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christopher polly architect

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practice

Christopher Polly Architect

Christopher Polly Architect is an award-winning, full-service architecture and interiors practice based in Sydney. The practice engages with clients who share in the reward of accomplishing bold architectural visions to enrich their daily lives – clients who prioritise quality over quantity, and who place value in achieving inventive, well-crafted spaces that are meticulously detailed and finished.

The practice is recognised for design excellence through its ability to synthesise the opportunities and constraints of each site, context and client brief into sustainable and uniquely appropriate architectural outcomes. With a proven track record delivering complex projects, it brings design rigour and strategic problem-solving expertise to create places that are distinctive, enduring and highly responsive to their setting and use – and is well placed to bring this expertise to your project.

Widely published locally and internationally, the practice has extensive experience across varied scales and building types. It provides highly personalised architectural services to clients across all stages of each project, underpinned by solid working relationships with consultants and builders. Projects encompass new houses, additions and alterations to existing homes, and boutique retail, restaurant and workplace environments.

Get in touch

If you have a project you'd like to discuss and initiate, please reach out at mail@christopherpolly.com with the following information:

/ Name, Email address, Phone number
/ Location of your project
/ Approximate budget range
/ A bit about yourself and your project

Steps that follow

/ Initial phone discussion – to talk over your project and site, and to explain the service, process and fees
/ Client Questionnaire – sent to you in follow-up email after initial discussion
/ Site visit meeting with you – for walk-through inspection, offered opinions, and sit-down discussion about your brief, the service, process and fees
/ Client & Architect Agreement – tailored and sent to you following site visit meeting
/ Welcome Guide – sent to you after receiving your signed Client & Architect Agreement

director

Christopher Polly

Christopher Polly is a registered architect who was educated at the University of New South Wales, graduating with First Class Honours, the *Australian Institute of Architects NSW Chapter Prize* (best in state), and the *Frank Fox Memorial Prize* for his thesis on the urban design of Battery Park City in New York.

Prior to establishing private practice, he held a senior position at Tzannes Associates and previously worked at Candalepas Associates. He has presented works in tours and talks, served as a juror for University of Technology Sydney final architecture studio presentations, and as a juror for the AIA NSW Architecture Awards in the Houses 'New' and Houses 'Alterations & Additions' categories.

Memberships, Qualifications & Education

Australian Institute of Architects A+ Member Fellow and A+ Practice
Registered Architect, NSW Architects Registration Board, ARB 7150
ArchiTeam Member
Bachelor of Architecture-First Class Honours, UNSW, Sydney

Member Australian Institute of Architects

ARCHITEAM member

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services / process

The practice provides a full end-to-end service from design concepts, design development, and construction detail documentation, through to construction period services for the best guarantee of a high quality outcome within the framework of a traditional procurement process from commencement of the project to its completion on site:

1. Design Concepts

/ Understanding client requirements and aspirations from the client brief and ongoing discussions.
/ Preliminary review and analysis of council planning policies pertaining to the site, site visit to enable an assessment of site opportunities & constraints, photographic survey of subject site & neighbouring conditions, site measure and preparation of measured plan drawings of existing conditions.
/ Management of delivery of, and co-ordination & integration of the work required from separately client-appointed consultants.
/ Exploration, development & production of design concepts and supporting information aligned to the brief to reach the preferred design, with drawings encompassing a level of detail suitable for preliminary cost estimates if needed.

2. Development Application (DA) [or CDC Application combining the DA Stage & CC Stage below]

/ Development of the preferred and client-approved design option, with revisions as needed from consultant input, into the final design for a Development Application to council, with preparation of a range of numerous accompanying documents as required by council.
/ Management of any separately client-appointed consultants as needed by council, and co-coordination & integration of consultants' design work.
/ Completion of required forms and checklists, and obtainment of the client's approval of the final developed drawings & documents to proceed with lodgement of the DA.
/ Pre-application meeting if needed with council to facilitate obtaining approval.

3a. Construction Certificate (CC) Documentation

/ Development of DA documents into detailed plan, elevation and section drawings & specifications with accompanying schedules for a CC application to a separately client-appointed Private Certifier, meeting detail requirements of DA consent conditions in accordance with the Certifier's checklist.
/ Management of delivery of, and co-ordination & integration of the work required from separately client-appointed consultants to meet DA consent conditions.
/ Completion of all required forms and checklists, and obtainment of the client's approval of the final developed drawings and documents to proceed with lodgement of the Construction Certificate application.

3b. Construction Detail Documentation

/ Development of the approved CC into variously scaled detail construction drawings, schedules, specifications & accompanying documents.
/ Comprehensive client communications for selection of fixtures, fittings, equipment, and interior materials and finishes.
/ Reviews and mark-ups of ongoing preliminary drawing sets prepared by the previously appointed consultants (at CC) for management of delivery of their final work, and co-ordination & integration into the final architectural detail construction documentation.
/ Meetings with the client and completion of the client-approved final construction set of architectural and consultant's documents in readiness for tendering.

3c. Tendering

/ Investigations and vetting of suitable and available contractors via research and calls to contractors, with reporting of investigations to the client.
/ Preparation and production of all tender documents & forms in hard copy and electronic versions, and submission of complete tender packages to 3 selected tenderers and client, attendance of one tandem on-site meeting with each tenderer and the client.
/ Complete management of the tender process, responses to tender queries with information as needed, tabling and analysis assessments of submissions for clarifications, discussions with client and tenderers & tender negotiation period with one preferred tenderer with a view to their selection as the contractor.

4a. Construction Period: Contract Documentation & Contract Administration

/ Preparation of all Contract Documentation, with any revisions as required to the documentation following cost outcomes from negotiations with the preferred contractor, inclusive of the nominated contract, drawings and all other documentation into the final set of contract documents for signing by both the client and selected contractor, for an architect-administered contract over an assumed construction period.
/ Attendance at fortnightly site meetings, preparation of meeting minutes, and preparation of supplementary details and information to clarify the contract documents.
/ Complete administration of the contract between client & contract to ensure design quality and workmanship are maintained & delivered throughout construction on site.
/ Complete financial management of the contract, documentation management, substitutions & variations management, further intermittent site visits as needed by the contractor and extensive off-site time as needed.

4b. Post Construction

/ Site visit and photographic record of defects and incomplete works once practical completion is reached.
/ Preparation of 1 defects list for defects and incomplete work to issue to the contractor under the contract provisions, with any further revised versions issued as needed.
/ Site visits to assess progressive completion of all defects as notified by the contractor, and assessment of the final contract account on completion of all defects work.

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projects / selected

26 - **Art Studio Cabin** - Lane Cove North NSW / Wallumedegal Land
New modest building functioning as both an art workspace and secondary dwelling at the rear of an established site

24 - **Redfern House** - Redfern NSW / Gadigal Land
Substantial additions and sensitive alterations to an existing masonry 2 storey terrace house in a heritage conservation area

23 - **Leura House** - Leura, Blue Mountains NSW / Dharug and Gundungurra Land
New house on a greenfield site comprising of a series of connected pavilions cascading down to a complex two-way slope from the highest elevation in Leura

23 - **Trafalgar House** - Annandale NSW / Gadigal Land
Substantial additions and sensitive alterations to an existing masonry 2 storey freestanding terrace house in a heritage conservation area

22 **National House** - Leichhardt Sydney / Wangal Land
New two-storey sustainably modest house referencing its immediate context and the formal qualities of various compact housing types

21 - **Blue Mountains House** - Mt Victoria, Blue Mountains NSW / Dharug and Gundungurra Land
New modest off-grid house meeting design performance requirements within a high bushfire zone

21 **Manifold House** - Dover Heights Sydney / Gadigal Land
Significant first floor addition with alterations to an existing 1940's freestanding brick residence

20 **Greenwich House** - Greenwich Sydney / Cammeraygal Land
New two-storey split-level house in response to its steeply sloping site, landscape setting and harbour views

20 **Murrabin House** - Matraville Sydney / Gadigal and Bidjigal Land
New two-storey addition and substantial alterations to an existing 1956 brick residence with associated rear pool and cabana

18 **Flexion House** - Earlwood Sydney / Wangal Land
New freestanding two-storey house with associated outdoor areas, pool and significant landscaping overlooking the Cooks River

18 **Binary House** - Woolooware Sydney / Gweagal Land
Substantial additions and alterations to an original 1960's freestanding yellow brick residence

17 **Starling House** - Lilyfield Sydney / Wangal Land
New freestanding two-storey house on a typically modest inner-suburban site

17 **Woonona House Studio** - Woonona NSW / Dharawal Land
New house and studio spaces on a substantial property in the south coast town of Woonona

16 **Unfurled House** - Petersham Sydney / Gadigal Land
New two-storey addition and alterations to an existing Federation freestanding brick residence

15 **Formosa House** - Drummoyne, Sydney / Wangal Land
Ground floor re-design and first floor addition to an existing Inter-War Federation semi-detached brick residence

13 **Cosgriff House** - Annandale Sydney / Gadigal Land
Substantial additions and alterations to an existing brick 2 storey freestanding residence

11 **Elliott Ripper House** - Rozelle Sydney / Gadigal and Wangal Land
Substantial additions and alterations to an existing sandstone and brick 2 storey freestanding residence

