

FINE *tuned*

For the music-loving family who live in this Mid-century home on the NSW Southern Highlands, light and sound were top design considerations.

STORY *Carli Philips* | STYLING *Chloe McCarthy* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Felix Mooneeram*

LIVING Howqua stone wall cladding, Eco Outdoor. Fireplace, Highland Fires. Fritz Hansen 'PK80' chaise and 'PK61A' coffee table, both Cult. Vase and bowl (on book) by Emily Belle Ellis, The DEA Store. Christophe Delcourt vase, Ondene. Eames 'ES105' lobby chairs by Vitra. Artworks on shelves by Morgan Stokes, Katarina Wells and Emma Lindegaard, Curatorial + Co. Rug, Sam Kasten.

“They’re a family that spends time together, so connection was very much part of the brief.”

MICHAEL KILKEARY, ARCHITECT

THE PALETTE

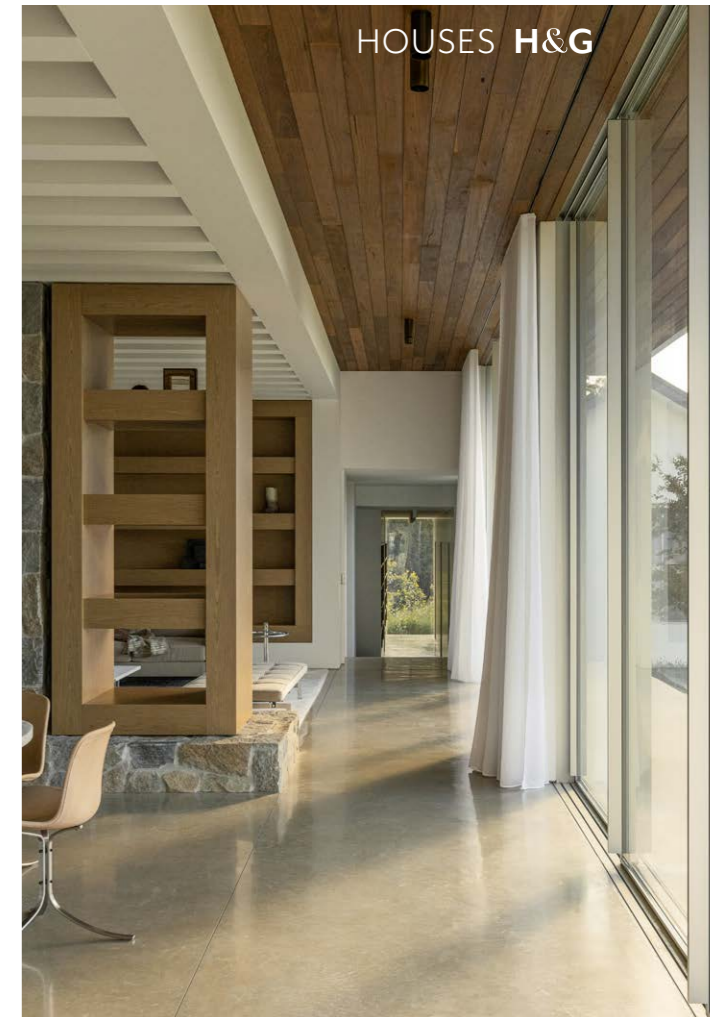
Dulux White Polar Quarter
(interiors)

Eco Outdoor Howqua stone
(fireplace cladding)

Briggs TrueGrain Biscotti
(joinery)

Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

DINING/KITCHEN Walls painted Dulux White Polar Quarter. Joinery in Briggs Veneers Biscotti veneer. Island, benchtop and splashback in Matira quartzite. Gaggenau ovens, Winnings. Agapecasa ‘Eros’ dining table, Artedomus. Black platter by Rina Menardi, Ondene. Herman Miller bar stools, Living Edge. Vase by Vogel Studio, Ondene. Ceramics, The DEA Store. *Above right* Curtains, Simple Studio. The white acoustic board ensures that the sound quality is excellent for when the owners are playing one of their many instruments. Polished concrete flooring.



Peering up at the living room ceiling in this Southern Highlands family home reveals a three-dimensional beamed design. Long, deep and white, they’re like fingers on a piano keyboard, stretching from one side to another.

While it may appear simply decorative, architect and design principal at Cadence & Co, Michael Kilkeary, explains its practical purpose. “The family play a lot of music, and it was integral to their brief. We fitted the ceiling with acoustic board to minimise reverberations and echoes for when they play together. A lot of time and detail went into creating this area; we had to make sure the sound quality was excellent.”

While the homeowners were clear on the functional amenities they required, when it came to aesthetics, they embraced Michael’s concepts wholeheartedly. And although much of the home was rebuilt, he largely worked within the confines of the existing footprint.

