

POPPY BEVAN

NEWSLETTER  
ISSUE N°.01

# à point

{timely, perfectly done, medium rare}

*Pontifications on the world of design*



EDITORIAL

## ONE FINE DAY...

We stepped outside into the crisp autumn Parisian air. The light was golden, the sky blue, and everywhere I turned I saw the art of architecture and nature together as one magnificent, large scale canvas.

In France this September for *Paris Design Week* and the autumn edition of *Maison et Objet*, what I found reverberated with me most was the notion of "**what goes around comes around**".

Everywhere we looked things seemed hauntingly familiar, and yet decidedly different. We were surrounded

Continued on page 2

4

WHAT LIES  
WITHIN

FASHION  
FIRST

5

FAST  
FURNITURE

8

IS BROWN THE  
NEW BLACK?

Continued from page 1

by new interpretations of the old classics, a confident intertwining of design eras, and finally - the return of colour!

The other thing that stood out to me arose as a result of sitting, watching, and absorbing the world *around* design. This world can be quite a different space to that of design and creativity itself. What I mean by this is that one's actual experience and understanding of current design may vary drastically depending on whether one experiences it first hand as a space, piece of furniture, or object, or reads about it in a high end design magazine.

*AD France's* editor might, for example, tell us that the 70s are back, but in my opinion this controversial claim is probably more about selling magazines than reflecting reality or speaking the real truth.

This issue I want to look closely at what we experienced and draw my own conclusions. This sort of genuine exploration is based on the freedom of approaching a context with an open mind with the deliberate intent to discover meaning. How satisfying.

---

*Front page, main image: The Pantheon, Paris. Photograph par moi.*

*Front page, bottom left image: Marigold wall covering from the Artwall Collection by Hanneke Van Der Pol.*

---

NOW & THEN

## BACK TO THE BEGINNING

***... 1930's Modernism returns to the forefront of the design scene***

Those of you who know me well will likely be aware that I have quite a history with the great Modernist architect Le Corbusier. I spent six months following his trail from the Jurassic Alps of Switzerland where he was born in 1887 all the way to his iconic Modernist projects of Paris.

His influential ideas have long been misconstrued in the notion of "big white box" architecture and bland white interiors. This misinterpretation is exemplified by the fact that Corb developed two extensive and very beautiful colour palettes that attest to his acknowledgement of the importance of the interior experience.

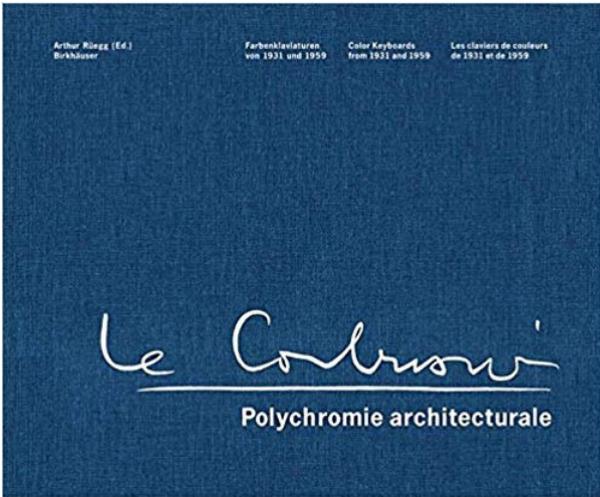
Indeed, architects don't like to have this said, but Le Corbusier was as much about interiors as he was about the architecture. It's part of the reason why I respect him so.

So, it is a pleasure to see that this year Corb's influence is everywhere - the proof is in the perusing - today I happened upon this evocative image in *AD Norway* - and it took me straight back to the 1930s.



Vase "Tumble" by Falke Svaton. (Photo: Siren Lauvda) via AD Norway <https://www.ad-magazin.de>

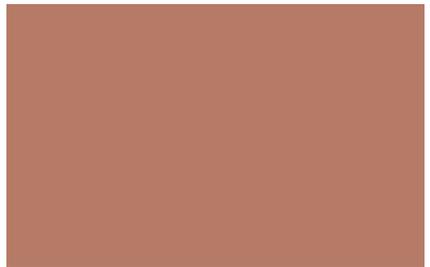
THE FACT IS...



How interesting to note that not only have the 70's allegedly come back round (see p.9), but then so too have the 1930s!

Le Corbusier developed two wonderful colour palettes in his time and this one from 1931 is (in my opinion) a much stronger colour influence this season than anything from a mere 50 years ago!