11 **Darling Point Penthouse** - Darling Point Sydney / Gadigal Land
Substantial alterations and additions to an existing penthouse apartment

10 **Haines House** - Newtown Sydney / Gadigal Land
Extensive additions and alterations to an existing semi-detached terrace

10 **Wintons Teak Showroom** - Artarmon Sydney / Cammeraygal Land
New flagship showroom showcasing the company's premium range of hand-crafted, solid teak outdoor furniture

08 **EyeOpener** - Sydney / Gadigal Land
New flagship store fit-out including new display systems, joinery and signage

07 **Surry Hills Offices & Showroom** - Surry Hills Sydney / Gadigal Land
Two storey steel framed addition atop an existing 3 storey brick building on a prominent Foveaux St corner and adaptive re-use and upgrades to the existing premises

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online publications / selected

22 **The Local Project,** 23 June 2022 - “Design To Be Revered - Flexion House by Christopher Polly Architects” - **Flexion House**

22 **Dezeen,** 22 May 2022 - “Ten homes with spacious open-plan studies and workspaces” - **Unfurled House**

21 **Archello,** 19 November 2021 - “25 Best Architecture Firms in Sydney” - **Christopher Polly Architect**

19 **The Local Project,** 22 September 2019 - “A Hidden Addition - Unfurled House by Christopher Polly Architect” - **Unfurled House**

19 **Hunting For George,** 17 April 2019 - “Binary House | Christopher Polly Architect” - **Binary House**

19 **Australian Design Review,** 14 February 2019 - “Binary House: a contemporary extension to a 1960’s yellow brick house” - **Binary House**

19 **Hunting For George,** 30 January 2019 - “Christopher Polly | Meet the Architect” - **Christopher Polly Architect** feature

18 **The Design Files,** 15 November 2018 - “A Home With Two Personalities” - **Binary House**

18 **Lunchbox Architect,** 14 November 2018 - “Contrasting Addition Complements a Sixties Yellow Brick Home” - **Binary House**

18 **ArchitectureAU,** 6 November 2018 - “Unapologetically suburban: Binary House” - **Binary House**

18 **Habitus Living,** 8 October 2018 - “Hello Yellow Brick Home: Binary House By Christopher Polly Architect” - **Binary House**

18 **Dwell,** 2 October 2018 - “A Modest Midcentury Bungalow Takes on New Life in Sydney” - **Binary House**

18 **Design Milk,** 21 September 2018 - “A Bungalow in Sydney Gets a Dramatic, Pavilion-Like Addition” - **Binary House**

18 **Good Weekend,** 21 July 2018 - “Indoors: A Mezzanine? Things are looking up” - **Binary House**

16 **ArchitectureAU,** 15 September 2016 - “Dynamic expression: Unfurled House” - **Unfurled House**

16 **Habitus Living,** 21 July 2016 - “Unfurled House” - **Unfurled House**

16 **Design Milk,** 21 July 2016 - “Unfurled House by Christopher Polly Architect” - **Unfurled House**

16 **Designboom,** 19 July 2016 - “Unfurled House designed by Christopher Polly Architect for a Sydney family” - **Unfurled House**

16 **ArchDaily,** 7 July 2016 - “Unfurled House / Christopher Polly Architect” - **Unfurled House**

16 **Dezeen,** 6 July 2016 - “Wedge-shaped reading and sleeping nooks feature in Christopher Polly’s Sydney extension” - **Unfurled House**

16 **Domain / Amazing Design on Sunday**, 12 June 2016 - “Amazing Design: Don’t forget the garden” - **Unfurled House**

15 **Dwell,** 7 March 2015 - “Renovation Near Sydney Opens Home Onto a Lush Garden” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **Domus magazine online,** 24 May 2013 - “Christopher Polly: Cosgriff House” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **Fast Company / Co.Design,** 23 May 2013 - “Renovation On The Sly: Same Footprint, Twice The Volume” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **MARK,** 16 May 2013 - “Cosgriff House by Christopher Polly - A Clever Interplay Between Copy and Contrast” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **Dezeen,** 7 May 2013 - “Cosgriff House by Christopher Polly” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **Designboom,** 4 May 2013 - “Cosgriff House by Christopher Polly Architect” - **Cosgriff House**

13 **Dwell,** 7 February 2013 - “An Airy Renovation In Sydney” - **Elliott Ripper House**

12 **ArchitectureAU,** 18 December 2012 - “Elliott Ripper House” - **Elliott Ripper House**

12 **Habitus Living,** 10 October 2012 - “The Elliott Ripper House” - **Elliott Ripper House**

12 **Dwell,** 10 February 2012 - “Back Storied” - **Haines House**

11 **ArchitectureAU,** 24 September 2011 - “Haines House” - **Haines House**

11 **Habitus Living,** 10 February 2011 - “The Haines House” - **Haines House**

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print publications / selected

20	**Daily Telegraph,** 10 October 2020 - “Top 50 Homes”, p.3 - **Binary House**
19	**Sydney Home Design + Living magazine,** Issue 9 - “Opposites Attract”, p.39 - **Binary House**
18	**Daily Telegraph, Home,** 17 November 2018 - “When the sky’s the limit”, pp.22-23 - **Binary House**
18	**Houses,** Issue 123 - “Binary House”, pp.118-123 - **Binary House**
18	**Domain magazine, Sydney Morning Herald,** 21 July 2018 - “Seeing value in good design”, p.9 - **Binary House**
18	**Good Weekend magazine,** 21 July 2018 - “Mezzo forte”, p.24 - **Binary House**
17	**Grand Designs Australia,** Issue 061 - “Architecture Shorts”, pp.43-44 - **Unfurled House**
16	**Green,** Issue 51 - “Simple Illusion”, pp.48-54 - **Unfurled House**
16	**Daily Telegraph, Home,** 20 August 2016 - “When the sky’s the limit”, pp.22-23 - **Unfurled House**
16	**Houses,** Issue 110 - “Unfurled House”, pp.76-83 - **Unfurled House**
16	**The Sun Herald, Domain / Amazing Design on Sunday,** 12 June 2016 - “Family opts for quality over quantity”, p.7 - **Unfurled House**
16	**Inner West Courier,** 24 May 2016 - “Couples’ ‘adventurous’ design scoops prize”, p.22 - **Unfurled House**
14	**Architectural Review Asia Pacific,** No.137, Residential Issue - “Cosgriff House”, pp.42-47 - **Cosgriff House**
14	**Inside Out,** July 2014 - “Back Extensions”, p.120-123 - featuring **Cosgriff House**
14	**(Inside) Interior Design Review,** No.81, May / June 2014 - “The Cosgriff House”, p.26 - **Cosgriff House**
14	**Green,** Issue 36 - “Modern Dugout”, pp.48-53 - **Cosgriff House**
14	**House & Garden,** February 2014 - “Bright Sparks”, pp.80-87 - **Elliott Ripper House**
13	**Grand Designs (UK),** October 2013 Issue - “Digging Deep”, p.20 - **Cosgriff House**
13	**The Sydney Morning Herald, Domain,** 28 September 2013 - “Modesty is best policy”, p.14 - **Elliott Ripper House**
13	**Belle,** August / September 2013 - “Right Now Architecture News - Vault Line”, p.46 - **Cosgriff House**
13	**Timber + Design International,** 2013 Vol.1 Issue 2 - “Memory Retention”, pp.9-13 - **Elliott Ripper House**
13	**The Sun Herald, Domain / From The Drawing Board,** 19 May 2013 - “Homes that hit the right notes”, p.40 - **Cosgriff House**
12	**Architectural Review Asia Pacific,** No.127, The Residential Issue - “One To Watch: Christopher Polly”, pp.28-32 - feature on **Christopher Polly**
12	**Monument,** Issue 111, The Residential Special - “Turning The Corner”, pp.56-61 - **Elliott Ripper House**
12	**Houses,** Issue 88 - “Elliott Ripper House”, pp.122-128 - **Elliott Ripper House**
12	**House & Garden,** Issue 111, Collector’s Edition - “2012 Top 50 Rooms”, p.50 - **Haines House**
12	**The Sydney Morning Herald, Domain,** 14 April 2012 - “Sold on a size that fits all”, p.14 - **Elliott Ripper House**
12	**Daily Telegraph, Home,** 28 April 2012 - “Turning pokey into perfect”, pp.14-15 - **Darling Point Penthouse**
12	**Dwell,** February 2012 Issue - “Houses We Love - Back Storied”, p.36 - **Haines House**
12	**The Sydney Morning Herald, Domain,** 14 January 2012 - “New chapters in old storeys”, pp.4-5 - featuring **Darling Point Penthouse**
11	**Architectural Review Australia,** No.122 Residential 11 - “Haines House”, p.62 - **Haines House**
11	**Green,** Issue 21 - “Rear Window”, pp.50-56 - **Haines House**
11	**Houses,** Issue 81 - “Haines House”, pp.84-88 - **Haines House**

