



TOP NOTCH

SJB's chic black and white design scheme for this Melbourne home, complete with bespoke fittings and luxe finishes, took it to another level of sophistication.

Photograph LUCAS ALLEN Words CARLI PHILIPS



This jug, the 'knotted glass' pendant from Monduluce was the owners' favourite design piece and came from their previous home. Custom-designed hall table with a black steel base and Calacatta marble top. Custom rug by SJB. Opposite page: San Raphael Swirl #11 by Roger Byrt hangs above a 'Valentinox' console in Nero Marquina marble and stainless steel from Misura.

What's black and white and sophisticated all over? The answer is this monochromatic masterpiece designed by SJB and built by Leone Constructions. Located in Melbourne's Toorak, this vast home was built in the early-20th century, and its elegant rebirth is sharp and contemporary without forsaking its heritage rooms.

The owners were repeat clients for SJB director of interior design, Ljiljana Gazevic, who had renovated their previous home with the same black and white brief. She says their relationship made for an innate understanding of their preferences and needs. "I know the family dynamic," says Ljiljana, who jumped at the chance to work on the significantly larger house, purchased with a growing family in mind. "This second project was much easier because I knew the parameters, the way they live and what they like. When they bought the house and asked me to take it on, I already knew what furniture they had, what would suit and what else we would need to fill it because it was considerably bigger. I could visualise what pieces would work well and what we could change."

Pieces such as the dining table and custom credenza from the first house were easily integrated as the palette was the same, albeit pushed to the extreme with big linear contrasts in Nero Marquina and Calacatta marble, and slick edges sweetened by plush custom rugs and rich velvets. In the formal living room, the 'Evergreen' sofa from Fanuli was recovered in a petrol molair, accessorised with "champagne and fuchsia cushions for lift and accent".

The entry gate and landscaping were realigned for symmetry and the front door enlarged. The arched frame was replicated in the spirit of the Arts and Crafts period, but exaggerated for prominence. Oversized double steel-framed doors with bevelled glass infill panels usher in more light and provide a "more grandiose, more luxurious arrival experience", says Ljiljana. The home's original features were kept intact but modernised to suit the contemporary setting, with heavy drapery removed to reveal big windows, timber dado panels carefully placed to hide LED lights, and charcoal panelled walls split with white to ease the heaviness.

To the left of the foyer are the formal living, dining and sitting rooms. To the right, a cinema room, meals and living. The most significant architectural work was done at the rear, with a long kitchen designed as a showpiece to entertain family and friends. A separate, more functional butler's pantry is hidden behind a series of sliding doors where things can be stashed. Overhead, a fluted skylight illuminates the island bench and wraps down along the wall.

Tucked underneath the central staircase is a sleek new powder room that, with its "experiential moodiness", wouldn't look out of place at a nightclub. Wrapped in 'Noir Mineral' wallpaper from Seneca, the mirrored grey ceiling tricks the eye, a pair of Tom Dixon 'Plane' golden disc



These pages in the living area, 'Evergreen' sofa and 'Lay' coffee table, both from Fanuli; 'Giuseppe 333D' floor lamp and 'Hoe 'Sereni' table lamp, both from Eusebio; 'Object 'Corama' side table from Cult. The new fireplace in polished Nero Marquina marble is an exact replica of the original. Yellow Crossing private commission artwork by Jasper Knight. Bronze cubes from Space.

pendants seeming to reflect into infinity. The original staircase wraps the double-height void, spotlighted by a dramatic Murano glass chandelier that came from the owners' previous home. Lijlana says it was a challenge to relocate, but well worth it. "It's a dominant pendant sculpture, but casts a beautiful shadow with its knored glass. It's almost like a gallery space with art exhibited on the walls."

Upstairs, four bedrooms have ensuites, while half the floor has been dedicated to an apartment-like master wing overlooking the pool. His and hers walk-in-robos have been designed for display, meticulously measured for hanging lengths and sized shelving. "It's like walking into a Dior or Chanel boutique, everything is perfectly aligned. We had a special brief for that. Really special. It's like a dream. Shoes galore and so special they had to remain in the boxes. It's a sanctuary." The bathroom references a five-star hotel, enclosed in glass but with timber sliding doors for privacy. The shower is lined with the biggest slab of marble Lijlana says she has ever used.

