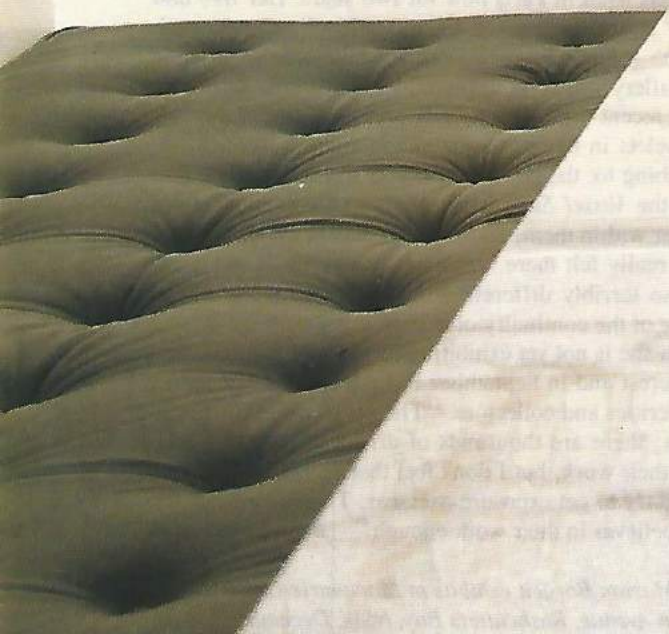




In an unusual design twist, the main dining area is closer to the kitchen than the informal living area. The marble-topped table was designed by Iain Halliday; the Charles Eames chairs are from Herman Miller, Sydney; the painting is by Caroline Duffy. Halliday's banquette feature is echoed in the living room where a niche is filled with similar seating. The platter is by Tony Assness. To the right is the marble box which houses the kitchen appliances.



