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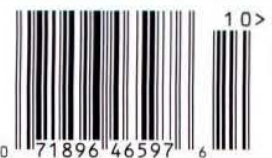
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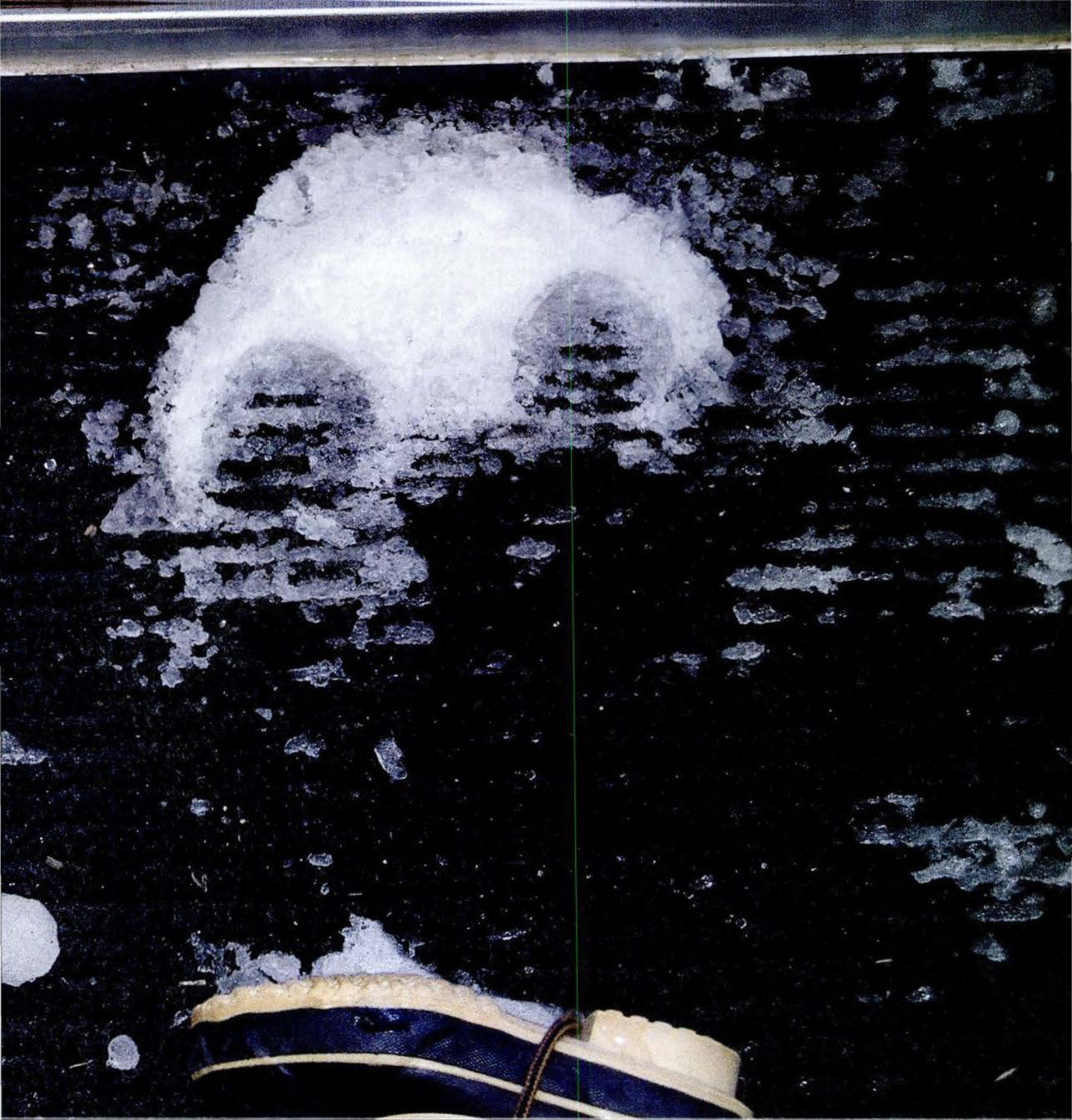
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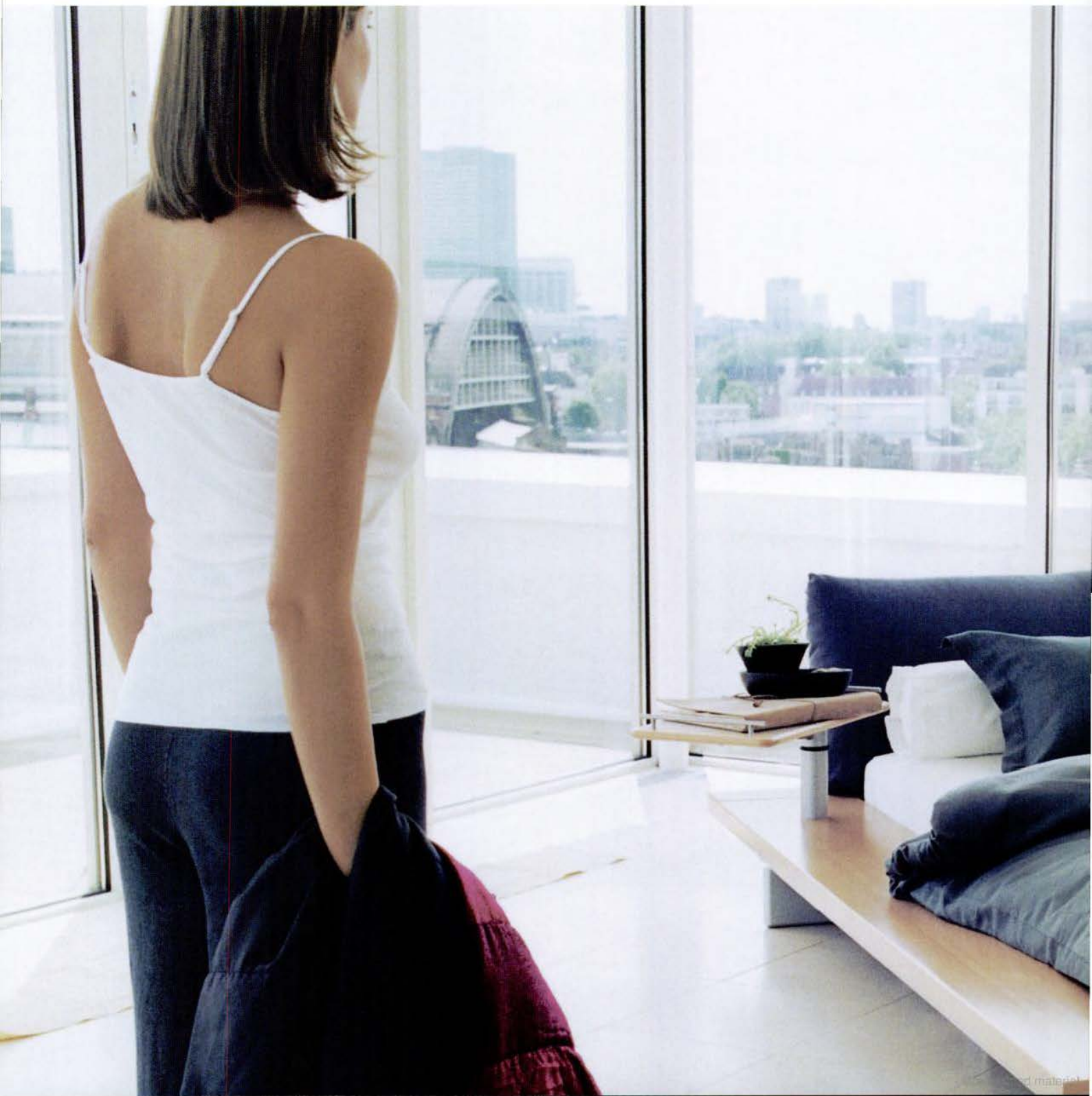
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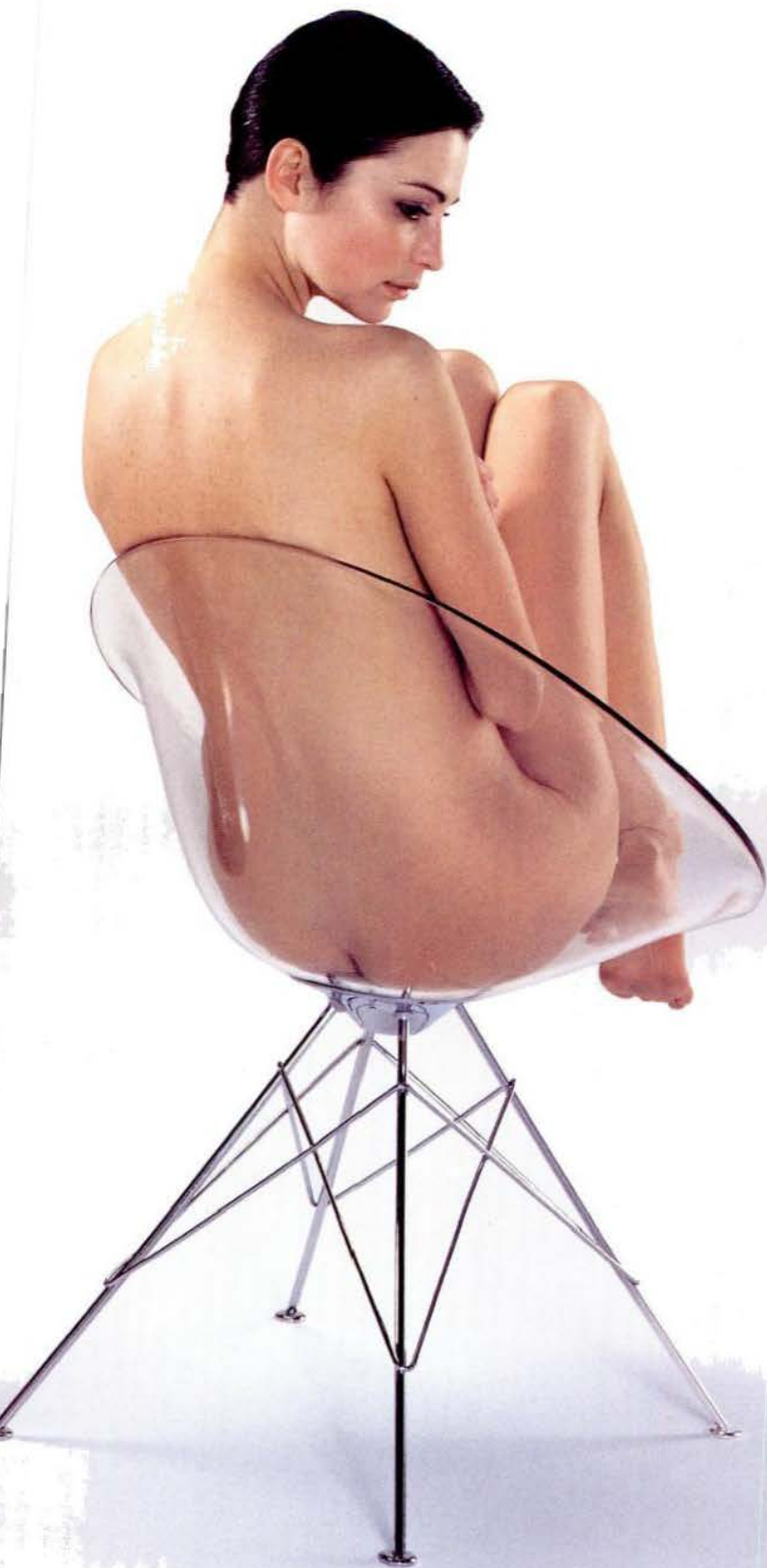
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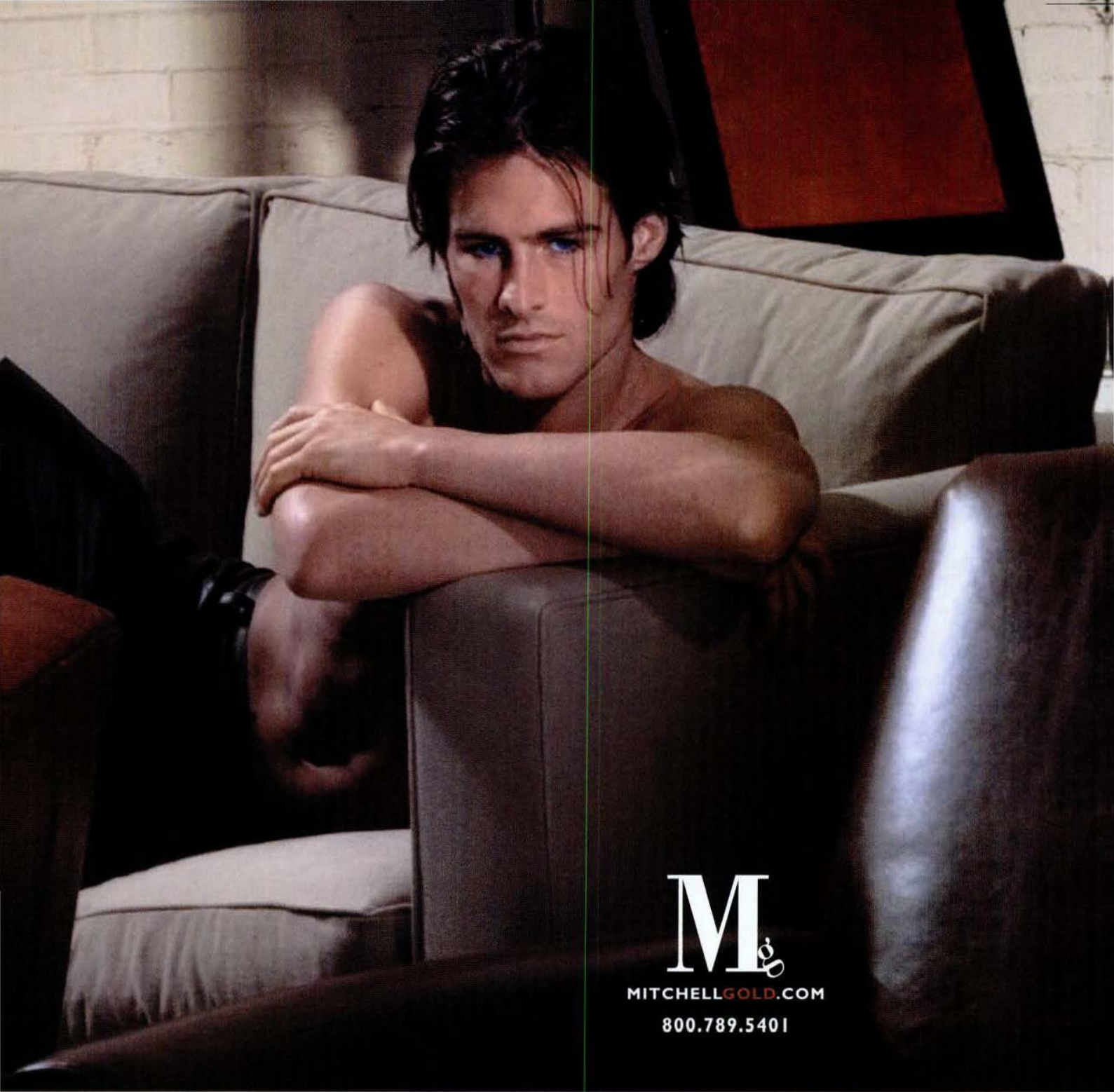
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Cover

Uninspired by the available homes in his price range, Michael Young took the bull by the horns and commissioned this house, located just south of Fort Worth. "I think outside the box," he says. "You see that in the way our home turned out." Photo by Scogin Mayo.

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There There Again

For our second anniversary, and our third There Is Too a There There issue, we sent our associate editors deep into the Midwest. **Karrie Jacobs** reports on exotica from the heartland.

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This Is Not My Beautiful House

When Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura shut down the official governor's mansion in St. Paul, was it a political scandal or a design opportunity?

October 2002 Contents: There Is Too a There There, 3

Dwellings



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Burleson, TX

In a suburb of Fort Worth, Gayla LaBry and Michael Young built a steel-framed house from Tinkertoy-like components for \$120,000. **By Allison Arieff / Photos by Scogin Mayo**



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Calgary, Alberta

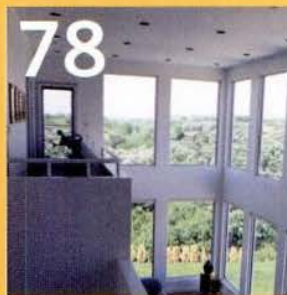
In Canada's architecturally conservative cow town, architect Richard Davignon had to keep the modern addition to his tiny bungalow well hidden. **By James Nestor / Photos by Bryce Duffy**



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Birmingham, MI

Janice Steinhart wanted a New York-style loft, but because she lives in an affluent Detroit suburb, she had to build one from the ground up. **By Jim Rendon / Photos by Juliana Sohn**



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Midwest Road Trip

Dwell hits the road—the straight, flat road—stopping in Des Moines, Omaha, Sioux Falls, Kansas City, and Oklahoma City to find homes that stand apart from their neighbors. **By Virginia Gardiner and Sam Grawe / Photos by Colette De Barros**



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What We Saw in Milan, Part II

In his first furniture line for B&B Italia, Belgian architect Vincent Van Duysen proves that minimalism can be cozy. **By Victoria Milne**

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"This is a completely quaint little town with a downtown and parks. The stuff everyone talks about is already here. It's not New Urbanism, it's old urbanism." —Michael Paris, page 70

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It took six years for the Salditch family of suburban Baltimore to build just the right house on just the right lot.



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A business that started with a fixer-upper kitchen has turned Fu-Tung Cheng, author of *Concrete Countertops*, into a do-it-yourselfer's deity.



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In Bega, Australia, a couple built a shabby-chic solar-powered mud-brick home with a central garden, screened in to keep the wallabies out.



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Late-night house parties no more—deejay Chuy Gomez is now shackled to the morning show and a 4:45 A.M. wake-up call. Who better to help Dwell test alarm clocks?

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Designer Karim Rashid and his wife, artist Megan Lang, go shopping at the Manhattan flagship store of H&M, the IKEA of fashion.

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On Istanbul's Bosphorus Strait, gad architecture designed a completely modern home inside, and under, a 19th-century seminary.

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The 1962 World's Fair gave Seattle's skyline its most memorable entry, and a monorail. Thirty years and one Gehry later, Northwest Style is going strong.

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Touching a glowing light bulb is never a good idea. That is, unless it's Henk Stallinga's Lumalash light fixture.

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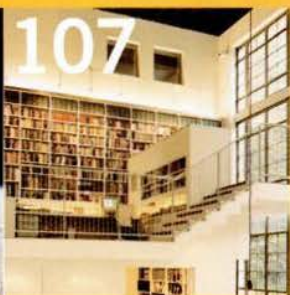
Dwell enlists an architect to help transform a young couple's one-bedroom New York apartment into a baby-friendly haven.

In The Modern World...



95 Calendar

The latest exhibitions to attend, books to read, goodies from Milan to purchase, and Earth-orbiting real estate you helped fund (but will likely never visit).



107 Home Office 101

It's better to leave work at the office, but can you? Julie Lasky shares her thoughts. Plus: the ideal home office, the latest gadgets, and the best new office chairs.

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Sourcing

New entries for your Palm Pilot, and information on where to buy what you see in our pages.

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Houses We Love

It may resemble a sculpture by Donald Judd, but really it's a house by architects Luis Ibarra and Teresa Rosano.



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A Letter From Our Publisher

The other day a friend said to me, "Dwell is so great because it fills a niche that I didn't know I needed filled." This was a great compliment, particularly coming on the eve of our second anniversary. My friend was responding to the opportunity Dwell affords her to learn more about architecture, but also to the magazine's tone and spirit—a spirit that invokes a subtle glamour by being real, humane, and humorous. I'm happy that so many people are responding to this format that is meant to give readers choices and help inform but never dictate.

Whether it be mixing a paint color, choosing furniture, or working with an architect, I sincerely hope Dwell is inspirational and helpful to you. Modern design allows us to be intentional and creative in our decision making—to think about how we want to feel in our homes and what ideas we want expressed, instead of what style we

want to emulate. To me, modernism is not a style but a lifestyle choice: A choice to be more aware of your surroundings, to be more optimistic about the future, and to be intellectually stimulated by where you live. Of course, we at Dwell also think you should be comfortable. So this is what we will continue to show you, projects and products that meet all of these criteria. Fortunately, there is a lot to show.

Thanks to all the readers and advertisers who have been so supportive these last two years. We feel like we are developing a community of great individuals and companies. If you would like to be more connected to Dwell or to other readers, please check out our discussion board on www.dwellmag.com. There is a lot we can all learn from each other, so let's start sharing.

Lara Deam, Publisher

Meet Our Nice Modernists

Since 1998, professors of architecture at the University of Kansas Dan Rockhill (below, left) and Kent Spreckelmeyer (below, right), backed by architecture dean John Gaunt, have been holding a class for their third-year master's of architecture students called Studio 804. This challenging, yearlong course thrusts students into an intensive design/build undertaking culminating with the completion of an actual built home.

Working with Lawrence, Kansas-based nonprofit Tenants to Homeowners (TTH), headed by executive director Alan Boves, Studio 804 begins with a house or plot of land purchased by TTH. This relationship, says Spreckelmeyer, "is crucial to Studio 804. TTH's support and assistance deserves as much mention."

The first semester is dedicated to construction management, headed by Spreckelmeyer. Students must complete all the necessary management and administrative tasks before construction can begin, including securing donations of building materials, receiving building permits, and creating a construction schedule. These tasks are evenly divided among each of the 8 to



17 students in the class. With permits in hand, the design process begins toward the end of the first semester.

During the spring, design is finalized and construction begins, with a completion date slated for graduation day in May. The results so far have been impressive: four houses designed and built on a budget between \$40 and \$50 a square foot (each house is typically about 1,300 square feet). The houses are offered for sale to low- to moderate-income individuals by Tenants to Homeowners. 216 Alabama in Lawrence, for example, was completed for a total cost of \$85,000. Thirty-two thousand dollars was donated in materials

and supplies, bringing the net cost to \$53,000. The house was then sold to a low-income family through a lease-to-purchase agreement with TTH for \$100,000.

Studio 804's focus on design/build collaboration, inexpensive building techniques, and innovative design serve to bring a thorough understanding of the complete architectural process to its students and a well-designed environment to the homes' tenants as well as the citizens of Lawrence. A win-win situation for all.



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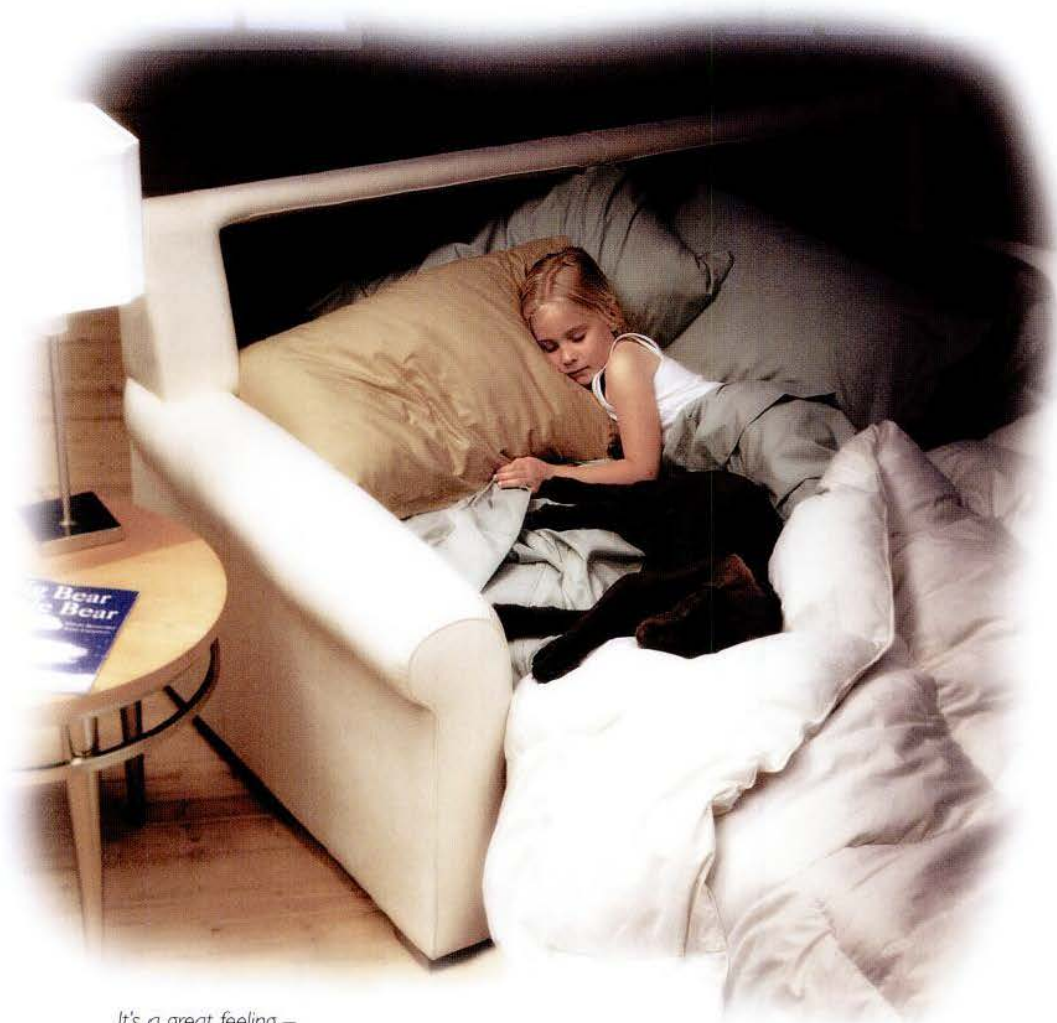
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Letters

As a ten-year resident of the Eichler Summit, I was proud to see our building depicted in the company of six architecturally stunning structures around the world (Skyscrapers 101, June 2002). Sadly, although I have repeatedly tried to convince a sequence of Boards of Directors to cease permitting alterations to the building's exterior, the desecration of the majesty of the building continues today unabated.

Walter A. Nelson-Rees
San Francisco, California

Samuel Mockbee must be rolling over in his grave. Particularly offensive passages from "Because Good Architecture Is For Everybody" (August 2002): "Mockbee, his colleagues, and his students built homes of great beauty for people who couldn't normally afford beauty." "...for clients who had probably never imagined living in anything that was more than a simple roof over their heads." "...or for clients who have never lived in anything plusher than a tarpaper shack."

"We would like to see the language of modern luxury influence the language of necessity." Why does it sound to me as if the author is trying to convince herself that good architecture is for everybody? The sanctimonious and condescending tone of this piece is appalling.

Philip Pankiewicz
Brooklyn, New York

Editors' note: Sanctimony, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

Dwell magazine resides in the pantheon of greatness. I hungrily gulp up the latest issue and find myself forlornly waiting two whole months for the next one. To cope, I slowly pore over past

volumes to glean nuggets of brilliance missed the first time around. *Time*, *Newsweek*, even the dear *New Yorker* are all out with the morning trash. Dwell, on the other hand, takes a privileged place in The Archives of Eternity.

Enough encomium?

An idea for your consideration: In the August 2002 issue, the article on Pugh + Scarpa ("Solar Flair") suggested something to me that I in turn would like to suggest to you.

How about a whole issue dedicated to the idea of sustainability? After all, we only have one planet to (forgive me) dwell on and we should do a much better job of taking care of it.

A focus on sustainability would fulfill your Fruitbowl Manifesto to be "nice modernists." After all, the bigger picture of being "truly livable" and showing "connections to society, place, and human experience" also rests on acknowledging the earth's limited resources. Fact of note: Were every human to have the lifestyle of the average American, it would require an additional 8 to 12 planets.

The challenge: how to create a high quality of life, using our nifty modern tools, without, in the process, disrupting and derailing the basic biological processes upon which all life depends? This will require all our ingenuity and cleverness to pull off. So, instead of "staging a minor revolution," why don't we stage a major one?

Jeremy Paul Hunter
Claremont, California

As an early subscriber, your mag has been a pure joy for me from the start. But wouldn't you know it, the first thing that inspires me to write you is to complain of the shameful Mitchell Gold advertisement on page 49 of the August issue. ▶

Dwell in L.A.!

