

2022 DULUX STUDY TOUR - AUSTRALIA



Thank you for the generous support and organisation of the study tour by The Australian Institute of Architects and Dulux.

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Green Square Library by Stewart
Architecture with Matthais
Hollenstein
Photo Credit: Alexander Mayes

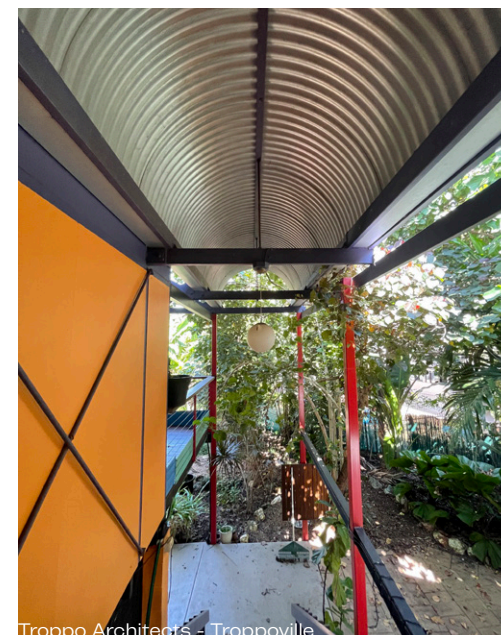
MODES OF LIVING

Big and small, curated and homely. The Residential visits on the DST were diverse and highlighted the range of ways in which people choose to live and how architecture can enhance and support those lifestyles. From the highly crafted and curated homes of Wadle and Smart, to the everyday life and comfort of Haddow's and Tim+Lara's, it was a delight to be welcomed into people's homes. The ability to see so many homes in quick succession allowed me to question what type of homes I want to create, and how the architecture can respond in a very personal way to my client's lifestyles.

A highlight for me was our visit to the Glebe House by Chenchow Little, where I found a strong connection to the ideas of the architects. The home was equal parts comfortable, playful and clever.

Glebe House Chenchow Little, an extract from my DST blog post:

At our next stop we were met at Glebe House by Tony Chenchow, Stephane Little (Directors at Chenchow Little) and the home's owners who invited us inside their compact and cleverly designed house. Tony explained that Chenchow Little consistently aims to create singular pieces of architecture, each unique, focusing on a spatial strategy that is consistent but flexible enough to handle various iterations throughout the life of the project (council, consultant and client inputs etc). The clients at Glebe House voiced a series of key objectives for the project from the outset – to create connectivity between levels that suit family living, to create generosity of space to make the most of the tight site, and a desire to create light-filled interior. The design response rescues and reinterprets the arch motif often found in heritage homes nearby, inverting it for daylight access. Arches play out in plan, section and elevation to create a singular whole, while playful scalloped joinery clad in warm toned American Oak and a restricted colour palette tone-down what could otherwise be a flamboyant interior. Glebe House is an intelligent response on the tight site – it balances an ambitious design idea with a modest budget through light weight construction and clever detailing.





SRG House - Studio Johnson

SRG HOUSE | STUDIO JOHNSON

Conrad, Director of Studio Johnson, and his dog greeted us in a sunny laneway where we caught glimpses of the extension of one of two 1970's semi-detached homes by Sir Roy Grounds beyond. When Conrad purchased the home, it was in a poor state requiring a sympathetic hand to offer it a new lease of life. The recent alterations and additions were built by a contractor with interiors finished by Conrad who acted as owner/ builder/ architect. The home and extension are characterised by a zigzag plan with built-in furniture where clever moves break the static grid and push the eye out to the water beyond. A series of carved landscape terraces step up the hill to the ground floor of the home which overlooks the pool. We wandered through the garage to the side street to view the ancillary dwelling, which is topped by a tropical rooftop garden cascading over the facade. The architecture strikes a balance between upgrading the existing house to be comfortable and contemporary while also remaining true to the original modernist design.



