

WINTER 2012

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homes & art

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World class

Inspiration from San Francisco
New York, London and China

Young, Australian and Muslim

The controversial new
face of West Australian art

WA art guide

Brendan Darby, Jeff Wall,
David Bromley, Stuart Elliot

Milan 2012

Cutting edge trends
from Salone del Mobile

Architecture awards

Home and commercial designs
from this year's AIA awards



01 The three-dimensional quality of the stone-clad wall at the centre of the house allows for natural light to create constantly changing shadows throughout the day. Seen laterally, the stone wall in the stairwell reveals its jutting variations. The owners love visual and tactile details and became very involved in the material palette and finishes, including the white oak floorboards and a carved rug in the living room. A modern expressionist painting by Angel Pak, antique armchairs and a contemporary cream couch by Bensen finishes the look.

Pushing the envelope

One of the oldest houses in an historic San Francisco suburb is renovated by a creative couple wishing to modernise it, while respecting the original rustic facade

WORDS Julia Berney PHOTOGRAPHY Paul Dyer





02 The removal of a central part of the upper floor not only facilitates the dispersal of light down through the storeys but also allows easy interaction for owners Melodie and Jerome. The geometry of metal and glass at the rear of the extension contrasts crisply with the old timber house, and ceiling-to-floor glazing gives the newly created office a contemporary feel filled with natural light.



03

Built in the 1860s, this cottage has witnessed dramatic changes in the surrounding landscape. The smallish wooden house with a dark interior is typical of the neighbourhood. It fell into disrepair for many years until an imaginative couple with two children – who now have another sibling – saw its potential and commissioned Feldman Architecture to repair, extend and modernise it while retaining the rustic appeal.

Bernal Heights, the suburb in which the house is situated, was largely undeveloped until the earthquake of 1906 and the resultant firestorm that devastated San Francisco. After the disaster, many shacks were constructed rapidly to shelter thousands of refugees from the city, and some of the little 'temporary' homes remain to this day. While adding to the eclectic nature of Bernal Heights – an area that also contains 1950s workers' homes and a few modern residences – the mix of historic housing brought limitations on what the architects could do.

At the front of the Old Bernal house, as the project was named, both the new addition and any improvements to the facade had to be designed to respect and blend with the streetscape.

"With older structures, San Francisco is very sensitive to not altering facades," says architect Jonathan Feldman. "Other towns do not always care about this, but here we need to do an elaborate historical evaluation of the structure and then design in such a way that important aspects of the facade are preserved. Additions are clearly differentiated from the original structure."

This meant that no alterations were made to the old facade apart from



04

03 A funky yet casually comfortable studio for Jerome includes his own artwork. He is a graphic designer by trade.

04 The renovated kitchen in the 1860s house sees American slate used on the floor in the breakfast area. The large pendant lights are hand-folded paper by Danish company Le Kline. White oak floorboards and teak drawers and cupboards create warm notes, with an existing vintage Wedgwood cooktop. The splashback is clad in stone, paying homage to the days of the original cottage when all materials would have been from natural sources.

Homes & interiors

San Francisco | Pushing the envelope

repainting in a different colour and replacing existing windows with ones that offer better thermal performance.

The narrow portion of the extension – roughly 4.5m wide – which faces the street is materially compatible with the old timber house, but it is more pared down and modern in form, with a large pivot window. Hidden behind this understated wooden facade, the extra wing houses the garage as well as a bedroom suite, studio and office, which all enjoy the benefits of being wrapped in floor-to-ceiling glazing. The roof and upper floor in the middle of the old house were cut away so that daylight floods the kitchen and living room.

At the back of the home, it was possible to add much larger amounts of glass to the renovated kitchen, so it now connects

beautifully with the backyard. A two-storey side extension with a metal and glass curtain wall also looks directly on to the back garden.

“The back of the existing structure has kept its traditional massing and shape,” explains Jonathan, “but we added modern windows in a playful way. The back of the addition is very modern and it sharply contrasts the old structure.”

While the family were mindful of keeping the envelope of the historic building intact – the newly up-to-date interior absolutely suits its new owners’ needs. By adding an unobtrusive extension, the family has the luxury of enjoying historical aspects while living within the space and the sense of openness, which everyone desires. ■



05

“We added modern windows in a playful way. The back of the addition is very modern and it sharply contrasts the old structure”



07



06

05 Bathroom cabinets by Artcraft with fixtures by Grohe are faced with salvaged teak in order to reaffirm the rustic nature of the old house.

06-07 The owners use their innate creativity to add personality to the interiors. Melodie, a creative director for Pottery Barn, utilizes her love of textiles to instill layers of pattern in the master bedroom, against white oak floors and a salvaged teak bed.