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awards

25	**Best of Houzz Awards 2025: Design** - Portfolio of projects - **Winner**
22	**Best of Houzz Awards 2022: Design** - Portfolio of projects - **Winner**
21	**Best of Houzz Awards 2021: Design** - Portfolio of projects - **Winner**
20	**Best of Houzz Awards 2020: Design** - Portfolio of projects - **Winner**
19	**Lysaght Inspirations Design Awards -** Binary House, Residential Projects - **Highly Commended**
19	**ArchDaily Building of the Year Awards -** Binary House, Houses Award - **Nonimation**
18	**Houses Awards -** Binary House, House Alteration & Addition over 200 sqm - **Shortlisted Finalist**
18	**Australian Timber Design Awards -** Binary House, Interior Fitout - Residential - **Shortlisted Finalist**
17	**Architizer A+ Awards -** Unfurled House, Residential Interiors Award (Typology Category) - **Shortlisted Finalist**
16	**Australian Institute of Architects Awards -** Unfurled House, Residential - Houses (Alterations & Additions) - **Winner**
16	**Marrickville Medal Award -** Unfurled House - **Winner**
16	**Interior Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) -** Unfurled House, Residential Single Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
16	**Sustainability Awards -** Unfurled House, Single Dwelling (Alterations & Additions) Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
16	**Houses Awards -** Unfurled House, House Alteration & Addition under 200 sqm - **Shortlisted Finalist**
16	**Australian Interior Design Awards -** Unfurled House, Residential Design Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
16	**Marrickville Sustainable Building Award -** Unfurled House - **Shortlisted Finalist**
15	**Best of Houzz Awards 2015: Design** - Portfolio of projects - **Winner**
14	**Architizer A+ Awards -** Cosgriff House, Residential Interiors Award (Typology Category) - **Shortlisted Finalist**
13	**Sustainability Awards -** Cosgriff House, Single Dwelling (Alterations & Additions) Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
13	**Australian Institute of Architects Awards -** Elliott Ripper House, Residential - Houses Alterations & Additions - **Shortlisted**
13	**Houses Awards -** Cosgriff House, House Alteration & Addition under 200 sqm - **Shortlisted Finalist**
13	**Australian Interior Design Awards -** Cosgriff House, Residential Design Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
12	**Interior Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) -** Elliott Ripper House, Single Residential Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
12	**House & Garden Top 50 Room of the Year Awards** - Haines House - **Shortlisted Finalist**
12	**Australian Timber Design Awards -** Elliott Ripper House, Treated Pine Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
11	**Houses Awards -** Haines House, House Alteration & Addition under 200 sqm - **Shortlisted Finalist**
11	**Interior Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) -** Haines House, Single Residential Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
09	**Interior Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) -** EyeOpener, Retail Design Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
09	**Australian Interior Design Awards -** EyeOpener, Retail Design Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**
09	**Dulux Colour Awards -** EyeOpener, Commercial Interiors Award - **Shortlisted Finalist**

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Sensitive alterations and a new rear addition to a freestanding house in a heritage conservation area are carefully composed to provide significant additional room for a growing family. The restored original front form retains local cultural heritage in the public domain, while the new addition purposely defers to established conditions of the front primary form in the manner in which it is sub-ordinate to and extends from it, with a distinctly contemporary material and colour palette serving to strengthen its legibility against the original front half.

A four-metre high rear 'grand room' provides a generosity of volume for kitchen, dining, and living areas which directly expand to a landscaped courtyard garden, while an adaptable original front room, and new bedroom, bathroom and laundry spaces vastly improve its amenity.

Trafalgar House

Annandale Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2023 -

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Trafalgar House

Annandale Sydney /
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2023 -

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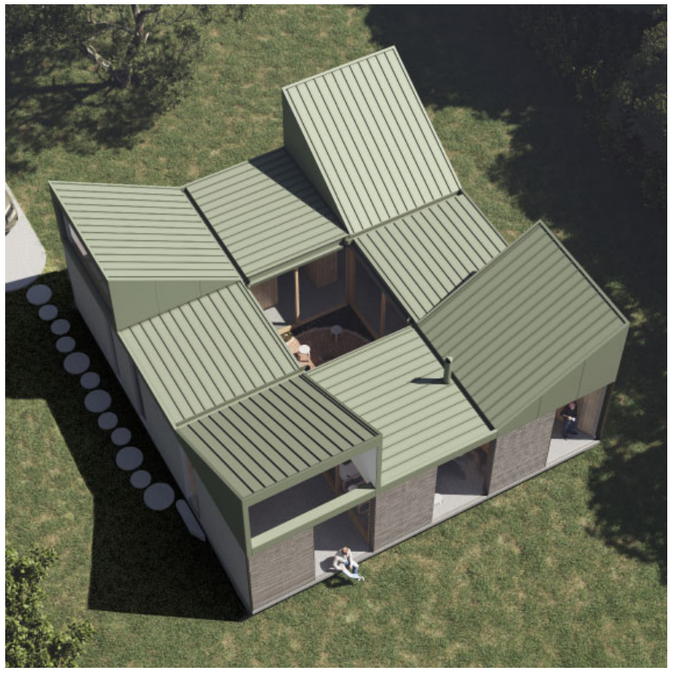
A new off-grid house is based on a 4m x 3.8m structural grid and pin-wheels a series of private and public rooms around a central courtyard to provide a modest internal floor area of 100 sqm with a low environmental footprint of only 129 sqm on site. Pop-up roofs at each corner amplify the pin-wheel to offer expanded volumes and varying connections to tree canopies and sky views.

It incorporates robust and durable materials to meet the design performance required of a BAL FZ high bushfire attack level, inclusive of a fire-proof concrete base, low carbon fibre-cement panels, pre-finished metal cladding, and fire-rated thermally efficient double glazing. External horizontally-sliding metal mesh screens and vertically-retractable motorised screens provide fire barriers, allowing its entire envelope to be fully 'shut down' when unoccupied.

Blue Mountains House

Mt Victoria, Blue Mountains NSW / Dharug and Gundungurra Land

2021 -



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An articulated two-storey volume is sensitively stitched to the rear fabric of a Federation house envelope to provide significant additional freedom for the owners and their children to grow into. It has a sectional split-level relationship to the original house that harnesses the fall of the site to the rear, allowing the cellular front plan to unfurl into a series of connected interior spaces that expand to its setting.

The built form & its program resolution respond to its immediate setting and the established conditions of the original dwelling. The new volume mediates the scale and massing of its larger and smaller neighbours, with the existing southern setback extrapolated to the extent of the southern neighbours' rear setback. Projecting 'wedges' at the rear further unfurl the envelope to meet specific programmatic requirements.

Unfurled House

Petersham Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2016

2016 AIA Awards, Residential Architecture, Houses (Alterations & Additions) - Architecture Award Winner
2016 Marrickville Medal Award - Winner
2017 Architizer A+ Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Sustainability Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 IDEA Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Houses Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Australian Interior Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Marrickville Sustainable Building Award - Shortlisted Finalist

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Client testimonial /
Warrick Goldsmith & Kate Pennington

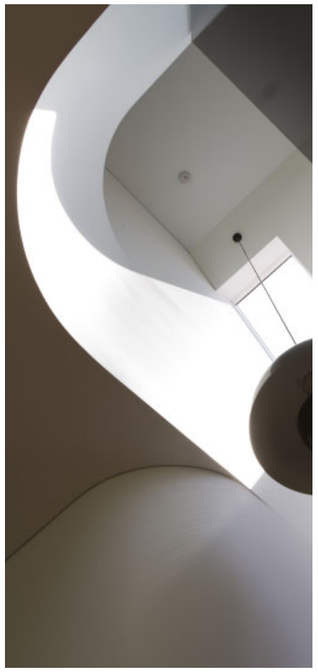
We engaged Chris to design a renovation on our house after seeing his previous work. Particularly, his spectacular Elliott Ripper House in Sydney's Rozelle.
Throughout the entire process from design to completion of construction, Chris has acted in the most professional manner of any person I've ever met. His talent for architecture & rigorous attention to detail is exemplary.
The resulting product has been beyond our wildest expectations. For anyone with a passion for good design, I couldn't recommend Chris highly enough for engagement in their project.

Unfurled House

Petersham Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2016

2016 AIA Awards, Residential Architecture, Houses (Alterations & Additions) - Architecture Award Winner
2016 Marrickville Medal Award - Winner
2017 Architizer A+ Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Sustainability Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 IDEA Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Houses Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Australian Interior Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2016 Marrickville Sustainable Building Award - Shortlisted Finalist



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A crafted volume is carefully connected to the retained and refashioned rear of an original 1960's brick dwelling to enact clear planning, cost and environmental values in an articulated binary composition of spatial and material opposites - a cellular and private front with an extant yellow brick character, and a voluminous and public rear with a singular grey metal expression in counterpoint.

