This 180-square metre house is set on five acres of bushland at Tinderbox, 20 minutes drive south of Hobart on a site overlooking native treetops and the Derwent River beyond. The site’s topography is varied and does not lend itself to a single built form idea, but rather a series of forms generated by the fall of the site, the surrounding hills and the client’s need for separation between the living and the sleeping areas.

A layering of contrasting materials – warm natural timber boards and cold masonry walls – identify and soften the entry area, while combined they act as a barrier to the roadway. They cradle the occupant, shielding them from passers-by and terminate with glazed ends, as the masonry runs past the glass emphasising their power, and opening the view from within.

The main living area has an open feel, with spaces separated and defined through differing overhead ceiling planes and the varying depth of threshold condition to the outside. The bedrooms are housed over two split levels and are connected to the living space by an amenity link. Splitting these levels from the main level of the building creates a closer physical and, more importantly, psychological connection between the two.

The building accommodates the ever changing Tasmanian climate through form, orientation and detail at the glazed ends. Its narrow modular arrangement allows living spaces to face north and circulation spaces to run along the south. This ensures deep solar penetration during the winter months and easily controlled heat gain during the warmer months, through simple cross ventilation principles, providing a naturally comfortable and energy efficient house in a moderately cool climate.
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mirror systems

Mirror Systems is an Adelaide practice concentrating on creating generic archetypes. The emphasis is on avoiding the picturesque sentimentality that makes architecture appear innocuous and affirming, in the most reductive and polemical way, the pure force that propels Australian society. Special attention is given to lighting effects that are less to descriptions such as blue, celestial, mineral and clay. They are interested in religious inspired literature where the common person glows in a divine light from unspecified sources. Beyond these concerns, the architectural object itself is designed as an interesting, inscrutable, and neutral entity inspired by the modernist metaphors, which, in the case of Adelaide's architectural trends, has found its abode in tidy juvenile modernism and a distinctly local hybrid of bourgeois quass-classicism and Gone with the Wind romanticism.

paul morgan architects

Paul Morgan Architects produces architecture for the public realm and aims to explore and refine architectural typologies. PM&A is a design-led practice that takes an expressive and critical approach to create innovative projects for ambitious clients. The practice was established in 2003 following on from Morgan McKenna and builds on experience gained in educational government housing urban design master planning and commercial projects completed in Melbourne regional Victoria and Asia. The practice has an office in Zhengzhou which is the base for projects in China.

The aim of the practice is to transform architectural typologies through exploring the expressive potential of the brief and form. The complexity of the brief led to an experimental process in each project. For example, a critique of the traditional chark and tak style university laboratories has led to a series of student focused computer studios where syndicate groups and self learning scenarios are installed via video pods, kitchen table workstations and double helix umbilicals. Separately in current residential designs, analyses of the dynamic environmental forces acting on coastal and inland sites has led to the development of performance shells — where the buildings skins are modelled and deformed as a result of the effects of wind forces and solar movement.

naxon giffen

Naxon Giffen is a Sydney-based architectural practice that was established in 2004. The office is currently working in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide on a variety of projects including a veterinary clinic, cheshire, some small government projects and a number of urban and country residential projects. Justin Naxon and Darren Giffen have worked internationally and locally acclaimed offices including Foster and Partners in London. Their collective experience encompasses a diverse range of project types including aviation, education, commercial and both single and multi-residential.

The practice emphasis is on the inventive use of materials, the qualities of light and the relationship between the building and its surroundings. Each project is an original interpretation of the site client brief and budget. A rigorous design process involves investigation, collaboration and consultation and recognises the realities of tight budgets and programs.

Naxon Giffen aims to create simple and timeless architecture that enriches the human experience and contributes to a socially and environmentally sustainable future.

o.d.r. (of diverse residue)

Our investigations into architecture are primarily concerned with the conditions of the social, political and cultural interface. We are interested in the process of articulating our thoughts and beliefs to deliberately affect an architectural outcome. Our concern therefore is to extend architecture beyond the limits of formality. We are not interested in stylistic outcomes. We want to imagine something outside that which we know. We begin our projects by setting propositions and ideas to test. Is it a cultural, social or political response we desire? The proposition may be obvious or not.

We also understand that a proposition can often only be read from a critical distance, so the embrace of rhetorical referential meaning is saturated in our projects. By this, we are trying to make the proposition performative. If our responses are coloured they are so for a reason; if something seems meaningful it is deliberate. If an idea absurds it is for reason, debate and enlargement.

Our interests lie in the ingredients more than the taste. The taste is for others to indulge engage and hopefully question. Ultimately through our processes, we try to provide possibility and opportunity, as opposed to certainty and the absolute. We engage controversy and debate outside of the technical to leave an aftertaste sweet or bitter but certainly with some residue.

rowan opat architects

Rowan Opal Architects was established in 1996. The practice has evolved over a period of intense building activity. Budget constraints and expectations have increased while site constraints have remained the same. In parallel, heritage overlay areas have proliferated. The practice has developed a means of working in heterogeneous insignificant spaces. This design practice has a broad spectrum of experience and current work is very familiar with heritage overlays and heritage listings. Rowan Opal is a tutor at RAFT in the Architecture and Design department.

Quintin-margalit architects

Quintin Margalit Architects was formed in 2001 by Ted Quintin and Harry Margalit. Initially our common interest lay in uncovering and reinterpretation the everyday modernism to be found in Sydney buildings of the 1950s and 70s.

This has expanded into more contemporary concerns, updating the formal vocabulary of our work while still holding to the basics of site- and program-specific design that facilitates the good life. At present none of our schemes are alike, a characteristic we hope to maintain. Although derived locally we also aim to test our intuitive approach in exotic localities.