



Ethnicraft N701 Sofa - Leather with Ethnicraft Mahogany Roller Max Coffee Table.



50180 Ethnicraft Oak Mikado Dining Table with 51490 Ethnicraft Oak Bok Dining Chair.



51490 Ethnicraft Oak Bok chair and 50180 Ethnicraft Oak Mikado Dining Table.

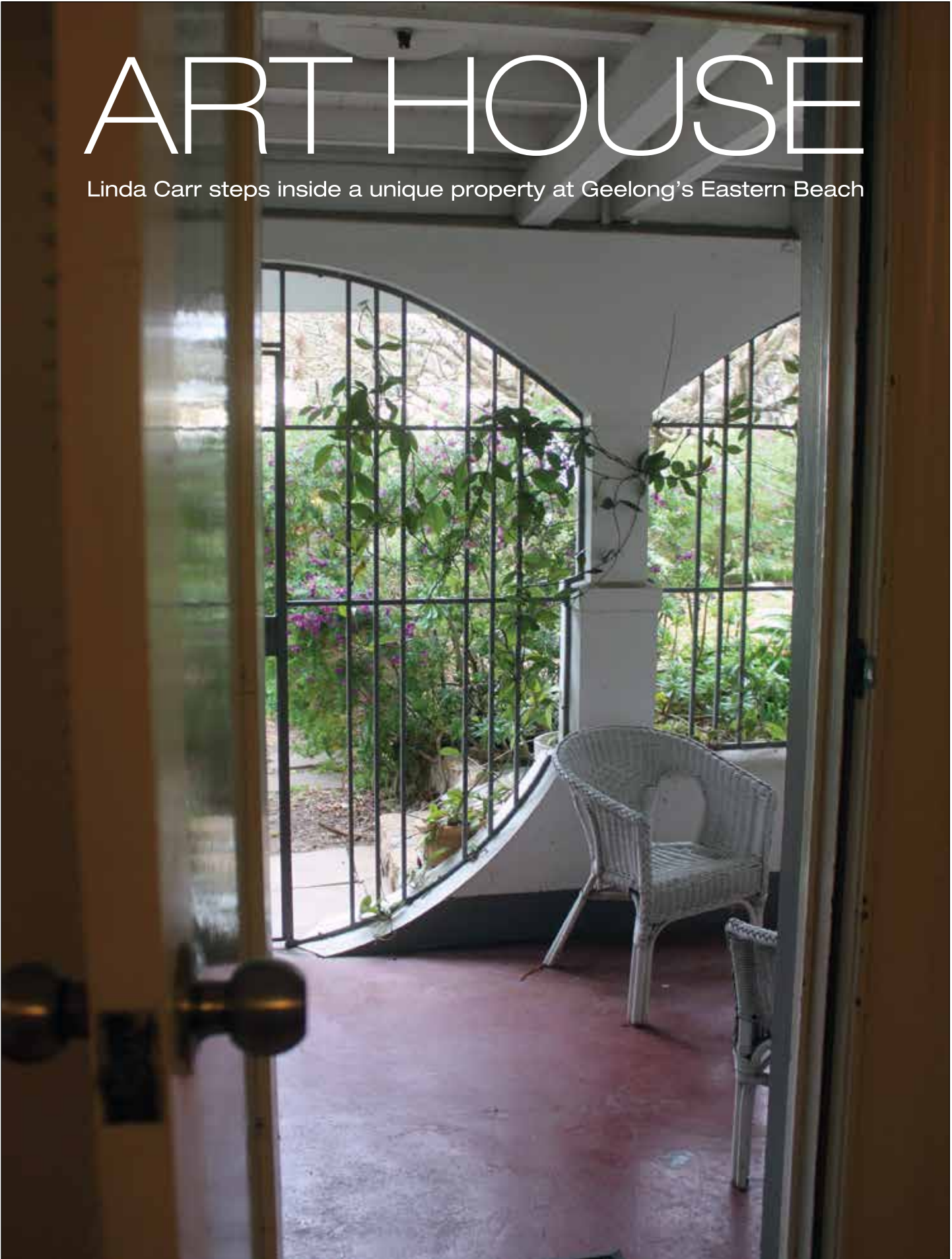


35007-35008 Ethnicraft Mahogany Boomerang Coffee Table, 29751 Dark brown Tampa boards.



View Ethnicraft furniture at ethnicraft.com

Visit us at Bayside Furniture – 75 Pakington Street, Geelong West.





