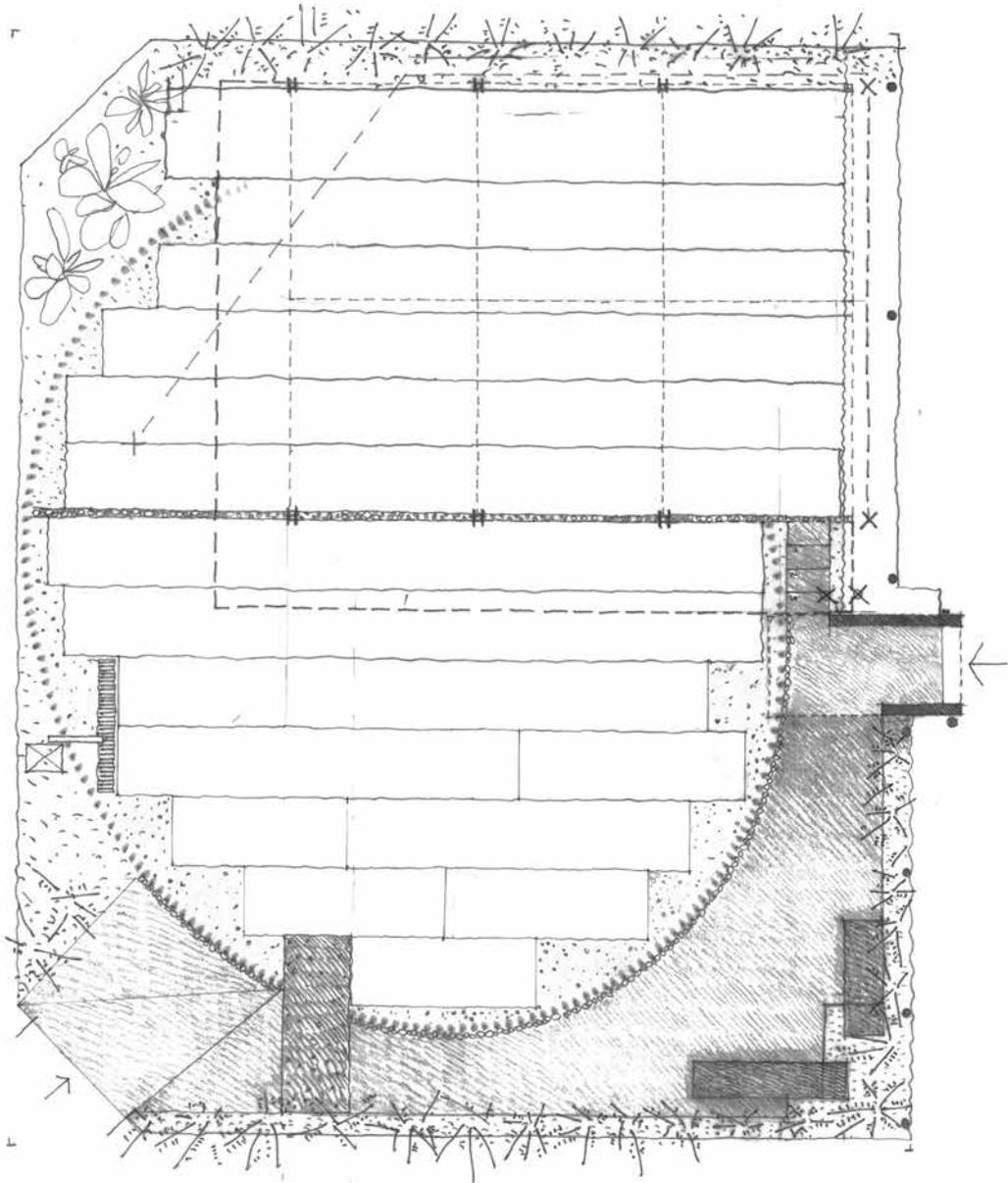


Secret Garden

REVIEW

Pavilion
Mosman Park, WA

MORQ



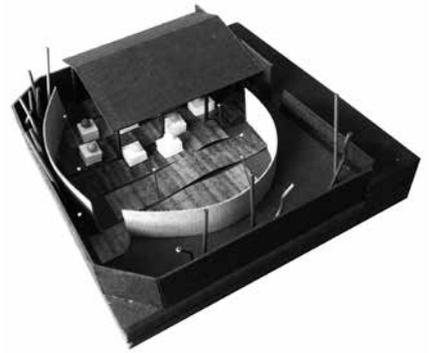
The very notion of a secret garden pavilion by MORQ, nestled in the far rear of the famous Tsunami Restaurant in Mosman Park suggests an experiential journey to intrigue any architect.

Andrea gave me the directions “...You go through the restaurant to the back, down the stairs then through to the rear garden patio area...and then pass through the hidden entrance. It is at the rear of that.” Hokusai’s ‘The Great Wave’ greeted me halfway, suspended over the shiny black grand piano, and immediately I understood something, familiar yet foreign.

MORQ’s design for this small space began with the simple brief – to design a small pavilion and convert the rear end of the long narrow laneway site into a private courtyard area for patrons. The subtle yet sophisticated design utilises an existing old timber carport structure, crafting the ‘yard’ in-situ with a methodology that would please any fine artist.

The planning is clear, and there are only a few elements to this wonderful project. Firstly, the concrete ramp leads you around the space, as ‘ascending bridge’ through the in-between black bamboo garden perimeter - ordered by a linear progression of reclaimed hardwood posts cast into a void. You then pop into the centric black-oxide concrete and pebble courtyard space, where the dark volume of the pavilion interior draws you close. Drawing on Japanese sensibilities, the design is clearly the result of a robust collaboration between client, architect and a master craftsman.





From the experience of this 'Secret Garden Pavilion' it becomes evident that MORQ are at home with the typology of the private Roman courtyard, a European tradition. The penetration of light into the darkness provides a unique meditative experience in the day, and an ethereal glow at night leaving no doubt about its purpose or character. The existing context is crucial to the success of this project. "The garden was further developed out of our own sensibilities to provide layered privacy from the outside world," Andrea explains. The standard functional division between terrace building and outbuilding is camouflaged by the strength of this design – the whole linear site can be read as a single composition to the extent that the whole site is a building. Items such as fence, shrub, fairy lights, ramp and garden bed have a value equal to the primary architectural elements such as roof, column and wall.

The final result is to present a modest clarity about certain ways of doing things. I would suggest that this clarity of the description of thought is the 'hidden genius' of this outstanding work of architecture.

Brad Ladyman

Brad Ladyman is a PhD candidate at The University of Western Australia, and has recently been awarded the UWA Theresa Symons Post-Graduate Scholarship in Philosophy - a recognition of outstanding academic achievement for research into 'trans-typological' architecture.

