

*The VL50 is a veritable snapshot of AUSTRALIA'S most dazzling creative talent, a mix of VISIONARIES, rule-breakers and maestros of materiality. Prized for their commitment to the wider DESIGN community and indicative of this country's extraordinary ability to punch far above its weight, this year's collective will be CELEBRATED in Sydney at an awards ceremony presented by Mobilia.*

# WLF50

*Compiled by THE VOGUE LIVING TEAM*   *Written by YEONG SASSALL*

AKIN ATELIER

“Our practice is experience-led, and our work always commences with an artefact as the genesis for a project’s overall development,” explains Kelvin Ho, whose steadfast transformation of his multifaceted studio has seen him tackle an astonishingly diverse array of hospitality, retail and residential spaces. “I tend to lose interest in a project if there isn’t a compelling design concept or narrative so it’s important for us to start a project with a strong idea,” he says. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Opening a Byron Bay office; designing the Messi Youth Cup for the soccer legend’s youth soccer tournament in Miami; and the buzzy Club Rose Bay with Merivale. **UP NEXT** The most personal and meaningful project of all: “working on our own home”.

## FIONA LYNCH OFFICE

Renowned for balancing “projects of scale and complexity” albeit with a unique and idiosyncratic approach, Fiona Lynch’s oeuvre spans hotels, private residences and cultural institutions. “Our process is inquisitive and evolving, balancing creative exploration with technical expertise and delivery,” explains Lynch, who is “guided by robust design thinking, realised through a commitment to craft, materiality and detail”.

### 2025 HIGHLIGHT

“Working alongside Kengo Kuma on our first project in the Middle East — a large-scale luxury residential project.”

**UP NEXT** The launch of Marina Mirage’s luxurious Private Residences located on Queensland’s Main Beach.



## ACME

Caroline Choker and Vince Alafaci describe ACME as rooted in “clarity, restraint and collaboration”, and it’s this confident synthesis of architecture, interiors and experience that grounds every project with an “intuitive, timeless and quietly resolved” quality. “Pushing boundaries is about depth rather than novelty, exploring how spaces are experienced over time, how materials age, and how people connect within them.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** A number of large-scale hospitality projects in development across Australia. **UP NEXT** “Hospitality and experiential projects in multiple states and a rare residential commission. And completing our own build — a particularly meaningful milestone.”

## MIM DESIGN

“Pushing boundaries begins long before design decisions are made,” says Miriam Fanning, who places a strong emphasis on collaboration and craft, opting to resolve ideas “with precision and care”. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Following a number of private and multi-residential projects, “the completion of Leesthorpe in Mosman, a four-year collaboration with an exceptional client, builder and project team” was a standout. **UP NEXT** Fanning is excited to “work with clients, makers and interdisciplinary designers to test ideas, challenge assumptions, and discover solutions that allow us to do our best work. I’m also looking forward to continuing to contribute to the broader design community through mentorship, advocacy and initiatives.”





## THOMAS HAMEL & ASSOCIATES

Thomas Hamel is deeply motivated by his clients and “the trust they place in us”. “Understanding how they live, what inspires them, and how they want to feel in their spaces is what continually pushes the design forward,” he says. “Translating those aspirations into something considered, layered and enduring, often by drawing on art, travel, craftsmanship and historical references, is what drives me to keep refining and evolving the work.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Travelling across Europe and Morocco, and collaborating on The King’s Foundation Hillview Estate in his capacity as ambassador for The King’s Trust. **UP NEXT** The studio celebrates 35 years in 2026 — “It’s a wonderful moment to reflect on a career that has allowed me to do what I love every day,” says Hamel.

## HECKER GUTHRIE

“We are all about process, if the business end is running smoothly then it allows us to focus on the creative,” states Paul Hecker, who is equally quick to highlight the importance of curiosity and questioning everything. “Thankfully, we exist in a design world that constantly challenges boundaries and norms... to be relevant you have to be a part of that ‘questioning’ conversation.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** 2025 saw Hecker and co-founder Hamish Guthrie straddle residential, retail and hospitality spaces, but the pinnacle was the “launch of two luxury river ships APT Solara and the APT Ostara — where we challenged all the international norms of what a river ship should be”. **UP NEXT** “Another year of fun and challenges... another boat, this time in Portugal on the Douro River.”



## ARENTPYKE

"Beyond design, our deeper intention is to positively shape the way our clients live, feel and move through their everyday spaces," explain founders Sarah-Jane Pyke and Juliette Arent, who pride themselves on fostering a collaborative working environment. "If a project improves someone's life in a meaningful way, then we know we've done our job well." **2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Opening our Melbourne studio was a major milestone and has strengthened our connection with our Victorian clients in a meaningful way," says Arent and Pyke. "We also moved into a larger Sydney space." **UP NEXT** "Bringing our work into new cultural contexts by stepping into exciting international projects in Chile and San Francisco; and a new boutique hotel."



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black sleeveless dress, sits in a light-colored armchair. Behind her is a large, multi-door cabinet with a mix of light and dark panels. To the left, a tall, thin floor lamp with a blue stem and a dark, funnel-shaped shade stands. A dark shelf holds a vase with yellow flowers, a small sculpture, and books. To the right, a fireplace with a dark frame and a patterned cushion is visible. The room has a warm, orange-toned ceiling and a textured rug.

