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# Act Locally

## July/August 2009

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### Editor's Note

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### Barn Again

How you define a region depends on what you look for there—and for North Carolina architect Frank Harmon, it's all about the people.

### Dwellings

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### Casa Study House #1

Traditions collide in Los Angeles when architect Jeremy Levine hotwires SoCal Spanish with international haute-moderne. The resulting house of courtyards, shelves, and even some repurposed car parts is a hybrid sensation.

Story by Frances Anderton

Photos by Tom Fowlks

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### A Northern Haven

Christopher Campbell combined lobster-shack aesthetics with sectional prefab for this island abode off the coast of Rockland, Maine—giving serious northern exposure to part-time residents Barbara Callahan and Ed Hayes.

Story by Aaron Britt

Photos by Raimund Koch

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### Net Assets

Even the economy has regions, Alejandro Sticotti and Mercedes Hernaez discovered when Argentina's economy collapsed. This led them to build a house from local woods and materials, creating a house that is "of Argentina"—and proud of it.

Story by Jaime Gross

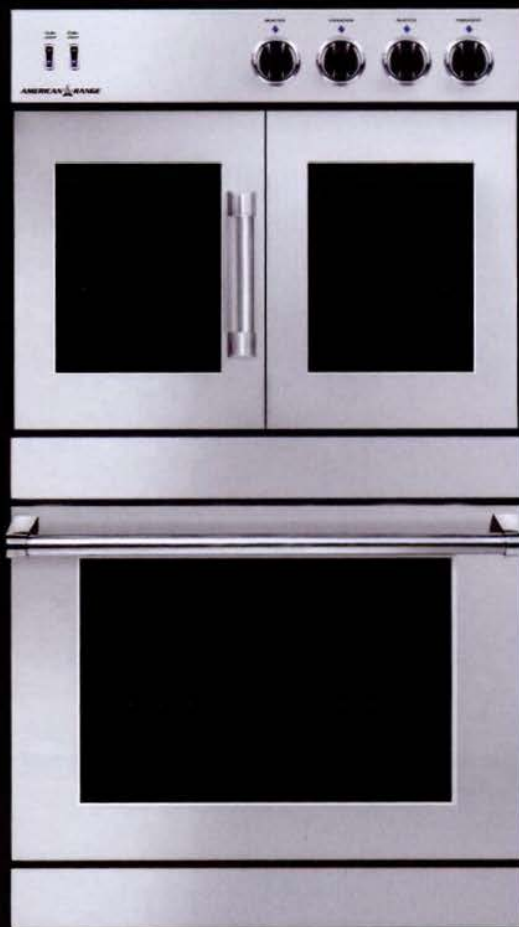
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Los Angeles, California, page 80  
Photo by Tom Fowlks



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M A D E I N U S A



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Good books, tin cars, and a reusable sack of products will get you through the summer months in high style.

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Coastal, on a hill, and made from inexpensive materials, the Ferguson house is a catalog of moving surfaces and open rooms.

## 52 Off the Grid

A canopy is all you need! For this private house and performance venue in the desert near Joshua Tree National Park, Lloyd Russell's ingenious idea was as basic as shelter itself.

## 58 Dwell Reports

I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream...makers. Take a taste from these gleaming modern machines and you'll never settle for store-bought again.

**“It’s instructive to look at what a farmer would build if he needed to use goods that were locally at hand, because he couldn’t afford to go to Home Depot.”**

Frank Harmon



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## 62 Conversation

You can walk into the same Wal-Mart from Utica to Ukiah, but Wonderwall Inc.'s star of retail design, Masamichi Katayama, thinks every store should tell a story of its own.

## 66 Outside

If Dwell remade *Baywatch* starring Søren Kierkegaard, the majestic Sea Bath by White Arkitekter on the cloudy Danish shores of Kastrup would be the existential lifeguard's home. Dive in.

## 70 Detour

Put down that hoagie and never mind the water ice: Philly's got more soul than its East Coast sister cities would have you believe. Local novelist Ken Kalfus tells us where to find it.



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## 104 Archive

Meet Marianne Strengell, the woman who gave texture to modern interiors by supplying innovative textiles for airplanes, airports, and even the Lincoln Continental.

## 110 Design Finder

In downtown Los Angeles, nonprofit worker turned design-savvy entrepreneur Willard Ford turned the historic Kim Sing Theatre into a haven for modern furniture and design, now known as Ford&Ching.

## 112 ABC

Dwell's directory delivers the down low on all things D and designerly—Tom Dixon, Deconstructivism, Nanna Ditzel, and displacement ventilation, to delineate a few.

## 124 Finishing Touch

All's well that ends well—even when it's siding. Architect David Salmela shows us how a simple material used wisely can make an entire project finish finely.



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# I Brake For Architecture

In 2007 the *New Oxford American Dictionary* chose “locavore” as its word of the year. For me, the significance of this selection had less to do with the popular acceptance of the local food movement than the fact that a hundred years ago there would have been no need for such a word. In 1907, there was no fast food, and there was no slow food; there was just food. The reality of a world populated by locavores is that it now requires an extraordinary effort to achieve what was once decent, honest, and normal.

With farmers’ markets sprouting up just about everywhere, the success of the local food movement underscores a widespread desire for greater connectedness to our communities—to the where, who, and what of our otherwise increasingly anonymous lives—and for restoring fading historic and cultural traditions. Though progress has been made on our diets, there is an unmet need for a corresponding movement to address our buildings. As modern homeowners we have about as much knowledge of what goes into a house as a grocery shopper might have of the ingredients of a bag of Doritos.

If there is an architectural equivalent to a locavore, it is a vernacular building. Vernacular buildings, whose appropriate and site-specific designs are determined by generations of experimentation (not styles or whims) are generally built with whatever resources are available to create the best possible conditions for living. While vernacular buildings thrive in areas and situations where resources are scarce, in the greater developed world the industry of building marginalizes the accumulated knowledge and strategies of what is regionally appropriate in favor of meeting the bottom line and fostering the latest creature comforts.

Somewhat ironically, though, modernism—that enemy of so many neighborhood design-review boards seeking local character—has more in common with vernacular architecture than you may suspect. “Less

is more” just as well applies to barns and sheds as it does Miesian towers (and most people would find living in an agrarian building just as disagreeable as living in a glass house). From a socioeconomic standpoint, however, the relationship between what are arguably the most inclusive and exclusive building styles is an uneasy one, but accepting the gulf between pedigrees, there is fertile ground for exploration in their synthesis. Modernism at its worst exists in a vacuum, devoid of context and ignorant of our most human needs. Greater deference to vernacular traditions, which rely heavily on context and do the utmost to fulfill basic necessities, can bridge that void.

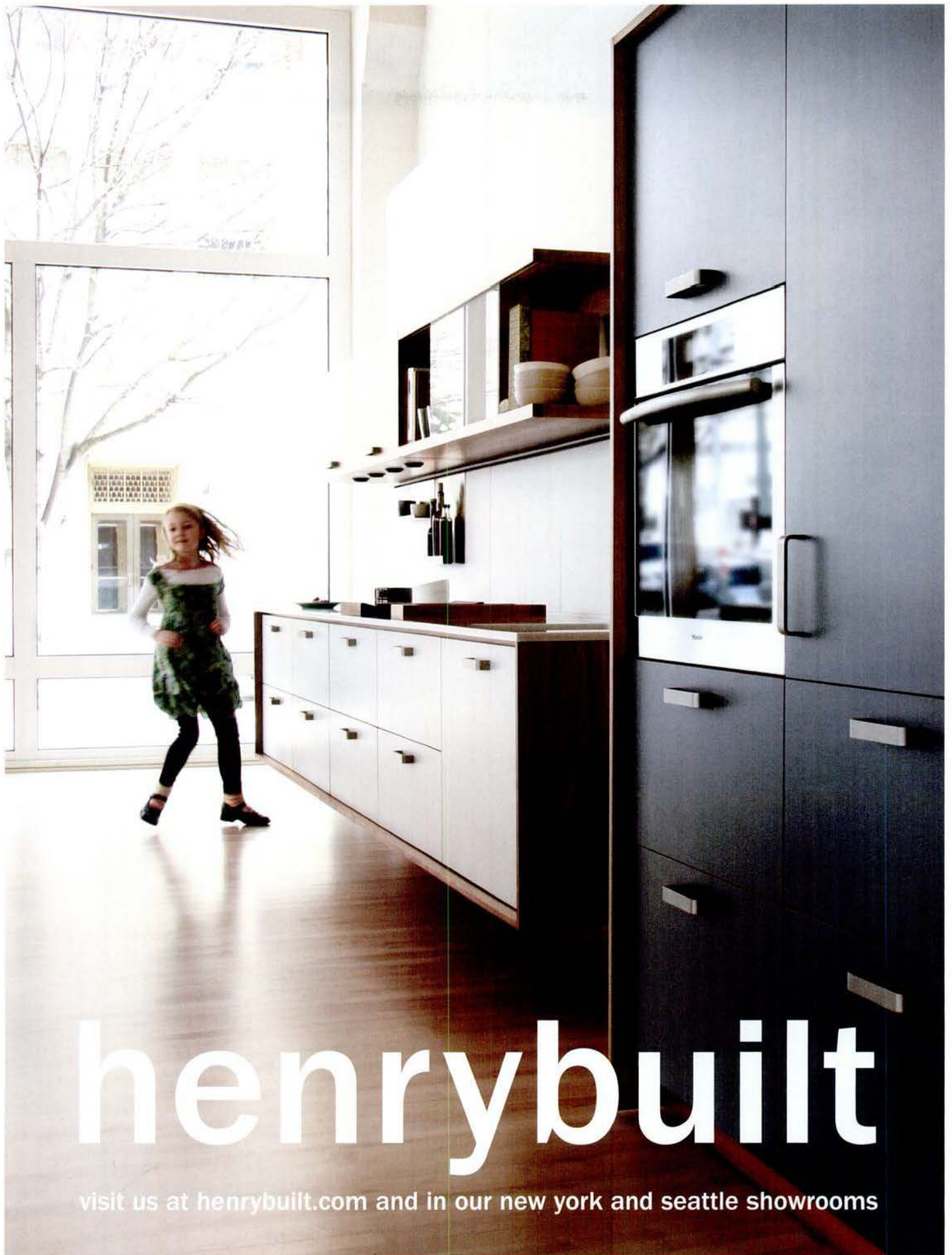
This is not exactly a new idea. Architect Paul Rudolph, who grew up in the South and studied at Auburn University before working under Walter Gropius at Harvard, saw the benefits and the challenges of embracing vernacular design. “Some of the tendencies which tend to limit regional expression,” he wrote in 1957, “are industrialization, national distribution systems, ease of travel and communication, cost of traditional materials, influence of the architectural press, [and] our desire to conform.” In 1964, Bernard Rudofsky’s Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Architecture Without Architects* sought to make caves, tree houses, and troglodytic dwellings (or, according to Rudofsky, “ways of life that are heavy on acute insight, albeit light on progress”) acceptable to an audience more accustomed to the latest high design. In our increasingly resource-tapped age, it behooves us to revisit the ecologically sound principles laid out by our forebearers both ancient and recent.

So consider this issue a primer for the architectural equivalent to the slow food movement. In the features that follow you will find homes produced with local ingredients, based on well-honed, time-honored recipes. The only difference here is that “good taste” is just about the last priority. ■■■









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**The "Editor's Note" in the April 2009** issue was encouraging and realistic. I am 32 years old and married with a ten-month-old son. We are renting the first floor of a brownstone in Brooklyn after moving to New York City two and a half years ago. I grew up in Detroit, Michigan, and left behind a house that I began renovating after being inspired by articles I read in Dwell.

I would like to own again, preferably a two- or three-unit brownstone here in Brooklyn, and do my own renovations. But between the credit crisis and unemployment, that idea seems like a dream. I am a licensed plumber and this spring I enrolled at New York University to begin my studies in construction and project management. I have a passion for construction and rehabs. Reading Dwell helps me stay focused on the goal of home ownership and home rehab—and my own occupational refurbishing as well.

**Domonic James**  
Brooklyn, New York

I love the Stump House ("Off the Grid," April 2009). I grew up in Connecticut but was drawn to Portland from reading about people and projects like this. I now live in Northeast Portland and walked by this house a couple of weeks ago; I was very impressed.

**Posted by Kate Callon**  
on [dwell.com](http://dwell.com)

In one of those odd coincidences, I was rolling on a coat of muted purple-gray paint in the front hallway while my wife read the April 2009 issue of Dwell to me. Naturally we were interested to hear your report on low- and zero-VOC paints ("Dwell Reports"). When she read the review on Mythic, we both raised our heads, took deep sniffs, and laughed. Perhaps there is a large variation between colors, because of the three we've used so far (Antique White, Pickle, and the purple-gray), there has been minimal odor, even while the paint is wet, and none once it dries. Given its coverage, color saturation, and spreadability plus the lack of toxins, it's pretty amazing.

**Lindley Karstens**  
Los Angeles, California

Jennifer and Mattias Segerholt ("Just Do It," April 2009) have done an absolutely amazing job and are pretty courageous, having gone through all that work and hassle. It's such a beautiful, timeless place.

**Posted by Jeremy**  
on [dwell.com](http://dwell.com)

What a beautifully restrained, respectful, yet meaningful update on a sweet modern home showing its age ("Time and Again," April 2009). I hope that in 50 years, someone comes along with another egoless update on this house.

**Posted by Mark Masi**  
on [dwell.com](http://dwell.com)

I have called Sydney home for the past decade, so I was excited to read your March 2009 issue, "Learning From Down Under." Finding Dwell here can sometimes be tricky, so it was only near the end of March that I finally managed to get it. Turns out the delay, as well as Dwell's mention of Jørn Utzon, was rather poignant.

The day after I read the issue, I attended the state memorial for Jørn Utzon at his masterpiece, the Sydney Opera House. It was a moving and emotional service chock-full of performances and VIPs, including Utzon's adult children Jan and Lin, who traveled from Denmark for a tribute that some say was 40 years too late.

I remember vividly when I moved here from Canada, seeing the Opera House for the first time, my mouth wide open in awe: the perfect building in the perfect setting. My favorite description is that it is "alive," and as you walk around it or sail past it, as the light changes, you can see that it is. It struck me how the numerous stock photos of the Opera House that I had seen throughout my life did absolutely no justice to it at all. It must be seen in person, and the fact that its own creator never had the opportunity to feel its awe is a great tragedy. Let's hope that the sentiment and gratitude of the memorial endures and ensures that this type of government idiocy and interference never happens again.

**David Fedirchuk**  
Sydney, Australia

I enjoyed your "Learning From Down Under" (March 2009) issue. It's great that your publication can introduce to a wider audience some of the exciting residential architecture being created in Australia and New Zealand.

Hopefully you can do a follow-up issue showing the work of more architects in the region, as there are so many designers whose houses you could have included.

**Jasper Brown**  
Brisbane, Australia

**Editors' Note:** We certainly weren't lacking homes to feature in our Down Under issue. Be sure to check out [dwell.com](http://dwell.com) for more homes from the Lucky Country and its neighbor.

I was so pleased to see that *Nomadic Furniture* is back in print ("In the Modern World," March 2009). I just passed on my original copy to my son, who is going into his second year of university. Though I never mastered the Styrofoam-cup lamp, that book gave me lots of panache in my university days for very little money.

**Frank French**  
Edmonton, Alberta

Loved the March 2009 issue. Pages 76-77 looked like an open box of assorted chocolates; I call it architectural eye candy and will soon be hungering for more.

**Ron Green**  
Collingwood, Ontario

I hadn't picked up a copy of Dwell in a couple of years and was so happy to see all of the changes that have been made in the magazine—specifically: People! Real life! To everyone involved in its publication, "Dwell done."

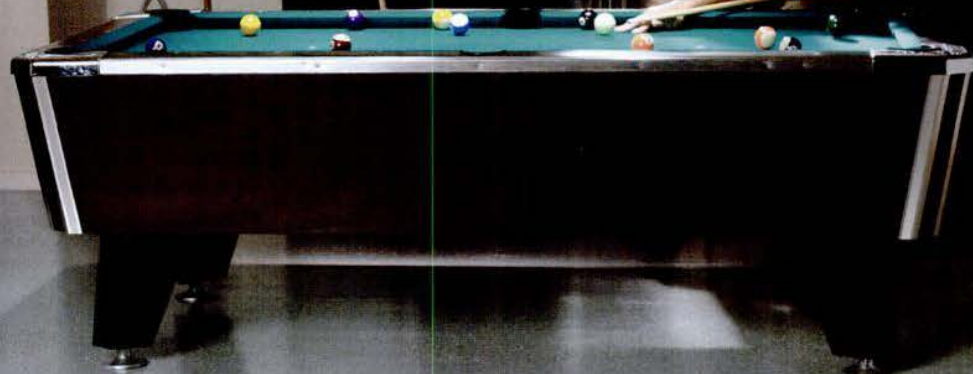
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### Alfresco

As the hottest days of summer set in, we take a look at the best picnic sets for enjoying a meal in the park. How can unbreakable plates and spill-proof cups possibly look good, you ask? Check out [dwell.com](http://dwell.com) to see a selection of portable, durable dishware that brings good design to outdoor dining. [dwell.com/eatingout](http://dwell.com/eatingout)

### Local Traditions

Within our pages this month, we explore vernacular architecture from Maine to Argentina. At [dwell.com](http://dwell.com), we invite you to share your own images and stories of building styles from your neck of the woods. Whether you showcase the screen porches of the Deep South or the lodge-style abodes of the Pacific Northwest, show the Dwell community what characterizes "regional" in the place you call home. [dwell.com/regional](http://dwell.com/regional)



## CONTRIBUTORS

### Nate Berg

Nate Berg is an assistant editor at Planetizen ([planetizen.com](http://planetizen.com)), an urban-planning-news website. He'd never written about buildings, so he was a bit intimidated to pen a piece about the Rimrock Ranch house designed by architect Lloyd Russell in the Southern California desert ("Off the Grid," p. 52). In the end, he focused on the ways in which the home reflects the ideology of owner Jim Austin as it blends into its surroundings. As for the house itself, "it sure is pretty," Berg says.

### Christine Cipriani

Boston-based writer and book editor Christine Cipriani was first drawn to textile designer Marianne Strengell's story ("Archive," p. 104) while researching architects with whom Strengell was closest, including the designer's husband, Olaf Hammarström. As she considered Strengell's enormous impact on 20th-century fiber art—and her limited name recognition—Cipriani noticed that architectural textile design is like editing: When done well, it's invisible.

### Jaime Gross

Jaime Gross lives in San Francisco and writes about design, culture, and travel. She met architect and furniture designer Alejandro Sticotti ("Net Assets," p. 96) on a recent trip to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and got a tour of his house, which he built after the country's economic meltdown in 2001. Gross was especially intrigued with how the architect incorporated recycled and local materials into the interiors. "Sticotti used reclaimed wood and concrete partially out of financial necessity, working with what was available and affordable at the time, and also as an aesthetic decision," Gross says. "The place feels warm and cozy, like a gigantic tree house, with views of the garden from every room."

### Adam Hayes

Adam Hayes is an illustrator from Stoke-on-Trent, England. He graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2006 and continues to live and work in London. He frequently contributes to the UK *Guardian*, creating drawings

for its travel section's "Streets Ahead" series. For this issue of Dwell, he illustrated the green technologies used at Jim Austin's Rimrock Ranch ("Off the Grid," p. 52).

### Cristobal Palma

Chile-based photographer Cristobal Palma recently traveled to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to shoot the Casa Sticotti ("Net Assets," p. 96). Since that trip, Palma has made several more visits and has met the residents, Alejandro and Mercedes, for drinks each time.

### Amanda Prior

Amanda Prior is a photographer who lives and works in Sydney, Australia. For this issue, she traveled two hours north of her hometown to photograph the Avoca Beach House ("My House," p. 43). While shooting the cleverly designed living-kitchen-dining area, Prior noticed a black-and-white photograph of the original beach shack and its owner: the current resident's mother.

### Nicola Twilley

San Francisco-based freelance writer Nicola Twilley traveled to Tokyo to talk to Masamichi Katayama at his Wonderwall Inc. studio for this month's "Conversation" (p. 62). She would like to give special thanks to Yumiko Shimizu, Wonderwall's press officer, for not only translating during the interview but following it up with a quick but financially dangerous tour of Katayama's neighborhood haunts, from his favorite art gallery, antique shop, and bookstore to the store in which he had purchased his most recent pair of jeans. ■■■

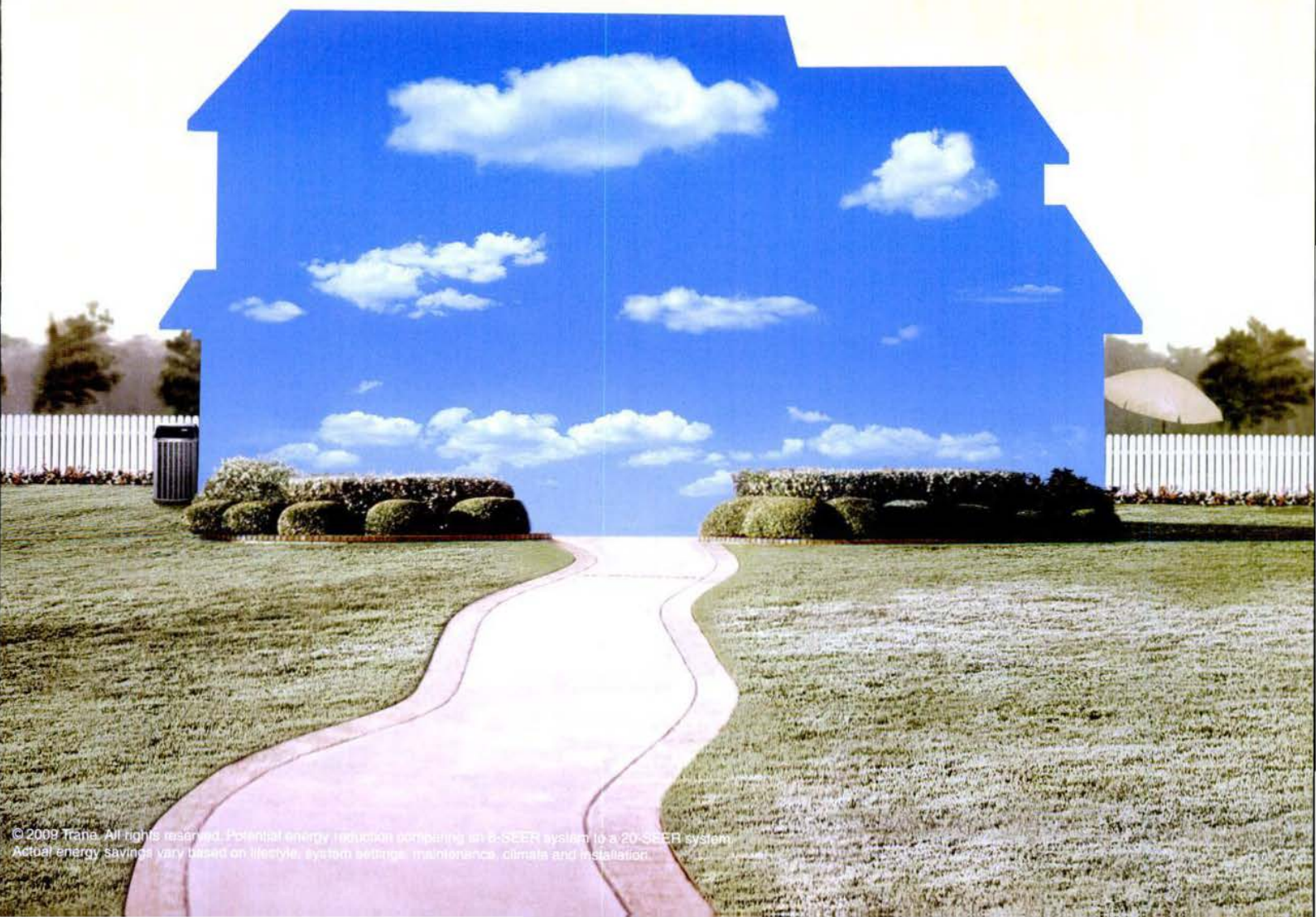


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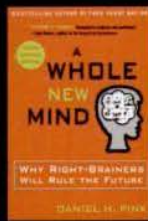


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## DESIGN CONFERENCE

Friday, June 26

Curated and conducted by the editors of Dwell, this comprehensive design conference focuses on good design in architecture, product design, landscapes and interiors.

