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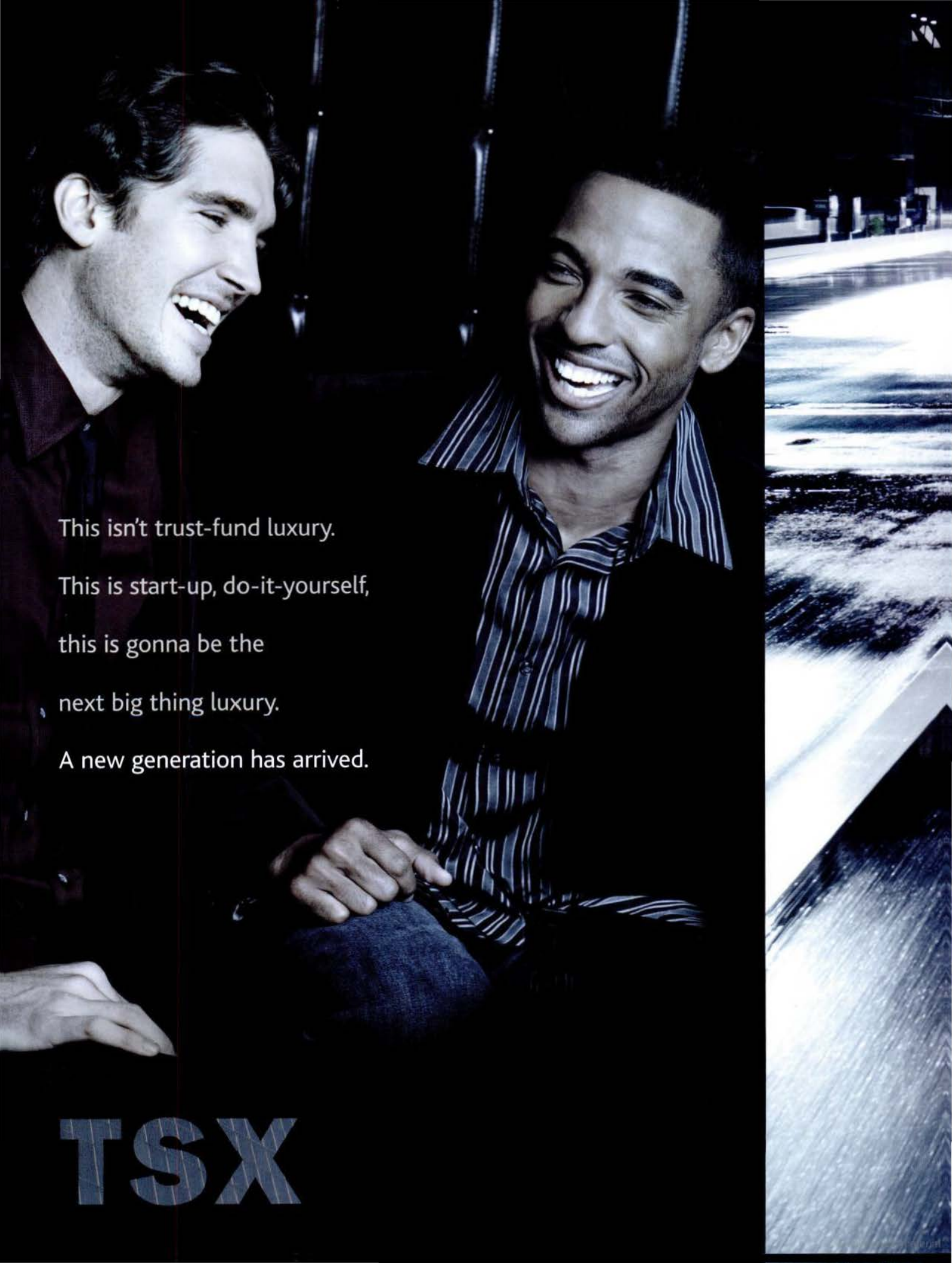
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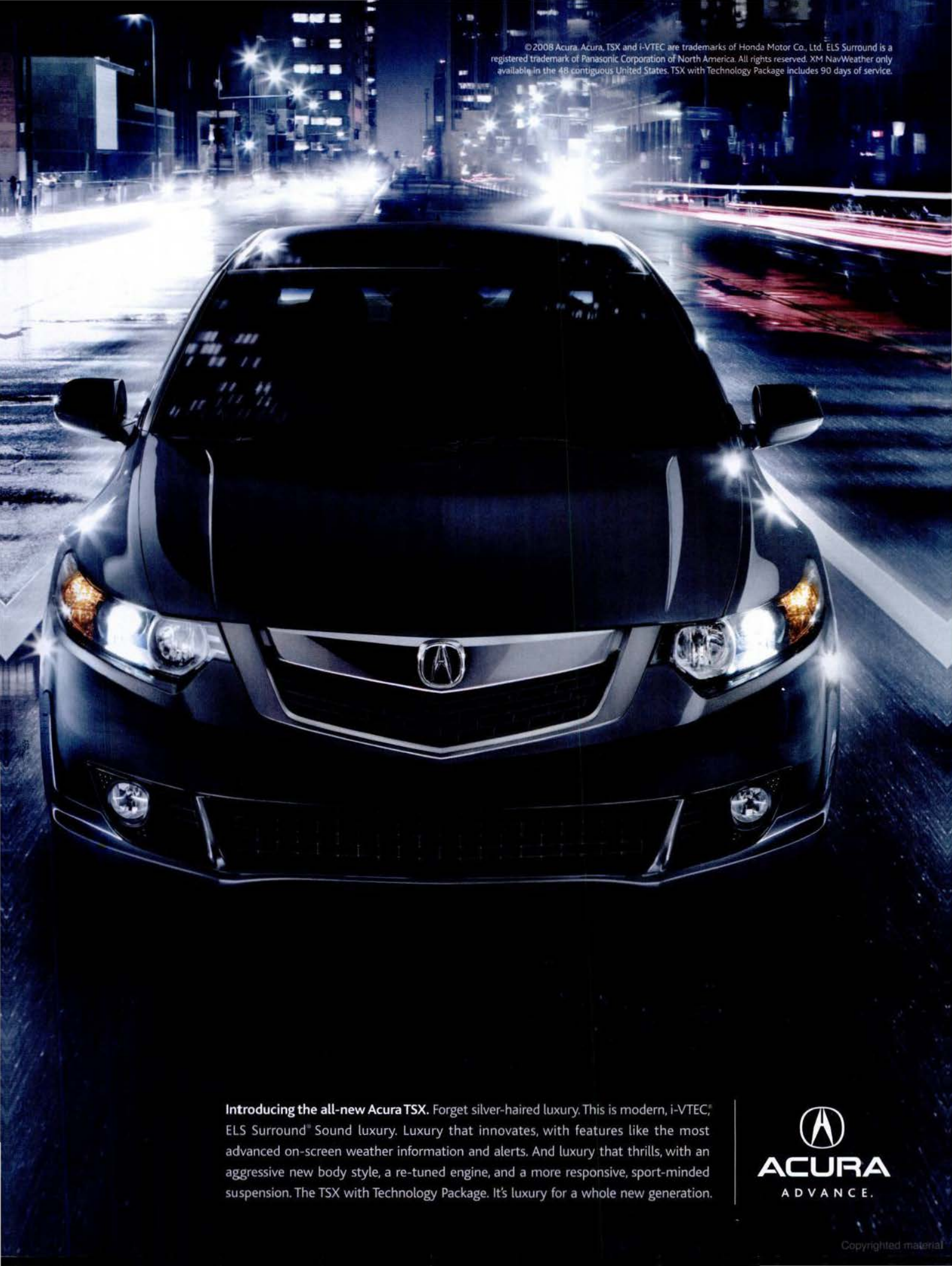

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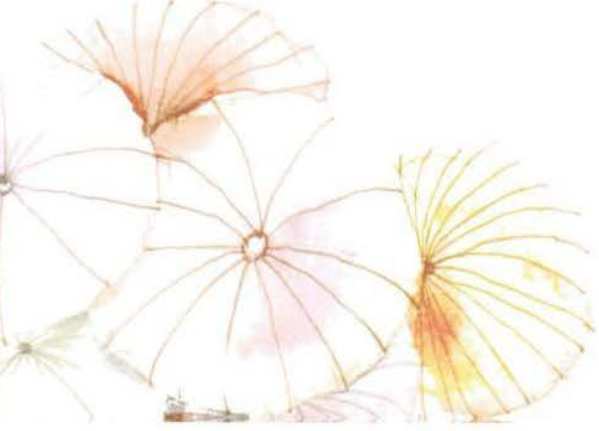

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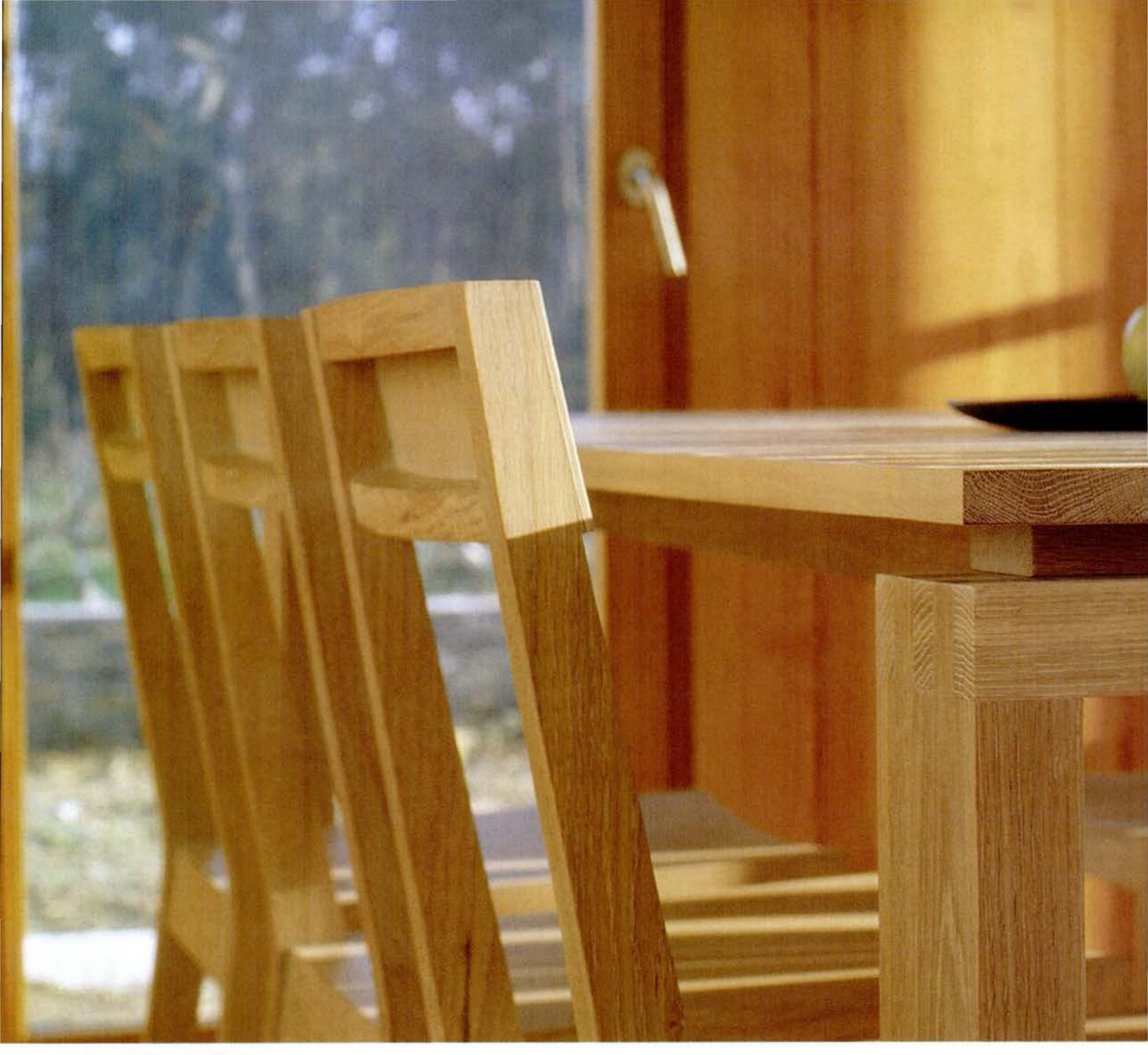

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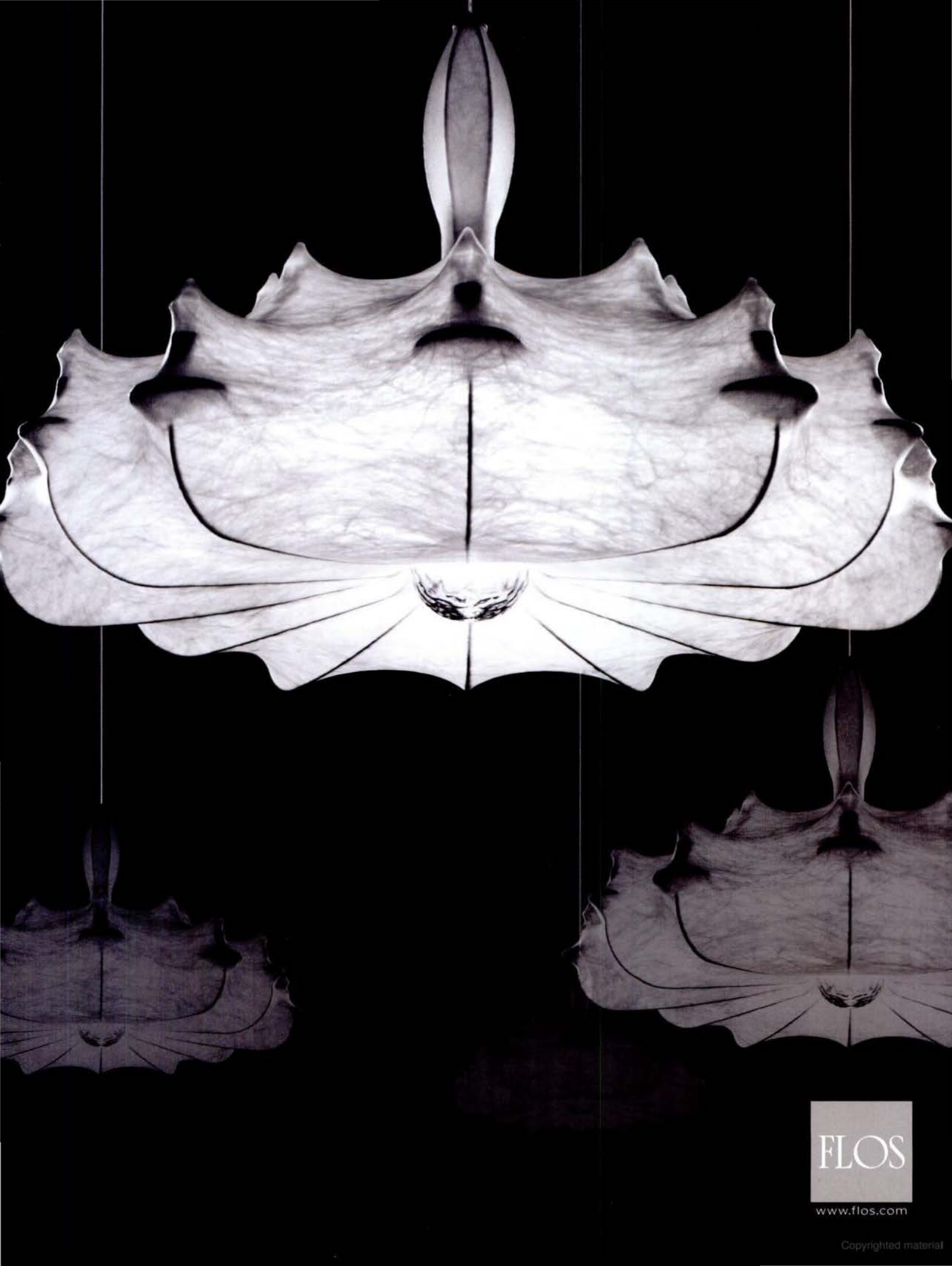

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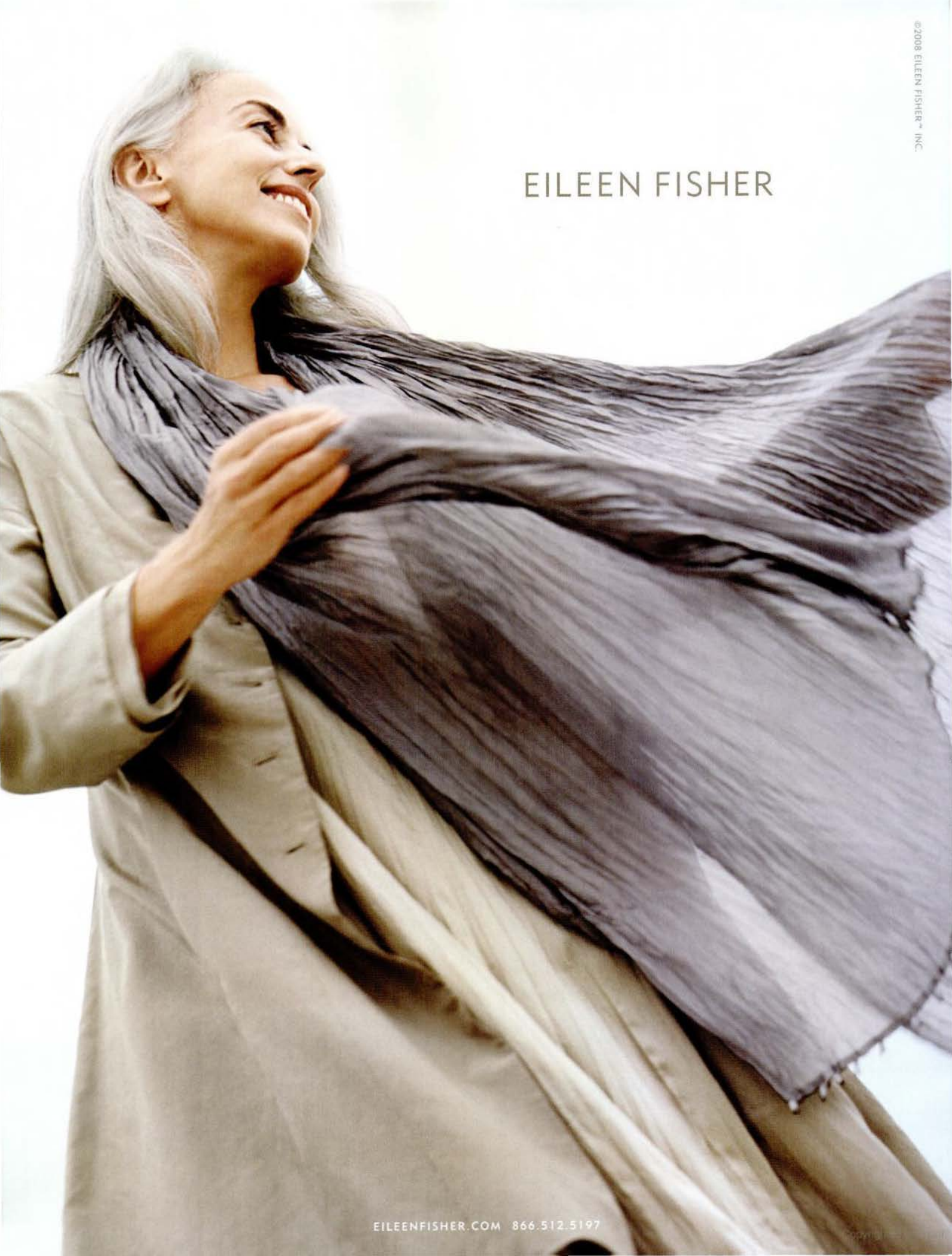
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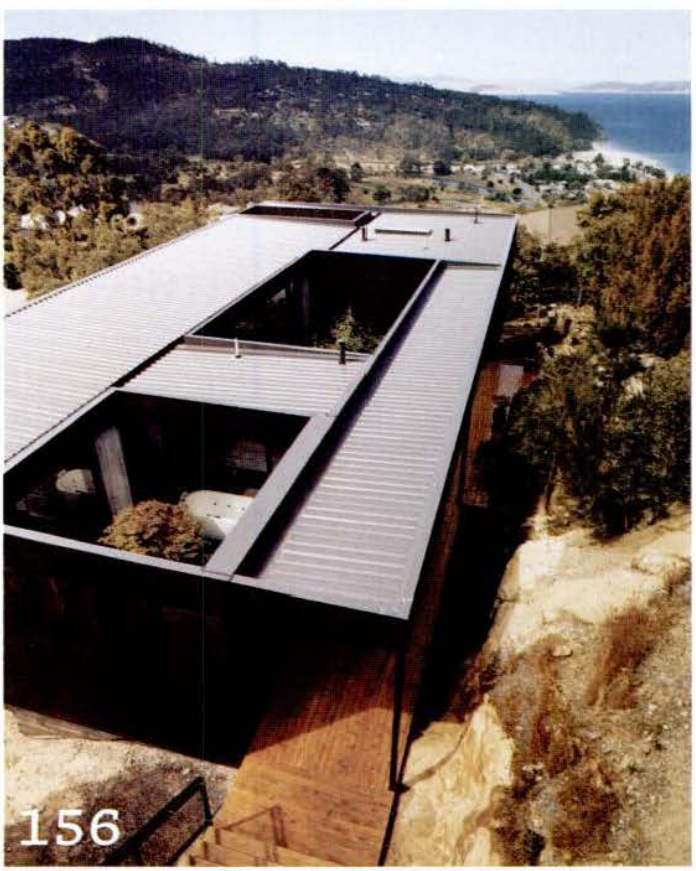

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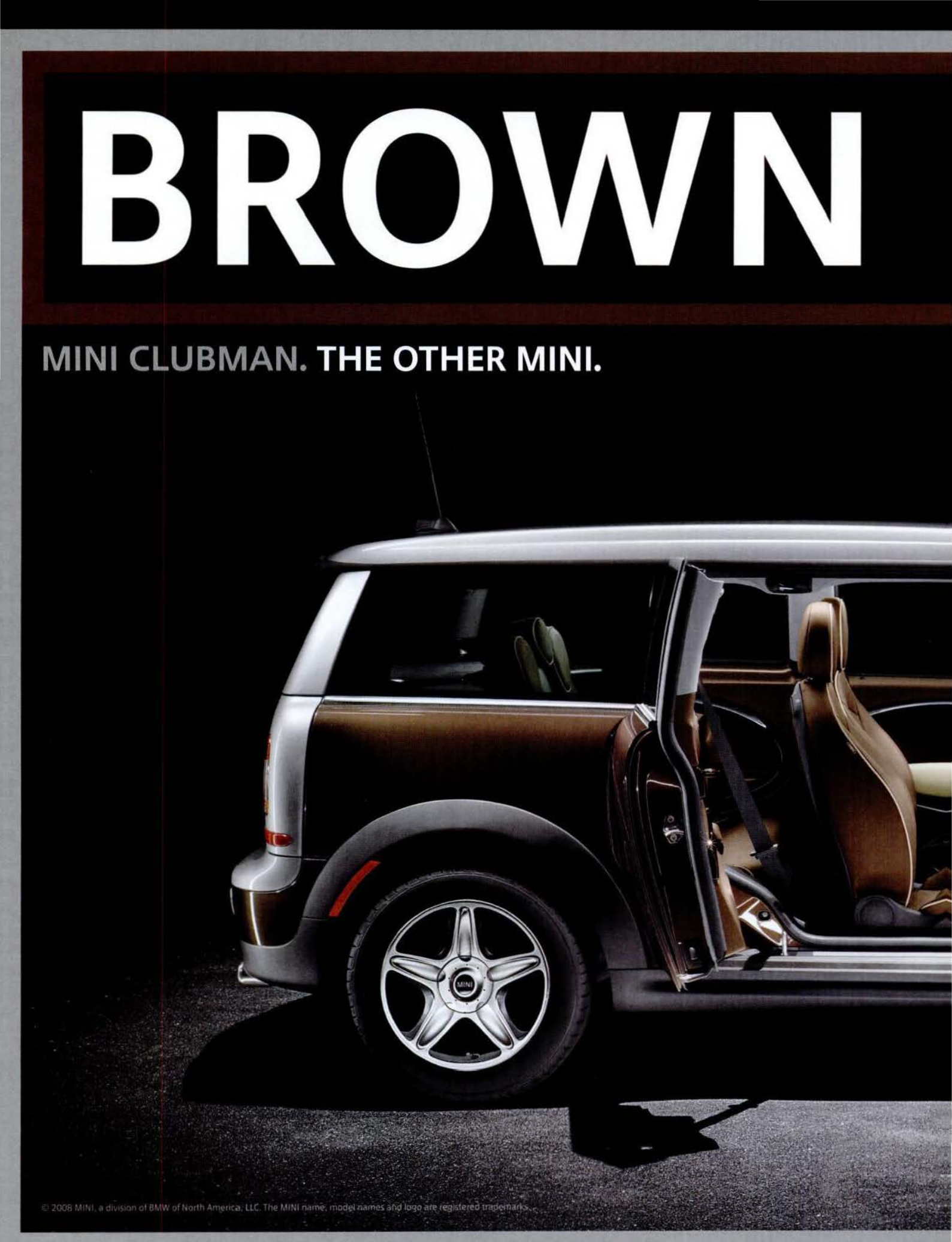

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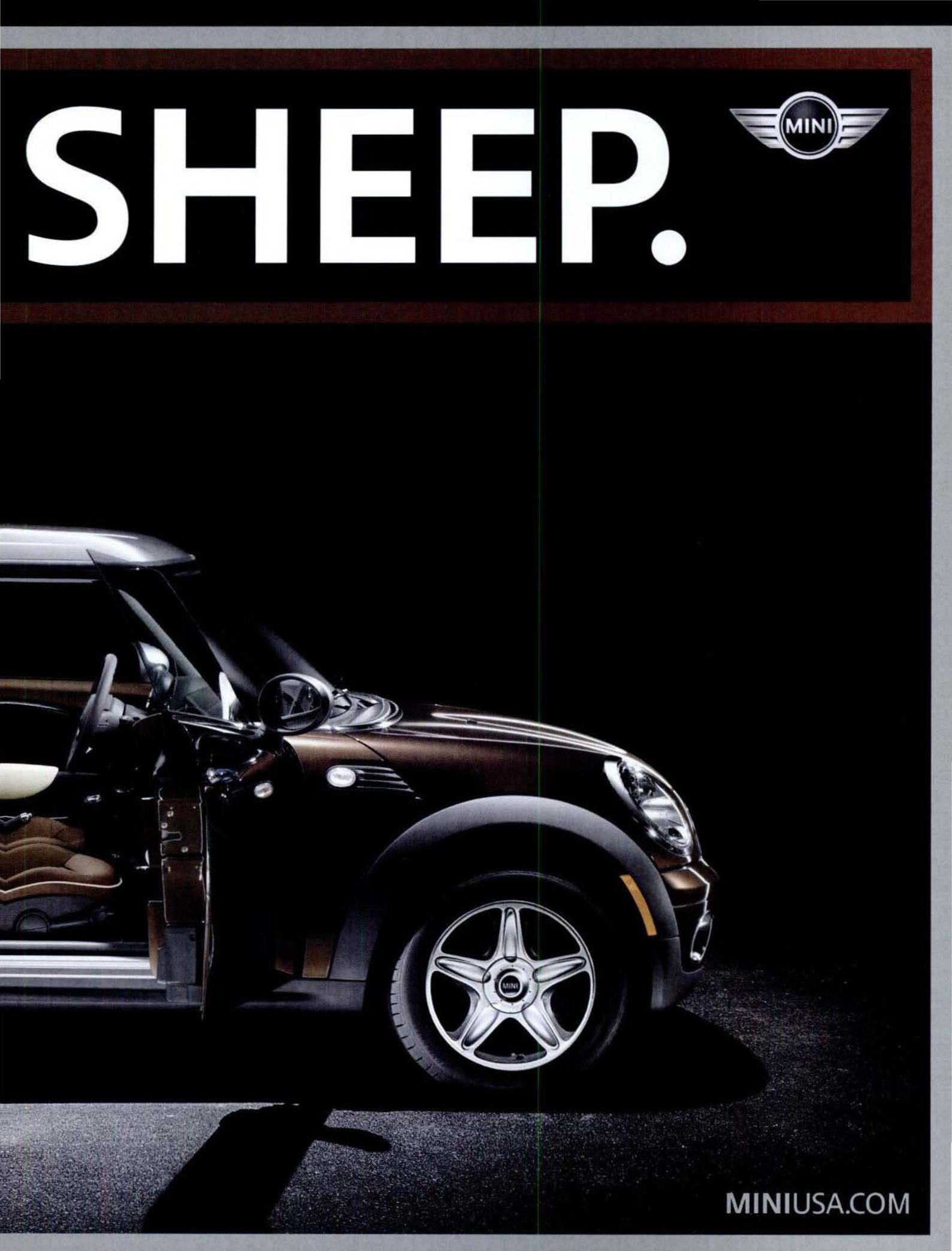

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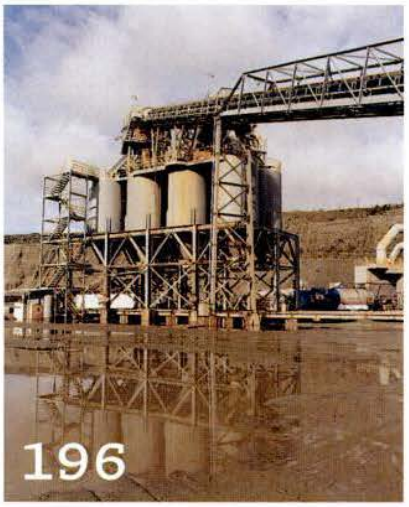

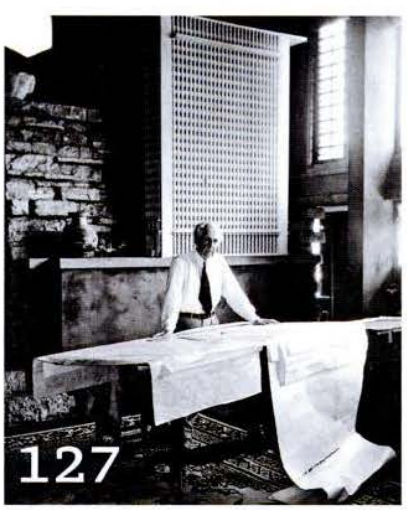

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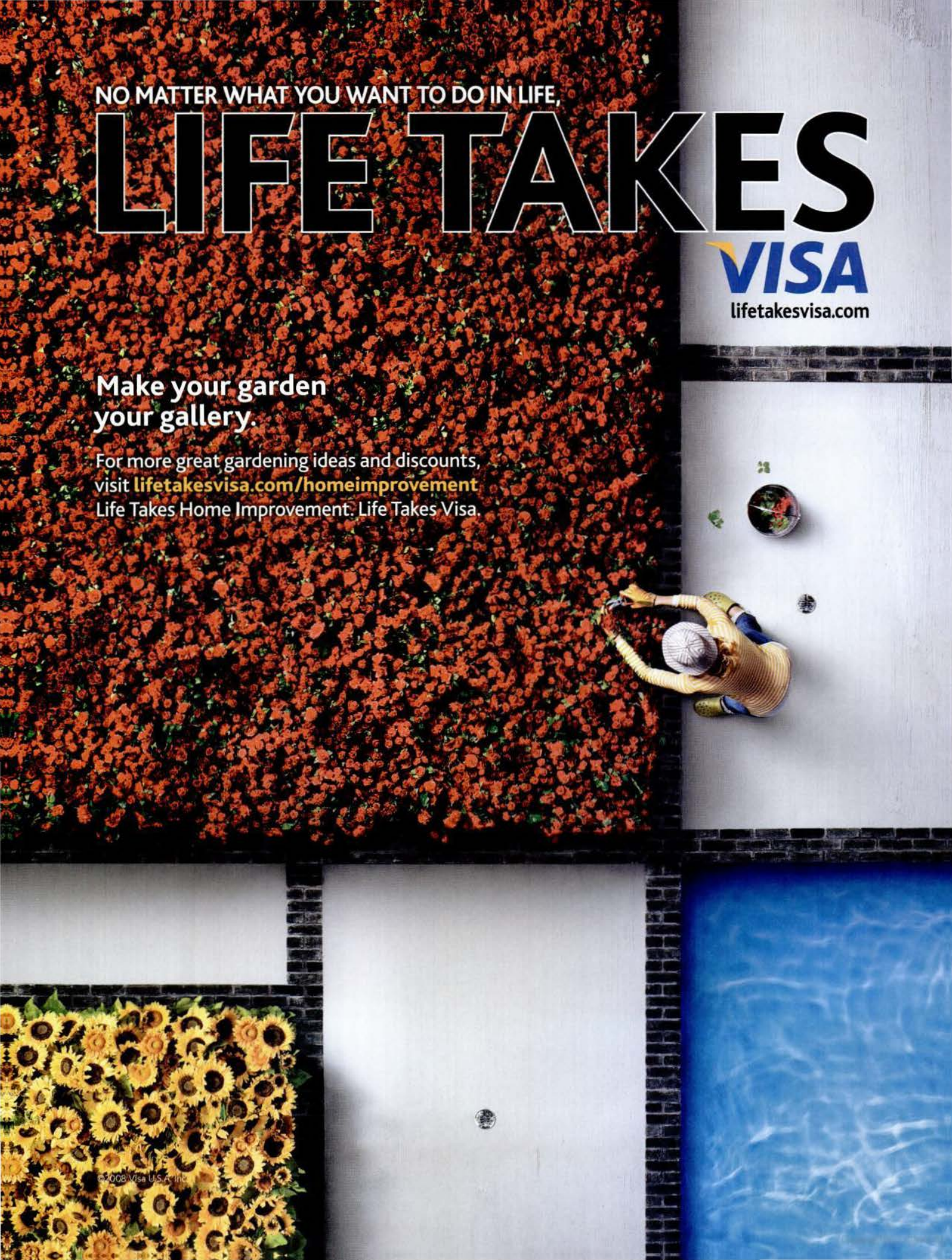
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Abroad View

The Americans did not Americanize us—they were merely one step ahead on the road towards a global civilization with a standardized style of living which, whether we like it or not, is beginning to emerge all over the world. For we live in a state of cultural osmosis where influences percolate across the porous frontiers, native traditions wane, and the movement towards a uniform, mechanized, stereotyped culture-pattern has become irresistible. —Arthur Koestler, *The Lotus and the Robot*

Arthur Koestler penned these prescient words in 1961, assessing a world on a collision course with monoculture. In *The Lotus and the Robot*, he delves into the India of yogis and their legions of devotees and the rapidly modernizing "robot culture" of Japan, in the hopes of finding an untapped source of inspiration for the Western world. Ultimately, however, he arrives at a conclusion that expands on the above, but fails to find the answers he sought. One wonders what Koestler would make of today's world, where New Delhians munch on KFC and Angelenos pull into Yoshinoya Beef Bowl for a quick bite.

Cultural osmosis is so endemic to our modern world that the idea of national borders seems somewhat quaint. Our emails reach Sri Lanka in little more time than the cubicle at the other end of the office; a contractor in Colombo is just as viable as the company around the corner; and even the most minor events—political, economic, social, or cultural—have an impact that simply cannot be localized and contained.

Though I'm presenting you with a rather facile view of globalization, no one person can truly grasp each and every aspect of a globally linked culture—no matter how many issues of the *Economist* or *Monocle* they read. It may be trite, but more often than not, the most reasonable option is to think globally, and act locally.

For architecture, this has been true for a long time. Even when Philip Johnson and Henry Russell Hitchcock coined the term International Style in 1932, it was with a concession to context. They wrote, "The new style is not international in the sense that the production of one country is just like that of another. Nor is it so rigid that the work of various leaders is not clearly distinguishable. The international style has become evident and definable only gradually as different innovators throughout the world have successfully carried out parallel experiments." In this issue, against the backdrop of a new century, and with more porous frontiers than ever, we examine three parallel experiments in residential design ("Around the World," p. 145).

Despite the disparate locales, our globetrotting tour of three houses on three continents reveals some striking similarities. This isn't a coincidence: The language of modernism has had close to a century to permeate every corner of the globe. But rather than coming off as uniform, mechanized, or stereotyped, the homes in this issue demonstrate that modernism amounts to much more than an international *style*. Though visual evidence may point to shared influences and aesthetics, the fact is that each home solves a unique set of contextual problems, such as the harmonization of security needs with graceful indoor-outdoor living ("Katz's Cradle," p. 148), a sloping, difficult site ("Kingston Brio," p. 156), or neighboring apartment towers ("EggO Centric," p. 164).

Long vilified as a one-size-fits-all approach, modernism has been portrayed as the antithesis of vernacular tradition. But the young architects in this issue, who demonstrate a well-balanced approach to both form and function, and keen sensitivity to site and situation, prove the naysayers wrong. Native traditions are far from dead—they have just evolved.

Sam Grawe, Editor-in-Chief
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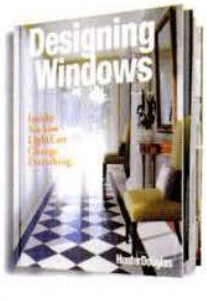

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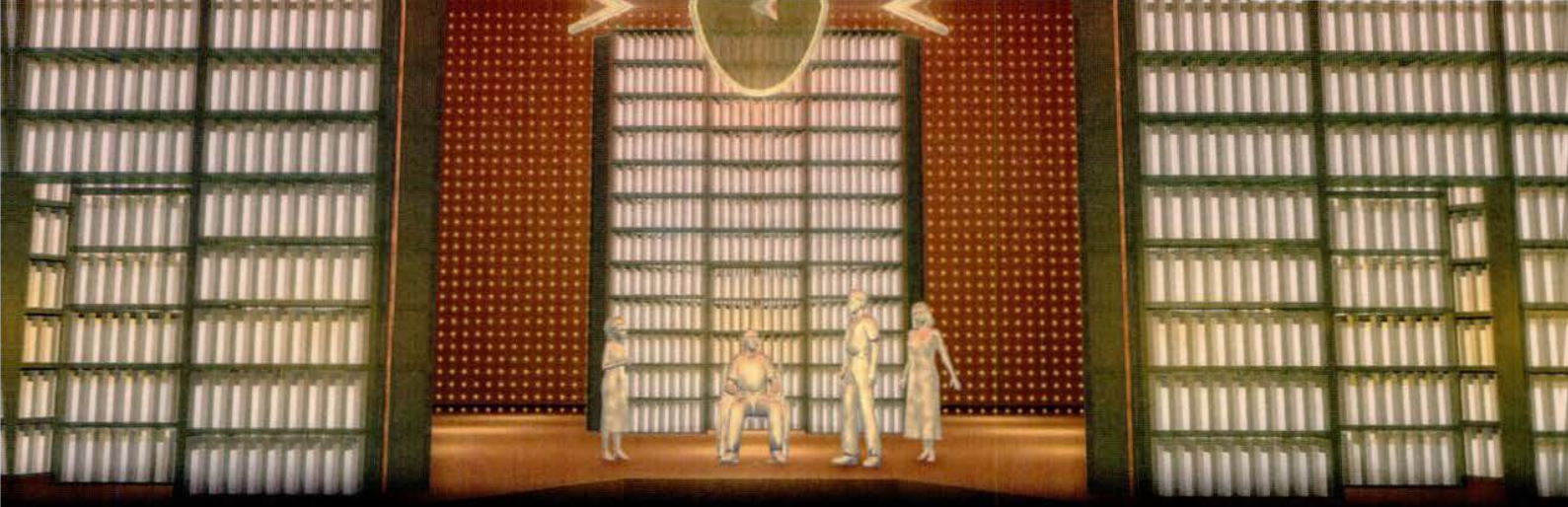

Is it possible to see sound? Tod Machover certainly seems to think so. "I've always liked the idea of an opera of visuals," he explains, "of connecting colours and shapes to music. But I don't think screens or projections mix particularly well with live performers. So instead I'm using a live choreography of physical objects on stage. Somewhere out there is a visual, physical language that can help us listen better, and allow us to feel sound and the sound to touch us. With Death and the Powers, I'm trying to discover it." **Tod Machover,** *Professor of Music and Media, MIT Media Lab and Fellow of the Society of Sound*

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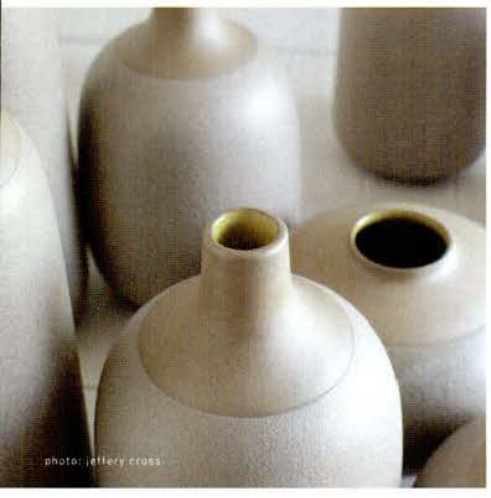

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As a space-challenged San Francisco dweller, I was happy to see that the magazine is now available in digital format via Zinio (zinio.com). I immediately subscribed.

Gina McWherter
San Francisco, California

As a new arrival to Dwell, I'd like to give you all a hearty "Right On!" I'm most definitely not tired of sustainability, nor am I tired of innovative, imaginative approaches to the necessary art of dwelling. What I am sick of are glossy, pretentious catalogs of vulgar, nouveau riche residences and their clueless, more-money-than-sense owners who mistake flash for taste.

I'm also sick of precious, self-important "intellectual" journals where redundancy is mistaken for rigor, and masturbatory, irrelevant fantasies of "design" take precedence over humanity's continuing need for an invigorating, secure, joyful setting in which to conduct the varied tasks inherent in living.

Once a month, wedged in among the bills, misleading political fliers, worthless special offers and repetitive catalogues, lies Dwell, a magazine with ideas and people I can actually be inspired by, objects I can admire and homes that embody the practical, aesthetic, ethical, and emotional dimensions of the people who design, build and live in them. I thought I'd never see the day.

Peter J. McQuaid
Los Angeles, California

Small wonders (March 2008)? You should consult the many urban exile, bi-coastal, aging hippies in search of affordable real estate in the late 1970s. Remember the back-to-the-land movement? I still live in a hip, 750 square foot, owner-built hovel filled with Berenice lamps and wood heat. I'm posting you from a dinosaur green, modem driven iMac because I have no choice. I'm new to your mag, and I love it.

Suz Kling
Sent via email

The photo of the cut and coiled power cord holding a toothbrush on page 56 of your March 2008 issue ("Q&A: Scott Amron") has to be the stupidest idea I have ever seen. I agree that it looks cool, but it's an electrocution waiting to happen. As an electrician, I can't believe that this idea even made your pages. What's next, broken light bulb bases being used in a lamp socket to hold flowers? Please tell me it's a joke.

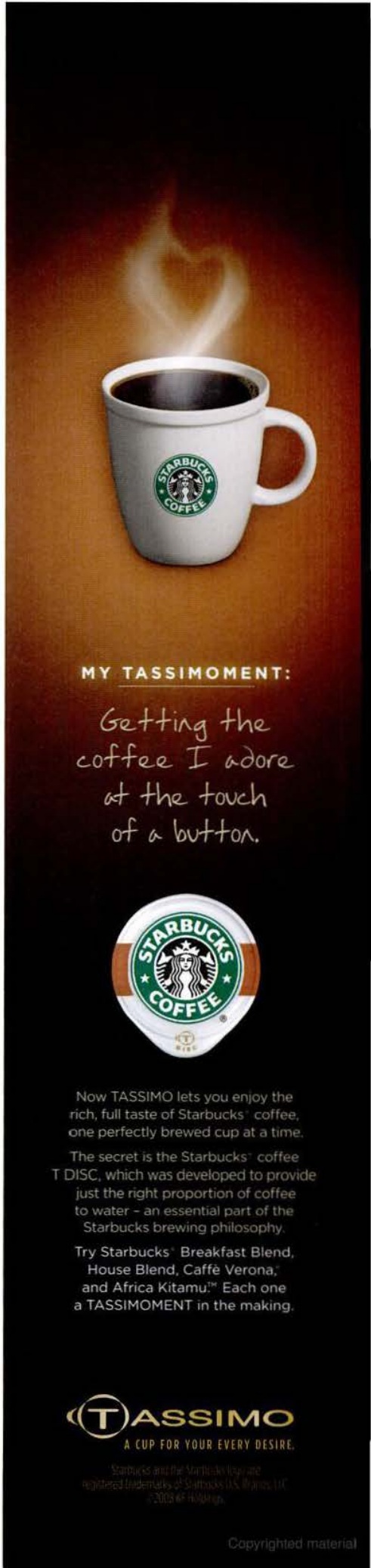
Rick Neidig
Sent via email

Editors' Note: The "Die Electric" series of non-conductive (i.e. dielectric) outlet oddities is designed to shock one's conscience regarding electricity usage, electricians included. (dieelectric.org)

I love your magazine. I first picked it up while on vacation in Charleston, South Carolina, two years ago, and got a subscription immediately after I got home. I know you are a growing magazine and there's a learning curve as things unfold. Please allow me to suggest that the layout be simplified—it seems to have as much crammed into it as possible, and I can't tell where articles begin and end sometimes. I had to go through 16 pages of advertising just to get to the first editorial page of the magazine, and that was the contents page.

This seems to defy the uncluttered/simple lifestyle that Dwell promotes. This world is busy, overwhelming, and confusing enough. Please dare to be different, and keep it simple.

Ross Herring
Richmond, Virginia



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I just received my issue of Dwell and was very excited about the article "Lucky's Break" ("My House," February 2008). My husband and I recently purchased a 1960s home in Atlanta and are trying to restore it. We were inspired by the many good ideas and eco-friendly, creative solutions mentioned in the article. I have been searching furiously to find lights similar to the ones pictured on page 65, and have been unable to find any outdoor wall sconces like them. Can you please provide me with the manufacturer or the retailer? I'd greatly appreciate it!

Amanda Jesperson
Atlanta, Georgia

Editors' Note: After a lengthy search, homeowner Lucky Diaz discovered the sconces at Vintage Oasis in Palm Springs, California (vintageoasis.com).

I'm completely astounded at the amount of advertising that is shown in Dwell. I can deal with the sleek modern furniture ads, but Lexus? Cadillac? Loads of paper wasted on ads to make the magazine look thicker—is that what this is? Not only that, but I have to flip through almost 40 pages just to find the Table of Contents!

Which brings me to my other question: Why the increase in newsstand price? I subscribe, so it's not my problem, but I would think that the substantial amount of advertising would counteract the newsstand price. Can you tell us why it has increased? I don't mean to sound like a complete nut job, but I look forward to reading Dwell each month and enjoy the content.

When I have to sift through loads of ads to get to the meaty stuff hidden in the back, it makes it seem like a chore.

Brooke Rane
Southbury, Connecticut

Editors' Note: We held out as long as we could: Prior to the recent increase, Dwell's rates had remained unchanged since our inaugural October 2000 issue. Over the past seven years, we've increased our publication frequency from six to ten issues a year while maintaining a higher-than-average editorial-to-ad ratio, so while there are indeed more ads, there is also more content than ever.

I used to spend several hours reading every issue of Dwell from cover to cover—I scanned the February 2008 issue in about 30 minutes. The preponderance of advertising on the right-hand pages is extremely annoying. It screams the message that you value your advertisers more than you value your readers.

Additionally, the new design makes it even more difficult to distinguish the content from the advertising. When I started reading Mr. Grawe's Editor's Note (February 2008), I momentarily got excited: I thought that you had finally reexamined your mission in light of the current unsustainable world we live in. Sadly, it was just another magazine redesign—designed solely, as far as I can tell, to keep the design department from leaving due to boredom. Pity it won't do the same for me.

Steve Mann
San Luis Obispo, California

You are rightfully proud of saving 935 trees per issue with some format changes and recycled content ("Editor's Note," February 2008). How many more trees would you save if five subscription cards didn't rain from the magazine when I opened it?

Jeff Lannigan
Pullman, Washington

I would like to see Dwell focus on an occasional restoration of old modern

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houses like mine. I tried a subscription for a year, but I found so many hard-edged, glossy-finished homes, and the material a little repetitious. I still think you have a good magazine, though, and my architect friends love it.

Martin Chilcutt
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Editors' Note: In addition to featuring a variety of renovations and restorations in every issue, our upcoming June issue will be devoted to the concept of "Old Meets New," and will hopefully hit a little closer to home.

I'm an avid reader of Dwell and enjoy getting design ideas from your magazine, but I am continually frustrated by the fact that the "Products" section ("In the Modern World") does not include prices. I don't decorate solely on price, but it is more efficient to at least have an idea of the approximate price point, rather than having to research each item on the Internet. Thanks for putting out one of the better magazines left in the world.

Jamie Hunter
Denver, Colorado

Do you know of any architects with a Dwell sensibility working in the Madison, Wisconsin, area? I've interviewed a few architects to help us with our 1950s ranch renovation, but can't seem to find one who doesn't immediately suggest adding on (we have 2,200 square feet of living space already). While I know adding on would be a simple—though pricey—solution, we would prefer to team up with someone who is willing to explore more earth-friendly and creative options that reflect our modern design sensibilities. I am certain this person must exist in the "Berkeley of the Midwest," but where?

Becky Behling
Madison, Wisconsin

Editors' Note: While your home may not be a Wright, many others in your area are: Try contacting the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy in Chicago (savewright.org) for a list of architects simpatico with your anti-add-on aesthetic.

I just bought the February 2008 issue. Dwell is one of my favorite publications—I pick it up religiously and always appreciate its content—but I am a bit disappointed with the new cover look and color use. I found something so pleasing about the cover font, simple use of color, and solid white side binding of the old issues. Please reconsider going back to the old format. Viva Dwell!

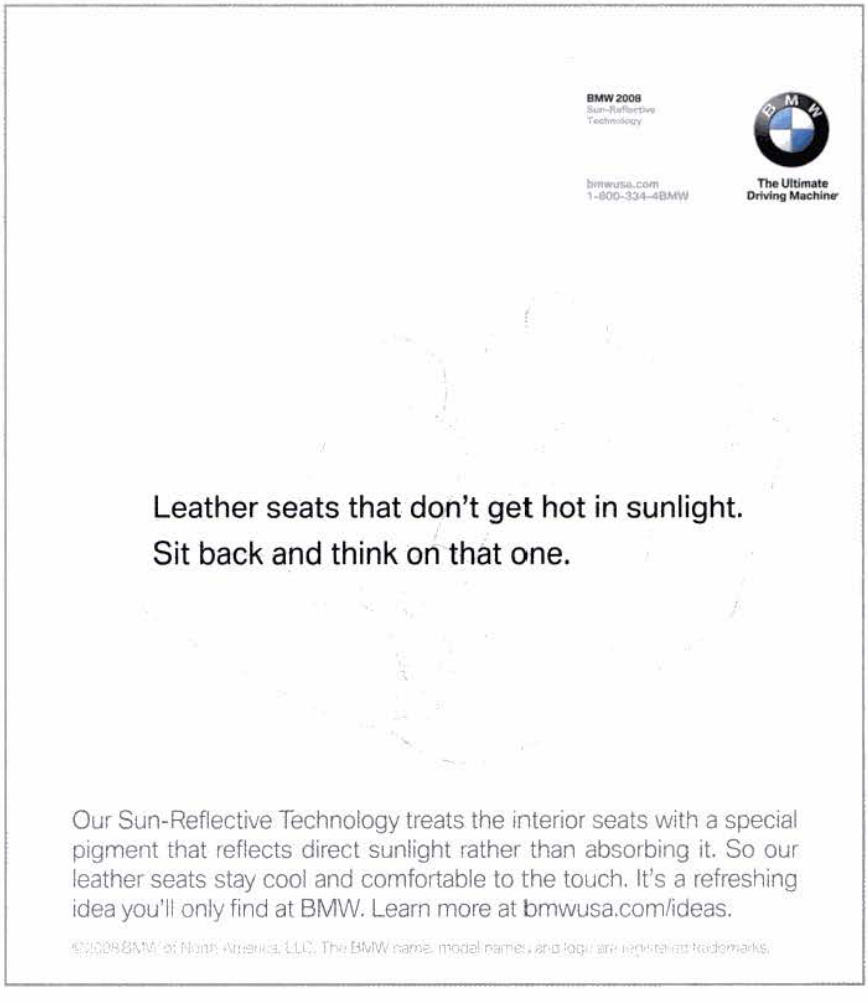
Jen Szczepanski
Denver, Colorado

As soon as I pulled the February 2008 issue from my mailbox, I knew something was different. Honestly, previous issues of Dwell still lay unread in a large bin of other unread magazines, but I couldn't wait to open this issue. I'm less than halfway through it, and I had to put it down to write and tell you how amazing it is. The new layout is so much more reader-friendly: I find myself actually reading articles (and even captions!), and I'm eagerly turning pages to see what's next. Thank you for taking the time and making such a major effort to restyle the magazine. As an aspiring interior designer who wants to focus on modern, sustainable design, you have just given me a substantial gift. Major kudos to all of you!

Allison van den Berg
Raleigh, North Carolina

I get excited whenever I see a new issue of Dwell arrive in the mail, but when the February 2008 issue arrived, I almost didn't notice it. What a difference 5/8" makes! I loved the weight and floppiness of the old Dwell. The tactile experience of the magazine is much diminished now in its new, ordinary footprint. One could certainly save even more trees by continuing to shrink the magazine, but please be sensitive to the impact on the reader. Happily, I've saved my past issues—when I feel like a bit of the Dwell experience, I will pick up one of those.

