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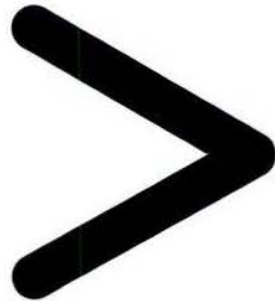


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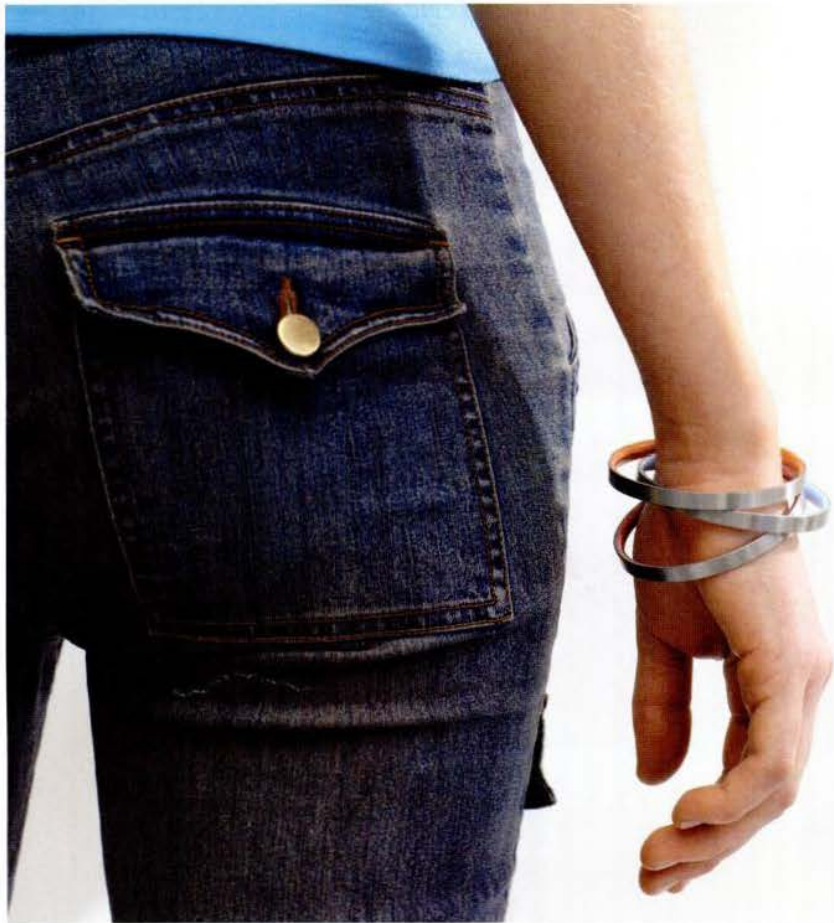
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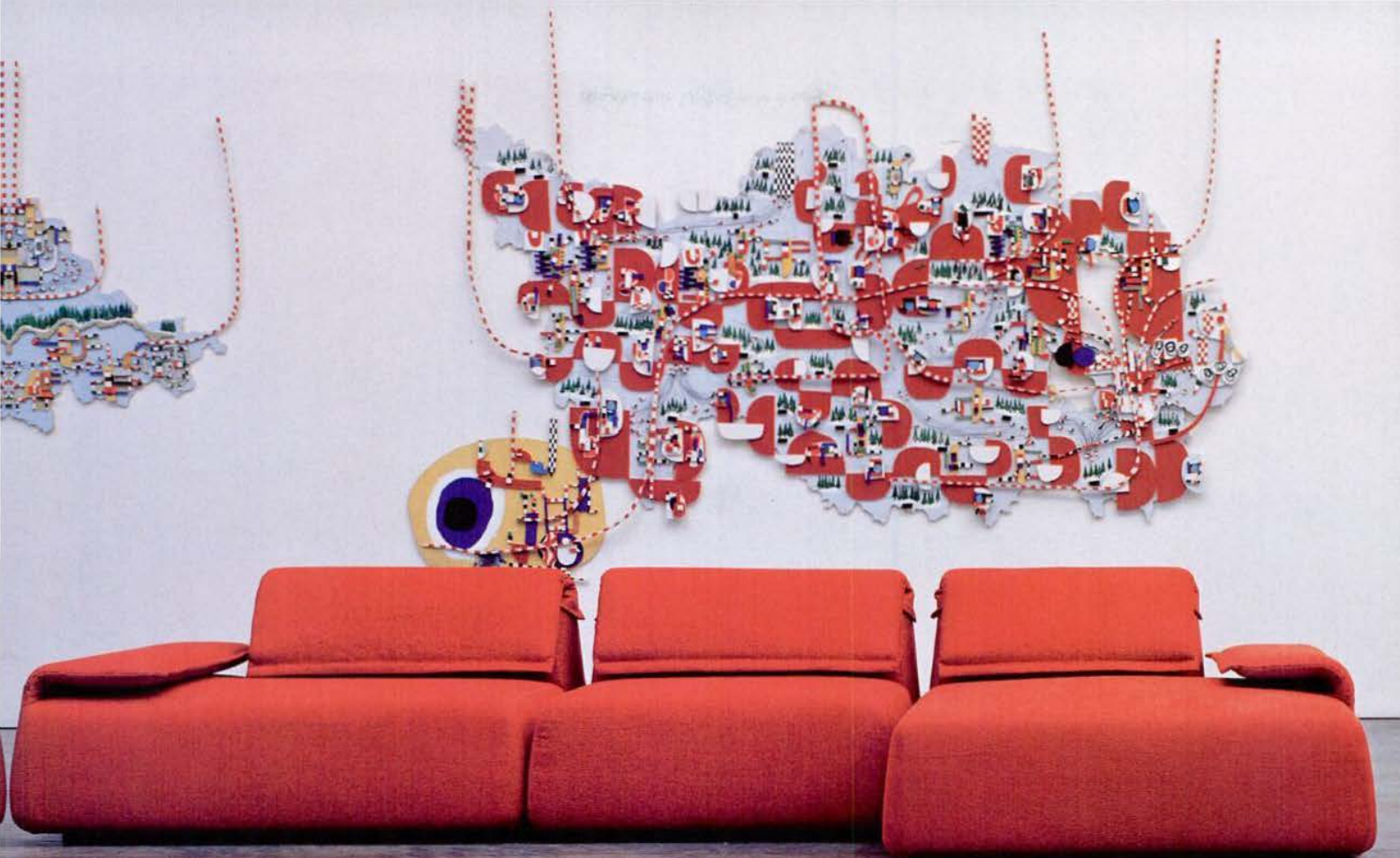


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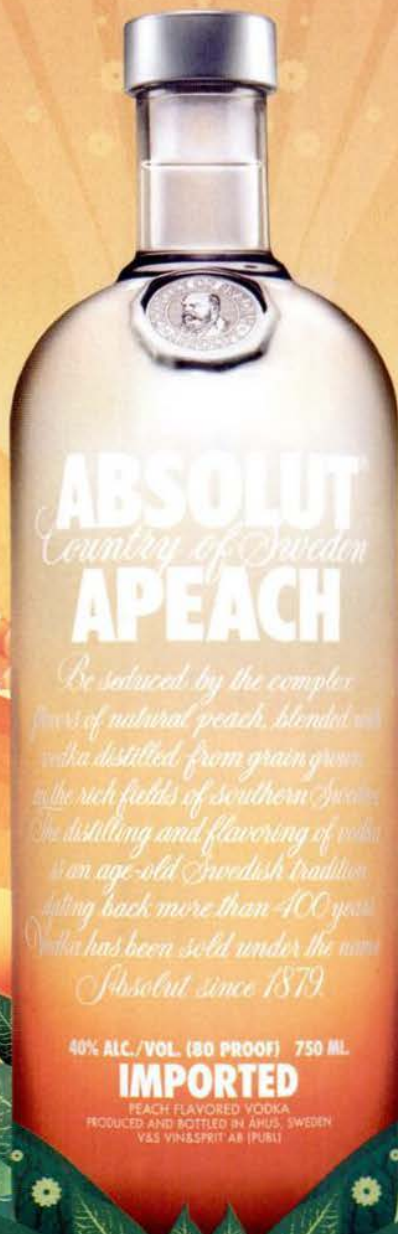
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“People think I can’t be doing good work because I’m not stressed out. . . . ‘Oh, he *surfs.*’”—Craig Steely

Editor’s Note

We hate to brag, but our generally excellent staff are the happy recipients of a National Magazine Award.



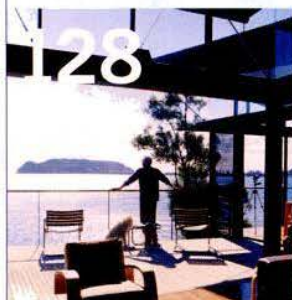
Liquid Assets

For the lucky souls whose homes float, Styx’s mantra “come sail away” isn’t just wishful thinking.

Story by James Nestor

July/August 05 Contents: Modern Waterfront Homes

Dwellings



Inclined to Relax

The ocean view from this Australian hilltop house is breathtaking, and so is the hike required to see to it.

Story by Davina Jackson /
Photos by Richard Powers



Go With the Flow

The nearby volcano may erupt again some day, but this couple is happy to enjoy their Hawaiian home one day at a time.

Story by Sam Grawe /
Photos by Linny Morris
Cunningham



Off the Beaten Path

When it comes to island retreats, Minnesotans Bruce Golob and Jean Freeman prefer Madeline to Martha.

Story by Eric Lawlor /
Photos by Chad Holder

Cover: Two Black Sheds, page 148

Photo by Chad Holder

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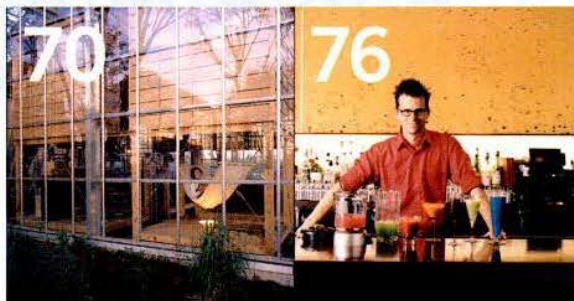
Letters

In the Modern World

Fantastic exhibits, covetable products, intellectual beach reading, and some cute additions to your summer wardrobe.

My House

In collaboration with the architectural firm Concept, Danish cinematographer Erik Zappon and his wife create an Oscar-worthy vacation retreat.



Off the Grid

People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, which probably isn't an issue when the glass house is a commune.

Dwell Reports

Margaritas, anyone? Our expert mixologist has his finger on the pulse of which blender will deliver the perfect summer cocktail.



Nice Modernist

Traci Rose Rider and the Emerging Green Builders aim to construct something more solid than buildings for young architects and designers—connections.



Conversation

Over breakfast with designer Vladimir Kagan, the talk is of longtime love, the importance of craft, and the intrigue of sexy table legs.

What We Saw

Our editors report back on the latest and greatest designs from the Milan Furniture Fair (a.k.a. Salone Internazionale del Mobile).



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Dwell Labs

There is a (perfect) light at the end of the tunnel—or, rather, a mouse click away on your Web browser.

Outside

For those seeking refuge from an interminable game of Marco Polo, these four pool houses provide an artful escape.

Storage 101

Are the cute little containers purchased to contain your things beginning to outnumber the things themselves? Here's help from the experts.

Sourcing

If you liked it, you'll probably like its website, too. Here's how to find all the stuff you dig in the pages of Dwell.

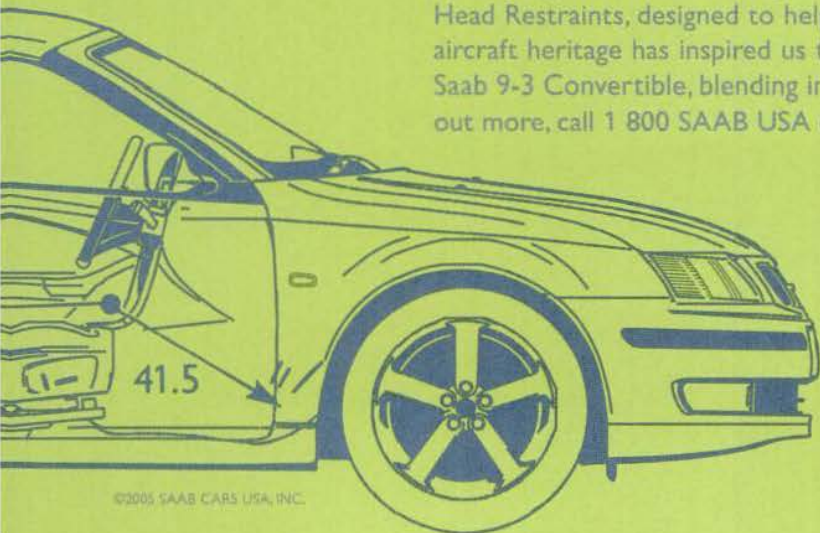
Houses We Love

Instead of bringing the house to the water, in Baja's arid wine country, these architects brought the water to the house.



Finally, a luxury car designed to protect you from blending in.

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Your prefab issue (April/May 2005) was amazing on so many levels. It has given me more inspiration than I've had in years. With the likes of *Trading Spaces* and *Dwell*, the years of being looked down on as a builder/contractor are disappearing and even seem hard to explain to people now. I am telling all of my clients about your magazine. I'm also getting them to sign up for a free issue and making it required reading before taking on new projects.

Thad Lucken
Detroit, Michigan

It would be difficult for most people to get approval to construct one of the prefab homes featured in your April/May 2005 issue. In many parts of the country, developments are ruled by quasigovernments called homeowners associations that have architectural review boards to approve (or disapprove) of every house plan. I've even encountered them in rural areas, in "developments" that were just a collection of a dozen or so five-acre lots. There are strict regulations on acceptable colors, styles, and materials. I've had to back out of several deals because it became clear that the architectural review board didn't like some very fundamental design elements. For people who want to try cutting-edge designs, the only option, unfortunately, seems to be to buy agricultural land far away from any urban area.

The first step to get better home designs is to encourage citizens to mount a revolution against restrictive CC&Rs [covenants, conditions, and restrictions] enforced by homeowners associations. Imagine not being able to paint your house an unapproved color—yet this is how the majority of Americans in new homes live today. In some states, like California, if your homeowners association doesn't like the way your TV antenna is installed (for example), they can even foreclose on your home without a court hearing.

Robert Swirsky
North Lake Buena Vista, Florida

"How to Play FlatPak" (April/May 2005) starts by saying, "If you have more than a casual interest in modern architecture and less than a six-figure salary, your dream home might just remain that," but then goes on to describe the FlatPak House as a prefabricated house system for ordinary pocketbooks. I wonder which ordinary, less-than-six-figure-income pocketbook the article pertains to. By my calculation, the house that Charlie Lazor built would be way beyond most families in this income bracket.

If you live in Minneapolis and could buy a nice piece of land for \$5,000, the house would cost over \$370,000, and if you were unfortunate

enough to live on one of the coasts, it would cost over half a million without the land. That doesn't seem affordable to me or probably to anyone without a trust fund.

Rick De Coyte
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Upon opening the April/May issue of Dwell, I was excited to read about the prefabricated homes and their potential. Affordable modern homes? Sign me up! I was dismayed, however, to learn that Charlie Lazor's FlatPak House was \$150 to \$200 a square foot. That means a modest house of 1,500 square feet would cost about \$262,000, and that doesn't include the land purchase or architect fees!

I think your magazine is the best on the market right now, but for a blue-collar worker and schoolteacher, the pages are still castles in the clouds. Prefab's promise isn't quite delivering just yet.

Jessica Bach
Tarpon Springs, Florida

It might not fit into the purist form of prefab housing, but I'm surprised that *Dwell* has never featured the building *Habitat*, built for the Montreal Expo in 1967. I think that this condominium development shows great vision by Moshe Safdie. If you see the documented history of how it was built, it shows early prefab construction. Considering that today it is difficult to build a prefab home even with all of the materials and an abundance of designers and architects available to us, it is quite an accomplishment.

Andrew Ferguson
Scarborough, Ontario

Editors' Note: We are big fans of Moshe Safdie and the Montreal Expo and, in fact, briefly covered *Habitat* as part of "The Electronic Cottage 101" in February 2001. We also featured Zvi Hecker's *Beehive* housing in Israel, based on similar concepts, in our December 2000 issue ("Unorthodox Architecture/Orthodox Lives").

As a new subscriber, I wanted to thank you for creating a magazine that celebrates and promotes modern home design. The simplicity and elegance of your featured layouts is a refreshing departure from the cluttered, gaudy displays that are passed off as good design in other magazines. Keep it up.

Brian M. Starns
Portland, Oregon

I would love to see an article about places of worship, regardless of religion, using modern ▶



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architecture. It would be interesting to see how a centuries-old tradition could adapt through interior/exterior design.

Calee Lee
Rancho Santa Margarita, California

My wife, Laura, and I have worked on sustainable economic development issues for the U.S. Department of State for the past ten years and we feel especially connected to your magazine for its support of modern architecture and sustainability. In your April/May 2005 issue, several readers wrote critical letters to the editor about the Dwell Home II, but it irked me that they did not offer any solutions. So, on their behalf, we offer up our postage-stamp-sized lot, zoned multifamily, in Hurricane Gulch, a particularly windy and wet neighborhood of Sausalito, California. You can ride your bike most anywhere, and the lot is within walking distance to the community shuttle, commuter bus, and ferry. We are moving to Brazil in May to continue our environmental and economic development work, so whatever and whenever you decide (or not) to take on the lot would be up to you.

James Wiggins
Evanston, Illinois

Editors' Note: *Thanks for your support—we just might take you up on your offer!*

Thank you for the recent article about Alison and Peter Smithson's Hexenhaus ("Bewitched," April/May 2005). Their work should be more widely known, both the good and bad. The Economist Building is possibly the most sensitively scaled and sited high-rise building extant. Their Fonthill folly is an early example of modern green building, and an exceptionally fine small house. I had the pleasure of meeting Alison in 1988 and spoke with her several times during the course of writing my graduate thesis on their work. They never took a project at face value. There were always bigger issues to investigate, even when they were rearranging their furniture. Not a life everyone can live, but it suited them and produced some great thinking and good buildings.

David Locicero
Emeryville, California

I have a couple of comments on the article on the Tait house ("Tait Modern," April/May 2005): Nice house, descriptive article and photos, but regarding the sidebar, "Nice Curves," the assertion that the "concave forms are integral to the dwelling's self-sufficiency" is hyperbole. The concave shape is attractive, stylish, and likely feels good in the space, but a simple shed would

function equally well in collecting rainwater and shading. Overstating it in this way sounds a lot like real-estate-magazine advertising writing. I expect more from your magazine.

John Craycroft
Santa Cruz, California

I've been a subscriber since the beginning and have wanted to write you for a long time. Reading Dwell for the past four and a half years has changed me into a modernist through and through. My friends are sick of me preaching to them about the beauty and benefits of modern living, though I have converted several of them. We all love the articles and read each issue cover to cover so as not to miss anything. At 17, it's all dreams, but someday I might have my house pictured in the magazine. I want to be an art teacher so I know my budget will definitely be limited, but I'm always inspired by your articles on urban housing. I just wish you did more in the Midwest!

Hannah van Loon
Batavia, Illinois

A few points in your article "Trading Shingles for Shrubs" (March 2005) deserve further comment. Your diagram of a green roof omits a significant component of that roof: insulation. The green roof of my house pictured in your article has six inches of extruded polystyrene (Styrofoam) placed above the roof slab to store heat and moderate inside temperatures throughout the year. Green roofs can help keep a building cooler during the summer but, since wet soil is a conductor rather than an insulator, do little to retain heat in the winter.

Green roofs need not be as costly as your article indicates. While I saved money by doing the planting myself, the additional expense for my "intensive" green roof, including providing a heavier structure, was less than \$10 a square foot, not the \$40 a square foot or more your reporter states. As for the waterproof-membrane roofing, which, as you correctly note, is well protected from the elements in a green roof, I expect mine to last almost indefinitely, not the 40 years Mr. Liefhebber estimates.

G. Mackenzie Gordon
Lakeville, Connecticut

As a single man and environmentalist, I see my fair share of the world in small terms. With all the working and going out I do, my place seems more like a nest for the night. I was happy to see the article and pictures of a small apartment in a recent issue ("One Room Fits All," January/February 2005). I love using a room for three or four purposes, like home office/kitchen/storage ►

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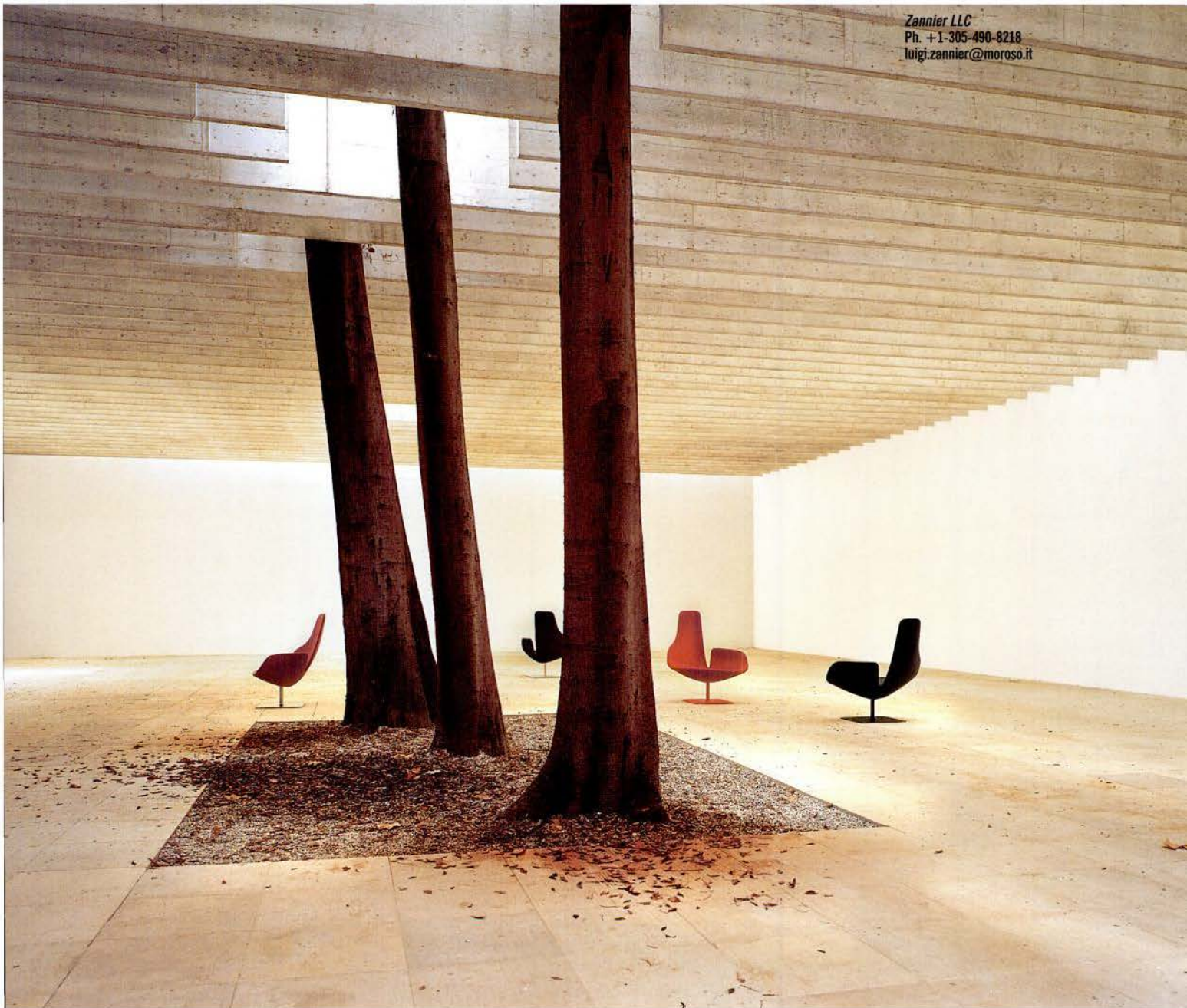
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Fjord design Patricia Urquiola. The picture was taken inside the "Nordic Countries Pavillon" at Giardini di La Biennale di Venezia.

MOROSO 

Modern Firsts: The Lovell House, a.k.a. Health House, designed by Austrian émigré architect Richard Neutra, was the first house to utilize a steel frame. Built in Los Angeles between 1927 and 1929, the “floating” house hovers above a steep ravine. Its steel planks bridge the street with the entryway and cradle a basement-level swimming pool. Its unique structure spurred a flurry of home designs that used steel-frame construction and proved to be a telling precursor of the architectural profession’s embrace of more modern building materials in the years to come.



or bedroom/office/entertainment/storage. As I near age 55 and look ahead to going into senior housing, I look for more ideas about our small spaces.

Loren Fay
Albany, New York

In addition to my interest in architecture, I am also a dedicated car enthusiast. For this reason, I’d like to see some garages covered in the future. I don’t know if anyone has applied modern design to the garage, but if it has been done I’d love to see it.

Eric Hill
Salt Lake City, Utah

I saw the brief article about the DASH school in Miami (“Education by Design,” April/May 2005). Very cool and a cool website too! I thought you might be interested in our school, the Denver School of Science & Technology, which, like DASH, is very cool indeed. We have a different mission, however: to be the premier public high school for science, math, and technology in the state and to serve underrepresented populations. It is not a magnet school, and all students, regardless of academic preparation, are allowed to participate in a lottery that determines admissions.

The school opened in August 2004 for ninth grade with the most ethnically and economically diverse student population in the state. In order to attract this diverse population, we decided to rethink the whole “science school” mentality, and decided to embark on a design process we called “degeekification.” We actually interviewed the client (students), held focus groups, etc. The result is one of the first purpose-built wireless schools in the U.S. (every student gets a laptop), a school-as-lab model (all the guts of the building are exposed), lots of windows, and all kinds of things you won’t find in a typical high school.

David Ethan Greenberg
Denver, Colorado

Your update article on the House of Earth + Light (“Love’s Labors Found,” June 2005) highlights why some contemporary/modern homes have gotten a bad reputation. A modern home should be comfortably livable in the climate it is designed for, and not a monument to an architect’s whimsy. I partially blame the Phoenix city or county building code engineers for approving Marwan Al-Sayed’s design. Adding additional air-conditioning capacity to a “modern” house without thermal-pane windows, adequate insulation, etc. is like trying to cool the desert! You might do better in a tent.

Howard M. Whitfield
Jamul, California

Cheers to Lisa Sette and Peter Shikany for rescuing the House of Earth + Light. Their common-sense approach was both reasonable and sound. The result speaks for itself. I read the original article about the house in the first issue of Dwell (“Labor of Love,” October 2000), and the fabric roof was a great concept artistically but flawed as a solution to keep the elements out of a modern home. Frank Lloyd Wright designed fabric roofs over the original drafting room at Taliesin West but he ran what amounted to a winter work camp in the 1930s and believed artists should suffer for their art. Hardly conducive to modern living standards.

It’s unfortunate that Marwan Al-Sayed would lead his original clients into a project that could not be lived in or completed within their modest budget. I find it incredible for an architect to walk away from a project for the sake of art when given a second chance to correct a flawed design. This is the kind of experience that scares people who are interested in good design. They end up compromising for a suburban tract house. I think Dwell let this architect, or should I say this artist, off the hook all too easily.

Lee Hill
Fort Worth, Texas ▶

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Letters

In 1949, a young couple, Ruth and Russell Kraus, hired an architect to design their dream home. Their adventure was much like Lisa Sette and Peter Shikany's ("Love's Labors Found"). Their architect was also an experimenter who was willing to try new roof designs that often leaked, and his houses were often very warm in the summer.

I was recently involved in the restoration of their house and it gave new meaning to "building the Wright way." It is considered the most detailed Usonian by the restoration architect, John Eifler. And unlike most Frank Lloyd Wright homes, the owner is still alive to tell the stories. The house is truly a gem in a pile of rocks. You can check it out at www.ebsworthpark.org. Thank you for your magazine, it helps me breathe.

Jeff Markway
St. Louis, Missouri

I'm wondering if you might consider revealing ballpark budgets of the projects you feature. I understand that this is probably largely up to the homeowners. However, my husband and I truly wish to be able to build our own house or do a Glidehouse some day, and would appreciate knowing how financially realistic (or unrealistic!) our ambitions are. Living in California, we already know it will be expensive, but I suspect that it may not be much more expensive than buying a regular house if we are smart about it.

