

WILLOW CASTLEY MCCRIMMON

Words by Millie Thwaites • Photography by Derek Swalwell • Styling by Jess Kneebone • Architecture and Interior Design by Castley McCrimmon • Build by Head Homes
Furniture Supplied by Space Furniture • Timber Flooring by Made by Storey



Delineation is often unavoidable when heritage and contemporary architecture converge, and a building’s identity rests on the architectural response to either emphasise or subdue this definition. Engaged to design a generous extension to a double-fronted Victorian house in Elsternwick, Owen Castley and Jake McCrimmon of Melbourne studio Castley McCrimmon tempered their approach, seeking softness rather than severity in the juncture between old and new.

Castley McCrimmon initially proposed a highly contemporary form to juxtapose against the original period home, with a focus on creating and enhancing demarcation. However, as Owen explains, “early design meetings suggested we were pushing the boundaries a little too far with the client, so we softened our approach.” Uncovering a way to extend this heritage home and create an exciting yet sympathetic language between the existing and the proposed was key. A fine balancing act ensued, whereby Castley McCrimmon worked to identify the elements of the heritage architecture that captivated the clients and reinterpret those features through a measured, contemporary lens. “Our views on the design were initially quite different, which was challenging,” says Jake. “It put us in a place where we were slightly uncomfortable, but it forced us to consider our approach and our clients’ brief even more carefully.”

While the existing and the addition feel cohesive, the innate beauty of each is heightened. The original home has been thoughtfully reconfigured to house a generous master suite, laundry and main bathroom along the northern elevation and three bedrooms along the southern. The architects have emphasised the grandeur of the Victorian architecture by reinstating and restoring skirting boards, architraves and decorative elements typical of the era. In contrast, the extension is a celebration of contemporary cool, with a flicker of ornament referencing the original

home. A subdued colour palette of grey and white bathes the interiors, creating a fluid internal experience and a welcome reminder that these spaces have been considered, designed and realised as one. “We’ve used timber chevron flooring throughout as a contemporary interpretation of traditional parquetry flooring,” Jake says. Not only is this a nod to the heritage nature of the building but it also creates a feeling of cohesion from front to back.

Owen and Jake both reference the idea of accentuating sightlines to create depth and draw people through a space as central to their work. Willow’s wide original hallway leading to the new addition presented an opportunity to expand on this. As well as restoring and highlighting the beauty of the ornate existing archway, the architects designed a contemporary arch at the threshold between old and new. Beyond this, a floor-to-ceiling window replicates this shape once again, framing a curved external breezeway stretching the length of the property. “We like that you don’t necessarily open the door and see a big living room at the end,” Owen says. “Instead, you see this element of architecture and then, as you transition through the space, it opens up to the extension on the right. It creates a journey.” The sightline from the front door sweeps to the back of the home; one’s gaze is guided by continuous arches, reinforcing the curved form and creating momentum.





The crisp and contemporary interiors are softened by a selection of pieces from Space Furniture featuring lush fabrics and inviting curves.



The Camaleonda sofa by B&B Italia from Space Furniture creates an inviting place to lounge.



The concept of momentum driven by form and sightlines appears in the master suite where Made by Storey flooring and repeated arches guide the way.



The open-plan kitchen, living and dining area opens onto an arched breezeway with a courtyard and lap pool beyond.

Crossing the threshold between old and new, there is a slight change of tempo, however, the spirit of the original house has been carried through with the chevron flooring, high ceilings and the same crisp, neutral palette. The extension protrudes from the southern side of the original house and unfurls to the north; large steel-framed doors open onto the arched breezeway and garden beyond, capturing afternoon sun. Defined by a sense of polished openness, the ground floor extension houses an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, as well as an additional living space and garage set deeper into the plan. Upstairs, there is a large gym and a fifth bedroom with an ensuite, both with views to the backyard and long lap pool.

