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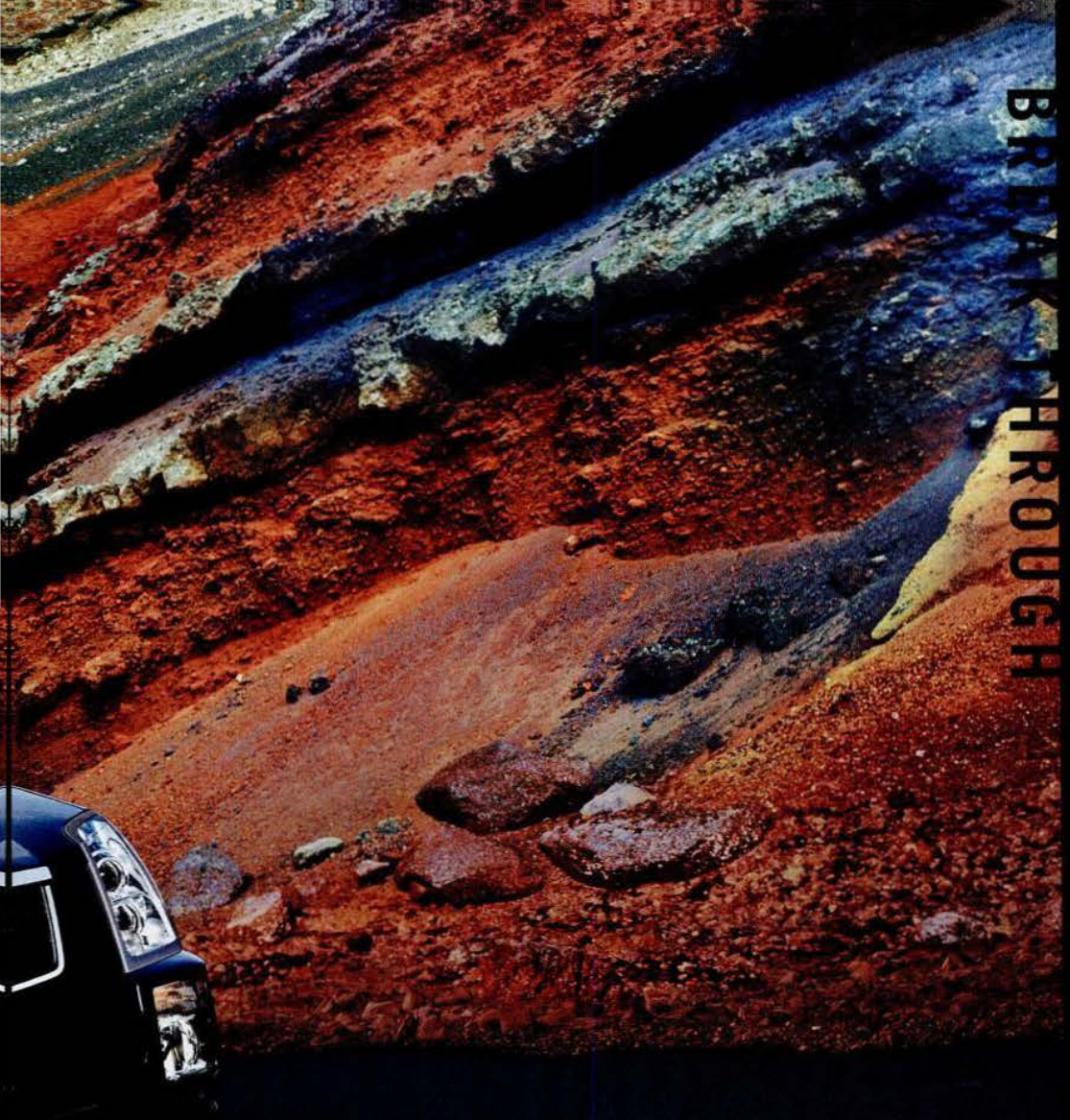

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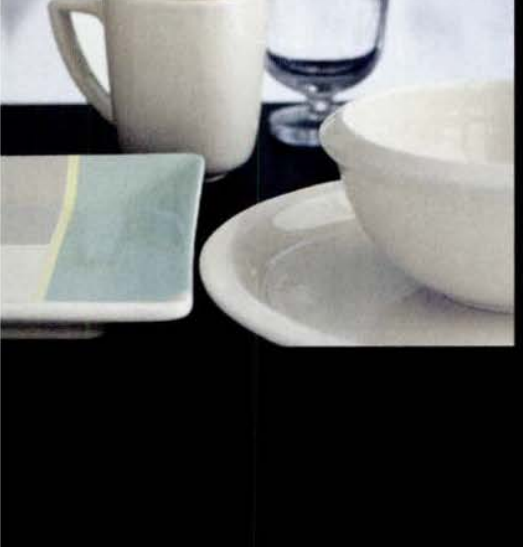

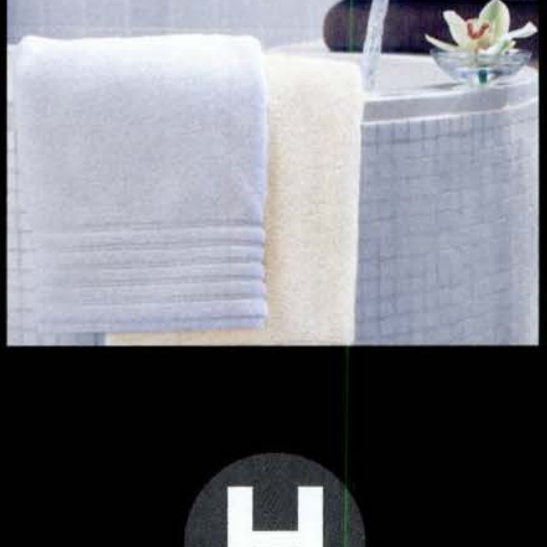

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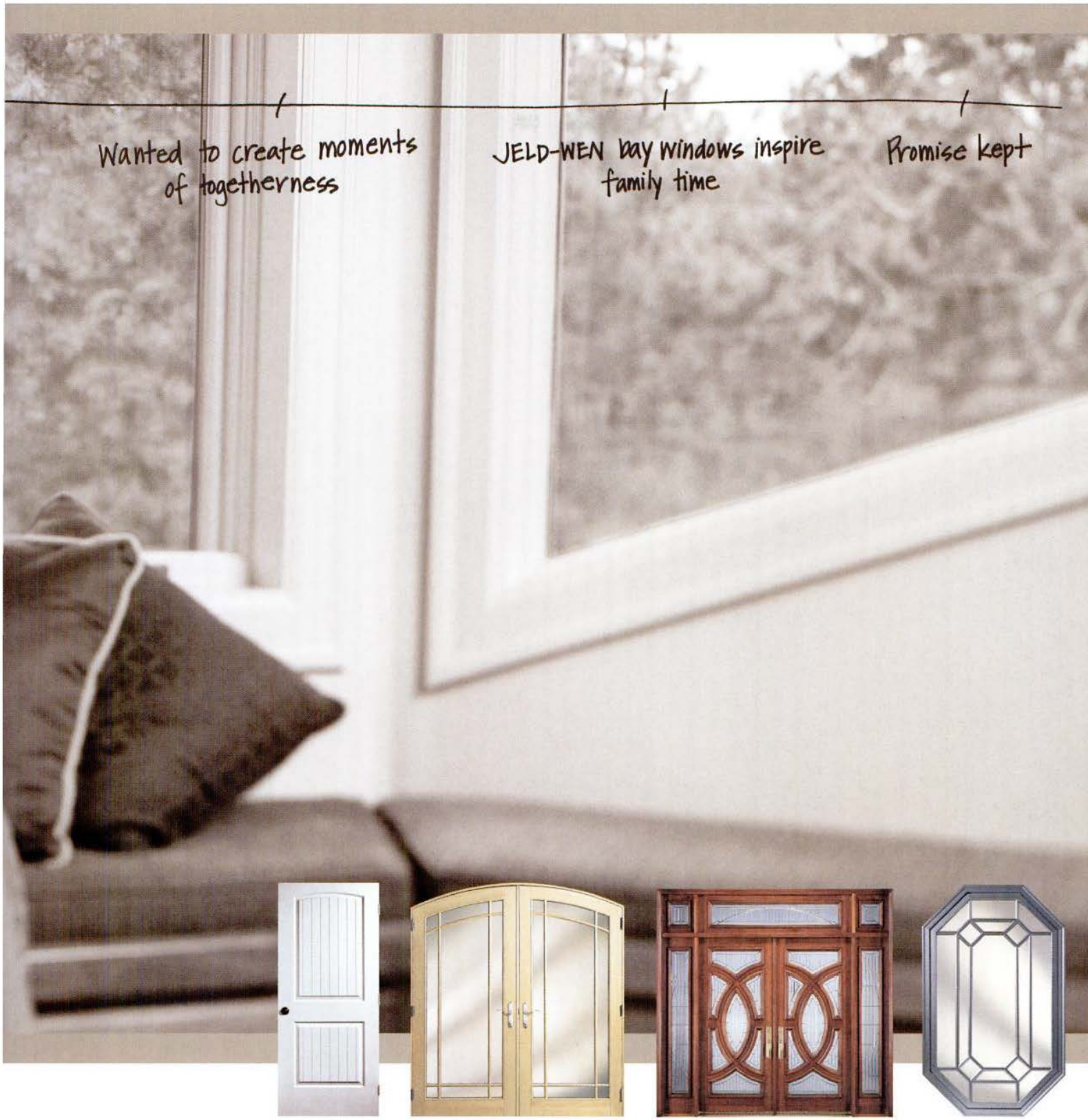

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Cover
Of his striking Mexico City home designed by architect Alberto Kalach, Guillermo Gonzalez observes, "Some angles I see Wright, then Scarpa, then Barragán. Of course there is Yazpik, and there is the city we live in. But in the end, it's Alberto." **Photo by Paco Pérez**

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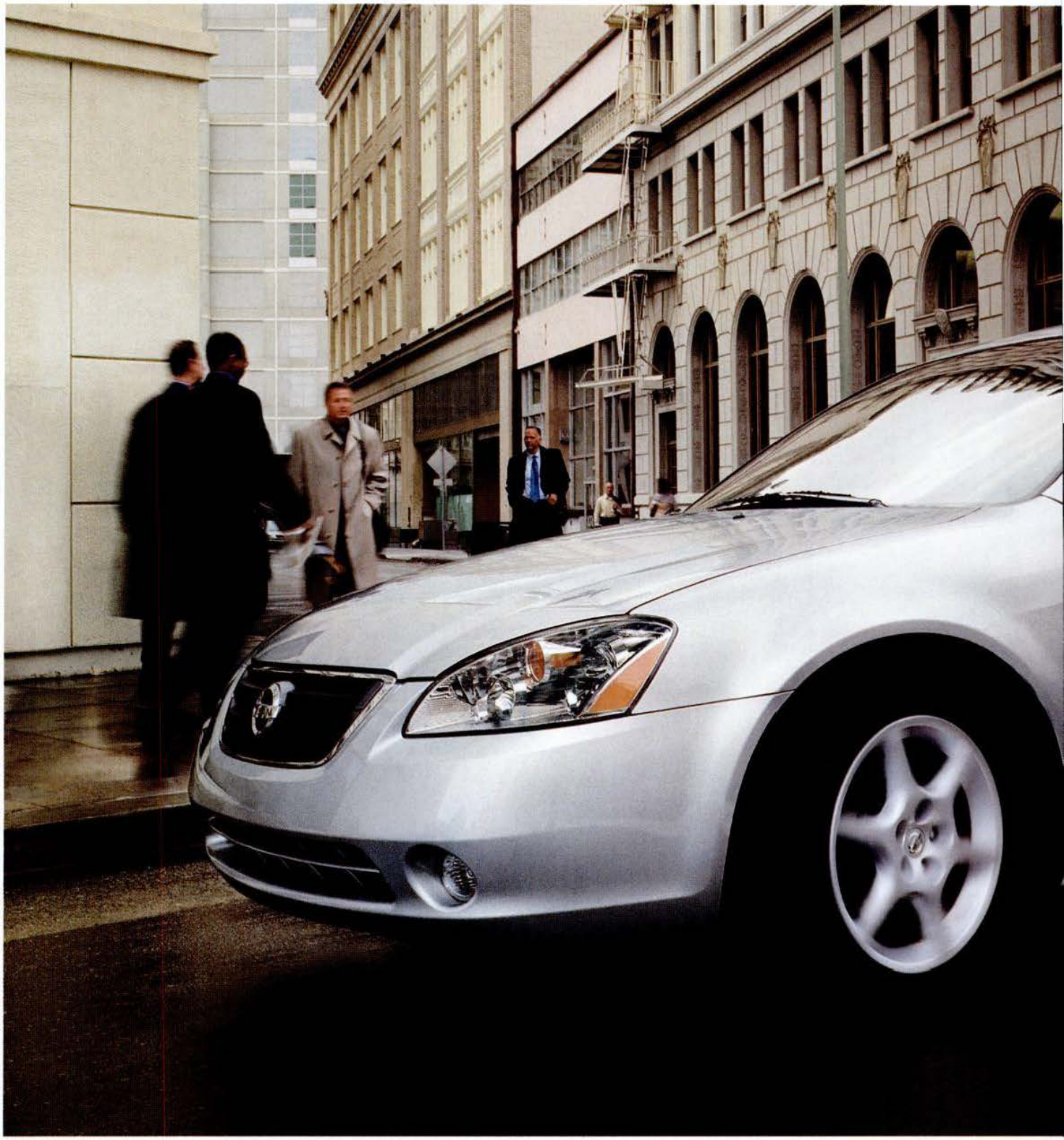
October 2003 Contents: Elsewhere

"In some regions of Austria, alpine tourism has a strong economic influence, and the general idea of what a building should look like is more influenced by *Heidi*, *The Sound of Music*, and leather trousers." —Ambros Spiluttini, p. 106

Dwellings



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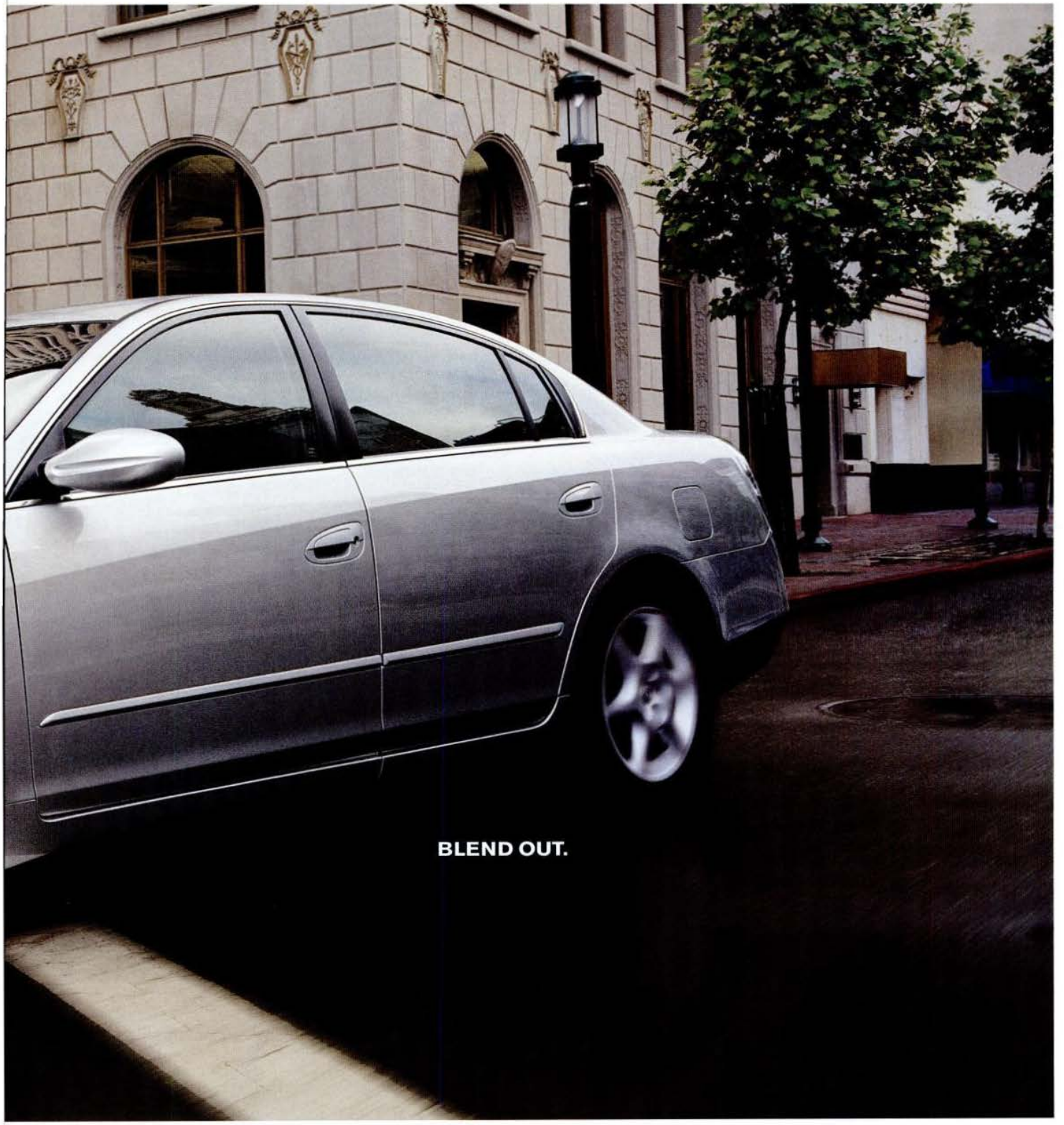

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Letters

I am an architect; however, I have always been interested in a wide array of design and artistic fields outside of architecture. Most design magazines focus strictly on architecture and engineering issues as if those professions exist in a vacuum. What I like about Dwell is the way it expands the field of vision to include associated design fields and unrelated fields, as if to remind us that there is a larger world all around us.

Rob Ferguson
Buffalo, New York

Your magazine creates in me a terrible craving to spend time in a modernist environment. But this itch isn't easily scratched because my partner and I live in a pre-war apartment in DC. Can you help us find temporary relief short of moving out of the city? Please consider running an article on modernist lodgings, preferably in glorious natural settings. Starck hotels don't count—too urban; too familiar. My first suggestion would be Phinda Game Reserve Forest Lodge in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. It hits the spot in every particular except distance and (relatedly) cost. On the other hand, any reporter you sent to review it would probably be your slave for life. I suspect there are better pickings out West, but please include some places accessible to Easterners too.

Jon Reel
Washington, D.C.

Editor's Note: *Great idea, Jon! Check out "Super 8 Hotels" on page 136. We'll definitely add the Phinda Game Reserve to our "to visit" list.*

Re: "Bell's Mission" (September 2003), Samuel Mockbee would be proud, both of Bryan Bell (with whom he worked) and of Dwell (for recognizing Bryan's efforts and accomplishments). Keep up the great work. And, as Sambo would say, "Proceed and be bold!"

Christian Trask
Beaufort, South Carolina

I'm an avid fan of your magazine and have subscribed since issue #1, but when I read "Watching It All Unfold" (July/August 2003), I was disappointed that the house's ability to feel like a "horse with blinders" was positive. Aren't you the magazine of "nice modernists"? In addition, doubling the size of an original bungalow as an act of "self-defense" suggests an eye-for-an-eye mentality that's part of a problem, not a solution.

Surely there are plenty of noteworthy modernist houses that have loftier goals than to "block out the neighbors" and build "as close to the wetlands as setback laws would permit." Perhaps it isn't Dwell's job to remake society, but shouldn't it highlight projects with more to offer than a ►

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Contributors

After living in Canada for two years, **Andrew Blum** ("Winnipeg Whiteout," p. 43) had never heard of Gordon Smith, one of Canada's most prominent modern painters. "But," Blum says, "Smith excused me when he heard I was American." Blum writes for the *New York Times, Metropolis,* and *Architectural Record.*

This year photographer **Claudio Edinger** ("Brazil: Curves Ahead," p. 112) is publishing his 11th book, which is about Rio, shot completely with a 4x5 camera. He will also publish his first novel, *Swami in Rio.* Edinger's work has appeared in *Time, Newsweek, Fortune, Forbes,* and *Vanity Fair,* among many others.

Photographer **Mark Gilbert's** ("Winnipeg Whiteout," p. 43) work has appeared in publications such as *Dutch, Elle, GQ, Travel & Leisure, People,* and *Adbusters.*

Dwell's New York contributing editor **Alastair Gordon** ("Austria: 21st-Century Secession," p. 106), is the author, most recently, of *Beach Houses: Andrew Geller* (Princeton Architectural Press).

Photographer **Matthew Hranek** ("Austria: 21st-Century Secession," p. 106) is a frequent contributor to *W, Wallpaper, Travel & Leisure,* and *In Style.* Hranek lives in New York City.

Daisann McLane ("Why I Love Hotels," p. 132), author of *Cheap Hotels* (Taschen, 2002), writes the Frugal Traveler column for the *New York Times.* At home in her Brooklyn apartment, she sometimes accidentally picks up the phone to complain to the front desk.

Fashion photographer **Paco Pérez** ("Mexico City: Elemental Architecture," p. 96) has shot for magazines such as *Marie Claire* and *Elle Latin America.* He started his career covering protests and demonstrations. He also enjoys photographing nature and folklore.

When he's not staying in a hotel, **Robert Sullivan** ("Why I Hate Hotels," p. 134) lives in Hastings-on-Hudson. While writing his book *The Meadowlands,* he stayed in a nondescript hotel next to a polluted swamp in New Jersey. Sullivan is a regular contributor to the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times Magazine.*

Terry Wade ("Brazil: Curves Ahead," p. 112) has lived and worked as a journalist in São Paulo for the last three years. An urban planner by training, he is still struggling to make sense of South America's largest city but says being baffled is part of the fun.

my-house-is-bigger-than-your-house attitude?

I don't mean to suggest the house itself isn't an accomplishment; it is clearly beautiful. However, the underlying motivations are not. When Dwell focuses on features such as "From A to (Bed)ZED" and "A Lot on a Little Lot" (both July/August 2003), it comes much closer to the ideals the magazine set out for itself and is, in this reader's opinion, a more interesting and ambitious publication.

Kevin Varrone
Baltimore, Maryland

Dwell, an inspiration for the elderly? Yes! Your stunning magazine emphasizes the simplicity and minimalism we do need and appreciate in our retirement years. In my mid-70s, I am still practicing the business of interior design, always advising my contemporary clients on the rewards of scaling down. Dwell is an exciting presentation of great design for readers of all ages.

Joan Lyman
York Harbor, Maine

Although I am very pleased that the Turnbull win- ery project was included in your July/August issue ("Good Wine, Good Design") and that my father's work continues to be recognized, I would like to underscore the fact that the current winery building and the outlying structures were altered by the current owner. The winery building in its present state is very different from the original.

Connor Elizabeth Turnbull
San Francisco, California

As an interior designer, I can only say this is a fantastic magazine. I read them twice and mark many pages for contacts for my business. As an owner of a geodesic home, I love the unusual spaces you show. Your magazine gives such a different perspective. I get bored with most, but I can't wait for the next issue of yours. I want all my friends to know about it but don't want to give up any of my issues, so I talk a lot about the magazine and tell them to grab one at the stand.

Sharon M. Maga
Venice, Florida

I very much enjoy reading your magazine and find it very inspiring. I am fascinated by furniture design and in particular chair design. I have sketched a lot of various designs but I have no ►

Coming in November/December 2003: High-Tech/Low-Tech
Amazing feats of technology and innovation from architects Sir Norman Foster, David Hovey, and Jennifer Siegal. Festive guide to holiday giving. Plus, a Q&A with futurist Virginia Postrel, an assessment of cool new TVs, and all the latest in domestic innovations from refrigerators to PDAs.

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Letters

idea of the process of how to actually realize these designs. I live in New York City and would very much like to learn more. Is there any place where I can take classes that can teach me how to take my interests further?

Chaz Mee
New York, New York

Editors' Note: *The Parsons School of Design in N.Y.C. would be a good place to start. And take a look at our "Furniture 101" (June 2003), featuring interviews with well-known and not-so-well known designers on how they got their inspiration, and "Furniture: Factory to Floor," which outlines the manufacturing process.*

Writing from Berlin, Germany, I greatly appreciate the arrival of the classic manila envelope carrying your magazine to my door. I also heartily applaud what I understand to be your magazine's aim of discovering the roots of, as well as supporting, the development of a clear and strongly international contemporary modernism. However, I see that this effort seems to be teetering dangerously on the edge of superficiality if you are not able to go deeper inside the projects that you present to your reading community. In addition to more plans, we would need a section, site plan, etc. in order to seriously explore the projects you share with us. Lastly, it would be most refreshing to see critical (but constructive) discourse on the projects. Do not underestimate the skills or intelligence of your reading public! And they will love you for it.

Jason Danziger
Berlin, Germany

Corrections: In our September 2003 issue, we incorrectly spelled the name of the photographer who shot our feature on Nashville, TN. Her name is Kyoko Hamada. In the story "Building a Bond," we are terribly embarrassed to note that we misattributed the designer of the Barcelona chairs. They were designed by Mies van der Rohe. In "What We Saw," the Italian exhibitors at the Abitare Pavilion at this year's ICFF were brought by Federlengo-Arredo, not the Italian Trade Commission. And, finally, in "Flooring 101," we incorrectly identified the source for the bamboo floor shown on page 132. It is from Smith & Fong (www.plyboo.com). We regret the errors—and promise to get more sleep during our next production cycle.

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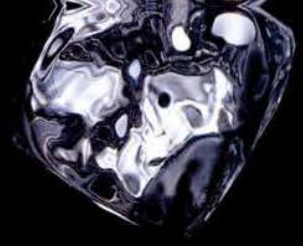

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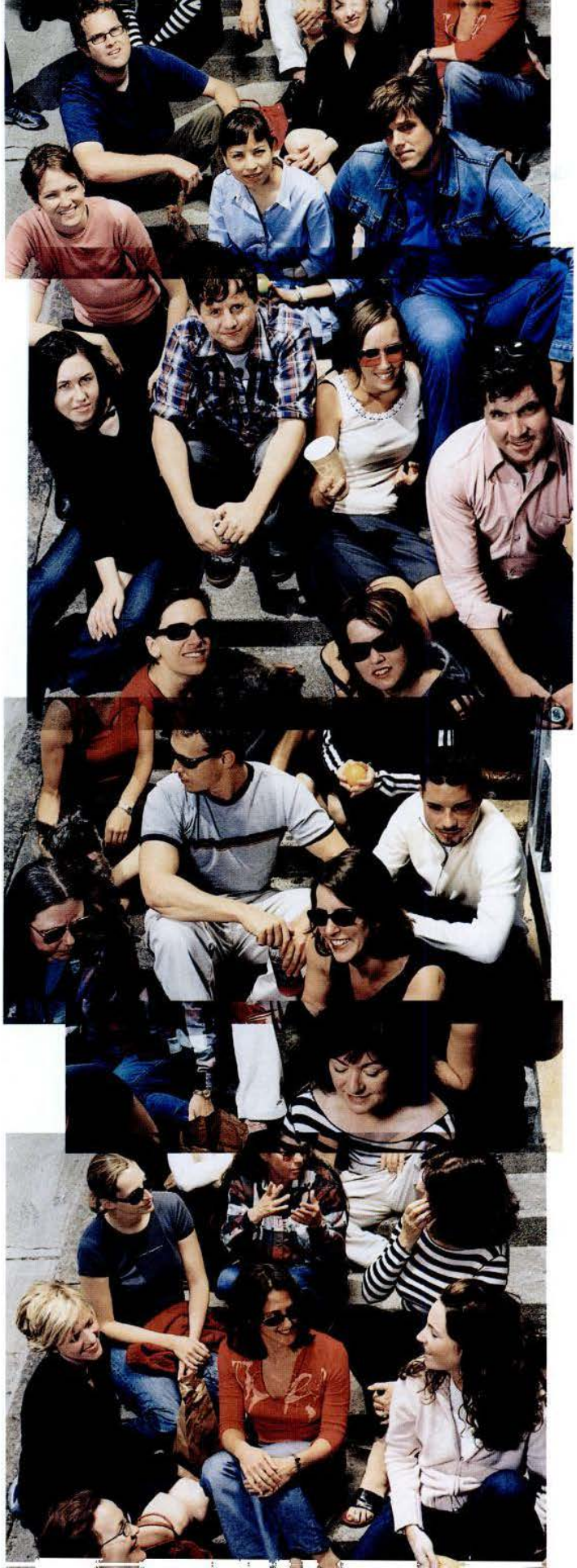

Photos by Michael Martin

And Now We Are Three

Recently I came across the following quote from the British painter David Hockney: "Art has to move you and design does not, unless it's a good design for a bus."

To which I say, but of course design has to move you! If it doesn't, what's the point?

Dwell may not have been founded to prove David Hockney wrong, but as we celebrate our third anniversary with this issue, I think it's fair to say we have.

To commemorate this milestone, we thought it would be fun to gather everyone together for a staff portrait. We strolled down Broadway en masse, past our favorite neighborhood haunts like the Great Water (a Thai restaurant with—go figure—really great french fries), El Taqueria Gran Taco (formerly identified as "the Best Burrito on Broadway," a distinction that has been inexplicably but deservedly removed from the front window), the Helmand (the best Afghani cuisine this side of Kabul), and Smoothness Above All Else (which is, of course, a Vietnamese restaurant), and took our places on the Peter Macchiarini Steps amidst the pigeons and pedestrians. It was a beautiful day for a picture. We smiled, the flash bulbs popped, the film advanced—and there we are on the left.

All of this local color undoubtedly contributes to the creative energy in our offices, but for this issue of Dwell, we went global. We scoured the United States and Canada for great design in our annual Modern Across America issue last month; this time around we eagerly set ourselves to the task of discovering great architecture from all seven continents.

