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SCOPE

MRM



NZ METAL ROOFING MANUFACTURERS INC.

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DETAILS MATTER

Like so many Janette and Peter Wilkins had a dream of their new home which would be something very special and uniquely suited to them. Having had some preliminary plans drawn they found the concepts did not match the dream, "We simply did not like it," says Janette, "It was just a very ordinary house."

After considerable research in magazines and asking others for recommendations, Janette and Peter arrived at Studio MWA where they outlined their requirements and vision for their new home.
This meeting led to site visits to a couple of Studio MWA's completed projects and what has been described as "some open talk" about the project and the requirements of the brief.

"Our architectural philosophy is a constant exploration in the overlap between utopian and pragmatic. The area between these is our working space" , says architect, Davor Mikulcic. " As architects we work very hard to achieve excellence in the fundamentals of functional, quality, aesthetics, sustainability and composition but successful architecture is about much more. It is about the people who will occupy these spaces, their feelings about the spaces, colours, textures, fittings, style, cost effectiveness, and co-ordination. To achieve this we must challenge ourselves and our clients to push the boundaries of stereotypes. It is always a challenge, it is exciting and frustrating, but the results are always very rewarding."

The first requirement of the brief was to create a home, but to make it "unique & special".
The home included: A double garage, 4 bedrooms including master suite with walk-in wardrobe and ensuite, studio (as a possible bedroom), 3 bathrooms (including two bedroom ensuites), separate visitors toilet, a separate space for TV, a formal living / dining area, family living kitchen area, and protected – sheltered terraces for outdoor living. The spaces should be comfortable and functional with opportunities for different configurations.



The 700 m2 site in Khandallah, Wellington, posed some problems with a 300 m2 easement over a protected native tree reserve, existing main stormwater and sewage lines in the centre of the site and the usual outer residential rules from Wellington City Council applied for distances for future building from boundaries and high control plane restrictions. Having researched these constraints thoroughly a design format was conceived which considered the impact of wind, sun ,good and bad views, existing services and the general impact on the neighbourhood. The new residence would eventually be spread over three levels, incorporating over 310 m2 of interior space and over 170 m2 of terraces and decks.

The design process.

With most of Studio MWA's designs considerable importance is placed on accessibility and as it became apparent in the early stages this would be a 3 storey building it was imperative that easy access would be an asset in the future. We all age, have older parents or disabled friends and it is always something to consider at the outset of a design concept.

A lift and stair access created an interesting void and opportunity to open the three levels which form an impressive entrance that incorporated a 9 metre high water

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fall, a glass bridge as a functional - connecting element through the middle of the void and sculptured stairs.

From the entrance and access platforms flows the "big picture' of the overall design and in this instance the unusual shape of the two connected rectangle floor planes formed an irregular "Z' shape. This had the advantage of opening the building with interesting views and has created some very well sheltered outdoor living areas which are essential in the Wellington climate. In addition the careful design of open areas allowed for maximum passive solar gain and living flexibility but retains privacy.

This building is in a high wind zone and as a result very careful consideration has been given to the exterior materials for weather tightness and to compliment and reflect the overall composition.

Early in the design process it was decided to use materials people are familiar with, but in a slightly more elegant way, giving them importance, relevant not only through function, but through emotional "attachment": schist-stone walls, exterior weathered timber decking giving "instant silvery grey old appearance", the use of a monochromatic "green" colour scheme for the exteriors and metal colour steel roofing and partial wall cladding – so typical of iconic Kiwi architecture. The project illustrates the effortless blending and sensitive use of materials and colours that would blend into the existing urban context.

To achieve the initial concept in a cost effective way it was immediately obvious that "non standard" structural steel posts and beams would be incorporated into the timber framing. Obviously "a standard" timber frame structure was impossible when making such large open plans, glass walls and huge spans and voids in the 3 storey structure.

