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P98. We take a tour through the eclectic home of interior designer Suzanne Gorman.

*Tips from professionals about
how to display your art*

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Clash happy

For interior designer Suzanne Gorman, it's about the little touches that make a space feel warm, inviting and unique. This approach, *JANE O'SULLIVAN* discovers, is clearly reflected in her own home in Sydney, where her growing art collection sits happily alongside bespoke furnishings and custom accessories.

PHOTOGRAPHY ZAN WIMBERLEY

Mother's touch. Gorman hand painted this mural on the ceiling of her daughter's bedroom, hoping to instill within her children a love of art.

Interior designer **Suzanne Gorman** says she doesn't have a set style, but her home clearly plays to her strengths, creating relaxed living spaces and working in bright colours. She also has a knack for showing off her art collection. Works are often nestled cosily alongside homewares or design pieces and one of her newest purchases, a painting by **Ali Wood**, is placed alongside the egg bowl in the kitchen. Another painting rests on top of a stack of magazines. In her world, art is not something to be admired from afar. It is part of the hustle and bustle of life.

And art has been in her life a long time. "My mum always loved art and there was always art at home. She's got a great eye for colour and she was always making the house look fantastic. I think it was quite natural, to see her doing it. I just thought everyone's home looked beautiful and had lovely art." She bought her first piece in high school from a friend's mother who was an artist and it quickly became a habit.

Many of the works in her sunny Willoughby home in Sydney have a personal connection. "There's a lot of meaning in art for me," she says. "I walk around the house and it just reminds me of everything. It's like a story of your life in a way. You pick things up at important times, or from people who touched you."



Side by side. This Ali Wood painting is propped against the kitchen wall.

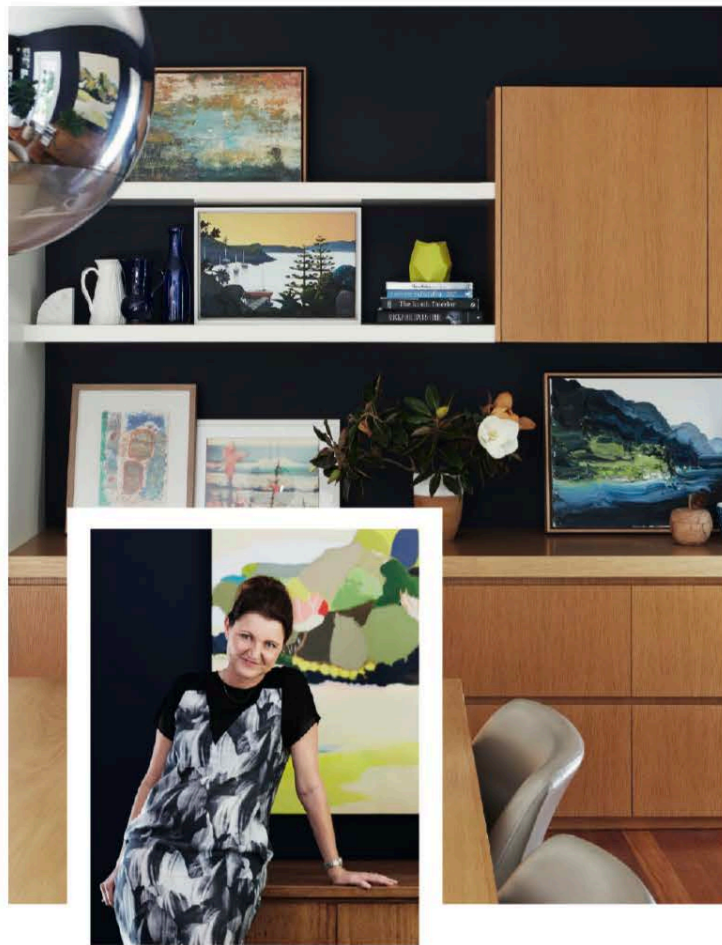
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Suzanne Gorman

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To the sea.
Paul Ryan's impasto seascape hangs proud in the dining room.