Mitra Fabian
Los Angeles, California

Editors' Note: Excellent point. You'll notice that in this issue we have made an effort to include the budgets of the projects featured. Whenever that information is made available to us (some prefer not to disclose amounts), we will do our best to provide it to our readers. ▶

Contributors

Femke Bijlsma ("Low-Tech Utopia," p. 70) is a Dutch architect and writer. She has lived and studied in Japan, where she found the subtle Japanese beauty and lively simplicity to be a great source of inspiration.

Heather Bradley ("Cinematic Retreat," p. 61) is a freelance writer based in San Francisco and has previously written about knives, robots, and Utah for Dwell. For this issue she wrote about Danish cinematographer Erik Zappon's summer home and the parallels between cinema, design, and Plexiglas.

Linny Morris Cunningham ("Go With the Flow," p. 138) is based in Oahu and enjoys photographing just about anything except newborn infants, spoiled celebrities, or beige interiors. She found the Steely family's Big Island home, surrealistically set into a field of rough lava, to be endlessly photogenic and would have happily spent at least another day burning through film if time had permitted.

Hunter Freeman ("Illumination Online," p. 106) is a San Francisco-based photographer who discovered that finding the best light for photographing a group of elegant lamps brightened his whole day.

Chad Holder ("Off the Beaten Path," p. 148) is a commercial photographer from Minneapolis, and a San Diego native. Because

he is landlocked for so much of the year, it was a pleasure for him to head up to Madeline Island to shoot. He says, "There is a unique feeling that comes with being near the water; it will always remind me of the place I still call home."

William Lamb ("Storage 101," p. 158) is a staff writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. In this issue, he writes about organization in spite of his utter lack of authority on the subject. He is offering to sell images of his apartment to professional organizers for use as "before" photos.

Eric Lawlor ("Off the Beaten Path," p. 148) is a frequent contributor to Dwell. He lives in Houston, Texas.

James Nestor ("Liquid Assets," p. 119) is a writer living in San Francisco. As part of his research for this issue, Nestor immersed himself in the salty lexicon of maritime terms. He has since given his land legs to Davy Jones and can be found nightly standing portside his coxswain abaft the poop deck, a pint of steam in his grabbers, a sea chantey in his throat.

Richard Powers ("Inclined to Relax," p. 128), a Sydney-based British photographer, jumped at the chance to shoot the awe-inspiring waterfront home by architect Rob Brown. Just getting there was a magical experience, as the only way to reach the house is by boat and a stroll along the beach—Powers's idea of a perfect commute.



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Letters

I have subscribed to your magazine because I enjoy reading about innovative architecture around the world. I live in a condo in a suburban town west of New York City. I hope you can give me some ideas on soundproofing that do not involve major construction. Noises from inconsiderate neighbors who feel entitled to rugged individualism have a greater impact on someone in my situation than style or aesthetics. Many apartments, with their inferior construction, are sadly lacking in considering the problem of sound and its impact on people.

W. Randolph van Liew
Upper Montclair, New Jersey

Editors' Note: A Google search will reveal plenty of good sites that offer advice and products to consider. Take a look at www.soundprooffoam.com, for example, for a low-cost way to reduce noise transmission from your neighbors.

You may be interested to know that I bought the April/May 2005 issue of Dwell at a newsstand in Kuwait this morning. It cost the equivalent of about ten bucks, but my wife and I liked it and will be sending in a request for a subscription soon. Thank you.

Richard B. LeBaron
Kuwait City, Kuwait

Editors' Note: Glad to see we're getting around, but sorry about the crazy cover price. Regardless, thanks for your support!

Corrections:

In our April/May 2005 issue, we neglected to credit Mark Lyon for his photograph of Jean Prouvé's Maison Tropicale. Also, the image on page 42 of "In the Modern World" announcing the "Design Innovations in Manufactured Housing" show is incorrectly labeled as COMMA's Packed House Project. It is actually the SUMO MiniMax project for the same show. Finally, in "Live/Work" we neglected to co-credit the design of the Equa chair to Donald Chadwick. We regret the errors.

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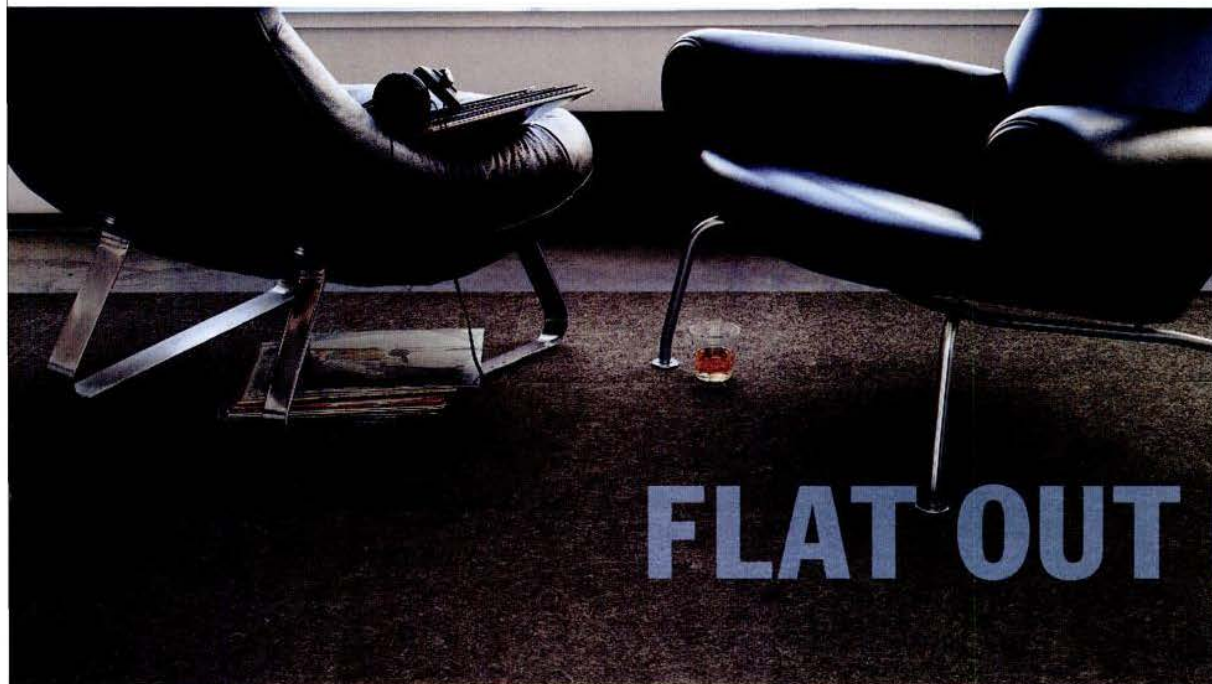
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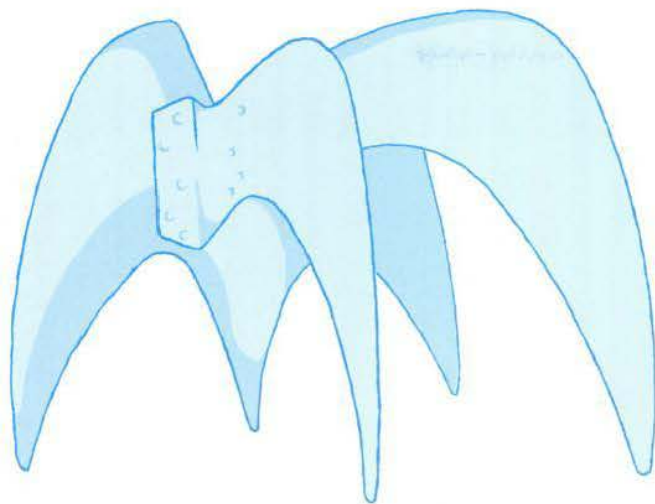


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House Proud

Newspapers have their Pulitzers, Hollywood their Oscars, and basketball players their NBA championship rings. Magazines have their Ellies (named after the Alexander Calder stabile “Elephant,” which is the American Society of Magazine Editors’ symbol of the award). And on April 13, Dwell won an Ellie for General Excellence!

While the connection of elephants to magazines is a mystery (though the Ellie is one groovy-looking piece of sculpture), the thrill of winning this award is easy to understand. This year, 318 magazines submitted a total of 1,562 entries to the ASME awards; in the end, only 22 awards are given. It’s a tremendous honor, the experience of which I’d like to share.

Around noon on April 13 I met up with a good representative sampling of Dwell’s creative team at New York’s Waldorf-Astoria. There were no evening gowns, no red carpet, no Joan Rivers (though I would later learn from a neighbor that I appeared for a millisecond on *Entertainment Tonight*), but the atmosphere was charged—and for me, even more so after the director of ASME casually asked for the correct pronunciation of my last name as we walked into the ballroom for lunch. As I’d be accepting the award if Dwell won, I cautiously took this as a good sign. But as we took our seats upstairs, the ten of us Dwellers grew glum. Why were we seated up here? If we won, it would be far too difficult to get to the stage downstairs! However, as I began pacing to offset my nervousness, I discovered a means of quick access to the stage—just in case.

Our category—General Excellence, circulation 100,000–250,000—was the sixth award to be presented that day, and the wait seemed interminable. As speeches were made, and awards accepted, all of us at the Dwell table tried to make jokes, snapping silly digital photos of each other and marveling at the shellacked pieces of salmon

masquerading as lunch that perched on our plates.

I don’t remember much of those few minutes when the editor of *Newsweek* read the list of nominees in our category, but I sure do remember when he finally said, “Dwell!” My eyes welled up with tears—the whole table’s eyes welled up with tears—and I have to tell you, it’s an honor being nominated but it’s a whole lot better to win. I made a beeline for my secret route to the stage, temporarily filtering out the reality that as I addressed the crowd of some 1,500 magazine professionals, my own image was projected onscreen behind me on the hotel ballroom equivalent of the Times Square JumboTron.

To get a handle on all that emotion, I began my speech with something familiar, an anecdote from my childhood. “When I was in eighth grade and had to write an essay about what I wanted to be when I grew up, I wrote that I wanted to be the editor-in-chief of *Time* magazine,” I said. “So it’s really an honor to be up here today.” Later on in the program, when the managing editor of *Time* came onstage to collect an award on behalf of the photographer James Nachtwey, he said that he didn’t really have anything prepared but had always “wanted to be the editor of Dwell.” (The next day, this exchange would make it into the *New York Post* in an issue sure to be a top-seller given its cover photo of a pregnant Britney Spears.)

At the end of the ceremony, all of the editors from the winning magazines, including the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Wired*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*, gathered together onstage for a group photo. Martha Stewart, recently released from prison and accepting the award for *Martha Stewart Weddings*, was the center of attention but I didn’t mind. We’d won! And I wasn’t on 48-hour furlough.

But lest you think all this attention has gone to our heads, let me share a final anecdote. As my colleagues and I parted for a much-needed nap before dinner, I set off for Dwell’s New York office with our Ellie. Too unwieldy for airplane transport, the Ellie needed to be shipped back to our offices here in San Francisco. Alas, as any *New Yorker* knows (and this one-time *New Yorker* forgot), at 4 p.m. cab drivers change shifts and you’re more likely to win the Lotto than catch a ride. So how did my afternoon of prestige and fame end? With me walking 20 long New York blocks awkwardly cradling the metal Ellie and a heavy wooden plaque in my arms, desperately hoping that those *New York Post* photographers had long dispersed.

Okay, I lied. There is one more thing and it is really the most important. I want to urge you to turn to the masthead on pages 26 and 28 and read all of the names listed there. These immensely talented individuals make up the spectacular team that creates Dwell magazine every day. Working with them continues to be one of the most enriching experiences of my life, and that is the greatest award of all. ■

ALLISON ARIEFF, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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Iceland / www.artfest.is



Finland / www.finnishdesign.fi

Scandinavia! / To prove to the world that this region is not just about icy terrain, northern lights, salmon, and saunas, five northern countries are hosting major art and design events in 2005.



Sweden / www.designaret.se

Additional websites:

Denmark / www.ddc.dk

Norway / www.designaret.no

The Nordic countries have banded together to steal some creative thunder from the Italians. Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden are all calling 2005 their “year of design” and planning full rosters of events—from a felt exhibition in the crafts town of Fiskars, Finland, to design tours in Stockholm, Sweden, to an ambitious World Design Congress that will include conferences and panels and span all four nations.

Not to be left in the dust (or ice?), Iceland is centering its annual Reykjavik Arts Festival this summer on contemporary visual arts. Along with a major retrospective of the work of Dieter Roth (the German artist spent much of his life in Iceland), curated by his son, the festival will include other art exhibitions and musical performances by groups like Lady & Bird Trans Danse Europe and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

All the more reason to head north this summer and enjoy your entrée of cloudberry-sauced reindeer with a hearty helping of Scandinavian aesthetics on the side.



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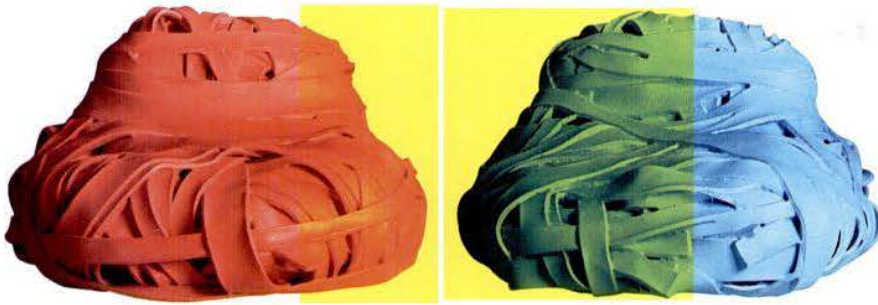


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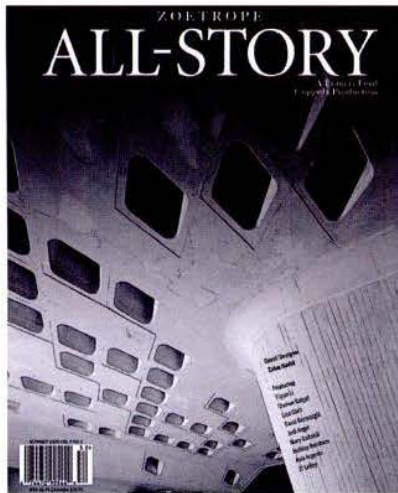
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In the Modern World



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Zoetrope: All-Story (summer issue)

The San Francisco-based literary magazine *Zoetrope: All-Story* has long set a standard for both quality content and compelling design, thanks to design and editorial contributors like Wayne Thiebaud, David Byrne, and Gus Van Sant, to list just a few. For *Zoetrope's* summer issue, Pritzker Prize-winner Zaha Hadid will try her hand at designing the magazine using various media from line drawing to painting to computer-generated renderings. The issue will also feature short fiction from Yiyun Li (winner of the *Paris Review's* first annual Plimpton Prize), Damon Galgut (shortlisted for the 2004 Booker Prize), and Mary Gaitskill, among others. www.all-story.com

Richard Neutra's Cyclorama Building / Gettysburg, PA

We may agree that age alone doesn't necessarily warrant preservation, but we have no reservations getting huffy over the proposed destruction of the Cyclorama. The only public Neutra building east of the Mississippi, this mid-century design was built as a utopian homage to Lincoln on the 100th anniversary of the Civil War. The National Park Service, however, plans to destroy the curvilinear structure within the next year in favor of a tourist-friendly (i.e., massive) visitors' center and parking lot. You can help protect Neutra's building by signing this online petition. www.petitiononline.com/neutra61/petition.html



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Jean Nouvel / 7 June–18 Sept / Louisiana Museum of Modern Art / Humlebæk, Denmark

The Godard of French New Wave architecture, Jean Nouvel not only epitomized a generation of architects but also continues to create award-winning buildings throughout Europe. A pioneer of the French “high-tech” architectural movement, Nouvel has been lauded for such buildings as the Fondation Cartier in Paris and the Cultural Congress Centre in Lucerne. This exhibit will cover his past achievements and yet-to-be-completed projects in both Paris and Ørestaden, Denmark. www.louisiana.dk



Auckland / By Jean Marie Massaud for Cassina

An oyster's hard outer shell protects the soft living mass inside, a masterpiece of natural design (and cuisine). In much the same way, the Auckland's exterior encases a padded seat. Gently rocking to and fro, you might well imagine yourself to be a hidden pearl. www.cassina.it



Beware of Domestic Objects T-shirt / By Six Inch Heel

We all know that irons can be unwieldy, scorching weapons of domestic destruction—and that's not even taking into account the dangers of leaving them plugged in when you leave the house. Part public service announcement, part pret-a-porter, this line of T-shirts also includes styles that reference Colette, Oscar Wilde, and elementary mathematics. www.sixinchheel.com



Big Pool printed bedding / By Area, Inc.

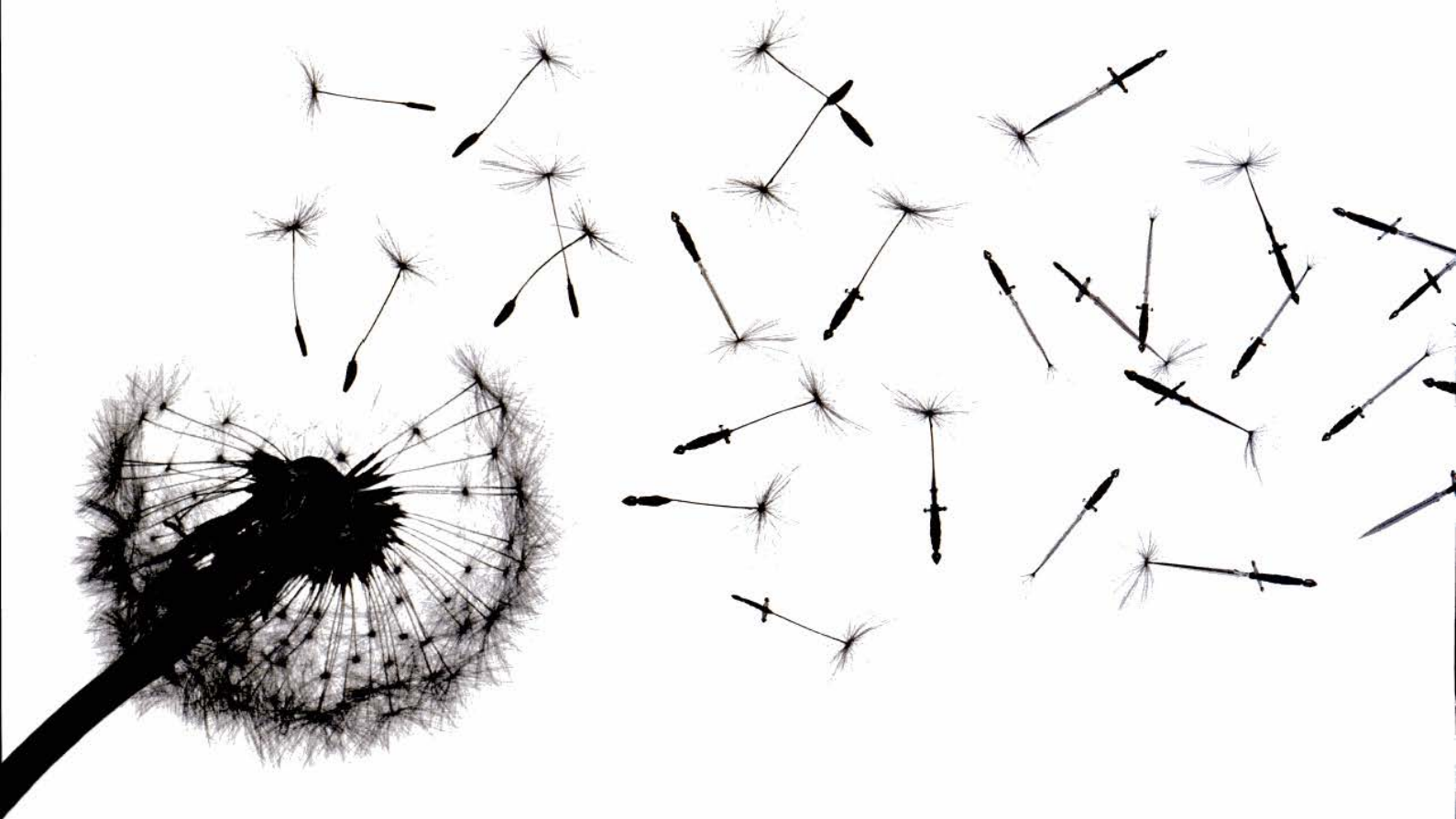
Nothing feels better on a warm summer night than sliding between crisp, cool cotton sheets. And when you finally peel off the heavy layers of down and wool, it's nice to have a bed that looks as good as it feels. Area has created just that kind of bedding for its newest collection. Stripes, blocks, loops, and leaves adorn 100 percent cotton and cotton/linen blends; names like Vanilla, Pear, Tangerine, and Rose evoke thoughts of a tall cocktail sipped poolside. Area's products are fresh and uncomplicated, just like summer ought to be. www.areahome.com



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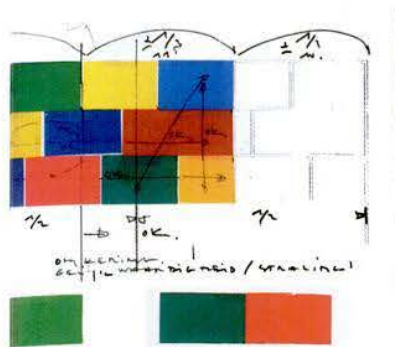
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Maarten van Severen: Work / Edited by Lieven Daenens / Stichting Kunstboek / \$40
Published in conjunction with the Design Museum of Ghent's retrospective, this catalog explores van Severen's stunning yet lean body of work, including his collaboration with Rem Koolhaas on the Floirac house in Bordeaux. www.stichtingkunstboek.com



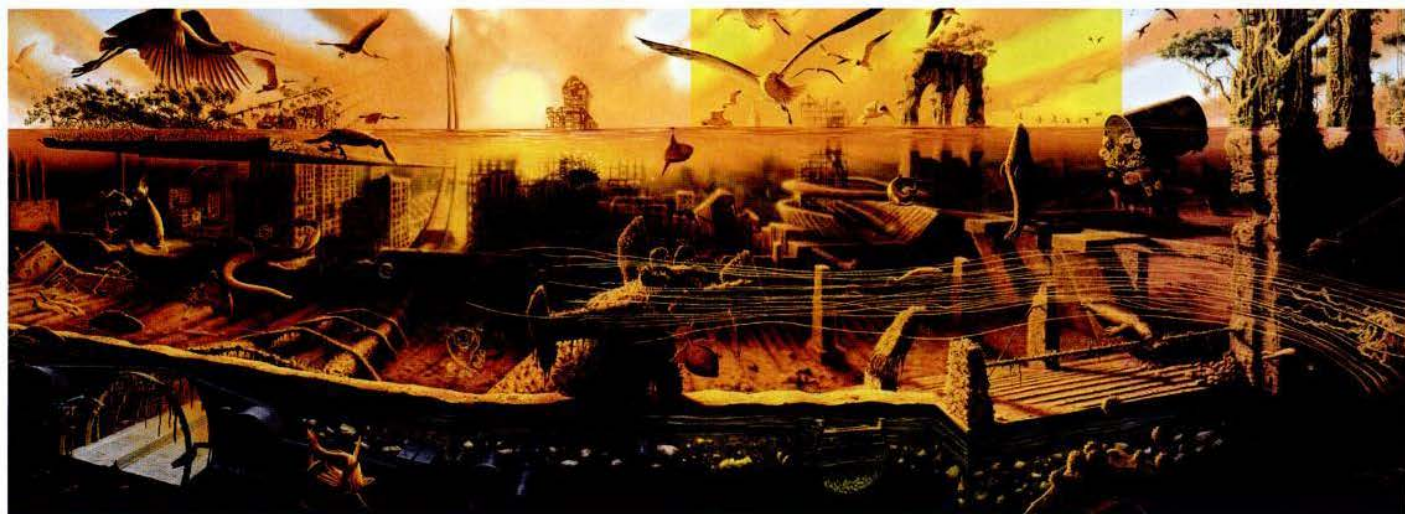
A+A Textile / By Alessandro Mendini for Alessi

Some women are immortalized in songs, others in paintings. Alessandro Mendini's former girlfriend will forever be rumored to have inspired the popular Anna G. of Alessi's corkscrews, pepper mills, and other houseware paraphernalia. Now, the perky Anna G. and her new mate—who, coincidentally, is named Alessandro—are joined together forever on this new textile collection. www.alessi.it



Bel'occhio / By Pablo Pardo and Kevin Sloan

If your mood lighting is overly diffusive, making you seem more smooth jazz than ambient, Bel'occhio is the light for you. Both ambient table lamp and spotlight, this mellow beacon has a little edge. Its maneuverable acrylic shell allows for easy adjustment, and with a choice of orange or white inner shade colors, no one will ever suspect you've got a soft spot for adult contemporary. www.ylighting.com



Alexis Rockman: Manifest Destiny / 17 June–18 Sept / The RISD Museum / Providence, RI / Lest anyone become complacent about the environment, Rockman serves up a fanciful, disturbing vision of a globally warmed Brooklyn in the year 5000. Part Hieronymus Bosch, part Hudson River School, this 8-by-24-foot mural depicts sunken stadiums, paddling rats, and, of course, a cockroach. www.risd.edu/museum.cfm

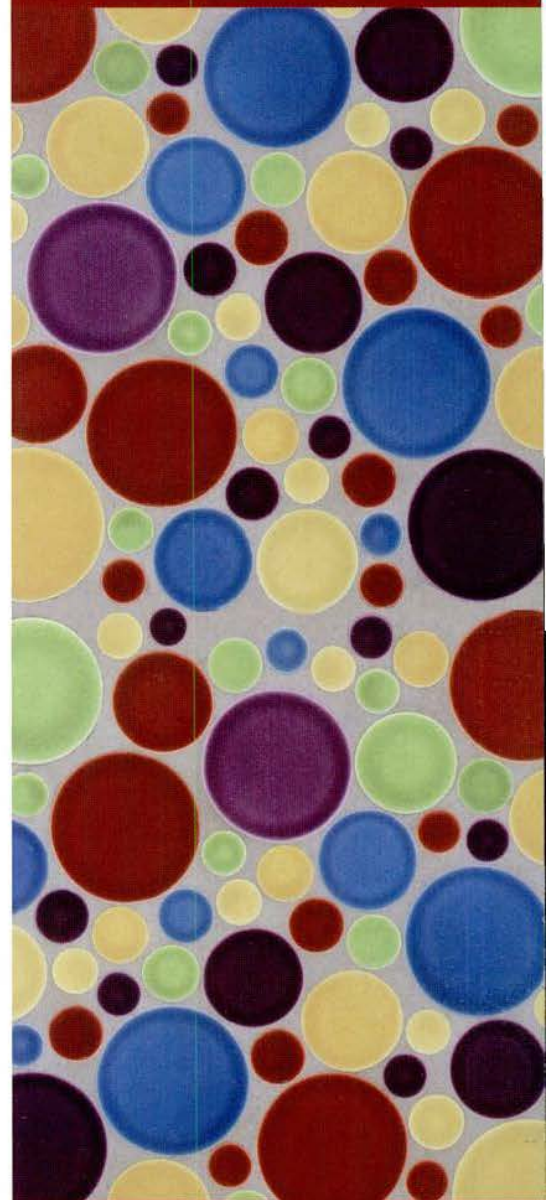
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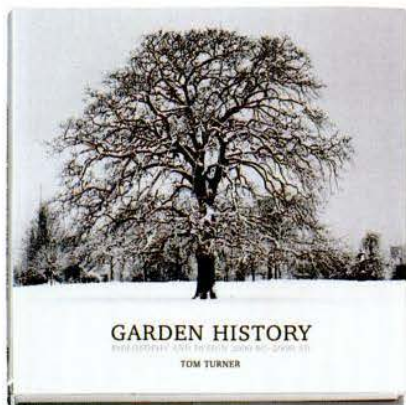
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Garden History: Philosophy and Design, 2000 BC–2000 AD / By Tom Turner / Spon Press / \$89.95

From the shady canals and meandering pathways of Egyptian outdoor spaces of 2000 BC to the rectilinear and carefully proscribed gardens by current-day architects Daniel Libeskind and Bernard Tschumi, Turner leaves no stone unturned in his fascinating account of gardening history. www.sponpress.com



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Weego Home Signature Collection

We've all been in a house that feels like a modern design museum, with iconic furnishings placed just so, making it seem as if no one has ever entered the space to do anything but style it. It would behoove these homeowners to hightail it online or in person to Weego, a small store in Santa Monica that combines wit with whimsy without being precious, and offers such items as these hand-screened prints by Atelier LZC (right) and almost maniacally cheerful pillows. www.weego.com