## STUDIO TALI ROTH

"I'm motivated by the power of a space to move someone emotionally," says the Melbourne-based designer whose CV includes a mega successful multi-year stint in New York City. "Through a lot of introspection, I've realised my work is rooted in a simple impulse: the desire to make things better, more thoughtful and more beautiful. That pursuit of emotional resonance is what pushes me to experiment, refine and continually raise the bar." **2025 HIGHLIGHT** A year of "growth and grounding" saw Roth move into an Armadale office with an expanded team, broaden her studio's bespoke furnishings collection, collaborate with Oigall Projects at Melbourne Design Week, and craft a flagship for Cultiver. **UP NEXT** New residential projects and a collection of hardware with Lo & Co.



## GREG NATALE

Spanning architecture, interiors and product design, Greg Natale's multidisciplinary practice reflects his hands-on, collaborative approach. "The team is a mix of ages, backgrounds and walks of life, which brings a richness of perspective to the work," he says. "There's a strong influence of my Italian heritage, with a respect for history, materiality, and telling a story that is always filtered through a contemporary lens."

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** "A timber flooring range with Tongue & Groove, a collection with Designer Rugs and being stocked at The Conservatory in New York and Bergdorf Goodman. Another highlight was experiencing the work of Luis Barragán firsthand during a trip to Mexico, a long-held dream to witness his magical use of block colour in situ." **UP NEXT** Celebrating 25 years of his studio; luxury projects in Europe and Australia; and an exhibition at Milan Design Week with Serafini.

## ALEXANDER & CO.

"I am deeply interested in developing narratives and details that haven't been done before, and the bravery required to bring those ideas into the world," states Jeremy Bull, principal and founder of Sydney-based architecture and design firm Alexander & CO. Coupled by his love of the arts and a strong emphasis on design with intention and sustainability, the practice's far-reaching expression encompasses hospitality, commercial and heritage residential projects. **2025**

**HIGHLIGHT** Hotel projects Isle of Wight, Kirra Beach Hotel and the Mondrian Hotel in Burleigh Heads; the completion of Ayrburn hospitality precinct in Queenstown; finalising a handful of grand homes in Sydney and the New South Wales coast. **UP NEXT** New collaborations on Sydney's former Grace Bros warehouses and One Darling Point projects; and continuing large-scale residential and commercial projects in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and New Zealand.





## TAMSIN JOHNSON

“My practice is led by constant research, which roughly translates to travel,” admits the multihyphenate designer, whose modus operandi is centred around the elusive ideal of beauty. “How you discover beauty changes, it is dynamic,” she explains. “I become infatuated with a piece of furniture, a small idea or a material, and that can crack open a path to a whole interior. It then comes down to refining and issuing restraint.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** New P Johnson stores in Brisbane and Jakarta, and upcoming openings in Sydney and London. Plus, ongoing work with hospitality group Anyday: “Those guys want the best and it’s so exciting working under those auspices.” **UP NEXT** A short working holiday in Switzerland with family; and “most excitingly, a second book with Rizzoli launching in March”.

## DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church delves into her work in an “instinctive and iterative” manner, with a keen focus on “nuance, texture and the detail in the small moments”. Proud of her Australian peers and the local industry, she sees our unique geographical position as a motivational strength — “globally we punch well above our weight,” she affirms.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Unveiling a new Decus studio in Sydney, “followed closely by our first major new build in Sydney’s east on an incredible estate for beloved repeat clients.” **UP NEXT** “A major new build in Western Australia; our first Passive house; a foray into international waters; and a range of limited-edition works crafted with our dearest collaborators.”

## BLAINÉY NORTH

“Our guiding philosophy is that the most minute detail is as important as the largest gesture,” reveals North. “It is the alchemy of the unexpected; the discipline by which we look wider and deeper into culture, art, history, technology and natural environment to inform a new type of space. The result is work that balances the precision of skilled architecture with the creative freedom of thoughtful design, spaces that are considered, inspiring, and distinctly our clients.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Residential, hospitality and wellness projects in Sydney, Brisbane and New York; and a “meaningful” award at the International Design Awards in Capri. **UP NEXT** Celebrating 25 years of the studio; new projects in Sydney, Brisbane and Manhattan; and a new furniture and lighting collection.

## HANDELSMANN + KHAW

Guided by intuition and an underlying sense of ease, Tania Handelsmann and Gillian Khaw “don’t work from a fixed aesthetic or a signature look”, choosing instead to create “a framework that allows each project to unfold naturally through proportion, light, materiality, texture and atmosphere,” they share. “Layering is central to how we work, mixing old and new, hard and soft, expressive and restrained, to create interiors that feel collected, comfortable and quietly confident rather than overly polished or prescriptive.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Completing their first retail space, a debut lighting collaboration with Dunlin, and many residential projects like the Bondi Beach home featured in this issue. **UP NEXT** “2026 is a year of evolution — we’re increasingly working on new build and contemporary projects, pushing us outside our usual context of heritage homes. And there are early conversations around hospitality projects, and opportunities to [explore] furniture and objects.”



