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PERSPECTIVES
ON DESIGN, CULTURE,
AND BEING PERTH.

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D_Residence

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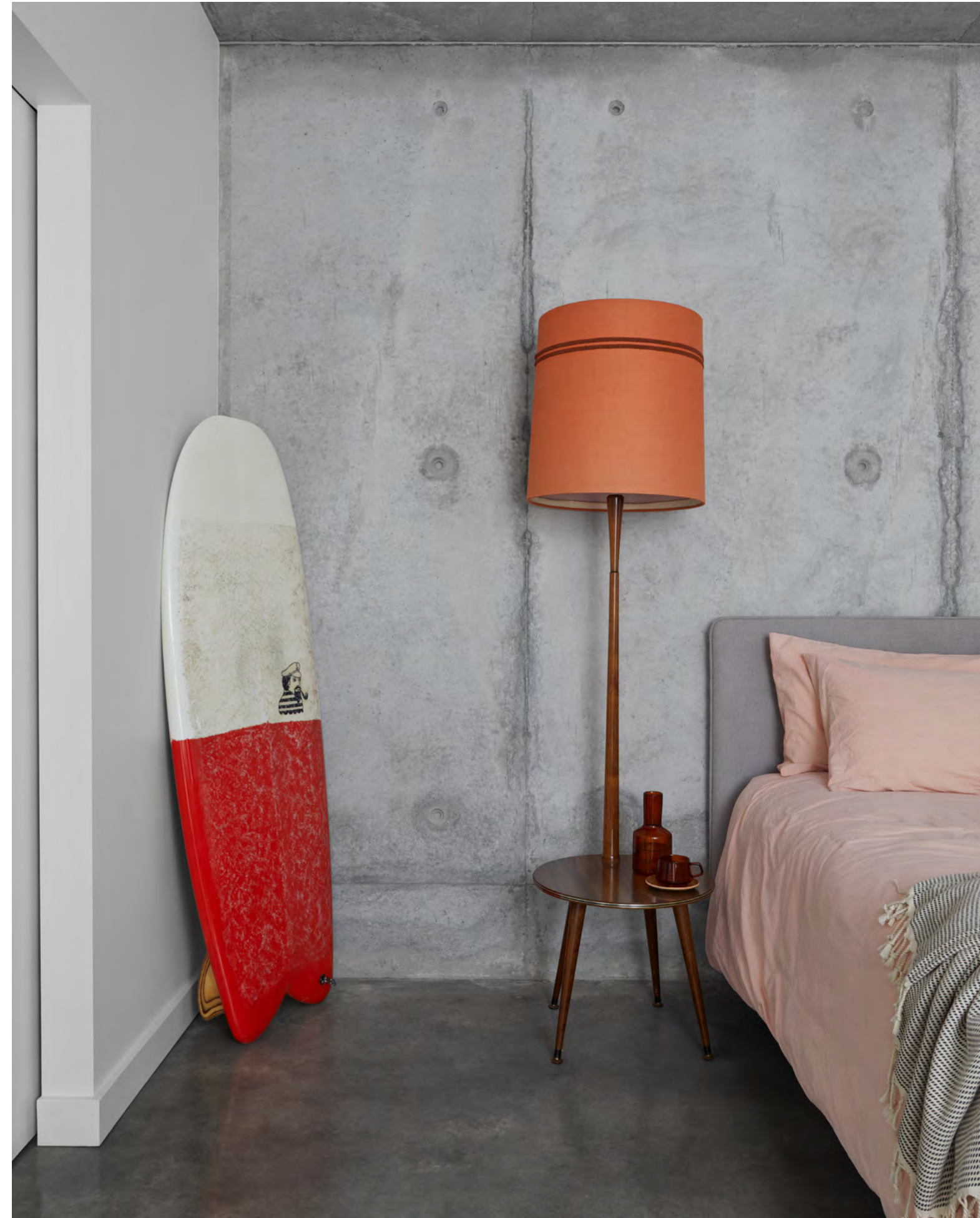


CAPA's suburban beach architecture in the rolling dunes of Scarborough is gritty and robust, tailored perfectly for a growing young family with their skateboards and sandy feet. With some very cool nods to substance and real-ness, the house has a refreshing back-to-basics feel that's a lot like Scarborough itself.

They knew what they wanted, knew that only an architect could deliver it and they also knew instinctively that it was a very important relationship to get right. They joked about those instincts kicking in before a couple of early candidates even got out of their cars, but the minute they met Justin from CAPA they knew they'd found "the one."

CAPA is a multidisciplinary firm that combines the talents of architect, Justin Carrier, and landscape architect, Steven Postmus, making them a formidable creative team on a project like the D_Residence. The clients had already selected a commercial builder, so the CAPA team designed to the contractor's particular strengths, detailing off-form concrete and specifying ribbed masonry blocks as a nod to Iwan Iwanoff, one of Perth's mid-century architectural legends. On a tight budget, CAPA had the challenge of dealing with the two-storey level change across four directions which were cleverly retained using high masonry garden beds and an above ground concrete pool elevated to chest height for propped-arm conversations, softened by a delightful mix of natives and lush tropical plants.

When designing with heavy materials, commercial detailing and extensive retaining, the relationship between the architecture and landscape is critical. There is barely a vertical surface at D_Residence that isn't artfully stepped, draped in softly weeping acacia or bristling with black-flowering native vines and the whole backyard is dappled by native frangipanis planted high above the ground plane. For a small block, the ground plane amplifies the social feel created by CAPA's design that sidesteps the need for a pool fence and faces everything in towards the main living space. Even the roving pack of local kids agree that Ashlee and Ryan's pool is the place to be, helped along by the family's open front door policy and the friendly, close knit street they have found themselves in — something they say had impacted their lives as much as the house itself.





Internally, the levels are softened and pulled apart into different platforms, split into opposing kids and parents levels and separated by an expansive void over the ground floor living space where the family all hang out together. Ashlee and Ryan's level is high and breezy, the stairs like a white steel and timber bridge across the void, with an epic walk-in robe taken up largely by Ryan's impressive clothing collection. CAPA have also delivered exactly the kind of washroom that sandy-footed, active parents require: a calming, blue-toned, floor-to-ceiling mosaic folding shower-wall with a formed circular skylight, perfect for a walk-through rinse after a busy day.

The design of the D_Residence is everything the clients asked for and more, but it's the relationship with their architects that is the constant in the conversation. When asked what the best thing about hiring an architect was, Ryan is adamant "it's contract administration that's the most valuable thing." This is something not often acknowledged by clients in favour of more visible things, but for Ryan it was knowing that during the build on a tough site when things were difficult, that CAPA had his back. Their early instincts about the kind of architect that was right for them were spot on, and the proof resonates in every detail of the house. It's impressively rigorous, robust, and soft all at once; a laidback, shoes-optional space that's so right for the place, and so right for them.

OUT SIDE



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