STUDIO SIMPLICITY AND FORM

Text
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Photography
Jason Ierace

With a deep familiarity with Sydney's Darlinghurst and its surrounds, Tina Engelen and Will Fung of CO-AP (Collaborative Architecture Practice) were the perfect choice to design Luxe, a new photographic studio situated in the leafy inner city suburb of Darlinghurst in Sydney.

The idea behind the studios, created by owners Dolores Lavin and Paola Toppi, wass to provide a studio for photographers working in this new age of digital photography. Now that photographers no longer need dark rooms or have assistants, and with Sydney rents skyrocketing, many photographers who would once have rented their own space now no longer have studios.

Luxe provides all the things a photographer needs – from equipment such as lighting systems, grips, computers and lenses, to less technical things like a range of different rooms with different backdrops, lighting levels, dressing rooms and make up spaces for models etc.

There is a choice of six studios at different sizes and capacities, some enjoying full sunshine, others with more muted lighting and all can have the light totally blocked out by heavy duty curtains. There is also a roof terrace which can be used if direct sunlight or outdoor conditions are required.

The larger studios downstairs can be used separately or together to provide space for functions and can even open up onto the street, meaning it is possible to bring cars into the space, or build catwalks.

For designers Engelen and Fung, the design of the space involved a thorough process of investigation on their behalf, and in consultation with the client, about the range of features that would be needed to provide the best and most practical studio for those who would be using the space – the photographers.

So, operable walls, lighting around mirrors for application of make-up on models, dressing room curtains, modular furniture, kitchen spaces, luxury bathrooms, have all been created to make it easy to shoot there, to bring in models or clients, to provide meals when wanted, creating a relaxed and yet comfortable experience that is flexible for all kinds of needs.

Furniture was carefully selected to provide this flexibility. Modular tables designed by Alvar Aalto for Artek can be joined up with each other seamlessly to provide a long dining table, while the 'Oblong' modular sofa designed by Jasper Morrison for Cappellini can be zipped together to provide any shape required. Meanwhile, the stackable 'Chair_One' by Konstantin Grcic provides an industrial counterpoint to the natural timber of the tables and bright blues of the sofas.

All materials are simple and minimal with no veneers, so you see the quality of the building materials, whether they are concrete, glass, timber or marble, showing through to the surface. "These details are my favourite aspect to the space," says Fung, demonstrating how curtains come out from between two vertical wooden panels in the wall

and be drawn around to create a completely private dressing room for models, or pushed back so that they are not seen at all.

"I also like these details," Engelen comments. "Like on the exterior where the lay of the bricks is a certain way for the load-bearing columns to support the weight, but then, in between, are laid in a more decorative way."

The overall effect is an interior that is minimal, with plenty of natural light – relaxed, luxurious, yet comfortable – providing functionality and flexibility for the need for which it was intended.