PHOTOGRAPHERS: ANSON SMART (TAMISIN JOHNSON AND DECUS), FELIX FOREST (BLAINÉY NORTH), DAVE WHEELER (HANDELSMANN + KHAW), BART CELESTINO (HANDELSMANN + KHAW PORTRAIT)

## RICHARDS STANISICH

That Jonathan Richards and Kirsten Stanisich describe their process as “frustrating, deeply enjoyable, never perfect, confidently unsure, non-linear, and collaborative” says everything about their atypical approach. “Our industry is overloaded with imagery and there is a temptation among designers to simply look for the answers rather than create them,” they continue. “We look forward to a future where good design is about context and focus rather than an insatiable need for newness.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Collecting accolades for the Sarah & Sebastian store in Armadale; designing the Lamella Chair for the American Hardwood Export Council which was exhibited at Cult. **UP NEXT** “In 2025, we supported ReLove, a non-profit that provides free furnishings and styling to people in crisis. We look forward to continuing this support in 2026.”

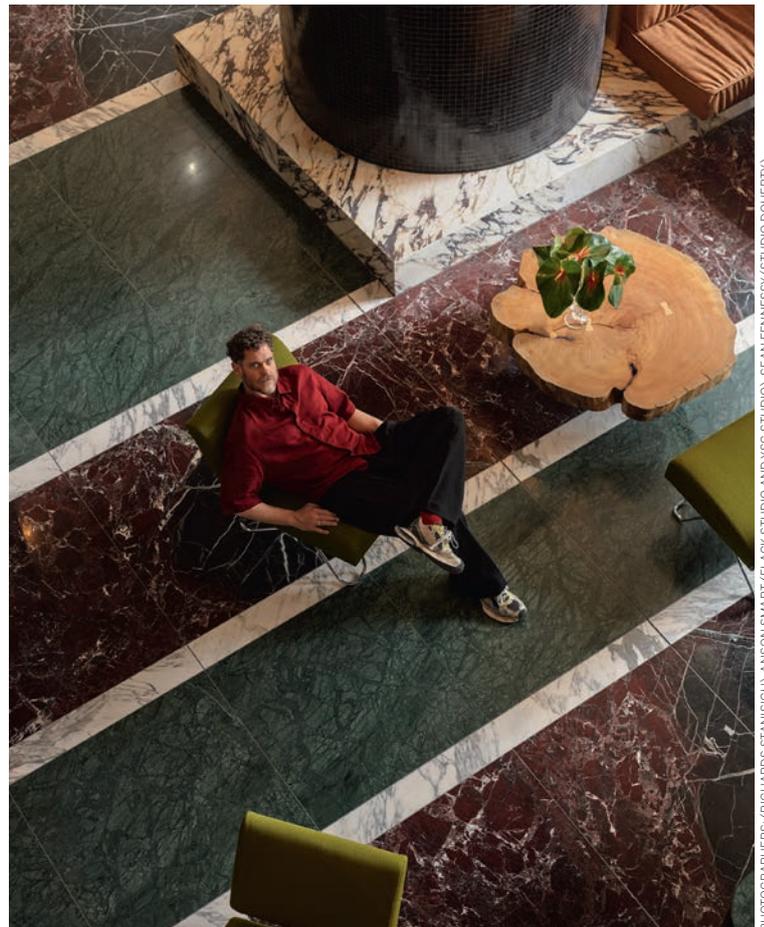


## STUDIO DOHERTY

Describing her eponymous studio as driven to “push boundaries, test new ideas, and balance restraint with moments of surprise and joy,” Mardi Doherty is constantly implored to “design spaces that feel both purposeful and emotionally resonant”, while developing “a distinct contemporary Australian style”. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** On top of carving a name for “refined, enduring and highly considered spaces”, 2025 saw the completion of a space of “rewarding” retail, hospitality and commercial projects. **UP NEXT** “A Bondi store for VRG GRL; converting a Gothic-style church in Armadale into a multi-generational home with Tom Robertson Architects; and more private residences.”

## FLACK STUDIO

“I always say, ‘what would be the worst thing that could happen to the business?’ That would be to wake up and not enjoy what I do,” says David Flack. Luckily, “each year, my passion for the studio and our work continues to develop and knead in many different directions” — and the designer continues to expand his practice, to global renown. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Releasing *Flack Studio: Interiors* with Rizzoli, becoming Scanlan & Theodore’s design partner for the luxury brand’s stores in Canberra, Chatswood Chase and Miami, and Melbourne’s latest boutique stay Hannah St Hotel. **UP NEXT** Andy Lee and Rebecca Harding’s second home (a project six years in the making); plus architectural builds in Victoria, Byron Bay and Western Australia; and new furniture products and collaborations.



## YSG STUDIO

Propelled by instinct and “mood activation”, YSG’s illustrious founder Yasmine Ghoniem “wants people to feel that what they see has never been encountered before”. Actively influenced by books, film, music and travel, she relies on the arts to “lead my imagination down unfamiliar paths”.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** After a “firecracker start to the year” receiving the VL50 Interior Designer of the Year, Ghoniem secured new builds in Australia and China, finished projects in the Middle East and New Zealand, and launched a hardware range with Bankston. **UP NEXT** Her second season co-hosting ABC’s *Grand Designs Transformations*; the redesign of Sydney restaurant Aqua; a Tongue & Groove flooring collection and various design projects around the globe.



### VOLKER HAUG X FLACK STUDIO

“Experimentation is at the heart of our studio — it’s about curiosity, risk-taking and discovery,” says Melbourne-based founder Volker Haug. “Sometimes the most unexpected results lead to our most iconic pieces.”

