



Ester was the first restaurant Dewald took me to when I arrived in Australia, for my 30th birthday. The space's raw, minimalist nature and warm, ambient glow set the tone for the wood-fired, produce-driven dishes. Each plate was simple and subtle in flavour, balanced perfection with refined finesse. The fermented potato bread with kefir and dashi cream was life-changing and has become a favourite of ours. [ester-restaurant.com.au](http://ester-restaurant.com.au)

Edited by VERHAAL STUDIO  
Portrait ALANA LANDSBERRY

THAT VERHAAL HAS A GALLERY APPENDED TO ITS ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN STUDIO IN BALMAIN, SYDNEY, IS TESTAMENT TO THE FIRM'S PASSION FOR PROMOTING ART AND DESIGN ALONGSIDE THE "EXCEPTIONAL HOSPITALITY, HOTEL, RETAIL AND RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCES" THEY CREATE. FOUNDERS NEYDINE BAK AND DEWALD STRUWIG HAVE ASSEMBLED A RAFT OF TALENTED COLLABORATORS TO ASSIST IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS. HERE, THEY OPEN THE BOOKS ON THEIR FAVOURITE ADDRESSES. [VERHAAL.STUDIO](http://VERHAAL.STUDIO)

# INFLUENCES



## SPACES

**THE GREAT OUTDOORS** We do enjoy walking in nature and love to show its wonders to our little ones. The Calyx at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney (left) is a must-visit! It has the most incredible displays throughout the year. Currently, inBLOOM is an exhibition displaying over 20,000 plants with one of the largest green walls in the Southern Hemisphere. It is a breathtaking sensorial experience of light, colour and fragrance. Gibbs Farm (below) is also on our wish list. Located at Kaipara Harbour, near Auckland, New Zealand, this outdoor sculpture garden has an extraordinary collection of commissioned works, including Anish Kapoor's *Dismemberment, Site 1* (below) and



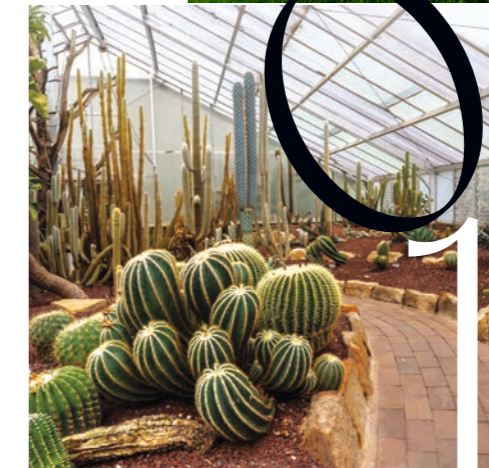
## INSPIRING



### [ Child's play ] BEMELMANS BAR

*Bemelmans Bar at The Carlyle hotel in NYC is one of the most intensely memorable spaces. The hand-painted murals, originally created by Austria-born artist Ludwig Bemelmans in 1947, still adorn the walls with their soft ambient lighting. The characters were inspired by the Madeline books written by Bemelmans and depict the four seasons of New York. The childlike illustrations come to life at this iconic venue which is excellent for people-watching, too.* [rosewoodhotels.com](http://rosewoodhotels.com)

PHOTOGRAPHY SUE MARTIN (WOLLONGONG BOTANIC GARDEN); ROBERTO SALOMONE, COURTESY OF LE SIRENUSE. (FRANCO'S BAR)



