Subtropical showcase

23 Blessed with a gorgeous outlook in the hinterlands of the northern NSW coast, this living pavilion has a wonderful connection to the landscape, yet the design incorporates enough wall space to house the owners' art and book collections.

WHY IT WORKS Large sliding glass panels can be stacked – and seemingly made to disappear – behind the blade walls, blurring the distinction between inside and out. The muted palette of materials – travertine flooring, rough-cut stone fireplace surround and off-white walls – provides a neutral backdrop for artworks and for the brightly coloured garden walls.

OWNER'S VERDICT "We love the room because it's adaptable, practical and – everyone tells us – stunning. In the long, subtropical summer, the doors disappear and the garden and views become part of the room, while on chilly winter evenings we are cosy around the fireplace."

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Perfect match

24 A professional sportswoman owns this apartment overlooking the ocean in Sydney's eastern suburbs. Spending much of the year in overseas hotel rooms, she wanted her home base to be "fun, colourful and carefree, somewhere you can walk into with sand on your feet", says interior designer Melissa Collison. She also wished to make a splash with the ensuite, formerly a poky and poorly lit space.

WHY IT WORKS In the ensuite, Melissa installed a two-person shower and removed the wall adjoining the bedroom, replacing it with glass. "When the screen slides open, there's complete 'peekaboo' from the bedroom into the bathroom," says Melissa. Oak joinery carved with cherry blossom lends the room Zen tranquillity. Underneath is a seat reminiscent of an athlete's warm-up bench, with drawers storing shoes and socks ready for action. The pretty rug is from TibetSydney. ›

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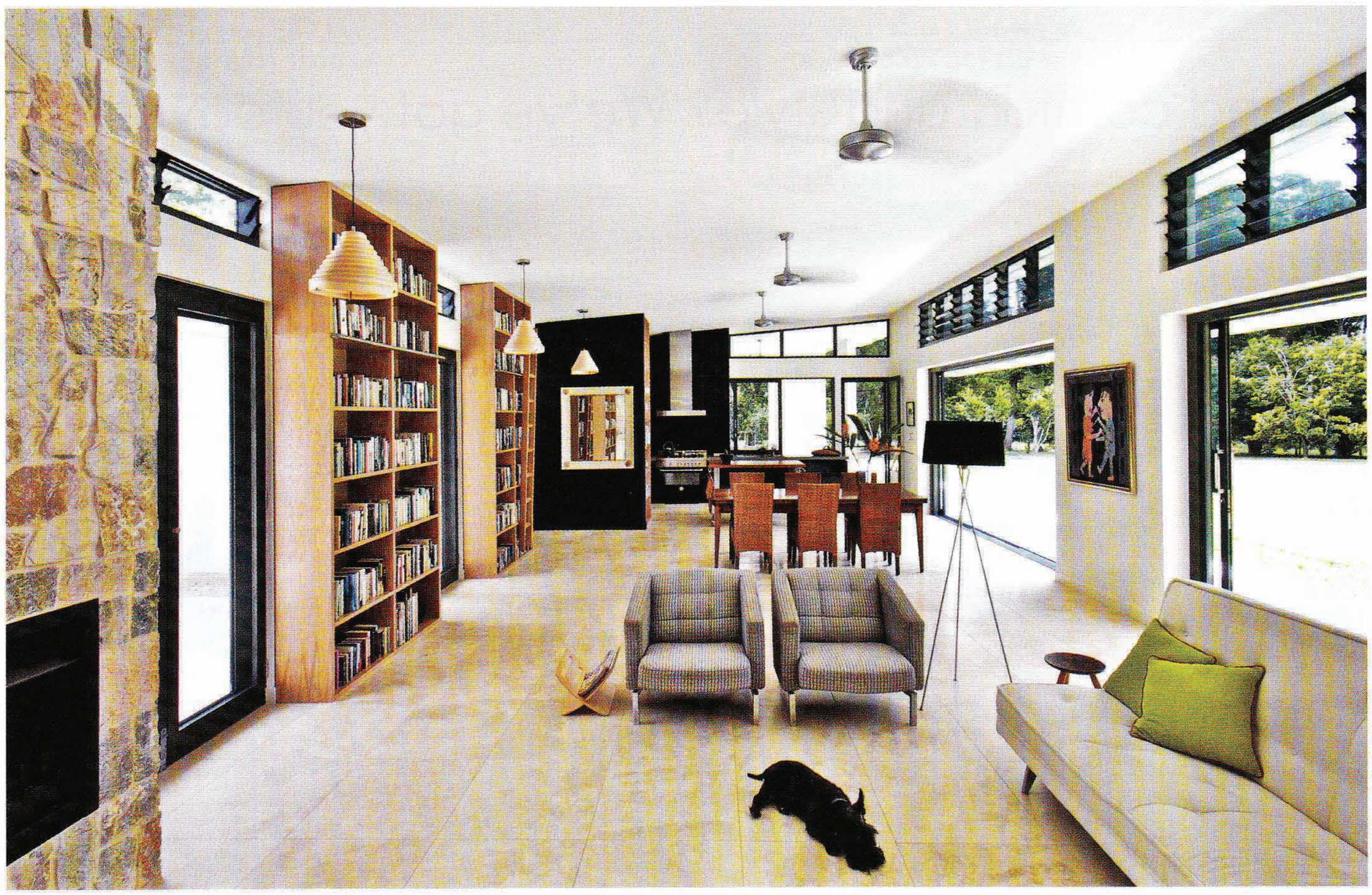

Photography by David Taylor (this page), John Paul Urizar (opposite). Styling by Janet James (opposite). Artwork by Andrew Sibley.