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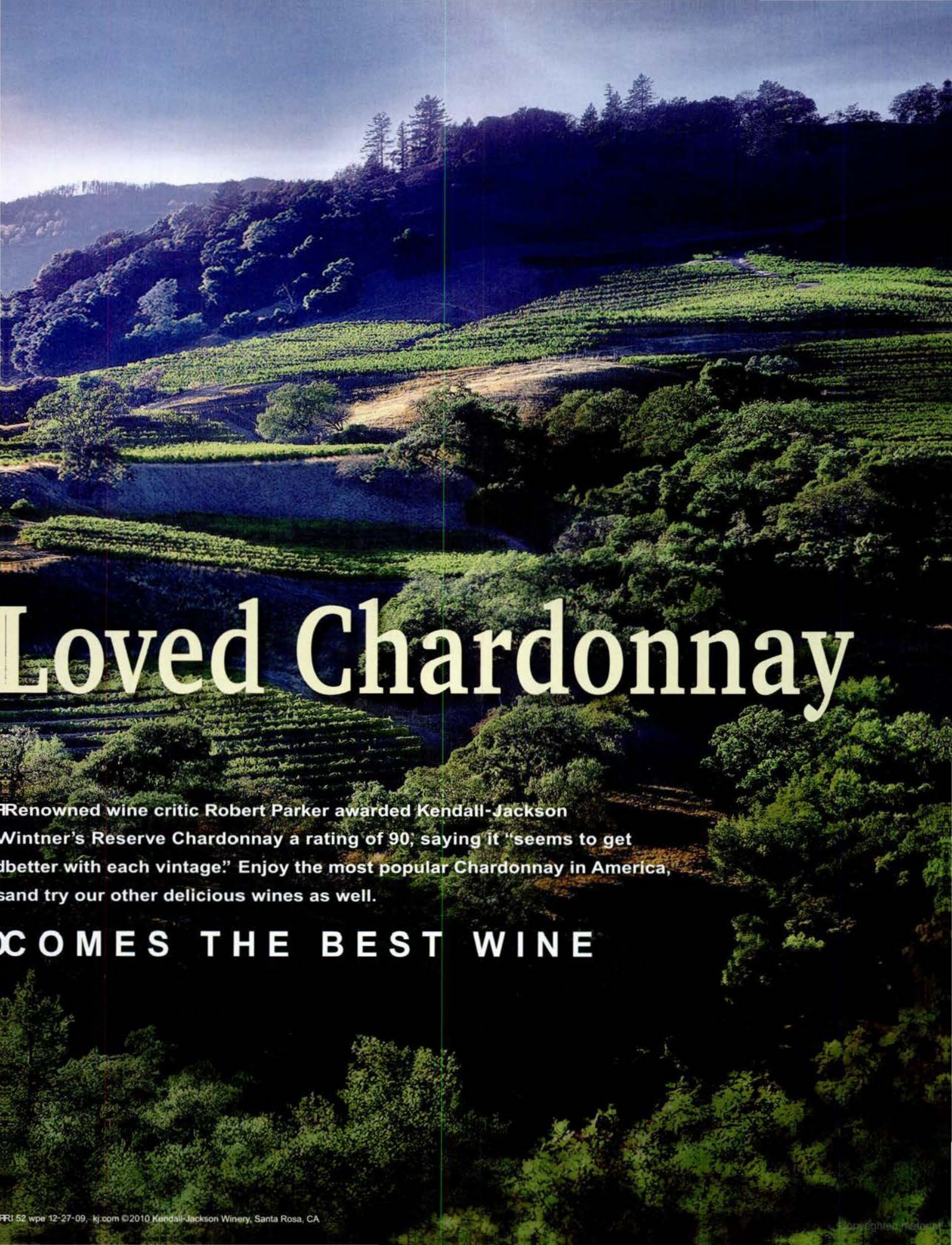
Prefab Today

April 2010

Cover: Orchard House, Sebastopol, California, page 98
Photo by Dave Lauridsen

Wine Advocate 12-31-08, 2007 Vintner's Reserve Chardonnay. Claim based on



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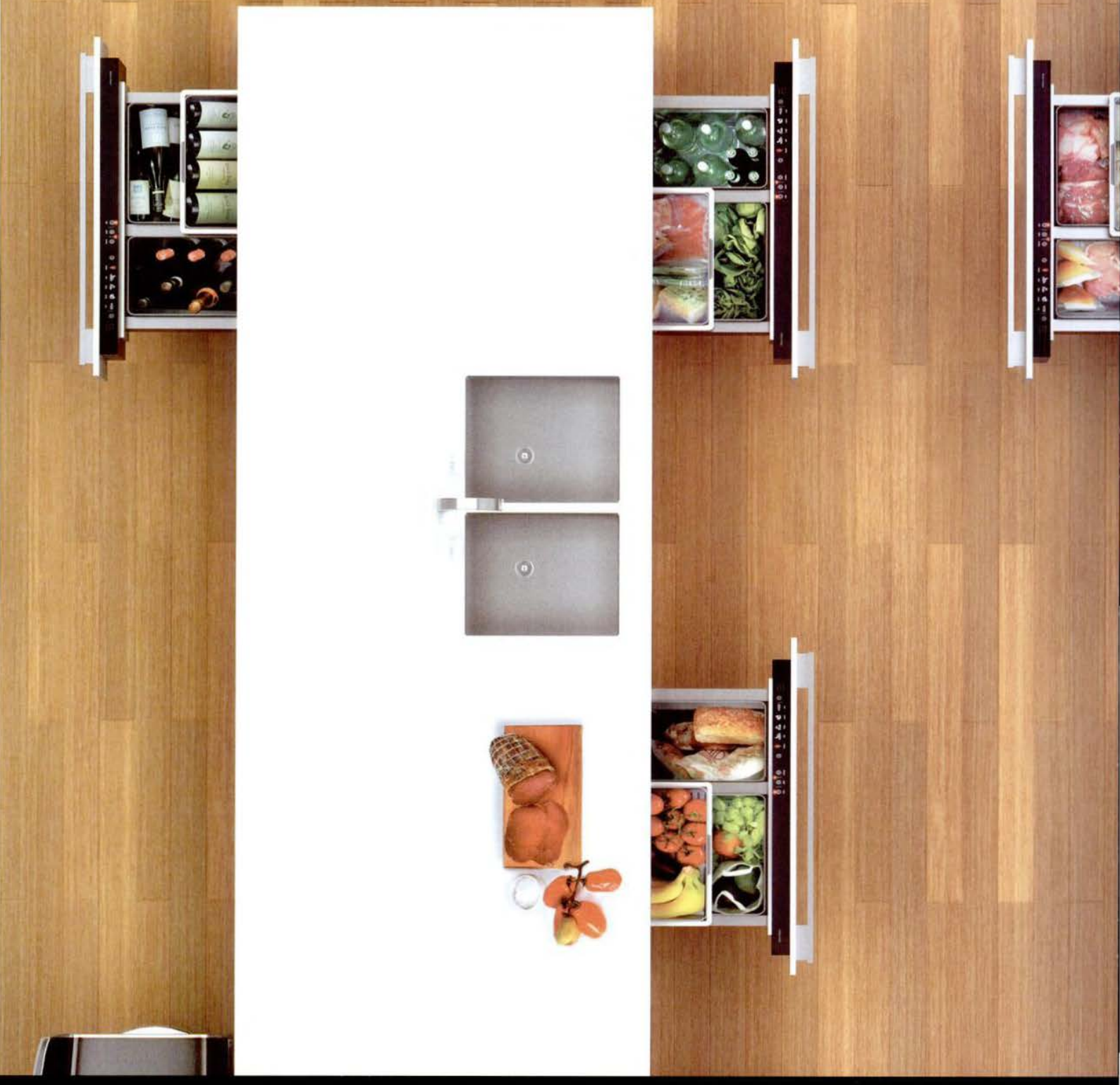

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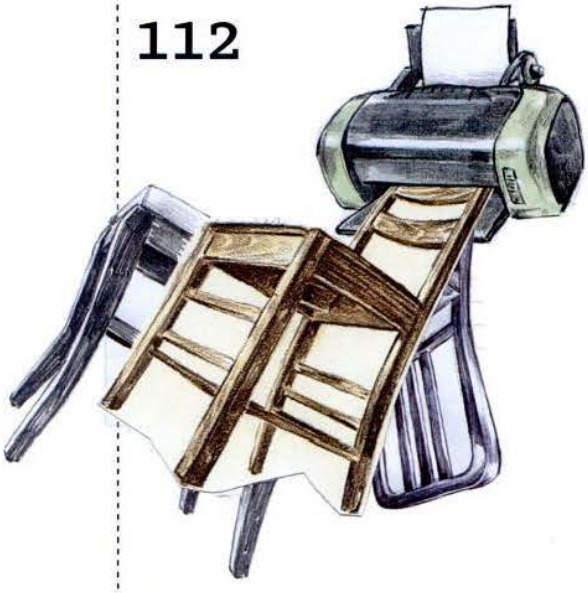

"[Our architects] also lived right here in the neighborhood so we thought that they could break through the nicey-nicey aspect of the West Village."

Alice Weiner

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Right to Assemble

Unlike most normal people, who use vacations as an opportunity to relax or catch up on their reading, I spent my most recent holiday helping friends (one of whom is an architect) build an addition to their house. As a lifelong renter, my handyman side has been woefully underindulged. And as I am someone who makes a living talking about things that people build, helping out seemed like a good opportunity to learn a thing or two about how it's done from an experienced architect. The fact that the project was in Hawaii didn't hurt the case, either.

I knew that recreational manual labor would provide a gratifying diversion from computer screens, key commands, and clicking, but working on the shelter (it would be a bit of a stretch to call a building that plugs into the main house with an extension cord much more than that) had the greater effect of bestowing an intense appreciation for the amount of work, and moreover the difficulty of achieving the high level of finish, that goes into the homes we review back on our computer screens every day. Construction—even that of our little Hawaiian sleeping chamber—unfolds like an elaborate sequence of minor victories that seem anything but minor in the moment. Every squarely driven screw warrants a mental high five. Each plumb-fitting corner is akin to a bottom-of-the-ninth game-winning home run. I can tell you now: There is no sweat more satisfying to sweat than sweat-equity sweat—even when it's not your equity!

Over the course of our construction project, one subject lingered in the back of my mind—prefabricated architecture. In many ways the little guesthouse qualifies as prefab. Two walls of the shelter are steel frames with louvers that were fabricated and assembled in the Bay Area, disassembled, packed into a shipping container, and delivered to the site in Hawaii. Another wall consists of a standard-size sliding glass door and windows. With these components, in the words of my architect buddy, we were able to "go vertical" in a day. Most of the other building materials were either packed into the container (alongside some 40 cases of cheap wine imported by neighbors) or were off-the-shelf parts procured from local building suppliers. Even the furniture for the place came over on the container. With all the parts in place, there was but one Ikea-esque caveat: much assembly required.

What I came to realize (repetitive construction tasks offer your mind a lot of space to roam) is that while the business models for prefab firms have been troubled—largely by banks unwilling to lend, but also by the economic pressure of maintaining a factory—prefabrication as a building strategy has thrived. If you look at average housing-industry developers, they may not be building houses on assembly lines and delivering them to sites in one piece, but they do use multitudes of standard, off-the-shelf parts such as trusses, windows, and panels. Designers of custom homes have an astounding array of ready-made building components available, and it only makes sense—economically and logistically—that these should be taken advantage of. Prefab, in this sense, is not so much about architecture as product, but rather the production of architecture.

In this issue, we've broadened our scope to include a variety of projects that apply this kind of strategic prefab approach to homebuilding. Blue Sky Homes developed a steel-frame kit of parts to create a relatively affordable and sustainable desert home ("Plan of Steel," p. 82). Resolution: 4 Architects show us that factory-built modules aren't limiting; in fact, they can provide endless variation ("Kid Tested, Mothers Approved," p. 90). And Anderson Anderson Architects make the most of both off-the-shelf systems and a reusable concrete formwork ("Fertile Grounds," p. 98). Prefab isn't a one-size-fits-all solution; it's a state of mind.

Sam Grawe, Editor-in-Chief
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Media Relations
Nancy Alonzo
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Article Reprints
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Brand Director / Sales Development
Angela Ames
415-373-5122, angela@dwell.com

Dwell Digital
Brand Manager / Digital
Jenny Gomatos
919-345-0563, jgomatos@dwell.com

Dwell on Design
General Manager / Dwell on Design
Michael Sylvester
Sponsorship Sales Managers / West
Meredith Barberich
415-342-8830, mbarberich@dwell.com
Shelley Guastucci
707-226-1060, sguastucci@dwell.com
Sponsorship Sales Manager / Midwest
Lisa Steele
248-647-6447, lsteele@dwell.com
Sales Manager / Los Angeles
Sunshine Campbell
310-570-3818, sunshine@dwell.com

Modern Market / Dwell on Design
Brand Manager / Sponsorship Sales
Northern U.S., Canada
Diane MacLean
248-860-4699, dmaclean@dwell.com
Brand Manager / Sponsorship Sales
Southwest, Southeast
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Brand Manager / California
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Brand Director / International
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Wayne Carrington
866-219-6222, wayne@dwell.com
New York Sales / Marketing Coordinator
Mari Slater
917-210-1734, mari@dwell.com

West
Chalamode, LLC
Cha Mueller
310-829-1200, cha@dwell.com
Stacey Jones
310-829-1201, sjones@dwell.com

Midwest
Derr Media Group
Timothy J. Derr
847-615-1921, derrmediagroup@comcast.net
Karen Teegarden & Associates
Karen Teegarden
248-642-1773, karen@kteegarden.com

South / Southeast
Nuala Berrells Media
Nuala Berrells
214-660-9713, nuala@sbcglobal.net

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I have been a Dwell reader since the beginning. When a new issue is out, I try to clear my schedule to read it cover to cover. (My newly renovated art studio has a shelf system dedicated to housing my well-worn back issues.)

The February 2010 issue has a three-way tie (a first for me) for favorite article: "Shelf Life," "Mod Men," and "Cambell's Coup." Each of them got an immediate second read. Three very different pieces of a big architectural puzzle and all of them brilliant. Thanks for doing such great homework in discovering these treasures and bringing them to us.

Bonnie Damron
Fullerton, California

In your December/January 2010 issue, you've finally given us readers a break from single pictures of the "Houses We Love"! I was delighted to learn more about the three housing solutions you presented. Please continue with such presentations, and would you please add a north arrow and a graphic scale to plans? Evaluations of designs are not really meaningful without such simple tools!

Arthur Wm. Carlson III
Titusville, Pennsylvania

I am a faithful reader of Dwell and eagerly await the newest edition every month. I've bought it regularly at the newsstand for the last several years and planned to subscribe this January, but the December/January 2010 "The Future" issue was unacceptable.

The issue felt phoned-in, for lack of a better term, and failed to deliver what I expect to see when I buy Dwell. Seriously, an article on living in space, one about a furniture concept that is not technically feasible (the magnetic ball thing), a story about a Biodome knockoff (inventor of the Eames chair or not, a shout-out to Pauly Shore, à la Bud Macintosh in *Bio-Dome*, was due here), a piece about a "cooperative" Dutch living structure (in North America that's called an apartment or condo building, albeit a clever-looking one; that's not a new concept), and an article about a car you don't have to drive (uhh...a suicide machine)?

I thought, however, that the November 2009 "Back to Basics" issue was outstanding. I live in a rural home in a lake community, so that issue was especially fun for me, but I imagine city dwellers also enjoyed the creative and detailed versions of modern rural getaways—creative homes that can and do exist in the real world, unlike much of the ideas in the December/January issue. The in-depth articles covering the real living structures that people are actually experimenting with in the November issue are what Dwell readers want to see.

But please, no more articles on space living and death cars.

Ryne Miller
Eufaula, Oklahoma

Your magazine inspires me and helps me get my creative juices flowing with new ideas for both my own property and the properties I help clients buy and sell in North Vancouver, Canada. I must say, however, as a member of North Vancouver's Advisory Planning Commission and a person looking to do more growing on a city lot, that although you say vertical farming and urban agriculture is the way of the future ("Editor's Note," November 2009), it sure would have been nice to have had at least a single photo. Dwell is the only magazine that I still purchase. I have come to expect your great writing to be matched with great photos. More visuals, please!

Joel Carcone
North Vancouver, British Columbia

Vertical farms—are you kidding? Have you ever worked on a real farm? Did you even talk to real farmers? Do you know how many acres of pasture it takes to raise a cow?

When editor-in-chief Sam Grawe wrote in the November 2009 "Editor's Note," "These vertical farms—multistory urban sites with crops and vegetables growing in greenhouselike conditions in their upper levels and livestock and fish thriving below," did he think about the infrastructure needed to support this kind of agriculture?

Let's see: First you build your multistory structure, which has to be extra strong to support the weight of soil and water. Then you add extra-large pipes to bring water in and waste out, extra ventilation so neighbors won't smell the manure, and separate freight elevators to convey the tractors and livestock. And that's just the beginning. Then you haul in hundreds of truckloads of soil and hire farmers to commute into the city to grow crops.

Certainly it makes sense to have parks, community gardens, and rooftop greenhouses in cities for many reasons—supplementing fresh food, personal satisfaction, reducing carbon emissions, appreciating nature—but true agriculture—producing food on a scale to feed the millions of people in cities—requires thousands of farmers tilling many thousands of acres.

It doesn't make sense to haul in truckloads of soil to build artificial farms in the city when real farms already exist nearby. The farmers live on the farms; they don't have to commute. They can work at home.

Dwell should be an advocate for retaining and sustaining the farms that already surround cities but are fast disappearing. As suburbs and new towns are built on our best farmland, we're forced to buy our food from halfway around the globe. When are we going to have the strength of character to resist the developers' dollars and honor the food-production value of the soil? Build the suburbs around the farmland, not on top of it. It is already too late in many areas, where our most fertile soils are now under acres of asphalt.

Dwell would do a greater service, not by writing about small-scale artificial farms built on high-rise structures at great costs, but by supporting real farmers on real farms close to cities and by resisting the obliteration of those farms by city growth.

Cynthia Richardson
Anacortes, Washington

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Wine Meets Design

All eyes are on Liebherr's new HWS 1800, a wine storage cabinet that takes fine wine from under the counter and places bottles in full view. With the capacity to hold 18 bottles, this innovative unit is surprisingly compact. Coupled with its diminutive size, a sleek recessed handle opens up opportunities for integration beyond the kitchen into the dining room, living room or study. Once inside, your bottles will benefit from ideal storage conditions such as precise temperature control and features that protect against light, odor & vibration, allowing you to enjoy the wine as much as the unique design.

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Prefab Parlance

From Kynar and Galvalume to SIPs, the terminology associated with prefab construction can be daunting. We asked a handful of architects and designers to help us build a prefab glossary of the top terms and definitions related to modular housing, and we hope you'll help us add to the list at dwell.com/prefab-glossary.

Mapping Prefab

In just under ten years, dozens of prefab projects from all over the world have graced the pages of Dwell. We sifted through our archives to find some of our best-loved pieces, revisiting stories from Ethiopia and Japan's Izu Peninsula to modular projects in our own backyards. We created a map that showcases the preeminent prefabs from our past, with links to the articles and slideshows of images. Reacquaint yourself with old favorites, or find houses you may have missed, at dwell.com/maps/mapping-prefab.

Rediscover your favorite prefabs, like the Scott Stafne Residence, first published in April/May 2005, this month at dwell.com.

CONTRIBUTORS

João Canziani
Photographer João Canziani recently relocated to Brooklyn, New York, after living in California for ten years. "I loved the perpetual sun and biking around Silver Lake, but I wanted to be in a place where I could continue to grow as an artist and be inspired by new things," he says. Canziani wasn't sure what to expect when he traveled to the Hamptons to shoot Tanya Wexler and Amy Zimmerman's house ("Kid Tested, Mothers Approved," p. 90). He'd imagined a land of WASPy snobbery but found a down-to-earth family and a beautiful home.

Patrick Di Justo
Patrick Di Justo enjoys writing stories that start in prehistoric times and continue into the future, as he did for this month's "Manufacturing 101" (p. 112). He lives in the New York area, near the place that makes parts for the Mars Rovers. He hopes to receive a MakerBot for his birthday this April.

William Lamb
William Lamb, a writer living in New Jersey, enjoyed making his first trek to the Hamptons to report on Tanya Wexler and Amy Zimmerman's modular beach retreat ("Kid Tested, Mothers Approved," p. 90). He didn't bump into Billy Joel or P. Diddy while there, but he now understands what they see in the place.

Benjamin Laramie
The last time San Francisco-based industrial designer Benjamin Laramie made any sort of flower out of paper was in elementary school. For this month's "Dwell Reports" (p. 60), however, Laramie was asked to fill nine planters with botanicals made entirely of paper. After studying a vintage illustrated encyclopedia of houseplants, he abstracted and handcrafted over 20 varieties of flora made up of hundreds of individual pieces, no two being exactly alike.

Dan Maginn
Dan Maginn is a principal with the Kansas City–based architecture firm El Dorado, Inc. His failed experiments with cat diapers and bulk-toasted bagels notwithstanding, he is enthusiastic about the timesaving potential of prefabrication in everyday life. Want to know if prefab is right for you? Check out Maginn's helpful flowchart: "Is Prefab for You?" (p. 80).

Geoff Manaugh
Writer and former Dwell senior editor Geoff Manaugh was living in New York City this winter to teach a design studio with his wife about quarantine when he visited Lawrence and Alice Weiner's townhouse ("My House," p. 51). He stopped by on a gray Halloween afternoon, dodging masked Manhattanites—and the fully costumed Sixth Avenue parade—to get a tour through the home's industrially redone interior.

Brendan Francis Newnam
Brendan Francis Newnam is a writer who complains about living in Los Angeles. While researching the seismic code for his story about David McAdam's Blue Sky Homes ("Plan of Steel," p. 82), he was pleased to find the term "catastrophic failure" used to describe something other than his handwriting. When not giving impromptu lectures on how to use turn signals, he cohosts the *Dinner Party Download*, a public radio show that helps people "win the dinner party," the tagline of the show.

Tim Tomkinson
While working on the images for "Manufacturing 101" (p. 112), illustrator Tim Tomkinson also juggled the sale of his Brooklyn apartment in anticipation of a relocation to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. A dramatic change in lifestyle, the move to Wyoming offers Tomkinson and his wife a new realm of inspiration and adventure—not to mention increased space for his ever-expanding array of art and supplies.

Photo by John Clark

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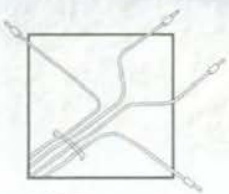

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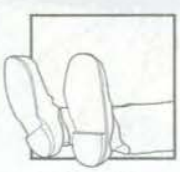

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why green?

Kathy Ireland
DESIGNINGreen Leader

Some personal faves...

Dessert: My mom's chocolate chip cookies (or Chef Andre's!)

Play: Wicked

Treasure: Artwork of our children Erik, Lily, and Chloe

Garment: Valentino gown given by Dame Elizabeth Taylor

Color: Green

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why not?