Sunnybanks House - Core Collective
Photo Credit: Remi Chauvin

SUNNYBANKS HOUSE | CORE COLLECTIVE

Located 45mins drive south of Hobart, this home sits on a side of a hill facing north overlooking the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Growing up in this region, I am familiar with the place and climate and have an appreciation of the level of comfort Ryan and the team were able to create in this home. On approach this house is discreet and sits below the brow of the hill; it offers refuge through a large entry courtyard and makes no signal of its sustainability credentials. I am drawn to this type of architecture; it doesn't confuse aesthetics with tokenism. Ryan spoke in detail about the systems employed in the design to create a comfortable home that is passively heated year-round. The owners were proud of how rarely their heater is used. Expanded clay was used under the slab for insulation and lightweight fill for green roofs. Ryan is currently developing a local business to create this product locally as it is imported currently. Similarly, triple glazed windows were imported from Europe with Ryan being very hands on with the sourcing and exporting of products for each home he designs. There is a clear commitment to this approach which is instilled very early within the design process.

DULUX STUDY TOUR REPORT | KEITH WESTBROOK



Shearer's Quarters + Captin Kelly's Cottage - JWA
Photo Credit: Remi Chauvin

SHEARER'S QUARTERS | JOHN WARDLE

John Wardle's property is an active farm and an ongoing exercise in crafting architecture and delight within the coastal landscape of north Bruny Island. John regularly welcomes people to visit what he has created, and provides opportunity for education through small build projects surrounding the home for his staff and broader architectural community.

Of particular interest to me is the way in which John sources materials and crafts them in an honest yet stylised way. Steel is folded into ribbon like elements, timber is sourced from apple crates, and a huge collection of personal artefacts and trinkets adorn the shelves and tables. The spaces are restrained yet full of character and delight.

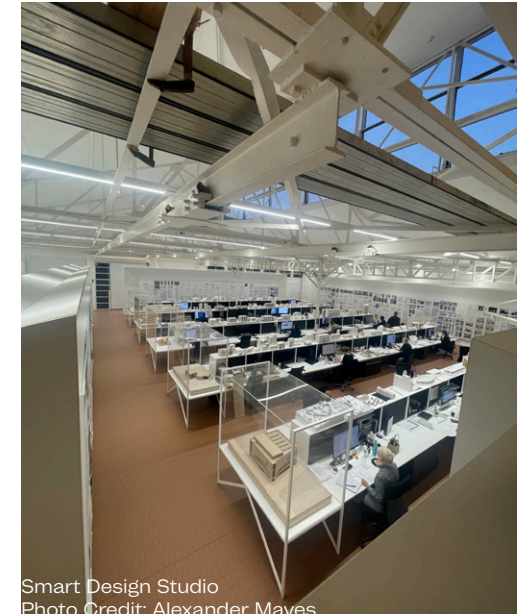
One take-away from our time with John is his charisma and ability to hold an audience captive. He's a great storyteller and shares his passion for design with conviction. These traits, along with his design sensibilities, allow him to execute designs with few compromises.

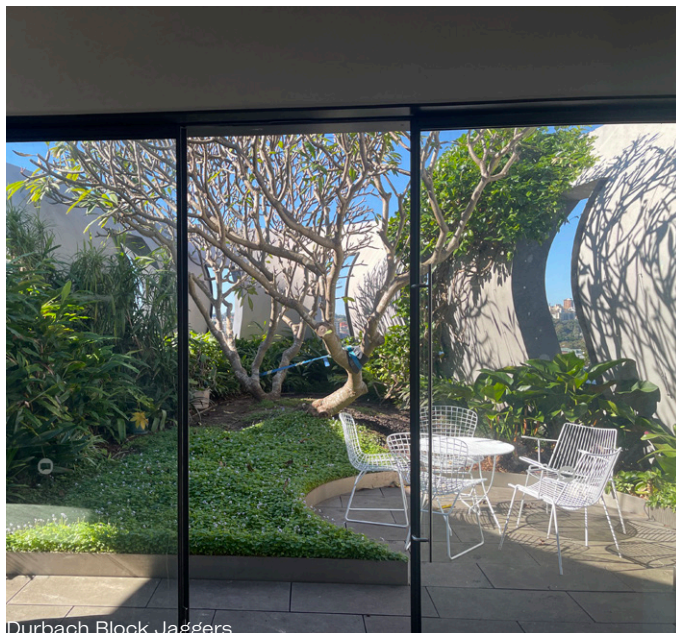
PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

