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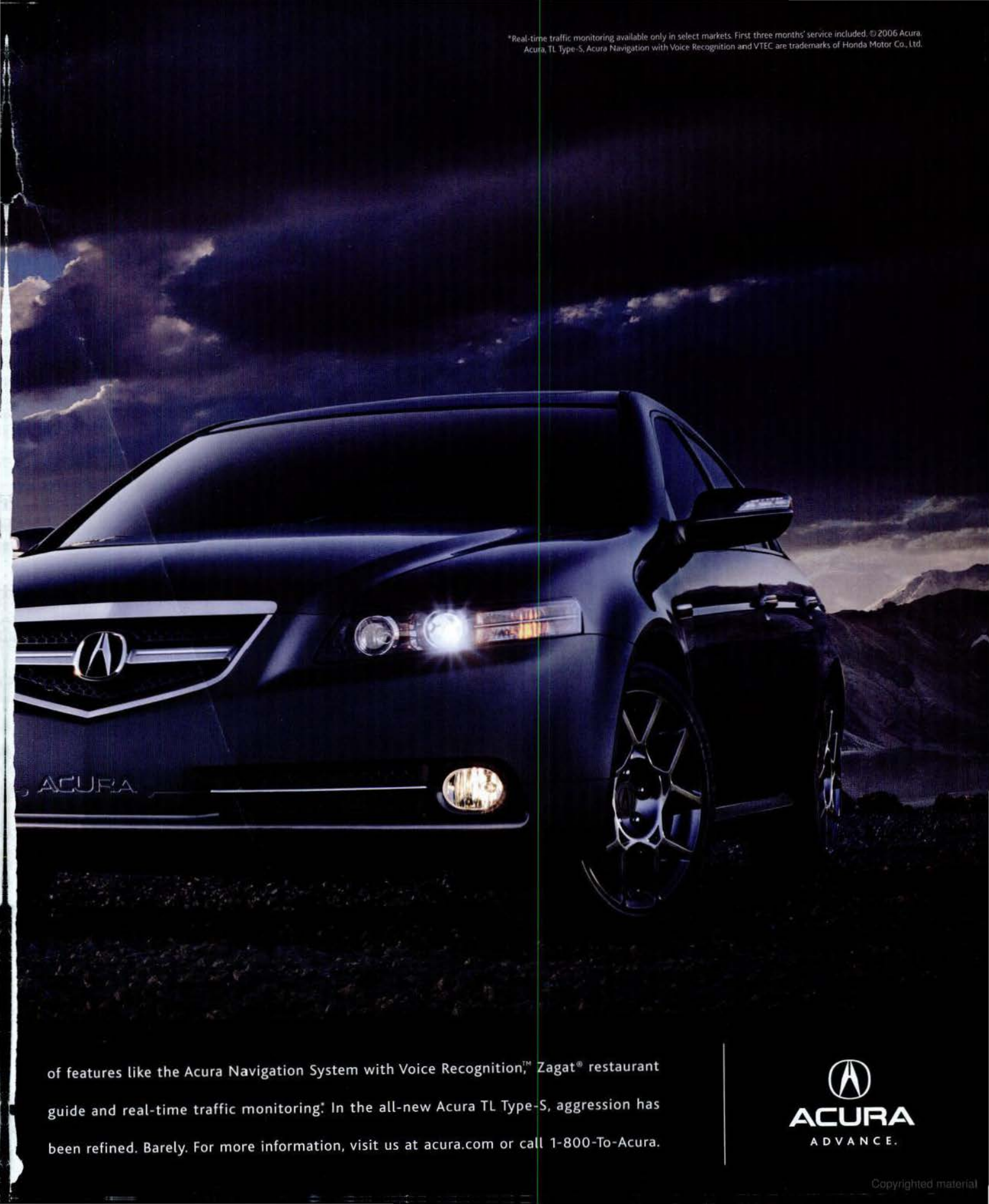

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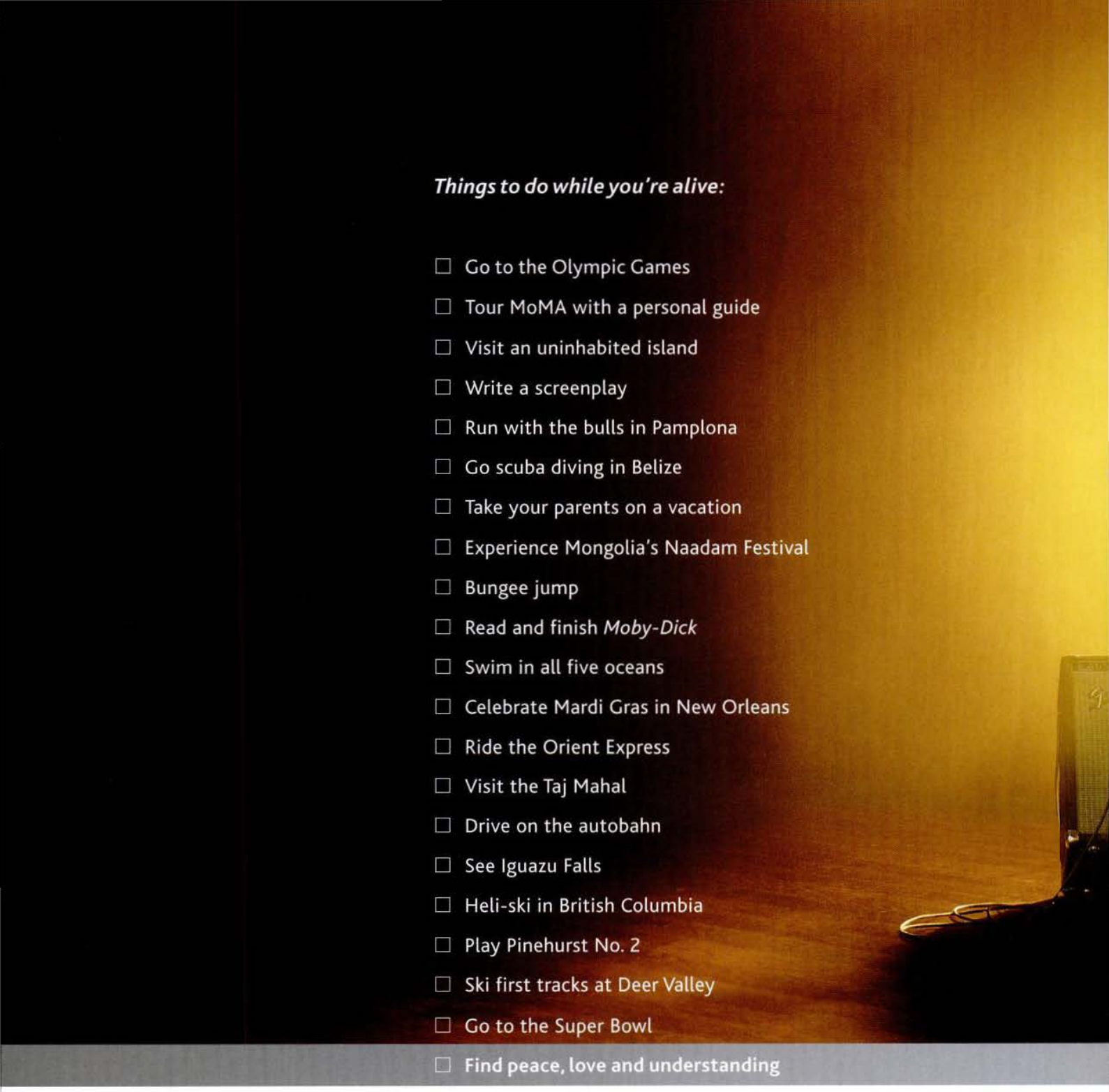

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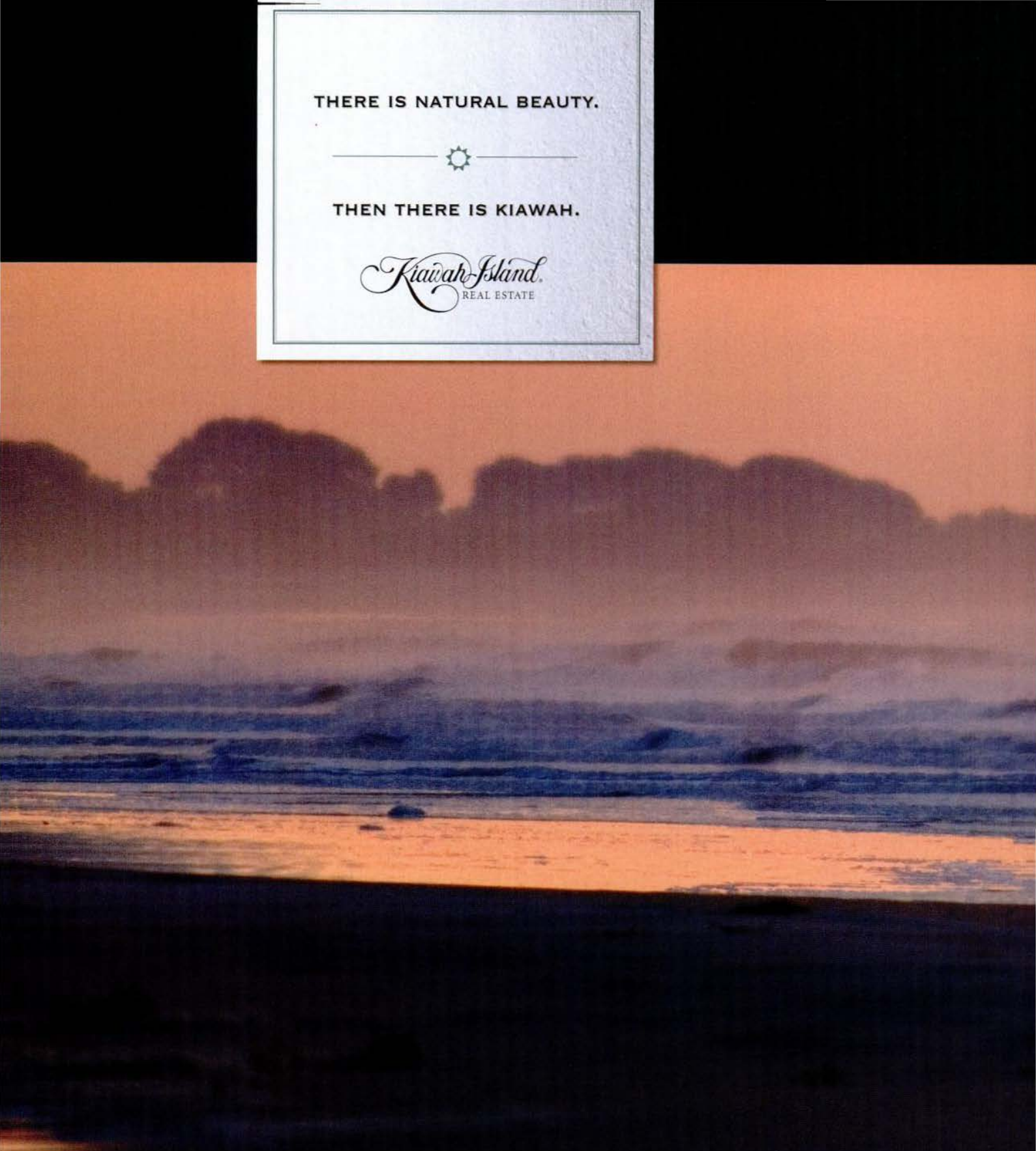

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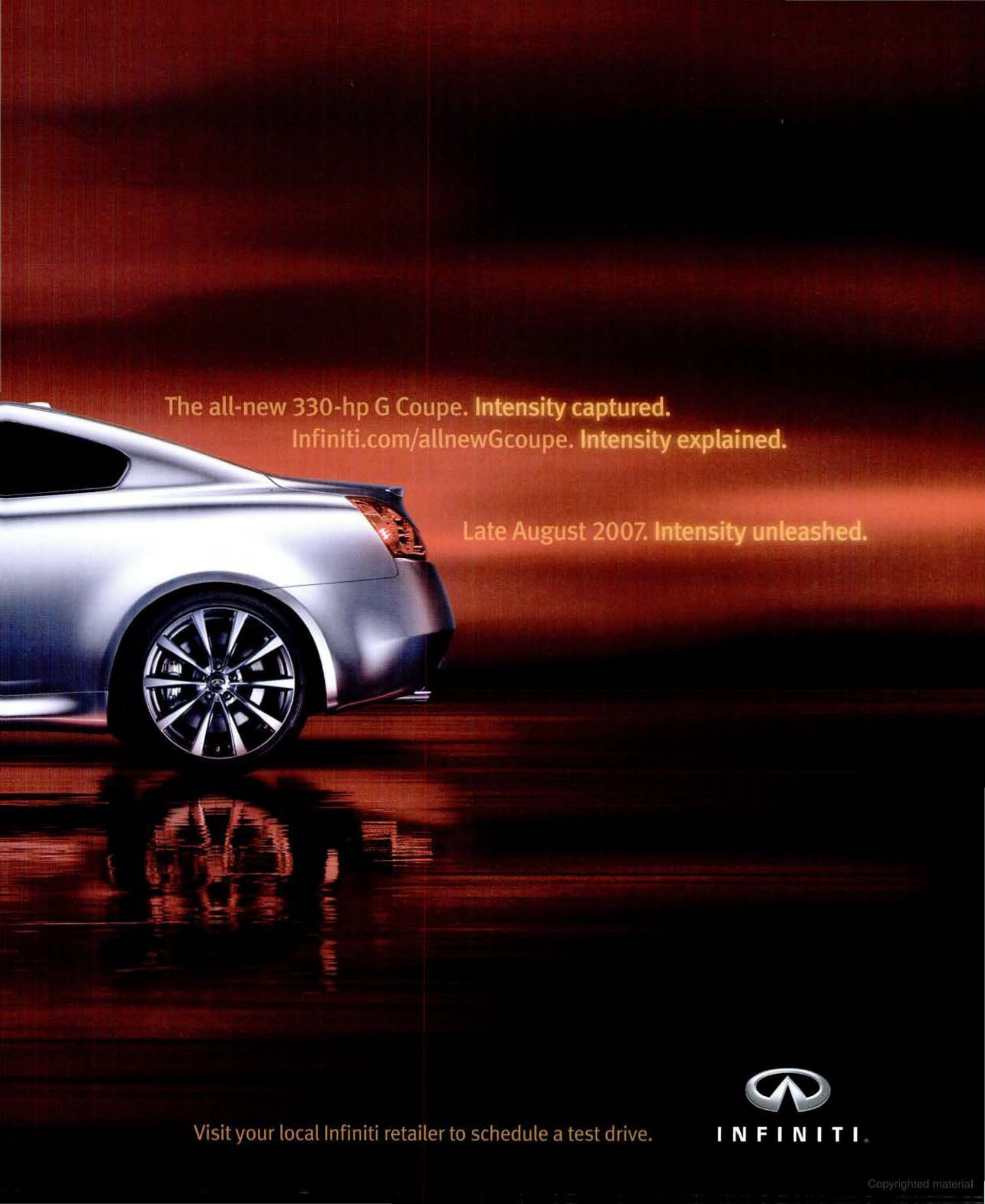

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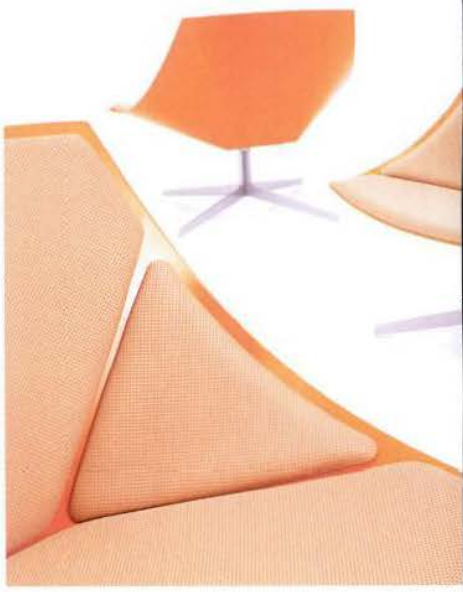

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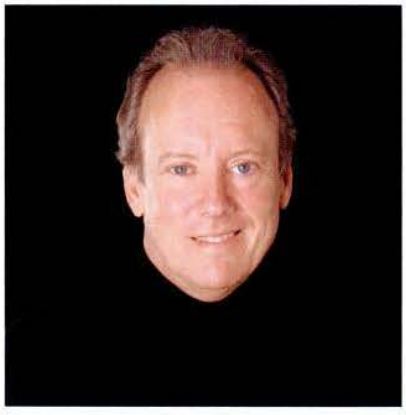

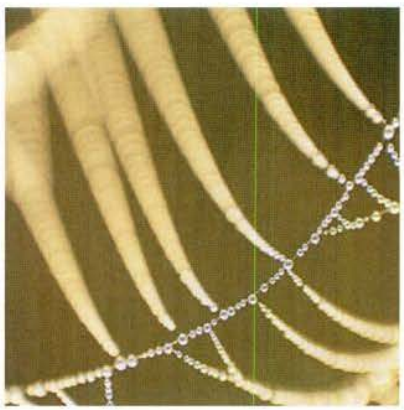

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Cover
Great Highway House, San Francisco, California, page 150
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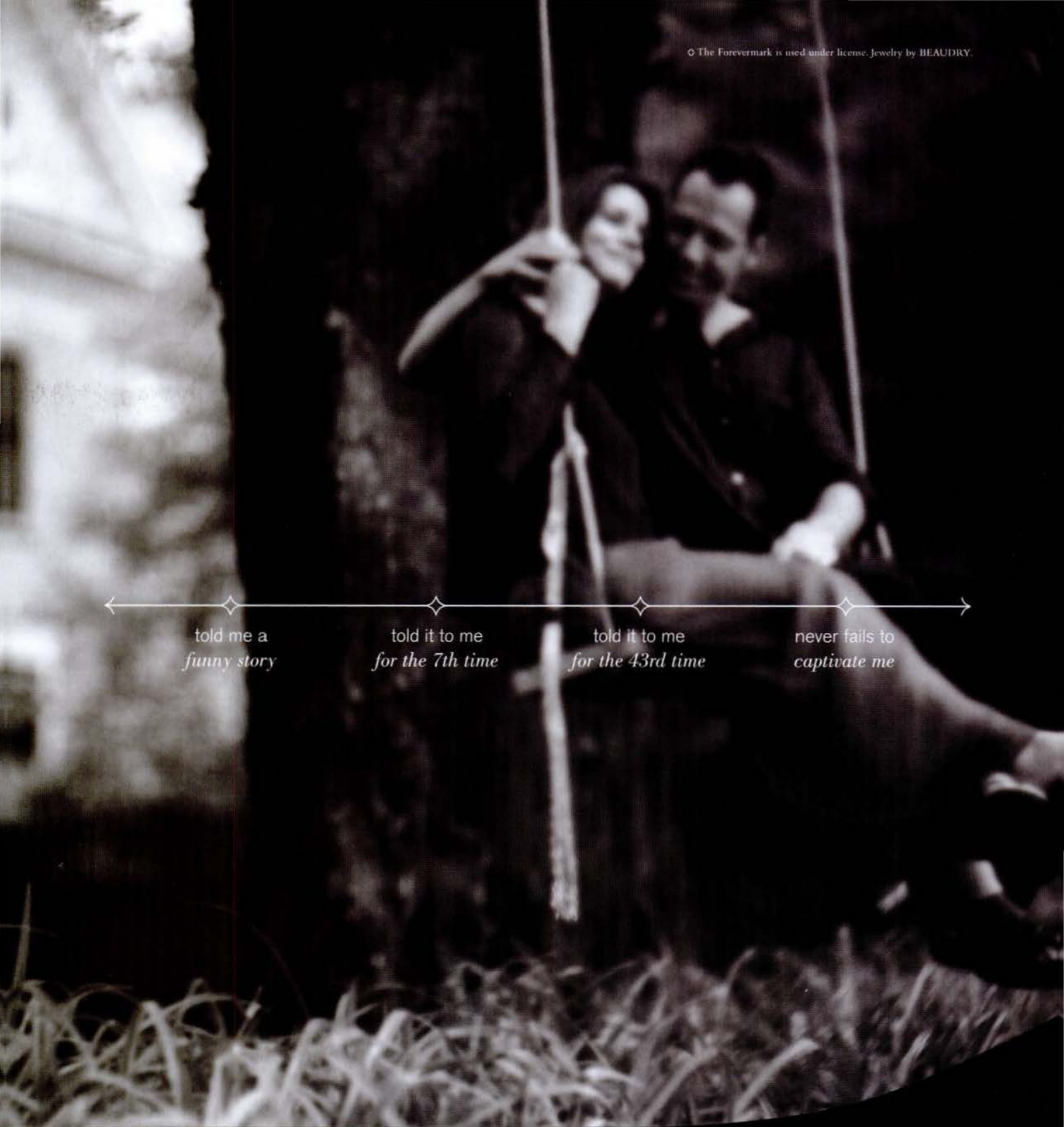

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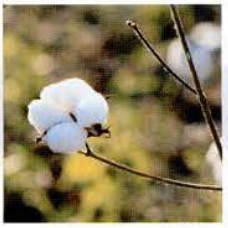

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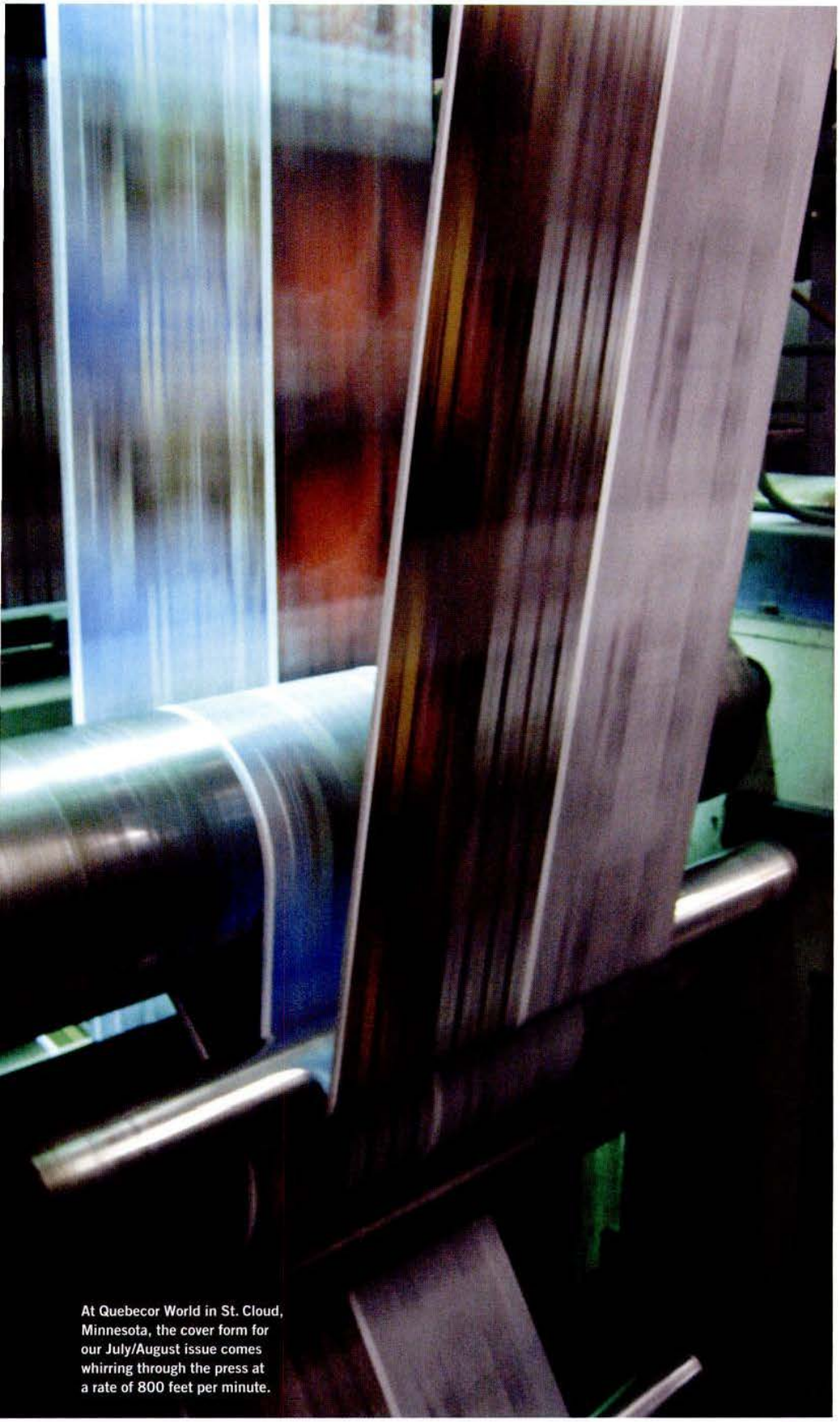

At Quebecor World in St. Cloud, Minnesota, the cover form for our July/August issue comes whirring through the press at a rate of 800 feet per minute.

PHOTO BY SAM GRAWE

Thank you for all of the great inspiration and ideas. I got hooked on Dwell after my mother gave me a subscription for Christmas. I am only 15 years old, but your magazine has given me some amazing ideas. I am in the process of trying to get my school and its students to be more environmentally aware. I want my school to be as green as possible, while still making it usable for students. I was wondering if you have any past articles on this topic, or if you would ever consider devoting an issue to this topic.

Dylan Turk
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Editors' Note: *Dylan, we are equally enamored with you; not many students take it upon themselves to green their schools. We're happy we've inspired you and hope we can continue to help guide your endeavors. You might want to check out Being Green 101 (June 2006). Also, these websites could be helpful for you: www.usgbc.org and www.ecoliteracy.org*

Thank you for the article on Ken Isaacs ("Nice Quads", May 2007). We have had an interest in his work, as co-chairs of the Design Department of Cranbrook Academy of Art from 1971 to 1995. For the purposes of historical accuracy and documentation, we should mention that when we became co-chairs in September 1971, the school's president, Wallace Mitchell, informed us that one of our duties was to teach "Matrix of Design," a one-semester, one-hour-per-week course for six BFA students. Unfortunately, we were given only the course title with no syllabus. There was no documentation of the course under Ken Isaacs or any of the Design Department chairs between his time at Cranbrook and ours. So we invented a seminar course with a modest sequence of projects and readings that focused on the impact of design and art on the man-made and natural environment, reflecting that era's new interest in environmental concerns. We also found no documentation of student projects under Ken Isaacs. The Design Department Chair's studio file cabinet was nearly empty when we arrived, with no evidence of the distinguished history of this department. Charles Eames founded the program as the Department of Experimental Design in 1939. In its early years, students Ray Eames, Harry Bertoia, Niels Diffrient, Don Albinson, and David Rowland produced breakthrough work in the department.

Apparently there was little interest in documentation in the 1950s and 1960s in such a small and quite informal school. The Art Academy's cutting-edge art, architecture, and design focused intensively on the future, and the past was considered irrelevant—even the recent ▸

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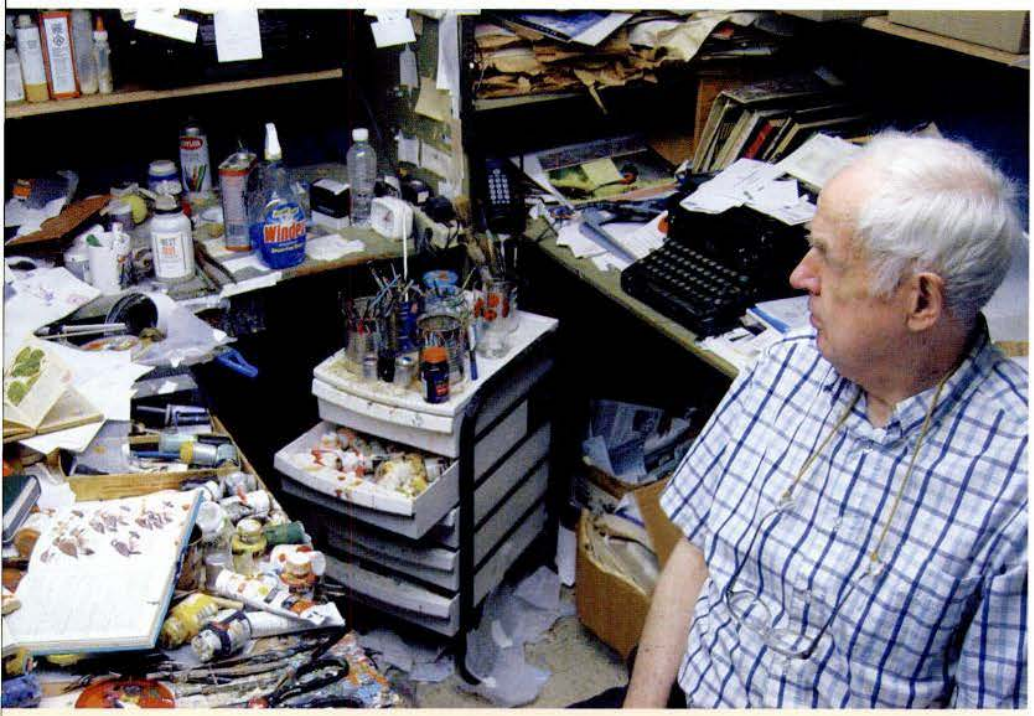

In Memoriam: Charley Harper

Above the entrace to Charley Harper's Cincinnati, Ohio, studio hangs a newspaper clipping from the aftermath of a hurricane: "Charley Roars In, Leaves Giant Mess." A few feet away another handpainted sign reads, "Ladybugs will save the world!" These two artifacts poignantly illustrate the extraordinary wildlife artist's wit and worldview. Harper, who recently passed away at age 84, leaves behind a singular legacy of minimalist, geometrically-intricate, depictions of nature, newly compiled in the book *Charley Harper: An Illustrated Life* (Ammo Books, 2007).

PHOTOS BY SAM GRAWE (PORTRAIT). ©2007 CHARLEY HARPER / COURTESY WWW.AMMOBOOKS.COM (ILLUSTRATION)

past's groundbreaking modernism. This changed with the postmodern influences in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which brought a renewed interest in history. Under the leadership of Art Academy president Roy Slade, who arrived in 1978, the art museum began to collect and exhibit the Art Academy classics of Eliel and Eero Saarinen, Charles and Ray Eames, Harry Bertoia, and Florence Knoll—work that had been previously ignored or taken for granted. In fact, several rare Eliel Saarinen pieces were rescued from Cranbrook Dumpsters. In 1983 Cranbrook's early years were documented in the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition and book *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision 1929–1950*.

Fortunately, Cranbrook has had an excellent archive for over 15 years, and the Cranbrook Art Museum has developed a fine collection of historic Art Academy design objects and materials. It is possible that some unidentified Ken Isaacs materials may be in these two locations, and some further research on the Isaacs years at Cranbrook would be a very good thing.

Katherine and Michael McCoy
Buena Vista, Colorado

I chuckled when I read Sam Grawe's politically correct Editor's Note on consumption ("Room to Consume?" May 2007). It was very tactful to not dictate how much room one needs to live comfortably. Well, I am. In order to receive pats on the back for building "green," each person in your home should have less than 4,000 square feet, or maybe we could just use common sense and exercise some morality.

Now I know that being judgmental is not in fashion, but when 20 percent (yes, here comes the ugly, often-sited statistic) receive 83 percent of the income in the U.S. maybe we should start to judge. I am a single mom. I have five biological children and have had up to five foster children at one time. Our home is 1,044 square feet. People often say our home in the country is like a city house. My point is, not only do I think our home is nice, it really isn't a trashed cardboard box. Everything that I can possibly do on my very tiny income is "green." When we would drive into the city and see the monuments people are building for themselves, my children would often say, "Mom, how many adopted or foster kids do you think those families have?" Enough said. Thanks for your lovely magazine.

Sharon Orcutt
Alberta, Canada

I really like Dwell. I recommend it to friends and even strangers. I save every issue. Sure, I have some complaints. I hate the hypocrisy of the SUV ads. I hate the swaths of color that run amok through pictures and text. The article on Paris ("Parsing Paris," May 2007) is a particularly glaring example. I find it ironic that each month the magazine gets bigger while the dwellings covered get smaller. Soon you will not even be able to get Dwell into any of the dwellings inside of it, a paradox if there ever was one. But I digress.

What has me upset enough to write is Sam Grawe's viscious and unfair attack on my stuff ("Room to Consume?" May 2007). I am my stuff and my stuff is me. Surely a person who is retired has to do something, and doing something requires stuff like an inkjet printer that prints 44-foot-wide pictures, like three or four computers, like a large stereo with a couple of hundred CDs, like a big TV with associated equipment and a few DVDs, like a few thousand books, like some pots and pans, etc. Surely a person has to have some art around to enliven and deepen his experience of life and the world (no, make that the universe) around him. I mean, where would I put my 200 Toikka birds in one of your 450-square-inch (or is it millimeters?) dwellings? Where would I hang my own photographs if I had no walls? What about reminders of my past? Would you have me destroy my 4,000 LP records that I can no longer play in your obsession to render my life meaningless? What about my daughters' stuff, which is being removed at a pace so it will all be gone just before the heat death of the universe?

Look at your magazine. It is crammed full of ads selling what? STUFF! In fact, you have monthly features on all the new stuff. You have articles telling us which stuff is the best stuff to buy and these articles are always ambiguous so ▶

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that we may feel the only thing to do is to buy all of them. (Full disclosure: I now have a wall in my dining room—yes, I have a separate dining room—with four large clocks on it.) Here is the point: If I and people like me didn't have a lot of stuff, you would not exist!

Len Charlap
Princeton, New Jersey

I subscribed to Dwell almost a year ago and have been so pleased with the wide range of articles and beautiful photography that I recently renewed for two years. My own personal interest is in the small, or, I should say, "smallest," dwellings. Probably the most famous of these in human and architectural history is Thoreau's cabin at Walden (at 150 square feet). Quite a way down the line toward smallness now comes Major Arnold Strong's eight-by-eight-foot military-shipping-container dwelling in Kabul, Afghanistan ("Barrack Essentials," May 2007). Those 64 square feet he inhabits in Kabul contrast strongly with his Oregon ranch house of 4,000 square feet. It's exactly 1.6 percent the size! Food for thought for all of us.

And reading Major Strong's few lines (reading between the lines, too), you detect the presence of a warm, generous heart and a powerful spirit. It's good to know that America is being represented by such qualities in Afghanistan.

It would be a pleasure to see other contributions by this author in upcoming issues of Dwell.

Ron Sabaroff
Berkeley, California

I've been enjoying the May 2007 issue and was excited to see the inclusion of eco-design in your Architectural Movements 101 section. Hoorah! An influential publication is giving the green-design movement the press it so rightly deserves. However, I was confused that you cited Bruce Sterling as the manifesto's source. Where are Sim Vander Ryn and Stuart Cowan's seminal *Ecological Design* (predating the Viridian speech by two years), or John Lyle's *Regenerative Design for Sustainable Development* (1994), or the scores of others that are directly involved in the movement (David Orr's *Design with Nature*, for example)? I'm a graduate student, working on a thesis project that involves eco design and I've never even come across Bruce Sterling on reading lists or cited in influential works—he's just not on the radar.

Also, the "be less bad" line is completely refuted in McDonough and Braungart's *Cradle to Cradle*, Chapter 2, "Why Being Less Bad Is No Good"—as it is by many others who see the possibility of the human and natural worlds "integrating" as opposed to being in some kind of perceived conflict. There's so much more happening in the movement than Sterling, so don't forget about the rest of them next time! Thanks for kick-starting a cohesive eco-design movement in your publication, but it needs to be represented accurately!

Kristen Morse
Halifax, Nova Scotia

I have read Dwell since issue no. 1 and love most issues. But I have to say, aside from the Karim Rashid review of plastic chairs ("The Haute Seat"), the May 2007 issue might be the single worst issue you have ever produced. I kept thinking, This is just awful stuff and totally useless, downright ugly and depressing. Every design topic was awful.

Modern design and living can be lots of things, and this issue seemed to focus on "prison chic," for lack of a better term. Small, cramped, concrete, and garbage.

Page 168's 426-square-foot apartment, come on, that's not modern living, that's less-than-college-dorm–room-living; hotel rooms are bigger than that. "Stripped Ease" is what gives modern design a bad name: a stripped concrete shell for an apartment? There is no design there. It has the ambiance of a prison. An 800-square-foot house in Tokyo in the shape of a shipping container with no private space and a solo lightbulb on a cord? That's existing, not living. These three visually depressing stories were followed by a lovely photo essay depicting garbage. It's so very easy to find the ugly in the world—it's too easy. Good art is hard.

I'm all for well-designed small spaces, minimalist interior design, Japanese design, and photo essays of the abstract. But this issue managed to shine a light on the ugly side of design and depress me, rather than uplift and move me the way great design can, and like Dwell has shown before. I hope you return to it.

Jeff Coons
San Diego, California

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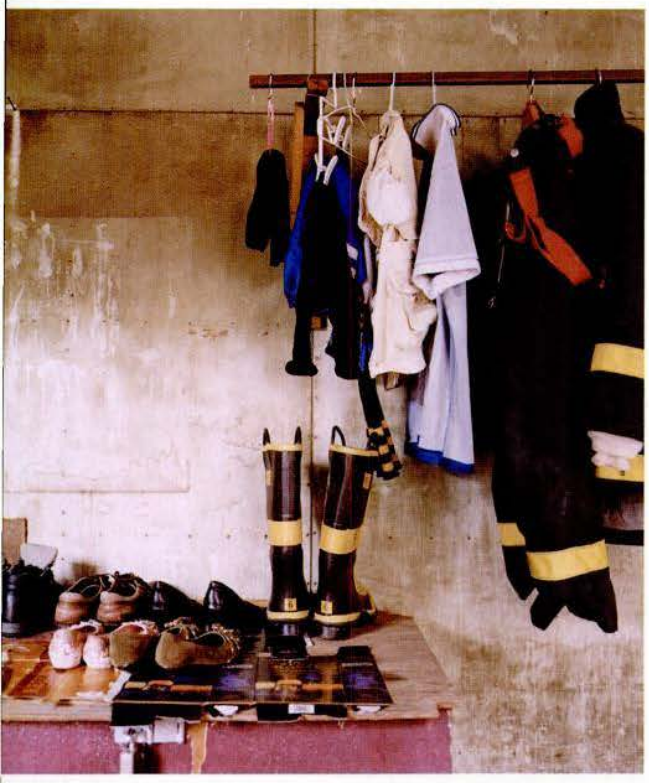


In Bangkok, a derelict 1880s Customs House has been has been reappropriated to house a fire station.

Contributors

Peter Belanger (Dwell Labs p. 132) is a photographer who lives and works in San Francisco. He loves and appreciates good product design, whether it is a chef's knife or a drawer pull. Since his own home is in a constant state of improvement, he gets a kick out of previewing Dwell's items and ideas firsthand.

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR, ("Cultivating Appreciation," p. 196) is the Founder and President of The Cultural Landscape Foundation in Washington, D.C. (www.tclf.org). Prior to TCLF he spent 15 years as the coordinator of the National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative, and a decade in private practice in New York City. He is the author/editor of numerous books including, *Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture* and *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*. Birnbaum was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and was the recipient of the Rome Prize in Historic Preservation. This October he will be awarded the ASLA's LaGrasse Medal for his public work.

Deborah Bishop ("Avant Gardens," p. 123 and "No Diving," p. 134) is Dwell's San Francisco contributing editor who, in the course of her research, experienced a coincidence right out of Paul Auster's *Red Notebook*. "I went to Oakland to check out a garden Bob Royston designed some 60 years ago, and then popped into a boutique for a little retail digestif. When one of the staff asked what brought me to the East Bay, I grudgingly embarked on an explanation, convinced she would never have heard of my subject. It turned out her father co-wrote the Royston monograph I had been poring over. We stared at each other for a moment, half-expecting the theme from *The Twilight Zone* to start welling up."

Ron Gluckman ("The Bangkok Beat," p. 204) is a native San Franciscan writer who has lived in Asia for 16 years. For the past two years, he's been based in Bangkok, where he relishes the fantastic food, frantic motion, and fusion of old-new, East-West. A regular visitor since the early 1990s, Gluckman thought he knew the Thai capital, until taken in hand by Mason Florence.

Raimund Koch ("Terra Ephemera," p. 162) was born in Munich in 1964. After studying at the Bavarian Academy for Photography, he moved to Berlin in 1990 and started specializing in architectural photography. For 5 years he documented contemporary art for the Goetz Collection and collaborated with artists and architecture firms.

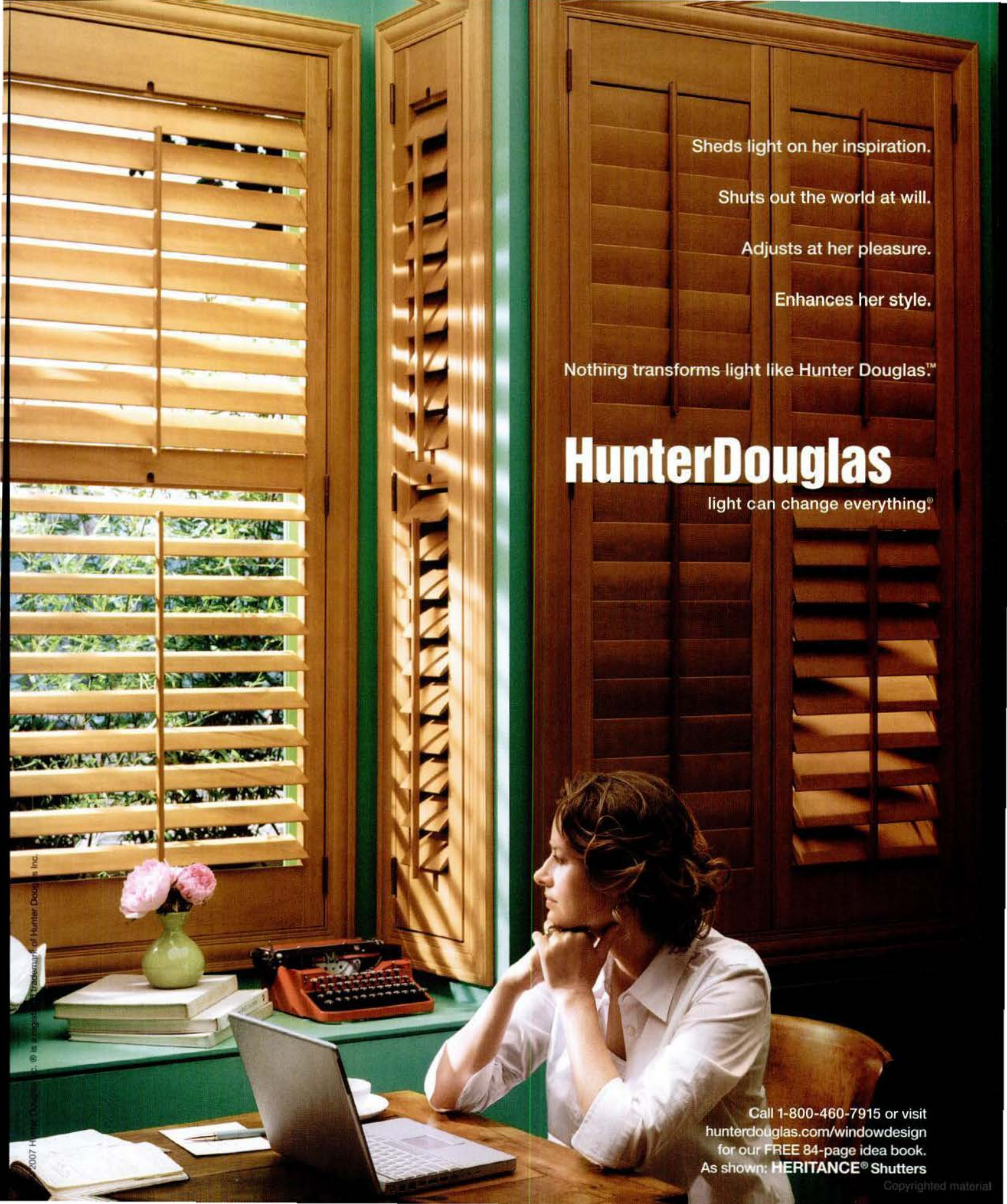
He shoots editorial assignments for Dwell, *Fortune*, *House & Garden*, *Interior Design*, *Newsweek*, *Wallpaper* and *Wired*, as well as numerous other magazines. Aside from photographing architecture and interiors he frequently shoots new technology, portraits and urban landscapes.He lives in New York.

Kieran Long ("Where the Wild Things Aren't," p. 170) is a journalist and critic based in London and Stockholm. He was pleased that this month someone decided to send him to a country with some sun—normally his beat is anywhere in Europe where there's snow. His opinion of Guilherme Vaz's house in northern Portugal was in no way influenced by the salted codfish bought for him by the architect the evening before.

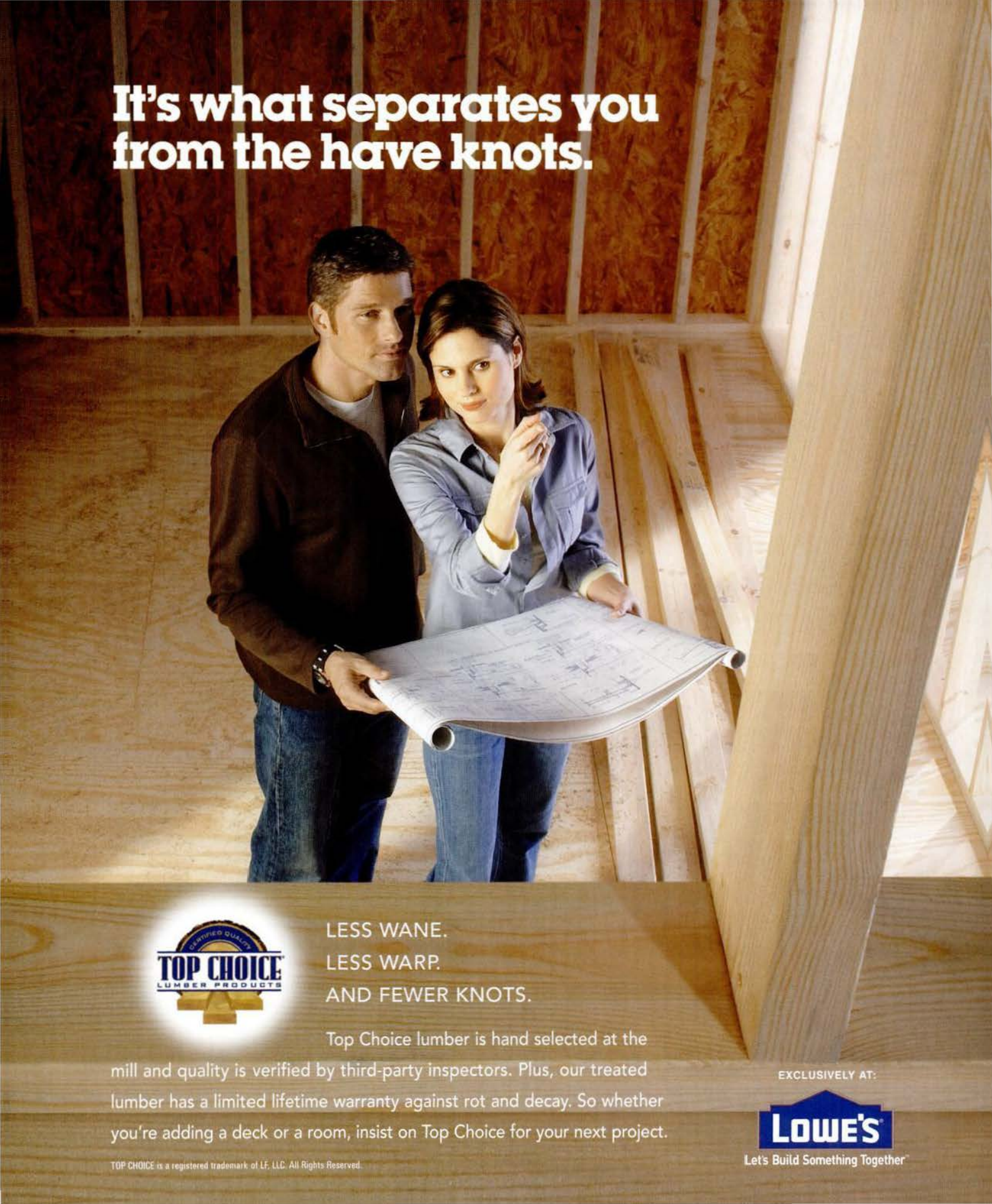
Robert Schlatter ("Highway Hideway," p. 150) is a native Swiss, who shoots predominately in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York. He enjoys working anywhere that takes him close to the ocean and enjoyed shooting the Great Highway House. "I particularly liked the way it merged old and new architecture. It's a challenge I'm having with my own renovation."