On September 18, Dwell senior editor Allison Arieff will host an exclusive panel discussion, "Shaping Modernism in the 21st Century," at LA Mart. Panelists include architect Jennifer Siegal of the Office of Mobile Design; architect Ronald Radziner of Marmol + Radziner; architect David Hertz of Syndesis, Inc.; Richard Holbrook, designer and the CEO of dna; architect Eero Koivisto of Claesson Koivisto Rune, and industrial and furniture designer Lisa Krohn.

For more information, contact jsampson@lamart.com

On September 20, join Dwell for the opening of RENFORM 02, an exhibition of Swedish design presented by Lampa + Mobler and SMI (Swedish Furniture Industry Association). The event will celebrate the arrival of Offecct to Lampa + Mobler as well as Swedish designers Märten Claesson, Ola Rune, Eero Koivisto (Offecct, David Design, and Swedese), and Teppo Asikainen's (Snowcrash) first visit to Los Angeles! For details, please go to www.lampamobler.com or call (323) 852-1542.



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It's not the homoerotic theme of the ad; I hope it would offend me equally if the model in leather were a young woman. Rather, it's the age difference of the subjects, and the not-so subtle suggestion that the young man is the older's gigolo. If that weren't enough, they had the audacity to throw in the tag line "by the inch."

Well, Mitchell Gold, I guess your little trick worked, because I never bothered to look twice at your ads before or remember your name. Thanks—now I know who not to buy. As for you, Dwell, this reader expects—and usually gets—better.

Neil B. Chapman
Evansville, Indiana

Didn't anyone ever tell you that scathing editorial commentary doesn't belong in the table of contents? For you to sneer "Did hippies ever actually do anything worthwhile?" (Table of Contents, June 2002) 35 years after the Summer of Love suggests that they did.

Robert Borden
Jemez Springs, New Mexico

Since I love Dwell as much as I do, I have to write you about my concern with the "news-stand" approach to selling the magazine. The blatant supermodel come-on on the cover of the August issue isn't consistent with the integrity I have come to count on, especially when I find Kathy Ireland fully clothed. Spend your time and money on architecture!

Steve Housel
Wilsonville, Oregon

I am a resident of Redwood City, formerly worked in downtown Palo Alto near Ideo, and occasionally shop at Target (Big Box, June 2002). Very few degrees of separation, in other wor(l)ds . . .

A. Two-Room Six-Person Dome Tent. I bought this tent and discovered that the functionality of the design and materials are terrible. Broke on its first outing.

D. Bicycle Seat. What an incredible disservice to propagate the myth that saddles with holes in them somehow help your "naughty bits." Especially not a poorly designed, cheaply made \$19.99 version. Ironically, one of the premier

bicycle shops on the West Coast, Palo Alto Bicycles, is spitting distance from Ideo—and this shop is co-owned by the brilliant saddle designer Bud Hoffacher, who has diligently worked to educate cycling consumers on saddle designs that will actually make them more comfortable. Might make an interesting interview.

I am a huge fan of your magazine and recommend it to friends often. Thanks for listening.

Joe Reifer
Redwood City, California

Rather than being gratified that Murcutt "embodies Dwell's values" (Letters, August 2002), let us instead salute a magazine (Dwell) that so well embodies Glenn Murcutt's values.

K. Davidsson
Ashland, Oregon

Eric Carr's letter to you in the August 2002 issue describes my feelings about your magazine. *Sunset* magazine, with its emphasis on affordable and good design for those of us in the lowly middle, better fulfills your aims of accessible design and modern living.

I would like both magazines to be good (since I doubt your staff could equal *Sunset's* excellent recipes), but your recent articles describing the designer-knackknocked "dwellings" of well-off couples confirm my instinct that you cannot overcome history. The 50's modernism you applaud relied upon industrial innovation to house a growing middle class when the United States industrial plant encouraged innovation. Now that the majority of us live in fear of being outsourced to cheap off-shore labor and American companies foolishly abandon production, the economic basis for good mass-produced design no longer exists.

You also have the fault of many magazines today: not enough text. Get your writers to do more than a publicity brochure for an architect.

Jacqueline Cantwell
Brooklyn, New York

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Corrections On page 82 of our August issue ("How to Build a House for \$145,000"), the article stated "Massie draws with an \$800 nerve-surface modeling program . . ." The sentence should have read ". . .

NURBS surface modeling program . . ." NURBS stands for Non-Uniform Rational B-Spline.

On page 78 of "The Box Outside," we attributed the design of the Sauna Pavilion

solely to Salvatore Tranchina. However, the credit should have read Artifact Design+Construction, a collaboration between Salvatore Tranchina and his partner Christopher Kilbridge. We regret the errors.

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There There, Three: The Great Plains

What you are holding in your hands is the second anniversary issue of *Dwell*. Two years doesn't sound like much, but in the life of a magazine it's a remarkably long time. What it means is that somewhere in the past several months, we have made the transition from childhood to adolescence, with all the petulance that implies.

And, unlike many magazines where art and editorial staff come and go like passengers on some wacko bus line, most of us have been with *Dwell*, in our little hot-house of an office, since the beginning. As a result we're a pretty cohesive team much of the time with a shared history of in-jokes and localized jargon. Utter the phrase "naughty Zen garden" around here and you'll get a laugh. It's hard to explain why. Tell someone here to "nuggetize" an idea and they'll know that you want a piece of writing that is shorter than a sidebar but longer than a caption. It's all very cozy, but sometimes, like any group of people who spend time together, we get on each other's nerves.

So, in this issue, *There Is Too a There There, Three*—our third annual celebration of great houses in unexpected cities—we decided that it would be refreshing to get a couple of our editors out of the office for a week or so. We sent associate editors Sam Grawe and Virginia Gardiner on an extended road trip through the Midwest, a sort of *Outward Bound* experience for a pair who, it seemed, could only thrive here in San Francisco or in some other overly evolved coastal metropolis.

They flew into St. Louis, rented a Mustang convertible, and, after a night at Best Western and lunch at Chubby's (featuring "threwed rolls"), they headed to Des Moines (where, in order to survive, they were forced to eat at a Bennigans), Omaha, Sioux City, Sioux Falls, the Badlands (which they, like Frank Lloyd Wright before them, found to be bad in the good sense of the word), Kansas City, and Oklahoma City.

Along the way, Sam and Virginia met people like Steve Larson, who not only designed and built a Richard Meier–inspired house in Sioux Falls but is also developing a car that is long and streamlined on the highway but gets shorter and scrunchier for city use. "He's kind of a visionary," Virginia observes.

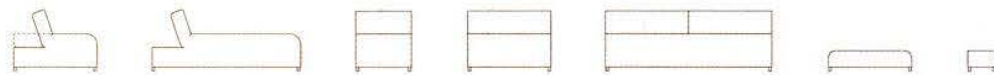
They also visited Carhenge, a re-creation of Stonehenge near Alliance, Nebraska, made out of junked automobiles. "It's a poor man's Cadillac Ranch," Sam explains. And they spent a night in Interior, South Dakota, where they lit fireworks in the parking lot of the Horseshoe Bar (along with the town's fire chief) and drank with Shortbull, a local Sioux, who told them all about the preapocalyptic "mark of the bear," better known as the Universal Product Code.

Sam and Virginia are back and, at this juncture, still talking about the urban sprawl that has pushed cities like Omaha way out into what was once prairie, and reminiscing about the dust-fueled magenta sunset over a Skidmore, Owings & Merrill–designed office tower in Kansas City. Like all successful *Outward Bounders*, they've developed improved self-esteem and, on good days, a more cheerful demeanor. Plus they brought us five terrific houses (see page 78) and a new respect for places without hills.

Actually, by the time you read this, *Dwell* will be well into its third year, moving swiftly out of puberty and toward a form of maturity. We hope our journey goes as smoothly as did Sam and Virginia's ride from Sioux Falls to the Badlands. "That was the best drive ever," says Virginia, "because there was always a cloud somewhere, but it was never over the car."

KARRIE JACOBS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
karrie@dwellmag.com

Roadtrip highlights: Interior, South Dakota (left), and Carhenge, Nebraska's answer to Stonehenge.



SCROLL
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Less is Baltimore

When 16-year-old Taylor Salditch's friends walk into her house, they say, "Wow, this place should be on *Cribs!*"

Ian and Ilene Salditch are leading a decidedly un-hip-hop lifestyle raising three daughters in suburban Baltimore, but they were no doubt tickled pink by that response. Ian, a medical supply entrepreneur, and Ilene, a teacher, built their house in Hunt Valley, an area outside the city through which hounds and horsemen continue the chase. The neighbors have laid-stone houses and standing-seam copper roofs. The Salditches have horizontal roofs and concrete block walls. Their neighbors have horses, llamas, sheep, pigs, goats, and chickens. The Salditches have an SUV.

The Salditch house took ten years to complete, and was finished on Labor Day 2001. "Ilene and I had built a house we loved in 1985. When we decided to move on, we knew the kind of land we wanted to buy, but it took four years to find the property, and two years of coercion to get the owner to sell. Then two more years to find the architect and builder, and almost two years to get it built," explains Ian. "Our second daughter, Blair, was four when we started looking and now she's 14."

It was obviously worth the wait for Blair, who—along with her sisters Quinn and Taylor—is enjoying the street cred the house gives her with her peers. Ian and Ilene's friends are similarly impressed. "It's amazing how often visitors ask us, 'Did you really do this yourself?'" says Ian. They had some help on the kitchen from interior designer Mallory Branson, a family friend, but did the rest of the interior design on their own. "In those ten years we collected scraps of everything we liked," says Ilene. "When it was time to furnish the house, we started with things we knew we loved. Each room's design was keyed off of the first thing we decided on. We all really liked the Bisazza terrazzo for the girls' bathroom, so we based the rest of the colors on that."

After he bought the property (about six years after finding it), Ian met Richard Cataffa at the gym. The two got to talking about architecture, and Richard told Ian everything he needed to know to find an architect in Maryland—all before shyly admitting that he was one. The conversation turned into a collaboration that resulted in an L-shaped home for five just below a thickly wooded rural hill. On a recent visit, the speed with ▶



The Salditch family in the kitchen: from left, Ian, Quinn, interior designer and friend Mallory Branson, Blair, Taylor, and Ilene. Inset: The doors of the living room open out into the woods beyond the house.

My House

which Quinn, seven, ended up in Cataffa's arms proved that this is one case in which architect and client really became—and have remained—friends.

Due in part to the unusual footprint, Cataffa's plan for the house organized the two L-shaped floors around a central entryway, with the upper floor twisted a few degrees away from the lower. The arrangement serves three girls, one tailless dog named Ruby, one tailless hamster, and two adults. The adults' living areas are on the short leg of the L, and the girls' rooms, kitchen, and guest room are on the long leg.

Radiant heat adds extra comfort to the house with its double-height rooms and very open, flowing space between floors. Despite Cataffa's dramatic composition, one economical design strategy was to use only standard-size windows, with the exception of one crucial custom triangular window.

"What we designed is a compromise between modernism and the couple's desire for low maintenance on a wooded Maryland lot," says Cataffa, who created the effect of a flat-roofed house even though all the roofs

slope enough to take care of the snow and leaves.

Architect and client worked together very closely on this project and the resulting house is full of Salditchisms—or maybe they're Salditch-Cataffisms. There's the outdoor planting bed that extends indoors, bringing flora to the ground floor. A small screened-in balcony off the master bedroom hangs off the second floor, right in the midst of the trees. Client input led to a smart solution for Taylor's workspace—as is often the case with 16-year-old daughters, she's not as tidy as her mother. Cataffa designed an area with a nice big desk for all her schoolwork, but it's placed in a closet, behind a door that can be closed on the mess.

Though her parents often visited the building site twice a day, Blair refused to see the house during construction. "I think that after hearing us talk about it for so long, she just didn't believe the house would ever exist," says Ian. "She loves it now. I think a good lesson the girls learned was that if you have a dream, pursue it, be patient, don't get discouraged, and don't listen to criticism." ■



Above left: Taylor's walk-in-closet-as-office allows her to shut the door on her homework. In the dining room, above right, the table is from B&B Italia, the folding chairs from Sam's Club ("For now," stresses Ilene).

At right: Ilene and her daughters cavort with dog Ruby in the courtyard. The master bedroom and study are located in the shorter end of the L-shaped house (at left); the kitchen and girls' rooms are on the longer end.



From My House to Your House

The tone for the whole house was set with the distinctive lamps the Salditches put in the dining room. "It is very modern but not cold," says Ian. Funi pendant lamp from Tango, (954) 767-0100.

This pull-down shelf is a universal design that brings high shelves to the user, rather than the other way around. Ezyshelf by Häfele, (800) 334-1873.

The door leading to the garage is flanked by five lockers, one for each family member. These are the designated locations for all athletic equipment and outerwear. From C&H Distributors Inc., (800) 558-9966.



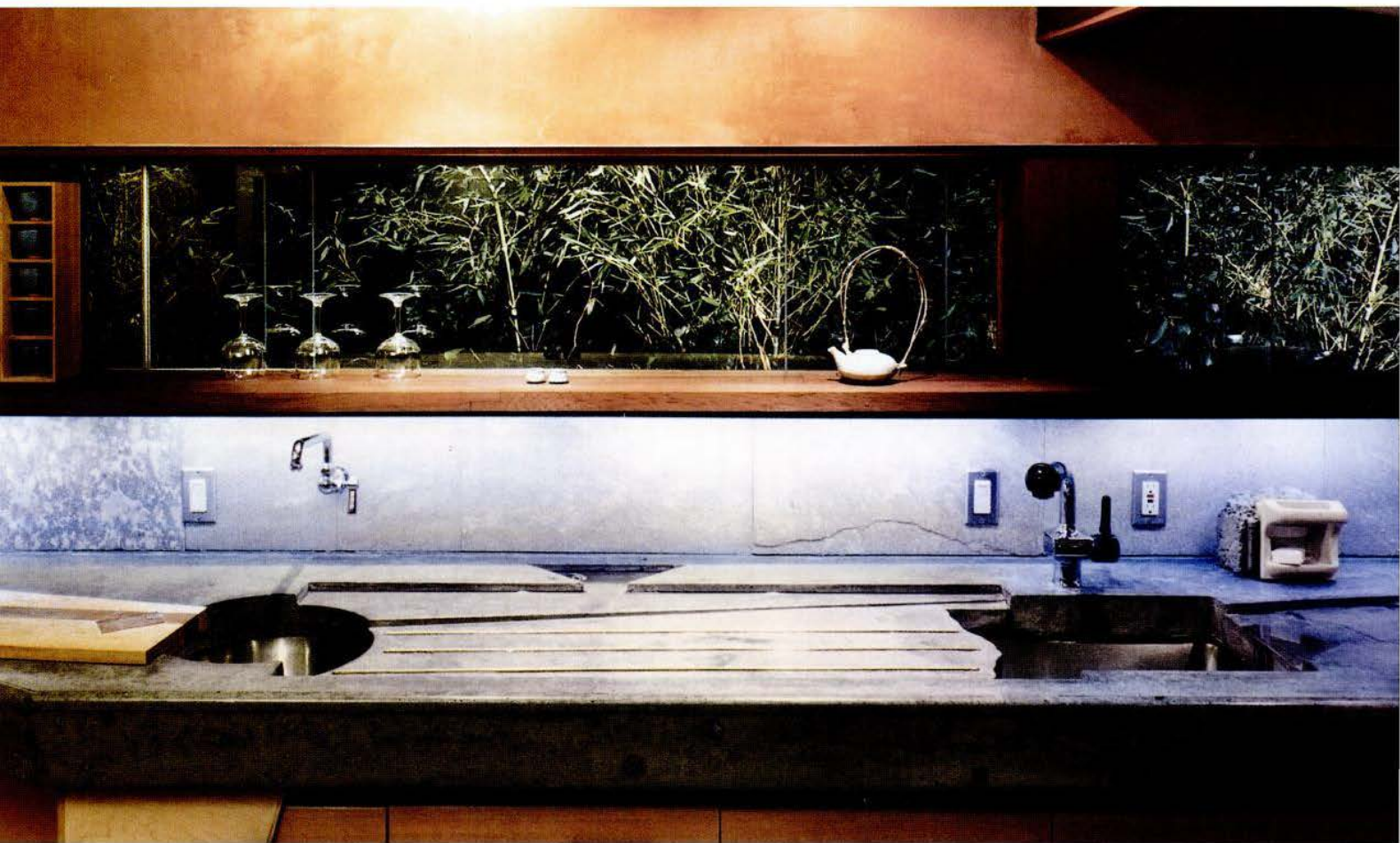


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Solid As a Sidewalk

“Corian has no soul; it doesn’t touch your emotions,” says designer Fu-Tung Cheng, founder of Cheng Design in Berkeley, California, of the all-purpose polymer that’s finding its way onto kitchen counters. Cheng eschews the squeaky-clean material in favor of the gritty. “Concrete stands out because of its ability to mimic any kind of form,” he extols. “It’s an incredibly versatile material.” Although this plastic mixture of Portland cement, sand, gravel, and water is what makes up most city sidewalks, under Cheng’s direction it takes on a rich character not seen on the urban beat.

But Cheng’s designs are not just simple surfaces made to display the latest KitchenAid appliances. They are, in Cheng’s words, “practical landscapes.” A countertop isn’t always flat. Cheng’s unique terrain consists of inlays that serve as built-in trivets and fruit-bowl hollows. Cutting boards make for wooden plateaus.

The popularity of Cheng’s concrete designs inspired a book, *Concrete Countertops: Design, Forms, and Finishes for the New Kitchen and Bath* (Taunton Press, 2002), written with Eric Olsen, that marries Cheng’s unique design philosophy with a do-it-yourself attitude. In addition,

Cheng’s firm is marketing a kit so that anyone can start mixing their own gray-matter landscapes. The kit includes just about everything but the actual concrete: NeoMix (an add-in of pigment, aggregate, and accelerators), sealer and wax, finishing pads, and tools.

Cheng’s custom countertops are made from Geocrete, a proprietary mix he developed; NeoMix is the next best thing. The average person, Cheng explains, “is going to buy bags of Sakrete, which is very poorly made concrete. So I thought that we should beef it up.” What the NeoMix kit doesn’t have is Cheng himself, but it does provide instructions on everything from mold making to sealing and maintenance.

A countertop made from the kit costs about the same as custom Formica. It’s not easy to pour your own concrete, but the process is certainly doable and offers creative possibilities. The do-it-yourselfer can take inspiration from Cheng’s ingenuity—or from one of his demonstrations. “I did a cooking show just like *Yan Can Cook*,” Cheng recounts enthusiastically. “I had all the ingredients. I treated it just like I was baking a cake. Concrete’s just a little bigger and a little heavier.” ■



With his concrete countertops, Cheng creates complex landscapes rather than flat planes. You can create your own countertop terrain with Cheng’s Do-It-Yourself Kit. It costs \$339–379 and is available at www.chengdesign.com/neo mix.

➤ p. 114

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Old, New, Borrowed, and Green

Six years ago, garden designer Robyn Barlow and her husband, Julian, a builder, decided to leave the big city of Melbourne and move to the rural coast of southeast Australia. They found 200 acres in Bega with the perfect spot for a house—a spit jutting out into the river, bordered by water on three sides.

The sand-colored house is adorably quirky, with an organic quality that comes from a hodgepodge of natural and recycled materials. Julian worked with Melbourne architect Wendy Nettle but did most of the construction himself. He created his own bricks on-site, mixing up the mud in a deep pit and shoveling it into molds. The oversized, sun-dried bricks form the house's thick adobe walls. The second story was constructed from native eucalyptus trees on the lot. Large timbers from an old bridge provide the frame of the house.

The house also incorporates Julian's giant collection of choice bits and pieces from renovations he's supervised. All the windows and hardwood flooring in the house are salvaged. The walkway had a previous life as paving for the Melbourne Tennis Center. Mustard-yellow kitchen cabinets were rescued from a 1950s tear-down

and revitalized with green paint, and an old porcelain sink sits on a new mud brick pedestal in the bathroom.

"It's like that old wives' parable when you get married—something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue," says Julian. "We're trying to use that philosophy to re-create that sense of feeling, of connection, in a home."

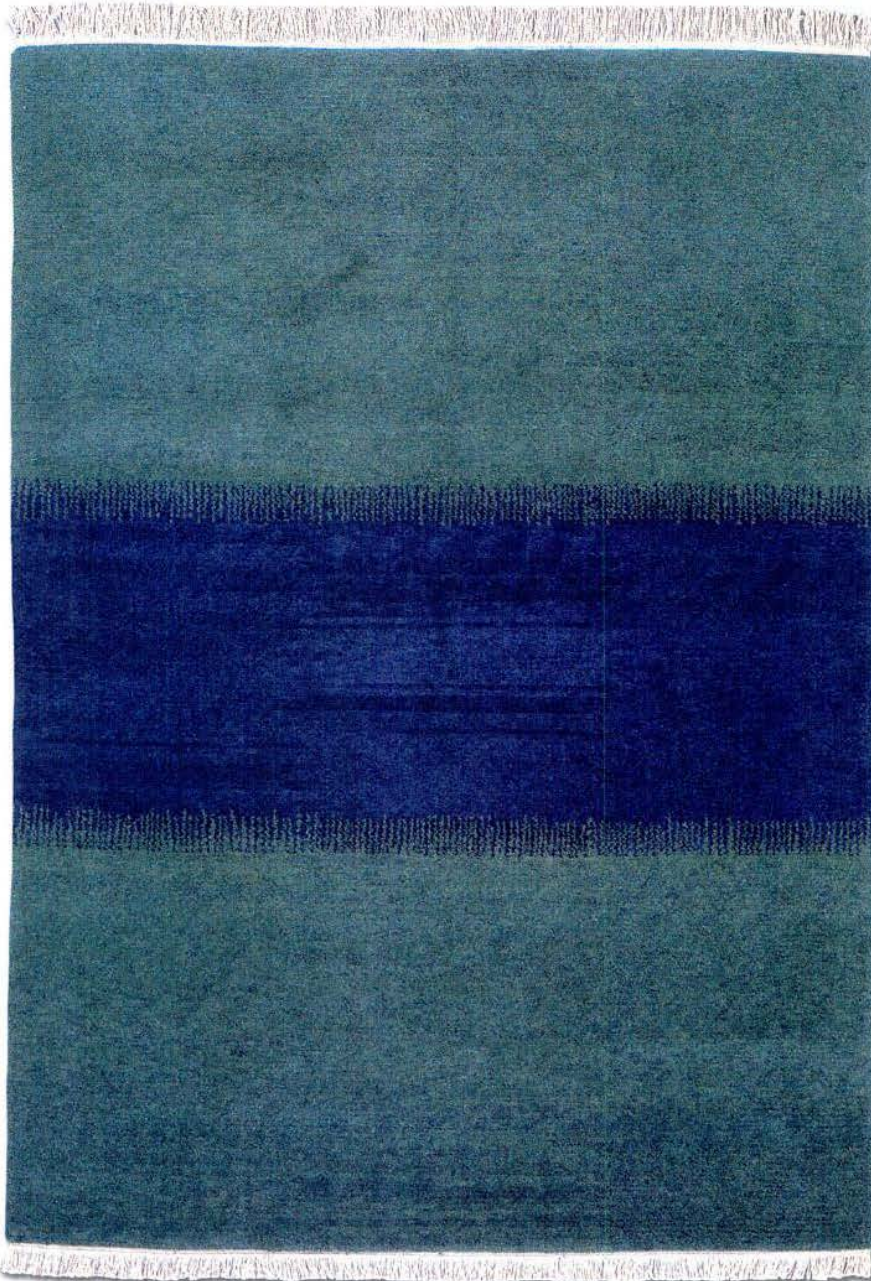
Another of Julian's design inspirations was Australian architect Alistair Knox. "He was a pioneer of building your own house, a man of the '60s hippie movement," says Julian. In his designs, Knox used roughly hewn logs and corrugated metal, the vernacular materials of sheep-shearing sheds dotting the Australian countryside. Knox was also a huge fan of mud. "The humble mud brick alone could be the one catalyst to stimulate co-operative living instead of competitive destruction," he wrote. "Watching the earth dry . . . immerse[s] us in poetic deliberations that unites our hearts, heads and hands."

Still, it's hard to imagine, say, Martha Stewart baking her own mud bricks. "They're very labor-intensive, and they're heavy," says Julian. "Every house [I build] nearly kills me, even in just an emotional sense—but ▶



Wisteria provides summer shade on the Barlows' pergola. Their sustainable home merges "resourceful bush Australia with a dash of New Mexico." All of the walls are mud brick—as is the pedestal for the bathroom sink.

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with mud brick the work is really physically hard, too.”

For him, the rounded walls of adobe are a deliberate counter to the “minimalist, sharp-edged, expensively chic look” that he’s often asked to build. “I love the warmth and softness of mud brick,” he says.

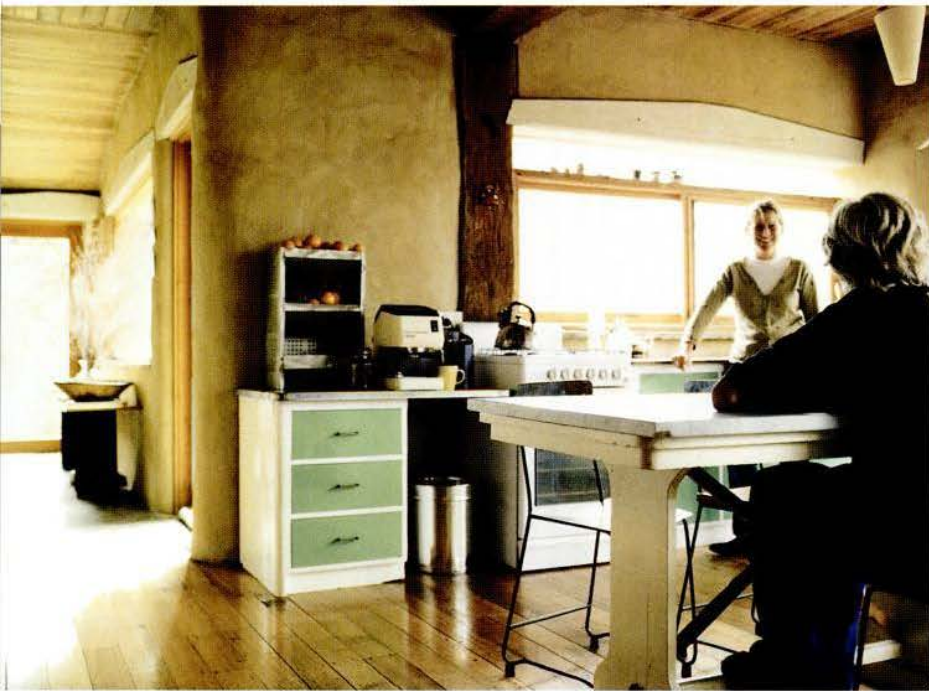
The massive mud brick walls help even out extreme temperature changes between day and night. Julian says that mud brick provides sufficient insulation, but he also includes other elements he’s designed to help heat and cool the house. Large doors open up to a walkway shaded by a wisteria-covered arbor, for cooling cross-breezes in the summer. To get the maximum amount of sun in the winter, the house faces north—the right direction, if you’re south of the equator, for passive solar heating.

Solar power provides the Barlows with electricity as well. “We wanted to do it all and be as self-sufficient as we could—and we didn’t want to have poles for electricity,” says Robyn. After discovering that bringing the grid out would cost as much as installing solar panels, the

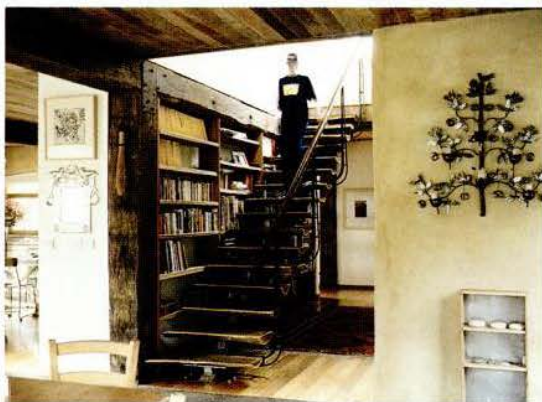
decision was easy. Relying on the sun does mean switching to another source of energy when the days are short. In the winter, the Barlows fire up a slow-combustion woodstove, which supplies hot water for radiant heating and household use. Julian installed a bigger stove, explains Robyn, because with the last one “we all had to have a shower before we turned on the heat.”

Despite these minor hang-ups, the Barlows have grown accustomed to a life where their two boys take a boat across the river to catch the school bus, the rooster starts to crow at 5 A.M., and it’s a seven-mile drive to civilization (a.k.a. the farming town of Bega, pop. 4,190).

