# dwell

AT HOME IN THE MODERN WORLD

DECEMBER 2000

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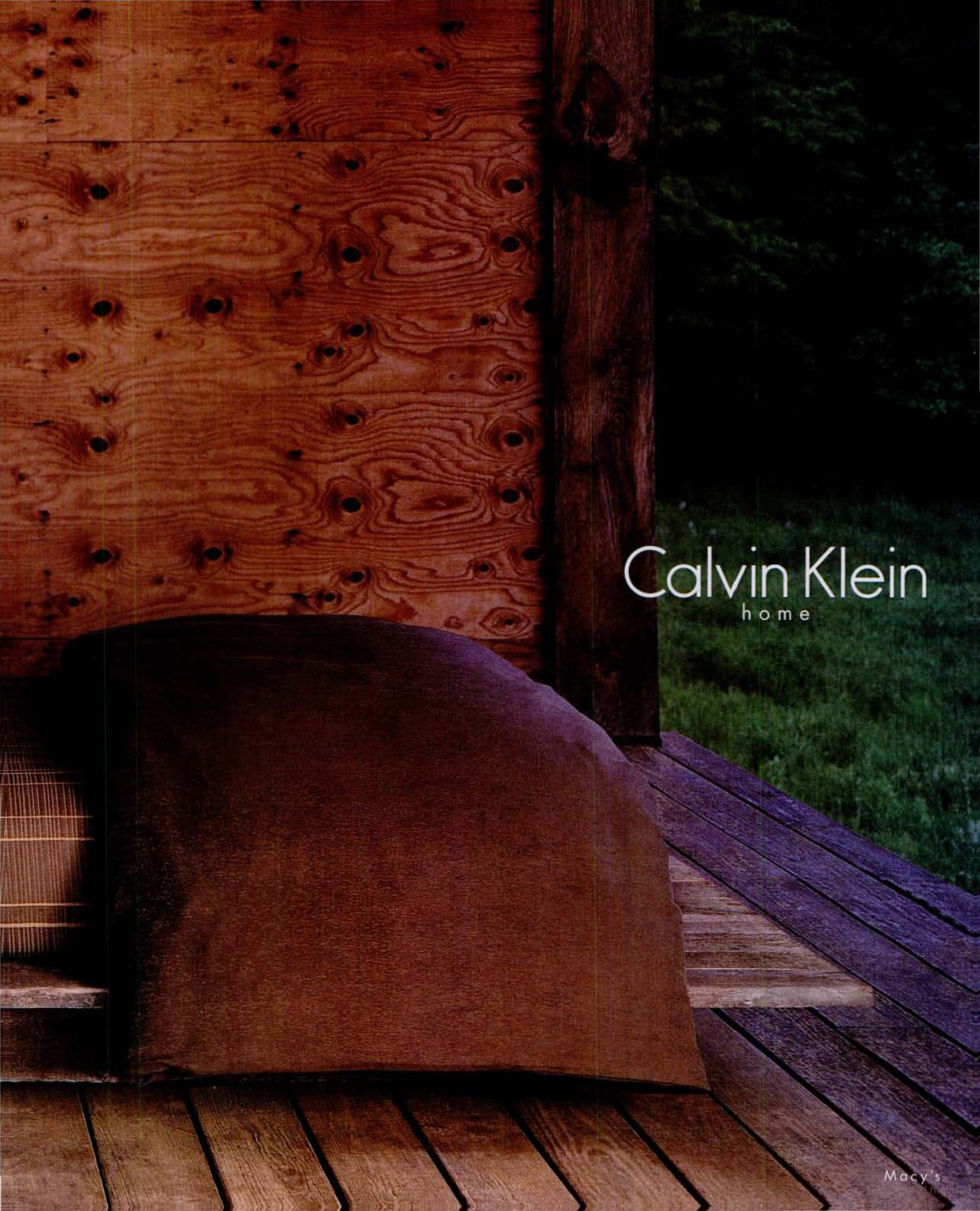
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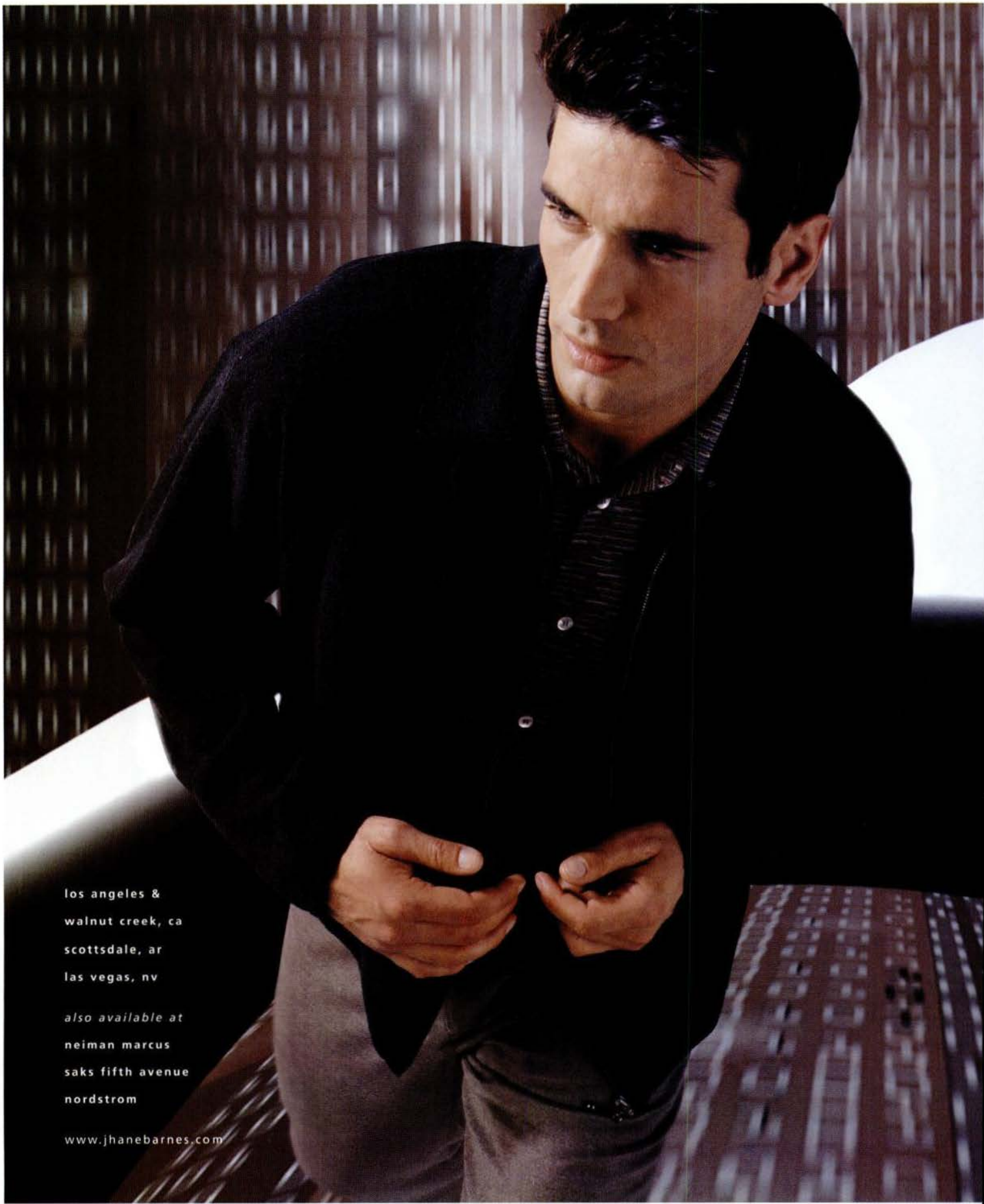

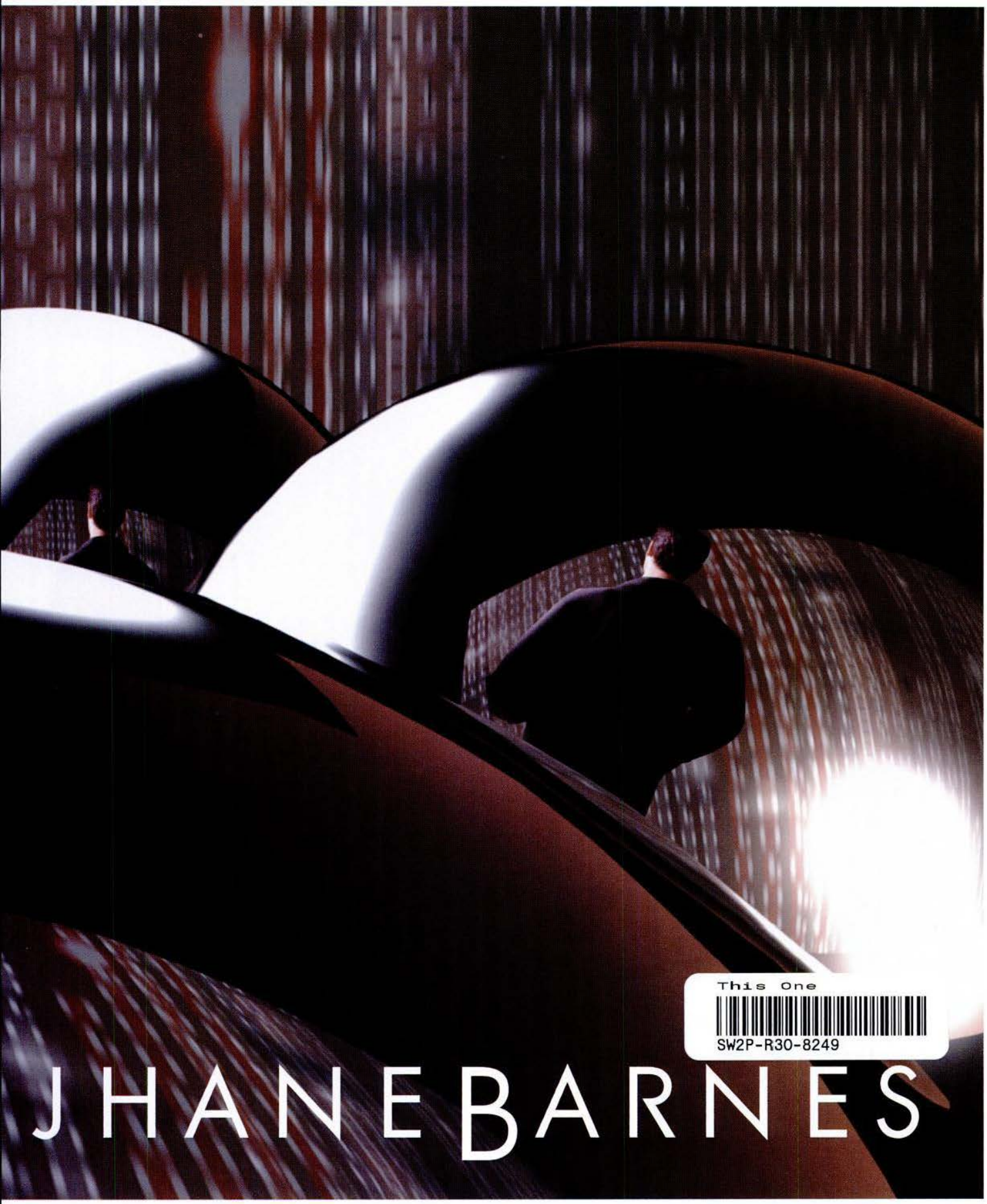

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"Whether in the short term or the long term, cranking out three-garage homes on quarter-acre lots in subdivisions that are five miles from the nearest mall cluster of Home Depots and Burger Kings is simply wrong . . ." —ANDREW ROSS, PAGE 91







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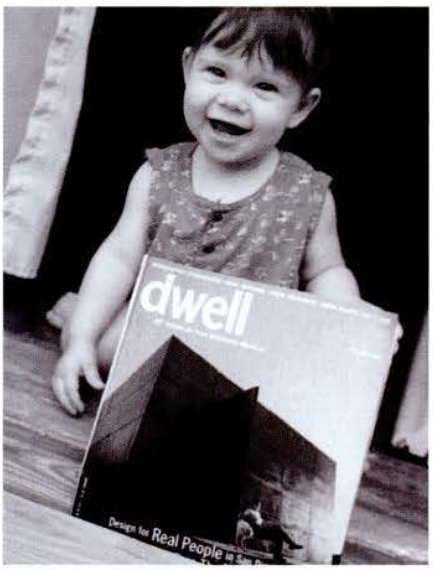


Our youngest reader, Marcelle of New Orleans.

**Congratulations on the launch!**

You guys had me worried. I didn't think I was ever going to actually get this promised magazine. It seems like I mailed off the little postcard so very long ago. But at last. And it's wonderful. Just be sure you're not too California-centric. OK?

DONA KNIGHT
Chicago, Illinois

**Cheers to a great premier issue. This is a** great mag for those in the architecture biz and for those who aren't. Your "Architects 101," the "Diary," "Dwellings," the whole thing actually speaks to what is important in architecture. And, although we have been guilty of the "fruit bowl" mentality, dwell speaks to our work and our philosophy of creating places that reflect the lives of the people who live in them.

I am hoping that dwell will help show what makes "Modern" architecture "Modern" is not simply materials or shapes or colors, but is about the way a place is designed to meet the "modern" needs of "modern" occupants.

CHRIS KOCH, SALA ARCHITECTS, INC.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Thank you so much for your unique maga-**zine. I am in the initial phase of designing/building/paying for a new house/home for my family of five as we outgrow our three-bedroom, one-bathroom ranch and your interviews with Mr. Sottsass and Ms. Roberts have given us the courage to hire an architect (and not use out-of-the-book plans by the builder) for our home. Someday, maybe I'll send you some pictures of it as it moves from "the dream house" to "Well, that's OK" to "How are we ever going to pay for this?" to finally "I LOVE IT!!!"

PAUL B. KARAS, M.D.
Fountain Hills, Arizona

**I just put down my copy of the premier issue.** I really like your philosophy regarding a home and design magazine that shows how real people live in real homes showcasing modern architecture. However, there are not enough photos showing the rooms and the details within. You are just dangling a wonderfully juicy carrot in front of our eyes and making us leave the table still hungry!

So, my final thoughts are "great concept, but more photos please!!!"

LOUISA JOHNSON
Sarasota, Florida

**Finally a magazine that has landed on my** (not-yet-modern) stoop that I can relate to! I too will be starting my "diary" project soon, and predict many challenges from the traditional neighborhoods. Congratulations on a truly great magazine!

KELLY JOURDAN
Indianapolis, Indiana

**Currently I am in the process of redesigning** my house/home. I am now on my second architect and this time egos seem to have merged versus clashed. And yes, I face the great dilemma of designing the great monument or simply a very nice place to live.

Monument versus home . . . monument versus a place to sit. I would love to believe that my work as an industrial designer will become a small part of history, but when I put it in the context of my life and my two wonderful little boys, I believe they are just very nice chairs . . . somewhere between the fruit bowl and the can of fruit cocktail.

Thanks for an insightful and delightful magazine. Please do not let it become so esoteric that I need a dictionary and Ph.D. to read it.

JOE RICCHIO, RICCHIO DESIGN
Seal Beach, California ►

dwell

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**I suspect that the sight of the Robie House as** well as so many others that Mr. Wright designed jolted many people.

To provide exceptional architecture is not easy. By "exceptional architecture" I mean design characterized by the kind of qualities I think you are referring to: embodying a connection with this moment and not a dead past, having an effect that enables the dweller to identify with the totality of the space that surrounds him or her, and of doing nothing less than anchoring and enriching his emotional and spiritual life.

Our thanks for your experiencing that jolt on a warm afternoon, and my thanks for your starting dwell.

JOSÉ MARCIAL-DEGOMAR, ARCHITECT
Deltona, Florida

**As a wife of an architect who subscribes to** elitist design magazines, I found the first issue of dwell to be an inviting and refreshing look at modernism.

Congratulations! Your magazine makes it over on my side of the bed.

GERALDINE MAGARELLI
Mountain View, California

**My partner and I have enjoyed the first issue.** The introduction from the publisher and Philip Nobel's story got the most of our attention since they deal with an issue we particularly care about in a very direct way.

The issue we are referring to is, of course, informing people about current architecture in a way that is different from what both typical "decoration" magazines tend to do, as well as what one-single-trendy-trend magazines such as *wallpaper* have been doing.

This issue connects to another one, which we find to be even more crucial: reaching new clients. Over the years we have noticed, by comparing our field to the ones of many of our clients, that architects are the only "creatives" who do not have any real form of representation (agents, reps, dealers, etc.). This affects our careers as much as it affects anybody's search for the right architect.

Connecting people with interesting, new architects could knock off a few obstacles towards the answer to your question: "How can we best build our homes to respond to the cultural changes that take place?"

GIUSEPPE LIGNANO, PARTNER
LOT/EK ARCHITECTURE
New York, New York

**First of all I want to commend all of you on a** wonderful innovative look at design. I have read the first issue from cover to cover, and never realized how much I enjoyed architecture and design.

I want to throw out a challenge to you all. There are a great number of us yearning for more than just your cookie-cutter condos and high-rise apartment buildings; however, we don't all live in South Beach, Hong Kong, New York, Phoenix, Atlanta, or San Francisco. Try to seek out odd places to find what you are looking for. Take a look at some other places for homes in the modern world.

CHRISTOPHER R. SOSNAY
Janesville, Wisconsin

*Editors' Note: Your wish is our command. Check out the cities in this issue.* ■

## Bridge the Gap

On the right is the Pravada, a tract house built by mega-homebuilder Kaufman & Broad for an Oceanside, California, development called Rancho del Oro. On the left is the home built for the Naiditch family in Altadena, California, by the firm Dean Nota Architects, one of a dozen firms represented in the LA12 Architects exhibition currently on view at the Kent State University School of Architecture.

Pravada, which features a "turret" for the "curb appeal that homeowners desire," is roughly 2,400 square feet and sells for approximately $265,000. The Naiditch residence, a cool, rectilinear composition of concrete, stucco, and glass block, is about the same size as the tract house but costs more than twice as much. This might explain why typical homebuyers wind up with something like the Pravada but it doesn't answer our questions.

Why, for example, can't a contemporary homebuilder do what Eichler did in the 1950s and 1960s and build developments that explore new styles and ideas? What if a homebuilder like K&B built houses that looked more like the unique homes designed by the LA12? What really constitutes "curb appeal"?

dwell invites you to help us tackle these and other questions in a moderated discussion with architects, homebuilders, and special invited guests on our website beginning Wednesday, November 1st. Join us at www.dwellmag.com and help us bridge the gap between mass and class.

PHOTOS BY ERHARD PFEIFFER, KAUFMAN & BROAD (PRAVADA HOUSE)


## Note the size of the martini.

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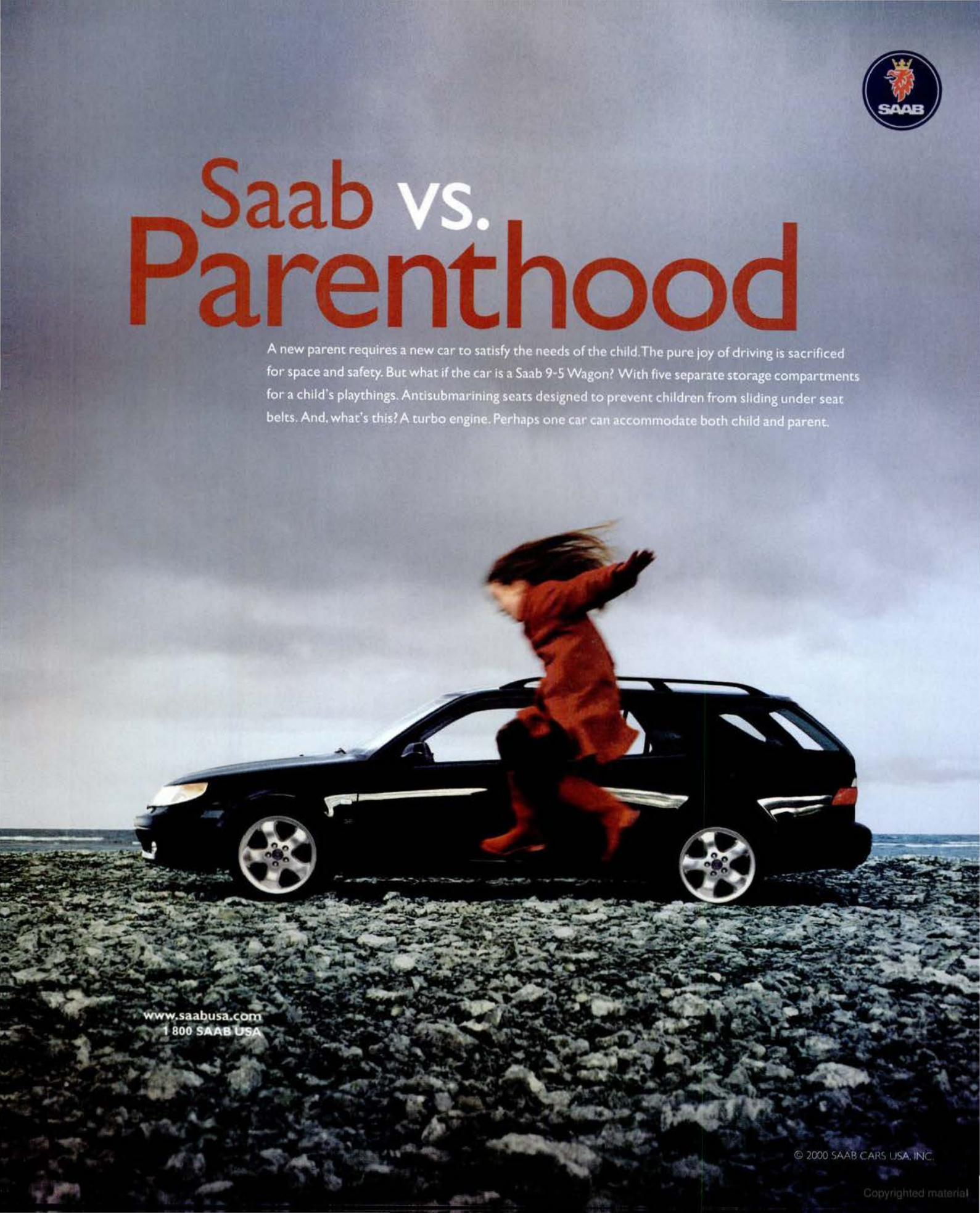
"Out of Sight" is now available on DVD from Universal Studios Home Video. 

# Saab vs. Parenthood

A new parent requires a new car to satisfy the needs of the child. The pure joy of driving is sacrificed for space and safety. But what if the car is a Saab 9-5 Wagon? With five separate storage compartments for a child's playthings. Antisubmarining seats designed to prevent children from sliding under seat belts. And, what's this? A turbo engine. Perhaps one car can accommodate both child and parent.



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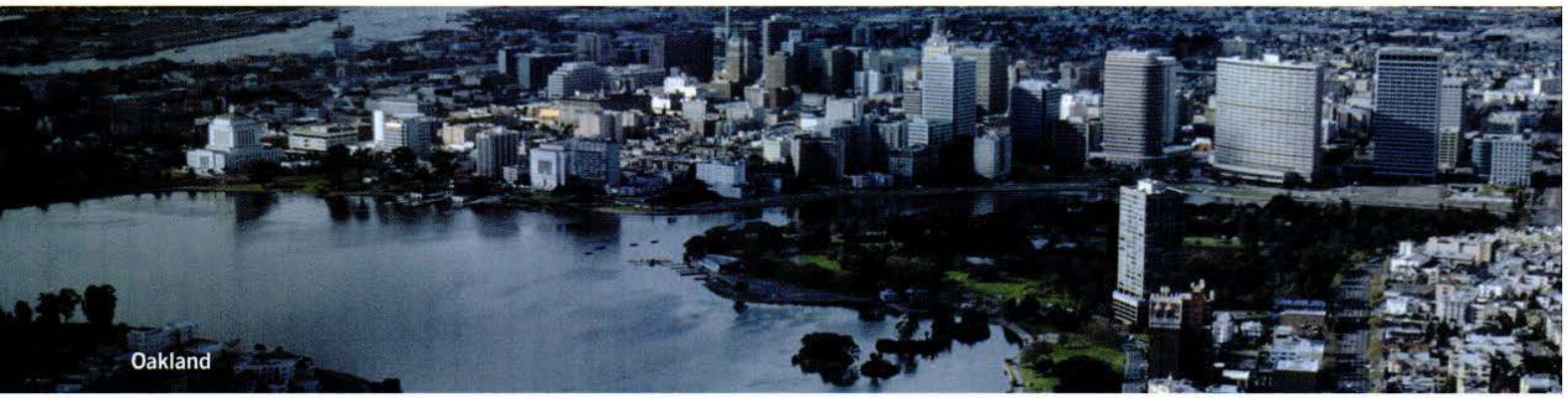
Sunset over West Oakland, as seen from David Clifford and Scott Oliver's modest roof-deck.

PHOTO BY DANIEL DE SOUZA

# THE ZEN OF OAKLAND

**Back when I still lived in New York, I got** startled into consciousness one night, not by a car alarm or by a drunken brawl, but by a phrase that was running through my sleeping brain: "There is too a there there!" Apparently, I was having an argument in my dreams with Gertrude Stein, author, librettist, bender of language, who back in 1937 said what she said about Oakland, California.

I don't think I, in my REM state, was contradicting a long-dead writer's observation about the dreariness of her adolescent home. It was more that I was defending the honor of all the Lesser American Cities—all the metropolises that are not world cities like New York or Los Angeles; that are not officially "livable" like Portland, Oregon, or Seattle; that are not even second cities like Chicago but are third or fourth or one hundred and thirty-fourth. I woke up at 3 a.m. determined that dwell's mission—one of them anyway—would be to sniff out signs of architectural life hidden away in America's less glamorous urban locales and champion the cause of homeowners and builders who have the courage to bring the avant-garde to a ▸



Oakland

nation of ranchburgers, neocolonials, and McMansions.

And that is exactly what this issue of dwell does. We scoured America and found amazing homes in unlikely locations: deep within an Indianapolis subdivision where the residents are obliged to drive golf carts, atop a U-Store-It facility in Albuquerque, amidst the ruins of downtown Detroit.

What we learned is that it's sometimes easier to build an architecturally daring home in a city that isn't completely smitten with itself, in a city where no one has bothered to form a citizens' committee to tell would-be renegades: "You can't build that here."

Which brings me back to Oakland, the original "no there there" town. Oakland, which reached its economic peak during World War II, is one of the few San Francisco Bay Area cities that hasn't been completely engulfed and transformed by Silicon Valley wealth. But that is beginning to change.

I've made a series of pilgrimages to Oakland in recent months, and I have seen a city with wonderful diversity of neighborhoods and people, a city that, given its prime location, couldn't exude more potential if it had the word spelled out in ten-story-tall, neon letters. What I see is a city that, because it is nowhere near as affluent or precious as its neighbor across the bay, could be a place to experiment with new architectural approaches and new ways of living.

The real-estate industry has lately caught on to Oakland's potential. One San Francisco developer, Rick Holliday, has announced plans for 25 acres of loft-type housing and wired office space in West Oakland, a five-minute BART ride from downtown San Francisco. Oakland may soon be more *there* than it would like to be.

Inevitably, my 3 a.m. epiphany led me to the doorstep of Jerry Brown, Oakland's mayor and the former governor of California. Brown originally moved to Oakland in the early 1990s in search of affordable real estate, and he built a live/work building in what has since become the city's loft district. Brown's building is radical less in its architecture than in its social design. The mayor lives there with several roommates. Each has a private space along a series of hallways arranged motel-like around a concrete-floored atrium, and they take their meals in an oversized communal kitchen.

I made an appointment with Brown to find out whether this politician with a reputation as a visionary does, indeed, have a vision. Wearing a black pinstripe jacket over a black mock turtleneck, slow to smile, Brown seemed more priest than politician. He spoke of wanting a more "vibrant urban space." I suggested that the overall land shortage in the Bay Area should make it possible for Oakland to call the shots in dealing with developers, but Brown didn't think so. "It's hard, because it's expensive to build buildings over three or four stories. And Oakland has had very low rents. And builders can't build without being able to obtain the rents to pay back their investment."

Brown relaxed a little when I threw out one of the questions we've asked almost everyone in this issue: What do you like about the city where you live? "There's a certain informality about Oakland," Brown replied. "There's an appropriateness of its scale. It's easy to move around."

And when asked what symbolizes the city for him, he responded: "The water. I like the flow of water, so I like the estuary. And I like Lake Merritt."

But I couldn't quite get a picture of what Mayor Brown's revitalized Oakland—with the 10,000 new units of housing that he has proposed for downtown—might look like architecturally, economically, or racially.

And, when I expressed concern about West Oakland's low-income residents being driven out by an influx of wealthy loft-owners, Brown responded by telling me about "Jingletown," a neighborhood that was historically Portuguese but now is largely Mexican-American. "There's a flow here," said Brown. "You can't stop the river of time."

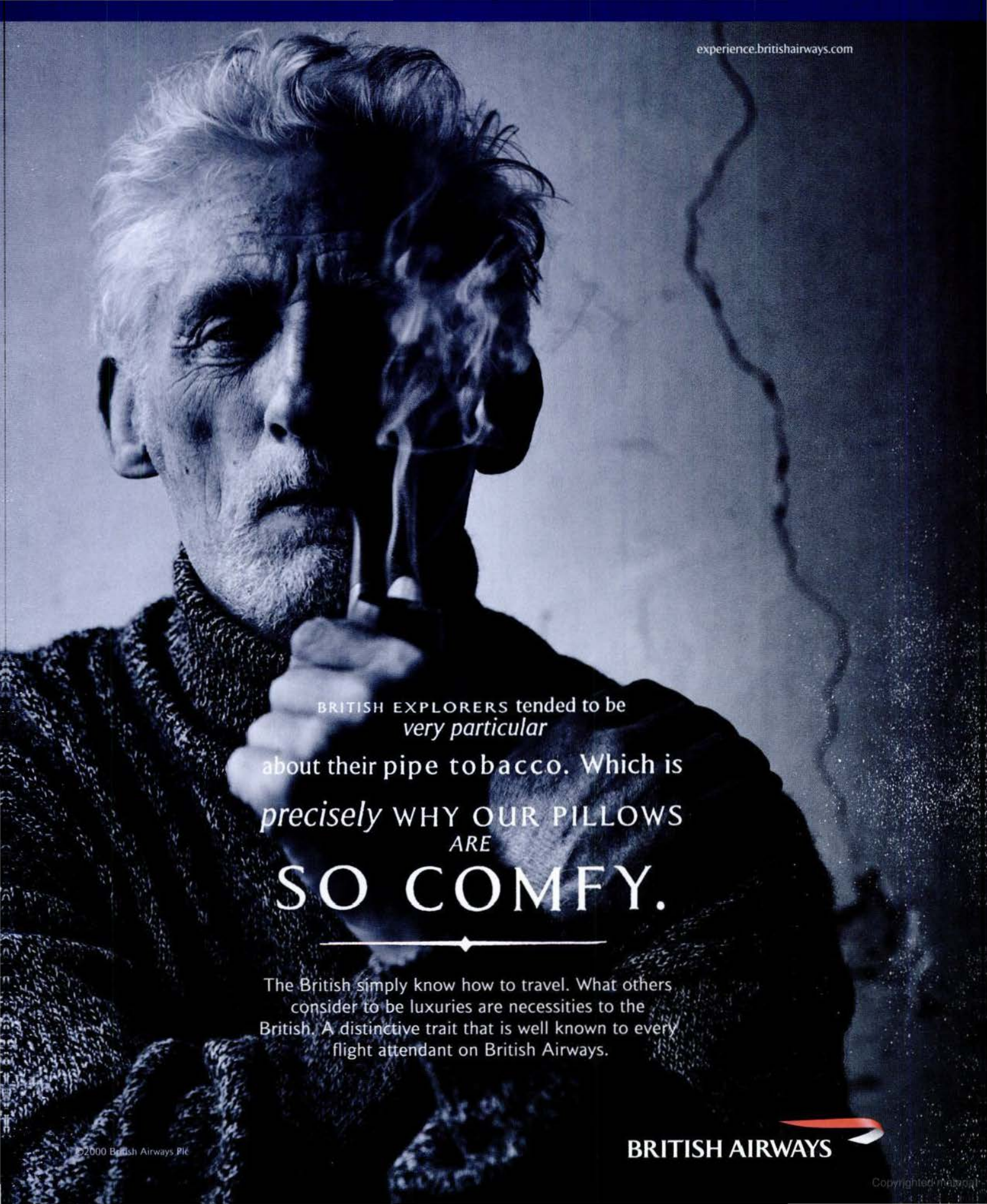
I left City Hall with no clear sense of if or how Oakland will live up to its potential. I desperately wanted to argue with the mayor about the river of time. I wanted to make a case not for stopping the flow, but for channeling it. But I have a feeling that it would be about as productive as a 3 a.m. debate with a famous dead writer.

I did leave Oakland's seat of government with something: an invitation to the twice-weekly yoga class at Brown's communal homestead near Jack London Square. Of course, I went. What better experience could there possibly be for a Californian-in-training than yoga at Jerry Brown's?

And, after downward dogging with Brown's roommates and neighbors (but not with the mayor himself), it occurred to me that the reason Stein's flip comment has become such a cliché is that it has a very Zen, very mystical cadence. "There is no there there." Stein was more of a Californian than she realized. And like so many Zen sayings, it can mean whatever you want it to mean.