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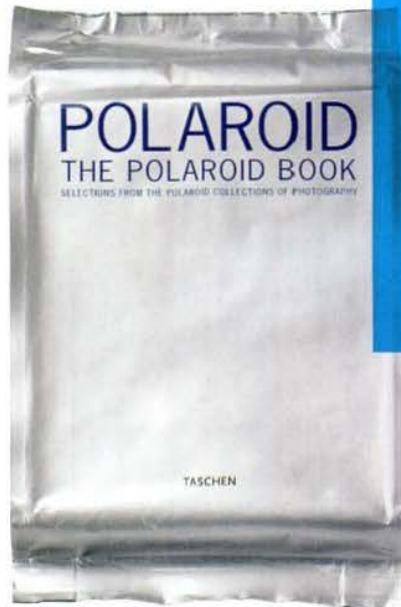
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The Polaroid Book / By Barbara Hitchcock, edited by Steve Crist / Taschen / \$39.99
It's hard to match the cool simplicity of the Polaroid picture. Of course, it takes a supremely inventive publisher to design a book clever enough to house the standout images from the Polaroid Collection of Photography. Formatted and packaged like an oversized Polaroid film pack, this collection displays the numerous possibilities that develop inside the canonical white borders of the original instant photograph.
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Purist Hatbox toilet / By Kohler

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PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)

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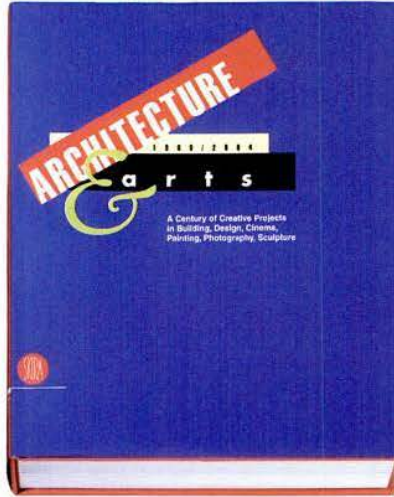
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Scandinavian Design, Beyond the Myth /
18 June–28 Aug / The Lighthouse / Glasgow,
Scotland

This exhibition strives to stretch public perception beyond common stereotypes to present a diverse array of Scandinavian designs from the past 50 years. Graceful metal objects by Georg Jensen, bright Lego toys, phones from Nokia, and Hasselblad cameras (above) are all well represented, as are wedding dresses, folk costumes, and innovative textiles. www.thelighthouse.co.uk

PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)



Architecture and Arts / Edited by Germano Celant / Skira / \$95

The intersection of art and architecture is a vast and varied realm, where disciplines collide and give rise to visionary work. This colossal volume, originally presented as a Guggenheim exhibition in Genoa, Italy, in 2004, chronicles a century of artistic convergence, with images and essays by 20th-century designers, both renowned and obscure. www.skira.net

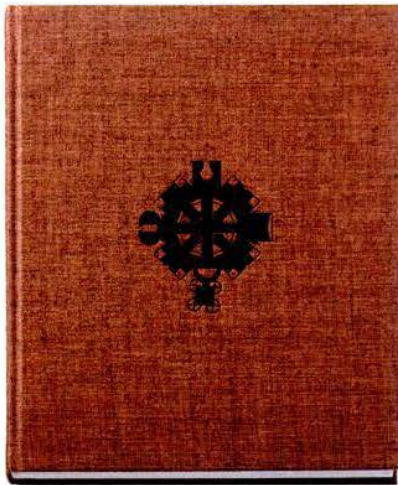


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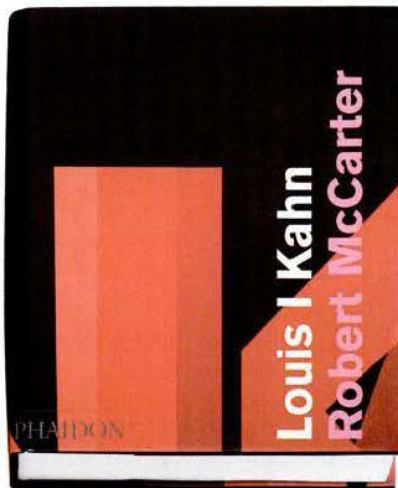
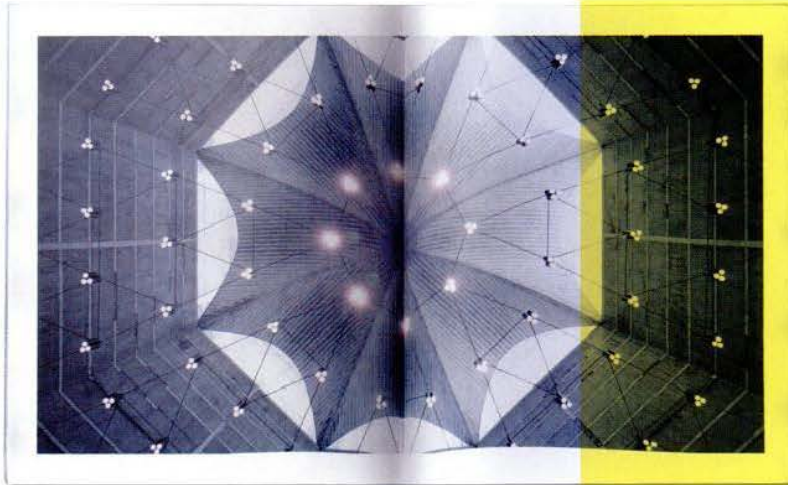
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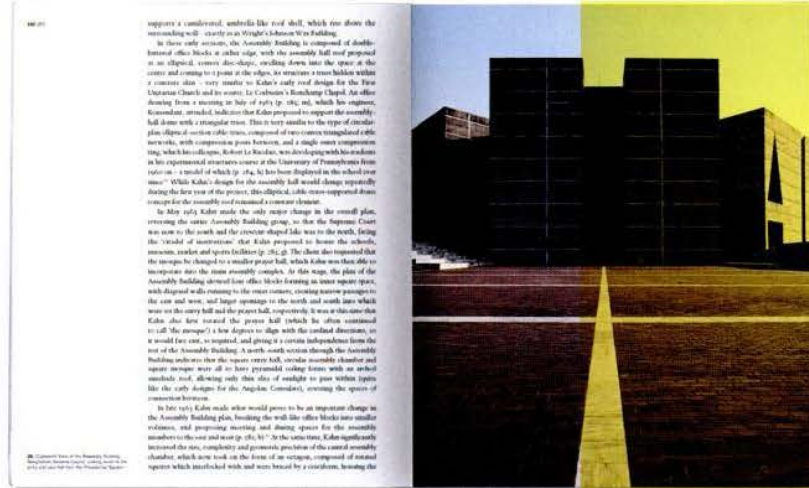
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Louis Kahn Dhaka / By Raymond Meier / Edition Dino Simonett / \$175 / www.louiskahndhaka.com



Louis Kahn / By Robert McCarter / Phaidon / \$75 / www.phaidon.com



Two on Kahn / While many of us will never be able to hear Neil Young's "Long May You Run" without conjuring the image, from *My Architect*, of Nathaniel Kahn twirling on Rollerblades at the Salk Institute, the film has undoubtedly enabled many to see the elder Kahn's work in a more humanistic light. The film's apotheosis, the construction of the capitol of Bangladesh in Dhaka, presents a particularly stirring image of Louis Kahn's work and is the subject of photographer Raymond Meier's two-volume, limited-edition (of 2,000) *Louis Kahn Dhaka*. Nathaniel Kahn provides the foreword for this mix of restored archival duotones and architectural, landscape, and portrait photography. Widening his lens of Kahn worship, Robert McCarter's *Louis Kahn* presents a comprehensive study of the architect's oeuvre. Each building is presented chronologically and is illustrated through photographs and concept-development portfolios that detail each project from inception to completion.



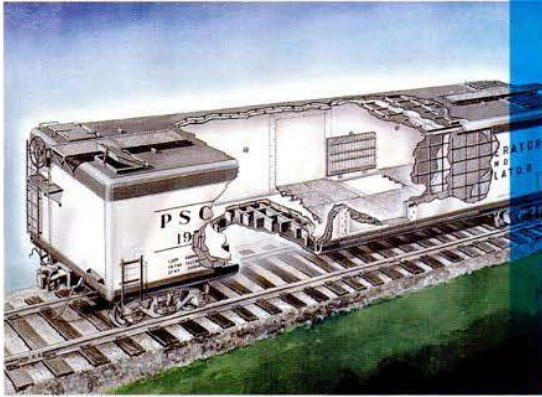
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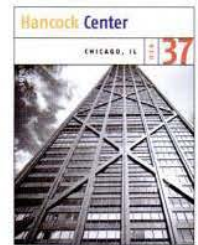
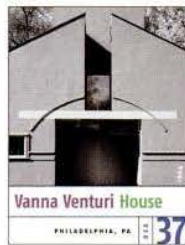
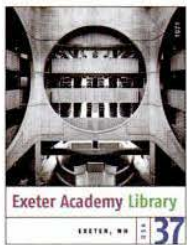


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1945: Creativity and Crisis, Chicago Architecture and Design of the World War II Era / 7 May–8 Jan / Art Institute of Chicago / Chicago, IL

The challenges of the war years produced some of the century's most innovative design solutions. Numerous artifacts and drawings will showcase plans to convert wartime factories into peacetime facilities, develop highway systems, and design residential housing to accommodate the impending suburban sprawl. The show will coincide with the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in mid-August. www.artic.edu



2005 USPS Commemorative Stamps / Even if you lack philatelic tendencies, June's set of modern architectural stamps might encourage you to forgo email in favor of old-fashioned correspondence. Just don't waste these beauties on the phone bill. www.usps.com



6910-6911 / By Jan des Bouvrie for Gelderland

Citizens of Sumeria and Assyria worshipped at ziggurats—temples formed of gently receding geometric tiers. The muted color of this Gelderland seat reminds us of the sun-baked mud bricks used to build those ancient edifices, as do the gradient shapes. If you lounge languorously on this seating surface, your loved ones might feel compelled to worship you. www.gelderlandgroep.com



Yoga bag / By Omma

These days, one would be hard-pressed to find a person who hasn't assumed the downward dog at least once. As yoga becomes an increasingly quotidian activity, the accompanying gear must also comply. This neat and stylish bag will fit a yoga mat and gear, with enough room left over for a Deepak Chopra paperback. *Namaste.* www.ommayoga.com



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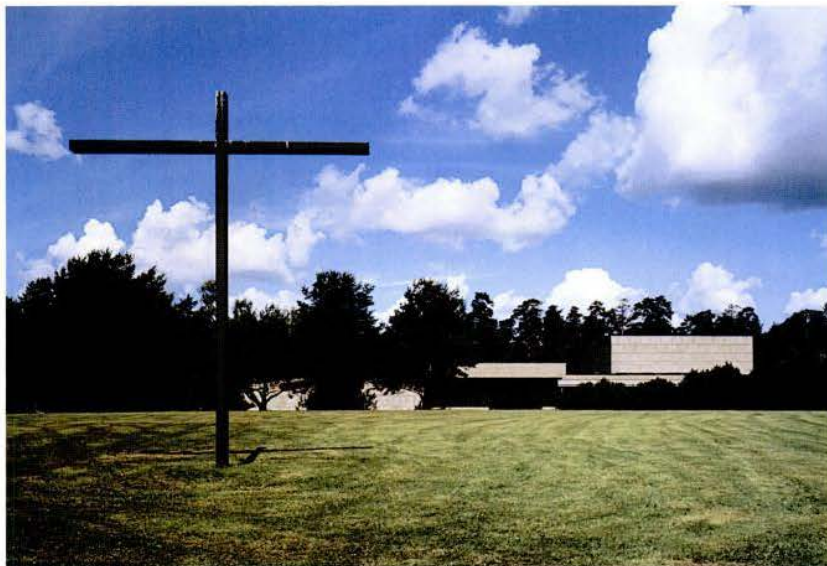


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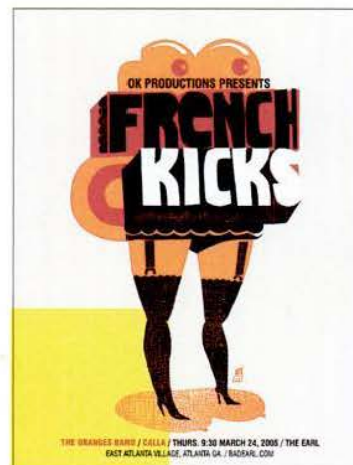
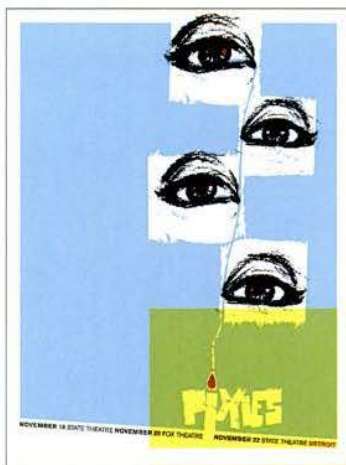


In the Modern World



Sacral Space: Modern Finnish Churches / 10 June–24 July / Emily Carr Institute / Vancouver, BC

A far cry from the frippery and frills that decorate so many Renaissance and Baroque churches, a spare modern aesthetic characterizes the 12 Finnish churches on display here. Their ethereal light and lines allow for openness in spiritual views, as well as architectural space. www.eciad.ca



Graphic Noise / 28 July–20 Aug / Museum of Design / Atlanta, GA

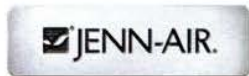
These are not the stock Marley and Hendrix posters peddled alongside tie-dyed shirts and hemp paraphernalia; this exhibition explores a reinvigorated rock-poster art scene. Featuring print superstars like Jason Munn (left) and Methane Studios (right), along with emerging artists like Dan McCarthy, this collection highlights poster art that's truly frame-worthy. www.museumofdesign.org



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Cinematic Retreat

The main living space (above) is constructed of immense I-profiles, allowing for a full wall of glass with four large sliding doors that open to the backyard.

When separating the haves from the have-nots, owners of summer homes tend to reside enviably in the former category. Indeed, a select few seem to have no problem whatsoever turning the word “summer” into a verb—“We summer in the Hamptons.” While it’s easy to dismiss that set, who wouldn’t relish the opportunity to flee urban gridlock for the proverbial house by the lake during the sticky months?

For Erik Zappon and his family, a strong yearning for a peaceful getaway from the structured urbanity of their penthouse in downtown Århus, Denmark’s second largest city, inspired them to take action. As Zappon puts it, “We needed space that wouldn’t constantly bomb us with impressions.”

A man of few words, Zappon is a prolific cinematographer of critically lauded Danish films such as *Okay* and *Aftermath*, known for their graceful asceticism and the showcasing of actress Paprika Steen, the Cate Blanchett of Copenhagen. Zappon’s wife, Ingrid Sõe, is a costume designer on his films and others.

Working with a spouse is often thought of as a risky proposition, but apparently not in Denmark. The architects on the project were another married professional team—Mette Nygaard and Morten Schmidt of the architecture firm Schmidt, Hammer & Lassen (though this project was completed through their own firm, Concept). Schmidt is an old childhood friend of Zappon’s, so the collaboration was an obvious choice.

The collective aim was to create a coolly modern sanctuary that echoes the elegant austerity of Zappon’s films. And, indeed, the house’s minimal materials let nature do the talking, providing a respite for the couple and their three children, Clara, Lauritz, and Sarah.

The location—a pristine waterfront district on the east coast of Jutland, just ten miles south of the family’s central Århus home—also had strong ties to Zappon’s personal history, as he spent childhood summers in the same area. “I feel very connected to the spirit there,” he says. Construction began on a plot of land with an overgrown garden and rolling hill that provided the ▶



perfect mix of pastoral and rugged landscapes the family was searching for.

In 2004, a year after the house's completion, an Århus architectural committee declared it the best new building of the year. And there's good reason for that, as Zappone is eager to relate: "The house is prize-winning for the rather ascetic design combined with a simple and very clear choice of materials."

Like the forest and beach that surround it, the house has diverse textures. "There are contrasts all over the house in light and dark, warm and cold, hard and soft—and it changes all the time," Zappone explains. The raw concrete of the floor and walls is softened by gigantic white curtains that billow playfully in the living room. The curtains function as room dividers, or, one could imagine, as catalysts for a riveting game of hide-and-seek. The back wall of the living room is covered with perforated metal to better integrate with Zappone's slick stereo system and other technical enhancements necessary for the home life of any filmmaker. ▶



Chalkboard-fronted cabinets (top) provide an ideal surface for scrawling shopping lists.

In keeping with the house's spirit, its master bath (above) calls for a sense of adventure.



"CINÉ CITY" entertainment unit, design Luigi Gorgoni. Off-white lacquer interior, metal bronze lacquer frame. Sliding bronze glass door. Exterior neon light. Home cinema screen. Dimension : L. 274 x H. 204 x D. 44 cm. "NUAGE" swivel armchairs, design Maurizio Manzoni et Roberto Tapinassi. To purchase our "Les Contemporains" catalog or to locate the Roche-Boboïs store nearest you, call 1-800-972-8375 (dept 100). www.rocche-boboïs.com

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My House

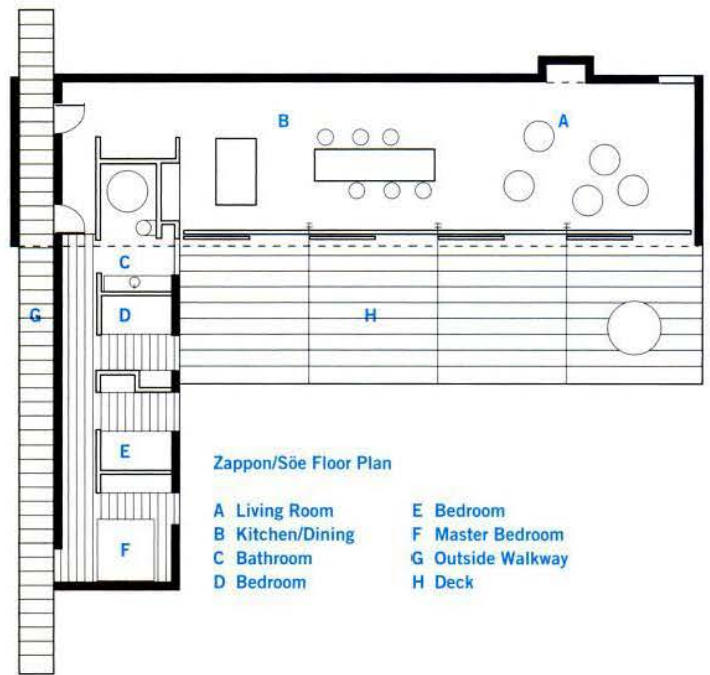
The expansive, industrial nature of the living room contrasts with the refined design of the bedroom wing, which is covered entirely with ash wood on the floor, walls, and ceiling. The hall between the living room and bedroom contains the master bathroom, constructed in concrete with a circular bathtub and accompanied by a parallel circular cutaway in the roof that allows contemplative bathers to view the stars from the tub.

In the open kitchen, tall cupboards are coated with black matte paint that can be used as a chalkboard, a clever and practical use of the surface space. The color matches the exterior of the house, although no one has yet to use the front door as a chalkboard, even with the constant presence of the children and their friends.

The house is surprisingly devoid of furniture, aside from the elegant Alinea table and Eames chairs. In lieu of a sofa, the family has placed some white beanbags (or "sack chairs," as Zappon refers to them) in the TV area. In this way, leisure time is more of an improvisation than a La-Z-Boy mandate. As Zappon puts it, "Everybody ▶

In the bedroom wing (below), sunlight shines down from Plexiglas bubbles. Steel in the

cutaways reflects the light. The same skylight is used in the minimalist bathroom (right).



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My House

can relax as they choose to.”

The exterior of the house is clad in horizontal wood panels, giving the building an elongated effect. Unlike a horizontally striped sweater, however, this element manages to flatter the structure. In the rear of the house, a wooden terrace mirrors the living room. “[The children] love the outdoor space,” Zappon says. “They are all dancers so it has turned out to be an ideal rehearsal stage.”

In the front yard, landscape architect Torben Schönherr created a huge circular stone fireplace, excavating it right out of the site. Essentially a large fire pit that would make any budding pyromaniac giddy, the inclusive design allows for the family to gather after a swim or shower and perhaps sing a campfire song. Or not.

Thanks to the shifting Danish climate, the whole house is warmed (and cooled) by geothermal heat, which lies discreetly beneath the flooring. In fact, the only problem with the home seems to be the difficulty inherent in abandoning it and heading back to the city. ■



With a brood of energetic kids, the advantage of so much outdoor space is clear.

How to Make My House Your House



Curtain call

Whether you're in need of some immediate privacy or just like the billowy effect, hanging curtains can be an easy alternative to the costly and often unsightly prospect of adding an extra wall. Zappon used 500 square feet of long curtains installed in the ceiling on sliding rollers.

Sack out

A small fleet of sack chairs (below) adds whimsy and informality to any living space. Sakwa, the Denmark-based manufacturer of “lifestyle furniture and accessories for progressive teenagers and modern-design-oriented consumers,” has many durable, flexible beanbag variants in a wide range of colors and materials. www.sakwa.dk

Geothermal heating and cooling

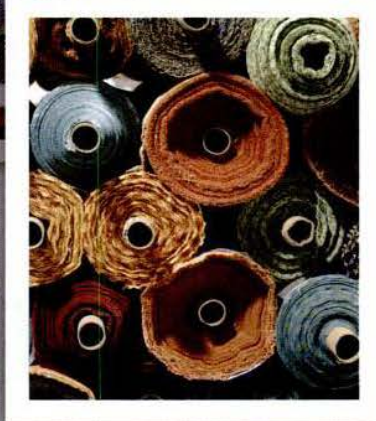
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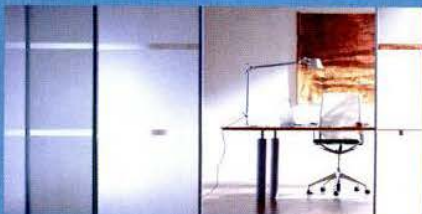
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Low-Tech Utopia

A greenhouse is generally considered to be a house for plants. But for Tokyo-based architect Hiroshi Iguchi, a greenhouse can be a very pleasant home for people, too, and he has built several such projects to prove his point.

Iguchi's latest glass development is a utopian experiment called Millennium City. On a plot of open farmland in Chiba, a two-hour drive from Tokyo, four giant greenhouses comprise an environmentally friendly commune. This eco glass village is the product of several workshops that Iguchi organized in order to come up with an innovative solution to Japan's housing situation, which is highly polluting and socially isolating. "Millennium City allows people to live closely together, yet in privacy, and enables them to enjoy a lifestyle in harmony with nature," Iguchi explains.

Small wooden pavilions in each of the four greenhouses function as living areas. Each features an enclosed room elevated on stilts, not unlike a tree house, with a ladder leading up to the entrance. Underneath, the open platform appears to float just above the earthen floor.

There are no formal designations for these spaces; it's left to the user to decide how to use them, from sleeping in the elevated hut to reading, relaxing, gardening, or entertaining below. A communal kitchen is built into one of the greenhouses, and a separate pavilion accommodates the shared toilet and bathing facilities.

Iguchi's dedication to environmental conservation and an earth-conscious lifestyle is further evident in the commune's source of power: Supplementing the electricity supply, the greenhouses use solar energy for lighting and heating. Trees help monitor the interior temperatures of living areas (see sidebar), and solar panels made from plastic bottles provide heat for the water, ensuring that residents don't have to suffer through cold showers.

In order to bring his somewhat offbeat community to completion, Iguchi established a nonprofit organization to corral others into helping develop Millennium City. This not only created a community of like-minded people, but also helped keep costs low. The land for the project was secured as a 20-year lease through a ►

Sitting placidly in the midst of open farmland (as evidenced by the gray plastic crop covers that seem to run into the greenhouses), Millennium City is an experiment by Japanese architect Hiroshi Iguchi in utopian sustainable living.

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Off the Grid

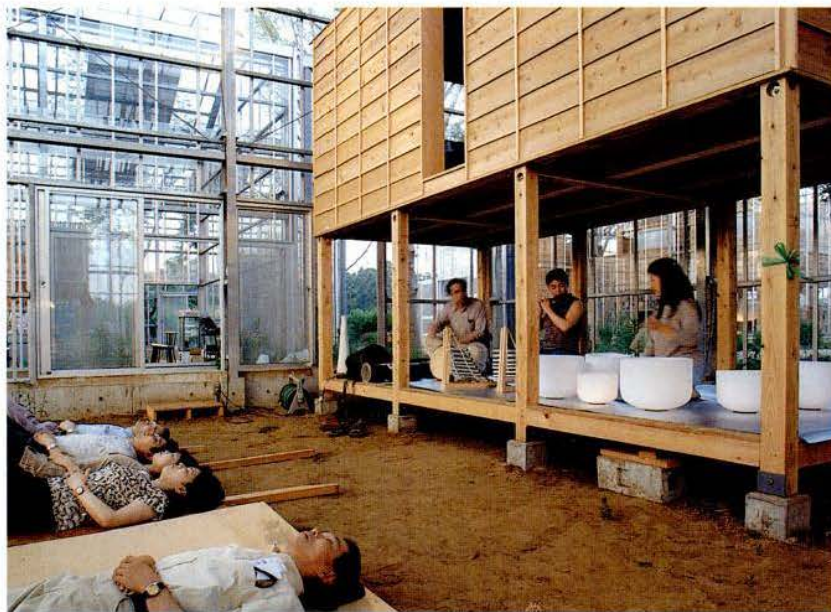
volunteer who also happened to be the president of the Japanese Agricultural Association. Other aspects of the buildings were secured through similar means: "Through the personal connections of our members," Iguchi elaborates, "many materials were donated or supplied at low cost. The trees were a gift, as well as all the kitchen furniture, the bathroom fixtures, and many other amenities." Though the glass houses were built by a greenhouse manufacturer, volunteers built the wooden pavilions, thus significantly reducing the total building costs for the project. As a result, the entire complex was completed for about \$470,000.

Millennium City is structured on the assumption that the pavilions will be rented out for either temporary or long-term accommodation. With rents at about \$50 per month, the pavilions offer an affordable seasonal getaway or reasonable year-round lodging in the inflated Japanese real estate market. "I can imagine a family with children moving into Millennium City. The father can commute to Tokyo for work and have something peaceful to look

forward to when he comes home in the evening," says Iguchi. But the glass village assumes a community function as well. There is an art school, for example, where tea ceremony, flower arranging, and painting classes are held. A variety of classes on ecological agriculture and exchanges with agriculture students are also planned.

There are other environmentally friendly benefits of the glass village, as Iguchi explains: "The fact that this one place facilitates so many different functions is in itself already ecological. The huts can always be recycled or reused, either by dismantling and reassembling them in a new location, or just by moving them intact." Iguchi emphasizes that to save energy, he avoided using high-tech instruments whenever possible. It's cheaper to do it the old-fashioned way, both by reducing to a minimum the space that requires heating and by adapting one's daily routine to the outside light and temperature. As Iguchi says with a laugh, "Our ancestors actually lived a very environmentally friendly life." ■

Far from the noise of Tokyo, it's easy to see how these houses serve as meditation and relaxation spaces. As Katsumi Ikura, a therapist who has worked here, says, "Surrounded by trees and an organic farm, all we hear are the birds, insects, and the wind."



Leaving Electricity Behind

Japan's extreme seasonal temperature changes consistently prove to be a challenge for architects: Grappling with the exigencies of cold yet sunny winters and extremely hot and humid summers within one construction project requires inventive design.