An interesting question that has emerged from all this concerns the idea of what constitutes national and cultural identity. Would a house from Mexico, for example, be instantly recognizable as such? What about one from Norway? from Austria? The answer is yes, but not in the way one might expect. The houses in this issue seem wholly attuned and appropriate to their locations, but not as the result of any blatant cultural symbols or stereotypes. The failure of so much architecture today seems to lie in a relentless urge to tack on signifiers of "place" that have nothing whatsoever to do with the time and place in question (consider, for example, the preponderance of Tuscan villas in Tucson). What is so wonderful—moving, even—about the houses we feature here is their collective ability to convey a sense of place, of continuity, with beauty and restraint. And that, along with our third birthday, is definitely something worth celebrating. ■

ALLISON ARIEFF, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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Eric Fischl / 12 Oct–25 Jan / Esters Haus / Krefeld, Germany / Two years ago, Eric Fischl was invited to show new work at Mies's Esters Haus. These striking paintings document the experience. www.krefeld.de

Invited to exhibit his work at Mies van der Rohe's Esters Haus, the figurative painter Eric Fischl hired two actors to pretend they lived there. He spent three days photographing them, taking more than 2,000 snapshots back to his New York studio. Those photos served as studies for a dozen monumental paintings. Recently, art critic Jonathon Keats interviewed Fischl about the exhibition.

How did you select your models?
I chose the actors from their websites. I don't read German, so I didn't look at the details, and when they arrived, the male was well over six feet tall and the female was tiny. But throughout the shoot they seemed to grow or shrink, she at times becoming larger than he.

How did you choose the furnishings?
When I arrived I went to a store that sold contemporary European furniture. My idea was that the people who now lived in this historic house had little respect for or knowledge of its significance.

What was your inspiration?
I'd never worked with a specific site where the paintings were designed to go back in the space that inspired them. The exterior of the Esters Haus is bunker-like yet there are so many windows that one has a voyeuristic access to its interior. This ambivalence for private and public is what connected for me.

IMAGES COURTESY MARY BOONE GALLERY, NY (ERIC FISCHL)

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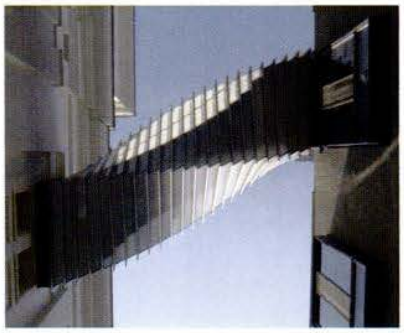
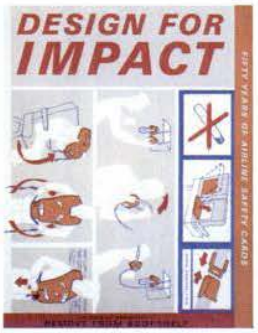


Royal Ballet School Bridge / London, England
If you're strolling through Covent Garden, you might glimpse a tutu overhead walking on this enclosed footbridge. The bridge—designed by Wilkinson Eyre Architects—is a dynamic glass, timber, and aluminum space that links the Royal Ballet School with the Royal Opera House. Supported by a 31-foot aluminum beam, the 23 square frames each rotate four degrees as they progress, to create the light-filled, accordion-like space.



Design for Impact: Fifty Years of Airline Safety Cards / By Eric Ericson and Johan Pihl / Princeton Architectural Press / $30
Every airplane seat pocket contains a similar array of stuff: in-flight magazine, Skymall catalog, air-sickness bag, and safety-procedures card. What this graphic collection proves is that while the cards are ubiquitous, there's ample variation and humor to be found. Selected from safety-card designer Carl Reese's collection of over 70,000 cards, this compendium redefines the phrase "in the unlikely event of an emergency." www.papress.com

Ori Lighting / nüf design
Foam has many wonderful practical uses. In cars, it provides a comforting cushion on which to sit. In sports, it protects human heads and limbs. In boxes and mailers, it safeguards our valuables in transit. When it comes to using foam impractically, Yeon Soo Son and Yoyo Wong of nüf design give us Ori lighting. The gathered handmade folds of EVA foam glow in beautiful soft shades and evoke submarine life-forms. www.nufdesign.com

Lacaton & Vassal: Beyond Form / 26 June–6 Oct / Architekturzentrum Wien / Vienna, Austria / French architects Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal make use of basic building materials and adopt prefab systems to create homes that are both sleek and unobtrusive. www.azw.at

Tru / San Francisco, CA / After a hard day spent shopping in downtown San Francisco, a long massage at newly opened Tru day spa is the perfect reward. Designed by architect Chris Kofitsas, the minimalist, rectangular space is infused with natural light and natural wood touches, with no fussy trappings to be found. Some treatment rooms have good views of the city, while others are flooded with colored light that intermittently changes hues. It's a spa experience akin to drinking a really good martini—refreshing, simple, and very satisfying. www.truspa.com

PHOTOS BY NICK WOOD (ROYAL BALLET BRIDGE), DAVID PRADEL (LACATON & VASSAL)

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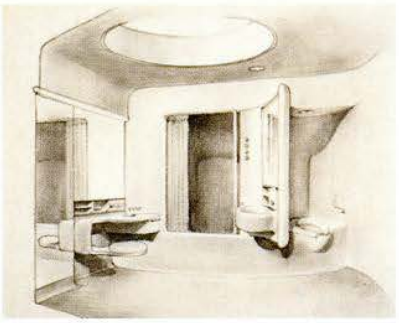

Aesthetics of Hygiene: Modernist Kitchen and Bathroom Design / 27 May–2 Nov / University Art Museum / Santa Barbara, CA

Who ever thought bathrooms could change the world? A lot of people, apparently, among them architects Richard Neutra, Gregory Ain, and Thornton Abell. This exhibit examines the work of many California-based mid-century-modern architects, with particular attention paid to the kitchen and bathroom. www.uam.ucsb.edu

DRAWING BY MAYNARD LYNDON COURTESY ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM UCSB (AESTHETICS OF HYGIENE)

Feeling Flushed?

Toto, which recently patented the new Cyclone multisequence rim jet flush, sees no limits when it comes to raising your toilet's I.Q. The new Neorest 600 toilet seat is interactive. As you approach, a sensor knows you're coming and the lid obligingly opens. After you've made your deposits and stood up, the lid closes and the high-performance Cyclone issues forth. While we're in favor of cutting-edge flush mechanics, the sensor lid seems overeager, not to mention too smart. Next thing we know, the toilet will have its own free will, and then there could be real trouble. www.totousa.com

Shuhei Endo: Paramodern Architecture / Edited by Hiroyuki Suzuki / Electaarchitecture / $59.95

"My buildings are experiments in the use of corrugated sheet steel," says Japanese architect Shuhei Endo. Draping, wrapping, and twisting metal into supremely light and refined forms, Endo creates "paramodern" architecture full of continuous surfaces and spaces without well-defined boundaries. From a bicycle depot to a crematorium to an apartment block, this book includes drawings, photos, and explanatory text of Endo's work over the past 15 years. www.phaidon.com

Nest Table / Intoto

As Intoto, Janet and Joe Doucet create a variety of furnishings and decorative objects that are both simple and charming—a difficult combination to achieve. With the Nest table, the simplicity comes from the molded-plywood top with a walnut veneer and the three stainless steel loops that serve as legs. The charm is the result of the ceramic vase sunk into the tabletop in which you can plant a plant, house a goldfish, or stash your remotes (or your stash). www.intotonyc.com

Beach Houses: Andrew Geller / By Alastair Gordon / Princeton Architectural Press / $40

In the '60s and '70s, a steady stream of station wagons full of inflatable water toys and small children made their way from New York City to the beaches each summer weekend. The "little dream houses" that architect Andrew Geller built dotted coasts from Fire Island to the Jersey Shore and captured the era's ethos; the homes stand in stark contrast to the seaside McMansions of today. With engaging text and original photos, this book looks at the stories behind Geller's designs. www.papress.com

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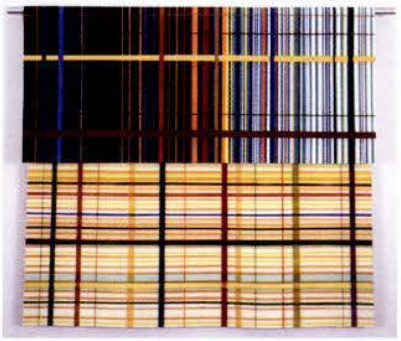


One Word: Plastic / 7 Sept–7 Dec / Weatherspoon Art Museum / Greensboro, NC
The soul of polymers and vinyl is alive and well. Five contemporary artists working with a variety of plastics will prove that the wonder material of the 20th century has not been creatively limited to slick computer cases and toothbrushes. Their work—ranging from Styrofoam carvings to eclectic sculptures of found objects—is a testament to the versatility of this relatively modern material. www.uncg.edu/wag

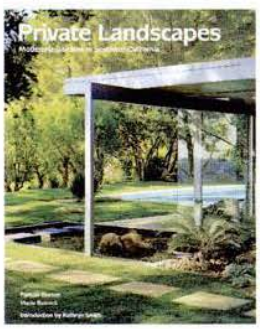
UnNaturally / H&R Block Artspace / 20 Sept–29 Oct / Kansas City, MO / From single-stemmed flowers to trestles of ivy, phony flora have become a design staple across America. Fingering these plants to test for signs of life has become a matter of instinct. "UnNaturally" displays thought-provoking works of simulated nature by domestic and international artists that ask the viewer "to consider our changing experience of nature and the mediated environment." www.kcai.edu

PAINTING BY LINDA BESEMER (ONE WORD: PLASTIC). PHOTO BY MARC QUINN, COLLECTION ADAM LOWE (UNNATURALLY), COURTESY MÁRIO SEQUEIRA GALLERY (FIAC)

Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain (FIAC) / 9–13 Oct / Porte de Versailles / Paris, France
There's never a bad time to sip a café au lait on the Champs-Elysees, and this October, a trip to Paris becomes ever more palatable with the celebration of FIAC's 30th anniversary. More than 1,000 artists—both emerging and established—from 22 countries will show their work at one of the world's foremost contemporary-art events. Featured artists include Sophie Calle, Thomas Ruff, Richard Serra, and Julian Opie (work pictured at left). fiac.reed-oip.fr

Tokyo Designer's Block
If you're interested in seeing the latest cutting-edge designs from around the world, there's no better place to be October 9–13 than Tokyo. The Tokyo Designer's Block continues to grow, while maintaining its original goal of presenting vibrant and youthful new work. This year's theme, "Anything Goes, Design Flows," will be explored in the many goings-on, such as the TDB design competition (where the winner's prototype will be manufactured), the annual Sputnik dome (where a concept hotel will be exhibited), and IDEE's Slow Life House (a showcase of Danish style). www.tokyodesignersblock.com

Private Landscapes: Modernist Gardens in Southern California / By Pamela Burton and Marie Botnick / Princeton Architectural Press / $40
When landscape design is put into action, the result often includes poodle-shaped topiary and intricately set rows of colorful flowers. In this book, however, Burton and Botnik depict California landscapes that subvert traditional garden ideals and complement their architectural counterparts. Well-designed greenery next to houses by Soriano, Schindler, and other notable architects is shown. www.papress.com



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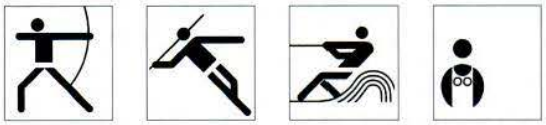
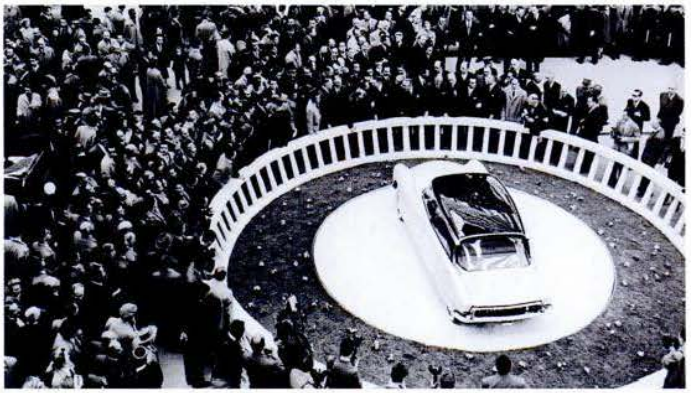
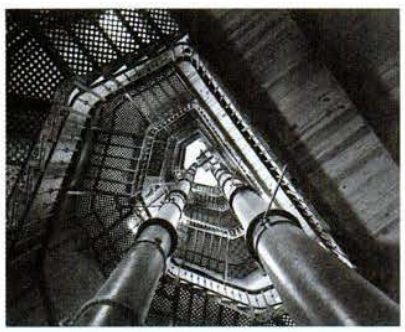


Otl Aicher: Designer, Educator, Author / 12 Sept–30 Oct / Harmon Fine Arts Center, Drake University / Des Moines, IA / Most famous for his superlative pictograms for the 1972 Olympic Games (so good they were used four years later in Montreal), Otl Aicher was the main flag bearer for Bauhaus design philosophies in postwar Germany. More sensitive than some stricter predecessors, he strove not only for rationality but also for more meaningful communication. The resulting body of work, on display here, is pure, graceful, and continues to influence contemporary poster, identity, and typographic design. www.drake.edu/andersongallery

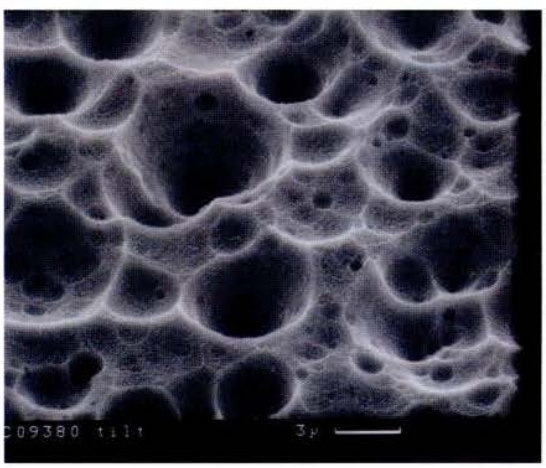


When Flaminio Drove to France: Flaminio Bertoni's Designs for Citroën / 1 Aug–12 Oct / Design Museum / London, England
They stick out like sore thumbs on American streets. Nicknamed "the goddess" or "*la déesse*," the Citroën DS19 is easily one of the most revolutionary-looking cars ever (not quite Pontiac Aztek revolutionary, mind you). Bertoni, the man responsible for the French auto's sleek curves and friendly oversized headlamps, was the head of Citroën's design department from the 1930s to the 1960s. The exhibition will feature such classic cars as the Traction, 2CV, and DS, in addition to notes, sketches, and working drawings. www.designmuseum.org



Openhousenewyork / 11–12 Oct / New York, NY
If you've always had a hankering to explore the subterranean spaces of New York or poke around in fancy uptown penthouses, this is your chance to fulfill voyeuristic tendencies. Modeled after similar events in Europe and Canada, Openhousenewyork will provide free tours of normally forbidden architectural structures and spaces throughout all five boroughs. www.openhousenewyork.org

B.1 Chair / Fabien Baron / Bernhardt Design
Called "the posterboy for ADD" by *Hint* magazine, creative director Fabien Baron has his hand in many a high-style pot. The man who created new corporate identities for Burberry, Miu Miu, and Prada (among others) now dabbles in furniture design, first with a Cappellini collection and more recently a line with Bernhardt Design. The B.1 chair, with its brushed-nickel base and smooth linear form, is a seat with attitude. www.bernhardtdesign.com



Super Black / National Physical Laboratory / Teddington, England
Spelunking may never be synonymous with glamour, but when flashlights are extinguished in the depths of Mammoth Cave, fashionistas would die to slather that lack of color on everything from dresses to walls. Scientists at NPL have created Super Black (far more marketable than Bottomless Pit), a coating 2.2 percent more light absorbant than the blackest paint, to improve optical devices and other light-sensitive equipment. www.npl.co.uk

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WWW.ERCO.COM (OTL AICHER), DESIGN MUSEUM (BERTONI), © STANLEY GREENBURG / YOSSI MILO GALLERY (OPENHOUSENEWYORK), NPL (SUPER BLACK)

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The American Effect / 3 July–12 Oct / Whitney Museum of American Art / New York, NY

With Britney Spears and Big Macs familiar to residents of the farthest reaches of the world, and the White House's international involvements well known if not well regarded, it's undeniable that America has left its calling card all over the globe. In this exhibition, 47 artists and filmmakers from 30 countries portray their visions of America's influence through paintings, sculpture, installations, videos, and Internet art. www.whitney.org

360 Dog Habitat / Knoell & Quidort Architects

The annual Pawchitecture competition held in Scottsdale, Arizona, challenges architects to design useful structures for our four-legged friends. Awarded Best in Show by an esteemed panel in this year's competition, the 360 Dog Habitat wins our vote as well. 360's wheels allow for easy transport to the park, beach, or the other end of the yard. A removable sunshade and food dish are nice extras. www.kqarchitects.com

Happiness: A Survival Gu… Life / 18 Oct–18 Jan / Mori … Tokyo, Japan

Aiming to fulfill the new museu… "illuminating the links between a… the inaugural show presents works… into four ideas of happiness that have… found across times and cultures: Arcad… Nirvana, Desire, and Harmony. The mus… is on the top floor of the 54-story Roppong… Hills Mori Tower that's being billed as the "cultural centerpiece of downtown Tokyo redevelopment." www.moriartscenter.org

twenty2 Wallpaper

When a TV show wanted to film twenty2's Kyra and Robertson Hartnett at work in their home studio, the designers realized they had a lot of work to do. Armed with an array of their hand-silk-screened wallpaper, in the two days before the crew arrived they completely transformed four rooms of their apartment—proving that wallpapering isn't quite the ordeal we've been led to believe it is. Unlike your mom's wallpaper, twenty2's four collections can provide the perfect backdrop to your furniture and art. www.twenty2.net

Moderne Changing Table / Netto Design

For those parents whose living rooms are of the Saarinen and Le Corbusier variety, nursery furnishings are usually an embarrassing necessity of white wicker and painted stencils. But with Netto Design's changing table, there's no longer a reason to place your little pride and joy's tender backside on anything but the modernist best. With a flip of its top, the table—white lacquer finished with stained ash veneer—is even suitable for storing cocktails when the kiddies have grown up. www.nettocollection.com

PHOTO BY DANWEN XING, COURTESY WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART (AMERICAN EFFECT)

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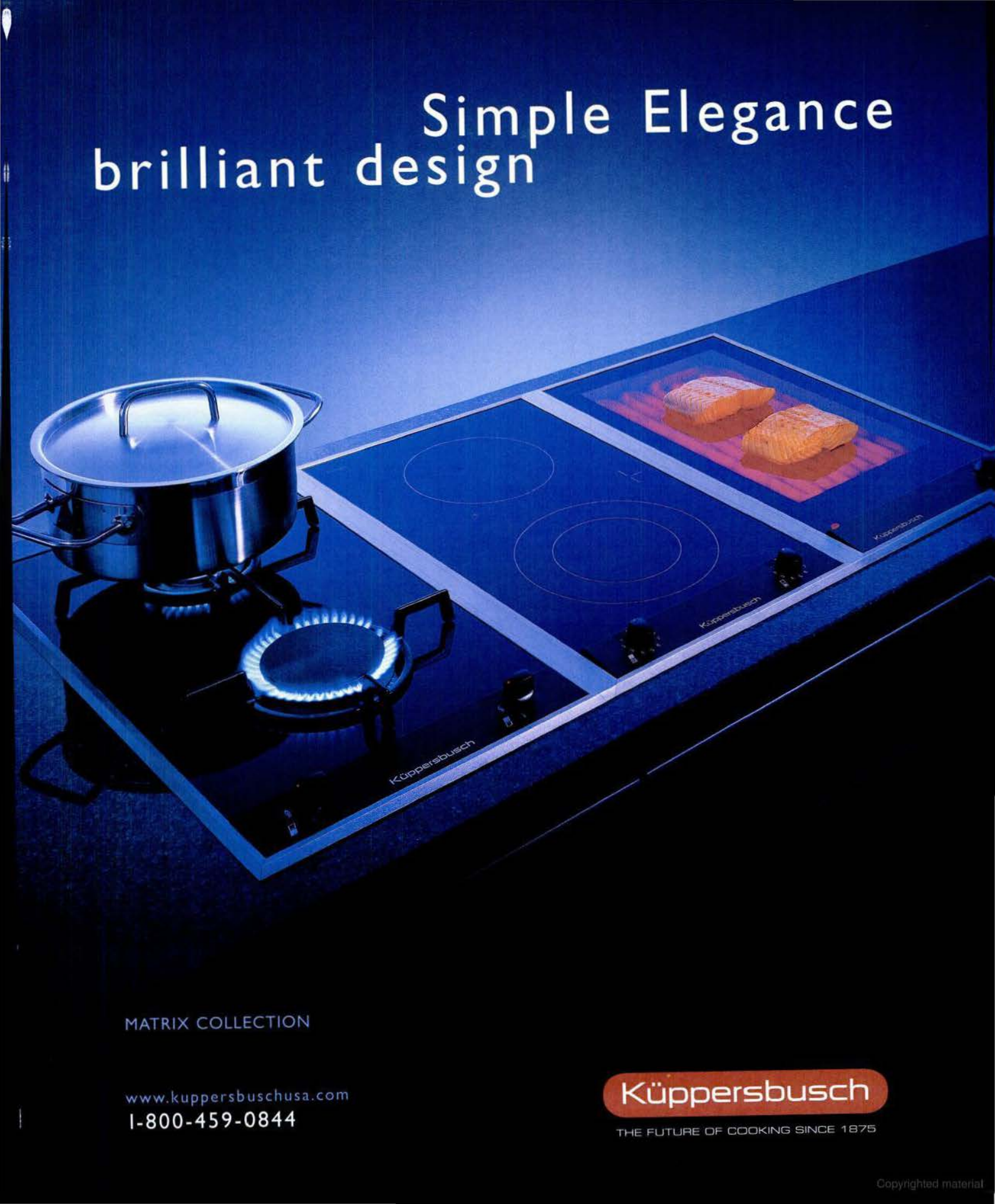
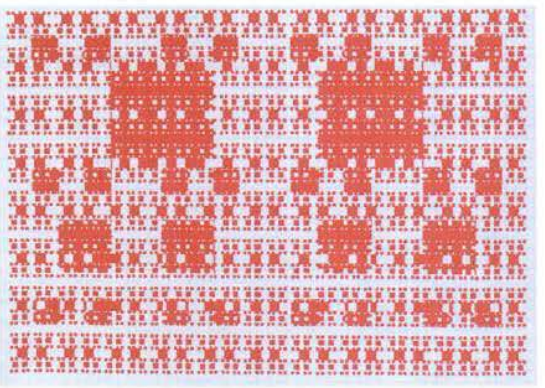


Cité Bed / Molteni & C

For people who yearn for the simple postcollegiate aesthetic of a futon on the floor but want something with a bit more grown-up style, Paola Navone's new Cité bed for Molteni & C is the perfect sleeping solution. Bands of smooth wood join to make the streamlined platform; for late-night reading needs, a padded headboard covered in fabric, Alcantra, or leather can also be added. www.molteni.it



Dirty Pixels / 16 Aug–5 Oct / Dunedin Public Art Gallery / Dunedin, New Zealand

Though the title suggests a darkened gallery full of surreptitious visitors and soft-core porn, this exhibition is a G-rated multimedia exploration of digital art. Seven artists from the United States, Australia, France, and New Zealand (including Stella Brennan, Joyce Campbell, and Tim Ryan) use materials from bacteria to embroidery thread to create two- and three-dimensional images based on the tiny digital blocks that color our computerized world. www.dunedin.art.museum

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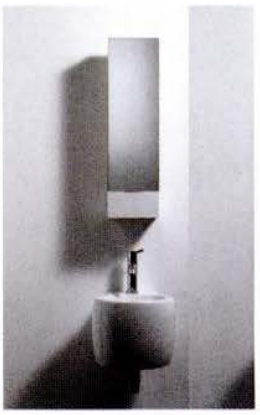

Jet / Agape

Hiding behind the doors of many an American medicine cabinet is a selection of balms, potions, and pills that would put any drugstore to shame. But whether you're a pharmaceutical-product hound or a toothpaste-and-aspirin minimalist, you'll find the new Jet bathroom cabinet by Agape a stylish addition to your bathroom. Created by German industrial designer Konstantin Grcic, the mirror-cum-containment system can be tailored to your storage needs, with one (or several) swiveling units placed vertically or horizontally on your wall. Intended to be paired with any of Agape's sinks and washbasins (as pictured here), Jet's comely shelves lend a swanky appearance even to your shaving cream. www.agapedesign.it

Warped Space / 17 Sept–15 Nov / CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts / San Francisco, CA

Not the Trekkie convention that the theme may suggest (or that visitors may hope for), this exhibition explores the manipulation of forms to create hypothetical spaces, reenvisioning the light-and-space installations of the '60s. The works—which include an imaginary room wallpapered in pink, groovy curtains of crystal beads, and a three-dimensional circle of bright neon lights (pictured above, by Carsten Höller)—are a cornucopia of media, from painting and sculpture to video and installation art. The international roster of artists in this show includes Ricci Albenda, Ann Lilsegaard, Jennifer Steinkamp, and Pae White. www.wattis.org

IMAGE BY SARA HUGHES (DIRTY PIXELS), COURTESY CASEY KAPLAN, NY (WARPED SPACE)

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Winnipeg Whiteout

Sotirios Kotoulas—like most artists and architects whose work begs for the term—hates to be called a minimalist. But looking at the house Sotirios designed for his family on the outskirts of Winnipeg, Manitoba, it's a tough label to avoid. At 6,000 square feet, the Kotoulas residence is a cavernous expanse of highly polished pure white marble, interrupted only by a couple of pieces of furniture by Donald Judd and a few of Sotirios's own designs. Otherwise, all the typical household clutter—from the piano to the spice rack to his little brother's Playstation—is hidden within the massive closets that comprise nearly every wall of the house, except those made of glass. But like most minimalists, the 24-year-old Cooper Union graduate insists that amid the rigid geometry and strictly unadorned surfaces, there's really quite a bit happening here: the camera obscura reflection of the woods outside, the play of shadows on the vast, empty floors, and the powerful psychological impact of a house with a fun-house sense of scale.

The Kotoulases take great pride in being the kind of family that would occupy a house that could be the love child of a Greek temple and a Miesian box. As Sotirios's sister, Voula, 21, says, "There's obviously some sort of challenge involved in living here. I don't have my big fat La-Z-Boy couch to sit on." Sotirios himself puts a slightly different spin on it. "There was a reason they made mental patients go into all-white spaces," he says with a chuckle.

When Sotirios was still in high school, his family outgrew their turn-of-the-century house in downtown ►

"It's the whitest space I've ever been in," says Sotirios Kotoulas, pictured below. Play of light is the only decoration. "Why have art on the wall?" the young architect wonders. "You can tell what time of day it is from patterns on the floor."

The house reveals its teenage designer's eye for play, with a long, narrow pool for summertime parties and a hidden staircase that rises directly to the roof—both of which Nicholas, Sotirios's brother, enjoys. Nonetheless, his mother insists, the house is functional. "It works out just fine," she says. "I do my cooking, my baking, no problem."

Winnipeg, and began looking for property on which to build. Building was the most natural thing to do. Sotirios's father, Konstantine, who owns a large construction company, trained as a mason when he was growing up in Greece. The family hired a retired architecture professor who made the house his pet project. "It was his excitement," Sotirios says. "Every day he would sit on his porch and draft these things"—super-functionalist designs that sought the greatest possible efficiency in the life of the occupants, which was not at all what the family had in mind. "There was no way I wanted to live in that kind of a house," says Sotirios's mother, Chrysoula, in a rich Greek accent.

As active gallery-goers in Winnipeg's thriving contemporary-art scene, the family knew what it was like to have art "shake you up," and they wanted the same from their house. But the architect's plan wasn't doing it. Sotirios says, "My mom would be the first one to start screaming, because it was boring. If it doesn't excite you, why sweat over building?" At what would be their last meeting, the architect threw a pencil at the teenage Sotirios and said, "You do it."

So Sotirios did. He sketched a rigidly geometric plan with 20-foot ceilings, hugely thick masonry walls, and a slender pool jutting out from the house like a diving board. "I was obsessed with keeping it extremely, extremely, extremely refined," Sotirios says. "I had a ►

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vision for what this place should feel like, what I would feel in it, and how I would live in it." Today, Sotirios's speech overflows with architectural theory, picked up from any one of his professors—who included Peter Eisenman, Anthony Vidler, Raimund Abraham, Diane Lewis, and Lebbeus Woods—but, as he explains, "when I did this at 17, I didn't have anything to reduce from. I just stopped early."

With Konstantine doing the construction work himself in his spare time or supervising one of his crews on the site, and with Sotirios working summers, the house grew slowly over four years. Nearly everything was custom-built, from the bed Sotirios designed with his little brother to the huge, rectilinear Vermont-slate bathtub. And while Konstantine toned down some of his son's wilder ideas (like a 20-foot masonry wall towering in front of the entrance), other features of the house still carry the whiff of Sotirios's teenage imaginings, including a narrow hidden staircase that rises directly to the roof, or the shower big enough for half a dozen people. Even the way the house deals with a mess seems like a teenager's dream. As his younger brother, Nicholas, 14, puts it, "It's easy to keep my room nice and organized—I just stuff everything in the closet."

All that absence does require some accommodations. In the frigid Winnipeg winters, when arctic air generally brings the temperature well below zero and sucks every cloud from the sky, the uninterrupted white surfaces can create what Sotirios describes as a "whiteout"—"so we all just walk around the house with Ray Bans on." ■

The Kotoulas family doesn't have less stuff, they just store it behind closed doors. There's even a closet for the piano. But even if the piano-closet door is shut, the thick masonry walls make the music reverberate all over the house.

