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RAW TALENT

globally recognised architectural feat, this distinctive Sydney home owes success to its inspiring surrounds, luxury materials and bold vision.

BY VERITY MAGDALINO PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANSON SMART
STYLED BY JOSEPH GARDNER



THIS PAGE the facade of a Sydney home on the Lower North Shore.



THIS PAGE in the living area, Airport sofa by Paola Navone from Poliform; Moroso Bohemian armchair and Fjord ottoman by Patricia Urquiola from Hub Furniture; Knoll Tulip side table by Eero Saarinen from Dedee; custom shelves by Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design; Tolomeo Mega floor lamp from Artemide; cushions from Jordan; Cloud Bell vase (on side table) from Marmoset Found; Fort Standard standing bowl from In Bed; *Still Life 1* (2018) artwork by Robert Malherbe (on shelf) from Michael Reid; *Rushka* (2018) sculpture by Carol Crawford. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the entrance, Knoll Platner armchair from Dedee; Simone Karras vase from Hermetica Flowers; rug from Cadrys.

HIDDEN DOWN A DISCREET DRIVEWAY

on a block overlooking the bushland of Sydney's Lower North Shore is a family home by Terroir architects – a striking concrete- and zinc-clad residence that counters the ubiquitous bungalow-style homes that seemingly blanket the northern suburbs.

“SOME PEOPLE DON'T LIKE IT because they're traditionalists but I like the fact that this house creates a discussion,” says Fiona, a talented chef who owns the home with her husband, Chris. “And it has some impact. We felt very strongly about building something that was not a beige house, that pushed the envelope and wasn't afraid to be bold.”

Architect Chris Rogers of Terroir had a brief for a five-bedroom dwelling “that wasn't a McMansion” for the couple, plus their collective of six daughters — only two of whom reside at home. “The family wanted something that would sit into the land,” says Rogers, who came up with a geometric concept that mirrored the sandstone-strewn surroundings and enveloped an existing eucalypt tree. “We wanted to capture the monumentality of the site but then you've also got to live in it, so it has to be intimate.”

Enter interior designer Pascale Gomes-McNabb, who was lured from her commercial hospitality work (including Cumulus Inc, Monopole, Stokehouse, Jackalope and, in another partnership with Terroir, Cirrus) into this, her first major residential project. “Pascale pushed it to the next level,” says Rogers. “She and Fiona really connected.”

Fast-forward the mind-bending intricacies of a five-year build — which pushed trades to the limits of quality and craft — and the initial idea of inserting timber to soften the concrete interior was developed by Rogers and Gomes-McNabb into a series of intimate living spaces that all open to the spectacular view. “I didn't want overwhelming proportions in the rooms,” says Fiona. “If you think about how people live, you don't live in rooms of a large size. And although the house is quite bulky externally, it feels intimate inside... Pascale took us in a direction where I wouldn't have had the balls to go myself.”

Gomes-McNabb defers all inspiration to the generous spirit of her clients. “We just spoke about what Fiona and Chris wanted,” she says. “They're very accepting and giving people — of their time and themselves. They like embracing new concepts, and are willing to push boundaries. They're interested in quality, craftsmanship and design in all its aspects. Architecturally it was a long journey with this house. »

THIS PAGE in the kitchen, concrete island, topped with a mixture of concrete and stainless steel; mild steel upstand and counter; marble back counter; bronze mirror splashback; oak veneer joinery with Black Japan stain.





THESE PAGES in the dining area, custom
 Lowe Furniture dining table from Hub
 Furniture; Gubi Beetle dining chairs
 by GamFratesi from Cult; Flo table by
 Patricia Urquiola from Driade; B&B Italia
 anasta '13 circular armchair by Patricia
 Urquiola from Space Furniture; Deknudt
 Edvard mirror from Hub Furniture;
 Wooden Drop vessel by Joao Manardu
 from Alm; Cassina Réaction Poétique
 centerpiece by Jaime Hayon from Space
 Furniture; Infinity bowl from Lightly;
 Lariat chandelier from Apparatus;
Gateway artwork by Marisa Purcell;
Savannah (2015) panel artwork
 by Patricia Piccinini.



