



DULUX STUDY TOUR 2022 REPORT

TASMANIA  
NEW SOUTH WALES  
NORTHERN TERRITORY

MADELINE SEWALL



## TASMANIA

Traveling Australia for the first time, the 2022 Dulux Study Tour started in Hobart with a project that seemed to be at the top of everyone's list and certainly one I've been eager to see for many years. We left early in the morning traveling by prop plane, helicopter, bus and foot to arrive at Taylor and Hinds' Krakani Lumi structures on wukalina land.

On the walk in our guides Cody and Jake shared local knowledge of their land, pointing out flora and fauna and sharing stories. After several kilometres of walking through scrub and along the beach, we arrived at sleeping and dining structures clad in charred timber. Cody then performed a smoking ceremony and welcome to country before we shared in a lunch of locally foraged foods and native ingredients. After spending a couple of hours soaking in the unique landscape and thoughtful, sympathetic structures, we reversed our pilgrimage to return to Hobart. Our first day set the tone for a few themes that continued through the tour; an opportunity to take in some of Australia's most beautiful landscapes, the importance of considering traditional landowners and climate change in design, and the generosity and kindness of our hosts throughout the trip to share places with us that are of deep significance to them.







## TASMANIA

Tasmania is a place that has always drawn me in – the pristine wilderness and atmospheric weather combine in an enchanting and amorphous landscape that feels deeply nurturing and almost sacred. The specialness of this place is something inherently felt by the whole group, and is a clear point of pride for those who call it home. This deep appreciation of the environment seems to feed into all aspects of life in Tasmania, and was clearly visible in the projects we visited.

Though diverse in typology and execution, all of the projects visited demonstrated a significant respect and understanding of the landscape and the environment in which they were situated. Sited on some of Australia's most rugged and exposed coastlines, we saw projects that balanced the capture of views and amenity with resilient design to withstand Tasmania's harsh conditions. Core Collective's Sunnybanks House is a commendable example of this, achieving a 9 star NatHERs rating by balancing strategic but generous views of forested surrounds with high-performance triple glazing and thermally broken window detailing. The house demonstrated a sincere commitment to sustainability, to the extent that founding director Ryan Strating collaborated with a European manufacturing company to develop and import an expanded clay aggregate for use as insulative, lightweight growing media for the building's green roof. Hearing him describe this process of R&D was a powerful reminder that we as architects have the skills and expertise to influence the built environment well beyond individual projects, and arguably have a responsibility to do so.



CAPTAIN KELLY'S COTTAGE & SHEEP SHEARER'S QUARTERS, JOHN WARDLE ARCHITECTS  
Photo: Remi Chauvin

## BRUNY ISLAND

I wasn't prepared for a project I felt so familiar with through photographs to take me so completely by surprise. Located on Bruny Island, John Wardle's Shearer's Quarters and Captain Kelly's Cottage are yin and yang, new and old, singular and composite. Together they are enchanting, forensic and inventive, offering spaces for shelter, gathering and making amongst a rugged and expansive landscape

These projects are refined yet also very textural and delightfully raw in places. The smells reinforce the authenticity of materials, lined in fragrant uncoated timbers. The way John speaks about these houses as we wander through the property demonstrates a genuine love, and perhaps obsession, with design, tinkering, making and discovery that I found energising and inspiring to experience first hand.



