



Lasting Luxury

LUXE offers Sydney an elite photographic studio for those seeking style and discretion. The building's timeless design is a reminder that true luxury lies within an enduring sense of style, underpinned by understated elegance

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LUXE Studios in Sydney's east most certainly lives up to its majestic title. Sleek style and an unblemished sense of finesse are the hallmarks of this establishment, which has significantly raised the bar of photographic facilities within the city. The design by Tina Engelen and Will Fung of CO-AP (Collaborative Architecture Practice) astutely reflects its elite nature yet manages to retain a relaxed and peaceful ambience within a highly functional environment. The building contains six multipurpose studios capable of accommodating a variety of shoots. Their flexible nature allows them to be converted into stylish contemporary event spaces, which have already become highly sought-after for some of the city's most celebrated functions and parties.

"The owner, Dolores Lavin, saw a gap in the market in terms of photographic studios. She thought there was room here for a different type of place, somewhere for clients who wanted VIP treatment and, above all, something more discreet than the regular venues," explains project architect Tina Engelen. Thus LUXE fills a niche by offering a private setting to those who seek it, creating a studio that truly caters to the high end of the market.

The three-storey structure exudes a timeless quality, which cleverly reacts and interacts to the surrounding suburb of Darlinghurst. "If you drive up the street, you will see that currently there is an interesting mix of older warehouses and smaller terraces. We really wanted to make the studio communicate with this setting," Engelen says. This has been thoughtfully achieved, for while the structure is contemporary, it also manages to blend in with the older surrounds and is in no way out of place. "We took references from other buildings in the area. If you go a few blocks up the road there are some older apartments made of dark brown liver bricks and we alluded to their form in the façade," Will Fung of CO-AP explains. This method of appropriating past styles within a modern setting serves to place the new edifice in its context, while also building upon the appearance of the exterior surface.



above The modest approach applied to the architecture and interior design works to show that lasting luxury is achieved by discretion and a classic sense of style **opposite page, clockwise from top left** Taking references from surrounding buildings allows LUXE to fit into the landscape in a contemporary fashion • Large windows allow ample light to flood in, illuminating the upstairs studios • Roller doors open up the space so that a car may drive into the building for certain photographic shoots

The architects embraced this opportunity to work with different materials and textures, manipulating the scale and overall visual reading of the site. "It is actually a lot bigger than it appears from the outside; our design was really a rationalisation of the amount of land that we had," Engelen says. This effective use of space was a fundamental component of a project with a limited site area of 497 sq-m, but which required a number of large rooms and an outdoor area. Obtaining a ceiling height of at least 3.4m was also of great necessity to meet the needs of different photographers. Therefore, in order to make LUXE a truly incomparable destination, an enhanced sense of vertical space became another essential structural component within the design process.

Across the three floors, there is a total of six studios and a rooftop terrace for exterior shots and

special events. On the bottom level, the structure is expressed and combined with raw ceilings that lend a very industrial feel to the environment. The two smallest studios are more product based. Their multifunctional and adaptable nature is suitable for photographing a wide range — a full commercial kitchen caters for food shots and styling, while impressive roller doors open up to allow a car to drive into the building. An operable wall divides these two spaces so that there can either be two separate rooms or one large area, which has proved popular for prestigious events.

The studios on the second level have a much brighter feel, in contrast to the ground floor's somewhat muted ambience. To maximise natural light, the stairs leading from the roof terrace on the third floor were used as a lantern, vibrantly illuminating these inner sections. Meanwhile, all

four studios in this zone were fitted out with large windows and white plasterboard ceilings to artfully reflect the light that streams in, allowing the sun's rays to bounce around the rooms.

The interiors are marked by their simple yet elegant nature, which works to reflect the clean-cut design of the external façade. A subtle sense of luxury was crucial, part of a concerted effort to avoid an over-the-top look. "Above all, we really wanted to create a timeless and functional building with an understated sense of splendour. If something is really exclusive then it must be discreet and should only be for those elite people in the know," Engelen says. The enduring design and superior finishes that define LUXE studios achieve just that — proving that genuine glamour and elegance can be derived from classic styles that never lose their lustre.







above The facilities and professional nature of LUXE remain unrivalled throughout Sydney opposite page The staircase was used as a lantern to channel natural light into the building from the rooftop

