

The three-level house now makes the most of the sloping site and city views. **OPPOSITE** Architect Shaun Lockyer in the top-floor main bedroom. Corona chair from Corporate Culture. Painting by Chelsea Lehmann. For Where To Buy, see page xxx.



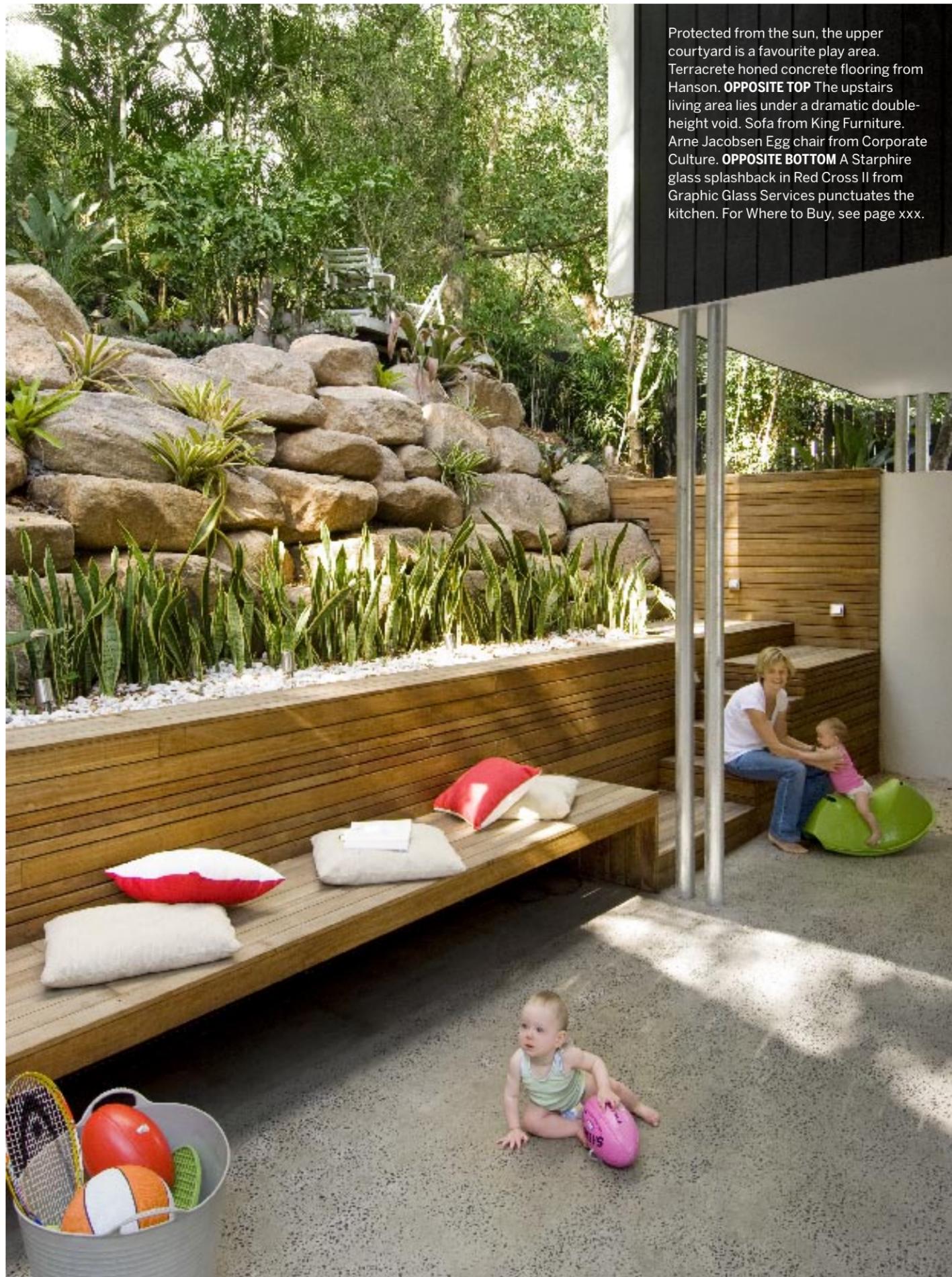
LION'S DEN

After two renovation projects, this growing family has achieved a whole new level of functionality, and fun, in their Brisbane home.

