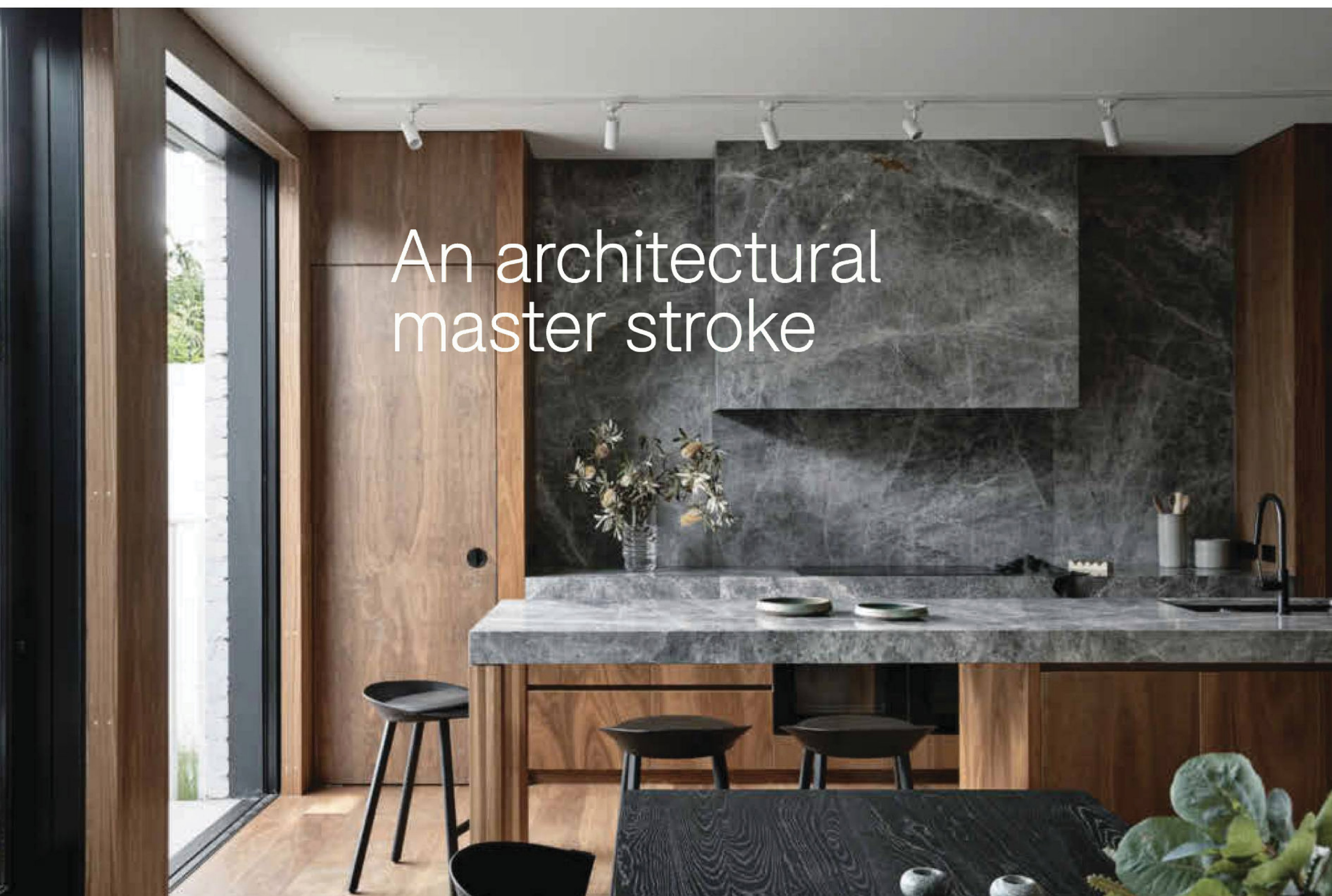




RENOVATION

Words by Kate Jones • Photos by Derek Swalwell



An architectural master stroke

A repositioning of the living rooms for northern light is just one of the design successes that define this Carlton North family home.