This ethos could not be truer, for it is Haug’s synchronisation with Flack Studio for their exquisite lighting collection, Me and You, that has yielded the most astonishing result.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT:** Volker Haug received the 2025 Melbourne Design Week Award from Mercedes-Benz and the NGV; expanded the Me and You collection, and collaborated with a number of global designers. **UP NEXT:**

“We’re excited to showcase new lighting designs across several categories at Melbourne Art Fair and Milan Design Week, with additional releases throughout the year. We’re also looking forward to plenty of team travel.”



PHOTOGRAPHERS: PIER CARTHEW (VOLKER HAUG X FLACK STUDIO), JONATHAN VAN DER KNAAP (CLAIRE MARKWICK-SMITH PORTRAIT), ANNIKA KAFCALOUDS (CHRISTOPHER BOOTS AND BRUD STUDIO).

**CLAIRE  
MARKWICK-SMITH**

An interior design background anchors Claire Markwick-Smith's thinking into one of "scale, purpose and inhabitation", and she begins every process from a place of purity, zoning in on materials like metal offcuts or salvaged stone. "The work often sits between function and sculpture, guided by ideas of reduction and material honesty, exploring how construction methods, fixings and surface treatments shape form and meaning." **2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Exhibiting at the NGV's Rigg Design Prize; taking part in 100 Lights for Melbourne Design Week; co-launching Adelaide's first Design Week; completing vinyl bar Honeydripper." **UP NEXT** Settling into new home LA and "exploring California's history of manufacturing and modernist design"; plus some Australian furniture collaborations and exhibitions.



**CHRISTOPHER BOOTS**

Christopher Boots identifies as a polymath. "I move between disciplines the way light moves between materials: geology, mythology, metallurgy, architecture. Nothing is siloed," he shares. "I believe that when we surround ourselves with forms that echo natural laws, something in us remembers how to be human." **2025 HIGHLIGHT:** The launch of Gallery Boot, from his Wood Street warehouse home; and his brass vessel collection Thalamos. **UP NEXT:** The official opening of Wood Street studio, a process 14 years in the making; and a restoration with Edition Office designed to last 120 years. "I believe 2026 is the year we grow tired of the digital and begin seeking analogue connection again. Over a meal. With a drink. In spaces that make us feel good to be alive."

**BRUD STUDIA**

Restraint is the key characteristic that unites Brud Studia's offering, which rests on the principle that objects should challenge the user. "We tend to think of our practice less as designing objects and more as solving small, persistent problems," explain founders Mitchell Zurek and Andrew Kelly. "How something stands. Where the weight goes. What happens when it's actually used, moved, leaned on, lived with." **2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Being included in the VL50 is a pretty significant moment, both affirming and slightly surreal. Winning the Anibou prize was a big highlight too." **UP NEXT** Less expansion, more focus. "There are a number of collaborations in development that extend the practice into more spatial and architectural contexts. And Andy will continue his work with Melbourne Art Fair."





## CAON DESIGN OFFICE

The impetus for David Caon to create is “built around judgement rather than novelty” and it is this unwillingness to compromise that elicits such a confident output, spanning product, furniture, interiors and aviation. “There is a great deal I want to achieve, across many different kinds of projects,” declares Caon. “Boundaries often come in the form of limits, whether perceptual, technological, budgetary, or simply time, but working through those constraints is part of the métier.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Among smaller projects for Erede and Laker, “the past 12 months have been defined by learning and recalibration — I’ve taken time to consider the kind of work I want to be doing over the next decade.” **UP NEXT** The completion of the Project Sunrise aircraft for Qantas; plus, the Time Capsule for Powerhouse Parramatta.

## TOM FEREDAY

Honesty is the guiding principle and framework for Tom Fereday’s refined portfolio, which spans furniture, product and lighting, and seeks to honour the people and practices behind every slab of marble or piece of timber. “I try to develop pieces that are meaningful to me and the people who use them,” he shares, “this bonding connection that can occur between people and objects is what keeps me developing new works every year across a whole range of interactions.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Presenting creations with NAU, Design By Them and Armadillo at 3 Days of Design; bespoke work for Customs House; and the launch of Fereday’s own gallery space in Sydney’s Camperdown. **UP NEXT** Custom commissions for the Powerhouse Museum and new furniture launches for clients in Europe and beyond.



## ADAM GOODRUM

“I enjoy working closely with craftspeople, testing ideas through making, and letting intuition sit alongside discipline,” says the prolific, Sydney-based Goodrum who adores being part of Australia’s design landscape. “Curiosity is the constant driver, curiosity about new ideas, new materials and what’s possible when you work with like-minded, ambitious collaborators.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Taking out the VL50 Product Designer of the Year as part of Adam & Arthur; exhibiting at 3 Days of Design with NAU; completing the A&A Ark Cabinet, a commission for Judith Neilson. **UP NEXT** A stand at Melbourne Art Fair for new collection ReStitched; launching a collection with NAU at 3 Days of Design; fresh work with Tait at Melbourne Design Week; and a major A&A commission with an institution set to be unveiled later in 2026.

## STUDIO HENRY WILSON

Henry Wilson is “constantly inspired by the evolution of manufacturing and the new possibilities found in modern making”, and his clear vision is bolstered by a staggering level of productivity that has only accelerated since establishing his studio in 2012. “I am driven by the challenge of creating physical objects that occupy a unique middle ground: items that are quietly functional and ‘useful’, yet possess a sculptural presence that draws quiet attention.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT:** A new

Paddington showroom has proved the missing link, “allowing me to communicate my design philosophy more effectively with a wider, more direct audience”.

