

OUT OF THE BOX

A thoughtful update of this 1960s Brisbane home maximises space and light, and forges a fresh connection to the outdoors.

STORY KATE NIXON | PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE RYAN

With the long run of concertina windows open, the kitchen space merges with a large, protected terrace. Stools from Space. Sofa, table and chairs all from Noble House. Cushions from Ambience. For Where To Buy, see page xxx.

'THE CHALLENGE WAS TO MODERNISE AND EXPAND WHILE PRESERVING THE HOME'S UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS.' SHAWN GODWIN



Over a marble-clad base, a box of painted MDF channels natural light from the old fireplace opening in the ceiling. At right, a wraparound bulkhead in rich wenge veneer defines the kitchen zone. Marble from Finestone Granite & Marble. **OPPOSITE** Owner Sandra Tsunoda and architect Shawn Godwin in the kitchen. Artworks from Hang Ups Gallery (left) and Jive Gallery (right), Lamp from Corso De' Fiori. For Where To Buy, see page xxx.



Paint colours



xxxxxx



xxxxx



xxxxx



xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Renovation veteran Sandra Tsunoda knew that she had found her latest project when she spotted this house for sale in Brisbane's northern suburbs. Dating from the 1960s, it reminded her of the work of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, particularly his iconic Fallingwater house in Pennsylvania.

"I'm interested in house design and look for homes in their original state," says Sandra, who lives here with the youngest of her adult children, Emiko. "I particularly love Frank Lloyd Wright's work, so this was a very exciting find."

Project architect Shawn Godwin of Base Architecture was equally enthused at the idea of working on the property.

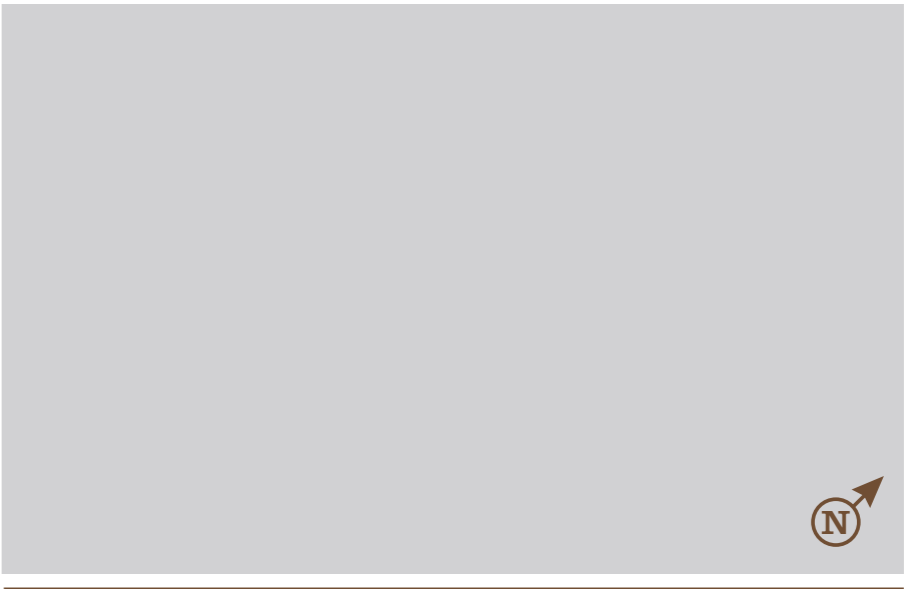
"The original design incorporated many avant-garde features, including suspended, cantilevered concrete slab construction, metal door and window frames, slate stone cladding and parapet eaves," he says. "It was ahead of its time."

On just 560 square metres of land, Sandra wanted to achieve an increase from three bedrooms to four and one bathroom to three, while also opening up the interior to interact with proposed external spaces. "I thought that introducing integrated breakout spaces would be the greatest value we could add to this quintessential Queensland home," she says. "Shawn managed to incorporate four."

Although open-plan in its original conception – again, very forward-thinking

How they live

"The house is so easy to maintain, and it fits our busy in-and-out lifestyle perfectly," says owner Sandra Tsunoda. "We can just lock it up and go to the beach without any worries." It's also a great gathering place for the extended family home, in that it provides opportunity for a large number of people to come together, yet also offers privacy with discrete living areas. "It's become a great party house!"