刹那永恆

LUXE攝影工作室是悉尼一眾出色攝影師的新寵：風格獨特而且構思嚴謹的建築空間、永恆耐看的設計提醒我們，一份輕描淡寫的優雅就等於真正的奢華，永遠經得起時間考驗。

撰文：PATRICIA NELSON 攝影：JASON IERACE

LUXE攝影工作室位於澳洲悉尼東部，這幢全新建築物絕對配得起「奢」兩個字。時尚的格調及零碎裝飾的佈置，在悉尼是絕對罕見，大大提升了城中影樓的建築水準。CO-OP建築事務所兩位建築師Tina Engelen及Will Furguson靈活的手法營造出一個氣質優雅脫俗的攝影空間，容納多種用途卻依然保留一份清新傳聞。建築物共有六個多用途攝影室，適合不同類型的拍攝需求。這種彈性能使各空間變奏成時尚感十足的活動場地，而事實上LUXE已成為城中人人共知的派對盛事熱點。

截至現時，悉尼還未出現一所影樓的設備比得上LUXE的專業，LUXE能媲美紐約、倫敦及洛杉磯等地一些攝影師梦寐以求的工作室。建築師Tina說：「LUXE的業主Dolores Lawton發現市面上的高水準影樓不多，認為有潛力發展一個獨特的空間，提供零碎式的待遇之餘，環境也要比一般攝影場地更優質。」因此LUXE成功打開一個非主流市場，每位顧客都有專用的攝影設備與場地，專攻高級顧客層。

三個樓層的影樓空間，散發一種恆久的氣質，跟Darlinghurst郊區一帶巧妙地起了互動作用。Tina說：「當你在附近的街道上駕駛，一路上會發現舊倉庫及細小的磚牆混合成有趣的畫面，因此我們希望影樓周圍的環境有所交流。」CO-OP為此作出獨特的考慮去達到預期的效果，而這種充滿現代氣質的建築物亦與一帶的舊建築富融合得很好，沒有過份突出。Will指出：「我們研究過附近的建築物，如果你往上去幾個街口，會發現一些深褐色磚牆建成的舊屋，我們在影樓的外牆上穩穩地重現這種質如肝臟的顏色。」現代建築物重現舊日的風格，恰剛好地塑造出影樓的外貌。

建築師趁著這次機會，運用不同的物料及材料結構，去整合影樓的比例，營造附近範圍

的整體觀感。Tina認為：「影樓的內部確實比外表看來大得多，我們合理地善用所有的空間。」對於一個只有四百九十七平方呎的場地，卻能有效提供寬大的攝影室及戶外空間，善用空間果然是不二法門。LUXE樓高三米四，延伸的垂直空間感，方便攝影師的不同拍攝需求，設計過程中考慮到這個不可或缺的結構因素，令LUXE的空間功能發揮到極致。

六間攝影室分佈在各個樓層，屋頂陽台是拍攝戶外照及舉行派對的理想場地。影樓地下的結構和天花，沒有刻意的修飾，流露質樸的工業味道。此外兩間面積較小的攝影室既多用途又靈活，除了適合拍攝產品照外，一套商業廚房設備更專門用來拍食物造型類，打開影樓門口的大型玻璃門，便可讓車輛駛進拍攝場地。攝影室之間的問題可隨着不同需要而移動，既可作兩間獨立的攝影室，又可二合一成為大型攝影廳，這種變通能配合不同類型的活動各自所需的面積。

樓上的攝影室相對樓下的柔和氣氛來得更如光緒精神，連接天台的樓梯以百葉式設計，就像一個燈籠般大量收取自然光，活潑地照亮室內的環境。其餘四個分佈在樓上的攝影室，均配上大型窗戶及白色石膏板天花，巧妙地反射傾瀉來的光線，讓陽光在室內隨意照射，帶來一室光亮。

影樓的室內設計簡潔華美，建築外觀同樣簡樸自然。一份不知不覺散發出來的華麗，正是設計的主旨所在：不亢不卑不浮誇。Tina總結：「畢竟，我們希望輕描淡寫地帶出影樓的那份既實用又永恆的光彩。它最獨一無二的特色，便是一種樸實的性格，這只有出色的攝影師才懂得欣賞。」LUXE永恆的設計及優秀的執行技巧，見證經典風格帶出的魅力與優雅，即使經歷時間洗滌亦不失風采。E