“When you’re driving here, you’re driving through the bush and seeing kangaroos, possums, lyre birds, parrots,” says Julian, who is now developing a new career in the spirit of the house, as a practitioner of Feldenkrais, an alternative form of physical therapy. “You’re not having to contend with traffic and noise and someone right up your bum in a car. It’s easier on your whole state.” ■



Most of the interiors were created from salvaged materials like the once mustard-yellow, now bright-green kitchen cabinets (above). At right is a view of the staircase made from sawed logs. Rough-hewn timbers support the house, the floors are mountain ash.



The Barlows' Garden

Robyn Barlow designed her garden in a large courtyard for two reasons: “I loved the idea of the Islamic courtyard gardens,” she says, “and I knew the kangaroos and wallabies would eat everything if we didn’t put up a fence.”

The 130-square-foot vegetable garden, screened on all sides to keep out voracious bowerbirds, provides about half of the produce on the Barlows’ dinner table. Currently growing is an entire farmer’s market: beans, tomatoes, zucchini, lettuce, spinach, swiss chard, peppers, snow peas, eggplant, cucumbers, green onions, and various herbs. Tucked among the vegetables is the odd rose-bush, planted here to take advantage of the irrigation. Citrus trees in tubs along the entrance are a nod to gardens of the Middle East.

Elsewhere, Robyn sticks to

drought-resistant plants that can survive the long dry spells. Echinops sends up tall spikes of dark-blue flowers and cordylina australis (cabbage tree) bristles like a porcupine, a counterpoint to the soft adobe walls. The faithful standby, agapanthus (lily of the Nile), provides generous masses of greenery.

Like many Australians, Robyn is a recent convert to native plants, which acquired a bad rap in the '70s but are now making a comeback. “It’s ridiculous, really, that it’s taken this long for us to appreciate them,” says Robyn. Natives in front of the house include grevillea moonlight, with creamy sprays that look like tooth-brushes, and statuesque, blood-red gymea lilies. “I love the colors and the big flowers,” she says. “And they attract beautiful native birds.”

Molteni & C

PASS storage system
design: Luca Meda

ALFA chair
design: Hannes Wettstein



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A Note on Our Expert:

Chuy Gomez wanted to be a deejay starting at age five. He got his wish and is now said to have one of the most recognizable voices in the Bay Area. After years working the night and afternoon shifts, Chuy moved into the prestigious (but early) morning show at the beginning of this year.



**Richard Meier
Sleeper Alarm Clock
\$45**

This slick but substantial zinc alloy clock features a quartz mechanism and four ascending alarm rings. The brushed-matte finish and the circular body held in place by two distinguished feet help give the illusion (if you squint hard and use your imagination) of a miniature Getty Center right on your nightstand.

Expert Opinion: This thing is major cool. Out of all of them, I'd pick this one, but just for the looks, not for the alarm purposes. It can be a paper-

weight, a clock, and, if you lay it down, even a coaster. But the alarm is not going to cut it. I'd have to say, Richard Meier, stick to museums! But it's very hot, I'll give you that; it's my favorite.

What We think: Very minimal, very cool. This would look great on the bedside but would never get us out of bed. We'd be looking at the clock for a half-hour, trying to figure out what time it was due to the lack of numbers (though there is a version with numbers available). Still, it does indeed look cool and therefore earns a spot next to the stack of magazines, the pictures of our significant other, and the glass of water.

Bzzzt!

Open your eyes. It's time to forget that weird dream about your coworker and greet the new day. Here are a few alarm clocks too pretty to hurl across the room.

Alarm clocks are the definition of necessary evil. They rest innocently at your bedside until that fateful moment when they explode with bells, whistles, chimes, or music, bringing much misery to your aching head. But without them, who would make it to that 7 A.M. Ashtanga class or 8 A.M. board meeting?

Back when humans were first shedding their fur for their finer (but thinner) skin, alarm clocks were not so necessary. Due to our horrible night vision, humans tended to hole up in caves and other crevices as soon as the sun went down, emerging only when it came back up.

But with the advent of farming and the decrease in nomadic life, the possibility of sleeping in (and oversleeping) came into sharp focus. Enter horology (the science of measuring time or making timepieces) and alarm clocks. The first known devices were low-key

affairs often consisting of a nail driven into the wax of a candle. As the candle burned down past the nail, the nail would fall, making a clanging noise on the candle holder and rousing the silent sleeper.

Now, alarm clocks scream (literally), shake (imagine your own private earthquake), and thump music at obscene decibels, leaving your tired brain and body no option but to bolt from bed, harried rather than refreshed.

Who better to evaluate these timepieces of the modern era than a deejay used to living the high life of late nights at clubs and breakfasts (and lunches) in bed, but now coping with the morning slot on 106.1 KMEL, the premier hip-hop radio station in the Bay Area? "It sucks," Chuy Gomez says of his new waking hours. "I'm on the air at 6 and try to get up at 4:45. But usually I crawl out of bed by 5:10. It's really tough!" ▶



**Sony LIV for Target
CD Clock Radio**
\$79.99

A cost-conscious all-in-one design from Sony, featuring CD, radio, and TV/weather/FM/AM bands. The "snoozinator," a feature allowing the sleeper to snooze for up to 60 minutes (is that a good thing?), gets high billing, as does its nap feature—a separate alarm that you can set in increments.

Expert Opinion: It looks like it could be loud enough for me. I could see this thing on my nightstand probably more than any of them, but only because you can play music on it. You

**Sharper Image Download
Musical Alarm Clock**
\$39.95

Sharper Image is the king of things you don't need and this funky alarm clock is no exception. Its plastic body makes its endurance questionable, but if you're looking for a little novelty in the morning, this could be the thing for you.

Expert Opinion: If any one of these were going to wake me up for sure, it would be this one. It's equipped with "She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain," which is a hot song. Always has been, always will be. If that doesn't wake you up, nothing

can also have all three things go off simultaneously—the CD, the radio, and the buzzer. That might just be obnoxious enough! As far as the appearance goes, it's a little bulky, but you have to expect that because of the CD.

What We Think: This is bulky to be sure and its image-of-the-future-circa-1982 look doesn't do much for us. But we too are fans of the bedside CD player, and the addition of clock and radio would eliminate a lot of clutter. Still, we aren't quite as intrigued as our expert by the fact that you can set all three alarms (clock, radio, and CD) off at once. For us, one would probably be enough.

will. The antennas light up, which is pretty nice. You can download your own songs, which is catchy but you can't use this with a Mac. What if you've got a Mac? That sucks. Downloading songs is too complicated, but the novelty of it is really cool.

What We Think: We agree, "She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain" is a hot song, and this clock would definitely wake us up. We too are a little disappointed in the lack of Mac compatibility, as we have dreams of waking up to the sweet sounds of Sid Vicious belting out Frank Sinatra's "My Way." But the flashing antenna makes us forgive and forget.



**Braun AB1
Travel Clock**
\$9.95

This handy little alarm clock featuring the classic analog look was put out of production in 2000 in order to focus the company's attention on razors and other beauty products that have become Braun's mainstay since being acquired by Gillette in 1967.

Expert Opinion: The Braun is cool. It's a classic. But the alarm would never wake me up—it's not annoying enough. It almost sounds like a song! Braun, let's stick to shavers. But for a light sleeper it would be awesome, because it's small enough to put anywhere

and you can actually use it when you travel. If you want something that is inconspicuous but still stylish, the Braun is for you!

What We Think: Yes, it's a classic, but Braun doesn't make it anymore. But these beauties are around for the taking on select websites and at various retail outlets, so we suggest grabbing them while you can. They are lightweight, elegant, run on a single AA battery, and hence are travel ready. The simple face makes it easy to tell time, but we have never been fans of the single hand alarm indicator. Still, this is a design staple, a collector's item.



**Victorinox Voyager
Swiss Army Knife Clock**
\$70

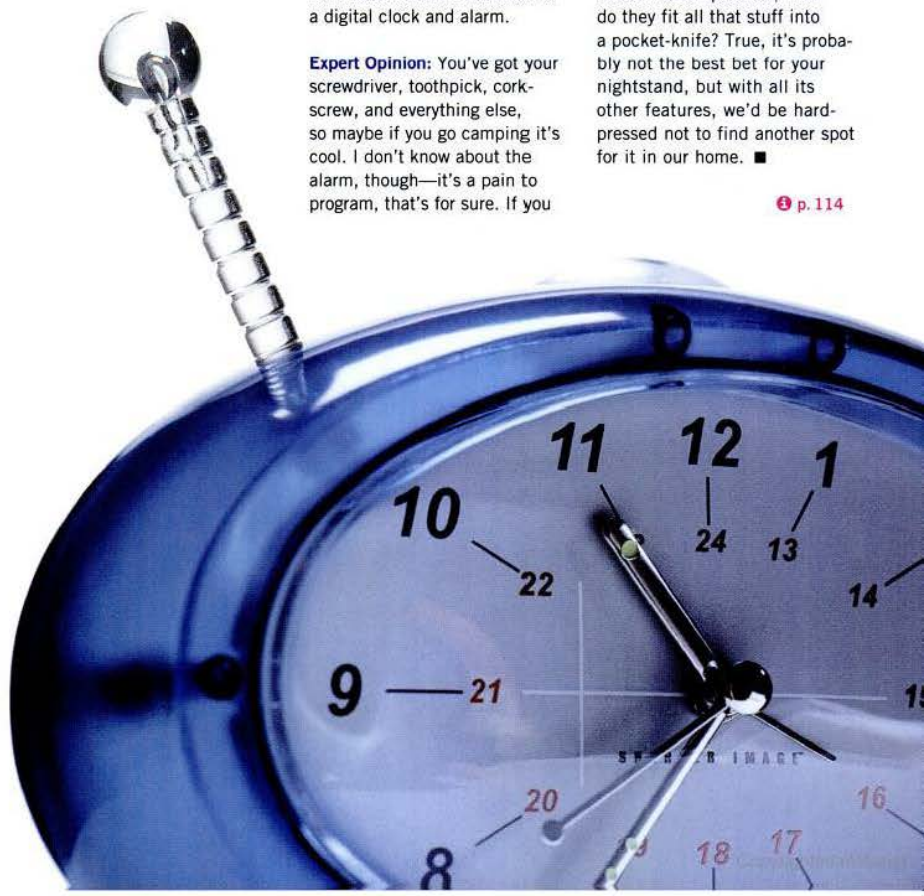
Victorinox, a division of the Swiss Army Brands, has been delivering blades to the Swiss Army since 1884. With the Voyager, Victorinox has moved a step beyond its standard arsenal of 20 blades and household tools with the addition of a digital clock and alarm.

Expert Opinion: You've got your screwdriver, toothpick, cork-screw, and everything else, so maybe if you go camping it's cool. I don't know about the alarm, though—it's a pain to program, that's for sure. If you

are sensitive to sound, it might wake you up, but me—no way. Also, what's it gonna look like when someone walks in and sees a Swiss Army knife by your bed? It's not gonna look good, that's what.

What We Think: Aside from its multifacetedness, this translucent version scores points for providing some insight into the universal question, How do they fit all that stuff into a pocket-knife? True, it's probably not the best bet for your nightstand, but with all its other features, we'd be hard-pressed not to find another spot for it in our home. ■

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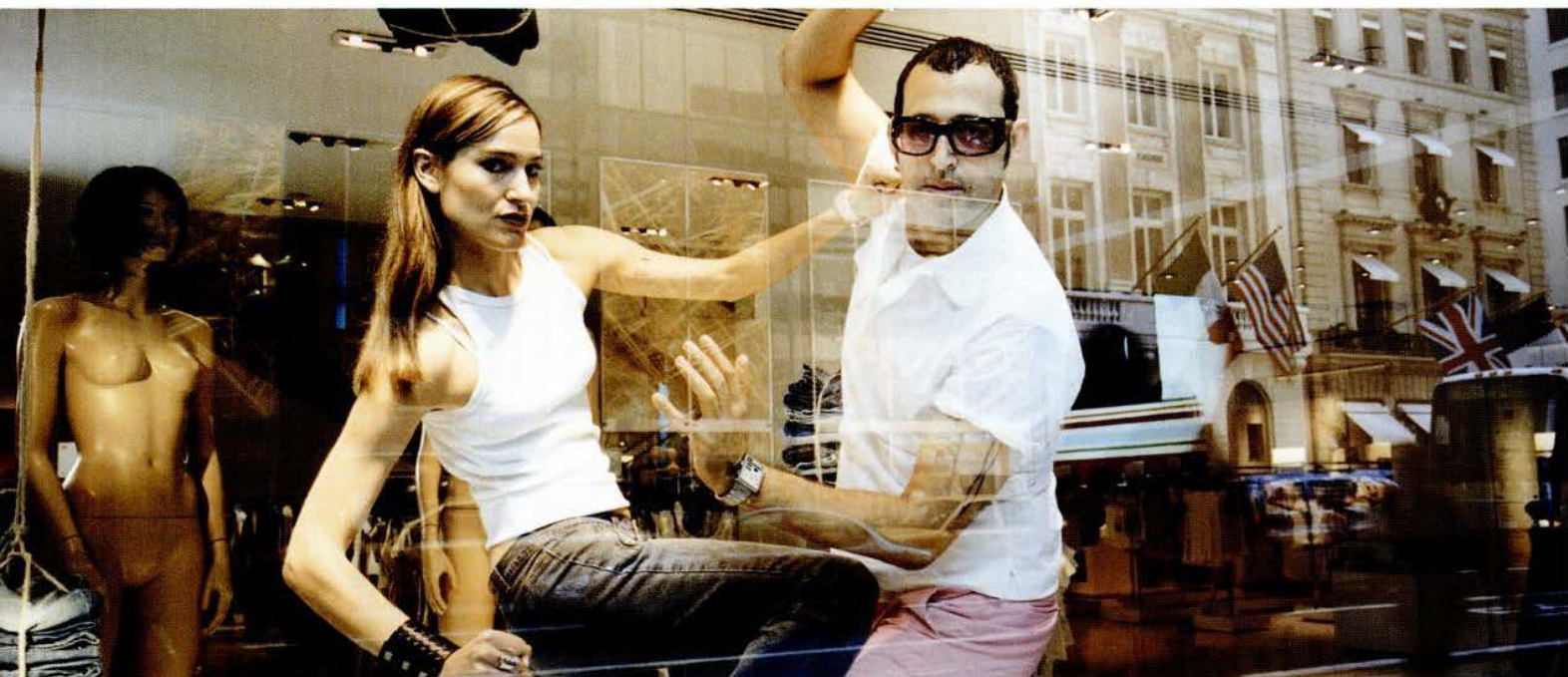
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At H&M, White Is Still the New Black

After the second World War, a young clothing salesman named Erling Persson from Vasteras, Sweden, visited the United States. He returned home in 1947 with an idea: open a store with high product turnover and low prices. Its motto? "Fashion and quality at the best price." Enter the first Hennes ("hers" in Swedish) store. Moving into Stockholm in 1968, Hennes occupied what was once Mauritz Widforss, a gun shop that came equipped with a stock of men's clothing. So as not to waste what was given to them, Hennes became Hennes & Mauritz and began selling men's clothing as well, and before long was simply H&M.

Today, H&M is a chain specializing in clothing, cosmetics, and accessories, with stores in 14 countries. While our European counterparts have been privy to the wonders within for years, over here in the hinterlands, access to H&M was granted only in 2000, and then only to those lucky enough to live on the eastern seaboard.

Never ones to pass on "fashion and quality at the best price," we couldn't resist sending two opinionated fashion hounds to investigate the American flagship store in New York City. Karim Rashid began his career as an industrial designer and soon ventured into fashion, co-founding Babel Fashion in Toronto in 1985. He has recently kept himself busy designing garbage cans, chairs, manhole covers, and pretty much anything else you can think of for companies like Edra, Magis, Nambe, and Umbra. However, he has never strayed far from fashion and is currently working on Cybercouture, a collaboration with Norwegian fashion designer Pia Myrvoid that will be presented in Paris this fall. His wife,

Megan Lang, is an artist who works with computers. "I make abstract paintings on my computer using painting and photography software, then print them out on paper and canvas," she says. "We can do anything on computers today—why not use them to make paintings?"

A / White leather belt \$15

Karim: I picked this belt, about an inch and a half to two inches thick, leather, and it has a really minimal, really nice buckle—white with two chrome little bars on it. The price was so cheap. It's amazing, I don't know how they do it. H&M is like the IKEA of the clothing business.

B / White terry cloth visor \$5

Karim: I tried on a white terry cloth visor. You know, like those '70s visors. I bought it. I'm deejaying at the Cooper-Hewitt so I think I'm going to sport it there.

White represents for me the 21st century and my reactionary position to all the black that designers wear. I've moved into the millennium and I've stuck with white. So, impressively, H&M had enough white for me. White ▶

Megan Lang and Karim Rashid strike a pose in H&M's Madison Avenue storefront. Karim thinks "the price points are good," while Megan says, "H&M is fun if you just want to wear something that is trendy that you are not going to keep for the rest of your life."





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Big Box

is really in this year in Europe, and I think I started it.

Really, I did. You know, I'm over in Europe all the time. Everybody keeps walking up to me, "Wow, I love the way you dress." I've got some amazing shoes and my eyeglasses—well, I've got some beautiful eyeglasses.

C / Overcoat \$40

Megan: The first thing I picked was a lightweight jacket that is kind of tweedy looking, and sort of military style. It has nice details and is really flattering on the body.

With coats or outerwear, pockets are crucial, and the pockets on this jacket are well placed and big, so you can put stuff in there. The breast pockets have a button and would be good for your cell phone. The pockets at the waistline are open, but because they are deep enough and high enough, if you bent over or sat down, nothing would fall out. They are at the perfect spot.

D / White pants for men \$39

Karim: I love white pants. This pair is skateboarding and made of white nylon. What I like about them is the waistband is actually suit lining, but the rest of the pant is not. It's kind of a pin-striped, classic men's suit lining. It's just exposing a detail.

This idea of exposing details is taking on a movement that I thought was amazing. Comme des Garçons and Anne Demeulemeister were doing this—deconstructing clothes and showing the details on the outside.

E / Knit skullcap \$5

Megan: I've been looking for one of these for a long time. I have very flat hair, and when I'm having a bad hair day, these are perfect. You can wake up, wash your face, put that thing on, and look hip. I got the black one because black blends in, whereas white is more like "Hey, look at my head." It's cotton, it's breathable, and it doesn't itch.

E / Pink sunglasses \$5

Megan: These are totally outrageous and I thought, No way are these going to look good on me, 'cause I have a small head, but they look cool. It's interesting to find these kinds of universal things. I don't know how they manage to make a pair of sunglasses that look good on everyone. What I like about them is they are more like wearing eye shadow—putting a bit of color on your face.

Some of the stuff in H&M you look at and you go, "Oh my god, that is a knockoff of something else," but these glasses are their own thing. ■

"The thing about glasses is, you're always breaking them, sitting on them, losing them in a cab, so I figure for \$5, why not?"




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Istanbul: Prosperous on the Bosphorus



The waterfront home—a 21st-century interior wrapped in a 19th-century exterior—is referred to as the “Flooded House.” Both the indoor and outdoor pools bring in water from the Bosphorus Strait.

Istanbul is schizophrenic, bipolar even. It straddles two continents, resulting in a culture that is both ancient and modern, European and Asian, religious and secular, traditional and avant-garde. The Gulcelik home, located on the Bosphorus Strait, seems a built representation of that complexity and contradiction. The striking 9,000-square-foot home, with four bedrooms, two living rooms, five bathrooms, indoor and outdoor pools, and a 12,000-square-foot garden with a view, started out in the 19th century as a modest residence for priests. Four years ago, Selim and Emine Gulcelik bought the building, approached architect Gokhan Avcioğlu, founder of gad architecture (Global Architecture Development), and asked him to transform the old wood structure into “a nice and functional house.”

“Our greatest challenge was to make a modern living space within the footprint of the old one,” explains Avcioğlu, who had to work within the restrictions of an ordinance passed in 1983 prohibiting new construction on the Bosphorus. His solution was to preserve the frame of the Gulceliks’ old building so that even the measurements of the windows were the same. “We preserved the

old frame but added new living areas underneath, like a cellar, a garage, an indoor swimming pool, and a gym,” says Avcioğlu. “We made the original house contemporary by using steel and concrete together with wood. What we really like best is the way the old relates with the new.”

Selim, 34, and Emine, 33, live in the house with their two-year-old daughter, Lal, and their golden retriever, Ralph. “Istanbul is where we were born and raised, though we both went to university abroad,” Emine explains. “It is the place where our families and friends are, where we feel at home.”

Describe your typical day.

We wake up early because of Lal, around 7:30. Selim, whose family owns Enka, a construction company that builds buildings, bridges, and highways in Istanbul, works in an office that’s about a ten-minute drive from here. That is very convenient, as Istanbul is quite big. After Selim goes to work, I go to the gym and then, after lunch, to the park with Lal. In the evening we spend time at home and often give dinner parties for our friends. ▶

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Istanbul's Derin Design custom-made a lot of the Gulceliks' furniture, like the bed and seating unit shown above. Selim and Emine both grew up in modern-furniture-filled households.



How did you become interested in modern design? How did you choose your architect?

We grew up with classic modern furniture and really like simple, sleek, and functional design. We wanted to build a comfortable, cozy, and functional house where we could mix the old with the new and modern. Choosing gad was a very easy decision. We like gad's approach and designs. Their style is very similar to ours. Gokhan Avcioglu is a good friend of ours. We believe that he's talented and open to new designs and ideas, but at the same time very practical.

What do you like best about your house?

Our daughter Lal has quite a few favorite places; she is the one who thoroughly enjoys every inch of the house. In the summer, she spends time in the garden with Ralph and she has swum in the indoor pool every night since she was two months old. We love the garden and the swimming pools, which we use year-round.

How did you choose the neighborhood? What do you like most about living there?

We really like our neighborhood, because it is both central and quiet. We chose to live here because it simply had everything we were looking for. We have almost two acres of land with a great view. The location is also very convenient—right in the heart of the city and yet away from the noise of traffic. Istanbul is a very mixed and cosmopolitan city and our neighborhood (Kurucesme) is a good example of that. Just down the hill is Ortakoy, one of the most attractive tourist spots in Istanbul.

What are your favorite places in Istanbul?

We stay home more now that we have Lal, but we like to go to the Ninja restaurant for sushi, and for more eclectic cuisine, either Changa or Downtown. We like to explore Beyoglu, the old part of the city.

This city where old meets the new is always alive and is one of the cultural centers of Europe. And of course it has the Bosphorus, which looks absolutely different and beautiful every season. ■



Tea and Dervishes

Changa Restaurant

Siraselviler Cad. 87/1 Taksim Changa ("mix" in Swahili) is as much a study in contradictions as the city where it's located. Housed in an original Art Nouveau building, its stunning and decidedly modern interior was designed by gad in 1999. The menu is a fusion of contemporary international and traditional Turkish cuisines.

Kapali Carsi (Grand Bazaar)

It's a magnet for tourists, of course, but the locals still come, too. This vibrant and frenetic marketplace has been luring shoppers since the 15th century. On your visit you're guaranteed an offer of fragrant apple tea as you peruse the piles of kilims. You'll also find spices, jewelry, antiques, and leather goods.

Galat Mevlevihanesi (Whirling Dervish Hall)

Dervishes still whirl here on the last Sunday afternoon of each month. The unassuming *tekke* (dervish lodge) was built in 1491 and rebuilt in 1766 after a disastrous fire; today, trance-inducing spins notwithstanding, it is a scenic and restful place to pause in the midst of the hustle and bustle of this cosmopolitan city.

Tünel Square

At the end of the Tünel train line on the city's west end is Istanbul's version of Paris' Left Bank. The area is filled with cafés, open-air restaurants, galleries, music venues, and lots of great bookstores.

"The unusual sculptures in the garden were gad architecture's fantastic idea," says Emine. The ovoid shapes are skylights placed over the indoor swimming pool. They bring natural light in from the outside during the day and cast reflections on the pool.

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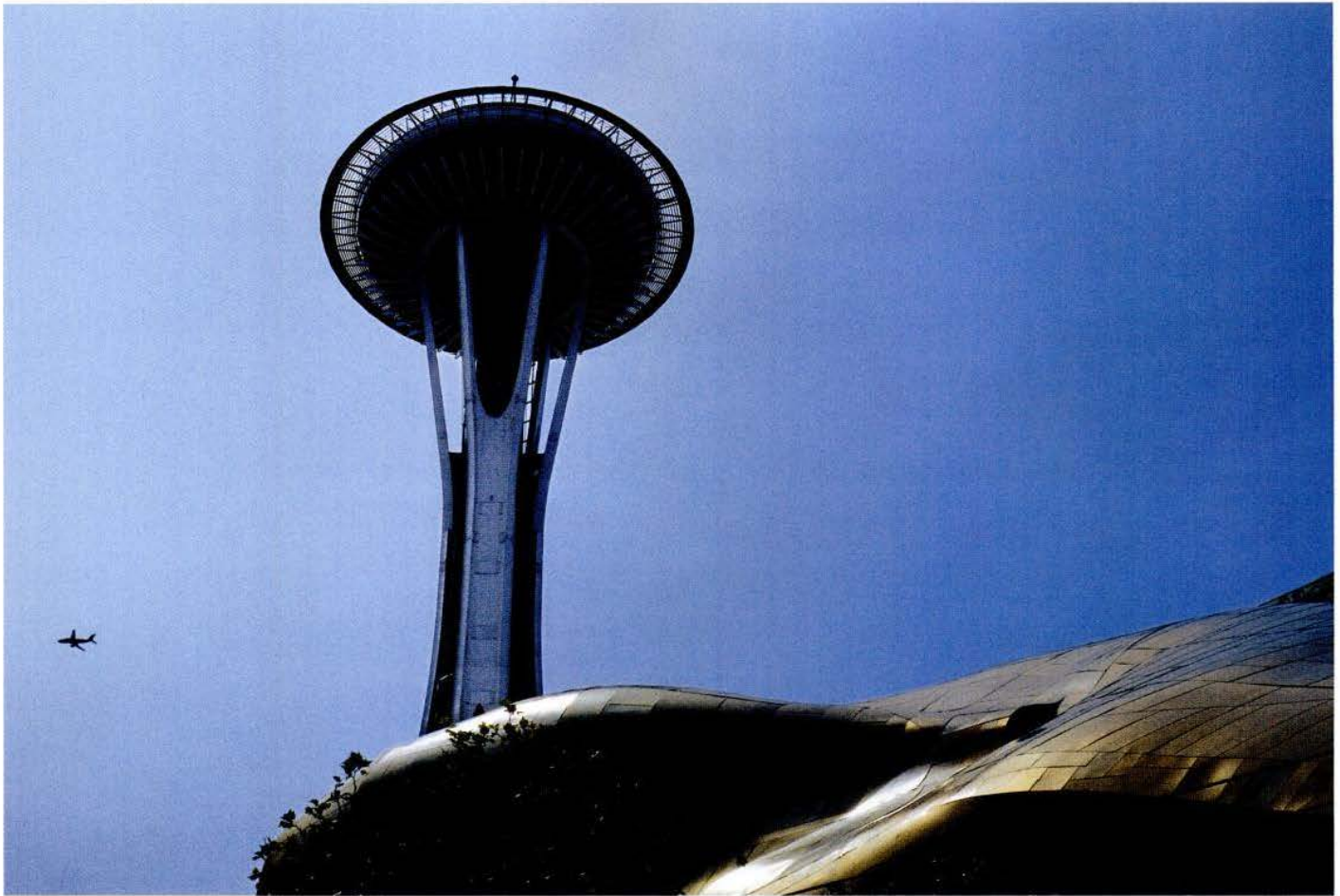
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Northwest by Northwest

Don't let the Space Needle's retro-modernism fool you—Seattle is a serious place for classic mid-century design. The city's relative youth and lack of strong architectural traditions made it fertile ground for a regional derivation of modernism that reflected the power of Seattle's spectacular natural setting.

Paul Thiry was the first architect to introduce the International Style to Seattle with his own house (1935), an unadorned white stucco cube. Interest in modernism expanded during a postwar building boom when Thiry, Paul Hayden Kirk, Wendell Lovett, Victor Steinbrueck, and others defined a Northwest Style that mixed equal measures of Mies van der Rohe, traditional Japanese architecture, and native natural materials. This emerging body of work was so cohesive that *Architectural Record* devoted its April 1953 issue to area houses featuring revealed post-and-beam structures, large expanses of glass, and close integration with the landscape.

