

Quiet time

In Sydney, a clever reworking of the floor plan and deliberately restrained furnishings have achieved a wonderfully peaceful home for its busy owners.

STORY *Elizabeth Wilson* | STYLING *Jack Milenkovic* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Anson Smart*



VERANDAH The dining table is positioned under a giant skylight, ensuring this outdoor space – just off the family room – is bathed in light, even in winter. Pedrali ‘Nolita’ dining chairs, Chunky dining table, Willy Guhl ‘Loop’ chair and Chess stool, all Robert Plumb. **LIVING** A painting by Betty Mbitjana was the starting point for this scheme. Vessels by Katarina Wells, Curatorial+Co. Abrash Solid rug, Cadrys. Pliverre floor lamp, Great Dane. The Tired Man armchair and ottoman, Fred International. Frankie sofa, Fanuli. Mondrian coffee table, Poliform. Hex side tables, Spence & Lyda. Knot ornament, Jordan.



Designing a house is like hand-sewing a perfectly-fitted dress, says architect Jorge Hrdina. “You want a home that’s tailor-made and really connected to who you are,” he says. And this is the notion he and interior designer Lisa Burdus brought to the remodelling of this home in Sydney’s upper North Shore.

As often happens with these things, the renovation evolved after a series of home-maintenance events. First, the oven blew up, then the fridge was on the blink - which led the owners to think about renovating the kitchen. Then they began thinking about all the areas of the home that didn’t feel ‘right’. Which led them to engage Jorge. “It’s a postwar bungalow that had undergone several makeovers, including an extension in the 1970s,” says Jorge. “It was a voluminous house but the renovations weren’t in sync, so it felt like something of a hybrid.” Because of the

organic nature of these additions there was a fundamental problem with movement through the house.

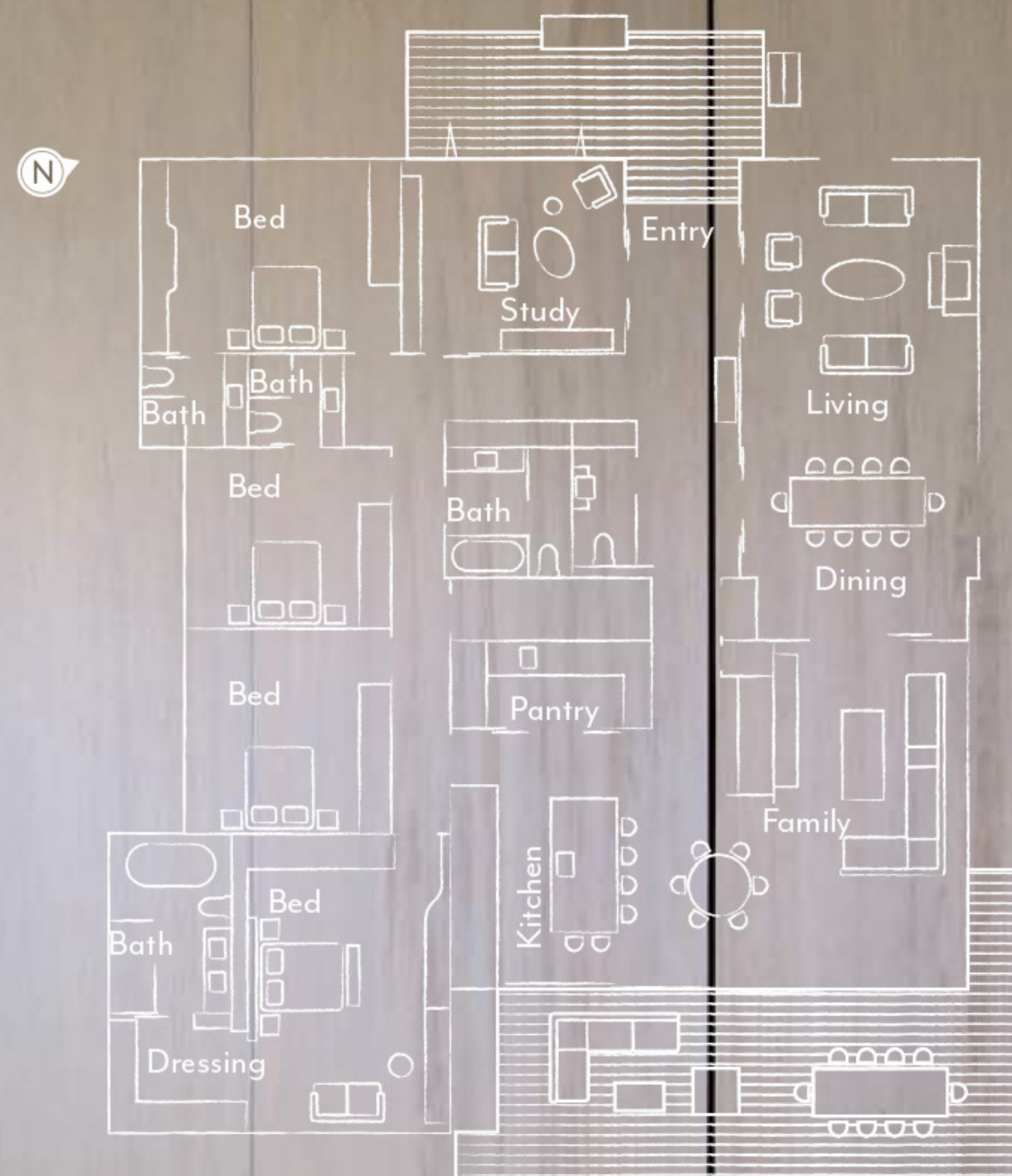
His priority was to improve the flow of the four-bedroom home. All vestiges of the 1970s extension were removed and some internal walls altered to create a formal entry and two connected open-plan spaces - one a kitchen/meals/family area, the other a combined living/dining zone. “The renovation wasn’t about making the house bigger, it was about making it work better,” says Jorge. A key focus was to ensure a strong connection between the internal living space and the leafy canopy outside.

For furnishings and decoration, the owners turned to interior designer Lisa Burdus, whose work they’d loved on a previous project. Their brief? “They wanted to create the look of an elegant hotel,” says Lisa. “They’d collated images on Pinterest and all the furniture was very ‘Milan’: Italian and contemporary. ▶



FAMILY Rooms at the rear of the house are designed to enhance integration with the adjacent 4m-deep verandah and garden. Mondrian modular sofa, Space. Abrash Solid rug, Cadrys. Float side table (left), Spence & Lyda. Chess side stool, Robert Plumb. **DINING** Eileen dining table, B&B Italia. Grace dining chairs from Poliform, upholstered in Danubio 58 velvet. Il Fanale pendant light, LightCo. Curtains in Studio Collection ‘Sinua’ fabric, Tigger Hall Design. Artwork by Nunzio Miano, Curatorial+Co. Drinks cabinet designed by Jorge Hrdina.

The layout



THIS IS THE LIFE

To maximise integration with the outdoors, the floor and ceiling planes continue flush inside and out, and the huge sliding doors glide back in two directions, offering open-air living. In the older rooms of the house, Jorge widened the doorways, retaining the architraves, and fitted them with modern sliding partitions. "It gives those rooms the option of intimacy, or fluid access to the open-plan area of the house." ▶

