



TAKE A MOMENT

An engaging garden that draws you outside and makes you want to linger

The rear garden of this terrace home in Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs may be small, but its layout and flow make it feel considerably bigger. A two-storey studio with parking above had been added at the end of the garden, so when designing the outdoor space it was important to complement the new timber-and-concrete structure for a seamless visual transition. The inclusion of a water feature was also essential, with the homeowners eager to enjoy the sense of calm it would bring year-round — and its cooling effect during summer.

“This is a well-defined garden. It has a strong sense of order while being engaging, just like our clients,” says Steve Warner, principal of OUTHOUSE design. “It is also practical, which it needed to be. With pet dogs to accommodate and the clients’ busy lifestyle, the garden needed to work well and be easy to maintain.” Broad concrete steps link the two garden levels and forge a visual connection with the defined concrete slab of the garage. Concrete forms part of the pared-back palette of materials, which also includes timber and Corten steel. Each works in harmony with the other: the grain in the timber,



Photography: Katrine Mardini

SENSE OF CALM



the exposed aggregate in the honed concrete, and the earthy, rusted patina of the Corten edging.

Simple yet captivating, the water feature is a mesmerising work of art, the focal point of which is a freestanding deep-grey, fine-ribbed Sakura stone fountain from Yardware. This has been paired with a custom-made bench that is long enough to allow someone to lay down yet equally ideal for just sitting, taking a moment and dangling your feet in the water.

“Creating the one-piece, 1800mm-long concrete seat was a bit of a challenge, but with the help of Urban Garden Enrichment and a skilled concrete team, we came up with a great solution. Formwork and reinforcement allowed a one-time pour for the water feature bench, the main seating configuration as well as the concrete tops,” says Steve.

The colour of the poured concrete blends well with the existing on-site concrete to create a unified look. It also harmonises with

the Eco Outdoor Linton sandstone pavers, used in a random-length format for the main entertaining area and stepping stone path.

The planting was challenging, too, as the garden has two key microclimates: full shade on one side, full sun on the other. Also, a way had to be found to incorporate an established magnolia tree — for balance, pear trees were planted on the opposite side of the garden.

For Steve, the most satisfying part was the water feature. “We don’t often get a chance to design and install a traditional pond, so when we do, it’s great to be able to create a feature that brings a garden to life in the evening and cools the space in summer,” he says.

more info?

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