Architect Hiroshi Iguchi's sustainable solution was to surround the greenhouses with tall, deciduous trees. In the summer, the "breathing" of the trees' leaves and the shadows they cast over the homes help cool the spaces. To combat moisture from the

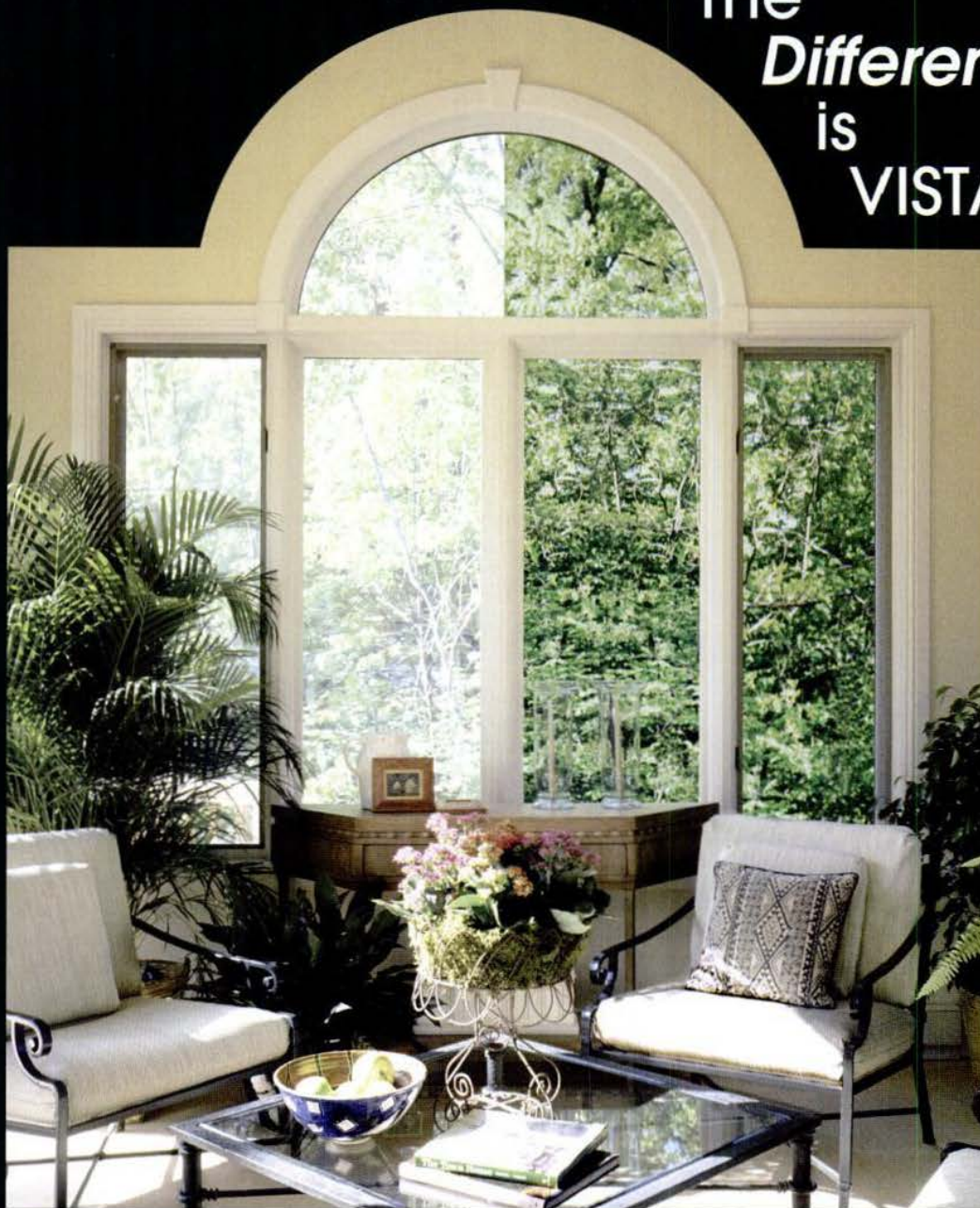
humidity, residents can open the top windows of the glass spaces.

In the winter, the leafless branches of the trees allow the sun to filter into and heat the interiors. The warmed air is then circulated by ceiling fans, keeping residents toasty. For areas that are out of the reach of the sun's rays, insulation mats also help increase the temperature.

All in all, arboreal temperature maintenance seems most appropriate for a community of greenhouses. —F.B.

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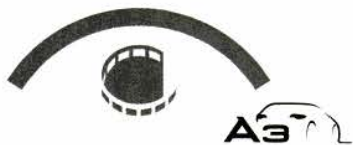
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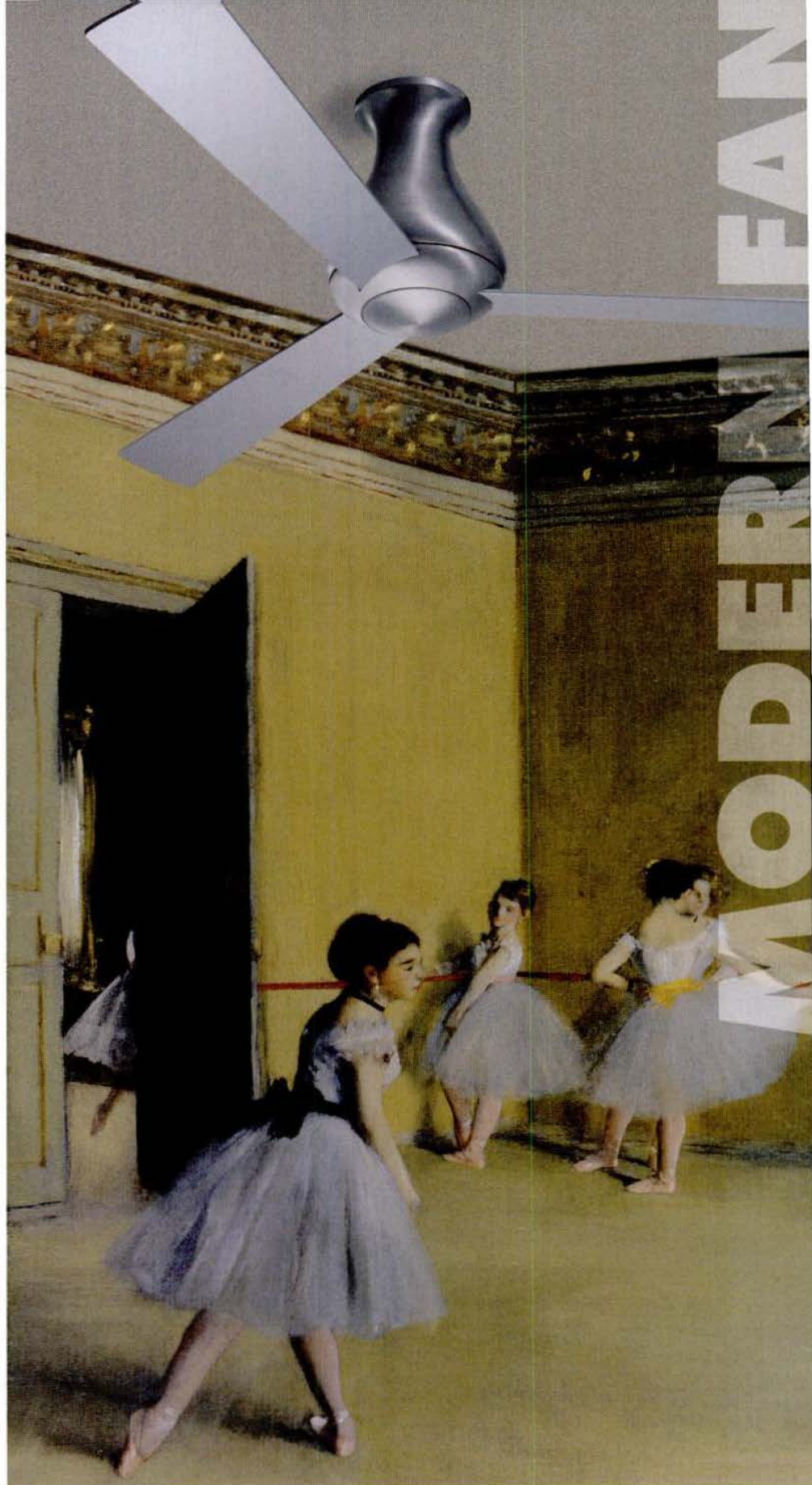


Visitors to P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center this summer may think they've landed on another planet. For the sixth year, the courtyard of P.S.1 will be transformed by the winner the MoMA/P.S.1 Young Architects Program. This year's winner, Xefirotarch, will create SUR, a playful installation of undulating surfaces and areas for listening and relaxing. The project will serve as the venue for Warm Up, the popular music series held annually in P.S.1's courtyard.

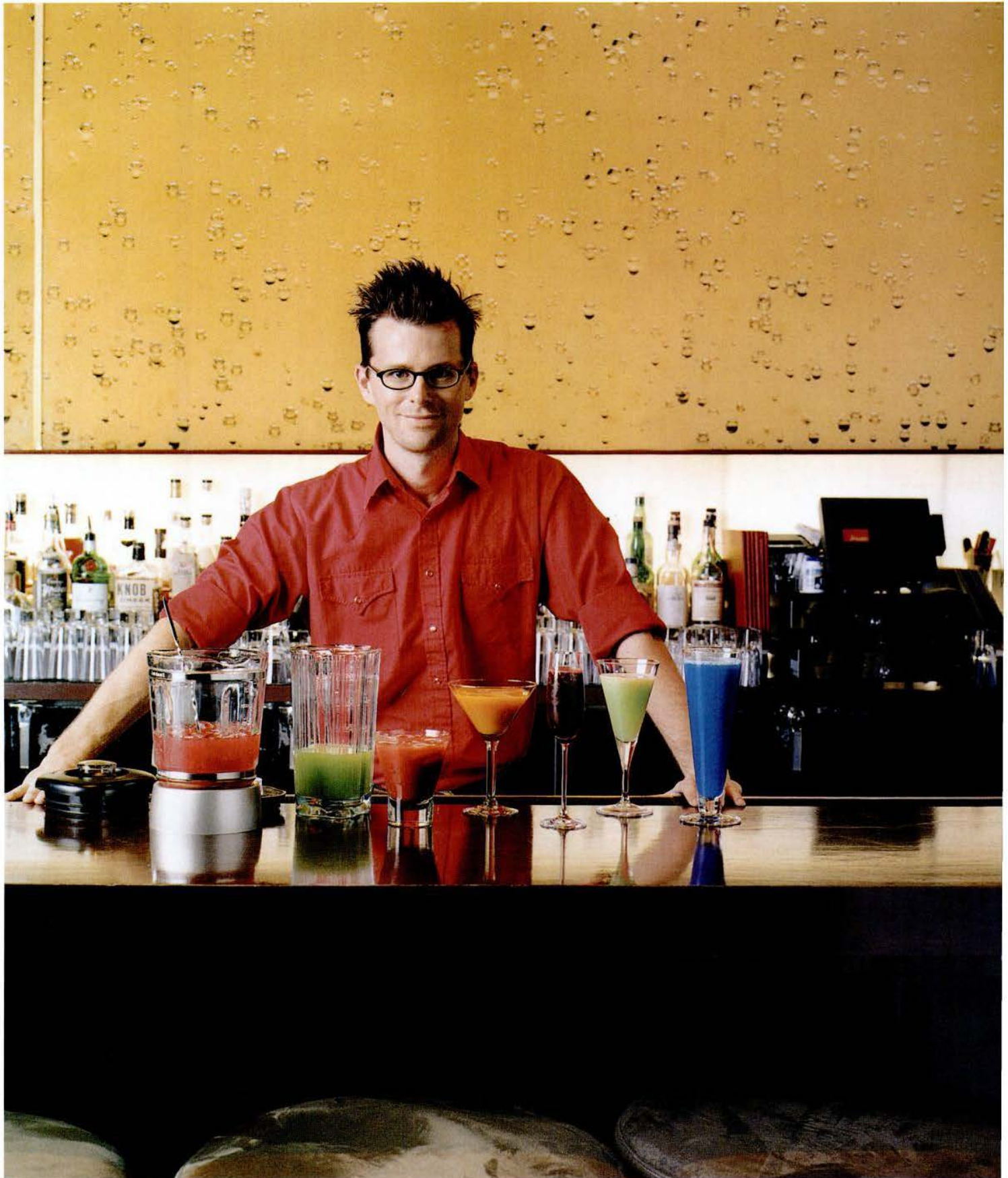
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Edgar Degas, Ballet Studio at the Opera in rue Le Peletier, 1872
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France



A Note on Our Expert: Duggan McDonnell has been professionally involved in drink making for five years, but a love for liquid has been present since his youth. "I've definitely been interested in beverages for a long time," McDonnell says. "I love coffee, I love tea, juice, all of them, from beginning to end, A to Z. I just love the art of making a drink." After moving to San Francisco in 2002, McDonnell did stints at Mecca

and the Redwood Room in the Philippe Starck–designed Cliff Hotel before being lured away to help open the restaurant Frisson, designed by Scott Kester. Despite Frisson's strict no-blender policy ("There's a stigma attached to blenders in bars," McDonnell says. "People think if one is present, then it's going to be a T.G.I. Friday's or something"), the self-proclaimed mixologist has retained his affection for the device.

Smooth Operators

A good blender can turn almost any mischievous mixture into a delicious treat. We put four to the test in search of the best.

In times of great social strife, it's refreshing to stumble across something that everyone can agree on, even if that something is the extraction of one's wisdom teeth. It goes without argument in all quarters of the world that evicting the offending molars from one's heavily sedated mouth just plain sucks.

Having recently experienced the procedure, it was a pleasant surprise to return to the office and receive the assignment to review those high-wattage, sharp-bladed workhorses of the kitchen—blenders. You see, as anyone who has had their wisdom teeth pulled knows, for approximately a week after the procedure, you are relegated to strictly soft food. That means that the blender quickly becomes your new best friend.

The kitchen blender has been around since 1922, when an industrious gentleman named Stephen Poplawski from Racine, Wisconsin, attached a spinning blade to the bottom of a glass container and plopped a top on it to help him make soda fountain drinks. A lot has changed in the last century, and many blenders are now banging on the food processor's door, crushing ice, fruits, and

vegetables in addition to making shakes. So, wanting to advance our knowledge of the blender and its more recent aesthetic and technological developments, we enlisted the help of someone intimately familiar with the workings of this small yet indispensable kitchen appliance: a bartender.

Duggan McDonnell, 31, began helping quench people's thirsts by distributing wine before moving behind the bar at Wild Ginger, an Asian-fusion restaurant in Seattle, where he first learned to love the blender. "Not only was the food terrific at the restaurant," McDonnell explains, "but we made incredible mango daiquiris, which were our signature drink. We had one blender and we would burn through them constantly. The blades would literally spin off because we were making something like 200 daiquiris a night."

Most users aren't planning on making 200 daiquiris a night, but we still wanted to put an assortment of blenders to the test. We bought all manner of vegetables, yogurt, juice, coffee beans, fruit, and, of course, that versatile mixer, rum, to see what we could whip up.



Waring Pro MBB518 Professional Food and Beverage Blender / \$129.99 / www.waringproducts.com

Professional-quality blender with a trademarked 40-ounce cloverleaf glass carafe; available in numerous colors. Substantial metal base and stainless steel blade, with two-speed toggle switch.

Expert Opinion: This one is very cool looking. Traditional but not stuffy. There is only one switch with two speeds, low and high, which I like. Keep it simple. For the least amount of complexity, it seems to possess the greatest amount of power. It has four means by which to lock the container to the base during blending, so it's safe and secure. Its four blades are very sharp and its tall cylindrical shape is really elegant. It is quite presentable and easy to clean too. All in all, the Waring Pro comes out ahead.

What We Think: Straight out of the box, the Waring Pro adds a certain air of authority to the room. But this shouldn't be surprising, considering the Waring Pro's illustrious history. Building on Poplawski's first blender in 1922, Fred Waring perfected the contraption and debuted it at the National Restaurant Show in 1937; the world was immediately smitten, and we are too. ▶



Bosch MMB 2000 / \$99.99 / www.boschsmallappliances.com

A strong and unique-looking blender, with 600 watts of power, a 56-ounce glass jug, one simple push control button, and nice cord storage.

Expert Opinion: This looks great, very solid and very sturdy. But where are you going to put it? Whether you're behind a bar or at home, this is going to take up a lot of space. I do love the handle, but the container and the base don't look right together. The lid is very difficult to open, which should give you confidence that it won't leak or fly off while blending. Luckily, there is a handy little hole on top that allows you to add additional things as you're blending. With 600 watts, it has a lot of power and really did a great job of liquefying my concoction.

What We Think: The container is one for the ages, but the blender's especially curved base, intended to protect the motor, juts out an additional four inches, which seems excessive. However, we are big fans of the single, push, rotary-dial speed operator that replaces the many buttons normally featured on blenders, which makes cleaning much easier. The retractable cord, simple and super-secure container lock, and four suction cups on the base for extra stability are also big pluses.



Cuisinart SmartPower Premier 600-Watt Blender CBT-500 / \$150 / www.cuisinart.com

600 watts of power in a stainless steel or matte-black finish base, with a 50-ounce glass container. Includes a built-in five-minute timer.

Expert Opinion: Well, you would never really do this, but I fed this one chunks of uncooked, not-quite-ripe butternut squash and livened it up with coconut and ginger syrups. This was a serious challenge, but it got it done. It's important to remember that blenders aren't food processors. Still, it did a decent job acting in that role. I also crushed a lot of ice with this one and it was great in that capacity. It's very economical in terms of space, and the container is really nice and light. It's easy to work with all around.

What We Think: Just the name Cuisinart is enough to inspire confidence in any food-related task we may have to take on. True, we treated this blender (and all of them, for that matter) to tests you should never subject your blender to at home, but the Cuisinart hung tough, giving us a butternut squash drink we'll never forget. Even ice was no obstacle. The Cuisinart's perfectly professional appearance scored points as well.



KitchenAid 5-Speed Ultra Power Blender KSB5CR / \$179.99 / www.kitchenaid.com

Five speeds, multiple color and finish options, and clean touch-control pad. Includes extra-long ice-crushing blades and a handy speed-control guide that walks you through which speed to use when.

Expert Opinion: This is a very serious blender. It's intense. You've got a separate button for each feature—mix, stir, chop, puree, liquefy, off, on, pulse. The top seems to be on quite tight as well, but it actually is much easier to remove than the Bosch's. It really did a number on our fruits and made a stand-up smoothie too. I love how this one looks. It's lean and clean, but it requires more intelligence on behalf of the user—which, when you think about it, how intelligent do I want to be when I approach my blender? This is for the more serious cook.

What We Think: We really like the simple, straightforward appearance. Though there are many options offered, we're willing to put in the time to understand when to chop and when to liquefy. However, we're a little nervous about the cleaning that's bound to come with all the opportunities for food to invade the inner workings of our machine. KitchenAid, however, assures us that the control pad is an impenetrable, easily cleaned feature, and on our few test runs, their claims were proven. ■



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Going, Going, Green



Traci Rose Rider (above) is helping green designers get their start through Emerging Green Builders, an organization she founded to provide sustainable building opportunities for young people entering the industry.

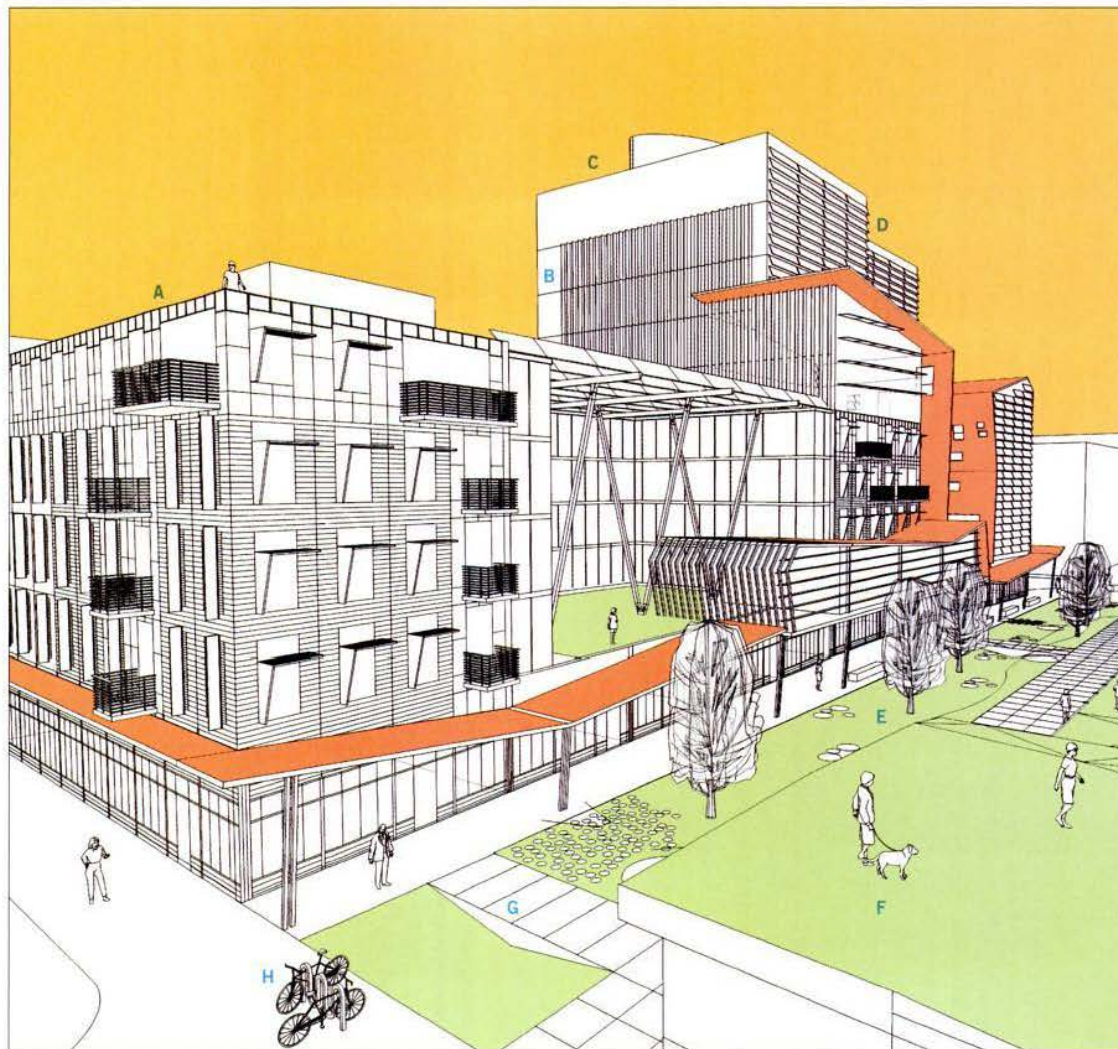
As a new generation of eco-conscious builders comes of age, Traci Rose Rider is leading the charge. The 29-year-old designer is a founding member and the current chairperson of Emerging Green Builders (EGB), a branch of the U.S. Green Building Council. Established in 2002 with the goal of facilitating sustainable building opportunities for young people entering the industry, EGB has been hard at work ever since, nurturing the natural talents of promising designers.

Rider honed her enthusiasm for green design during her first postcollegiate job, at HOK (Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum) in Houston. "I saw all the internal resources [available to utilize green design strategies] that my office already had and realized that no one used or knew about any of them. I was in complete shock! So I became an advocate," she explains.

Like the pied pipers of sustainability, founding members blazed a green trail when they formed the

first EGB committee in 2002 in response to an overwhelming turnout at a Greenbuild conference session focused on students and young professionals. There was a collective outcry over the apparent generation gap between new and seasoned professionals, a problem the EGB founders felt they could solve. EGB has proved to be as beneficial for new builders as for the industry itself, generating significant momentum for the advancement of sustainable design.

In 2003, EGB launched its Natural Talent Design Competition, which aims to encourage and promote the presence of emerging leaders and to recognize their excellence, innovation, and dedication to green principles. Through direct interaction with the all-twentysomething EGB committee members, Rider hopes to show aspiring students through example that "we're essentially them"—and in the process to continue to sow the seeds of green design throughout the world. ■



The first-place winners of the 2004 Natural Talent Design Competition, Gregory Thomson, Amit Price Patel, and Christine Scott of Goody Clancy (Boston), created "Re-Orientation," a multipurpose building for a development in Portland, Oregon, with the goal of limiting the use of nonrenewable resources and maximizing the site's natural assets.

- A Roof gardens
- B Low-flow appliances and fixtures with a leak-detection maintenance plan
- C Green roof
- D Horizontal sunshades on south elevation
- E Native species planted in hydro-zones
- F Viewing hill overlooking main pedestrian path with retail below
- G Porous pavement paths
- H Bike parking and storage

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Vladimir Kagan: Crafting Design

Vladimir Kagan and Erica Wilson sit in their living room on one of his sofas, surrounded by her needlework cushions. Behind them hangs a large painting by Frank Stella.

On a clear crisp morning, furniture designer Vladimir Kagan and needlework designer Erica Wilson share breakfast with me in their 14th-floor Park Avenue apartment. Wilson serves soft-boiled eggs with toast, jams, cheeses, meats, and taramosalata (a Greek caviar spread). Kagan and Wilson have been married since 1956, and have lived in this apartment for three decades. "Breakfast is my favorite time of day," announces Kagan.

Kagan, best known for his chairs, divans, and sectional sofas, escaped Nazi Germany with his family in 1938,

arriving in New York at age 11. His career took off in the '50s and '60s, when he developed his distinct style, mixing modern aesthetics with sculptural woodcraft. Kagan and Wilson's apartment is an endless rabbit warren packed with furniture, artwork, and their home offices. In the living room sits a 1957 Kagan Contour rocking chair upholstered with a Wilson needlepoint of an owl on a tree branch. "We collaborate once in a while," says Kagan, "but our professional lives always have a sort of quiet interaction." ►

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“My father was a master cabinetmaker, and I learned from the wonderful carpenters who worked in his shop.”

You've been together for almost half a century. How did you meet?

It was 1954, and I was on the entertainment committee at the Architectural League of New York. Erica was dating an architect, and he brought her to our annual costume party. She was dressed as a black poodle, and I was a circus roustabout, in a striped blazer and a straw boater hat. We sat next to each other at dinner, but I thought she was married to her date, and she thought the same of me. It turned out we were both unmarried, so I invited her for lunch at my office. The next day when she appeared, my secretary said, “There’s a Miss Wilson here.” I had completely forgotten. I looked out and saw a tall blonde, and we went to lunch. Two years later we married. Since then, our professions interwove. Her work is more traditional, but it has always fit with my style.

I guess you share enthusiasm for craft.

Craft has always been paramount for me, mostly because my father was a master cabinetmaker, and I learned from the wonderful carpenters who worked in his shop. Then I studied architecture, which filled in the missing ingredients—structural science and modern aesthetics. ▶

The multiposition reclining chair (above) and a dining table (right) both date from the mid-'50s, when Kagan's signature biomorphic modernism earned him a distinctive niche in the world of American furniture design. These two pieces were inspired by tree roots, branches, and leaves.



PHOTOS BY KUBIR THANDI (RECLINING CHAIR), COURTESY THE COMPLETE KAGAN / POINTED LEAF PRESS, LLC.

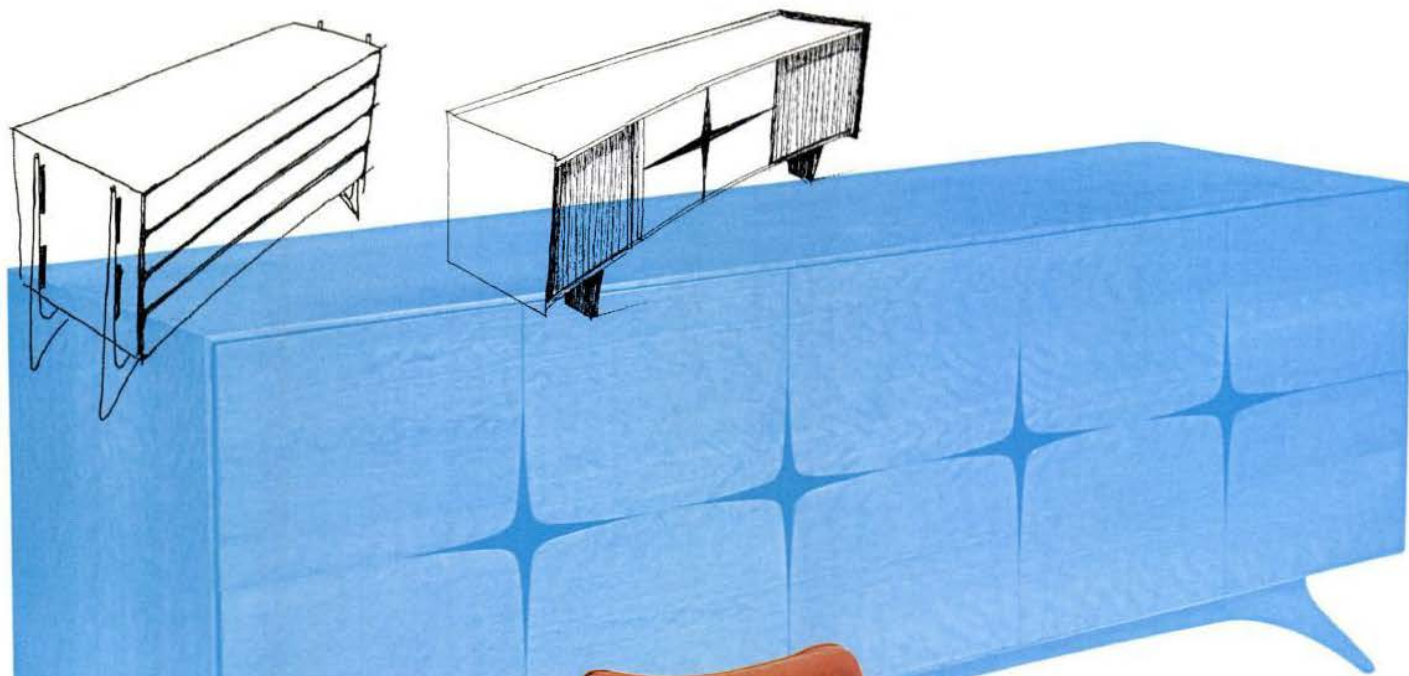
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“I wanted my work to have a 20th-century look, but 18th-century-quality craft. I never rejected the past.”