Kristin Antelman
Chapel Hill, North Carolina



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Finally, time to savor the latest issue of Dwell, spending Christmas up here in snowy Duluth, Minnesota. Great view, fire going, open the magazine... "Same Great Taste" ("Editor's Note," February 2008).

Oh, no. They've redone the magazine. Oh, crap. The only magazine I get that I really can't wait for. Oh, no...

No need to worry: Not only is it the same great taste, but I think it's even more satisfying. The content is the same quality, smart, and well written. You manage to include design commentary, new stuff, history, and food for the imagination. I have already started to think about our kitchen, and our fence, and...

I'm a graphic designer, and it's so satisfying to see your redesign reflecting your philosophy, keeping current, and allowing me to more easily find my way through. My grandson and I share a smug belief that great people were born in February. Add to that great magazine redesign! I can't wait for the next issue.

Ron McClellen
Iowa City, Iowa

I've been a loyal reader for five years, and have always looked forward to every issue. Over the past few months, I've been anticipating a redesign of the magazine, but to be honest, I'm very surprised at the choices that were settled upon. I applaud you for reducing your environmental footprint by decreasing page size and switching to recycled stock, though I will miss the texture and weight of the former design.

What's really confusing me are the new typography choices and grid. I'm not sure what font you've chosen for your tagline and body copy, but it may as well be Cooper Black. It's very difficult to read, and seems incredibly dated. The grid you've chosen is blowing my mind, and not in a good way. I've always enjoyed your stories, but I've loved soaking in your photos even more. For me, Dwell is all about the photography. On my first perusal, I only saw one full-bleed photo! A vast majority of them were framed by a half-inch border on all sides. So, you've reduced your page size and you've smooshed your beautiful photos even smaller to fit into this needless frame! Not to mention that your folios now feel utterly crammed into the corners, which seems like an amateurish mistake.

It honestly doesn't make any sense. You may as well cut the page size down to the photos themselves and save even more trees, since a half inch on all sides is being wasted anyway. Please let those photos breathe, and for heaven's sake, give us our beautiful, all-caps tagline font back! Your masthead was great: If you want to bump up the size, fine, but there's no need to mess with typographic perfection.

I hate to say it, but if the overall design of the new Dwell doesn't improve significantly over the next few issues, I may be looking for another modern-stuff resource.

Kyle Snarr
Via email

Thanks for making your magazine smaller. Not only are you saving trees, but the new issue fits much better on the tank of my toilet. Finally, "The Fruit Bowl Manifesto" ("Editor's Note," October 2000) lives up to its name.

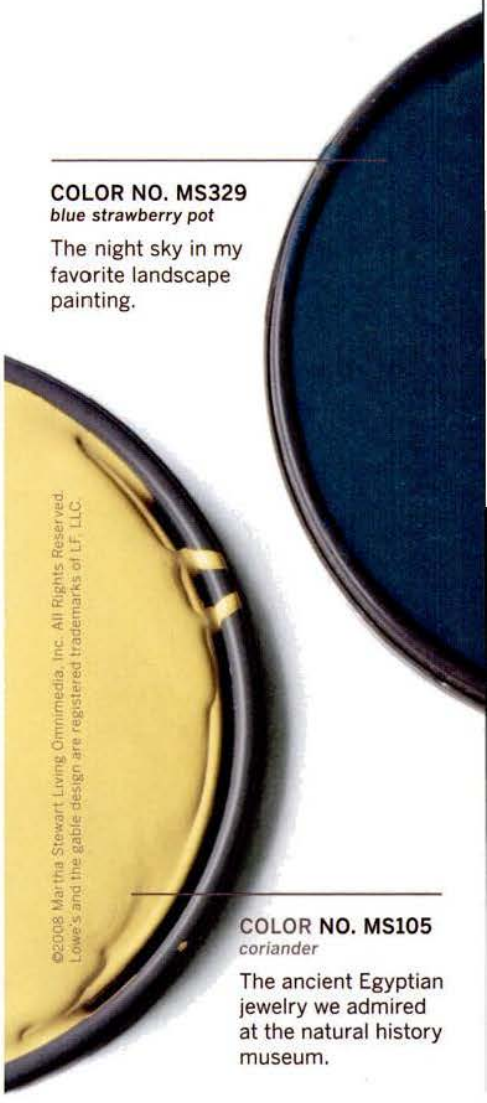
Dave Otte
Portland, Oregon

Editors' Note: Our July/August 2008 issue will feature a report on eco-toilets, and should feel right at home.

First of all, I want to say how much I enjoy your magazine—it's a refreshing alternative to the typical design magazines. Your approach to design, sustainability, and modernism keeps me in suspense each month while awaiting the next issue.

Speaking of issues, I have a bone to pick: One thing I really hate about magazines in general is those annoying subscription cards. Not only can they cause a mess and force you to jump ahead to a page you're not ready to visit yet, but they're also a waste of paper. Maybe they're made of recycled paper, but regardless, they're still paper. Imagine how much paper (even recycled paper) could be saved if you ▶

the self portrait no. 16
curator



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blue strawberry pot
The night sky in my favorite landscape painting.

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The ancient Egyptian jewelry we admired at the natural history museum.

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either limited it to one or two, or eliminated them altogether. I think you'd have a few trees thanking you, not to mention me.

Adolfo M. Perez
Coral Gables, Florida

I'm blown away by the redesign of your magazine. I have been an avid reader for several years, and have anticipated each issue with a voraciousness that rivals a hard-core skier's anticipation of fresh powder. But with the changes made to the design of your magazine, I plan on canceling my subscription. The typography and organization is what I would expect from a high school yearbook, and not from such a darling magazine like Dwell. It's hard to read and hard on the eyes, while managing to plummet my interest to three shades of boredom. I must say that I am bummed—I think someone just shot my puppy.

Ryan Goodwin
Salt Lake City, Utah

Editors' Note: No puppies were harmed in the making of this issue.

As a design professional living and working in Montreal, I was pleased to see Dwell focusing its attention on the city ("Detour," December/January 2008). Gilles Saucier is one of the more talented architects currently practicing in the country, and his take on Montreal's design status and community made for an interesting read. However, I found the photos accompanying the interview to be completely incongruous with the text. Saucier expressed that "We're still living in that old image of Habitat 67 and the Olympic Stadium." Surely this could have been an opportunity to update that image, but instead full-page photos of Fuller's Expo dome and Safdie's Habitat reinforced it. The view from the mountain lookout highlights some of the city's worst architecture, and the choice of a restaurant interior (with clever decor but little design) and a drab "lifestyle" shot of our farmer's market were baffling inclusions.

Equally confusing was the absence of any of Saucier's work. His Faculty of Music Building at McGill University is one of the most exciting additions to the downtown landscape in years, and an opportunity to showcase it was wasted here. I can only hope that Dwell will revisit Montreal with a more balanced perspective.

Kurt v
Montreal, Canada

Editors' Note: Though we loved presenting Gilles Saucier's views, it was not the goal of our photography to hew to them. Given how large buildings like Habitat 67 still loom on Montreal's architectural horizon, not showing them would leave readers who have never visited in the dark. That said, images of new and exciting buildings like the Palais des Congrés (p. 200) and Nomade Architecture's addition to the Centre des Femmes de Montréal (p. 206) do illustrate the city's more forward-looking design scene.

I haven't seen a lot of comments on your "Archive" series, but they are my favorite part of Dwell. I am the architect daughter of a still-practicing 70-year-old architect, and the "yellowed" pages look right out of one of the old issues of *Progressive Architecture* or *Architectural Record* that sit on our shelves! Hooray for the ones who paved my way—they deserve to have their stories told. Thank you!

Barb Quinn
Louisville, Kentucky

First of all, I miss your editors' responses to letters to the editor. I always thought they were smart and funny and informative. It also seemed like you were engaging us, your readers, more by actually addressing some of our concerns.

But I would like to thank you for your move away from the swaths of color in the middle of the photos of the "city" pieces. I was reading the article on Montreal, Quebec, in the December/January 2008 issue ("Detour") and I thought, Wow, they took out those color swaths! They always distracted me because I love photography, and I couldn't see the beautiful pictures you had chosen for each city because of the color you superimposed over them. Now, with the color just above the pictures, you still have the concept of the color theme throughout the article, but it doesn't interfere with our enjoyment of the pictures. What a great solution! Thanks a million.

By the way, I don't know how you managed to make suburban living interesting, but you did!

Tim Powell
New York, New York

Editors' Note: Showering us with praise in an effort to elicit a coveted editors' note is a transparently shallow act of which you should be thoroughly ashamed. And, we might add, sincerely thanked.

Correction: In our November 2007 issue, we failed to credit photographer Richard Barnes for the photos accompanying our "Nice Modernist" story about Brooklyn, New York, design firm Della Valle Bernheimer.

We regret the error.

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Christene Barberich
Big Apple–based Christene Barberich has written for *Travel & Leisure*, the *New York Times's T* magazine, and *Elle Decoration UK*, and is a founding editor of the seminal style and fashion website refinery29.com. Such experience served her well during a sit-down with photographer Pedro Guerrero ("Conversation," p. 127), whom she found to be a riveting raconteur: "Even though some of his stories are more than 70 years old, they all retain their essence and are beautifully intact. And he makes a killer martini."

Nick Bowers
Powderhound photographer Nick Bowers spent a steamy and stormy Christmas Eve in his hometown of Sydney documenting the duplex of David Langston-Jones ("Twice as Nice," p. 89). "The job was shot on film, which is always a pleasure. Peeling back a Polaroid to reveal an image still gives me a buzz." Also buzzworthy: his ongoing efforts to make blurry fruit bowls an omnipresent architectural photography cliché.

Michael Dumiak
Berlin-based writer and dwell.com contributor Michael Dumiak never tires of making the trip to the history-rich city of Prague ("EggO Centric," p. 164). "I was at a neighborhood place called Žlutá pumpa, standing there between a Czech rock promoter and a guy who says he used to be a roadie for the bluegrass mandolin god Bill Monroe. He was telling stories about how Bill used to keep fighting chickens on his front lawn." Whether the EggO House ever hosted similar bouts between pugilistic poultry shall remain one of Prague's enduring mysteries.

Kerryn Fischer
New mom—and Cape Town–based writer—Kerryn Fischer traded nappies for notebooks for her assignment in Johannesburg, South Africa ("Katz's Cradle," p. 148). She found the indefatigable Gregory Katz and his wife to be as inspiring as their home: "They have lots of fingers in different pies, and are incredibly passionate people." No slouch herself, Fischer is the endearingly disorganized South Africa editor of *Real Simple*, and former editor of *Elle Decoration South Africa*.

Nigel Peake
We enlisted the inestimable hand-eye coordination of compulsive illustrator Nigel Peake—currently devoted to drawing dilapidated sheds in excruciating detail—to ink Tom Vanderbilt's story about the Nakagin Capsule Tower ("Time Capsule," p. 178). He did so to the soothing strains of Frankie Valli while waiting for the sullen Scottish weather to prove that it fronted an equal number of seasons.

Andrew Rowat
With a background in modeling and graphic design, photographer Andrew Rowat naturally dreamed of being a marine biologist when he grew up. Finding the life aquatic not for him, he hit the silk road for China. On being shanghaied by Dwell to Tasmania ("Kingston Brio," p. 156): "It's always a treat to shoot these wonderful homes, and to see how people fit their living spaces into the greater environment."

Simon Sellars
Writer Simon Sellars took a break from an in-depth study of the topography of cereal boxes for his story on the hill-hugging house that architect Aaron Roberts built for his parents in Tasmania ("Kingston Brio," p. 156). A coauthor of Lonely Planet's *Micronations* and *Netherlands* guides, he notes that the home embodied "innovation and sensitive design in a package that is sure to grab the attention of the Mainland."

Steve Silberman
We outsourced our story on architectural rendering studios ("Offshore Drawing," p. 172) to San Francisco–based wordsmith Steve Silberman. A former student of Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs, he now earns his naked lunch money writing for *Wired* and *Shambhala Sun* magazine.

Marcus Trimble
Architect, writer, and Pecha Kucha Grand Pooh-Bah Marcus Trimble is the founder and head provocateur of Sydney-based architectural firm Super Colossal. After being treated to a fine cup of tea and the disarming hospitality of homeowner David Langston-Jones, he discovered the duplex's verdantly landscaped courtyard to be a cool and relaxing suburban oasis ("Twice as Nice," p. 89).

Tom Vanderbilt
Brooklyn-based writer Tom Vanderbilt made a pilgrimage to Tokyo to tour the Nakagin Capsule Tower–designed by Kisho Kurokawa–in advance of its planned demolition ("Time Capsule," p. 178). "I have a particular affinity for relics of the future," he says." The Nakagin has long captivated me as a response to urban density, one that seems particularly striking in an age marked by increased consumption of domestic space." His book, *Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do (and What It Says About Us)*, from publisher Alfred A. Knopf, will hit the road in August.

Noah Webb
Paparazzi-shaming pro photographer Noah Webb makes Los Angeles look like a star regardless of whether it's ready for its close-up ("Detour," p. 196). Though no stranger to California's fabled freeways, he feels most at home with salt in his hair and sand in his shoes. Webb stays in Sex Wax and leashes by shooting for such clients as *Anthem*, *Domino*, *Monocle*, *Newsweek*, and *Surface*.

Photos by Nicholas Trikonis

Noah Webb ("Detour," p. 196) risks life, lens, and Nike Dunk Lows in a daring attempt to gather photographic evidence of Vulkie, the elusive Vulcan Materials gravel pit monster.

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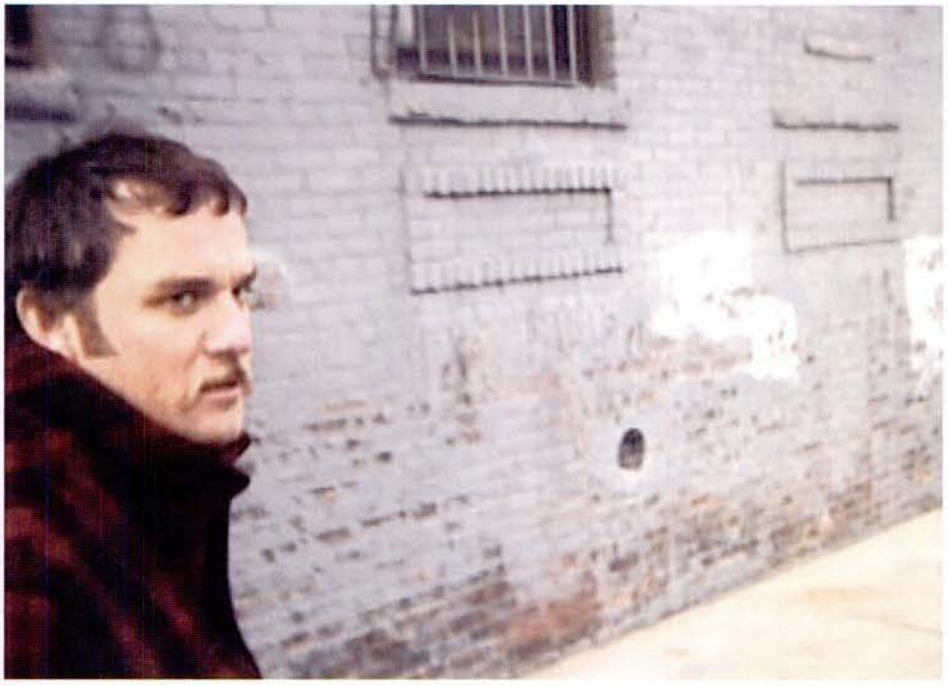

Designer Jason Miller takes us on a guided tour of his Greenpoint, Brooklyn, studio where creations like this contrarian tea service and Duct Tape chair originate.

For more about Herman Miller's design legacy, please go to HermanMiller.com/discoveringdesign. For the Herman Miller retailer nearest you, call 1 800 646 4400, or go to HermanMiller.com/hmhome.

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EggO House Interview

Berlin-based writer Michael Dumiak takes us to Eastern Europe to discuss Czech design with architect Jaroslav Wertig. Wertig is part of the firm A69 Architects, whose beautifully arranged concrete-and-wood EggO House is featured in this issue. Visit our website to hear this exclusive audio interview. dwell.com/audio

Garden Watering Cans

Whether you're tending to a gah-den in Boston or a patch in Pasadena, most of the vessels we use to keep those peonies and petunias healthy are in need of a major makeover. Make sure your path to botanical bliss is filled with stylish, ergonomic outdoor equipment by checking out our selection of watering cans. dwell.com/slideshows

Photo by Jens Passoth (exterior)

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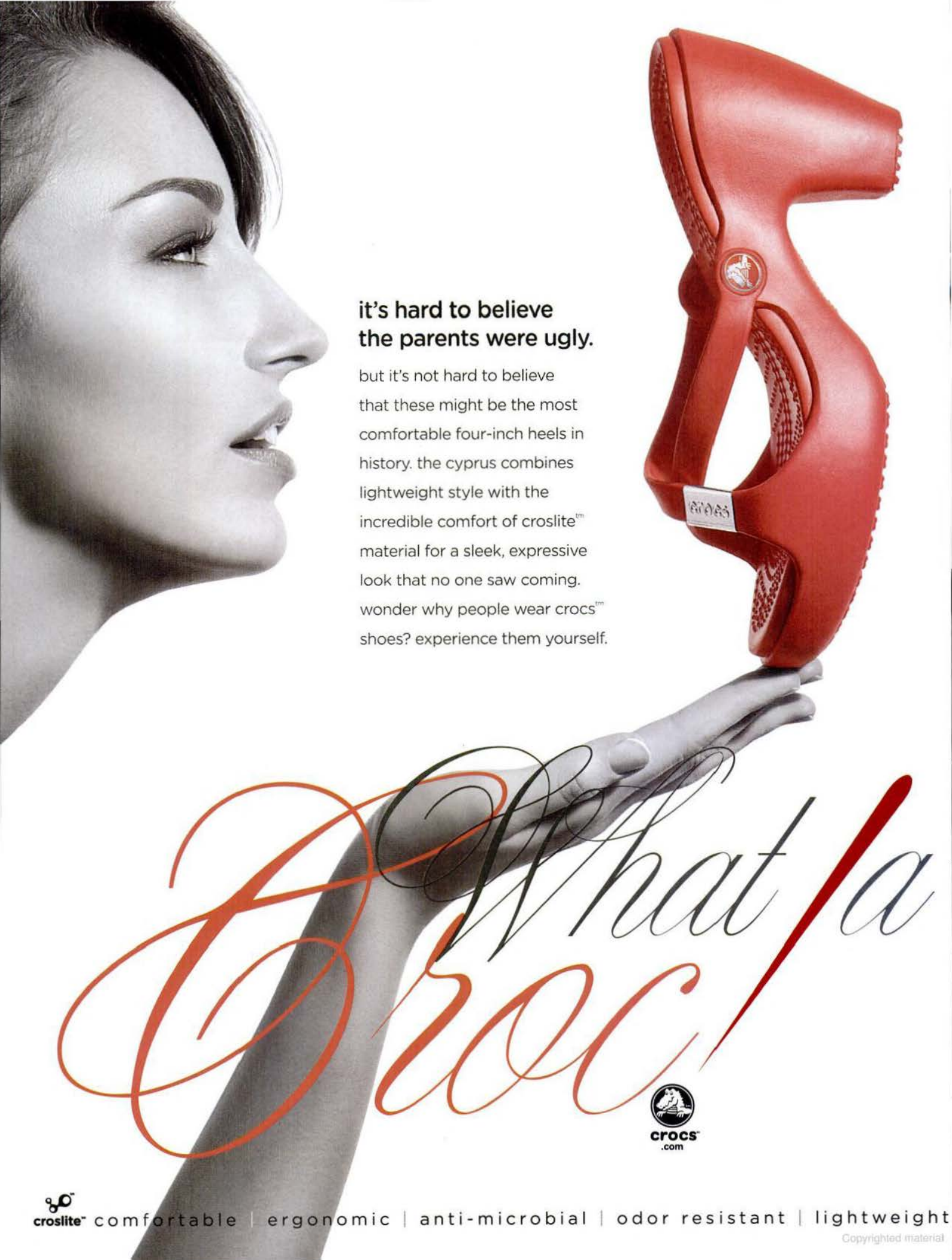

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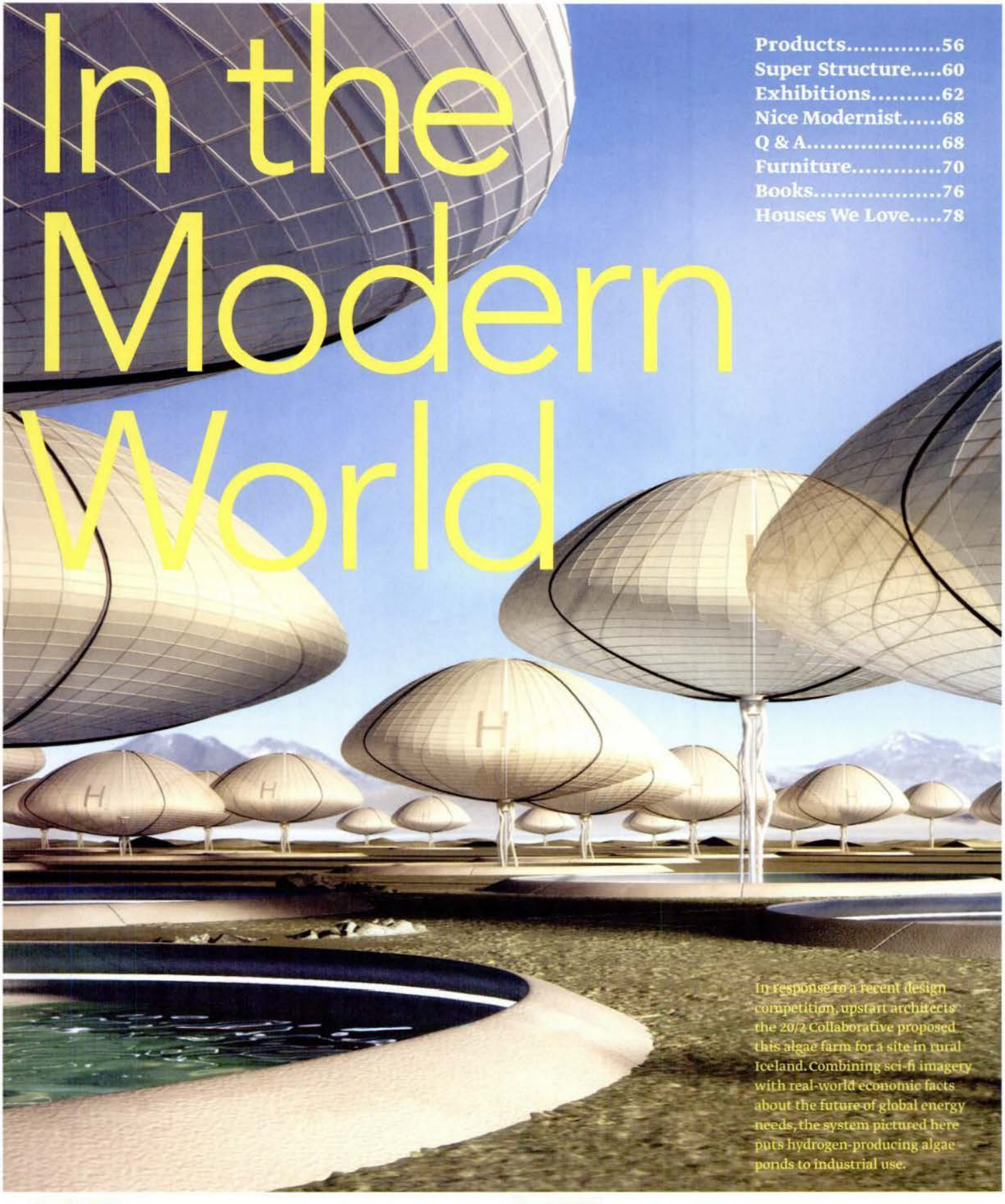
In the Modern World



In response to a recent design competition, upstart architects the 20/2 Collaborative proposed this algae farm for a site in rural Iceland. Combining sci-fi imagery with real-world economic facts about the future of global energy needs, the system pictured here puts hydrogen-producing algae ponds to industrial use.

May Calendar
Important dates in art and design, with architecture thrown in for good measure: Welcome to Dwell's timeline of the month.

May 1 (1893)
The World's Columbian Exposition opens in Chicago, as memorably retold by author Erik Larson in *The Devil in the White City*.

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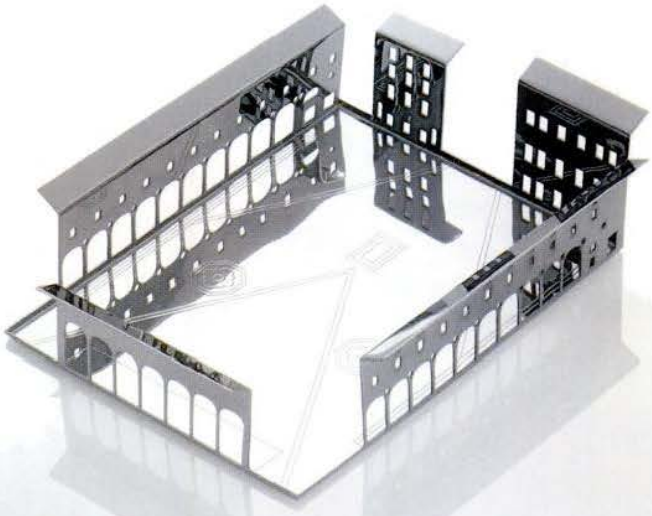
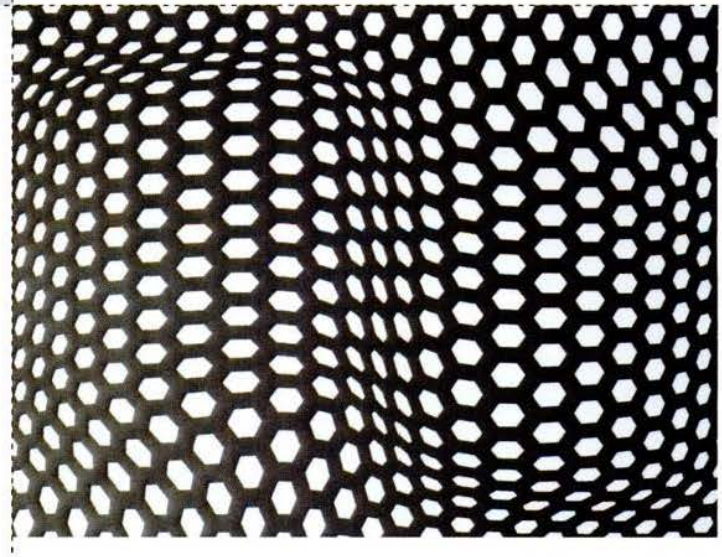


100 Piazze Firenze tray
By Fabio Novembre for Driade
driade.com
Inspire a mini-Medici renaissance with this silver-plated *piccola piazza*—one of the many Italian environs emulated in a new series of trays by Fabio Novembre.

Wishbone hall stand
By Busk+Hertzog
busk-hertzog.dk
Leave all your hang-ups at the door with the Wishbone, Danish design firm Busk+Hertzog's sleek, powder-coated stainless steel take on Mother Nature's original coatrack: the tree. *(right)*



Trio glassware set
By Camilla Kropp for Iittala
iittala.com
Handmade and free blown at Iittala's legendary Finnish glass factory, this modern three-piece serving set stacks up well against the classics. *(left)*

Cage placemat
By Maurizio Meroni for Industreal
industreal.it
Part of precision-fabrication magician Industreal's new laser-cut Soft collection, Cage comes in five flavors of iridescent Kvadrat textile and four very Vasarely textures (shown).

May 4 (1880)
Utopian architect Bruno Taut is born.

May 6 (1889)
The Eiffel Tower opens, instantly becoming one of the world's most famous structures.
tour-eiffel.fr

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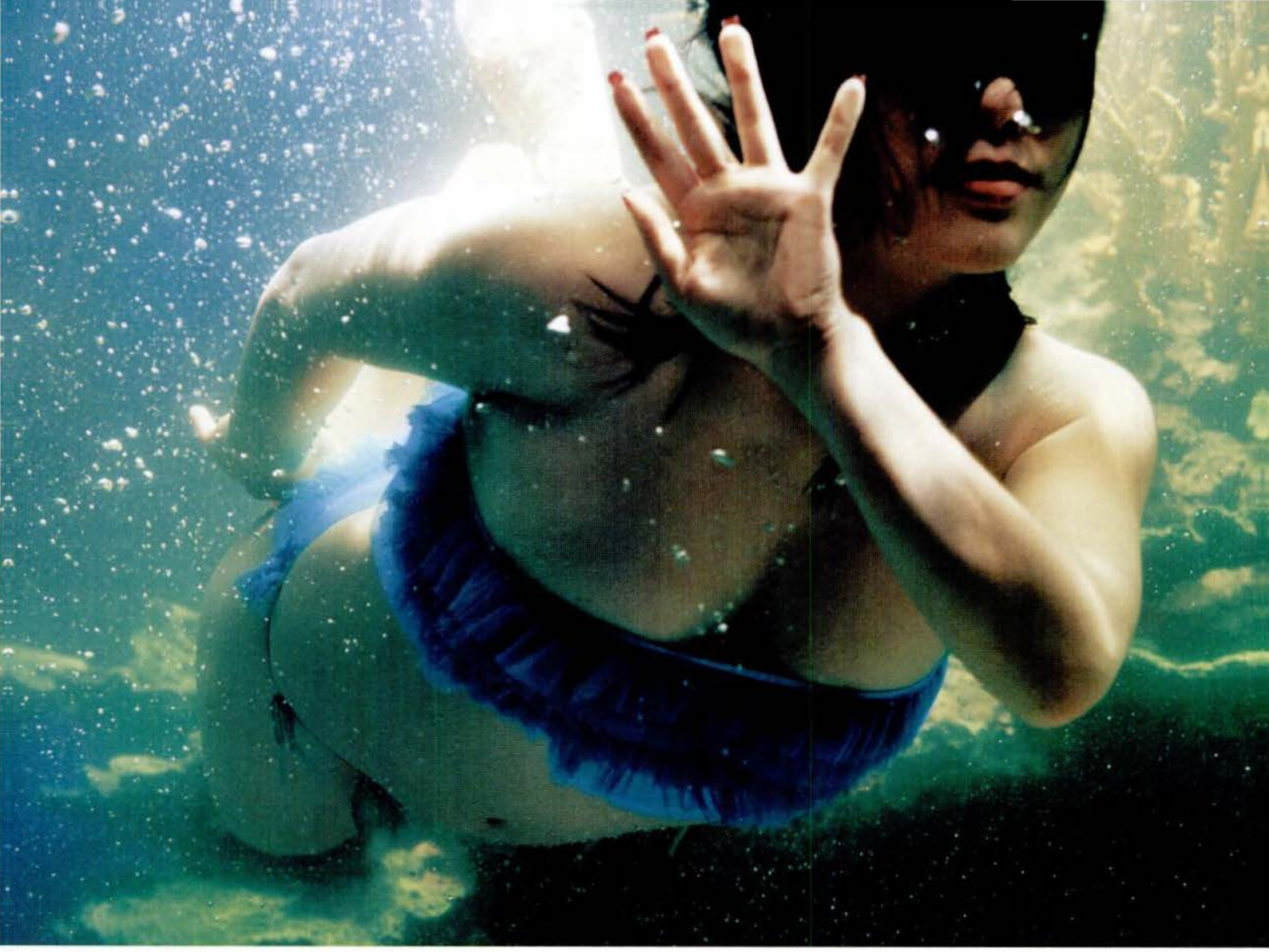

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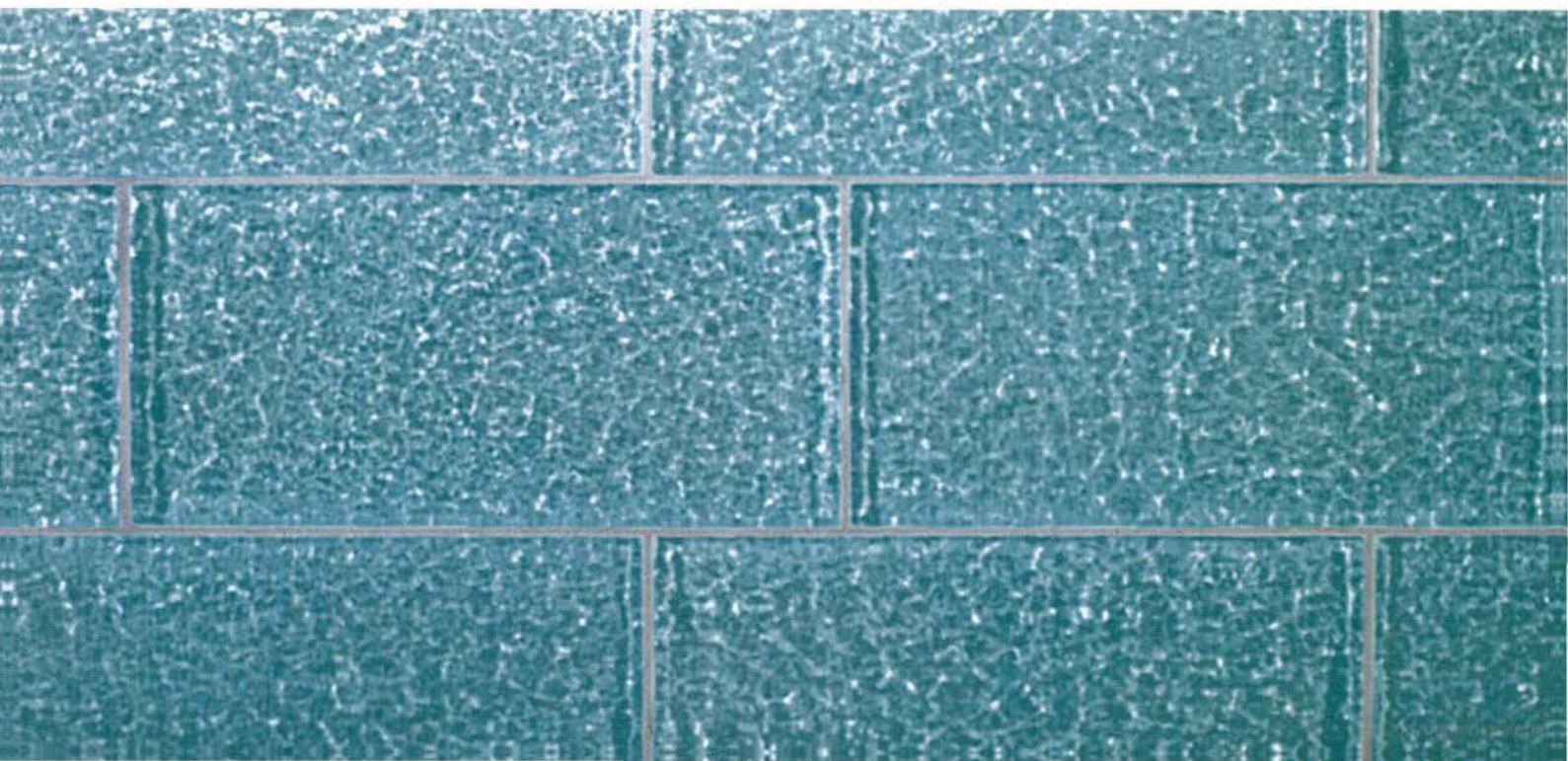
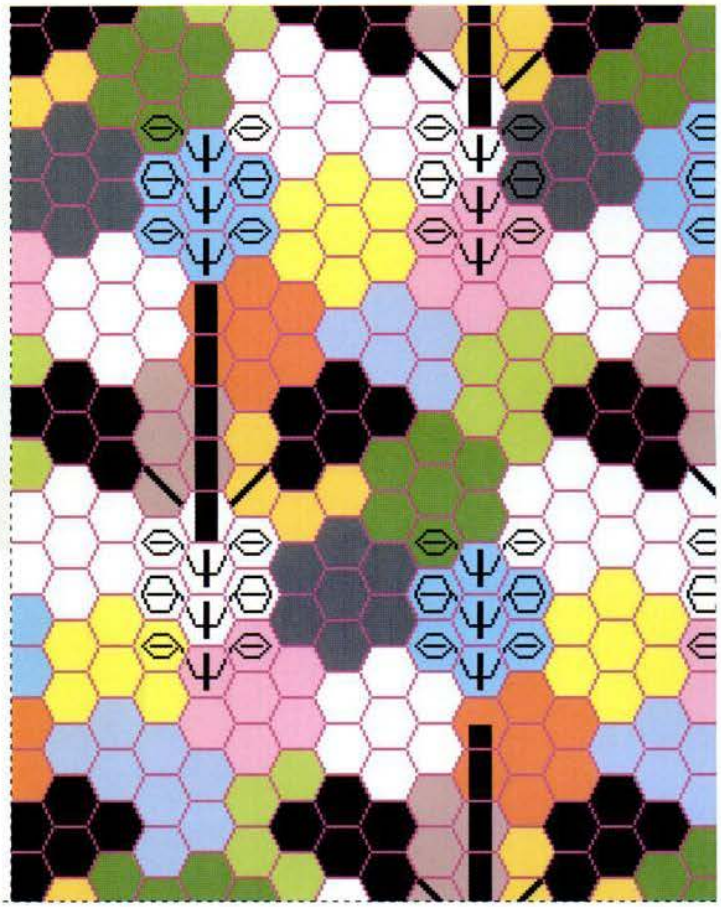


Round Wire basket
By Ufficio Tecnico Alessi for Alessi
alessi.com
Originally introduced by Alessi in the 1950s, this sunny little basket is one of 11 recently reissued, limited edition designs available exclusively through MoMA Design Stores.



Gift-wrap set
By eBoy
hello.eboy.com
This honey of a gift-wrap set from the pixel pushers at Berlin-based eBoy packs four eye-popping patterns, one of which brought back fond memories of our Q*bert-playing arcade days. *(right)*

Soaps and sanitizers
By the CleanWell Company
cleanwelltoday.com
Antibacterial hand soaps seem like a good idea—until you look at their active ingredient: triclosan. Found in many a soap, body wash, toothpaste, and even deodorant, triclosan can become chloroform, a known carcinogen, when it contacts chlorinated water. Add UV rays and you get dioxin, a toxic compound. One great way to escape this polluting predicament without ditching healthful habits is to use that innocuous household herb thyme, a natural antiseptic that eliminates germs without triclosan's aftereffects. CleanWell's new line of soaps and sanitizers utilizes the little herb's big abilities, cleaning your hands without dirtying your conscience. And while the Orange Vanilla scent is a bit intense, we're big fans of their Lavender Absolute.

May 9-11 (2008)
BKLYN DESIGNS presents the "next wave" of home furnishing and accessory design.
brooklyndesigns.net

May 10 (2008)
A new exhibition by Stanley Greenberg closes at the Gitterman Gallery, New York.
gittermangallery.com

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www.dyson.com

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Smart Elevators

The invention of the modern elevator in 1853 opened up revolutionary possibilities for vertical travel within architectural space. But elevators have remained remarkably consistent since. So what if we were to rethink elevator design?

As it happens, elevator innovation is in its heyday. The Miconic 10, for instance, Schindler's smart elevator, offers what the company calls a "destination dispatch system." You type the floor you're visiting into a lobby keypad, and a computer then clusters floor visits together by efficiency. Someone racing to the 75th floor can thus avoid stopping at the 5th, the 15th, the 25th, and so on—which reduces starts and stops, saving energy. But there are hitches: As John Tierney joked in the *New York Times* last year, smart elevators can be a "cognitive test" for users, who find themselves whisked up to the very top of a building when they had only wanted to go two floors.

There is also a "green" elevator by Otis, whose flat-belt, gearless Gen2 system requires no polluting lubricants and, when coupled with a "regenerative drive," reduces energy use by nearly 75 percent. Meanwhile, firms such as Mitsubishi Electric and Toshiba have been accelerating their elevators in order to cope with new building heights. These high-tech cars can reach speeds of nearly 14 feet per second.

Finally, Mitsubishi made waves last winter when it opened the world's tallest elevator testing tower, the Solaé, in Japan. One gigantic, windowless elevator shaft, the Solaé tests out the firm's secret elevator designs, which just might one day outdo Willy Wonka's infamous lift.

schindler.com
otisgen2.com
mitsubishi-elevator.com

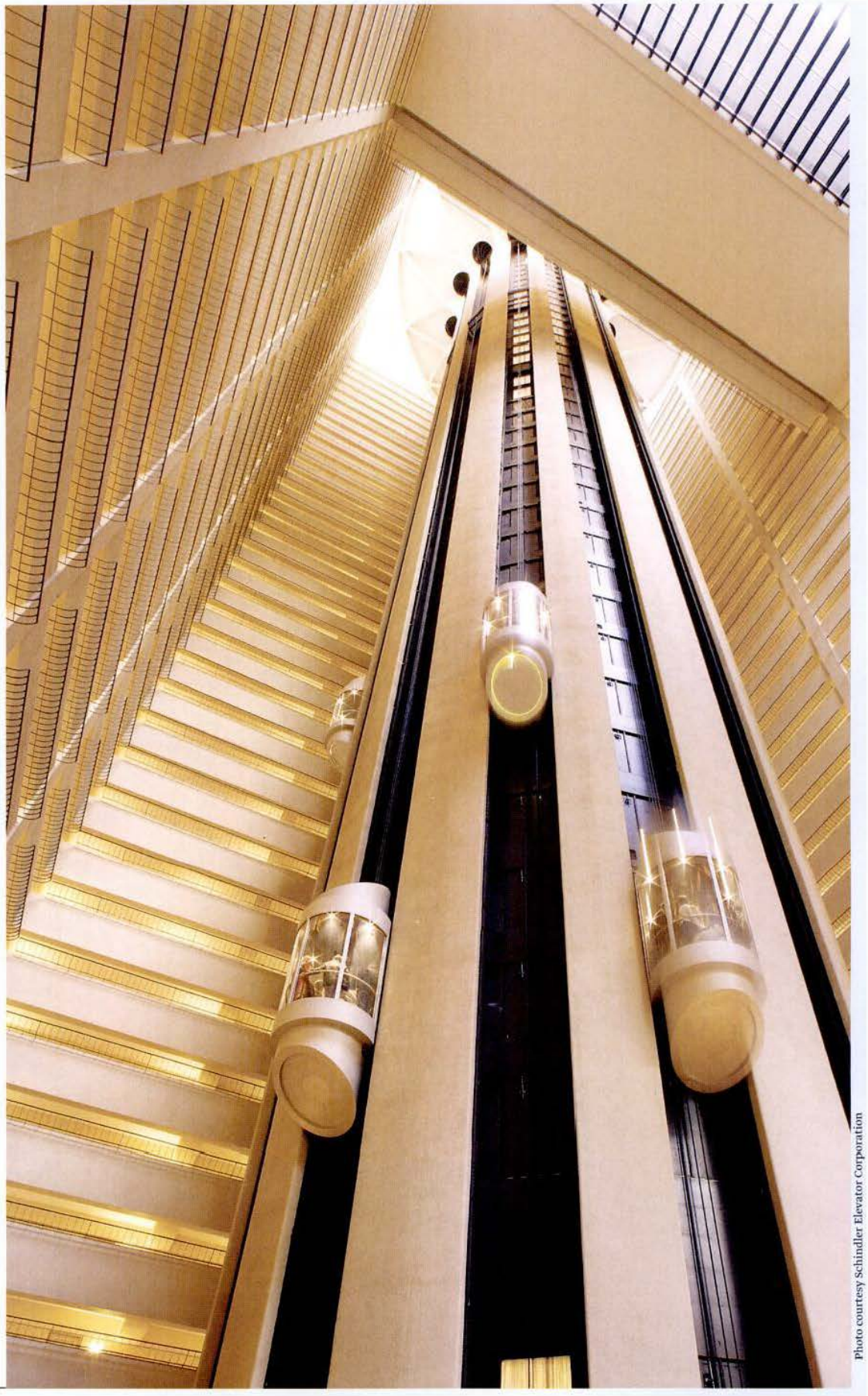

Photo courtesy Schindler Elevator Corporation

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A preliminary sketch by Aaron Morse for his new mural at UCLA's Hammer Museum.

Aaron Morse: Timeline
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
January 23–June 12, 2008
hammer.ucla.edu
The paintings of Aaron Morse combine a bewildering array of references: comic books, historical images of U.S. presidents, the writings of Jules Verne, pop music, Mount Everest, and even the Bible, all filtered through Morse's rusty color scheme. *Timeline*, his epic new montage, decks the walls of the Hammer Museum through June.

Andrea Branzi's new installation at the Fondation Cartier is more folly than sculpture.

Andrea Branzi: Open Enclosures
Fondation Cartier, Paris
March 28–June 22, 2008
fondation.cartier.com
Designed by architectural provocateur Andrea Branzi, cofounder of the legendary group Archi-zoom, this project weaves together metal, glass, and organic matter to form walls around a "vertical home": a surreal piece of unfolding furniture that's part bed, part personal workspace, part shelf.

One of On Kawara's infamous "date paintings" captured November 23, 1996, for all to see.

On Kawara: 10 Tableaux and 16,952 Pages
Dallas Museum of Art
May 18–August 24, 2008
dallasmuseumofart.org
On Kawara began painting words, numbers, and images over five decades ago to record the passage of time with an amusing and highly conceptual simplicity. The Dallas Museum of Art has now organized the first major retrospective of this work in more than ten years.

A glimpse of the surreal, broken symmetries and reflective surfaces of artist Saskia Olde Wolbers.

Saskia Olde Wolbers
Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
April 25–July 13, 2008
mori.art.museum
Video artist Saskia Olde Wolbers weaves together complex, handmade models of architectural space with surreal voiceovers to produce engaging narratives that often refer to real events. Here she brings her strange and dreamlike worlds to Tokyo's Mori Art Museum.

May 11 (1976)
Finnish International Style architect Alvar Aalto dies.

May 11 (2008)
Coop Himmelb(l)au: Beyond the Blue closes at the MAK, Vienna.
mak.at

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Environa Studio
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Leo Marmol, FAIA
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Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects

Mark Rios, FAIA, FSLA
Rios Clementi Hale Studios

Sebastian Mariscal
Sebastian Mariscal Studio

Theresa Fatino
SBE Entertainment Group

Patrick Tighe, AIA, FAAR
Tighe Architecture

Angela Brooks, AIA, LEED AP
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For the complete list of speakers, conference line-up, and registration info go to DwellonDesign.com

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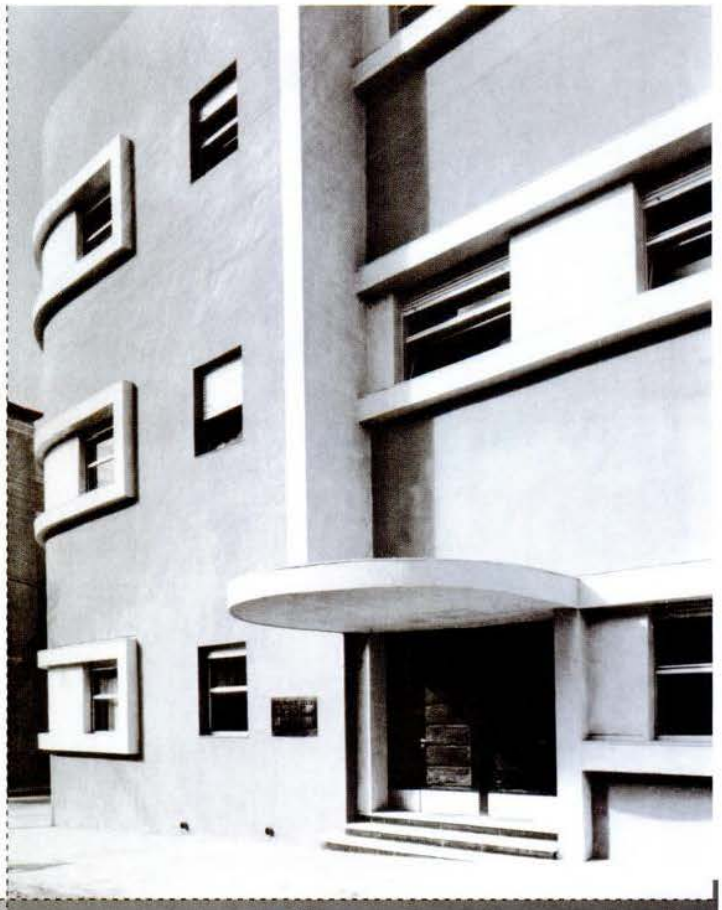
The White City of Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv's Modern Movement
Architekturzentrum, Vienna
February 21–May 19, 2008
azw.at

Some may be surprised to learn that the Israeli city of Tel Aviv is a UNESCO World Heritage site, not because of its ancient past—the city was only founded in 1909, atop the old port of Jaffa—but due to a preponderance of Bauhaus-style architecture. In 1925 the city was laid out by Patrick Geddes, a Scottish city planner (and trained biologist). Geddes infused his design with the ideals of European urban planning from the era—from green space and public squares to dense residential complexes designed by contemporary architects—and was partly driven by botanical metaphors (the layout of the city has been compared to the veins of a leaf). Weaving throughout the plan was a rational traffic system segregating automobiles from pedestrian use in the interest of urban hygiene.

Inspired by history's Bauhaus heavyweights, and designed by such names as Richard Kauffmann and Erich Mendelsohn, it was architecture that soon made Tel Aviv into the "White City." On one level, the city could be viewed as a gigantic laboratory, in which the central tenets of European modernism were tested in physical form. On another, Tel Aviv was simply a product of its colonial era: exporting a design template from one culture and climate to another. This fascinating city, in need of more preservation and study, is the focus of a major exhibition at the Architekturzentrum in Vienna.



The reason for Tel Aviv's nickname—the "White City"—is made clear by these photographs.

Photos by Nitza Metzger-Smuk/Dwelling on the Dunes

May 12 (2008)
Design and the Elastic Mind closes at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
moma.org

May 12-13 (2008)
The Forum for Urban Design hosts *Rethinking Public Space: From Parks to the Street.*
forumforurbandesign.org

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Valerie Casey

Maybe it was jet lag, or the incipient echo of Al Gore's recently revealed truth. Meetings devoted to diaper design might have played a part, though SkyMall's seatback brand of captive consumerism cannot be discounted. Whatever the catalyst, while circling in the skies above Denver International Airport, Valerie Casey's crisis of conscience hit critical mass: "What am I going to do?" she despaired. "I can't design another *thing*."

She then proceeded to do exactly that: Her "Kyoto Treaty" of design—which has matured over the last year and a half into The Designers Accord—was created before the plane touched down.

The Designers Accord is Casey's nonprofit global initiative to instill awareness of, and foster dialogue about, the environmental and social impact of designer-client relationships. By adopting the Accord, designers commit to impressing upon their clients the idea that sustainability is more than a marketing tool—it's intrinsic to the integrity of their products, and to the subsequent evaluation of their success. The pooling of knowledge and resources is another important tenet, with the ultimate goal being to establish an online brain trust for designers all over the world.

Casey—now at Ideo after 15 years of experience with industry icons like Pentagram and Frog Design—considers the Accord a holistic approach to problem solving. "Designers are very competitive individually, and view themselves as something of mythmakers. It's incredibly gratifying to see everyone playing by the same rules in pursuit of a common goal."

At the heart of that goal lies the question: "How can we make something so valuable that you never want to get rid of it?" It seems Valerie Casey may now have found an answer.

The Designers Accord logo manages to communicate the natural clarity that the Accord itself calls for.

designersaccord.org
valcasey.com

Ebony Snow Chafey

Owner and creative director Ebony Snow Chafey cofounded the Chicago-based design and stationery firm Snow & Graham in the spring of 1998. One successful decade later, her firm does more than $2 million worth of business each year, producing cards, calendars, stationery, notebooks, and even wallpaper. One of Chafey's stated goals is "to put good design in everybody's hands," and that includes producing "big, bold, modern" holiday cards you could even send to Grandma. Amazingly, Chafey was once a welder, studying sculpture at the Art Institute of Chicago—but this somewhat brutal background is impossible to detect in the simple and often mesmerizing lines of Snow & Graham's design. Chafey invited Dwell into her busy Chicago workspace for the following Q&A.

What's your ideal office or working environment?
Our new offices at 4021 Ravenswood, here in Chicago. We started with 12,000 square feet of raw space and made it fit us just right.

Is there someone outside your field who inspires you?
Chef Thomas Keller. His approach to food is both serious and self-disciplined, and his results have wit and sincerity.

What novels, music, or films keep you thinking about design?
The Fountainhead by Ayn Rand. Her novel shows that individuals make great design.

Is there anything that you wish you had designed?
The Paul Rand UPS logo—that knot is binding.

