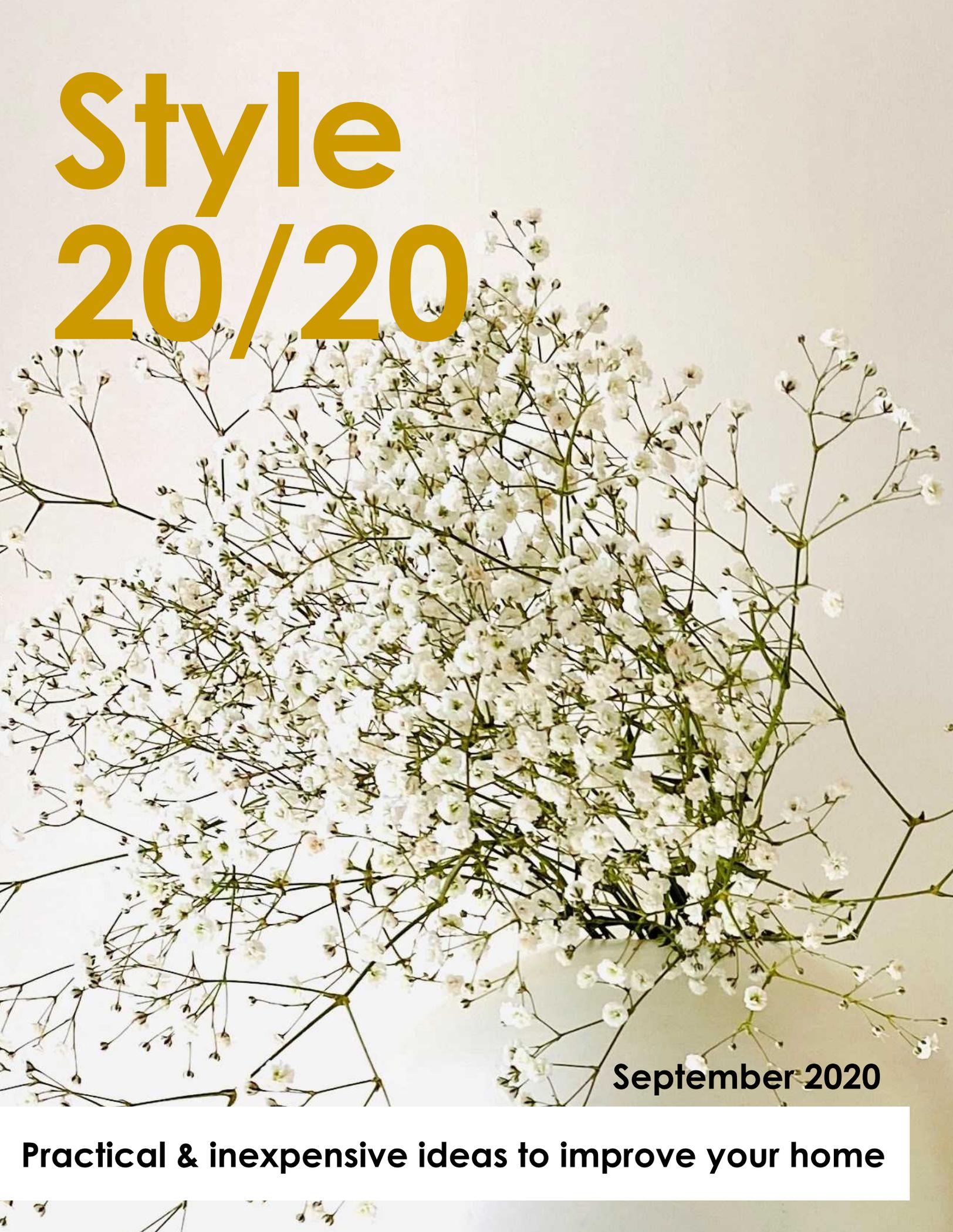


Style 20/20

A large, dense bouquet of white baby's breath flowers (Gypsophila) is the central focus of the image. The flowers are small and delicate, with thin green stems and small green leaves. The bouquet is set against a plain, light-colored background, possibly a wall or a backdrop. The overall aesthetic is clean, fresh, and minimalist.

September 2020

Practical & inexpensive ideas to improve your home

Striving for balance

September is the month we've all been waiting for! Not only does it signal the start of Spring, but it hopefully also represents a slow return to a lifestyle we had before the pandemic. I have no doubt that the gentler pace has been good for us all, but I'm also itching to travel more, socialise, and watch sport. The next few months are going to be a real juggling act as we tussle between letting go of our fears and anxieties while, at the same time, remembering to proceed with caution. I guess we are all just striving for our own level of balance and comfort.

This edition of Style 20/20 is essentially about striving for balance, as I unpack ways to:

- Start buying art without breaking the bank
- Downsize your home without losing style and comfort
- Create impact by updating only some of your lighting.

