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THOMAS HAMEL | SAHBA ABEDIAN | LESTER MILTON

HOMEWARES + DECORATING + LIGHTING + PAINTS AND COLOURS + SMART HOMES

Vol.11 No.3
AUG/SEP 2008
AUS \$12.00*
NZ \$9.90
(both incl GST)



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Right A grand fireplace and period pieces furnish the living room. Below Distinguished interior decorator Thomas Hamel.

beach revival

A world-class renovation from a world-class designer

When we think back to the seventies we remember long hair, painting flowers on our cheeks and mung beans. What about disproportionate windows, low ceilings, tiny bedrooms and living areas that are so jumbled you need a map to navigate around them? In certain cases, some of us are unfortunate enough to still be living like that.

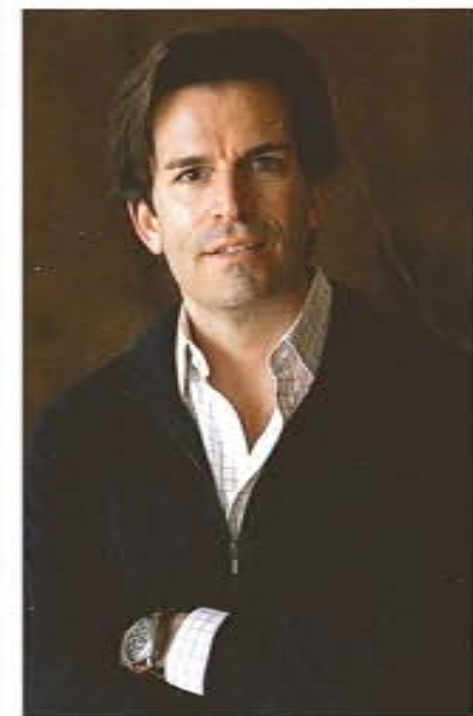
Seasoned traveller and discerning interior decorator, Thomas Hamel had to turn the proverbial decorating paintbrush on his own

home when he bought a run-down 1970s beach house on the NSW Central Coast. "I was a demanding client and wanted an interesting mix of various cultures and styles representative of all my travels," he tells us.

The two-storey home had a floorplan indicative of its age that needed a total update. Thomas, with the help of architect Michael Bell, removed most of the walls and made the roof flat to give additional ceiling height. The middle of the home, where the dining and living areas are situated, was very dark due to its shape so a central lightwell was installed to allow in natural light. Large timber beams were also sourced from Newcastle in NSW to add architectural interest and detail to the main ceiling.

The organic feel that was being established was complemented with timber floors stained in dark lacquer and black. Upstairs, the master bedroom and all living areas take advantage of the ocean views on one side and bay views on the other. Lofty ceilings here flow from the entertaining area to the master bath and bedroom, creating one space.

Downstairs, guest accommodation, including a bedroom, small kitchenette and second sitting area, were streamlined to take on simple, clean lines. This simplicity also creates a good backdrop for a collection of Anglo-Indian furniture and accessories, which are proudly displayed. Rooms here were made to look higher without the pain of total structural renovation by removing the gyprock from under the beams and adding v-groove plywood to resemble a timber ceiling. >





Above and below The home is filled with all sorts of items Thomas has collected from all over the world.
Opposite page Large windows let light spill into the kitchen and living room, keeping the whole home cheery.