What three buzzwords do you never want to hear applied to your own work?
"Retro," "whimsical," and "letterpressed" should never apply.

snowandgraham.com

Illustrations by Elisabeth Moch

Nice Modernist Q & A

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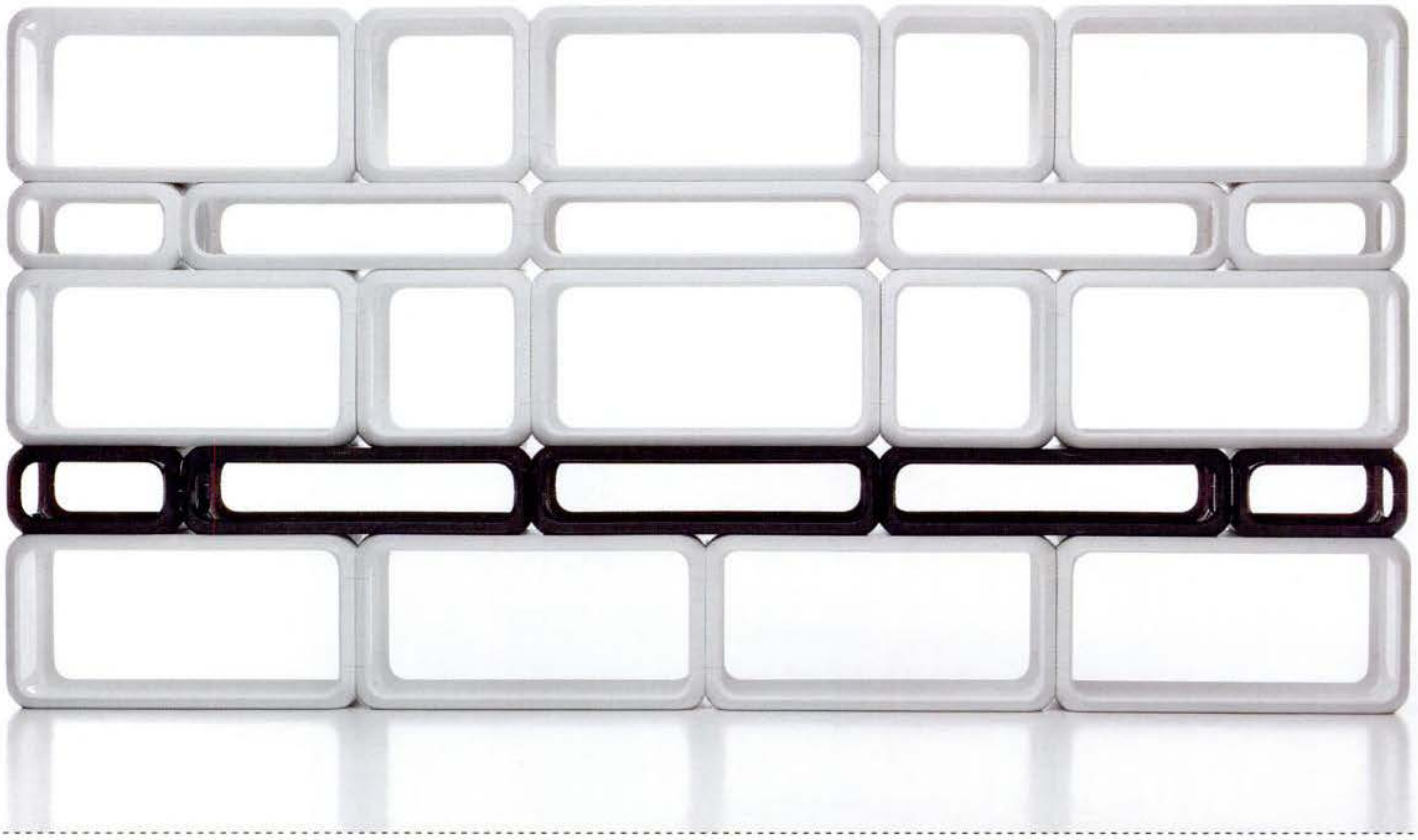

Kobo storage system
By Giovanni Giacobone and Massimo Roj for Sintesi
gruppo-sintesi.com
Sintesi's modular Kobo storage system—which includes a variety of boxy elements, as well as optional wheeled bases—stacks up to resemble a magnified slice of synthetic plant cells. *(above)*

Arenal seating
By Ximoroca for Bonestil
bonestil.es
Outdoor furniture often possesses a look that's more parking lot than patio, but not so the stackable Arenal collection: Its spare lines, patterned backs, and classic car colors will have you carting it inside as well.

May 15–17 (2008)
The American Institute of Architects brings its annual meeting to Boston.
architects.org/2008

May 16 (1915)
American architectural photographer Ezra Stoller is born in Chicago.

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BulbsInBulbs pendant light
By Neweba for d'Esposito & Gaillard
despositogaillard.com
Edison's on-the-outs incandescent inspired the interconnecting acrylic silhouettes of the BulbsInBulbs, a hanging or standing light that shines in countless user-assembled configurations. *(left)*

Maia Relax footstool
By Patricia Urquiola for Kettal
kettal.es
Designed by Patricia Urquiola, and released by Kettal last year, the Maia line of outdoor furniture—which features intricate, handwoven, Alhambra-tiled plaiting—feels even more relaxed with this newly added footstool.

Icicle coffee and side tables
By Thomas Pedersen for Fredericia
fredericia.com
The amoeba table—a member of the mid-century modern gene pool for more than 50 years—gets an evolutionary update in the Icicle table's spiky wood legs.

Shiraz sofa system
Tartan collection
By Philipp Mainzer for e15
e15.com
Germany's e15 tartan'd up their well-respected wooden reputation by introducing this colorful new upholstery collection at last January's IMM Cologne. *(right)*

May 18-21 (2008)
The International Contemporary Furniture Fair comes to New York City.
icff.com

May 18 (1883)
Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus and one of the titans of modernism, is born.

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Miele

Anything else is a compromise

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Canasta sofa
By Patricia Urquiola for B&B Italia
bebitalia.it
Whether evoking the Spanish word for "basket" or the card game, B&B Italia's new Canasta line of outdoor furniture wins us with its modern meld of scale shift and traditional weave. *(above)*

Pentagon seating and tables
By Morgen Studio
morgen.org
Like its namesake, the Pentagon collection boasts a low profile and sturdy construction, though the retro look of its oak frame, earth-tone cushions, and smoked-glass tabletops is decidedly more waiting room than war room.

May 18–21 (2008)
The National Stationery Show moves into the Javits Convention Center, New York.
nationalstationeryshow.com

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50/60/70: Iconic Australian Houses
Karen McCartney
Murdoch, $60
Against the wildness of the Australian outback, the meticulous, controlled environments of modern architecture form a welcome juxtaposition. The homes in this book were all built by modernists Down Under during the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. The influence of international design trends is apparent in the stunning photographs of low, eucalyptus-framed rooflines, wide wooden decks, and generous picture windows.

Design Now!
Charlotte and Peter Fiell
Taschen, $39.99
If you need compelling evidence that design can save the world, then *Design Now!* serves it up. Launching with a sharp critique (in three languages) of wasteful, superfluous, and short-lived products, the authors present works that embody the more noble and sustainable qualities of "durability, unity, integrity, inevitability, and beauty."

Things I Have Learned in My Life So Far
Stefan Sagmeister
Abrams, $40
Seminal designer Stefan Sagmeister once created a self-promotional poster using nothing more than an X-Acto blade and his bare chest. His new book is equally bold: Its die-cut slipcase contains 15 mini books illustrating entries from his diary that can be rearranged to display an array of arrestingly odd covers.

Brussels—A Manifesto: Towards the Capital of Europe
A Berlage Institute Project
NAi Publishers, $45
With its heavy cardstock cover making it feel more like a workbook, complete with maps, plans, and creative montages, *Brussels—A Manifesto* asks us to rethink what the capital of a unified Europe should be. What is the space of politics in a city—and what role do cities play in international politics today? Part democratic treatise, part urban planning guide, this book is well timed, well designed, and well worth the read.

Photos by Peter Belanger

May 31 (1925)
Frei Otto, the structurally adventurous German architect and engineer known for complex geometries, is born.

May 31 (1946)
London's Heathrow Airport, originally used only by the British military, opens for civilian use.

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Guest House for an Anthropologist
Brentwood, California
Air Architecture
francoisperrin.com

A Santa Monica–born anthropologist, having lived in Sri Lanka and Taiwan for nearly 30 years, returned home to teach anthropology at UCLA. Needing a place to store three decades' worth of accumulated artifacts—from Buddhist masks and statues to an entire library—he commissioned local architect François Perrin to create this guesthouse-cum-personal archive in Brentwood. Inspired by the beach house Le Corbusier built for himself on the French Riviera, and intended as a kind of Southern Californian cabinet of curiosities, the house beautifully showcases Perrin's major architectural interests: working with the local climate and industrial material. Using air as insulation, the plywood walls, sheathed in polycarbonate cladding, keep the collection comfortably temperate and out of the reach of bleaching sunlight. Perrin explained that this idea came to him from clothing: Using a thin layer of air between the skin and the garment helps a body stay warm or cool. The translucent panels—cheaper than stucco—are also easy to replace, which means that long-term sun damage is not a problem: You simply attach new panels. Perrin explains that this cladding gives the house "an ability to merge with the sky. The structure can disappear, based on the angle from which you see it and the moment of the day." The house is also a prototype: Perrin is working on two similar structures, for the same anthropologist, to be constructed in Sri Lanka and Taiwan.

Photos by Joshua White (exterior), Michael Wells (interior)

Houses We Love

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SPACE | TO BE

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THING
great books

ROOM
living room

TIME
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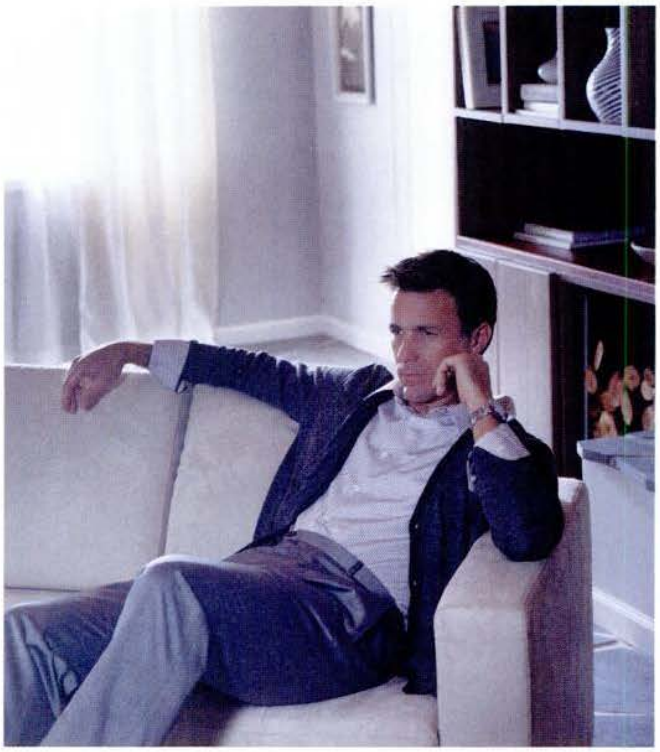

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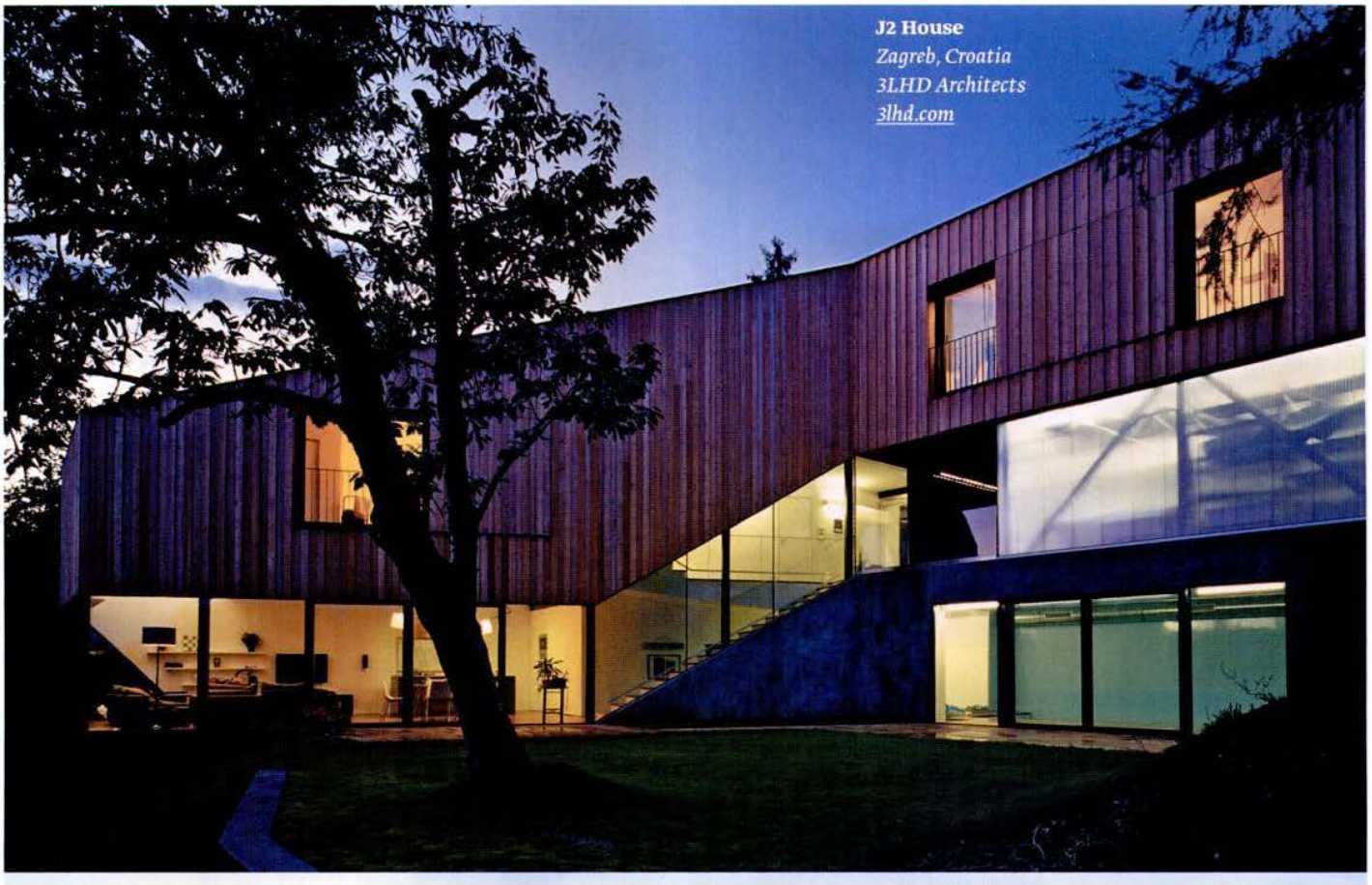

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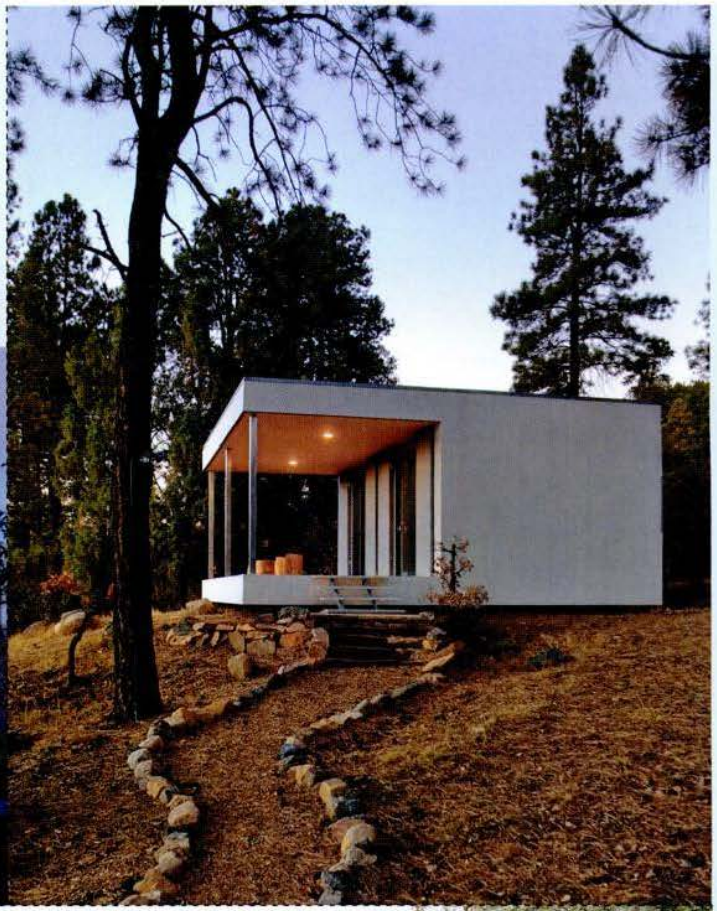

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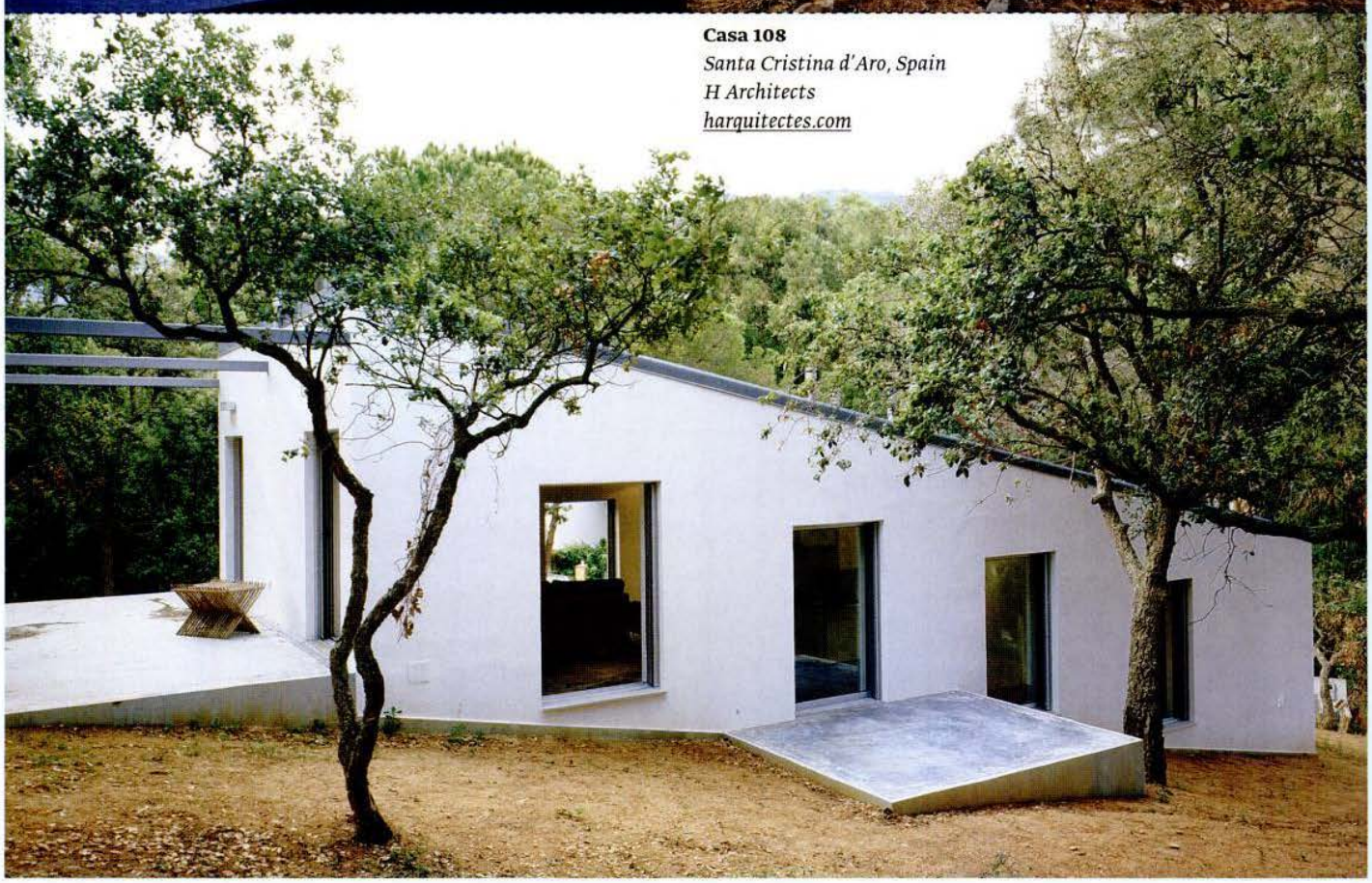

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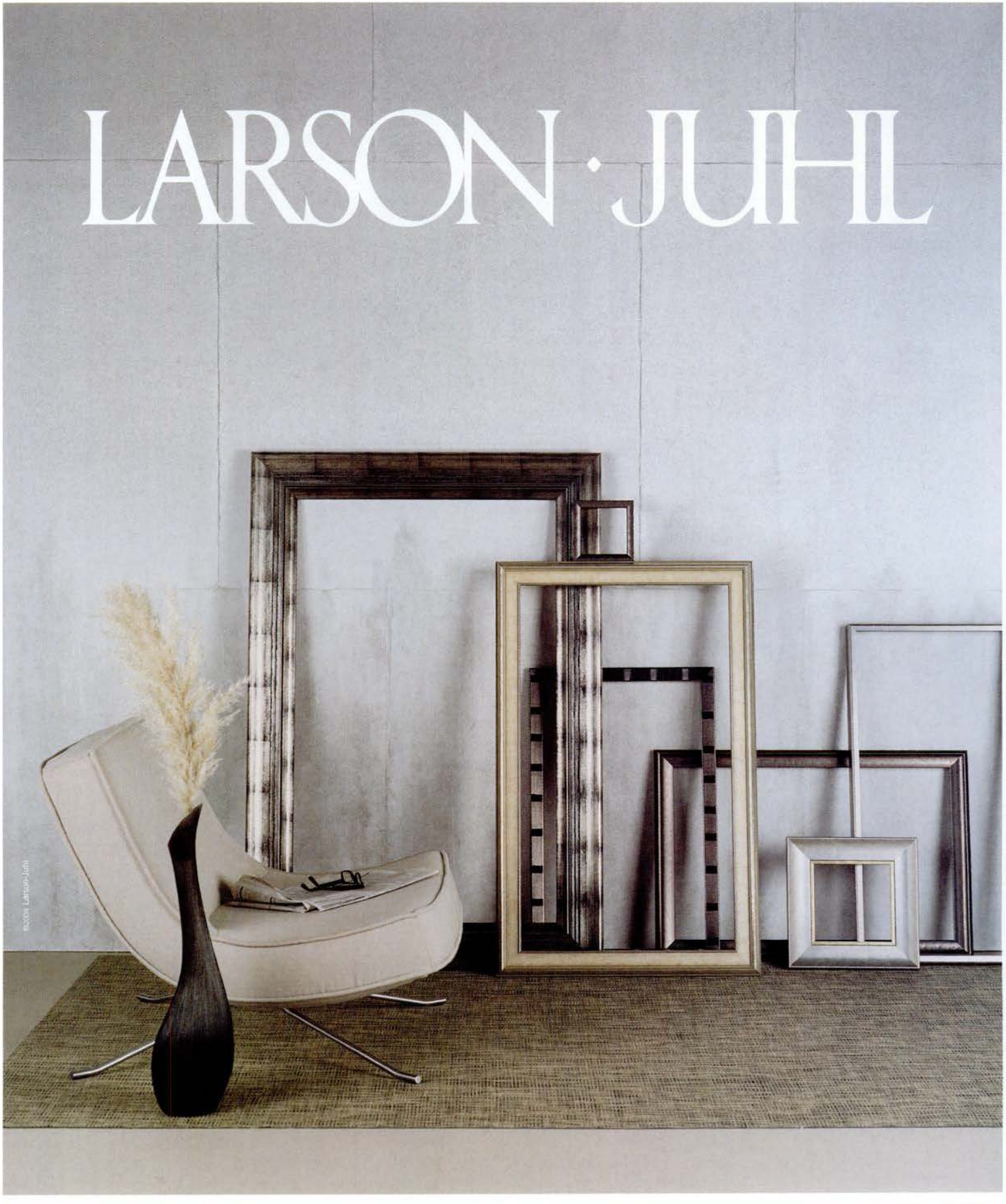

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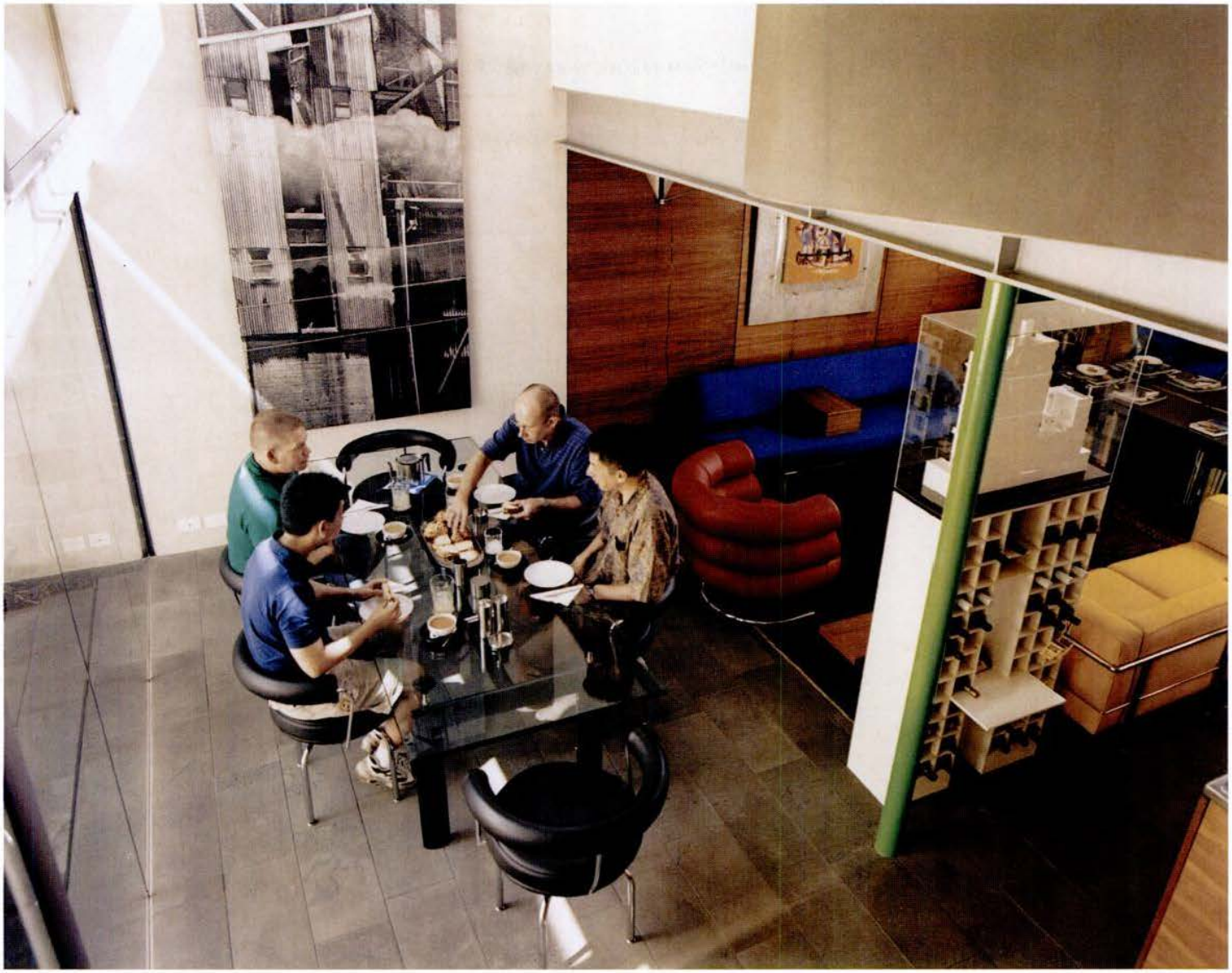

Twice as Nice

Within the mix of warehouses, detached brick bungalows, and dusty pubs of the Sydney, Australia, suburb of Alexandria, local architect David Langston-Jones has built an intricate and finely textured duplex that's one part speculative development, one part home for the owner and architect. The building's two small units (Langston-Jones occupies one and rents the other) benefit from a shared shady patio that makes the somewhat cramped quarters a leafy retreat.

As told to Marcus Trimble
Photos by Nick Bowers

My partner and I were originally looking for a house to renovate, but when we found this block of land, we saw it as an opportunity to make our home here. We purchased it in 1999, and began construction four years later. Initially construction was quite rapid, and we were able to move in fairly quickly. However, completing the project—putting in all the finishing touches—took a little longer than we thought, and it was finally done at the end of 2006.

Before moving to Australia in 1990, I was project architect on Norman Foster's own house, his penthouse in London. It was an ongoing project that seemed to be in a constant state of redesign—as they say, a shoemaker's ▶

Though the duplex presents a tough face to the street (bottom) the double-height ceiling and ample northern light in the dining room (top) make it rather cozy within.

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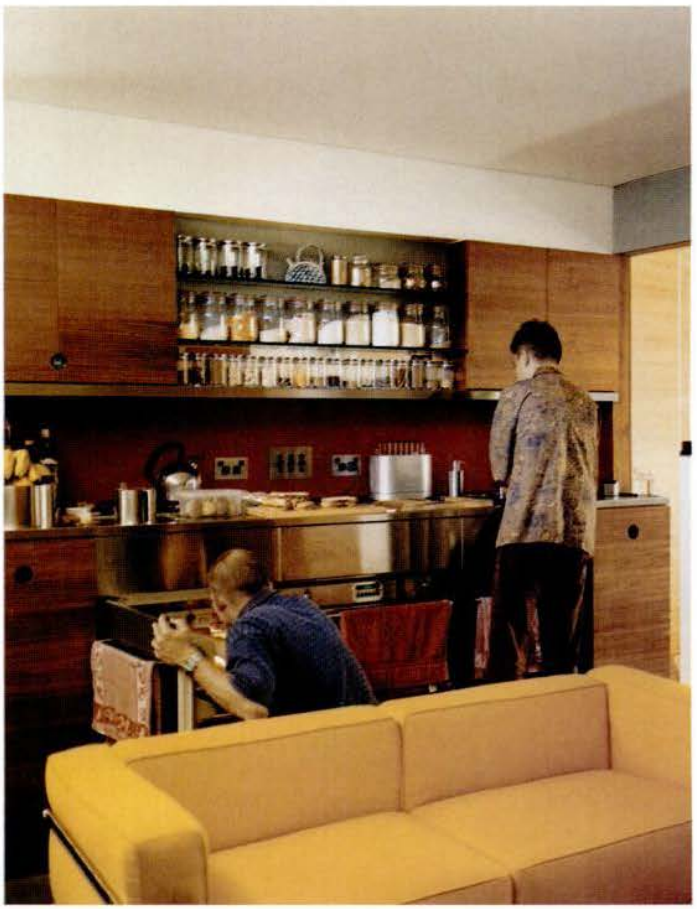


children never own their own shoes—so I had a particular desire for my own house to be a complete project. In a way I saw this house as an opportunity to set out my architectural principles.

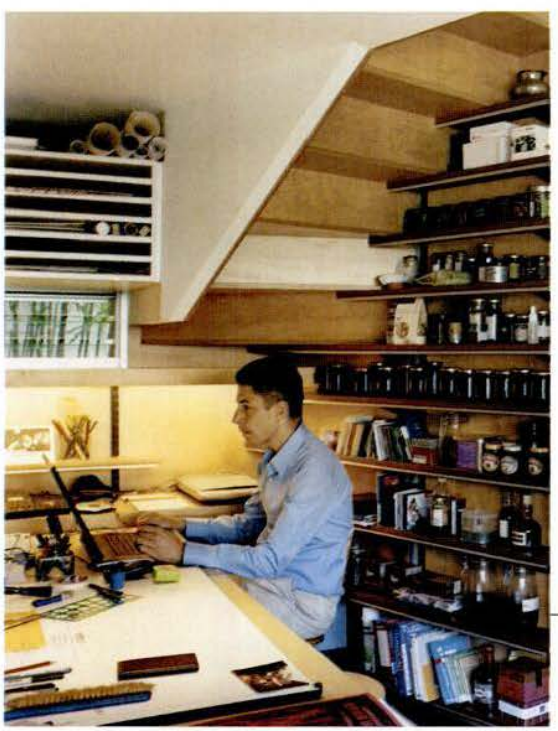
On the outside, we used muted grays of corrugated-steel cladding, but arranged them in various patterns to give some decorative detail as a response to the urban character of the laneway. As a contrast, we wanted the house to feel like something of an oasis inside, and so we used a lot of rich materials like timber and steel, as well as color, to give the interior space a sense of warmth.

The house is very intimate, and there are little things that I think work quite successfully to help this. For instance, the way in which the doors that open into the ground floor living space are made of the same veneer as the wall makes them disappear when closed, and the mirrors in the cabinetry and over the kitchen double the space.

We used splashes of color throughout the house to highlight various elements, like joinery units and structural beams, and the primary colored paint we used was mixed precisely to Le Corbusier's specifications by Katrin Trautwein, a color specialist in Zurich, Switzerland.

Given the incredibly small footprint of the house, I was concerned from the beginning about how to make the living space seem bigger than it really is. It is one of the problems of small houses that the underside of the stairs are often visible, and that that space is rarely very usable. One of the first decisions we made was to move the stairs over the garage, giving it a cave-like feel.

I converted the garage to an office from which I run my architecture practice. I find I am far more productive away from the distractions of an office full of people, so this arrangement suits me very well.



A tightly contorted timber staircase (above left) leads up to the bedrooms next to the garden that provides privacy between the two residences. The kitchen (above right), clad in the same wood as the joinery walls, is designed like a self-contained piece of furniture. Langston-Jones (left) works tucked in his office beneath the stairs. p. 238

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David Underwood, Langston-Jones's partner, opens the large glass doors that expand the interior of the small house out onto the sun-drenched courtyard garden. In keeping with Langston-Jones's love of Le Corbusier, the dining room chairs are LC7s and the table is an LC6 by the famed Swiss architect and Charlotte Perriand. p.238

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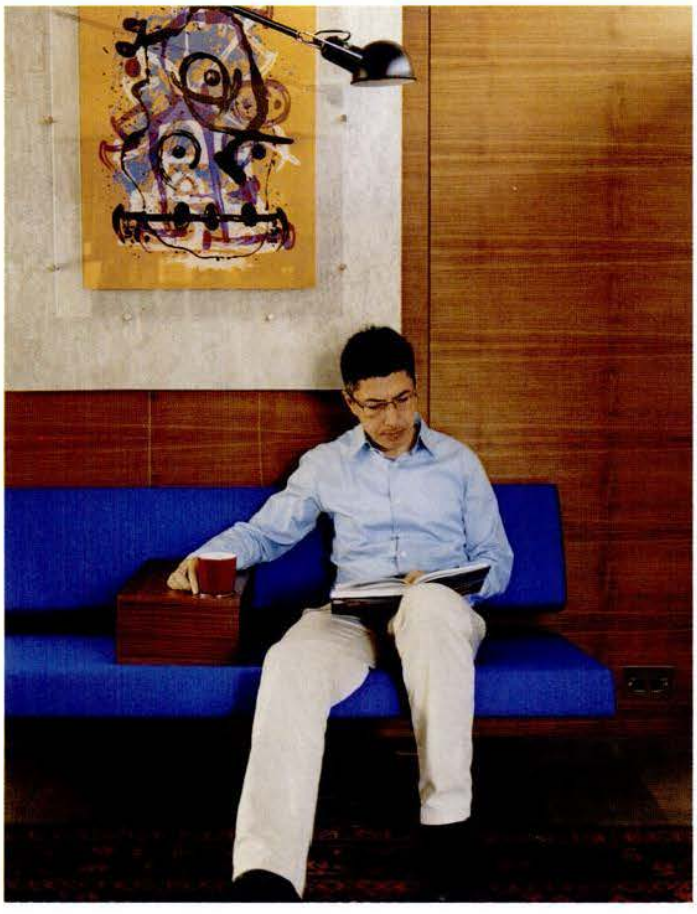

There is a double-height space with windows high above the dining area and a large glass door to the garden, so the space gets a lot of light all day long. We put in glass louvers over the glass sliding door and at the front of the house; the whole space is very well ventilated, which is an important consideration in Sydney's warm, temperate climate.

Helping this, the rear courtyard, although small, acts like a lung to the house. We decided not to put a wall up between the two duplexes, partly as a sign of neighborly goodwill and also as a way of making the rear courtyard feel bigger. There is a large glass sliding door to the courtyard, and on special occasions we can open up the whole space to the outside. The engineering of the door ended up being more complex than I first anticipated; In the end there are some details that I would change, but overall I am very happy with how it functions.

We chose the furniture specifically for the home. The armchair acts as a kind of baseball glove, catching the space and confining it. Originally the Le Corbusier sofa was upholstered in a beige fabric, but it seemed too weak for the space, so we reupholstered it in yellow, and then it seemed to make sense for the rest of the furniture to follow suit in matching primaries. We had the armrest custom-made for the sofa from American walnut.

In a way, the cabinetry and the kitchen are like buildings in the space and people moving through it are like traffic, so I made this wine rack that is like the Arc de Triomphe. It directs the traffic around the space. The model sitting on top of it is of my final design submission at the Royal College of Art, which is where I studied architecture. It was my first serious attempt at a building, and I keep it in the house as a reminder of where this little career of mine began.

Langston-Jones used American walnut for the veneer of the kitchen cabinets (above right), the walls, and the custom armrest (above left) he had made to fit snugly on his blue Slaapbank sofa designed by Martin Vissin. Tight quarters in the bathroom (left) allow for a bit more room in the main living spaces.

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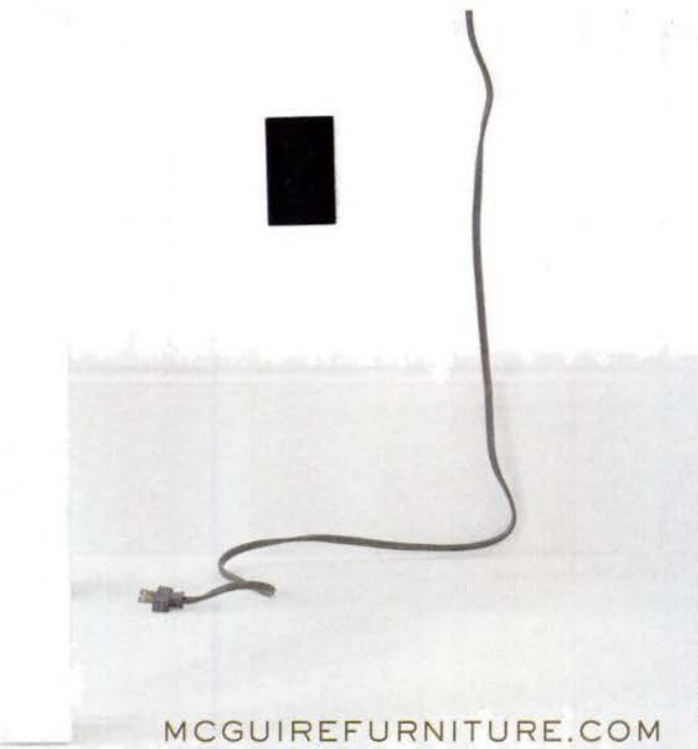

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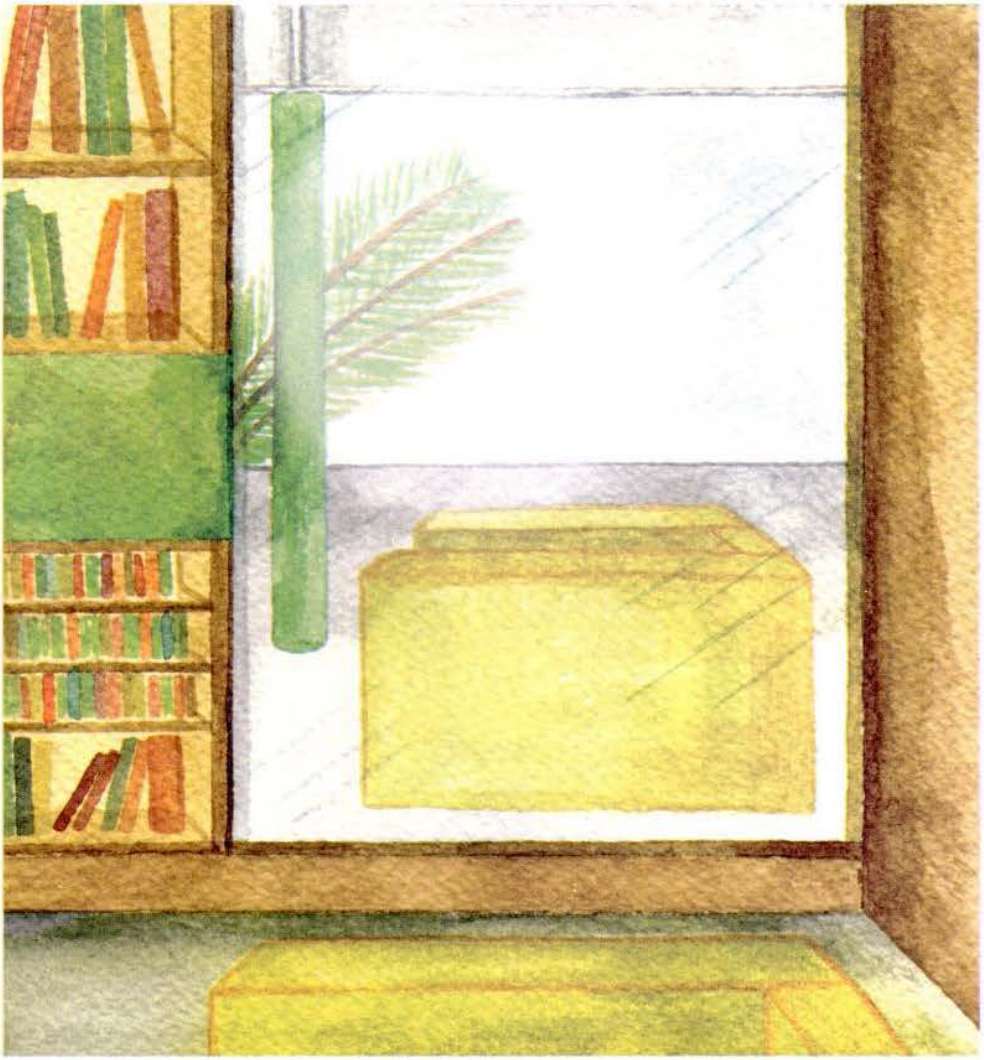
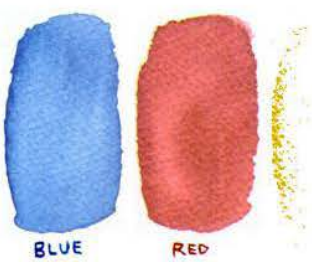
Smokin' Mirrors
Faced with a small living area, Langston-Jones made use of discreetly placed mirrors to add a sense of depth and effectively double the apparent size of the 915-square-foot unit. For instance, a mirror placed in the rear of the living room cabinetry catches glimpses of the garden on the opposite side of the room, creating the illusion of more space.

Back That Trash Up
The kitchen trash can is located in a cupboard that can be accessed from the garage beneath the kitchen's workbench. This clever custom move obviates the need to schlep dripping sacks of refuse through the house, keeping the trash and recycling out of the living space. rcp-worksmarter.com



Corbu's Hues
Taking a cue from Corbu, Langston-Jones used vibrant primary colors to highlight particular details in the house, such as the cabinet doors and kitchen backsplash. The paint, mixed by color specialist Katrin Trautwein in Zurich, Switzerland, and supplied by Aalto Colour in New Zealand, was made to Le Corbusier's specifications and gives the house an air of early modernist optimism. ktcolor.ch, aaltocolour.com



Doors of Perception
Langston-Jones clad the entry door and the door leading into the garage in the same timber veneer as the wall and cabinetry, and then sprung the garage door on parliament hinges, allowing the doors, when closed, to disappear into the wall. This enhances the feeling of stepping in from the garage or laneway into a private, secluded space.

Courtly Love
Langston-Jones doubled the outdoor space by combining the back patio of his unit and that of his neighbor. A small screen of gracilis, or weaver's bamboo, and Rhapis palms provides privacy between the courtyards while still remaining relatively transparent. "When funds allow, a stainless steel chain-mail 'curtain' will be suspended from the roof structure to provide further privacy," the architect notes. bamboo4u.com

Make It Yours

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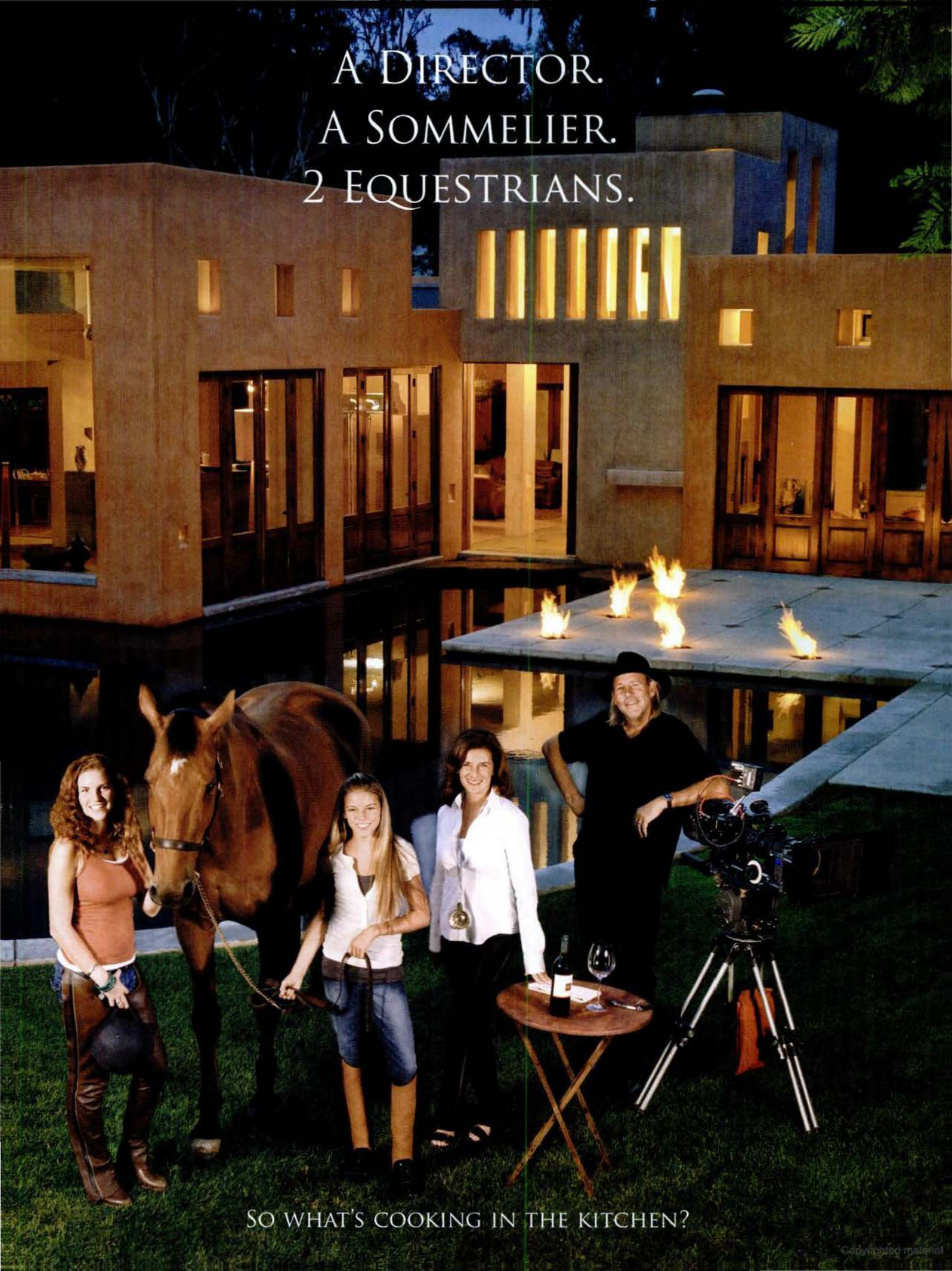

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And action! Cast: David Cornell, director/husband; Mea Argentieri, sommelier/wife; Clancey and Ella Cornell, equestrians/daughters.

Wide shot reveals cast preparing a meal in their California kitchen. Feature: double convection ovens, professional cooktop with dual-stacked burners and 42" ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator with Express Thaw and Chill compartment.

Fade out as the doorbell announces arrival of guests. *Perfect take!*

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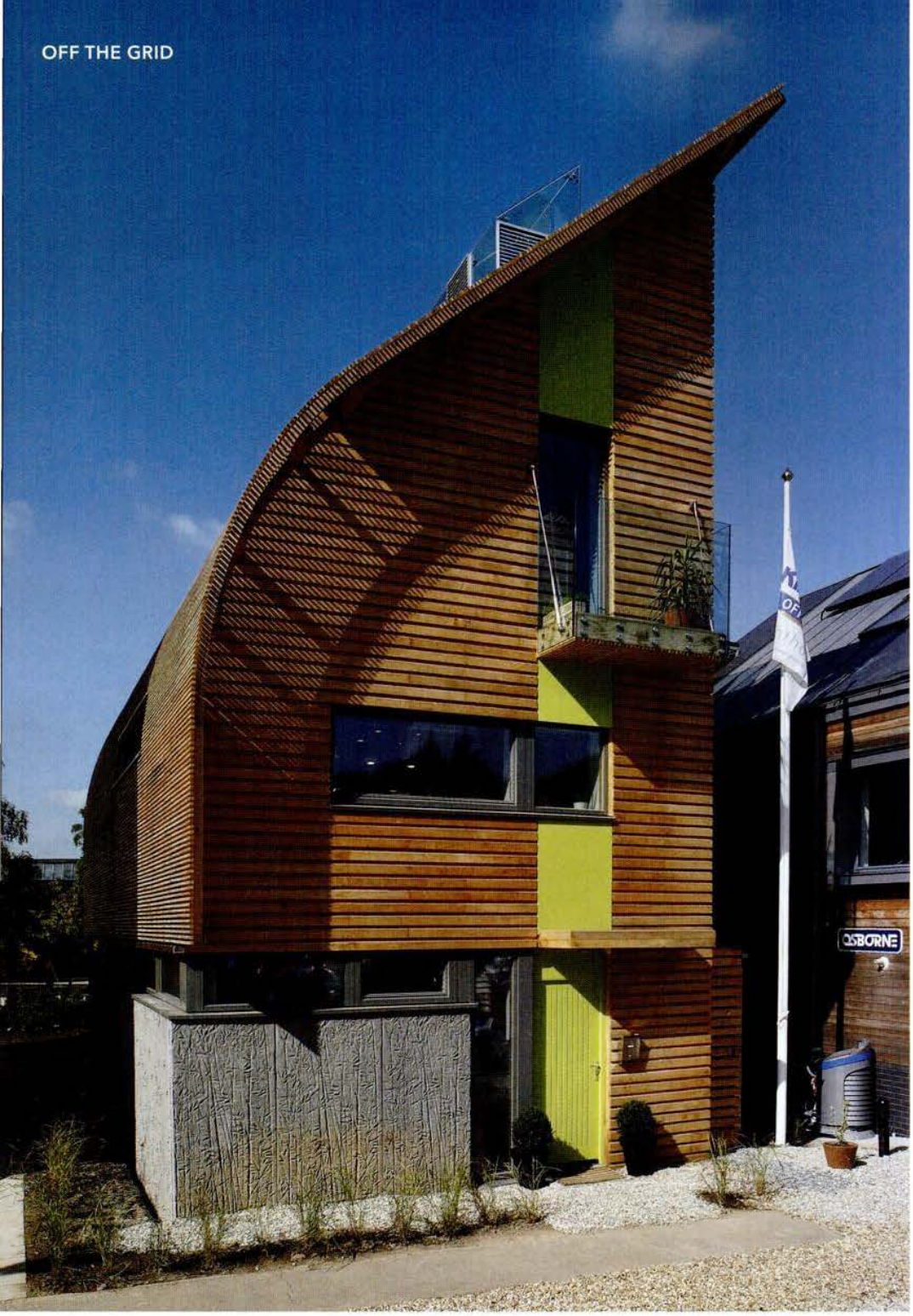

London Cooling

The Lighthouse, by British architects Sheppard Robson, seeks to redefine the future of residential energy by plugging into the sky itself.

Story by Sarah Rich and Geoff Manaugh

The building industry's voracious appetite for both energy and natural resources has many architects aspiring toward zero waste, zero emissions, and zero grid-sourced energy use in their designs—but everyone needs a good example to help them achieve their goals. The Lighthouse, a London-area show home, has the potential to make a huge impact on the practice of sustainable architecture because of its minimal impact on the planet.

Designed by Sheppard Robson for the Building Research Establishment (BRE), the Lighthouse bundles together a number of advanced technologies to meet the highest level of the Code for Sustainable Homes—a new set of sustainability criteria with which all new homes in England must comply by 2016. For instance, the sloping 40-degree pitched roof integrates a photovoltaic array with highly efficient structural insulated panels (SIPs), attractive timber framing, and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) to maintain consistent indoor temperatures. The standard interior layout has also been inverted, with sleeping quarters placed on the ground floor and living areas above. This gives the most heavily trafficked rooms maximum exposure to sunlight through double-height windows and a rooftop light shaft.

Perhaps the most unique feature of the Lighthouse, though, is the windcatcher—a low-tech passive cooling system that has been around for millennia but rarely appears in new construction. Originally designed and used in Persian oasis cities, the device works like a chimney.