Where to find real green

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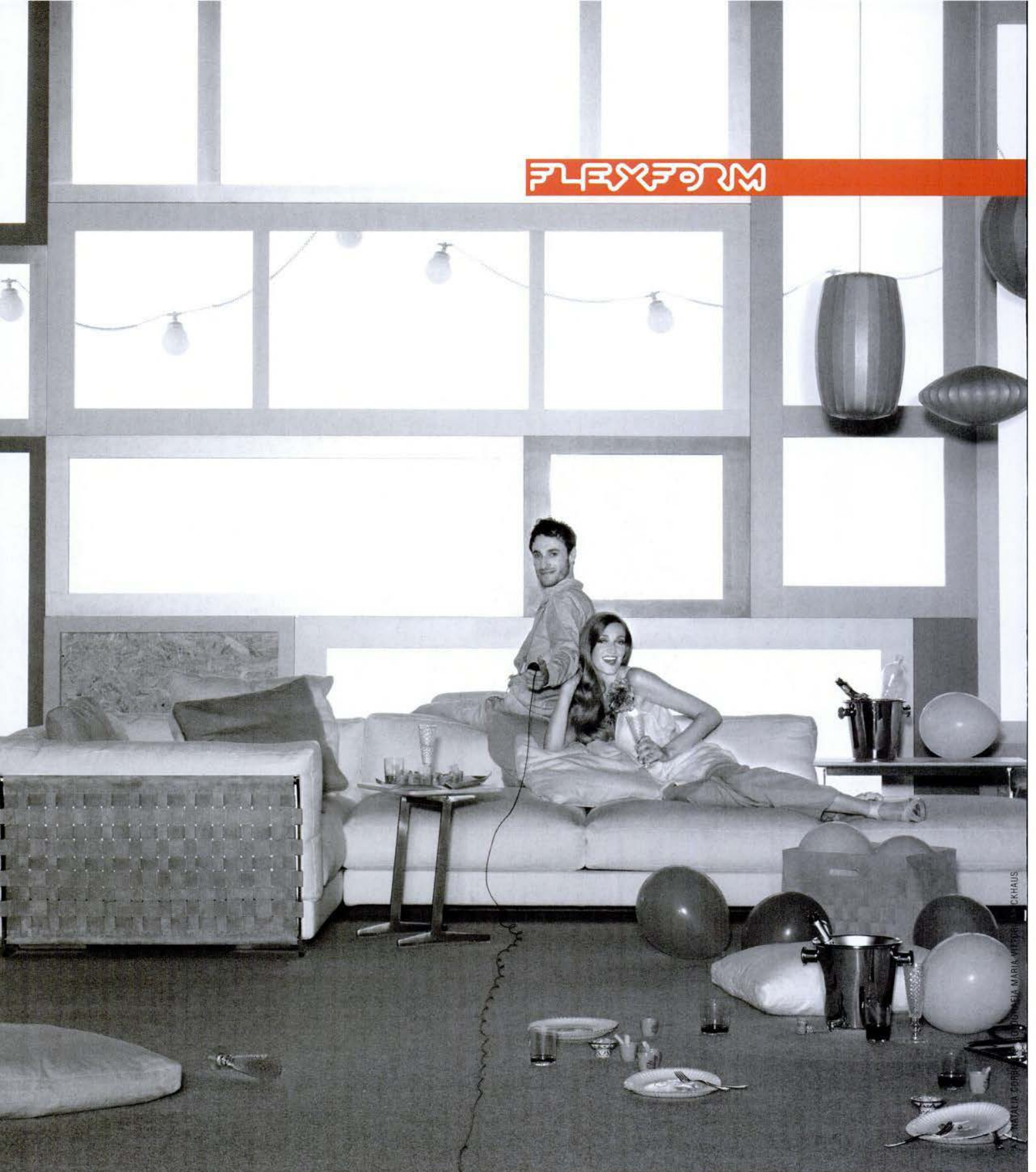
sustainablefurnishings.org



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CONTENTS

In the Modern World

Photo by Steve Hall/Hedrich Blessing

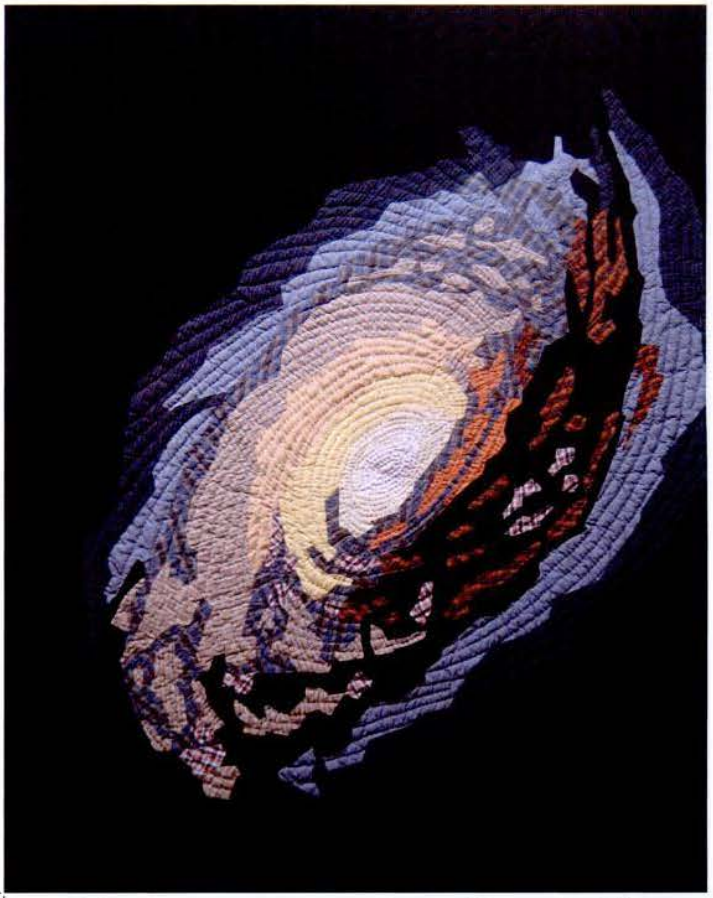
Finding an urban room with a view is not an easy task. Studio Gang Architects addressed this need when they designed the Aqua Tower in downtown Chicago. The sculptural, mixed-use skyscraper was built to accommodate retail and office spaces as well as residential units and condos, with Windy City vistas offered from undulating terraces that take shape along the building like concrete waves on a shining, vertical shore. *studiogang.net*

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

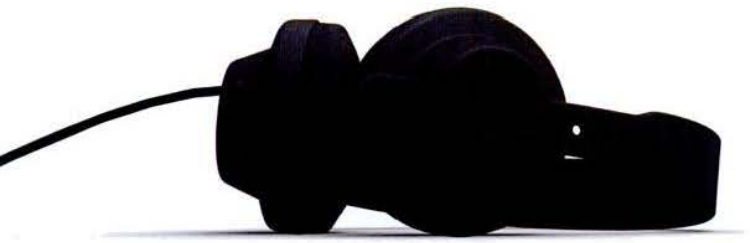
April 2
Palladio and His Legacy: A Transatlantic Journey opens at the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City. themorgan.org

Ceramic Clock Model No. 2 and No. 3
By George Nelson
design-museum.com
George Nelson might be best known for his Ball clock, but our man of the hour also designed a series of ceramic desk pieces in the early 1950s that never made it into production—until now.

M64 Child's Quilt
By Jimmy McBride
jimmymcbride.com
The swirling stars of the Black Eye Galaxy are transformed into stitches on M64. Designer Jimmy McBride's intergalactic inspiration for his collection of handmade quilts comes directly from the cosmos. *(right)*



TMA headphones
By KiBiSi for Aiaiai
aiaiai.dk
Earbuds may suffice for an inconspicuous (ahem) Coldplay (ahem) session on your morning commute, but these minimalist jet-black, DJ-friendly headphones will leave you—and possibly everyone else on your bus—with no choice but to conspicuously nod and bob in time with your dubstep, grimestep, or 2-step playlist.

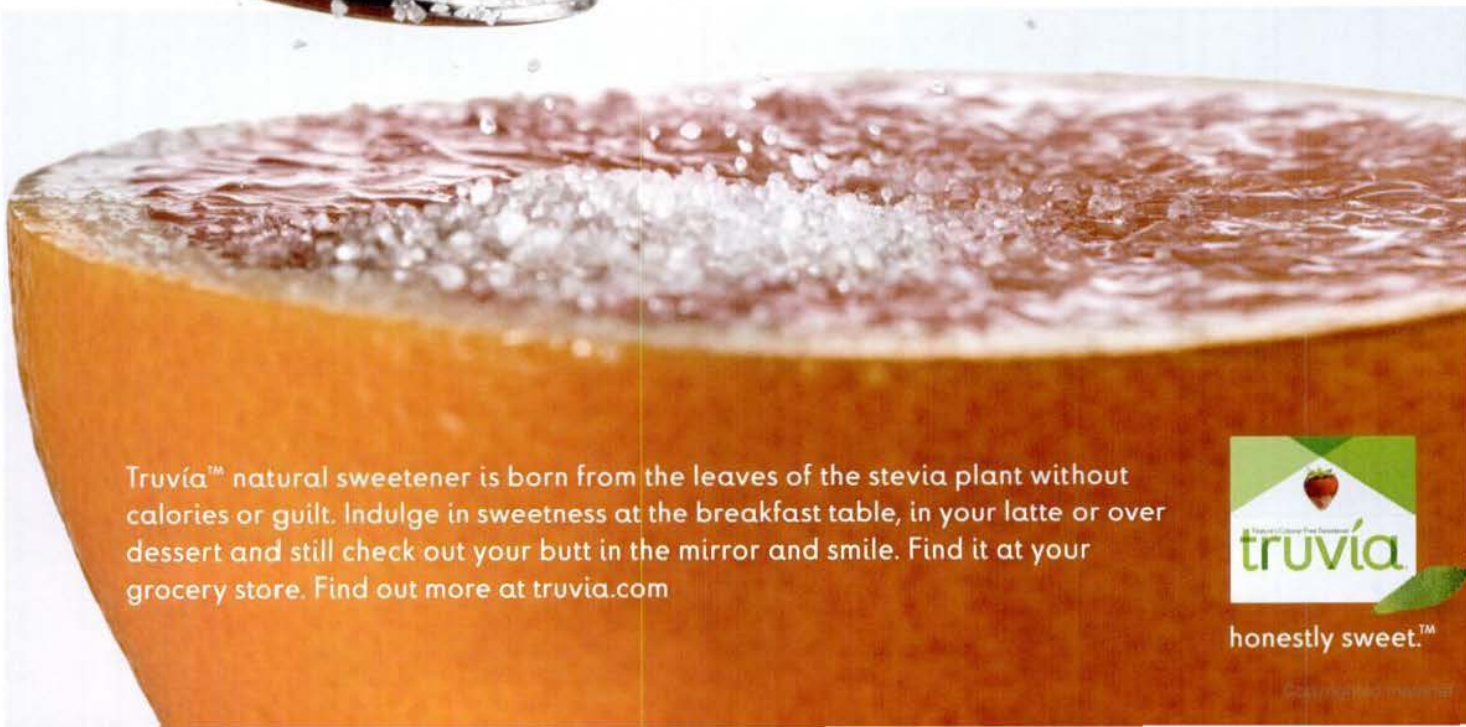


PuraVida
By Phoenix Design for Duravit
duravit.com
Forget flat screens above the toilet and LED-illuminated tubs. When we retreat to the bathroom it's a time to relax without distraction (and, of course, wash our hands afterwards). PuraVida is Duravit's second collaboration with Stuttgart-based studio Phoenix Design, and the milky white ceramic series—which includes basins, toilets, tubs, and showers—creates a smooth, clean look that even stray dollops of shaving cream and splatterings of toothpaste can't sully.

April 4
Design USA: Contemporary Innovation closes at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York City. cooperhewitt.org

April 4
Slash: Paper Under the Knife closes at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City. madmuseum.org

Give in to sweetness without giving up your skinny jeans.



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Such Great Heights

In late 2008, you could barely scroll through a design blog without encountering Dubai's Dynamic Tower: the world's first moving skyscraper, brainchild of self-proclaimed visionary and tireless self-promoter architect David Fisher. Each floor would rotate independently, creating an ever-changing silhouette that Fisher brazenly predicted would transform the world's skylines. *Time* declared it one of 2008's "Best Inventions of the Year," and Fisher was awarded Architect of the Year by the Developer and Builders Alliance.

What a difference a year makes. Now, what might be the most overhyped architectural project in history might never be built.

Dubai's real-estate market is reeling. The tower, originally slated to open in 2010, has not yet broken ground, though the architect insists it's because of delays in obtaining land approvals, not technical problems or financing. His office claims they'll still start this year, as skeptics devour news about the tower like condors ravaging a corpse.

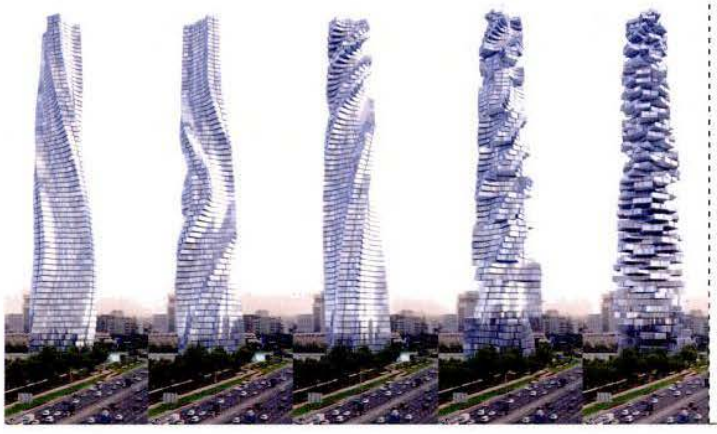
The Dynamic Tower is good for Dubai because 90 percent of the tower will be constructed in a factory, reducing the number of on-site workers from 2,000 to 90. In a region notorious for horrific working conditions, this is a welcome development. Statistics compiled by Build Safe UAE, a group of construction companies committed to safer worksites, reported 690 "lost-time injuries" caused by crushing incidents, falling objects, explosions, and fires in 2008 alone.

The only part of the Dynamic Tower that will be built on-site is the central core of the 80-story tower. Each floor will be made up of 12 modules that will arrive at the site fully built. The donut-shaped modules will be assembled around the base of the core and hoisted up by cables, like an upside-down Fisher-Price stacking toy. This will dramatically reduce the amount of time workers toil at high altitude in oppressive heat. If the Dynamic Tower lives up to its hype, it will generate all of its own energy and power five additional comparably sized buildings thanks to between-floor wind turbines and rooftop solar panels.

The delays and rumors have been enough to provoke doubt, however, as has the fact that Fisher has never before built a skyscraper. Even if the Dynamic Tower implodes in a flurry of false bravado and engineering impossibility, other architects in the region should be encouraged to fulfill Fisher's prefab promise with or without the spin.

–Robin Cherry

dynamicarchitecture.net



Piero Lissoni

"Prolific" is a weighty designation to assign to a living designer, but few contemporaries have produced the caliber and portfolio of Piero Lissoni. Since the start of his career in 1978, the designer and architect has produced major works for every room in the house for a who's who of brands—Alessi, Cappellini, Living Divani, Kartell, Cassina—as well as homes, showrooms, and hotels in cities around the globe. Dwell caught up with the soft-spoken Italian at the showroom Dzine in San Francisco.

Ideal working environment: Everywhere. I may prefer to work at a classical table in a classical office with a lot of noise, or a beautiful park, or in a forest, or on the top of a mountain. It's totally personal; there are no limits.

Lucky break: Love is the real lucky break. It can happen in a flash.

"Eureka!" moment: To enjoy a fantastic cappuccino in the morning with a very good croissant. This can help the creative process a lot.

Hero: Donald Duck. He is, at the same time, human, stupid, and a genius.

Best seat in the house: In the kitchen.

A book: I have a *biblioteca*. Two of my favorite books are *The Odyssey*, by Homer, and *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, by Italo Calvino.

A film: There are too many.

Worst-ever idea: It's not possible to talk about it.

Highest compliment: To be human. Humanity is so complex. You have to be nice, angry, and arrogant. A fighter and a lover.

Soundtrack: I like baroque music from the 17th century, especially Bach, and the piano player Glenn Gould.

Antihero: Stupidity is the antihero. I'm against ignorant people and unfortunately this world is full of them.

Best advice: Every moment of every day is a long intellectual process. Professionally, everything is possible. You have to be lucky, but you also have to be good.

When not designing: I design a lot.

Dream commission: To be able to continue in this way for many years.

I wish I had: More time to spend sailing, skiing, climbing, walking somewhere—anywhere.

Looking forward to: Girls. Beauty is a special alphabet. More than just long legs, artifice, and plastic; it's looking true, a nice light in the eyes, some natural movement.

lissoniassociati.com

Super Structure

Q & A

Jim Zack & Lise de Vito

Occupation:
Principals, Zack/de Vito Architecture
www.zackdevito.com

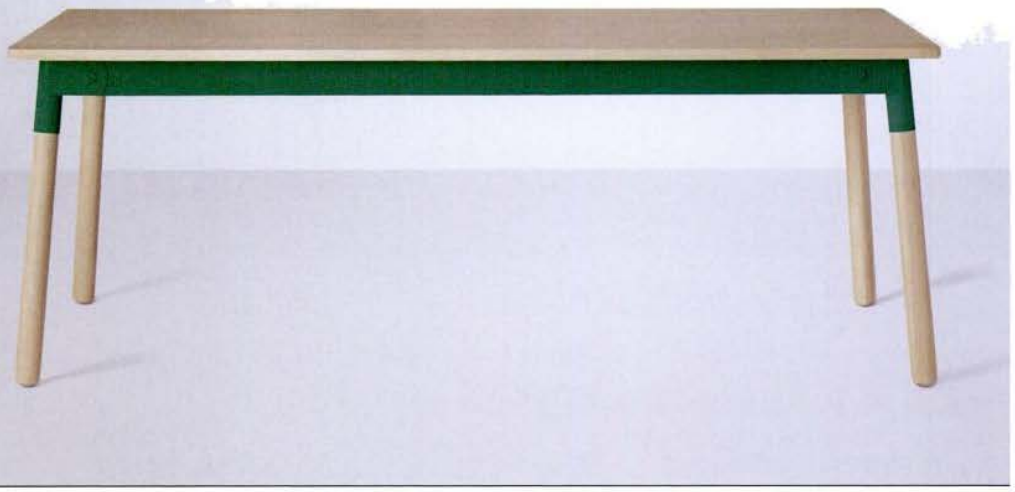
Location:
San Francisco

Favorite Light:
GLO' low voltage Pendant by Leucos
Designed by Danilo De Rossi, 2003

Quilt
By Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec for Established & Sons
establishedandsons.com
The brothers Bouroullec have deconstructed the standard sofa in favor of a softer profile, equal parts deflated soccer ball, puffy coat, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle. Though the soft bowl-shaped seat is comfortable to sink into, a fiberglass shell, steel frame, and individual foam inserts beneath Quilt's stretch fabric upholstery will keep you from drowning in turtle soup.

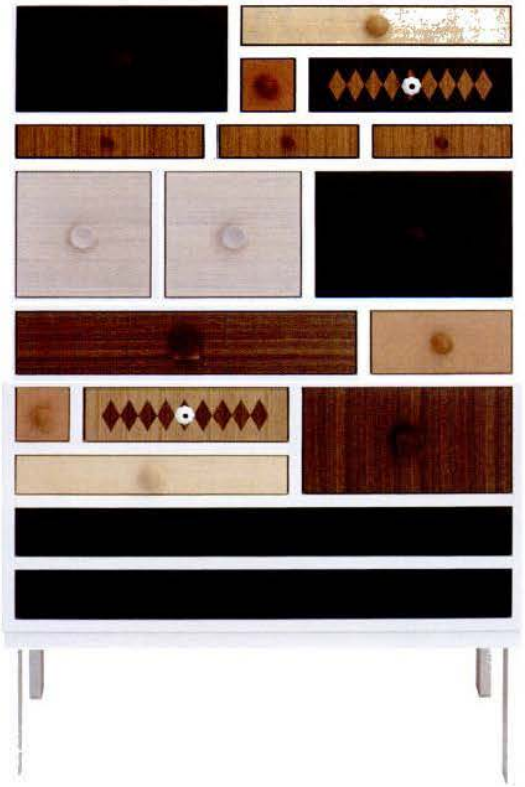
Poulpe
By Oriol Llahona for Estiluz
estiluz.com
Imagine this sleek lacquered lamp had eight twisting arms instead of four straight legs (or simply translate its name from French), and the true muse for this fixture will be revealed.

Adaptable
By TAF Architects for Muuto
muuto.com
Mixing and matching might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you're deciding on a dining table, but Muuto's mutable options allow for a fully customizable fixture. TAF Architects modernized a Scandinavian classic with three styles of oak tops and legs and four colors of powder-coated steel frames, for a total of 36 possible combinations to suit your decor or dishes.



April 8
Iannis Xenakis: Composer, Architect, Visionary closes at the Drawing Center in New York City. drawingcenter.org

April 11
The Exploded City closes at the University of California, Berkeley, Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. bampfa.berkeley.edu



Collect
By Wis Design for Schönbuch
schoenbuch.com
You'll find a place for most everything in this patchwork chest. Just don't forget what you put in which drawer. *(above)*

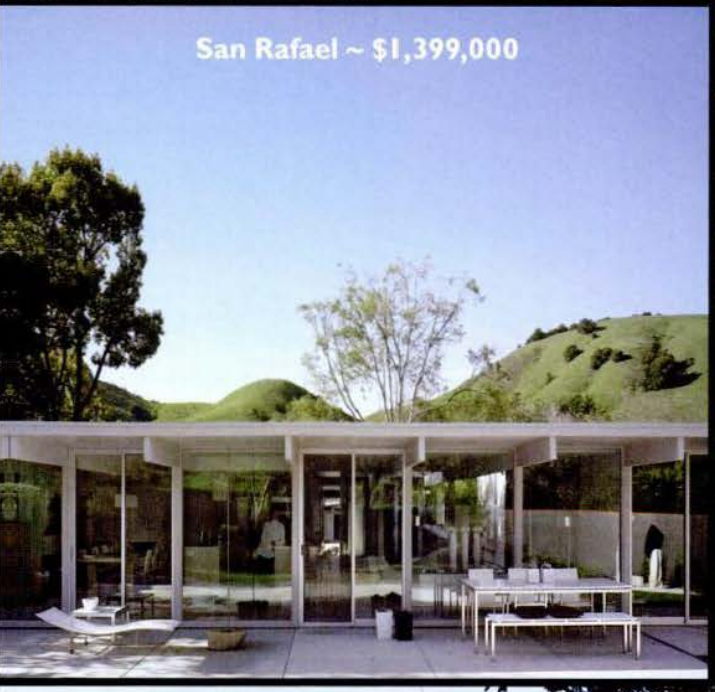
JRA2
By Jenni Roininen for Nikari
nikari.fi
This spare chair from Nikari proves that boxy is indeed beautiful, and finished Finnish wood feels fine. *(top right)*

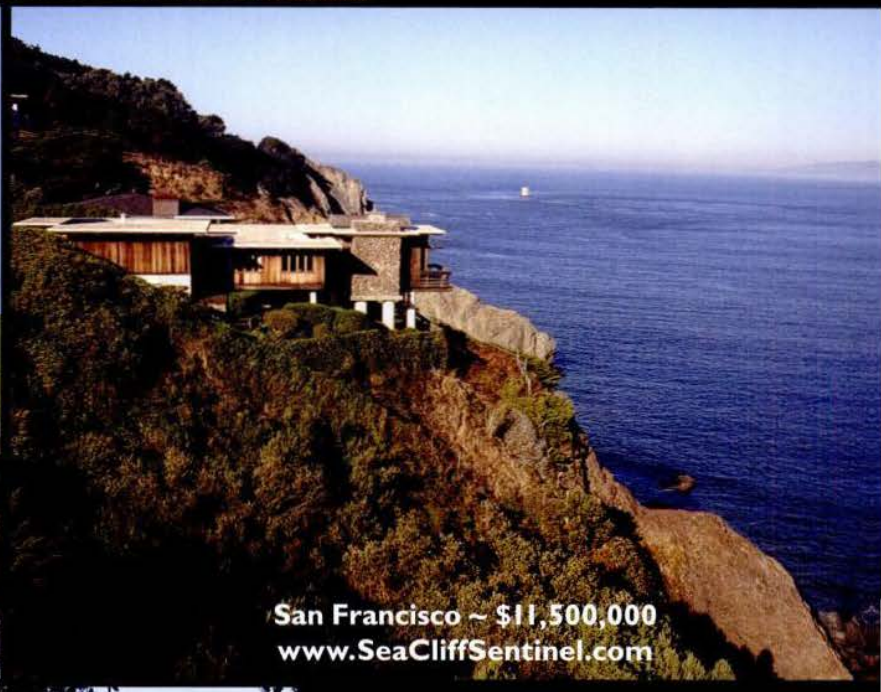
Allumette
By Atelier Oï for Röthlisberger Kollektion
roethlisberger.ch
Don't be deceived: The filigreed frame of this sofa only looks delicate, like a loosely assembled collection of matchsticks. Designed by Swiss design firm Atelier Oï, the geometric structure is made of arura vermelho, an extra-hard Amazonian timber. The Allumette series also features dining table, chair, and armchair.

