



Touches of *sweet harmony*

Bringing the old and the new together is both a challenge and an opportunity. **PAUL MCGILICK** looks at a conservation house in the **SYDNEY** suburb of Randwick where **STUDIO INTERNATIONALE** has forged an elegant solution.

TEXT PAUL MCGILICK PHOTOGRAPHY KATHERINE LU



The clients had seen a house in Clovelly designed by Rita Qasabian and Christina Markham of Studio Internationale which was up for sale. They loved the house, but not the location. So, they rang and asked whether, if they found the right place, Rita and Christina would do something for them. “We had some wonderful communication,” Christina recalls, “and when I got off the phone I said to Rita, ‘We have to work with these people – they’re really lovely.’”

Almost two years passed, during which time the clients had found a bungalow in North Randwick, close to Centennial Park. They had been living in it for a year and now had a second young child. They were open to any suggestions, mindful that the bungalow was in a conservation area which meant that any additions had to be consistent with the existing streetscape. It was also clear that any new work would need to be an addition to the rear because it was a long, narrow rectangular site. This way the pitched roof of the existing bungalow would screen any rear addition from the street.

Christina observes that an architect often learns more about their clients from what they don’t say, rather than what they do say. In this case, she infers that her clients preferred quality over quantity, “and we wanted it to be an expression of that”. She also observes that they are very calm people and like harmony.

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Having been to the house and met the clients, I would also suggest that their Chinese descent generates this ethos. We take our shoes off at the entry where they had originally wanted a water feature with koi. Although this didn't make the budget cut at the end, there is instead a small, tranquil, welcoming courtyard garden whose pebbles, bamboo and large totemic stone immediately conjure a Buddhist mood of harmony.

Rita comments that bungalows are typically "rather heavy buildings" and not well-articulated, "so we knew we had to create something lighter, finer".

Eventually, the brief resolved into a renovation of the front portion of the existing house and the addition of an open plan living/dining/kitchen along with a pool and what turned out to be an extremely discreet garage. Driving the design was the aim to clearly separate the public from the private, and the parents' domain from the children's.

Hence, the existing bungalow (consisting of three bedrooms and a sunroom) has become the children's domain. The existing internal structure and pressed metal ceilings are retained, but otherwise the bungalow has been totally renovated with the addition of new wet areas.

This 'private' area is linked by the glass entry space to the expansive volume of the 'public' area. This, in turn, is screened off from the new private spaces upstairs in the addition by a long joinery wall which hides the stairs until you reach the threshold to the rear garden.

Embedded in the planning is a strategy of surprise. Entry to the house is now down a side path to the unexpected glazed place of arrival with its tranquil garden. Then a left turn throws up an even more exhilarating surprise with the grand living/dining space and its uninterrupted prospect out to the garden.

This space is drenched in western light. The reason only becomes apparent when we reach the fully glazed, double-height sliding doors because the upper level – a sitting room and entertainment space – is set back as a mezzanine, creating a beautiful volume dramatised by a full-height curtain which can be drawn across.

This is indeed a highly refined house and crucial to this refinement is Studio Internationale's use of the Swiss-made Vitrocsa glazing system for the two enormous guillotine windows at the entry end and the enormous sliding glass doors leading out to the garden.

With this system the glass itself is the supporting structure, while the sleek 17mm

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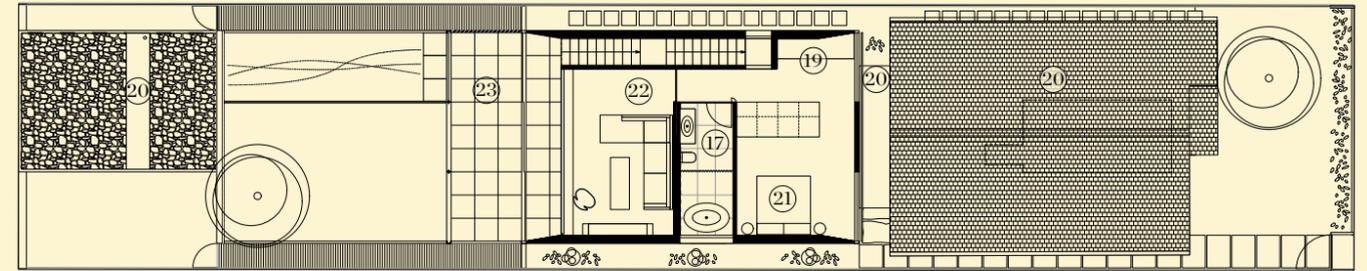
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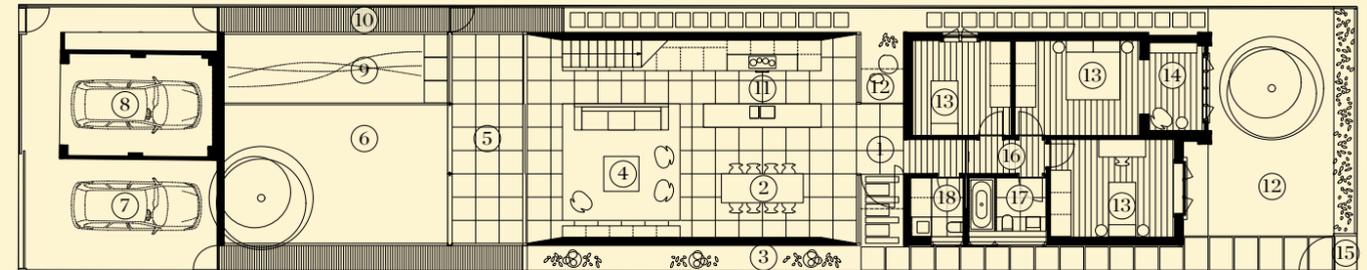




