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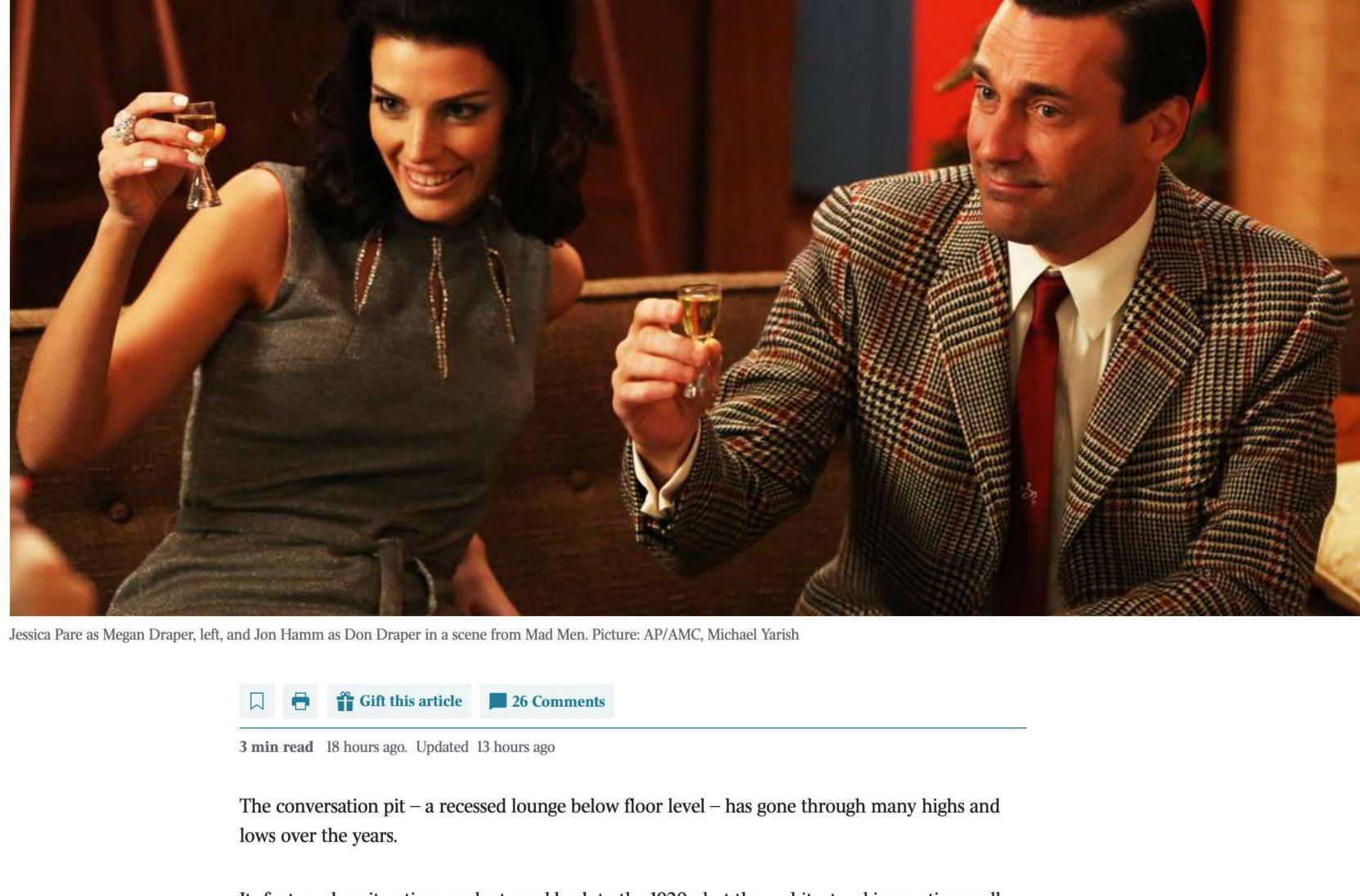
27 March 2025

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A 1950s design trend is making its comeback in Australian homes The revival of retro glamour is taking over our households once again. In these disconnected times, homeowners are looking to spaces that encourage close connection and conversation. By CARLI PHILIPS



