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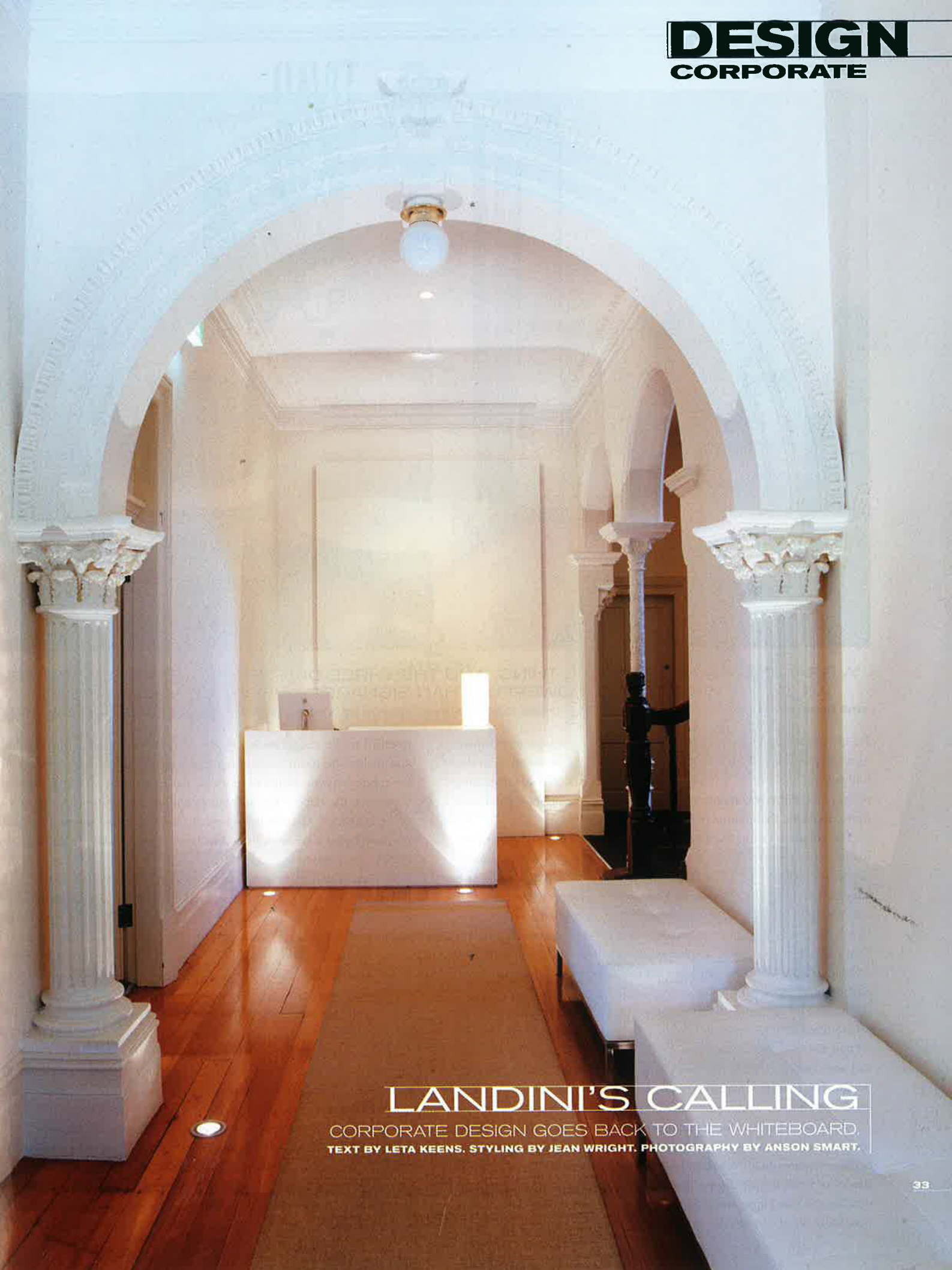
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LANDINI'S CALLING

CORPORATE DESIGN GOES BACK TO THE WHITEBOARD.
TEXT BY LETA KEENS. STYLING BY JEAN WRIGHT. PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANSON SMART.