A traditional windcatcher is a vertical void, like an air well, made from brick, stone, or other basic building materials. It cuts down through the center of a house, from the roof all the way to the basement. On each floor of the interior, the windcatcher has shuttered apertures that can be opened or closed as needed, depending on the season. Used in conjunction with windows on the outside of the house, and with doors in the central corridor, a well-operated windcatcher lets residents directly manipulate the ▶

Photo by Hufton + Crow

The Lighthouse currently sits on a demonstration lot in London, its curved roof enjoying unobstructed exposure to the sun, which keeps it independently powered.

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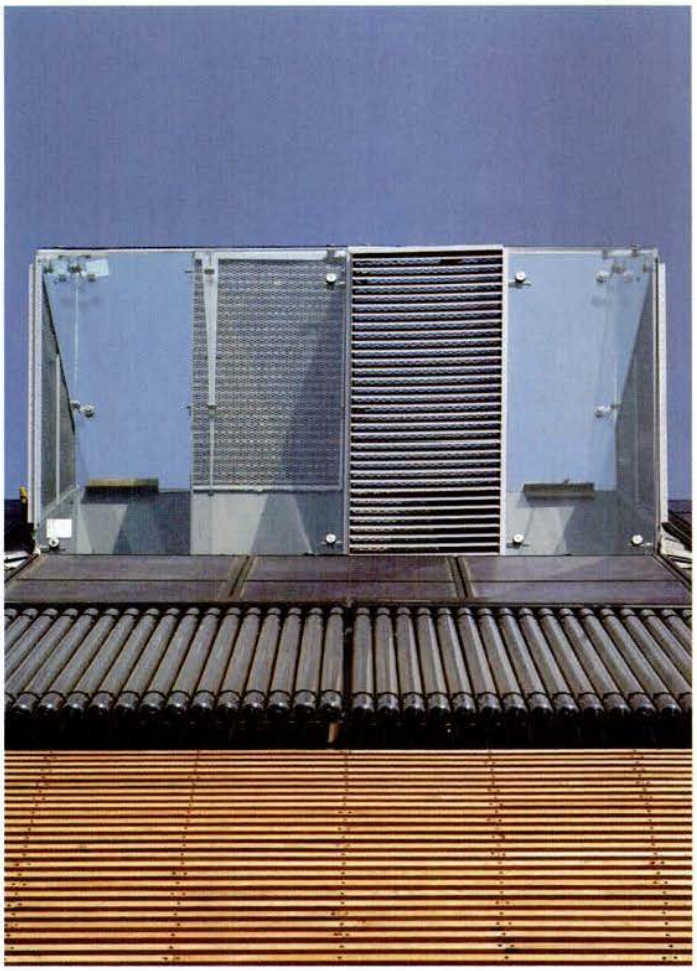

flow of air into and out of the home—and there's no need to use electricity. This process generates a kind of personal weather system, sending cool breezes out from the center of the house (when the windcatcher pulls cool air down from roof level) or dispersing hot winds upward through the structure (when it sucks hot air up from inside). Activated naturally by gradations in temperature from top to bottom, it's like a preventative, self-regulating air conditioner.

Windcatchers can also be used in tandem with underground streams. Air passing over the super-cool subterranean water creates chilly residential microclimates; the effect can be so intense that long before the advent of electricity, icehouses could be operated—even in summer. The Iranian city of Yazd, for instance, located at the meeting point of two deserts, is famous for its giant windcatching towers, which help to define the city's skyline. Many of these sit atop domed cisterns, or *ab-anbar*, in which chilled water can be stored for several seasons. Ice making has been abandoned inside these structures for reasons of bacteria, but indoor reservoirs will always be useful in a desert climate.

Of course, the top end of any windcatcher risks turning into nothing but an inlet for dust and bugs—and even birds—but filters and screens can be installed to maintain the division between inside and outside. Traditional designs also include internal dust sills, which work when the bottom of the shaft is wider than the top, thus slowing down breezes at the base—and allowing dust to settle.

Windcatchers are surprisingly sophisticated climate-control devices. Many people wonder how our ancestors ever survived without air-conditioning—let alone without Diet Coke and iPods—but these low-tech designs are inspiring evidence that living comfortably does not, by necessity, mean living with electricity.

For now, the Lighthouse stands near London, uninhabited, as it undergoes monitoring and research. Unfortunately, in late 2007, the green prototype was found to fall short of the British construction standards for zero-carbon homes. The design itself called for a building of the highest level of sustainability, but when it came time for construction, airtightness proved challenging in such a unique structure.

If they can work out the kinks, the architects estimate that the Lighthouse's total energy bills will be only £31 per year (roughly $60), all of which will go toward purchasing wood pellets for the biomass boilers. With this setup in place the building's electricity will not only be renewable, it will be nearly as free as the wind.

Photos by Hufton + Crow

At the top of the house sits the ultra-modern descendant of an ancient Middle Eastern cooling tool: an air shaft with operable shutters that release hot and cool air.

The Lighthouse lives up to its name, filled with natural daylight from floor to double-height ceiling. Light wood, white walls, and plenty of glass help keep the place bright.

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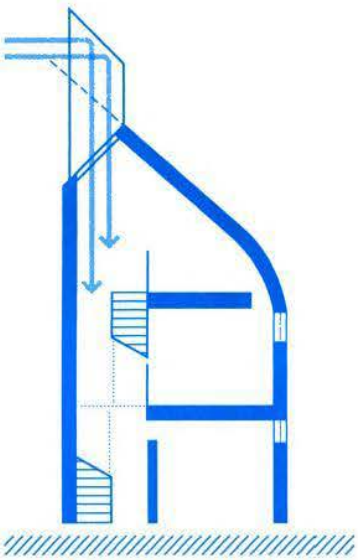
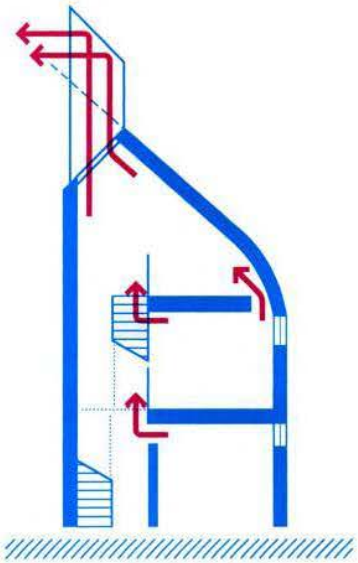
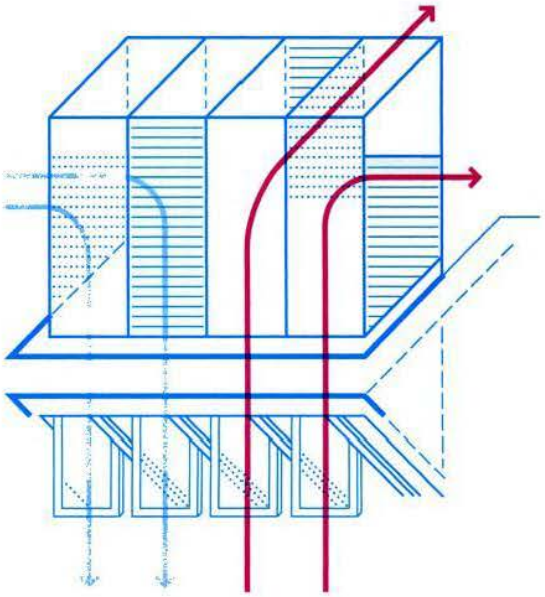


Flow of cool air



Flow of hot air

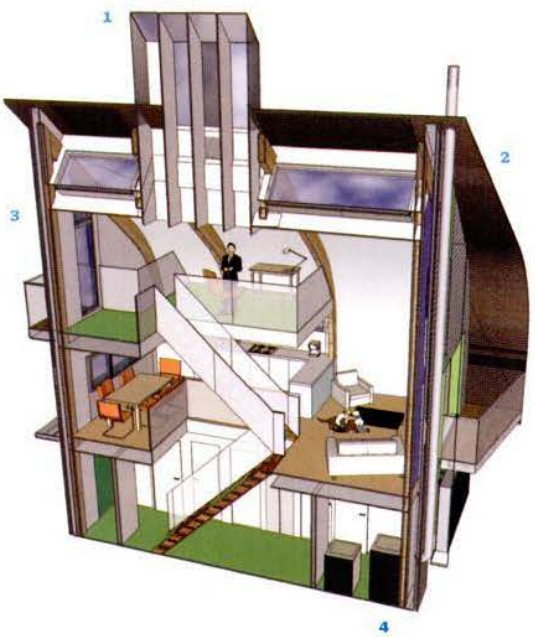


Venting system at work

Windcatchers defined:

Windcatchers are controlled indoor weather systems, architectural microclimates framed by windows and walls. While they are historically associated with the desert climates of Iran, where they are known as *bâdgir*, they can function almost anywhere—the only requirement is a temperature difference between the interior of a building and the air outside.

Windcatchers often have very distinct profiles, with a commensurate effect on the local skyline. In fact, several cities are well known for their wind towers. The Iranian city of Yazd, for instance, features the mosque of Dowlat Abad, with a distinctive central windcatcher, and a large domed cistern with its own four towers. Done well, a windcatcher can look more like a vaguely Baroque piece of fluted ornamentation than a mere functionalist chimney tacked on with no sense of design.



Around the Lighthouse:

1. Windcatcher
The ventilation shafts of the windcatcher reach several feet above the roof to pull cooler outdoor air inside.

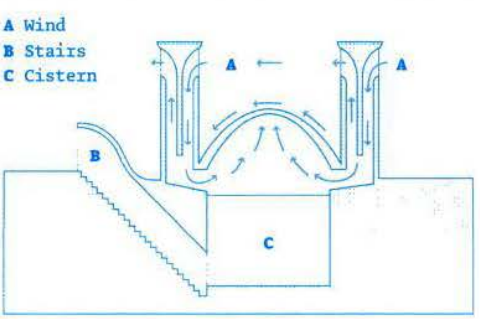
2. Photovoltaic array
Solar panels extend down the sloped roof, capturing energy for heating and lighting the house.

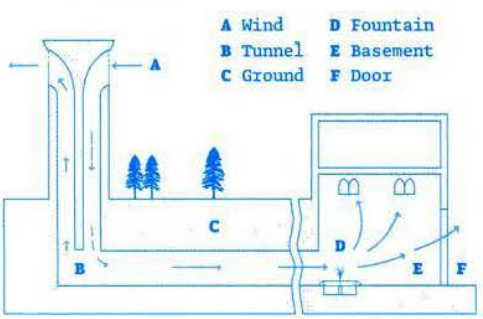
3. Efficient insulation
The building's super-effective insulation is integral to the home's overall efficiency.

4. Biomass boilers
Biomass boilers run on low-cost, renewable organic waste material, such as compressed sawdust cast off from the timber industry.

Windcatchers at work:

Used in conjunction with underground reservoirs of water, such as streams or artificial cisterns, a windcatcher can produce temperatures so low that ice will form. These devices are thus like refrigerators—with no need, or use, for electricity.





Rendering courtesy Sheppard Robson (cross section)

Click here:
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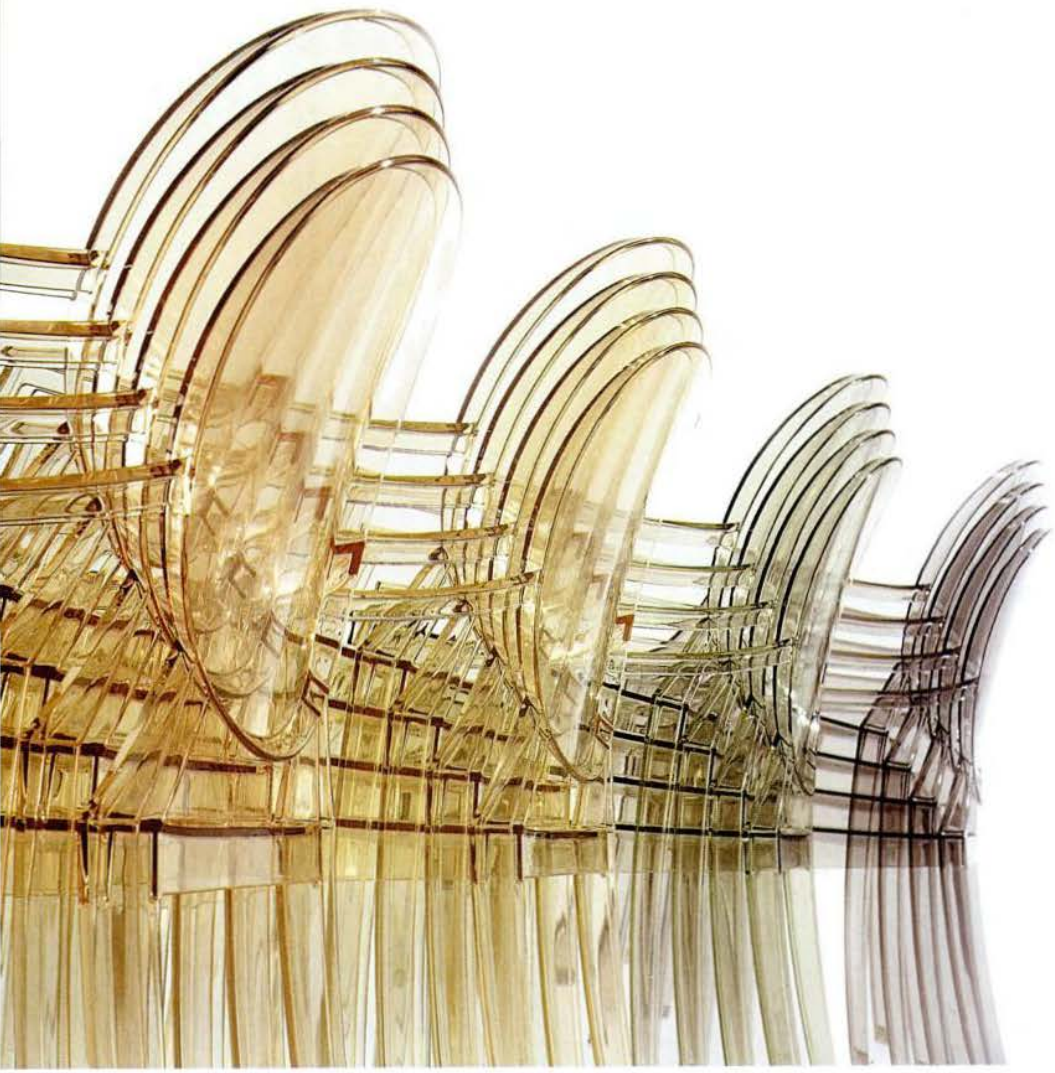

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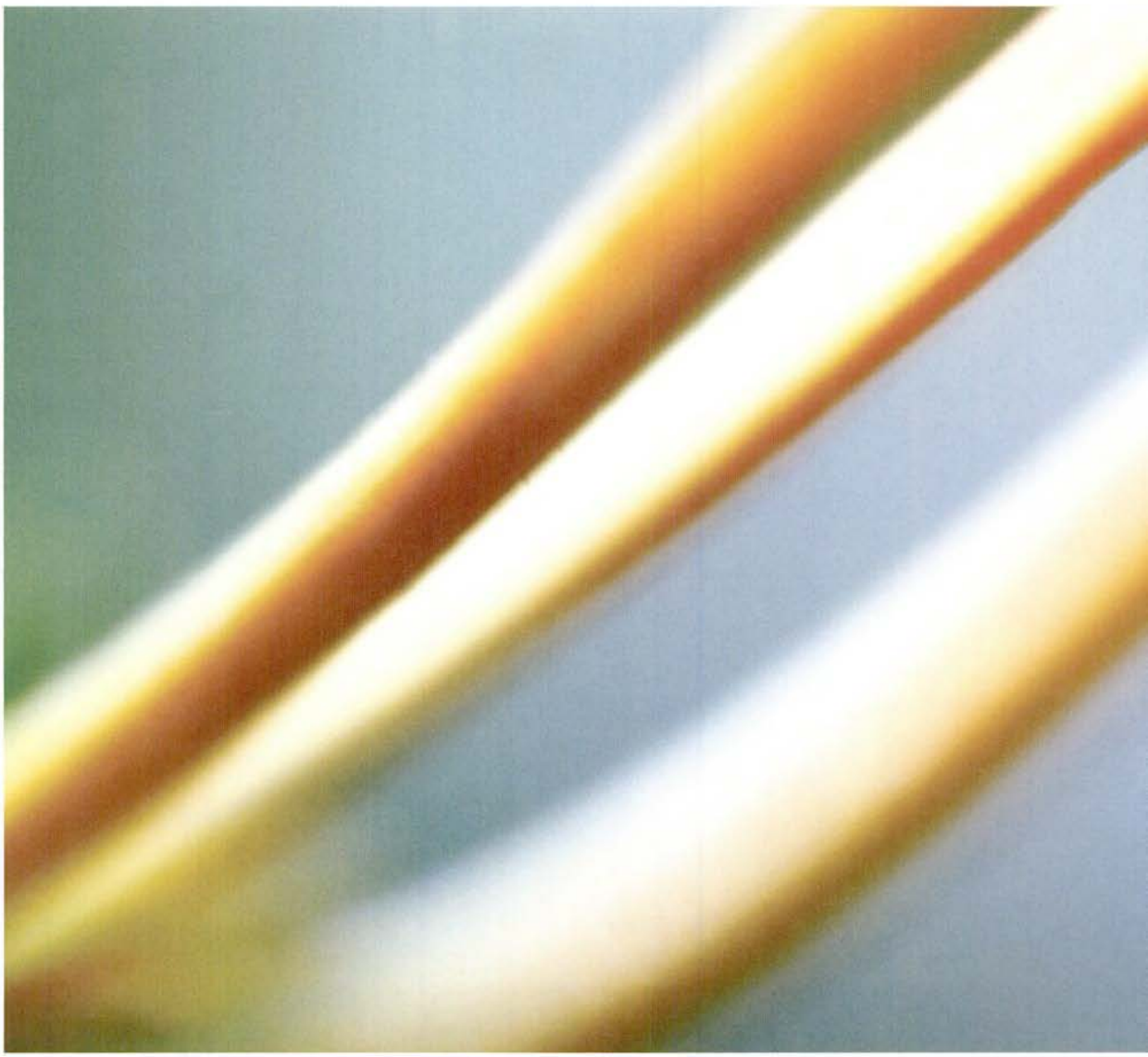

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Glass Act

Whether you like it shaken, stirred, or straight up, a good drink deserves a superior glass. These sets break delicately from tradition without losing the formality that puts the swank in your swig. Bottoms up!

A Note on Our Expert

Andi Kovel's background in sculpture, painting, photography, accessory design, and art theory uniquely equip her to become one of the most original and influential glass artists working today. Her work has been shown in galleries internationally, and she has taught at New York University, Parsons, Urban Glass, and the University of California, San Diego. In 2001, Kovel moved from her native New York to Portland, Oregon, to establish her studio, Esque Design, with her partner, Justin Parker. Their fresh techniques and successful experiments have won them wide acclaim as tastemakers of modern design.

Story by Sarah Rich
Photos by Peter Belanger
Portrait by John Clark

A glass could be judged as the mere vehicle of a good beverage, but a drinking vessel can do much to influence the character of its contents. Tasting champagne from a tumbler or beer from a plastic cup doesn't reveal the drink's complexity as a flute or stein might. As any sommelier would attest, in the wrong glass, wine can't breathe, and a stifled syrah surely isn't at its best.

But it's not just about taste. While many of us use disposable cups to caffeinate and hydrate on the run, almost by definition a glass compels us to slow down and savor what's in it, lest we break it. In that moment, the weight, thickness, texture, and shape of the glass all become part of the experience, reminding us that it's not just what's inside that counts.

Of course, when we finally pause for a sip, we don't always want to contemplate the characteristics of our cup, which is why we asked Andi Kovel, who designs glass both functional and sculptural, to help us decide which sets are worthy of a toast.

Float
By Molo / $89–$99 (individual styles in sets of two) / molodesign.com

Expert Opinion: This set is by far my favorite. Justin and I love to figure out how complex glass pieces are formed, and this stumped us. Technically, these are no small feat. The technique mimics scientific glass, which suits their functionality. Plus, they come beautifully packaged. And you must see these filled with liquid. Wow.

What We Think: The Float design creates a beautiful suggestion of liquid, even when empty. The rounded base looks like a bubble suspended within the outer cylinder. We found the flute and martini glass to be a little tipsy without bases to support the weight up top, but then again, standard stemmed versions don't offer much more stability.

Ottagonale
By Carlo Moretti / $660 (set of six) / tartontheweb.com

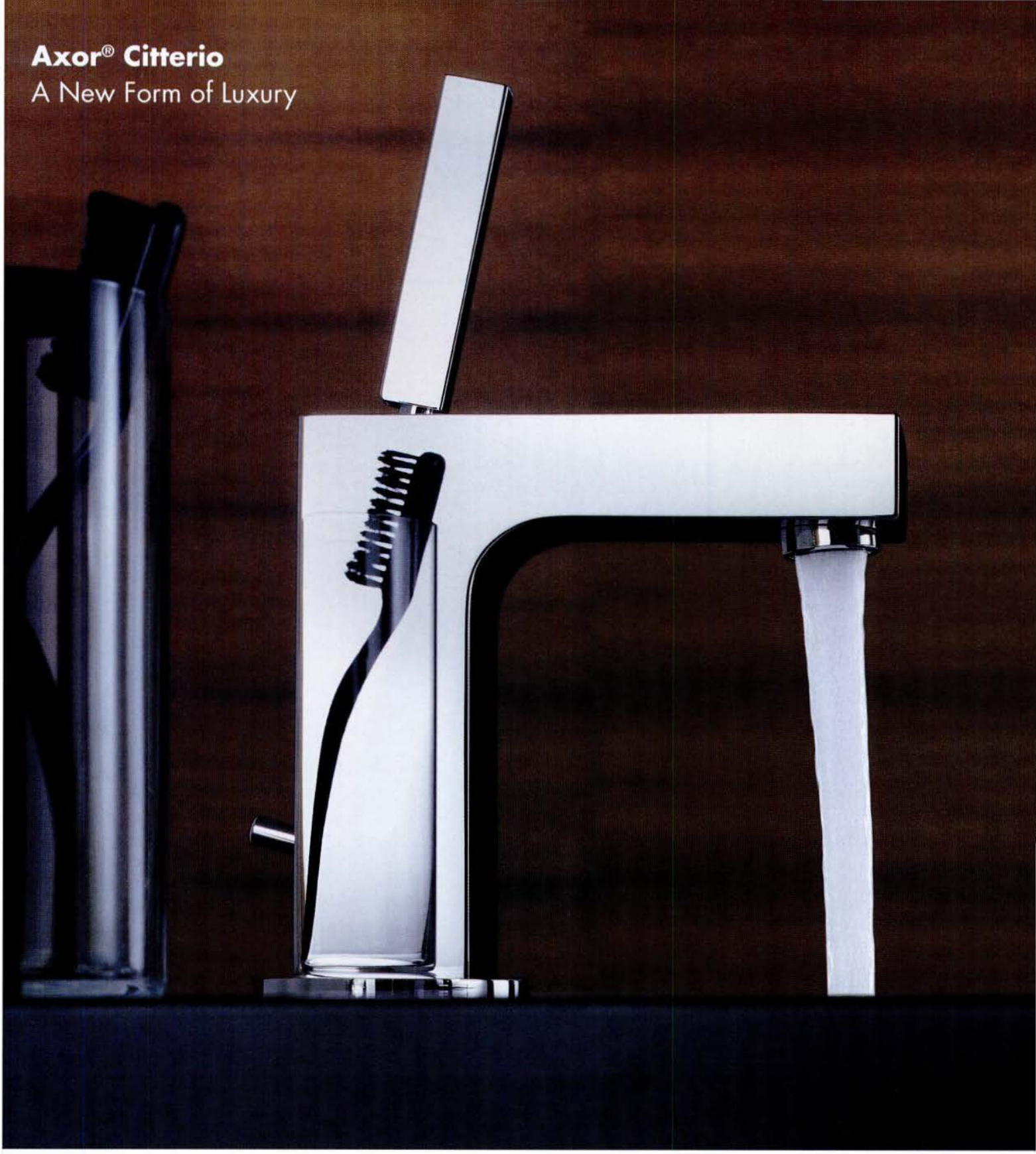
Expert Opinion: These are so thin and light, they really transport the user. So thin, in fact, that I might be afraid to use them. They seem like a relic from the Winter Palace. Although these don't turn me on per se, they are truly a perfect mixture of opulence and simplicity. The gold lip is a subtle touch—very sophisticated and refined.

What We Think: These are a little old-fashioned for our taste, and the combination of conical and cylindrical shapes isn't as appealing as a consistent silhouette. We do like the octagonal mold, though; it feels good in the hand. We might pass on the gold rim, but we agree that it's a detail that makes a big difference in the overall impression of the collection.

5 in Uno
By Joe Colombo for Progetti / $250 (set of five) / dwr.com

Expert Opinion: This is a clever and beautiful design. I love that the full collection forms a functional sculpture, but I would be nervous about damaging them when stacking. I'm bothered by the use of "hand blown" to describe a mass-produced piece. These were made by people, but they appear to me to have been blown into molds and cut and polished mechanically. I'd prefer that the term be reserved for items blown freehand. Regardless, the end result is very effectual here.

What We Think: Our love of order is deeply satisfied by this set, which fits together as neatly as Russian babushka dolls. And while the nested quintet is lovely, the individual glasses don't disappoint. The three larger ones have generous proportions despite being small. We agree that the delicate glass makes stacking a painstaking task. ▶



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Tapio
By Tapio Wirkkala for Iittala / $36–$54 (individual styles in sets of two) / finnstyle.com

Expert Opinion: These are a classic. Their weight feels great in your hands, and the bubble gives them a sense of mystery. Intoto does a contemporary version, where the bubble protrudes into the hollow of the base. I've spent countless hours trying to figure out how this detail is achieved.

What We Think: Of all the sets, we think this is the most timeless. The design feels considered, from the distribution of weight to the thickness of the glass. Classic, but certainly not boring, that eye-catching bubble gives the form some movement—and, as our expert attests, a touch of technical enigma. (In fact, the bubble is formed by dipping a wet pencil-shaped piece of birch into the base while the glass is hot, releasing a bubble of air.)

InsideOut
By AMT Inc. for Charles & Marie / $48–$60 (individual styles in sets of two) / charlesandmarie.com

Expert Opinion: While these are very elegant, I much prefer the Float's design and engineering. I feel that these follow rather than lead the "inside-out" trend. The proportions are graceful and sophisticated, but the execution is slightly heavy-handed. The glasses have an interesting receptacle at the bottom, but this detail makes them impossible to clean. I'd recommend rinsing them out before your champagne dries!

What We Think: InsideOut gets literal with the concept, sheathing the classic form inside a cylinder. They're lovely with the added color of a drink, and the martini glass is probably the most spillproof we've ever seen. ■

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Our Man in Ceylon

Before completing his architectural training in 1957, at the age of 38, Geoffrey Bawa dreamed of transforming the overgrown tropical world of his native Sri Lanka into a stylized Mediterranean retreat. Though he would return to this vision later in life, composing for himself a Palladian garden compound on an abandoned rubber plantation outside Bentota, Bawa was quick to learn that working with the landscape—not forcing it to become something it was not—was often a more appropriate strategy of design.

Bawa was born in 1919 in Sri Lanka, which the British then called Ceylon, to wealthy parents of European and Ceylonese descent. He was destined to spend much of his life moving back and forth between London and Sri Lanka, and this ceaseless transit between two competing origins was to have a marked effect on Bawa's work. Was he "a European with Ceylonese connections," author David Robson asks in his 2002 book, *Geoffrey Bawa: The Complete Works*,"or a Ceylonese who happened to have some European blood in his veins?"

It would be wrong to imply, however, that Bawa lived his life in a state of creative exile. His ability to pass back and forth between England and Sri Lanka was, in fact, a privilege, and this lack of clear affiliation with either country gave him beneficial access to a variety of social situations. These laminations of geography and culture eventually became a defining characteristic of Bawa's mature architectural style: Behind the ordered facades of his buildings we find vibrant courtyards and breezeways in which flowering plants and heavy vegetation thrive. Trees grow up to and beyond roof level. Pools shimmer in the afternoon ▶

Photo courtesy Thames and Hudson

Story by Geoff Manaugh

The Jayewardene House (above; 1997–98) is a residential project designed by Bawa after the Jayewardenes' bungalow burned to the ground. The project has a number of interesting details, including an electricity generator beneath the dining table. David Robson succinctly describes the project as "a roof inserted into a landscape."

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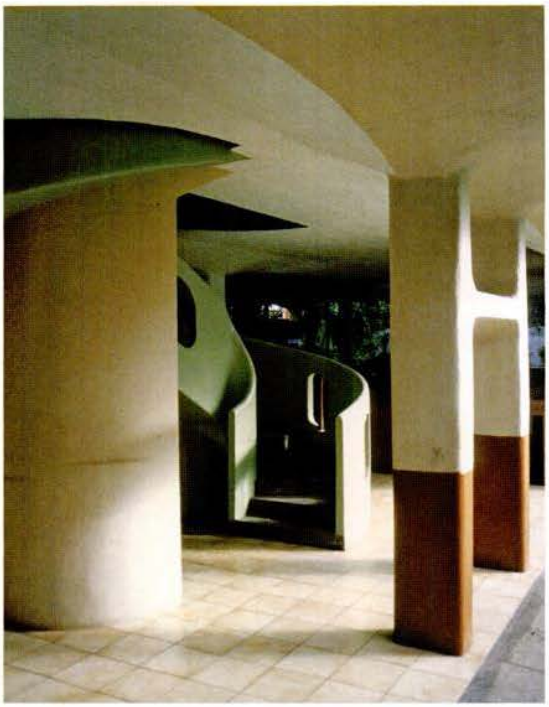
sunlight. The tropics extend inside the structures, giving shape to what Robson calls Tropical Modernism.

Bawa applied the design training he received from London's Architectural Association to the Sri Lankan climate and topography. He developed a number of innovative solutions, such as deeply cantilevered roofscapes, verandas, removable screens, and galleries, to the problems of humidity, monsoon rains, heat, and internal airflow. For instance, the administrative building Bawa designed for the Steel Corporation (1966–69) has a gridded exterior made from precast concrete, allowing cross breezes to pass into the structure. The building itself, meanwhile, is a peninsula, extending out into a reservoir for the nearby steel-rolling mill. It seems to owe as much to Sigfried Giedion as to the region's historical building styles.



But not all was modernist grids with Bawa. The St. Bridget's Montessori School in Colombo (1963–64), built for nuns, playfully reinvents the convent experience through a Gaudíesque vocabulary of rounded edges. At times resembling biological forms, with its droopy windowsills and curved concrete stairs, the school was colored in a soft palette of earth tones just this side of pastel. Meanwhile, the bungalow at Polontalawa (1963–65) structurally incorporates enormous boulders that the architect left undisturbed. These geological intrusions bring the site's topography literally inside the house, like gigantic and wonderfully abstract pieces of earthly furniture.

One of Bawa's most fascinating and frustrating projects, though, was the Sri Lankan parliamentary complex at Kotte (1979–82). There he was called upon to articulate a vision for the future ▸

Photos courtesy David Robson

Bawa's St. Bridget's Montessori School (top; 1963–64) playfully rethinks the space of convent education, using soft colors and biomorphic curves to define active zones.

The Steel Corporation Offices (bottom; 1966–69) form an artificial peninsula, extending out into a reservoir whose water was used by the firm's steel-rolling mill.

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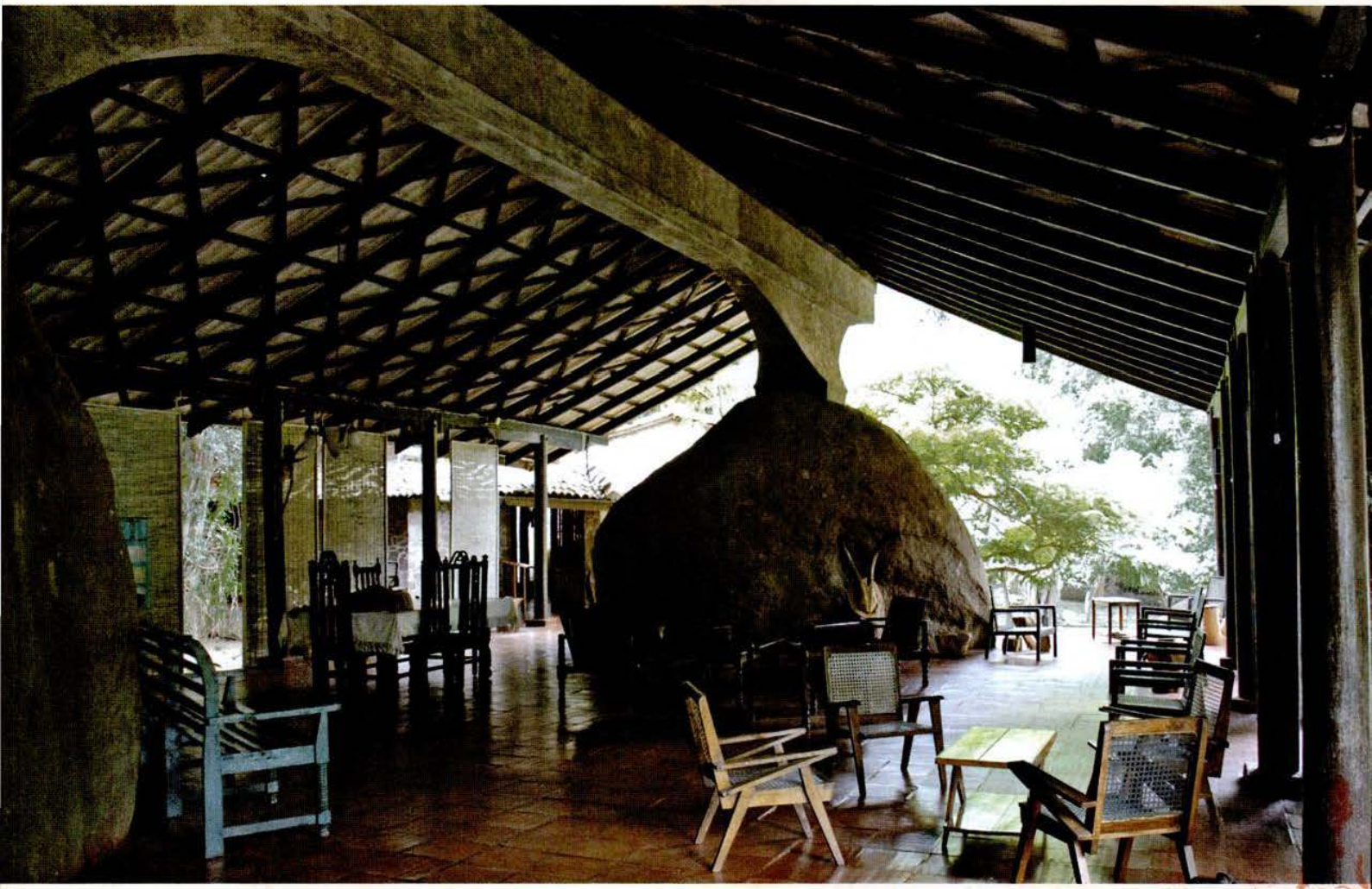

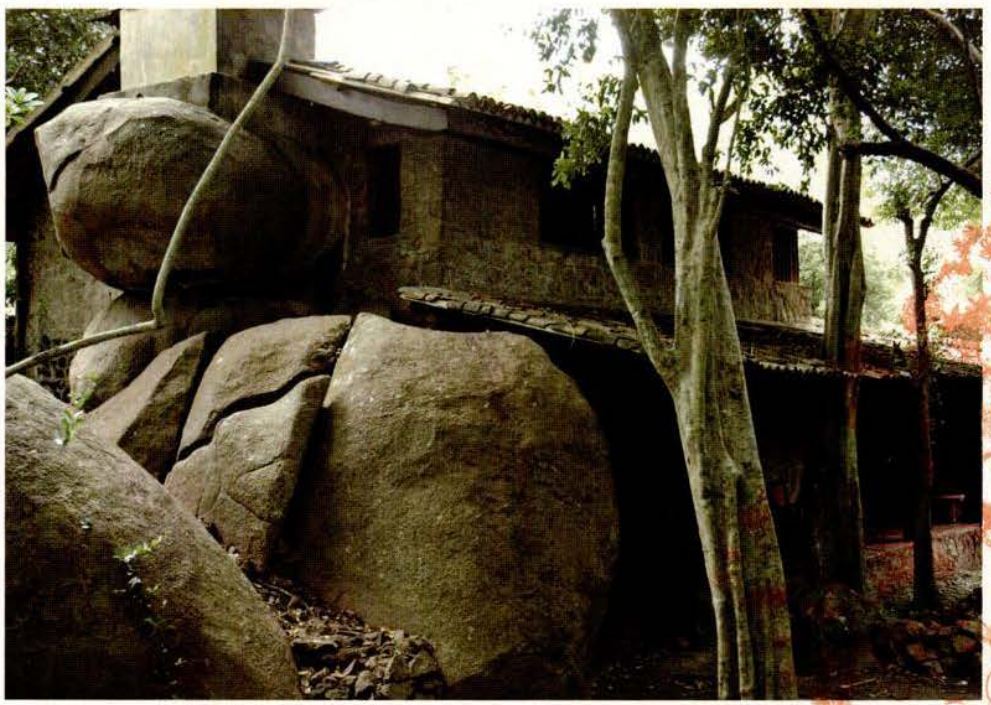

Photos and illustration courtesy David Robson

The Polontawala Estate Bungalow (1963-65) uses the site's existing geology in creative ways, incorporating several large boulders into the actual structure of the building.

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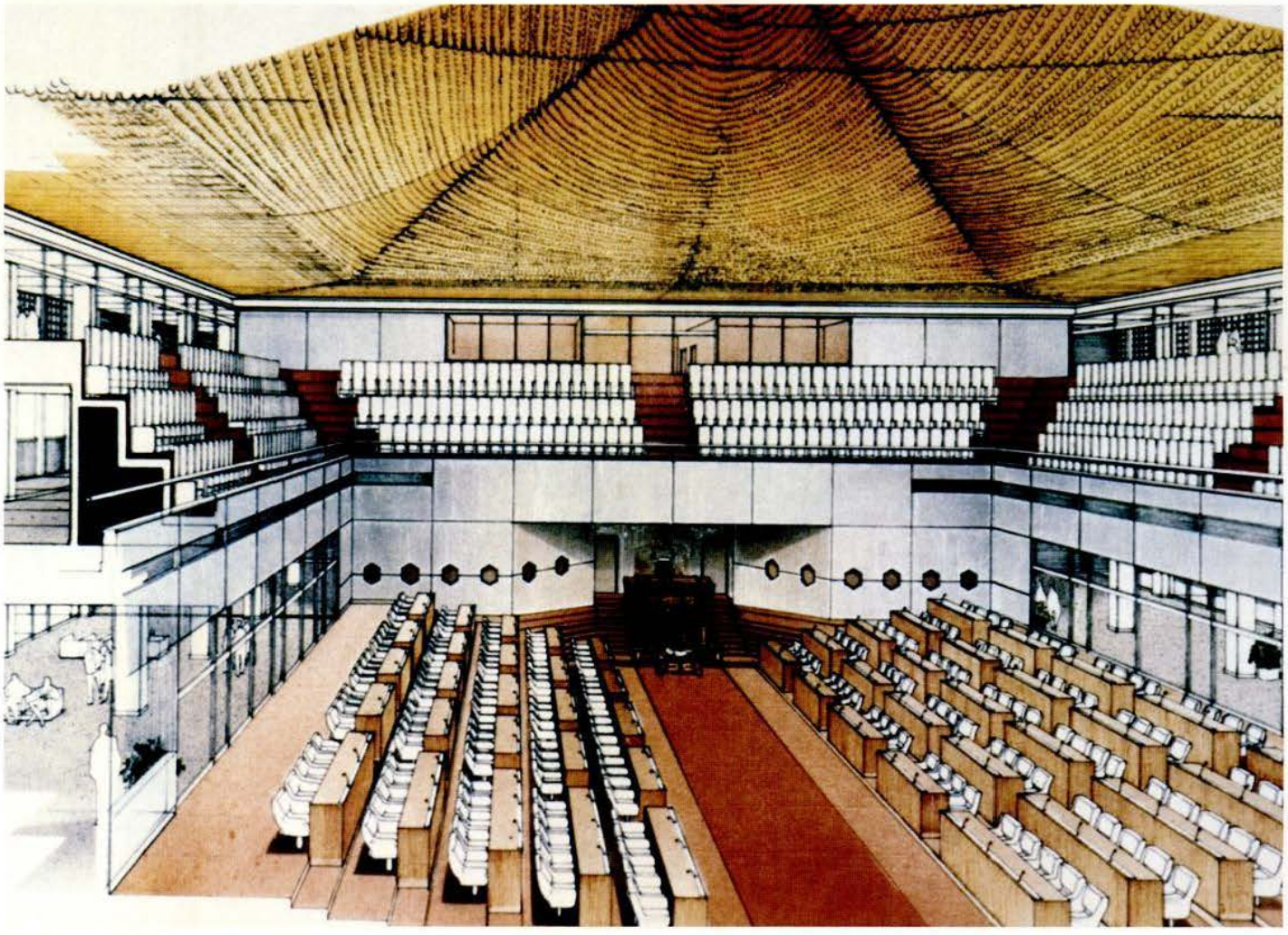

of Sri Lanka—and to do so through a work of monumental architecture. Bawa's Parliament stands brooding and precise on a partly artificial island in the midst of former marshland—and it is truly gigantic, encompassing more than 400,000 square feet of space. The complex is really a series of asymmetrically arranged pavilions, with broad sloping roofs, grouped around green space and open piazzas. If the Parliament's external appearance is reserved—even semi-monastic—then its central debating chamber is simply breathtaking, complete with bronze and silver doors, wood-paneled walls, a shining, aluminum-clad ceiling, and banners by Ena de Silva.

Sadly, the complex also represents something of a political tragedy: In 1983, only one year after the project's completion, Sri Lanka descended into civil war—an armed conflict that continues to this day. Standing on its island podium, Bawa's Parliament has taken on "a fortress-like air," Robson writes. After 25 years of war, the building is now more like "a Parliament under siege: the lawns are empty and the lakeside pavilions are used by armed sentries. In another time, perhaps, when peace and communal harmony prevail, the terraces, gardens and pavilions will be thrown open to the people and the Parliament might finally become what it was intended to be: the expression of many different but overlapping cultures and traditions and a symbol of open, accessible and democratic government."

Bawa's legacy may now be receiving increased attention, but it remains to be fully rediscovered. Too modest for today's architecture culture, Bawa's work sits in the south Asian humidity, awaiting its future audience.

Photo and illustration courtesy David Robson

The new parliamentary complex at Kotte (1979–82) was supposed to give architectural form to the emerging Sri Lankan democracy—but a civil war erupted only a year after the project's completion. The vast complex now feels forlorn and inaccessible, surrounded by military patrols. A sketch (top) shows the central debating chamber.

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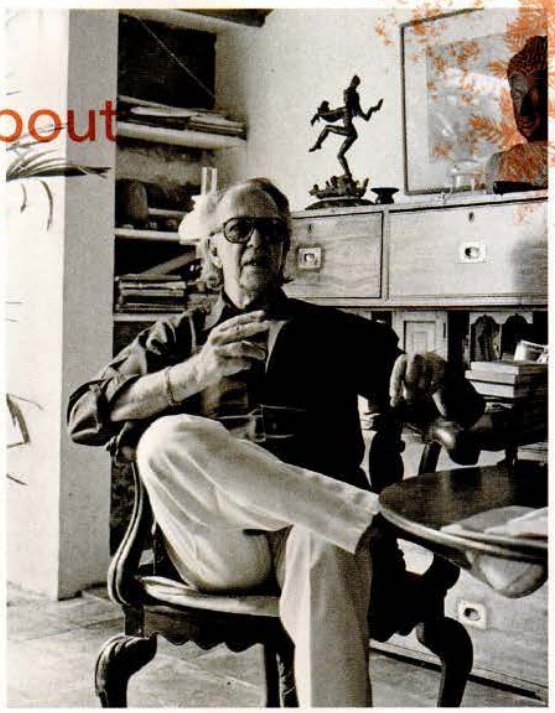
10 things you should know about Geoffrey Bawa



1. Initially Bawa trained to be a lawyer.

2. In 2001, Bawa won the Aga Khan Chairman's Award for Lifetime Achievement in architecture, just two years before his death.

3. The ceiling of the main parliamentary chamber at Kotte is structurally modeled after a silver chain-link purse owned by Bawa's mother.

4. When it came time to produce a book about Bawa's work in the 1980s, researchers found that much of his early project documents had been eaten by white ants.

5. Bawa had never washed his own clothes until a trip to Moscow, where he tried to clean his shirts by spraying them with water in the shower.

6. Bawa had a thing for Rolls-Royces, and he owned at least four of them.

7. When Bawa's cousin Georgette came to visit him in Colombo, she was stopped at Customs for traveling with a large glass chandelier. She said she always traveled with a glass chandelier and she didn't understand what the problem could be.

8. Bawa named his home and garden complex Lunuganga, which means "salt river."

9. In 1988 Bawa's good friend Ray Wijewardene came down to visit him at Lunuganga—only to crash his microlight airplane into the roof of the main bungalow. He survived.

10. Shortly before his death, Bawa was working on a design for the official residence of the Sri Lankan president. That project remains incomplete.

Photo by Richard Powers (exterior home), courtesy David Robson (portrait, exterior hotel)

Geoffrey Bawa (top) engages in conversation. Bawa's garden estate (center), which he named Lunuganga, was a lifelong dream. It encompasses two hills near the sea, and was once a cinnamon garden run by Dutch settlers. The spectacularly overgrown Kandalama Hotel (bottom; 1991–94) snakes along a seaside ridge. p. 238

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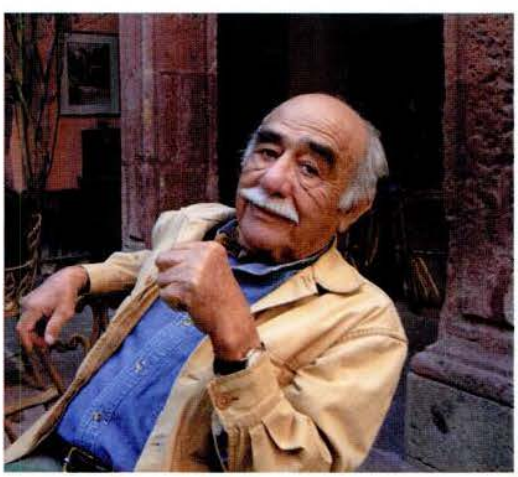
"Cortez could not have been more startled at finding the world of the Aztecs than I was when I was shown around Taliesin West for the first time. It was a stunning sculpture of redwood, stone, and canvas."

Pedro E. Guerrero



Portrait by Lorraine Chittock

Story by Christene Barberich
Photos by Pedro E. Guerrero

Clockwise from top left: Frank Lloyd Wright at the Reisley House in Usonia, a cooperative housing development in Pleasantville, New York, 1952; Taliesin West, 1939; Guerrero in Guanajuato, Mexico, 2005; a full-scale model of a Usonian house, installed on the site of the future Guggenheim Museum, 1953. p.238

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In 1939, Frank Lloyd Wright hired 22-year-old Pedro Guerrero to be Taliesin West's resident photographer, the start of a collaborative bond that would last until Wright's death in 1959. Though Guerrero's 60-plus-year career as a photographer is underscored by his work with Wright, he enjoyed later success shooting interiors for *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *House & Garden*, in addition to forming close friendships with artists like Alexander Calder and Louise Nevelson.

At 90, Guerrero is experiencing a renaissance of sorts, with the recent release of both a documentary film and a memoir. Dwell traveled to Florence, Arizona, to spend some time with the photographer, who proves to be a sublime storyteller—with or without the camera.

Which came first, photography or architecture?

Neither, actually. I had gone to Art Center School [now the Art Center College of Design] in Los Angeles, thinking that I would become an artist. I was trying to escape the bigotry of my hometown, Mesa, Arizona, and I thought being an artist would be exotic. But when I got there, all the art courses were filled. I asked them what else they taught, and they said photography. I had never thought of photography before. But I would have taken embroidery rather than go back to Mesa.

So how did that lead to photographing buildings?

I had seen an exhibition in 1938 or 1939, and one of the photographs that struck me was that of a distinguished gentleman. As it turned out, it was Frank Lloyd Wright, whom I knew very little about. But about ten photographs down the aisle, I ran into one of the most spectacular photographs I had seen—it was of Fallingwater.

Did that encourage you to pursue a job with Wright?

I had the beginnings of what might be considered a profession, but I hadn't decided yet what I was going to do with it. My dad suggested that I go see Frank Lloyd Wright's school in the desert to see if maybe he had a role for a photographer. So, on a day of unimagined importance to me, I took off for Scottsdale and aimed my car for this white slash against the mountain that I thought was Taliesin West. When I got there, I saw this man that I had seen in the photograph. He looked at me and said, "And who are you?" I told him that I was Pedro Guerrero, and that I was a photographer. And he said, "Well, come and show me what you've done." I wouldn't have gone up there if I'd known even a little bit about him. My samples were ridiculous: some Japanese fishermen on the wharf at San Pedro, some nudes. Every once in a while Mr. Wright smiled and even chuckled, but when he came to the nudes he said, "I see you have a fondness for the ladies." He said, "The pay

isn't much, but you could live here and you could use my camera if you want to." I found out the pay wasn't anything, but it didn't matter.

Without any experience with architecture, how did you approach shooting his work?

I took it to be sculpture—sculpture of stone and cement, canvas, and wood. I was intrigued by the fact that there were a lot of young men working, and I found that they were wonderful subjects to photograph.

How did Wright react to those first shots?

At the end of a couple of weeks, I took what I had done to him, and he was very pleased. I spent two or three months shooting there.

You were just 22 at the time and inexperienced. Why do you suppose Wright responded to you so well?

For one thing, it was just pure luck. Just before I came to show Mr. Wright my portfolio, the man who had been his photographer eloped with one of the female apprentices. So, my timing couldn't have been better. But after I started showing him what I could do, and when I told him that I didn't know anything about architecture, he said, "Well, I'll teach you." He'd say, "I want a photo of architecture, I want to see it from terminus to terminus, or at least give me a connection from one part of the building to another so that I

"When I set up this shot of Wright in his studio at Taliesin (bottom left), he hadn't shaved that morning and told me he wasn't about to. So I had to move the camera back to conceal the stubble, which actually improved the shot." Behind Wright is a model of the San Francisco Call building, a favorite of his that was never built. Alfie Bush (above right) was one of the many young apprentices who helped build "the Camp," as Taliesin West was then called. Here he's shown working on the dining hall.

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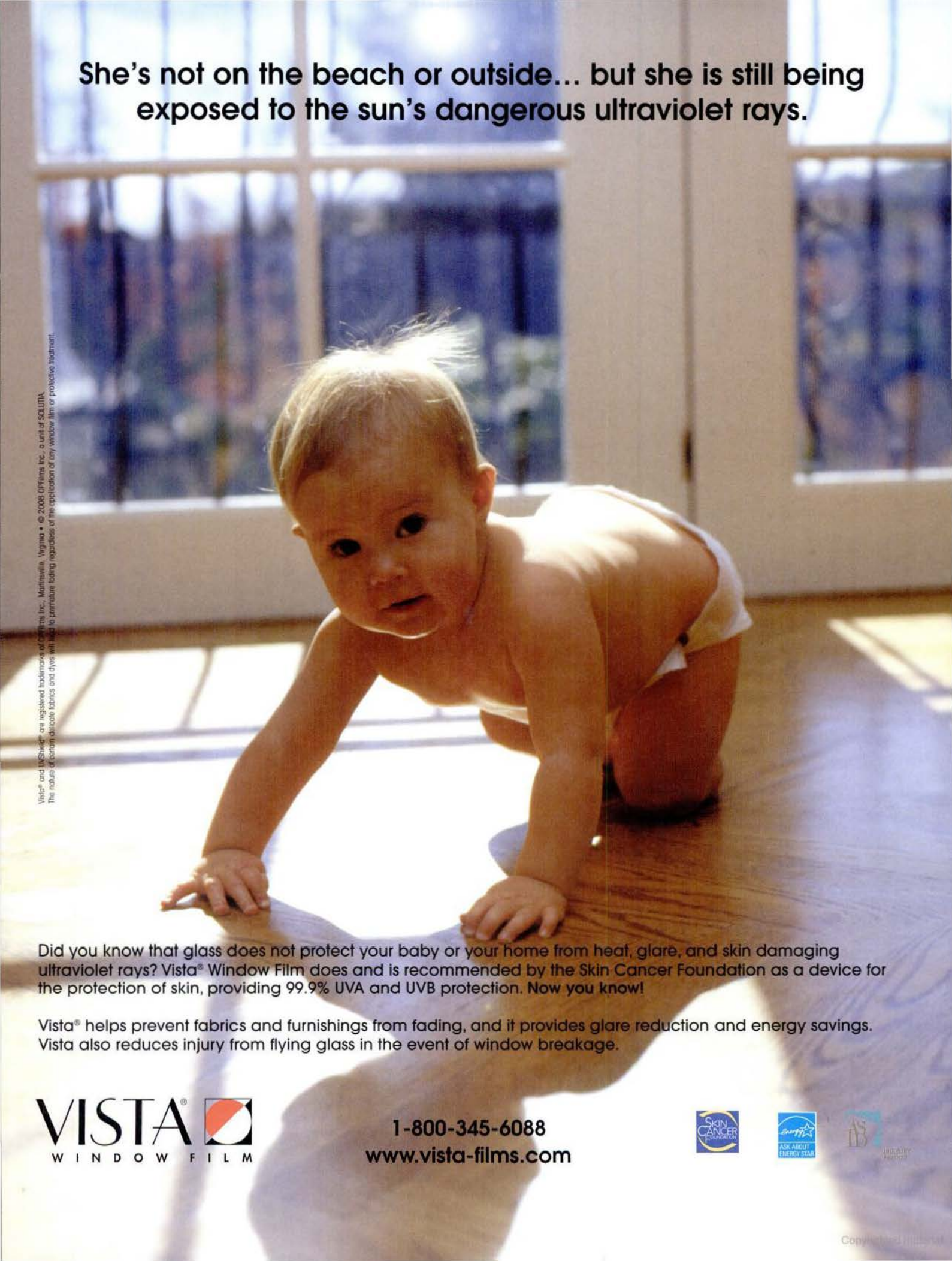
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can see that it's my building." Today, there are a lot of people doing [detailed] photographs of Mr. Wright's, which he would have hated.