The Northwest Style, however, never made the leap from small-scale suburban houses, schools, libraries, and medical clinics to larger projects. Most of the towers downtown are Mies knock-offs designed by out-of-town

firms. The best example is the Norton Building (1956–59) by Myron Goldsmith of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The Space Needle was built for the 1962 World's Fair at what is now Seattle Center, the city's entertainment hub. After the fair, many of the buildings were converted to new uses, including high-modernist Minoru Yamasaki's U.S. Science Pavilion (now the Pacific Science Center).

Cycles of economic boom and bust are part of Seattle's history, with corresponding architectural feast or famine. In the early 1970s, huge layoffs at Boeing inspired the billboard "Will the last person leaving Seattle turn out the lights." During the 1990s, Microsoft's success created hundreds of young high-tech millionaires, who built private Xanadus and funded the expansion of local cultural institutions. While many plum commissions have recently been awarded to carpetbaggers (the Henry Art Gallery expansion and renovation [1997] to Gwathmey Siegel, the Seattle Central Public Library [2003] to Rem Koolhaas, and the Olympic Sculpture Park [2004] to Weiss/Manfredi), the boom has also fed local architects dedicated to a modernism that conveys the zeitgeist of the Pacific Northwest. ►

Seattle's Space Needle, built as a symbol of the fabled 21st century for the 1962 World's Fair, is eclipsed in the photo above by one of the Experience Music Project's many steel-clad bumps. Designed by Frank Gehry, the EMP was built as a symbol of Microsoft-enriched Seattle and completed in time for the real 21st century.



bath



cabinet



door



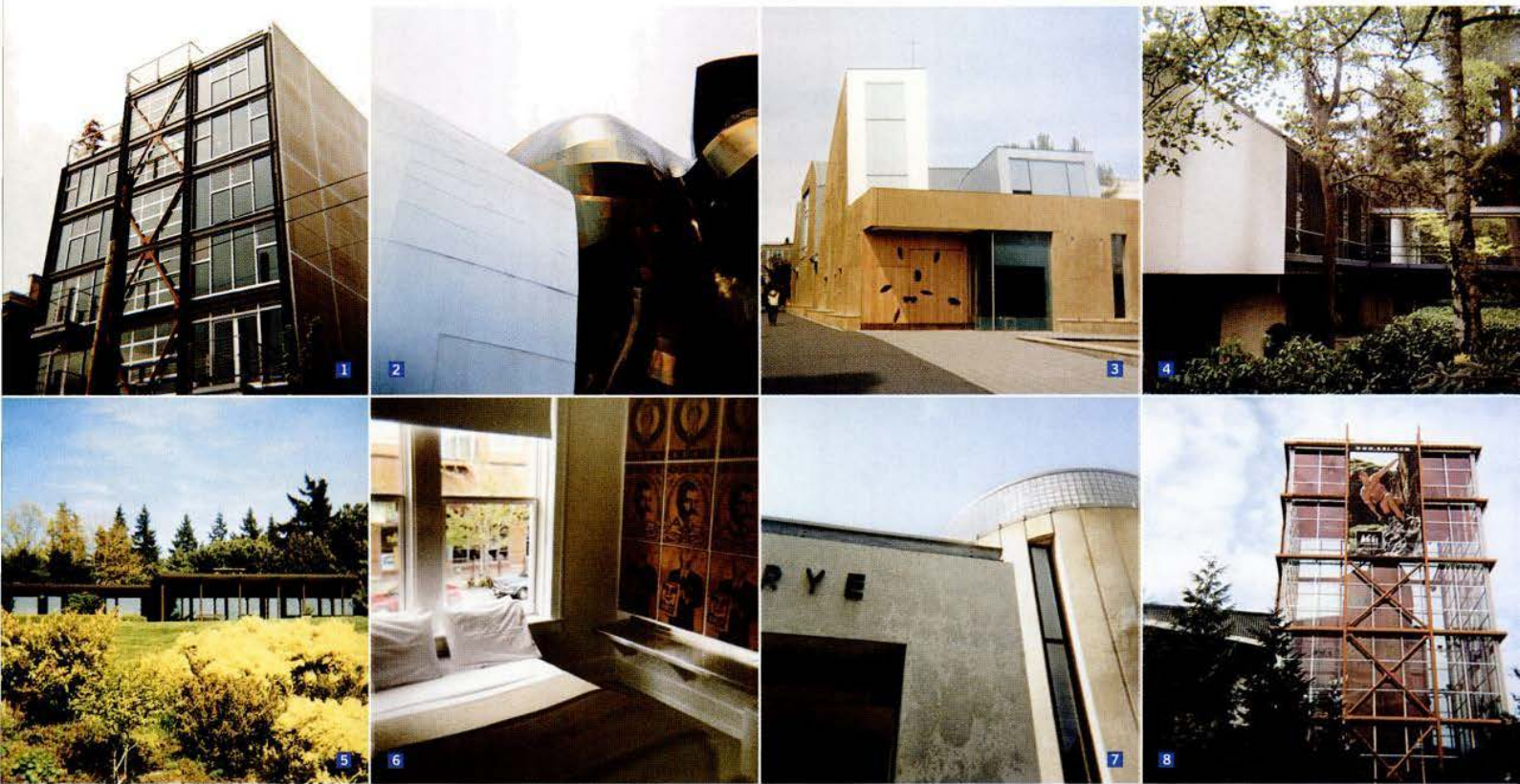
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1. In the Pike/Pine neighborhood, **1310 E. Union** (2001) is a loft-style glass-and-steel condominium project by the Miller/Hull Partnership, known for their distinctly Northwest modern designs. Working with a young first-time developer and retired Microsoft executive, they created their best in-city project yet: an exposed-steel frame with brick-red X-bracing infilled with glass and glazed garage doors that roll up to open whole walls of the units. Inside, double-height spaces with mezzanines have a raw industrial feel with exposed-concrete floors, steel beams, and steel deck ceilings.

2. The Experience Music Project (2000), at 325 5th Avenue North, is the Frank Gehry-designed rock 'n' roll museum bankrolled by Microsoft tycoon (and Jimi Hendrix devotee) Paul Allen. Its rippling steel panels—painted sky blue, cherry red, and iridescent purple—are so geometrically complex that only recent advances in computer-aided manufacturing made them constructable. Inside, the state-of-the-art interactive exhibits include Sound Lab,

where computer-driven tutorials allow novices to play any instrument, and On Stage, where wannabes can perform for a virtual audience. Most of the interior is a black box, but the swoopy bar, café, and gift shop are classic Gehry designs.

3. Seattle University's **Chapel of St. Ignatius** at 900 Broadway (1997) is Steven Holl's first and perhaps best major commission in the U.S. Holl (a Washington native) translated the Jesuit saint's religious imagery into a dramatic roofscape of light scoops that emerge from a concrete box. Huge slabs of tilt-up concrete fit together like a jigsaw puzzle to form an inscrutable exterior. Inside, Day-Glo lenses in the light scoops cast patches of otherworldly color around the sculptural white plaster interior. Across Lake Washington, Holl's Bellevue Art Museum (2001), a leisurely corkscrew of unfolding space within a barn-red concrete container, brings urban sophistication to its suburban shopping mall context.

4. The University of Washington's Faculty Center (1958-60), just off of Stevens

Way, is a classic example of the Northwest Style. Designers Paul Hayden Kirk and Victor Steinbrueck were part of a group of U.W.-educated architects who led the development of a regional interpretation of the International Style. The center, with its flat roof, modular steel structure, and glass expanses, transcends its references to Mies van der Rohe and traditional Japanese architecture. The club is organized around a central courtyard on the edge of a steep hillside, and the dining room has a spectacular view of snow-capped Mt. Rainier.

5. Hilltop (1947-50) is a planned community of custom houses designed by some of Seattle's best early modern architects, including Wendell Lovett, Paul Hayden Kirk, and Fred Bassetti. The cooperative development was founded by a group of architects and University of Washington faculty who bought 63 acres on the east shore of Lake Washington. They sited the 39 houses to preserve views, privacy, and the natural setting and established the informal, contemporary character of the designs. A few

of the houses have been remodeled but most remain as intended: simple post-and-beam platforms in the woods.

6. The Ace Hotel (1999) at 2423 1st Avenue, a fusion of European pension and minimalist luxury, is representative of the latest wave of Seattle modernism. It's on the second floor of a former maritime flophouse in Belltown, a stylish neighborhood on the fringe of downtown, studded with upscale restaurants, clubs, and cyber-cafés. The Ace's white-on-white interior, stainless steel fittings, and picture-postcard photomurals provide a low-key back-drop for visiting DJs and filmmakers. For economy, as well as local flavor, many of the furnishings are salvaged from unlikely sources. The vintage modern Thonet bench in the lobby once graced an old airport lounge.

7. Local modern master Paul Thiry designed the original **Frye Art Museum** (1952), 704 Terry Avenue, in the International Style to house an extensive private collection of 19th- and 20th-century representational art in a free public museum.

Over the years, the cohesiveness of the original design was lost under a series of additions until a major renovation and expansion in 1997 by Olson Sundberg Architects. The architects created a sophisticated new public face for the museum, with an austere concrete arcade, an outdoor reflecting pool, and a dramatic domed rotunda.

8. On the edge of downtown, **Recreational Equipment, Inc.'s** 65-foot-tall indoor climbing rock, located at 222 Yale Avenue North, is visible from Interstate 5, a siren's call to motorists stuck in traffic. The rock is part of the try-before-you-buy philosophy that makes this flagship store (1996) one of Seattle's top tourist destinations as well as an example of the greening of the Northwest Style. Designed by Mithun Architects, REI's heavy-timber framing and corrugated-metal siding combine references to modernism, the region's lumber mills, and sustainable design principles. The result is pure fun as mountain bikes zip along a test track around a waterfall powered by harvested rainwater. **E p. 114**

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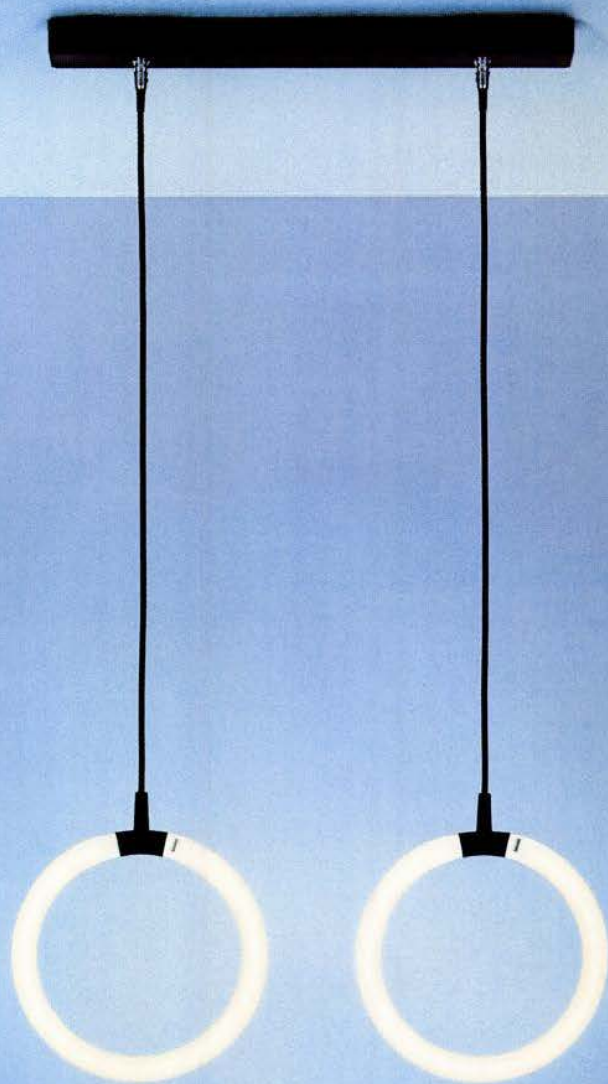


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Friendly Rings of Krypton

The krypton-filled tubes of the Lumalash lamp by Dutch designer Henk Stallinga produce the warmest, most full-spectrum glow you can get from a fluorescent fixture. To control the brightness of the light, you simply grasp one of the bulbs and pull. [p. 114](#)

Generally speaking, when perfectly ordinary products like irons or electric razors are converted into “smart” appliances by the addition of a microchip or two, they become insufferable about their newfound intellect, flashing their LEDs and beeping at every opportunity.

Not so the Lumalash light from eccentric Dutch product designer Henk Stallinga, best known for his goofball approach to everyday objects: A sponge doubles as a vase, a claw hammer becomes a coat hook. This exquisitely elemental twinset of krypton-filled bulbs, which dangle like gymnasts’ rings, is controlled by a new force in the lighting world, the “digital electronic ballast.”

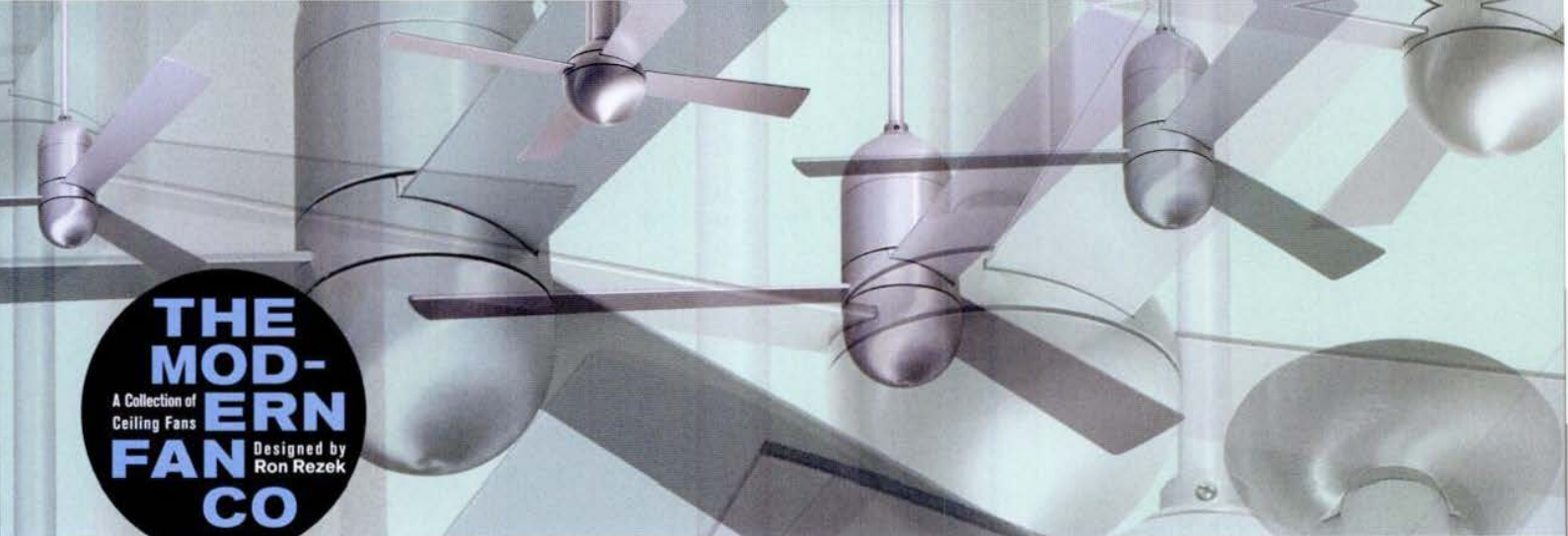
An ordinary ballast is a device that regulates the voltage and the current in any gaseous lamp, like a neon or a fluorescent. By making the ballast digital, you can begin to control the light in ways that are intuitive and strangely sensual. Initially, Stallinga’s firm developed the necessary hardware and software to control the digital ballast, but ultimately they wound up using an off-the-shelf ballast manufactured by Osram.

With the Lumalash, controlling the intensity of the light is all about touching and pulling. “If you pull one of the tube lights, the lights dim as long as you keep on pulling,” says Stallinga. “If you then pull one of the tubes again, and again keep on pulling it, the lights will grow brighter and brighter.”

In other words, the design of this light encourages you to do the previously unthinkable: to rest your hands on the luminescent bulb. It seems reckless to actually handle something so fragile, to grasp something that a lifetime of experience with incandescent bulbs suggests will be flesh-searing.

“I agree that it is a little counterintuitive for most people to touch a light tube the way you touch the Lumalash,” Stallinga admits. But then he defends the logic of his innovation: “In a way, it is designed to play with one’s expectations, but it seems more logical to pull the lamp itself in order to switch it on or off than to walk over to a wall, far away from the lamp, and switch it off or on by means of a button that is not visually connected to the lamp.”

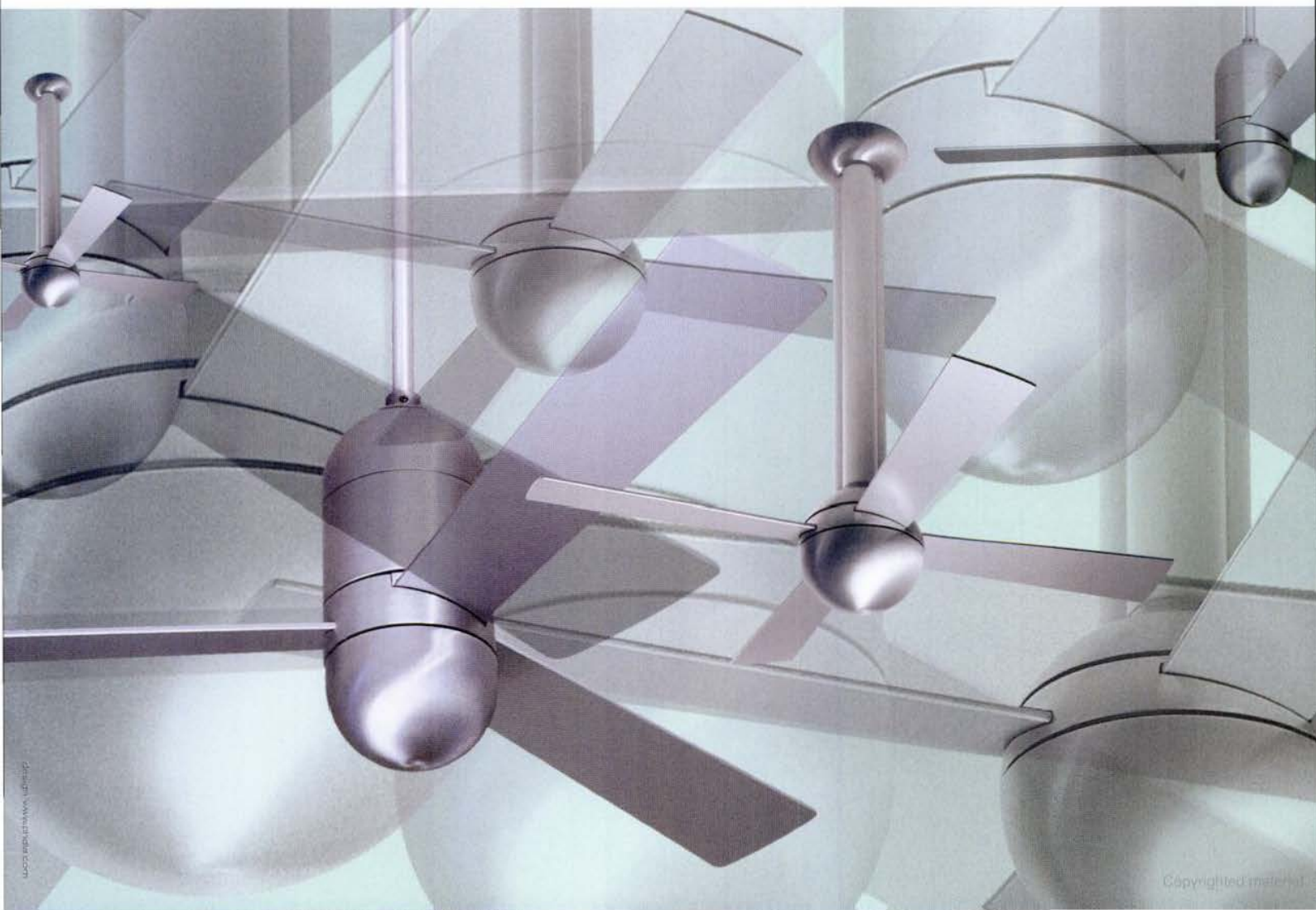
In any case, the inert gas in this light is always cool. As is Stallinga’s quiet, understated use of digital technology. ■

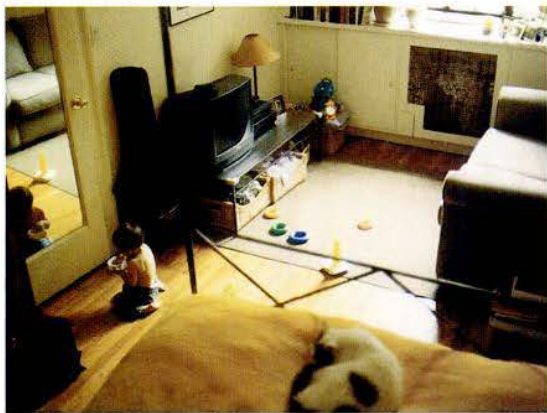


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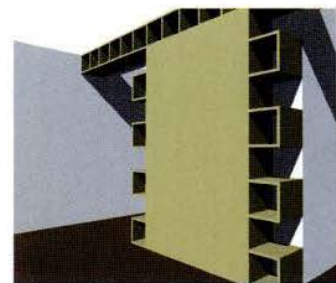
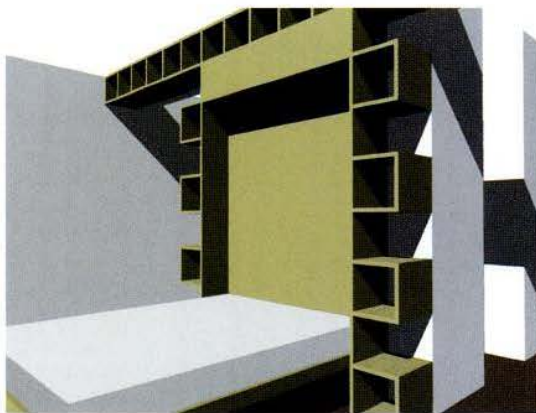
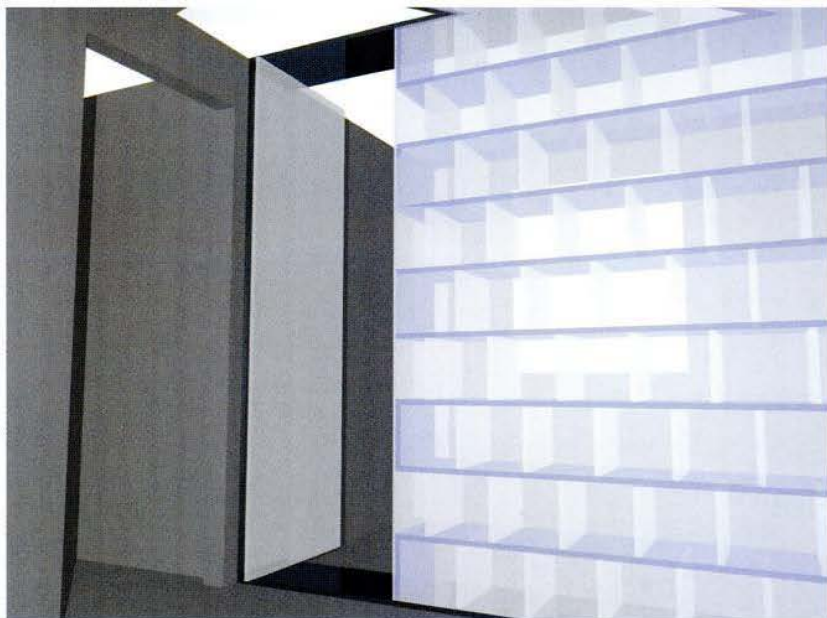




Hello Dwell,

We're two adults with an 11-month-old baby. We love our Manhattan neighborhood but don't want to double our rent to get a two-bedroom apartment (\$2,750 in our building!). We've decided to stay put in our 650-square-foot apartment, but must make some changes because Lucia will soon need her own sleep/play space. (The crib is currently in the living room, next to the bookcase. She has already ripped apart the Latin American section and now has her eye on Freud.)

—Karen



Make Room for Baby

Dear Karen,

We sympathize, especially since the American way of child rearing too often revolves around taking up lots of space. Whether it's buying baby food in bulk or building playgrounds in McMansion basements, we're encouraged to indulge our inner infant—so acquiring stuff takes precedence over planning for it.

But once upon a time, one-bedrooms worked for families of three, or even eight. The Lower East Side Tenement Museum Encyclopedia reports that the Rogarshevskys, a typical 1900s immigrant family, squeezed into a one-bedroom like this: "The four boys slept in the front room on a couch which was extended by placing chairs next to it. The two daughters slept on a cot near the interior window. Abraham and Fannie slept in the back room. In the summer, the children would sleep on the fire escape, or on the roof." So there's hope for you, too.

To address your problem, we called architect Brian Messana, of Messana O'Rourke Architects, because the firm specializes in Plexiglas room dividers—excellent tools for making one room into two. But when Messana came to scope out the situation, he revealed another

affinity: Murphy beds. He points out that a Murphy bed would allow your main room to double as your bedroom; the current bedroom would then go to Lucia.

Messana's other suggestion is to build a frosted-Plexiglas wall that would divide your bedroom into two—one for the parents and one for Lucia. Plexiglas walls insulate noise remarkably well. "And," he adds, "you could build shelves on Lucia's side, for toys, which would create an interesting shadow effect."

You can follow one or both of Messana's suggestions without a contractor. If you order a Murphy bed, the company will come to your house and set it up. For walls of frosted plexi, send specifications to any place that deals with plastics, and have a muscular shop-savvy friend help you install them. "You can do it yourself," Messana says, "which is really gratifying"—though with an 11-month-old underfoot, it might be more gratifying to get help. ■

Got a question? Send it to:

Dwell Labs, 99 Osgood Place, San Francisco, CA 94133.
Or email labs@dwellmag.com.

Clockwise from top left: Lucia and Oscar, the cat, in the current bedroom; Messana's suggestion for dividing it (a translucent shelved Plexiglas wall with a door on the left); Messana's image of a Murphy bed for the main room, in both positions. **E** p. 114



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When we heard that Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura shut down his official residence, our first thought was not political squabble but design opportunity. Maybe the governor wanted to wake up the Midwest with something shocking and new.

This Is Not My Beautiful House



From the Associated Press, May 1, 2002: "Gov. Jesse Ventura shut down the governor's mansion, laid off most of the staff and declared it unavailable for all but limited official functions. The governor said lawmakers had left him no choice but to close the 20-room English Tudor-style residence when they cut his spending and reduced his security budget. Lawmakers said they might seek an injunction to reopen the mansion."

Governor Jesse Ventura: It was done because of political cuts that were made in a time of recession, in deficit to my office and also to my security at a time when security was being heightened all over the country. I took a hard look at it and asked, "What's necessary and what's nice?" Well, the governor's residence is nice, but it's certainly not necessary.

Dwell: According to the newspaper reports, you didn't really live there anyway.

Why would one live there unless you're a career politician and expect to be elected again and again? You come into these jobs with a four-year limit on them. I'm certainly not going to sell my private home and move all my personal items into a residence that I may only occupy for four years. And my wife also has a horse business—she raises and trains saddlebred horses. . . .

There's no room for horses at the governor's mansion?

Certainly not. It's in the heart of St. Paul. And most governors haven't lived there full-time. It serves a purpose as a ceremonial home. . . . It's a place that I would live in when it's inclement weather and I couldn't make it home. And I would eat there on numerous occasions, because it was so close to the capitol. I would like to add that I'm charged for every meal. Every meal that I have at the governor's residence is deducted out of my paycheck. See, a lot of people don't realize, they think that you get these jobs and somehow you get this free ride to food and shelter and all this. You don't. You have to pay for it like anyone else does.

Do you have to pay rent on the governor's mansion?

No. You get that.

Are there things that would make it more homelike or more desirable for you?

No, because of the fact that you know it's temporary. You

don't own it. You're just occupying it. It's there as a convenience. Like when Vice President Al Gore came to town, I offered him the governor's residence because of its security. So it serves a good purpose, don't get me wrong. But would I move into it permanently? Absolutely not.

Do you have a favorite room in the mansion?

I would probably say the outside porch off the side of the home. It was very nice to be able to go out there by the garden and smoke a cigar in the evening, and it was screened in so you didn't have to worry about mosquitoes.

