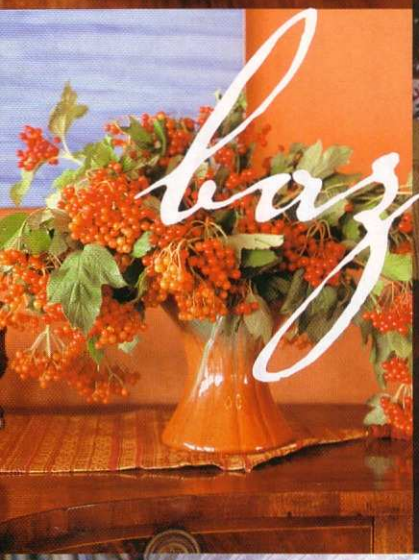
STORY BY **BABETTE HAYES** AND **ROSE-MARIE HILLIER** STYLING BY **BABETTE HAYES** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **SIMON KENNY**



bazaar brilliance

DESIGNERS AND ARTISTS HAVE MUCH IN COMMON – THEY KNOW A LOT ABOUT COLOUR AND PATTERN. SYDNEY ARTIST, AUTHOR AND PHOTOGRAPHER **ANNA-MARYKE** FILLS HER HOME WITH ITEMS INSPIRED BY HER TRAVELS. HERE, SHE REVEALS HER TOP TEN DECORATING TIPS...

ART OF DECORATING

COLOUR REIGNS IN ANNA-MARYKE'S HOME

Anna-Maryke comes from a very creative family. With a Dutch-born father and Australian mother, her multicultural roots were firmly established when she embarked on a career as a photographer. Her images, often inspired by 19th century explorers, photographers and travellers, are captured in black and white. Yet, in the apartment she shares with her husband, she displays great confidence in using unabashed, brilliant colour. The couple, who have a passion for history, travel regularly to archaeological sites.

There is a huge generosity of spirit – with colour and artworks – in this amazing apartment. "My inspiration comes from the layering of texture, the play of light and decoration and colour in the works of 19th century painters such as Ingres, Delacroix and Matisse's odalisques of the 1920s. I've travelled to several of the countries they found inspirational – Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Libya and Iran – and also been influenced by the way pattern, colour and design are still used in those countries in everyday life," says Anna-Maryke.

The couple had originally been looking for a house until they saw this apartment. "It's in a 1920s building, one of only three apartments with high ceilings. It's on the edge of Sydney harbour. The view said it all – it's absolutely breathtaking," she says.

But the apartment was dark, heavy and enclosed. They briefed architects Espie Dods and William Zuccon of Dods and Zuccon to open up the two floors of the apartment to maximise the view. "It was a constantly evolving process – we modified and elaborated on our plans along the way."

The pair travelled overseas while the renovation was being carried out. "The defining moment came after this trip through Libya and Italy. It was important – the architecture, paintings, fabrics. I decided there would not be one white wall in the apartment. It gave me the confidence to use colours, patterns and textures."

Anna-Maryke's book Fragments: Icons of Antiquity *(published by Chapter & Verse) can be ordered at most good book stores. Or order through Anna-Maryke, on 0417 667 558.*

DESIGN SECRETS

Anna-Maryke's

1 mood and atmosphere make it personal

"I wanted to create something that would transport you back in time, to create a mood of being somewhere else – imbued with mystery and magic, almost like a dramatic stage set. You can do this if you focus on the colour, pattern and texture of **every element you bring into a room.** The mosaic-brick faced steel structural columns which frame and anchor the view in the new living room – originally a long, enclosed corridor – look like something from a movie set but they were influenced by the Sassanian Persian architecture we saw in Central Asia. It nearly drove the stonemason crazy having to precisely hand-cut house bricks into tiny mosaics!" ▸

opt for the unusual

"**Don't always go for the obvious.** We replaced all the doors with solid American oak doors that had classical detailing. We found old marble outdoor troughs from Turkey which we fitted as a kitchen sink and basin in the main bathroom. **The kitchen bench is made from recycled ironbark** [from Ironwood Rozelle, Sydney NSW, (02) 9818 1166]. It's protected with resin normally used on surfboards. I painted the 19th century French provincial dish rack Murobond Burnt Chilli to match the walls."

be confident with colour

"The predictable approach to **an apartment with a harbour view** would be to paint it all white or cream. After our trip through Libya and Italy, where colour is so important, I felt I had the **confidence to use colour, pattern and texture.** It was a gamble. I didn't use any sample pots. I figured I had the artistic background since the year dot to go it alone! I chose all the colours basically from the colour cards at a hardware store. When I looked at the Murobond range it seemed to be so right. **A Vermeer painting became the inspiration for the kitchen colours** – we chose Spruce for the ceiling, and Emerald and Burnt Chilli for the walls."