At dwell, we're learning to see the lack of "there-ness" as a virtue. To us, it suggests an abundance of possibility. Thumb through the magazine and you'll see what we mean. When you're done, drop us a line and let us know what "there there" cities we've overlooked.

—KARRIE JACOBS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
*karrie@dwellmag.com*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Clockwise from top left: StudiozONE's proposed rehab of the Seedlings Motor building; Julie Kim and Paul Matelic on the back deck of their downtown loft; a view of their loft building (far right) on Congress Street.

PHOTOS BY GEORGE WALDMAN

# HOMESTEADING THE APOCALYPSE

**Julie Kim and Paul Matelic graduated from** the Masters of Architecture program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1995 and promptly left Cambridge for the looming gray metropolis of Detroit. In the five years since their arrival, Kim and Matelic founded an architecture firm, StudiozONE, as well as a new design/build venture, ConstrucTWO. During this time they have made their downtown loft, as well as the entire city of Detroit, their home.

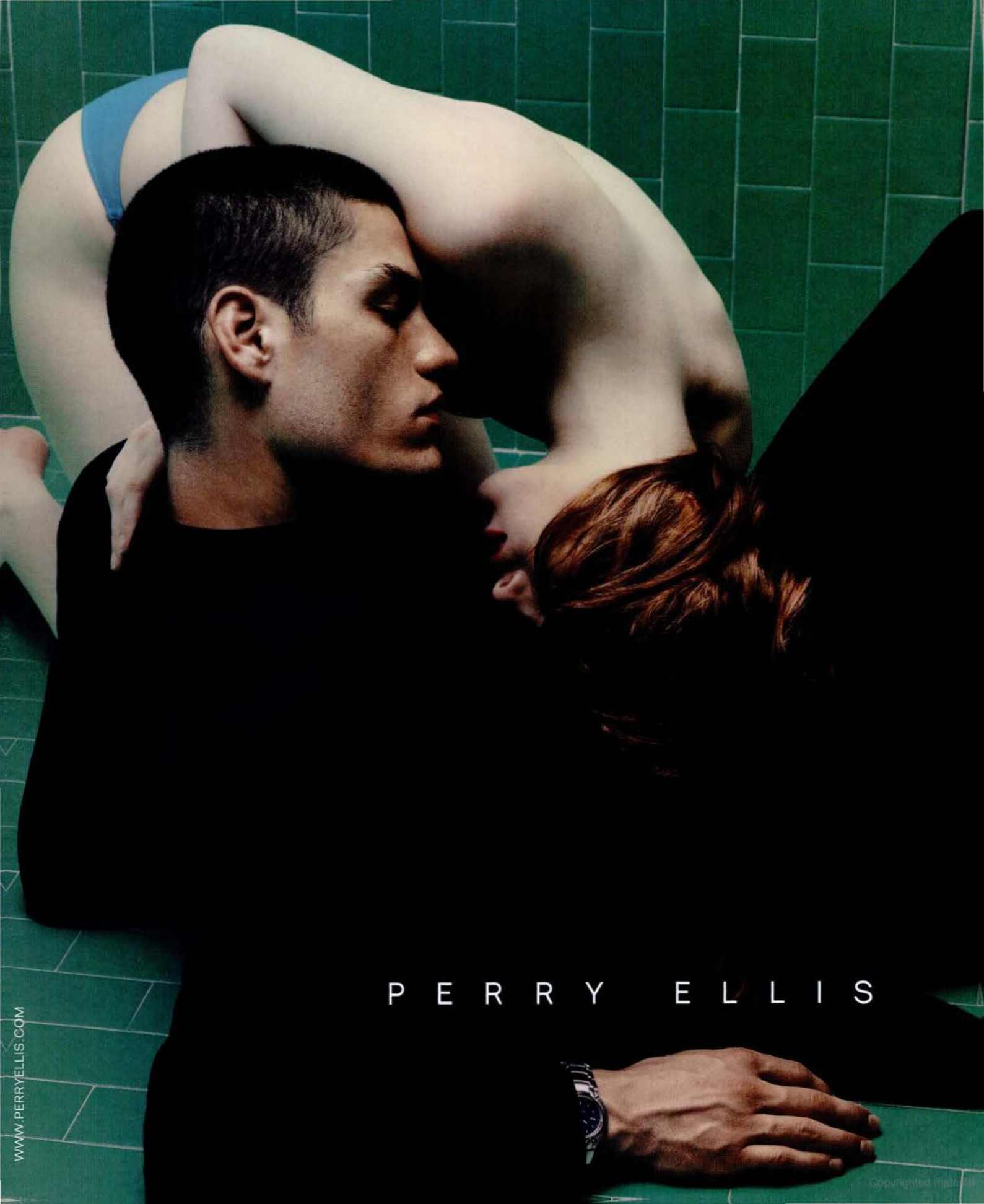
"When we first moved to Michigan we lived in Ann Arbor," Kim says. "We thought it would be an easier transition coming from Cambridge. But when we moved it was winter, and no one was walking around—it just didn't sit well with us. Plus, all of the work we were doing was in Detroit, so we ended up moving to the city and I'm glad we did.

"We live in the Kay Bridal Building, on the second floor, where all the wedding gowns were stored. So all the windows in the front were blocked in with concrete to protect the dresses from the light. It was completely dark and there was also a dropped ceiling. So, of course, we opened up the windows and removed the dropped ceiling.

"One of the nicest things about being on the second floor is that we're the only unit in the building where the back door opens directly onto this little deck. We call it our apocalyptic backyard, but we don't have to cut the grass.

"There are some negatives to living in Detroit and one of them is that the city on a whole is not very receptive to modern architecture or modern design. Detroit is more interested in nostalgia—like the new Tigers baseball stadium, Comerica Park. Everyone says, 'It has to look like [Baltimore's] Camden Yards.' But, we're in Detroit—Camden Yards is not Detroit. You say 'modern architecture,' and everybody says, 'Like the Renaissance Center? Well, we don't like the Renaissance Center.'

"It is interesting, your perception of a place before you know it. I remember first coming here to look for a place to live and feeling like I was in the middle of a wasteland. Five years ago it was just Paul and I walking down the street. It was the definition of desolate. But Detroit is really coming around. Give it another five years and the Detroit then will almost be unrecognizable from the Detroit of five years ago. Detroit's a funny place that way; it really has a knack for surprising you." ■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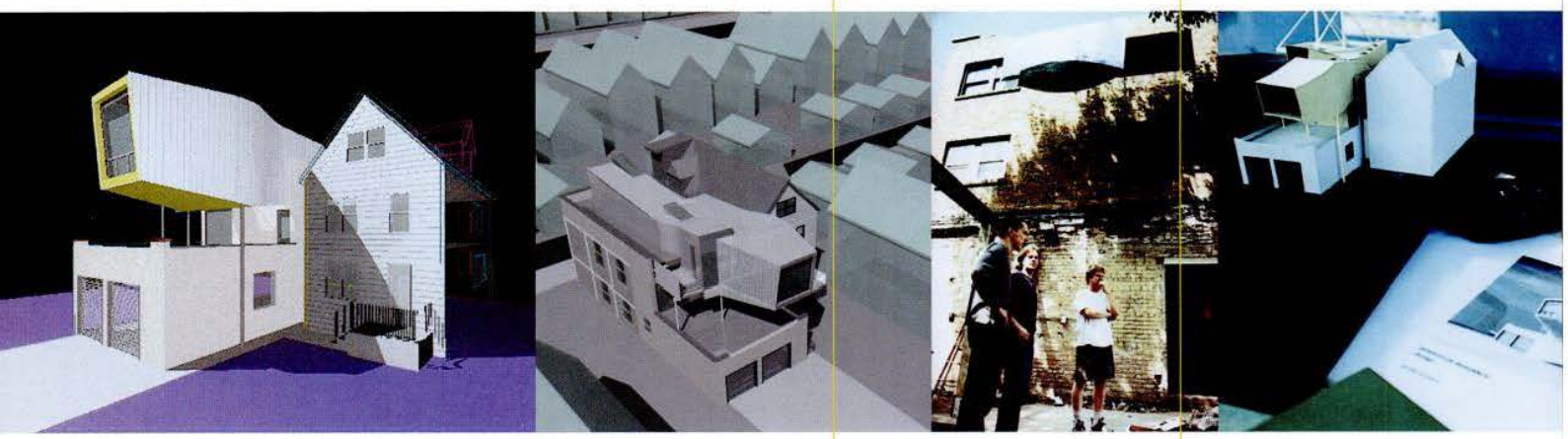

# THE RADICAL ADDITION

BY VIRGINIA GARDINER

Top, left to right: Two virtual views of the new addition; Doug, Randy Kober (lead carpenter and architect at Garofalo Architects), and Mike at the site; a 3D model.

## The Cast

**Doug Garofalo:** *A 41-year-old architect who is changing the face of Chicago's suburbs with additions inspired by animation software.*

**Mike Goszczycki:** *A 41-year-old contractor who has lived in Roscoe Village, Chicago, for five years.*

**The House:** *A small brick factory building, with a 1928 wood-frame gable house next door. Both buildings are typical Chicago vernacular—one industrial, one residential. Garofalo Architects designed a 500-square-foot addition to the factory building, where Mike lives.*


## Mike and Doug

**Mike:** I own both buildings. I bought them as one property about five years ago, from a general contractor. Before he owned it, my house was a gear shop—heavy machinery. You'd notice by the way it's constructed, with all the columns and steel. I haven't researched the whole thing yet—haven't had a chance to go downtown and really dig and fish.

The original owner lived next door in that frame building, which I rent out to tenants. He had an underground passage and a second-floor passage between the two buildings, so he never had to go outside to go to work. They bricked up the second-floor passage, but if I knocked out the bricks you'd be able to walk right from my second floor into the kitchen next door.

**Doug:** I had met Mike before we started this—he painted one of the first houses we really got to sink our teeth into. It was up in Skokie.

**Mike:** They were going to put just a basic bathroom-bedroom addition on it, but they wound up redoing the whole house. It had Doug's trademark kind of look—lots of different angles, skylights—futuristic. They used 22 different colors of paint.

I worked on a couple more of his projects as well—tiling and painting. Then, two years ago in February, I refinanced this place and got a bunch of money. That's when I called Doug.

## Doug's Impression

**Doug:** I had been to Mike's property before, and I knew it was kind of strange, you know—two buildings on a site. I was intrigued because it was odd, not a typical house on a lot. Chicago is full of 25-foot-wide by 125-foot-long lots, and the houses tend to be rectangular boxes that sit in the middle of their lots, with a front yard and a backyard.

Mike's lot has both houses flush against the back alley, so there's all this yard in the front, by the public street, and absolutely nothing in the back. So basically it's two interconnected buildings, one a wood-frame, and then Mike's—a masonry, semi-industrial structure.

It's just a big room, tall ceilings, elegant columns, exposed framing—like a warehouse. Brick walls, hardwood floors, exposed joists, a simple steel supporting structure. And I just love that kind of ... you know it's so Chicago to have a no-nonsense, work-type of environment. It wasn't designed for Mike to live in, necessarily, but it's typical of Chicago to have that kind of situation ... situation/aesthetic, if you will. ►

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## The Extension

**Mike:** So Doug and Randy made six or seven little models of different ways we could build something over the front of the garage. And I went over and said what I liked and what I didn't like about each one. We finally came up with this third-floor addition, which comes shooting out over the second floor and cantilevers into this big Mulberry tree. When we wrap it with some kind of zinc or titanium, it's going to be quite an addition.

**Doug:** It's basically a hybridized bridge structure, balanced on two posts that come up and support a beam-and-column system.

The bridge structure works with one of the main ideas of the addition, which is to hang the bedroom up at the optimal three-dimensional place in the site. If you look at the site plan, the bed is almost dead center in the air—at the best location for the lot, almost floating in a tree. It's a beautiful tree.

In part, the design came out of banal stuff: the zoning codes. The center of gravity of the site is the best way to think about this—best in terms of views, space, light, air, and building code. We said, "Here's where we want to put his bed; how can we best get a structure out to it?"

## The Interior

**Doug:** We work with light and color very much for the interiors. On the one hand, it's to make a total environment—to accentuate the project as a composition. But it's also to take advantage of how you get light into a space, and how light tracks throughout the day. We're careful about where we choose to put the skylights—it's not like we just throw them everywhere. And if you think of the extension formally, it's a series of tubes, some of which lift and open up so you get a skylight or a clerestory window. It gestures out towards the places in the site where we think we can pull light in at certain times of day. That big window for his bed faces east. Mike's an early riser.

We haven't decided about blinds. If it were up to me, I think the tree might be enough for privacy, but there's the winter to deal with … we'll work with Mike on that. As of now, we haven't gone much farther than convincing him that the bed has to be suspended from the ceiling in the new addition. It will be supported by the same suspension system. A set of wires will hang a bed that floats up towards the window.

## The Bathroom & LDK

**Mike:** I told them I wanted a full bath. I'm looking at putting in one of those new Jacuzzi systems—the J-Allure system. It has a whirlpool, steam, shower, bath, all these jets, a TV, stereo. It sits right in a corner—about five foot by five foot—with everything you need.

**Doug:** The whirlpool really is meant to be a sculptural object inside the larger space. We want to integrate the whirlpool with the rest of the bathroom—to see it all as a piece of very detailed furniture. There's no door between the bathroom and the bedroom, just a partition made out of sandblasted glass or some other translucent material.

The kitchen area—similar to the bathroom—floats on its own as a piece of furniture, resting on its cabinets.

**Mike:** I can't wait to redo the kitchen. We're not putting up any walls, just building a kitchen area, with concrete counters and high-end appliances, in a corner of the living/entertainment area. Doug designed a boomerang-shaped island that wraps around one of the steel columns. It's going to be concrete with stainless-steel cabinets.

The entertainment area will be in the same room as the kitchen. I listen to a lot of English dance music from the late '70s and early '80s—New Order, Depeche Mode, Sex Pistols, The Clash. All that stuff. I'm stuck in the '80s, but try and play me something better. Nothing since then is better.

## Digging

**Doug:** Mike is going to act as the general contractor. Randy, who works with me, will probably take a month to go out and be head carpenter. I'll go out as often as I can. Mike hasn't done much carpentry, but he's a good craftsman.

**Mike:** I had a half a dozen concrete contractors here to talk about the first part of the work—foundation work. We're putting a new foundation between the two buildings. And every contractor said, "We'll have to dig it out by hand."

So I said, "The hell with that," and I got a couple of buddies, and we dug it out ourselves, with shovels and a wheelbarrow. We saved a lot of money, and found every utility in the world—gas, water, sewer. We just missed the gas line. That was lucky.

The dirt is on the grass in the yard—made a mess of that, but we had no choice.

My friend Jim helped me dig. He works behind a desk all week. Every other weekend he helps me with jobs—painting or being a laborer. I pay him when he helps me on contracting jobs, but when he helps me on my house he doesn't charge me, so he's a good buddy. But he drinks beer, and I feed him, and we have a good time.

The weather's been perfect. We're working in 80-degree summer days. In another two weeks I'll be full time on this job—to get the exterior done by Labor Day.

**To be continued . . .**
**For updates, check www.dwellmag.com**

Above, from left to right: Doug's cross-section drawing with floating bed; foundation work; the demolished wall; Mike's friend/helper, Jim Kine.

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The Burkhart house provides a serene alternative to Hawaiian tourism. Below left, a view of downtown Hilo.

# IN HILO, A HOUSE THAT COLLECTS RAIN* & SUN**

PHOTOS BY DEKE O'MALLEY

*** 120 inches a year**

**** if it ever stops raining**


**Don Burkhart first came under Hilo's spell in** the 1950s as a submariner in the U.S. Navy. In 1992 he began the process of building an island getaway on 20 acres located just a mile from the ocean. Nicknamed "The Perch," Burkhart's house offers views of Hilo Harbor and the active Kialuea volcano in the distance.

This city on the north side of the Big Island is notorious for its prodigious rainfall (about 120 inches annually), but Hilo's residents and visitors still enjoy an average temperature of 80 degrees. Ahi tuna is nearly as abundant here as the ubiquitous SPAM (the region's culinary equivalent to peanut butter and jelly); the roads are dotted with wild ginger and hibiscus.

Early on, Burkhart consulted with a number of architects but felt they couldn't convey his feeling for the land. Consequently, their suggestions and approaches, he explains, "seemed to be a forced fit imposed on and abusing the land's characteristics." So the now-retired engineer made the decision to design the house himself. The result? Frank Lloyd Wright–inspired lodgings that are a far cry from the nuclear submarine that brought him to Hilo decades ago.

The house is almost wholly self-sufficient. All water is provided by rainfall collected from the roof, and electricity is supplied by 24 solar panels. Portable propane tanks heat water and supply gas for the refrigerator and stove. Post and pier construction keeps the house well-ventilated, and 80 feet of screened French doors bring the outdoors in. Thanks to the 14-foot roof overhang on the deck, one can nap comfortably in the hammock during a storm and not feel a drop of rain.

"Several times a day," Burkhart says, "I'll look up and have my breath taken away by the view like it's the first time I've ever seen it."

—ALLISON ARIEFF

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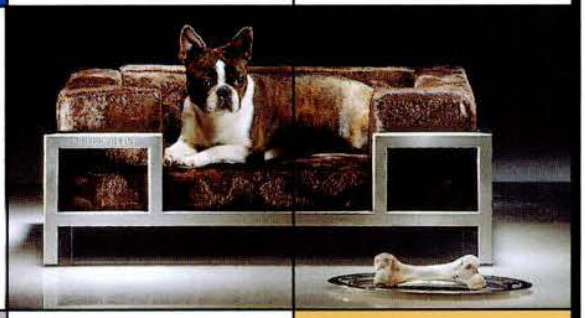

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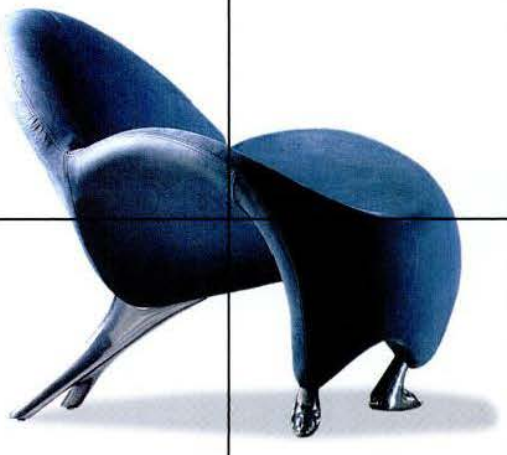

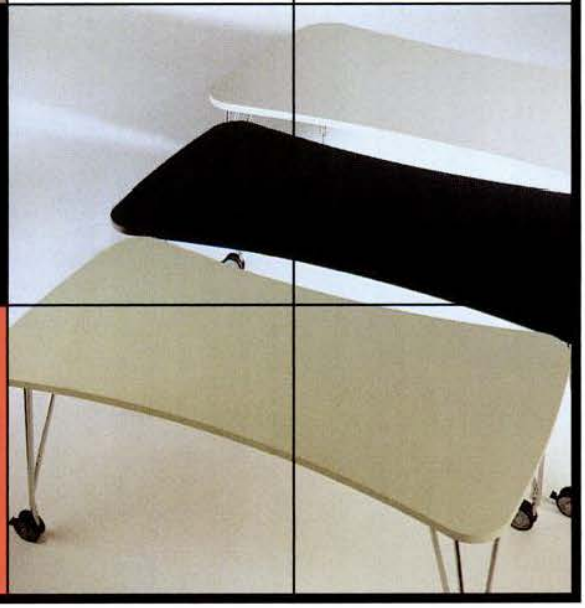

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*Photograph by Daniel Proctor* STYLISTS: CHRISTI MIDER, LAURA HOWITZ
HAIR & MAKEUP: TERENCE RANGER
MODEL: WANDA BONNEVILLE

# PUT IT AWAY

## *Our Search for the Well-Organized Life*

**Not so long ago, we owned a wall unit. It was not just any wall unit. It was 17 unbroken feet of pure storage, with cabinets custom-proportioned to hold our massive collection of magazines, lateral files for our papers, and bookshelves that stretched to the ceiling. At the end, near the window, was a desk made of white Corian, and that's where we spent our days working. Outside, the routine cacophony of New York City screamed by. Inside, we kept chaos at bay.**

**We are not, by nature, well organized, but this wall of space made us feel as if our life were in order. Sometimes we would step back and admire it. It was like a house within a house, an infrastructure that held all the things that were most valuable to us. It was like seeing our own DNA blown up to billboard size.**

**Then we sold the apartment and the wall unit with it. And, while we didn't shed a tear for the apartment, we ache for that big wall of storage the way we might for a long-lost sweetheart.**

**Now we're adrift. Our things are stored provisionally in laminated, particle-board bookcases with names like Niklas and Onkel. It isn't the same.**

**And so we're searching. To be candid, we're obsessed.**

**Somewhere out there is a wall unit that will make us feel whole again. That will make us feel as if we really live someplace. That will anchor us. Somewhere there is a piece of furniture that will allow us to arrange our things—the collection of oversized art and architecture books, the old *MAD* and *Fortune* and *Wet* magazines, the Oxford English Dictionary, the goofy little pamphlets that graphic designers send as gifts, the Russian roly-poly toy, the stapler shaped like a dachshund—in a way that makes sense.**

**We know it's a lot to ask from a piece of furniture, but we believe that the right wall unit is out there.**

***We admit it:*** *We stole the idea for the photo (opposite) from a 1945 issue of* Life *(above), in which the magazine introduced a modern innovation, the built-in "storage wall." Life's wall was designed for the magazine by the originator of the concept, George Nelson.*

**A NOTE ON OUR EXPERT**

We asked Donna D. McMillan, Los Angeles–based founder of McMillan & Company Professional Organizing, sometimes known as the "Clutter Therapist," to assess our selection of wall units for flexibility, capacity, and overall contribution to a well-ordered life. Visit her Web site: www.organizer4me.com

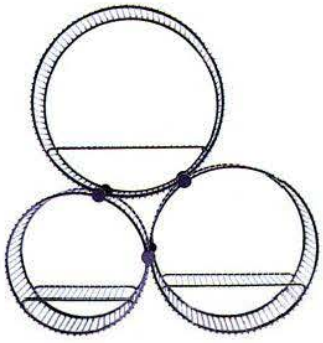
▸

**Domusnova Storage Cabinets**
Antonio Citterio
**$7,590**
*Manufactured by B&B Italia, this imposing storage unit was designed by one of Italy's most prolific designers. It is decidedly anti-modular. Each cabinet is intended to be as solid and self-contained as an apartment block. Thick panels of frosted glass glide smoothly on tracks, revealing or partially concealing the contents of the five shelves.*

**Expert Opinion:** "I really like this piece," McMillan exclaims. She admires its clean lines and its capacity. "There's massive storage here." Above all, she appreciates the fact that most of the shelves will be more or less covered at any given time. "The only disadvantage with the see-through doors," says McMillan, "is that things would have to be neat inside."

**What We Think:** Antonio Citterio. We have a thing for Antonio Citterio. OK, maybe he's less fashionable than Mark Newson or Karim Rashid. But, with products like his colorful, translucent stacks of drawers on wheels for Kartell, he anticipated the resurgence of pop modernism. And his kitchen designs, compositions of frosted glass, steel, and blond wood, make us drool. Come to think of it, the Domusnova looks suspiciously like one of Citterio's sexy kitchen cabinets. We regard this piece with reverence. But we're afraid that our possessions may not be worthy of it.

HERBERT GEHR/LIFE/TIMEPIX



## Atom Circular Shelving System

Mick Bradbury

**$450 as shown, $1,200 for six circles and connectors.**

*Manufactured by a small company, Stone Circle, in Derbyshire Dales, England, the round components of the Atom Circular Shelving System are designed to fit between the walls of an alcove or a small room, the circles acting as interlocking cogs, supporting each other without being fastened to the wall. "Atom," claims designer Bradbury, "will fit any space as simply as dropping pebbles into a jar."*

**Expert Opinion:** "It doesn't encourage organizing, as far as I can see," McMillan states. The Atom system is just not the Clutter Therapist's type of thing. The single shelves don't hold much and the open steel cages conceal nothing. "I can see it in entryways and places that need display shelves," she acknowledges, "but it's not for storage."

**What We Think:** On a purely practical level, we agree with McMillan on Atom's limitations. It's for someone with a few prized tchotchkes, not someone like us, drowning in a sea of paper. Intellectually, however, we admire the idea of a shelving system held in place by gravity. And we appreciate the pattern it makes on a wall. We agree with Bradbury when he says, "The circle to me is such an antidote to all the angular shelving that's seen everywhere, and it is a brilliant framing device for treasured objets d'art."

## Etno Shelving

Riccardo Franco

**$2,350**

*Manufactured by the Italian company Seccose, this modular shelving system is made of oxidized metal. "The texture of multi-colored brown-red gives to Etno a warm and pleasant primitive feeling," according to the manufacturer's brochure. Etno is always six feet, ten inches tall, but can expand laterally to fill a room.*

**Expert Opinion:** "I love this," states McMillan, and then turns her attention to the way the stylist from The Terence Conran Shop arranged the books on Etno for the catalog shoot. "That's bothering me that they're on their sides. What's going to happen to the books on top when you pull that bottom book out?" she asks. As for the shelving system itself, McMillan seems particularly enthusiastic about the way it divides space into manageable chunks: "The small cubbies inspire organization. A cubbyhole contains like a box contains. So it's conducive to an organized lifestyle."

**What We Think:** We keep reading the Seccose brochure again and again, thinking, "Oxidation? Does that mean it's rusty?" The Italians respond: yes and no. It is rust, but it's coated rust, so the red stuff won't rub off on your collection of priceless first editions. We are taken with its silhouette. The open top, the asymmetry, and, yes, the rust, remind us of a Richard Serra sculpture. We would enjoy having 17 feet of Etno marching down our wall.

## Eames Storage Unit (ESU)

Charles and Ray Eames

**$2,500**

*Recently reissued by Herman Miller, the manufacturer who introduced these innovative units to the public in 1950, this modular system was so ahead of its time that, unlike some "classic" modern pieces, it never looks dated. The multicolored panels arranged on a steel frame also anticipated the home that Charles and Ray Eames would build for themselves in 1953, making the ESU the ultimate example of the wall unit as house in microcosm.*

**Expert Opinion:** Clutter Therapist McMillan seemed a little put off by the visual appearance of the ESU. "To me, the colors on the panels and the materials would limit flexibility as far as where it is situated." She was, however, enthusiastic about the presence of drawers and sliding doors: "My philosophy these days is to eliminate visual graffiti, to put things behind closed doors." In fact, the ESU inspired her to tell us about the virtues of clear plastic shoe boxes for organizing small items.

**What We Think:** We're grateful that Ray Eames, a dedicated pack rat, had never encountered the clear Sterilite shoe box. She liked to stow her treasures in drawers. Which is why, we believe, the ESU comes with three commodious drawers. What we like best about the unit is its kindergarten quality. The dimpled plywood, the colors…Our only quibble is that even the biggest model won't put a dent in our archives.

## Elements Storage System

Stephen Burks

**From $33 for a single CD shelf to $834 for a 69-inch-tall, four-shelf unit.**

*New York–based designer Stephen Burks says that he aims to create "systems of products." Elements Storage, with its specialized components for wine bottles, letters, and CDs, is the first of his systems to be manufactured. He regards it as an expression of his fascination "with how people live with things and interact with things."*

**Expert Opinion:** McMillan finds the Elements Storage System "fun, cheerful, and playful." She admires its flexibility: "I like the attachments—they make it more functional and more versatile," but she is troubled by its openness. "Things could fall off," she observes. Clearly, she views it as a piece of furniture for more casual situations: "I personally would not put this in my living room. But that's just me."

**What We Think:** We, of course, *would* put this in our living room. But that's just us. We think that orange metal elements would be just the thing to spruce up our landlord-taupe walls. And there is something about the look of these pieces that reminds us of the indestructible furniture in our grade-school classroom. We're not sure why, but this pleases us. "I'm searching for ways to order my environment," explains Burks. Well, so are we. ■

PHOTO BY DWIGHT ESCHLIMAN (ATOM)

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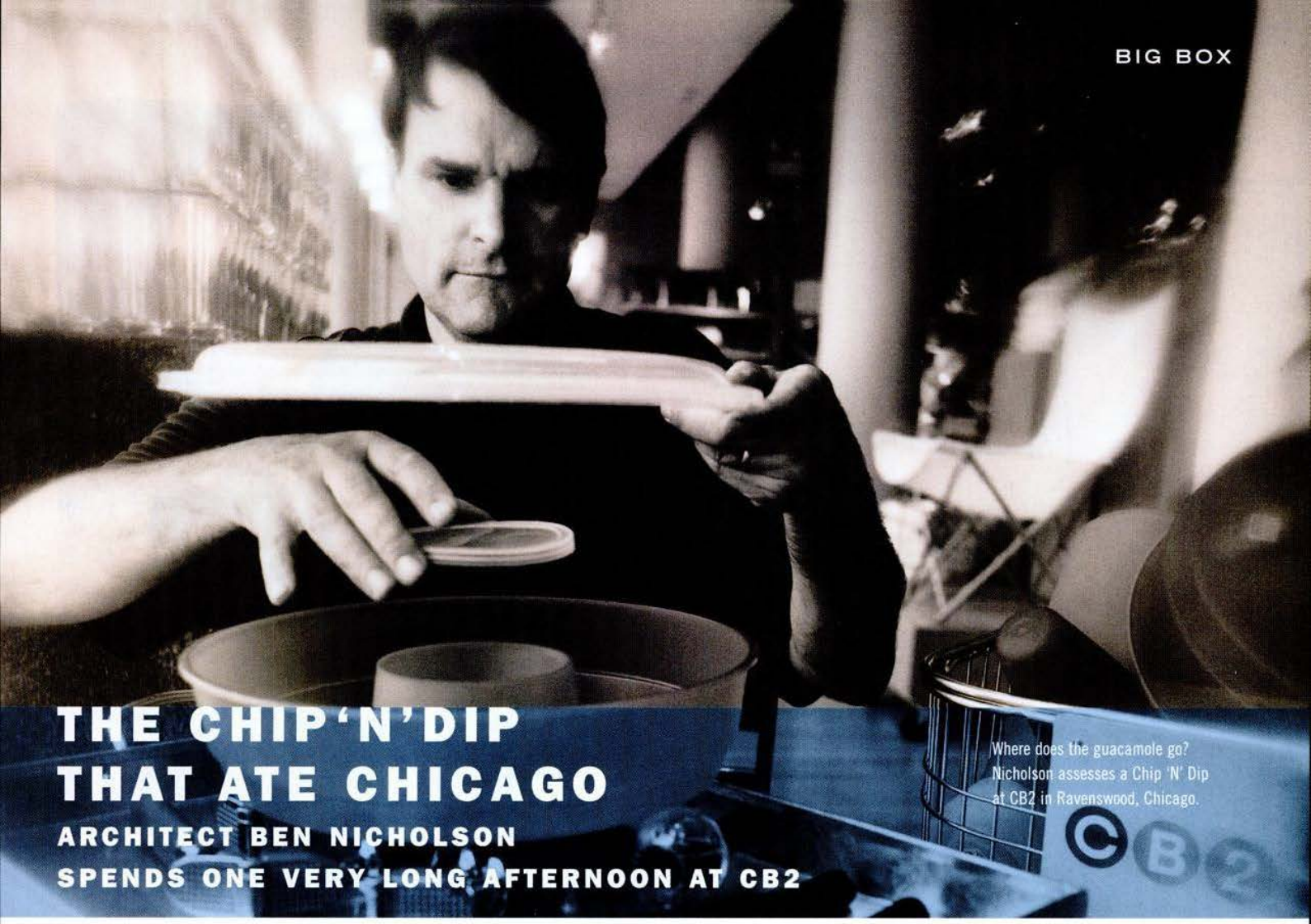



# THE CHIP'N'DIP THAT ATE CHICAGO

## ARCHITECT BEN NICHOLSON SPENDS ONE VERY LONG AFTERNOON AT CB2

Where does the guacamole go? Nicholson assesses a Chip 'N' Dip at CB2 in Ravenswood, Chicago.

PHOTO BY ROB LINGLE

*Ben Nicholson, a Chicago-based professor of architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology, takes us on a tour of CB2, Crate & Barrel's younger, hipper spin-off.*

**Crate & Barrel has basically grown with the** twenty- or thirtysomethings of 10 or 15 years ago. So now it's the fortysomethings who are buying all of their maple beds and big comfy chairs, and they know damn well that all the new twenty- or thirtysomethings are buying their home wares at IKEA and may not even know what Crate & Barrel is. So, CB2 is Crate & Barrel's attempt to win the younger generation back. But unfortunately I think it is trying to imitate IKEA rather than doing its own thing, American-style, which would actually go over better. Crate & Barrel is clearly onto something, but it is missing the mark.

