

Kerry and Lindsay Clare's environmental sensitivity has won them Australia's top architecture award.



Love the

A TALENT for blending striking buildings with high environmental performance has earned QUT alumni Kerry and Lindsay Clare the most prestigious architecture award in Australia.

The couple became the first husband-and-wife team to win the 2010 Australian Institute of Architects' Gold Medal earlier this year, thanks to a body of work that includes Queensland's landmark Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA), pictured above.

The Clares share the same university ties (Kerry has a QUT architecture degree and Lindsay a QIT architecture diploma), a family of five adult children and the same passion for creating sustainable buildings.

Their work over the past 35 years has been characterised by a desire for their buildings to respond to the particular characteristics of a place and to tap into the environmental benefits of natural light and ventilation – often through pavilion-style forms.

Equally at home designing family residences or massive

government projects, the AIA Gold Medal especially recognised their "enormous contribution" to sustainable architecture.

"It has been a high honour and not something we ever expected," said Kerry. "We're particularly proud that it recognised our environmental achievements because that is something that we would like students and young architects to recognise and pursue in their own work."

Lindsay said the medal win was made "all the more remarkable" because he and Kerry had never set out to create "spectacular places".

"We only ever set out with the intention of designing habitable places," he said. "But whether you are making public spaces or private spaces, people need to feel comfortable and be inspired by them. Both need to reinforce a relationship with an area and feel connected to the place it's in."

The couple founded their own business, Clare Design, on the Sunshine Coast in 1980 and are now based in Sydney



landscape

where they are designing for clients across the country.

They moved south 12 years ago to become design directors for the New South Wales Government Architect's Office, where they worked on projects including the refurbishment of the Circular Quay wharves.

From 2000 to early 2010, they switched to the Sydney office of national firm Architectus, where they were design directors of the winning entry in the GoMA international design competition.

The gallery has become their best-known project, but one which they describe as "challenging" and which saw them forced to navigate the complexities of a major building company and government hierarchy.

Asking them to pick a favourite building from their career is somewhat akin to choosing a favourite child.

"It's a question we usually try to avoid," Kerry says, citing the difficulty in comparing a 25,000m² gallery with someone's 80m² home.

But the freedom that came with designing their own

former home, pictured above, at Buderim on the Sunshine Coast – and its ensuing awards – pushes it towards the top of any favourite list.

And although most people don't build a new home from scratch, anyone undertaking renovations can also learn a lesson from some of the simple principles that have dominated the Clares' work.

"What's the site like, where are the breezes, where does the sun come from? These are the questions we ask," Lindsay said. "There's not much point in adding more spaces if they don't work well."

Kerry said a good starting point was: "Ask yourself what the nicest parts of your property are, where are the best aspect and views, where do you get the lovely warm winter sun, or where do you like to sit on a summer afternoon? Those are the elements you want to keep and expand on."

- Mechelle McMahon

**Image taken from Lindsay Clair Website
2 Satinwood Dr received the “BHP Steel
futures National Award” when constructed
along with other projects nearby done by
Lindsay Clair**