In my line of work, I'm constantly striving to balance indulgence with austerity, high style with high street, practicality with the wow-factor. Obviously, it doesn't help that I have expensive taste! If you had to line up a group of similar products hiding all prices and suppliers, I would undoubtedly choose the most expensive one every time. So, sticking to a budget is always difficult for me but, no matter how frustrating and challenging it is at the time, it is also so rewarding once I've achieved the look I want and successfully balanced the spend. I hope this edition of Style 20/20 goes some way towards guiding you with this balancing act.

Enjoy your home and remember to follow the magazine on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest for more inspiration and ideas.

Melissa Druce

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Style20/20



melis_style2020



melis_style2020



C o n t e n t s

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Where to start with art?



Where to start with art?

Art, of course, comes in many forms, paintings, sculptures, prints, ceramics, photography and so much more. Some of us have specific preferences and others (mainly investment buyers) would want all these art forms represented in their homes. The art world can never be summarised in a few pages, and so, in this edition, I've mainly focused on affordable ways for first-time buyers to dip their toes into the art world.

You may not know exactly what you're looking for, but that's actually the best way to choose art because then you'll be guided by your senses and not by a pre-conceived idea of what you "should" be buying. Just buy what you love, what resonates with you, what catches your eye, or what evokes a happy feeling for you. And, like so many things in life, some people know immediately what they like whilst others will want to ponder on the decision for some time. I am definitely the latter, and this makes choosing even simple things difficult, never mind valuable pieces of art! But take your time, because, when you see the right one, it will grab you.



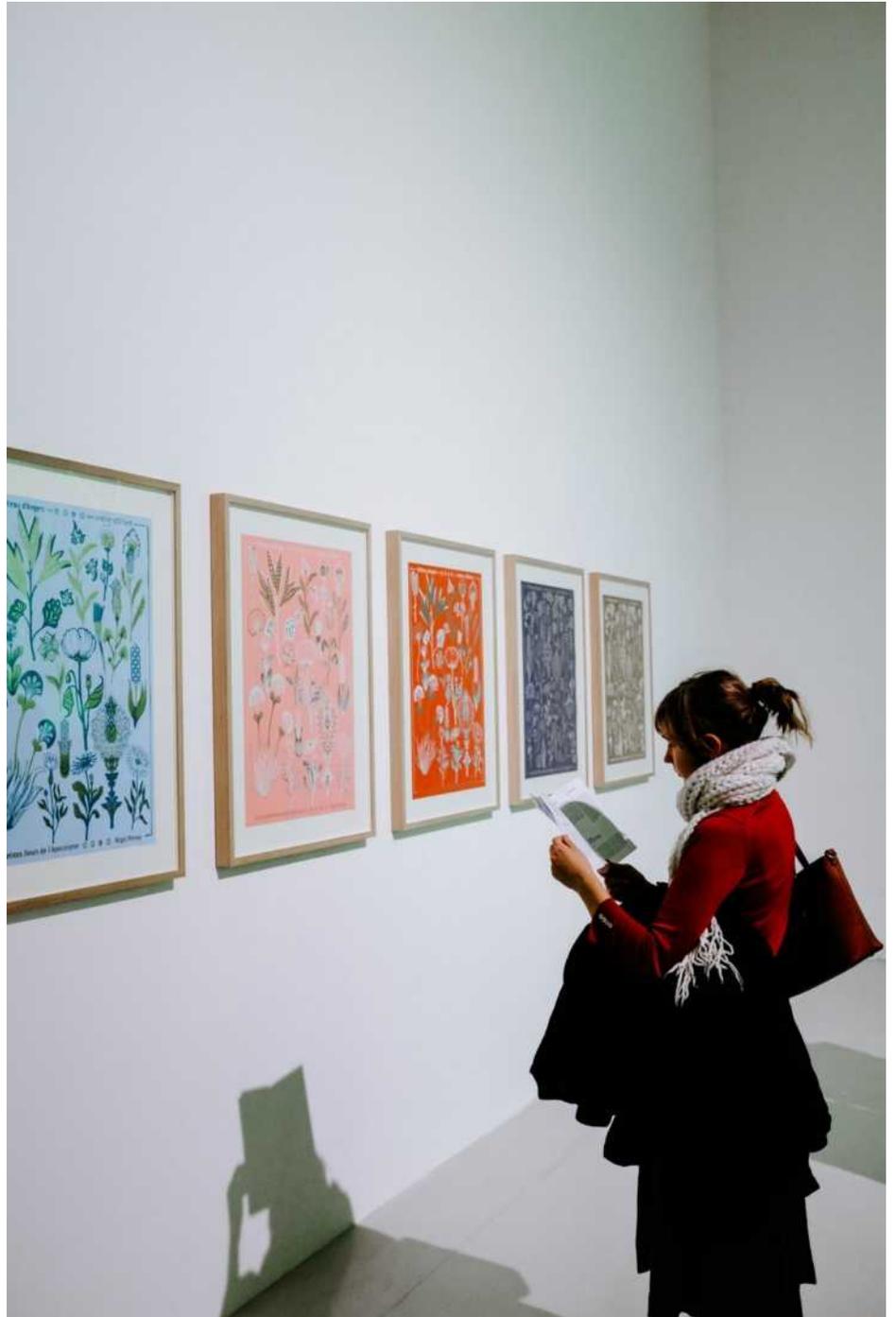
This exquisite sculpture by Egon Tania is made from recycled wood — I find it absolutely captivating.

