

## Build

## The brief

To knock down a brick bungalow and replace it with a modern, spacious, double-brick/concrete construction.



ARCHITECT  
**Trevor Hall Architects**  
hallarchitects.com.au

BUILDER  
**Con Mihas** (pictured with wife Mina),  
MiCorp, micorp.com.au

INTERIOR DESIGNER  
**Chris Slaughter** Scenic Blue Design,  
scenicbluedesign.com.au

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER  
**Michelle H. Joh** Matt Blatt,  
mattblatt.com.au

THE SOURCE  
**Flooring** tallwood hardwood,  
barrenjoeytimber.com.au  
**Himalayan sandstone** Sydney  
Sandstone Company,  
sydneysandstonecompany.com.au  
**Water/fire feature** Yardware,  
1300 185 662

## BEFORE



## AFTER



## Flexible viewing

The TV is set up on a cantilevered joinery unit which rotates for viewing in both the dining and family rooms.

# Everything old is new again

A family's dream home replaces a rickety bungalow, writes **Catherine Nikas-Boulos**

This grand example of modern architecture in Earlwood almost never happened. Owners Con and Mina Mihas had carefully remodelled a bathroom in the brick bungalow that previously stood in its place. As their family grew and it became apparent they would need more space, a renovation was on the cards.

They had bought the property 10 years earlier with a view to sprucing it up down the track, but crunch time came when Con put his foot through floorboards and the house was overrun by mould.

"We wanted something to accommodate our family, we wanted an area to entertain and we wanted something modern and clean with lots of storage because I had zero," Mina says.

When architect Trevor Hall was engaged to draw up plans to accommodate the family of five, the issue of how to maximise space within the existing confines forced a re-think. "They had done a bathroom renovation with a lot of love and care and they were rightly proud of that, but it was right in the middle of the house and it was a stumbling block to progress," Trevor says. "They wanted to vastly increase the size of the house with a renovation, but they couldn't achieve what they wanted using the existing building, so the job evolved from there and the decision was made to knock it down and start again."

As owner/builder, responsibility fell on Con's shoulders as he embarked on a 14-month build of this solid brick-concrete construction.

## Culture shines through

Trevor drew on Con and Mina's respective Greek and Italian lineage for inspiration, now most evident in the facade with its "boxy Mediterranean elements".

Allowing northern light into the property was another important feature of the design. The home has an east/west orientation, so Trevor designed a courtyard around a water/fire feature on the northern side to allow light to penetrate the middle of the property.

Another interesting highlight is an entertainment room, which sits off the staircase mid-landing in this tri-storey house, above the garage.

"I was interested in subjugating the garage; I didn't want it to be too high, otherwise it would have a massive door," he said. "Given the site rises up, the garage was always going to be a dominant element and I wanted to make it a secondary feature. So I designed an entertaining room with a balcony that cantilevered over the garage."

## Hard-working design

The unique design of the staircase creates a clean backdrop for the dining room.

Keyhole slots in the balustrade where it meets the wall take this area from strictly minimalist to very cool.

The dining room, a central feature of the home, adjoins the family living room and sits just off the northern courtyard at the base of the stairs.

These two spaces are cleverly separated by a cantilevered joinery unit with a TV,



which spins around to service both rooms.

"The problem with many extravagant homes is you end up with many things repeated," Trevor says.

"I always make things in my design work hard, and that's the same thinking with that room — you need only one TV, it just needs to spin around."

Finishing touches include limestone flooring downstairs, travertine in the bathrooms and Himalayan sandstone wrapped around the garage and leading into the hallway of the four-bedroom-plus-study house. The couple is thrilled with the result. [catherine.nikas@news.com.au](mailto:catherine.nikas@news.com.au)

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Pictures Bob Barker



Clean lines and lots of storage are hallmarks of this Earlwood home.



Architect Trevor Hall ensured his design allowed the home to be flooded with light.

