

Interior TALENTS TO KNOW IN 2026

Interior design is in a thrilling moment, with styles stretching wider and creativity running deeper than we've seen before. Every choice – materials, hardware, paint, furnishings and decor – shapes not only how a space looks, but how we feel moving through it each day. Our homes hold us, comfort us and become the backdrop to our memories, which is why we grow so attached to them. While many designers attract well-earned fanfare, others are quietly crafting extraordinary work. Here, we highlight a mix of familiar names and under-the-radar talents in designing and decorating, and what's informing their work for the year ahead.

PRODUCED BY JESSICA BELLEF

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOM BLACHFORD ARTWORK: 'THE SWINGING TREE' BY SEAN BAILEY

"I want the spaces we create to emotionally resonate"

ANOUSKA MILSTEIN

ANOUSKA MILSTEIN
A.Mi

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "I think we'll see warmer, more patinated materials – finishes that are honest and that age beautifully."
Your top design trick for transforming a space? "It sounds so simple, but lighting is the single most powerful tool to transform a space. Downlights mimic midday sun at its most harsh – bright, but unflattering. Think about lighting that you love; sunrise, sunset, candlelight, firelight. Lighting makes spaces feel their most

intimate, emotive and beautiful when it is low and layered."
What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? "We increasingly work with local furniture makers on bespoke pieces for our clients, particularly Hugh McCarthy and Chris Wilson of Seeded Interiors. For beautifully made, local and highly customisable furniture, we love Grazia & Co, who have also brought Featherston and Meadmore mid-century icons back into production."
Visit studioami.com.au. >

“Natural stones have this incredible way of creating their own art; they bring such depth and soul to a space”

JESS HUNTER



LYDIA MASKIELL
Lydia Maskiell
Interior Design

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?
“I’m fascinated by the return to materials that feel real and restorative. We’re moving away from plastic coatings and over-processed finishes and back towards healthy, breathable layers, lime washes, timber, stone and natural fibres that ground a space. They remind us that good design isn’t just seen, it’s felt.”
What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands?
“I love supporting local makers and stores. The Living Room in Tasmania is my go-to for contemporary, versatile furniture that always feels easy to live with. I also can’t go past Simon Ancher Studio and Matthew Prince; their craftsmanship is next level. I’m obsessed with We Ponder and their gorgeous handmade lights. For layering, I love the rugs from Natural Rugs Australia and Pampa – their rugs add a relaxed, grounded feel.”
Visit lydiamaskiell.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) STEPHANIE HUNTER (THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT) NICK HANSON (OPPOSITE) JACQUI TURK (ARTWORKS (OPPOSITE, IN BACKGROUND, TOP) ALECIA, FROM STILL LIFE ART STUDIO ALL OTHER ARTWORKS ARTISTS UNKNOWN

JESS HUNTER
Jess Hunter Interior Design

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands?
“Armadillo for their heirloom-quality rugs, MCM House for texture and warmth, and Rachel Donath for those sculptural statement pieces that make a room sing.”
What are your favourite interior and exterior paint colours? “I’m a green and blue girl through and through –

Porter’s Paints Olive Grove and Dark Newport Blue are go-tos. For exteriors, I love earthy stone tones like Dulux Double Bushland Grey, especially on timber or architectural details.”
Which artists and makers are on your radar? “I’m always swooning over Gabrielle Penfold – her work captures light, joy and that effortless Australian spirit.”
Visit jesshunterinteriors.com.



From left ‘Grace’ dining chair, \$890, Rachel Donath. Dulux Wash&Wear paint in Primal, \$102.95/4L.



BENJAMIN SELKE
Studio Pulp

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?
“Triple bullnose detailing on benchtops. The rounded edge brings a beautiful softness and sculptural quality to the surface.”
Who are your favourite fabric suppliers? “We’re using a lot of fabrics from Redelman Fabrics and South Pacific Fabrics, with their natural linens and textured blends that layer effortlessly. We’re also leaning into Pierre Frey and Élitis for those rich, expressive prints and tactile finishes that add warmth and personality to a space.”
What are your favourite interior and exterior paint colours?
“My go-to paint colours at the moment are Dulux Settler, Dulux Murray Red, Dulux Primal, Dulux Pookie Bear and Porter’s Paints Olive Grove.”
Visit studiopulp.com.au.

“I’m really excited to see a return to bold, tactile detailing in 2026. Think animal prints, chunky piping and ’70s-inspired sculptural furniture pieces” BENJAMIN SELKE

MARIAH BURTON
Folk Studio

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? “We have so many!

We specify a lot of items from Marz Designs, Studio Henry Wilson, Ellison Studio, Fleur Studios and Jordan.”