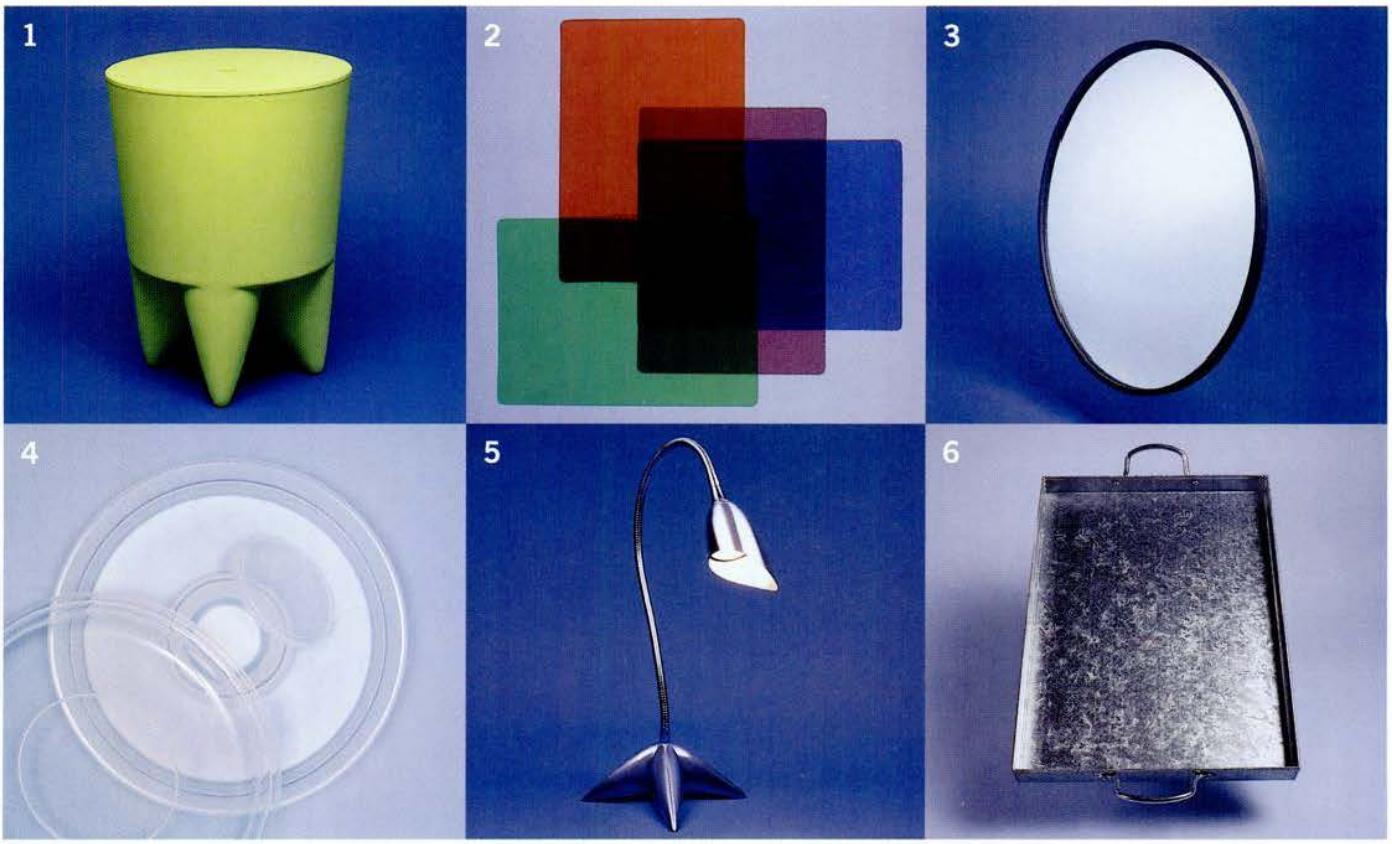
## The Six Products

**1 / Kartell Bubu Stool** **$69.95**
**by Philippe Starck**

They've got these right as you walk in as one of a series of high-design items that are meant to project their desired image. At Crate & Barrel you would imagine that they would be the cat's whiskers for crates and barrels. With the Bubu they hit it right on, but they are not selling them correctly. If they were, they would have this thing shown with a sign that said something like, "Jump Now to Get Your Bubu Stool Because the Market Is Shooting Up and You Are Going to Be Left in the Dust." With good design, you have to sell it like a stock. You have to buy design like a venture capitalist and you have to endorse design like a venture capitalist. If you don't, you're a follower and not a leader.

**2 / Jelly Mat Place Mat** **$3.95**

These come in opaque red, purple, green, or blue plastic. What I thought was interesting was that you could put a green one on top of the red one and start drawing on it—like one of those kids' magic blackboards, you know? You have a film of paper on a sticky surface and you draw on it. You could do that on these with your fingernails or a knife. Of course, you're not supposed to and it would actually be fostering bad behavior. But if you harness that energy, that bad behavior, by a particular sort of design, then you are on the route to good behavior. So it's an issue of not stopping the kid from being badly behaved, but rather harnessing that energy through design and making something of it. ▸



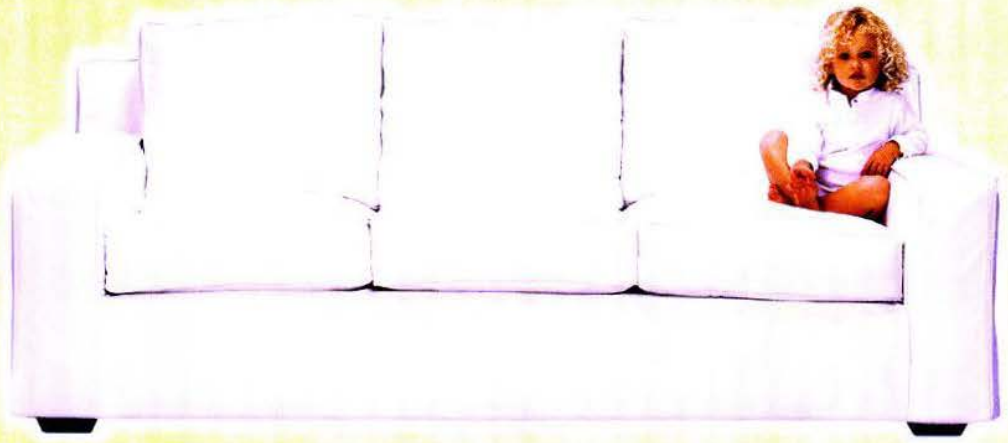

PHOTOS BY DWIGHT ESCHLIMAN

**3 / Hub Black Mirror** **$89.95**
It is a 36-inch complete circle with a black, square, rubber gasket that goes around the edge. I chose this because a round mirror is very different from a square mirror—it is a cosmos that is horribly truthful because you get to see peripheral vision and all the crap around you that usually the mirror makers edit out. The design is OK, but it's not perfect. You can see the joints in the rubber gasket, which you shouldn't be able to do—it should be a perfect continuous loop—so that gets a zero. But this concept of having a sheet of glass that looks extremely fragile, bound by what looks like a black ebony frame but is in fact rubber—that kind of teased danger and delicacy—I thought it was kind of interesting. I would imagine, however, that people who buy them really hate them because it begins to reflect their own neurosis. That's definitely an issue.

**4 / Chip 'N' Dip** **$3.95**
If you can imagine a doughnut and in the middle of a doughnut a cup, and in that cup you put the dip. And then you cut the doughnut in half like a bagel and hollow out all the bread—that's where the chips go. This item is plastic and it has a Tupperware-like cap that fits over the dip in the middle like a diaphragm. The chips go over the outside, and there is a cap that goes over the whole item. A container within a container. It looks like hell, but people like to do the dip thing and how you carry it is always an issue. It's all over the place. I know we've carried dip a million times all over Chicago and that is always an issue. But with this, a couple of flips and you're home free. It's Tupperware strength, so it'll last forever. You could have a head-on collision with an SUV, and the dip would make it. Very reasonable.

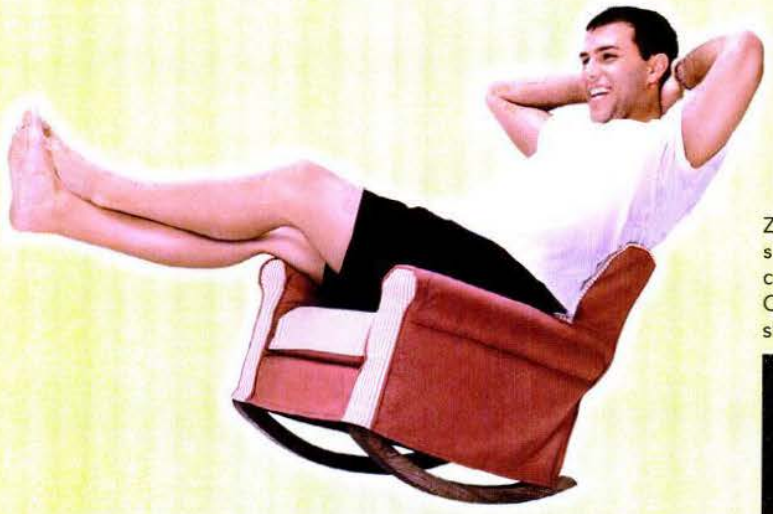
**5 / The Lara Lamp by Dansk Lights** **$149**
It's not perfect, but it's practical. It uses new lighting technology while respecting the tradition of the flexible-neck light. I did a kind of stress test—making it go horizontally outward all two feet—and it could still stand up, which is pretty good because many similar lamps just fall over. It hit all of the usability criteria that I have. It's expensive but, again, I think they are not selling it correctly: Money is not the issue. They should have this lamp right next to a $20 piece of crap so you can compare quality, so you understand what quality is. I would have a big arrow pointing to the $20 lamp that says, "Crappy Thing," and then next to that, have the "CB2 Good Housekeeping Label of Quality" on the Lara Lamp. Those types of marketing strategies really work.

**6 / Galvanized Rectilinear Tray** **$15.95**
Now this is exactly what it says it is—a galvanized-steel, rectilinear serving tray. It is really well built. You could throw this thing across the room and it would knock a hole through the Sheetrock. It is made in Poland and is what I would call a post–cold war, swords-to-ploughshares product. You can imagine some Polish cold-war industrialist trying to work out what the old machinery could produce that would make money—and lo and behold they made this dinosaur tray. It is very nicely made, though, and incredibly heavy-duty. This tray has very little poetry to it. It's the honest truth and it sells. ■



Kids are always welcome on Mitchell Gold furniture.

Whatever kind of kid you have.



We have a style that *fits.*

Zachary sofa in easy-care white-denim slipcover over feather-blend duvet cushions; Biarritz club chair in Old America Ranch leather; Tootsie slipcovered kid's rocker.

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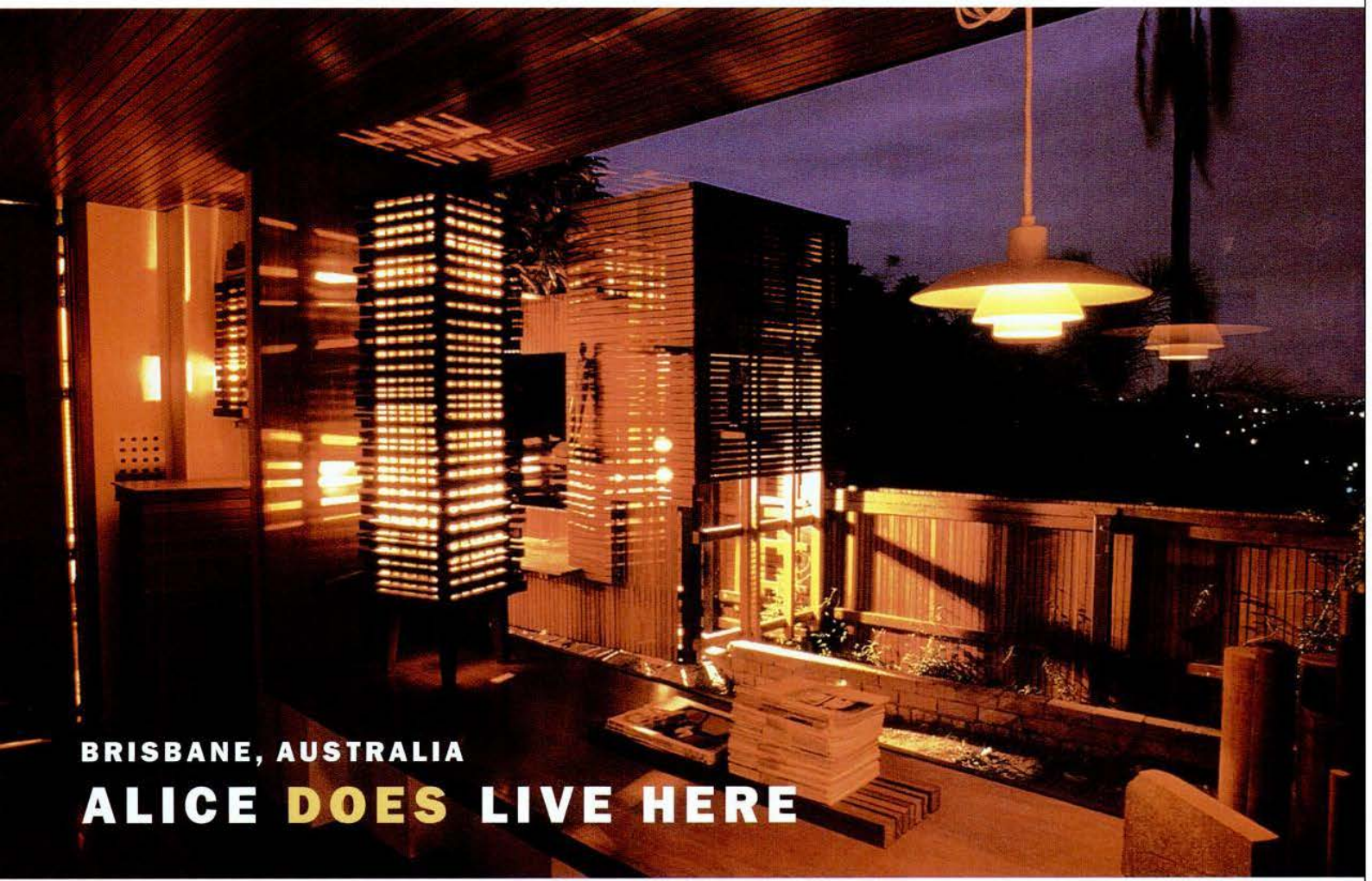


## BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

# ALICE DOES LIVE HERE

Hampson's dramatic office interior was built with turpentine, a dark wood traditionally used for wharf building. At right: Hampson's garden, and a view of the Hampson house from Newstead Park in Brisbane.

**Located just south of the Great Barrier Reef,** Brisbane is the capital city of Queensland, Australia's booming international playground of tropical beaches, rain forests, deserts, and eucalyptus-covered hill country. At the same time, the agriculture and mining that dominate the interior make the place feel like rural Texas. Subtropical Brisbane, Australia's third-largest city, embodies both of Queensland's extremes; high-rise sophistication and lowbrow provincialism coexist in wary daily proximity. In a hillside neighborhood overlooking the city, architect Alice Hampson has created a tranquil world for living and working.

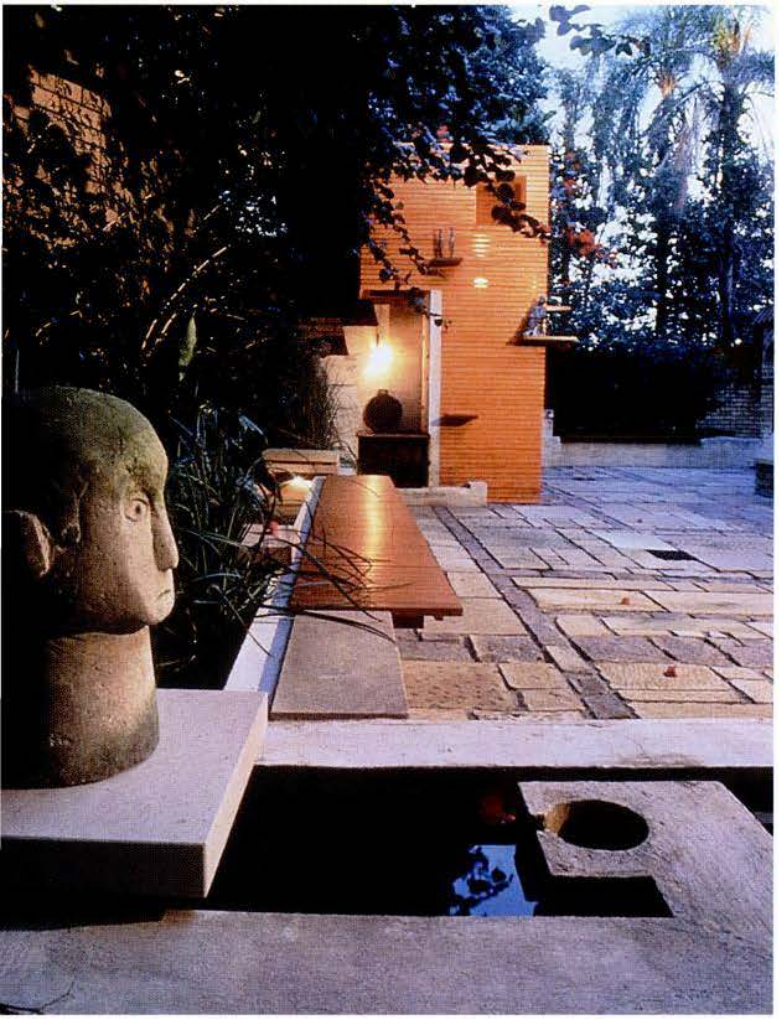
From the street there is little to suggest the transformation that has been made to the 1930s house behind the garden wall. But just inside the gate a carefully formed landscape embodies a quiet, personal vision of living. The enclosed garden introduces the front porch and continues down hillside steps at the side of the house to include the entry court of Hampson's studio below. Inside the house, she has made small but precise additions; the basement studio, however, is an entirely new world. The built-in cabinetry, work surfaces, and light fixtures are sumptuously crafted of rich dark wood, with every joint and detail considered, resulting in a warm, serene, and intimate space. A huge landscape-scaled window captures distant views and connects the private interior with the city below.

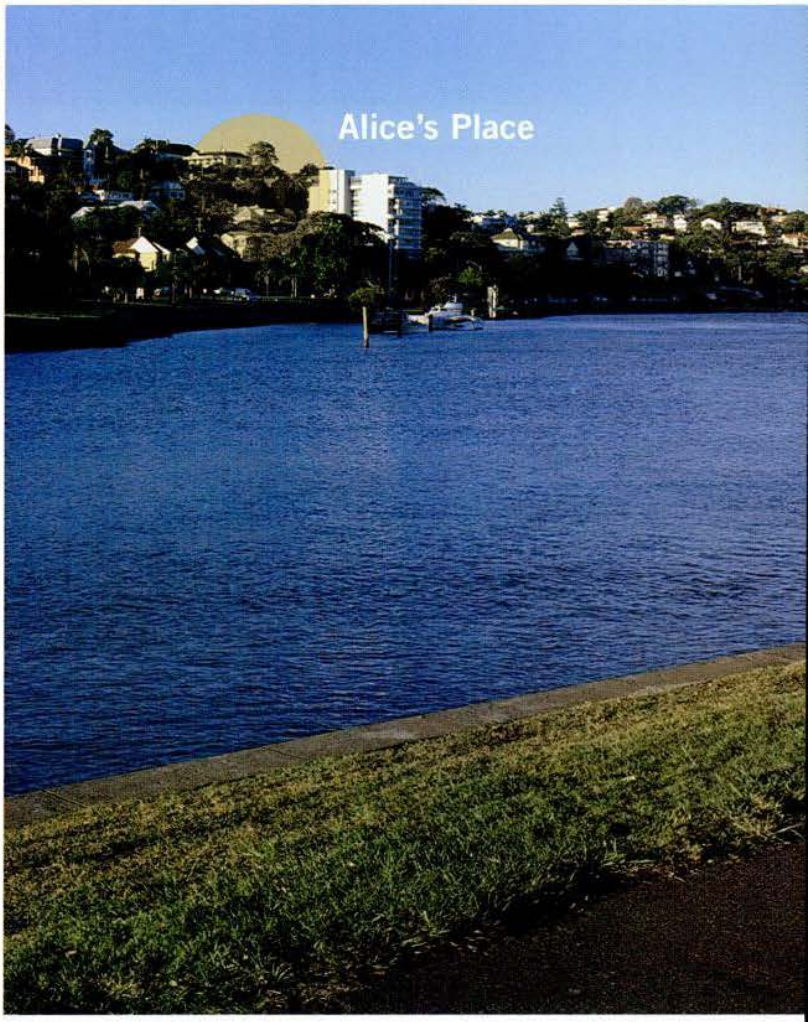
Hampson, who also teaches and writes about architecture, spoke with us about her life in Brisbane.

### What made you choose this house and neighborhood?

My partner had the house when we met. It was designed in 1938 for the younger sister of

PHOTOS BY PATRICK BINGHAM-HALL. DAVID SANDISON (LANDSCAPE)






a pair of prominent spinster publicans. I found the history of the place appealing and it has splendid views of the river with the city beyond.

**What were the most important things to you about the garden and the space you were making for yourself to work in?**

The most important factor was to make my own little intimate world in the garden and studio, and to define its connection with the city beyond. The urban panorama is seen through a massive window seat, while a series of intimate views are made through smaller shuttered windows, each taking in only a small, special fragment of the garden within each view. With its historic notions of "a little paradise on earth," the garden delights in exploring much beyond itself. It takes in those characteristics that are of infinite space—the sun, the sky, and the horizon—and those that make one's finite space—modulations you make and build on the earth's floor, the ground itself and the shadows that it projects, and amplifies it all within the experience.

**How often do you get away from your house/studio?**
**Do you ever feel cut off or lonely?**

Normally at least once a day, but when deadlines are due I tend to stay attached to the house. I recall once in hindsight realizing that I hadn't left for five days when I was working on a competition. I was a bit shocked that I hadn't noticed my isolation. The design strategy employed precludes being shut off or lonely. The closest I get to being lonely is on the rare occasion, very late at night, when most of the neighborhood lights are out and the city lights are engulfed by fog.

**How far are you from downtown Brisbane?**

The trip to downtown depends on the time of day. During peak hour it takes about 20 minutes or more, other times about ten.

**What sorts of amenities are available in your neighborhood? Can you walk to them? Or do you drive?**

Within a block there is a petrol station (petrol stations seem to be becoming the replacement of the corner store) and a park, and a couple of blocks away a plan-printing and drafting-supply business. Other than things within the block I'll usually drive. Despite having a print shop nearby and the city only ten minutes away, I have a very healthy relationship with my courier.

—LISA FINDLEY



# THE CACTUS FENCE AND OTHER NOVEL SECURITY SYSTEMS

**How can a window offer privacy and security while still providing light and a view to the world outside?**

**A young couple recently moved into this house on Potrero Hill, a San Francisco neighborhood valued for its sunny weather (in a city often blanketed by fog), and its proximity to Mission District bars and restaurants as well as to the dot-com offices that have taken over every available corner of the city. The couple lives upstairs and rents out the studio apartment on the ground floor. The large window at street level is the only source of daylight for the apartment, creating the need for a "security gate" that will protect the occupant and her belongings while still allowing sunlight to enter the apartment.**

**To address this problem, we asked a metal worker, a pair of industrial designers, and a student architecture studio to create an affordable ($2,000), design-conscious solution using the materials of their choice.**

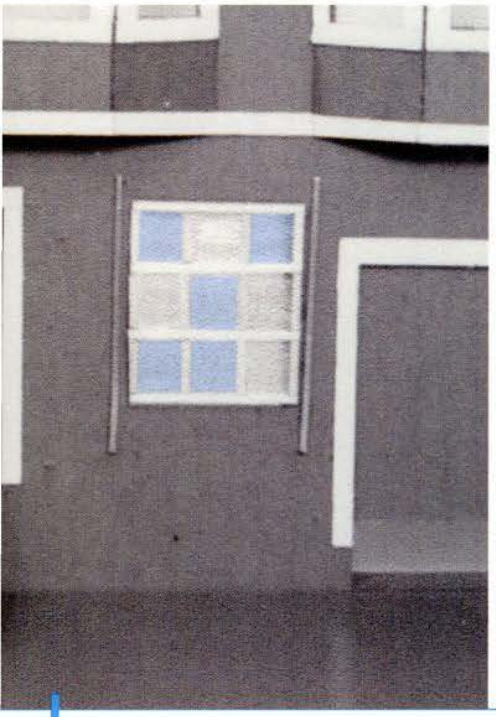
### 1 / Atlas Industries

*Atlas is a design and manufacturing firm located in Brooklyn, New York, that offers a variety of design and fabrication services for furniture, interiors, retail, lighting, and custom hardware.*

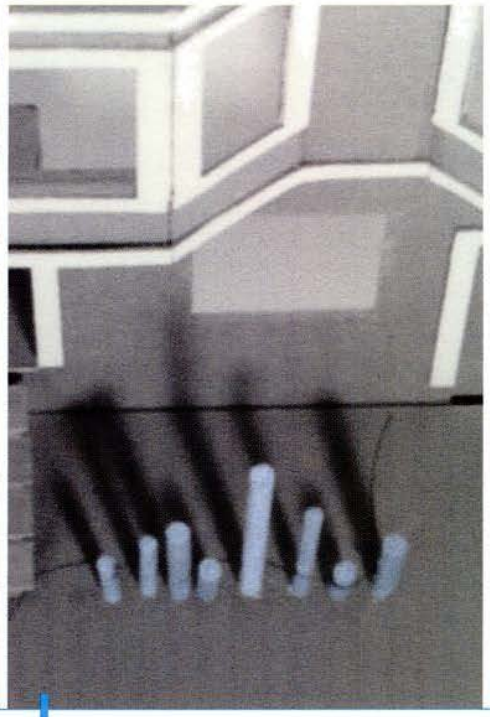
### Shad-E-Gate

Happy tenant returns home from a local planning meeting and looks out her window. Her communal feelings still fresh, she wants to open wide her arms and embrace the world outside. But all is not well. The gate that bestows a sense of security when she is away from her happy home thwarts her desire for community while inside her comfy nest. About now she realizes that in a few minutes the sun will begin to scorch the pleather of her La-Z-Boy. She wants to avoid pulling a window shade, as this will obscure her lovely view, but at the same time, her loyalty to her furniture is great. Luckily, happy tenant has recently installed an Atlas Shad-E-Gate. She pulls down the Shad-E-Gate fabric and clips it to a bar. She releases the latch and pushes gently on the middle bar, the gate folds outward and upward, rising effortlessly. A moment later she is reclining in her chair, enjoying the view, the shade, and the confidence of security and community spirit that come with every Atlas Shad-E-Gate.

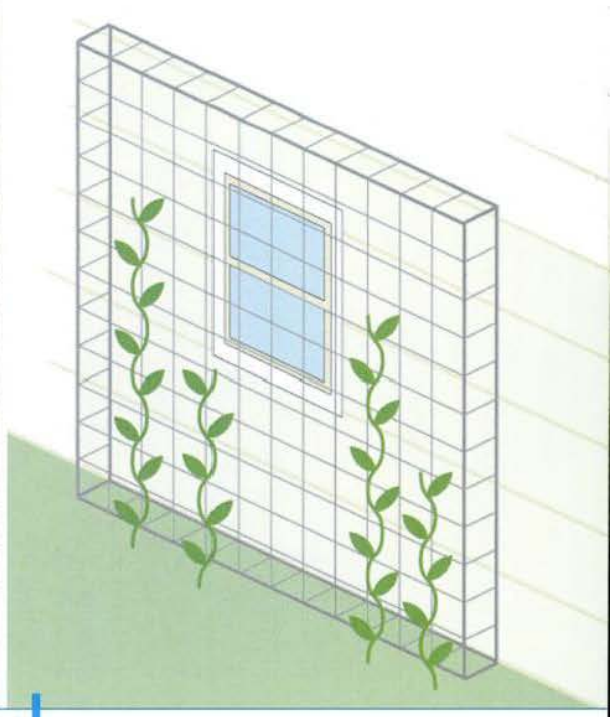
PHOTOS BY DOUG MOUNTJOY. SHAD-E-GATE RENDERING BY KAREN BRANDT



Slide Puzzle



Somewhat Sharp Fence



Grid Gate

### 2 / CALA

*In the summer of 2000, as part of a unique collaboration between the Walker Art Center and the University of Minnesota, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (CALA), in conjunction with* The Home Show, *an architecture studio was established in the Walker's galleries for CALA students and faculty. This project was created by Robert Adams and Dawn Gilpin, architects and instructors at CALA, and their students, Rachel Bruinsma and Josh Rau.*

**Slide Puzzle** (security matrix)

The slide puzzle of childhood lets you recombine an image—Superman, for example—from a series of dislocated parts. Slide Puzzle, the security gate, uses a combination of opaque and translucent movable frames that can produce a variety of effects. With frames that slide up and down mechanically, the occupant can control the amount of light that comes in or the amount of interior that is visible from the street.

These projects are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the metal bars and electronic surveillance systems usually associated with home security. We believe that architecture should be more extensive even in the slightest gesture of a house enveloping part of the city. We are optimistic about city living and wanted to describe a number of security gates that fulfill the function while at the same time create an inside-outside, newfound space for the occupant.

**Somewhat Sharp Fence**

(cactus as razor wire)

Not nearly as aggressive as a barbed wire fence, this barrier builds up the ground plane of the sidewalk and plants it with cacti and a series of posts. At different diameters and heights each are lit up at night, casting a shadow on the façade of the house.

### 3 / Ken Draizen

*Ken is the proprietor of I.C. Steel, an Oakland, California–based architectural and structural metal-work company.*

**Grid Gate**

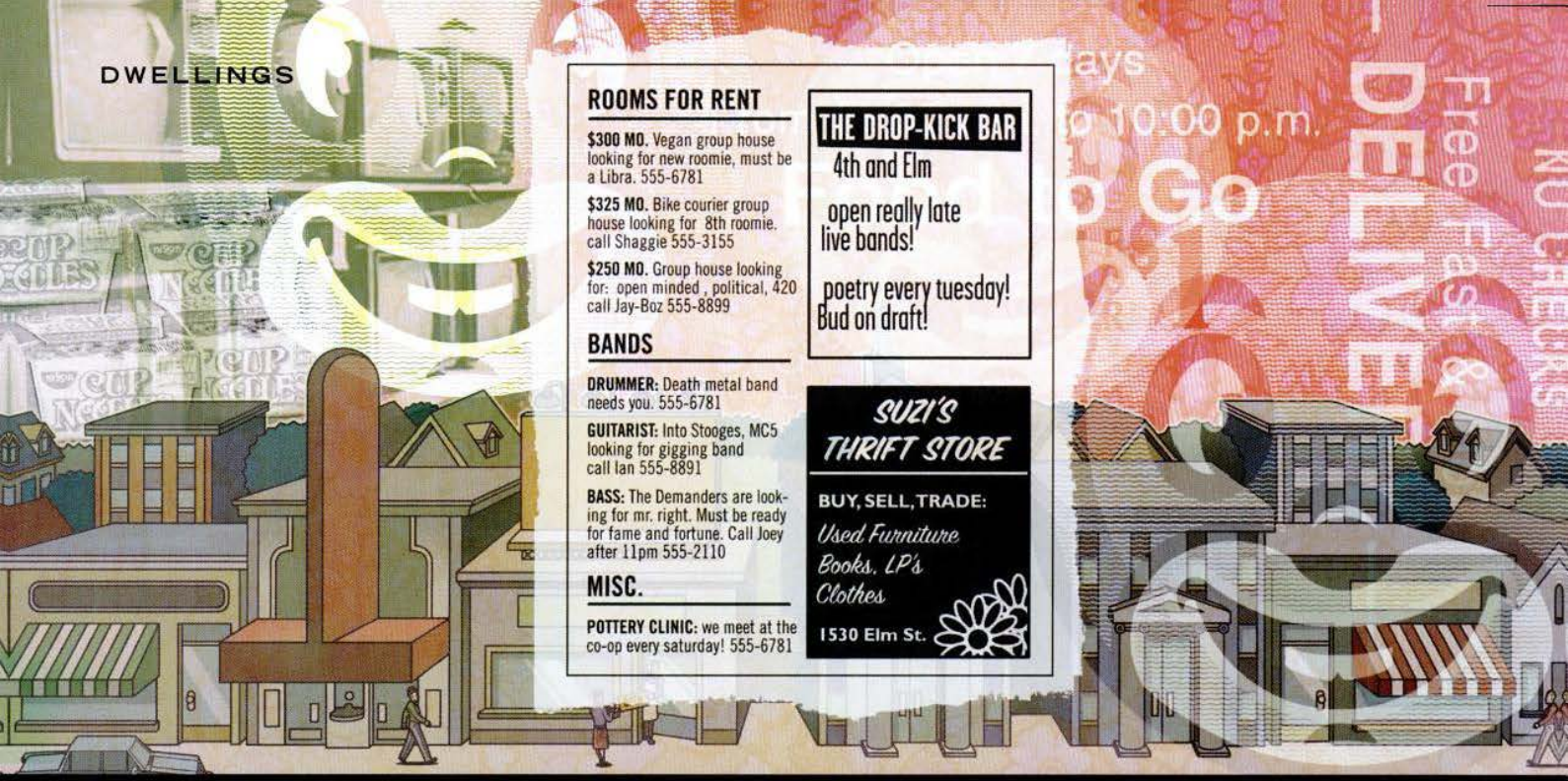
The fact that this room is on street level, only about 10–15 feet from the sidewalk, makes it a tough space to inhabit, and the idea of separation between personal space and public space becomes that much more important.