April 14–19
The world's leading designers show off their freshest creations at the annual Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan. cosmit.it

April 28
Contemplating the Void: Interventions in the Guggenheim Museum closes in New York City. guggenheim.org

Distinctive San Francisco Bay Area Homes





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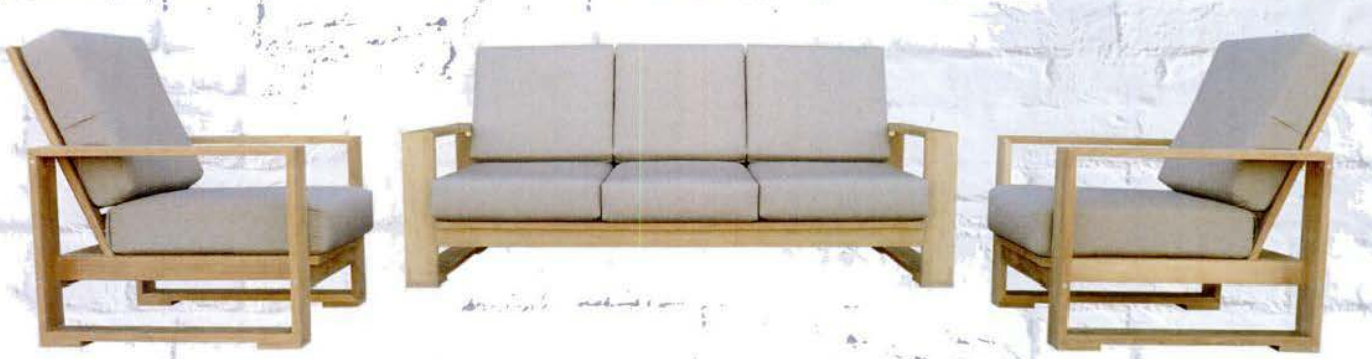
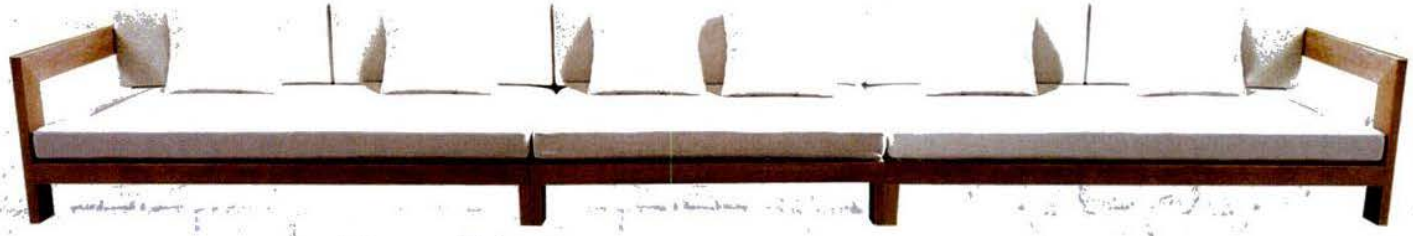


LIVE OUTDOORS



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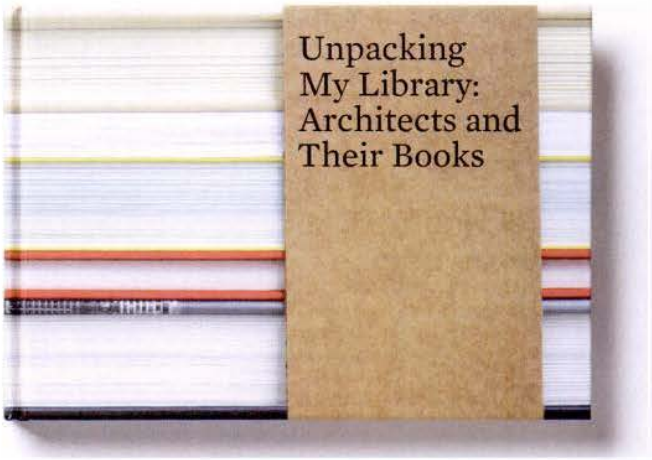

Definitive Collections

We all know not to judge a book by its cover, or people by the company they keep. *Unpacking My Library: Architects and Their Books* offers a guided tour across the shelves of ten famous architects, each of whom gives a brief yet intimate take on the titles that shaped their lives and careers. It tempts us to conflate and contradict the opening adages: We are invited to judge these people by the covers they keep.

Unpacking opens with a reprint from literary critic and essayist Walter Benjamin's 1969 book, *Illuminations*. "There are spirits, or at least little genii, which have seen to it that for a collector... ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects," he writes. "Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them." In the chapters that follow, we browse the personal libraries on a curated tour, from Steven Holl to Stan Allen, Toshiko Mori to Michael Graves. Photographs of individual shelves are shown—Henry N. Cobb houses a set of tattered back issues of *L'Esprit Nouveau*, while Hitchcock and *Frankenstein* sit by side on Bernard Tschumi's shelves. Also included is a top-ten-books list from each featured architect.

In this digital age, when reading often amounts to more page scroll than page turn, collections—what we choose to own and display—will undoubtedly begin to take on even more meaning. Now, we welcome the meta-moment of pulling a book from our shelf that details the tomes lining the shelves of others we admire.

yalepress.yale.edu

Tomorrow Never Knows

At the 1933 World's Fair in Chicago, prefab construction was introduced as the salient element of modern residential architecture. Eleven Homes of Tomorrow, financed by building-materials manufacturers and designed by ambitious young architects were constructed for the Century of Progress–themed event, despite it being the middle of the Great Depression. When the fair came to a close, six of the homes were barged or trucked eastward to the Indiana Dunes for a happy second life.

Plans to make the Dunes a dazzling resort proved impractical, and while five of the houses survived, time and neglect took their toll. Only recently did the National Park Service, which bought the land and houses in the 1980s, come to terms with long-term lessees who agreed to repair them to their former glory.

Among the restorers were Chicago couple Christoph and Char Lichtenfeld, who in 2005 undertook the renovation of the Armco-Ferro Enamel House, designed by Robert Smith Jr. Christoph, a recently retired manufacturing engineer, leapt at the opportunity to ply his metalworking skills. Both he and Char saw it as their chance to have a holiday home on Lake Michigan.

In 1933, the 2,400-square-foot home—two stories and an atrium with factory-made sections of roll-formed steel and sides of baked-porcelain enamel—went up in 11 days. The restoration has not been as quick or as simple.

In the 77 years since it was erected, "the structure had been completely compromised," Christoph says. Ultimately, saving the house meant building a new foundation; replacing the siding, which was too badly corroded to save; and supplanting significant portions of the walls with new sections of corrugated 22-gauge steel. Christoph also replaced all floors with a system of interlocking steel Z-panels. Fabricated on press brakes and bolted together to create sturdy, hollow "pans," the panels mimic the original floor, which was spot-welded together at the factory.

The World's Fair prefab homes were futuristic in concept but not built for the ages. The Lichtenfelds hope to have the home in full working order this year. "The problem with steelwork is that it is just so time-consuming," Christoph says. But time has had its benefits, too. "With all its flaws, we slowly learned to love this house," Char says.

–Jay Pridmore

nps.gov/indu/historyculture/armco-ferro-house.htm

Photos by Peter Belanger (book), Kaufmann & Fabry (exterior)

Books

Preservation

House in Never Never Land
Cala Vadella, San José, Ibiza, Spain
Andrés Jaque Architectos
andresjaque.net

Planit
Rolo, Reggio Emilia, Italy
Bestetti Associati
bestettiassociati.com

Photos by Miguel de Guzman (House in Never Never Land), Fabrizio Bergamo/Foto Studio Fratelli Zambroni (Planit)

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Salt Point House
Salt Point, New York
Thomas Phifer and Partners
tphifer.com

Photo by Scott Frances

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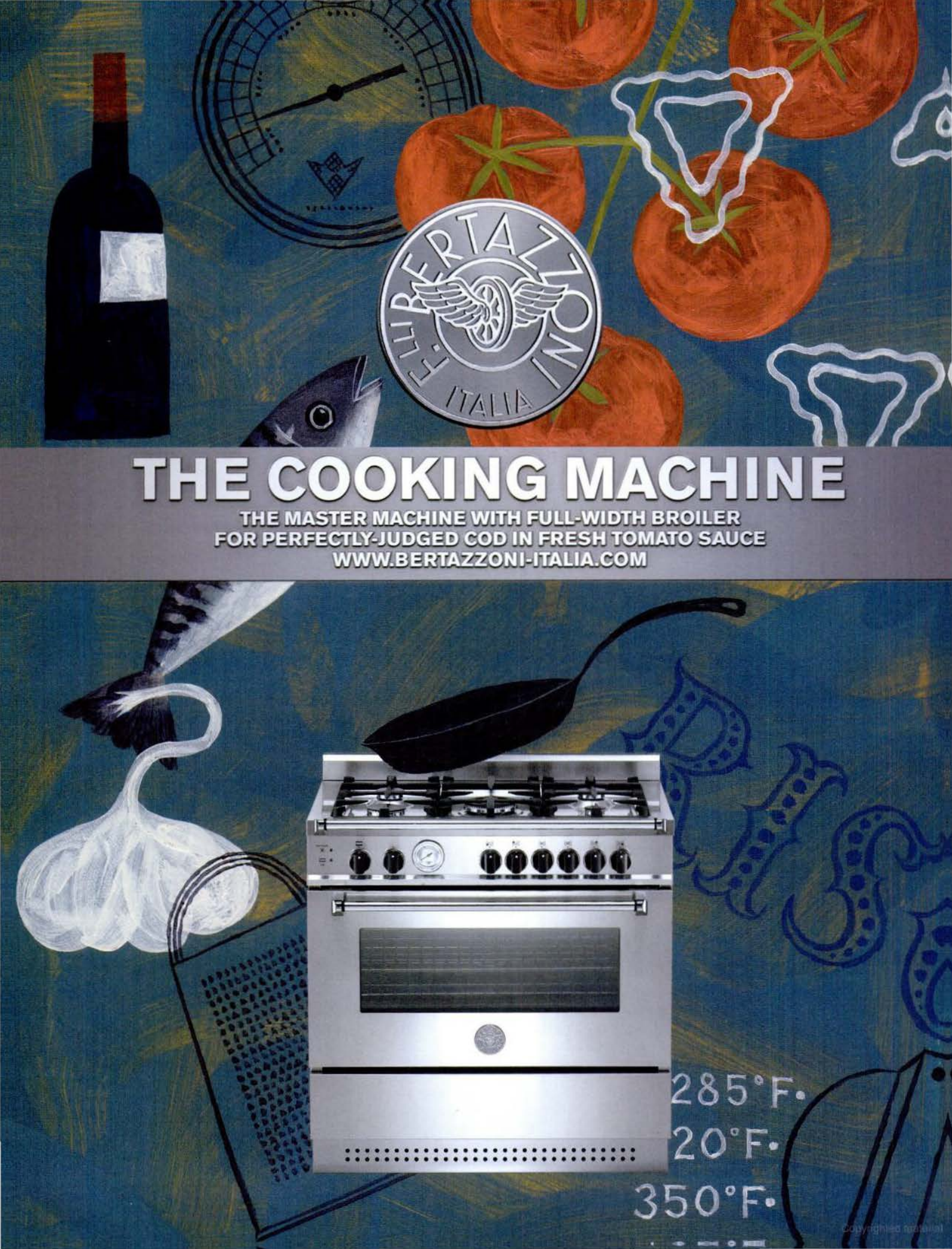
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Village People

Amidst the pedestrian-friendly maze of leafy streets in New York City's West Village, LOT-EK, a firm whose designs focus on the creative reuse of industrial materials, inserted a gut-renovated and intensely colorful new home—getting a facade embedded with truck beds past the heritage commission along the way.

Lawrence and Alice Weiner have lived in New York City for nearly half a century, but it wasn't until 1990 that they bought their first house. Over the years, Lawrence, one of the godfathers of 20th-century conceptual art and widely known for his minimalist experiments with language, needed a bigger place to work—and more room for his ever-expanding archive. Twenty years after moving in, with a renovation wrapped up in 2009, the Weiners' three-story house in the West Village is sublimely industrial. In the interest of collaboration, Alice and Lawrence talk us through their new home. ▶

Story by Geoff Manaugh
Photos by Dean Kaufman

Lawrence Weiner sits at his daylit desk. The bare walls are perfect for tacking up new projects, and the steel ductwork gives the space an industrious feel.

Even with the reused truck bodies creating large windows in the facade (top), the house still cuts a trim figure on the street. The rooftop garden is hidden from the sidewalk.

Lawrence and Alice (below) confer in the ground-floor kitchen. Traces of color are visible everywhere, including the orange-and-yellow curtains and pink coathooks.

Alice: We've always lived in New York—Lawrence in the East Village since the early 1960s. But after we were evicted in 1988, with a note left on our door at seven o'clock in the morning, I spent about eight months riding my bike around the city, looking at buildings. Lawrence would only move to the West Village, he said, and I wanted a backyard.

One day I biked past a former bakery and laundromat, and it had aluminum siding. I said I would never set foot in a building like that! But our real estate agents tricked me, basically, and got me to go inside. When I went downstairs, I saw that the entire basement wall was a mirror—and Lawrence loves to work with mirrors. I thought: Maybe this isn't so bad.

So we bought it and moved in. Then two things happened: First, Mayor Giuliani changed the building codes to allow for another story, and, second, our neighbor started to build up. We didn't want to be overshadowed—literally: Someday we knew we wanted solar panels—so we started thinking about a renovation.

Lawrence: That was 2005. I met Ada [Tolla] and Giuseppe [Lignano, LOT-EK's principals] that year at a show I was doing in Finland.

Alice: And he liked them, and he liked their work. Ada and Giuseppe also lived right here in the neighborhood, so we thought that they could break through the nicey-nicey aspect of the West Village.

But we don't come from people who hire architects! That wasn't in our background. We started off looking by word of mouth, and we looked for quite a while. We made it clear right away that we wanted a green renovation. Initially, we had architects coming through offering environmentally friendly paints and things like that—but that just felt like stuff for rich people who don't want their children to get sick. We wanted something more.

Lawrence: Ada and Giuseppe got the spatial sense well. I need a lot of light, for instance, and I seem to require outdoor spaces, both psychologically and for my work. The earlier house was a mixture of studio and

The Weiners (top left) sit in one of the many large window bays, showing how the reused truck bodies look from within. The huge master bathroom (top right) includes a fully accessible walk-in shower. Pieces from Lawrence's voluminous archive (center and bottom right) act like unintentional architectural ornaments, bringing color and humanity to the often Spartan LOT-EK design. The back garden (bottom left) includes fragments of stone from the earlier building.

Jesse

SELECTION CONCEPT
BY JESSE LAB

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SERIES OF 4 : 5
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ANDY : **BED GROUP** : CRJ
TULLYBED : **BED** : MASSIMILIANO MORNATI
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home, and I wanted the same arrangement. I was working on a retrospective while they were redoing the house, so I had to move in earlier and accommodate changes in the architecture. I saw the house come together, part by part, pragmatically, whereas Alice had a more holistic view of the final building.

Alice: LOT-EK was generous about letting us have what we wanted—but we were also very generous to them and open to their ideas. They had an interest in exposed industrial materials, and I actually wished that they had exposed more—like the radiant heating and the kitchen exhaust pipe—but the contractor wouldn't do it! They used diamond-plate steel as a backsplash in the kitchen—which we painted pink—and they put untreated plywood inside the elevator. We need that for moving Lawrence's work.

Lawrence: A lot of the detailing that we pushed for had to work around the spatial idea of the architects—that's not a bad thing, but you do have to work with someone else's ideas.

Alice: I like the roughness of LOT-EK's approach and Ada's tactile sense—like the reflective metal they used on the walls. It keeps the daylight moving through the house and it visually sustains the colors that we chose. There's also a lot of rubber, steel, and recycled oak—and it was their idea to use trucks in the facade. Of course, you can't please everybody. A little old lady came by one night; she knocked on our door, she had a cane in one hand, and she said that she hated the color of our bicycle rack! Our neighbors across the street called one night and said: "You left your truck lights on!"

Lawrence: The trucks are almost an elegant affectation. But the great thing was Ada and Giuseppe bringing a building that had been stuck in the mud into the present day, giving it a sense of openness without it really sticking out in the neighborhood.

Alice: You can miss the trucks entirely. The wall color blends in with the houses nearby, and it might be three or four times before you walk past and notice them. But this is New York; people shouldn't expect everybody to want to look like everybody else.

The couple's archival photographer Alyssa Gorelick (top) sits in front of Lawrence's sliding red storage units while Alice reviews some papers in the background. Lawrence (bottom) relaxes in the master bedroom with a hand-rolled cigarette. The room has a lavender ceiling (Alice was told it's the best color to see when waking).

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papyrus chair, 2008 by Bouroullec Bros - plastics ottoman, 2003 by Piero Lissoni - Made in Italy by Kartell

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Keep on Truckin'

The house contains five stainless steel truck bodies taken from 18-wheelers; two were used for constructing the rooftop penthouse (itself topped with solar panels). The trucks were pieced together by Truck Body East in Orange, New Jersey. truckbodyeast.com

One to Grow On

The Weiners' first stab at a decorative green roof went awry when workers installed the fabric membrane incorrectly; the plants didn't thrive, and soil leached down the drain, causing a backup in the yard below. But with the help of an artist friend—and avid gardener—they successfully brought a piece of cultivated wildness, including hardy flora like creeping thyme, honeysuckle, hops, and kiwi, to their roof.

Twice Baked

A garden path in the backyard was paved with discarded marble windowsills and stone doorframes. This reuse of ruins adds texture to the landscape.

Tone Poem

The entire house is marked by dramatic changes in color: Though the walls are white, the floors and ceiling swap tones, and pink fluorescent lights give way to a lavender bedroom ceiling. The domestic spectrum culminates in the orange floor and curtains of the rooftop penthouse—proving that even diamond-plate steel and ventilation ducts, given some Safecoat paint, can be made as colorful and warm as a kindergarten. afmsafecoat.com

Partly Cloudy

The Weiners put Kalwall translucent panels to good use on the home's back wall, bringing daylight in without the use of glass windows. Although Kalwall panels can look slightly institutional in cloudy light, the results are often golden, as here. kalwall.com

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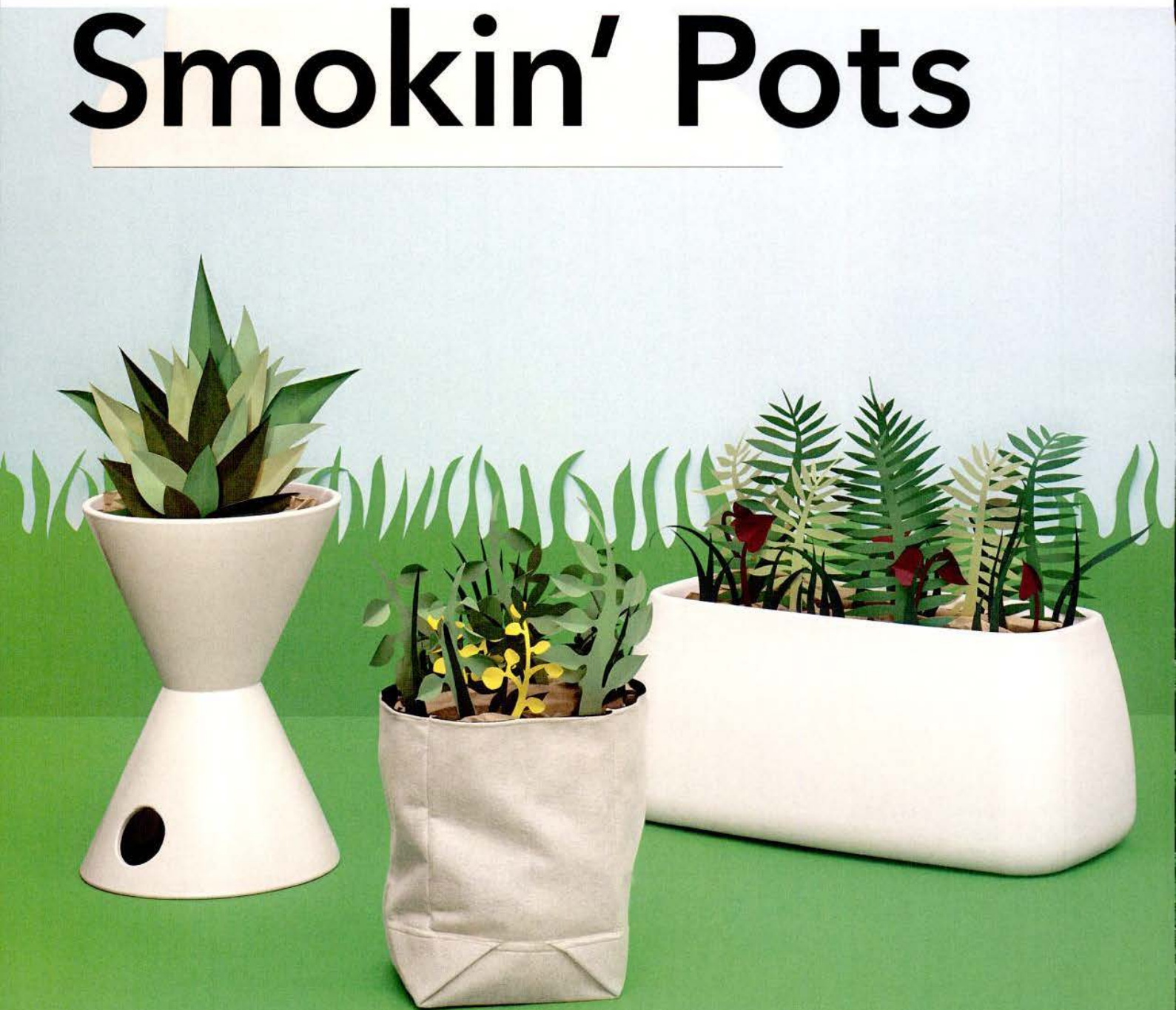
Smokin' Pots



Story by Miyoko Ohtake
Photos by Peter Belanger
Paper art by Benjamin Laramie

TH-4, $1,095
H 26"
by La Gardo Tackett
for Architectural Pottery
architecturalpottery.com

Ridge, $67
W 12" x L 12" x H 18"
by Woolly Pocket
woollypocket.com

Sahara 5, $590
W 17" x L 39" x H 17"
by Pablos Griones
for Gandia Blasco
gandiablasco.com

Griffin XL, $880
H 28"
by Reza Feiz for Phase Design
phasedesignonline.com

Nature, $375
H 18"
by Tram Pham and Dominic D'Andrea for Design Night
designnight.com

18" Square, $240
W 18" x L 18" x H 16"
by Loll Designs
lolldesigns.com

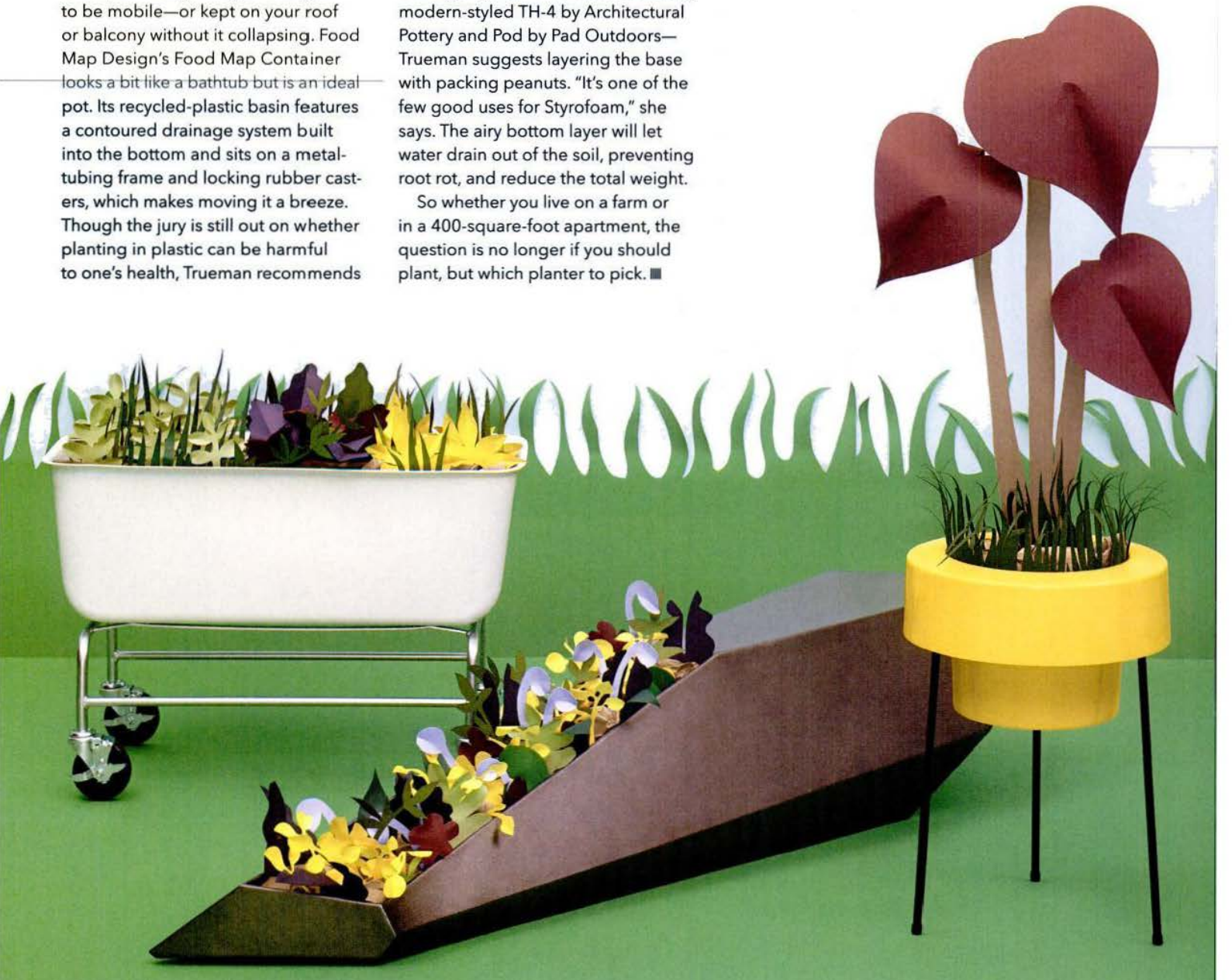
You don't need a garden to grow food or flowers. And even if you've got one, planters are often preferable. "With a backyard, you have to take into account so many things about your soil: clay, rocks, drainage," says Huffington Post food and garden blogger Kerry Trueman. "Container gardening is the ultimate way to go. You can move pots around, plant things next to one another that have different needs, and create the perfect soil for each."

