

HOME / MORNINGTON PENINSULA

# Sea Change



Salt in the air, waves within earshot, green plains sloping down to cliffside crags and 35 resplendent hectares of Victorian coastland make up the ruggedly idyllic setting of Peninsula House by Carr.

Working on such an expansive plot, the Melbourne-based studio's initial challenge was to establish structure and a sense of place. 'Our first question was how to get from the front gate all the way to the house,' recalls studio founder and principal Sue Carr. After mapping and considering the property from all angles, Carr and her team conceived an undulating pathway to the home, designed to celebrate movements in the terrain.

The pavilion itself is a confident sculptural expression, oriented to maximise ocean vistas and positioned in line with the natural fall of the land. A robust, monochromatic exterior of zinc and render meets the site's extreme climatic conditions: sweltering summers, brutal winters and constant exposure to harsh sea winds. Softened at the edges with sensitively planted greenery, including native seagrass, the angular form is further embedded in its coastal surroundings. 'As a firm, we don't divide our thinking between architecture and interiors. These are inextricably bound together, as is the landscape, which forms part of the internal experience,' Carr explains. 'For us, getting the landscape right is just as important as choosing materials for the interior.'

Visitors are welcomed at a dramatic arrival courtyard, which is clad in timber that will

eventually turn silver to match the home's monochromatic shell. This area is artfully minimal, punctuated only by a mature olive tree. 'We wanted to create the experience of travelling through the landscape, arriving at a blank canvas, then opening the front door and being gifted this amazing view of the water,' says Carr.

Inside, the clients' impressive art collection comes to the fore. The interior spatial strategy is defined by a spine-like gallery, informed by the scale of the sculptures and paintings displayed. Though special care was taken to showcase and preserve each of the clients' precious pieces, Carr's intent was for the couple to live alongside their art. 'The gallery wasn't intended to be a Zen-like experience,' she explains. 'It's a way of allowing the clients to appreciate their art collection as they move through their home.'

Though conceptually grand, Peninsula House is thoughtfully designed to support the intimacy and utility of everyday life. A limited interior palette of only three primary materials — warm timber paired with a richly veined natural stone, and unpretentious concrete floors — speaks to the home's contemporary farmhouse character. The house also extends itself to accommodate the couple's visiting family and grandchildren, complete with a fully appointed western wing separate to the main spaces inhabited daily by the couple.

'Because it's such a large property, it was important to us that they feel cosy when it's just the two of them,' Carr says. 'We wanted the space to feel easy to live in, to be a real home.'

#### *Text*

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Conceived as a contemporary farmhouse on the coast of the Mornington Peninsula, Peninsula House by Carr marries landscape, architecture and interiors. The monolithic structure nestles into the landscape to protect it from the coastal winds while maintaining views

*Facing page*  
A sculpture by artist Greg Johns stands in the timber-clad arrival courtyard; the view is deliberately shrouded so as to create a sense of anticipation for what lies beyond





The pavilion-like home was designed with deep consideration for landscape, climate and weather. A hardy exterior of zinc and render is appropriate for the coastal conditions, while a stretch of ocean-facing windows offers expansive views



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In the informal living, dining and kitchen area, the Myworld sofa by Philippe Starck for Cassina echoes the colours of the ocean and, together with the Patricia Urquiola-designed Husk dining chairs from B&B Italia, provides ample seating for when family and grandchildren visit

Facing page  
The crazy bluestone paving in the external courtyard is a reference to Australian mid-century modernism



