

THE ARTEDOMUS SERIES

Hawthorn House

Christopher Elliott Design

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Windows by Steel Window Design • Flooring by Made by Storey • Lighting by Est Lighting

The scale and grandeur of the staircase is enhanced by the sumptuous and seamless Artedomus Elba marble that wraps up the treads (facing page).





Within the bones of an original 1930s home in Melbourne, Christopher Elliott Design has created a restrained and elegant interior world that infuses art deco elements with a contemporary sensibility.

The design coalesces around three defining gestures: the dramatic double helix staircase, the oak slatted detailing, and the steel-framed glazing that creates a new connection between the interior and the garden. From these three elements, Christopher Elliott Design developed a design language that informed the overarching concept. Director Christopher Elliott describes how the original architecture “wasn’t the purest example of the iconic period,” nevertheless, they sought to retain aspects that spoke to the Hawthorn House’s history. “We took cues from the original architecture by retaining a modernised ‘deco’ style and infusing it with a new contemporary design,” Christopher says.

The project was prompted by the clients who, with their children now moved out of home, felt the house no longer served their needs. “The main drive for the renovation was the primary living space and kitchen that had limited natural light, and which didn’t take advantage of a beautiful aspect onto the pool and garden,” Christopher explains. Creating a connection with the garden that was missing in the home’s original state was the priority, and involved overcoming challenges, such as the slope of the land and an existing tennis court that could not be moved, during the design process. As a result, this necessitated close collaboration with the architect and landscape designer and saw Christopher Elliott Design heavily involved in elements of the exterior and landscaping too.

Internally, the spaces were significantly reprogrammed to achieve this sense of connection between indoors and out and to create a home appropriate for the clients at this stage in their lives. The ground floor was entirely reconfigured, opening up the kitchen and main living space to the northern aspect, while the entire first floor was altered to accommodate an additional ensuite and retreat space. “We paid careful attention to the relationship of each of the rooms and spaces, and how they flow. Whenever we are spatially planning a design, we look to see the lines of sight between spaces and if they affect how a client will use the space,” Christopher says.

The designer was conscious of the connection between individual rooms and the architecture, which can “initiate an emotional response,” Christopher explains. “Once the layout was established, we set about evolving the interiors using the design language we developed from the architecture.” A pivotal element of the entire design of the Hawthorn House is the spiral staircase that, being centrally located in the architecture, influences most of the shared living spaces. “We wanted this to be a statement design and set the stage for the rest of the interiors,” he says. “The scale and grandeur of the staircase is enhanced by the sumptuous and seamless Artedomus Elba marble that wraps up the treads.”

Just as the staircase holds such prominence within the home, Elba becomes a running-



Designer Christopher Elliot pictured in the Hawthorn House.



A restrained palette of natural materials is key to the project's balance between old and new.



Artedomus Elba is used on the treads of the central spiral stair, and again in the bathrooms, creating a sense of continuity.



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thread of continuity throughout the design. "I am drawn to authentic materials. I am not inclined to use faux materials that imitate nature," Christopher says. "A real hero of the project is the Elba marble, featured in the dramatic double helix staircase, master ensuite, and the numerous sections of feature joinery throughout. It has an elegant simplicity and gorgeous colouration." This simple and restrained palette of natural materials evokes a timelessness that complements the period architecture while contributing a contemporary quality. "We intended to use time-honoured natural materials with a restricted palette to create interest with the built form. We wanted the materiality to evoke elegance but not be fussy. There was an overarching simplicity to the design and our approach," reflects Christopher.

In addition to working with Artedomus to source the Elba marble, Christopher Elliott Design also selected tiles and the bath from Artedomus. Having worked with Artedomus for many years across a variety of projects, "Artedomus is one of our 'go-to' suppliers," Christopher explains. "We appreciate their diverse, progressive and timeless product range, which caters to different budgets and styles. And they're always good for a laugh! We definitely need more of that in our lives. There is a reliable quality to all Artedomus products, which gives us the confidence to specify them. They just have some of the best products around."

All bathrooms except the master ensuite feature Italian Fiandre Nuances tiles in light grey from Artedomus. "We chose to emphasise the clean, matte appearance grouting the tiles with a darker colour, making it look more contemporary and graphic," says Christopher. The Agape 'Normal' bath from Artedomus, which Christopher describes as a "classic product for us", is found in both the master ensuite and third bedroom ensuite. Meanwhile, the textured INAX Fabe Ox tile from Artedomus clads the fireplace. With a distinctive "earthenware look, I love how the rawness of the finish, which is enhanced by not using grout," Christopher says. This raw, organic quality, enhanced by the traditional manufacturing process used by INAX in Japan, contrasts with and complements some of the finer, art-deco influenced details such as the brushed brass, contributing a sense of balance to the design.

Capturing the essence of the era in which the original home was built, Hawthorn House exemplifies the success of a holistic approach to design. Christopher Elliott Design weaves a sense of history through an elegant palette of natural materials, ensuring the interiors complement and harmonise with both the architecture and the landscape design to create a unified, elegant contemporary home.





The textured INAX Fabe Ox tile from Artedomus clads the fireplace.