There is a consistency of geometric patterns throughout the house, with bevelled mirror grids above the fireplaces, stepped stone fireplaces, repetitive panelling and a jigsaw of rectangular glass panels on the glass bathroom doors. With its mature identity and checkerboard colour palette, the house is definitely a winner. 18

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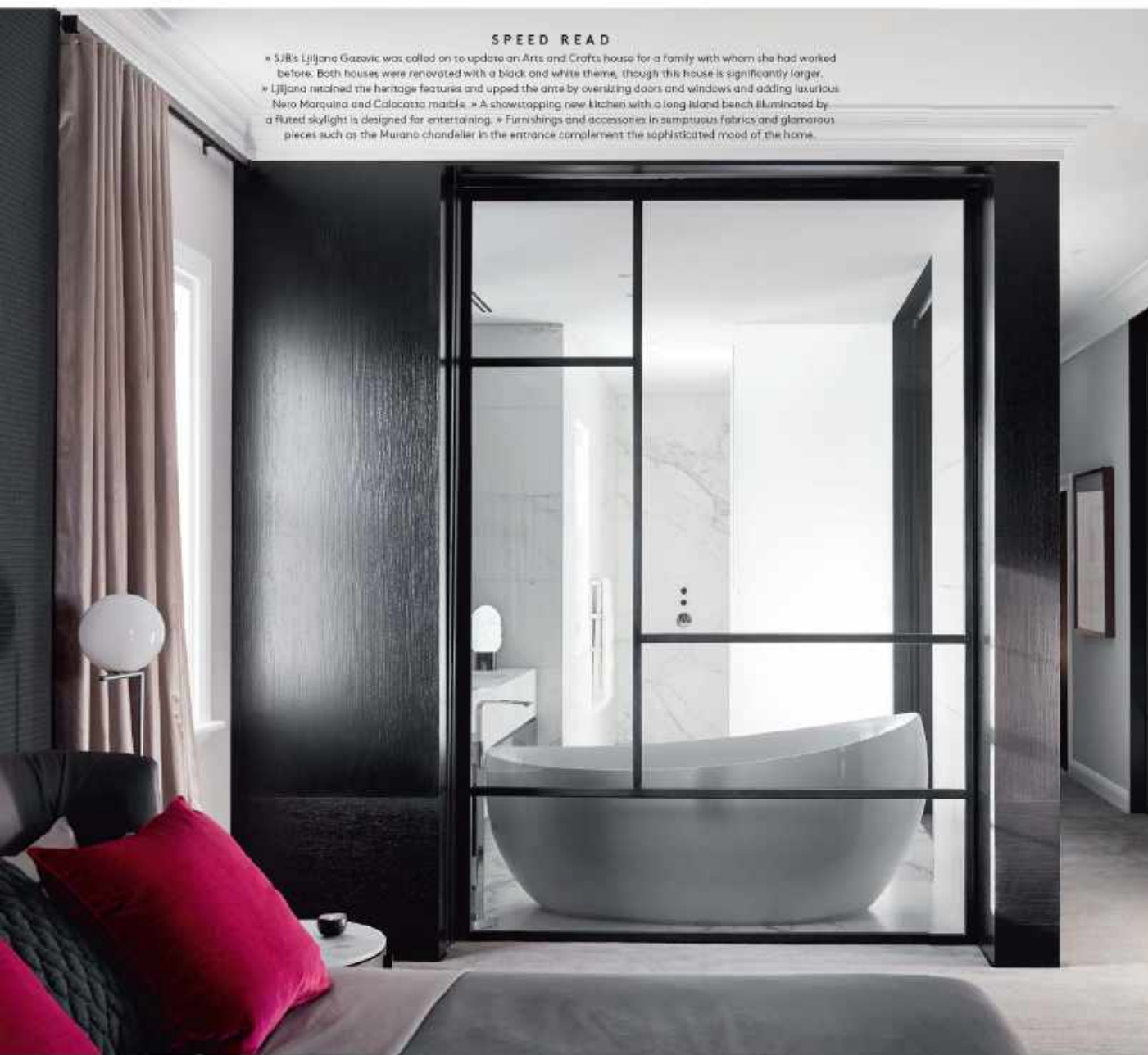
This page: The glass skylight runs the length of the kitchen ceiling and admits plenty of light. 'Joko' dining chair from Faniul. Alka artwork by Lani Mitchell. Opposite page: Flatform 'Astria' armchairs from Faniul. Artwork is Son Raphael Swell #2 by Roger Eyer. Rug from Artzo Rugs + Carpets.



[THE HOME'S] ELEGANT REBIRTH IS SHARP AND CONTEMPORARY WITHOUT FORSAKING ITS HERITAGE ROOTS.

SPEED READ

- » SJR's Ljiljana Gazovic was called on to update an Arts and Crafts house for a family with whom she had worked before. Both houses were renovated with a black and white theme, though this house is significantly larger.
- » Ljiljana retained the heritage features and upped the ante by oversized doors and windows and adding luxurious Nero Marquina and Calacatta marble.
- » A showstopping new kitchen with a long island bench illuminated by a fluted skylight is designed for entertaining.
- » Furnishings and accessories in sumptuous fabrics and glamorous pieces such as the Murano chandelier in the entrance complement the sophisticated mood of the home.



This page: Black steel-framed glass doors into the master bathroom which is swathed in Calacatta and Nero Marquina marble. Opposite page: 'Basket' bed from Fenzi. Cushions from Southwood Home. Michael Anastassiades 'IC' floor lamp from Eurofluoce. A timber screen slides across in front of the bathroom for privacy.