COLOURS OF THE MOMENT  
*(by Le Corbusier, 1931!)*



*Weissenhof-Siedlung Doppelhaus, Stuttgart, 1927 by Le Corbusier and his cousin Pierre Jeanneret*

TRENDS

## FASHION LEADS THE WAY

### *Haider Ackermann: Trail Blazer*

Our visit to Maison & Objet Paris reinforced the theory that the fashion world exists at the pointy end of design. Indeed, fashion trends of the past few years have continued their natural progression into interiors in terms of colour, materials, and styling.

Haider Ackermann is known for his avant-garde aesthetic, artful use of textures, and affinity for luxe fabrics, and his collections of the past few years sing the songs of all that is now on trend in furnishings.

Colour and materiality likenesses abound - velvet, brass, and luxurious jewel tones that started on the catwalk are now at the forefront of furniture design.



*Men's burgundy Haider Ackermann velvet bomber jacket with stand collar, five zip pockets at front, rib knit trim and zip closure at front.*

*Fall 2015 collection. Sold out everywhere.*



*Dark green silk and cotton-blend Haider Ackermann quilted bomber jacket featuring a short length, a zip fastening, a textured style, a round neck and two front pockets.*

*Current collection. \$1,925, Farfetch.com*



*Anita Bar Chair by Ottiu in Siege Velvet Black Forest.*



*Anita Bar Chair by Ottiu in Siege Velvet Syrah.*

## NEWS

THE FOUL SIDE OF  
FLIMSY FASHION[S]

*... and why buying to last is worth it.*

This week I came upon not one, but two articles on the problems associated with Fast Fashion - one definitely by accident as I don't normally read the *Newcastle Herald* and just happened to be flicking through it in a waiting room. The other was an article in one of my favourite parts of *Sydney Morning Herald's - Good Weekend* magazine - *Foreign Correspondence*. The article in question was entitled Fashion Victims.

A bit like organic food, sustainability, the problem of plastic bags, and the need for free range eggs and chicken, the sustainable fashion movement is one of those things that have bubbled away quietly in the background for years unbeknownst to the majority of the public whilst a dedicated few have tirelessly worked away to ensure that their message will eventually be heard.

A well admired friend of mine began developing her sustainable fashion label ([www.carlieballard.com](http://www.carlieballard.com)) over a decade ago and I know through her stories, struggles, and successes the hard work and determination that it can take to make one's voice heard in a world driven by product turnover and profit margins.

“

*At Maison et Objet this September  
the evidence of the Fast Furniture  
industry was in full force.*

As Amelia Lester so shockingly highlighted in her *SMH* article, the world's second wealthiest man made his fortune from Zara - a Fast Fashion store that encourages buyers to consistently shop (and, at the end of the day, throw away).

Of course, the problems are multifaceted and far reaching - child labour, unfair work conditions, pollution due to a lack of environmental policies or priorities, poverty, waste, and a short life cycle - these are clothes that are made to look good for a moment and be thrown into landfill the next.

In many ways (as is so often the case) this is a scenario symptomatic of our times, and the truth is that the fashion industry isn't the only culprit.