STORY & STYLING KATE NIXON | PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE RYAN

Former Brisbane Lions AFL star Nigel Lappin and his wife, Claire, have been through not one but two renovations of what was an original Queenslander home, located in one of Brisbane's middle ring suburbs. Having bought the property in 1999, they lived in it for a few years before organising basic renovations themselves. By 2006, with just one bathroom but two children – Milla, now aged four, and Chloe, three – growing fast, they'd outgrown the three-bedroom house, which meant either moving or undertaking more extensive work.

"We kept thinking that with property prices rising, we would never find another spot as good as this one," says Claire. Steeling themselves for Renovation 2.0, the couple called in architect Shaun Lockyer of Arkhefield.



Protected from the sun, the upper courtyard is a favourite play area. Terracrete honed concrete flooring from Hanson. **OPPOSITE TOP** The upstairs living area lies under a dramatic double-height void. Sofa from King Furniture. Arne Jacobsen Egg chair from Corporate Culture. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** A Starphire glass splashback in Red Cross II from Graphic Glass Services punctuates the kitchen. For Where to Buy, see page xxx.



'WE DESIGNED THE HOUSE AS A SERIES OF SPACES THAT ALLOW PEOPLE TO EITHER DRAW FORWARD AND ENJOY THE VIEW, OR RETREAT BACK FROM THE WESTERN SUN.'
SHAUN LOCKYER, ARCHITECT

Top tips

- * Renovate a home to complement your lifestyle, not to follow the latest trends, say owners Claire and Nigel Lappin. Find a good architect who will turn your ideals into something truly special. Don't rush the process: it's better to plan twice and renovate once.
- * Plan for your long-term needs, even if you intend to renovate stage by stage, suggests architect Shaun Lockyer. Look for a 'big idea' that will be the core to the renovation, such as this house's central courtyard, or the double-height void.
- * Employ professionals with a proven track record who can supply references.



How they live

"I love the fact that we have a huge deck area where the children can ride bikes and play while I get chores done.," says owner Claire Lappin. "As a mother of four little ones, the areas I use most are the kitchen and laundry. Having the pool so handy means the kids practically live in the water for half the year. The terrace courtyard with a sandpit is used a lot by the older girls, who also love to explore the garden. The terrace is also a lovely place for adults to sit and have a coffee and read the paper."



'OUR BIG SPLURGE FOR THE FINISHED HOUSE WAS THE ERIK JORGENSEN CORONA CHAIR, NIGEL'S FAVOURITE.' CLAIRE LAPPIN

"The previous work done was good, so we really didn't touch the bulk of the old house," Shaun explains. Instead, this project was all about altering and extending. Just as well that Shaun's plans included not one but two additional bedrooms, as the Lappin family grew by two (twins Meg and Ally, now 18 months) halfway through the project. Other criteria for the brief included two new bathrooms, a second living area sheltered from the western sun, undercover play zones for the children and an internal laundry.

Shaun proposed a rear extension that would scale up two more levels, with a staggered fifth bedroom cum nursery bridging the first and second floors. "We worked the design from back to front and top to bottom, beginning with the master bedroom and ensuite," he explains. These occupy the entire second floor, directly above the

ABOVE Sliding doors in New Guinea rosewood frame views from the main bedroom. Louvres from Breezway. **OPPOSITE** Dark tiles minimise glare in a sunny ensuite. Wall tiles from Salvatore Ceramics. C3 basin from Rogerseller. For Where to Buy, see page xxx.