A perfect home planter has a hole in the bottom for drainage, weathers well so it can be placed either indoors or out, and is lightweight enough to be mobile—or kept on your roof or balcony without it collapsing. Food Map Design's Food Map Container looks a bit like a bathtub but is an ideal pot. Its recycled-plastic basin features a contoured drainage system built into the bottom and sits on a metal-tubing frame and locking rubber casters, which makes moving it a breeze. Though the jury is still out on whether planting in plastic can be harmful to one's health, Trueman recommends the material, which is also used in the Sahara 5 by Gandia Blasco and 18" Square by Loll Design, as it is often recycled and recyclable, lightweight, and lower in cost than metal or ceramic.

A missing key feature like a drainage hole, however, shouldn't automatically eliminate a planter from your list of possibilities. Woolly Pocket's Ridge is made of breathable fabric that wicks the water out of its sides and base, and the 18" Square joinery allows for water to escape through its edges.

For planters that steal your heart based on their aesthetics but lack a drainage system—like the mid-century-modern-styled TH-4 by Architectural Pottery and Pod by Pad Outdoors—Trueman suggests layering the base with packing peanuts. "It's one of the few good uses for Styrofoam," she says. The airy bottom layer will let water drain out of the soil, preventing root rot, and reduce the total weight.

So whether you live on a farm or in a 400-square-foot apartment, the question is no longer if you should plant, but which planter to pick. ■



Food Map Container, $185
W 15.25" x L 33" x H 23.25"
by Food Map Design
foodmapdesign.com

Shard Planter Bench, $3,200
W 19" x L 71" x H 16"
by Charles Constantine
for Planterworx
planterworx.com

Pod, $202
H 10" with 22" stand
by Pad Outdoor
padoutdoor.com

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Prince of Tides

For all the joys of beachfront living, it's not without its risks. But with some smart design and sound engineering, this small coastal house stands tall against the threat of rising tides.

Story by Sarah Rich
Photos by Mathew Scott

On a sandy cul-de-sac in Stinson Beach, California, architects Matthew Peek and Renata Ancona built an elevated modern structure beside a modest 1940s bungalow.

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mission

There's no easy way to get to Stinson Beach. The last few miles of every route are winding snakes of sharp curves and steep grades. But the stomach-turning journey doesn't deter visitors. Often more than ten times as many day-trippers as locals can be found along this short stretch of Pacific coast just north of San Francisco.

Life here is blissful indeed, but for the 800 or so people who call Stinson Beach home, the risks of coastal living are real. Sitting in the sand with Peter Dwares, who bought a home here in 2005, I get a beach-chair tour of the tiny seaside cul-de-sac. "That house over there went into the ocean once," he tells me, pointing toward a tall wooden structure sited just steps from the waves. "A winter storm sent water over all three stories."

Dwares recounts the neighborhood history casually, knowing that his own home is unlikely to meet such a fate. His architects, Matthew Peek and Renata Ancona of Studio Peek Ancona, designed an elevated living space next to his 1940s modernist bungalow that is engineered to withstand floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, and the potentially drastic rise of sea levels. The structure is the first completed prototype of a model they envision being appropriate for any number of low-lying areas.

Prior to establishing their practice in San Francisco, Peek and Ancona lived for many years in Italy, where Ancona was born and raised. "We were inspired by the floating architecture of Venice," says Peek, who studied there on a Fulbright scholarship. Practicing alongside leading European architects and engineers, Peek cultivated his aptitude for technological innovation—a skill that is most evident in the use of concrete and steel. In the case of Dwares's house, the concrete forms a floating foundation with thickened edges, set flat on the sand, as opposed to resting on piers buried deep in the ground, which is often done in coastal zones. The system also has environmental merit, Peek explains, "using 30 percent fewer materials than conventional flood zone foundations."

The architects' design process was steered in part by a multitude of zoning regulations set by organizations ranging from the Stinson Beach Village Association all the way up to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The structure had to be elevated at least 12 feet off the ground, and the interior area could comprise no more than 450 square feet. Peek and Ancona made up for the space restrictions with ipe decking on all sides of the house totaling 350 square feet. Given the spectacular views, it was hardly a compromise—indoor-outdoor living is possible almost year-round.

The fair climate also allowed for natural green features, such as passive heating and cooling. With the windows open, cross breezes off the ocean keep the rooms comfortable on ▸

With almost as much area dedicated to decks as to interiors, Peter Dwares's house is truly made for outdoor enjoyment. From his perch (above) Dwares can enjoy a glass of wine while gazing at the ocean. The eastern side (left) offers an equally mesmerizing view of Mount Tamalpais, which is lush with foliage throughout the year.

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warm days. When the temperature drops and the windows are shut, solar heat warms the interior. The exterior rain screen creates an air chamber around the building that adds extra insulation. In Peek's initial sketches for the house, he'd imagined an even more dramatic passive strategy—essentially a giant moon roof that would pivot open completely to reveal a full sky view. While that concept didn't fly, the overall efficiency of the design did earn the project Platinum status in Marin County's green-building rating system.

Among the sustainable features, the most visually compelling is the landscaping in the entry courtyard, which feels at once tropical and quintessentially native. Using only drought-resistant plants, landscape designer Michael Bernsohn established a garden that attracts myriad butterfly and insect species. From the cantilevered deck, yellow monarchs can be spotted making their way to the botanical feast.

The garden and front patio supplement the modest living space upstairs. Peek Ancona's addition contains just one main, multipurpose room with a modular Murphy bed for sleeping. Glossy wood floors and minimal furnishings create a tranquil atmosphere, enhanced by the sound of waves drifting in through large windows. "I wanted it to feel a little Pacific Rim but also nautical," Dwares says. A collection of Asian-influenced art and a large model ship reflect his fusion concept.

Peek adds that at night the entire structure glows like a lantern through the exterior red cedar ventilation wall.

From the main room, a short hallway leads to a Japanese-style master bathroom tiled in green slate, and beyond it is a narrow outdoor alcove just the right size for Dwares's elliptical machine, which has a direct view of the ocean. While the seaward vistas call the most attention, Dwares didn't want to neglect the view to the east of the house up the lush slope of Mount Tamalpais. A set of sliding doors opens to reveal the profusion of redwoods and ferns. "It's just amazing to wake up in here," Dwares muses.

Dwares and his girlfriend, Sonia Pilar, awaken almost every weekend in this airy nook along with their two-year-old daughter, Chloe. During the week they live in San Francisco, where Dwares runs a real-estate development company and a nonprofit organization for youth mentoring. While he could have chosen to buy a house about a quarter-mile north in the gated community of Seadrift, Dwares enjoys the more idiosyncratic assortment of both houses and people on his little street. Neighbors and tourists alike share the swath of public beach just a few houses away from his front door, and it's clear he takes pleasure in chatting with just about anyone smart enough to know that the dizzying drive to Stinson Beach is worth every winding mile.

Floor-to-ceiling windows in the bedroom (above) create the sensation of being outside, as if the entire house is one platform deck strategically shielded from the elements. The bed (left) folds vertically into the wall to open up the living space for lounging or entertaining. Even the bathroom (right) features narrow ocean views.

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Before the Flood

Studio Peek Ancona designed the house to be partially prefabricated, with steel framing elements manufactured off-site and then assembled on the poured-in-place concrete foundation. With the living space elevated 12 feet, the design makes allowances for all manner of storms. "If a tsunami came through," Matthew Peek explains, "the water would wipe out the wooden breakaway walls on the lower level but pass over the heavy concrete foundation and through the columns, keeping the upper level in place and intact."

The structure is engineered to be wave-resistant by combining the thick, floating foundation with a steel stairwell that acts as an anchor and a cantilevered court. The stair is oriented toward the ocean as a counterforce against powerful waves, and the court is welded to the stairs, shifting the building's weight toward the water.

Peek says the house resists both high waves and low-level "sheet flow," making it appropriate for other flood zones. Because the design obviates the need to drill deep piers, material and labor costs are below average. Though the firm hasn't tested the design in real-life extremes, they've produced many renderings and studied flood scenarios with engineers. In digital images of the house after dramatic sea-level rise, it looks nearly as idyllic as a dwelling on a Venetian canal.

The steel stairwell that connects the garden-level patio with the new living space (top left) performs double duty as an anchor attached to the foundation. The cantilevered entry court (top right) assists with the reinforcement by securing the building's weight seaward. Concrete pillars (below) are key in the event of a tidal wave.

Autoban

Young Turks

Istanbul modern? In a word, it's Autoban. With their east-meets-west twist on mid-century classics, this young duo has jump-started their hometown's design scene.

"Money, budgets, strategy, borders, limits—if you want to be successful, you have to keep them all in mind at once," says Seyhan Özdemir while smoking a cigarette at her desk. A slice of the Bosporus, blue with white boats, peeks between buildings through the tall window behind her. It then reflects off a mirror, placed deliberately so she can enjoy the view from where she sits.

Özdemir founded the design firm Autoban with Sefer Çağlar in 2003, eight years after they met, at age 20, at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University—Özdemir studying architecture, Çağlar interior design. "Sefer is like a brother," Özdemir says. "We created ourselves together through our passions for design, architecture, and telling a story." After a few years of professional experience, they opened a small studio and began designing interiors.

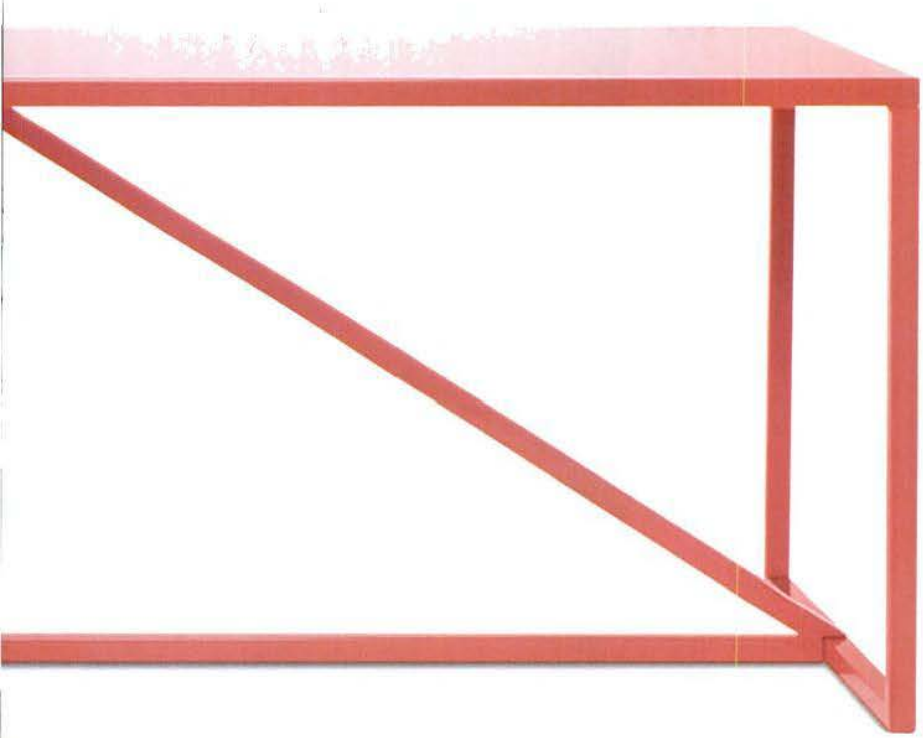
"In those days, Turkey didn't know about branding," she recalls with a hint of disdain. The duo wanted to create total environments, filled with their own furniture and graphic designs and their distinctive aesthetic character. They needed to claim their territory and did it in part through the name Autoban, which came from the life-as-highway metaphor—driving fast and making all the right moves.

"The decisions we make are so important," Özdemir adds. "Every project is a mix of the client's brief, the location, the history, the architecture, the people who live there, who eat there. Sometimes it's just a feeling."

The feeling in an Autoban space is generally warm, good-humored, and cosmopolitan. The designers also have a healthy appetite for aesthetic contrasts, and their work can offer baroque curves meeting square ▶

Photo by Emre Ünal

Story by Virginia Gardiner



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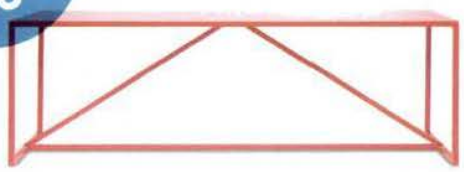

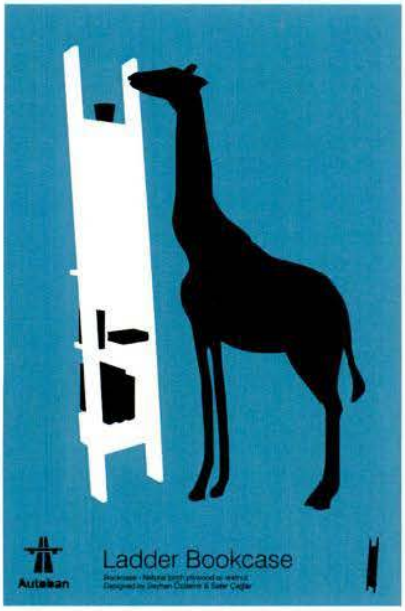

edges, the old abutting the new, rough-hewn surfaces jostling up against polished metal, and subtle cultural influences playing off each other. Traces of humor emerge here and there, and wood—the material most readily available for local production in Istanbul—is everywhere.

The Autoban partners combine product development, their favorite activity, with interior design projects. Their first interior, Istanbul's Sedir cafe, was in a converted 19th-century Greek mansion, and the budget was tiny. They created ornate light fixtures using found objects, delineated the window frames with bright colors, stripped the walls, painted sections in crisp white to offset scruffy swaths of worn paint, and incorporated summer-house-style furniture to reference the neighborhood's past life as a resort town.

Most importantly, they added a graphic message, using icons like the crescent moon and star of the Turkish flag, which they emblazoned on a wooden panel and surrounded with lightbulbs—a national coat of arms spliced with a vanity mirror. The message prompts questions, but it's these whimsical graphic touches that make Autoban's interiors feel like more than simple decoration.

Sedir led to jobs that became their bread and butter: Istanbul's trendy House Café, now a chain with ten locations and growing, and Vakko, Turkey's biggest fashion retailer. "You have to get people to believe in you," says Özdemir, "and your crazy world."

Autoban's world is crazy enough to involve a bit of droll imagery attached to otherwise sturdy, stately furniture. At their office, they've festooned the furniture with black silhouettes: a puffin perched on the Woody chair; a giraffe nibbling a plant atop the Ladder bookcase; a mustached man in an apron, holding a big knife and staring down a duck on the Bergère chair. The silhouettes double as ideal environments: two-tone, contoured worlds where the designers' imaginations have total control. This might be why they so love designing furniture—their limitations don't involve multiple clients, site issues, or the sapping effect of never-ending logistical questions.

Their product work has grown apace with interiors. Their wares won quick acclaim in 2004 at the tony furniture fair Salon du Meuble in Paris, and a display two years later at London's 100% Design led to a contract with De La Espada, the Portuguese-Spanish furniture retailer that now produces, markets, and distributes Autoban's products and furniture.

Autoban's graphic whimsies, where silhouetted animals interact with furniture (top left), also allude to the decorated surfaces and colonnaded patterns in mosques, which the House Café (top right) evokes, albeit in a secular manner. In Özdemir's living room (bottom) an Autoban Box sofa faces an Eames 670 lounger, its clear predecessor. Their Octopus chandelier's lit legs beckon to the ceiling, which boasts a pattern as typical to the city as the tiled floor on the previous page.

Before De La Espada came calling, Autoban was manufacturing its furniture in the many workshops in the bohemian neighborhoods Galata and Tünel near the firm's studio. Production quality was high, and long-term relationships with certain craftsmen meant good communication. But higher volumes, marketing, and distribution were beyond the scope of the small office, now a team of 32, which is still overwhelmed with interior design projects. Freed from the burden of selling, Autoban can focus on total control of the design and production of goods. Rather than send drawings to De La Espada, they go beyond the drafting board and send them whole pieces of finished furniture. "We have the products made, and we sand them ourselves," Özdemir says. "Two centimeters of thickness is something, but 2.5 is something different."

New product concepts are sometimes spontaneous—ideas from found objects or childhood memories—but often deliberate, defined by specific interior needs. For instance, the design of the Mushroom family of stools was function driven: They can be seats or tables. The rectilinear Box sofa was specifically intended to create "architectural product design,"

which Özdemir says harks back to her favorite designers—Marcel Breuer, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and the Eameses. "We use lots of organic and experimental forms in our interiors," she adds, "so sometimes we need strong, sharp, geometric shapes for contrast."

As Autoban has grown, Western media has made much of its Turkishness, tending to exoticize its product line, pointing out mosque motifs like minaret-shaped curves and backlit perforations. This line of inquiry too often misses what's most compelling about the duo's work: In less than a decade, Autoban has become an instrumental force in Istanbul—almost single-handedly injecting a design scene into the city. Turkey was well represented in Milan recently, with young designers like Erdem Akan and Serhan Gürkan showing furniture in Zona Tortona. The annual Istanbul Design Week launched in 2005, and creative studios have been popping up all over town. "You can see Istanbul changing day by day," says Özdemir.

So what's next for Autoban? "We want to do some big architectural projects," says Özdemir. "The whole building from the ground up. If we do the whole building, the design can create a whole new experience. The story will be complete."

Autoban's showroom in Tünel (bottom) is on the same street as the firm's recently expanded office, which is in an early 19th-century building. Özdemir works at her desk (top right), conveniently just a few blocks from her flat. The King lamp and One Armed chair (top left) showcase the kind of detailed woodwork that's been done in the district for centuries. The De La Espada partnership was fortuitous, as the manufacturers also specialize in woodwork.

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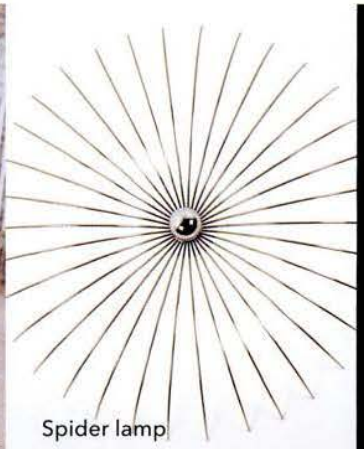
Autoban

2003

After meeting at university Özdemir and Çağlar form Autoban in Istanbul. Their interior design practice begins to take off after their first commission, the Sedir cafe.



Spider lamp

2003

Supported by interior design work, Autoban also designs lighting, seating, and tables that combine classic sensibility with whimsical spontaneity. "I found this piece of metal," says Özdemir of the Spider lamp, "and put a bulb in the middle. The shadows on the wall were like a spider."

Single Octopus chandelier

Bergère chair

Çağlar's apartment

2007

Autoban's interior work continues to showcase and inspire new product designs. The Box sofa is specifically intended to bring contrast into rooms filled with curvaceous products like the King Lamp. Interiors like that of V2K Akmerkez keep Autoban thinking about architectural space.

Box sofa

The Marmara Sisli Hotel

King lamp

Kitchenette Bebek

Photo by Birgitta Wolfgang Drejer/Sisters Agency (Çağlar's Apartment)

Pumpkin stool

Loft

2005

Autoban shows its furniture at Paris's Salon du Meuble and London's 100% Design. The first annual Istanbul Design Week launches. The firm's interior design work begins to include more residential commissions, commercial work, and public spaces.

2006

Autoban strives to expand their furniture range. "Most designers like Eames have their own unique stool in wood," Özdemir says. "We needed stools for our interiors. We made some that were like mushrooms. In the forest you see them at many different levels."

Mushroom table and stool

Art8

V2K Akmerkez

2008

A series of lucrative interior jobs from a pair of hotels (Witt Istanbul Suites and the Marmara Sisli) keeps pace with further explorations in furniture design, like the King lamp.

Witt Istanbul Suites

2009

Though Autoban's products have been made and distributed by De La Espada since 2007, this year they launch new pieces like the popular Nest chair. "It's like its name," says Özdemir. "Sometimes you need to be alone, to daydream, but still be aware of your surroundings."

Deco sofa

Nest chair

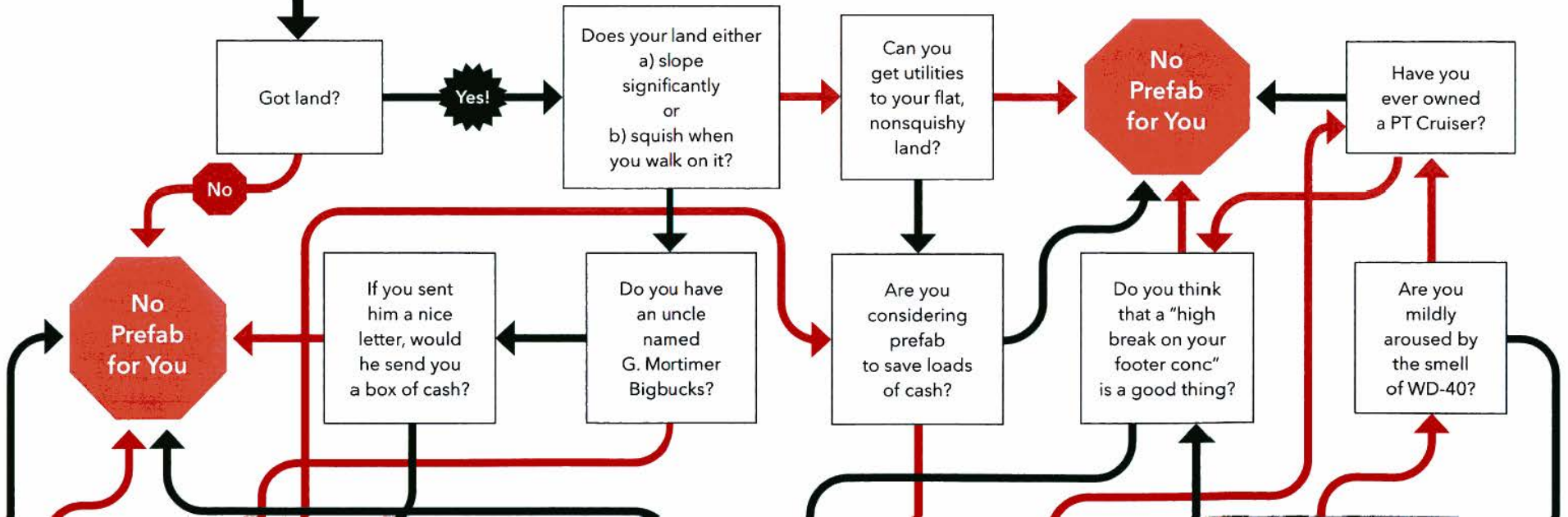
Is Prefab for You?

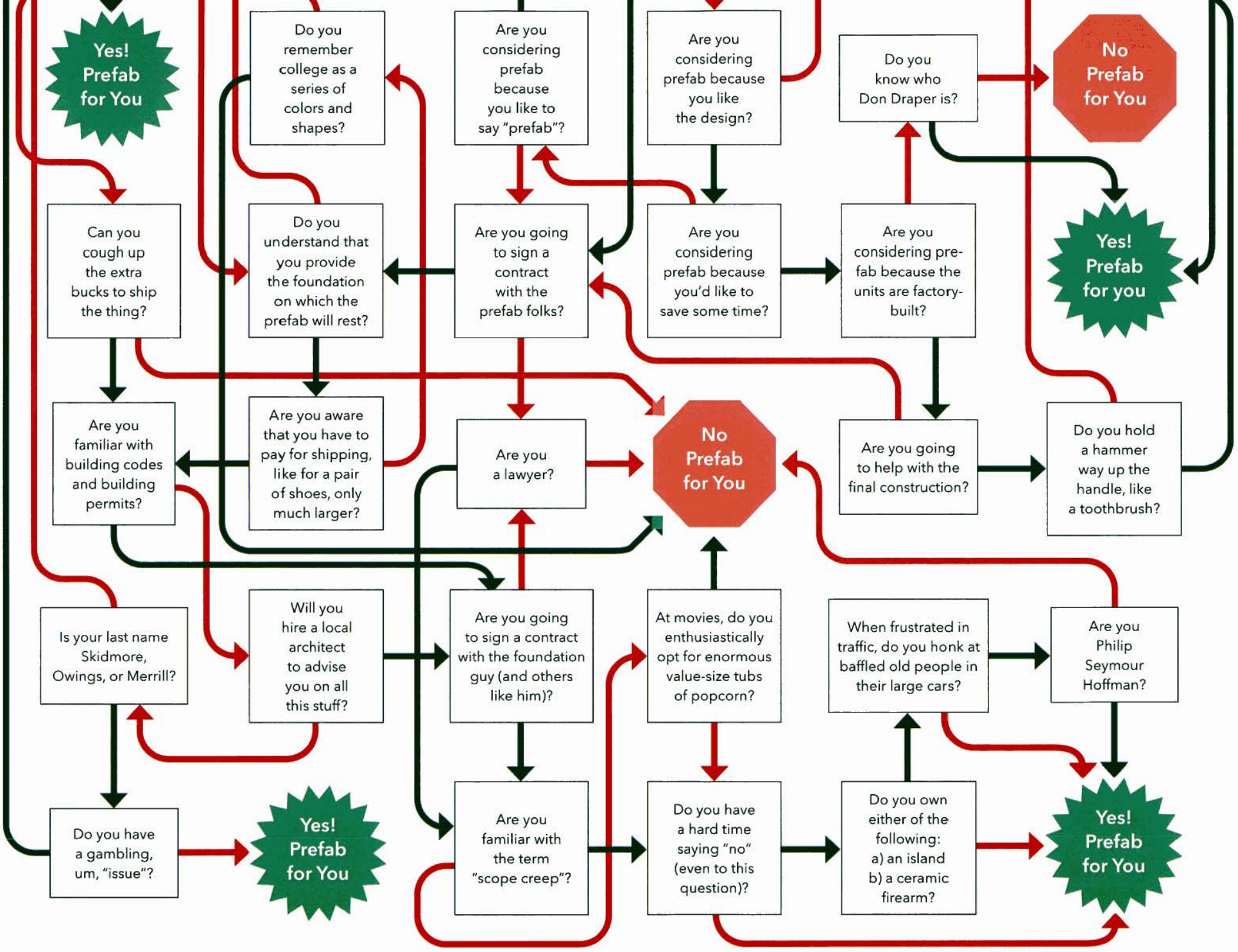
We can learn much from *Drosera capensis*, the odd, summer-blooming perennial known to South Africans as the Cape sundew. To we humans, its pinkish flowers are delicate and beautiful. To curious insects, however, its prey-trapping mucus glands are of particular interest. What does this have to do with prefab? Like *D. capensis*, the prefab process can go one of two ways: sublime physical experience or death by mucus.