Make My House Your House

On one of their annual trips to Greece, father and son searched for the whitest marble they could find, settling on a particular quarry on the island of Thassos. Unlike Carrara marble, Thassos marble has no depth of its own but instead reflects everything perfectly, giving the house the feeling of a large camera obscura. "You don't want to hit your head anywhere," Sotirios's mother warns. www.thassos.com.gr

While in London to visit the Architectural Association, Sotirios stopped in at the studio of John Pawson, the minimalist architect best known for his design for the Calvin Klein boutiques. Sotirios says he "cringed" at Pawson's "quiet architecture" ("It's like super new age," he says), but he liked the kitchen module Pawson designed for the Belgian company Obumex (previous page), with its hidden fixtures and crisp lines. www.obumex.be

Sotirios designed what little furniture there is in the house—with the exception of two pieces by the famed minimalist sculptor Donald Judd, including an enormous wooden daybed. Sotirios's own pieces reflect a similar aesthetic: The heavy wooden dining table (above left) tidily stores cubic stools beneath it, while his own bed has a lid like a coffin. As he explains, "It's nice because you never have to make your bed." ww.barbarakrakowgallery.com

Flat XL design Benedini Associati - photo F. Bergamo - styling L. Rossire - opera G. Cerone

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Story by Amara Holstein

Photos by Charlotte Wood

Are You Being Conserved?

The Brooke/Coombes house redefines modern housing in its traditional London neighborhood. "All the houses around us are typical red-brick Victorians," says Carol Coombes, "and we're this extraordinary thing, right in the middle, with all this glass and light."

Ealing is the kind of typical London neighborhood made famous by glossy travel brochures, imported BBC programs, and the cover of *Abbey Road*: tree-lined streets with rows of brick houses and manicured gardens. A requisite local link to royalty is even provided by the handful of houses built for Queen Victoria's coachmen. So when Carol Coombes, a visual artist, and John Brooke, a retired BBC television producer, bought their own plot, they assumed that what they built on the site would have to replicate the traditional surroundings.

But architects Burd Haward Marston had a different idea. "We came from the approach of contemporary design," says Catherine Burd, "and we wanted to incorporate the ideas of sustainability and energy efficiency." After convincing Brooke and Coombes of a modern vision for the home ("Carol, in particular, was rather excited—she's always wanted to throw out our antique furniture and buy something new," says Brooke with a laugh), the architects were faced with the notoriously strict neighborhood-planning council intent on preserving a historic aesthetic. Through a crafty combination of designing exterior elements such as the height of the walls and eaves to fit perfectly within the context of surrounding homes and a presentation of very small-scale, straightforward drawings, the architects secured approval from the vigilant council.

Completed in 2001, the four-bedroom, 2,100-square-foot house—which Coombes and Brooke built themselves—is an attractive urban combination of sustainability and good design. It's no surprise that the ▸

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house is energy efficient; as Brooke states succinctly, taking matters of the environment into concern is, "for British architects, part of their stock-in-trade." The architects designed the house, Burd notes, "so that the energy-efficiency strategy is integrated into the overall design, not as a series of bolted-on extras at the end." The steel-and-timber frame of the house is wrapped with Panelvent particleboard. To provide good insulation, the walls were injected with a recycled newspaper pulp called Warmcel, and the exterior was clad with terra-cotta tiles that cleverly mimic the red brick of the surrounding homes.

When the couple's daughters and son move out in the next few years, the house will evolve. "With the steel frame structure, there is the option to knock down walls or change the house's configuration," Burd explains. "It's quite a sustainable model, because people can adapt it according to their needs." In fact, the design is so eminently transformable that the architects are currently trying to build a mini-development of five of these houses in a row as an updated take on what Burd calls the traditional typological model of the English terrace house.

Now that the house is completed, the family leaps at the chance to share it with others, from dinner parties to home tours for the occasional interested passerby. Coombes and Brooke's initial fear that modern design would be unwelcome in their very traditional neighborhood turns out to have been unfounded. "The house looks friendly," says Brooke. "People always come knocking on the door, asking if they could just have a peek."

"It's absolutely gorgeous. You get a wonderful feeling of space and light here, with all this glass, and you're very aware of nature—the garden, the sky, and the trees—all around you, which you can't really imagine in the middle of London," Coombes says with a happy sigh. "Lying in bed with the blinds open, it's like being at the cinema with the clouds and birds. It's continual entertainment." ■

The house was designed to maximize light and take advantage of flexible open spaces. The courtyard (above) serves as the entry area to the house, but when the sliding windows on the ground floor are opened, it also acts as additional living space for the family.

The Ealing Garden

Because of the long and narrow site, the traditional garden model seen throughout London of large back garden/small front garden was modified for the Brooke/Coombes residence, and one uninterrupted stretch of green runs all the way down the side of the home. "This whole idea is un-English," says Burd. "From the street, you look straight through the courtyard and into the back garden." Brooke, an avid gardener and orchid buff, has no trouble filling the space with his treasured plants.

The heating and cooling system created for the house was also innovative. Ponds were put at the front and back of the house to collect rainwater and runoff from the roof, connected by a three-foot-wide and three-inch-deep water channel that runs through the courtyard and around the house (which is elevated about a foot, "as if on stilts," Brooke says). As air passes over the water, it's cooled off, and pushed into the living areas through a series of vents. In the winter, the vents are closed, and the house stays warm from the winter sun coming in through the double-glazed glass. —A.H.

Clockwise from top left: ***Nima,*** Shown in Frontier, Canyon, Solstice, and Tundra. All available in 4x6, 6x9, 8x10, 9x12, 10x14 and runners. Custom sizes up to 20x30.

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Roll With It

As travel becomes a central feature of modern life, luggage has become an integral component. And as with anything one spends an inordinate amount of time with, it's better to have a friend than a foe.

"Did that guy just grab my bag?" It's the first symptom of *baggageclaimitus*—a sensation we've all felt as we feverishly glance at one black bag after another pouring into the hands of fellow passengers. "I can't believe that person has my bag!" With frustration reaching the boiling point, out comes another bag. Not another black rectangle but a tartan plaid wonder, merrily making its way to its owner's confidently outstretched hand. No one interferes with the tartan. No one yanks this cacophony of color to check the name tag. No beleaguered traveler wonders where her bag is. There is but one plaid bag on this flight, and behold, a cure for *baggageclaimitus* is within our grasp.

Somewhere along the way, as air travel sacrificed romance for big business, luggage started to lose its luster. Black became the hue du jour and the rectangle the ubiquitous shape. It hasn't been all bad—wheels and ergonomic pull handles were introduced and a 22-inch bag now seems to hold more than your average station wagon—but the sense of adventure that could have fueled Pan Am's circumnavigating Flight 001 seems to have vanished with in-flight meal service (not to mention Pan Am).

Although Samsonite did make an effort to alleviate the overwhelming dullness of luggage design by enlisting the services of Philippe Starck, and companies like Zero Halliburton have pushed the envelope with aluminum luggage of all sorts, these efforts have not become the norm. Even with fashionista faves like Diesel, Calvin Klein, and Louis Vuitton jumping into the fray, nothing, as of yet, has been able to stem the tide of black rectangles spilling onto conveyor belts the world over.

To help us make sense of luggage design's inexorable trends, we enlisted the help of industrial designer Yves Béhar to evaluate the market and to see if there isn't yet hope for the design-savvy air traveler. Coming to terms with our *baggageclaimitus*, and not being a fan of tartan plaid, we opted to narrow our focus to only those bags that could be stored in the overhead compartment or safely underneath the seat in front of us. ▸

A Note on Our Expert:
Yves Béhar is the founder and principal of FuseProject, an industrial-design firm known for its work with such companies as Birkenstock, Nissan, and Hewlett-Packard. Béhar is currently designing several lines of luggage and is therefore well aware of said industry's dire straits: "Luggage is very hard to design. It is a very conventional, very classical product. It is a little bit like men's shoes—the market is very conservative so they always end up being brown, black, or dark green. That's about as much fun as men will have wearing shoes. It's the same with luggage." Photographed on location at San Francisco International Airport.

Photos by Jim Hughes

Rimowa Cabin Trolley / $675

Founded in 1898 in Cologne, Germany, Rimowa was the first company to make metal suitcases in 1938, when the founder's son, Richard Morszeck, noticed the strength that grooved metal brought to airplane construction. Sixty-six years later, Rimowa is still the leader in metal suitcases. The Cabin Trolley is their latest.

Expert Opinion: With the integrated double lock and aluminum exterior, this is for both the paranoid and people who bring a lot of alcohol back from their trips. I like the way metal luggage looks, but it gets beat up and tends to get dented. If you like the beat-up look, aluminum luggage is perfect because it acquires a patina of travel. But if people think it's going to maintain this über-modern, hyper-controlled look, they are going to be in for a surprise after a few trips. I also like that they provide a floating laundry bag.

What We Think: With a shiny silver case, people might wonder what documents or wads of currency you've got stashed. But even if you're not transporting microfilm and a cool grand, the Rimowa is a nice piece of luggage for more conventional needs.

Ricarddo of Beverly Hills Big Sur / $150

This entry features oversized interlocking zippers and a honeycomb frame, allowing the bag to absorb shock and protect contents. The ballistic nylon provides protection from punctures and abrasions.

Expert Opinion: Red and black are the main directions in colors and that doesn't really make for an interesting product. If you think about old luggage, there were so many colors, browns, beiges, etc. If you used some of these muted colors in a bag like this, you might get interesting results. I like the removable toiletry kit. But what happens if some of your stuff doesn't fit exactly? For me, the look is one of a traditional briefcase and is too much like a salesman's bag.

What We Think: This is a simple, straightforward bag with all the basics—expandable pockets, one-hand-release retractable pull handle, two packing compartments, a quick-access ticket sleeve on the exterior. We found the "Detachable Hanging Toiletry Organizer" to be a welcome feature. One of our biggest packing issues has always been trying to cram in a zipper-busting dop kit.

Swiss Army E-Motion 360 by Victorinox / $275, $295, and $325 depending on size

Swiss Army has focused its attention on adventure travel, and this bag is billed as "a true marriage of the convenience of wheel and handle systems with the performance and comfort of ergonomic pack technology." The "E" in E-Motion stands for "ergonomic."

Expert Opinion: You can turn this into a backpack and it looks substantial and feels good. The backpack straps take up a lot of room, however. I wish they were detachable so I could take them off when I'm going to New York versus, say, Milan, where I might plan a trip outside the city. While I'm not a fan of the backpacker look, there is a feeling of quality and there is a lot going on here for a weight that is remarkably low.

What We Think: The curved telescoping spine system that shapes itself to the wearer's back and the "fully rotating 360 response swivel handle that fully addresses the ergonomic issues of bag-handling" make this a desirable option. But even with all the gadgetry and ergonomic advances, we're not sure we would want to stroll into our next big meeting looking like a hipster hitchhiker.

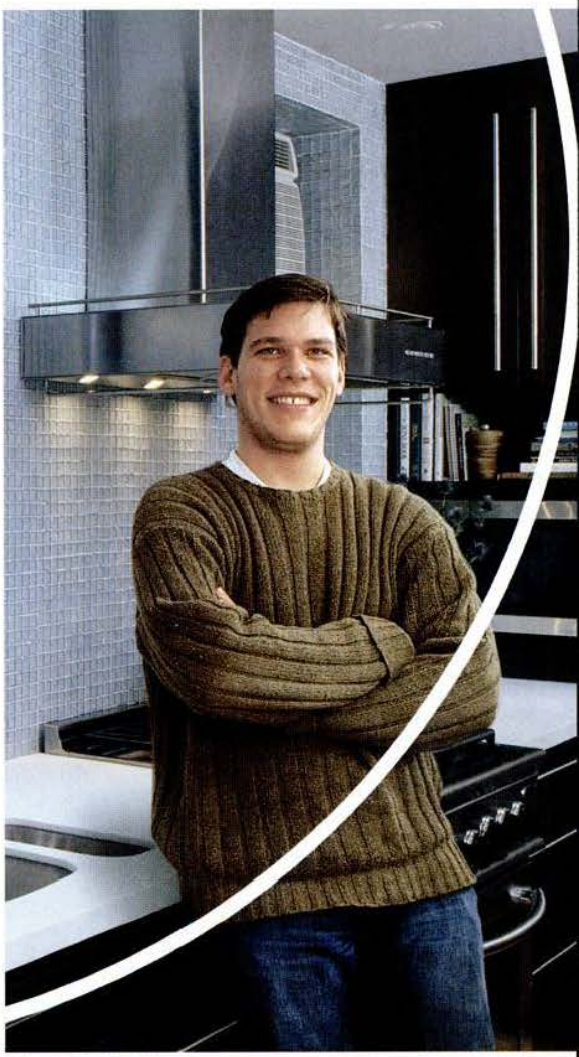
Samsonite 700 Series / Silhouette 8 / $179

Samsonite has been making comfortable and durable luggage for nearly a century. Featuring shock-absorbing wheels, gel-infused shoulder straps, and soft-touch contoured handles, the Silhouette 8 may well mark the zenith of the brand.

Expert Opinion: The integrated wallet thing is cool, but I think it could be a lot more tactile. The intention is there, but the resolution is not so elegant. What do you actually do with the thing when you are walking around? I'd like to see it have its own special pocket. I would like the accessories to be really integrated. The thing with Samsonite, and this bag in particular, is while they are not that original, they are of high quality. There is good construction and it's nicely finished with great details.

What We Think: We love the Silhouette 8's integrated wallet/airline ticket/I.D. container immensely. Too many times we've fumbled about with our boarding pass in our jacket pocket, dropping it on the floor while struggling to pull the wallet from the back pocket of our pants. We really have no complaints with this bag. ▸

Oceanside Glasstile



www.ogtinfo.com

Mandarina Duck: Frog Jr. / $360

The Frog's soft shape lets the luggage "expand like cheeks" (hence the amphibious moniker). The use of polypropylene and aluminum give the bag lightness, but it remains rugged enough to carry a load of 375 pounds (smugglers take note).

Expert Opinion: I like the handle—you just have to push it once to unlock it and then you don't have to push it again. With most bags, you really have to struggle to get the handle up or down. The materials are unique and the finishes and colors are nice.

I wish it had some secret compartments. It looks like it should but it doesn't. And it doesn't stand up—that's going to annoy the hell out of anyone who travels a lot.

What We Think: Dwell's creative director often speaks lovingly of her Mandarina Duck bag and now we know why—the Frog is a prince of a traveling companion, from the semi-rigid, translucent polypropylene back that gives the Frog shape to the expandable elastomere front. Still, the weight distribution of the bag is odd, allowing it to stand upright only if you've packed your belongings like a perfect lasagna.

Tumi Wheel-A-Way Carry-On Duffle / $400

Tumi's exclusive Omega Closure System claims to have "revolutionized the zipper by significantly reducing the risk of costly damage to the most vulnerable and abused part of the bag." In addition to a full opening to the main compartment, the bag also includes two side pockets for smaller items, a large easy-access outside pocket for accessories, and a ticket/document pocket.

Expert Opinion: There's a level of sophistication with Tumi that's reflected in the price. Sometimes bags are like old houses and you can discover secret rooms within them. You don't know if you've really seen everything until you explore—that's what's going on here. It's light, and the design of the hardware is studied. If you must go with a black bag, this is a good choice.

What We Think: Tumi's quality is immediately clear, from the extra-grip zippers to the retractable interior key chain for those hard-to-reach locks. The interior laptop bag is also a nice feature. Sure, it's a black bag, but with its cool magnetized closures, slick-looking zippers, and comfortable shoulder straps and handles, it's as good as black bags get.

Hideo Wakamatsu Design Office Trolley / $180 for the 19" model

Simple and to the point, the Wakamatsu Trolley offers basic amenities, such as a separate shoe section, interior/exterior pockets, phone and wallet pouches, and plenty of room for your toiletries.

Expert Opinion: It looks like the Ferrari of luggage. It has a nice folding system for the hand pull and I like the combination of hard and soft elements. This is really solid construction for a very reasonable price. There is little here in the realm of travel intelligence, but it's high on the performance look. There is no alternative use for it—there are no straps, no way to make it a backpack; it is a one-use bag. It does stand up (literally) quite nicely, though.

What We Think: Here is a simple and subtle bag, though the bright red plastic exterior might lead you to think otherwise. Like a Ferrari, it may scream "midlife crisis," but once we got past the flash, we found that this is the perfect bag for the weekend warrior in us.

TravelPro Platinum 3 Rolling Tote / $440

The Rolling Tote features a fully retractable handle, padded shoulder strap, adjustable "CompuGuard" laptop bag, and zippered side pocket with interior gusset for extra packing capacity and is made of Dupont 1050D Original Ballistic Nylon with leather trim. The Rolling Tote even comes with a lifetime warranty.

Expert Opinion: I like the fact that it has the laptop bag within the other bag. The problem is, it fills almost the entire interior, so if I wanted to put in a few shirts and some pants, I'm limited. There are all these functions on this bag that are not so clear. The shoulder strap is pretty cheap. It is hardy foam but definitely lacks comfort. I wouldn't be caught with a bag like this because it looks like everything else that is out there.

What We Think: True, it is just a black bag, but the company was started by a pilot and you can bet pilots know a thing or two about traveling. The extra laptop bag is a handy feature, and after further inspection, we think one could certainly cram in a suit, a couple shirts, and even a bottle of Dewars from the duty-free shop. ■

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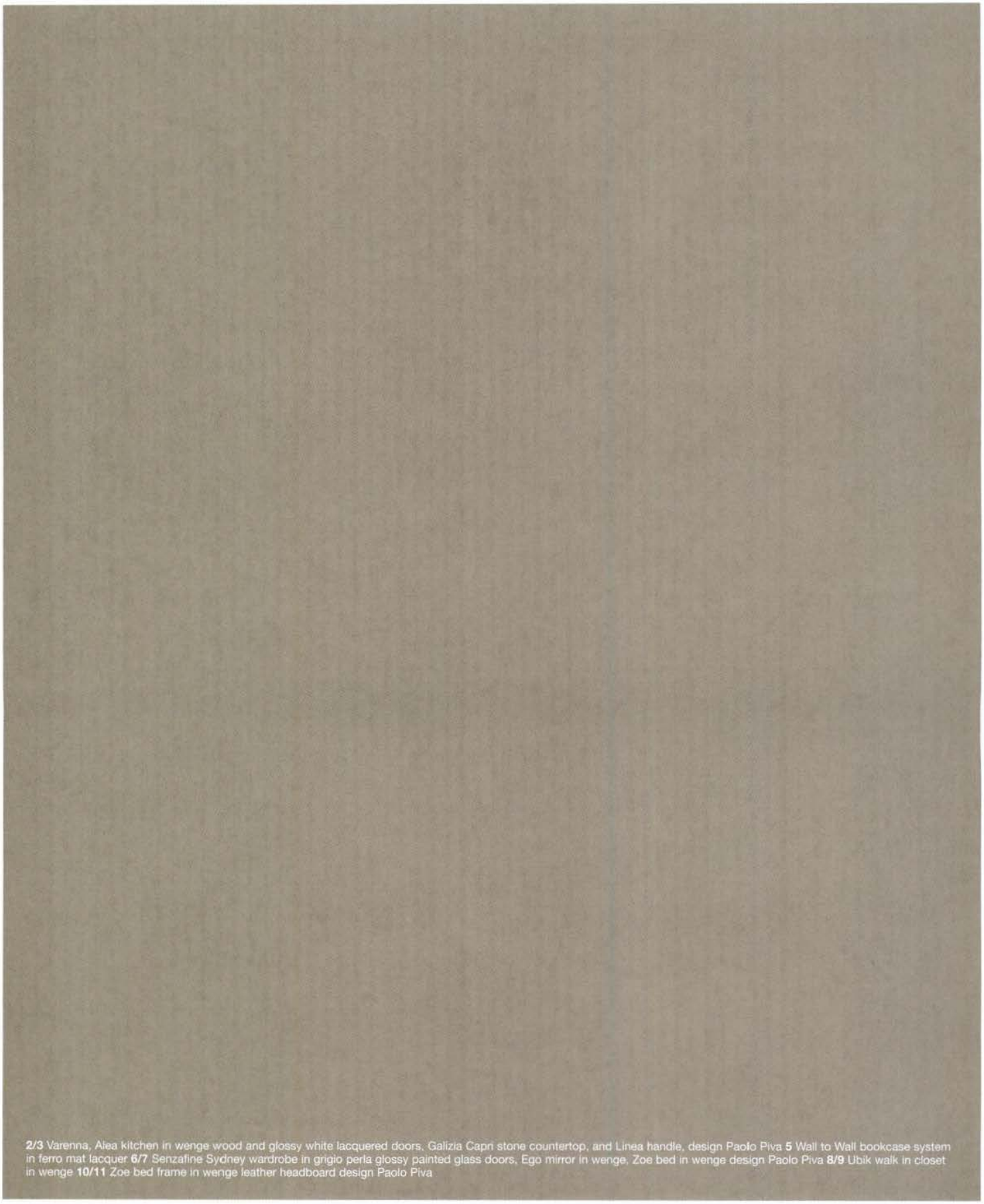

2/3 Varenna, Alea kitchen in wenge wood and glossy white lacquered doors, Galizia Capri stone countertop, and Linea handle, design Paolo Piva **5** Wall to Wall bookcase system in ferro mat lacquer **6/7** Senzafine Sydney wardrobe in grigio perla glossy painted glass doors, Ego mirror in wenge. Zoe bed in wenge design Paolo Piva **8/9** Ubik walk in closet in wenge **10/11** Zoe bed frame in wenge leather headboard design Paolo Piva

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Story by Amara Holstein

Photo by John-Francis Bourke

Making Her Mark

There's something few of us consider when we proudly unfurl a swanky new imported rug: Chances are, child laborers were involved in its creation. The unfortunate use of children in the rug industry is fueled by the belief that small hands are better, an idea that Stephanie Odegard flatly states is a myth. "The best weavers are older people who've been weaving for many years and have a great deal of experience," she says. "Children are used because they're cheap labor."

Odegard, who founded and owns the multimillion-dollar rug company Odegard, Inc., has long been committed to humanitarian concerns. After years spent working for the Peace Corps and United Nations, Odegard ended up in Nepal in the mid-'80s, employed by the World Bank to help local artisans market their wares. She started her own company in 1987 and has since garnered great rewards: Odegard, Inc. produces and imports more than 4,000 high-end creations each year and employs more than 10,000 people in Nepal. It's an achievement Odegard shares with her Nepalese workers, who benefit from improved water supplies, better living quarters, and humane working conditions.

But perhaps her greatest feat is her initiative to take children out of the rug-making business. In 1997, Odegard joined Rugmark, an international nonprofit coalition of rug makers established to ensure that children stay out of the factories. Rugmark undertakes surprise inspections of weaving facilities in India, Pakistan, and Nepal, removing and placing in school each child they find. It's an endeavor that has proven eminently successful, almost completely eradicating child labor in Nepal's rug industry.

Odegard's company has become the most generous American donor to the Rugmark program, and she holds a long-term seat on the organization's board of directors. "Child labor is wrong no matter how you look at it," Odegard states emphatically, "and it will never change unless we all take serious action." ■

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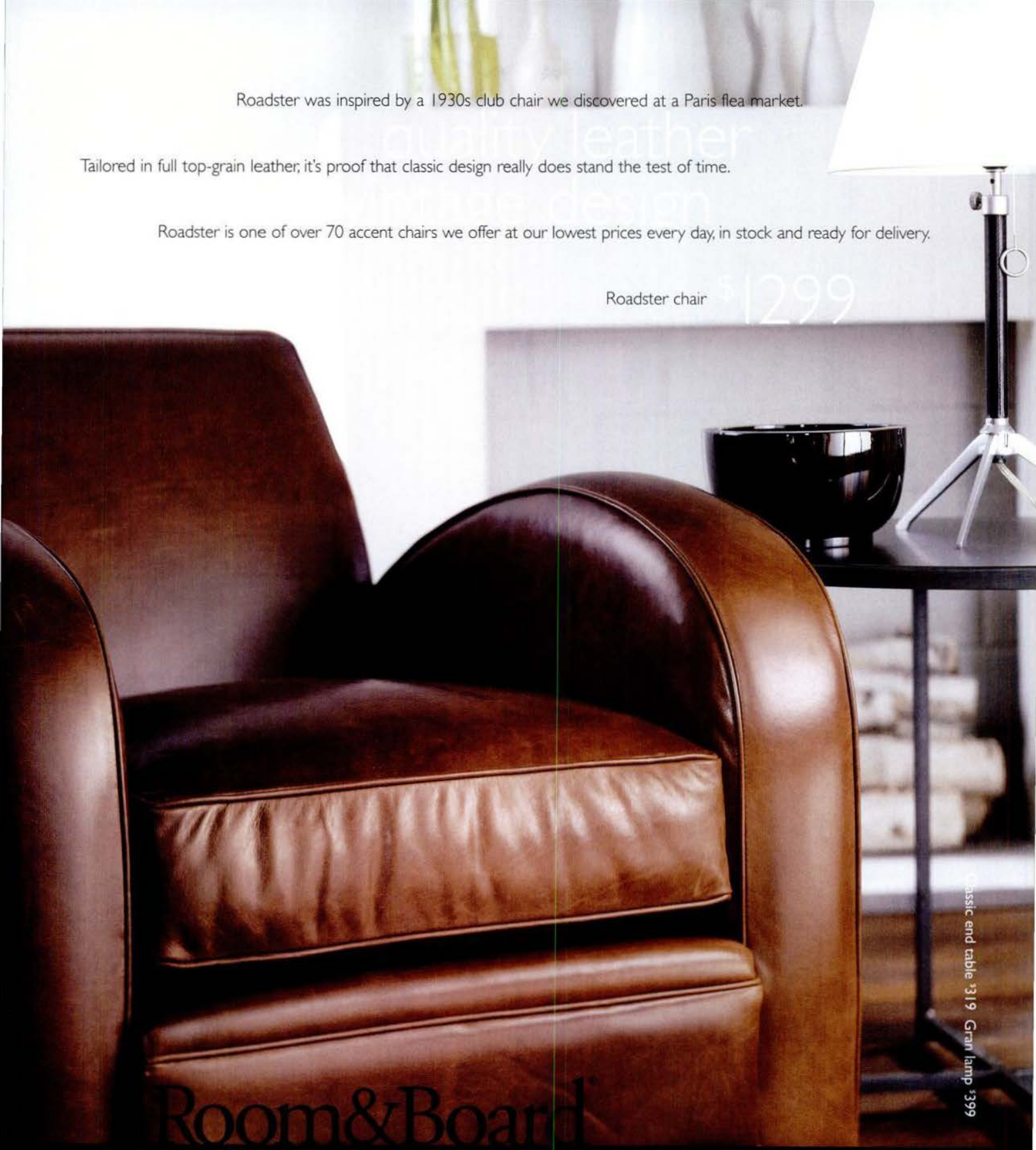

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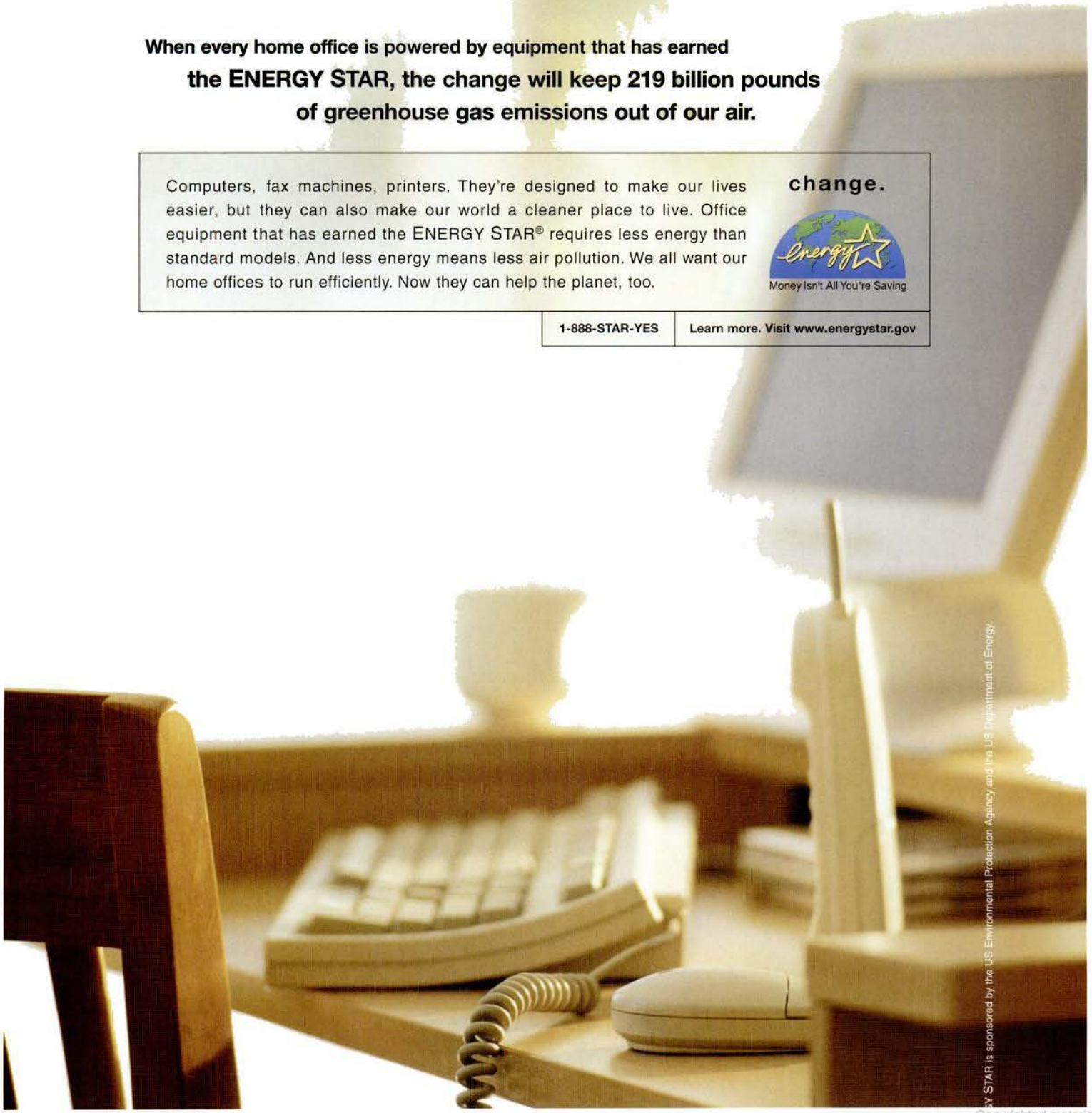

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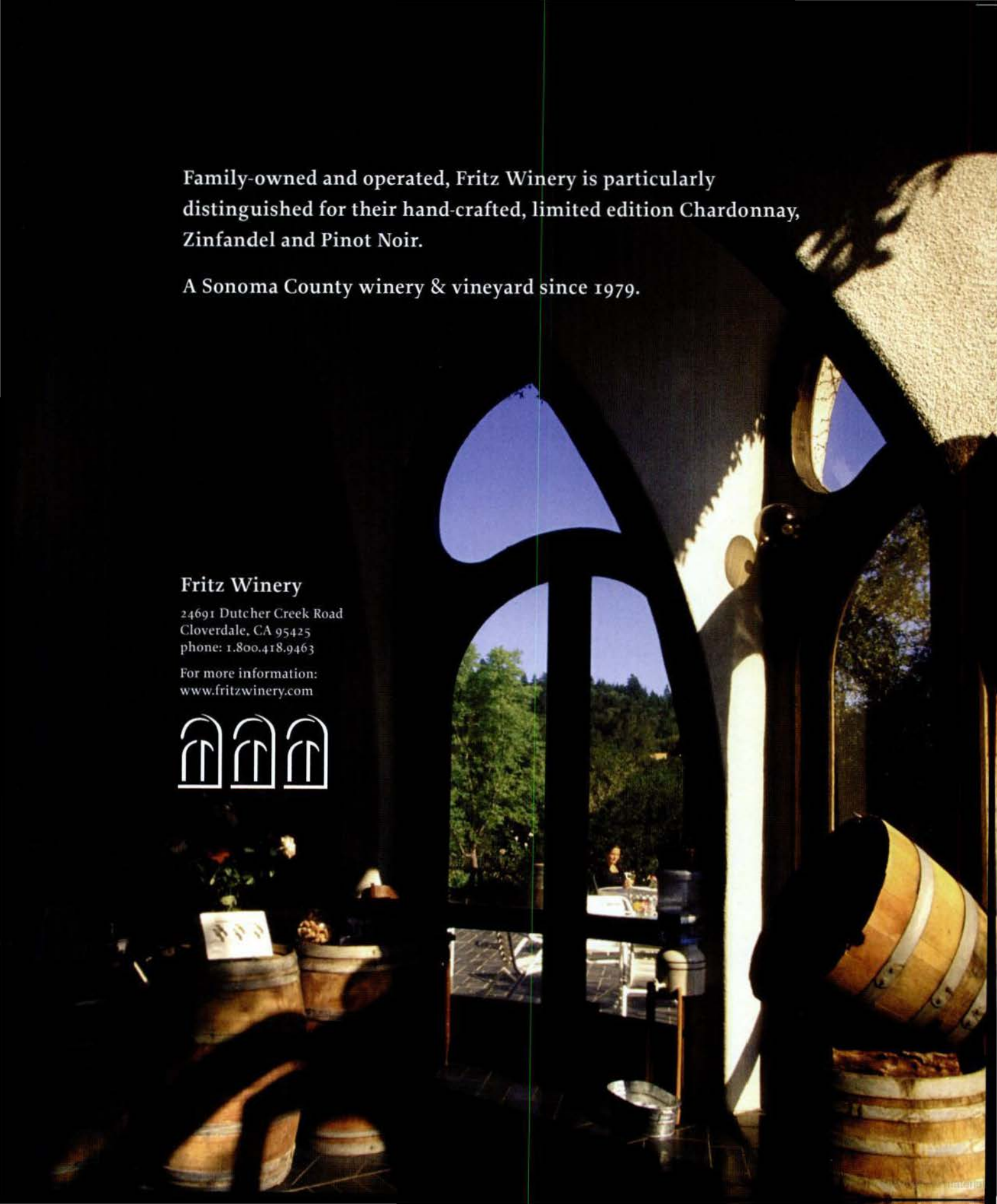

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Though the city was initially resistant to Zack/de Vito's design scheme, the house has managed to integrate seamlessly into the neighborhood.