In the outdoor terrace, in particular, ideas swirled around the low-lying forms of Mid-century architecture. The original verandah roof extended so far past the house that it blocked sunlight, so Michael replaced it with a steel-framed structure lined in timber. ▶

With its steel posts, flat plane and cantilevered roof, the verandah is reminiscent of the iconic Richard Neutra-designed Kaufmann House in Palm Springs. Michael says he adopted a similar direction, albeit “reinterpreting Mid-century modernism for an Australian setting”, with flat ceilings on the ground floor, timber cladding and broad, finely framed glazing.

The furniture also echoes this era, with iconic pieces by Thonet, Herman Miller and Oscar Niemeyer. The secondary living room is decked out in Knoll ‘Laccio’ tables, Fritz Hansen armchairs and Vitra ‘Eames’ lounges. To avoid presenting like as a homage, contemporary fixtures and finishes form the backdrop. Stone plays a starring role, featuring as green Vitoria Regia quartzite, dark Breccia Imperiale and a trio of light tones in white travertine, Matira quartzite and Sivec marble.

New landscaping was planted close to the house, but the three-hectare site is mostly comprised of established trees, which add verdant lyricism to the property, their auburn and gold-dipped leaves particularly beautiful in autumn. “Full-height glazing along the northern elevation frames the shifting seasons, while timber-lined eaves temper light and shade throughout the year,” says Michael.

At the entrance of the house is a rumpus to the right with an adjoining bathroom, while to the left is a dedicated music room. Unfolding from here are the generous living areas with a floor-to-ceiling fireplace that also opens to the kitchen and dining. Towards the rear of the home is a secondary living space with a direct connection to the terrace. “They’re a family that spend time together,” says Michael. “They aren’t in separate rooms on tablets or devices, so connection was very much part of the brief.”

Jutting forward past the front facade is a north-facing wing of three identical bedrooms for the kids with a shared bathroom. It includes a bath zone that can be closed off and two individual back-to-back showers with doors. “They can use it simultaneously while still having privacy,” says Michael, “but we created a communal vanity space so they could all come together too. Overall, this house is all about balance – between openness and retreat, togetherness and privacy.”

The first-floor suite is a dedicated parents’ retreat and balcony terrace with the addition of an office. “Having a study up here that’s separate from the rest of the family – especially with music playing – was really important,” says Michael.

► *Cadence & Co: cadenceandco.com.au.*



BEDROOM *Above* Bed, Crafted Furniture. Bed linen, In the Sac. Throw, Ondene. Rug, Sam Kasten. Flooring, Havwoods. Artifort armchair and stool, KE-ZU. Bedside table, Anibou. Table lamp, Space. **ENSUITE** *Below right* Walls, vanity and floor in honed travertine. Stool, Ted O’Donnell. Omvivo bath, Reece. **BEDROOM HALLWAY** *Below left* Shelves in Briggs Veneers Biscotti timber veneer. Sika-Design ottoman, Domo. **MEDIA ROOM** *Opposite* Fritz Hansen chair, Cult. Joinery in Briggs Veneers Biscotti veneer. Sculpture by Caroline Duffy, Curatorial + Co. Rug, Sam Kasten.





THIS IS THE LIFE

The music-loving owners are “thrilled with how brilliantly the ceiling acoustic boards prevent reverberations and preserve sound quality”, says Michael. “They also love how the ground floor is oriented around connection. From the servery windows through to the main living spaces, the sightlines are clear and consistent. Whether seated or standing, everyone is visible.”

POOL AREA Kettal stackable deckchairs, Mobilia. The pool was installed by Lap of Luxury Pools. Stone structure, JN Engineering. Tavolo outdoor table, Zeus. Knoll ‘Bertoia’ outdoor side chair, De De Ce.



1

THE SOURCE

Make the move to calming Mid-century and modern classics.



Produced by Amanda McCourt and Marissa Foye.

1 *Nothing Without Everything* artwork by Celia Lees, \$2800, Saint Cloche. 2 Sol Studio ‘Zephyr’ vessel, \$99.99, Life Interiors. 3 Sika-Design ottomans, from \$750 each, Domo. 4 ‘Plum’ swivel bar stool in Eastwood Java/Matt Syrah, \$750, GlobeWest. 5 Arflex ‘Pecorelle’ sofa, \$6401, Haute Living. 6 ‘Big Bend Sexy Bowl’, \$330, Gramercy Home. 7 Australian House & Garden ‘Palmer’ hammered glass vase, \$34.95, Myer. 8 ‘Blaze Tuscan’ rug (270x180cm), \$2230, Hali. 9 Eames ‘Lobby’ chair, POA, IstDibs. 10 ‘Kora’ rectangular dining table, \$3995, MCM House. H&G