**UP NEXT** “I have several new products currently in development, including a significant extension of our hardware range” and potential showroom expansion into other cities both local and global.



PHOTOGRAPHERS: RACHEL YABSLEY (DAVID CAON PORTRAIT), PIER CARTHEW (TOM FERREY), JESSIE PRINCE (ADAM GOODRUM), DINA GRINBERG (STUDIO HENRY WILSON)



## BEN MAZEY

"There's a Carl Jung quote I love that's along the lines of, 'Life really does begin at 40, up until then, it's just research,'" says Mazey, whose 15 years living in Europe and Asia have proven the ultimate preparation for his "optimistic" yet "naïve" sculptural practice rooted in slab-built ceramic and lost-wax cast bronze. "This idea of a slightly cartoon domestic environment feels creatively authentic to me," he explains.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT:** "My first public artwork proposal getting greenlit; and the draped sculptural fireplace from my July 2025 show at C Gallery.

**UP NEXT** A residency at Milan's bronze foundry Fonderia Artistica Battaglia; a C Gallery show for Melbourne Design Week; and a series of functional sculpture at The Future Perfect in the United States.

COLLECTIBLE DESIGN



**DALTON STEWART**

Growing up in Johannesburg, studying art in Melbourne, then eventually finding his footing in design and architecture has gifted Dalton Stewart a unique perspective on cross-disciplinary practice and its intellectual, material and social impact. “I have never experienced architecture as separate from culture, daily ritual, or everyday life,” he says. “It is always entangled with how people gather, how materials are handled, and how meaning is carried through objects and spaces.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Exhibiting at Collectible in Brussels with Annie Paxton; a nomination for the NGV’s Rigg Design Prize; and winning an IDEA award.

**UP NEXT** “Following another collaboration with Annie Paxton at Melbourne Art Fair through Futureobjekt, I’ll be presenting work in group exhibitions in Europe, including Milan Design Week and 3 Days of Design in Copenhagen.”



**TRENT JANSEN**

“I use an approach called Design Anthropology to embody important cultural narratives, values and ideas in 3D forms, so that these objects might become repositories for the dissemination of significant, but often marginal, stories,” states Trent Jansen, whose partnerships with First Nations creatives are fertile breeding ground for the realisation of meaningful objects embedded with the spirit of Country and cultural memory. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “Two 20-year retrospective exhibitions: *Two Decades of Design Anthropology* at Useful Objects for Melbourne Design Week and *Poiesis Symboli* at Studio ALM for Sydney Design Week”; global exhibits with Johnny Nargoodah, Tanya Singer and Errol Evans. **UP NEXT** New furniture and rug collaborations with Marce Clarke and Johnny Nargoodah; and curating and designing Transformative Repair x Useful Objects at Melbourne Design Week.

**MARLO LYDA**

An instinctual appreciation for found materials is the spark for Marlo Lyda’s creative impulses. “I’m drawn to materials that feel overlooked — dead stock fabrics, remnant stone, weed timber species, scrap metal, electrical waste — each carrying its own pulse and potential,” she says. From there, experimentation and imperfection play a supporting role. “I’m interested in pushing gently against homogeneity, allowing variation, asymmetry, and difference to remain visible.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “Being invited to participate in the NGV’s Rigg Design Prize — and the *Vogue Living* coverage that followed — was deeply affirming, as was completing the George Alexander Fellowship.” **UP NEXT** New brand collaborations; expanding the Toile collection; a rug residency in India; and 3 Days of Design.



## JORDAN FLEMING AND ROSANNA CERAVOLO

A partnership melding Ceravolo's architectural rigour and Fleming's interior design instincts birthed their lighting collection Cavetto and a series of vases with glass blower Billy Crellin. "We became very interested in how to hold the grandeur and monumentality of architectural form alongside the intimacy and precision of interior detail," the pair explains. "The collection became a way of working at both scales at once." **2025 HIGHLIGHT**

Their show Soft Monument, at Oigåll Projects, and the culmination of a year's worth of collaboration on lighting and glassware. "There were a lot of musings and conceptual conversations about life and design, lots of laughs and moments of sheer delirium." **UP NEXT** Exhibiting at Futureobjekt at the Melbourne Art Fair.



## ZACHARY FRANKEL

Exploration occurs naturally for Zachary Frankel, a designer who laughingly describes his divergent approach as "chaotic". "I'm always moving, testing something, trialling a technique to see where it takes me, daydreaming, eating long lunches," he muses. "It mainly centres around personal exploration. I follow what interests me, whether that's a period in design, a place, a material, a technique, or a feeling. I pursue it and see where it takes me. I love drawing influences from historic styles and melding them together."

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Launching my showroom and collaborative space, Hotel House. I love having a physical space to see my work and to show it to others." **UP NEXT** Participating in Futureobjekt as part of Melbourne Art Fair; and debuting a new hardware brand Verra.

## SARAH NEDOVIC

Clay may be Sarah Nedovic's raison d'être, but recent explorations have seen the ceramicist embrace glass, metal and fibreglass, alongside a decades-old technique using extrusion machinery. "I'm interested in how objects shape atmosphere — how light, material, proportion and pattern create intimacy and transform a space," she says, and it's this "balance between precision and intuition" and reframing of the familiar that makes her work so singular.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Presenting her Extruded Bricks and Fibre Sconce series at Melbourne Design Week; a workshop at Domaine de Boisbuchet in France with Dutch ceramicist Floris Wubben. **UP NEXT** "Expanding into more sculptural and site-specific commissions, plus new collaborations."