A 50-metre square gym could be seen as excessive, yet it is anything but for this project. A necessity for the fitness-focused clients, the gym is Castley McCrimmon's considered response to the owners' personal and professional need for a typically commercial space within a residential context. Designing a gym that addressed the briefing requirements

without posing detriment to Willow's overall design aesthetic and functionality was crucial. "There was a real process in terms of planning the gym – we had to make sure it worked at a planning level but also at a detail level," Jake explains. As a result, the gym is situated "as far away from the main sleeping areas as possible" and has been constructed as a separate structure, largely unique from the remainder of the extension. "We worked closely with our engineer to divide the extension into two physical structures, while allowing it to appear as one," Jake says. "The slab structure and framing are all separate except for one portion of the façade, so any activity in the gym – such as vibration or noise – doesn't pass through to the remainder of the house."

Willow could have easily been defined by its various separated elements, yet it expresses a welcomed uniformity both inside and out. Castley McCrimmon has balanced a highly contemporary approach with the clients' love of Victorian-era grandeur, designing a family home that boldly expresses both its heritage and newness.



THE MADE BY STOREY SERIES

The Penthouse at Thirty Anderson

Rob Mills Architecture & Interiors

Words by Millie Thwaites • Photography by Timothy Kaye • Styling and Furniture Supplied by Collective • Architecture and Interior Design
by Rob Mills Architecture & Interiors • Build by Minicon • Landscape by Jack Merlo • Timber Flooring by Made by Storey





The natural environment has long been channelled by architects and designers, its calming qualities and restful earthiness often emulated through materiality and form. The Penthouse at Thirty Anderson, designed by Rob Mills Architecture & Interiors with furniture and styling by Collective, draws on nature’s unrivalled tranquillity, resulting in a luxurious residence that explores kinship through design.

Located in Melbourne’s South Yarra on the edge of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Thirty Anderson is part of The Botanic Collection by Sadikay Group, with the penthouse the jewel of the collection. Director of Rob Mills Architecture & Interiors Rob Mills cites the work of celebrated modernist architects Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn as highly influential to the design, coupled with a genuine desire to create a place that cultivates wellbeing. “We’re all discovering how important it is to live in a healthy, well environment – in a calm environment,” he says, adding, “this building will give you that experience because of the acoustics, the quality of the light and the quality of the materials we’ve used.”

The Penthouse at Thirty Anderson features a serene palette including richly veined natural stone, grey and silver hues, and textural, polished plaster walls. Lush rugs and light, flowing fabrics bring softness while timber flooring and complementary timber joinery have a continuous,

soothing effect. Made by Storey supplied and installed the timber flooring, which stretches from front to back, contributing to the cohesive internal experience. Together with Rob and Butch Sadikay, Managing Director of Sadikay Group, Made by Storey selected Ash from the Touch Collection in a custom size, laid in plank style. Wire brushed and finished with a hardwax oil, the boards enhance the organic, earthy aesthetic reminiscent of driftwood.

There is an abundance of natural light here and, despite its typology, ample connection to the outdoors. Large skylights bring pools of natural illumination into the building, and floor-to-ceiling windows and doors capture swathes of treetops and open sky. “The materials we chose for the interiors are one with the building form – with the shell, if you like. There’s a direct connection and that’s why your eye is able to travel through and across the architecture and the interior details,” Rob explains. “It’s a singular experience; it flows and that’s calming.” Curved



Timber flooring from Made by Storey in Ash creates a cohesive foundation underfoot, complemented by furniture and objects by Collective.

walls and rounded edges — as well as 3.2-metre-high ceilings — help to create this momentum. Full-height steel-framed glass doors soften every transition through a lightness and fragility of form, simultaneously enhancing the volumes of this penthouse. The space feels at once generous and enveloping, encouraging a certain slowness of both mind and movement.

Butch believes the sheer exclusivity of The Penthouse at Thirty Anderson comes down to “the combination of arguably the best location in Victoria, the design and quality of the build, and the specification of the best products available.” The bath, which is carved out of one piece of stone, is an example of the artisanship within this home. Butch also notes the private pool terrace and outdoor kitchen as standout features. Accessible by lift, the terrace boasts views to the bay, across the Royal Botanic Gardens and of the city skyline.

The Penthouse at Thirty Anderson is the synthesis of well-honed design principles and the intangible, soothing effects of nature. As a home, it is both grand in its execution and humbling in its fundamental principles. Rob says this project “embodies the philosophy” of the studio’s work, acknowledging nature as the source of so many ideas.





Furniture selected for the project by Collective creates an inviting place from which to contemplate the views of the neighbouring Royal Botanic Gardens.