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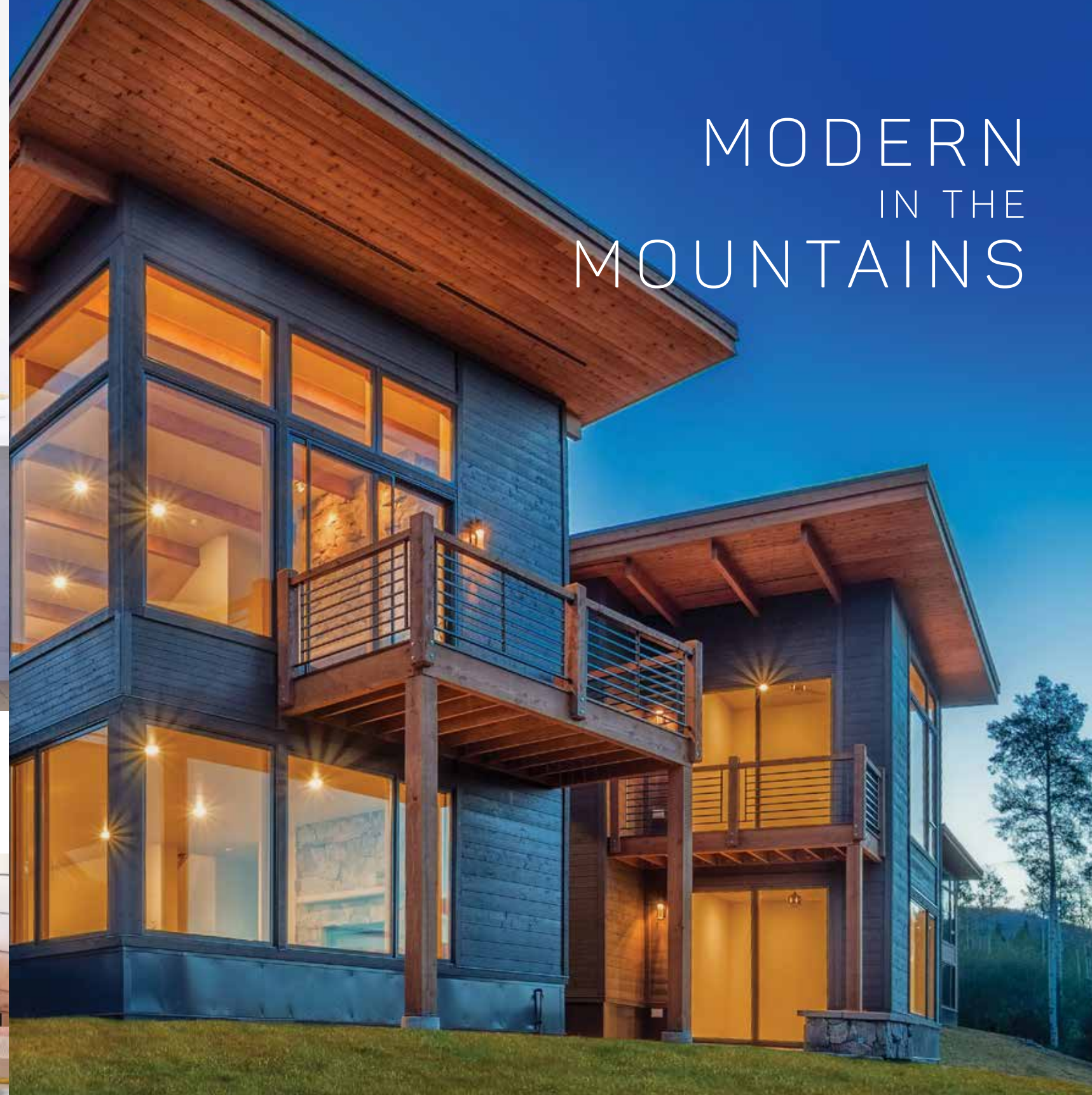
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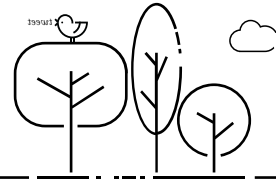
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# INSIDE NJOY!

MESSAGE / MATERIAL / MATTER / TEXT / IDEAS - SUBSTANCE



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## FIELD STUDY

Our inspiring roundup of gadgets, modern accessories, and other items you didn't know you needed.

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## ICONIC CHAIR: CH07 SHELL CHAIR

Danish designer-architect Hans J. Wegner challenged design perceptions and assumptions in 1963 with the release of his now-iconic CH07 Shell Chair. In spring 2018, Danish furniture company Carl Hansen & Søn will re-release the chair in an updated, limited edition.

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## INTO THE FOLD

A new book from London publisher Lawrence King teaches crafty architecture buffs how to recreate the work of master American architect Frank Lloyd Wright—out of paper.

60

## SITTING PRETTY

The revolutionary new Silq chair, from Steelcase, may change modern office furniture as we know it.

64

## MATTER OF TIME

The Kirkland Museum, truly one of Denver's design treasures, has expanded and relocated to a new home in the Golden Triangle. Modern In Denver takes a first look and reports on the stunning new space.

86

## A MODERN COTTAGE

The Denver-based firm Tomecek Studio Architecture has re-envisioned the idea of the classic cottage with the completion of a new project in the Black Hills.

104

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF OUR ALLEY'S

Good design teaches us to see possibility in the most unlikely places. For OZ Architecture's Nathan Jenkins, this meant diving into the world of ADUs, or Affordable Dwelling Units—a phenomenon transforming the affordable housing landscape in Denver.

116

## 5 ELEMENTS OF A MODERN GARDEN

When people think of Modern architecture, they often overlook the landscape. But the principles of Modern design apply equally well to garden design. We explored 5 crucial elements of the Modern garden.

120

## THE AVANT GARDENERS

The story of Modern landscape architecture begins at Harvard in the 1930s with three classmates. After becoming friends and collaborators, they changed the field of design forever.

124

## COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUS

The Alliance Center in Downtown Denver believes in practicing what it preaches. That's why it brings elements of sustainability and eco-consciousness to an office collective for businesses focused on sustainability and eco-consciousness.

134

## TRAVEL BY DESIGN: TIPPET RISE ART CENTER

Epic sculptures in the middle of Montana's Big Sky country redefines the relationship between man-made art and the art of the land itself.

148

## THE TIES THAT BIND

At The Bindery, a new eatery in the Lower Highlands by chef/owner Linda Hampsten Fox, sustainability is built into every facet of the business.

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## RISING SPIRITS

A penchant for perfection has brought Japanese whisky distilleries to the attention of spirit enthusiasts around the world.

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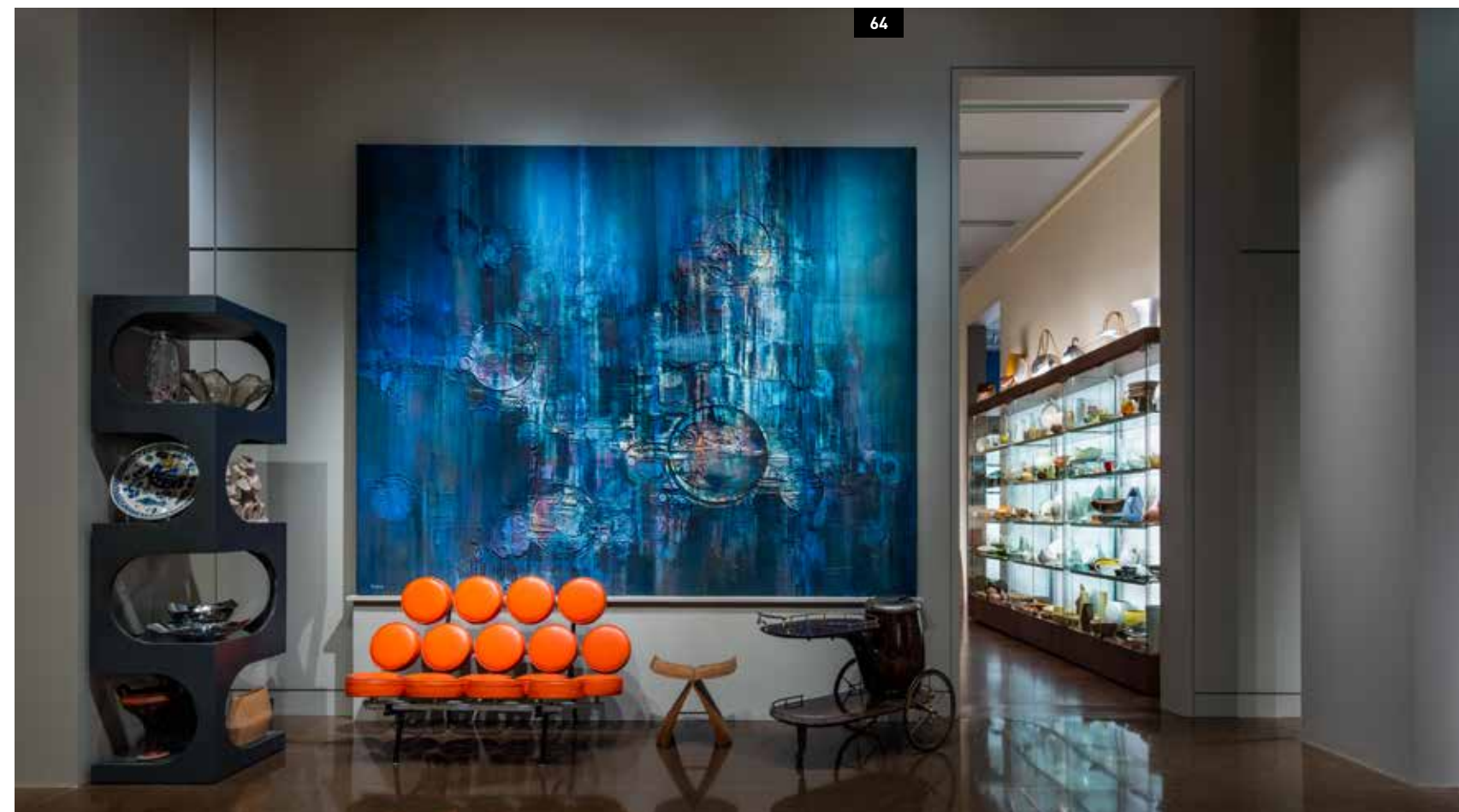
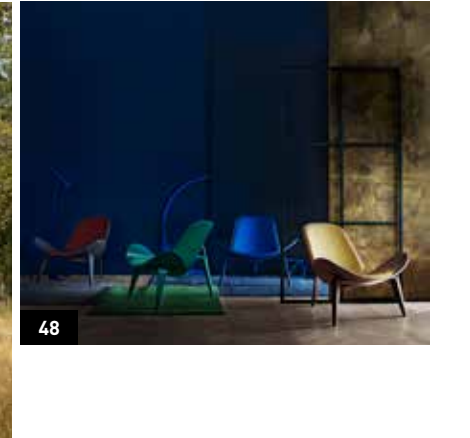
## THE BATHROOM

Recent advancements in bathroom design have transformed bathtubs, sinks, and other fixtures into cutting-edge examples of design done right.

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## ONE LAST THING

Izzy Wheels, a Dublin-based company founded in 2015, is on a mission to introduce style and personality to contemporary wheelchair design.





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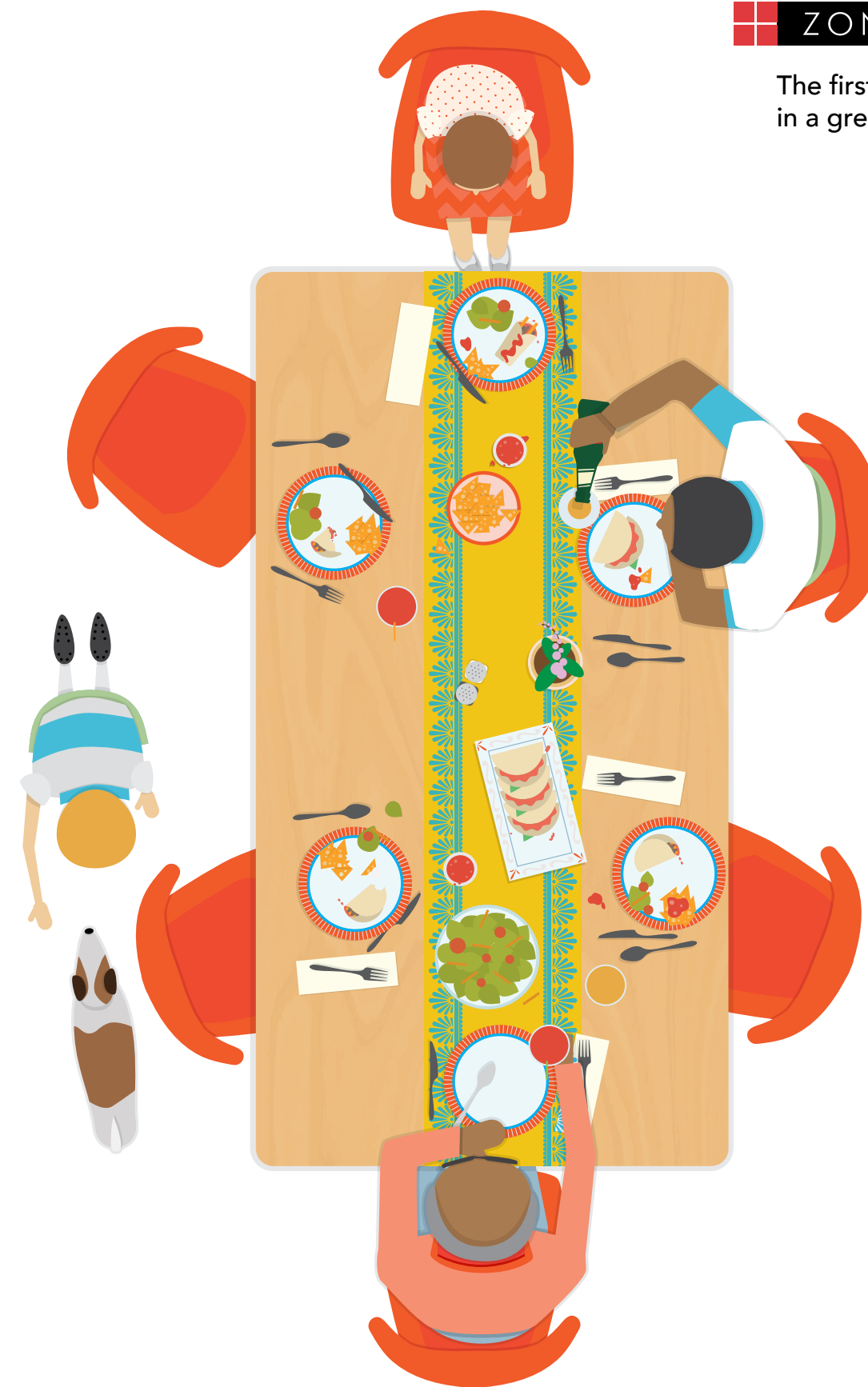
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Shiny & New

Part of the joy of living in a city – especially one as progressive and innovative as ours – is watching it change over time, mature, come into itself. Some of my favorite memories of Denver involve observing its transition from old to new, witnessing the signs of positive growth that have cropped up everywhere around us.

One notable example of this growth is the expansion and relocation of Kirkland Museum. I have always cherished my visits to Kirkland Museum, even in its early days, when it occupied an inconspicuous stretch of street on 13th and Pearl in Capitol Hill. With a discreet profile, many people drove or walked by the museum every day, completely oblivious to the magic just a few feet away. Once inside, however, the experience was always jaw-dropping. The museum was composed of a handful of rooms adjoined to Vance Kirkland's century-old art studio. Every square foot was filled with treasure – paintings, ceramics, sculptures, pottery, glass, furniture, even an Andy Warhol tomato soup can mini dress from the 60s. There was so much to see, so much take in, and yet there was also extraordinary thought and energy put into every object. The salon-style method of integrating objects, furniture, and paintings in each room was exciting, illuminating, and vastly different from other museums in Denver.

When the museum announced its intention to move (and expand) to the

Golden Triangle, near the Denver Art Museum and adjacent to the Clyfford Still Museum, I was delighted that the new building would allow for a larger display of its collection. The move is sure to elevate the museum's stature and enable more people to experience the magic I have loved for years. I will always remain a little nostalgic for the old space, but this new location – designed by Olson Kundig – is stunning, unique, and altogether suited to the museum's bright future.

Now, the four-year move is finally complete, and the new Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts will open on March 10, 2018. To celebrate the occasion, the museum asked Modern In Denver to be the first publication to feature photography of the Kirkland's new space, and to tell the story of Vance Kirkland, his friendship with Hugh Grant, and the determination and vision that brought the museum to reality. It was a great honor to fulfill this request, and we believe you'll be as excited to read the story as we were to create it. Eleanor Perry-Smith's reporting and James Florio's photographs are a beautiful testament to this unique museum. We hope they inspire a visit. There's simply nothing that compares to immersing yourself in the stunning combination of architecture, art, furniture, and history that the Kirkland Museum provides. It is truly a unique experience, and one we're lucky to have right here in Denver.

William Logan  
william@modernindenver.com

THE COVERS



*Daydreams*, a site specific sculpture at Tippet Rise Art Center, by Patrick Dougherty is featured in our *Travel By Design* story. Photographed by James Florio, this one room replica 19th century schoolhouse with thousands of local willow saplings woven into giant otherworldly strands envelop the schoolhouse. The effect evokes a surrealistic dream or nightmare. This story starts on page 134.

Photographer James Florio, captures The westside of the new Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts. Gleaming in the sunlight are thousands of ceramic and glass tiles that beckon the visitor to the treasures that lie within the new museum. You can read our story on page 64.

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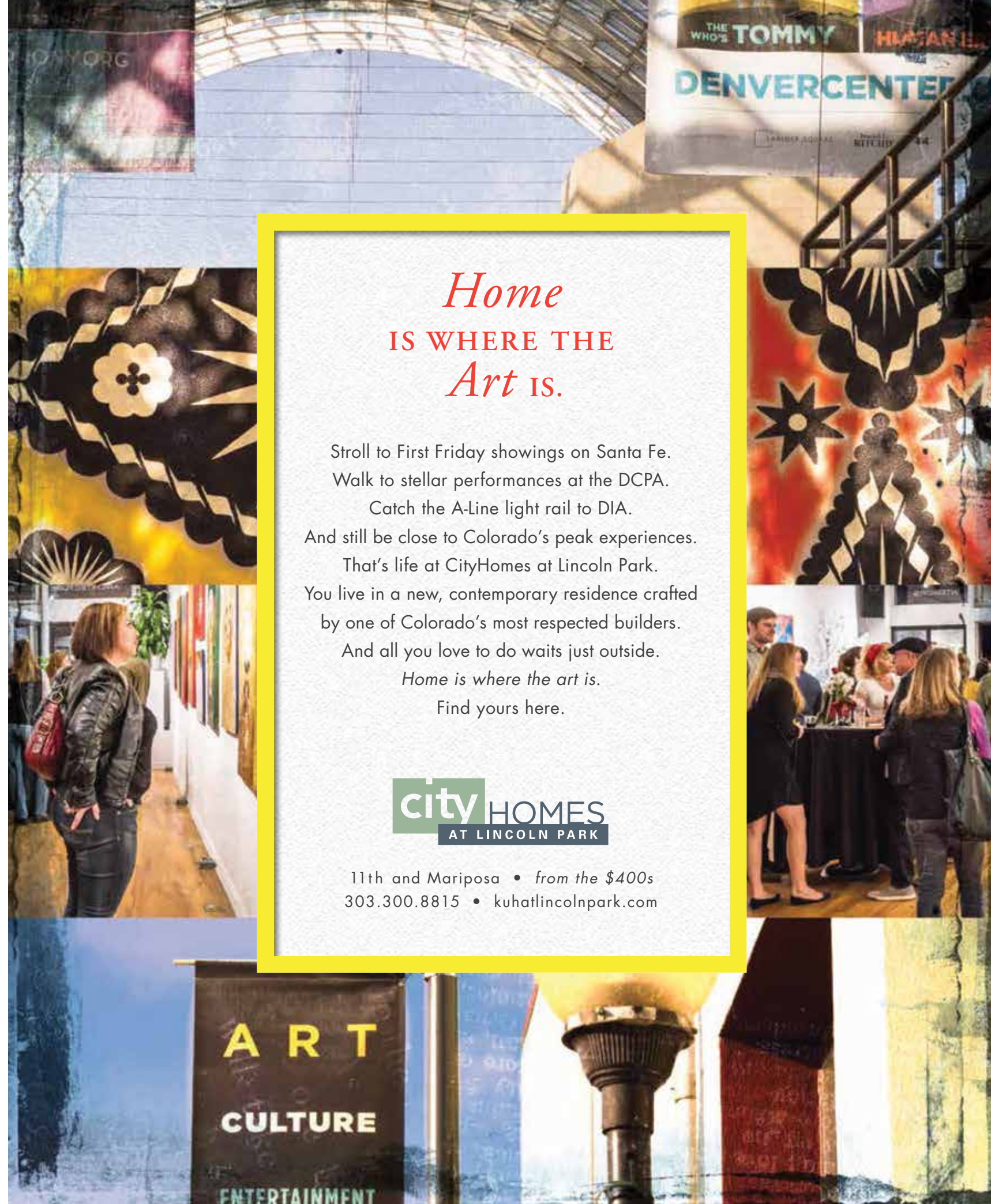
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YES, DO REACH OUT. *Now is a really good time.*

Modern In Denver is created by our dexterous hands and sometimes agile minds using an iMac 27", Adobe InDesign CC, Illustrator CC, Photoshop CC, Trello, FontAgent Pro, a Brother color laser printer, Apple Music, an iPhone 8 Plus, a Paper Mate flexgrip pen, and a much-needed sense of humor.

