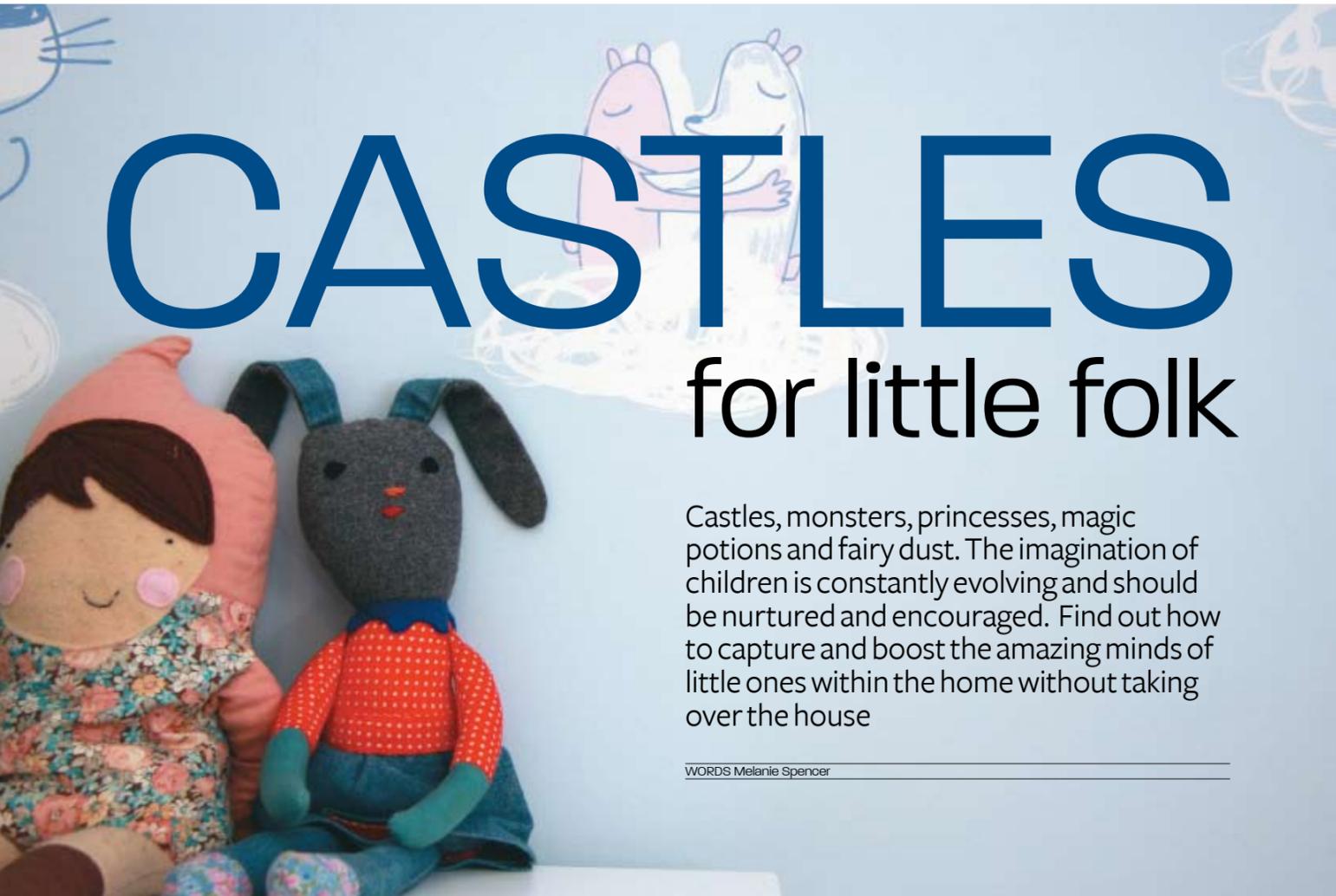


CASTLES

for little folk

Castles, monsters, princesses, magic potions and fairy dust. The imagination of children is constantly evolving and should be nurtured and encouraged. Find out how to capture and boost the amazing minds of little ones within the home without taking over the house

WORDS Melanie Spencer



A child's room

Billy Kavellaris, director of Kavellaris Urban Design (KUD), believes children are individuals and this needs to be carefully considered when designing a home.

"It's important to recognise that children are their own person and statistically they're going to be in the family home for longer than previous generations," he says. He believes that when designing spaces for children it's important to plan for the future. "The kid's bedroom eventually becomes a de facto study and sanctuary when they get older. Here, they do so much more than sleep."

