



latest

habitat tv



DIY Rust Effect Obelisk

Create an obelisk that's aged to perfection with Resene FX Faux Rust Effect, [see this and more videos](#)

blog



Jackie Nicholls' ornamental take on tiny houses

"French vintage with a Scandinavian influence" is how artist, designer and Resene colour consultant Jackie... [more](#)



A love of Kiwi heritage homes lets this architect breathe new life into them, while preserving classic character

10 Oct 2022

 Like 0  Tweet  Share

When architect *Mona Kruse Hurnen* arrived in New Zealand from Scandinavia she brought with her a love of heritage buildings and character homes that has melded perfectly with New Zealand's long love of classic bungalows and villas

Have you noticed that happy homeowners who appear in New Zealand ads for banking, insurance or building, always seem to be living in classic bungalows or villas? Mona Kruse Hurnen and the team at Callidus Architects certainly have.

Callidus, based in Wellington, shares that long-term collective love we have for these character home styles. They have managed to combine it with a classic Kiwi 'can-do' attitude to home design, and their founder, Mona's Scandinavian heritage and practical approach to create a niche market for themselves altering these older homes to accommodate modern life while retaining their unique personalities.

Her love of these treasured design styles "that we almost take for granted", led to another long-term project in which Mona and photographer Paul Knight travelled New Zealand seeking out some of our most wonderful character homes. Those trips resulted in a book, *Confessions from a Heritage Architect*, filled with photographs and stories from the owners.

Why does Callidus focus its work on heritage homes?

They are still some of the most popular house styles in our New Zealand cities and towns. They continue to fetch higher prices and you hear people gush about them: "Let's drive down this street; it's so nice going through this neighbourhood." Character homes have continuously been demolished, rebuilt and changed over the decades. Some have been lovingly restored several times, some have been transported on the backs of trucks to new locations, some have been altered to almost beyond recognition. I thought they deserved a business catering just for them and that is why I decided to form Callidus Architects in 2010.

What is it you particularly love about older buildings?

I love using my skills to create designs that enhance the original character, whilst still introducing modern-day convenience and functionality. It's very satisfying. When something is beautifully proportioned it just looks right. Even if we may not be able to say why or how it works, we know. Conversely, when something is out of proportion it looks odd, awkward and out of place. Architecture is like music. At some point we've all listened to a piece of music that seemed to gel better than another piece of music, no matter what genre. We have different tastes but we still all respond better to some pieces of music than others. The same is true for architecture. I love the challenge of putting the rhythm back into homes for people to live in.

What are the highlights of working on these buildings?

Our staff love to work on these homes to enhance their proportions, details and craftsmanship, as well as showcase the history that these houses exude. They can be immensely attractive and seem to have that 'x-factor'. We fix the insulation and heating and bring these homes up to the standards of modern day living, while still retaining their character and street appeal.

What challenges do heritage buildings present you with?

Our sense of touch and feel; our understanding of scale and proportion; how we move through space and how we interact with our surroundings are all vital and important elements in creating a successful built environment. Our heritage built environment must have some lessons to learn so that our architecture continues to evolve, rather than just starting from scratch repeatedly. That is the challenge I like about heritage buildings, learning from them and putting that proportion back together if it has been disrupted. And being respectful of the past.

How does your Scandinavian heritage influence the work at Callidus?

Having that Scandinavian heritage, as well as a New Zealand can-do attitude, provides a practical approach to design and construction, which is crucial in getting a home right, proportion-wise.

Why do you choose Resene products?

Resene's specifier and follow-up service, and the ease of choosing colours is unparalleled in New Zealand. The flexibility that Resene offers makes on-the-spot decision-making very easy, especially if you are doing a pink ceiling and bathroom and it's not quite right!

www.callidusarchitects.co.nz



This heritage house in Whiteman's Valley was fully restored by the Callidus team with a classic colour scheme, completed after careful research matching it to an oil-painting of the house. The weatherboards are painted in [Resene Desert Sand](#), trimmed on the posts, boxed corners, soffits and finials in [Resene Scoria](#). The sash windows, leaf doors and decking are [Resene Waiherowhero](#).



This stunning ensuite adds modern flair to a Hataitai home while staying true to its Arts and Crafts heritage. The ceiling is painted in [Resene Alluring](#), the right wall next to the shower is [Resene White Pointer](#) and the skirting is [Resene Homegrown](#).



A pressed tin [Resene Merino](#) splashback looks modern and glamorous in this Khandallah bungalow, with elegant cabinetry in [Resene Powder Blue](#). The island is also painted in [Resene Merino](#) and the window trim is [Resene Eighth Thorndon Cream](#).



The lounge of the Khandallah bungalow embraces colour with [Resene Rivergum](#) walls and crisp [Resene Eighth Thorndon Cream](#) window trim.

Published: 10 Oct 2022