



# The Young ARCHITECTS

Bower Architecture was born when three young up-and-coming architects working in large-scale firms decided they had the energy and the ideas to break away. Before they even had an office they had a commissioning. Jade Vidal, one of Bower's three Directors talks STARDOM through the journey.

## DOES BOWER HAVE A PHILOSOPHY?

Many people are so preoccupied with trying to do something different in architecture that they forget about doing things well. How do you come up with a unique design? Simplicity. At Bower we strive to make the outcome of a complex process as simple as possible, including all the elements that go into a building; the client, the site, the authorities and the building process as well. If you solve all those things and make it as simple as possible you're still going to have a unique building and a really elegant solution. Every time a problem comes up like how to do a part of a building, that's the answer we're trying to get to. What's the simplest way we can satisfy these requirements?

## DOES MINIMALISM NECESSARILY EQUAL SIMPLICITY?

No-it's the same with minimalism as it is with trying to be unique. Instead of shoving everything aside to make a room brutally bare and minimal, we'll make the room as simple as possible. The way it functions, the way it uses the light, as long as this fundamental resolution is beautiful and clear it will be unique.

## WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THE WAY BOWER OPERATE?

We don't just specialise in one part (eg. concept design, overseeing construction, interior fit-out) of what is in total a very complicated process. Bower Architecture

sees the project through from the very first line drawn – whether that's an initial scribble when we're brainstorming on day one – right through to the day the client locks the door after they've moved in. Its very rare that one person can specialise in that whole process, but between the strengths of the three of us, we aim to comprehensively cover it off from start to finish. Also, we've been friends since uni. There's a lot of history there – even though we're different people, we've got a deep respect for how the other does things.

## YOU'RE A YOUNG TEAM, WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE READY TO BREAK OFF AND FORM BOWER?

When you get thrown into the architecture world it's initially quite daunting. You'd think after six years studying you'd be ready, but it takes a lot longer to learn how to handle all the things that come up. We got about six years into our careers and we were all out in bigger firms that did large-scale high-pressure projects constantly. We all did components of those projects. One day we got together and said, together we have the process covered, let's do it! Within three months we had our first major commissioning. The process is always that everything we do along the way we run past each other and we always pull each other into line. With roles, there's no one person who does a particular thing, but having said that we do have our key strengths.

[www.bowerarchitecture.com.au](http://www.bowerarchitecture.com.au)

## THE HERO PROPERTY – CAULFIELD, MELBOURNE

- › Over 400 square metres
- › Black zinc and charcoal block externally to create a stark contrast with an interior flooded with natural light
- › A series of north facing living volumes range in scale from expansive to intimate arranged beside, behind and over a central courtyard
- › The house is zoned into a downstairs area for the residing couple and an upstairs area for their grandchildren
- › The central courtyard and a void running the length of the house connect these zones and allow natural light to be captured absorbed and bounced throughout the house

Bower Architecture is Chema Bould, Anna Dutton and Jade Vidal



Images courtesy: Bower Architecture, Main Image by Colin Page