4

lighting can really set the mood

"In the apartment, lighting is subdued and quite dark and moody at night. Not everything is for convenience, but **we have hidden spot lamps which appear when we want to read,** but they disappear when they're not being used. Chandeliers are a fabulous addition for **mood and glamour** and are perfect in the ambience of this mellow apartment." ▸

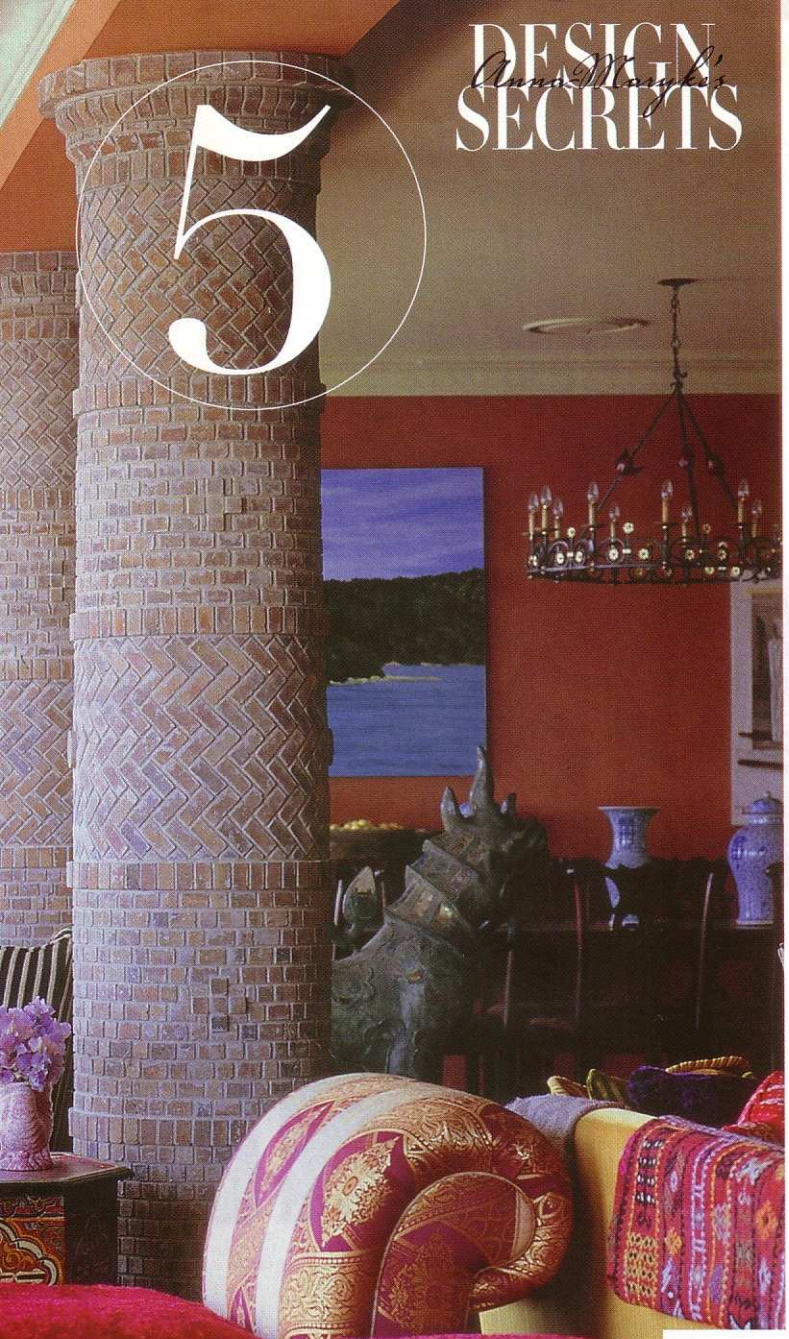
comfort should always come first

"I wanted the living room to be one big, open multi-purpos space with different 'stations' cordoned off. **The idea was t be able to sit anywhere with ease,** to have our extended family set up their toys wherever they like. I wanted people to come here and instantly feel comfortable, to flop down on a sofa and relax. And, of course, our dogs Bunsen and Pipsen needed to be able to lounge around, too. **My advice is don't make your rooms too precious.**"

"the idea was to be able to sit anywhere

5 DESIGN SECRETS

Anne Maryke's



plan to budget, but be flexible

"**The way you can save money** is to do all the legwork, all the running around, yourself. I started with a grand 'wish list'. Some of the work and materials ended up costing more than I'd budgeted for. I had to get my head around that, finding alternatives, using second-hand antique fabrics, for instance, and dyeing fabrics and rugs. I bought drapery remnants from Pepper Green [Berrima, NSW (02) 4877 1488]. I designed all the cushions and Provincial Upholstery [Bowral, NSW (02) 4861 1008] re-covered the old furniture. **You can save by buying second-hand furniture,** which ours is. My husband already had an extensive collection of English and French antiques and artworks. It was a question of **combining what we both liked** against the backdrop that was being created." ▸

6

with ease"

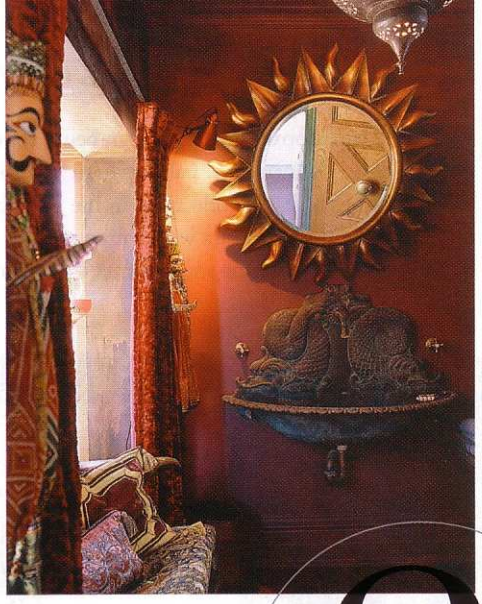