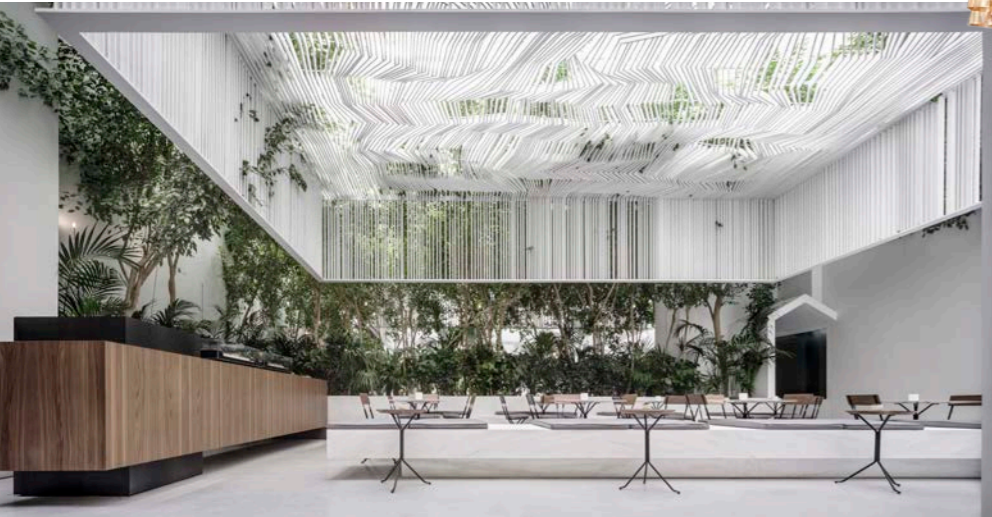
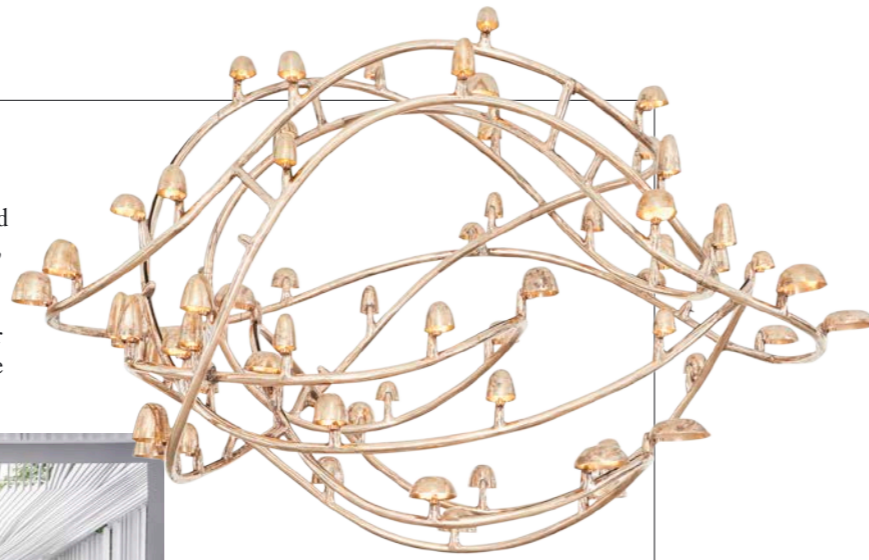
Jeff Thomson's *Giraffe*. A visit to the Succulent Collection in the Sir Joseph Banks Glasshouse (left) at Wollongong Botanic Garden feels as if you're lost in a Mexican desert. While cacti are not native to Australia, this is an extensive display of unique and beautiful plants. We suggest visiting in June and July when the agave and aloe are in full bloom as their flower spikes are exquisite. [rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](http://rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au); [gibbsfarm.org.nz](http://gibbsfarm.org.nz); [wollongongbotanicgarden.com.au](http://wollongongbotanicgarden.com.au)

**LOCATED JUST** above the iconic Le Sirenuse Hotel in Positano, Franco's Bar bridges the gap between art and function. Owners Antonio and Carla Sersale are renowned for showcasing their passion for art throughout both their properties. One of our favourites is the abstract water feature by Italian artist Giuseppe Ducrot. When you stand in front of it, the fluid movement is mesmerising and overwhelmingly precise. [sirenuse.it](http://sirenuse.it)





**IT IS TRULY MAGICAL** having an espresso underneath the 'moving' ceiling at the Museum of Cycladic Art cafe in Athens, designed by Kois Associated Architects. This mesmerising installation (below) was inspired by the simple and thoughtful elements of this traditional art. As a studio, we try to create different installations for each project and are always looking for inspiration. We are busy with an installation chandelier (right) by Frederik Molenschot of Studio Molen in The Netherlands for a residential villa in the Middle East, a piece that will set the tone for the art-inspired family home. [koisarchitecture.com](http://koisarchitecture.com); [studiomolen.nl](http://studiomolen.nl)



**SEXY FISH's** washrooms are spectacular. We are always intrigued with washroom design when we travel. Our obsession with Quatre Saison marble was reinforced after a visit to this intensely opulent space (below) in the London restaurant. The glow of the backlit onyx over the large stone patterning reflected in the mirror perfectly showcases its natural beauty. The extensive use of the stone inspired us to create a magical washroom for a client. [sexyfish.com](http://sexyfish.com)