Is there anything that would make the governor's residence a better place to spend four years . . . or maybe eight years?

It's a catch-22 because it's an old home that will require huge amounts of money to renovate. And the amount of money to renovate it is more than the actual value of the home. Would it be better to just knock it down and build one specifically designed for entertaining with a ballroom and the types of things that you would do at a governor's residence? Truthfully, I would say that would be the better road to take. But you have people that believe that it is a historic building.

Maybe you could get someone like Frank Gehry or Santiago Calatrava to design one.

Whatever. But like I said, it will be a choice that the legislature will have to make. My guess is that they would never build a new one.

That's too bad. I think they're missing an opportunity.

Yeah, I do, too. ■

As we went to press it was reported that Governor Ventura will not run for a second term.

Which House Costs \$120,000?

Answer: They both do. Here's how one young couple who refused to buy into the developer version of a dream home built one of their very own.

Burleson, Texas

Project: LaBry & Young Residence
Architect: Richard Wintersole
Location: Burleson, Texas







At left, the view from the front door shows how Wintersole's design makes the most of the house's 950 square feet. The furniture helps, too. As Mike explains, "These pieces don't consume visual space." Above, a rather precarious catwalk leads to the bedroom. Mike designed the entertainment center (below) with components from Elfa.



In the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, there is no shortage of three-bedroom, two-car-garage homes for sale on newly created streets with names like Running Brook Drive and Brittany Place. It's almost a given that young couples in search of their first home go straight to developments by companies like Centex, Dissmore, History Maker Homes, or any one of the many builders in the area. These homes are all spacious, well-appointed, and reasonably priced, to be sure—but each seems nearly indistinguishable from the next.

"People don't want to make choices or take chances," Gayla LaBry observes. "That's why they buy those developer homes."

Gayla and her husband, Michael Young, who describes himself to me as "a strong, aggressive personality" (as Gayla nods her head vigorously in agreement), wanted something different. "I think outside the box," says Mike who works as a project engineer for Acme Brick in Fort Worth. "You see that at work and in the way our home turned out."

Mike and Gayla, who works in finance, met during college in Lafayette, Louisiana, and in 1996, after a year in Germany, moved to Fort Worth. In a town where football and church are the primary cultural activities, this couple has made more treks through Europe than PBS' Rick Steves. When they accumulated \$1,000 worth of books and magazines to research ideas for their new home, the stack included not only *Southern Living* but *Abitare* and *Domus*. And while their peers were happily handing over down payments for 3,000 square feet of brass-fixture, shag-carpeted colonials, Mike and Gayla presented an architect with their idea of a dream home, hired him, and paid for the whole thing in cash.

When they made the decision to build rather than buy, Mike and Gayla chose a lot in Burleson, about 20 minutes south of Fort Worth. In contrast to the brick-veneered homes in the unabated sprawl of "affordable luxury" housing developments clustered off I-35, their little neighborhood is a refreshing pocket of individuality. "I wish I'd been born here," says Gayla. "I feel like I was." The houses in this working-class community are unremarkable but unique. As you turn off the main drag just past Wal-Mart, there's a newly minted colonial, a '70s-era bunker with grass growing on the roof, and a modest ranch house featuring an artful if puzzling pattern of undulating bricks. It's a libertarian's dream here—people just let each other be. So when the couple began work on their 950-square-foot house-as-loft project on Pecan Drive, the only thing anyone asked was, "You're not putting a trailer on the lot, are you?"

Mike was working at that time for a glass company, where he had supervised the construction of a steel-frame addition to the factory. He was fascinated by the technique, and for a variety of reasons ranging from aesthetics to termite-resistance, he was intent on using a steel frame for his own house. All he needed was an architect. ▶



Details, shown clockwise from the top left corner: ground-floor window detail, exposed ducts, a plywood bridge that connects the staircase to the bedroom, sandblasted steel railings, exterior Galvalume siding, frosted glass panels for privacy, industrial diamond-plate stairs, shelving system by Elfa, and in the center, view of the side entrance.

The Fort Worth AIA put the adventurous couple in touch with architect Richard Wintersole. It was a perfect match, and since Rick's idea of marketing himself is "sitting by the phone and waiting for it to ring," the Young/LaBry commission came as a pleasant surprise.

Architecture is a second career for the mild-mannered and wry-humored Texan, who was originally trained as a microbiologist. The determination and resolve that comes with starting out in a new field later in life has no doubt aided his efforts to work in a modernist vernacular in a community reared to desire gabled roofs. His own home in the suburb of Aledo, Texas, which he shares with wife, Margaret, a journalist, and son Colin, 17, is an elegant corrugated-metal-and-glass structure with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that takes its inspiration from Louis Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum. "We're probably considered to be communists or something out where we are," says Rick, who is just completing construction on a house for a client in Keller, Texas, that has industrial stairs and a camouflage roof. "Margaret has to hide her subscription to *Mother Jones*."

Mike and Gayla were clear about what they wanted—something clean, modern, and minimalist—and knew what they could afford. "We wanted something unique," says Mike. "We didn't want to copy someone's design, but we also weren't interested in something so different that it didn't look right." At \$120,000, the budget was small, but because the site was located in an unincorporated part of town, the codes and restrictions that normally dictate home construction were not in place, so Rick knew he could have more freedom with his design.

Mike enthusiastically marketed the steel-frame option to Rick, who at first wasn't convinced. "I don't think the day that I sat down with a blank piece of paper I was thinking it was going to be a metal building," he explains. But when contractors' bids started coming in, the steel-framing turned out to be not only the clients' preference but also the most cost-effective option.

Rick's initial reticence had been based on his prior experience with steel companies. "When I'd dealt with them before," he explains, "they basically just wanted to sell steel. The closest thing these companies have to an architect is the guy who does the CAD work for them. And once the house is complete, it's like you're not supposed to know that it's steel anymore. It's supposed to look like everybody else's house."

Houston's Classic Steel Frame Homes was willing to transform Rick's working drawings into a steel frame for the house, though the company—which manufactures a line of Tudorish homes with names like the Palace and the Oxford 10Plex—wondered why the client didn't want to just pick an existing design from their brochure. Once the fabrication was complete, the company loaded up everything from the floor joists to the roof purlins, trucked it from Houston to Burleson, and laid it out in the yard like an outside set of Tinkertoys. The frame ▶

Steel Frames

Architects like Richard Neutra, Albert Frey, Pierre Koenig, and the Eameses may have all designed houses with it, but, historically, steel framing has held a small market share among single-family homes built in the United States. However for a variety of reasons—most notably the rising cost (and dwindling supply) of lumber and the stable price of steel—this type of fabrication is gaining popularity in the world of residential architecture.

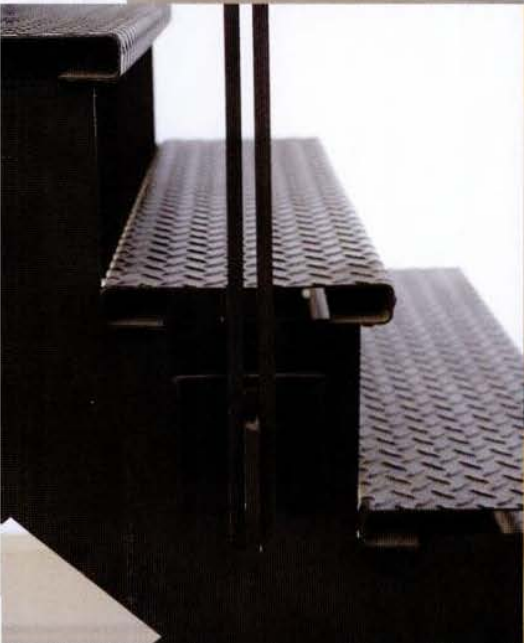
Why? Steel possesses the highest strength-to-weight ratio of any building material utilized today, and is one of the strongest, most durable, and

economically manufactured materials available. It doesn't rot, warp, or split. It makes for straighter walls and less cracking in drywall and plaster. It's both fire-resistant and termite-proof. Steel framing produces less waste on the job site. And it's lightweight, making it easier to handle than wood frames.

For the Young/LaBry residence, Classic Steel Frame Homes adapted one of their standardized systems, usually used for conventional models, and fabricated a steel frame based on architect Rick Wintersole's working drawings. The red iron frame (above),

which was bolted rather than welded together, supports the roof and floors of the house; galvanized metal studs fill in the spaces between. The benefits of this building system quickly became apparent to Rick, and since completing the steel-frame house in 2000, he has built two more.

"I really love the aesthetic of steel," Rick explains. "I can't understand why people want to cover it up. It's like telling a lie. You have this wonderful thing and then you cover it. Being able to see the steel or any other building material, you're telling the story of how the house was built." —A.A.



was assembled in a day and a half. The house was completed in about six months.

The house is refreshingly different from the developer homes down the road. Essentially, Rick created a distinctive urban loft space within the confines of a Fort Worth suburb. Its industrial roots are exalted rather than hidden: The exterior is expressed in Galvalume siding and simple white stucco. Interior details include sandblasted steel and maple railings, galvanized diamond-plate stair treads, exposed ducts, and a bridge of steel and plywood decking upstairs. An uncomplicated palette—white, blue, light wood (mostly maple), and metal—used inside and out maximizes the square footage and natural light.

The absence of code restrictions allowed Rick to get away with a few more space-enhancing features. There are no egregious safety infractions—though walking across the open catwalk that leads from the top of the stairs to the bedroom, one is hit with a heady dose of vertigo. The ability to fudge things like stair depth and handrail heights allowed the architect to place the stairway parallel to the house's front façade, creating a fluid line from one end of the house to the other. Had the grade been to code, the stair would have been the first thing you saw when you entered through the front door.

Most of the fixtures and furnishings came from stores like IKEA, Pottery Barn, and The Container Store, but Mike and Gayla splurged at Smink, Inc., in Dallas, on a B&B Italia sleeper sofa (Mike was so entranced with the way it opens out and closes, he dropped to the floor to show me how the internal mechanism works) and two sleek side chairs by Artelano. "We deliberately chose furniture with no arms," Mike told me. "Everything we chose had to do with creating visual space."

Another clever space-saver was the configuration of the master bath upstairs. Rick wasn't sure how he could fit both a shower and a tub in the space allotted; Mike suggested putting the bath in one half of the room and creating an open shower area by installing two shower heads on the wall that faces the tub. It was also Mike's idea to install a stacking washer/dryer unit right between the bathroom and the closet. This arrangement, Mike explains enthusiastically, "completely eliminates clothes migration!"

Whether they're raving about the guest bathroom ("a perfect expression of minimalism!") or the ceiling fixtures they got from Lowe's for \$12 a pop, the couple's eyes light up when they talk about their home. "People say it's too small," says Gayla. "'You'll never be able to sell it.' But we're not worried. We're not going anywhere for a while and when we do, there will be someone else just like us, a couple with a cat, who will want to move in."

For now, Mike can't wait to make an addition out back—from a shipping container.

Allison Arieff is the senior editor of Dwell.

At right, the couple's bedroom includes a cool bed on wheels from IKEA. The strategic placement of the washer/dryer between the bathroom and closet has drastically reduced the number of orphaned socks. This page, the space-saving

placement of the shower heads and tub in the master bathroom was Mike's idea, but the half-bath off the kitchen is his favorite "because it's so simple." Below, Gayla straightens up in the bedroom.

➤ p. 114





Fort Worth, TX

Fort Worth humor:

What does Dallas have that Fort Worth doesn't?
A nice city 30 miles away.

Square Miles: 300

Population: 198,682

Median Income: \$72,000

Avg. Home Cost: \$106,000

Total Housing Units: 211,035

In March 2000, Fort Worth was hit by a devastating tornado that cut a two-mile swath through the city, killing four and causing over \$400 million worth of damage. The 35-story Bank One Tower (at right), one of only a handful of skyscrapers in the downtown area, was hit particularly hard. Ninety percent of its 3,450 windows were destroyed, many interior walls crumbled, and the wiring was shot. Gaping holes in the building were covered with plywood sheets, earning the building its new moniker, "Plank One Tower." Then came the black mold. Steps were taken to demolish the building—it would have been the tallest building in the world to be imploded—until the owners discovered the asbestos. Now the tower sits, waiting for management companies, construction crews, and owner

Sid Bass to figure out what to do. Meanwhile, legions of birds, who've come to roost in the oddest of aviaries, emit a high-pitched collective chirp that often drowns out city traffic.

The rest of downtown is not nearly so dramatic. Traffic moves; pedestrians don't span the sidewalk. The bulk of the retail and dining establishments are chains like Barnes and Noble, Chilis, and The Chop House. There's not a Starbucks in sight, but several national companies are headquartered here, including Pier One and Radio Shack (which has a corporate headquarters with a sense of humor: It's composed of two obelisks, one spelling out in lights "Radio" and the other "Shack").

Despite the Paul Rudolph and SOM skyscrapers (and a water garden, of all things, by

Philip Johnson), Fort Worth's prized architecture is to be found not here but just about a mile west in the aptly (er, obviously) named Cultural District. Within walking distance are Louis Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum; the Amon Carter Museum, designed by Philip Johnson; a Bucky Fuller dome; and, opening this December, Tadao Ando's imposing new Modern Art Museum.

Why such an embarrassment of cultural riches in this former cow town?

Mike Young has a theory. "There's a saying that 'Fort Worth has better rich people.' They've really contributed a lot to our city. All the museums are free. I'm sure they've done their share of not-so-nice things, but they do a lot for the community.

"People," he adds, "are a lot greedier in Dallas." —A.A.





Calgary, Alberta

Behind the Bungalow

Project: Davignon/Mott Residence

Architect: Office of Research and
Development in Architecture

Location: Calgary, Alberta, Canada

“Yogurt has more culture than Calgary,” explains

Richard Davignon, architect and principal of the Office of Research and Development in Architecture, as he and I cross the Bow River and head toward downtown. We take a left down the main drag. Liquor stores are gated shut. So are the bars. Sidewalks are filled only with streetlight and still shadows. It's 11 P.M. on a Saturday night. “This city, it's like a big office park: Everybody works here but nobody *lives* here.” Davignon pauses. “I want to change that.”

Despite having close to a million inhabitants, Calgary is still a cow town—literally. Second only to oil, cattle is the city's biggest industry. And it shows. The downtown is littered with boot shops and steak restaurants, rodeo-themed bars, and bad-ass pickup trucks. And like their American counterparts in the cow towns—turned—industrial hubs of Dallas or Houston, the cowboys of Calgary have transformed miles of open prairie into an industrial cash cow.

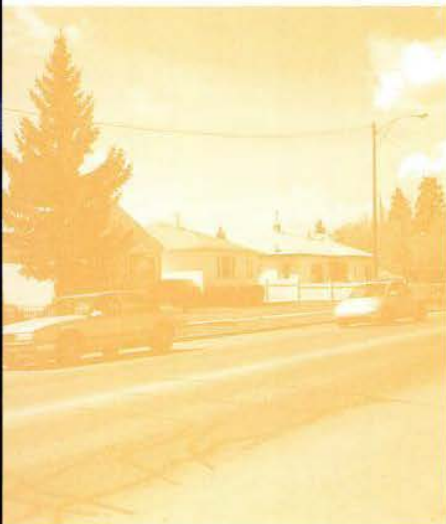
Fluctuations in the oil and cattle industries over the last hundred years have shaped the physical nature of Calgary. The railroad days of the late 19th century brought a few grand hotels and a few sweeping mansions. The oil boom of the '20s brought miles of single-family bungalows. In the '70s, the second oil boom transformed ranches of a million steers into a city of buildings made of

mirrors, and in the '90s, a population surge brought the requisite stucco mini-malls and cookie-cutter tract houses to whatever open space was left. The result of this growth was architecturally diverse neighborhoods totally detached from the city around which they are centered—in other words, a city that acts like a suburb.

Banking on a soon-to-be modernist future for the city, Richard Davignon, 32, and fellow architect Troy Smith, 28, ditched their jobs at a firm in downtown Calgary to open the Office of Research and Development in Architecture in September 2001. Part of their plan is to convince people to live in inner-city Calgary rather than the ever-expanding suburbs surrounding downtown. However, most of the 1930s-era homes that fill the inner city are very small, antiquated, and thus undesirable for the majority of Calgarians. Davignon and Smith hope to change that perception—and Davignon is leading by example.

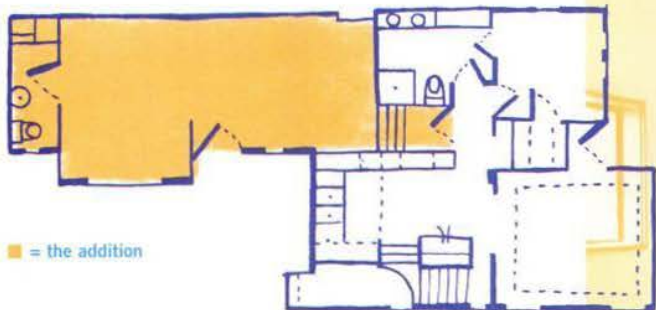
On a Sunday, we head a couple miles north across the Center Street Bridge and enter the Mount Pleasant community of inner-city Calgary, a 10-by-14-block neighborhood of bungalows constructed during the first big oil rush of the mid-'30s. Houses were built small here not because of any lack of space but because for about six months out of the year it's cold as hell. Back then, a big ▶

The winters are frigid and the architectural climate is chilly, but that doesn't prevent architect Richard Davignon from dreaming of a more progressive Calgary. He hopes that the modern addition he's built behind his stucco bungalow is the beginning of a warming trend.



From the street, the Davignon/Mott residence blends in with the sleepy, suburban environs of Mount Pleasant. But behind the white picket fence, something modern is waking up the neighborhood.





■ = the addition

"Ten months out of the year it's not comfortable to be outside," explains Davignon, shown here playing Nintendo during one of those times. The beige chair is by Ligne Roset; the coffee table is the architect's own design.



Natural light is a hot commodity during the long Calgary winters. With oversized windows throughout the garden room and kitchen, the Davignon/Mott residence makes the most of whatever sun the skies have to offer. Below: Helen Mott on a vintage sectional couch. Top right: Mott in the kitchen. Bottom: a view of the kitchen from the backyard.

house meant a big heating bill—a turnoff for homeowners struggling through the Great Depression. “In February, it gets pretty cold—temperatures can hover around zero for the most of the day,” says Davignon, flashing a macho smile, knowing that I, a native Californian, do not register any temperature below 54 degrees.

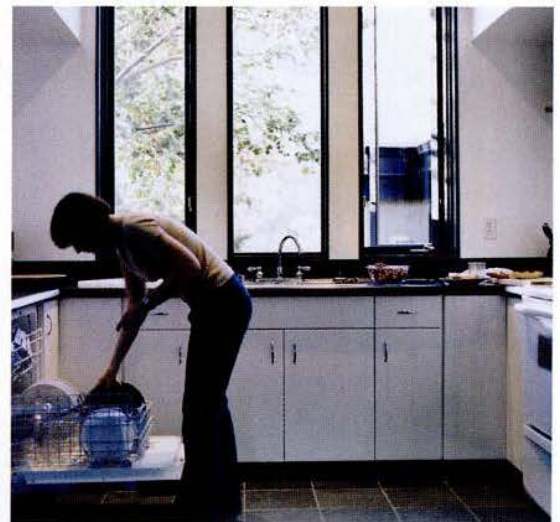
From the front, the house Davignon shares with his wife, Helen Mott, is identical to the houses that surround it: an off-white stucco bungalow with white-gray asphalt shingles, the thin footpath to the front door obstructed by a pine tree and scruffy shrubbery. But the back of the bungalow tells a different story. Jutting out from the left wall of the house is the garden room, a quintessentially modern structure that seems anachronistic in its surroundings. “Canadians are very conservative,” Davignon explains. “Having the more interesting part of the house in the back, more hidden, is just more in line with Canadian character.” Besides, this way it’s legal.

In Calgary, conservative architecture isn’t a choice—it’s the law. The city’s Lot Coverage bylaw requires Mount Pleasant homeowners to keep 55 percent of each lot as open space. These provisions have kept most inner-city neighborhoods spacious and open—a good thing—but have also denied privacy for the homes’ inhabitants.

Separated only by four-foot-high white picket fences, backyards are considered more communal space than private property. Davignon explains: “In Calgary, yards aren’t for hanging out in—they’re for watching your neighbors. I wanted my privacy.”

Davignon and Mott, a project engineer for oil companies, bought their Mount Pleasant bungalow in 1994, for \$85,000 Canadian, a year after they moved to Calgary from Montreal. Their first priority for the 700-square-foot house was to create more space. Fearing that adding a second story would cause a ruckus with the neighbors, the couple opted to move not upward but outward.

Davignon’s initial plan was to build an addition that stretched from the back of the bungalow to the garage in the corner of the backyard. But since every house must, by law, have a standalone garage in the backyard, the city’s Mount Pleasant Planning and Building Department immediately rejected the idea. Davignon then drew up a more humble proposal incorporating a single room to the back of the bungalow. Following “many, many conversations” with the planning department, the plans were approved and construction began in 1998. With strict land-use bylaws and a very limited budget, the room had to be small. But it didn’t have to feel that way. The plan ▶



was to put windows everywhere to give the 15-by-34-foot room access to the natural light and spaciousness afforded by wide-open backyards but also to expand the perceived space of the room, merging it with the backyard. Think Neutra sans the glamour—a place to let the world in but also keep the weather out.

The day that I visit, the weather is an unseasonably warm 80 degrees and gorgeous. Four steps down a thin hallway from the back of the bungalow, the garden room, which was completed in 2000, is warm and radiant in the early summer sun—it not only looks like a patio, it feels like one as we walk around in our socks on the sun-warmed slate floor. I mention that we should be munching tortilla chips and salsa and drinking *mojitos*. Davignon gives me a confused look then hands me a Molson Golden and a bag of ketchup-flavored potato chips.

For fluidity, the doors, cabinetry, and Chinese black-slate floors of the garden room were extended to the newly renovated kitchen and bathroom. To brighten the kitchen, three oversized windows were built above the sink and the walls were painted bright white. When the sun enters the room, it reflects off the white walls and provides ample light for the counter space. Standing in the kitchen, you are eye level with the roof of the garden room

and the canopy of the mountain ash tree in the backyard, an effect that, according to Davignon, “puts the garden room as part of the backyard, making it feel as though the house is on a different plane. All angles—the curve of the roof, the view from the kitchen, the garden room—lead to the garden area.”

Even taking into account the occasional splurge—like the Philippe Starck bathroom fixtures and some high-end furniture—the entire garden room came to less than \$70,000 Canadian, nearly doubling the resale value of the house. That’s got to appease the neighbors, who weren’t initially thrilled with Davignon’s backyard tinkering. “I’m seen as kind of the troublemaker in this neighborhood,” says Davignon. “When the walls first went up, neighbors on both sides of me were infuriated that I had disrupted the backyard space—but now they’re used to it.

“Architecturally, Calgary is a blank slate, like it’s in a state of design unconsciousness,” Davignon continues. “There’s so much opportunity here, a chance to really do something, to affect something and make your mark.” He takes a sip of his beer. “It’s time to wake this place up.”

James Nestor writes about art, design, and culture for NPR, LIMN, and Salon.com. He lives in San Francisco.



Calgary, Alberta

Each year millions flock to Calgary for the Stampede. Thinking of going next year? 2003 will mark the 80th anniversary of chuckwagon racing at the event.

Square Miles: 2,301

Population: 198,682

Typical Household Income: \$74,200

Average Home Cost: \$119,200

Total Housing Units: 348,902

In *Waydowntown*, the 2000 movie by Canadian director Gary Burns, four people are locked in a city of glassed-in bridges and office buildings, each wanting desperately to get outside. For Calgarians working downtown, this is not so much a fictional plot but a documentary of life in the Plus 15. Standing 15 feet above street level (hence the name) and stretching ten miles through more than 800 stores, theaters, indoor gardens, and key office buildings in Calgary’s downtown core, the Plus 15 walking system is a human Habitrail of hermetically sealed glass-and-steel bridges that shelters Calgary’s office dwellers from often brutal weather—a kind of *Logan’s Run* space-age city protecting them from the world outside. Designed by architect

Harold Hanen, the Plus 15 opened in 1970 with much fanfare of making downtown Calgary a more business-friendly destination, but today most Calgarians have, at best, a love-hate relationship with the system. Calgary architect Troy Smith comments: “The good part is it’s warm; the bad part is that it has totally detached people from hanging out in the *real* downtown area.” If Smith and Davignon have their way, perhaps people will finally have a reason to. —J.N.



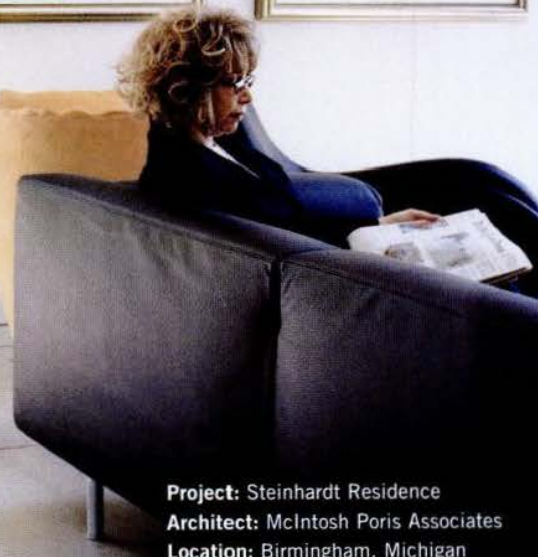


For cohesion, the black-slate floor and cabinetry of the garden room were repeated throughout the kitchen and bathroom in the main house. Davignon designed the garden room desk, pantry, and bathroom cabinets,

and had them fabricated by local woodworker Ross MacDonald. Davignon also designed the cylindrical sink, seen at left. The rabbit faucet is by Philippe Starck for Hansgrohe.

Janice Steinhardt's new home looks out onto the streets of Birmingham, Michigan, some 600 miles from Manhattan. But that didn't stop this kitchen designer from pursuing her dream of "a New York urban townhouse where I can walk to the cleaners, the bookstore, and restaurants."

Not Quite New York



Project: Steinhardt Residence
Architect: McIntosh Poris Associates
Location: Birmingham, Michigan



Birmingham, Michigan

As soon as the steel frame of Steinhardt's modern home went up in this traditional neighborhood, some residents started complaining. Though the architects made subtle efforts to blend it in with the surrounding traditional homes, this is no neocolonial.

Janice Steinhardt loves New York City. The top of her iron, artist-made kitchen table is scattered with the last two days' issues of the *New York Times*. Her closets are filled with nothing but Manhattan-issue black garments. She conceived the design for her new home at the MoMA's 1999 "The Un-Private House" exhibit. The only problem is, Steinhardt doesn't live in New York.

She lives some 600 miles to the west, in a tree-lined suburb of Detroit. Despite its proximity to a city famed for a two-decade descent into poverty and blight, Birmingham, Michigan, is as upscale and idyllic as any wealthy suburb of Manhattan. Brick and clapboard homes perch at the edge of clean-swept sidewalks. Unlike so many other towns across America, Birmingham, with a population of just 20,000, has maintained its downtown shopping district. Two movie theaters, restaurants, galleries, coffee shops, and retail stores like Ann Taylor and Furs by Wrubel & Kozin line its quiet streets, housed in a mix of traditional and contemporary buildings.

"This is a quaint little town with sidewalks and schools and a downtown and parks," says Steinhardt's lead

architect, Michael Poris, a partner with McIntosh Poris Associates. "The stuff everyone talks about is already here. It's not New Urbanism, it's old urbanism."

Steinhardt, a kitchen designer who grew up in nearby Flint and has lived in the Detroit area for 30 years, wanted to live in Birmingham because of its downtown. "What I wanted was a New York urban townhouse here in Birmingham," she says. "Here I can walk to the cleaners, the bookstore, restaurants. There is no other place like this near Detroit."

McIntosh Poris created a home that, while not exactly a downtown loft, is hardly meant to fade into the blur of pointy-roofed Arts and Crafts homes and neocolonials that populate Birmingham. Its rectangular form, glimmering steel chimney, and two-story windows do anything but kowtow to the town's traditions.

When the *Detroit News* ran a photograph of the building's steel frame rising from the ground, Steinhardt's home became a flash point for a debate that had been brewing in Birmingham since the mid-1990s, when New Urbanist planner Andres Duany came to town. His 2016 ▶



plan for Birmingham, calling for a mixed-use downtown, energized architects, but it also helped galvanize an opposition. The argument over Steinhardt's home is one that will likely be repeated every time a nontraditional home raises its beams above the sod here.