There's an old German saying, "Honor the craftsman," and I've held it dear. I wanted my work to have a 20th-century look, but 18th-century-quality craft. I never rejected the past.

You're old-school compared to most designers, in that you still submit hand-drawn pen-on-vellum designs to manufacturers. Have you always liked drawing?

Drawing is the most important tool I have: the ability to visualize with pen on paper what a finished product should look like. That was something my father instilled in me when I was very young. He said, "Learn to draw," because he couldn't do it very well. I started drawing pictures from life: trees, landscapes, human figures, and anatomy. At one point I had the vision I wanted to be an artist, but my father said, "You've got to do something practical. You can always paint on the weekend." So drawing became my tool for becoming a designer.

From the 1950s through today, your furniture looks distinctly Kagan. How did you find such a particular style?

After I finished Columbia architecture school in the '40s, I was struggling to combine minimal trends of ▶



Kagan has dreamed up many a credenza in pen-and-ink, like these sketches (above) dating from the '50s. In the same period, one containing ten file drawers—with downright sculptural drawer pulls—adorned a client's office. Decades later, in 1999, his VK chaise for Club House Italia rethought a three-legged chaise from 1958, also with aluminum legs.

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“A lot of my pieces are quite leggy. I like chair and table legs to look delicate but strong.”

modernism with organic shapes from nature. My earliest furniture was very linear. Then I started to fall in love with sinuous contours. By the '50s, my furniture became more sculpturally related to trees and animals. I've always had fun watching young fawns or young horses: the way they stand unsteadily, and in order to steady themselves they splay their legs outward. I thought that posture had an element of strength, which I adapted for my furniture. So a lot of my pieces are quite leggy. I like chair and table legs to look delicate but strong.

What's the latest in Kagan furniture?

I've been designing a seating collection for my Italian manufacturer, Fendi Casa. I came up with new ideas for the Milan furniture fair. But I decided to go to High Point in North Carolina instead, where my sofas for American Leather are on display. We'll go to Europe afterward, to Germany, where I have the most wonderful assignment—to judge a beauty contest at the Kagan Club. It's a marvelous nightclub named after me, and the beauty contest is a promotional event. I didn't do the interior, but they used a lot of my furniture. I figure the reason they named it after me was that in case it failed, no one would know who Kagan was, you see. ■

The Floating Curve sofa and a three-legged table with stem light illustrate the young-fawn effect. Both were built in the mid-'50s, in the East End Avenue workshop Kagan shared with his father. After a fire destroyed the shop in 1972, Kagan opened his own factory in Long Island City, which was operational until the late '80s.



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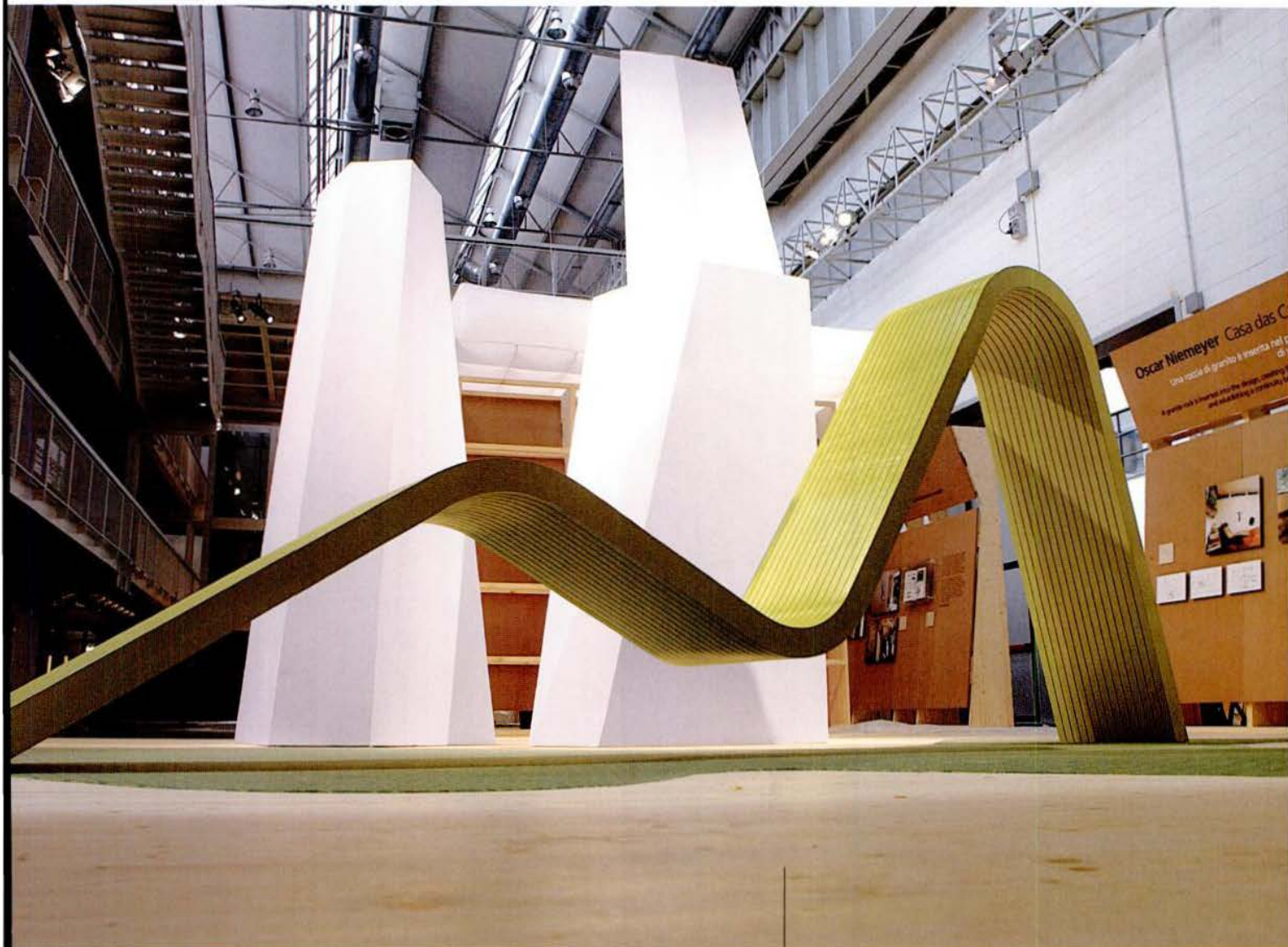
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Milan Furniture Fair

It was a busy spring in Italy: While devout Catholics thronged Rome, several hundred thousand design-worshippers wandered Milan. The fairgrounds hosted the show for the last time; next year it moves to Massimiliano Fuksas's new convention center in the city's outskirts. Satellite exhibits filled every showroom and every inch of abandoned industrial space throughout the espresso-flavored urban jungle.



Entrez Lentement / COSMIT

Named for a phrase Le Corbusier painted at the entrance of Eileen Gray's beach house, "enter slowly," this exhibit paired visual accounts of old masters' houses—including Corbu's Le Cabanon—with sculptural interpretations by current architects. Alvaro Siza's contemplation on Oscar Niemeyer's Casa das Canoas featured a gargantuan chaise (above). ▶

What We Saw . . . Milan



Usame / By Patricia Urquiola for Kartell

At the fairgrounds' Pavilion 4, next door to posh living-room luminaries like Molteni & Co., it was nice to see some furniture a writer could actually afford. The name of these plastic tables, imprinted with a ginkgo-leaf pattern, translates as "use me," and it's a reasonable request, as they're in the \$200 range. www.kartell.com

Hundreds of furniture companies and EuroLuce, the biannual lighting show that alternates with the kitchen-focused Eurocucina, filled the fairgrounds, where visitors wandered through at a snail's pace. Offsite, younger designers served beer and wine at their exhibits in the Zona Tortona, a cluster of buildings on the city's south side.



Phonograph / By Cucumberslab

The iconic Victor Victrola trumpet speaker has been underexposed for almost a century now. Some clever students of the RISD product-design program built an updated version, which plays LPs or MPGs, and stores wine behind a sensor-linked glass door that turns from foggy to transparent at the user's approach. www.cucumberslab.com



H2O installation / Boffi showroom

This year was the modular kitchen company's 70th anniversary, and they commissioned a radical French duo, Naziha Mestaoui and Yacine Ait Kaci, to build mesmerizing setups about two fundamental domestic elements: water and fire. www.electronicshadow.com



Martini glass / By Melody Sirman

The second prize of Bombay Sapphire's annual martini-glass contest went to Melody Sirman, a young Belgian designer whose globular vessel has a form reminiscent of the olive or wee onion one might find floating inside. www.bombaysapphire.com ▶

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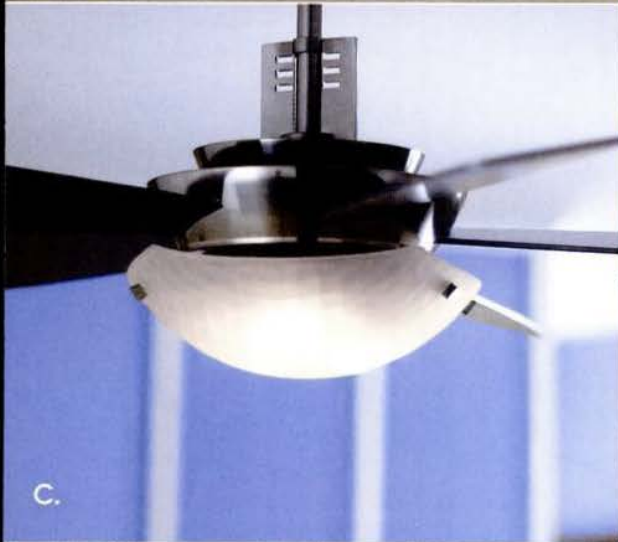
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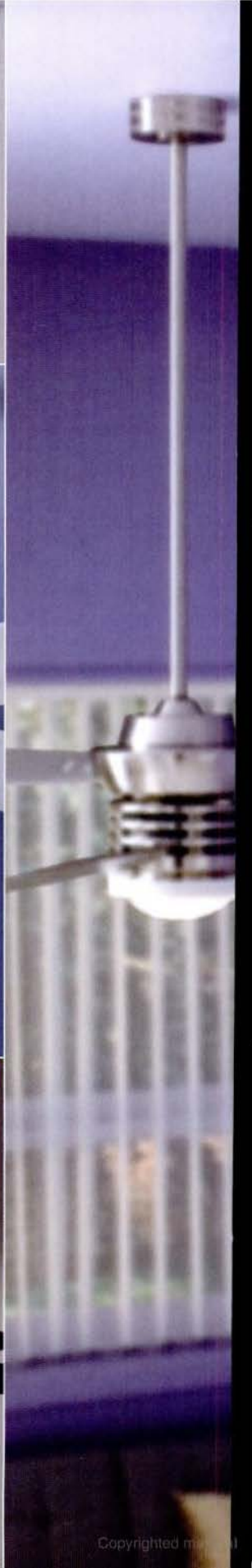
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What We Saw . . . Milan



Globo di Luce / By Roberto Menghi

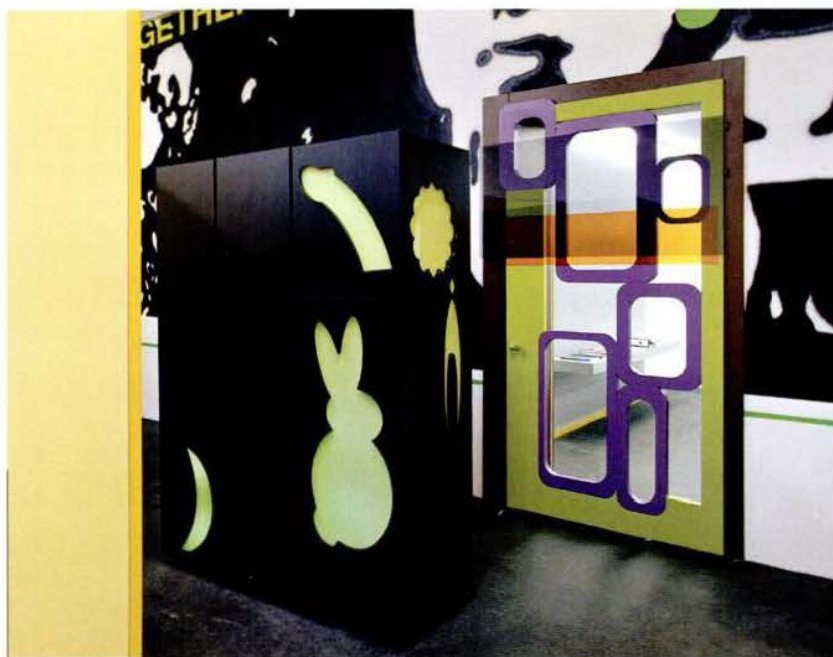
This rerelease from the '60s was just one of Fontana Arte's new offerings at their stand in EuroLuce. Pendant lamps love going retro, and this one, with its crystal-clear, shiny reflective surface, goes there monumentally. www.fontanaarte.it



Hover-Spoon and Fork / By Susana Shaw

Shaw's pieces stood out for their small feat—weighted lever arms help the cutlery perform a bona fide balancing act. Zen moment aside, the clever design encourages new approaches to table setting. www.susanashaw.com

Most Milan residents say the city verges on boring when the fair is not in session; maybe so, but when it is, there's too much to see. Even fashion stores and art galleries get design-enthused, luring visitors away from the fairgrounds and showrooms.



Tobias Rehberger / Gio Marconi Gallery

At the Gio Marconi Gallery, a tidy display of Alexander Calder's sculpture was juxtaposed with a more abstruse installation by Tobias Rehberger, which mixed coy humor with delicate effects of light, color, and transparency. Tel: 011-39-02-29-40-43-73 ▶

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What We Saw . . . Milan

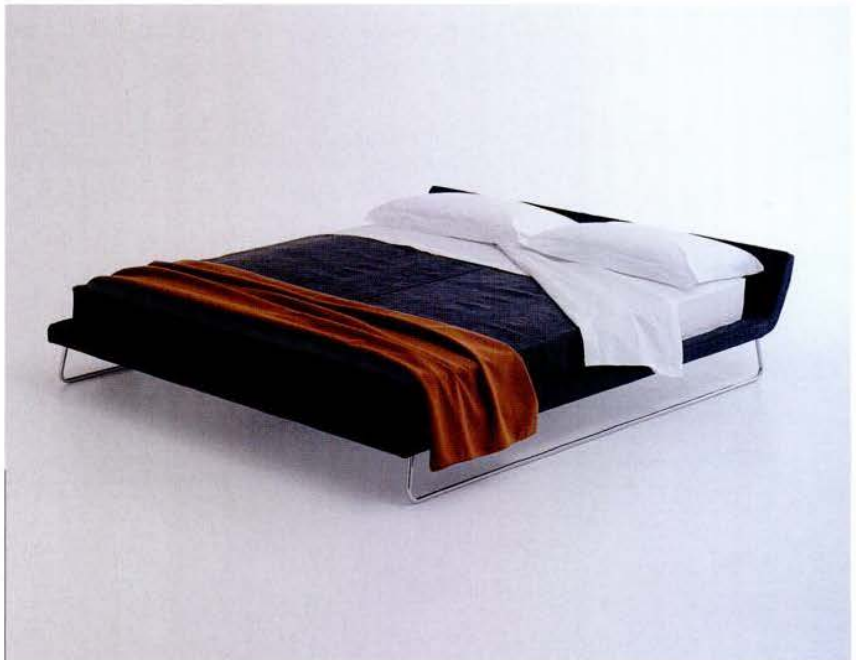


Cortiça / By Daniel Michalik

Rhode Island-based Michalik makes tables, chairs, bowls, and this chaise out of recycled cork—waste material from the wine-stopper industry. He sold several chaises to visitors at his stand in Pavilion 9, designated for young designers. Not only is it environmentally sound, but the cork is tactile and resilient.

www.danielmichalik.com

While the large companies that are the fair's bread and butter brought mixed offerings—at worst, giving in to tacky whims of star designers, and at best, lodged in classic minimalism—interesting work filled the more modest stands of young designers.



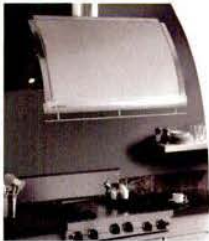
Eleen bed / By Soda Designers for MDF Italia

All kinds of beds wind up at the furniture fair, and some are all too ornate. No such tawdriness at MDF Italia, where the Eleen bed, available in many colors and with a taller headboard, epitomized high-class minimalism. www.mditalia.it ■

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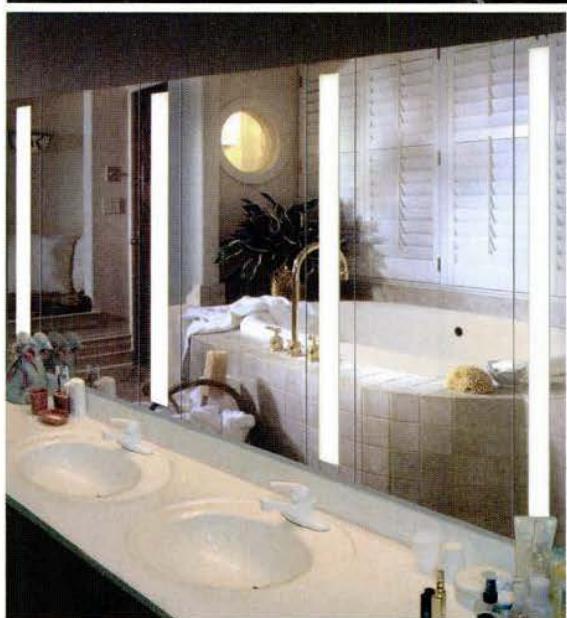
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I'm searching for some lamps for my living room. But I live in the middle of design nowhere and don't have easy access to lighting stores. Can you recommend websites where I can find modern lights?

—Scott Bradley, Norfolk, Nebraska

Although it may seem as if the sole purpose of the Internet is to besmirch your desktop with endless pop-ups, the Web is a miraculous resource for design—if you know where to look. While there's no substitute for testing products in person, the resources listed here prove that the Internet can be a rather illuminating place.

[IKEA / www.ikea.com](http://www.ikea.com)

It's hard not to love this Swedish behemoth for its solid Scandinavian design and bargain-basement prices. Lamps start at \$3.99, and online shopping ensures that you'll avoid the clamoring masses at the stores. Just be forewarned: Some items are only available by making a trek to one of the big blue boxes.

[YLighting / www.ylighting.com](http://www.ylighting.com)

Nearly 40 different Spanish, Italian, and American brands are represented here, from the high profile (Artemide, Flos) to the lesser known (Taller Uno, Cubox). Designs range from iconic pieces like Castiglioni's Arco floor lamp to products made of innovative materials, such as Foscarini's Tite and Mite series, crafted from Kevlar.

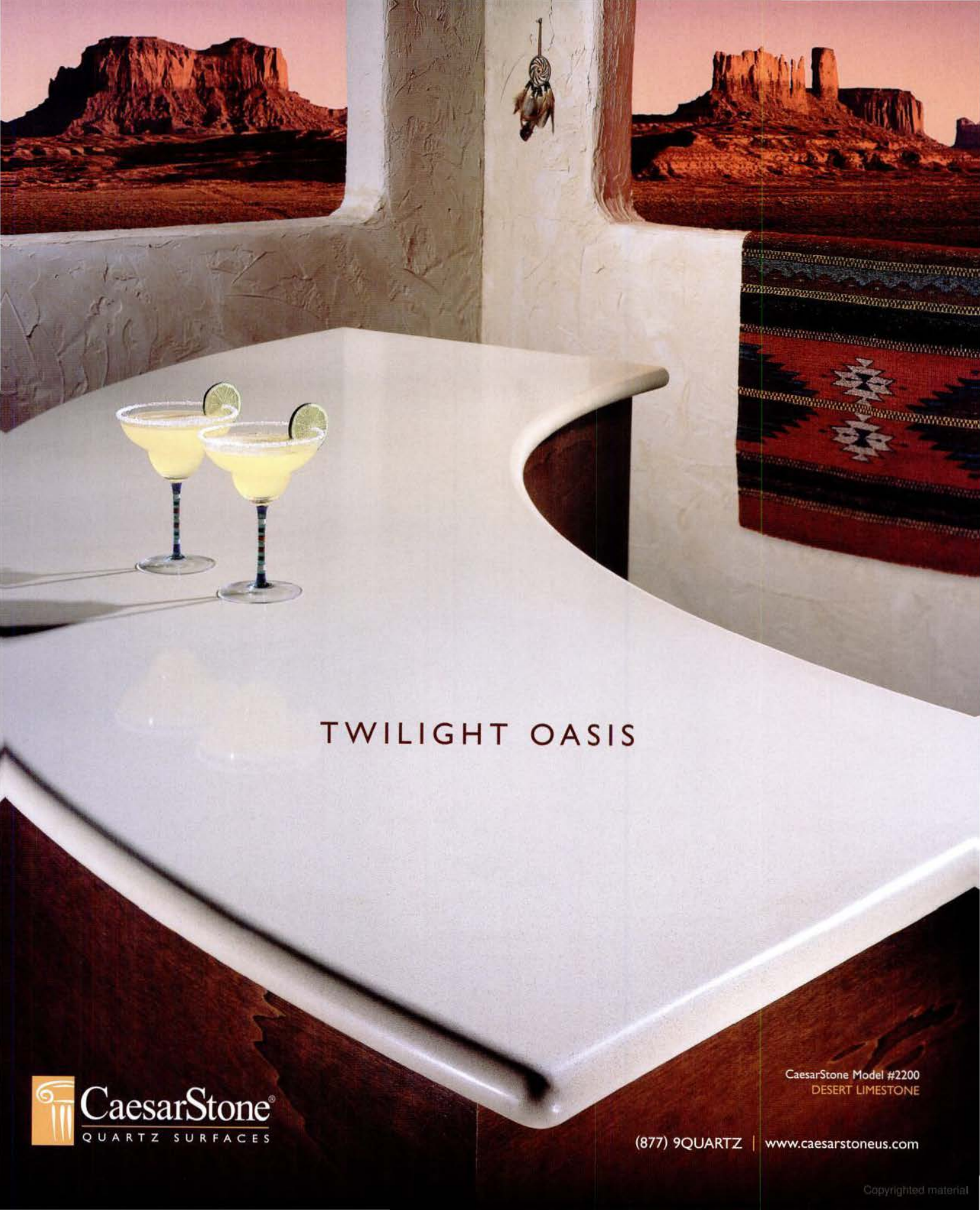
[100watt Network / www.100watt.net](http://www.100watt.net)

roowatt offers up thousands of lights from 14 manufacturers, including Leucos, Venini, and Rolute. The company also has a signature line created by a group of San Francisco and Seattle designers.

[Surrounding / www.surrounding.com](http://www.surrounding.com)

International selections from about 30 companies reach beyond Italy to include inventive lights from Dutch company Moooi and rectilinear products from Canada's Ogus Design. Isamu Noguchi's washi paper lamps from Akari can also be purchased here. ■

Clockwise from top left: Vedum floor lamp, IKEA; Frog pendant, 100watt; ZeroGravity Tripod floor, Surrounding; Zelda pendant, 100watt; Stranne table lamp, IKEA; Artemide Boalum, YLighting; Flos Miss K, YLighting; Luceplan Agaricon, Surrounding. **p. 186**



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Pool Houses: From Laps to Naps

A house, for all of its quirks and eccentricities, is essentially a place within which people undertake the multiple tasks and functions of everyday life. There's a necessity to designing the spaces within a home, because rooms must serve multiple purposes—kitchens are used for cooking, storing food, and congregating; bedrooms are for sleeping and dressing; and bathrooms are for washing and other personal grooming activities. A pool house, on the other hand, is created for a single, hedonistic reason: the pursuit of pleasure.

"Pool houses have a different connotation than main residences," explains principal E. B. Min of San

Francisco-based architecture firm Min/Day. "They have their own lives and don't have to be integrated into the flow of the main house." Rather than including spaces for chores, pool houses provide places for romping and entertainment. Changing rooms, showers, and small kitchens are usually found in these outbuildings, while more licentious designs also have saunas, hot tubs, and bedrooms.

Though undoubtedly an unattainable accessory for many homeowners, in terms of both space and money, it's easy to see why Min says of pool houses, "They're luxuries, but very nice ones, if you can afford them." ►

This public pool house (above) was designed to merge with its park surroundings. Translucent wall materials, floating overhead planes, and plenty of windows let the light in.

Project: Stapleton Neighborhood Pool House

Architect: Semple Brown Design

Location: Denver, Colorado



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Project:
Morgan Pool House
Architect:
Christoff:Finio Architecture
Location:
Long Beach Island,
New Jersey



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A study in contrasts with the stolid stucco main house, this 750-square-foot pool house seems to float lackadaisically on the bluestone terrace. “The pool house speaks of summer,” says designer E. B. Min.

Project:
Burt Pool House
Architect:
Min/Day
Location:
Palo Alto, California



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Colored concrete walls, pivoting glass doors, and a scissor-shaped steel roof maintain the fun and modern feel of this computer-game designer's suburban pool-side shelter.

Project:
Traeger Pool House
Architect:
Dan Phipps Architects
Location:
Woodside, California



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Living on the water is the closest we can get to living *in* the water. On it you are immediately affected by the slightest shift of currents, winds, the constant ebb and flow; every second you are reminded of precisely where you are. Your world is less seen than felt. Perhaps it is this immediacy of the environment that has attracted hundreds of thousands of people to make their homes on sailboats, houseboats, and ships. Or maybe it's just that living on water can be cheaper than living anywhere else on earth.

For the past 150 years, land booms across the U.S. have forced thousands to seek what was once a rent-free refuge on the water. In Seattle, the sudden rapid growth of the logging industry in the 1870s forced workers and ▶

# Liquid Assets

The wonders of living on water are reaching ever-expanding audiences as once-decrepit ships find new lives as stylish and stunning digs.



**Project:** Lundberg Office  
**Architect:** Lundberg Design  
**Location:** San Francisco, California

Ole Lundberg looks out across San Francisco Bay from the deck of his converted Norwegian car ferry. The old car entrance now serves as Lundberg's conference room, complete with floor-to-ceiling windows.





Lundberg's sunny roof deck (above) provides ample opportunity for leisurely pursuits or more business-minded endeavors. The busy San Francisco Bay is the office's backyard.

Inside, a wood-burning stove (right) heats the cavernous interior while the flat-screen television offers visual escape when the weather won't allow for enjoyment of the expansive views on deck.



their families off expensive land and onto "floathouses." When San Francisco was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, people moved to the safe harbor of houseboats, and during the Great Depression, thousands who could no longer afford land moved on to bays, rivers, and lakes. Property on water was free, it offered free food, free views, free "toilets," and plenty of room to expand. In the 1960s and '70s, many houseboat communities were dismantled at the behest of homeowners and real estate moguls trying to boost the value of their oceanfront property. Deemed "ghettos on the waterfront," some communities survived but have never fully recovered.

Today, with even the humblest beachfront property in most metropolitan areas ranging in the millions, some are again returning to the water. The attraction now is economic, aesthetic, and philosophical.

"Here we are in San Francisco, this amazing city surrounded by water, but in most of the city you are totally unaware of it," explains architect Olle Lundberg, founder and CEO of Lundberg Design. "That got me thinking about getting a ship that my wife and I could transform into an office."

For Lundberg, a self-professed "hoarder," spending so much time in the hull of a tiny sailboat had no appeal, but any decent beachfront property in the Bay Area was out of the question. "I liked ships for their scale—plus, they just seem really cool."