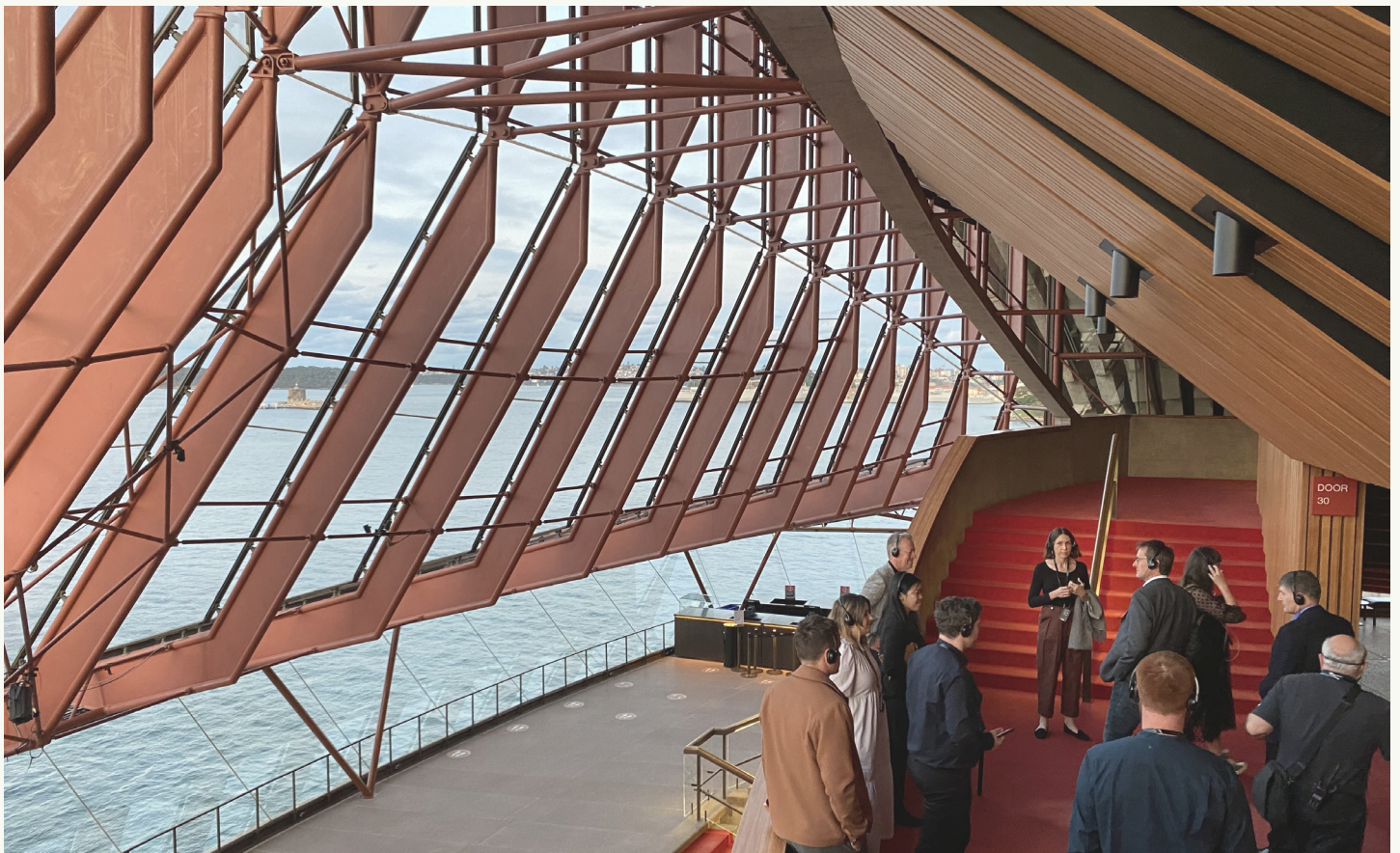
## SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

Arrival in New South Wales saw us touch down in Sydney before immediately boarding a bus for a two hour trip to the Blue Mountains to visit Glenn Murcutt's Simpson-Lee House, a meaningful visit and a special way to spend our first day in the state.

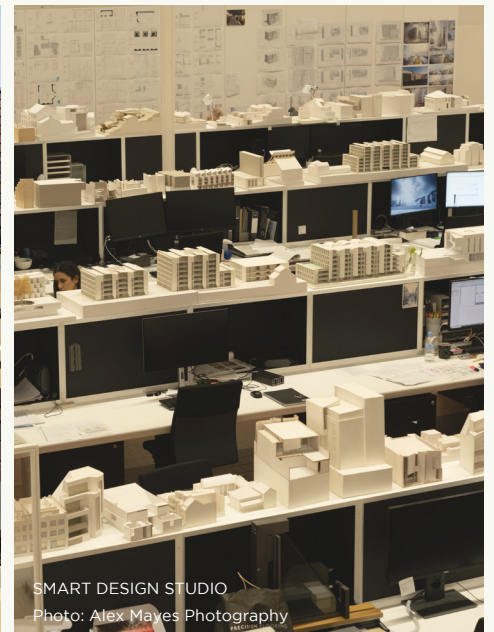
Personal highlights from our time in Sydney include the largely underground Green Square Library by Studio Hollelstein in association with Stewart Architecture and Hassell, as well as a rambling walking tour taking us by Peter Stutchbury's Joynton Avenue Creative Centre, and Smart Design Studios iconic Indigo Slam and Phoenix Gallery.

