

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE

Tickle the ivories inside Bendigo's newest pad made for the teaching, performance and enjoyment of music

Words Louise Smithers Photography Adam Gibson



“We were inspired by the work of minimalist artist Donald Judd, who has long explored simple rectangular forms in different and contrasting ‘heavy’ materials” — Melonie Bayl-Smith

Bijl Architecture recently modified a Bendigo home to make it suitable for family life and the instruction and enjoyment of music. Dark, dim and decidedly decrepit, the original structure served as a coach house where horses and hay were kept for the neighbouring mansion. It was converted to a one-bedroom home in the 1970s, with an asbestos-clad laundry tacked onto the side.

The clients are a musical duo (he’s a music teacher and conductor, she’s a music teacher and

professional pianist) who craved a contemporary home that could lodge a grand piano in a salon-inspired setting. “The dwelling needed to accommodate the possibility of salon-style musical performances of varying scale, as well as rehearsals and music study,” explains architect and project manager Andrew Lee.

In time the three-bedroom home will become the family’s permanent residence, but for now it serves as a bolthole for weekend sojourns and short getaways. “We were inspired by the work of



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THE ENORMOUS ENTRY SKYLIGHT THAT PROVIDES STRONG VISUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN NEW AND OLD

minimalist artist Donald Judd, who has long explored simple rectangular forms in different and contrasting 'heavy' materials," says Melonie Bayl-Smith, Bijl Architecture director. "By adopting this approach, our design for the addition creates a recessive, minimal form that allowed the renewed sandstone of the heritage building to be the hero."

The square site possessed significant front and side setbacks — a result of the land being subdivided. However, the rear and other side setback were absent. The design addresses the problem by "wrapping" the coach house with the addition. "This meant that instead of a marked division between heritage and contemporary, there is transition," Melonie explains. "The original features and openings of the house — the loft window, carriage and barn door openings — are retained and renewed. These large openings of the traditional form are celebrated, with views extending through to the new open-plan kitchen and living environment."

Deep, rich colours and simple vertical textures, including James Hardie Axon cladding painted in Monument, populate the exterior and make the addition recessive in relation to the sandstone coach house.



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THE EXISTING
SANDSTONE WALLS
THAT COMPLEMENT
THE TASMANIAN
OAK FLOORS



Conversely, the interior possesses a bright palette where stone tiles and warm metal finishes (like the Milli brushed rose gold taps, mixers, shower head and bath filler) provide depth and contrast to the stark white walls and pale oak floors.

There is significant reuse of the original sandstone, linings and framing from the coach house, which can be credited with dispensing charm throughout the residence. "The opportunity to refashion and reinvigorate the spaces and materiality of the original building was not one that comes every day," Melonie adds.

Bannerman House is perfect for all seasons and conditions. An enormous skylight floods the entry and living spaces with natural light and generates a palpable connection between new and old. With black aluminium powdercoat double-glazed windows and external doors, the house can be closed up for Bendigo's bone-chilling winters and opened wide when the weather is warmer to encourage indoor/outdoor flow, with direct connection to the spotted gum timber deck and garden. Full-height sliding doors enable significant cross ventilation, light and thermal mass to infiltrate almost every inch of floor space.

The custom-made hand-painted steel winder staircase and blackened patina steel chimney were crafted by the builders at BLR Provincial Construction, the firm responsible for completing this project. These bespoke and well-executed details elevate the contemporary appeal of the home, and certainly make it one worthy of publication within these pages. **HD** bijlarchitecture.com.au

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