Metal COLORSTEEL® roofing – cladding (Dimondek 400 – Endura 0.55 BMT) was chosen as one of the most dominant "striking" materials to achieve the overall



architectural composition and the simple, elegant appearance of straight sharp lines on some walls. This was seen as an opportunity to create a sculptural form rather than the "standard" approach to divide the wall and roof as separate building elements and in a few places the roof actually visually and physically continues 3 stories to ground level. It was obvious that "cavity" wall structure would be the best solution to "eliminate' problems and a combination of metal COLORSTEEL®, James Hardi painted "Lineaboard" and "Monotec" plaster systems were used on the exterior.
Fairview aluminium Joinery in "Karaka green" matches the colour of the metal roofing and fascia elements and is completed with green tinted, double glazing to maximize thermal "efficiency" and improve the performance of the building. Exterior balustrades are completed in green tinted glass to match the exterior glazing.
These elements form, for Davor, the broad framework of the structure but he is careful to impress that it is the details that form these elements that are of critical importance. The structure is actually very complex and the skill is in trying to create very simple details that reflect the function but also enhance the sculptural form. The success of the design often relies on the "first impression" but in fact it is the well designed and executed details that reinforce the composition. Getting the balance between function and detailed design is always very hard work that requires considerable dedication and patience. This is often the divide that distinguishes between good and bad architectural design.

Many of the projects Studio MWA are asked to consider are those with challenging aspects, some of which have been attempted by others without resolution. For this reason our site and pre-design process is very detailed, exploring every opportunity prior to presenting a solution worthy of the site and clients consideration. This takes time but has proven to be a worthwhile approach which delivers the maximum potential.

As with all Studio MWA projects the design incorporates the total interior design including kitchen, bathrooms, toilets, laundries, wardrobes and storage together with some "fixed furniture and cabinetry", interior and exterior colour schemes and choice of materials. The complete overall architectural design combines the exterior, interior and architectural hard landscaping.

The architectural hard landscaping design addresses access to the garage and house, terraces, decks, retaining walls, raised gardens, roof terraces, a "connection" with preserved bush land at the back of the site enabling the building to settle into the existing urban context, with full appreciation of neighbouring properties, without the intention to dominate.



The success of any project depends on the attention to detail and on the Wilkins' home the main contractor, Ryan Freer, did a magnificent job. Together his team worked closely with the Studio MWA design team and with all other sub trades co-ordinating them to deliver a top quality project that Studio MWA, and their clients, could be proud of.

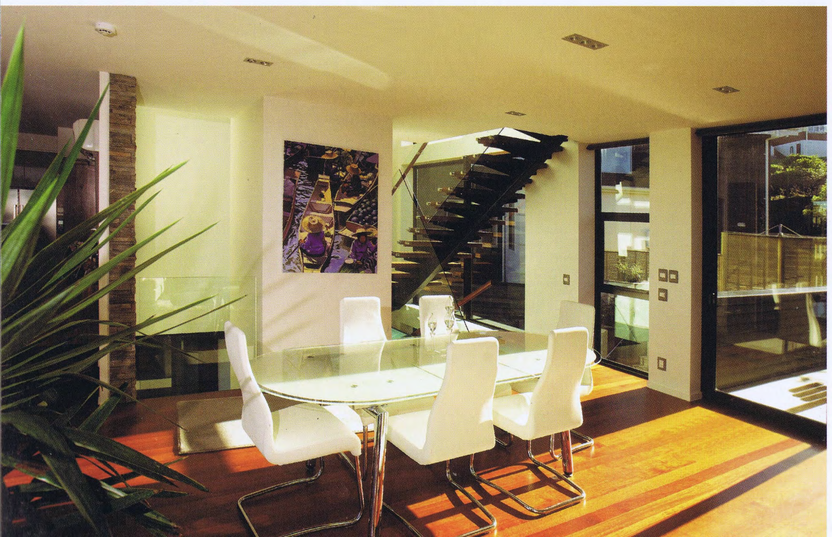
The project has many "state of the art" features such as the automation of the electric main entry door, total lighting inside and out, a security system and electric roller blinds are just some of features executed by Mr. Punan's team at "Home Automation.

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The 9 metre high waterfall sculpture with the Glass Bridge and elegant open timber – steel steps and internal schist wall are definitely the most powerful "first impression" at the entry.

