



Situated on a corner block in the Sydney suburb of Five Dock, the house is a colourful addition to this suburban street



# MONDRIAN MODERNISM

*Colourful, cohesive and current, this house came together perfectly for a Sydney family*



- **HOUSE** Five Dock Retro House
- **LOCATION** Five Dock, NSW
- **COST** \$1.7 million
- **DATE COMPLETED** December 2011
- **EPISODE** 3 SERIES 2

Anne Potter loves anything from the 1960s, so from day one she knew she was going to incorporate colour and modern, clean lines into the design of her new family home. “From the start of the project I told Kristin Utz and Duncan Sanby of Utz Sanby Architects that we wanted an upside-down house,” Anne explains. “We wanted to have the kitchen and entertaining areas upstairs to capture the views and beautiful breezes, and we wanted to have an outdoor area connected to the inside living space where you could entertain up to 12 people.”

The 110m<sup>2</sup> bungalow Anne and her husband Michael purchased on a small corner site in Sydney’s unpretentious suburb of Five Dock 10 years ago no longer met their living needs, so they were looking to create a home that would take them and their three school-aged boys through to the boys’ teenage years and beyond.

Together with their architect, Duncan, they came up with a design that provided generous living, dining and kitchen space surrounded by large louvres and oversized glass doors that open the interior space to panoramic views of the bay. The outdoor weatherproof terrace was designed as an extension of the living

space, meshing the two and almost doubling the living area. Towards the back of the house, the master bedroom suite was designed with privacy in mind; it’s sectioned off from the rest of the house. A yoga wall was even cleverly incorporated into Anne’s walk-in robe, doubling as a sanctuary and exercise space.

The ground floor was designed as a dedicated kids’ zone, complete with a rumpus room that has the capability to be turned into a nifty guest bedroom, the three boys’ bedrooms and study/hallway.

The suburb of Five Dock was once a mangrove swamp; in fact, it still sits on reclaimed swamp today. Building any house, especially a two-storey dwelling, requires creating a rock-solid foundation for the home to stand on and, as was the case for the Potters’ home, deeply set grout-injected reinforced concrete piers were implemented as the base to hold the sturdy steel frame.

For Anne, designing her first home was not just a pivotal move for her family, but also a step towards reinventing herself as an interior designer. Having spent the past 10 years as a full-time working mum, she was ready to jump back into business and create a dream home for her family. Anne wanted the new home to stand out, both on the inside and on the outside, with the success of the exterior design lying in the exposed steel that was designed to seductively wrap around the dwelling.

Expressed steel was chosen for its concealed joinery, with the beams fabricated off-site using shock drawings and then fitted into the holes on-site. With 100 beams and more than 220 connections making up the hefty structure, one beam did not fit, which meant the connection had to be removed and re-welded.

**THIS IMAGE** A ‘60s fan, owner and interior designer, Anne’s love of modernism was her inspiration for the home’s clean lines and colourful interiors

**LEFT** An all-white kitchen is given warmth and character with the use of timber floors, a colourful splashback and accessories



■ *Anne wanted the new home to stand out, both on the inside and on the outside, with the success of the exterior design lying in the exposed steel that was designed to seductively wrap around the dwelling* ■

Inside and out meld seamlessly through glazed sliding doors and a wrap-around balcony capturing views and beautiful breezes



Inside, Anne used a structured injection of colour, greatly inspired by Piet Mondrian, a Dutch painter regarded as one of the most influential artists of modern times. “I fell in love with the Rose Seidler House (Harry Seidler’s first and most famous house that he designed for his mother),” Anne explains. “This house is the iconic home for me. I love the shape, form and sculptured aesthetic. It almost looks like a jewel box sitting in among a lovely landscape.”

Anne set about creating her own jewel box, incorporating similar styles and focusing on sculpture and shape. Inside, the play between sharp angles and curves makes for an inspirational space further enhanced by the boost of colour splashes. An interior curved wall turns into a double-height ceiling that reaches over the hallway/study space. It provides a closed-off study area for the boys, while also adding an element of soft shape to the interior. “The brief to the architect was to have a very lightweight and geometric-looking house, and this curve just hides another curve on the corner there where the steel is,” Anne explains.

Anne worked with three dominant primary colours — red/orange, yellow and blue — interspersed with the definition of lines. A Mondrian-style feature window on the second-storey’s façade and the brilliant

orange door add bright external elements, while inside the boys have vivid bedrooms with the bedhead and shelves painted blue, yellow or red — these colours correlate with their study spaces. It’s an interesting and design-savvy scheme.

A more distinct Mondrian-inspired feature is a vibrantly coloured mural — in red, yellow and blue, of course — sitting prominently above the staircase. “In the Rose Seidler House there’s a brightly coloured mural that weaves around the whole courtyard and the boys and I also painted a mural in those colours,” Anne remembers.