Colour is an integral part of a child's development and is often the first step in the process of creating an amazing space. Sara Silm and Megan Morton of Home — a design, editorial and styling practice — have launched a paint range, Home Paint, for Bauwerk. "Basically, there are no rules with colour," says Sara. "High chroma colours such as red and yellow are stimulating and visually demanding. If sleep is the major objective,



above:
Binny Talib wallpaper

below:
Panton Junior chairs in a range of brights, from Space Furniture

it's best to stick with blues, greens and purples. I prefer to use colour in the accessories and decorative elements of a child's room. Choose a hero piece, such as a fabulous rug or vintage quilt, and let it be the big voice in the room."

Children sharing a room shouldn't be a deterrent to using colour, either. Sara says, "If you have a situation where a brother and sister are sharing, keep it simple and stick to a warm white on the walls and put the focus into soft furnishings such as a great upholstered chair or a colourful floor rug. Colour doesn't always have to be on the wall; the floor is a great canvas. If you have floorboards, don't overlook their ability to take colour. I've had a specialist floor painter paint a rug onto boards for a client — it looked fantastic!"

Sara also suggests that vintage industrial pieces can have great multifunctional potential and she once used an old wooden hose chaff bin for toy storage in a play room. Sara loves to use cow hides in kids' rooms for texture and a graphic element (black and white always defines

a space beautifully). Mobiles, vintage flags, posters and children's art are all great ways of adding interest and contrast to walls.

Nicky Line, director of bednest.com.au (upholstered bedheads online) says you can never have too much storage in a kid's space. "When space is an issue and built-in cupboards aren't an option, try a variety of solutions such as toy bags suspended from hooks on the wall, storage boxes on wheels and open shelving where kids can create their own displays," she says.

Nicky believes that fabric is a great way to breathe life into a room. She says that stripes, spots and bold geometrics are perfect for both girls and boys. Use them for curtains, cushion covers, bedspreads, laundry bags and oversized floor cushions.

Children need an area for "quiet time" and a place to go to that feels safe, to read, or just to be. Nicky believes that by strategically placing a teepee (great for storage also), floor cushions

above:
Kavellaris Urban Design commissioned this imaginative mural to shake up the urban courtyard and provide a sense of fun for the children who live there

below:
The Porcupine desk from Space Furniture has a number of holes in the table top, for storing pencils while they aren't in use





BedNest's Bambino bedheads can be created in a range of colours and textures to complement any décor



The boys' room in Andrew Maynard's Butler House embraces a young sense of adventure

and beanbags, you will assist your children in creating fabulous ideas for inspiring and imaginative play.

Sleeping children is another priority for any family. Choosing a good-quality bed that can double as storage is a great solution if space is an issue, while an upholstered bedhead is the easiest way to add a pop of colour and to further outline the personality in a child's space.

Wall-art or wallpaper can be another great way to add character. Sydney-based illustrator Binny Talib has created just that. Binny's wallpaper adds a touch of whimsy and a feel for the surreal, designed to transport her audience into a magical journey of childhood dreams.

The Binny Wallpaper collection is a culmination of Binny's own hand-drawn and playful illustrations, which create a beautiful childhood sanctuary. Binny says, "My wish is that they become part of the fabric of a child's room and home — that what started as my stories will become woven into the story of that individual's life and create childhood memories that will linger for a lifetime."

Outdoor play

It's not a new notion that children need outdoor space but with today's reduced land size, a bit of creativity is required to give them that much-needed feeling of freedom.

Billy Kavellaris, of KUD, explains that our view of space needed for the backyard isn't what it used to be. The Perforated House designed by KUD has a mural (by artist Emma Burmeister from Monash University) painted on the back wall. He explains that the mural is a parody of the traditional quarter-acre block of old. It gives the kids colour and an interesting outlook for their outdoor play.



The Streamliner range by Playsam is available from Great Dane Furniture

Below: The Elephant Party mobile is bold in primary colours, from Great Dane Furniture

Right: The Omar Owl clock is a friendly face when learning to tell the time, from Space Furniture

Far Right: Bholu has created an imaginative range of characters that adorn its wallpapers, trims and also soft toys





THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING TO CONSIDER
IS HOW A CHILDREN'S
SPACE INTERACTS
WITH THE REST OF THE
FAMILY HOME.

Andrew Maynard



Bambino bedhead from BedNest pictured in Amarena Norwich Candy fabric

In the Butler Home by Andrew Maynard, outdoor space was created on the roof. It was a case of either moving to the suburbs or creating a garden upstairs, which is exactly what they did.

Dragan Majstorovic, of Majstorovic Architecture, suggests lots of sand and adventure things for climbing and hiding for the outdoors. "Most children today live in single-level homes on flat suburban blocks, depriving them of three-dimensional experiences — and it has been shown that 3D skills are related strongly to conceptual thinking for a child's development."

Finally, the most important thing to consider is how a children's space interacts with the rest of the family home. Andrew Maynard says, "The reality is children want to be part of the action." So to have their own space is important but to feel connected to the hustle and bustle of family life exhilarates and inspires our little people.

references

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