San Francisco: On a Mission

With so much happening in the world of travel— SARS, terrorist attacks, airline bankruptcies—it's sometimes not a bad idea to do a little bit of exploring right in your own backyard.

With that in mind, we decided to take a stroll across town to San Francisco's Mission District, named for the historic Spanish mission built in 1776 (and renovated by Willis Polk in 1916) located at 16th and Dolores streets. The once-predominantly Irish neighborhood began to shift demographically in the 1940s and '50s and is now largely Hispanic. During the dot-com boom of the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Mission welcomed (though not so warmly) the arrival of newly moneyed techno-savvy folks with quickly built loft-lets and no small number of high-end restaurants and boutiques.

Though the boom has come and gone—and many lofts now sit vacant—a few remnants of that bygone era are worth exploring, and Robert Kohler's house is one of them. Designed by San Francisco–based firm Zack/de Vito and completed in late spring 2002, Kohler's new home sits between the Edwardian row houses that line 19th Street. The unassuming exterior belies the home's dramatic interior. Step inside and you are immediately impressed with the staircases, reminiscent of Arne Jacobsen's at the Danish National Bank in Copenhagen, which beckon you to the roof, second-floor deck, or office.

"I love the different levels," says Kohler, a lawyer/businessman who is originally from Salt Lake City, Utah. "I spend a lot of time on the phone, traversing the catwalks and making my way to the outdoor patios. I like the way the views change." Architect Jim Zack says, "We design a lot of restaurants, and the vista, the theater of circulation, is a big part of restaurant design. Stairs are a great place to take it all in."

The husband-and-wife team of Jim Zack and Lise de Vito brought their varied experience as architects, builders, interior designers, and furniture designers to the project, and it shows—the house is much more than stairs and balconies. Rooms seem to unfold from every nook, yet the 3,800-square-foot home doesn't feel at all cramped. A second-level deck makes a perfect space for a hot tub, and a roof deck offers up views of downtown and the East Bay. Two of the three bedrooms double as an office and a living room. Doors to each are tucked away, opening each space up to the rest of the house; close the doors, and the rooms are easily transformed into bedrooms, complete with their own full bathrooms.

Kohler has found his new neighborhood and home a great fit for his lifestyle: "I wanted to have a cool place for entertaining, a place to have friends over. But at the ▶

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Photos by Roger Casas

same time, I didn't want it to be cold and sterile. The house is a perfect combination of modern design sensibility with natural finishes to make it a little more timeless. I really like this area a lot—Dolores Park, Valencia Street—there's just a lot going on around here."

What were you looking for when you started your search for a house?

I lived in Mill Valley, but I wanted to buy a place in San Francisco. I couldn't find anything until I came across this lot with this old warehouse on it. At first I was going to fix up the warehouse, but after Jim [Zack] took a look at it, he said, "Robert, you might want to consider just starting fresh." With the new house, I made it clear that I wanted to stick with the warehouse theme: big open spaces with lots of light and a very contemporary design.

How was that accomplished?

Well, Jim likes to say that the design came from thinking about the original building. If you have this warehouse, you want to maintain part of that quality of open space and enhance it. I think Zack/de Vito took the best parts of loft design (high ceilings and big open spaces) and the best parts of what might be called residential design (very expressive space and honest use of materials) and put them together. You get the big open space, but you still get a house feel.

What was it like building a house from the ground up?

I really enjoyed the process. I was pretty hands-on—probably too much, but building a house is a big deal. The most frustrating part was the amount of time it took. I just wanted to be in there. I don't think I'd do it again for a long time. It ended up taking two and a half years.

What's the deal with the center-pivot door on your office?

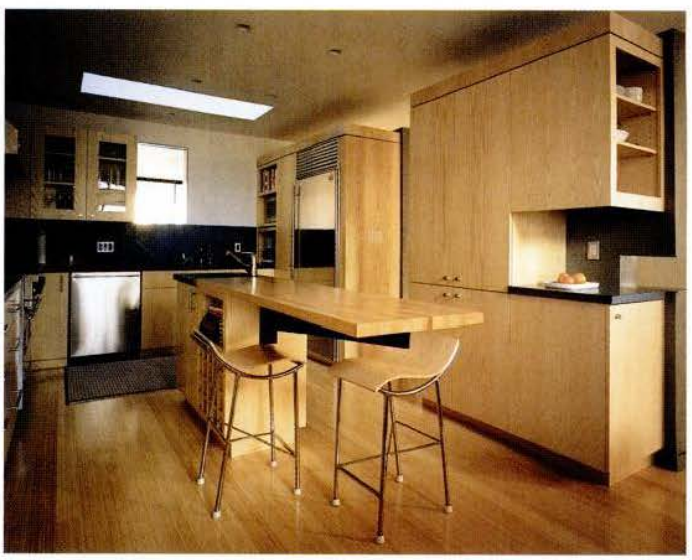
I wanted to have a little secret area—at first I wanted it to be a bookcase like in *Scooby-Doo*, but it was kind of impractical and didn't fit. But I love how it turned out.

What's your favorite part of the house?

The kitchen. If friends are over, more often than not, we're in the kitchen. It's an extremely functional kitchen. You've got the Sub-Zero, the Viking. The original idea for the island was really cool—there was going to be this main piece that would rotate so it could spin, and if I was having a party I could block the kitchen off and turn it into a bar. But it just didn't work out.

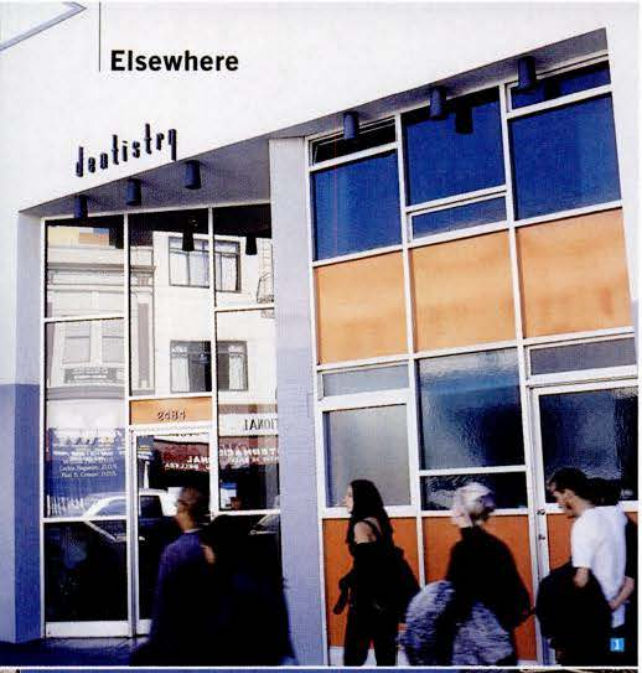
What about the neighborhood? What are some of the highlights?

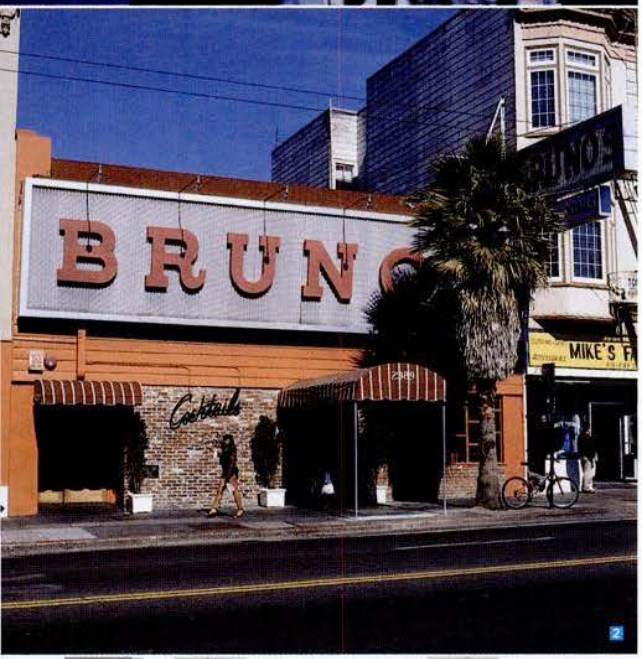
I love Delfina restaurant. The Last Supper Club is really good, too. City Art gallery, right around the corner, is cool. I've gotten some art there. There is so much to do in the neighborhood. Of course, parking is horrible, but I have a two-car garage now. I always get calls from friends on the weekend: "Robert, can I park in your driveway?" or "Robert, can I park in your garage?" That's fine, though, at least I get to see them all a lot now! ▸



Top: Stairs and catwalks encircle the living room, offering excellent views at every level. "The third set of stairs can get a little scary because of the height," Kohler admits.

Above: In the kitchen, off-the-shelf counters and cabinets are complemented by Sub-Zero and Viking appliances. The bar stools are by Karim Rashid for Pure Design. p. 154





Photos by Aya Brackett

Mission Accomplished

1 / Dentistry Building at Mission and 21st
A colorful little addition to the crowded and often dirty Mission Street, the ultra-cool dentistry building, built in 1957 and designed by Bernard G. Nobler, is the fantasy piece of real estate for San Francisco's hip set.
2484 Mission Street

2 / Bruno's
Despite a succession of ownership changes, Bruno's has played a big part in keeping jazz alive in San Francisco. Dinner and music—and top-notch martinis—are served nightly at this Mission hot spot.
2389 Mission Street
www.brunoslive.com

3 / X-21
Looking for the hard-to-find Baby Bertoia chair by Knoll? Look no further—X-21 can satisfy almost every vintage-modern furniture whim. Spend some time digging through the aisles to find some of the true treasures. A great spot to spend a lot or a little.
890 Valencia Street
415-647-4211

4 / Radio Habana Social Club
It may have only four tables, but it's got enough character to seat 50. Cuban fare at a fair price, plus they'll undoubtedly be playing some of the best (but hardest to find) Cuban music you've ever heard.
1109 Valencia Street

5 / 826 Valencia
Author Dave Eggers wanted to run his McSweeney's publishing empire out of this storefront, but zoning laws required it to remain a retail space rather than an office. To get around all that, Eggers opened the Mission's first-ever pirate-supply store, which sells pirate paraphernalia like eye patches, glass eyes, and lard, among other swashbuckling essentials.
826 Valencia Street
www.826valencia.org

6 / Universal Café
Local designers/fabricators Jeff and Larissa Sand created the dramatic yet relaxed interior for this intimate neighborhood restaurant. Creative cuisine, great service, and a distinctive wine list have made Universal a city favorite for the past nine years.
2814 19th Street
415-821-4608

7 / Aquarius Records
A great record store featuring every kind of music from country to dub on vinyl or CD. The super-knowledgeable staff are happy to answer your questions.
1055 Valencia Street
www.aquariusrecords.org

8 / Den
Affable Louisiana native Raymond Long opened his storefront furniture showroom, Den, in 2001. With an inventory of new and vintage furniture changing weekly, including a wall repainted every other week by artist John Baden, Den is always worth a visit.
849 Valencia Street
415-282-6646
www.densf.com

9 / The Touch
A new addition to the Valencia Street corridor, this secondhand furniture shop has some great pieces at great prices, with a focus on mid-century Scandinavian modern.
956 Valencia Street
415-550-2640

10 / The Make-Out Room
Another fantastic and funky spot to hear all sorts of music, from Brazilian to indie rock—all inside a space that makes you feel like you just walked into your senior prom.
3225 22nd Street
www.makeoutroom.com

11 / The Roxie
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12 / Modern Times Bookstore
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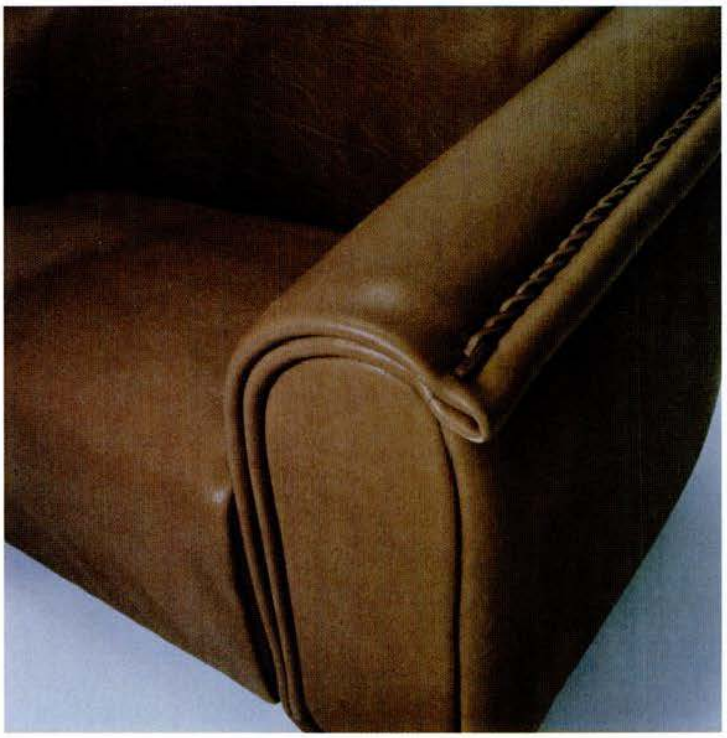

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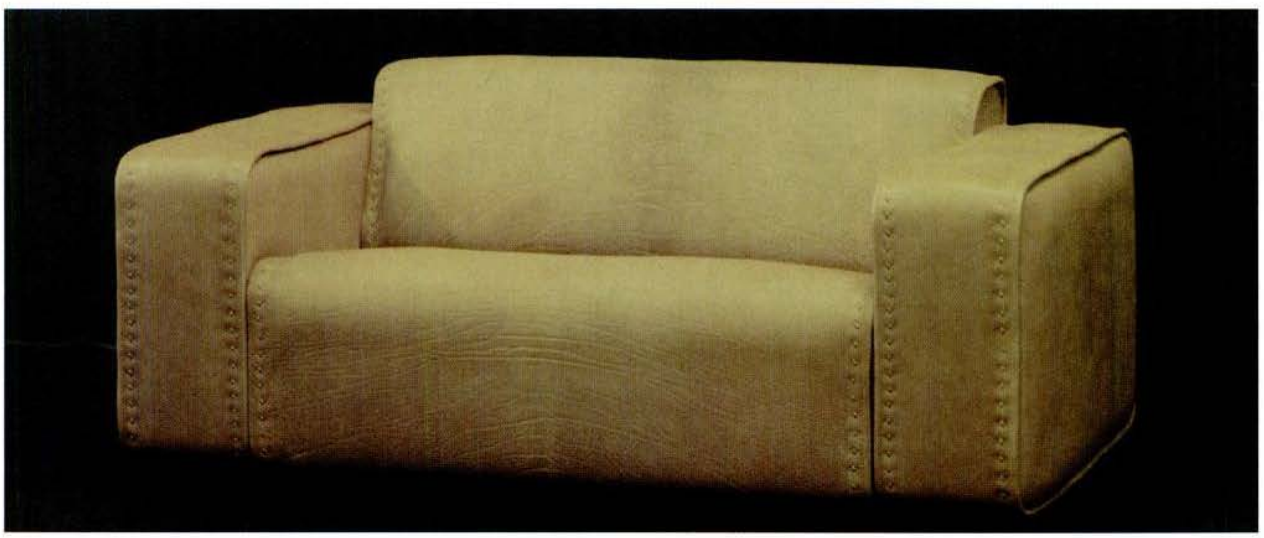

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Story by Sam Grawe

The DC07's Root⁸Cyclone technology uses over 100,000 G of centrifugal force to filter dust and particles from the airflow of the vacuum without obstructing the filter. The result is a vacuum whose suction power never decreases. Top right: James Dyson poses with a prototype of the DC07 at Dyson's headquarters in Malmesbury, Great Britain.

Suck It Up

It's not something you're taught how to do in school. It's not something your college's career center can advise you on. There aren't seminars about it at your local Holiday Inn. No, having your surname transformed into a verb takes more than a go-getter personality.

Over the course of centuries, a few men have been awarded this sort of etymological honor. Our first surnames were of course derived from occupations: the Baker who baked, the Miller who milled, and the Smith who smithed. But in more recent times this has become a tougher game (after all, I'm far from grawing this article). Perhaps the most dubious example of this vocabular twist is owed to Thomas Crapper, Victorian England's most legendary plumber. However, these days the United Kingdom is abuzz with a new verb: to dyson. You can dyson the rug and you can dyson the hall. Heck, you can even dyson your clothes.

The "Dyson" in "dyson" is James Dyson, a tireless innovator, designer, and engineer best known for the world's first vacuum that never stops sucking. In 1978, fed up with the lack of suction displayed by his old vacuum, which clogged almost as soon as a new bag was loaded, Dyson began investigating a better way to clean up. Inspired by the cone-shaped cyclone-inducing filters seen atop saw mills (which use centrifugal force to separate flowing air from sawdust particles), Dyson removed the ubiquitous bag and, using cardboard and tape, appropriated the technology for his home's vacuum cleaner. By 1985, and some 5,127 prototypes later, he had successfully licensed the world's first dual-cyclonic, upright, bagless vacuum cleaner to a company in Japan. Although the gleefully postmodern G-Force attained remarkable success, Dyson continued to face considerable difficulty proving the technology's merit in the U.K.—where a veritable mafia of Hoovers and Electroluxes tried to keep his development off the market. It wasn't until he founded his eponymous company in 1992 and introduced the Dyson DC01, which became the U.K.'s ▸

top-selling vacuum, that his path to verbiage becam clear.

Today, Dysons are sold in 24 countries, have been exhibited in numerous museums, and are the benchmark of a company that prides itself on function-driven design and constant innovation. While the United States has only been introduced to the DC07, elsewhere Dyson's product range includes six different vacuum cleaners (including the world's first completely autonomous robotic vacuum) and a washing machine.

Recently Dwell sat down to talk with James Dyson about everything from failed prototypes to a Dyson home.

It seems as though your career has been distinguished by doing things your own way, even if it proved to be more difficult. How did you keep going?

By doing things I have an enthusiasm for. What I hate is doing things the way other people do—for all sorts of reasons. Often the old way is literally passé and doesn't work, but also it's much more fun to be pioneering. You learn so much more and are so much more alive and intelligent than if you're merely doing things as they should be done. We [at Dyson] have a sort of philosophy that you start off doing things the wrong way in trying to think of a better way of doing it—to see if we can make what's wrong (but interesting) right.

"We wanted it to look like a piece of NASA technology. Its superior performance has to be visible," says Dyson of the DC07 pictured here. Launched in 1997 (one year before the similarly translucent iMac), the DC02 Clear was the world's first clear vacuum.

Now that you're not working in a backyard shed but rather heading up a staff of 1,200, what are your days like?

I'm interested in the nitty-gritty. I have someone who runs the business, so I don't get very involved in that bit. I do have 30 companies throughout the world which I have to visit and that pretty well means one a week. I also spend a good amount of time talking to journalists. The rest of the time I'm down with the engineers, talking to them—more on the new-product-development side than existing products. I spend my time looking at the new technology we're developing that's going to the workshop, and seeing things fail.

Have there been some noteworthy failures?

Everything's a failure until you make it a success. That's the drug, actually—going in every day and seeing the failure and trying to improve on it and stop it from failing. If everything was a success, it would be deadly boring. So there are failures all the time, and you try and sort them out—which is what I like doing.

The story of your vacuum cleaner is fairly well known, but what inspired the washing machine?

I discovered that if you hand-washed clothes for 15 minutes in 30-degree [Celsius] water, you could get them much cleaner than the best German and American washing machines. I found that the hand-washing action—flexing the clothes—is actually what makes them clean. We decided we could make a very fast washing machine that could wash kindly and economically and do it quickly, so we set about finding a way of re-creating the manipulative hand-washing action. We tried all sorts of very strange things, the most bizarre of which was ▸

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"If everything was a success, it would be deadly boring. So there are failures all the time, and you try and sort them out—which is what I like doing."

The Contrarotator, Dyson's entry into the world of washing machines, features two drums that spin in opposite directions. The result is cleaner clothes.

putting the clothes in a rubber sack that was punched around by things outside the sack, but we couldn't recreate the right action. With a rotating drum, if you go above a certain speed, the clothes just stick to the side by centrifugal force, so we decided to have a paddle knocking the clothes down as they got to the top. In order to have this paddle in the middle of the drum, we had to split it in half and have a drum on either side of the paddle. I saw this rig and wondered what would happen if you didn't have the paddle but just moved the drum in two opposite directions. It actually created a kind of dancing action for the clothes inside the drum, which sounds pretty fanciful, but when you look in the front it really almost looks like there's someone doing a pretty vigorous hand-wash manipulation. The result is that we can get the best cleanliness in half the time as a European machine, and it's way ahead of the American machines in terms of wash performance and, of course, water consumption.

If Dyson developed a house, what would it be like?
A lot of the way we plan our houses stems from Edwardian and Victorian days, when you had a room for each activity. Areas were separated because you had servants doing things and social needs that vanished a long time ago. Today we're very busy, we work longer hours. What people actually want to do when they come home is to talk to people before they go out again, so I think a home should be built around that concept. For example, that would mean that the kitchen should be right in the center of the house. Things like bathrooms and almost everything except a bedroom should come off that kitchen or be a part of that kitchen—one room. You could continue a conversation while you do all the things you've come home for.

You've spent a lot of time fighting against patent-renewal fees (calling it a human-rights issue, even) and battling patent-infringement cases in court. Isn't it a pesky distraction?
When you're designing or engineering something, you have to make a whole lot of decisions. Everything from will it sell to will people accept this, to does this work legally to will we be able to make such-and-such a claim legally. So getting involved in legal aspects and patents all helps me be a better designer.

So what's next for Dyson?
Unfortunately, it's not our policy to say.

We tried. ■

Story by Andrew Blum

Photo by Ezra Stoller

Rough Not Rustic

In the Smith residence, modernity is rustic. Massive fir beams support a glass-walled living room that bridges over the entrance to an open-air central courtyard.

Gordon Smith knows landscapes. As one of the most prominent Canadian painters of his generation, the 84-year-old has a reputation for not-always-easy abstract-expressionist depictions of the wilds near his British Columbia home. So it's fitting that his house, designed by Arthur Erickson and Geoffrey Massey in 1964, be both in the forest and of the forest, yet still a work of art.

Erickson and Smith were friends with mutual interests: European high modern design, abstract expressionism, and the new regional identity being forged in the Pacific Northwest. In 1953, Gordon and his wife, Marion, gave Erickson his first residential commission—a painting studio surrounded by living quarters. But as their Vancouver neighborhood grew throughout the '50s, the Smiths sought greater seclusion. They found it near Lighthouse Provincial Park in West Vancouver, on a wooded promontory overlooking the Strait of Georgia.

The second time around, the Smiths offered Erickson no brief. "They said, 'You know what we want,'" the architect recalls. "Gordon being a painter and Marion being a weaver, this was one opportunity where I could use rough timber, because they'd both be interested in texture and not so fussy about things like splinters."

The massive Douglas fir beams may be rough, but the house is not rustic. Erickson arranged the building as a spiral of boxes around a courtyard, with each wing stepping up from the last. A sky-lit white studio—the only room not finished in wood—anchors one corner of the house, while the living room bridges a cleft in the site's solid granite, rising up to get the view. Both there and in the bedroom, huge expanses of glass define the wall, opening the house to the landscape, their smoothness contrasting with the roughness of the wood. The central courtyard serves a similar function, both confronting and illuminating the forest—Erickson once called it "an architectural reiteration of the forest clearing."