Noah Webb ("Drumming Up Design," p. 88) loves shooting for Dwell, wherever we'll send him. Usually it is close to his own backyard, as is seen in this issue's Off the Grid in Los Angeles's Eagle Park neighborhood. Don't ask him to play the guitar, though; his talents are concentrated heavily in the photographic medium (or so he's told). He did, however, enjoy shooting the modern, ecological living space that synchronously serves as a cool music studio. Maybe someday he will take up the trombone, but in the meantime you can see his photographs in the pages of *Monocle*, *Anthem*, and *Black Book*. ■

PHOTO BY DAVE LAURIDSEN



It's what separates you from the have knots.



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What's In and What's Outside

April in the design world means one thing: Milan. Designers, agents, vendors, manufacturers, and journalists (not to mention cool hunters, bloggers, and a handful of design tourists) descend on the city in ever-increasing numbers for a jam-packed week of business deals, cocktail parties, press conferences, and, most importantly, the debut of thousands of new products. Although one could easily plan a yearlong around-the-world itinerary of must-see design events, Milan sets the benchmark by which everything until the following April is judged.

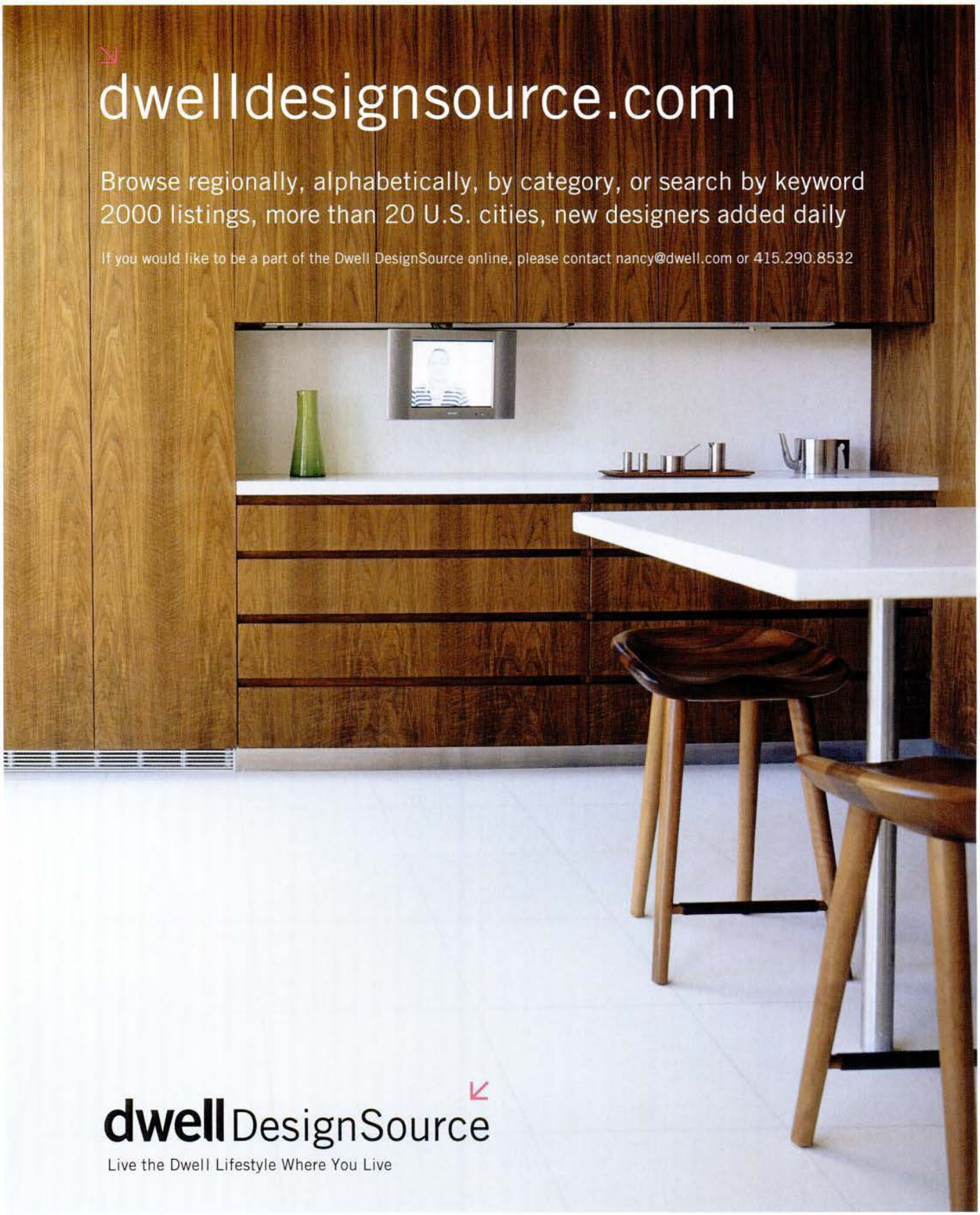
Claudio Luti, president of the Milan-based plastics giant Kartell, agrees. "In all the other cities a fair is a commercial moment," he told me recently. "Milan is only about innovation." This strategy was on display in Kartell's huge trade-show booth—a construction of diagonally cut white plastic tubing and neon lighting, which was equal parts Willy Wonka and Joe Colombo—where they introduced no fewer than 16 new products. One of the most technically advanced pieces, Philippe Starck's aptly titled Mr. Impossible chair, had been in the works for almost a decade. Although the chair made a splash at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York a month later, such an important innovation could only have debuted in Milan.

In all honesty, Milan is almost too much. It's practically impossible for one editor's brain to absorb. For six days and nights I trekked through the trade show and its burgeoning offspring of satellite events, collecting as much press material as humanly possible for my eventual digestion (luckily my suitcase unzipped and expanded for the return flight), taking mental notes, alternating proseccos with espressos, and trying to comprehend what kind of barometer reading the fair was giving. Although we usually cover trade shows in a section titled "What We Saw," this time around I thought we could take a cue from Mr. Luti and present Milan to you in an equally innovative way. The result is our "Special Design Report: Milan" (page 220).

Upon my return everyone inevitably asked, "What was the best thing you saw?" or "What was good this year?" And I suppose it would only be fair if I told you, too. My favorite thing in Milan this year wasn't a sleek new sofa, or an improbably witty Dutch object; rather, it was something that the Italians do better than just about anyone—an amazing dinner. What made this meal so great wasn't the fact that the restaurant denied me a reservation, only to grant one five minutes later to my Italian-speaking colleague, or that the antipasti, primi, and secondi were prepared to perfection, or that I was dining with old friends whom I rarely see in the flesh, but rather that it all happened in the exquisite confines of a garden patio dripping with blossoms and vernal foliage. Even the pollen-laden detritus that kept falling on my head wasn't so bad.

This issue of Dwell is dedicated to the thoughtful design and planning that go into making moments like that possible—to the designers and architects and landscape architects who address our lives outdoors with as much passion as they exhibit for the buildings we inhabit. Landscapes are in a constant state of flux: They change with the seasons, and they alter significantly over time. As long as we have built, we have also had to consider where we build, and what we build around. Humankind has enjoyed a long and varied history of tinkering with our surroundings, and a variety of up-to-date approaches can be found in the following pages. The key word here is "variety." Landscape design is about context and the context for every project is going to be different. Ultimately, however, the pleasures offered by the outdoors are simple ones. ■

SAM GRAWE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
sam@dwell.com



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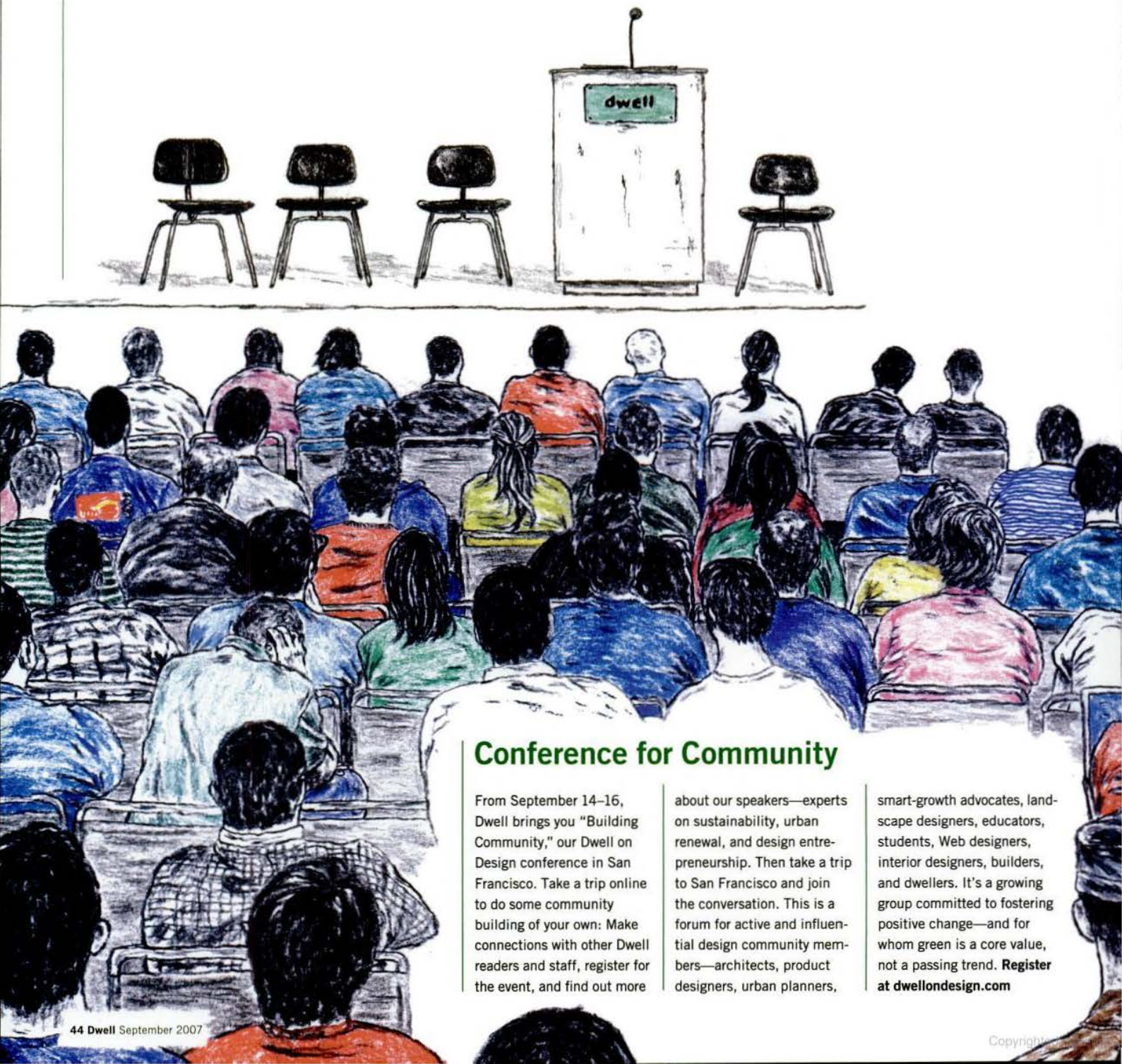

Conference for Community

From September 14–16, Dwell brings you "Building Community," our Dwell on Design conference in San Francisco. Take a trip online to do some community building of your own: Make connections with other Dwell readers and staff, register for the event, and find out more about our speakers—experts on sustainability, urban renewal, and design entrepreneurship. Then take a trip to San Francisco and join the conversation. This is a forum for active and influential design community members—architects, product designers, urban planners, smart-growth advocates, landscape designers, educators, students, Web designers, interior designers, builders, and dwellers. It's a growing group committed to fostering positive change—and for whom green is a core value, not a passing trend. **Register at dwellondesign.com**

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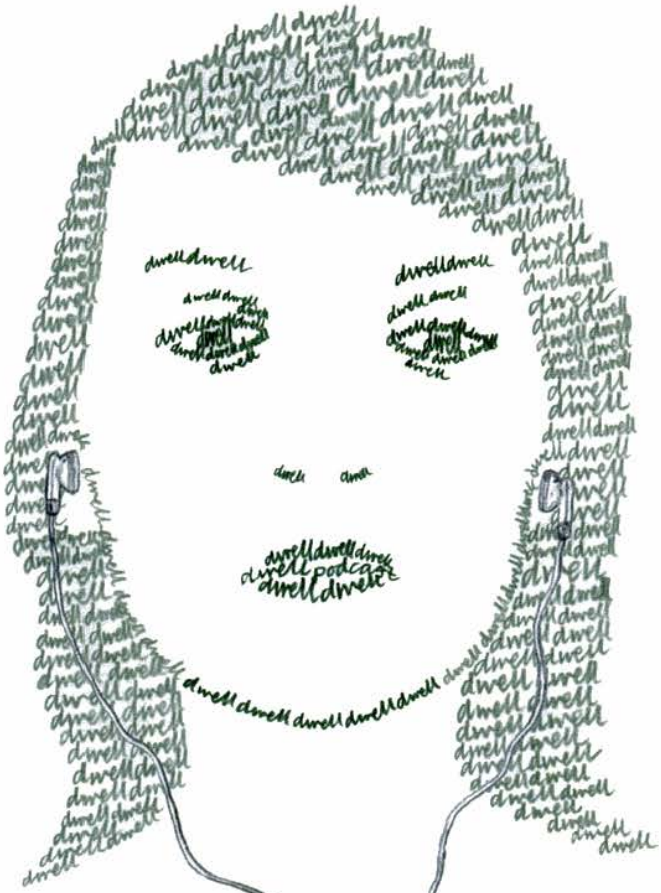
Podcasts

In an interview with Los Angeles editor Frances Anderton, Joe Osae-Addo discusses the house he built in Ghana (featured on page 77), borrowing equally from Finland's Alvar Aalto, L.A.'s Ray Kappe, and the region's traditional adobe structures.



Design Blog

New and Noteworthy

Dwell staffers update our blog throughout the day with the latest news, from product launches to trend spotting at far-flung furniture shows—all of it accompanied by your comments. Join the discussion. **dwell.com/blog**

Your Space

Rental Reality

In what might be called "run-to-the-hills architecture," a Brazilian couple hangs all of their kitchen gear from their apartment's ceiling, allowing them to move out at a moment's notice. So what's your rental philosophy? **dwell.com/showyourspace**

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or call 415.362.7397 for details. Events are held in conjunction with participating arts and culture organizations.

design by EXBROOK

Elbe Philharmonic Hall by Herzog + de Meuron / Hamburg, Germany / www.elbphilharmonie.de / Obviously, the Elbe Philharmonic did more than hold a bake sale. This $326 million, 1.3-million-square-foot structure will provide 2,700 concert seats in two halls, a luxury hotel, condominiums, and enough entertainment options to keep you in port all evening.

In 2010, Hamburg will enter the tchotchke trade of Europe, as miniature Elbe Philharmonic Halls compete with Eiffel Towers, Leaning Towers, and Big Bens. The building is a coup for the Hafen City master plan, which will increase the size of developed Hamburg by 40 percent. The adaptive reuse of this former cocoa bean warehouse is the work of starchitects Herzog + de Meuron, a logical choice given their transformation of London's Bankside Power Station into the sensational Tate Modern. The hall—whose highest point is 360 feet above the water—will change Hamburg's skyline, population, and cultural cachet. In a city most famous for ground-meat patties, that's no small feat.

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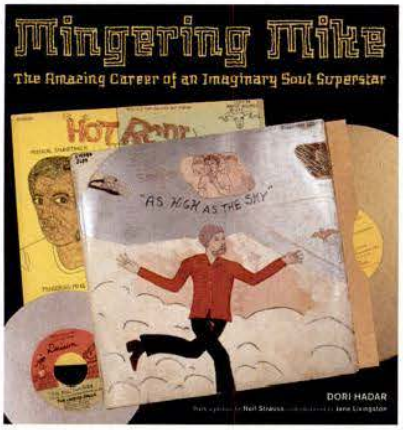


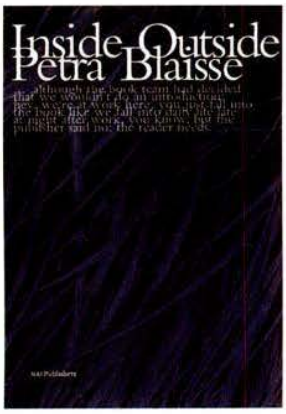
Mingering Mike / By Dori Hadar / Princeton Architectural Press / $24.95 / www.papress.com / While most of us let the dream of stardom fade, Mingering Mike fabricated his own cult of celebrity for almost a decade. Vinyl collector Dori Hadar stumbled upon over 50 cardboard albums by this imaginary superstar; here, he presents a catalogue of Mike's faux career for the fans he always fantasized about having.

Linkable notebooks / By Start Here / www.starthereny.com / Suckers for all things modular (Trapper Keeper, where art thou?), we were delighted by the concept of customizable, linkable notebooks. The brainchildren of spunky graphic design team Little Fury, these diary-sized books are like a fine font: They have all the options you want (like graph paper and pockets) and no dingbats you don't need (like spiral binding).

Mod / By Ross Lovegrove for VitrA / enexp.vitra.com.tr / Ross Lovegrove is running out of objects to futurize. Watches, water bottles, airplane seats, a solar car—and now a line of fixtures for VitrA, the Turkish bathroom manufacturer. In a nod to conservation, the Mod line keeps the faucet flow to a modest level. Lovegrove, who is famously fond of streamlining, has reduced the thickness of his pedestal sinks to about half an inch. The toilets are so sleek they would look at home in the most refined living room, and they are made more presentable still by the choice of covers in bamboo, white, green, or gray-painted aluminum.

Previous installation of *Illumination I* at Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas.

Michael Somoroff: Illumination I / 24 June–14 Oct / Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum / Ridgefield, CT / www.aldrichart.org / Whether defined as sculpture or architecture, Somoroff's stimulating structures blur the boundaries between disciplines and focus on the place where object, experience, and light coalesce.



Inside Outside: Petra Blaisse / By Petra Blaisse, edited by Kayoko Ota / NAI Publishers / $55 / www.naipublishers.nl / This rich collection of Blaisse's projects from around the globe reads like a guide to the design industry's hottest names. Works from the Dutch designer, including collaborations with the ever-present Rem Koolhaas, are laid out by pioneering graphic designer Irma Boom. The result is a comprehensive compendium that isn't just beautiful, but is an intimate and edifying look into the process of an intriguing designer.

Handmade toys / By La Maison de Lola / www.lamaisondelola.com / Those of us who tire of watching kids drag around raggedy stuffed animals will be relieved to find this collection of respectable cushioned toys. "Creatures," from Portuguese couple Iolanda Roftoples Mealha and Álvaro Tavares Ramos, are hand-sewn from wool and felt and stuffed with duck feathers. Bestowing Mr. Bunny, Mr. Grizzly, or Ms. Oink on an unassuming youngster will surely encourage an appreciation for the finer things in life—after all, a little taste of houndstooth could always blossom into a lifelong passion for sophistication.

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Great design draws us into the vision of an individual artist and allows us to make a personal connection with the surrounding world. Technology gives an artist the context and the framework to explore great design from different perspectives. Landscape architect Andrea Cochran is an artist whose palette consists of soil, concrete, and steel. The public and private gardens that Cochran creates are modern and playful, serene and dynamic.

English country gardens they are not. What they are is surprising and unique. Cochran starts with the basics then layers for depth to create outdoor spaces that are rich but never overdone. Cochran takes her cues from the location, the surrounding environs, and the light. Her work can't be categorized because the existing site dictates the final outcome. Her gardens aren't static but change as seasonal plants make an appearance and existing ones fill out.

And although they are full of movement—Cochran is drawn to flowing grasses and undulating shapes—her gardens invite reflection. They are places for solace—an increasing necessity in the fast-paced world we inhabit. Her ability to create a relationship between the elements demonstrates a hallmark of great design.

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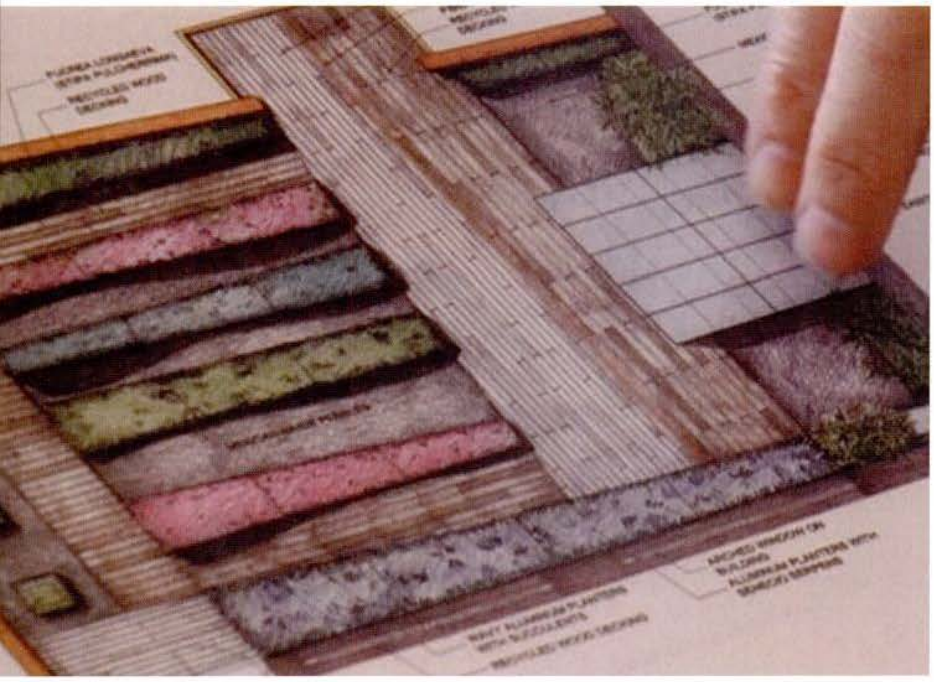

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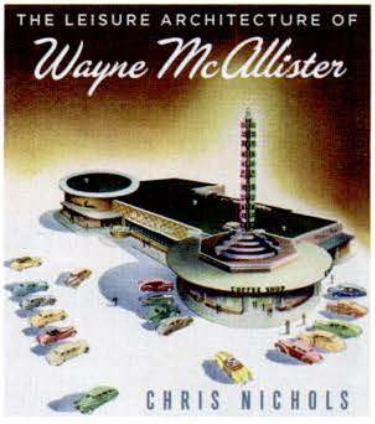
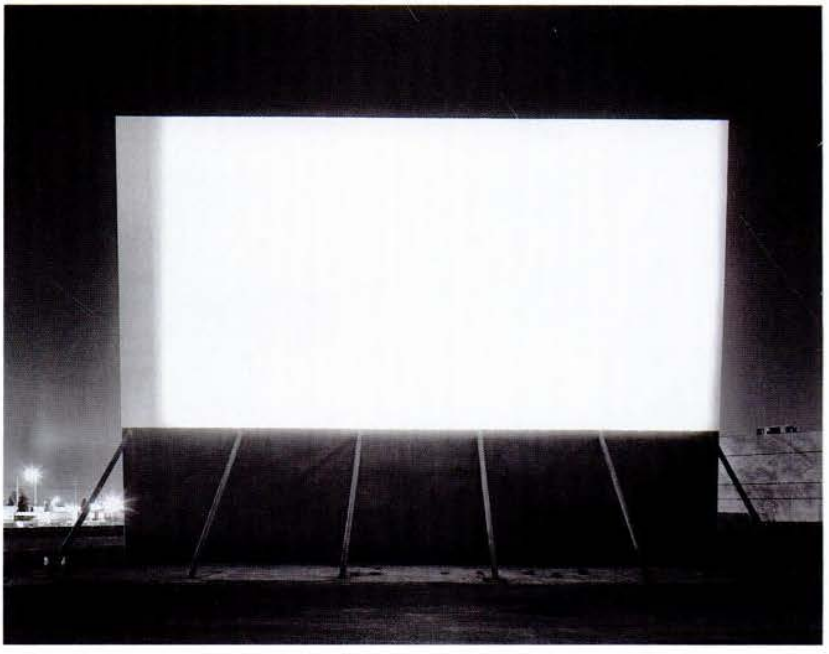


The Leisure Architecture of Wayne McAllister / By Chris Nichols / Gibbs Smith / $19.95 / www.gibbs-smith.com / McAllister was almost as much a set designer as a glam-o-rama architect. Just look at the photos of the Rat Pack in front of the Sands Casino, or the bars he installed on every floor of his home, a.k.a. L.A.'s Biltmore Hotel.

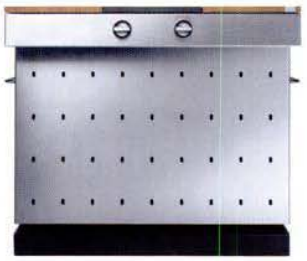
Mobilehome / By Kids On Roof for Sparkability / www.sparkability.net / Taking a thoroughly modern approach to gender-neutral play, this dollhouse is sure to please both the She-Ras and He-Men in your house. Better still, when they outgrow this eight-room (plus stair openings and spy holes) electric-blue-and-red playhouse, it can be easily recycled, unlike those Castle Grayskulls currently holding court in your local landfill.

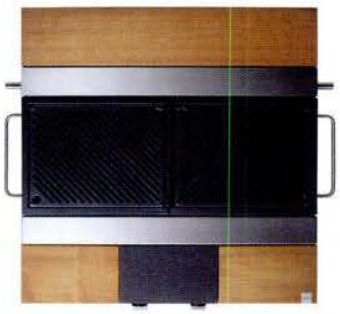


Hiroshi Sugimoto
Winnetika Drive-In (Paramount), 1993

Hiroshi Sugimoto
Hyena-Jackal-Vulture, 1994

Hiroshi Sugimoto / Through 30 Sept / Villa Manin Centre for Contemporary Art / Codroipo, Italy / www.villamanincontemporanea.it / The Villa Manin might seem an unlikely place to show the works of a Japanese photographer, but the dioramas and seascapes captured by Hiroshi Sugimoto have an ancient quality oddly at home among the 16th-century hallways. Sugimoto has some fun with the setting, resting his prints on easels and displaying his portrait of a wax-figure Napoleon in the room where Napoleon actually slept.





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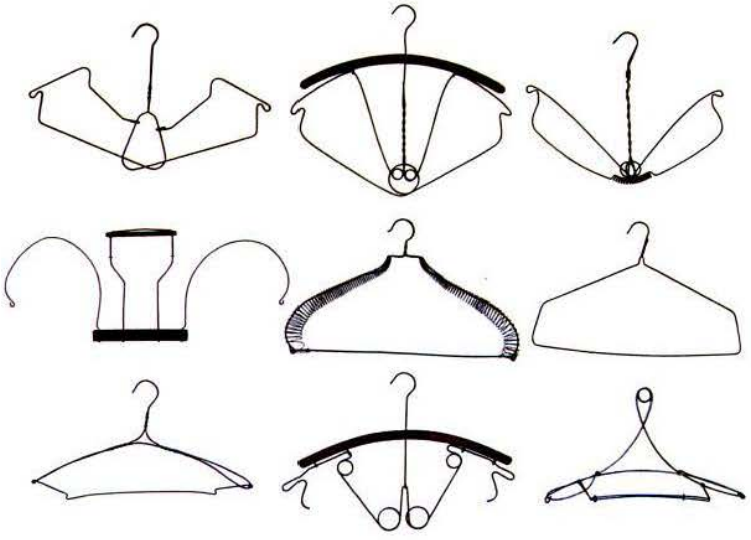

Mark and Joy Indursky are the names behind this anomalous and quirky design company. Eschewing bright and shiny newness for oxidation and cracked paint, the duo seek out folk art and industrial-designed pieces and display them in unique ways. These sculptural presentations can be installed in either commercial or residential environments, and are curated with special attention to scale, color, surface, and graphic appeal. Be it an assemblage of vintage ray guns, Art Deco microphones, or baseball mitts, these one-off creations are the perfect antidote to the ubiquity of mass-produced mediocrity.

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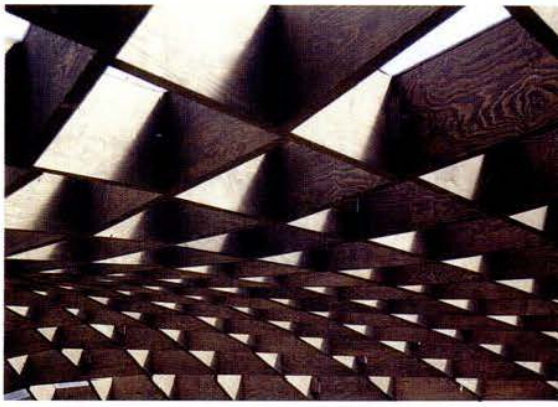
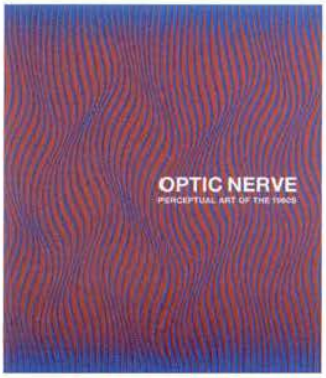


Cecil Balmond
Serpentine Pavilion, 2002

Cecil Balmond
Serpentine Pavilion Gallery, 2005

Frontiers of Architecture I—Cecil Balmond / 22 June–21 Oct / Louisiana Museum of Modern Art / Copenhagen, Denmark / www.louisiana.dk / Call it the revenge of the slide rule set. For decades, engineers stood by, anonymously calculating weight loads as architects hogged the limelight. The balance of power is shifting as engineers like Cecil Balmond gain more recognition for extending the boundaries of architecture with the kind of complex building feats shown in this exhibition.

Font clock / By Sebastian Wrong for Established & Sons / www.establishedandsons.com / We assure you this clock's at the top of any font geek's wish list. Sebastian Wrong chose 12 20th-century fonts to appear on his version of the 24-hour timepiece. Wrong claims that "at given points within the annual time cycle, all the fonts will run together for five minutes." The synergistic beauty of these five minutes will bring any typophile to tears.



Optic Nerve: Perceptual Art of the 1960s / By Joe Houston / Merrell / $49.95 / www.merrellpublishers.com / Long the red-headed stepchild to the 1960s' more celebrated Pop art, Op art hasn't received monograph treatment in over 30 years. This book brings back everything from vintage *Vogue* covers and Joseph Albers paintings to requisite manifestos. Although Op art gets sniffed at for its egalitarian carnival qualities, *Optic Nerve* makes you think today's art world could use a new drug.

The "best seller" from Italy can be found in:

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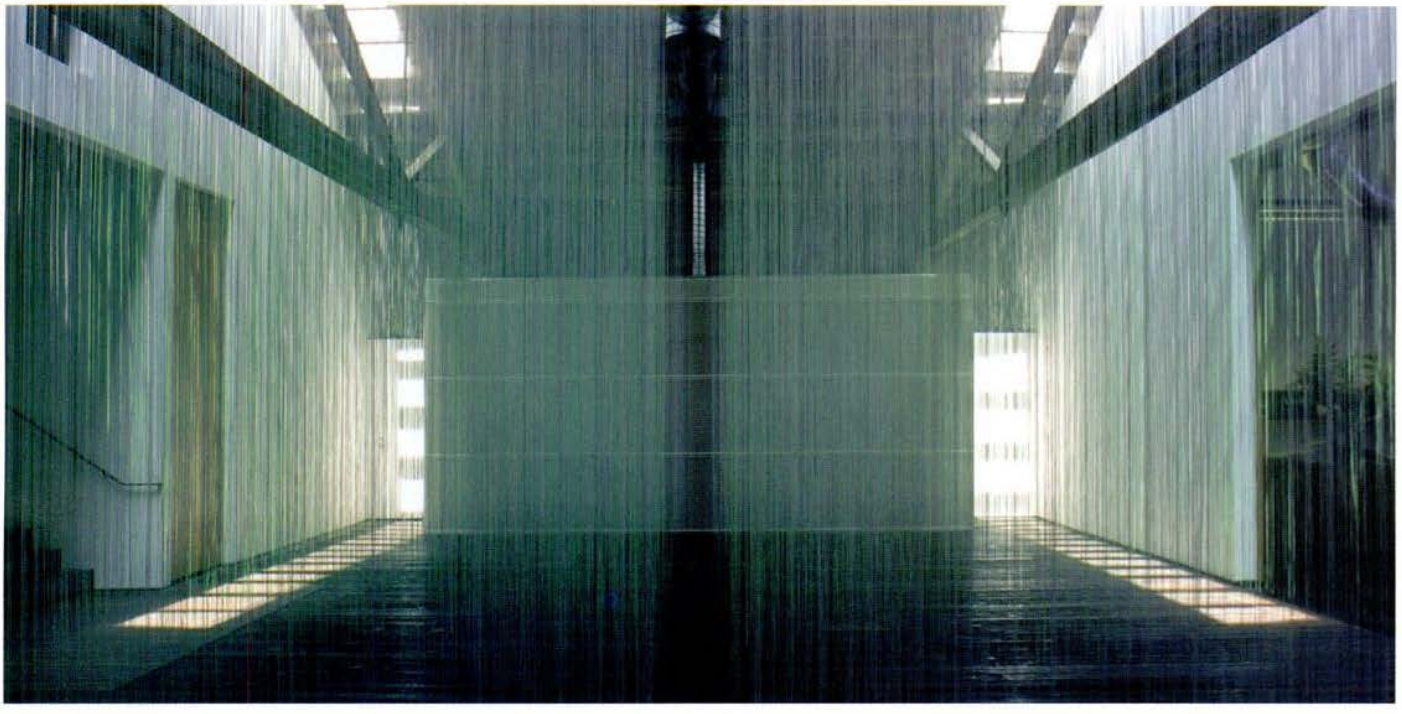
The "best seller" from Italy

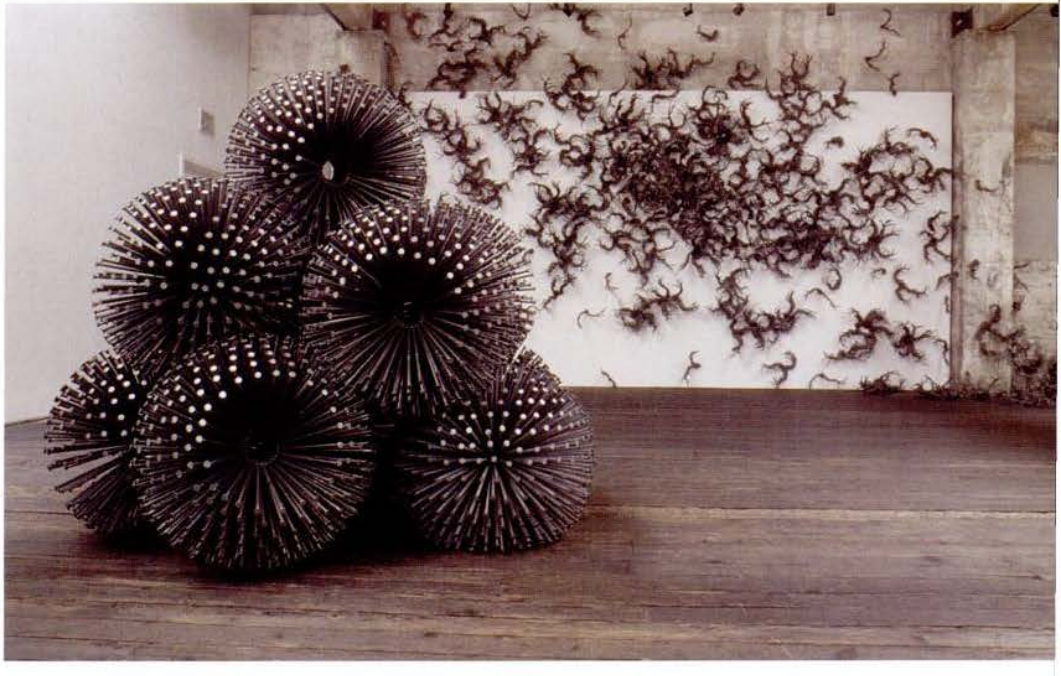
Suyama Space / www.suyamapetersondeguchi.com / Seattle's Suyama Space, a striking exhibition gallery located in the offices of Suyama Peterson Deguchi Architects, is a nonprofit program that invites three artists to create site-specific installations every year. These beautiful exhibitions are architectural responses, bringing an improved meaning to the term "still life."



Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo
Linear Plenium, 2004

Christine Wallers
Sea Level, 2005

John Bisbee
Three Tons, 2002



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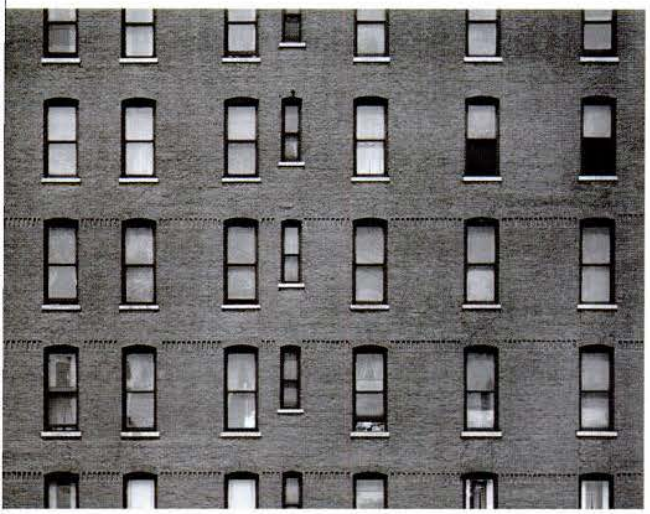
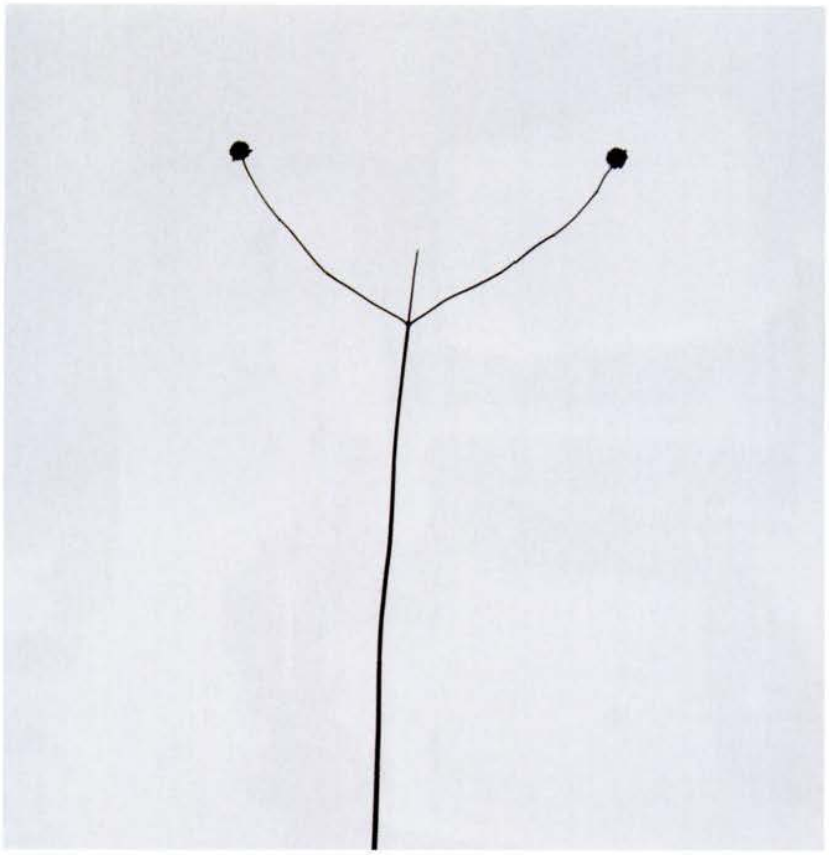


Harry Callahan / 9 June–21 Oct / The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art / Kansas City, MO / www.nelson-atkins.org / In the wake of the digital revolution, when everyone with a digicam deems any snapshot press-worthy, Nelson-Atkins inaugurates its brand-new galleries with this genuine icon of modern American photography. Despite the immense volume of negatives Callahan shot, only a handful became final prints. The resulting oeuvre is an impeccable collection of graceful and virtuosic pieces. Consider this a return to the good old days of f-stops and aperture gauges.



Harry Callahan
Chicago, 1949

Harry Callahan
Weeds Against the Sky, 1948

Cyclocity / By JCDecaux / www.cyclocity.be / Holland's penchant for public pedaling is nothing new, but French firm JCDecaux's new public bike-sharing system (think Zipcar for the 21-speed set) looks to rival even the Dutch model. Already a hit in Spain, Austria, and Belgium, Cyclocity members need only pay their minimal annual dues to gain access to bikes all over the city. Simply pick up a set of wheels at a flashy red kiosk, ride around town, and deposit the bike at any other kiosk. Lyon's 3,000 bikes already boast 20,000 trips per day, and Paris has signed up for over 20,000 velos of its own to go into operation this summer. San Francisco, Portland, and Chicago are all considering a Cyclocity system. Though Cyclocity doesn't currently offer a proper Tour de France, *un Tour de Paris et Lyon n'est pas mal.*

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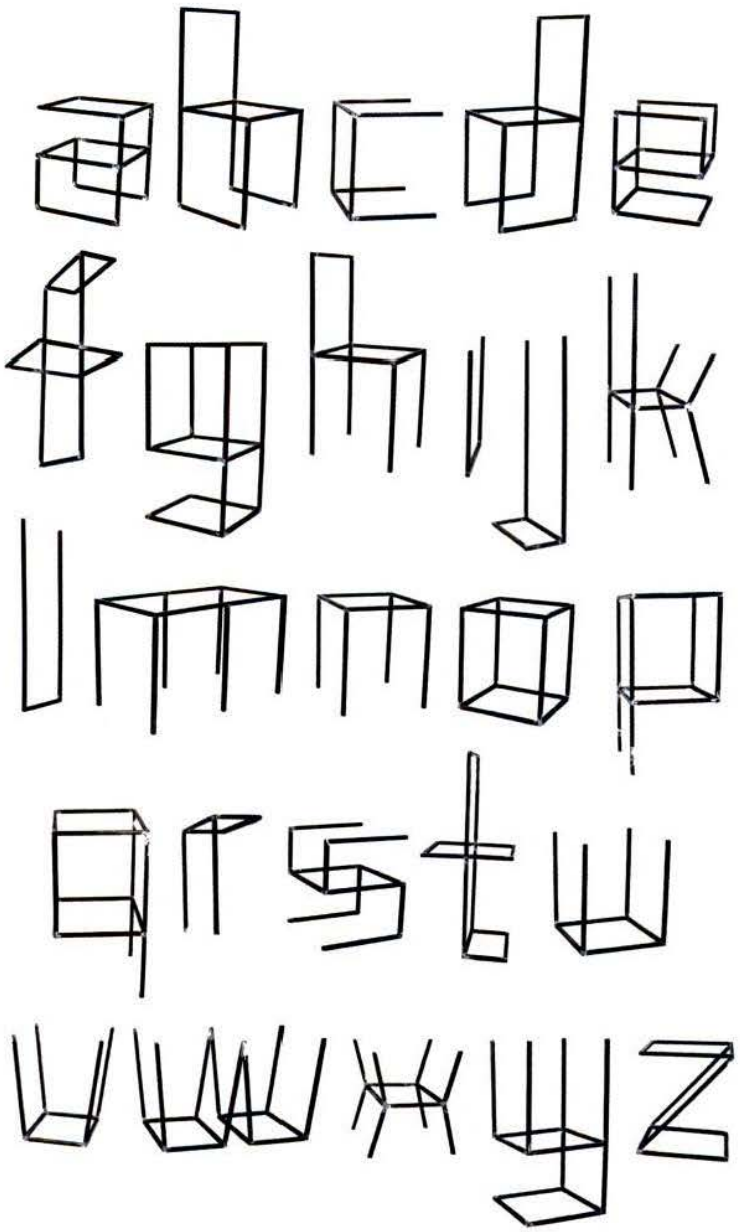
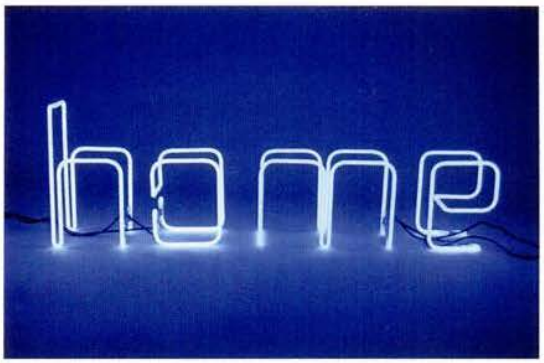
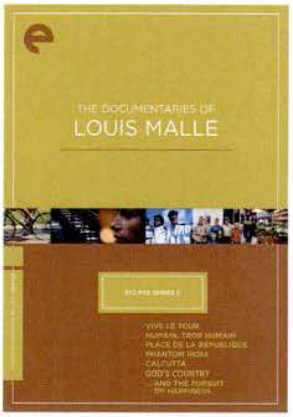


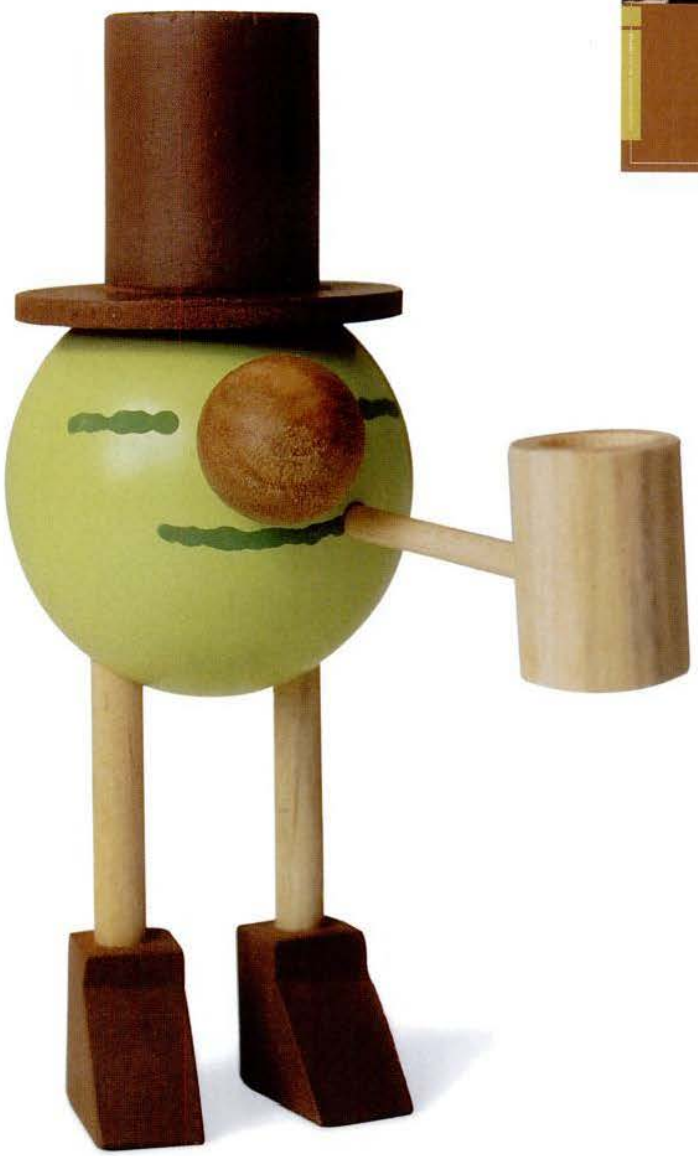


Three-dimensional fonts and furniture /
By Andrew Byrom / www.andrewbyrom.com /
Inspired by *Helvetica?* Wishing the written word didn't have to stay on the printed page? Look no further than Andrew Byrom's typographic furniture.

