

renovation



Hard and vast

Industrial strength

Left, a solid bench of joinery, with in-built fireplace, metal flue and jarrah veneer shelving, softens the room's raw concrete structure. Below, all the ground floor rooms open onto the garden.

Challenges

Meeting council requirements for soft landscaping. A garden of native grasses was built on top of the garage to balance the build-to-landscape ratio.

Trying to convert an existing stormwater tank into a rainwater tank for home use.

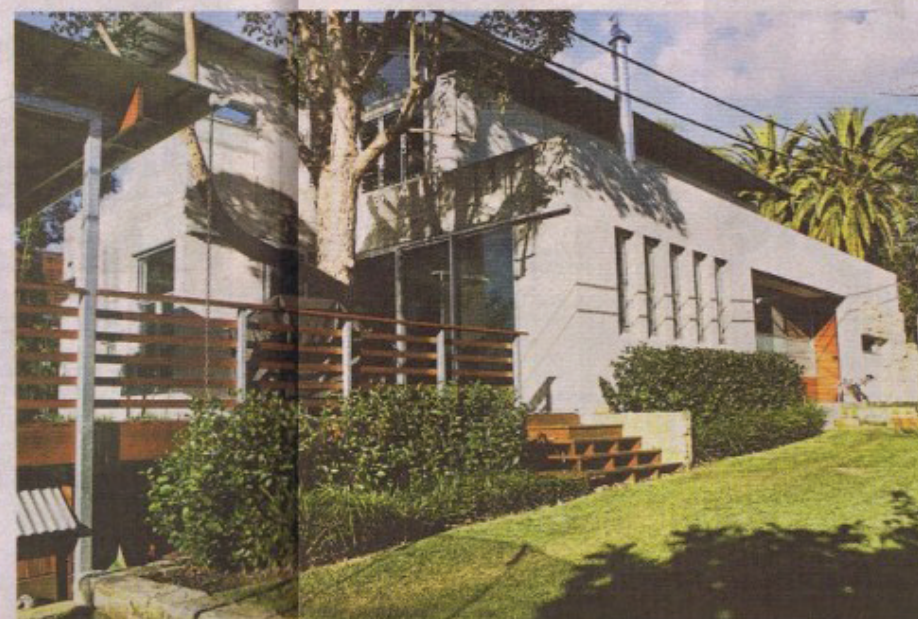
Tips

"For practicality, choose an architect with similar-aged children to your own," Shiona says.

Shiona's asthma has improved since moving to a carpetless house made of sheer, easy-clean materials - stone, concrete, steel and glass.

Contact

Architect Richard Cole, www.richardcolearchitecture.com.au or (02) 9918 3843.



Water views The dining deck above the garage (above and below) extends from the living areas, providing a handy vantage point for the pool.



Gleaming expanses of stone, concrete and glass set this north shore home apart from its neighbours, **BECKY BARKER** writes.

WATER cascades from the roof of this eye-catching property into a pond below, heralding the beginning of a long, rainy spell for Sydney.

But no grey winter day could dampen the spirits of John and Shiona Williams or their loveable Dalmatian, Patch, who is happily snoozing on the heated stone floor of their cavernous, concrete-clad living area.

"We've always liked the contemporary feel in a house and it's been a dream of ours to build our own home," says Shiona, who studied architecture and loves the practicality of modern design.

When the couple bought this 542-square-metre block opposite a leafy Chatswood park, it was occupied by a dark, three-bedroom Federation bungalow.

But having lived in a light-filled, modern abode as a child, Shiona wanted to create a more functional, eco-friendly residence that would suit their children, Charlotte, 9, and seven-year-old twins, Archie and Rupert. Thankfully, architect Richard Cole was on their wavelength.

"We met at antenatal classes," Shiona says. "Richard knew we wanted an industrial-strength house that was

going to last the distance. When we first moved in, the twins' bedroom was used as a handball court."

The huge room, in the colourful southern end of the house, accommodates both boys and their drum kit. It was built to allow a central wall for separation later on.

Like the twins' retreat, Charlotte's next-door room backs onto a storage-lined, study-cum-rumpus room and opens via a sliding door to a landscaped pond. Into this pond flows the stormwater from the roof via two stainless steel spouts.

Environmental considerations were a high priority when planning the home. Oriented to the north, the building is based on good solar passive design principles with natural ventilation and roof windows.

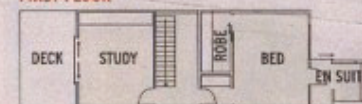
Ribbed skylight strips filter natural daylight throughout the ground floor and expose the natural palette of materials - stone, concrete, fibre cement, galvanised steel and glass.

The living areas at the rear, northern end, open to a deck built around a soaring gum tree, pool and landscaped garage roof. But, even when John and Shiona are inside cooking, a large glass window at the rear allows them to keep a wary eye on their children swimming.

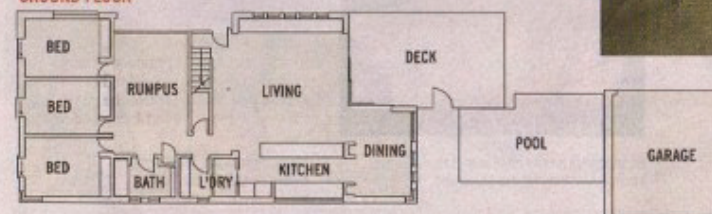


Fuss-free Light floods into the master bedroom and adjoining en suite via glass louvres and high windows.

FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



Set in stone In the kitchen an over-length Corian benchtop with sleek steel supports is the focal point, the floating ceiling providing a sense of intimacy. The adjoining dining nook has comfy built-in seating.

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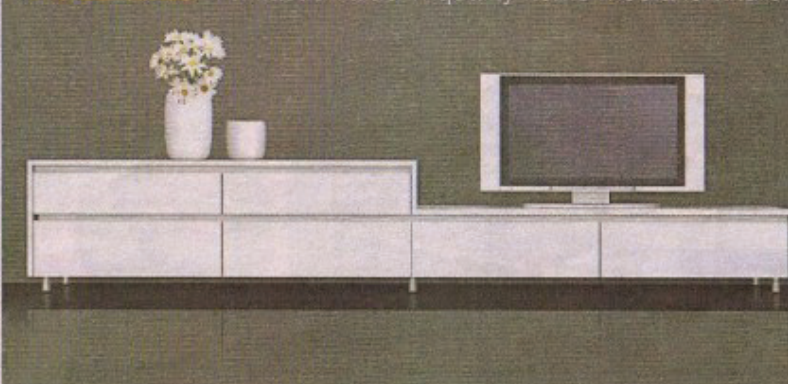
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