THIS PAGE A REFRESHING TAKE ON CORPORATE STYLE FROM MARK LANDINI, WHO USED WHITE SHADES AND CLASSIC FURNITURE TO CREATE A SLICK, YET COMFORTABLE, WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR FAME ADVERTISING AGENCY IN THIS HERITAGE LISTED PROPERTY. **OPPOSITE PAGE** THE WALLS OF THE RECEPTION AREA ARE CONSPICUOUSLY BARE. "ANYTHING YOU PUT ON THE WALL IS HISTORY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO CELEBRATE THE FUTURE," SAYS LANDINI.





“A BRAND IS A MULTI-FACETED THING, AND THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF AN OFFICE IS FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN SIGNAGE.” – DESIGNER MARK LANDINI.

THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT DESIGNER MARK LANDINI CHOSE CLASSIC FURNITURE FOR ITS APPEAL; ARNE JACOBSEN WHITE LEATHER SWAN CHAIR.

Put an advertising agency in a heritage listed Victorian house in Mosman, its walls painted in faux Victorian tones, the decorative columns in the hallway picked out in a mass of heritage colours, the cornices and ceiling mouldings accentuated in white. The impression: parochial, and more domestic than commercial.

The solution: call in Mark Landini of Landini Associates, best known for his work on such projects as the Volvo Gallery, Awaba restaurant, Cruise and Posh at Sydney’s Overseas Passenger Terminal, and the late lamented David Jones Foodchain. The former Conran creative director, who set up his own firm in Sydney 10 years ago, is more than a designer; he’s in the business of creating brands and developing corporate identity. That may, and often does, involve designing uniforms, letterheads and websites, “but a brand is a multi-faceted thing, and the three-dimensional environment of an office is far more powerful than signage”.

In the case of Fame Advertising, the job in Mosman, Landini’s task was to transform the building’s public areas – the reception and, leading off that, two meeting rooms. “The creative director and managing director had seen pictures of The Tea Room in Sydney’s Queen Victoria Building, designed by Landini, where there were also heritage issues,” he says. “They liked my white-on-white approach and wanted something similar.”

White on white can be meaningless but, in Landini’s hands, that’s certainly not the case. He’s managed to retain, and restore dignity to, the heritage features of the Mosman building in a contemporary way. Three shades of white are used on ceilings, walls and woodwork; all the fussy detailing on mouldings and columns has been painted over so that now “shadows do all the work”. A dado rail – painted white – has been

installed in the main meeting room: “It suits the nature of the building and makes the room seem special,” he says. “I’m convinced that if, in the future, anyone wants to renovate the room, they won’t be allowed to remove the dado – the authorities will assume it’s part of the fabric of the building.” Apart from its aesthetic appeal, it also serves a practical purpose, being wide enough to display work on. Landini-designed easels (white) are used during client pitches and presentations – as each board is finished with, it can be shifted straight to the easel-high dado.

As part of the renovation, doors in the front of the building were lined up, fanlights and architraves added where appropriate. Doors in the main meeting room fold right back to reveal a large television screen and sound system encased in a rich purple/brown fabric panel. The same colour, picked up from a tile in the original fireplace, is used for the rug.

Furniture in the meeting room is a mix of classics – signature pieces such as Arne Jacobsen leather Swan chairs, Saarinen side table, Castiglioni’s Arco lamp, Eames Eiffel chairs around a large Landini-designed meeting table with chamfered edges (creating more shadows). “We chose classics because they’re timeless,” says Landini. They’re not from the same era as the house – or necessarily each other – but sit comfortably together, simply because they are all well designed.

On the opposite side of the corridor is a sitting room, furnished with an L-shaped Schamburg + Alvisse couch and white leather chairs from Anibou. “The client had originally wanted a smaller meeting room, but we suggested they make it more of a sitting room,” says Landini. “This way, there’s a formal and informal space – the meeting room for pitches and presentations, the sitting room the place to integrate with clients.” >