



LEFT TO RIGHT
Bold colours
and fixtures mark
the living and
dining areas

MAKING A MARK

THANKS TO A KALEIDOSCOPE OF
COLOURFUL FURNISHINGS AND ART,
BARRY AND ANJI CORNELL HAVE MADE
THIS VIBRANT ABODE THEIR OWN



BY RACHEL DUFFELL PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF ANJI CORNELL



It was through the very act of trying to leave South Africa that Barry and Anji Connell were drawn back in. The couple were holidaying there last year, having wanted to visit for some time. On the final day of a five-night trip, while en route to the airport, they decided to stop by the town of Franschhoek for a quick look around, having heard how lovely it was. Spying a property agency, the couple got out of the car to peek in the window. What they saw there was love at first sight—and the rest, as they say, is history.

RUSTIC CHARM

Franschhoek is a country town that's less than a two-hour drive east of Cape Town, surrounded by stunning scenery that includes centuries-old vineyards and magnificent mountains. It's also where the couple now spend three months of each year, splitting their time equally between their various homes—they have properties in Hong Kong, London and North Norfolk, England. Anji works on the go as an interior architect and landscape designer, so it comes as no surprise that the newest home in Franschhoek is full of style and character, both inside and out.



LEFT TO RIGHT Interior architect and landscape designer Anji Connell; South African artist Marieke Prinsloo-Rowe's sculpture is a lively addition to the garden; pops of colour animate the outdoor area and interior spaces throughout the home

"I like to think I create homes to suit my clients; however, I do like to push the boundaries and help them to push theirs, especially if they are living away from their 'real' home," says Anji of her design style. "I encourage them to do something a little different." This description also relates to what she's done with her own home in Franschhoek. Although she states that she prefers a clean, minimal home, her South African property is far from that ideal. "My style on paper, or in my head, is grey, austere modernism—concrete, metal, glass, minimal furniture, with no signs of life," she explains. "But colour always sneaks in."





LIFE IN COLOUR

The Franschhoek home is striking, in particular for its bold use of colour. But it's perhaps also a reflection of its setting. "Location does affect the aesthetic: Hong Kong is urban and minimal, and London is more modern and eclectic, while the Norfolk beach house is more homely," she says. So how would she describe the South African home? The aesthetic of the house's previous inhabitants was "French country style," and that partly made Anji fall in love with it. But although she was tempted to keep the furnishings as they were, in the end, she decided to do the design her own way, sourcing various pieces from South African furniture brand Weylandts and others from Hong Kong, ultimately creating what she describes as an "uncluttered, inviting, comfortable living space with a bit of African flavour."