Anne wanted to involve the family from the start of the project, and the result is a home rich in personal touches. Apart from the mural, each Potter handprint is set into concrete at the stepping-stone entry to the house (the boys loved this idea) and the boys’ personalised artworks are featured prominently throughout the residence, adding colour as well as a charming personal touch.

Seamless joinery was another innovative design feature employed by Anne and Michael to maximise and save space. “We got all the joinery done at the same time so it would blend in as part of the house,” Anne explains, “including built-ins in all bedrooms, plenty of hidden storage space and an imported bed

- *Inside, the home is minimalistic and colourful with artworks, furnishings and stunning bay views acting as the statement pieces* ■



from Germany that's hidden behind the TV in the rumpus room."

Anne and Michael also incorporated a number of environmentally friendly features into the build, including hydronic underfloor heating downstairs. "With the void and hot air rising, we hope that it will produce enough heat upstairs," Anne explains. Other eco-friendly features are a 2.1kw solar-panel system on the roof for electricity, two 5000-litre rainwater tanks under the garage for flushing toilets and irrigation, an instantaneous gas hot-water unit and louvres for cross-ventilation.

From the outside, the cosy entrance is offset, but the double-height space and exposed steel provide strong focal points. Inside, the home is minimalistic and colourful with artworks, furnishings and stunning bay views acting as the statement pieces. The abstraction in the visual art elements combined with the

■ *"Every day we see something new in our home," she says. "It's forever changing, with the glass taking on a lot of movement thanks to the beautiful reflections."* ■

sculptural placement of the lines create a contemporary, clean look.

Sitting confidently in its corner position, Anne's dream home is every bit the bright beacon the Potters envisioned. "Every day we see something new in our home," she says. "It's forever changing, with the glass taking on a lot of movement thanks to the beautiful reflections."

"The house is also being very well used," she adds. "The boys' study area turns into a media area on the weekends with lots of computer

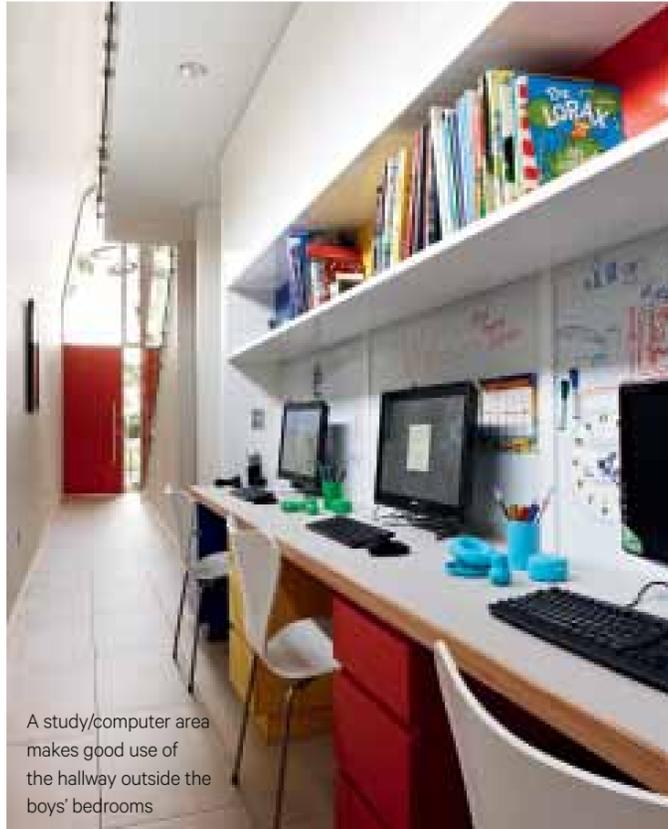
games and using Skype to call friends. Plus, when the boys have lots of friends around for sleepovers we can now accommodate them all."

Anne and Michael have also hosted a number of social gatherings on the new terrace since the completion of the build and are really enjoying sharing the new space with their family and friends. To them, it's the perfect home and they feel the success of the project was largely due to the collaboration with their architects. "It still seems surreal seven months on, but we just love it!" Anne says. ♡

**ABOVE** An all-white bathroom is given the colour treatment using bright towels in one of Anne's three primary colour choices. Light and air are incorporated through the use of skylights and large louvre windows

**OPPOSITE TOP** The master bedroom features its own balcony and highlight windows to allow for good cross-flow ventilation