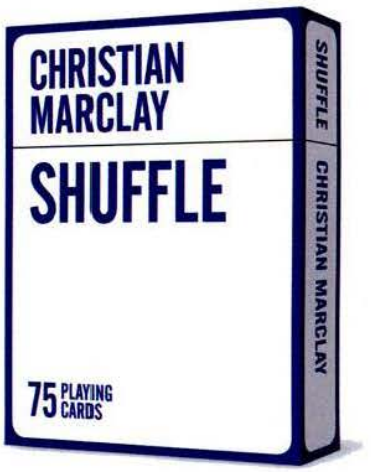
Through the use of tubular steel, neon, nylon, and fiberglass, Byrom experiments with materials and letters to create distinctive 3-D forms. Each of his projects consists of 26 units, otherwise known as the alphabet. With his Interiors series, the result is sometimes a functional structure that serves as a tabletop or a chair; other times it's just sculptural. In his Grab-Me project, inspired by his four-year-old son's stenciling, stainless steel tubing doubles as bathroom handrails. Not content with the standard font suitcase, Byrom's alphabetic sculptural hybrids open new worlds to words.



The Documentaries of Louis Malle—Eclipse Series / www.criterion.com / Louis Malle's documentaries are often overshadowed by his narrative films, but Criterion Collection's second Eclipse series looks to change that with this six-disk boxed set. Covering the diverse landscapes of France, India, and the American Midwest, Malle shows the ways in which people define place, as much as it defines them.



Eloie / By Garrett Morin / www.garrettmorin.com / This five-inch-tall wooden elf is neither a lost prop from the cover of George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass* nor an ambulatory tennis ball. Instead, he's a limited-edition incense burner, a funny little toy, and the answer to all your patchouli fantasies. The brainchild of designer Garrett Morin, this green guy looks like one-third of your favorite snowman sprouted legs, copped Honest Abe's headwear, and trucked on down to the local head shop.



Shuffle / By Christian Marclay / Aperture / $29.95 / www.aperture.org / Christian Marclay's boxed collection of oversized playing cards presents music as symbols, transforming the aural into the visual. It's part Fluxus box, part Eames House of Cards, part Burroughs Cut-Up Method. Marclay creates an interactive experience between the viewer and his photographs by inviting you to deal your own spontaneous musical scores. John Cage would be proud.

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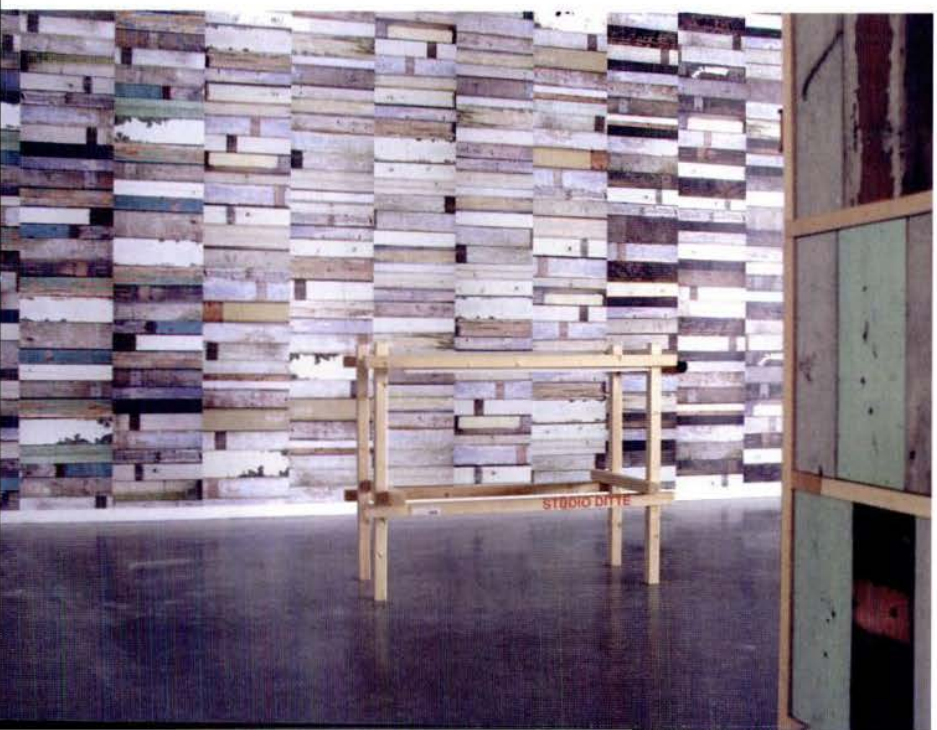
Lotus pendant / By David Knott / www.knott.com.au / This handmade pendant lamp combines the layered spherical form of classics like Poul Henningsen's Artichoke Lamp with contemporary materials, including white styrene plastic and acid-etched aluminum. An internal frame of powder-coated steel holds the 24 bent petals in place. It may be delicate, but it's not small, with a circumference of up to four feet. Your inner Buddhist will blossom in no time.

Sloophout / By Studio Ditte / www.studioditte.nl / Inspired by the work of Piet Hein Eek, known for his eclectic scrap-wood furniture creations, this young Dutch design studio has created a wallpaper for those who see beauty in imperfection and find comfort in the detritus of times past. The deceptively haphazard color palette and unassuming rustic texture are stacked up in a grid just tight enough to allow the self-consciousness of the design to come through. If you think of paper as coming from wood, then perhaps the distressed wallpaper look is not so far off.

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An Inno-native Approach

Joe Osae-Addo, a highly gregarious, Ghanaian-born architect, was living in Los Angeles, designing buildings and acting as the unofficial social coordinator of the local architecture scene. But on a visit to Ghana in 2000 he ran into, and subsequently fell in love with, Sara Asafu-Adjaye, an old high-school classmate who was living in London. The two embarked on a long-distance relationship, and before long Osae-Addo sprang a surprise on Asafu-Adjaye: He suggested they build a house together on a piece of land given to him by his mother in his native Accra, the capital of the West African nation. "We wanted to build something to cement our relationship," Osae-Addo recalls. "I didn't have the money," says Asafu-Adjaye, "so Joe said he'd build it and I could have some intellectual property." ►

A free-flowing, open-plan dining and living area is built of local Dahoma wood and has sliding screens and jalousie windows to allow cross ventilation in the hot climate.

Osae-Addo threw himself into designing a home that would come to be a test for—and testimony to—their new life as a couple. With a passion for the contextual modernism of Finland's Alvar Aalto, Australia's Glenn Murcutt, and L.A.'s Ray Kappe, he sought to apply their lessons to Ghana, a onetime British colony where unfortunate concrete-block houses made with imported English portland cement have become the urban norm. "Interstitial spaces and landscape are what defines tropical architecture," he says. "It is not about edifice but rather harnessing the elements—trees, wind, sun, and water—to create harmony, not the perfection that modernism craves so much."

Unhappy with Accra's concrete-block houses, the architect was determined to build with the materials found primarily in rural areas: timber and adobe mud blocks. "Adobe mud block doesn't exist in cities in Ghana, which meant I had to create it," says Osae-Addo. Furthermore, he didn't want air-conditioning in a climate where the average temperature can approach 90 degrees, with humidity exceeding 90 percent (an idea that didn't immediately fly with his soon-to-be wife).

The pair designed their house long-distance: Osae-Addo built models and sketched designs in his L.A. studio and emailed his ideas to his fiancée in London. She would reply with pragmatic considerations. "Initially I didn't want a corridor between the two rooms [parents' and child's bedrooms]," recalls Osae-Addo, "and Sara said, 'Hell, no, we have to be able to reach the kid.'" (Their son Kwaku was born in 2003.) Asafu-Adjaye remembers ▸

Slatted wooden screens (above) afford privacy and break the short but driving rains that blast the house from the southwest. Kwaku's bike sits near the adobe wall (below).

How to Make My House Your House

Elevated Thinking

Osae-Addo took lessons from vernacular building in a tropical climate, and raised his house three feet off the ground on a wooden deck, a trick as applicable in Accra as in Biloxi. This timber-and-concrete structure provides protection from insects and hard rains, access to the electrical and plumbing underneath, and cooling under-floor breezes.

Hey Jalousie

Jalousie windows are common in Ghana, but they're almost never used floor-to-ceiling. Osae-Addo used the nearly 12-foot-tall windows as a wall—a clever solution to cooling (and another strike against air-conditioning).

The wraparound balcony is a playground for four-year-old Kwaku (left); there he plays soccer, chases the family's four dogs, and hangs out with his friend and neighbor, Anita (right).

her skepticism during the design process: "I knew it would look good, but I didn't know if it would work."

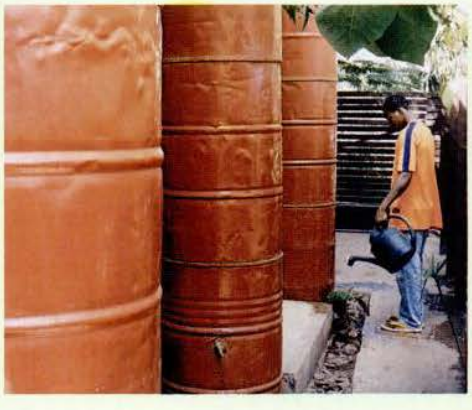
"I wanted to explore ideas of light, cross ventilation, and lightness of structure," Osae-Addo says of their one-story, 2,500-square-foot house. Arranged in an L-shape, with bedrooms and TV room in one wing and the kitchen and dining areas in the other, the house has a balcony wrapping around it, inspired by both colonial English bungalows and the courtyard plans of rural Ghanaian houses. "There are no internal corridors," Osae-Addo says, "so rooms extend from one wall to the opposite wall, allowing for free flow of light and air. We are always moving from room to room. It's a very intimate house."

The design follows the "no air-conditioning" philosophy by raising the structure three feet off the ground on a wooden deck to take advantage of cooling underfloor breezes. For cross ventilation, the house has sliding slatted-wood screens that neighbors thought were crazy in the damp, hot climate, and floor-to-ceiling jalousie windows. The project was not without its challenges, including, Osae-Addo says, "the limitations of labor, availability of materials, environmental conditions, and being ready to adapt the original design." He continues, "There was a temptation to give up on the original concept of adobe, because of the difficulty in making it ourselves. We achieved the near impossible of taking a relatively unskilled labor force and inspiring them to think differently and be open to new possibilities." Though the house is on the grid, solar panels provide ▸

Osae-Addo's electric bike (above) sits at the juncture between a powder room and TV area. The Bulthaup workbench and kitchen cabinets (below) were imported from L.A.

Cistern Act 3

In keeping with the African tradition of reusing everything, Osae-Addo bought old oil barrels from a junkyard and painted them with red oxide. After welding them together three-deep and embedding them in the ground, he inserted downspouts from the roof gutters and welded taps on the bottom. When the barrels are full, a hose can be attached to water the garden.

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Sara Asafu-Adjaye rests on a couch in the TV room. The IKEA light fixture and other imports give the house its blend of Western and African, mass-produced and handmade.

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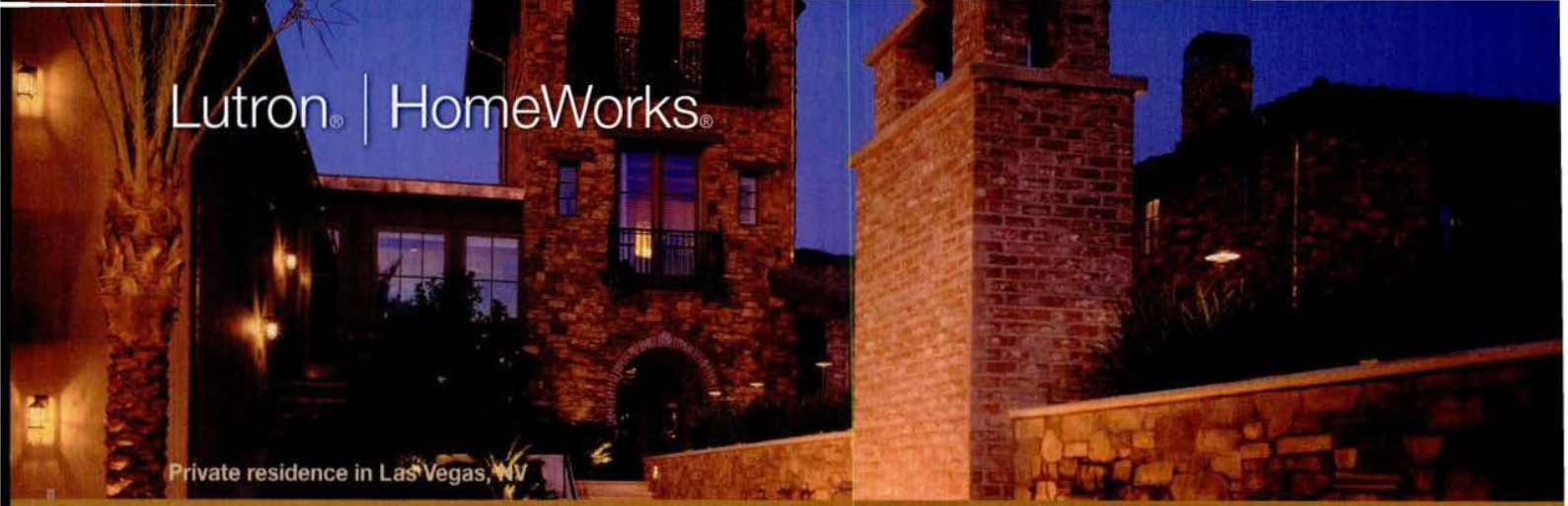

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Construction began in 2003 while the couple was visiting Accra, and was finally completed in the fall of 2004; Osae-Addo, Asafu-Adjaye, and their young son moved into the house just before its completion.

Osae-Addo has found so many design opportunities in Ghana that he's left L.A. behind—but he also brought a slice of California with him. "We moved L.A. straight into this house—from our bed to our sofas to our TVs," says Osae-Addo. "We have American appliances and equipment, including a complete Bulthaup kitchen that I'd bought while in L.A. and stored in my basement." They love the juxtaposition of the mud house and Bulthaup kitchen, amusedly pointing out that a new one would cost more than the reasonable $50,000 required for the entire house.

But does it work? Even Asafu-Adjaye says yes, the house stays cool. "Sara had to eat her words," says Osae-Addo. Shade trees also help, as does the lush garden that has grown on what was once a piece of arid, uninviting land. Asafu-Adjaye now says that the house is "so comfortable and easy to live in, I don't like to go out."

Her husband has coined a phrase for his approach to contextual modern architecture: "inno-native," and it's an approach he is trying to apply to condo projects and low-cost housing elsewhere across Ghana. "We must lead by example," he says. With a burgeoning practice in Accra, and a smartly built abode of his own, Osae-Addo has the chance to do just that. ■

Osae-Addo is highly gregarious and his house serves as a magnet for friends and family. He lunches with his Aunty Charlotte (above), who is also his neighbor.

Slat 'n Slide
The house's big sliding doors (seen on page 77) were another U.S. import. Beginning as mosquito screens cast aside by Osae-Addo's Los Angeles design partner, Stephen Kanner, the nine-by-five-foot screen doors made the trip to Ghana, where the architect screwed two-and-a-half-inch wooden slats with one-inch spacing onto them for use as movable exterior walls.

Bamboo and Conditioner
The six-by-six-foot shower boasts a hardwood-slatted deck, which allows water to seep into a concrete pan that empties into the main drainage system. The cage of bamboo poles provides the requisite privacy to the bather.

Architect: Thielsen Architects, Inc. **Project:** Lake View Residence

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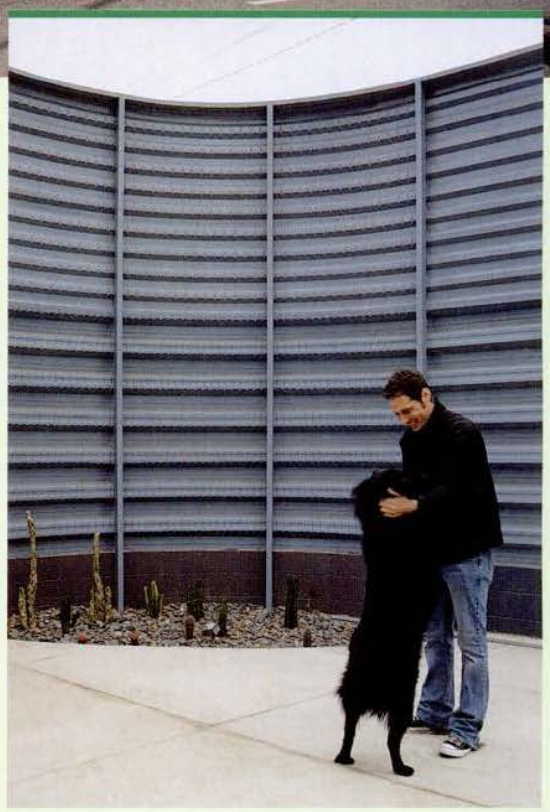
Drumming Up Design



Rob Brill's remodeled late-'60s stucco box (above) is wrapped in corrugated-steel panels that exaggerate both the industrial and the horizontal feel of the building. Solar panels provide shade for the car and a billboard for going solar. Brill (right) makes nice with his good buddy, Junior.

Brotherly love takes many forms; in the case of Rob and Eric Brill, it's a shared passion for modernism. Rob, the younger of the two and a rock musician, recently completed the second of two live/work homes in Los Angeles that serve as spaces for recording and rehearsing and as expressions of his taste for a bracingly spartan brand of minimalism. He built both homes with co-investment from his brother Eric, a retired businessman and serious collector of industrial design, who until recently lived in a 1934 Edward Durrell Stone house in New York State. "We are modernists," says Rob, with the clarity of someone declaring a religious belief. "We love its simplicity, the embrace of its surroundings." Along the way, though, the Brill brothers have been struck by another near-spiritual commitment: environmentalism.

Their first house, a remodel in a rough-edged corner of L.A.'s Silver Lake neighborhood, was initially created for Eric and his family; Rob and his then-girlfriend ended up moving in. Designed by the architect Wes Jones, it featured a movable steel platform, polished-concrete floors, and a none-too-cozy prison-issue toilet.

The new house is farther east, in the emerging neighborhood of Eagle Rock. It too is a remodel—the ▸

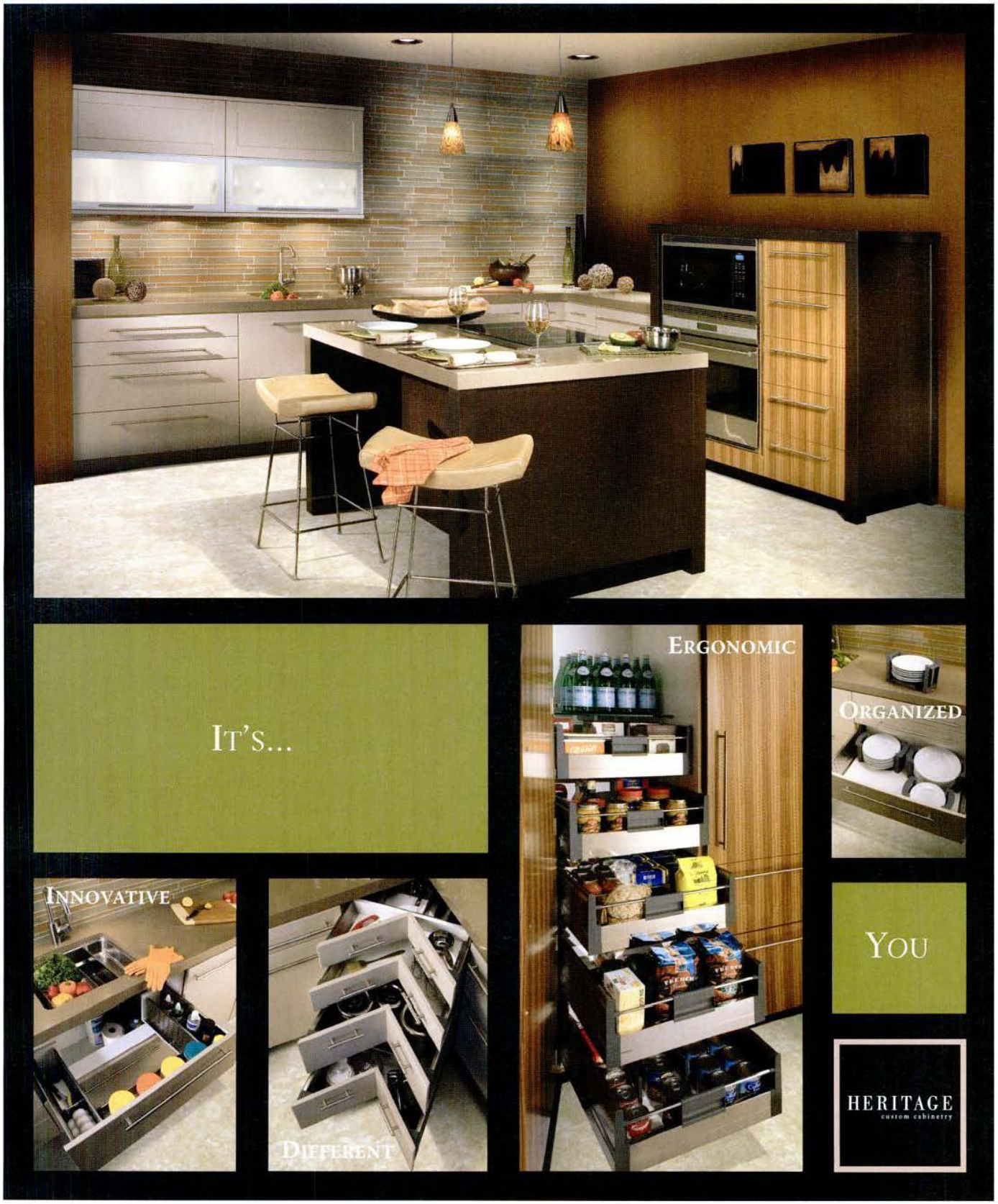
Brill softens his spartan living space with his music. An IKEA set of table and chairs commingles with some 1963 Slingerland drums (top left). When feeling more Depeche Mode than Def Leppard, Brill turns to his Rhythm Ace drum machine, sitting on top of assorted recording gear (bottom left); his practice area (right) features a '50s Wurlitzer piano and a mid-'60s Ludwig drum kit.

one-story stucco box from 1968 last served as the plant for Saturn Lighting, a fabricator of mid-century-modern light fixtures—and is situated in a less-than-ideal spot: smack up against the freeway. Designed by L.A. architect Tony Unruh, it has a tough, industrial aesthetic similar to that of the Silver Lake house, and features restaurant-supply steel sinks and counters in the bathrooms and kitchen, and unadorned white walls. It's clad in a continuous screen of dark gray corrugated-steel paneling with deep horizontal recesses. The horizontal orientation of the siding makes the house appear longer and further compounds its unyielding quality.

In the last few years, though, Rob Brill has developed a strong environmental awareness that he determined to incorporate into the design of this new house, a concern not wholly out of line with his life as a musician. Realizing that perpetual fighting with the neighbors is not exactly sustainable living, Brill—a drummer and guitarist who has toured with Pete Droge and the Sinners—wanted to control the noise coming in from the freeway, and the noise going out from his music. "Prerequisite number one was a place to play music day and night," Brill declares. To achieve it Unruh insulated the walls with a double layer of Sheetrock and recycled-denim insulation. To provide further soundproofing around the band-practice area, as well as visual separation when desired, he suspended heavy-duty industrial baffles that cordon off the rehearsal space.

"Prerequisite number two was to transform the building into a highly energy-efficient, low-energy-profile kind of place," says Brill, a wiry and youthful 51-year-old who greeted me on my arrival with a large glass of green liquid that turned out to be his daily brew: a farmer's-market welter of nearly a dozen organic fruits and veggies blended into a mix that was surprisingly delicious.

"I wanted a place that was really minimalist and required an active participation on my part not only to become green, but to sustain that green sensibility." He also attributes his eco-awakening to lessons learned from living several years in Japan. "I have a taste for minimalism, not wanting to make too big of a footprint on where I am. As I've become aware of the environmental situation, I find myself paring down on items that are unnecessary or detrimental." ▸



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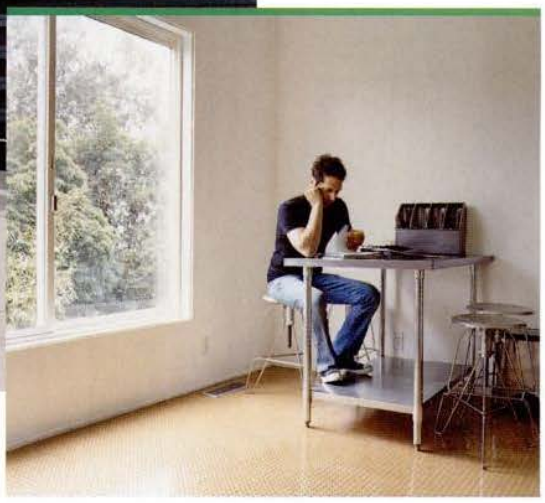

Brill's Prius (looks like Larry David has company) sits under the solar panels, which supply much of the house's energy (above). The house's bare-essentials decor extends into the kitchen (top right), which owes more to sleek commercial cooking spaces than anything on the Food Network. The restaurant-supply counter and Model Six stools by Jeff Covey for Herman Miller (bottom right) soak up the sun as they look out onto the back garden. p. 262

To that end he gutted the once-subdivided 1,880-square-foot building (on a site of 4,800 square feet) and turned the bulk of it into a large open living/dining room and band-practice area with two bedrooms and a kitchen on the side and rear. The solar panels mounted over the parking area out front power the water heater, lighting, and air-conditioning. Bill also installed "the highest SEER-level Puron HVAC system." Those were the big-budget items. "We made a conscious decision from the very first day to make it as green as possible and keep it within our budget," says Brill. "I knew that the solar, insulation, and heating and cooling would be the biggest expenditures, so I figured we'd bite the bullet on those three." The rest of the house is sparsely and cheaply appointed, with primarily IKEA furnishings and a pegboard floor.

One of the biggest challenges in renovating a deep-plan industrial building is the distribution of natural light. Unruh punched in skylights over the cavernous space, and highly efficient T5 fluorescent tubes provide the necessary artificial light. Unsatisfied with the look of the energy-saving lumens, Brill covered them with gels to soften the cold quality of the fluorescent light. "I was recording an album," he reports, "and as it got darker, I turned on the lights and everyone shrunk. It wasn't a mood enhancer, so I went to a theater supply [shop] and gelled all the lights."

The off-the-shelf materials suited Brill's taste and his pocketbook. He and Eric had set a budget of $200,000 maximum for construction, but "we came in under budget because we used industrial materials. And because I was working on it every day all day long." Brill did the bulk of the building work. Starting in September of 2006, he spent four and half months working as general contractor and laborer with a core crew. His diligence kept costs under $100 per square foot.

Having lived there for a short time, Brill is still settling into his new home. Though the bare walls will soon fill up with art, for now the house has a decidedly minimal feel. In his view, it's the natural fulfillment of the kind of modernism he has long pursued. "For me modern architecture is not about razzle-dazzle. It's about being simple and clean." For Brill, the razzle-dazzle is best left to the music. ▸

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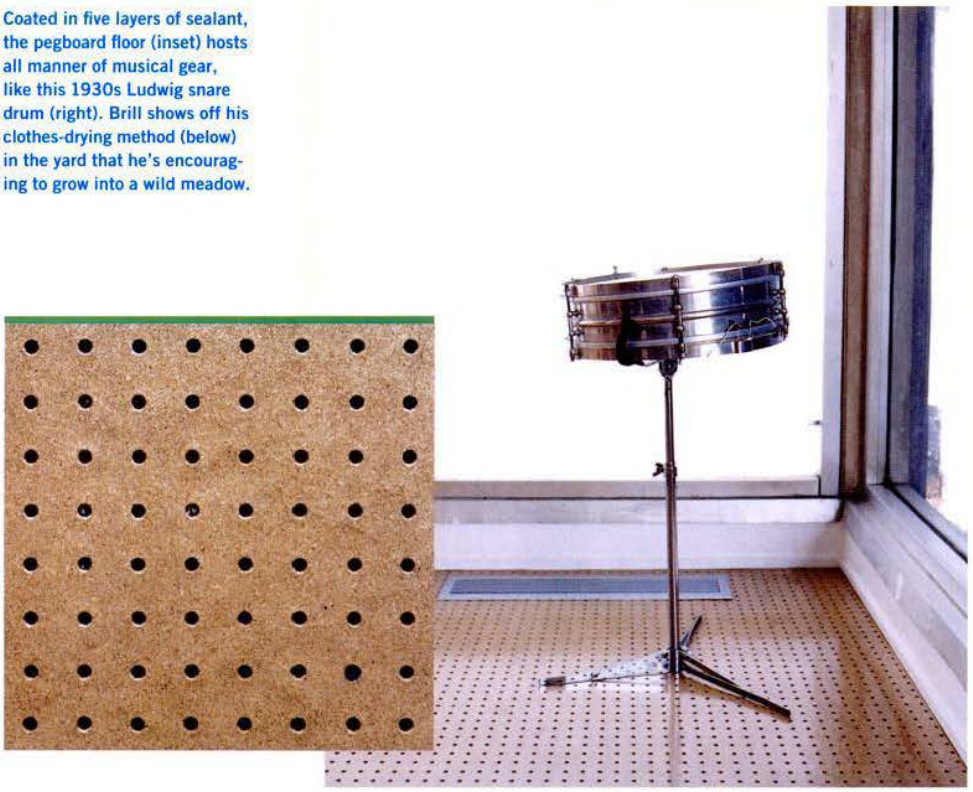
Coated in five layers of sealant, the pegboard floor (inset) hosts all manner of musical gear, like this 1930s Ludwig snare drum (right). Brill shows off his clothes-drying method (below) in the yard that he's encouraging to grow into a wild meadow.

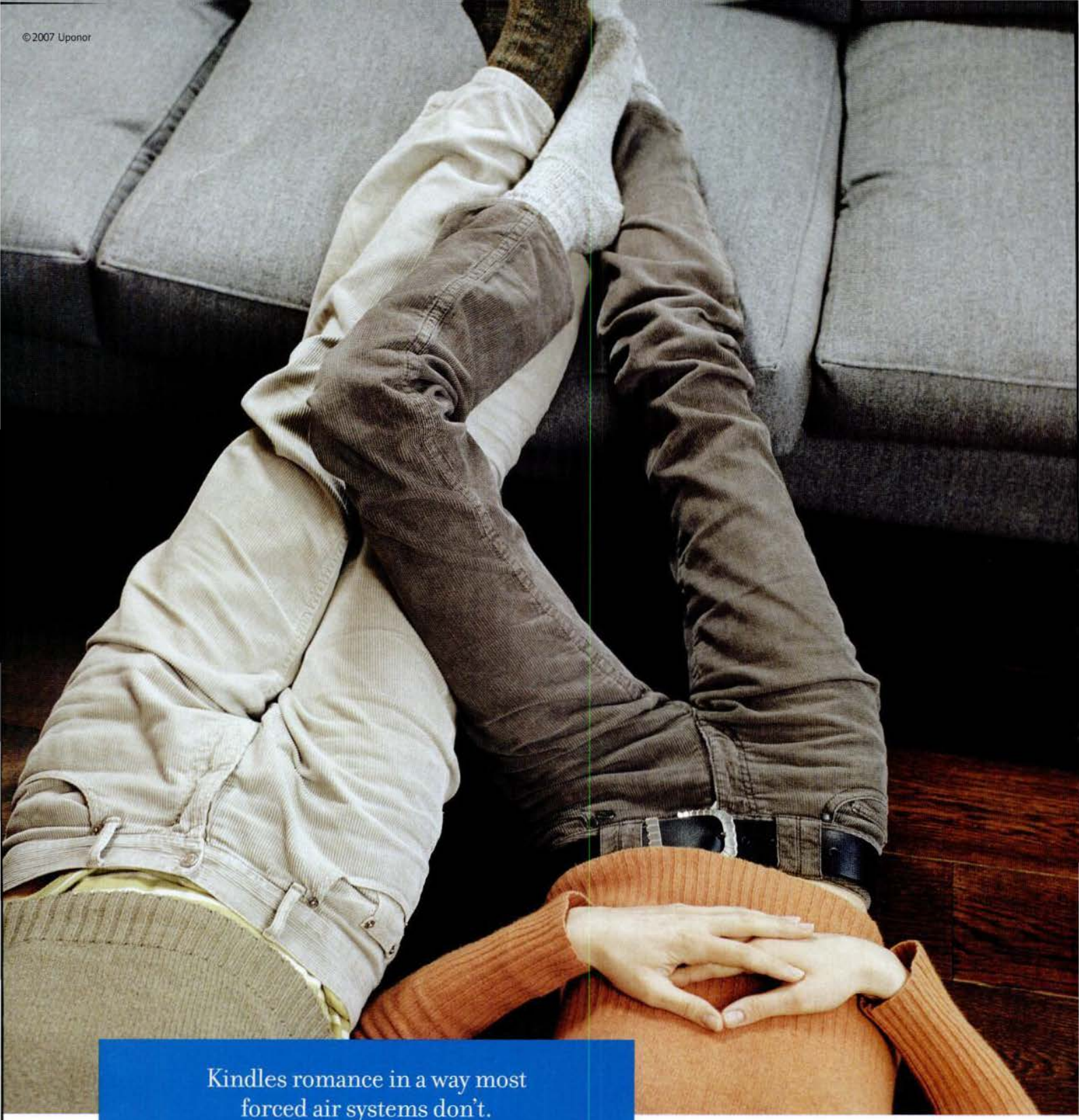


Guinea Peg

Pegboard, those pressed-cardboard tiles that had their heyday on the walls of recording studios in the '50s and '60s, is now mostly hung in woodshops the nation over. In his last house, Brill and his son Jon applied them to the bedroom floors. This time Brill has done the same throughout the house, with several coats of sealant for extra protection, especially from Junior, his friendly but highly energetic Chow-Lab mix. Not only is this floor absorptive, with small regular holes and soft backing on each panel that dissipate sound, it's also cost-effective: $500 for enough to cover almost the entire house. The pegboard was a low-budget and visually striking move, though when asked what happens when a spilt cup of coffee ends up in the little holes, Brill replies that at a few dollars per panel you can simply rip it out, recycle it (naturally), and put in a new one.

In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida

Brill's commitment to a brand of stylish but virtuous austerity extends to his yard. "You can go out and spend hundreds and thousands of dollars on the most green thing, but if you don't live green it doesn't make sense," says Brill, who has taken to drying his laundry on a clothes line outside the kitchen. To keep down the freeway noise, and get a bit of privacy, he's growing a wall of bamboo on the perimeter. He landscaped the yard with a clover bed, native California grasses, and wildflowers, which require far less irrigation than a typical L.A. lawn and have an untamed meadow quality that adds a natural softness to the house. "I am not going to mow it," adds Brill. "I want to encourage bees and butterflies to come. I am not going for a manicured garden."■



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Craig W. Hartman

Craig W. Hartman, FAIA: Skidmore, Owings and Merrill
A design partner in charge of SOM's San Francisco office, Hartman is team leader on the Treasure Island Master Plan, a sustainable planned community in development on the 400-acre former Naval base in San Francisco Bay.

Alice Waters: Chez Panisse Foundation
A chef and activist who spearheaded America's fresh foods movement, Waters is working to reawaken our relationship with food, how we nourish our children, and our stewardship of the land.

Gwendolyn Wright: Columbia University
An architectural and urban history professor, Wright is author of the forthcoming Histories of Modern Architecture: The United States and appears regularly on the PBS television show "History Detectives".

John Hockenberry

John Hockenberry: Moderator – Dwell on Design 2007
An award-winning veteran journalist in print, broadcast radio, TV and online, Hockenberry is a longtime design authority and a distinguished fellow at the MIT Media Lab.

Building Community in the Modern World

Moderated by Emmy-award-winning journalist John Hockenberry

Dwell on Design 2007 will focus on how we can strengthen whole communities through architecture and design. Take this opportunity to engage in a lively dialogue with experts and everyday nice modernists who are committed to fostering positive change – and for whom green is a core value, not a passing trend.

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Story by Christopher Bright | Portrait by Doug Adesko

Photos by Peter Belanger

Cutting Edge

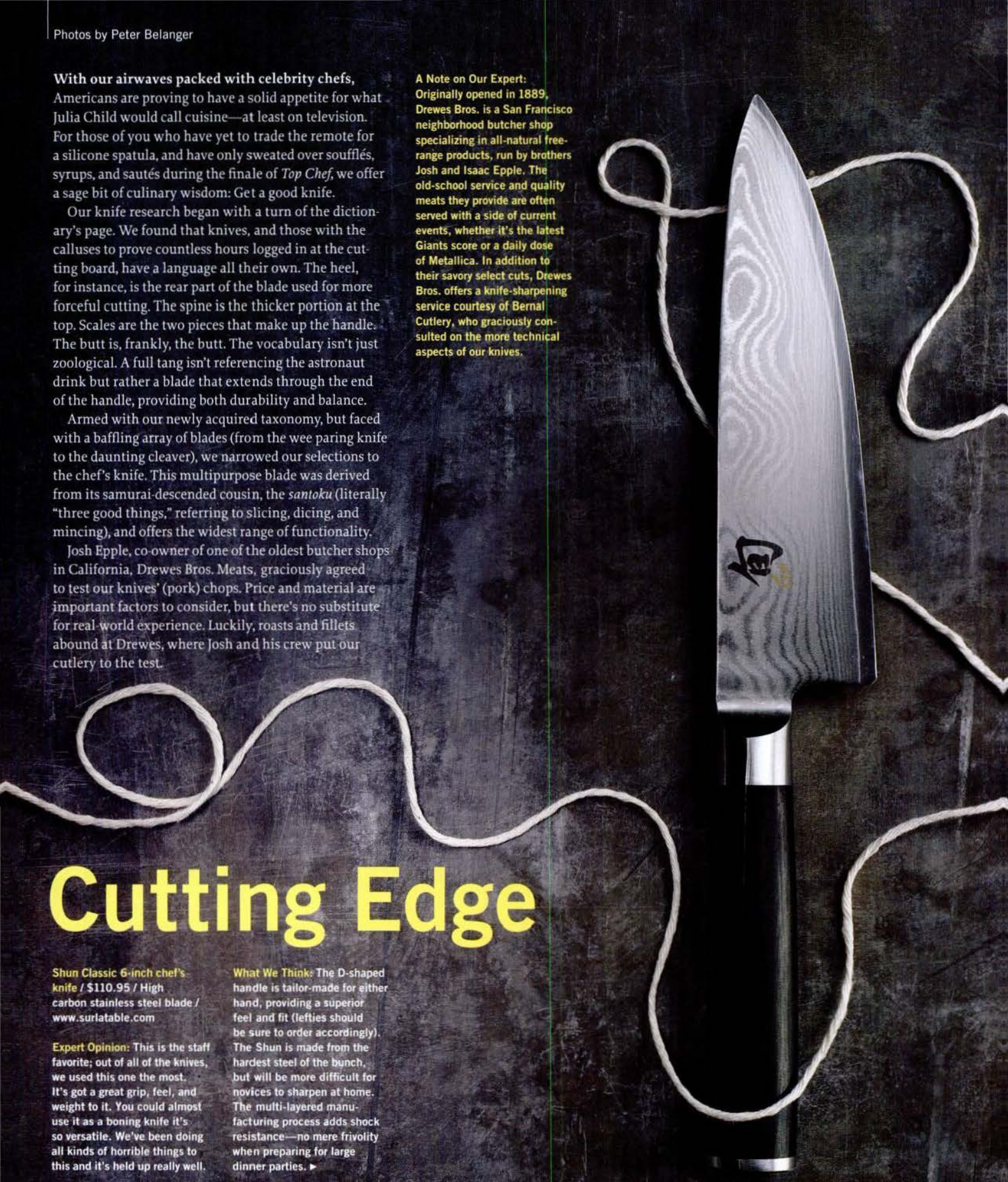
With our airwaves packed with celebrity chefs, Americans are proving to have a solid appetite for what Julia Child would call cuisine—at least on television. For those of you who have yet to trade the remote for a silicone spatula, and have only sweated over soufflés, syrups, and sautés during the finale of *Top Chef*, we offer a sage bit of culinary wisdom: Get a good knife.

Our knife research began with a turn of the dictionary's page. We found that knives, and those with the calluses to prove countless hours logged in at the cutting board, have a language all their own. The heel, for instance, is the rear part of the blade used for more forceful cutting. The spine is the thicker portion at the top. Scales are the two pieces that make up the handle. The butt is, frankly, the butt. The vocabulary isn't just zoological. A full tang isn't referencing the astronaut drink but rather a blade that extends through the end of the handle, providing both durability and balance.

Armed with our newly acquired taxonomy, but faced with a baffling array of blades (from the wee paring knife to the daunting cleaver), we narrowed our selections to the chef's knife. This multipurpose blade was derived from its samurai-descended cousin, the *santoku* (literally "three good things," referring to slicing, dicing, and mincing), and offers the widest range of functionality.

Josh Epple, co-owner of one of the oldest butcher shops in California, Drewes Bros. Meats, graciously agreed to test our knives' (pork) chops. Price and material are important factors to consider, but there's no substitute for real-world experience. Luckily, roasts and fillets abound at Drewes, where Josh and his crew put our cutlery to the test.

A Note on Our Expert: Originally opened in 1889, Drewes Bros. is a San Francisco neighborhood butcher shop specializing in all-natural free-range products, run by brothers Josh and Isaac Epple. The old-school service and quality meats they provide are often served with a side of current events, whether it's the latest Giants score or a daily dose of Metallica. In addition to their savory select cuts, Drewes Bros. offers a knife-sharpening service courtesy of Bernal Cutlery, who graciously consulted on the more technical aspects of our knives.



Shun Classic 6-inch chef's knife / $110.95 / High carbon stainless steel blade / www.surlatable.com

Expert Opinion: This is the staff favorite; out of all of the knives, we used this one the most. It's got a great grip, feel, and weight to it. You could almost use it as a boning knife it's so versatile. We've been doing all kinds of horrible things to this and it's held up really well.

What We Think: The D-shaped handle is tailor-made for either hand, providing a superior feel and fit (lefties should be sure to order accordingly). The Shun is made from the hardest steel of the bunch, but will be more difficult for novices to sharpen at home. The multi-layered manufacturing process adds shock resistance—no mere frivolity when preparing for large dinner parties. ►

OXO 8-inch professional chef's knife / $19.99 / Stainless steel blade / www.oxo.com

Expert Opinion: This one has the most bang for your buck. It's got the best handle, and does a good job for basic needs if you don't want to spend a lot of money.

What We Think: Price doesn't always determine quality, and the OXO knife exemplifies this. Their Good Grips tagline isn't just ad-speak; the handle was the most ergonomic and the edge held its own against the higher-priced cutlery.

Culinhome Platinum Collection 8-inch chef's knife / $33.75 / Stainless steel blade / www.culinhome.com

Expert Opinion: Nothing too fancy, but it gets the job done. It's got a good weight to it, and the handle's got a natural feel; the white accent is a nice touch. I'd buy this knife to use at home.

What We Think: For those of us who can't afford the latest and greatest, the Culinhome is a welcome option. The form and appearance are relatively basic, but the white handle stands out amongst a sea of black-clad competitors.

Global 8-inch G-2 chef's knife / $89 / Stainless steel blade / www.sointuusa.com

Expert Opinion: Out of all the metal handles I like this one the best, but it's still kind of a knuckle banger. It has the best edge of all the metal ones, and, of course, the appearance is really nice.

What We Think: Josh has pretty big hands, so the Global may be a better choice for women (and carnies). While we agree it's one of the more sexy pieces of cutlery on the market, the spine is pretty thin on the top, so it can dig into your hand after continuous use. ▶

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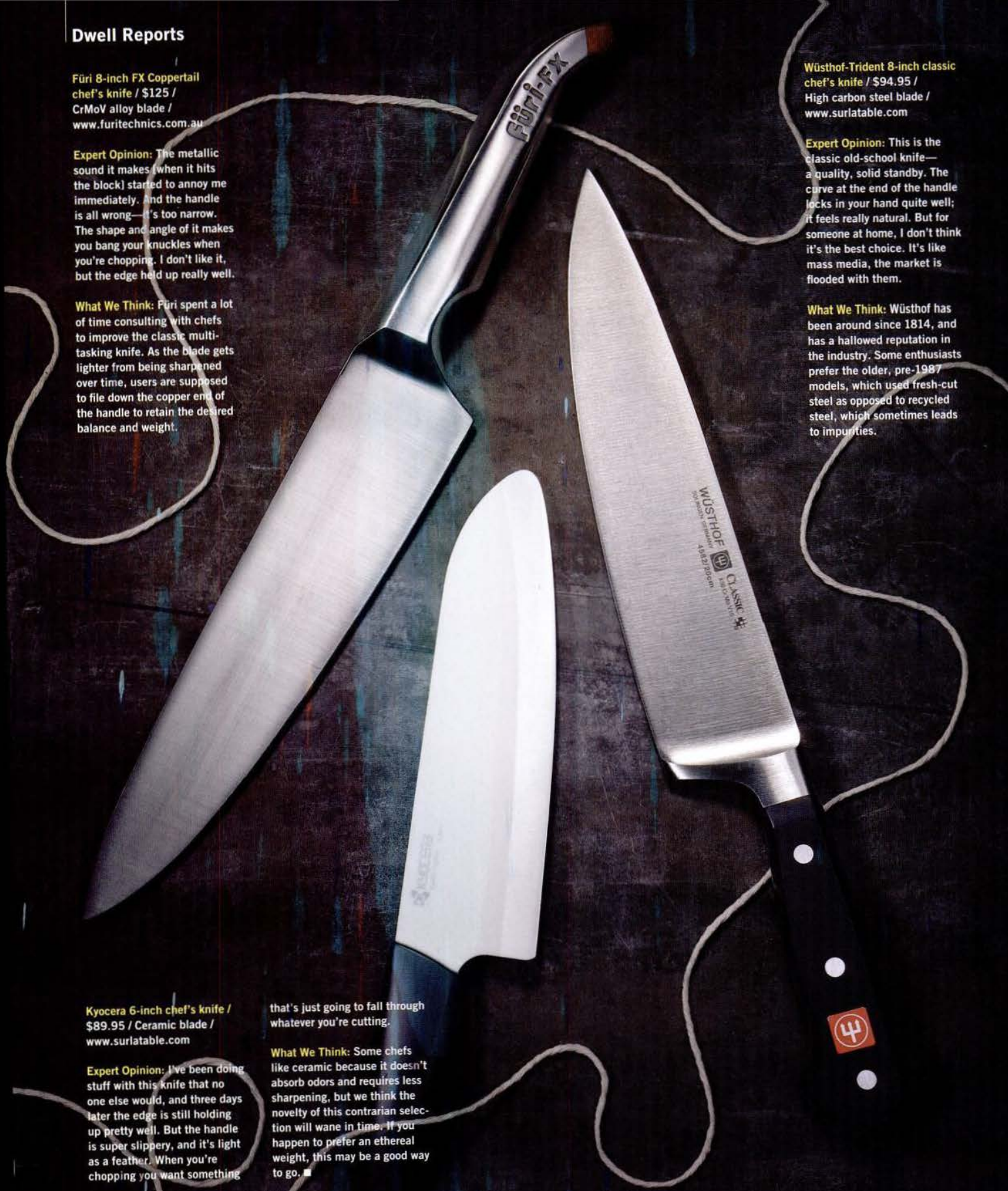

Füri 8-inch FX Coppertail chef's knife / $125 / CrMoV alloy blade / www.furitechnics.com.au

Expert Opinion: The metallic sound it makes (when it hits the block) started to annoy me immediately. And the handle is all wrong—it's too narrow. The shape and angle of it makes you bang your knuckles when you're chopping. I don't like it, but the edge held up really well.