start collecting, it's easy

"**I am a bowerbird.** You can begin collecting old textiles for their luscious, velvety textures or brilliant colours. I always **look out for the unusual or quirky.** Kitchen items are fun things to begin collecting. In the guest bedroom, I've 'layered' the bed linen by combining second-hand fabrics with cotton sheets I dyed. The wall colours here are Murobond Lord Howe, Grapevine and Haymes Brunswick Green. And the Chinese scroll calligraphy is old." ▸

7

"include touches of whimsy and surprises"

9



include the quirky

8

"When decorating, don't **forget a sense of humour** little touches of whimsy and things that surprise you. People don't expect the kasbah when they go to our guest bathroom. But the **colours and fabrics are inspired by the kasbah** and we installed an old fountain base for the hand-basin which we bought from Architectural Heritage [Glebe, Sydney (02) 9660 0100].The wall behind the basin is painted Haymes Burnt Sienna. **The mirror, wall decorations and fabrics are old treasures.**"

learn from the impressionists

"**When you're mixing pattern, look to Matisse.** Or the Middle Eastern countries. When you visit these places, you discover that not one inch of wall is left unpatterned. The main bathroom is my favourite room. I've used lots of different patterned tiles here, bought at A Turkish Bazaar [Camperdown, (02) 9565 4007]. If you are doing this, **lay them out in another room to see how they all work together.** All the window needed was a length of embroidered silk."

make your bedroom colourful

"**The apartment is full of light,** so it can take the bold colours. Also, the high ceilings work well with colour – especially in the main bedroom. **For a rich Orientalist effect** I've used three pairs of second-hand curtains in chintz, heavy cotton and crushed velvet. We dyed the flokati rug aubergine." H&G

10