## BMDO

"We're drawn to the absurd and work that carries emotional weight, but we avoid treating the ideas too heavily," explains James L. Marshall and Fletcher Barns, whose vision always begins with a familiar object or material. "We draw from what's around us, pulling just as readily from popular culture as from design and art histories. That mix keeps the work from becoming overly reverent or resolved, allowing humour and a degree of absurdity to emerge naturally."

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Our solo exhibition *The World's Smallest Horse* at Oigall Projects in Melbourne; presenting at Sydney Contemporary with Neon Parc; and *Done/Undone* curated by Joseph Gardner at Craft Victoria. **UP NEXT** Futureobjekt at Melbourne Art Fair with Oigall Projects; and various commissioned projects including some larger lighting products.



## SMART DESIGN STUDIO

Constant innovation is the axiom that has won Smart Design Studio a slew of accolades and widespread industry respect. “We look for opportunities for architecturally poetic moments,” explains principal William Smart, “for the drama in expression of materials and form”. Revered for his ability to capture natural light, Smart “looks for clues in architecture from centuries past, particularly modernism” and harnesses technology to advance his designs. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “We just finished an incredible four-storey home and have two more under construction.” **UP NEXT** Two “amazing” houses in Sydney are currently in construction documentation phase. “With both we have an opportunity to give an existing house a new lease of life and pair it with a grand, contemporary pavilion,” says Smart. “My favourite part is seeing our drawings being translated into a built form.”



## STUDIO PRINEAS

Through a ‘thinking more, building less’ philosophy, Eva-Marie Prineas seeks out the creation of spaces that nurture wellbeing, both practically and emotionally. “I’m driven by learning from Country and climate, understanding how to design with rather than against the natural world,” she says. “There’s something hopeful about creating beautiful, sustainable spaces that prove luxury and environmental responsibility aren’t opposing forces. That optimism keeps me pushing.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** “Being appointed a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects was deeply humbling; but perhaps most meaningful was seeing Montage Apartment win the National Prize for Residential Design.”

**UP NEXT** Finalising her own Victorian-style villa; a boutique hotel “in a remarkable regional location”.



## LUIGI ROSSELLI ARCHITECTS

For 40 years Luigi Rosselli has understood “innovation as a transformative practice, not as a revolutionary invention” allowing his studio to play a lead role in the development of modern techniques and building materials, from Marblo resin and mosaic Bisanna tiles to rammed earth. “Over time, we have demonstrated that, far from being rustic and bucolic, the application of rammed earth can be elegant, beautiful, and tactile,” explains Rosselli.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Rose Terraces: “four build-to-rent terraced homes constructed with CLT panels, an environmentally sustainable, prefabricated cross-laminated timber system manufactured in Australia from timber sourced from locally grown plantation pine.” **UP NEXT** “Evolving a construction method popular in the ‘60s: the shaping of free-form masonry volumes without formwork at a scale that 3D printing can’t yet achieve.”



## CLARE COUSINS ARCHITECTS

The compulsion to create architecture that “can meaningfully improve how people live together” lies at the core of Cousins’ iterative and collaborative process. “We’re interested in making buildings that feel generous and enduring, where materiality, light and landscape work quietly together to support everyday life,” she continues.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** Marking 20 years in practice, 2025 also saw the implementation of retail stores for MAAP in Los Angeles, Sydney and Shanghai. **UP NEXT** “We’re continuing to work on ambitious housing projects that explore new models of density, sustainability and shared space, while also developing more intimate residential work.”

## KENNEDY NOLAN

For 26 fruitful years Patrick Kennedy and Rachel Nolan have sought to apply a level of curiosity and sensitivity to every project, ever mindful of treading more lightly on the earth and acknowledging and showing respect to our ancient country. “We are motivated to make the world around us and this springs from the visceral pleasure that domestic environments can bring,” they share. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Giving the keynote address at Melbourne Design Week in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria. “It was a gift to take the time to reflect, and wonderful to do so in such a significant room.” **UP NEXT** “A suite of diverse projects, including master-planning at the Abbotsford Convent, a tally of houses (some in stunning coastal settings) and the revival of a 1960s office building in Melbourne’s CBD.”