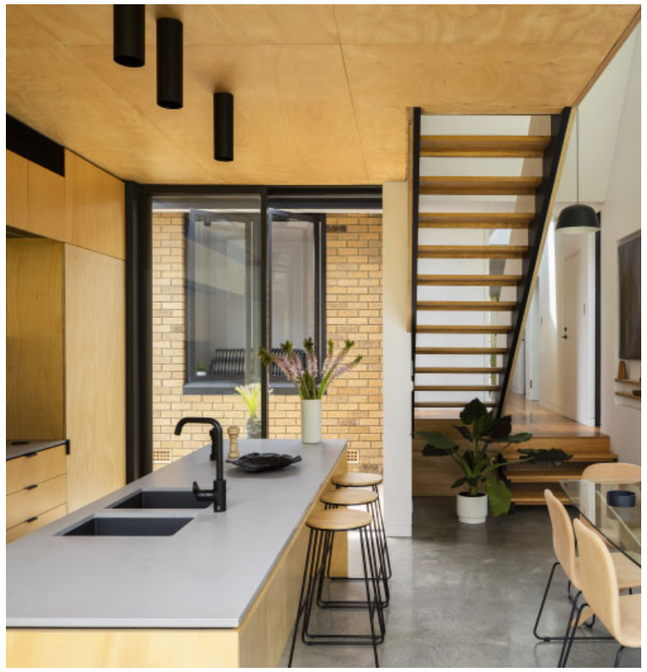
The retained bungalow responsibly preserves the embodied energy of its original footprint while contributing to meeting a low budget and allowing the mid-century form of its suburban type to be retained within its locality. The two-storey pavilion provides a volumetrically expansive double-height living area, and serves as a generously proportioned 'garden room' with large apertures capturing sky and landscape views.

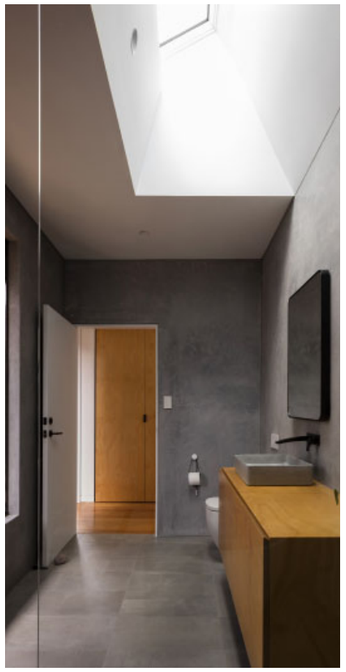
Binary House

Woolooware Sydney /
Gweagal Land

2018

2019 Lysaght Inspirations Design Awards - Highly Commended
2019 ArchDaily Building of the Year Awards - Nomination
2018 Houses Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2018 Australian Timber Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist





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Client testimonial /
Jeremy Farrington & Jasmin Ellis

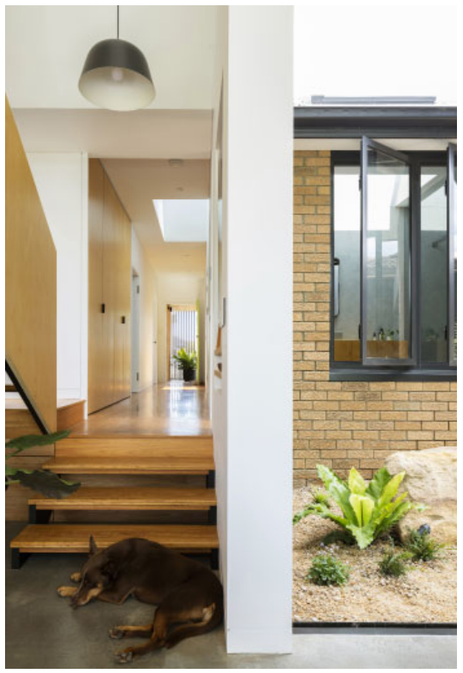
Chris has been an integral part of our 4+ year journey in turning our 1960's modest brick house into something that discreetly improved the understated original character from the street while opening it up into an amazing contemporary new addition which provides perfect living spaces in which to enjoy our time.
Chris has an amazing level of attention to detail and focus that was carried across all elements of our build to help drive the result of our amazing light-filled addition. He has brought his vast product knowledge to ensure the finishes were exactly what we wanted for a great architectural outcome inside and out.
Chris' passion shows through in all elements of his work and phases of the project and for that we are sincerely thankful.

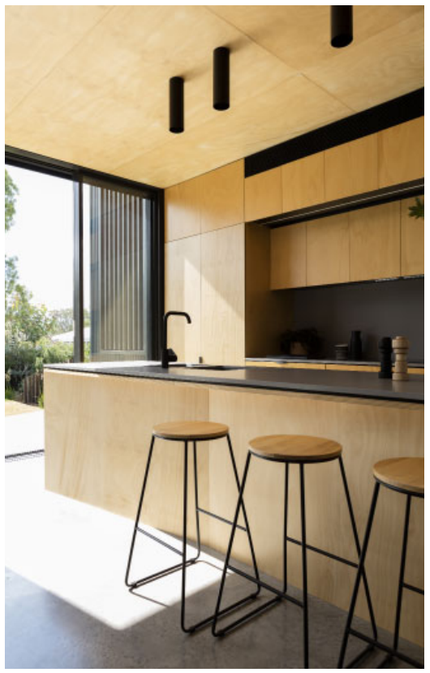
Binary House

Woolooware Sydney /
Gweagal Land

2018

2019 Lysaght Inspirations Design Awards - Highly Commended
2019 ArchDaily Building of the Year Awards - Nomination
2018 Houses Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2018 Australian Timber Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist





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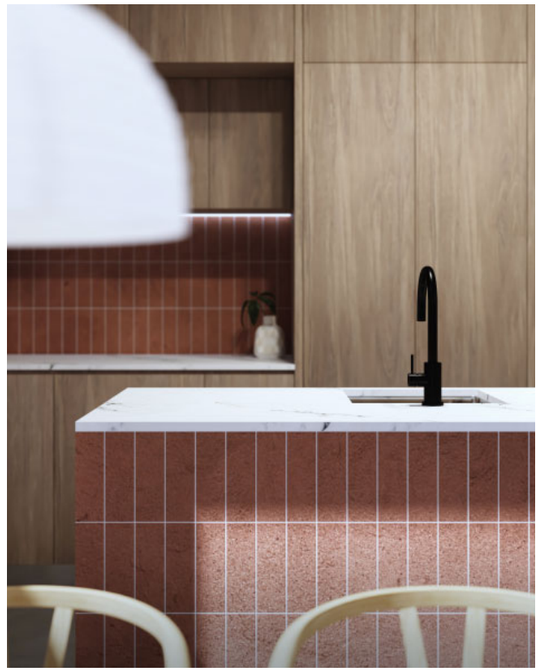
National House is a new modestly sized two-storey skinny house for a young family of four. The design makes geometric and elemental references to the neighbouring development of its immediate context while also alluding to the formal qualities of various compact housing types in Japanese, Dutch and Belgian inner urban neighbourhoods.

Its exterior is predominantly articulated by a 'jacket' of charred timber cladding, black aluminium glazed doors & windows, black metal hoods, and black standing seam metal roofing for a restrained and singular external expression in counterpoint to its neighbours. Internally, a composition of FSC certified ash timber walls and joinery, black steel, terracotta, and ground floor burnished low-carbon concrete create a series of warm and pared-back spaces.

National House

Leichhardt Sydney /
Wangal Land

2022



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A new two-storey split-level house on a harbour site cascades a series of private & public rooms in response to its steeply sloping site, landscape setting, and water views. It provides crafted inter-penetrations of space and light across its multiple half-levels, and offers a multi-generational model in its spatial organisation to enable room for a growing family of four with permanent accommodation for the owner's parents.

Its formal geometry is expressed as two distinct volumes separated by an open courtyard along the northern edge, and bridged by a glazed stair circulation zone for access to light, ventilation and divergent interior views at the centre of the house. An 'up-ticked' rear and several considered pop-out projections in the roof and wall planes expand the envelope to allow enhanced connections from various spaces to sky and views.

Greenwich House

Greenwich Sydney /
Cammeraygal Land

2020

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Greenwich House

Greenwich Sydney /
Cammeraygal Land

2020

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Flexion House is a new two-storey residence located at the end of a cul-de-sac on an expansive site overlooking adjacent parklands and the Cooks River. Its uniquely crafted form bends, extends and shifts in response to the shape of the site, program of rooms, and views to the river and adjacent landscape.

It incorporates white brickwork, blackbutt timber boards of varying width arrangements, black fine steel elements and expansive aluminium framed glazing for strong connections to outdoor spaces and its setting. A layering of dark bronze metal mesh pivoting screens enable activation and engagement of the rear composition along the riverbank, temper shifting direct light to the rear upper floor, and modulate privacy to balcony & living spaces from an immediate neighbour and riverside walkers & cyclists alike.