Photo credit : Teresa Truda

Where to buy affordable art?

Art Fairs and galleries - The art world can seem intimidating and so, for first-time buyers, I would definitely recommend attending an art fair. In Johannesburg, we have the RMB Turbine Art Fair in July each year (postponed this year as per details below) and in February in Cape Town, the Investec Cape Town Art Fair. These fairs not only showcase established artists but also strive to make art accessible to a much larger audience by showcasing emerging artists, which means much of the art is priced well below what one might expect to pay for original art. Many of the gallery owners are in attendance so you can chat to them and be guided by their vast knowledge. You can buy art at the fair, or you can browse and contact the artists or galleries when you are ready. And, if you do not have time to browse galleries and fairs, you can approach a gallery to source art for you (whether you are only looking for that one special artwork or enhancing your art collection).

Don't miss this year's virtual RMB Turbine Art Fair from 28 August to 2 September:
<https://turbineartfair.co.za/>.



Buying art direct

With the growth of social media as a marketing platform, artists are now largely able to market themselves. The visual and personal nature of social media has, to a large extent, removed that perceived aloofness between artists and the public, thus bringing the artist to the fore and enabling them to share their creative processes. Buying directly from a local, emerging artist is a great way to step into the art world.

This Peonie oil painting is by Teresa Truda. Contact her via Instagram : @teresatruda



Buying art direct



Another artist who has caught my eye on Instagram, is Hilde Alet Malan.

About the artist:

"My inspiration comes from everywhere — my faith, the people in my life, books, podcasts, traveling to new places, long walks in nature, and my home town. I have created my own art style through many years of drawing and painting daily. I have a very "free", natural and simplistic approach to making art and for me creating art is very therapeutic. My main focus is to create artworks that will fill peoples' lives with beauty and meaning.

Purchasing my art:

1. My artworks are available by commission (order). We talk about what would work best for your specific space and I make something especially for you.
2. There are artworks available on my website. I also regularly post artworks on Instagram and Facebook that are available to purchase online.



3. There are also auctions on my Instagram and Facebook pages where you can bid on artworks I post. This is really fun and you can get amazing artworks at amazing prices."

View Hilde's work on

Instagram :

@hildealetmalanart or on her

website :

<https://>

www.hildealetmalan.co.za/.

Photography as an art form

Photographic art can be relatable, accessible, moving and powerful. It transports us to places we've never experienced, brings us closer to people we've never had the privilege of meeting, and it chronicles historical and political events we were not able to witness.

So, whether it be travel photography, wildlife photography, architectural photography, portrait photography, or fashion photography — you will definitely find a photographic artwork that has meaning, relevance and a sense of place in your home.

I recently chatted to local photographer Kerry Manson from African Artwork (<https://africanartwork.co.za/>) to get her insights into photographic art and find out more about her experience as a photographer. This is what she had to say:

1. How did you get into photography?

I first picked up a camera at around the age of 13 and had always done it as a hobby, until I got to the age of about 21. I was working at an ad agency as a Copywriter and found myself always going back to the camera, wanting more and thinking of new ways I could show things and what wonderful, magical places I wanted to photograph. At that point, I knew what I wanted to do, photography and travel.

2. How would you describe your photographic style?

I would say I have a documentary type style as I shoot what I see. Occasionally I will ask someone to pose for me, but, even then, I find the best photos of my subjects are when they are at their most natural.

3. Can you provide a brief summary of your product offering at African Artwork?

African Artwork showcases travel photography from all over Africa. We give the customer a variety of options, including different sizes and framing options (all picked on our online store with ease), with delivery to the customer's door, and we aim to offer affordable and original art to people who love the continent as much as we do.

4. Any advice you can offer to someone looking to buy photographic art?

Get something that speaks to you. Something, that when you look at it, you are transported to a place of calm within yourself. I always say, the bigger the better, especially in artwork. Oversized art in a room (when placed well) is a great focus point, makes a statement and has the ability to bring a room together.