architecture

# amazing space

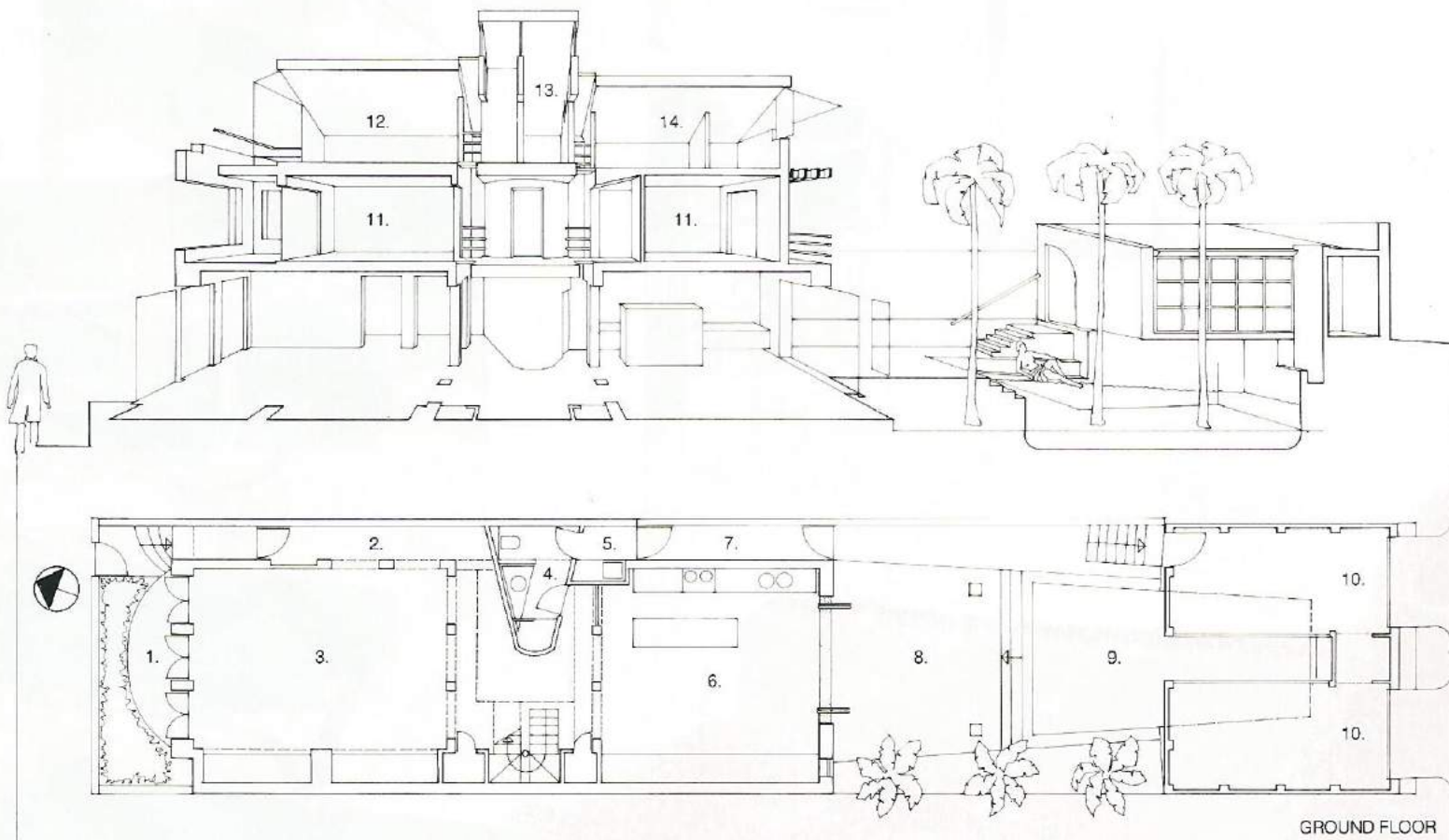
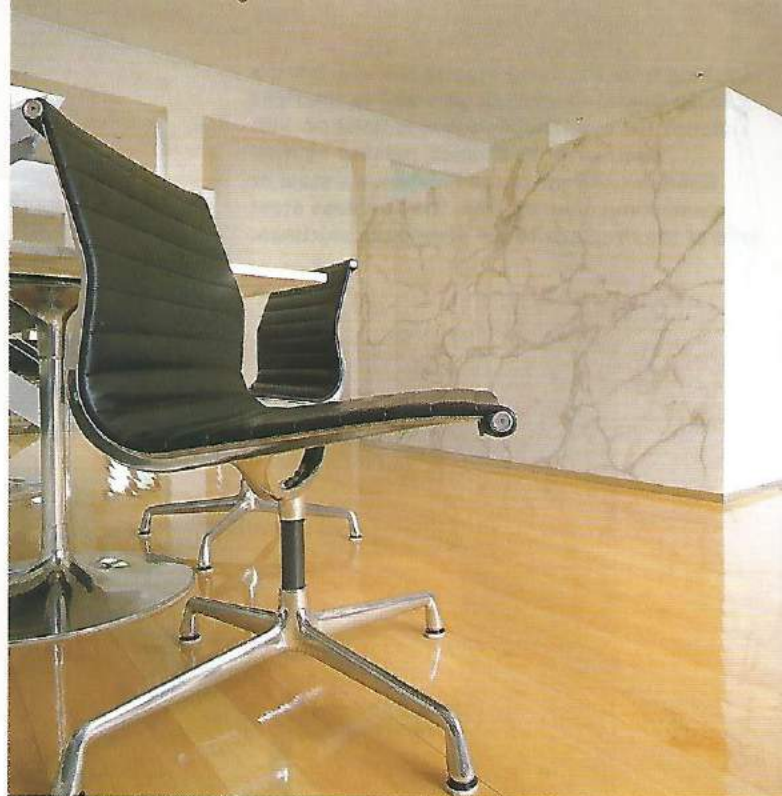
**A clean, newly modern Sydney house  
opens up and reveals some sharp  
architectural thinking inside and out.**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LUDBROOK



