

Neutral Canberra shivers over shimmer

SHE'S been on just about every renovation show in Australia and Canberra can claim her as its own.

TV decorator **Tara Dennis**, now appearing on *Better Homes and Gardens*, migrated to Canberra from England with her family in 1970. Her dad **Roy Harvey** was an officer with the Australian Federal Police while her mum **Joan** was the whip's clerk in the Senate.

"We moved to Scullin when it was just all fields and cows," she said. "Places like Gungahlin, I just don't even recognise now."

Dennis went to Watson Primary and Campbell High before moving back to London when she turned 17, starting her own decorating and painting business. She now lives in the northern suburbs of Sydney with her partner **Martyn** and daughter **Avalon**, 15.

She is one of the big attractions at this weekend's Home Improve-



EXPO STAR: Decorator Tara Dennis.

ment Expo at Exhibition Park in Canberra, explaining what's hot in decorating on stage at noon and 2pm today and tomorrow.

"It's funny when you talk to people all over Australia, different people pick up on different things," she said. "I'm sort of going

through the whole gamut, you know, yellow is popular this year, gold and metallics are really big this year and everyone is sort of sitting there looking very alarmed. But as soon as you say to people in Canberra that neutrals are in, they'll breathe a sigh of relief."

So how would you introduce metallics to the house? "There was a trend with minimalism where everything was stainless steel and very cold and hard but now it's starting to warm up and we're seeing a lot more copper and bronze and even gold.

"I like to introduce them not so much as the metal itself but into fabrics, like cushions or shimmering curtains ... Or you can do a feature wall .. which can look amazing if you light it well."

■ The Home Improvement Expo is at Exhibition Park from 10am to 5pm.