Why?

He wanted to see as much of the architecture as he could in one shot, and I wanted the same thing. There were very few instances when I took his elements and made a composition for myself. Outside of that we got along fine.

His very particular aesthetic must have permeated your work, especially since you were so young.

Except for the two years I went to art school, there was a lot left out of my education that I had to get from other people. I tried to rid myself of any of the habits I had formed as a young Mexican-American trying to fit in to an Anglo society. I was absolutely entranced with the fact that Mr. Wright was very minimal with his architecture. His own home was filled with things he loved, but when he went with me to do a home, like the Jacobs House in Madison, Wisconsin, he went around and told me which pictures to take down because it took away from his architecture. He wanted everything to reflect his design and his taste.

You spent a lot of time with the forefathers of mid-century modernism, living in New Canaan, Connecticut. Did you work with any of them?

I knew Marcel Breuer, Ed Stone, Eliot Noyes, Joe Salerno, Landis Gores, Jens Risom, Victor Christ-Janer. They were all likeable guys doing their own version of the modern style, but I didn't try to get work from them, probably out of misplaced loyalty to Mr. Wright. I photographed their architecture only if I had an assignment from a magazine.

What do you think of modern architecture today?

I was never really a champion of modernism until much later, when I realized that they did have a message; their stuff was built with a basic philosophy just like Mr. Wright's organic architecture. But compared to the architecture now, I wish I'd spent all my waking moments with them. I suppose the reason [mid-century modernism is] appreciated now is because what's new is absolutely deplorable.

What was it like living off your photography? I can't imagine it paid very well.

You're absolutely right about that. I remember my father-in-law came to visit us in New Canaan, and he looked over my income and said, "You could do better as a stock boy at one of the grocery stores."

Did you face much discrimination as a Latino?

After the war, one of the first organizations I went to to look for work was MoMA because I knew the architectural director. She told me that when the show on Frank Lloyd Wright's work opened at MoMA in 1940, several of my photographs had been blown up very large and were part of the exhibition. She gave me a couple of ideas about where I might find work, but her main advice to me was to develop an accent. Maybe she thought it would make me more exotic than I already was [*laughs*]. But I didn't find any discrimination or find myself out of place. I shared a studio with three other photographers—one was Japanese, one was Jewish, and the other was Norwegian. I was just part of the diversity that is New York City.

Is it true that *House & Garden* rejected Alexander Calder's house as a feature story?

It is true. The moment I walked into Calder's home with the kitchen editor, I knew it was going to be rejected. There were three stoves in that Roxbury, Connecticut, house, and not one of them was less than 30 years old. Nothing there could have encouraged advertising.

You worked closely with both Calder and Wright. Did you find them very different?

Their work ethic was the same, but the difference was that Mr. Wright was starchy and always dressed to the nines even in the desert. Calder dressed more like a blacksmith for every occasion. He insisted on being called Sandy. Frank Lloyd Wright was always Mr. Wright.

How did that translate to their work?

Mr. Wright said, "Give me the luxuries, and I'll do without the necessities." Sandy wouldn't buy anything that he could make himself. He made the necessities, and they became luxuries.

How do you feel about photography becoming a more computer-based medium?

Even though I admire it, I don't think I'm ever going to have the time or the interest in mastering it myself. I know two or three people who do wonderful things with it. I envy them, but they're not going to have me as competition.

Architect John Black Lee's Day House (left), in New Canaan, Connecticut, 1966. "After Calder built a new studio and home near Sache, France, he sent me a postcard that read: 'We have a new shack. We'll be seeing you.' I took it as an invitation and went to visit in 1964, capturing him in front of the studio" (right).

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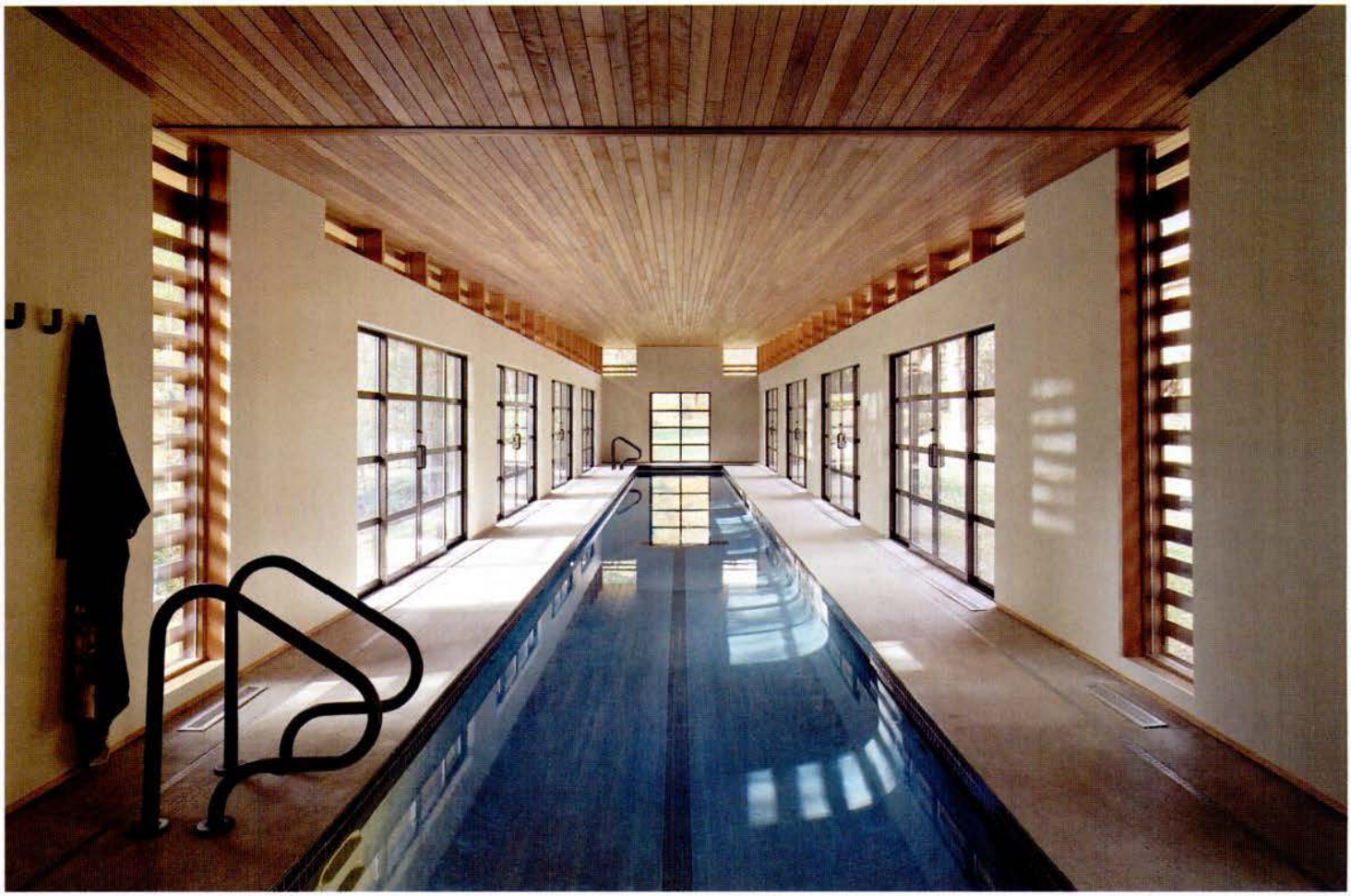

Skinny Dip

An elegant new pool house keeps competitive swimmer Sydne Didier in top form, and out of the Connecticut River.

Though a placid morning swim spent gliding weightlessly, slowly perfecting the overhand crawl, is enough to steam any aquaphile's goggles, it's the prospect of the eight miles of choppy open water in Lake Champlain that gets competitive swimmer and triathlete Sydne Didier's heart rate up. Preparation for that swim, and countless others, is critical, but as Didier sought a place to train, she found her surroundings in the often wintry college town of Amherst, Massachusetts, lacking. "There isn't much access to pools around here," she says. "Plus, well, it's New England."

Having bought a cramped farmhouse "with lots of doors" on a plot of land just yards from Amherst College, Didier—who runs a design shop in nearby Northampton—and her husband set about building a pool house. The initial idea was to make the second structure a workout room, guest room, and pool combo, but budgetary constraints soon forced the couple to pare down their plans. The guest room went; the pool stayed. "People would come over and say, 'Oh, you're building a pool… Haven't you seen your kitchen?' We went more with our passion than with our practical side."

Rachael Chase of Austin Design Inc., based in Colrain, Massachusetts, was charged with designing an enclosure for a lap pool where it would otherwise remain frozen for three months of the year. The 102-foot-long pool house encases the 75-by-8-foot pool, though just barely. Clerestory windows let in ample natural light, and several pairs of glass doors open wide to the outside world. "It actually feels more like a pavilion," she says.

Chase, who has a background in sculpture and interior design, says of her first architectural project, "It was pretty easy to think outside the box because I hadn't really been in it." The wood-clad structure, whose boldest ▶

Photo by David Stansbury

Story by Aaron Britt

The long, narrow pool has enough space for Didier to train, but is still shallow enough to offer her kids worry-free splashing around.

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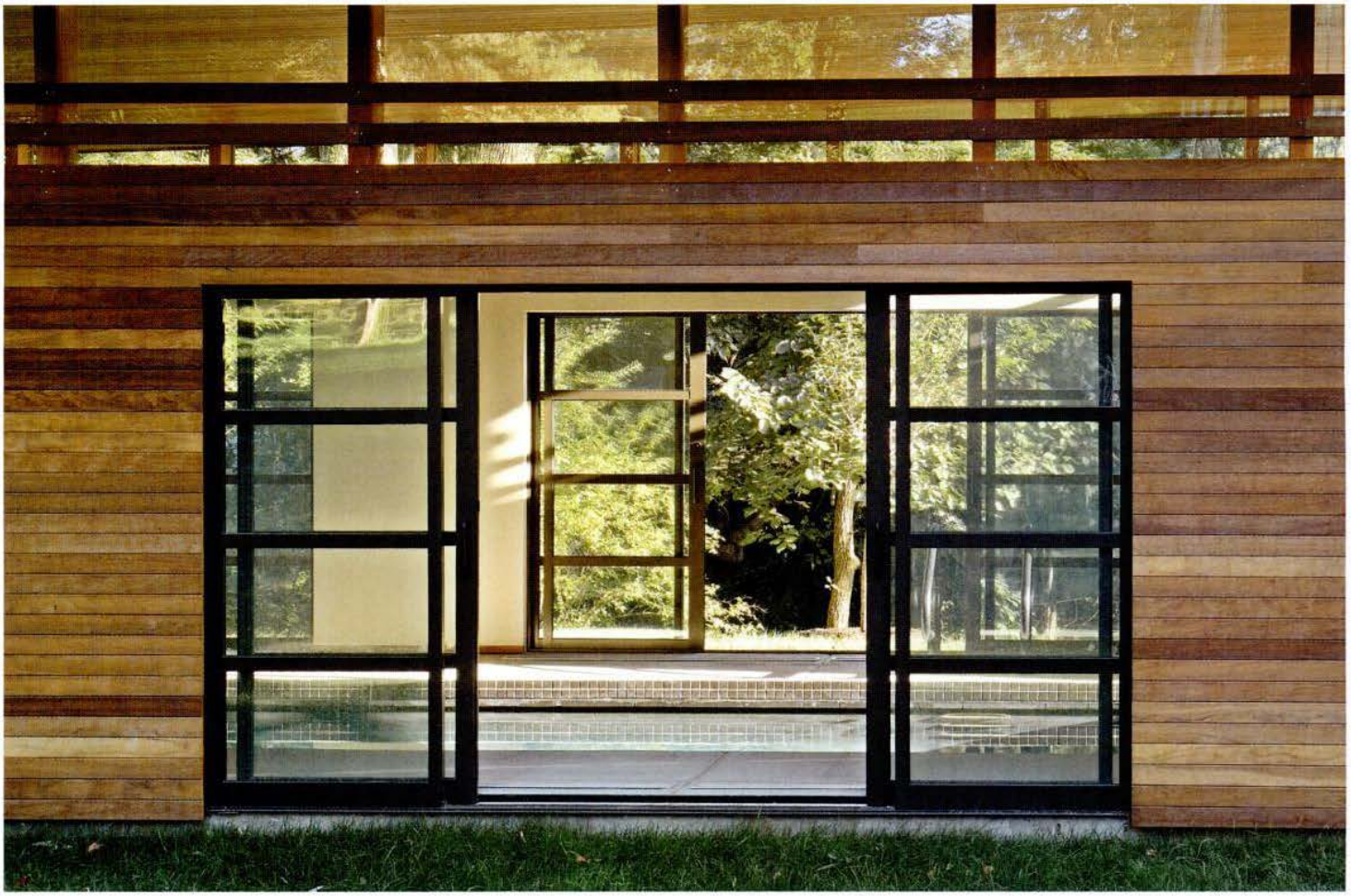

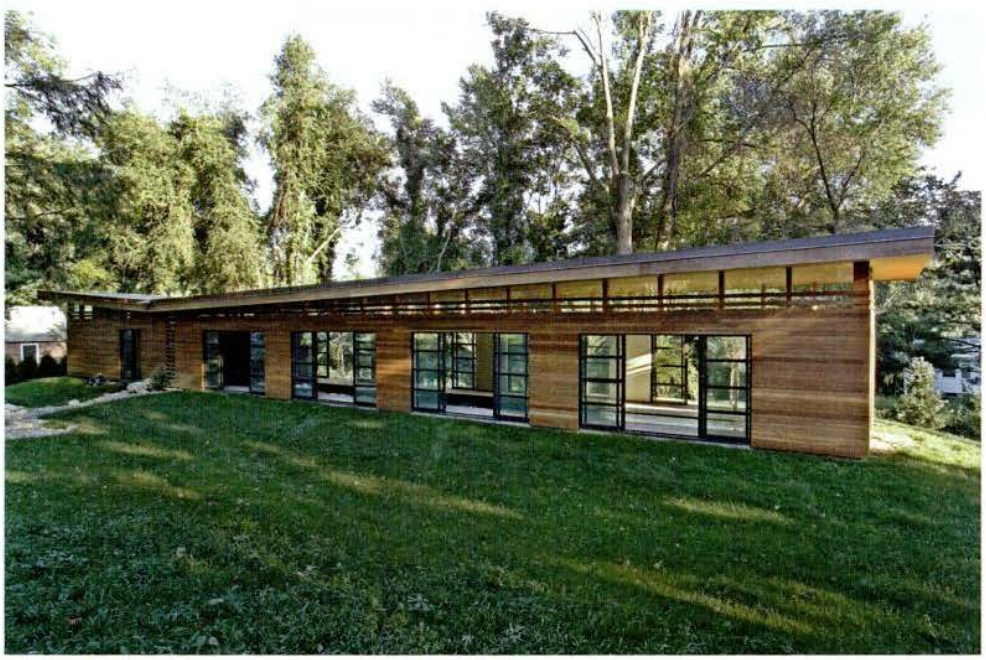

architectural move is its sharp swooping roof, integrates nicely with the green surroundings. "The butterfly concept came up as a way to mimic the arms of the swimmer as she cuts through the water," Chase says. "It gives the building this feeling of lifting, of opening up."

The lap pool has come to be a social hub for the couple's kids and their friends. And despite some initial raised eyebrows from the neighbors, Didier reports that "it's helped integrate the property. Before, we were just a little farmhouse in the grass."

As for her training, Didier is out nearly every morning swimming laps. "When all the doors are open, you feel like you're swimming outside, though without the sun beating down on your back," she says. This pleases her family, and her dermatologist, and if nothing else, the pool house keeps its busy mother and wife at home just a little bit longer each day.

Photos by David Stansbury

Though a stylistic break from the white-sided New England farmhouses that dot the forests and pastures of Western Massachusetts, the pool house's simple, rustic exterior is a modern descendent of the local vernacular. With the area under snow for a quarter of the year, it also prevents Didier from having to join the local Polar Bear Club.

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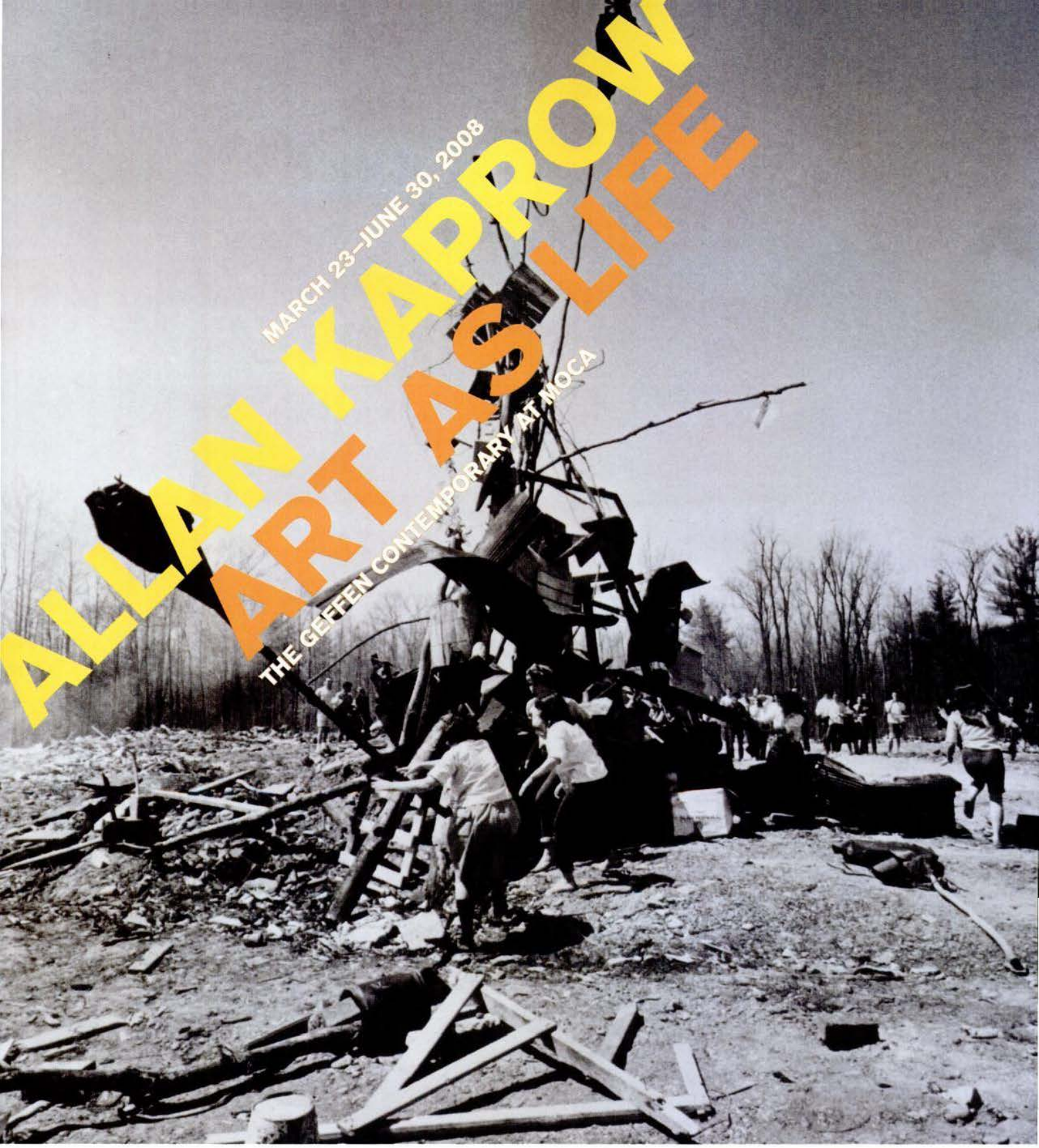

Allan Kaprow—Art as Life is organized by the Haus der Kunst, Munich, and the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven. Concept of the exhibition by Stephanie Rosenthal and Eva Meyer-Hermann.

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ABOVE: Allan Kaprow, *Household*, men working on the tower (detail), 1964, photo by Sol Goldberg, courtesy Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA (980063)

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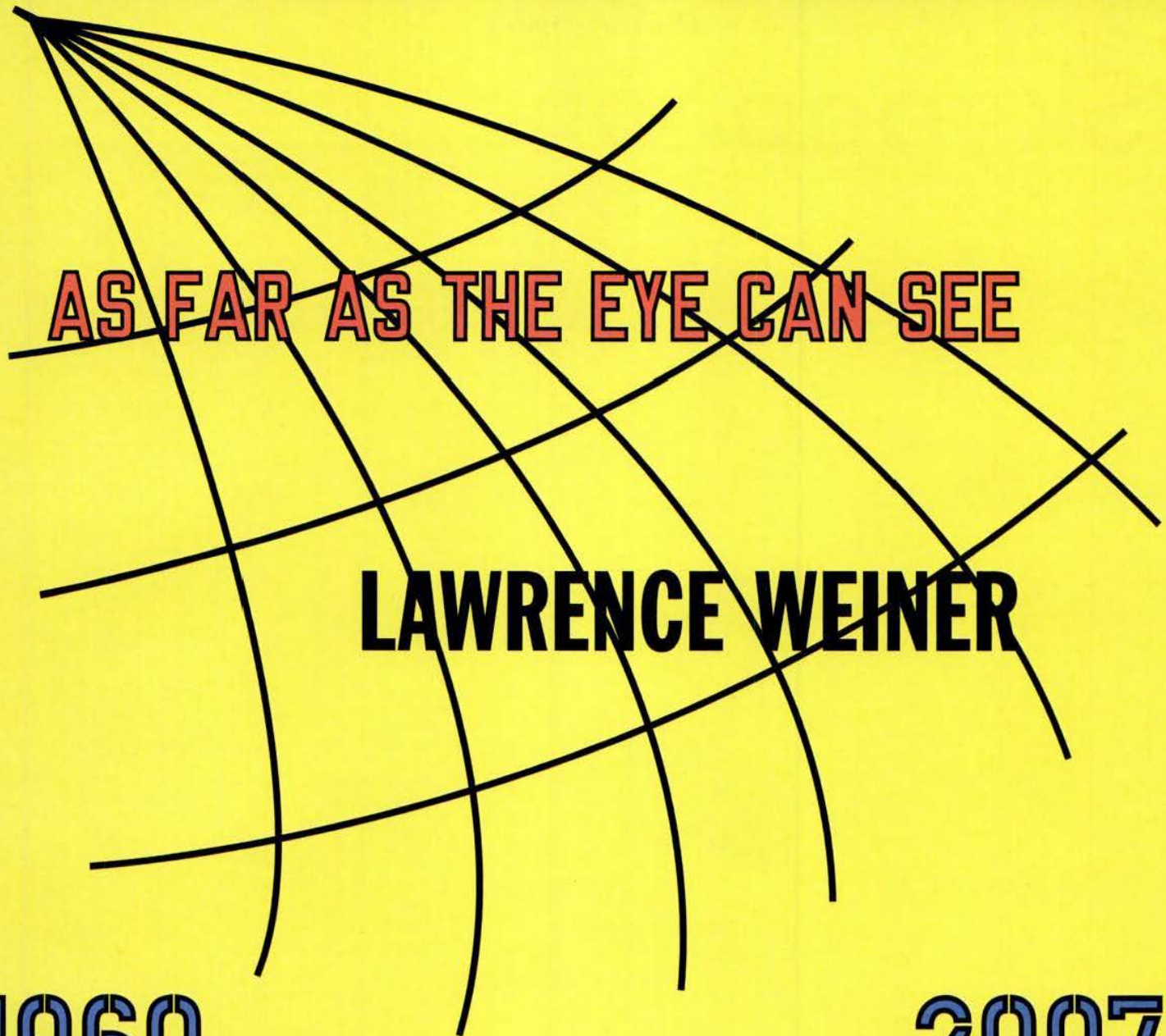

AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE

LAWRENCE WEINER

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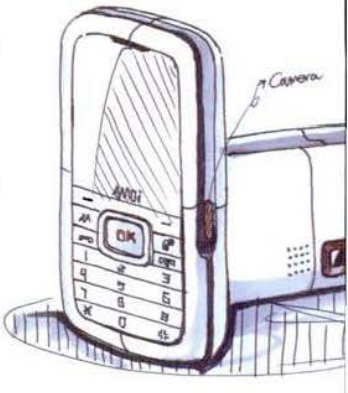
Skypephone

Last year saw the European launch of the world's first mobile phone with integrated Skype, the Voice over IP software traditionally used via computer. This year, the phone arrives in the United States. Like most mass-produced items, mobile phones are usually made in China, and while the Skypephone is no exception, with hardware made and assembled at the Shanghai facilities of AMOI, its parts are sourced from all over the world. The Qualcomm chipset comes from San Diego, the software from iSkoot in Israel. The design was directed by Hutchison Whampoa Limited, the Hong Kong–based company that initiated the project. Dwell recently sat down with Ken Johnstone, director of products at HWL, to discuss the production process.



Story by Virginia Gardiner
Photos by Christopher Sturman

New Skypephones are scattered among their ancestors, including a color sample in a plastic bag, and an early form study in more monochromatic gray.

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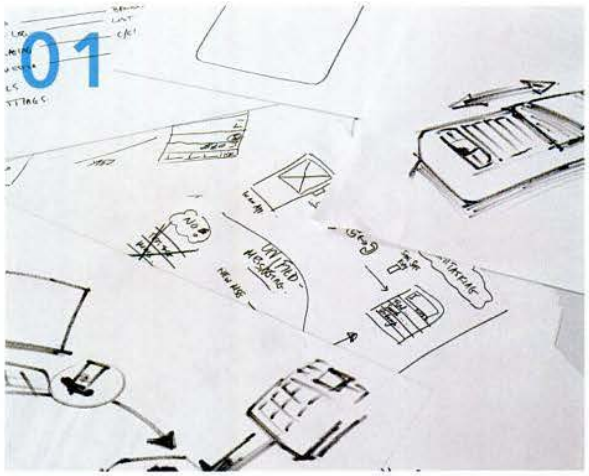
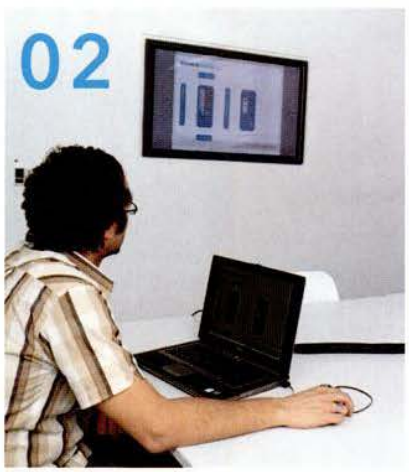


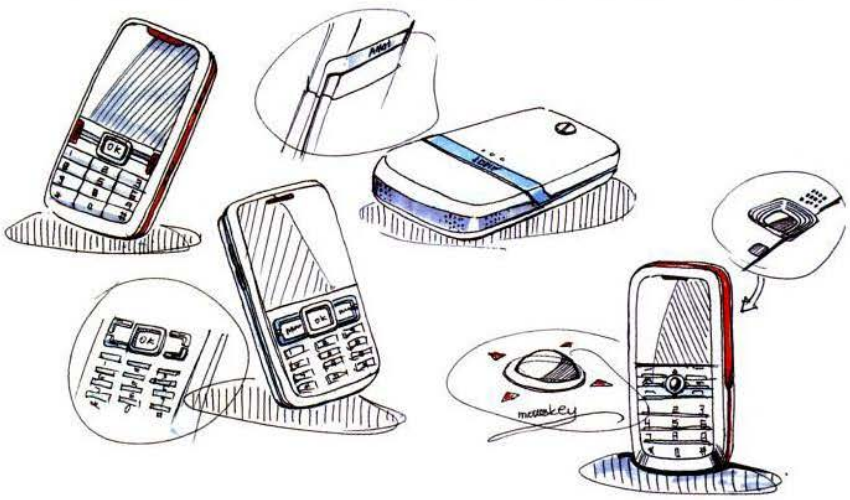
Concept

On every scale, from cottage industry to mass market, production starts with research. Johnstone begins by scouring the globe for team members who have the right skills and design sense to match a new user interface with a good-looking phone.

"We were scratching our heads," he says, remembering the first stages of putting it all together. The challenge was to find the best balance between affordable and savvy—inherent values in the market of Skype users. At the same time, the interface had to be easy enough for everyone to pick up quickly. "We have an idea of what customers want," he explains, "and we have to be able to give the phone to someone who has never used Skype, and they need not only to understand it, but to like it."

The process kicks off with a three-month collaborative concept phase between HWL's London office and AMOI in Shanghai, with two big questions in mind: How are they going to integrate Skype into the phone, and how would they make a phone that sells for around $100 feel high-quality and cosmopolitan?





From 2-D to 3-D

"Very aggressive" is how Johnstone describes the design schedule. They move quickly from a few rough sketches to a virtual 3-D model. AMOI and HWL take advantage of the time difference, working on a 24-hour cycle. "As we are finishing for the day, they are just arriving in the studio."

Communication is mostly visual, using the sketch-overlay method. Starting with hand sketches and moving into computer-aided design drawings, the companies exchange visual ideas by email. When verbiage is crucial, a liaison team from HWL in Hong Kong helps to eliminate any linguistic or cultural barriers.

The teams have complementary skills. "They are more hard-core design and engineering," Johnstone says of AMOI, "while we have a more industrial design take, evaluating the user interaction, look, and feel."

After this brief, intense phase and "very little sleep," the phone comes together. The central feature is the Skype button, which enables users to see who is on their Skype network with a single tap and call them with a scroll and click. "It was very important to have a single idea," says Johnstone. "We had to be brave about it."

Above: The early conceptualization stages see dozens of marker sketches; the creative and marketing teams discuss design options.

Below: A member of the design team uses software to move sketches into a more technical state; further developed form studies begin to give the phone a defined shape.

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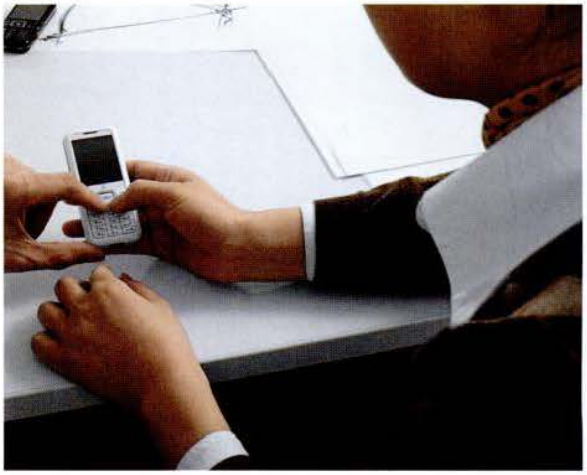
03



Prototyping

After the sketch-overlay and technical-design phases, AMOI provides a 3-D model. In the nine months that follow, the shape is subject to intensive prototyping before delivery to the factory line. "We have to test the user interface against the design we have," says Johnstone. The team at HWL envisions every single motion a person might go through with their phone in excruciating detail—looking up a contact, sending a text message, making a call.

Two key innovations become reality. The first is an aluminum battery case that adheres magnetically to the back of the phone. "There was extra cost associated," says Johnstone, "but it was certainly worth it." The second is a multitasking-friendly function-flip button placed on the side of the phone next to the screen in "an ergonomically sensible place." The button flips through open applications like pages in a magazine, letting you talk, chat, and text at the same time.

"At about four months we get our first working phone," says Johnstone, "and that's exciting. We start sharing it around internally, letting users try it out. For us, this was a highlight because the response was so positive."

04

Finishing

When finishes are chosen and everyone has signed off, the factory line begins to churn. "We do a short production run of about 500 phones," says Johnstone, "and use them heavily to gather feedback."

Choosing the finishes takes place in the AMOI paint studio, which has a massive digital wall of color swatches on painted plastic. "There are a hundred different shades and textures of black," Johnstone says. "We went for a nice soft-touch black. The texture is crucial. It has to feel good in my hand."

The phone parts are painted in Shanghai and assembled by a production line in Xiamen on the outskirts of Shanghai. "Like with any mobile phone, there's a ramp period in manufacturing," says Johnstone. "You start off building a couple hundred a day, then it goes up to several thousand a day."

The first run has three color schemes: a Skype-colored blue and white, a youthful pink and white, and a more conservative black. "The iconic one is the white handset with blue highlights. When you see someone walking down the street with it, you say, Hey, that's a Skypephone."

Above: The phone bodies are produced by AMOI, ready for internationally assembled inner parts; testing the user interface with the first-run prototype. p.238

Below: The first product run, in black, pink, and the brand's signature blue; the packaging represents the Skype brand—a simple box for a straightforward device.

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Around the World

Despite vast cultural and geographic differences, when broken down by specific parameters (i.e., literature, art, and design), the world is small. So small, in fact, that we often find our connections to be based on fewer than six degrees of separation.

For this issue, we feature three projects from young, emerging architects: the EggO House by the Prague-based firm A69 Architects, whose work is almost exclusively based in the CZECH REPUBLIC; Gregory Katz's house in Norwood, SOUTH AFRICA, one of three identical units the architect built in this staid suburb of Johannesburg; and Hobart, AUSTRALIA–based room11's Kingston House, which partner Aaron Roberts helped design for his parents. Despite geographic and structural differences between these three houses, we found a unifying spirit in their architecture: a consideration for site and form, and an overriding aesthetic that can be traced through the continuum of modernism.

In the spirit of "six degrees of Kevin Bacon," we set out to draw relationships between these projects, and were pleased and surprised by the connections that emerged. Even more exciting (and a little validating, given our raison d'être) is the way in which modernism is able to transcend borders while honoring the context and regional spirit of a place. In bringing their own brand of design to areas where it may be lacking, these architects are proving, like so many before them, that modernism is as boundless as it is timeless.

Story by Amber Bravo

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Around the World

Oscar Niemeyer, **Le Corbusier**, and Sir Howard Robertson designed the United Nations Headquarters (1950).

In 1908, **Walter Gropius** began work for Peter Behrens. His coworkers at the time were **Le Corbusier** and **Mies van der Rohe**.

In 1937, **Bertrand Goldberg** accompanied **Mies van der Rohe** to visit his sometimes contentious peer **Frank Lloyd Wright** at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin.

In 1949 Chicago architect **Bertrand Goldberg**, a former student of **Josef Albers** at the **Bauhaus**, was asked to teach at **Black Mountain College**. He couldn't, but suggested **R. Buckminster Fuller** as a replacement.

After teaching at the **Bauhaus**, **Josef and Anni Albers** immigrated to the United States. For the next 15 years, they taught at **Black Mountain College**, Josef serving briefly as rector.

Walter Gropius went to **Harvard University** to head the architecture department in 1937. **Bauhaus** alumnus **Marcel Breuer** also joined the faculty.

Harry Seidler studied under **Walter Gropius** at **Harvard University** from 1945 to 1946. In 1946, he attended **Black Mountain College**.

Harry Seidler worked for **Marcel Breuer** from 1946 to 1948, and in 1948 worked with **Oscar Niemeyer**. In 1949, Seidler established his practice in Sydney, Australia.

Kenneth Frampton cowrote and edited ***Harry Seidler***, published by Thames & Hudson (1992). He is the Ware Professor of Architecture at **Columbia University** (1972-present).

SOUTH AFRICA P. 148

Gregory Katz worked for **Daniel Libeskind** in 1994.

Daniel Libeskind was the first holder of the **Frank O. Gehry** International Visiting Chair in Architectural Design at the University of Toronto (2003).

The loosely defined Los Angeles School includes architects **Frank Gehry** and **Thom Mayne**.

Gregory Katz

Gregory Katz studied under **Bernard Tschumi** at **Columbia University** from 1995 to 1998.

Thom Mayne established **Morphosis** with Michael Rotondi in 1972.

Bernard Tschumi was the dean of architecture at **Columbia University** (1988-2003).

From 1991 to 1994 **Wiel Arets** was a visiting professor at **Columbia University**.

Wiel Arets was a finalist for the **Mies van der Rohe Award** for the Hedge House Art Gallery in Wijlre, the Netherlands (2003).

Tony Caro was one of three winners of the **Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition** in 2006. He worked for 12 years at **Harry Seidler** & Associates.

room11 participated in the 2006 **Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition**, judged by Carme Pinós, **Wiel Arets**, and Catherin Bull.

AUSTRALIA P. 156

room11

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In 40 Ways

In 1919, **Walter Gropius** was appointed master of the Grand-Ducal Saxon School of Arts and Crafts, which later became the **Bauhaus**.

Avant-garde designer and typographer **El Lissitzky** was appointed the Russian cultural ambassador in Weimar, Germany, in 1921, where he greatly influenced the **Bauhaus**.

Paolo Soleri, architect and designer of Arcosanti and former student of **Frank Lloyd Wright** at Taliesin West (1947–1948), taught at **Fontainebleau School**.

R. Buckminster Fuller and his father-in-law, noted architect and muralist **James Monroe Hewlett** formed the Stockade Building Company in 1922.

In 1932, **James Monroe Hewlett** was appointed director of the **Fontainebleau School** outside of Paris—an institution renowned for its school of architecture and conservatory.

The **Bauhaus** ran from 1919 to 1933 under the directorships of **Walter Gropius** (1919–1927), **Hannes Meyer** (1927–1930), and **Mies van der Rohe** (1930–1933).

From 1924 to 1928, **Mart Stam** published the magazine *ABC: Beiträge zum Bauen* (Contributions to Building) with Hans Schmidt, **Hannes Meyer**, and **El Lissitzky**.

Architects **Ladislav Lábus** and Norbert Schmidt renovated the Palička House in 2003 originally designed by Dutch architect **Mart Stam** (1932).

CZECH REPUBLIC P. 164

Both **Terroir** and **A69 Architects** were included in *Wallpaper** magazine's Architects Directory 2007: 101 of the world's most exciting new architects.

A69 Architects

A69 Architects beat out **MVRDV** in the development plan for Central Park Praha in 2003.

MVRDV is one of the firms participating in the **Make It Right** project.

A69 Architects Prokop Tomášek, Boris Redčenkov, and Jaroslav Wertig met while studying at the **Czech Technical University** under professor **Ladislav Lábus**.

One of **Frank Gehry's** notable buildings from the 1990s, the Dancing House (also called "Fred and Ginger"), was built in cooperation with Czech architect **Vlado Milunić**.

Vlado Milunić received his degree at **Czech Technical University** (1960–1966), where he currently teaches.

Morphosis is one of the firms participating in the **Make It Right** project.

The **Make It Right** project is a program to build 150 homes in the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The **Mies van der Rohe Award for European Architecture** was established in 1987 to acknowledge and reward quality architecture in Europe.

A69 Architects was nominated for the **Mies van der Rohe Award** for a sanitorium in Františkovy Lázně, Czech Republic (2003).

From 1938 to 1958, **Mies van der Rohe** headed the architecture department at Chicago's Armour Institute of Technology (later the Illinois Institute of Technology).

room11's Aaron Roberts, Nathan Crump, James Wilson, and Thomas Bailey all studied under **Richard Blythe** at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Richard Blythe, Gerard Reinmuth, and Scott Balmforth formed **Terroir** in 1998; the firm has offices in Sydney and Hobart.

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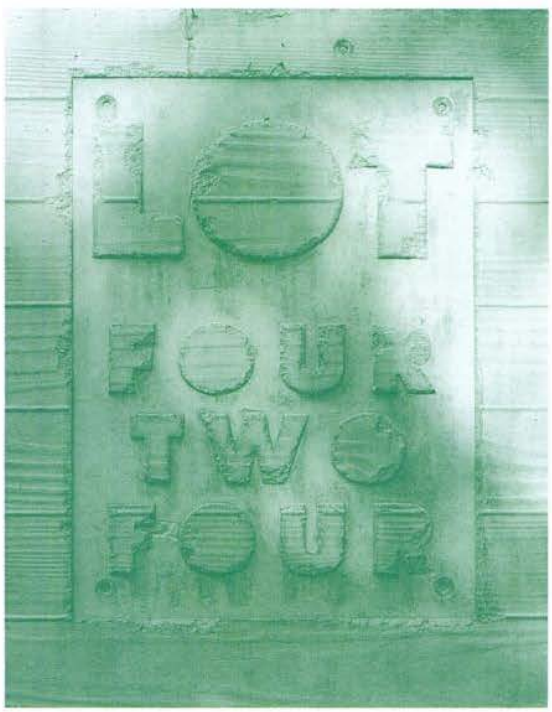
Around the World

Gregory and Caryn Katz (opposite page) are dwarfed beneath the cantilevered concrete overhang, which houses the bedroom on the upper level. The stackable glass doors that run beneath allow the house to open completely to the yard and swimming pool, soften the severity of the concrete, and blur the boundary between indoors and out. Inspired by an old technique that Le Corbusier experimented with in the 1930s, Gregory has imprinted Lot Four Two Four's name on the exterior wall at the entrance, using laser-cut Perspex on concrete (below left). The shared service at the back of each unit allows for easy access to the garage and enabled Gregory to maximize unobstructed views at the front of each of the three structures.



KATZ'S CRADLE

NORWOOD, SOUTH AFRICA—Gregory Katz proves that three times is a charm with his trio of concrete homes, which challenge the status quo in this quiet Johannesburg suburb.

Story by Kerryn Fischer
Photos by Elsa Young

Project: Katz Residence
Architect: Gregory Katz Architecture

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Around the World

"I've never understood the distinction between domestic and commercial architecture," says South African architect Gregory Katz. "A lot of what I do is an attempt to use engineering materials in a domestic setting in a new, clever way." One of essentially three identical concrete boxes, the Norwood home Gregory moved into months before marrying his actress wife, Caryn, cuts an incongruous but captivating sight in this leafy middle-class suburb of Johannesburg. The trio of houses contrasts with the area's mishmash of architectural styles, where a glut of security complexes are characterized by cookie-cutter design and little space in between.

The three 3,660-square-foot dwellings at Lot 424 share over a third of an acre and answer a common desire for space, security, shared maintenance, and even a sense of community. Achieving this in an economical fashion wasn't easy, but for Gregory, who thrives on the research and development side of a design project, it was all part of the process.

"I love the solidity, strength, and neutrality of off-shutter concrete," says Gregory. "You can build pretty quickly with it, and the absence of fittings and finishes made the economics convincing. It wouldn't be cost-effective for one house but it is for three," he explains. Taking just 18 months to build, the units are designed with a shared-access service road that runs down the back of the buildings and, at 20 feet wide, is big enough to drive cars down and provide off-street parking for visitors. "Each unit is designed so that the more open side of the house looks onto the private sides of the neighboring houses," explains Gregory. The slope of the ground facilitates this too, with each unit stepping down a bit so that none of the windows correlate.

Gregory's ability to exploit concrete's strength is visible in his own home, a huge expanse that feels light and spacious thanks to the absence of a single load-bearing wall. A large aperture of stackable glazed doors softens the divide between indoors and outdoors, and the freestanding staircase and cantilevered bedroom keep the path of light and space dynamic. Upstairs, the openness continues in the main bedroom, spare bedroom, and home office where Gregory bases his practice. The modular design allows the other two units to utilize the office space for a third bedroom and study. "I'm all for modular design; it's easy to manipulate and control, and the spin is that it allows tremendous flexibility. So the house is designed to accommodate the demands of a nursery, restaurant, or office in the future. I believe that if you put all this energy into a building, it has to be around for a long time."

But it took a while for the developer to get the concept. "It's an incredibly simple box, and so initially, it was difficult to convince the developer that we could surpass these connotations and make concrete 'warm and homey,'" Gregory says. "I appreciate the super-slick minimalist look, but it's hard to get right in this country, and I don't see the point in doing something if you can't do it properly."

Studying architecture at Columbia University ▶

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The freestanding staircase (opposite) was built three times before Gregory deemed it structurally sound—a tribute to the architect's tenacity. The high-tech end result was achieved using small custom-made plastic reinforcing fibers. The galley-style kitchen (below) with its bold use of color was Caryn's choice. She fell in love with the name of a paint swatch called Canary Yellow and then left it to Gregory to fine-tune the exact hue.

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Cognizant of concrete's excessive greenhouse gas emissions, Gregory built with the future in mind: The modular structure of his home could just as easily accommodate the demands of a nursery, restaurant, or office, as suggested by the various seating and dining arrangements situated throughout the house, particularly in the dining and living area. The space is outfitted with an Eames chair and an unfinished wood shelving unit and dining table. The room opens to the yard and pool, enhancing the room's circulation to the outdoors.
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in New York and working for Daniel Libeskind in Los Angeles has given Gregory some perspective on this. "[Libeskind] taught me the value of experimentation. Where architecture is most often concerned with moral decisions, Daniel is unable to be anything but playful and courageous." Another influence is maverick architect Zvi Hecker, with whom Gregory worked during a gap year in Tel Aviv and Berlin. "His experimentalism with materials and his insistence on not settling for what's available, but rather reinterpreting it, has set me in good stead coming back to South Africa."

For Gregory, Johannesburg is a great place to be an architect. Its origins as a swashbuckling gold-mining city where fortunes were quickly made and lost resonates even now, most notably in its architectural landscape where developers are all-powerful, and buildings go up and come down with little regard for longevity or the preservation of architectural value. "It's an exciting place to be as there's much to be done, but it's not for the fainthearted," says Gregory, who started his own architectural practice four years ago—three years after returning to South Africa.

"You have to work within what is achievable in this country. I tend to work closely with the builders, which eases the process. In fact, with this house, the builder ate most of the cost of the experimentation on the staircase, as he was just as passionate about getting it right." After three attempts, strength-tested in situ each time, Gregory is particularly pleased with the high-tech result, achieved using a composite system of welded steel L-profiles, expanded mesh, and polymer fibers in the concrete.

It was a similar journey with the concrete finishes, starting with the boundary wall, for which they used heavy-grain timber as shutters so that the resulting molded concrete retains the impression of the timber grain. They also used laser-cut Perspex to imprint text on walls, inspired by an old technique that Le Corbusier used in the 1930s. "There's an alchemy to concrete that allows it to take on many guises at very little cost," says Gregory. The concrete staircase is pigmented black, a durable choice for a high-traffic area that can withstand nicks and scratches, and the slab on the terrace has been ground to expose the black flecks of Johannesburg granite used as an aggregate. Concrete countertops in the kitchen have been finished simply with an invisible sealant while the windowsills in the bedrooms form deep slabs to resemble floating shelves.

The house has also been designed to be thermally efficient with the overhang on the terrace carefully calibrated to avoid the summer sun but capitalize on it in winter, when the sun is lower and the light comes through the huge glass doors in the living area. "Our Highveld winters are good because they're sunny, so the concrete absorbs heat during the day and gives it off at night," notes Gregory. The radiant heating is also embedded directly into the slab of concrete. In summer the big openings and cross ▸

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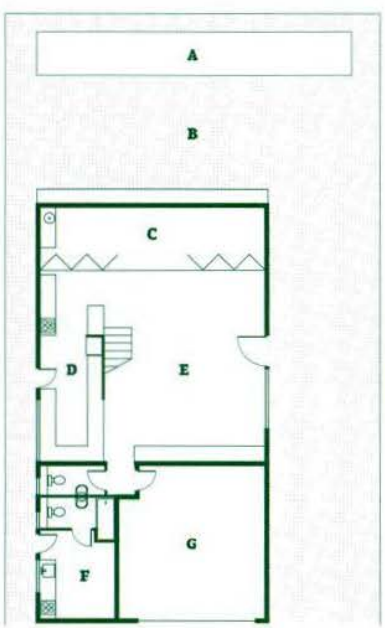
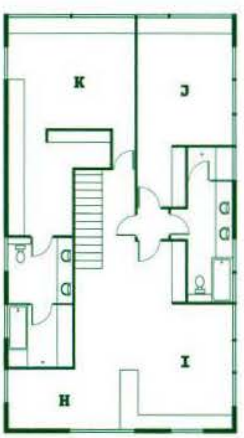
With Gregory and Caryn both working from home, it was crucial that their office (a communal space located off the landing upstairs) accommodate separateness of space and privacy (left). The shower-and-bath-in-one (below) allows for the open feel of the house to translate within the bathroom. Simple concrete slabs function as countertops with inexpensive tiles laid floor to ceiling.



Katz Residence
First Floor Plan

A Pool
B Garden
C Terrace
D Kitchen
E Living/Dining
F Guest Suite
G Garage



Second Floor Plan

H Office
I Office/Future Bedroom
J Bedroom
K Master Suite

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ventilation ensure a thorough flow of air throughout the house.

A self-confessed minimalist, Gregory is the first to admit that the architecture can't stand alone, and that the stereotypically masculine order of the house needs a feminine counterpoint. "There's a lot of clutter around with Caryn," he quips. "But I love it. This place needs to be lived in and she makes it happen. The color is all her," he says, pointing to the bright yellow kitchen cabinets. "Gregory enjoys the calculus whereas I'm more spontaneous and don't mind living with the consequences of imperfection," says Caryn. "But I trust him. I initially chose a paint swatch called Canary Yellow, which admittedly I loved because of the name. Gregory then agonized over the final color choice, but eventually he settled on this citrus hue and of course it's perfect."

They both marvel at how grown-up the house feels in comparison to their previous Art Deco apartment. "At first I thought I was moving into a mission statement for Gregory's head, which was a little intimidating," Caryn muses. "It's taken a while to get used to it, but I'm surprised at how quickly I've managed to make the space my own. What I hadn't anticipated was how the house makes all my little personal details like photos and tablecloths look quite spectacular. In our previous space they just blended in, but here they stand out. I really like that." And when you consider the marital harmony this must afford, it's the design's most impressive accomplishment to date.

Around the World

The trio of townhouses have a shared service road and garage access (above). Caryn was thrilled to discover that all her personal details look spectacular when offset against the solemnity of concrete. In profile, the free-standing staircase is the most outstanding design accent (left). Gregory's love affair with concrete is evinced by his distinct lack of embellishment, particularly on the exterior. The only decorative flourishes are those occuring in the interior, like the gentle arc of a Castiglioni's Arco lamp (opposite) visible through a window.

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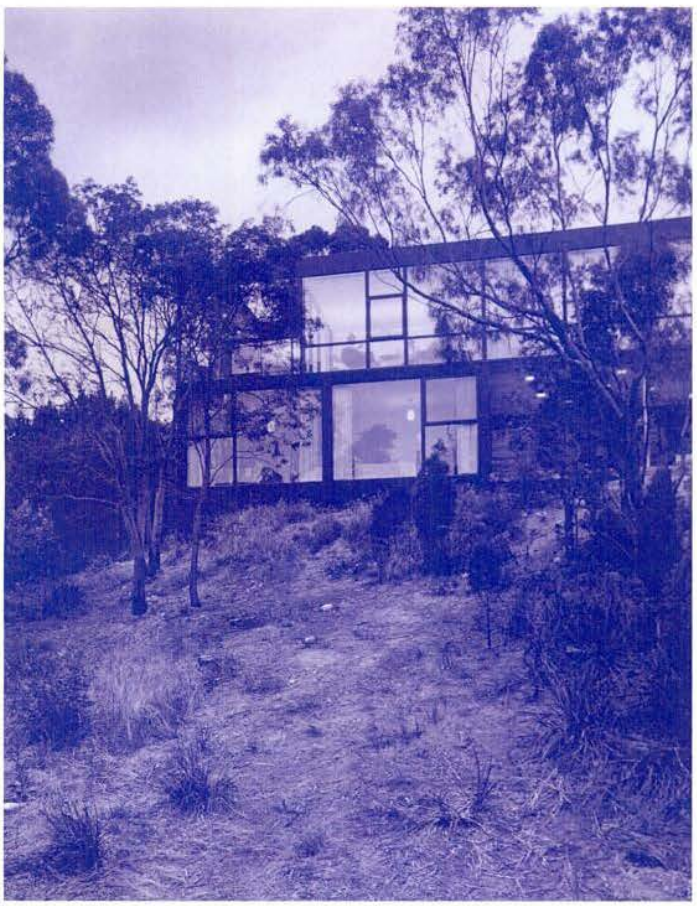
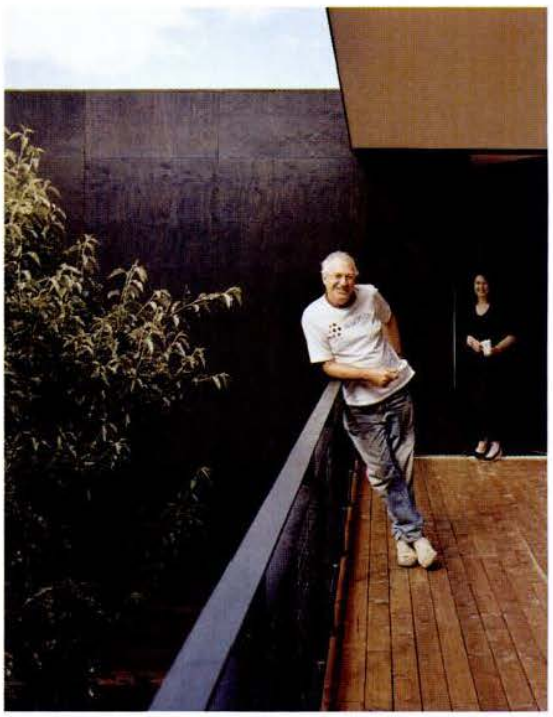


The Kingston house remains unobtrusive and well camouflaged on its hillside site despite the architects' use of modernist geometry. The outer cladding is simply plywood stained with dark Madison oil. The house's residents, Diane and Hayden Roberts, stand outside to admire the views that their son Aaron has given them in his design for the house.



