

NEW ZEALAND RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

HOUSES

DESIGNER HOMES
Inspiration from
north to south

DESIGN OBJECTS
Product ideas
for your home

IAN ADAMSON
Houses with flair
from the mainland



ELEVEN GREAT NEW ZEALAND HOMES

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PROJECT

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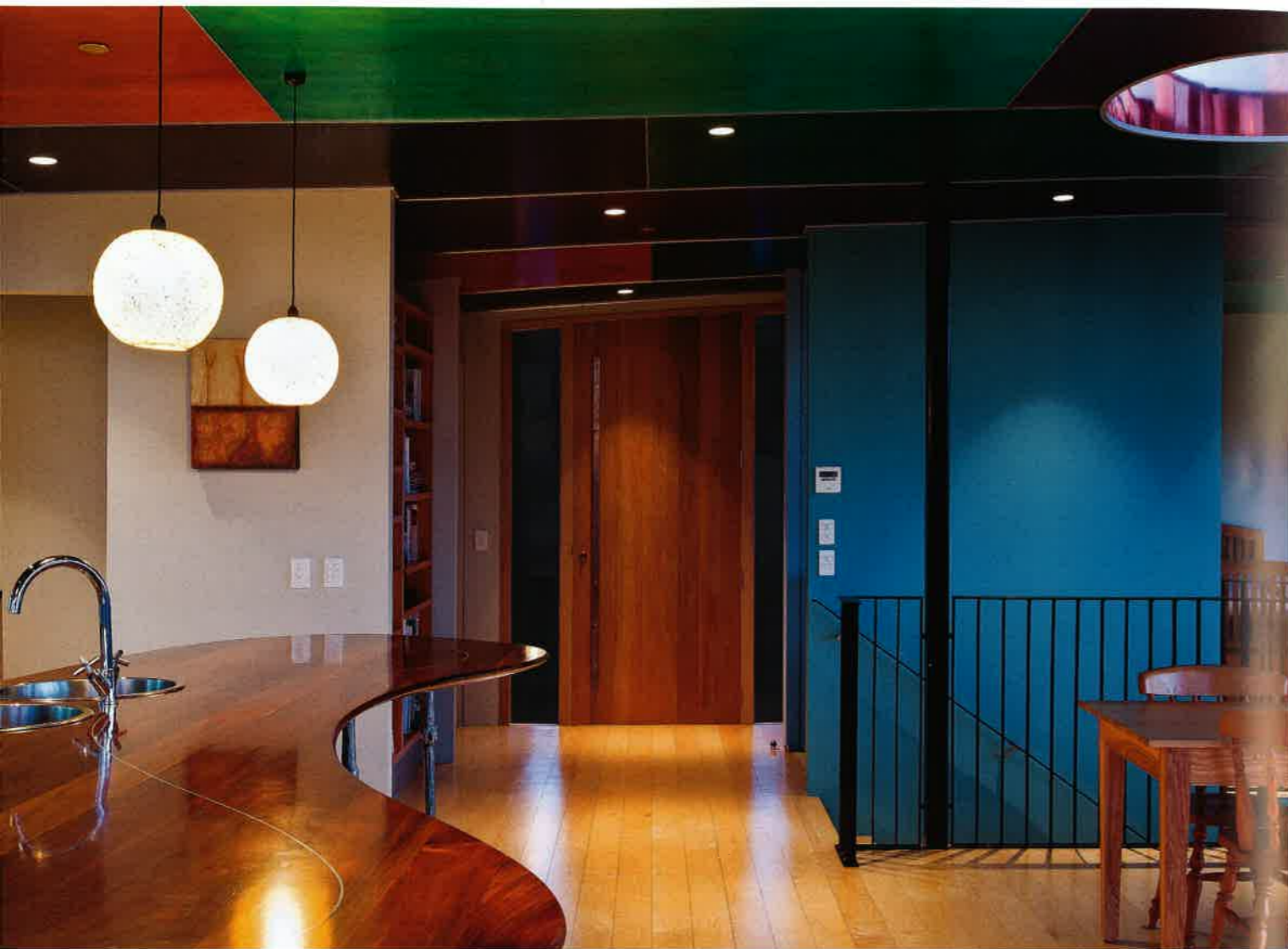
Tui HOUSE by John Mills Architects

• WELLINGTON •

This lovingly crafted and comfortable home has a unique personality.

Words by Justine Harvey
Photography by Paul McCredie

01 Tui House is discreetly and tightly nestled within bush and neighbouring homes.



02 The main entrance opens into the large, open living space. Different woods are used throughout, with copper and brass details adding warmth and character.

03 A copper lightwell draws sun or moon shadows into the dining area.

On the edge of Wellington's town belt, near the Zoological Gardens, local architect John Mills has tightly nestled a new two-storeyed home within neighbouring houses and bush. Tui House cleverly responds to its steep Melrose site by providing total privacy for its occupants, without fencing the new building off from the adjacent properties.

Access to the site is from the end of a cul-de-sac, down a path towards the southeastern corner of the building. The cedar-clad frontage shows clean lines, with visual clutter minimised by concealing a storage locker and drainpipes within the building. The cedar-panelled recessed entrance opens up into an expansive open-plan kitchen/dining/living area with panoramic bush, city and ocean views to the north, west and east.