Birmingham is a small town. Michael Poris and his business partner, Doug McIntosh, grew up together in nearby Farmington. Over dinner at 220, a downtown restaurant, they joke with the waiter, with whom they went to middle school. Outside the restaurant, their lawyer braces himself against a tree, puffing on a cigarette. As with any tight-knit community, there are close bonds and there are spats. And in this town, when architects think of spats they think of Paul Reagan.

Reagan, a management consultant, runs the President's Council, an association of Birmingham's neighborhood groups. And Reagan says there is no place for buildings like Steinhardt's in this town. "When people move to Birmingham, they move here for the Birmingham style. I may not be able to say if it is Queen Anne or Arts and Crafts. You can't label it, but you know it when you see

it," he says. When Reagan looks at Steinhardt's house, he says, he has to wonder why she wanted to be in Birmingham in the first place. It's a home more suited to Los Angeles, or some other city with no sense of place, he argues.

Walking along Birmingham's tree-lined streets, Reagan sees a traditional America right out of the *Andy Griffith Show*. But Victor Saroki, a local architect who has designed buildings in Birmingham for 20 years, says this is no Mayberry RFD. In fact, Birmingham and the surrounding area have a deep history of modernism. Eero Saarinen, who designed Washington's Dulles Airport, grew up just down the road, on the campus of his father's Arts and Crafts masterwork, the Cranbrook Educational Community. Saarinen practiced in neighboring Bloomfield Hills for more than a decade. McIntosh's mentor, Cesar Pelli, also has local roots, as does architect Tod Williams. With the booming auto industry in the first two-thirds of the 20th century, Detroit became a haven for modern designers, and to this day boasts a rare collection of Mies van der Rohe townhouses. ▶

For all of its spare open space, the home feels really comfortable. "When you're in the house you feel like you're in New York, yet when people come and see it, everyone says they could see themselves living in it," says lead architect Michael Poris.

The Kitchen Designer's Kitchen

For Janice Steinhardt, the kitchen is one of the most important rooms in the house. Not because she cooks a lot but because it is the room in which she and her guests spend the most time. "As long as people are going to end up there, why not make it a beautiful space," she says.

In pursuit of a minimalist treatment of her galley-style kitchen, she created a space that leaves you wondering how it functions. The refrigerators and freezers are hidden behind Boffi Italian walnut cabinets. Steinhardt decided early on

that above-counter cabinets were out of the question—she prefers looking out windows to staring at hanging storage units. But windows won't hold the necessities of a kitchen. So McIntosh Paris designed a storage area that runs the length of the counter and extends from the body of the structure so glasses and appliances can be stored without taking up interior space.

She's come away with a room that is functional when it needs to be, but feels as inviting as any other in her home. —J.R. [p. 114](#)



Dwellings

Despite the area's modernist roots, the building department received 11 complaints regarding Steinhardt's home, on everything from the contractor leaving the gate unlocked when he ran down the street for a sandwich to a sudden interest in whether the house may have inched past height restrictions.

Harassment during construction is not uncommon in Birmingham, says builder Kevin Schroeder, of Brown-Schroeder and Company, which specializes in modern residential construction. Other nontraditional homes he has worked on brought him late-night death threats. Other architects roll their eyes and groan when they talk about the challenges of raising a modern home here. "Some people want this to be a one- and two-story town," says Saroki. "They want to turn the clock back and have us wear Amish clothes. Architects need to resist that."

The argument is so pitched here in part because Birmingham has so much that works. The homes closest to downtown, like Steinhardt's, are on small lots; nestled together behind sidewalks, they give the neighborhood a feeling of real community. Farther from

downtown, homes become mansions, the lots begin to sprawl, and the architecture becomes looser. Seventies-style brick-and-aluminum-siding homes mingle with Arts and Crafts houses. But in Steinhardt's neighborhood, a short two blocks from downtown, her home is on show for a dozen peaked-roof neighbors.

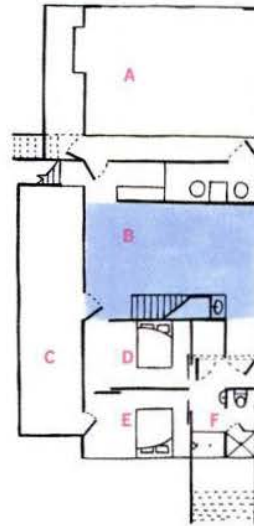
Poris' firm wanted to make Steinhardt's home refer to its surroundings. Without sacrificing the entire concept of a modern home, Poris made subtle connections to the traditional. The exterior is a cream-colored block that echoes the homes of the 1920s. A traditional stoop points off the front of the house, leading to a mahogany door. And the roof has a low pitch to it.

But that is where the similarities end. The building is a rectangular box with soaring windows and touches of steel sheeting. The metal wraparound terrace references a fire escape more than the covered porches of the surrounding buildings.

And that is what Steinhardt wanted. When she approached her architects, she brought a file full of images of interiors and exteriors she liked. "From the start I ▶

Steinhardt's children, who visit often, are all athletic, so she decided to add this custom Diamond Spa whirlpool tub and shower. "I thought it would be cool to sit in the whirlpool tub and then be able to shower," she says. The tile is by Ann Sacks.



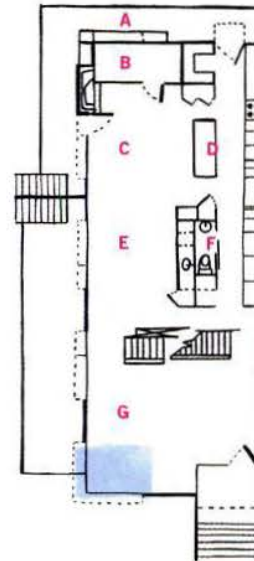


Basement



A = Garage, B = Exercise,
C = Sunken Terrace,
D = Daughter's Bedroom,
E = Son's Bedroom, F = Bathroom

Photo: Steinhardt has two adjoining guest rooms that look out onto a sunken terrace. Her children use them as bedrooms when they come to visit.

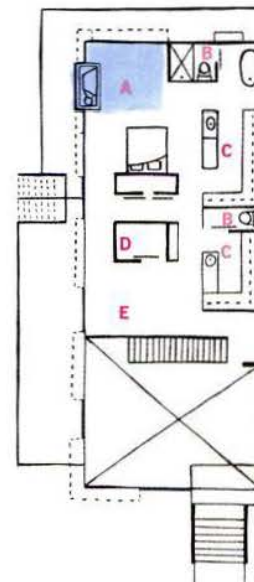


First Floor



A = Upper Terrace, B = Porch,
C = Sitting, D = Kitchen, E = Dining,
F = Bath, G = Living Room

Photo: The two Cassina dining room tables can be pushed together for Steinhardt's large dinner parties.



Second Floor



A = Master Bedroom, B = Bath,
C = Closet, D = Storage, E = Office

Photo: Steinhardt loves the clean lines of this Cassina Le Corbusier lounge that was reproduced from his original 1928 design.



Just behind her bed is this vanity with a honed-marble sink top and exposed Kohler basin. It is not in a bathroom, but in her closet, which is simply a large open space with hanging rods and drawers.

wanted to use clean materials: cement and stone and glass and metal and just a bit of wood," she says. "My vision was that everything should be very minimal and beautiful and functional."

Poris says working with a designer was a great help. While the designs were being drawn up, Steinhardt was already on the trail of furnishings, so the structure and its furnishings were integrated from the start.

Steinhardt wanted a space she could entertain in (she often hosts charity events with as many as 100 people present), but she also wanted it to feel comfortable as a home. The interior works remarkably well. Somehow, the concrete floors, white walls, and minimalist decor manage to feel inviting. Rather than walls, forms break up the space. On the main floor, the only walls mask a central cube that holds a powder room and closet, breaking the space between the living room, kitchen, and dining area. Upstairs, all walls stop short of the ceiling. The central cube also provides a space for an elevator if Steinhardt ever needs to install one.

Steinhardt is happiest at her desk, overlooking the

open living room and the views through her two-story windows. She says it is a perfect place to think and design. She also spends plenty of time at the elevated worktable in her kitchen, one of her favorite spaces in the house.

Steinhardt says that the home is perfect, aside from a few small things—a drawer she would have placed elsewhere in the kitchen, steam build-up in her glassed-in shower. "Modernism is my first love," she says. "I've never been happy in a traditional home." Paul Reagan's vision of Birmingham was never an option for her.

Ironically for those who challenged Steinhardt's home, it has been added to the Birmingham House Tour and, to her surprise, Steinhardt has been made chairperson of the tour. This spring, the Michigan chapter of the American Institute of Architects gave the home an award, not only for the building itself, but also for how well the architects fit this modern home into its traditional neighborhood.

Jim Rendon is a Los Angeles-based freelance writer.

Detroit

In Detroit, 10,000-square-foot homes butt up against burned-out buildings. Streets disappear into open fields of weeds and litter. The city boasts the third largest collection of pre-Depression skyscrapers in the U.S., and many of them are empty.

The economy collapsed hard here in the 1980s, but the preceding 70 years of boom produced some buildings worth the trek through this post-apocalyptic landscape. Tiny Birmingham, less than half an hour north, is a great spot from which to soak up

the architectural gold mine. Birmingham dates from 1819 and its downtown has a number of buildings. Shops and restaurants like Forté and 220 Restaurant, as well as Steinhardt's favorite galleries, the Hill Gallery and the Robert Kidd Gallery, are enough to keep anyone diverted for an afternoon or two.

A mile up the road is Eliel Saarinen's Cranbrook Educational Community, featuring beautifully preserved Arts and Crafts buildings and outdoor sculpture by Carl Milles. Saarinen's original

There's more to Wayne County than cars. World heavy-weight champ Joe Louis, Aretha Franklin, Madonna, Francis Ford Coppola, techno-music innovator Carl Craig, and a host of other important cultural figures have all called the Motor City Metro Area home at one point or another.

Square Miles: 139
Population: 951,270
Median Income: \$85,300
Avg. Home Cost: \$145,00
Tot. Housing Units: 1,803,000

furniture is still in use at the school. New projects, like Steven Holl's science institute extension, make this place far more than a school. In nearby Warren, Eero Saarinen's General Motors Tech Center offers tours to the public.

Detroit's city center was built on a radiating plan, which was then overlaid with a grid, so awkwardly shaped island parks are nestled next to towering limestone structures. Massive buildings with intricate detailing are visible from every angle. Along the river, Minoru Yamasaki's One Woodward

Building bears a striking resemblance to his later work on the World Trade Center.

Northeast of downtown is a redevelopment plan by Mies van der Rohe. Some of the townhouses are still in use.

For Steinhardt, Detroit is a living city. She gets out to cheer the city's many sports teams (the NFL's Lions and MLB's Tigers both have new downtown stadiums). And she spends many evenings at the symphony, dance theater, and opera. Despite its crumbling façade, Detroit is a vibrant home to many. —J.R.



Clockwise from top left: Birmingham is quint essential small-town America with a good-size, pedestrian-friendly city center lined with well-preserved older buildings.

Detroit's rail station was built in 1913 by Reed, Stern, Warren and Wetmore, the same architects who designed New York City's Grand Central Station. New York's, however, is still in use.



Cranbrook Educational Community was designed by Eliel Saarinen in the 1920s. Its sprawling campus is filled with architectural wonders. The dining room in the boys' school (pictured here) still utilizes the fixtures he designed.

The Cranbrook Science Museum was designed by Steven Holl. Its hallways and open bright spaces are well worth the trip.



Left: Skywalks connect Des Moines' downtown structures, protecting workers from cold sidewalks.

On America's Great Plains you expect to find water towers, grain elevators, corn, cattle, and urban sprawl. But if you know where to look, you'll also see extraordinary modern houses, eccentric churches, and one golden geodesic dome.

Great Plains Road Trip

Des Moines, Iowa

In Beavertdale, the neighborhood where Sayles and Clark live and work, you can go to Beaver Cleaners and Beaver Mowers—“And no one thinks it's funny,” says Clark.

Square Miles: 2,301
Population: 693,000
Median HH Income: \$38,408
Median Home Cost: \$125,300
Total Housing Units: 192,975

“Most people,” says John Sayles as he reclines in an Eames Aluminum Group chair, surrounded by Blenko glass, “go to these big furniture marts where you can get a couch and a stove and lamps and curtains.”

“Boom! The truck backs up and your house is decorated,” interjects Sheree Clark, finishing his thought. “John and I have been in business 17 years and we've been collecting that entire time.”

Taking even a cursory look around their graphic design office and pair of homes, where vintage furnishings and objects rescued from Salvation Army oblivion have been meticulously arranged to fill every possible surface (and pour from every orifice), it's easy to believe. For these business partners and former spouses, collecting design is no mere hobby, it's an obsession.

Des Moines, where Thomas Kinkadee has more cachet than George Nelson does, has proven itself an unreeped harvest for the Deco and mid-century pieces that Sayles and Clark covet. “There are some people who don't get it,” continues Clark. “They think we're totally out of step with the universe.”

Sayles continues: “Our business allows us to live and breathe and sleep design. We're lucky—we can get away with being different because we're designers. We can wear vintage clothing.”

What started innocently two decades ago with a Thonet sofa and Chase ashtray has grown into an inimitable collection that is bountiful enough to fill the 1939 Art Deco home the couple once shared and where Clark now lives, the 1952 redwood-clad ranch house that Sayles



Left, in green, Clark's flat-roofed 1939 home was originally built for the city's building inspector.

Clockwise from below left: A baby Bertoia chair and Eames fiberglass and plywood models make perfect wall decorations.

Finding the right home for Sayles' Danish modern collection wasn't easy, so he asked the woman living here if

she would sell—she did. Sayles and Clark love working in their former doctor's office turned graphic design studio.



has since moved into, and the 1956 pediatrician's office that houses their design firm. All three lovingly restored locations are in constant flux as new pieces are acquired, rooms get rearranged, and new collections are started.

Sayles and Clark's historically appropriate, fastidiously loved houses vindicate the collectors' fanaticism, and provide their thousands of modern artifacts with an almost poignant dignity. Although their tastes differ—Clark with her Art Deco, Sayles with his Danish modern—they both surround themselves with older design because they understand how it influences the new. In the basement of the office, Clark gets out a Sayles poster for a post-9/11 benefit, and Sayles points at the screen-printed background, where red fades into orange and yellow. "See those colors?" he asks. "Pure Blenko."

The City

If there is anything romantic about Des Moines, it might be the way its former farmhouses sit on square green lots—with the naked and droll attitude of a Grant Wood painting. If there's anything to dry up that romance, it's the corporate infrastructure—behind London, England, and Hartford, Connecticut, Des Moines is home to Earth's third densest cluster of insurance companies. Because of the harsh winter weather, the buildings of downtown are connected by skywalks (insurance companies don't want their employees outside

climate control), and the result, as Jane Jacobs might have predicted, is hardly any retail and zero bustle in downtown streets.

Nonetheless, sandwiched between the '80s high-rises and recently regilded capitol dome, a kind of downtown life asserts itself in the sparse array of warehouses that outlived 1970s urban renewal. Restaurants enjoy balmy summer air with outdoor seating, bars are within walking distance, and a furniture store, Projects, sells contemporary items that are somewhat predictable (Starck and Citterio) but good.

Spread around the sprawl, as Sayles and Clark know best of all, is a not-so-wee handful of stores where the lucky might find 20th-century furnishings at incredible prices (go to www.iowaonweb.com). If you don't want to lug any Coconut chairs home from Iowa, there's the Des Moines Art Center to see—an Eliel Saarinen building with Pei and Meier additions. The day we visited, Andy Goldsworthy was chiseling the permanent installation "Three Cairns" in the backyard, smiling and muttering to himself in a thick brogue.

Below: The exterior of the Brown house, top left, is the aesthetic opposite of the renovated interior, below right—this is a real wolf in sheep's clothing. At bottom left, Paul and Djel Ann enjoy Randy's deconstructionist design for Paul's law office.



The City

Arriving in Omaha from the east, you can cross the Missouri River in less than a minute on I-80—a far cry from the six weeks early settlers waited to take a ferry. Evidence of Omaha's history as a fur trading post and then a railroad mecca is unavailable from the roadside. Instead, the broad shelf rising from the riverbank salutes travelers with urban America's usual suspects: winding overpasses, recognizable chain stores, and faceless glass office blocks.

Omaha is full of people who, in architect Randy Brown's words, "want to forget their

roots of being farmers and ranchers." Spearheaded by über-businessmen like Warren Buffett, whose Berkshire Hathaway stockholder's weekend fills the city's hotels with money-minded investors every spring, Omaha seems more proud of its Fortune 500 companies, under-construction convention center, and status as a telecommunications capital ("because we don't have accents," explains Djel Ann, Randy's mom) than its surrounding agricultural bounty. Even the cattle, which once filled the world's largest stockyard, are trucked in at night so

as not to turn heads.

But big business hasn't always been kind to Omaha. ConAgra's 1992 campus saw the demolition of roughly eight city blocks of charming turn-of-the-century brick structures. The few that survived comprise downtown Omaha's most popular and pedestrian-friendly area, the Old Market.

Bounded by the river to the east, Omaha's development has spread in only one direction, west. Paul Brown remembers when 70th Street was a cornfield—now it's in the middle of the city.

Seated in Breuer chairs and surrounded by white walls, Paul and Djel Ann Brown explain what they like about Omaha. In Paul's words, it's a "20-minute city," because a car covers every crucial distance in that time. Paul and Djel Ann's son Randy, who renovated his parents' ground floor in which we sit, disagrees. "Omaha isn't a 20-minute city; its sprawl exceeds that," he says. "But it doesn't feel like a sophisticated modern city, or like a neighborly little town."

Randy's renovation reflects that ambivalence, albeit with a healthy sense of humor. The exterior is so conventional that when we arrived after a balmy drive from central Iowa, we couldn't find the house. In a cookie-cutter subdivision filled with bright green lawns, the Browns live in another cookie, with a chunky 1960s

Below, in green, is the exterior of Paul's law office. The inset shows Omaha's Old Market, a good place to take a stroll.

Tornado country. In 1975, a twister took out 12 square miles near 96th and Q streets.

Square Miles: 2,475
Population: 723,210
Median HH Income: \$47,122
Median Home Cost: \$140,273
Total housing units: 277,500

Omaha, Nebraska



stone façade and peaked roofs. But upon entering (after Randy finally flagged us down), we were transported to a spare, pristine world.

The guiding motif of the interior is the L-shape, in everything from the plan of the living area to trim on the hearth. Since Randy Brown Architects does both design and construction, the L theme, like many decisions, came together after construction was under way. "The demolition was a family affair but turned out to be hard work for Paul and our sons who came to help," explains Djel Ann, "so we brought in some semi-professionals. In one day they took out the whole wall between the living and dining rooms—which we hadn't intended to do, because it meant we had to reroute some plumbing." "But there it was," says Randy with a

smile. "We suddenly had an L-shape, and that became the theme."

The space's pithiest detail, a plywood window surround above the kitchen sink, was also somewhat spontaneous. "The window kind of ended up in the wrong spot," Randy explains, "so the surround was a way to balance whiteness on either side." Cut from flat, finished plywood, the piece is conventionally shaped (again an L) but floats abstractly above the sink. It frames a view of several neighboring geranium-encrusted houses—a storybook springtime suburbia. But the plywood cover, through its abstractness, acts as a tongue-in-cheek partition. The kitchen window sums up the Browns' attitude: Their anomalous interior makes perfect sense despite its middle-American milieu.

Left inset: The Big Sioux River plunges through the city's recently restored Falls Park, with the abandoned Zip Feed

Mill in the background. Below left, in green: the Larsons' exterior, with its corn-fed Meier aesthetic.

Below: The palatial living room enjoys a woody view even though the Larsons live right in the city. All of the Larsons'



Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Billboards outside of town: "Don't Miss the Reptile Gardens," "Visit Flintstones Bedrock City," "We Dakotans REJECT animal activists."

Square Miles: 1,392
Population: 181,000
Median HH Income: \$58,800
Median Home Cost: \$125,464
Total Housing Units: 69,368

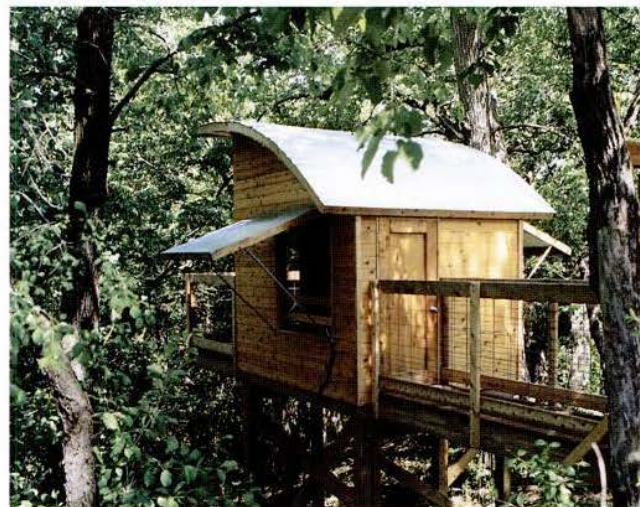
About three miles northeast of downtown Sioux Falls, a good-sized street thins to become Steve and Dianne Larson's driveway. At least once a day, errant drivers turn around by the Larsons' garage, but no one leaves without stopping to look at the house, which sits behind Steve's design/build office, Next Inc. Large, white, and heavily reminiscent of Richard Meier, the whole complex—all designed by Steve—is unlike anything else in town. For accidental visitors, the Larsons are building a historical marker by the entrance. The placard is finished but they haven't yet decided what to write on it. "We're going to make up a story about glaciers or something," Steve says.

Perhaps a reflection of the powerful work ethic in these parts—locals credit the 30-below winters for keeping people inside "loving the job"—the Larsons' diver-

sions are rigorous, too. The house's ample whiteness functions like a big logbook covered with activities. The front hall is full of artwork by the Larsons' friends and photos of their daughter Sarah, a clothing designer, wearing her creations. On the deck off the guest bedroom are twin replicas of Rietveld chairs, which Steve built with his son Gregory, an architect. In the basement, next to the garage where Steve restores antique cars, is a home theater for which their other son Christian, an electronics technician, installed a massive web of wires.

The Larsons have lived here for nearly three years, but the house will probably always be a work in progress, because they love adding to it. Due to indigenous expanding clay in the soil, they had to excavate 39 feet into the soil, so there's room to build a second

recreational amenities, such as the home theater and treehouse, were conceived by Steve and Dianne.



underground story. To the north they've planned an adjacent pottery studio with a kiln and plenty of light for Dianne, who is a ceramist. Upstairs, where a mezzanine overlooks the 19-windowed living room, is a mid-level roof on which they might add bedrooms. In the backyard, Steve recently built a playhouse for their grandsons out of cedar wood and corrugated aluminum; he's hoping for a granddaughter, so he can build a girl's version ("But there's no pressure," Dianne adds).

When the Larsons aren't busy constructing things, or casually inventing history for their placard, their favorite place to be is in their living room, especially on winter evenings. "I like to sit there with a glass of wine," says Dianne, "and watch the moon reflect on the snow."

The City

"This is a desert for architecture," Steve Larson says with a north plains accent that intensifies the comment. As he points to another outcrop of bulldozed development, we hear a familiar tune: "This is what people want, what satisfies them."

Sioux Falls does indeed seem like a place where people are satisfied—although that might not always have been the case. In recent years, the city has been transformed from a dying agricultural center to an "entrepreneurial hot spot." Without income or personal property taxes, South Dakota has set out

to be a place where businesses are welcome and can easily grow—and they have. From the windows of the Larsons' SUV, Main Street is lined with independent shops, the Empire Mall's parking lot is full (it's the state's largest tourist attraction, with more visitors annually than Mt. Rushmore), and the satisfactory sprawl chomps unabated into the rolling plains.

If there is an architectural tradition to be found here, it is indelibly connected to the land. Grand, fortresslike Richardsonian Romanesque buildings, such as the Old Courthouse

Museum, are hewn from distinctive pink Sioux quartzite. Industrial and agricultural structures, including the state's tallest, Zip Feed Mill, sit vacant, awaiting reincarnation as lofts or restaurants or dust. The state's foremost 20th-century architect, Harold Spitznagel, was famous for his churches and for the "earth-architecture" of Mitchell's Corn Palace. But his first commission, a cast-concrete bus shelter from the 1930's, stands out as the city's most unique and enigmatic structure.

Knittel designed the McFarlands' home with maximum flexibility in mind; the stairway could be closed off to

turn the downstairs space into retail. Below, Matt and corgi Kihei play in his photography studio.

Below: Becky and Kihei in the open-plan kitchen. The green image shows the house's exterior—concrete cinderblock, cor-



Arthur Bryant's is the place for barbecue, beans, fries, and a chilled mug of beer.

Square Miles: 5,406
Population: 1,776,062
Median HH Income: \$56,475
Median Home Cost: \$105,455
Total Housing Units: 740,884

In the Westside neighborhood of Kansas City, you can look downhill steeply—a rare phenomenon in these horizontal parts—at the former stockyards of West Bottoms that provided jobs for the Europeans who settled here in the 1920s. The view, and a large number of old houses built by stockyard workers in various European styles, makes the neighborhood unique. “People are tired of bland sprawl,” says architect Thomas Knittel, who designed a house in Westside for photographer Matt McFarland and his wife, Becky, a casting agent. “They want to live in neighborhoods like this, where they can walk down the street and see people, and buildings that have character.”

Last year, the McFarlands bought an empty corner lot that, many years before, had been an outdoor produce

market. Planning a house for the plot, Knittel employed a local longevity tactic. “Many of the houses here have lasted all these years because they have diverse possibilities for interacting with the street,” he explains. “This lot is zoned for residential and commercial use, so we decided to design with potential retail space. It could work, for example, as a ground-floor gallery with a living area upstairs, so it’s more flexible for the future.”

Matt, who proclaims “contracting is in my blood,” was the general contractor, and finished the house in eight months, working six or seven days a week with subcontractors and masons. “The biggest challenges came out of teeter-tottering between a commercial building and a residence,” he says, standing on his concrete floor beneath Douglas fir ceilings. “That mix was

rugated metal, and cherry-wood window frames set this house apart from its neighbors. Inset: SOM's BMA Tower.

The City

After miles of cornfields and water towers, Kansas City, with its George Edward Kessler-planned broad boulevards and grassy park lands, feels like an oasis of sophistication. "This is an old money town," we are told emphatically by Alex Pryor, proprietor of the radically modern eatery Zin. "There's a lot of money here but you don't see it in the ways you see it in other cities." Although his restaurant is arguably the best in town, he laments the fact that some people will never eat there because they're intimidated by the space.

However, there is plenty of

evidence that Kansas City once embraced modern architecture, and could again. All over the city, blocks are dotted with finely crafted mid-century structures, many beckoning with For Sale and For Lease signs—most notably SOM's BMA Tower, a near-perfectly proportioned building that breaks out of the Miesian box with a white exoskeletal grid. More recent developments include Gunnar Birkerts' Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and Steven Holl's addition to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

There are a handful of pri-

vately owned Frank Lloyd Wright houses tucked away on leafy streets, including one next to the home of Missouri's most acclaimed artist, Thomas Hart Benton. While Wright was working on the flat-roofed house, he offered to design Benton a painting studio. Ever the stalwart, Benton declined on the grounds that he didn't want a building that leaked.

Louis Curtiss, a little-known K.C. architect, designed the Boley Building in 1908 (renovated in 1986)—reputedly the first glass-and-metal curtain-wall in the United States.

Kansas City, Missouri

manifest in our use of mixed materials—like cement block and steel. I thought the house would be easy to build, since it looks simple and there aren't tons of finishes. But we ended up doing a lot of finishes anyway, to tidy up corners."

All for less than \$100 per square foot, Knittel's design luxuriates in the mixed materials that challenged its builders. Between corrugated metal and concrete, subtle gradations of gray glow on the exterior, set off by a screen-like cherry-wood window frame on the second story.

From within those windows, diagonal views of the downtown and West Bottoms feel lofty, though the Westside location is far from isolated. "We love the views," says Matt. "And we get these gleaming Maui sunsets here, because of the Kansas dust."





Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

This is home to 644 Protestant and 24 Catholic churches, and three synagogues. The borderline-kitsch variety from the 1950's and '60s are among the city's finest structures.

