

SIGHT LINES

Discover architecture that pays tribute to design standards of the past and an interior that harks to design trends of the future

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This house in Sandton's Morningside suburb was a collaborative effort between Kain Mason of PWM Architects, interior designer Nicole Roscoe and entrepreneur Jacques Duyver.

People, like houses, are strange. Both come in a tediously wide variety and it seems improbable to ever explore either to satiation. Endeavours to do so, however, soon become an apparent exposé of more of the same.

With apologies to people and houses everywhere, ubiquity tends to fog the best of intentions and expression thereof is as boring as it is trivial.

But people, like houses, invariably end up surprising you. It isn't a common occurrence, but once it hits, it's unmistakable and goes a ways to restoring interest.

This house melds all that was good and true about Early Modernism and the hospitability of Spanish vernacular architecture – adapted to suit a contextually South African landscape and climate. In fact, it is the house's very architectural engagement and interaction with its environment that make it noteworthy. Comprising only two levels, the house's low horizontal profile rambles over two wings where a gallery foyer divides public and private spaces.

Its cantilevered construction reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's *Falling Water* (1936) integrates exterior spaces and interior volumes. The lower-level living areas are surrounded by a moat and contoured by landscaped features like the stepped waterfall and walkway.

Remembering of course that auteurism in architecture is long defunct idolatry, one has to consider that this house must have been borne of a fortuitous marriage of minds. It was spearheaded by Keith Mason of PWM Architects – the acclaimed authority in premier residential architecture – the project was also a remarkable creative collaboration between much-lauded entrepreneur Jacques Duyver and interior designer Nicole Roscoe. As one of the country's few conceptual designers, Nicole's visionary talents and exceptional skill have made her a sought-after player in the hospitality and corporate interior stakes, locally and abroad. Jacques Duyver, on the other hand, has made his inquisitive nature and pioneering spirit a multi-million-dollar – yes, that's dollar – core business. Having recently diversified his brand to include several new ventures, among them an interior-design firm based in the UK, it would only be a matter of time before he outsourced skill sets to Ms Roscoe.

Of the house's most striking qualities, apart from its concrete construction, is its relationship to light, both natural and artificial. It is ambient in the dictionary sense – its electric blues and pinks enliven the interior and hark to the future of residential lighting schemes. Other notable features, like the suspended ceiling's barred vaults, serve to aid spatial perception and make private areas seem generously proportioned. Furniture sourced from celebrated design house Ligne Roset transposes the built structure's aesthetic appeal to lifestyle, the facilitation and enjoyment thereof.

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THIS PAGE On the perimeter of the courtyard, the patio – characteristically similar to a Thai sala thanam (water pavilion) overlooks the lap pool. Sides are open pavilions and mainly used as either a meeting place or space to rest and reflect.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP A reinterpretation of Thibaut Desombre's Fine dining chair (Gina by Ligne Roset) combines comfort and retro-chic design. Contours dining table and Celine sideboard also by Ligne Roset; the balustrade's brushed-steel finish complements the organic patchiness of concrete; Rive Gauche modular sofa and Good Morning pedestal by Ligne Roset. Mama floor-standing lamp with white tafeta shade, slate base and tubular steel counter-balanced arm also by Ligne Roset. The painting is by Robert Hodgins; a grid of circular mirrors as foyer decoration where even the post door is treated as a work of art.





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In the master bedroom, timber box cladding and a recessed lightbox feature provide an architectural alternative to headboards. The Celine bed and low side table in ebony-stained oak are by Ligne Roset.

With its cantilevered overhangs, stone cladding and cascading water feature, this house pays tribute to the pioneering Early Modernist architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright.

This bathroom features centralised island vanities, a free-standing tub and a backlit, glass-panelled wardrobe – a major trend in contemporary bathroom design.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The main living area comprises a lounge and informal reading area. To complement the massive volume, selected furniture pieces show a low profile and are reminiscent of '60s styling, but the focus is undoubtedly the pitch's architectural aperture feature. The Dixit occasional table in ebony-stained oak is used in conjunction with Dixit foot stools. The floor-standing lamp with aluminium frame and polycarbonate shade is the Easy Light from Ligne Roset and the Lagoon vase is made from moulded, mouth-blown glass.





OPPOSITE AND THIS PAGE,
CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT
The kitchen's long and narrow profile makes for a sleek utilitarian space, showcasing a mirror-like quartz surface, suspended hood and fume extraction, and a series of pendant lamps; an enclosed courtyard is a prime example of Spanish vernacular architecture and provides a convivial, localised entertainment space; set apart from the public areas, the home office is also a quiet space for reflection and looks out onto the garden. Stone cladding on the walls is a subtle indicator of the outside environment and blurs the lines between interior and exterior; the pool deck in teak also features a slight overhang for practical and aesthetic cohesion. As inside, boundary and retaining walls are either concrete or stone clad to extend the house's architectural vocabulary.

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