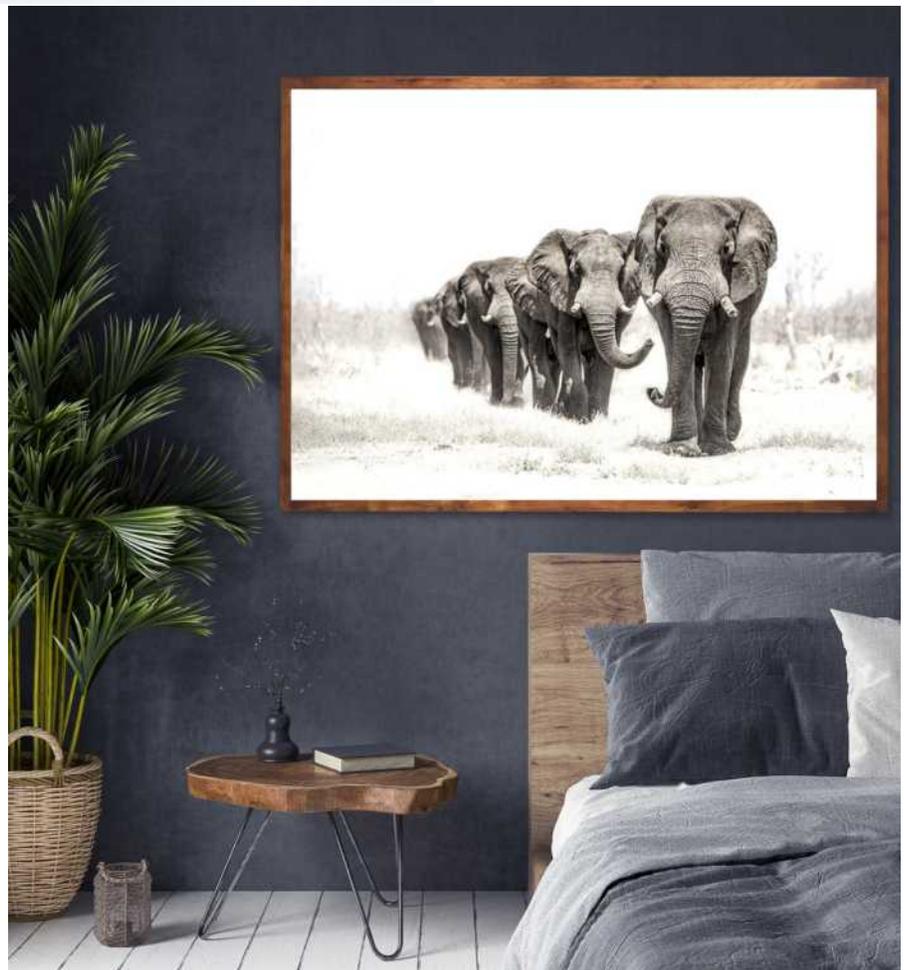
Follow African Artwork on Instagram : @africanartworkza

Photography as an art form



Voyager from the
Beachscapes
collection by
African Artwork

Procession from the
Wildlife
Collection
by African Artwork



Framing options



Selecting art is only the first step, framing it and hanging it is almost as important to ensure you do justice to the artistic style of the artist.

I photographed the beautiful art featured on Pages 4, 11, 12 at a friend's house. They are keen collectors of some of the best local art, but, more than that, they have brought their modern, minimalistic home to life by finding impactful ways to present their impressive collection of art. For example, framing one piece in a collection in a striking contrasting colour (red in this case) is a really dramatic way of drawing your eye to the collection and a clever way to introduce colour into an otherwise black and white scheme.

Framing options

It can be difficult to get the right balance so that the frame really enhances the art without overpowering it. For example, just look at the over-scaled dark frame featured here, and how cleverly it enhances the artwork!



Matching your frame to a dominant colour in the artwork is a great way to make an impression. Look at this stunning example, where the frame heroes the pink in the art.

