



IT'S NOT JUST AUSSIE ACTORS WHO ARE MOVING TO HOLLYWOOD. OUR CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS ARE HEADING THERE TO JOIN THE CITY'S CULTURAL RENAISSANCE, WRITES **GEORGINA SAFE.**

A dynamic new art, food and fashion scene is drawing the culturalati to Los Angeles. And talented Australians are surfing the wave of opportunity, drawn by affordable rents and the same sunny weather they enjoy at home.

With a swathe of newly opened art galleries and the high-end boutiques, hip hotels and restaurants that have colonised the formerly drab downtown district, it's no wonder *The New York Times* declared the city "booming".

Here, three Australian creative couples share the ups and downs of starting a new life in Tinseltown.

PAUL DAVIES artist & **SARAH NOYE DAVIES** publicist
Many people find the concrete and glass sprawl of LA to be ugly and isolating, but Paul Davies sees the city as a work of art. "You have this incredible built environment of modernist architecture right within a natural environment of sunshine, canyons and oceans," he says. "You can't help but be inspired."

The artist and his publicist wife, Sarah Noye Davies, moved to LA from Sydney in February last year after Davies secured representation with Heather James Fine Art gallery in Palm Desert, just two hours from LA. While the move was a no-brainer for the painter – his

artworks feature modernist houses – for Sarah it was more problematic. "It's difficult to find work when you first come over here because you don't have a context or contacts," she says.

Her answer was to sell herself in a more creative way than usual. "I made a YouTube clip to pitch my skills and sent it straight to a CEO. I might not have done that back home, but being creative and bold here is really important. I ended up getting interviewed that day and was offered a job by the end of the afternoon."

The job was working for über publicist Cari Ross. "One day I was co-ordinating a shoot with Bruce Weber, Jennifer Connelly and Louis Vuitton, and I remember coming home to Paul and saying, 'I can't believe I'm doing this,'" says Sarah.

The pair received a boost in LA's crucial networking scene when they were accepted into Soho House, an exclusive club for top Hollywood creatives, thanks to recommendations from well-placed Australian friends

including actor Rachel Griffiths and designer Collette Dinnigan.

"We were invited to a dinner where Cate Blanchett gave a speech after Catherine Martin was awarded a star on the Walk of Fame for her costume design," Paul says. "It was so exciting but we were nervous about the little old green car we turned up in," he laughs.

One of the positives of LA living is the surprisingly affordable real estate. "We have a three-bedroom West Hollywood apartment and the rent we pay is the same as what we are getting for renting out our Sydney one-bedder," says Paul.

When the duo needs a break, they jump in the car for one of California's iconic road trips. "On the July 4 weekend we hiked up Eagle Rock in Topanga and went for a dip in the beautiful, clear waters at Little Dune beach," says Sarah. "A young boy was selling delicious homemade pumpkin bread and lemonade. It was the first time I have seen a lemonade stand where the 12-year-old accepts credit cards ... only in LA!"