Lundberg discovered that buying a ship was actually quite feasible: The world's ports were littered with unused, outmoded ships, all bafflingly inexpensive. "Once a ship outlasts its designed use, it becomes essentially valueless," he explains. "After a while, people are just trying to get rid of them!"

Lundberg contacted a broker, who referred him to a retired 1975 Norwegian-made small car ferry harbored in Isafjord, Iceland. "My wife and I flew over in October of 2001 to check it out. We liked it, and bought it."

Though buying a ferry in Iceland may be easy, getting it to California proved more arduous. Even without considering the costs (which were plenty), the organization necessary to make the seven-week, 7,000-mile journey made the prospect daunting to say the least. But that didn't stop the captain and crew. "I wasn't sure what they'd say when I asked them," says Lundberg, "but they actually loved the idea—I think they felt like Vikings storming into the New World."

In just under two months, the captain, crew, and 450-ton ship arrived unscathed in San Francisco Bay.

Lundberg relays this adventure while seated at a glass table in the former car deck of the ship, which was converted into a conference room. Above the recently installed fireplace are glossy white walls strewn with stenciled red Norwegian signage and a skylight that leads to the upper deck, now used as a patio. Afternoon sunlight floods in past an enormous half-opened retractable glass door at the stern of the ship. "I love it here because it is such an extremely serene existence smack in the middle of the city." As Lundberg talks, a freighter the size of a football field slips across the flickering bay, ▶



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From the roof deck of Quinze & Milan's converted barge, there's little evidence of the sleek spaces created inside.

**Project:** Propatria

**Architect:** Quinze & Milan

**Location:** Amsterdam, The Netherlands

its distant perspective making it appear as if it is exactly entering his left ear and exiting his right. It is impossible to imagine a more stunning work space.

In Amsterdam, city dwellers have been living on converted ships for decades. With land as scarce as it is expensive, and with seemingly as many canals as there are streets, living on water has become the natural—and sometimes only—option for the swelling population.

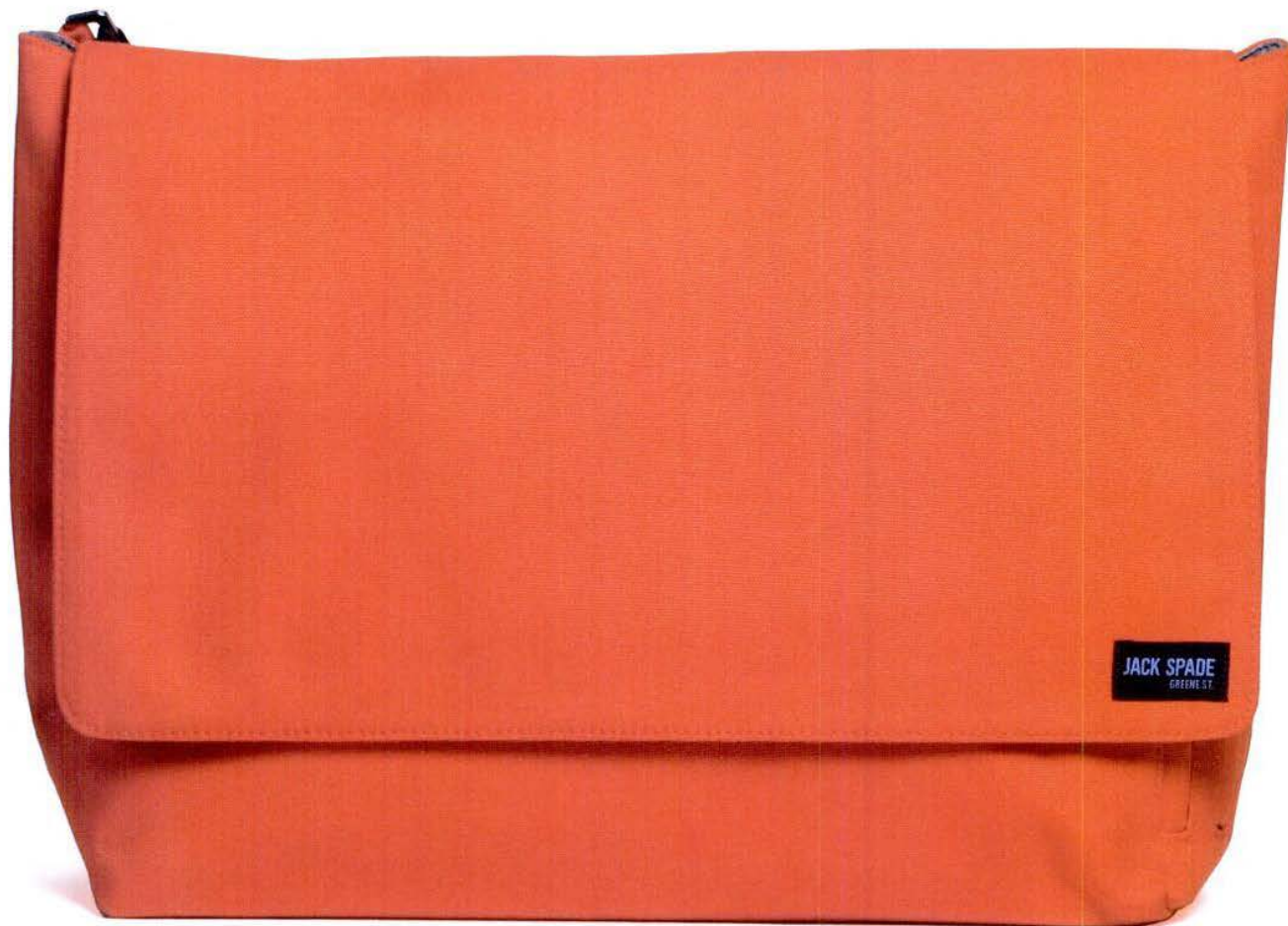
“Water is the new real estate,” claims Arne Quinze, self-styled futurist, “creator of atmosphere,” and founder of the Belgium-based design company Quinze & Milan. “People don’t consider houses near the water because they are so expensive, and no one thinks of the space on the water,” Quinze explains. “They should, it’s the most beautiful place to live!”

But living on barges or working ships can be a claustrophobic existence. Narrow halls, few windows, low doors, and tiny rooms may make for an efficient, seaworthy vessel, but often translate to dark, dank, and awkward living spaces. “We tried to create a loft feeling in the ship, make it livable,” Quinze explains, describing his recent redesign of the *Propatria*, a 50-year-old retired ▶



In Amsterdam, Quinze & Milan's converted ocean barge has raised the standards of houseboat aesthetics.





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Quinze & Milan's minimalist furniture (above) adds to the *Propatria's* luxe living quarters. Small portholes throughout the space bring in natural light.

The kitchen (below right) is so nice it's easy to forget that you're docked on the murky waters of the Port of Amsterdam.

The entertainment console (right) helps relieve any tedium one might encounter onboard. Full-size portholes lining the south wall help open the interior to the surrounding waters.

barge in the Port of Amsterdam. To create more open space, he began by removing the 17,000-pound engine and cockpit areas and raising the doors; multiple windows were added to maximize the natural light.

The clients, a young family, were also concerned about privacy. Quinze's solution was to create a number of modular panels, each folding in and out of walls to either open or close rooms off. "The most difficult part of making a ship livable, though, is keeping it warm," Quinze explains. For this purpose, he developed a heating and cooling system that pumps hot water through the ship's walls in winter and cold water in summer.

Completed in 2004, the *Propatria* has over 3,000 square feet of adaptable interior living space with an additional 1,600 square feet of outside terrace space. And most impressive, after all this, it still floats. "When you're out there on the water," Quinze says, "you feel like every day is a vacation."

The connection to the elements. The horizonless backyard views. The industrial-scale living space. Of all the benefits to living on water, none compares to the freedom it seems to offer. As Olle Lundberg likes to say, "If we ever get bored of being here, we can just sail away!" ■





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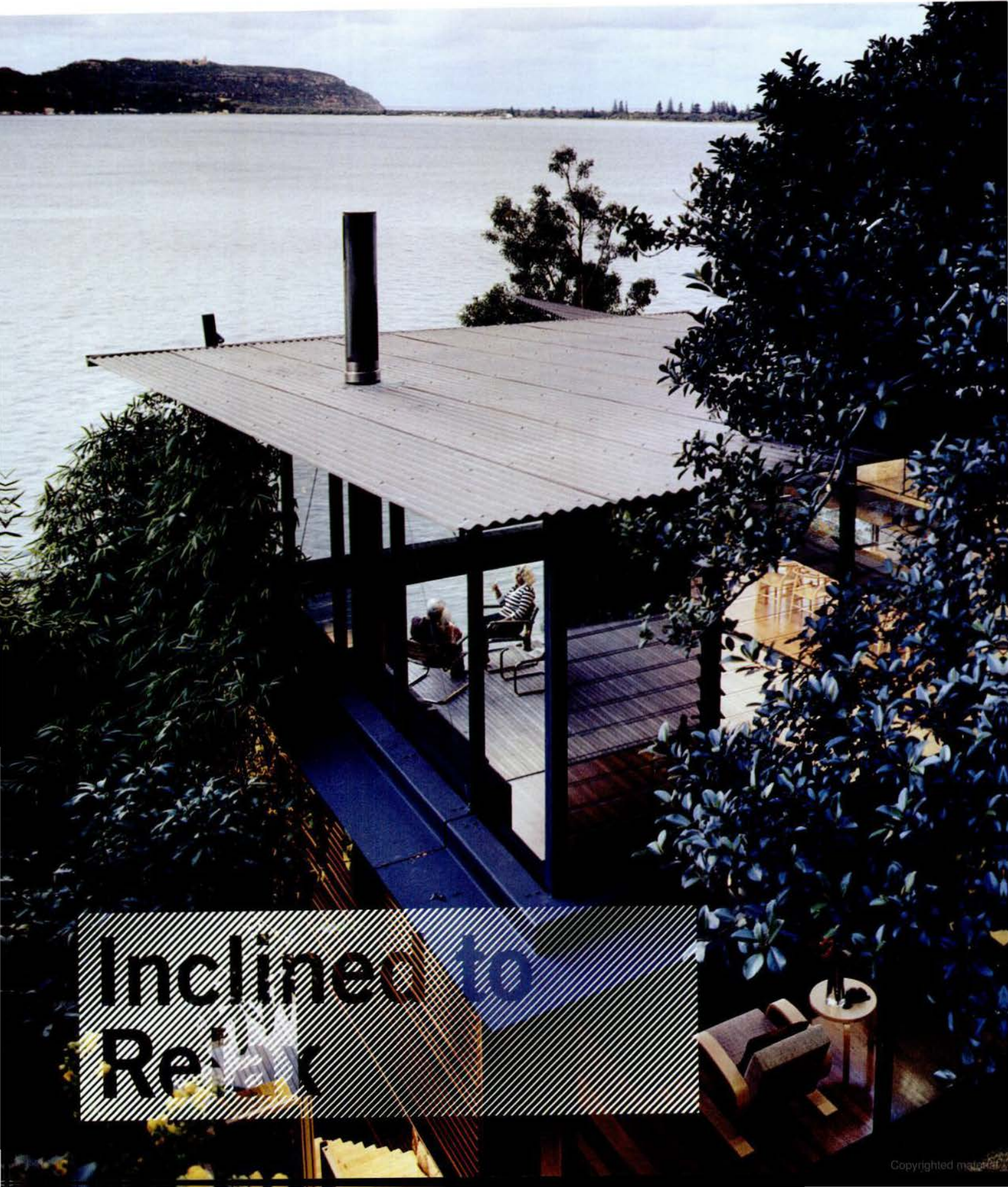
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# Inclined to Relax





The three structures that make up the James-Robertson residence are framed in black-coated aluminum and steel. The living room structure (left) soars to two stories, with banks of glass louvers (next page) at the upper level providing cross ventilation.

Because of the commanding presence of Jørn Utzon's iconic Sydney Opera House, few visitors to Australia ever bother to discover the other two great harbors of this Pacific Rim city: Pittwater to the north and Port Hacking to the south. But the locals know better. Though directionally distinct, the harbors' similarities make both much-sought-after sanctums. Both are about an hour's drive from downtown Sydney. Both have palm- and eucalyptus-shaded shores dotted with weatherboard cottages and brick mansions. And perhaps most important, both are occupied by residents who have found fragments of paradise.

Some of the luckiest watersiders call Great Mackerel Beach home. Accessible only by water or (impractically) by hours of bushwhacking down a steep cliff, this village on Pittwater is a haven for the adventurous.

To get to Mackerel, you have to take a chugging ferry from Palm Beach, near the tip of Sydney's northern peninsula, across the bay. On the other side, you're deposited at the end of a long jetty that leads to the center of the beach. Upon arrival, you can simply drop your bags in a wheelbarrow conveniently provided for locals and guests. It's also here that you might spot architect Rob Brown and furniture designer Caroline Casey and their kids in the garden of their simple but stylish shack, famous locally for its quirky tree house.

From Brown and Casey's abode, it's an uphill climb to the residential enclave they've created in collaboration with their clients and friends, Marcia and Dougal James-Robertson. Set high on a cliff along the south end of the beach, this residence of three glass-and-copper pavilions offers a mighty reward for conquering the steep ascent.

When you arrive at the base of the James-Robertson's site, you understand immediately why the locals call it ▶

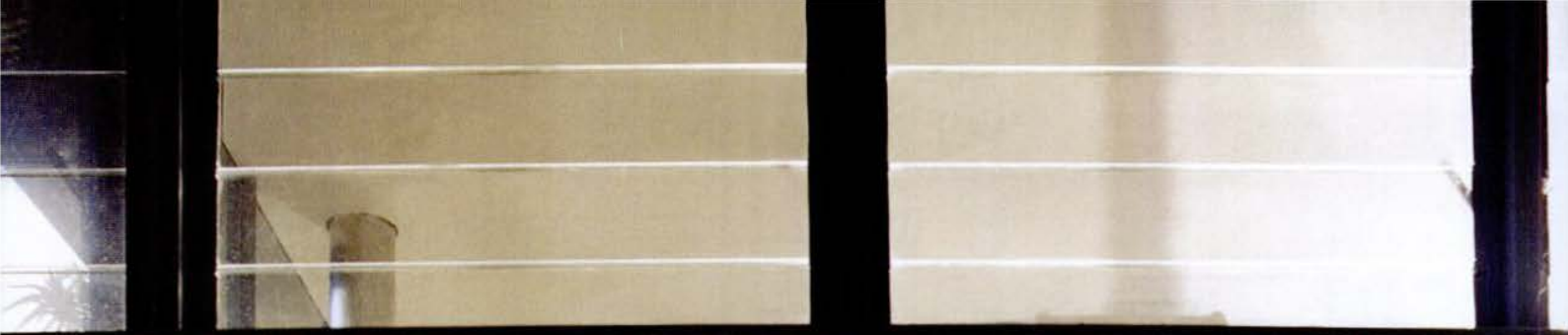
Hidden on a hill overlooking Australia's Pittwater Bay, Rob Brown's design for the James-Robertson house happily opens itself (and its occupants) to all that Mother Nature can dish out.

**Project:** James-Robertson Residence

**Architect:** Dawson Brown Architecture

**Location:** Great Mackerel Beach, Australia







Alcatraz. Towering above you like the isolated island prison in San Francisco Bay is a massively intimidating wall of stone—a formidable barrier that must be overcome to reach the peak. Retaining the entire property from potential landslides, its ten-foot-thick walls were built with 11,000 chunks of sandstone excavated directly from the 50-degree slope. To meet the city council's stringent anti-noise requirements, the edifice had to be constructed without any mechanized tools. As Rob Brown recalls, "For over six months, the stonemasons were literally chipping away at the stone all day—the place sounded like Carrara." Adds Marcia, "Our builder had 22 laborers walk off this job—the site was so steep and difficult."

But the work was well worth it, which becomes exceedingly obvious as the home reveals itself during your journey up. A flat path of timber boards, bordered with white gravel, leads you around the back of a steel-framed glass shed that hovers lightly above the ground. From here, turn a corner and step up more treads of sandstone to a timber deck that floats between two of the three transparent pavilions. Ahead lies an astounding aerial vista normally familiar only to pilots and birds. The expansive bay of Pittwater, dotted with yachts, stretches out below, while the flat ribbon of the northern peninsula, with its bush-clad headland, slices through the blue waters. The lush land is topped by the blinking Barrenjoey Lighthouse—and beyond, the vast Pacific meets the sky.

Safely ensconced in what they tellingly refer to as their "glass tents," Marcia, a property and lifestyle analyst, and Dougal, a wine importer and distributor, are at one with the mysterious weather patterns in the midst of this awe-inspiring scene. Former owners of a viewless cottage ▶



Caroline Casey designed the curving dining table (top right), which is surrounded by Hans Wegner's Wishbone chairs. Suspended above the table is an old Aboriginal fishing trap. **▶ p. 186**

Dougal James-Robertson studies the expansive views that extend all the way to the Barrenjoey headland many miles away with the use of a handy telescope. The sliding glass wall makes the kitchen feel like an outdoor room.







The view from the house and a view of the house: Dougal James-Robertson explains that with all the glass doors open, the couple is "fully in touch with whatever's happening naturally." Contrary to what the images here portray, this is not always a good thing, as the weather can pack a wallop with intense rain and wind.











near Mackerel's village green, their perception of nature has changed dramatically since moving into their new house. These days, it's not about watching ducks frolicking in the creek, or listening to possums stalking the trees and roofs at night. Now the James-Robertsons marvel at nature writ large. "The doors are open and there's a northeaster blowing," Dougal says. "The colors of the sky and the qualities of the light are always different. The moods are amazing."

Their home's trio of skillion-roofed sheds fits within the high-tech modernist style of architecture that emerged in Sydney during the 1980s and '90s, following Pritzker Prize-winning architect Glenn Murcutt's adaptations of Mies van der Rohe's classic glass box. The James-Robertson house pays obvious homage to Murcutt's (and Mies's) work but includes a number of innovations, including the use of corrugated copper roofs on the pavilions and on some wall panels. Aside from its structural appeal, one big advantage of this material is its red-brown patina, which blends with the muted natural colors of the land—a blessing for neighbors whose homes overlook the property from higher up the hill.

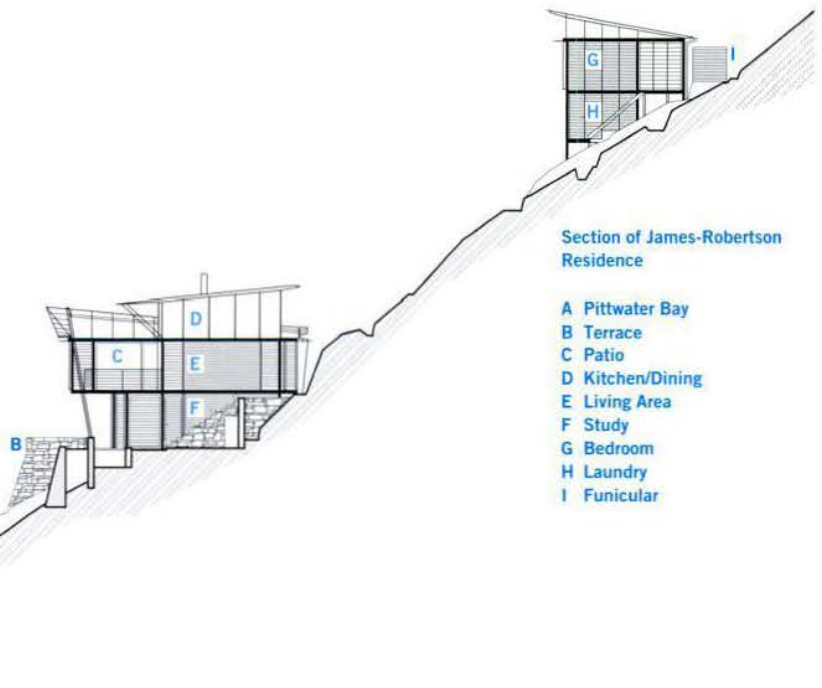
With the buildings' black aluminum-and-steel frames, the red-brown of the copper, the teak timber decks, and the landscaping of the arrival path, the architects have created a sense of both naturality and nauticality. There's an atmosphere that links the architecture and quintessentially Australian location and light qualities to certain ancient sensibilities of Japan. At night, indirect lighting from fixtures installed along select roof eaves and interior walls increases the drama.

Inside, the house is less precarious, though no less dramatic. The side-by-side living pavilions contain a ▶



The James-Robertsons' perilously steep funicular (opposite) transports people (here, Marcia) up and down a track between the living pavilions and the upper sleeping pavilion. Between the two levels, a garden of helicopter-delivered pandanus palms is taking root.

At top right, the family dog enjoys the shade provided by the corrugated-copper roof overhangs.







guest suite, study, wine cellar, and plant room on the ground level, with living, dining, and cooking areas above. The upper sleeping pavilion contains a laundry room on the lower level and a master bedroom above.

Interiors are furnished with only a few pieces of freestanding furniture, designed to float above the floors to enhance the impression of continuous space. Caroline Casey, Mackerel Beach's star furniture designer, however, was still able to contribute quite a bit to the project, designing the couple's dining table, bed, and cabinetry and bringing in a unique personal flavor. Also notable is the custom-made fiber-optic barber pole light sculpture installed on the main deck: Its programmable effects of colored light can be seen from the mainland and tip a wink to the historic lighthouse at the tip of Barrenjoey headland.

Apart from an Alvar Aalto leather sofa and armchair and dining chairs by Marcel Breuer and Hans Wegner, all other furniture is wall-mounted to free up floor space. The most prominent installations are the fireplace and stereo cabinet, with its sliding doors of stainless steel mesh, and the stainless steel cabinets and shelving in the kitchen and walk-in pantry. Terrazzo basins and showers of floor-to-ceiling frosted glass round out the bathroom.

Loving their new life on high, the James-Robertsons still commute to their professional roles in the city, lugging their briefcases and laptops along the beach to the ferry or water taxi. But when they get home, they open themselves to the weather. As Dougal explains, "We're just living from day to day here. We open all the glass doors so we're fully and completely in touch with whatever's happening outside. You definitely need a sense of adventure, but really we're living in a dream." ■



Even the master bath (top left) is open to the surrounding water. From the master bedroom (left), it's a short trot to the wild landscape that their dog experiences even more intensely in his house just outside the bedroom door.

Marcia takes in the view (opposite). Caroline Casey designed the bed and built-ins in the master bedroom.

➔ p. 186







# Go with the Flow





**Project:** Lavaflow 2  
**Architect:** Craig Steely  
**Location:** Kehena, Hawaii

Along the ever-expanding coastline of Hawaii's Big Island, an architect and his family exchange fast-paced city life for a different kind of flow—the geological kind.

**It's somehow appropriate that my trip to Hawaii, one of the most relaxing destinations in the world, should begin with a mad dash to the airport. My flight leaves at 8 a.m.—it's 7:05 and I just woke up. I grab my bags and hurtle off toward my car. I make the plane, but just barely, and drift to sleep as we head out over the Pacific.**

When I come to a few hours later, my ears adjust to the conversation of couples beginning romantic getaways and businessmen boasting of golf retreats. Outside, the white haze rising from the horizon gives way to a deep blue mass of land. I'm bound for Hilo, on Hawaii, the island that comprises the largest mountain on earth, most of it under the sea. After the plane's shaky touchdown, the Hilo airport provides the unique welcome I had anticipated. A muggy breeze flutters through the long open-air walkway, painted an unfashionable brown and lined with weathered olive-green Eames fiberglass shell chairs; the mid-century atmosphere serves as a modest reminder of air travel's youth and the oddity of a state in the union situated some 2,390 miles from the contiguous coastline.

Even the Big Island has not completely avoided the pitfalls of the modern world, adding 35,000 residents in the last 15 years and, accordingly, strip malls that could be Anywhere, USA. Architect Craig Steely, his wife ▶



**It's mid-morning on the lanai. Cathy reads a Dr. Seuss book to Zane while Craig chats with a client about a project he's working on back in San Francisco.**







Cathy Liu, a painter, and their two-year-old son Zane are three of those new residents, having first come to the island six years ago, and now splitting their time between a home base in San Francisco and what one could call a remote-access network here. Following a set of hastily compiled directions, I pilot the rental car in the direction of Craig and Cathy's recently completed house on the island's southeastern Puna coast.

As I turn off the main route, and with the sun casting an orange glaze from low in the sky, on cue the surroundings transform from vaguely tropical to dense jungle. The road narrows to one lane, and oncoming cars veer onto the red dirt shoulder to pass. I miss a turn and end up facing a boat ramp in a place named Pohoiki, a popular surf spot. Under windswept palms a haphazard labyrinth of tents and blue tarps has taken root; a lone rooster patrols the gravel parking lot.

Back on the assigned route, I pass a subdivision called Sea View that Craig had identified as a get-ready-to-look-for-the-turnoff landmark, noting the home built and painted to look like a medieval stone castle. Finally Cathy and Craig's house, as I had seen it in so many emailed photos, appears on the horizon.

The house is impossible not to notice, thanks in part to its siting on a lava flow. The Big Island is the youngest island in Hawaii's chain, and is in a constant process of expansion and regeneration. The flow here in Kehena occurred in 1955, after a vent from the Kilauea volcano unleashed a slow coastal-bound pour of molten lava. In the same era, lava flowing from other vents covered a famed six-mile-long black-sand beach; more recently, during the 1990s, a flow destroyed the main road linking this side of the island with the Kona side.

Although less adventurous people would question the logic of choosing to build on a recently active lava flow, Craig and Cathy have embraced the experience. In 1999, Craig, who'd never previously been to Hawaii, came to Kehena to look at the site for a San Francisco client's second home. He called Cathy almost immediately, and told her they were going to buy land here. A year later they ended up with a half-acre lot with an ocean view.

The San Francisco client's house came to be known as Lavaflow 1. Craig and Cathy live in Lavaflow 2. Lavaflow 3, a house for a librarian and a choreographer from Chicago, is in the primary phases of construction, and the site for Lavaflow 4, which sits in a dense kipuka (an island of vegetation that the lava chose to avoid), was just cleared. Cathy jokes about the "Steely subdivision."

While the designs vary in scope and scale according to the clients' desires and individual sites, each house is set upon a concrete foundation in the a'a lava flow. The dark black a'a, which has a highly porous and knife-sharp surface, resembles a demented oversize gravel driveway. Ferns sprout out of it irregularly like weeds. I pull into the actual driveway of Lavaflow 2 and the car's tires rumble on the lunarlike surface.

I'm greeted by an exuberant toddler and Craig with a pitcher of mai tais. Cathy puts the finishing touches on a batch of coconut rice and we all sit on the lanai grilling ▶



"Concrete guru" Mike Lynch helped pour the foundation into the a'a lava (opposite). The steel frame was erected by Richard Jones, who usually works on big-box stores in Honolulu.

A small room divider (top) offers a place to hang Cathy's painting *Pelevision*, which was inspired by her first trip to the island. Above, Zane plays on a fuchsia Della Robbia sofa. **p. 186**





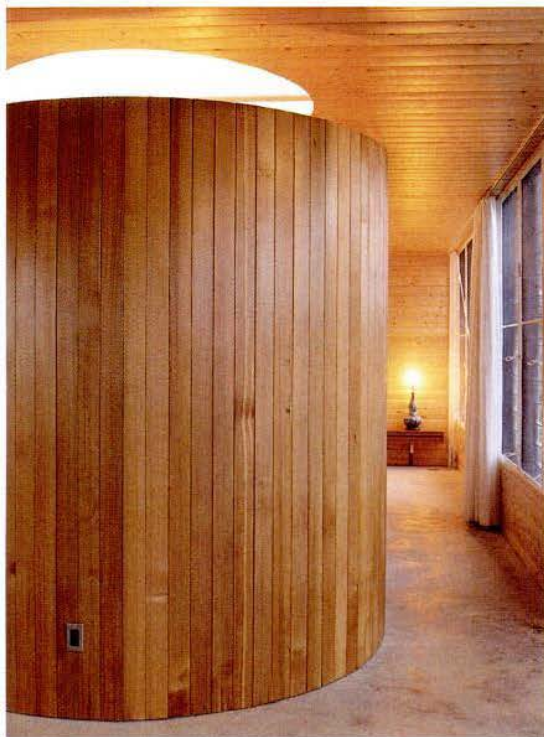
The screen around the lanai is made from extreme, a material used by the military for radio towers. The welded-steel sculpture, set atop a pile of a'a rocks, was made by Craig.