Square Miles: 4,242
Population: 1,039,000
Median HH Income: \$45,000
Median Home Cost: \$91,000
Total Housing Units: 466,230

Eighteen years ago, Rand Elliott sat across from Philip Johnson at a desk containing nothing but manicured pencils and a roll of yellow tracing paper. Although the architect and Oklahoma native had his own eight-year-old practice, he had come to New York to look for a job. Johnson made an offer, but minutes later, sitting in the Seagram Building's plaza, Elliott had an epiphany. "I decided that it wasn't right, and that if I went back to Oklahoma I was really going to dig in," he recalls. "I then entered what I call my period of surrender." Nowhere is this Oklahoman surrender more implicit than in the renovated garage apartment Elliott designed 15 years later in honor of his wife Jeanette's grandfather, North Losey. The apartment is named North, for its honoree.

Losey gained fame among Oklahoma's early settlers as

a territorial photographer of Native Americans, and of the postcard images Cyclone #1 and Cyclone #2 (in which superimposition was used dramatically to combine rural folk with oncoming twisters). The images, artifacts of Losey's connection to the land and native peoples, inspired Elliott to create a space that would metaphorically reference the photographic process and the unique history of his wife's ancestor. Without the trappings of full-time living, like recycling bins, laundry, and a place to store a Sam's Club-sized jar of mayonnaise, North achieves these metaphorical relationships through minimal means, and is afforded the kind of elegance that lived-in spaces rarely sustain.

Inspired by a common Native American belief in the importance of the number four (four compass directions,

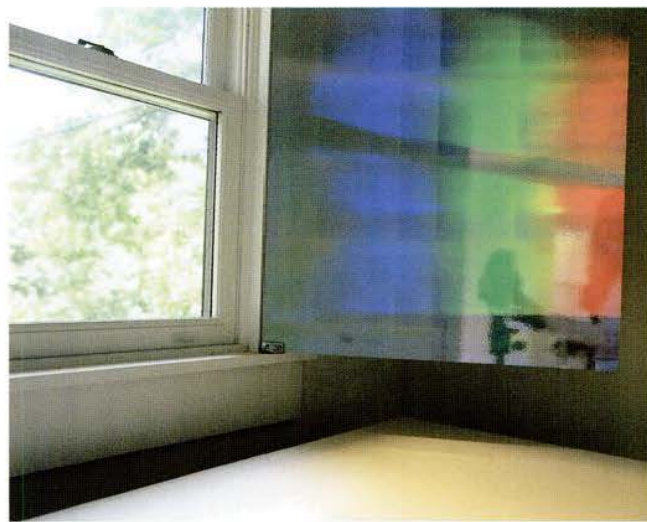


Facing page: The green image is North's Italianate stucco façade, which blandly camouflages the minimalist interior.

At far left is Bruce Goff's Hopewell Baptist church, buttressed by metal structures salvaged from oil rigs.

Below: Inside North, focused lightbulbs highlight Losey's photographs, like the one above the bed. A mirror that obscures the

window opens to reveal a holographic surface. Behind frosted glass, necessities like toilets look more poetic than prosaic.



four seasons, etc.), North is divided into four quadrants. With openings on all four sides and a series of four etched-glass boxes that house utilitarian functions (a closet, toilet, shower, and sink), the movement of light plays as significant a role in the space as it did in affixing Losey's images to film a century ago.

The space's sheaths of white and glass quickly wash away suburbia. Although, as Elliott explains, the effect is mostly that of "whiteout," North is not without its details: chain pulleys for light fixtures, a ceiling-mounted T-shaped shower head, a mirror backed with holographic foil, and a slate surface for visitors to share their impressions.

North's most compelling attribute is that it is as much a place to remember as to forget. ■

The City

Cruising around 620 square miles of Oklahoma City's low-density habitation, what is most distinctive is the perpetual, awkward bob of oil derricks. The industrial creatures inhabit haphazard corners, from the grounds of the capitol building to dusty backyards in the forlorn periphery. They multiplied here after black gold was discovered in 1928. The derricks are beaky and mechanistic, but seem like apt visual descendants of the stalwart opportunism that instantly formed a city of 10,000 westering immigrants on April 22,

1889, when the federal government lifted a sanction that had designated Oklahoma for dozens of displaced Native American tribes.

Although Oklahoma still has the largest Native American population in the U.S., few of the capital city's public buildings reflect that aesthetic heritage—with the notable exception of Bruce Goff's 1950 teepee-shaped Hopewell Baptist church.

Since the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, the city's residents have gained a healthy interest in

urban redevelopment. Butzer Design Partnership's memorial, in which the placid reflecting pool and 168 symbolic chairs sit in the very basement that exploded, is wrenching. More cheerful is the Crystal Bridge Tropical Conservatory, a fully cylindrical glass greenhouse, in the Myriad Botanical Gardens. One mile north of downtown, Bank One owns a 1958 gold-anodized Bucky dome—the first of its kind—and wants to sell it to Walgreens, who would tear it down. A group of self-described "dome-huggers" are up in arms.



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Downtown, at B&B Italia's storefront on Via Durini, we discovered a new wrinkle—or maybe it was more like a ripple—on minimalism.



What We Saw in Milan,

In modernism, generally speaking, fine materials and restrained forms take the place of outrageous gestures. Many designers and architects stop there, to get a clean look, a modern style. In talented hands, though, the repressed impulse for richness re-emerges in some way—in function or comfort or proportion or the use of light—deepening the experience.

Judging by his new furniture from B&B Italia, and what can be gleaned from photographs of his architecture, Belgian Vincent Van Duysen is practicing that richer kind of modernism. From an office in Antwerp he designs buildings fit for a prosperous and sophisticated order of monks. Long walls of travertine and concrete, with solid oak furnishings, predominate in his projects.

However, this is his first line of furniture, and it began with an utterly quiet daybed. It is a thin plane, about knee height—flat, reduced, and spare. A headrest wafts up from one end in the quietest curve, a curl as quiet as the concession a hair makes to breath.

"It is my favorite piece," says Van Duysen. "When B&B came to me, they assigned something 'related to the night.' I returned with this daybed. They were surprised, I think, because I usually work with massiveness—concrete, stone, wood... rough materials. Maybe they expected a Donald Judd cube with a cushion."

What they got instead was a series of wool or leather upholstered seats all based on that first plane. "The idea was to only change the proportions within the vocabulary," says Van Duysen. "The colors are another way to bring difference to the pieces. They can seem more contemporary in the yellow, perhaps, or more classic in the brown."

Federico Busnelli and Rolando Gorla are the directors of the research and development center at B&B Italia. They had come to know Van Duysen's architecture through European magazines before they met him at a Milan furniture fair some time ago. Last year, they asked him to consider doing a project. Gorla says he was



Belgian architect Vincent Van Duysen's first furniture collection pairs minimalist forms, like the ultra-slim chaise, with warm materials such as wool and leather.

Part II

initially impressed "because Van Duysen began thinking of a complete system of seats, something in between a residential and an office product family." By this year's furniture fair, the manufacturer was ready to present the line to the public. The launch was in a new showroom in the center of town instead of at the fairgrounds, says Busnelli, "because we think it is less commercial than some other products we have this year."

In the early phases, Van Duysen was at the factory every two or three weeks. "It was an amazing experience to see the craftsmen's professionalism. I brought only the forms and dimensions, and their experts made them real. The way they fit the upholstery was like the finest tailoring. It has been a tremendous opportunity to work with people of such integrity."

There is a technical corollary to the aesthetic challenge in this piece. If the aesthetic challenge is, How do you keep the disciplined minimalism without making the chairs look cold and unwelcoming?, the technical chal-

lenge is almost the same: How do you guarantee comfort while keeping a structurally sound thin plane?

"We worked out the issue of comfort in many prototypes, retaining the floating look as much as possible," says Van Duysen. According to Busnelli, "the solution came from quilting. It offers softness and comfort, retaining the light appearance." Born as a technical solution, quilting became one of the unifying details in the collection, "like a signature," says Busnelli.

Two of the pieces, a chair and the flat daybed, have a blanket element that can be attached or removed. "It is like a futon, or when you have an old sofa that you throw a cloth over," Van Duysen says. The blanket is zippered to the sides of these pieces, however, making it an integral component, not one casually draped or removed. But the ingenious aspect is that the zippers leave an extra length in the middle, a kind of loop, designed to hold a bolster. The double-ended zipper allows the bolster to be moved along the length of the daybed (or up and down ►

For more furniture from Milan, see page 102.

Despite choosing a design vocabulary that is mostly about what is not said, Van Duysen demonstrates that it is still possible to create something warm, new, and current from the heart of modernism.



For added coziness, many of Van Duysen's pieces come with a detachable quilt. The quilt is fastened to each chair with a pair of zippers that are made extra long to accommodate a movable bolster. **3** p. 114

the back of the chair). As a result, the chair can have a headrest, backrest, or lumbar rest, and the daybed can have a pillow, armrest, or divider, depending on where one puts the bolster.

Adjustable furniture sometimes starts out intriguing but ends up fussy. In this case, though, the function is not only thought through but useful and sensuous. As the ribbed blanket flows over it, the bolster itself becomes a macro version of the quilting. And in the end, minimalist or not, it's fun to get the nice snake-swallowed-the-mouse lump inching up and down the bed.

This simple (but inventive) use of a zipper demonstrates how that repressed desire for lavishness can end up in good modern designs. Or, as B&B's Gorla puts it: "This new line represents an interpretation of a recent minimalist past newly transformed into simplicity and different richness. The coldness usually attributed to minimalism is definitely destroyed to give place to the sophisticated pleasure of simplicity."

What Gorla is describing here—though he may just be spouting the rhetoric that accompanies this season's launch—is a larger transition. Even though this now very old principle of modernism would seem to be completely played out, designers continue to find ways to be nourished by it.

"I had the classic masterpieces in the back of my mind," says Van Duysen. "It's not that I want to copy the classics—Mies, Corbu, Barragan—but I think that by changing materials you can come up with luxuriousness within tradition." And, in fact, despite consciously considering works now 50 years old, despite choosing a design vocabulary that is mostly about what is not said, Van Duysen demonstrates that it is still possible to create something warm, new, and current from the heart of modernism. As though he were the first to speak these words, he says, "I do hope that these are timeless."

Victoria Milne is Dwell's New York-based contributing editor.

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Outdoor Muff Daddy

By Jerszy Seymour for Covo

Thinking about the manufacturer Covo, some people might picture the Soho Totem store which retails its tableware. Covo's Bicox Food Containers sprout off the shelves in clusters of colorful, irregular, semi-lucky three-leaf-clover shapes. The whole scene conjures "picture yourself on a boat in a river." Outdoor Muff Daddy, introduced in Milan last spring, creates similar seq-

uences—most of all when he's on such green grass. But Muff Daddy's functionality vindicates his mild hallucinatory laxity. Waterproof polyester cushions contain filling as soft as a steamed Chinese pork bun. His long arms, puffy and primal, can be positioned to embrace an occupant with enough space for a friend.

For more designs from the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, see page 102.

www.covo.com

In the Modern World...

Bauhaus births zany photography	96
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bathrobes and omelettes are part of the office	107
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dwell



Taken By Design: Photographs from the Institute of Design, 1937–1971

20 July–20 Oct

SFMOMA

San Francisco, CA

Long before there were digital Elphs and Photoshop, the photographic process was a time-consuming labor of love, with a stringent set of procedures, rules, and standards—all waiting to be broken. Late of the splintered Bauhaus, László Moholy-Nagy, like his architectural peer Mies, came to Chicago to continue teaching. There, he founded the Institute of Design—where an exploratory, imaginative, and unruly approach to the photographic medium became common practice. This exhibition is the first to bring together works from the school's many teachers (notably that of Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind), students, and students-turned-teachers (such as *Untitled*, 1969, by Barbara Crane, above). www.sfmoma.org

Exhibits



Franz West: *Merciless*

27 Apr–4 Nov

MASS MoCA

North Adams, MA

The Viennese artistic trend Actionism, in which performance artists forced viewers to passively watch bloodthirsty events, set the stage for West to make art that MASS MoCA dubs “merciless.” Denying the blood lust but embracing interactive art such as the *Paßstücke* (adaptables), a group of plaster forms that viewers awkwardly wear. Those too proud must instead gape at West’s intestinal, RV-sized *Drama*. www.massmoca.org

Gerald Zugmann: *Blue Universe, Architectural Manifestoes by Coop Himmelb(L)au*

9 May–8 Sept

MAK Center

West Hollywood, CA

Photographer Gerald Zugmann sees lusty shades of cobalt within the avant-garde Austrian architecture of Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky. Even if you already know what birds are in this coop—like the stout and angular Gasometer apartments in Vienna, or the glassy, crest-shaped UFA-Cinema Center in Dresden—Zugmann’s romantic photos transform them. Here’s another occasion to feel gangly in Schindler’s delicate King’s Road House. www.makcenter.com

A Thin Skin: *The Fickle Nature of Bubbles, Spheres, and Inflatable Sculptures*

25 May–15 Sept

Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art

Scottsdale, AZ

These seductive sculptural forms aim to draw people of all ages and pigments to Scottsdale. Activities like trudge-

ing through an ocean of balloons—popping is allowed—in Martin Creed’s *Half the Air in a Given Space* and blowing up rubber bodies in Sutee Kunavichayanont’s *Siamese Breath* will surely elicit some unsuspected sounds (and possibly germs) from visitors, while challenging their notion of stability in space.

www.scottsdalearts.org

UN Studio—UN fold

26 May–29 Sept

Netherlands Architecture Institute

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

UN Studio sees itself less as an architecture firm than as “scientists of everyday public life.” From urban plans to flatware, its work is dedicated to movement and digital realization of forms. The oft-published Möbius House (1998) is a prime example of this intersection—a physical representation of the impossible möbius band equated with the daily “loop” of life in a house. This exhibition brings together the firm’s key projects with a series of canvases created specifically for the show. www.nai.nl

Out of Site

27 June–13 Oct

New Museum of Contemporary Art

New York, NY

This group show has a different take on the recent artists vs. architects exhibition boom. Leaving the architects at home, the artists focus instead on the complicated web that is digital technology, cross-cultural flow, sprawl, and contemporary culture. Of course, architectural surroundings and place figure prominently in the works, as in Stephen Hendee’s ▶

Disturbing Trend

We misread the large yellow plastic banner off I-35 in Burleson, Texas, just past Honey Homes and the House of Babes (the former sells homes, the latter, lap dances). Palm Harbor wasn’t the largest manufactured-housing company in Texas, it was selling the largest manufactured *house* in Texas. At 3,192 square feet, Palm Harbor’s Triple-Wide (yes, *triple*) extends out 76 by 46 feet. Picture a sheet cake placed atop a demi-

tasse cup, and you’ll get some sense of the unwieldiness of the thing. As you walk inside, your throat seizes up—a sensation akin to doing deep-breathing exercises on the freeway in the midst of a SIG alert in Southern California. The home’s synthetic green carpet buckles at the “marriage lines” (the seam where one mobile home is connected to the next). The walls are much like those of an airplane interior but somehow even more plastic. The, uh, good news? It can be yours for \$96,000—financed, delivered, and installed within 28 days.





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Exhibits (cont.)



bandaged labyrinthine lightbox constructions and Shirley Tse's volumetric inflatables. www.newmuseum.org

Moving Pictures
27 June–12 Jan
Guggenheim Museum
New York, NY

Bringing together selections from the museum's permanent collection of the "Lens Arts" (photography, film, video), this exhibit will line the curved walls of Frank Lloyd Wright's inverted ziggurat—art stroll. In an adjoining space, Bill Viola's installation *Going Forth By Day* will employ state-of-the-art high-definition digital video and, like a modern-day take on Thomas Cole's *Voyage of Life*, present the viewer with five panels displaying 35-minute segments of abstract spiritual progress. www.guggenheim.org

Seeing
29 June–31 Jan
The Exploratorium
San Francisco, CA

It's not a bad idea to bring two Advil to the museum when part of the exhibit will involve saturating your retinas with opposite colors red and green, before showing you how your vision gets distorted. In installations that stun Nobelists and laymen alike, eerie changes will occur without your noticing—a sedan in a streetscape becomes a minivan, bright colors turn to black-and-white but you can't see the difference. Interactive and odd. www.exploratorium.edu

Defining Craft I: Collecting for the New Millennium
10 Aug–3 Nov
Davenport Museum of Art
Davenport, IA

The bountiful fields of our U.S.

heartland are relatively easy places to forget some of the heartache begrudging this "New Millennium" and focus on the crafts most worth collecting. All dourness aside, the 175 American and international creations of clay, glass, fiber, metal, wood, and a touch of plastic promise inspiring shapes. Don't miss the Deluxe Cone Bowls by Ibex Glass Studio (1992), unwittingly reminiscent of Madonna's 1990 "Blonde Ambition" breast-wear. www.art-dma.org

Rivane Neuenschwander
18 Aug–10 Nov
Walker Art Center
Minneapolis, MN

If you never got over scratch and sniff, you won't want to miss the first solo show of young Brazilian mixed-media artist Rivane Neuenschwander. Using materials as varied as

snail tracks and digital video, her Neo-Concrete-inspired explorations (such as dots of clear glue that over time track visitors' movements in the floor, and an alphabet constructed of tape and spices) can be both materially inventive and self-consciously cosmic. www.walkerart.org

Jack Lenor Larsen:
The Company and the Cloth
18 Aug–12 Jan
Mingei Art Museum
San Diego, CA

A master of 1950s "random repeats," those mass-produced natural-fiber textiles that adorned airlines like Braniff and Pan American, and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, Larson is also a writer, collector, and gardener. Only this sort of Renaissance man would think of savvy ways to mass-produce textiles that look so organic and, well, comforting. Visitors are encouraged to let loose and touch Larson's soft fabrics. www.mingei.org

Maestros de Plata:
William Spratling
and the Mexican Silver
Renaissance
6 Oct–5 Jan
San Antonio Museum of Art
San Antonio, TX

In Taxco, Mexico, a land of masterful silversmiths, New York-born designer William Spratling founded a revolutionary cooperative in the 1920s. Preeminent craftspeople, including Valentín Vidaurretta, Margot de Taxco, and Ana Brilanti, produced tableware, sculptures, and the occasional chess set or punch bowl. The 400-piece show is set in five stages, from pre-Spratling to the mid-century years of 3-D effects and married metals. www.sa-museum.org



Events

6–22 Sept
Convergence International
Arts Festival
Providence, RI
www.caparts.org

13–15 Sept
Pitti Imagine Casa
Florence, Italy
www.pittimagine.com

26–30 Sept
Art Forum Berlin
Berlin, Germany
www.art-forum-berlin.com

30 Oct–3 Nov
Affordable Art Fair
Pier 92, New York, NY

Tired of walking around museums, wondering what your empty off-white walls would look like with a Lucien Freud or Ellsworth Kelly? You won't find any of their pieces here, but you might find an appropriate substitute that won't require a wealthy benefactor's donation. Or you could just go to the flea market and buy that black velvet Day-Glo Hendrix. www.affordableartfair.com



Super Structure

Chances are, if you pay taxes in the U.S., Russia, Japan, or Europe, you've been helping finance one of the most expensive, advanced, precise, and complex construction projects ever attempted—and it doesn't even have a front door. The multibillion-dollar effort is, of course, the International Space Station, and at any given moment it could be 250 miles over your head (orbiting at a rate of 17,000 miles an

hour). Bolt by bolt, unit by unit, the station has been slowly growing to full size since the first Russian Zarya Control Module was launched in 1998 (in the end, it will take over 40 space flights to transport all of the components into orbit). Having reached puberty, the most recent addition to the ISS is a 55-foot-long robotic arm (from Canada). Its main purpose is to aid spacewalkers in the remaining construction and upkeep, but maybe later on it could do a little heavy docking. spaceflight.nasa.gov/station/

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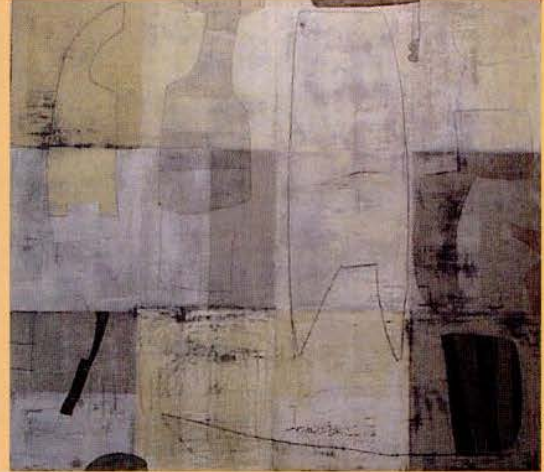
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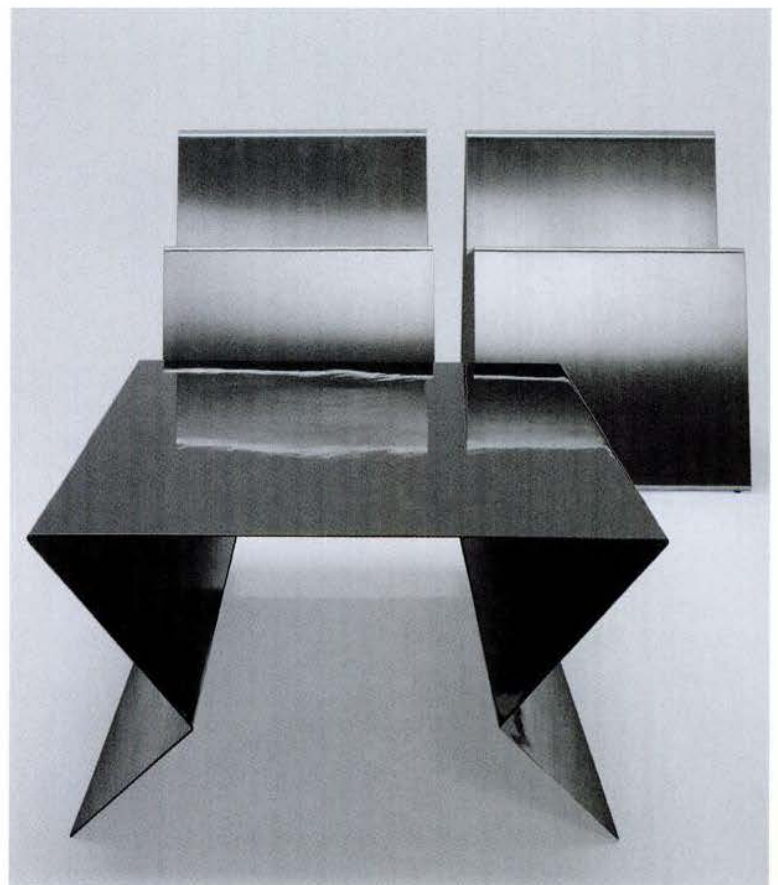
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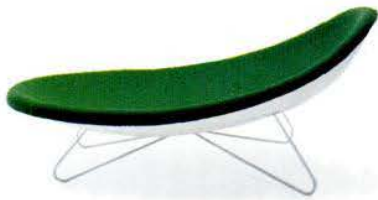


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Milan Products


The Petal Chair
By Ora Ito

When a petal, pulled from a flower, makes a leisurely swaying motion toward the ground, it approaches Earth at precisely the same angle as Ora Ito's chaise. At least, this seems like a reasonable explanation for the design's romantic moniker. Contained in a shell of polished fiberglass, the grasshopper-green upholstery shown here is available in numerous other colors and covers a soft but firm bed of foam. The looped X-formation base is available in gray polished metal or brushed stainless steel. www.cappellini.it


Sac a Seige
by Essaime

Here's a brand-new design from the French cardboard masters Quart de Poil, who issued Olivier Leblois' famed folding corrugated cardboard "T.4.1." chair in 1993—which promptly found a place in the Guggenheim and Victoria & Albert collections. The Sac a Seige is just as clever, and serves multiple purposes. You can carry some papers, and instead of yawning at the bus stop, unfold the bag, have a seat, and wield your reading material. The design looks potentially easy to replicate at home. But the price is right. www.quartdepoil.com


Random Light
Moooi

By Monkey Boys
 Although it's not entirely clear as to what's random about this lamp from creative director Marcel Wanders' stable (the Dutch collective Moooi), we appreciate the fact that it could easily double as some sort of evil alien life form from the original *Star Trek*—industrial enough that the materials came from a local hardware store and otherworldly enough that with a lubed-up dimmer switch you could convince people that it was actually speaking English to Captain Kirk. Amazing what a little epoxy, fiberglass, and a healthy imagination can do! www.moooi.com


Clip Bed
By Patricia Urquiola

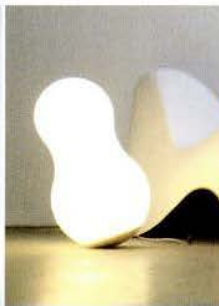
Urquiola's unique upholstered double bed has a multifunctional headboard—it sweeps down under the entire length and supports a chartreuse sliding bedside table. Whether you're sitting up or fully reclined, the headboard accommodates your position with a satisfying click into place. The paper clip was the inspiration for the headboard's functional swoop and loop. The aluminum-structured table comes in etched colored glass (shown) or a more organic cherry wood. www.molteni.it


Louis Ghost
Kartell

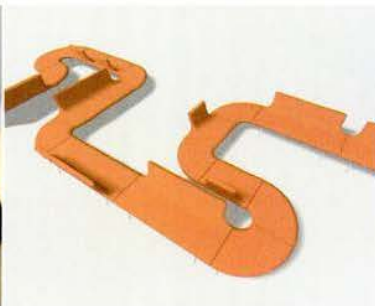
By Philippe Starck
 Louis XV's "flying chair," which, like an elevator, carted the corpulent ruler from floor to floor at Versailles, was ahead of its time in 1743. The Philippe Starck-designed Louis Ghost pays homage to its namesake in form but is equally ahead of its time in 2002. Available in a range of colors varying from "straw yellow" to "ice green", the transparent polycarbonate chairs are manufactured from a single mold—no small feat considering the intricate rococo styling. www.kartell.it


Soft Wall
B&B Italia
By Carsten Gerhards & Andreas Glücker

If you can't get enough of your cubicle and feel compelled to create one at home (see Home Office 101, p. 107), there's no better excuse than B&B's Soft Wall. Leave it to crafty (krafty) Germans Gerhards and Glücker to figure out a beautiful, cushy, de Stijl-inspired way to increase productivity away from the workplace. Although we sometimes tire of felt, here's a use of the material in all its glory—neatly layered, tightly seamless, and the perfect texture for tucking things into. www.bebitalia.it


Penguin Ambient Floor Lamp
By Dominic Symons

This little friend is one and a half feet tall, about the size of a young emperor penguin. It's better than a penguin in one way: You can give it a guiltless kick, as if it were a Weeble. But unless you're as rich and maladjusted as Bret Easton Ellis and take your designer surroundings for granted, we don't suggest you bang violently on the roto-molded plastic shell of this new Bluelounge floor lamp. Rather, calm down with a cocktail by the diffused flat glow of light shining through matte material. www.blueloungedesign.com


The Orbit System
Offectt

By Eero Koivisto
 If any piece of furniture could re-create a rapid-transit map in a great white room, it's Koivisto's geometrically wormy modular sofa system. The Orbit system remains in prototype form, but we admire the gump-tion, whether the virtual version signifies fabric or foam. Orbit's continuous, centerless line of sofa seems an oddly poetic emblem of 21st-century social activity, in which the age of communication and transportation complicates chains of communication so much that centers are unrecognizable. Where should we sit? www.offectt.se


Omni
Swedese
By Eero Koivisto & Märten Claesson

The racecar angles of Omni, made delicate by birch or beech frame and support (as opposed to the bloated kitsch of Virgin Atlantic's upper-class seats, also racecar-inspired), are worthy of a giant airy room with a killer sound system. As it has since 2001, Omni comes with a pixelated see-through polyester net cover, or one of several fabric colors—but not until 2002 could you put your feet up on an ottoman structure proudly deemed "reminiscent of a Japanese Tori gate." www.swedese.se


Oblo
By Mario Mazzer

Stainless steel has become so popular that U.S. kitchens are turning silvery gray alongside the aging baby boomer population. With the cylindrical theme of Oblo, designer Mario Mazzer takes a refreshing turn. The rounded sink and rangetop fit modular-style into identical circular holes and are part of a larger kitchen system that can be custom-arranged and includes ovens, dishwashers, counters, and stove hoods, all in stainless steel. Available from Units, a Cappellini line. www.cappellini.it



Trestle Table, Thorsten Franck, 2001, \$210, Photo: Antoine Bonin

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Calendar

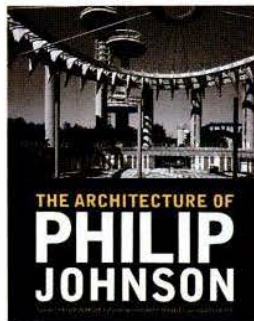
Books



Ettore Sottsass/Exercises

Edited by Enzo Cucchi
Alberico Citti Serbelloni
Editore, \$69.44

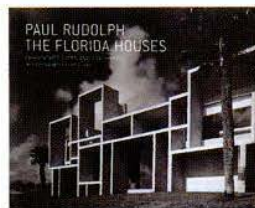
Though it may seem like there's a new Sottsass design/exhibition/book/building out nearly every month, this lovely coffee-table book differentiates itself by presenting Sottsass' eloquent and humorous renderings together with his photography, sculpture, architecture, and insightful musings on the world. It's a best-of for the seminal Austrian-born, Italian-bred architect and designer. For the tried-and-true fan, *Exercises* brings Sottsass' scattered works into focus.