I started my thinking with the planter box at the base of the window. I saw this as a great opportunity to add some warmth to the whole front of the house and to accentuate the window, while still providing a deterrent to possible intruders or unwelcome voyeurs. Then my mind jumped to those metal breadboxes you see in grocery stores and then I thought, "Why not enlarge that grid pattern that occurs in these breadboxes and use it for a window cover?"

It is important not to make your home a prison, so the base of this security gate design is a 6-by 6-inch grid pattern made of quarter-inch galvanized wire. The screen would cover not only the window but also approximately three feet on both sides of the window as well as the area below it. The screen would then be bolted to the house and planted in the dirt in the planter box. Both the bolts and the planter box would serve as added deterrents to anyone considering breaking in. I then would plant some type of vine, maybe evergreen or morning glory, and let it crawl up the screen. Of course, you would have to give it some guidance so as not to obscure the view out the window or the light coming through the window.

You could also do this design in a smaller grid pattern, a larger grid, or even choose to go with no grid at all. The whole scheme is really flexible, from patterns to paint choices to plants. That's what I like about it. ■

ARCHITECTURAL MODELS BY ADAMS/GILPIN/BRUINSMA/RAU. GRID RENDERING BY DRAIZEN/HAZEN



## ROOMS FOR RENT

**$300 MO.** Vegan group house looking for new roomie, must be a Libra. 555-6781

**$325 MO.** Bike courier group house looking for 8th roomie. call Shaggie 555-3155

**$250 MO.** Group house looking for: open minded , political, 420 call Jay-Boz 555-8899

## BANDS

**DRUMMER:** Death metal band needs you. 555-6781

**GUITARIST:** Into Stooges, MC5 looking for gigging band call Ian 555-8891

**BASS:** The Demanders are looking for mr. right. Must be ready for fame and fortune. Call Joey after 11pm 555-2110

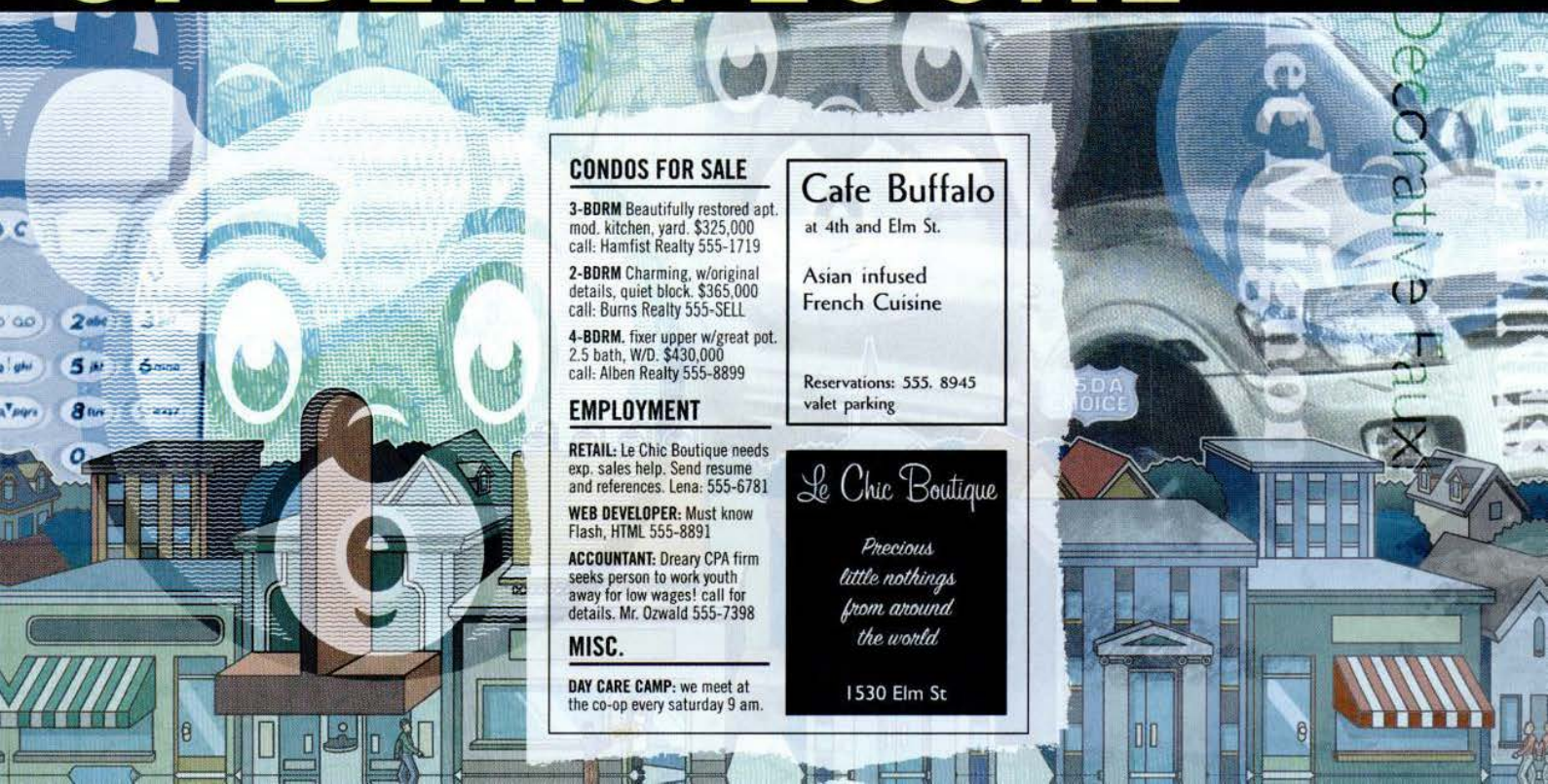
## MISC.

**POTTERY CLINIC:** we meet at the co-op every saturday! 555-6781

**THE DROP-KICK BAR**
4th and Elm
open really late
live bands!
poetry every tuesday!
Bud on draft!

*SUZI'S THRIFT STORE*
**BUY, SELL, TRADE:**
*Used Furniture*
*Books, LP's*
*Clothes*
1530 Elm St.

# THE VIRTUES OF BEING LOCAL



## CONDOS FOR SALE

**3-BDRM** Beautifully restored apt. mod. kitchen, yard. $325,000 call: Hamfist Realty 555-1719

**2-BDRM** Charming, w/original details, quiet block. $365,000 call: Burns Realty 555-SELL

**4-BDRM.** fixer upper w/great pot. 2.5 bath, W/D. $430,000 call: Alben Realty 555-8899

## EMPLOYMENT

**RETAIL:** Le Chic Boutique needs exp. sales help. Send resume and references. Lena: 555-6781

**WEB DEVELOPER:** Must know Flash, HTML 555-8891

**ACCOUNTANT:** Dreary CPA firm seeks person to work youth away for low wages! call for details. Mr. Ozwald 555-7398

## MISC.

**DAY CARE CAMP:** we meet at the co-op every saturday 9 am.

Cafe Buffalo
at 4th and Elm St.
Asian infused
French Cuisine
Reservations: 555. 8945
valet parking

*Le Chic Boutique*
*Precious little nothings from around the world*
1530 Elm St

STORY BY PAGAN KENNEDY
ILLUSTRATION BY PETER AND MARIA HOEY

**Most of the people I know who have lived in big cities are drawn by moments of transcendence that only a big city can offer: living on the same block as the world's largest used bookstore, stumbling into a film shoot on your lunch break, or trotting out your knowledge of Foucault at a dinner party full of Ph.D.s.**

I migrated to Manhattan in the '80s just after graduating from college, head stuffed with my own particular big-city fantasies; mostly, they involved meeting beatnik poets and penning reviews for the *Village Voice*.

These fantasies came true with an unnerving ease. I ended up sharing a tiny one-room basement apartment with someone I'd never met before. Her mother happened to work at the *Village Voice*, so I became a part-time receptionist there. Not only did I meet beatnik poets, I took their messages, learned how they liked their coffee, and eavesdropped as they bitched about their love lives. From my perch in the middle of the *Voice* loft, where I controlled the phones, I was in a prime spot to mercilessly pester the editors, until they allowed me to try my hand at reviewing.

About a year after I moved to New York, my first piece appeared in the *Voice*. I remember hanging around the newsstand with my friend Maggie, spying on people as they bought copies. "She wrote that," Maggie announced to everyone on the street, stabbing her finger at the newsprint and then gesturing at me. The New Yorkers hurried past. We were invisible.

Strolling home late at night from my freelance gigs, I'd pass sushi restaurants I couldn't afford. They invariably had elaborate window displays, the food arrayed like Tiffany diamonds, buttons of sushi and glistening sliced ginger. But the meals in the window were only for show; they'd been molded out of plastic.

That seemed appropriate. Though I have many friends who've found nourishment in big cities, I never could. **For me, New York was about wanting, about waiting for moments of transcendence that never quite happened.**

That's why I left. I fled for a neighborhood on the outskirts of Boston, where the old houses had been wrapped in vinyl siding and concrete virgins tilted in the yards, where bands practiced in the basements and my friends put on puppet shows in their backyards. In Allston, I finally found what I never could in New York—a place that was aggressively local.

The center of our universe was a diner with black-and-white-tiled floors that served challah french toast, and had such a stench to it that you'd smell like the place for days afterward. Musicians hung out there, including the members of a band called The Rattlers that my friends and I had arbitrarily decided to worship. The Rattlers would hog the table near the pay phone, guitars leaned against the wall (did they really need their guitars to eat french toast?) with their black-jeaned legs stretched out. One glance at The Rattlers and you knew they'd never move to New York or get signed; **any five guys who put that much energy into making an appearance at the Allston diner would not go beyond the diner.**

That's what was so endearing about them.

And about Allston in general.

Within the confines of those ten blocks, we felt liberated to create whatever noncommercial forms of art we desired. We did not have to measure up to the standards of record labels or publishing houses or fashion designers because our rent was scandalously cheap and our audience lived all around us. After I moved to Allston, I began putting out a 'zine—a xeroxed newsletter in which I documented my travails as a sometimes-scenester and sometimes-recluse. I found the experience far more satisfying than publishing in the *Village Voice*; a hundred copies of the 'zine, scattered around the neighborhood, would find their way into the bathrooms of group houses. My readers became my friends and sometimes collaborators. Writing became a way to participate in the life of a small town; it was a road to community.

Eventually, a friend and I pooled our meager resources and bought a duplex in Lower Allston. "I'm moving to L.A.," I told my neighborhood pals, and everyone knew I meant the strip of land below the Mass Pike—not the West Coast city. Our house became a work of art, a collaboration with the city and the people on our street. We swapped building materials with the homesteader on the next block; the Vietnamese lady across the street gave us feng shui advice (a big mirror from Home Depot would take care of the bad energy bombarding our house); we petitioned the city to plant three trees on the tiny strip of sidewalk out front.

Our house was a band, a 'zine, an indie movie. It evolved in an eccentric fashion that would have been impossible in a big city.

Of course, this story has a sad ending. You knew that. Big box stores—including a Super Stop 'n' Shop and a Super Star Market and a Blockbuster—moved into the neighborhood. They drove the local food co-op out of business. The city, high on the cocaine buzz of skyrocketing real-estate prices, began putting up cutesy signs everywhere that said, "Allston Village." The gritty club where The Rattlers had played went out of business. And The Rattlers themselves? Who knows?

As for me, I moved. **Vibrant small cities are fragile ecologies; they can be destroyed by dot-commers, mall sprawl, and real-estate booms.**

So if you find one, do everything in your power to protect it, or else your Lower Allston may turn into just another L.A.

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*Pagan Kennedy is the author of seven books. Her latest,* Black Livingstone: A True Tale of African Adventure, *will be available from Viking Press next year.*

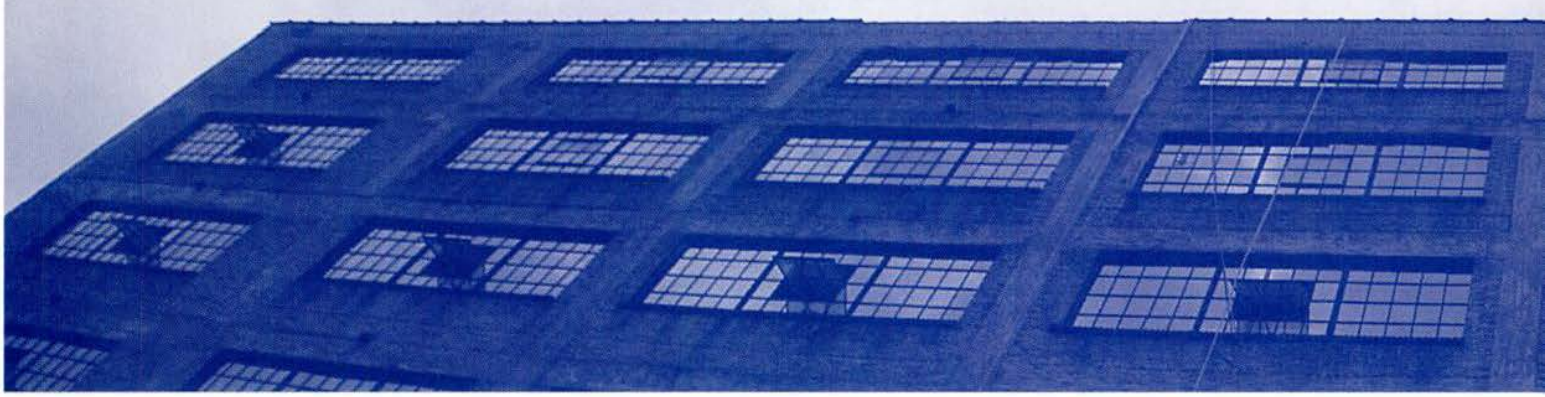
# ARKANSAS MODERN


## Loft Life Comes to Little Rock

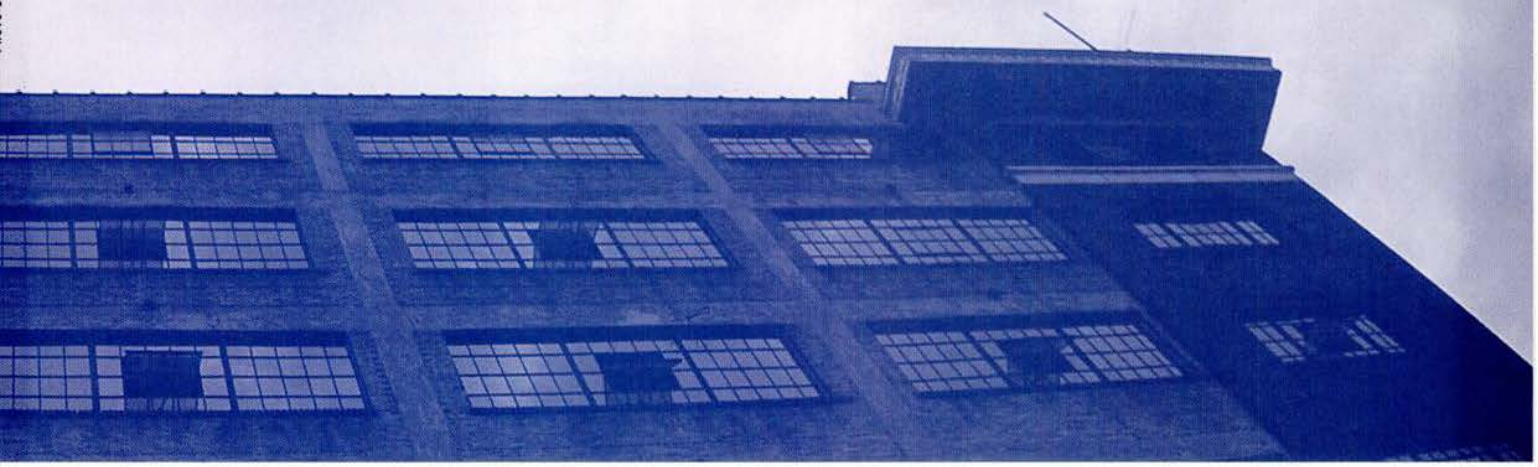
Story by Phil Patton

Photographs by Ben Fink

Above, a view of downtown Little Rock from the Arkansas River. Next page, the Democrat Printing and Lithograph Building built in 1924. Right, inside Block 2, exposed brick, multi-pane windows, and stained concrete floors are the perfect backdrop for the eclectic mix of vintage modern furniture, Jonathan Adler pillows, and IKEA light fixtures that furnish the model unit.



**City slickers might joke that folks in Arkansas think loft living is something you do in a barn. They would be surprised and properly humbled by a visit to Block 2 Lofts, a complex of three industrial warehouse and office buildings in the heart of Arkansas' capital city.** ▸ ▸ ▸



**PROJECT: BLOCK 2 LOFTS**
**ARCHITECT: FENNELL PURIFOY ARCHITECTS**
**LOCATION: LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

▸ **They would not, however, be more surprised** than Marilyn Rubbatino has been to find herself living in a loft on the third floor of the old Democrat Printing and Lithograph Building on Markham Street in downtown Little Rock, a few hundred feet from the Arkansas River.

Rubbatino was born in the San Francisco Bay Area. She now does publicity and graphic design for the restaurant and entertainment business. She has lived in Austin, Texas, and Cuernavaca, Mexico, spent some time in London, and traveled widely. When she came here, somewhat dubiously, at the behest of two friends with local roots and a business to launch, she did not expect to stay long.

But she has come to think of Little Rock, somewhat to her own shock, as home. "I never expected to find this level of energy here," Rubbatino says. "There are lots of young people, artists, students, professionals, interesting people.

"Also, I could never have afforded this kind of space in San Francisco," she notes.

Most of all, she is drawn to the warmth of the place. "People say hello to you on the street," Rubbatino says, still amazed. She doesn't mean they just nod—they speak—shocking the jaded northern urbanites who visit.

The question for Little Rock is whether the current energy will last, whether the downtown has assembled the necessary critical mass of residential, office, and retail spaces to generate continued vitality. The existence of Block 2, a $21 million project that includes 143 one- and two-bedroom lofts, is predicated on the success of the four-year-old River Market shopping complex just up Markham Street. Anchored by the Discovery Center science museum, the flourishing shopping area includes restaurants, galleries, antique stores, a farmers' market, and a covered amphitheater for outdoor concerts. There is a happy and surprising absence of the national chains one has come to expect. There is no Starbucks; instead, there is a local coffee bar—and catfish, barbecue, sweet potato fries, and other local fare.

The downtown revival caught the attention of developer Todd Rice of the Vanadis Group, who noticed sturdy, attractive buildings that had stood underused or empty for years. Vanadis conducted marketing surveys that showed there was potential for some 2,500 units in downtown housing.

The first Block 2 project, the Democrat Printing and Lithograph Building, opened this June. The other two, the Beal-Burrow

San Francisco transplant Marilyn Rubbatino holds court from a lawn chair in her new loft. She and her friends are opening a restaurant and bakery in Little Rock's River Market area. Arkansas native Amy Fisher (far right) rented her loft sight unseen. She liked it so much that she now works for the Block 2 leasing company.

## Fennell Purifoy Architects

Architects Tom Fennell and Phil Purifoy have made a big contribution to the city's redevelopment with projects like the Kramer School Artist's Cooperative in Little Rock. Abandoned for 20 years, the former elementary school building was transformed into low-income live/work studios for artists. With their particular knack for reinventing old public housing projects and rescuing abandoned derelict buildings, Fennell Purifoy is helping to make downtown a better place to live.

Dry Goods warehouse and the lovely Art Deco Wallace Building, will open this fall. Block 2 is a novel concept for the city. The brochures promise "urban class" and "factory finish," along with the pledge that the developers had done their best "to retain all the original architectural details for maximum industrial impact."

The entrance hall to Rubbatino's loft is lined with Astroturf. A coffee mug laid on its side makes an informal putting green. Thus the theme of the décor struck: the outdoors indoors. Rubbatino has painted the back wall into shades of blue, signifying a horizon. "This was inspired by the work of an artist I saw in London," she says, "Julian Opie, and two paintings of his I saw at the Tate Museum called *Imagine You Are Driving* and *Imagine You Are Walking*."

Elsewhere around the loft, bits of the old, battered, green paint cling to raw brick. The original multi-pane, tilt-out industrial windows run up to the ceiling. Pipes and vents are left exposed. The kitchens are done in simple, straightforward white Formica. Appliances form a cooking island. Rubbatino's outdoor/indoor theme continues: A dozen spiky plants line the sill of one big window like a mini jungle. Her current furniture consists of redwood lawn chairs and side tables. "Now," she says, "I'm looking for a sofa."

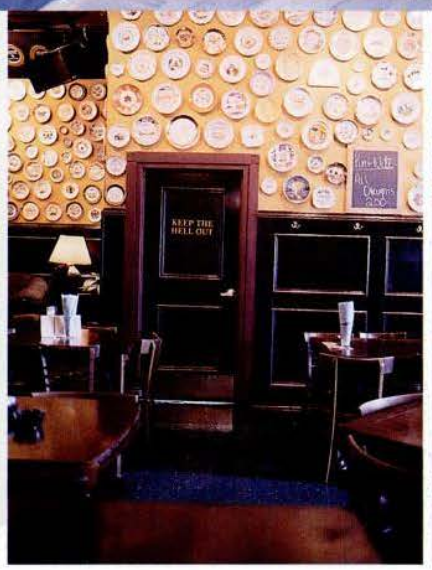
For Rubbatino's downstairs neighbor Amy Fisher, the attraction of Block 2 and Little Rock was not having to leave behind the local color and flavors of Arkansas to partake of the virtues of urban life. Fisher comes from Jonesboro, Arkansas, a small city (or big town) in the northeast part of the state. "I always wanted to live in a larger city. I didn't think it would be Little Rock."

She imagined Chicago, New York, even Paris, she jokes. But now she loves Little Rock. She moved into Block 2 and liked it so much she became an advocate: She went to work for the leasing company. Now she goes to work in the building where she lives, with her desk and phone set up in a model unit downstairs. That unit is furnished with items from a shop in River Market called Soho—Herman Miller tables, Umbra chairs—but Block 2's brochures promise "the perfect canvas for any décor."

"Traditional taste" is Arkansas taste, says Becca Hayley, who runs Soho. She often grows impatient with the lack of demand for the modern furniture lines she sells. "Most people here still live in antebellum times," she sighs. Were it not for renting items for films and catalog shoots, she says, she would have a hard time keeping the store open.

Arkansans are watching Block 2 and River Market carefully, as several earlier efforts at reviving downtown have failed. ▸






Indeed, ever since Little Rock was established around 1821 (the town is named after a geographical feature on the south bank of the Arkansas River), it has possessed at best a tenuous grip on urban values of more traditional cities. It first came into existence as a cluster of cabins around a ferry crossing; a few years later legislative machinations, well lubricated with homemade whiskey, made it the territorial capital.

The three buildings that make up the Block 2 complex date from the '20s, a boom time in Little Rock, and although many of the buildings have been torn down, these three are part of the sturdy legacy.

Block 2 was made possible through the sale of tax credits granted for historic preservation, as well as HUD and Arkansas state housing-support programs. Half the units must be low income, which, calculated according to local median income of $19,800, works out to $436 rent for a one-bedroom compared with the full price of $600–800 for Block 2 units. None of these subsidy programs has depended on the incumbency of Bill Clinton, Rice explains. But the city has enjoyed a building boom of sorts during his two terms: an expansion of the convention center on the river; a new arena in North Little Rock, across the river; dramatic expansion to the art museum.

But Little Rock is no Silicon Valley. The city is dominated by state government, law, and corporate headquarters for companies like Dillard's and TCBY. But Rice says there are younger, artier people who like to be able to walk to shopping and entertainment, and that's what this refashioned area can provide.

"It was completely dead at night down here three or four years ago," says architect Phil Purifoy, whose firm Fennell Purifoy designed Block 2's renovation. He kept the feel of the structures rough and rugged. "We did as little as we could," Purifoy says. "We put in a fire stair to bring it to code and made it ADA accessible. But mostly we wanted to leave it as primitive and urban as possible."

The urban as primitive—it's no odd phrase for a state whose civilization is rural, whose economy is built on agriculture and tourism, the beauty of the Ozarks and the Delta, and whose license plates read "Arkansas—the Natural State." From such a perspective, urban life here may still feel a bit, well, unnatural. *Imagine You Are Walking;* Julian Opie's title is still a challenge in Little Rock.

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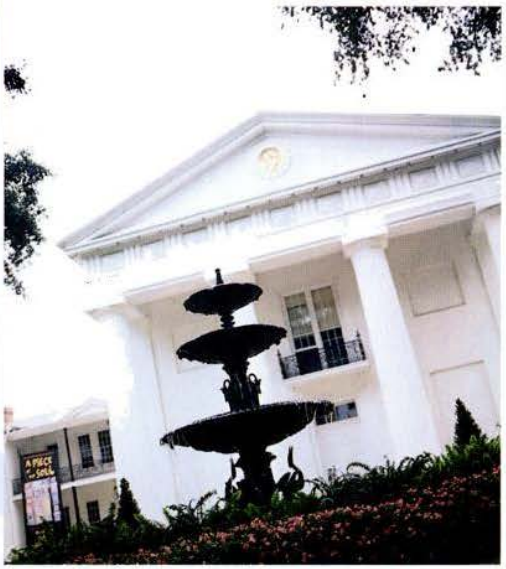
*Phil Patton contributes to the House and Home section of* The New York Times *and is a contributing editor of* Esquire, Wired, *and* ID. *He is the author of* Dream Land: Travels Inside the Secret World of Roswell and Area 51.

◄ From left: At Soho, a Medusa lamp by Lumisource, Eames chairs, and George Nelson lamps await modernist converts; a door expresses a little southern hospitality at the Flying Saucer, which serves over 180 different beers on tap to Little Rock's expanding happy hour crowd; okra and sweet potato pie (but no Frappuccinos™) at the farmer's market.

Log cabins and Greek revival architecture (right) make way for modernism in Little Rock. ►



# CLINTON: GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

From their windows, Marilyn Rubbatino and Amy Fisher both look to the east across a parking lot to a stand of crepe myrtle trees blooming bright pink, and beyond them a dogtrot log cabin dating from the earliest days of Arkansas. The Plum Bayou Log House is part of a cluster of the city's oldest buildings, protected as the Territorial Restoration. The cabin was moved to the area, but the brick Brownlee House, the frame McVicar House, and elegant Woodruff Print Shop are native to this, the oldest quarter of town.

The Arkansas Territorial Restoration Museum will be finished next year, one of a number of cultural attractions in the area, including the large Arkansas Central public library, housed in a multistory, converted warehouse. Its frieze bears the traditional names of great authors but with a twist: Plato, Shakespeare, Dr. Seuss.

Block 2 and River Market fit neatly into a group of other developments. The developers are counting on the nearby convention center, flanked by two large chain hotels and the older, restored Capitol Hotel across the street. And just up the street, in the other direction, is the 26-acre site of the Clinton presidential library, under design by James Stewart Polshek.

Also nearby is the old State House, where Bill Clinton appeared to claim his victory on election night in 1992 and 1996. The 1836 Greek revival work by Gideon Shryock, a pupil of William Strickland, served as the state capitol until roughly the turn of the century, when the collapse of the ceiling in one house of the Legislature precipitated the immediate release of funding for the new capitol. The original plan called for six columns but the territorial Legislature, careful with the taxpayers' money, settled for four columns and as a result there's a certain awkwardness to the façade. One of its rooms is dedicated to the surprising story of Bill Clinton. A vitrine displays his saxophone and sunglasses; not far away sit a pair of his New Balance 1500 running shoes.

Little Rock has been ahead of the country in one respect: It has been living in the post-Clinton era since 1993. No one is quite sure how the presidential library will fare, with Bill and Hil now making their home in Chappaqua, New York. The library is near the intersection of Interstates 30 and 40, the latter the main east-west highway. (As any mall builder would tell you, that's good location.) Winnebagos en route to Memphis and Graceland, three hours away, could make a quick stop.

Bill Clinton's presence is inescapable in the city. There's the Excelsior Hotel, referred to in various legal depositions, towering above Markham Street. Quite by chance, signs catch the eye: There's a Tripp Building and Starr's Guitar store. The place where Clinton's rise really began continues to flourish, unchanged. Doe's Eat Place on Markham Street is famed as the place where Clinton's aides, over steaks and beers, planned his rise to national power. One visitor found himself seated at a table beneath the signed photo of another president—a flyblown image of Dwight D. Eisenhower. —P.P.


The Emery McClures on the porch of their shotgun duplex.

# LIVING IN A SHOTGUN SHACK

## YOUNG ARCHITECTS MAKE A HOME IN BATON ROUGE

STORY BY STEPHANIE RAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK OLIVIER

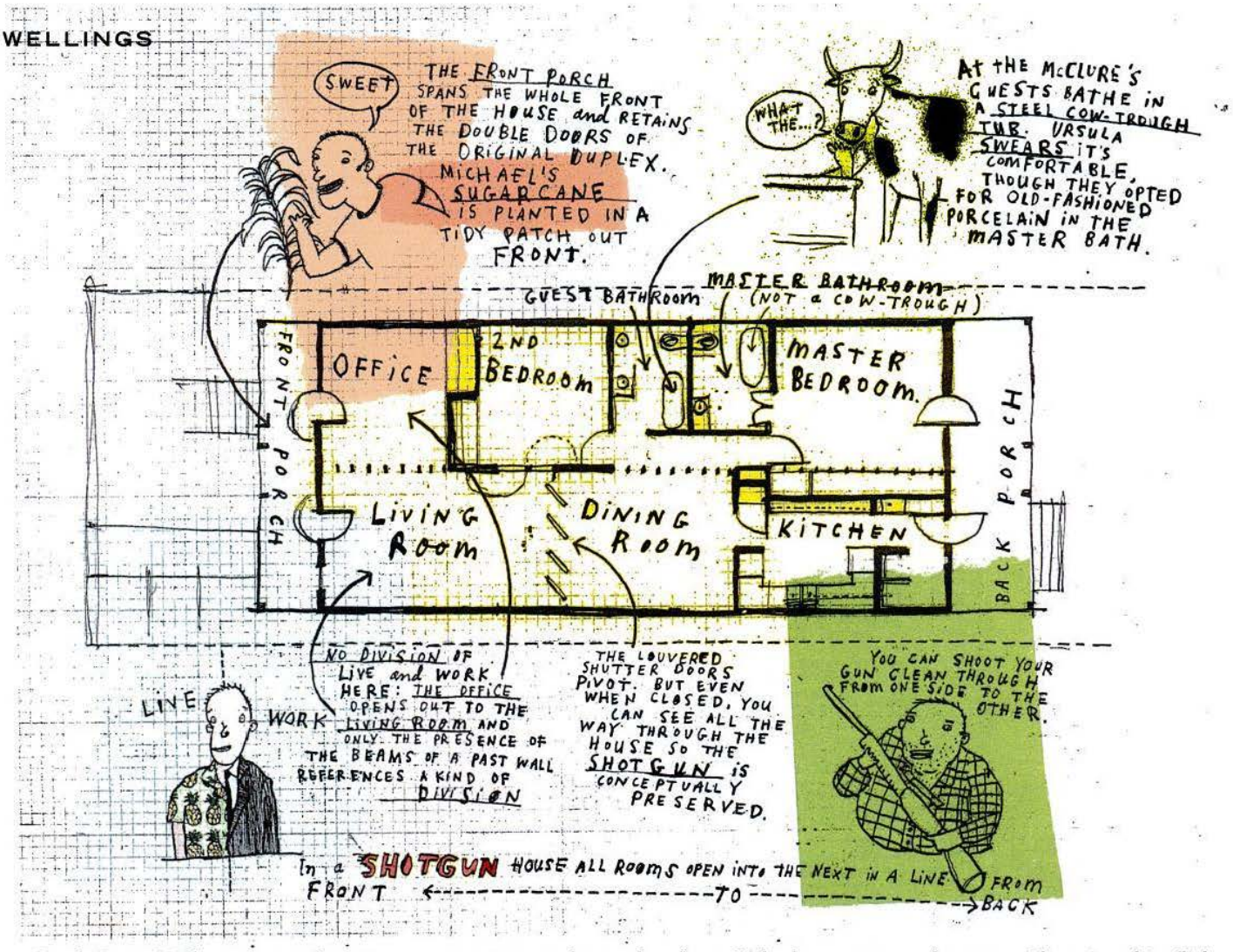
**PROJECT: EMERY McCLURE RESIDENCE**
**ARCHITECT: EMERY McCLURE ARCHITECTURE**
**LOCATION: BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA**

**Moving to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, from** New York just under nine months ago, Columbia-trained architects Ursula Emery McClure and Michael McClure are already clued into how this city operates—or doesn't. A lack of any kind of zoning has turned all of South Baton Rouge into the worst kind of suburban sprawl (the Sierra Club ranked Louisiana 50th on its 1999 Rate the States Sprawl Report). The town square in its historic Beauregard Town, one of the country's oldest planned districts, is now graced, for example, with a McDonald's. And conversations with the city inspectors about their Maximillion Street house, a 1930s shotgun duplex that they've renovated into a modernist take on Southern tradition, consistently descend into Abbott and Costello–like dialogues. ▸

In the foreground, Frank McMains, director of Cossas Antiguas, the restoration firm that's buying up the shotguns. The empty club chairs to his left were mass produced in the early '50s. The Emery McClures found them on the streets of New York and refurbished and reupholstered them in black.

