

Under The Edge
The Architecture of
Peter Stutchbury

Second Edition.
300 pages.





Under The Edge
The Architecture of
Peter Stutchbury

Edited by Ewan McEoin
Photography by Michael Nicholson
Published by the Architecture Foundation Australia
Second Edition 2015



Under The Edge
The Architecture of Peter Stutchbury

Editor: Ewan McEoin
Photography: Michael Nicholson
Art Direction & Design: Studio Round
Editorial Coordinator: Jennifer McMaster

Text © 2015 Brit Andresen, Ingerid Helsing
Almaas, Richard Lepastrier, Lindsay Johnston,
Peter Stutchbury, Ewan McEoin
Photography © Michael Nicholson, Peter
Stutchbury, John Gollings (Cardboard House),
Jure Zavrtnik

Publisher: Lindsay Johnston, Convenor,
Architecture Foundation Australia

First published in Australia in 2011 by the
Architecture Foundation Australia. Second
edition published in Australia in 2015. All rights
reserved. No part of this publication may be
reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any
means, electronic or mechanical, including
photocopy, recording or any information
retrieval system, without permission in writing
from the publisher.

Architecture Foundation Australia
PO Box 90, Brooklyn, NSW 2083, Australia
info@ozarchitecture.org / www.ozarchitecture.org

ISBN 978-0-646-55233-0

Cataloguing-in-Publication entry is available
from the National Library of Australia:
<http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/>

Printing: Everbest Printing Co Ltd

Cover image: Contour House, Berry Mountain,
NSW, 2011 / Cover illustration: Sketch by
Peter Stutchbury

Previous page
Aboriginal Elder Uncle Max
Duhumman Harrison welcomes
Peter Stutchbury to the land of his
people in a traditional smoke ceremony.
Photo: Jure Zavrtnik

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Preface by Lindsay Johnston | 6 |
| Forward by Brit Andresen | 7 |
| <i>'The Land in Mind'</i> by Richard Lepastrier | 8 |
| <i>'Available Realities'</i> by Ingerid Helsing Almaas | 10 |
| <i>'Underpinnings'</i> by Peter Stutchbury | 16 |
| Projects in brief | 28 |
| – Israel House | 30 |
| – Design Faculty | 32 |
| – Nurses' Wing | 34 |
| – Archery Centre | 36 |
| – Bay House | 38 |
| – Birabahn | 40 |
| – Life Sciences | 42 |
| – Reeves House | 44 |
| – Springwater | 46 |
| – Bangalay | 48 |
| – Cardboard House | 50 |
| – SCU Innovation Centre | 52 |
| – Learning Commons | 52 |
| – Torovo House | 54 |
| Projects in detail | 58 |
| – Deepwater Woolshed | 74 |
| – Paddock House | 84 |
| – Bay Beyond | 98 |
| – Beach House | 112 |
| – Depot Beach House | 126 |
| – Garden House | 138 |
| – Theatre House | 150 |
| – Verandah House | 160 |
| – Outcrop House | 174 |
| – Hangar Flying Museum | 188 |
| – Reef House | 206 |
| – Contour House | 218 |
| – Cliff Face House | 228 |
| – Invisible House | 240 |
| – Wall House | 274 |
| Project index | 274 |
| Studio | 290 |

Lindsay Johnston
 33° 39' 03" S 151° 18' 40" E

Lindsay Johnston is Convenor of the Architecture Foundation Australia and former Head of School and Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design, at the University of Newcastle, Australia.

The architecture of the Edge, architecture of the Asia Pacific Antipodes, may be a counter-proposition to the mainstream architecture of the developed world.

In order to understand one's self, it is illuminating to attempt to understand the opposite, and it is for this reason that the architecture, particularly of Australia, the biggest land-mass in the Antipodes, now attracts such international interest.

There is an historical interface here between the hegemony of western culture and the many and exotic cultures of the east, of the Pacific Islands and the, perhaps misnamed, 'primitive' indigenous cultures, that exposes a deep understanding of building in harmony with place, climate and nature. The leading Australian environmentalist Bill Mollison, in his books on 'Permaculture', postulates "The seemingly-wild and naturally-functioning garden of a New Guinea villager is beautifully ordered and in harmony, while the clipped lawns and pruned roses of the pseudo-aristocrat are nature in wild disarray."

Australian architecture has grown from frugality, from scarce resources – either as indigenous building or the building of the early European settlers – thus giving it an integrity without flourish, that is technically considered. Unlike so much European architecture, it is not based on mass for substance and stability, but on a fragile framed typology in timber and, later, steel that defines much of the architecture of today. Technology that is efficient, often informed by nautical skills, derived from immediate and transportable materials and, interestingly, capable of disassembly and reuse – a contemporary imperative.

A benign climate in many parts of Australia facilitates dissolution of the boundary between inside and out, manifest architecturally in walls that slide completely away, corners that fold out and, even, roofs that open to the sky - buildings that can be 'sailed like a yacht'. Thus setting up an immediacy between architecture and place, users and climate, that is 'news' to many from other parts of the globe and is timely, now, in the contemporary global challenge to reduce resource consumption by the human species on planet Earth.

Brit Andresen
 Forward

Peter Stutchbury's award winning architecture continues to stimulate a new and increasing awareness of the potential for designing with the Australian landscape and its environment. His built works of architecture are expertly and inventively responsive to the environmental context in both form and technology. Many works have that added quality of being composed with a 'knowing anticipation' of movement through spaces that offers memorable experiences of the landscape. Carefully constructed openings are located to expand compressed space but also to offer an experience of the natural world both through near views of great rocks close by and distant views up to animated treetops and shifting sky.

His exemplary architecture also exhibits the way technology may be adopted and elegantly transformed to meet the more complex performance tasks of shelter and context. It demonstrates great clarity of thinking in adapting a range of passive cooling methods to moderate the impact of a challenging climate for owners and occupants. This suite of measures, together with creative use of materials and construction simplicity, informs the elegant re-interpretation of iconic Australian building typologies. Whilst Peter Stutchbury's knowledge and respect for traditional building methods contribute to his analytical thinking, it is his formal and technical synthesis in designing which has reinvigorated and transformed the traditional to produce both exceptional contemporary buildings and new models for living and working.

With his open-minded and experimental approach to architecture, Peter Stutchbury has engaged with and completed many inter-cultural commissions of high merit including projects in Australia, Russia and Japan. His ongoing interest in inter-cultural and international exchanges finds expression not only in his practice work, the make-up of his studio team and professional presentations but also in his involvement with architectural education and general architectural culture-building. Through his lecturing and teaching both in Australia and abroad, Peter Stutchbury has been a central figure in introducing international students of architecture to issues inherent in designing with the Australian landscape and in promoting the highest standards of architecture.

Brit Andresen is a distinguished academic and Emeritus Professor at the University of Queensland. As a practitioner with her partner Peter O'Gorman, their works have been published internationally. She was the first female recipient of the Gold Medal of the Australian Institute of Architects in 2005.



Viewing aperture overlooking the surf break at Theatre House, Central Coast, NSW.



Detail of roof vents at Reef House, Vanuatu, used to capture prevailing sea breezes and cross-ventilate the house.