

AUSTRALIAN STYLE
at home in Tuscany



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A SYDNEY LANDMARK HOUSE REIMAGINED

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Fronde *embrace*

These pages Part of architect Koichi Takada's original concept, an infinity pool, perched among the treetops and with expansive views of the harbour, creates a seamless connection with the landscape. White gloss pool tiles from ColorTile.

Words **CHRIS PEARSON** Photography **PRUE RUSCOE** Styling **OLGA LEWIS**

Indoors and out are in perfect harmony in this warm, cocooning home on Sydney's lower North Shore.

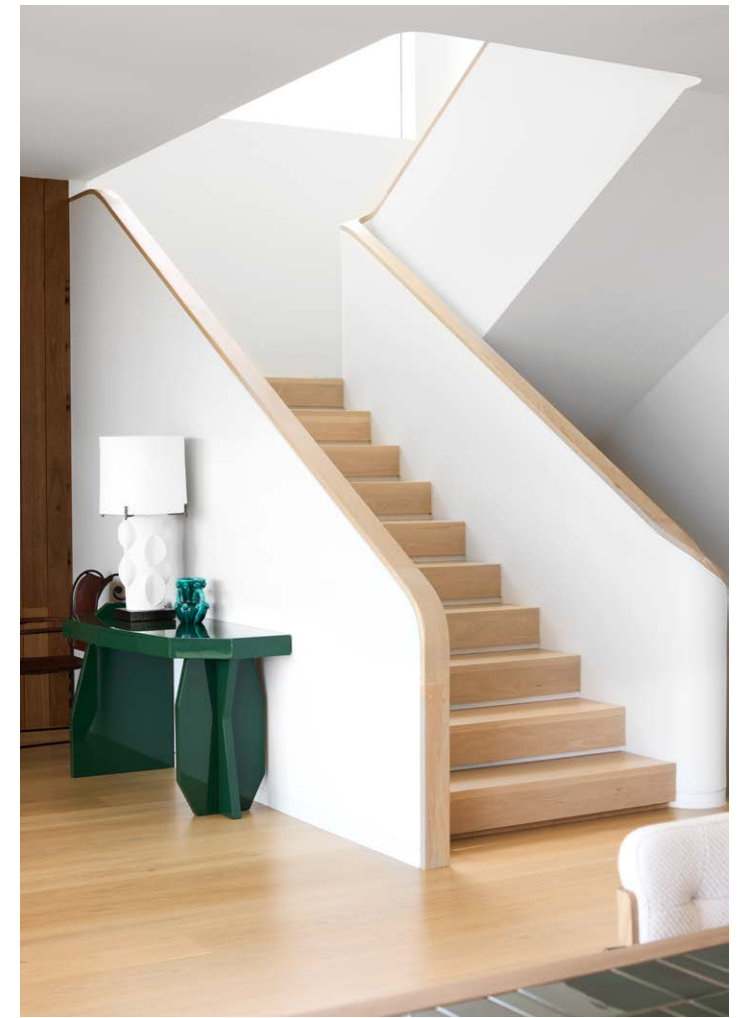


Architect Koichi Takada boldly ventured outside the box with this luminous home hugging a hill on Sydney’s lower North Shore, its curves and parallel lines evoking the perfection of a palm frond. “Nature’s umbrella, the palm frond provides shelter from sun, wind and rain in the same way as our screening protects this home,” says Koichi. “The effect is an endless display of shadow and light.” Similarly, the interiors by Hugh-Jones Mackintosh, echoing Koichi’s inspired exterior, share those curves, lines and textural richness. So it’s little wonder, for the owners, living in the home is like a ‘frond embrace’.

The couple were living next door when in 2016 this property came on the market and proved irresistible. “It was a much larger block of land, with impressive views out to the [Sydney] Heads,” says the owner. But the views were hogged by a pile of indeterminate age. After toying with renovating, the only option was to bring in the bulldozers and start afresh. The owner was already familiar with Koichi’s work which references »



These pages On the terrace beside the open plan, ‘Mesh’ sofa and coffee table and Kettal ‘Roll Club’ chairs, all from Moebel. Crema Bella limestone patio tiles from STS Stone.



« nature and sits seamlessly in its surroundings. “We loved his buildings with their organic, fluid shapes, embodying lots of curves, and refined in an understated way,” she says. “Here we wanted a sophisticated but coastal home with a natural palette, connected to its setting and maximising bush and water views.” Koichi obliged with a five-bedroom, three-storey home etched out of concrete, glass and aluminium with spectacular vistas and sweeping curves that echo the terrain, the shapes and materiality taking their cues from the harbourside location.

