RESTLESSLIVING

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BAAN AKARD YEN

Bangkok, Thailand

Formally known as Baan Akard Yen, the two-storey residence is placed on Yen Akard street. Curiously enough, ‘Akard Yen’ means ‘Cool Air’ and since the owner wanted a home filled with comfort and cool breezes, the name seemed to perfectly fit the project.

On a 1,600 m² site, Baan Akard Yen is a project going through several design processes. “ Initially, the property was located on only around 400 m² land, with a concept of voyeurism as a visual interaction between different spaces through framed views so that one will know where the other is within the house. Due to the constraint of the area in comparison to the spatial requirements the owner wished to have, the first design for Baan Akard Yen focused on circulations and openings to help navigate and join each of the complex internal organization of functions and spaces”, Principal Architect at Studio Krubka, Danai Surasa, says. However, there were also a rather amusing reason to why the project needed to be revised several times. “We were done with the [first, ed.] construction and bidding process and was ready to start the construction. A Feng Shui master came and said that the house will need to be mirrored – the entire layout – or someone will come to an unfortunate event. So, the drawings were revised, recalculated and went through a new tender by the contractor. When we were ready to start building, the owner purchased a neighboring piece of land and from 400 m², we now had 1,580 m², thus

BAAN AKARD YEN









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the third round of designing had to be done. In the end, when thinking back, we liked this final design better [laughing]", Danai explains. The end result was a home with five different designed courtyards within, highly encouraging the inhabitants to experience different landscapes throughout the project – not to mention allowing the house to flood with light. Due to the extension of the home, the courtyard also functions to create a visual linkage between areas, ensuring the owners to 'be together' no matter where they are in the house.

Inspired by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando and more specifically the living room of his Koshino House (1984), Baan Akard Yen uses the change of light during the day to showcase the imperfections of the concrete surfaces. "Seven cast concrete walls become the main visual structure and define separate different zones within the project yet allowing for each to be linked through specific openings located within these main structures", Danai explains. The central corridor was the main signature of the project. Here, two curved concrete ceilings with skylights were placed at each end to further enhance the miniature play of shadows, evidently proving the uncontested uniqueness of Baan Akard Yen.

Architecture by **Studio Krubka** Photography by **Beer Singnoi**



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DM HOUSE

Mata de São João, Bahia, Brazil

Situated northeast of the Brazilian metropol Salvador, Praia do Forte is a hidden gem scouting the Atlantic Ocean. The coastal village is well-renowned for its charm and natural beauty, where tourists from all over the world are welcomed to appreciate traditional food, ecotourism and sunny days by the golden beach. The village carries a relaxing and laid-back atmosphere that makes it a perfect place to build a home, characteristics that DM House had meticulously incorporated into its design. We talked to the principal architects at Architects+Co, Caio Bandeira and Tiago Martins.

“The inspiration comes from the surrounding nature. Its shapes, colors and textures lead us to think about interiors that connect the dweller with the green and the landscape. Bahia’s warm climate – with coastal forests and beaches, invites us to an open leisure area to enjoy day and night by the pool, or just be out in the sun and watching the view. The connection with the landscape is its strong point”, Caio Bandeira begins. Fundamentally, DM House is a double-level family home spread over 700 square meters of elevated plot. Surrounded by native vegetation and with views to the sea, the home could be anyone’s dream – having memorable days in a place of endless summer. That said, comfort is key and is implemented here in ways that also serves the identity of the DM House – by means of brise soleil. The feature contributes to keeping the interiors cool and it is also aesthetically pleasant, creating striking patterns on the facade.

Architects+Co approaches nature as its precious frame and introduces a design that is in dialogue with its place. “Natural materials, such as local stones, wood, and handcrafted work are inserted into the project, reflecting its regionality. We favored the work of local professionals, also making the work sustainable. The openings of the leisure area to the landscape are our response to the temperature of Bahia”, Tiago Martins explains. The interiors are primarily guided by comfort with a color palette that emphasizes natural elements. “The wide ceiling height of the living room is the highlight of the interiors. In the leisure area, there are spaces to enjoy the day by the infinity pool, or the night while drinking wine at the wine cellar”, Caio concludes.