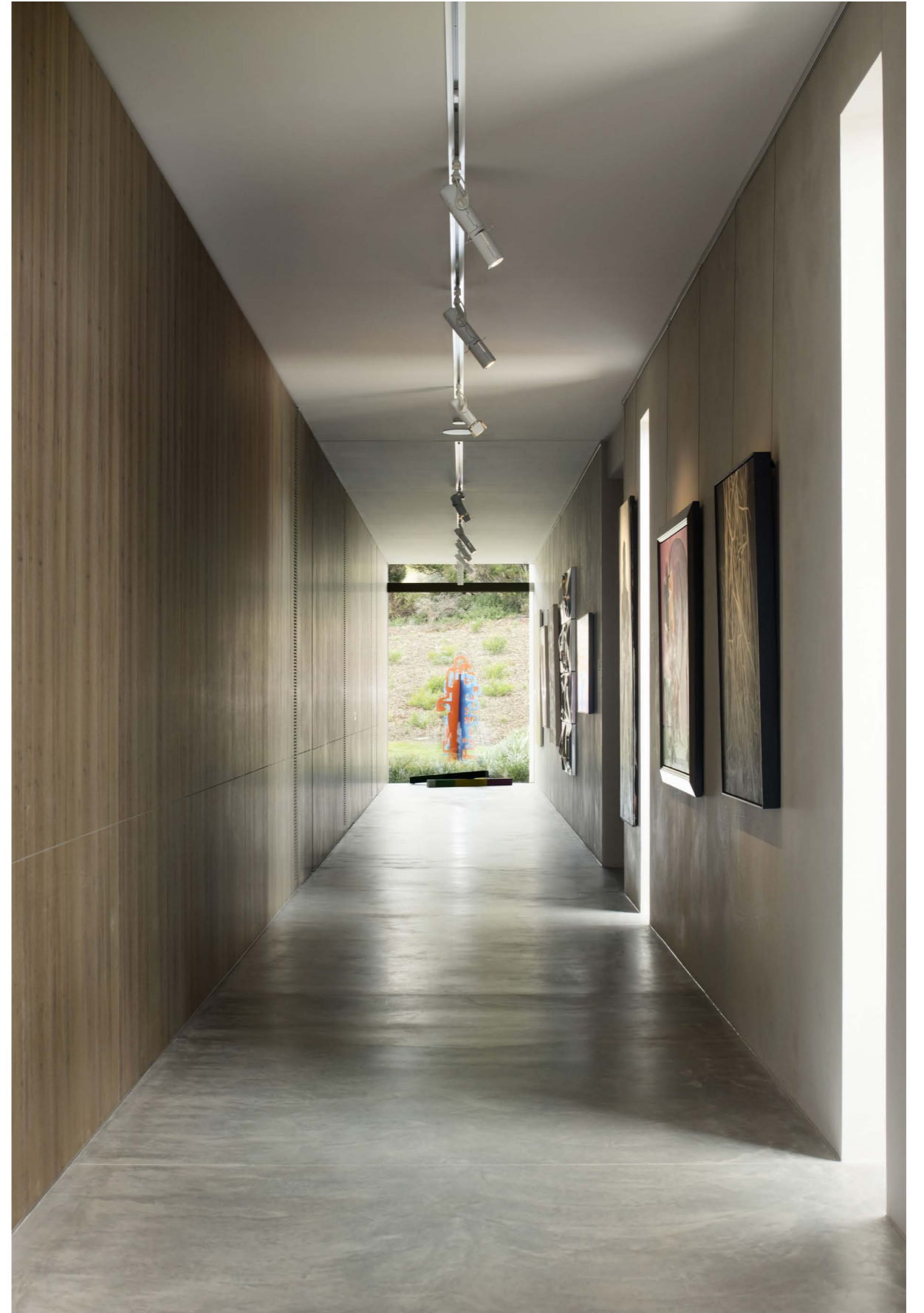


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Gallery-like spaces were incorporated to accommodate the homeowners' extensive art collection that includes large-scale pieces like this Caleb Shea sculpture and ink painting by Mike Parr

Facing page

The gallery spaces were conceived to allow the owners to interact with their collection as they move through the home, exemplified here in the central corridor where track lighting accentuates the works on display and a sculpture anchors one end