*Daniel Pink, Featured Keynote Speaker*

Daniel Pink, NY Times best-selling author of *A WHOLE NEW MIND* and expert on innovation, competition, and the changing world of work will discuss *The Surprising Science of Motivation and Creativity: How do we motivate ourselves and others to perform at a higher level?*

## EXHIBITION WEEKEND

Saturday, June 27+ Sunday, June 28

The pages of Dwell come to life throughout the weekend. Enjoy two full days of engaging panels and seminars on our Design Innovation and Sustainability stages.

EXHIBITION



## TRADE DAY

Friday, June 26

Calling all design professionals. From architects and interior designers to developers and retailers, this exhibition day is open to all in the design trade. Credentials are required. Register today.

## GENERAL ADMISSION

Saturday, June 27+ Sunday, June 28

Everything you ever wanted to know about modern design in one very big place: Dwell Outdoor, Furniture + Accessories, Kitchen + Bath, Energy + Solar, Design Materials, Modern Family, Modern Lifestyle, Design Technology, Kitchen Ecology.

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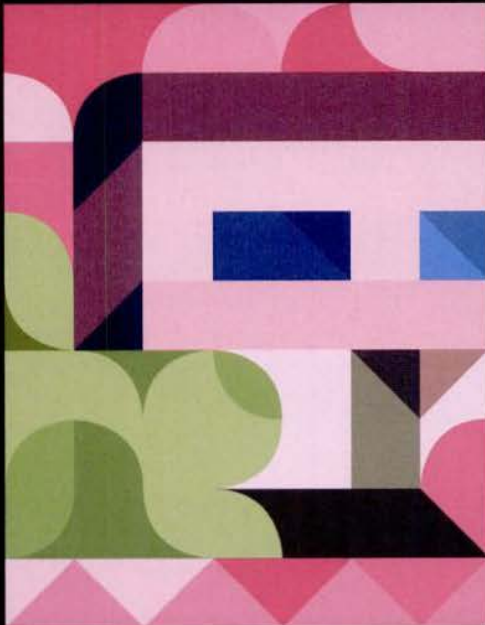
LOS ANGELES  
ART SHOW

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Join the editors of Dwell for the West Coast's largest modern design event showcasing the people, products, and ideas driving design and architecture today.

HOME TOURS



**EASTSIDE** Saturday, June 27  
**WESTSIDE** Sunday, June 28

Take the show on the road and tour some of LA's most Dwell-like homes. Featuring single-family residences by established and emerging design talent leading the Southern California architectural scene, the Dwell Eastside and Westside Home Tours demonstrate the best in LA living.

From new construction to radical renovations you'll experience a diverse selection of inspirational dwellings and learn about the materials and methods behind the homes.

Event Sponsor: *Los Angeles Times*

SPECIAL EVENTS



**RESTAURANT DESIGN AWARDS**  
 Friday, June 26

AIA Los Angeles Chapter and Dwell play host to the LA's hottest culinary event. The Restaurant Design Awards celebrate excellence in the design of restaurants, cafés, bars, lounges & nightclubs.

**FILM SCREENING**  
 Saturday, June 27

*Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman*

View the award-winning film about the extraordinary life and work of 98 year-old photographer, Julius Shulman before its theatrical release.





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# In the Modern World

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Houses We Love.....	36



While adults risk their lives extracting natural gas and oil off the coast of Norway on the Troll field, back on dry land kids risk scrapes at the Geopark, a new action playground that mimics the topography of the Troll field at a scale of 1:500. Architects Helen & Hard designed the colorful retreat out of recycled and reshaped elements from the petroleum industry. Peak oil never seemed so fun.  
[hha.no](http://hha.no)

## July/August Calendar

Architecture, art, and design openings and closings around the world. Welcome to Dwell's summer timeline.

## July 7

*Patterns of Speculation*: J. Mayer H. closes at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. [sfmoma.org](http://sfmoma.org)



**Balancing kitchen utensils**

By *Trudeau*  
[trudeaucorp.com](http://trudeaucorp.com)

Perform a cool culinary balancing act with these silicone spoons and spatulas. Their notched handles rest on the rim of your hot pot or pan, allowing you to taste, stir, and taste again without dribbling spaghetti sauce across the kitchen floor.

**Alli-Grater**

By *Fred Flare*  
[fredflare.com](http://fredflare.com)

While the real deal might choose to chomp, have no fear when this gator grater opens wide—its jaws become a helpful handle. Your block of sharp cheddar doesn't stand a chance against these stainless steel gnashers—just be careful that your fingertips don't get nipped as well.

**Banana Split**

By *Jason Nip for Umbra*  
[umbra.com](http://umbra.com)

Don't let their thick skins fool you: Bananas are a delicate bunch, easily bruised on the road to ripeness. Banish the big brown soft spots with this special Split (sans ice cream) from Umbra, which will help keep your yellows mel-low until you're ready to peel.

**Bean French press**

By *Bodum*  
[bodum.com](http://bodum.com)

Ditch the long lines, paper cups, and three-dollars-a-pop buzz, and kick off your morning commute with a home-brewed hot beverage. This Bodum French press serves up 32 ounces of java that you can enjoy in the comfort of your pajamas or after your frantic dash to the bus.

**Drop money bank**

By *Rita Botelho*  
[ritabotelho.com](http://ritabotelho.com)

Saving a single penny might seem like a drop in the bucket, but all the loose change that you slip through the crack of this glazed ceramic cache will really count. Fill 'er up and smile when your money plummets—to the floor—as the only way to access your stash is to break the bank.

**Origo Mix bowl**

By *Alfredo Häberli for iittala*  
[iittala.com](http://iittala.com)

Do not adjust your magazine. The Technicolor graphics on this porcelain bowl are just a test of the Emergency Breakfast System. For Origo's tenth anniversary Alfredo Häberli remixed the palettes of the otherwise horizontally inclined line with a slight vertical adjustment.

**July 15-25**

Join the Aussies for the State of Design "Sampling the Future" Festival in Melbourne. [stateofdesign.com.au](http://stateofdesign.com.au)

**July 19**

*Urban China: Informal Cities* closes at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. [hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu)





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**Plant Pod**

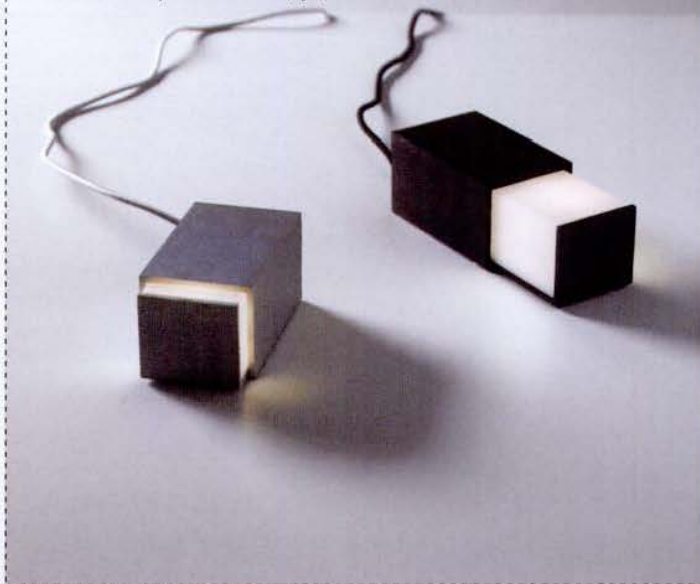
By Amy Adams for Perch!  
[perchdesign.net](http://perchdesign.net)

It drains. It holds. It's two, two, two pods in one! Put your indoor plant in this hanging piece and water it without worrying about drip stains on the hardwood. Leather cords provide a classy update on Granny's macramé. (left)

**Box light**

By Jonas Hakaniemi for Design House Stockholm  
[designhousestockholm.com](http://designhousestockholm.com)

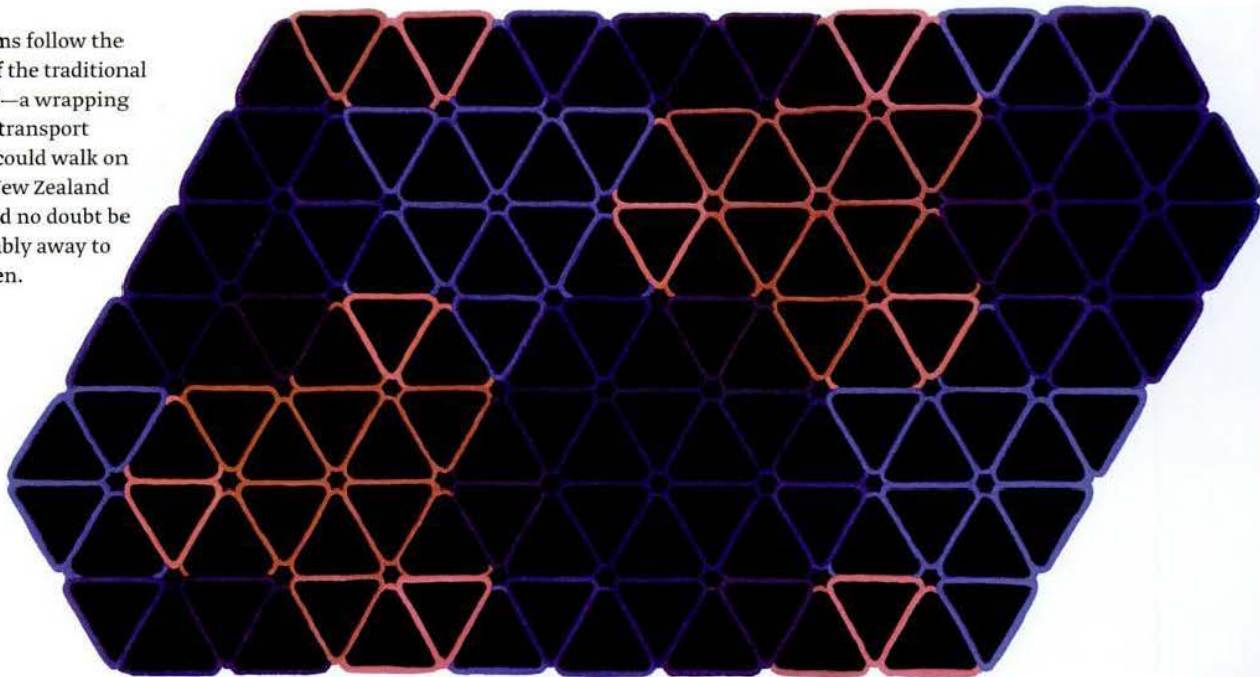
The Clapper is old news. These days, touch activation is taking the world by storm. Illuminate your room with the gentle tap of a fingertip on this little Box light.



**Furoshiki rug**

By Miguel Vieira Baptista  
 for Tema Home  
[temahome.com](http://temahome.com)

Its geometric seams follow the folding patterns of the traditional Japanese *furoshiki*—a wrapping cloth designed to transport goods—and if we could walk on this 100 percent New Zealand wool rug, we would no doubt be whisked comfortably away to living-room heaven.



**July 19**

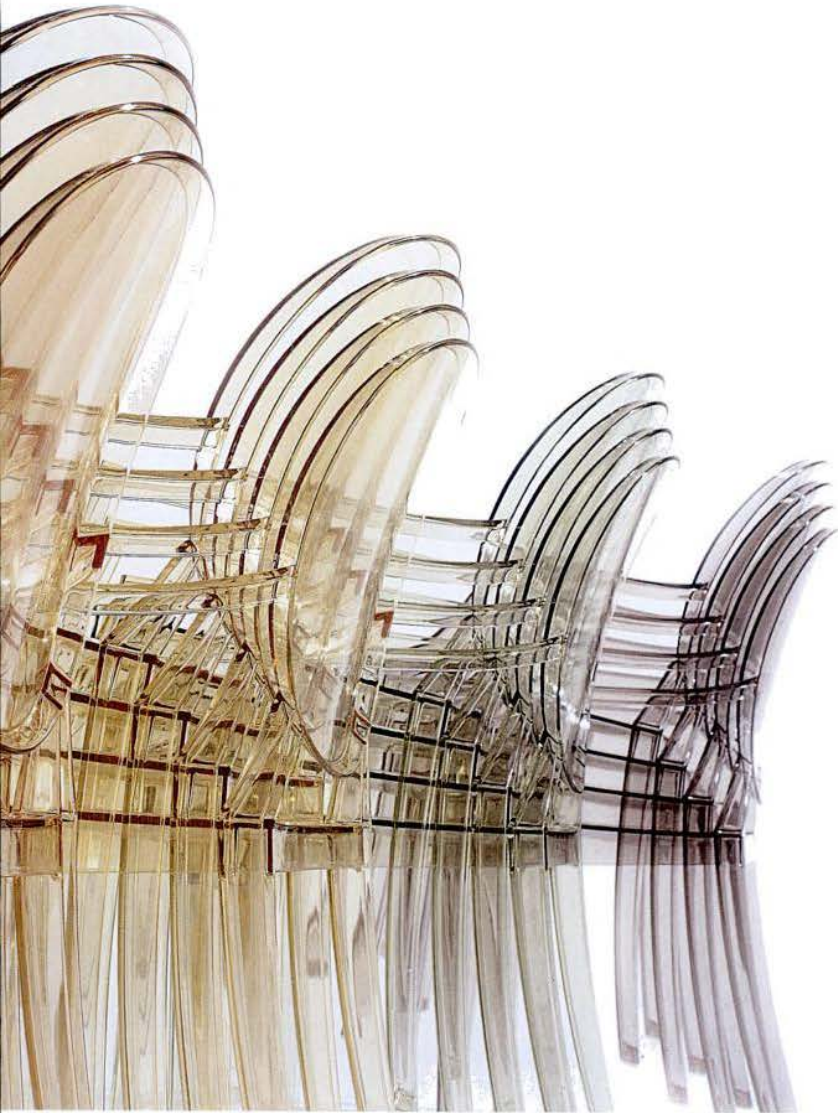
*Every Thing Design* closes at the Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich.  
[museum-gestaltung.ch](http://museum-gestaltung.ch)

**July 20**

*Deadline Today! 99 Stories on Making Architectural Competitions* closes at Architekturzentrum Wien in Vienna. [azw.at](http://azw.at)



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## Buffalo Basics at 153 Eaton Street



It may be hard to believe, but Buffalo, New York, was once a pinnacle of high-tech innovation, even dubbed the City of Light for being one of the first electrified towns in America. But today, with the century-old houses in the city's low-income East and West Side neighborhoods standing in disrepair, a new organization called Buffalo Basics is hoping to reenergize the city with a low-tech approach—hands-on training.

At the heart of the efforts are Megan McNally and Whitney Yax, two Buffalo natives who met in 2008 through Barnard College's Centennial Scholars Program, which awards students funds for a project of their choice. An environmental policy major



who will be graduating in 2010, McNally originally envisioned creating a community garden but quickly learned that the neighbors needed solid roofs more than homegrown radishes.

"I thought, Why don't I just rehab a house and through that teach people how to fix up their own homes?" McNally says.

In October 2008, McNally and Yax, an urban studies major who graduated last spring, purchased a foreclosed 1,500-square-foot home at auction. Since January, the pair, joined by local trade professionals, have hosted free workshops nearly every weekend, teaching skills from painting to installing windows to fixing leaky pipes.

One of the biggest surprises has been the number of women in attendance and witnessing their transformations from cautious to confident renovators. "Because we are two young women doing home repair, other women show up," McNally says. "They walk out saying, 'I used a circular saw today.'"

In the future, McNally and Yax plan to open the site as a community show house highlighting renovation techniques and green technologies to further reelectrify Buffalo, one resident at a time.

[buffalobasics.blogspot.com](http://buffalobasics.blogspot.com)  
For an extended interview visit [dwell.com/magazine](http://dwell.com/magazine)

## Sebastian Wrong



Sebastian Wrong is no stranger to the seduction of strong shapes and pure forms. After he studied sculpture during his university years, he turned his attention to a different creative field and launched Established & Sons in 2005. The UK-based design and manufacturing company celebrates the "refined strength" of modern British and international designers and supports Wrong's straightforward approach. "What the world needs is intelligent use of materials and high-quality, sexy design."

**What is your ideal working environment?**

Space, silence, and serenity.

**Is there a specific person who changed how you think about design?**

[Achille] Castiglioni has had a huge influence on my work. He used everyday materials and engineered existing production techniques to create these interesting, hybrid results that were quite challenging to achieve. It seems to be the key to successful product design, of a sort.

**What three buzzwords do you never want to hear applied to your own work?**

I can't stand the word "typology" used with regards to design. "Recyclable." And "decorative"—that would make me ill.

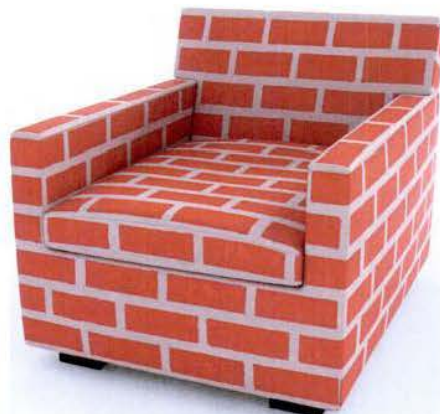
**Is there something outside your field that inspires you?**

I would say my major source of inspiration is, and always has been, the art world.

**What novels, music, or film keep you thinking about design?**

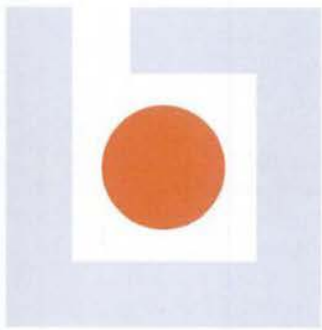
Stanley Kubrick's visual language and attention to detail is brilliant. I listen to mostly classical music, but also some moody stuff, like Joy Division and Thom Yorke. And Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a fantastic book. I love a bit of darkness.

[establishedandsons.com](http://establishedandsons.com)



Illustrations by Elisabeth Moch





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**Tropicalia Cocoon**

By Patricia Urquiola for Moroso [moroso.it](http://moroso.it)

When these conceptual cocoons appeared at last year's Milan Furniture Fair, they seemed like Toltec-scaled artifacts hauled back from an exploratory voyage

deep into the uncharted headwaters of Urquiola's creative flow—elegantly minimal geodesic forms wrapped in an explosion of color, pattern, and texture. A year later, the remote tropical jungle outpost of Urquiola's ingenuity remains unscathed.



**Camping chair**

By Jesper K. Thomsen for Normann Copenhagen [normann-copenhagen.com](http://normann-copenhagen.com)

The cartoon simplicity of these camping chairs belies the craftsmanship that went into their molded and laminated beechwood construction. Unlike the activity from which they take their name, we recommend keeping these indoors.



**Screw table**

By Tom Dixon [tomdixon.net](http://tomdixon.net)

From lunch at the kids' table to romantic dinner for two with a simple spin of the solid marble top, Dixon's industrial-strength aluminum screw allows this table to achieve great new heights, and the heavy cast-iron base will ensure it doesn't sway.



**July 26**

*Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner* closes at The Lighthouse in Glasgow. [thelighthouse.co.uk](http://thelighthouse.co.uk)

**August 23**

*The Isle*, an exhibition of two proposals for the Persian Gulf island Kish, closes at the MAK Center in Los Angeles. [makcenter.org](http://makcenter.org)



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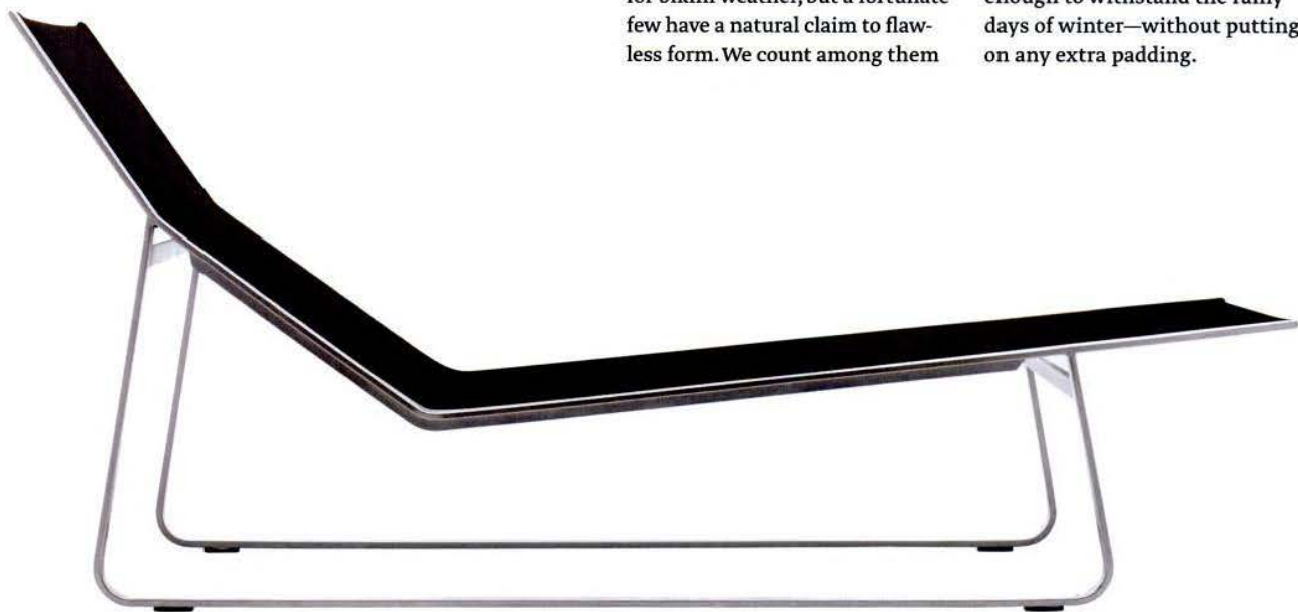


**Essentiel chaise**

By Piergiorgio Cazzaniga for  
Henry Hall Designs  
[henryhalldesigns.com](http://henryhalldesigns.com)

Some of us need crash diets and fruit-juice cleanses to get ready for bikini weather, but a fortunate few have a natural claim to flawless form. We count among them

this new chaise by Piergiorgio Cazzaniga. With gentle curves in all the right places, its beauty isn't just skin deep. Constructed from electro-polished stainless steel, the structure is tough enough to withstand the rainy days of winter—without putting on any extra padding.

**Basel chair**

By Jasper Morrison for Vitra  
[vitra.com](http://vitra.com)

If Jasper Morrison's "Super Normal" ethos applied to cafe menus, we'd be enjoying butter-and-saucisson-sec baguettes, greens with vinaigrette, and espresso. The accompanying cafe

chair of choice would of course be Morrison's new Basel chair—an updated and refined take on the city's basic model. It's the subtle details, like textured plastic that keeps your chinos firmly in place and a lack of connecting screws, that make this chair more super than normal.

**August 23**

Frank Lloyd Wright: *From Within Outward* closes at the Guggenheim in New York.  
[guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org)





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**Beyond the Bubble: The New Japanese Architecture**

By Botond Bognar  
Phaidon, \$79.95

It's well documented that Japan replaces its building stock at an astonishing rate—the average life of a house is a mere 25 years. With that in mind, this attractive book examines modern Japanese architecture with an eye firmly focused on how the booming post-modernism of the 1980s—and its ultimate demise in the '90s—set the stage for the more small-scale, economically minded, creative, and sustainable projects that exist today.