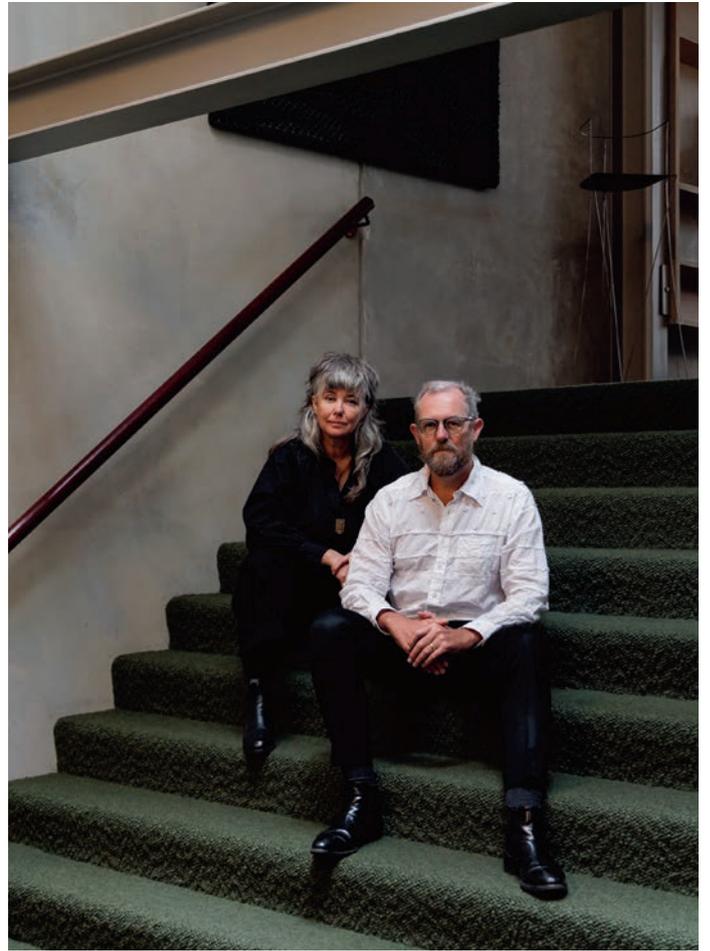


## MADELEINE BLANCHFIELD ARCHITECTS

In her rigorous design process, founder Madeleine Blanchfield blends technical prowess with master strokes of creativity. “We are focused on solar passive principles, balance, proportion, order and precision, which we consider timeless and essential qualities in good design,” she asserts.

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** “We completed several projects in 2025 which are a wonderful showcase of us as a practice. They vary in scale, budget and typology and are proof that our design approach leads to very different outcomes depending on client and location.”

**UP NEXT** The completion of homes across Sydney and regional New South Wales; and the arrival of new international opportunities.



## MORQ

Founding partners Matteo Monteduro, Emiliano Roia, Andrea Quagliola are bound by passion and respect for shared creativity, a value system that still forms the basis of this Italian-Australian studio, some 25 years after establishment. Focused on the interrelationship between nature and man-made form, MORQ’s designs don’t just succeed in “blurring boundaries between architecture and landscape”, they transform every single scenography they touch. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “Breaking ground on our first project in Lombok and seeing our Melbourne apartments reach roof level.” **UP NEXT** A global reach that extends to “coastal residences and hospitality projects immersed in nature in Indonesia, Australia, Africa and the Middle East”.



## STUDIO BRIGHT

Describing themselves as a relatively small Melbourne studio, Studio Bright tackles projects of all scales, ranging from residential and civic, to educational and multi-residential — “each is bound by a sense of craft and considered detail”. “We like to think of ourselves as problem solvers, we approach challenges with optimism and consider how design can meet fundamental human needs.”

**2025 HIGHLIGHT** The award-winning Hedge and Arbour House. “It was also a huge career highlight to present on the Sydney Opera House stage for the AIA National Conference about ‘Architecture in Action.’” **UP NEXT** Multi-residential projects across Melbourne and Sydney, in collaboration with other architects. “We have also been working on small meaningful projects that give back to the community and care for design and environments for those most in need.”



## LEETON POINTON

Commitment to a collective, collaborative approach ensures the work of St Kilda studio Leeton Pointon is guided by “the poetic potential of architecture and a sensitivity to place”. In seeking new ways to inhabit the world, co-founder Michael Leeton “seeks to create small windows of imagination beyond the everyday — spaces that invite connection, curiosity and a sense of belonging”. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Completing the “ambitious” House on a Hill project; being shortlisted in the Créateurs Awards in Paris.

**UP NEXT** “Continuing to focus on thoughtfully crafted residential work, including several inner-city projects, a country retreat for a close friend, and a new beach house by the ocean.”



**SJB**

Founders Adam Haddow and Andrew Parr would like to say SJB is “completely process-driven, but honestly, we like to sit somewhere between science and art,” says Haddow. “We’re drawn to work that contributes to the greater good, and love finding those urban ‘fissures’ — the in-between spaces where life can take hold.” An abiding passion for Australia’s distinct landscape drives SJB to build forms that are enveloped in “the spirit of this incredible continent — the smells, the textures, the colours.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “For us, it’s the moments with clients — seeing that warm smile when they enter their home for the first time, or those unexpected moments overhearing people talking about the work.” Plus, Billyard Avenue in Sydney and Cul de Sac House in Melbourne. **UP NEXT** Their 50th anniversary and finalising some “significant projects”.

