





ARCHITECT BLACK KOSLOFF KNOTT ARCHITECTS
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANNON MCGRATH
TEXT STUART HARRISON

2partshouse.

Architect's statement A house of many parts. The project is an extension to a 1920s California bungalow for two academics with two children. The addition references qualities of the Californian bungalow such as textured surfaces, the play of natural light and liberal planning.

The house is essentially a series of many parts: the old and the new sections, the two halves of the extension, the incomplete walls and distinct, but flexible areas of activity. Many halves join together to create a variety of spaces both within and around the house. The house works not in opposition, rather in counterpoint. The seemingly disparate elements are brought together into a seamless whole that allows for a multitude of readings, functions and understandings. The backyard was conceived as a series of courtyard spaces, the residual of a conversation between the two main parts.



WITH THIS MODEST HOUSE EXTENSION, 2PARTHOUSE, Black Kosloff Knott (BKK) extends a series of formal concerns developed in two other residential projects, the Frame House and the Wrap House. The completed house is a tripartite configuration: a new distorted timber box, a simple timber link and the existing Californian-style bungalow. If the Frame House was named after formal device (and considered in elevation), Wrap a process (diagram), this recent project foregrounds the part-like nature of the completed building, and is therefore an argument clearest in plan.

The plan reveals that the different 'bits' are connected internally, resulting in a flowing living space that starts in the original corridor of the house. This is then the armature which forms circulation and forms rooms, living, kitchen, library. This one continuous space forms a key-shape in plan, separate rooms linked together, both open plan and room-based. The decision as to the openness of residential work is often a key concern for architects and their clients. Typically the old houses (pre-20th century) of the inner suburbs of Australian cities are made up of rooms – those that used to be both bedrooms and 'living' rooms. The houses of modernism are often configured by open planning, and many suburban houses of the post-war era are like this. Now the children of the modern house wish to live in the inner city, and they bring with them ideas of open living.

It is then often the case, where inner city houses are extended, to add open living areas whilst maintaining the original rooms as bedrooms. This house by BKK is typical of such a situation, but the outcome is more complex than one open living space. Here the cellular nature of the plan is consistent from front to back (through old and new); in this way it can be read as both open and room-based.

The Californian bungalow is often seen as a hybrid itself; with elements of both raumplan and open plan, as are some of the early 20th century houses by Desbrowe Annear in Melbourne. In this way, this project is an extension of the concerns of the existing house; externally, however, it can be read as having different 'parts'.

Perhaps one of the most engaging and clearly defined rooms is the small study behind the fireplace – a sort of reverse inglenook, this little room forms a block onto the boundary and adjoins the main living space, which is essentially a library.

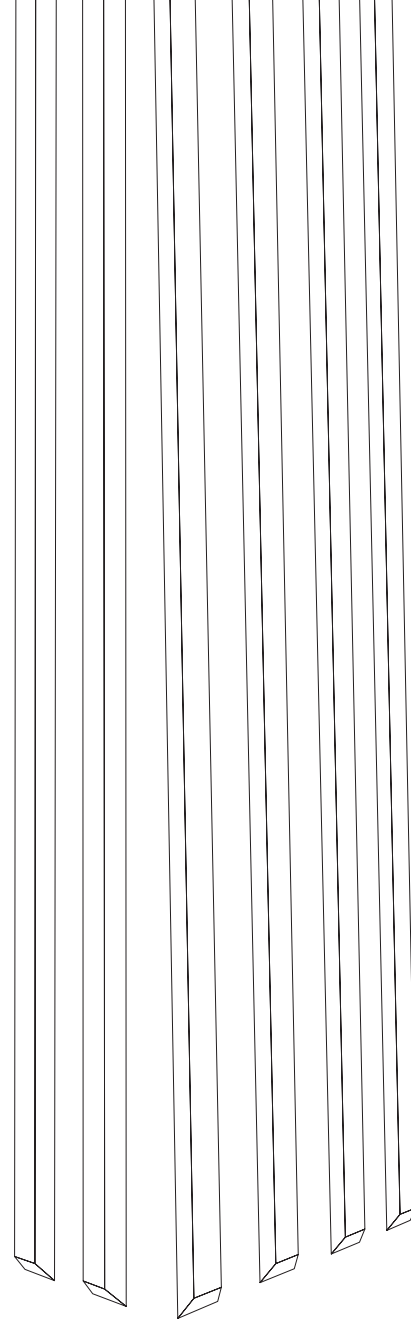
This library features a large full-height bookshelf, intercut with vertical windows. This wall is thick – through the bookshelf and the bulging form externally. This depth is emphasised through the thin vertical windows – far deeper than they are wide and finished in green painted steel plate. These windows face north, capture sunlight and edit the view of the outside – you see a bit of everything: grass, fence, tree, sky – a suburban sample from the comfort of this 'intelligent' space.

