



Residential

 2022 Podcast Series eBook





Talking Architecture & Design continues to grow in leaps and bounds

Podcasts are not only international, but in countries with largely English-speaking populations, they have become universal.

Think about these statistics for a moment. There are nearly 385 million podcast listeners globally. It is predicted that there will be around 425 million podcast listeners worldwide by 2023. As of June 2022, there are over 2.4 million podcasts with over 66 million episodes between them.

While the United States leads the globe in podcast listenership, accounting for some 40 percent of all internet users, Australia accounts for some 33% of all podcast internet users, making this country #4 in the world, above places like Brazil, Argentina, China, and Japan. Talk about punching way above our weight.

And in this country, there are very few podcasts

that examine the issues and ideas in the built environment – except of course for Talking Architecture & Design.

We launched the podcast at the end of 2017 without knowing just how big it would become. But here we are, at the end of 2022, celebrating a podcast series that is firmly established as essential listening for all parts of the architecture, design, and construction sectors.

So, in terms of total numbers, Talking Architecture & Design has since its inception, garnered in total over 300,000, or if you like, almost one-third of a million downloads within its 130 uploaded episodes.

Soon to launch Season 7, our podcast has

some of the most impressive download figures there is outside of course, commercial or music-based platforms.

In 2023, we will be looking at a whole new range of guests and ideas to engage with, along with new methods and platforms of presenting our episodes. Most importantly though, we will strive to continue to deliver one of the most respected, informative and industry-relevant building, design and architecture podcasts that there is in Australia.

Enjoy the listen and the read!

Branko Miletic

Toilet talk with Luke di Michiel and Andy Grigor from Caroma

Modern bathrooms serve myriad purposes in our residences. From addressing our physical needs to supporting our mental health hygiene and contributing to our emotional wellbeing, they offer an invaluable place of respite from the rest of our busy dwellings and the outside world. And as the role of the bathroom evolves, so do the spatial solutions within it, bringing to life the results of significant research, ever-changing insights and technological advancements. Luke di Michiel and Andy Grigor are Industrial Designers for Caroma and with a combined wealth of experience spanning product design, innovation, and research and development, they sit at the forefront of pioneering design where the multifaceted bathroom space is concerned.

"I think it highlights that for us as a society the role and value of the house and that space does extend beyond what previously was a few essential rooms," says Luke. "People have higher expectations now, and that includes places like the bathrooms, laundries and butler's kitchens. They want their vision to be realised right throughout the house. No room gets left out when we talk about the expectations across the interior design, bathroom, and product selection throughout the house."

So what are some of the key trends that are defining the present and informing the future of bathroom design? "Ageing in place and being able to get older with dignity are certainly key aspects that shape bathroom design, as we move forward with an ageing population," says Luke. "As they age, people are reluctant to settle for the products that have been available in the past and it's a really exciting opportunity for us, at Caroma, in terms of presenting products that have all those functional characteristics, but also deliver on contemporary trends and styles of bathroom design and products. We've been able to pioneer modern grab rails and assistive supports that look very contemporary, but offer those valuable qualities that people will need as they age. So I think we're really shifting that approach from being considered purely as a product to looking at it as universal design."

Another big one - and one Caroma have firmly in their sights - is toilet technology. In Australia smart and tech-enabled toilets are yet to take off in the way they have in other places, like Japan. "But the tech is there," says Andy. "And there are two ends of the development spectrum. On one side is the full biometric, wellness toilet, and on the other is the

one that solves a genuine problem, like cleaning and smell, for example - and cleaning is obviously one of those ones that's high on our agenda," he says. "But in terms of high-tech, there are now toilets containing multiple sensors that claim to track mental and physical status and then provide recommendations about your health. And we can't ignore that. But if we look at that spectrum of development, for now we're taking a very pragmatic approach to solve genuine problems. But watch this space!"

And as Caroma continues towards this bright, tech-and-design-focused future, they're well placed to keep pushing the envelope in bringing trail-blazing and useful solutions to market. "Caroma has always had a really hands-on approach from a design perspective, and we have incredible design and prototyping capabilities in-house," says Luke. "That allows us to open up that conversation; we can take the product and engage with key industry partners for feedback and iterate based on their responses. We've always had the approach of 'how could this be improved?' and I think it's that method, combined with our technical abilities, that allow us to really uncover the points where that true innovation can be found."



Listen to episode here
bit.ly/TAD_E098



ABOVE Andy Grigor. BELOW Luke di Michiel.