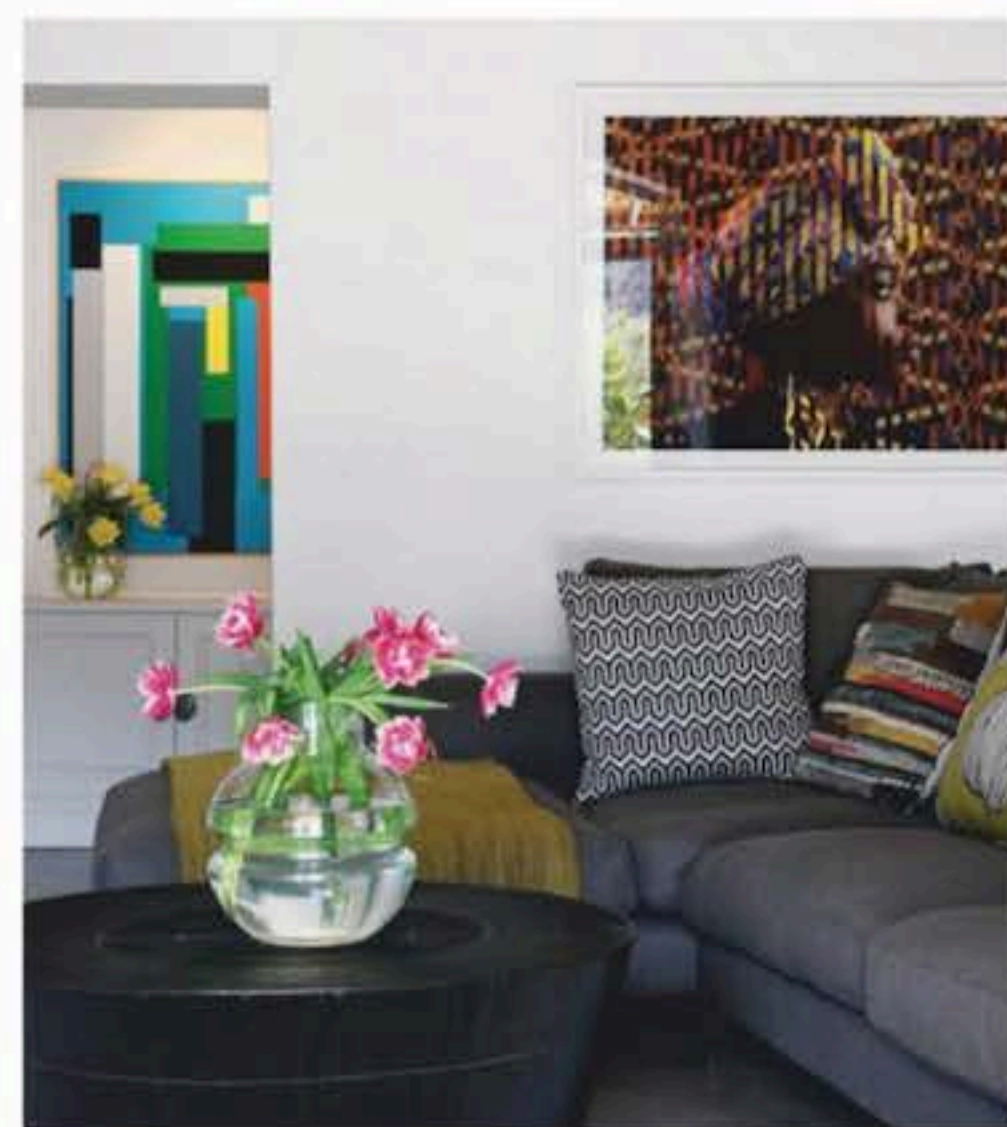
This flavour that she identifies is delivered mainly through the various artworks that punctuate the space, most of which were sourced from Franschhoek's many galleries or from Cape Town. They include pieces by South African artists such as Richard Scott, Karin Miller and Ralph Ziman, as well as paintings by others from around the world including Gavin Turk, Gary Stephens and Andrzej Urbanski. The artworks are complemented by Anji's expert splashes of bright hues here and there, particularly in the furnishings—as can be seen in the yellow velvet dining room chairs; the large, bright pink-painted tree; the vintage yellow armchair; and the living room bar cabinet in striking blue, white and red. Then there's the big sculptural light above the dining table, which though not bright in hue is certainly bold in structure.

THIS PAGE

The sunny yellow chairs create a cheerful mood at the dining table; the couple's art collection adds a touch of South African flavour to their abode

OPPOSITE PAGE

Anji kept the original French country style aesthetic of the home while decorating it with an eclectic array of art and furniture; the light palette and stone flooring makes it easy to incorporate colourful furniture and art throughout the home



