

NEALE WHITAKER

THE STYLE GURU



The most exciting colour punch I've seen in a long time

How variety adds colour to your life



My life is nothing if not varied and I love that. It keeps me on my toes and it keeps the creative juices flowing. In fact, sometimes those juices thrash and roar like Niagara Falls.

In the week just gone, after sending the March/April issue of *Vogue Living* to the printers (my first issue as editor — performance anxiety at fever pitch), I found myself in an inner Melbourne suburb talking renovations, dogs and life after *The Block* with one of the show's most popular couples. Their identity will be revealed in a future episode, but let's just say I was suitably humbled to learn this young couple had built — not renovated, built — six houses in the time it's taken me to get round to thinking about fixing my bathroom. And then it was into the Melbourne studio (you may know it as Scotty's HQ) to record *Open House* with Shelley Craft and reflect on the week that was and the week to come.

Back in Sydney, and great to catch up with the elegant Anna Lenti, sister of Italian designer Paola Lenti, at the Dedecce showroom in Darlinghurst. I've long been a fan of Lenti's rugs, curvaceous indoor and outdoor furniture, and the brilliant, kaleidoscopic palette that has secured her reputation as a colour guru.

Where Lenti's palette and innovative fabrics lead, the design industry often follows and, for me, the reveal of a new Lenti collection is always a highlight of Milan Design Week. While Paola herself is a reluctant traveller, her indefatigable sister flies the world, promoting the Lenti brand. Touching down in Sydney for just 24 hours to



The Paola Lenti outdoor sofa with citrus lights (above) at Dedecce and (inset) the Arne Jacobsen chair turns 60.

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talk new designs, I assumed Anna was on a whistle stop tour of our region. No, she smiled, just Sydney — as in Milan to Sydney and straight back again. Deciding at that point not to mention my arduous flight from Melbourne, I declared instead that Lenti's outdoor sofa in watermelon teamed with pendants in citrus shades was little short of genius, packing the most exciting colour punch I've seen in a long time. This week, too, I was

privileged to open an exhibition of photographs by Sydney-based Felix Forest.

Travelling to Ukraine in May 2014, Forest achieved a lifetime ambition to visit Chernobyl, site of the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986.

The resulting photographs (which can be seen on line at www.beckerminty.com) of long-abandoned schools, homes and theatres are haunting and poignant yet ultimately uplifting, as nature has started to reclaim the

devastated site. More used to shooting luxurious interiors for glossy magazines, it was intriguing to hear the photographer talk of the very different beauty he found.

And I can't sign-off without wishing a happy 60th birthday to a design icon — Arne Jacobsen's Series 7 chair.

Reissued by manufacturer Fritz Hansen in soft pink or deep navy, the chair is an enduring beauty. If I look even half as good when I reach its age I'll be a happy man.

POWER OF MOOD

YOU CAN BRING ART INTO A HOME

Viewing Felix Forest's exhibition made me reflect on the power of art in the home. Art choices make an enormous impact on the mood of a room.

- Art is generally best displayed at eye level.
- Never be afraid to make a personal statement. What you place on your walls says a lot about you.
- Don't worry about your art matching. The most interesting walls are covered in a variety of styles, sizes and mediums.
- Grouping art is a very contemporary and effective way of displaying it.
- Don't try to match your decor to your art or vice-versa. Your art can (and in my opinion, should) exist independently from interior colour or styling themes.
- General rule of thumb: if you love it, it's meant to be. Only put on your walls what you will enjoy looking at (or waking up to) every day.



Felix Forest's favourite image from his Chernobyl photo exhibition.



WIN

TICKETS TO THE CAMPFIRE FESTIVAL!

The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph are giving 125 readers the chance to win a double 3-day pass to the Campfire Festival at Hope Estate. Experience the best in Australian music including John Butler Trio, Lee Kernaghan, Kasey Chambers and many more at this family friendly and non-stop fun 3-day festival.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

Go to dailytelegraph.com.au/promotions and answer in 25 words or less

"Who are you most looking forward to seeing at the festival?"

Entries close Thursday 5 March

Daily Telegraph Sunday Telegraph