What We Think: Füri spent a lot of time consulting with chefs to improve the classic multi-tasking knife. As the blade gets lighter from being sharpened over time, users are supposed to file down the copper end of the handle to retain the desired balance and weight.

Wüsthof-Trident 8-inch classic chef's knife / $94.95 / High carbon steel blade / www.surlatable.com

Expert Opinion: This is the classic old-school knife—a quality, solid standby. The curve at the end of the handle locks in your hand quite well; it feels really natural. But for someone at home, I don't think it's the best choice. It's like mass media, the market is flooded with them.

What We Think: Wüsthof has been around since 1814, and has a hallowed reputation in the industry. Some enthusiasts prefer the older, pre-1987 models, which used fresh-cut steel as opposed to recycled steel, which sometimes leads to impurities.

Kyocera 6-inch chef's knife / $89.95 / Ceramic blade / www.surlatable.com

Expert Opinion: I've been doing stuff with this knife that no one else would, and three days later the edge is still holding up pretty well. But the handle is super slippery, and it's light as a feather. When you're chopping you want something that's just going to fall through whatever you're cutting.

What We Think: Some chefs like ceramic because it doesn't absorb odors and requires less sharpening, but we think the novelty of this contrarian selection will wane in time. If you happen to prefer an ethereal weight, this may be a good way to go. ■

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Resolution: 4 Architecture Dwell Home, Beverly Hills, CA

PHOTO BY HOWARD PASAMANICK

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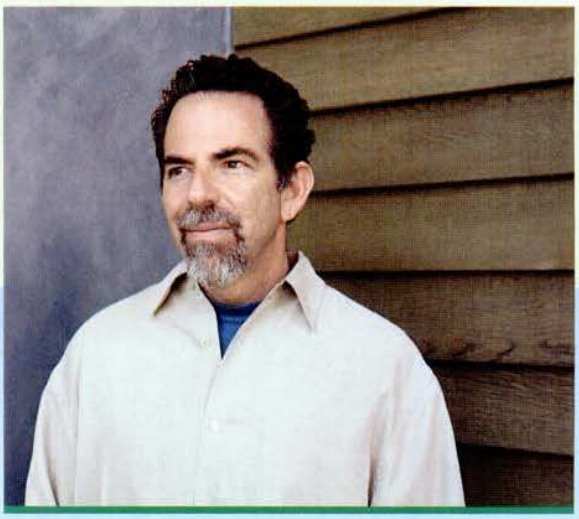
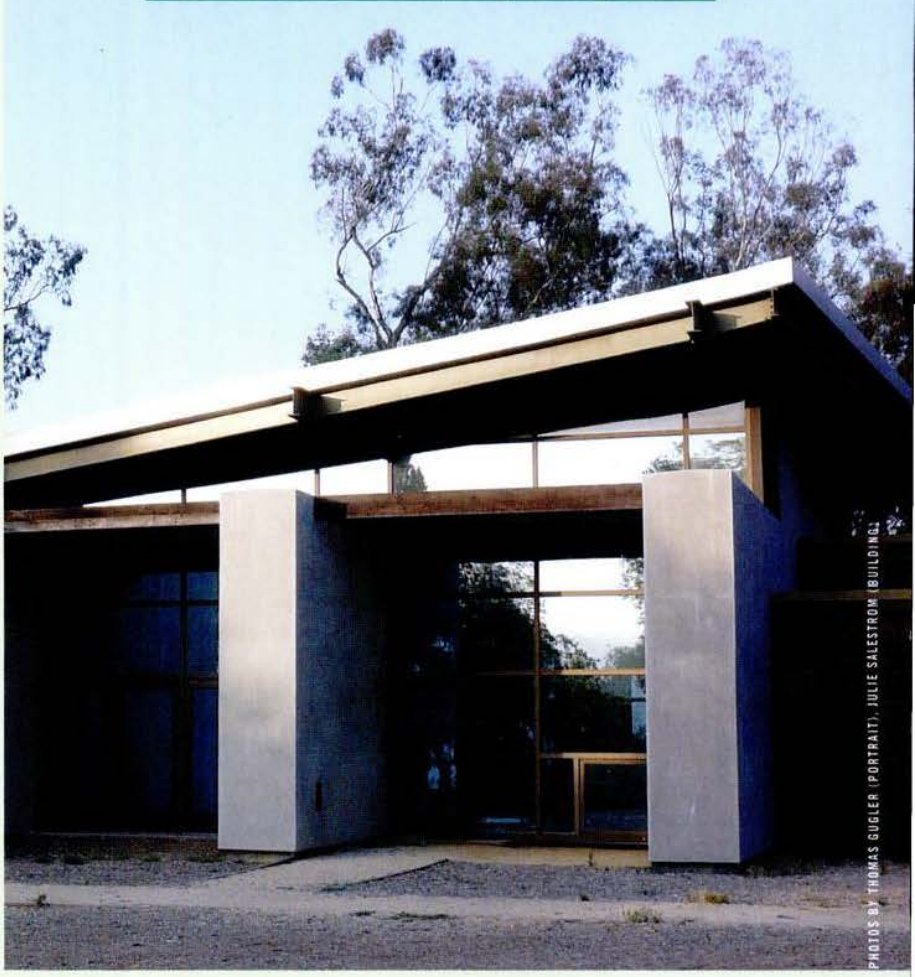
Story by Aaron Britt

Greening Los Angeles has long been Andy Lipkis's dream. Greening his nonprofit's Hollywood Hills campus is now a reality.





PHOTOS BY THOMAS GUGLER (PORTRAIT); JULIE SALESTROM (BUILDING)

"When I was 15 I was raising trees in people's backyards," recalls Andy Lipkis (top), president of the Los Angeles nonprofit TreePeople. Countless trees later, the organization has the super-green Marmol Radziner–designed conference center (bottom) it commissioned 15 years ago.

Tree's Company

Local lore has it that the then-50-year-old prefabs in the Hollywood Hills into which fledgling nonprofit TreePeople moved in 1977 were once the offices of California's most notorious eco-villain: William Mulholland. Unlike Mulholland, who diverted, dammed, and plundered California's water supply in the 1910s and '20s for the benefit of Angelenos (and their golf courses), Andy Lipkis, founder and president of TreePeople, has a take on greening L.A. that's markedly more arboreal.

"By 1975 I had moved my nursery up to Coldwater Canyon, and in 1977 our offices got up there too," says Lipkis. Taking up residence on the site of an abandoned fire station off Mulholland Drive, TreePeople has worked for the last three decades planting hundreds of thousands of trees around L.A., encouraging conservation, and serving as caretakers of Coldwater Canyon Park, a 45-acre urban forest replete with hiking trails, a tree nursery, and a brand-new, and highly green, conference center.

"Fifteen years ago we hired Marmol Radziner when they were just out of architecture school to design an off-the-grid campus on our site that would inspire people to live more sustainably," says Lipkis. But like countless architectural projects, this one saw more delays than action. "Back when we started, green building was even more expensive than it is now, and we just never had the money to build everything. For the last five years we've been working out of yurts."

Only TreePeople's conference center, which was designed to fly through LEED certification, has been constructed. The structure employs numerous recycled and natural materials, including kitchen cabinets made of pressed sunflower seeds; a 225,000-gallon cistern located beneath the center catches rainwater and runoff and uses it for irrigation. With its rough concrete walls and canted roof marking a clear nod to SoCal modern past, it is not the least bit dated. The conference center makes a forthright aesthetic statement about its environs, but it's the environment that's really on Lipkis's mind. "The plan was to build a really attractive beyond-LEED building so that then no one will have any reason not to build green." ■

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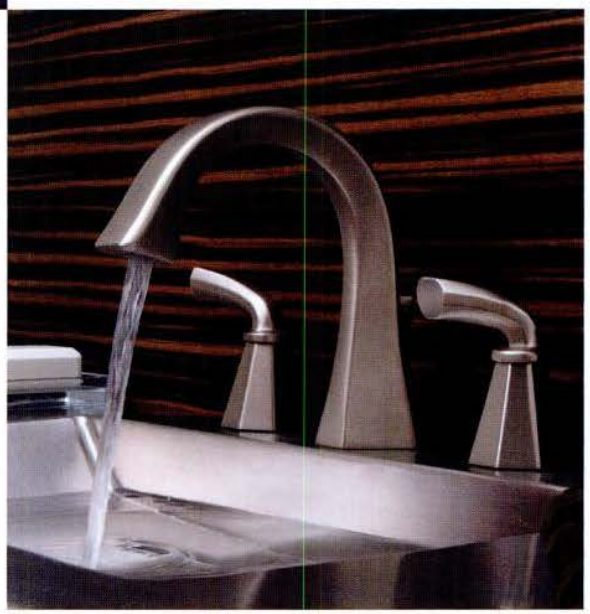

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Story by Chelsea Holden Baker and Aaron Britt

K/BIS

The annual Kitchen/Bath Industry Show rolled into Las Vegas this year, bringing a welter of gleaming porcelain and more stainless steel dishwashers than you can shake a handcrafted Italianate toilet brush at. Industry types, HGTV crews, and domestic celebs all turned out, including PBS gourmand Martin Yan in the GE booth. He diced and sautéed to a rapt crowd, passing out a stellar stir-fry and some less-than-toothsome baked goods. K/BIS or not, Yan, it seems, can't cookie.

A Bertazzoni Professional Series range /
www.bertazzoni-italia.com
Range stalwart Bertazzoni introduced these retro, boxy ranges whose details and design seem as much informed by Lamborghinis as by lamb shanks. In 30- and 36-inch models, and with as many as six burners pumping the BTUs, the Professional Series turns up the heat without burning up your pocketbook.

B Garbage Square by John Roth for StandInn /
www.standinn.com
This clever cube from Danish designers StandInn deserves a leading role. A spare antidote to that worn plastic bucket under the sink, this is one trash can you'll relish leaving out in the open. Available in five sizes and a host of colors. Simply slide the pedal to the side to open the lid, deposit your debris, and be done with it.

C Rooche megasonic cleaner by Coway /
www.coway.com
The megasonic faucet creates not a thumping bass line but micro-cavitation. When the filtered water (you can house the bulky filtration system beneath the sink) hits your grapes or broccoli, it creates a misty, dry-ice effect while cleansing your edibles of dirt and chemicals with just sound waves, some negative ions, and good ol' H_2O. No dish detergent necessary. ►

A

B

C

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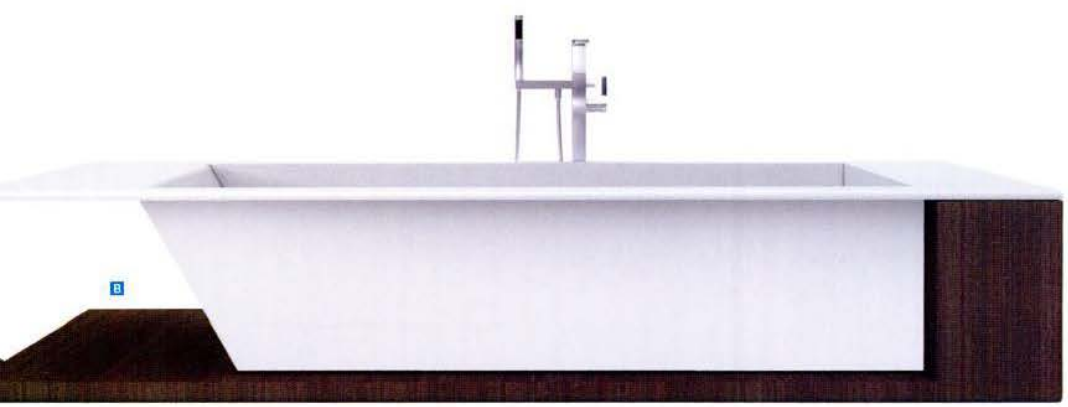
K/BIS isn't all this pretty. Not shown here: any and everything made of brass, over-engineered microwaves, and new bidets "designed for the American market" (synonymous with "Now with a wide-angle spray"). There were also innovations that have to be experienced, not seen, like acoustically astounding tubs by Jason, whose sides serve as amplifiers for your favorite soak-rock.

A Arc Series hood from Zephyr / www.zephyronline.com
These sleek hoods immediately caught our eye for their sculptural swoop and elegantly unadorned aesthetic. Zephyr has been in the hood game for years and the Arc Series is their very latest—so new, in fact, that they won't hit the shelves until early 2008.

B Easy Incline bathtub by Dan Brunn for CaesarStone / www.caesarstoneus.com/danbrunn
In a rainbow of LED-lit behemoths, we were drawn to this boney beauty. While the shape has the industrial look of a bathtub that's meant to be inlaid, there are no rough edges, and its wooden frame balances the form while providing hidden storage. And CaesarStone retains heat, perfect for a long soak in a tub built for two: no more squabbling about who has to have their back to the faucet.

C Istanbul Collection basin mixer by Ross Lovegrove for Vitra / www.vitra.com.tr
Navigating through a maze of plumbing covered in I-ate-hot-dogs-and-nachos-for-lunch fingerprints, we found something worth touching despite the smears. While Ross Lovegrove may be the industry's go-to guy for sexy, futuristic fun, his biomorphic forms show that he knows Mother Nature is still the best designer. ■



"Where the kitchen is the home, it is the home which revolves around the kitchen."

Arclinea

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Story by Sam Grawe

J. Mayer H.
In Heat, 2005
Installation view

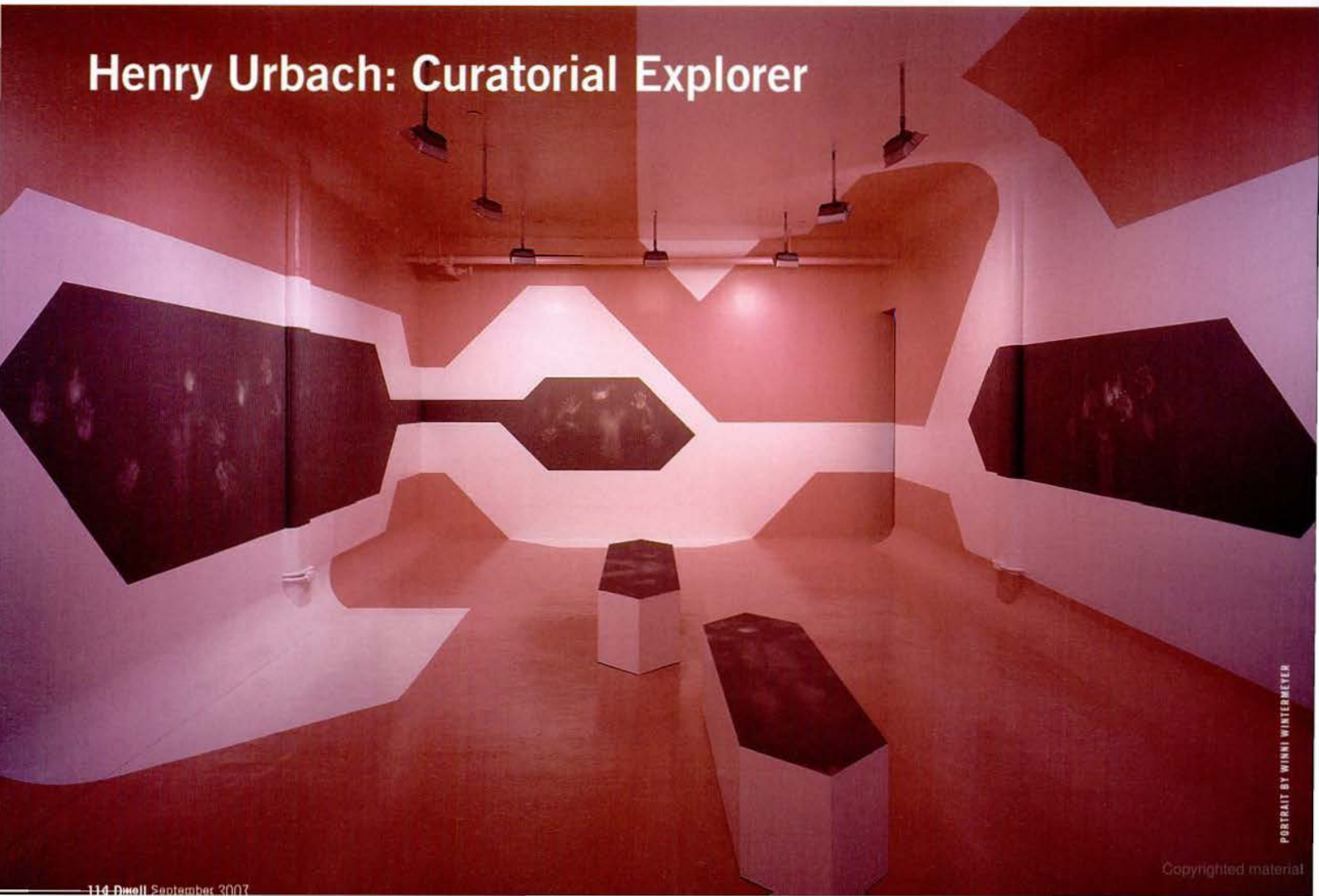
In 1932, the Museum of Modern Art in New York became the world's first museum to boast a department devoted to architecture and design. Curated by Philip Johnson, Alfred H. Barr Jr., and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, the exhibition "The International Style: Architecture Since 1922," which opened in that same year, would introduce such notable architects as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Walter Gropius to the American public while establishing the museum's role as a cornerstone in the architectural landscape.

Following suit in 1940, San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art organized its first architectural exhibition, inviting the progressive design society Telesis to mount a program that would encourage a broader understanding of the Bay Area's built environment. "Telesis: Space for Living" proved so influential that it prompted the city of San Francisco to establish an office of planning.

Henry Urbach, who was appointed the SFMOMA's Helen Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design in 2006, is aware of the opportunity for cultural impact offered by exhibiting architecture and design. Although the subject had found solid footing in the museum environment, in the late 1990s Urbach was the first to transfer the freshness and entrepreneurial zeal of the private-gallery art world to design and architecture. For almost a decade his Chelsea, New York–based gallery, Henry Urbach Architecture, operated outside of the mainstream, providing a fertile testing ground for progressive architects and designers to experiment—and the world took notice.

Now that he's at SFMOMA, has Urbach gone mainstream, or will he bring his unique outlook to a larger audience? "The SFMOMA was consistently one of my gallery's best clients," he tells us, "so I feel confident about taking that tradition forward." During a recent heat wave we sat down with Urbach for a chat over iced coffee. ▸

Henry Urbach: Curatorial Explorer



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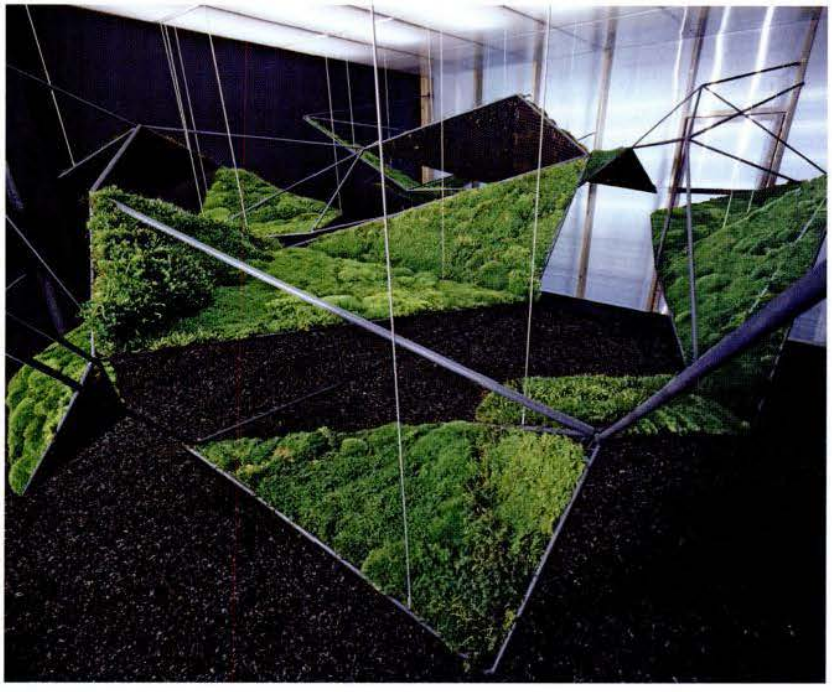

Freecell
Moistscape, 2004
Installation view

Stephen Dean
Balance 385, 2004
Installation view

You ran a private gallery in New York and now you're a curator for an art museum. How different are the two roles?
I'd say it's both similar and different. A gallery is a public environment where you get a lot of different people coming through, and as much as possible you want to be able to address and relate to them. With a museum the same is true, but much more so. It's a larger audience. It's a broader public—especially for a department of architecture and design in a modern art museum where a lot of people are coming to see shows on painting, sculpture, or photography, and wander into the design gallery.

So where does design fit into a museum that's basically an art museum? Even if an object has origins as a tactile, everyday-use kind of product, does it become art when you rope it off and put it in a museum?
It's a very strange and interesting hybrid that makes for a lot of challenges and a lot of opportunities. It's part of the legacy of modernism with the founding of the Museum of Modern Art [in New York]. Including the architecture and design department at the outset had very much to do with the modernist notion of an alliance of the arts in the service of social betterment. At the SFMOMA, we inherit that.

What I think is really great about that is it pitches design on the same cultural level as the fine arts and creates an opportunity for interesting dialogues among the fields. Now more than ever, the interstices between the arts and design professions are rich sites of experimentation. It puts us in a good position to navigate that in-between space.

And how do you go about that?
One promising example is Olafur Eliasion's Ice Car—also called "Your mobile expectations"—which we're going to be presenting pretty soon. This is a project that he's doing with BMW, one of their so-called "art cars." Here's an artist who is effectively creating a sculpture by working with an advanced piece of automotive deign. A sculpture where the meaning can be understood by examining the future of car design.

Another example comes from architects who work in an installation mode, something that I've been interested in for a long time. What architects are able to do in a gallery or an exhibition space is present work at a one-to-one scale, as a fully realized work of design rather than a representation or an image of another work.

That's what was special about your gallery, and the nature of the work you chose to exhibit. What was it in your background that led you to that point?
I felt I could do more for the present and future of architecture in our culture, not by following an academic route [Urbach has two master's degrees, one in architecture from Columbia, the other in the history and ▸

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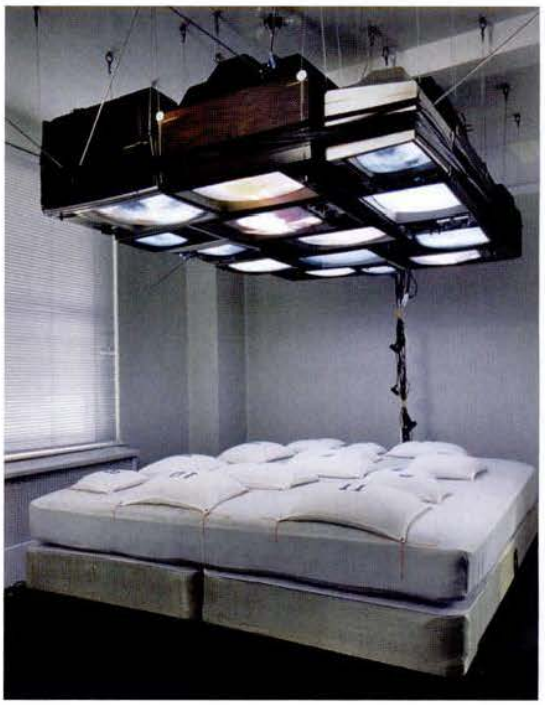
An Te Liu
Condition, 2001
Installation view



LOT-EK
SURF-A-BED, 1997
Installation view

theory of architecture from Princeton], but rather by trying something I had no background or preparation for, just a strong determination. The idea was to see if I could help promote experimental architecture by borrowing the model of a commercial art gallery. The idea is that the gallery would have a cultural role, but would also serve to promote and give value to work that is often overlooked and hardly known outside of the field, and so it was really meant as a kind of platform to bring experimental architecture to a broader public.

That sounds good on paper, but how did you actually go about it?

The first show I did was at the Gramercy Art Fair in May 1997. Basically they took over a few floors of the hotel and each gallery got a room to present work in for four days. Most exhibitors treated the hotel room as an imperfect gallery—the walls weren't white enough, the spaces weren't big enough—and made do. I saw the opportunity to engage the hotel room as a site, so I invited works by nine designers that each co-opted certain aspects of the hotel room: the bathroom, the television, the postcards. A lot of people that came into the room thought that they had walked into the wrong place, because it actually did look like a hotel room. But then once you got into it deeper you realized everything had been transformed and re-thought. It was a very different approach.

It seems at the moment that people are still hungry for that kind of work. Everywhere you look there are more examples of big-name designers executing limited editions. What do you make of it?

Well, there's no escaping capitalism. We're in a very intense moment right now. Consumerism is a serious feature of our culture, and it has all kinds of effects on art and design. This is a very interesting, and maybe risky, moment too because design is coming to be seen as the next frontier for the contemporary art market. Lately there have been a lot of efforts to pitch design as a collectible, and one that is relatively affordable by comparison with contemporary art—which is great insofar as people are starting to pay attention to design, which they really haven't before. It's also dangerous because when designers work, they should be engaging large social issues, either in direct or oblique ways, and one hopes that the leading designers of our time aren't drawn into an inauthentic production for the sake of a collector's market, but rather can find a way to take advantage of this surge in interest to collectively push design forward.

So when you're creating a curatorial calendar you must have similar concerns and goals.

Curating is kind of like organizing a dinner party over a period of time. You think a lot about the mix of people, or the mix of shows, and how they talk to each other—both in a single moment and also over the course of ▸

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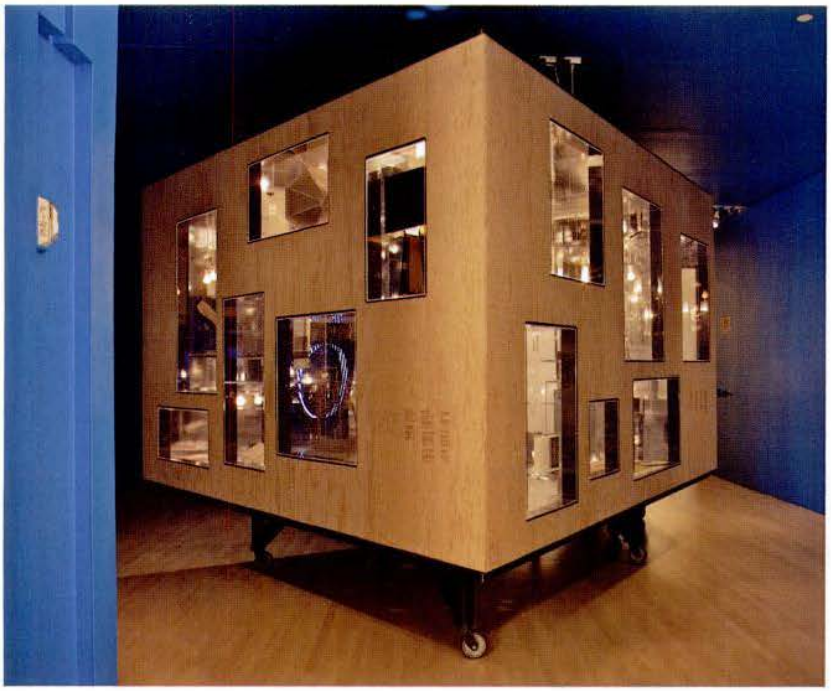


Lebbeus Woods and Kiki Smith
Firmament, 2004
Installation view

envelopeA+D
California College of the Arts at 100: Innovation by Design
Installation view

some years. There are a number of priorities. One is to present shows that simply awaken people, shows that will stop people in their tracks and make them say "Wow" or "That's really interesting" or "I want to know more about that." And so let's say visual immediacy is very important, but that's only good as long as there's a deeper strata beneath that, one which engages the conceptual challenge that a show can present. We can use exhibitions to help people understand that design is by no means neutral, it's connected to larger social, political, economic, and material phenomena. So often in mainstream culture it's deployed in the service of maintaining norms. Basically I really want shows that not only open people's eyes but also expand their minds and really provoke thought.

If you are developing these mind-expanding experiences for the exhibitions, what then is the modus operandi for developing the permanent collection?

We are trying to be very clear and strategic in our collecting strategy. We have to recognize where our strengths are, and how we can develop them. I think for us to recapture the canon of iconic modernism isn't necessarily the most productive thing to do. The MoMA in New York does that beautifully, so instead we have a tradition here—one that I'm very interested in building on—of looking at innovative practices. I'm looking for conceptual depth, as well as visual immediacy, as well as the design excellence of a piece, and when those all line up we've got a treasure.

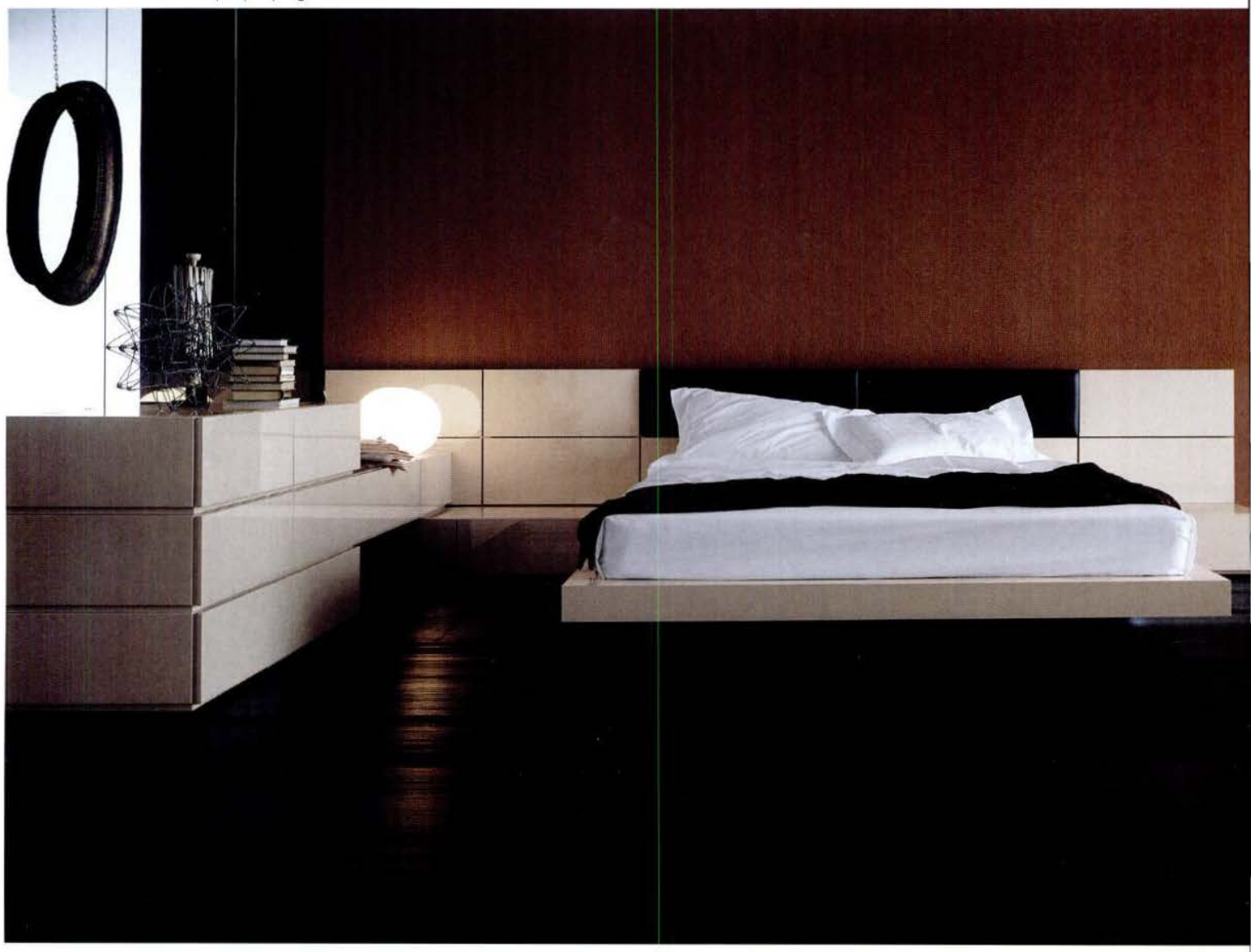
I'm also trying to address certain gaps in our history. We just bought a fantastic model from 1961 by Eliot Noyes which was designed for Westinghouse's Pavilion for the 1964 New York World's Fair. It was an early model and it's an amazing object, not because it's among the most familiar works of that period, but because Noyes was so advanced in terms of the integration of architecture, corporate branding, and graphic design. It's a work which expresses modernism's deep and ongoing concern with utopian thinking, and helps explain other things that have come since.

Have you found a way to address sustainability in the design collection or with an exhibit without pandering to trend?

Clearly, environmental issues in design are of enormous importance, but I do feel somewhat suspicious about the way it's become this year's thing, like sculptural attitudes in design were last year's thing, and so it's the same problem. You want to be able to capture people's interest and attention, but I wouldn't necessarily separate out environmental responsibility from all the other aspects of good design—including social responsibility, or formal and technical inventiveness. For me, design is research and you may establish certain priorities in that research, but ultimately it's got to be integrated and pretty broad to be meaningful. ■

PHOTOS BY IAN REEVES (CCA INSTALLATION)

people progetto notte



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Avant Gardens

Robert Royston's early commissions for private gardens such as the Zuckerman residence (below) were harbingers of his larger-scale public parks to come. Geometric privacy screens and pavers, the swooping curve of a bench, and biomorphic planters work with the foliage to create different zones of use and opportunities for intimacy.

If you've ever wondered what it might feel like to picnic, play, or wander through a painting by Jean Arp, Joan Miró, or Wassily Kandinsky, you might try visiting a private or public garden designed by Robert Royston.

Instead of seeking inspiration from formal French or Italianate gardens or English estates—the norm when Royston was a student in the late 1930s—he transformed modern art's geometric lines, overlapping planes, and biomorphic curves into some of the most intimate, functional, and comfortable outdoor spaces imaginable.

"I was always consumed with the way space moved, be it a painting, a sculpture, or the outdoors," recalls Royston, still vibrant and dapper at 89, with the warm demeanor and sparkling blue eyes of a family doctor as depicted by Norman Rockwell. As a student in landscape architecture, he took his site plans to the art department for criticism. As a teacher, he designed a special transparent "model box" to help his students manipulate images in order to consider the psychological impact of a space: How would it feel if it were narrower, sunnier, more enclosed or exposed?

"Bob is one of the most important pioneer modernists in landscape architecture," says Reuben Rainey, coauthor with JC Miller of *Modern Public Gardens: Robert Royston and the Suburban Park*. "His work is derived from avant-garde painting and sculpture, but the form-giving was always based on the needs of the individual users. So many parks are just a scattering of equipment; his designs are truly spatial and reflect a deep understanding of human interaction."

Royston got his modernist feet wet in 1938 while a student at the University of California at Berkeley, apprenticing in the office of Thomas Church. A few years later, as a boat commander in the navy and witness to carnage he couldn't talk about for years, the nights kept him sane. "I would creep into my office and dream about landscape architecture, sketch houses, make jewelry," recalls Royston, who is also a lifelong painter.

Back in the Bay Area after the war, Royston resumed his friendship with Garrett Eckbo—who had shaken things up, designwise, with Dan Kiley and James Rose at Harvard—and the two, along with Edward Williams, ▸

PHOTOS COURTESY ROBA GETTIE STORY

At the Koret residence in Tiburon, California, the garden flows out on the same ground plane as the house into an outdoor room. The geometry of the overhead pergola, softened with hanging vines, is reflected in the paving squares, while the abstract pool foreshadows the greater expanse of Richardson Bay just beyond.

set up the firm Eckbo, Royston, and Williams. (After an amicable split in the late '50s, Royston founded the firm that became Royston, Hanamoto, Alley & Abey.) Royston and Eckbo shared not only an aesthetic approach, but a belief that design could have a positive impact on people's lives. Royston once wrote: "We work in the realm of health: our profession can restore a marsh, purify the air, abate noise, and provide systems in the city where trees will grow and people can gather, exercise, and laugh."

"Bob's goal was to get people outdoors," says JC Miller. "Lots of his early work was on steep sloping lots, and decks gave people usable space. Today, sliding-glass doors and decks are taken for granted, but when he was starting out, this was revolutionary." Royston's artistic sculpting of the space—with overlapping planes of paving, decks, and benches often sheltered beneath one of his circular suspended umbrellas—created graphic compositions that were inviting and functional, and just as compelling when viewed from above.

One of Royston's living laboratories is his home in Mill Valley, California, designed 60 years ago by former office mate and Bay Area modernist architect Joseph Allen Stein. Recalls Royston: "I looked over his shoulder at a house he was designing for himself, and I liked it. So I bought half his property and did a reverse plan in exchange for doing his garden. It was a good deal!"

The concrete-slab dwelling, filled with art and paneled in wood with a rolled-copper-covered fireplace, has a triangular central living area that opens to the outside through walls of glass. The gardens seem to lap around and up to the house. "The gardens are extensions of the house," says Royston, who still takes pleasure in pointing out how the polished-concrete flooring aligns with the pavers across the threshold. The main terrace flows into a bench-lined deck that extends, pierlike, toward Mount Tamalpais, and is furnished with tables tiled by Royston's friend, the renowned ceramicist Edith Heath. The rose garden, planted in rolling pots of Royston's design and tended by his wife, Hannelore, sits behind a screen embedded with panels by artist Florence Swift that Royston created for SFMOMA.

Many of Royston's techniques in private gardens—the intimate spaces, undulating walls, vine-smothered pergolas, screens, and places to eat and play—carried over into his suburban parks, albeit on a larger scale. Never merely ornamental, the Mondrianesque paving patterns and furnishings helped shape the space and define zones until the foliage matured. And unlike the urban pastorals of Frederick Law Olmsted, for example, where plantings create a green buffer between park and street, Royston ▸

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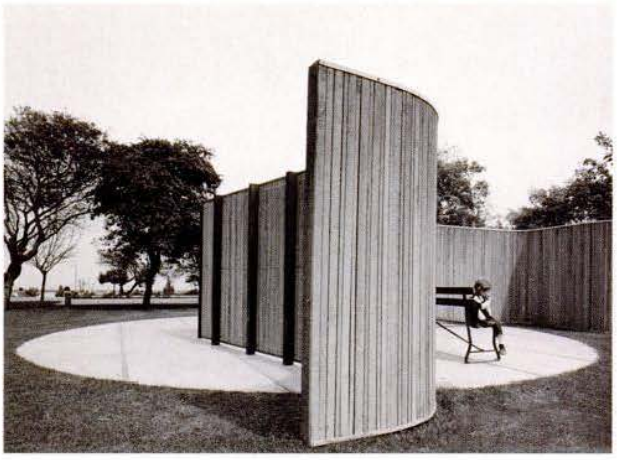
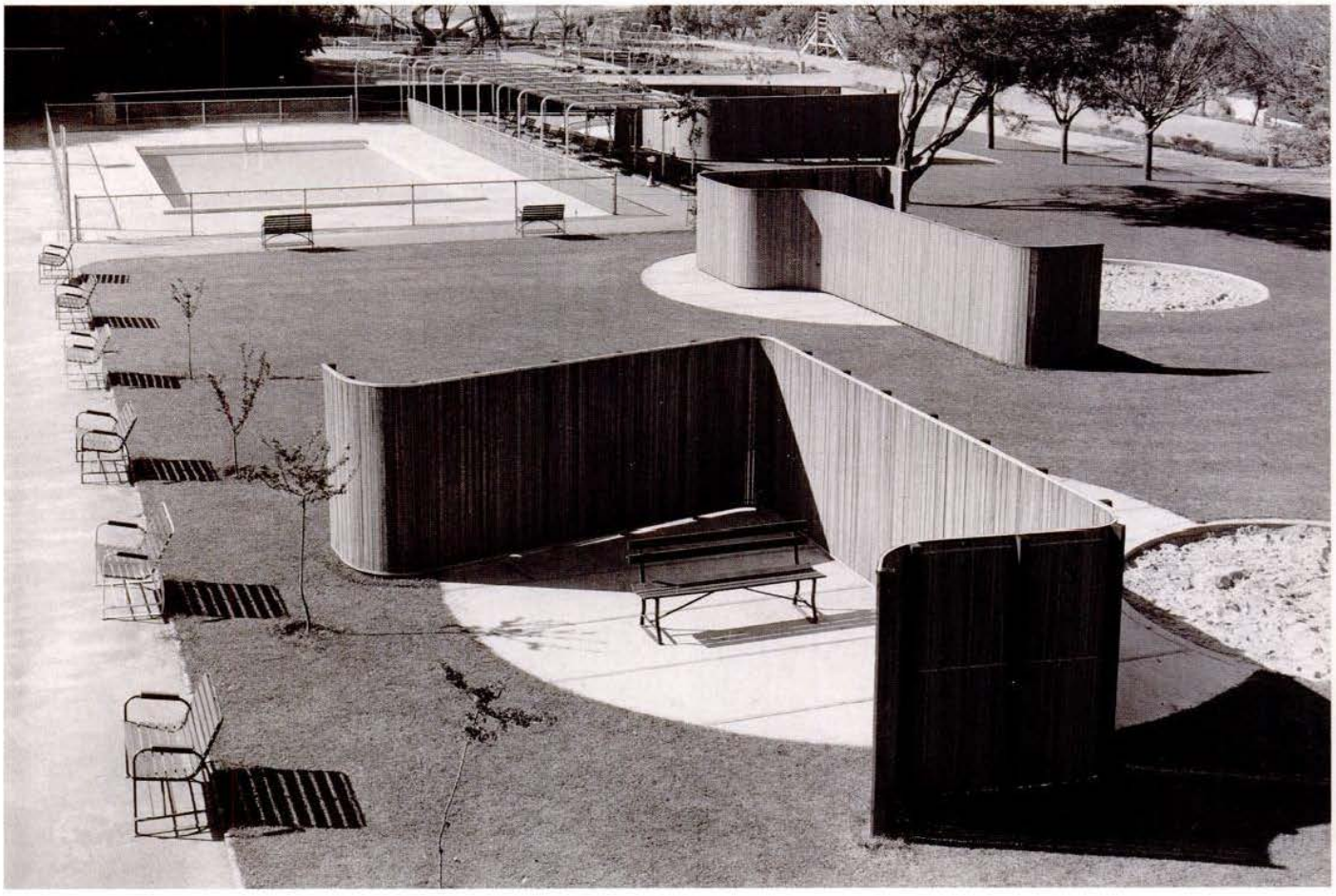
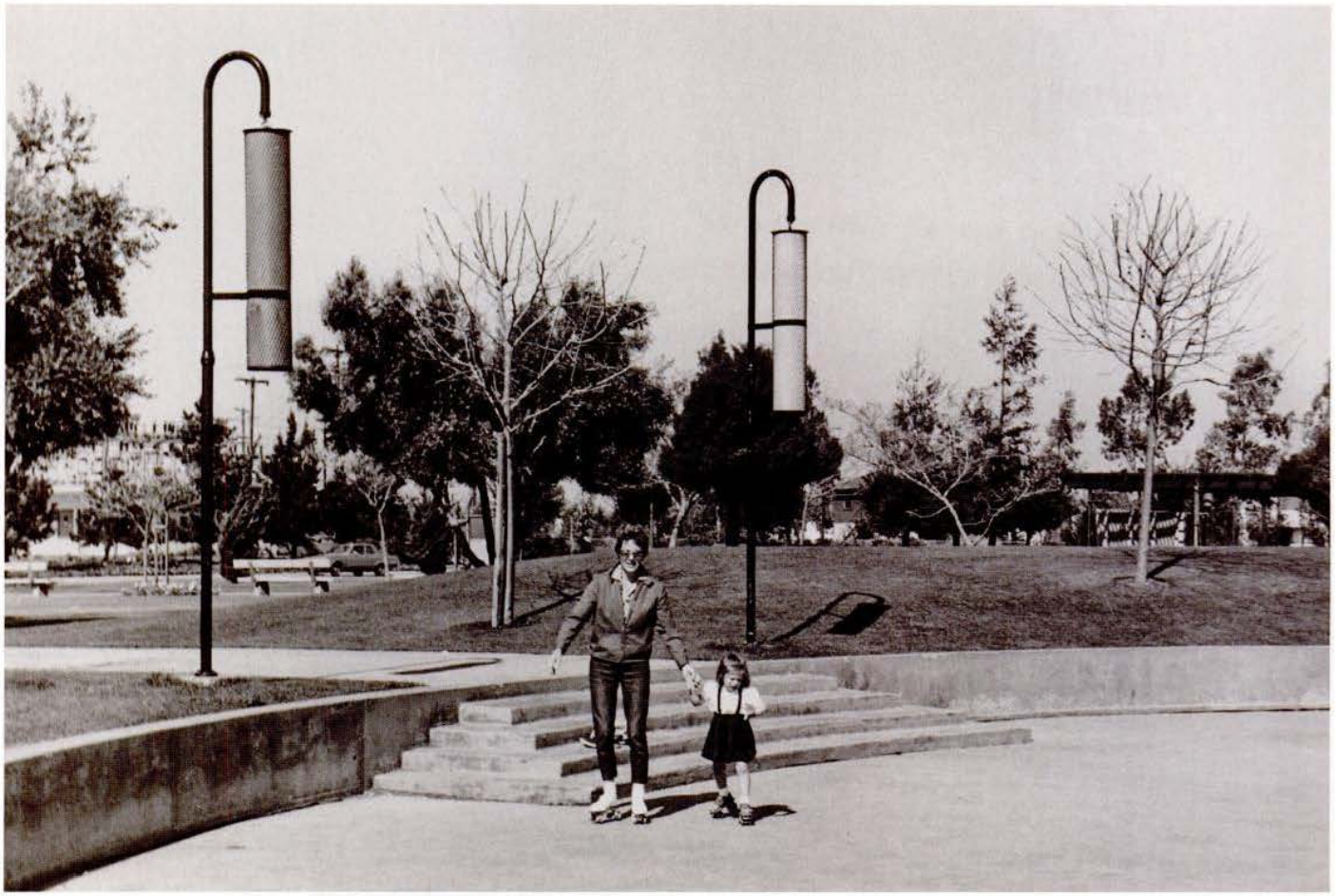
Royston's first large-scale project was the Standard Oil Rod and Gun Club in Point Richmond, California, a facility for the refinery's 700 employees (near right and below). Even before the foliage matured, graceful curving wooden screens provided shelter from the wind and sun traps for soaking up the rays. The oversized suspended garden umbrella (far right) was a signature Royston element, shown here at the 1960 Marin Art and Garden Show.



"Royston's parks...recall your neighbor's garden (if she can afford a single-family home) rather than the glory of the Medici or a 1920s millionaire's idea of the good life."—**JC Miller and Reuben Rainey**





Now a half century old, Royston's masterwork, Mitchell Park, in Palo Alto, has not only grown into itself but evolved with the times. Where roller skaters once held court in the sunken concrete multipurpose area, skateboarders now compare moves. And Royston's Japanese-inspired lanterns, recently enlarged to accommodate energy-efficient bulbs, still illuminate the pathways.

designed his parks to be peered into, seducing passersby with a host of recreational and restorative possibilities.