A peak into an artist's home

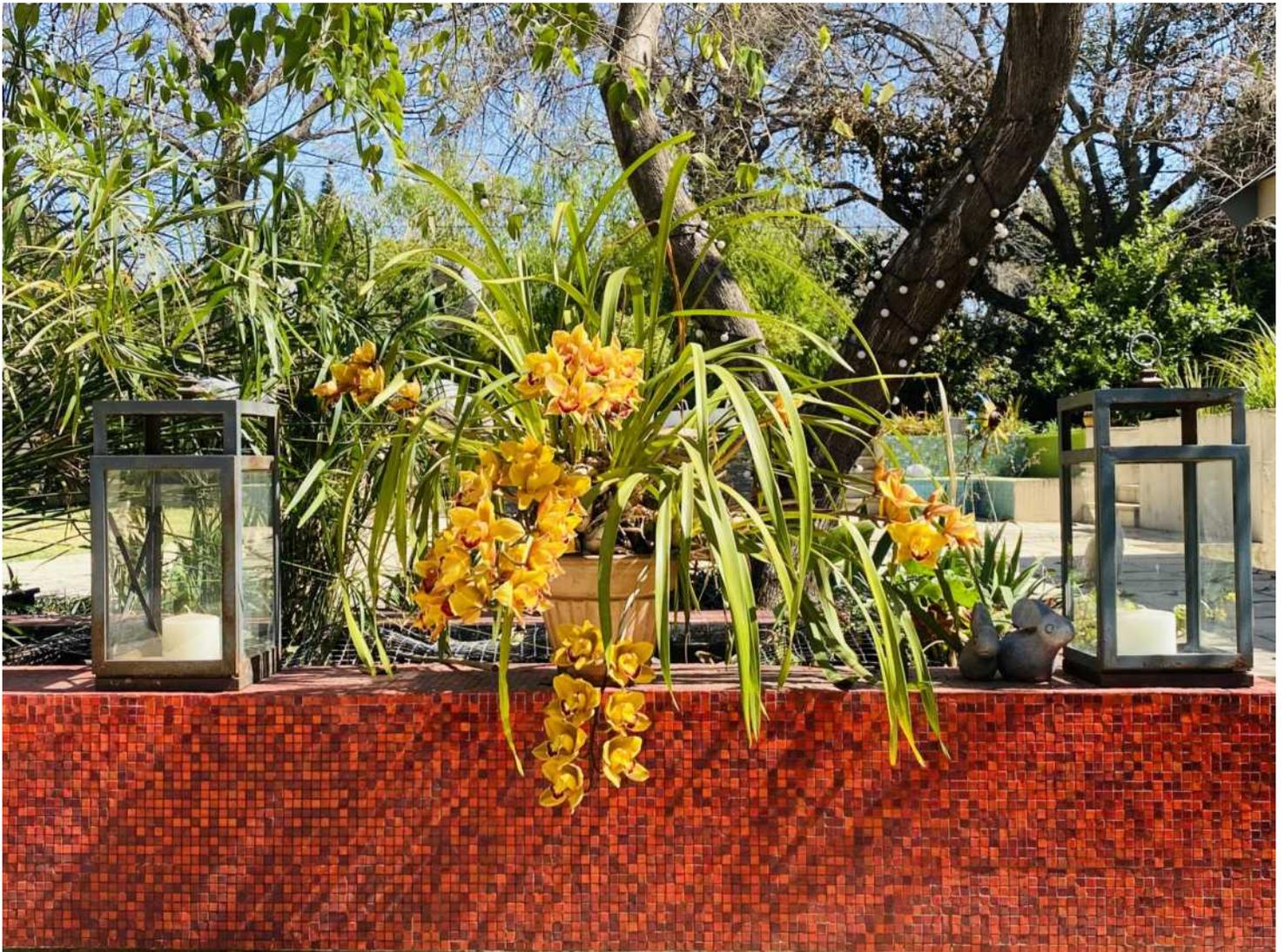


A peak into an artist's home

Have you noticed how artistic people seem to effortlessly style their homes in that eclectic, quirky, warm, layered and enchanting style? It's as if their creativity is literally bouncing off the walls, and it's a look that is not easy to pull off!

One such person is an artist friend of mine who kindly agreed to me taking a few snaps of her home and sharing her distinctive ideas.

From the art-filled gallery walls in her main bedroom, to her Instagram-worthy dressing room (previous spread), to the striking mosaics in her kitchen courtyard (below), to her expressive art studio, I hope this home inspires you to add your own unique character to your home.



A peak into an artist's home

The owner's art studio where her art works come to life. She describes her style as geometric abstract but she also experiments with other styles.

Instagram : constancesmithartist



A peak into an artist's home

This stunning gallery wall in the owner's main bedroom is proof that original art can sit comfortably with other less expensive artworks in a home. The artwork on the far left was bought by the owner at a Hospice shop for almost nothing, and once re-framed, it sits comfortably with coveted limited-edition prints and paintings by established South African artists.



In case you're wondering what a limited-edition print is, it is both a print and an original piece of art, as it is often hand-printed using traditional techniques and then limited in number, as opposed to digitally printed in large quantities. Each print is slightly unique and of a very high quality. The artist determines the number of prints and no more will be produced after that. The number of the print is marked on the print (usually in the bottom left corner) confirming that it is part of a limited-edition, for example: 3/20 (3 of 20).

A peak into an artist's home

This small art collection above the owner's bedside table is another clever example of how she has combined original art with other more affordable decorative pieces.