THIS PAGE in the main bedroom, B&B Italia Maxalto Febo armchair by Antonio Citterio, Opinion Ciatti Original Ptolomeo shelf and B&B Italia Tufty-Bed bed by Patricia Urquiola, all from Space Furniture; Society Limonata bed linen and throw from Ondene; bowl by Alana Wilson; Cylinder sconces from Apparatus; rug from Cadrys; *Bunny* (Gwendoline Christie) artwork by Polly Borland from Murray White Room; *Lottie* sculpture by Carol Crawford. **OPPOSITE PAGE** in the bathroom, ceiling and door surround in Resene Lucifer; handmade Moroccan glazed sea-green tiles; custom Portsea Grey marble and brass vanity by Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design; tapware from Vola; Flos Easy Kap downlight from Euro luce.

“The owners like embracing new concepts, and are willing to push boundaries... In the design there are so many beautiful details and they wanted this quirkiness reflected in the interiors and also imperatively for it to be an inviting and comfortable livable family home” PASCALE GOMES-MCNABB

« In the design there are so many beautiful details and they wanted this quirkiness reflected in the interiors and also imperatively for it to be an inviting and comfortable livable family home.”

Cue reworking the kitchen into a smaller, more crafted yet still handsome space; expanding the dining room to embrace Fiona’s love of entertaining; and adding linen to the bedroom walls to soften the timber and concrete surfaces. The bathrooms, too, swerve from the functional elements of the original idea. “And Chris loves them,” says Gomes-McNabb. “Especially the ensuite with the marble and mirrors on the ceiling... and downstairs, the guestroom is just so sexy. For the guest bathroom we used black mosaic disco tiles and custom-designed brass fittings. The family calls it the James Bond room.”

For Fiona however it’s the kitchen that brings the most joy. “It’s the heart and soul of the house,” she says of the galley space with its custom-built concrete island that acts as the bow from where she can survey the majority of the home. “You can become so productive here — and incredibly creative.” The display of contemporary art sparks a similar feeling of delight. “I’m into design, furniture and fashion and I believe in not being over-the-top, or a mindless consumer,” she says.

From the Ziggy Stardust-esque sculptural forms and mirrors — crafted to reflect and connect the viewer to the bushland — that make up the internal spaces, to the Kubrickian vision-of-the-future exterior, the property exudes pure escapism. It’s a mood that’s enhanced by the home’s dramatic positioning, which flows with the topography of the landscape. “It even has its own microclimate,” says Chris. “You can have a strong southerly blowing and because we’re tucked down behind the hill, it feels perfectly still.” Fiona adds, “The house breathes and it’s peaceful. I’ve gone for periods of not leaving the property for up to four days and been perfectly content.” Rogers explains why. “It can feel resort-like,” he says. “It’s this classic thing in Sydney — if you have the right location and the right space, you can completely escape.” terroir.com.au @pascalegomesmcnabbdesign

As featured in the May/June 2019 edition of Vogue Living.



THIS PAGE in the guest bathroom, handmade glass mosaic tiles from Byzantine Design; vanity bench in nero tempesta honed limestone from CDK Stone; mirror cabinet by Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design; tapware from Vola.



“I didn’t want overwhelming proportions in the rooms... And although the house is quite bulky externally, it feels intimate inside”

FIONA, HOMEOWNER

THESE PAGES in the guest bedroom, custom blackened mild-steel desk by Pascale Gomes-McNabb Design and Terroir; Knoll Platner armchair from Dedee; Glas Italia KooH-I-Noor Specchi mirror by Piero Lissoni from Space Furniture; Society Limonta quilt from Ondene; rug from Cadrys; *Woman 6* (2017) artwork by Robert Malherbe from Michael Reid; *Pointy Gold Head* (2017) sculpture by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran from Sullivan + Strumpf.