**OPPOSITE BOTTOM** The rumpus room incorporates built-in joinery to conserve space and continue the clean lines



A study/computer area makes good use of the hallway outside the boys' bedrooms



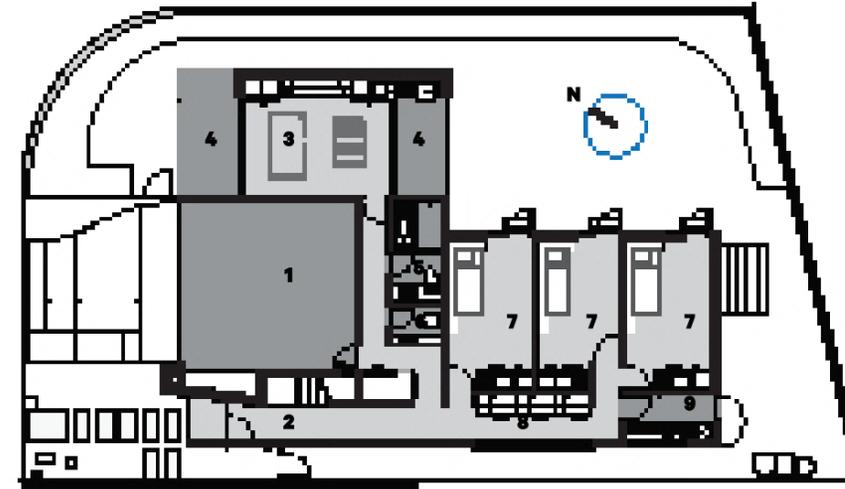
The home's design delivers plentiful living and entertaining space on two levels with panoramic views of the bay



A hanging chair outside the master bedroom provides a tranquil spot to relax and watch the world go by

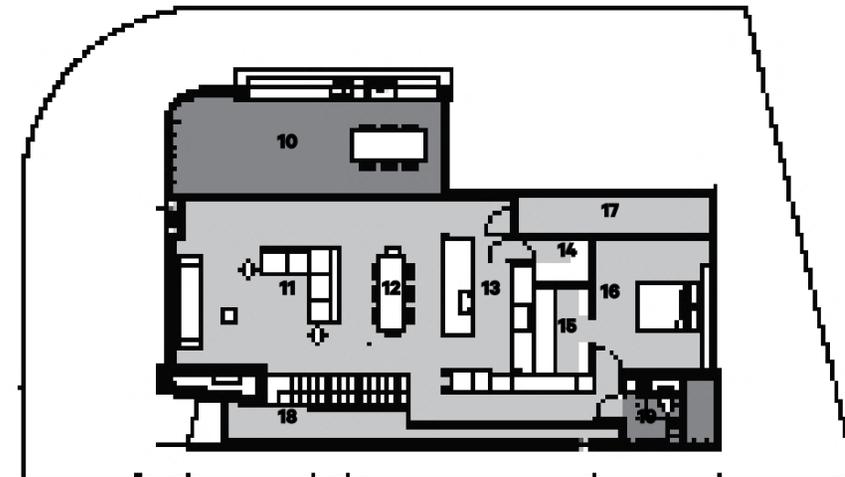


Colourful joinery and bed linen feature in each of the boys' bedrooms



**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

- 1 Garage
- 2 Entry hall
- 3 Rumpus
- 4 Terrace
- 5 Bathroom
- 6 W.C.
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Study
- 9 Laundry



**1ST FLOOR PLAN**

- 10 Terrace
- 11 Living room
- 12 Dining room
- 13 Kitchen
- 14 Pantry
- 15 Wardrobe
- 16 Bedroom
- 17 Deck
- 18 Void
- 19 Bathroom

**PROJECT TEAM**

- **ARCHITECT** Utz Sanby Architects (utzsanby.com)
- **INTERIOR DESIGNER** Plan 2 Design (0438 694 252)

- **STRUCTURE** Builder Steele Associates (steeleassociates.com.au) Joiner Sydney Joinery (sydneyjoinery.com.au) Structural Engineer Birzulis Associates (02 9555 7230) Hydraulic Engineer Whipps Wood (whipps-wood.com.au) Landscaping Bates Landscaping (0425 235 555) Floor Tiles Di Lorenzo (dilorenzo.net.au) Wall Tiles Classic Ceramics (classicc ceramics.com.au) and Skheme (skheme.com) Sandstone Eco Outdoor (ecoo outdoor.com.au)
- **FIXTURES AND FITTINGS** Solar Roof Panels Solar Switch (solarswitch.com.au) Hydronic

- Underfloor Heating Amuheat (amuheat.com.au) Standby Power Saver Ekone Standby Switch (greenhorizons.com.au) Security Chubb (chubb.com.au) Glazing & Frames Aluminium & Glass Constructions (02 9482 1897) Door Hardware Halliday Baillie (hallidaybaillie.com) Openable Roof Louvretec (louvretec.com.au) Lighting The Light Site (02 9436 4516) and Lightinggroup (02 9882 6000) Bathroom Fittings Reece (reece.com.au) Barbecue Benchtops Leemac (bbqfactory.com.au) AirConditioning Sun Heating (02 9452 5799) Gas Fireplace Heat & Glo (heatnglo.com)