**The BLDGBLOG Book: Architectural Conjecture, Urban Speculation, Landscape Future**

By Geoff Manaugh  
Chronicle Books, \$29.95

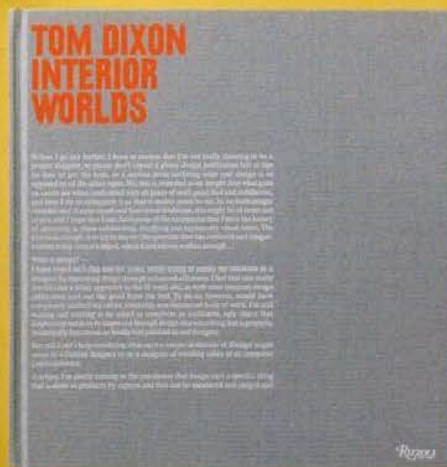
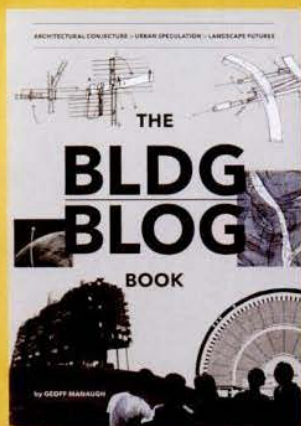
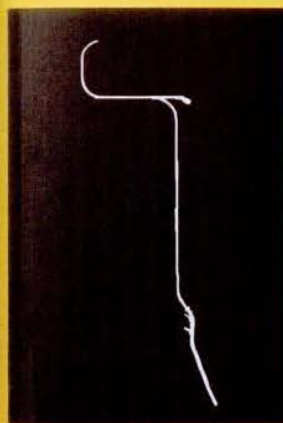
BLDGBLOG has long been one of our favorite websites for architectural conjecture, left-field landscapes, and dispatches from the bleeding edge of the built world, so much so that we brought author Geoff Manaugh onboard as a senior editor. Now Luddites and linkers alike can revel in Manaugh's singular weltanschauung as the *BLDGBLOG Book*, in all its Smythe-sewn perfection, hits bookstores nationwide.

**Designing the High Line: Gansevoort Street to 30th Street**  
By Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro

*Friends of the High Line*, \$30  
The High Line reclamation and landscape project has captivated us for the last decade with its psychedelic vision of a 21st-century hanging garden. Transforming an abandoned railway viaduct into Manhattan's newest public park, the High Line brings nature—from the Chelsea Grasslands to a two-level sundeck and "rail preserve" to a wildflower field between 28th and 29th Streets—to cosmopolitan life.

**Tom Dixon Interior Worlds**

By Tom Dixon  
Rizzoli, \$85  
In a world of Flickr sets and Google image searches, Tom Dixon's new photo-heavy book may not pack the same punch it would have two decades ago, when a picture of Cornish miners extracting tin couldn't be dialed up on demand. Regardless, this hefty tome visually connects the dots between finished domestic product and the world writ large, and Dixon's amiable character comes through in his digestible introductions and a series of interwoven comics.



**August 23**

*Brazil Contemporary* closes at the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam.  
[nai.nl](http://nai.nl)

Photo by Peter Belanger





customer file № 079 01 102007 036  
**Arthur Einwiller / Seattle**

- 01 My Son's favorite robot, Gary
- 02 Dad's Playboy tie tack from the Chicago years
- 03 Vintage Pisces tin can matches
- 04 The Appalachian Trail in summer of 1992
- 05 Danish tray found at an estate sale
- 06 Rope from my first Yosemite Valley climb
- 07 Dad and me circa 1974
- 08 My Foscarini Twiggy XL table lamp from YLighting
- 09 Prized Japanese toy train from my collection
- 10 Monthly poker game with old college buddies



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**Passage House**  
Karuizawa, Japan  
TNA Architects  
[tna-arch.com](http://tna-arch.com)



Photo by Daici Ano

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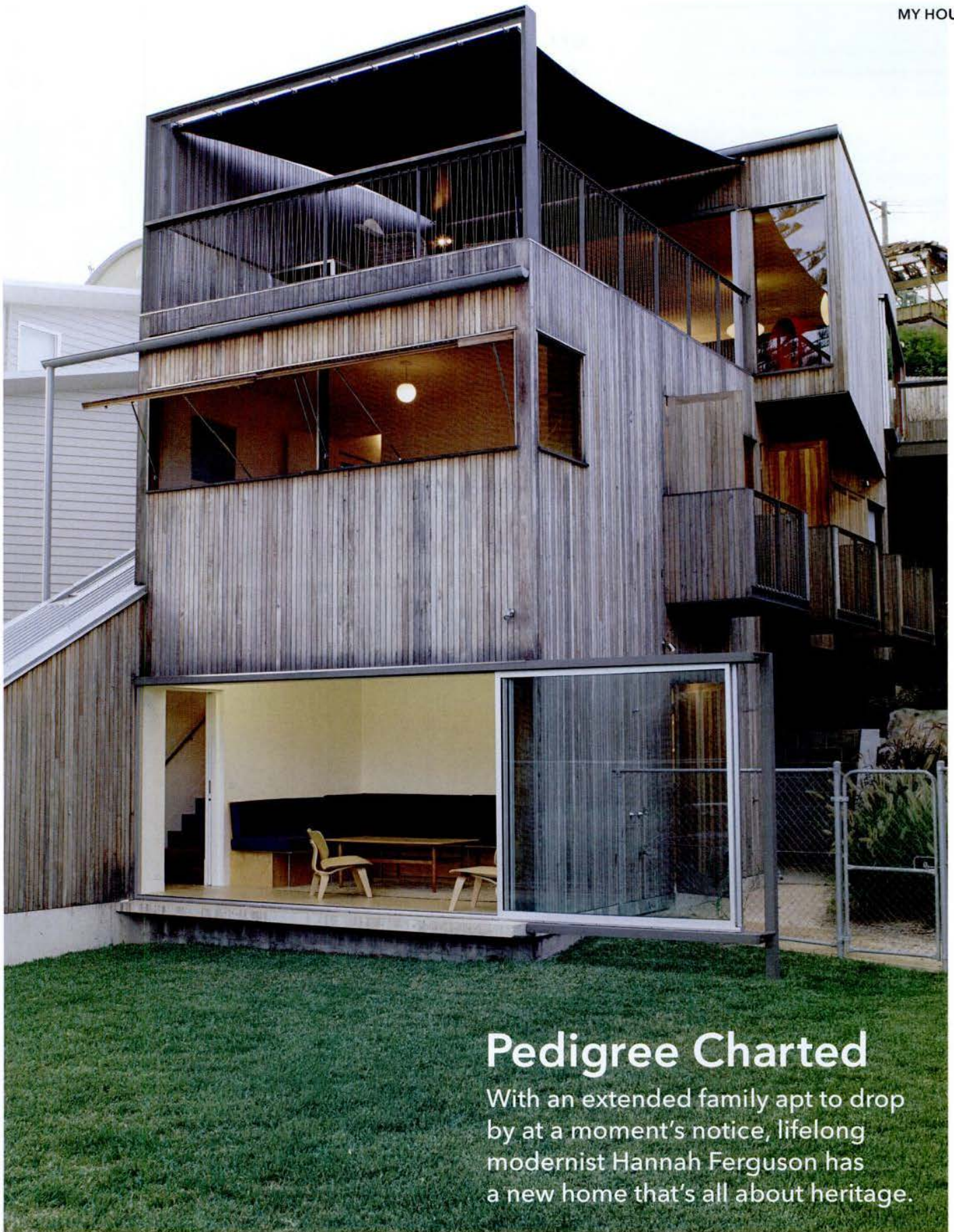
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## Pedigree Charted

With an extended family apt to drop by at a moment's notice, lifelong modernist Hannah Ferguson has a new home that's all about heritage.

As told to David Hay  
Photos by Amanda Prior  
Illustrations by Christine Berrie



Designing a beach house for three generations of the Ferguson family in rather traditional North Avoca, Australia (50 miles north of Sydney), architects Rachel Neeson and Nicholas Murcutt had big ambitions, staggering the three stories of their new commission up a rocky hillside to maximize views of the ocean. The challenge was proposed by design-savvy doctor Hannah Ferguson, who has been living with sleek modern architecture since she was a girl. Murcutt, son of legendary Aussie architect Glenn Murcutt, was only too happy to find a client with a design pedigree as burnished as his own. Ferguson gives us the tour.

My parents emigrated here from Czechoslovakia after World War II and bought a beach cottage in North Avoca in the late 1960s. It had three tiny bedrooms, and, as teenagers, my kids loved to come up here with all their friends. But when my elderly mother was ill, she and I started talking about building a replacement. Much earlier, my parents commissioned another Czech émigré, the architect Henry Rossler, to design them a home in the modernist idiom in Castle Crag on the northwest side of Sydney Harbor. It's a bushland suburb where many architects have experimented, starting in the 1920s with the American Walter Burley Griffin. Sadly, my mother died, and we had to sell that house, but her belief in architecture gave me the confidence to tear down the old beach shack and start afresh. ▶



A painting by Aboriginal artist Yinarupa Gibson Nangala hangs in the kitchen (top), with a barstool from Danish designer Erik Buch in the foreground. Hannah Ferguson

relaxes in her living room (above). Her daughter Joanna prepares dinner in the open kitchen, behind and above the plywood banquette designed by the architects.



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Thin skylights running atop the full length of the staircase illuminate the trip up the side of the house (top). Joanna Ferguson stands on one of the balconies extending from the

I began by making the rounds of the “exhibition villages” in far western Sydney, looking at ready-made homes. I found them a little depressing and not suited to a site with a rocky hillside behind it. So after seeing Rachel and Nick’s much-praised Box House in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, I telephoned and told them how all of us, including my sometimes-reluctant husband, James, wanted a bigger weekend house, one that would help us remember a woman who had strong ideas about the importance of design. Even before they drew up any plans, I made sure they went out to visit the Castle Crag house.

With my family expanding—I have three young grandchildren—we couldn’t come down from four bedrooms, but the architects didn’t seem to mind squeezing them into the second floor. The guest rooms are small, but by adding sliding doors that open to individual balconies, they expanded the sense of space and allowed for the breeze to come in. In our bedroom in the front, when I roll up the windows, it’s the same. Even on the hottest days, the entire house is cool. We have no need for a big air-conditioning unit like they have next door.

Because Rachel and Nick built up the hill, there are a lot of stairs lurking behind our front door. A thin, running skylight lights the stairwell, making the climb much more pleasurable. Still, when I get older, the stairs may be a challenge. Being a doctor I like to plan ahead, so we added a small bathroom to the downstairs flat, so I can stay there, too.

The top floor reminds me so much of the Rossler house. Rachel and Nick placed the kitchen-dining area at the back with a few steps leading down into the living room. It opens up, thanks to the floor-to-ceiling sliding doors, to a big balcony just the way our living room did at Castle Crag. Its openness means we’re the last people on the street to turn on our lights.

The high-backed plywood banquette along one side of the large dining table is true genius. It helps to separate the two floors, and both it and a similar banquette in the living

guest bedrooms (bottom left). Ferguson’s prized Voids rocking chair (bottom right) is positioned by a living-room window that affords views of the small town and

room provide the type of lolling around feel ideal for a beach holiday.

You’re always told to expect surprises of the monetary kind when you’re building a house. Ours came in the form of the spotted-gum siding, which pushed the total budget to nearly \$545,000. But it was worth it to have the house feel as though it’s part of the original landscape. The spotted gum slats that cross the windows on the sides afford privacy but at the same time look like a continuation of the siding. As Nick often tells me, “Remember, they are not cutouts like most windows; rather they look more like a pocket on a shirt.” I get to benefit from them—not feeling like my neighbors are looking through my bathroom window—but they’re also a smart idea. Like everything else in the house, they’re an expression of sensible, modern living in a place that’s rarely been treated to it. It would have made my mother proud. ▶



its beach. Designed in 2002 by Ron Arad for Magis, the Voids is blow-molded entirely from polyethylene. ❶





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Nick's father, Glenn Murcutt, insists on banks of sliding windows, louvers, and fly screens to allow for both natural ventilation and wintertime heat retention. Here Neeson and Murcutt opted for something simpler: large custom-made windows by Windoor that push out from below. Operated by a simple hydraulic system, these windows have spotted-gum slats, which allow for privacy. To keep out mosquitoes, the architects used a thin metallic screen from Phoenix Fly Screens to sit flush against the window. Held in place by magnets, it's easily pulled away for storage in the wintertime. [windoor.com.au](http://windoor.com.au)



**One Slide Fits All**

Ever the energetic grandmother, Ferguson insisted the house be flexible. In the three guest bedrooms, twin beds are mounted atop a railing system. Pushed together, they form a double bed. When Ferguson wants to accommodate a raft of children, she pushes the twin beds apart, thanks to the rails, with the flick of a finger.



**Shower the People**

The outdoor shower greets everyone returning from the beach. Ferguson, well versed in the behavior of teenagers, didn't want them running inside with sandy feet, so a stop under the fresh rainwater shower from Enware is mandatory after a morning in the surf. [enware.com.au](http://enware.com.au)



**When in Drought**

With serious water restrictions in drought-stricken Australia, Ferguson needed these tanks so that the new bush garden surrounding her house would flourish. Filled with rainwater draining off the roof and snugly set into the south side of the house, her two 1,300-gallon Bluescope tanks also service the toilets and outdoor shower. [bluescopewater.com.au](http://bluescopewater.com.au) ■■■

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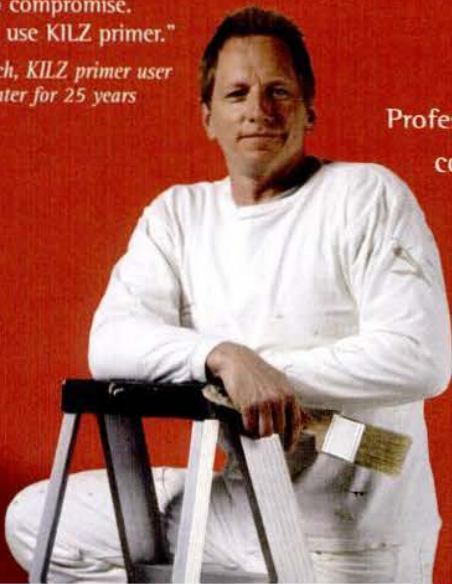
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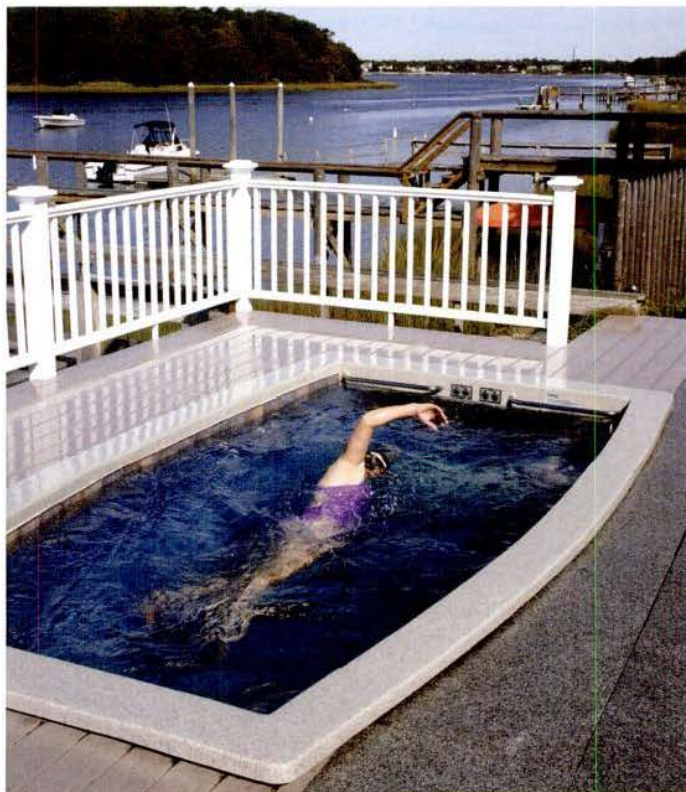
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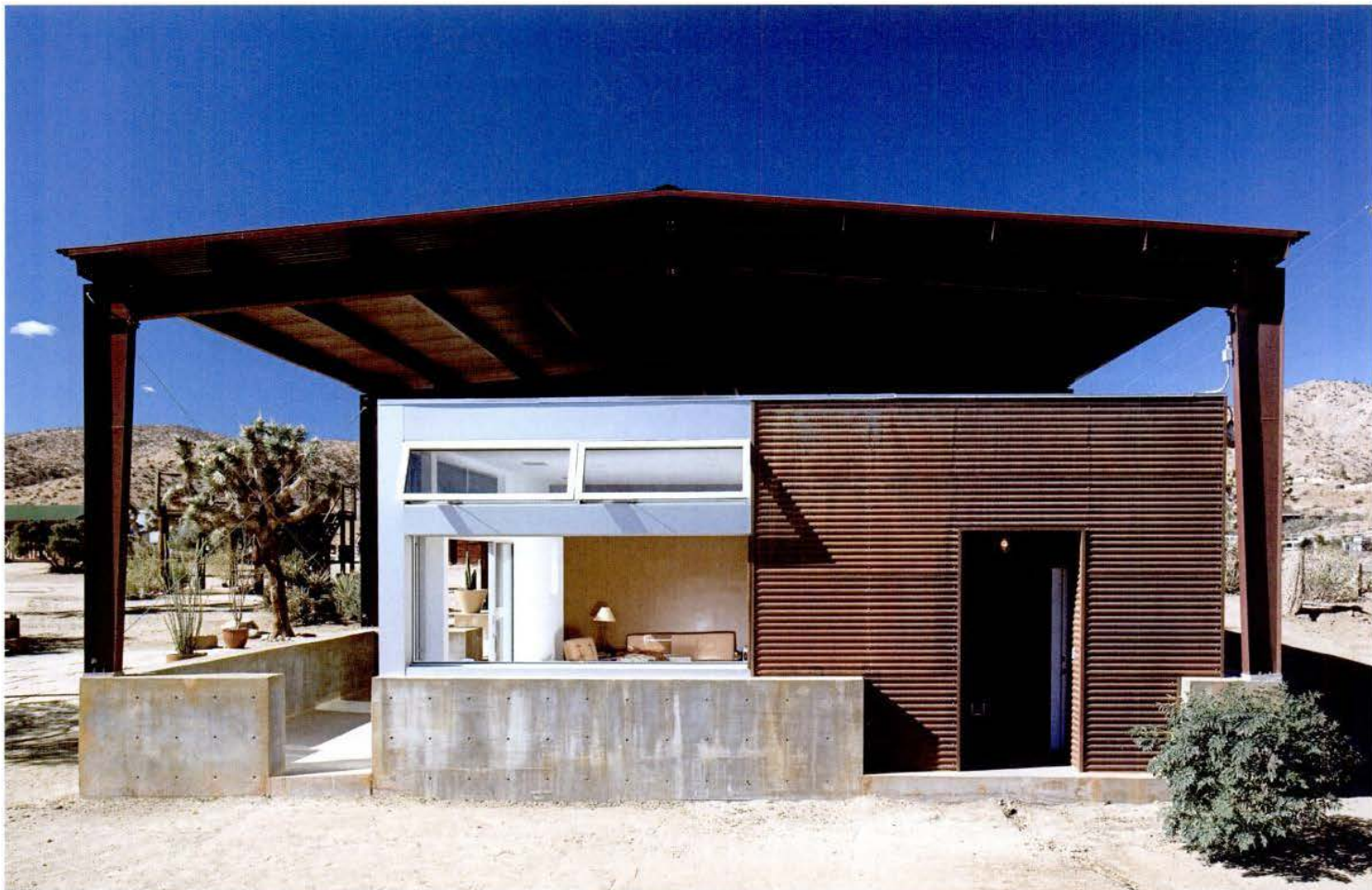
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# Operation Desert Shed

**Architect Lloyd Russell's design for this desert getaway passively mitigates the elements with a utilitarian solution, turning a modest modern retreat into a hardy, region-appropriate home.**

The desert is a study in ecological extremes—a place where the elements of nature and climate are inextricably intertwined with every form of life. In the iconic Southern California desert city of Palm Springs, these environmental factors have long been regarded as forces to be reckoned with and conquered in order to maintain a climate-controlled lifestyle. Beyond the golf courses and swimming pools, though, the desert still exists.

Up and away from the posh estates and casinos of greater Palm Springs is Pioneertown, a settlement surrounding a living set for Western movies and cowboy TV shows that was built in the 1940s by Roy Rogers and other Western actors. Hitching posts and old-timey wooden structures still stand here, a facade of an era long past. But the mentality of the cowboy persists in the area's residents. They embrace the land, doing what they

can to adapt to the environment, not the other way around. This principle was important to Jim Austin, a former San Diego surfwear entrepreneur who set out in 2007, with architect Lloyd Russell, to build a new home near Pioneertown that would reflect and embody the idyllic and resilient character of the desert.

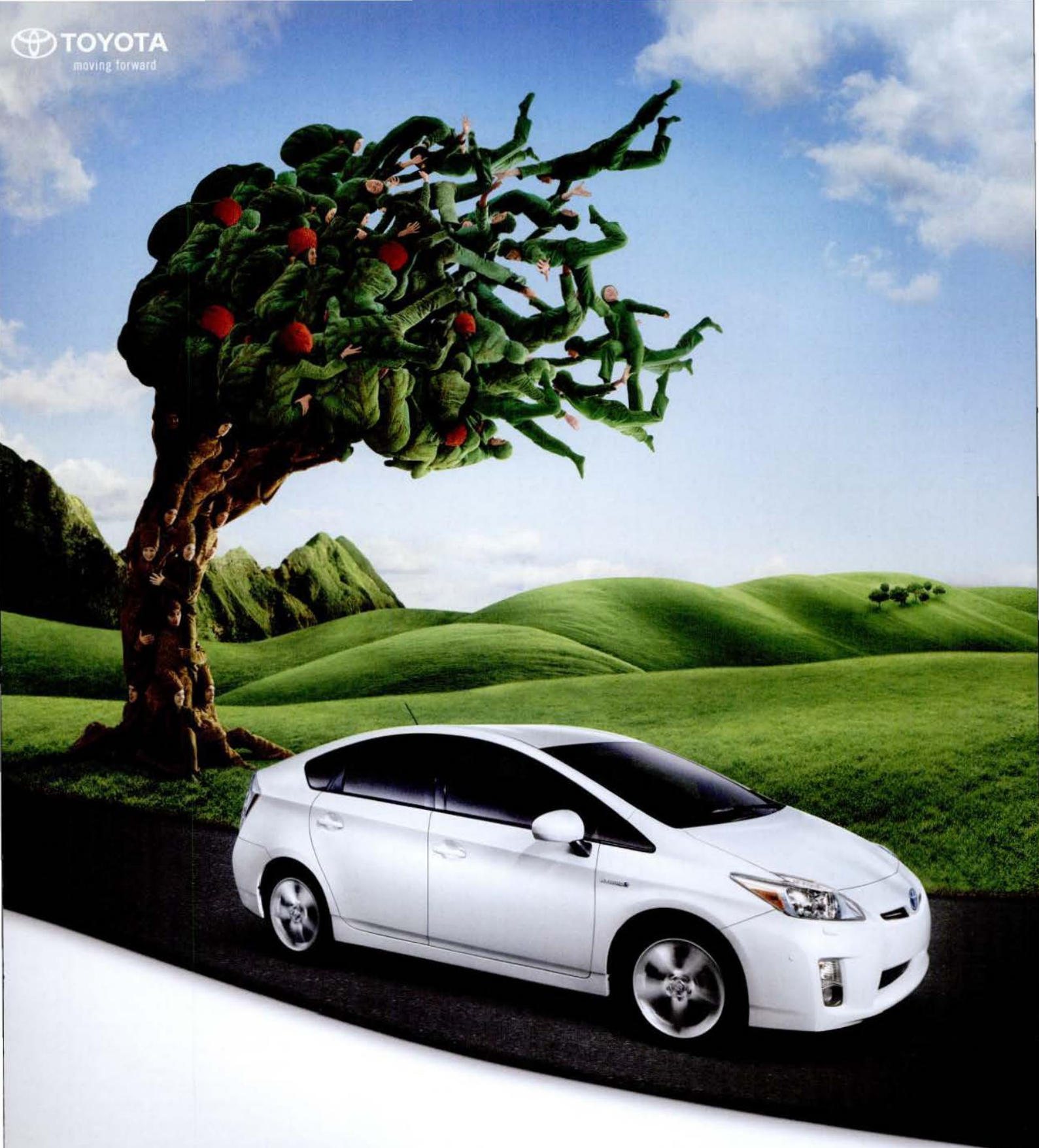
"It's a very simple life, so you want it to be pretty simple architecture," says Austin of the two-unit, 1,600-square-foot home completed in 2008. "It doesn't have to be ugly to be simple."