Flexion House

Earlwood Sydney /
Wangal Land

2018

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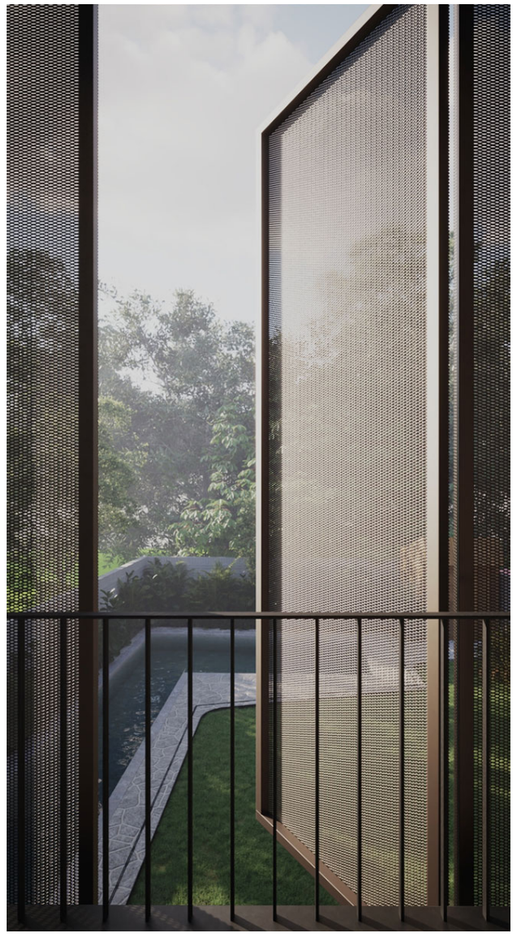

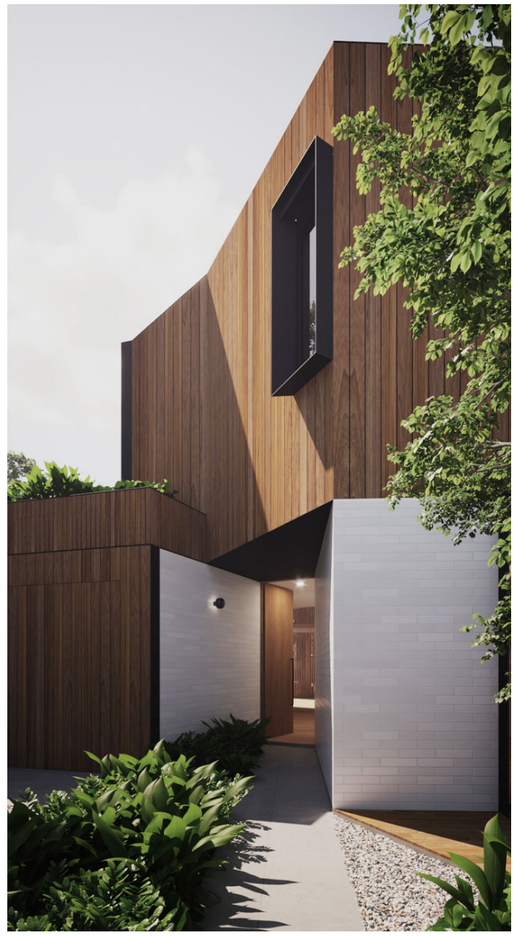

Flexion House

Earlwood Sydney /
Wangal Land

2018

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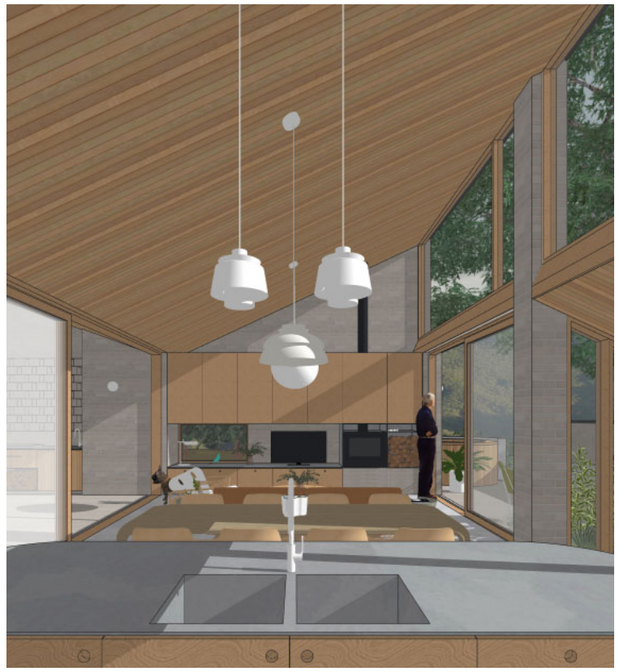
A new house on a greenfield site comprises of a series of brick pavilions which cascade down a highly complex two-way slope from the highest elevation in Leura. It is carefully sited & anchored to its land in the manner in which it negotiates and relates to existing surrounding levels to provide proximate connections to its encompassing landscape, while simultaneously emerging from its topography to amply capture daylight, air circulation, and commanding views of the Blue Mountains National Park to the north.

It embodies a durable interior & exterior material language comprising of low carbon burnished concrete, face brickwork, galvanised steel, and naturally finished timber ceilings, doors, windows and joinery - while referencing the tones of its immediate landscape to allow a contiguous relationship with its surrounding setting.

Leura House

Leura, Blue Mountains NSW / Dharug and Gundungurra Land

2023 -



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Leura House

Leura, Blue Mountains NSW /
Dharug and Gundungurra Land

2023 -

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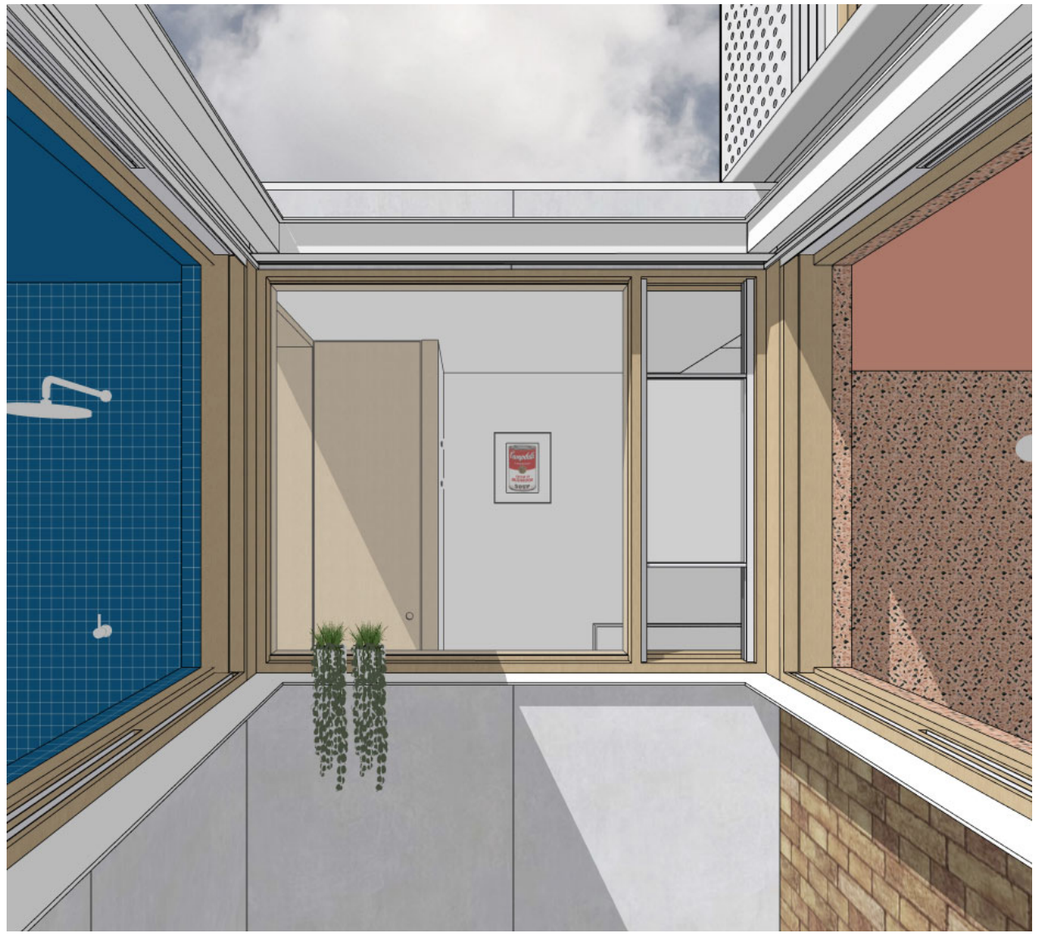


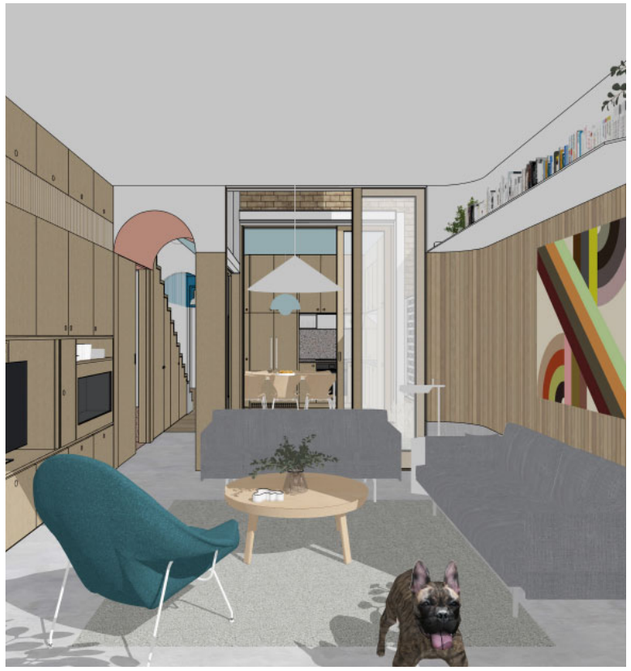
Sympathetic alterations and new additions to a terrace house are meticulously planned to provide essential room, refuge and privacy for an artist couple and their growing family. Aside from meeting numerous client and council planning objectives, the new works amply resolve many requisite concerns around daylight access, cross ventilation, and material & energy sustainability.

