



# SYNTHESIS &

AN ODE TO MODERN DESIGN, **A PRETORIA HOME RESTS LIGHTLY ON THE LAND**

# SYNERGY

AND BLURS THE LINES BETWEEN INSIDE AND OUTSIDE.

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PRODUCTION  
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# "IT ALL STARTED WITH THE SITE,"



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says the owner of the remarkable floating concrete box in Pretoria's Silver Lakes Golf Estate. Tucked away in a quiet street in one of the country's premium residential estates, the house of glass and concrete looms above a steep bank of feathery grasses. Featuring the most elemental forms and honest materials, it's a house that, despite its rarity, is too elegant to beg for attention, instead speaking to style through subtlety.

Architect Luke Chandler, whose work at Aevitas Group typically involves much larger property developments, describes the house as having an intimate connection to the koppie against which it resides. "The site fundamentally informed the orientation, layout, level and aesthetic of the house and it was critically important to capitalise on its unique features," he says. A 28-m-wide floating concrete box runs west to east, flanked by two stone-clad bookends. On the northern side, the building tucks into the estate's game reserve, and on the southern side it gapes open to a panoramic view of the golf course, observed from a lofty position 4 m above its initial ground level.

It is the structural engineering that makes this house – built by Archecon Construction – truly exceptional. The span of concrete above the veranda, 12 m long and 4 m deep, is unsupported. And just three

sliding doors cover its entire length. When the doors are fully opened on the northern and southern sides, they disappear into cavity walls, making the concrete box seem as if it's hovering.

The homeowner, who has worked closely with Luke in the past, has an astute sense of design, one that led him to approach Julia Day of interior design company Generation.

"The design consciousness in South Africa is starting to shift," says Julia "and my client is part of the vanguard in terms of the way he perceives what he builds. An art aficionado and collector, he wanted a space that was custom-made to display his collection, which includes works by the likes of André van Vuuren, Paul Blomkamp and Gail Catlin.

How to appoint a home

to be in harmony with the architecture and the site was a challenge that Julia met with a deep appreciation for the spirit of the house. "In 50 years this house will be iconic, so we chose timeless design," she says. By timeless she means authentic, hand-made classics by the likes of design icons Maarten van Severen, Kensaku Oshiro and Vico Magistretti. These global heavyweights were chosen for their love of distilled form and quality over quantity, traits that run deep in this dwelling. With respect given to pieces like a Pilotis armchair by Philippe Nigro and an LL04 lounge chair by Maarten van Severen, the rooms have been allowed to breathe.

The homeowner, architect and designer all mention the *feeling* that the house evokes more often than they refer to the look of its individual components, signifying that the whole really is greater than the sum of its parts.

"When you walk into a room that makes you feel something, you just know you've got it right," the homeowner says.

- Architect Luke Chandler: [aevitasgroup.co.za](http://aevitasgroup.co.za)
- Interior designer Julia Day: [generationdesign.co.za](http://generationdesign.co.za)



02



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## PREVIOUS SPREAD

01 The facade of the house and the koppie behind it, as seen from the golf course.

## THIS SPREAD

01 Interior designer Julia Day, standing next to a Focus Bathyscafocus, a suspended rotating fireplace that the homeowner refers to as functional art.

02 The set of Vico Magistretti Louisiana chairs and poufs is one of the homeowner's favourite acquisitions. The oval coffee table is a Dan table by Jørgen Møller, and behind it is a Yuva sofa by Aksu/Suardi, both designed for De Padova.

03 The D-ended dining table in oak was custom-designed by Generation. Carimate dining chairs by Vico Magistretti were upholstered in a shade inspired by rocks on the property. Five concrete Foscarini Aplomb pendant lights hang above the table.





- 01 A Maarten van Severen LL04 chaise longue in unfinished leather and steel in front of a picture window is as much artwork as furniture piece.
- 02 A view of the garden is bookended by a pair of LL03 chairs by Maarten van Severen in the tranquil office.
- 03 The bathroom takes the form of a stone box, featuring oversized travertine tiles and sanitaryware from the Axor Bouroullec collection at Hansgrohe. Frameless glass and generous mirrors give this sanctuary a sense of space.
- 04 The main bedroom is a spartan, calm space, with a balcony that overlooks the estate's nature reserve. A Pilotis armchair and ottoman by Philippe Nigro are paired with a Vico Magistretti Sleeping Car double bed, upholstered in a slubby linen to add texture.