Kim Chadwick on the capability of colour and how it shapes our spaces

Colour plays an important role in our lives – it impacts us in more ways than we can imagine. The way we perceive different colours, how we react to them, the purpose of the space, the size of the room, trends – all these factors come into play when selecting colours for a particular environment.

In Episode 104 of Talking Architecture & Design, Australian Trend Forecast Director Kim Chadwick speaks on how colour affects the way we design, from material curation through to the feeling a certain shade evokes.

Sunlight illuminates the world from sunrise to sunset. Thanks to sunlight, we're able to perceive colours in our brain. Colour has a profound impact on human emotions and behaviour. 'Getting the blues' or 'seeing red' are expressions that have a scientific basis.

Similarly, on a feature wall, one sees colour as a solid block a lot of the time. But even that solid block changes colours continuously throughout the day. Most natural materials are modelled, and they have depth. The different elements in a room really do affect our psychological reaction to that space. So, it might well be a feature wall colour, but it really is how colours and surfaces are used together.

The basic colour theory is all around us, says Kim. Many variables impact a space, including the positioning of windows and the amount of natural light.

BELOW Kim Chadwick.



"If we take a triadic colour scheme, for example, three colours that are equidistant on the colour wheel, we take the three primaries – red, yellow, and blue," she says.

"We can look at yellow and orange as timber. And that with a little bit of red, a little bit of blue. And it doesn't have to be bright red. It doesn't have to be bright blue. It could be a cool grey with a cool undertone in terms of blue and a little pop of red just for a highlight.

"Sometimes we walk into rooms, though, and they're discordant like a bum note in a musical chord. And certain colours in combination jar with each other."

It all comes back to the colour wheel and how certain colours interact with one another due to their positioning. The creator of the Design Colour Wheel, Colours opposite each other on a colour wheel – like red and green or blue and orange – complement one another. Complementary colours, when mixed together, will neutralise each other to create a neutral palette. There are other relationships as well – split complementary colours, which are very balanced and harmonious, and analogous colours, which are colours that are side-by-side on the colour wheel.

Chadwick says that she takes into account the location and environment, with neutrals typically balancing out many of the colours of the natural world. While there's often a neutral or restrained palette seen in many contemporary homes, each neutral colour has a subtle undertone.

"At the moment there's a big greening of interiors and greening of colour as undertones. It could be a slightly green grey, and it's still balancing the basic colour theory with the neutrals palettes and working with natural materials as well. As I said earlier, timbers are inherently orange based, and they'll always work with blue. It doesn't have to be bright blue. It could be a cool grey with a blue undertone. So, it's just applying colour theory to a space."

A thoughtful application of colour can also manipulate a space to feel larger or smaller depending on curation. Cool colours such as blues, greens and purples can make a room feel bigger. Warm colours such as reds, yellows and oranges advance towards the eye, making the space feel closer and cosier.

When it comes to trends, Chadwick says they are driven by observation. Many materials and colour choices made by designers are ultimately viewed by other professionals. A shift to smaller spaces, attributed to the pandemic, will see colour choices pivot from typically warmer shades to lighter to accompany the 'greening' of our interiors.

"We're realising the importance of that again, to bring nature indoors or to have that interaction with nature within buildings. We're certainly seeing it in commercial buildings with more outdoor spaces, green rooftops, indoor plants, and growing plants internally in the kitchen because it makes us feel better and it makes us more productive, and it keeps us calmer. And it's all about our wellbeing and our wellness."

In Episode 104, Chadwick discusses colours for office and bathrooms, her favourite colour projects and what's next in terms of colour trends. With over three decades of experience in the colour industry, Kim has chosen the colours of the inherently Australian corrugated roofs for Colorbond, hand selected colours for Wattyl and Dulux, created bathrooms for Laminex, curated complete house solutions for Brickworks Building Products, developed product style guides for Officeworks, and trends for Australia.



Listen to episode here
bit.ly/TAD_E104



Getting real about sustainable building design with David Coates

As the winner of the Emerging Architect/Designer category at the 2021 Sustainability Awards, David Coates lives and breathes sustainability. His business, Sustainable Building and Design Pty Ltd, specialises in sustainable renovations, and David works closely with his clients to achieve brilliant results that minimise overall energy consumption and reduce waste.

David's vision is all about efficiency of performance and reusing and upcycling. But what exactly is 'sustainable building design' to him?