1	ENTRY	5	TERRACE	9	POOL	e	BEDROOM	u	BATHROOM	a	MASTER BEDROOM
2	DINING	6	LAWN	0	POOLDECK	r	SUNROOM	i	LAUNDRY	s	PARENT'S RETREAT
3	SIDE GARDEN	7	CARPORT	q	KITCHEN	t	ENTRY GATE	o	STUDY		
4	LOUNGE	8	GARAGE	w	GARDEN	y	HALLWAY	p	ROOF		



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

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frames simply act as a sealing element. The windows draw in northern light and create a breezeway, while the sliding doors create an uninterrupted connection to the outside garden.

Facing west, the afternoon sun is addressed by a louvred roof which covers the 'outdoor room' of the extended living area. This highly functional element also provides an external expression of the aesthetic found inside the house. Supporting this is the equally refined motorised blind which provides added protection from the western sun.

To me, this whole project is a definition of architectural refinement – namely, a harmony of structure, finishes, detailing, furnishings and fittings. And it is a common refinement which harmonises the old house and the new, rather than any attempt to re-invent and extend the aesthetic of the original Californian bungalow style. The interplay of finishes and light – both natural light and the Louis Poulsen pendants – lends a mood of gentle informality to the addition, while the contrast of light and dark between the old and the new wings seems absolutely right. After all, the best marriages are between opposites, creating a harmony which like-on-like can never really achieve. This house, indeed, embodies Shakespeare's "touches of sweet harmony".



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DROP BOX

ARCHITECT & INTERIOR DESIGN *Studio Internazionale*
 PROJECT DIRECTOR *Christina Markham*
 PROJECT TEAM *Christina Markham, Rita Qasabian, Jeremy Unger and Julia Heazlewood*
 BUILDER *Aqupa*
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEER *Partridge Partners*
 SURVEYOR *Project Surveyors*
 GEOTECHNICAL & WASTE WATER CONSULTANT *Martens & Associates*
 LANDSCAPE DESIGNER *studiointernationale*
 LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR *Yates Garden Design*
 JOINER *Crafty Kabinets*

Studio Internazionale
 (61 2) 9380 9844
 studiointernationale.com

FURNITURE
 Entry Cappellini Fronzoni 64 chair from Corporate Culture. In Lounge, Cappellini Superoblong modular sofa, Fritz Hansen Egg Chair and stool (limited edition) and Fritz Hansen Swan Chair all from Corporate Culture. Moroso Fjord Small FootStools from Hub Furniture, Linen rug from Robyn Cosgrove and small artworks by Pam Tippett from Australian Galleries. In Dining Room, Flexform Jiff dining table from Space Furniture, Eames moulded Plastic chairs from Living Edge, Society platter from Ondene. First floor Lounge room B&B Italia Charles sofa from Space Furniture, Eames lounge chair and ottoman from Living Edge. Society linen from Ondene, small artworks by Pam Tippett from Australian Galleries. Bathroom, Society linen from Ondene. Outdoor deck, Paola Lenti chairs and coffee table from dedece.