THE SITE FUNDAMENTALLY INFORMED **THE ORIENTATION,**

**LAYOUT, LEVEL AND AESTHETIC OF THE HOUSE.**







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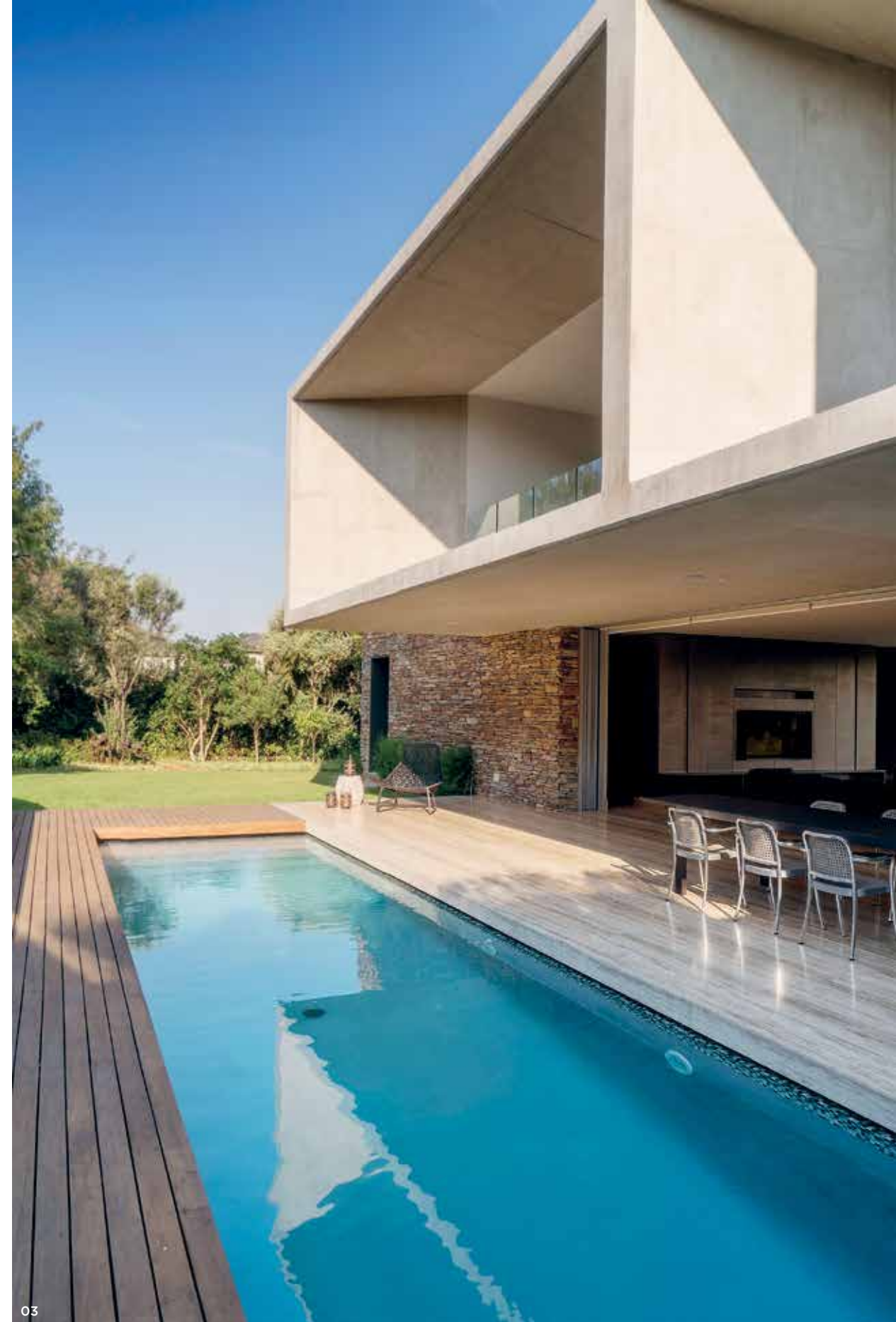
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"IN 50 YEARS THIS HOUSE  
WILL BE ICONIC, SO WE  
CHOSE TIMELESS DESIGN."

**01** "On the northern side, we used an L-shaped ground-floor plan to tuck the house into the koppie and create a contained space where the connection to the hill feels tangible," says architect Luke Chandler.

**02** The driveway, flanked by ornamental grasses, winds up to one of the stone-clad "bookends" of the house.

**03** The long, narrow swimming pool mirrors the proportions of the house. Alongside the pool are Vico Magistretti Thonet-inspired Silver chairs, chosen for their lightness of form.



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