The house has been both home and studio to the Smiths for almost 40 years. "It's a very genuine house," Gordon says. "There's nothing pretentious about it. It's just simple post and beam, mostly all windows, looking out onto the park, onto the sea. It is the most honest of houses." ■

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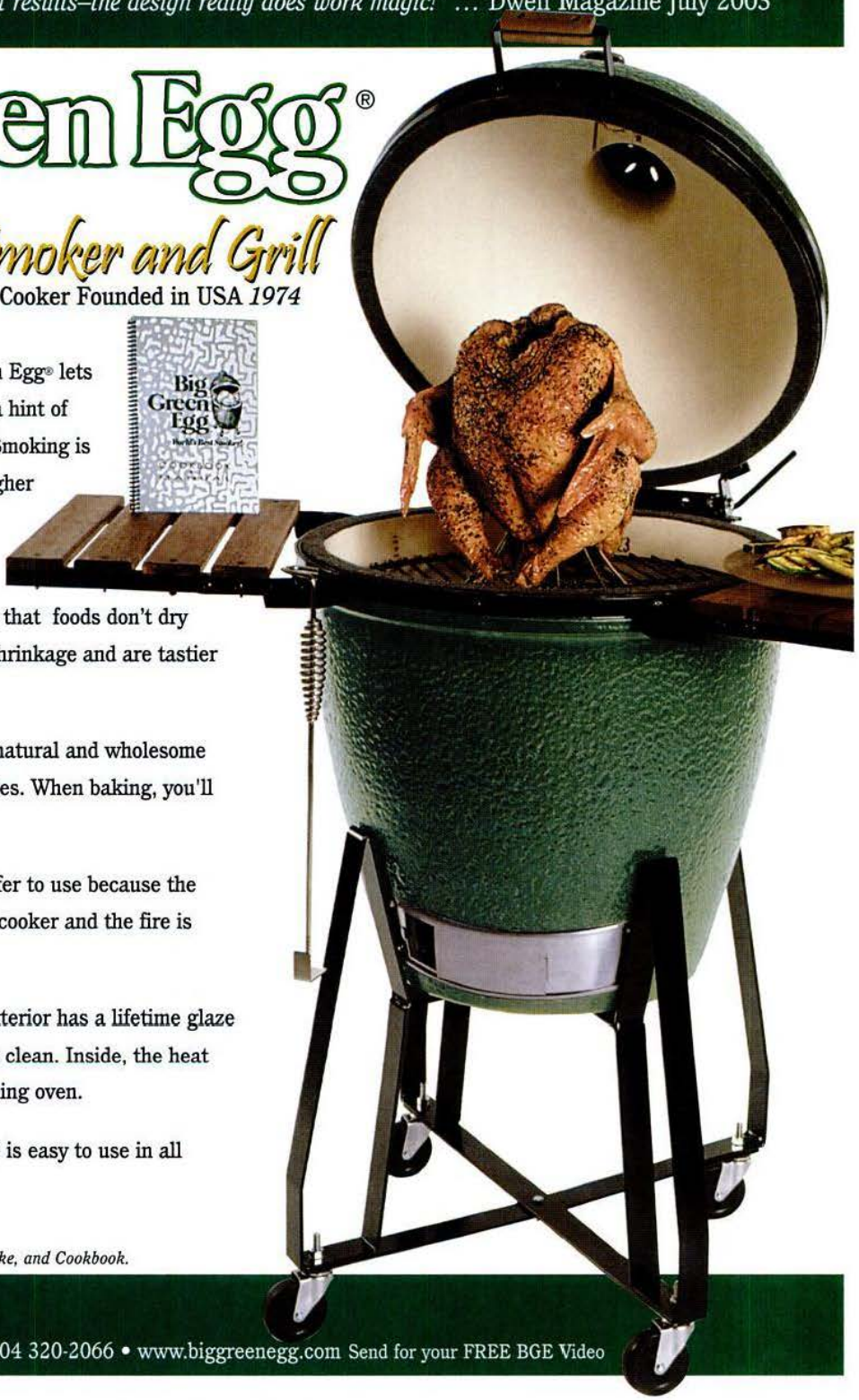

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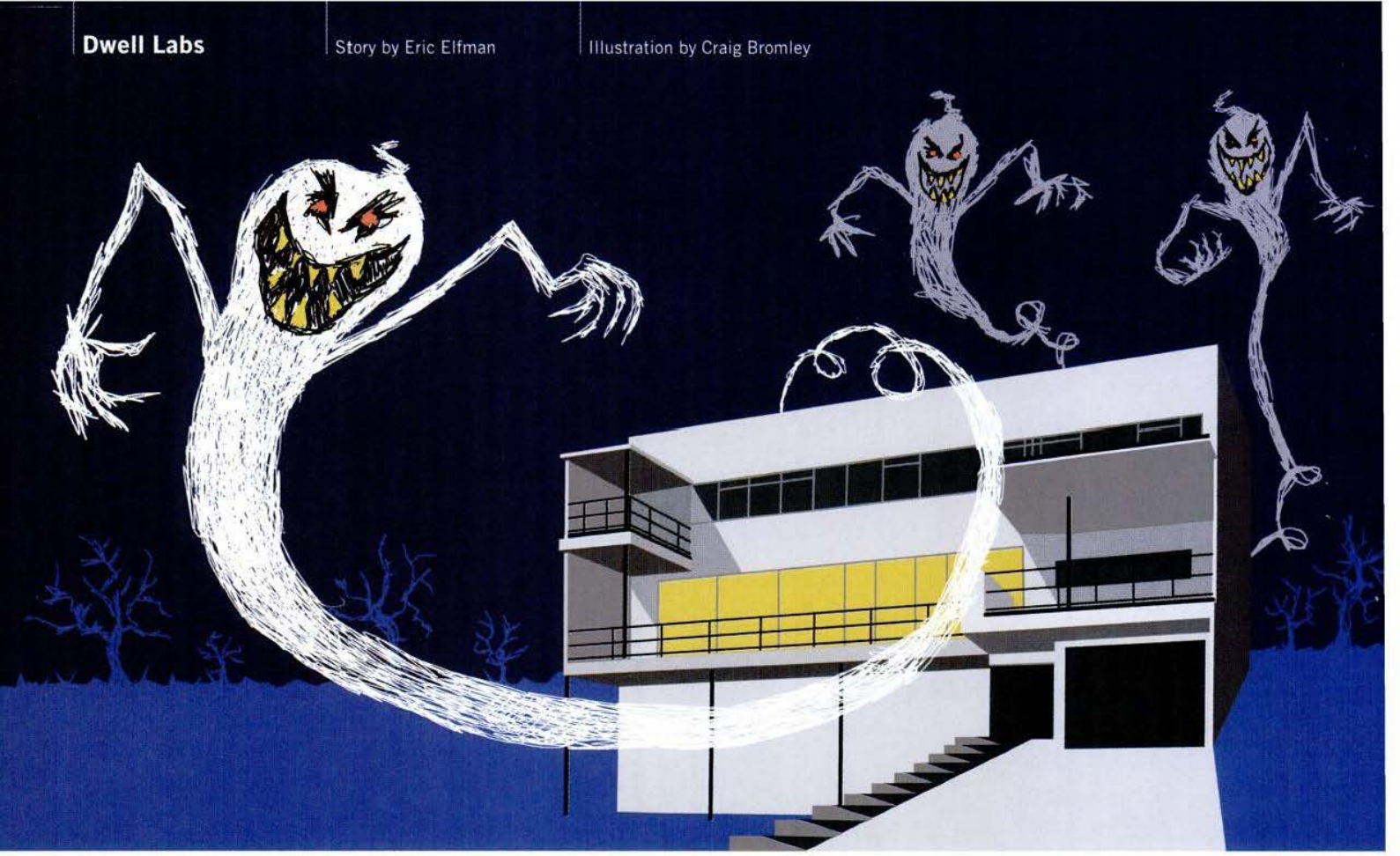
Story by Eric Elfman | Illustration by Craig Bromley



Architectural Maneuvers in the Dark

Dear Dwell,
I made a toasted peanut-butter and jelly sandwich the other day in my new house. After I ate it, I left the kitchen, but then I decided I really wanted another one. When I went back, the peanut butter and jelly were out again and bread was being toasted. I flipped out. I think my house might be haunted. What should I do?
—Mandy Agner, Guilford, Connecticut

The first thing you might want to do is call a lawyer—you could have a stigmatized property. According to Sam Kraemer, a real estate attorney with Prudential California Realty, stigmatized properties are those tainted by any notoriety that could affect a house's use or desirability, such as a well-known murder or suicide on the site. If the previous owner didn't disclose the fact, you might be able to rescind the sale—or even sue for fraud and damages.

If you're experiencing actual paranormal phenomena, Christopher Chacon, one of the world's most experienced paranormal investigators, recommends that you handle a volatile apparition just as you would any volatile non-supernatural event: Get out of the house and call the proper authorities.

If the situation doesn't seem dangerous (how dangerous can a peanut-butter and jelly sandwich really be?), the first step is to check for natural causes for the phenomenon. Most turn out to have simple explanations, from a sagging foundation to a juvenile prank. You can carry out a detailed inspection of your house yourself, or hire an electrician, plumber, or building inspector to try to track down ordinary explanations for opening and closing doors, cold spots, and the like.

But if this doesn't turn up anything, it might be time to contact a paranormal investigator. Treat him or her as you would any contractor. The trick is to find one who is professional and effective—the website of the Parapsychology Association (www.parapsych.org) is a good resource. Most paranormal investigators will only ask you to cover their out-of-pocket costs.

The universal advice from paranormal investigators and ghost hunters is not to be frightened. In spite of everything we know from horror movies, the vast majority of hauntings are harmless, and the number of people who have sustained injuries directly due to a paranormal activity is minute. (Skeptics, of course, would peg that number at zero.) If the activity seems benign, try to live with it, and appreciate the urbane distinction of living in a haunted house. ■

Got a question? Send it to:
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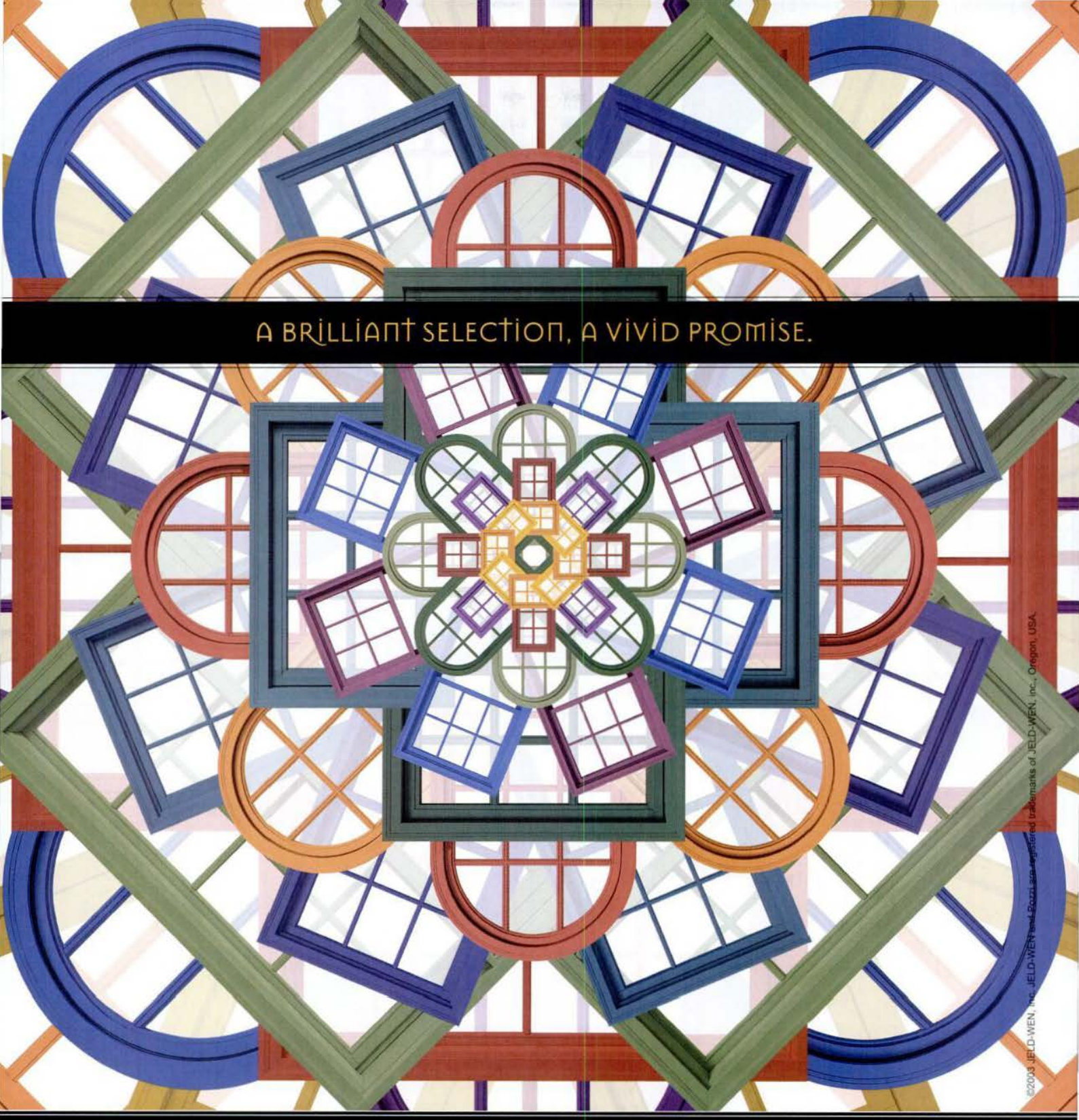

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Story by Allison Arieff

Photos by Douglas Bothner

Shady Business in the Capital

Just down the street from the vice president's residence in northwest Washington, D.C., In Situ Design is letting the sun shine in. "When our client showed us this house, he said he wanted it to be an open gathering place for friends and family. The problem was," jokes designer Edwin Zawadzki, "that it looked like that family should be named Addams—and I don't mean the presidents."

"When I bought the house, it was a mess," explains owner Andrew Lee. "Buried in a sea of bamboo and overgrown bushes, the house had walls in strange places, appliances where they should not be, and a yard that was utterly underutilized. That said, it had such a good feel and such great potential."

Lee asked Zawadzki and his partner, Mason Wickham, of the Brooklyn, New York–based In Situ Design, for "something modern, but very usable" for himself and his family. In addition to a gut renovation of the house, Zawadzki and Wickham ventured outside to make the most of the entire 5,250-square-foot lot.

The garden's dramatic outdoor "ceiling" is a luminous tensile sunscreen that extends out toward the detached garage, adding a sculptural form to the space. The cedar path built in its gently arcing shadow is a continuation of the house floor and doubles as the family's alfresco dining area. The pool had to be hacked out of a concrete deck that had once taken up over half of the available garden space. "It was vital that the pool would read as an object, like a piece of furniture or a rug, to reinforce the feeling of indoor/outdoor living," says Wickham.

While working on the Lee residence, Zawadzki and Wickham were putting the finishing touches on their proposal for the Pentagon memorial (they were one of six finalists). Despite the radical contrast in scale and purpose of the two projects, "there was a surprisingly direct connection between the two," explains Zawadzki. "Both explored the inherent power of the outdoor room."

"The juxtaposition of the objects normally found indoors with nature is always exhilarating," he continues. "And the sense of enclosure in relationship to the sky is always spiritual. Taking the table outside, laying out fine china, lighting candles under the stars—it's a primal thrill that just can't be experienced inside." ■

The traditional façade of the Lee residence in Washington, D.C., gives little hint of the contemporary design inside and out back. In the garden, the dramatic tensile "ceiling" is crucial to habitability, as it blocks most of the UV energy—an essential feature to combat D.C.'s hot and humid summers.

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Finding a Factory

At press time, Resolution: 4 Architecture was on the verge of choosing one of two housing companies to manufacture the Dwell Home. Just before he left for North Carolina for meetings at both factories, we asked architect Joseph Tanney to tell us about the arduous process of finding just the right manufacturer for the job.

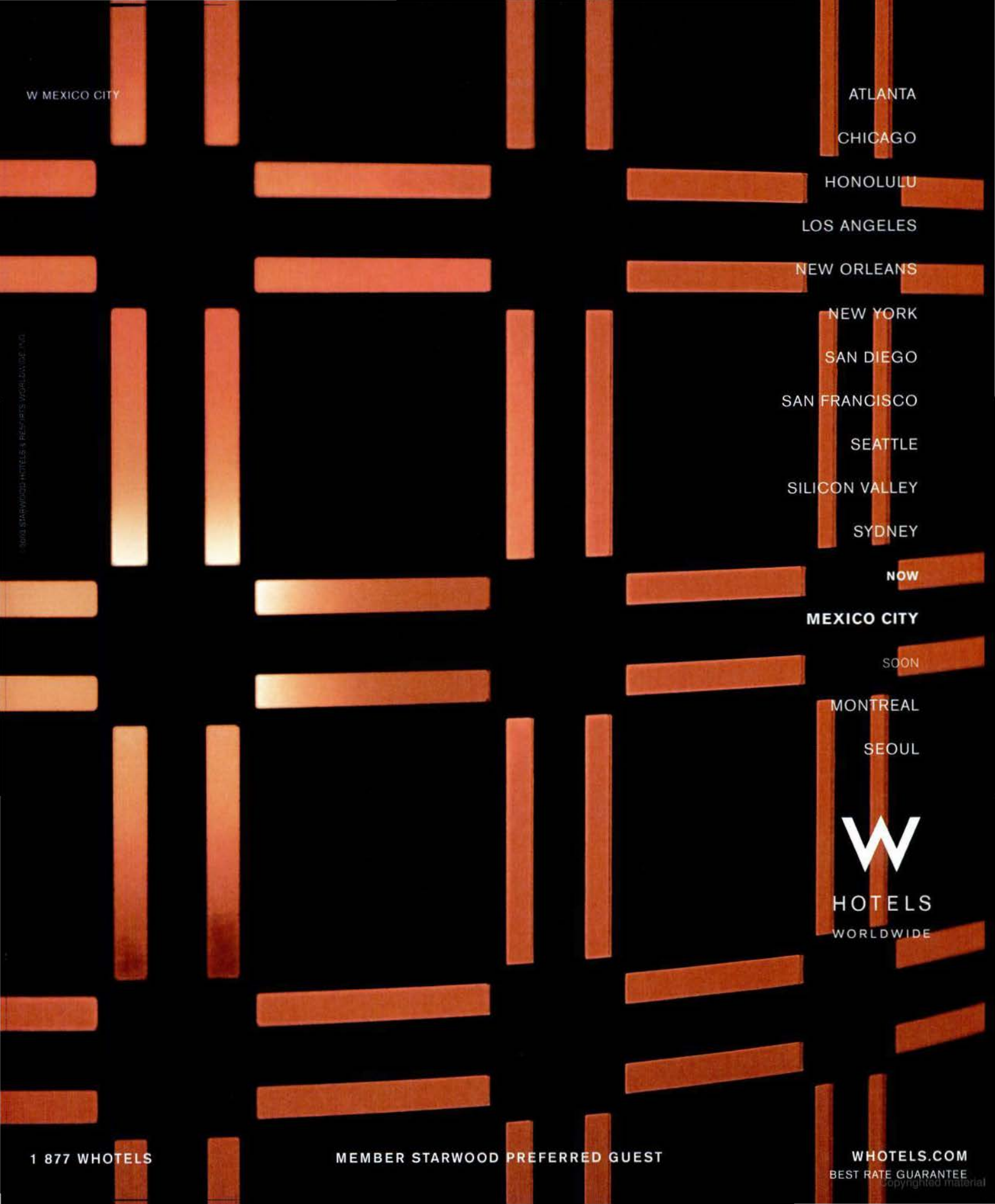
Convincing manufacturers to expand the parameters of what is possible in housing has been a big obstacle for many architects interested in taking prefabrication to the next level. Will this factory accept the challenge?

Since winning the Dwell Home Design Invitational, our priority has been to identify a manufacturer that is licensed and approved to build in the area and that's willing and able to work with us to make the Dwell Home a reality. We want to find the best one, so we can get the best product at the best price. Every week we learn a little more from each company about what they can and cannot do, what they're able to do and what they're willing to do. Each manufacturer we've spoken with has different abilities in terms of the materials and finishes they can actually provide in the factory. This is crucial, because the more that gets manufactured in the factory, the lower the cost per square foot, and the better we'll be able to hit our price point of $200,000.

It's an interview process, with a lot of back-and-forth dialogue. There's a lot on our end to learn. We issue design drawings and then we get info and pricing back from them—it's a tennis match. What we've been learning is that this is an entrenched industry and no one thinks it needs to grow or evolve. Many manufacturers are suspicious of who we are and what we're trying to accomplish. The industry is fine, they say, why are you trying to change it? So we're trying to identify the companies that get it and are willing to work with us.

In the future, this will all be easier, as we learn from this project and carry that experience into the next ones. Now we know which questions to ask.

We'd like to thank our Dwell Home sponsors: Artemide, Bang & Olufsen, Birkenstock, CaesarStone, Emma Gardner Design, Fisher & Paykel, Forbo, Herman Miller for the Home, Home Director, Inc., Jenn-Air, Kadan Modular, Kohler, Lennox, Loewen Windows, Maharam, Microsoft Office for Mac, The Modern Fan Co., Neoporte, Rosendahl, Sears, Volkswagen, West Elm, and Zwilling J. A. Henckels, Inc.



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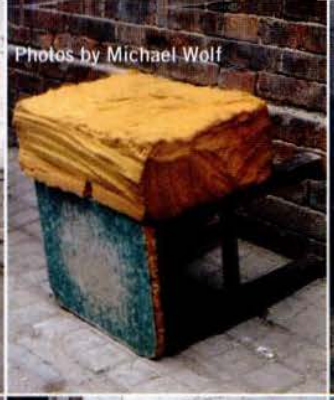
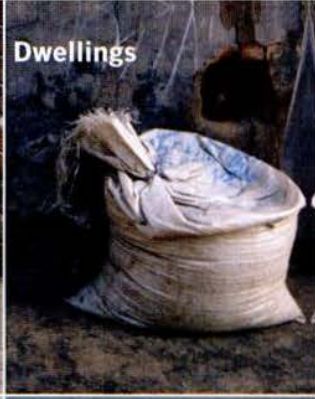







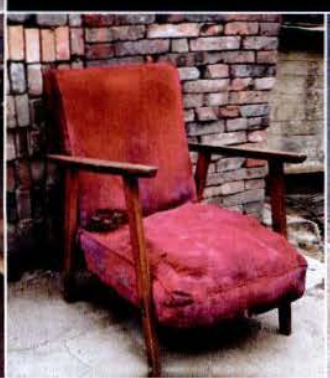


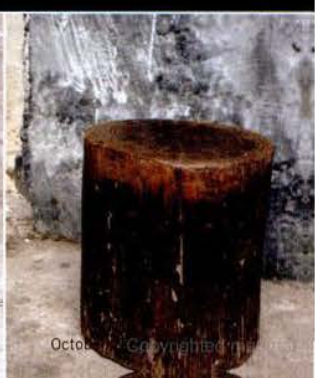



Design Is Everywhere

Photographer Michael Wolf discovered a beautiful design tendency while traveling in China: an abundance of ramshackle old chairs whose owners had taken all kinds of steps to keep them alive. Each example of makeshift seating becomes a unique and palpable expression of human resourcefulness.

The world is so big that, inevitably, our attempt to show you "a world of good design" is somewhat arbitrary, even improvisational. But, as Wolf's photographs attest, good design is where you find it.

Story by Virginia Gardiner

Photos by Paco Pérez / Alluro.com

Project: GGG House
Architect: Alberto Kalach
Location: Mexico City

Mexico City Elemental Architecture

From an airplane window on a clear day, Mexico City's massive urban expanse presents itself ten minutes before touchdown. Beneath a thin haze, all the tilted grids of freeways, boulevards, streets, and alleyways are a legible geometry. The densely packed buildings contain an infinite color spectrum, which reads mostly brown. When Benito Juarez Airport was built in 1928, it was on the outskirts of a city of 1.2 million. Today, it's engulfed by a megalopolis of 25 million, a dense 700 square miles in which neighborhoods can hardly proliferate fast enough to house the population that increases daily by 1,000. But as the plane banks a turn and descends northeast of the runway, directly below it is an empty floodplain, which in pre-Columbian days was Lake Texcoco. Here is the dark side of urban expansion: trash heaps, wastewater runoff, contamination.

Architect Alberto Kalach has watched this city grow for decades and, in 1996, was instrumental in forming Ciudad Futura, a collaboration of architects, engineers, and environmental scientists dedicated to repairing the mega-problems of a megalopolis. "I've been collecting aerial photos for a long time," he explains over an afternoon coffee. "I was trying to put together a complete picture of the shape of the city. To a point, no one really knew. By learning more, we could find solutions for big problems that nobody was, or is, addressing."

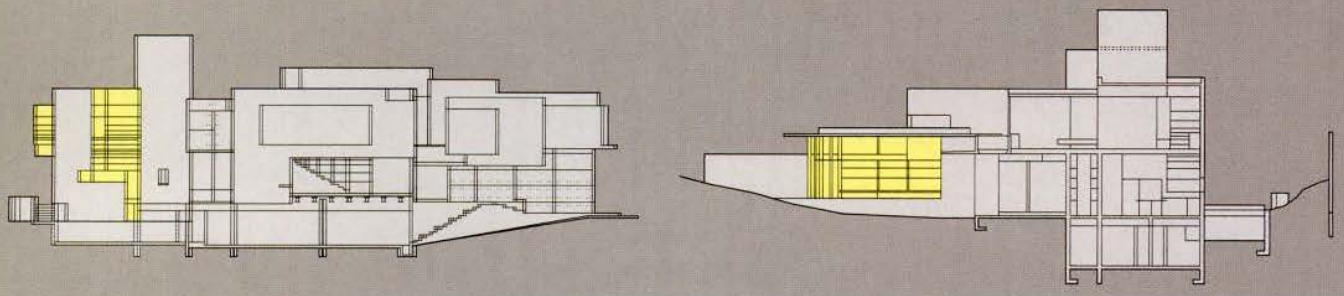
Kalach would never say that his labors solving Texcoco-size problems—in which artful renderings collect dust on a shelf while the government systematically fails to adopt progressive urban plans—are frustrating. "I know Mexico City isn't the best place," he says, but his grin belies his words. His long-suffering obsession with the environment's flaws enhances his perception of its beauty. Forays into the unattainable—that is, planned visions of what could improve if anything were possible—sharpen his imagination. He works with a team of ten designers, all in their 20s and 30s. On a rainy afternoon at his office, it becomes clear that his well-informed idealism for the future city keeps him in good company: Mexico City's new generation of architects. ►

For architect Alberto Kalach, a house has things in common with a loftier task—understanding the world's third-largest city, and trying to change the shape of its future.

From the backyard, evening light affords views into the windows of the GGG House's east façade. From left to right are the living room, a hallway, and the dining room; a roof patio and the master bedroom are above.

Left: In the living room, an Abaco lamp from Venini glows next to a stream-of-consciousness painting by Sean Leaders, hung flush with the bottom edge of a clerestory slot window. Barcelona chairs sandwich an Eileen Gray table.

Opposite page: On the west side of the house, Gonzalez's wife, Claudia, is visible in the stratified bathroom window. At the far end of the same wall, the protruding box contains the shower, which has translucent walls of yellow onyx.



Sectional drawings reveal the house's sculptural complexity. In east-west and north-south sections (above left and right, respectively), yellow areas indicate the bathroom windows and the living room.

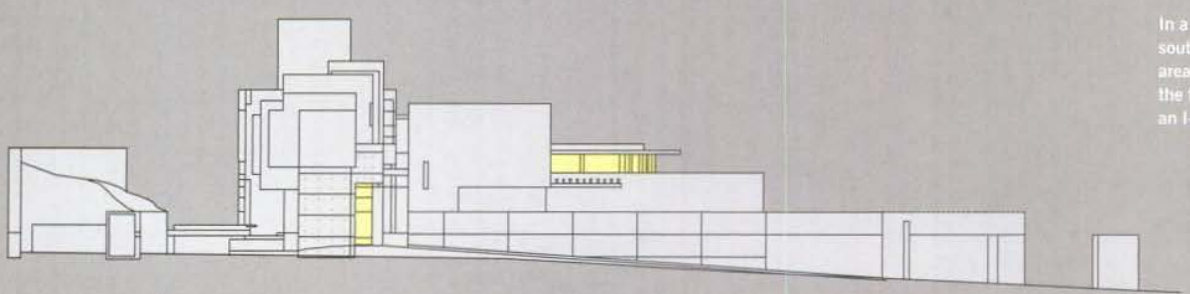
Kalach thinks holistically about his work. "All our projects are about solving problems related to organizing space—in terms of functional issues and quality of life," he says. Whether he is planning for a reclaimed Lake Texcoco or drafting a house for a friend, the same spirit of investigation and intuition fills the architecture. Like his urban plans, his residential projects reveal his infatuation with the many layers of his city. This idea emerges especially on a visit to the GGG House, which Kalach completed in 2000 for the Gonzalez family.

In the late '90s, Guillermo Gonzalez Guajardo, an entrepreneur who hit it big at a young age with a themed-restaurant business, had a quarter-life crisis. He decided to refocus his investments and build an artistic house, to share with his wife and sons. Gonzalez and Kalach had a mutual friend, Alejandro Gonzalez Innarritu (the writer and director of *Amores Perros*), who invited them both over to his house, which Kalach had designed in 1997. The evening was a success and Guillermo Gonzalez, intrigued, toured more Kalach houses. "What I liked about Alberto," he says, "was that he could make his work reflect the different clients."

Each of Kalach's houses has a distinct motif. One is shaped like five fingers reaching into a forest, to minimally disturb its wooded site; another has easy-access courtyards for a resident who is disabled; another stacks gardens to maximize vistas on a hillside lot. As Kalach explored concepts for the GGG House, named for Gonzalez's initials, inspiration came from a friend and sculptor, Jorge Yazpik. A native of Mexico City, Yazpik sculpts angular, razor-accurate, roomlike hollows into rough, rounded boulders of volcanic stone. Asked to cite his influences, Yazpik mentions many, especially pre-Columbian architecture: Olmec and Aztec ▸

Opposite page: Gonzalez reads in a PK20 chair, designed by Poul Kjaerholm in 1967, and rests his feet on a coffee table commissioned from Yazpik. Out the window is a column by Mexican sculptor Ricardo Regazzoni. p.154

Right: To the right of the large triangular fountain on the house's southeast side, the staircase to the playroom is visible behind a sitting area. Above the fountain, Gonzalez sits by the window with his youngest, Pablo, who is almost two.



In a drawing of the house's south-facing street side, yellow areas indicate the study and the fountain area, from which an I-beam extends eastward.

buildings, and Machu Picchu, "where you see the union of sculpture and architecture, and where the angles of light become crucial to the art."

While planning the house, Gonzalez and Kalach became friends. When Gonzalez fell ill and spent two months in bed, "Alberto would send architecture books," he remembers. "A wide assortment—Tadao Ando, Carlo Scarpa, Adolf Loos—he got me into architecture."

Kalach borrowed Yazpik's process, and with it came something of Yazpik's expression. "I like the way he sculpts by subtracting from the original stone," Kalach explains. "We started with a block of clay, and an idea of what the orientations and views would be. Then we carved the rooms into and out of it, with the idea of directing light into a domestic labyrinth."

In fact, the labyrinth experience begins before you reach the house—as it does any time you search for someone's refuge in Mexico City. And it's not just tourists: Locals often consult the *Guia Roji*, this city's version of Los Angeles's *Thomas Guide*, with a 250-page street index and 103 map plates. As we search for the GGG House's enclave at the edge of a golf course north of Chapultepec, with *Guia Roji* in hand, the affable cab driver still needs to pull over to ask for directions at a newsstand in the neighborhood. And as the Barragán houses and the fine haciendas of San Angel attest, Mexico City's loveliest refuges hide discreetly, sometimes in riffraff zones or behind shabby walls.