- **FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES** Sound & Audio-visual New Fidelity (newfidelity.com.au) External Blinds Horiso from Turner Bros (turnerbros.com.au) Internal Blinds Blind Experts (blindexperts.com.au) Pirce Pendant Lamp Artemide (artemide.com.au) Built-in Bed Hartmann asytec GmbH & Co (hartmann-asytec.de) Cushions (Fabric) South Pacific Fabrics (southpacificfabrics.com) Bedhead (fabric) Woven Image (wovenimage.com)

- com) Yuyu Orange Stools Corporate Culture (corporateculture.com.au) Dining Chairs Series 7 from Corporate Culture (corporateculture.com.au) Outdoor Dining Table Homeware Gallery (homewaregallery.com.au) Hanging Outdoor Chair Orson and Blake (orsonandblake.com.au) Kitchen Stools Magis Steelwood from Corporate Culture (corporateculture.com.au) Lounge Kurve (blue) from Zenith Interiors (zenithinteriors.com.au) Fridge Liebherr from Whitfords, Five Dock (whitfords.com.au) Bar Fridges Bar Fridges Australia (bar-fridges-australia.com.au) Kitchen Rangehood Winning Appliances (winningappliances.com.au) Oven Ilve from Whitfords, Five Dock (whitfords.com.au) Barbecue Tucker from BBQ Factory (bbqfactory.com.au) Garage Storage Garage Blitz (garageblitz.com.au)
- **SERVICES** IT (Internet/Telephone Connections) Herotech (herotech.com.au) Upholsterer Atelier (02 9810 4408)



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# GET THE LOOK

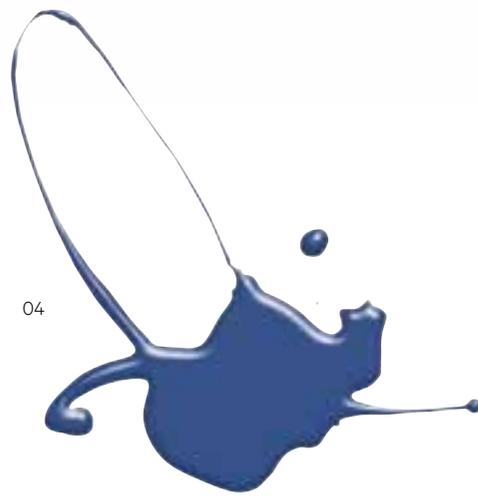
Get started on your own Piet Mondrian project with these modern pieces



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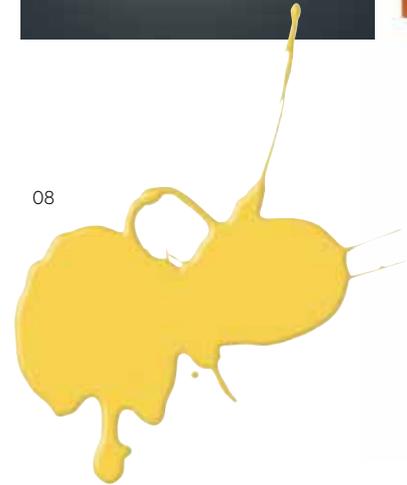


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- 01** Prometeo Terra Ambientata lamp by Custom Lighting. [customlighting.com.au](http://customlighting.com.au)
- 02** Create your own Piet Mondrian masterpiece with blues, reds, yellows, blacks and whites from Resene. Daredevil by Resene. [resene.com.au](http://resene.com.au)
- 03** Hanging Outdoor Chair by Orson and Blake. [orsonandblake.com.au](http://orsonandblake.com.au)
- 04** Superhero by Resene. [resene.com.au](http://resene.com.au)
- 05** Aero Designs' Quasi four-drawer system in Bright Orange. [aerodesigns.com.au](http://aerodesigns.com.au)
- 06** Pirce pendant lamp by Artemide. [artemide.com.au](http://artemide.com.au)
- 07** Project Letterbox (in Dulux OrangeX15) available from In A Designer Home. [inadesignerhome.com.au](http://inadesignerhome.com.au)
- 08** Wild Thing by Resene. [resene.com.au](http://resene.com.au)
- 09** Yuyu stools by Corporate Culture. [corporateculture.com.au](http://corporateculture.com.au)
- 10** Kitchen splashback in Jazz Yellow by Skheme. [skheme.com](http://skheme.com)



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