KINGSTON BRIO

KINGSTON, TASMANIA—Aaron Roberts and Thomas Bailey, the young architects behind room11, teamed up to design a house for Aaron's parents, fixing the structure into the topography of the site.

Story by Simon Sellars
Photos by Andrew Rowat

Project: Kingston House
Architect: room11

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Australia

Around the World

The Kingston House abuts a rock shelf upon which architects Aaron Roberts and Thomas Bailey once sat, dreaming up ideas for the design. The outside deck (opposite, top), made of local celery-top pine, welcomes both humans and the natural landscape further into the house; it also helps shape an outdoor room (opposite, bottom) that works perfectly for family meals.

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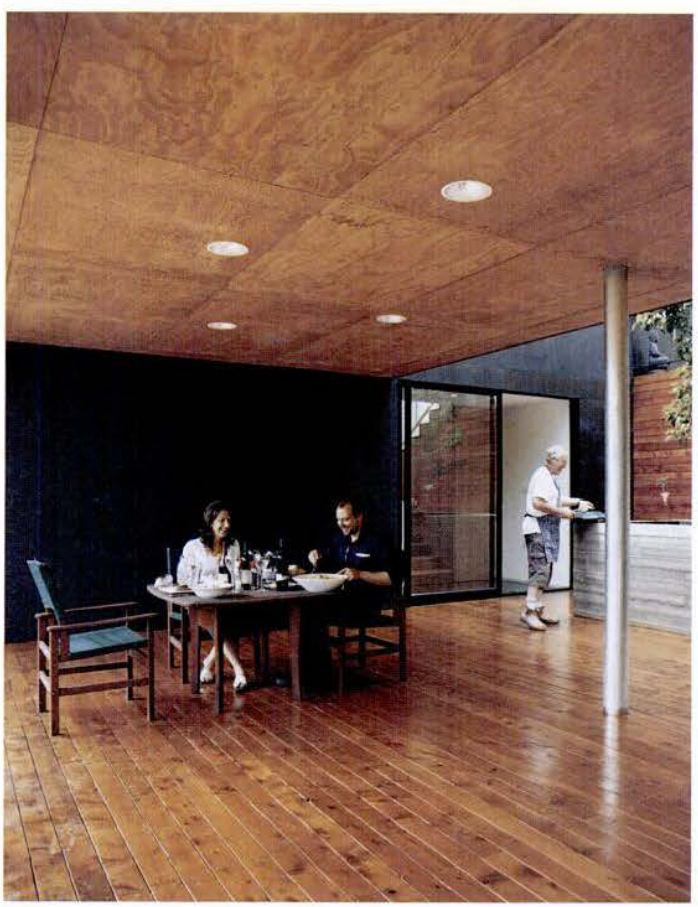

The Kingston House is deceptive. From the street only the property's raised garage can be seen, tucked away amid neighboring *Truman Show* lawns—force fields surrounding identikit brick-veneer suburbia. The house itself is over the rise, on a hilly incline. Visible from the house's sundeck is Kingston Beach to the east, and expanding northwards from there is the Derwent River. To the west there's a small verdant valley. And somewhere past that are the shops and business district of Kingston, an outer suburb of Hobart, the capital of Tasmania—Australia's only island state. To the north is Mount Wellington, the 4,170-foot-high peak that owns Hobart's skyline.

Looking back from down the hill, near the valley, it's hard to pick out the house. The dark shell blends in with the earthy hillside and weather-beaten trees, while the large front windows reflect and absorb the sky. "We didn't want it to be this big element stuck out on the hill, mansion-style," says Aaron Roberts, from the Hobart-based architecture firm room11, and co-designer of the house with Thomas Bailey.

At close range, the building is a monolith, its plywood facade treated and stained with dark Madison oil and sharply delineated by the lightness of the decking, which is constructed from local celery-top pine. Towards the entrance, the monolith is sliced open by a long void between house and deck, filled with ornamental pear trees. As the trees change hue and texture throughout the seasons, they enhance "the qualities of the living space, emotionally and experientially," according to Aaron—something akin to a "seasonal body clock." The cutaway also serves to reveal Mount Wellington, double-framed from inside by the windows on the near and far sides. As Aaron says, regarding the textured, rough-hewn rock shelf to the right of the building, "We used to come and sit on the rock shelf and think about how the house might be planned. We always seemed to gravitate to that spot, looking back at the mountains and down at the water, and we wanted the house to retain that perspective."

The project originated just after Aaron had finished university—his clients were his parents, Diane and Hayden Roberts, who run a newsagency in Kingston. According to Hayden, "we basically said we wanted three bedrooms, and that was the brief really." The design went through seven stages over a period of ten years, beginning with a typical graduate conceit. "Back then," Aaron says, laughing, "the design was like a curved wave! Like the wing of a plane." He wasn't thinking of emotional effects until later, when he began to make connections between the stressful nature of his parents running their own business and the tension of managing his own practice. As a result, he says, "I really wanted to make a calming place, with luxury in the form of space and volume rather than, say, gold-plated taps." That calmness is apparent in the upstairs living area, which smells like clean living, especially when the windows are open. Furnishings are sparse and elegant—understatement is understandable given the view, engorged with Mount Wellington's

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natural theatrics and a sensual lull of sloping hills and inclines. As Diane enthuses, "I just feel so relaxed here, like I'm on holiday all the time. I never want to leave."

Aaron says he and Bailey conceived "the whole building as one solid, large object that has had elements pulled out of it or cut away, as opposed to a multiplicity of elements that come together." This thesis is clearly on display in the home's second void: a square enclosure featuring a Japanese maple, with glass walls connecting it to the master bedroom and bathroom, unifying, in Aaron's words, this "very intimate zone." Chocolate-colored, leaf-themed tiles enhance the mood of the bathing space—"it's more patterned, more personal down at this end of the house," he notes—and the surrounding walls are lofty enough to deter peeping toms. Both private and expansive, this space is a big hit with Diane and Hayden, although, as Aaron points out, his mother was initially resistant to his ideas.

Diane does admit to worrying about what her family would think—and her father, especially, as a member of a conservative older generation for whom the thought of designer architecture doesn't sit well with traditional concerns of practicality and comfort. (But even he was impressed with the smaller void. "Now, that's a bathroom!" he apparently exclaimed on his first visit to the house.) Added to that, after vacationing in Queensland and seeing "big white rendered houses with big white pillars and lovely plants out the front," Diane says she envisaged something similar, and was thrown by Aaron's decision to use sparse vegetation rather than lush evergreens. "But as the seasons change," she says, "they come out in multitudes of blossoms. And I remember ringing Aaron and saying, 'I'm so glad you did this because I know I was a pain!'"

For Diane, the way the living space and kitchen area merge with no classical sense of division also took some getting used to. For Aaron, though, the concept made sense. "We design houses by looking at the architecture as a vessel, almost like a tent as such. It just stops the wind and the cold but at the same time you are able to inhabit that landscape, that place."

Elaborating on their design philosophy, Aaron says room11 is investigating ways "to make denser spaces in the city, researching how people might live in smaller spaces. Everyone wants the great Australian dream, the backyard and all that, but the reality is the environment can't handle it." So the firm is developing an innovative system of modular housing, "pre-engineered planning for a series of buildings where people could add to the building and take away as needed—an affordable green alternative to standard brick-veneer boxes. It becomes sustainable through the smallness of the building: less to heat, less to light, less services." In recognition of its efforts, room11 has been invited to exhibit at the 2008 Royal Australian Institute of Architects national conference. The conference explores the impact of globalization on "meaningful ▸

Around the World

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Australia

The concrete floor acts as a giant thermal bank, storing solar heat well into the evening. Diane finishes up some paperwork at the kitchen countertop (opposite, top). The guest bathroom (opposite, bottom) includes glass walls that look out onto one of the house's "voids," in which pear trees grow.

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Around the World

Floral tiling on the walls of the master bathroom (below) help ground that wing of the house, using earthly color and ornament to detail the space. As Aaron points out, it feels "more patterned, more personal down at this end of the house," and the bathroom, with its view of a Japanese maple, is one of the major reasons for this. The decor of the master bedroom (bottom) remains stark, but a black chandelier brings a touch of complexity to an otherwise white space. The same maple tree can be seen through the rear glass wall, providing a visual focus for this wing of the house.

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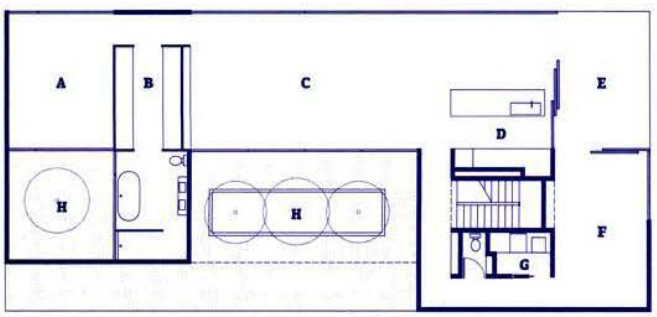
architectural practice," and room11's brief is to map out how Sydney might deal with various environmental challenges in the year 2025. These challenges will, of course, include drought, which already affects—even shapes—life Down Under.

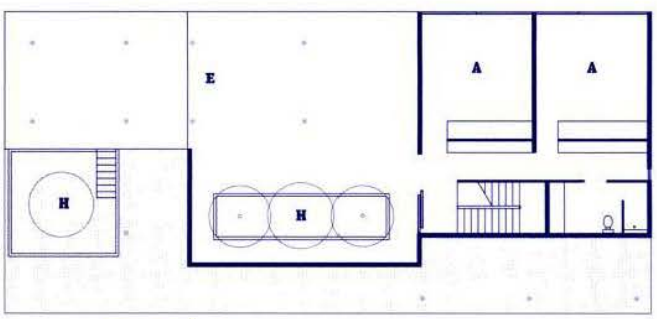
Though the Kingston House may not exactly be small, it does embody the room11 attitude, made apparent by the cozy temperature of the living space and by one of its most striking features, the uncarpeted concrete floor. Aaron explains that after Diane and Hayden returned from Queensland raving about the hot weather there, they decided to employ the concrete slab "as a big thermal bank so that heat stays in the building until late." If it does get too warm, he says, "you can open up the windows and the sea air will suck that hot air through." Hayden reckons they've not had to turn on the heating for months—remarkable for Tasmania, which does get cold—while Diane owns up to more skepticism: "I'm a farm girl originally. I always thought concrete floors belonged in barns."

In light of all this, it's not too far-fetched to see the organic modernism of the Kingston House as a working model of an eminently possible future. Intimately integrated, its low-impact footprint enables the outdoors to permeate the house but also allows the landscape to breathe and grow.

As the RAIA conference will doubtlessly reinforce, the house—and room11—is meaningful architectural practice in action. But, of course, Diane and Hayden need no further testimony.



Top Floor



Bottom Floor

Kingston House
Floor Plan

A Bedroom
B Closet
C Living/Dining
D Kitchen
E Deck
F Studio
G Laundry
H Atrium

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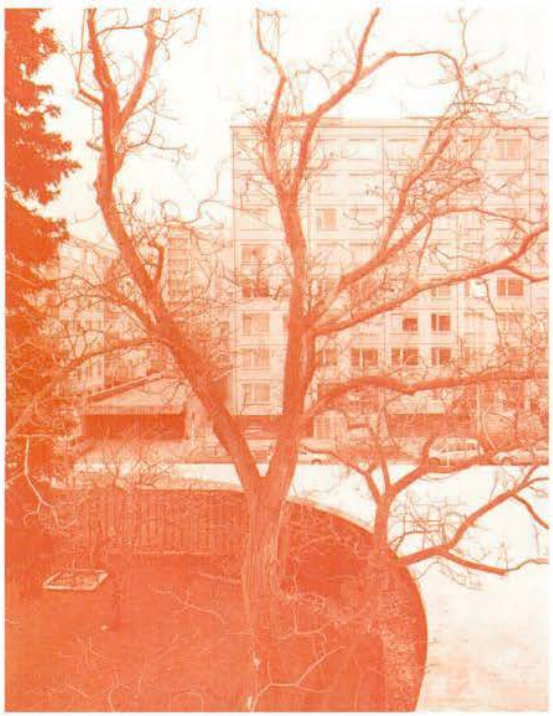
The clean-cut concrete roof slab of Prague's EggO House frames a backyard full of spruce and apple trees. The ovoid concrete hole not only gives the house its name—after all, it is an egg-shaped O—but it gives clear visual definition to an outdoor space that risks being dominated by the hulking tower blocks next door.

The roof weighs an incredible 120 metric tons. All the concrete was poured onsite, and the whole thing is held aloft by thin steel beams. The backyard is the same plot of land in which EggO resident Tomáš Růžičká once played as a child.



EGGO CENTRIC

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC—A69 Architects were called upon to match concrete with concrete for this family home in Prague. Helping block the gaze of the high-rises next door, the roof slab of the EggO House, like an artificial horizon, was born.

Story by Michael Dumiak
Photos by Jens Passoth

Project: EggO House
Architect: A69 Architects

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Around the World

The tension between old and new is easy to see in Prague, where Art Deco housing butts up uncomfortably with utilitarian tower blocks left behind after the Soviet invasion of 1968. Even the homeowners' attitude reflects this. "I'm used to that antique style and always thought I would live like that," Johana Růžičková explains. "I know that conflict."

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The eye-level concrete slab slicing the sightline down a short lane at the end of the Žižkov number 9 tram is a surprise, even if you're looking for it. But with EggO, a 2,300-square-foot, single-level home built by Prague architects A69, the surprises aren't limited to the exterior.

EggO sits low on the street corner next to a row of prewar red-shingled houses. Its signature feature is a six-and-a-half- to eight-and-a-half-inch white concrete slab that stays straight and level even as the street slopes away. What isn't apparent until entering the home and walking a few steps past the garage is that a large oval hole has been cut out of the concrete to frame an inner garden. Instead of landscaping around the house, A69 built the house around the landscape.

"My husband Tomáš used to live here with his parents in the old house next door," says 38-year-old Johana Růžičková. Smiling and relaxing at the broad dining table, she adds: "Right here was his childhood place. It was just a garden, full of trees; it was a tree alley. These ugly buildings were not here."

Johana is referring to the scene across the street, a long wall of what Germans call *plattenbau*: shoebox-shaped concrete prefab housing estates, rising eight stories and looming over the entire block. In Berlin, Leipzig, or Moscow, there's an argument to be made for the much-maligned *plattenbau*, but it probably won't go very far at this table. When Tomáš Růžička returned to his childhood home as an adult and took in the altered surroundings, he figured he would never live here again; a house underneath this brutal block of concrete would feel too public, as if 400 pairs of eyes were looking right at him.

A ruddy, vigorous man with a clean-shaven head, Tomáš, 40, is straightforward about the difficulties involved. "I'm an engineer: heating, air-conditioning, electricity. That's my advantage. But it was horrible to start my own house," he says, laughing. "My friend Stanislav Fiala is also an architect. He said, 'You'll have trees there. It'll be perfect.' For me it was the first step. My way is to believe the architects."

And so Tomáš turned to A69, a firm led by three architects all born in the same tumultuous year of 1969. The architects decided to meet concrete with concrete: pouring 1,765 cubic feet of concrete in situ to form a singular roof slab weighing 120 metric tons. "How to live in this garden," explains 38-year-old architect Jaroslav Wertig. "How to use the garden without being dominated by the buildings across the street. That was the complication. So we created this opening in the roof. It originally should have been a circle, but when we followed the trees that were here already, it became ovoid." The egg-shaped opening (which gave the house its name) also works to define an expanded sense of personal space, he notes, highlighting and focusing attention on the yard with its spruce and apple trees reaching through to the sky.

EggO is about where concrete is, and where it isn't. A third of the oval's diameter gives shape to a curved interior glass wall; the glass is attached

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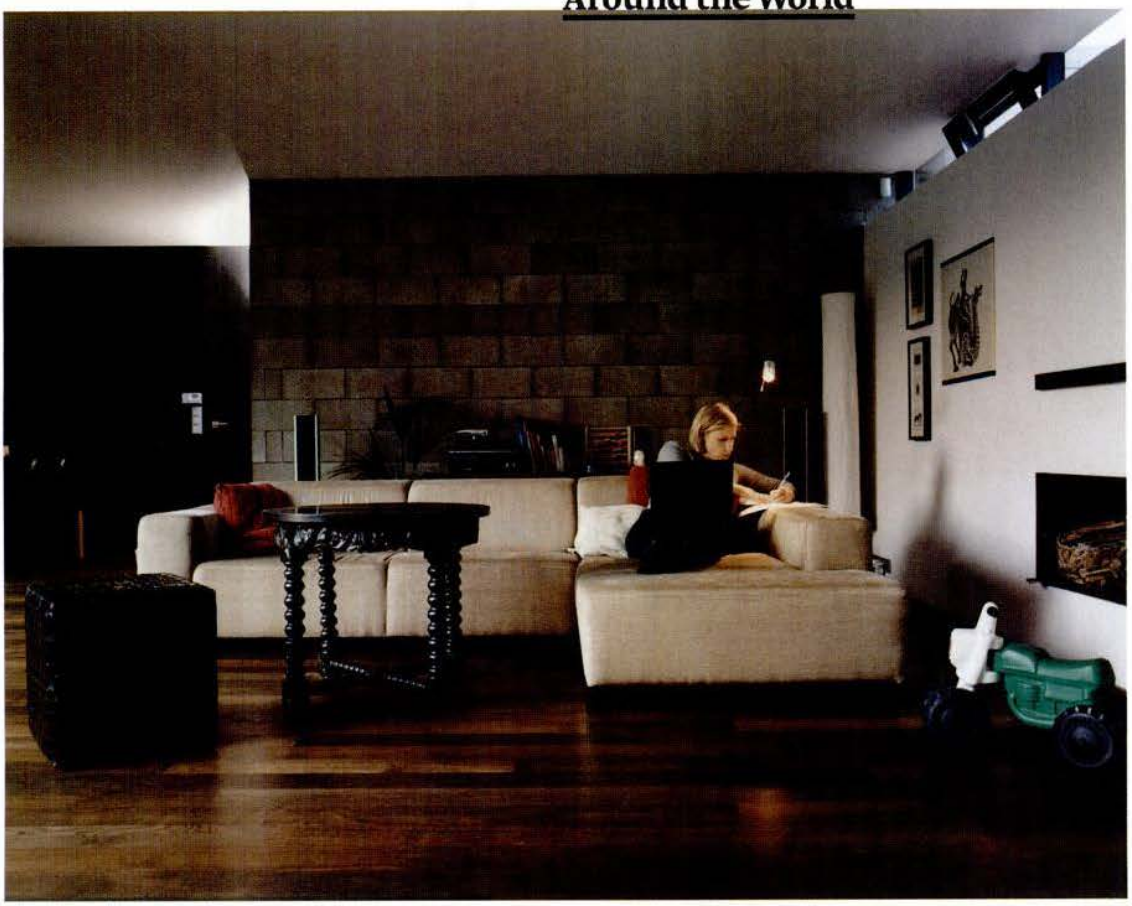

Johana works at home (left) in the living room defined as much by its cinderblock wall as by the light coming in through recessed windows above. The house, while open, fluid, and defined by the circular outdoor space at its center, is also well partitioned, allowing both Johana and Tomáš to maintain private home offices. The dining space (below) achieves its own clarity through a consistent color palette and strong angled lines. The white pendant light adds a sculptural detail.
p.238

to slender steel columns using the same technique automakers use to seal windshields onto car frames. These windows frame the main living space, gazing out onto the lawn and trees. The other side of the living room features a false wall surrounding a fireplace, above which rectangular windows let eastern sunlight into the room.

Those steels columns also bear the load of the concrete roof, with huge girders stationed in the garage. The girders are hidden from view by a checkerboard wall of steel baskets displaying rocks, bricks, and chunks of concrete saved from the construction site held in place with wire gabions (a detail Wertig says was inspired by Herzog & de Meuron's Dominus winery in Napa Valley).

Another, thinner slab extends from the back of EggO to abut Tomáš's boyhood home. It is covered with grass, creating an elevated garden accessible from the second floor of the old house, where Tomáš keeps his office. But this detail was also for his 92-year-old grandmother, Vera, who can now get fresh air without having to head downstairs or even leave the house. After all, the spaces of the house are not clearly delineated. Walking from the patio to the living room, or from the kitchen into the garden, doesn't feel like going in or out—it feels like moving from a glass room into a green room.

As open as the house is, it was important that the interior could be partitioned. Because both Tomáš and Johana work from home, the entryway seals off to provide a place for the couple to meet clients.

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The EggO House's inner glass wall is sealed like the windshield of a car, attached to steel columns that also support the massive concrete roof. Outside, the lawn might be under the watchful gaze of the tower blocks across the street, but the concrete horizon of the roof affords a slight screen—and a psychological barrier—against prying eyes.

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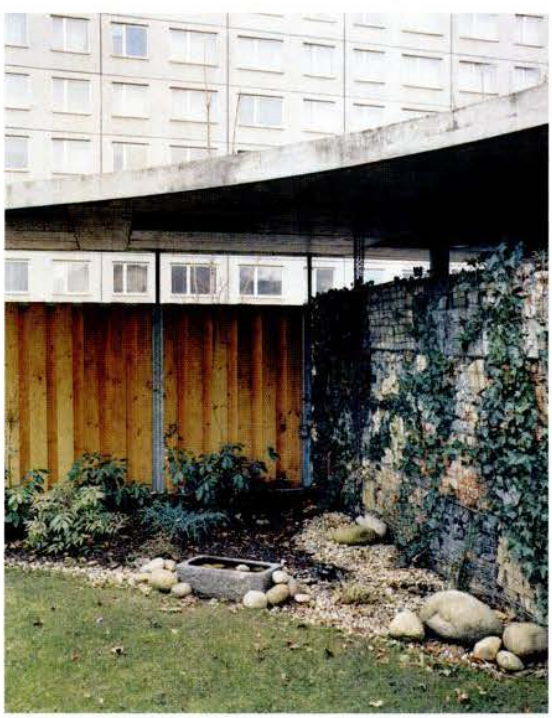
In the end, the house is driven by insularity, closing out the city instead of embracing it—a paradox not uncommon to Prague: Many residents desperately want to get out of the city while at the same time loving it. But the Žižkov district and A69 may represent a broader city shakeup.

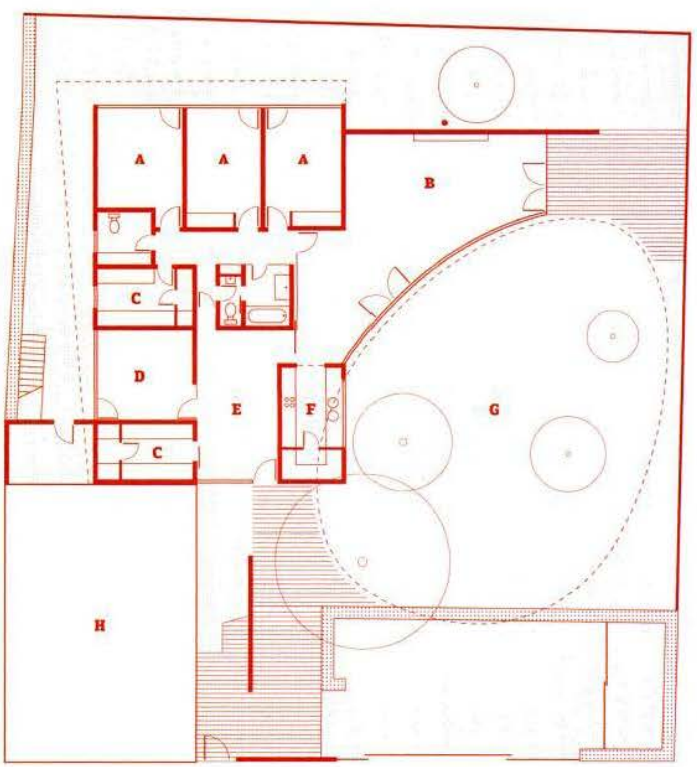
"I met the local planner at a party," Wertig says, "and I asked him: 'If I came to you two years ago with this project, would I get permission?' And he said, 'No, of course not!'" The planner may have been kidding, but Žižkov, once working-class, residential, and plain, is changing. It's now home to bars and rock clubs, and a new metro connection is on the way. But with a hearty stock of Art Deco and classical buildings downtown, new architecture in Prague is uncommon—and local attitudes toward new buildings reflect that. There is also latent public resentment at not having had a voice in urban matters under communism.

"I'm used to that antique style and always thought I would live like that," Johana explains. She never thought she would want to live in something contemporary. "I know that conflict. I needed time to change the old things in my mind. I like this space. It's so free."

As the house grows up, the trees will form a leafy wall, with vines growing over the wire baskets and gabions. Which means that EggO has saved its biggest surprise for last: 120 metric tons of concrete will vanish into green, weightless, fully camouflaged from its surroundings.

Click Here: To listen to an audio interview with A69 Architects visit dwell.com/audio.





EggO House Floor Plan

A Bedrooms
B Living/Dining
C Closet
D Study
E Entrance Hall
F Kitchen
G Atrium
H Existing House

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Czech Republic

At night, the curved geometry of the house becomes even more clear. Lit from within, the house stands out against its backdrop of architecturally unexciting houses. Here, Johana and Tomáš look out onto an enclosed yard, a private space cut out of the bigger city.

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Offshore Drawing

Architecture firms are saving up to 90 percent of their rendering costs by sending projects overseas, often to India. Out go plans, in come full-color images—changing the basic economics of architectural design.

Story by Steve Silberman

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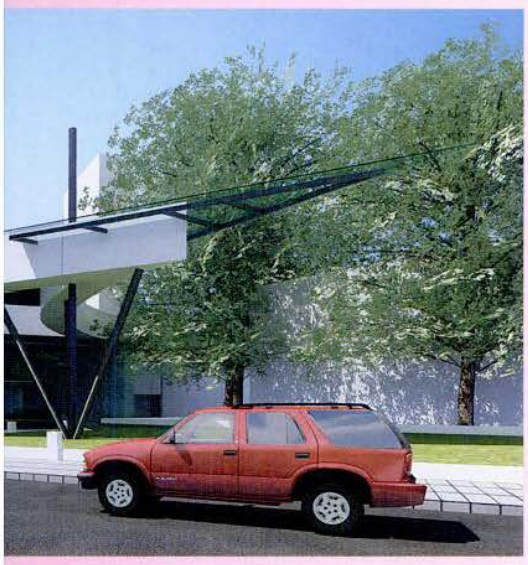

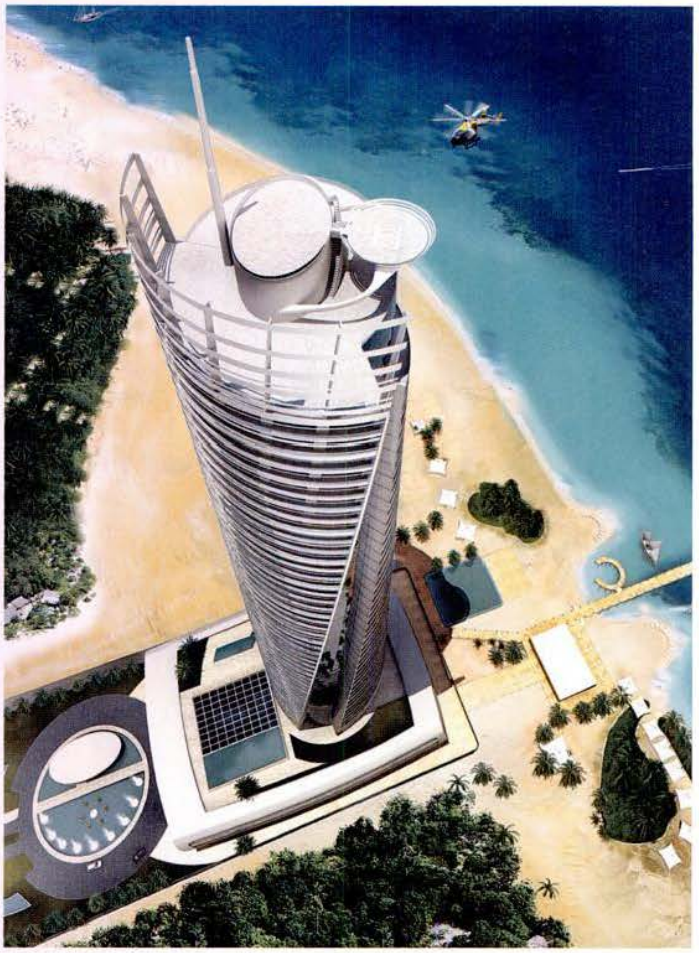

After 16 years at a major hotel and restaurant design consultancy, Janice Clausen was eager for a change. "I was managing too many projects and not doing enough design, which is what I love," she says. In 2004, Clausen and fellow megafirm alumnus Chuck Chewning launched their own design firm in Atlanta to focus on creating luxury environments for the high-end hospitality industry. Soon Clausen Chewning Interior Design (CCID) landed its first commission, upscaling a remote island hideaway in the Maldives to become the One&Only Kanuhura resort. With thatched-roof "water villas" on stilts, dining areas and tennis courts tucked among the mangrove trees, and a tiny adjacent island to which one could travel for private dinners and day trips, the location seemed ideal.

Then, in 2004, an undersea earthquake hit off the coast of Sumatra, launching 100-foot tsunamis into the Indian Ocean and erasing whole villages from the map. The resort was ravaged. Of the water villas along the beaches, only the bathroom fixtures remained. Suddenly CCID's breakout project became much more daunting—particularly with an in-house staff of just three people. The two senior designers hadn't mastered AutoCAD yet and still relied on sketching by hand.

For help, they turned to Satellier, a rapidly growing Delhi-based architectural outsourcing firm, specializing in CAD and BIM (Building Information Modeling). As Clausen and Chewning turned out elegant concepts for a reborn tropical paradise, Satellier's architects and engineers whipped them into CAD files at a fraction of the cost of stateside production. The One&Only Kanuhura was declared Best Resort 2006 by *Hospitality Design* magazine, and more commissions poured into CCID's Atlanta office—from a three-bedroom ultraluxe apartment at 15 Central Park West to 340 guest rooms and five restaurants for a new Mandarin Oriental in Guangzhou.

"There's a perfect storm of design and communication technology happening right now that gives architecture firms the ability to work with teams distributed all over the world," explains Robert Mencarini, BIM services director for Satellier. These international teams are short-lived, often based on a single project.

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When Michael Jansen, the Yale- and Cambridge-educated 38-year-old founder of Satellier, first arrived in Delhi in the early 1990s, the economy was depressed, corruption was rampant, and just getting phone service in your office was tricky business. But then the Y2K event gave a shot in the arm to India's nascent tech industry. With seed capital from angel investors in 2004, Jansen built a five-story headquarters on a dirt road between a garment maker and a dilapidated candy factory. The original staff of 15 has now grown to more than 450 and continues to grow 100 percent annually.

Firms like Satellier are leading a revolution in architectural practice that goes far beyond outsourcing CAD. More and more, the routine production tasks that comprise much of the heavy lifting in the architecture, engineering, and construction industry (AEC) are being farmed out to startups in developing countries like India, China, and the Philippines. A 2006 survey by Larsen Associates predicted that 20 to 30 percent of U.S. architecture jobs will move offshore in the next decade. Autodesk, the makers of AutoCAD, recently told its investors that its business in emerging economies is growing at 30 percent a year, faster than any other sector—despite the fact that the majority of users in those countries are working with pirated software.

AEC outsourcing firms are also proving to be passionate early adopters of new technologies—such as BIM, which replaces CAD with a deep data set that tracks changes to every element in a project. Tweaking the dimensions of a window in BIM instantly updates the changes to the walls surrounding it, the materials required,

the overall cost and time to delivery, and the effects of that decision on the energy efficiency for the life span of the building. A change in any component instantly updates the overall project data.

As technologies like Skype, instant messaging, video conferencing, and the ability to move terabytes of data with the click of a mouse radically transform project flow and create a 24/7 global workforce, offshoring is becoming less of a dirty little secret in the architecture and design industries; it's just how business gets done.

With BIM "we're not just representing buildings anymore, we're simulating them," explains architect David Gerber, who honed his skills working with Frank Gehry and Moshe Safdie, and is now vice president of innovation at Cadforce, another leading outsourcing firm. "In the past, when we reduced 3-D objects to 2-D models, we were basically dumbing down all the knowledge it took to make the drawing. That's why there have been so many lawsuits and cost overruns in architecture—bad information. With BIM, the model in your computer operates like a building, and can be calculated like a building, including all the environmental impacts. That's a major leap forward." By outsourcing BIM jobs to developing economies like India and China, he adds, "we're exporting green-building knowledge to countries whose carbon footprint is going to exceed ours within ten years. They're going to need it."

Even the venture-capital community is getting onboard. Last November, Silicon Valley powerhouse Sequoia Capital gave a $10 million infusion to Satellier. Most of Satellier's big-name clients are tight-lipped, but among the high-profile projects that took shape on computers in India are the Trump Tower and MGM City Center in Las Vegas, and the Formula One racetrack in the Dubai MotorCity complex.

Cadforce, based in Marina del Rey, California, began marketing its offshore services to commercial and residential architects, home builders, and engineers in 2001. One of its early clients was architect Cliff Moser, then at RTKL Associates, who couldn't find anyone in the office with enough spare time to help him render the drawings for an addition to his Culver City bungalow. After stumbling on the company via Google, Moser is now its VP of architecture. One of his roles is bringing project managers over from the firm's offices in Kolkata on what Moser calls "field trips" to immerse them in Western building practice.

"It's often the first time they have been to the U.S.," he says. "We give them tours of parking garages and skyscrapers, bring them down to the Disney Concert Hall and Santa Monica Pier, and take them to Wal-Mart and Target. They may have drawn dozens of buildings like these but never been in one. It's like finally seeing the inside of a space station."

On the domestic side of the equation, outsourcing companies are also learning the value of expanding their presence so that clients can deal with them face-to-face. This year, Satellier will open new offices in Manhattan, London, and San Francisco.

"Over the years, architects have erected higher and higher barriers to entry, and now they're too high," says Cliff Moser, vice president of architecture at Cadforce. Architecture offices in the U.S. are downsizing, with basic work going overseas—helping to create new markets for certain services and jumpstarting whole subsidiary industries.

See Sourcing for all rendering credits; photos courtesy Dimension 1 CAD (top, right), 3Dcities (left)

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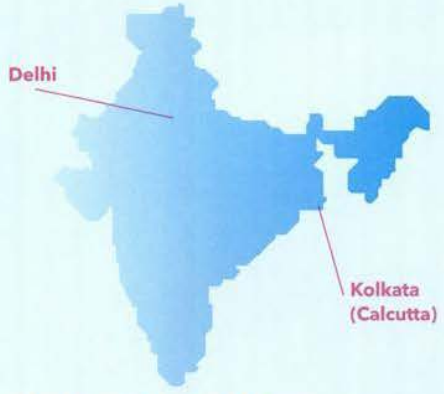
Outsourcing Architecture

- 60% of U.S. architecture firms outsource domestically; 8% outsource overseas
- By 2009 it is estimated that 20% of U.S. architecture firms will outsource overseas
- By 2015 it is estimated that 20 to 30% of all U.S. architecture jobs will move overseas
- Overseas costs are ⅓ to ⅒ of domestic costs



Satellier has offices in Delhi and Kolkata; Cadforce has offices in Kolkata

Types of Work Outsourced

According to a 2006 survey, U.S. architecture firms outsource the following documents:

69% of all construction documents

22% of renderings and models

14% of design development

11% of schematic design

10% of drafting

Statistics Source: AIA International Committee Report on the Offshore Outsourcing Roundtable, 2006

Autodesk's vice president of industry relations, Yale School of Architecture lecturer Phil Bernstein, disputes the notion that AEC offshoring is undercutting American jobs. "It's a subtler issue than that. There simply aren't enough warm bodies here anymore to do the work, and everyone's as busy as they can be," he says. "The way I gauge this is how easily my students are employed after they graduate. For the last few years, they've been snapped up immediately every summer." Even so, outsourcing is changing the traditional apprenticeship process. One of the most fraught topics at a 2006 AIA roundtable on outsourcing was how the industry should respond to a world in which young architects no longer get years of on-the-job training in drafting and documentation.

But for Satellier founder Jansen, success stories like Clausen and Chewning's are just a preview of the liberation of design intelligence, as routine tasks are increasingly shifted to the global network. "The day of the megafirm is over," he declares by VoIP phone from a beach in Kerala. "You're going to see the emergence of the construction-modeling firm as architects move production out of house. These companies will be metadata warehouses that do modeling directly for owners, construction companies, and AE firms. By allowing architects to focus on their core skill, which is design, they will enable firm owners to increase the dollar value of their companies exponentially."

Jansen's ultimate vision is "to act as the great democratizer of design in the industry. You have a lot of tremendous talent inside megafirms right now that would love to be doing their own work, but they don't have the money to float a startup until it becomes profitable, which takes about five years," he says. "Small, high-end firms like CCID are the future. Now with a good website and a reliable production resource, you're in business."

CAD and BIM outsourcing has grown, but has yet to take over the whole industry. "Firms like Satellier haven't taken over the design role," Janice Clausen, co-founder of CCID, is careful to point out. "It's not taking jobs away from [the U.S.]. For a firm like mine, they provide crucial support. It's like having a 24-hour office." p. 206

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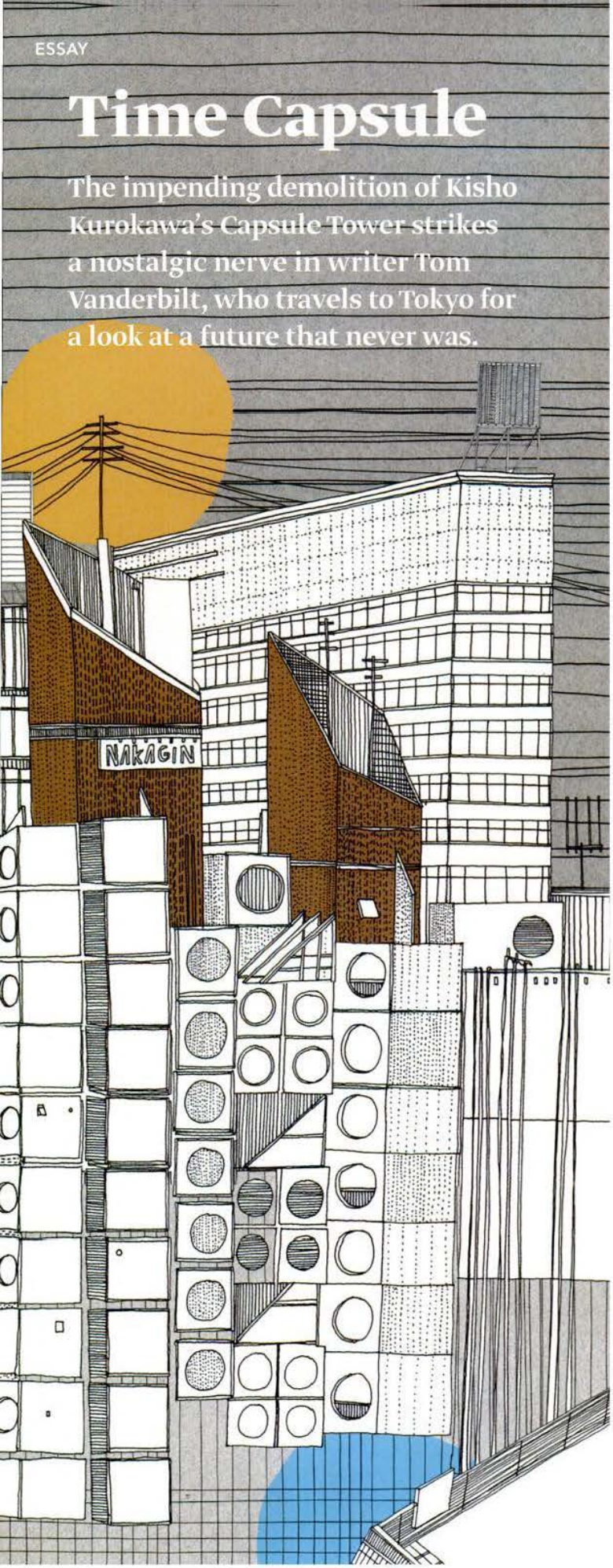
ESSAY

Time Capsule

The impending demolition of Kisho Kurokawa's Capsule Tower strikes a nostalgic nerve in writer Tom Vanderbilt, who travels to Tokyo for a look at a future that never was.



Even as a child in 1970s suburban America, I had a firm, if skewed, vision of modern architecture. My modernism demanded not rational Miesian boxes but structures whose form proclaimed the future: anything space-related (the Space Needle—how the very name evoked modernity!); anything that moved (revolving restaurants); anything molecular (the Brussels Atomium); anything underground (Welcome, Mr. Bond...); and virtually anything spherical.

My juvenile imagination was particularly enraptured by Tokyo's Nakagin Capsule Tower, built in 1972. A towering stack of prefabricated concrete cubes jutting at myriad angles out of a central core, the Nakagin looked more like a docking station—the mother ship of modernity primed for takeoff. Its interior was composed of startlingly compact white pods (under 100 square feet) whose walls were mounted with every necessity, from a sleeping bunk and desk to a rotary phone, calculator, and reel-to-reel tape player. The hallway doors looked like airlocks. The sole window in each pod was circular.

I was convinced that the Nakagin was the future, not least because it came from the proving ground of the future Japan. With its small windows set into white facades, it even seemed to evoke the *shinkansen*, or bullet train. Like the Sony Walkman, the Nakagin seemed a marvel of miniaturization, a harbinger of a new way of living, a self-contained cocoon. Someday we would all live in capsules, eat capsule food, digest capsulized bits of information, make encapsulated love.

I hadn't thought much about the Nakagin until a few months ago, when I heard the startling news that it would be demolished. The building was obsolete, it was said, beyond repair. The units leaked and were tinged with asbestos. Its original raison d'être, that its modularity would allow residents to replace outmoded systems with the latest upgrades—every 25 years, ideally—hadn't been honored. The tower's architect, Kisho Kurokawa, insisted that this modularity could, in fact, save the building. Replacing the capsules would cost less than rebuilding, he argued. But, in light of Tokyo's rampant development and a preservation ethos that prioritizes temples and shrines, the end seemed imminent. I knew I had to go to Tokyo to see the Nakagin, and I quickly made plans to meet with Kurokawa. Then came more unexpected news: Kurokawa had died, at age 73.

Story by Tom Vanderbilt
Illustrations by Nigel Peake

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I went to Tokyo anyway, with no certain plan beyond a pilgrimage to what now seemed like the ruins of my own imagined future.

In Japan, Kurokawa was a confirmed celebrity—the country's "third most famous person," Charles Jencks once joked. A founder of the Metabolists, Kurokawa completed dozens of major commissions, from Tokyo's National Art Center to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport; hosted a television show; wrote best-selling books; and, most recently, ran mercurial campaigns for public office. However broad his reputation grew, though, Kurokawa could never quite escape the Nakagin Tower—he was long known as the "capsule architect."

In the context of late '60s and early '70s design, the capsule tower almost seemed preordained. Long-haul space flights had introduced the world to confined, multifunctional, technology-intensive living. In *Where's My Space Age?*, Sean Topham chronicles the capsule's emergence as a leading leitmotif of the architectural avant-garde. Archigram, which extolled the "poetry of countdown," had its Plug-In Cities and Living Pods. In 1969, Joe Colombo unveiled his Habitation Capsule, which, like everything else in those days, from Vico Magistretti's Eclisse lamp to Vernor Panton's furniture, was heavy on the white, plastic, and spherical. Sanyo Electric had its own prototypical white sphere, the 1970 Living Capsule, with everything one would want in a space-age bachelor pod: bar, TV, phone, bed. Blast off!

But of all the prefab capsule projects swirling around, the only one constructed was the Nakagin. That it was built at all still seems incredible: As alluringly futuristic as capsules were, who would actually want to live in one? Moreover, Kurokawa was just another late '60s wild man with a manifesto and an arsenal of fictive works-on-paper. Metabolism, as wonderfully abstruse as most architectural philosophies, was a sort of Japanese-influenced spin (a little more organic, a little more Buddhist) on high-tech, imagining structures and entire cities as biological entities subject to decay and renewal, with constituent parts replaced as they outlived their usefulness. ("Capsule architecture," wrote Kurokawa, "was an architectural expression of the living cell.") After a decade of scheming, he designed the Discotheque Space Capsule in Tokyo's Roppongi district ("a capsule," he declared, "for those who want to release what is pent up inside them"), and then debuted two capsule projects at the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka.

As a pioneering urban prefab project, the Nakagin Tower was incredibly innovative—but also imperfect. The steel units were built in a shipping-container factory several hours outside Tokyo, with no storage space on site. Only units delivered that day could be hoisted up and bolted onto the central truss. The capsules, in spite of this, were "no cheaper than conventional rooms," Jencks noted: "Kurokawa offers them not as economic panacea but rather as forms for a new way of living." And though people compared the units to birdhouses and to washing machines, all 140 of them (which included sheets and toothbrushes, but not kitchens—it was assumed residents would eat out) sold within a month. The buyers were commuting salarymen, for whom the capsules would be pieds-à-terre; foreign corporations who wanted a cheaper alternative to hotels; and even families simply looking for an extra room.

In his 1969 book *Homo Movens*, Kurokawa had envisioned a mobile society, with people time-sharing among five or six different environments. Like astronauts protected from solar rays, Kurokawa suggested, "individuals should be protected by capsules in which they can reject information they do not need and in which they are sheltered from information they do not want, thereby allowing an individual to recover his subjectivity and independence."

When I finally made it to the tower, on the far edge of the Ginza neighborhood, I was struck first by how small it now seems, dwarfed by the looming high-rises on the edge of adjacent Shiodome, one of Tokyo's glittering new infill districts. My next impression was of the toll that decades of weather and pollution had taken on the building: With black streaks of rain running down it like tears, the new way of living was looking rather old. Next to the building's entrance sat a single preserved capsule, with a sign attached to the window meant to ward off architectural tourists: "Because I do not open it now, this model room cannot do a visit from inside."

I took the battered elevator to the fifth floor to meet with Seibei Yamashita, director of the building's owners association. The hallway was dark, with paint-chipped walls. Shoes and umbrellas rested outside every door. I found Yamashita, bespectacled and soft-spoken, in a room that barely resembled the original photographs: Its once-white enameled walls were painted red and green, the small black-and-white television had been supplanted by a larger color model, and the original clock was stuck at 5:29. A plastic owl perched in the window (to ward off Tokyo's many pigeons, Yamashita said). Outside, cars raced by on the Shuto Expressway. Where every window once had a custom radial blind,

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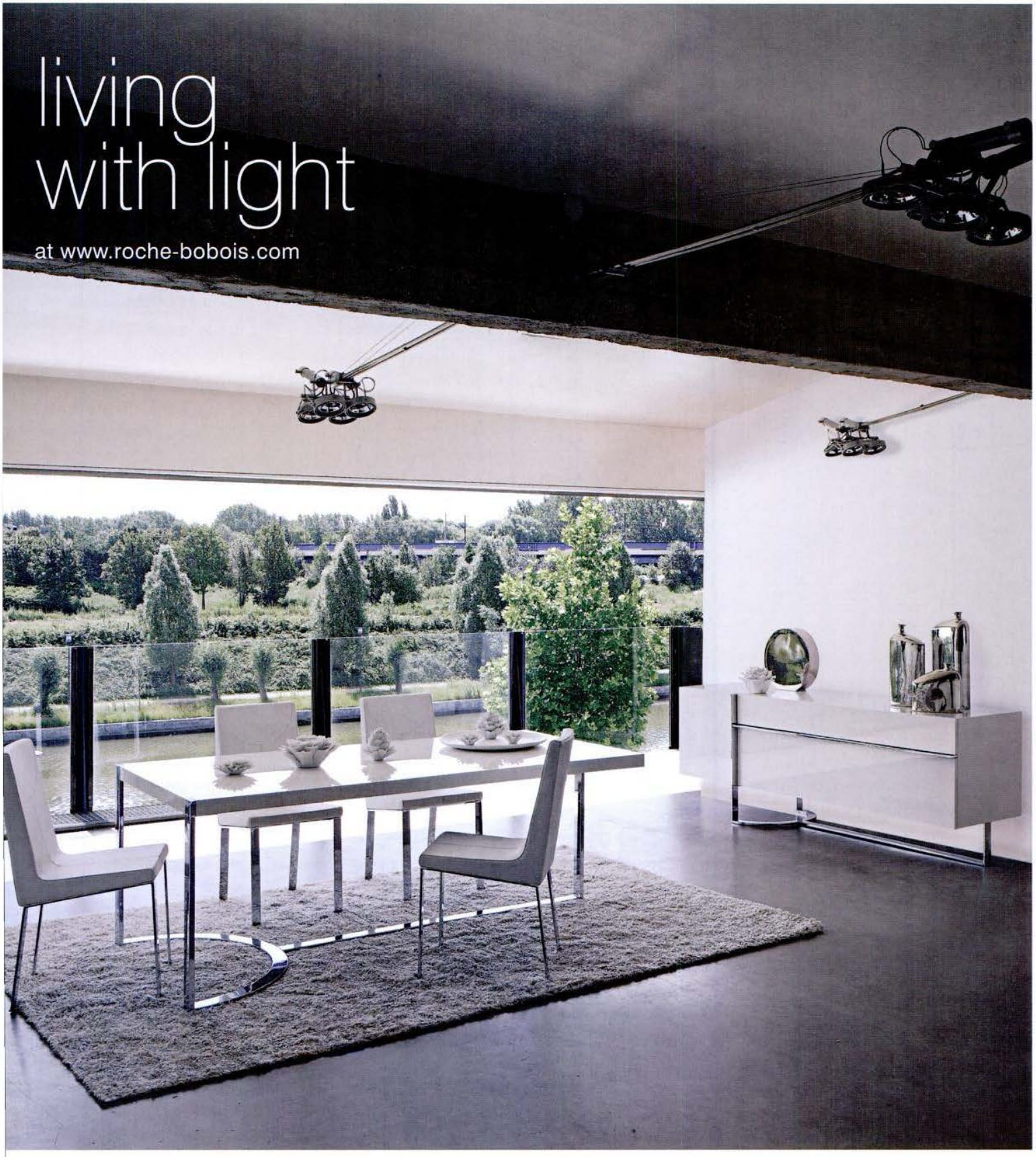

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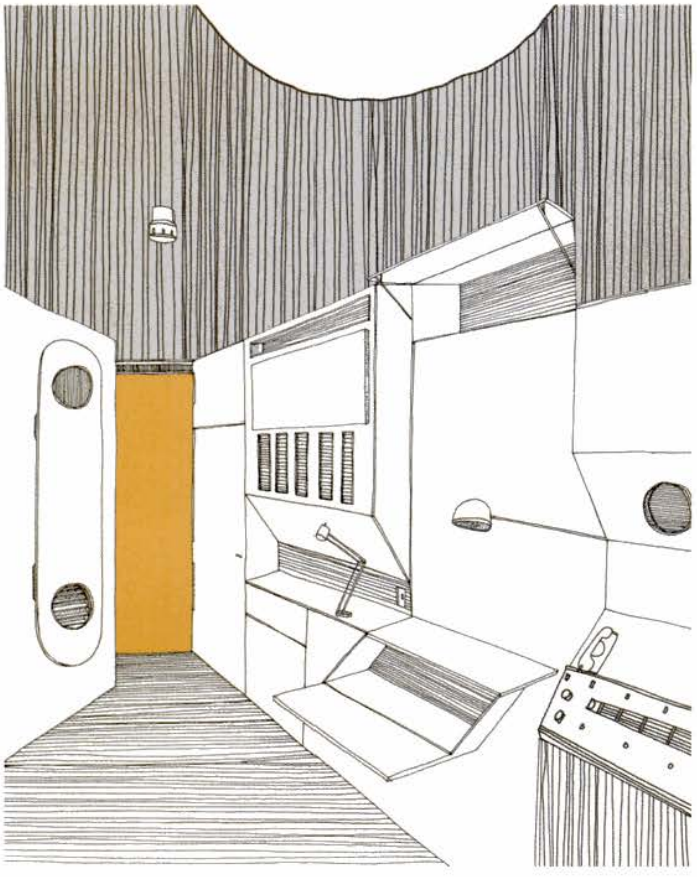

Yamashita, like every other owner, had covered his with standard drapes. My arms outstretched, I could reach from wall to wall.

