

BRIGHT ANGLES

Old and new, inside and out come together in a bold new shape for this Melbourne heritage home.

STORY *Stephen Crafti* | STYLING *Beck Simon*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Derek Swalwell*

KITCHEN/DINING Unexpected angles, a signature of architect Fiona Dunin, animate the contemporary extension of this Victorian-era home. Mirror-backed glass wraps around the island bench and rangehood canopy, balanced by the warm tones of Tasmanian oak veneer. Dining table made by Naco Design. 'Urban' chairs, Feelgood Designs. Customised sideboard by Zuster. Table lamp, Mark Douglass Design. Splashback tiles, Academy Tiles. Mixer tap, Abey. At bottom right, a turntable attests to owner Arthur's love of vintage vinyl recordings. The painting and sculpture, both by Robby Wirramanda, are just two of the artworks the homeowners have acquired through The Torch, a not-for-profit program providing artistic, cultural and vocational support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners and ex-prisoners in Victoria (thetorch.org.au). **Designer buy:** Design House Stockholm 'Cord' floor lamp, from \$245, Vincent Design Supply. ▶

The residents of this home in Melbourne's inner north-east were well acquainted with their architect long before their renovation was discussed. Fiona Dunin, director of FMD Architects, initially devised a scheme for owner Arthur, who shared the single-fronted Victorian-era terrace with his son Lindsay. Fiona had previously transformed an Edwardian home nearby for Arthur's partner, Pam Mitchell.

"Then Pam and I decided to get married and live under one roof," says Arthur. That meant choosing between two abodes. While Pam's home (known as the Cross Stitch House and featured in the April 2015 issue of *H&G*) ticked numerous boxes, this property offered greater outdoor space and potential for all the amenities three adults and two generations would require in a shared home. "Lindsay is 24, so he needs his own space, as do we," says Pam.

When council approved the original plans for Arthur's renovation and extension, the house was designed for a father and son. The new living arrangements, however, required some fine-tuning. In addition, Pam and Arthur were keen to translate favourite features of the Cross Stitch House to this home.

Among the most distinctive elements of both projects are the dramatic use of angles, raked ceilings and joinery featuring mirrored surfaces. The first can be seen to great effect in the window frames, cabinetry and bathroom vanities. Some angled features take on the abstracted shape of a pitched-roof house, in various orientations.

"We call this one the His & Her House," the proud architect says of the 158m² project. "It's a merging of design references

from the original design for Arthur and the best elements of the Cross Stitch House."

The two front rooms have been left in their original form, with minor changes. The first now functions as a study/guestroom. Next is Lindsay's bedroom with french doors opening to a side courtyard and adjacent bathroom, which has a door to the living area so it cleverly doubles as a powder room when required.

Central to Fiona's design is the new open-plan kitchen, dining and living area. The kitchen is pivotal to the design, with its 3.2m-long island bench forming an arresting focal point. Mirrored on three sides, the unit appears to 'float' off the floor. Its geometric quality is complemented by triangular splashback tiles. Soaring above are skylights, and LED lighting set into the walls and concealed in skylight shafts. "The LEDs accentuate the angles of the walls and the ceiling," says Fiona. At night, they create a glow against the moonlight."

A garden courtyard behind the kitchen and passageway along the side separate the open-plan area from the main bedroom. The side corridor is lined with cabinets and shelving and its generous windows strengthen the outdoor connection. That same bright, welcoming quality is evident in the landscaped courtyard featuring an integrated barbecue and dining setting (designed by Fiona and built by joiner Spence Construction).

"We're very happy," says Pam. "Fiona has created a wonderful place for us to live. This house feels like a real home." ►
FMD Architects, Melbourne, Victoria; (03) 9670 9671 or fmdarchitects.com.au. **Basis Builders**, Prahran, Victoria; 0412 821 720 or basisbuilders.com.au.