Michael takes a pre-party call in the dining room, which was designed to accommodate a maple table with black Shaker stain by EMCInc. (the furniture division of Emery McClure). Called the Crane Table, it was inspired by the construction cranes at Abondoibarra in Bilbao. The dining room chairs are 1940s Thonet America.

Right: Ursula's Pyrex collection exclusively from the '40s and '50s. Some pieces of Philip Johnson's design are muted behind the frosted glass cabinets. The kitchen has Louseal rubber flooring, inspired by Ursula's days as a ballerina.




But the Emery McClures are part of a movement to change all that.

I've arrived in Baton Rouge just in time for the couple's housewarming party. Prepping for the event, Ursula is frantic with the olives. When people start to arrive, I shoo her out of the kitchen to get ready. A photographer gets busy, the flashes brightening the fresh faces of the Emery McClures' Louisiana State University professor peers and the babies they've brought with them. Ursula emerges looking very Southern belle–esque. She's wearing a black, flouncy dress with elbow-length lace sleeves. Her curls are strategically bouncing down her shoulders and she's strideful in tiny, strappy shoes. A party guest pauses to whisper haughtily, "Ah! Look at that." I suspect that Southerners are not accustomed to being so openly "referenced."

But that's exactly what Michael and Ursula have done with their house. On the outside, the house looks like a fresher, newer shotgun duplex. The inside, however, is a pure abstraction of Southern tradition. "The idea was to respect what was here," says Michael. Using the iconography of the Southern shutter, the dominant features in the house are the five central pivoting louvered doors in the middle of the main room. Painted black, they allude to a division of space, yet allow enough light through that the central "public space" can be seen at all times. When closed, you wouldn't be able to fire a shot from the front door straight through to the back, but it looks like you could.

The shotgun houses were typically slave quarters, usually 12 to 15 feet wide and 80 feet long with a front and back porch. But the form became "one of the most archetypal housing stocks in the South," Ursula explains. Their shotgun, which has no historical connections to slavery, is part of a pre-Civil War Beaux Arts planned subdivision that features quarter-acre lots with some grand homes, some shotguns, and some duplex shotguns. Along with Spanishtown across Government Street, it's one of the few neighborhoods in town within walking distance to downtown. The 1960s white flight to the suburbs literally turned Baton Rouge inside out, though, and Government Street, once the downtown shopping district and the original Beaux Arts boulevard, became the main exit to South Baton Rouge. Those families who remained lived in the shadow of a corrupt state capitol in crumbling homes with growing crime in one of the nation's poorest states.

In 1995 the city hired New Urbanist planners Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk to cook up "PLAN Baton Rouge," a downtown development scheme much welcomed by residents. The renovation of Beauregard Town is part of the plan, as is the addition of a new community arts center, the widening of River Road, and several new high-rise downtown office buildings. Inspired by the vision of a 25-year-old contractor, Frank McMains, who began buying the dilapidated shotguns and fixing them up, the Emery McClures and others are following suit.

In defense of the unspoken word "gentrifi-

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID FULLARTON

The couple designed and built their birch veneer plywood and Plexiglass bed and bedside tables (inspired by the art of Donald Judd) through their furniture design firm, EMCInc. They found the Swedish-inspired 1940s foldable chair on the street in New York. Angus the cat balances on the sill.

cation," Ursula explains that "the idea is not that we want people to come in here and make everything look good and then rent it out. We want the owners to live here. There are people here that have lived here for a long time and who own their homes, and they're not going anywhere. It's the rental stock that's being replaced."

David Baird, a fellow LSU architecture professor who has built a modernist house under the freeway in the Overpass district, is excited by the potential of this urban revitalization. "To me," he says, "Baton Rouge can really be seen as having two distinct communities: an African-American community and a white community. Downtown is one of those places where it doesn't belong to one group or the other." Michael adds that "for a long time, a lot of lawyers had converted the old houses downtown into offices. The goal for our part of town is to make it a livable community."

The house has filled up with party guests who seem to be having a good time squeezing in and out of the open frames and peering (literally) at the Emery McClures' dirty laundry inside the doorless bedroom closet. And the cow-trough-as-bathtub idea continues to draw huddles of onlookers.

Because they had only a week to get the plans together, the Emery McClures used Michael's parents' house in rural Oklahoma—which they had just completed—as a design reference. "We took the precedent of the American barn, and we started to get this idea of windows inside houses," Michael says. "In the shotgun tradition, the kitchen is always off the back porch where you eat your dinner, so the line from the kitchen door and the front door creates the major axis. Using the original windows realigned in cross-axis, we thought the second bedroom shouldn't be a room, but a box that could be cut through, again the idea of inside and outside . . . So you're inside the house, but outside the box.

"In the bedroom," he continues, "the original transom windows were more in reaction to their view. We like to think of those as hanging pictures of our neighbor Ronnie's house, because we think that disintegration is very beautiful. Everyone (including Ronnie) thinks we're crazy for saying that."

Michael joins me on the front porch to check on his little sugar-cane patch. The 12 stalks look a little peaked, but they're growing—a tidy metaphor for the neighborhood and for Baton Rouge. "Maybe we're being too romantic about it," he adds, "but I love Ronnie's house. It's just an old shotgun that's falling apart but it's a precedent for what we looked at here, and it's right next door."

I see Ronnie leaving his house just as the guests—and the thunderstorm—arrive. The abandoned shotguns across the street that Frank McMains just bought are now hidden by the new cars that fill the street. The contrast is striking and I am reminded of some-

Louis the cat scurries past the cow trough bathtub. He often hangs out here because the industrial reconstituted wall tile and the poured concrete floor keeps the room the coolest in the house. The old-grove recycled cypress counter keeps the room rooted just enough in Southern history (left). Open-frame walls divide the workspace (sort of) from the living area (below).

thing that David Baird had observed about the downtown plan: "The issue for urban revitalization is not to just go in and sanitize and clean it up enough so that property values rise. That's a good thing, but you also have to keep in mind how to leave opportunities for people of moderate means to get in there so that it's really an urban environment and not a gentrified condition."

Still, strangers do drive-bys to marvel at these new projects. Baird says one woman rang his doorbell just to say, "Thank you for doing something different." Only time will tell. In the meantime, the rain and the heat hustle everyone inside where they're toasting the future of their city and the young energy that is here making things happen.

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*Stephanie Ray first explored Baton Rouge for* dodge city journal, *which she co-founded in 1997. She is currently Editor-in-Chief of* Modo San Francisco.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BUCKMINSTER FULLER ESTATE (DOME)

# BATON ROUGE

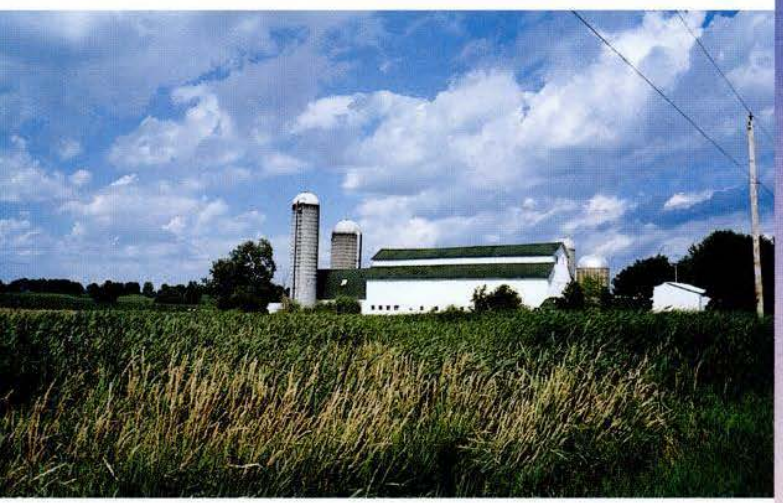
Baton Rouge was founded in 1699 when French explorer Jean Baptiste happened upon a bloody stick on the banks of the Mississippi that demarcated the lands between warring Indian tribes, the Houma and Bayou Goula. He creatively wrote in his journal, "baton rouge" (or red stick), and despite more than obvious warning signs, determined that this was a great place to settle down.

Ninety miles north of New Orleans, Baton Rouge was a similarly diverse city, populated with French and Spanish immigrants, Acadian exiles and African slaves, and by the turn of this century, sugar and cotton were the crops that sustained it. In 1909 Standard Oil built the largest refinery in the United States, and oil became the industry that would forever change the face of the city; there are currently over 30 refineries dotting the area's Mississippi shores. Governor Huey "Kingfish" Long was vehemently opposed to such development, and his mysterious murder in the Art Deco capitol building he had built became Baton Rouge's darkest and most memorable legacy.

Long was also a huge proponent of education (unfortunately not a policy later governors would make a priority), and along with state/parish politics and oil, Louisiana State University is Baton Rouge's most important industry, with over 17,000 students.

Perhaps in homage to its shady political past—former governor Edwin Edwards was the only governor elected while under indictment by a federal grand jury and had a young wife named "Candy," raising more than a few eyebrows—Mardi Gras is celebrated here a little differently. Starting in Spanishtown, the Krewes (the private social club that sponsors the parade) use this day to fully ridicule their government leaders and perhaps mock even the tradition of Mardi Gras itself as it gets played out in New Orleans. From Baptiste to Candy, it can be said that Baton Rouge is never devoid of the absurd. —S.R.

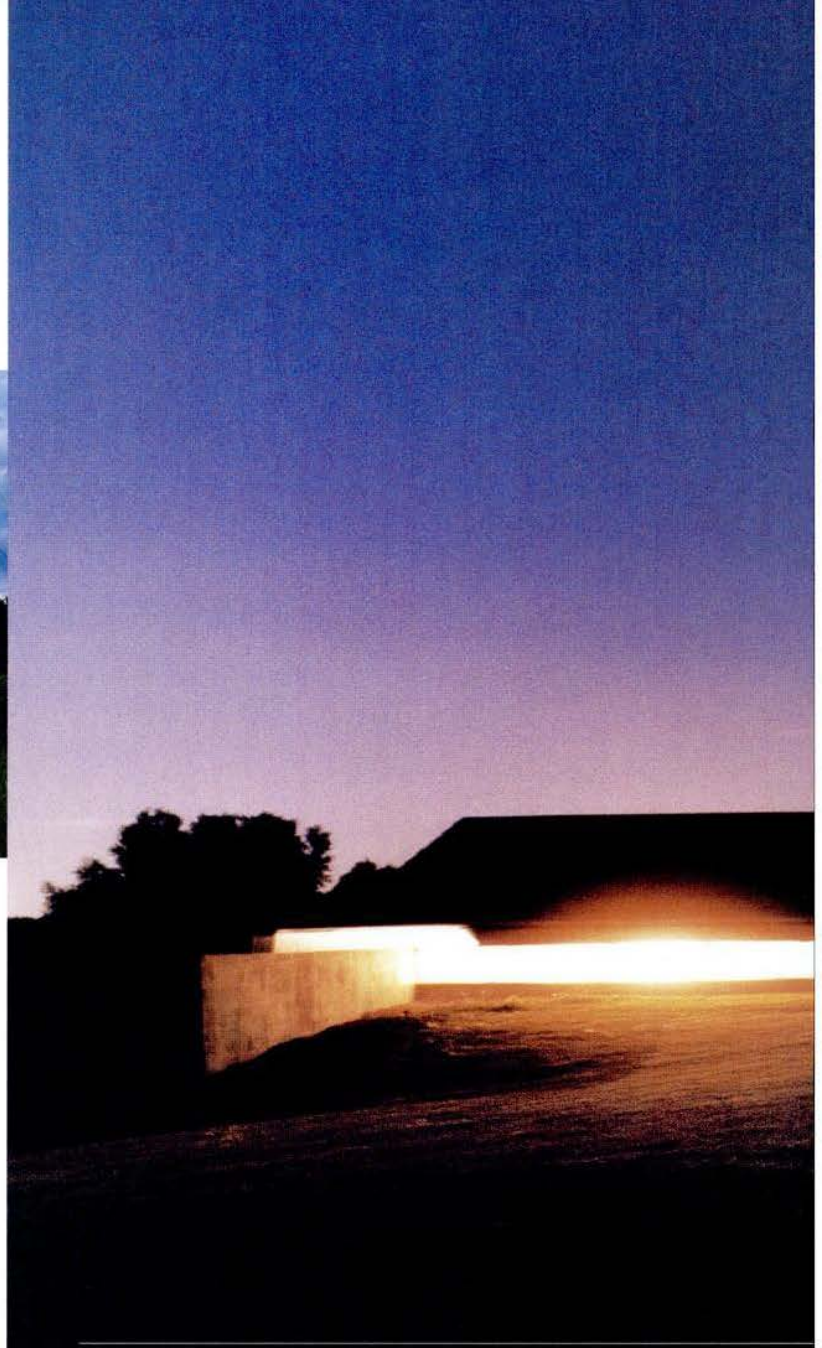
**Ursula's favorite architectural landmark is the dome for the Union Tank Car Company (1958) by R. Buckminster Fuller. "The fact that you have to hike through weeds to get there makes it more cool. It's a modern ruin. And it's the only piece of modern architecture in the state of Louisiana done by a famous person. It's way out there in the country and nobody knows about it."**



STORY BY ALLISON ARIEFF
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIRANDA LICHTENSTEIN

**About 30 minutes from Milwaukee, Hartford** is an idyllic landscape blanketed with cornfields and dairy farms. A glass, wood, and concrete house is about the last thing you'd expect to see, let alone a glass, wood, and concrete house inhabited by a retired Milwaukee narcotics detective and his forensic-chemist wife. But here we are gathered in their kitchen, laughing, drinking lemonade, and eating empanadas. It is a picture-perfect day. And I think it's fair to say that the lives of Jack and Jana Champion have been changed by architecture. **"I thought after 35 years on the police force that I could control my emotions,"** recounts Jack Champion, **"but when I saw this house I just couldn't."**

It was a horse that brought the Champions to Hartford. The couple had been making the drive from Milwaukee three days a week so that Jana could ride and care for her prize-winning thoroughbred, Gamble. Jack had never even been on a horse before meeting Jana, but now he wholeheartedly shares her passion. So when Jack retired from the police force, the equestrian enthusiasts decided to move out of their downtown Milwaukee



**PROJECT: THE CHAMPION RESIDENCE**
**ARCHITECT: VETTER DENK ARCHITECTS**
**LOCATION: HARTFORD, WISCONSIN**

**No grand entrances or circular driveways here. All that one sees of the Champion residence from the street is a glowing band of light. At left, a neighboring barn typifies Hartford's vernacular style. The house was strongly influenced by the agrarian architecture that surrounds it.**

MILWAUKEE CRIME-FIGHTERS GO PASTORAL

# BARN MEETS BAUHAUS

Perched on his sofa, Jack shares a Popsicle with Zeke. The screen porch behind him is a perfect architectural element for a couple who didn't want unnecessary rooms. It extends the living area and opens up the house to the outside.

duplex to Hartford in order to be closer to Gamble.

It took some time to find the right site. "This was the only piece that was suitable for horses, acreage-wise," Jack explains. (The two plan to eventually build a barn and breed horses on the property.) "And we liked that we could have control of what was in front of us." Once they had the site, the Champions proceeded as a lot of people do—they went straight to a builder. They were not impressed with the home plans they were shown. "Everything was designed for a subdivision so it would look good on the street—all curb appeal, nothing in the back," Jana recounts. **"First we thought we could put one of those in and turn it around, but that would've looked dumb.** We found a workable design but with all the adjustments we wanted to make, we decided it would cost just as much as having an architect design one just for us."

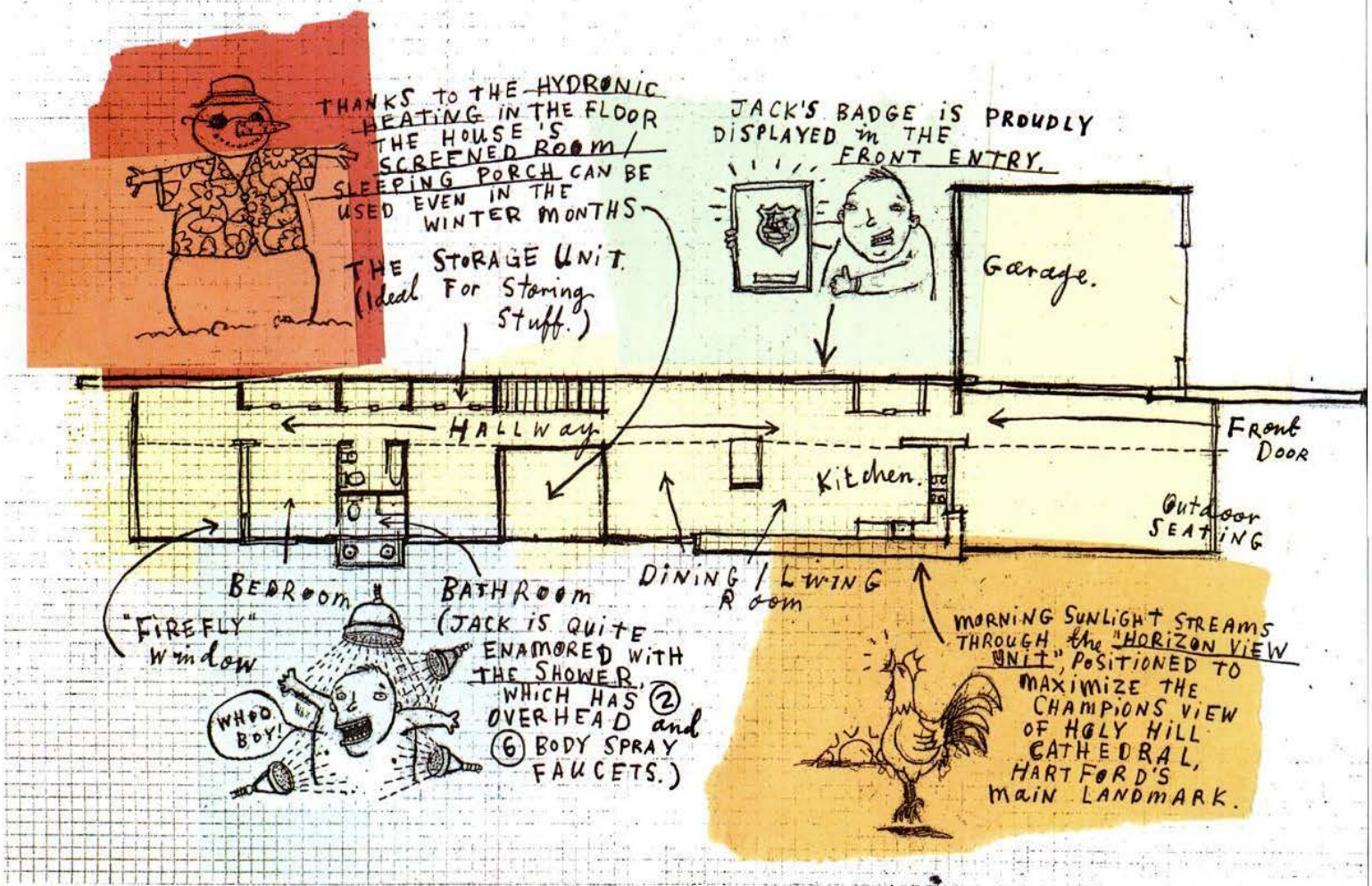
At the urging of Jack's son Joe (an architect in San Francisco), the Champions contacted Vetter Denk Architects in Milwaukee. They arrived with no preconceived ideas about the design of their future home when they went to visit the architects. Their requirements were mostly about lifestyle. For project architect Sebastian Schmaling, the Champions were ideal clients: "An architect normally has to wait for years to get to this point, to have the opportunity to go to the site and simply do what is right for the land. The Champions were open to every idea."

Because it was just the two of them (plus their dog Zeke and cats Merlin and Wizard), they were adamantly opposed to gratuitous square footage. "We just wanted to take advantage of the view and to be unobtrusive to the land," Jana explains. For architect John Vetter, the initial concept for the house was evident when he went to the site for the first time. With a design scheme that opens out to the now-verdant landscape—Wisconsin winters offer another palette altogether—Vetter aimed to make the most of what he describes as the **"beautiful outdoor room"** out back.

But there were obstacles, one being the limited budget—$270,000. It also was nearly impossible to get a valid appraisal because banks couldn't understand why "a two-bedroom ranch house" (the bank's description) would cost this much. "It's a narrow way to put value on architecture that doesn't take into consideration all the elements you really can't describe," Vetter laments. "All they want to know is, 'How big is it?'" The addition of a basement satisfied the bank so financing could go through. The next hurdle was in finding and then educating the tradesmen who worked on the project. Eventually the Champions and their architects met builder

Jana takes a break from the stables to enjoy the living area. Select pieces of modern furniture like George Nelson's classic bench compliment Vetter Denk's simple design.

At the top of the driveway, a concrete retaining wall bisects the land into two pieces: front and back, public and private. Here, a view of the Champion residence as seen from the rural pasture that is their backyard. Each window pane of the "horizon view unit" frames a separate view of the landscape.




Robb Perlewitz. He had the patience and skill to coach electricians, plumbers, and contractors accustomed to cookie-cutter architecture; he was also completely won over by the design of the Champion residence and eagerly awaits his next modernist undertaking. Clearly this was a labor of love for Perlewitz and his crew. He was still going back to make adjustments and improvements on his own time months after the Champions moved in. In fact, all of the tradesmen who worked on the house came back with their families to show off what they'd done.

"It felt good to figure all this out and make it work," says Schmaling. **"Sometimes architects feel they have all these ambitions to do something weird or different** and then when it's done, they look back and think, 'Did I really need to do that?' but with the Champion residence, the program was really clear. I wouldn't have done anything differently."

The 1,860-square-foot house is essentially one long volume. As you enter, all of the living areas run the length of the house to your left while the storage and service functions are confined to the right side behind a built-in storage wall made of birch and particleboard. The central screened porch is, Schmaling explains, "where the house really breathes. It opens up the building to the outside." A long horizontal line of custom window panels made of aluminum sash and clad in mahogany—what Vetter has termed the "horizon view unit"—wraps around the corner of the kitchen and continues past the dining room. At night, the bedroom is illuminated by fireflies seen through the corner window.

This house doesn't interfere with the farm buildings that surround it; instead it quietly establishes a place for itself among them. "This was an architecture of courtesy," explains Vetter. "The neighbors have been there for a long time and we wanted to respect their environment." The agrarian vernacular is acknowledged in subtle ways. **"Farm buildings are straightforward and deliberate,"** Vetter continues. **"There are no tricks. The people who build them achieve this without really thinking about it."**

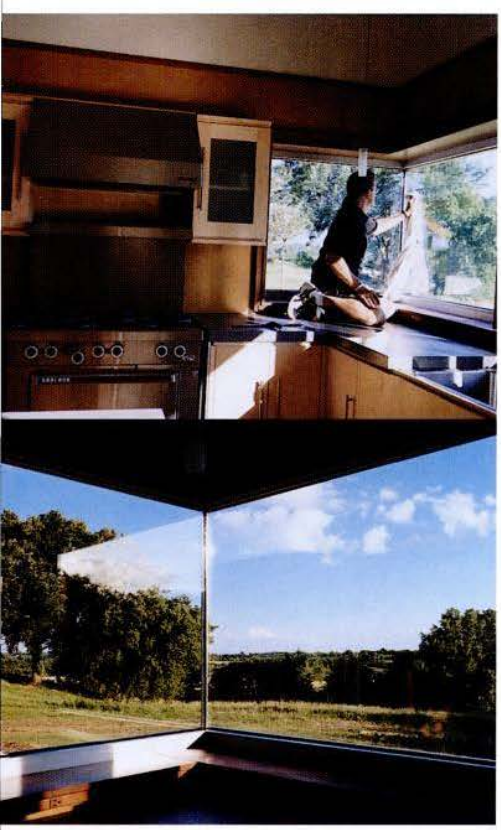
Nestled into the hillside, the house is barely visible from the road. At night, all you see as you come up the drive is a band of light on the horizon—an effect achieved by a clerestory window of sandblasted glass that diffuses light and shadow. The minimal façade addresses the street in an unconventional way and achieves the unobtrusiveness the Champions sought.

Country life agrees with Jack (who has grown a ponytail since retiring) and Jana. So does modern architecture. "When the architects saw my reaction to the model, the price



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID FULLARTON

**Perched on the bluestone counter, Jack polishes his new window. Below, a view from the kitchen to the "beautiful outdoor room."**



went up right away," Jack jokes before continuing on to extol the virtues of his new home. "This is more an atmosphere than a house. It's an environment."

Vetter is, of course, pleased with his clients' reaction. "The time is right for modernism in Milwaukee," Vetter opines. "There's a whole new way to look at modernism that holds the tenets but is a little friendlier, a little bit more reality-based. The modernism of the '30s and '50s was much more human and that's what I'm seeing now." Schmaling concurs: **"People are more aware, more willing to consider something other than what they grew up with.** They are interested in materials and how the site is addressed. People are learning that it's not about 6,000 square feet but in what you do with what you have."

*Allison Arieff is the Senior Editor of dwell.*

PHOTO BY DALE OLSON/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

# MILWAUKEE

My visit to Milwaukee started off not with a bang but with the roar of an engine. I'd arrived just in time to see the HOG (Harley Owner's Group) parade—over 2,500 Harley riders cruising down the main drag in front of the Hilton, past Hooter's and onward to the shores of Lake Michigan. I wondered if this was what the Greater Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau meant when it coined the slogan "Genuine American." I'd been prepared for Cheeseheads, bratwurst, and brewery tours. This was a happy surprise.

As I explored Milwaukee by foot and then by car, I liked what I saw. Eero Saarinen designed Milwaukee's Art Museum in 1957 as part of the landmark War Memorial Center. Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava's addition to the museum will be completed in late 2000. Beautiful, old industrial buildings throughout downtown are ripe for what will be, one hopes, well-planned renovation and development. One of these, a five-story renovated brewery, is being converted into the Harley Davidson Museum (set to open in 2002). Another, the Central Steel and Wire Warehouse built in 1956, is a favorite of the architects at Vetter Denk. Wisconsin, of course, has a wealth of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings like the Frederick C. Bogk House (1916) on North Terrace Street. The Champions are partial to the early industrialist homes (including the home of the motorcycle Davidsons) located on Washington and Hi Mount boulevards.

Milwaukee residents clearly appreciate the quality of life that their city provides. Harsh winters notwithstanding, it is described as an easy place in which to live—affordable, unpretentious, and more culturally rich than you might expect. Its proximity to Chicago (about an hour and a half by car) is another plus. The city has an extensive and well-utilized system of interconnected county parks, including an old NIKE missile base that has been converted into a nature preserve.

In contrast to the theme-park atmosphere of other waterfront developments like San Antonio's Riverwalk or Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco, Milwaukee's Riverwalk development, which extends from Lake Michigan through the heart of downtown, actually feels like a place locals would frequent. (Milwaukee's original inhabitants, the Potowami Indians, referred to the area as "A Gathering Place by the River.") A convention center just opened downtown, and the Brewers will be playing ball in the new Miller Park stadium in 2001. As for cuisine, there is more here than bratwurst and beer, but if your heart is set on sauerbraten, head to the German institution Karl Ratzsch's.

Like every other city in the world, Milwaukee is trying to promote its "wired" image, but whether or not technology will supersede the city's beer (which has been brewing there since 1840) and motorcycle production (Harley celebrates its centennial in 2001) remains to be seen. —A.A.

# THERE IS TOO A THERE THERE

The Yamamotos' brick, redwood, and cedar home is at the opposite end of the architectural spectrum from its neocolonial neighbors (inset, top right).

Nevertheless, local regulations required Tom and Nancy to purchase their own golf cart for the property. At right, Tom relaxes on the Florence Knoll lounge in his new living room. The architect customized the lounge and chairs to fit the space; he also designed the overhead light fixture in the kitchen.

**Do you have to live in a dazzling megalopolis to have a dynamic, exciting home? Not at all. In fact, we believe the opposite is true. Sometimes it's easier to build a breakout house in a city where an inflated sense of civic pride doesn't turn neighbors and politicians into style vigilantes.**

PROJECT: THE YAMAMOTO RESIDENCE
ARCHITECT: BRININSTOOL+LYNCH ARCHITECTS

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

**The neighbors simply don't know what to** make of the anomaly on Golden Ridge Lane. Driving up to the brick, redwood, and cedar house located in the suburban perimeter of Indianapolis is a bit like coming upon a minimalist sculpture in a museum devoted to Louis XIV furniture. The house is the very antithesis of the neocolonial mansions that surround it. "We set the house back from the street to insulate it from the traditionally influenced development," explains architect Brad Lynch, ever the diplomat. "The intent is calm juxtaposition—not a radical statement."

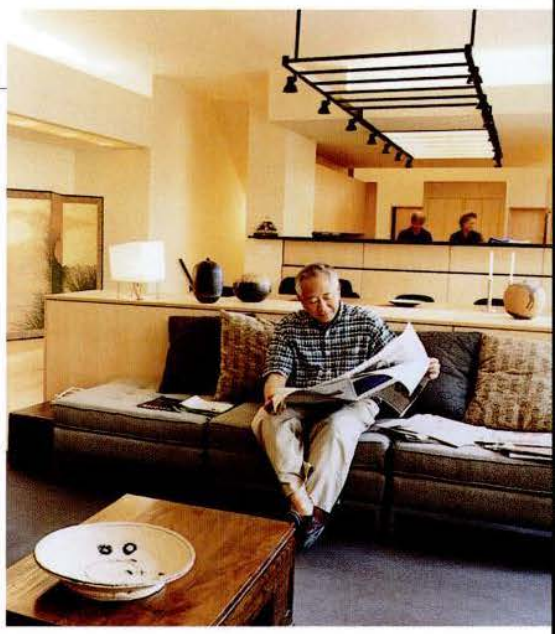
"In comparison to the rest of the country, this design is pretty conservative," explains Lynch, "but down here it's like a flying saucer that's landed." He's not exaggerating. As the Yamamoto residence was being built, there was a long line of traffic every weekend—cars circled the cul de sac to stop and point at the incongruous structure. Builder John Lerchen was encouraged to remove his company sign from the house during construction because the "design was so bad." He left it up. The entrance canopy prompted his workmen to refer to the house as the "gas station."

This story begins with the acquisition of a pair of 17th-century Japanese screens. The Yamamotos came home to their old house one evening to discover sheets of water pouring down in front and behind the two six-panel screens; the pipes in the bathroom had burst. Miraculously, the screens emerged from the domestic rainstorm intact, but the near miss provided impetus for the Yamamotos to find a sanctuary for themselves and for their cherished artwork.

The couple was uninspired by the houses they looked at in Indianapolis, so they decided to build their own. Because Nancy wanted the security and comfort that comes with a suburban setting, the couple purchased a lot in Cambridge, a development on Geist Lake, about 20 minutes from downtown Indianapolis. The next step was to find an architect. Tom Yamamoto began to ask around and was surprised at the response. "Over and over, people told me I didn't need an architect, just a builder," he recalls. A quick drive through Indianapolis confirms that Tom's initial experience was not unusual. This is a city utterly sold on model homes—size, not style, is of paramount importance.

Frustrated with Indianapolis architects, the Yamamotos looked to Chicago, where they found Brininstool+Lynch. Architect Lynch has designed a serene space full of beautifully crafted architectural details: the custom light fixture in the kitchen, the subtle tapestry texture of the brick, the patinated hearth that references the screen adjacent to it. The home was influenced not only by the Japanese pieces it was designed around but by the wooden barns Lynch passed on his frequent drives from Illinois to Indiana. Architect and client are pleased with the results. "As you walk through this space, as you sit down in it," Lynch explains, "it's comfortable, it does what it's supposed to do." In sharp contrast to the many dormer-and-balustrade-laden houses nearby, "it doesn't have to hit you over the head."