In the afternoon we arrived at Smart Design Studio's award winning office and William's personal home on Stoke Street. The residence is made of three catenary brick arches clad in galvanised steel from the outside, and finished with a minimal, sophisticated materials palette internally. Hearing William describe the design and documentation process was a reminder of a common thread we heard many times through the tour; that an architect's own home represents tremendous opportunity for innovation and risk taking. We had the opportunity to visit many architects own homes throughout the tour and they often spoke of the freedom it brought them to try ideas they hadn't been able to get other clients to commit to. Once they were able to prototype ideas in their own home and demonstrate their success, they were then able to gain more traction with similar ideas in wider practice.

On our last day in Sydney we went to two brutalist architectural icons, old and new – The Sydney Opera House & Angelo Candalepas's Punchbowl Mosque. Ending the day with sunset drinks at the Opera Bar and dinner at Aria, we celebrated our last evening in NSW and prepared for our journey North on our final leg.

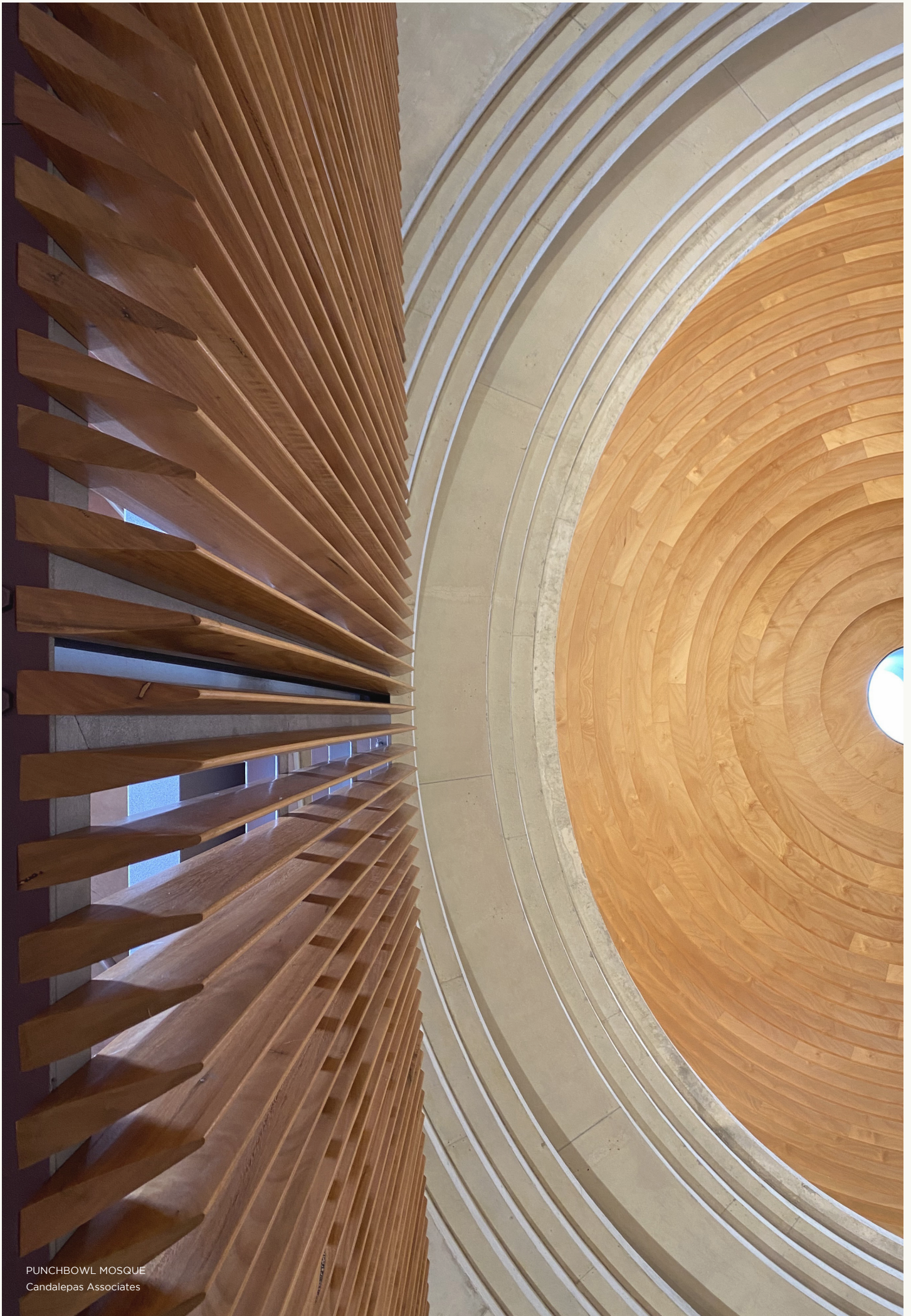


GREEN SQUARE LIBRARY  
Photo: Alex Mayes Photography



SMART DESIGN STUDIO  
Photo: Alex Mayes Photography





PUNCHBOWL MOSQUE  
Candalepas Associates



## NORTHERN TERRITORY

The NT leg of the tour was highly anticipated, as no one in the group had been before and we were eager and excited to explore the state, the architecture and the landscape. Touring architecture in 30+ degrees and heat was somewhat more exhausting than on our previous two legs, but with some strategic midday swims we kept energy levels high between site visits.

We spent the majority of day touring Troppo Projects and Troppoville, starting with a practice visit in their open air office, complete with outdoor meeting room, pool, and outdoor kitchen. Here previous DST Alumni Katy Moir and Troppo director Jo Best spoke to us about the importance of the practice's connection to place, traditional landowners and climate. Of particular interest was an ongoing discussion about Section J of the NCC due to be rolled out in NT later this year; Jo explained that the framework isn't designed for the tropics, and of the stresses the local community will be facing when this comes into effect. Troppo buildings are designed to breathe and ventilate, keeping occupants cool with shade and breeze. Section J mandates thermal envelope requirements which Jo likens to the 'esky' explaining it will cause increased construction costs and lower comfort in their area, forcing people to rely on air conditioning with the lack of breeze. Troppo are working with local consultants and decision makers to advocate for a smarter, contextual approach. Their dedication to understanding their local context, people and climate, and to serving the community was admirable and inspiring.

