

architects can save you money?

"I am just ringing you up to say thank you for saving us money"

-John a previous client was on the phone. *"What do you mean, I thought you always said I charged you through the nose?"* I joked. Ha ha ha - we both laughed (thankfully). *"No actually, Mona, I am being serious. My wife and I have just been tidying up the paperwork from our building project and found our original brief"...* When I meet John and Margaret, they were looking at retirement and saw this as the ideal time to go ahead and relocate their small character cottage home to Wairarapa as a weekend retreat and on the hilly section build their dream home in their ideal location; seaside Wellington. Their original brief had been for a 3 story house with the top floor for themselves and the two lower stories for garaging and to house their university school kids, when they were home for the holidays.

Let us think about this for a minute.

When we did the ball park calculations for the cost of the build it turned out that they were prepared to spend almost half of their budget for accommodation for their 3 kids, already moved away from home, accommodation which would be used at max maybe 2 months out of twelve. Completely crazy - once they saw the figures staked up like that, we changed the brief to a much smaller house, with more focus on actually making the spaces we created into high quality well designed rooms. The bonus of the altered brief there was more than enough money in the budget to give Margaret the kitchen she had always dreamed about, and for John his den with custom made library cabinets to house his collection of rare books.

There was still room for the kids when they came to visit. They just didn't have their individual rooms with en-suites as per the original brief. On top of all these rather expensive fit outs there was still money left over for them to spend on a nice overseas holiday.

Today the house is finished and they absolutely love it as do I, happy to help them create a sustainable high quality home which, given the fantastic location, was worth every penny spent, or saved, depending on how you look at it.

Quality over quantity. Or as Mies van der Rohe would put it: Less is More.

"A home is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul"

- Phillip Moffitt

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contents

- Architects Can Save You Money?
- The business of Architecture
- Master Builders Awards 2013
- About



'7 Mistakes people make when renovating'

-one of our recent publications. Contact us for more details.

info@callidusarchitects.co.nz



the BUSINESS of ARCHITECTURE

interview part one

On September 5th I was interviewed by Enoch Sears from the "The Business of Architecture", blog site working out of Fresno, California. It was a great opportunity to discuss architecture on a broader scale looking at both nationwide as well as global trends

Enoch: Welcome to this episode of Business of Architecture. Today, we're joined by Mona Quinn. She is the Principal of Callidus Architects, which is New Zealand's leading character home architecture firm. Callidus specializes in renovating character homes in New Zealand.

So, Mona, welcome to the show.

Mona: Thank you, Enoch.

Enoch: Please tell us a little bit about what your firm does. What is a "character home?"

Mona: When New Zealand was colonized, there were a lot of beautiful old homes built throughout the whole country. A lot of the building skills and building knowledge of how to continuously upgrade and also modernize and renovate these beautiful houses for today's market, we see as quite a unique skill.

The problem we have today is that there are a lot of new builders that come out on the market, who don't know how to deal with old properties, and how to detail them correctly and restore them correctly.

I've always been really interested in heritage. I think it has a lot to show us and we can still learn a lot from the past. A lot of it has been forgotten in today's world of just fast action and quick buck all the time.

We wanted to take the old houses and the old neighborhoods of New Zealand as a way to start having a conversation around, "How are we going to make the new neighborhoods of New Zealand, and the new houses of New Zealand just as great as the ones from the past?" So that in a 120 years, you still want to restore those and preserve those because we suffer, truly, from a lot of new badly planned houses and neighborhoods.

I'm sure it is happening in the States. We see a lot of photos from neighborhoods over there as well. Unfortunately, I don't see that as a very sustainable way of managing the Earth's resources and, also of managing people's happiness.

To be continued...



Typical Danish home



Typical New Zealand home

master builders awards GOLD WINNERS

We are proud to announce that our renovation in Lowry Bay won three awards in the latest Master Builders Awards:



GOLD Award
Best Renovation
over 500K



LIFESTYLE Award
Best Kitchen



LIFESTYLE Award
Best Bathroom

Thank you to Brian Marriner and his team at Maridale Construction, as well as all his subbies, Focus QS, CHP Wellington and off course last but not least our wonderful client for a great project and a great end result.

about



Mona Quinn.

Mona Quinn speaker, author and commentator is one of NZ's leading character home architects. Her education started in Denmark at the prestigious Royal Academy of Arts, School of Architecture

and she has drawn inspiration from her extensive travel around the world ever since.

She has a passion for restoring character buildings both through her work for clients and her own development projects. She set up Callidus Architects in 2010, specialising in Character Home Renovations.

Her combination of Scandinavian design flair and nz no8 wire attitude provide a practical approach to design and construction. A love of old buildings and her unique skills set result in designs that enhance the original character and add a sophisticated flair.

contact

email info@callidusarchitects.co.nz

phone (04) 527 4304

mail 84B Johnsons Rd
RD1, Whitemans Valley
Upper Hutt, 5371

web www.callidusarchitects.co.nz