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MAR 22, 2014
PROPERTY

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Dan Honey and Paul Fuog's city apartment





Sean Fennessy

This compact city apartment, set in the heritage-listed Bible House building in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, presented a curious challenge to design professionals Paul Fuog and Dan Honey. With soaring ceilings but a footprint of just 75 square metres, it would take a creative approach to turn the space into a family home.

Paul and Dan bought the apartment three years ago, and at the time it featured red timber floors, a dated blue laminate kitchen and bathroom, and just one bedroom. "[It was] a terrible size," recalls Dan. "Just big enough to make a mess in, but not big enough to really enjoy."

With the aim of creating a contemporary, versatile space with two separate sleeping areas – a master "sleeping

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nook” and a smaller child’s bedroom – the owners enlisted their friend, architect Clare Cousins, to realise their plan.

Under Clare’s guidance, the apartment was completely gutted. Existing internal walls, and the kitchen and bathroom, were removed to make way for a modern, minimal and flexible space. Inexpensive plywood joinery was designed to separate the sleeping nook from the second bedroom. The kitchen was extended, floorboards sanded and clear-coated, walls painted crisp white, and the bathroom overhauled.

“One of the good things about living in such a small space was that it made it possible to do the entire thing at once,” says Dan.

This isn’t a typical Melbourne home. There’s something unmistakably international about this space, with its marriage of old and new, and almost frugally efficient design.

“We aren’t really attached to stuff as a rule,” says Dan of the pared-back aesthetic she and Paul share. “Objects come in and out of fashion for us, and the only ones we feel something for are those that are connected to a person or a place.”

Being based just moments from Flinders Street railway station has also meant Dan and Paul can live without a car. There’s a lot to learn from this home, and the lifestyle it has afforded this young family. There’s something serene and comforting about the perfect balance of form and function here, and the lack of excessive “stuff”. It provides a persuasive case study for the benefits of small-footprint living.

TAGS: Interior design
Melbourne apartments



LUCY FEAGINS

is founder and editor of *The Design Files*. She is *The Saturday Paper*’s interiors editor.

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