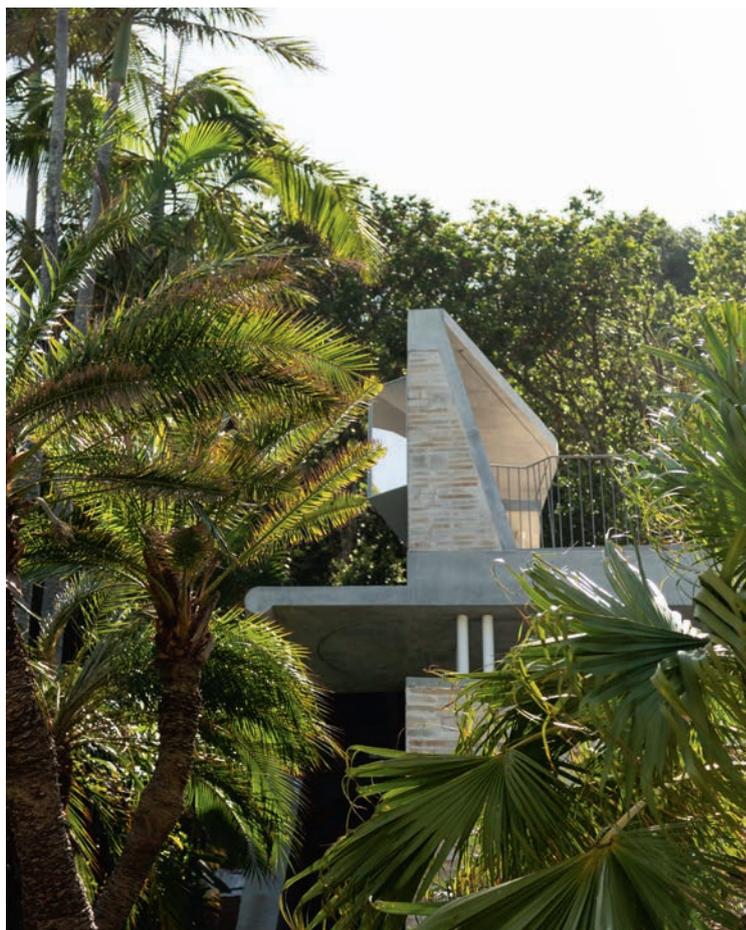


**WARDLE**

Citing “relentless curiosity” and an “openness to exploration” as the fuel that pushes his eponymous practice constantly moving forward, founder John Wardle is further guided by dialogue, interpretation and a careful reading of context. “Projects can become a conversation — translated into form, material and space — using narrative and ambition to produce work that is both specific and enduring,” he reveals. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** The firm’s final project for the University of Tasmania’s Inveresk campus, which was acknowledged in the National Architecture Awards. **UP NEXT** “Our first private residential commission in Bangkok; homes on the Victorian coast; and two large family homes in coastal and country New South Wales.”

**DURBACH BLOCK JAGGERS**

In leading a small yet stable team of 12, directors Neil Durbach, Camilla Block and David Jagers have assembled what they call “a platform for adventure”. Motivated by passion and devotion to their craft, each project is a call for ‘next’. “A moment to explore something new within the depth of architectural thinking and history,” they explain. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Beginning on site at the Powerhouse Ultimo Heritage revitalisation to “set the scene for the next life of this incredible Sydney institution”. **UP NEXT** A new library and piazza in Melbourne’s Coburg; apartments in Newcastle; Pencil Tower in Pitt Street; a waterfront Manly building; and a book with Evi O.



# LANDSCAPE DESIGN



## KATE SEDDON

Fuelled by a “desire to create places of harmony, welcome and engagement”, it is Kate Seddon’s firm belief that “well-designed garden spaces should surround and embrace you”. Her landscapes sit in harmony with their built environment, reflecting a uniquely Australian approach to the indoor-outdoor divide. “The significant effect of nature and greenery on people’s wellbeing is a key part of our design ethos,” she explains. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “We completed an exceptional residential project with Arent&Pyke where, alongside clever structural engineers, we were able to deliver very special design solutions over existing built structure.” **UP NEXT** Toasting 20 years in practice alongside developments for a philosophy club in a period home; and a rooftop garden in a mid-century apartment block.

## AMANDA OLIVER GARDENS

Amanda Oliver’s self-described “plant focused” landscapes possess a rare, untethered quality that perfectly encapsulates her simple mission statement: “Seeking beauty, a narrative and connection to place through the selection and use of plants in all projects. To create beautiful landscapes and gardens that are climate sensitive and low impact through good plant choice, low water use, permeability and use of local or recycled materials.” **2025 HIGHLIGHT** “A highlight of any year is continuing to watch older gardens and landscapes grow and develop as intended. Plus, lovely new projects with Kennedy Nolan and Clare Cousins Architects in some stunning locations.” **UP NEXT** An array of residential projects around Australia, “some in the early stages and some ready to be built and planted”.



## ADAM ROBINSON DESIGN

Since opening his Byron Bay studio in 2011, Adam Robinson has been guided by the motto: 'Better garden, bigger life' and the conviction that landscapes contain restorative powers that can support emotional, physical and environmental needs. "Our philosophy is anchored in the belief that gardens are catalysts for wellbeing," he says. "We design with the intention of nurturing healthier, more joyful communities." **2025 HIGHLIGHT** "Receiving the Landscape Association's Excellence Award for Landscape of the Year, as well as the Landscape Design Institute's 2025 Plantscape Design of the Year." **UP NEXT** Refining the design practice and embarking on the design and construction of Robinson's personal home (and garden). "After 14 years of creating spaces for others, it feels like an extraordinary and long-awaited milestone," he says.

## FLORIAN WILD

Describing his methodology as "intuitive curation" that's akin to "a kid in the sandbox commanding and transforming nature" Rupert Baynes-Williams delights in what he calls "an almost naïve quality" to his design approach. "The intention is to be responsive to the space and the sense it evokes, and not to force something that does not fit, in that way the hand of the designer can be hidden," he explains. **2025 HIGHLIGHT** Witnessing some of his earlier projects flourish. "Gardens are living artworks," he says. "Plants and trees take time to grow, and you must have patience to see them reach their full potential. That is not an easy virtue to hold, but it is worth it." **UP NEXT** "Design underscored by care and curiosity. And, hopefully, finally working on my own garden."

