

Earthship

Architecturally, earthships form part of the discipline of adaptive reuse. They embrace a style of architecture developed in the late 20th century, which aims to utilise both natural and upcycled materials to create passive, sustainable, and often off-grid dwellings. Here, with Luigi Rosselli Architects' Earthship, that concept of adaptive reuse and connection to the environment is extended with the revitalisation of an existing home whose original design was akin to that of a drilling platform, hovering above, and entirely disconnected from, its craggy and precipitous surroundings.

Luigi Rosselli has never much been a fan of 'pole houses', constructed with the intention of admiring the view from above while denying contact and symbiosis with the natural habitat the house occupies. As such, the aim with Earthship was to bring the existing two storeys of the house down to earth by adding a further two storeys below them to create a direct link to the garden.

Visitors to Earthship approach from above, negotiating a steep driveway to reach a level, landscaped courtyard; an intentional resting place in contrast to the steep hill the home occupies. From there the formation of the rammed earth walls, constructed in a warm and welcoming colour reminiscent of the external walls of the famous Casa Malaparte villa (<http://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/LIBERA/OBJ/1938.%20Casa%20Malaparte.%20Capri.%20ITALY.html>) - a magnificent example of an earthed structure to be found nestled amidst dramatic limestone cliffs on the island of Capri – guide guests to the front entry porch of the house.

Once inside, the visitor meets with a linear stair that cascades down to the different levels of the house. Above the stair is a deep void capped with a large skylight that allows natural light to flow down through each storey. The descent is easy and comfortable and leads first to the main living-dining- kitchen area, and then on again to the lower floors which house a guest bedroom, a sunroom, and a gym.

Each floor has a generous balcony; a succession of nautical-inspired tiered terrace decks, their ship-like appearance softened by tall trees and vegetation. This nautical appearance is not as pronounced as that of the Cottage Point (<https://luigirosselli.com/residential/cottage-point>) house, Luigi Rosselli Architect's first major project, designed and built towards the end of the 1980s, which was described as Noah's Ark moored on the _____ of Mount Ararat. As its name suggests, Earthship is more earthy than its predecessor.

In its realisation, Earthship successfully combines the tenacity of Project Architect, Nicola Ghirardi, the interior design flair of Romaine Alwill and the landscaping excellence of Will Dangar to produce a home of warmth and comfort to those who inhabit it.

Earthship is a branch of the adaptive reuse discipline of architecture, particularly in revitalising existing houses that have been designed as drilling platforms hovering over the mountainous landscape. LRA has never been a fan of pole houses built with the intent of admiring the view and nature from above and denying contact and symbiosis with the environment. Earthship house has aimed to bring the existing two storeys down to earth by adding another two storeys below more connected to the garden.

enclosed by rammed earth walls, which serve to guide guests to the front entry porch and conceal the garage door. The level courtyard is an intentional contrast to the steep hill the site occupies.

Visitors approach the entry from above through a steep driveway and a rammed earth courtyard. The level landscaped courtyard is intentionally contrasting with the surrounding steep hill.

Rammed earth is a warm and welcoming material, in this case it was used as a closed solid wall to lead to the front porch and entry concealing the garage door.

The colour of the earth was intended to be similar to the famous Casa Malaparte of Capri, a magnificent example of an earthed structure perched on the limestone cliffs of the island.

Once inside the visitor is confronted with a linear stair cascading to the many levels of the house, with a large skylight showering the flights of steps. The descent is easy and comfortable and leads to the main living-dining-kitchen floor, and if the locomotion does not stop, the floors below with the guest bedroom, gym and sunroom.

Each floor has a generous balcony and the succession of those terraces provides a tiered nautical inspired decks. The shiplike appearance is softened by the tall trees and vegetation that surrounds the building. It is not as pronounced as LRA first major project of the 1980s the Cottage Point House. It was called as a Noah's Ark moored on the plains of Mount Ararat Earthship is more earthy than its predecessor.

The project was successfully realised with the tenacity of Nicola Ghirardi the project architect, Romaine Alwill's interior design flair and Will Dangar's landscaping excellence.

Credits

Location: Mosman, NSW

Design Architect: Luigi Rosselli

Project Architects: Nicola Ghirardi

Interior Designer: Romaine Alwill for Alwill Interiors Pty Ltd <http://www.alwill.com.au/>

Builder: TC Build www.tcbuild.com.au

Structural Engineer: Cantilever Consulting Engineers <https://cantileverstudio.com.au/>

Joiner: Corelli Joinery www.corellijoinery.com.au

Landscape Architect: Will Dangar for Dangar Barin Smith <https://dangarbarinsmith.com.au/>

Photography: Prue Ruscoe <http://prueruscoe.com/>

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