



As demonstrated in the March 2006 issue of *The Architectural Review*, London has become a rich and fertile place for the careful insertion of contemporary private homes. Cassion Castle Architects extend this emerging tradition with this live/work studio located on a very constrained site in an industrial alleyway that runs parallel to Bethnal Green Road in east London.

Designed for two industrial designers who wanted a place of sanctuary in which they could escape the bustling city, to live and work, the building deliberately minimises views out. Appearing relatively narrow from the width of infill facade, the property extends through the party wall to gain access to essential mezzanine storage space. This allows the principal interiors to remain clean and clutter free, adding to the stark contrast between inside and out.

In section, the main body of the premises arranges studio and living spaces in two interlocking L-shaped forms. On the ground floor, accessed directly from the alley, is the studio with its stepped section. Hanging above this is the bedroom, with more limited headroom, and above all this, on the second floor, is the living space; the only space with a view through a large single aspect glazed screen that gives access onto a narrow external roof terrace.

From the alley, the crisp glass facade was conceived

LIVING IN A BOX

Complexity and contradiction in an urban alley.

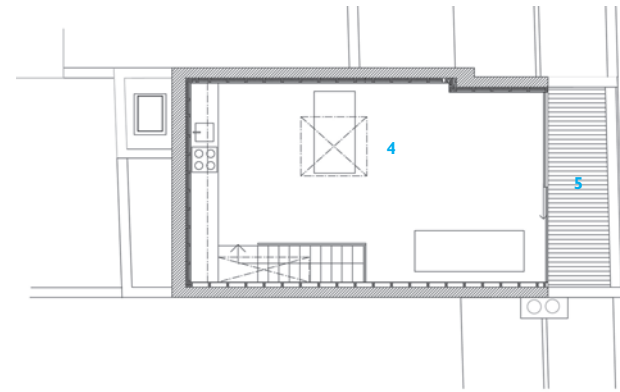
HOUSE, BETHNAL GREEN, LONDON
ARCHITECT
CASSION CASTLE ARCHITECTS

1
Pristine and ramshackle,
sitting cheek by jowl.
2
The live/work unit
presents a bold
intervention in the gritty
terrace.





3

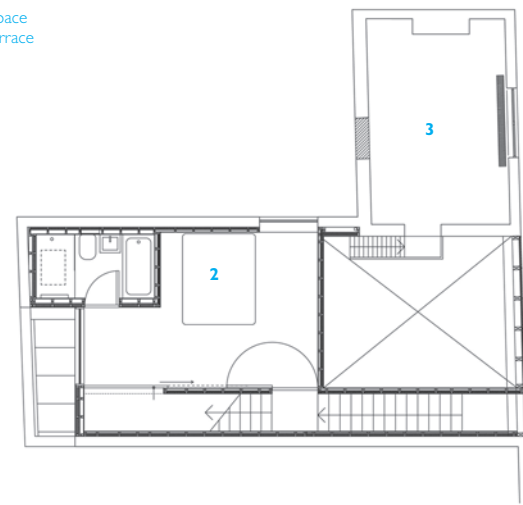


second floor, roof terrace plan

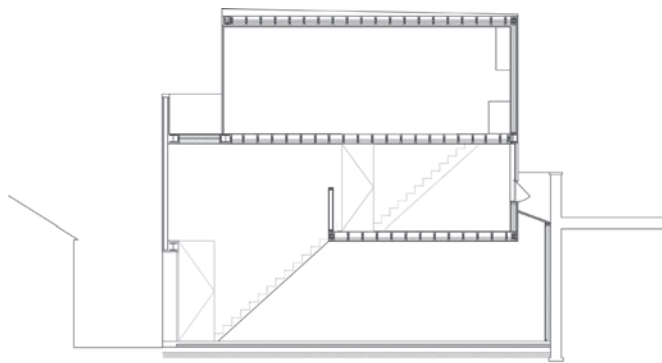
- 1 workspace
- 2 bedroom
- 3 store
- 4 living space
- 5 roof terrace



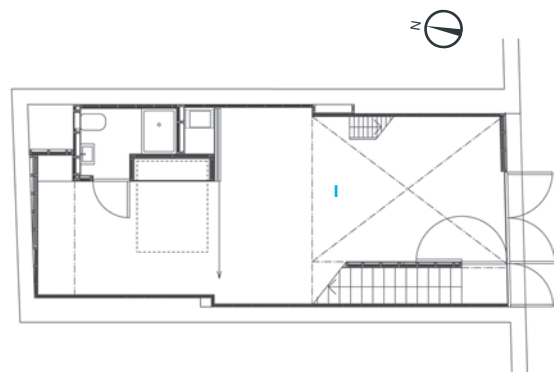
4



first floor (mezzanine) level plan



long section



ground level plan

as a foreign object 'wedged' into the existing terrace, to provide a bold counterpoint to the dishevelled alleyway. Not ignoring the realities of context, however, this elegant and refined double-height box overhangs a more robust infill screen, set back from the building line to form a slightly more protected threshold between public and private realms. Coated in anti

fly-poster paint, the nature of this element reminds us of the realities of urban life, and of the sort of tensions and juxtapositions that combine to make cities like London such vibrant places of complexity and contradiction. R. G.

Architect
Cassion Castle Architects, London
Photographs
Keith Collie

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3
On the second floor,
the living space has
rooflights to the
rear ...
4
... and a large glazed
screen to the front,
giving onto a narrow
but useful roof
terrace.
5
The ground floor
workspace is also
lit at the rear, and
open to bedroom
mezzanine above.



5