The result is an unapologetically modern house that noticeably diverges from the standard Spanish- and ranch-style homes that dot the desert hills nearby, 4,500 feet above the sea. The house is basically rectangular. Its rusting, corrugated-steel-clad walls alternate with large sliding glass that give the home a rustic feeling, but one that's also very new. Aesthetics were

Story by Nate Berg  
Illustrations by Adam Hayes

The rustic look of surfwear entrepreneur Jim Austin's home both stands out and also conforms with its rough-and-tumble surroundings in Pioneertown, California.





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an important consideration as the home was being designed, but the idea of suitability took precedence.

Austin and Russell wanted to build a space that blended in with its desert surroundings, which meant accommodating the harsh climate, where temperatures climb into the hundreds and dip into the teens, with winds that top 90 miles per hour. So they took a low-tech approach, designing a highly adaptable house where many of the wall spaces can be opened or closed to facilitate heating or cooling. The main element of the passive temperature control is the steel canopy that shelters the house. It's a scaled-down version of the type of shading structure found covering bales of hay on farms, and it provides constant shade for the house and its patio areas, maintaining a relative coolness amid the heat.

"When you're out in the desert, shade is gold. It's the most valuable



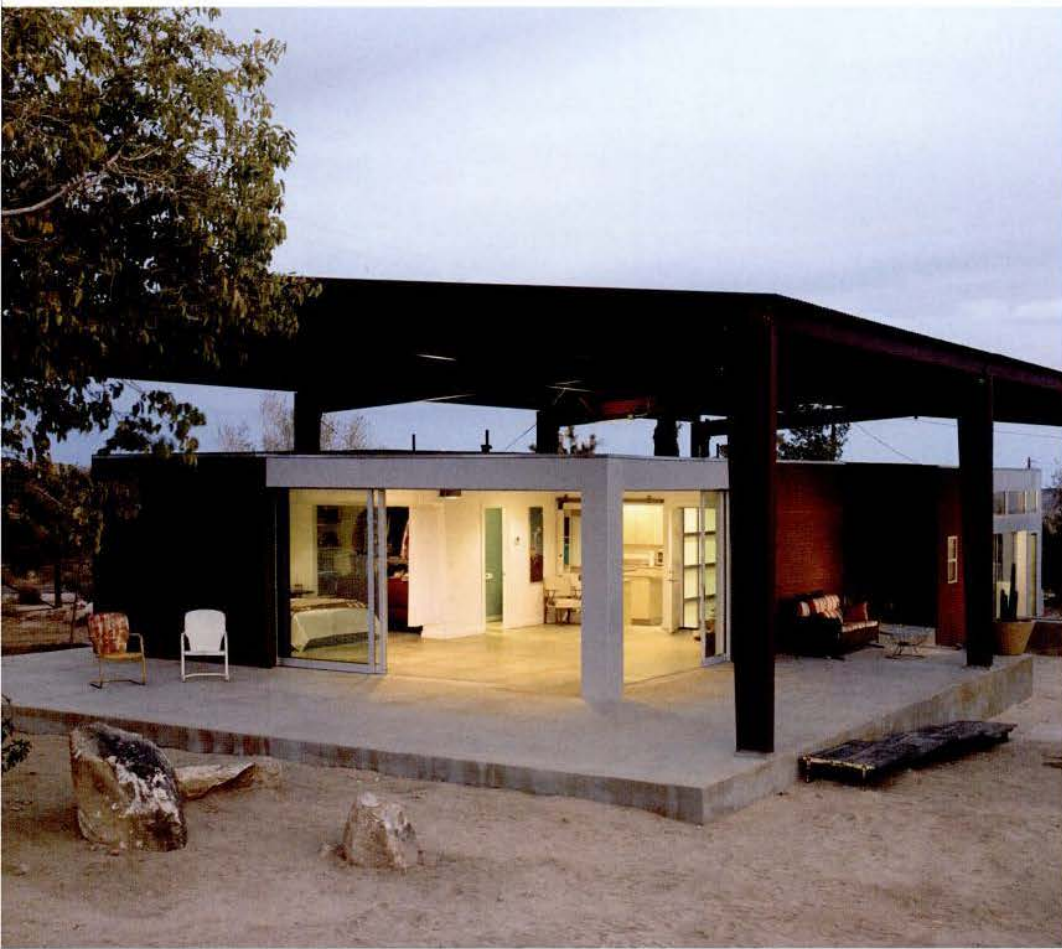
asset you have, so to make more shade was such a sound strategy," says Russell. "That really resonated with me, because I didn't want any extra frills. I didn't want it to be complicated, I didn't want it to be expensive, but I wanted it to have that engaging contemporary space."

A musician with an affinity for the Americana of old Western music, Austin frequently hosts friends for concerts, parties, and other events. The house is oriented toward a center courtyard on the ten-acre property, which also holds four rental cabins and a garage that's being converted into a recording studio. All of the buildings on Austin's Rimrock Ranch surround a large open-air barbecue area, but the highlight is the stagelike patio that tucks into a nook next to the main kitchen. A roll-up wall of windows that resembles a garage door opens the kitchen onto the stage, transforming this zone into the soul of the home during parties. As a whole, the building is a very active space, sharply contrasting its passive design.

"I hate the idea of 'form follows function.' Form should transcend. It should do more than just function," says Russell. "Of course the house is going to work. But what extra benefit do you get from arranging it just right?"

Austin wanted his house to act as a canvas for the make-do culture of the area and its cowboy aesthetic. The interior is a compilation of reused materials from an architectural salvage shop, matching the rugged metal shell of the house—a strategy that reduced costs and environmental impact. From the old elementary-school drinking fountain he uses as a bathroom sink to the salvaged machined steel parts that form handles on his cabinets and drawers, Austin takes pride in the new life his home has given to the old things within and around it. He calls it "the ultimate desert structure," both inside and out.

"It's either recycled stuff or stuff that's going to last forever. And to me that's as green as you can get. It's going to be there, you never have to go back and retouch it or fix it," Austin says. "This place is bulletproof." ■



The steel shading structure and massive concrete foundation help keep the home's temperature a comfortable 70 degrees. In a climate where highs and lows can vary

by 100 degrees, keeping temperatures stable would seem a huge energy drain. But the air-conditioning unit required by county codes still hasn't been turned on. ■



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## Made for the Shade

The rusted red corrugated-steel canopy that covers Jim Austin's home at Rimrock Ranch is visually striking in its desert surroundings. The structure, produced by Braemar Building Systems of Colorado, is made from a preengineered build-it-yourself kit using steel from Recla Metals, which sells for \$20,000. Austin and Russell could have spent that \$20,000 on solar panels to power an air conditioner that ran all the time, but instead they opted for the low-tech approach. (County codes require an air conditioner in the house, but it's never been needed.)

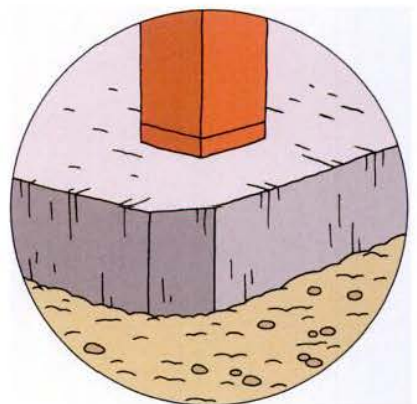
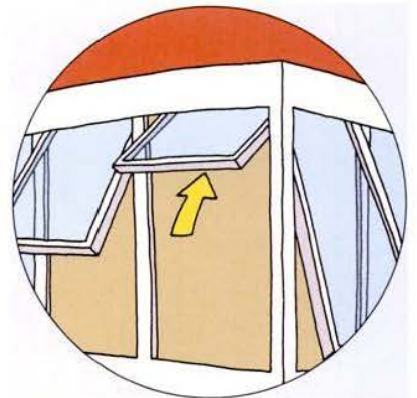
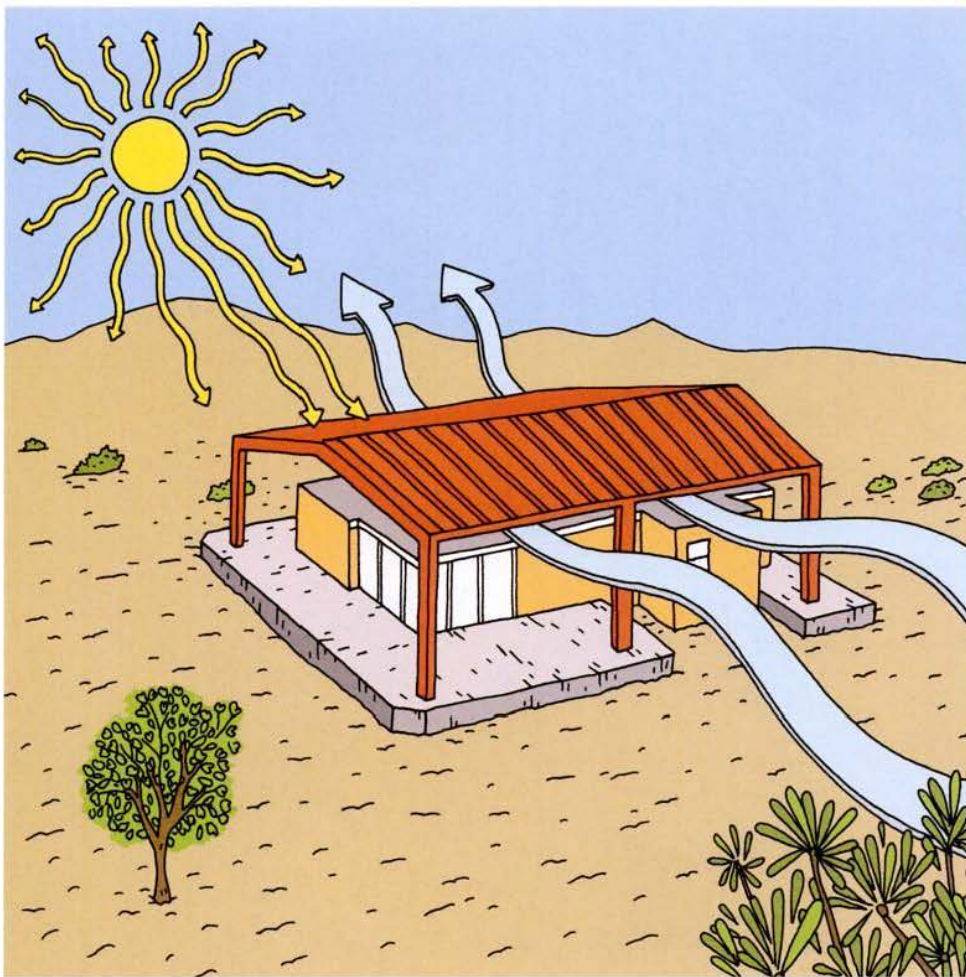
Less noticeable but equally important to the regulation of the house's temperature is the massive concrete foundation. Taking 20 truckloads and nine pours, the foundation has a high

thermal mass. "It has so much mass it doesn't change temperature much. Kind of like the ocean," explains architect Lloyd Russell. The uncovered surface of the foundation also forms the concrete floors for the house, which help keep the rooms cool. Aside from these benefits, the massive foundation was a structural requirement, serving as a counterweight to the steel shading. At its peak, the steel shade has six feet of clearance above the house. This allows the breeze to pass through for additional cooling, but essentially turns the canopy into a kite in the high desert winds. The heavy foundation makes sure the steel roof doesn't fly off on windy days. Whether the climate of the desert is embraced or conquered, it can't be ignored.

## Windproofing

To keep the shade structure from taking flight during high winds, engineers had to make sure the supporting foundation was strong enough to withstand a 100-year windstorm. That translated into windforces of up to 90 miles per hour, requiring 25 tons of concrete to hold it in place.

Architect Lloyd Russell's familiarity with the desert made him particularly careful in selecting appropriate materials for the house. The movable glass windows were chosen because they slide on bars rather than tracks, which would have been quick to jam from the unavoidable desert dust and sand. ■



### Click here:

To learn about the corrugated metal used as siding, visit [reclametals.com](http://reclametals.com).

For more on the prefabricated steel shading structure, visit [braemarbuildings.com](http://braemarbuildings.com).



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There's an expression of sheer glee that flashes across a person's face, regardless of age, when handed a scoop of ice cream. While growing older may swirl a ribbon of guilt into that experience, there's no denying that a good cone can still make our day.

Enjoying ice cream at home has only been possible since the mid-20th century, when household freezers became common. Before that, the treat had to be purchased from a confectioner and eaten at once or churned

laboriously with a hand-crank. Today, grabbing a pint at the market and saving it for weeks is routine (if you have that sort of self-restraint), but it's almost as easy to make your own batch in a kitchen-ready electric machine.

This month we review a collection of home ice-cream makers, from the low-cost starter model to a high-end Italian gelato machine. To help us judge, we asked ice-cream-shop proprietor and flavor inventor Jake Godby to give the machines a whirl.



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Story by Sarah Rich  
Photos by Laurie Frankel



#### A Note on Our Expert:

It's rare to find a friction-free workplace, but Jake Godby can proudly claim he has one. "The thing about an ice-cream shop," he says, "is that nobody comes in with a bad attitude." A former pastry chef, Godby owns Humphry Slocombe, a new dessert stop in San Francisco. Already a cult favorite for its signature flavor, Secret Breakfast (bourbon ice cream with cornflakes), the shop is likely to become a niche legend much like the 1970s British farce *Are You Being Served?*, from which it takes its name.

4070 Gelato by Lello / \$199.99 / [icecreamprofessional.com](http://icecreamprofessional.com)

**Expert Opinion:** This one was a mystery to me at first. The fit of the removable bowl was not immediately obvious, and the machine would not turn on without the bowl locked into place. Once it was running, the blade seemed to churn very slowly. This may be partly to achieve the less-airy texture of gelato, but it also made for a slow process. The removable bowl made cleaning easy, and the ice cream had a nice richness, though I wouldn't think it was gelato.

**What We Think:** The lid on this machine has the blade attached, which lowers the risk of misplaced parts, but it also makes for a messy process if you must pull the lid off a few times as you fit the bowl to the base. We also like the convenient cleanup with the removable bowl and found the texture to be satisfactory, but for the size and cost, this one didn't blow us away.

Ice-Cream Maker Stand Mixer Attachment by KitchenAid / \$99.99 / [kitchenaid.com](http://kitchenaid.com)

**Expert Opinion:** Prefreezing the bowl for the stand mixer requires forethought, and this bowl takes up a lot of freezer space. I was impressed with how well the blade scraped the sides of the bowl on each pass, preventing an icy buildup. The process whips a ton of air into the ice cream, resulting in a very fluffy texture—I got three pints out of a one-quart bowl.

**What We Think:** If you are lucky enough to own a candy-colored KitchenAid countertop mixer, this attachment could be a good choice. The size of the bowl is definitely an issue if you have a small or overstuffed freezer, but once the freezing stage is complete, the bowl attaches securely and operates easily. The ice cream comes out a bit like whipped marshmallow, but after a night of freezing it gains some solidity. ▶





**Supreme Commercial Quality Ice-Cream Maker by Cuisinart / \$299 / cuisinart.com**

**Expert Opinion:** Unless you enjoy the sound of fingernails down a chalkboard, you will not want this machine. It makes a frightful noise and the resulting ice cream looks like cottage cheese. It's liquid on top, frozen on the bottom, and the blade froze and got stuck before it was done. This is the clear loser.

**What We Think:** This Cuisinart model certainly looks like it should outshine its baby brother, with its steel exterior, significant weight, and built-in freezing mechanism. However, it was a disappointment all around. The recommended time was not enough, yet the motor stopped with the timer, meaning you can't leave this thing alone and expect it to churn to perfection in your absence. We agree with Godby that the worst part is the noise.

**Play and Freeze Ice-Cream Maker by Industrial Revolution / \$29.95 / icecreamrevolution.com**

**Expert Opinion:** The eggless recipes for this ball led me to believe that the ice cream might not solidify well, but the ball produced a surprisingly thick treat. It got even better with about ten minutes of freezer time after the recommended 30 minutes of tossing and kicking. It looks like a hamster ball and I guess it's a good way to keep a child occupied, but it's a lot of work for less than a pint of ice cream.

**What We Think:** As an activity for kids, this concept is pretty brilliant. They forget that they're waiting for dessert, they get a little exercise, and when the ice cream is done, they have the satisfaction of knowing they've made it themselves. Plus the color options are great and storage is easy. As the only nonelectric model we reviewed, this won very high marks. We'd definitely take it on a picnic.

**Automatic Frozen Yogurt-Ice Cream & Sorbet Maker by Cuisinart / \$49.95 / cuisinart.com**

**Expert Opinion:** This one was a surprise hit. While you can't make ice cream on a whim with it since the bowl must be pre-frozen, I found it easy to operate and was pleased with how quickly the ice cream was done. The consistency was somewhat uneven—a bit icy—but the flavor was good.

**What We Think:** Let this machine be a lesson that the most expensive option is not always the best. We were delighted to discover how well this model stood up to its costlier competitors. The motor is quiet and the machine is lightweight. Our main complaint is that the walls of the bowl become very icy as it spins, which makes it hard to get all of the ice cream out and means you can't clean it until the buildup has melted. ■■■







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Masamichi Katayama and his Tokyo-based firm, Wonderwall Inc., create stores with a focus on entertainment and experience—not just dollars per square foot. Katayama is best known for the 45 (and counting) stores that he’s designed for the famed hip-hop clothing line A Bathing Ape (Bape), but Wonderwall’s client list also includes Dean & DeLuca, Uniqlo, and Meiji Seika, the Hershey’s chocolate of Japan. Even among the jewel-box boutiques and starchitect-designed

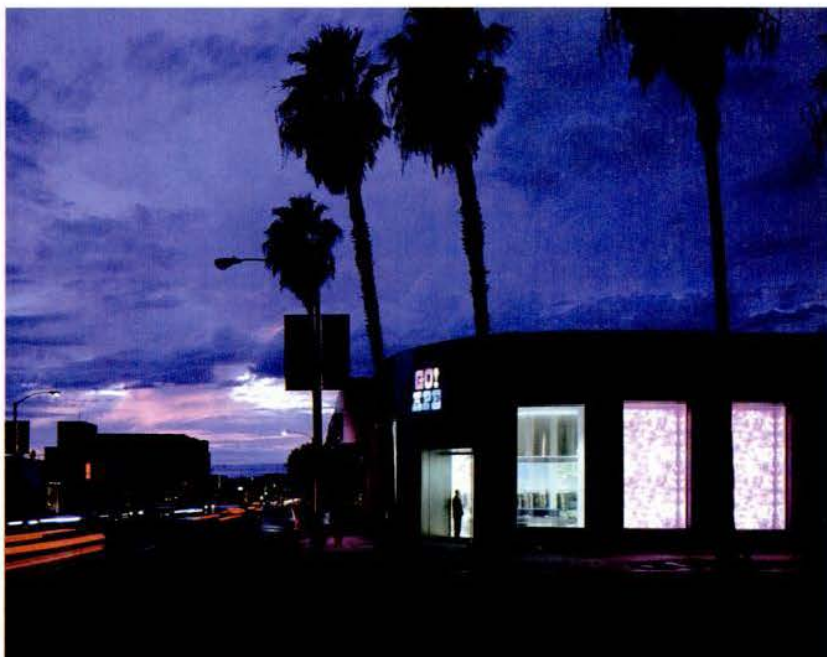
flagships of Tokyo’s retail-crazed Aoyama and Daikanyama districts, Katayama’s interiors stand out. Their details are woven seamlessly into larger spatial narratives, and they’re seasoned with the designer’s trademark playfulness and penchant for experiential surprise.

Dwell visited Katayama in his Ebisu studio, where we discussed the delicate balance of comfort and challenge, context and concept, that defines Wonderwall’s popular style.



# Wonderwall Inc.

**At the opposite end of the spectrum from North American big-box stores are the conceptually driven and exquisitely realized retail designs of Masamichi Katayama.**



**How do you bridge a chaotic street environment with a particular brand identity?**

I never copy a design for different locations. For example, I had to find a new approach for the Bape store in Los Angeles, because driving is so much faster than walking. So I replaced four of the six windows in the store with neon artwork, to make an impact on drivers. By contrast, I designed a Bape store in Shibuya, Tokyo. Shibuya is chaos: teenagers, tourists, billboards, and neon. Usually Bape stores are tucked away on back streets and deliberately hard to find; it’s part of the exclusivity. In this situation, I had to balance expressing the brand with fighting the chaos. It’s a very simple exterior design: just an anodized aluminum exterior with a single iconic sign. Immediately inside the door ▶

Story by Nicola Twilley

Every store—even for the same brand—requires a unique approach. Inside the Shibuya location of Bape (top left) the neighborhood’s neon chaos is echoed

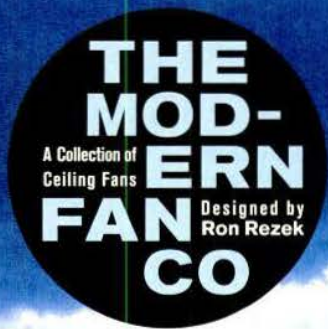
in the interior fixtures. By contrast, the Los Angeles store (bottom) has been designed to be spotted from the car. Recently Katayama redesigned Colette in Paris (top right).

Photos by Koza Takayama





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are steps down to the retail area, which I surrounded with multicolored LEDs. So it's a stoic facade, and the steps are like a filter, to adapt the store to its environment.

**But the depth of the filter varies both by brand and by context—I'm thinking of Uniqlo on Oxford Street in London and A.P.C. Homme in Daikanyama, Tokyo.**

Exactly—these are almost opposite brands, so the treatment of the transition is quite different. There's a bus stop outside the Uniqlo store, and the sidewalk is always jammed. The typical design would have been to put windows between the columns in the facade, but Uniqlo is not about decoration or atmosphere; it's very low-price, very accessible. I decided to expand the sidewalk into the store. In between the columns, I put floor-to-ceiling glass doors, which can be left open unless the weather is bad, and I put paving stones on the floor of the entrance that are similar to those they use for the sidewalk. Then I added glass columns with mannequins on carousels, to echo the swirl of pedestrians outside. I even put benches along one wall side, to make it look like the bus stop. Most brands want to separate their stores from the street, but Uniqlo's strength lies in being mass-market.

A.P.C., on the other hand, is not mass-market. With A.P.C., the challenge is less about drawing people in than about enhancing the experience so that they purchase something. I had known this store for a long time, as a customer and a fan, before I was asked to redesign it. This was the very first A.P.C. store in Tokyo, and they started out just in a garage. Later they added a second building and a corridor to connect the two. I didn't want to destroy this history, but I felt as though a redesign could enhance the potential of these buildings. So I kept the original cinder blocks from the garage, and I put a steel rectangle around the two structures to unify them and package the story in one framework. Then the alley between them became a garden. Customers have to walk through the garden on a path to enter the store,

which makes it seem like you're visiting A.P.C.'s house. This slow transition helps you feel the A.P.C. brand: It's not about putting products and prices in front of the customer right away.

**Apart from the brand and the location, what else do you consider during the design process?**

Well, I am a big shopper! As a designer, I might appreciate an idea from an aesthetic point of view, but the other person in me—the consumer—will say, "That's a nice design, but how do I get into the store? Where are the products?" It's a delicate balance: I have to give customers enough of a challenge to make the design seem fresh, but at the same time they need a certain level of comfort. And the right balance between comfort and challenge varies depending on the brand.