Yamashita bought the capsule several decades ago, as a place to sleep three nights a week when business kept him downtown late. For years, a series of progressively mounting problems have been plaguing the owners—from leaks (the original weather stripping was cork) to hot water issues to, most seriously, asbestos. The owners (many are absentee) would have preferred to save the capsules, but the cost was such that most voted to have the building demolished and a new, more standard tower built in its place. Whether this is true or not, the damage was evident everywhere: holes punched through to reveal plumbing, caulking tracing zigzag cracks, strange innards spilling out. I asked what would be done with the relatively pristine demonstration capsule. Surely some museum planned to save it? He shrugged and suggested that if I wanted it, it was mine.

Yamashita had told me that most people, even in space-starved Tokyo, could no longer imagine living in such small spaces. But if Kurokawa's "capsulized existence" failed to take hold, notes architectural professor Akira Suzuki in *Do Android Crows Fly Over the Skies of an Electronic Tokyo?*, its DNA survives in two architecturally denuded forms. First are the famous "capsule hotels," those morgue-like rows of sleep chambers for businessmen too tired—or too inebriated—to make the long commute home. Second are the city's "one-room mansions," 100-square-foot units with prefab bathrooms, brutally expressive of Tokyo's real estate market. Suzuki argues that residents transcend their small confines through cyberspace. "A link to huge communication networks that spiral around us as we crouch in our tiny, atomized spaces," he writes. "This is what we are after."

Call them myPods—residents installed in their docks, downloading information, recharging before striking out again into the city. Kurokawa had forecast this: The capsules were "cyborg architecture," he wrote, inside of which humans could "equip themselves with various devices with which to perform complicated roles which are beyond their capabilities as living creatures."

The Nakagin's place in architectural history is more secure than the building's future. "Without Kisho's capsule building," Jencks argues, buildings like the Centre Pompidou and Richard Rogers's Lloyd's of London "are unthinkable." Kurokawa was asking radical questions in built form: Could buildings renew themselves by adding new "cells"? How much (or little) space do we need to dwell—and what does it mean to dwell, anyway? Can architecture inspire new forms of living? His work, which took the idea of the American mobile trailer, among others, and made out of it an urban monument, resonates in the dreams of future-minded architects, in everything from houses made of shipping containers to any number of mini-living schemes.

The fact that the building seems set to be destroyed is strangely poignant: Not only do we lose a sense of how the past imagined the future, we lose a future that never came to be. Kurokawa, vocally and publicly, called for the building's preservation—but he was also fond of discussing the contradictions of preservation in Japan. His own architectural career was forged in the wreckage of Japan's destroyed postwar cities, and he liked to cite the Shinto shrine at Ise, which is rebuilt every 20 years. After all, preserving the building itself was not the point; what mattered was spiritually preserving the shrine's "invisible tradition."

In his own writings, Kurokawa, a Buddhist, offered a fitting and, especially now, quite haunting encomium to the capsule tower: "We used to consider things that could live forever to be beautiful. But this way of thinking has been exposed as a lie. True beauty lies in things that die, things that change."

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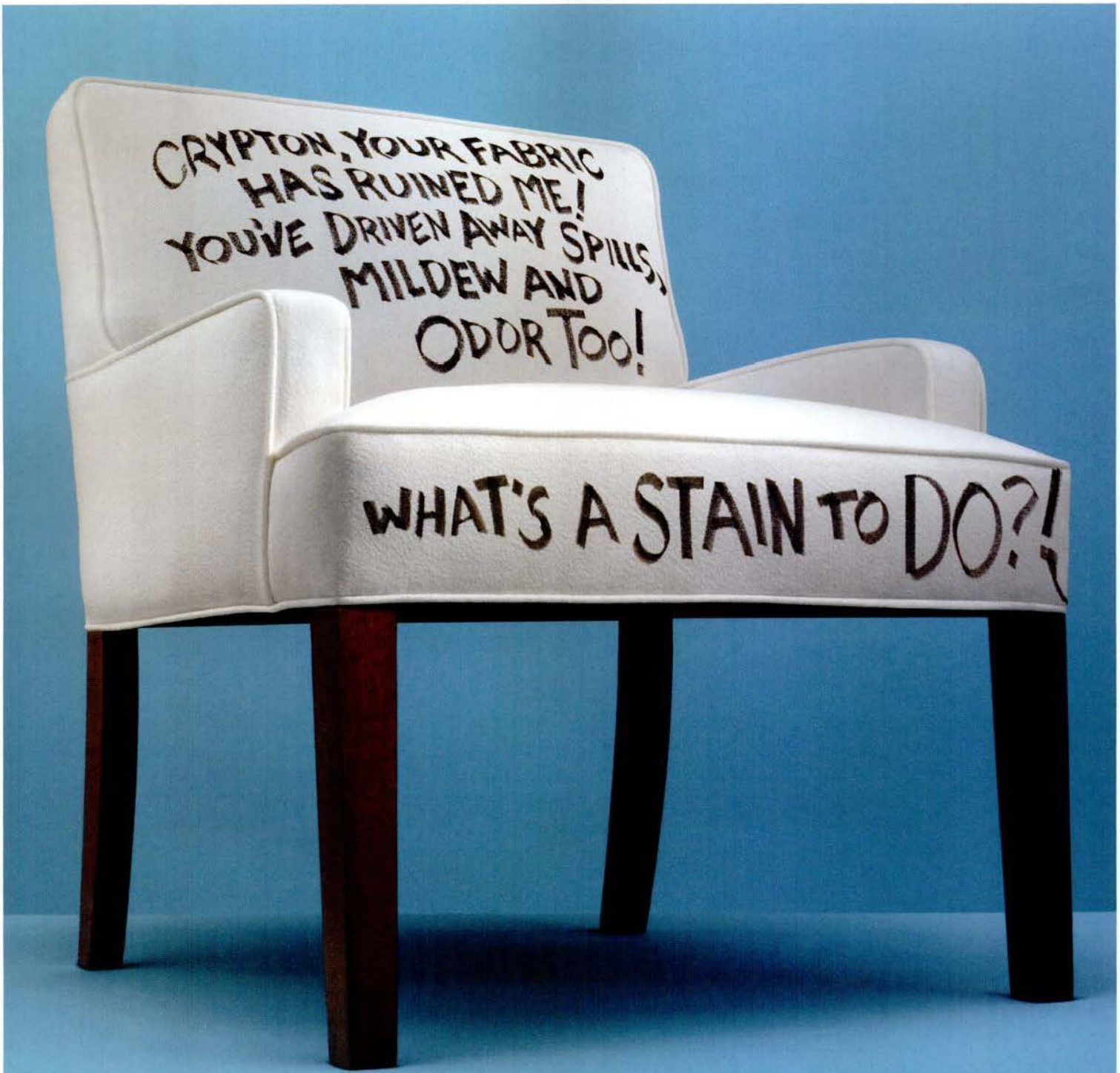

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The Placemakers

"We want to position our work outside of architecture, as a clear piece of sociology and ecology."

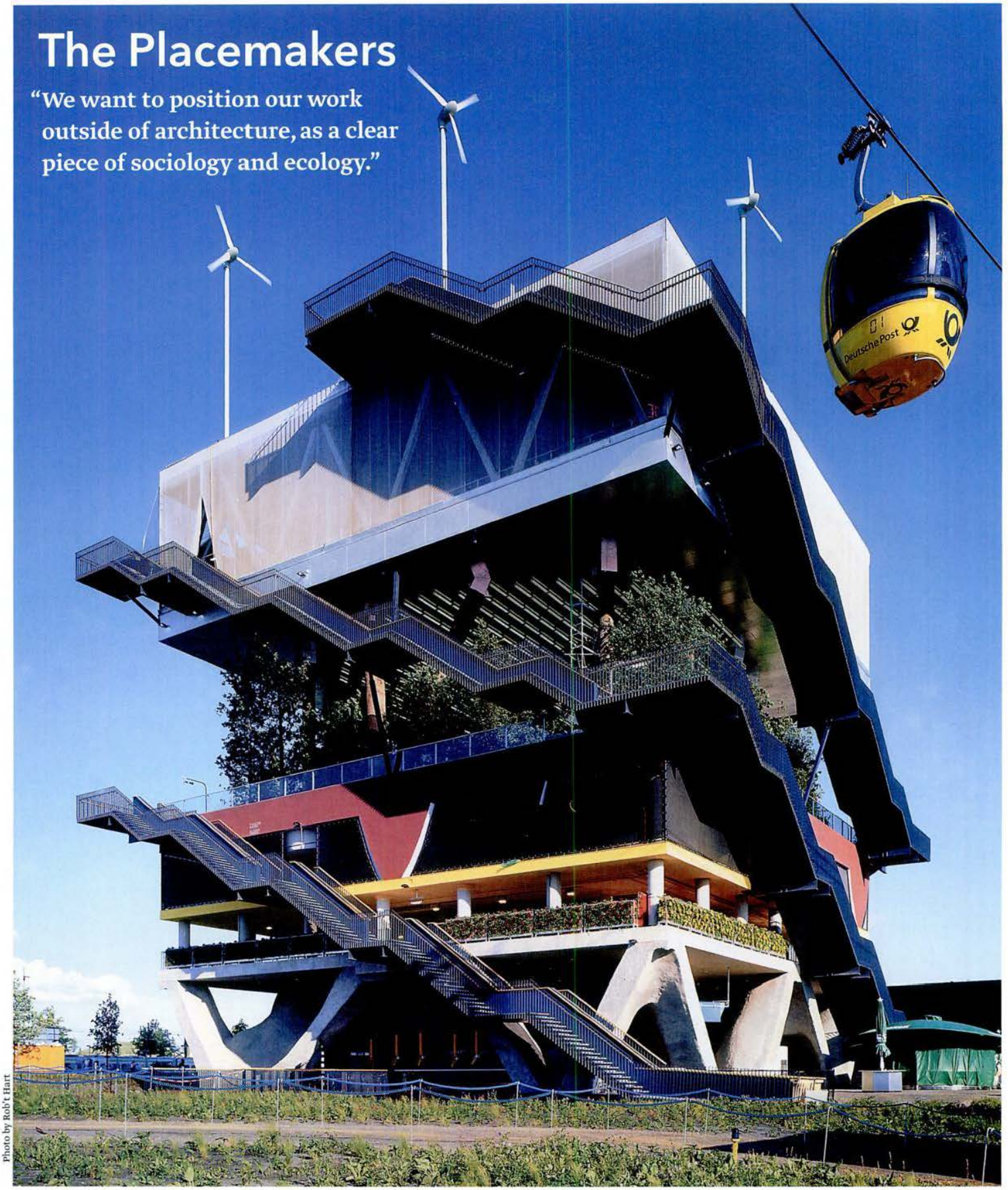

Photo by Rob't Hart

Story by Jane Szita

The motto for the Dutch Pavilion, designed by MVRDV for Hanover, Germany's Expo 2000, was "Holland Creates Space." The pavilion uses only one-tenth of its allocated plot for its facade-free, layer-cake representation of the Dutch landscape, complete with tulip fields, dunes, and forests, and topped with a lake and wind turbines.

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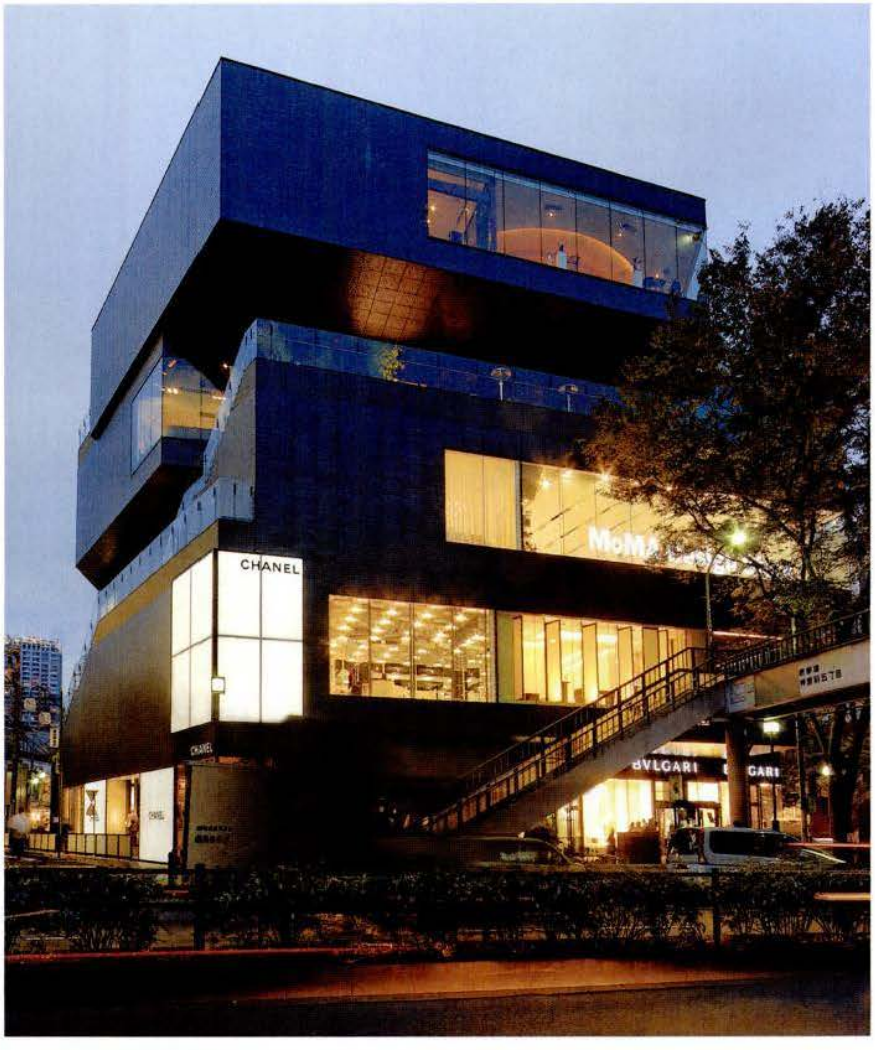

When you Google MVRDV, the first words to appear below the architecture office's name are "Firm facts." Though signifying the company details listed on its website, the phrase could be MVRDV's motto. Factual analysis is the avowed foundation of the office—though this strict methodology belies the stylistic playfulness of their projects, from the Rubik's Cube twists of the recently unveiled Gyre building in Tokyo to the sly, slinky humor of their "caterpillar" design for the future expansion and renovation of the Cleveland Institute of Art.

Winy Maas, one of the Rotterdam-based office's three founders, along with Jacob van Rijs and Nathalie de Vries (the tongue-twisting name MVRDV is an acronym of their surnames), explains that the firm's identity is founded on its approach. Maas characterizes it as "practical and dialectical," rather than aesthetic, which he derides as architectural "hairdressing." It's a methodology that is best understood not from the varied manifestations of MVRDV's architecture, but from its steady production of brick-thick polemical books, including *Farmax*, *Metacity/Datatown*, and *KM3*.

These tomes consistently argue for a new density in architecture, mining mountains of social and economic ▶

Photo by Rob't Hart

The Gyre building (top) in Tokyo's Omotesando district is a layered cube, with the levels twisted slightly so that the volumes protrude at odd angles.

The design for the expanded and renovated Cleveland Institute of Art (bottom) adds a sinuously warped rectangular wing to the existing McCullough Center. ⓘ p.238

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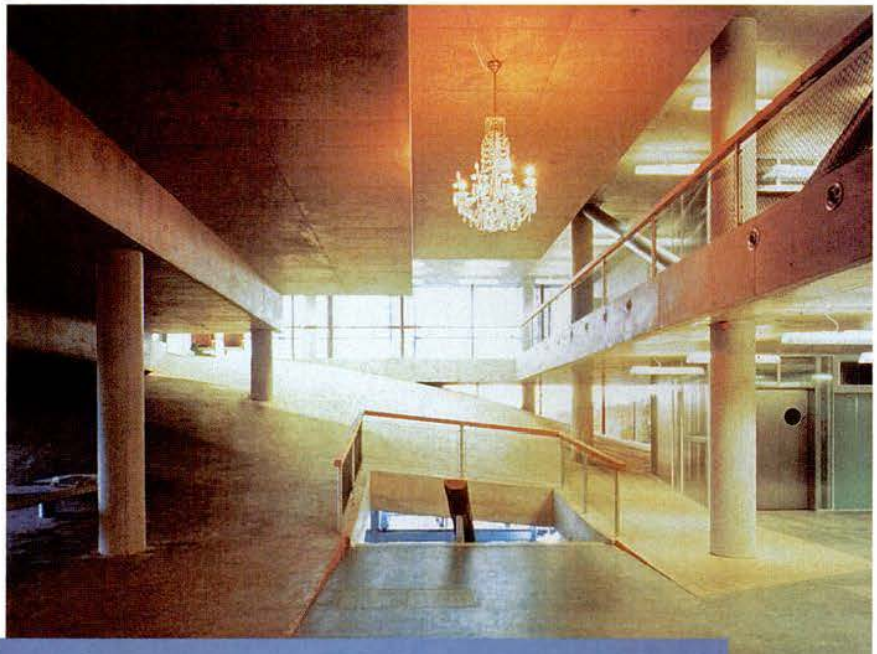

data—from official statistics to interviews with local residents—to create visual "datascapes" and propaganda-like arguments (many written by Maas, the vocal theoretician of the group) that tie the overarching manifestos to specific situations. As grounded in research as it is in architectural practice, MVRDV has even developed The Regionmaker, a set of software planning tools.

In its rigorous academic basis, MVRDV has much in common with Rem Koolhaas, whose *Delirious New York* launched a thousand urban theories; unsurprisingly, Maas and van Rijs worked with Koolhaas at OMA in the 1980s. Nathalie de Vries, meanwhile, was employed at Mecanoo, in Delft. The trio first joined forces to work on a submission for the Europan 2 competition in 1991. Their Berlin Voids entry formulates the kind of compact complexity that recurs throughout their work, but despite winning first prize, the design was never built. As a high-rise "it was the one thing you couldn't do," de Vries recalls, given Berlin's strict planning regulations.

Nevertheless, a booklet that the trio had made to accompany their entry caught the attention of their first major client, progressive Dutch TV broadcaster VPRO, which required a new head office in leafy Hilversum, the Netherlands' media capital. The booklet was the first indication of the office's talent for self-promotion; there's a story that, to land the contract, the architects "borrowed" an office and got friends to pose as their employees.

Later Maas announced, in a statement that became an MVRDV trademark, that the VPRO building would have the atmosphere of "a luxurious car parking garage" and no facade at all (heaters would instead mark the "climatic" boundaries of the building, and "air would become the main building material"). Building codes meant that it ended up with a transparent glass exterior, but it still meets Maas's claim that it is "solely an interior.... In a building whose activity is mainly expressed by other media, any representation in the facade has been avoided."

From the first, MVRDV has claimed that its buildings do not result from

Photos by Hans Werlemann (Villa VPRO), Thijs Wolzak (WoZoCo)

The Villa VPRO reflects the nonhierarchical nature of progressive Dutch broadcaster VPRO through its design as a continuous interior with the atmosphere of a "luxurious parking garage" (top) and the transparency of its facade (center)—which was originally designed as a "climatic" boundary formed only by differences in temperature.

The cantilevered "outboard units" of the WoZoCo seniors' housing complex (bottom) in Amsterdam maximize daylight in the interiors and preserve outdoor spaces.

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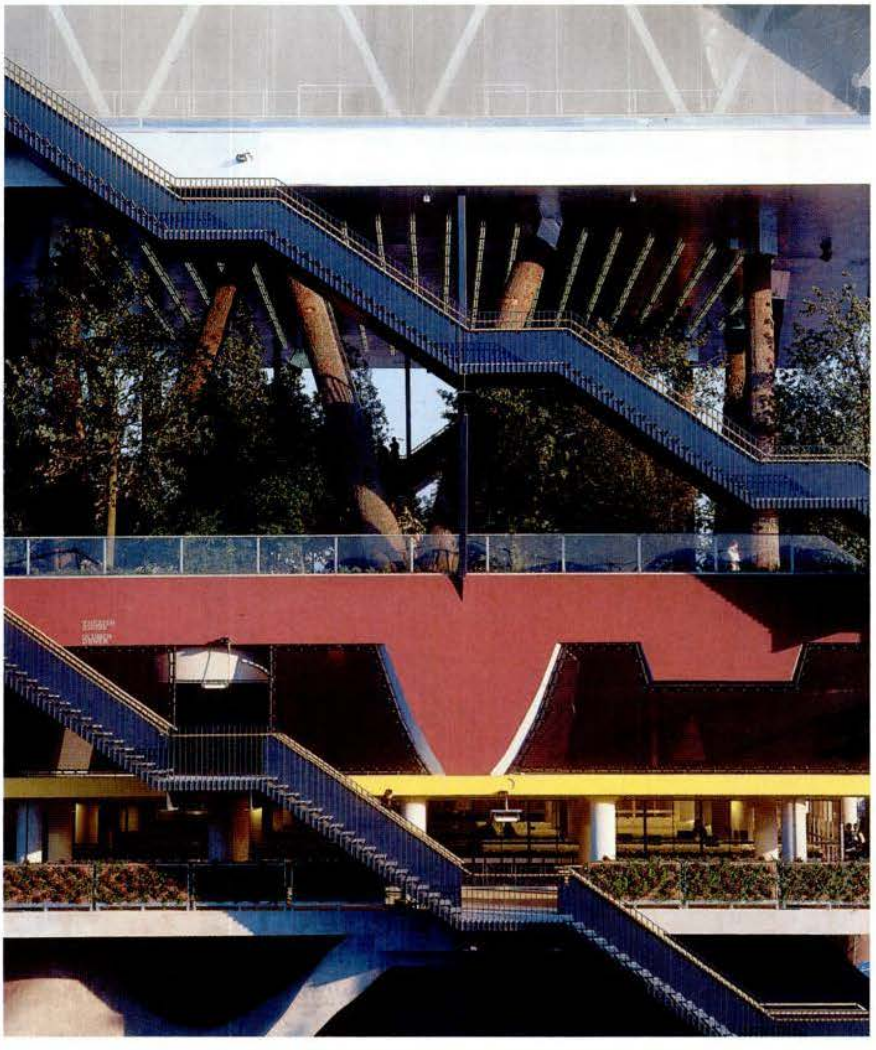

Photos by Rob't Hart

any formal or aesthetic aim, but from the datascape of systems and relationships that proliferate in the modern urban landscape. Take the 13 small, cantilevered blocks parasitically dotting the side of their WoZoCo seniors' apartment block—they weren't a stylistic choice, but the result of the project's datascape, which showed that, allowing adequate daylight for each unit plus sufficient outside space, there was room only for 87, not the required 100. Thus, the remaining 13 apartments were, according to the architects, "reconfigured as 'outboard units,'" and smacked on the exterior.

Nowhere is the building-as-datascape as clearly worked out as in MVRDV's Dutch Pavilion for Hanover, Germany's Expo 2000. "We wanted to make an icon," says de Vries, and the stacked Dutch landscape turned out to be as much a symbol of the office's own thinking as of the artificial, compactly populated nature of the Netherlands. The layer cake of tulip fields, dunes, and forests, topped by a lake and a wind turbine, is a working, self-sufficient example of natural density, with its own power and water systems. Using a tenth of the allocated plot, it creates, rather than uses, space.

The enormous popular success of the pavilion reflects the MVRDV ▸

The Dutch Pavilion (top) is as much an emblem of MVRDV's resolutely pro-density thinking as it is a symbol of the artificial nature of the Netherlands, which is evoked by the "tulip fields" (bottom left) and other levels. Though nature is the subject here, stackability is a recurring feature in all of MVRDV's urban solutions.

Torre Huerta (bottom right), currently under construction in Valencia, Spain, creates a layered landscape by adding stacked orange groves to the apartment's balconies.

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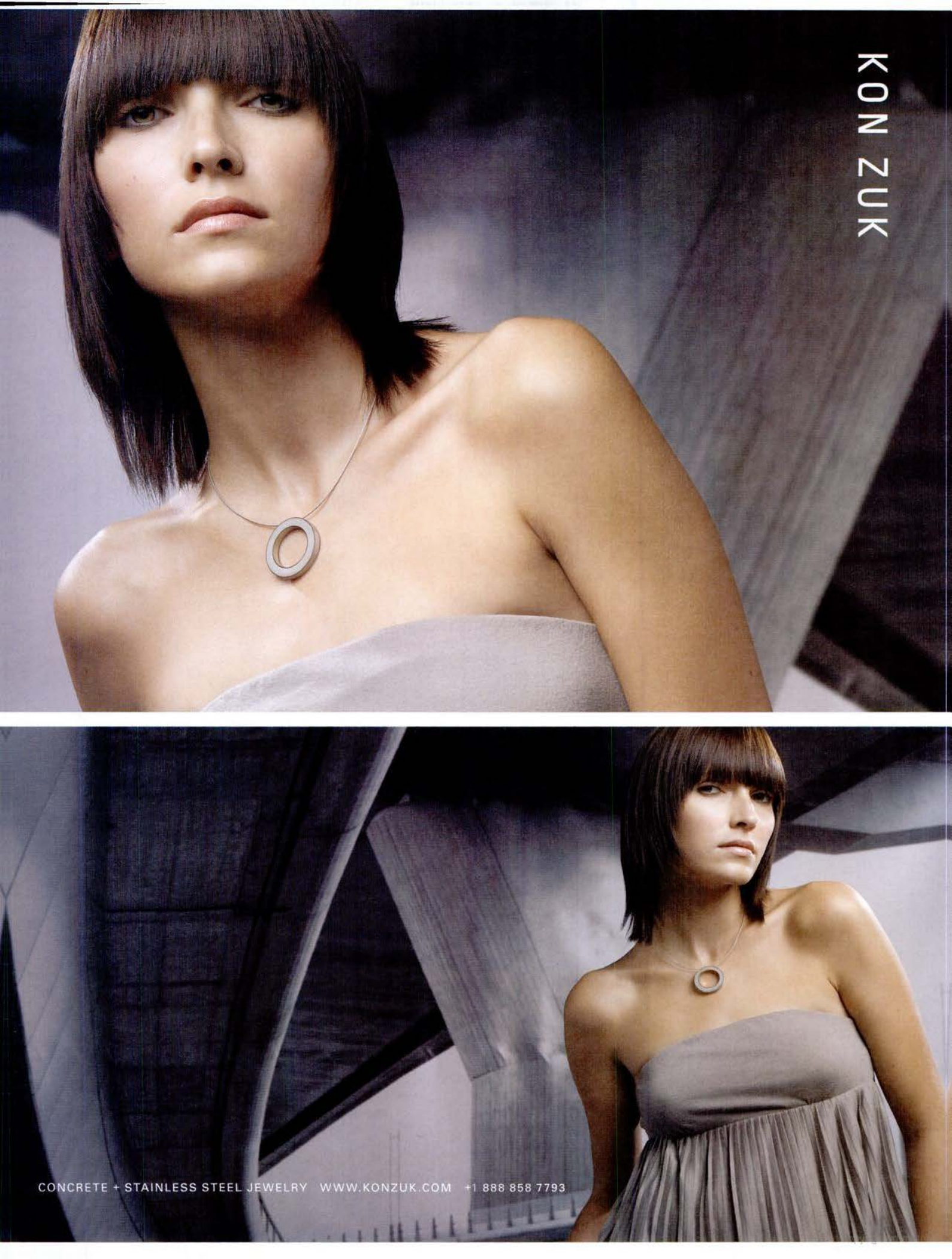
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1991—Berlin Voids
Berlin, Germany (unrealized)
This design won Maas, de Vries, and van Rijs the Europan 2 design prize and led to the founding of MVRDV. As the name suggests, the negative spaces are the important thing in this scheme for an apartment complex.

1997—WoZoCo
Amsterdam, the Netherlands
MVRDV's original approach to this commission for a retirement home resulted in what became one of the most published—and gravity-defying—projects of the 1990s. The suspended timber-clad boxes help to humanize the large-scale apartment block, as does the whimsical use of color. (p. 188)

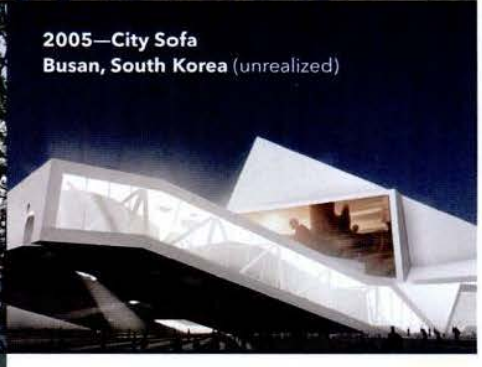
2000—Dutch Pavilion at Expo 2000
Hanover, Germany
MVRDV's 130-foot-high stacked representation of the Dutch landscape was widely acclaimed at Expo 2000. The layered concept commented eloquently on two very MVRDV (and Dutch) themes: density and artificial nature. (p. 190)

2001—Pig City
Rotterdam, the Netherlands (unrealized)

2002—Maxima Medical Center
Veldhoven, the Netherlands

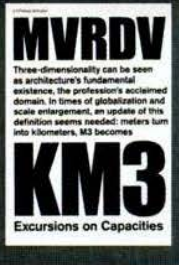
2004—Mirador
Madrid, Spain
For this low-income public-housing project, MVRDV built a 21-story structure that's defined by its striking central void—a massive terrace bridged by the upper floors. The building actually contains nine different blocks, each with its own identity. (p. 194)

2005—Effenaar
Eindhoven, the Netherlands



2005—City Sofa
Busan, South Korea (unrealized)

2006—CCA
Rotterdam, the Netherlands



2006—KM3 Excursions on Capacities
MVRDV (book)

2006—Residential development
Liuzhou, China (unrealized)
Assigned to build a residential development in the valley between the beautiful mountains of Liuzhou, MVRDV discovered that the quarried mountainside was eroding. The solution they came up with was the dense, barrio bajo-like terraces of housing, intended to shore up the mountains and restore their profile while turning the valley into a lake. (p. 194)

2007—Didden Village
Rotterdam, the Netherlands

2008—Make It Right
New Orleans, Louisiana (unrealized)

2009—McCullough Center
Cleveland, Ohio (scheduled for completion)
MVRDV's North American debut is its design for the 80,000-square-foot expansion of the Cleveland Institute of Art's McCullough Center, which has been likened to a bridge, a caterpillar, and an inchworm. An elongated rectangle, it arches upwards and outwards in the middle. (p. 186)

Photos by Rob't Hart, Courtesy Actar (book cover)

"How architects form the new urban spaces will have an effect on a society's culture...design is a political issue for us."

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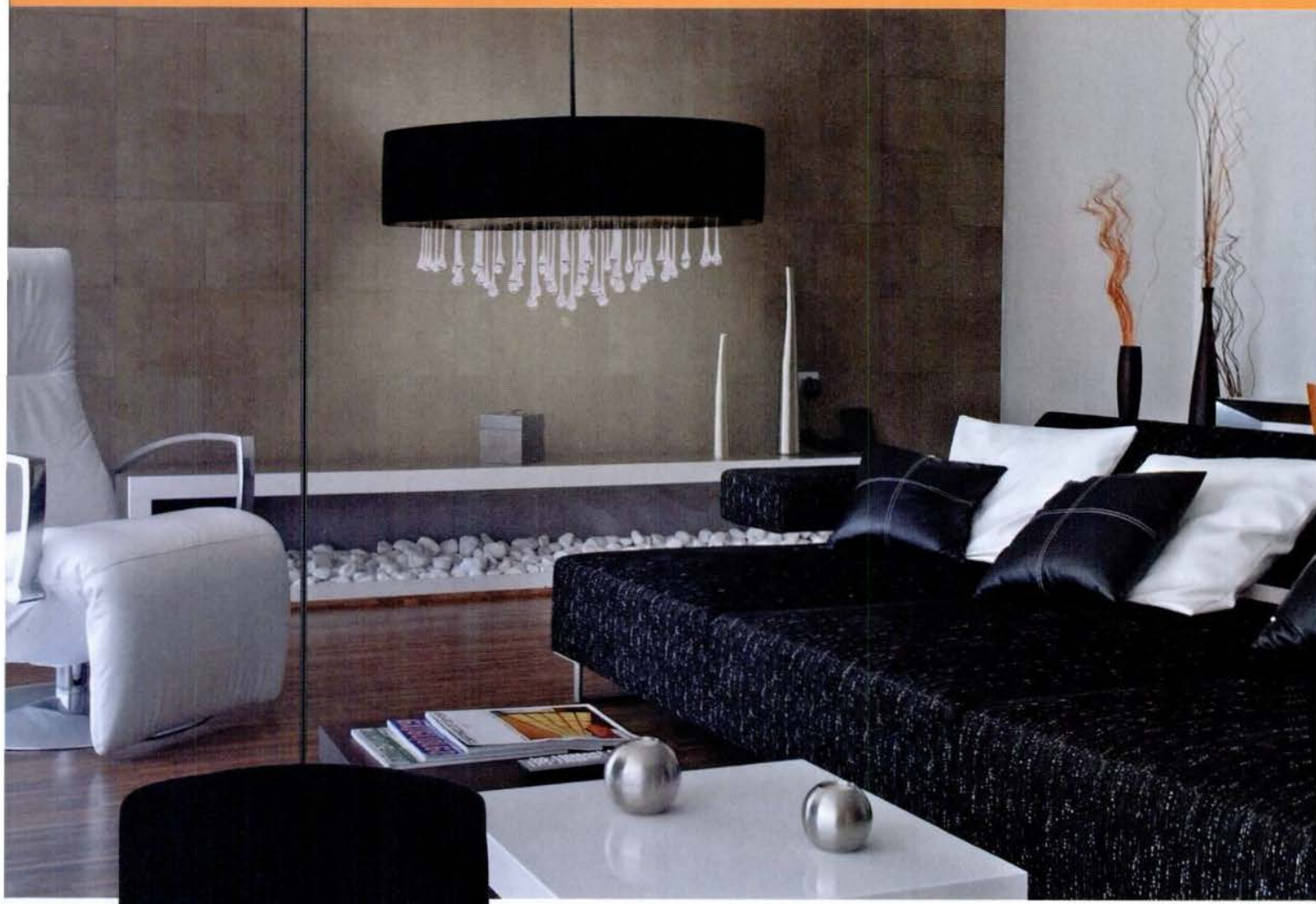

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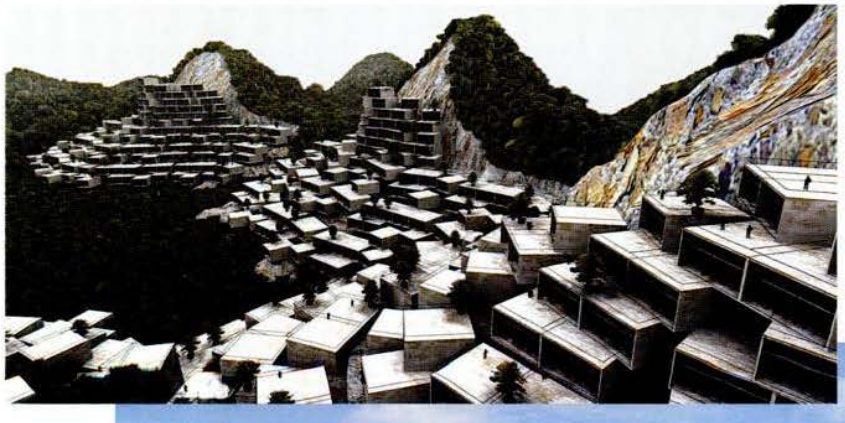

mission, according to Maas: "We want to position our work outside of architecture, as a clear piece of sociology and ecology," he says, "but to do that in such a way that not only architects understand it, but also the other 99 percent of the population understands it, and can debate it." The pavilion is a landscape equivalent of the "three-dimensional city planning" that MVRDV promotes as a response to urban expansion and population growth. The stackable city would halt the proliferation of sprawl, preserving what's left of the world's wild spaces.

The most infamous example of the firm's high-density theorizing is its proposal for a high-rise pig farm, Pig City, based on the mind-boggling statistic that the Netherlands contains as many pigs as people (about 15 million of each). The Mirador housing development, built in 2004 in the Sanchinarro neighborhood of Madrid, is an example of how MVRDV turns existing typologies on their heads, in this case quite literally. The Mirador looks as if a quartet of low-lying blocks surrounding a courtyard had been upended and left standing like a monolith. The banal courtyard separating the blocks becomes a void, eloquently framing the distant Guadarrama Mountains.

MVRDV's lively Silodam residential building in Amsterdam works a similar transformation by condensing what could be several neighborhoods within a single building. This collage of mini-neighborhoods, created for different functions and lifestyles, becomes what Maas calls "a mirror of the political and economic situation in Amsterdam." Its patchwork of interests indicates what client Suzanne Oxenaar (co-founder of the Lloyd Hotel) terms the office's "natural attitude to be open to other disciplines."

Dutch architecture writer Bart Lootsma calls MVRDV "utopian," and Maas, even with his ironic (but never cynical) stance certainly seems to agree. "How architects form the new urban spaces will have an effect on a society's culture for years to come, so design is a political issue for us," he says. Reason enough to try to make the world a denser place.

Photos by Rob't Hart

The Mirador housing block (top) in Madrid is defined by its trademark void: a covered, communal terrace. The different colored areas represent different housing types.

The as-yet-unbuilt tumbling terraces of box houses in Liuzhou, China (center), are intended to protect the eroding slopes of the surrounding mountains.

In Amsterdam, the Silodam housing development (bottom) again uses color as the code to convey differences in the types of dwellings under a single roof.

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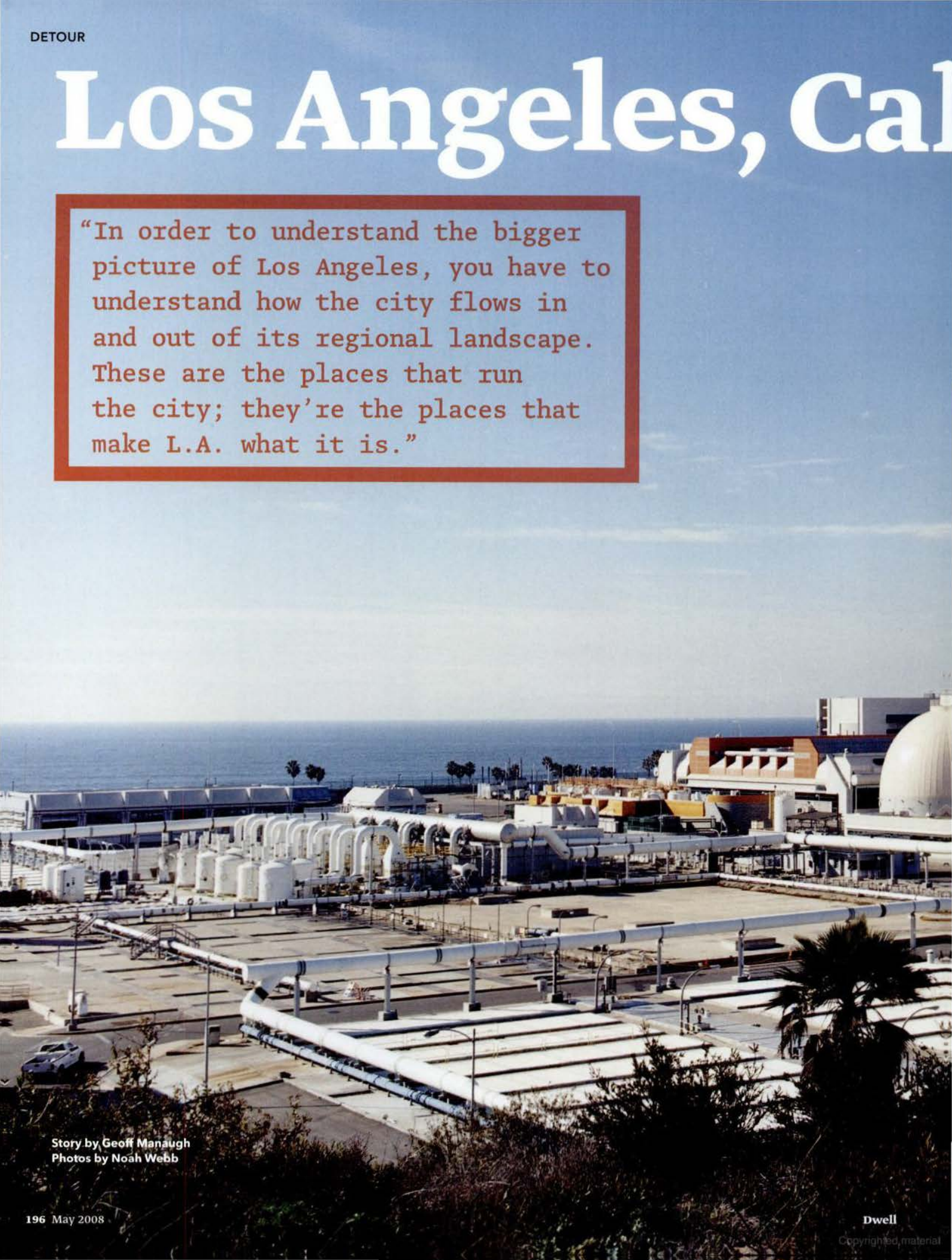
Los Angeles, Cal

"In order to understand the bigger picture of Los Angeles, you have to understand how the city flows in and out of its regional landscape. These are the places that run the city; they're the places that make L.A. what it is."



Story by Geoff Manaugh
Photos by Noah Webb

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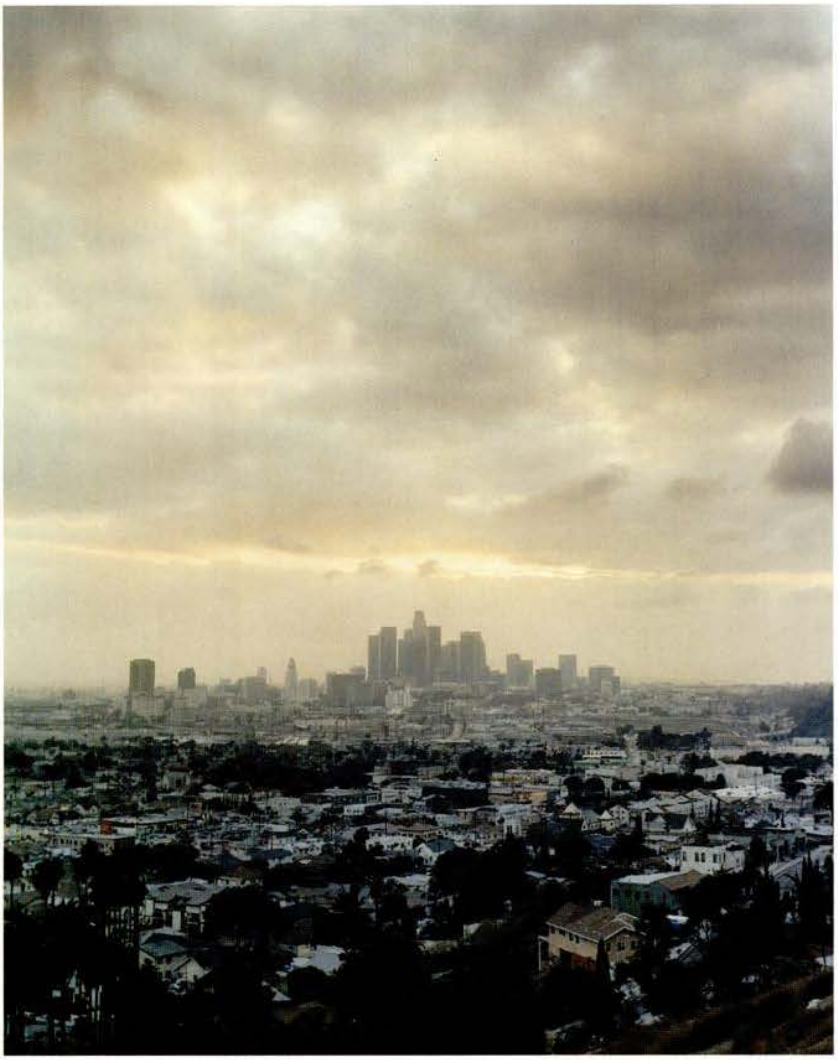
The Hyperion Treatment Plant is the largest and oldest wastewater treatment plant in Los Angeles. It can process as much as 850 million gallons of waste each day.

When it was constructed in 1894, on the beaches of El Segundo, it simply discharged raw sewage directly into the sea—today, thankfully, it performs full waste treatment.

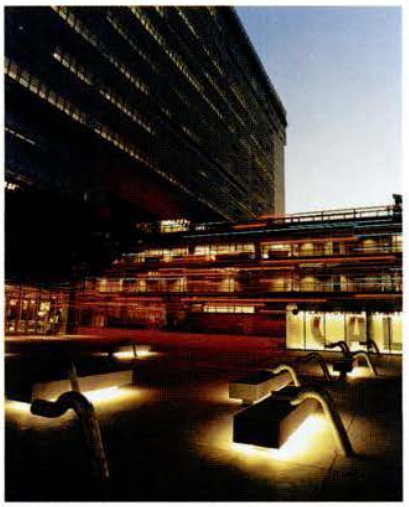


Covering more square miles than Rhode Island, greater Los Angeles is not always bathed in perfect sunshine. Here, the towers of downtown (above) are lost in haze.

Los Angeles is a polarizing city. To some it is a paradise of beautiful beaches, buxom bodies, Beverly Hills, and the world's most pimped-out cars—a place where you, too, could be discovered, your name in lights, your star forever embedded in the Walk of Fame. To others, it is a glimpse of the apocalypse, one of the forecourts of hell, with its race riots, air pollution, earthquakes, wildfires, and overwhelming extremes of stupidity. Los Angeles is the kind of place some people refuse even to visit.

Let's put that argument aside and look instead at L.A.'s edges—not its countercultural hot spots, but the post-industrial voids and internal peripheries that let the city function. For instance, where does L.A. get its water? What about electricity? What about all the sand, gravel, and concrete that went into those thousands of freeways, parking lots, and roads? How does such a chaotic and sprawling city actually work? And where does all its trash go?

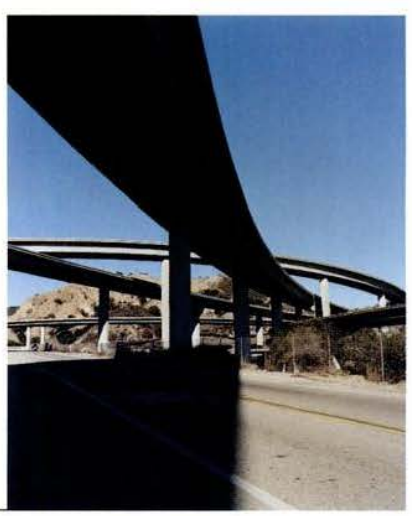
To learn more about L.A.'s blind spots and interstitial spaces, Dwell talked to Matthew Coolidge, founder and director of the Center for Land Use Interpretation. Operating from a small gallery space on Venice Boulevard, just south of Hollywood, the Center re-examines the American landscape from a perspective well off the radar of your average tourist, focusing on topics as diverse as infrastructure, urban sanitation, earthquake science, military history, abandoned shopping malls, traffic surveillance systems, and even arctic research labs.



The new headquarters for Caltrans (top right), by local starchitect Thom Mayne, frames the most sci-fi seating area in town with strange angles of light and material.

In the process, they've won awards and published books (including the recent *Overlook: Exploring the Internal Fringes of America with the Center for Land Use Interpretation*), and they continue to lead uniquely off-center tours through the dead zones of America's built environment.

"In order to understand the bigger picture of Los Angeles," explains Coolidge, "you have to understand how the city flows in and out of its regional landscape. These are the places that run the city; they're the places that make L.A. what it is. They're places we've constructed so that other, perhaps more minor, activities can occur here. Once you understand how they operate—how they form a system, how they consort and are connected—these places do have a beauty to them."



Taken on their own, as sculptures in concrete, the region's freeways (bottom right) are an unappreciated source of beauty, an experiential artwork you can drive on.

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Where would you start to show how Los Angeles really works?

10 Well, I'd begin at the end, really, and that's at Hyperion, the wastewater treatment plant in El Segundo, right on the beach. It's actually the third-largest treatment plant in the country—behind Chicago and Boston—and, if you're in L.A., chances are that's where your waste is going. They even offer tours. El Segundo is a great place to visit, anyway, sandwiched right between LAX and the Chevron refinery. You've got the Pacific Ocean to the west, LAX to the north, Chevron to the south, and then the wastewater treatment plant. You can even see where its pipe extends out into the water.

Then I would go to the other end of the spectrum, up to Mt. Wilson—not just to the observatory, although that's interesting, but to the antenna fields. Mt. Wilson has the main collection of radiating points for radio and television in Los Angeles, as well as for police and fire communications. It's great up there: It's this forest of huge antennas, and you can wander around among the trees and the towers—and it makes a nice kind of antipode to the plant at Hyperion.

Are there any specific buildings you'd visit?

Looking at the surface or the structure of a building doesn't interest me as much as what goes on inside it.

11 One Wilshire is an interesting example. It's a classic modernist Skidmore, Owings & Merrill building, at the crossroads of Grand and Wilshire—but it's called the most connected building on the West Coast in terms of internet bandwidth. It's certainly one of the most connected buildings in the United States. It's a telco hotel and has connections directly to Pacific submarine cables. In other words, it's infrastructure, but it's also architecture. It's got floors and floors of computers—and then, occasionally, some lawyer's office. You see these fiber optic cables billowing into the building like spaghetti, through the parking garage, and then it all takes a right-angle turn up through the service core to enter the different floors and the former office space that's been turned into switching centers and server farms.

Another interesting building is the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, with its rotating restaurant and lounge on top. Sometimes I take people up there to get a nice panoramic sweep of the city. It's also a bit of a movie landmark, and it appears in a lot of car-chase scenes—I think Clint Eastwood even threw somebody off the roof once. In a movie.

You've said that the city "flows in and out of its landscape." Where can this be seen most clearly?

One of my favorite places is the gravel pits in Irwindale—the Durbin pit and the Vulcan pit spring to mind. Those are two adjacent gravel pits in this huge complex of pits, where they mine much of the gravel out of which the buildings and the freeways in Los Angeles get made. A high percentage ▶

These cell phone masts atop Mt. Wilson (above), northeast of Pasadena, are the region's major relay point for police, fire, and civilian communications. ⓘ p. 238

One Wilshire (top left) is what's called a telco hotel: The majority of its rooms are full of hard drives and cables, hosting information for global businesses.

Matthew Coolidge (top right) stands in the doorway of the Center for Land Use Interpretation. The Center is a bookshop, gallery, and office all in one.

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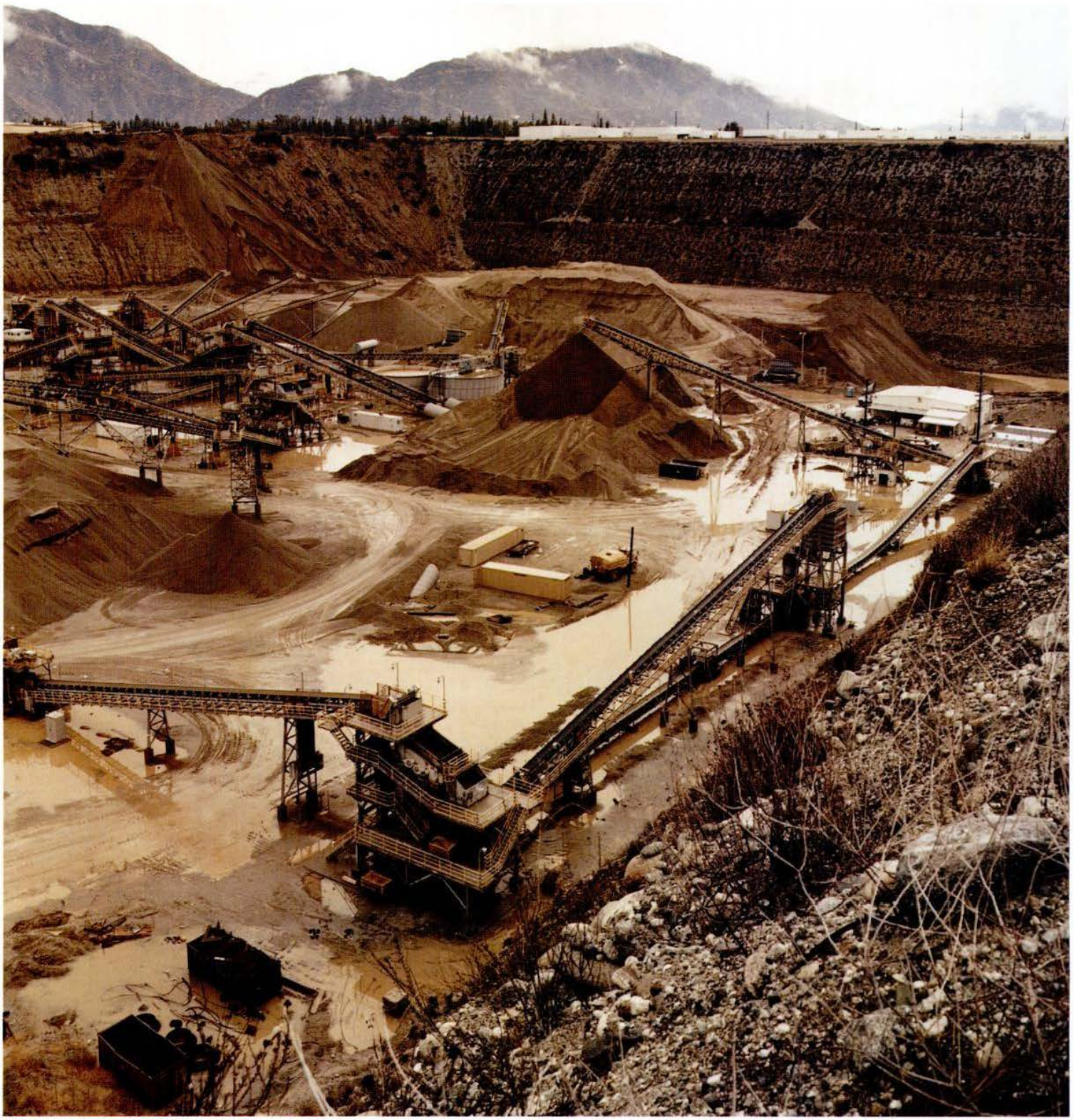

The San Gabriel River deposits its sediments in a broad alluvial plain as it flows down out of the mountains east of Los Angeles. These sediments are now hundreds of feet deep. Gravel pits such as these yield a seemingly inexhaustible supply of the small rocks, which are mined for use in landscape design and mixes of concrete. The more concrete that is poured in Los Angeles, the deeper these pits will get. They are a negative record of the region's growth, a void created by the city's expansion.

