

Fabio and Anna Fanuli (centre) at home with their daughter Lara, 26, and son Marco, 32. "We are very family-oriented and love nothing more than to entertain at home," says Fabio. *Pause* painting by Karen Lange. Gregory sofa, Fly coffee table, Clay bowls by Paola Paronetto and Cloud rug, all Fanuli.



# IT'S ALL *relative*

Home and family are the most important things  
in Fabio and Anna Fanuli's life.

## H&G AT HOME WITH

In the dining area, a striking painting – *Genshi Genshi* by Ian Greig – is the focal point. “Anna and I love abstract art,” says Fabio. Riva 1920 ‘Rialto’ sideboard and ‘Sky’ dining table, Eforma ‘Max’ dining chairs, and Penta Light ‘Glo’ pendant lights, all Fanuli. Clay Bottle vases by Paola Paronetto. **OPPOSITE** In the living area, the Shore sofa is from Fanuli’s Made in Australia range. Seraphina rug, Flexform ‘Brig’ coffee table and ‘Fly’ side table, all from Fanuli.



“I was a very mischievous child,” Fabio Fanuli tells me, speaking from his office at the family’s eponymous furniture business. It’s something that anyone who knows this lovely man would find very hard to believe - the moniker ‘Mr Nice Guy’ was surely designed just for him. “No, it’s true,” he insists. “I really was.”

As a little boy, Fabio loved playing in the workshop of his cabinetmaker father, Giuseppe. The meticulous craftsman, who left Italy for Australia in 1956, would spend hours creating timber patterns for his furniture designs, only for his son to repurpose them into model planes and boats. “Dad would have perfected the plan for a particularly difficult table leg and I would then cut it up to use in one of my models. He wasn’t always exactly thrilled,” recalls Fabio fondly of those early days in the family’s home in Sydney’s eastern suburbs.

We are talking only six weeks after the loss of the much-loved Giuseppe, which had come swiftly on the heels of the family’s matriarch Maria’s death. The pair met in Copertino, a town in the Puglia region, when they were 13 years old marrying when they were 25. “Dad died of a broken heart,” says his eldest son simply. “They were both 93 and I feel so lucky to have had them as my parents.”

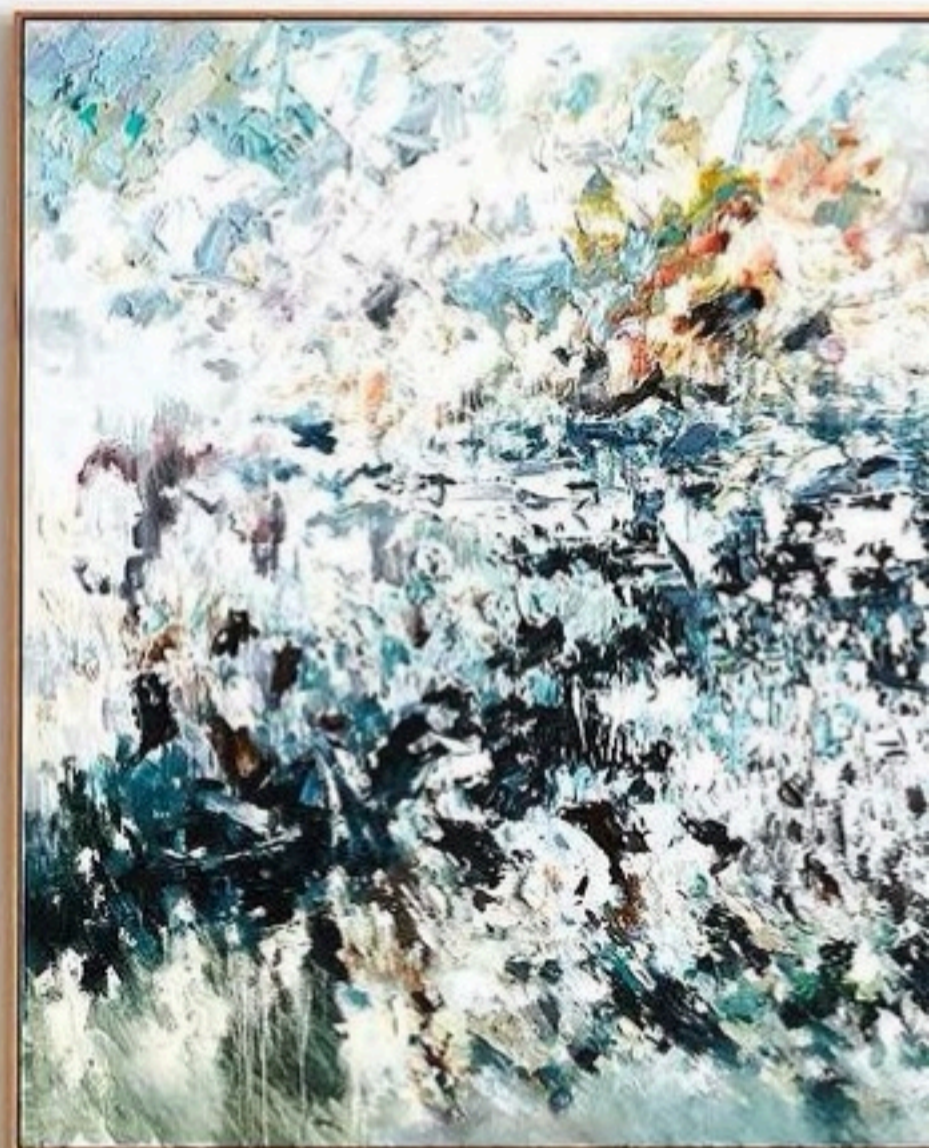
I ask Fabio what his father instilled in his children and the answer comes without any hesitation. “Attention to detail. He always told us: ‘Measure something twice, cut it only once,’” he says.