Potential prefabbers: If you are careful and alert, you can find yourself basking in a well-designed modern home sooner and for less money than if you were to go about building in a more conventional way. And this is a good thing. But if you're an impatient little bug who seeks sugary fluids and doesn't utilize its antennal lobes properly, prefab may very well snare you in its glutinous grip, exposing both you and your wallet to its full array of digestive fluids. And that's not so good.

But don't panic—not yet. Remain calm and remember this: No matter how easy the literature makes it sound, building a prefab equates to building a house—and that's a Very Big Deal. Every issue that exists in the construction of a conventional house—every single issue—also exists in constructing a prefab house. You must become aware of work scopes that are most likely not included in the prefab package, including biggies like sitework and foundation construction. You must make sure the house abides by all the relevant codes and covenants in your area. You must understand the relationship between cost and quality, and the long-term maintenance implications associated with your choices. And, of course, you must sign a meaningful contract with any money-seeking humanoid.

Story by Dan Maginn





PREFAB TODAY

PLAN OF STEEL

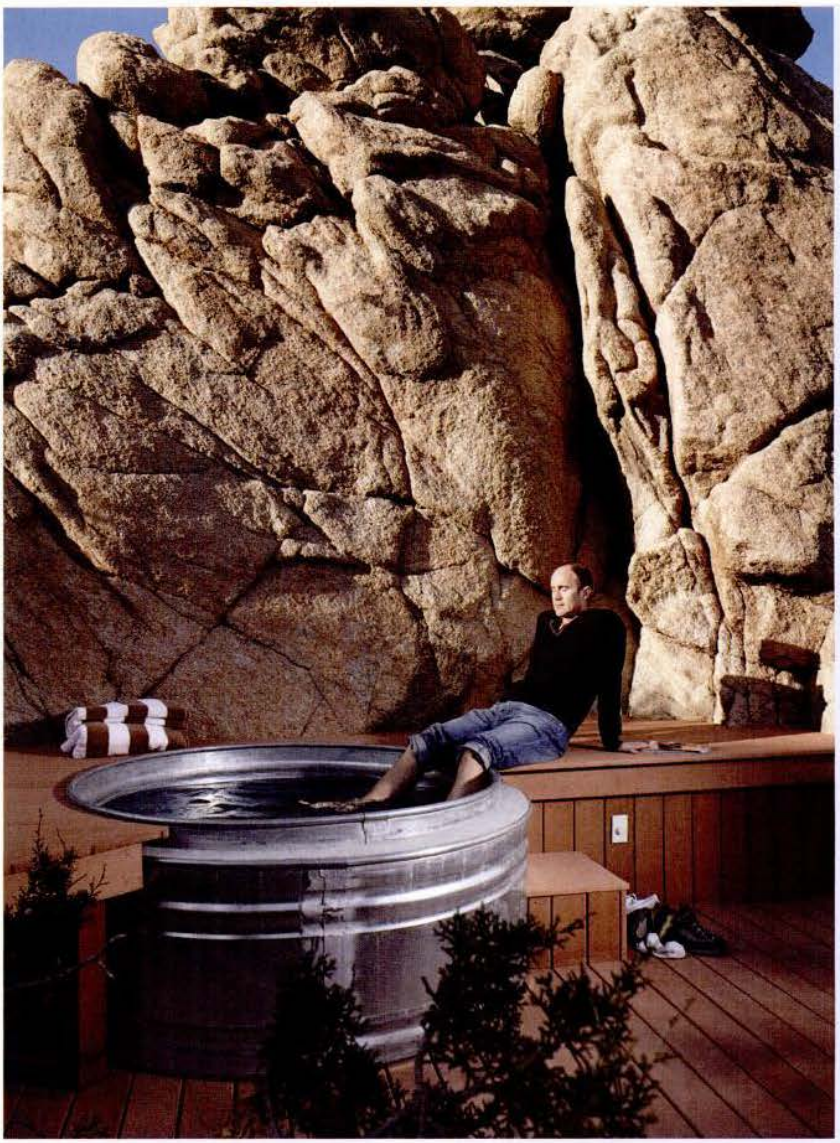
YUCCA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

The Blue Sky prototype home tiptoes gracefully across the desert landscape just north of Joshua Tree National Park. Nestled amid piñon and juniper trees and outcroppings of boulders, the house's six steel columns permit a seasonal stream to run underneath it. The clever steel frame allows the house to float above the wilderness—a concession to the lightness on the land that its owner, architects, and engineers so clearly wanted. Figuring out how to achieve this lightness, however, was anything but clear.

When David McAdam, co-owner and chief dreamer of Blue Sky Homes, bought 2.5 acres of cactus-studded land near Palm Springs, California, he didn't know what kind of getaway he wanted to build, but he did know one thing: no wood. "It's boring, and I see how it works in the desert. It gets destroyed," he says, remembering the damage he'd seen other houses suffer in the unrelenting sun. If the material isn't handled perfectly, arid conditions turn it into a pretzel. So if not wood, then what?

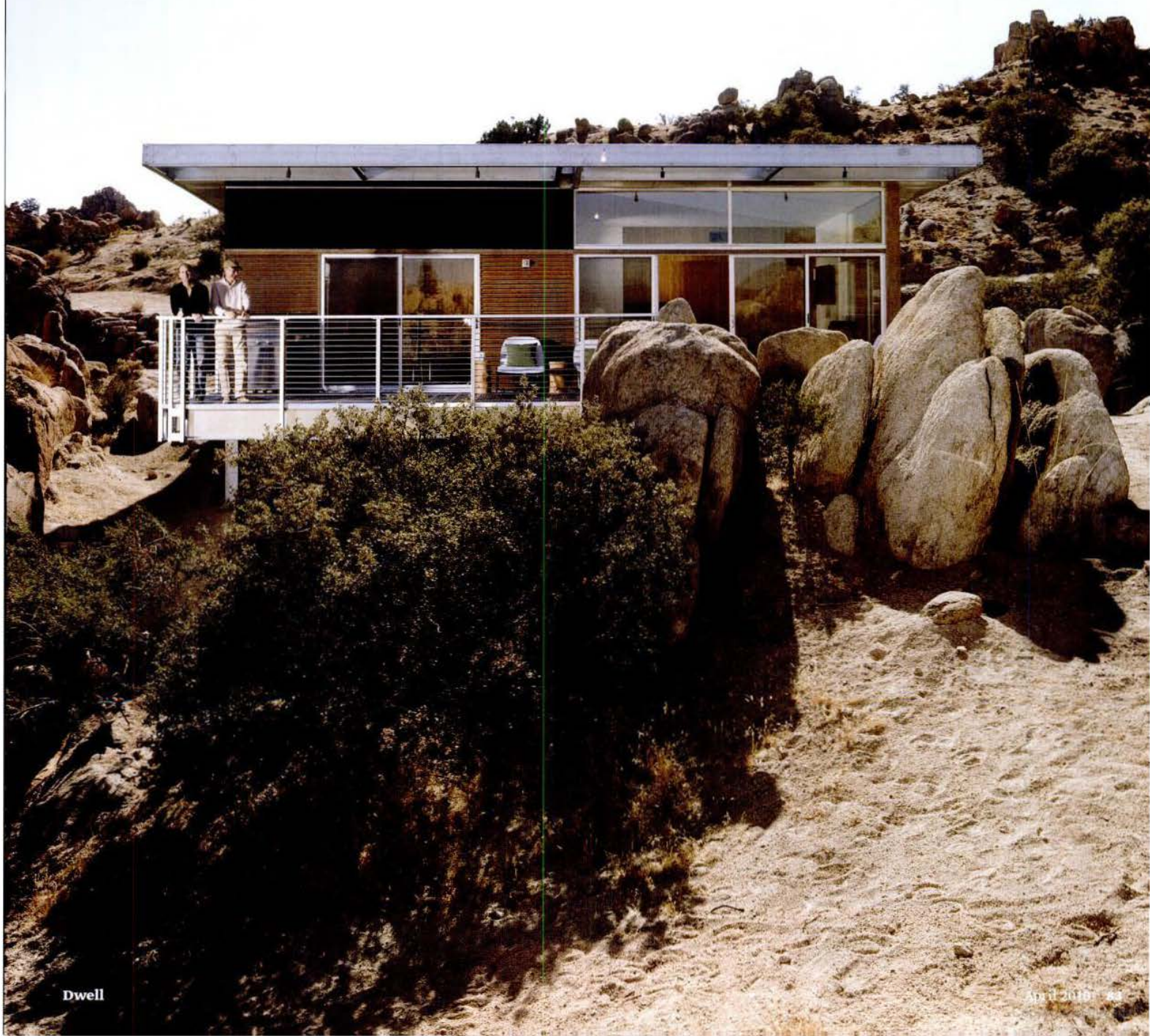
Taken with the architecture of Rick Joy, McAdam thought about concrete, but he quickly learned that

The Blue Sky prototype house (opposite) leads a second life as desert getaway for David McAdam and his partner Scott Smith. Nighttime hikes often end at the the "cowboy" hot tub (below) where Smith soaks his feet: two nested Hastings galvanized livestock feeders. The tub is surrounded by a Veranda faux-wood deck and fed with hot water from the house's solar hot-water system.



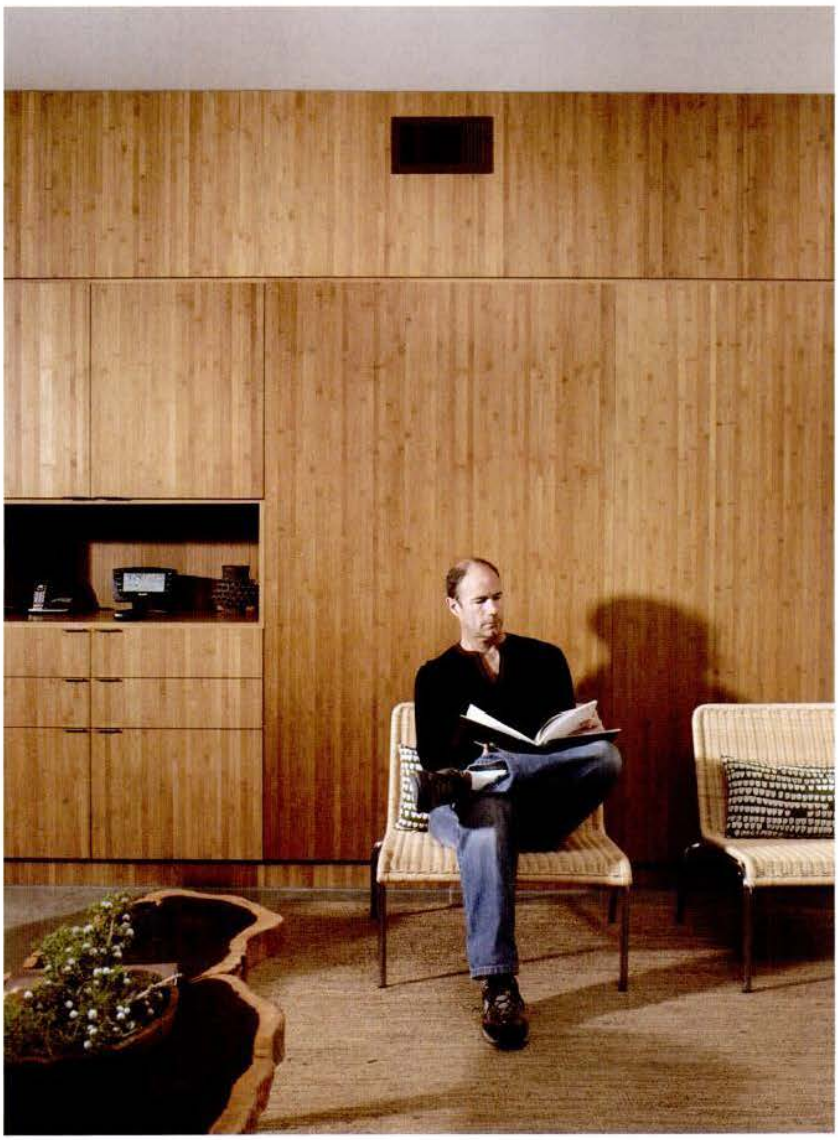
Project: Blue Sky Prototype
Architect: Blue Sky Homes
Location: Yucca Valley, CA

Story by Brendan Francis Newnam
Photos by Misha Gravenor



PREFAB TODAY

YUCCA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA



it wouldn't meet his budget. He then considered a rustic steel structure reminiscent of the mining cabins he had explored over the years in the Mojave Desert. But again, cost was an issue. Then he visited a friend who was building equestrian facilities on her property. McAdam marveled at how the modular steel elements came together elegantly and quickly to form the barns, shelters, and other structures. After speaking with Barret Hilzer, one of the heads of FCP, Inc., the company that did the work on his friend's property, McAdam became convinced he could use a similar steel framing system to build an affordable, sustainable, beautiful, and prefabricated home.

In technical terms, the steel framing system that bewitched McAdam is a mezzanine system, with a point-loaded, bidirectional, moment-resisting frame made of cold-formed, light-gauge galvanized steel. It's strong in two directions, resists twisting or bending, and won't rust. It also happens to be cheaper than the structural steel systems normally used in residential construction. Each steel element is made in a factory and delivered to the building site, where it goes up like an erector set, requiring zero welding, little assembly time, and reduced costs.

Once he saw the framing system's potential, McAdam expanded his dream house in the desert into a dream of a marketable steel homebuilding system. After drawing up his own plans for a 1,000-square-foot weekend retreat using Hilzer's system, he recruited residential builder Solterra Development, an architecture firm called 02 Architecture, and Hilzer. He also contacted Robert Brada, an old colleague and fellow architecture enthusiast, and they formed the company Blue Sky Homes. Their mission was to make McAdam's home, and the homebuilding system he had stumbled on, into a reality. They succeeded.

Every room in the house has a door to the outside. "Given the mostly temperate climate, you tend to have all of the doors pushed wide open all the time, and you find yourself outside as often as not," explains McAdam. Unlike a wood-frame house, where load-bearing walls need to go in certain places to support the structure, a Blue Sky steel frame house doesn't require interior walls. The architects at 02 capitalized on the flexibility the steel afforded them by emphasizing open space and a connection with the surrounding nature.

Half of the house is one large public room containing the kitchen, dining, and living area. It extends to the outside through sliding glass doors that open up onto a 340-square-foot cantilevered deck out front. "When you're in the main room, your eye is drawn inexorably to the dramatic weathered rock formations that rise steeply just beyond the house," McAdam notes.

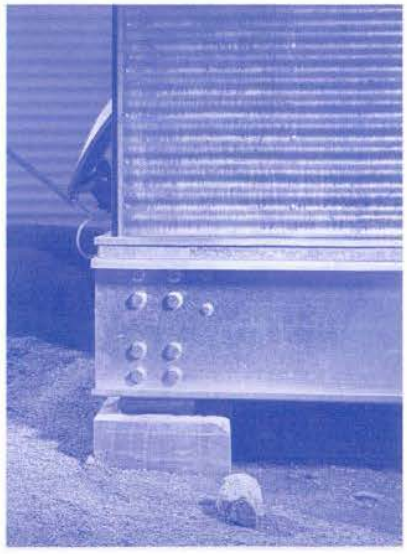
A bamboo wall divides the interior. To maximize space, it doubles as a two-way storage unit, with cabinets for the kitchen and closets for the bedrooms. The cabinet boxes are Forest Stewardship Council–certified, and aside from the interior

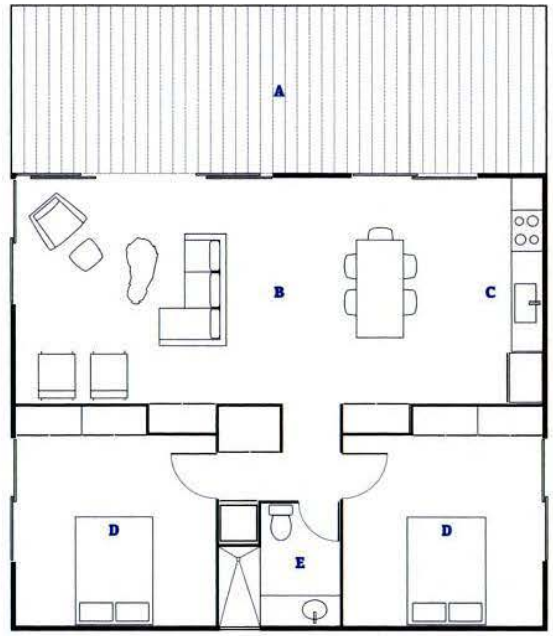
One large room houses the kitchen, dining, and living area (opposite top), which extends to the deck through sliding glass doors. The backsplash and countertops are made by Vetrazzo, and a Plyboo wall (opposite bottom) divides the interior of the house.

HOW A BUILD BECOMES A LAW

The 1994 Northridge earthquake in Los Angeles was so devastating, California officials rewrote the book on building codes. Unfortunately for FCP, Inc., its steel framing system, with the connection it had developed and put to first residential use in McAdam's Blue Sky prototype, wasn't in the book. Barret Hilzer, the company's COO, brought the connection to the structural engineering department of the University of California, San Diego, where it was shaken, blasted with wind, and otherwise subjected to earthquake conditions. The engineers then compared the results of the "destructive" testing with theoretical analysis of how the system would behave in an earthquake. The two matched, and steel geeks got excited. "Everybody dug it," says Hilzer. After submitting "feet, not inches," of paperwork to subcommittee after subcommittee and spending "more money than I care to talk about," FCP got word that its system for combining light-gauge, high-tensile steel and structural steel columns would enter into the International Building Code when it's revised in 2012. From there, each jurisdiction will make the recommendations, also favored by the American Iron and Steel Institute, into law. Entry into the California Building Code can't be far off.

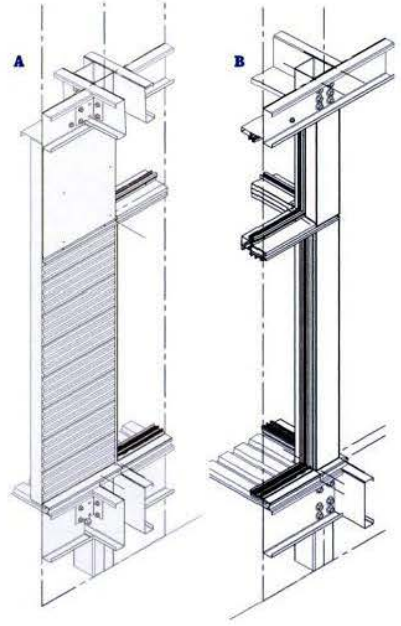
The secret sauce for the Blue Sky Home is its framing system, which resists twisting and bending and won't rust. Eight carefully placed bolts in the joints in the steel frame absorb any movement, allowing the home to rest on small footings and meet California's strict seismic standards.





Blue Sky Prototype Floor Plan

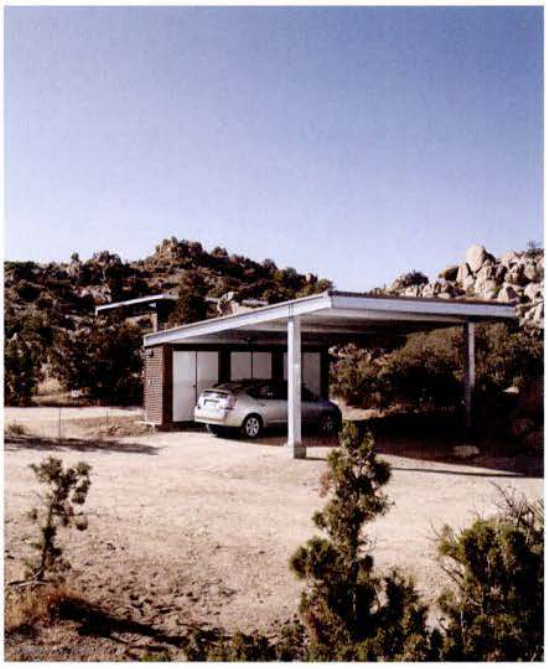
A Deck
B Living/Dining Area
C Kitchen
D Bedroom
E Bathroom



Blue Sky Prototype Wall Section Axonometrics

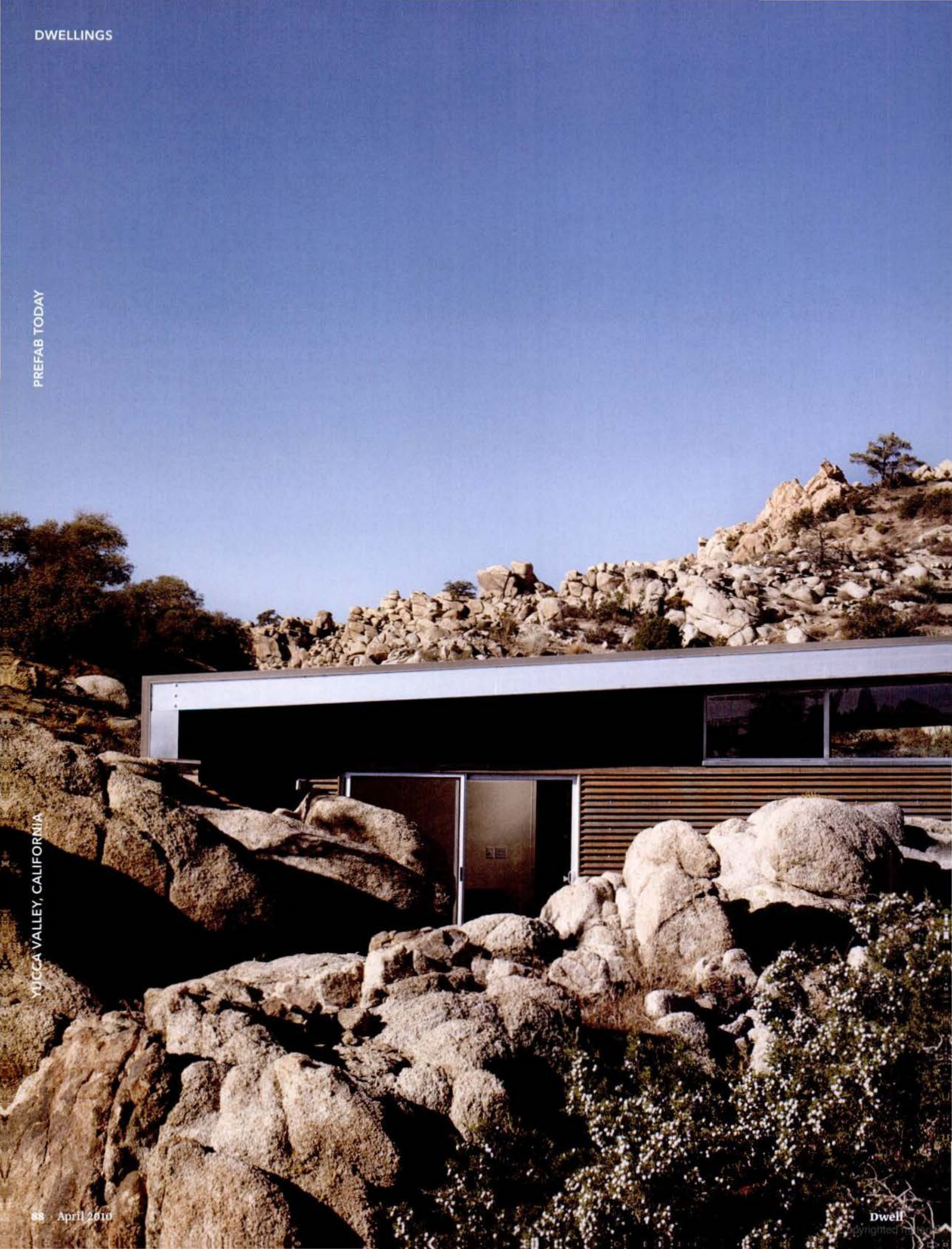
A Column
B Corner Column

As a paean to the old steel-mining shacks that inspired the home, McAdam sprayed the the corrugated-steel exterior (below) with apple cider vinegar to create a warm rust effect. The carport (above) stands apart from the home and is topped with Solar World's Sun Module photovoltaic panels. McAdam and Smith have grown quite used to their small electic bills.