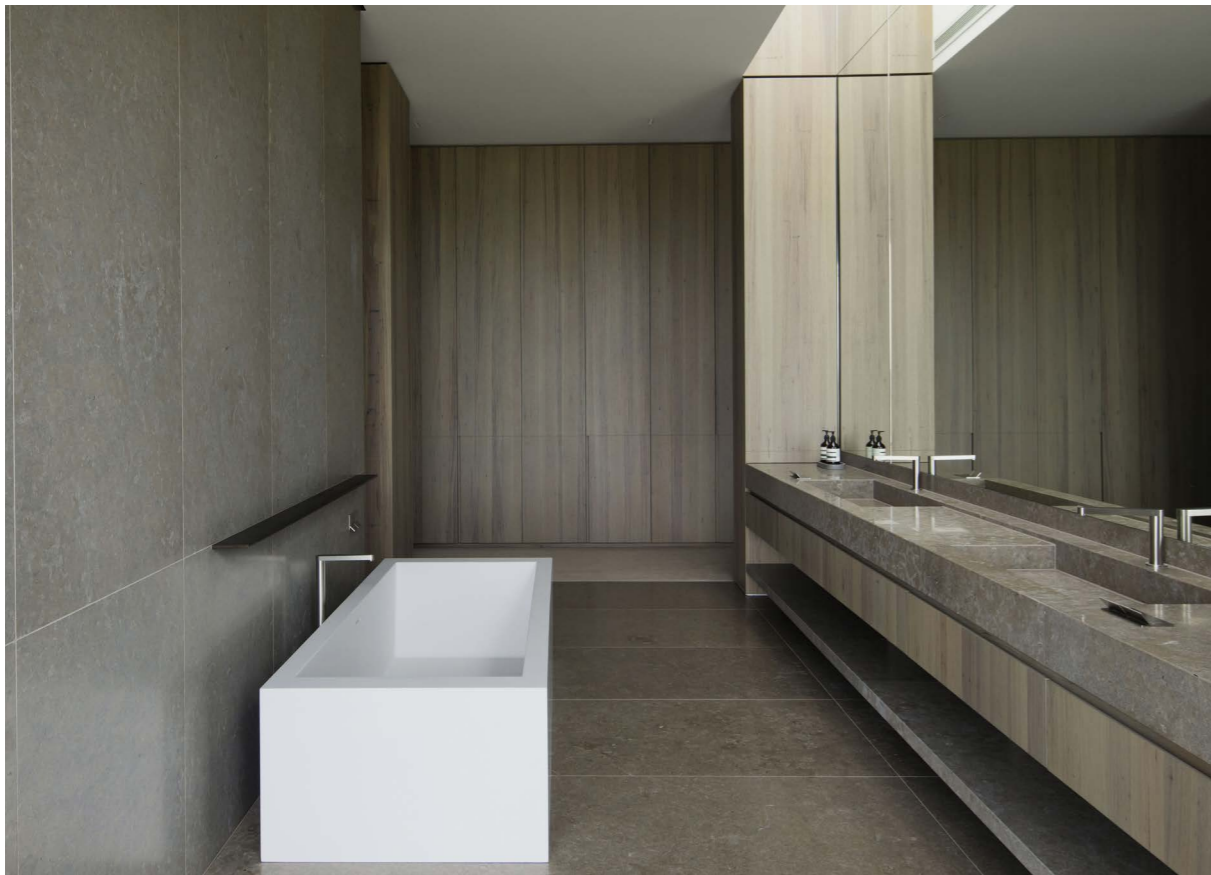




The ocean view greets guests as they enter the home through the formal sitting area. Here Jean-Marie Massaud's swivel armchairs for Poliform offer seating for socialising or watching the waves, and pared-back furniture and decoration, including the architectural coffee table by Victor Vasilev for Living Divani, ensure the view has maximum visual impact



The master bedroom features the same material used throughout the home — a custom lime-washed timber veneer — to create a sense of consistency and fluidity between spaces



Facing page

Detailing and materiality are key to the home's design. In addition to the consistent lime-washed timber, cavity sliding doors appear throughout, creating a sense of openness (top left). The judicious addition of a mirror at one end of the walk-in wardrobe furthers the illusion of additional space (top right)

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A Boffi bathtub in the master ensuite echoes the home's linearity, and the floor-to-ceiling windows offer suitably serene views