'I LOVE USING STONE. FOR THE MAIN BEDROOM I PICKED THE TRAVERTINE FIRST, THEN WORKED THE COLOUR PALETTE AROUND IT.' SANDRA TSUNODA, OWNER



ABOVE In the main bedroom, a wall of travertine marble connects to the northern terrace. Mirrored bedhead from Domayne. Bedside lamps from Corso De' Fiori. Bedcover from Sheridan. Cushions from Ambience. **OPPOSITE** A long, horizontal window over a sofa turns this green garden view into an ever-changing artwork. White leather sofa from Space. Caramel suede sofa from Corso De' Fiori, Armchair from Dare Gallery. Coffee table and side table from Natuzzi. For Where To Buy, see page xxx.

Before

What they did

THE BRIEF To make the house larger, with multiple outdoor living 'rooms', and to update it from 1960s style to something cutting-edge and contemporary, while still respecting the original design.

KEY FEATURES Changes to the floorplan allowed for an additional bedroom, plus multiple living spaces and terraces, with focused interaction between inside and out. Dated existing surface materials were swapped for modern counterparts: for example, slate tiles were replaced with travertine tiles, porphyry with quartz stacked stone.

WHAT IT COST "Way over. Let's not even go there!" says owner Sandra Tsunoda. "The project grew from inception and the budget followed," architect Shawn Godwin points out.

WHAT THEY LOVE The northern outdoor terrace with its 4m ceiling, nominates Sandra. "It's screened by a 'wall' of black bamboo that offers both privacy and a beautiful green vista."



'PASSIVE CLIMATIC DESIGN, INCLUDING WATER-SAVING TAPS, IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY GADGET.' SHAWN GODWIN

for its time – the existing house was dark and introspective on its small footprint. "As soon as you walked through the door, you were hit with a huge, dark fireplace that blocked the view to anywhere else," Sandra recalls. "In the end, we gutted the whole interior to start again."

From the front entrance and reception foyer, limestones tiling flows now through an open arrangement of discrete living and dining areas, with the kitchen stretching along the northern side. "The original kitchen was walled in and tucked away with no apparent view to anywhere," Shawn says. "We saw a great opportunity to open up the northern side and create a covered court space, raised and screened from the adjacent property."

The revised kitchen is not only a great functional space but also promotes a fluid sense of connection to the large, north-

facing terrace, one of three outdoor spaces on this level, via a seven-metre run of concertina windows.

Corridors lead from the social spaces to the three existing bedrooms, retained in their original position, and two bathrooms, while a new bedroom suite has been added to other side of the house. In between is a staircase leading down to another living room and bathroom, transformed from existing utility spaces, as well as another terrace and a new pool alongside the home's front steps.

"It was a late decision to add the pool but, in hindsight, one of the best," Shawn says. "I love the way it interacts with all the other aspects of the house, not least of all the entrance, where it reflects the best of old and new."

Base Architecture, Grange, Qld; (07) 3352 5899 or www.basearchitecture.com.au.

ABOVE A wall-hung vanity, frameless shower screen and inset storage add up to a sleek, marble-tiled ensuite. Basin and tapware from Reece Bathroom Life. **OPPOSITE TOP** The water feature in the south-eastern courtyard incorporates crushed sandstone pebbles and a stainless-steel trough planted with reeds. Pebbles from Island Stone. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** Utility space on the lower ground floor was reclaimed for a living room with views to the new pool. Outdoor chair from xxxxxx x. For Where to Buy, see page xxx.



Top tips

- * Live in the house through changing seasons to get a feel for the light before you plan renovations, suggests owner Sandra Tsunoda. Also, make sure you and the architect share a vision.
- * Be realistic about budgets, architect Shawn Godwin advises. Allow a minimum of \$2000 per square metre. Start with what you want, then pare back to what you need. Consider what needs to be demolished; if an element can be kept without compromising the design, it will save you money.
- * Be prepared for surprises and delays: you never know what you'll find behind a wall or under the floor.