Floor mounted strips of LED up-lights totally transform the space at night including the waterfall and glass bridge supported by two simple steel beams and opaque glass in combination with a clear glass balustrades. Attention to details, really emphasis the design goals to make it functional, light, visually attractive and unique. Glass Relate did an amazing job completing these features.

Schist veneer is a visually interesting design element and is also functional performing as a "solar collector" to store winter solar heat together with floor tiles over the thermally insulated concrete slab.

The kitchen joinery and fixed cabinetry, including bathroom and ensuite joinery, is designed by Studio MWA and manufactured and installed by Hadrian Noble from Noble kitchens. Top workmanship and attention to details and installation, together with "Trethewey" black granite bench tops make the kitchen one of the central focal points of the residence.

Davor emphasises the importance of building long term working relationships with the various trades involved in each project. It is the specialist skills and expertise that these collective trades bring to each project that contribute to the overall excellence at the highest of standards.

In the final analysis architectural design is about people and space. An email from the client in this case sums it up well.

Hi Davor & Michael

Just confirming my phone call to Michael this morning to say how delighted we are with the look of the house now that the scaffolding has finally been removed.







We can't believe how fantastic it looks and just can't wait for it to be completed.
The project is a real credit to your vision and skill and we are absolutely thrilled with what is being delivered to us.

Thanks for your marvellous contribution to our project.

Kind regards
Peter Wilkins

Studio MWA

Studio MWA now works in collaboration with the new, Brisbane based office of Davor Mikulcic Architect.
The range of projects is a spread between commercial and residential. Our primary focus is on high end residential buildings and new clients predominantly are the result of recommendations, or they are people who have seen our work through publications, Industry Awards or from visiting completed projects.

The core team at Studio MWA consists of Davor Mikulcic (Principle of Architect) and Michael Maddren (interior design and ArchiCAD specialist).

Michael teaches at Wellington Weltec in interior design and ArchiCAD systems and Davor Mikulcic teaches in the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) - faculty of Build Environment- School of Design.

Davor was on the jury for the 2009 Royal Australian Institute of Architects (now AIA) for Queensland and Brisbane and this year AIA–Queensland, have chosen Davor to chair the 2010 Judging for Award in Architecture in the Brisbane region in most prestigious category – Public architecture.

In 2010, for the second year in succession, Davor was invited onto the jury for the international architectural student's competition in Denver, Colorado, USA for the Socio Design Foundation.

Project Design Team:
Architect: Davor Mikulcic Dipl. Eng. Arch. (Sarajevo) ANZIA, RAIA
Michael Maddern- Interior designer
Studio MWA ltd - NZIA Practice
Wellington
Telephone: +64 4 4711331
Fax:+64 4 471 1332
E-mail: info@studiomwa.co.nz
www.studiomwa.blogspot.com
www.studiomwa.co.nz

Warren Lane Structural Engineer - Wellington
Telephone: 04 475 7889
Mobile: 021 446 565
Email: warren.lane@xtra.co.nz

Builder: Ryan Freer Construction
Mobile: 021 187 0607
Email: ryanfreerconstruction@gmail.com

Glazier specialist:
Glass Relate (Wellington) Ltd
Lower Hutt Glass Merchants & Glaziers
Telephone: 04 586-4092
www.glassrelate.co.nz

Interior joinery: Noble Kitchens
Contact: Mr. Hadrian Noble
Telephone: 04 528 3965

Aluminium Joinery:
Fairview Aluminium Joinery
Telephone:04 564 9669

Roof and metal cladding manufacturer: Dimond
Profile: roofing and Cladding Dimondeck 400
COLORSTEEL® Endura ®
Flashings: COLORSTEEL® Endura® Karaka Green

Roofing and metal cladding installer:
Tararua Roofing – Wellington
Telephone: 04 569 3074

Electronics: Home Automation Wellington
Contact Mr. Kena Punan
Mob: 027 543 9895

NME Electrical (Wellington)
Phone: 04 589 0310
Email: admin@nme.co.nz

Photography:
Ivor Earp – Jones, Wellington
Telephone: 027 443 0807