Inside the GGG House, the labyrinth continues. Cooled by the contrast of dark wood floors and heavy walnut doors, the raw concrete volumes meet at surprising corners, and are lit moodily by enigmatic light sources: a clerestory slot window, a reflection off a fountain out the window, a yellow onyx panel in the hall. ▸

Looking west down the hall by the master bedroom presents partial views of three rooms. In the master bathroom at the end of the hall, supplies are stored in a green wheeling Mobil from Kartell. The bedside lamp was designed by Christian Liagre. p.154

In the master bathroom, a custom-designed travertine counter and tub provide soft, albeit stony, contrast to the bare concrete walls.

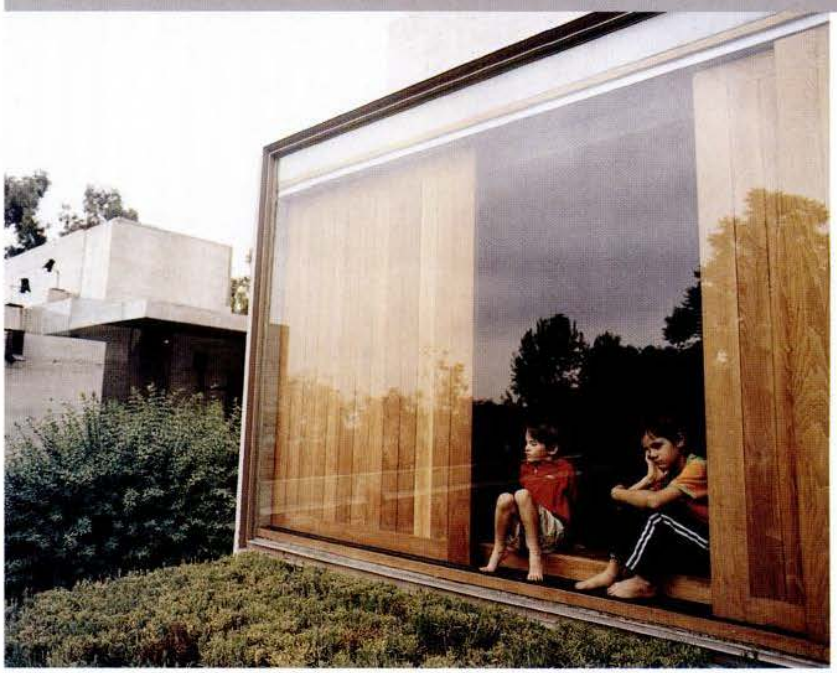
Every room offers enticing, almost baffling views of rooms next door. For instance, from the playroom one sees a grassy roof out the window, and a glass bridge over the downstairs atrium. A floating walnut staircase with a partial wall descends to a sitting room, the partial wall making what Kalach calls "a scenographic effect—the person disappears and reappears from behind." A balcony affords a view out the downstairs window, where multicolored carp swim in the fountain.

To echo the shape of the house, Kalach and Gonzalez chose Yazpik's sculptures as centerpieces for the reflecting pools and fountain. The three bodies of water are self-replenishing—the pools hold rain (a daily guarantee this time of year), and the fountain has a built-in cistern that also stores water for gardening. Yazpik sees water as a mediator between solids, "where one sees the depth of the interior and the reflection of other facing surfaces at the same time." For Kalach, water is a vital presence: "We are made out of water. You cannot inhabit a place without water. So water is a source for architecture."

In a way, the house's three pools, filling voluntarily when it rains, seem like a subconscious reference to the city's past as a basin of lakes. They bring to mind Kalach's loftier work—the attempt to change his city's future. But there is no limit to what the GGG House brings to mind. In Gonzalez's words, "I see so many influences, yet it's unlike any other architecture. Some angles I see Wright, then Scarpa, then Barragán. Of course there is Yazpik, and there is the city we live in. But in the end, it's Alberto." ■

Below: In the GGG House, glazed surfaces reflect and transmit light at the same time. This effect is visible on a window behind which Guillermo, seven, and Miguel, five, sit on a rainy afternoon.

Opposite page: Through a window off a glass bridge, you can see the reflecting pool—with a Yazpik sculpture in the center—in the front hall. Gutters collect rainwater, which replenishes the pool.



Reclaiming Texcoco

In the dry season, wind kicks up sewage-contaminated dust at Lake Texcoco; in the rainy season, it stinks. Kalach's team imagines reclaiming the floodplain and turning it into a lake of urban infrastructure.

Mexico City was once a basin of lakes surrounded by mountains. Since the arrival of the Spanish, water has been pumped out of the underground aquifer to dry the lakebed and build streets. But the city retains its tendency to flood in rainy season, and in dry seasons suffers severe drought.

Ciudad Futura proposed reclaiming the largest former lake, Texcoco, currently a desiccated dust bowl or a valley of sludge, depending on the season. Ciudad Futura envisions the modern Texcoco as a lake surrounded by infrastructure, with water-treatment facilities, parks, commercial and industrial areas, and a new airport.

Reclaiming the lake would offer myriad environmental benefits. Most important, explains Gustavo Lipkau, who spearheaded the project with Kalach, the lake would enable the city to treat more water for reuse, and pump less from the aquifer, reducing subsidence (recently, the city has sunk so much that sewage pipes sometimes flow backwards). Evaporation would create air cycles, reducing smog. A wasteland would become valuable urban property.

Ciudad Futura's lake project got off to a good start—with funding—because it became part of the new airport project. For decades, the city has wanted to move the airport farther from the city center.

But trouble started in 2001. On the northeast side of the lake, several hundred people have been farming some weakly arable land for decades. Ciudad Futura's proposal accommodated the farmers, but government representatives, heedless of Ciudad Futura's plan, tried to buy out the farms for peanuts. When farmers stood their ground with machetes, the government panicked—a predictable reaction, considering Zapatista history—and dropped the project altogether. So the lake project is on hold. Lipkau shrugs, quoting the proverb *"siempre lo urgente se antepone allo importante"*—what's urgent always overrides what's important. —V.G.

Story by Alastair Gordon

Photos by Matthew Hranek

Austria
21st-Century Secession

For such a small country, Austria (population 8.1 million) enjoys one of the world's most vibrant design cultures. "There's constant dialogue and constant battles," says Otto Kapfinger, an architectural historian and curator who lives in the heart of Vienna. Like most everything else in Austria, architecture is taken very seriously here and it often makes front-page news.

Case in point: A group of young Viennese architects recently rallied together to stage a street action—a kind of *salon des refusér*—to protest government practices for hiring architects: "We decided to act on our own and put our position in the public eye," says Mark Gilbert, an American architect who expatriated to Vienna 11 years ago and was one of the organizers of the event.

In response to the protest, a group of small firms were given empty storefronts on Schönbrunner Strasse and asked to create designs that interacted with the immediate neighborhood. Gentrification was becoming an issue in Vienna's Fifth District as an economic shift began forcing small, family-owned stores to close. "Our intention was to break down the distance between architects and the people living in the neighborhood," says Gilbert. One firm, Transparadiso, created homeless shelters, while another team, ENTERprise, created a community meeting space called City Breeze. "We wanted to begin on the street level and publicize the new architecture outside of the existing institutions, which we felt were excluding us," explains Gilbert.

When not agitating on behalf of the cause of modern architecture, Gilbert has been building up a private practice in Vienna and recently completed the eye-grabbing Haus P. in the city's outlying 14th District. Designed in collaboration with architects Marlies Breuss and Michael Ogertschnig, the house was built on an oddly shaped, leftover lot for Barbara Pichler, a TV journalist, and Philipp Pichler, a psychologist, both in their mid-30s. Gilbert met his client while playing basketball. "Philipp and I have remained good friends throughout the process," says Gilbert. "But the new house hasn't helped his jump shot one bit."

The 10,500-square-foot property is an acute triangle, squeezed between two roads with a steep, sloping grade. In fact, the site is the vestige of a highway that was never built and had originally been set aside for a high-speed access ramp. (The Pichlers were able to buy the land at a good price from the national highway department.) Instead of being constrained, the house takes its cue from the difficult site. It bends and folds, transforming what ▸

The wood on the front façade is a screen made out of clear fir lathes and stained gold-brown. The screens were assembled in the workshop as large, prefabricated elements and then fitted, mounted, and trimmed onsite. "I try to handle each material in accordance to its innate character, to make it do what it is able to in unusual, sometimes dramatic ways," explains the architect. "In the end, you could say that the geometry of the building was inspired by the interplay between the site and the materials that were used to build it."

Project: Haus P.
Architect: Mark Gilbert with Marlies Breuss and Michael Ogertschnig
Location: Vienna, Austria

Vienna

Philipp Pichler in his living room. The red, orange, and yellow cabinets, designed by a cabinet-making friend of Philipp and his wife's, were left over from their previous apartment. The architects simply refurbished and remounted them in the present offset arrangement.

appeared to be an unbuildable lot into a successful house. "The idea was to pull the green around, into the garden, up a ramp, and into the living room," says Gilbert. "We treated the lawn as a carpet we could fold and deform. That's how we established a relationship to the site."

A pedestal was created out of concrete block that burrows into the sloping site and raises the house to take advantage of the views. Cast-concrete walls create shell-like voids for the main living areas, which are filled in with floor-to-ceiling glass. The foundation block was sealed with stucco and the concrete walls were sheathed with a textured, gray rubber membrane. Rubble retaining walls were fashioned into a berm, helping create a visual and acoustical barrier against traffic on the main road. The living room was left completely open to the west and looks out over the Lainzer Tiergarten, the old imperial hunting grounds where Emperor Franz Josef once hunted wild boar. "Standing on the staircase to the master bedroom," says Gilbert,"you can feel the slope of the exposed concrete ceiling and you have a view over the whole of the house and the Vienna hills in the distance."

That a city like Vienna is currently sprouting so many experimental houses like the Pichler residence isn't really so surprising. The tradition goes back at least as far as Adolf Loos, who, reacting to Vienna's then excess of decorative architecture, wrote his 1908 manifesto, "Ornament and Crime," igniting a revolution in architecture that spread around the world. Later, two of Loos's students, Richard Neutra and R. M. Schindler, would carry his reductivist message all the way to California.

What's more notable is that Austria's design renaissance isn't just happening in cities like Vienna. The general population of the country has an unusually sophisticated attitude about design that is fostered in part by government-sponsored programs. All of Austria's nine provinces have architectural forums that hold exhibitions, competitions, tours, and symposia on new architecture. There are also the annual Bauherrenpreis design awards, given out to encourage corporate and private initiatives in experimental design. The effects of this kind of support can be felt not just in Vienna but way out in the hinterlands.

Witness the Grossi house in Goldegg, 44 miles south of Salzburg, where a middle-class roofing contractor chose to hire an unknown young modernist rather than ►

"We wanted to begin on the street level and publicize the new architecture outside of the existing institutions, which we felt were excluding us."

For the architect, the most rewarding moment was when the roofers spanned the rubber cladding. "The process was more like upholstering giant furniture than the usual sort of site work," Gilbert says. "Each piece had to be cut, fit, and stretched with exquisite care. The handworkers usually do roofs that no one can see. They took obvious pleasure in doing something of aesthetic import, and in the fact that the architects paid their work so much heed. Their motivation paid off."

"In the end," explains Ambros Spiluttini, "this project is a response to the question of how to build in the Austrian Alps today and how to deal with local tradition."

"The challenge was to integrate the old with the new so one could still have a sense of what the old house was like while also fulfilling the requirements of the present (and future)," says architect Ambros Spiluttini.

Goldegg

going the conventional route. Harald and Elisabeth Grossi owned a fairly conventional suburban house, but as their daughter Nina, now 11 years old, grew older, the house began to feel too small, and it was prohibitively expensive to heat. So the Grossis hired Vienna-based architects Ambros Spiluttini and Caterina Faggi Spiluttini to design an addition.

Surrounded by ski resorts, most of the houses in Goldegg are traditional, pitched-roof affairs with quaint little cuckoo-clock details, so there was great resistance to the design of the Grossi house—with its new, oddly sloping walls designed to capture heat—from the very beginning. During construction, some of the neighbors objected, claiming it was inappropriate and that it looked too much like a ski-lift station. Elements of the original house were retained and now it appears as if the old and new sections have collided in some way. Partitions were removed and the interior spaces opened up. In the end, it took a year to get approval from the mayor to build the unusual house.

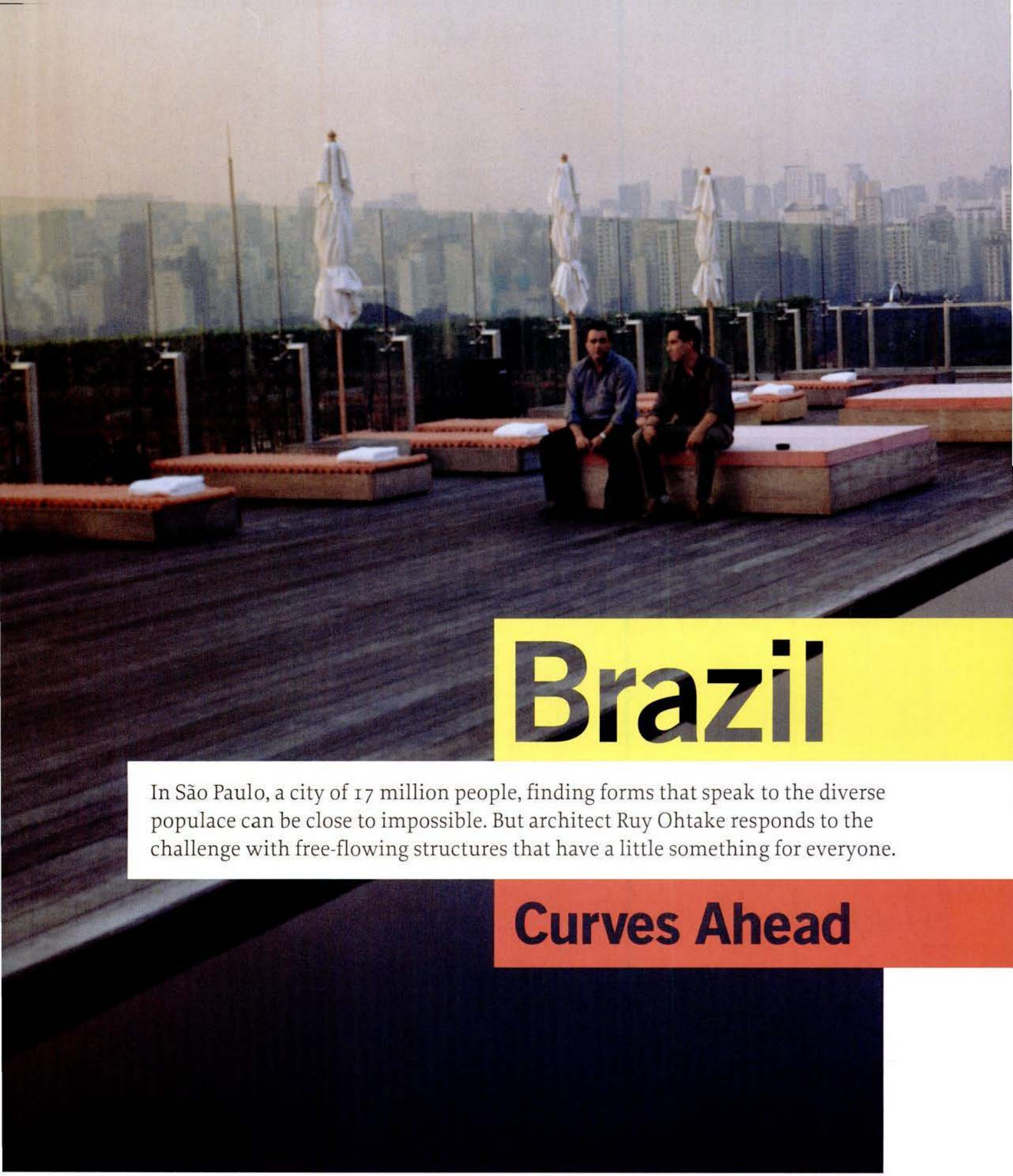
"The level of architectural acceptance varies from cities to countryside," explains Ambros Spiluttini. "The level of support is generally higher in some cities in Austria like Graz and Vienna, and a lot lower in places like Salzburg and Tyrol. In these areas alpine tourism has a strong economic influence, and the general idea of how a building should look is more influenced by *Heidi, The Sound of Music,* and leather trousers than how today's needs could lead to a reconsideration of new building forms."

So it was perhaps not too surprising that when the Grossi house was finally finished in 1998, a group of local mayors met to discuss how to prevent such architectural experiments from happening again in the future. "It does look a bit like a solar heating plant for the village," admits Ambros, though he's delighted to report that the community has since grown not only to tolerate the house but to regard it as one of their own. "Sitting in their garden, the Grossis can still hear people passing by, wondering about the house," he says. "But they've also started to accept it. In fact, when the architecture critic Norbert Mayr presented a project to collect and publish a book of local contemporary architecture, the mayor of Goldegg proposed the Grossi house!" ■

The house has a copper roof. Its solar panels are not gratuitously added to the house but seamlessly connected to the design and the surrounding landscape.

Right: Harald and Elisabeth Grossi in their open kitchen, which is fully integrated with the house's living and dining areas.

Project: Grossi Residence
Architect: Spiluttini Architecture
Location: Goldegg, Austria



Brazil

In São Paulo, a city of 17 million people, finding forms that speak to the diverse populace can be close to impossible. But architect Ruy Ohtake responds to the challenge with free-flowing structures that have a little something for everyone.

Curves Ahead

Story by Terry Wade

Photos by Claudio Edinger / Corbis

The Skye Bar beckons patrons to the roof deck of the Hotel Unique—one of architect Ruy Ohtake's latest creations—with a glowing red-tiled swimming pool and an unbeatable view of São Paulo's surreal cityscape.

São Paulo, Brazil, looks a bit like Los Angeles might if it were pumped up on steroids, but instead of sprawling over a desert floor, it springs up from a high-altitude rain forest that has been paved over to create a veritable concrete jungle.

The city can be highly impersonal, without any real sense of a center, as many of its historic buildings were demolished long ago. The threat of crime is a constant worry, and the city is so vast that those executives who can afford it commute to work by helicopter, while the bullet-proofing of cars is one of São Paulo's fastest-growing industries. Though often criticized for lacking the natural beauty of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's industrial and financial nerve center has something Rio lacks: unbridled dynamism.

Unstoppable population growth, gobs of money, and a disregard for history define this city of disparate immigrant and indigenous groups. All these forces have allowed Brazil's unique architectural style of tropical modernism to flourish here.

A fashion and design renaissance is currently under way, and in recent years São Paulo has supplanted Rio as Brazil's cultural center. The city is now trying to grab the world's attention in the same manner that the cool sounds of Rio-inspired bossa nova did back in the late 1950s and '60s.

Perhaps no other contemporary architect working here embodies this phenomenon better than Ruy Ohtake, a controversial Brazilian designer of Japanese descent. Clad in a white button-down shirt and nearly whispering, the 65-year-old Ohtake, whose career spans over four decades and includes hundreds of public and private projects, appears far less outlandish than his buildings and his hyper-industrialized hometown. But looks can be deceiving.

Ohtake puts up structures that are downright radical: The Hotel Unique, shaped like a levitating slice of watermelon, the Aché pharmaceutical lab wrapped in pink-mirrored glass, huge purple skyscrapers like the new Ohtake Cultural Center featuring a theater and art galleries, and apartment buildings such as the Maison de Mouette, with wavy balconies resembling ripples in ▸

Unstoppable population growth, gobs of money, and a disregard for history have allowed Brazil's unique style of tropical modernism to flourish in São Paulo.

The 65-year-old Ohtake is a bit more low-key than his flamboyant buildings, like the watermelon slice–shaped Hotel Unique. Opposite page: The interior of the Skye Bar at the Unique.

a pool. But he is also at home doing more traditional Brazilian architecture, including the Marcio Thomaz Bastos house, built in 1994 for the current Justice Minister, which exemplifies the cool feeling of concrete and glass mixed with lush curves on a tropical beach retreat, or white houses like the Schwartzman residence, with sweeping, wide curvilinear terraces spilling out of expansive glass walls onto sparkling swimming pools surrounded by dark-green vegetation.

"São Paulo doesn't have natural beauty, so it needs to have art with architecture that is very free, courageous, and innovative," Ohtake explains, sitting in his studio above the traffic-clogged Faria Lima Boulevard bordering the tough Pinheiros and swanky Jardins neighborhoods. "These characteristics make up the vanguard [of architecture] in the world. An architect must fight to be creative."

The Hotel Unique is probably the best example of what Ohtake refers to as contemporary Brazilian architecture: art boldly fused with the design heritage of an older generation of Brazilian modernists like Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa. Because of its daredevil structure, the boutique hotel, designed for a pharmaceuticals magnate, has become a must-see for all visitors and the favored haunt of the fashion set since its opening in late 2002. A red-tiled swimming pool and a fine restaurant, Skye, lure people to the roof, which offers stunning views of São Paulo's *Blade Runner*–esque cityscape.

"São Paulo was built by man and was always very utilitarian and connected to the force of work. It was never a political capital, so it never really had generous parks and plazas. This is why it is still a relatively closed city," says Ohtake. ►

Ohtake's corresponding design strategy makes sense. What is one to do with the endless, rectangular, monotonous gray skyline of the world's fourth-largest metropolis, a place where 17 million toil every day? Ohtake's answer is to use subtle (and not so subtle) colors and curves and play on the spontaneous character of Brazil's famously permissive culture.

"Brazilian architecture is very easy to read and yet it is full of surprises and light and curves," Ohtake says. "I work a lot with colors because that is the history of Brazilian cities. They were extremely colorful in the 19th century. But we lost this in the 20th century with industrialization and more European influence. We need to revive color."

While his use of color seeks to revive Brazil's chromatic past, Ohtake's curves continue a long tradition in Brazil. "The formal notion of the curve has always been cited as the link between the colonial baroque legacy

Opposite page: The interior of the Marcio Thomaz Bastos house, built in 1994. This page: The liberal use of wood and rattan soften the concrete curves of the exterior.

"São Paulo doesn't have natural beauty, so it needs to have art with architecture that is very free, courageous, and innovative."

in Brazil and the sweeping lyricism of the work of the Rio de Janeiro modernist architects during the 1940s and '50s," says Catherine Seavitt, a professor of architectural design at the Cooper Union in New York and principal of her own design firm (Catherine Seavitt Studio) who spent the past year and a half researching in Brazil. "His curves are now attempting to link the Rio school to the São Paulo school."

The architect is often asked if his mother, Tomie ►

"Architecture can't be overly difficult or hermetically sealed," Ohtake explains. "People should be allowed to like it."

Ohtake, a highly respected sculptor and painter for whom he built a house—one with straight lines and high concrete ceilings reminiscent of the art galleries that show her twisting forms and brightly colored prints—influences his work. But he insists any connection with his mother's work "isn't conscious" and jokes that he, in fact, inspires her. Instead, he says, he draws his own inspiration from what he likes to call "the happiness of life" that exists in Brazil, where people can often be found daydreaming about the future and talking sentimentally about the country's past in a nation that's bigger than the continental U.S.

Ohtake isn't the only one talking about this Brazilian happiness. Its influence stretches far past the concrete confines of architecture to the soccer grounds throughout the city, where there's talk of playing "happy" soccer—full of the surprise, lightness, and creative moves that have brought Brazil's national soccer team an unprecedented five World Cup titles. In its broadly defined form, Brazilian happiness is a culturally specific idea. It stems from the mixing of cultures and races in São Paulo, which Ohtake calls "marvelous," as it obliterates traditional notions of identity and contributes to a dynamic idea of Brazilianness while still respecting people's roots.

"Architecture can't be overly difficult or hermetically sealed," Ohtake explains. "People should be allowed to like it." But he acknowledges that designing in São Paulo and interpreting its contrasts is extremely challenging. "If you can design here, you can design anywhere," Ohtake says. "But to do Brazilian architecture you have to live here and feel the culture." ■

Opposite page: Ruy and Tomie Ohtake in Tomie's home studio designed by Ruy in 1968. The twisting curves of both Tomie and Ruy's work, leaves one to wonder who influences whom. This page: Tomie at work.

Story by Sam Grawe

Durban, South Africa

Instead of building an addition to his house, architect George Elphick built a separate building on the property. Supported by steel framing, the arcing Zinc-alume roof serves as an oversized gutter in subtropical Durban.

An entire wall of the main living area slides open to allow for maximum ventilation and circulation between the indoor hearth and outdoor balau hardwood decks.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG HUDSON

If you ever find yourself in Durban, South Africa, you would do well by your stomach to seek out Bunny Chow. It's not pellet feed for rabbits, but rather a hollowed-out loaf of bread filled with curry. The city's culinary celebrity—a result of European baking, Indian cooking, and South African apartheid (word has it a crafty restaurateur invented the take-away treat for black South Africans, who were not allowed, by law, to sit in his eatery)—poignantly reflects Durban's eclectic cosmopolitan composition. In other words, it could have only happened in South Africa.

When it comes to local architecture, George Elphick, a lifelong resident of Durban, is trying to establish his own variety of Bunny Chow. A director of Elphick Proome Architects Inc., one of Durban's largest firms, Elphick has observed the "struggle to create a contemporary architectural character." When it came to designing a new building on his home's property (which would house his wife Karin's reflexology practice, a home studio, guest bedroom suite, and an expansive indoor-outdoor living and entertaining area), Elphick responded to the challenge by creating a structure that is in his words resoundingly "Afrocentric."

Elphick says, "There's a lot to understand—responding passively to the subtropical climate, dealing with being able to build with limited skills, using native and natural materials. It's a conscious effort to grasp the genius loci and embody these principles in the design."

The steel-framed structure does exactly that. Bold, brightly colored blockwork forms make use of a common local building technique and echo the palette of indigenous art. A Zincalume sheet roof is bowed into a position not unlike that of a vernacular farm structure. Infill glazing and a northern orientation allow for optimum use of natural light, while also giving the residents a feeling of being at once both indoors and outside. The balau hardwood decks, which seem like natural extensions of the African rosewood interior, further the overwhelming feeling, and are Elphick's favorite part of the building. "When the valley breezes blow through at night, and all the sliding doors are open, there's nowhere I'd rather be." ▸

Story by Maggie Kinser Hohle

In the JIG House, *washi*—that translucent, insulating multipurpose paper of old—is replaced by fiberglass-reinforced plastic (FRP): The kitchen shelves are sandwiched with it, the Shinto altar upstairs is backed with it, and the bright-white second-floor bathroom is illuminated by an FRP skylight.

Chiba, Japan

Above: Extra-wide suspended sliding glass doors are veiled indoors by double-faced shoji screens constructed of a new, super-tear-resistant paper. Radiant heating underlies ultra-thin, high-tech tatami floors. Right: The house was built in a newly developed suburb of Tokyo.

When Shin Sugawara, an architectural paint dealer and Japan's eighth-ranking kendo master, hired Atelier Bow-Wow to design his family home outside Tokyo, he insisted that every room have tatami mats. This was an unusual request in modern-day Japan, where most suburban houses are now dull vertical boxes built by developers out of mostly artificial materials with just one—or no—tatami rooms. Sugawara also asked for interior sliding doors (once customary in Japan) that would expand the living room from ten mats (about 175 square feet) to a spacious 20, as needed. "I'm from the countryside," he explains. "When there's a wedding or a funeral, the whole family gathers at home."

The house, called JIG, suits Sugawara and his family perfectly. Like a bow pulled taut on a single steel arrow, the structure is a white rectangle suspended over four parking spaces, untroubled by vertical supports. "I hate clutter," Sugawara says. "I demanded only that our house be dynamic, clean, and individualistic." The architects tweaked traditional Japanese components like the narrow wooden veranda with Western and high-tech materials: steel, concrete, and multiple shades of interior paint, the last of which is still unusual here. But the overall effect is that of an old Japanese home in the country, where man-made elements conspire only to engender an appreciation of nature's simplicity.

JIG stands in an area so newly developed that to reach it you walk a temporary asphalt path through a red-dirt construction site that follows the elevated train toward Tokyo. But the Sugawaras hardly notice. The architects concentrated all downstairs views on the formal garden, a grassy rectangle bordered by a string of white-flowering trees: summer camellia, white magnolia, Japanese snowbell. And the master bedroom window, a four-by-four-foot industrial pane set inches from the floor, cleverly misses the view of the train. "The joy of a house," says Bow-Wow partner Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, "is measured by routine. Architecture gives rhythms to the groundless, erupting flow we call life." On fair days Shin's wife, Noriko, steps through this great aperture, which ingeniously doubles as a portal to the balcony, and, following a custom as old as the nation, hangs out the futons to air in the sun. ►

PHOTOS BY YOSHIHARU TSUKAMOTO

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Story by Virginia Gardiner

The South Pole, Antarctica

Housing in Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, where temperatures range from zero to minus 100 degrees Fahrenheit, is the most extreme on Earth. In fact, NASA sees the new South Pole lab-and-living complex as a prototype for future residential stations on the moon and on Mars. The architects in charge of the project, sustainability experts Ferraro Choi and Associates, are proud of their work's historical significance. "In particular," Joe Ferraro says, "the food growth chamber is a testing ground for what they could use in outer space. With sophisticated indoor hydroponics, we can grow lettuce, berries . . . a garden of fresh produce in a brutal climate."

By 2007, all 220 or so residents of the South Pole—most of whom stay only in austral summer—will have moved from the summer camps and year-round snow-buried geodesic dome, circa 1970, into this $125 million reverse cooler on stilts. Fourteen-inch-thick Styrofoam walls and freezer doors house the complex, which, at 42 feet above ground, won't get buried in snow. Most South Pole residents, a.k.a. "Polies," will have a bedroom window (triple-glazed) for the first time, and in a population dominated by astronomers and astrophysicists, they'll know how to enjoy the view.