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**IN MEMORY:** Cory Skolnik - Your light and laughter will be missed.

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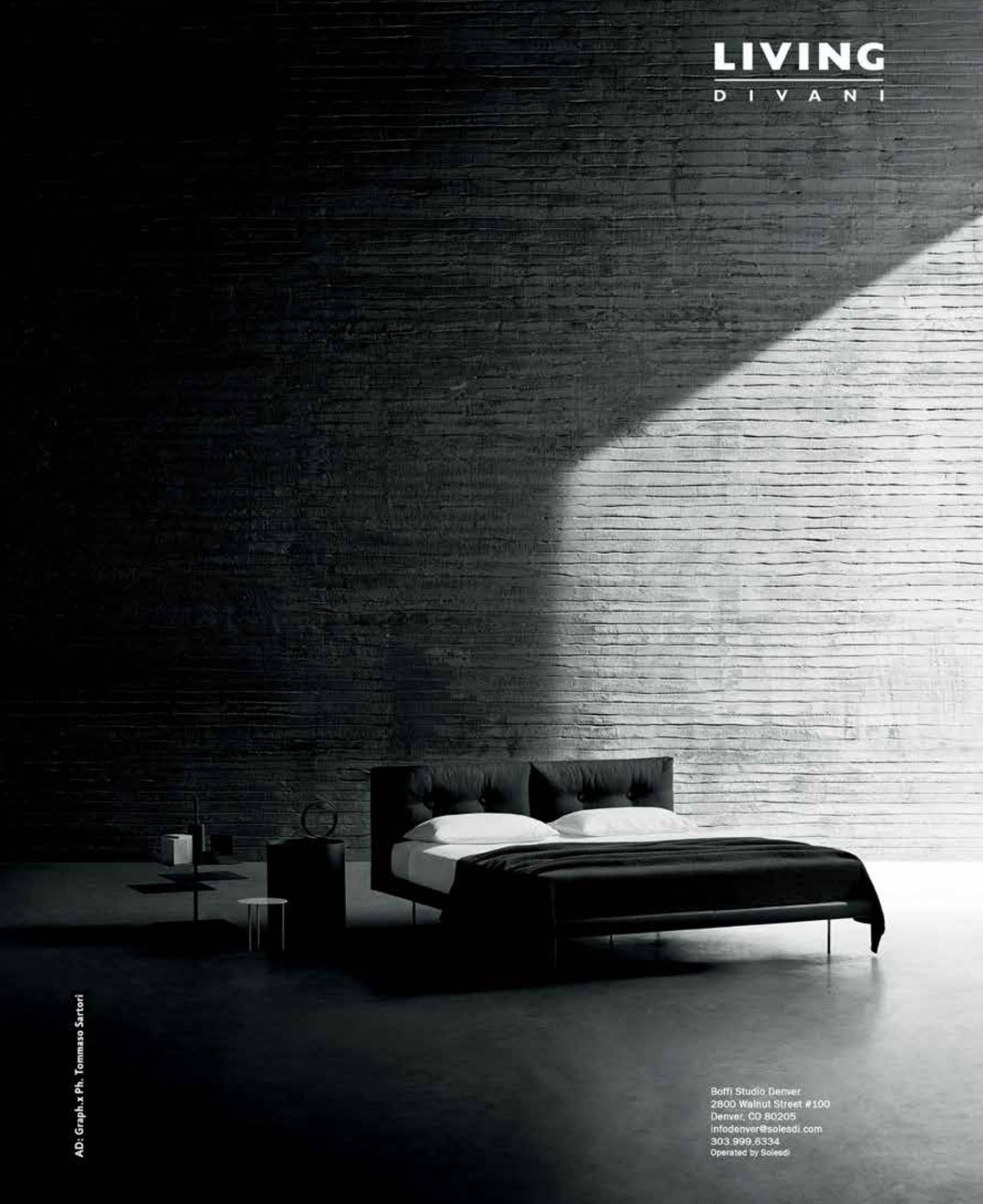
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# Field Study

WORDS: Tamara Chuang

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## Scenic Drive

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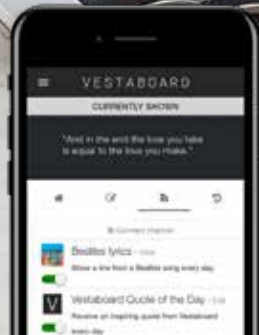


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### ***Ready All the Time***

When emergencies strike, no one wants to be stuck desperately hunting around for the last place someone saw the emergency kit. Look no further than Life Clock, from South Korea's Gyeonggido Company, which does double duty as an everyday clock. When the situation strikes, the clock springs to life as an all-purpose preparedness kit. It opens up like a suit case that stores a thermal cloth to keep a victim warm with his own body heat, a chemical light good for 12 hours, a whistle, bandages and room to pack other first-aid necessities. And when disaster has passed, it's still useful as a time teller.

**+lifeclock.com**

### ***Twisted Tool***

Who knew the screwdriver needed to be redesigned? Selek Design, that's who. But the Oregon designers didn't redesign the utility aspect. Just its looks—because no one wants to leave screwdrivers lying around the house. The PlusMinus modern makeover makes these stainless steel tools still handy but also okay to leave on the coffee table. Shaped like silver paddle boards, they have round tops that are easy to grip. Plus and minus signs are visual cues to distinguish between Phillips (plus sign) and flat (minus sign) screwdrivers. But remembering lefty-loosey and righty-tighty is still up to the user.

**+selek.design**



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### Carpet Case

Super fluffy pillows aren't just about what's inside. For ABSTRACT, a new line of pillows from designer Tom Dixon, it's the exterior that stands out. In a nod to '70s-style wall hangings, these shaggy, hand-tufted cushion cases are woven by craftsmen in northern India using the same weaving techniques as the rug and carpet industry. The results are thick, wooly knits and knots that are artfully woven into colorful scenes that literally—and plushly—stand out.

+[tomdixon.net](http://tomdixon.net)



### Mighty Byte

We're not exactly sure how digital storage manages to get larger, faster, and lighter. But it does. And then Western Digital comes along and says, "Not enough!" The company's latest—the sporty WD My Passport Wireless SSD portable drive—is just what any on-the-go photographer needs. With a sturdy solid-state drive, available in up to two terabytes, the new Passport includes a goof-proof button to back up images from an SD card at a rate of 65 megabytes per second. And then there's this: It wirelessly streams 4K video to nearby devices. And this: It doubles as an extra battery to charge up mobile devices.

+[wdc.com](http://wdc.com)



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### Dock Pod

Digital devices full of recipes are finding their way into more and more kitchens, so it's about time we gave them a special spot on the counter. The STAK Kitchen Tablet Dock does this quite graciously. The handmade stoneware, from STAK Ceramics in Pittsburgh, has a ledge to prop the tablet up and out of spills' way. At a slight angle, the tablet is easier to read. And like all good countertop fixtures designed with space limits in mind, it does double duty as a planter or kitchen tool holder.

+etsy.com/people/STAKceramics



### Fork It Over

We're all dreaming of a Rosie the robot to clean up after us, but until then, Cantilever Flatware is here to help minimize dinner mess. The stainless steel flatware is all about design. The eating end of the fork, knife, and spoon floats because it juts out from the utensil's base. You'll still have to wash up, but at least food bits won't get on the table or vice versa. Genius! Now where's the toddler version?

+ilovehandles.com/shop/cantilever-flatware



### Trip Worthy

It's 2018 and we still live with cords that power our wireless lives. But at least there's a gadget that will make our lives a bit safer, especially if you're prone to tripping over cords. That's what Tug is all about. Inspired by Apple's MagSafe magnetic connector, which easily disconnects cord from computer when yanked, pulled or even gently tugged, the two-piece Tug does the same for wired devices and power outlets all over the home.

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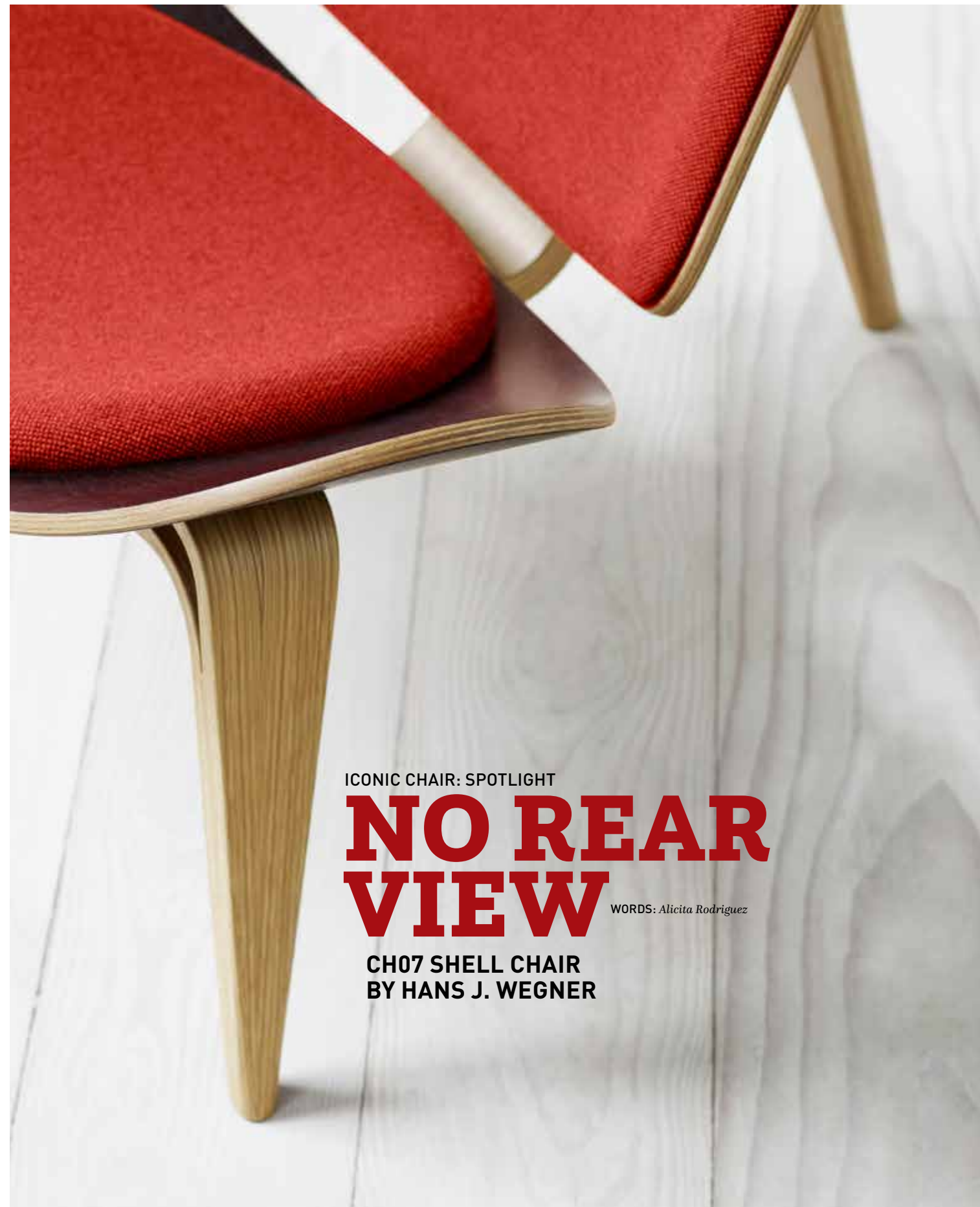
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ICONIC CHAIR: SPOTLIGHT

# NO REAR VIEW

WORDS: Alicita Rodriguez

CH07 SHELL CHAIR  
BY HANS J. WEGNER

## HAVE A SEAT

**T**he three-legged chair goes back centuries, but if you want to argue about its merits, visit the Physics Stack Exchange, where scientists and researchers have debated this question: “Why are four-legged chairs so common?”

The mysteriously named Yakk offered an online treatise on stability, which included mention of a chair’s “tippy directions.” Another eschewer of capitalization, known as garyp, might have even had a negative encounter with a three-legged chair, saying, “It is easy to tumble out.” Graphs and diagrams were posted. A geometer proposed ease of construction (straight versus angled cuts, etc.).

### AND YET NOBODY BROUGHT UP STYLE.

Every object has a default shape—and the chair’s is four-legged. But a good designer challenges our perceptions. Which is what Danish designer-architect Hans J. Wegner did with his CH07 Shell Chair. Manufacturer Carl Hansen & Søn (CHS) admits the Shell Chair was not “an instant success.” When it was introduced in 1963, in fact, “the general public was reluctant to accept the chair’s bold and different design.” Perhaps it was the smiling face or winglike sides that troubled people. Or maybe it was the three legs.

Thankfully, the low bentwood chair gained popularity when it was reissued in 1998. At that point, people were receptive to the Shell Chair’s dynamic form, which CHS characterizes as “floating lightness.” Writer and critic Italo Calvino wrote an entire lecture on the benefit of lightness, calling it an antidote to “the weight of living.”

In design, too, there is value in the literal shape and symbolic meaning of lightness—and the Shell Chair encapsulates this idea by recalling smiles, seashells, and wings, among other things. It seems as if it’s about to take flight.

CH07 Shell Chair also illustrates Hans J. Wegner’s belief in all-encompassing design: “A chair should have no rear view. It should be beautiful from all sides and angles.” From the side, Shell Chair presents a beautiful arc and tapered legs. From the back, there is the third leg to admire, with its sensual negative space tucked between two layers of curved bentwood. And head on, we are faced with the dramatic swoop of the seat resting on widely spaced legs, reminiscent of Japanese torii gates.

Shell Chair has been available in various finishes, with an upholstered back and seat in fabric or leather. In Spring 2018, Carl Hansen & Søn will release limited-edition Shell Chairs upholstered in handwoven Thai silks by Jim Thompson Fabrics. The new collection is organized in four jewel-toned themes—Red Coral, Blue Sapphire, Golden Citrine, and Green Jade—and finished in various complementary woods and finishes, including painted beech in Anthracite Gray, Grass Green, Purple Blue, Berry Red, and Vanilla White. Silk and frame colors can be combined for great effect.

Minimalists will stick with the traditional Shell Chair. Those who believe “more is more” can choose the Jim Thompson incarnation. Whatever its wrapping, the expressive curves and handcrafted construction make Shell Chair a perfect example of Danish Modern. ■



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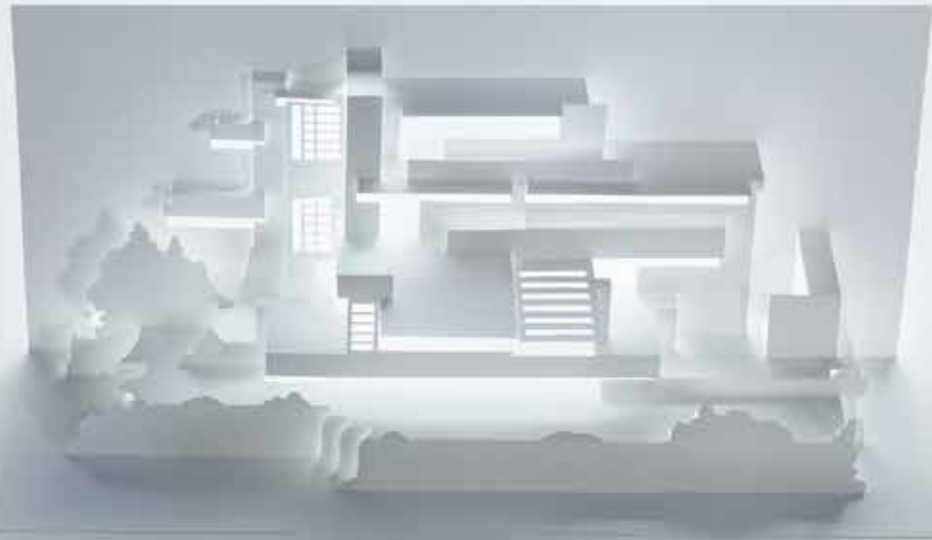
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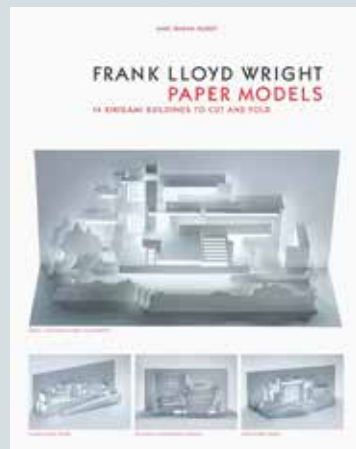
## INTO THE FOLD

A NEW BOOK ALLOWS ARCHITECTURE BUFFS TO RECREATE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S MOST ICONIC MASTERPIECES OUT OF PAPER.



**Y**ou've heard of origami. Perhaps you still remember how to fold a crane, or one of those claw-shaped fortune tellers popular on grade-school playgrounds. But were you aware that origami has a cousin, the far-less-famous kirigami—the Japanese art of folding and cutting paper? If not, we have the perfect introductory guide.

**Frank Lloyd Wright Paper Models: 14 Kirigami Buildings to Cut Out and Fold**, a recent title from the London publisher Laurence King, brings to life the work of one of America's most renowned architects in elegant miniature. The guide includes templates, with clear instructions on cutting and folding, for replicating 14 of Wright's masterpieces—including icons like Fallingwater and the Guggenheim Museum, as well as lesser-known works such as the



Ennis House in Los Angeles. Some of the minuscule design components may look difficult, but fear not: The trickier bits of the templates are pre-cut. For the rest, all you need is a little dexterity with an X-Acto knife, an ability to follow instructions, and some patience. The finished products are beautiful, minimalist ornaments that will look good on any desk, coffee table, or bookcase shelf.

The author, Marc Hagan-Guirey, is a seasoned kirigami practitioner and design director. His kirigami commissions, according to the publisher, “include pieces for Samsung Galaxy, Procter & Gamble and Decorex International.” For those looking to expand their paper craft repertoire further, he is also the author of *Paper Dandy's Horrorgami* (Laurence King, 2015). ■



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# SITTING PRETTY

WITH A REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO THE CLASSIC DESK CHAIR, STEELCASE'S SILQ BRINGS MINIMALISM AND RESPONSIVE DESIGN TO WORKPLACE FURNITURE.



For those whose occupations require sitting in an office, the humble desk chair is an indispensable—and highly personal—piece of workplace furniture. In 1994, when Herman Miller released the Aeron chair, one of the most successful examples of industrial engineering in human history, designers around the world conceded that some kind of pinnacle had been reached. The chair has sold millions and millions of units since its debut; today, it is enshrined—an example of zeitgeist-altering design—in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Now, 24 years later, Steelcase, the Michigan-based office furniture designer, believes it has an answer to the Aeron. The Silq chair, developed by a secret project team in a locked room at the Steelcase headquarters, is a minimalist, 21st-century interpretation of the classic desk chair, taking its cues from the streamlined designs of aerospace technology and emphasizing elegant simplicity over technical gadgetry. Where the Aeron is composed of hundreds of individual parts, the Silq has fewer than 50. Rather than levers and mechanical arms, the Silq relies on unique materiality and clever

engineering to deliver ergonomic support and response. (It does have one lever, to raise and lower the chair's height.) It is one of the first office chairs—certainly the most hyped and visible—to emphasize overall user experience, rather than the more isolated components of comfort, support, and adjustability.

“Steelcase has created a chair we believe truly transforms seating design and has pushed the boundaries of material science,” says Frank Harney, senior director of business development at Denver’s OfficeScapes, which carries the Silq chair. “They created a fully adjustable task chair where the material becomes the mechanism. Height is the only adjustment necessary for a tailored and unique experience.”

The secret of the Silq’s success lies in the unique material Steelcase uses to make it: a proprietary polymer,

developed specifically for this design, that mimics the strength and flexibility of carbon fiber but costs far less to produce. James Ludwig, Steelcase’s vice president of global design and product engineering, won’t go into specifics about the production process for the Silq, but we do know one thing: It’s fast, reliable, and replicable on a large scale. The result is a top-of-the-line chair whose cost falls squarely in the range of similar luxury options.