—ALLISON ARIEFF



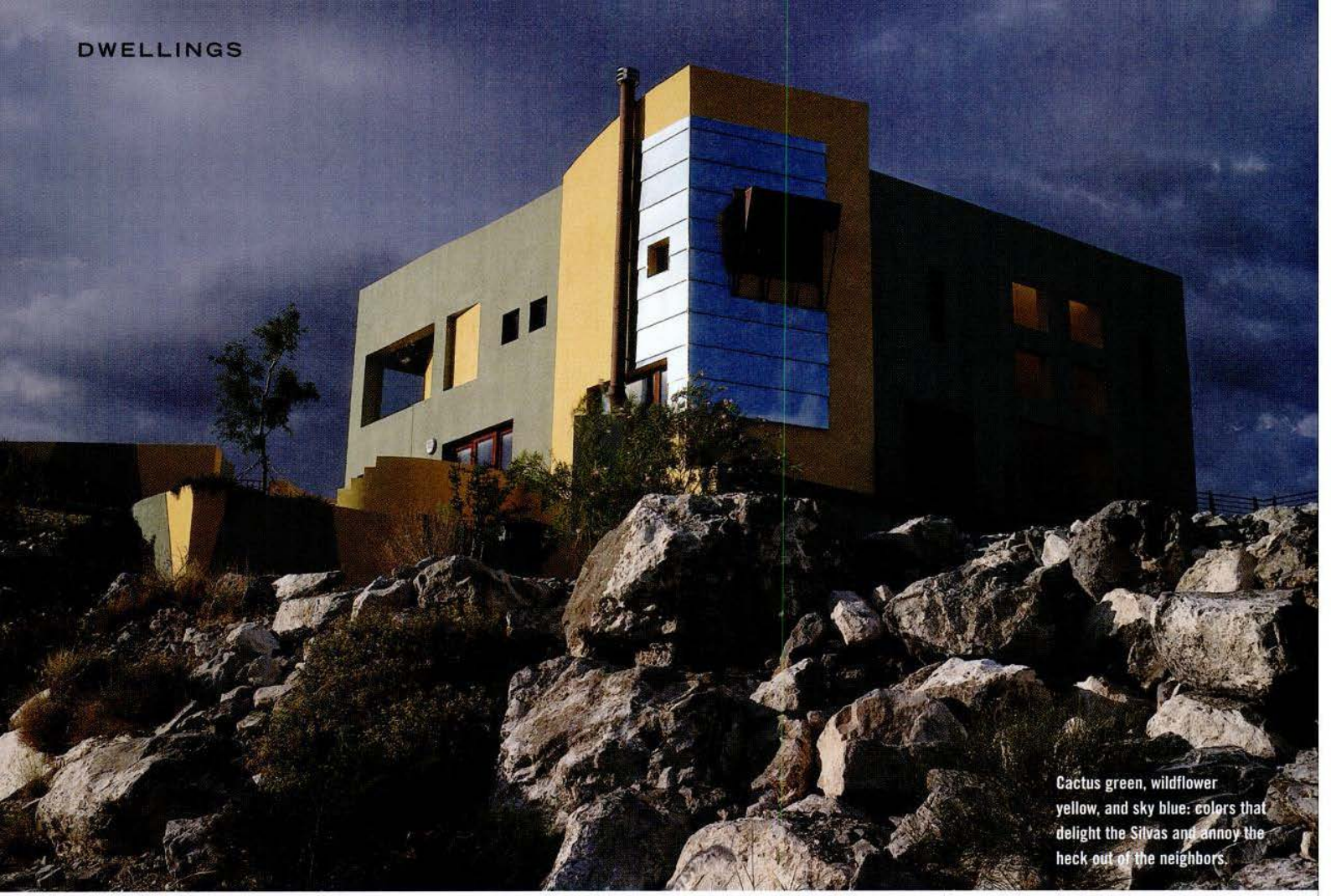
**Tom Yamamoto on Indianapolis**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
The National Collegiate Athletic Association headquarters building.

**Favorite Thing**
"It is perhaps the only place that has both IMAX and Cinedome theaters," Yamamoto jokes. "People miss three-dimensional space in this city so 3-D films hold particular appeal."

**Least Favorite Thing**
"Unfortunately, Indiana ranks at the top of the charts for pounds per person—so much so that there's a slight indentation in the earth."

PHOTOS BY EVAN KAFKA



Cactus green, wildflower yellow, and sky blue: colors that delight the Silvas and annoy the heck out of the neighbors.

## EL PASO, TEXAS

**José Silva on El Paso**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
"The Toltec Building, a 1910 trapezoidal structure with an eclectic design."

**Favorite Thing**
"The bilingual/bicultural character, Casa Jurado (a Mexican restaurant), and the heavy influence from Mexico itself. In Latin America, Mexico, even Europe, homes are more colorful."

**Least Favorite Thing**
"Parochialism (probably from this side of the border)."

**PROJECT: SILVA RESIDENCE**
**ARCHITECT: ED SOLTERO**

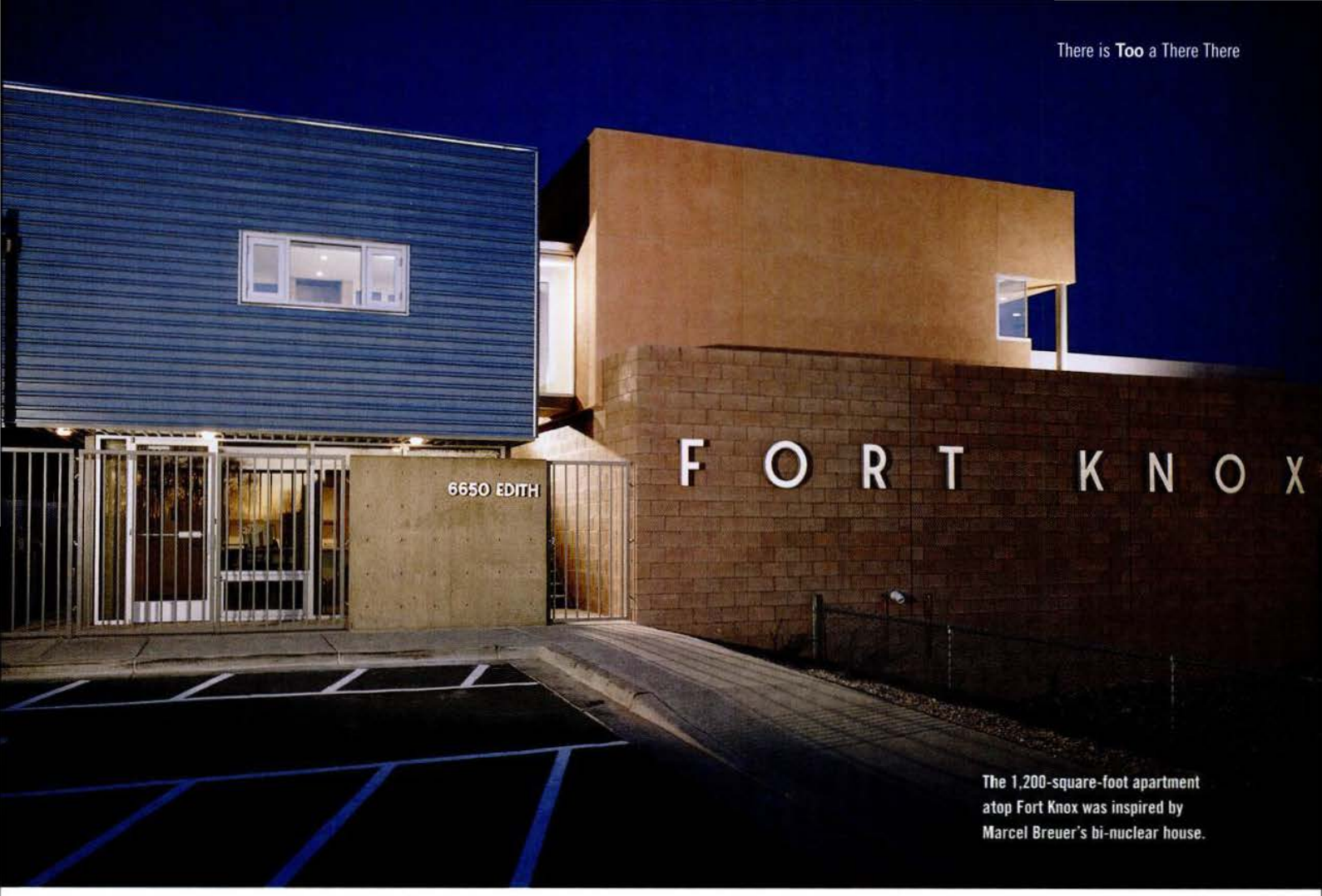
**José Silva fell in love with Crazy Cat Mountain** at age eight, on a hike with friends. Looking at the 360-degree view of two states, two countries, two cities, and the Rio Grande, he thought, "What a great place to live." What Silva didn't know then was that within two decades, all the lots on Crazy Cat Mountain would become "Sierra Crest," a gated community. Nonetheless, in 1992 he bought a lot from a law partner who had tried unsuccessfully to build a house there. Silva turned his friend's defunct project over to architect Ed Soltero, who realized Silva's dream on the same footprint, with unpredictable angles and bold colors. Soltero didn't pound more foundations into the "fragile desert ecosystem"—rather he honored the ghosts of the desert wildflowers. To choose colors for the house, "Ed actually took the cactus to the paint store and said, 'Here, match this,'" says Silva.

The radiant aesthetic of the Silva house has been lost on the Sierra Crest Homeowners Association, which is suing Silva because he refuses to repaint his house taupe, beige, or any other docile tone that, according to the SCHOA, "blends into the desert." Silva has a different idea of the desert: "People think the desert doesn't have colorful plants. But it's amazing how much color comes from desert cactuses. You've got some ugly-looking cactus, it rains, and all of a sudden, bam! All kinds of brilliant colors come out."

But it's easy to ignore disgruntled neighbors and their dull conceptions of the desert when you're a car fanatic and your architect has created the garage of your dreams. No matter if some of his neighbors are grumbling behind dirt-colored walls—Silva is safe in his home, lost under the hood of his Corvette. —VIRGINIA GARDINER



PHOTO BY BRUCE BERMAN




The 1,200-square-foot apartment atop Fort Knox was inspired by Marcel Breuer's bi-nuclear house.

## ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

**PROJECT: FORT KNOX SELF-STORAGE**
**ARCHITECT: GEOFF ADAMS & MARK DEPREE**

**Think living in a renovated warehouse is the** epitome of cool? Think again. This Breuer-inspired apartment atop a 6,000-square-foot self-storage facility in Albuquerque brings industrial chic to new heights. In a city with a rather pronounced anti-architectural bent, the discovery of Fort Knox Self-Storage, an industrial container that references modernist vernacular, comes as a pleasant, pueblo-free surprise.

Most architects would have opted for a ho-hum response to such a utilitarian structure, but architects Mark DePree and Geoff Adams had higher aspirations for the project. In light of the intelligence and humor the pair brought to the seemingly mundane program of "storage facility," it perhaps comes as not too much of a shock to learn that the project immediately following was Robertson's Violin Shop, a 15,000-square-foot violin store, sort of a Home Depot for Stradivarians.

The architects passionately argue that they have been inspired rather than stymied by the very specific set of site restrictions for these projects. In the case of Fort Knox, the owner had chosen the name, color scheme, and building materials; DePree & Adams took it from there. (The two have since moved on to begin their own projects.) Because they designed and built the project themselves, they could invent as they went along. To the owner's bemusement, the architects utilized an early modernist vocabulary, particularly in the second-floor apartment that houses Toni, the storage facility manager, her husband, and her infant son. Though the family's presence is dictated by function rather than form, they love living there and are charmed by the regular pilgrimages made by architecture students.

And yes, the apartment has "tons of storage space and huge closets." —A.A.

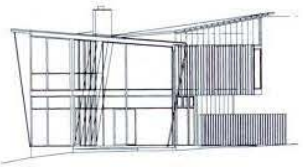
**Geoff Adams on Albuquerque**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
Architect Adams likes the abandoned Southern Pacific Railroad sheds.

**Favorite Thing**
Sandia Mountains and green chili.

**Least Favorite Thing**
"It's so far away from the ocean."

PHOTO BY KIRK GITTINGS



**PROJECT: WYATT RESIDENCE**
**ARCHITECT: COLEMAN COKER, BUILDINGSTUDIO**

## LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

**The Lakeside neighborhood of Louisville,** Kentucky, is an eclectic mix of architectural styles—ranch houses, Cape Cods, Tudors, and bungalows—but the Wyatt house may still take some neighbors by surprise. "They keep asking what color brick we're using," Ruth Wyatt explains. "I don't have the heart to tell them about the corrugated metal."

It all began during a rainstorm when Kevin Wyatt stumbled upon a dog-legged lot for sale in Lakeside, a subdivision designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. in the 1920s. The couple jumped at the chance to purchase the site. Kevin had grown up nearby, and they wanted to raise their children (now four and two) there. The next step was to find the right architect.

"I had seen a Mockbee Coker house in *Abitare*, and it was the kind of house I always wanted to build. I liked the rural feel, the use of mixed materials in their work," Kevin recalls. "Then we saw their Butterfly project [a compact and low-cost house with galvanized aluminum roof designed by Samuel Mockbee and his students at the Rural Studio in Greensboro, Alabama] and were completely sold."

"We were sort of their pro bono project," says Ruth, "as we have taste toward the top and money towards the bottom." But the Memphis-based architects were undeterred by budgetary contraints, geography, or the "small, 'leftover' piece of property" that was the Wyatts' lot. Architect Coleman Coker utilized creative yet cost-effective materials like galvanized metal siding, fiberglass panels, and insulated glass in the Wyatt home. The odd configuration of the lot allowed for all unbuilt areas to be devoted to perennials, herbs, and native plants to the delight of the couple, who are both avid gardeners.

Concrete was poured in June. Construction should be completed by year's end. We'll keep you posted about the neighbors.

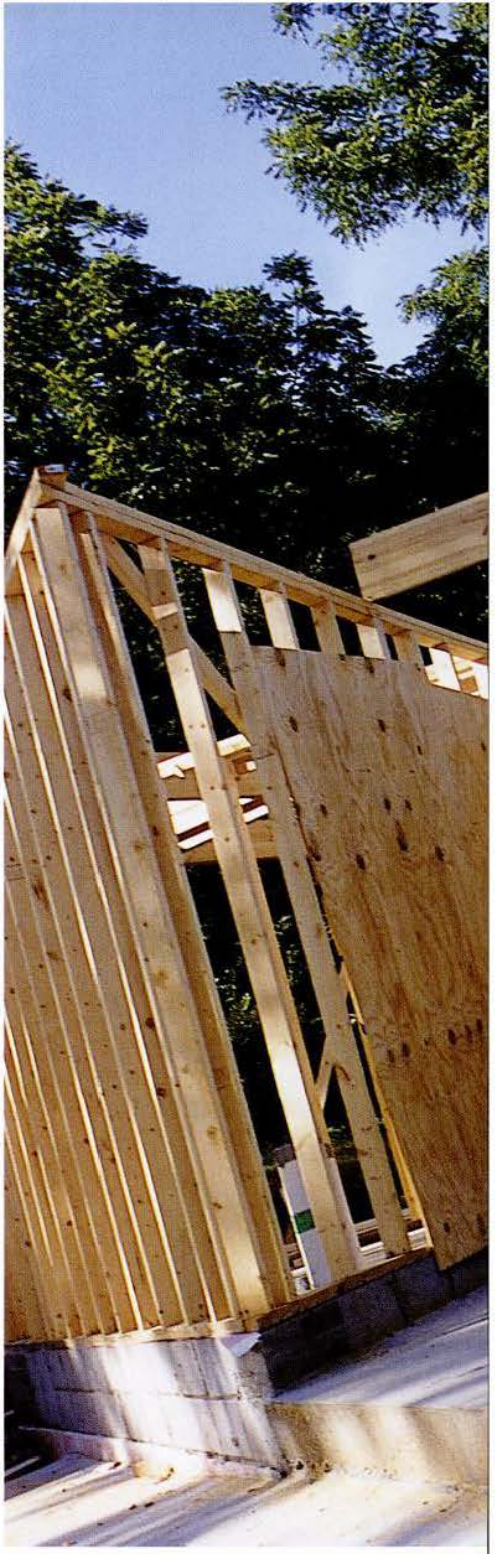
—A.A.

*Note: At press time, we learned that Coleman Coker and Samuel Mockbee have amicably parted ways. Coker's new firm, buildingstudio, will complete work on the Wyatt residence.*

**Ruth Wyatt on Louisville**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
"It's not finished yet."

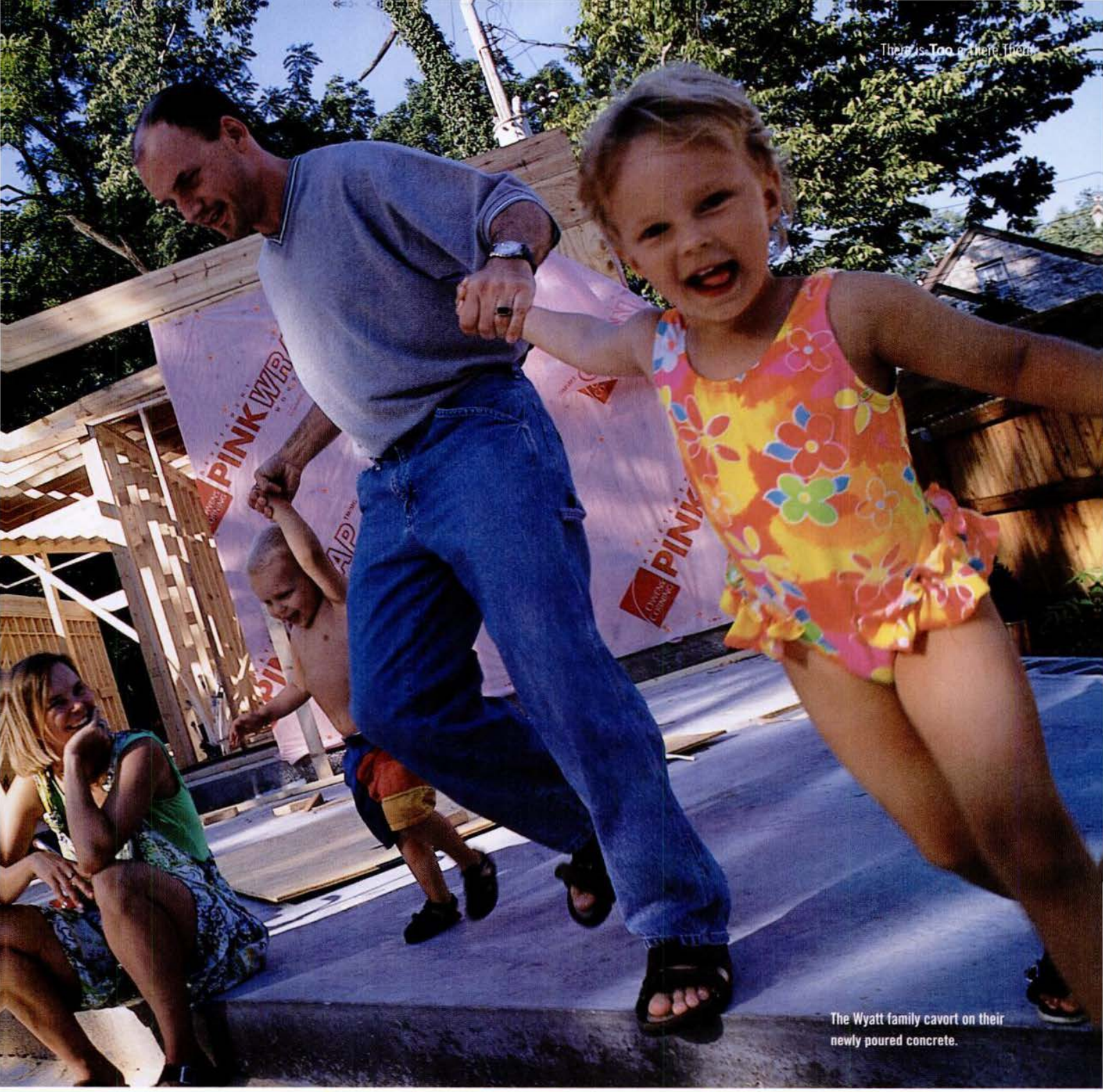
**Favorite Thing**
"Compared to other places we've lived, it's artier, funkier, the people are friendly, more liberal, more diverse. And there's no traffic."



**In architect Coleman Coker's inventive design, interior and exterior space were developed as one. From left, the west elevation showing translucent carport screen; the house seen from the southeast; and a view from the rear garden, where the family will plant beans, tomatoes, and cantaloupe.**

DRAWING BY CARL KENNON
MODEL BY JOHN TATE, VINCE BANDY, HENRY YUMAMOTO

PHOTO BY DAWGHAUS PHOTOGRAPHY




The Wyatt family cavort on their newly poured concrete.

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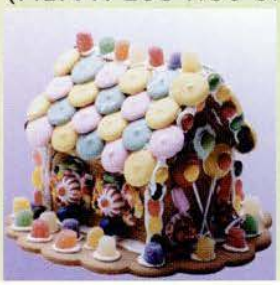



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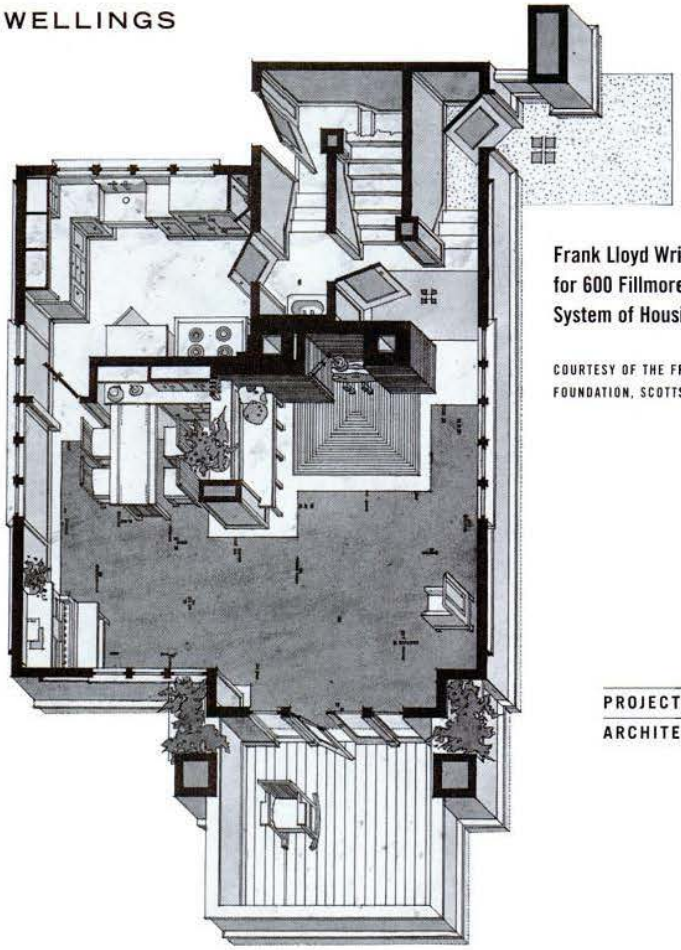


Frank Lloyd Wright's original plan for 600 Fillmore, part of his American System of Housing.

COURTESY OF THE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FOUNDATION, SCOTTSDALE, AZ

PROJECT: 600 FILLMORE STREET
ARCHITECT: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

## GARY, INDIANA

**The first thing that strikes you about Gary,** Indiana, is its glut of vacant, burned-out buildings. In many parts, Gary more closely resembles a war-torn village in the Balkans than a midsize city in the middle of the wealthiest country in the world. However, there are a number of architecturally significant structures here, including a now decrepit white stucco house at 600 Fillmore Street, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1916.

The house, which has stood abandoned for the past 25 years, was built for the American System of Housing, a short-lived venture based on prefabricated designs and materials. It was purchased recently by the American Heritage Home Trust, an historic-preservation group that repairs, cleans, and furnishes architecturally significant buildings throughout the United States with the hope of tempting tourists to spend their vacation in an "American Heritage Home." Though 600 Fillmore is a Frank Lloyd Wright house, the idea of tourists bedding down in Gary seems like a stretch, but not to the project manager, Christopher Meyer. Wright fanatics will go anywhere, he believes. "These homes built for the American System of Housing were not designed with a particular client in mind," says Meyer, explaining 600 Fillmore's special appeal. "Wright literally designed these homes for himself—they are an almost pure realization of his aesthetic."

Currently, the house is a tragic sight. The second floor has collapsed into the first floor, which in turn has collapsed into the basement, leaving a remarkable gaping hole in the living room. Dripping water continuously trickles down from the all-but-nonexistent roof. But even in its eerie state, it is a beautiful structure. Looking at the classic Wright details, you become convinced that Meyer's dream to resurrect this lost Wright relic might not be so far-fetched after all.

—ANDREW WAGNER

PHOTOS BY TERRY EVANS

**Though hard to believe, 600 Fillmore will soon be an American Heritage Home bed-and-breakfast.**

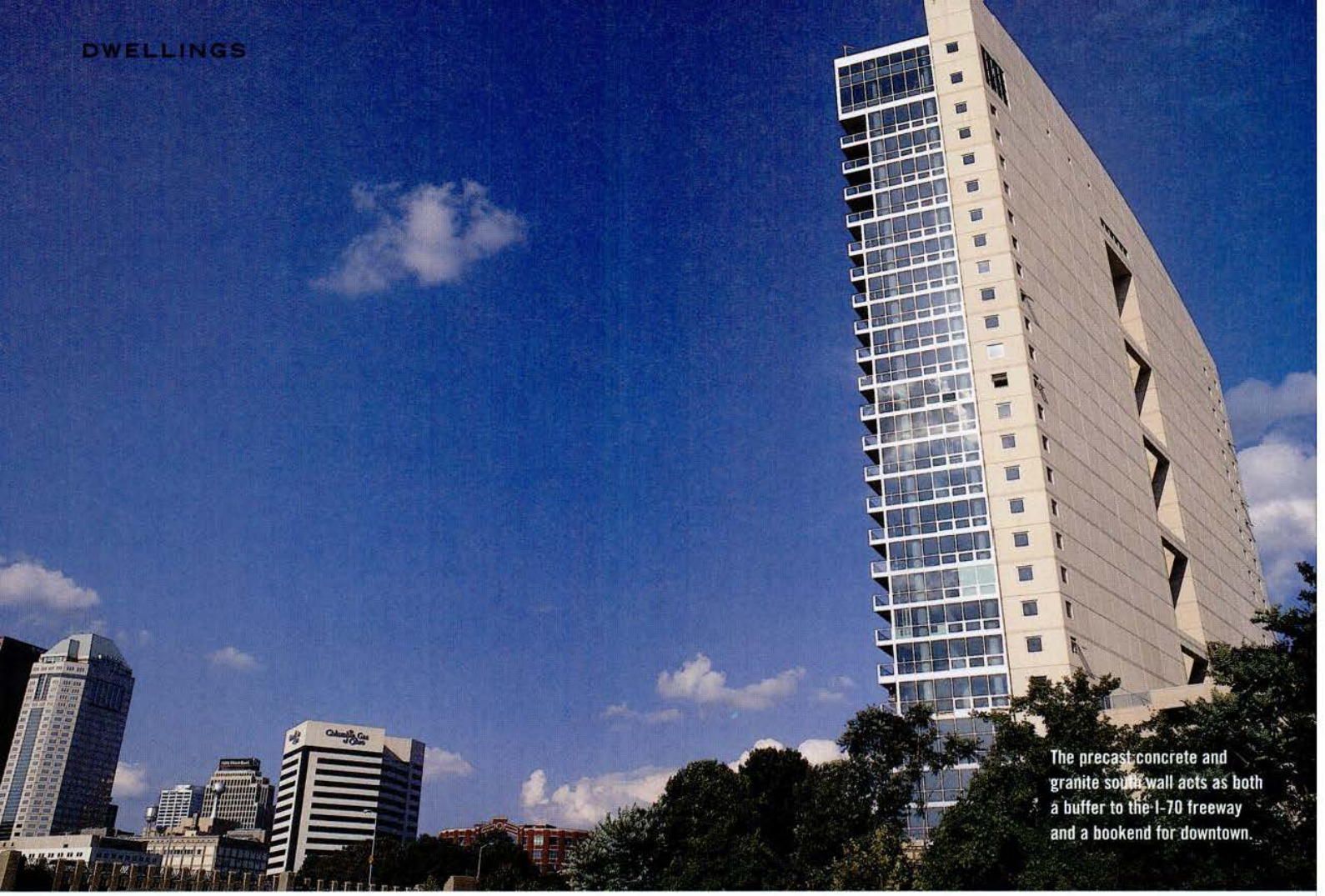
**Christopher Meyer on Gary**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
"I have no one favorite building. I greatly enjoy my discoveries of numerous undocumented Prairie School buildings by Wright, Maher and Son, and George and Arthur Dean."

**Favorite Thing**
"Gary's people and their desire to see the city come around."

**Least Favorite Thing**
"The stereotypes attached to the city about crime, violence, and drugs. Yes, the city has its share of these problems, but what city doesn't?"

**Favorite Place to Go**
The eateries and stores on Lake Street, in the Miller neighborhood, and West Beach.



The precast concrete and granite south wall acts as both a buffer to the I-70 freeway and a bookend for downtown.

## COLUMBUS, OHIO

PROJECT: MIRANOVA
ARCHITECT: ARQ

**Michael Caven on Columbus**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
LeVeque Tower, a skyscraper built in 1927 and designed by C. Howard Crane from Detroit.

**Favorite Thing**
"This city is one of the best-kept secrets in the country. The diversity, the acceptance of new and different ideas, it really is fantastic. Columbus is a kinder, gentler city."

**Least Favorite Thing**
"There aren't a lot of mountains."

**Favorite Place to Go**
The Short North neighborhood, with its galleries, retail spaces, and festive bars.

**Who knew that Columbus, Ohio, possessed** such a wealth of modern architecture? While Cleveland was busy convincing the world that Ohioans might not really understand modern architecture by building I.M. Pei's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Columbus, the state capital, was busily constructing Peter Eisenman's Wexner Center for the Arts and The Greater Columbus Convention Center, and Arata Isozaki's new COSI science museum. And now, the latest structure in the home of the Ohio State Buckeyes is Miranova, a 26-story apartment tower located on the banks of the Scioto River downtown, designed by Miami-based firm ARQ (née Arquitectonica).

The structure is a surprisingly graceful and omnipresent addition to the Columbus skyline. Sheathed entirely in glass on the north wall, each of the 113 units has an unobstructed view of the city and river. The south wall, with its imposing precast concrete and granite façade, acts as both a buffer to the neighboring I-70 freeway and as what Linda Readey, vice president of sales for Miranova, calls a "bookend" for downtown.

While the city has been dabbling in modern architecture for some time now, Miranova is its first modern residential high-rise. Readey says the response has been fantastic, with a solid cross-section of Columbus' diverse population preparing themselves for the move-in date. Partners Michael Caven, a restaurateur, and Tom Grote, co-owner of the Donato's Pizza Chain, were one of the first couples to buy into Miranova and eagerly support Readey's claim. "Columbus has shown itself to be receptive, not only to modern architecture but to all sorts of building types," says Caven. "Miranova is representative of this accepting attitude—which is what I really love about Columbus." —A.W.



PHOTO BY BRAD A. SMITH / PHOTOSMITH

David Clifford and Scott Oliver designed a translucent Fylon (like Tyvek, a type of fiberglass) screen to partially hide the bathtub from view.

## OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

**PROJECT: CLIFFORD + OLIVER'S HOME/STUDIO**
**ARCHITECT: DAVID GILL**

**David Clifford and Scott Oliver on Oakland**

**Favorite Architectural Landmark**
The Paramount Theater, an art deco wonder. It's where James Brown plays when he's in town.

**Favorite Place to Go**
"The Parkway Movie Theater—beer, pizza, and couches, and movies."

**Favorite Thing**
David: "I like that people in Oakland say hello when you walk by." Scott: "The racial mix—even the crowd at Whole Foods is pretty diverse."

**Least Favorite Thing**
Scott: "There's the inconvenience factor. Services left this neighborhood long ago."

**In metal worker David Clifford and graphic** designer Scott Oliver's West Oakland post-industrial home, you notice two things: One is the grandeur of the space with its barrel-vaulted warehouse ceiling retrofitted with generous skylights. The other is the noise of the BART trains that roar by at regular intervals on the elevated track across the street.

BART is the sole reminder that downtown San Francisco is only a few minutes away. San Francisco real-estate moguls, however, have lately caught on to West Oakland. This dilapidated warehouse district is one of the last spots in the Bay Area where land can be assembled for large-scale development. Young white professionals such as Clifford and Oliver, as much as they cherish their traditionally black neighborhood's run-down charm, are harbingers of change.

Following plans drawn up by architect David Gill, Clifford and Oliver spent three years carving separate zones for living and working out of the former auto body shop. They finally got a certificate of occupancy in April, despite the fact that city building inspectors were befuddled by the notion of a 6,700-square-foot metal shop/textile studio/communal homestead. The inspectors were also put off by the pair's little quirks: "There was no separation between the toilet and the kitchen," says Clifford. At the inspectors' insistence, they put a translucent glass door between the toilet and the kitchen. The bathtub, however, is still out in the open, shielded from the kitchen stove by a circus-striped screen. The building code also required fire escapes. So Clifford and Oliver each have a ladder leading from their second-floor bedrooms to a rooftop walkway. It's a perfect place to watch BART go by—and to track the transformation of West Oakland.

—KARRIE JACOBS

PHOTO BY DANIEL DE SOUZA

**Meet Tom Dixon. He thinks that the design world has played you—yes, you!—for a sucker. He is profoundly anti-design. He also happens to be the head of design for a chain of stores that sells roughly $400 million of designer merchandise annually to style-hungry Europeans.**

# THE RETHINKER

STORY BY LIZ FARRELLY


**Does this strike you as odd?**
The man who is possibly the most powerful design impresario in Europe—if we're counting quantity of merchandise sold—issues a manifesto (not a marketing plan) espousing anti-design. *Rethink* (Conran Octopus Limited, 2000) is the book. Tom Dixon is the author. And he's promoting a get-real attitude in an industry notorious for what we'll politely call style over content.

You'd expect Dixon, as head of design at Habitat, with 79 stores across Europe dispensing some $400 million annually of affordable, tasteful everything, to be a big fan of the catchall tag "designer." But he's not. In *Rethink* he informs us that we've been suckered by, of all people, the manufacturers and retailers of domestic design, and the design schools—and all those lifestyle and shelter magazines. However, with Dixon's hometown of London in the midst of a real-estate boom and a taste revolution (fueled by a glut of prime-time, do-it-yourself, interior-design shows on national television), everything "designer" is atop the homemaker's shopping list. So, how is Dixon's no-nonsense attitude playing at Habitat, the 35-year-old brand he has been charged with regenerating?