"In 2022, it can be a whole range of things. I think it's become a bit of a buzzword. I think it's a hot topic. I think a lot of corporations and governments like to attach the name to anything they do to kind of show the world that they're doing something, which I think leads to quite a lot of disbelief, and there's quite a lot of bullshit that covers it, if I'm honest," says David. "But it's also something that I think is integral to humans surviving on this planet, and it's a serious issue."

David's take on sustainable building design is that it's about working with the planet, and for the future. And fundamentally, it's about respect for the earth. Unfortunately, while there are undoubtedly plenty of people and businesses making a real, concerted effort, greenwashing is rife, and the regulatory environment has a way to go before it's truly fit for purpose.

"Our standards are pretty low," says David. "There are mass amounts of housing that's being built with virtually no consideration for the environment. People need cheap housing, absolutely, but I think that we have some really minor regulations that could be lifted and improved, and standards that could be put in place for some of these mass housing developments – particularly where there are people making some serious bucks."

In David's eyes, sustainability matters even more where there are large amounts of money

involved – like with those mass developments, or even higher end multi-million dollar residences.

"Some of these places have little to no proper implementation of sustainable design. They don't charge their own power. They're not responsible for what they're doing. And I think that's a big thing. It's about putting some responsibility back onto people, putting it back onto the corporations that are making lots of money because, frankly, they can afford it."

And despite the protestations that no doubt would emerge if the bigger end of town were required to reach a little deeper into their pockets, David is adamant that even with stronger regulation, their bottom lines wouldn't take much of a hit. "If they're not actually governed a little bit stricter and a bit harder, then that's where it all goes pear shaped because I've proven that you can actually design and build houses for fairly low costs that can run themselves, and have a pretty minimal, if not positive impact on the planet. So it's not that it can't be done. It's just that it's not being done."

David's mention of minor regulatory improvement is not just some broad statement he makes off the cuff. He knows where to start, and what should be focused on first. "Things like lifting insulation by, you know, a few notches. What we're using now is pretty basic. Limiting the size of buildings for their footprint. There's so much red tape that needs to be dealt with just to be allowed to build something, it seems like they could pretty easily put a few sustainable hurdles in that process."



ABOVE David Coates.



Listen to episode here
bit.ly/TAD_E108



Living large in small spaces: Apartment living with DKO's Jesse Linardi

Compared to Europe, Australia has an undeniable luxury of space. As a result, our residential landscape has long favoured houses over apartments. But, as DKO Design Director Jesse Linardi points out, things are changing. For the latest Architecture and Design podcast, we sit down with this innovative designer to talk about what's driving that change, what are some of the most important considerations when designing an apartment building – and what the future holds for this particular typology.



ABOVE Jesse Linardi.

"Apartment living is a typology that's quite common in Europe," says Jesse. "In Australia, we're only just starting to get used to it." The highly talented designer is incredibly well-versed on the topic – he's got several award-winning projects under his belt, including Campbell Street which won a Victorian Architecture Award for Small Project and Multi Residential Architecture.

Jesse explains that while a typical three-bedroom apartment might boast between 95 to 110 square metres, a house of equivalent size will oscillate around 150. Because of that, smaller spaces have to work harder. "In an apartment, or a small townhouse,

spaces need to have multiple uses. A living space may need to double as a home office or a kids' play area. Or, sometimes, it's a social space."

Jesse points out that – particularly after the pandemic – the needs and wants of the residents have evolved. Many people who want to downsize or switch to a lower-maintenance apartment living don't want to compromise on space, plus the pressure for our residences to be comfortable, have good ventilation, access to natural light and amenities has certainly been compounded by the numerous lock-downs.

So what are some of the most important considerations when designing an apartment? Jesse explains that when DKO designs an apartment, they start with the building itself. "We look at it as a group of housing. Considering a wider community is really important," he says. "So we always try to create an opportunity for thriving relationships within the building. And we do that by making the community smaller, so we have more lift cores and less people per floor."

Jesse says that sun management is the second important consideration – both when it comes to the best access to light and the orientation, to the management of the heat loads. "Sun is your best friend, but it also can be your worst enemy when it comes to living in an apartment." Amenities go hand in hand with that, and include – amongst other – usable, sizable and effective balconies, which can take the form of rooftop gardens or access to communal facilities, rather than smaller individual balconies hanging off the sides of the building. "All of that should be considered before we even start looking at individual apartments," Jesse adds.