“The chair was designed for the way people work today—people moving from one space to another,” says Harney. “The way Silq responds to a person’s posture and stature is unique to each user because of the way the materiality, design, and motion of the human body come together. This is truly the chair of the future.” ■

**“STEELCASE HAS CREATED A CHAIR WE BELIEVE TRULY TRANSFORMS SEATING DESIGN AND HAS PUSHED THE BOUNDARIES OF MATERIAL SCIENCE. THEY CREATED A FULLY ADJUSTABLE TASK CHAIR WHERE THE MATERIAL BECOMES THE MECHANISM. HEIGHT IS THE ONLY ADJUSTMENT NECESSARY FOR A TAILORED AND UNIQUE EXPERIENCE.”**

— Frank Harney, OfficeScapes



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# MATTER OF TIME

*Kirkland Museum gives reason to reminisce as its grand opening links past to present.*

**IT'S NOT EVERY DAY YOU WALK INTO A ROOM LIKE THIS.** A green rug imagined by one of England's cherished craftsmen graces the floor. Atop, a slender dining set by America's darling Prairie architect. Here, a slat chair by Scotland's godfather of design. There, a ceramic "mud baby" from the Mad Potter of Biloxi. These alone might fill volumes of commentary, but they're just four of 30,000-plus works belonging to Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art. All around are treasures that can't be found elsewhere, and others that are so few as to be numbered. From William Morris to Eero Aarnio, a century of stylized human creativity is on display under one roof. Actually, make that two roofs, but we'll get to that.

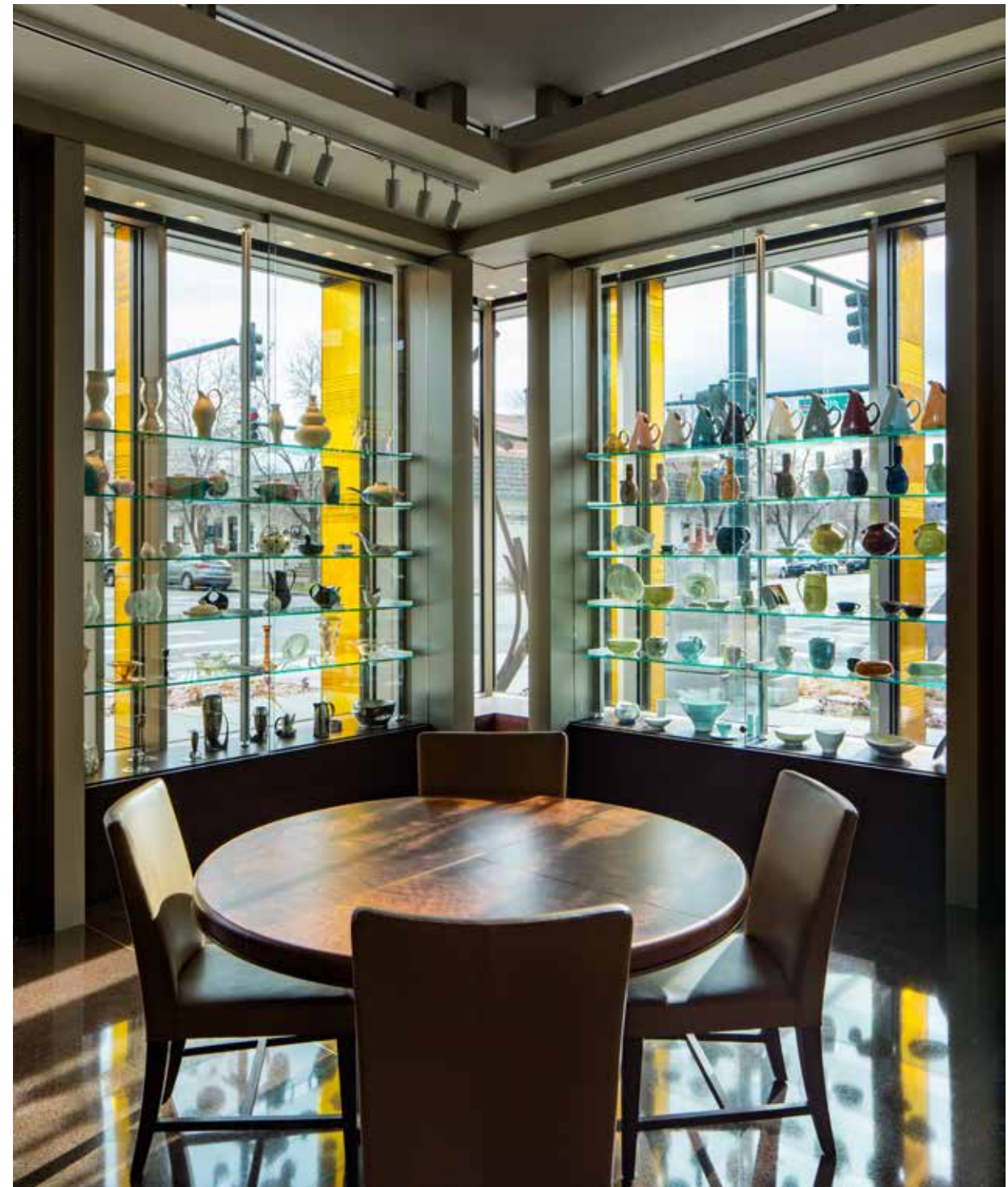
"It's a place of dreams for me," says Hugh Grant of the museum he founded with Merle Chambers and curates with astute obsession. On March 10th, they reopened their doors, treating the public to a charming, brand-new building designed by Jim Olson, working closely with Kirsten Murray of Seattle's Olson Kundig. Significantly, Kirkland is one of only a few salon-style museums in the country, including the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, and Neue Galerie New York.

Arising from the Salon of 17th-century Paris, salon display style can take two forms. One involves hanging paintings in as many large groupings as a wall can hold, and the other, as with Kirkland and the museums above, is to arrange furniture in the same space as paintings. Simply put, most museums place a premium on negative space, while salon museums immerse visitors in a rich array of related works. "I could have done a museum of just Kirkland paintings, which would have been wonderful," Grant muses, "but the idea of doing a formal museum didn't appeal to me. Too sparse."

WORDS: Eleanor Perry-Smith

IMAGES: James Florio

The Promenade Gallery links the six era galleries, the Sculpture Gallery, and Temporary Exhibition Gallery and points visitors to the exterior wall of Vance Kirkland's former studio. "Rather than trying to blend the new, modern building with the old, we decided to let them just stand side by side, each its unique self. We picked up the red tones of the old brick in the red glass parts of the new building," says architect Jim Olson. The terrazzo floors pool art and light into liquid mirage.



Of the many qualities setting Kirkland Museum apart from, really, anything in the nation is not only its vast assemblage, but also its curatorial trifecta: There are hundreds of paintings from Colorado and regional artists, rare decorative objects, and the creative progression of Vance Kirkland himself.

For the uninitiated, Vance Kirkland is a hometown hero of the painting persuasion. Through five major periods, he produced more than 30 series from “Designed Realism” to his stunning “Dot Paintings”, which he made while lying horizontally suspended over the

canvas with the help of thick straps. These three distinct areas of collection blend beautifully in Kirkland’s fresh space, nestled in the Golden Triangle on 12th and Bannock. Funding for construction of the new building was provided by the Merle Chambers Fund. “It is an iconic building, and the museum enhances Denver’s recognition as an arts center,” Chambers says of her brainchild that rests effortlessly within Colorado’s growing repertoire of acclaimed museums.

On its own, Kirkland is an anomaly, although Maya Wright, education

manager and historian at the museum, points out its relation to America’s other salon-style museums: “What we have in common is a visionary founder who, with Merle’s help, collected everything.” Though, consider that those larger institutions have had the benefit of advisors. “I had these two eyeballs,” Hugh laughs from behind his glasses.

**COLLECTIVE KINSHIP**

At just six months old, Kirkland’s devoted curator was introduced to the man who would become his lifelong friend and inspirational fountainhead. Hugh’s mother had previously turned >P.70

**DETAILS | The collection**

These Postmodern chairs by French designer Pierre Sala hold colorful court as examples of 80s experimental furniture design. Sala was known for his whimsical pieces, such as the Multicolored Table that utilized giant pencils for legs, finished with a blue spiral notebook table top. His children’s pencil leg chairs with eraser feet inspired multiple knock-offs in nurseries across the world. Clockwise from left: *Griffe de Lionne Chair (1985)*, *Oiseau Rare Chair (1982)*, *Piranha Chair (1982)* and *Oiseau Rare 2 Chair (1985)*.



A Jim Olson table design in the Visitor Lounge receives golden light filtered by the exterior glass fins. Window displays entice onlookers with an array of ceramics and glass, including a group of Russel Wright modern tapered pitchers on the top right shelf. The pitchers were among the most popular dinnerware line ever crafted. A Steubenville Blue is the only one known to exist.

**“IT IS AN ICONIC BUILDING AND THE MUSEUM ENHANCES DENVER’S RECOGNITION AS AN ARTS CENTER.”**

— Merle Chambers

Twilight graces the west side of the museum and second-floor offices with a row of setback windows, while the façade radiates well into the night. “The horizontal overhangs on the building help to create a more human, residential scale. The outdoor sculpture, the yellow tiles, the glass fins and the window displays help the ‘art experience’ to begin on the street and sidewalks,” Olson explains. As the texture and color beckon on the outside, the building’s voice becomes subdued once within, allowing the art to do the talking.





The Postmodern gallery features works such as the *Easy Edges Side Chair*, or *Wiggle Chair*, displaying skillful ribbon-like folds by the famed architect Frank Gehry. Carefully chosen wall colors let the abstract paintings stand out. Grant carefully selected the paint colors for each gallery and carried them into the new building: "White walls, for me, really don't work."

down Vance Kirkland's marriage proposal, knowing he was already wed to his paintings.

She instead married Colorado architect Alfred Grant. Still, the couple admired Kirkland greatly and wanted him to meet their newly adopted son. A bond was formed.

As young Hugh grew up, he became aware that his parents and their friends were curators of rare beauty. "To be surrounded by art in your home is a fantastic thing," he says, alight with memory amid the subtle rays of his new museum. With room to breathe, the building provided Grant space to recreate Kirkland's own living room. A few other pieces are relics from Grant's childhood home.

In his advancing years, Grant honed his eye for talent and collectible value, often visiting dealers on Broadway. He showed Kirkland his first piece—a 1920s Ruba Rombic piece with skillful folds like a glass paper bag—to which Kirkland replied, "Oh no, you've contracted the terrible disease of collecting!"

With eight new galleries in addition to a sculpture gallery, temporary exhibition space, and a basement filled with stocked storerooms, it appears Kirkland was right. Even so, just 20 percent of the collection is on display, with objects often lent out for temporary exhibitions at museums across the country. "No curator has ever had enough room," Grant concedes. But visitors can rest assured they'll see 2,000 more works on view

than at the Kirkland's former location, along with temporary shows such as *Near and Far: Contrasting Regional and National Prints from the Kirkland and Mayer Collections* running from opening day until June 17.

Kirkland, whose only children were watercolors and oils, outlived his wife. As his strength diminished, Grant took to caring for his friend, who remained productive till the very end. "The weaker and closer to death he got, the more colorful and explosive his paintings became," Grant reminisces as he stands before a massive canvas swirling with energy and sinuous pattern.

During his last hospital stay, Hugh set up a card table so Kirkland could continue working. He died in 1981, >P.73



DETAILS | *The collection*

Arriving late to a dinner gathering, Hugh held up a photograph of this red *Marilyn Bocca Lips Sofa* as evidence of his forgivable tardiness. He couldn't pass up Studio 65's 1972 furniture design in tribute to Marilyn Monroe's mouth. Surrealist painter Salvador Dalí originated the concept for an art installation where the entire space was arranged to look like actress Mae West's face. Her lips were made of a plastic sofa, never intended for use. A tribute to a tribute, the *Bocca Sofa* has reached its own iconic status. Dalí would likely have applauded this compounding reference and ultimately absurd way to take a seat.

ON ITS OWN, THE KIRKLAND IS AN ANOMALY, "WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON IS A VISIONARY FOUNDER WHO, ALONG WITH MERLE'S HELP, COLLECTED EVERYTHING." - Maya Wright



Hugh Grant is the steward of Kirkland's legacy. His devotion extends to every corner of the museum. As Maya points out, Hugh even hand-illustrated to scale the arrangements of each gallery for his staff.



A painting by Colorado artist M.C. DeBoer hangs top right, titled *Whether Dead or Died or Growing* (1971). It is one of over 7,000 works by more than 700 Colorado and regional artists, over a third of whom are women, such as DeBoer. Kirkland was a champion of female artists, and the museum upholds that legacy. Beneath the paintings, Art Deco furniture by Wolfgang Hoffmann, Warren MacArthur and Axel Einar Hjorth completes the picture.

“IN A WAY, THE BUILDING IS SYMBOLIC OF SUNSHINE. THE COLORED GLASS FINS NEAR THE ENTRY ARE DESIGNED TO GLOW WITH COLORADO SUNLIGHT.”

— Jim Olson, Olson Kundig

while working on his last painting. He left his home, studio, and the majority of his estate to Grant. He advised Grant to keep his house and sell off the studio on 13th and Pearl. He did the opposite. “I knew instinctively the studio was the big deal.”

That’s when his troubles began as two distressing events sank in. “One, it was traumatic because I lost one of the greatest friends I’ve ever had. Then, I was plunged into debt.” Paying off the estate taxes took five-and-a-half years. Grant could have shortcut the process but refused to sell the paintings and break up the estate. Instead he kept preserving, cataloging, and eventually he began collecting again.

After deciding to share its treasure trove with the public in 2003, the Kirkland has grown steadily. Grant, along with his friend and former spouse, Chambers, founded the museum with the desire to celebrate Colorado’s artistic depth, show internationally valued objects, and champion Kirkland’s contributions. As their collection sprawled, so did dreams of a suitable place to display it all. But Grant could not part with the studio, which was now a part of the illustrious Historic Artists’ Homes & Studios, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. That’s

when Chambers spoke up: “Well, then, move it.” So they did, with the additional financial support of the Merle Chambers Fund. It was no small task to lift the studio building from the ground and roll it eight blocks to where it now rests in the same street orientation as before. Only now, the studio is a visual link to the past in the midst of modernity.

**GOLDEN CHILD**

Alluding to the vertical grooves of the Clyfford Still building and Gio Ponti’s tiled turrets at the Denver Art Museum, the new Kirkland fits readily into the city’s family of artistic venues. But unlike the understated stone tones, Kirkland’s exterior gleams with gold-leaf and yellow long tile baguettes. Kirkland used the cheery hue often. “In a way, the building is symbolic of sunshine,” says Jim Olson, the Seattle-based, internationally acclaimed architect who dreamed up what he calls the jewel box. “The colored glass fins near the entry are designed to glow with Colorado sunlight.”

Bringing Olson into the fold was an effortless decision, as both Chambers and Grant admired his museums and local residential designs. Pairing his prowess with Grants’s crisp vision made the drafting process as breezy as



Jim Olson is the founding partner of Olson Kundig. For the Kirkland design, he took inspiration from Merle Chambers’s recommended book *The Architecture of Happiness*, by Alain De Botton.

designing a museum from scratch can get. It was like the banter of luminaries over lunch.

“Jim sketched it out at the table at our first meeting.”

“Hugh knew exactly how he wanted the visitors to flow through the various galleries and laid out each gallery and its contents in great detail.”

“He implemented it brilliantly.”

“Our two different perspectives were complementary.” >P.79



**DETAILS | The collection**

The remarkable survival story of these glass pieces, *Tree of Life* and *Hanging Wisteria*, originates in the Darwin D. Martin House Complex in Buffalo, New York. The home and its 394 leaded “glass screens” were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1904, but fell into ruin just 30 years later. Neglected, subdivided, and now on its way to restoration, the home was an important specimen in Wright’s budding career.



**VIEW INTO KIRKLAND'S STUDIO:** Moving the studio building was a challenge, but relocating thousands of delicate objects was another chore entirely. Deputy curator Christopher Herron and a skilled team of collections staffers masterminded the move. Longtime Kirkland Museum fans will recall familiar rooms and paintings, like this 1978 piece, titled *The Energy of Explosions Twenty-Four Billion Years B.C.*, illustrating Kirkland's signature cornucopia of dots.





**THROUGH FIVE MAJOR PERIODS, KIRKLAND PRODUCED MORE THAN 30 SERIES, FROM DESIGNED REALISM TO HIS STUNNING DOT PAINTINGS, WHICH HE MADE WHILE LYING HORIZONTALLY SUSPENDED OVER THE CANVAS WITH THE HELP OF THICK STRAPS.**



Kirkland collected baby food jars to house his paints. Grant recalls running out to buy more baby food when their stock was low. Out went the mashed vegetables, in went the oil paints. Kirkland's final, unfinished painting is shown next to the radio collection, as the thick straps Kirkland hung suspended from while working take center stage.

Four years later, Denver's newest old museum was born.

One intention was for the exterior to feel like a piece of the collection. Its low profile gives thoughtful details precedence and keeps art at center stage. Glimpses of interior treasures are seen from the pop-out vitrines along the sides. Once inside the visitor lounge, one can spot three Jim Olson table designs in brass and wood, signaling his inclusion in the Kirkland family. Next to the lounge is the Vance Kirkland Gallery, which allowed Grant to display Kirkland's cathexes in many phases. Grant at last has space to create the ensembles of his dreams, chuckling, "It's like Hercules unchained." And now, Hercules has the advantage of upstairs offices, conference rooms, secure storage, and a basement lecture space.

Extending out from the impressive glass and burlwood welcome desk is the Promenade Gallery. Serving as another display area, the corridor is itself a sight to behold. Its long gray ribs draw you in. The tunnel vision

effect embodies Grant's crowning concept: "You get the feeling of time travel." It's true, especially as six galleries of historic decorative arts and corresponding paintings branch off to each side. A visitor can take the intuitive chronological approach to the galleries, or simply meander through the ages at will.

Then, beyond the sculpture and temporary galleries, the light at the end of the tunnel reveals the red brick of Kirkland's former studio in its fresh surroundings. The old and new structures are bound by a glass seam; then, as if teleported, one is right back in Kirkland's turn-of-the-century studio from Pearl Street.

Grant's eye for subtle visual poetry is nicely framed to the left, just inside the studio entrance. Side-by-side are two photographs of Kirkland in a similar pose. In the first photo, the artist is in his prime, lording over his creative realm with savvy energy. In the second, the glass skylight is broken, and Kirkland sits with the aid of his

walking device near, the proud badge of years upon his spectacled face.

Were he alive today, Kirkland would certainly recognize the familiar setup and arched roof of his old work space, slightly confused as to how his living room furniture got there. But to walk outside and find himself standing at Denver's creative core beside a building bearing his name would be dazzling and dizzying. A cause for celebration. And reflection.

As for Grant, himself now a septuagenarian, this is no time for repose. It's another beginning. "I'm going to keep doing what I do and hope for the best," he says. Hope is his living language, but he knows from experience that the compulsions to collect and arrange are insatiable. "There's no hope for the satisfied curator." ■

#### **Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art**

1201 Bannock Street Denver, CO 80204  
[kirklandmuseum.org](http://kirklandmuseum.org)



Irving Harper's 1956 *Marshmallow Sofa* creates a nice contrast to this *Untitled (Cosmos Series)*, late-'69 or early-'70, painting by Pawel Kontny. The marble dust and oil glazes on board creation was a gift of the Kontny family. Sitting pretty is Sori Yanagi's 1954 *Butterfly Stool*, a molded plywood construction inspired by a Japanese Shinto shrine. Completing this vignette is a bar cart in the shape of a pipe by Aldo Tura.



#### **DETAILS | The collection**

Vance Kirkland was a radio enthusiast, so he'd have been ecstatic about this coveted piece now on display at the museum. It's elusive. It's expensive. And yes, it's a working music machine. Standing nearly four feet tall, with about 10 known to exist in various conditions, the *Sparton Nocturne Radio* (Model 1186) is pure radio nobility.

It was conceived in 1935 by industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague as a functional symbol of wealth and modernity. At the time, it cost nearly as much as a new car, and it has since outpaced inflation, coming in among the top 10 priciest items sold on eBay last year. Part of its mint condition rarity is the glass face, which is susceptible to shattering and sun damage.

Teague didn't create for the elite alone. He rose to the top of his field by also designing Art Moderne objects for mass consumption. His longstanding relationship with Kodak put his sleek Bantam Special camera in homes across the nation. As car travel gained popularity, people looked to his curvilinear filling stations designed for Texaco.

An architect, designer, writer, and pioneer, Teague was a man of many colors—but his midnight blue shines brightest of all.