On the ground floor, the kitchen forms the central hub, with the entertaining spaces on one side and shoes-off family zones on the other. Walls of glazing allow a seamless transition between indoors and out. “Generous, protected spaces entertain family and friends, while pockets throughout offer solitary escape,” explains Koichi. Meanwhile, the first floor features four bedrooms,

including the main, while the lower ground includes a fifth bedroom, a casual living room and a study.

Koichi cocooned the home in aluminium timber-look batten screens and louvres, sheltering the interiors and terraces from the sun, ensuring privacy and directing sightlines toward the trees and beach below.

In a similar vein, for the interiors by Justine Hugh-Jones and Katrina Mackintosh of Hugh-Jones Mackintosh, the couple wanted to celebrate natural materials such as clay, stone, timber and rattan, [all] muted and organic, textured and handcrafted “with nothing shiny”, says the owner.

“This was the first time the client had lived in a contemporary home with all that glass and open plan,” says Justine. “So we had to make it warm and liveable, with tactile, layered interiors, using natural fabrics and colour. We wanted each room to have a focal »

These pages, clockwise from left In the living room, ‘Julep’ sofa upholstered in Pierre Frey ‘Bridget’ fabric in Meringue, from Stylecraft. Maxalto ‘Febo’ armchairs upholstered in Kvadrat ‘Gentle 2’ fabric and Maxalto ‘Clio’ armchairs, all from Space. Cassina ‘Rio’ table in oak and rattan from Mobilia. Miniforms ‘Soda’ glass side table from James Richardson Furniture. Custom bench seat and shelves upholstered in Kvadrat leather. Custom scatter cushions in Pierre Frey velvet and Cloth velvet from Ascraft. Reuber Henning ‘Cut Out’ rug in Green from Halcyon Lake. Curtains in Kohro ‘Lucilla’ fabric from South Pacific Fabrics made by Simple Studio. Custom fluted fireplace made by Northern Kitchens and Joinery in Elba marble from Worldstone. Engineered European oak floorboards in Bistre from Tongue & Groove. &Tradition ‘Copenhagen’ floor lamp from Cult. *Kungka Kutjara (Two Women)* at *Winpirri Rockhole* artwork by Pansy Napangardi. Walls in Dulux ‘Snowy Mountains’. In the entry, ‘Wedge’ plaster table lamp from Blackman Cruz. ‘Exto’ green desk in lacquered solid wood from Origine. Accessories on desk, client’s own. European oak floorboards in Bistre from Tongue & Groove. Walls in Dulux ‘Snowy Mountains’. In the dining area, De La Espada ‘Twenty-Five’ dining table and ‘Capo’ armchairs, all from Criteria. Rose Uniacke plaster cone pendant lights from Dunlin Home. ‘Agra’ rug in Marlin from Armadillo.

These pages In the informal dining area, Expormim 'Frames' rattan dining chairs from Ke-Zu. 'Bell' oak dining table from The Wood Room. Faina 'Strikha' woven pendant light from Tigmi Trading. In the kitchen, WEPlight 'Renata 35' wall light in Ash from Enlightened Living. Custom banquette with buttoned loop detail with backrest in Navy leather and printed fabrics from Tigger Hall Design and Walter G. Perrin & Rowe 'Mimas' sink mixer in Nickel from The English Tapware Company. Terracotta bowl from OOV (Objects of Virtue). *The Lovers View* artwork by Johnny K. Joinery in Dulux 'Snowy Mountains' with benchtops in Lucente Dolomite from SNB Stone made by Northern Kitchens and Joinery.

« point, so the eye travelled easily through the home and everything looked cohesive.”

“Koichi’s trademark screens, louvres and curves gave us the framework for the texture and layers, such as the timber and travertine fluting, which was influenced by the slats,” adds Katrina. “The fireplace and the powder room, both in fluted travertine, and the fluted-timber kitchen bench became the heroes in these spaces.” The tactile palette also includes rattan inserts in joinery, marble in the kitchen, terrazzo in the main ensuite and seagrass wallpaper in the powder room. Similarly the designing duo took their inspiration for the colour palette from the outside, with its wattles, eucalypts and water views, including warm terracottas, reds, mustards and greens.

For the furnishings, the owner brought vintage pieces to the table, as well as an impressive art collection featuring Aboriginal and contemporary works. »



These pages, clockwise, from top left In the hallway, three artworks by Abie Jumbyinmba Tjangala above the vintage console. In the informal sitting area, joinery in Dulux 'Lamb's Ears' with American oak veneer and rattan inserts. Cassina 'Maralunga' sofas from Mobilia. Cushions in Alhambra 'Candela' linen from Elliott Clarke. Gubi 'Epic' white travertine coffee tables from Cult and 'Cala' side table from Kettal. Hand-woven kilim from Halcyon Lake. Danish Studio stoneware table lamp a vintage find. Vintage 'Pretzel' armchair with footstool re-upholstered in fabric from Tigger Hall Design. Artwork by Kirra Jamison. In the kitchen, Weplight 'Renata' 35 wall light from Enlightened Living. Danish cord counter stools sourced by HJM. Joinery in Dulux 'Snowy Mountains' with benchtops and splashback made by Northern Kitchens and Joinery in Lucente dolomite from SNB Stone. *The Lovers View* artwork by Johnny K. Terracotta bowl from OOV (Objects of Virtue). Custom runner in natural with stripe detail from Cadrys.