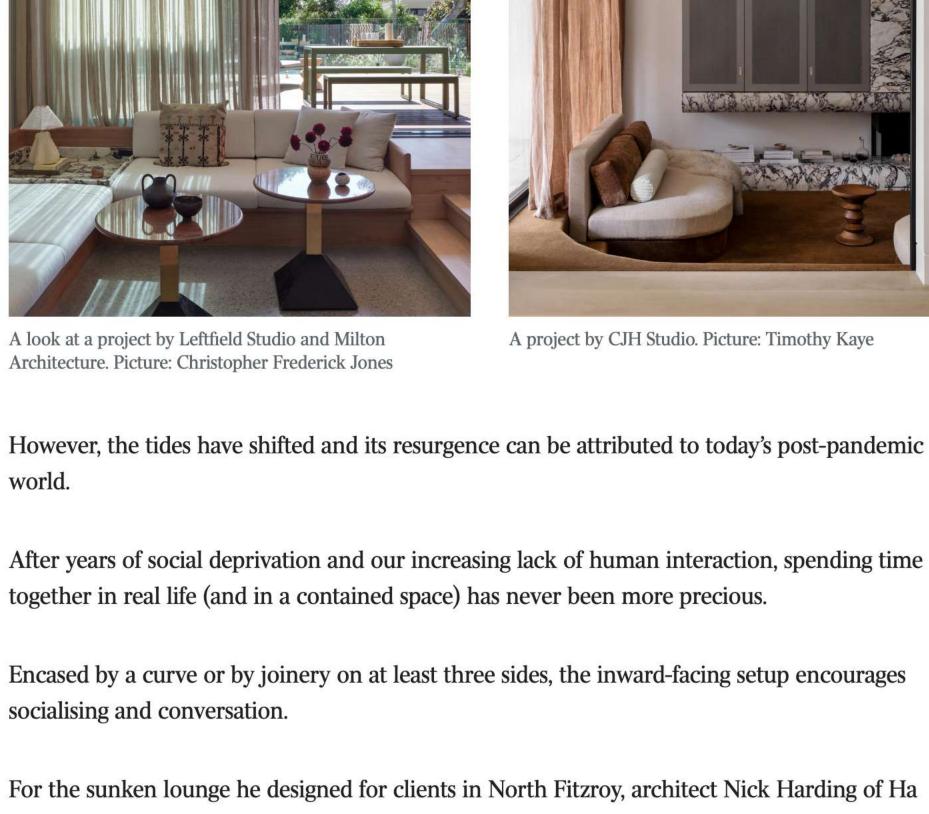
spaces.

orientation and unencumbered sightlines to the outdoors.

Its first modern iteration can be traced back to the 1920s, but the architectural innovation really rose to prominence in the 1950s with the famous Miller House in Columbus, Indiana, by prominent mid-century architect Eero Saarinen.

Over time, the sunken lounge became associated with a spirit of retro glamour. Think James Bond, Oceans 10 and 11, and Don Draper's penthouse in Mad Men. Peaking in the 1970s, the lowered format eventually waned in favour of more disparate living

With a cherry-red carpeted floor and masses of patterned cushions, its appeal lay in both the cosy



with relaxed upholstery it's especially comfortable.

a designated space for an undesignated activity."

hardwood.



A project by CJH Studio. Picture: Timothy Kaye

delineates it from the rest of the surrounding space.

"It's designed to be enjoyed for extended periods of time," he says. "Everyone faces inwards, and

"People naturally gravitate towards it. It's an invitation to get close to the ground and loosen up -

With its integration into the ground, the sunken lounge's appeal lies in its fixed location, which

"It offers a little separation or refuge from the surrounding areas of the house," she says. "And the joy of entertaining at home has become highly sought after – the client can see a great return on investment into a space that encourages greater connection."

In a collaborative project in Rose Bay with Luigi Rosselli Architects, Atelier Alwill created an

intimate zone by digging out a square pit from the tongue and groove European oak floor.

Cassie James-Herrick of CJH Studio suggests that the newfound popularity of such spaces may

Sunken lounge designs by Ha Architecture, Alexandra Buchanan. Picture: Supplied

also reflect a shift away from large, open-plan homes.

Studio Tate. Picture: Anson Smart

wears like a great old jacket".

with a more contemporary look and feel.

