



Nathanael Preston and Daniel Lane
Preston Lane Architects Pty Ltd

Between Spaces

TEAM

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Preston Lane Architects was established in 2004 and brings together the diverse professional experiences of the two directors, Nathanael Preston and Daniel Lane. Their combined experience ranges from small-scale highly crafted residential projects to larger scale urban design. With offices in Hobart and Melbourne they are exposed to different opportunities and environments within which to work, allowing both offices to contribute a wider range of experiences to their clients and their architecture. All projects are shared between offices providing the unique opportunity to have an 'outsider' review and challenge evolving design concepts.

Design outcomes are developed following rigorous analysis of both brief and site. The understanding of the buildings environment, 'place', is integral in their approach, and informs all aspects of their architecture; from the siting of a building to the form, material selection and detailing. Often perceived constraints in a project provide unique opportunities and it is through intelligent analysis and questioning that successful outcomes can be produced.

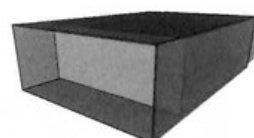
In February 2007 they were awarded the RAIA (Tasmania Chapter) Architecture Award Residential New for their Bonnet Hill House. This project initiated their investigations into the potential of the 'between space' and has led to its further consideration and development in subsequent projects. In May 2008 they were awarded the RAIA (Tasmania Chapter) Architecture Award Residential Alterations and Additions for their South Hobart House.

www.prestonlane architects.com.au

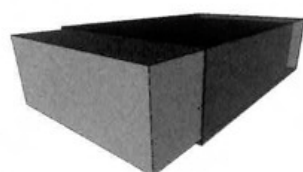
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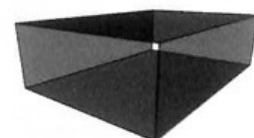
CLOSED CONDITION



BETWEEN CONDITION EXPRESSIVE



BETWEEN CONDITION RECESSIVE



OPEN CONDITION

HOUSING ISSUE IDENTIFIED

The iconic Australian quarter acre block is now a thing of the past with new subdivisions creating lots approximately half that size at about 500sqm. We are seeing an interesting pattern emerging in cities where there is an increased inner density, spacious middle suburbia and an increasingly dense outer suburbia. The recent policy focus on increasing densities in outer suburbia, whilst positively promoting smaller lots, does not address the crucial and more important issue of dwelling size. Typical outer suburbia consists of big houses on small blocks, narrow foot paths, narrow roads and little open space, the traditional backyard has disappeared. Houses are built so close together that windows and doors must be kept shut or have blinds and curtains drawn to maintain visual and acoustic privacy. These houses are inward focused and have little or no relationship with their exterior.

One of the key challenges for creating sustainable suburbs is changing current expectation about dwelling size. This project explores the between space, the threshold between inside and outside and how this space can be utilised to extend the perceived size of a dwelling and create higher quality smaller houses. We are interested in creating spaces that respond to the characteristics of a place, with the armature of a building acting as the mediator of the occupants' experience of the external landscape. Real sustainability is about limiting consumption and we strongly believe that through thoughtful considered design this can be achieved.

We are seeing some interesting statistics on housing trends that do not relate to the housing stock that is currently being built. Average house sizes are increasing at a staggering rate whilst average household sizes are shrinking. The current suburban mass housing model which promotes four-bedroom family homes is simply not sustainable when assessed against current demographic changes. One size does not fit all and housing diversity must also be provided for.

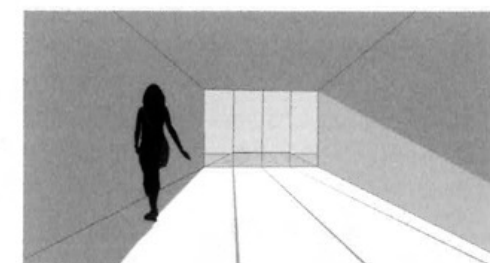
MATCHBOX DIAGRAMS

One of the key ideas we have been investigating in some of our recent work can be most simply described in what we call the 'matchbox diagrams'. The manipulation of the box of Redheads demonstrates the opportunities that pushing and pulling a building's external skin can provide.

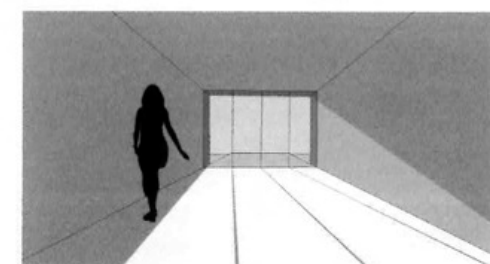
SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Developing this thinking from the matchbox diagrams, we have investigated and propose a number of simple design techniques that reinforce the most basic design vocabulary, form and space. Through the implementation of these techniques, internal spaces have an integral connection with their exterior providing the perception of a larger space and the opportunity to therefore reduce the size of living spaces. Houses must establish a framework that supports relationships between people and environments. The relationship of a building with its environment is also fundamental in producing healthy buildings that can utilise natural and passive systems reducing the need for increased energy load.

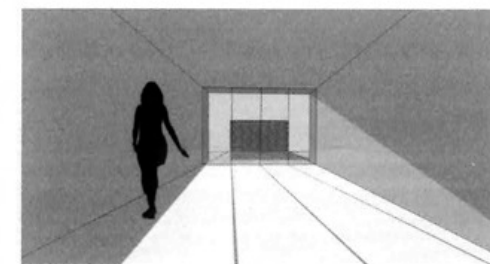
- 1 Interior space is defined. Exterior space is not defined.
- 2 Projecting walls extend the threshold between inside and outside and begin to connect the two spaces.
- 3 A vertical plane articulates the exterior space and creates a connection with the interior. A wall can be used to reflect light into dwellings with southern orientation.