Royston still recalls his excitement when the call came to design one of his first large spaces, the grounds for the Standard Oil Rod and Gun Club in Point Richmond, California. "Garrett was primarily based in Los Angeles, and Ed [Williams] wasn't interested. Back in 1950, a park was considered among the dullest things you could do—a few trees and a baseball diamond. I couldn't wait to get my hands on it." Built by employees on their off hours, the private park bears signature Royston touches—sculpted fences that create wind blocks and sun traps, berms that subtly sculpt the land, and an inventive, modernist playground whose custom structures offered an exciting alternative to the galvanized schoolyard offerings.

At Mitchell Park in Palo Alto (which recently underwent a historic rehabilitation and celebrated its 50th birthday), Royston synthesized his aesthetics with his civic philosophy: "A community park should have something for all ages," he explains. "It is not an outdoor gymnasium, but an intimate space where everyone should feel at home—families, friends, children, and old people." Scattered throughout are picnic areas originally enclosed by hedges and wooden screens. They are sheltered, but not severed, from groves of trees, an amphitheater, a giant checkerboard for seniors, and the famous tot lot, whose biomorphic shape keeps caregivers within viewing and shouting distance of the children.

By the time Royston retired from full-time practice, his firm's projects included nine national and state parks, ten regional and county parks, 109 city and community parks, countless residential gardens, and communities such as Sunriver, Oregon. But the prolific output was not without its disappointments. In the optimistic postwar years, when much of the Bay Area was still open space, Royston had envisioned a "landscape matrix"—a system of interconnected green spaces, akin to Olmsted's Emerald Necklace—to help organize and humanize suburban neighborhoods. "But land planners have never seen the landscape as a primary form determinant. Rather, it's 'Here's a thousand acres—let's do a new town!' Then any little leftover pieces, you get to make a park. Well, it's tragic, a missed opportunity," says Royston, sighing.

However, rewards still come when least expected. "I met a young couple out at Mitchell playground last year, and the woman told me, 'When we were first married, we stayed way over on the other side of the park and played tennis. Now with children, we're over here every weekend.' The park is working for them. That was very satisfying to hear." ►

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Ten Things You Should Know About Robert Royston

1 / When Royston was ten years old, he constructed an elaborate model community on a 20-by-40-foot lot, with buildings made from compressed soil, traffic signs, and commercial and residential zones.

2 / Royston and his great friend Garrett Eckbo were both members of Telesis, a visionary group of Bay Area architects, designers, and planners concerned with environmental and social issues.

3 / Like Eckbo, Royston had a strong social conscience. He was forced to resign his teaching post at UC Berkeley in 1951, after refusing to sign the loyalty oath during the McCarthy witch hunts.

4 / The 20-foot-high spiral slide Royston designed for the Standard Oil Rod and Gun Club was for years the Bay Area's tallest piece of play equipment—a source of delight both to him and its end users.

5 / A college thespian ("Gregory Peck was in one of my classes; I guess our careers took different turns!"), Royston still regales dinner guests with spot-on impersonations of Julia Child's antic gestures and fluting tones.

6 / Among Royston's favorite unbuilt projects is a Utopian-sounding community in Lake Tahoe, for which he proposed four strategically placed parking structures, on-call buses—and no cars.

7 / At a presentation to developers in Sunriver, Oregon, Royston recalls, he told them, "'If you divide this property into one-half-acre waterfront lots, you will make millions of dollars! However, we propose building no houses on the water.' They went for it! Today there are more than 30 continuous miles of nature trails."

8 / The renovation of Mitchell Park's tot lot in the '90s inspired a protest demonstration by schoolchildren, one of whom stated, "We want a modernist playground!"

9 / Royston swims daily, was a ballroom dancer, and stages fierce *pétanque* (French bocce ball) matches in his lower garden.

10 / Royston received the ASLA Medal in 1989, the highest honor bestowed by the American Society of Landscape Architects. ■

Clash of the tartans (above): Royston (right) and Garrett Eckbo gaze out at the Canadian landscape in 1949. The slide at the Standard Oil Rod and Gun Club (top left), just one of many examples of Royston's sculptural and creative play equipment, is still in use, a half century after it was designed. "Furniture is also a way of shaping the space," says Royston, whose dining table and stools were featured in an exhibit at SFMOMA in 1951 (bottom left).

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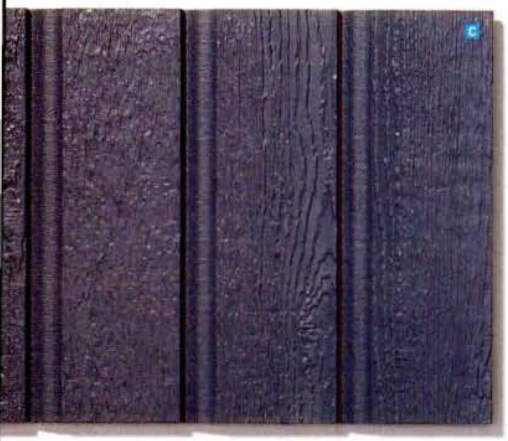
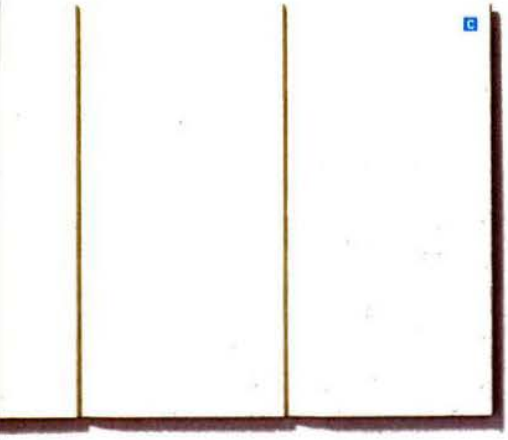
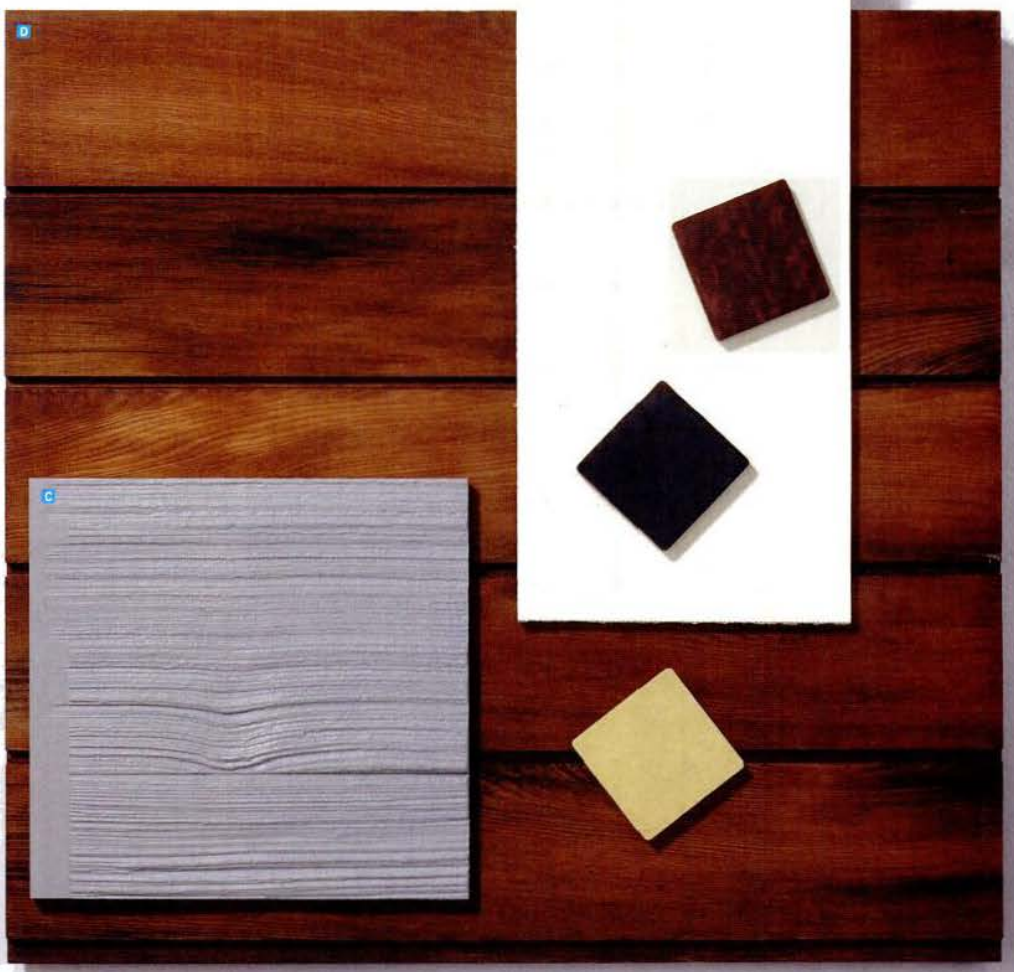
—**Roger Knight**, Hillside, Illinois

Roger that. Leave the vinyl for your turntable, not your house. One rule of (green) thumb: Stick with materials found in a forest or on the periodic table. Production practices, longevity, and recycled content should also be among your criteria. Here are some solid options to put your well-clad house on the best-dressed list.







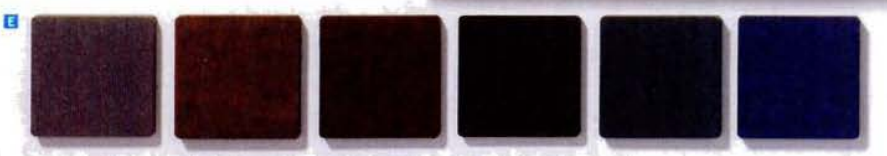


Photo by Peter Belanger

A Metal vertical walls by Zappone Manufacturing / Copper / www.zappone.com Ti, Al, and Cu are all excellent options for siding. These natural elements are nontoxic (you probably ate some copper in your cereal this morning) and easily recycled. But for us, copper takes the cake because of its chameleonic qualities and 200-to-300-year life span. While the investment clearly pays off, it's still a more expensive option than vinyl, but family-run Zappone supports DIY customers with an installation guide for their interlocking system, which will cut down on cost if you're willing to sweat.

B HardiePlank by James Hardie / Fiber cement / www.jameshardie.com / HardiePlank and Plyboo: a match made in eco-heaven, right? Well, the energy it takes to bring cement (or bamboo) products to your door must also be considered. Granted, HardiePlank is a durable alternative to chopping down stately cedars, but anything made with cement is not perfect. While the market remains competitive, companies like CertainTeed (www.certainteed.com) are worth looking into as they try to surpass HardiePlank with recycled wood and fly-ash concrete in their boards.

C TruWood by Collins Products / Engineered wood / www.collinswood.com / A 2000 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor* shows an image of towering 130-year-old pines, captioned: "Some 150,000 houses later, there are as many trees in this California forest today as there were in 1941." This surprising feat is due to the pioneering sustainable practices of Collins. Their TruWood is made of 40 percent recycled and/or recovered wood fiber (consolidated by heat and pressure), allowing Collins to reuse former by-products while creating smooth siding with a 30-year warranty.

D Reclaimed wood by TerraMai / Redwood / www.terramai.com / For out-and-out oenophiles, what could be more satisfying than a house ensconced in redwood reclaimed from wine barrels? TerraMai's siding—redwood, teak, Douglas fir, or pine—provides the beauty of aged hardwood without the guilt of clear-cutting (reclaiming about one million board feet of lumber saves a thousand acres of old-growth forest). On average, less embodied energy is used in its production than with other siding, and the wood has the nonwarping stability that comes with age.

E PaperStone XP Rainscreen panels by KlipTech Bio Composites / 100 percent postconsumer recycled paper / www.kliptech.com / While corporate greenwashing is rampant, KlipTech is already clean-green. Their recycled-wood fiber is Forest Stewardship Council certified and made at Grays Harbor Paper, which runs on Green-e energy. The resin is water-based (although they're experimenting with cashews), and the panels are available in seven colors. In fact, it's so eco-friendly you could eat from it: KlipTech makes countertops from the same stone-like material. ■

Story by Deborah Bishop

No Diving

Ever since emerging from the primordial soup (or, more metaphorically, being evicted from the world's greatest pleasure garden), we humans have enjoyed a primal attraction to water—as the price of beach- and lakefront property in more recent times attests. Just being around a body of water has a preternaturally calming effect, which may explain why no memorial—from the Lincoln in Washington to the King Center in Atlanta—is complete without its own reflecting pool. The still surface reflects the scenery while inspiring our own mental reflections upon this mortal coil.

Placed by the house, a reflecting pond is unburdened by the swimming pool's recreational imperatives (and steeper budget), and adds soul and depth to the landscape. Just as a mirror makes a room feel more open, water expands the vertical view, blurring the boundaries between sky and ground plane. And the benefits are not only visual. Whether at the Alhambra in Spain or in the hills of Hollywood, such oases offer evaporative cooling effects in hot, arid climates.

Although the pool may have had greater social cachet in the past, things may be shifting, as historian William van Leeuwen suggests: "If the pond became pool, now... the pool has reverted to the pond: 'You don't see many diving boards in pools these days,' the *New York Times* informed its readers. 'They want pools to pass for ponds.'" What follow are watering holes designed to be gazed at—rather than dived into—by seven practitioners past and present.

Project: VDL Research House II (1966)
Architect: Richard Neutra
Location: Los Angeles, California

Named in homage to Neutra's patron, Cornelius Van der Leeuw, the VDL Research House was built in 1932 (using mostly donated "test" materials) and destroyed by fire 30 years later. By this time the Silver Lake Reservoir—whose proximity had once lent a cooling effect—had been downsized, and was 600 feet away. So Neutra (shown here) and his son, Dion, integrated water into the house's redesign, most spectacularly with the shallow rooftop reflecting pool adjacent to the solarium. Looking out toward the lake, the two bodies of water appear to merge, and the fluid feeling is echoed inside the penthouse, where glass and mirrored walls expand and reflect the views. ▶

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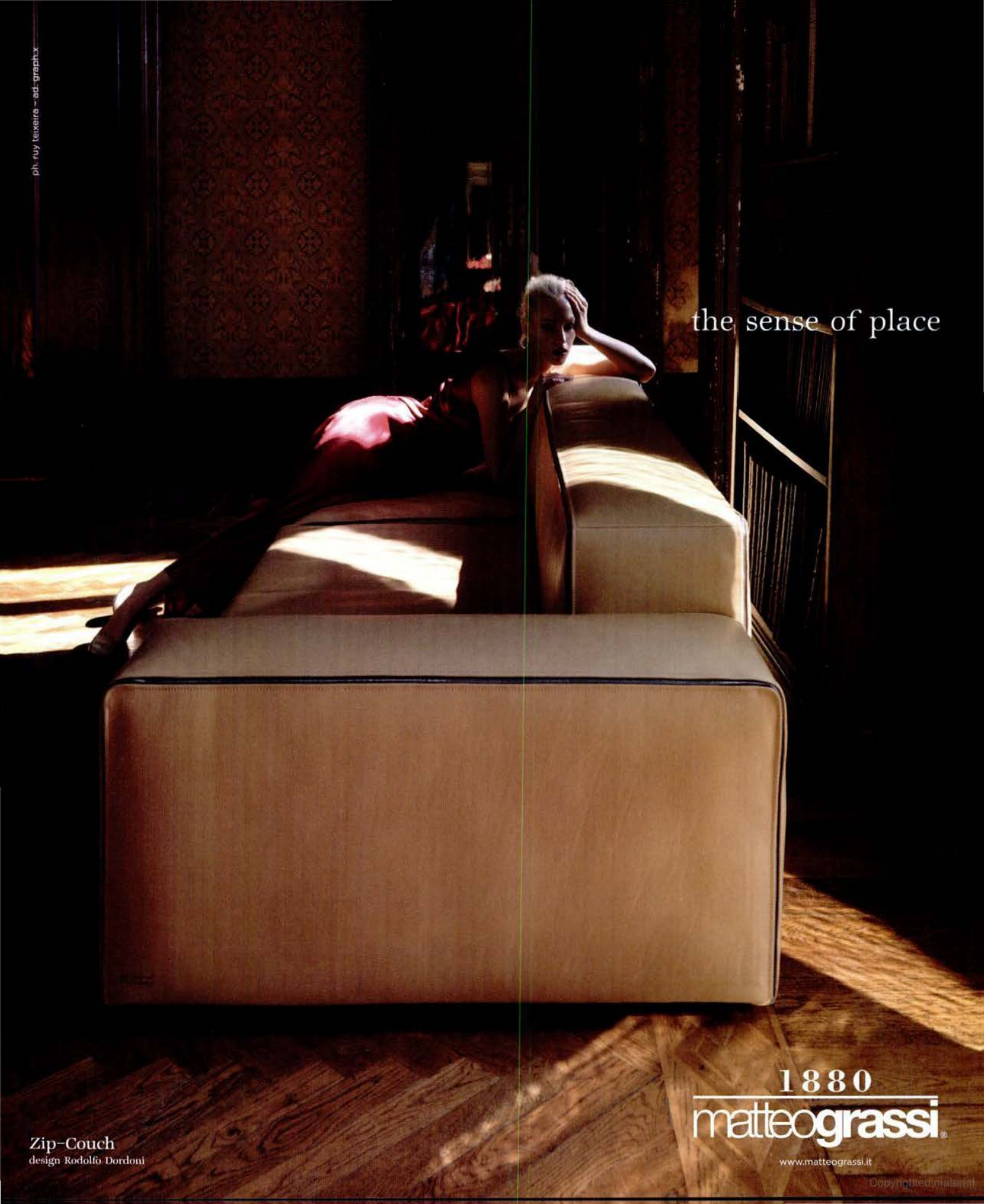
Project: Case Study House #21 (1966)
Architect: Pierre Koenig
Location: Los Angeles, California

Case Study House #21 is that Los Angeles anomaly: an air-conditioning-free zone. Koenig, with sensitivity to the site and concern for sustainable solutions, surrounded the house with five shallow reflecting pools to create a cooling microclimate. In the hottest months, water is pumped up to the roof and then falls back through downspouts for even greater tempering of the air. Writes Esther McCoy in *Case Study Houses 1945–1962:* "The house...introduces a new concept in making water an integral structure and landscape element. Brick terraces, spanning the pools, lead to the living areas, and the terraces add another plane and texture to the interplay between water and structure." ▶

PHOTO COURTESY J. PAUL GETTY TRUST / JULIUS SHULMAN PHOTOGRAPHY ARCHIVE / THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE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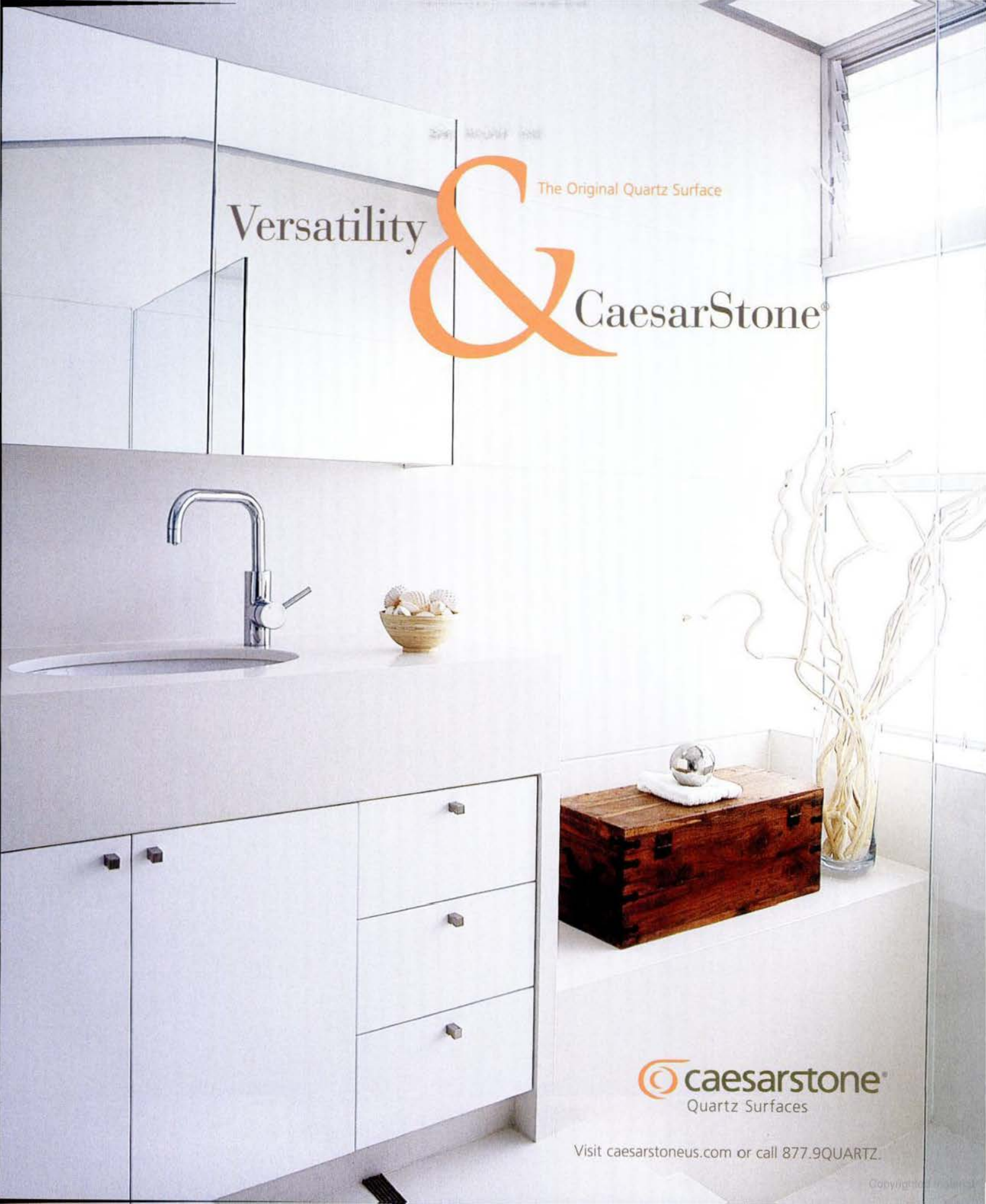
Project: Casa Galvez (1954)
Architect: Luis Barragán
Location: San Angel, Mexico

Upon accepting the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1980, Barragán commented: "Waking and sleeping, the sweet memory of the fountains of my childhood has always been with me: the spillways, the cisterns on the haciendas, the wellheads in the courtyards of the convents, the watering troughs, the little reflecting ponds, and the old aqueducts...and my work feeds on the idea of transposing these distant, nostalgic longings to the contemporary world." At the house he designed for Antonio Galvez in a colonial neighborhood of Mexico City, large windows in the living room look onto the reflecting pool and the surrounding rose-pink walls, creating a private meditation. ▸

PHOTO BY ARAMANDO SALAS PORTUGAL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Project: Killingsworth Residence (1961)
Architect: Edward Killingsworth
Location: Long Beach, California

The rectangular pool in the courtyard of the home Killingsworth designed for his family is a 60-foot-long canvas for a massive canopy of wisteria, whose overhanging vines and flowers transform the water into a kind of modernist Monet. Killingsworth had an affinity for such pools: One is required to walk over water via raised stepping-stones to reach the front doors of the Frank House (Case Study House #25), the Case Study "Triad" House A in San Diego, and even his Long Beach office. ▸

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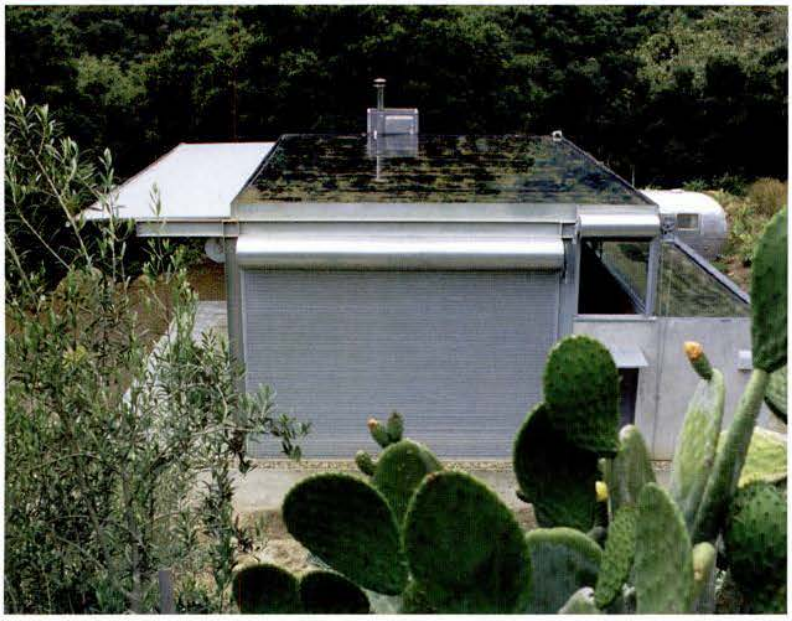

Project: 949 Toro Canyon Road (1999)
Architect: Barton Myers
Location: Montecito, California

When architect Barton Myers decided to build a home at the crest of a secluded mountain canyon, his primary concern was wildfires. So he placed four pavilions on three stepped terraces, and integrated fire protection into the architecture by putting water on the roofs. "Obviously, they're not going to burn, and they provide insulation. They're beautiful as reflecting ponds, but they also serve as water reservoirs," Myers explains in his book, *3 Steel Houses*. Water cascades lyrically down the procession of rooftops, from the studio to the residence to the guesthouse below, which also supports a lap pool. The only dry building is the garage, which plays host to a Zen garden. ▶

PHOTOS BY ROBERT POLIDORI (OVERALL); RUSS WIDSTRAND (ROOF)

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Project: Rios Garden (2000)
Architect: Mark Rios
Location: Bel-Air, California

"Water is an important way to enter a house or a garden," says architect Mark Rios. "It's mentally cleansing and provides a calming transition from the outside world." This '50s-era property was bone dry until Rios turned it into his living laboratory. A walkway to the front door leads over a 15-foot-long and three-foot-wide water channel, which expands into a five-by-eight-foot backyard pond populated with plants—a low window in the wall between front and back offers a framed preview of the water lilies and irises. And there are sound effects. "I added a bubbler," says Rios, "which creates a nice soft Moorish sound and ripples that barely break the surface. Anything more is too heroic!" ▶

PHOTO BY DOMINIQUE VORILLON

Project: Tubac House (2000)
Architect: Rick Joy
Location: Tubac, Arizona

In the void created between a glass-and-rusted-steel house and guesthouse, a courtyard offers shade and refuge from the wilder landscape beyond. Among the raised and ground-level planting beds are cubic pools that reflect the clawing limbs of mesquite by day and summer lightning storms at night. Within this partially paved desert microcosm nature is contained, but not castrated: "Through the garden of barrel cactuses that appear to be standing guard, one descends into a courtyard by way of a stair wedged between the two retaining walls. From here, an oasis unfolds: cool dark shaded area, the sound of water trickling, humming birds, the smell of sage and flowers, reflections" (from *Rick Joy: Desert Works*). ■

PHOTO BY BILL TIMMERMAN


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"Yet it must also perform its primary function of being a garden in the true sense of providing trees and flowers, fruits and vegetables; a place where man can recapture his affinity with the soil, if only on Saturday afternoons. It must be a green oasis where memories of his bumper-to-bumper ride from work will be erased."

Story by Katrina Heron

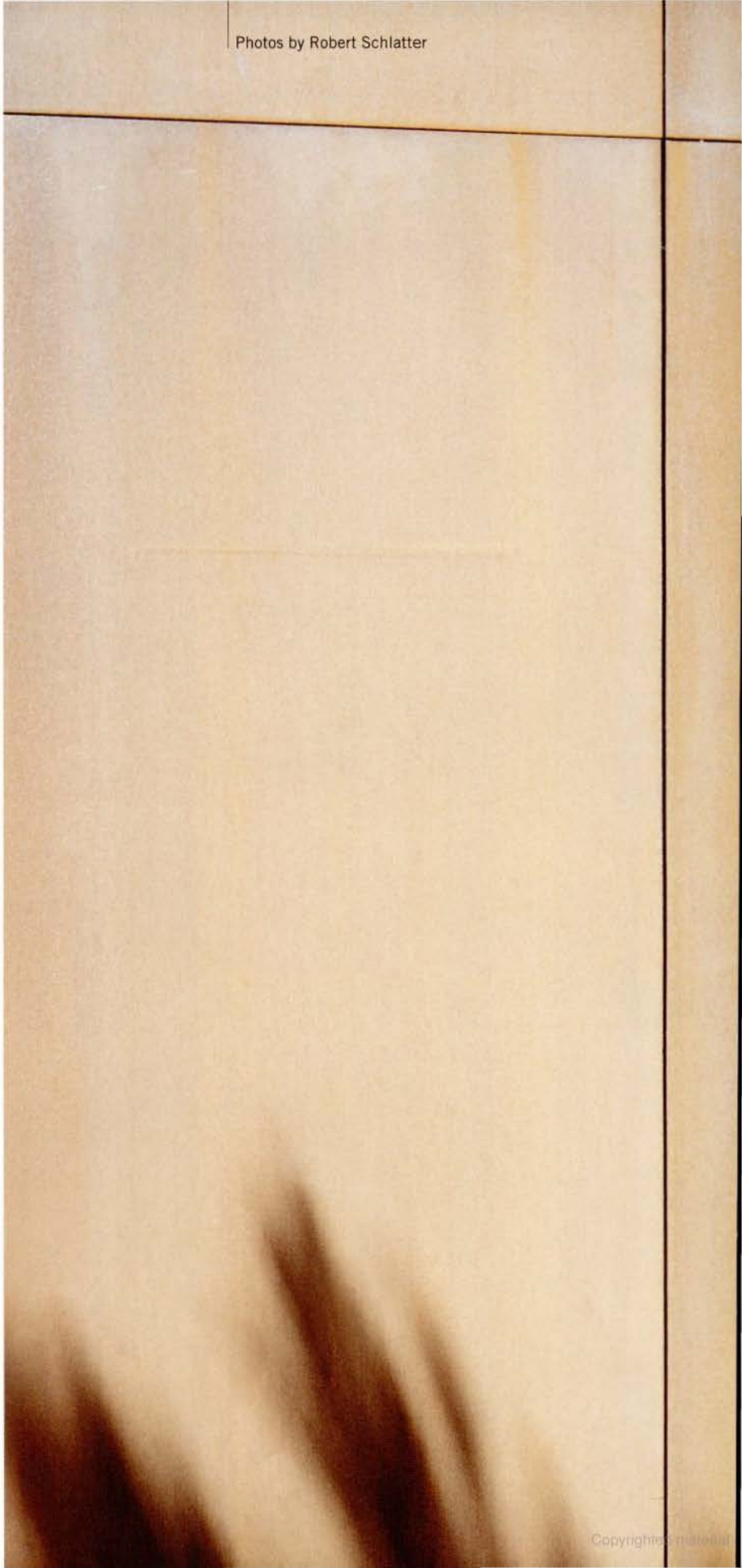
Photos by Robert Schlatter

Highway Hideaway

Most beachfront houses treat the ocean as part of the visual landscape with panoramic views and wrap-around balconies. Tom Lloyd-Butler's beach house by Ernest Born, however, is deeply interior, and far more interested in its tranquil inner courtyard than anything beyond. One transparent addition later, the avid surfer has a new outlook.

Project: Great Highway House
Architect: Aidlin Darling Design
Location: San Francisco, CA

The modest home overlooking the Pacific Ocean that Ernest Born built for his family in 1950 has taken on a new life. A glassed-in bridge (right) connects the original, inward-looking house to a far more transparent new house. Born's creation, and intent, remains intact while also embracing the contemporary addition and its more inclusive nod to its surroundings.

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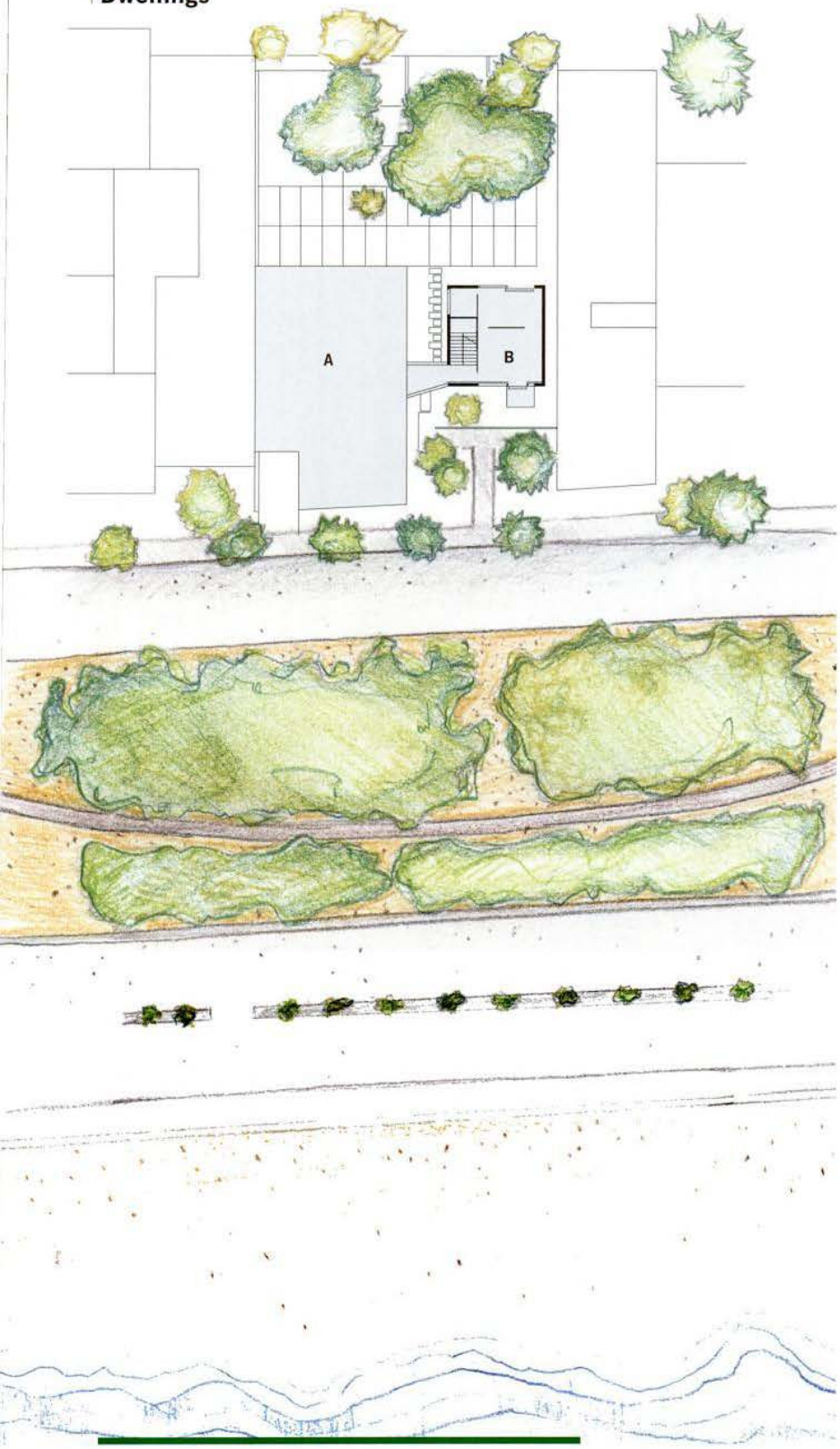
Born's original house (far left) only gave two glimpses of the vast Pacific Ocean out of the west-facing windows—an unusual choice given the epic sweep and clear cachet of an uninterrupted ocean view. Aidlin Darling Design took a different tack with the new addition (left), using the cypress trees as a natural screen to shield the lower levels while opening the third floor to stunning views. The Cor-Ten steel cladding on the new house is designed to further redden and rust with the help of the obliging sea air.

The first thing you notice on crossing the threshold is what the house itself is deliberately turning its back on: the roiling, crashing surf of the Pacific Ocean. Ernest Born, an esteemed Bay Area architect who built the flat-roofed, two-story home for his family in 1950, could hardly have chosen a wilder, more windswept location—then a nearly deserted coastal road running along the westernmost edge of San Francisco—but his austere façade seems content to be merely backdrop for the elements.

The present owner, Tom Lloyd-Butler, first spotted the place after a day riding 20-foot waves on the far side of that road, called the Great Highway. "I was changing, and I looked up and saw this tiny 'For Sale' sign," he recalls. "It was totally different from any other house at the beach," cloistered by trees and with only two upstairs windows facing the view.

"I thought it would be plain inside," says Lloyd-Butler, a longtime San Franciscan who runs his own investment company. "And then I went in and was blown away by the architectural motifs and how simple and sophisticated the design was." Born had worked from a limited palette—Douglas fir, travertine, cork, brick, and aggregate stone near entryways to conceal the sand that eternally swept in—to great effect. "He didn't use any fancy materials; he chose basic ones and then used them in really interesting ways," says Lloyd-Butler.

Tom and Diane Lloyd-Butler and their two young sons, Ross and John, moved into not just a house but a design philosophy, complete with furniture and built-in details crafted by Born: a palatial dining-room table, beds, bureaus, wall installations for hanging (and rearranging) artwork, original lighting, original paint colors, even garden furniture. They felt at home with the idiosyncrasies, the personal stamp of an architect who used ▸



"We had the advantage of a beautiful layering of foliage, which allowed us to create a glass façade without sacrificing privacy. Born gave us a forest to work with."

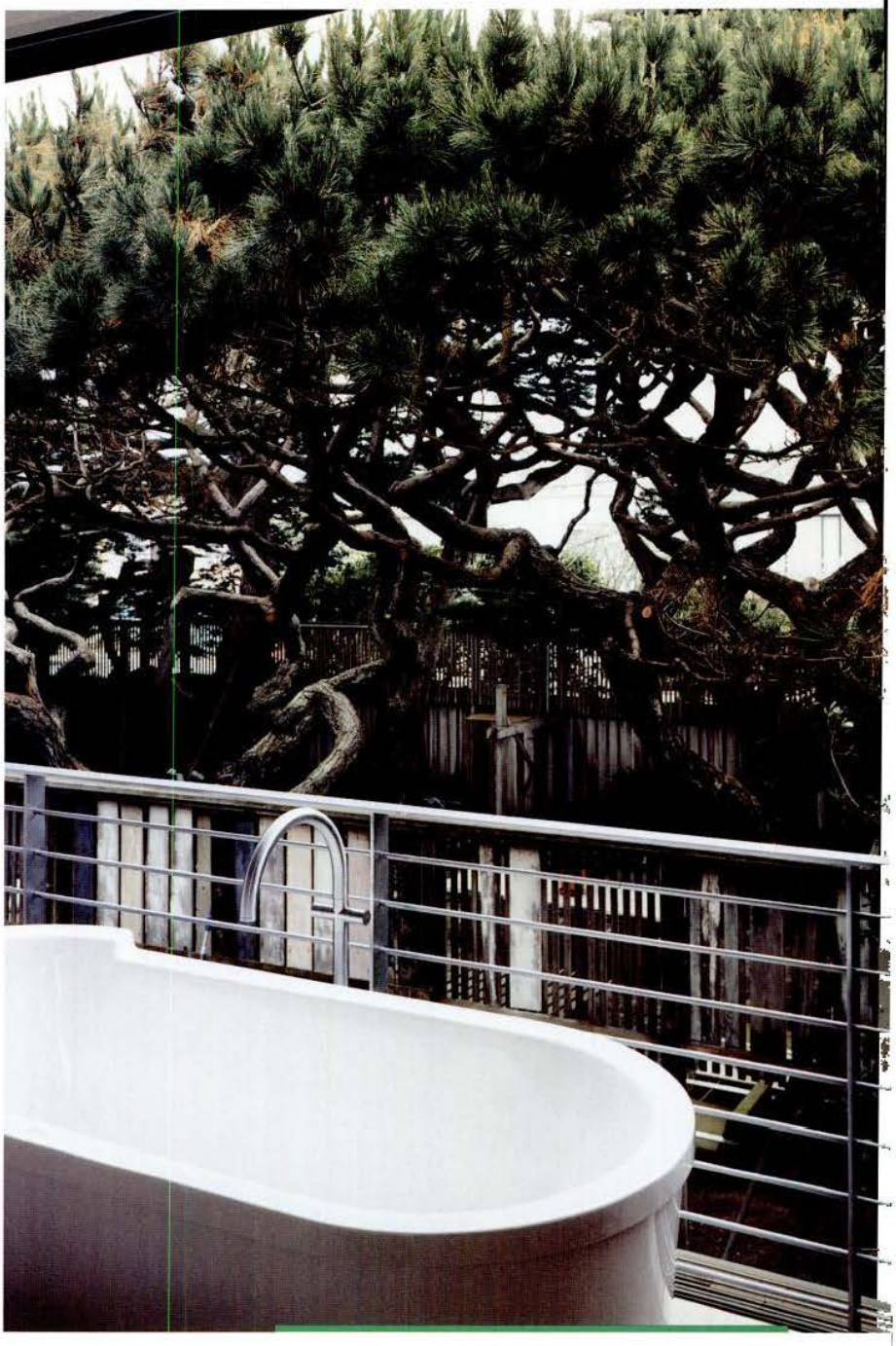
a ten-penny nail to fasten the door of a strikingly beautiful bathroom cabinet while creating spaces that seemed to reveal an understanding of universal design qualities to which people respond. The spare, double-height living area is grand and intimate at the same time, and its floor-to-ceiling window, which takes up the entire back wall and is sectioned into Mondrianesque blocks, pulls you into the hidden treasure of the house, a deep garden set with stone pine and cypress trees whose top branches catch the wind off the ocean while the atmosphere below is serene, protected. In the front, Born set the kitchen windows high enough to avoid a view of the road but so that they would perfectly frame the sunset.

By 2005, the family's needs had changed. The Lloyd-Butlers had divorced and Tom kept the house, joined by his new partner, Dan Zelen, who has a design company and a store in Los Angeles called Zelen Home. Ross and John were growing up and clamoring for their own rooms. It was obvious they needed more space, but how to build an addition that wouldn't compete with or alter Born's design? After several false starts, Lloyd-Butler found Aidlin Darling Design in San Francisco. "Among other things, the house is remarkable spatially," says Joshua Aidlin, who took on the project with his partner, David Darling, and colleague Michael Hennessey. "We knew that to simply add to it would be to compromise it." They also noted how the house pretty much ignored the ocean—escaped from it, even, into the sanctuary of the garden. This standoff between, well, inner peace and outer turbulence became Aidlin Darling's starting point.

Like Cosimo in Italo Calvino's *The Baron in the Trees*, the architects perched in the branches of the cypresses and pines, observing where the canopy was dense and where it was porous, noting various perspectives and ▸

The site plan (above) shows how the old (A) and new (B) buildings connect. Born outfitted the living room of the original house (opposite) with vertical slats on which to mount any manner of visual material. Artwork becomes easy to move around, but Lloyd-Butler likes the placement of a painting by Wayne Gonzales depicting Lee Harvey Oswald.

Zelen (left) and Lloyd-Butler take advantage of their shady outdoor space (opposite) while the cypresses beyond the ipe fence (below) afford the family privacy.



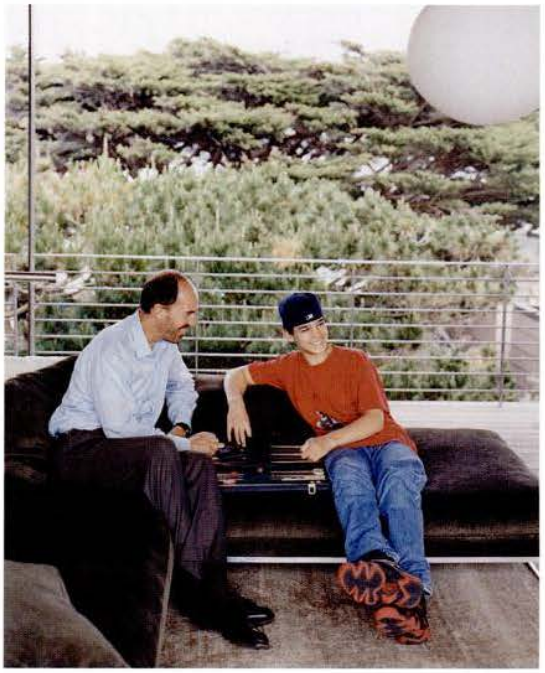
view corridors to the ocean. Then they came down again and, removing only one tree in the process, planted a three-story, 24-by-24-foot steel-sheathed glass pavilion next to the house, tethering it by means of a translucent bridge connected at the second stories.

The pavilion's open plan invites the ocean and the horizon in but stops short of letting them dominate. Like Born, Aidlin Darling subscribes to view "editing." On the ground floor, a slatted ipe fence lets in sunlight but shields the living space from the street. On the translucent bridge, a horizontal stripe of clear glass at eye level affords just a glimpse of sea and sky. And on the top floor, a large side window is fully translucent, thus directing the eye to an amazing next-stop-Asia view of the ocean through a clear sliding glass panel.

The pavilion can't help but be much more attention-grabbing than the house next door, but the effect is softened by a careful echoing of materials. "We picked up on the Douglas fir casework and the travertine, and the floors are concrete, crafted in such a way that you see the texture of the troweling," Aidlin says. "Nothing precious. The interior is mostly Sheetrock, and the skin is Cor-Ten steel, which is great for an oceanside building because it oxidizes and then stops; you don't have to repair it."

The addition also echoes the original house's sense of proportion, radiating simplicity yet organized according to very specific needs and activities. A two-and-a-half-foot-deep storage area, made from Douglas fir, runs the length of the far wall in each of the three rooms. On the ground floor, it's for surfboards, wetsuits, and a Murphy bed; one floor up, it becomes closets for the master bedroom and bathroom; and on the top floor, where, says Lloyd-Butler, "we all pile on the sofa together after dinner," it houses a fireplace, electronics, and bookshelves. ▸

The bridge between the buildings connects the addition with Lloyd-Butler's second-floor office (opposite) in the old house. The collection of neckties Lloyd-Butler and Zelen have amassed is on permanent display (above left) draped over an upstairs railing. Sliding glass panels in the bathroom open to put the tub in the tree canopy.



The frosted glass of the bridge offers a transparent stripe and a view of the ocean (above). When not surfing, Lloyd-Butler and his son John (right) repose in the new addition over a game of backgammon. Aidlin Darling took pains during construction to preserve the cypress trees (opposite) that give the Great Highway House so much of its charm.

Despite the relatively small footprint, each level seems much bigger than it is, because the landscape—particularly the greenscape—is designed as an outdoor room. Sliding glass panels overlooking the garden in the master bathroom, for example, open to put the bathtub essentially in the trees, which are also reflected in an expanse of mirrors. "The wall disappears, and it feels like a tree house," Lloyd-Butler says.

The partnership between before and after, each distinctly its own design yet in sync with the other, feels natural enough that one imagines Born would have approved. In fact, he may even have anticipated the future possibilities, having secured three contiguous parcels of land way back when. His own residential work was limited; on the faculty of the University of California at Berkeley's School of Architecture, he focused more on civic building design and restoration, as well as painting and illustration. Born also coauthored the definitive treatise on an enduring architectural enigma: the Plan of St. Gall, housed in Switzerland, is a set of parchment renderings for a ninth-century Benedictine monastery that was never built (and that was drawn at the odd and intriguing scale of 1:192).

One thing is certain: Something significant has changed since Born built his house, and he laid the groundwork to make it happen. The five-foot-tall trees he planted all around the property are now majestic 30-foot elder statesmen, making possible a new, bolder, and more open form of architecture within their intertwined branches.

"We had the advantage of a beautiful layering of foliage, which allowed us to create a glass façade without sacrificing privacy," says Aidlin. "Born gave us a forest to work with." ■

Story by Amber Bravo

PHOTO BY SHERRIE GRIFFIN

Terra Ephemera

Whether spanning acres or encased in amorphous glass ecospheres, Paula Hayes's singular landscapes blur the boundary between art and nature—and redefine the relationship between art and beholder.