Externally, with its adjacent wall, this wall forms the tall distorted box/object that sits within the centre of the site. This is a single storey extension, but the box is tall enough for it to read as something clearly more than that – the scale is perhaps even institutional for a moment. The occupation in the centre of the backyard retains space around the object and cleverly avoids (planning) problems of high volumes on the site boundary. The relative openness at the back brings into the site the dense suburban scale typical of Elwood – some sites with single houses, the same size sites with blocks of six or nine flats from the 60s and 70s. An open form of urbanism unfortunately no longer allowed.

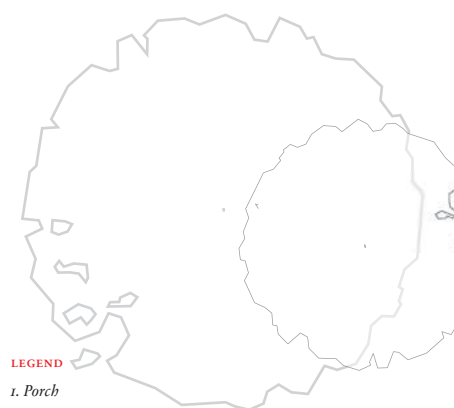
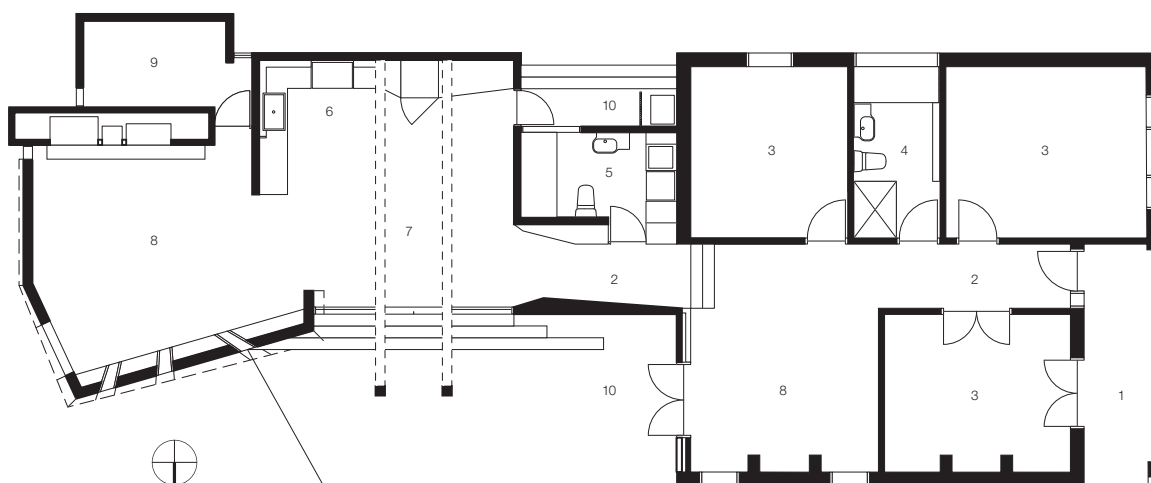
Silvertop ash boards and battens form the main external cladding, and these vertical lines on tilted planes begin to play eye games, like a subtle Op-art. Externally, the walls bulge out and then back in again, and the reading of floor level inside is suppressed as well – these steps make the object read like an object (even though it isn't) – along with the central siting. An object is often something like a sphere, not really grounded or located – and the object here moves down that path, but retains a clear architectural sense.

