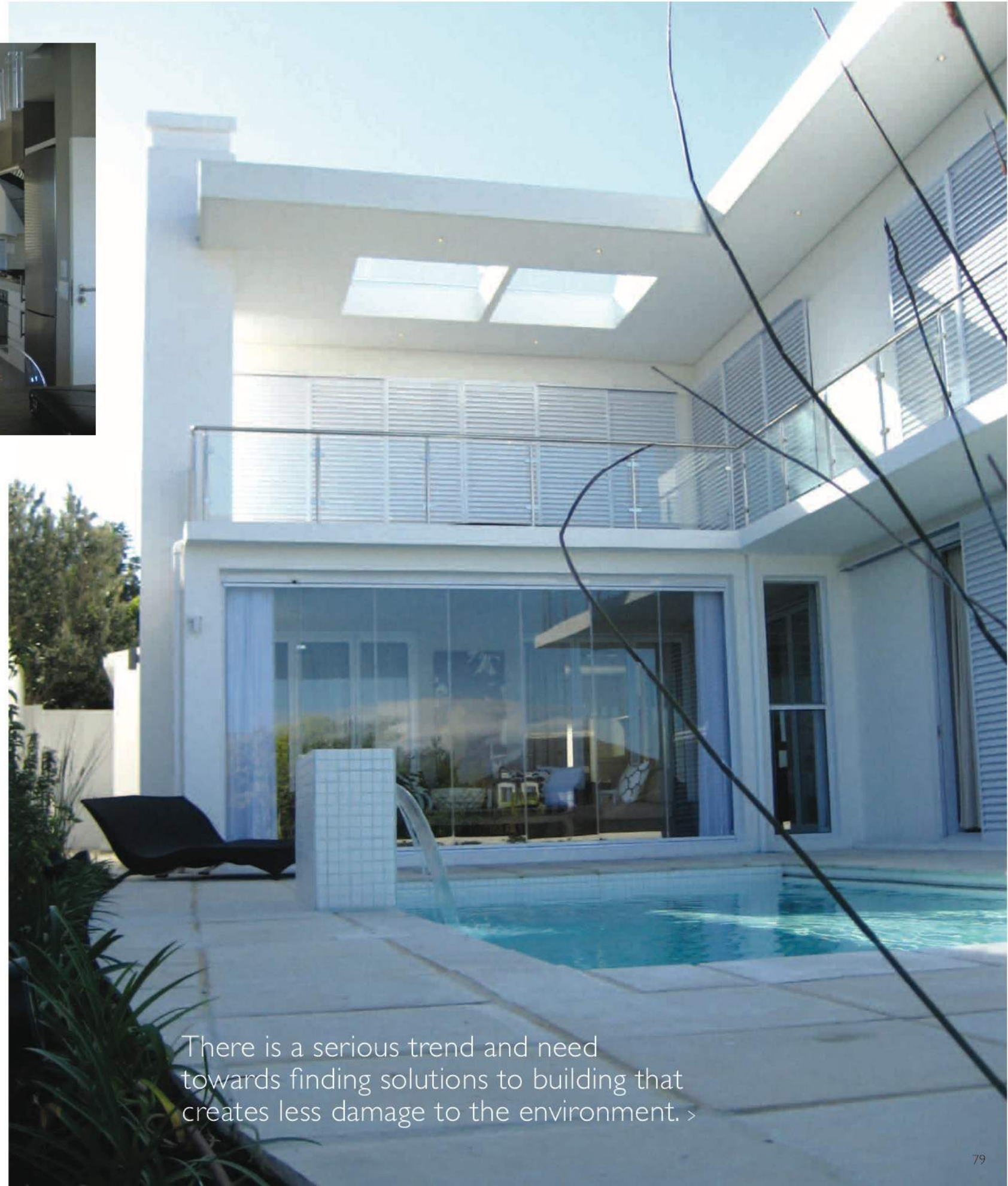


IN A CONVERSATION WITH

There is beauty, a soul and a face that you can identify within any building. Our homes depict an architectural work of art. This work of art can be more poetic and described as the composing of light in space. By **Denise Mhlanga** >

Amanda



Amanda Katz, an architect from Amanda Katz Architects in Cape Town, is passionate about her work, be it home extensions or planning designs of new homes. We chat to Amanda about one of her projects, a revamped home which looks not only beautiful but its design and architecture is one that maintains the functionality of the home at the same time echoing visions of art throughout the home.

