

# MONUMENT

83

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

## TOKYO RISING

A CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN DESIGN

TOKYO'S TNA INTO THE LIGHT

TERROIR HIGH POINT IN TASMANIA

STEVENS LAWSON A KIWI CLASSIC

FRANK GEHRY ICE AGE IN NEW YORK

STEVEN HOLL NYU PHILOSOPHY ZONE

CHENCHOW LITTLE NATURE & NURTURE



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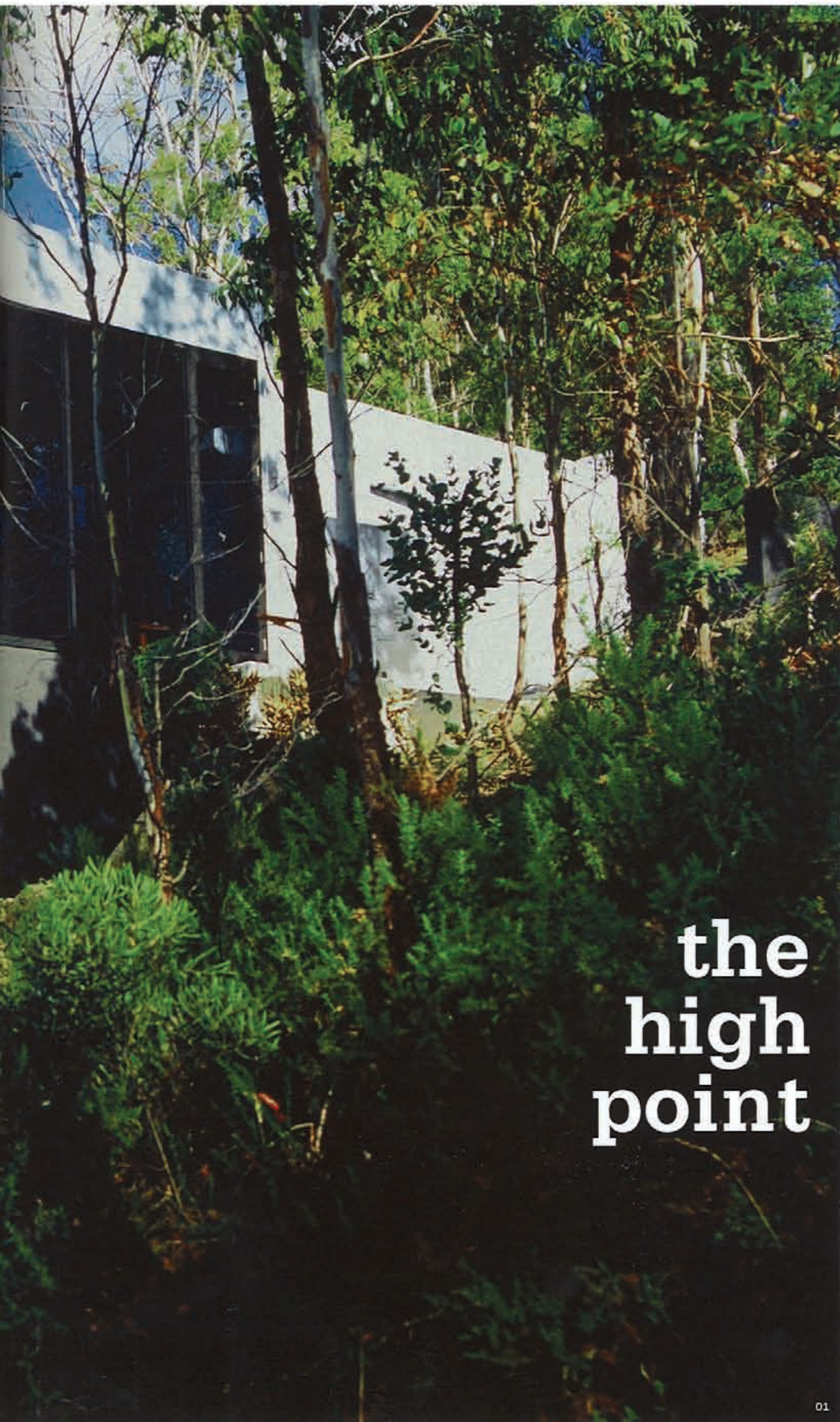
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RON ARAD **FORM & FUNCTION** NAOTO FUKASAWA **BEAUTY IN THE EVERYDAY** SIDNEY NOLAN **RETROSPECTIVE**

