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FERNANDO FRISONI
INSIDE OUT
DECEMBER 2009
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CHANGING SPACES

A CREATIVE EYE INHERITED FROM HIS ARCHITECT FATHER ALLOWED PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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"I love this room, it faces north and gets a lovely breeze," say Sam Rickard of the 'summer' living space in the Sydney home he shares with partner Fernando Frisoni. The two Eames lounge chairs were inherited from his architect father, Bruce Rickard. The artwork behind them is by Ben Hall, and the painting on the other side, by an unknown artist, was bought for \$20 by Sam's father at a Whitlam Labor Party fundraiser in 1975. →

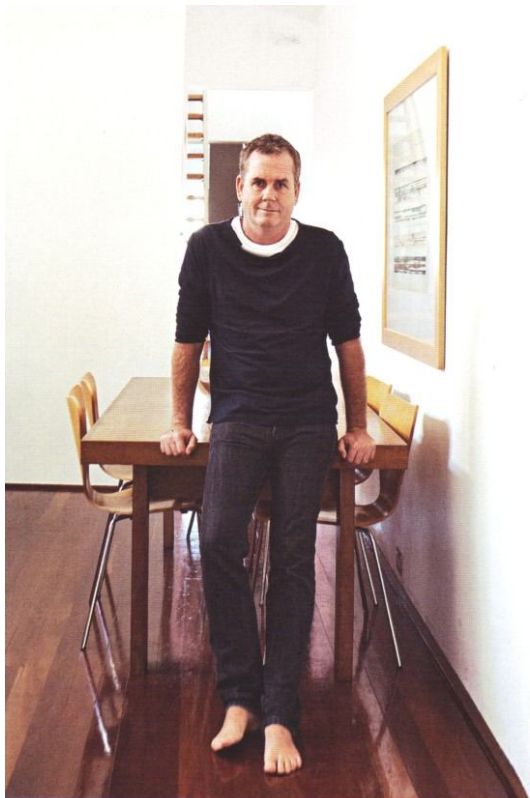


SAM RICKARD TO SEE THE POTENTIAL IN HIS ORIGINALLY DOWN-AT-HEEL SYDNEY TERRACE

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There are two very good reasons why the inner-Sydney home Sam Rickard shares with his partner, Fernando Frisoni, is so well thought out and articulated.

Firstly, Sam's father is renowned architect Bruce Rickard, which means some of his desirable belongings adorn this home – including an office desk he designed 40 years ago (which Sam now uses as a dining table), bookshelves from one of Bruce's offices and several striking pieces of art.

Secondly, Sam is greatly skilled at bringing a place to life. As a production designer working in film and television, he is responsible for creating interiors from scratch and making sure everything you see on screen looks just right. Having worked on TV commercials, music videos and films, both in Australia and overseas, he's currently involved in the design of a housing development project with his father and is also busy producing sets for the TV series *Packed To The Rafters*.

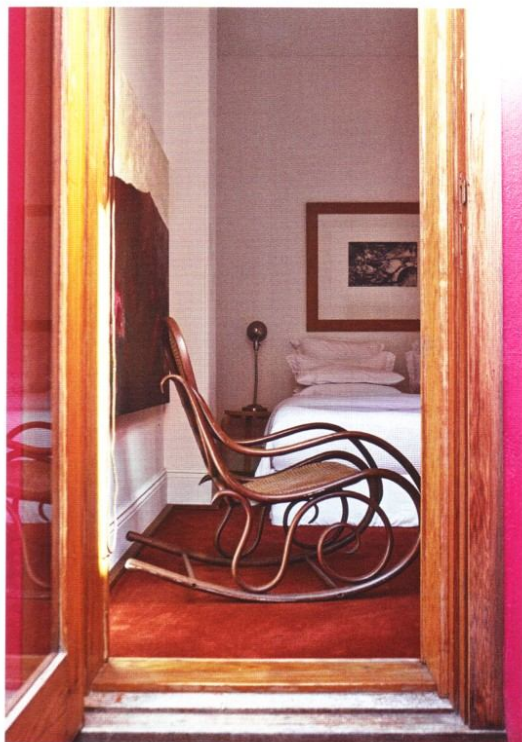
Some of the furniture pieces in the terrace house (which is located on a quiet inner-city lane in Sydney) were acquired from movies and commercials Sam worked on; this is how he came across the 'Swan' chair by Arne Jacobsen. "I found that at an auction and had it re-covered for a job I was doing," recalls Sam. "I then got the flokati rug to match." Both objects are vibrant red, a tone that is repeatedly splashed around the Rickard-Frisoni home, along with another of Sam's favourite hues: "Orange is a colour I'm naturally attracted to and use it without thinking. It's warm and livens up a room or a set."

