

# ITM WildTomato Building & Architecture Awards 2010

First we form our buildings, then they form us... making building and architecture the fundamental art form. And the standard of this year's entries proves the point.

BY SUE FARLEY

Once again, this year's ITM WildTomato Building & Architecture Awards have revealed some exciting and dynamic local architecture. Eight category winners were picked from the many entries, and one supreme winner was picked from those eight.

This year, the chairman judge was renowned Wellington architect Ian Athfield. Other judges were Scott Gibbons representing ITM, Richard Merrifield from the Certified Builders' Association and Jack Martin, editor of WildTomato.

Judging criteria was weighted towards each entry's relationship with its local and regional setting, as well as its use of local materials and craftspeople. Another important factor was the degree of consistency and completeness in expressing the relationship between each building's concept, form and structure.

Jack Martin was thrilled that WildTomato was once again able to provide a forum to showcase the best of the best architecture that Nelson and Marlborough can offer. Fellow judge Scott Gibbons felt that the drive towards using more eco-friendly, natural and sustainable building materials and design concepts was significant. "It was great to see architects and builders constantly pushing the boundaries to achieve such technical design features," Scott said.

Richard Merrifield was encouraged by the high levels of skill shown by local builders and the trend towards eco design, which "I would like to think that, with a skilled designer, would be at neutral cost to the client," he said.

## Winner

*The Olive and the Goose,  
Westdale Road, Mapua*

Richard Carver, Redbox Architects  
Harris Builders (builder)

This very successful renovation won two categories: Best Interior Design and Best Renovation. The largely rebuilt house replaces an older one and features recycled hardwood bridge beams in the double-height lobby and living areas, recycled internal Balinese doors and a Japanese garden. Both a private home and a lodge, there is a owners' retreat and large yoga/tango room, with guest accommodation, living areas and outdoor entertaining area. Polished-concrete floors and stone fireplaces are enhanced by a neutral colour palette, with bathrooms finished in mosaic tiles. There is polished jarrah tongue-and-groove flooring upstairs, and the bespoke interior joinery features a 100mm thick Caesar stone benchtop.

## Runner Up

*Selbourne Avenue, Richmond*

Stephanie Millar and Susan Elliot  
(designer)

Architekton (builder)

Judges described this home as "edgy and modern". Making good use of sculptural lighting, the décor is strong and minimalist with black joinery, white walls and pale oak and tile flooring. There are no trims or mouldings. Brightly-coloured artwork completes the look. Coloured LED lighting provides accent colour and highlights the architecture.



## Best Interior Design

## Winner

*The Olive and the Goose,  
Westdale Road, Mapua*

Richard Carver, Redbox Architects  
Harris Builders (builder)

This very successful renovation won two categories: Best Interior Design and Best Renovation. The largely rebuilt house replaces an older one and features recycled hardwood bridge beams in the large double-height entry lobby and living areas, recycled internal Balinese doors and a Japanese garden. Serving as both a private home and a lodge, there is a private owners' retreat and large yoga/tango room on the upper floor, with guest accommodation, living areas and outdoor entertaining area downstairs. Interior polished-concrete floors and stone fireplaces are enhanced by a neutral colour palette, and bathrooms have been finished in mosaic tiles. There is polished jarrah tongue-and-groove flooring upstairs, and the bespoke interior joinery features a 100mm thick Caesar stone benchtop.



## Runner Up

*Pugh Road, Hope*

Russell Stevens, R V Stevens Ltd  
(builder)

What was once a plain house has been transformed into a very modern home featuring strong columns, linear board and stucco cladding, and interesting angles. These help marry the old building to the new and give the house a new identity. Most of the retained areas of the original house had to be realigned, repacked or re-battened, and the owners lived in the house throughout the four-month renovation. Judges described it as an "incredible transformation with great vision".



## Best Renovation

## Ian Athfield, Interview

Take a wander through central Wellington and there is barely a street corner where Ian Athfield's bold, artistic architectural style doesn't feature somewhere. He is known for his highly-creative designs in places like Civic Square in Wellington, which he worked on with two other noted Wellington architectural firms. But the iconic steel nikau palms are his design and demonstrate his great love of expressing the built environment by how it stands against the natural. He also has a strong sense of how to manage public spaces, which is amply demonstrated in that development.

His own home, on a steep hillside above Wellington harbour, has been written about in countless publications and is a living testament to Athfield's understanding of community environments. To quote from Houses for the 21st Century by Geoffrey London et al, "It is constructed as a village-like mix of colonial, vernacular and High Modern references". London goes on to describe it as having an "anti-suburban manifesto" and complimenting its "disruptive nature".

Ian accepted the invitation to judge because he sees a value in what smaller cities, particularly towns, can offer larger cities in the areas of urban design and development. "Smaller places generally look to the bigger ones to provide answers to design issues, but sometimes the answer can be seen in the smaller towns and applied to the bigger ones. It's a grass roots effect," he explained.

"I have been critical of urban development in some parts of the country, and also critical of our good agricultural soil being used in housing developments. Nelson is a very attractive place, although historically its record of sensitive development hasn't been that great." He feels that awards in smaller centres like Nelson and Marlborough provide a forum for new ideas to emerge.

"The other area we [Athfield Architecture] have questioned most is housing. We are looking at what sort of housing and alternative land use initiatives we can take. The last time this happened on any scale was in the 1970s." Here he refers to the brief foray into collective and community living that came with the lovin' generation, and how it almost happened but didn't.

"We have once again regressed into individual living units. But the sub-prime recession has brought about the need to change this. I would like to live another 30 years to see this played out," he laughed.

Asked if he saw any interesting new developments while here to judge the awards, he was positive. "It was good to see new buildings being built into the infrastructure. The NMIT building is a good example of that, as is the public toilet block in Bradford Park. It was also good to see well-positioned budget housing emerging with sound eco values. However, there was still a predominance of the old style of design. I hope we've given enough credit to people moving away from the old models."

# BUILDING & ARCHITECTURE AWARDS 2010



Principal sponsor of the awards for the second year, the ITM Building Centres at Nelson, Motueka, Takaka, Havelock and a brand new store at Greymouth, provide significant coverage in the Top of The South.

Following the initial success of the 2009 awards and after listening to feedback from last year's participants, ITM and WildTomato have tailored the awards to recognise the contribution that the builder makes to a successful build.

ITM Business Development Manager, Alistair Smart, says the increase in entrants this year demonstrates that architect, builder and home owner alike are all very proud of what they have achieved through the design and build process. ITM plays its part in providing product knowledge and sourcing the best materials to match the architect's requirements.

Many of this year's winners are entrants from last year who returned with new projects for judging by an industry panel of experts. The objective of the ITM WildTomato Building & Architectural Awards is to recognise the high standard in design and construction in our region.

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