[ escape ARTIST ]  
KITE FLYING

*Artwork plays a pivotal role in Verhaal's concept creations. South Africa-born, Byron-based artist Diana Miller's obscure compositions transport the viewer from reality. The loose geometry is woven together with intuitive line work, resulting in an illusive piece. One of her beautiful collection, 'The Great Escape', Running with Kites (below), shows her masterly use of colour and playful brush strokes.* [dianamiller.me](http://dianamiller.me)



WE LOVE SOPHIE DAVIES FOR HER UNUSUAL HANDMADE LIGHTING AND TABLES, ESPECIALLY THE FLOOR LAMP (RIGHT) FROM THE TWISTER COLLECTION. [SOPHIEDAVIES.COM.AU](http://SOPHIEDAVIES.COM.AU)



PHOTOGRAPHY AGNIESZKA CHABROS (ANGIE PAI), GIORGOS SFAKIANAKIS (CYCLADIC CAFE, OPPOSITE PAGE)

ARTISANS

**ANGIE PAI** is a Taiwan-born artist and fashion designer based in Melbourne. Her delicate, multi-layered work often depicts her personal and political views and, frequently, the importance of family. There is no fixed medium or style, but rather an expression of a client's passion for their own brand or family home. Angie's work seems simple but on taking a closer look you see its complexity and depth. [angiepai.com](http://angiepai.com)



Soane Britain has an amazing selection of rattan furniture and lighting. We simply adore the oversized 'Rattan Daisy' hanging light. [soane.co.uk](http://soane.co.uk)

[ Social Medium ]

OFF THE WALLS

*Villa Santo Sospir, home of socialite Francine Weisweiler, was covered in 'tattoos' by artist Jean Cocteau (right). After he completed his work, she and friend Madeleine Castaing decorated the home. Famed for her eclectic aesthetic, Francine inspired Verhaal with her style as she managed to create intense emotion within her interiors where every surface is adorned with patterns and textiles.*



ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Experts in light studies for interior projects InLite in Sydney's Chippendale have a great selection of international brand fittings, including Delta Light of Belgium which created the 'Miles C2 E27 Smoke' pendant light (1). Mi&Gei is the brand of a French couple living in Goa, India, who design and hand-craft considered hardware in recycled brass or bronze such as the 'Hook and Pull Forme-No3' cast brass wall hook, cabinet pull or curtain tie back (2). Two Tease in Sydney's Crows Nest has an extensive range of lovely brass and forged iron hardware such as the 'Nour by Edward van Vliet EV200V' solid front doorknob in Satin Gold (3). [inlite.com.au](http://inlite.com.au); [miandgei.com](http://miandgei.com); [twotease.com.au](http://twotease.com.au)







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**SELJAK BRAND** is an inspiring marque created by two sisters in 2016. They use recycled lambswool and merino to weave new blankets (left) using the oldest mill in Tasmania. They are constantly finding new ways to realise regenerative designs. Truly inspiring. [seljakbrand.com.au](http://seljakbrand.com.au)

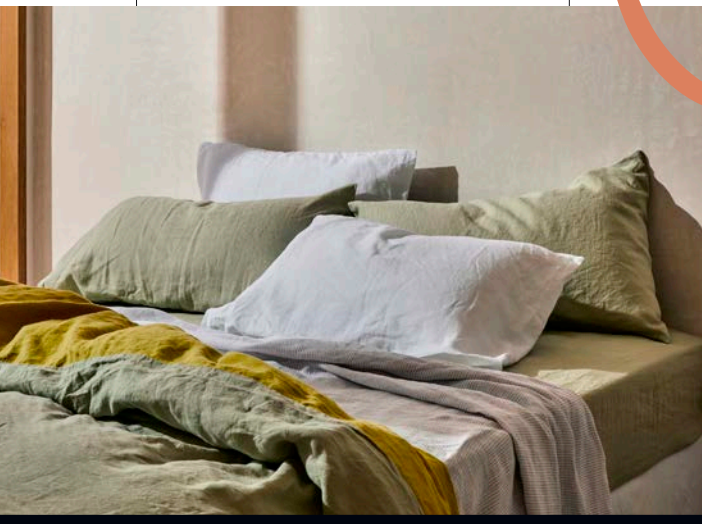
LUXE SUSTAINABILITY



[ paper PLAY ]  
ELONAH O'NEIL

South African paper artist *Elonah O'Neil* transforms paper into sculpted beauty (left). Her ability to see the potential of what a two-dimensional surface can become is incredibly humbling. One of our most beloved installations we have done with her was a paper installation that imitated a tulle skirt, which added a feminine edge and a softness to the quiet interior dining area with its bohemian undertone. [elonahoneil.com](http://elonahoneil.com)