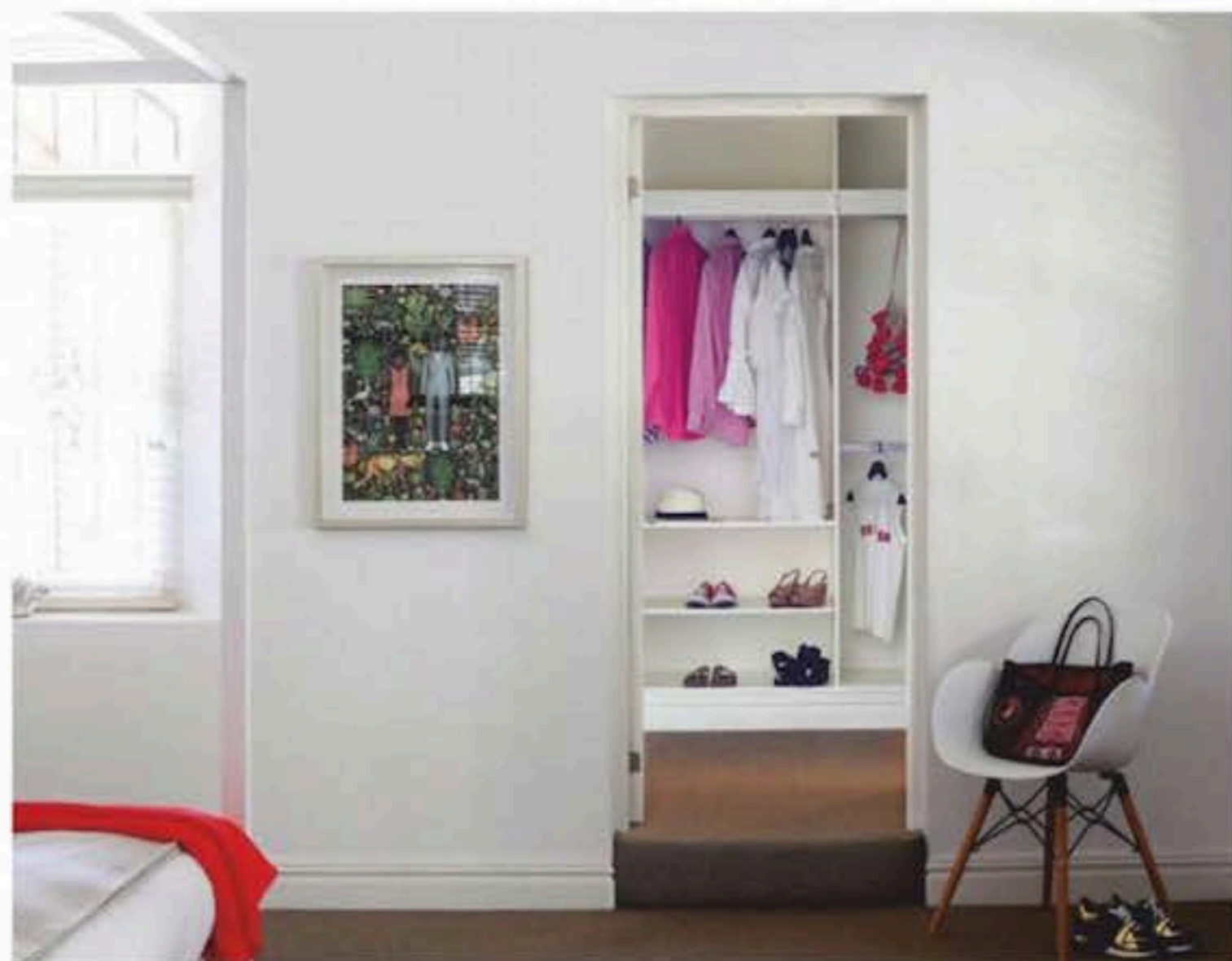


LEFT TO RIGHT
Every corner of the home from the hallway to the bathroom has been thoughtfully decorated with art and decorative objects; Connell commissioned South African street artists Wayne Bks and Ana Kuni to create bold artworks for the walls, such as the mural in her bedroom



By sourcing various pieces from South Africa and Hong Kong, Anji ultimately created what she describes as an “uncluttered, inviting, comfortable living space with a bit of African flavour”





LEFT TO RIGHT
A playful mix of patterns on the furniture and upholstery imbue the home with personality

There are quirkier artworks, too. Anji sought out two South African street artists via Instagram, Wayne Bks and Ana Kuni, whom she commissioned to create something for the home. Their mural work now appears in one of the bedrooms and on one wall of the verandah. And the art continues outdoors. By the swimming pool, a sculpture—by South African sculptor Marieke Prinsloo-Rowe—of a girl in a diving pose appears almost ready to jump into the inviting waters. “We fell in love with it on sight and felt instantly that it would be our mark on the garden,” says Anji. “She’s a beauty.” With much more planned, including transforming the office into a fourth bedroom, it sounds like Anji still has plenty of opportunity to make marks on this elegant African abode. 📍

THE brief

- LOCATION**
Franschhoek, South Africa
- TYPE OF PROPERTY**
Landed
- BUILT-UP SIZE**
12,916sqft
- INTERIOR DESIGN**
Anji Connell Interior Design
- TIME TAKEN**
5 months