



2011

11

New
South
Wales
Architecture
Awards



Glenn Murcutt

Magney House,
Bingie Bingie, (1984)



Jury citation

On rare occasions, we encounter a house that is not only an exceptional work of architecture, but one that has a profound influence on many others into the future. The Magney House, also known as the Bingie Farmhouse at Bingie Bingie Point, by Glenn Murcutt, is without doubt such a work.

Completed in 1984, and seamlessly extended more recently, the house has been extensively published and recognised through numerous awards, contributing to the unparalleled body of work by its architect, who gracefully no longer enters awards, leaving space for the recognition of his colleagues.

Built as a family retreat on a dramatic coastal site, its brief from the client (who had previously camped simply on the site) was to achieve minimal intervention, and the house provides a sensitive and elegant response to the both the brief, and the landscape, in its form and materials.

Its siting, clever manipulation of daylight, subtle management of heat load, and recycling of water, are all integral to the design and spatial experience. They demonstrate intelligent passive design thinking that results in a responsible and responsive mode of living.

The simplicity, clarity and reductive response to the setting of this remarkable house have also seen it performed well, with minimal maintenance, despite its exposed location. It continues ownership in the same family, under whose stewardship, the house retains its original integrity, which has been enriched over time by the gradual transformation of the farmland to native vegetation.

The Magney House received the 1985 Robin Boyd Award, and was one of sixteen 20th century residential places nominated to the International Union of Architects' (UIA) World Register of Significant 20th Century Australian Architecture, and to the Australian Government National Heritage List.

The influence of this seminal house – with its crafted structure, subtly sculptural forms, and sophisticated assembly – is, in part, due to its importance in the evolution of the architect's work. It is truly an exemplar of enduring architecture, that will doubtless continue to inspire, long into the future.