Eastern Beach Art House. These four words strung together cause the mind to pause. Is this an art gallery for surfies – the aroma of oil on canvas, with a hint of sunscreen wafting against white-washed walls? No. Eastern Beach Art House is located at the elegant and highly-regarded end of Geelong’s foreshore – where art deco cranes dance merrily on the backs of tortoise dragons and tall palms evoke Casablanca nostalgia.

Built in 1909 by famed Geelong architects Laird and Buchan, the first step inside the building tells you this is special. The house embraces you and even those of us that feel bereft of creative skill can understand that it accommodates the imaginative mind. Strong artistic impulse was perhaps woven into the house from the very start – the same architects also built the first section of the Geelong Art Gallery in 1913.

Delivering this creative ambiance now requires direct artistic experience and deep personal commitment. Art House hosts Dr Helen Bodycomb, contemporary mosaicist, and Martin Paten, arts producer and administrator, embody those characteristics. Busy people in their own right, what moves them to operate such special accommodation?

“Well, we’re not a hotel, although there is certainly the concept of hospitality but it’s

more than that. More importantly there’s support and pricing that we make available to artists in recognition that they live and work in a different economy to most of the rest of society. It’s sort of part of our mantra, part of our mission,” explains Martin.

“Yes,” Helen continues, “there’s an element of excitement that sits around a place that is supportive of arts and arts practice. It’s a bit like a garden and when you create habitat for artists to just be who they are and do what they do, then special things happen and that’s what we’ve seen here since we started in February 2020.”

The house is almost a piece of art in itself with many of the interior furnishings relocated from the Brooklyn Arts Hotel in Fitzroy after it ceased operation. The pieces sit perfectly in their new architectural location, creating a harmony that eases the spirit – whether it’s the lovely wall panelling or arresting paintings.

We are fortunate that this end of the Geelong waterfront is holding its integrity, as Helen reasons.

“Many houses like this in Melbourne were demolished in their thousands through the 1970s and 80s, probably even earlier,” she says. “Geelong is a regional city and it was focused on other things – on industry for example. Buildings like this bring with them a history and a culture that has

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The Villawood Foundation supports numerous Geelong region community groups and causes, everything from toy libraries to calisthenics clubs and little athletics.

One of the groups, Geelong Youth Engagement, tackles the Kokoda Track yearly with local youth and their mentors in a life-changing adventure.

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been lost in huge parts of Melbourne. Big regional cities like Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo have certain types of vernacular architecture that lends itself to a creative atmosphere."

The range of creative people attracted to stay here is very varied. As he flips through the guest book Martin pauses at colourful drawings and wondrous handwriting.

"There have been many people stay here but at the moment we seem to be having a run of writers finishing novels but we've had amazing performing and visual artists here," he says. "We have had artists exhibiting with the Geelong Gallery. We have a lot of younger and older creatives working with Platform Arts and it's only when we read the guestbooks and see what it says that we know what the stay has meant to people. Beautiful illustrations and such kind and meaningful entries."

Artistic Director for Platform Arts, Ilana Russell, explains how the Art House is part of their support for contemporary practice,

to foster growth of regional arts audiences.

"We've been partnering with Eastern Beach Art House for three years now. It's an amazing house for our artists from around the country and many continue to stay at the House on subsequent visits to the region."

"It's so important for Geelong to have spaces like this – that host artists in a residency capacity – it provides generous time for reflection, process, conversation and research."

Melbourne author, Jacqueline Ross, who has visited a number of times, explains what the Art House means to her work.

"I couldn't imagine anything better. I find that it's such great concentrated time. I get an enormous amount of work done when I'm down there. I can't get down there often enough. I've met some interesting people there but for me it's not so much about meeting other people but just being able to lock myself away for that concentrated time."

"My last work was a book called *Blackwater*, published last year, and my most recent stay down at the Art House was doing all the final edits for that."

Corio Bay is in a rather unique position in southern Australia, having one of the very few groups of waterfront houses that face north. Those who choose to stay at the Eastern Beach Art House are lucky to find a unique Geelong discovery. It's a very intimate offering, made for those who like a different kind of experience, stepping away from the standardised hotel and entering the world of creative joy.

German playwright Bertolt Brecht wrote "*Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.*"

If we agree with this claim then we see establishments such as the Art House as foundries tending the fires of creative passion.

For more information visit www.ebarthouse.com.au or call 0410 402 550