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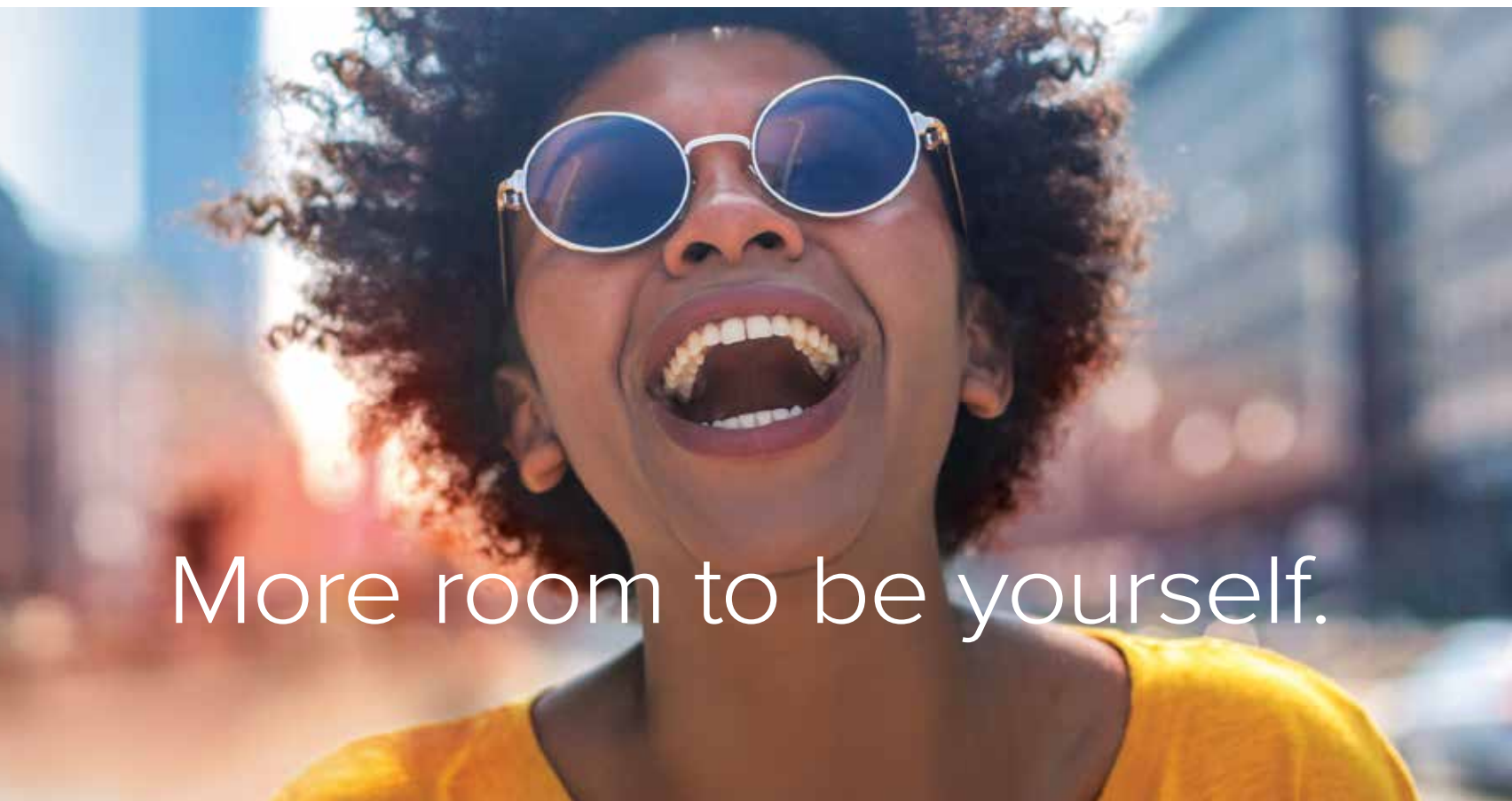
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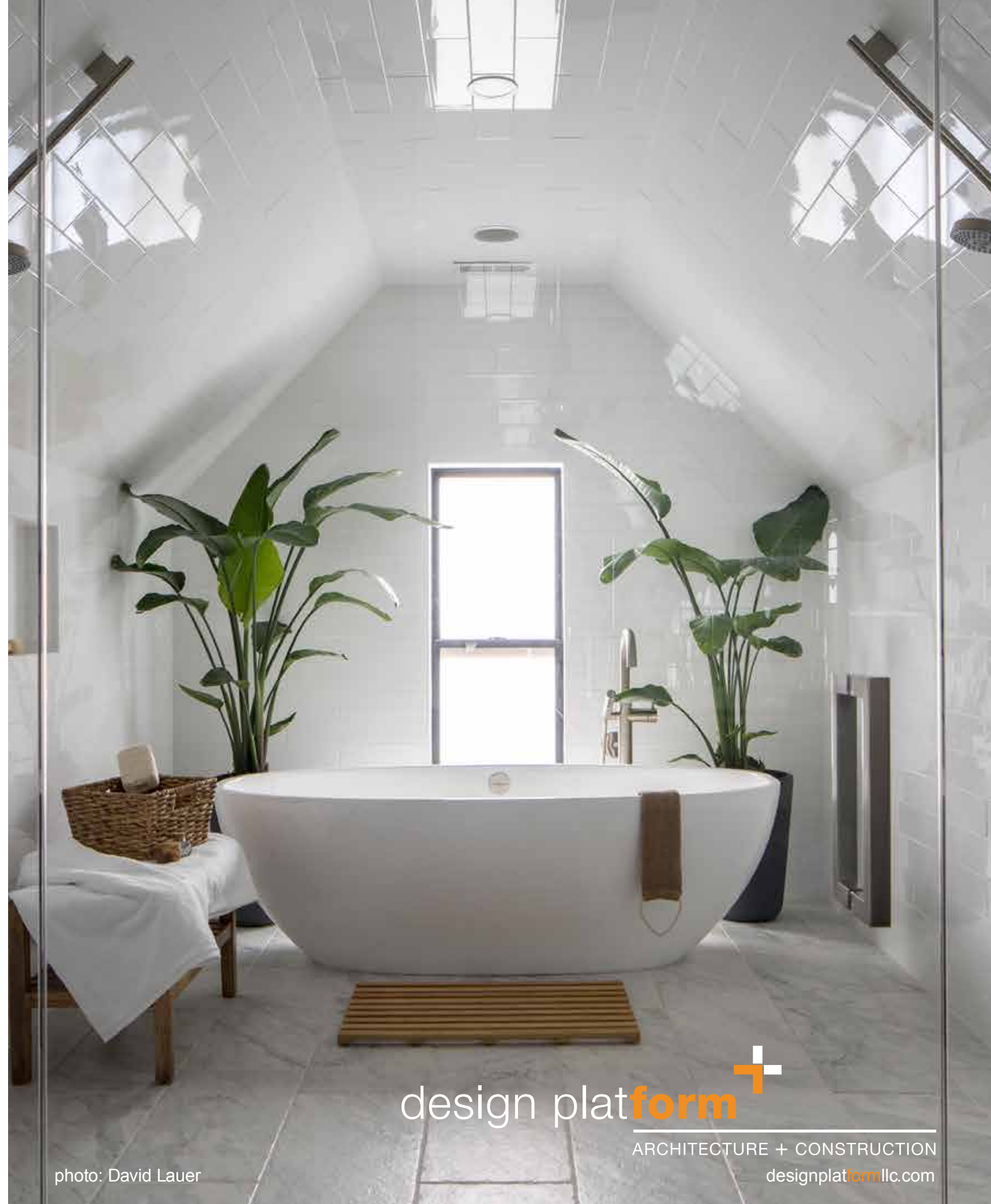


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# A MODERN COTTAGE (& CHICKEN COOP!)

## DENVER FIRM TOMECEK STUDIO'S DESIGN FOR A PREFAB, GLASSED-IN COTTAGE IN THE BLACK HILLS IS BOTH IN AND OF NATURE

**A** Denver architect. Florida clients. A Utah builder. A Wyoming road trip. And a South Dakota location.

The story behind the construction of this Black Hills cottage was truly all over the map—but in terms of design, it could not have been more simple or direct. Located about 10 minutes outside Rapid City, the contemporary cottage (second home to a soon-to-be-retired but very active Florida couple) and a nearby chicken coop (home to about 30 laying hens) were designed by Denver's Tomecek Studio Architecture on a stunning 12-acre site that includes woods, a hilltop meadow and a deep ravine.

"We wanted the cottage to fit in with the other architecture, including a traditional pole barn and gabled main house," Brad Tomecek says, "but also be very connected to the setting. We didn't want a big white box sitting in the middle of nature."

Homeowner Robert Hogan and his wife, Wendy, envisioned a little house à la Le Corbusier: "something architecturally distinctive but also utterly functional," as Hogan describes it.

To achieve both ends, Tomecek designed a straightforward but striking rectangular cottage cantilevered out over a ravine, with floor-to-ceiling windows of varying widths on all four sides. "The idea of feeling like you were floating in the tree canopy was very powerful," Tomecek says, "and the windows were inspired by the irregular cadence of the trees. Being

WORDS: Jane Craig  
IMAGES: Kristina Barker



Tomecek Studio Architecture cantilevered the house out over a ravine to emphasize the feeling of being in the trees. Windows of varying widths run on all four sides of the home, mimicking what Tomecek calls the “irregular cadence” of the forest outside.



From above, it’s easy to see the rolling meadow that spills out from the cottage, as well as the density and vast, unspoiled beauty of the surrounding Black Hills. The homeowners wanted something that was “architecturally distinctive but also utterly functional.”



inside is like chichi camping—you’re sitting in a very contemporary house but there are chickens outside eating feed on one side and trees on the other. It’s very calm and relaxing.”

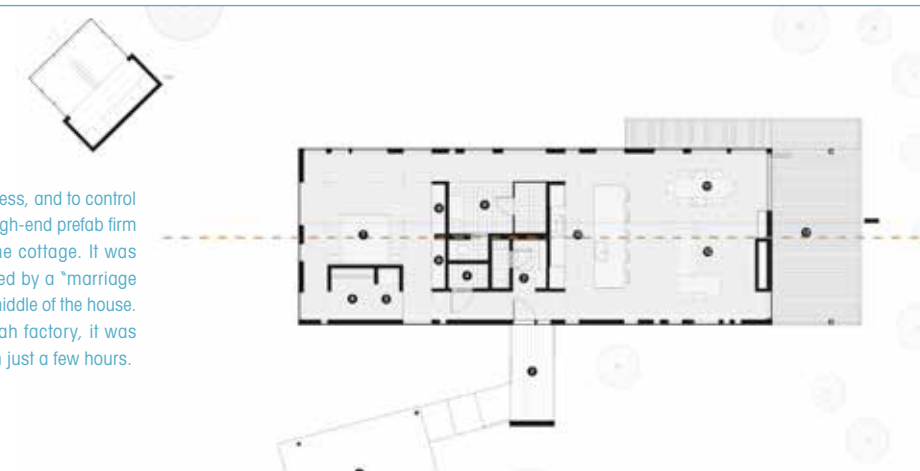
“It’s all glass, so one has the sense of being in a treehouse overlooking some woods and a wild meadow,” says Hogan. “There is a constant stream of wild turkeys, deer and other creatures that are usually hard to spot. The outside flows into the inside.”

Because it would be located on a remote site, Tomecek decided to control the quality (and shorten the time frame for construction) by having the house factory-built. He turned to Irontown Homes, a high-end prefab builder of 30 years’ experience based in Spanish Fork, Utah. But that decision brought its own share of challenges. “A prefab home has to be built in modules,” says Kam Valgardson, general manager at Irontown, “and the floor systems need to be rectangular—you can’t ship circles or triangles or other different shapes. And each module has to be pretty uniform, with a width of no more than 14½ feet because of state and federal Department of Transportation rules, so it can be craned easily and trucked down a road.” (For those trying to picture this, 14½ feet is about a lane-and-a-half on Interstate 80, where the two modules in this cottage did much of their traveling across Wyoming.)

Also, modular homes like this one have to be beyond sturdy in order to endure the



The interiors are clean and open, and the walls bare of artwork, so as not to detract (or distract) from what is outside. As the homeowners told Tomecek, “Why would we want to look at something else other than what we’re looking at right now?”



Because of the location’s remoteness, and to control quality, Tomecek hired the Utah high-end prefab firm Irontown Homes to construct the cottage. It was delivered in two pieces, separated by a “marriage line” that went straight down the middle of the house. After being shipped from the Utah factory, it was placed on the site’s steel frame in just a few hours.



Ultra-efficient, the cottage suits the homeowners' every need. "We sleep in the bedroom, shower, then work in the main area," says homeowner Robert Hogan. "It is a superb work space that turns into an entertainment space. It is designed well for party flow; when we entertain, there is a nice flow between the kitchen counter and the deck."

long road trip. "They've got to be able to go through a pretty intense seismic event on the road," says Valgardson, "so we overbuild them. They're all wood construction, but the floor system is engineered wood so it can handle more stress and strain, and then we both glue and nail all of the wall sheathing and the like. We actually built some homes in a neighborhood hit hard by the (6.7-magnitude) Northridge earthquake in 1994 in Southern California; though a lot of the surrounding homes were destroyed, our houses just slid off their foundations intact and were able to be re-used."

Irontown, following Tomecek's designs, installed virtually everything in the house—"windows, flooring, mirrors, towel bars, appliances, toilets," says Valgardson. "The only things we can't install are items that fall on what we call 'the marriage line,' where the two modules meet."

That was challenge enough. There was also the matter of actually getting the house to the site. Each module weighed about 30,000 pounds, was 12 feet wide and 64 feet long, and had to be trucked on an 18-wheeler with a long, flat bed. That's a lot of truck to manage, "so we look at satellite images of the route and measure everything out just to make sure the truck can actually get to the site," Valgardson said. Once it was there, it took a 175-ton crane only a few hours to place the modules on their steel foundational frame. Then they were "stitched together—half the living area to half the living area," as Tomecek says, and an on-site team led by Bill Barber of GBA Construction worked on finishes like metal railings.

The result is a form-follows-function-follows-form space, one that has won numerous architectural awards and citations. "We sleep in the bedroom, shower, then work in the main area,"

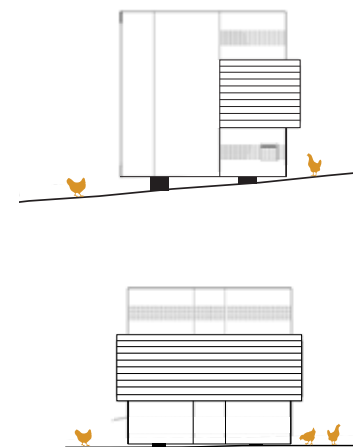


An original plywood chicken coop made way for Tomecek's designer version, which offers the property's 30 or so laying hens their own "indoor-outdoor space": During the day, they "do their thing," Tomecek says, often wandering around the adjacent yard. "It's an amazing thing. When it starts getting dark, they all go inside."

**"BEING INSIDE IS LIKE CHICHI CAMPING—YOU'RE SITTING IN A VERY CONTEMPORARY HOUSE BUT THERE ARE CHICKENS OUTSIDE EATING FEED ON ONE SIDE AND TREES ON THE OTHER. IT'S VERY CALM AND RELAXING."**

—Brad Tomecek



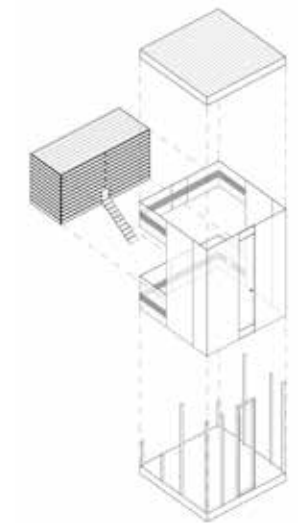


The chicken coop, like the main cottage, is both beautiful and functional. Tomecek had to research the needs of chickens, including 45-degree roosting poles, cozy nesting boxes and a ground-floor area to walk around in. At night, the chickens can often be seen silhouetted through the perforated, polymer top of their coop.

says Hogan. “Wendy works at the kitchen counter, and I have a small desk. We finish each day with drinks on the deck. It is a superb work space that turns into an entertainment space when I turn off my computer.”

But the cottage was not the end of Tomecek’s work: He also designed a modern chicken coop—“one worth looking at”—to replace a dilapidated one already on the property. “We thought of it experientially, not just as something to look at but asking, ‘What does it do to the site and how does it interact with what’s around it?’” says Tomecek. “We liked the idea of doing a very contemporary take on a very functional piece of agrarian and utilitarian architecture.”

First, Tomecek’s team researched chicken coops to learn what they needed (nesting boxes, roosting poles and an area for the birds to walk around in, among other things). They had to consider ventilation and how to make egg gathering easy. The result is a 10-by-10-by-10-foot, translucent, perforated polymer cube, with a wooden nesting box insert. “We wanted it to be very clean and pure and to contrast well with nature,” says Tomecek. At night, a single lightbulb



in the coop gives it the appearance of a glowing box amid the Black Hills’ deep, vast darkness.

Day or night, the views from the cottage are so spectacular that the homeowners decided not to embellish their interior walls with art. As they told Tomecek: “Why would we want to look at something else other than what we’re looking at right now?” ■



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# THE ARCHITECTURE OF OUR ALLEYS

## HOW ADUs ARE CHANGING DENVER'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND DESIGN LANDSCAPE

WORDS: Beth Mosenthal, AIA

IMAGES: JC Buck

**W**hen Nathan Jenkins, a senior associate with Colorado-based OZ Architecture, went house-hunting in 2012, he had no intention of building an accessory dwelling unit in his backyard, nor had he even heard the term “ADU” before. At the time, rents were high and housing prices were low. Recently married, Jenkins and his wife, Stacie, settled on a home in Whittier, a location that met the couple’s search criteria as a long-standing, culturally diverse Denver neighborhood that was walking and biking distance to Jenkins’s work and one of the city’s beloved greenspaces, City Park.

A few months later, Jenkins began to explore the renovation potential of their new home, a modest bungalow with a semi-finished basement. “I started doing a bulk plane diagram of what [the zoning code] would allow: a weird clipped-corner, gambrel roof-shaped house with a flat top.” Jenkins’s zoning studies revealed an alternative development option. “What I didn’t realize, upon buying the near 100-year-old house sited on a 6,250-square-foot lot, was that it could become two homes: one Primary Urban House and one Detached Accessory Dwelling

Unit – most commonly referred to as an ADU (aka carriage house, mother-in-law apartment, ‘Granny’ flat, and tandem house).”

After an extensive zoning and code study, Jenkins’s found that given the 1.5 story allowable height and a maximum footprint of 24’ x 36’, he was able to build a comfortable, 650-square-foot one-bedroom / one-bathroom apartment upstairs with a three-car garage below.

On paper, it seemed like a no-brainer: Creating an asset on a piece of land that Jenkins already owned, while creating the opportunity for a short-or long-term rental to offset the construction cost, seemed like a win-win. Trying to secure financing for the project proved to be a different story. “We didn’t realize that getting the building permit wouldn’t be the hard part. Finding a bank that understood what an ADU was, let alone financing one, was next to impossible. The biggest issue for the banks was that the ADU is a deeded structure that cannot be parceled off or sold separately from the primary residences.” After making more than 1,000 points of contact with various

## The Architecture of our Alleys

financial institutions, Jenkins found his tenacity and persistence paying off, as he was able to secure funding through a local credit union.

After he secured a local contractor, Jenkins' drawings soon became a reality. That reality was so successful that Jenkins and his wife moved into the ADU while leasing their original home.

The resulting design is both a playful, complementary response to the ADU's context as well as a testament to minimalist living. From an exterior perspective, the south side of the asymmetrical gabled slope of the ADU's roof matches the gabled sloped roof of the existing house. Jenkins selected metal panels as a primary exterior finish to express the functionality, utility, and durability of the unit as garage, storage area, and dwelling. The interior of the home presents a clean, modern, light-filled space in which clever millwork and perimeter storage solutions conceal the majority of the couple's belongings. An architect who has worked

extensively in multifamily, residential development, Jenkins calls the apartment "a lab... Market-rate units are getting smaller. This is where I am testing furniture, finishes, and a variety of other things so I can put my money where my mouth is."

Jenkins's ADU is one case study of maximizing the development potential of a specific residential lot in a specific urban location. Groups such as the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative have identified more global, socio-economic impacts for this historic housing typology: to provide low-and middle-income homeowners with the potential to avoid displacement in now sought-after neighborhoods such as West Denver, including the neighborhoods of Athmar Park, Barnum, Barnum West, La Alma Lincoln Park, Sun Valley, West Colfax, Westwood, Valverde, and Villa Park.

The West Denver Renaissance Collaborative (WDRC) was formed in 2016 with a "mission to facilitate the revitalization of West Denver in an equitable fashion



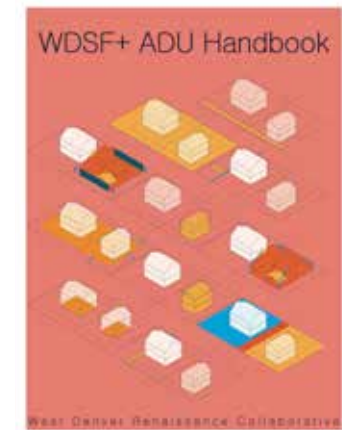
**JENKINS SELECTED METAL PANELS AS A PRIMARY EXTERIOR FINISH TO EXPRESS THE FUNCTIONALITY, UTILITY, AND DURABILITY OF THE UNIT AS BOTH GARAGE, STORAGE AREAS, AND DWELLING.**



The clean, minimalist interiors of Jenkins's ADU live large. Roughly 650 square foot, the one-bedroom, one-bath apartment is bathed in natural light, enhanced by motorized skylights in both the kitchen and bedroom. Millwork from VONMOD seamlessly integrates built-in storage in a variety of widths and heights to conceal items ranging from clothing to cleaning equipment.

by improving the livelihood of existing residents and working to preserve and amplify the rich multicultural character." After talks with West Denver residents about community priorities, the rising cost of housing, affordability, and development were quickly identified as key issues across the nine neighborhoods.