Aiming to find "hidden beauty in the mundane," *Rethink* sums up Dixon's highly refined, hunter-gatherer approach to design. Bound between covers of medium-density fiberboard (one of the homely materials that Dixon champions), mixing photos of funky, styled interiors with product shots lifted from industrial furniture catalogs, the book is a breath of fresh air. Forsaking pseudo-sophistication in favor of indestructible quality and pure function, Dixon has discovered a wealth of unsung, anonymous design classics. Workbenches, task lights, anti-skid flooring, rock-steady shelving, and color-coded storage are redeployed as accessories for modern living. It is the high-tech fad of the late 1970s (a look promoted in part by Habitat, or Conran's, as the chain was known in America) taken to the next level.

When asked why he wrote *Rethink*, Dixon is characteristically blunt: "The publisher asked me, 'What's the next big thing?' And I said, 'I don't do crazes.' But I thought about how I work and what I like—you know, industrial stuff—and then asked myself, 'What is it that makes something appealing?' And if it is [appealing], why not live with it rather than lock it away in the workshop?"

When asked how he sees the *Rethink* attitude affecting his work at Habitat, he is adamant: "It's not about Habitat." Fine. Habitat's press officer says the same thing. While Dixon does have a life outside the corporation (he still runs his own company, Eurolounge), the boundaries, in fact, aren't so clear, simply because everything Dixon does, he does his way. And he has been "rethinking" for pretty much his entire career.

The first thing you notice about Dixon is his energy. He admits that his earliest efforts were driven by a hunger for instant results. "When I started making things," he notes, "I struck on welding as a fast way of building up big things.

"I am," he confesses, "very impatient."

Pragmatic, imaginative, and entrepreneurial, Dixon consistently turned the odds to his advantage. As a designer working in a country devoid of a manufacturing base, that meant getting his hands dirty.

Back in the early '80s, twentysomething Dixon divided his time between playing in a band and running a nightclub. The band, Funkapolitan, made it onto the charts, and the club was full of London's famous faces. By day, Dixon set up a new business with a couple of friends just as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's deregulated financial boom kicked off the "Designer Decade."

"When we started out I trained my eye to look for the potential in what other people threw away," recalls Dixon. "I looked at things like coal-hole covers as raw material, and I began thinking about how something could be used in a different way." ▸

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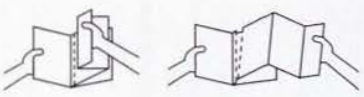

Tear out and enjoy.

PHOTO THIS PAGE COURTESY OF SONNABEND GALLERY, NY
CALENDAR: COLOR AND FIRE PHOTO BY SHARON RISEDORPH

Shadows from Le Corbusier's Ronchamp live and breathe in Hiroshi Sugimoto's photograph, on view at SFMoMA this winter.


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Patching together reclaimed debris in a post-industrial city, informed by the stylistics of a nightclub scene where retro-chic was mutating into ripped 'n' torn work wear, Dixon's output was pure theater. But it had teeth enough to shock the design elite out of its pristine modernist stagnation. Having turned necessity into a style, Dixon's "metal bashing" company, Creative Salvage, gave birth to the most populist design genre of the century, the "Mad Max" look. It wasn't long before design's major players, Italy's avant-garde furniture companies, moved in to sign him up.

Then, frustrated by the "unavailability" of his work (being labor-intensive meant high price tags, and the Italian-made objects were only available in a few outlets), Dixon opened a shop, stocking his designs alongside products by a gang of international allies; he was the first to sell Droog Design outside the Netherlands. But, financially, it was always a struggle. In 1997 the shop and workshop mutated into Eurolounge, an operation with a clear agenda to mass produce for low cost. "Because I was sick of being underfunded, I borrowed the money to make a product, just one, using an affordable industrial technique," says Dixon. And where did he look for inspiration? "On the street!" Of course. "I noticed that traffic bollards were low-maintenance, had low mold costs, and were luminous. So I got some to practice on. You can borrow them because they're always being knocked over."

Dixon bought a plastic-welding machine to work the low-density polyethylene and played around with star forms until coming up with the distinctive Jack Light, a Day-Glo star that looks a whole lot like a cluster of little traffic bollards. To date Eurolounge's UK factory has shipped 10,000 Jack Lights. "The day our first bulk container went," Dixon recalls, "I thought, 'Yes, we've done it!' "

Arriving at Habitat two years ago, Dixon spent a year heading up the furniture design department (where he fired half the designers because they'd never worked anywhere else). Then he was made head of design and began applying his *Rethink* attitude to the complete range, some of which had been on sale since founder Sir Terence Conran opened his first store back in 1965. Dixon kept asking that simple question: What makes something appealing?

PHOTO BY DWIGHT ESCHLIMAN (BOOK)

***Rethink* pages 36–37, New Uses for Cinder Block: "Flintstone-like coffee tables" or "even sofas."**

To simply read *Rethink* as a preference for no design is to miss the point. It's more subtle than that. In explaining what he thinks is wrong with Habitat's line, Dixon offers clues to his approach: "I think what's happened with Habitat over the years is that, on a scale between being designed and being undesigned, most of the objects were clustered in the middle. They're all slightly designed, but not very radical or very functional. What I'm trying to do is get a bit more quality into the materials and textures and not do stuff that's too complicated."

Coming to grips with Habitat's manufacturing and sourcing contacts—factories based in over 40 countries—has meant hitting the road. And along the way Dixon has discovered some classic *Rethink* objects. On a buying trip in Thailand, for example, at the side of the road he spotted a rain bucket made out of recycled tires and said to his agent, "Let's buy it." The shipment sold out in days. That level of honesty—of function, invention, and aesthetics—is what Dixon's looking for in a *Rethink* object. But it's one thing to discover such an object along a Southeast Asian roadside, and quite another to extract one from a professional, capital-D Designer.

Here are a few of the first pieces Dixon has commissioned for Habitat, currently in the autumn/winter 2000 collection. Design or anti-design? You be the judge.

*Liz Farrelly is a writer and editor who spends six months of the year in London making books and the rest of the time roaming the world in search of inspiration.*

## Yanagi

**$58**

Habitat's "Living Legends" collection of re-released classics offers yet another variation on the *Rethink* theme. Once again, Dixon is doing salvage. "I'm mining Habitat's back catalog and finding neglected objects by designers who were working at the time of the shop's birth," he explains, "so as to connect the store back to its culture and context."

One of Dixon's first acts at Habitat was to ask Sori Yanagi if he could reproduce his iconic fiberglass stool. "I've always thought it was a brilliant design, but the whole project is so dear to him that it was hell on earth trying to get a yes . . . **For Sori it's not just a stool, it is the epitome of a particular curve which he says is most pleasing to the Japanese eye.** And he's used that soft curve in a lot of his work, from a pedestrian bridge to a kettle."

PRODUCTS COURTESY OF HABITAT

## Nyota

**$118**

Habitat has sold one type of bentwood hat stand since 1965, a model by Thonet. "I'm very keen on those proper classics being kept in the range," avows Dixon, "but it's time for a contemporary angle, and it's clear that we need about three different hat stands."

Nyota is made from walnut-veneered plywood, but is honest about it, and the edges are deliberately left raw so there's no doubting its true substance. It's flat-pack but sturdy, and cleverly minimizes waste, as one element is cut from another's leftovers.

Nyota was designed by Shin and Tomoko Azumi, a husband-and-wife team from Japan who trained at London's Royal College of Art and, earlier this year, created a cool white kinetic interior for Britain's Crafts Council Gallery.

"The great thing about the Azumis," says Dixon, **"is that they're not interested in over-complex solutions and high design, but they are experts in folding materials and solving problems."**

## Groovy & Bedinabox

**$898 & $598**

Dixon spotted designer Lisa Norinder while teaching at her college in Stockholm. When she enrolled at London's Royal College of Art, Habitat sponsored her graduate project by funding the Groovy prototype. **"We nurture talent,"** says Dixon, "by sponsoring students and giving young designers one-year contracts straight out of college." During her Habitat year, Norinder developed two shape-shifting products that debuted this autumn, the Groovy sofa and Bedinabox. Groovy solves the age-old problem of eating while sitting cozy by dropping a table into the middle of a couch. Unlike other less flexible seat/table solutions, the laminated plywood surface simply lifts out of its recessed slot to provide extra seats.

Bedinabox is a more exotic animal; a new object-type that solves an everyday problem—where to put your best friend when they've missed the last bus home. Just unfold the stacked link of cushions, retrieve a comforter and pillows from under the flip-top hatches, and say good night. It applies the *Rethink* concept by starting from scratch after rejecting the tried-and-tired solution of bulky fold-up camp beds.

## Aio

**FROM $4.50–$7.50**

Designed by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, two of France's most progressive young industrial-design talents, the Aio range of porcelain tableware has Dixon jumping up and down. **"Their designs usually end up retailing in the Cappellini price range, so I think it was nice for them to produce something more democratic."** The porcelain service made in Bangladesh was beset by technical problems, though, and took eight painstaking months to perfect.

Conceived to be displayed in tall, vertical but sturdy towers, the interlocking pieces are so space age and multifunctional they could comfortably migrate off the dining table to be desk accessories. Currently available in three slight tones—not pastels—the idea is to add seasonal color changes and a glass version, which would, in effect, punctuate those towering stacks.

## Radius

**FROM $150–$898**

Dixon asked Simon Pengelly, a regular freelancer for Habitat, to design a new classic. The Radius line includes a bed, wardrobe, refectory table, and bench, with another eight pieces in development. Radius was conceived as "heritage" furniture, which, according to Dixon, means "objects from a named designer of such a quality that customers will want to keep them in the family." He adds, "Those are the really difficult objects to design."

In an effort to put an end to cheaply veneered, throwaway furniture, Dixon insisted that Radius be built of solid wood. **Shunning nonrenewable tropical hardwoods and too-cheap labor, he avoided manufacturing in the Far East.** So, the pieces are made in Poland from solid oak. Big and chunky, the pieces are a far cry from the pared-down, attention-getting chic of Italian furniture. Which makes sense, since they're intended as a contemporary alternative to farmhouse-stripped pine or thrift-store retro. **Able to withstand an army of kids climbing all over it, this is reliable, real-life furniture.** ■

**All prices approximate, based on current exchange rates.**

STORY BY HANNS ZISCHLER
ILLUSTRATION BY GEOFFREY GRAHN

# URBAN DENTISTRY

## SHINY NEW FILLINGS REPAIR BERLIN'S CAVITIES

Berlin is too big for Berlin. People like me, who have roamed around this asymmetrical double-city for many years using bicycle and elevated S-Bahn (combined they form the fastest *and* most tranquil means of locomotion) will have had plenty of opportunity to convince themselves of the truth of this paradox. The city districts surround the center like large and loosely moored ships stranded among the lakes and swamps between the River Spree and the Havel.

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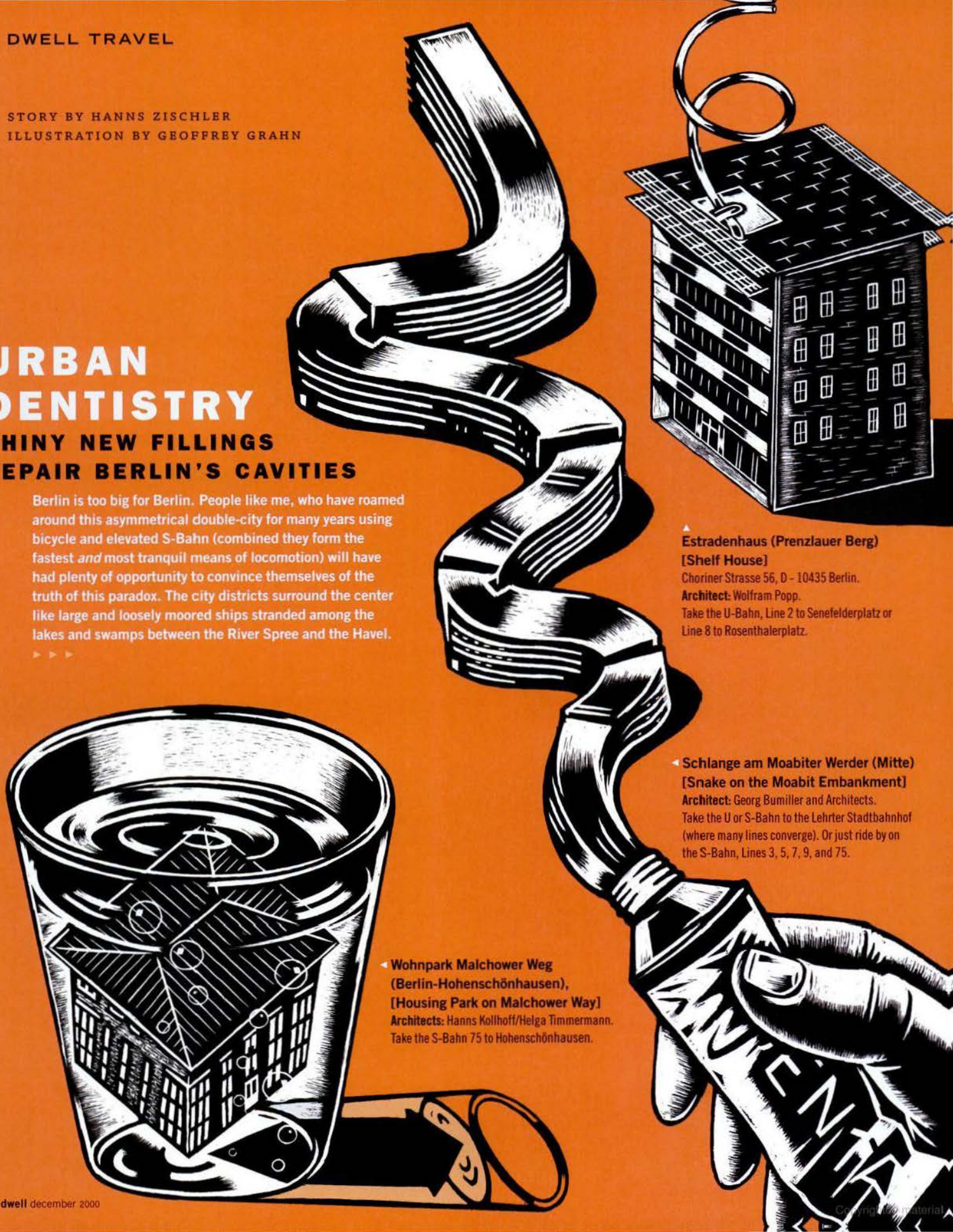

▲ **Estradenhaus (Prenzlauer Berg) [Shelf House]**
Choriner Strasse 56, D - 10435 Berlin.
**Architect:** Wolfram Popp.
Take the U-Bahn, Line 2 to Senefelderplatz or Line 8 to Rosenthalerplatz.

◀ **Schlange am Moabiter Werder (Mitte) [Snake on the Moabit Embankment]**
**Architect:** Georg Bumiller and Architects.
Take the U or S-Bahn to the Lehrter Stadtbahnhof (where many lines converge). Or just ride by on the S-Bahn, Lines 3, 5, 7, 9, and 75.

◀ **Wohnpark Malchower Weg (Berlin-Hohenschönhausen), [Housing Park on Malchower Way]**
**Architects:** Hanns Kollhoff/Helga Timmermann.
Take the S-Bahn 75 to Hohenschönhausen.

**When I first came to West Berlin in 1968,** it was quiet, green, and empty. At once, I noticed a deficiency, gaps between the houses, a mouth full of missing teeth. Even a good 20 years after the end of the war, many city blocks were still defaced by provisionally fenced-off plots and derelict bomb sites. In the eastern half of the city, the tooth decay was even more obvious. Wherever something new was inserted, it was done so rudely that the memory of the old city was blotted out. In this respect, East and West were alike.

Berlin was a city under glass, where time passed with vegetative slowness. Then the Wall fell and Berlin was shaken from its long hibernation. When the dust had settled and the noise abated, two partial cities stared at each other with suspicion and astonishment.

Much has been written about massive rebuilding projects like Potsdamer Platz and the capitol complex along the Spree. But one of the most surprising changes to the physiognomy of the city since the fall of the Wall is that the huge expanses of rented housing blocks are no longer threatened with demolition; their gaps and openings are now ready for startling experiments in urban cavity-filling.

In this new environment of sharp and stimulating contrasts stands the singular example of the **"Estradenhaus" by Wolfram Popp,** which I came upon by chance during the shooting of a TV thriller. The Choriner Strasse in Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg still looks very much like an old black-and-white photograph from the late 19th century: the housing blocks—as Leon Trotsky noted—"all lined up with a ruler." After decades of neglect, the whole area has been comprehensively spruced up in the past few years. As in the fabulous sunken city of Vineta (the Atlantis of the Baltic), large complexes of entertainment architecture—halls featuring beer and theater such as the Prater and the Kulturbrauerei—now rise again to the surface. A new and colorful element has been pasted into the old and faded photograph.

The "Estradenhaus" takes on the outwardly rectangular form of the neighboring buildings but convincingly redefines the façade and interior, departing from the stiff, traditional divisions between home, office, and shop. The apartments consist of a single, large freeform space.

The "Estradenhaus" appears almost Japanese in its poetic serenity, and a greater contrast to the neighboring late-19th-century houses, ravaged by neglect and warfare, can hardly be imagined. An *Estrade* (or shelf) is the architectural point—it has the effect of calmly restraining the wide, column-free space so that it does not somehow slip out through the transparency of the balcony window. One sees a broad expanse of city skyline through the French windows that run the entire length of the space. Anyone who enters one of these apartments must surely be overwhelmed by a desire to immediately move in.

Minutes away by bicycle and S-Bahn, an enormous serpentlike building lies stretched in a threefold zigzag across what used to be the site of the Lehrter Güterbahnhof, an old railyard. The serpent's skin varies between precisely laid red brickwork and long, curving strips of glass. Flying past on the S-Bahn, along the wide curve between the railway stations Bellevue and Lehrter Stadtbahnhof, we pass close by the body of the serpent. All we can see is the back of this huge complex. It consists of 700 dwellings, designed primarily for members of the federal civil service and for federal employees. That, at least, was the intention. But the politicians and civil servants have come from Bonn to Berlin for reasons of political expediency, rather than following their hearts, and have no wish to be "modern." They are sulking. They would really prefer something more familiar: a dim suburbia, a dormitory town with a healthy population of garden gnomes . . . and this they can find in Berlin's southern outback, in Lichtenrade. If everything has to change, at least one's house and home should remain the same.

For these refugees from the Rhineland, the confrontation with architect **Georg Bumiller's Wohnbebauung am Moabiter Werder** (Housing on the Moabit Embankment), as the snake is officially known, was just too much. Curiously, few of these horrified visitors have ever seen the great serpent from its alluring garden side. It looks out over a broad area of greenery onto the River Spree. Here we have a situation, very rare in Berlin, where the city doesn't turn its back on the river but embraces it. It is not without a certain irony that, within the whole of the adjacent neighborhood of Moabit, on the other side of the high S-Bahn viaduct, only a Turkish restaurateur has grasped the unique opportunity of place and time: He has broken through the rear wall of his highly recommended fish restaurant, allowing diners to look fearlessly into the serpent's face.

Far to the north of Berlin—but well within reach of S-Bahn lines 8 and 10—on the borders of Hohenschönhausen, stands the **Wohnpark Malchower Weg** (Housing Park on Malchower Way, 1994), an extraordinary example of "Neue Wohnen" (New Living). The surrounding district is untidy, both socially and in its planning: Clusters of tiny weekend cabins are interspersed with abandoned industrial buildings, decaying housing blocks, and a sprinkling of defiant single-family houses. The architects **Hans Kollhoff and Helga Timmermann** have made intensive use of their site, and their skillful positioning of the individual blocks and the high level of craftsmanship in the execution of the apartments make this a unique housing development. The compactness of the whole provides a peaceful haven in an area of restless and piecemeal development, offering solid comfort without any pseudo-idyllic pretensions.

The two blocks, each with eight four-story buildings (with eight flats each), are raised about three feet above ground level. The apartments are connected centrally by a sober entrance area built of fine materials. The plain brickwork of the outside walls is broken by high window frames of untreated Canadian pine; they are weather-resistant, will certainly age well, and will require little maintenance. The wood on the underside of the gently sloping and widely extended zinc-covered roofs harmonizes unobtrusively with the brickwork and window paneling.

This work by Kollhoff/Timmermann relies on following the rules of solid, traditional craftsmanship—a quality that can scarcely be found today, or which has entered the realm of sheer luxury.

The various residential buildings by Popp, Bumiller, and Kollhoff/Timmermann not only maintain the standards that were laid down in the 1920s, but they also provide good examples of what this city needs most if it is to escape the boundless exfoliation of London or Paris. They cement the city together, fill in the cavities, and reduce the centrifugal forces generated by this already way too large, way too extended city.

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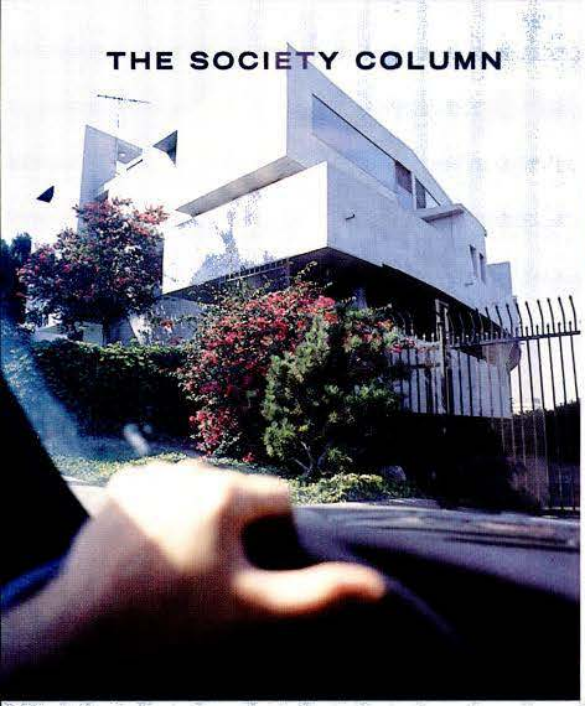
*Berlin actor and author Hanns Zischler recently played the fencing master in the movie* Sunshine. *His book* Kafka Goes to the Movies *will be published next year by the University of Chicago Press.*



PHOTOS BY GREGG SEGAL

# TO LIVE AND BUY IN L.A.

**To be cool, and simple, on a modest budget—loosely translated, these are the original ideals of American modernism. And nowhere were those tenets explored more than in Los Angeles. From Charles and Ray Eames to the Case Study Houses, L.A.'s heterogeneous sprawl nurtured modernism's most democratic leanings. In our heady times, though, fetishism and thirst for prestige have gilded that old-school simplicity—especially in style-conscious L.A.**

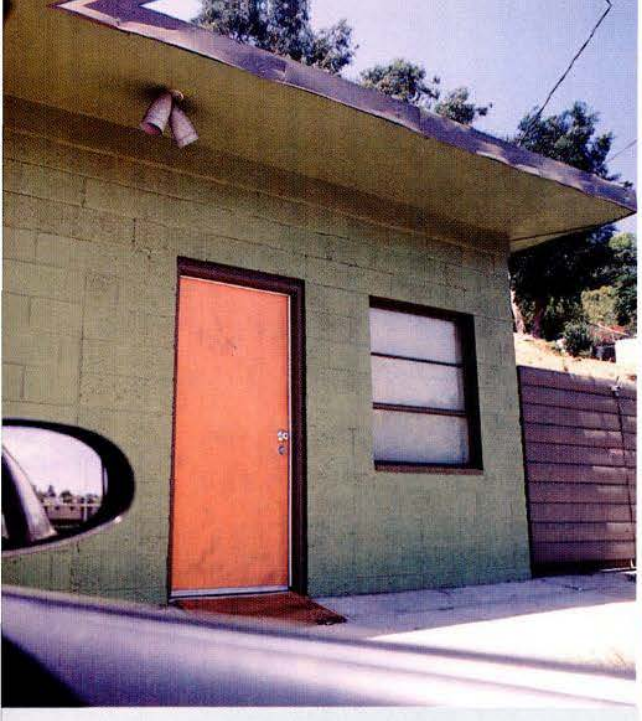
**So where—and in what—are a young Los** Angeles couple with an appreciation for architectural history, a modest income, and no fear of hard work (but not too much) supposed to live? My fiancée Rachel and I set out to do the seemingly impossible: to find an inexpensive modern house that would neither kill us financially nor be located in a neighborhood hazardous to our health.

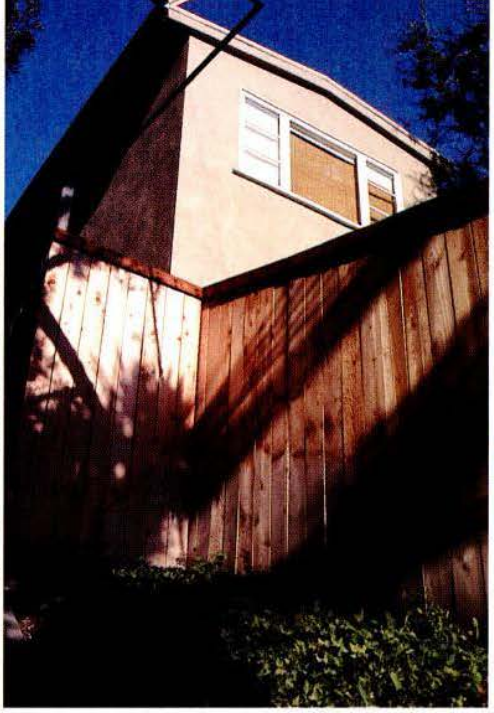
During our first tour of duty in L.A., in the recession-and-riot years of the early 1990s, we rented in Silver Lake, a hilly neighborhood tucked between Hollywood and Downtown. Known for its arty (read "seedy") character and as a sedate alternative for L.A.'s gay community, it was also revered as a **secret petting zoo of modernist architecture** that included a robust herd of Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler residences clustered around the sparkling Silver Lake reservoir.

But today sleepy Silver Lake and the nearby village of Los Feliz are the white-hot nabes of the moment, dubbed by the *L.A. Times* as "South Beach, TriBeCa, and the Paris Commune rolled into one." Half of the cast of *ER* lives on our old street, while the houses friends bought in 1997 for less than 200 grand are now on the market in the mid-400s (even more if they're flat-roofed, thus "mid-century modern").

Yikes! As recent residents of the equally mad West Village and Mission District—and wily veterans of the Barney's warehouse sale—we were up to the challenge and were determined to find a bargain. We knew exactly what we wanted: **While the hipster masses bought Eames anything, we flea-marketed for less popular, streamline moderne styles**—our Buck Rogers to their Gus Grissom. In architectural terms, this means the '20s and '30s, including the early experiments of Schindler, the Austrian-born Frank Lloyd Wright apprentice who, even now, gets lost in the long shadow of Neutra and the Case Study architects.

For months, I had my eye on something: an early Schindler known as the Lacey Duplex (1922), the last commission before his all-out modernist blowout. Listed as a "1920s Spanish-revival architectural," it mixed European proto-modern chunkiness with fashionable Spanish Colonial frippery. Located in Echo Park, a refuge for hipsters priced out of Silver Lake—and home to L.A.'s most notorious gangs—the building was on a street we knew, meaning we also knew which parts were dangerous. (Beyond its gated communities, **L.A. is a city not of safe and picturesque neighborhoods, but of streets—even halves of streets.**) And the price was right: $210,000 for the slightly tat-





**Homes We Have Lost** (from left): an Allyn Morris condo; a coveted co-op by Gregory Ain; L.A.'s version of industrial chic (but not ours); a less than impressive "celebrity-owned modernist retreat" for $750,000; and our biggest regret thus far, Schindler's Lacey Duplex in Echo Park.

tered duplex plus a detached income unit. We checked with the real-estate agent: It needed plumbing upgrades and earthquake retrofitting, which the owner was willing to do.

Alas, in keeping with our knack for bad timing, the Lacey Duplex sold that very day—after almost ten years on the market. Apparently, we weren't alone. Others had the same idea and were quicker on the draw. So we changed our tack; **one trend L.A.'s real-estate sharpies haven't fully exploited is the reuse of commercial buildings.** We found a former Silver Lake tire-repair shop turned into a bunker-ish retro-modern bachelor pad (by a New York transplant, natch), complete with lime-green cinderblock walls, stainless-steel everything, and a copy of the newest Prestel release artfully displayed on the Danish coffee table. Cool, yes—and tiny, too. In Manhattan, it'd be a steal at $199,000. But this is L.A.; urbanites move here so they don't have to huddle in concrete cubbies on busy thoroughfares.

Next came rumors of a dilapidated Lloyd Wright classic farther south; **it was sold before we could pick up the phone.** And then, well, not much, at least in our price range. We coveted from afar a co-op triplex by Gregory Ain (the Avenel Housing, 1947), a stepped series of long, rectangular boxes with sliding glass doors and enclosed gardens in early international style. Cost: $299,000 for the cosmetic fixer-upper. More affordable was a two-bedroom condo by Allyn Morris (Lago Vista, 1973); this low, glass-walled complex with manicured grounds and a teardrop-shaped pool looked from afar like a silver spaceship had landed in a bad, "Silver Lake–adjacent" neighborhood.

**By now our real-estate agent had resigned, baffled by our pickiness in such a tight market.** Our new agent, in what we now realize was an act of kindness—a sort of intervention, actually—sent us on a tour of a house we could never afford: a "celebrity-owned modernist retreat" in the hills between Los Feliz and Silver Lake. A generic 1970s box newly tarted up in loftlike style, it was indicative of how silly the real-estate tsunami had become: At least a third of its $750,000 price tag was due to its trendy location, and, um, "modernist" pedigree. (And the "celebrity"? A screenwriter—which true Angelenos know doesn't count.)

We got to thinking: Maybe our quest for modern simplicity was more Zen than Zeitgeist; in other words, didn't that kind of calm, cool craftsmanship exist in other periods—and for God's sake, in less fashionable neighborhoods? As much as we loved Silver Lake, it was obvious it had changed—while we hadn't. Looking back, I realize we were developing our own version of the modernist credo: Pragmatism is paramount, while hyperbole and aggression are interlopers, at odds with the flourishing of a living art like architecture. **All this hoopla was so, well, postmodern.**

So we came to our senses and hit the road. Just up the 110 Freeway is the city of Pasadena, known for its support of, even obsession with, architectural history. We honed in on the seedy (of course) northwest corner, with its run-down Victorians and turn-of-the-century bungalows by the likes of Charles and Henry Greene. And the houses! A Greene & Greene for $236,000! A 1920s Craftsman, all simple lines and solid built-ins, on a huge lot, for $170,000! Sure, they needed work. But they were beautiful and unspoiled. We took this as a good omen.

We kept looking, and we still are. **Buying a house is as complex a financial and emotional enterprise as can be imagined,** with disappointments and wrong turns the norm. But at least we discovered one thing in the process: that to be cool, and simple, is a state of mind—not a matter of style.

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*David A. Greene is a screenwriter living in Los Angeles. He is co-author of* The American Art Book *(Phaidon), and a former art critic for* The New Yorker *and the* Village Voice.

Celebration, Florida: "The pixie dust wears off quickly here."

# BEHIND THE WHITE PICKET FENCE

BY D. J. WALDIE

**Americans are anxious about their places in the world. The unease goes back to how we got them, which begins with God and gunpowder. We long for always Newer Jerusalems in the dark forest, on the lonely prairie, or along the deserted shoreline, and we're prepared to build them by force. Zoning codes have replaced the rifle in current American place making, but the effect is the same. Utopian order is imposed on an indifferent landscape that must be simultaneously cherished for its Arcadian properties and improved by the buildings that cover them. Lived with long enough, the contradictions in real-estate development become a design tradition, to be rejected if you remain modern, to be represented critically if you are now postmodern, or to be embraced if you are a New Urbanist.**

Many have begun to embrace the places New Urbanists make. According to the *New Urban News*, more than 200 town sites and more than 100 infill projects in older neighborhoods have been built (or begun construction) using NU principles. Architectural historian Vincent Scully thinks **New Urbanism's founders have had more influence than Frank Lloyd Wright on American architecture**. Presidential candidate Al Gore, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, the governors of several states, the Urban Land Institute (the housing industry's think tank), advocates of the related Smart Growth movement, and some developers looking for a marketing slogan are, at least to some degree, New Urbanists, too. Because New Urbanism builds in the vernacular of the places built toward the end of the 19th century, NU is rightfully called neotraditionalism in *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*, a handbook published in March by architect-planners Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk with Jeff Speck. (Duany and Plater-Zyberk, as well as architects Peter Calthorpe, Elizabeth Moule, Stefanos Polyzoides, and Daniel Solomon, were the founders, in 1993, of the Congress for the New Urbanism, the movement's guiding organization.)

There are flavors to neotraditionalism. **Peter Calthorpe designs "transit-oriented developments" that promise to reduce automobile use** by recreating many features of the early-20th-century "streetcar suburbs." Duany and Plater-Zyberk design "traditional neighborhood developments" that explicitly revive the town-planning principles of 19th-century architects and social reformers.

Despite their rhetoric about sprawl, NU designs are mostly for more suburban housing—like the towns of Seaside, Florida, and Kentlands, Maryland, that Duany and Plater-Zyberk designed in the 1980s—leading NU's harshest critics to call the movement the "New Suburbanism." To be fair, NU suburbs are intended to be more diverse in terms of land use, more mixed demographi-

PHOTO BY ALEX MACLEAN/LANDSLIDES

## Glossary: The New Urban Lexicon

**Charrette** (literally, the "little cart" Parisian architecture students trundled their drawings in): Part workshop, part revival meeting, and part 'est' for architects, the NU charrette puts stakeholders through an intensive, multi-day analysis of a new project.