HALLWAY A ramp from the kitchen leads to Pam and Arthur's bedroom, which has a slightly lower floor height. The built-in storage and display space along the corridor includes much of Arthur's vinyl record collection. Green glass vessels, Mark Douglass Design. Tasmanian oak flooring with Bona 'Traffic' finish.

KITCHEN/LIVING Pam at ease in this airy space, where angled skylight shafts cast intriguing patterns of light. She brought the ottoman, sofa and armchair (all by Jardan) from the Cross Stitch House. Kitchen stools, Great Dane. Copper planter, The Greenery Garden Centre. Artwork by Wendy Ford.



Be my quest

The new extension was taken out to the side and rear boundaries with a small but charming outdoor dining and party zone built into the middle. "The courtyard is a great year-round entertainment area," says Pam. Fitted with an Electrolux barbecue and custom dining table, it's well suited to long winter lunches. Overhead, blown-glass pendant lights in translucent colours lend the space a sense of enchantment.



Mirrored surfaces create the sense of a larger, light-rich space.



MAIN BEDROOM A windowsill and shelves extended from the angled window make a handy desk surface and display corner. Eames storage cabinet, Living Edge. Hay 'Mega Dot' bedcover, Cult. Bentzon Carpets 'Savanna' carpet, RC+D. Linen curtains and feature cushion custom-made by Lyn Hunter Design. Pendant light, Mark Douglass Design. Bedside table, Freedom. **Designer buy:** Herman Miller 'Capelli' stool, \$940, Living Edge. **ENSUITE** Five-sided 'house' shapes, constructed from Maxi Ply Edge 'Rustic' by Maxi Plywood, reprise the geometric theme. 'Quinn' basin and 'Cube' toilet suite, Caroma. 'Icon' shower and basin tapware, Astra Walker. Tommy Hilfiger towels. Planter, Bunnings. Floor tiles and 'Triangle' vitrified ceramic wall tiles, Academy Tiles.

THE
PALETTE

Vitrified ceramic
tiles (ensuite)

6mm mirror-
backed glass
(kitchen)

Dulux
Grey Pebble
(courtyard)

This is the life

Although modest in size, this house allows a family of three to socialise happily or enjoy their own spaces. One of the key decisions was to create a separate rear bedroom wing for Pam and Arthur, accessed by a gentle ramp. This not only provides privacy and a clear separation of domains but also future-proofs the house. "We don't want to have to negotiate stairs or move from this home when we're older," says Pam. ▶

'LIGHT WAS VERY IMPORTANT
IN THIS HOUSE. I WANTED TO
BRING IN AS MUCH NORTHERN
LIGHT AS POSSIBLE, WHICH WAS
SLIGHTLY PROBLEMATIC GIVEN
IT'S ON THE SIDE ELEVATION.'
Fiona Dunin, architect

Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.



COURTYARD this page, all images except bottom left, and opposite “Each room has a great outlook to the greenery in the garden and courtyard,” says Pam. *Sedum ‘Gold Mound’* grows up training wires, while dwarf nandina thrives in the tabletop planter. Scyon wall cladding, James Hardie. Custom outdoor table by Spence Construction. ‘C607’ chairs, Feelgood Designs. Maxwell & Williams ‘Cashmere’ dinnerware. Glasses, Ikea. Pendant lights, Mark Douglass Design. Planters, Northcote Nursery. **Smart buy:** ‘New Deck’ 80mm timber decking in Silvertop Ash, \$6/m, Radial Timber. **FRONT DOOR** Wisteria frames the home’s heritage facade. Landscape design by Eckersley Garden Architecture; construction by Vivid Landscapes. *For Where to Buy, see page 196.* **H&G**



FEATURE TREES
& PLANTS

FRONT YARD
Wisteria

INDOORS
Fruit salad plant
(*Monstera deliciosa*)
Dragon tree
(*Dracaena marginata*)

COURTYARD
Silk floss tree
(*Ceiba speciosa*)
Sedum ‘Gold Mound’

THE PLAN

