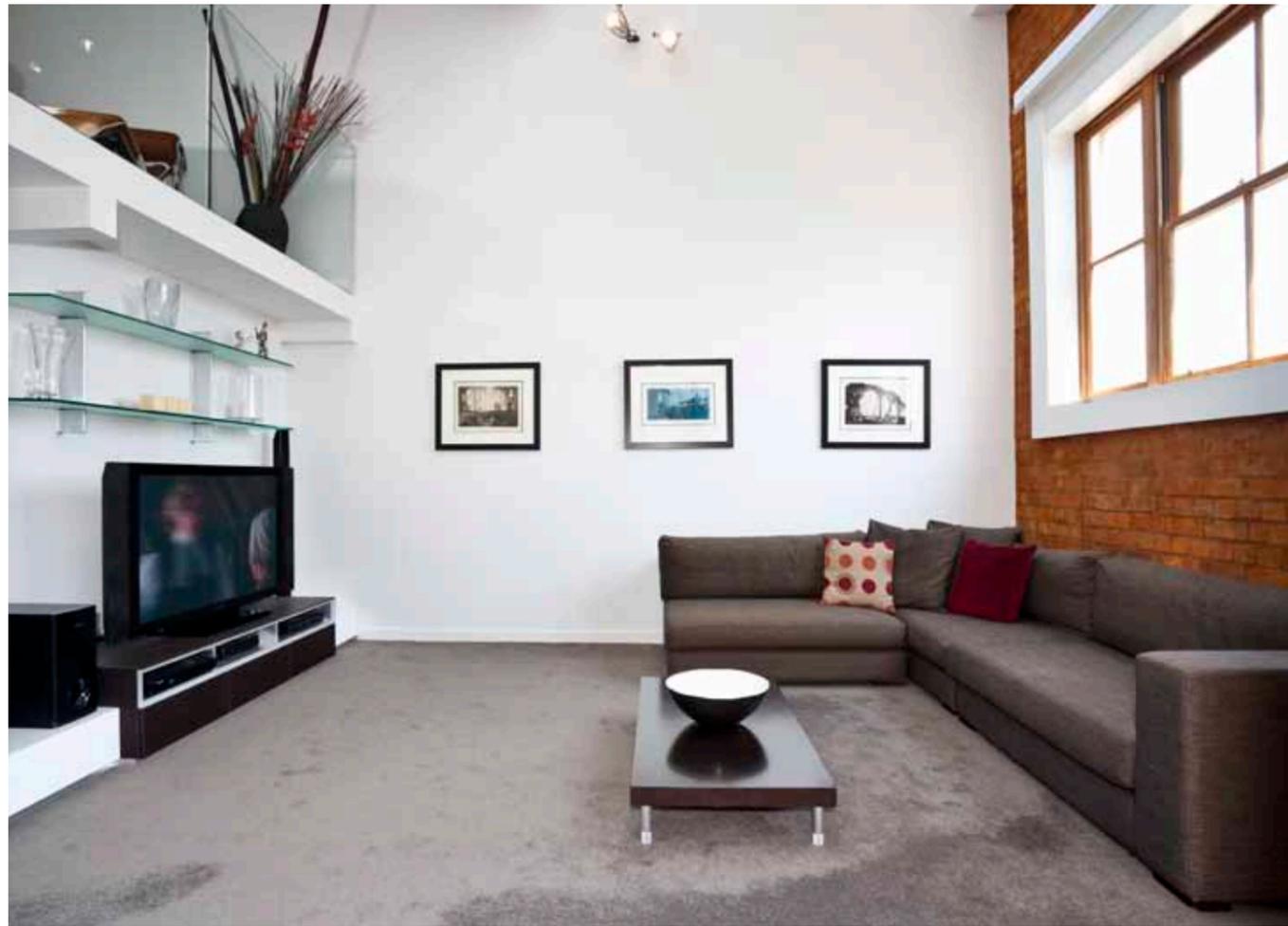


Moving on up

Apartments are increasingly remodelled to cater to urban lifestyles – and to make the most of a building's character





Cut above

This redesigned apartment plays up the historic character of a former brick woolstore with a dramatic saw-toothed roof

Twenty years ago Brisbane's riverside cannery district underwent an intensive rejuvenation. Many of the old warehouses were converted into multi-unit housing, including the London Woolstore, which was originally built in 1912.