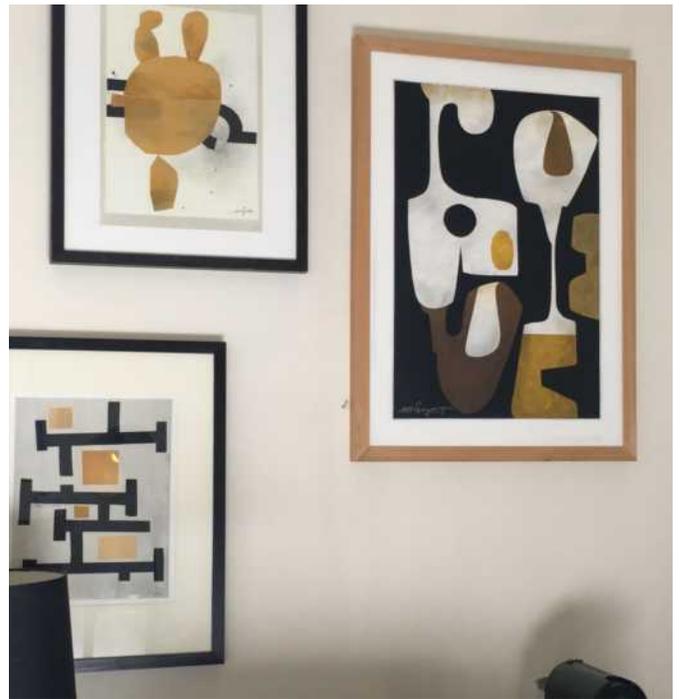
Downsize in style

Downsize in style

I only properly understood micro-living after I visited Amsterdam. It was both exhilarating and terrifying climbing up and down the narrow, spiral staircase of the tiny guesthouse we stayed in, which happened to be above a shop. But what our room lacked in square metres, it more than made up for in style and convenience. From the view of the canals, to being walking distance from beautiful shops and restaurants, to hardly ever having to use a train or bus, the benefits were many. These are the very reasons why many people are re-assessing their large suburban homes in favour of smaller, inner-city apartments. Not to mention the added security and communal facilities offered in many of the newer developments. Micro-living is an international trend for sure. The question is, how can you retain at least some of the comforts you currently enjoy in your home when you downsize to a significantly smaller living space? I believe there are many ways you can make the most of a small living space from creating multi-purpose rooms, choosing your furniture wisely, finding clever ways to utilise all your living space, etc. In this edition, I've shared some ideas around selecting the most appropriate furniture and accessories for a small living space. Ultimately, as with everything in life, it's about getting the right balance.



Downsize in style



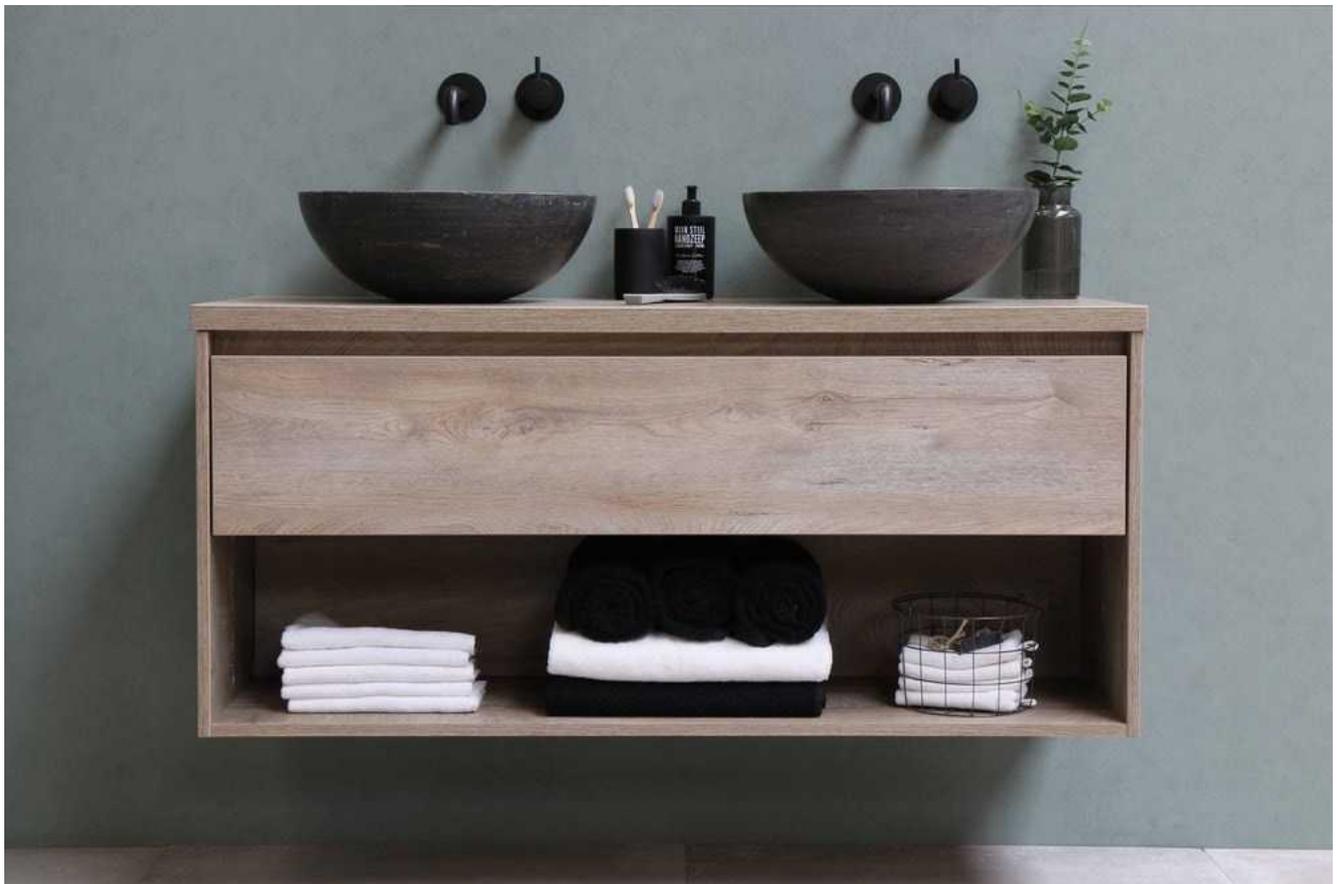
Our petite but super stylish guesthouse in Amsterdam, Maison Rika:
<https://www.rikastudios.com/maison-rika/>

Downsize in style



Source bathroom accessories that have a dual function (cupboards with mirrors for example instead of a separate mirror and separate cupboard). This mirrored bathroom cabinet is from CTM.