In my role as Director of Cumulus Studio, I am exposed to all aspects of the company, from design, project coordination and delivery, to the management of staff and business decisions. The access to practices through the study tour was an invaluable experience for me - gaining an insight into how other architects operate their businesses and differentiate themselves from their competition. I believe that getting the business right is critical to success; it is the foundation for making great architecture.

At each practice visit I was curious about the design processes employed, the work environment that allows creativity to occur, and also considered key aspects which I found inspiring and would like to reflect on further.

On day 4 of the tour, we ventured to the Blue Mountains to meet Glenn Murcutt at the Simpson-Lee House. Glenn generously spoke to us about his reflection on the practice of architecture throughout his career, including lessons for young architects which we were asked to keep to ourselves. The discussion was set within the home that was handed to him by the late owners, and he spoke about custodianship and the legacy of his life beyond architecture. It was a real privilege to hear from such an icon of Australian architecture within a home that is the outcome of a challenging yet dear friendship between the late client and Glenn.





Durbach Block Jaggers



Durbach Block Jaggers



Renato D'Ettorre

PRACTICE VISIT: DURBACH BLOCK JAGGERS

Design Process: DBJ utilise a combination of manual techniques and computer software as part of their design process. Camilla spoke in detail about how concept work is often a debate between the directors and leads to testing through iterations of sketches and physical models. From this point onwards BIM software was utilised for detailed design and documentation drawings.

Work Environment: The tactile and artistic nature of this process was beautiful- and filled the studio space with hundreds of concept models. I was also quite interested in how the top floor area was utilised as a multi-purpose space for the studio, it could act as an events space, meeting room, or a variety of other uses and opened out to its own private rooftop garden.

Key Takeaway / Inspiration: The technique of making models from balsa wood and hand painting them was quite specific to the practice and generated a particular aesthetic/design quality. I found this combination of model making and BIM an inspiring balanced use of the various tools at our disposal as architects.

PRACTICE VISIT: RENATO D'ETTORRE

We joined Renato for lunch in his humble studio in Darlinghurst where he shared stories of the evolution of his practice over the past decades.

Design Process: Renato operates much like a sole practitioner with key staff to assist in the delivery of projects. He talked about his fondness for slow architecture and

reflected on the small number of projects he has created compared to some of his peers, albeit each on a labour of love. The Coggee House was one particularly special project Renato reflected on, commenting on how long and integral he was to the project, being on-site and enjoying the relationship between craftsman and architect.

Work Environment: The studio is currently a 4 room sandstone cottage, with only a handful of staff, surrounded by books and models. The space was grounded, which Renato enjoyed, and he spoke in detail about the proposed extension of the office which would retain the courtyard space which he found contemplative and in contrast with the more perfect office spaces he had been in previously.

Key Takeaway / Inspiration
I was inspired by the way Renato rejected trends in architecture and sought to follow a process that he had continuously refined over his career.

LANDSCAPE + CULTURE

One of the obvious differences between this years tour and previous tours has been the ability to explore the vast range of places in Australia. Travelling from bottom to top we were fortunate to include a number of visits to places that celebrate the aboriginal history of Australia, including Krakani Lumi in north-eastern Tasmania and Kakadu in the Northern Territory. Aside from the natural beauty of these places, we were joined by traditional owners who shared their stories of the place and cultures that have existed for thousands of years.