A close-up of a custom blown-glass terrarium (opposite) offers a microcosmic view of one of Hayes's lushly overgrown landscapes. Hayes produces her silicone planters in five sizes, two styles ("classic" and "eccentric"), and five standard color options. An assortment of mini silicone planters and polyurethane trays highlight a delicate assemblage of ferns and oxalis plants (right). Both the planters and the trays are produced in series by Salon 94, one of her two galleries.

PHOTO BY RICHARD FELBER

PHOTO BY RICHARD FELBER

Portrait by Raimund Koch

Three centuries before the English botanist Nathaniel Ward created the first terrarium in 1829, the Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch depicted the world as one in his infamous triptych *The Garden of Earthly Delights.* Ward came upon the concept by happenstance: He'd been observing insect specimens under a bell jar and found that the small fern spores that sprouted from clumps of dirt within the jar thrived, whereas his outdoor specimens withered due to pollution. Bosch's two-dimensional orb, painted on the exterior panels of his triptych, depicts what is supposed to be the third day of creation; when opened, the interior panels—and, in following, the interior of the orb—depict a world teeming with surreal landscapes, all manner of life and death, and the grimmest of afterlives. The portrait of mankind, according to the artist, is perfectly contained and encapsulated in an ethereal glass bubble.

Paula Hayes strikes me as equal parts Bosch and Ward as she leads me down to her basement studio, or "grotto," as she likes to call it. The dark, windowless space in New York's Greenwich Village is illuminated by grow lights and warmed by plant specimens encased in biomorphic glass containers. "I love this one," she says, pointing to a ball of organic matter slightly smaller than a volleyball from which a diminutive sapling has sprouted. "This little locust tree was just in the soil. You know, they're huge shade trees..." She pauses as if to consider its fate and shrugs. "We'll see what happens, I guess." These new creations, called orchid bee blobs, are made from a host of ingredients such as melted beeswax, coconut fabric, spirulina, turmeric, gold leafing, and burnt umber powder and are cooked in what appears to me to be a much-loved Crock-Pot.

As I wander around the studio, peering into the amorphous terrariums, each appears to be its own world, inhabited by all manner of plants, from selaginella to succulents, that have been shaped, prodded, and pruned into existence with dirt, surgical tools, and dowels rigged with coat hangers, which litter her worktable. Hayes explains that most of the terrariums in the studio are ▸

A cluster of maple trees sprout from a trio of Autumn Lake eccentric silicone planters and a Ginko medium classic planter in the courtyard of gallery Salon 94 (opposite).

Like the delicate white blossoms bursting from her Manhattan Blue Hour classic silicone planter, Hayes soaks up the spring sunshine (above).

"My goal is to have gardens seem more like living artworks. In many ways, I'm having to rewrite the way that art is perceived or how it's handled. That it's not in any static object that one simply preserves, [but] it is evolving."

Hayes cultivates her terrariums for a year before she sends them out to collectors. The carefully constructed landscapes are the result of hours of attention and manipulation, and require a sophisticated knowledge of the care and maintenance needs for a variety of plant types from succulents to ferns to mosses.

spoken for, but that she grows and tends to them for a year before sending them out into the world. I marvel at her ability to let them go, to trust that collectors will be willing and able to care for them. I ask, guessing at the difficulty of maintaining the terrariums with miniature water gardens inside, how a collector might maintain a piece like that. She laughs and says, "Oh those...those are more for me," conveying the degree of expertise required to keep these pieces. "Actually, I had to manhandle one of them yesterday. But they like to have a little bit of cataclysm. They almost have to go through something to have this sort of beauty. That was a little bit of a surprise, but it shouldn't be because that's what the earth is like."

While she may be reluctant to send the more complicated designs to collectors, she has more than 60 terrariums out in the world, and has tracked the progress and life of each one since she began making them in 2003. "I hope to never have to cut the cord with the

"The only thing that could go terribly wrong is if someone starts to think of [a] terrarium as an object. Because they'll be highly disappointed that it changes."

PHOTOS BY SHERRIE GRIFFIN (SPREAD)

terrarium," she explains. "We have a whole database that tracks where they all are and how they're doing. We have all their contact information and photos [documenting their development]." On one side of her studio, a large chalkboard is marked up with what looks to be some sort of elaborate equation, but is, in fact, a list of terrariums by code. "It takes a whole team of us," Hayes explains. "For the first three months that [a terrarium] is with a collector, I'm working with them to try to train them how to take care of it." Hayes's team has grown by necessity—her office now consists of two in-house assistants and a horticulturalist who helps with onsite visits.

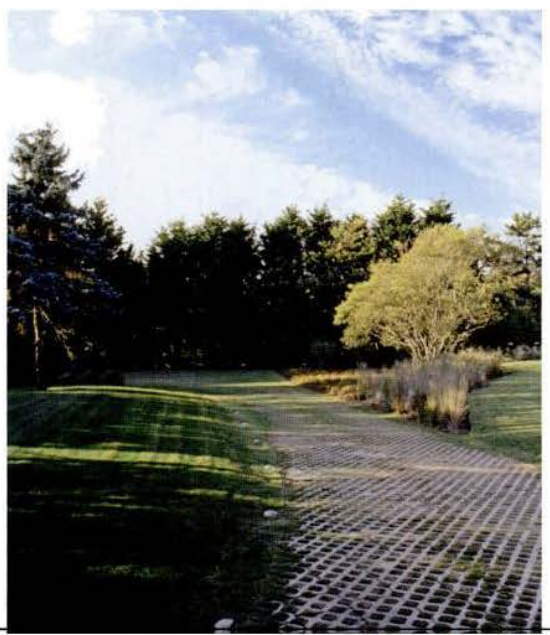
Hayes credits her upbringing on a farm in rural upstate New York and her schooling and entrance into New York's intellectual art world as shaping her work today. She started her gardening business in 1985 to help pay for graduate school (Parsons, for sculpture). "I would walk around [the city] with a tool bag and take care of gardens. I did it because it was something I knew how to do. I had to have a job during grad school, and it related to the type of art and sculpture that I was doing at the time. It's been a very organic process. You're funneling everything into one thing, working and thinking all of the time."

Indeed, the business has grown to include larger-scale projects. Architects have enlisted her to conceptualize gardens for both large- and small-scale works, such as a green roof for Rafael Viñoly's Howard Hughes Medical Institute facility in Virginia (for which she also did the landscape concept) and a private residence in Miami. Much of Hayes's work is divided between creating terrariums and silicone plant vessels, and envisioning larger landscapes and gardens. Her connection to the art world has made her a favorite garden designer for collectors and dealers, and it's to this world she feels she most belongs. Her silicone vessels, cast from her ▸

original sculpted-plaster molds, are produced as artist's editions by two galleries, Salon 94 and R 20th Century. "My goal is to have gardens seem more like living artworks. In many ways, I'm having to rewrite the way that art is perceived or how it's handled. That it's not in any static object that one simply preserves, [but] it is evolving with how it's maintained. In relationship to other artworks, it can seem antithetical. [My work] needs humidity, it needs UV light, whereas most art [is protected from environmental concerns] and the houses that [art collections] go into have been heavily invested in to control humidity and to shade out UV light. The same collector who wants to collect a terrarium may have a hard time placing one of my pieces."

Hayes reveres those clients who are willing to accept a degree of uncertainty. "The only thing that could go terribly wrong is if someone starts to think of [a] terrarium as an object. Because they'll be highly disappointed that it changes," she explains, laughing. "You know, I really try to talk with them about it." And here, I see the temperament of the artist trump that of the botanist.

Hayes walks over to a shelf and pulls out a sheet of paper and hands it to me, explaining that it was part of an exhibition she did in the early '90s. It's a contract that reads "An agreement for a potted plant as artwork." The document spells out, in legalese, the obligation of an owner or collector of the art: "[T]he owner is responsible for the artwork in as much as the artwork does not exist without the responsibility and commitment to its undertaking and without the attempt to remedy failure with renewable idealism." Hayes is clearly parroting the rhetoric as a way of restating our understanding of art and life. "Basically it states that it's idealism that we're maintaining, and if something goes wrong, we renew our idealism by putting in another plant," she laughs. "[With this document] it was conceptual, it was more of an idea. But through a lot of soul-searching, seeing, and doing, I realized that even if [this idea] has a beautiful material form, it is still entirely ephemeral." Indeed, it is art as life. ■



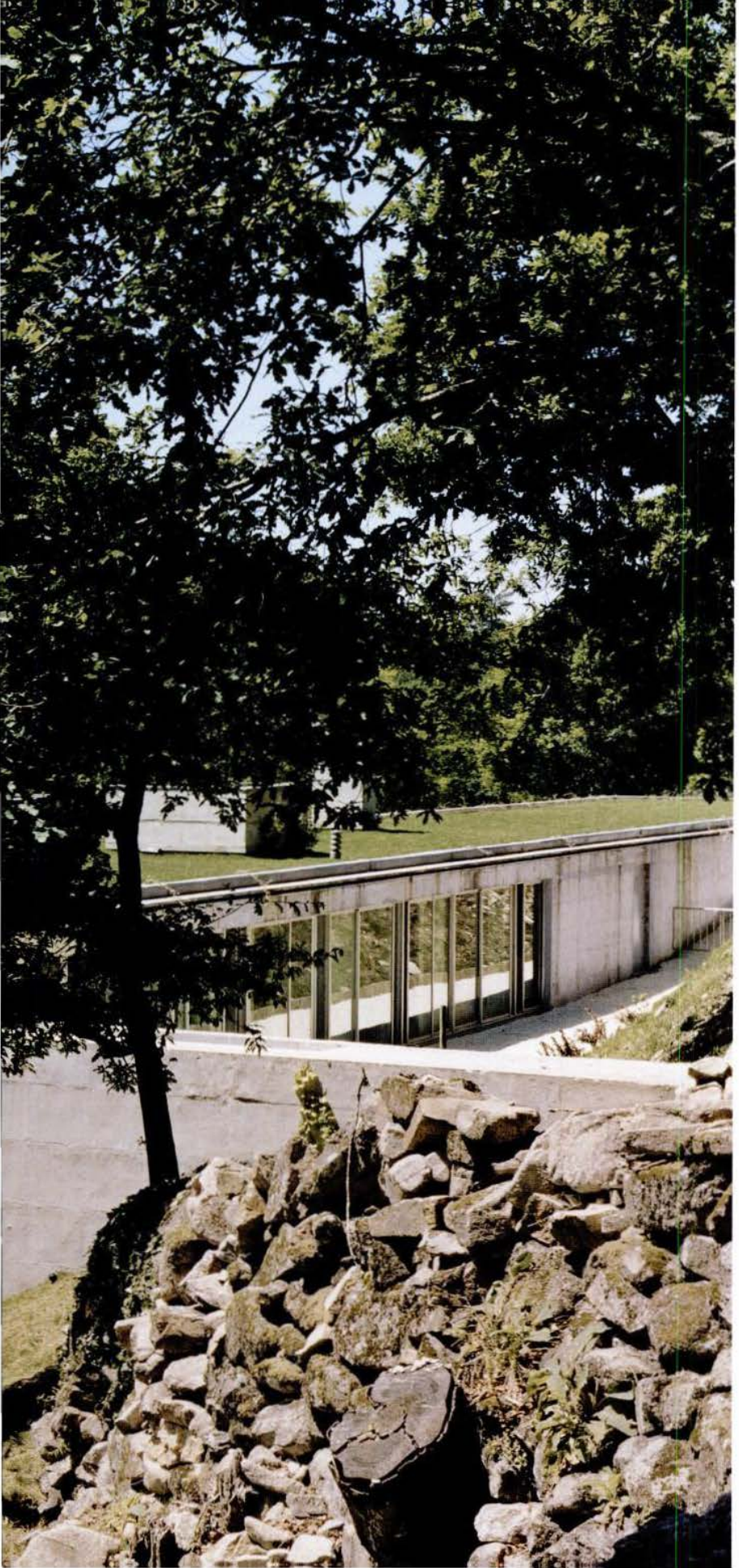
A garden for a private residence in East Hampton, New York (this page), mixes a variety of heights and textures—even in the hatch-marked driveway. The landscape Hayes conceived for a private garden in Santa Fe, New Mexico (opposite), exploits the desert landscape with drought-tolerant planting. "Walking in the Santa Fe hills is psychedelic. It's a desert, and there's all this rock and lichen. The people who live here are really great art collectors. It's a minimalist art collection, but [they] also collect strange kinds of pottery and baskets."

PHOTOS BY RICHARD FELBER

PHOTO BY FRANK OUDEMAN

Story by Kieran Long

Photos by David Hughes



Where the Wild Things Aren't

In Vieira do Minho, a small village in northern Portugal, Guilherme Vaz designed a fortresslike retreat that embraces the natural landscape while keeping it at bay.

Project: The Valley House
Architect: Guilherme Vaz
Location: Vieira do Minho, Portugal

Vaz designed the Valley House to act as a retaining wall built into the site, allowing it to be both fully integrated within yet closed off from the surrounding landscape. The house's elongated program is single story, with every room accessible from the veranda on the south façade. The view from the northeast corner of the site (opposite) evokes the retaining quality of the structure, and highlights one of the home's key attributes: a green roof. The line of the house mimics the native stone walls that trace the perimeter of the landscape.

The Valley House flows down along the site, integrating smoothly into the sloping hills. A view from the rambling path behind the house gives a clear view of the green roof and the not-so-green swimming pool (opposite) on top of it. Below, from right: Vaz, his wife Cati with their two children, Tiago and Gaspar, his father, and his brother João, enjoy the sun on the well-kept lawn. Vaz initially hoped to let the grass and surrounding vegetation grow naturally, but his father preferred a more traditonal manicured aesthetic.

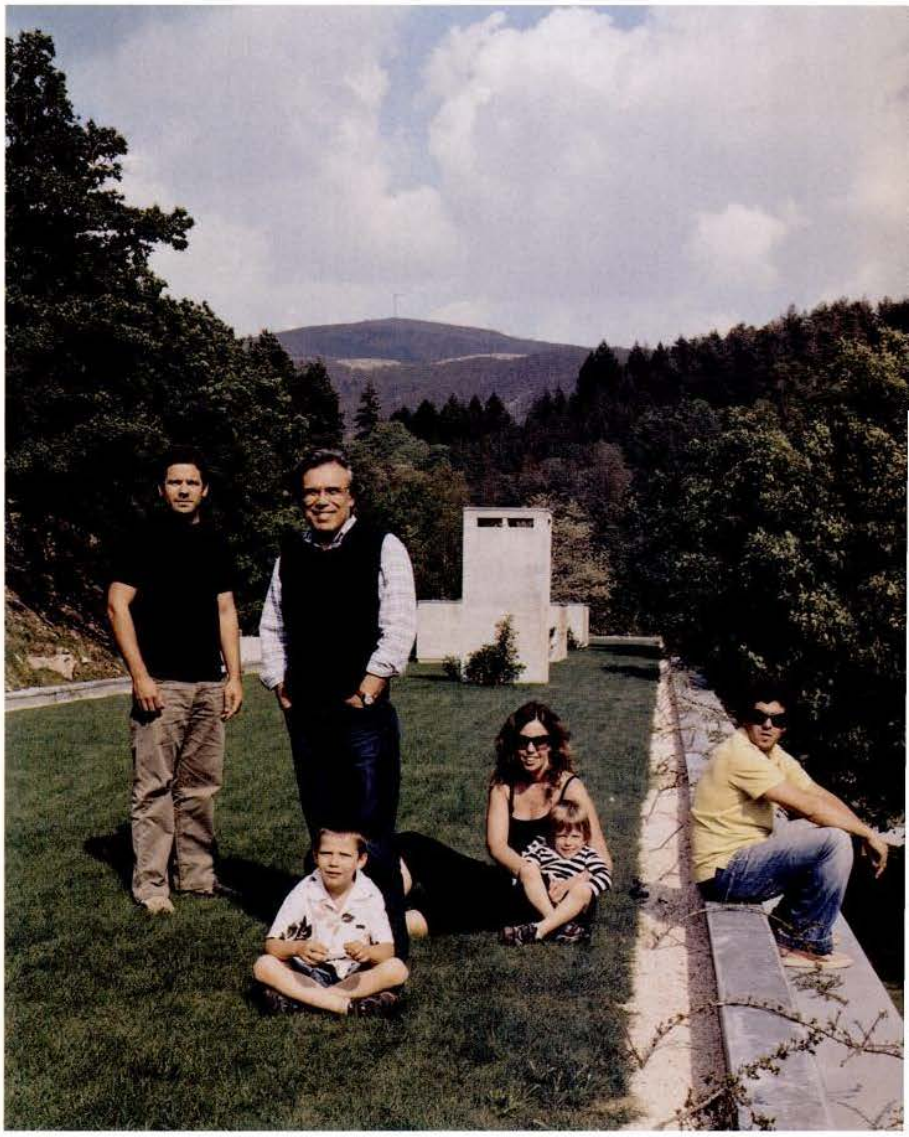
Despite its unconventional planning, the house shares many characteristics of the area's rural architecture of retaining walls, agricultural sheds, and, in particular, the square granite water tanks that stand in the adjoining fields.

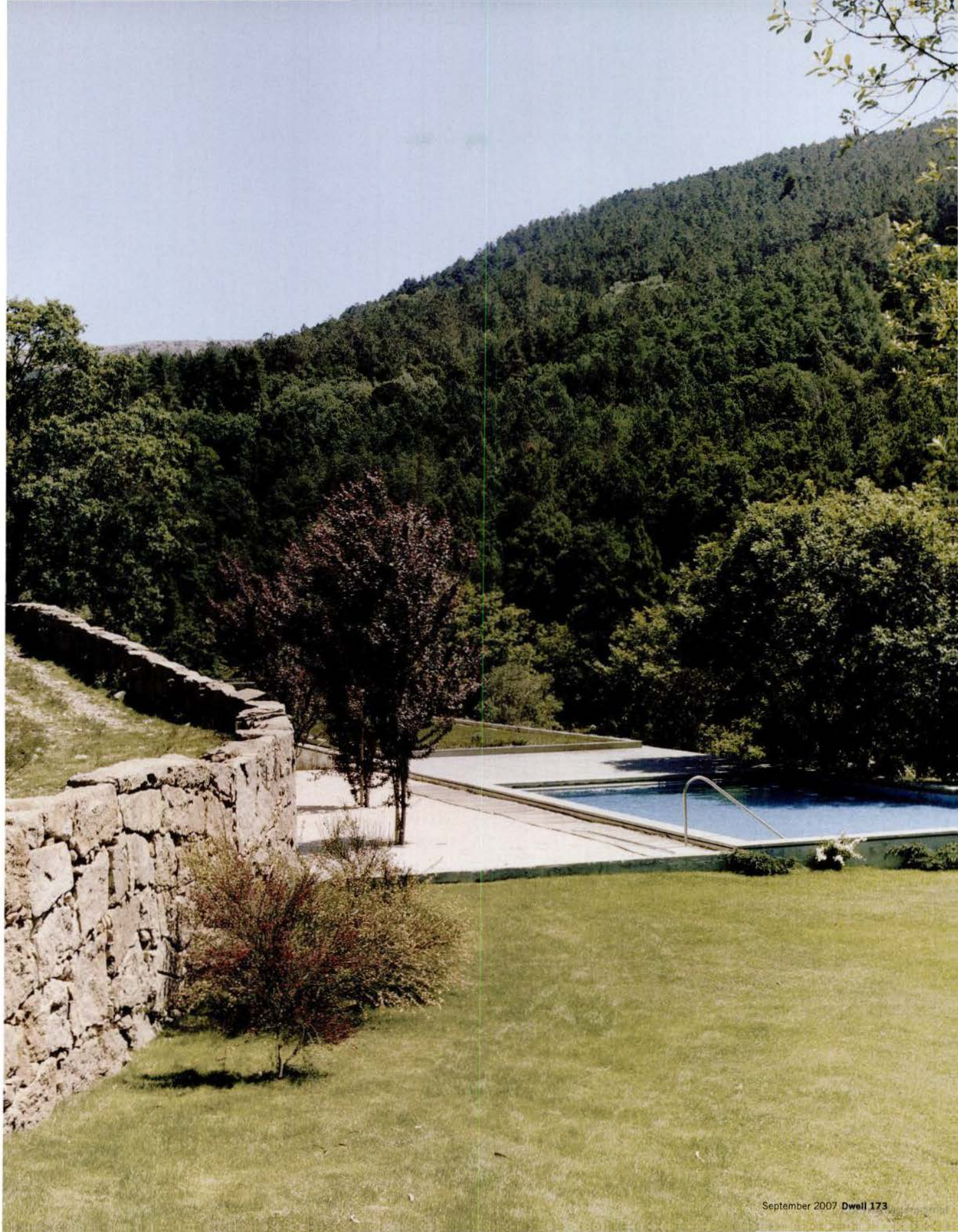
"Nature to me is something quite frightening," says the diminutive Guilherme Vaz, as we walk around the expansive site of the Valley House, a weekend home the young architect designed for his father in the village of Vieira do Minho in the north of Portugal. "Nature is so strong here. I wanted all the natural things to be on the outside."

Vaz, whose practice is in Porto, harbors a city-dweller's skepticism of nature. It may be beautiful, but it is also full of bugs that might trigger anaphylactic shock in your children. Vaz is not one to speak platitudes about blurring boundaries between inside and out, and in many ways, the Valley House is a bulwark of sorts: What is artificial is contained within this concrete shoebox of a building, and what's wild is kept out, observable from generous terraces and huge windows.

Vaz took on this project while he was still a student, and his psychiatrist father proved an ideal client for an ambitious young architect. "He wasn't really very interested. I would say to him, 'I'm thinking of maybe four rooms instead of five.' And he would say, 'Oh, okay.'" The project's protracted gestation also meant that Vaz had time to get influences out of his system. (He admits to having one Glenn Murcutt–inspired version of the house.)

At first, the Valley House seems absurdly long. The entire living area is housed on one level, allowing the low structure to stretch across the northern boundary of the site. It is a concrete tube pointed directly at a spectacular mountain range to the east of the valley. Vaz initially wanted to keep the house that originally existed on the site, but severe dilapidation rendered it physically unusable. The old structure did, however, help to define the eastern end of the Valley House. "The old house was in the best location," he says. It sat up on an embankment with stone retaining walls to the south and north. Stone walls are characteristic of this region, which is known for its dramatic topography and irrigation. ►





The concrete exterior of the house is rough—partly due to the inexperience of a local builder and partly due to the architect's intent—and the rugged finish makes the side of the house look like another retaining wall. With its simple rectangular form, the house has an infrastructural presence in the landscape, making it appear as if the house itself is holding back the steep hill. A rooftop swimming pool sits on a neat rectangular lawn punctuated by concrete chimneys. In this way, the Valley House's integration into the landscape is both fluid and artificial. Vaz's father, however, preferred manicured lawns (served by sprinklers) to the architect's original intention of allowing wild grasses to grow up around the house, which slightly compromises the artificial vs. natural separation that the house is trying to accentuate.

Despite its unconventional planning, the house shares many characteristics of the area's rural architecture of retaining walls, agricultural sheds, and, in particular, the square granite water tanks that stand in the adjoining fields. But it took drafting several plans before Vaz lit upon the house's defining feature: a veranda, inspired by the outdoor spaces accessible to every room on the first level, common to many of the farmhouses in the area. Vaz translated this into the generous corridor that runs along the south façade of the Valley House and is glazed in full-height windows that open completely.

The traditional two-story veranda farmhouse, with animals sheltered on the bottom level, also provides a vernacular rationalization for what looks like a typically modernist entrance sequence: a concealed ground-level garage and an unremarkable staircase leading up to the second story. The depth of the south-facing veranda also serves a functional purpose, allowing the low winter sun to shine in through the leaves of several trees recovering from years of brutal pruning by farmers; during the hot summers, the high sun does not encroach. The veranda is the heart of the Valley House, and every room is accessible from it. Four bedrooms are arranged in two ▸

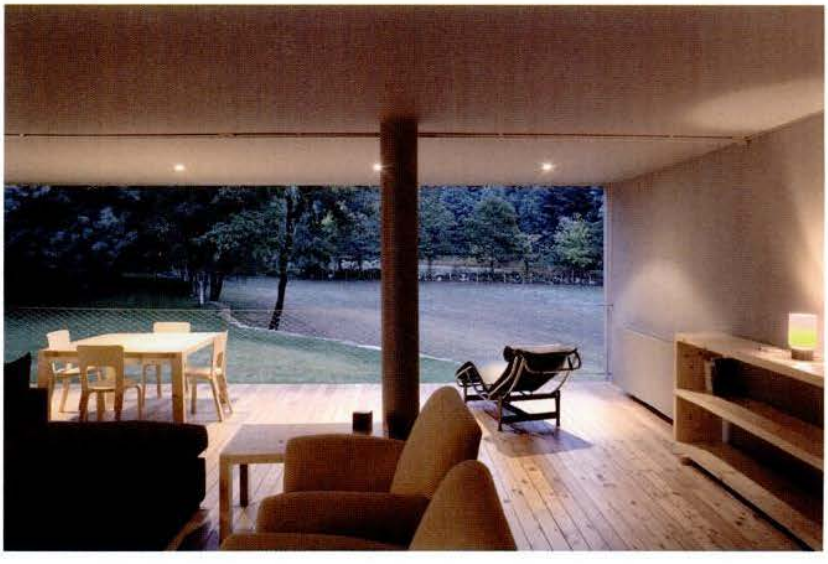
The veranda (opposite) is the Valley House's defining feature and serves as a communal space for the family to sit and enjoy nature. The more traditional rattan furniture fits well with Vaz's local vernacular, as the Portuguese were the first to bring rattan to the West from the East. Despite being meticulously maintained, bits of unruly vegetation find their way onto the house's pristine concrete walls (right).

self-sufficient modules behind doors on the north wall of the veranda; the kitchen sits to the west.

Vaz describes the house as ascetic, and his father as someone who is not much interested in interior decor, and this is reflected in the house's bare neutrality. But this mood belies the gregariousness of the house—the veranda, the pool, and the generous kitchen with its inviting hearth suggest a place of entertaining and communal family life rather than a weekend escape for a loner psychiatrist and his word processor. It feels like it has been made as a place of communality—the bedrooms are all the same and are very modest ("like monks' cells," says Vaz), and when you get up in the morning you wander from your room through a small lobby directly onto the veranda.

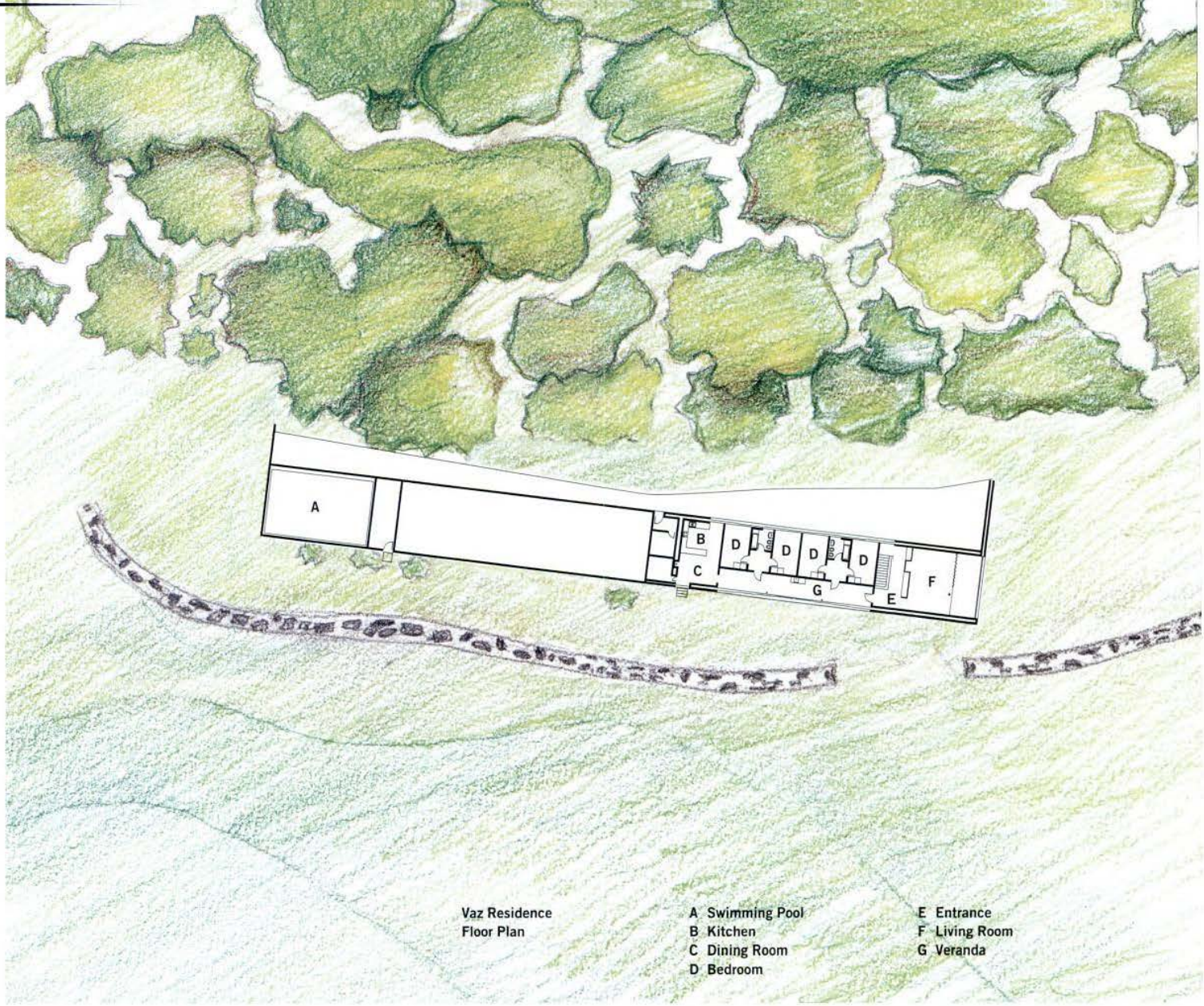
The house does, of course, have this social life too, with Vaz, his wife, and their two sons visiting regularly. But the detail-less interior, the gray, the bare-bulb light fittings (designed by Álvaro Siza), even the Tugendhat House doorframe, make the house feel austere. And yet this is the distinctive character of the place: It has a contemplative interior but a sociable exterior.

An authentic country retreat, the Valley House is designed to be part of its site, but does not pretend to be part of nature. In this respect Vaz has learned much from his former employer, legendary Portuguese architect Eduardo Souto de Moura. It was Souto de Moura and Siza who reintroduced drystone walls to the architecture of the Iberian peninsula, and created a modernism that was rooted in the materials and topography of Portugal. The DNA of this house's architecture is to be found in Siza's Leça da Palmeira swimming pools and Souto de Moura's seminal Casa Bom Jesus, both projects that superimpose concrete on stone, and make nature a place of human inhabitation. Vaz's house, likewise, is a place from which to watch the surroundings, be amongst the sounds of birdsong and the rushing water from nearby rivers, and very probably sip something cold on the veranda while wirelessly connected to the Internet. ■



Vaz's father's restrained aesthetic is carried in the interior design scheme, which is reserved to the point of being austere. The light-colored, knotted wood provides a desirable warmth to the sparsely decorated space, which doesn't in any way aim to compete with the outdoor scenery. Portuguese designer Álvaro Siza's Lorosae pendant lamp (top) bathes the simply furnished kitchen in warm light, and a Le Corbusier chaise lounge (middle) invites guests to relax in front of the stunning panoramic view.

PHOTOS BY LEONARDO FINOTTI (SPREAD)



Vaz Residence
Floor Plan

A Swimming Pool
B Kitchen
C Dining Room
D Bedroom

E Entrance
F Living Room
G Veranda

With its simple rectangular form, the house has an infrastructural presence in the landscape, making it appear as if the house itself is holding back the steep hill.

Photos by Thomas Wrede

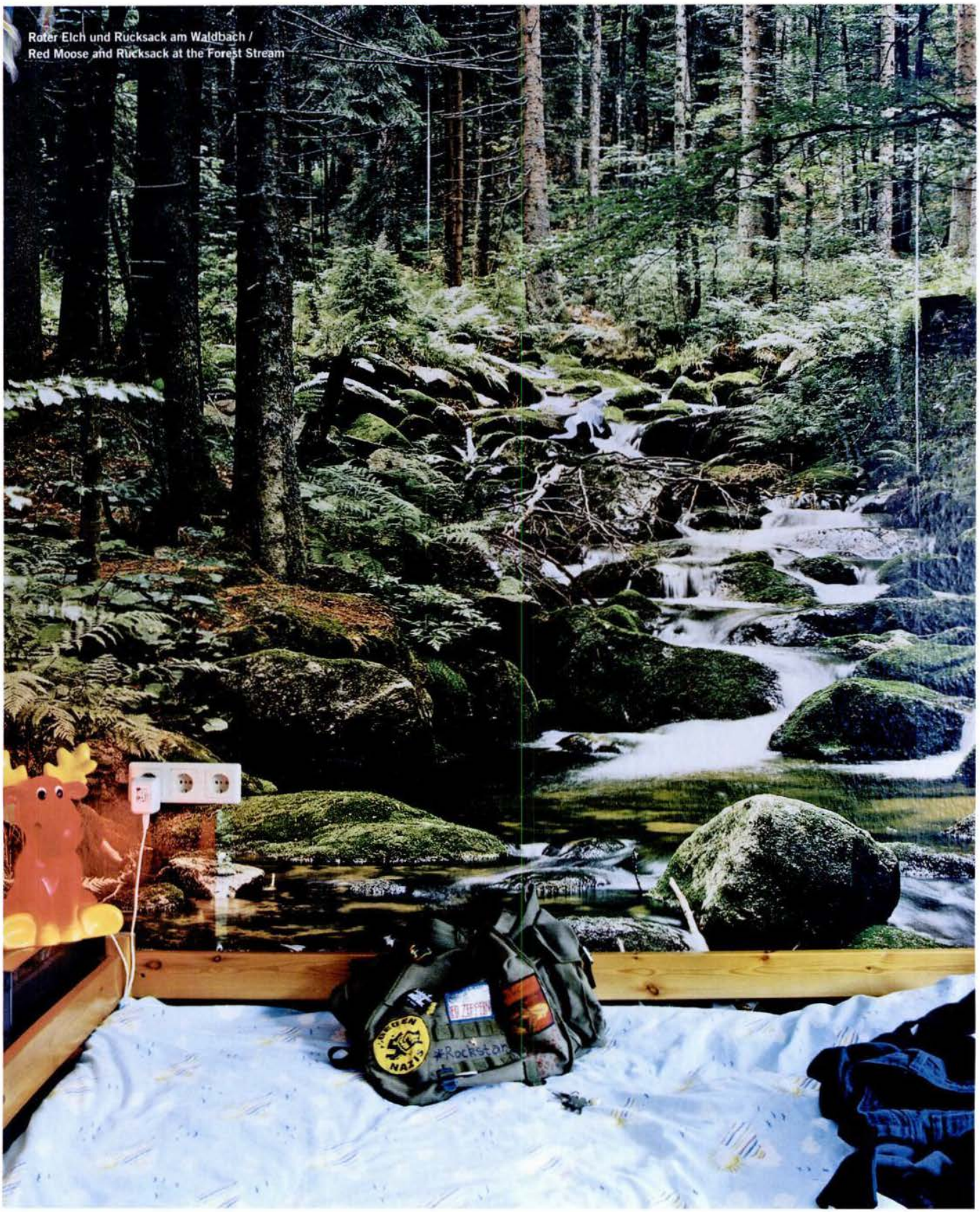
Toiloette am See /
Toilet by the Lake

Walls Gone Wild

For some people, a plastic ficus blurs the boundaries between the real and artificial too much. And then there are those who transplant whole landscapes indoors. In his "Domestic Landscapes" series, photographer Thomas Wrede captures such impulses in various German homes. Although the bosky lawns and alpine meadows exist in the real world, the wallpaper hardly creates the illusion that the toilet is on the lake. What's behind the impulse to bring life-size photos of the outside in?

Kitsch is a pat explanation. While it takes a certain temperament (perhaps the kind that bought velvet paintings in the '70s) to live with the design decision, the choice is both limiting and escapist. The seasons never change, but the depth stimulates the imagination. The desire for variegated pseudonature over 90-degree angles and flat man-made walls smacks of biophilia. It also makes you curious about what's outside of these houses.

While you might not want the wallpaper for your own home, you can appreciate the desire, and the photographs. After all, no one ever called it the Great Indoors. ►



Roter Elch und Rucksack am Waldbach /
Red Moose and Rucksack at the Forest Stream

Gebirgssee mit Stehlampe und Kissen /
Mountain Lake with Floor Lamp and Pillows

Mozart und trinkender Mann vor Herbstlandschaft /
Mozart and Drinking Man in Autumn Landscape

Bett im botanischen Garten /
Bed in the Botanical Garden

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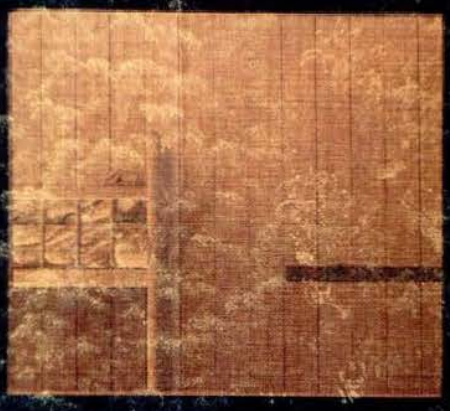
Outdoor Odyssey

An afterthought no longer, residential landscaping is now an integral part of the design process. In the new thinking, it's not just about how rooms interact, it's also about how the house relates to its surroundings—the woods and wetlands, the sky and street. Recent years have seen landscape architects enjoying not only greater creative freedom and reward, but swelling numbers: Enrollment in landscape architecture programs jumped 14 percent between 1997 and 2004, according to the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Once dubbed "smoothers"—because they refined, smoothed, and in some cases vigorously shrubbed the land once the backhoes and hard hats cleared out—many landscapers and landscape architects have moved well beyond the decorative hedge and requisite expanse of Kentucky bluegrass that dominates so much of the domestic landscape. Early modernists worked to open the house up to the outdoors (and subsequently lined Windex's pockets for decades), and landscape architects carry on in that vein, imagining exterior spaces that talk to, describe, and complement what they surround.

"Landscaping is becoming a more valuable medium in people's lives," says Michael Van Valkenburgh, a professor of landscape architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. "It's embraced in a much broader way than it was a few decades ago. Maybe it's an antidote to the world we live in. Whatever the case, it conveys comfort, immediacy, and sensuality."

The following homes came into being with exactly those qualities in mind. ▸



It would be hard to find a house more harmonized with its surroundings than this Swedish summer cottage. Wrapped in a photographic image of the nearby juniper grove, it nearly disappears among the trees.

PHOTOS BY ÅKE E:SON LINDMAN

Juniper House Gotland, Sweden Designed by Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts

When Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts set out two years ago to build a summer home on Gotland, an island south of Stockholm, Alberts's family teased them about spoiling the compound. Her mother and five siblings all have neighboring vacation homes on Gotland, all traditional white stone cottages. Murman and Alberts are architects with adventurous taste and it was clear they would dissent. "Everyone was a little nervous about what we might build," Murman says. "They're afraid of modern architecture."

In mischievous response to the familial concerns, Murman photographed the grove of juniper trees on his site and printed the images on a broad swath of plastic netting, which he then wrapped around three sides of a simple two-bedroom box of oiled pine the couple constructed themselves for $100,000. The netting acts as camouflage, allowing the house to vanish among the trees at dusk.

Graphic trickery aside, the house does make use of its surroundings, particularly the late-summer sunsets. To take advantage of the lingering Scandinavian light, the couple and their three children eat dinners cooked on a woodstove in a kitchen that can be opened wide to the western sky. Extending outdoors from the kitchen is a wooden platform that feels more like a dock than a deck. Murman and Alberts amble out on their maritime deck to meet arriving friends, but because it has no furniture, when they close the sliding doors and withdraw into total privacy, the platform takes on a blank, almost inhospitable character. "When [the sliding doors] are open we're inviting people in," Murman says, "and when they're closed the house is just for us." ▸

The Juniper House on Gotland, a Swedish island retreat for Stockholm residents, has a kitchen and open eating area with a pocket door that slides open so family members can enjoy the long Scandinavian evenings. The deck is unfurnished to promote a docklike feel—and because the chill off the Baltic Sea often inhibits outdoor lounging.

IDEA

Contemporary Extraordinaire — by Pininfarina Design

"Great design should not be reserved for special occasions, but celebrated in everyday life."

Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts built their home from pine (top) cut to exact specifications on the mainland so they could easily assemble it onsite with neighbors and nephews.

A small kitchen (above) affords just enough space for the family. The plastic netting (right) covers three sides of the house, including an outdoor shower, like arboreal exterior wallpaper.

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Curran House San Francisco, California Designed by Andrea Cochran

With its drifters and drug dealers, San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood hardly seems ideal for raising a brood. But given its proximity to downtown jobs, it has become home to a growing number of immigrant families. With that in mind, the nonprofit Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp. set out to bring the benefits of thoughtful design to low-income residents when it built Curran House two years ago.

Considering the 67-unit building's easy access to public transportation—most residents don't own cars—the developer dispensed with onsite parking and with the savings hired landscape architect Andrea Cochran to create what she calls a "decompression garden." A 20-foot palm tree stands like a sentinel at the entrance above a concrete seat wall that extends past the flax ground cover into the glassed-in lobby. "The street tends to be cacophonous and predatory," says Cochran, "but once the gate is closed, you're in a transitional safety zone."

At the rear of the lobby a garage door opens onto a bamboo-edged courtyard where the gurgling of a polished-concrete fountain drowns out the welter of street noise. To further dampen the sirens and screech of the street, and to discourage noisy gatherings or children's wild play, Cochran planted the wings of the courtyard with tree ferns and baby tears.

If the courtyard is for meditation, then the roof deck is for mingling. Dominated by tables, benches, and free-standing planters filled with citrus trees, pomegranates, and kiwi vines, the common space also has 23 galvanized-metal agricultural troughs where residents may grow their own plants and vegetables. "This is where people talk," Cochran says. "This is where people really come together." ▸

The courtyard of a low-income housing development is planted with plovia, ferns, and bamboo (above) to dampen street sounds and to leave no space for grilling or other noisy activities. Residents are invited to use agricultural troughs on the rooftop (left) as their personal planters. The two-tone recycled-wood boxes conceal the ventilation.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN ROSE (ROOFTOP), MARION BRENNER (BENCHES)

Behind Closed Doors

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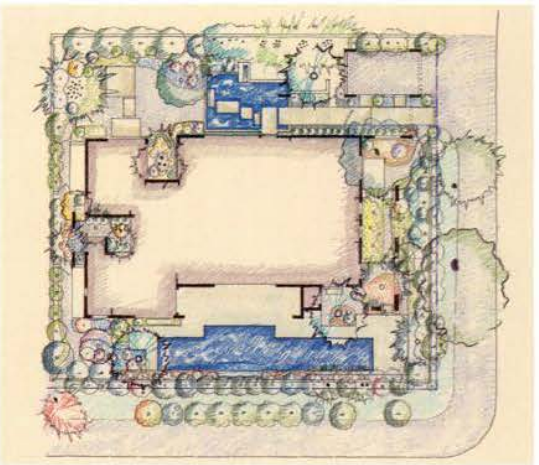
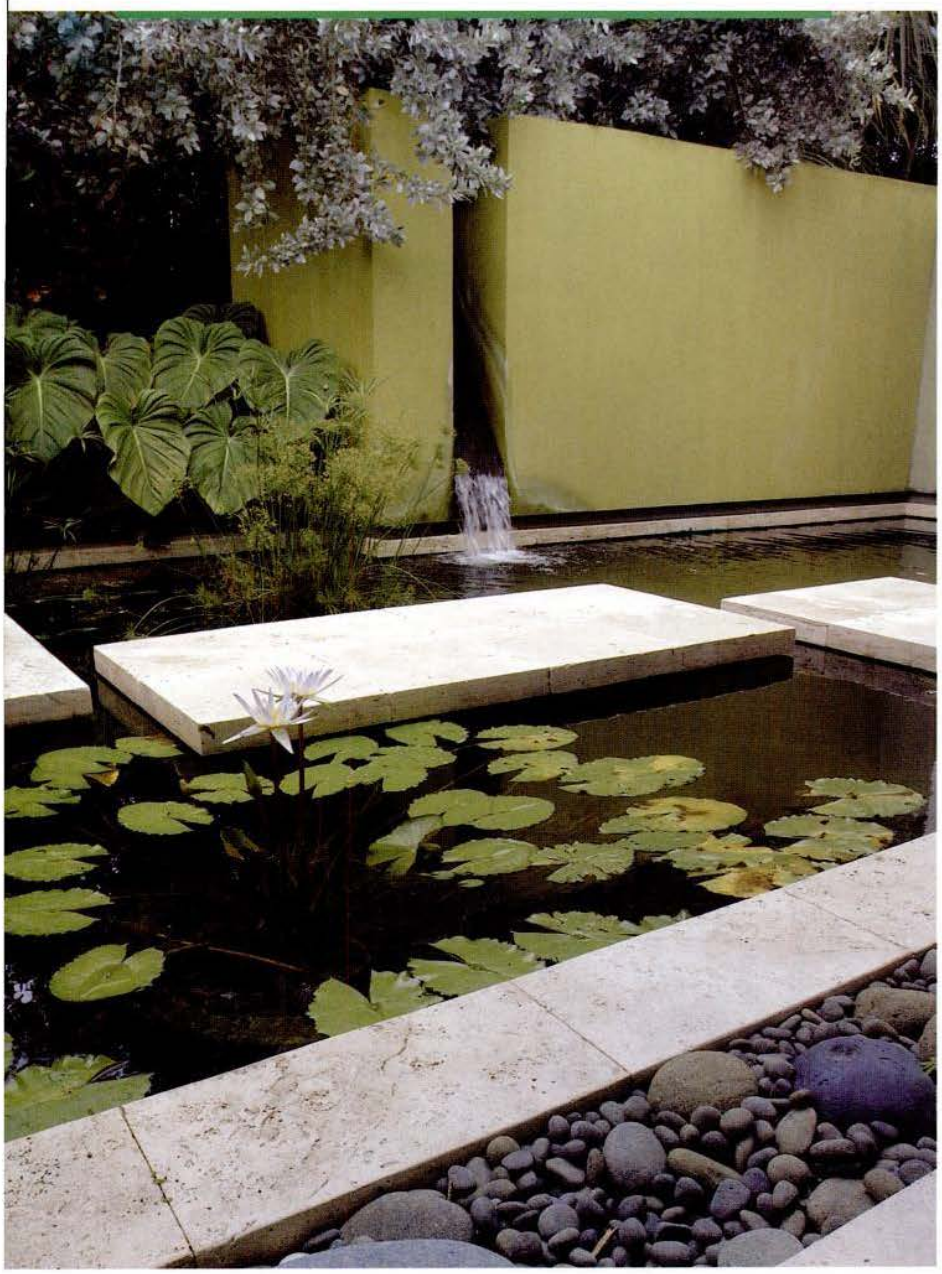
Jones Residence Key West, Florida Designed by Raymond Jungles





The walls of a home sometimes stand well beyond the walls of the house. Such is the case at Susan Henshaw Jones's retreat in Key West, Florida, where the living area spills from an undistinguished 1940s suburban-style house and flows into pocket gardens and toward a pool enclosed by a living wall of dense vegetation and colored panels inspired by Luis Barragán, the godfather of tropical modernism.

"She liked the idea of the living environment extending from property line to property line," says Raymond Jungles, Jones's landscape architect.

To create a sense of containment on the 10,000-square-foot corner lot, Jungles inched the fences in from the property line, and planted a dense screen of Jamaican caper, cinnamon bark, and other native vegetation on either side of them. The effect is of a clearing in the tropical brush with ample sunshine—and enough privacy to free the house of curtains.

