

HOUSES[®]

Australian Residential Architecture and Design

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Vibrant spaces that energize and revive

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Designed with clarity and creativity, the homes in this issue are a layered expression of contemporary ways of living.



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Wallis Lake House
by *Matthew Woodward Architecture*

New house
Whoota, NSW



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Mermaid Multihouse
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New house
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Castle Cove House
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Sydney, NSW



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Alteration + addition
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Alteration + addition
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House Lincoln
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Alteration + addition
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Surfside House
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Alteration + addition
Sydney, NSW



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Cooks River House
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Alteration + addition
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New house
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Studio
Sydney, NSW

CASTLE COVE
HOUSE
BY TERROIR
WITH PASCALE
GOMES-MCNABB
DESIGN



In Sydney's tranquil Castle Cove, an angular concrete form is an architectural riff on the rocky crag and crevices that characterize the steep topography of this harbourside suburb.

Words by Genevieve Lilley
Photography by Brett Boardman

Castle Cove is one of those pockets of Sydney that only residents go to. Conceived as a sort of garden suburb around a lush country club, it's more discreet than the adjacent peninsulas of Middle Cove and Castlecrag (famous for its Burley Griffin houses). So, by the time you have wound around the golf links, down a side street and along a long driveway to reach this off-form concrete house, by Terroir in collaboration with Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design, it feels very much like the city and suburbs of Sydney have been left behind.

The curved slope into which the house nestles is an extraordinary (yet typical) harbour peninsula bush landscape – twisting angophora, rocky outcrops, screeching birds and, below, a glimmer of sparkling water. Among the huge gums sits a strangely beautiful, concrete, oyster-like form. It hovers above ground level and has deep recesses. The wide concrete eave shades a full wall of dark glazing (and conceals a recessed fire-shutter to comply with fire-zone requirements). The house is a play of sunny platforms, clear crinkled angles and deep shadows in crevices. Its cool, dark spaces are supremely suited to bright, warm days and echo the rock overhangs all around the basin of the site.

01 The living areas of the residence are arranged on the upper level, where a wide concrete eave shades an expansive balcony. Artwork: Sally Ross.

Castle Cove
House is built on
the land of the
Gadigal people
of the Eora nation



Sydney,
NSW



New
house



Family

4



5



4



Site 4,813 m²
Floor 510 m²



Design 1 y 4 m
Build 6 y

The clients had come to Terroir some years ago, motivated by the architect's attitude to landscape. Disciplined building and art enthusiasts who are passionate about design, their circumstances meant that they could be actively involved on the site.

The siting of the house feels beguilingly logical and informal. In shape, the building is an embracing crescent that follows the terracing of the landscape, looking north-east from a wide terrace to a new pool and deck and thence to the harbour. A smaller “flipped crescent” wing behind the main rooms includes subsidiary bedrooms that look uphill into a tiered garden. The house is also of a deceptive scale. As one approaches the property along a long narrow contour, the end elevation (a bedroom with a blank, sloping, cast-concrete wall) protrudes over a smaller angled form (a concealed storeroom). The openness of the car spaces and the converging angled concrete wall of the upper deck lure visitors towards an entry hall.

Inside, the drama of the double-height space, with triangular skylights and sculptural steps sheathed in vertical metal blades, comes as a complete surprise after the angled but restrained exterior palette of concrete forms. The stairs lead up to the living spaces at a piano nobile level. A bedroom sits at each end of the house, and is reached by wandering through either the living area or a darker, sound-absorbing music/TV room. The main bedroom has a beautifully faceted, mirrored bathroom and a small study nook looking into a lush pocket garden. The variety of spaces is delicious, with every room having a different emphasis and quality. The rear bedrooms, with concealed timber doors, are set apart from the north-facing principal rooms by a timber-lined corridor toplit by triangular skylights.

The Melbourne interior designer Pascale Gomes-McNabb was also brought in to the project by the clients. The architects, while not fully involved in contract administration, remained involved throughout the six-year build, and enjoyed working on the smaller details that arose from the collaboration with Pascale – bespoke bronze cupboard door handles, quirky cabinetry, delicate covers for light shafts.

The lower entry area has a remarkable trifecta of spaces: a guest suite; a light, airy gym looking onto a garden, and a moody cellar where a hand-blown glass pendant light can be glimpsed through stacked wine bottles. The guest suite is a veritable cave, dug into the eastern end of the site, with only a sliver of a window offering a glimpse of the garden. Otherwise, the suite is illuminated entirely by light chimneys that rise through the rooms above. Other support spaces dug into the hill include a storeroom, a fire-water tank and enormous rainwater tanks.

Sculptural and complex, the house directs the visitor's gaze to a plethora of views. Climbing through the terraces of the upper site, one can see the triangular skylight forms rising above the zinc roof. The zinc rolls down the sides of the various forms, emphasizing the idiosyncrasies of each room. This makes it a building that is incredibly respectful to its neighbours above. On this beautiful site, Castle Cove House is a crafted labour of love. It will remain an exquisite paean to its location, its client, its architects and all those involved in its creation. It will no doubt have an enduring place in any history of Sydney bush architecture. ©

Products

Roofing: Elzinc cladding in 'Slate' and 'Black' from Arc
External walls: G and D Concrete off-form concrete; Elzinc cladding in 'Slate' and 'Black' from Arc

Internal walls: G and D Concrete off-form concrete; Elzinc cladding in 'Slate' and 'Black' from Arc; custom blackbutt veneer panels in Feast Watson 'Black Japan' and 2-pac panels in satin finish by Rintoul

Windows: Atlite double-glazed skylights; Vitrosca double-glazed sliding doors in black anodized aluminium