Fast-forward 20 years, and many of these apartments are now getting their third lease of life. The apartment on these pages was redesigned by Sparc architects Gary McGrath and Kelly Gray to better suit a modern lifestyle.

McGrath says that although many of

the historic features of the building had been retained in the original restoration, the apartment had the potential to provide a much more spacious, contemporary living environment.

"Most of the apartments have a balcony facing into a central, suspended walkway within the complex," says McGrath. "Many of these balconies appear to be

Preceding pages and these pages: This apartment in a former woolstore was redesigned to maximise the building's character and natural light.

used for storage purposes rather than as an additional living area. We had the opportunity to reclaim and enclose this space, effectively creating an extra room."

McGrath says the additional floor area meant a bedroom could be removed from the other side of the apartment. This freed up space to create a much larger, open-plan living area – the former bedroom is now a lounge.

"Opening up this space also meant we could maximise the building's character, particularly the saw-toothed roof, cathedral





Above: The new kitchen pairs white lacquered cabinets with dark-stained sable oak veneer. New glass balustrading on the mezzanine level helps to keep the interior light and airy.

Right: This redecorated balcony is one of two that existed in the original apartment. The balcony on the other side of the building was enclosed to create a bedroom.

Facing page: Trusses and bracing tie rods are painted a dark charcoal colour to highlight a cathedral ceiling that follows the scissor lines of the saw-toothed roof.

