



Peregian Beach Community House

### Architect Dan Sparks Sparks Architects

Australia, their collection has contemporary, designer, retro and kids' lampshades, as well as a timber tripod base they designed.

Launching SevenDandelions at the Eumundi and Peregian Beach markets, the designers found the constant feedback from customers and passersby was a great way to refine their product before setting up online and supplying stores including Finders Keepers in Peregian and Artisan in Brisbane.

Scaling back their market commitments to just the monthly Young Designers Market at South Bank in Brisbane, the women can now spend more time doing what they enjoy most – being creative.

Currently working on a new base design called Hangman, which uses recycled timber from an old pier in Noosa, their range continues to expand. "We've started making cushions and canvases too and hope to move into fabric design as well. We can see a lot of avenues where we can take it," Jenny says.

With their handmade shades recently featured on the *Frankie* magazine website and in *Real Living* magazine's July edition, Jenny and Kelly toasted being in the spotlight with a glass or two of champagne.

"We've celebrated little milestones along the way with a glass or two of bubbly," Jenny says. "And being in two of our favourite magazines was a real highlight."

Visit [www.sevendandelions.com.au](http://www.sevendandelions.com.au)

It was a picture of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater house in Pennsylvania that convinced Dan Sparks of the power and beauty of good architecture.

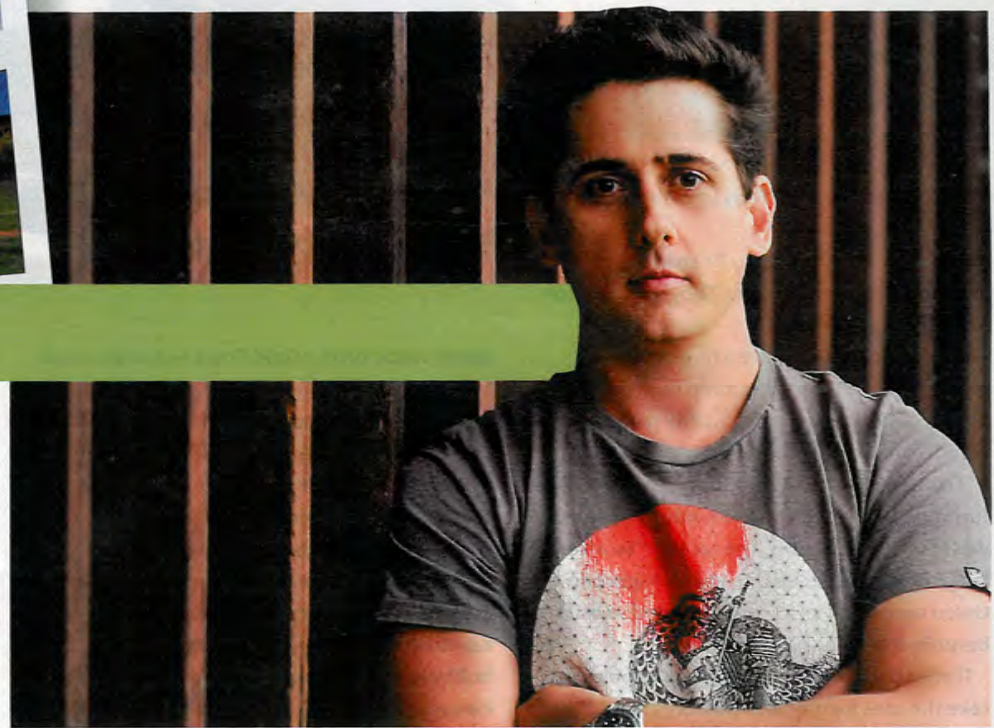
The originality of the iconic home, which sits above a waterfall, appealed to Dan's creative sensibility. And since he set up his architectural practice three years ago, ingenuity has proven a hallmark of Sparks Architects.

Dan's own home on Mt Ninderry, designed with wife and fellow architect Margo, won awards including the 2008 Royal Australian Institute of Architecture Sunshine Coast house of the year award and a Commendation for Sustainable Architecture.

Designed on a budget and built from nine prefabricated modules to maximise material and labour efficiency, it was a chance to explore sustainable design concepts, which will be increasingly important as resources dwindle.

"For a small building, the house punches well above its weight, as the functionality of the spaces and building elements were very well thought through and could adapt for multiple uses," Dan says. "When we won the award I had just set up Sparks Architects (with Luke Nuske and later Tommy Vuletic) and to kick off with that was really encouraging; confirmation we were on the right track."

This year he again attracted top honours at the 2010 Sunshine Coast RIAA awards with several Residential Commendations and the prestigious Gabriel Poole Award for Building



Of The Year for Peregian Beach Community House, as well as a State Award for Sustainable Architecture and a Commendation for Public Architecture. The building, praised for its lightweight form and eco credentials, such as recycled timber, solar panels, rainwater tanks, natural lighting and ventilation, now goes on to compete at the national level in October.

Dan credits his six-year apprenticeship with former Coast architect Gabriel Poole for fostering his resourcefulness and passion for sustainable architecture.

"What really resonated with me was his passion for new materials and how we might put these materials together in better ways in order for our buildings to respond to the environment more truthfully and to be more economical," Dan says. "Gabriel is also a big believer in listening to and respecting the builders and myriad subbies who all contribute skills and knowledge to the realisation of architecture, something I am mindful of too."

With admiration for "anyone who pursues their dreams with integrity and passion and in the process contributes something positive to the world", Dan's design ethos centres on creating buildings that enrich people's lives and enable them to appreciate the subtleties of materials, light and space.

Working across a range of residential and commercial projects, including celebrity chef Ben O'Donoghue's new South Bank Surf Club, he says his ultimate goal is simply to create architecture that "feels good".

"I like designing inspiring places for people to live in, work in and play in and which work well with the environment," he says.

"Each project is a new puzzle to solve, with varied site, brief and budget constraints, and that is one of the things I love about architecture. Due to the very nature of what you're doing, you are constantly learning."

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