

# THE LOCAL PROJECT



N°5

Architecture and Design of Australia and New Zealand

Kew Residence JOHN WARDLE ARCHITECTS • Gottlieb House WOOD MARSH ARCHITECTURE • Ballarat House  
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Latimer House TOBIAS PARTNERS • Windsor Street TOM MARK HENRY — AND MORE



THE MADE BY STOREY SERIES

CORA HOUSE  
—  
TOM ROBERTSON  
ARCHITECTS

Words by Jackson Hides • Photography by Sean Fennessy • Architecture and Interior Design by Tom Robertson Architects  
Art, Objects and Furniture by Simone Haag • Build by Bieëmele Projects • Timber Flooring and Stairs by Made by Storey



Charged with the difficult task of stepping into a project after construction had already commenced, Tom Robertson Architects leant on the clients' love of timber and openness to bold material selections to achieve a contemporary entertainer's dream in the picturesque Mornington Peninsula location of Red Hill.

**C**ora House, so named after one of the client's grandmothers, champions natural materials and a sense of whimsy. Having already completed a number of commercial and residential projects together and with youthful exuberance on their side, the clients set about the exciting journey of building their own home in 2018. Snapping up a perfectly located north-facing property, they quickly got to work, engaging the services of local drafting practice Rod Hannah Design to create a two-level house that sits comfortably against the site's natural slope. Once construction had commenced, however, the clients decided it sage to enlist the services of architecture practice Tom Robertson Architects and stylist Simone Haag, two firms they had long admired from afar, to see their dream home through to completion.

Of particular interest to the clients when choosing to engage the architects was a timber batten ceiling Tom Robertson Architects had utilised previously in a past project, which was ultimately adapted for Cora House. To Tom, this is now one of the most significant design elements throughout the home. "The timber batten ceiling defines (and unifies) all general public areas, while contrasting against the raised painted ceiling above the

kitchen. It adds to the warmth of the timber floor and creates a strong sense of homeliness." A combination of natural stone, terrazzo, glazed mosaic and rammed earth was then selected throughout the rest of the house to both offset the feature ceiling and imbue the home with a hint of luxury.

With entertaining a focal point of the brief, the upper level sees the primary living and master suite straddling the entry access spine, as the kitchen and dining then flow out onto an outdoor terrace and pool. The lower level, featuring additional bedrooms, powder room and another informal living space, is accessed via the central timber stair, which Tom proudly asserts is his favourite part in the home. "A skylight filters light down through the void, as the stair meanders around the internal garden," he explains. "It is an unexpected moment of joy as you enter the house." The interior garden was Tom's idea and was quickly adopted by the clients, bringing an unexpected element into the home as you enter, the vibrancy of the leaves juxtaposing against the warm grain of the timber.







Art, objects and furniture were selected for the project by Simone Haag.

Bringing this unexpected moment to life necessitated a beautifully crafted staircase, and for this Tom turned to Made By Storey. Working closely alongside both Tom Robertson Architects and the clients allowed Made By Storey the opportunity to source the perfect complement to the rammed earth wall and timber battened ceiling. For Damir Dzuzdanovic, co-founder and director of Made by Storey, this collaborative way of approaching projects is one of the central tenets of the business. “Our business has been established with the long-term in mind. People don’t just buy products from us: they work with us to select the products that best suit their needs.” On the working relationship with Tom Robertson Architects, Damir explains, “we’ve been lucky enough to collaborate with Tom on a number of projects. For Cora House, Tom arranged a private appointment at our showroom, and we went through the range with his clients, first selecting the finishes and size and then turning our attention to delivery and installation.”

It comes as little surprise then to hear that Made By Storey was similarly hands-on in the crafting of the central timber staircase, achieving a result that Tom describes as “incredible.” As Damir tells it, “the clients ended up selecting a Sesame board from our Tonal collection in a nature grade for use across the bed head, flooring and staircase, which was cladded and mitred. The timber on the staircase wraps all the way around and every single corner was hand-mitred, which is a really time consuming and specialised process.”

According to Tom, the furniture selected by Simone Haag throughout clearly reflects the client’s energy, design nous and sense of adventure. Similarly, in designing a house with daring visual statements like timber-clad ceilings, rammed earth feature walls and internal gardens to gently envelop the main staircase, the bones of Cora House match the enthusiasm and consideration of the clients to successfully emerge as a contemporary Peninsula haven.





Timber stairs feature the Sesame board from Made by Storey's Tonal collection.



“Cora House, so named after one of the client’s grandmothers, champions natural materials and a sense of whimsy.”



Custom timber panelling from Made by Storey features on the bed head.