As would be the case in outer space, the astronomical building cost (pun intended) comes from schlepping supplies. According to the construction manager, Carlton Walker, "all the components have to be shipped to McMurdo, and then flown about 800 miles to the Pole, on LC-130 Hercules aircraft that takes off from McMurdo using wheels, and then lands at the South Pole on skis. So every piece has to fit into an 8-by-8-by-32-foot space, and the load limit is 26,000 pounds." For this reason, the construction is happening in phases. Part of the complex is already finished, and the first residents moved in earlier this year.

B. K. Grant, the South Pole area director, is excited for the improved living standard. "I admit I'm nostalgic for the dome," she says, "but it was getting too crowded. It's important for everyone to have their own room, even in a tight community." Most Polies agree that community is the best thing about life on the South Pole. As Walker says, "We laugh every day, no matter how stupid it gets." ►

PHOTOS BY NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, UNITED STATES ANTARCTIC PROGRAM

Above: A bird's-eye view of both the old and new structures at Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station. Below right: The new reverse cooler on stilts. Below left: A view from inside the circa 1970 geodesic dome.

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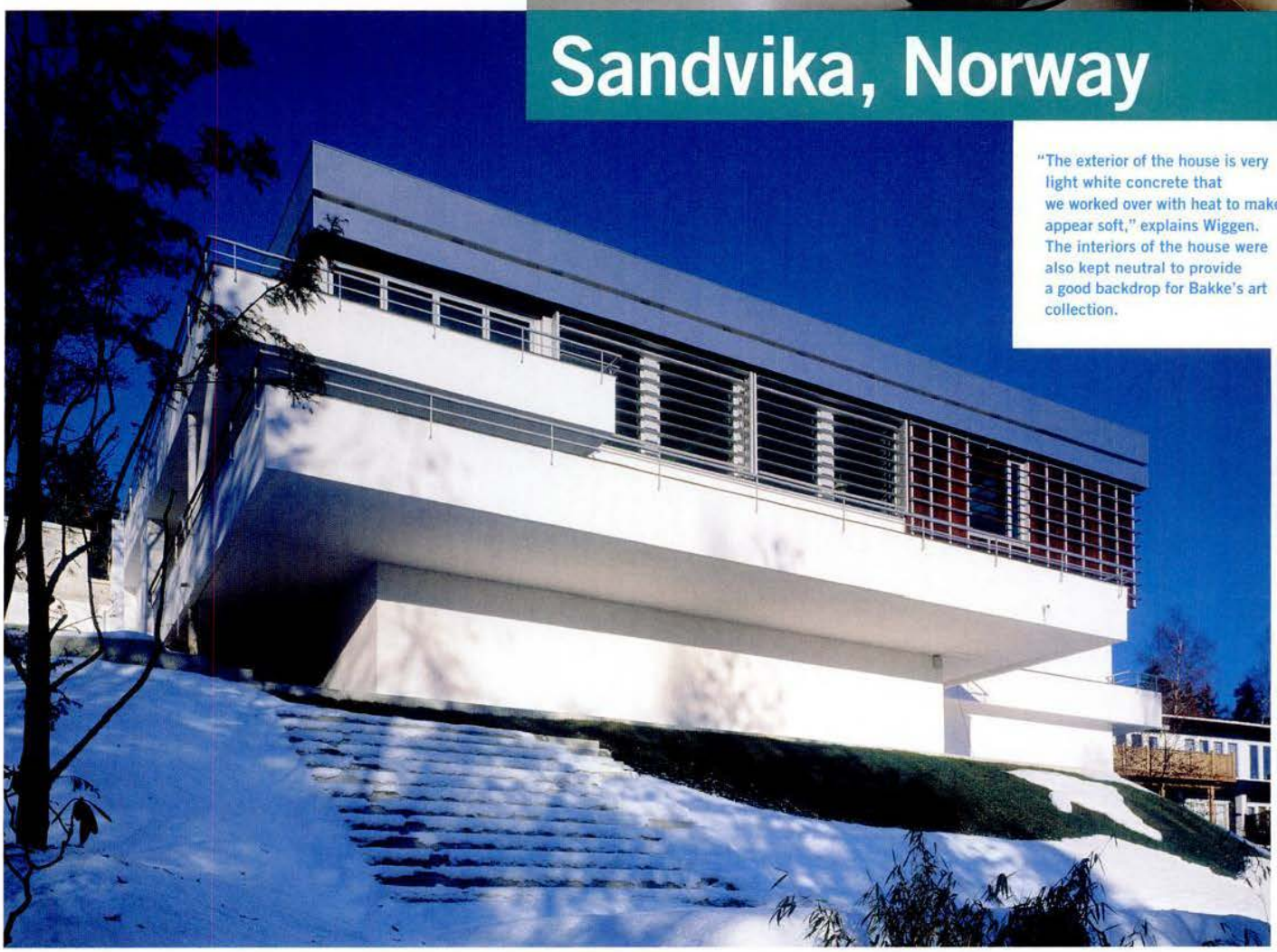
Story by Amara Holstein

Sandvika, Norway

"In the winter in Norway, it's freezing," notes architect Magne Magler Wiggen of mmw. "So any connection with nature is based more or less on an admiration of the snow." Trying to circumvent an inclination toward hibernation, Wiggen incorporated open spaces, light, and greenery into his redesign for Jan Andreas Bakke's house in Sandvika, just outside of Oslo.

The house, built in the 1960s, was a two-story wooden box that, as Wiggen explains, "had lots of small rooms, many of which were quite dark." The house was originally his aunt and uncle's home, but Bakke decided to update the structure and add an extra floor before moving in. The architect created an open floor plan, so that the only closed-in rooms are the bedrooms; all other spaces slip into each other, or are divided by sliding glass doors. Light flows inside through large triple-insulated windows, and there's a two-story greenhouse, with plenty of plants and a hearty tree to help Bakke forget the stark landscape outside.

Most striking are what Wiggen calls the "cores of fire and water" that sit in the center of the house. Handy for Viking rituals or midnight weenie roasts, the fire sits ▸



"The exterior of the house is very light white concrete that we worked over with heat to make appear soft," explains Wiggen. The interiors of the house were also kept neutral to provide a good backdrop for Bakke's art collection.

PHOTOS BY ESPEN GROENLIE (INTERIOR), JIRI HAVRAN

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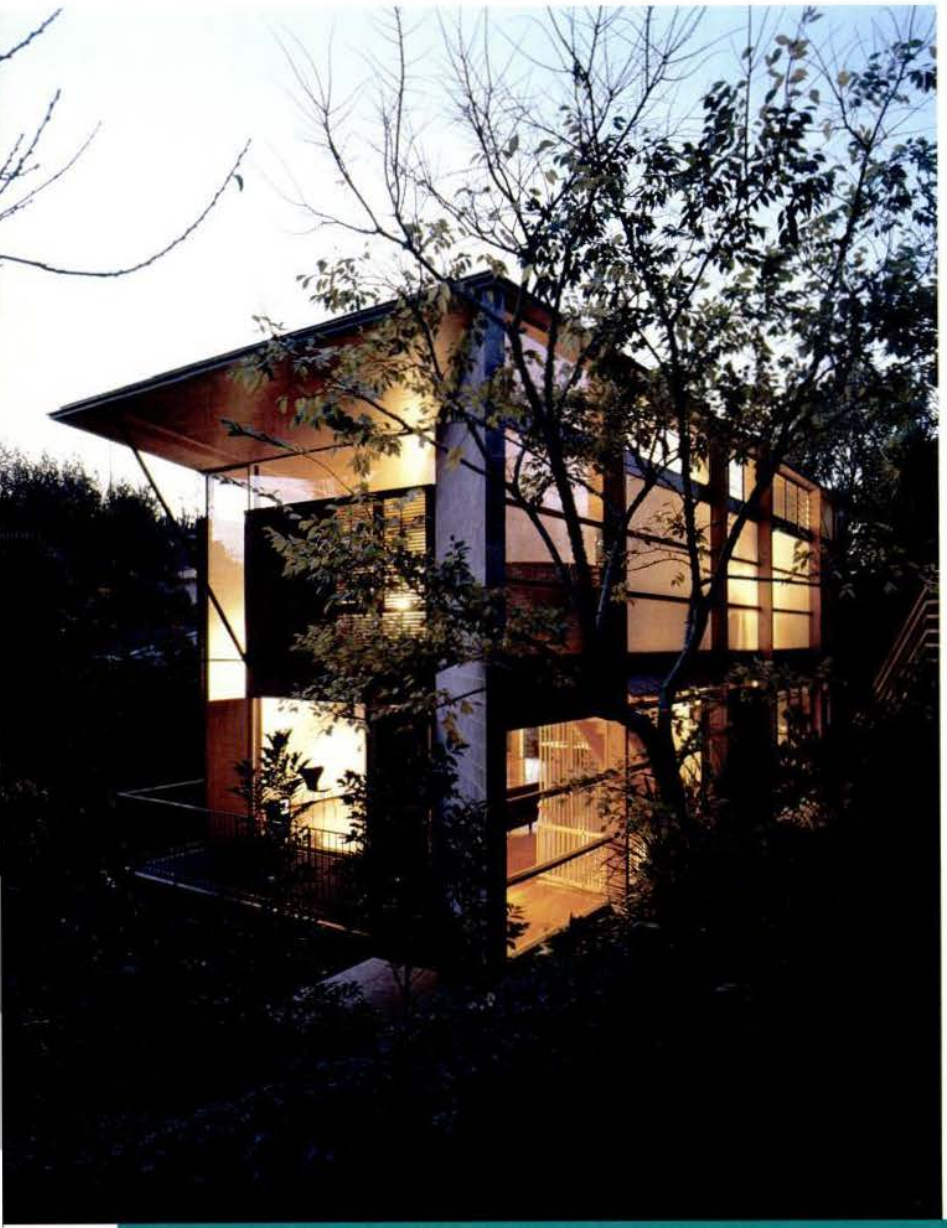
inside a concrete column that reaches through all three floors, opening to fireplaces at each level. Balancing out the flames, an aluminum water column also spans the house vertically—within which sit the bathrooms for each floor—and faces the pool and sauna in the basement. Lest one's toes become chilly while tramping about, the house's concrete floors are radiantly heated with a system of hot water pipes.

Bakke, an avid art collector who now has plenty of room to hang his paintings in his 6,500-square-foot home, is delighted with the redesign. Inspired by the West Coast architecture of John Lautner and Richard Neutra, the house is exactly what he wanted. "It's a challenge to apply those ideas in a harsh climate like Norway," Bakke says, "but I think we succeeded." ▸

Sandvika, Norway

Bakke's strong interest in modern sculpture helped influence the large spaces and clean lines of his new home. Originally constructed with lots of small rooms, Wiggen says, "it's now a very open, light-filled house."

PHOTOS BY ESPEN GROENLIE



From the stream that runs next to their house, architect Patrick Clifford, his attorney wife, and their three young children can easily paddle their canoe down to the Auckland harbor. Mingling amongst the 80,000 other boats floating in the "City of Sails," the family seems right at home in this cosmopolis that's a far cry from the country's sheep-laden stereotypes.

When the Cliffords moved back to New Zealand after years of living in Europe and New York, they decided Auckland was a good place to settle and found the perfect spot for their new house just ten minutes from the city center. The 2,200-square-foot, three-story structure perches on a footprint kept intentionally small by Clifford, who was concerned with "appropriateness of scale."

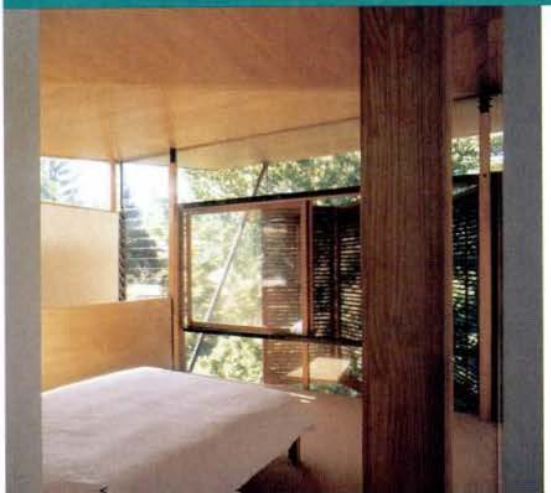
Clifford chose a north-south orientation for the home and a clear arrangement of rooms to maximize space and light within. Floor-to-ceiling windows are evident throughout, and, as he explains, "it has lots of moving parts—doors, windows, and flaps—that all help ventilate." The roof overhang deflects summer sun and protects the structure from Auckland's near-constant rain.

The house also reflects its locale: It has a simplicity of structure that is reflected in other recently built New Zealand residences—which Clifford attributes to a strong imported influence of Japanese architecture. Instead of building with steel—locally expensive and rarely used—Clifford worked with dense concrete blocks and native timber.

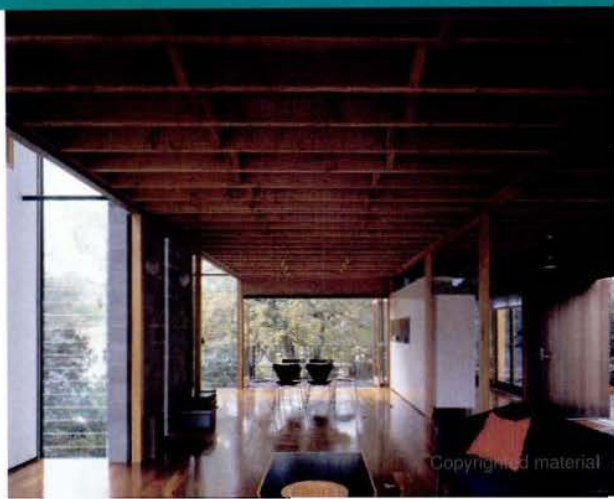
Surrounded by flora and fauna, the house rests lazily in the greenery. Deciduous oak and maple trees provide shade in the summer and let in sun in the winter, and iridescent green and purple tui birds flutter about, making it easy to forget the house is in the middle of a city. "Sitting on the couch in the living room, with all the doors open, watching a game of cricket on television is one of my favorite things," Clifford muses. "Being inside but feeling like you're outside—that's a real indulgence." ■

PHOTOS BY PAUL MCCREADIE (EXTERIOR, LIVING ROOM); PATRICK REYNOLDS (BEDROOM)

Auckland, New Zealand



"It's a lovely environment, but just a little pocket of land," Clifford says. "So we decided to make the house fit the site, rather than make the site fit the house."



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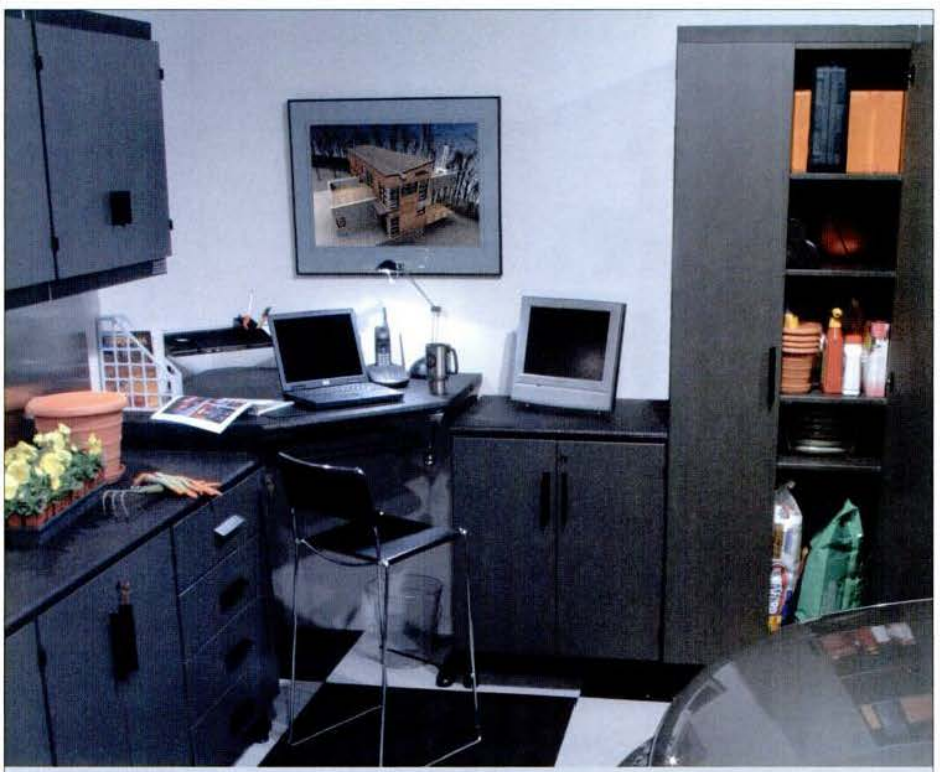

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Story by Daisann McLane | Illustration by Christoph Niemann

Why I Love Hotels

I recently bought a new mattress, a harrowing experience that involved lying down in embarrassing positions while an oily salesman hovered, earnestly sharing his thoughts about latex and coil counts. Exasperated and confused, I ended up buying blindly, by brand name. But I knew I'd be happy, for the label was the same one I'd noticed on the beds where I usually have my most pleasant dreams: the beds in hotel rooms.

My hotel mattress joins my hotel soap (a delicious-smelling lavender-oatmeal from Miracle Manor in Desert Hot Springs), my hotel bathrobe (a cotton *yukata* shamelessly stolen from the Tokyo Keio Plaza), my hotel-style magnifying mirror, and my hotel Chinese wooden hair comb (a gift of the Rui Jin Guest House in Shanghai).

Hotels, the good ones, strive to provide all the comforts of home. But the idea of home is mutable, and not always what you expect it to be. Over the past five years, I've stayed in hundreds of strange rooms around the world, and I've learned about comfort—and beautiful design—in ways I couldn't have imagined before my travels began. Were it not for hotel rooms, I wouldn't know about pillow-top mattresses; I would never have slept on 450-count Egyptian-cotton sheets or discovered the thrills of the automated Toto Washlet.

But staying in hotels has introduced me to more than the experience of high-end luxury. They've shown me a global smorgasbord of comforts large and small that make me smile. Linen towels instead of terrycloth, in Italy. Flower petals on my pillow, in Bali. A traditional *ondul* floor fitted with a heater that warmed my bare feet, in Korea.

A hotel room is a guilty pleasure. I inspect drawers, push buttons, and relish the opportunity to behave like a nosy houseguest without having to show up for meals or bring a gift basket. Instead, I pocket my own hostess gifts—unfamiliar shampoos, unusual fruits, slippers in cellophane wrappers. I enjoy collecting these things, but they're mere souvenirs compared to the real treasure I carry home from any hotel room: a new way of living, seeing, and making a home in the world.

Some of these ideas of home are not what I'd call sanctuaries. I have suffered nights in rooms with turquoise-and-orange motifs in pure polyester and in others where every inch of surface area is covered with paisley or lace. But even yucky hotel rooms have their positive points. First of all, they let you know, in case you ever had the slightest temptation to install a cone-shaped Philippe Starck knock-off aluminum sink in your bathroom, that you should get over it, fast. And, having helped you to recover your senses, the hideous hotel room gives you an extra bonus—you get to check out.

Those are worst-case scenarios. The best case is that I will find something that I think is so beautiful, so evocative, that I can't imagine leaving it behind—a color, a fabric, a fragrance. When this happens, I do everything I can to remember the shape, the smell, the idea. And I try to carry it with me in my memory, from hotel to home.

Sometimes, sitting in my Brooklyn apartment, I wonder if I love my home because it reminds me of a hotel, or if the hotel trappings that surround me here comfort me because they remind me of faraway places where I have felt so content. As I plop onto a couch covered with jewel-red raw-silk pillows like the ones that covered the bed in my pension in Luang Prabang, Laos, I can't tell.

I am not so in love with hotels that I lock my refrigerator with a key and keep it stocked with tiny bottles of Tanqueray and mini-canisters of Pringles. At least, not yet.

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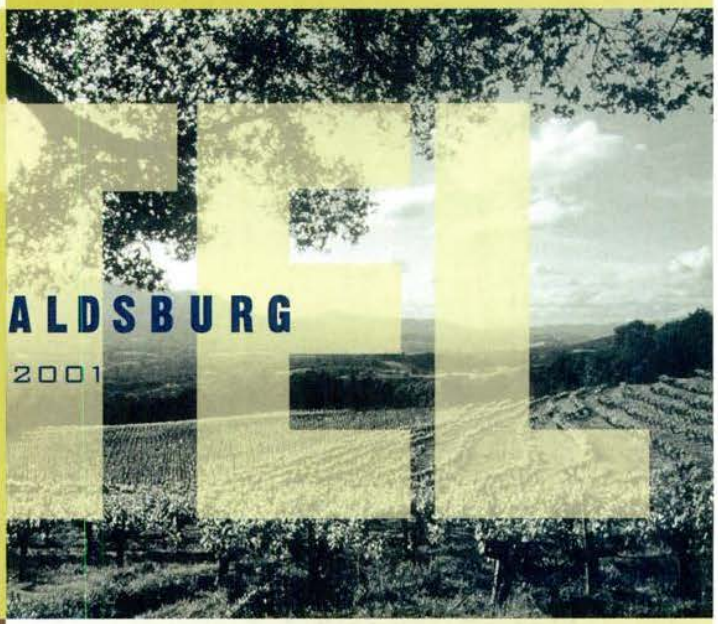

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Story by Robert Sullivan

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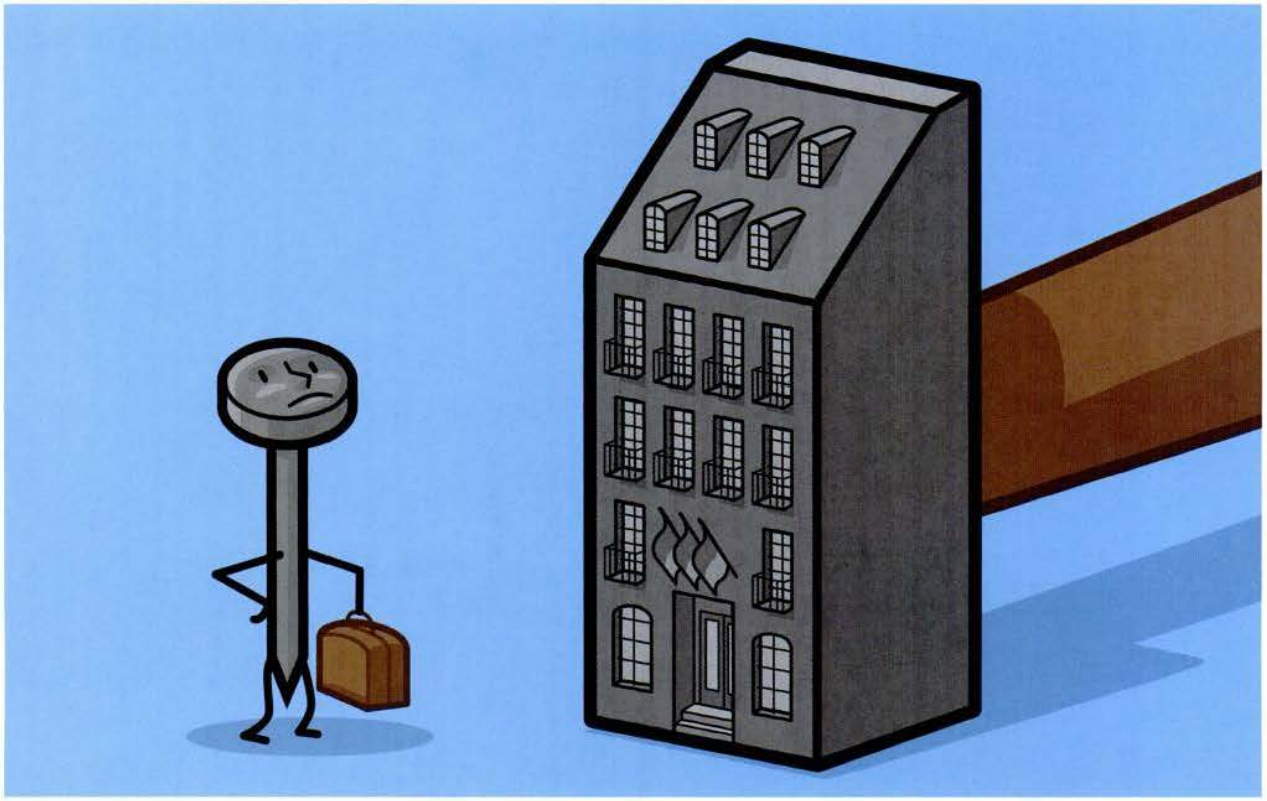


Why I Hate Hotels

When I say I hate hotels, I don't want any hotel to take it personally. I have met some really nice hotels—some of the nicest in the world, in fact. I'm the problem. I don't work well in hotels. I get anxious in the elevator on the way up to my room. I am already flustered when the bellhop shows me the extra towels.

Extra towels! What would I do with extra towels? There are several hundred towels in the bathroom already. Is there a track meet on the hall tonight? Oh, how I love the idea of Thoreau's little un-hotel-like cabin on Walden—everything he needed right there on the peaceful pond, and if he missed his friends, all he had to do was slip into town for a drink.

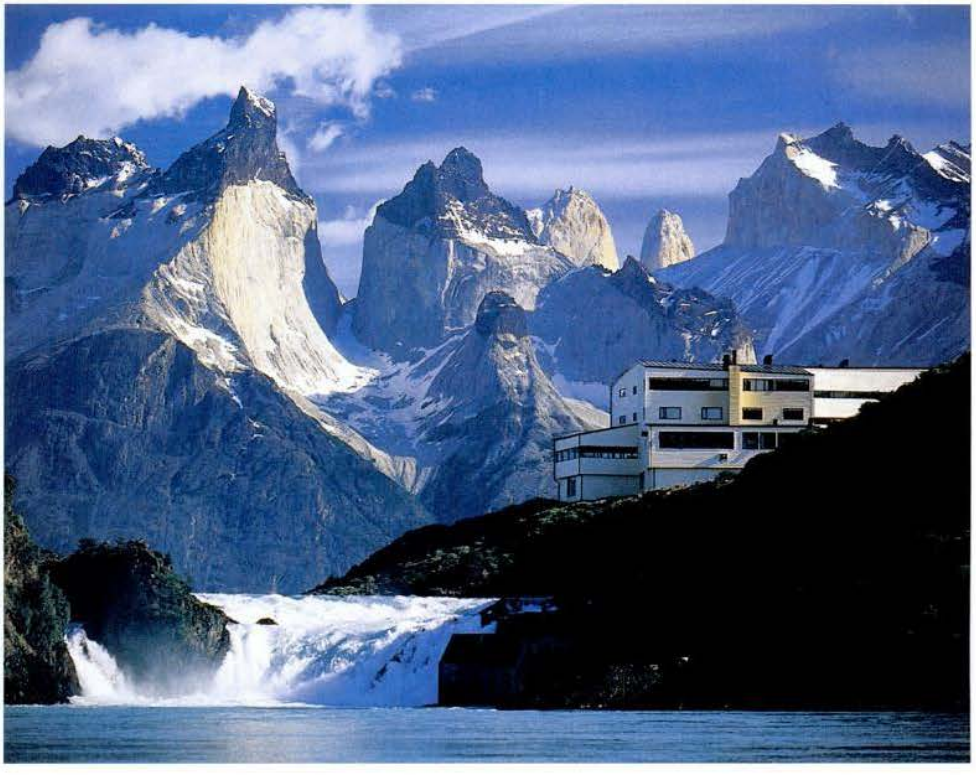
So I ask for the little rooms, so there will be less hotel room to freak me out. I'll even pay more for less, but I don't want to bother anybody. This, I know, is a deep psychological flaw (and it does not apply so much to my hotel feelings when I am traveling with my wife, whom I could learn to love a hotel for). Once I stayed at the Oriental Hotel in Bangkok, a hotel lover's utopia. I felt like Graham Greene when I checked in: sophisticated, worldly, cool, balding. But when I got to the room—which was a few hundred square feet smaller than the state of Montana—I became anxious. When the man outside the door told me that he would be there to assist me and me alone during my stay, I almost had a nervous breakdown. A servant! Picture me picturing him as he sat dozing in an ornate chair. I ended up spending most of my time checking to see if he needed anything. We nearly bowed each other into a pair of concussions.

Hotels emphasize the fact that I am away, not at home. They try to make me feel otherwise, but I don't buy their milled-soap con. I am not comforted by a situation where strangers wait until you are away to fold your clothes and implement a "turn down." I'm thinking early James Bond movies the whole time—the room must be bugged, rigged, booby-trapped.

To make the best of a strange situation, I follow a strange protocol: I don't unpack. I like to check into a room and not spread out. I stay out of the closets, which are just trying to lure you in anyway. Anything that I do take out of my suitcase, I leave in the open clearing that is traditionally the center of a hotel room. And I never watch hotel TV after noon. After noon, the TV becomes some kind of government-funded mind experiment; just the slightest glance means you'll be up all night, if you're me.

The only way I can coexist with hotels—the only way I can survive on the road, actually—is via the hotel lobby, which I love. The hotel lobby is all that a hotel can be: a base. In the lobby, I sit, read, drink coffee, have a beer, pretend I might actually be waiting for a friend. In the lobby, I feel a little bit more at home away from home. I hated the roaches in the coffee in Kiev but I loved having a beer in the lobby, which was cold and stark and Communist-era but somehow human.

Just so you know, my favorite lobby in the whole world is the one at the Hotel Okura in Tokyo—vast, with low chairs, low tables, and a cool jazz feel. The coffee was six dollars a cup, literally, and I drank enough so that I didn't sleep for about a year. And as I sipped, I just sat there and wrote a million illegibly jittery postcards and stopped and sipped more and looked around and smiled once in a while and almost forgot how much I hated to go upstairs and lock myself into a room.