**Community** The elusive goal of New Urbanism. In NU's "morals follow form" philosophy, neighborhoods make people neighborly.

cally, more dependent on mass transit, and more compact than conventional middle-class suburbs (but no more dense than the working-class suburbs of the 1950s). NU planners also are careful about the materials they use for walls and roofs, the layout of windows and doors, and the presence of porches and other architectural details. **They care about the proportions of the streets in front of the houses and the ability of residents to be at least occasional pedestrians.** These streets echo the right-angle grid of a 19th-century prairie town.

New Urbanism unites concerns about the environmental cost of conventional suburbs and fears about the moral order of what is built in them. For New Urbanists, the design of a place affects behavior well beyond the number of automobile trips required to do errands. The neighborhood permeates the lives of its residents, not just visually, but also in the ways they live. **New Urbanism isn't about aesthetics; it's about structuring relationships.**

NU planning begins with the neighborhood as the primary unit. The neighborhood has a center and an edge, with the quarter-mile walk from the edge to the center taking about five minutes. The center has a public space—a park or civic building—that situates the houses in the neighborhood around it. The edge is a definite limit, because (say Duany and Plater-Zyberk) "the combination of a focus and a limit contribute to the social identity of the community."

Lot coverage within the neighborhood is higher than average, with at least five units per acre, and the units sit closer to the street. Big, single-family houses on small lots are around the corner from duplexes and town homes on even smaller lots, and these are around the corner from low-rise office buildings or a row of shops with owner housing on the floor above. These mixed uses, built to a human scale, should allow a mix of family types and incomes to share the same neighborhood. As the neighborhood's residents marry or assemble nontraditional households, have children, divorce, live alone, or see their children leave home, they should expect to find another NU home a short walk away.

Duany and Plater-Zyberk call nonresidential areas "districts." They are beyond the domestic range of the neighborhood, with manufacturing, retail, or large institutions such as colleges—but with some other uses always mixed in. **The intent is to avoid the functionally segregated "pods" of suburbia.** Peter Calthorpe surrounds his NU neighborhoods with secondary areas that look a lot like conventional suburbia. These are areas of low-density residences (as in Laguna West, a Calthorpe-designed community outside Sacramento, California), or they can contain functions that require more room than the spare blocks of an NU grid.

NU in practice makes other concessions. The Kmart in Kentlands is still a big box at the end of a large parking lot, even if it is New Urbanized with Georgian columns. Decorative details like the application of columns to a Kmart have led some architects (like Alex Krieger of Harvard's Department of Urban Planning and Design) to criticize NU places as sentimental evocations of the white, affluent suburbs that were built before Henry Ford.

New Urbanists (particularly James Howard Kunstler, NU's leading polemicist) **reject the claim that they are merely nostalgic.** They argue their vocabulary of traditional designs is driven by consumer demand, the need to blend old and new neighborhoods harmoniously, and the "crisis of place" brought on by conventional suburban development.

New Urbanists also reject the architectural cult of the isolated building in favor of a very sophisticated analysis of what makes ordinary places work and what makes them marketable. As Duany points out in *Suburban Nation*, NU places may look like a bungalow neighborhood, a Georgian terrace, or a seaside camp, but nothing in practice requires that they look that way. Small houses and small lots don't have to evoke 19th-century brownstones or a 1920s streetcar suburb, they just do.

That's disingenuous. New Urbanists believe, perhaps not fully aware of the irony, that the best places to live in America were the small towns that Americans in great numbers fled during the first half of the 20th century seeking to escape their commanding power to mold residents in exactly the manner that New Urbanists expect their new towns will.

New Urbanists are not prepared to let this power be diluted. **NU developments are rigorously defensive of prescriptive design as a restraint on owner preferences and local politics.** Such stringency replaces the messiness of everyday public life with deed-bound regulations (called "conditions, covenants, and restrictions") and a vigilant homeowners association. The overwhelmingly white, overwhelmingly affluent residents of NU places long for neighborhoods that appear to have been created by generations of small-town conviviality, but without the generations of day-to-day compromise that built America's small towns and with none of the democratic processes that can change their form entirely. Disenfranchised residents who live under a developer's privatized, phantom government aren't citizens at all; they're just consumers.

The anxious consumers of place are unlikely to become the communitarian loyalists who are the NU ideal, but they might. "To dwell in the common Arcadia and to build private Utopias" is the way the critic William A. McClung recently described the turn-of-the-century suburban ideal of Los Angeles, a contradiction that New Urbanists have yet to solve. They struggle, as all American place makers do, to reduce our alien landscapes to a few simple elements and expand them into an image of desire.

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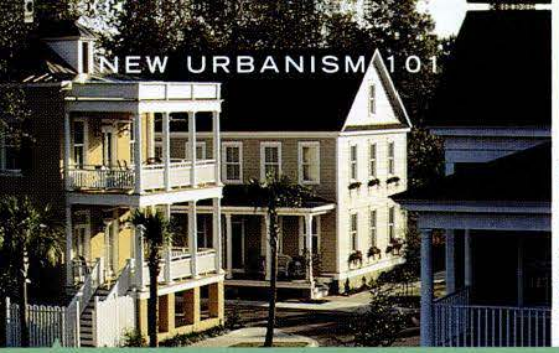
*D. J. Waldie is the author of* Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir *and a city official in Southern California.*

**Conditions, covenants, and restrictions (CCR)** They keep an NU place NU, despite your neighbor's fondness for fuchsia house paint or your longing to receive 500 channels of satellite TV. Think of CCRs as the "church ladies" of NU, except they sue.

**Density** Just how neighborly are you? NU places are supposed to have at least five units per acre; some have more (and some, paradoxically, have less).

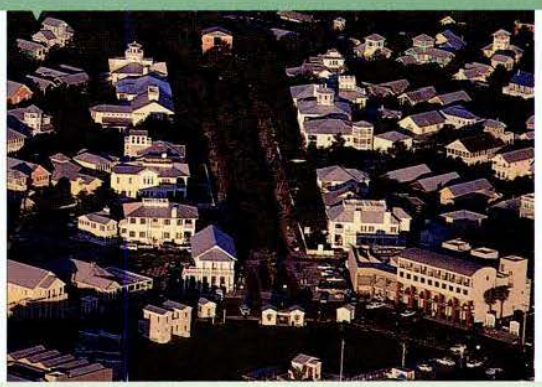
**Grid** Scorned as being "soulless and dehumanizing" by the previous generation of architects, the right-angle grid of streets is the NU generation's basic design tool. ►



I'on, SC **Est.** 1995; **Pop.** 300; **Avg. Home** $250,000–1 million

Seaside, FL **Est.** 1981; **Pop.** 1,200; **Avg. Home** $800,000

Civano, AZ **Est.** 1998; **Pop.** 7,800; **Avg. Home** $119–200,000



# Q & A: IS THERE ROOM FOR MODERNISM?

**Robert Davis** *is the founder of Seaside, Florida, and a principal at the Arcadia Land Company. He also serves as the chairman of the board of directors for the Congress for the New Urbanism and is a member of the board of directors for The Seaside Institute and of 1,000 Friends of Florida.*

**Is there room for modernism in New Urbanism?**
Absolutely. There are a number of modern buildings in Seaside, some of them quite distinguished, by architects like Machado & Silvetti; Holl; Berke; Mockbee Coker; Gorlin; Chatham; etc.

These are architects who are willing to design buildings that are part of the urban fabric, not just isolated objects in space. They have also rejected the silly but devastating attitudes toward the city which modern masters like Corbusier and Wright propounded.

**Are the current leanings toward traditional architecture necessary for a successful New Urbanist community?**
No. Traditional architecture is simply what the vast majority of middle-class Americans want. Most NU projects are market rate/developer jobs, so they respond to prevailing notions of what is marketable, perhaps with too much homogeneity. The Seaside Code was set deliberately loose, to allow for a variety of architectural styles, but most purchasers of home sites voted with their wallets for traditional styles. The exceptions noted above were built by me or by owner/architects, in most cases.

**How do you define community?**
The Seaside Institute has helped organize a series of seminars, papers, etc. on this topic. I doubt that I can do it justice in 25 words. You should read a paper by David Brain that distinguishes between "community," a word that has been rendered all but meaningless, and "civility," the ability to deal with other people who share the same space but not necessarily the same values or backgrounds.

**What would be your ideal combination of architectural and planning philosophies?**
I don't think we have improved much on the theories of the *città ideale* of the Renaissance humanists, like Alberti, Pope Pius II, Serlio, etc. Their partial realizations, in Pienza by Pius II, and in Rome by Sixtus V and his successors, produced some of the best urbanity on the planet.

**What is missing from the New Urbanist communities that exist now?**
Time.

**Elizabeth Moule** *is a principal of Moule and Polyzoides, Architects and Urbanists. She is a co-founder of the Congress for the New Urbanism and sits on its board of directors. Moule and Polyzoides most recently completed the town plan for Civano, a New Urbanist community in Tuscon, Arizona.*

**Is there room for modernism in New Urbanism?**
A lot of people do not make an adequate distinction between modernism in building and modernism in urbanism. New Urbanism is the antithesis of modern urbanism, which is based on homogeneity and the automobile.

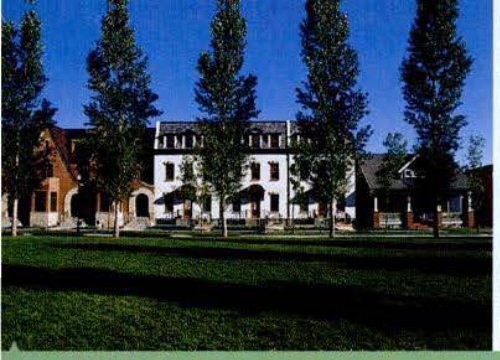
I have always thought that the architecture of the New Urbanism should be robustly diverse (maybe not all in one neighborhood, but neighborhood by neighborhood,

PHOTOS BY WADE SPEES (I'ON), MICHAEL MORAN (SEASIDE), ALEX MACLEAN/LANDSLIDES (SEASIDE AERIAL), VINAYAK BHARNE (CIVANO)

**Human scale** The ideal scale that makes the street an outdoor hall, with walls made of buildings and a ceiling made of shade trees.

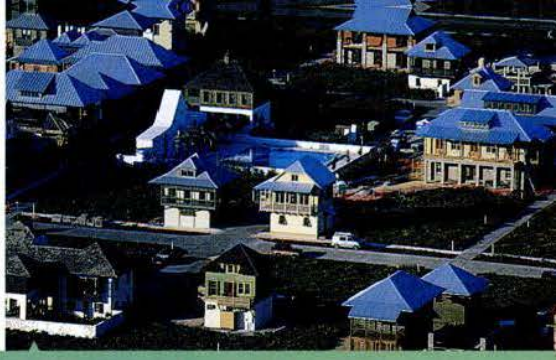
**Mixed use** Your house, your office, and your mom-and-pop market in the same neighborhood. Someone could walk to work and bring home the groceries, but you have a meeting with a client at her office in town and later, the kids have a soccer game.

**Neighborhood** The basic unit of NU design (40 to 60 acres in area). It's in "human scale" and bounded by the standard "walking distance."



Prospect, CO **Est.** 1996; **Pop.** 200; **Avg. Home** $300–550,000

Celebration, FL **Est.** 1996; **Pop.** 20,000; **Avg. Home** $125–750,000



Rosemary Beach, FL **Est.** 1996; **Pop.** 400; **Avg. Home** $465–998,000

PHOTOS BY MARC DIEMER (PROSPECT TREES); RON FORTH (PROSPECT HOUSE) ALEX MACLEAN/LANDSLIDES (CELEBRATION AERIAL, ROSEMARY BEACH); MARK PETERSON/SABA (CELEBRATION BAND)

district by district, or as a contrast between housing fabric and civic place). Of course, I mean that it has to follow New Urbanist guidelines. The only important blanket criteria for architecture is that it be good and humane.

**Are the current leanings toward traditional architecture necessary for a successful New Urbanist community?**
What we have done in our practice is simply not discriminate against traditional architecture, like so many modernists do. We do not believe that it is evil or unrepresentative of our times. If you are going to build cities, and, in particular, housing, you are going to have to come to terms with popular taste, which is decidedly in favor of traditional building. Why do architects think they can just shove things down people's throats? Architects have a responsibility to their constituency.

More importantly, though, because we have such a deep belief in sustainability, permanence, and the respect of history, it is our sense that traditional building is the most low-tech, least energy-consumptive, and lasting work. Our preference is for simple, classically proportioned, elegant pieces.

**What non-New Urbanist communities would you cite as influences in your work?**
I have been particularly struck by the work of Eliel Saarinen, [who was] working at the turn of the century in Finland. His notion of the garden and nature in the city is the most poetic model there is. So much of our own work is about the weaving of nature and building that my interests are skewed by those who have derived beauty both in building and in the manipulation of nature. I admire the work of George Washington Smith (in Pasadena and Santa Barbara), Alvar Aalto, Edwin Lutyens, Asplund, Schindler, and Siza, as well as the numerous unknown architects and builders who made magnificent adobe and mud churches throughout New Mexico.

**Andrew Ross** *is the director of the American Studies Program at New York University and the author of* The Celebration Chronicles *(1999).*

**What is the most successful thing about New Urbanism? The most distressing thing?**
There's no question that the rate and nature of sprawl growth is unsustainable. Whether in the short term or the long term, cranking out three-garage homes on quarter-acre lots in subdivisions that are five miles from the nearest mall cluster of Home Depots and Burger Kings is simply wrong, for all sorts of economic, ecological, and social reasons. Far from being armchair critics, New Urbanists have come up with a highly articulate and practical alternative for planners, authorities, and residents who are convinced of the perils of our automobile civilization. The greatest successes of New Urbanists? They have been highly persuasive, winning over virtually everyone from Podunk county planning officers to folks in the White House. Whether or not you agree with the neotraditionalist principles of NU, the success of the movement is that it has put on the table the practical question of design alternatives to sprawl.

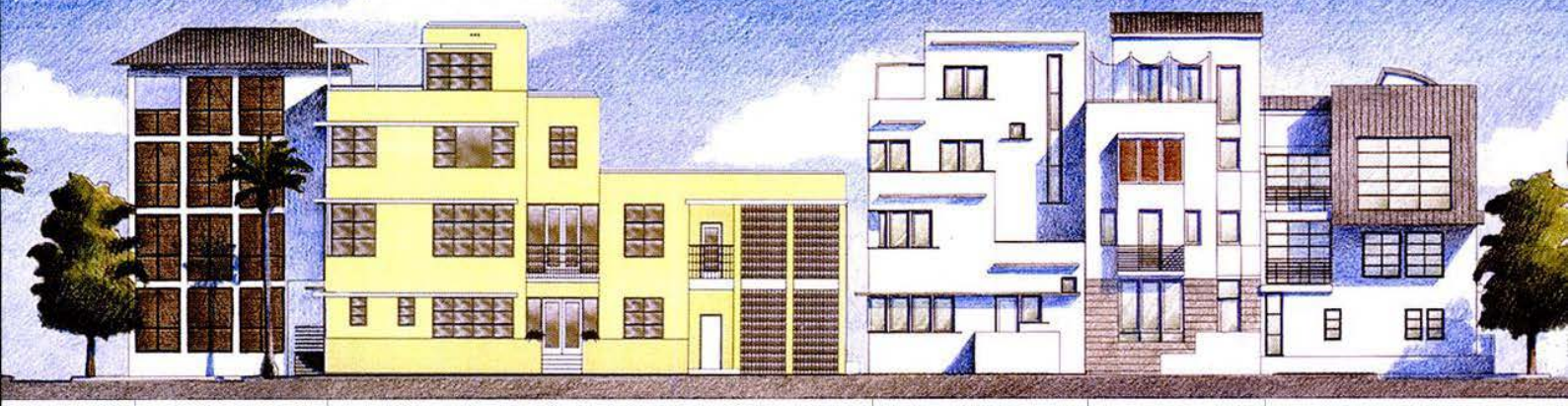
Distressing things? Like all architectural or design movements, this one is fiercely evangelistic, and so the "true believerism" of some of its adherents is not always easy to stomach. In practice, what this can lead to is the acceptance of any form of patronage in order to see the designs built.

**Is there room for modernism in New Urbanism?**
Well, Andres Duany will say that the neotraditional style is simply a Trojan Horse to smuggle in the NU code. But it is clear that there is a passion for pre-war architecture among most NU adherents, and a very strong distaste for modernist style. In principle, there's no reason why a modernist version of NU could not be built, and I expect it will be someday. I think it would be healthy if that happened.

**Neotraditionalism** The term preferred by Andres Duany for what is otherwise called New Urbanism. It was coined by the Stanford Research Institute to describe the ethos of Boomers and reflects, says Duany, the non-ideological bent of the post-war generation. Similar terms, with different emphases, are Neotraditional Town Planning (NTP), Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

**Porch** Where your grandparents sat because they didn't have air conditioning. In NU design, porches are supposed to project domestic values into the public realm. ■

# ISN'T NEW URBANISM REALLY JUST GOOD URBANISM?



Chatham
30' Corner (side)

Martinson
30' Edge (side)

Magnusson
30' Interior

Shulman
24' Interior

Hariri
30' Edge

*Craig Robins is the president of Dacra Development Corporation in Miami Beach, Florida. Aqua on Allison Island is Dacra's latest residential real-estate venture consisting of town houses, low-rise apartment buildings, and three ten-story, midrise buildings. Here, Robins discusses his views on New Urbanism and Dacra's modernist NU development, Aqua, in Miami Beach.*

**New Urbanism is often thought of strictly in** the context of a project like Seaside, but I think it is applicable in many different situations, where the value and formula of the New Urbanist theory is consistent but what is created looks different. New Urbanism is merely a term that has been coined to clarify what the appropriate urban-design principles are for any real-estate project or any neighborhood or any city.

One of the tragedies of Miami Beach, and it is happening all around the country, is that the basic developer model is to build these massive high-rise buildings where the entire focus is not at all the effect that they have on the neighborhood but what it is like when you are up in your shoe box looking out the window. We feel that that model is unfortunate, and I think that is why you have so much urban sprawl. Basically, when someone does something and it works, everyone else imitates it. Even if it is something that is not that good, it becomes the paradigm, the model that everyone follows.

To counter that, Dacra recently acquired Allison Island in Miami Beach. We decided that we are going to try to prove that low-rise is even better than high-rise—low-rise, high-density. Liz Plater-Zyberk and Andres Duany (DPZ) have done the master plan in collaboration with a number of different architects. We have taken the typical high-rise structure

## Books

***The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream***
**Peter Calthorpe/Princeton Architectural Press, 1993**
Before "New Urbanism" hit the symposium circuit, before sprawl became a political buzzword, Berkeley, California–based architect Peter Calthorpe published this blueprint for walkable neighborhoods and cities. Most of the book is taken up by plans, realized and unrealized, by Calthorpe Associates that demonstrate the use of Transit-Oriented Development, Pedestrian Pockets, and other tools from the kit with which Calthorpe hopes to retrofit the dream.

***The Celebration Chronicles: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Property Values in Disney's New Town*** **Andrew Ross/Ballantine Books, 1999**
Can a hopelessly cerebral New York academic with two pierced ears find happiness in a town Imagineered by Disney? Not really, but then, neither can anyone else. As one resident tells Ross, "The pixie dust wears off quickly here." Ross uncovers strife over the public schools and persistent rumors that Disney is preparing to abandon the town it built. (Also see *Celebration, USA* by Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins, Henry Holt & Company, 1999.)

***Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream***
**Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck/North Point Press, 2000**
In this "call to arms," Duany and Plater-Zyberk, the most influential proponents of New Urbanism, put into words the world view that they have articulated so eloquently in their plans for towns from Seaside, Florida, to Kentlands, Maryland. Simply stated—and most everything in this book is stated simply—sprawl is bad and traditional town planning is good. If you agree, you don't need to read it. If you disagree, you're unlikely to bother.

***Seaside: Making a Town in America***
**Edited by David Mohney and Keller Easterling/Princeton Architectural Press, 1991**
A detailed documentation, nicely designed and photographed, of the original New Urbanist development, this book proves that a really great, traditional town layout is enhanced, not diminished, by the inclusion of avant-garde architecture. Seaside also demonstrates that town planners Duany and Plater-Zyberk are very thoughtful, creative people—something you won't glean from their own book.


and spread it out over approximately 50 zero-lot land structures [the buildings are built side by side with no empty space between them] along with three midrise structures, ten stories each with roughly 100 apartment units. It is all in the form of a neighborhood, built with streets and blocks and great architecture. The Hariris are doing some of the houses—Walter Chatham, Allison Spear, Alex Gorlin . . . So what's coming out of it is so phenomenal . . . it is the first modernist neighborhood DPZ has designed—not that they were against modernist design, but the market is geared toward the traditional.

I think this happens for a number of reasons. First of all, if you look at where a lot of these New Urbanist projects have gone up, they haven't been in areas that lend themselves as nicely to a modernist style. They are usually done on a huge chunk of land in some remote place. Seaside, for instance, happened on over 80 acres surrounded by highways. We are doing Aqua on only eight acres on urban infill. We are focusing more on the view across the street than the view out the window. It is a great combination of urban design and innovative, new, modernist architecture.

The way that we've applied these urban-design principles is very important because we are doing it in urban neighborhoods. This proves, I think, that the principle of New Urbanism is really just good urbanism, good urban design. New Urbanism was a response to the fact that no real planning was being done. We want to demonstrate that modern design can take place within a New Urbanist model. The biggest criticism of Andres [Duany] and Liz [Plater-Zyberk], who I really think are geniuses, is that all of their towns are traditional, but I don't think the fact that their towns are traditional has anything to do with them. I don't think that New Urbanism has anything to do with traditional architecture. New Urbanism has to do with having a defined style of urban design. ■

***After the City***
**Lars Lerup, The MIT Press, 2000**
After years of teaching and living in Berkeley, California, architect Lars Lerup accepted a position as dean of Rice University's architecture program in Houston, Texas. This book, in its meandering way, is an account of Lerup's reaction to the big, sprawly, confusing mess that is his new hometown. His approach is meditative rather than prescriptive. "In the suburban metropolis space is unbound and places are evenly spaced," writes Lerup, who doesn't seem to mind at all.

## Pop Urbanism

**1 / *The Truman Show* (1998), directed by Peter Weir and starring Jim Carrey, was filmed on location in Seaside, Florida (called Seahaven in the movie). Hollywood magic made Seaside look almost like a real city, one with jobs that don't involve the sale of macramé souvenirs, one where the bagels don't have to be air-freighted in from New York.**

**2 / "Celebration, Florida," on the album *What You See Is What You Get* (Uni/Universal Records, 2000) by British popsters Chumbawamba, is a country anthem about the Disney town. "They're buying up nostalgia for a time they can't remember," croon these petulant Brits.**

**3 / *The New City: A Novel* (Doubleday, 2000) by Stephen Amidon is, strictly speaking, about the old New Urbanism, the planned cities of the 1960s and 1970s like Columbia, Maryland, and Reston, Virginia. But the utopian impulse nicely described in this melodramatic tale is also a driving force behind the new New Urbanism.**

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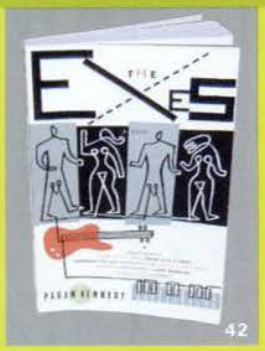



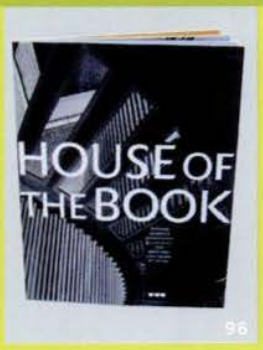



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Hecker's polyhedric housing complex sprawls across the desert landscape of northern Jerusalem.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL SCHILLER

# UNORTHODOX ARCHITECTURE / ORTHODOX LIVES

**In the hilltop neighborhood of Ramot on the** northern edge of Jerusalem, one housing complex stands out from the rectangular block-shaped buildings around it like a growth of gleaming white crystals.

For the ultra-orthodox Jewish community that resides in the Ramot Housing Complex's cluster of 720 units (also known as "the beehive") life follows a different pattern, one based upon shtetl life of the 1700s. Every aspect of life is as it was, except for the shape of their dwelling, which is based upon the 1971 design of Zvi Hecker, one of Israel's most controversial and internationally celebrated architects.

The predictable rectilinear forms of Israeli architecture were fragmented and reshaped by Hecker and his teacher Alfred Neuman in the late '60s. Hecker's drawings, paintings, and architectural designs from that period were inspired by the symmetry and logic of nature and expressed the microcosmic world in a macrocosmic way.

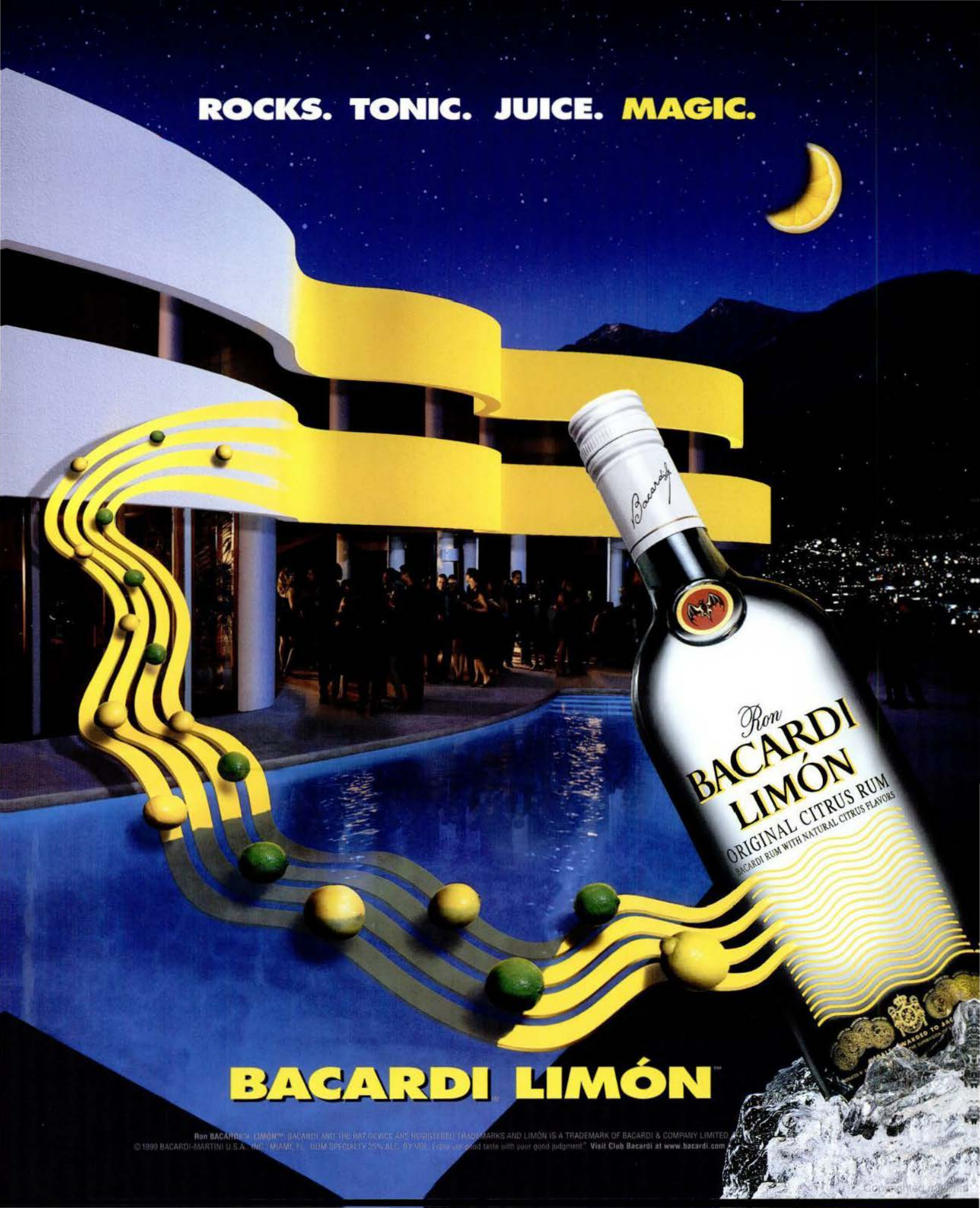
On one level, "the beehive" is just another purely functional housing unit. The settlement was initially one of many absorption centers used for European Jews who immigrated to Israel in the boom years following the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967. The immigrants who were relocated to Hecker's housing complex (including the ultra-orthodox who later would be the primary occupants) became the first generation of inhabitants of the new Israeli aesthetic.

Today Hecker lives in Berlin. From his office he reflects upon his early design and its current occupants. Though he had no particular group in mind when he designed it, he finds the orthodox Jews to be an appropriate community of occupants.

"The religious have little interest in visual appearance," Hecker says. "Other populations are more difficult to design for because of their attention to the media and its criticisms of anything out of the ordinary. The religious have other concerns. Round, square, polyhedric—they don't care as long as it functions."

Oblivious to the heavy criticisms lodged against the structure during its construction, the current occupants embrace "the beehive" as home, as good a place as any to hang a black fedora. For a traditional community that refuses to be shaped by its surroundings, unorthodox architecture is acceptable.

—MICHAEL SCHILLER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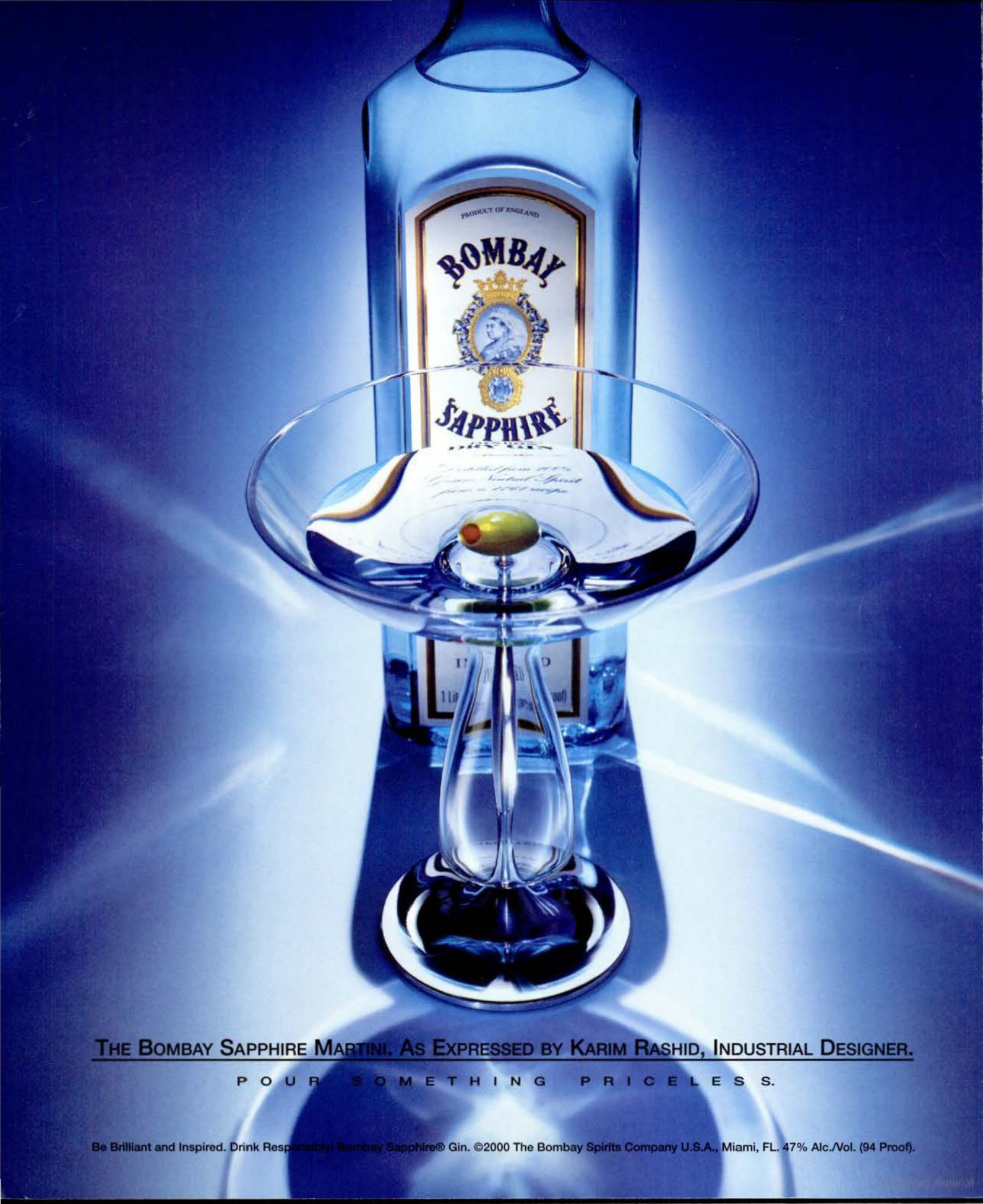


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