In terms of process, before I design a store, I go to the brand's existing stores and I study how they sell the product. Of course, I have to listen to the client's vision. Once I've reached a certain point in the design, I'll create a scale model, at about 1/30. Computer renderings sometimes conceal problems, while the physical model gives me a much more truthful sense of how the design will feel. Building a model can actually help me transform potential flaws into positives.

**How do new materials and techniques influence your work?**

I prefer to use everyday objects, actually, even used objects, as a way to draw the customer into a sense of closeness and shared experience. For example, at the 100% Chocolate Café in Kyobashi, the theme was a chef's table. When you have a concept, it dictates your choice of materials. It's not about the form; it's about reinforcing the story that I'm trying to tell. So I turned glass-fronted commercial refrigerators into display cases for the chocolate. These refrigerators are very familiar, but their context as display cases makes them intriguing. By using familiar materials, I can prepare the stage for a new experience. So it has to be different and new, but it still has to fit into their world.



One final touch for the consumer: The professional kitchen fittings and refrigerators made it feel a little cool and very serious, so I added oversize chocolate bars on the ceiling as a touch of playfulness. They're made out of wood, which is a warm, very familiar material, but I gave them a new shape. Each person carries a set of memories about a material, and I wanted to play with that a little.

**Is there a particular project or brand that you'd like to work on?**

It's not a brand, but I'd love to design a hotel. I think hotels are somewhere between ordinary life and the retail experience—a vague space between the two—and I'd love to create a new experience for that reality. In a hotel, of course, the main thing is that you want to sleep well. But there's also a sense of wanting to get more—to get the maximum—from your hotel room. I'd really like to design the whole range of spaces in a hotel. ■■■



At the 100% Chocolate Café the traditional shape of chocolate bars suspended from above creates the witty reverse relief of a classically coffered ceiling. 🍫

For the A.P.C. store in Tokyo (top right), Wonderwall retained the original garage space and framed a new courtyard garden with a steel frame.



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*Sold into bondage, Sunita Jimba worked 18-hour days, forced to pay down her food and shelter "debt." She was rescued by RugMark inspectors in 2005. Today Sunita studies at a RugMark school and dreams of being a teacher. Photo © U. Roberto Romano*

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## Dunkin' Danish

**The thought of stripping down for a communal skinny dip in a salty strait might make Americans a bit squeamish, but in Denmark, it's the stuff that can save a city.**

Six years ago, the shoreline in Kastrup, Denmark was practically inaccessible, not that anyone wanted to go there: It was nothing but industrial buildings and rocky beaches. The parklike Copenhagen waterfront to the north was the envy of Kastrup residents, so in 2003, the city hired Swedish design firm White Arkitekter to clean up its coast. The result: the Kastrup Sea Bath.

What was once considered the wrong side of the harbor is now a bustling hub of activity, a result of the recent extension of the Copenhagen Metro through Kastrup, the replacement of the beach's rocks and stones with white sand, and the completion of the sea bath in 2005. Teenagers swarm the structure in the summer, jumping off the diving platforms. Even in the winter, when temperatures dip down to the 30s (Fahrenheit), hardy bathers still stop by for a quick dip or, more frequently, to soak up the sun on the built-in benches.

From the beach, the bath's 328-foot pier extends into the Øresund Strait toward Sweden and culminates in the 9,365-square-foot swimming, bathing, and diving structure. The spiral plan, which was inspired by the shape of a conch but also meant to mimic the motion of ocean swells, offers a range of in-and-out options: ladders, stairs, and ramps in various widths that disappear into the lightly lapping waves and jumping platforms at all heights. The sandy bottom is six to ten feet below the surface in most areas, 15 feet under the highest diving platform. Swimmers who come for an aquatic workout do 245-foot laps around the structure's inner circumference.

Along the first level, past the benches and stadiumlike seating, are gender-specific changing rooms—but they're rarely used, says Fredrik Pettersson, the lead architect of the Kastrup Sea Bath project. Instead, bathers strip down to their skivvies ▶

Story by Miyoko Ohtake

The dynamics of the sea bath change through the day as the sun crosses the sky and casts shadows along the platforms. At night, the bath is illuminated by floodlights.





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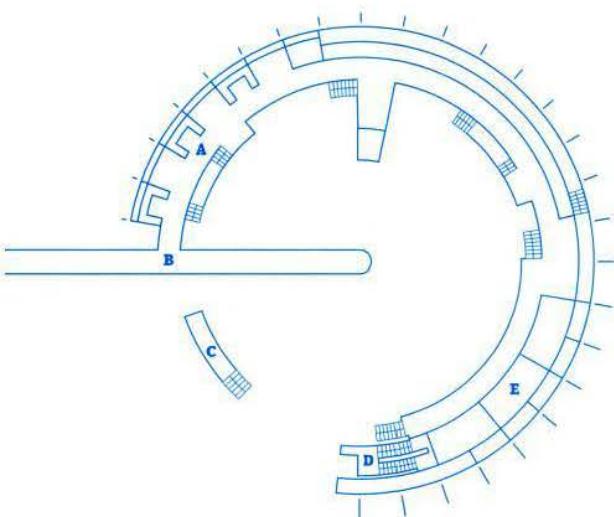
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**Kastrup Sea Bath  
Plan**

- A Built-in Benches
- B Pier
- C Floating Platform
- D Diving Platforms
- E Locker Rooms



on the beach or on the deck. “The Danish have a tradition of public bathing. Being naked is not a problem,” Petterson says, though he admits a preference for swim trunks.

The slatted outer wall wraps around the structure and provides protection from the wind while still allowing a view across the strait to Malmö, Sweden. “The spaces between the slatting are small enough that kids can’t get their heads stuck in them but large enough to enjoy the lively urban place, with the traffic through the Baltic Sea, the planes above, and the kayaks below,” Petterson says.

Building in open water presented a unique set of challenges. During construction, workers often dropped their tools into the water, therefore Petterson devised a system of strings and magnets to fetch those that didn’t float. Shipworms, just like terrestrial termites, can quickly destroy soft woods, so the architects carefully researched

the materials, choosing azobe for its durability and strength against salt-water and the pests. The wood is also resistant to human wear and tear—both natural and criminal. Because there’s no finish on it, graffiti can easily be sanded off, and the azobe quickly returns to its brown-gray color. The stairs and ramps that dip into the water require regular scrubbing to minimize the buildup of moss, a slippery hazard to swimmers, but otherwise the structure requires little upkeep.

Kastrup is not alone in its quest for urban renewal and waterfront rejuvenation: Stockholm’s updated waterway is slated for completion in 2010, and both Philadelphia and New York City have recently pushed forward efforts to redevelop theirs. Though in the United States, we might not share the Danes’ time-honored tradition of public bathing, the Kastrup Sea Bath presents a strong case for dipping our toes in the water. ■■■

The sea bath’s shape creates great acoustics, which local musicians frequently take advantage of by performing impromptu concerts in the middle of the structure.

As the structure curves around, two pathways are formed: The outer path ascends into a diving platform, and the inner path remains level, for wheelchair accessibility.



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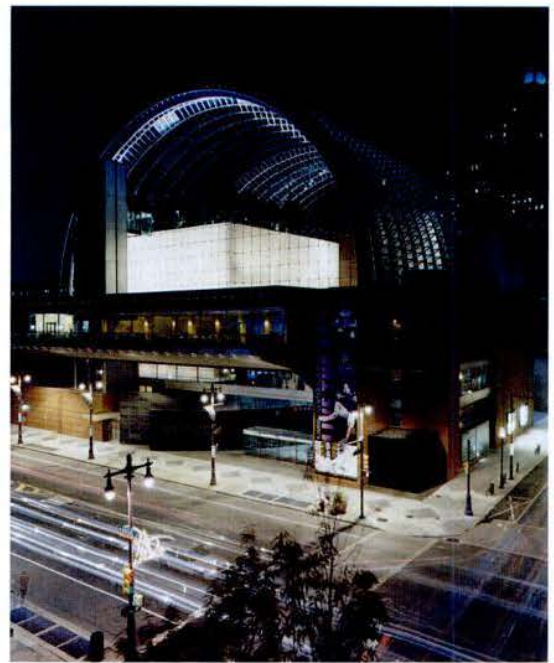
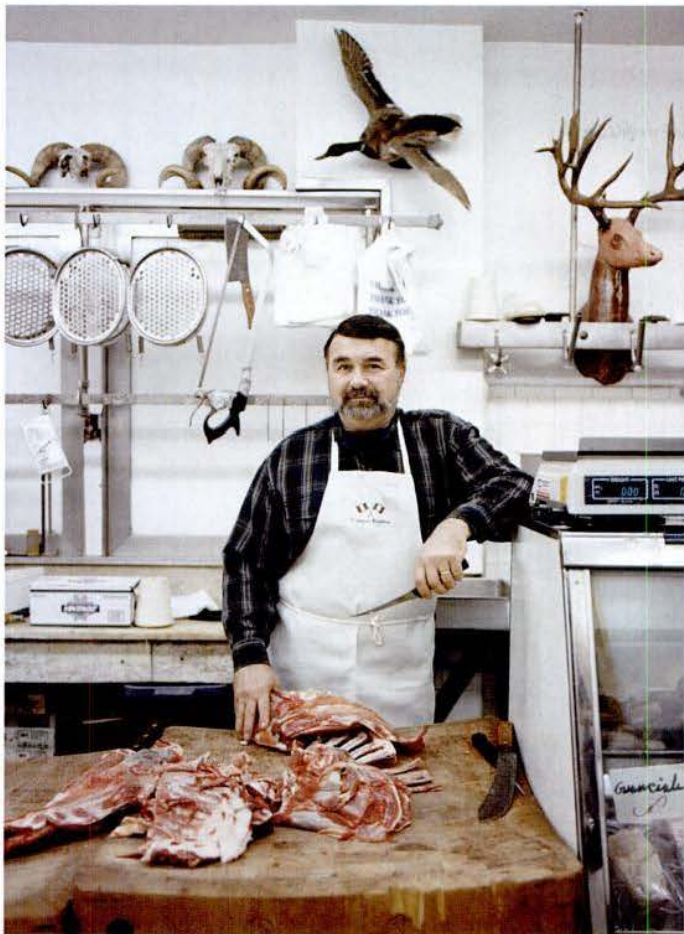
One of the oldest cities in the United States and home to the country's first International Style skyscraper, Philadelphia is, unfortunately, now associated more with cheesesteaks and colonial kitsch than with successful American urbanism.



# Philadelphia, PA







No doubt, Philadelphia has seen better days. Even in 2009, whole neighborhoods resemble sets from a zombie horror film, and the City of Brotherly Love's reputation hasn't fully recovered from the controversial police fire-bombing of a West Philly block of row houses in 1985. But Philadelphia deserves to stand, if not equal to, at least favorably compared with its East Coast neighbors. New York is just a train ride away—but why make the trip at all when there's so much here to discover?

Novelist Ken Kalfus (husband of celebrated architecture critic Inga Saffron) is a Philadelphia native and resident of the centrally located Fitler Square neighborhood. He takes us on a tour through the streets of Philadelphia. ▶▶



**Story by Geoff Manaugh**  
**Photos by Mark Mahaney**

Philadelphia rises above the banks of the Schuylkill River (opposite). Spots like the Italian Market (opposite top and top left) keep Keystone Staters well fed, the

Kimmel Center (top right), designed by Rafael Viñoly, offers classical music, and the charming Joseph Fox Bookshop (below) attracts proper bibliophiles.





**Philadelphia has a reputation for walkability. Where do you like to go?**

It's almost impossible to leave the house without running into someone you know here. A friend of mine calls Philly a small village with crime. I love just walking the neighborhoods—going out for groceries or to Di Bruno Brothers for lunch. It's hard to imagine a week where I don't walk to Rittenhouse Square at least two or three times.

**A new addition to the city is a public path along the Schuylkill.**

It's actually a bike path and a hiking path. It's only been established for



Rittenhouse Square (top), an idyllic, multi-block park dating to the late 17th century, is reliably populated with sunbathers and summer music festivals. The Van Pelt Library

a few years, but it's a huge success. In fact, if you want an example of a small amenity that has changed a whole neighborhood, then this path is one of them. The main problem now is that the path is too narrow! It can hardly accommodate all the people using it. They show movies on the path in the summer—like *Airplane* and *Annie Hall*—projected onto the side of a trailer, and you can bike all the way to Valley Forge. There's a community garden near the south entrance; it feeds us all summer.

**Philadelphia is the site of the nation's first subscription library, the Library Company, as well as the public Free Library of Philadelphia, which is now expanding its main branch with a new wing designed by Moshe Safdie.**

They invited me in to discuss how local writers might use the new space. As a writer, even with access to the Internet, a good library is so important to me, and they were way ahead of anything I was thinking of. They're talking about installing a studio where people can come and make records. If everything happens as planned, the library could be a big new focal point for the city.

But there's another library here: the Van Pelt Library at the University of

at the University of Pennsylvania (bottom right) holds intellectual treasures behind its brutalist facade. Ken Kalfus (bottom left) stands amidst the autumn leaves.

Pennsylvania. It's a 19-minute walk from my house—I've timed it. From a design standpoint, it's a disaster: It was built in the 1960s with low ceilings, concrete walls, prison-type slit windows, and tiny bathrooms—but it has open stacks. That makes it a very easy library to use. The ability to find books on your own, and to get lucky—to find books in the vicinity of what you're looking for—is just fantastic.

**What do you think of the PSFS Building, the International Style skyscraper designed by George Howe and William Lescaze back in 1930?**

My wife, Inga, loves it—but, you know, I've had drinks there. It's all right. It's not something I'd seek out.

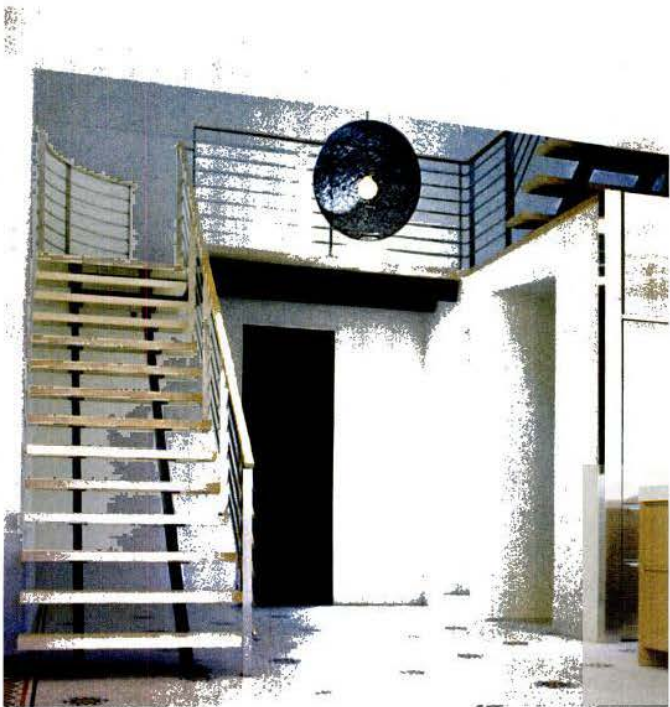
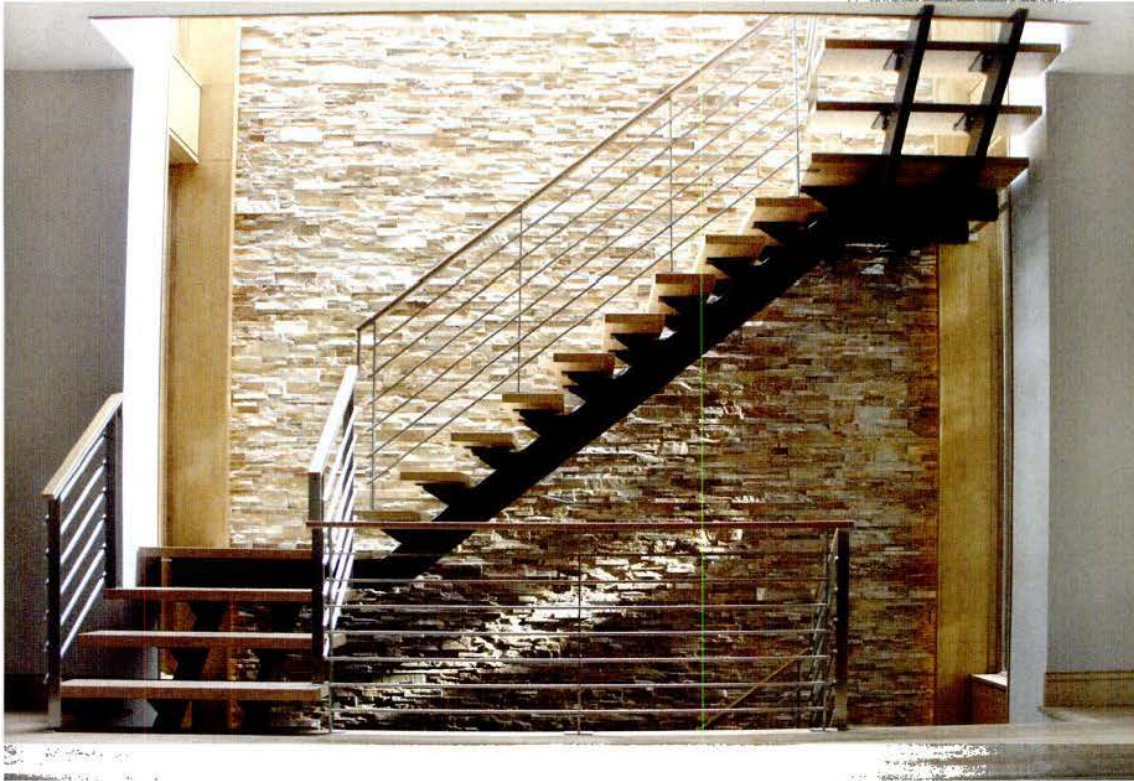
**So it's a landmark to architectural historians and not to residents?**

It's just not a neighborhood I visit much. It is a nice building, and it's got a nice bar—in a place called SoleFood—but there's no compelling reason to go there. It's surrounded by discount electronic stores. On the other hand, I'm always struck by how many people do





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## Kimmel Center

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[kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org)

## Rittenhouse Square

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[friendsofrittenhouse.org](http://friendsofrittenhouse.org)

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The PSFS Building, now a Loews Hotel, was designed by George Howe and William Lescaze from 1929 to 1932,

and was the first International Style skyscraper built in the United States.



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hang out in that neighborhood, especially in the Gallery, a shopping mall.

When I take visitors for a walk we usually end up at the Italian Market, down on Ninth Street. It's nothing special, design-wise, but the cheeses are really great.

That reminds me: When people do visit, they often arrive by train, at 30th Street Station. That's an easy walk from our house—right up the bike path—and it's a magnificent welcome to the city. The interior is like Grand Central Station in New York, and it's exciting to walk into any large train station. I took my daughter there once and we went into one of the smaller corridors and she was flying this little balsa wood airplane around. It was pretty cool!

**Speaking of your daughter, the city has been experimenting with private and charter high schools, including one sponsored by Microsoft. Has that affected her?**

What they did here, during Paul Vallas's term as education CEO, was to start these smaller high schools, and each one has a theme to it. My daughter's is the Science Leadership Academy. It's a very progressive, learning-centered, inquiry-based environment—and it's got interesting architecture. One thing I like about



it is that the principal's office is on the second floor—not the ground floor—so you don't have to walk past it every time you visit the school. The principal's office is integrated into their needs, not their parents' or their teachers' needs; it helps students feel like it's their school.

**What do you think of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Rafael Viñoly, which opened in 2001?**

Inga and I have been there a few times to hear music, but I think they hoped to make the inner lobby into more of

a public commons—a 24-hour urban center where people would come in and out all day. That hasn't quite gelled; it's kind of a dead space.

But the Kimmel Center is on Broad Street—the Avenue of the Arts—which is a very successful urban rejuvenation project. The art institutions and theaters there have really encouraged people into the city. That extends over to the 13th Street area, which has great restaurants now, including Capogiro, the gelato place, and even a bowling alley. In fact, last fall, on Broad Street, they had an outdoor exhibition on prefab architecture in an empty lot.

There's one more building I want to mention, though: the PECO Building, a big tower at 23rd and Market. It's like the monolith in 2001. It has a gigantic message ticker at the top, and the message is always stupid—like "Call PECO to save on heating bills!" I've always wanted to propose a new idea: The city does this thing every year called One Book, One Philadelphia, where everyone is supposed to read a particular book, usually a novel. But what if they were to run the text of that book as a ticker message on top of the PECO Building? There's a museum here, the Rosenbach, that has the original manuscript of *Ulysses* by James Joyce. What if they ran the entire text of *Ulysses* once a year, on Bloomsday? You could be walking down the street—and suddenly see a really interesting sentence! ■■

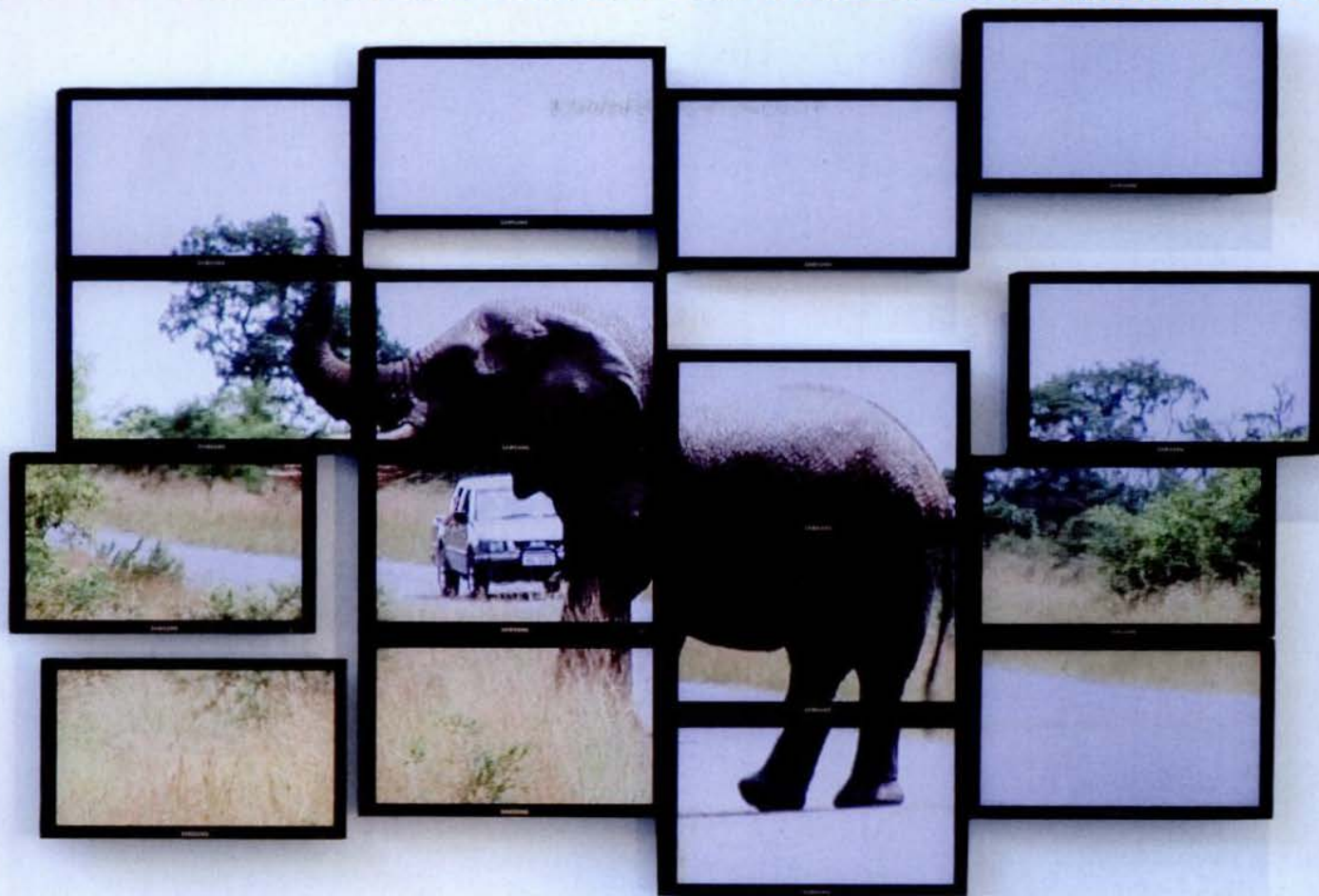


The cheese cave at Di Bruno Brothers (top) delivers dairy delicacies. At night the PECO Building's (bottom right) giant LED screen displays scrolling text messages around the

building's crown. Showing off a combination of Beaux-Arts and Art Deco styles, the 30th Street Station (bottom left) was designed in 1933. ⓘ



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Artwork: Diana Thater: RARE, 2008, 16 LCD monitors, 204 x 264 in., courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner Gallery, New York. photo: Pablo Mason.





