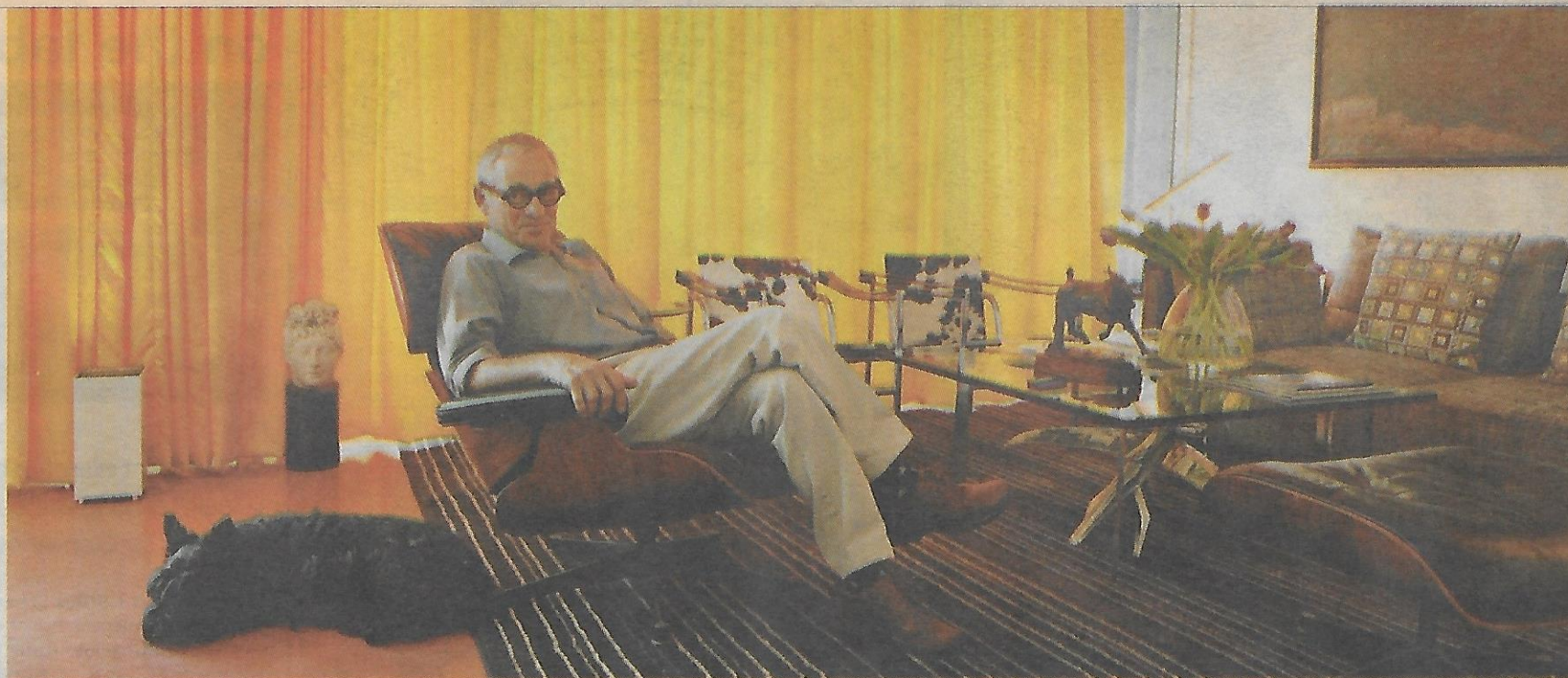


George Freedman, designer, Surry Hills

my domain



Come in and pull up an Eames

... Or a Le Corbusier or a Mies or a Meadmore. The dogs won't mind a bit. By **Stephen Lacey**.

If you're a design addict, it's hard not to drool when you walk in the door of George Freedman's 14th-floor apartment – best described as a temple of 20th-century modernism.

The first thing you notice are the Eames lounge chair and ottoman in black leather and rosewood (Eames 670 and 671, for the aficionados). Freedman looks very comfortable in the chair. He's sitting back, enjoying a Campari on ice. His two Scottish terriers, Pee Jay and Duffy McFala, are at his feet. A striking yellow curtain billows behind them.

The sophisticated scene is what you would expect from a man who has devoted his life to

design. Instead of the standard carpet throughout, they opted for terracotta tiles – supplied and laid by Artedomus in a herringbone fashion on a soundproof bed and honed and polished on site. "I saw a similar floor in the Carlo Scarpa [Castelvecchio] museum in Verona," Freedman says.

He had a bathtub installed in the main ensuite and replaced the wall tiles with glass mosaics in puce. The second bathroom was reconfigured to include a laundry (hidden behind a mirrored door), which was to have been in the kitchen. "I did not want socks in my soup," Freedman laughs.

He says the alterations cost less than expected,

from Florida for the covers. There are also beige covers for winter. A set of chrome-and-black Poul Kjaerholm mini-tables sits beside them.

Inside, there is a glass-and-chrome Barcelona coffee table by Mies van der Rohe and pony-skin LC1 Basculant chairs by Le Corbusier.

When Freedman and O'Brien entertain, they and their guests sit at a white marble dining table designed by Florence Knoll, seated in black leather MR chairs designed by Van der Rohe in 1927.

Freedman has been careful to avoid a "constellation ceiling" of halogens, with none in the living-dining area. "Everyone looks so dreadful beneath them,"

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The sophisticated scene is what you would expect from a man who has devoted his life to design. Born in Brooklyn, he studied architecture at Syracuse University and later lived in Spain, Amsterdam and London, working as an artist.

He came to Sydney 36 years ago and set up his own interior-design business. He designed the interior for Barry Humphries's splendid apartment in the Astor. Clyde Packer (Kerry's elder brother) was another client. His company, Freedman Rembel, recently revamped the interiors of the AMP building at Circular Quay.

One afternoon, Freedman saw a display suite in Surry Hills for a development called the Common by Melbourne architect Bruce Henderson.

"The plan reminded me of a New York brownstone [apartment building]" he says. "And I liked the idea that there were only two apartments per floor."

Freedman and his partner, psychologist Peter O'Brien, moved into the apartment last October, having paid extra to have the developer modify the

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finished: a good tip for those who buy off the plan.

From the balcony, a corridor of buildings frames a shell of the Opera House. Tall buildings surround the apartment, but Freedman doesn't mind. He loves city life and enjoys sitting on the balcony watching urban vignettes. "On one or two occasions we've passed the binoculars to each other," he says.

Funky metal-framed chairs turn the balcony into a second living area. Like most of his furniture, they are classics he has owned for more than 30 years.

Designed by Clement Meadmore, the chairs have been powdercoated again in black. A weatherproof Textilyne fabric, in fire-engine red, was imported

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Freedman has been careful to avoid a "constellation ceiling" of halogens, with none in the living-dining area. "Everyone looks so dreadful beneath them," he says. "Up-lighting is much more flattering." He

Behind the yellow curtain ... Freedman in his lounge room on his Eames 670. To his right are pony-skin LC1 Basculant chairs by Le Corbusier, a Minotti sofa and Barcelona coffee table by Mies van der Rohe.

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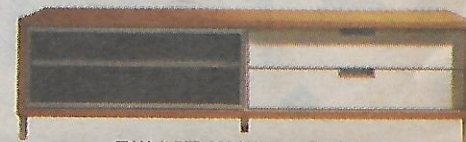


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