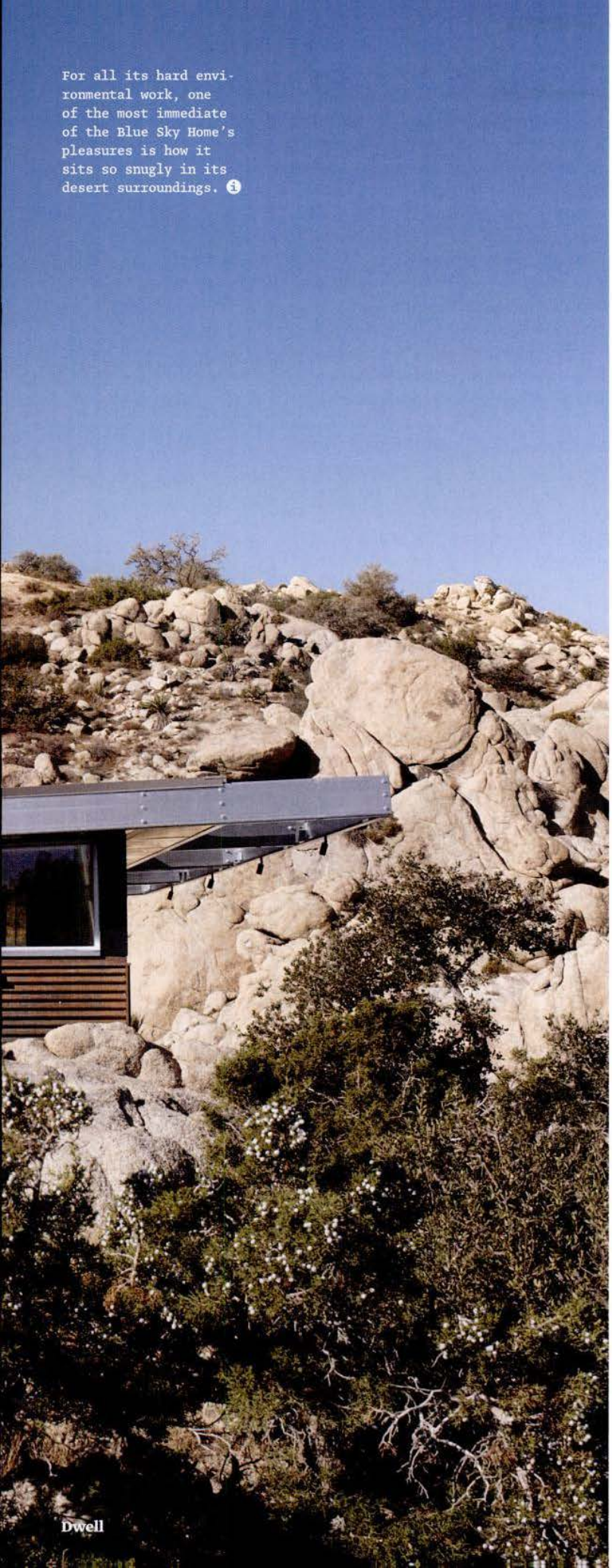


doors, they're the only wood in the house. Behind the wall, two equal-size bedrooms sit on either side of the building's factory-built core: the bathroom, water heater, air handler, and washer and dryer. One is hard-pressed to decide in which bedroom to sleep: The east bedroom looks out to rocks, and the west opens onto the desert floor.

To achieve McAdam's steel-home dream, though, the Blue Sky team had to overcome a significant problem: the thermal properties of steel. It can burn wicked hot in the desert sun before turning searingly cold on a frosty desert night. The conductive properties of steel tend to amplify whatever's happening outdoors inside the house. After months of research, the team found a solution in the form of steel studs insulated with expanded polystyrene foam. A Pennsylvania firm, Accelerated Building Technologies, created a channel system through the foam that forces hot and cold temperatures to follow a zigzag path along metal pieces embedded in the insulation, thus deadening its effect on the interior temperatures.



YUCCA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA



For all its hard environmental work, one of the most immediate of the Blue Sky Home's pleasures is how it sits so snugly in its desert surroundings.

With the conduction problem solved, the builders were left to enjoy all the positive assets steel has to offer: Every piece is perfect, the frame goes up straight without any fuss, it's mold resistant and fireproof, and it can be made with up to 70 percent reused materials and is completely recyclable itself.

In fact, should you take it apart, you could put most of the Blue Sky home back in the recycling bin. Steel frame aside, the countertops in the kitchen and bathroom are Vetrazzo, a material made from recycled glass. A graywater system feeds the desert flora in the yard. Sunshine is recycled through the hydronic heating system that provides the home's hot water and space heating, making this desert flower an off-the-grid marvel.

But the key sustainable attribute is the building system itself, which boasts all of the environmentally friendly advantages of prefabricated construction. Like traditional prefabs, Blue Sky homes generate less construction waste than stick-built homes. Since everything is made to order in a factory and then shipped to the site, everything is used and nothing is left over. But unlike most prefabs, which require heavy site preparation that can be environmentally damaging, the Blue Sky frame adjusts to the site's topography, and no harsh grading of the land is necessary. Scraping a housing pad is environmentally disruptive wherever it happens, but in some areas, like the near-pristine desert, it becomes a limiting factor. Environmentally inclined developers have approached Blue Sky about using its system to design low-impact resorts in locations with fragile ecosystems.

"Hybrid prefab" is how McAdam describes the building system his firm created, which is fabricated in a factory but assembled onsite. The prototype was built in eight weeks for $325 per square foot. Taking what they learned from the experience, the builders believe they can complete future homes in about six weeks for $265 a square foot. Not the most expensive prefab on the market, but not cheap either. "This house is the Prius of prefabs," says McAdam, referring to a hybrid of another sort, "but people are willing to spend a little more money, because it's better engineered and better for the environment."

And here, it's hard to resist that environment—the almost alien boulderscape that beckons from every vista in the house. When McAdam and his partner, Scott Smith, are entertaining friends, they like to go on starlit hikes—rambles that often end around the fire pit or in the cowboy hot tub made from steel (what else?) troughs and filled with water warmed by the sun. But when the revelry ceases, the utter quiet and profound darkness of the Mojave Desert takes hold, and McAdam closes his eyes and resumes dreaming.

PREFAB TODAY

EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

KID TESTED, MOTHERS APPROVED

Story by William Lamb
Photos by João Canziani

Project: Zim-Wex Residence
Architect: Resolution: 4 Architecture
Location: East Hampton, NY

New York City can be a difficult place to call home. Charming and exhilarating, it's also dirty, crowded, and punishingly expensive. Now imagine New York with children. Tanya Wexler and Amy Zimmerman share their Greenwich Village townhouse with four of them, juggling birthday parties and play dates with work obligations and other commitments. It's an exhausting routine, one that frequently leaves them worn out and hungry for a break.

Wexler and Zimmerman were more fortunate than most Gothamites in that they had a refuge—a beach cottage in East Hampton, New York, that they bought in 1999, three months after their oldest, now 10, was born. By 2005, however, Zimmerman was pregnant with the couple's fourth child, and the aging 1,200-square-foot cottage no longer seemed as large as it had six years earlier. The foundation had cracked, creating a nagging mold problem, and the place was only "somewhat winterized," Wexler says, effectively putting it off limits for months at a time.

Wexler, a film director whose movie *Ball in the House* was screened at the 2001 Toronto International Film Festival, and Zimmerman, who put

Tanya Wexler and Amy Zimmerman linger in the breezeway (below) designed to draw eyes, and footsteps, from the driveway through the house to the gently sloping backyard and swimming pool beyond. The house was deliberately sited to preserve the two-acre property's existing trees, three of which can be seen protruding through the surface of a rear deck.

Honed granite was selected for the kitchen surfaces (left) because its matte-like finish is easy to maintain and hard to damage. Eight-foot sliding glass doors bathe the kitchen and adjoining living room in ample sunlight. The living room is furnished with Modernica's Split Rail loveseat and sofa and a walnut Eames stool from Herman Miller. The dining area features Vico Magistretti's Maui chairs and an Antonio Citterio Glossy table, both from plastics expert Kartell.

an acting career on hold to stay home with their children, decided that they wanted a year-round retreat. They approached Joseph Tanney and Robert Luntz of Resolution: 4 Architecture in the spring of 2005 to explore the idea of demolishing the cottage and replacing it with a larger, stylish beach house where they could get away for a weekend or settle in for weeks at a time in the summer.

Wexler sought out Res: 4 after falling in love with the firm's winning design for the first Dwell Home Design Invitational in 2003. The Manhattan firm has spent the past decade honing what Tanney calls a system of "mass customization," in which prefabricated modules are inexpensively produced in a factory, trucked to a site, and configured to meet a client's lifestyle and budget. "We have a series of what we call 'typologies,'" Tanney says. "We arrange our modules specifically to your site, your program. And now, with the experience, we have a better understanding of the efficiencies that can be leveraged, and you don't understand that until you've done it a few times."

"We were looking at it as a way to get both design and lower cost," Wexler says of the modular construction method. "The idea of building a stick-built house just seemed so expensive. And certainly with an eye for design and the finishes we had hoped for, we looked at this as an alternative."

In their initial discussions with Res: 4, Wexler and Zimmerman found themselves cycling back to one word: indestructible. They wanted a house that could hold up to the wear-and-tear of four young children running around, trailing beach sand and backyard dirt in their wake.

"That was a big, big part of our concept," says Zimmerman. "We wanted the materials to be really durable—able to withstand people coming from the outside, all the sand and stuff." Caramelized bamboo flooring was installed throughout the house with that in mind, as were the Corian countertop that runs the length of the dining area and the honed granite surfaces in the kitchen.

"We weren't going to spend a bunch of money to build a house that we would then yell at our kids about destroying," Wexler says. "We weren't interested in that."

"The idea of building a stick-built house just seemed so expensive. And certainly with an eye for design and the finishes we had hoped for, we looked at this as an alternative."

Tanya Wexler

EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

Architect Joseph Tanney says the house was designed as a safe haven for Wexler and Zimmerman's children. "A big, long bar cuts off the front, where the cars are, so the kids can just run free in the back," he says.

They also wanted both a large space where the family could be together as a unit or entertain guests and private areas where they could go to be alone. Tanney and Luntz responded by giving the ground floor an open layout, with the kitchen island serving as a sort of command center looking out onto an expansive dining and living area. All of it is bathed in ample sunlight that filters through a canopy of mature oak trees before shining through a series of six eight-foot-tall sliding glass doors. For meals, the family can gather around one of two square tables, or push them together to seat 12. A pair of guest rooms is hidden at the end of a hallway.

The upstairs is given over to private spaces. An office and a television room occupy the eastern end of the house, separated from Wexler and Zimmerman's master suite by a long corridor. The four children divide themselves among the three bedrooms and two bathrooms off the hallway.

The seven modules that make up the house were trucked to the property and lowered into place by crane over the course of two days in May 2006. They were assembled and outfitted with cedar siding, effectively creating a 112-foot barrier separating the backyard from the moderately busy two-lane road out front. "The design of the house is a long, linear bar to create a safe haven for child's play in the back," Tanney says.

The first thing visitors see upon arrival is a breezeway that frames a view of a gently sloping hill leading to a swimming pool and a 200-square-foot pool house, which Res: 4 also designed. The effect is to pull visitors through the opening—past the house and its easy-to-miss front door—into the yard beyond it.

The two-acre property was meticulously landscaped by Robin Key, the landscape architect who designed the rear patio and roof deck at Wexler and Zimmerman's three-story city townhouse. The house—which, at 4,500 square feet, is more than three times the size of its predecessor—was carefully designed around the property's existing trees. In a clever move, a direct result of a program that implored the designers not to cut down a single tree, one of the two rear decks was built around three tree trunks.

HOME DELIVERED

Joseph Tanney, principal at Resolution: 4 Architecture, describes his firm's Modern Modular system of prefab residential construction as "designing within the box." Literally: The modules that serve as the system's building blocks can be no wider than 16 feet to comply with oversize shipping regulations.

Within those constraints, however, what Res: 4 calls its "modules of use"—components designed for communal or private space—can be configured to fit the tastes and budgets of their clients. Res: 4 divides its process into four phases of about four months each:

Design and documentation: After consulting with the client, Res: 4 designs the house in detail, including the precise location of each electrical outlet and light fixture.

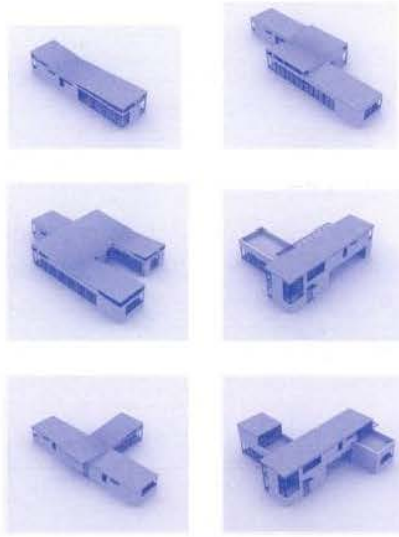
Engineering and approvals: Res: 4 outfits one of five factories with plans, obtains state and local permits, and hires a general contractor to oversee and complete onsite construction.

Fabrication and site prep: Windows, cabinets, plumbing fixtures, and other components are ordered and delivered to the factory. The modules are built in an assembly-line process over a period of just one or two weeks. The duct work, windows, light fixtures, tiling, and cabinetry are installed on the factory floor.

Delivery and onsite construction: The modules are trucked to the site and assembled in a matter of days.

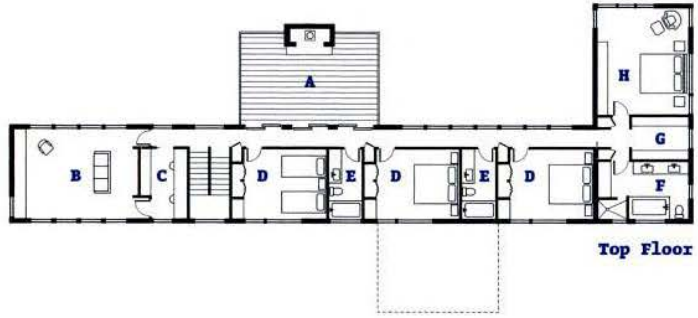
Over the next four weeks, the clear cedar siding and flashing details (sheet metal that reinforces and weatherproofs the roof) are applied. The flooring is installed along with any optional fixtures—like granite countertops—not part of the standard process. Screen porches and decking are constructed, and the interior is primed and painted.

Tanney says Res: 4's Modern Modular homes cost $250 per square foot on average, with site prep and onsite construction accounting for about half. The cost varies by location. At the eastern tip of Long Island, where Wexler and Zimmerman are, it can creep as high as $300 a square foot, Tanney says. Still, compared with site-built construction costs that can rise as high as $600 per square foot in the Hamptons, modular construction is a relative bargain.

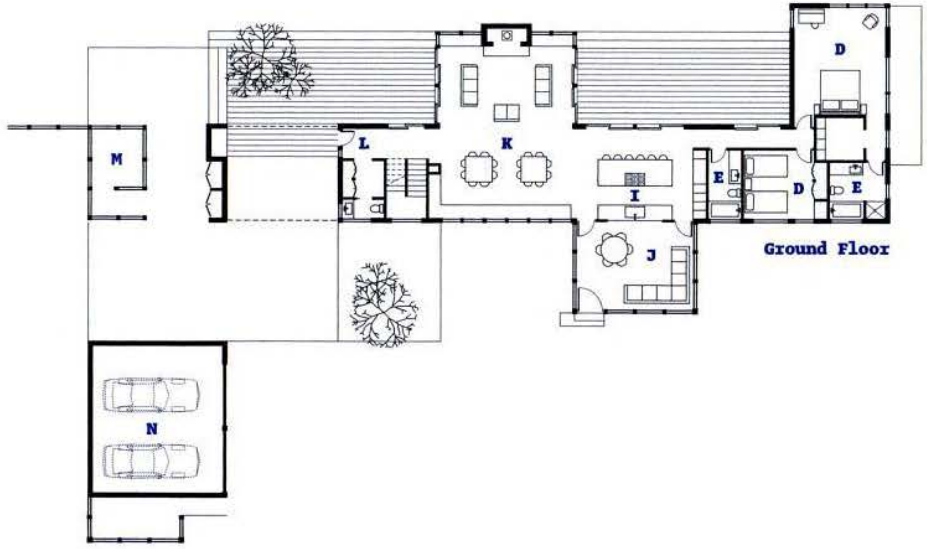


Zim-Wex Residence
Floor Plans

A Roof Deck
B Media Room
C Office
D Bedroom
E Bathroom
F Master Bathroom
G Master Wardrobe
H Master Bedroom
I Kitchen
J Screened Porch
K Living/Dining Area
L Entry
M Outdoor Shower
N Garage



Top Floor



Ground Floor

The four children divide themselves among three Blu Dot–furnished bedrooms (right) and two bathrooms located off the second-floor hallway. The narrow hallway separates an office and television room at one end of the house from Wexler and Zimmerman's master suite (below), which sports an Emma Gardner rug and matching Saarinen Womb chair, made for Knoll, perfect for lounging.

"What Joe and Rob did, particularly with the windows, and what Robin did with the landscape kind of came together in a perfect way," Zimmerman says. "We haven't even hung any art in the house, because every room has this giant window—that's the art, basically. All you want to do is look outside."

"What it's constantly doing is pouring you outside," Wexler says of their new home. "It isn't trying to keep you inside and say, 'Wow, look how cool the design is.' It's really trying to say, 'Go outside. Go to the beach. Go enjoy the yard.' The architecture isn't imposing in that way. I think it's great. It makes for this thing where our family is really relaxed and ends up spending a lot of time in those places together."

Res: 4's Modern Modular system ended up working for Wexler and Zimmerman because of its limitations rather than in spite of them. In a modern world of endless choices, they responded to a system that gave them flexibility within a framework of relatively strict design parameters and a limited palette of materials. With Res: 4, they created a house that suits their lifestyle—one that a family of six can retreat to whenever the burdens of their overscheduled city lives get the better of them.

SEBASTOPOL, CALIFORNIA

FERTILE GROUNDS

During harvest season in Sebastopol, California, the sweet smell of fermenting apples travels from the orchards all the way to Highway 101, luring drivers off the road in search of a fresh Gravenstein or Golden Delicious. Though just 50 miles north of San Francisco, the Sonoma County town is absolutely rural, dense with fruiting trees and vineyards, and it's partly for this that Naomi Hupert and Ben Kinmont moved here with their son, Ian, and daughter, Natasha, in 2003. But they couldn't leave New York City behind entirely, so they found a pair of architects who could adapt elements of their Manhattan loft to the California countryside.

One feature the family hoped to retain in the new home was the unified, open living space they'd enjoyed back east. But this wasn't the only requirement. First and foremost, the house had to be completely accessible to teenager Ian, who gets around in a power wheelchair. Second, they needed a place that could accommodate two home offices and a study area for homeschooling Ian. Third, they needed space not just for cooking, which they ▸

The Hupert-Kinmont house lies low in a century-old apple orchard, far from neighboring houses. The spaciousness of the rural surroundings is echoed inside. The wide front door opens onto a wide central living space where the entire family—and a regular cast of visitors—spends much of their time.

Story by Sarah Rich
Photos by Dave Lauridsen

Project: Orchard House
Architect: Anderson Anderson
Location: Sebastopol, CA

The dining room table sits at one end of the main room (below), with an open view onto the rows of trees that extend out from two sides of the house. Natasha sets the table underneath a suspended fixture made by her mother, Naomi, out of a salvaged branch, crystal pieces, and strung bulbs.

do a lot of, but for massive kitchen projects like making wine from their homegrown grapes and oil from their olive trees. "It was very task oriented," admits Naomi.

When Ben and Naomi found Anderson Anderson Architecture, they felt confident that their list of practical needs could be translated into a beautiful building. "What we liked about their work is that their projects didn't all look the same," says Naomi. "So we didn't know exactly what we'd end up with." Principals Mark and Peter Anderson embraced the opportunity to create an architectural container that would support the family's daily life without interjecting a dominant design concept. "We wanted the house to be really robust and kind of rustic so that anything could happen in it," Peter says. "It's not fussy in the sense that one thing out of place would create a disruption. They completely live in it."

The central living space is wide and airy, with a comfortable sitting area at one end, a dining table at the other, and in between a spacious cooking zone. Only the sleeping quarters sit apart from the main room, along a sun-filled corridor lined with artworks by various members of the family. Two "drive-in" bathrooms feature open showers with long drains that occasionally harbor a wild mushroom or a few blades of grass. The house is wheelchair accessible both inside and out. Smooth pavement extends through a carport and covered walkway to a separate wing where Ben's mother, Vikki, lives. "Ian can go from his bedroom all the way to mine in his wheelchair," Vikki says. "It's phenomenal."

The material of choice for the loft-cum-farmhouse was concrete, for which the Andersons devised a prefab strategy. A series of identical C-shaped modules from the same formwork compose the structural system, which sits on a continuous slab foundation. In order to integrate the house into its surroundings, the walls line up exactly with the rows of trees outside, which are planted on a grid, spaced 25 feet apart. As a result, the expanses of floor-to-ceiling glass doors span the open alleys between the trees, creating seemingly infinite views in every direction that taper into trunks and leaves.

The cooking area features two islands—one more permanent than the other. A concrete island contains various appliances while a massive slab of cypress (right) perched atop sawhorses provides storage for pots and utensils. With the extra surface area, there's plenty of room to roll out dough and a wide berth for Ian's power chair (below).

FORMWORK FOLLOWS FUNCTION

When Mark and Peter Anderson began the design process, their first step was to study the orchard. "We set up some chairs in a clearing and thought about the character of the space," says Mark. They quickly noticed that the trees were planted in a 25-foot-square grid. "That set up all the modules for the house, even down to the lines in the concrete floor," adds Peter.

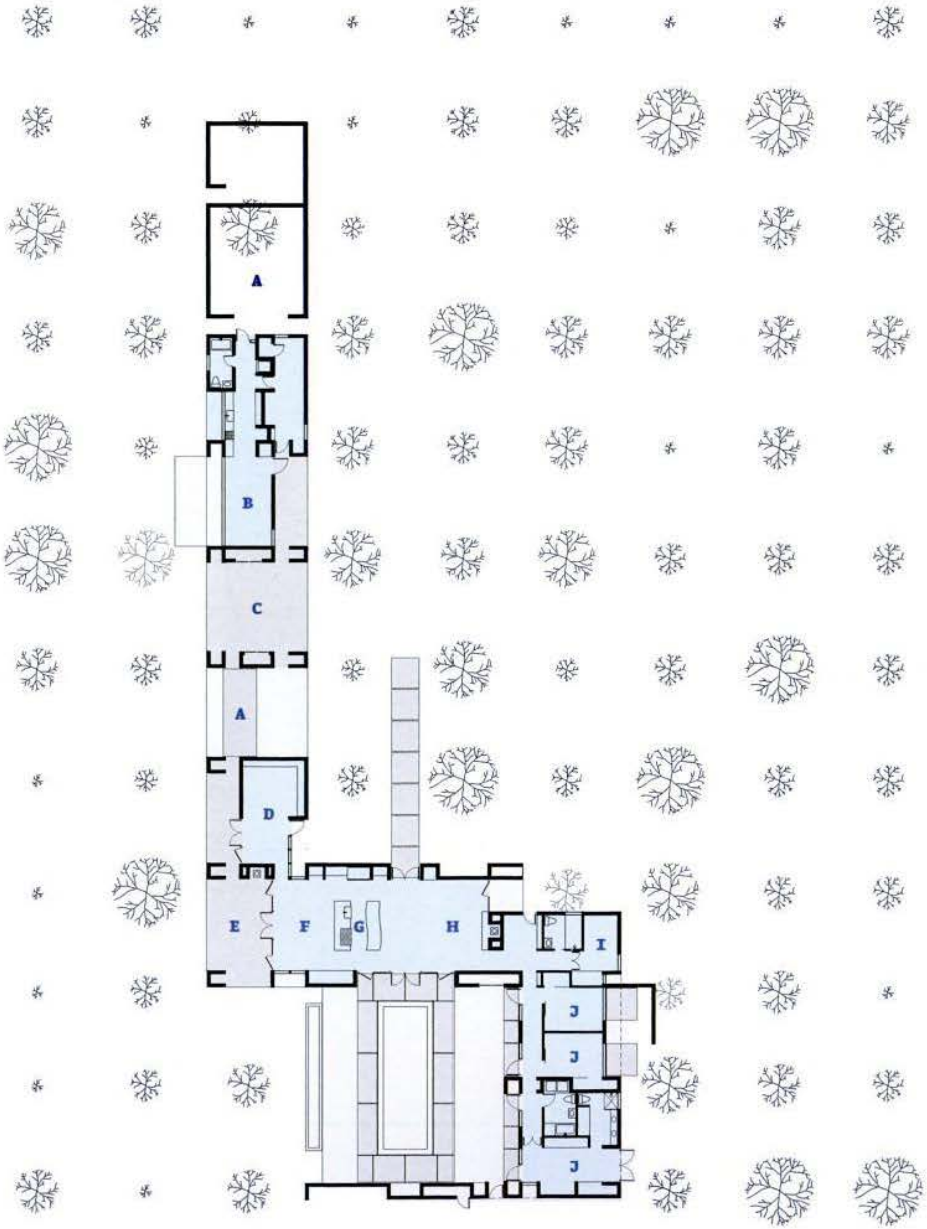
They designed a system of four-by-four-foot concrete modules, created from a reusable formwork of 2-by-12-foot boards that could be easily moved around the site. By using the units repeatedly, the architects saved on cost and materials as well as scaling the work to be manageable with one concrete truck and a two-person crew. The resulting facades are textured from the rough wooden planks.