It certainly adds spark to the terrace's bathroom, where a burst of shiny and bright orange tiles is perfectly matched to the plummy-pink walls of the light well/interior patio outside its window. "I'm really influenced by the Mexican architect Luis Barragán and his use of colours," admits Sam, who created the →



(Opposite page) Sam perches on the dining table that used to be in the office of his father's architectural practice. **(This page)** The interior patio with the bright pink wall was Sam's design. The space is like a light well, allowing sun to beam right through the kitchen (another room that he created "from scratch"), where a Fred Williams painting hangs. Artwork in the "summer" living area includes a piece by Sam's partner, Fernando (next to the candelabra) and a canvas by Richard Goodwin (above Fernando's piece). The vivid red 'Swan' chair was acquired from a shoot that Sam worked on.





light well to bring some much-needed brightness to both the bathroom and the master bedroom.

"When I found this place, it was an absolute mess," he remembers. "It had walls everywhere and barely any windows. But it was like a blank canvas that had all the right elements: it faces north, so it gets loads of sun and it's on a ridge, so we get a lovely sea breeze. There was just something about it that made me feel really inspired."

The area, at the time, was also less than salubrious. "It was full of junkies and really run down," admits Sam. But he could see the potential of the location and loved the facilities nearby. "It's near cafes, and I knew it was going to be a good area. The dirty needles have been replaced by BMWs!"

Japanese-inspired design is another of Sam's favourite styles and he has used such elements – including large, sliding-screen doors and low furniture – in combination with Barraganesque touches of colour to create a flexible living space that works as well for the outdoor life of summer as for the cocooning of winter.

"The terrace is designed to be really flexible," he explains. "It can be two or three bedrooms, or two living rooms and a studio." The winter living room, hidden behind one of those sliding doors, features an open fire, a comfy Cassina couch and beautiful local artworks, as well as a separate area at one end that fashion designer and writer Fernando uses as his atelier.

The summer living room opens up onto a large deck, where the pair spends a lot of time during the warmer weather. The centrepieces here are two bashed-up Eames lounges, which Sam "rescued" from his family. "I grew up swinging on those chairs," he laughs. "They belonged to Dad, but I always had my eye on them."

"It's like an inside-out house," says Fernando of the airy, open space. "Like lounging around on a huge verandah. We love it." ❖



BRIGHTEN UP

By modern standards, this is a very simple kitchen, but Sam's combination of stainless-steel sinks and orange tiled splashback creates a happy atmosphere and an easy-to-maintain cooking environment. Finding a bright colour that isn't too brash to live with long-term can be tricky, but a shade that offers a warm, uplifting effect is worth the search. To help temper the bold tones, the custom stainless-steel configuration adds a classic, clean touch. One company that prides itself on premium made-to-order sinks and benches is Victorian business Veitch, [03] 9462 5099, www.veitchstainless.com.au.

Lea Ceramiche 'Progetto L14' gloss glazed tiles in Paprika, \$73 per sqm for 400mm x 100mm, \$51 per sqm for 400mm x 200mm, from Bisanna Tiles, [02] 9310 2500, www.bisanna.com.au. The range comes in matt and gloss with sizing from 200mm x 200mm.

Murowash in Magenta, \$39 per 1L, from Murobond, 1800 199 299, www.murobond.com.au.

Lumbersider all-purpose acrylic in Bullseye, \$43.90 per 1L, from Resene, 1800 738 383.

IN DETAIL
ideas from the Rickard home

Cassina 'Maralunga' two-seater sofa in leather by Vico Magistretti, from \$15,160, from Space, [02] 8339 7588, www.spacefurniture.com. Herman Miller 'Eames' lounge chair and ottoman by Charles and Ray Eames, \$6045, from Living Edge, 1300 132 154.

HOT SHOTS

Sam has a dedicated love of the colour orange but also doesn't mind a bit of red and pink at times. Here are some suggested variations on his palette for anyone who would like to brighten up their home. Note that strong colours like these are a little more expensive than pale hues, due to the deep paint bases required.