## CONTENTS

- 016 **NIGHT MOVES** Cologne-based graffiti crew Lichtfaktor is pioneering painting after dark
- 019 **NEWS SITE** Design-related events and happenings
- 022 **DESIGN RELEASES** *Monument's* pick of new design in store
- 026 **TOKYO RISING** As Tokyo refashions itself into the design capital of Asia, Heidi Dokull reports on the architects and designers behind the revolution
- 036 **NAOTO FUKASAWA** *Monument* speaks to the eminent Japanese designer
- 042 **DESIGN PROFILE** British design duo Barber Osgerby come full circle with a new design crown and a royal commission
- 047 **ART EXHIBITION** A sideways look at the influence of Sidney Nolan, as the first major retrospective of his work hits the road
- 050 **IN CONVERSATION** Ron Arad talks about form, materials, technology and rediscovering his roots as an architect
- 054 **ARTIST PROFILE** Melbourne artist Tim Fleming, creator of Flatland
- 058 **NATURE & NURTURE** Architect Tony Chenchow and Stephanie Little revisit their acclaimed Szirtes House
- 064 **TAKING THE LONG VIEW** A Shinto-inspired house in a dramatic Australian context
- 072 **ICE AGE** Frank Gehry's new building in Chelsea, New York
- 076 **LOGGER RHYTHMS** A modern Kiwi vernacular house in Auckland by Stevens Lawson Architects
- 082 **OUTSIDE THE SQUARE** The first Australian project by Roman architects MORQ refines the courtyard house proposition
- 088 **INTO THE LIGHT** The luminous Mosaic House by Tokyo's TNA Architects
- 094 **THE HIGH POINT** Terroir's Liverpool Crescent House in Hobart brings cinematic drama to an awkward bush block
- 102 **HIGH MINDED** The revision of NYU's Philosophy Department by Steven Holl Architects with lofty plays of light
- 104 **AUTHOR INTERVIEW** Museum of Sydney curator Inara Walden talks about *Sydney Now: New Australian Photojournalism*
- 108 **READING MATTER** New book releases
- 110 **RETROSPECTIVE** Anne Watson on the postwar collaboration of furniture designer Paul Kafka and architect Hugh Buhrich
- 112 **SITE UNSEEN** Projects on the drawing board
- 114 **LAST WORD** Architect Sean Godsell's brush with Sidney Nolan





# the high point

This Hobart house by Terroir, at first reckoning just a blunt cube in the landscape, ingeniously opens up to reveal warm and intimate interior and exterior spaces that fold together to create a powerful sense of place.

REVIEW LEON VAN SCHAIK  
PHOTOGRAPHY RAY JOYCE,  
SHANNON McGRATH



01 Side elevation showing the east-facing deck area 02 The living room features a red-lined light shaft, clad in zincalume sheeting 03 Floor-to-ceiling glazing gives the impression of the room floating above the valley 04 The central stairs, illuminated from above with a clear glass skylight 05 View from the living room across the kitchen to the dining room and terrace cut into the hill beyond





02

**TERROIR FIRST BEGAN** designing the Liverpool Crescent House five years before it was built. That it took so long was partly to do with a change in the circumstances of the client, a consequent change of brief. Sometimes people wonder what an architect can do for them. The story of this house belongs to a modern tradition of clients who buy impossible sites and find architects to make them liveable. Often these sites are leftover sites on the edges of subdivisions – bought at a discount because no one has worked out how to build on them. Often these sites are in the heart of desirable suburbs or sometimes they afford wonderful views. Many of the best houses in Los Angeles are wonders wrenched from catastrophe by Schindler, Neutra, Goff, or Lautner. My favourite Robyn Boyd design is in this tradition – his House Clemson in Kew straddles a gully on crisscross trusses. What makes the Liverpool Crescent site difficult is that it is a steep south facing slope that loses all sun in winter, and what made it so tantalisingly desirable to the clients was its adjacency to central Hobart and its wonderful views down the River Derwent.