LIGHTING
 At the front gate, exterior wall-recessed LED lights from Light Project. Throughout side garden, external in ground GEA LED outdoor lights from Light Project. External Kreon Mini Rokko Square wall-recessed downlights from dedece. Internally, Kreon recessed downlights from dedece, Yamagiwa Mayuhana suspended pendant light from Euroluce, Lzf Nut suspension pendant in Ash White and in orange both from Ke-Zu. In Bathroom, Intralux Slite concealed strip lighting from JSB. In dining room, Louis Poulsen PH 5 pendant light from Targetti, concealed LED strip lighting from Light Project. In Kitchen, concealed strip lighting from JSB. In stairwell, feature DAB Micro decorative pendant from Light Project. In stairwell and landing, Kreon down in line recessed downlight from dedece. In Study, concealed strip lighting from JSB. In Pool,

submersible pool lights from Light Project.
 FINISHES
 Generally throughout, all external steel is finished in steel primer with Dulux Protective Coatings. Timber decking from Nash Timbers. Roofing membrane from Ardex Australia. Rainwater head from Lysaght Gold Distributor. Windows and doors finished in Vitrocsa natural anodised aluminium. Solid doors and hatches coated in Murobond PURE aqua satin. All glazing finished by Viridian New World Glass and Graphic glass Sydney. All insulation and sarking by Sisalation and Autex. Interior wall lining and ceilings in Gyprock from Gyprock Trade Centre. All stairs, ladders and walkways by Attic Ladders. Vetricolour Bisazza Glass mosaic tiles from Academy Tiles. External feature stonewall tiles from Bisanna Tiles. Internal wall-to-wall floor carpet covering from International Floorcoverings,

all underlay from Bridgestone Australia. Timber flooring from Nash Timbers and sanding and finishing from Synteko. General interior walls coated in Murobond PURE wall flat, ceiling and low sheen paint. External rendered walls coated in Murobond PURE and Grain paint.
 FIXED & FITTED
 Bespoke drop curtains in Living area from Simple Studio. In Master Bathroom, Apaiser Small Haven free-standing bath, Vola T12 bath sprout, Apaiser Sanctum bench-mounted washbasin, and strap robe hooks all from Rogerseller. Vola 050A ceiling mounted head shower, Vola handle 19 with built in mixer, Vola 171 hand shower, all from Rogerseller. Miele integrated dishwasher, Miele 4 zone induction cooktop, Miele fan plus oven, Fisher & Paykel integrated fridge and freezer from Winning Appliances and E series wall-mounted panel heaters from Nobo.

RANDWICK HOUSE *in focus*

The residents have selected simple and refined pieces to compliment their home. Here they discuss their favourite pieces and what makes them work:

A feature of the home is the large windows and sliding glass system from Vicrocsa that was chosen to maximise sun light throughout the home and that also allowed a seamless connection from our living space to the outdoors. The Vicrocsa glazing systems offer such possibilities and we love its minimal and refined design which conveys visual lightness and adds a very different dimension within our internal living space. In the bathroom the oval shaped Apaiser bath was chosen as we preferred to contrast the square dimensions in the bathroom and the simple organic contours give a relaxed look with elegance. It is also functional with its compact form that fits well within our required dimensions. Again, functionality is key and of the Paola Lenti outdoor set was obviously mainly chosen for its elegance, light weight and comfort. For the finishing touches we found this wonderful platter from Ondene and love its generous proportion, beautiful texture and the tone of clay work. In the bedroom we chose the small artwork on the bedside table for its focus on an everyday object with simplicity and clarity. Its pared back composition imbues a sense of calm which ties in with the tone in the bedroom.

PAOLA LENTI



Italian designer Paola Lenti started her textile-based company specialising in the production of indoor and outdoor furniture and rugs in 1994, and since this time has been creating unique pieces from durable, signature materials. The company remains one of the few independent family owned companies in the Italian furniture industry and often works in partnership with technical companies from automotive and medical fields to produce innovative textiles. These materials are then reinterpreted for use in furniture, such as in the Baia Sunlounge.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
BAIA' SUNLOUNGES DESIGNED BY **PAOLA LENTI** AVAILABLE AT **DEDECE**, DEDECE.COM

SMALL HAVEN BATH WITH BASE BY **APAISER**, APAISER.COM

CERAMIC HANDMADE SHELL PLATE DESIGNED BY **RINA MENARDI** AVAILABLE AT **ONDENE**, ONDENE.COM

SLIDING GLASS SYSTEM WITH HIDDEN TRACKS AND FRAMES – SWISS-DESIGNED AND AVAILABLE FROM **VICTROCSA AUSTRALIA**, VICTROCSA.COM.AU

ARTWORK ENTITLED 'BONEBOX' BY **PAM TIPPETT** RESPRESENTED BY AUSTRALIAN GALLERIES, AUSTRALIANGALLERIES.COM.AU