The 'wow moment' here is a ceiling that essentially floats over the pavilion-like building, metaphorically repacing the sky with a spectacular cubic assemblage of colour-stained plywood. These natural hues are inspired by the colourful flash of plumage seen on a tui in flight (tui inhabit the surrounding bush). The tui-in-flight theme is carried into the form of the ceiling, which subtly dips and twist from the north and west towards the south and east. Above the dining table, a lovely feature is a gleaming copper lightwell that casts sun or moon shadows throughout the space, day and night.

The kitchen is the soul of the house, mainly because the owners are keen cooks: it is large and functional, incorporating ample

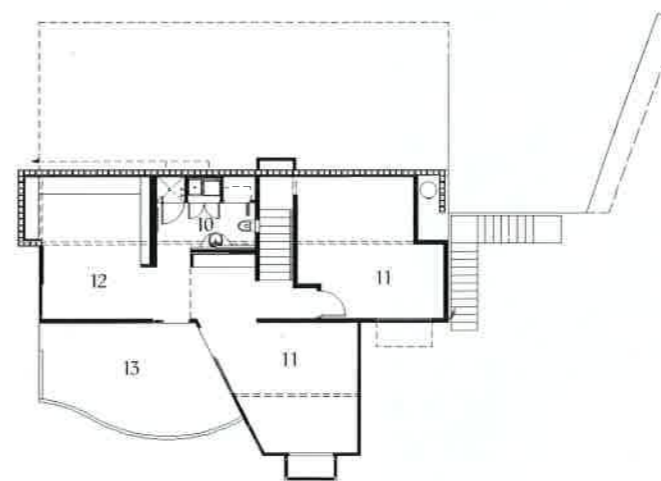
bench surface and a large no-door pantry. A curvaceous Tasmanian blackwood benchtop sits atop whimsical aluminium supports that were handcast by John Calvert from branches of larchwood - in true Hobbit style. Beside the kitchen, an L-shaped window seat stretches around the eastern corner of the house, offering a sunny perch for the owners to enjoy their morning coffee.

A bedroom on this ground-floor level leads out to a decked terrace which flows back into the living space. Window boxes provide cosy nooks to enjoy the sun and view at different times of the day. On the lower level are two more bedrooms, a media room and another decked terrace. A special feline feature - a discreet cat flap placed in the downstairs floor, rather than the door - is accessed under the building, keeping both the cats and the architect happy.

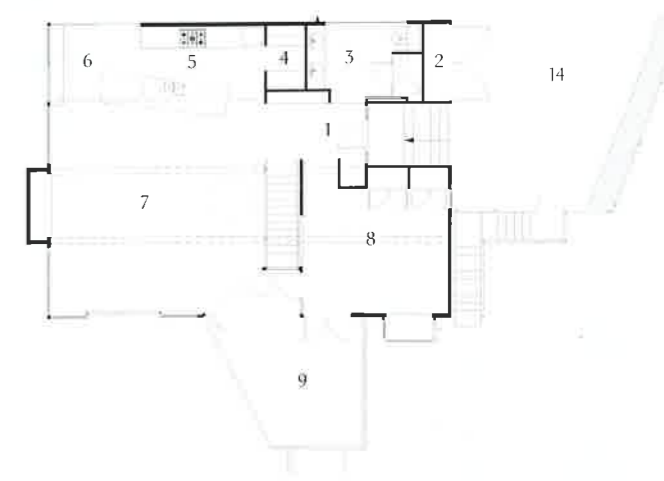
Various energy-saving measures were incorporated into the design, including solar water heating and wool insulating batts. It is particularly inspiring to see a Kiwi house that doesn't pay homage to the motor car: there is no garaging but, instead, a car pad utilises a small area of the site.

Mills suggests that the intention of the design isn't "to appeal to the fashions of the moment" but to fit harmoniously within the area, stand the test of time, reflect the diverse tastes of its owners (one a fan of modernism, the other of chunky wooden furniture) and with future occupiers' needs in mind. Everything is lovingly crafted, adding an engaging personality to what is a truly comfortable home. 

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1 Entrance | 5 Kitchen | 9 Deck | 12 Media room |
| 2 Store | 6 Snug | 10 Bathroom/laundry | 13 Deck |
| 3 Bathroom | 7 Living/dining | 11 Bedroom | 14 Car pad |
| 4 Scullery | 8 Master bedroom | | |



Ground floor plan



First floor plan





Practice

John Mills Architects (JMA)
21 Garrett Street, Wellington 6011
(04) 385 2255
johnmillsarchitects.co.nz

Practice profile:

Established in 1990, JMA has evolved to become a practice with wide-ranging scope, while still creating individual, design-driven homes with a uniquely New Zealand focus.

Project team:

John Mills, James Warren

Consultants

Engineer: Clendon Burns & Park

Quantity surveyor: Workshop
Quantity Surveyors

Kitchen designer: John Calvert;
JMA

Kitchen manufacturer: John
Calvert; Rennalls Joinery

Electrical: Peak Electrical

Builder

Planit Construction

Products

External walls: JSC Timber

Roofing: Nuralite

Skylight: APL

Ceiling: JMA; Intercoat

Internal walls: Gib

Flooring: Marmoleum by Forbo;
maple by Planit Construction

Windows and doors: Wellington
Windows & Doors

Lighting: Inlite

Heating: Radiant Heating solar

Blinds, drapes and upholstery:
Curtainworks

Decking: Will Wheeler

Time schedule

Design and planning: 12 months

Construction: 12 months

Project areas

Site size: 696m²

Building area: 220m² plus decking

05 The ceiling features panels of stained plywood, inspired by the colourful plumage of the local tui in flight.