Propped up. A series of landscape works create interest and coherence. **Soft lines.** A pastel David Band is one of Gorman's most prized possessions.

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There are works that relate to different places she's travelled to and places that are important to her. One year, on the family's annual holiday down the coast, she discovered the Egg & Dart gallery in Thirroul and she now looks forward to picking up a new piece of art from here every summer holiday.

One of these holiday buys, an impasto seascape by **Paul Ryan**, has become one of her favourite works. The painting is now in the dining room where she has grouped it with a wooden apple turned by her daughter Sami and a ceramic vessel. Other artworks in her home have a connection to Bondi, the seaside suburb where she first lived with her husband. **Craig Parnaby** is a favourite artist from these years.

Life looks a little different now with three teenage children in tow, but she hopes she will be able to pass on her love of art to her kids. She has just commissioned a work by **Lani Tupu** for her youngest son's 12th birthday and there is art in all of the children's bedrooms. She also hand painted a bright pink and orange mural on the ceiling of her daughter's room.

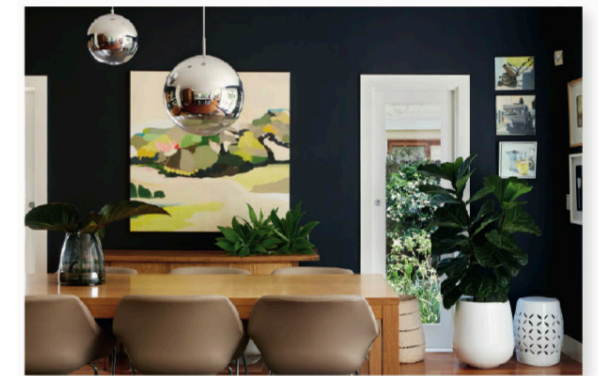
It's this handmade touch that is also becoming a hallmark of her design practice. She will often customise pieces for clients, hand embroidering a curtain with a single running stitch, knitting a cushion, or sanding and finishing a table. "I don't like to repeat anything," she says. "Other designers I talk to say I'm very hands on." She doesn't like to wax lyrical about her design ethos, but it's clear she places a high value on creating unique environments for her clients.

She also thinks it's vitally important to have a connection with the objects you choose to live with. That's why she's wary of forcing her artistic taste on clients. She would never ask a client to choose a work based solely on how it fit with the style or colour palette of a room, for example. "I have a really strong philosophy that art must, must be something you love and must be something that means something to you. I don't think art should be colour matched or anything like that. It's got to move you," she says. "My heart actually races when I see something I want to own and bring home."

There is also a real sense of fun in Gorman's home. She enjoys experimenting and moving things around. When *Art Edit* visits she even has a cheeky computer print-out of a **Stephen Ormandy** work tucked into a photo frame in the kitchen – a lament that the artist no longer works on a scale she can afford. It's temporary of course and while it hurts that she missed out at the last Ormandy exhibition, she did manage to get her hands on a **David Band** recently and it has become one of her most prized possessions. It's displayed in the living room where the flatness of the work is set off by the different textures in the room: a tasselled wall hanging from Avalon's Table Tonic, metallic pot plants and the matt metal of a suspended fireplace. Band might also be something of a mentor to Gorman when it comes to colour. She shares his love for bright tones paired with subdued neutrals and rejects anything that might be too "matchy matchy". It's all a bit of a beautiful mess. "Good art can work in with good interiors without them matching," Gorman says. "It's better if they don't match actually." ●

Get the look

Like the eclectic style and bold colours in this Sydney home?
We show you how you could recreate the look.



Pamela Honeyfield, *Poplar*. Oil and enamel on canvas, 49 x 49cm.

To browse more works for your home visit artedit.com.au



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