Paint colours





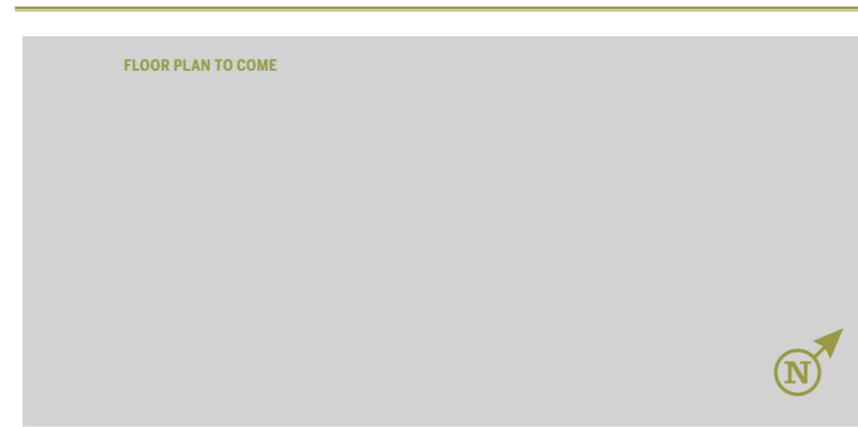
‘THE NEW CENTRAL COURTYARD SPACE EMBELLISHES THE TRADITIONAL IDEA OF THE VERANDAH.’ SHAUN LOCKYER, ARCHITECT

original house, with views to the city, a space that balances privacy with a close connection to both the nursery and the central courtyard space. The first floor features a new living area, kitchenette and bathroom, plus direct access to a covered courtyard with a child-friendly sandpit and stepped landscaping to the rear boundary. A set of stairs, bordered by a bright red polycarbonate feature wall, connects the new additions to the original lower level, which retains the existing three bedrooms, living room, study and bathroom, and also features a new kitchen.

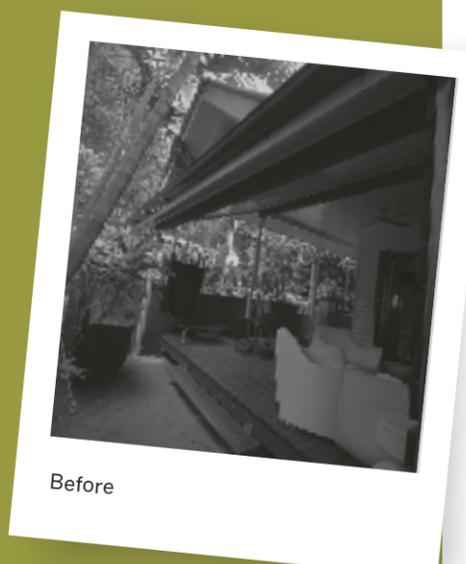
“When we started talking about the central courtyard, we couldn’t find a way around the existing living, dining and kitchen arrangement,” Shaun explains. “Nigel and Claire had already spent money updating the kitchen and we were loath to do it again but, in the end, everything hinged around this one room.” And so, the old kitchen had to go. In its place sits a bright, open and highly functional layout that links up with a new laundry and opens onto the central courtyard and pool.

“This courtyard is the epicentre of old and new,” Shaun explains. “It’s the change from front to back that brings a sense of discovery to the house. To me, the element of surprise is what makes renovations so exciting.”

Arkhefield, Brisbane, Queensland; (07) 3831 8150 or www.arkhefield.com.au.



BELOW The central courtyard features tallowwood surfaces and ceramics in a rhythmic colour arrangement. Tiles from Salvatore Ceramics. **OPPOSITE** The girls at play in the courtyard. A glass-sided pool sits partially above ground; parents can keep watch through the viewing window. Tokyo Pop sofa and chairs from Space. For Where to Buy, see page xxx.



Before

What they did

THE BRIEF Claire and Nigel Lappin needed an extra bedroom and bathroom, plus an additional living space for their young family. Sheltered outdoor play areas were also a priority.

KEY FEATURES By excavating and building up the back of the block, architect Shaun Lockyer was able to incorporate two additional levels, with a double-height void running through them. The new space allowed for two extra bedrooms and bathrooms, plus a second living space and two protected courtyards, one with a pool.

WHAT IT COST Approximately \$800,000, including \$140,000 for driveway works. It breaks down to about \$2300 for each new square metre built.

WHAT THEY LOVE The rich timber detailing and the tiled wall in the central courtyard.