"Ten percent of West Denver's residential parcels are single family homes, with only ten percent of the parcels having a density of more than two units per lot. Given that physical layout, and the desire to address displacement, affordability, as well as many existing residents having a need for more space but not having the ability to sell and to move into a bigger home, we came up with a list of solutions that might help some of the existing homeowners manage cost, have more space, and potentially replace some of the rental houses that are disappearing from the market. That's where we honed in on the potential for ADUs," explains Renee Martinez-Stone, a redevelopment strategist and current director of the WDRC.



The soon-to-be-released WDSF+ADU Handbook, written by the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative, is a helpful guide that "explains detached accessory dwelling unit development as it currently relates to the City and County of Denver." The WDRC worked with local Denver architects to create standardized ADU designs that Renee Martinez-Stone of the WDRC describes as "functional, sustainable, and timeless in a way that can contribute in a number of different contexts. Right now every ADU is custom—how do we pull that back to a form and design that works in a number of contexts and that can be more accessible?"



**"IN THE RENTAL MARKET, SMALLER HOUSES EQUATE TO MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING... IT'S NOT THE SOLUTION, BUT IT IS AN ADDITIVE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE."**

-Nathan Jenkins



Millwork from VONMOD conceals storage of different sizes and scales while eliminating clutter in the 650 square foot apartment. Ascending scales of storage pictured above also cleverly serve as "stairs" to a sleeping and storage loft within the main living space.

Despite the potential for ADUs to help bridge a current affordable housing gap (often referred to as "the missing middle"), the WDRC identified several hurdles to the development of ADUs for homeowners experiencing potential destabilization, including the design, permitting, and construction of an ADU as well as securing financing for these projects.

As a response, the WDRC formed the Single Family-Plus (WDSF+) program, "an initiative to stabilize low-income homeowners and minimize displacement by providing targeted homeowner education, connections to trusted home services, and equitable access to accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and tandem home construction in West Denver." Partnering with Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver and others to launch a two-year pilot program, WDSF+ aims to connect low- and middle-income households with access to loans and mortgage refinancing, access to several type approved, off-the shelf ADU design options (studio, one, two and a three bedrooms), reduced development costs aligned with income-based development offsets, and initially a Habitat constructed unit. "Currently we are planning on building 240 units over five years," explains Martinez-Stone. "The Pilot Program is years one and two."



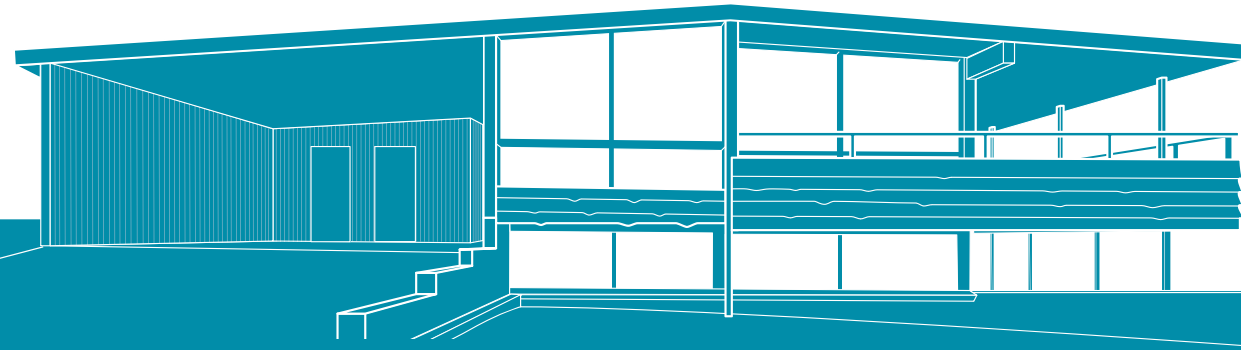
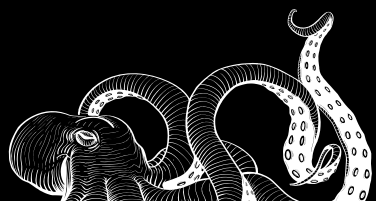
Since the completion of Jenkins's ADU in Denver's Whittier neighborhood, several homes in the vicinity have followed suit. Jenkins' sleek, modern design, however, continues to stand out, both as a moment of pause when circulating the alley via bike, foot, or car, and as a testament to how even the smallest of homes—when considered carefully—can bring a sense of place and intention to an otherwise transitory urban space.

An important byproduct of this effort is the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative's soon-to-be-published "WDSF + ADU Handbook," a guide intended to demystify the process of building an accessory dwelling unit in the City and County of Denver. Well-written and supplemented with clear graphics, the guide takes a user-friendly approach to understanding a homeowners' detached ADU development options, design and zoning rules, financing and construction processes, as well as a section regarding managing a property upon completion.

Both Jenkins and Martinez-Stone see great potential in ADUs, but admit that ADUs are one of many different development strategies that might contribute to easing Denver's affordable housing crisis. From Jenkins's perspective, ADUs can help fill a gap by providing options for renters who might prefer living in a free-standing house that doesn't share walls with neighbors. "You get your own little house even if you can't afford renting a big house... It's not the answer, but it is an additive piece of the puzzle." Martinez-Stone sees ADUs as one solution that might

help preserve the diversity and history of Denver's celebrated neighborhoods, "We've seen a lot of change in our urban neighborhoods in the last few years. We can't control the market, which is impacting who is able to stay or move into those neighborhoods. We really need to think about the policies and solutions that create equitable access so our mid and low income homeowners can be or stay a part of our diverse and historic neighborhoods. Who does Denver want to be in the future? What interventions and policies will take us to the future instead of letting the market take us there?"

With architects such as Jenkins providing design ingenuity, and groups such as the WDRC devising a thoughtful, measured approach to identifying development and densification potentials, it's likely that we will see a huge shift in the look, feel, and experience of traversing Denver's many alleyways in the years to come. ■



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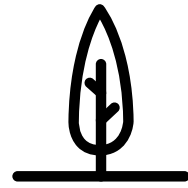
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*A dig into the roots of Modernist landscape design*

# 5 ELEMENTS OF A MODERN GARDEN

Modernism. With reference to architecture, the word is perhaps more widely used, more evocative, more freighted with meaning and connotation than any other single term in the lexicon of the discipline. It calls to mind many things: clean, geometric shapes; asymmetrical compositions; ample use of glass, steel, and concrete. But while most people, even design novices, can distinguish a Modern house from, say, an Arts and Crafts bungalow, there is a notable lack of understanding when it comes to Modernist landscapes. In spite of a progressive movement toward Modern landscape architecture beginning in the 1930s with the work of Garrett Eckbo, Dan Kiley, and James Rose, many people today still have trouble thinking of landscapes as “Modern.” Perhaps, as some have theorized, the materiality of garden design—trees, shrubs, grass—challenges the common (and mistaken) conception of Modernism as cold and impersonal. Perhaps people simply have a hard time thinking of landscapes, or any outdoor space, as “designable.” Whatever the reason, the following list of architectural concepts proves that Modern garden design can be just as impactful, just as meaningful, and just as worthy of study as any other aspect of the Modernist architectural tradition.



WORDS: Craig W. Mayer

## 1. EXTENSIONAL.

A Modern garden acts as an extension of building architecture. It links the architecture to the site by enhancing and highlighting the location and the orientation of the building, extending the building lines, and incorporating secondary architectural elements into the landscape. The Modern garden strives to maximizing the physical and visual interaction between indoor and outdoor spaces, as well as connect interiority with exteriority through the use of similar indoor and outdoor patterns and materials.



photo: Raul Garcia / Three Sixty Design

**“THINK OF YOUR GARDEN AS A ROOM RATHER THAN AS A PIECE OF GROUND”**

Landscaping for Modern Living, Sunset Magazine, 1956.

## 2. SPATIAL.

A Modern garden is designed with ample attention paid to three-dimensional space: the ground surface, the eye-level, and the overhead experience. Plants, paving, walls, and garden structures are used to create dynamic spaces and shapes that join, interlock, and overlap.

**“A GARDEN IS A BLOCK OF SPACE. WHY ONLY DESIGN ITS SURFACE?”**

Garrett Eckbo in Landscape for Living, 1950.

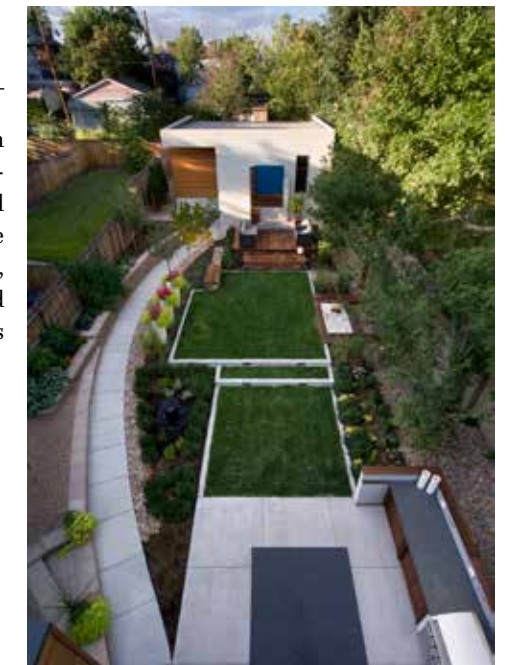


photo: Raul Garcia / Three Sixty Design

# 3. FUNCTIONAL.

The Modernist garden is designed for people—in other words, for activity and comfort. Gardens, in this sense, are like outdoor rooms; a consideration of humanity is just as important as a consideration of the natural world. To enhance this concept, plants are selected for their functional utility rather than for mere ornamentation. Modern garden design emphasizes low levels of maintenance by focusing on hardy plants, minimizing lawn areas, utilizing raised planters, and covering large areas with paving or hardscape.



photo: David Lauer / Connect One Design

**“THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE PLANTS IS TO DESIGN A GARDEN THAT LOOKS GOOD WITHOUT THEM”.**

Landscaping for Modern Living, Sunset Magazine, 1956.

# 4. SCULPTURAL.

A Modern garden blends formal geometric lines with informal naturalistic shapes. The resulting “biomorphic” designs are sculptural and minimal. Plants are used as objects or masses and are chosen for structure and texture.

**“LANDSCAPE DESIGN IS OUTDOOR SCULPTURE, NOT TO BE LOOKED AT AS AN OBJECT, BUT DESIGNED TO SURROUND US IN A PLEASANT SENSE OF SPACE RELATIONS”.**

James Rose, Freedom in the Garden, 1938.



photo: Tahvory Bunting / Three Sixty Design

# 5. ENVIRONMENTAL.

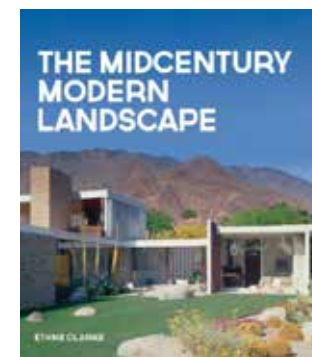


photo: John M. Birkey

Although most Modernists, working during the movement’s heyday in the 20th Century, rarely articulated their garden designs in the environmental terms of today, they did advocate for consideration of sun angles, wind directions, and changing seasons to maximize comfort for people. They promoted hardy plants and more paving to reduce maintenance, which led to the use of more native plants and water-saving designs. The original Modernists, with their affinity for new materials and technologies, would be pleased with recent developments in waterproofing and lightweight soils that have enabled gardens to climb vertical walls and cover rooftops, further blurring the boundary between architecture and landscape.

**“JUST AS THE DESIGN OF THE LOCOMOTIVE, THE AEROPLANE, AND FOR THAT MATTER THE MODERN HOUSE, IS BEING CHANGED BY SCIENTIFIC INVENTION, IN A SIMILAR WAY, SCIENCE WILL TRANSFORM THE GARDEN OF THE FUTURE”.**

Christopher Tunnard in “Gardens in the Modern Landscape” 1938.



The Midcentury Modern Landscape  
By Ethne Clarke  
Gibbs Smith Publishers, 2017

**F**resh off the press, *The Midcentury Modern Landscape* is a comprehensive and thoroughly researched exploration of the origins of midcentury modern garden design and its impact on contemporary landscapes. Written by Ethne Clarke, a well-known author on gardening subjects, the book is the result of her own research as she moved from England to a midcentury modern ranch in Colorado Springs.

The book is comprised of two parts. The first is a history lesson spanning the end of the Arts and Crafts movement and the rise of early Modernism. Clarke brings a refreshing international perspective by highlighting lesser-known Scandinavian and English influences. In fact, throughout

the narrative, the author frequently discusses “shadow figures” as she calls them, the architects and designers whose work was important but names have been forgotten. Even knowledgeable readers will find something new in Clarke’s book.

The second half of the book is a design reference and style guide illustrated with copious vintage and contemporary photographs of modernist gardens. Clarke includes topics such as colors, textiles, fashions, and ceramics – as part of personalizing or accessorizing the garden. In all, *The Midcentury Modern Landscape* is a fresh guide for those seeking to understand modernist landscape design and looking for inspiration.



Garrett Eckbo, Dan Kiley, James Rose

## THE AVANT-GARDENERS

How three friends at Harvard in the 1930s transformed old-fashioned garden design into modern landscape architecture.

WORDS: Craig W. Mayer



Rose House, James Rose, 1954



ALCOA Forecast Garden, Garrett Eckbo 1952

While Modern landscape architecture is now firmly rooted in the tradition of American design, it took a considerable amount of time and effort (not to mention a few ruffled academic feathers) for the original practitioners of the art to install it in the public consciousness. Prior to 1940, the reigning landscape aesthetic in the United States revolved around the Beaux-Arts and Neoclassical styles of English, French, and Italian gardens. Landscapes of this period, designed primarily for large

private estates or public parks, were either highly formal, with strict axes and symmetrical plantings, or loosely informal and romantically naturalistic. Naturally, Harvard University—as the oldest and arguably the most prestigious landscape architecture program in the country—was stepped in these traditions.

In 1936, three Harvard classmates, Garrett Eckbo, Dan Kiley, and James Rose, developed a friendship based on their mutual interest in Modern architecture and began

to challenge the landscape design traditions not just at Harvard but across the entire industry. Under the tutelage of Walter Gropius, founder of the German Bauhaus School, Eckbo, Kiley, and Rose began to experiment with integrating the ideas of the Bauhaus School into landscape design. In 1938 and 1939, they published a provocative series of articles titled “Landscape Design in the Urban, Rural, and Primeval Environments,” in which they argued for a more social and environmental approach to outdoor design. Further inspiration came



Miller Garden, Dan Kiley 1953

photo: David Lauer

from Christopher Tunnard, an English landscape architect who published a groundbreaking book in 1938 called *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, in which he argued that “the modern house requires modern surroundings, and in most cases, the garden of today does not fulfill this need.” Eckbo, Kiley, and Rose succeeded in bringing Tunnard to Harvard to deliver a lecture in 1939, a seminal event that prompted Gropius to offer him a permanent job at the university.

After Harvard (only Eckbo succeeded in graduating; Rose was expelled for refusing to design in the Beaux-Arts style, Kiley left of his own volition), the three visionaries went on to forge successful and influential landscape design careers. Eckbo became one of the leading landscape architects of

the California Modern movement. He designed numerous private gardens in Los Angeles, including several well-known Case Study Houses and an aluminum demonstration garden. In 1950, Eckbo authored *Landscape for Living*, considered the most influential book on landscape architecture since Tunnard’s in 1938. Kiley settled in New England and developed friendships with prominent architects such as Louis Kahn, Eero Saarinen, I.M. Pei, and Gordon Bunshaft. His connection with these figures helped establish his reputation as one of the few expert Modernist landscape architects on the east coast. Kiley’s large body of work includes the site plan for the Saint Louis Arch monument, the Air Force Academy campus, rooftop gardens at the Oakland Museum, and the Dallas Museum Sculpture

Garden. Rose went on to become a prolific writer and lecturer on the theory and practice of landscape architecture. His best-known project, his personal estate in New Jersey, seamlessly interweaves a house and a garden through a series of interconnected rooms.

One thing is certain: without Eckbo, Kiley, and Rose, Modern landscape architecture as we know it today wouldn’t exist. Under their influence, landscape design became a social art rather than a horticultural science. And for this considerable contribution to the world of architecture, the Cultural Landscape Foundation recently honored them as “Pioneers of American Landscape Design.” ■



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# COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUS

## BLENDING ALTRUISM AND DESIGN, THE ALLIANCE CENTER IS AN ECOCENTRIC COLLABORATION FOSTERING BOTH OPPORTUNITY AND IMPACT

WORDS: Sean O'Keefe • IMAGES: David Lauer

**S**USTAINABILITY ISN'T EASY TO DEFINE PRECISELY OR UNDERSTAND CLEARLY, AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ACTUALLY AGREE ON.

In nature, sustainability discerns diversity and the ability to remain productive infinitely. Sustainability in design strives to balance environmental responsibility with human productivity, societal enrichment, and long-term operational costs.

At The Alliance Center in Lower Downtown Denver, an extraordinary ecosystem of sustainable-centric thinkers has been drawn together by a pragmatic building transformation that now beats as the heart of a collective conscious.

“Using design to facilitate community allows this building to be a living, breathing example of meeting our mission - enabling collaboration and impact,” says Jason Page, Senior Director of Operations for The Alliance Center. Page is responsible for the daily management of the 41,000-square foot non-profit office collective situated in a reclaimed red brick edifice along what was once Denver’s warehouse row facing Union Station. Today the building pulsates with purpose, a light, airy, animated hub of flexible, scalable, micro-lease office space for non-profit organizations and businesses working in sustainability.

“The workplace is where we spend the majority of our time,” continues Page. “We need space to be the best that it can be to help our tenants make the most impact on what they do.” By adopting a lease-by-the-

seat model of commercial hyper-space providers like WeWork, The Alliance Center currently serves as the home office to over 50 different organizations involved in fostering sustainable existence in all its forms. Ranging in size from Conservation Colorado’s 40+ full-time employees down to part-time volunteer-run entities in need of occasional single-seat workspace or a conference room, every tenant benefits from the building’s improved image, efficiency, and performance. It wasn’t always so. Page’s relationship with The Alliance Center stretches back to days when the building was quite a bit darker, cluttered, cramped, and confused both in design and purpose.

Prior to 2004 when the Alliance for Sustainable Colorado took ownership of 1536 Wynkoop, the building was like any other office building, an opportunistic mix of inhabitants including the office of then-LoDo entrepreneur and now-Governor, John Hickenlooper. Until becoming Denver Mayor in 2003, Hickenlooper oversaw a burgeoning empire of some of the area’s nascent hip inhabitants including Denver’s first brewpub, Wynkoop Brewing Company, and Wazee Supper Club. The early fibers of what the building has since become did exist though, and Hickenlooper was among the first supporters when 1536 Wynkoop was acquired. The building’s largest tenant, Conservation Colorado was joined by a group of four or five other environmental non-profit organizations to suppose a semblance of an identity associated with sustainability. However, the threads of commonality that existed within 1536 Wynkoop were segregated by an overly partitioned building plan and obstructed windows. The occupant’s work experience was sadly marred by a lack of light, warmth or charm, generally making the desire for a coffee escape far more likely than inviting guests in for business meetings.

The Alliance Center stands quietly amid the bustle of what has emerged as the new city-center at Union Station. The weathered brick face of the building belies the intense purpose and conviction of character that resides within.



Reclaimed and reinvigorated, design strategies seamlessly blend organic sensibilities and a cascading sense of spatial scale to impart warm feelings of inclusion even for those working alone.

“The departure point is seeded in understanding the commonalities in how these organizations use space and what we can do strategically to maximize efficiency and increase connectivity,” says Gensler Principal, Michelle Liebling, who leads the Denver office’s workplace design studio and has led The Alliance Center’s transformation. Independent interviews with organizational tenants of every scale consistently revealed that most users wanted to spend at least half of their time in active collaboration with others, but the building’s lack of meeting space made dynamic group conversation difficult to facilitate.

