

## CANNONS HOUSE

ALUSION™ delivers a futuristic and uplifting expression to Cannons House



Cannons House is a new jewel in the streetscape of Flinders Lane. It provides a generous welcoming experience and a unique outcome, setting an extraordinarily high benchmark for adaptive reuse.

Its innovative, award-winning façade and lobby is thanks to the creative team at NH Architecture. Renowned for creating thoughtful, site-specific designs that draw reference from the site's archaeology, Cannons House is no exception.

Acknowledging its location in the lexicon of the Flinders Lane conversation, the design references the history of the fabric warehouse genre, the building's adjacency to the Harry Seidler Shell House public plaza, and gives a clear nod to the luxury, high-end retail of Collins Street.

In fact, the refurbishment of Cannons House has more than brought the original building up to contemporary standard, reinvigorating the space and presenting itself to the Flinders Lane precinct in a more polished light.

Careful material choice delivered on the true potential of Cannons House.

Dimpled Bronze Rimex stainless steel panels on the external façade have overtones of a fabric texture, while polished granite tiles on the building's base visually extends the granite paving and landscaped walls of Shell House across Flinders lane. By extending the overhang of Cannons House, a sheltered walkway now provides a meeting place for people to stop and congregate before heading out to Fitzroy Gardens.

"We feel we have contributed to the generosity of the public domain, at street level, and also created a remarkable façade in the streetscape of Flinders Lane," comments Astrid Jenkin, Principal, NH Architecture.

Inside, the lobby delivers a delightful element of surprise; its illusionary, slightly futuristic space a complete change from the robust and busy Flinders lane.



“For us it was all about bringing the robust material of the external urban environment through to the interior in a more refined way,” explains Astrid.

The minimal material palette reflects this refined continuation of the public space. And despite its small footprint and low ceiling, a combination of mirrors and continuous planes of materiality cleverly creates the illusion of a larger, more sumptuous experience, making the once small and unwelcoming lobby appear much larger.

Continuous panels of ALUSION™ Stabilised Aluminium Foam wall cladding is a beautiful complement to the theme of texture, fabric and light. It redefines the 1980s office aesthetic, creating an innovative, seamless and uplifting space, channelling scenes from ‘2001: A Space Odyssey.’

“The beauty of the ALUSION™ panel is that it can be installed to give the effect of a continuous, textural & monolithic surface, with a robust yet refined grain.” says Astrid.

From a practical point of view, small cell one-sided ALUSION™ panels are a tactile aesthetic and robust surface that readily withstands a continuous flow of traffic through the lobby.

“This was a project that happened throughout Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, so people left the office in its original form and came back to this new space, so the futuristic sci-fi aesthetic amazes them when they come in,” says Victor Wong, Associate, NT Architecture.

A bronze mirror at the far wall subtly extends the lobby, while engaging visitors in the visual dynamics of the striking interior.

Granite flooring continues in from the public space in the same tones as the external bluestone paving. This extends into an inviting bench seat running the length of the lobby, referencing the external granite seats in the plaza opposite and enabling people to physically use the space. On top, feature cushions in dark tan leather are an inviting resting place to gather your thoughts or belongings before continuing on your way.

“We were conscious of providing amenity that allowed for congregation and meeting, pausing and propping before you entered or left the building, or were waiting for someone. That was part of the experience, giving



people the opportunity to engage with the building and use it in a physical way rather than just in a visually pleasing way," continues Astrid.

There is no doubt Cannons House exemplifies adaptive reuse at its best. For that alone NH Architecture is to be congratulated. Fittingly though, the team was awarded a commendation in the Commercial Architecture category in the 2021 AIA Victorian Architecture Awards amongst some heavy hitting contenders. Not surprisingly, Pomeroy Pacific, the building's owner, is more than ecstatic with the outcome, proudly framing a copy of the award for display in its unique and uplifting new foyer.

Architect: NH Architecture  
Developer: Pomeroy Pacific  
Product: ALUSION 2440mm x  
1220mm x 12.7mm  
Small Cell 1 sided  
Builder: Harris HMC  
Carpenter: Cannard Hicks  
Carpentry  
Photography: Peter Bennetts