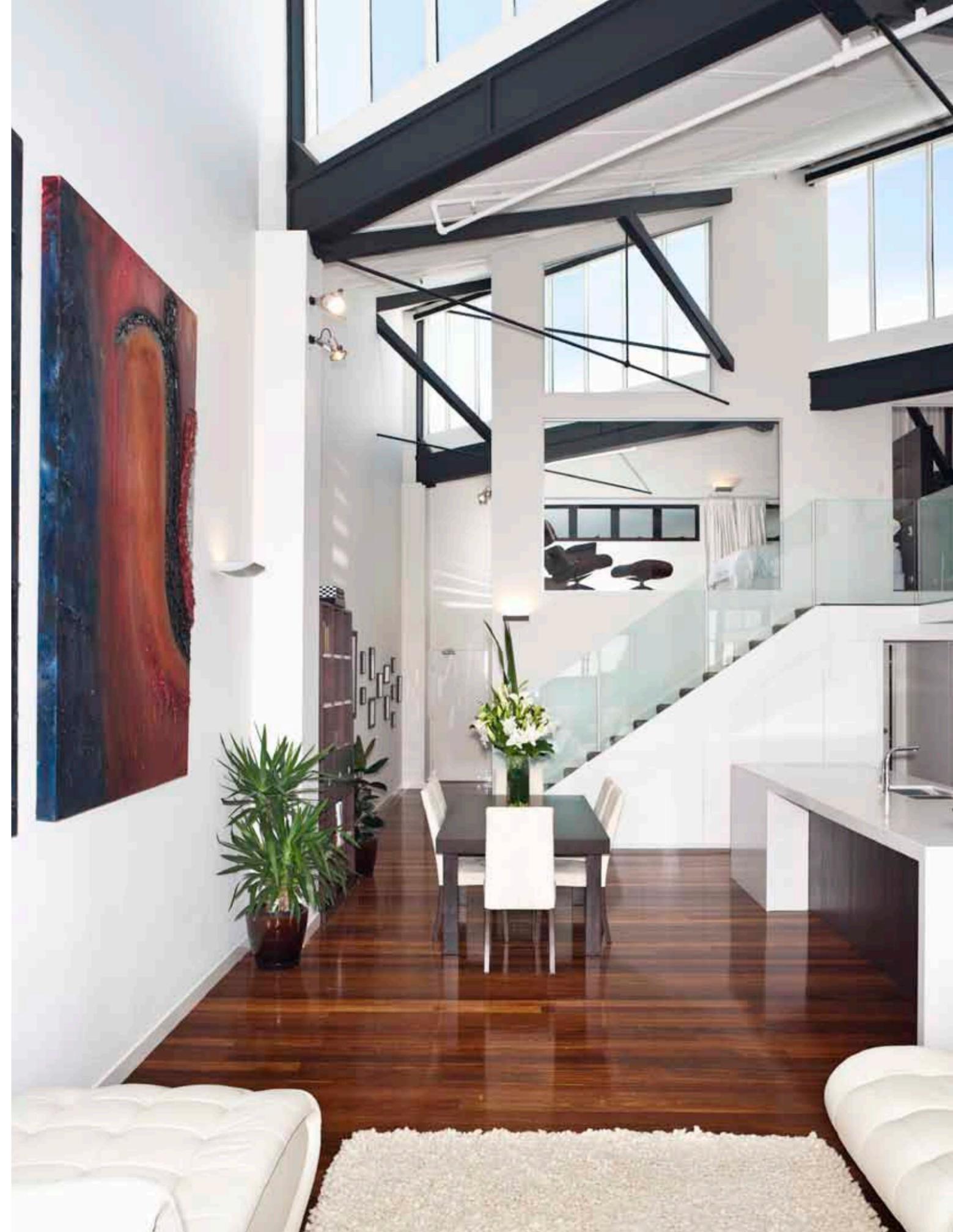


ceiling and exposed brick wall. We wanted to highlight the height of the space, and the way the roof scissors back and forth.”

For this reason the original trusses and bracing tie rods are painted a dark charcoal colour. The sprinkler system is also exposed to enhance the industrial look.

“Using a dark colour to pick out the bracing elements leads the eye up to the high ceiling, making the space seem larger,” says McGrath.

Introducing plenty of natural light to the interior was another priority. New





Above: The master suite also features glass balustrading that allows a transparency through the apartment. A freestanding wall of sable oak veneer with stainless steel trim conceals the walk-in wardrobe.

Facing page top: Nero Marquina marble is paired with white tiles in the master ensuite, where a sculptural Villeroy & Boch Aveo tub makes a dramatic centrepiece.

Facing page lower: The second bathroom also has a monochromatic palette – Calacatta marble lines the floor and walls, which have niche shelving.

glazed balustrading that leads to a mezzanine study area and second-floor master suite provides a transparency that did not exist previously.

“We also retained the high hopper windows that look over the former balcony space – to ensure natural light would be coming in from both directions,” says McGrath.

Because the owners like to entertain, the kitchen is a focal point of the interior.

“We ended up with a long expanse of wall for the cabinets, which we enclosed

within a white portico-style framework to add visual weight. We were able to create a cocktail bar at one end, within an open space that is ideal for socialising. The bar, which has its own wine refrigerator, is a separate entity to the kitchen.”

A limited material palette enhances the sophisticated look of the interior – the white lacquered cabinets are paired with dark-stained sable oak wood veneer. This veneer also appears in the master bedroom, where it forms a freestanding wall concealing closet space behind the bed.

The large master ensuite continues the monochromatic palette. Nero Marquina marble forms the vanity top and upstands behind the toilet, bidet and a sculptural tub. The sense of space is reinforced by a walk-through shower beside the tub.

Calacatta marble lines the floor and walls of the second bathroom.

“Marble is a wonderful way to express the surfaces,” says McGrath. “It provides visual depth, in addition to introducing a random organic patterning to an otherwise strictly ordered, geometric interior.”

- Architect and interior designer:** Gary McGrath; Kelly Gray, Sparc (Brisbane, Qld)
Builder: The Infinitec Group
Joinery: T&M Cabinets
Carpet: Feltex Hemisphere
Lighting: Iguzzini; Masson for Light
Kitchen cabinetry: White lacquer and sandblasted sable oak veneer by Navlam
Benchtop: Quantum Quartz in Starlight White
Sink: Gessi Quadrato
Kitchen mixer and bathroom taps: Gessi Ovale
Main kitchen appliances: Miele
Wine refrigerator: Vintec
Bathtub: Villeroy & Boch Aveo

- Bath spout:** Waterfall Hydra from Southcape Tapware
Master bathroom vanity: Nero Marquina marble; with Parisi basins
Shower rails: Hansa Designo shower set
Toilets: Vitra Matrix
Master bathroom tiles: Riviera White limestone from Homestone
Powder room walls and floor: Calacatta marble

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