To enhance The Alliance Center’s leasing capacity, while decreasing individual tenant overhead, Gensler developed a barbell-shaped floorplate. Large open workspaces on either end of each floor are centrally connected by a common corridor featuring multiple conference rooms, restrooms and the elevator core. By pre-furnishing the entire building with modular kit-of-parts furniture

**“USING DESIGN TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY ALLOWS THIS BUILDING TO BE A LIVING, BREATHING EXAMPLE OF MEETING OUR MISSION-ENABLING COLLABORATION AND IMPACT”**

- Jason Page

systems, Page acutely manages occupant density, essentially doubling from just 130 people in 2004 to over 250 today. Appropriately-scaled space is easily assigned to incoming tenants; reconfigured as entities grow; and accommodates micro-organizations with intermittent or limited office needs that want to enjoy the benefits of being associated with The Alliance Center brand. Within the large open-plan work arenas, prefabricated, demountable wall systems create closed-door spaces that can be quickly reconfigured with minimal disruption as situations change. Tenants enjoy conference rooms, kitchens, group workspaces, and quiet recesses located along the amenity ring connecting the offices on each floor as part of leased shared services.

An animated first-floor quick-bite/coffee café provides a hospitable welcome and fond farewell



“THE DEPARTURE POINT IS SEEDED IN UNDERSTANDING THE COMMONALITIES IN HOW THESE ORGANIZATIONS USE SPACE AND WHAT WE CAN DO STRATEGICALLY TO MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY AND INCREASE CONNECTIVITY” - Michelle Leibling, Gensler



while making the coffee escape and light business meeting one in the same. The café is joined by a training room portioned by an accordion glass wall, allowing the dual spaces to become one for large group events, speaking engagements, and educational programs. The ability to program the space with high-profile speakers has grown significantly since 2004. The Alliance Center hosted Denver Mayor B. Hancock in January 2018 for a sold-out program titled Denver’s Climate Action Plan + You. Beyond holding more than 300 community-focused events a year, The Alliance Center also regularly leads tenant-only events for professional development, social networking, and wellness.

Page and his team at The Alliance Center try to take an active role in altruistic matchmaking when leasing space, grouping together entities with common interests and goals to nurture change and increase impact. A second-floor space houses a collection of entities engaged in urban sustainability issues within a single suite. (Urban Land Institute, Natural Resources Defense Council’s Urban Solutions Program, Walk Denver, Sustainability Economic & Enterprise Development (SEED) Institute, Local Governments for Sustainability and Streets Blog Denver) Page’s objective is to eliminate the communication barriers or shared-information lags that occur when people work in silos.

Planned or spontaneous, putting people in a position to make collaborative connections was a thoughtful focus of the design. The amenity ring on each floor includes a variety of conference room and casual meeting areas, kitchens, and restrooms enlivened by cork flooring, living art, and tactile surfaces.



Scale matters, tenants are leased individual workspace along with unlimited access to the common core. Views and hues, abundant daylight, and bright, light, flexible furnishings add buoyancy to the atmosphere.





Within the office space end caps dedicated, closed-door options are cohesively mingled with single-seat, occasional-need workspaces to facilitate linkages between entities addressing common challenges.



THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY AT THE ALLIANCE CENTER IS FOUND IN TENANTS, LARGE AND SMALL. BELOW A FEW OF THE 50+ CHANGE MAKERS OPERATING OUT OF 1536 WYNKOOP.

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## MAXIMIZING IMPACT

*Proud testament to the success of The Alliance Center's capacity to facilitate change stands Initiative 37. The Colorado Renewable Energy Requirement Initiative was among the first major accomplishments of the collective conscious that blossomed into the dynamic that exists today. Passed in 2004, this statewide citizens' ballot initiative required that a percentage of retail and investor-owned electricity sales be derived from renewable energy sources. Beginning with a 3% mandate in 2007 and increasing to 10% by 2015, this was an important first step in achieving the 30% retail and 20% rural co-op renewable energy requirements that exist today.*

"A key to our design vision was to uncover the natural character hidden within the timbers of this old building, while also enlivening spaces and relationships through biophilia," says Liebling about the aesthetics. Biophilia draws on the hypothesis that people possess an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life. At the Alliance Center, that realization includes authentic moments like artwork rendered from layers of cardboard; tactile, green building materials with connections to biomimicry; abundant access to natural daylight; and wall-hung planters adorning corridors in living tapestries. Importantly, it also includes ample opportunity for impromptu exchanges through accommodating

access to inspirational alcoves where passersby can quickly become allies.

While the building's many tenants are benefiting from improved work areas, spatial, amenity efficiencies and economic efficiencies, the Alliance Center also needed to be a high-performance showcase of the possibilities for building re-use in order to meet its own mission. Doubling the building's occupancy while increasing conferencing spaces by more than 400% is, of course, a huge first step. The building's transformation also included a major energy efficiency and high-performance systems renovation that brought in automated and interconnected building systems. The results are

a per capita reduction in energy usage of 50% and the distinction of being the first Colorado project certified Platinum under the USGBC's LEED Version 4 for Existing Buildings Operations & Maintenance among many other sustainable design accolades.

"The Alliance Center is a wonderful example of what can be achieved when we open our eyes to the prospect of doing things differently," finishes Page. "Here smart choices and good design are the basis of a healthy, sustainable, symbiotic relationship between productive collaboration and community impact." ■

# PRESERVATION

What *Mid-Century Modernaires* can do . . .

Denver is having an architectural identity crisis. All around the metro area we are seeing new construction. Many of the new built “contemporary” houses take their cues from one of the most notable architectural periods in American history . . . **Modernism** is a movement and architectural period that came to be in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. This architectural style and philosophy has sleek, futuristic, and defined lines. It also has an unprecedented use of natural light and a seamless flow from indoors to out; all driven by big ideas around the relationship between buildings and the people that live in them. These homes are commonly known as California Contemporary or Mid-Century Modern (MCM) and the Denver area is fortunate to have thousands of MCM homes, many of which are in beautiful enclaves; some of whom are nationally known.

We are at a crucial point in Denver’s march through history. As Denver has grown and changed, some local MCM masterpieces have been lost, while others continue to be threatened in the name of “progress.” We don’t have to accept the destruction of Denver’s heritage of modern architecture; the remaining masterpieces and enclaves can still be saved for future generations to enjoy, understand, and be inspired by.

**Educate** yourself and your neighbors about the history of your Mid-Century Modern home.

**Work with your local community** to obtain legal protection for Mid-Century Modern homes through the establishment of historic districts, conservation overlays, or restrictive covenants.

**Find an MCM house of your own** to restore and protect by learning its story, architectural features, and modernize it in ways that respect its architectural history.

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Denver’s MCM homes are not a “thing of the past,” let’s save them today for future generations.



Congratulations to Krisana Park for being the first mid-century modern neighborhood in Denver to overwhelmingly support, and ultimately gain enforceable protections for the architectural character of their homes through a conservation overlay!

  
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TIPPET RISE ART CENTER  
**CURATING THE WILD**

WORDS: *Caroline Joan Peixoto* • IMAGES: *James Florio*



*Beartooth Portal*, Ensemble Studio, constructed of concrete cast from the land.

**I**n the middle of Montana's Big Sky country lies one of the most impressive sculpture gardens in the world. But labeling Tippet Rise Art Center as such would be largely missing the mark for this seamless narrative woven between land and art.

There is a long dirt road that leads to Tippet Rise, and as you drive it, the prairie grasslands stretch out every which way from where you sit in your car, the curves of the road and the undulating hills play a game of hide and reveal with the all-consuming sky, and you begin to wonder how you never knew such a place existed.

Of course, there are those familiar with Montana's Big Sky, those who are local and those who have migrated, but there are none who are not awestruck by the vast, empty, and overwhelming beauty on display, valley after valley, knoll after knoll, mountain after mountain. It's a land that instantly demands your attention and reverence.

"There's a feeling that overcomes you right away when you encounter this place," says Cathy Halstead, co-founder of Tippet Rise Art Center.

"It's as if you pass through a wormhole into an alternate space where earth meets sky and brings you into the cosmos," her husband and co-founder, Peter, adds.

The Halsteads' enthusiasm is contagious. Both artists and long-time benefactors of the art world, the two met when they were 16. Cathy, an abstract painter, worked

**"THE LAND IS THE DEPARTURE POINT OF THE DESIGN AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF STRUCTURES OF LANDSCAPE. IT IS ITS REFERENCE AND ITS SUPPORT, ALSO ITS MATTER. THERE IS A STRONG DIALECTIC BETWEEN THE ARCHITECTURE THAT WE BUILT AND THE LAND."**

— Debora Mesa Molina, Ensemble Studio

Tippet Rise Art Center is at the mercy of the land it sits on: The winters rage with bitter cold and heavy snow and the hot summer sun beats down relentlessly on the golden hills. Inviting outsiders to this commanding space was perhaps the first in a series of wild ideas from Peter and Cathy Halstead.

alongside her father in his liquor business, and Peter is a pianist, poet, and photographer.

Their travels brought them to repeat visits to the Storm King Art Center in upstate New York and Tickon Sculpture Park in Denmark, where they were inspired to create.

It took five years to develop Tippet Rise, and when it opened in 2015, it was met with acclaim. In stark contrast to their inspirers, which house dozens of pieces in a few hundred acres, the Halsteads' center is over 10,000 acres of working ranch and boasts only nine sculptures.

"We looked for many years for a large space where the terrain would allow privacy, where each sculpture essentially has its own sculpture park," says Peter. The land that now makes up Tippet Rise was never just one ranch, though it is an ecosystem unto itself and an important watershed in the region. When they found an available ranch in southeastern Montana, the Halsteads bought several adjoining ranches to unite the entire valley at the foot of the Beartooth Mountains.

"I've been visiting this land for nearly 20 years," says Ben Wynthein, the ranch manager at Tippet. "And I had my own ranch nearby when the Halsteads came to visit. The valley was all split and had been ranched for generations. In a way, it was tired."

Wynthein, who has spearheaded restorative water projects, reorganized grazing practices for the cattle, and introduced sheep to combat noxious plants, has watched the land regenerate and wildlife return. "Maybe to the naked eye you can't see, but I look at pictures from 2006, 2010. It's incredible watching the land come back to life. Now I can manage it as a whole instead of just a fraction. It's a dream come true for me." >P.137



**ABOVE:** Allowing for sensory reactions you won't get in a concert hall, the Olivier Music Barn, the Tiara Acoustic Shell, and the Domo serve as intimate stages on the insulated prairie. Classical concerts run throughout the season, bringing some of the world's premier musicians to Fishtail. This third season will bring Wu Han and David Finckel, Anne-Marie McDermott, Ingrid Fliter, along with up-and-coming artists Julien Brocal and Jenny Chen.

**BELOW:** "We have a lively and appreciative audience, and what we hope for our third season is that it will be as warm, personal, and fun as our first two summers."  
—Peter and Cathy Halstead



"THE SCULPTURE IS A REACTION TO THE MEMORIES THAT HAUNT THE OLD PRAIRIE SCHOOLHOUSE. IT IS A SCULPTURE THAT CELEBRATES IDEAS OF WISTFUL ESCAPE AND INDULGES BUCOLIC FANTASIES OF NATURE AS HEADMASTER AND THE WIND AS A LEARNING AID."

— Patrick Dougherty, Daydreams



"We were fortunate that the land turned out to have its own magnetism," agrees Peter.

Armed with a space that can only be described as limitless, the couple did not set a formal process for selecting sculptures. Instead, they chose art that moved them. They bought some and leased some, and commissioned works from artists and architects they knew and liked. For the Halsteads, recapturing the feeling from Storm King and Tickon was most important. "We wanted to be able to duplicate consistently the electricity we experienced: being on our own outside, with great and innovative works of art."

were immediately struck with the power of the place. "The infinite sea of rolling hills, the backdrop of the mountains, immensity of the sky, the overall multi-sensorial spectacle of the landscape, were at once inspirational and overwhelming," says Debora. The two felt deeply that architecture had to make a contribution to the setting.

The Ensemble crew was on the ground in Montana for eight months through the winter — a challenge, to say the least. "We soon realized we were building in the middle of the wilderness, and nature rules!" laughs Debora.

Nonetheless, the team created three pieces in response to the environs: Beartooth Portal, Inverted Portal, and Domo. The massive pieces are cast from the land, channeling nature in their geological form. The structures are ones you can touch, walk through, and sit under. They powerfully frame the landscape for the visitor.

"My idea of bringing a schoolhouse to Tippet Rise coalesced when Peter Halstead joked that the best parts of his education were his daydreams of escape and his desire to embrace the world beyond the classroom," says the prolific artist Patrick Dougherty. "I began to imagine a sculptural >P.141

"Peter and Cathy were visiting my studio in New York when they saw my Satellite series—at the time a collection of models I was working on for an alternative housing project on the East River. They fell in love, and asked me to build one for the ranch," says Stephen Talasnik, whose Satellite #5: Pioneer sits in a valley at Tippet. "I spent about two years looking for that spot," says Talasnik. "The first time you visit, you're just overwhelmed by the size. It takes time to process."

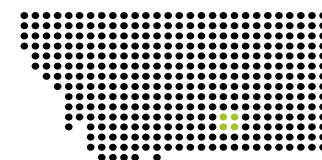
The Spanish duo Debora Mesa Molina and Anton Garcia-Abril of architecture firm Ensemble Studio



*Daydreams*, Patrick Dougherty  
Local willow saplings and replica schoolhouse



With the construction team building a replica of a 19th-century one-room schoolhouse, Patrick Dougherty spent months soaking thousands of willow saplings in the nearby creek. Mixed with foraged sticks, the supple branches were interwoven with each other and the schoolhouse, blurring the lines between dreams and reality.



FISHTAIL, MONTANA  
Tippet Rise Arts Center

Fishtail, Montana, holds a rich history of art. Isabelle Johnson, whose family ranched the land at the turn of the century, was an accomplished modernist painter who bucked tradition. Inspired by the French Post-Impressionists, she traveled through Europe before returning to Montana, where she taught art at the university and served as department head. Some of her pieces are on view at Tippet, and several of her art books are available as well.



*Domo*, Ensemble Studio, constructed of concrete cast from the land.

TRAVEL BY DESIGN  
**TIPPET RISE ART CENTER**

work that contrasted book learning tethered to a desk with the rambunctious potential of the natural world.”

When Dougherty wanted an old schoolhouse to weave his tens of thousands of reeds through for Daydreams, they couldn’t find the right one. “So we built it!” Cathy shares.

The building, reminiscent of a 19th-century one-room schoolhouse, takes your breath away with its mysticism. Willow reeds, soaked for days, are woven through the windows, the walls, the ceiling, and the floor. From the outside, it seems as if the house is about to be spirited away by the prairie winds. Passing through the door, the reeds weave cocoons that welcome you in and induce a dream state.

With the sculptures slowly and surely manifesting the essence of the prairie, the Halsteads hired local architect Laura Viklund to design two more structures. Will’s Shed serves as the mess hall, with long, inviting tables and benches that serve as a welcome respite from the prairie sun. The Wild Flower Kitchen, a local, organic catering company, serves fresh pastries, lunch, and cool drinks.

Viklund’s second contribution to Tippet is the state-of-the-art Olivier Music Barn, which >P.144

“AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, TIPPET IS ALL-CONSUMING. THE WAY THE SUN AND THE AIR AND THE MOUNTAINS AND THE LAND ALL COME TOGETHER IS INCREDIBLE. — I WANTED TO CAPTURE EVERY ANGLE AT EVERY MOMENT. THE LAND IS UNLIKE ANYTHING ELSE YOU’LL COME ACROSS IN NORTH AMERICA, AND THE ONLY OTHER PLACE IN THE WORLD I’VE SEEN AS WILD AS THIS IS PATAGONIA.” — James Florio



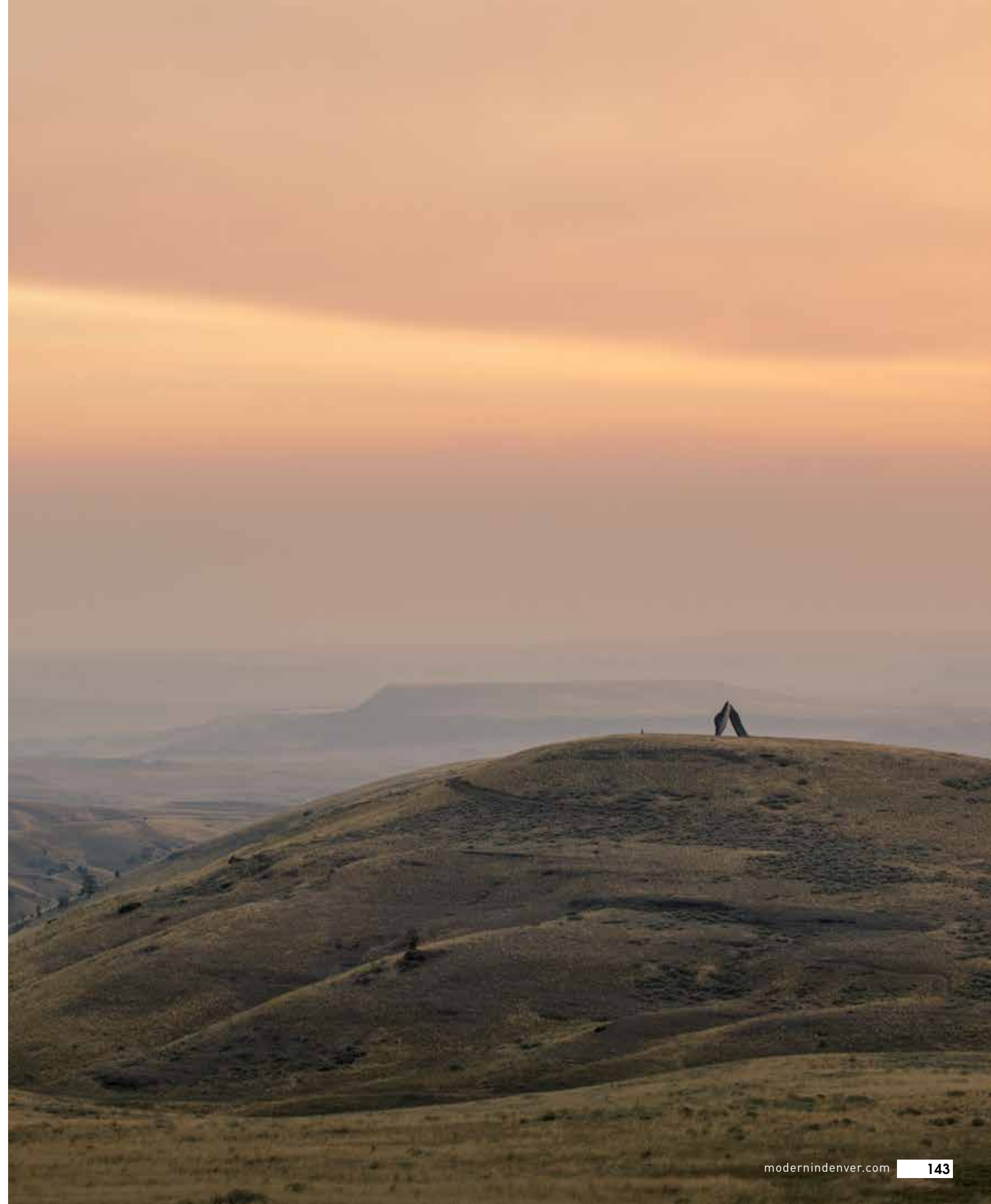
"I WANTED TO BUILD A THING THAT WOULD ASSIST SOMEONE IN UNDERSTANDING THE SCALE OF THE LAND. THERE IS A LUSH BARRENNESS TO IT. IT SOUNDS LIKE AN OXYMORON. IT'S MASSIVE AND LUNAR-LIKE, BUT IT'S EXTREMELY LUSH. PIONEER IS POSITIONED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT'S CRADLED IN A LITTLE BOWL, AND YOU CAN GET BACK TO THE INTIMACY OF THE SPACE."

– Stephen Talasnik, Satellite #5, Pioneer

*Satellite #5: Pioneer*, Stephen Talasnik, assembled with 98 logs of cedar.



*Inverted Portal*, Ensemble Studio, constructed of concrete cast from the land.







*Two Discs*, Alexander Calder, bolted sheet steel.

**“THE UNDERLYING SENSE OF FORM IN MY WORK HAS BEEN THE SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSE, OR PART THEREOF, FOR THAT IS A RATHER LARGE MODEL TO WORK FROM.”**

-Alexander Calder,  
The Bulletin Museum of Modern Art, Spring 1951

includes a performance space with perfect acoustics and world-class sound and video recording studios. Musical performance is integral to Tippet Rise: Each season brings premier musicians from around the globe to Montana to perform classical concerts under the shade of Ensemble Studio’s Domo, or in the pristine and exquisitely designed music barn that doubles as a welcome center.

The nine sculptures are spread across the immense property, and no two are next to each other, though from some angles you can sense the whisper of another off in the distance. The art center is only open Friday through Sunday from June to September. Visits are limited and timed, providing each individual with the space to create his or her own experience. “It is precisely this terrain that insulates you against

the outside world,” the Halsteads believe. “It gives your imagination room to create its own virtual reality.”

The experience of being at Tippet Rise is much more than observing a work of art: It’s entirely visceral, including the wind through the grasses, the lowing of the grazing cows, the warmth of the sun, the backdrop of the mountains, and the vista that surrounds as you take in what stands before you.