NATURAL LINES

The simple slab coffee table and the similar bench storage in the lounge room create a low-key crafted statement that contrasts effectively with the strong colours and shapes of the flokati rug and 'Swan' chair. This solid unadorned style can be found in the teak furniture available at Oishi Furniture & Homewares in Sydney. The store features a collection of long-lasting, reasonably priced pieces made in Indonesia to the designs of the shop's owner, Christian Lauweriks, and by a European firm called Ethnicraft.

enduring icons A few key classic furniture pieces around the house show the Rickard designer legacy. Sam's Eames lounge chairs in the main lounge area are rosewood versions inherited from his father, Bruce. Now mainly available in walnut, the chair, which was designed in 1956, creates an informal atmosphere and works well in eclectic interiors. The 'winter' lounge area houses Vico Magistretti's masterpiece from 1973: the Cassina 'Maralunga' sofa. This design introduced the folding headrest into sofa design. The leather version is popular, while fabric variations offer a softer look.

'Double' bench in solid reclaimed or plantation teak by Ethnicraft (180cm x 40cm x 45cm), from \$550, from Oishi Furniture & Homewares, [02] 9960 4200, www.oishi.com.au.

in detail



'Akari' sideboard, POA, from Takeshi Iue, 0412 081 803, www.takeshiue.com.

EAST OF EVERYTHING

The house shows some strong Japanese influences. A large sliding timber screen is used to create an intimate second lounge (the 'winter' one) and maintain privacy for Fernando's atelier. The low slab coffee table and bench storage in the main living area echo this simple Eastern feel.

To replicate this effect, contact Japan Woodworking in Sydney. It's run by Takashi Nishiura, a master woodworker who makes Asian-inspired cabinetry, shoji screens and tatami rooms while also producing more conventional European-style furniture and fitted timber kitchens. Call (02) 9907 0924 or visit www.japanwoodworking.com.

Takeshi Iue is an award-winning furniture designer based in Adelaide. He works to commission as well as producing his own range of contemporary Japanese pieces – mainly handcrafted in timber – such as the 'Akari' sideboard shown above. For more information, you can call Takeshi Iue on 0412 081803 or have a look online at www.takeshiue.com.



OLD ROCKER

Thonet started making rocking chairs in 1860 and was soon turning over 100,000 of them annually. This iconic design is available here in a light or dark oak stain with seat and back in hand-woven cane. Bentwood rocking chair, \$677, from Thonet Australia, 1800 800 777. Painting by Robin Young, Sam's mother.



LIGHTS ON

An interesting mix of vintage designer and economical task lights are dotted about the house. The curved table lamp in white and chrome in the lounge is a vintage piece by Verner Panton, while the bedside lights are from Ikea. Here are some ideas for models with similar looks.

Book marks

A rustic ladder used as a bookshelf in the bedroom has been cleverly modernised with an artful splash of red paint. If you don't have the flair for creating your own, consider these ready-made options that achieve a similar effect – from the affordable 'Rexbo' shelf from Ikea to the beautifully crafted 'Libri' from Swedese. (From left) 'Leaning' bookshelf in black-painted solid birch timber, \$390, from Orson & Blake, (02) 8399 2525, www.orsonandblake.com.au. 'Rexbo' bookshelf in Red by Francis Cayouette, \$65, from Ikea, (02) 8002 0400, www.ikea.com.au. Swedese 'Libri' slimline bookshelf in Black by Michael Bihain, \$1800, from Fred International, (02) 8004 9890, www.fredishere.com.au.



1. 'Barometer' lamp in Red, \$69, from Ikea, (02) 8002 0400. 2. 'Format' lamp, \$49.99 from Ikea, as before. 3. 'Dalu' light by Vico Magistretti, \$175, from Artemide, 1300 135 709. 4. Unique Copenhagen 'Flowerpot VP4' lamp, \$695, by Verner Panton, from Great Dane, (02) 9699 7677.



BE FLOORED

Sam has chosen brushbox, an Australian eucalypt species, for its soft reddish-brown tones, for the large floor expanses, such as the lounge room. This very hard timber is perfect for floors and sits in the colour spectrum somewhere between the browner spotted gum and the slightly redder shades of turpentine. Much easier to co-ordinate with other colours than very red species, like blue gum and jarrah, brushbox is, however, one of the more expensive local hardwoods, due to its limited availability.

If you like the vivid red flokati rug in the lounge, it's worth considering a floorcovering that incorporates different textures – from a soft blend of wool/silk to the chunky, more substantial and tactile feel of tufted wool.



(From left) 'Aquatic Silk' New Zealand wool/silk rug in MC Dankey, \$2560 for 1.6m x 2.3m (other variations also available); 'Felted J Tuft' rug in Burnt Orange, \$1930 for 1.6m x 2.3m (other variations also available), from Rugs Carpet & Design, www.rc-d.com.au.

Brushbox floorboards (85mm x 19mm) from \$74.85 per sqm for Australiana grade or \$97.96 per sqm in select grade. Prices are supply only, based on 40sqm or more, from Sydney Flooring, (02) 9755 1899.