Terroir's first design did a small cut and fill – an arrival platform steeply up from the driveway has to be achieved – and then it raised three thin storeys above this, stretching up to snatch at the winter sun. This proposal stuck up out of the tree cover of the hill, disrupting the flow of the canopies of the dark-trunked trees that give the hillside the uncanny hauteur of a John Glover landscape painting. The second brief called for a single dominant living platform above the city, and was prepared to forego the winter sun to achieve this, and happy to be masked by the trees from a distance. This is the design that has been realised, and it is a worthy member of the tradition.

The design provides an almost square plane at the upper level, one third of which is cut into the hill, forming a terrace and a service yard, one third of which is set three steps down allowing increased volume on the view edge. On this platform three bedrooms line the western edge, evening sun is welcome all year round this far south, the master bedroom with views to the south. A bathroom

core is set alongside forming a corridor linking the study to the south to the dining room that faces the terrace to the north, its glazed wall focusing you on the tree trunks that climb up the hill to its ridgeline. The east wall of the core forms one side of the main stairwell, and to the east of this the kitchen, facing the dining room and hovering three steps up from the living room, which – glazed floor to ceiling on the south and the east – floats like a magic carpet above the city and the valley below. A deck incised into the plan opens to the east from the dining room, completing the suite of spaces available to the family on this one floor. There is within the compass of this disarmingly simple racecourse circulation plan a surprisingly wide range of places for a family to get together or to find solitude.

Walls, floors and northern ceilings are in dark tones, the floors in stained plywood marked at transitions with black stripes. To the south, ceilings are white. This tonal schema creates >>



05



06, 09 At this juncture of the house (the landing off the concrete staircase), the moody materiality converges with zincalume sheet ceilings, black-stained plywood floors and a black-shrouded kitchen  
 07 View from the dining room across the kitchen to the living room  
 08 A corner of the main bedroom