What are your favourite interior and exterior paint colours? “We love Dulux

New Penny for warm bedrooms, Dulux White on White for some of our contemporary interiors, and Dulux Natural White for more heritage interiors.”

Which artists and makers are on your radar? “My partner, Dan Rushford, is an established artist. We use a lot of his pieces in our interiors as his works marry so nicely with our interior palette. I also love Phoebe Stone, Lucy Anderson and Elle-Louise Burguez.”

Visit folkstudiodesign.com.

“Layering textures is my go-to approach for transforming a space, rather than relying on a broad or varied colour palette” MARIAH BURTON



SHANTALA MACK
Shantala Mack Interior Design

What is your trend prediction for 2026? “The use of colour seems to be shifting away from cold neutrals to a more earthy, natural palette. Soft muted colours are being used as the base colour for spaces more and more, instead of just an accent.”

What design details are you currently obsessed with?

“In furniture, I’m loving all of the box pleat lounges, chairs and ottomans being used, and I can’t go past a tasselled cushion without feeling just a little bit joyful.”

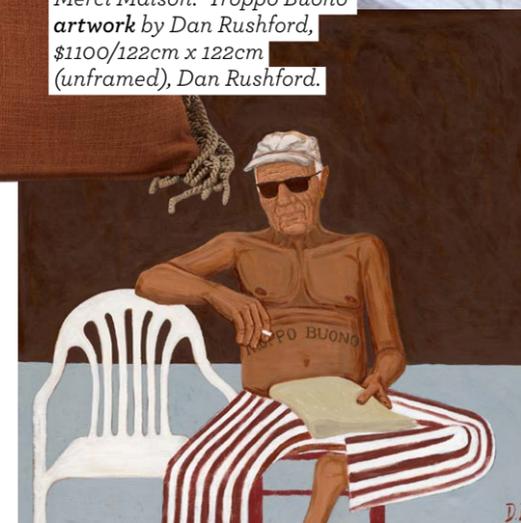
What are your favourite interior and exterior colours?

“I always love using my Porter’s Paints fan deck. The colour Assam Tea paired with Promenade is a gorgeous exterior combination and a fairly neutral scheme with a hint of green. Internally, I’m loving the Washed Linen French Wash.”

Visit shantalamack.com.au.

From left ‘Sylvie’ tassell cushion, \$360/50cm x 50cm, Merci Maison. ‘Troppo Buono’ artwork by Dan Rushford, \$1100/122cm x 122cm (unframed), Dan Rushford.

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) PRUE JA STEEDMAN (THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT) RACHEL WARE (OPPOSITE) JACQUI TURK (ARTWORK (OPPOSITE) PHOEBE STONE



JESSICA HALVORSEN
Halvorsen Interiors

What is your trend prediction for 2026? “We’re seeing a shift toward statement ceilings, expressive floor treatments, and a layered visual narrative that draws the eye above and below.”

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

“I love starting with a calm, neutral foundation, then building character through natural linens, aged metals,

timber accents and curated art. Layering is the magic ingredient.”

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?

“Decorative joinery such as inset panels with mesh, wallpaper, grasscloth or wicker, refined mouldings and custom-built shelving. I love pairing these with antique brass hardware or a softly honed stone benchtop.”

Visit halvorseninteriors.com.au.



GRAHAM SIMMONDS
Gray & Co Interior Design

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "I think we'll see a nostalgic return to classic decorating - the kind of warmth you find in the movies 'Father of the Bride' or 'Home Alone'."
Your top design trick for transforming a space? "Painting the walls, trims and cornice in the same colour creates a seamless visual line that draws the eye upward, making

the ceiling feel taller, the space more grand, and the room less visually cluttered."
What design detail are you currently obsessed with? "I'm really drawn to plaster relief walls at the moment. They bring a subtle texture that catches the light beautifully and make a space feel soft, layered and quietly detailed."
Visit grayandco.com.au.



JESSICA VISCARDE
Eclectic Creative

Your top design trick for transforming a space? "Start with a clear sense of mood rather than a single colour or style. I always build from feeling first (calm, grounded, inviting) and layer texture, tone and lighting around that."
What design detail are you currently obsessed with? "Pleated sofa skirts. After years of exposed legs and minimal silhouettes, a skirted sofa brings movement, comfort and a subtle sense of nostalgia."
Which artists and makers are on your radar? "I love anything Bridget Bodenham does in terms of pottery and ceramics. I recently discovered Zoe Willey Art at the Affordable Art Fair in Melbourne and bought myself a birthday present."
Visit eclecticcreative.com.au.



From left Diane Bergeron 'Allegra' chair, from \$4770, Arthur G. 'Reflections' Vessel I by Angela Hayes, \$1200, Pépite Gallery.