**Although the kitchen and dining room are clearly defined areas, the accent is on open space and long sweeping lines.**





GROUND FLOOR

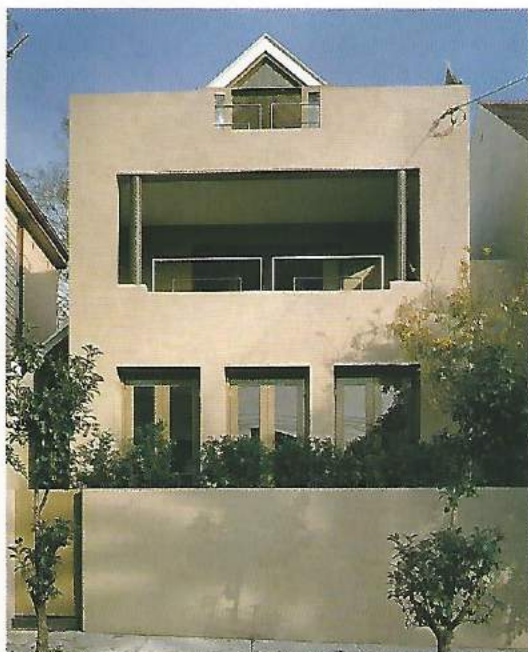
- |                |                   |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Terrace     | 6. Kitchen/dining | 11. Bedroom       |
| 2. Entry       | 7. Service yard   | 12. Main bedroom  |
| 3. Living area | 8. Courtyard      | 13. En suite      |
| 4. Bathroom    | 9. Swimming pool  | 14. Dressing room |
| 5. Laundry     | 10. Garage        |                   |

French doors let the living area, opposite, open out to the pool and courtyard. The Florence Knoll-style sofa is covered in 'Flame Red' wool from I. Redelman and Son and the twist-pile rug is by Designer Rugs. Concealed storage is contained in the wall to the left. A skylight two storeys above lets light stream into the gallery-like area (top). This page, top left: Iain Halliday designed the kitchen bench unit; the stainless steel cabinetry was supplied by Amona. Right: the marble wall conceals the kitchen from the main dining area. Above: architect's section drawing and plan.

Looking from the living area to the courtyard a Clinton Garofano artwork on a wall to the right catches the eye. The staircase is finished with 'Hammer-it' by Galmet, painted by Nick Goedhart. All the metal finishes are steel or aluminium-coloured, from the stainless steel trim of the fireplace to the aluminium skirtings.







“Originally, it was the ugliest building in the street,” says Sydney architect Edward Szewczyk from André Porebski + Associates. Now it is one of the most striking. The lack of historical significance was a blessing; it gave Szewczyk free reign to develop the Woollahra duplex into a three-storey terrace house. Porebski’s office is known for doing grand villas in the classical European style and there is a bold classical symmetry to the facade of this post-modern development. The clients had planned to develop the property but not live in it. When they began to see the fruits of Szewczyk’s labours, however, they decided to make the terrace their home and commissioned Iain Halliday from Burley Katon Halliday to design the ground-floor interior.

The result is a harmonious balance of two dominant trends in current architecture: the late post-modernism of Szewczyk’s work and the neo-modernism (drawing on the early 20th century Bauhaus movement) of Halliday’s kitchen and furnishings. Szewczyk eschews the purely decorative and the purely functional — his aim being an aesthetic mix of both. But the effect is boldly angular. As Szewczyk says, “the overall geometry is very strong.”

The design is light-conscious. Three large French doors and balconies dominate the facade while huge glass doors pivot open to the garden and pool at the back, with a virtually uninterrupted view between the two. Although the kitchen and dining area are clearly defined spaces, separated from the living room by columns (where the original walls were), the accent is on open space and long sweeping lines.

