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## GLOBAL KITCHEN INSPIRATION

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*A new design integrity*



# AT HOME WITH WILL DANGAR



William Dangar, of landscape design practice Dangar Barin Smith, has a family home 'The Barn', in Sydney's Bondi that reflects his passions and preoccupations. Working facing a garden of 'perfect imperfect' planting he enjoys the blurring of lines from inside to out in a space filled with art and furniture that has evolved over time.

INTERIOR DESIGN Alwill Interiors

ARCHITECTURE Clayton Orszacky

PHOTOGRAPHY Prue Ruscoe

WORDS Karen McCartney



The living and dining space face the garden with silvery tones of blues and greys in the rug and sofa designed by Romy Alwill. The abstract work is by Michael Cusack at Olsen Gallery and just seen outside on the fence is an outdoor sculpture in corten by Caroline Duffy.



**You've said the block of land you bought in Sydney's Bondi was an unconventional, pizza-slice shape. What drew you and Julia to it?**

Julia found the block. We had been looking for years as Bondi is a very tightly held suburb and level sites with rear access are uncommon. We also liked the proximity to the beach but also the road access to other suburbs to the west, south and north. It was not a popular site due to the shape of the block and I don't think other interested parties could quite imagine the potential.

**You worked with architect Michelle Orszacky of architecture practice Clayton Orszacky on the design of the house a decade ago. What was the creative concept ?**

Photographer Murray Fredericks is a good friend and he was showing me images of simple structures on the edges of glaciers from his trip to Greenland.

They reminded me of the barn structures I had grown up with in country NSW and this became the very high-level structural brief to Michelle.

We knew we wanted a timber building that was simply but elegantly detailed. Michelle, Julia and I worked really closely with our building business Robert Plumb Build to deliver the project. We did it with the bare minimum of documentation as there was great deal of trust within the team. We also had an amazing friend of mine Paul Sheather who we employed as our foreman. He died not long after we completed the house which was very sad. We have an apprentice award named in Paul's honour within our building team which is given annually.

**You have long supported the work of interior designer Romaine Alwill who did both the original fit-out and recent updates – what was the original brief?**

Romy and I met while working at Belle magazine. Our careers have developed together and we have been friends for several decades. Julia and I love her unfussy style: it's elegant yet unpretentious and not overwhelming. Originally when the kids were smaller we had a slightly less refined interior – more robust. But as they are now older we have recently updated much of the furniture to be a little more sophisticated with a bespoke sofa designed by Romy and with some iconic furniture pieces such as the Borge Mogensen Spanish chair.

The entrance boasts a bolt of vibrant orange with a sculpture by Korban Flaubert and a more muted bench in oak from the Robert Plumb Ribbon range.





Custom-designed sofa by Romy Alwill,  
Borge Mogensen Spanish Chair, and  
Rio Low Table by Charlotte Perriand.









**Over time some things have changed and some have remained. Is the ability to evolve the sign of a good interior?**

The built-in components of our house are timeless and have remained. The joinery is hand painted and we have combined this with solid timber and stone which never dates. This makes updating as simple as bringing in some key pieces and selecting items that will be with us for life.

**Art plays a big role in the interior. What are you and Julia drawn to?**

We have just slowly begun collecting more art. We have some really beautiful art and sculpture from Australian artists Michael Cusack, Greg Wood and Indivi Sutton. We are also lucky to have two beautiful images of Murray Fredericks' Lake Eyre series as well as a very interesting photographic composition from Daniel Shipp in our bedroom. We like sculpture both inside and in the garden with work from Caroline Duffy on an interior wall and a punchy tangerine metal piece by Korban Flaubert in the entrance way.

**You often work from home and have meetings here. Is the house conducive to creativity?**

It's a lovely creative space and very sunny in winter. I work from the dining table and when the doors are open to the garden you feel like you are literally in it. I think it's also nice for my clients to see my garden as it's very unexpected for Bondi.

For the Bondi Barn the relationship with the garden was always going to be crucial. Large sliding doors ensure the connection is maintained while the planting embodies Dangar's philosophy of perfectly imperfect.



**What are the garden's defining elements?**

It's very green and relies on texture and foliage form. It's also a composition of entirely native plants from Japan and Asia, except for the jacaranda and Ficus which were here when we moved in. I never get sick of looking at it – it is so perfectly imperfect.

**You have created a beautiful, contained world with the house and garden but you also spill the landscaping out to the street. What does that achieve?**

It's a trick I often employ where possible on all of my projects. I detest large imposing fences or walls as the first thing you see of a project. Our house is enveloped by a beautiful composition of native plants outside the physical boundary of the site planted in the verge and the narrow strip of garden between the boundary and our fence. The Banksia trees also attract lots of bird life.