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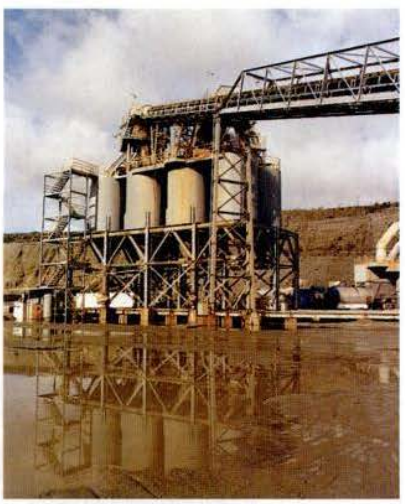
of the construction material in the city literally comes out of the ground in Irwindale—and a lot of those pits started when the city began building the freeways.

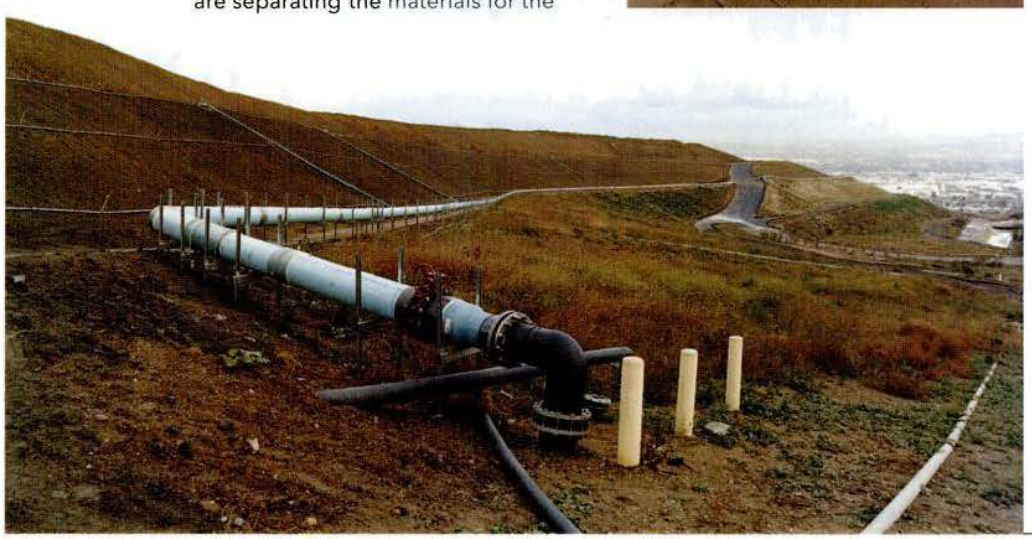
Why are the pits located here?
The San Gabriel River comes out of the mountains and, over millennia, it's been dropping its load—its sediment—into the channel. It starts out with coarse rocks closer to the bottom of the hill, and it gets increasingly fine as you move away from the mountains. Nature and the mechanics of erosion are separating the materials for the industry; the companies just have to select the part of the wash where the materials are the right size for making concrete and aggregate. The pits, though half a square mile or more in size sometimes, are well disguised: Some people don't even know they're living next to a functioning pit.



The Center's work on trash disposal is particularly interesting. How does that play out in Los Angeles?
L.A.'s Puente Hills Landfill is actually the biggest active landfill in America right now. It's basically the extension of an existing mountainside: They took a canyon and they filled it in, and now they're doubling the size of the mountain—not vertically but horizontally. You cross over it when you fly into L.A.

Something more architectural, down on the Long Beach side of Terminal Island, is the Navy Mole. The Navy Mole is actually just a pier—a kind of artificial peninsula—but out at the tip there's a detachable structure called Sea Launch, which is Boeing's and their partners' satellite-launching system. It's the only thing of its kind in the world. They converted a Norwegian oil rig, which docks there until it goes out into equatorial waters, south of Hawaii, to launch things like XM radio satellites into orbit. Then it comes back to Long Beach and docks at the pier.

L.A.'s water supply is famously controversial—but is there anything we can actually see?



Sea Launch (top left) is a converted oil rig. Its surreal new role is to launch private satellites into space from the equatorial Pacific. A glimpse of gravel pit workings (center). The Puente Hills Landfill (bottom left) is the largest active landfill in the United States. Its buried and rotting garbage produces methane gas, which is harvested by large pipes. The Baldwin Hills (top right), in Culver City, offer a glimpse of L.A. as it used to be: covered in pumping jacks and hoping for oil. The Hills are now a popular film location.

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The Cascades are a registered State Historical Landmark. They are where the 338-mile Owens River Aqueduct terminates, bringing fresh water to L.A. The aqueduct's construction, which finished in 1913, is a fascinating—and murky—tale of government corruption and outright theft. It was made famous by the film *Chinatown*. Owens Valley residents, watching their water disappear into pipes bound for Los Angeles, successfully sued the city. Some of their water began returning in late 2006.

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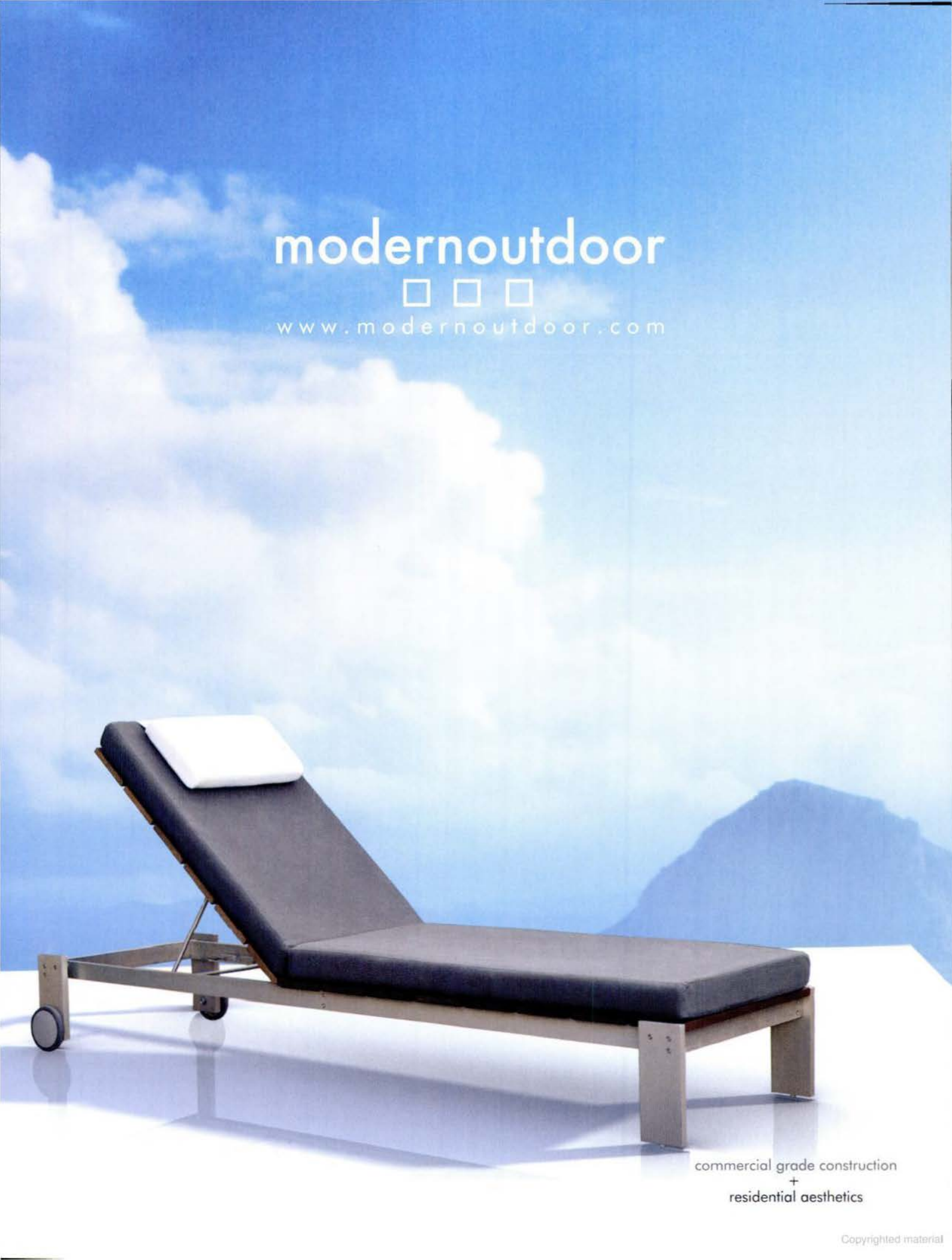

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Mu Shu Steak & Apple Wraps
Total preparation and cooking time:
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- 4 beef tri-tip steaks, cut 1 inch thick (about 4 ounces each)
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup hoisin sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Salt (optional)
- 3 cups tri-color coleslaw mix (with green cabbage, red cabbage and carrots)
- 1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, thinly sliced
- 8 medium whole wheat flour tortillas (8 to 10-inch diameter), warmed

1. Combine cinnamon and pepper; press evenly onto beef steaks. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Place steaks in skillet; cook 9 to 12 minutes for medium rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally.
2. Combine hoisin sauce and honey in large bowl. Carve steaks into thin slices; season with salt, if desired. Add steak slices, coleslaw mix and apple to hoisin mixture; toss to coat.
3. Place equal amounts of beef mixture down center of each tortilla, leaving 1-1/2-inch border on right and left sides. Fold bottom edge up over filling. Fold right and left sides to center, overlapping edges; secure with wooden picks, if necessary.

Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 385 calories; 9g fat (3 g saturated fat; 4 g monounsaturated fat); 5.5mg zinc; 61mg cholesterol; 658mg sodium; 59g carbohydrate; 6.3g fiber; 30g protein; 8.8mg niacin; 0.7mg vitamin B6; 1.3mcg vitamin B12; 3.5mg iron; 28.0mcg selenium.

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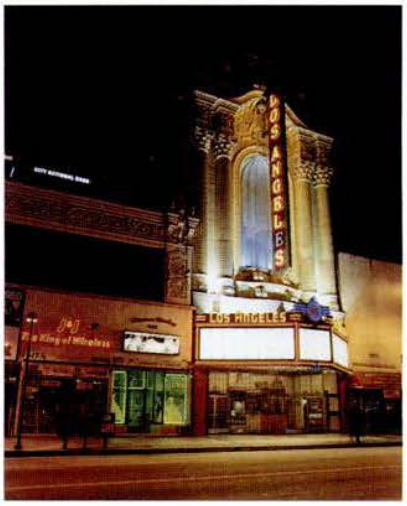
Well, there's a classic L.A. site: the Cascades. That's where the Owens Valley Aqueduct spills into the city. It's the place where William Mulholland famously stood in 1913, saying something like, "Here it is, Mr. Mayor—take it." Then he opened the valve, and created the city as we know it.

Of course, the Cascades are also where the power lines from the Owens Valley come in and meet the Bonneville Power Administration direct current line. Much of L.A.'s power comes from the Columbia River projects in Washington and Oregon. That's almost a thousand miles away. It's the longest DC line in the United States—possibly even in the world—and it comes directly from the big dams on the Columbia. It then gets converted into AC and distributed into the grid. You can see the power lines as they cut across the highway there and enter the substation on the other side.

Mulholland's life and the uniquely odd history of L.A.'s water supply were later fictionalized in Roman Polanski's film *Chinatown*. What other sites of cinematic interest should people visit?

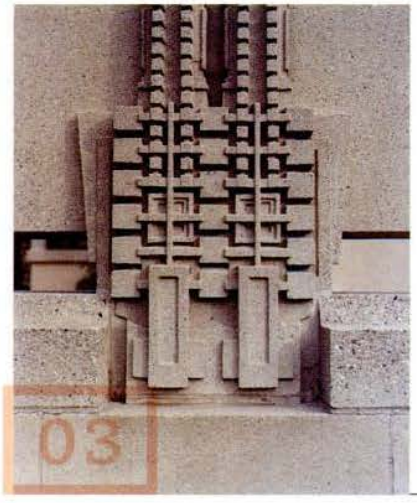
Here in Culver City, the Baldwin Hills are just fantastic. When *L.A. Confidential* needed an old, creepy L.A. landscape, they shot it in the Baldwin Hills because that whole area is like a landscape museum of what L.A. looked like in the 1920s, when the city was covered with pumping jacks. Most of the jacks are gone now, but in the Baldwin Hills you still see fields of them—a few square miles. The general theory is that the oil companies can't stop pumping there, even though it's not productive, because if they stop pumping then they have to clean it up!



There's also the Los Angeles Theatre on Broadway, downtown: That's a piece of architecture from the old silent movie days—in some ways, one of the most dramatic ones. Though nicely renovated, it's not often open to the public, and it now exists largely as a movie location. In other words, it's a movie house that plays a movie house—a very L.A. kind of space. There are some great bathrooms in there, too! But many of the city's architectural landmarks seem to exist now to serve the film industry. Like the Ennis-Brown House, one of those Frank Lloyd Wright houses here that gets used over and over in movie-making. A lot of people know it from *Blade Runner*.

They used the interior for Deckard's apartment—its design is a kind of Mayan futurism.

Yeah. And there's also Wright's Hollyhock House. Though *Blade Runner* and *Chinatown* are some of the more obvious L.A. films to talk about, they are important cinematic landmarks that contributed to the city's culture and identity. Los Angeles is, after all, maybe more than other cities, a complex blend of physical facts and interpretive fictions. ▶



An exterior detail of Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House (bottom left). The house was designed for the daughter of local oil magnate William Barnsdall in 1921.

The Los Angeles Theatre (top right) is a classic baroque movie palace from the 1930s. Designed by architect S. Charles Lee, it is now used primarily as a film location.

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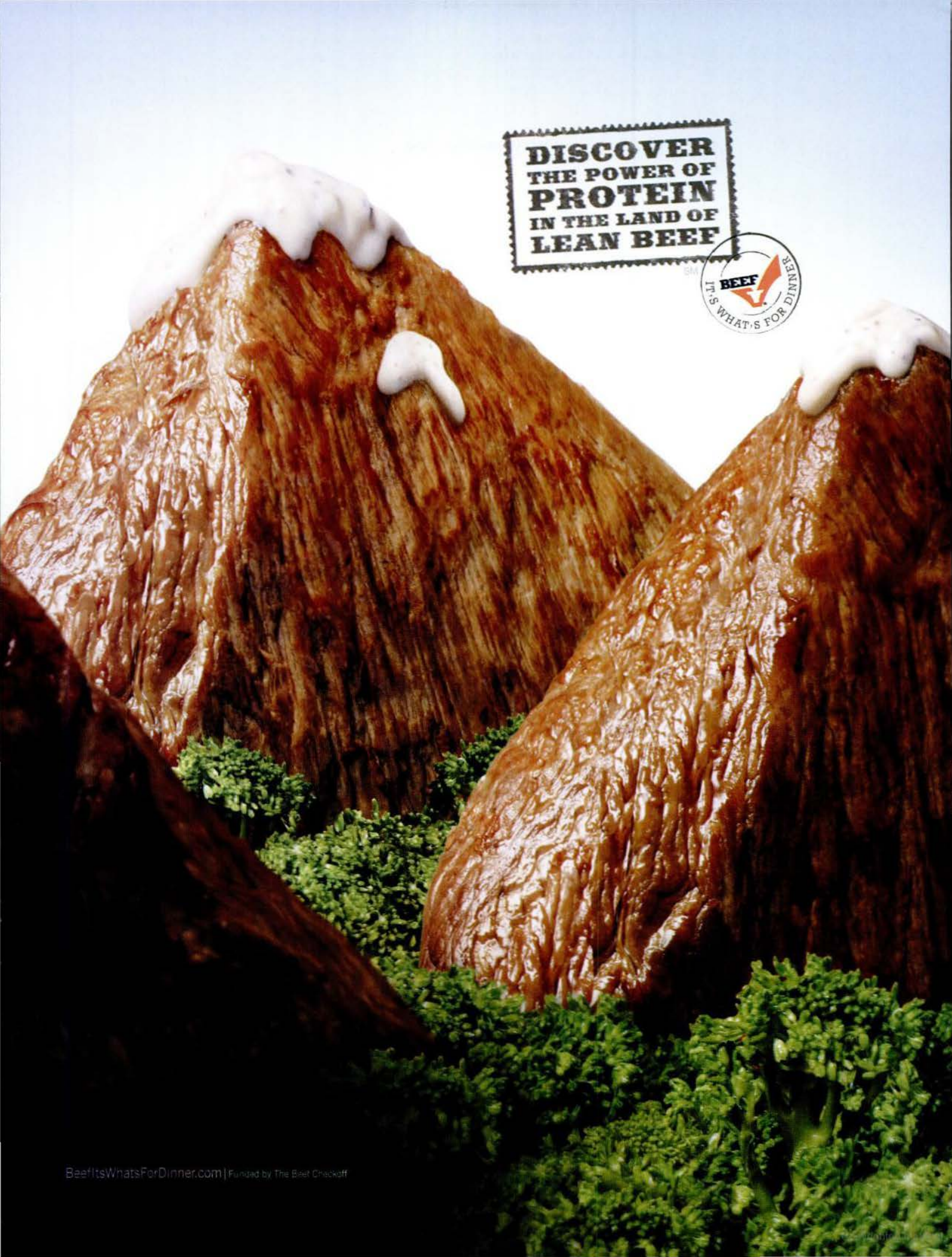
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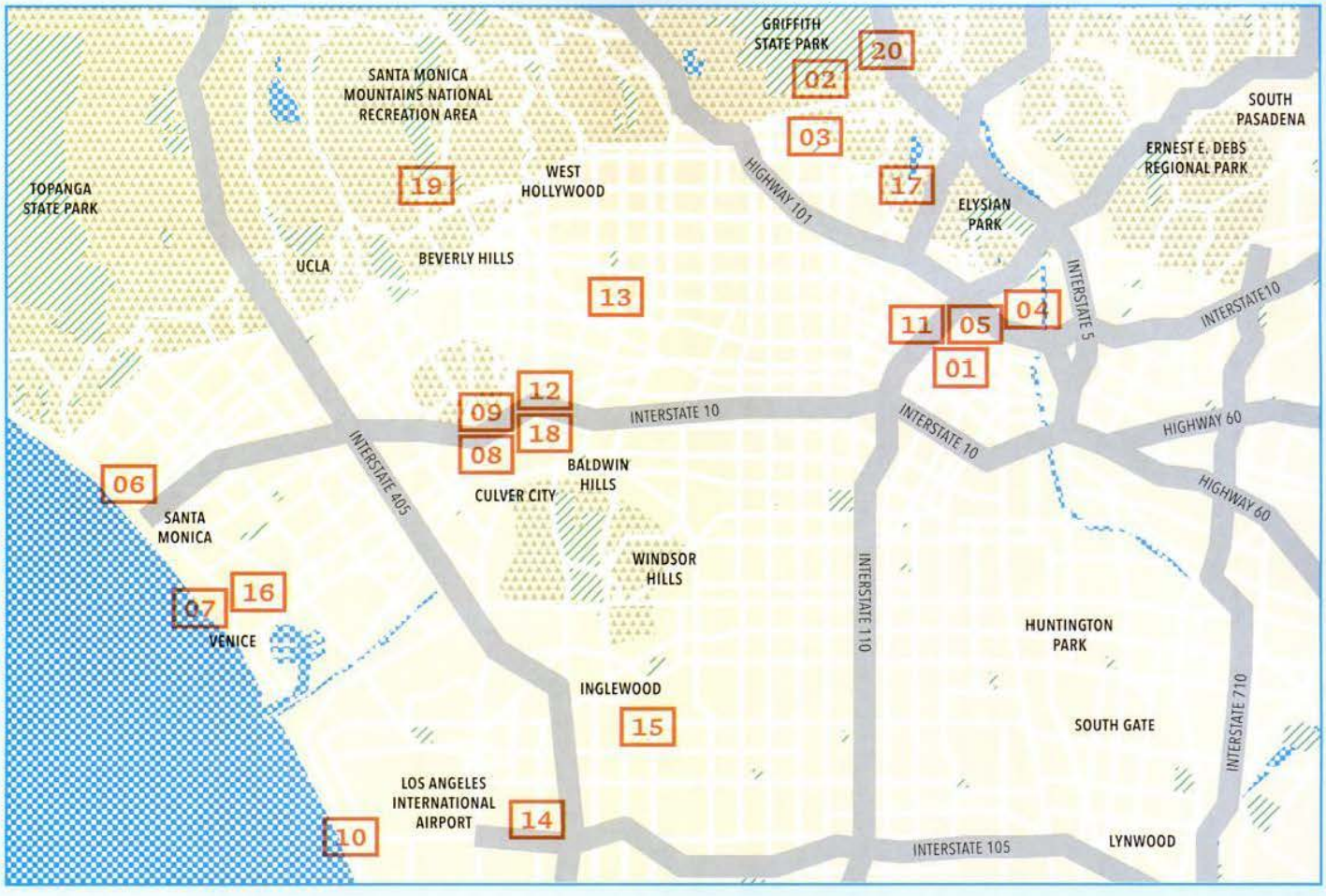

Architectural Tourism

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losangelestheatre.com
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213-629-2999

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ennishouse.org
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crgwest.com/facilities/onewilshire.html
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Durbin Rock Pit
vulcanmaterials.com
13000 East Los Angeles St
Irwindale, CA 91706
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Puente Hills Landfill
puentehillslandfill.org
13130 Crossroads Parkway South
Whittier, CA 90601

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Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits [13]
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hdbuttercup.com
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Design at Work

With wi-fi and a laptop, the world is your office. No matter where you tackle your to-do list, good desk accessories are essential. The cubicle may soon be passé, but a perfect pen is perennially practical.

Story by Sarah Rich
Photo by Peter Belanger

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Vitra

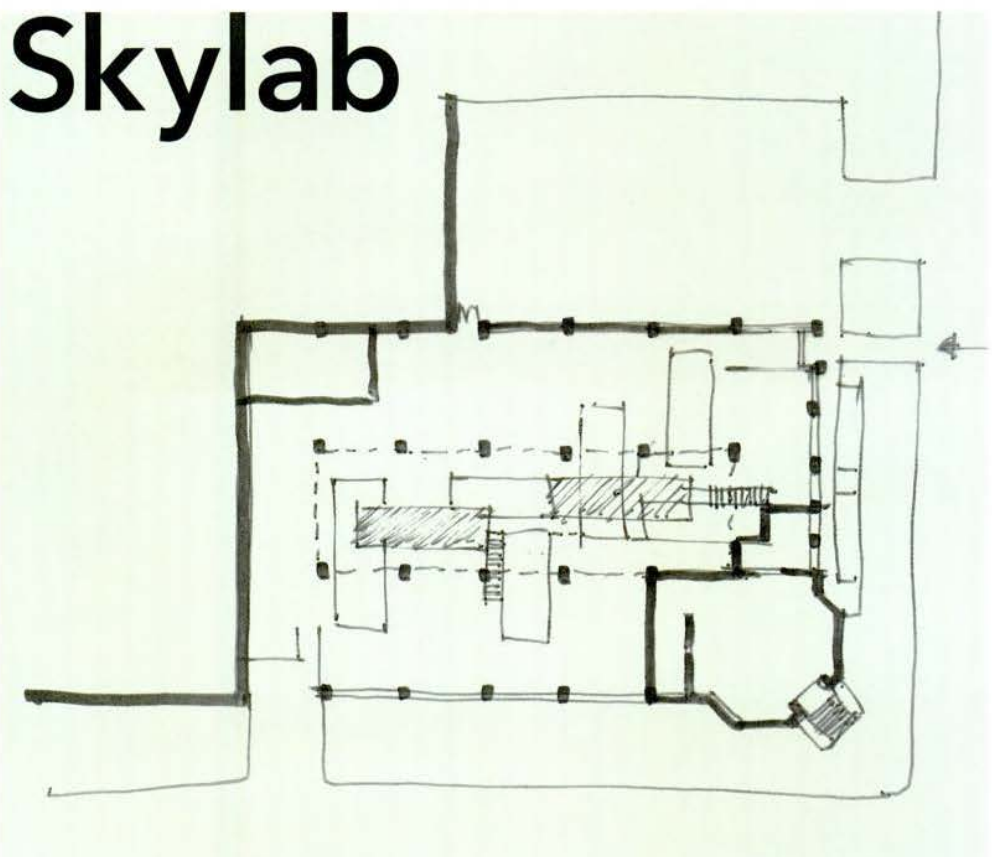
Jürgen Dürrbaum, Director of Division Systems, Vitra
Birsfelden, Switzerland
vitra.com

The conventional version of the open-plan office is now regarded as a failure. It was introduced prematurely, before technological networks played such a major role. Lighting, acoustics, and climate management were not satisfactorily resolved. Consequently, the goal of almost every employee was to move up—and out of the bullpen—as fast as possible. The private office became an object of prestige.

With today's technology, it is possible for people to work from home. We now come to the office for teamwork. Open spatial structures and fewer walls promote this new arrangement.

When we do need to withdraw, we don't need a private office, just acoustic and visual isolation. Having this option supports productivity, motivation, and creativity, and makes the office more humane. It is essential to provide a workspace where employees can develop their full potential.

Skylab



Jeff Kovel, Principal, Skylab Design Group
Portland, Oregon
skylabdesign.com

The distinction between professional and personal life has blurred. We have moved from the business-only cubicle to a model more reflective of the home—a metaphor that supports both the amount of time creative professionals spend at the workplace and the alternative social interactions that now qualify as work, such as cooking, eating, lounging, and gaming.

The North office is inspired by a polar research station. We see it as a cultural research station: a collection of modular furniture and equipment that can be reorganized to support collaboration and creativity, and host events. The goal is to break the static office environment and elevate satisfaction.

We found a plastic laminate the color of a Post-It note, a universal tool for quick creative thought and communication. We thought, why not make a whole environment out of this color? The effect is like a color signal indicating the intended work atmosphere.

Vitra's world headquarters (top), designed by the Bouroullec brothers, are made to adapt, with expandable suspended screens and a raised open desk system.

Jeff Kovel likes to integrate nature into his office interiors. The sketches for Skylab's North project (bottom) outline a design similar to workspaces built for polar explorers.

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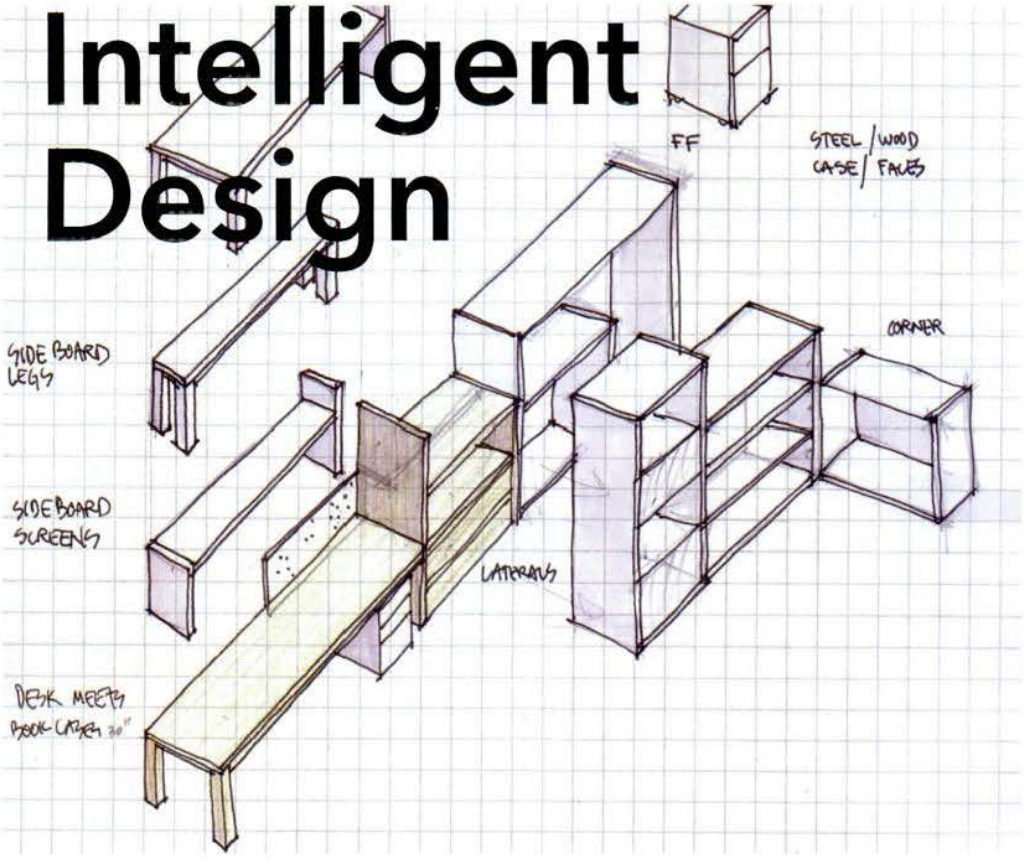


Bill Fritts, Founder, Intelligent Design
Portland, Oregon
idcollection.net

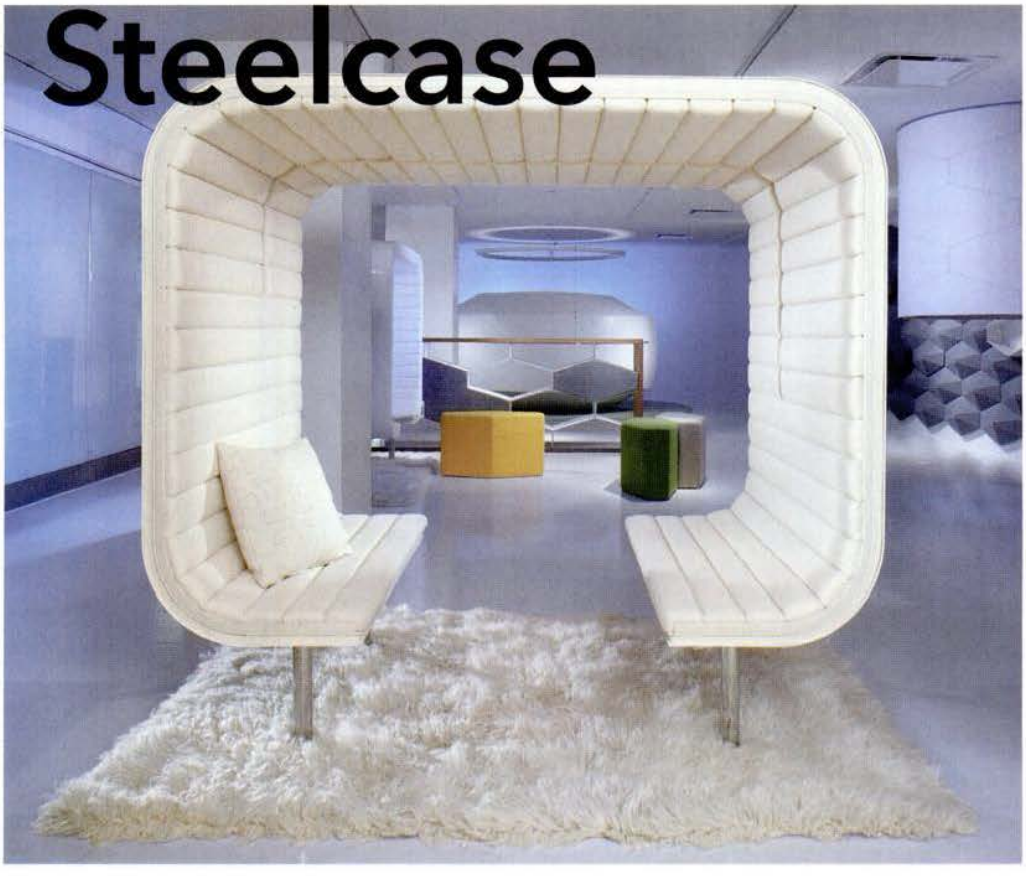
The future of the office is about providing a balanced response to the environment and the person in the office—or at home, in the park, on a plane, or wherever the "office" happens to be.

Solutions offered in association with "work" in the 21st century must be directly connected to how people work and to how our planet works. You cannot attend to one without affecting the other. We are a pretty smart bunch of critters but our implements of office work do not demonstrate that yet.

Solidcore is a group of simple systems of furnishings for the office: work stations, desks, executive suites, and conference rooms. We considered effects from fabrication through distribution, use, and life cycle. We thought, What if we designed in less design?

Our endeavor is to recalibrate expectations and reintegrate nature and the work environment, increasing productivity, morale, and effectiveness.

Steelcase



Angela Nahikian, Manager of Global Environmental Strategy and Programs, and Mark Grenier, Senior Vice President, WorkSpace Futures, Steelcase
Grand Rapids, Michigan
steelcase.com

Now that work can be done anywhere, what qualifies as an office? How can you create the personal feeling of a coffee shop inside the office? The perfect future model of the office is a place to interact, not to sit in a cubicle all day. The genius of an organization comes out of collaboration.

With wireless access you don't need cubicles to distribute power and data. While the office will still be planned as a system, the walls will come down and people will move around. Noise will be the new secondhand smoke.

Consumer desires are being transferred to the office and we expect a level of sophistication that rivals home entertainment technology. That changes the office landscape. Soon we'll be surrounded by information. The halls will be lined with displays. The ways we get content and connect with others will become far more architectural.

Bill Fritts and his team planned the Solidcore furnishing system (top) as a response to the lack of "holistically considered sustainable" office products.

Steelcase's Dyadic Slice (bottom) is the two-person version of its Digital Yurt concept: a Corian pod that blocks outside noise and gets brighter when sensors detect hot ideas.

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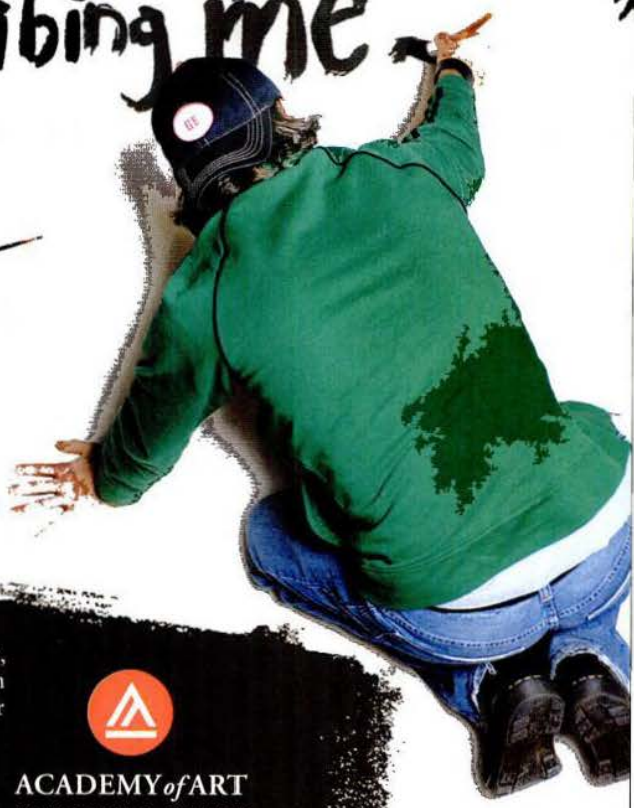

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1. Herman Miller Inc. National Design Center
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ksarch.com
Herman Miller's National Design Center in Atlanta achieved a LEED Gold rating for commercial interiors. Designed by Krueck+Sexton Architects, the space is one of the most sustainable of Herman Miller's facilities, all of which are intended to meet or surpass the criteria for LEED Silver. The green elements of the 15,000-square-foot showroom are the same features that make it a pleasant place to work: sunlight through clerestory and full-height windows, high rafters made of natural wood, and glass walls that emphasize transparency in the workplace.

2. Pallotta TeamWorks Headquaters
Los Angeles, California
clivewilkinson.com
Inside a 47,000-square-foot warehouse, Clive Wilkinson built a veritable campus for Pallotta TeamWorks, a national charity-events company. Constrained by a budget of just $40 per square foot, the designers chose to employ shipping containers (which cost approximately $3,400 apiece and are never in short supply) to form private offices and an "executive tower" piled six units high. To keep costs in check, the heating, air-conditioning, and lighting are not distributed throughout the cavernous space, but are strategically isolated in the most highly used work areas, functioning in tandem with skylights, reflection, and passive air currents along the corridors.

3. TBWA/Hakuhodo
Tokyo, Japan
klein-dytham.com
In Shibaura, this former bowling alley is now the shared offices of international advertising agency TBWA and Japanese agency Hakuhodo. The floors above and below the ad agencies remain in operation as an amusement complex. Still arranged in a lane-like configuration, the two-story facility contains indoor parks that encourage social engagement during and after work.

4. An der Alster 1
Hamburg, Germany
jmayerh.de
The new office complex by J. Mayer H. Architects sits on the edge of downtown Hamburg, bordering the Aussenalster waterfront. Horizonal window bays form protruding oval-shaped "eyes" that intermittently protrude from the facade, peering over the public park below. A pure white interior reflects the abundant daylight pouring in from all sides, making the space largely shadowless. Open floor plans and spare furnishings meet the increasingly common desire for flexible workspace.

5. Fuseproject
San Francisco, California
fuseproject.com
In the San Francisco offices of Yves Béhar's industrial design and branding firm, the work environment suits the work. With Herman Miller, Béhar designed the fuseproject offices to be collaboration-friendly, with long shared tables and few obstructions to the view across the space, where 29 designers work on such forward-looking projects as LED lighting, tiny Bluetooth headsets, and the One Laptop Per Child machine.

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Shown: Tosai Round Table by Peter Maly.

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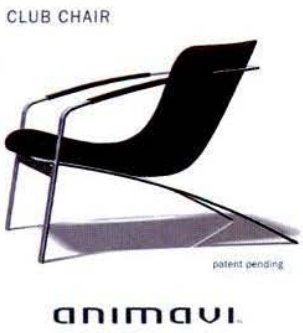

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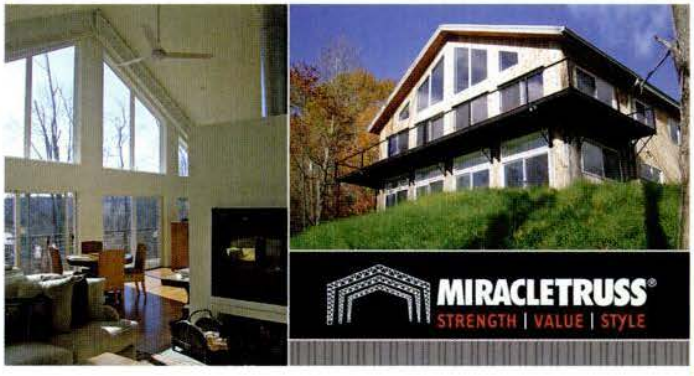

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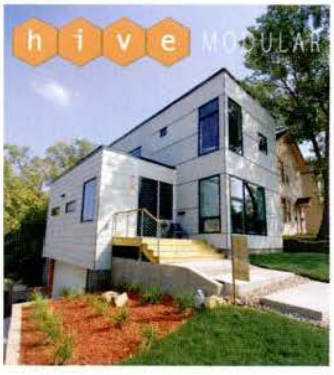

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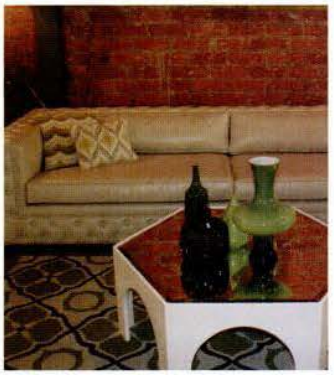

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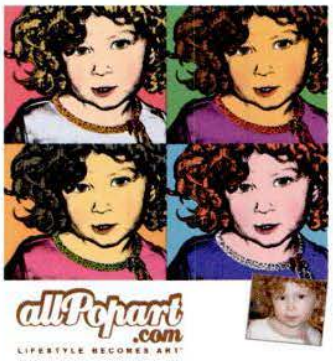

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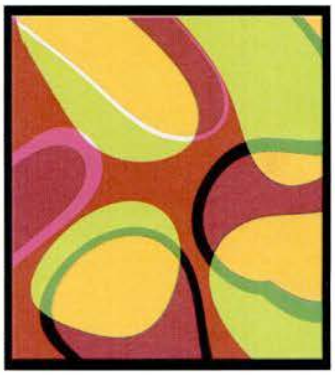

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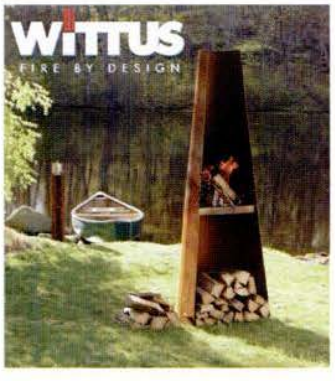

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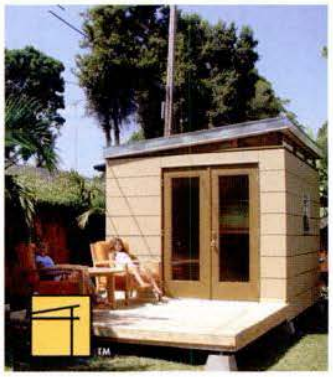

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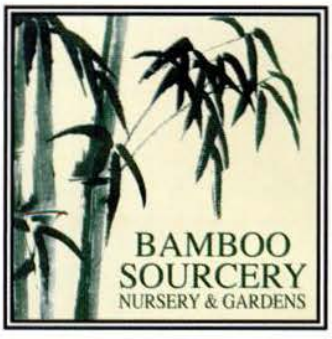

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Shown: Berson Console, 74" x 22" x 16" shown with optional concrete top.

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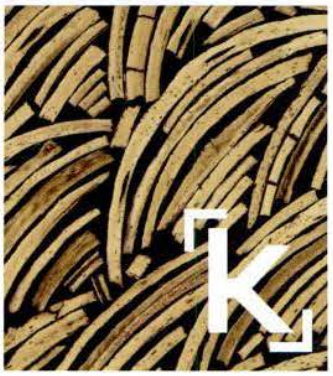

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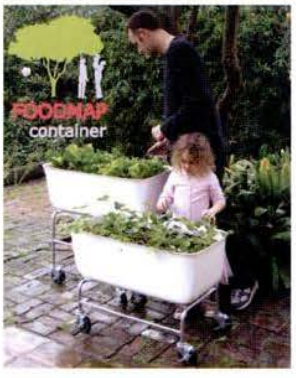

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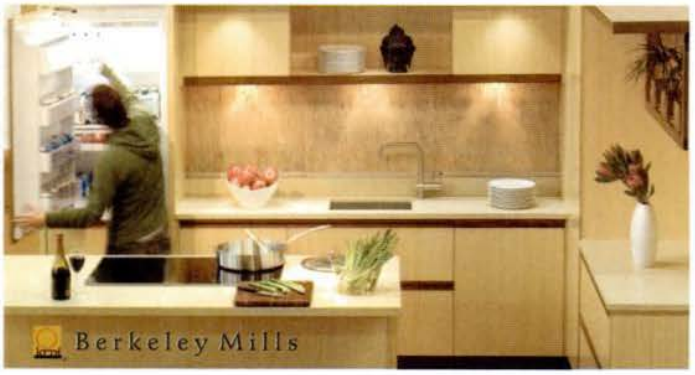

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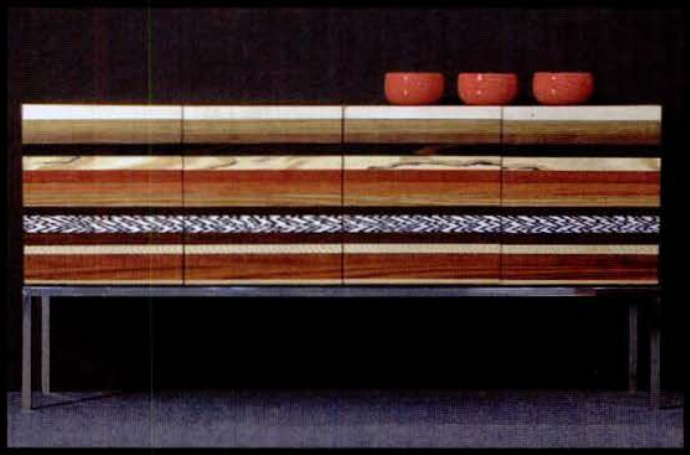

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HOW TO GET INSIDE SOME OF L.A.'s MOST ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT HOMES:

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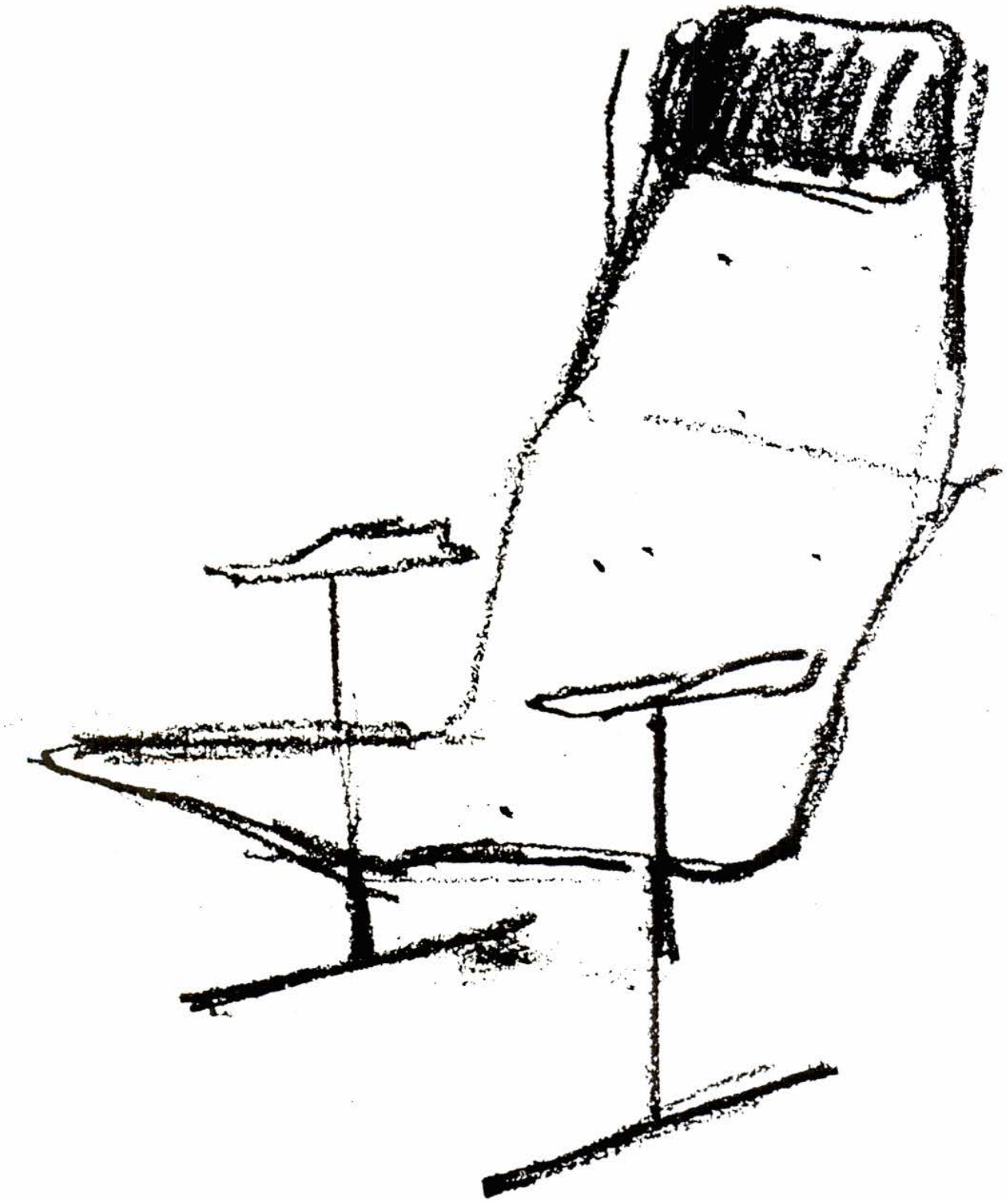

Confronted with a world increasingly riddled with obsolete objects, Dieter Rams—who has worked at the vanguard of product design for over five decades—presents us with his 1960 sketch for the Vitsœ Chair 6000, and tells us, "All things superfluous are not timeless, and become ugly all the more swiftly."

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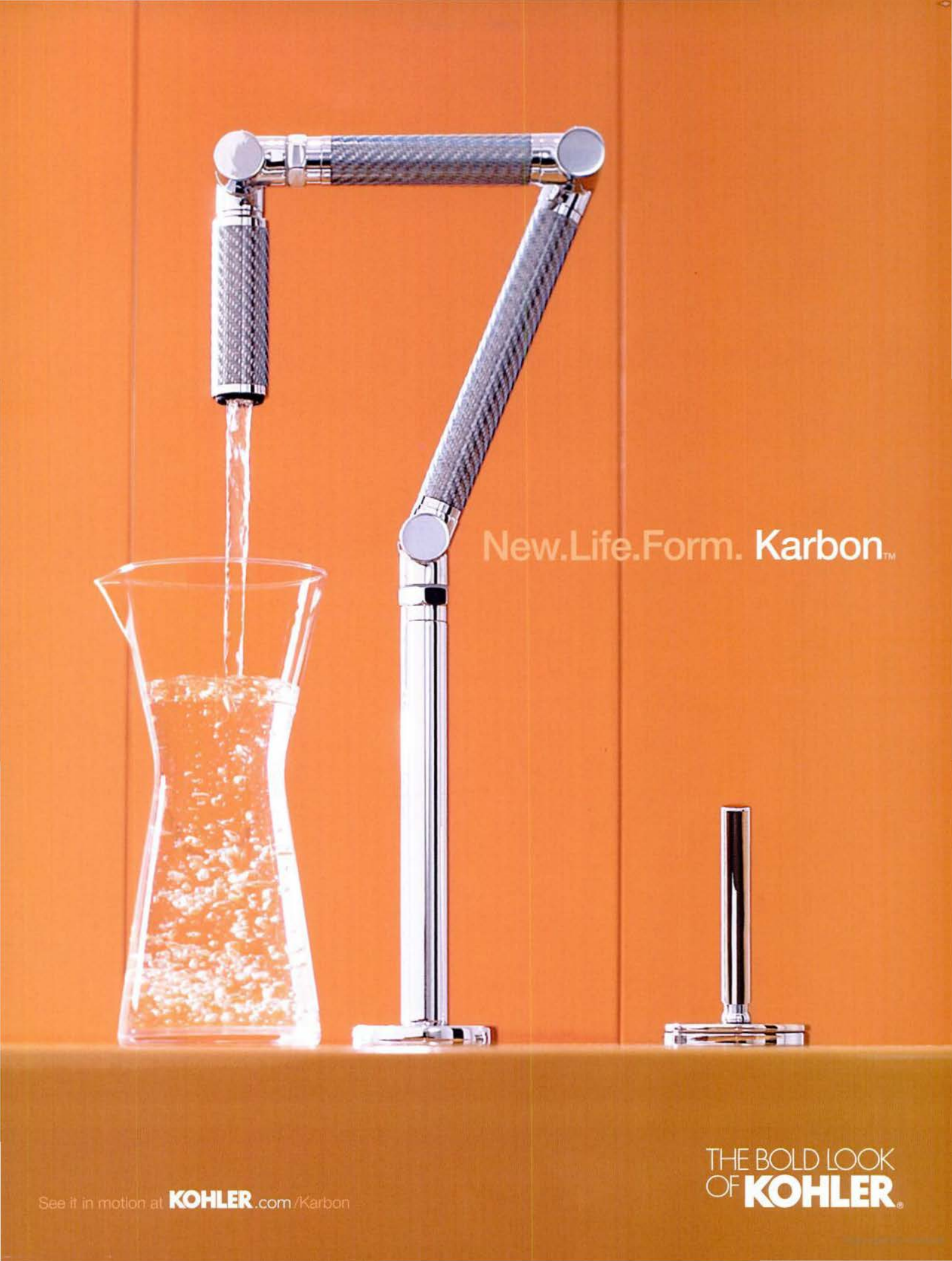
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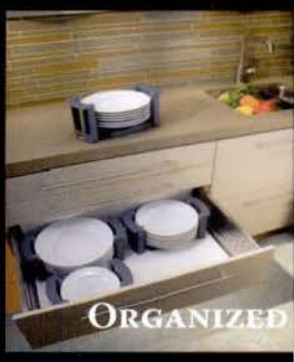

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