The Architecture of Philip Johnson

Essay by Hilary Lewis/Foreword by Philip Johnson
Bulfinch, \$85

Most master's degree theses are characterized by jargon and lots of colons. Philip Johnson, for his MA, turned in his Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut. The 96-year-old has been a presence on the architectural scene for most of the 20th century, and whether his buildings were celebrated or ridiculed, he has made an indelible mark on modern architecture. This monograph features 400 photographs by Richard Payne, Johnson's principal photographer since 1979.



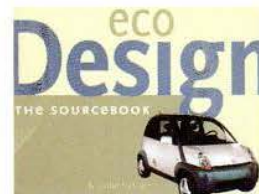
Paul Rudolph:
The Florida Houses
By Christopher Domin and Joseph King
Princeton Architectural Press,
\$40

Though he was best known for high-rises and institutional buildings, Paul Rudolph began his career designing elegant beach houses on the west coast of Florida. The 60 projects shown in this book, built between 1941 and 1962, are depicted by Ezra Stoller's gorgeous black-and-white photography, and Rudolph's own perspective renderings. Less severe than Rudolph's later work, the houses offer a glimpse of what the outcome might have been had the Case Study Program been launched in Florida.



Computers:
An Illustrated History
By Christian Wurster
Taschen, \$30

Today we gripe if our laptops weigh in at more than five pounds, but just half a century ago, *Popular Mechanics* predicted that "computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." We've grown so used to the planned obsolescence of technology, but Wurster's engaging cultural history of the computer serves as a reminder of the enormous changes we've witnessed and illustrates the tremendous degree to which computers have become an inextricable fact of our existence.



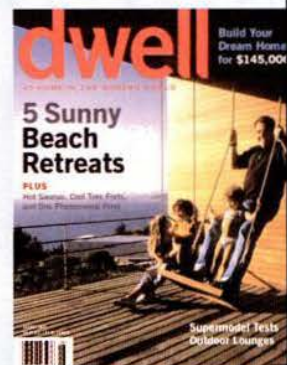
ecoDesign: The Sourcebook
By Alastair Fuad-Luke
Chronicle Books, \$35

People have a tendency to use materials and products that are readily available. Eco-friendly materials, sadly, are more expensive and harder to come by than vinyl siding. So even if your intentions are good, it's not easy being green. *ecoDesign* makes it easier to put your money where your conscience is. The well-designed directory shows where to get everything from Shigeru Ban's cardboard furniture to trash cans made from shredded shipping containers, and provides eco-design strategies and a resource guide to boot.



Prefab
By Allison Arieff and Bryan Burkhart
Gibbs Smith, \$39.95

Arguably, prefab houses have failed to capture the public because of their emphasis on mass-production. Prefabrication today, however, is embracing mass-individualization. In *Prefab*, Dwell's senior editor, Allison Arieff and her coauthor Bryan Burkhart, present prefab's fascinating history from Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion house to Konyk Architecture's red Neoprene Hydra House. Four beautifully illustrated chapters—History, Production, Custom, and Concept—make for a solid contribution to the future study, and production, of housing worldwide.



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"I've always loved this miracle material
that you can mold into whatever you

— David Pettigrew, Diamond D Concrete



Concrete: New Product of Choice for Countertops, Floors

It's a trend that's taking the country by storm - concrete is leading the charge as the product of choice for kitchen countertops, floors, fireplace surrounds, even bathroom counters and vanities. Concrete is popular because it's durable and versatile. Countertops offer a warm, natural-looking material that corresponds with the popularity of more natural materials like wood, stone, and brick.



Chemical stains, coloring pigments, aggregates, and epoxy coatings can give concrete the look, texture, and feel of quarried stone such as marble, granite, and limestone. Or it can be used in its natural state. Homeowners who have indulged in concrete like creating their own colors, textures, and edges. They can even incorporate objects like broken tile, seashells, or glass into the countertop's surface.

"Most clients do their own designs," said Buddy Rhodes,

known in the industry as the father of the concrete countertop.

And that, he says, is perhaps the most appealing aspect of concrete. It's hands-on and it's handcrafted. It cries out "this is all mine." Concrete countertops offer the warmth of the material without any grout lines associated with tiles. Also, there is a natural, earthy look that complements a range of kitchen styles.

Homeowners are also turning to concrete to grace their floors.

"We have stamped concrete, slate, stain, overlays, Spanish tiles, Arizona flagstone," said David Pettigrew, owner of Diamond D Concrete. "It's just amazing what technology has done," he said. "And we have no idea where it's going. It's advancing all the time."

And as the technology advances, so do the design options.

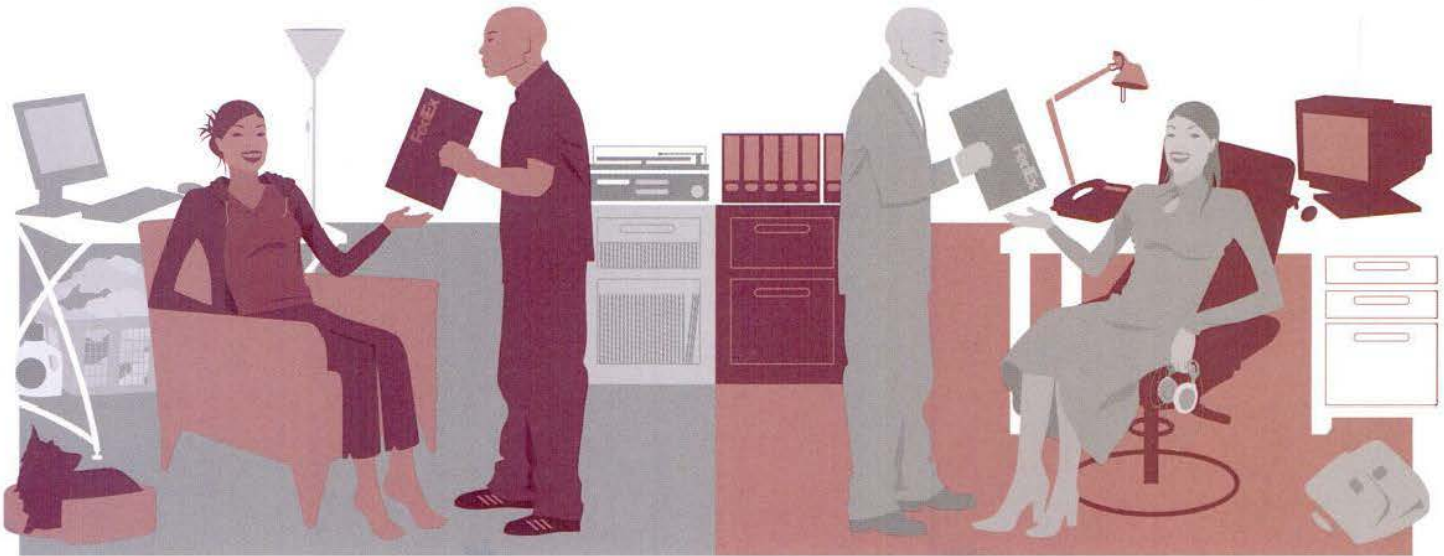
"With concrete you can use a different material that produces an old-world look - or you can make it high-tech," said Steve Eyler, owner of Eycan Sufacing.

Want to learn more about decorative concrete?

Visit www.concretenetwork.com.

Free Manuals! Get our concrete floor and/or concrete countertop manual!

Go to: www.concretenetwork.com/dwell



Home as Office. Office as Home.

When I was growing up, I never thought much about how my father spends his day at the office. Only years later, when I was running an office of my own, did it dawn on me that his workplace is really a second home. He has a work wife—a devoted assistant who has smoothed over disturbances for almost four decades and even mixes the occasional cocktail at the end of the day. And he has work children, employees who remain in his thoughts long after they have outgrown the nest.

Just as his office is modeled on the traditional family, mine was modeled on the modern one. I was, professionally speaking, a single mother, in charge of both the heavy lifting and the social niceties. I worried about my brood, took pride in their accomplishments, and felt guilty when my patience cracked. On my frequent business trips, I phoned my assistant daily just to ask if everything was okay, like any anxious parent.

Strangely, now that I am working out of my home in New York City as a freelance writer and editor, I find that my milieu is more professional and less familial. It is true that I am surrounded by domestic comforts and that the line between work and leisure is apple-pare thin. I can indulge in any cliché of the self-employed—write in my bathrobe, duck out for a matinee, or fix an omelette if I am at a loss for words. It is also true (though embarrassing to admit) that since I have been upgrading equipment, my home office looks like one of those garages that gave birth to the computer revolution. Spare components are strewn like rose petals in a seraglio. Cables snake like giant strands of pasta.

More important, it is quiet. Oddly quiet. No chattering, yelping, nonstop phone ringing.

No constant noise of machinery, except for the soft whir of my hardware. Does that sound like home? I conduct phone interviews, set up appointments, chat with friends who are similarly untethered from a nine-to-five routine, so I cannot say that my days lack a social dimension. What they lack is the alternately warm and irritating subjugation to a buzzing network of emotional demands. The world is shut away until I choose to turn on a radio or look at a newspaper. Whole cities could be destroyed without my knowledge.

In fact, one almost was. On the morning of September 11, 2001, I was catching up on some reading, when my mother called from Chicago to find out whether I was all right. “Why wouldn’t I be?” I asked.

Everyone’s office is different. So is everyone’s management style. But I have yet to encounter a workplace that isn’t kinlike at some scale. Several different nuclear families may be clustered in an open plan, with distant relatives nodding at one another in the elevators, or a single family may be crammed into a tiny space, like tenement dwellers just off the boat. In all cases, the familial sentiments of duty, resentment, affection, rivalry, and a longing to please take up as much room as do office sentiments such as ambition and fear. Recognition of these nuances may be one reason why office designers have been placing more and more emphasis lately on home-style values like intimacy and comfort, despite communications technology that makes it possible to work from anywhere.

Or is it because of technology’s leaps that office designers have come home to the idea of home? One of the ironies of design in the post-industrial age is that high-tech offices set a trend for brighter colors, curvier lines, and more places for fraternizing or relaxing. Led by youthful entrepreneurs, these businesses purged

the chill of professionalism from workplaces. And for reasons other than a distaste for their elders’ ways. Punishing hours have required many employees to all but live at work. There may also have been an urge to make technology look as friendly as its gurus apparently found it. And finally, the heightened mobility of new-economy drones yo-yoing around the globe enhanced the meaning of “home office.” It is the place where a work family awaits to hear one’s news. “Did you close the deal?” “Gosh, I’m so proud of you.”

The influence of high-tech offices on commercial design hasn’t much waned since the new economy fell apart. Though much of the capital that supported freewheeling office styles has been blown away by the recession, the idea of an open, collaborative workplace remains intact.

And despite September 11, high-rise towers are here to stay, though they may never be as lofty. Apparently the advantages of collective work environments continue to outweigh the safety of being dispersed.

I happened to be barefoot and in sweats when I watched the Twin Towers burn from a Brooklyn roof deck. In the aftermath, I dressed and mechanically made my way to a promenade along the East River that faced the maimed skyline. As in a dream, or a peculiar episode of *This Is Your Life*, I found a crowd dotted with former colleagues from different jobs. Not just buildings had collapsed, but also a sense of time and the solidity of cubicle walls—everything but the desire for community. My friends and I kept vigil together while the ashes rained down on us, a small temporary family sharing binoculars, portable radios, and reminiscences.

Julie Lasky writes about design, culture, and politics. She is the author of Some People Can't Surf: The Graphic Design of Art Chantry.

The Heavenly Home Office

A 1931 painting studio, built by the muralist Ezra Winter on a hilltop in Falls Village, Connecticut, offered none of the comforts of home and few of work. But that didn't deter William Drenttel and Jessica Helfand from buying the property, known as Winterhouse, four years ago and converting it into their residence and office. The couple, who produce books, magazines, and websites, were refugees from Manhattan with two young children and modernist tastes. Drenttel especially responded to the building's austere lines, its trio of 25-foot-high windows, and its cavernous interior, suitable for the couple's 750 linear feet of books. "It's a bunker," Helfand cheerfully admits. "There's not a lot of Martha Stewart charm, though the grounds do have stone walls and rambling paths." Architects Michael Morris and Yoshiko Sato of Morris Sato Studio in Manhattan renovated the residential quarters at the rear of the house, and the dream of a home office, shown here.

Artwork

A grid of custom-lathed metal pegs on the wall above the cantilevered desk was designed to hold works from the couple's art collection. The gray squares on either side of the grid are embedded audio speakers.

Lighting

Abundant natural light is supplemented by eight fixtures that hang from the rafters, and by 25-foot-high fluorescent strips that run down channels carved into two corners of the studio, softening the edges where planes of Sheetrock meet. "It was a James Turrell-inspired moment," Morris says.

Flooring

The architects won't reveal what they did to make the monolithic poured-concrete floor so light in tone. "We came up with a special way of sealing it," Morris says, with

a devilish look in his eye. Cherry wood was used for the mezzanine planking and stair treads.

Connectivity

Cables snake under the floor, from a hub in the server room, and feed power to computers for three employees, who sit at a desk that the architects designed to cantilever across the studio's

History

Perhaps best known for his three-story "Fountain of Youth" mural in the grand foyer at Radio City Music Hall, Ezra Winter designed Winterhouse with art in mind. The structure is 90 feet on the diagonal to accommodate canvases of that length, its ceiling is 32 feet high, and its massive windows face north. After Winter died, in 1949, the property passed to the Lathrop sisters, Gertrude, a sculptor, and Dorothy, a children's book illustrator, who had won the first Caldecott Medal in 1938.

Heating and Cooling

Insulation was added to the walls, and water-coil radiant heating was installed under both the ground and mezzanine floors. In summer, the space is cooled with a pair of ceiling fans whose brown color blends in with the dark-painted rafters. The windows are operable for cross-ventilation.





Library

"Despite the architectural simplicity, one reason it doesn't feel like a cold box is that we have 8,000 books in here," Drenttel says. Many are shelved

on a two-level mezzanine where Drenttel and Helfand each have desks. Below the mezzanine, the architects provided a server and storage room, and behind

that they designed a rare-book library, which is protected from direct light by a sliding Plexiglas door.

Homeyness

Helfand wanted to warm the space by preserving historical touches, such as window mullions. They're echoed at the top of the studio's main entrance, which the architects enlarged.

Safety

Connecticut's building code demands a maximum of four inches between stair railings. Helfand and Drenttel called for a narrower gap of three inches to protect their children. "It's an uphill battle," says Helfand. The kids recently learned how to manipulate the 12-foot-high sliding door between the studio and house.

Furnishings

For task seating, the architects recommended Alberto Meda executive chairs produced by Vitra, with subtle white-mesh backs that disappear in the space. The room's centerpiece—a worktable made of plywood construction debris sheathed in Masonite and painted white—was meant to be temporary.

Stop, Drop, and Roll

A good office chair is as essential to your workday as a cup of coffee and a high-speed Internet connection. But a good office chair doesn't come cheap: As industrial designer Ethan Imboden has observed, "the purchaser will feel the strain on the bank account even as the strain in the lower back is relieved." Dwell decided to take a few task chairs for a test run.



Leap Chair by Steelcase
Custom upholstered with Designtex fabric,
Pattern by artist Arturo Guerrero

If you get this \$1,400 chair for your office, you better hope that you don't have to move—this baby is heavy! This is another entry with many knobs and levers, but these seem to work better than most. Particularly appealing are the five different settings for the back, allowing the sitter to easily adjust between philosophical thinker (setting five, "laid back") to happy upright typist (setting one, "good posture") with a simple click. And the three settings in between provide comfort for those times when you feel like neither. Another plus—on some models the seat cushion snaps on and off for simple cleaning.
www.steelcase.com



Hula Hoop Chair by Vitra
Designed by Philippe Starck

Zero knobs, one lever, five colors. This swiveling seat is not a task chair but a "chair for work anywhere, everywhere." A mechanism in the seat allows it to tilt with your every move—sideways, forwards, and backwards—hence the name. It's easily the most attractive of the bunch, and if your work consists of rolling around from one conference table to the next, this chair featuring a polypropylene seat shell with integrated armrests and seat upholstery could be for you. At \$595, it could be the chair for non-rollers as well. Vitra says it's ideal for stores, galleries, or studios. We think it's ideal for any time you're feeling extra suave.
www.vitra.com



Jersey Chair by Turnstone
Designed by Brian Kane

The press release says the philosophy behind this chair is "maximum comfort with minimum complexity," but honestly, after sitting in this chair for the past three months, it seems quite the opposite. Five levers control everything from the slant of the back to the tilt and height of the seat, but none seems to cure our pain. But with a \$700 price tag, this chair falls into the (more) affordable category, and for an affordable chair, it may be hard to beat. The Jersey Chair is also environmentally friendly, using low-impact manufacturing processes. The back, for instance, requires no glue, plywood, or foam filler, and the mesh backing simply snaps on or off allowing users to easily and affordably fix their chairs in case of damage, not to mention making it easy to clean. Available in eight mesh colors with a fabric or leather seat.
www.turnstonefurniture.com



Freedom Chair by Humanscale
Designed by Niels Diffrient

The support system may resemble a headgear for the lumbar region, bringing back painful memories of seventh grade, but this \$1,170 chair truly is comfortable. In a complete turnaround from the Jersey Chair, the Freedom Chair has *no* knobs and *no* levers (save for one that adjusts seat height), and once the chair has been fitted to your body, it is controlled solely by body weight. When all is said and done, how many knobs and levers does one really need? Zero seemed like a good number to the designer and manufacturer, and it seems like a good number to us.
www.neutralbydesign.com



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Necessary Luxuries

When you buy yourself a gadget—the latest PDA or another digital camera—it is pure self-indulgence. When you buy that same gadget for your home office, assuming you actually do revenue-producing work in your home office, it becomes a tax-deductible business expense. And so that insatiable passion for the latest and greatest technology, also known as the early adopter syndrome, becomes a virtue rather than a vice, something akin to thrift. Here are a few items that we thought you might really truly need, things that will make your work life a bit more productive and infinitely more stylish.


Fossil Wrist PDA
\$145

You're out jogging, but you're haunted by a sense that you're missing a meeting. No sweat—simply consult your schedule on your watch, which holds all the contents of your Palm or PocketPC organizer. Beam your business card from your wrist and watch others drool.
Fossil / www.fossil.com
800-449-3056


TeleZapper
\$49.99

A pox on telemarketers! When one of those auto-dialing computers calls, hunting for a live one, this little box mimics the sound of a disconnected number—fooling it into taking your number off the call list. Dinner is saved.
Privacy Technologies
www.telezapper.com
800-373-6290


Samsung SyncMaster 171P
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Flat-panel monitors are cool. They take over as little of your desk as possible and they don't emit radiation. This sleek, 17-inch beauty was designed by Porsche and made by Samsung, the world's leading producer of computer displays.
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Danger Hiptop
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Why can't we have everything wireless without turning the piggybank upside down? This nifty little communicator says we can: e-mail, Web surfing, instant messaging, PDA, and mobile phone calls, all in one appetizingly priced gadget. Bring it on—we're hungry for the wireless revolution.
Danger / www.danger.com
650-289-5000


OQO Ultrapersonal Computer
\$1200-\$1500

One device to rule them all? The guys who designed Apple's titanium PowerBook have managed to squish a whole Windows computer into a PDA-size device. Depending on what's attached, your PDA magically morphs into a laptop or desktop. It's scheduled to debut at the end of the year.
OQO / www.oqo.com
415-920-9090


HP DVD200e
\$599

This multitasking portable drive not only lets you store three hours of video, 9,400 photos, or multitudinous files on one rewriteable DVD, but can also be used to burn DVD videos of your nephew's birthday party to share with Grandma.
HP / www.hp.com
888-999-4747


Minolta DIMAGE X
\$399

As compact as a deck of cards, this delightfully small digital camera has a cunningly designed zoom lens that doesn't project out and mar its sleek form. Best yet, it's a blithe traveler, supremely light at five ounces.
Minolta / www.minoltausa.com
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Agere Orinoco BG-2000
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The shark fin of this Wi-Fi wireless gateway cuts through cords stylishly, letting everyone in the house share a broadband Internet connection and printer instead of having them all crowd over your workaday PC. Make the porch or deck an extension of your office.
Agere Systems
www.orinocowireless.com
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www.plantronics.com
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Dioxyribonucleic Office



A home-office system as unique to you as your own DNA? For anyone who has put in their time in a standardized cube or been frustrated by the absence of an intuitively placed drawer or shelf, it's an idea that's long overdue. Enter dna: a line of mobile and wall-mounted desks, storage systems, tables, work chairs, screens, and accessories specifically designed to meet the needs of people working at home or in small-business settings. In the tradition of Emeco and the Eameses, this is office furniture that looks perfectly at home in the domestic milieu: No one will ever accuse you of pilfering your file

cabinet from corporate headquarters. Created by designer Richard Holbrook—who's been designing workspace components for two decades—in conjunction with contract furniture manufacturer Teknion, the dna collection aims to make contract-quality furniture affordable and easy to obtain.

"If people are empowered to create their own workspaces," says Holbrook, "I believe they'll build a more satisfying work environment." You can create your own personalized command center online and have it delivered right to your doorstep. **www.tekniondna.com** **p. 114**



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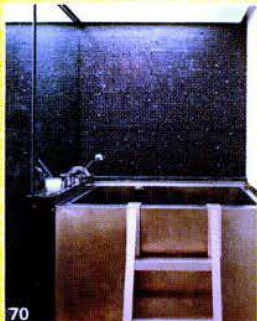
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Concrete Countertops
By Fu-Tung Cheng with Eric Olson
(Taunton Press, 2002)
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30 Off the Grid

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34 Dwell Reports

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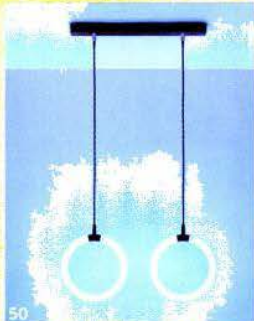
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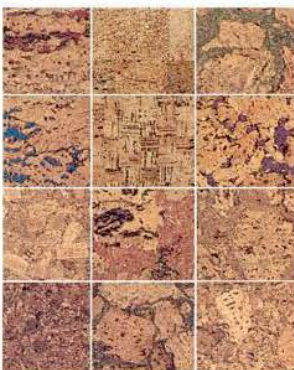


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Shown left: Rakks spring tension poles and mahogany laminate shelving

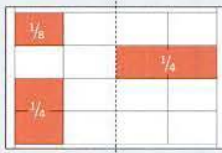
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Between a Rock and a Hot Place

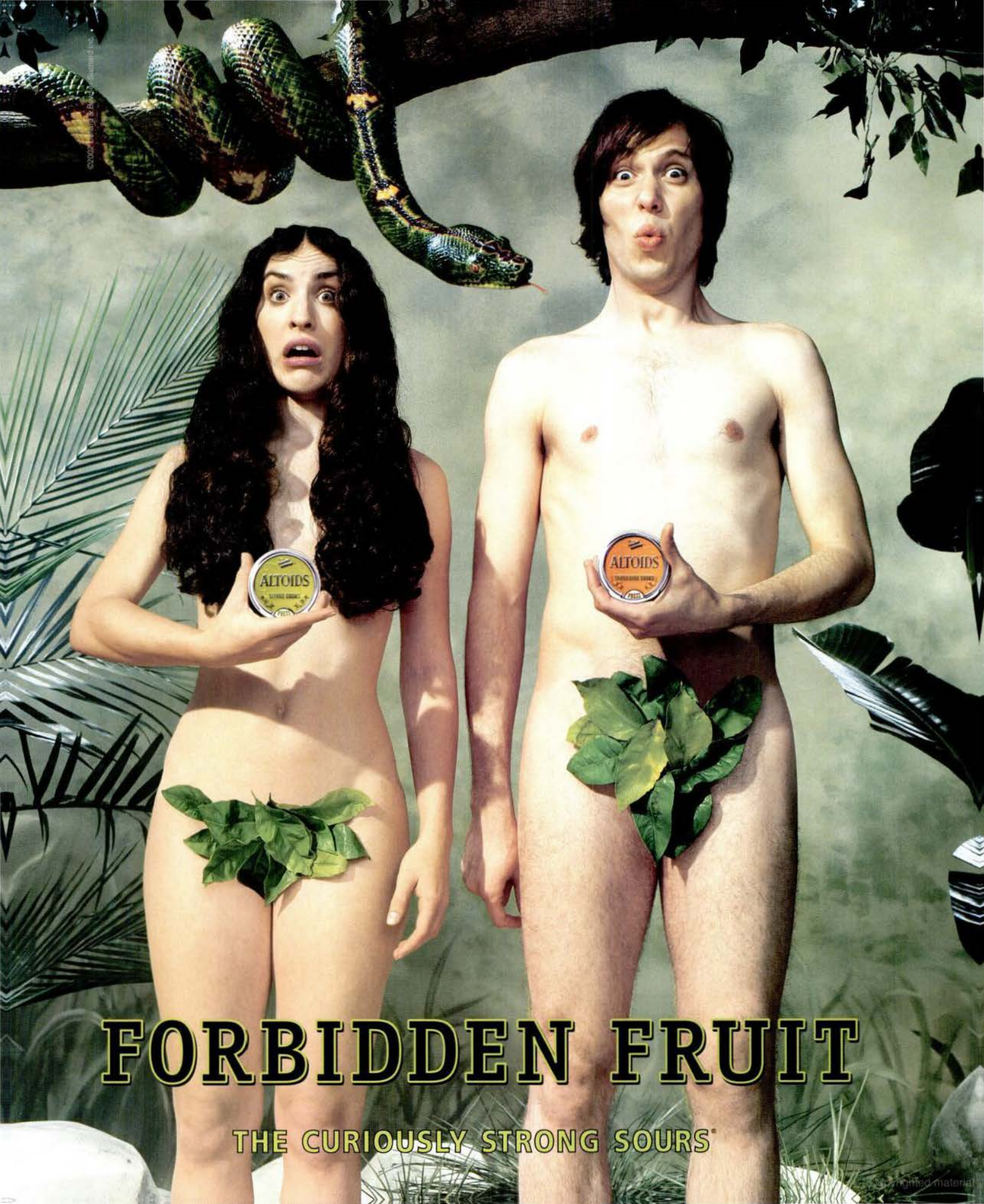


An untitled 1975 work of the late minimalist artist Donald Judd consists of a series of concrete boxes that transform a field into a gallery for blocks of light, newly defined by man-made forms. Judd would have recognized a kindred spirit at work in this striking Tucson, Arizona, home. The angular shapes of the house, with a dramatic portal framing the entrance, impose a similar geometry on the rough backdrop of the desert.

Architects Luis Ibarra and Teresa Rosano designed the house for a client who had been living in a reconditioned warehouse in Baltimore and wanted the airy feeling of a loft. "The ceilings had to be high, so the form was pretty inevitable—it worked its way from the inside out," explains Ibarra. The soaring walls, made from sandblasted concrete block, frame giant windows of commercial storefront glass. "The thing I hated about

the East Coast is that you're always inside and everything is gray," says the new homeowner, who lives there with his wife. "Here, every photon of light is coming through the windows—you feel like you're outside all the time."

The house was literally hacked out of the vast and uninterrupted stone on the site. But the property's spectacular views of the city and the surrounding mountain ranges came at a price—the steep slope was solid rock. Ibarra and Rosano had designed the house in three tiers, so that excavation would be minimal. Even so, the costs of jack-hammering into the hillside and digging a septic system added 30 percent to the original budget. "I tell Luis and Teresa that they need to make a little urn for my ashes in the corner," says the client, laughing. "We're never moving out of this house." ■



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