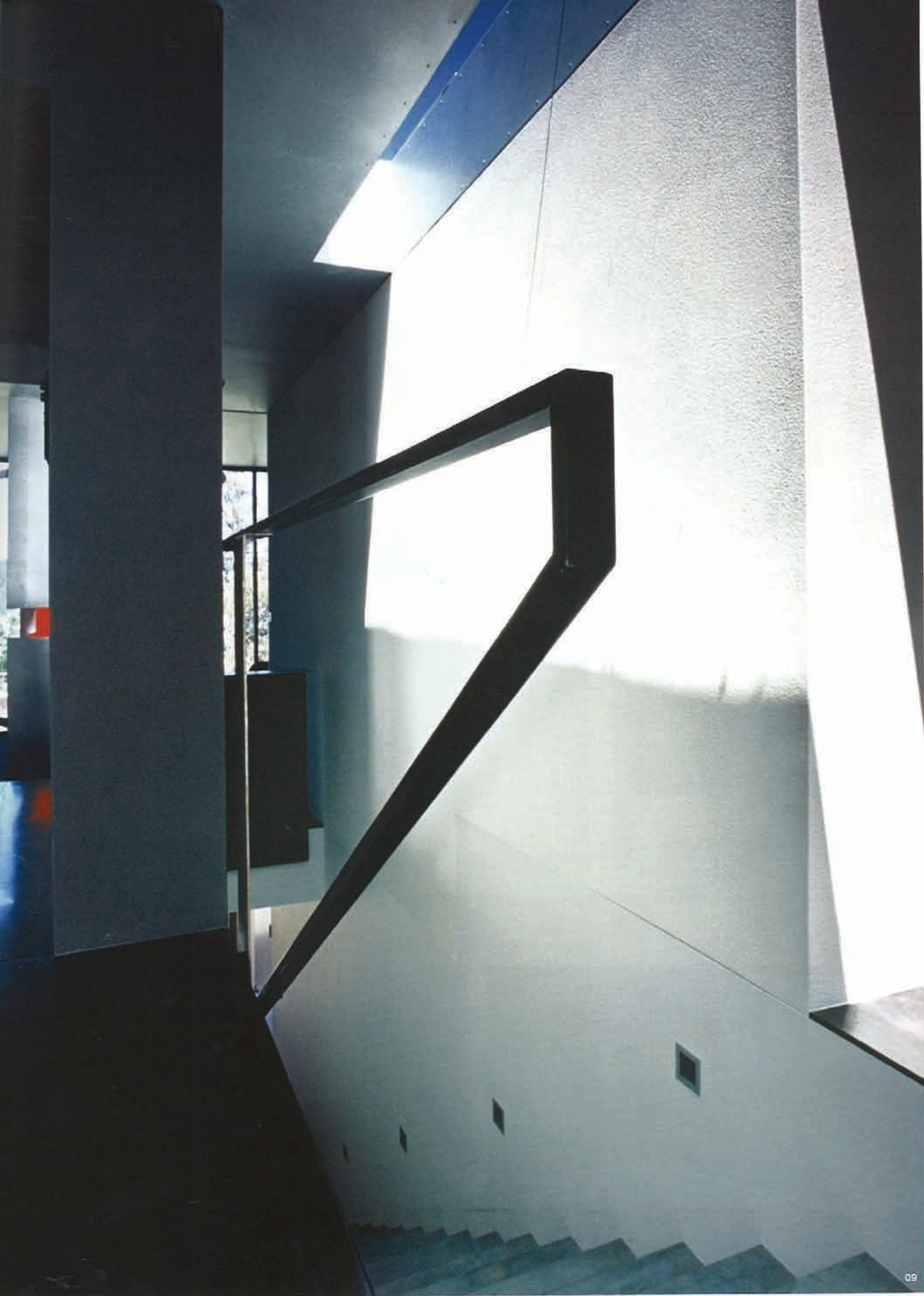
Walls, floors and ceilings of the northern space are in dark tones. To the south, ceilings are white. This tonal schema creates the illusion that light is pouring into the house from the south...



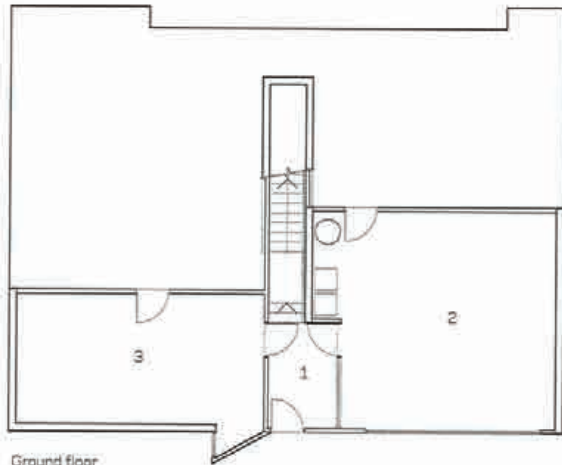
>> the illusion that light is pouring into the house from the south, and in summer it mutes northern light. This orchestration of light continues with a lightwell to the entry lobby below between the living room and the study. This is lined in red stained plywood and cut open to allow views into its always-glowing interior – which seems as if it is suffused with the light of the setting sun. On the arrival level the entry lobby divides a large store from a double garage. These two layers of space are skewered together by the stair that rises in one flight and draws you upwards as if directly into the trees beyond.

This is a house that has only one face – the one that you see on arriving. None of the others is ever visible in the normal course of events. And the face that you see as you arrive up the usual precipitate driveway is giving nothing away. It is a very blunt statement, barely articulated at all. A flange masking a window to the store peels away to the east of the front door – which is itself set slightly into the flush plane of garage door and the glazing above. A pale "T" shape is marked out on the elevation – this is the cap of the house. It is as if this were a doll's house and the roof could be picked off as a single component, and then replaced, with the vertical of the "T" acting to register it in place. You would not guess from this laconic mask that such riches lie within. This is a very private place. There are shades of the mystery of *Mulholland Drive* – everything seems to be visible, but mystery lurks.