Our last couple of days on the tour took us to Kakadu National Park, staying in Jabiru and taking a cultural cruise on the Alligator River. It felt like an extraordinary privilege to hear local stories, explore ancient landscapes, observe rock paintings and admire the unique colours, textures and smells of this place. In one of the most impactful moments of the tour, we enjoyed watching the sun set over Arnhem Land at Nawurlandja Lookout, as the red rocks contrasted the dusty pastel skies, there was a real sense of contentment and gratitude in the group.



TROPPO ARCHITECTS OFFICE  
Photo: Alex Parry Photography



## REFLECTION

Reflecting on the tour six weeks on, one of the feelings I find most affecting is a tremendous sense of gratitude. It was a humbling and enriching experience to spend 12 days with such talented, curious, creative humans, engaging in deep conversations that spanned topics both professional, personal and the convergence of those two things. I'm so grateful to Dulux, The Institute, and the participants for sharing their energy, knowledge, insights and friendship with me. The bonds formed on our tour are ones I know will last a lifetime and enrich my life profoundly.

The Tour prompted many conversations and reflections, but for me, one of the biggest takeaways was the importance of resource management in the practice of architecture. At Breathe, we care deeply about the environment and consider the management of embodied and operational energy on each project we work on. But something the Tour gave me perspective on is how various architects manage the resources of time and personal energy. We saw some exquisitely executed details on the Tour – precision tile setouts, bespoke door hardware, the perfect custom flush buttons. In seeing these things I have respect for the thought it took to craft them, but for me, it reconfirmed that I want to be an architect that uses my time and personal energy not just to make something beautiful, but to have a real impact. Impact not just on the residents, the visitors, or even the immediate community, but on the planet at large.

To build a better future in the context of climate change, every resource matters. As architects, we are in a powerful position to affect change on one of the largest contributors to global warming if we use our planet's resources and personal resources thoughtfully. For me, the Tour was a reminder of how critical this is and how creatively it can be done. Seeing so many strategic and skilful examples across three very different climate zones was heartening and certainly worth celebrating.



ALLIGATOR RIVER GULUYAMBI CULTURAL CRUISE