**MILOU MILOU** makes luxury flax linen bedding that is sustainably sourced and made to order. The company is carbon neutral and has a zero waste policy. Who couldn't resist getting the double-sided customisable duvet cover in yarn-dyed Olive and Mustard (below) for home? [miloumilou.com](http://miloumilou.com)



'MS SUN' IS PART OF HUIS, OUR HOMEWARE RANGE LAUNCHING THIS YEAR. SHE IS CHEEKILY CUTE AND HAS BEEN METICULOUSLY HANDMADE BY ARTISANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE ARE TOTALLY OBSESSED WITH HER CLEOPATRA-ESQUE HAIRSTYLE AND SURPRISED EXPRESSION. THAT A SMALL SCATTER CUSHION CAN CARRY SO MUCH EMOTION IS REFRESHINGLY SPECIAL.



DECORATION

5

[ limited EDITION ]  
CURATORIAL+CO.

Redfern-based art house *Curatorial+Co* represents a wonderful collection of artists and acts as a consultancy to assist both designers and clients in sourcing the perfect piece for their projects and homes. Artist *Odette Ireland's* sculptural mobile (above, right) would be perfect revolving slowly in a bedroom window. Constructed of a brass disc and smoke-fired porcelain in the shape of eucalyptus leaves and seed pod, it reflects the true nature of our Australian landscape. [curatorialandco.com](http://curatorialandco.com)



**WORN** has curated a range of hard-to-find pieces of vintage and modern collectables. We are in love with the two-tone veneer of the 'Stripe Indent Circular Tabouret' which feels like it could be a piece out of Villa Santo Sospir (p32). [wornstore.com.au](http://wornstore.com.au)





**BEN STORMS** is the son of a stonemason who is redefining the stereotype of one of the world's oldest building materials, marble. The Belgian designer and craftsman (right) pushes the boundaries of the material and questions how we can alter our perception of its appearance. "By creating shapes that verge on the impossible, I confuse the viewers, make them lose their balance briefly, and stimulate them to look at familiar materials with a fresh eye," he says. This is why we find his work so extraordinary, especially the 'Ex Hale' table (below), a marble pillow. [benstorms.be](http://benstorms.be)



[ stone AGE ]  
BEN STORMS



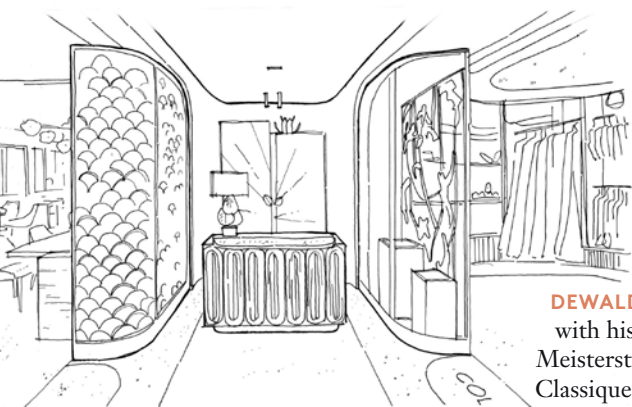
## TYPES



**THE DREAMLIKE ILLUSTRATIONS** of artist and interior designer Luke Edward Hall (left) have their own unique style in telling his personal story, which is playful, eclectic and whimsical. Luxury brands such as Lanvin, Burberry and Habitat are eager to collaborate with Luke to create mystical illustrations for their own ranges. The ease with which Luke moves between the various project scopes, including the 'Neptune' lidded vase for Ginori 1735 (left), redefines the role of a designer. [lukeedwardhall.com](http://lukeedwardhall.com)

[ flower POWER ]  
BUNCHING UP

*Isa Isa in LA creates mesmerising floral art. The floral design studio (left), founded by Sophia Moreno-Bunge, takes inspiration from natural surroundings and uses fruit, unusual foliage and foraged flowers to create elaborate compositions that break away from stereotypical botanical arrangements. [isafloreal.com](http://isafloreal.com); @isaisafloreal*



**DEWALD SKETCHES** with his Montblanc Meisterstück 'Platinum Classique' fountain pen – a good-luck gift from a favourite client.

36 belle



**BEIGE IS NOT A COLOR** by Carlos Mota captures the imagination and soul of each interior within the pages. I can feel their stories resonate from the images. The layered patterns and collectables that fill the creative spaces are indulgent yet calming.



07 COLLECTABLES