Verticality is a consistent theme in the project: the height of the object, the vertical timber cladding and proportion of the thin windows. Timber is the material theme, and also the construction system – this is vernacular timber framing – and therefore relatively cost-effective. The external timber cladding forms an interesting relationship to the new timber paling fence around the garden, but is clearly different to the brick and painted brick of the original house. The extension tucks under the gable end of the original house, in an unambiguous meeting with the existing. In this way the house has two clear parts as distinct from the others examples discussed, where a more complex relationship to the existing is evident.

1. Clearly distinct from its host, this addition to a Californian Bungalow reinterprets the dark grain and simple pragmatism of the period.
2. A composite play of vertical battens and bulging planes create a curiously non-domestic sculptural volume.







- LEGEND**
- 1. Porch
 - 2. Hallway
 - 3. Bedroom
 - 4. Bathroom
 - 5. Bath/Laundry
 - 6. Kitchen
 - 7. Dining room
 - 8. Living room
 - 9. Study
 - 10. Deck

- 3. A pair of exposed beams join 2 posts to support a sun screen.
- 4. The explicit two parts of the old and new.
- 5. The regime of verticality continues inside.
- 6. A central passage becomes the link between discrete rooms and open plan.



ARCHITECTS Black Kosloff Knott Architects (bkk Architects) **PROJECT TEAM** Simon Knott, Julian Kosloff, Rory Hyde, Amrita Mahindroo and Ben Kluger **CONSULTANTS** INTERIORS Black Kosloff Knott Pty Ltd Architects **ENGINEER** Design Action Pty Ltd – Patrick Irwin **QUANTITY SURVEYOR** Construction Planning and Economics Pty Ltd – Geoff Moyle **BUILDER** Latrobe Building Services Pty Ltd – Terry Hollingsworth **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Out from the Blue **CLIENT** Ian Gold and Natalie Stoljar **COUNCIL** City of Port Phillip **SIZE** New extension – 80sqm, existing house – 94sqm **TIME TO COMPLETE** Construction – October 2003, landscape – March 2004 **MATERIALS** WALLS Stud framing **WALL LININGS** Shiplapped, radial sawn timber weatherboards with radial sawn timber battens over. Timber Silvertop ash. Available from Radial Sawn Timber. No finish – left to weather naturally. **CLADDING** Carter Holt Harvey – EcoClad, plywood cladding **ROOF** Stramit ‘Monoclad’ metal deck roof sheet **GUTTERING** Stramit ‘Easyflow’ gutter **PAINT** Dulux paints **WINDOWS** Dayview – Sasless shugg windows **HARDWARE** Ingersol Rand – Dorma, Legge and Dalco **HEATING/COOLING SYSTEMS** Conway heating and cooling systems **INTERIOR MATERIALS** **CEILING** 13mm Boral plasterboard **INTERNAL WALLS** 13mm Boral plasterboard **PAINT** Dulux paints **LIGHTING** Supplied by Inlite, we-ef and Ism lighting **FLOORING** Radial Sawn Silvertop ash tongue and groove flooring **JOINERY** Formica ‘Victorian Teal’, Abet Laminati colours 496 and 459 **APPLIANCES** Elite appliances **TILES** Classic Ceramics

7. The deep shelves of the library accentuate the incisions of the three slot window.