*At Maison et Objet* this September the evidence of the



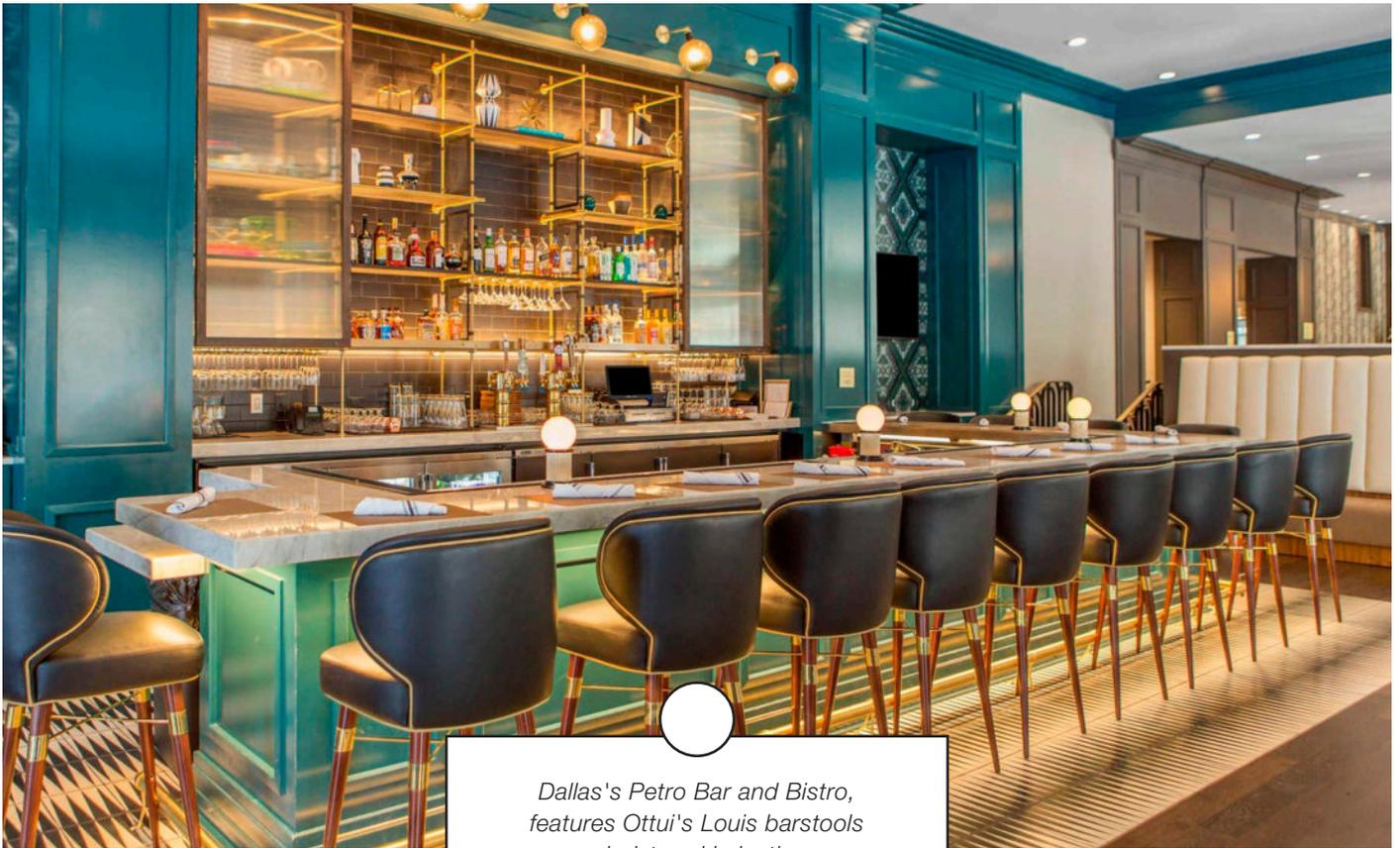
Fast Furniture (not yet a coined term, as far as I know) industry was in full force.

We all understand the myriad of influencing factors in any such situation, including the pressure placed on those in the industry (designers, makers, and brands) to release ever new collections in order to satiate a hungry market, and yet the over abundance of Fast Furnishings we came across at the fair was frankly both depressing and also somehow insulting.

I say this because as a designer, quality, craftsmanship, and uniqueness are fundamental to what we do (whether that be fashion, architecture, interiors, furnishings, or any other creative exploit). The industry of "Fast" is completely at odds with - and indeed ultimately combative to this elemental truth because it degrades the value of the individual designer, does its darnedest to dissolve the role of the craftsman, and is based on imitation rather than creativity and creation.