When someone wants to know how a building came to look the way it does—or why it was designed a certain way—they generally turn to architectural history. But why not turn to anthropology?

Rural structures such as these barns provide vernacular inspiration for North Carolina architect Frank Harmon. “In every shed there is a cathedral, and in every cathedral there is a shed,” says the architect. Features such as the large vaulted roofs and optimal

climatic orientation of porches and overhangs inform his own designs, like the Sunday-school addition to the Circular Congregational Church (opposite top) in Charleston, South Carolina, and the wood sculpture studio (opposite bottom) in Durham, North Carolina.

# Barn Again



If architecture is how culture spatially defines itself, then it seems worthwhile to look beyond mere buildings to learn what else might shape a regional style. Architecture, in other words, is not just walls and ceilings or wood and stone; the spaces we build are also cultural, defined by styles of living and by individual biographies and histories. After all, regions are not just climate, soil type, and topography: There are also human regions—cultural geographies with traditions that stretch back centuries.

Dwell caught up with Raleigh, North Carolina-based architect Frank Harmon to discuss how history, culture, and regions can still influence modern architecture.

#### What, for you, defines a region?

It's the people, primarily—their ideas, their commitment to a place, and their sense of creativity. Those are the most important things. Then it's the climate, the topography, the landscape, the vegetation, and the types of materials you build with. But you can't ignore the physical evidence around you of how people respond to a place. Often that goes back centuries, rather than years. As architects we're trained to look at what's new or what's current—but, after a while, we forget what surrounds us.

About 25 years ago I began noticing that wherever I traveled, if I looked at local farm buildings I could learn a great deal about a culture, its economy, and how it built in respect to the environment. Ever since then, I've used agricultural buildings as a way to read the local environment. It's instructive to look at what a farmer would build if he needed to use goods that were locally at hand, because he couldn't afford to go to Home Depot; he just had to get it right the first time. Often these agricultural buildings—barns or sheds for mules—seem as much a part of their place to me as a deer standing in a forest. They're very practical.

#### But something like your Circular Congregational Church is quite urban. What makes that a regional building?

That church—which is the oldest but also the most progressive church in Charleston—came to me and said: "We want a 21st-century building. We were founded in 1681 and we've been



here for four centuries, and we want our fifth century to be as contemporary as can be—and, not only that, but we also want our church to be as environmentally sustainable as you can make it." It came from them, in other words; it came from the people of the church. At the same time, they wanted it to be a building that respected the tradition and the scale and the history of Charleston, and I think we managed to do that. One of the best things a member of the congregation said to me about the building was that in 50 years no one will even notice it. I thought that was quite nice.

#### You've discussed the importance of people in defining an architectural region. Is there a particular architect that you would credit as having really defined a region?

I can name the person whose work introduced me to these ideas: Philip Webb. Webb was probably the greatest architect of the Arts and Crafts, pre-Raphaelite movement, and he was William Morris's best friend. He actually designed Morris's house.

Webb's work really opened my eyes to the whole idea of regionalism. I went to see one of his buildings when I was studying at the Architectural Association in London, and it was like an epiphany. My teacher at the time

mentioned Webb, saying that Webb's greatest house is in West Sussex and it's called Standen. I went down to visit it, and it was the most beautifully made house of local brick, stone, and wood, put together with a craft that I'd never seen the likes of before. Before Webb would start to build, he'd come to a place and study what had taken place there 500 years earlier. That was how he designed.

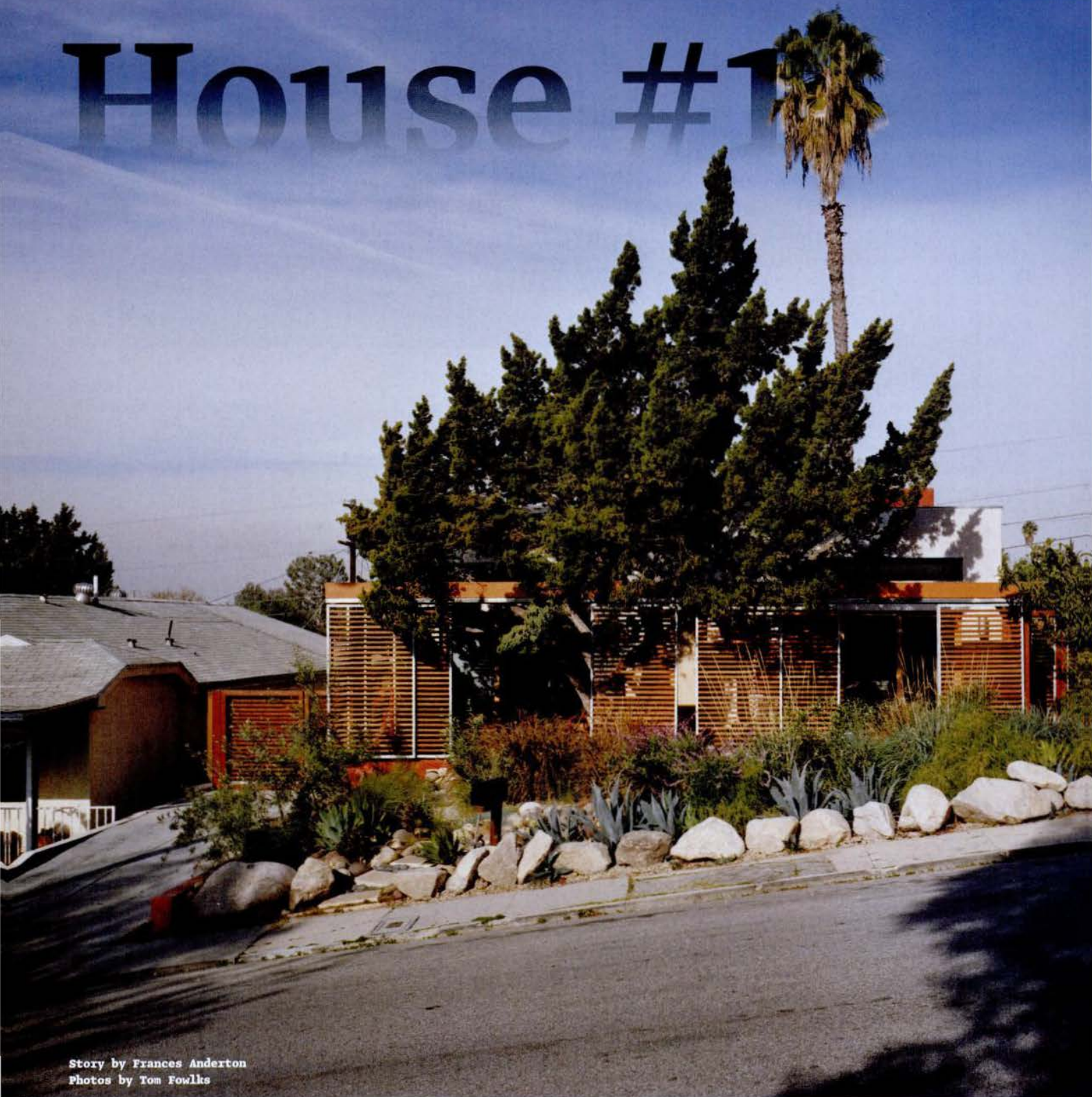
I grew up learning from Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier, but I really learned the most from the people who inspired them. To jump back a generation is often more useful than learning from the generation right before you. ■■■





# Casa Study

## House #1



Story by Frances Anderton  
Photos by Tom Fowlks



When Jeremy and Robin Levine remodeled their house in the Eagle Rock district of Los Angeles, they chose to keep it at the scale, if not the style, of other houses in the neighborhood. They expanded it back and front by building shady decks around existing trees. The sliding, slatted doors of triple-panel wood reinforce the inside-outside living experience.

When you think of “regionalism” you might think of vernacular architecture emerging in harmony with a specific climate and topography, long before air-conditioning, central heating, and steel-frame construction could produce buildings unrelated to their contexts.

When it comes to Los Angeles, however, the metropolis is young enough that it has barely had time to form a regional style. To the extent that it has, L.A.’s idiom first took the form of Spanish-style missions and homes built to provide protection from the sun: thick walls with deep openings, cool tiled floors, and shaded interior courtyards. But later L.A. birthed another kind of regionalism: Case Study Houses—post-and-beam steel or wood-framed houses immersed in lush landscapes with single-pane glass walls and flowing circulation between inside and out. This typology was not always practical for the weather—it intensified the heat of the day and the cold of the night—but it let occupants feel as if they now lived in harmony with the climate by being plunged right in it. In recent years, Los Angeles architects have been exploring a new brand of modernism that retains the open plan and light structure but uses new technologies and materials (such as more protective glass and solar power) to make houses in the modern idiom more appropriate for this region.

Los Angeles-based architect Jeremy Levine and his wife, Robin, have gone for a different approach: They opted for a hybrid. As Jeremy explains, their home both contrasts and fuses “the heavy mass and carved space of Spanish colonialism with the lightness and open space of the Case Study tradition.”

Jeremy Levine is a large guy with a larger-than-life personality. He is immensely warm and entertaining as he talks a mile a minute about art, physics, and the digital universe. He’s an ideas man who loves to make things. He studied architecture at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), then took a detour into movie-production design for notorious B-movie producer Roger Corman, and after that he found himself in Romania and Bulgaria building fake American streetscapes. Next, he sold a screenplay that was made into a movie; he took up property development, both in Los Angeles and overseas; and he eventually circled back to architecture, designing enviro-conscious homes for onetime entertainment-industry colleagues. Levine had remodeled structures in Eagle Rock, a funky community nestled between mountain ranges northeast of downtown, but was bristling with ideas for the green design strategies he wanted to test on a house of his own. ▶

**Project:** Levine Residence  
**Architect:** Jeremy Levine Design  
**Location:** Los Angeles, California







Architect, builder, and developer Jeremy Levine (opposite) stands at the threshold of the front deck and the living room under his newly raised ceiling made of wood recycled from the original pitched roof. The house features thick walls with deep shelves carved into them (below), intended to save space and convey the solidity of Spanish-style houses.

Together with Robin, also a Hollywood refugee (after her sister developed breast cancer, she quit her job as a production manager for animated movies to create her own natural-products company, Eco-Me), he looked in vain for the right virgin site. But in late 2007, they instead found a “perfect fixer,” a 1940s house on a leafy, sloping street in Eagle Rock. The 1,500-square-foot home was nondescript, with a “low, eight-foot-tall cottage-cheese ceiling” and a “warren of tiny, dark little rooms”—but it did boast a lovely giant cypress at the front of the site and an Australian brush box tree at the back.

Levine wanted to add more space without cutting down the trees and without changing the modest scale of the existing house. He also wanted to create a comfortable home that offered direct contact with the energy and water systems that pumped through it. In sum, he wanted a kind of soulful “machine for living in.”

The first big move was to gut the building and build a post-and-beam frame spanning from outside

wall to outside wall. They removed the old roof, recycled its lumber to make a lofty ceiling, and then hung it from the new frame. Levine says this meant that “by taking the load off existing walls, we could carve them sculpturally, making bigger openings and skylights.” The other big move was to build around the trees, creating outdoor decks front and back. Then they planted a third tree, a Robinia, in the center of the house, open to the sky above, creating an internal “pocket courtyard” that functions both as a source of natural light and as a thermal chimney, drawing warm air from the house up and out. Under the new rear deck they carved back into the cellar areas to create two entirely new rooms: an office and what they call the “chill-out” room: a bare, square room with a rock wall and benches at the perimeter, focusing the eye contemplatively on a tree growing up through the middle.

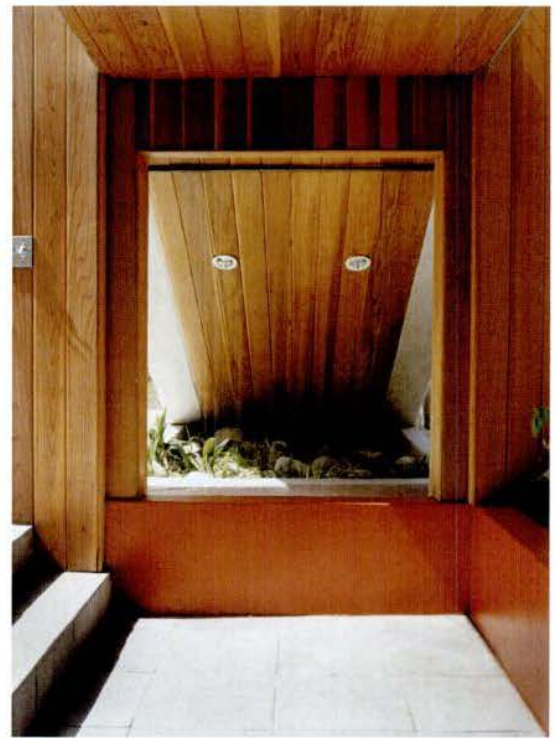
While they added just 500 square feet to the area of the house and a bathroom to the ground-level room count, they managed to dramatically increase the ▶



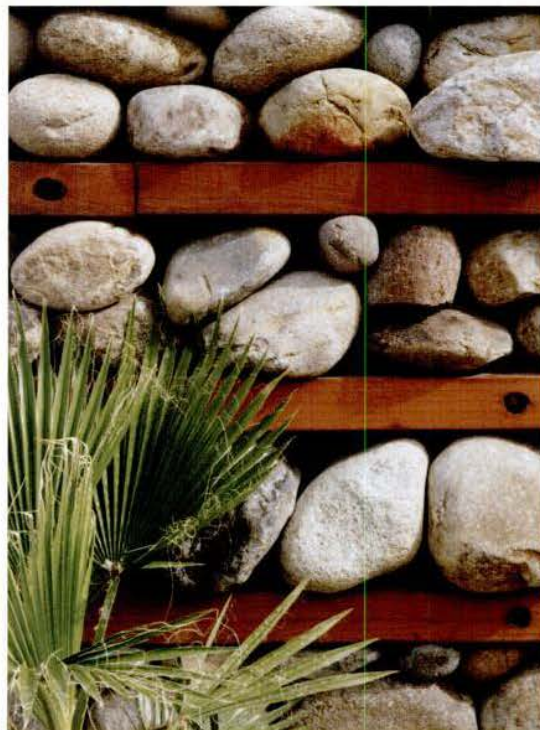








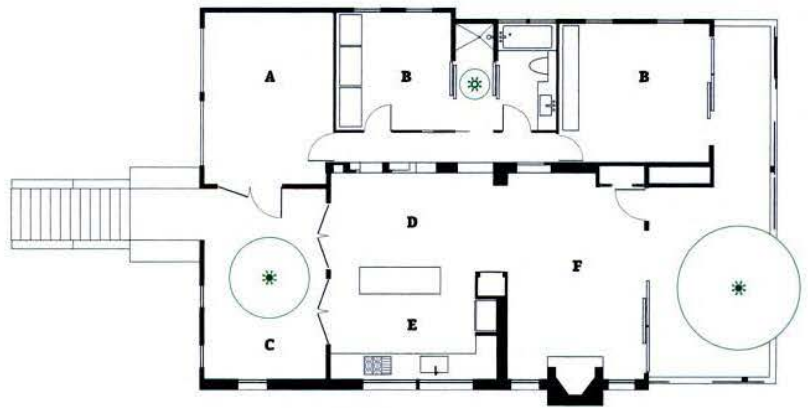
The layering of the remodeled house (opposite) is revealed in this image of Robin and Jeremy relaxing on the front deck. A young, drought-tolerant *Tristania conferta* (also known as Australian brush box tree) grows up through the chill-out room under the deck at the rear of the house (top left); the entrance to the chill-out room is under the stairs (top right). One of Levine's design experiments is this "thermal rock wall" of loosely stacked stones (bottom left). A *Robinia* tree moved from another part of the site grows in this pocket courtyard and thermal chimney in the heart of the house (bottom right).





sense of space. Rooms now flow from one to the next. Direct and indirect light and air enter through clerestory windows in the heightened rooms, and sliding doors lead out onto decks and the inner pocket courtyard. The result, says Levine, "made an illusion of bigger space by using little strategies."

Smart use of space was a constant concern. "In our never-ending quest for efficient living," Levine explains, sounding at times like he's channeling his Bauhaus predecessors, "we created a built-in, adjustable desk and shelving systems in the office, and we hung them from threaded rods." In the living and dining rooms they carved shelves and niches into the thick walls, freeing up the room, and they "harvested the dead space under the house by creating concealed underfloor storage rooms." Access to these is through a contraption that would have amused satirists of modern living like Jacques Tati or Osbert Lancaster: Using pneumatic car-hood arms and a foot pedal, sections of the floor can be raised one at a time.



**Levine Residence  
Floor Plan**

- A Office
  - B Bedroom
  - C Deck
  - D Dining Room
  - E Kitchen
  - F Living Room
- \* New Tree
  - \* Existing Tree





Levine applied this same live-wire ingenuity to making the project sustainable. In addition to the passive cooling and the solar panels on the roof, he recycled graywater from baths and sinks to water the ornamental garden and created a storm-water capture system that pumps water into an “evaporative rain window” built into the underside of the rear staircase. The rain window creates a delicate curtain of cooling drips at the entrance to the chill-out room. Levine then added more extras: a thermal wall of loosely joined rocks at the base of the house, intended both to store heat and to transmit air, and a dog-poop composting system in the backyard, making the most of output from their dogs, Samson and Lady.

In addition to thinking of the house as a set of systems and devices, however, Levine was preoccupied with capturing some of the essence of the region’s Spanish-style houses. It makes sense, he says, not only for climatic reasons but because he had found on previous projects that his team of

builders, most originally from El Salvador (his long-time contractor, Francisco Lopez, died shortly before this article went to press), had a hard time with the details of Southern California’s modernist houses. But “when it came to concrete and stucco, they were masters.” So walls in the Levine house are thick and smoothly stuccoed, and the sinks and baths are made of poured-in-place concrete.

Even though newly Earth-friendly architects do employ passive cooling and heating strategies, the emphasis in current green building design has tended to be on energy-saving gadgetry and showily sustainable, sometimes expensive, materials, rather than on applying the principles of local, vernacular architecture. While Levine himself also embraces the techie side of sustainability, by drawing on lessons learned from houses built before the advent of creature comforts, his house sets an example for an approach that could serve people well—especially during an economic downturn, when simplicity and common sense are more valuable than ever. ■■

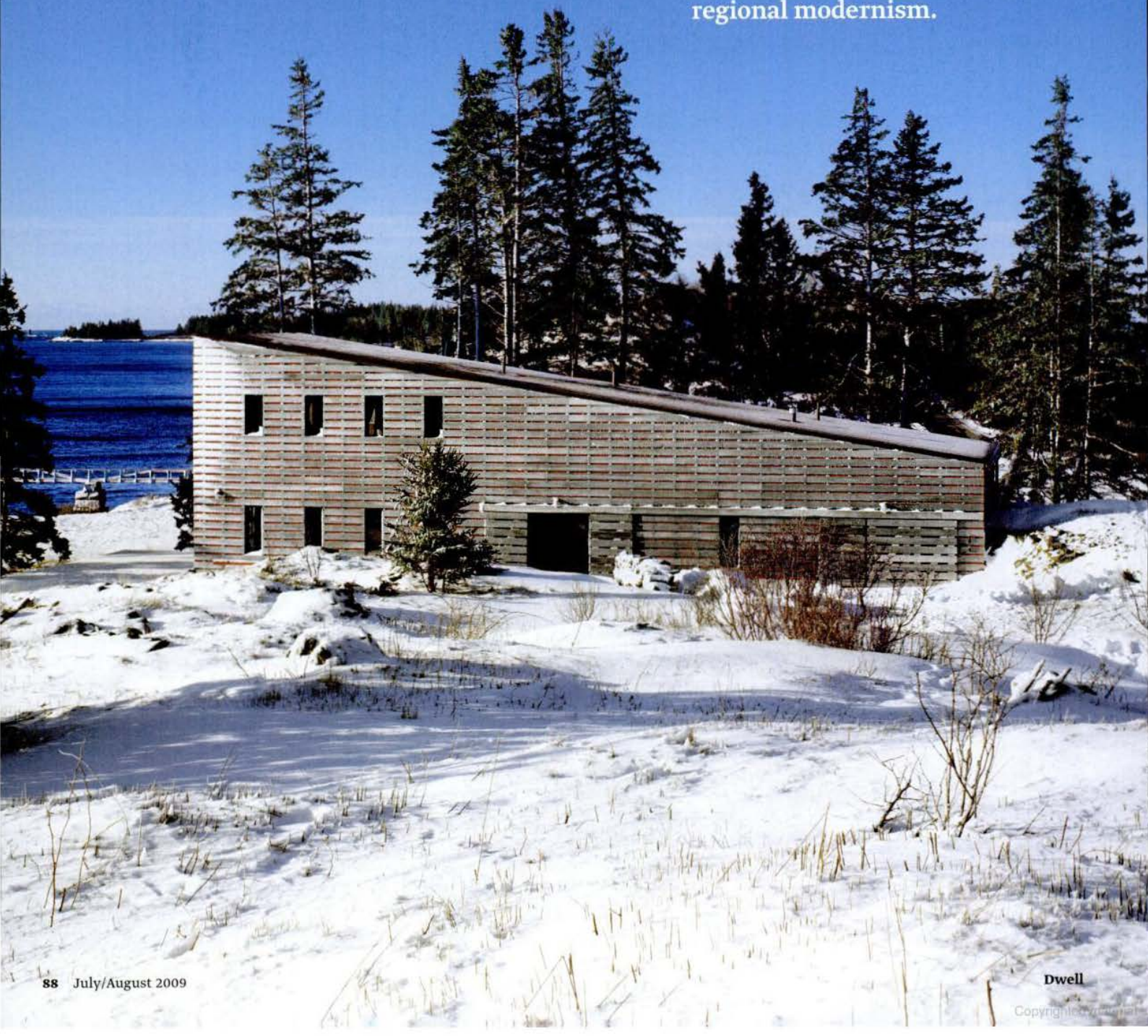
A preoccupation for Levine was saving space and money; he and his team used threaded steel rods and birch veneer plywood to construct the shelving in his office (opposite) at the rear of the house. The front bedroom (below) reveals how the design creates through-flow of light and air in what had previously been a poky set of spaces. **i**



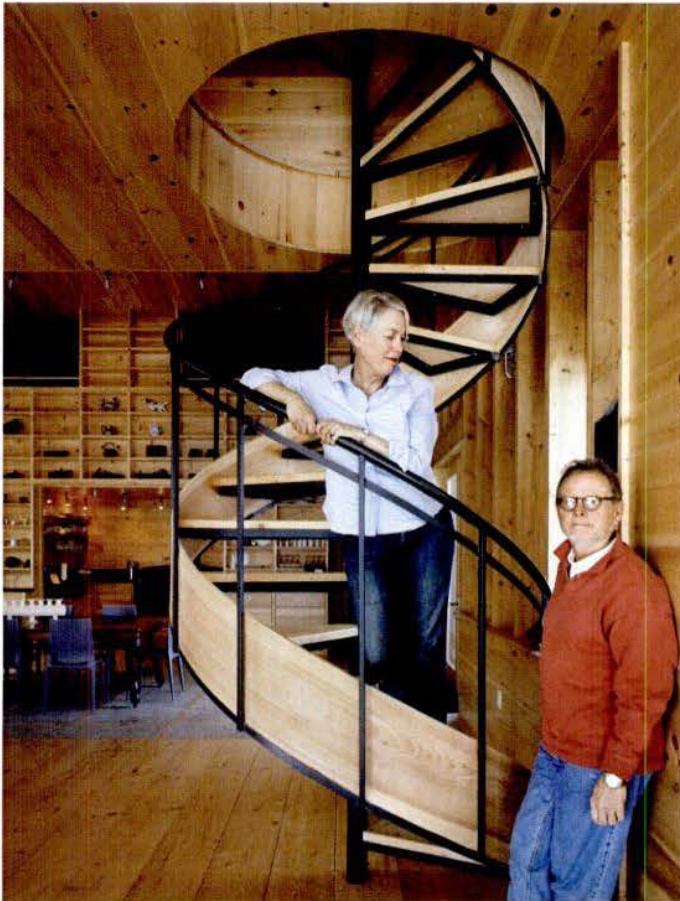


# A Northern Haven

North Haven, a rocky island in Maine's Penobscot Bay, is quintessentially New England. As it happens, so is this boat barn-inspired brand of rugged, regional modernism.