“You can take as much time as you like in a surreal landscape, with something that provokes and inspires you,” says Peter. “When you have to face your own dreams, they change you in unexpected ways. >P.147



*Beethoven's Quartet*, Mark di Suvero, steel and metal.

### **TICKETS**

Admission is free, but tickets must be pre-booked. Most weekends sell out quickly, so book well in advance. Season 3 opens in late June and closes at the end of September.

Classical concerts are scheduled throughout the season; tickets for performances are separate and range from \$10 to \$20.

To get tickets, visit: [www.tippetrise.org](http://www.tippetrise.org)

### **GETTING THERE**

Tippet Rise Art Center is located in Fishtail, Montana. Fishtail is approximately an hour from Billings and two hours from Bozeman, both of which you can fly to directly from Denver. Alternatively, Tippet Rise is an eight-hour drive from Denver, and the route is beautiful. Pro tip: Take the Beartooth Scenic Highway when leaving Red Lodge for the treat of a lifetime.

### **WHERE TO STAY**

There is no lodging in Fishtail, but Red Lodge is about 45 minutes away and truly lovely. Airbnbs can be found in surrounding towns as well.

#### *Pollard Hotel*

2 Broadway Ave, Red Lodge, MT  
(406) 446-0001

#### *Blue Sky Cabins*

32 Blue Sky Ln, Red Lodge, MT  
(406) 446-0186

#### *Stillwater Lodge*

28 S. Woodard Ave, Absarokee, MT  
(406) 328-4899

### **WHERE TO EAT**

When at Tippet Rise, Will's Shed provides snacks, lunches, and drinks for purchase.

#### Outside of Tippet, we suggest the following:

For snacks / *Fishtail General Store*, Fishtail, MT

For sandwiches / *Moon Lake Market*, Red Lodge, MT

For dinner / *The Wild Table*, Red Lodge, MT

For coffee / *City Brew*, Columbus, MT ■

“NOTHING IN THE WORLD IS LARGE. YOU KNOW, MY SCULPTURES ARE LIKE A CRUMB NEXT TO A MOUNTAIN. YOU TAKE A MOUNTAIN, YOU DROP IT IN THE OCEAN, AND THE OCEAN DOESN'T RISE AN INCH, YOU KNOW?”

— Mark Di Suvero, Art Works Blog, 2012



*Proverb*, Mark di Suvero, steel and metal

## THE TIES THAT BIND

LOHI'S NEW MULTIFUNCTIONAL EATERY, THE BINDERY, IS A BOLD EXPERIMENT IN CULINARY SUSTAINABILITY.

WORDS: Gigi Sukin • IMAGES: James Florio



**IT WAS THE SIMPLEST OF GESTURES.**

During the construction process on The Bindery—an ultra-sustainable new eatery in the Lower Highlands—the team of designers and builders working on the project discovered a bird’s nest along a silvery bend of exposed piping. The team was installing a panel of wall-to-wall windows overlooking the city and rather than knock the nest down, they halted construction, gently removed the bundle of twigs, and relocated its feathery inhabitants to a safer location. It was the culminating flourish for the project: a reflection of the environmental compassion around which The Bindery itself was conceived and built. An authenticity test, perhaps, for the new establishment—good news, it passed.

Linda Hampsten Fox, The Bindery’s chef/owner, opened her new venture—which combines a bakery, cafe, marketplace, and restaurant into a single hub—in November 2017, with the goal of showing Denverites sustainability can be compatible with convenience, that environmental consciousness makes sense (morally, financially, and experientially) for communities and the businesses that serve them. At The Bindery, the connection between plate and planet is clear and informed.

To accomplish this mission, Hampsten Fox relied on her roots and travel for inspiration. The daughter of Polish and Czech immigrants, Hampsten Fox came of age in New Jersey in 1963. “Family and food were important and reflected years of tradition and culture and care,” she says. In her early adulthood, Hampsten Fox lived in the Swiss countryside and later in a Tuscan farmhouse—a “wild, old, broken-down place with olive trees and a small vineyard,” as she tells it. She developed an affinity for the environmental ethos of European country living: the smaller cars, the energy efficiency, the walkability, the ubiquitous recycling. In Italy, she grew plums and prowled for mushrooms and wild asparagus along dirt roads. She discovered the culinary arts and the Slow Food movement, and enjoyed memorable encounters with plates of tangled noodles laden with balanced sweetness and acidity. Hampsten Fox says now, recalling those days. “The concept of farm-to-table is a given everywhere else in the world.”



For The Bindery, Hampsten Fox drew from her wanderlust to develop a menu representative of global cuisine. “The food reflects my entire life and personal heritage,” she says. The *carte du jour* invites diners to become intimate with the elements that compose their meals, to ask about the impact beyond The Bindery itself.

On top of this, Hampsten Fox insists that for a restaurant to call itself truly sustainable, eco-consciousness must be built into every aspect of the business, and that starts with the physical space.

Hampsten Fox fixated on the physical space, engrossed in every detail and design decision. She commissioned Narvaes Western, a construction and development firm based in Louisville, Colorado that took on The Bindery project

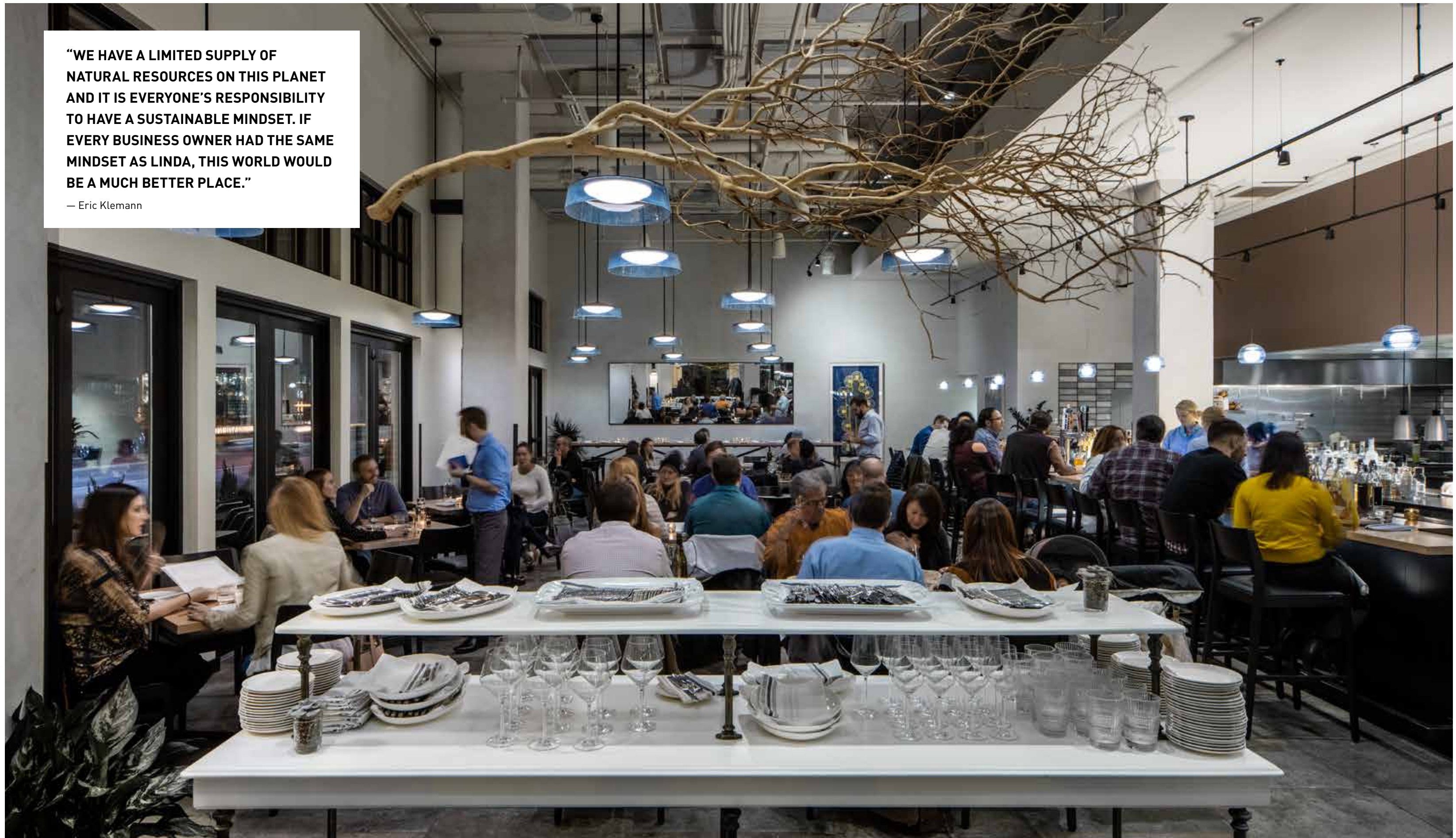
starting in December 2015. Jacques Juilland (an environmental biologist by training), principal and owner of Boulder-based Habilis DesignBuild, worked with Hampsten Fox to focus the establishment’s design on non-synthetic, sculpted-by-hand products, fixtures, and finishes. Together, they decided on *tadelakt* for the walls—a lime-based Moroccan plaster that replaces traditional concrete. “Lime plaster is a natural product,” says Juilland. “It’s a true craftsman’s product. Over time, it ends up with a hardness greater than concrete, and it’s more alive than stucco. It allows light to interact, to dance.” And while concrete emits carbon dioxide, *tadelakt* actively absorbs it, cleaning the air.

The kitchen is floored with Protect-All, a pliable recycled vinyl, rather

What was, in 2015, on its way to becoming a Starbucks at the ground floor of Southern Land’s new Centric LoHi apartment building, opened in November 2017 at 1817 Central Street as The Bindery. The restaurant became a 4,050-square-foot physical expression of chef-owner Linda Hampsten Fox’s [pictured above] imagination and ideals. An open floor plan, complete with performance kitchen positioned like a stage tempts diners to steal a glimpse of the action.

**“WE HAVE A LIMITED SUPPLY OF NATURAL RESOURCES ON THIS PLANET AND IT IS EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE A SUSTAINABLE MINDSET. IF EVERY BUSINESS OWNER HAD THE SAME MINDSET AS LINDA, THIS WORLD WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER PLACE.”**

— Eric Klemann



**“THERE’S A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE FOOD, THE EXPERIENCE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT. THE PHYSICAL SPACE IS A REFLECTION OF HER FOOD.”**

— Jacques Juillard

than the typical—and more environmentally costly—quarry tile and epoxy. “This type of flooring was probably 15 percent more expensive,” says Hampsten Fox, “but the time and money spent cleaning and painting it is practically zero, and we won’t have to replace it as often as one would with grout and tiles.”

Of all the items in a restaurant kitchen, dish machines are notoriously expensive—and wasteful. The majority of restaurant owners lease them, often through chemical companies, but Hampsten Fox, defiant in the face of large upfront costs, added about \$20,000 to her opening budget and bought her own.

“Linda was adamant that she wanted to purchase a machine by Champion that uses only cold water and recaptures its own steam, making it Energy Star Qualified,” says account manager, Eric Klemann of kitchen design firm Smith and Greene, who worked with Hampsten Fox on The Bindery’s kitchen. The special dish machine cost nearly 25 percent more than other, less sustainable options, “but it will pay for itself in water and energy savings in a few years,” Klemann says.

“To a large degree, the European aesthetic asks for an acceptance of imperfection that creates a sense of ease,” says Jacques Juillard. The Bindery embraced a complete absence of back-of-house and front-of-house, a design risk that keeps the staff on their toes, but allows the space to function as a workshop where transparency is a strong value.



**SUSTAINABLE ELEMENTS AT THE BINDERY**

- :: Geothermal radiant flooring
- :: Natural tadelakt lime plaster
- :: Recycled vinyl kitchen flooring
- :: Recycled demin insulation
- :: Natural low-VO<sub>2</sub> stains, finishes and paints
- :: Energy Star-rated kitchen appliances
- :: Miwe baker’s deck oven with smart technology and multilevel programming
- :: Cold water-injected dishwasher, collecting steam and vapor to charge the following cycle
- :: Acoustical ceiling panels from recycled cotton

Today, even with the eatery up and running, Hampsten Fox is still brainstorming ways to increase her business’s sustainability. This spring, she and her team will install a beehive on the rooftop of Centric LoHi, the building that houses The Bindery, to harvest honey. The kitchen staff is also collaborating with Grower’s Organic, a Colorado company committed to establishing an intimate link between chefs and farmers, to shrink the separation between farm and table.

Is The Bindery setting the standard of the future? “I believe it is,” Klemann says. “We have a limited supply of natural resources on this planet and it’s everyone’s responsibility to have a sustainable mindset. If every business owner had the same mindset as Linda, the world would be a much better place.” ■



**Creativity & Community**

LOOKING FORWARD 2018 : THANKS FOR SHARING

**MODERN IN DENVER**

# White Open Spaces

Architects and designers have long revered the color white for its ability to harmonize and balance space. Miele employed this respect for pure lines and transparency when creating its new Brilliant White Plus Series. Understatedly elegant, this new collection of built-in appliances offers discriminating homeowners and design professionals a unique solution to kitchen design.

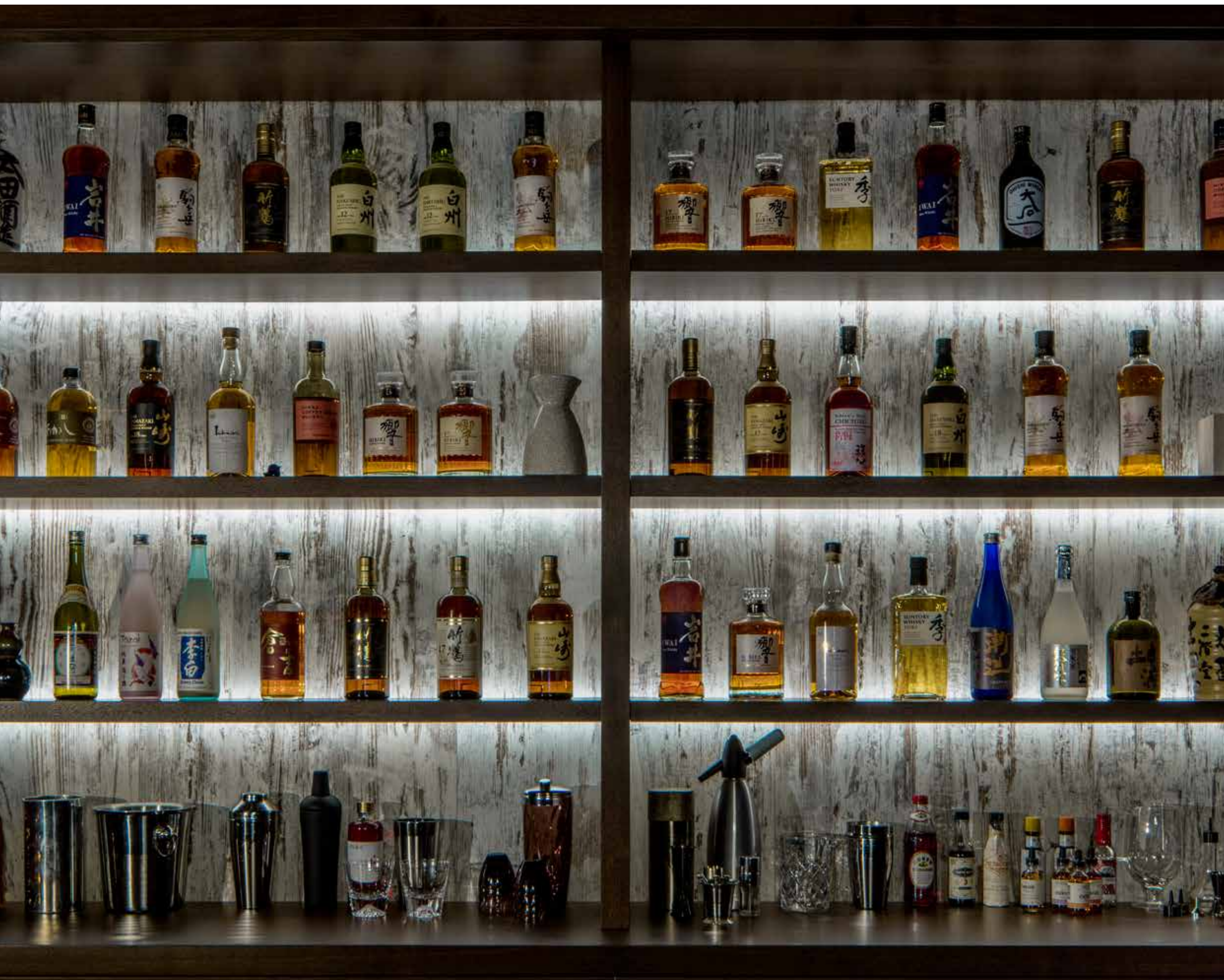
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KANPAI!

# 乾杯

## RISING SPIRITS

WORDS: Gigi Sukin • IMAGES: James Florio

### THE DRIVE FOR PERFECTION ELEVATES JAPANESE WHISKY TO CHART-TOPPING HEIGHTS

**They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But what of those who emulate and then steadily enhance and embellish?**

Hyperbole and clichés aside, this is precisely what the Japanese achieve time and time again. Evidenced by radio manufacturers in the 1950s, followed by industrialists such as Toyota and Yamaha, these examples lend themselves to a pattern of Western reproduction followed by outperformance.

“I think the main thing is the philosophy of incremental improvement,” says Dave Broom, an internationally acclaimed author specializing in spirits.



## 乾杯 RISING SPIRITS

The Japanese philosophy of kaizen nearly translates to “good change,” or continual perfecting, applied, no doubt, to all things, including adult beverages.

As Western influences washed ashore the Japanese seaboard in the mid 19th century, “the water of life,” as whisky is known, emerged in Tokyo. Less than a century later, Shinjiro Torii and Masataka Taketsuru sought to introduce Scotch to Japan, producing the first drop in 1924 at the Suntory Yamazaki Distillery in Yamazaki, Japan.

Overcoming early challenges, Takatsuru studied the practical trade, cultivating and harvesting barley, cooper barrels, engineering a pot still and building it from scratch, adapting methods – from temperature to the combination of yeasts – to distill a whisky that was pleasing to the Japanese palette.

After the fermentation and distillation processes, the result is a colorless liquid stored in barrels or casks, aged to achieve a distinctive pigment and profile. One popular modern product is aged in a sherry cask, resulting in a fragrant, rich, and sweet delivery, evocative of dry fruit. Swirled in a glass, the crystalline amber spirit is subtle and delicate.

Torii served as the marketing mastermind behind the bottles and with his and Takatsuru’s powers combined, Suntory achieved great success.

Today, Japanese whisky is a product of its environment, with the cool air, crystal clean groundwater and distinctive seasons contributing to the inimitable characteristics of the buzz-worthy liquid.

According to Eric Swanson, director of Japanese Spirits & Sake with Breakthru Beverage Group, which services Sushi Den and its sister restaurants in Denver, the bottle designs themselves carry symbolic meaning, including the Mars label, with a mountain range etched at the top and bottom, representing the valley the distillery sits between in the Nagano Alps.

What about the cultural aesthetic of Japan is rooted in and its whisky? “Balance and texture,” Swanson says. “Japanese whiskies tend to be soft and round, where Scotch can be more angular and rustic.”

Kevin Vesel of Vesel Contemporary Kitchens recently did a ground up rebuild of James and Clare Whitmore’s 1981 contemporary home, to now include a Japanese-inspired whisky bar. Memories of the homeowners’ brief residence in Tokyo and their love of the small, sensual “moguris” or Japanese speakeasies, guided the composition of the subterranean nook. The soft black Shou Sugi Ban walls incorporate a back-lit display in front of the whitewashed barn board planks and custom sliding doors, displaying bottles of the coveted spirits in true celebratory form.

**Whisky versus whiskey** – No, that isn’t a spelling error scattered throughout the story. The missing vowel is dependent on the spirit’s origin. The spelling “whiskey” is common in the United States and Ireland, whereas the rest of the world, including Japan spell the spirit sans “e.”

The last two decades’ worth of Americans’ fascination with Japanese cuisine, from sushi to ramen and sake, has helped win the eastern whisky a serious following stateside.

“Japanese food has become something that is both accessible and luxurious,” says Dusty O’Connell, bartender at Izakaya Ronin.

In 2003, the exotic beverage came into mainstream American consciousness with “Lost in Translation,” featuring a tuxedoed Bill Murray as the hype man for Suntory whisky.

The Yamazaki 12 Year Old single malt whisky became the first Japanese product to win the gold medal at the International Spirits Challenge, the most influential liquor competition in the world. In 2016, Hibiki, another Suntory label, won the World’s Best Blended Whisky prize at the World Whiskies Awards for the fourth time.