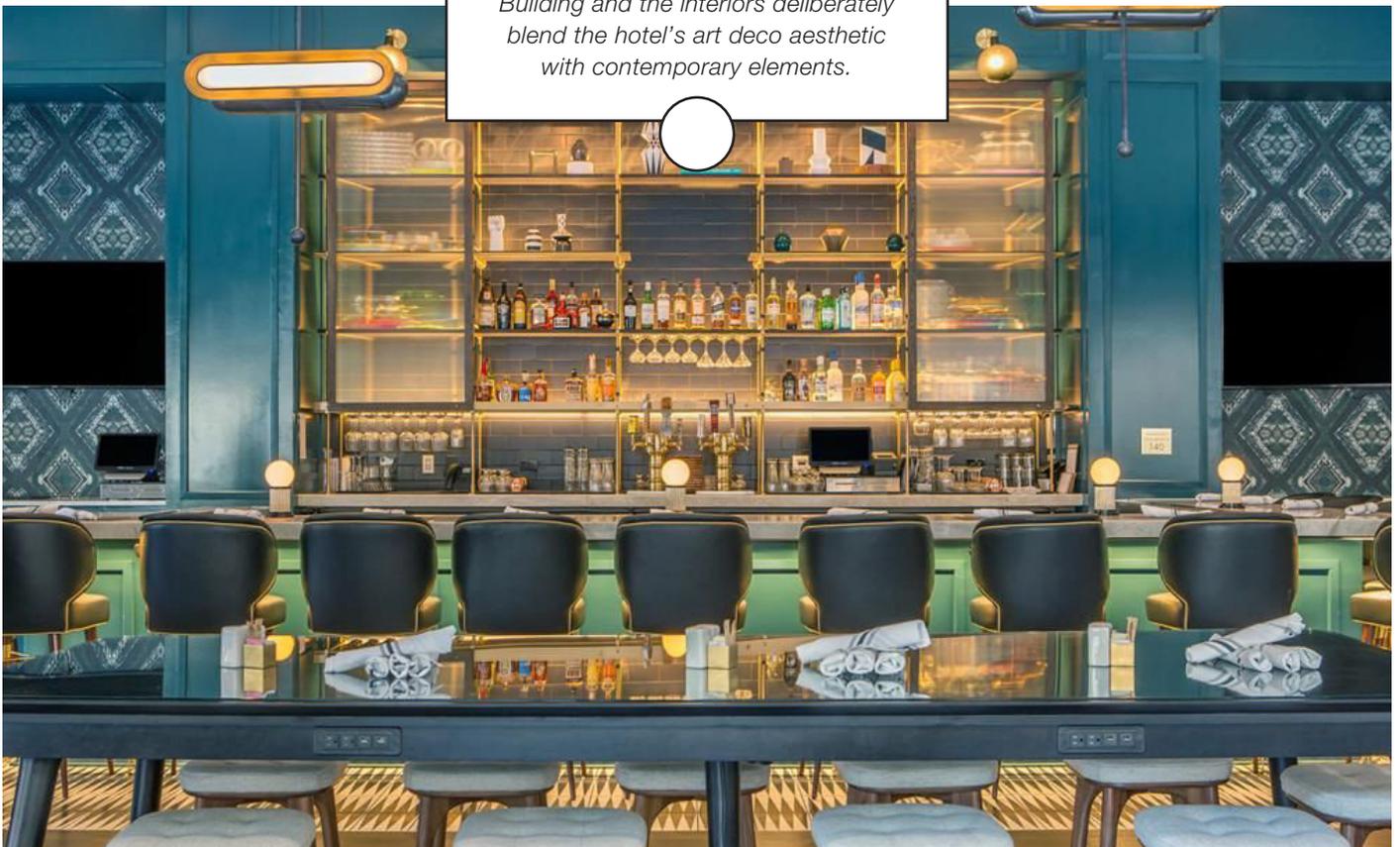
There's a lesson in this. I've always been a firm believer in being selective and avoiding compromise. For one, life is too short and there isn't room for anything that isn't just right. Secondly, we do have a say in changing how the world is.

It's our choices that carry our message.



*Dallas's Petro Bar and Bistro, features Ottui's Louis barstools upholstered in leather.*

*Designed by the Merriman Anderson Architects, the bar is located on the first floor of the historic Tower Petroleum Building and the interiors deliberately blend the hotel's art deco aesthetic with contemporary elements.*



IN FOCUS

## OTTIU - BEYOND UPHOLSTERY

### *of Portugal*

Portuguese upholstery brand Ottiu make it their art to create unique, customisable upholstery pieces that speak of a bygone, glamorous era.

Working side by side with specialised craftsmen, each piece is created as though it were a piece of art: the process begins by hand crafting a solid wood structure and is followed by finely detailing with high-quality materials and finishes.

Their sumptuous range includes sofas, armchairs, ottomans, and bar stools.



Clockwise from top right:

Louis Bar Chair \$2,345

Kelly Bar Chair \$2,570

Audrey Bench \$5,015

Kim Dining Chair  
\$1,600

*The complete Ottiu range is available directly through Poppy Bevan Design Studio.*

*All photographs courtesy of Ottiu.*



## OPINION



At *Maison et Objet* September 2019:

Above: Making myself comfortable in Enostudio's crisp and serene white, brass, and burgundy exhibit

Below: Built in bench seating by Greek designers and manufacturers TOPOSWORKSHOP



## IN A TERRIFYING TURN OF EVENTS..!

*Parisian design authorities advise that the 70s are back [and apparently in full swing].*

The latest issue of French Architectural Digest (*AD France*) is all about the rebirth of this heady era thanks to the guidance of editor in chief Marie Kalt.