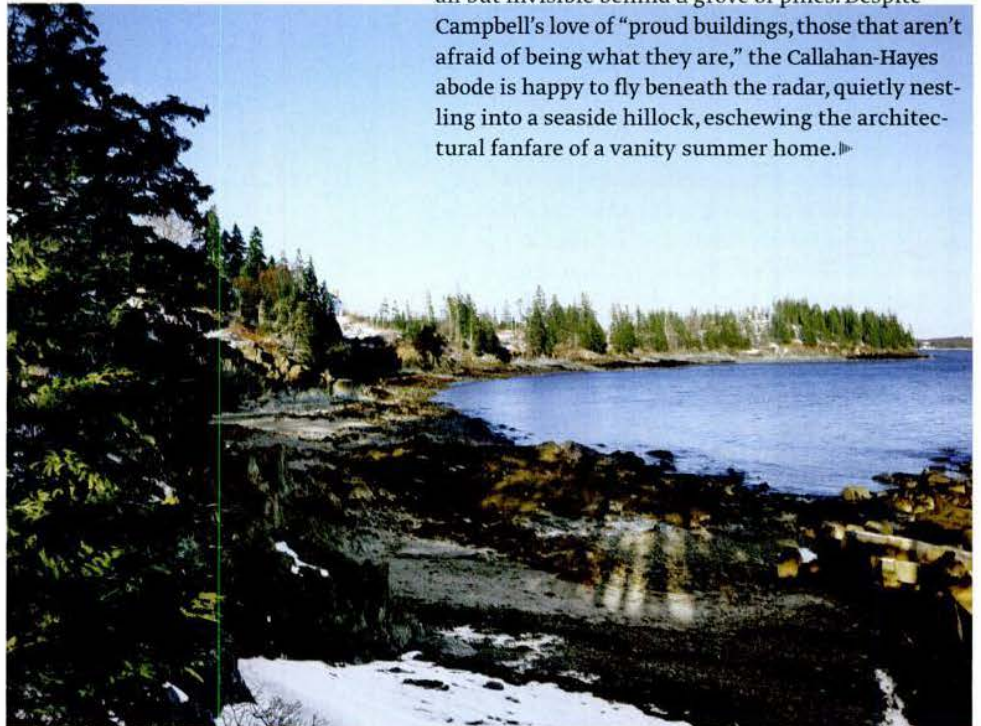






**Project:** Callahan-Hayes Residence  
**Architect:** Christopher Campbell  
**Location:** North Haven, Maine

North Haven locals nonplussed by Bobbie Callahan and Ed Hayes's unusual retreat (opposite) lit upon its cinematic qualities, calling it "the Strand" after the nearest movie theater on the mainland. The pair (above) have summered on North Haven for years; Callahan bought a house there in the late 1970s and has been back every year. Views of the Penobscot Bay from the house's small beach (below) remain spectacular even with a blanket of February snow.



**Story by** Aaron Britt  
**Photos by** Raimund Koch

From the top of Mount Battie, an 800-foot rise just outside the seaside town of Camden, Maine, you get an astounding view of the Penobscot Bay. Out of breath, my fingers stained from the trailside blueberries I've greedily gobbled on the climb, I can see the constellation of hundreds of islands in the bay.

There's wasp-waisted Isleboro, with its wealth of summering Scientologists; Vinalhaven and its artists; and crescent-shaped North Haven, one of the few Penobscot islands with a year-round community, beloved equally by Elizabeth Bishop, Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, and the tonier likes of the DuPonts. I've been spending a week or two in mid-coast Maine each summer for many years now, visiting my wife's family. "We should go out to North Haven," I tell her each year. "Ride the ferry, maybe rent some bicycles." I recently got my chance, though it wasn't quite in the manner I'd imagined.

Christopher Campbell, a Portland, Maine-based architect, waits dutifully for us at the 9:30 a.m. ferry despite the whipping wind and flurries of February snow at the terminal in Rockland. Dressed in a bright red woolen hunting jacket and three layers beneath that, he ushers us onto the boat he's ridden hundreds of times in the process of building Bobbie Callahan and Ed Hayes's summer home on North Haven. Campbell is no stranger to building in cold climates, having practiced in New Haven, Connecticut, and Boston before setting up shop ten years ago in Portland. "I keep moving up the coast," he quips. "I plan to expire in Nova Scotia."

As we approach North Haven, Campbell points out the huge summer homes favored by some—recently erected 20,000-square-foot colonials that loom massively even from the water. He then points to the plot where Callahan and Hayes spend their summers and to their clean, modern wedge of a house, all but invisible behind a grove of pines. Despite Campbell's love of "proud buildings, those that aren't afraid of being what they are," the Callahan-Hayes abode is happy to fly beneath the radar, quietly nestling into a seaside hillock, eschewing the architectural fanfare of a vanity summer home. ▶



Hayes, now retired from the furniture business, proposes a secondary reason for the staunchly modern house keeping a low profile: "We didn't want to upset the natives." Around 350 people live on North Haven year-round, and they're fiercely proud of their island. And though the local architecture tends toward white clapboard siding, painted shutters, and a never-met-a-gable-I-didn't-like aesthetic, Hayes's unusual house has got some fans. "The plumber, the electrician, both of whom live here, made a lot of jokes about this house. But they've come back to the finished product and said, 'You know, I kinda like it.'"

Callahan, a psychoanalyst, calls North Haven "a powerful place" and has been coming here since she was a child. After ten years of living in Asia, she returned to the States in the late 1970s and, wanting some security in a time of transition, she purchased a house on the island in 1978 for \$30,000. She and her family have been using it ever since, but with five children, seven grandchildren, and a passel of guests descending on them each summer, she and Hayes wanted to maintain their long-standing relationship with the island and design a house from scratch.

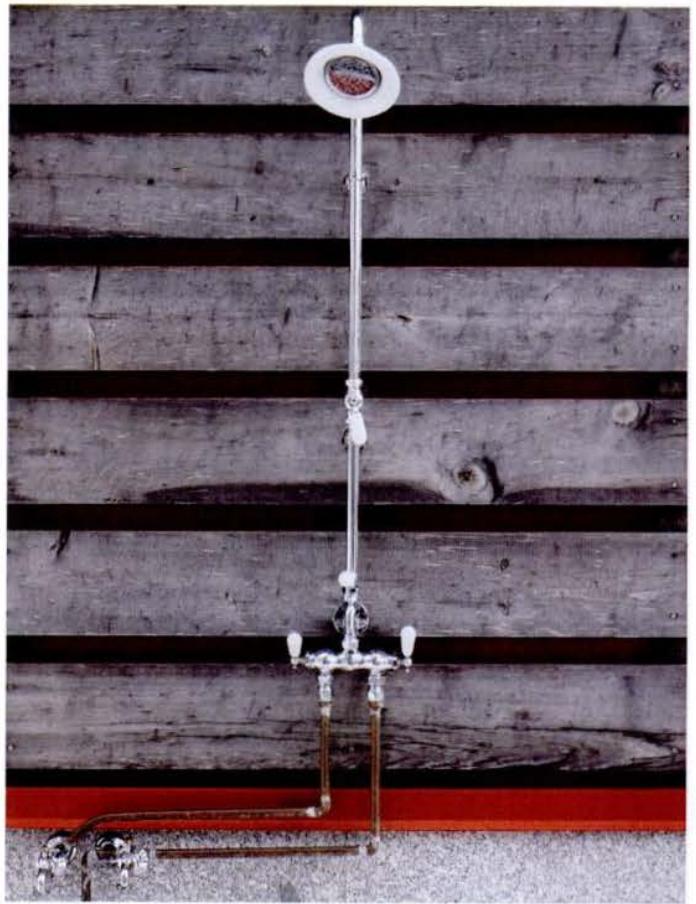
Though it may not strictly adhere to the local aesthetic, the house takes its cues from a humble and prevalent form of local architecture: the boat barn. "We wanted the essence of a New England barn," says Callahan. "The house is like a sculpture, a piece of jazz, like a riff on barnness." The couple had initially planned two structures on their land, but when Campbell delivered exactly what they had imagined, the desire to build the second evaporated.

The wedgelike shape of the house, the red prefabricated steel frame glimpsed between the slats of two-by-eight-foot pine siding, and the roll-up firehouse doors on the seaward facade all owe a debt to the working buildings of Maine. "The idea was to make a little red barn that's not a little red barn," says Campbell. A little red barn some 100 yards from the house attests to the architectural sympathy.


"When looking at New England working buildings," Campbell says, "one of the first things that you notice is the builders' comfort with a strong, simple geometric presence on a landscape. You notice a lack of fear over large expanses of siding, coupled with a strong rhythm established by the windows; the eaves and edges are close and clipped tight to the building."

"The fantasy with this house," he continues, "was that someone had built a boathouse and then abandoned it. You go to some of these old structures in Maine and think to yourself, I could live here. You know, this really isn't far off from livable."

Livable is all relative for summer houses. And though any visitor to "Vacationland" will tell you July is divine, proper Mainers are quick to add, with a shade of hardier-than-thou disdain, February is not for quailing city slickers. The goal then was to design a house whose debt to the local vernacular extended beyond aesthetics. "A maintenance-free house," Callahan crows before Campbell interjects, "There's no such thing!" "Alright," she says, chastened, ▶





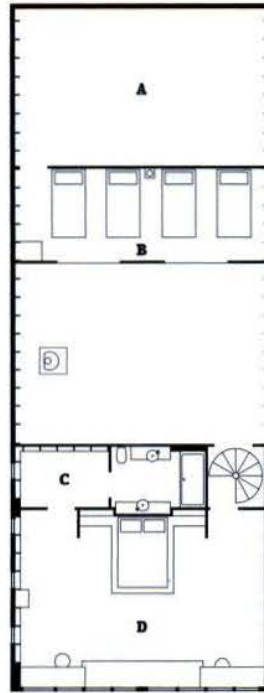
A large, vaulted wooden interior with a grid of shelves and a kitchen area. The ceiling is made of dark wood with several small lights. The walls are also wood-paneled. A large grid of light-colored wooden shelves is mounted on the wall, displaying various objects like figurines, teapots, and plates. In the center, there is a kitchen area with a red Aga stove, a sink, and a refrigerator. Two people are standing in the kitchen area. The floor is made of light-colored wood planks.

A stop at the outdoor shower (opposite top) reveals the red steel frame beneath the wooden siding. Campbell's Little Bird swing (opposite bottom) flies high alongside modern classics like the Eames shell chairs and Saarinen Tulip table. The kitchen, complete with an Aga stove, is framed by modular shelves and helps heat the sleeping nook directly above it.







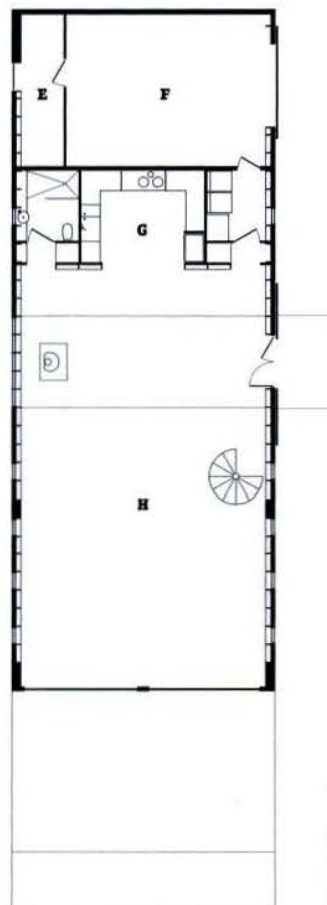


Looking from the kitchen out to the sea, one sees the simplicity of Campbell's design. Whether the long balmy nights of August or the raging winter winds, little seems to alter the tranquility achieved inside Callahan and Hayes's summer home.

**Callahan-Hayes Residence  
Floor Plans**

**Second Floor**

- A Storage
- B Sleeping Loft
- C Dressing Room
- D Master Bedroom



**First Floor**

- E Mechanical
- F Garage
- G Kitchen
- H Living/Dining Area





“The house was built for the last phase of our lives. But we couldn’t do it until we knew what that phase would be.”

The master bedroom (above) opens up to the sea “like a maw,” says Callahan, who is delighted with the high ceilings and expansive space. Callahan and Hayes’s full-time residence in Fairfield, Connecticut, is a 1734 farmhouse with, as she puts it, “small, dark rooms and very low ceilings.” Rolling drawers under the bed and window seat allow for considerable storage while keeping the room

clutter-free. His-and-hers desks flank the window seat in a room one is loath to ever leave; twin sinks in the master bathroom (opposite top) do a similar trick. The roll-up garage doors on the ocean-facing facade (opposite bottom) open onto a large deck. From the living room the deck appears to extend right out to the sea like a floating dock. [i](#)



“maintenance-free until Ed and I die. Then we let the kids worry about it.”

That the house needed to be a haven for summertime relaxation as well as a hurricane-proof shelter equipped to go untended through the punishing winter months was a tall order, but one Campbell ably filled using both local materials and regional know-how. The metal frame and wood panels that line the interior were constructed in a barn on the mainland then shipped out by barge. Work crews took lobster boats out to the island each day; the spiral staircase from the main room to the master bedroom was fabricated in a Maine shop; and the granite in the foundation is from Mosquito Mountain near Bucksport. The doors are from Bristol and the builder, Scott Pearson, whom Campbell frequently praises to the skies, is a homegrown Mainer.

A common trick in Maine working buildings is to continue the roofing material, often slate, down one side of the facade. Campbell opted for copper instead, knowing that even a sliver exposed to the sun will heat up, melting accumulated snow, and that as the material slowly acquires its green patina, it will perfectly mirror the lichen on the surrounding pines.

Though Campbell thinks of the house as an expression of modern architecture filtered through a specific place, he doesn't want to hem himself in: “This building succeeds not because it's overtly regionalist but because it's thoughtfully, gently so—just as it's not overtly a prefab or manufactured house, a superinsulated home, a hurricane shelter, or any of the other things it happily, modestly does.”

Back inside—we've been tramping around in the snow, investigating the house from all angles, climbing down icy steps and embankments to the rocky beach below and observing how from the road the house appears more like a snowy rise in the landscape than some Martian bit of modernism—Callahan has put together a simple lunch. As I reenter the house I'm struck by the simplicity of the interior.

The house is one massive room that opens into the kitchen with a spacious master bedroom above and an attic-like sleeping nook for either grandchildren or the abnormally short. The nook is heated in part by the pipe of Callahan's Aga stove from the kitchen below while the rest of the house relies on radiant heat in the floor beneath the dining table, a wood-burning stove, and individual heating units.

The couple aims to someday spend much more time here—an impossibility for summer homes designed with only fair-weather use in mind—though even now their visits come as late in the season as Christmas. “The house was built for the last phase of our lives,” says Callahan. “But we couldn't do it until we knew what the last phase would be.”

As the couple prepares to pass the rest of the weekend snugly ensconced in their New England fantasy, and our trio races to catch the last of three daily ferries back to Rockland, it seems that their understanding and enjoyment of that phase grows only clearer. ■■■







Gesturing at the wood-and-iron house he designed for his family three years ago, the Buenos Aires-based furniture designer and architect Alejandro Sticotti declares, "It was like putting in a UFO, like something from Mars." True, with its clean lines, open floor plan, and raw finishes it stands in stark contrast to its decidedly more traditional neighbors in this tranquil Buenos Aires suburb of Olivos—mostly hundred-year-old English Tudor-style houses with terra-cotta tile roofs and warrens of small, dark rooms. But unlike the derivative surrounding buildings, Sticotti's house actually feels Argentinean, as if it blossomed out of its gardenlike plot, a genuine native species.

It practically did. When Sticotti and his wife, Mercedes Hernaez, a graphic designer, began looking for a house in this neighborhood 20 minutes north of downtown Buenos Aires, they couldn't imagine living in a typical residence's cramped quarters. He was a devoted modernist, addicted ▶▶

# Net Assets

Argentinean materials, a roiling economy, and a pinch of personal tumult served as the recipe for furniture designer Alejandro Sticotti's Buenos Aires oasis.



**Project:** Sticotti Residence  
**Architect:** Alejandro Sticotti  
**Location:** Buenos Aires, Argentina

Story by Jaime Gross  
Photos by Cristobal Palma



Sticotti and Hernaez relax in their living room, where custom-built windows and sliding doors enhance the indoor-outdoor effect. The house peeks out from a scrim of greenery (opposite top) while Hernaez (opposite below) organizes CDs on a modular lapacho wood shelf designed by Sticotti.







First Floor



In the open-plan kitchen (opposite), buffed concrete floors, chrome globe lights, and a fleet of Bertolli chairs comprise a sleek backdrop for quirkier pieces like the marble-topped wooden tables from a Catholic school, snagged at a local flea market. The secret to the spare, uncluttered shelves? A dispensa, or walk-in pantry, down the hall. "We hide everything we don't want to see," Sticotti explains. "We don't want to have to look at brands." Also pictured: the couple's 12-year-old lab, Uma.

to "natural materials, clean spaces, less is more" in both his furniture and building designs. And she had previously lived in an airy colonial-style apartment in the chic Palermo neighborhood. But one site did catch their eye: the 5,400-square-foot garden outside one of the houses they were considering. Exhilarated by the idea of finally designing their own home, and delighted by its location next to a tree-filled town plaza, Sticotti and Hernaez made an offer for the land and it was accepted.

Sticotti had designed about a dozen houses for friends and clients over the past two decades—he studied architecture at the University of Buenos Aires before establishing his own line of furniture, NET—so building his own wasn't much of a stretch. "To him, it was like creating a *grand meuble*," says Hernaez—a big piece of furniture. He custom-designed every detail and had 14 employees in his furniture workshop and architecture studio fabricate them, from the gigantic, Mondrianesque installations of double-paned windows and doors (made of locally forged iron and rare peteriby wood from northern Argentina) to the modular lapacho-and-pine shelving units used throughout the house to hold books and CDs. Design Within Reach was so impressed that they picked up the shelves for distribution in the United States.

The house held symbolic value for the couple: It was a physical rebuilding of their lives after a series of turbulent events. First there was the emotional turmoil of their relationship—when they met back in 1995, they were both married to other people, each with two children of their own. And then there was the devastating economic crisis of 2001, during which Argentines' bank accounts were frozen and devalued, making investing in anything, including

a home, extremely challenging. Previously abundant construction materials from abroad were suddenly scarce and extremely expensive, forcing designers to look inward for inspiration and recycled materials—a new concept for the country, though not for Sticotti, who has always liked working with old wood. Because of this necessary resourcefulness (and a foreign market suddenly interested in Argentina's newly affordable goods), the early 2000s were a particularly vibrant and creative moment for Argentinean design, says Sticotti.

Reflecting that economic and architectural climate, as well as Sticotti's own aesthetic leanings, the finished house is very much "of Argentina," as he says. "People always say that Buenos Aires is like a European city [because of the baroque architecture and Italian heritage], but at the same time, we have our own culture, our own materials. This house is all B.A. In a way, I was trying to find something that represents us—and what we've got here is leather and wood and concrete."

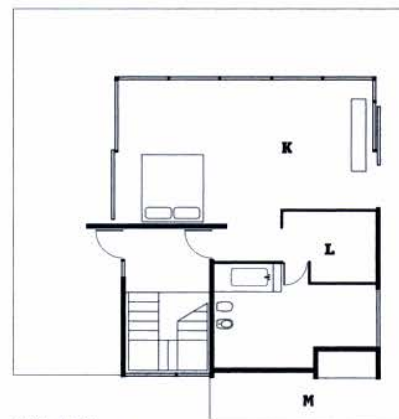
Those three materials make many appearances, in several incarnations, throughout the house. The exterior is clad with strips of Latin American lapacho hardwood, affixed an inch from the building to provide good insulation and air circulation; like teak, it will weather and gray over time. The second and third stories—dedicated to the children's bedrooms and the master bedroom, respectively—have floors of recycled pine, recovered from a local demolition site. (The couple's children live with them part-time and range in age between 11 and 18.) The walls are paneled in full sheets of plywood, to minimize scrap and keep costs down. Slats salvaged from an old house in La Boca—a Buenos Aires neighborhood known both for its rainbow-colored ▶

**Sticotti Residence  
Floor Plans**

- A Living Room
- B Dining Room
- C Kitchen
- D Pantry
- E Laundry
- F Mechanical
- G Workshop
- H Library
- I Family Room
- J Bedroom
- K Master Bedroom
- L Dressing Room
- M Terrace



**Second Floor**



**Third Floor**










The wood-and-steel open staircase wends its way up three stories, supported by a concrete structural wall embedded with PVC tubes and bare lightbulbs. The living room (opposite) resembles a Sticotti furniture showroom. The architect designed the couch, coffee tables, and stumplike stools. The fireplace is made of stacked stone from San Juan, a nearby province.



A ground-level patio and third-floor deck overlook a lush front garden; sitting out there is like “being on vacation,” says Hernaez. Dappled sunlight and reclaimed-wood floors and walls give the master bedroom (opposite) a warm, peaceful feel. Giant sliding doors open onto a wrap-around deck peppered with potted plants from the couple’s vacations in Brazil, Uruguay, the Netherlands, and Italy. 

wooden houses and as the birthplace of tango—lend visual interest to walls in the living room and master bedroom and are affixed backwards to hide their brightly painted faces.

In a nod to traditional Argentinean construction techniques, the ceilings and central structural wall are poured-in-place concrete, with seams and cracks showing “for honesty,” says Sticotti. “I try to use simple, honest materials. I don’t like paint or plaster; I prefer to leave things as they come, and show how things are made.” Furniture from Sticotti’s own line provides most of the house’s decorative flourishes. Mixed in with a scattering of design icons—wire Bertoia chairs and a pair of cowhide-covered butterfly chairs, invented in 1939 by three Buenos Aires designers—are a plethora of NET products: router-cut cedar light shades; wooden stools topped with woven rawhide; tray-topped side tables (used as nightstands in the bedrooms and as a coffee table in front of the couch); and those modular shelving

units, lined with books along a narrow catwalk hovering above the double-height living room.

“A house floating in the garden” is how Sticotti describes the finished building. Every room overlooks the surrounding landscape, with treetop and park views from the upstairs bedrooms and a tangle of flowering plants, cacti, and jacaranda trees visible from the ground-floor living area. Floor-to-ceiling glass doors slide open onto large patios, physically extending the interior living space into the garden, and a stacked stone fireplace literally penetrates the glass wall in the living room—a bit of visual trickery that blurs the line between the end of the house and the beginning of the yard. Upstairs, a giant deck off the master bedroom overflows with terra-cotta pots whose contents tell the story of the couple’s past and present lives: plants and cacti from their previous apartments and gardens; other people’s discarded plants, snagged off downtown sidewalks; and blooming souvenirs from their travels.







