



outdoor living

Bligh Graham Architects won a Brisbane Regional Commendation in the 2005 RAIA Queensland Architecture Awards for this family house at Fig Tree Pocket.



ABOVE, LEFT: A change in floor surfaces distinguishes the kitchen from the concreted living spaces. RIGHT: The main bedroom enjoys a view out to the pool. BELOW: While this project emphasises outdoor living, interior spaces such as this moodily-lit dining area are also extremely well resolved.



INSERTING A FAMILY HOUSE into a newly subdivided bush setting, in Brisbane's Fig Tree Pocket, presented Bligh Graham Architects with the challenge of finding a built form that would suit a natural environment of significance. Fig Tree Pocket is only ten kilometres from the centre of Brisbane, and is an area noted for its picturesque natural charms. "A main concern was finding the appropriate form for the house in this particular suburban landscape," say the architects. "How could we make the house contextual, as well as deal with it being on a smaller block with close neighbours, in this recent bushland subdivision?"

The strategy was to structure the landscape as a series of stepped terraces and walls, so as to form a new ground for the house to occupy – rather than simply treating it as an object to be dropped into an existing landscape. To achieve this, the envelope of the house has been designed as a series of deck pavilions. "These pavilions grow off and out of the walls, in forms that echo 1960s houses in the area," note the architects. The result is that the house feels spacious and well

THIS PAGE, ABOVE: The pool forms a focal point around which the house is arranged. **LEFT:** The landscaped front entry sequence has a formal flavour. **RIGHT:** The deck areas have been conceived as outdoor rooms, ideal for enjoying Brisbane's amenable climate.



connected to the environment, even though the interior spaces themselves are quite modest in size. The L-shaped footprint contains the north-facing communal rooms along the main axis and bedrooms along the other.

The pool courtyard forms a focal point around which the whole house is arranged, and is used by the clients as a primary outdoor "room" for family activities and large-scale casual entertaining. A pergola provides shade and shelter, as does the wide eave over the living room deck.

Bligh Graham Architects was keen to imbue this project with a high level of passive thermal comfort and energy efficiency. The building's single-room width ensures excellent cross-ventilation, while high-level louvres further promote cooling air flows, or expel hot air if required. The polished concrete floor in the communal spaces acts as a thermal mass in winter by soaking up the low sun's warmth during the day, and releasing it during the night. The communal spaces face north, and boast generous glazing opening onto a large deck area. H

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PRACTICE PROFILE
Small practice of four people
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PROJECT TEAM
Chris Bligh, Sonia Graham

BUILDER
Fielding Homes

CONSULTANTS
Engineer Bligh Tanner
Interiors Bligh Graham Architects
Lighting Point of View

PRODUCTS
Roofing Stramit Monoclad;
James Hardie compressed fibre
cement; Ampelite clear
polycarbonate **External walls**
Beeser bagged blockwork;
Norply stained plywood; James
Hardie fibre cement **Internal
walls** Boral plasterboard
Windows and doors Bradhams
aluminium sliders; Duce timber
frames **Flooring** Boral Karri
hardwood strips; Pioneer
polished concrete

PHOTOGRAPHY
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