Introducing a conversation pit into an existing

house can be challenging – especially in period

homes – but Harding says that integrating one

The biggest considerations? "The surrounding

of steps down." Once you've mastered that,

circulation, the depth of the lounge and number

revealed

sale

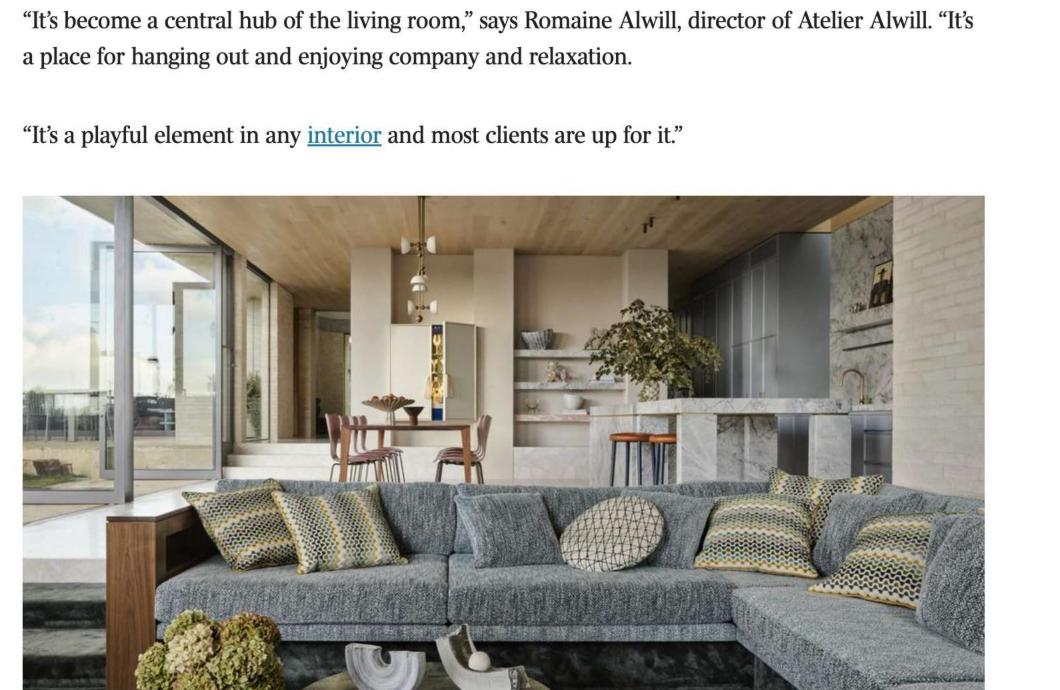
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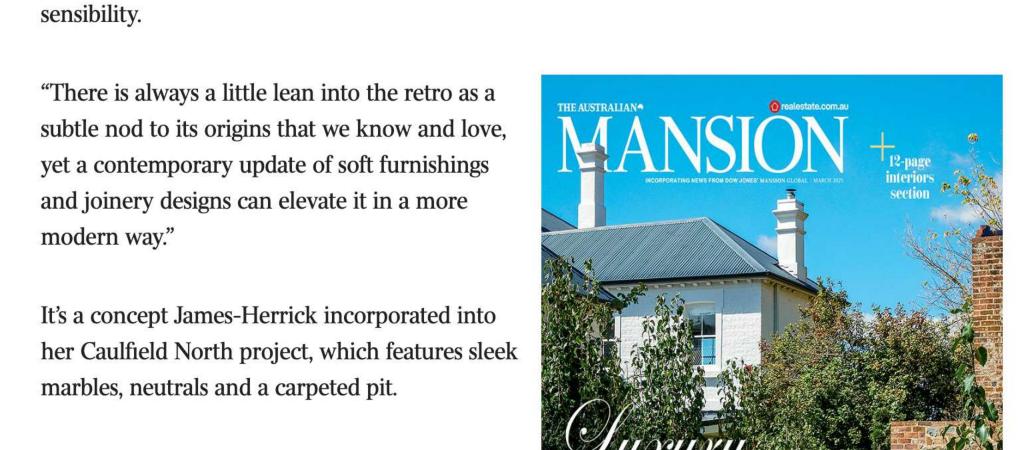
By LISA ALLEN

into a newly built space is relatively

straightforward.

you're good to go.





March 28.