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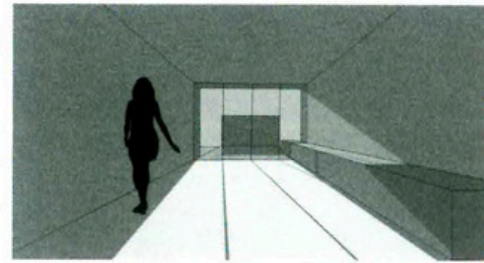


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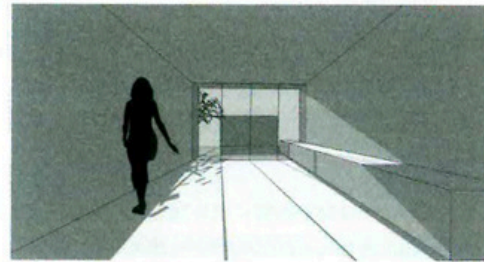


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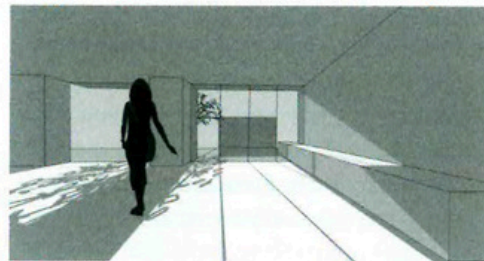




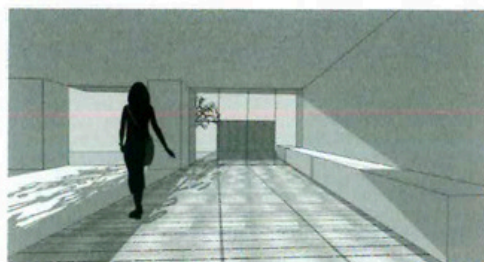
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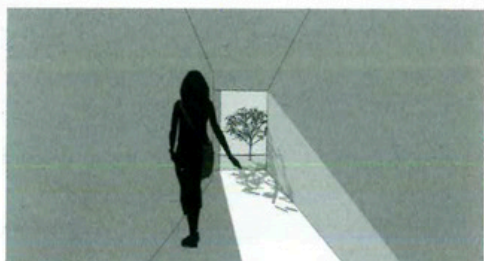
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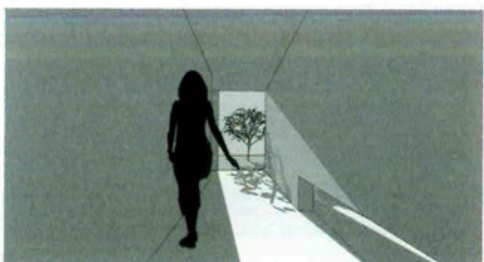
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- 4 Built-in elements connect the inside with the outside.
- 5 Incorporation of a tree/wall on the exterior generates a field of space and further defines the scale of the exterior.
- 6 The opening up of internal space allows wider connection with exterior.
- 7 Consistent materiality provides visual connections between inside and outside.
- 8 Creating a focal point beyond the immediate space provides a sense of connection as well as helping to draw occupants through circulation spaces.
- 9 Low level windows increase the perception of space in circulation areas.

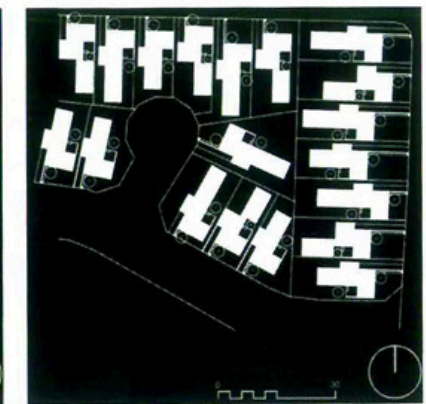
CASE STUDY

We have just begun working on a project in a new suburban subdivision north of Hobart, Tasmania. The project provides the opportunity to test some of our ideas about increasing density, and generally reducing dwelling size while also providing different size dwellings to meet the specific needs of a changing demographic. Our design development and thinking is in the early stages and we look forward to challenging the conservative planning regulations with regard to lot size, building setbacks, site coverage and some of the specific private open space requirements.

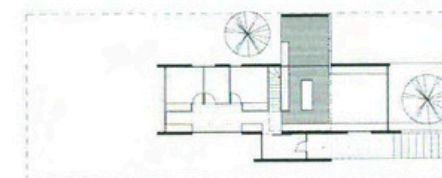
While our thinking and efforts do not attempt to solve the serious housing issue we are currently facing, we do hope it will contribute in a small way to creating a higher quality and healthier housing stock.



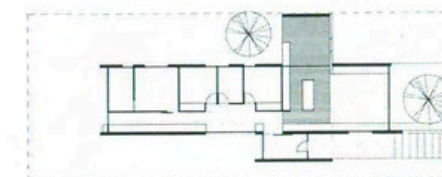
EXISTING DENSITY



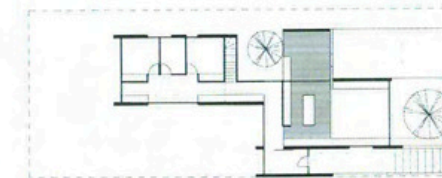
PROPOSED DENSITY



4 BEDROOM DOUBLE-STOREY



3 BEDROOM SINGLE-STOREY



2 BEDROOM SINGLE-STOREY



STREETSCAPE ELEVATION