Front original bedrooms are renewed & front secondary rooms are transformed into kitchen, dining and bathroom spaces, new staircases vastly improve circulation, and an added attic level provides dedicated office space that is flexibly adapated as guest accommodation. At the rear addition, a new ground floor living area opens onto a generous landscaped rear garden, while a new main bedroom and ensuite bathroom are accommodated on the upper floor.

Redfern House

Redfern Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2024 -



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Redfern House

Redfern Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2024 -

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The project for a young family entails a new two-storey house on an inner-suburban site. Its formal composition to the street and rear is a uniquely crafted and direct response to setback and building height plane controls. It offers a model for densification of a compact site to enable room for not only a growing family, yet a multi-generational proposition for increasingly extended stays of the owner's parents.

A thin front facade is extruded in section to the centre of the plan and pinched-in at this point to provide a covered second entry, expanding to a greater width at the rear for an asymmetric gable-end form inventively accommodating the client's brief over both levels. The wider rear half incorporates battens over upper level glazing, while retractable exterior blinds housed within steel plate assemblies shade lower glazing.

Starling House

Lilyfield Sydney /
Wangal Land

2017

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Art Studio Cabin is a new compact building which functions as both an art workspace & secondary dwelling at the rear of an established site amongst a cluster of eucalyptus trees. Designed on a 4m x 3.8m structural grid, it provides a modest yet highly efficient internal floor area of 29 sqm within a footprint of just 34 sqm - serving as a thoughful model for compact living that is both economically and environmentally sustainable.

Arranged as two distinct rooms, it packs a high level of internal amenity. One room houses a bedroom, bathroom and laundry, while the second room configures studio space with a compact living area and kitchen, separated by a pocket door when privacy is needed. Twin barrel-vault roofs volumetrically expand their modest floor areas, with glazed ends enabling firm connections to the surrounding tree canopy and sky.

Art Studio Cabin

Lane Cove North Sydney / Wallumedegal Land

2026 -

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Art Studio Cabin

Lane Cove North Sydney /
Wallumedegal Land

2026 -

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The project presents an appropriately simple and direct extrapolation of an existing archetypal form within a sustainably modest footprint. It provides an expanded series of connected interior volumes that harness access to sunlight, ventilation and strengthened links to tree canopies and sky, with extension of key existing materials & finishes to retain some memory of its previous incarnation.

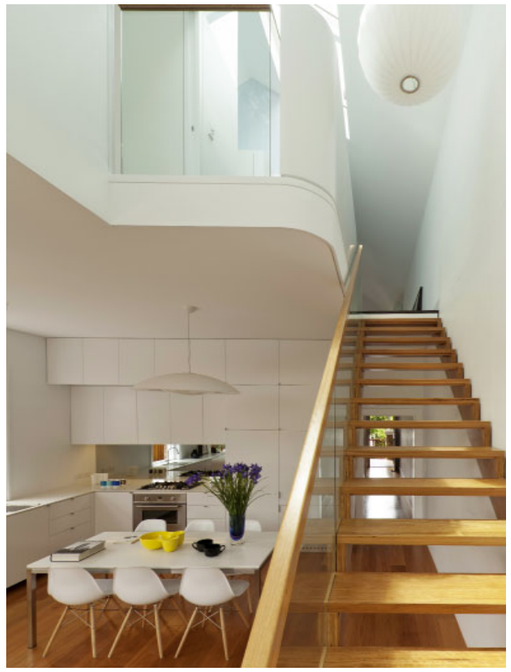
Two living spaces reflect contemporary patterns of use to enable separation of adult and children functions when required. The ground floor area provides a 'day' space for meals preparation, dining and expansive enjoyment of rear gardens, while the upper living room provides an 'evening' space for relaxation, separation from utilities and enjoyment of district views - with an adaptable third bedroom providing flexibility for future use as a study.

Elliott Ripper House

Rozelle Sydney /
Gadigal and Wangal Land

2011

2013 AIA Awards, Residential Architecture, Houses (Alterations & Additions) - Shortlisted Finalist
2012 IDEA Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2012 Australian Timber Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist



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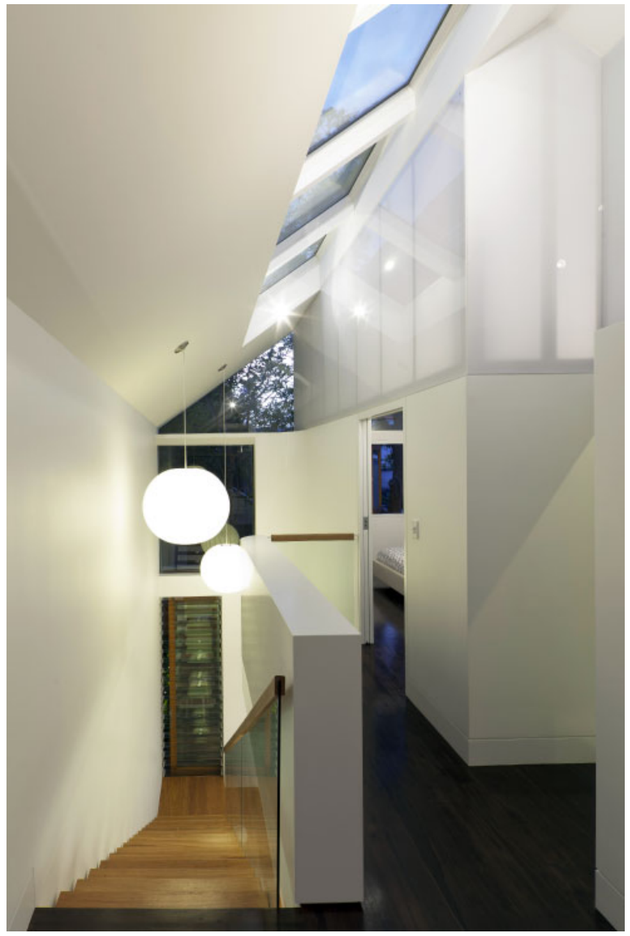
Client testimonial /
Megan Ripper & Glenn Elliott

We engaged Chris to design and project manage a large scale extension and renovation to our house and couldn't have been happier with the end result. Chris was able to come up with some fantastic ideas that gelled well with the aesthetic we'd hoped to achieve, and the little details he was able to incorporate really took the project to a level beyond expectations.
Chris is incredibly professional to deal with, and aside from his great ideas and an eye for detail, we were impressed with the way he was able to run the tender process and manage our appointed builders throughout the project.
The result? A project that came in on time and budget, and a house we love spending every minute in! Chris deserved all of the nominations and print media exposure our house received once completed.
We wouldn't hesitate to use Chris again on a future project and have reommended him to others.

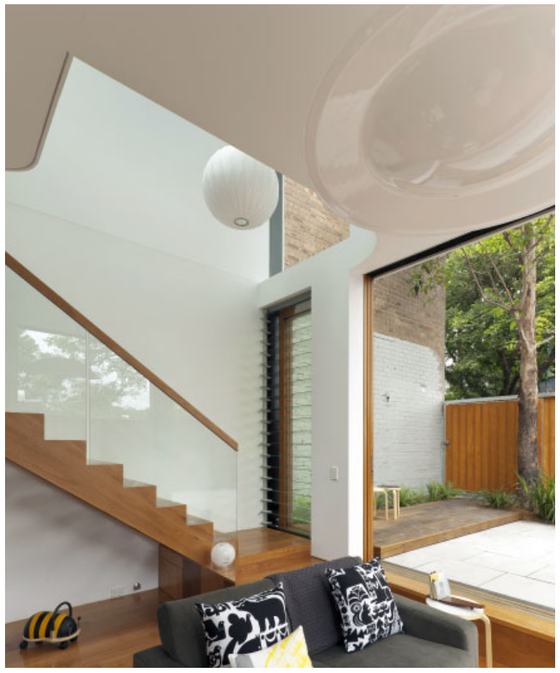


Elliott Ripper House

Rozelle Sydney /
Gadigal and Wangal Land

2011

2013 AIA Awards, Residential Architecture, Houses (Alterations & Additions) - Shortlisted Finalist
2012 IDEA Awards - Shortlisted Finalist
2012 Australian Timber Design Awards - Shortlisted Finalist



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A substantial lower ground level is sensitively inserted under the retained original envelope to harness the significant fall in the site towards the rear and to achieve environmental sustainability objectives. It extends deeply beneath the existing dwelling and outwards towards the garden to transform it - while a re-crafted rear ground floor above enfolds the existing rhythm of front rooms over the new lower ground below.

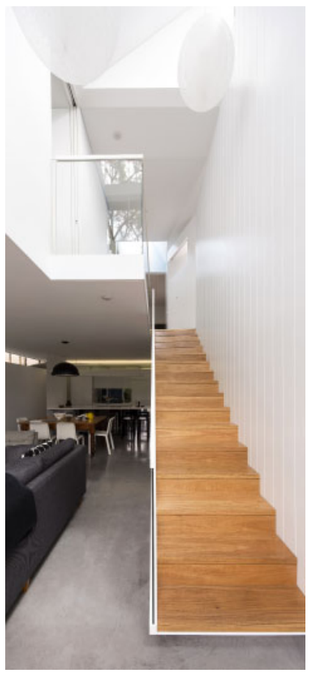
A modestly-sized lightweight addition extends and subverts existing geometries to present an interpreted mirrored slice of the original vernacular form and palette attached to the retained rear. An eccentric roof form mirrors the original southern roof plane and twice folds upwards to eastern light and Jacaranda views at the rear, and to northern light and sky through a large fire-rated window along the long boundary.