Architect CO-AP
Project Architects Tina Engelen, Will Fung
Builder ECL Group
Structural Engineer T.O.P. Consulting Group
Mechanical Engineer R&J Air Conditioning
Joinery Andrews Joinery
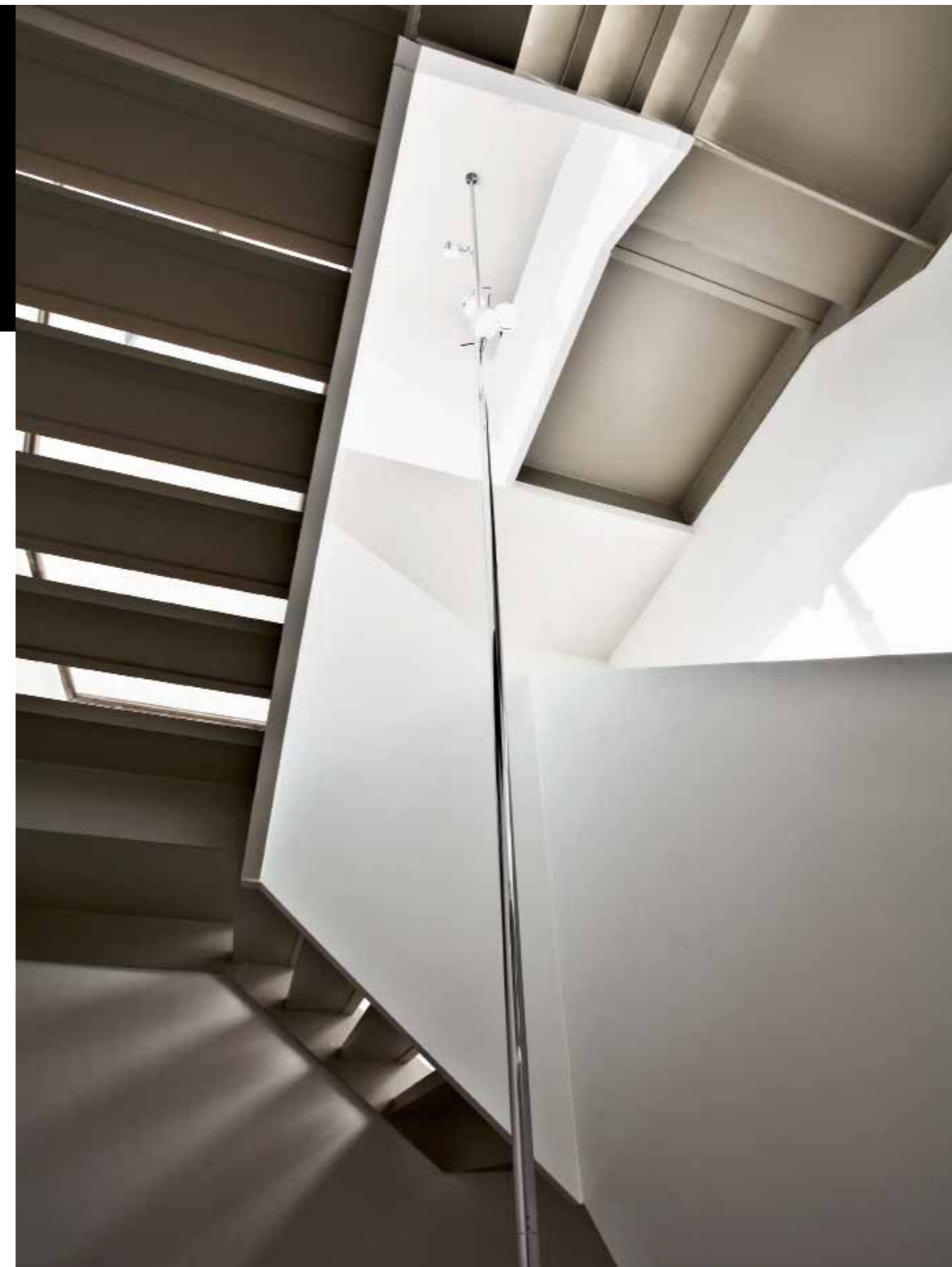
CO-AP
(61 2) 9380 9750, co-ap.com

Furniture
Stackable Chair 'Chair_One' by Konstantin Gricic for Magis (from Questo Design) available in Austrailia from ECC Lighting + Furniture. Modular Tables '95 Table', '81B Table', Side Table 'E60 Stool' by Alvar Aalto for Artek from Anibou. Arm Chairs and Sofa 'Oblong' by Jasper Morrison for Cappellini, task chairs 'Chadwick High Task Chair' by Don Chadwick for Knoll both supplied by dedece.
Anibou (61 2) 9319 0655
dedece (61 2) 9360 2722
ECC Lighting + Furniture (61 2) 9380 7922

Lighting
Eutrac and Kreon lighting from dedece. 'Occhio Sento' by Axelmeiselicht from Enlightening Australia.
dedece (61 2) 9360 2722
Enlightening Australia (61 2) 9918 7225

Finishes
External Walls 'Face Brickwork'. Joinery Limed Marine Grade plywood / plywood benchtops with Laminate finish. Flooring is 'Diamond Polished Concrete'. Staircase is compressed fibre cement sheet with steel structure and 'Dibond' cladding from Alucobond,. Curtains from Curtain Consulting Service. Roller Screens are from Verosol.
Alucobond (61 2) 8525 6900
Curtain Consulting Service (61 2) 4731 2622
Verosol (61 2) 9784 4141

Fixtures & Fittings
Tapware Gessi 'Oxygene' kitchen mixer and Intamix 'Geo Viva' basin mixer and sanitaryware Alape 'White' handbasin and Pozzi Ginori 'Lavabi 500' toilet pan from Reece. Kitchenette Applicances from Fisher & Paykel, Smeg, LG.
LG 1800 752 375
Fisher & Paykel 1300 650 590
Reece (61 2) 9843 3600
Smeg (61 2) 9384 5633

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