I'm quite sure I'm not alone in proclaiming that this isn't the kind of news that I welcome with open arms. It's also the kind of information that I hope I can take with a grain of salt (please, be gentle with us). I didn't experience the seventies live but just like the rest of us I've certainly lived through it's striking brown and orange trail of obnoxious destruction (striking being the kindest term I can think of for this colour and pattern egregious era).

Yet as an optimistic and open minded designer I am able to single out (there's no real need for double digits here) the so-called silver linings of Kalt's revelation. This objective clarity is in no small part thanks to our recent visit to Paris's biggest design fair *Maison et Objet*, during which we bore witness to the tens of thousands of new pieces from close to 4000 design houses' Autumn/Winter 2019/20 collections.

Interestingly my experience at the fair (and *Paris Design Week*, as well as recent experiences of French style in general) was much less about childishly simplified pattern and jarringly coloured elements than *AD France* might have you believe. As I say, seeing it all in the flesh is very much the reason that I am able to identify the positives and skim over Kalt's proclamations without falling into a total frazzle.

“

*The current trends are about pure geometry, sumptuous fabrics, a reverence toward natural materials, and a sleek, simple, uncluttered approach.*

For me, the current trends are about pure geometry, sumptuous fabrics (think velvet, slubbed silk, corduroy), a reverence toward natural materials (brass, unusual timber veneers, intensely colourful natural stone), and a sleek, simple, uncluttered approach (form over function, perhaps?).

Colour as well could have easily been interpreted as having a 70's influence, and yet its manifestation and application was distinctly contemporary. Emerald green, sage, soft mint. Burgundy, umber, dusty rose. Yves Klein Blue (as I like to think of it - otherwise considered - also by me - as Grecian blue, or finally, often called Ultramarine by the rest of the world). These colours weren't implemented with the intent to create

hitherto unseen ghastly and incongruous combinations but in a much more gentle and balanced manner that often created a serene and yet warm atmosphere.

It's true, there was a dash of mustard (they call it gold these days), and there may have been an abundance of large scale tropical and animal prints rearing their wild heads (you'll have noticed this trend gaining strength in the fashion world for a few years now), but a done deal these ingredients do not make.

Instead, what I notice are the differences between the 70s and now, despite what at first glance might seem like a few too many similarities. Then, fashion and interiors were as much a political commentary as an exploration of design, creativity, and the possibilities. The point was about breaking the mould, shifting the norm, and shattering expectations. Now, the approach is refined, restrained, and on many occasions quietly elegant.

It's not about reinventing the wheel. Human civilisation hasn't progressed as far as it has by forgetting everything that has been before. It's about building on the past, developing ideas, and transforming the design/our perspective so that what went before is usefully and cleverly creatively adapted to become relevant and appropriate for the contemporary world (whatever year that might happen to be).

I deem to suggest that *AD*'s proclamation regarding the return of BROWN may indeed come to fruition, but if so I think that might have more to do with marketing, the nature of the magazine world, and its influence on consumers than the pure art of creation itself.

So, remember, the art of being stylish isn't about being on trend - it's about being selective, getting to know what your tastes really are (and being aware of who might be influencing your perspective!), and finally, by buying only what you really love.



Above: "Brown, the new colour trend of the moment" - are you sure AD, is brown really it?

Below: "The 70s are again inspiring designers" - according to - well, not the designers...

Images from www.admagazine.fr





Photo by Claire Israël

### FAVOURITES

It was such a joy to explore this year's *AD Intérieurs* exposition held as part of *Paris Design Week*. In fact, it was my favourite part of our whole trip.

The event celebrated the unique talents of 13 designers from across the globe - each transforming a space within the Hôtel de Coulanges in the Marais district.

This serene space by French duo *Humbert & Poyet* was a definite highlight. Entitled "the neoclassical bathroom" the space draws influence from Palladian villas. To me it also brought to mind the 1930s art deco era. Beautiful materials, wonderful shapes, and oh that green!

ADVICE

ONE OF MY  
FAVOURITE  
PASTIMES...

*The art of purchasing fine  
handmade carpets.*

A brief moment in the vicinity of a beautiful rug and I'm mentally whisked away to the heart of Istanbul.

Honestly, take the risk of waving a persian carpet before my nose and reap the consequences!

These pieces are a wonderful manifestation of craftsmanship, human ingenuity, and beauty.