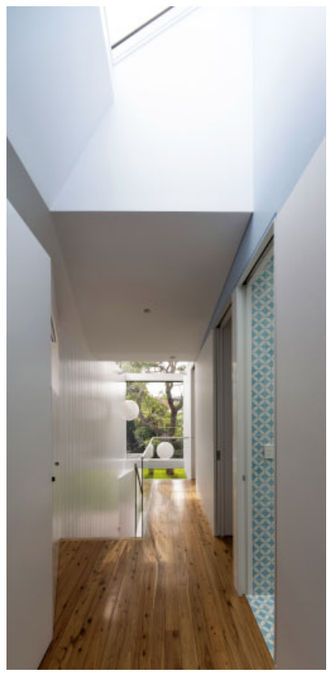
Cosgriff House

Annandale Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2013

2014 Architizer A+ Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Sustainability Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Houses Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Australian Interior Design Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist





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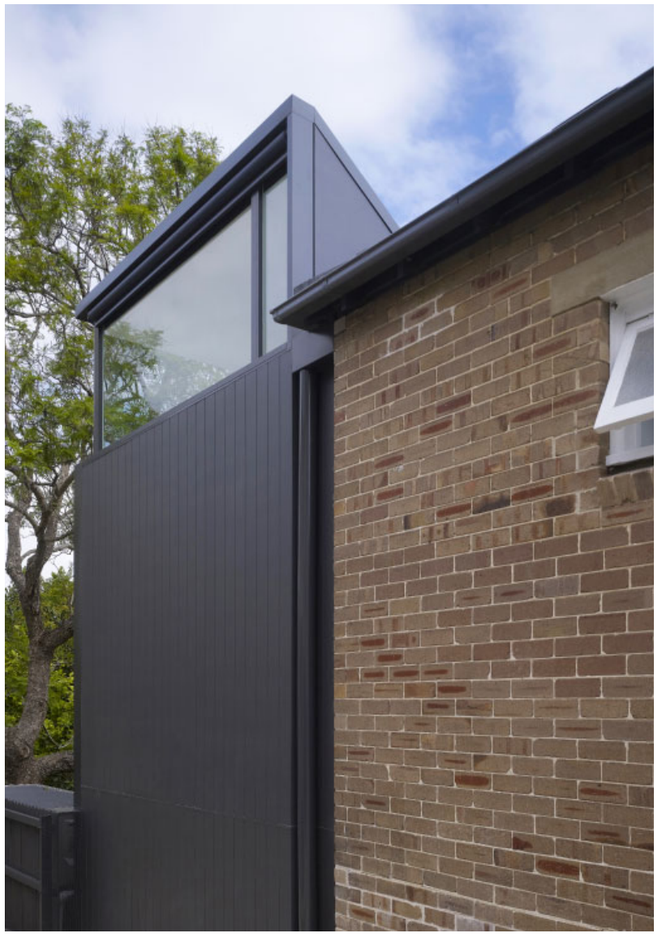


Client testimonial /
Georgina Cosgriff & Stuart Cosgriff

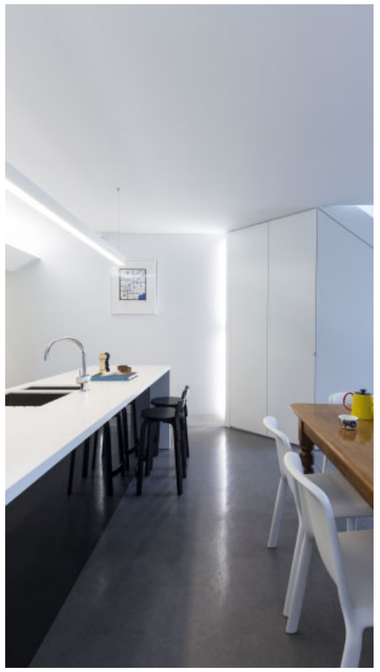
We engaged Christopher Polly Architect to design and manage the renovation of our two bedroom home. Chris had a positive "can-do" attitude and an extremely creative vision. He made full use of our sloping site to create a wonderful four bedroom family home which accommodated council's strict development controls.
Chris was also able to incorporate our love of the garden and, in particular, a huge jacaranda tree into the design. Chris has a very professional attitude and his thoroughness in the design process meant that we had very little difficulty during the DA stage.
Chris also managed the build and ensured that the finished project met his high expectations. Chris is attentive and very open with communication. We would have no hesitation in recommending Christopher Polly Architect.

Cosgriff House

Annandale Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2013

2014 Architizer A+ Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Sustainability Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Houses Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2013 Australian Interior Design Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist



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Murrabin House comprises substantial alterations and additions to a 1956 rendered brick suburban bungalow. Retaining much of the original front form responsibly preserves the embodied energy of the existing footprint and sustains its character within the locality, while a crafted two-storey addition, joined by a link, achieves the planning, cost and environmental objectives of the brief.

A single clean cut through the plan removes a rear portion of poorly configured rooms. The cut enables a new courtyard at the centre of the plan for light and ventilation, and a new intermediary link with a sharply folded roof, marking the entry point and prior side access condition. The hipped form of the addition is likewise sliced, echoing the front vernacular form in a mirrored contemporary abstraction, so that new and old strengthen one another and read as a considered whole.

Murrabin House

Matraville Sydney /
Gadigal and Bidjigal Land

2020

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The project for a young family of four presents a model for grafting a singular substantial volume to an existing single storey semi-detached dwelling while capturing an existing centrally located bathroom within the new volume, enabling old and new fabric to enmesh a unique spatial sequence along the length of the dwelling and provide for two separate living spaces.

An arrangement of fine steel plate supports and highlight windows march along the entire low roof, bridging the high and low roofs and wrapping to the rear to enable access to natural ventilation, views to neighbouring landscapes, sky and natural light from somewhat challenged eastern and southern orientations - while pocket-concealed sliding doors extend the living spaces onto a roofed terrace that directly connects to the enclosed private garden beyond.

Haines House

Newtown Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2010

2012 H&G Room of the Year Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2011 Houses Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2011 IDEA Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist

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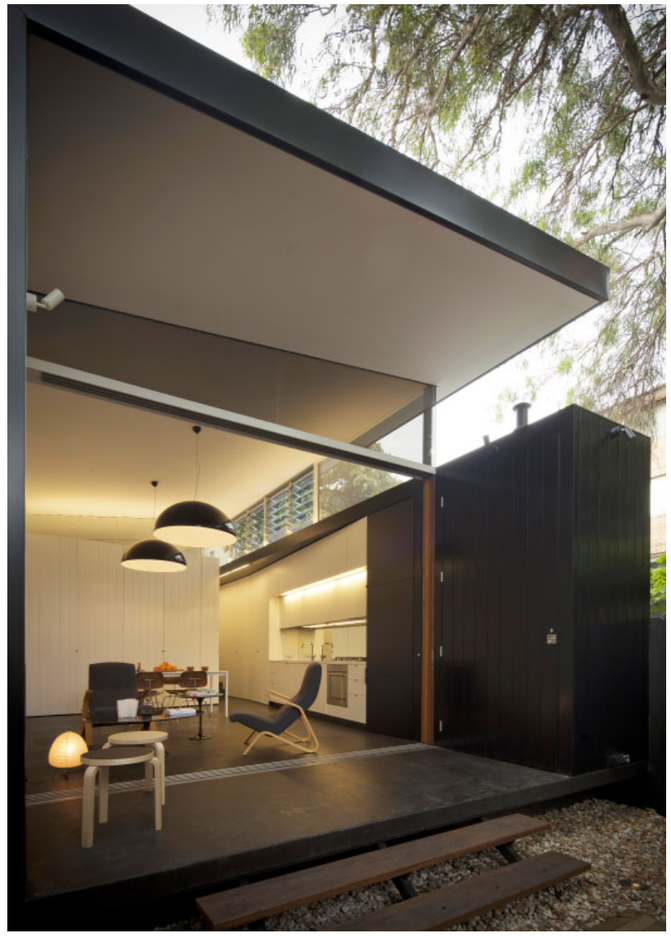


Client testimonial /
Georgia Haines

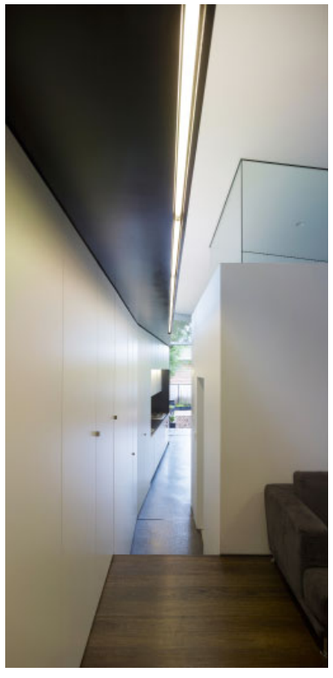
I hired Christopher Polly to design and project manage the renovation of my single story semi in Newtown. Chris worked very well with my brief and created an addition that was elegant, nuanced and suited to my needs.
He was honest with me and managed my expectations well. He managed all aspects of council approval and tender preparation. His talent for thoughtful design is matched by his attention to detail and keen desire to maintain the integrity of the design throughout the build. His instinct for builder selection was spot on and the resultant home has done me in good stead for many years now. I would highly recommend him to anyone.

