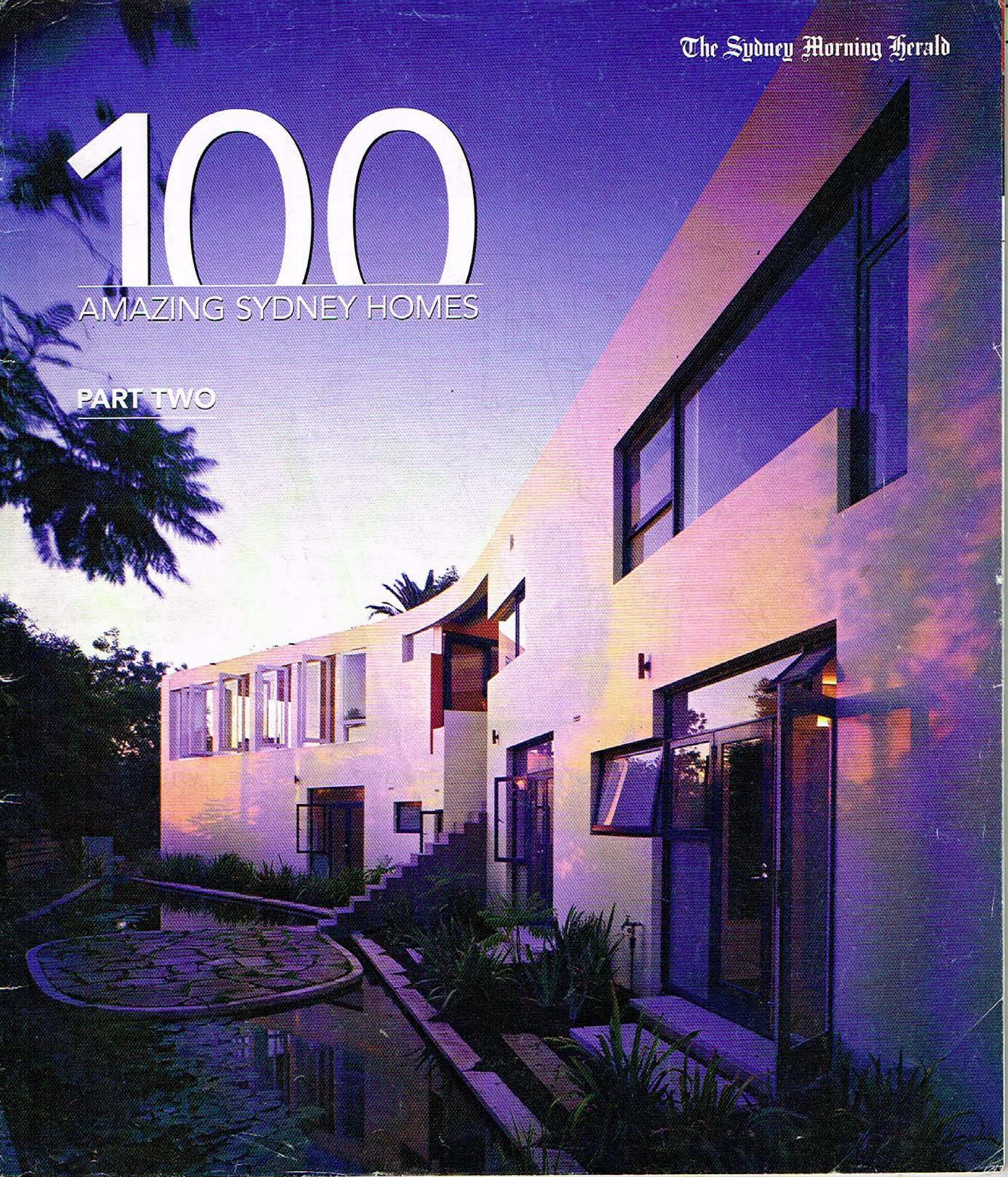


The Sydney Morning Herald

# 100

AMAZING SYDNEY HOMES

PART TWO





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Photography Eric Sierins

# Windy city

ARCHITECT JORGE HRDINA BUILT 2002

LIVING HIGH on a ridge on the Central Coast can give one helluva view **04**, but it isn't one you can always enjoy – unless being buffeted by a brisk southerly is your idea of a pleasant afternoon. As the owner explains: "The southerlies can be solid. Just before Christmas we had them up to 130 kilometres per hour."

Architect Jorge Hrdina went far beyond convention in this ambitious cliff-top house. It worked, but arguably only because he had the right builder in John Fielding. Fielding, of Belvedere Constructions, is known as a perfectionist with a flair for devising elegant solutions to vexing problems.

"It was a crazy house. Architecturally it took things beyond the limit," says Fielding. "A lot of the glazing was so big it had to be lifted in with a crane. The sliding doors were the biggest we'd ever built: 750kg apiece **02**."

In the north pavilion is the garage with guest room, study and deck. Cross the sheltered courtyard and you come to the home's main pavilion. Here are the open-plan kitchen and living room, opening to a deck with ocean views **03**.

Downstairs are two bedrooms and bathrooms. In the bedrooms, the first thing you notice is that the frameless, floor-to-ceiling glass windows don't open. Again, a buffer against the insistent southerlies; fewer fixtures mean fewer whistles.

Sandstone is the home's key element: the sandstone chimney **01** anchors the living space; stone is the main element in the central courtyard; and it grounds the home on its site. Snowy Mountains stonemasons were chosen because of the wealth of experience they've gathered building lodges in the high country. "They did a fantastic job," says Hrdina.

As has Hrdina in keeping a prestige home as unobtrusive as possible on a windy and exposed ridgetop.



01



02



03



04