

australian style

TAYLOR SQUARE NEWS
4NF07.95
PM 9331 2026

LOMO
PLACEBO
REALITY TV
GOLDFRAPP
GHADA AMER
MAGGIE CHEUNG

WHAT A GUY!

GUY PEARCE LOSES HIS MIND

ALEXANDRE MATTHIEU
DYNAMIC DESIGNER DUO

FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION
FAME ON THE HORIZON

TIME TRAVEL
FROM STEAM AGE TO SPACE AGE

NUMBER 49
MARCH 2001
\$7.95 INC. GST
\$2.58.95





THE YORK LOFT

australian style

MAKING SPACE

A SYDNEY DESIGN DUO IS MAKING MORE ROOM FOR PEOPLE WITH HIGH-RISE LIFESTYLES

STORY CATHERINE CAMPBELL

IF YOU THINK YOURS has been an eventful, up-and-down year, consider Trudi Scrymgour and Keith Glover's last 12 months. The duo at Form Follows Function, with their signature brand of "warm modernism", planted themselves firmly on the design map with an award-winning loft in New York, a re-fit at Sydney's landmark Horizon building, and a full kit-out of the 14-storey Lumina apartment building in East Sydney.

They've also moved their shop, which sells a select range of covetable, mid-20th century furniture, to a sleeker address in the Burley Katon Halliday-designed Republic1. And somewhere in between, the couple – partners outside work for 13 years – split up, moved into separate homes and managed to keep their business partnership going.

"It basically got to the stage where something had to give and unfortunately the relationship went," jokes the pixie-like Scrymgour. "Yeah, we're not talking to each other now," adds the more laconic Glover, as he amicably chats in the pub with his one-time partner. The pair repeatedly make light of expectations that they will have turned into bitter enemies ("faarking bitch," Glover chimes in at one point, in a comical, suburban housewife accent). It's a formula that seems to work, and while both admit to going "a bit wild" after the break-up, things seem to have settled down into a pattern that allows them to be both friends and business partners. "Yeah," says

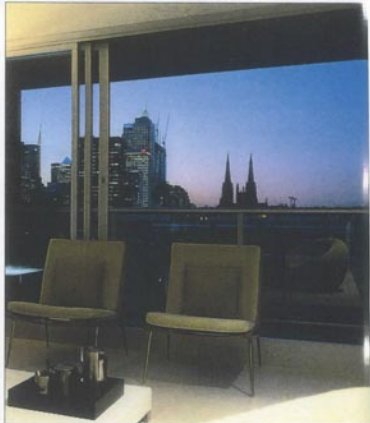
Glover. "We've basically got through all that break-up stuff, and it wouldn't be smart to throw the rest away at this stage, when we're just starting to get somewhere."

Evidence that they are getting somewhere takes the shape of their recent project in that jutting icon to celebrity chic, Harry Seidler's Horizon building. Scrymgour says Seidler's original plans for the interior got hijacked by the developers, so despite the north-facing banks of windows and the curving balcony, the apartment that they set to work on was littered with "nasty" enclosed spaces and dark corridors. The two bedrooms and two bathrooms were all too boxy for owners Richard Ludbrook, head of Pioneer Studios, and his partner; Form were given the task of opening up the place to the third-floor views.

The result is a light-drenched haven with just one bathroom, a much bigger living area, and a walnut-veneer kitchen that seamlessly segues into the living space. The most distinguishing feature, however, is a sliding door that effortlessly converts the place from a one-bedroom to a two-bedroom. When the solid door is pushed across, a second bedroom or study emerges. When it retracts the area dissolves into the living room. Even the dimensions of this second area can be altered, as its other 'wall' is actually a full-height, full-width bank of cupboards and shelf space. Mounted on castors with a spray-painted, white satin finish, it's a >>



LUMINA APARTMENT



» feature in itself, and can be moved in or out to increase or decrease size at will. "It's quite sculptural," says Scrymgour. The interior designer-cum-interior architect, and her partner, an architect by training, came up with their rapidly-becoming-a-trademark idea after paying homage at that modernist shrine, Gerrit Rietveld's Schröder house in The Netherlands while they travelled around Europe in their twenties. Their Horizon design delivers more than a passing nod at traditional Japanese housing too, but most importantly, they say, "it just makes sense". So much sense, in fact,

that since finishing the job last year, Ludbrook has invited them back to do it all over again. He and his partner are expecting a baby and want more space, so they've bought the apartment next door. Form's challenge is to incorporate the new acquisition into what they've already done.