Haines House

Newtown Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2010

2012 H&G Room of the Year Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2011 Houses Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2011 IDEA Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist



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Manifold House entails a significant addition and alterations to an existing house in Dover Heights. A new first floor envelope provides additional living, sitting, bedroom and bathroom spaces and negotiates a series of challenging existing conditions beneath it to craft a multifocal response to its place which better engages with the street, connects to an opposite parkland reserve at the front, and directs views to the harbour and city skyline at the rear.

Its folded form captures the existing front ground floor porch to provide external shelter and enhanced light to the existing front bedrooms, springing upwards to form the new upper floor and then outwards in a rear cantilvered balcony with wedge-like folds amplifying views to the city and harbour - while also providing covered shelter to the existing ground floor terrace below.

Manifold House

Dover Heights Sydney / Gadigal Land

2021

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The project involves a new house and studio spaces for a sea-changing artist couple on a substantial yet narrow remnant site in the NSW south coast town of Woonona. It draws upon the typology of farmhouses that were prevalent in the area during early 19th century settlement of the town, embracing utilitarian qualities in construction methods and materials.

Unlike the built pattern of the surrounding context, the proposal comprises of a small 103 sqm plan that is organised into simply demarcated public and private zones within a low saw-tooth roof arrangement to achieve an environmentally sustainable objective of 'compactness' which prioritises quality over quantity. It allows a generosity of volume to living, working and sleeping spaces, and establishes strong physical and visual connections to its place.

Woonona House Studio

Woonona NSW /
Dharawal Land

2017

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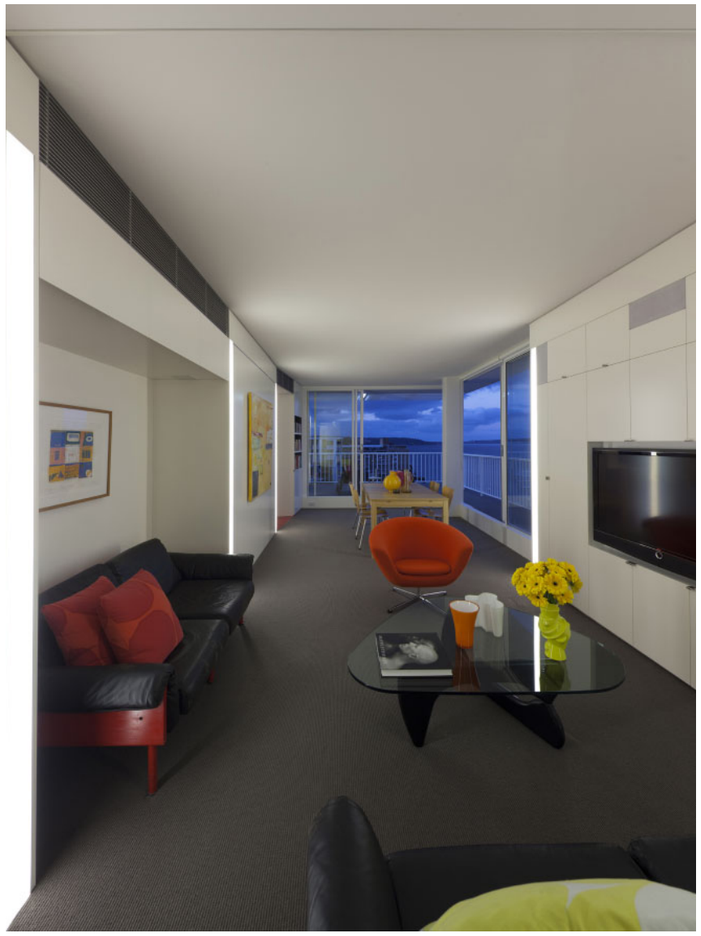

The project is located within the Easthaven building designed by Ancher Mortlock & Murray in the late 1950's. It embeds mechanisms of expansion, contraction and adaptability of space across the length and depth of a previously determined post-war plan layout, to offer a variety of unique spatial configurations.

Its arrangement was resolved around an existing central service core, existing utilities locations and retained columns & slab core holes. A long north-south joinery device was employed as a means of unifying disparate wall alignments along the entire length of the apartment, simultaneously serving as the key threshold between public and private areas. Its planar quality is punctuated by pivoting panels, recesses and apertures that lead to a reconfigured private domain of rooms, enlarged bathroom and kitchen respectively.

Darling Point Penthouse

Darling Point Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2011

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Client testimonial /
Sue-Ella Prodonovich & Roger Cornforth

Christopher Polly Architect provided architectural design services including defining and developing concepts; providing full design & documentation services; preparation of permits / applications and liaison with relevant regulatory authorities, community / strata management groups, councils and certifiers; and overall project and contract management. His design and expertise covered everything from the specification of the number on the front door, precision cabinetry that provided storage and defined spaces, outstanding lighting solutions, clever use of woodwork inside and out, and an innovative solution for the external terrace surface.
The level of detail covered in his documentation ensured there were no surprises and the project ran smoothly. The suppliers he used (builder, engineers) were all reputable and responsive. Our experience was first class and exemplified the value an architect brings to a project.

Darling Point Penthouse

Darling Point Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2011

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The flagship store responds to its specific urban location within the established high-end retail character of the street, providing a high quality spatial experience for the presentation of optical products that overcomes its spatial limitations and modest budget.

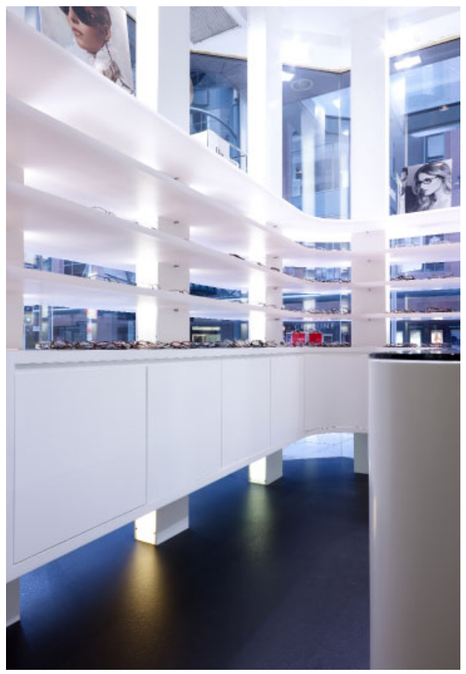
It involved a restrained monochromatic palette of materials and finishes - black rubber flooring, framed full height mirrors, white painted columns, white opal resin shelves and white polyurethane finishes for the desk, rear workbench, sunglasses display and storage units. A multicoloured striped wall marks the location of the eye testing room beyond, for visual interest to the rear of the store. It draws an abstract analogy with the visible spectrum that is refracted when light passes through an optical prism, to provide a nod to the clinical nature of the function being housed within.

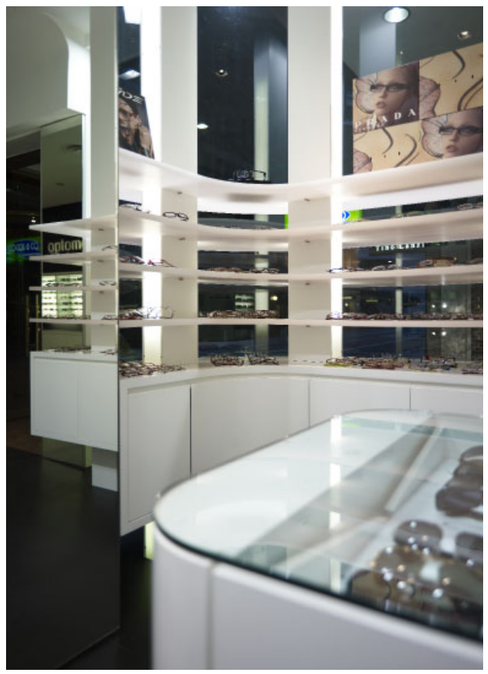
EyeOpener

Sydney /
Gadigal Land

2008

2009 IDEA Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist
2009 Australian Interior Design Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist (Retail Design)
2009 Australian Interior Design Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist (Colour Commercial)
2009 Dulux Colour Awards -
Shortlisted Finalist





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The flagship showroom provides a high quality experience for the presentation of the Wintons Teak premium range of hand crafted solid teak outdoor furniture. A restrained palette of materials has been employed and specific colours selected from the existing brand identity for front-of-house maximum focus of displayed products, while a back-of-house area meets specific requirements for services, deliveries, storage and assembly.

The insertion of a series of floating back-lit white paneled walls and white shelf units reinforce the rhythm of the existing columned-bays and provide maximum foregrounding of displayed products. This marching linearity is further emphasised by long lines of suspended lighting tubes drawing the eye through to the rear, to culminate in a freestanding carved counter module and backdrop focus of a rear wall lined in astro turf.

Wintons Teak Showroom

Artarmon Sydney /
Cammeraygal Land

2010

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