Doors: Custom solid blackbutt doors in Feast Watson 'Black Japan' by Rintoul

Flooring: G and D Concrete with burnished concrete floor by Stoneart

Lighting: Reggiani Sunny track-mounted projector and Yori Surface lights from Euroluce; Yamagiwa Mayuhana Mie pendant; Flos Easy Kap 80 Round down-light, Tab T table lamp and Find Me spotlight; Apparatus Cylinder Swing Arm sconces and custom Lariat 6 in 'Blackened Brass'; Modular Lighting Instruments light fittings

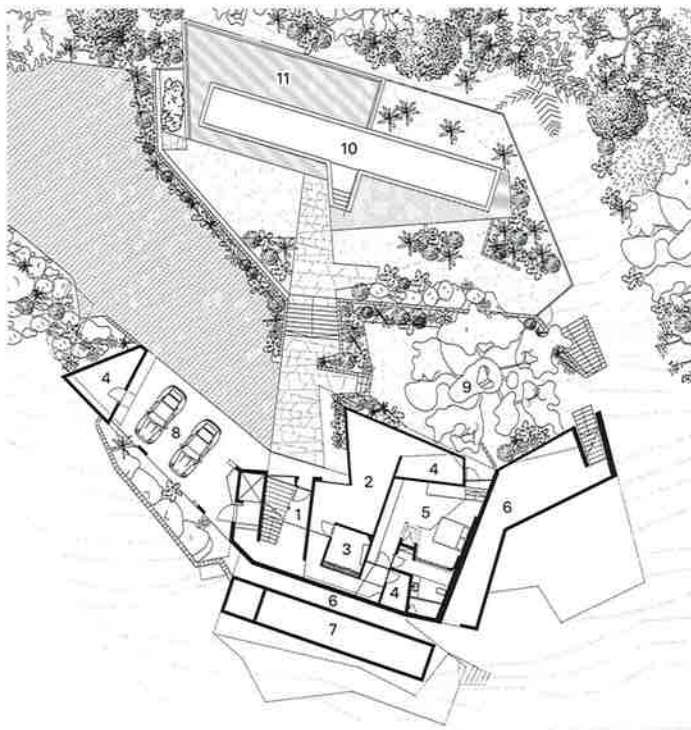
Kitchen: Cavalier Ventilation range-hood; Wolf stainless steel oven and cooktop; Vola tapware in stainless steel; Frost Catering Equipment custom fridge and freezer; Hobart dishwasher and oven

Bathroom: Vola tapware in stainless steel; Earp Bros hand-painted glazed and glass mosaic wall tiles; Calacatta marble and Portsea Grey marble from CDK Stone

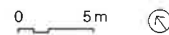
Heating and cooling: Rehau hydronic underfloor heating

External elements: Eco Outdoor cobblestones; Greene Fire fire curtains

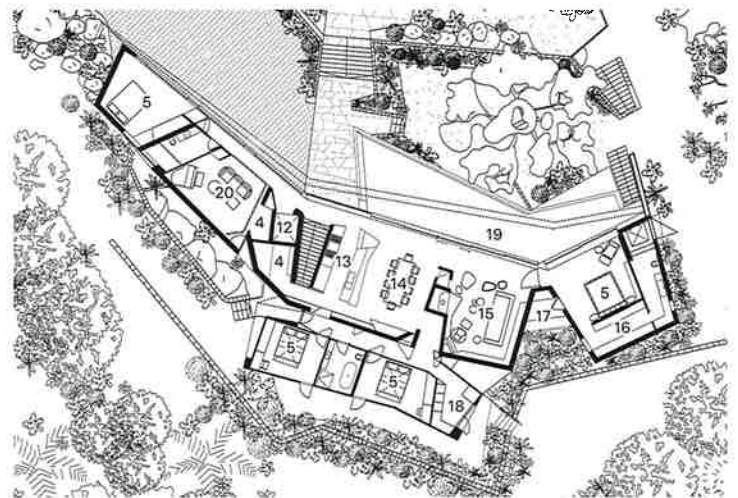
Other: Interior metalwork and structural steel by Salken Engineering



Lower floor 1:500



- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 Entry | 8 Undercroft | 15 Living |
| 2 Gym | 9 Scribbly gum | 16 Robe |
| 3 Cellar | 10 Pool | 17 Office |
| 4 Store | 11 Deck | 18 Laundry |
| 5 Bedroom | 12 Lift | 19 Balcony |
| 6 Services | 13 Kitchen | 20 Media room |
| 7 Water tanks | 14 Dining | |



Upper floor 1:500



02 On arrival, visitors encounter a crescent-shaped house with a skin of angular concrete.

03 A collaboration with interior designer Pascale Gomes-McNabb led to bespoke details.

04 The sharp geometry of the architecture continues inside, where canted walls playfully obscure views between rooms.

The house is a play of sunny platforms, clear crinkled angles and deep shadows in crevices.



05



06

05 A dramatic light chimney illuminates the downstairs bedroom suite.

06 On the lower level, a cave-like guest bedroom appears to have been carved out of the hillside.

07 The north-eastern elevation reveals the interplay of sunny platforms, clear crinkled angles and deep shadows in crevices.



Architect

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Interior designer

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Terroir project team Gerard Reinmuth, Chris Rogers, Scott Balmforth, Robert Beson, Sarah Benton, Joshua Lynch, Amanda Clarke, Alex Moore, Kirrill Grigarin **Interior design** Terroir in collaboration with Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design **Builders** Olding Constructions, Callic Constructions **Structural engineer** SDA Structures **Hydraulics** Michael Frost **Electrical engineer** Steve Nee