Leading a planning application during a pandemic for a much-longed-for renovation is not just a test of patience. It's a marathon of tolerance and forbearance.

Just ask the Quilty family of Carlton North. Cass and Jonathan embarked on their reno plans eight years ago, but council permit approvals and COVID delays meant their build didn't start for six long years.

Throughout it all, the Quilts were adamant they wouldn't bend on their vision of a contemporary addition to their double-fronted, heritage-listed, Victorian terrace.

"It was pretty simple; we wanted a house that was full of light and a house that could grow with us because we are

going to be staying here for a long time," Cass says. "We didn't necessarily want the latest, or most current or on trend; we just wanted something that would age with us and for it to be functional."

Their wish list called for a main bedroom, three kids' bedrooms, a guest bedroom that could double as a studio, a kitchen with butler's pantry, a dining area, a study and an entertaining area with a pool.

Living in a peaceful inner-city pocket, the Quilts were aware their children aged 14, 17 and 18 may not move out of home for some years. So, their plans included retreat spaces such as a rumpus room to provide enough space for the kids to comfortably accommodate partners and friends.



Family home: Jonathan and Cass Quilty with two of their children. Cass says the architects "really understood us".

The challenge for architects Aimee Goodwin and Louis Gadd of Project 12 Architecture, whose studio is based in neighbouring Carlton, was to fit all of this on to a small site while keeping heritage constraints in mind.

Unlike most turn-of-the-century revamps, a simple addition to the back wasn't an option, Goodwin says.

"What wouldn't have worked on this site was to provide a generic open-plan extension to the back of the existing terrace," she says.

"It would have been difficult to fit all the function and rooms that Cass and Jonathan required. There would have been no definition between key living spaces, no ability to capture north light and the connection to the garden could only have been made on one elevation.

"So, the new extension hugs the long southern boundary, opening key spaces to the northern aspect, which all have



A win-win result: Charred timber cladding and painted recycled bricks give the home a contemporary aesthetic.

"Although the design may look simple, there is a lot happening in a small area," Gadd says.

"There were lots of junctions, co-ordination of structure and alignments that needed to be resolved to make sure it looked as seamless as possible."

Charred timber cladding and painted recycled bricks give the home a contemporary aesthetic, which is complemented by metal screens to prevent views into adjoining neighbours' properties. The ornate details at the front of the house were preserved, along with the period-detail light fitting in the hallway.

The result is a win-win all round, Cass says. "Some architects really like to push their own thing, but they really understood us." ■



"What wouldn't have worked on this site was to provide a generic open-plan extension to the back." Aimee Goodwin

a view to the garden. Light wells and skylights punctuate the plan to provide additional light and provide a sense of volume.

The three kids' bedrooms were positioned on the ground floor along with the rumpus, study and living areas. The main bedroom with en suite and walk-in wardrobe was placed with the guest bedroom on the first floor.

The repositioning of the living rooms to face the north was a design master stroke, Cass says.

"I love how they changed the positioning so our living area had north-facing sun, it's such a great design that looks over to the pool," she says.

"I love the whole thing, but I must say my favourite room in the house is the butler's pantry where I can hide everything, and it has a laundry as well."

But the centrepiece for the Quilts is most definitely the kitchen, where just

two materials have been used – spotted gum for the cabinetry and a grey marble for the benchtop and splashback.

"It's a gorgeous space and that's the heart of our home because we love family and friends and gathering," Cass says.

"The beautiful marble bench is so divine. It's great for when people come over. There's already been lots of fun, lots of good conversations and food shared on the bench."

For the architects, the proudest design point is the staircase to and from the ground and first floors.

"From a design point of view, the timber-lined stair that connects the kitchen to the master suite is a favourite," Gadd says.

"The design does a lot – it harmonises with the kitchen, it incorporates a skylight with a perforated steel landing, allowing light to flood the centre of the plan and, importantly, also looks good.