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) ANNA HAMILTON (TOP RIGHT) ELISE SCOTT (OPPOSITE) KRYSIA AGIUS ARTWORK (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, MELISSA SCHWARZ, KIERAN FOWLER, AQUABUMPS; MELISSA SCHWARZ, JOHANNES BLUMER, CHANCE PURPOSE (TOP RIGHT) 'MID-CENTURY CORVETTE' BY JOHN TRIF (OPPOSITE) TOP SHELF: KELLY BROWN, FROM PÉPITE; SECOND SHELF FROM BOTTOM, LEFT: DANIEL LEONE; BOTTOM SHELF: FOO STUDIO, FROM PÉPITE



ALESSANDRA SMITH
Alessandra Smith Design

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "This may be wishful thinking, but I predict that overt decoration will reign in 2026. Think Italian villa meets Milanese glamour, with richly layered interiors featuring tassels, fringing, frescoes and gilded frames that feel unapologetically expressive and joyfully maximal."
What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? "I gravitate towards vintage and second-hand stores with exceptional curation. CCSS, Ma House Supply Store Smith

and Street Bazaar are firm favourites. Pépite Gallery is my go-to for that final layer of art and objects that make a space sing."
Which artists and makers are on your radar? "I'm inspired by Yvette Coppersmith and Gregory Hodge for their experimental use of paint and the way they challenge traditional techniques. I'm also drawn to the work of Melbourne-based artist Sarah Nedovic, whose sculptural lighting pieces explore material and form in a way that feels both contemporary and enduring."
Visit asdstudio.com.au. >

"Changing your lighting is the simplest way to transform the feeling of a space. Abandon overhead lighting in favour of ambient layers"

ALESSANDRA SMITH

NERIDA THORBURN
Nerida Thorburn Design

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?

"I'm loving the resurgence of cork - for flooring, walls and in joinery. It's a sustainable material with great insulation, health and acoustic properties. It also now comes in a variety of colours, leading to great design possibilities."

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

"We like to introduce something unexpected into our projects - an interesting piece of furniture or art, a beautiful wallpaper or an unexpected colour combination - something to create personality and a talking point."
neridathorburndesign.com.au

“EVERY ROOM SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING WITH MEANING THAT MAKES YOU SMILE”
NERIDA THORBURN



ROSE KISELEV & KATE MOSS
This Vacant Space

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

"You can't get much more impactful (or affordable) than colour-drenching a room in paint, or grounding it with a large-scale rug."

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? "We always seem to find a spot in a home, no matter the style, for a piece from Ellison Studios, Jordan or Dinosaur Designs."

Which artists and makers are on your radar? "We love the Ready to Hang mirror range, which we recently discovered while working on an exciting side project that's been keeping us busy behind the scenes."
Visit thisvacantspace.com.

From left 'Glove' occasional chair, \$2299, Ellison Studios. Ready to Hang 'Puffer' mirror, \$1560, Living Edge.

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) RUBY PROCTOR (THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT) MAREE HOMER (OPPOSITE) NICK LEARY



LEANNE SMEALLIE
Ampersand Interiors

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "Minimalism is out. People now want their home to feel like their sanctuary. They want timeless and sophisticated interiors with warm neutrals and textural contrasts."

What design detail are you currently obsessed with? "Double bullnose edge benchtops and the resurgence of joinery handles rather than finger pulls."

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? "The Foundry for homewares - they offer sculptural, earthy designs, plus Australian furniture designers Rachel Donath, McMullin, Ellison Studios."

Your top design trick for transforming a space? "Always look at how you can maximise natural light."
ampersandinteriors.com.au. >



SALLY RHYS-JONES
Rhys Jones Interior Design

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

"A simple trick people often don't consider is new skirting boards. Higher with a bit of detail is always going to elevate your space."

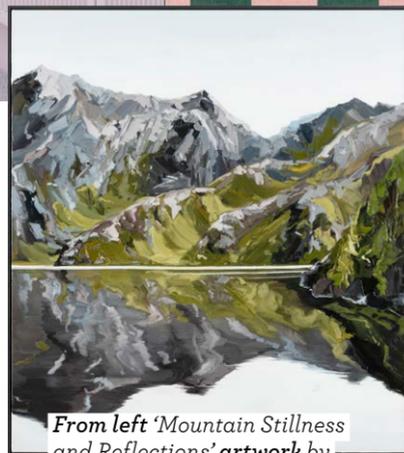
What design detail are you currently obsessed with?

"Currently and always obsessed with unusual and beautiful natural stone. I love finding new varieties and using them as

the hero in a space. They're all unique and so special, adding natural beauty, colour, texture and movement."

Which artists and makers are on your radar? "For a long time, my favourite Australian artist has been Julz Beresford and her beautiful textural landscapes. We also can't go past a coastal Stuart Cantor photographic print."

Visit sallyrhysjones.com.