For me, this real-world experience of connecting to places, people and cultures was a rich and engaging part of the tour, offering further appreciation and education. I was drawn to the Dulux Study Tour to experience architecture in different places and cultures. While our travel was kept within Australia's borders this year, the experience in Kakadu and Tasmania was rich with culture in a way that was unexpected and enlightening. The absence of architecture provided a chance to reflect on our role as architects and how we can respond to place, climate, and aboriginal culture with respect and authenticity.

KRAKANI LUMI: TAYLOR AND HINDS

On Day 1 we set off on an adventurous start to the study tour, hopping in a series of light aircraft and helicopters taking us from Hobart to Mount William National Park in NE Tasmania. We were met by our tour guides in a mini-bus and ventured further into the park to set off on a much shortened version of the 4-day guided wukilina walk. Our guides taught us about the native vegetation and how they have been utilised over thousands of years, and upon arrival at the standing camp, held a Welcome to Country ceremony before providing us with a smorgasbord of food for lunch and showing tools and jewellery traditionally made by Tasmanian aboriginals. I left feeling greater awareness of the land in which I live, and a broader appreciation of the significance of the place for aboriginal people and their ancestors.



Mount William NP



Krakani Lumi - Taylor + Hinds



Krakani Lumi - Taylor + Hinds



Krakani Lumi - Taylor + Hinds



Krakani Lumi - Taylor + Hinds



Bowali Visitor Centre - Glenn Murcutt + Troppo Architects



Bowali Visitor Centre - Glenn Murcutt + Troppo Architects



Ubirr Rock Art

KAKADU

Extract from my DST blog post: ...we headed to the Bowali Visitor Centre at Jabiru. Throughout the drive, Nifty (our guide) told us about the cultural practices of the local Aboriginal people, one of which is the systematic burning of the landscape. During our time in the NT, we spotted a lot of this kind of burning, which is 'cool' and slow-moving due to the native vegetation that is burned through. As well as regenerating the landscape, the practice is known as 'cleaning Country' as it provides clear grounds to move through and creates prime hunting territory.

At the Bowali Visitor Centre (designed by Glenn Murcutt and Troppo Architects in 1993) we explored the architecture and the local market stalls. The expansive roof featuring Murcutt's iconic arc/rolled roof ridge created reprieve from the heat and contained a number of spaces, enclosed by rammed earth, for exhibitions and various programs. While

we were there, many of us questioned the meaning of the ochre lines scoring the exterior. Upon returning to the bus, Nifty explained the markings were part of the First Nations community's 'sorry business' ceremonies and protocols. When a clan member passes away there is a smoking ceremony and ochre is marked by hand on the places the person has been. This became a reminder throughout our visit of the important ongoing cultural practices of Kakadu.

The next morning, we headed north to Cahills Crossing at the East Alligator River. Here we joined the Guluyambi Cultural Cruise where our guide, also named Neville, spoke about the significance of the place and shared knowledge of ancient Indigenous practices. Neville, a linguist at Charles Darwin University, who shared insight and knowledge of the place was inspiring. He told us stories about tragedy in the river, lessons about plants and their use, and demonstrated using the woomera and spear - which everyone found very

impressive! It was such a valuable experience and we all left feeling great respect for the place and culture.

Our last stop in Kakadu was the Ubirr rock art site. Estimated to have been continuously painted since 40,000 BCE, there are paintings on the rocks that are 2000 years old. The rock art has been dated, interestingly, through the carbon dating of the Mud-dauber Wasp nests built on top of the paintings. Mimi spirits are painted on the rock and are perhaps some of the most unique and eye-catching pieces visible - the spirits are part of the Aboriginal folklore of Arnhem Land and are said to have taught traditional owners many things, including how to paint. Among the rocky outcrops we also spotted a painting of a Tasmanian Tiger painting which attests to the age and ongoing occupation of the site. We left Kakadu feeling graced with knowledge and in awe of the beauty of the place - thanks in great part to our wonderful guide Nifty.