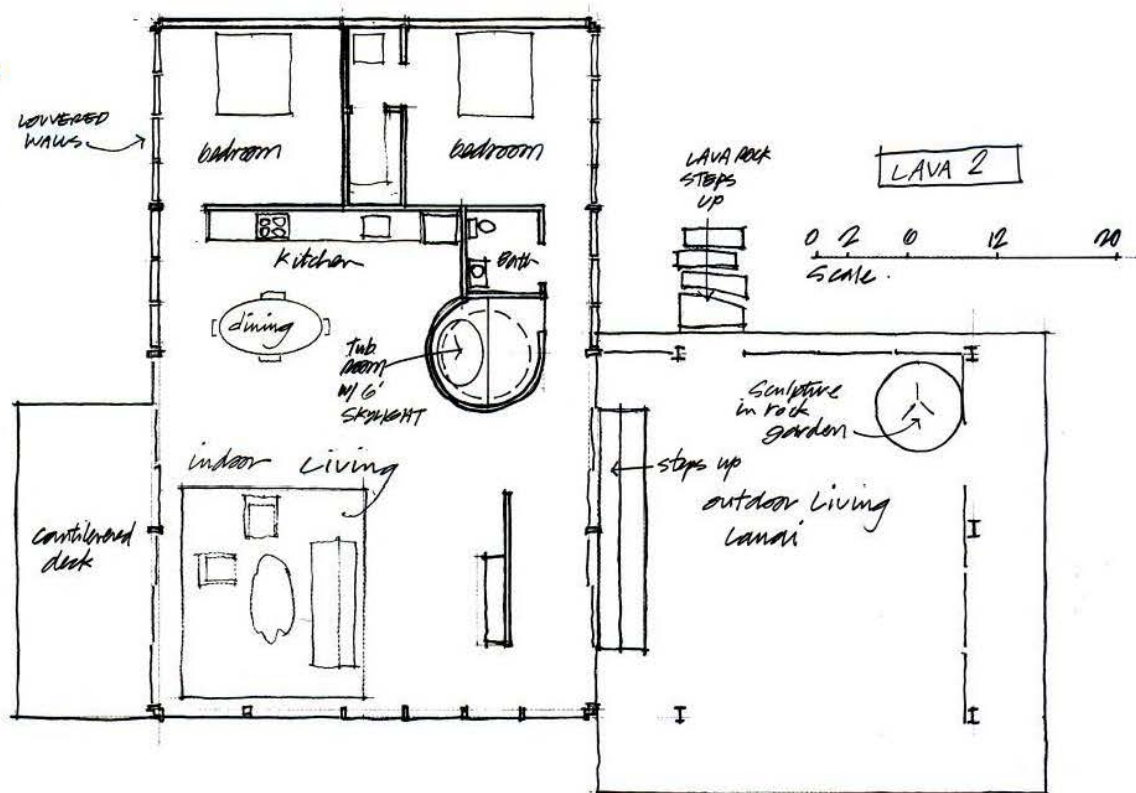
The X-shaped support in the steel frame acts exactly like the smaller version you might find on a bookshelf—helping maintain the frame's rigidity and tensile strength. Cathy models a vintage Thai muumuu.





The tub room sits at the end of the hallway leading to the bedroom, and serves as a visual centerpiece from almost every area of the home. The steel frame bisects the opening for the six-foot-wide skylight.

"I only made about six drawings for the whole house," Craig explains. He drew this plan for Dwell.



teriyaki pork. "This is the most dangerous house in the world for a two-year-old," Craig jokes as I continually lasso Zane from the edge of the concrete foundation. (On the other side of the house, a cantilevered balcony with no railing to speak of offers an even more severe opportunity for misfortune.) "But this is great for him," Cathy chimes in. "In the city there are a lot of 'no's'; here I don't care if he runs around and puts rocks in his mouth."

The house, though sparsely furnished, feels instantly warm and relaxing. A Nesso lamp on a highly polished burl-wood table casts an orange glow throughout the open-plan living space. The pine-covered walls and ceilings are reminiscent of the Sierra foothill cabins of Craig's youth, while the large expanses of glass set into the steel frame suggest a master class in mid-century modernism. Although there are precedents, the house feels timeless—there are no awkward details by which one could pigeonhole a date.

The next morning we engage in one of the family's favorite activities, moving rocks. Craig and I haul large pieces of a'a, building a gentle slope up toward the lanai. Around lunchtime we head across the flow, crossing the road, and down an ancient path that leads to the only remaining black-sand beach on this side of the island.



The strong tide and steep drop-off make for a severe undertow, but that doesn't keep a handful of naked hippie dropouts and promiscuous Italian tourists from working on their tans.

As we walk back to the house through the neighborhood, Craig points out some of the architectural oddities, and fills me in on "the ten-year plan." "A lot of people move out here, start building something, get shelter over their head, and get lazy about finishing it off," Craig says, though Lavaflow 2 had a self-imposed deadline—Zane's one-year baby luau, a Hawaiian tradition. Minutes before the first guests arrived, Craig was putting the finishing touches on the lava staircase that leads to the lanai. "I could run an architecture and fertility clinic," he jokes. "All my clients seem to get halfway through a project and then have a kid." He speaks with firsthand experience—construction started in 2001 and Zane was born in 2003.

We run into some local characters on our walk and Craig tells them he lives in "the gas station house." They all seem to understand. When the concrete foundation was first poured—during a marathon session in which seven mixers had to drive the 45 minutes from Hilo while Craig fretted over the prevailing weather—most passersby mistook the concrete structure for an air-sea rescue pad to serve the nearby beach. Until the baby luau,

most people thought the vast concrete expanse of the lanai was the future carport.

Even after a short time I get the sense that the days here move at a different pace, with priorities centered around three square meals, moving rocks, going to the beach (and, in Craig's case, surfing), and, most important, hanging out with Zane. Our conversations range from the merits of Kraftwerk's *Ananas Symphonie* (a long, droning piece featuring waves of Hawaiian guitar that we listen to on repeat throughout the day) to how Craig and Cathy met while they were both studying in Florence—Craig with Cristiano Toraldo di Francia of the famed Superstudio.

Unlike the popular tourist destinations, and despite a recent building boom, Kehena maintains an air of Hawaii's more rugged past. "Some people come out here and they don't want to be bothered. They don't get the place and they fight it," Cathy tells me. "*Haoles*," Craig adds, expanding my Hawaiian vocabulary with the term for outsiders. Even though Craig and Cathy are technically haole, they've embraced the local culture wholeheartedly, laughing off its foibles (Spam as a delicacy) and reveling in its pleasures (too many to name).

The next day we head out to the warm ponds in the village of Kapoho to do some snorkeling. A giant green ▶



Eddy Uritani (or Uncle Eddy, as he's known to Zane) did all the tile work in the kitchen and bathroom. The tiles come from a Canadian company called Interstyle. **E** p. 186



The concrete floor takes on a silky appearance in the kitchen and dining areas. The Gideå table is from IKEA, the Karim Rashid Oh chairs are from Umbra, and the Erik Magnussen kerosene Ship's lamp is by Stelton.





When Cathy and Craig bought the land, it was completely bare. With plenty of sun and rain, these palms have grown a lot in the last two years.



The lava rock used for the steps was cut on a giant saw near Hilo. Craig finished assembling the staircase just in time for Zane's one-year baby luau.

A vintage suspended wall unit serves as a home office (opposite). Cathy demonstrates the "third bedroom"—a three-person hammock from Oaxaca.

sea turtle moves as though it were some sort of submerged bird, while a bevy of brightly colored fish dart in and out of the rocks. Craig points out an older Hawaiian housing type, single-wall construction, which in its simplicity served as an inspiration for Lavaflow 2. After an initial frame is up and the roof is on, one-inch-thick tongue-and-groove boards are placed vertically to form the interior and exterior wall (with no open space for termites to mingle, though they do still mingle). A sort of wooden belt is then added to support the roof and keep everything from moving around. It's this sort of brevity and working within the context of a unique environment to which Craig has become attuned over the last six years, and now applies to all of his projects.

"You're working with a pretty harsh climate, so you don't want to try to do too much," the architect tells me. "It's not Martin Denny out here," he jokes as the rain flies in horizontally. "It's more like *Deliverance*."

That night Cathy sits at the dining table under the kerosene lamp painting an "aloha rock" in her signature Fillmore Auditorium poster-meets-Matisse cutout script (visit the homes of any of the couple's island friends and neighbors and you'll spot Cathy's rocks). Craig sits on the floor sewing up a hole in a new surfboard bag. "People think I can't be doing good work because I'm not stressed

out. . . 'Oh, he surfs.'" He continues, "When you're an architect, there's all this pressure to do a house, then a fire station, then a whole city block. I don't get that. Why can't you just get really good at doing one thing?"

As the conversation points back to the unique site, Craig tells me, "It's not a matter of if the lava could come back—it will." Adds Cathy, "It just makes living here more special. You enjoy it every day, and it's great to share." "Lava could surround the house tomorrow and it would have been worth the experience of being here," Craig says. "Actually, it would make for a great picture, but I just hope it will hold off long enough for Zane to really enjoy it."

The next day, halfway through lunch I check my airline ticket, only to realize what I had thought was the departure time was in fact the arrival time in Honolulu. I grab my bags and, suffering an all-too-real case of *déjà vu*, make a mad dash to the airport in Hilo. Not being able to enjoy my final moments on the island, or go through an extended goodbye with the family, somehow seems perfect (if not just for the irony of the situation): While Zane will grow out of his high chair and diapers and the island constantly alters its coastline with the lava flow, my view into Cathy and Craig's Hawaiian world will be forever preserved in my mind. ■







# Off the Beaten Path





Two Black Sheds incorporates all the conventional aspects of a weekend retreat in a rather unconventional way. A wooden stair (inset) leads from the house down to a dramatic view of Lake Superior.

A dramatic departure from your typical cabin on the lake, this unique retreat adds shades of black to a tiny island awash with local color.

**Project:** Two Black Sheds

**Architect:** David Salmela

**Location:** Madeline Island, Wisconsin

Architect David Salmela describes the “Two Black Sheds” he designed for Bruce Golob and Jean Freeman as a pair of frisky, barking dogs that “want you to go up and pet them.” The analogy is not only charming but apt. The sheds—really a bifurcated cabin centered on a plinth—come off as coy one minute and impish the next, but constantly radiate contentment.

Golob and Freeman, whose primary residence is in Minneapolis, chose to build their vacation cabin on Madeline Island, a few miles off the coast of Wisconsin. The pair made a trip there “by accident” one summer, says Golob. “As soon as we stepped off the ferry, we found ourselves in another world.” The tiny island, one of many in Lake Superior, has a year-round population of 200, which swells to 4,000 in the summer months. “It’s never going to be Martha’s Vineyard,” Golob says, implying that this is all to the good.

The couple—he’s a retired schoolteacher, and she’s a consultant—had been looking for some time for a place to build a small retreat. And on Madeline Island, they found it: four and a half acres of forest and meadows overlooking the lake. Back in Minneapolis, Freeman sought out the Duluth-based Salmela, whom she knew by reputation. But scheduling the initial meeting ►





## Dwellings

wasn't easy. The self-taught architect, who says he'll take on any commission that strikes him as interesting, was busy with other projects, but once they finally met, it was serendipitous. "That first time, we spent four hours with him, at the end of which Jean had tears in her eyes," says Golob, to which Freeman adds, "We adore David."

At that first meeting, Golob and Freeman had expressed a desire for a house that was simple and didn't involve a lot of work. "Another priority was having a space where everything worked together," says Salmela, "so that when you're cooking, you can visit just as well as if you're sitting down and talking to someone. That's a modern idea, but it's also a very old one. Primitive buildings were usually single rooms to which other rooms were added."

For his materials, Salmela used concrete-block foundation walls with frost (a poetic name for a foundational component that extends below the frost line so that when the harsh cold impacts the land through the freezing and thawing of soil moisture, it doesn't damage the structure); concrete-block chimneys; two-by-six-inch wood-frame walls; glued-laminated roof beams; and high R-rated structural insulated panels (SIPs). He clad the outside walls in one-by-four-inch, beveled lap cedar siding. Inside, he chose concrete for the floors and local tongue-and-groove, flush-joint pine for the walls. The larger of the two units (which contains the kitchen, dining area, lounge, master bedroom, bath, and screen porch) is 900 square feet, and the smaller (where the guest room and bath, office area, and mechanical room are located) ►



Philippe Starck's outdoor chairs for Kartell provide cozy fireside seating. These and the sofa version were selected by Salmela. "They're very much an art form," he says. **E** p. 186

At left, a side view of the house and of Salmela's signature architectural feature: the "unchimney." All windows are from Loewen.

"Every room except the bath has huge windows," explains Bruce Golob. "And although David was reluctant to design a screen porch [opposite], he figured out a way to do it without interfering with any of the views."













measures 360 square feet. The house, which was finished in 2003, cost \$295,000 to build.

Local color played a near-equal role to building materials in the creation of this place. In addition to the year-rounders—loggers and fishermen, for the most part—Madeline Island plays host to a small artists' colony and what Golob and Freeman call "the friendly wackos." At one Fourth of July party the pair attended, a group decided to field a drill team. Not a precision drill team, as it happened. This team strode down the island's main street bearing, of all things, electric drills.

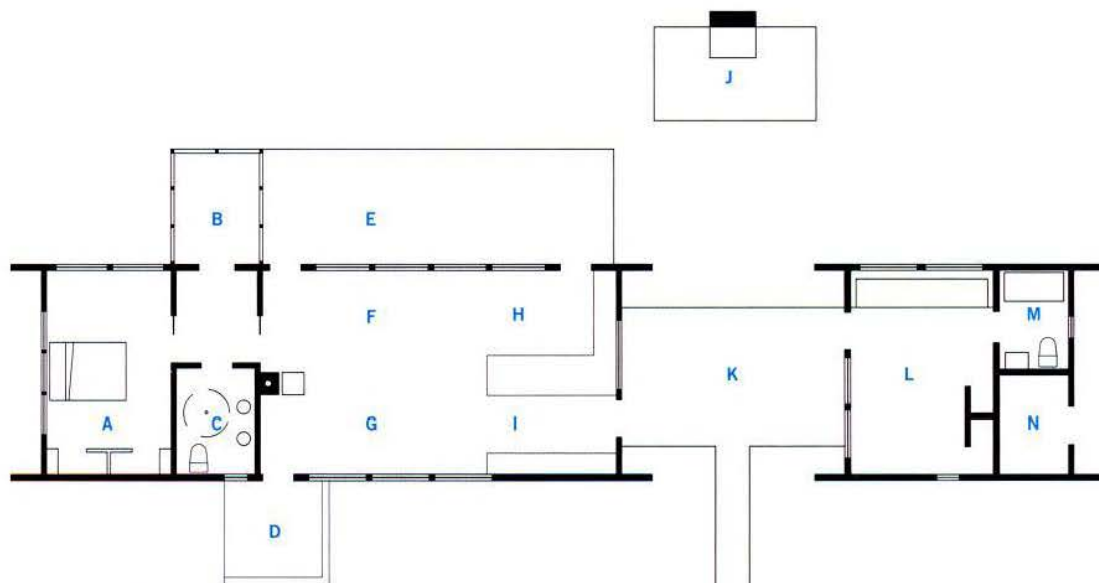
This eccentricity, though, is the charm of the place, says Salmela. "Here, it's out of character to be in character. It's topsy-turvy land. It defies the logic of other places. Which is why I was able to do the Two Black Sheds." (The clients' name for the house derives from Salmela's decision to paint the cabins not white—the modernist's color of choice—but black.)

The island community's free-spiritedness didn't always work in the architect's favor, however: When it came time to install a curving driveway leading up to the sheds, for example, Salmela hired a local man to do the work. But things went awry. Despite being provided with the necessary plans, the man, without consulting anyone, decided that he didn't like curves and instead installed a path of his own devising that was as straight as an arrow.

Originally, the couple had planned to clad the cabin in natural wood, Freeman says, but once Salmela had persuaded them to paint the exterior black and the ►

The homeowners (opposite) were impressed by the way Salmela conflated the indoor/outdoor continuum. "We really needed that contact with the lake and the woods even when inside," says Golob. All outdoor seating by Kartell.

Primary colors and uncomplicated spaces define the interiors of both sheds. Golob is shown above in the modest open kitchen, where appliances were chosen for "cost, durability, and efficiency." **E** p.186



Two Black Sheds Floor Plan

- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| A Bedroom      | H Kitchen          |
| B Screen Porch | I Entry            |
| C Bathroom     | J Fireside Terrace |
| D Sun Terrace  | K Entry Terrace    |
| E Lake Terrace | L Guest Bedroom    |
| F Dining Room  | M Bathroom         |
| G Living Room  | N Mechanical       |



## Dwellings

ceiling ochre, they decided to fall in line with his bolder vision. Interior walls may be white but the cabinetry is colored a deep violet. "Most of the colors came from David," Freeman continues, "but every one of them was a separate decision." The next problem was the concrete floors. Various colors were suggested, but despite hours of brainstorming, nothing came to mind. Then Freeman glanced across the room and spotted her vivid vermilion handbag. And with that, the impasse was broken.

Salmela's work is often characterized by a bold use of color, but his signature stylistic statement is the chimney—or, as he would have it, the "unchimney." As he explains, "Some years back, I visited a state park in the Copper Harbor area of Michigan, where there was a fort. Most of the log cabins had burnt down, and only the chimneys were left, but they struck me as being very dynamic." And so the unchimney—really an outdoor fireplace—was born. These structures are not real chimneys, Salmela explains. For one thing, they don't have a flue, but there is a grate, and one can build a fire. "The flames leave a sooty residue on the masonry," he says, "and the next time you see the soot, it triggers a memory of warmth."

Golob and Freeman's only regret is the fact that they're unable to spend more time here. The last time they paid a visit, 20 inches of snow fell, and the sound froze over. To return to the mainland, they had no choice but to drive their car over pack ice. Did it bother them at all? "Definitely not," they say. "We can't wait to get back." ■



Both bathrooms are simple and basic, with Dornbracht fixtures as the only real extravagance.

The living space gives first priority to comfort, and furniture pieces like the sofa bed by Niels Bendtsen deliver. The wood-burning stove by Rais is especially valued during wintertime visits.

Skylights and huge windows flood the master bedroom (opposite)—and every room in the house—with sunlight. Bed by Techline; lighting by Tech Lighting. [p. 186](#)







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# Food



# Drink



# Fun

GLOBAL TAMALES SEARCH BILL GATES'S KITCHEN HOW TO GET A GOOD TABLE

# CHOW

**Obsessed with Chocolate**

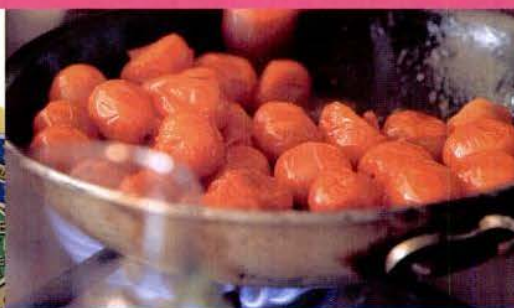
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## Contain Yourself



*A house is just a pile of stuff with a cover on it. You can see that when you're taking off in an airplane. You look down, you see everybody's got a little pile of stuff. All the little piles of stuff. And when you leave your house, you gotta lock it up. Wouldn't want somebody to come by and take some of your stuff. They always take the good stuff. They never bother with that crap you're saving. All they want is the shiny stuff. That's what your house is, a place to keep your stuff while you go out and get more stuff.*

—George Carlin, 1981

We're told that Americans are living longer, working harder, and marrying later. Maybe that's why most of us have more time and money to acquire stuff but neither the space

nor the energy to put any of it away. The result is clutter, and it's threatening to overwhelm our living spaces.

Take me, for example. I'm nearly 30 years old and still single. I earn enough money to throw some of it away on a few nonessentials but, as a rule, I don't buy much stuff. And yet my one-bedroom apartment is always a mess—an untamed pile of stuff with a cover on it. Why is that?

A quick inventory of my bedroom closet offers some clues. I still have the cassette deck that came with a car that I haven't owned in nearly a year, along with stacks of cassette tapes from high school (Ned's Atomic Dustbin, anyone?) that I no longer have the equipment to play. I've also kept the wall-mounted, battery-operated rubber

shark that I received as a gag gift for my 25th birthday. It plays the *Jaws* theme and "Mack the Knife" and, you know what, it was funny. At first. But it's been in the closet ever since, still in its original box.

And then there are the clothes, such as the maroon corduroy jacket that I bought at a vintage store for \$35 in 1997. It's the sort of thing I could pull off when I was 21. Now, however, it makes me look like an out-of-work circus clown, so I never wear it. The closet is full of things that I don't need but haven't gotten rid of, either because of a misplaced nostalgic attachment or because I stashed them there years ago and forgot about them. It is undeniably my all-purpose dumping ground.

Because there isn't a problem that can't





be solved with the swipe of a credit card, a multibillion-dollar industry has sprouted to help people like me kick the clutter habit. The International Housewares Association estimates that Americans spent more than \$6 billion on closet and space organizers in 2003. There are professional organizers who, for hourly fees ranging from \$50 to \$100 or more, help their clients decide what to toss out and how to store what is kept.

Suddenly, getting organized is hot. Not convinced? Look no further than the nearest television set, where cable networks are filming people's efforts to conquer clutter and packaging it, of all things, as entertainment. Shows like TLC's *Clean Sweep* and HGTV's *Mission: Organization* are among the more popular shows on cable.

Meanwhile, national retailers such as the Container Store, Organized Living, and Hold Everything are turning a tidy profit selling decorative stuff to, well, hold more stuff. The Container Store, which was founded in Dallas in 1978, recorded more than \$375 million in sales at its 33 stores last year. Most of these bins, baskets, and dividers are sleek, colorful, and well designed. The effect has been to drag storage out of the closet by offering the consumer an attractive alternative to shoe boxes and milk crates.

Paradoxically, the message here is that if we want to clear our homes of clutter, we need to buy even more stuff. But Sharon Tindell, the Container Store's executive vice president for merchandising, sees no contradiction, explaining that the store and its

competitors simply are meeting consumer demand. "I think there's a real elevated consumer interest in things that are well designed but also have functional value to them," Tindell says. "Our customers want things that they can use every day but that they also feel good about."

I doubt I'll spring for a professional organizer, and I certainly won't consider redoing a closet until I buy a place of my own. But I might go out and pick up some classy plastic boxes so I have a place to keep my stuff while I'm out getting new stuff. At the very least, I could stand to get rid of some of the useless things that are taking up valuable real estate in my closet. But not my singing shark. I've developed a misplaced nostalgic attachment to it. ►





## Sorting It Out

If it's true that clutter has transcended nuisance to become a full-blown epidemic, the members of the National Association of Professional Organizers are at the vanguard of the struggle to contain it. Founded in 1985 with just five members, the organization has swelled into a global behemoth composed of more than 3,000 professionals who, for a fee, offer hope to even the most inveterate clutterbugs. Its president, Barry Izsak, runs *Arranging It All* in Austin, Texas, and is the author of *Organize Your Garage in No Time*.

### Why does clutter appear to be an increasingly irksome part of our lives?

Basically, there's more to organize than ever before. In spite of the computer-age promise of the paperless office, there's more paper than ever before. But even more importantly, consumers are bombarded with messages from the print media and the airwaves, and

the predominant message is: Get more stuff. And because we have more disposable income than ever before, we're listening. So we get all this stuff without thinking about how we're going to use it, or where we're going to store it, and the result is clutter.

### What kind of people are likely to seek help from a professional organizer? Is there a profile?

There really isn't. Many of us are in high-demand, fast-paced jobs where the job responsibilities are almost too much for any one person to handle. As companies try to get more work out of people and are cutting back and downsizing, the demands on each and every one of us continue to grow. And from the executive down to the busy stay-at-home mom with several kids, many of us are chronically disorganized.

### What part of the house are your clients most eager to organize?

Everything. Closets. Garages. That's what my new book is about. Garages are huge. Home offices are big. Paper management, file management, moves and relocations. There are organizers that specialize in helping people move. There are organizers that specialize in collections and memorabilia.

### How do you get started?

One of the reasons people call us is that they're overwhelmed and they don't know where to start. So the first thing that an organizer does is to break the job down into manageable pieces. No one would sit down and say, "I'm going to write a book today." Well, you don't go out to your garage with 30 years of clutter and say, "Today I'm going to organize my garage," because it can't be done. So you break it down into manageable pieces that you can do bit by bit. We look at ►

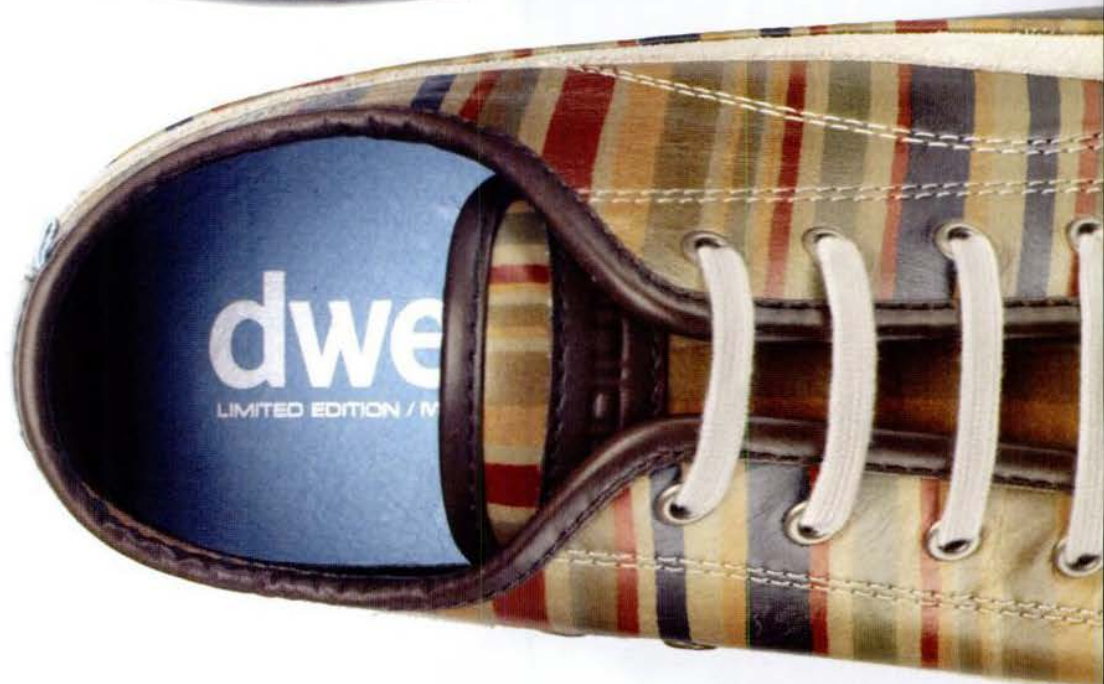




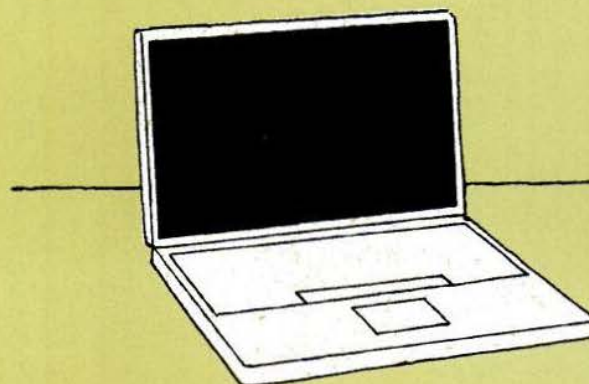
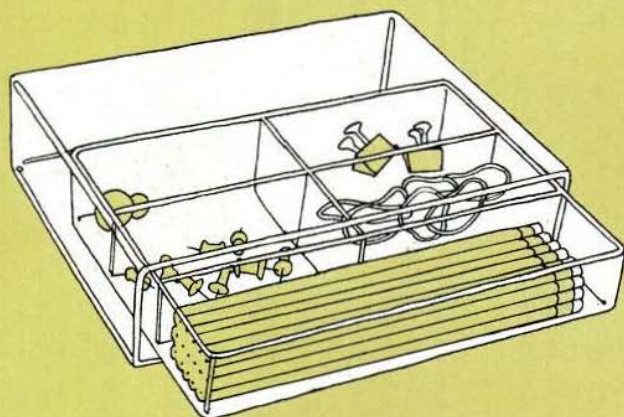
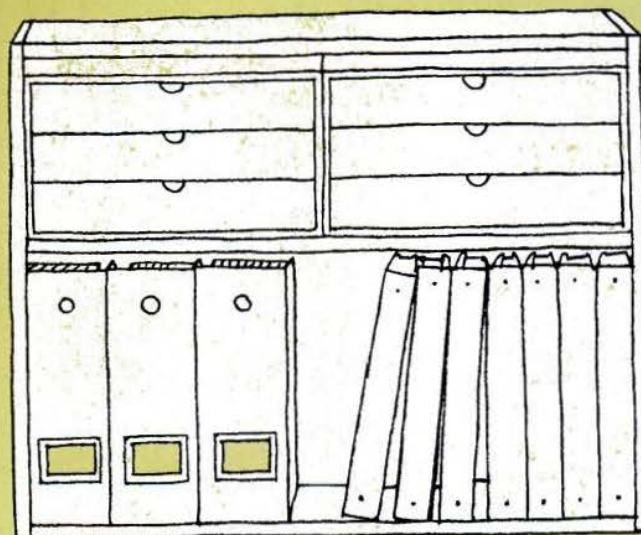
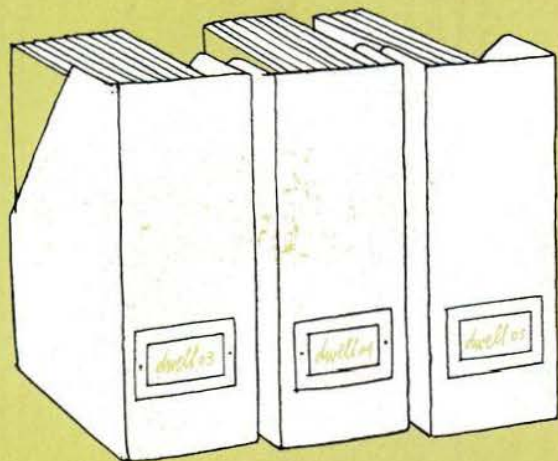
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the situation with a fresh set of eyes and help devise a plan of attack.

