



Ideal Commute

Project: Bark Studio
Architect: Bark Architects
Location: Australia
barkdesign.com.au

The most evident thing about this work studio is that it doesn't look like one in the least. Deftly realized in glass, plywood and steel, Bark Studio stands between two leafy bloodwood trees; poised against the unrefined beauty of Australia's Noosa hinterland, it is something of a vision, like a landed alien entity that has decided to root itself permanently and become one with this lush, heavenly patch of land. The building houses the seven employees currently working for Queensland practice Bark Design - incidentally, the architects of the project - and functions as a showcase for the firm's design approach. Founders Stephen Guthrie and Lindy Atkin initially yearned for a modestly sized building that could comfortably accommodate a live and work typology when they erected the structure over a decade back. "It has been designed to be a studio or a comfortable home for two, or a combination of both," Guthrie allows. "It has also been used for a wedding, presentations, talks, lectures and conference launches."

Inspired by the sun-drenched simplicity of Southern California Modernism, the compact studio is a

product of necessity, built with a low-brow budget of roughly AU200,000. It also emerges as a direct culmination of its context; layered with operable blinds as well as fixed and movable glazing, three sides defined by steel portal frames overlook the Pacific coastline, while the fourth façade, dubbed the "billboard", is rendered in plywood, bearing in mind privacy and the sweltering western sun. To alleviate the boxy solidity, a shop front-style display window and horizontal glass slots were put in place while the contrast between structural elements is emphasized by horizontal roof planes and a pair of blocky timber platforms at the entrance.

The main workspace, designed as an open veranda, features a linear

format that enables staffers to "plug in" during the workday. Service areas like a kitchen and bathrooms are also strategically compacted into this space. A mezzanine accessed via folded plywood stairs embodies loftier ambitions - here, shelves are filled with architecture literature, and spaces are made for reading, bathing, sleeping and dreaming. Here, one is treated to a "cropped" perspective of the resplendent vista, a "living" slow-motion movie that surely surpasses any number of trips to the cinema. The pleasure reaped from time spent in this alcove is delightfully simple, aptly echoing Guthrie's initial intentions for the studio: "[Our aim was] collaboration, open communication and a fantastic place to work." »



With a name that references the outer shell of trees, it's no surprise that architectural practice Bark Architects is surrounded by them. Oriented to protect against Australia's blazing sun, the studio is open

in both layout and framework, with extensive glazing to accommodate the incredible view and allow a sense of expansiveness that the practice directors hope will extend to the creative work of the studio.