Floating cabinets are more in style than the traditional cabinets, but the space beneath the floating cabinet is just wasted. Why not include a storage shelf below the cabinet? It doesn't spoil the look and adds that extra bit of really useful storage space.



Downsize in style

For your internal doors, use sliding barn doors instead of regular doors to save space within each room.

These barn doors are both from Leroy Merlin :

<https://leroymerlin.co.za/>



Downsize in style



Choose mirrored sliding bedroom cupboard doors as not only do the mirrors make the room look bigger, but the sliding mechanism also means you're not taking up any more space than you need to in your dressing room or bedroom.

These are from Leroy Merlin and they also have a wood finish option:

<https://leroymerlin.co.za/>

Downsize in style

Choose furniture that has some storage capacity over furniture that is purely decorative. These two pieces of furniture from SHF Home are both super-stylish and, believe it or not, similar in size. The second piece with the drawers would of course be a much better choice for a small apartment due to the storage capacity it provides : <https://www.shf.co.za/>



Vogue Console table : Dimensions W 1200 D 500 H 800



Visi sideboard : Dimensions W 1300 D 450 H 760

Downsize in style



Maximise storage space by creating a wall of built-in display cabinets and shelves from floor to ceiling on one wall rather than having lots of smaller free-standing display cabinets and bookshelves dotted around.

Downsize in style



Decorate the highest parts of your walls above eye-level to draw the eye up and avoid cluttering the walls at the level that the eye first sees. This is also a great way to create extra storage space if needed.

Downsize in style



Install shutters or blinds that fit inside the window reveal instead of curtains (which take up quite a bit of wall space on either side of the window, when open).

These shutters are from AMERICAN shutters :

<https://www.americanshutters.co.za/>

Downsize in style



Grow a vertical garden for an intense dose of greenery even if you only have the smallest of spaces available. What better way to lift your spirits than to walk past this thing of beauty each and every morning? This image is courtesy of Modiwall Vertical Gardens. Contact them for a quote : <https://www.modiwall.com/>.

Update your lighting



Update your lighting



Lighting trends seem to be changing quicker than one can blink, so I have long since given up on trying to be completely on-trend. But it does, unfortunately, mean that you wake up one day and suddenly your light fittings are looking very dated.

It is however not practical, or feasible, for most of us to simply discard all our lighting in order to introduce the latest look. In my opinion, there are four light fittings in a home that just might be worth updating. I would recommend refreshing your kitchen pendant lights, the chandelier in your main living room, the bedside lamps in your main bedroom, and perhaps investing in a large standing lamp for your living room.

If you create impact with these four lights, then the rest will simply blend into the background of your décor scheme.

I've searched for unusual, bespoke, beautifully designed and locally-made light fittings that have a story. The designs of the lighting products I've featured are all referenced to either our local culture, nature or landscape. Lighting trends will come and go, but these fittings are, in my view, pieces of art that you'd be happy to live with for many years to come.

Update your lighting

Some of you will already be familiar with these gorgeous creations from the very talented product designer, Candice Lawrence, of Modern Gesture. This is what Candice had to say about her company and her creative process.

“About Modern Gesture . . . Modern Gesture designs and produces lighting, homeware and small stationery items in Cape Town, exploring different production techniques and craft skills, which includes experimentation with the physical and tactile properties of mixed mediums such as off cuts of wood, wax cord and various metals.

Modern Gesture believes that in each piece created a story is embedded into its materials, capturing the time and care engaged in the creation of each item. This practice ensures that each piece holds its own unique characteristics. Throughout the process there is a constant conversation happening between the hand of the designer and the material being formed. Each product is designed to engage our attention and draw us into a space to encounter sensory experiences. This conversation leads to a deepening of ones-self, a more personal engagement with the material and its final design, allowing for a new approach to quality, innovative design and simplicity, but still holds an international appeal without losing its local relevance and sentiments.”