The roof is a prefabricated truss system—an approach more traditionally associated with wood-frame construction and standardized housing. "Most architects don't use or think in terms of prefab trusses," Mark explains, "but they can be used creatively, and they are less expensive than prefab sandwich panels."

Modular design is an effective way to make a project more affordable, the architects say, even without employing factory-based construction. In this case, modularity not only added to the financial and environmental sustainability of construction, it was an artistic reflection of the site itself—a way to echo nature.

Orchard House
Floor Plan

A Courtyard
B Guest Suite
C Carport
D Office
E Terrace
F Dining Area
G Kitchen
H Living Area
I Study
J Bedroom



The concrete extends even into the interior structures, framing the large kitchen island, with custom niches for appliances and sinks. The only accent materials are wooden doorframes made from reclaimed redwood wine barrels and galvanized steel siding on portions of the exterior. In the center of the main living area, an enormous slab of salvaged cypress cuts across the space, resting on sawhorses with open shelving underneath. Throughout the house all storage areas are open, leaving crockery, dishware, food, books, and clothes in plain view. "There is no cabinet or drawer here," explains Naomi, "because one of the hard things when you are in a wheelchair is to back up and open a door at the same time."

The open system is just one of many instances where Anderson Anderson's intentions are borne out. The simplicity of the overall design presents no opportunity for conflict with the family's way of life. Metal buckets of wooden spoons on the counter, giant bowls of table grapes from the garden, and a five-gallon jug of fermenting wine don't amount

Ben's office contains an impressive reference library for his inventory of antiquarian books (above right). An outdoor shower (above left) is made from one complete concrete module—a visual demonstration of how the entire house was built. In the master bedroom (right), more shelves were installed to accommodate the book collection.

The long hallway leading to the bedrooms (below left) gets spectacular afternoon sun, lighting up the family's many works of art. In the living room fireplace (below right), a bird turns on the antique French spit, while the outdoor hearth (opposite right) is primed for cooking in the summer.

to visual chaos; rather, they're evidence of a hands-on existence.

Many of the culinary craft projects are an extension of Ben's work as an artist and dealer of antiquarian books about food and wine. Off the kitchen, Ben stores his inventory—faded spines lined up on long shelves and a tall cabinet where a few select objects are kept. Next to a gaping fireplace in the sitting area is the most prized and frequently used of his antique cooking implements, an 18th-century French *tourne-broche à poids*—a delightfully analog contraption for turning a spit over a flame. Naomi demonstrates how it works, spinning a wheel that activates a set of pulleys that automatically turn the metal rod.

The oversize hearth (of which there is an outdoor double) was part of the original design specifications. "Ben said he wanted a fireplace big enough to cook a wild boar," Mark recalls, "and I said, 'That's great because I've got a recipe for that.' That's when we knew we were the perfect match." No boars have been cooked to date, but Naomi and Ben do entertain large groups on a regular basis, often preparing food grown on their property or nearby.

The five core members of the household are rarely without additional company. Ben's brother Seth stays over often and visitors rotate in and out. "The Andersons did a very good job of creating spaces that are completely accessible to all our family and friends," says Naomi, emphasizing the paucity of universal design that upholds high aesthetic standards. "We've seen quite a range of approaches, and they tend toward a generic hospital look with plenty of white plastic and poorly adapted structures. This house is so well designed that its accessibility is sometimes overlooked."

While Naomi admits to occasional nostalgia for city living, the family has found a comfortable rhythm in their country loft. "Our visitors joke that we have basically just transported our New York life right here without changing much except for lighting," she laughs. But she never forgets, of course, that only here does a crisp autumn day bring the pleasure of apple picking in her own backyard.

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Continuing Education

Business as usual for ReForm School founders Billie Lopez and Tootie Maldonado means far more than simply managing their popular Silver Lake, California, shop. Whether exploring thrift stores for vintage finds, hosting a series of hands-on Home Ec. classes, or planning field trips to test out a new DIY-canoe kit, the duo successfully share their passion for unique goods with local (and loyal) customers and artists. With the addition of an online store, class is now in session for the rest of us, too.

Story by Jordan Kushins
Portrait by Brigitte Sire

Tootie Maldonado and Billie Lopez have been friends since high school, but it was their years of shopping trips together after graduation that inspired them to open ReForm School. Now that browsing and buying are part of the job, they're able to stock the shelves with items that they would love to own.

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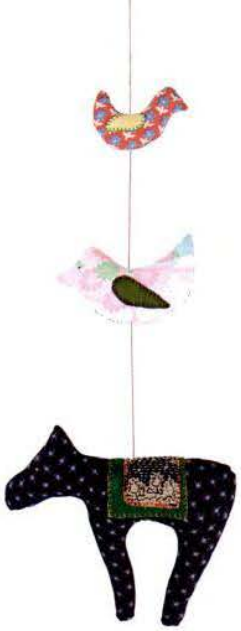


What are your criteria for selecting an item to sell?

Billie Lopez: We want to agree on all the items, but there have been a few occasions where…

Tootie Maldonado: …one of us has to nudge the other.

BL: We try to look for things that really merge art, craft, and design.

How do you source your products?

BL: We go to design and craft shows, but online is where we have the most luck. The Internet is a huge treasure trove. We'll find one artist's website, and they'll link to other artists they like, and then we just keep clicking through from link to link.

What's your most recent purchase?

BL: We just bought these amazing Amish-made scooters for the shop. They're functional and look great.

TM: We can envision our customers scooting by on their way to the farmers' market.

What's your favorite item you sell?

BL: When people buy the *We Are So Good Together* print it means that they're in a nice place in their life.

Is there an object that changed the way you think about design?

TM: I grew up with handmade design. My aunts made dolls for my cousins and me, and when I was young I'd sit with my grandmother and watch soap operas—her "stories"—and we'd crochet together to keep me busy and quiet.

Why is Silver Lake a good place for a design store?

BL: We could not have picked a better location. A lot of the artists we work with started out as regular customers. It's a very close-knit community and has probably inspired us more than we even realize.

What young designers or artists are you watching?

TM: Tanya Aguiñiga is on the verge of something huge. This girl is incredible; she's known for her furniture, but we carry her Soft Rocks. She can do anything. And Esther Derkx makes wonderful repurposed crockery.

BL: Maxine Sutton, an artist from the UK, is making some little trinkets and kits that we're very excited about. I love Ayumi Horie's pottery, and Lorena Barrezueta does cool ceramic take-out ware. Mixed-media artist Hillery Sproatt pays such close attention to detail in every single thing that she makes, no matter how small the item.

How has the market changed since you opened the store?

BL: There's a better understanding of the whole concept behind handmade goods. People appreciate the work that goes into the products and that sometimes it might cost a little more than something mass-produced.

What's next for ReForm School?

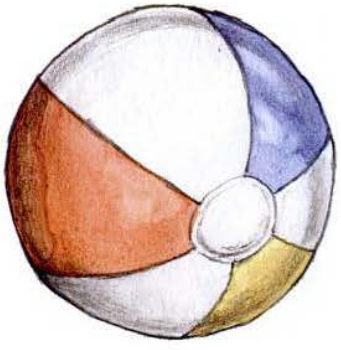
BL: We have always wanted our shop to have an interactive community feel with more layers to it than the basic retailer-customer connection. Hosting the Home Ec. classes was about making, and our next venture will put the emphasis on doing: canoeing classes and races, archery lessons.

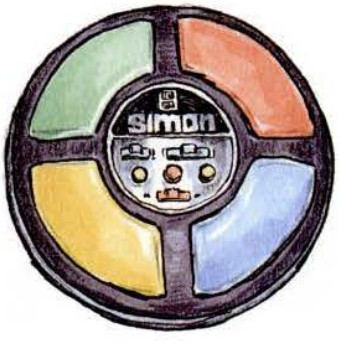
TM: We have got so many little crazy ideas.

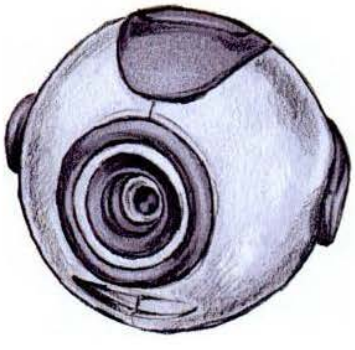
Photos by Brigitte Sire (interior, scooter)

Building a community around design was important for Maldonado and Lopez, and ReForm School has become a neighborhood institution promoting craft and artisan goods, like a textile mobile from Hillery Sproatt, Tanya Aguiñiga's Soft Rocks, and a scooter made in Pennsylvania using traditional Amish methods.

An Introduction to Manufacturing







Manufacturing began the moment the first prehistoric creature broke a twig off a tree and began to use it as a tool. It has since developed to the point where the bulk of the world economy consists of masses of people using tools to make products for other masses of people to buy.

Although workshops employing people laboring to create a specific product existed as far back as ancient China and Imperial Rome, the concept of the factory—a place where humans, machines, and a source of energy come together to produce the same object—didn't really take off until the 1770s, when an English barber and con man named Richard Arkwright borrowed other people's ideas to create a machine that used horsepower to spin cotton into yarn.

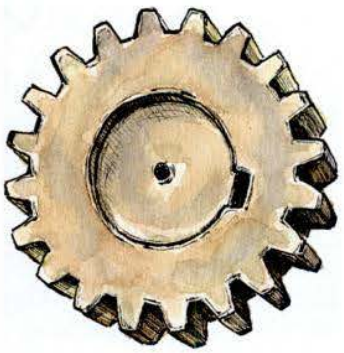
Soon other factories sprang up, using everything from waterpower to steam to make objects as disparate as buttons and battleships. The immense output of these factories, and the immense profits they earned for their owners, put an end to the age of handcrafted goods. The industrial revolution had begun.

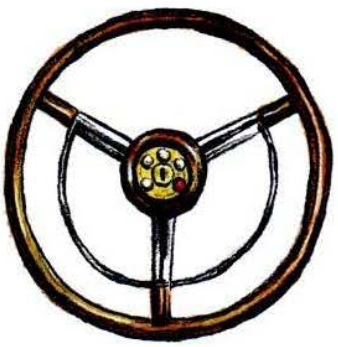
By the early 20th century, developments in industrial planning, as well as advances in machinery and materials, led to the industrial revolution's innovative peak: Henry Ford's assembly line. Ford's genius was to ensure that each worker did precisely one thing in a way that was carefully designed to all but eliminate the possibility of mistakes. Manufacturing in this era was about repetition: Identical movements by identical workers produced a nearly endless supply of identical goods.

People had at last become part of the machine, and soon after, so would art. Germany's Bauhaus school saw the machine in everything: the machine as an extension of the hand, the chair as a machine for sitting, the house as a machine for living. Materials that could only have come from factories—

Story by Patrick Di Justo
Illustrations by Tim Tomkinson

Little matters more in manufacturing than having your information straight. Read on and read up. We've got you covered.





tubed steel, vinyl, acrylic—began showing up as furniture, and by mid-century, we had entered the era of the industrially inspired skyscraper. Rows of Mies van der Rohes arose in downtowns the world over, making even the city, previously the demesne of bricklayers, masons, and carpenters, into one more product of a machine.

In the United States, where our economy used to be based on making things, we seem to have spent the past 30 years essentially giving away our factory infrastructure and know-how. This might spell the end of the United States as a major manufacturer, or it might set the stage for the next manufacturing revolution, one fueled by green technology. That one may very well be America's last, though.

New developments in computers and robotics might provide us with a future that would have been all but unthinkable a few decades ago: filled with goods produced in the millions, but in a million different factories and with a million minor variations that make each one unique. We may be looking forward to a manufacturing future where do-it-yourself is the guiding principle—where the factory is a box on your desktop and the end result is a high-tech, multifunctional, manufactured product as organic as a twig.

Words You Should Know

Anthropogenic: Caused by human beings. Most frequently used to describe pollution of one form or another.

Cradle-to-cradle: A style of manufacturing that attempts to provide for recycling of all components, from their first use in one product to their reuse in another product.

Edsel: A late-1950s automobile, designed and marketed using the most scientific principles, that was a miserable failure in the marketplace due to poor workmanship and misreading of customer demand. Now the term applies to any old lemon.

Gulaosi: The Chinese occurrence of death from overwork, not an uncommon occurrence given the 24-hour work shifts of some Chinese factories.

Inventory: The amount of finished product on hand. With the advent of on-demand manufacturing and just-in-time delivery, having products lying around a factory is coming to be seen as a liability.

Kaizen: The Japanese practice of making constant improvements to the design of a product. Unlike, say, software updates, which fix things designers should have caught the first time.

ROHS: Restriction of Hazardous Substances—a 2003 European Union law (in the U.S. it's just a guide) restricting the use of toxic substances like mercury, cadmium, and lead in electrical product designs. Naysayers predicted the death of the electronic industry, which hasn't happened yet.

Soroptomy: A situation in which one large buyer (think Wal-Mart), having squeezed out the competition (think Wal-Mart), becomes the main customer for many suppliers and thus sets the terms and prices (think Wal-Mart).

❶ Some historians say that the first factory was the Venetian Arsenal, which employed thousands of workers in the 15th century and could build 30 ships in 10 days.

❷ Samuel Slater (father of the American industrial revolution) got his start by memorizing, then stealing, designs for Richard Arkwright's yarn-spinning machine.

DONE WRONG

Wall of Shame

It started out as a great idea: Do away with wet-plaster wall construction, which required multiple workers taking days or weeks to plaster a house (and weeks or months for the plaster to set). So, in 1894, an ex-Navy engineer named Augustine Sackett designed and obtained U.S. patent 520123 for "a board or plate used as a substitute for lath and plaster": the first successful drywall. But Sackett's felt-wrapped board remained a specialty item in the building trades; plaster-and-lath wall construction predominated until the 1940s.

The postwar building boom changed that. Using assembly-line construction techniques he had developed to build war workers' homes, William Levitt built thousands of inexpensive houses on Long Island, in New Jersey, and in Pennsylvania for returning veterans. To save time and money, Levitt designed his houses with interiors of paper-wrapped gypsum wallboard, a linear descendant of Sackett's invention. And therein lies the problem.

Gypsum is a common mineral, made of calcium, sulfur, and water. Manufacturers can't use it to make drywall or plaster, however, until they remove its water molecules. They do this by placing the crushed gypsum in a gas-fired kettle at 300 degrees Fahrenheit for up to three hours. This removes the water, but it also produces copious amounts of CO_2 and water vapor, both greenhouse gases.

To make wallboard, manufacturers mix the dried gypsum into a water-based slurry, which they then pour into molds and wrap between thick sheets of paper. (What? They remove the water from gypsum and then add water right back? Yes: There is an enormous chemical difference between "gypsum with attached water molecules" and "dehydrated gypsum floating in water.") The paper-slurry sandwich is fed into a drying station, which is yet another gas fire, producing more CO_2 and water vapor. Because of these manufacturing techniques, designed when energy was cheap and pollution was free, nearly one-eighth of the man-made CO_2 in our atmosphere comes from the creation of building materials like cement, glass, concrete, and drywall.

DONE RIGHT

Slag Solution

Enter Serious Materials and its EcoRock drywall. EcoRock is not all-natural drywall—that would be called "wood"—but it is an attempt to do away with wasteful gypsum drywall manufacturing by taking the leftovers of other manufacturing processes and turning them into something useful.

The "rock" in EcoRock is primarily slag, a mineral-like solution of silicates and oxides that is left over at the bottom of the furnace during glass or steel manufacturing. (Slag is to natural rock what Lady Gaga is to Joan Jett.) In the old days of cheap manufacturing, furnace owners used to throw away slag, but in the past few decades slag has gained some respect as an aggregate in road building, and now as drywall.

Of course, as the leavings of a gas-fired blast furnace, slag itself is hardly carbon neutral. For EcoRock, since the slag already exists, and the carbon to make it has already been spent, we might as well benefit from the result.

Unlike freshly mined gypsum, furnace slag is already dehydrated. At the EcoRock factory, it is made into slurry with water and a few proprietary materials, and then pressed between sheets of fiberglass—not too different from regular drywall manufacturing.

The next step is critical: In CEO Kevin Surace's words, EcoRock "cooks itself and dries itself." Though he won't say anything more about that process, Surace drops hints that the mixture of materials results in a chemical reaction that gives off enough heat to drive the water out and bind the slag particles together. Because this heat comes from within the material, there's no need to run the boards through a second drying station, which prevents even more CO_2 from being released.

Serious Materials runs EcoRock on a cradle-to-cradle manufacturing system, claiming that every bit of its drywall can be recycled. Surace set a goal for his company to eliminate one billion tons of anthropogenic CO_2 from the atmosphere in 12 years, primarily by not putting it there in the first place.

❸ Friedrich Engels, coparent of communist theory with Karl Marx, was himself a partner in a successful textile factory.

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Let's Get Small

Hammers and nails are out, friends, and as the (patent) pending nanotech revolution shows, manufacturing is on the eve of the atom.

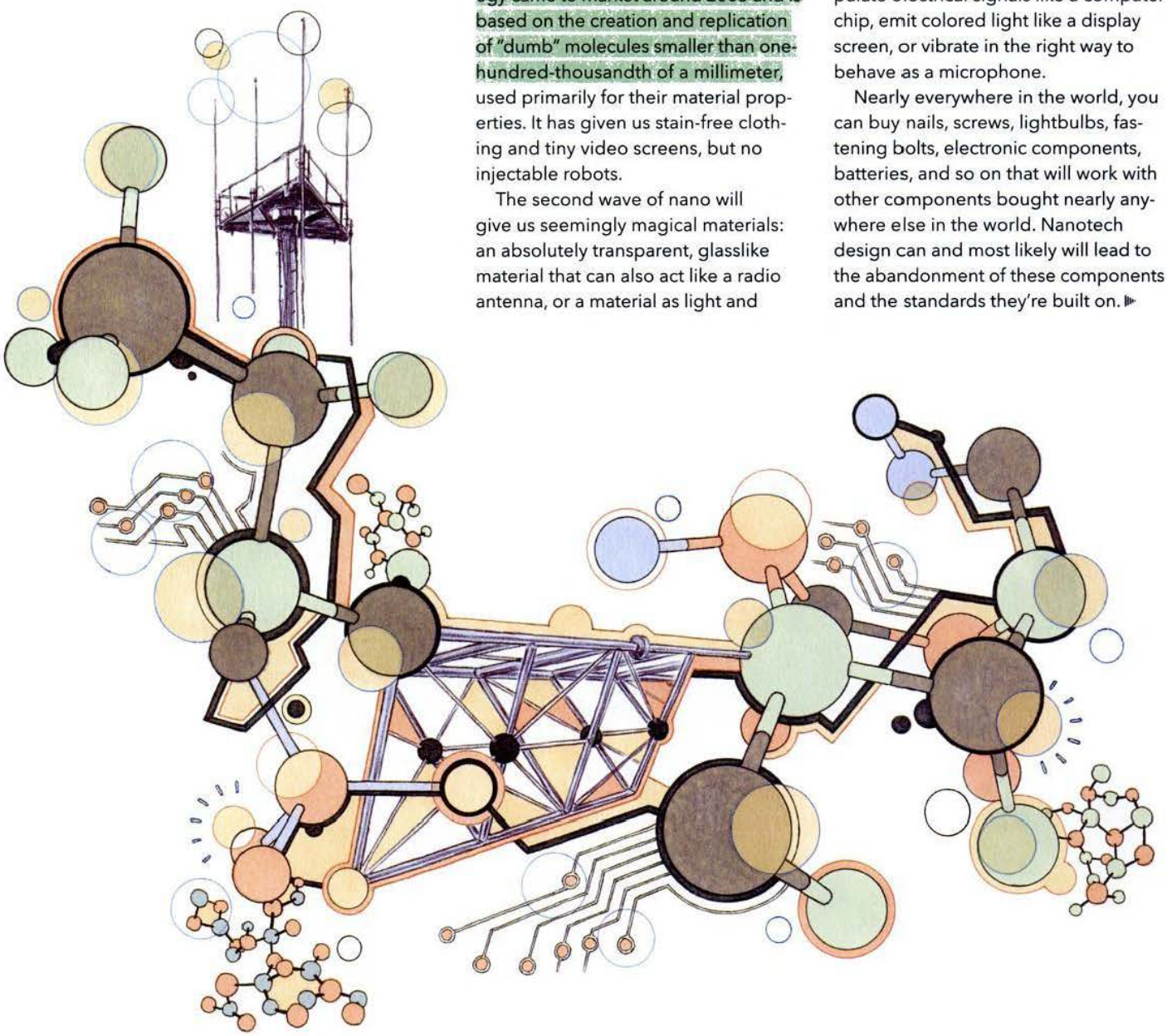
Nanotechnology is the science (or the art?) of manipulating atoms and molecules one by one. It will change everything we know about manufacturing and design.

The common conception of nanotech is that it involves the creation of submicroscopic machines—tiny robots that can be shot into our bloodstream to clear the cholesterol out of our arteries or sent to the ocean floor or the surface of the moon to build exploration infrastructure.

That may still happen, but not for a while. The first wave of nanotechnology came to market around 2003 and is based on the creation and replication of "dumb" molecules smaller than one-hundred-thousandth of a millimeter, used primarily for their material properties. It has given us stain-free clothing and tiny video screens, but no injectable robots.