Explora Hotels / Chile / www.explora.com
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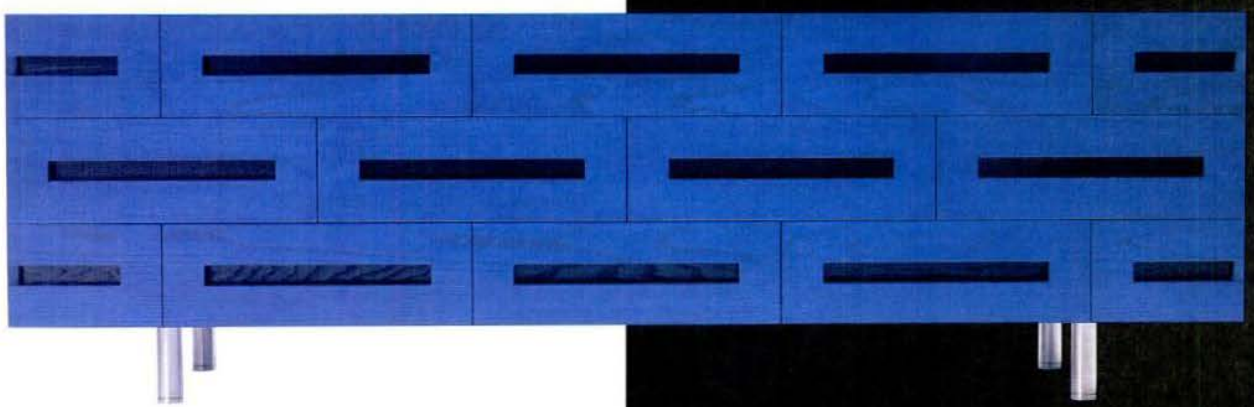
Super 8 Hotels

To help you make the most of your vacation, whether it be in the wilds of Chilean Patagonia or South Africa's Kruger National Park, or in bubbling metropolises like Los Angeles and New York, Dwell searched the globe for eight hotels where good design is just as important as a friendly wake-up call.

Costanoa / Pescadero, CA
www.costanoa.com
One of the greatest advantages of the Bay Area is just how easy it is to get away from. While local state parks offer an endless selection of camping options, visitors to Costanoa can expect much more than an open spit and a picnic table. The "luxury campground" offers a range of boarding options, from a traditional lodge to pitch-your-own-tent sites. Recently, ten Bay Area designers, including Celia Tejada, Charles de Lisle, and Marta Fry, were invited to redesign Costanoa's canvas tents in whatever manner they pleased. The results include Raymond Long's *Barbarella*-meets-IKEA Pop Tent (far right) and Edgar Blazona's Prefab Modular Dwelling (near right), which forgoes the tent and presents a Case Study–inspired portable bedroom.

BRICK



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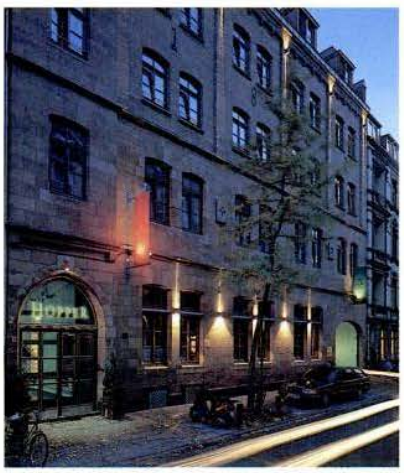
The Outpost / Kruger National Park, South Africa / www.theoutpost.co.za

In an early 1990s land claim, the Makuleke people regained possession of ancient tribal land in Africa's most renowned wildlife refuge, Kruger National Park. The clan then awarded an ecotourism concession to the Outpost, which hired Italian architect Enrico Daffonchio to design a minimal and refined take on the traditional game lodge. Twelve lavish guest suites, each with open terraces and expansive views of the Luvuvhu and Mutale River valleys, provide the ultimate in relaxation and game viewing.

Hotel Hopper Et Cetera / Cologne, Germany www.hopper.de

In 1894, the Cloister of the Merciful Montabaur Brothers first opened its doors to the public, providing alms and refuge for the needy. Although the building, like much of Cologne, suffered during World War II, the Brothers remained until 1974, when the property was sold to a private aid organization. In 1997, the 50 cloister cells were transformed into guest quarters featuring custom-built cherry furniture, marble bathrooms, and original artwork by contemporary artists.



Commune Boutique Hotel / Shuiguan, China www.commune.com.cn/english

The Commune by the Great Wall, the brainchild of nouveau-riche pro-capitalist Zhang Xin, is many things. In the shadow of the ancient wall, on three square miles of pristine woodland, are 11 homes and a central clubhouse designed by some of Asia's most renowned architects, like Shigeru Ban and Gary Chang. The structures function as elite hotel (each villa comes with its own butler), "living museum" of architecture, and showcase for what will become in the next phase an exclusive housing development. The highly acclaimed project puts a new face on modern architecture in a rapidly changing China.

PHOTOS BY SATOSHI ASAKAWA (COMMUNE BOUTIQUE HOTEL)

The Maritime Hotel / New York, NY
www.themaritimehotel.com
The Maritime's façade comes by its portholes honestly: It was originally built as a merchant-marine school. More bizarre than pretty, the grid of dots has stared enigmatically at Manhattan's West Side Highway since 1966. Having also served as a Covenant House and dormitory for Chinese diplomats, the building now houses a swank hotel, redone by Eric Goode and Sean MacPherson with Japanese-style interiors that nicely offset the somewhat brutal mid-century construction. Amenities include a soon-to-come "dramatic garden for dining and drinking."

PHOTOS BY GREGORY GOODE (MARITIME HOTEL)

Spaarne 8 & Park Tower Suite / Haarlem, The Netherlands / www.spaarne8.nl
If you dislike the anonymity of big hotels, then settle in to one of these little places in Haarlem (just 20 minutes from Amsterdam), designed by Janneke and Peter Schoenmaker. Spaarne 8 (pictured), a two-room hotel in a 1765 townhouse, is a seamless mixture of fine antiques and refined modern design; the even more sequestered one-room Park Tower is an opulent space on the ground floor of an 1870s home, replete with Italian granite, marble surfaces, and Danish furnishings. With museums and shops within walking distance, you can pretend you just moved into a brand-new neighborhood.

The Crescent / Los Angeles, CA
www.beverlycrescenthotel.com
California neocolonial exteriors can be forgiven only when they hide an indoor-outdoor courtyard where you can have drinks at attractive tables and benches or, if it's a breezy evening, sit by the fire. The Crescent, designed by Dodd Mitchell Design, is thus graced. With in-room spa services, a library of DVDs and CDs, and cooking classes available, you might not even have time to visit local architectural attractions like Schindler's King's Road House or Gehry's new Walt Disney Concert Hall downtown.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS PAGANELLI (CRESCENT HOTEL)

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Story by Jonathon Keats

PHOTO COURTESY OF FOUR SEASONS SCOTTSDALE AT TROON NORTH

A Condo for All Seasons

Building a vacation home may never be as easy as booking a hotel room. But leave it to the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts to make the process as stress-free as taking a weeklong holiday.

In fact, if you purchase a private residence at the Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North near Phoenix, Arizona, you'll be given a casita in the adjacent Four Seasons resort for a three- to five-days consultation with designers who are expert at keeping decisions about everything from landscaping to sofa fabric as untaxing as choosing a spa treatment. One year later, provided that your check clears, your three- to five-bedroom faux pueblo will be complete, with a bottle of Veuve Clicquot in the Sub-Zero.

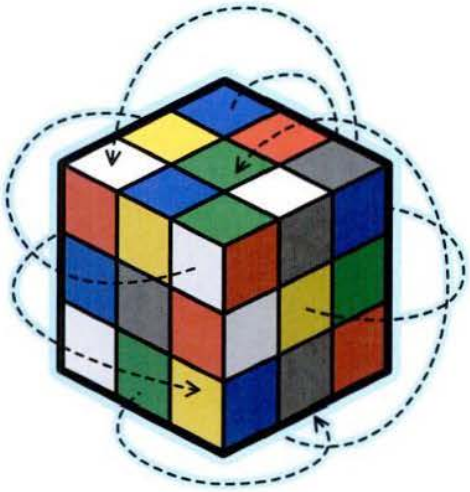
Ever since Eloise occupied the Plaza in the 1950s, people have fantasized about playing house in a luxury hotel. High-end hotel chains have responded in recent years by offering condominiums, for outright purchase or time-share ownership, in major cities such as New York, as well as in vacation communities like Lake Tahoe. The Four Seasons has followed suit, offering condos to buy in San Francisco and a choice of part or sole ownership of a residence in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The Scottsdale private residences are definitely on the upmarket side. Buying a 3,500- to 5,700-square-foot adobe-style house on a minimum half acre of land will cost you anywhere from $1.8 million to $3.3 million. For those of you who aren't up for a major investment, you can always buy into partial ownership of one of the resort's more condo-like villas.

Developer John J. Pappas, mastermind of the 65-acre Four Seasons gated community of private residences, is confident that the 51 planned custom homes will attract the right clientele: retiring baby boomers eager to purchase convenience at any price. "The Four Seasons customer looking to buy a second or third home doesn't want the hassle of interviewing contractors or the worry that some carpetbagger will bring down property values by putting in something inappropriate next door," he says. But the development's architecture, blending Anasazi, Pueblo, and Spanish colonial influences—"Adobes don't try to call attention to themselves," explains Ron Brissette of Brissette Architects, one of three architects who works with the Four Seasons Private Residences—feels somewhat more faux than five-star.

Coordinating a team of local architects and interior design by Wiseman & Gale, Pappas will be in a position to control building quality and to optimize view corridors. Four Seasons micromanagement has no limit: During construction, even the port-a-potties will be painted pueblo beige.

Of course, even the most high-end planned community runs the risk of promoting too much uniformity. While consistent use of traditional materials and indigenous forms will ensure that the desert landscape doesn't become stylistically cluttered, just keeping one's bearings within the adobe monotony of the Four Seasons complex may require a map and compass.

Illustration by Christoph Niemann



Beating the Minibar

It's sad, but even in the modern world, getting into your hotel's minibar usually means racking up a bigger room charge than Russell Crowe on a Down Under bender. For those of us with deprived travel budgets and/or depraved principles, here are some ways to reduce cost:

1. Avoid hotels with minibars altogether. Instead, opt for the hotel's Budweiser-loving little brother, the motel, whose minibar is just an empty mini fridge. Now you can B.Y.O.B., no one is watching you, and you might meet someone special at the ice machine.

2. When you arrive at a hotel with a minibar, open it right away and choose the most desirable items therein. Hide them in your suitcase, and ring the front desk. Say something along the lines of "I'm flabbergasted, but the Hennessey is missing." Depending on the outcome of said conversation, reward yourself with one on ice. Do not repeat.

3. Try to schedule your cocktail hour before the liquor stores close, so you can restock before the maid appears in the morning. This may work for candy and chips, too. Restocking with reasonably priced substitutes is a decent way to save a few dollars.

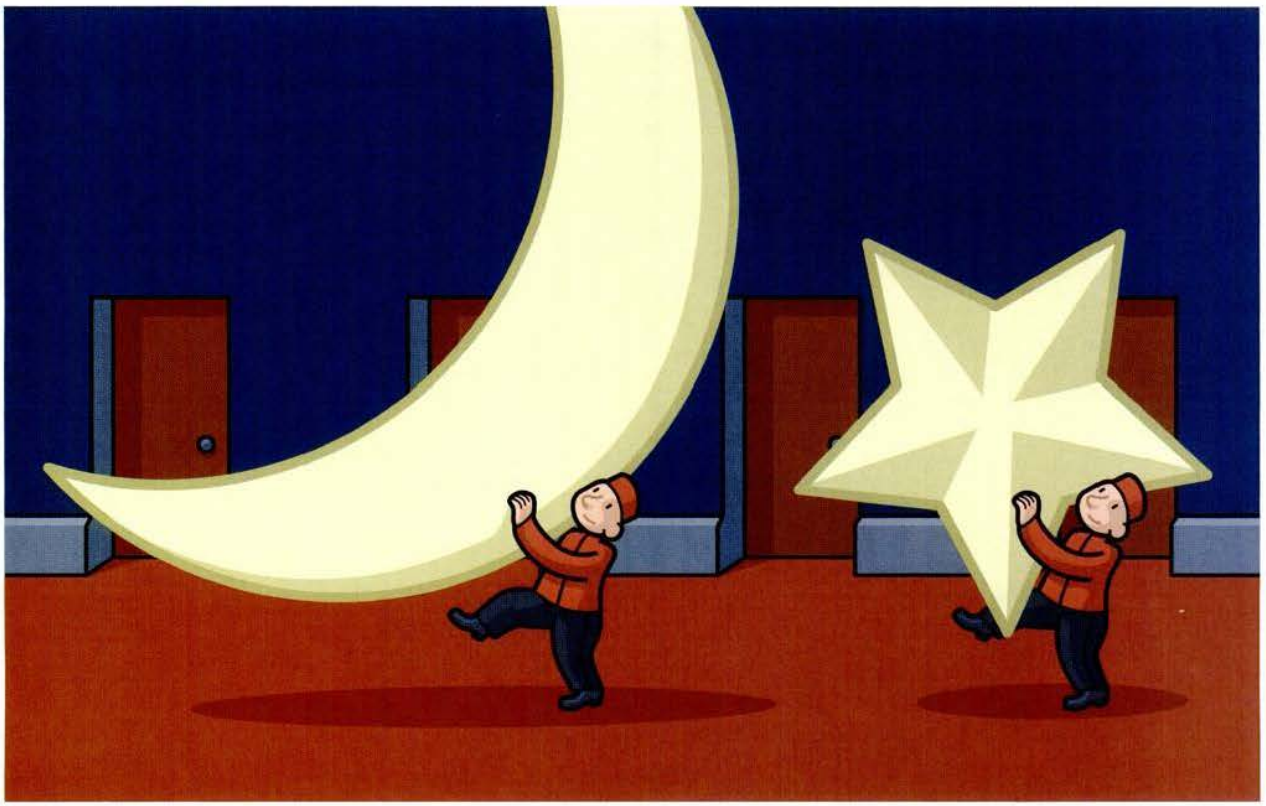
4. Remember what you did back in high school? Keep the bottle, change the contents: Use tap water for vodka, brew tea for whiskey, etc. Food coloring can be extremely useful. Partial refilling may even go unnoticed.

5. Abstain, abstain, abstain.

Note: The views expressed in this column are not necessarily those advocated by Dwell.

Story by Heather Bradley

Illustration by Christoph Niemann



Whatever You Want, Whenever You Want It

I once went to Vegas on the spur of the moment. After losing the requisite $200 on blackjack and witnessing three bachelorette parties grind away on the dance floor to "Push It," I retired to my hotel room at the Hard Rock, rang up the concierge, and demanded a chocolate milkshake, a vodka martini, a bowl of premium cashews, and an in-room pedicure. It all appeared in ten minutes. Still on a high from that stunning display of customer service, I decided to investigate the various types of hotel services, from the sublime to the ridiculous, and discover the extremes of modern hospitality.

At the Standard, a swanked-out Motel 6 for aspiring movie-industry chicks and guys who look like *American Idol*'s Ryan Seacrest, the real action is in the minibar. Not only do they provide several varieties of energy drink, premium sake, mini cans of Sapporo, and an ample supply of condoms, there's also a veritable hangover recovery kit, with aromatic candle, Mr. Bubble bubble bath, cucumber lotion, and Rescue water. It's not subtle, but you don't stay in West Hollywood for subtlety.

No matter where you stay, room-service cuisine tends to underwhelm, but some establishments go the extra mile—literally. According to the management staff at the Mandarin Oriental Bangkok, a frequent VIP loved a regional dish—rice congee and *pa tong ko* (fried dough)—but would only eat it from a certain food stall in the market district of Bangkok. Every morning, room service sent someone out to find that particular stall, score the congee, and serve it to him in bed. In a less exotic but equally heroic display of customer service, the W New York Union Square staff fetched a Filet-O-Fish for Lenny Kravitz at 3 a.m., tartar sauce and all.

But at the W chain, you don't have to be Lenny Kravitz to get treated like a dreadlocked rock god. Every single guest room has a "whatever/whenever" button on its phone, and they really mean it. According to their PR agency, at one undisclosed W hotel, a woman's fantasy of greeting her husband naked in a tub of melted chocolate was made a reality by a resourceful staff. In another bizarre incident, a woman requested—and received—dry ice at 2 a.m. (not for an Alice Cooper–style rager, as one would assume, but rather for shipping her breast milk home). And at the W Chicago, a man transformed his suite into a replica of the Nordstrom shoe department (200 pairs in all) as a birthday gift for his wife. Gentlemen, take note.

Schrager hotel rooms are ridiculously small—it's like staying in a diorama. They clearly don't want you up in the rooms, they want you down in the lobby ordering $15 apple martinis and pretending you don't care that Enrique Iglesias just arrived. But at the Hudson, if you rent the coveted Apartment Suite on the 24th floor, you get access to your very own private 2,000-square-foot P. Diddy–style party terrace. Tented for chilly nights and fully catered for your party needs, the terrace offers panoramic views of Manhattan and the Hudson River. Inside, Sub-Zero fridges, ivy-covered glass ceilings, and the soothing satisfaction of knowing that Mr. Combs partied here can be yours for the paltry sum of $5,000 a night.

At the Halekulani in Waikiki, Hawaii, nightly turn-down service yields a personalized note card and fresh papaya. On the last night of your stay, the staff draws a lavish bubble bath, spells out "Aloha" in rose petals on the floor, pumps up the smooth jazz, and leaves a tray of French tea cookies and a snifter of Courvoisier perched by the giant hot tub. And you can tell your significant other that you orchestrated the whole thing.

Celebrate the Hotel Collection by Charter Club® at Macy's in San Francisco

The first 20 readers to email events@dwellmag.com will be invited to join Dwell's editor-in-chief, Allison Arieff, and designer Colum McCartan for drinks and a discussion on design featuring the Hotel Collection at Macy's Union Square store in San Francisco this October!

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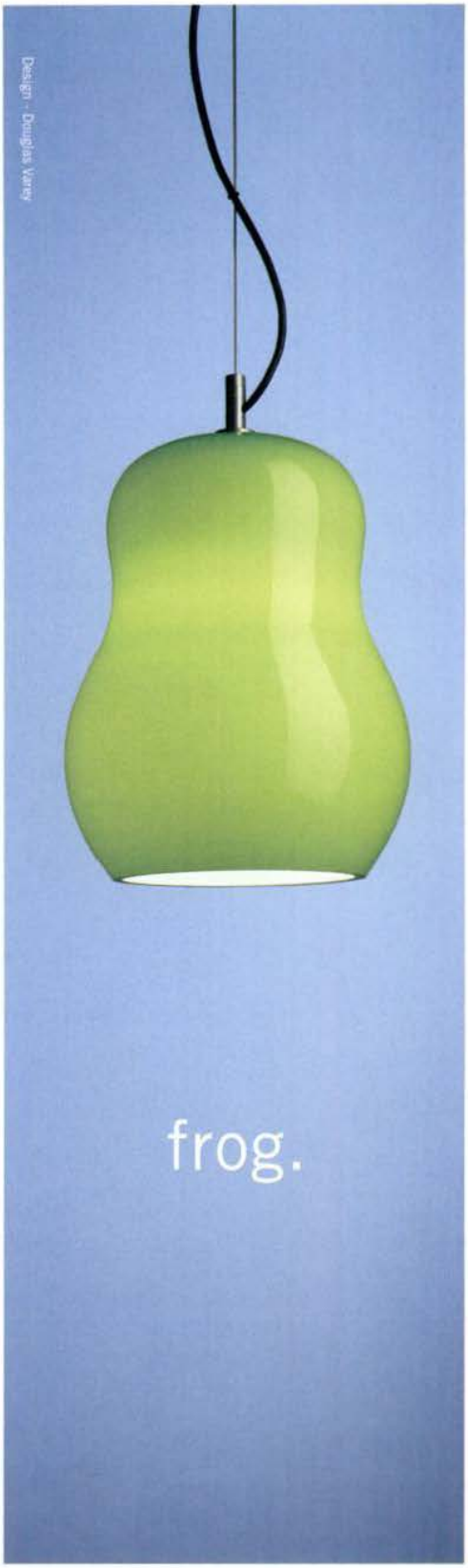

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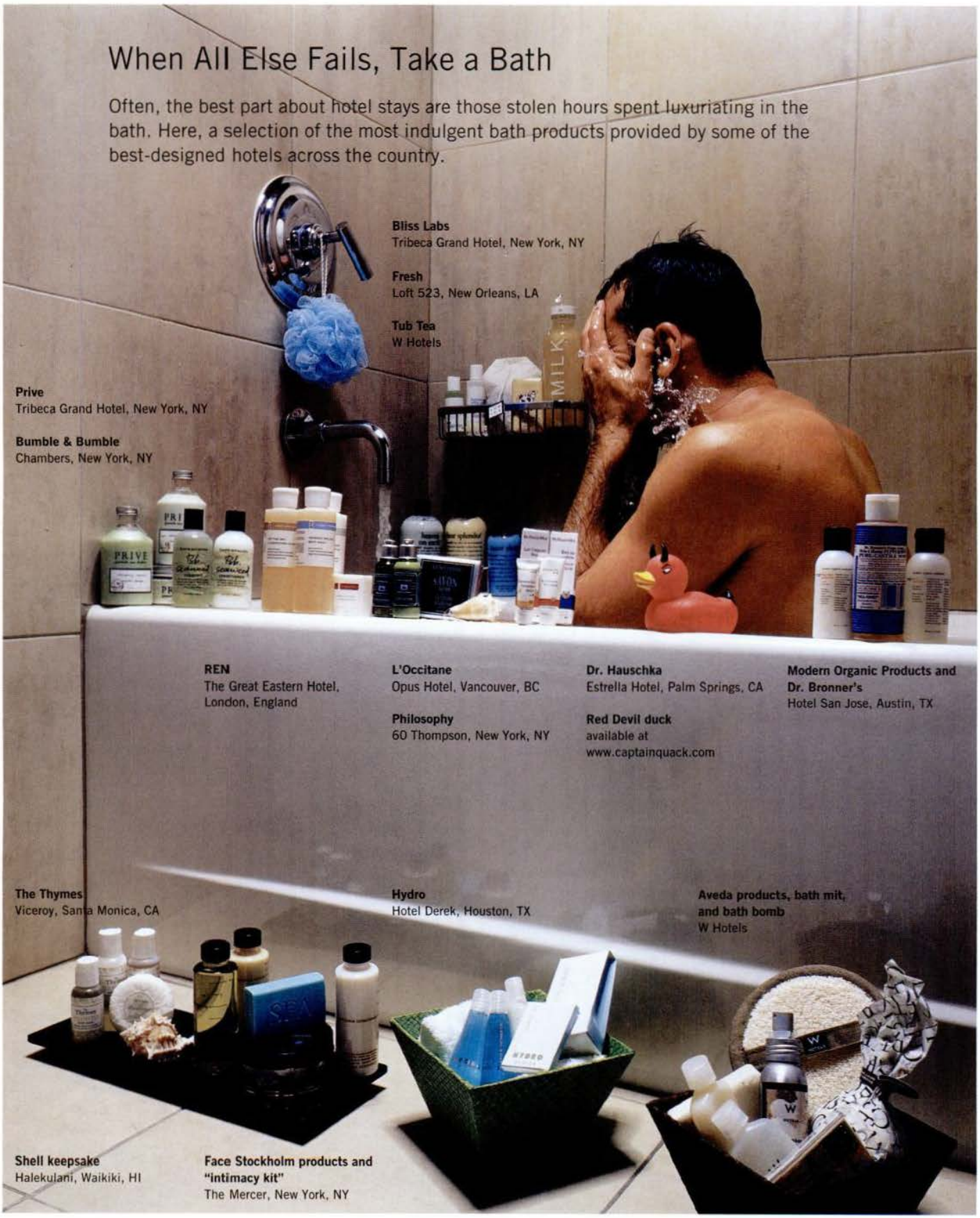
When All Else Fails, Take a Bath

Often, the best part about hotel stays are those stolen hours spent luxuriating in the bath. Here, a selection of the most indulgent bath products provided by some of the best-designed hotels across the country.



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Tub Tea
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Prive
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Modern Organic Products and Dr. Bronner's
Hotel San Jose, Austin, TX

The Thymes
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Hydro
Hotel Derek, Houston, TX

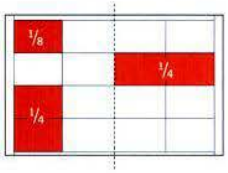
Aveda products, bath mit, and bath bomb
W Hotels

Shell keepsake
Halekulani, Waikiki, HI

Face Stockholm products and "intimacy kit"
The Mercer, New York, NY

STYLIST: AMY DENEBEIM / ARTIST UNTIED. MODEL: JOHN FERRARE / LOOK TALENT. LOCATION: W HOTEL SAN FRANCISCO

Welcome to Dwell magazine's Marketplace, a dedicated print storefront featuring specific products, product lines, materials, and services. Formatted 1/8 page or 1/4 page, four-color ads are available in the formats shown below.



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Contact

Tracey Lasko
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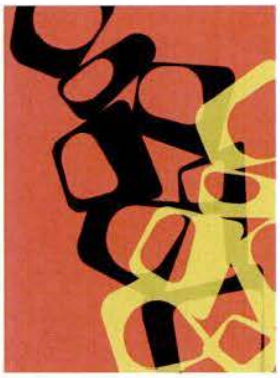

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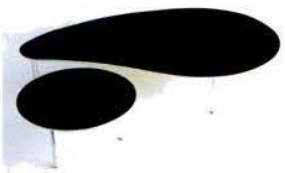

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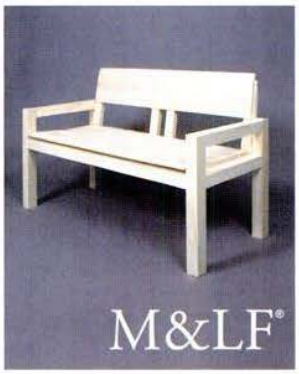

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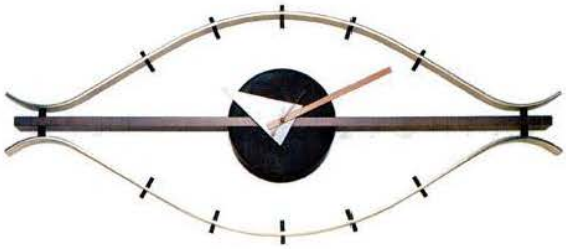

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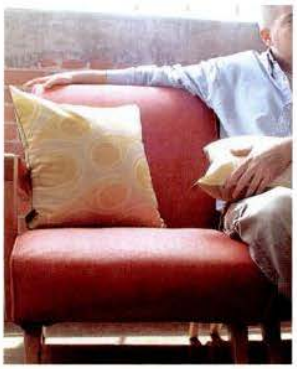

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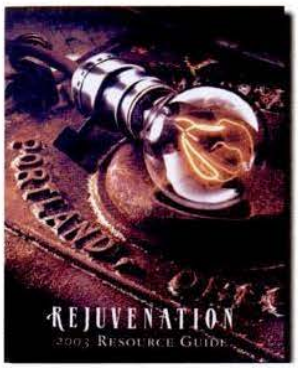

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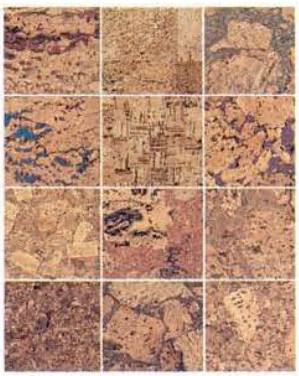

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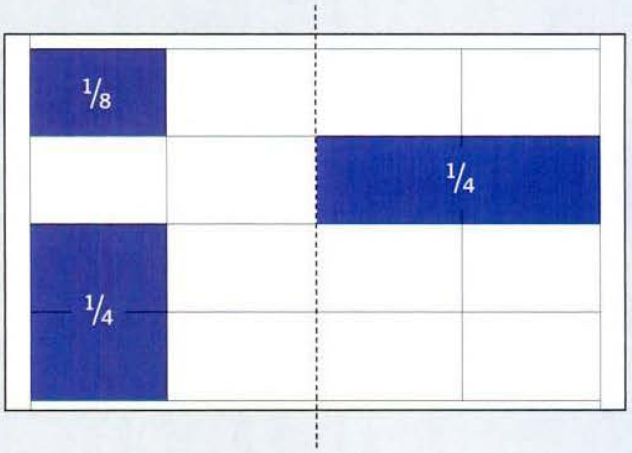

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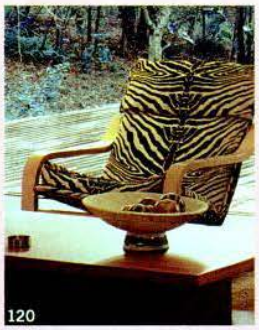
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License to Build

The bachelor pad may have grown obsolete after the '70s, but it's making a comeback of sorts in the western reaches of Austria, where architect Oskar Leo Kaufmann created a strictly male enclave for his friend and neighbor Sigi Innauer, a nightclub owner.

Innauer is a former hot-dog skier with a 1960s Alfa Romeo and an Audi coupe parked out front. Everything inside his house is equally high on testosterone and low on maintenance, calling only for the occasional hose-down. The James Bond–ian client gave his architect carte blanche. "He trusted me," says Kaufmann.

Kaufmann is well-known for his modern prefab houses, but this project was custom-designed from start to finish. "It was about spaces and creating different atmospheres," says the 34-year-old architect, who used a shell of cast concrete covered with perforated stainless steel and large openings of glass. "We wanted everything to be really raw, strong, and hard, in a way brutal," he says.

Accordingly, the bedrooms designed for Innauer's sons, ages 17 and 22, are small and dormitory-style. Bathrooms are open alcoves without doors or partitions, further enhancing the spartan theme. And there's an indestructible room in the basement—an Austrian version of the all-American rumpus room—where Innauer's sons can play soccer and listen to loud music.

Construction was finished last fall, but the Innauer house still awaits the right fireplace—a crucial ingredient in any proper wolf den. It was the only part of the design that the client wouldn't leave up to the architect.

"He would bring me little sketches and I'd say, 'I hate that,'" says Kaufmann. "Then he would come back with something else. It's become our running joke." ■

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