**What sorts of storage containers are useful when organizing a room or closet?**

There's everything under the sun out there. When we organize, we try to keep like things together, and using containers keeps the like things together. The whole goal is to make things easily retrievable so you can get what you need when you need it. If you're using a container, the clearer the better. That way you don't necessarily have to label it. If it's not clear, make sure the container is labeled, or you can even take a picture of what's inside and tape it to the outside. It doesn't have to be expensive. You don't have to run out and buy hundreds of dollars' worth of containers. You could use shoe boxes. Of course, if you want uniformity—not only do you want things organized but you want it to look aesthetically pretty—then you would

want to go out and purchase containers that look alike and fit well together, particularly if you aren't able to put them in closets.

**Do consultations ever get confrontational? How do you convince a client that he needs to downsize, or get rid of, his cherished collection of German beer steins?**

We'll ask the client the pertinent questions: When was the last time you used it? Is it still relevant or useful to you now? Do you have the proper place to store it? You may say you want or need it, but if you don't have space you've got to make some hard choices. When it comes to paper, is there a legal reason you need to keep it, like your IRS forms? Can you identify a specific use for it? One of my favorite questions is, What is the worst thing that's going to happen if you get rid of it?

**Once your work is done, what can clients do to make sure their living space does not**

**return to its natural, cluttered state?**

As an organizer, I'm there to help you create a system. Organizing isn't about looking pretty. It's about creating a system that's going to work for you. However—and here's the caveat—the best system in the world isn't going to work if you don't stick to it. You've got to be disciplined and motivated enough to make the behavioral changes and stick to them.

Break your tasks into small, manageable portions. Sort through the mail the minute you bring it in. Store things near where you're going to use them. Don't buy more than you need, and when you do buy things, know where you're going to put them before you bring them home.

Getting organized is not an inherent trait. It's a learned behavior, an acquired skill. The problem is, most of us never learn it. But the good news is, there's hope. It's never too late to start. ▶



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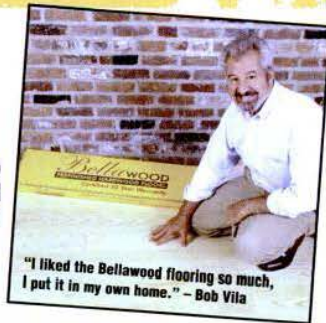
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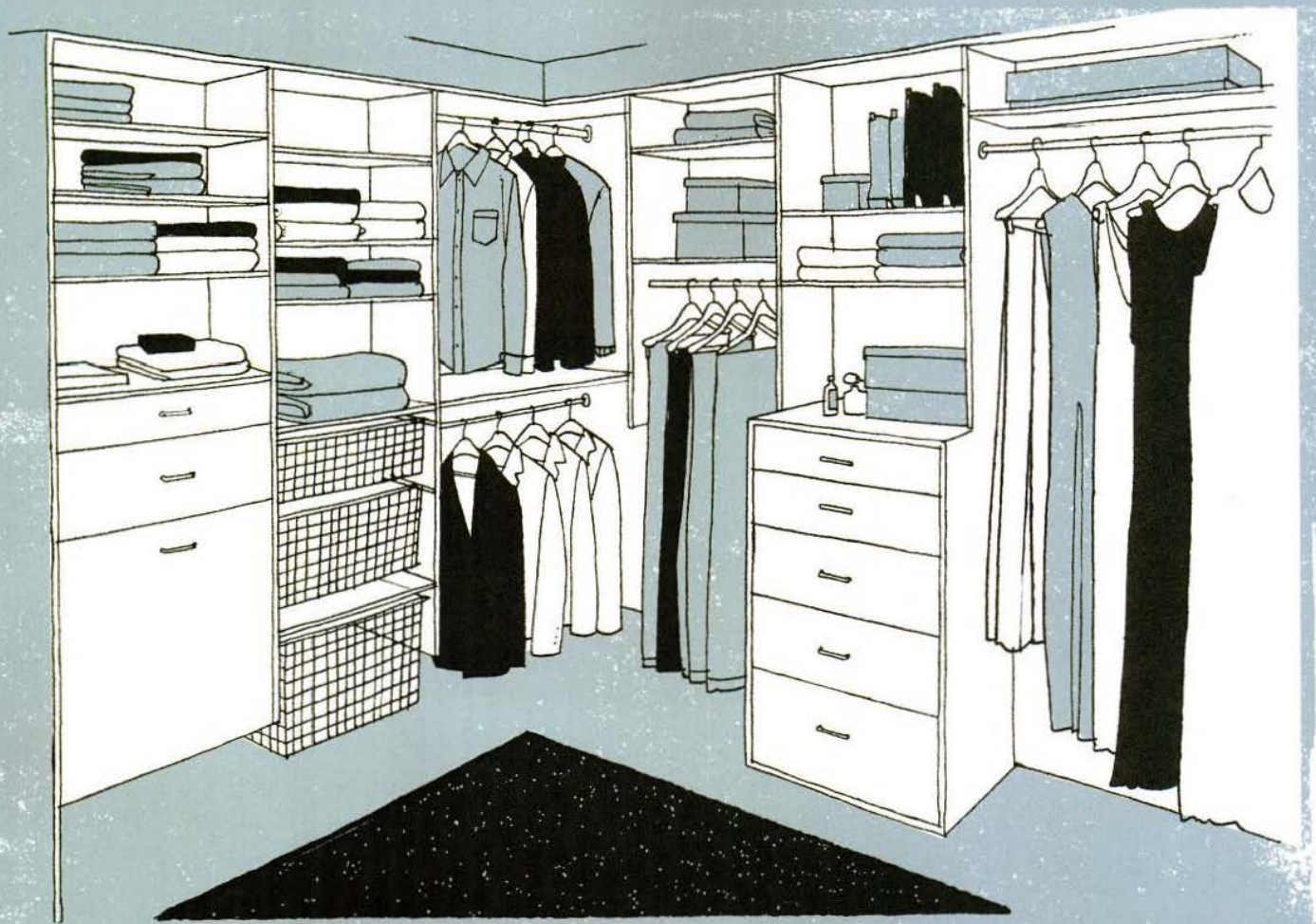


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## Closet Case

In 1997, Shanna and Mark Fischer were living in a cramped prewar apartment building in New York's Greenwich Village that, like other Manhattan structures of similar vintage, was short on closet space. "Everything you could think of was jammed into the closet," Shanna says. "If we needed to store something, we'd basically just throw it in and maybe never see it again."

Eventually the Fischers moved, settling on a loft in a converted Midtown warehouse. Because they were dealing with virgin space, they were able to design their own closets and turned for help to the Container Store, which distributes the Elfa system of wire-mesh storage components. The Fischers filled out a detailed questionnaire on the store's website, giving the measurements of their closets and answering questions about how much hanging space they thought they'd need, how many pairs of shoes they owned, and what kind of materials they'd like to use.

"We basically gave them an idea of what we wanted to do with the space," says Shanna. "They have somebody call you back and you really go into more detail. I don't know how they do it, but they really can interpret what you tell them." The installation, which the Fischers handled themselves, was (literally) a snap, and at an average cost of \$400 for a single closet, Elfa is among the more economical systems available.

According to *Closets*, a new trade publication, Americans spent more than \$2 billion on storage renovations in 2004, suggesting that closets are getting the kinds of makeovers that people have traditionally reserved for more visible parts of the house. "There are people who have a lot of expendable income [and who are] just now looking at a high-end closet system and saying, 'I'm going to indulge myself in that,' and sort of outdo the Joneses, so to speak," says Helen Kuhl, *Closets'* editor-in-chief. ▶



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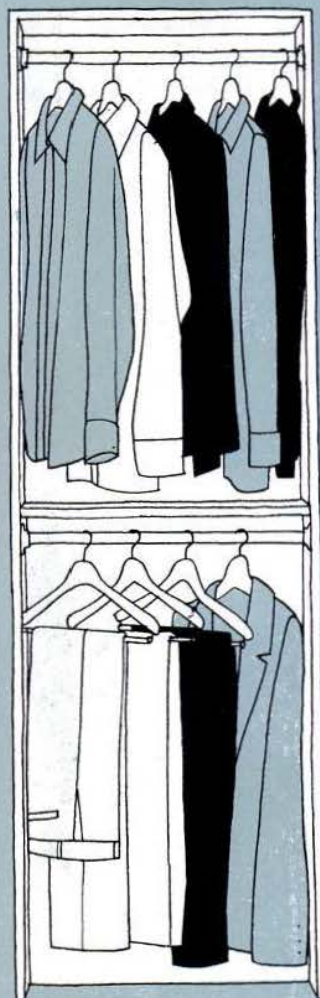
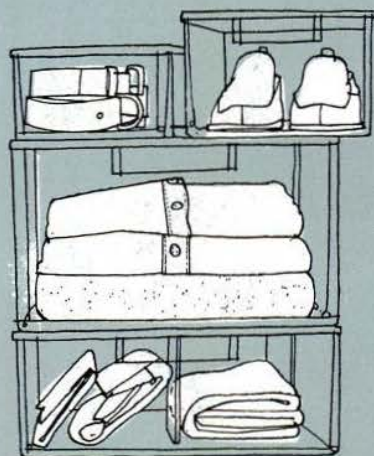
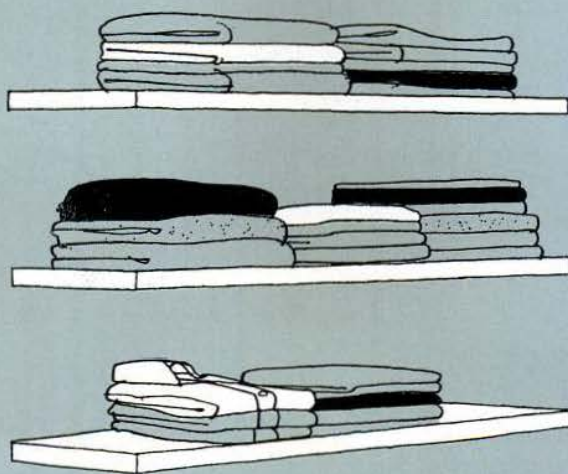
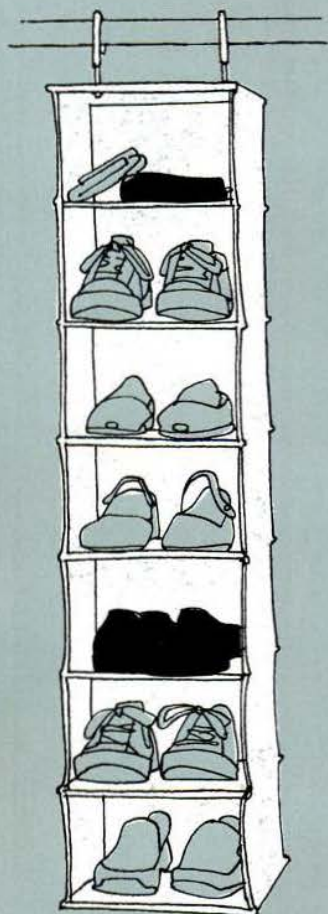
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What can be done depends on how much money the consumer is willing to spend. California Closets, which has been around since 1978, can refurbish a closet for anywhere from \$400 to \$10,000 depending on size and the type of materials used, says Ginny Snook Scott, the company's vice president for franchise development. That price includes an in-home consultation with a designer who helps clients sort through their priorities and storage needs.

California Closets has been joined by upscale competitors like Poliform and DOMA, while retailers like Organized Living and Hold Everything offer less expensive do-it-yourself systems. Whatever route you take, the same basic organizational principles apply.

Because closet organization is all about maximizing usable space, it can be helpful to store out-of-season clothing in clear plastic containers on a high shelf or under the bed.

Closets with high ceilings can accommodate two rods, hung about three or four feet apart, doubling the available hanging space. Shelves are good for storing sweaters, which tend to stretch out when hung, while drawers can be used for underwear and accessories.

"We say there are three elements to storing items: visibility, accessibility, and flexibility," says Sharon Tindell, the Container Store's executive vice president for merchandising. "First of all, you need to be able to see what you store or else you're not going to be able to find it. Accessibility—you need to put things that you use frequently in a spot that you can access easily. Flexibility—that's one of the joys of using a multifunctional component system. It's adaptable to the consumer's needs. If you're wearing jeans and T-shirts all the time, there really isn't a lot of need for hanging space. Shelves and drawers would work better for someone like that." [p. 186](#) ▶





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## My Beautiful Garage

John and Susan Conrad can remember a time, not long ago, when they kept everything in their garage. Everything, that is, except their cars. "It looked like a drop-off for Goodwill," John recalls, conjuring a "before" picture of his three-car garage in Chesterfield, Missouri, an upscale suburb west of St. Louis. "There were cans of paint and tents and coolers and folding chairs for the soccer field and boots and balls and bicycles. And somewhere underneath all that was the lawn mower and the snowblower."

The Conrads weren't alone. Dowdy, dirty, and just plain functional, garages often do double duty as a dumping ground for old LPs, camping gear, 12-packs of Sprite, and exercise equipment—things that we don't really need but can't bear to get rid of. There's help, however, in the form of these four garage organization systems.

### GarageTek / [www.garagetek.com](http://www.garagetek.com)

GarageTek, which evolved out of a company that produced fixtures for department stores, offers a system of slotted wall panels to which various modules, cabinets, racks, and even coolers can be attached. GarageTek employs professional designers who visit with homeowners and use computer-aided design to whip up a rendering on the spot. A typical installation prices out at \$6,000.

### PremierGarage / [www.premiergarage.com](http://www.premiergarage.com)

PremierGarage specializes in polyurethane floor coatings and cabinets made from high-density particleboard. The cabinets, manufactured at the company's own factories in Phoenix and Atlanta, are finished with a low-pressure laminate that prevents peeling or bubbling. Wall-mounted grid panels are used for hanging tools and lawn equipment. They also offer in-house service, and costs run in the \$4,000–\$5,000 range.

### GarageGrids / [www.garagegrids.com](http://www.garagegrids.com)

GarageGrids offers an economical alternative to the competition with a wall-mounted grid system that holds shelves, baskets, and hooks. A starter system, which costs about \$600, can be self-installed by homeowners who are handy with a level, a stud finder, and an impact drill. Otherwise, professional installers are available for hire.

### Rubbermaid / [www.rubbermaid.com](http://www.rubbermaid.com)

Rubbermaid makes your trash can, your food storage containers, and your dish rack so why not your garage system? Rubbermaid's FastTrack system involves a rail that is attached to the wall studs. Specially designed hooks, baskets, and shelving systems snap right into the rail, which can support up to 2,000 pounds. In most cases, FastTrack rail and accessories can be installed along a single wall for under \$300. ■

➤ p. 186



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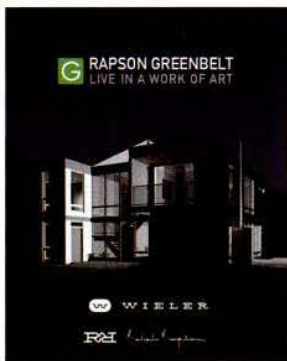
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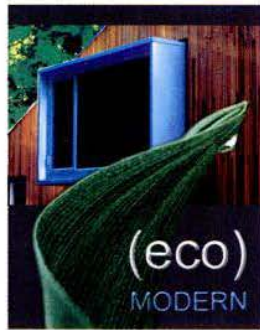


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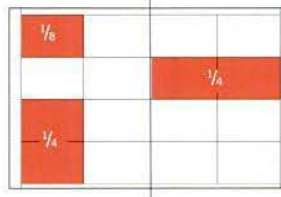
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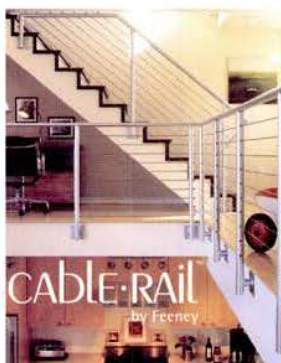


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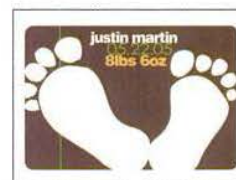
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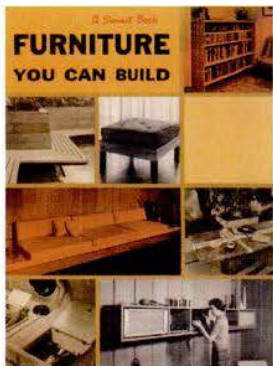
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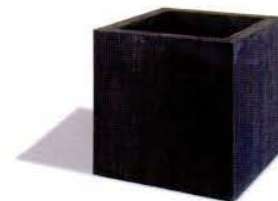
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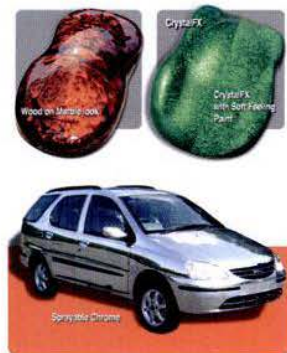
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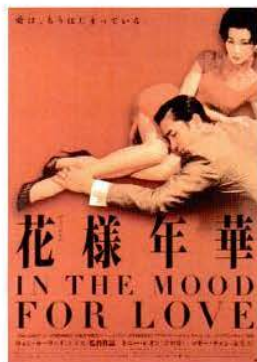
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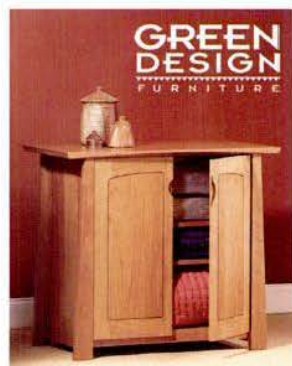
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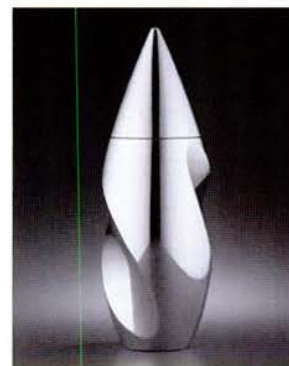
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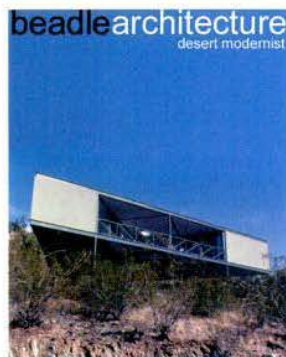




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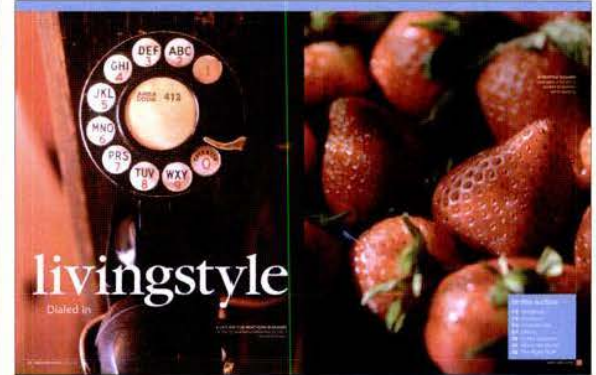
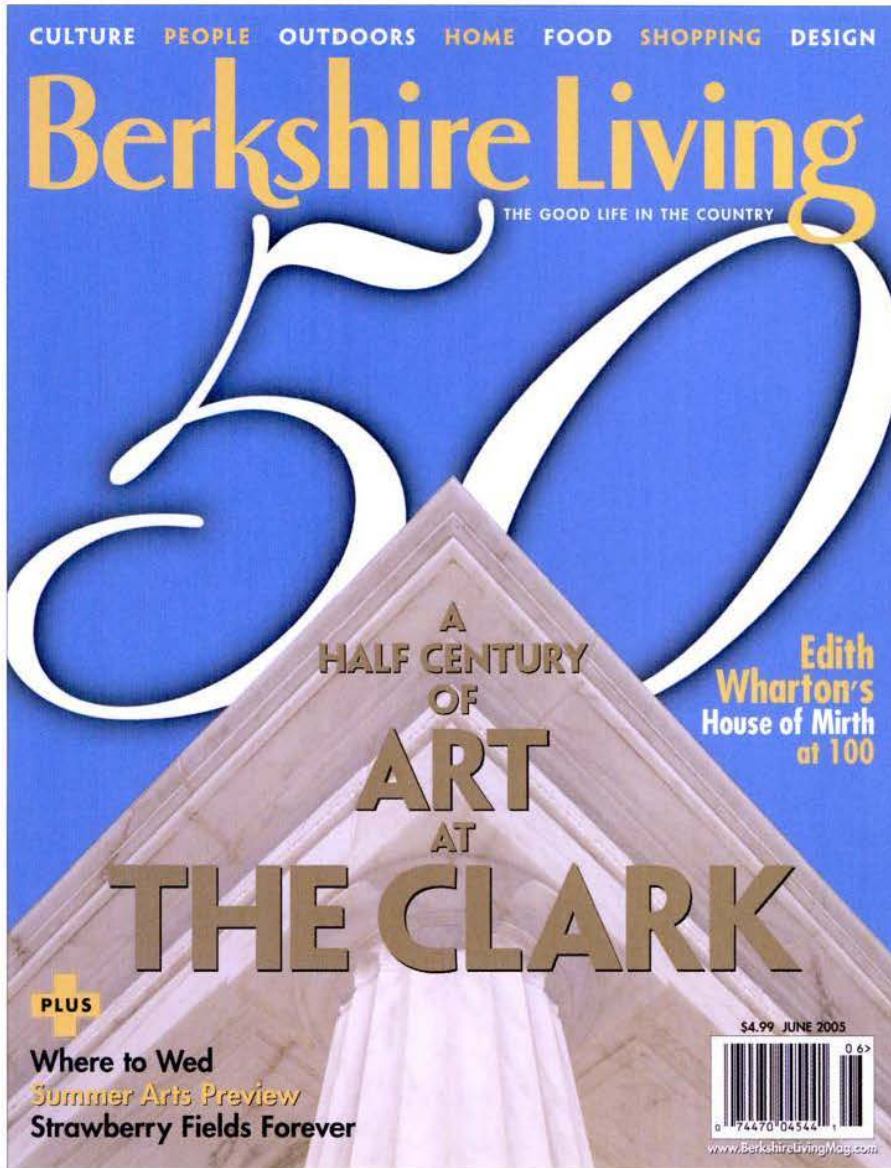
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[www.truecathyliu.com](http://www.truecathyliu.com)  
**Skate sofa by DellaRobbia**  
[www.dellarobbiausa.com](http://www.dellarobbiausa.com)  
**Nesso lamp by Artemide**  
[www.artemide.com](http://www.artemide.com)  
**Alexander Girard fabrics by Maharam**  
[www.maharam.com](http://www.maharam.com)  
**Tiles by Interstyle**  
[www.interstyle.bc.ca](http://www.interstyle.bc.ca)  
**Erik Magnussen Ship's lamp by Stelton**  
[www.stelton.com](http://www.stelton.com)  
**Oh chairs by Karim Rashid for Umbra**  
[www.umbra.com](http://www.umbra.com)  
**Gideå table by IKEA**  
[www.ikea.com](http://www.ikea.com)  
**Kehena Beach**  
[www.hawaiiweb.com](http://www.hawaiiweb.com)  
**The Big Island**  
[www.gohawaii.com/bigisland](http://www.gohawaii.com/bigisland)

**148 Off the Beaten Path**

**David Salmela, Architect**  
Duluth, MN  
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[ddsalmela@charter.net](mailto:ddsalmela@charter.net)  
**Salmela, Architect** by Thomas Fisher (University of Minnesota Press, 2005)  
[www.upress.umn.edu](http://www.upress.umn.edu)  
**Outdoor sofa by Philippe Starck for Kartell**  
[www.kartell.com](http://www.kartell.com)  
**Wood-burning stove by Rais**  
[www.rais.co.uk](http://www.rais.co.uk)

**Kitchen and bathroom faucets** by Dornbracht  
[www.dornbracht.com/en](http://www.dornbracht.com/en)  
**Windows and doors by Loewen**  
[www.loewen.com](http://www.loewen.com)  
**Glazing by Velux Skylights**  
[www.velux.com](http://www.velux.com)  
**Paint by Benjamin Moore**  
[www.benjaminmoore.com](http://www.benjaminmoore.com)  
**Sofa bed by Niels Bendtsen for Bensen**  
[www.bensen.ca](http://www.bensen.ca)  
**Lighting by Tech Lighting**  
[www.techlighting.com](http://www.techlighting.com)  
**Windows and doors by Loewen**  
[www.loewen.com](http://www.loewen.com)

**158 Storage 101**

**Organize Your Garage in No Time** by Barry Izsak (Que, 2005)  
available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)  
**The Container Store**  
[www.thecontainerstore.com](http://www.thecontainerstore.com)  
**Elfa**  
[www.elfa.com](http://www.elfa.com)  
**California Closets**  
[www.californiaclosets.com](http://www.californiaclosets.com)  
**Poliiform**  
[www.poliiformusa.com](http://www.poliiformusa.com)  
**Doma**  
[www.doma-usa.com](http://www.doma-usa.com)  
**Hold Everything**  
[www.holdeverything.com](http://www.holdeverything.com)  
**Organized Living**  
[www.organizedliving.com](http://www.organizedliving.com)  
**Closets magazine**  
[www.closetsmagazine.com](http://www.closetsmagazine.com)  
**GarageTek**  
[www.garagetek.com](http://www.garagetek.com)  
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## Grape Escape

Ask any sommelier where the world's great wines come from, and it's unlikely that Mexico will be included in the results. That, however, is changing, and the epicenter of that change is roughly 70 miles south of San Diego in Baja, California's Valle de Guadalupe. Situated 1,000 feet above sea level, but only 13 miles from the ocean, the arid valley can reach temperatures of over 100 degrees during the day, but is cooled each night by ocean breezes—perfect conditions for growing great grapes.

As it turns out, these were also ideal conditions for a group of six friends from San Diego to invest in a large subdivided property where they could build vacation homes, and even explore the wine-making business on a shared vineyard. The first home to go up was designed by Sebastian Mariscal (who is the next in line for a home) and his firm MS-31 for Federico and Ceci Fuentes, their two children, Nicolas and Paula, and pet dog Lucas.

Construction started with the house's defining feature: a 177-foot-long, ten-foot-tall rock wall. Made

from locally quarried stone, the wall serves not only as a noise barrier for the busy road that borders the property but also as a physical link between the home's three living areas. A corrugated Zincolume "wing" extends outward from the wall, providing shelter and shade.

The main living area features a 24-foot-long pocket door, which when opened completely exposes the space to the outdoors. "This was a 100 percent contrast from the clients' urban life," notes Mariscal. "In the city you go home and you're done with the outside world; here it's all about interacting with the outdoors."

Without a hallway, passing from one area of the house to the next requires that you venture outdoors, but if it gets too warm, you don't have to go far to find the swimming pool—it's practically inside the house. In fact, it even cuts through the rock wall as a foot-deep reflecting pool before transforming into a hot tub, which leads into the swimming pool. Now that's what we call living on the water. ■





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