She explains that this creative work was a collaborative team effort including the client, architect, structural engineer, building contractor and all his various specialised sub contractors and the interior designer that resulted in the success of this home.

Could you please give a brief description of the design and architecture of this home?

With this contemporary modern design, we wanted to achieve a visually simple lined white building that relies on shadow and texture for definition. Its layout needed to be user friendly while taking advantage of the site it is built on and spectacular views. At the same time, we wanted the house to get as much

light and sunshine as possible. This house started originally as a single storey "spec" house in an L-shape. We then used the same original footprint for the new extension and reworked the original ground floor extensively as well as adding on the new upper floor. The owner wanted a modern contemporary home that worked for his family, easy to lock up and go and took advantage of great views from an upper level.

What are the main features of this house which stand out for you as an architect and as a body of art?

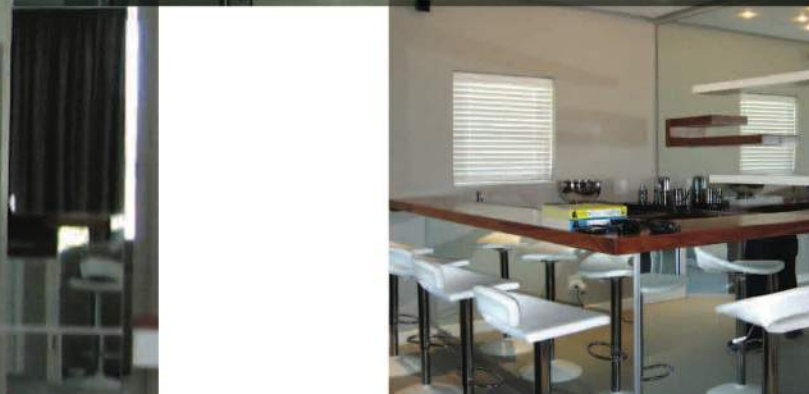
This house from the inside out is aesthetically pleasing to look at and live in. It features very dominant horizontal lines, large overhanging eaves and external mono colours that are hard to miss. There is an undisputable well-proportioned relationship between walls and openings, the clear flow between inside and outside and its ability to be shut down and remain secure while owners are away.

How would you describe sustainable architecture and is this a growing trend in your profession?

It is architecture that is relevant to its local context and users over a long period of time and can

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be amended easily over time. This is certainly a growing trend in architecture as the construction of buildings using current building methods is one of the biggest culprits causing environmental damage. There is a serious trend and need towards finding solutions to building that creates less damage to the environment. It also needs to respect local materials, culture and global trends towards more sustainable structures. Our firm is registered with the Green Building Council of South Africa and we try to work towards the council set goals and ratings for so called "green buildings". We struggle of course to find the appropriate and easily available economically viable and user acceptable materials. However, most suppliers and manufacturers are becoming more aware of the demand for products that do not harm the environment.

How do you blend contemporary materials with the natural, particularly in this home?

We try and achieve this blend and in this home we selected pigmented cement flooring finishes inside and out. This is combined with stainless steel fittings and aluminium doors windows and louvred shutters.

Do you remember your moment of breakthrough, when you realised people were starting to recognise you as an architect?

I don't really remember a breakthrough moment as such. Recognition has come slowly over time with the appreciation of many buildings completed and satisfied users.

Describe the feeling you have once the art-work of your creation comes to life and the world looks at it and read your footprints in that particular work?

It can be quite daunting if you put it like that as most buildings are not specific works of art. They are responses to user needs in a context put together with a sense of accepted good proportions within a time and space capsule. One hopes that the buildings that you create may become appreciated with use and over time. It is very rewarding and satisfying to see a building completed and enjoyed.

Amanda Katz Architects is an established firm that focuses on diverse home extensions, new homes, small offices and schools. For more information contact (021) 462 3324 or email amandak@afrika.com or visit www.amandakatzarchitects.com