



MY SPACE

HOW SIX PEOPLE MAKE THEIR MARK ON ONE ROOM

Their flats are the same, but these residents have very different styles. We take a peek inside one apartment block to see how their visions play out. Text by Naomi Jaul



JUANITA FIELD

When art director Juanita Field inspected this flat 10 years ago, it was hardly the haven it is today. “People were walking out saying, ‘This is disgusting,’” she remembers. “It had dirty

shag pile carpet, nicotine-stained, salmon-painted walls, and it smelled awful, too.” But after searching for a year, Juanita knew she had finally found home, and made an offer. “I could see the bones and what it could be.”

After giving her apartment a much-needed paint job, Juanita filled it with finds from the ‘40s to the ‘70s. Today, it frequently hosts craft days with friends. “It might not be to everyone’s taste, but it is to mine.”



ANDREW, MARIE AND LUCA COLANGELO

“Contemporary but classic” is how Marie Colangelo, a 32-year-old hotel project manager, describes the way she and her

husband, Andrew, 36, have decorated their two-bedroom apartment. The couple bought the place – almost by accident – soon after becoming engaged in 2005. “We were quite ambivalent at the auction,” recalls Andrew,

an architect. “But we put in a bid anyway – when we realised we got it, we were shocked!” Four years later, the couple are parents to six-month-old Luca – the first baby in the building in 28 years.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ADRIAN COOK. STYLED BY JO CARMICHAEL



**ANDREW TRUSWELL
AND VINCENT LEOW**

Lawyer Andrew Truswell (right), the building's newest resident, was forced to make some tough decisions when he moved from a

three-bedroom house into this one-bedroom apartment less than two months ago. "I was a mad e-Bayer," the 44 year old laughs. "But I kept things that have a connection and a story." His partner, psychiatrist Vincent Leow,

44, lives around the corner. "Its like having one place with two wings," Andrew muses. "We like to host two-act dinners where we have a course at his place and then walk two blocks for a course at mine."



SUSAN DU CHESNE

When grandmother-of-three Susan Du Chesne wanted to redesign her apartment six years ago, she looked to her wardrobe for inspiration. "I wanted it to be like a nice

pair of linen slacks," she recalls telling her interior designer. "Smart and sophisticated, while being warm and welcoming." When Susan bought the apartment, it hadn't been refurbished since the 1930s. "It even

had the original meat safe in the kitchen and a wind-up telephone on the wall," she says. After extensive renovations, including the installation of a fireplace, Susan admits she's pleased. "I've put my mark on it."



GAVIN MCCORMACK AND MOHAMMAD AMBRAN

All their relatives might live overseas, but Gavin McCormack (left), 30, and Mohammad Ambran, 24, have found a sense of family in

being flatmates. “Sydney’s really transient,” says primary schoolteacher Gavin, from England. “When you find solid friends who you can live and hang out with, it’s great.” But the pair admit they don’t always see eye to eye,

especially when it comes to tidiness. “Mo likes the apartment to be like an IKEA showroom,” teases Gavin. “I just want to walk around with bare feet,” retorts chef Mohammad, from Brunei, “and not fall over anything!”



ANNE AND VIV NDABA

“I didn’t know how I’d cope with close neighbours and confined spaces,” admits literacy teacher Anne Ndaba of downsizing from a house to a flat. “But I actually think

I’ve got more privacy here than I did in the suburbs.” Today, her apartment is filled with artefacts she’s accumulated on her travels around Asia and Africa – with each piece holding a special meaning. “I treasure

things from different stages in my life that remind me of people from those stages,” explains Anne, pictured here with her 26-year-old son, Viv, who house-sits whenever his mum is travelling overseas. ■

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