It’s this pursuit of excellence that saw the creation of Fanuli Furniture in 1976. Today, all of Giuseppe’s three sons - Fabio and his brothers Sandro and Carlo - work in the business, alongside some of the next generation.

The Fanuli family are very close. Figuratively and, once upon a time, ▶



Lara's groodle Kramer is a regular companion on Fabio's walks to the beach. *Coastal Estuary* by Noosa-based artist Colin Pennock hangs above a Chloe sofa, part of the Made in Australia range which was created "to keep up Dad's tradition of craftsmanship", says Fabio. Flexform 'Ascanio' side tables, 'Tessa' armchair, and 'Bangkok' ottoman, Penta Light 'Mami' floor lamp, and Cloud rug, all from Fanuli.





literally, for the three brothers all lived in the same street as their parents. In the end, they owned four neighbouring houses, and all gathered regularly around their mother's dining room table for her legendary cooking. (Fabio confesses his only culinary talent is over a barbecue, but his wife Anna loves to cook while their son Marco, 32, is a passionate foodie who has inherited his nonna's and mother's skills.)

The Fanuli brothers are no longer next-door neighbours, but they haven't strayed too far from familiar territory. "We live within a couple of kilometres of each other," says Fabio, who moved with his family to a four-bedroom house in a nearby suburb in 2005.

Anna loved its open-plan layout as soon as she walked in the door. "It had nice flow between different areas of the house, but still maintained enough separation between rooms to ensure clearly defined spaces," she says.

The barely used kitchen was also perfect for this keen cook who feels this is the most important room in the house. "It's true when they say, 'the kitchen is the heart of the home,'" she explains. "It's essential to have adequate space to allow a family to cook, eat and gather comfortably."

Built just two years before they bought it, the couple had done only a minimal amount of renovating until 2018 when they consulted interior designer Bradhly Le, who had worked on the Fanuli showrooms, to help them do a complete overhaul of the backyard and outdoor entertaining area.

The job took a year, but the result was well worth it. Expansive swathes of limestone connect the rear of the house to the backyard, creating a wonderful indoor/outdoor space ideally suited for the summer lunches and parties they love to host. Two built-in barbecues for Fabio - one gas, one charcoal - were an essential part of the brief. "We are so happy with the result, it has changed the way we live," says Fabio. ▶