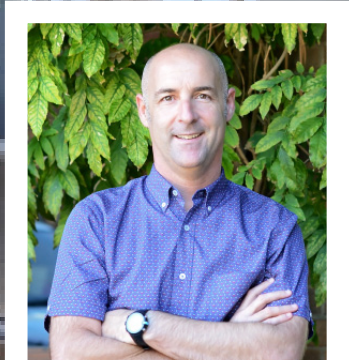


SENSE OF SECLUSION

Featuring recycled materials and a skilfully orchestrated plant palette, this courtyard is a masterpiece of design



STEVE WARNER
Director,
OUTHOUSE design

People spend all their time, energy and resources designing and personalising the inside of their homes but neglect their outdoor spaces. By making some clever design choices, however, you can capitalise on any outdoor area — and even turn it into a seamless extension of your home.

When OUTHOUSE design principal and founder Steve Warner received the design brief for this small-space project, it was clear that the terrace home, located in Sydney's Inner West, had recently been transformed with a modern architectural rear extension. Sadly, when you ventured through the character-filled hallway to the rear of the home, you were greeted by a bland paved courtyard that was seriously lacking in style and substance.

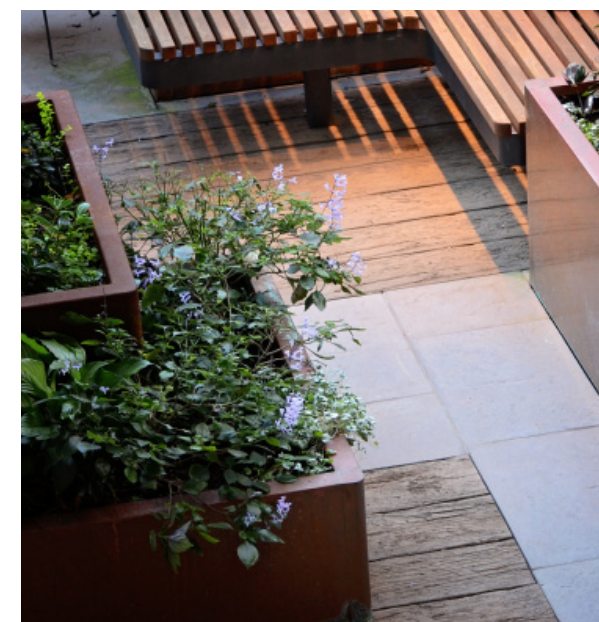
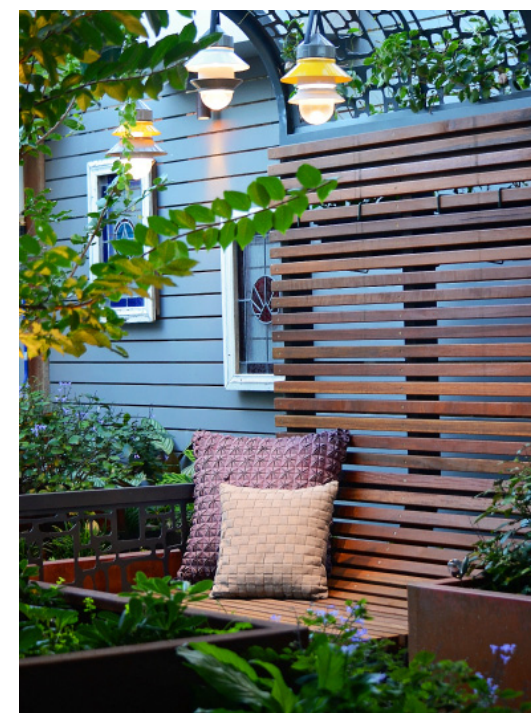
Even though the owners have a strong sense of style and character, this personality ceased to exist within the concrete courtyard. So, Steve worked closely with the owners to inject a little bit of their style and totally reinvent the space. With project management by Simon Munn at Urban Garden Enrichment, and the supply and fabrication of the raised metal planters and overhead structure by PO Box Projects, the garden was brought to life.

For privacy, Steve designed an overhead structure with a pattern that enables plenty of light to flow into the courtyard, while still creating a sense of privacy. The curved shape of the structure allows for a supportive daybed or seating, providing the perfect place for whiling away some time on a lazy afternoon.

As the owners favour reuse and recycling, the team wanted to incorporate this into the design. Recycled materials and unique items purchased by the owners on their travels around the world have been interwoven into the highly textural space, ensuring it very much reflects their personalities. Adding to the distinctive character is the water feature, built using recycled timber and bricks.

The existing fence was in good condition so was retained. To soften the look of the fence, and the rest of the walls, which are glass, the team planted ficus, a low-maintenance climber. Also reused were the existing pavers which were cut to fit the new design — this meant no trips to a landfill site as no excavation or waste removal was involved.

Also scoring high on the environmental scale are the raised planters which were more energy-efficient to manufacture than creating concrete footings and concrete walls. The overhead structure was manufactured using



light-gauge materials that ensure product longevity and no ongoing maintenance.

All of the planting was selected with ease of care in mind. Drought-hardy, flowering key shrubs create year-round interest while groundcovers retain moisture within the pots on hot days. Deciduous feature tree planting allows the right balance of natural light in winter and shade in summer, which also cools the house. There are also lightweight vertical planters that soften the space and contribute to the sense of lush green.

The water feature, which can be seen from all areas of the house, creates an extra layer of interest and by building it with recycled bricks, it blends with the character of the home.

This inner-city project is the recipient of two honours. In the 2019 AILD National Landscape Design Awards, OUTHOUSE

design received the coveted Gold award and Best in Category Residential Landscape Design Less Than 50sqm award. The judging panel that this courtyard design was a great example of how to maximise a small space and embrace the use of recycled products.

NSW

PROJECT DETAILS

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