The light fittings featured can be purchased online at :

<https://moderngesture.co.za/products>



African Tribal Necklace Lampshade



V-cut Light

Update your lighting



Blue & White Woven Necklace Lampshade

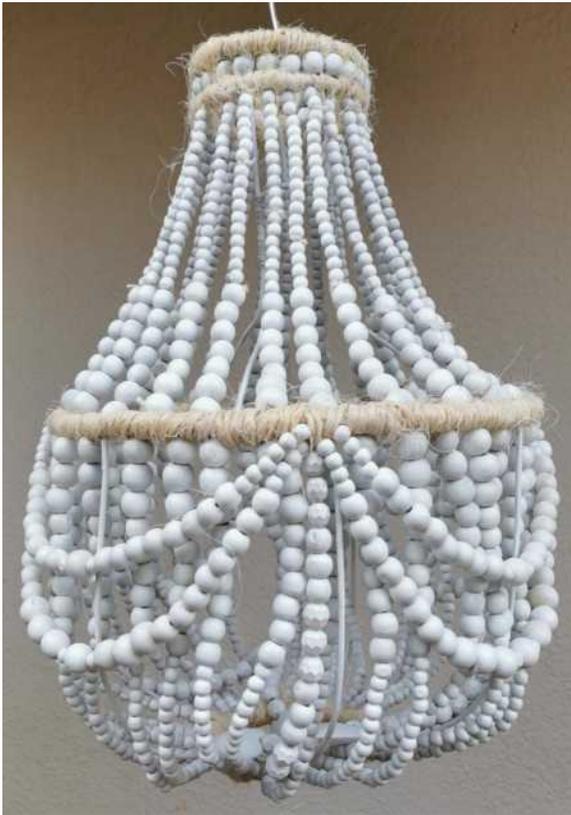


Column Wall Fixture



Weaver Wall Fixture

Update your lighting



Double Swagged White Egret

These beaded chandeliers from **Two Bird Shades** are both delicate and bold. The wooden beads are either painted or dyed to give them their unique look.

Each beaded shade is hand crafted from start to finish and no beaded shade is the same. I love that the colour combinations are inspired by local South African bird life and that each creation is given a bird's name, <http://www.twobirdshades.co.za/>.



The Sisal Rope Lantern



Charcoal Flufftail

Update your lighting

These beautifully formed pendant light fittings from AssemblIT are proudly designed and manufactured in Cape Town. Precision laser-cut from 3mm MDF wood, they come in different sizes and a number of different colour finishes. The fittings below are from the Vineyard range, each design cleverly named after a different wine cultivar. AssemblIT :

<https://assemblit.co.za/>

The Pinot pendant in black



The Merlot pendant in black



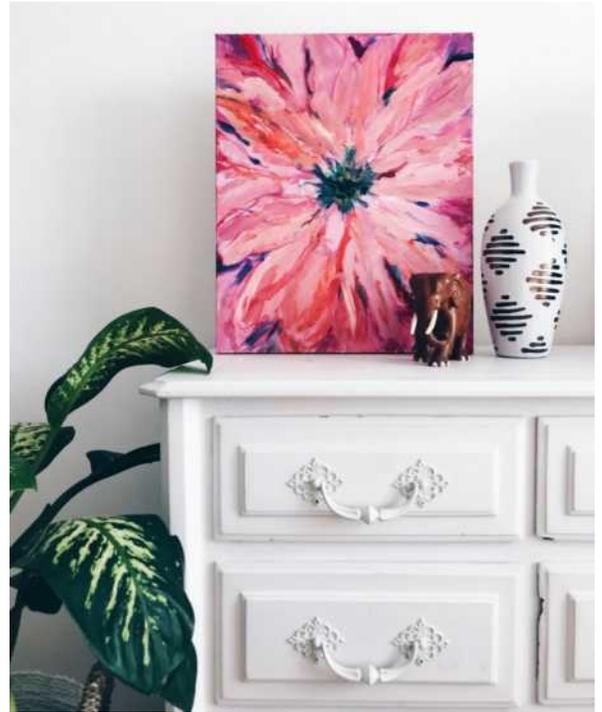
The Malbec pendant in natural



In the next edition of Style 20/20



Patio and courtyard Inspiration :
Add style to your outdoor space



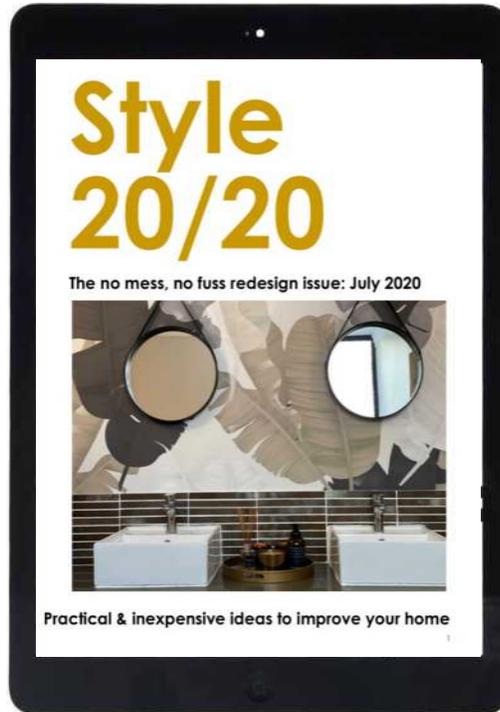
If it's not moving, paint it – how to
add personality with paint

Tile style :
Interesting ways with tiles



Previous editions

If you missed the previous 3 editions of Style 20/20, download them at :
<https://style2020.co.za/>.



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