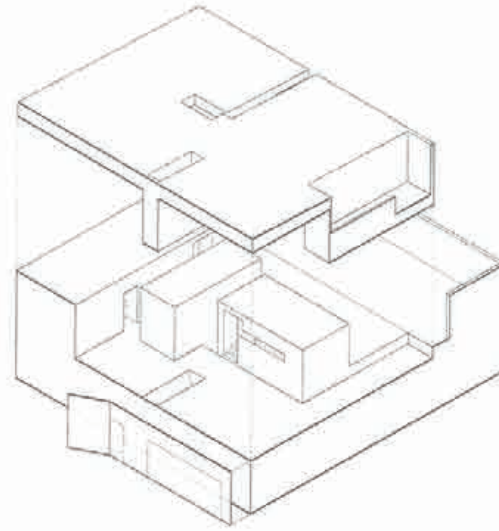
On an adjacent hill is Hobart's pioneering super-graphic from early in the 20th century. Made from stones that are periodically white washed it reads "KEENS MUSTARD." Perhaps there is an apostrophe. Who knows? It is said that it was laid out as a make-work scheme to help out of work returned soldiers. It is both obvious and elusive. This house by Terroir has a similar air. Despite its matter of fact-ness, once visited it haunts the imagination. **M**



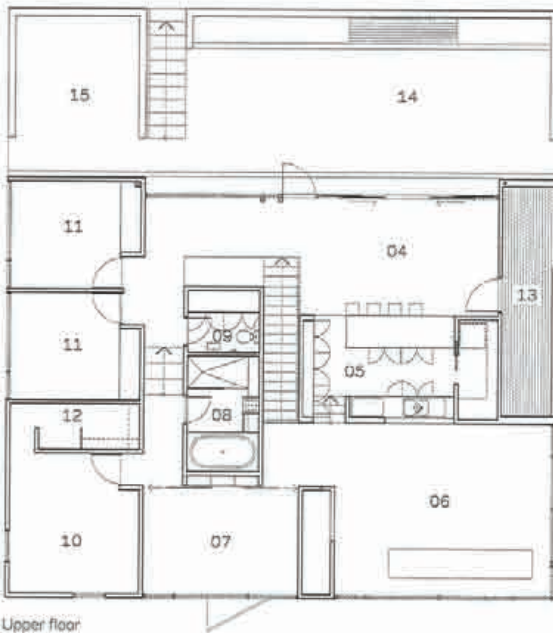




Ground floor



SOUTH EAST ISOMETRIC



Upper floor



- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 01 Entry       | 08 Bathroom          |
| 02 Garage      | 09 WC                |
| 03 Store room  | 10 Main bedroom      |
| 04 Dining room | 11 Bedroom           |
| 05 Kitchen     | 12 Walk-in robe      |
| 06 Living room | 13 Deck              |
| 07 Study       | 14 Courtyard         |
|                | 15 Service courtyard |



10



11

**PROJECT ARCHITECT** Terroir **DESIGN ARCHITECTS** Scott Balmforth, Gerard Reinmuth, Richard Blythe **PROJECT TEAM** Paul Sayers, Sophie Bence, Nic Fabrizio, Danica Taylor, Sam Nichols **MATERIAL DETAILS** Structural walls concrete blockwork, hardwood timber framing; Lysaght Zinalume Trimdek roof sheeting, Lysaght Zinalume flat-sheet fasciae; Capral windows; plywood floors; Lysaght Zinalume flat-sheet wall end ceiling linings; Dulux Acratex Tuscany render

**10** North-facing courtyard cut into the hill **11** Entry facade showing the flanged out window to the store room, the slightly recessed front door, the garage door flush with the rest of the building, and the 'T' that registers the roof component into the design