There are no side windows and yet the house is filled with light until dusk, thanks to Szewczyk’s ingenious series of large skylights which allows sunlight to stream in. There is one over the softly sprung geometric steel staircase, another along the entrance hall, several in the top-floor bathroom and another crucial one over a three-storey void in the centre of the house. A sophisticated ventilation system and a natural through-breeze avoid any overheating.

Light is also reflected back into the house from the small sparkling pool. Although the backyard is small, steps down to the pool add dimension. Ceramic tiles give a nice clean finish, a fluorescent green line around the pool’s interior enhances a clever illusion, while a cunning split between the twin garages, which sit over the water, allows again for extra light and takes the eye further.

On the ground floor, Halliday has gone for white walls (which include flush cupboards in the living room) to maximise Szewczyk’s play with light. “It was also quite a complex plan with lots of openings in the walls, so white helped to streamline.” And the clients liked the neutral backdrop for their artworks.

Halliday’s spartan interior is reminiscent of a major project by Mies van der Rohe (although he maintains the reference was unconscious). He has used leather chairs and a stool in the living room which Mies designed for the German Pavilion at the International Exposition in Barcelona of 1929 (which was rebuilt in the late 1980s). The white Calacatta marble wall which separates the kitchen from the dining area is also a reference to the Barcelona interior.

The Florence Knoll-style sofa combined with the dark green and black carpet makes a bold statement. “It was the sort of living room that needed anchoring furniture, something quite formal,” says Halliday. “You can’t leave it at all sorts of angles. The Barcelona chairs need to sit in a row, the coffee table and the sofa are lined up rigidly with the fireplace. It’s all nice and sharp,” he says.

Halliday also designed the discreet kitchen. What appears to be, from the dining table, a chin-height marble wall is, in fact, a big “kitchen control box”, in which the refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave and stove are compactly removed from view. It also contains a free-standing trolley with a cutting block which can be moved around. A long stainless steel bench, which incorporates a sink, lines the opposite wall, and is again largely hidden by the same marble wall. “It doesn’t cut you off,” says Halliday. “You can still carry on a conversation and all those ugly appliances are hidden.”

All in all, Halliday and Szewczyk have created a feeling of space, light and boldness. As the client says, “It’s not a huge house, but it feels as if it is.”