"Now, within the apartment, flexibility is the key element. The space should be designed so that it can be used differently by different people over time. It's crucial to offer the residents an opportunity to make the space their own, and use it in a way that suits them, rather than dictate the way that people live. It's about having flexible plans that can adapt to different ways of living."

And what does the future hold for apartment living? Jesse highlights the growing importance of sustainability, and the fact that it will affect the way apartments are designed even more prominently moving forward. "I also think that genuine integration of landscape within buildings is something that people are looking forward to, and that will be something that comes through really strongly in the future."

He also predicts an important shift towards community and multi-generational or family-style living. "In Australia we take quite a singular approach to apartment living so it's not something that's inherently a part of the Australian DNA. But I think that's where this typology is headed," Jesse sums up, painting a rather appealing picture of the apartment living of the future.



Listen to episode here
bit.ly/TAD_E114



Talking healthy homes with Kate Nason

There is no doubt that the last few years have brought an increased focus on our physical and mental health. But the onset of the pandemic – and the extended periods of lock-downs that came with it – have also caused us to further consider the health of our homes and buildings. Inherently linked to our wellness, our interiors can help maintain a comfortable and healthy life. But what constitutes a healthy home?

“A healthy home is one that allows you to thrive without requiring you to think too much about living there,” says Kate Nason, a certified Passive House designer and the chairperson of the Australian Passive House Association. “It ensures your health and well-being are supported, that you’ve got access to fresh air and you’re comfortable. And it allows you to protect your family against the elements outside.”

Kate is a passionate advocate of healthy and resilient buildings, and holds the role of Sustainability Advisor at Fraser Property Australia. “A healthy home should also be good for the planet,” she adds. “And it would be nice if you could run it for free!”

Passive House design can help create this kind of space. “It essentially allows you to control the temperature within the home to ensure it stays within a healthy band,” Kate starts. The band Kate refers to is between 18 and 25 degrees, and that’s the range a building has to maintain throughout the year. “Staying within that band creates a really comfortable and stable thermal environment indoors,” Kate explains.

Kate adds that constant access to fresh air is also something Passive House design prioritises. “All habitable spaces should have access to fresh air 24/7, no matter whether a window is open or not,” she explains. “We’re constantly supplying fresh, pre-tempered air by recovering the energy from inside the house through a heat exchanger. As a result, you’re providing fresh air and extracting stale air all the time, creating an ongoing flow of air.”

In addition, Passive House design allows the inhabitants to reduce both the energy use, and the associated bills. “That’s because you’re controlling the environment more passively, without the active heating or cooling required,” Kate explains. “You still may need additional heating in Melbourne and a little bit of cooling in Sydney, but you’re actually reducing the size of your equipment by at least a quarter.”

She adds that in the right circumstances, the entire heating demand of a building can be

reduced by up to 90%. “And if you’ve got any kind of renewable energy generation on site, you can actually get to a net positive position pretty easily,” she says, adding that it’s generally easier to achieve with a freestanding home and plenty of roof space.

Kate explains that the benefits of Passive House design have been appreciated across a range of different typologies and climates with examples she provides ranging from a hospital in Germany to an embassy building in Kinshasa. “It’s applicable in any climate, any type of building, as well as any size or shape.” That doesn’t mean that the design will be the same everywhere, of course. The buildings will vary based on climate zone, even within Australia.

“If we go back to the fundamental principles, like good orientation and good shading, these will be very different in the Northern Territory compared to Tasmania because of the angles of the sun. In terms of the ventilation strategy and air tightness, there are some nuances as to which climate you’re in and the direction of moisture. For example, you always put your air tightness layer on the warm side of the wall. In Brisbane, that could actually be the outside of the wall, whereas in Melbourne it’s always on the inside. However, physics works the same everywhere so you just have to follow the methodology, really.”

With its multiple benefits for the inhabitants, the standard is equally as enticing for architects, designers and builders. “Passive House is a performance based standard. So it doesn’t matter how you get there, as long as you prove that you can achieve the performance criteria. So it’s actually quite a malleable standard and, in that sense, very appealing to architects and builders, because they can find clever ways to meet it together,” Kate explains. She also adds that once you’ve built a Passive House, there’s no coming back.

“From my personal experience working with builders to construct Passive Houses, they’ll never want to go back to building a 6-star house,” she

says. “They’ll fundamentally have changed their perception of how to build because it’s just a better way to design. The Passive House standard is not only the most rigorous energy efficiency standard in the world, but it’s also the most robust health and wellbeing supporting standard in the world, too.”

BELOW Kate Nason.



Listen to episode here
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