From left 'Mountain Stillness and Reflections' artwork by Julz Beresford, \$7500/136cm x 124cm (framed), Michael Reid. 'Marilyn' indoor/outdoor rug in Forest Green and Blush Pink Striped, \$749/400cm x 300cm, Miss Amara.



LOUISE SPICER
OneFour Interiors

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?

"Anything that hides a TV so that it isn't the focal point of the room, such as sliding joinery panels or artworks mounted to rails that can slide to one side."

What is your trend prediction for 2026?

"I'm seeing clients moving towards a warmer colour palette of soft bones and clay colours layered with natural timbers and walnuts. Gone is the brass and oak aesthetic, and we seem to be leaning into metal patinas, which add warmth and depth."

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

"A clutter-free furniture arrangement over a large rug with a simple focal point helps anchor a space and provide a sense of calm. With online stores like Miss Amara, it's very easy to find a large rug that won't break the bank."

Visit onefourinteriors.com.au.

GENEVIEVE WALLIS
Genevieve Wallis Studio

Your top design trick for transforming a space? "We create a sense of synchronicity by carrying the same materials, tones and textures from one area to the next, often in unexpected or inventive applications, ensuring the home feels unified yet full of subtle surprises."

What design detail are you currently obsessed with?

"Stone benchtop profiles. I could name every single one off the top of my head. Adding a detail like an ogee or bullnose edge instead of a plain square edge is a small touch that can lift a kitchen island from ordinary

to really special. It can be a bit of an investment, but it's one that makes a big impact."

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands?

"Lately, we've been specifying Design By Them - their designs are timeless but playful, which we absolutely love. Jordan always personify classic Australian design. Harbro Furniture remains our all-time favourite sofa makers, and Arranmore Furniture are unbeatable when it comes to solid timber pieces. We still adore Design Stuff for homewares, they really have the best range."

Visit genevievewallis.com. >



"With AI-driven tools making it easier to visualise and communicate design concepts, clients can better understand and embrace bold aesthetics"

GENEVIEVE WALLIS



PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT) SUE STUBBS (TOP RIGHT) PABLO VEIGA (OPPOSITE) EMMA DUZHNIKOVA



"I'm obsessed with period features and using these in both traditional and contemporary settings"

ALEXANDRA MASON

ANGELA SMITH
Angela Smith Interiors

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "We'll see richly layered interiors where expressive shades like deep plum, olive and russet mingle with warm timbers, textured materials and crafted details."

What design detail are you currently obsessed with? "I'm loving the return to colour drenching and the layered elegance of old English style. It's the custom details that truly make a space sing - pleated lampshades, tailored upholstery and handcrafted pieces that bring warmth, character and soul."

What are your go-to homewares and furniture brands? "Bloomingdales Lighting, Xavier Furniture, Cromwell Australia, Globe West, and Harry and Kit. Also, antique dealers throughout Australia for vintage and antique finds."

What are your favourite interior and exterior paint colours? "White is always my go-to for interiors and exteriors because it's timeless, versatile and works beautifully no matter the style or architecture of the home." angelsmithinteriors.com.au.



"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN DRAWN TO ROOMS FULL OF PATTERN - STRIPES, FLORALS AND CHECKS ALL MINGLING WITH QUIET CONFIDENCE" ANGELA SMITH

ALEXANDRA MASON
Studio aem

What is your trend prediction for 2026? "Natural stone will still feature heavily, particularly the strong-veined stones. I'm seeing a lot of the strong stone with milky colour palettes to let the hero elements shine."

Your top design trick for transforming a space?

"There's no hurry - well-designed rooms and spaces take time. I think the importance lies in selecting objects that bring you happiness and evoke a positive feeling. For me, it helps to start from the ground up - first select

the flooring, then ground the space with a strong rug." **Which artists and makers are on your radar?** "I love Pān Pottery. They're based in Noosa and I will make a trip north when they have their next open studio. Sophie Vaidie for her sculptural ceramics in furniture and object form. Thomas Baker for his ceramics with a twist. Benedicte Maria for her focus on artwork that highlights materiality and simplicity in her refined aesthetics." Visit studioaem.com.au.



From left Pān Pottery cymbidium vase in Terracotta Sand by Angus McDiarmid, \$380, Braer. Rufus collection 'Fleur' side table in Carmine Marble, \$1030, Globe West. Terri Shannon 'Bol Lumiere' pendant, \$2600, Bloomingdales Lighting.

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE) BRIGID ARNOTT (OPPOSITE) HANNAH RUECHMARIN CERAMICS (THIS PAGE) VASE ON BENCHTOP BY KELLY BROWN, WHITE JUG BY TETSUYA OZAWA ARTWORK (OPPOSITE) ARTIST UNKNOWN