Interior stylist Steve Cordony puts his ultra-luxe restored farm up for

The March issue of Mansion magazine will be out on Friday,

Alwill says that the sunken lounge never went out of style, but rather that it has been revived

As evidenced by their robust concrete, rammed earth and masonry project, the materials palette

is a combination of sophisticated oak, rattan, a soft textured high-pile rug and "tan leather that

While designers are modernising the look, James-Herrick says it invariably evokes a nostalgic

This story is from the March issue of Mansion magazine, out on Friday, March 28. MORE ON THIS STORY Premium pockets: top 10 suburbs with the largest variation in values

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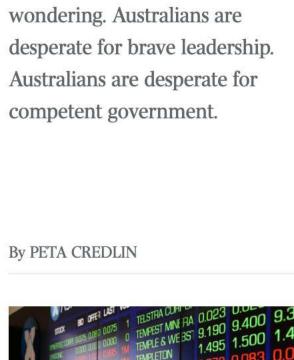
fuel excise

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Jim's cuppa: Dutton to halve

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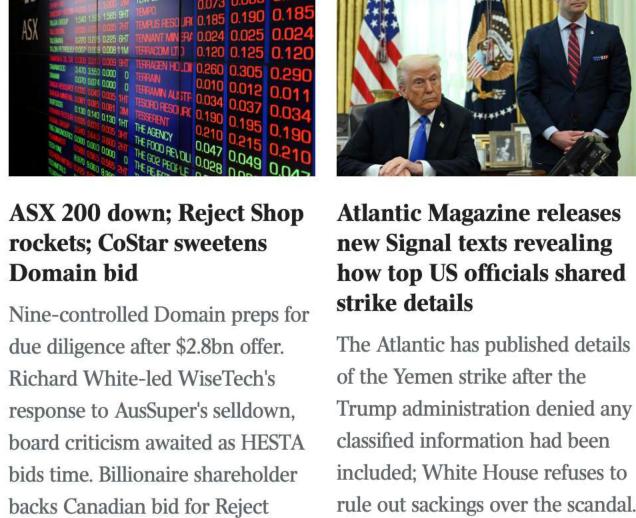
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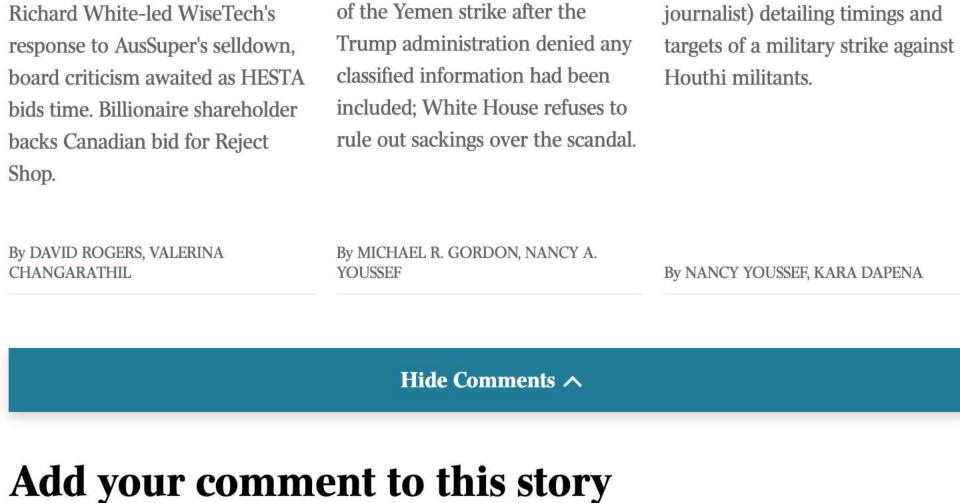
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My advice to Peter Dutton, given

what he's up against, is not to die

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It's not a conversation pit unless it has a shag pile carpet.

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jim 2 hours ago	
All very well for the fit and able. Not universal design.	
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This trend has already come and gone. That's the thing about trends. Once it is mainstream, it is no trend. If it looks like a pit, it doesn't work, and is merely a collection area for detritus. Natural light is critically important.	_
Like 1 2 Reply ←	Report ►
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If the conversation pit is revived so also the art of conversation will require resuscitation.	
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Until you've had a few drinks and forget that there are steps.	
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No mention of phone and digital tablet use increasingly isolating people more than anything else!	
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We used to call them a couch	
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David H. 11 hours ago	
Never mind sunken lounge's, how about returning to 1960s fashion. Chaps in jackets and ties in the shopping centre. And cardigans, shirts and pants at home. And women in dresses, hats and gloves. I coffee table book called Old Vintage Melbourne by Chris Macheras and there in black and white an Melbourne 1960 to 1990. People took care dressing before they went out, the streets are clean, no stor graffiti. The best of times. Now we live in the worst of times.	have a d colour is

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