Scrymgour knew she wanted to be an interior designer as an eight-year-old growing up in Adelaide. After working in various firms about town, she met Glover when they were both at what is now Cox Richardson Architects and Planners. Nine years ago she »



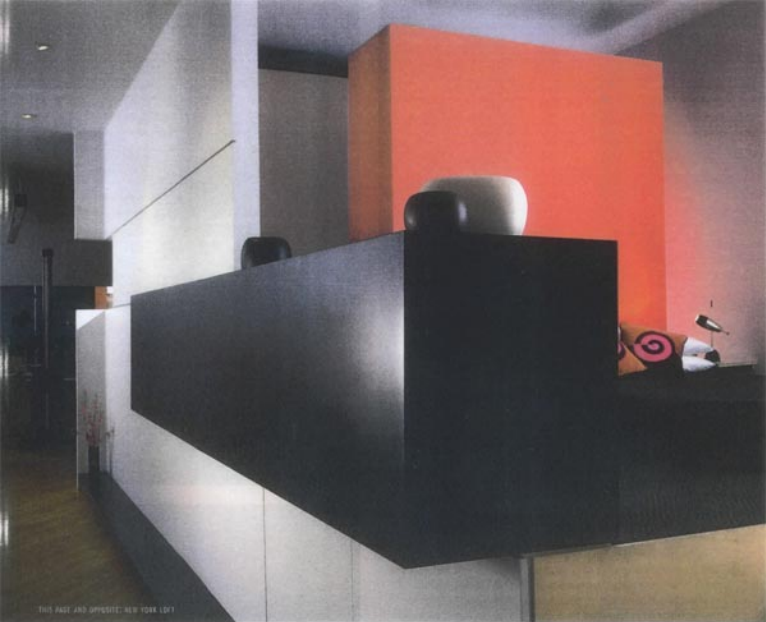
HORIZON APARTMENT



THE EGGHEAD







THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: NEW YORK LEFT

>> decided to start up a small furniture shop in Bourke Street, Darlinghurst. It was a make-or-break time in the midst of recession and modernism was becoming the fashionable design choice.

But Scrymgeour's hand-picked mix of original pieces by the likes of Charles and Ray Eames, Florence Knoll and Grant Featherstone, slowly caught on. "It was a real struggle to begin with, but it's paid off," she says. ("Well, it hasn't quite paid off yet," corrects Glover, with a wry smile. "Yeah, they put you on a pedestal but they don't pay you," Scrymgeour comically cries).

As the furniture shop slowly morphed into an interior design firm, Glover left his job as well ("too much boring commercial work") and joined her. They did various high-end residential work, including a Neville Gruzman apartment in Neutral Bay, and then they were handed a dream project: Scrymgeour's twin sister, Fiona, and her partner, Geoff, asked them to do their loft in Soho, New York. It was a great space – long and untouched, with huge windows. Better still, Fiona, a graphic designer, had almost identical taste to her non-identical twin. She and Geoff, a photographer, had already amassed an enviable furniture collection, boasting original mid-20th century pieces by Knoll and Eames, and they had even independently bought the same '50s Gio Ponti lamps as Scrymgeour. So there was a

mandate to make use of the favourite influences of all four: master modernists including Breuer, Le Corbusier, Neutra and Craig Ellwood.

The finished product is a graphic example of warm functionalism, with red, black and white strewn around like a Piet Mondrian painting writ large. One end is reserved for the owners' design studio, with a darkroom running off it, and high ceilings allow for a raised bedroom in the middle (lots of crawly space underneath for storage), with an above-eye-level, cantilevered bookcase maintaining privacy. It perfectly suits their tastes and accommodates their need for separate living and working areas.

The importance of all this, say Form, is that one of the ways they hope to differentiate themselves from other (particularly modernist) firms is by their responsiveness to clients' needs. "We really try and find out what they want," says Glover. "We don't understand how you as a designer can say 'we're going to do it this way', because part of the process is that interaction, that intimacy. That evolution." But the finished loft pleased more than just its owners; last year it won the *Interiors* magazine award for best residence – and had design fetishists in the US and the UK taking notice of this tiny Sydney practice. The Horizon job came along, and then the pair scored their biggest contract yet, the 14-storey >>