« “She loved vintage furniture and we loved contemporary pieces – together we mixed them,” says Justine. Standouts in the dining area include a handsome 1950s Danish oak sideboard and a De La Espada ‘Twenty-Five’ dining table with its tactile top boasting tiles handcrafted in Sintra, Portugal, resonating with the owners, because they had visited there on their travels.

Meanwhile, the classic 1960s Cassina ‘Rio’ coffee table in oak with Viennese cane inserts sits in perfect harmony with the pervading decorative themes, while sinuous sofas reflect the curves that flow throughout the home. In striking contrast HJM, known for their love of pleasant surprises, has included an asymmetrical console in brilliant green lacquer in the entry.

Accessories bring further warmth to Koichi’s slick shell. “We love lighting,” enthuses Justine. “We made a feature of decorative lighting with pendant lights and floor lamps, vintage and contemporary, most notably two large plaster pendant

lights over the dining table.” Similarly, the rush of rugs comes in diverse colours, patterns and textures among them wool kelims, Afghans and woven jute and, most dramatically, in the living room a Reuber Henning ‘Cut Out’ hand-knotted wool and silk rug in autumnal hues from Halcyon Lake.

For the owner, originally a little hesitant about living in such a modern home, the lush layering has proven a textural feast. “I love the handcrafted and textured Moroccan tiles in the bathrooms and pantry in pinks, greens and honeys, the raffia inserts in the joinery and all the lovely rugs,” she says, scanning HJM’s and Koichi’s handiwork.

“My favourite feature is how you can see all the way through the house,” says Justine. “And, with so many pauses, you don’t want to rush. While the house celebrates the view, there’s so much to see along the way.” ■

koichitakada.com; bughjonesmackintosh.com

SPEED READ

» When the owners bought this property on Sydney's lower North Shore, they were drawn by its water and bushland views. But it was occupied by a rundown home of indeterminate age. » They commissioned architect Koichi Takada of Koichi Takada Architects to design them a new build that was organic and flowing, while making the most of the water and bush views. » He obliged with a three-storey home, inspired by palm fronds, that embodies curves and straight lines, cocooning the home in timber-look screens. » For the interiors, Justine Hugh-Jones and Katrina Mackintosh of Hugh-Jones Mackintosh took their cues from the exterior, by using lots of curves and fluting, together with natural materials such as travertine, oak, rattan and textured fabrics. The colour palette features natural greens, rusts and mustards. » A combined effort between the designers and the owner, the furniture selection blends the contemporary and vintage, while celebrating the handcrafted.



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SIGNATURE STYLE
KEY PIECES

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1 'Nigella' rug in Olive, \$1250, from Hali. 2 'Cruz' lazy chair in Natural, \$795, from Cotswold InOut Furniture. 3 'Anthea' terracotta vase, \$259, from Domayne. 4 'Dice' ottoman in Luxe-02 fabric, \$500, from Camerich. 5 Aerin 'Clarkson' single pivoting sconce in antique brass with linen shade, \$790, from The Montauk Lighting Co.

These pages, clockwise from left In the main bedroom, Phillip Jeffries raffia wallpaper from The Textile Company. Natural oak bedside tables from Lawson-Fenning. Custom king bedhead by HJM. 'Franca' wall lights, in Antique Brass, from The Montauk Lighting Co. Bonacina 'Eva' chair from De De Ce. Custom chaise and cushions by HJM. Bolster cushion in Virginia White Collection 'Ola' in Fruit Salad from Tigger Hall Design, and scatter cushion in Ottoline 'Happy People' from Elliott Clarke. Bed cushions by HJM. Curtains from Simple Studio. Nicholas Watt artwork. John Blackman artworks above chair. In the main ensuite, 'Scandal' short wall sconce from Articolo. Custom rush bench by HJM. Vanity benchtop and splashback in Elba marble from SNB Stone. Vulcano Design 'Terrazzo Grande' Italian floor tiles from Inigo Jones & Co. Brodware 'City Plus' wall taps and 'City Stik' bath mixer in Brushed Nickel and Kaldewei Meisterstuck 'Centro Duo' oval bath, all from Candana.