These days, the house buzzes with activity, alive with the sound of teenagers playing musical instruments, a tinny radio in the kitchen, and two dogs lumbering underfoot. Seated contentedly on the deep, nestlike sofa (a Sticotti original, of course), Hernaez sighs happily. She's a recent convert to modern design and she's not looking back. "This is more fresh, more light, not much in the background. It's like a paradise!" she says.

It's also a brave new direction for Buenos Aires, a city best known for its ornate European-style baroque buildings. Sticotti's house, born out of trying economic and personal times, and set amidst a sea of terra-cotta roofs and faux English cottages, signals a very 21st-century approach to Argentine architecture, one that melds local and recycled materials with a global modernist language and celebrates native architects and designers who thrive by that old gardener's motto: Bloom where you're planted. ■■■







## Fruits of the Loom



Eero Saarinen set out to immortalize Detroit's golden age in the General Motors Technical Center, a 25-building sprawl begun in conjunction with his father Eliel in 1949, but he realized that glass, steel, terrazzo, and glazed brick were not enough. Textile designer and family friend Marianne Strengell got the call: These bald beasts needed hair. After fleeing Saarinen's lines with what she called the "texture and warmth" of individually designed rugs, drapes, and upholsteries, she had to face GM's maintenance staff.

"The [lobby] rug was quite dark and fluffy," she later recalled. "And that was certainly a problem right there with the people who took care of the building, because they were scared to death of that rug. They'd say, 'What do we do?' And I gave them a broom and said, 'This.' Of course, they died because, I mean, they had all this machinery and stuff like that."

Marianne Strengell was one of a handful of textile mavens who revived the art of weaving in the U.S. during World War II. As a girl in Helsinki, she spurned conventional colors and yarns when creating fabrics for her mother, an interior designer, to sell in her shop. By the time Strengell was 25, her eclectic fiber work—she called it "rags and riches"—was displayed at the Swedish National Museum. In the 1930s, Eliel Saarinen, a classmate of Strengell's father now ensconced at the nascent Cranbrook Academy of Art, cajoled Marianne into coming to Michigan to teach.

Strengell arrived in 1937, took over Cranbrook's weaving department in 1942, and blew a new wind through the young academy. In her world, texture, color, craftsmanship, and practicality were the order of the day, not human tableaux or folk motifs. Faced with dilettantes, she wasted no time in ▶

Story by Christine Cipriani

Strengell was a close friend of Eliel Saarinen, Cranbrook's architect and president, and also worked with his son Eero (top, with his mother, Loja, left, and Strengell in 1958).

She took commissions like the textiles for Eero Saarinen's General Motors Technical Center lobby (bottom).



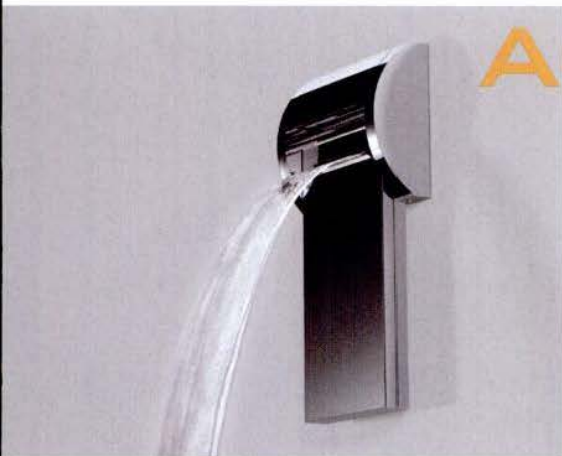
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raising standards and forging interdisciplinary bonds (read: sherry parties) with other departments to avoid the ghettoization of weaving. She brought Charles Eames to Cranbrook, where he became an instructor—she sensed he was in a rut when bowling with him at a party in St. Louis, Missouri—and her students included Jack Lenor Larsen and Ray Kaiser (later Eames). In 1949 she married Olav Hammarström, a Finnish architect who worked with Alvar Aalto and Eero Saarinen.

Strangell's commercial success helped elevate textile design from craft to profession at Cranbrook and by extension in the larger design world. In 1940 her work was featured in the watershed MoMA show *Organic Design in Home Furnishings*. She saw textiles as architectural elements, not adornments, and clients pursued her accordingly; she used sectioned rugs and walls of drapes to divide rooms, curtains to control light, and carefully chosen yarns to add sheen or fuzz. Fiber artist and scholar Ed Rossbach, who studied at Cranbrook in the 1940s, later wrote: "The small colorful rugs that [she] produced were responses to the blandness that accompanied 'good design.' [Weavers] had to impart comfort and warmth to the ever-increasing quantities of glass and metal, yet keep the rooms looking uncluttered, severe, and controlled."

From airplane seats to corporate headquarters to store windows, Strangell's abstract designs were everywhere in mid-century America. One of her high-end weaves was a nubby black-and-silver confection called Taj Mahal, used in the 1959 Lincoln Continental. Other commissions included rugs for Karastan, hotel fabrics for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, textiles and shag rugs for the Saarinen-Swanson Group, and the first printed fabric for Knoll Associates. "One of the remarkable things about walking into Marianne's house," recalls her friend Susan Saarinen, Eero's daughter, was a "combination of Finnish simplicity with an overlay of such wonderful, rich colors and textures."

Throughout her career, Strangell extolled limitations—in raw materials,

manufacturing, climate, the market—as catalysts for good design. She found the restrictions of wartime inspiring, and in 1951 she traveled to the Philippines with a U.S. government agency to help expand weaving as a profitable cottage industry. A few years later, when Alcoa asked her to make a rug of aluminum fibers in 36 colors, she was "horrified," she once said, but injected linen and wool to form brilliant contrasting stripes.

Strangell and Hammarström retired to Wellfleet, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod, and Strangell died in 1998. She never lost her confidence in the mutual importance of beauty and utility, or her impatience with the very concept of complacency. "Experiment, for God's sake," she told Mark Coir, current acting director of the Cranbrook Archives, when asked about her studio philosophy. "Don't do anything that somebody else has done before." ▶



"I never was so scared in my life," Strangell said of the moment she took this polychrome rug (bottom left) off the loom, wondering how Alcoa's aluminum fibers would

drape. With her dual demands for rigorous technique and experimental design, Strangell significantly raised the standard of weaving at Cranbrook (top left, in 1943).



Debuted by Knoll in 1947, "Shooting Stars" (bottom right) was Strangell's first screen-printed fabric. In the Philippines, she used fibers from pineapple husks (top right).

Photos Courtesy Cranbrook Archives (portrait, Alcoa rug, Philippines textile), Knoll Textiles (Shooting Stars and Pina)





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# 10 things you should know about Marianne Strengell



1. Raised in a coastal community of Swedish-speaking Finns, Strengell was sent to summer camp to learn Finnish. She made scant progress because the other kids spoke Swedish, too.

2. When Strengell and Hammarström wed, it was the second time for both—but they had first met in dance class when Strengell was eight.

3. The granddaughter of a pianist, Strengell loved music. On a visit to San Francisco, she was offered a singing job in a nightclub.

4. She forbade her Cranbrook students from going to the library during their first semester, lest they develop an anxiety of influence.

5. Despite the age gap, Strengell was very close to Eero's father, Eliel Saarinen. He dropped into her home for a chat just one hour before his death, in 1950, while Olav was playing tennis with Eero.

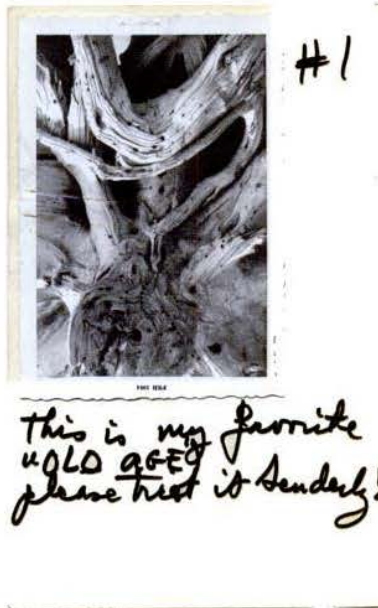
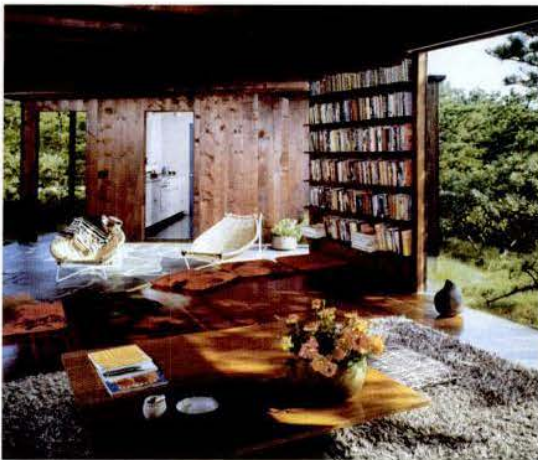
6. On a trip to Japan, Strengell was startled to see one of her designs on the seats of her taxi.

7. She acknowledged her students' professional success but was tart about those who had not excelled in class—including Ray Kaiser (later Eames), who, as she later recounted, had "made no great impact at all."

8. Strengell's showpiece rugs for GM, including one that measured 18 by 32 feet, were hand-loomed by a Swedish weaver named Gerda Nyberg in her basement in Pontiac, Michigan.

9. In 1952 Hammarström built the couple a breezy modern house in the Wellfleet woods, near the ocean. Eventually they sold it and moved to a Cape Cod-style house in the town center.

10. In her later years, Strengell took up photography and shot "huge pieces of driftwood or old gnarled roots," says Susan Saarinen. "It was about pattern and texture." ■■■



A pioneer of the shag rug as we know it, Strengell filled her Cranbrook studio with these and other creations in bold hues and pointedly abstract designs (middle).

Strengell's textiles warmed the Cape Cod retreat she shared with Olav Hammarström (bottom left). In retirement, she turned to photography (bottom right). ❶

Photos Courtesy Cranbrook Archives (portrait, studio interior, home interior), Marianne Strengell Papers / 1904-1989 / Archives of American Art/Smithsonian Institution (personal photography)



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## Big Design in Little China

Necessity is the mother of invention, and when, in 2005, Willard Ford needed to pay his rent, his business acumen and design-savvy eye saw him through: He launched FordBrady, a furniture showroom in downtown Los Angeles, with designer John Brady. Earlier this year, Ford relaunched the company as Ford&Ching with Andrea Ching and opened a showroom in Oakland, California. The goal is still the same—to bring high design to our living rooms.

### How did you end up in the old Kim Sing Theatre?

I'd seen movies here when I was little. It had been abandoned for about 20 years and I bought it dirt cheap. I decided to live here and needed to quickly figure out how to afford to do that, which is part of why we started the company.



### Is Los Angeles a good place to sell contemporary design?

It's probably one of the worst, actually. Los Angeles peaked with mid-century-modern design and that continues to take up most of the market. We're trying to open the market to a wider perspective that includes new ideas about furniture and design.

### Is there an object that changed how you think about design?

When we first started sourcing products, we were introduced to the idea of green furniture by designer Singh Intrachooto. We hadn't considered green issues when purchasing for our business, but now about half of our products are sustainable.



2

### What's your most recent purchase?

Wood coasters from Sam Moyer, one of our designers.

### What's your favorite item you sell?

The Ted daybed or anything by Semigood Design.



3

### What are you currently longing for?

A couch—but I don't know which one.

### How do you define "good design"?

It's usable and matches your personal aesthetic. I also like easily recognizable materials like metal or wood.

### What makes a good customer?

People who come in to see something new. Those who want to buy the same Eames chair don't want to talk about something new or made from recycled materials, only the Eames chair.

### What's next for Ford&Ching?

Getting more into contract work. We're working on some restaurant and hotel projects we hope to see through. ■■■

Story by Miyoko Ohtake  
Portrait by Jeff Minton

1. The old Kim Sing Theatre on North Figueroa Street, home to Ford&Ching  
2. The Chairwalker by Singh Intrachooto

3. The Rian Collection end table by Semigood Design  
Available from [fordandching.com](http://fordandching.com)



WELCOME TO THE

# Dwell Home Collection

**"One home does not a movement make!"**

Early in Dwell's history (in fact, in our March 2001 issue), we presented the advantages of modern prefab construction. Though prefabrication has long been championed by the housing industry—think double-wides—it has not appeared in the same sentence as "architecture" for some time. To change that, we hosted a design invitational for architects to plan a home that could be built for \$200,000. The winning home design by Resolution: 4 Architecture was chosen from the 16 extraordinary entries in May 2003, and we collaborated with a North Carolina couple to build what became the first Dwell Home. We then hosted an open house to showcase to the public what modern prefab could achieve—and a few thousand people came to rural North

Carolina to tour the home on a hot July weekend in 2004. But the Dwell community wanted more: "One home does not a movement make!" I think their words were.

In June 2005, we partnered with three architects and an established manufacturer to bring modern prefab to our audience. Eventually, 37 Dwell Homes were sold across the country. With this experience under our belts, in June 2009 we launch the **Dwell Home Collection**. With this new program, we effectively broaden our design portfolio, strengthen the manufacturer offering, and give the prospective homeowners more to work with in terms of price, proximity, and process. We are thrilled to announce that Joel Turkel of Turkel Design (one of our veteran

Dwell Home architects) is offering three new designs through our partnership with **Lindal Cedar Homes**. We also have the privilege of working with **Marmol Radziner Prefab**, who will unveil a new design system created especially for the Dwell Home Collection. With these and our future offerings, our goal is to make the most of the advantages modern prefab has to offer—in terms of design, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability.

At Dwell, we believe in the power of good design, and it's our sincere hope that the Dwell Home Collection will help extend that sentiment to you. Stay tuned to the pages of Dwell, our website [dwell.com](http://dwell.com), and Dwell on Design in Los Angeles from June 26 to June 28 to experience the designs and meet our partners.



Michela O'Connor Abrams  
President & Publisher

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# D

With ABC, we define must-knows for a modernist's vocab. This month we delineate the differences between De Stijl and Deconstructivism.



## D-Series Chairs

When you spot a few Eames seats in a vintage shop you don't generally say, "There are the DSX, DCM, and DSG chairs I've been looking for." Until now, that is. With a multitude of shell and base options, the Eameses' acronymic system keeps us design nerds sorted. D stands for dining or desk height. The middle letter generally points to type—A for armchair, C for chair, S for side, or K for upholstered wire frame—and the final letter indicates M for metal legs, W for wood, X for cross frame, G for wall guard base, R for the wire "Eiffel Tower," and so on.

## Robin (b. 1915) and Lucienne (b. 1917) Day

Oft regarded as the Eameses of England, this husband-wife team met at London's Royal College of Art in 1940 and opened their studio in 1948, with intentions of making the world a better place through modern affordable design. Robin's furniture, like his Polypropylene chair, and Lucienne's textiles, such as her Calyx pattern, became archetypal of post-World War II design. Today, the couple continues to test their talents via innovative product, graphic, and exhibition design.



## De Stijl

Out of chaos comes creation, and in the aftermath of World War I came the Dutch magazine, group, and eventual movement called De Stijl—"The Style." Emphasizing straight lines, intersecting planes, and primary colors, De Stijl culminated in Gerrit Rietveld's Schröder House. But for some followers there was only one right angle: Painter Piet Mondrian defected when diagonals were introduced in the early 1920s.

## Deconstructivism

Eschewing the modernist mantra that form follows function, Deconstructivism instead embraced the notion that form follows nothing: No seeming linear path or unifying aesthetic unites the sweeping curves and sharp angles of the abstract, sculptural structures popularized by Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid in the 1980s. Architecture for the shuffle generation.

## D. J. DePree (1891–1990)

Dirk Jan DePree purchased the Star Furniture Company in 1923 with the help of his father-in-law and returned the favor by renaming it after him: Herman Miller. He proved his knack for spotting talent—from George Nelson to Gilbert Rohde to the Eameses—and turned Zeeland, Michigan, into an unlikely hub of modernism.

## Design Research

Ben Thompson, an original member of Walter Gropius's The Architects Collaborative, opened the first modern design store in America, Design Research, in 1953 and introduced the U.S. to the now-ubiquitous modern wares of Scandinavia and Japan. The last of the ten stores closed in 1979, but its alumni—like Placewares owners Lu and Maynard Lyndon—have taken up where the shop left off.

## Displacement ventilation

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## Nanna Ditzel (1923–2005)

Danish designer Nanna Ditzel was a modern Renaissance woman, creating jewelry, textiles, and furniture out of everything from fiberglass to foam rubber. Her creations range from the Trinidad and Hanging chairs to the recently rereleased Sausage chair (formerly known as the Ring chair).

## Tom Dixon (b. 1959)

Tom Dixon made a name for himself after a motorcycle accident in 1983 laid him up and led him to design. His roundabout approach challenges popular ideas of what design can be—2000's *Rethink* offered a sofa made from cinderblocks—but Dixon has also operated within the industry mainstream as a creative director for Habitat, design director of Artek, and founder of his own eponymous brand.



## Djinn Collection

Designed by Olivier Mourgue, the Djinn collection was chosen to outfit Space Station Five's Hilton hotel lobby in Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Named after the Arabic word for "genie," the series continues to cast a spell on fans of futuristic design. ■■■

Compiled by Miyoko Ohtake and Jordan Kushins

# D



# Southern California's Premier 33rd Annual Home Remodeling & Decorating Show and Eco-Expo.

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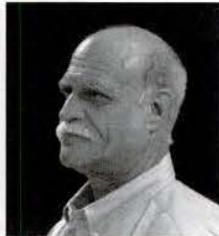
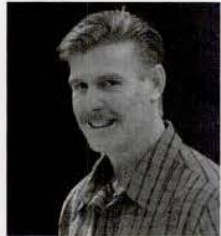


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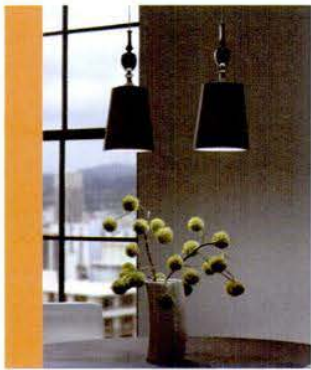
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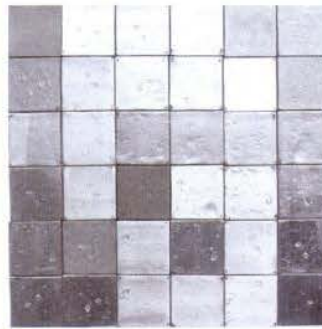
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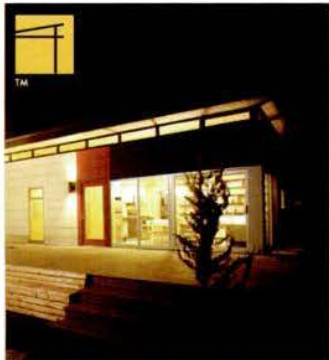
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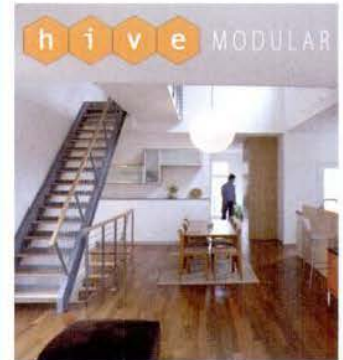
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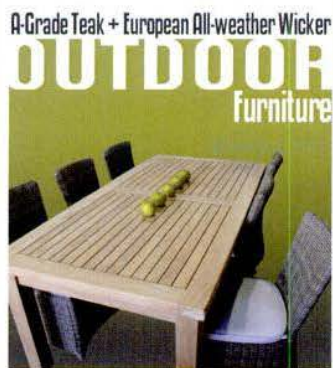


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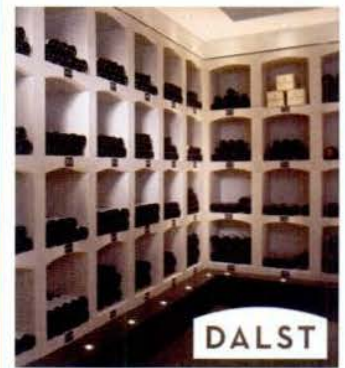
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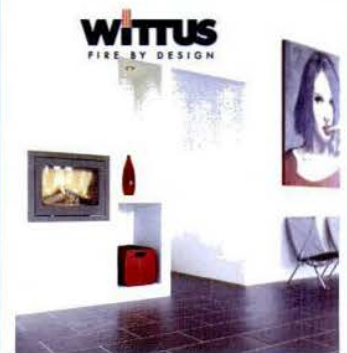
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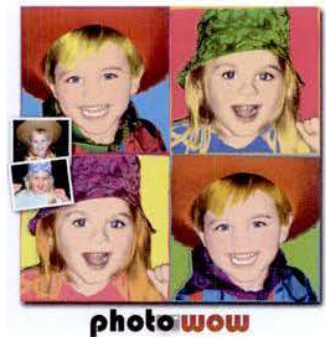


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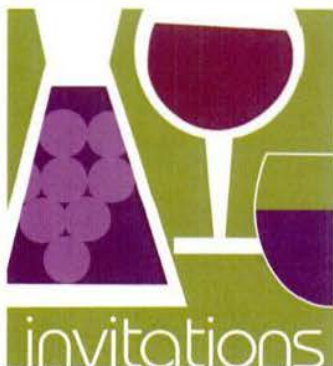
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architecturalsalvagesd.com

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**Recla Metals, L.L.L.P.**  
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icecreamprofessional.com

**KitchenAid**  
kitchenaid.com

**Cuisinart**  
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**Industrial Revolution**  
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### 62 Conversation

**Wonderwall Inc.**  
wonder-wall.com

**A Bathing Ape**  
bape.com

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uniqlo.com

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apc.fr

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meiji.co.jp

**100% Chocolate Café**  
choco-cafe.jp

### 66 Outside

**White Arkitekter**  
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### 70 Detour

**Ken Kalfus**  
*A Disorder Peculiar to the Country*  
(Harper Perennial, 2006)

*The Commissariat of Enlightenment*  
(Harper Perennial, 2004)

*Pu-239 and Other Russian Fantasies*  
(Washington Square Press, 2000)

*Thirst* (Washington Square Press, 1999)

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**Philadelphia Museum of Art**  
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**Jeremy Levine Design**  
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**Triple-panel wood sliders by Henry Bertoin for Knoll**  
okmfg.com

**Y Leg coffee table by Lawson-Fenning**  
lawsonfenning.com

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### 88 A Northern Haven

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**Little Bird swing by Christopher Campbell for National Wood Products of Maine**  
nwpmaine.com

**Saارين table by Eero Saarinen for Knoll**  
knoll.com

**Eames molded plastic chair by Ray and Charles Eames for Herman Miller**  
hermanmiller.com

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aga-ranges.com

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**NET studio and shop**  
Tel: 5411-4833-3901  
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tomdixon.net

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epicureanccs.com

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lolldesigns.com



# Siding Is Not a Crime

What do you do with excess skateboard park material once you've finished building the ramps, bowls, and half-pipes? Greg Benson, the former co-owner of TrueRide, a Duluth, Minnesota-based municipal skateboard park manufacturer, used the leftover Richlite (a black material made by baking recycled paper and FSC-certified wood into solid sheets) to create cutting boards and fabricate furniture. The side projects became so successful that in 2007, Benson

sold TrueRide to focus full-time on the emerging companies Epicurean Cutting Surfaces and Loll Designs.

Fellow Minnesotan David Salmela found another use for the material: cladding buildings. Though Richlite is not sold as siding, it is geographically and culturally suited for the region, Salmela says: "It's been tested under the cruelest conditions—in Minnesota skate parks—where there are extreme temperatures, weather, and abuse." It's survived superbly. ■■■



Story by Miyoko Ohtake

Architect David Salmela has clad numerous North Star State homes in Richlite, including his own abode (pictured here) and Greg Benson's companies' headquarters.



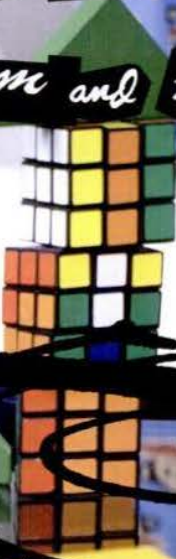
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