The rules are simple (above all remain confident and firm):

1. Begin with an instant attraction. If you have chemistry with a rug, go forth to step 2!
2. Turn it over. Have a look at the backside of your favoured rug. Are the knots fine? Is there a little too much consistency? We're looking for a good handmade quality - concise and tidy, but with some wobbly bits (evidence that no machine took part in this creation).
3. Think about your space. Does this rug have the power to complete the picture?
4. Make like a Persian and put forth a dramatic offer. If it's accepted at once - you win the rug but lose at the game. If instead you leave with the carpet and the seller is feigning a snarl at the sale - you've had all round success.



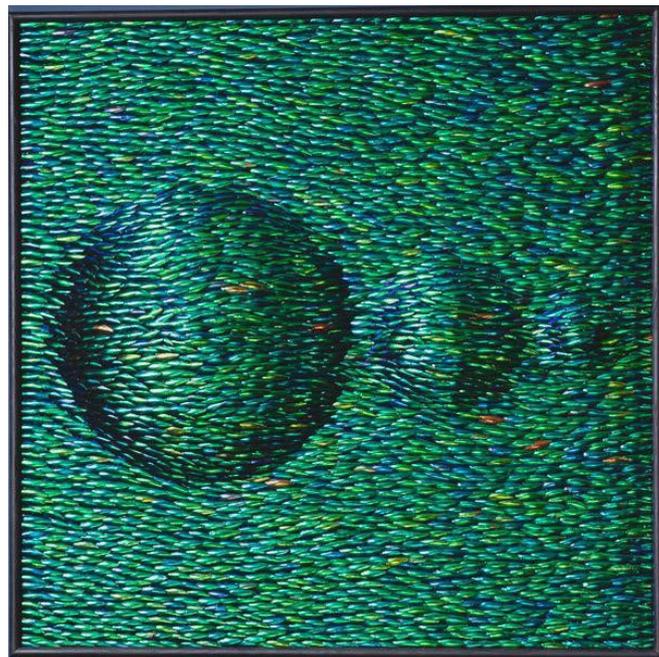
SPOTTED

# TABLEAU CARRÉ D'ELYTRES DE STERNOCERA

*A unique artwork made from an unsuspecting material...*

We found this intriguing piece at *Objet de Curiosité* - a wonderful family run French supplier of all things unusual and fabulous. In person it is mesmerising.

This piece is a unique item fashioned from the magnificent shells of the short lived *Sternocera* beetle of Laos - a bit like cicadas these beetles live in the larvae stage for around 2 years whilst the adult beetles live for



*Tableau carré d'Elytres de Sternocera 70cm x 70cm \$5,065*

1-3 weeks. Their shells are therefore available sustainably and without cruelty.

The undulating design of the piece creates a fluid sense of movement that brings to life the incredible iridescent blue and green colours of the beetle shells.

Fascinatingly, a swathe of 1.6 million of these Elytron shells were used by the artist Jan Fabre in his 2002 commission for Queen Paola of Belgium. The 'Heaven of Delight' was created on the ceiling of Salon des Glaces in the Royal Palace located in Brussels and gives a supremely luxurious and dramatic atmosphere to the space.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Bravo to MP who made the giant leap of relocating her specialist medical practice to a new space this quarter after many years of planning!

All of the hard work and effort has not only resulted in the day to day benefits of working in a lovely and inviting space but has also become a key talking point amongst many happy patients.

By all accounts everyone who visits is very impressed by your considerably designed space and integrated branding which has much more character and elegance than the usual medical rooms.

\*\*\*

Best wishes to my talented friend, ABC News presenter, and overall sweetest person on the planet Candice and her husband

Andrew on their lovely new baby Sophie Charlotte!

\*\*\*

Congratulations to our client Dan for his ability to remain humble after his recent crushing victory over pesky neighbours and backwards council.

\*\*\*

A big thank you to Branka and Darren for their recent referrals. We work almost exclusively on a referral

basis and love to be recommended by past clients and contractors to like minded friends and family who they believe would enjoy our process.

\*\*\*

Congratulations to the new Mr & Mrs Scott & Camilla, on a stunning wedding at the beautiful Worworing Estate! It was such a pleasure to share the day with you.

*Le bureau en arches  
by Anne-Sophie Pailleret  
AD Intérieurs, Paris 2019.  
Photograph par moi.*



POPPY BEVAN

✉ [info@poppybevan.com](mailto:info@poppybevan.com)  
☎ 0401 557 805

📍 35 Cleary Street, Hamilton, NSW  
🌐 [www.poppybevan.com](http://www.poppybevan.com)