The plantings are so thick that visitors might not find their way into the clearing at all if not for a roadside gateway with a vine-covered pergola. Just inside the gateway, a travertine walkway flows like a carpet to the house—pausing to make its way across a shallow pool—and continues on as interior flooring, a detail that helps to blur the border between inside and out.

This home is about the outdoor delights of tropical flora. With that in mind, Jones painted the house an unexceptional shade of white so that it would defer to the garden and a narrow pool, where water cascades from a spout protruding from a chartreuse wall.

The pool is the heart of the house, drawing the family outside with its sounds and reflected light. "Water is a way of keeping open space, like grass, except that it's ephemeral," Jungles says. "It sparkles and trickles." ▸

The suburban home on a corner lot (rendering above) is lined with a dense layer of tropical natives to create the illusion that it resides deep in the bush. To encourage a slow, eventful entrance, visitors approach the house via travertine stepping stones. A burbling fountain splashing in a shallow pool drowns out the sound of passing cars.

PHOTOS BY LANNY PROVO, DRAWING COURTESY RAYMOND JUNGLES

Gamble House
New York, New York
Designed by Kari Elwell Katzander of Mingo Design

The high-ceilinged rooms were in handsome condition when Vernice Gamble, an accountant, bought a brownstone on 136th Street in Harlem to share with her mother. The backyard, by contrast, was a dumping ground of concrete blocks, broken glass, and tree stumps. "It was the worst site conditions I'd ever seen," says Kari Elwell Katzander of Mingo Design, a Manhattan landscaper. "Vernice was horrified to even go back there."

Implausible as it might seem, Gamble hoped to turn the mess into a backyard refuge from the grit and noise of the city, and from the demands of her office life. "She wanted to feel like she was no longer in Manhattan," Katzander says. "She wanted to feel transported to another environment."

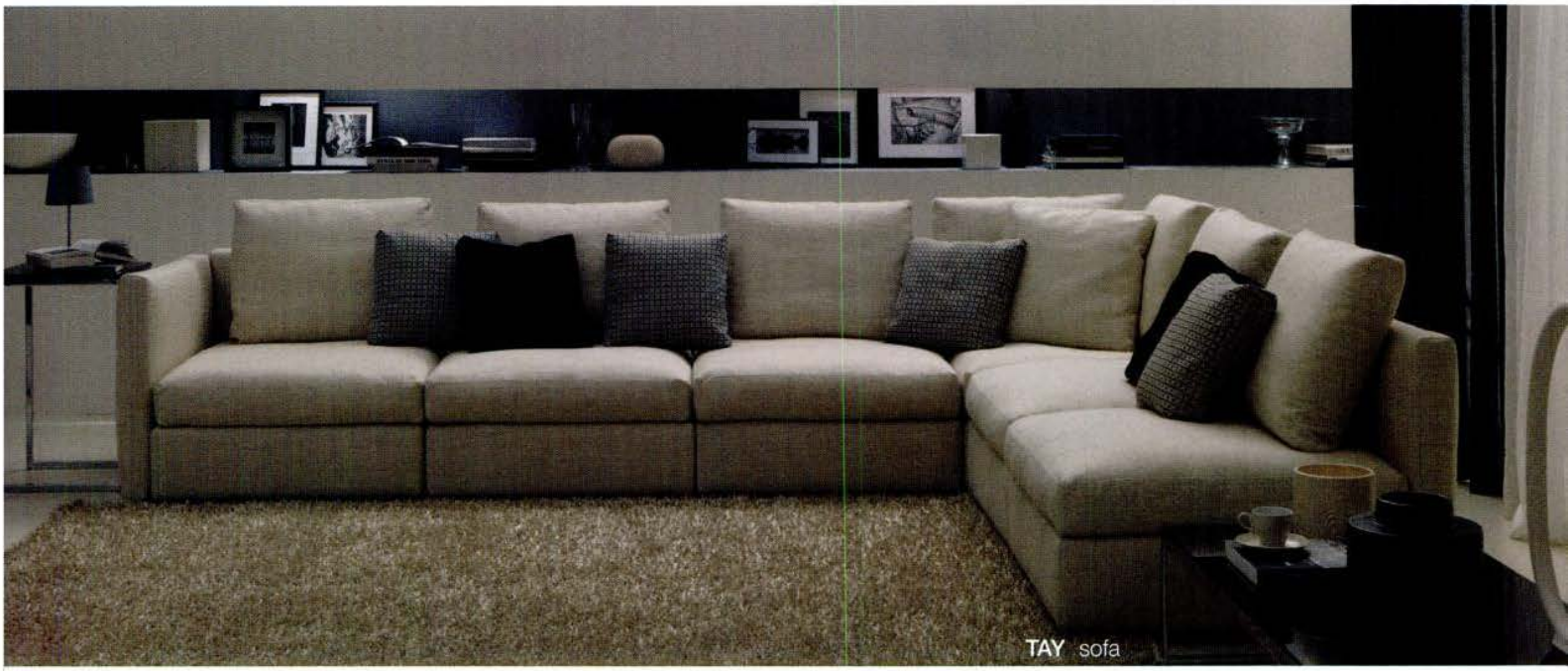
Even without debris, the narrow city yard can be a landscaper's curse. Katzander softened its edges and gave it the illusion of depth with an undulating path of tumbled stones edged with cedar stakes. The curved walk was inspired by the *Great Wave at Kanagawa*, a well-known woodblock print from circa 1832 by the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai. She further borrowed the wood print's deep blue for the garden walls. The curve also had practical benefits: "It gives you the sense of going further back than you actually have," Katzander says. "It's a psychological trick."

Among other things, the twisting path helped create distinct garden areas screened for privacy with Little Leaf Euonymus, a hardy evergreen shrub. Because hundreds of neighboring windows overlook the garden, Katzander enclosed a sitting area with a trellis made of braided stainless steel wire covered in trumpet vine. The result is two outdoor rooms in one small yard: a patio with a view for the daughter and a place at the far end where her mother can leave the city behind. ■

A serpentine path of stones (left) edged with cedar stakes creates the illusion of depth in a constricted Manhattan backyard. Plantings help divide a sociable sitting area under a trellis from a patio for reading under the shade of a canopy rigged like a sail (above). The narrow space now has two theaters of activity to help residents forget the city.

PHOTOS COURTESY MINGO DESIGN

Italian seduction



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Cultivating Appreciation

Sixty years ago it was *Mies*, *Alvar*, and *Lou*. Today it's *Zaha*, *Rem*, and *Renzo*.

I've spent most of my adult life in a state of low-grade irritation over the tendency to call our leading architects by their first names, as if they were movie stars, while landscape architects go unnoticed.

I can't resist dropping references to Dan (Kiley) or Larry (Halprin) at cocktail parties. What do I get in response? Nada.

Thomas Church, the California landscape architect, once said that he and his peers were often dismissed as "parsley around the roast." Over the past 25 years I have visited no fewer than 1,600 locations that collectively represent the story of landscape architecture in America. It's not parsley.

I founded the Cultural Landscape Foundation nine years ago to teach Americans how to see landscape architecture, and to value it as they do art and architecture. I've been called a crusader of forgotten places and the Johnny Appleseed of landscape preservation.

For someone who has devoted his life to saving endangered landscapes, I grew up in an unlikely place: the postwar suburb of Bayside, Queens.

My earliest exposure to gardens and grounds came on weekend trips to my grandparents' home in New London, Connecticut, where I helped them garden among prodigious beds of black-eyed susans and hydrangeas. While planting tomatoes there when I was about eight years old I uncovered a Moxie pop bottle that had been tilled under some 40 years earlier. It was my first brush with landscape archaeology, the field of remembrance and conservation. I still have that bottle tucked away in my kitchen.

I could scarcely ignore the residue of history even if I'd wanted to. At every turn, my parents dragged my sister and me to Colonial Williamsburg, and virtually every other restoration village on the East Coast. I took my seat in the family's Chevy Impala under protest. "I don't need to see yet another lady in period garb making a candle," I told them. ▸

Like it or not, I absorbed the history lessons, and I retained them with a memory so exceptional it qualified me as something of an oddity. Even as a five-year-old, I could beat grown-ups at elaborate memory games.

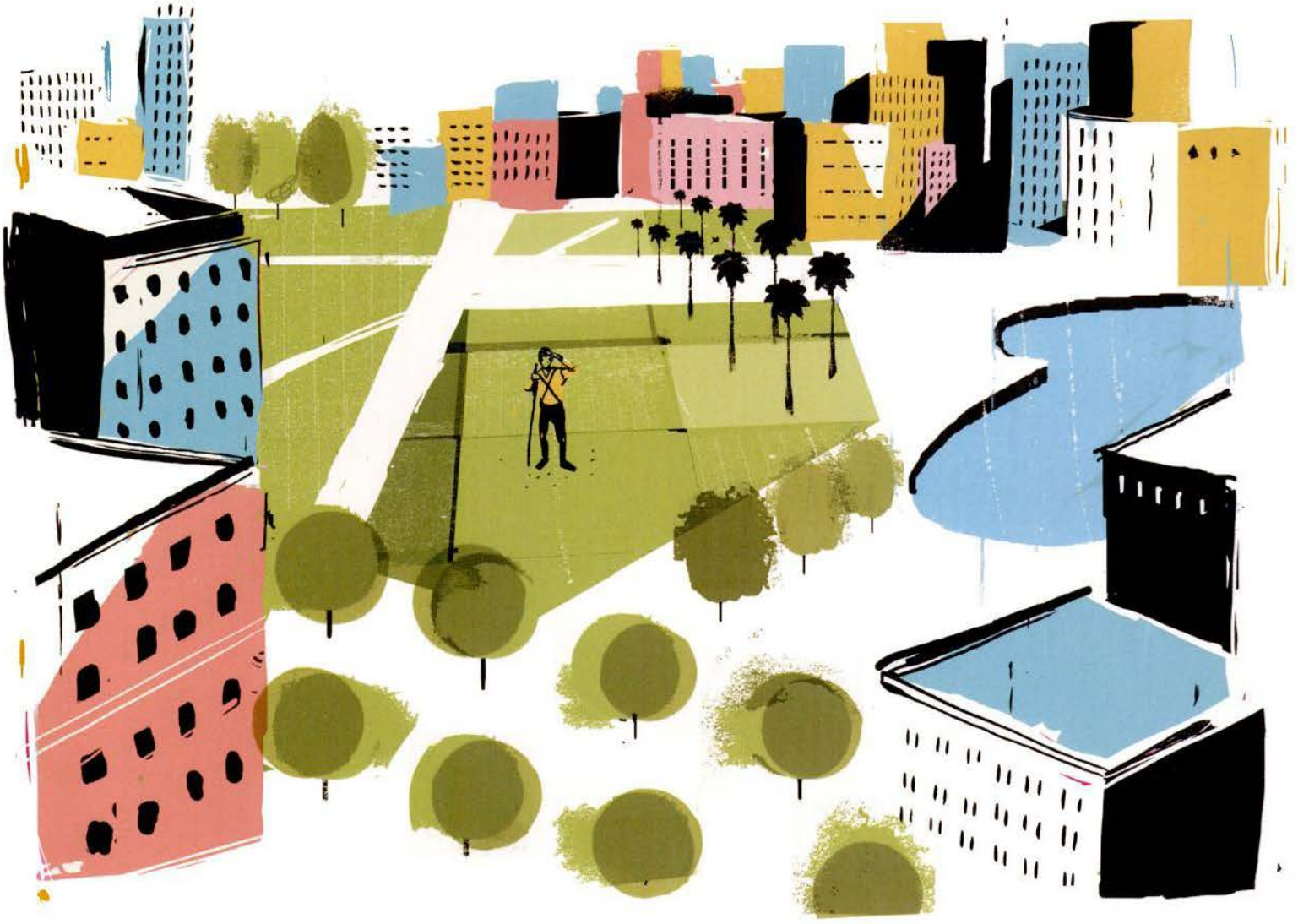
These powers of retention serve me well in the field, where I work to raise awareness of a community's landscape heritage. I visit cities with endangered landscapes 80 or so times a year, and it always astonishes me how much of the history is lost. As the bulldozers rev, I engage in a flurry of emergency meetings with local landmark officials (who are most accustomed to dealing with buildings) and city officials (who inevitably see landscapes as voids to be filled). All the while I'm rallying residents, feeding quotes to the press, and taking hundreds of photographs for the foundation's archive.

I'm part scholar, part grassroots agitator. Unfortunately, it often falls to me to play the heavy, so the local preservationists can stay on good terms with elected officials. I can intimidate if I have to. The days of capitulation are over; if we care about a place, we have to step up.

Naturally, these encounters can be emotional, and I try not to add to the heat. On the contrary, I do my best to convey my love for these places—parks and plazas, gardens and cemeteries—and I hope it proves infectious.

As a culture, we've learned to "see" architecture and form opinions about it. Landscapes are subtler. The artist Sol LeWitt once said that "successful ideas generally have the appearance of simplicity." So it is with the best landscapes: When trees and lawn, forest and field are manipulated successfully, the hand of the landscape architect is all but invisible. My challenge is to educate a community about a place so that it can be judged on its history, not just its appearance.

Of course, I've suffered my share of setbacks and disappointments. I wept in 1994 when the 150-year-old hemlocks at the Springside estate in Poughkeepsie, New York, the only surviving work by Andrew Jackson Downing, died after years of disease, neglect, and encroaching development. And I was badly shaken by the demolition last year of Lawrence Halprin's sculpture garden at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond and by the loss of the grid of palms and crape myrtles ▸



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designed by Dan Kiley at NationsBank Plaza in Tampa, Florida. Ironically, museum expansions destroyed both. They were not places loved or understood by most people, but I would have fallen on my sword to save them.

You'd think that prominent architects would show their support, but that's often not the case. The proposed renovation by Daniel Libeskind of Civic Center Park in Denver, Colorado, would destroy one of the great public spaces produced by the City Beautiful in the early part of the 20th century.

Fortunately, for every NationsBank Plaza there is a gem still to be found. A few years ago I drove around Woodside, California, with Marc Treib, an architectural historian, looking for some of the surviving gardens by Thomas Church. One of the highlights of the day was an impromptu stop at a home designed in 1950 by William Wurster with a garden by Church. For years I'd admired a photograph of the garden in Church's 1955 book, *Gardens Are for People*. I had to see for myself what was left of it.

We arrived unannounced and rang the doorbell. The owner invited us in, and to my surprise he unrolled blueprints of the garden. He knew nothing of Church, but was delighted to learn about him. When we stepped into the backyard, I did what my friends call my happy dance—a soft-shoe version of *Riverdance*.

Miraculously, the garden was intact and had matured to fulfill Church's intentions. The two original oaks, now majestic, crowned the central lawn and the sweeping pedestrian path, with its neatly clipped hedge border, was still razor crisp. Church's signature pavilion—a steel-framed structure with a wood slat roof—cast dappled light on cascading begonias and campanulas that called to mind players in a Busby Berkeley musical. Fifty years later it was still beautiful, simple, and functional.

I can never linger too long in places like that. There are thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of significant landscapes threatened by development. So I move on quickly, in hopes that I can save them from a quiet and ignoble death. ■

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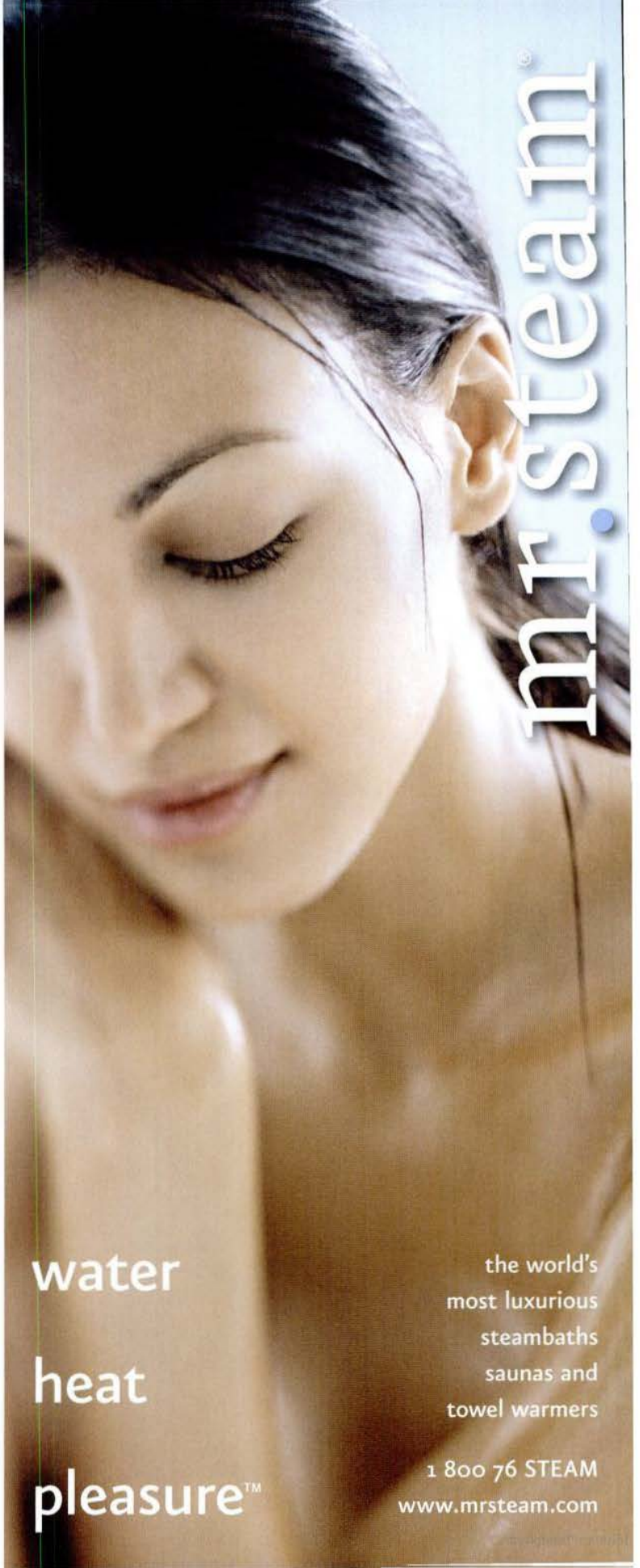


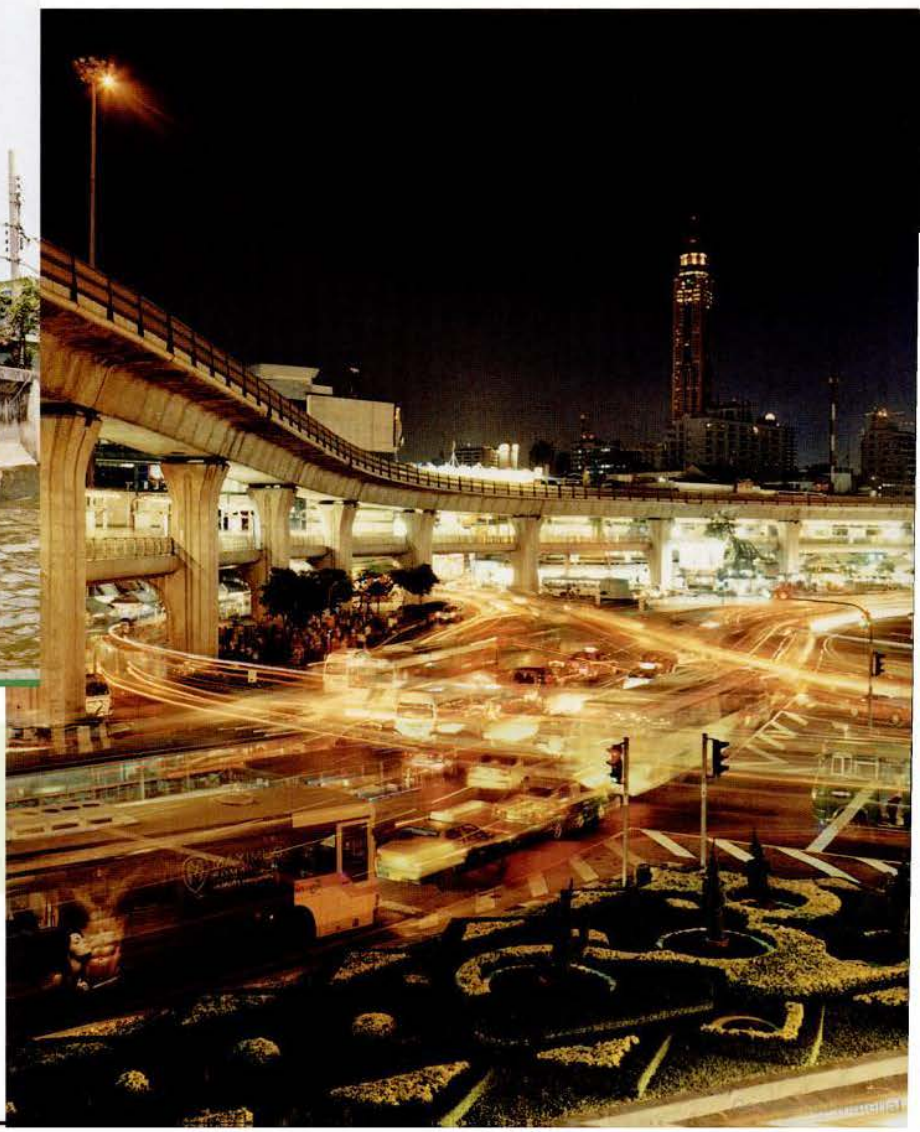
Story by Ron Gluckman

Photos by Dave Lauridsen

The Bangkok Beat

For years, Bangkok has served as an eye-opening introduction to the splendors of the Orient. Locals call it Krung Thep, or City of Angels, and that isn't its only similarity to America's Los Angeles. Unlike Hong Kong or New York—dense, modern cities with well-defined skylines and central cores—Bangkok is a sprawling, chaotic place that sometimes seems to lack any focus or order. The sense of mayhem is only amplified by the noise, bustle, and teeming traffic, common to cities across Southeast Asia. Yet this metropolis of 10 million is a warm, welcoming gateway to the Land of Smiles. And it's increasingly more livable. The BTS, an overhead monorail, offers great views over the city, and the underground MRT subway makes navigation a cinch. Always ranked among the world's best shopping cities, with scores of home-design and crafts emporiums, Bangkok has in recent years amped up its nightlife offerings and plays host to a vibrant arts scene.

All of this is well documented in *Bangkok 101*, the city's hippest and most up-to-date visitor's guide. Its publisher, Mason Florence, typifies Bangkok's increasingly international profile. Articulate and enthusiastic, Florence bristles with energy and ideas. Born in New York, schooled in Boston and Colorado, he has been a writer, a ski instructor, a tour leader, and a rodeo cowboy. But his first love is photography. After living for a dozen years in Japan, where he co-founded and still runs the Chiiori Project, which is dedicated to restoring a historic rural farmhouse, Florence covered Japan and Vietnam for the Lonely Planet guide-book series. He moved to Bangkok in 2003, and a year later, opened Gallery F-Stop, Bangkok's first photography-only exhibition center. ▸



Traditional Thai homes can be spotted from the river and are best seen from one of Bangkok's many canal tours (below left). The city's bustling nightscape is captured from a footbridge at the Victory Monument (below right). A guide strolls across a footbridge outside of one of the buildings at Kukrit House (opposite).

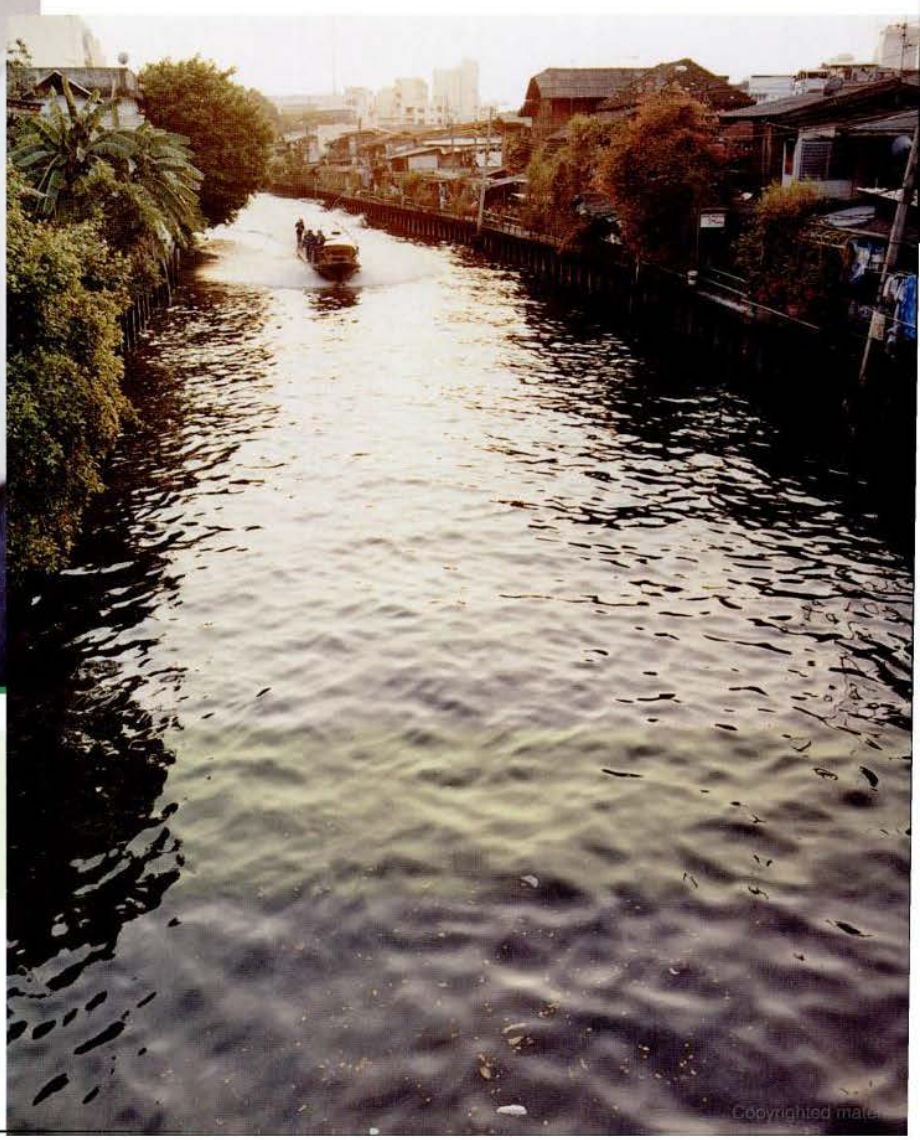
Mason Florence (below left) poses for a photograph inside the Tamarind Café, the restaurant he runs in conjunction with his Gallery F-Stop. A water "taxi" glides languidly down the canal (below right).

What's the buzz about Bangkok?
Bangkok was a regular stopover for me for years when I was researching guidebooks on Japan and Vietnam. My threshold for the city back then was really just a few days—it was congested, teeming, crazy. But the more trips I made, the more it grew on me, and I was always discovering something new. It didn't take long, actually, for it to go from stopover to the place I knew I wanted to live in.

Where do you go to soak up the essence of Bangkok?
The river. I've always loved that piece of Bangkok history, when it was the "Venice of the East." There are still remnants of that today, a vibrancy—cafés and cool new small hotels, where you can sit and watch the boats go by, ferries, rice barges, and tourist boats.

One of my favorite places to take it in is from the Deck, a Thai-French restaurant at Arun Residence, a five-room Sino-Portuguese boutique hotel perched right on the river's edge, directly across from the Temple of the Dawn [Wat Arun]. There's a very cool bar upstairs, and you can hang out there and watch the sun go down. And there are trips down the side *klongs* [canals] where you can see the local scene. The river has a life to it; it unfolds in different ways everywhere you go.

The most stunning views of the river and city are from the rooftops of the Dome at State Tower, and the Banyan Tree hotel. When I'm entertaining visitors, I always take them up the 60-plus floors of one of these places, keep them talking, then watch their faces as they step out onto the open terrace to an amazing 360-degree view of the city. Unlike similar experiences in other cities, ►



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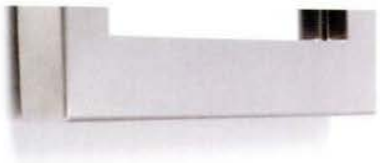

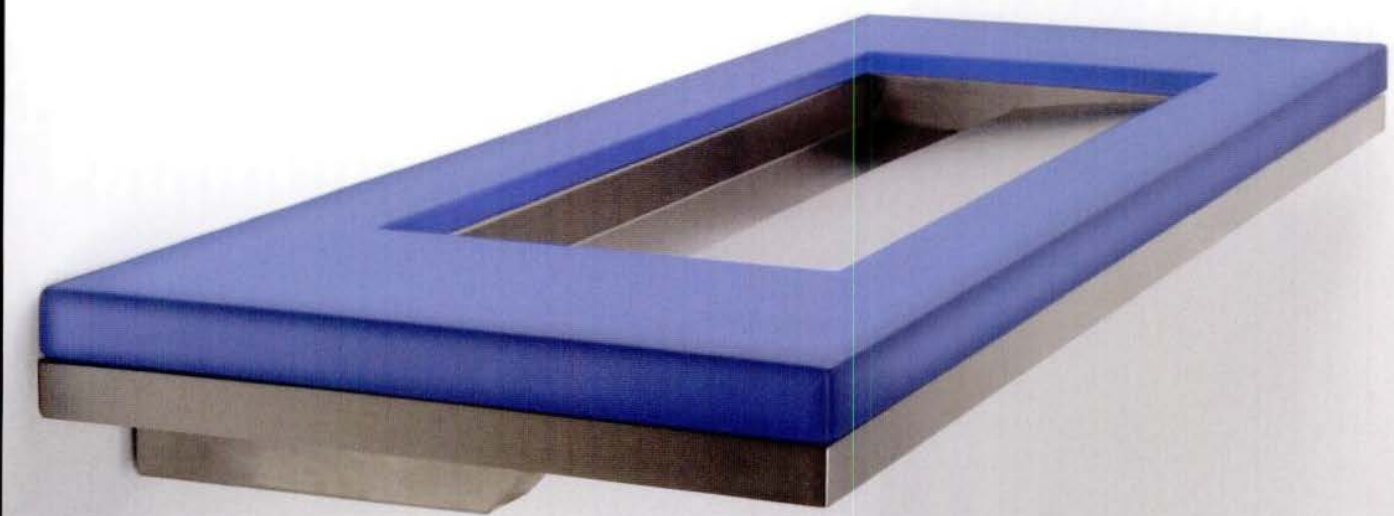

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The outdoor environs of a temple and "spirit house" near the Marble Temple (Wat Benchamabophit) (below left). Perhaps the most sweetly named mode of transportation, a group of Tuk Tuks park outside the Grand Palace (below right).

there's no towering Plexiglas, no huge barriers except for a waist-high railing. The view is enveloping and exhilarating.

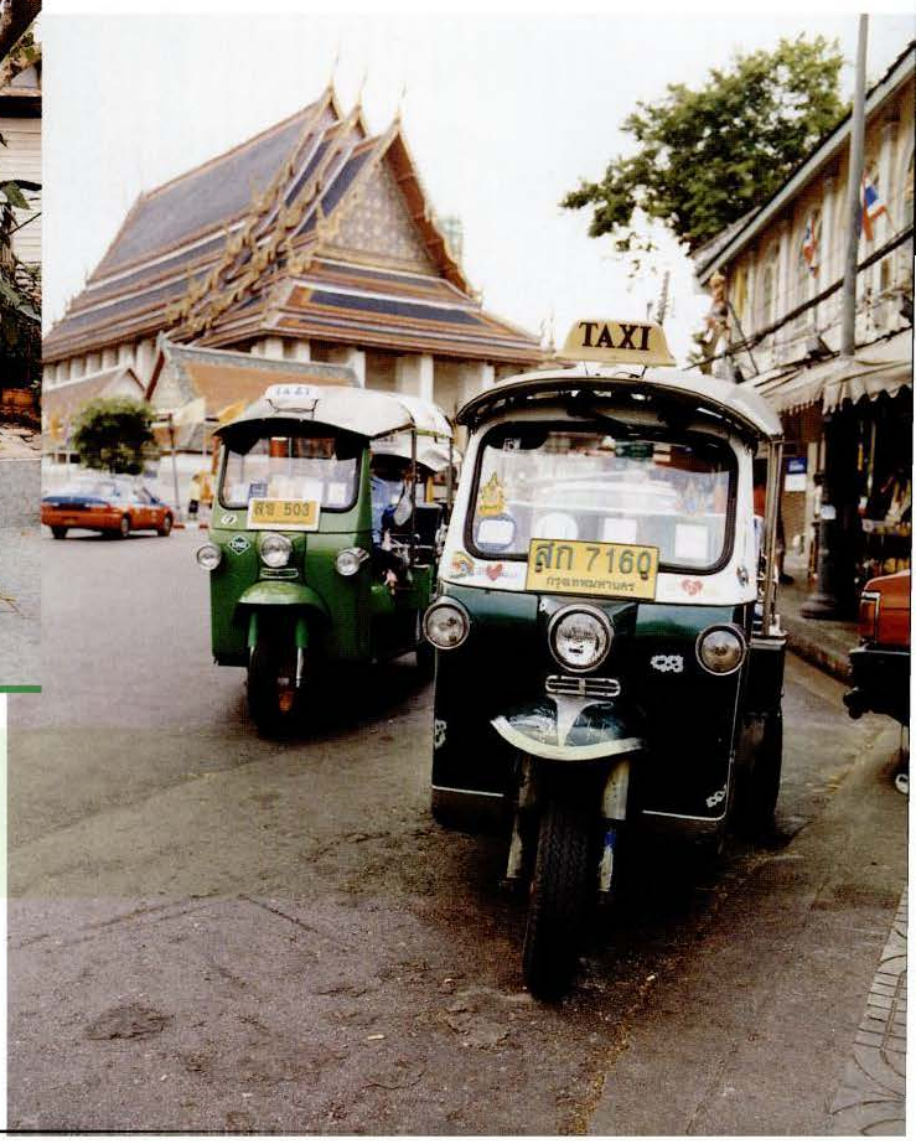
What about street-level action?

Bangkok's markets are great places to get lost; it's happened to me many times. For visitors, it can be intimidating to confront Jatujak [also called Chatuchak, or Weekend Market], for example. It's thousands of square feet of stalls and objects from housewares to antiques and ethnic crafts to flowers, fashion, or aquarium fish—it's Grandma's attic meets handicraft village, but on a massive scale. You really need a map. Nancy Chandler's printed and web-based maps are indispensable.

But Jatujak is also much more than a market, it's a complete neighborhood, with its own restaurants and bars; it's a local scene. It wasn't designed for tourists, but it's something tourists definitely want to experience. And it's just one of Bangkok's many markets.

Bangkok's arts scene seems to be maturing. Would you agree?

Cynics might say, "What art scene?" There's no gallery row in this city, no Chelsea or Greenwich Village. But there is great art here. The closest thing to an art area is around Silom Road, where the gallery movement has also contributed to the mounting effort toward historical restoration. H Gallery is in an old wooden schoolhouse, while the Kathmandu Photo Gallery, run by one of Thailand's most famous photographers, Manit Sriwanichpoom, is run out of a beautifully restored shop house. La Lanta Fine Art is an art gallery in Baan Silom, a very ►



Bangkok, Thailand

Patrons survey the photography on display at the Playground lifestyle mall (below left) and the Kathmandu photo gallery (below right).

hip new colonial-style complex. Another Silom-area institution is Eat Me Art Restaurant, which has, in addition to fantastic food, outstanding exhibits.

How about museums?

Of course, there's the Jim Thompson House, which is practically a cliché, but it's a great gallery with educational, interactive exhibits that cover the history of silk production in Thailand. The house alone is reason enough to visit. Other local standouts include Suan Pakkad Palace, M. R. Kukrit's house, and Baan Khamthieng at the Siam Society; all are in stunning, classically designed, traditional Thai buildings.

The National Museum is definitely worth a long look. The new Thailand Creative & Design Center is amazing, showcasing the cutting edge of modern Thai design. Another distinct Bangkok trend is the growth of "lifestyle malls"—small, uniquely designed plazas that have high-end clothing, home furnishings, gadgets, and toys in addition to artists' space, like Playground and the Third Place in the Thong Lo area.

Tell us about your own Gallery F-Stop.

The concept is really simple: We exhibit photographs. When I came to Bangkok, I was astonished to find there was not a single gallery devoted to photography. It's amazing when you find out how many great, world-renowned photographers work or live here.

It came together in a funny way. Some friends found this place for a café and wanted to do something with the walls. I'd been wanting to do my own photo gallery since I'd lived in Japan. I had the designer and the architect—I even had the name, ▸

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High design is played out in Bangkok's dining scene: a quiet moment in the lounge area at To Die For, a restaurant at H1 (below left), and the exterior of the Bed Supperclub (below right).

Gallery F-Stop, in mind. When I saw this café, it all just clicked.

I organize the shows, and the gallery is open to anything. We've had both Thai and foreign photographers, and a wide range of subject matter. It can be modern, landscape, street scenes, nudes, whatever. As long as it's a unique view coming through the lens.

Where do you eat?

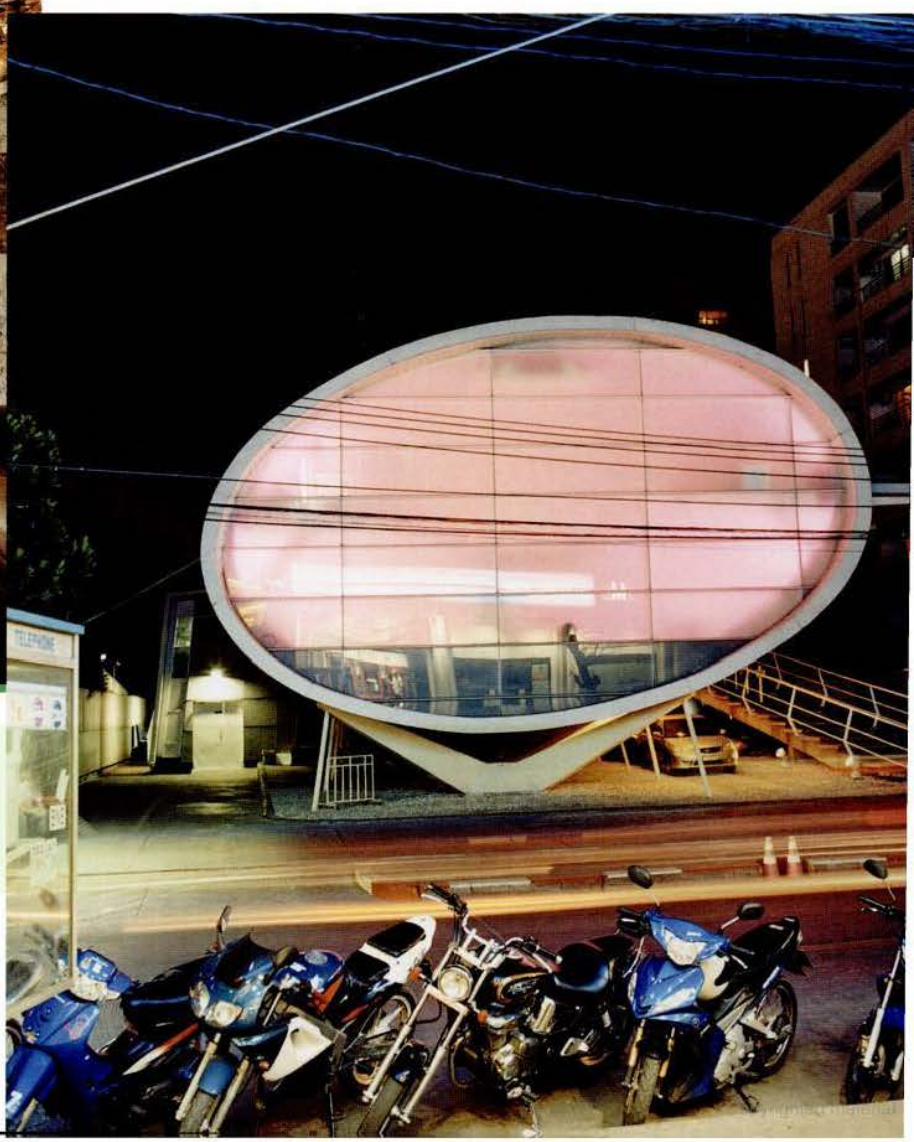
Before I came here, I was much slimmer. Now, I eat with Thai people and like Thai people—that is, 24 hours a day. Everyone who lives here will tell you the food here is irresistible. You have everything from amazing street food to Blue Elephant and Ruen Mallika, which both serve royal cuisine [traditional cuisine of the highest quality and richest ingredients, fit for the kings].

There's Le Lys, run by a French-Thai couple, which is a Bangkok mainstay for Thai comfort cuisine. It's in an old house with a fantastic, homey atmosphere where Ricard-sipping cliques gather after work for rounds of *pétanque* [French lawn bowling].

Then there's the uber-hip Bed Supperclub, where you can feast on innovative dishes while sprawled across white, fluffy couches. The building alone must be seen—a large, white, tube-shaped spaceship.

I'm a regular at Eat Me, which has amazing, fresh dishes, and La Villa, an Italian restaurant in a white hacienda near Thong Lo, run by Roberto Ferrin. He's a real character who greets customers with lines like "Tonight, we have some serious clams."

There are so many choices, spanning the cuisine of many different countries, that ▸



Bangkok, Thailand

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Your Mobile Expectations: BMW H2R Project

Since 1975, BMW has been participating in an experiment, the merging of technology and art. What began as an idea in the mind of French auctioneer and race car driver Herve Poulain, developed into a 16-car collection. The BMW Art Cars reflect the cultural-historical development of art, design, and technology and have been exhibited in museums around the world.

Olafur Eliasson, one of the most significant figures in contemporary art, has been commissioned to design the 16th BMW Art Car. With this assignment, Eliasson transforms a technological milestone, the BMW H2R, with which the BMW Group is pursuing its vision of sustained mobility based on the regenerative production of hydrogen as a fuel of the future.

The exclusive preview of the 16th BMW Art Car by internationally acclaimed artist, Olafur Eliasson, will take place at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Architecture and Design department. The presentation of the BMW Art Car, coinciding with a full-scale travelling survey of Olafur's works (which, among other places, will be shown at the Museum of Modern Art, New York), is displayed within the exhibition "Your Tempo: Olafur Eliasson" and has been titled by the artist *Your Mobile Expectations: BMW H2R Project*.

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Seeking respite from the hot Bangkok weather? The pool at the Eugenia hotel offers a quiet place to relax after a day of touring the city.

when it comes time to do the "Hot Plates" section of *Bangkok 101* every month, we're hard-pressed to focus on one restaurant.

How about a good place for a drink?
Q Bar is jammed with people but maintains a cool atmosphere year after year. The rooftop bars I mentioned are always good.

One of my favorite hideaways is Café Trio, a stylish, art-filled bar with low couches, chill tunes, and Patti—Bangkok's most gregarious hostess. Definitely not on the tourist path. (Take the alley to the right of the unnamed Chinese restaurant on Langsuan.)

For late nights, it's Wong's Place. This pub stays open as long as you are there and has the most amazing collection of old music videos. It's the thinking man's dive—you just help yourself to drinks, and pay when you leave.

What about a good place to stay?
There are plenty of stylish hotels sprouting up. Soi 31 is turning into a boutique hotel hot spot, with the Eugenia already established and a new place, Seven, just opening. Seven is a strikingly tall, narrow town house with a hip, modern revamp. Each room represents a different day of the week, which in the Thai tradition means that each has its own unique color.

Have you discovered any secret places to find the real Bangkok?
My advice to visitors is to go to the river, hop on a boat, and just ride up and down and look at everything. Then, jump off. It doesn't matter where, because as soon as you do, you will be swallowed up in all this fantastic atmosphere of activity and great aromas. Just wander around. ■

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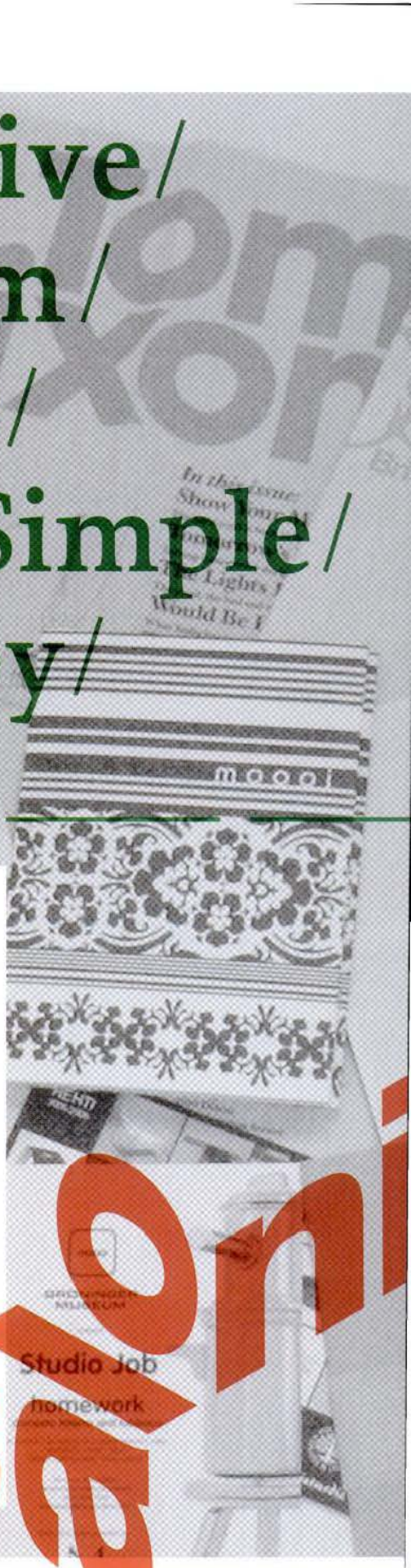
The strange and enchanting juxtaposition of larger-than-life iconography and mundane technology is, in Mason Florence's estimation, best glimpsed from a canal tour.

Bangkok, Thailand

Story by Sam Grawe

Blobby/Destructive/Folded/Gigantism/Limited Editions/Perforated/Real Simple/Structural/Trippy/Twisted/Ugly

Milan's Design Week is a veritable fireworks display: a blitzkrieg of showy blasts that either leave your ears ringing or fade quickly into the night. With hundreds of exhibitions sprawled over the city, and over 3.5 million square feet of tradeshow floor to cover, it's virtually impossible to see it all. Despite the scale, or perhaps due to it, there is an air of exhilaration and palpable sense of zeitgeist—word-of-mouth spreading among exhibitors, designers, and journalists as to the must-sees and don't-bothers. Amidst a flurry of almost-24-hour activity, there's usually something critical missed, new pieces from the expected cartel (pun intended) of brand-name designers, fresh surprises from newcomers, and the tipping point where tired feet trump another party. Back at the office, and faced with the monumental task of compiling a recap, we took a cue from our local record store, and decided to divide this year's offerings into genres of our own devising.