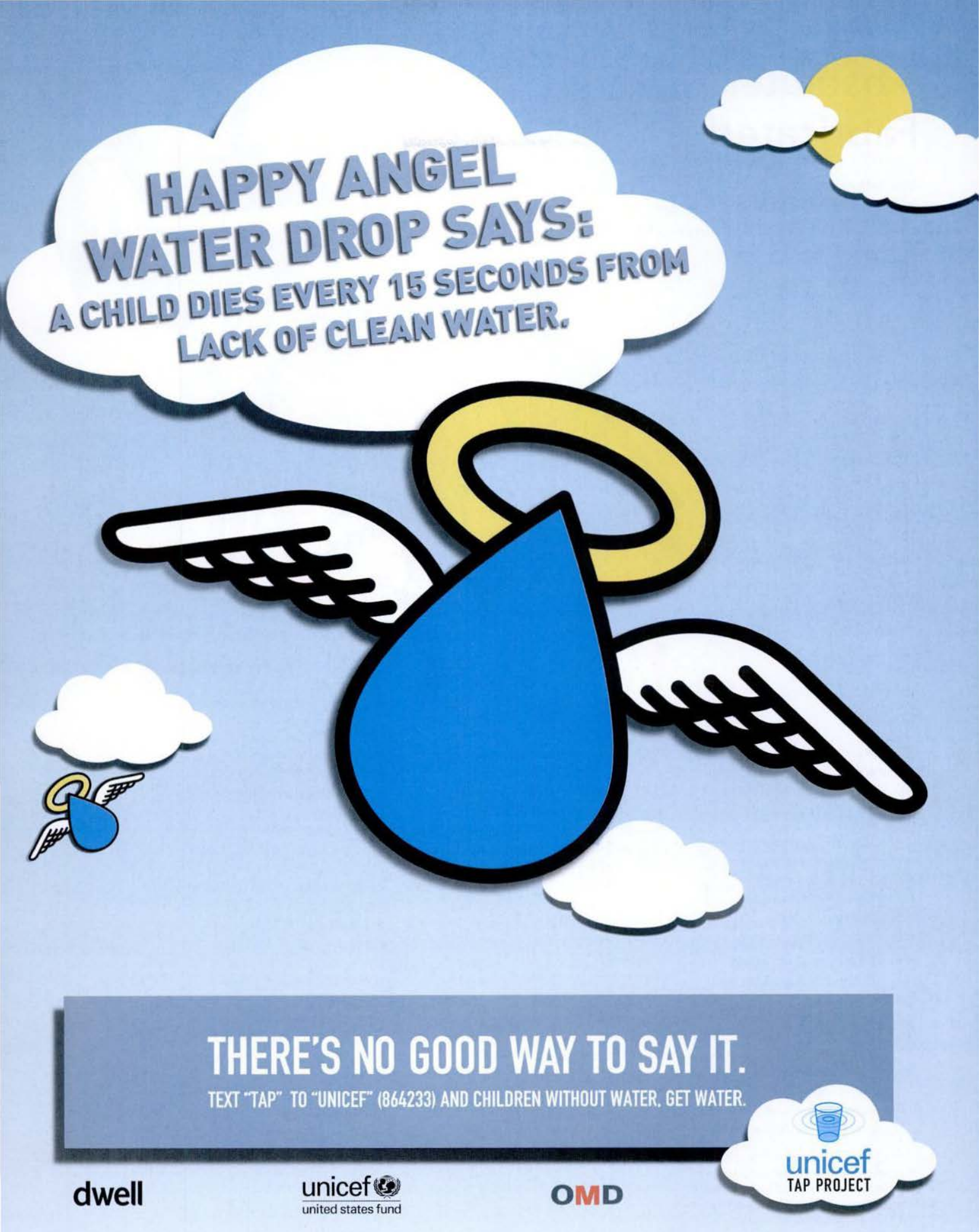
The second wave of nano will give us seemingly magical materials: an absolutely transparent, glasslike material that can also act like a radio antenna, or a material as light and flexible as plastic but also thinner than a soap bubble, stronger than steel, and as chemically reactive as the inside of your nose. The result will be that objects made by nanotechnology will not be made of components. A current-day cell phone contains a battery, a display screen, an antenna, a camera, tiny screws, a circuit board, and a great many electronic parts like computer chips, capacitors, resistors, and diodes. A cell phone made through nanotech will likely be a flat piece of material, looking like undifferentiated plastic made of smart materials that can manipulate electrical signals like a computer chip, emit colored light like a display screen, or vibrate in the right way to behave as a microphone.

Nearly everywhere in the world, you can buy nails, screws, lightbulbs, fastening bolts, electronic components, batteries, and so on that will work with other components bought nearly anywhere else in the world. Nanotech design can and most likely will lead to the abandonment of these components and the standards they're built on.



❹ Thomas Savery invented the steam engine, which was later modified by Thomas Newcomen. James Watt merely fixed the design to make it more fuel efficient.

❺ Prefab homes were sold more than 100 years ago by Sears, Roebuck and Co., who shipped them by rail across the Great Plains.



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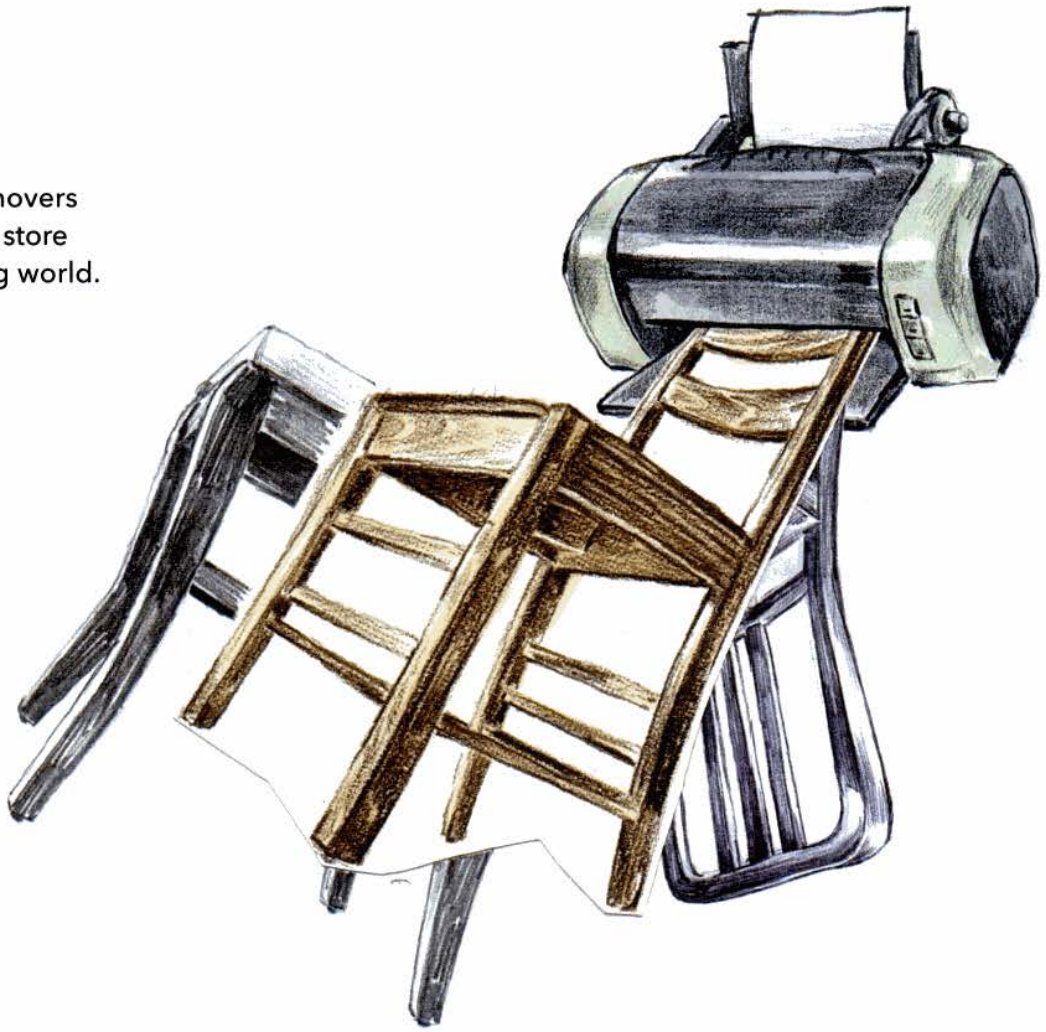
Absolutely Fabricated

We talked to a handful of movers and makers to see what's in store for the wider manufacturing world.



Bre Pettis is the host of the History Channel special *History Hackers* and one of the founders of MakerBot Industries, which offers 3-D desktop fabricators.

"The goal of MakerBot is shifting the kind of mind-set we have now, where if we want something, we go out shopping for it, toward one of wanting something and downloading it, or designing it yourself. I was at an art exhibit where digital artists made 3-D printed art they couldn't make any other way. So it's a shift not just in the economic sense but in consciousness as well. For instance, I broke a knob off an air conditioner. You can't get a replacement for it, or if you can, it's expensive. But if I could just get the specs and make one with a 3-D printer, it suddenly becomes supercheap."

Russel Versaci is an architect behind Pennywise modular homes.

"In September 2007, we saw the beginning of the end of the old way of making houses. By 2030, we're going to see nearly all houses made to order in factories. There are fewer qualified tradesmen coming along, and young people are less interested in working in the trades. Hand-built houses are going to be far fewer, as they're going to be so expensive, available only to a few at the very highest income level. Factory manufacturing of modular houses by that time is going to be well established, and it'll become exponentially more sophisticated, more efficient, and cheaper to do. It'll never replace the elegance of something handcrafted, but the economics are going to favor doing it this way."

Bill Young is a boatmaker and the founder of 100KGarages.com, a Web service that links designers to fabricators.

"For some things, a desktop 3-D printer isn't going to cut it. For bookshelves and other large objects, you're going to need access to larger tools. And when people see how easy it is to create and build their own designs, the end result will be that instead of buying this factory-made object, where everyone's is the same, you can design your own chair, let's say, that fits you perfectly. There's no reason why you can't have custom-built everything for the same cost as mass-produced. I'm not saying everyone will have a replicator in their garage 20 years from now—that won't happen—but everybody will have access to one."

⓫ Assembly-line manufacturing has played a role in works of art like Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*.

2010

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Materials deadline Friday April 30th

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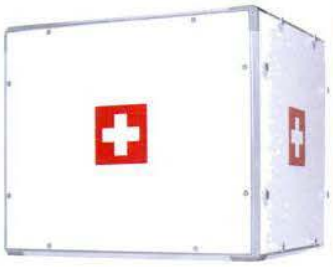

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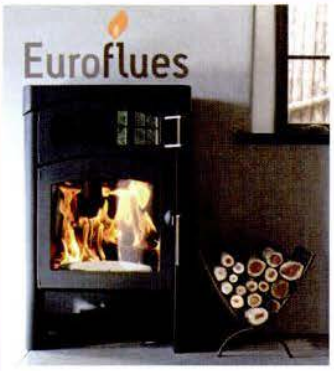

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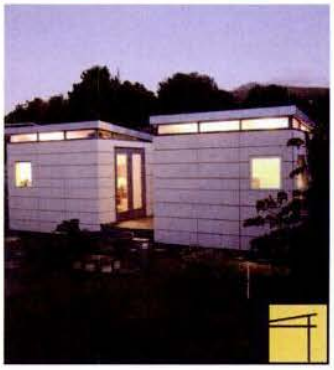

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goodearthcanvas.com

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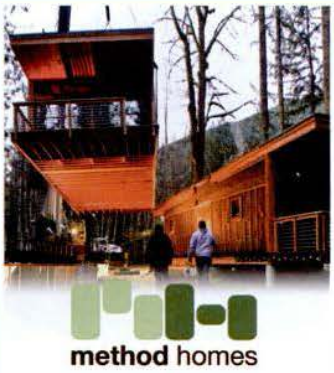

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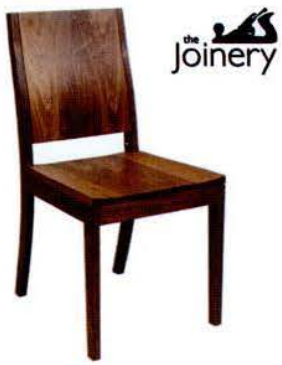


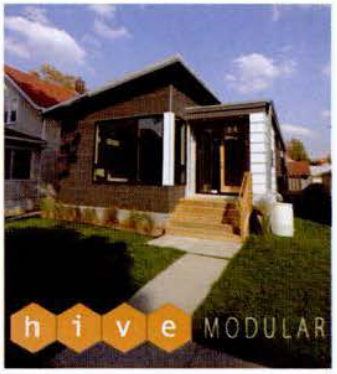
The Joinery

Handcrafted in Portland, Coveted Worldwide

Solid hardwoods, old-world technique, and meticulous handcraftsmanship exemplify The Joinery's devotion to classic design, heirloom quality, and sustainability.

Shown: Studio Chair in FSC-certified eastern walnut (available in four FSC-certified woods) SCS-COC-000060

Toll-free 800-259-6762
thejoinery.com



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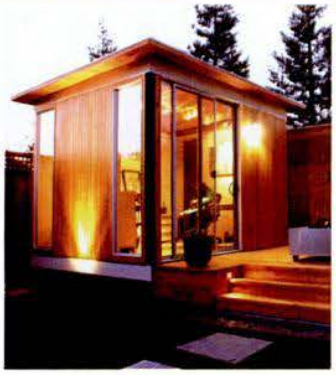
The Code lamp by Vibia is the height of ultracontemporary design. Another in a long line of modern masterpieces from the craftsmen at Vibia, the Code lamp is a fresh spin on the stale floorlamp design of decades past. The uniquely conical, white-lacquered stem and base uses rounded, clean lines to combine sturdy craftsmanship with a designer's touch. The Code Lamp's shade is a masterful hand-blown glass, ribboned in black that diffuses light coolly and softly. The Code lamp is available in traditional incandescent or energy-efficient fluorescent.

Toll-free 800-807-1826
lightingbygregory.com



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Shown: Wave, Zero, and Veneto pedestal sinks.

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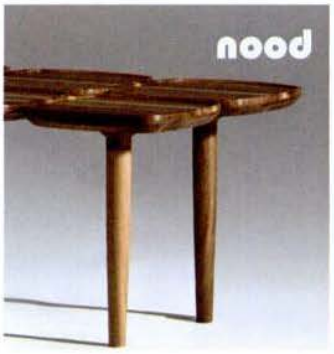

noodDesign.com

New Objects of Desire, Introducing the Sean Dix Collection

NoodDesign.com—home of distinct contemporary designs in furniture, housewares, and more—now offers a range of timeless, beautiful pieces from architect/designer Sean Dix, starting at just $110.

Shown: Sean Dix Petal Coffee Table, from $249. Free FedEx on any Sean Dix piece when shipping to U.S. and Canada.

Toll-free 877-324-9906
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Bauhaus-Style Dog Sofa

Dogs love this gorgeous sofa that pays tribute to classic Le Corbusier seating. Choose vinyl, leather, or pony-style fabrics that are waterproof, washable, and removable. Quality steel frames. Four sizes. From $210. Made in Italy and available exclusively at dogbar.com.

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Modern Market

MamagreenUSA

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Shown: 2" x 2" mixed finishes, $35 per square foot.

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Galvanized Ceiling Fan

The Machine Age Galvanized Ceiling Fan takes on the rugged style of the industrial age with its completely galvanized motor housing and 100 percent galvanized metal blades. The perfect addition to any modern, factory-inspired loft with exposed ductwork and conduit, the machine age Galvanized Ceiling Fan acts as the catalyst between the gilded age and art deco time periods.

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Shown Above: Machine Age Galvanized Ceiling Fan with Cast Guard Light Kit (black).

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Douglas Thayer Woodworking and Design announces a new line of limited-edition hand-built benches made of salvaged ipe lumber from the Coney Island Boardwalk in Brooklyn, New York.

Shown: "Baseball" bench in reclaimed ipe.

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Woodworking and Design
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info@douglasthayer.com
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Ilex Architectural Lighting

The WAVE sconce is fluid in conception and purposeful in design. The asymmetry of the one light wave requires a right and left handed sconce.

Shown: Wave Single Sconce Right.

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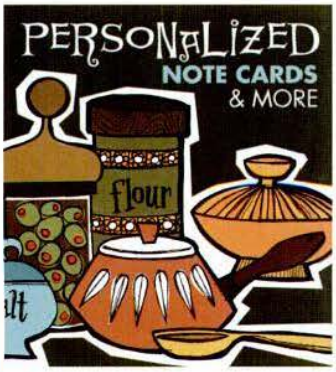

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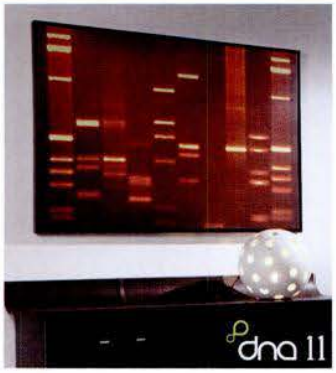

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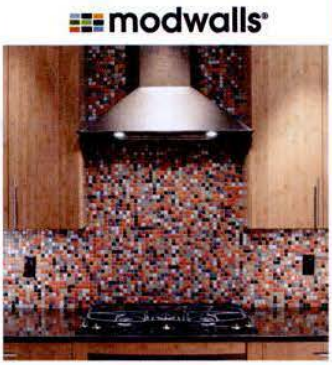

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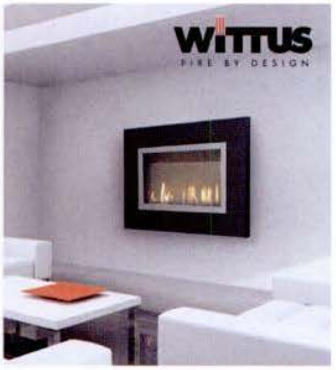

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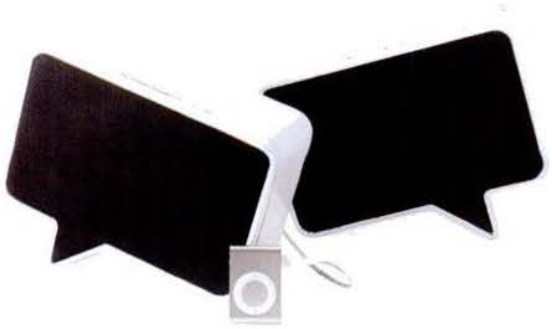

MoMA Design Store

The MoMA Design Store features a well-edited selection of products and gifts highlighting the latest in materials, production, and design concepts from around the world. The new "Speak-er" set by Mihoko Ouchi and Sherwood Forlee uses iconic shapes to make a bold statement. The multimedia speakers plug into your computer or MP3 player with a mini-jack connector and fill a room with quality sound. The set includes left and right speakers, and a power adapter. Each speaker is 4"H x 6"W x 2"D.

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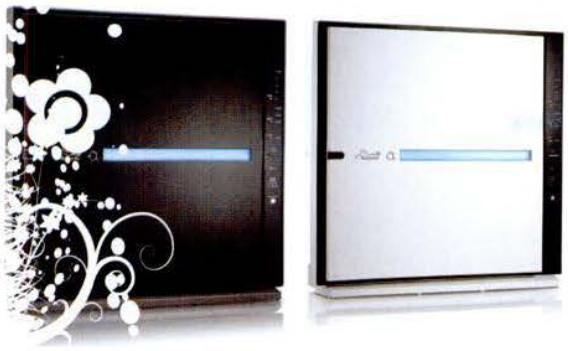
momastore.org



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Shown: Eames® Molded Plastic Armchair from Herman Miller, Charles and Ray Eames, 1948.

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Home, Made...

Partnering with Lindal Cedar Homes and Marmol Radziner Prefab, Dwell will make the most of the advantages modern prefab has to offer in terms of design, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. Experience the newest addition in the world of modern prefab construction, the Dwell Homes Collection.

Marmol Radziner Prefab
marmolradzinerprefab.com/skyline.html
or call 310-689-0089

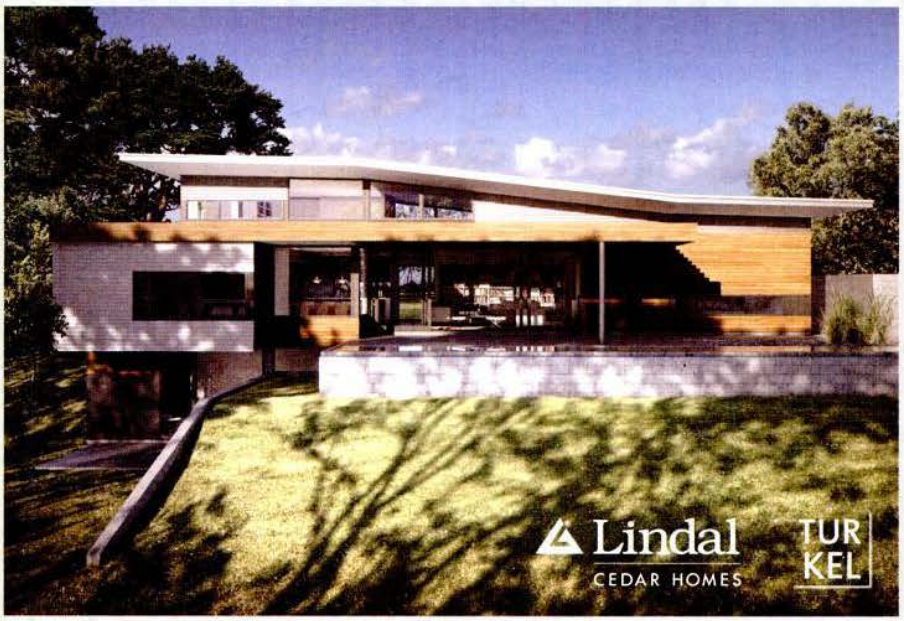
The company has created the Skyline Series to take advantage of the infill opportunities in urban areas. The Skyline Series offers six mix-and-match floor plans that fit on typical city lots and can easily be customized to various street configurations. By offering standard models, custom design time and cost are greatly reduced to provide people with new homes more quickly and easily.

Marmol Radziner Prefab believes that factory-built homes are the smarter way to build and is constantly looking for ways to bring prefab to more people. The Skyline Series is the latest creation of timeless design and quality.

Lindal Cedar Homes & Turkel Design
lindal.com/dwell or call 1-888-4LINDAL

The two companies have created this new series of efficiently designed homes that are fresh, exuberant, and respond to contemporary dwelling expectations through the intelligent use of shared space, structure, volume, and light. These homes incorporate many principles of environmentally conscious design, such as the use of natural and sustainable materials, passive gain and shading, and natural whole-house ventilation. The warmth and livability of a modern Lindal home comes from clean, uncluttered lines and the inspired use of natural materials.

Lindal Cedar Homes, delivered around the world, provides a lifetime structural warranty with each home and has contributed generously to the American Forests reforestation program on behalf of our clients for nearly 20 years.



SPONSORS HELP CELEBRATE MODERN HOMES AT PORTLAND'S FIFTH "STREET OF EAMES" TOUR

With help from the following sponsors, Portland has had a thriving modern home tour each April. This April 17, 1,200 people will get a rare glimpse into eight mid-century and contemporary modern designs. And with sponsorships and ticket sales, more than $100,000 will be raised to support after-school enrichment programs for homeless public school students.

Tickets are available online only.

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64 Off The Grid

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80 Is Prefab for You?

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82 Plan of Steel

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Lego Island

Billund, Denmark, could easily be considered the prefab capital of the world: Each year, its factories pump out more than 19 billion modules, which are sent around the world and pieced together by more than 400 million people.

Billund is, after all, the home of Lego, one of the most intensely used building blocks on Earth. The company's 2,350 different pieces and 52 colors form a nearly infinite number of combinations—and for as many purposes, from creating a land of shipwrecked pirates to assembling an actual kitchen island in a Paris apartment.

The idea for Simon Pillard and Philippe Rossetti's Lego kitchen sprouted five years ago, when Pillard put 500 blocks and a day's worth of work into building a Lego-legged chair. The designing duo—who create products together under the name Munchausen—recently gave the seat a colorful companion. They covered their kitchen island—a simple wooden block—with 20,000 Lego pieces.

"We design mostly in black and white," Rossetti says of their professional work. "Our apartment is our place for emotional release, the liberation of colors."

Story by Miyoko Ohtake
Photo by Céline Clanet

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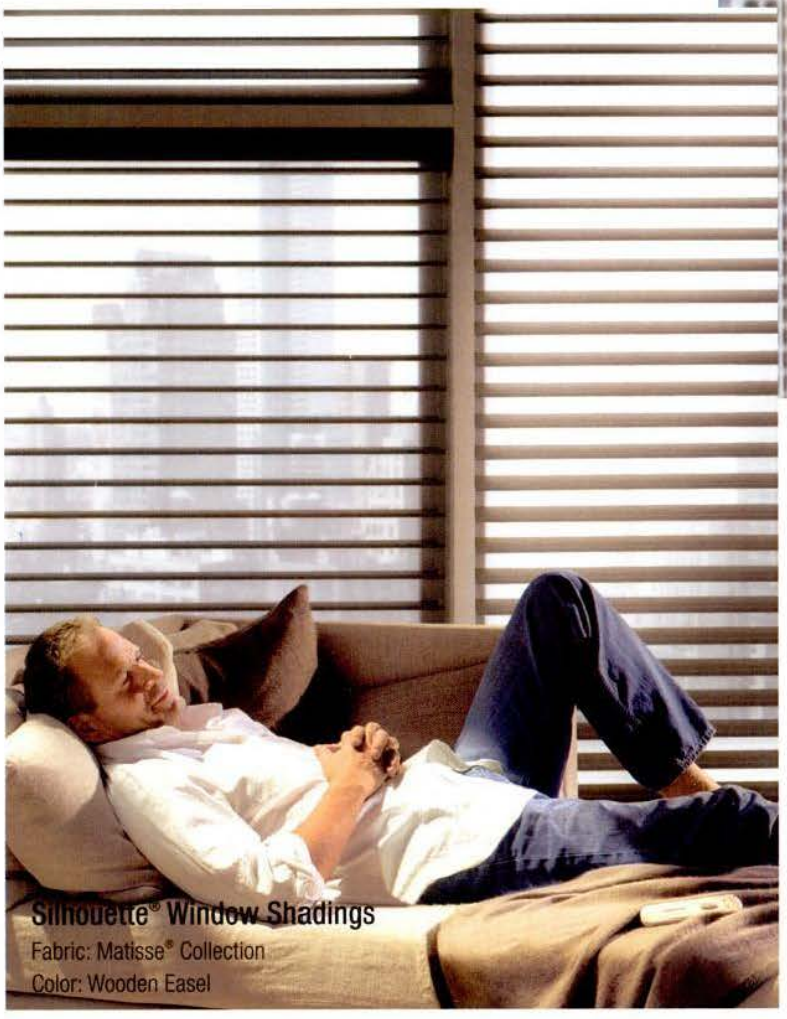

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