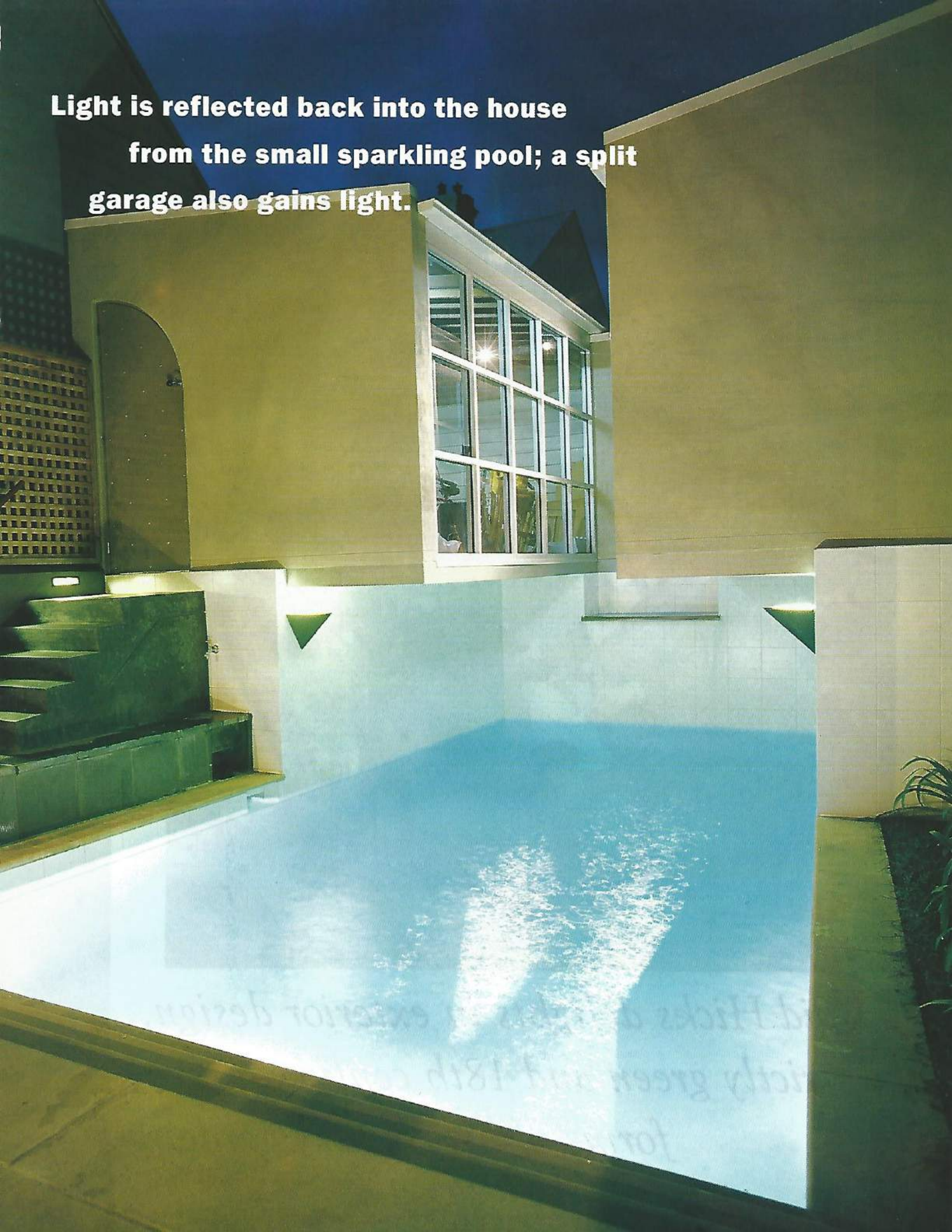
**JO LITSON**

**EDITOR: DAVINA JACKSON**



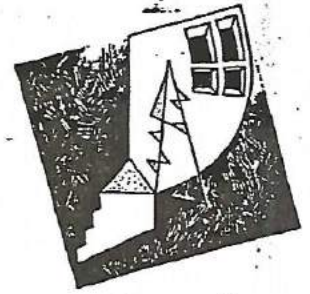
French doors and balconies dominate the facade, opposite, of this three-storey terrace. The exterior walls are painted with Dulux ‘Bandicoot’ with ‘Mink’ trim; the front door is painted with ‘Constable’. This page: twin garages are supported by tiled columns which double as walls for the swimming pool, installed by Jack Grant. Granolithic topping on the concrete steps gives a permanent finish. Paving is by Haddonstone.

**Light is reflected back into the house  
from the small sparkling pool; a split  
garage also gains light.**





4 December 2000



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**To whom it may concern**

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I have known Mr Greg Hunter of Constructive Constructions for some twelve years. During this period he has carried out a variety of subcontracting work on projects for myself and for many of my clients. His involvement was in various stages of carpentry and associated trades. The work he performed ranged from commercial to residential often involving prestigious residences in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs.

Skills represented by Greg where most apparent where complexities of detailing and high quality finishes where required. He always exhibited an ability to undertake the challenge of difficult tasks and contribute to the quality of a final product by reaching to his past experiences.

We were pleased when the numerous projects he contributed to were published in various architectural magazines.

Greg always carried the most difficult building tasks with great diligence and the aim of achieving the highest quality final product. I commend him for the above attributes.

Yours faithfully,  
EDWARD SZEWCZYK AND ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Szewczyk'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Edward Szewczyk M. Arch.