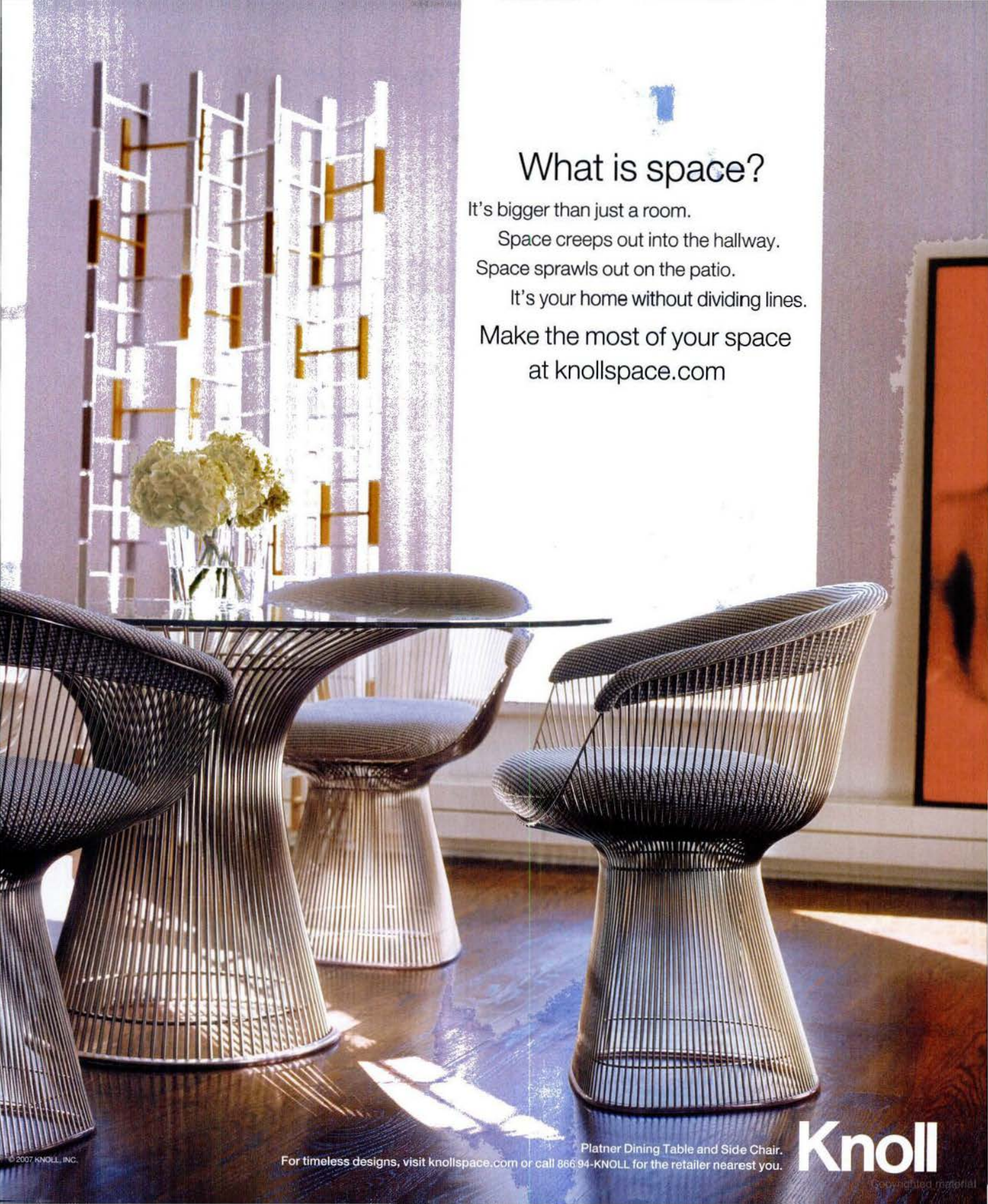
Plus:
Tokujin x Moroso
Helsinki Hotel
Artek Pavilion

PHOTO BY GEOFFF HALBER

Blobby

One suspects that the arrival of the unapologetically boxy Scion xB would have heralded the blobject's final chapter, but, just like in the sci-fi tale, these blobs don't go away easily. New designs from Inga Sempé, Patricia Urquiola, and Monica Forster prove that men aren't the only ones who appreciate good curves.

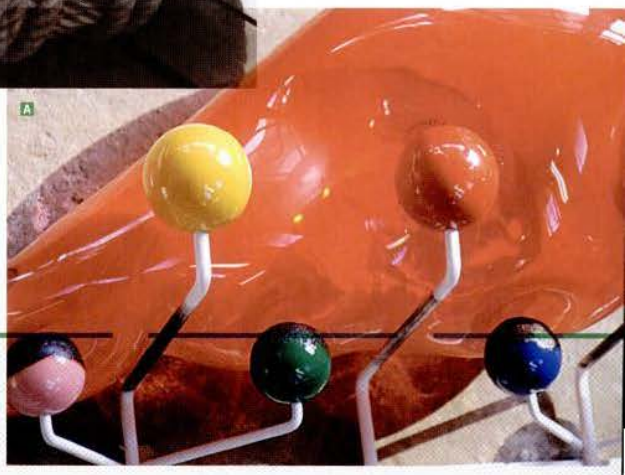
A Chantilly / By Inga Sempé for Edra
B Fat / By Patricia Urquiola for B&B Italia
C Esedra / By Monica Forster for Poltrona Frau



Destructive

Sometimes in order to create, you must first destroy. Maarten Baas (who blowtorched his way to fame) is the one to thank for this trend. It takes a certain amount of indifference (and the right safety gear) to employ these methods, but the results can be astounding—if not merely interesting.

A Vitra "Infected" by Crystal Virus / By Pieke Bergmans
B Meltdown / By Tom Price



Folded

Given the recent popularity of faceting just about everything, emphasizing the folded seams of an object seems like the natural next step, and—in some cases—offers the added dimension of functionality.

A Bent / By Christophe de la Fontaine and Stefan Diez for Moroso
B Clip chair / By Blasius Osko and Oliver Deichmann for Moooi

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Gigantism

We doubt there's an Italian phrase for "Can I super-size that?" but the language barrier didn't stop anyone from going big. At Bisazza Home, Studio Job amped the kitsch factor with a silver tile–encrusted tea service, while Jaime Hayon's installation was dominated by a reclining harlequin. Starck's enormous vases for Kartell reminded us of a 21st-century version of the ancient pithoi found at the Palace of Knossos.

A Basket / By Studio Job for Bisazza Home
B Misses Flower Power / By Philippe Starck with Eugeni Quitllet for Kartell
C The Pixel Ballet / By Jaime Hayon for Bisazza Home

PHOTO BY VINCENZO PATRUNO (THE PIXEL BALLET)

door

window

cabinet

grips

sinks

faucets

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Jane lever shown on Designer Collection escutcheon with white leather. UJ lever shown on Metro Collection escutcheon

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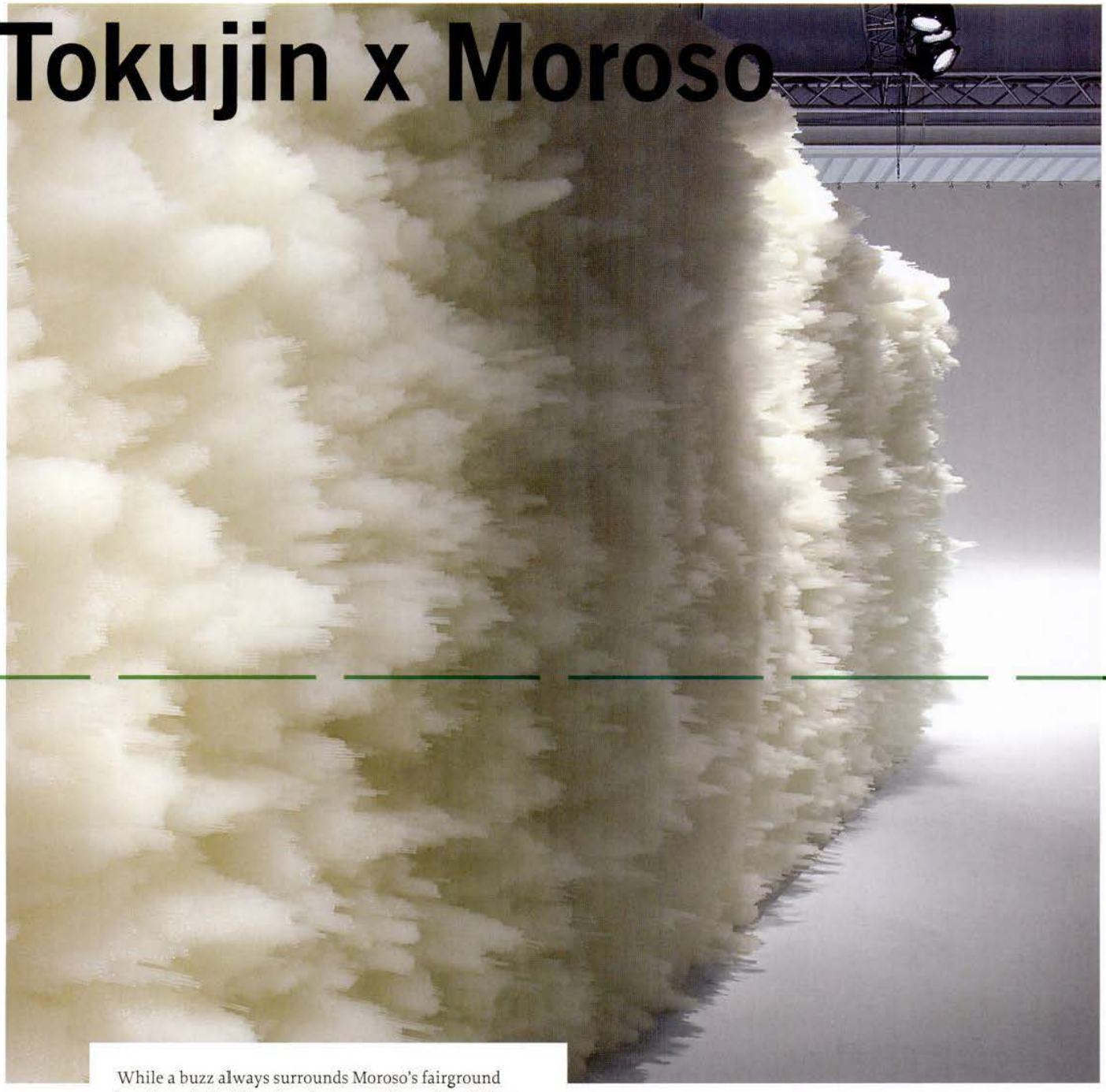
Tokujin x Moroso

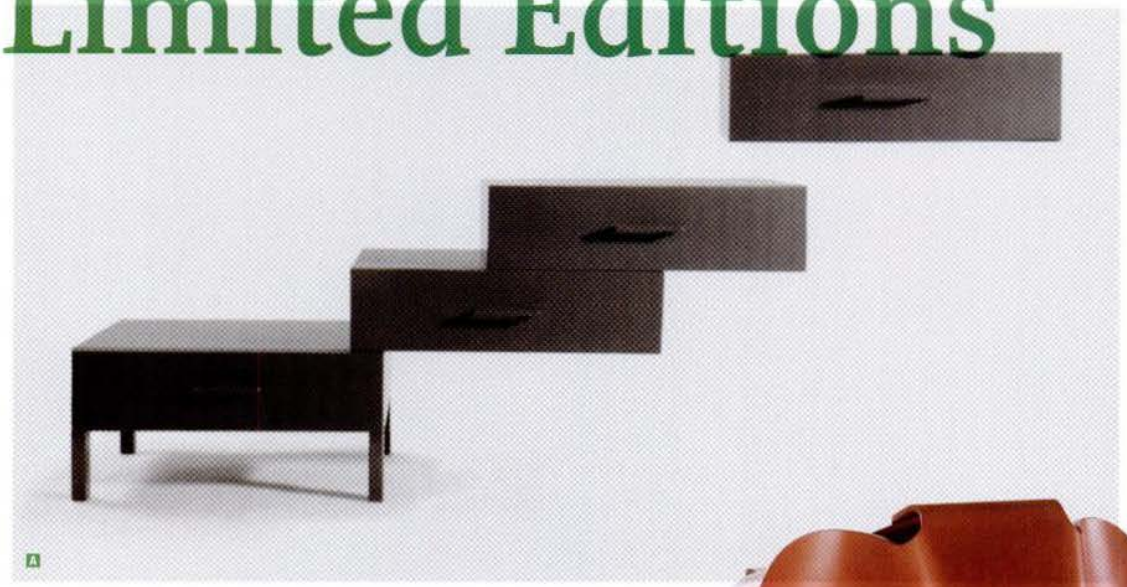


While a buzz always surrounds Moroso's fairground booth packed with a dizzying array of new furnishings, their downtown showroom on Via Pontaccio offered a singular vision that was equally enthralling. The installation by Tokujin Yoshioka, an elaborate stage set devised for the introduction of his Panna chair, was constructed from a mind-boggling three-million-plus translucent plastic straws. Stacked into glacial Kryptonesque walls or strewn into monumental pick-up-stick piles, the otherwise banal fast-food object took on an otherworldly appearance, and left us dazzled (not to mention thankful we weren't part of the construction crew).

Limited Editions

Designing for the masses is evidently outdated. Spurred on by the popularity of events such as Design Miami and Art Basel, design out of reach is in. The finest pieces were to be found at the Rossana Orlandi Gallery, which included an installation of the latest work from Front. Vitra found a pachydermic way to celebrate Charles Eames's 100th. And retailer extraodinaire Moss presented more work from Studio Job.

A Divided / By Front
B Plywood elephant / By Charles and Ray Eames for Vitra
C Glide / By Amanda Levete for Established & Sons
D Homework / By Studio Job for Moss and Groninger Museum



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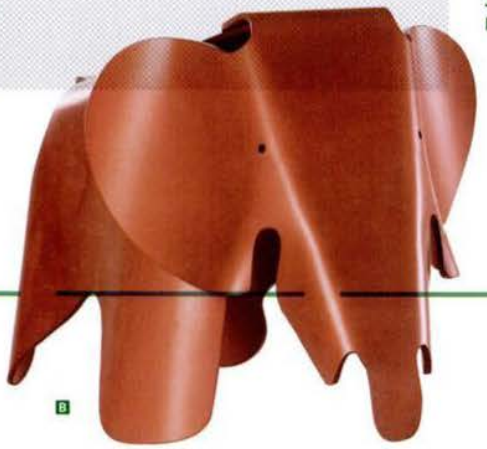

B

C

D

Perforated

There was a hole lot going on in Milan this year. Perforation provides a lightness of form (literally), even in the case of a cast-iron coffee table, and introduces Steven Holl's favored architectural quality—porosity—to the furniture world. Jean Nouvel's SKiN sofa may not become a top seller, but it was one of the most unusual pieces on display.

A Perf / By Khodi Feiz
B Link table / By Tom Dixon for Tom Dixon
C SKiN / By Jean Nouvel for Molteni & C

Real Simple

Less is still more, at least according to a few of our designer friends. At last year's fair, Jasper Morrison's $180 wooden crate sent ripples of both adulation and disgust through the design world, and this year he followed up with a whole Crate series. Meanwhile, the Bouroullec brothers' Pol is the ultimate reduction of form.

A Crate series 1–5 / By Jasper Morrison for Established & Sons
B Pol / By Erwan and Ronan Bouroullec for Kartell

Wingchair / CH445_1960

Hans J. Wegner

Hans J. Wegner / Wishbone Chair, CH24_1950

Hans J. Wegner / Shell Chair, CH07_1963

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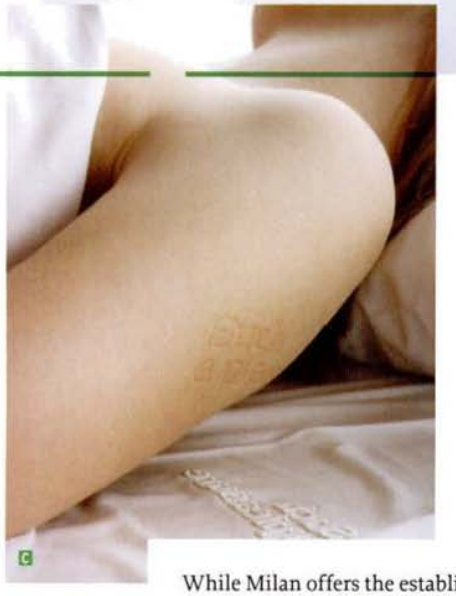
Helsinki Hotel

A

B



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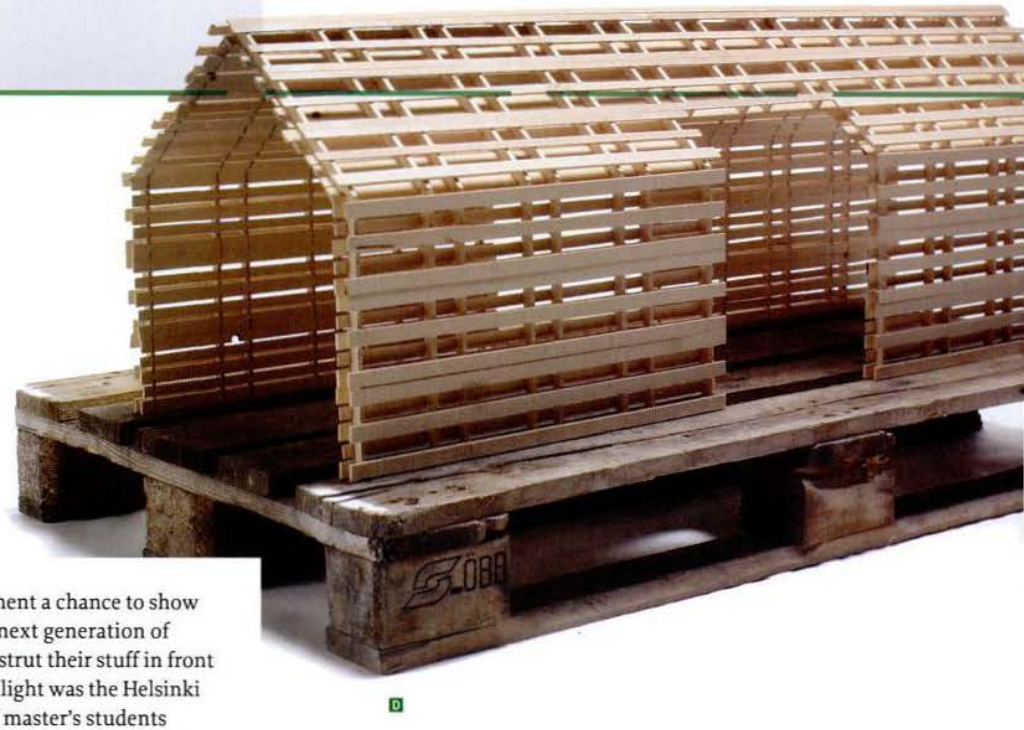
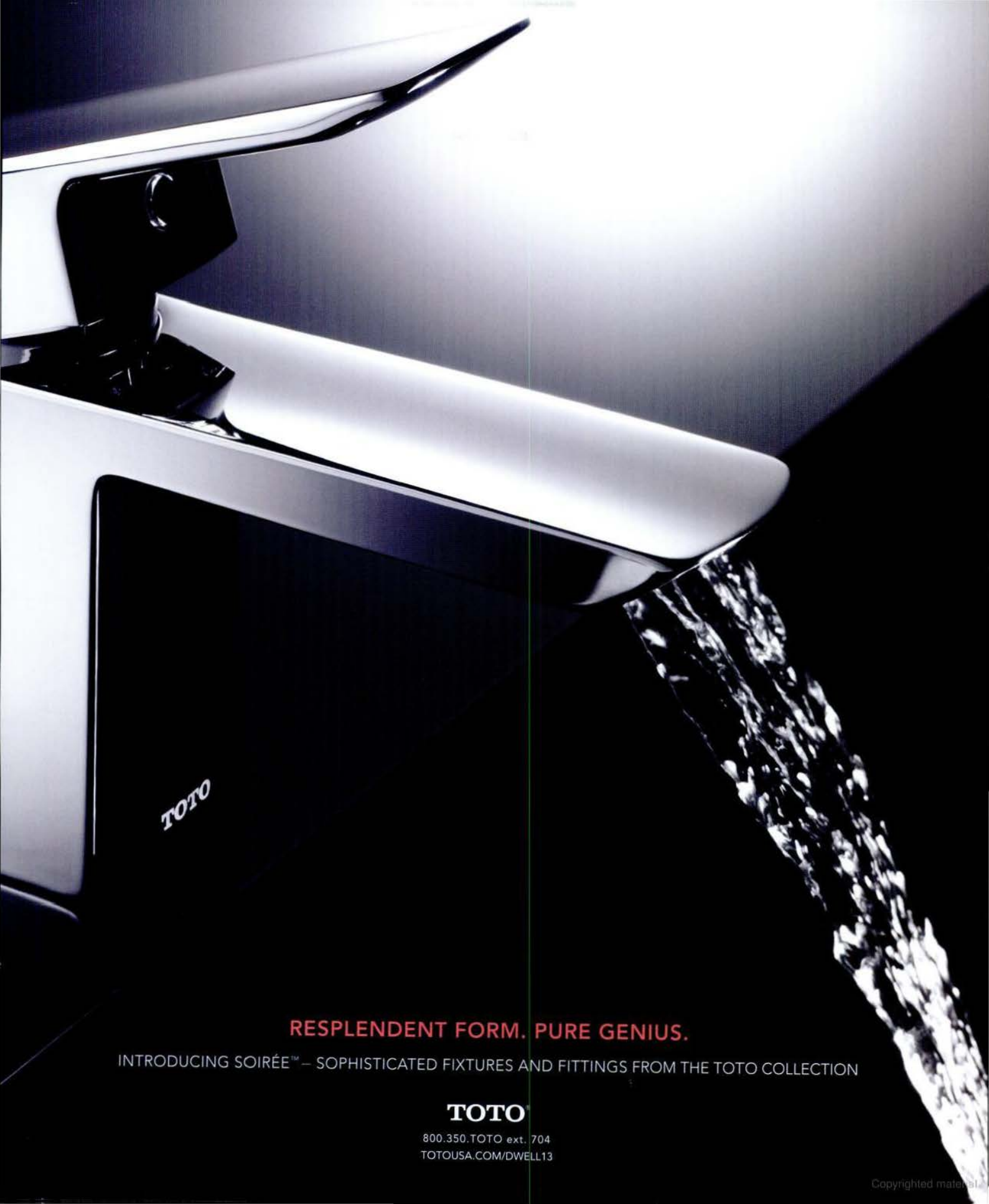


D

While Milan offers the establishment a chance to show off its wares, it also provides the next generation of designers with an opportunity to strut their stuff in front of a live audience. This year's highlight was the Helsinki Hotel, an installation courtesy of master's students from the University of Art and Design Helsinki's applied-arts program. The 16 objects on view managed to provide a fresh take on all things hospitality-related (towels, bedding, meeting points, chocolates on pillows), and the installation itself was cleverly constructed from standard shipping pallets culled from the site. If only our own accommodations had been so well considered.

A 100 Years / By David Dahlhaus Mora
B King Terry I / By Julia Wülfing
C Rise and Sigh / By Martina Carpelan
D Urbarn / By Karoliina Korhonen and Katja Vauhkonen with Maija Puoskari



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Structural

Structure is obviously an implicit part of every design, and we increasingly find designers choosing not to hide it beneath layers of veneer or upholstery, but rather allowing the structural components to define the final aesthetic.

A Steelwood / By Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec for Magis
B Smallwire / By Arik Levy for Zanotta
C Naked / By Alberto Colzani for Baleri Italia
D Strider / By Josefin Hagberg for Josefin & Jonathan
E Jockey / By François Azambourg for Poltrona Frau

A

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E

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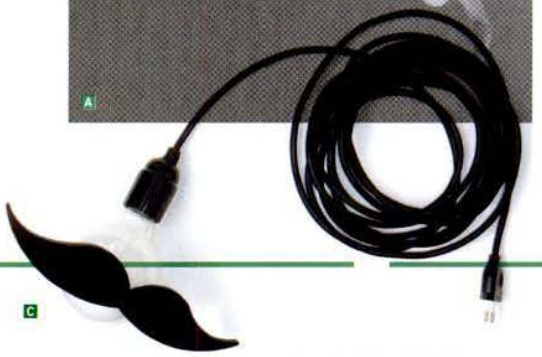
Trippy

A

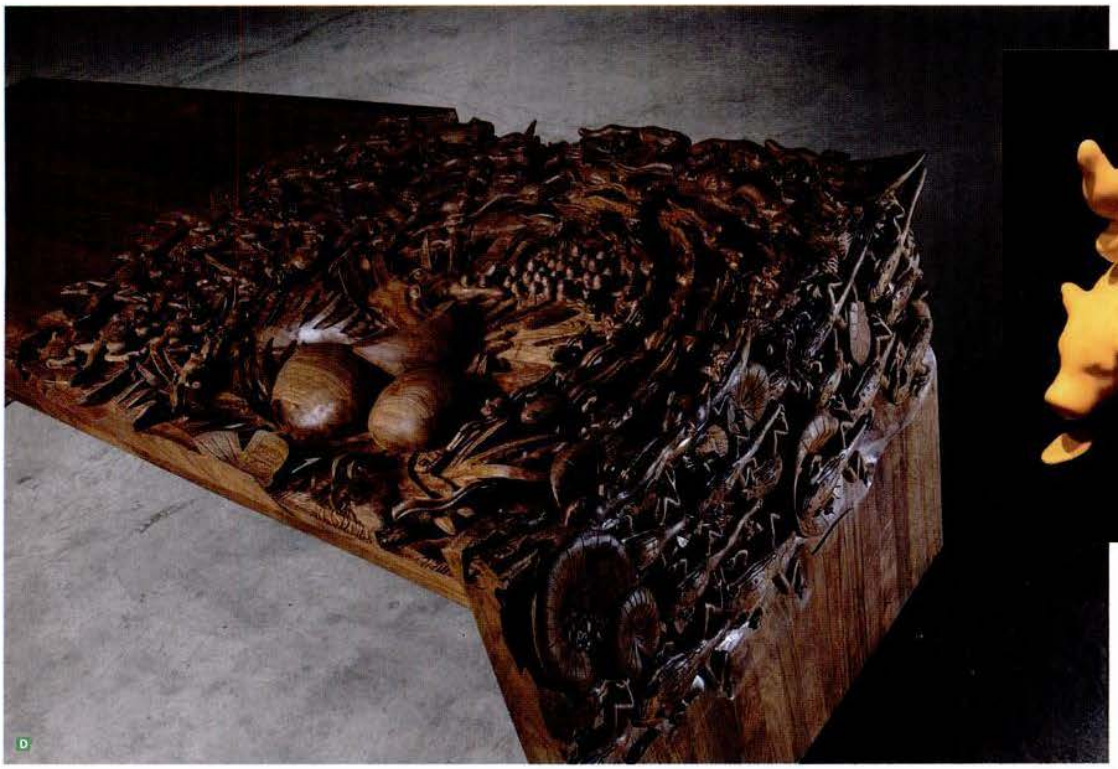


C

B

A lampshade casting shadows of the damned from the Last Judgment. Giant brocaded mushrooms. A vomiting pig straddled by a shark with a chicken on its head. A swirling primordial stew of frogs, lizards, and nautiluses. A lightbulb with a moustache that gives interviews. It could be the makings of an unreleased Phish album, but it was all, in fact, on display during Milan's Design Week. Does it come as a surprise that most of the items on this page hail from the Netherlands?

A Damned / By Luc Merx for Materialise.MGX
B Topiary "Bob" / By Marcel Wanders for Marcel Wanders
C Je M'Appelle Moustache / By Katrin Greiling
D Godogan / By Niels van Eijk and Miriam van der Lubbe for Droog
E The Gathering / By Bertjan Pot for Cor Unum



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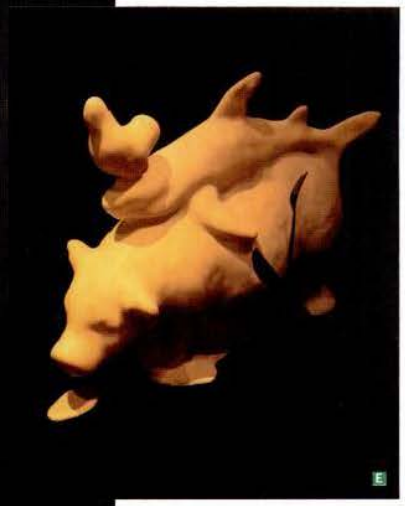

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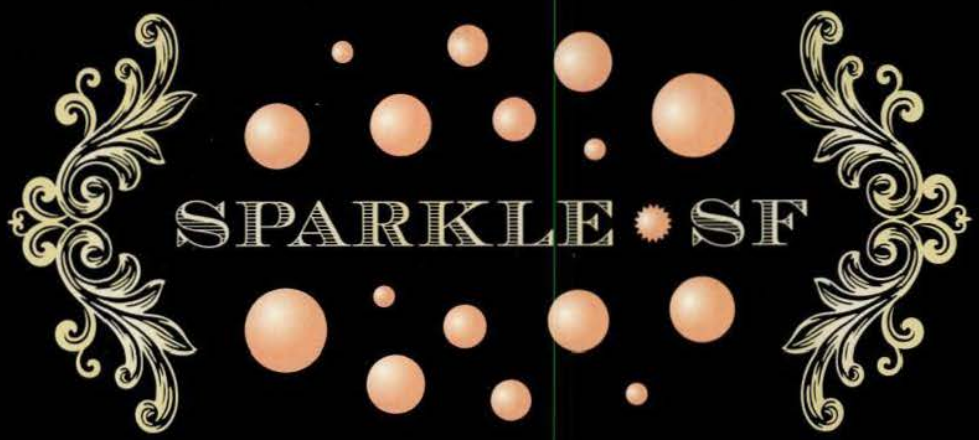
Artek Pavilion

Sustainability was a non-starter at this year's Design Week, which made Artek's commitment to the environment all the more impressive. Their Shigeru Ban–designed pavilion in the garden of the Triennale, constructed from UPM's ProFi wood-plastic composite (which is made from the trimmed sticky bits of envelopes), was elegant and forward-thinking, while the unveiling of their 2nd Cycle editions—decades-old products that have made their way back to Artek after a lifetime of use—exposed an under-appreciated notion of exactly what it means to be sustainable.

PHOTO BY VINCENZO PATRUNO



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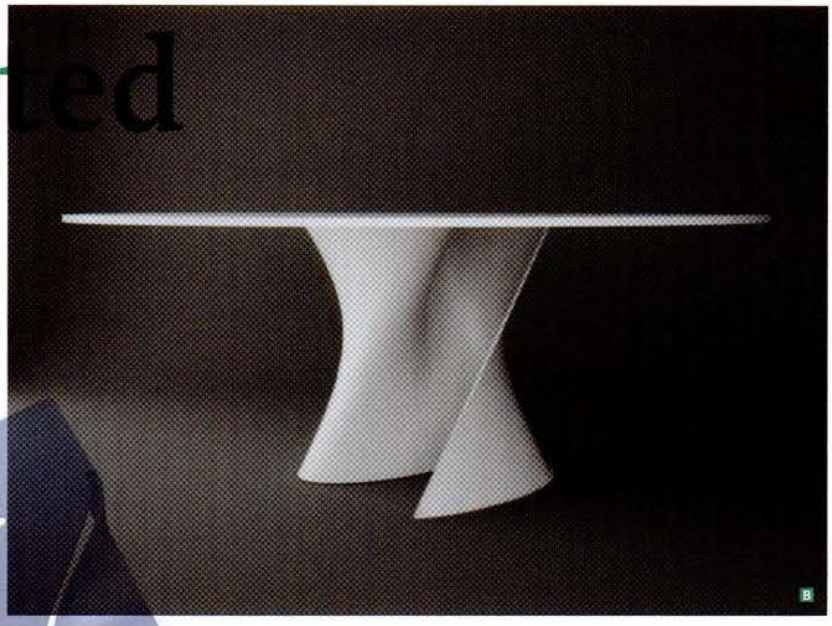
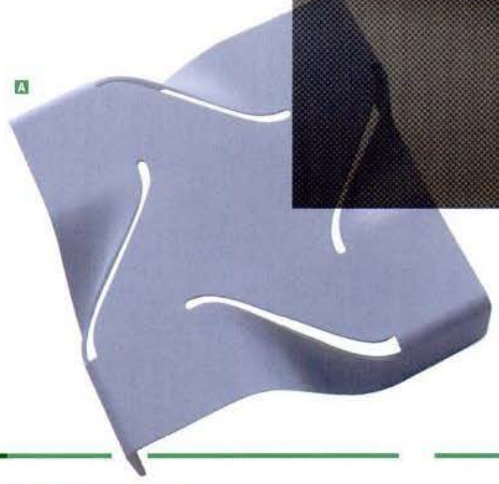
Twisted





Newfangled computer drawing programs enable the heretofore impossible shifting, morphing, and pulling of forms, which can look great onscreen but often leave us feeling flat in the real world (are you listening, Zaha?). Not so for the tables here, both of which kindled fond memories of Möbius strips and MC Escher.

A Vertigo / By Laura Aquili and Ergian Alberg for Moroso
B S table / By Xavier Lust for MDF Italia

Ugly

No matter how hard you try to justify these pieces' existence, at the end of the day they're just plain heinous. We'll give the designers some props for actually convincing the suits to produce this stuff. But shame on you, Toyo. Shame on you, Hella. Shame on you, Fernando and Humberto.

A The Worker sofa / By Hella Jongerius for Vitra
B Suki / By Toyo Ito for Driade
C Leatherworks / By Fernando and Humberto Campana for Edra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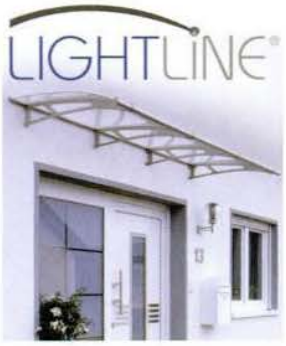

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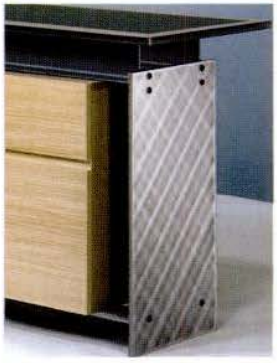

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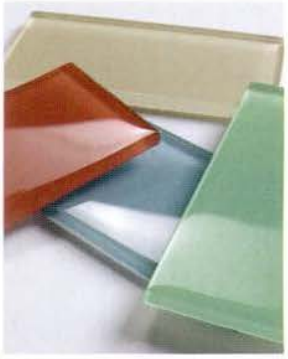

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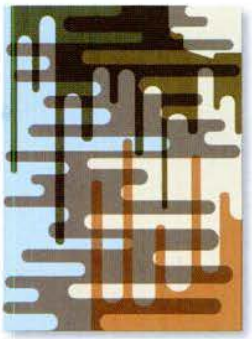

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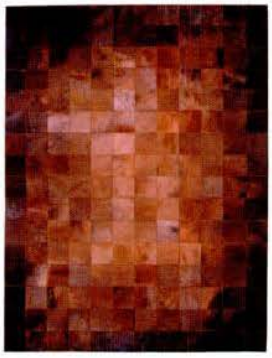

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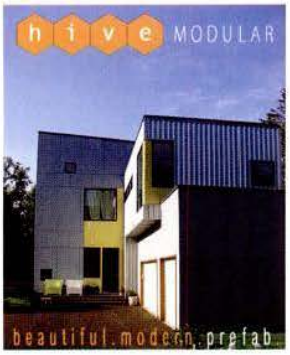

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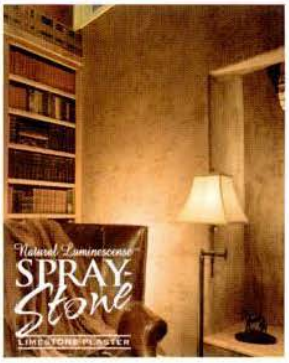

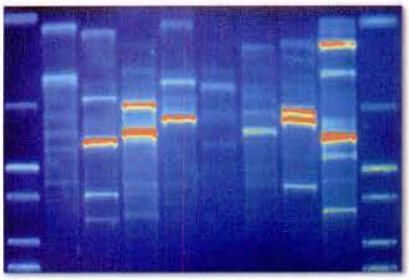

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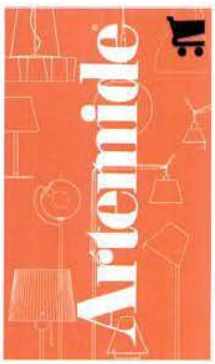

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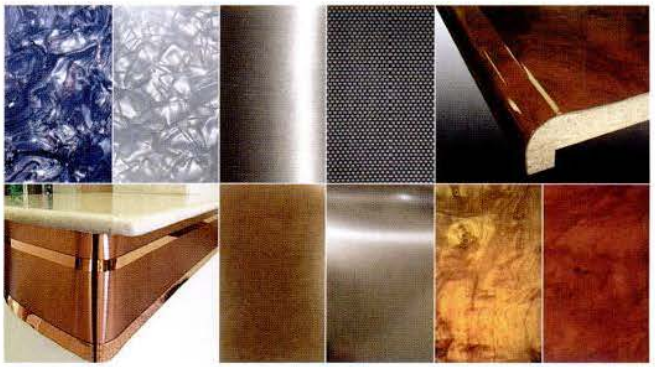

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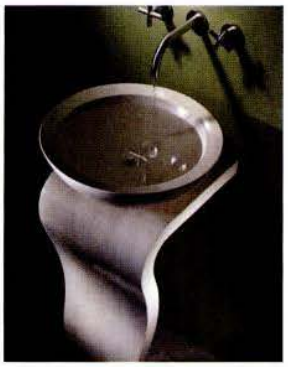

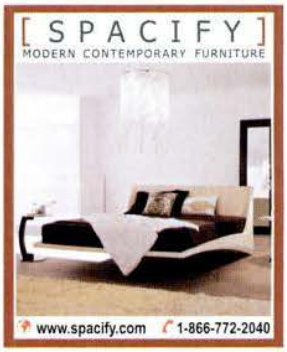

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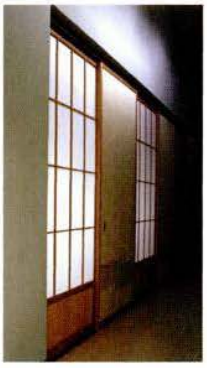

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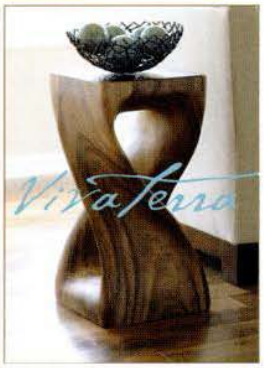

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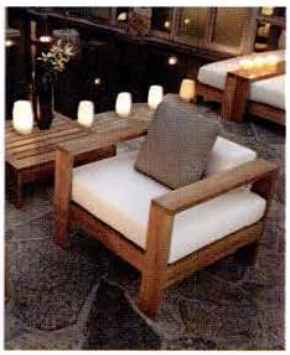

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149 Thomas Church

Gardens Are for People by Thomas D. Church, third edition (University of California Press, 1995)

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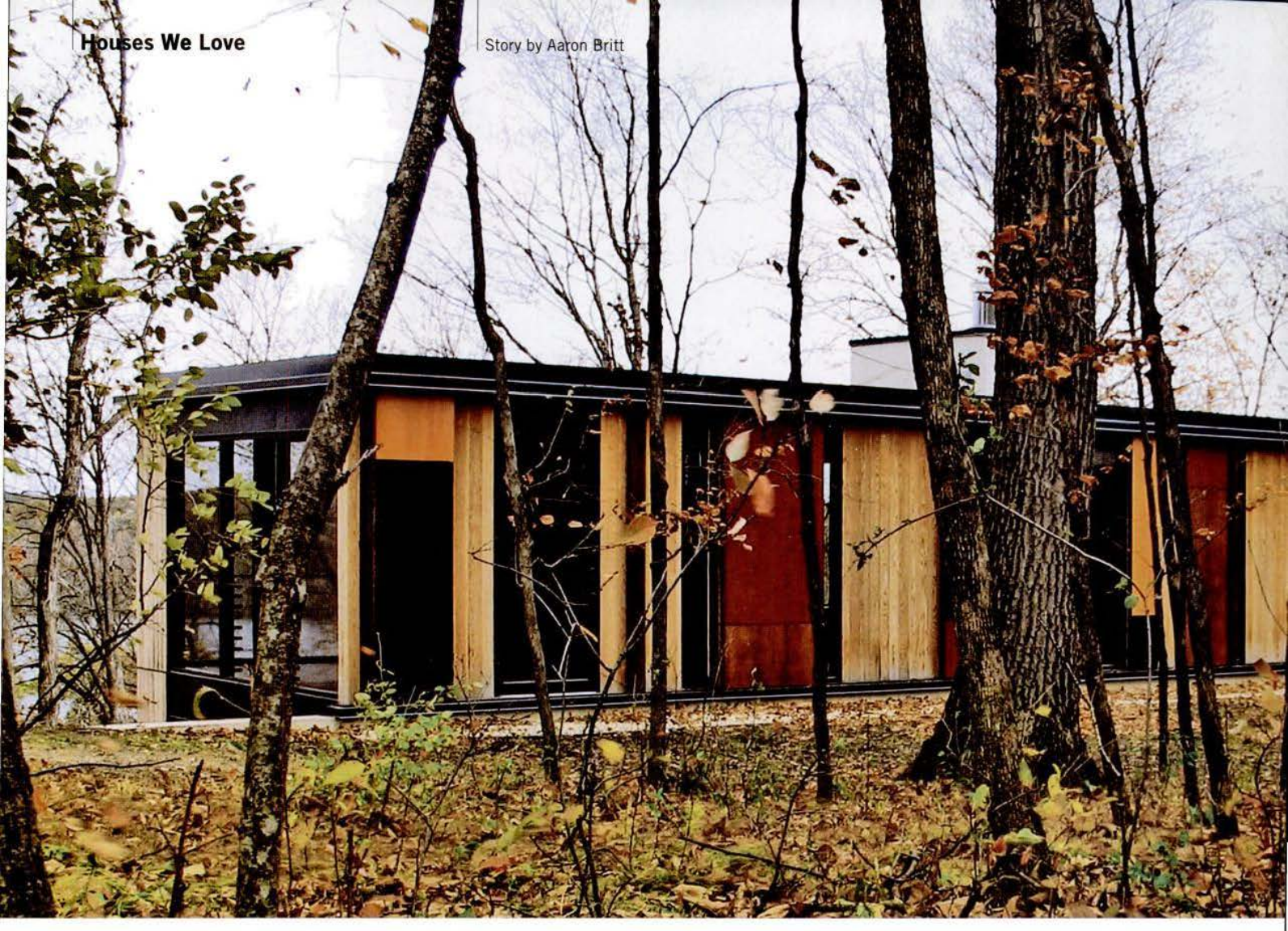
Story by Aaron Britt



Geiger Sanctioned

Green Lake, Wisconsin's reputation as a cool summer getaway, one that persists to this day, was cemented in the pre-air-conditioning era, when Chicagoans and Floridians alike flocked to the spot. John Geiger's modern vacation home is one in a long line of summer abodes on the lovely lake.

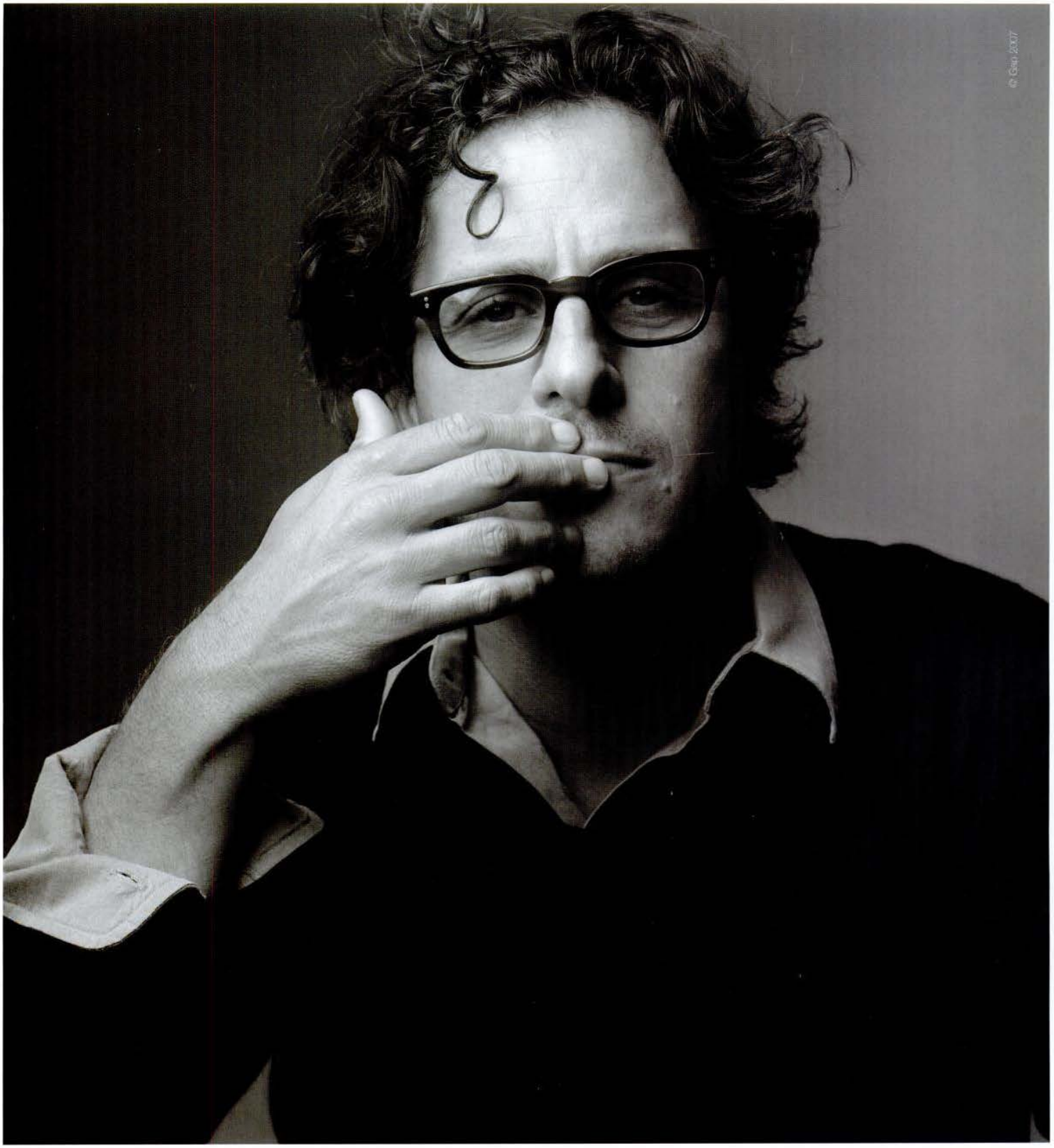
When Milwaukee-based financial advisor John Geiger decided to build a summer home, the choice of locale was clear: scenic Green Lake, Wisconsin, a spot he has adored for years. "We felt so fortunate to find an empty parcel of land," he says. "It's a very different piece of land—a cliff really." A collector of contemporary art of the Midwest and an architecture buff, Geiger had no intention of building "a regular Wisconsin summer house on a regular lake lot."

Fortunately, the then-fledgling Milwaukee firm Johnsen Schmaling Architects was up for the challenge. As one of their first commissions, the firm tackled Geiger's request for "an unusual, honest house" with aplomb. Unlike the typical lot Geiger passed up, his cliffside retreat is something more unique. "By putting your living area on that high level you get this amazingly dramatic treetop view looking down on the lake," notes architect Brian Johnsen.

Blessed with a rather leisurely building schedule—four years passed from initial design to completion—Johnsen and partner Sebastian Schmaling were able to carefully consider the site before breaking ground. "We were struck by the verticality of the trees, their colors and ongoing seasonal change, and [the] bark patterns of the over 100 species on the site," says Johnsen, describing the arbors whose forms and textures would become so integral to the house's design.

The result is an assuming 2,400-square-foot home clad in unfinished cedar tongue-and-groove siding that, over the course of the next year or so, will gradually turn a silvery gray. Though the house will begin to change and weather over time, a series of laminated wood panels at the entryway, each with a different grain, will retain their rich hues. "I'm not that excited about building a structure and then painting it," says Geiger. "Why not use a material that becomes more interesting and important over time, [rather] than less?" As Geiger wants this house to be a family retreat for generations to come, it too has the chance to become, with time, more interesting and more important. ■

PHOTO COURTESY JOHNSEN SCHMALING ARCHITECTS



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