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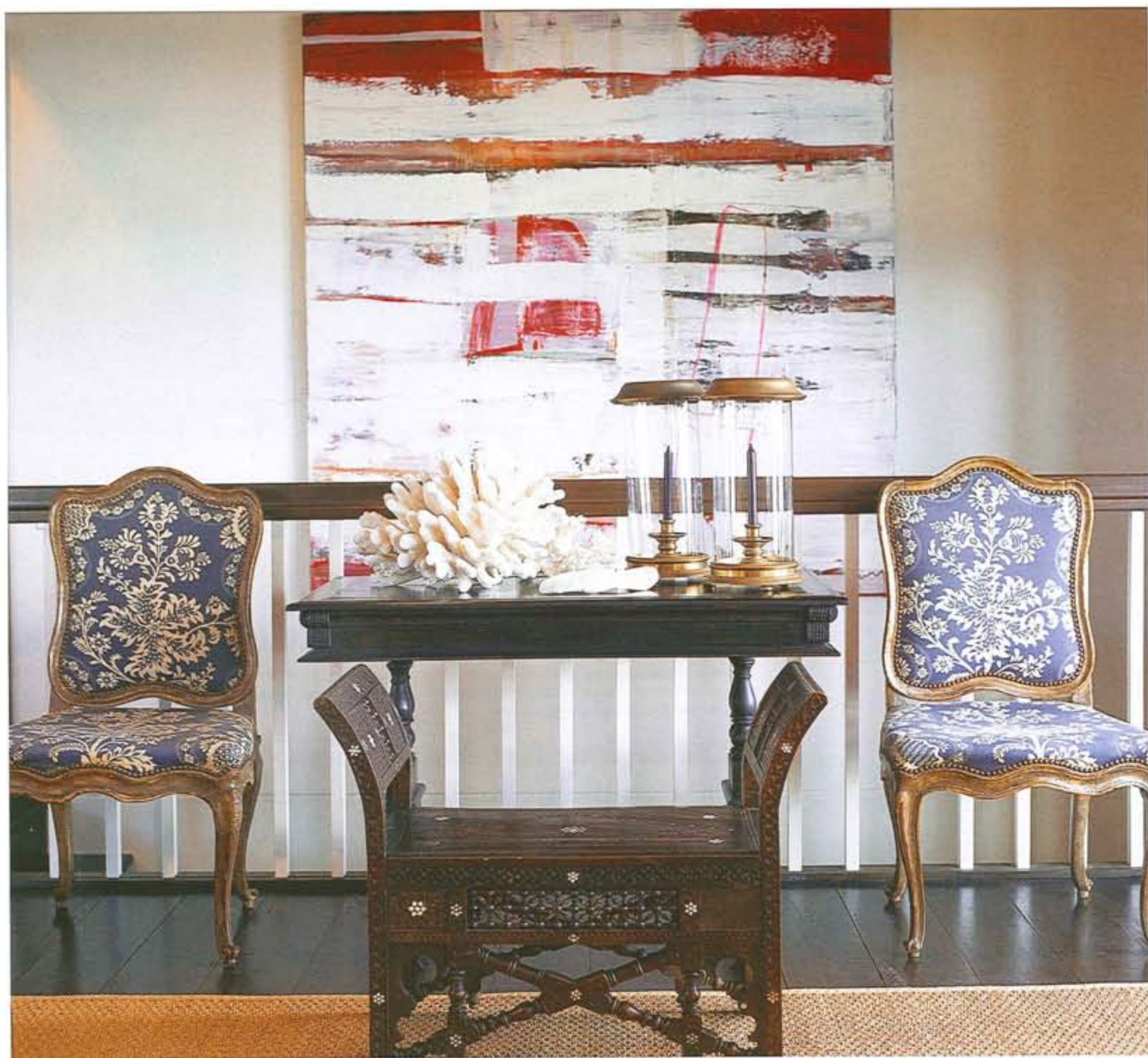




Above The double-vanity bathroom has plenty of room for primping. Below A traditional clawfoot bath and large timber linen cupboard create a very traditional feel. Opposite page The spectacular four-poster bed in the master bedroom takes pride of place.

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Above Styles have been mixed in this sitting area, with contemporary art set against parlour chairs and brass lanterns.

Large bi-fold doors were used to connect the inside spaces with the outside. Metal was used as opposed to the usual glass and works well to contrast against the woods and earth tones. Stone was used in the bathrooms and a limestone fireplace was sourced in Melbourne as the centrepiece for the living area.

Thomas's wealth of experience, having worked for Parish-Hadley — one of the world's most notable design firms — certainly helps form a very educated opinion and knowledge of what works well in a room. His most notable

design projects are in New York — Trump Tower, Museum Tower and United Nations Plaza — and using this broad knowledge of contemporary and even period styles is always a huge benefit to any home he designs.

By working closely with his architect, as he does on all projects, Thomas was able to get a cohesive balance of architectural renovation as well as decorative. He has taken the home out of the past and propelled it into the future, a future which will certainly be full of lots of beach holidays from now on. ●

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