Architecture by **Architects+Co**

Photography by **Tarso Figueira**









STRONG ARM HOUSE

Middle Park, Australia

Designed to suit a busy family of seven, Strong Arm House was naturally requested to be flexible and practical so the family could comfortable live here all together while catering to their evolving needs. Originally, the house was a modest bungalow, but with the reconfiguration of the existing and a contemporary addition, a strong sense of place was created for the large family.

“Strong Arm was all about space and light really and trying to provide flexible open living space for a family of 7 with a strong connection to the garden”, the Director at MCK Architects, Mark Cashman, initially says. MCK Architects accomplished this by making the garden ‘enter’ the living room, highlighted by the fact that the edge of the pool does not end until outdoor becomes indoor. As Mark puts it: “The abstract projecting pool unites the living space with the garden.” Strikingly for the design, however, is the incredible structure which emphasizes the name of the home. “The concrete sleeping box simply floats over the living space below. The desire was to have a columnless ground level space which resulted in a structural response with a post tensioned beam carrying the cantilevered concrete box at first floor level”, Mark explains.

Like many other Australian builds, contemporary upgrades are often additions to already existing heritage homes. The Strong Arm House falls under same category, and the transition between old and new was crucial for the design team. “There is a clear articulated junction between the old and the new which we expressed with a skylight. The new build location at the rear of the existing bungalow is more determined by local planning controls that require all additions to the rear and to be invisible from the main road. This kind of development is typical of the area with most modern architectural responses being secondary to the heritage of the existing being in a conservation area”, Mark elaborates and concludes: “The existing house was a fine example of its period and we restored the external street facade and all the interior that was retained. This was in strong contrast to the new but with lessons learnt from the old evident in detailing and finish.”

Through simple planning and a robust material palette, the house gives function and space to eat, play and rest. It creates a home of solitude and joy; a contemporary place to share moments in the years to come.

Architecture by **MCK Architects** Phototography by **Felix Mooneeram**















HILL HOUSE

St. Petersburg, Russia

There is always a certain mystery and a blissful serenity when in the forest, amid giant trees – that have been there for more years that one can count with both hands, or just appreciating the sound of the breeze. A home on the hill is a remedy that heals the soul. One cannot but feel energized and renewed after spending some days among nature. However, when one cannot content oneself with just some holidays, one can think of Hill House, a home built in the Russian mountainscape.

“The concept of the building takes into account all the natural values of the site. So the first floor is an extension of the mountain. There is a garage, storage room and other utility rooms. All main rooms are on the second floor. From here you have the best views of the forest and the river next to the house”, Lead Architect at Horomystudio, Olga Vetosheva, begins. The home’s facade is already inviting by itself. The dark shade instantly gives away the atmosphere the house seemingly proposes, and it does not compete with the surrounding, it complements it – as it is trying to verbalize that nature should not be obfuscated. “The facade of the building reflects not only modern architectural solutions, but also details that reflect the building’s belonging to the historical and cultural traditions of the territory”, Olga explains and continues: “On the windows, we have added openwork sliding shutters with traditional saw-cut carvings, which is associated with a rustic style. On the second floor balcony there is a lifting mechanism for the passage of the fire engine if necessary.”

Essentially, Hill House is a home that belongs to the mountains and its materiality confirms that, as Olga concludes: “Local natural materials were used in the construction of the house. The facade of the house is faced with a unique black stone from Karelia – gabbro-diabase, and natural oak is used in the interior decoration.”

Architecture by **Horomystudio**

Photography by **Dmitrii Tsyrenshchikov**

Words of the Week



Being from and living in Scandinavia, indoor-outdoor living is not a common phenomenon here. Most of the year, it is too cold or too rainy. When I started to experience homes around the world, I quickly noticed that indoor-outdoor living was a theme in many countries – strongly fueled by the difference in weather and the outdoor culture that follows. Back then, this way of extending the house was new to me, but the benefits were instantly clear. The functional value of the additional space was an obvious advantage, especially when having people over for a party or social gathering. Yet, I found the benefits related to mental health much more interesting.

In Denmark, we are not outside much during the winter. And the winter often lasts from October to March. Naturally, this disconnection to the outside can make a deep impact on our mood and our mental health – even the physical health as a lack of fresh air. People living in apartment buildings can probably also relate to this. Anyhow, what I am trying to say is that we often take the outside for granted. When we living indoor, we may not think about the consequences of not immersing ourselves with nature. But, effective indoor-outdoor living may help mitigate this obstacle.

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