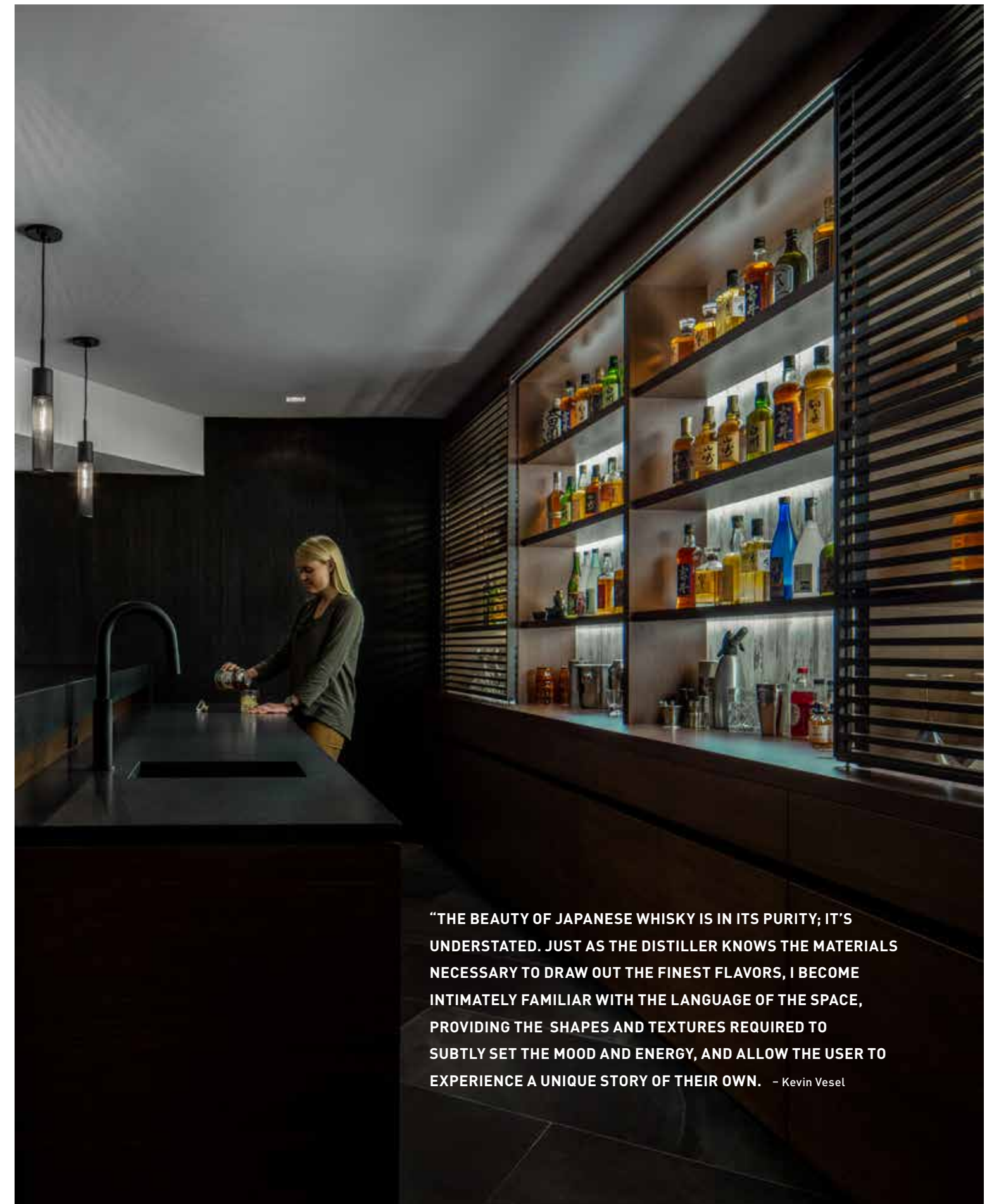
“Scarcity and quality have driven the conversation over the last five years,” explains Swanson.

These days, Japanese whisky is receiving rave reviews and top honors around the world for its carefully chosen flavors. But this wasn’t always the case.

In the 1990s, Suntory’s distillers were running one day a week, while the Hanyu Distillery was left in disrepair after Japan’s whisky market nearly collapsed. Owner Ichiro Akuto salvaged his grandfather’s dissolving operation and went on to open Chichibu distillery in 2008.

And then the industry’s pendulum swung again.

With the accolades received in the early- to mid-2000s, drinkers worldwide began to consume so much Japanese whisky that even the most stable producers were forced to make adjustments to avoid draining supply. Age statements – the numbers stamped on labels denoting the maturity of the contents – began to disappear, and Suntory, as well as distillery Nikka, replaced those bottles with non-age statement products.



“THE BEAUTY OF JAPANESE WHISKY IS IN ITS PURITY; IT’S UNDERSTATED. JUST AS THE DISTILLER KNOWS THE MATERIALS NECESSARY TO DRAW OUT THE FINEST FLAVORS, I BECOME INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH THE LANGUAGE OF THE SPACE, PROVIDING THE SHAPES AND TEXTURES REQUIRED TO SUBTLY SET THE MOOD AND ENERGY, AND ALLOW THE USER TO EXPERIENCE A UNIQUE STORY OF THEIR OWN. – Kevin Vesel

## 乾杯 RISING SPIRITS

The question remains, is the consumer attached to the digits published on the bottle, or the quality of the liquid, numbers or not?

Broom says age statements are not synonymous with quality. Similarly, Brittany Wagsness, Colorado's luxury brand specialist for Beam Suntory – yes, Suntory acquired Jim Beam for \$16 billion in 2014 and improved the import-export relations between the U.S. and Japan – encourages consumers not to judge a whisky by its number.

Broom says Japanese whisky manufacturers were modest about their products in the U.S. market initially. But with 100 million American consumers, there is ample opportunity for a diversity of tastes and experiences, Swanson contends.

To be sure, Denver has been catching up with the hype in recent years, with bars, restaurants, and retailers sharing their wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm for Japanese spirits.

Japan's aesthetic has swelled in popularity for more than a century stateside. Traditional Shou Sugi Ban is an ancient architectural technique used to preserve wood by heat-treating milled planks. Also known as Yakisugi, the method of charring the wood, cooling it, removing soot and debris, and finishing the boards with oil, is typically performed on Japanese cedar. The craft enhances the durability of the materials naturally.

“The Kizaki brothers wanted to introduce Denver to Japanese culture and values, and one of the ways they’re doing so is with the Japanese whisky list,” says Chip Soares, beverage director at Sushi Den. There, and at neighboring sister restaurants, Izakaya Den and OTOTO, a variety of Japanese whiskies appear on the menu, including a whisky flight with three, one-ounce pours of Akashi White Oak, Iwai Tradition, and Nikka Taketsuru along with “Ichiro’s Chichibu Port Pipe” – featured by one of only a handful of restaurants in the country – served as a two-ounce pour. Across town, Izakaya Ronin debuted in December 2017, complete with a basement level “moguri,” or speakeasy that serves a selection of Japanese whiskies, including the coveted Yamazaki Sherry Cask 2016, a cool \$350 pour, along with the Iwai and Iwai Tradition, complex and fruit-forward bottles that have received worldwide attention.



Roth Sheppard Architects embraced the ideal of a traditional sake den, blending asymmetrical features in tackling the South Pearl Street Izakaya Den project in 2014. Simple but sophisticated, natural materials are used in contemporary style to achieve a juxtaposition of new and old, with rusted steel, stone flooring and walls, bamboo partitions, mood lighting, and bold colors. Izakaya Den, along with its nearby sister restaurants, strives to introduce Japanese whisky to guests, with a menu of rare bottles, flights, and cocktails such as Nagano Nightcap, with Iwai Tradition Japanese whisky, sesame, honey, and orange bitters.



### FOR YOUR CABINET: GIVE THESE A TRY

*(Recommended by Dave Broom)*

**HIBIKI 17 YEARS OLD** (Hibiki 17) – If you do manage to track this down, know it’s worth a pretty penny (\$180+).

**NIKKA** – Much bolder, this is a good product for single-malt drinkers. It’s got superb balance of fruit. Try the Coffey Grain (\$65) or malt (\$65+).

**YAMAZAKI:** Try the Hakushu (\$60) – the older this whisky gets, the smokier it is.

**CHICHIBU** – This product is light, fragrant, and juicy (\$100+). Only a small amount is released each year.

### NEXT NIGHT OUT: ORDER A HIGHBALL

Japanese bar-goers often request highballs, served in a tall drinking glass, a mixed alcoholic drink composed of one part base spirit, two parts non-alcoholic mixer, add ice.

“Mizuwari means ‘mixed with water,’” Yasu Kizaki of Sushi Den says. It “is a popular way of drinking spirits in Japan. The Japanese climate is humid and oppressively hot in the summer, so the cold preparation works well in the climate.”

“Perhaps most important, Japanese whiskies are often densely layered with flavors from many barrel types and still shapes,” Kizaki says. “These blends and vattings all show their best when they are cut down in strength.”



.....  
 This January, the rare Yamazaki 50-year-old single malt earned the title of most expensive ever sold at auction, going for \$300,000 at Sotheby's Finest and Rarest sale in Hong Kong, more than double its pre-sale price estimate. Don't let that price tag scare you off, as the Japanese whisky niche continues to grow Denver. Whether you prefer malt, grain, or blended varieties, there's something for everyone. Consider the Yamazaki 12 Year, the Nikka Coffey Malt, or the Hibiki 17.



Izakaya Ronin debuted in December 2017, a split-level sushi bar and late-night boiler-room lounge engulfed in a red blush. Serving one of Denver's largest selections of Japanese whiskies, the menu includes blends, the Yamakazi sherry, and Mizunara Cask.

“Japanese distillers have gotten a lot of whisky collectors’ money,” says O’Connell, explaining that individual enthusiasts can often get their hands on rare bottles more easily than restaurants.

And that includes James and Claire Whitmore, Erie, Colorado homeowners who worked with Kevin Vesel of Vesel Contemporary Kitchens, who created not only the kitchen, but other prominent areas in the home as well. In the re-envisioning of their space, the homeowners insisted on demarcating their lower level with a moody bar-lounge influenced by eastern values and design.

The final product, “I describe as the original SoHo House in London mixed with a brothel,” says James Whitmore, of his “eclectic” abode.

“It’s truly one-of-a-kind,” Vesel says, of the Japanese-inspired bar he crafted. “It’s meant to feel like an underground secret.”

Though Vesel admits he hasn’t spent much time in Japan, the Whitmores lived and worked in Tokyo for nearly two years, and were inspired by The Oak Door Steakhouse in the Grand Hyatt Tokyo as well as the Hotel Okora, with its warm, amber notes and dark, sensual mood.

To build on the essence of this vision, Vesel took the simple space and like origami, folded some otherwise flat walls, introducing sharp angles to the space with traditional Shou Sugi Ban wood and six, inset walnut “masu” boxes for the displaying of prized bottles. The lumisheet LED lighting and lumicore tatami decorative panels create the desired amber glow.

The back bar wall is paneled in whitewashed barn boards, and the eco walnut veneered cabinetry and shelving incorporates Luminni LED lighting and custom Rimadesio Stripe sliding doors in brown lacquer and bronze glass.

Black leathered granite countertops are ultra-matte and light absorbing.

“The beauty of Japanese whisky is in its purity; it’s understated. Just as the distiller knows the materials necessary to draw out the finest flavors, I become intimately familiar with the language of the space, providing the shapes and textures required to subtly set the mood and energy, and allow the user to experience a unique story of their own.”

Vesel’s deliberate design decisions neither attempt to attain perfection nor timelessness. Alas, he says “projects need a balance of classic and trendy components,” a statement that symbolically unites the story he has created with that of the bottles showcased within.

Looking ahead, O’Connell explains Japanese whisky’s evolution will build upon its history. “I think the future is more interesting than the past,” he says. “There are so many forms and flavors ... Japanese distillers have only just gotten started and there is so much diversity in such a niche market.”

“Nothing is ever perfect or complete,” says Swanson. “There is always room for improvement.” ■

# THE BATHROOM >

WORDS: *Alicia Rodriguez*

How can something be simple and complex at the same time? That is the current conundrum in bathroom design. Nowadays, clean design is often achieved through cutting-edge technology. With the development of advanced materials, bathtubs and sinks keep getting thinner and lighter. Showerheads deliver more spray with less water. And mirrors and accessories take up less space with more purpose.



## AGAPE - LARIANA WASHBASIN BY PATRICIA URQUIOLA

The vision of world-renowned designer Patricia Urquiola, Lariana pays tribute to Lake Como, which was once called Larius. The range includes two washbasins, oval and round, freestanding over a countertop. Both designs contrast the soft curves of the bowl with the straight lines of the outside structure. The freestanding version sets the basin off center for added interest, making it border on sculpture. Basins and stands are available in Cristalplant® biobased or marble.

+ [rifugiomodern.com](http://rifugiomodern.com)

## FAUCETS & BASINS

### SEMI-RECESSED ALMOND WASHBASIN

The Semi-Recessed Almond Washbasin with Worktop by Porcelanosa combines excellent material with a unique design. The Almond Washbasin offers a pleasing oval shape with walls of slightly different heights, creating the implication of gentle motion. It's got the mystery of a planetary ring—in super durable KRION™, which combines natural minerals and high-resistance resins. Antibacterial, seamless, and super white, KRION™ is also heat and chemical resistant—even spilled nail polish poses no problem.

+ [porcelanosa-usa.com](http://porcelanosa-usa.com)

### BOFFI - KUPA WASHBASIN

A sloping, hidden drain set transversally within the lowered part of the basin itself sets Kupa apart from other sleek sinks. A lozenge shape, rectangular with subtly rounded corners, makes Kupa minimalistic without being strict.

+ [boffi.com](http://boffi.com) (by Solesdi)

### VITRAFORM - COUNTERSINK

Colorado-based company Vitraform crafts sinks out of glass. Countersink, which can be freestanding or mounted on a vanity, revels in its material splendor. Available in 13 glass colors, nine finishes, and three shapes, Vitraform basins offer an alternative to ceramics and composites. The translucent quality and vitreous beauty add glamour to bathrooms.

+ [vitraform.com](http://vitraform.com)+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)

## FAUCETS & BASINS



### HASTINGS - VOLA FAUCET

Created by iconic Scandinavian designer Arne Jacobsen in 1968, VOLA tap retains its signature silhouette yet gets an updated palette in honor of its 50th anniversary. The seven new colors include inky blacks, brilliant golds, and rich coppers. Both AF/21 and VOLA capture the magic of juxtaposition, pairing simple shapes with sumptuous finishes.

+ [hastingstilebath.com](http://hastingstilebath.com)  
+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)



### FANTINI - AF/21 BY NAOTO FUKASAWA

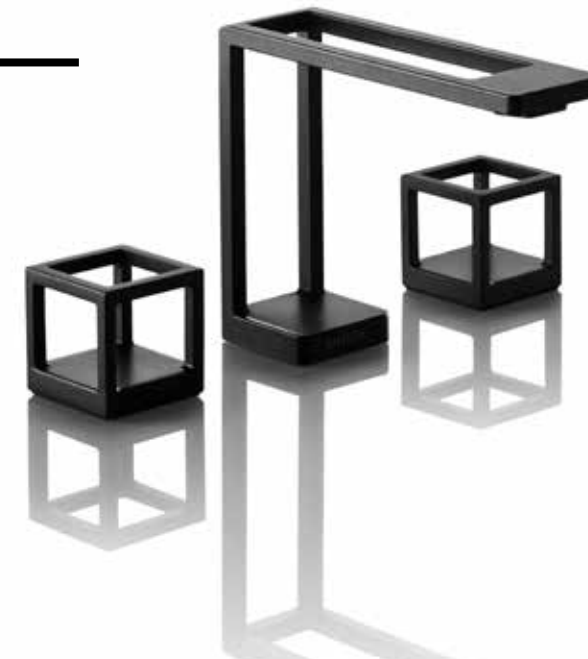
Italian company Fantini aims for “the simplification of forms, thought out in terms of maximum clarity.” Faucets feature sleek shapes including spherical taps inspired by stereo controls. And while the faucets focus on streamlined structure, the materials get glitzy. New chromatic finishes include matte gun metal, matte copper, and British gold.

+ [fantiniusa.com](http://fantiniusa.com)

### DORNBRACHT - VAIA

Transitional, elegant, and sensual, Vaia by Dornbracht brings to life “a new modern-day iconography.” Gentle curves, tapered rosettes, and a delicate spout combine to create a soft silhouette. With cross-handles or levers, Vaia offers a style that works equally well in modern or transitional spaces. Besides platinum matt and polished chrome finishes, the Vaia faucet is now available in dark platinum matt.

+ [ultradesigncenter.com](http://ultradesigncenter.com)



### KALLISTA - GRID FAUCET

Winner of Best in Show at the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show 2018 (KBIS), Grid by Kallista takes advantage of abstraction. The breathing room offered by Grid pays homage to the De Stijl Movement by removing excess decoration and distilling an object into essential forms. Kallista achieved the cube outline of Grid through metal additive manufacturing (3D printing). This technology erased the parameters designers usually have to consider, opening up possibilities—and negative space.

+ [kallista.com](http://kallista.com)  
+ [kohlersignaturestoredenver.com](http://kohlersignaturestoredenver.com)

### COSENTINO - DEKAURI BESPOKE BATH CREDENZA BY DANIEL GERMANI

When architect and designer Daniel Germani thought about the bathroom, it occurred to him that we’ve been remiss. While the kitchen offers “ingenious, innovative design solutions to hide and store everything,” the bathroom “has at its core remained the same.” Another standout at KBIS 2018, the DeKauri Bespoke Bath Credenza takes everything, including the bathroom sink, and houses it in a refined piece of freestanding furniture. Every element honors Mother Nature—from the Dekton® basin by Cosentino to the exclusive Kauri wood by Riva 1920. This collaborative piece no longer relegates bathrooms to walls and corners, making it perfect for open plans.

+ [danielgermanidesigns.com](http://danielgermanidesigns.com)  
+ [cosentino.com](http://cosentino.com)



### VICTORIA + ALBERT - BARCELONA 48

Perfectly pill-shaped, the Barcelona 48 sink by luxury British brand Victoria + Albert is also perfectly compact. At about 18 inches long, Barcelona 48 makes double sinks possible in smaller bathrooms. Its Englishcast® material, a combination of volcanic limestone with resin, is beautiful and warm to the touch. Barcelona comes in seven colors, including dramatic black and sleek gray finishes.

+ [vandabaths.com](http://vandabaths.com)  
+ [ultradesigncenter.com](http://ultradesigncenter.com)

## BATHTUBS



### HASTINGS - OVO BATHTUB

A return to the primordial form everyone loves—the egg—OVO by Hastings celebrates the beautiful, life-giving oval in a durable and lightweight resin-based mineral composite material. This makes OVO thin and soft, so the eye-catching shape is also oh-so-comfortable—for a “true Zen experience.”

+ [hastingstilebath.com](http://hastingstilebath.com)  
+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)



### WETSTYLE - WAVE BATHTUB

Retaining the clean lines that Canadian company Wetstyle is known for, Wave adds an extra dimension of aesthetic interest and bathing comfort with its high back. Available in high gloss or matte finish, Wave is made of WETMAR BiO™, a durable, non-slip, thermo-insulating eco-material.

+ [wetstyle.ca](http://wetstyle.ca)  
+ [ultradesigncenter.com](http://ultradesigncenter.com)



### AGAPE - IMMERSION BY NERI & HU

The popularity of smaller spaces, coinciding with increasing urban living worldwide, makes Immersion a beautiful choice for metropolitan bathrooms. Designed by Neri & Hu for Agape, Immersion is a modern adaptation of Japanese bathing vessels, which offer deeper soaking in a smaller footprint. Bathers sit instead of recline in order to enjoy “full immersion of the entire body for deep relaxation.”

+ [agapedesign.it](http://agapedesign.it)  
+ [rifugiomodern.com](http://rifugiomodern.com)

### STONE FOREST - PAPILLON TUB

Stone Forest is going back to nature, ignoring composite materials in favor of monolithic stone. The undulating lines of Papillon Bathtub (French for butterfly) give it a sense of fluttering motion despite the fact it's carved from one single block of granite, marble, or onyx.

+ [stoneforest.com](http://stoneforest.com)  
+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)



## SHOWERS AND SHOWERBASINS



### BOFFI - PIPE BY MARCEL WANDERS

Not new to bathroom design but fast becoming an icon, Pipe by Marcel Wanders for Boffi unveils what's behind our bathroom walls—and turns it into art. Function gets highlighted in the simple Pipe, adding a touch of fun in the process. With its red valve handle and thick vertical tube, Pipe makes us see what we normally hide, forcing us to admit that beauty lurks everywhere.

+ [boffi.com](http://boffi.com) (by Solesdi)

### SANDER & SONS - ENCOMPASS SHOWER BASE

Exclusive to Sander & Sons, Encompass Shower Bases are so minimalistic they virtually disappear. With its non-porous, stain-resistant material—and no grout lines—Encompass resists bacteria and mold, keeping stains away. The linear drain, curbless entry, and 2 percent single slope make Encompass a smooth gateway to a luxurious shower.

+ [encompassshowerbases.com](http://encompassshowerbases.com)



### NEBIA SPA SHOWER

The Nebia Spa Shower began with a Kickstarter campaign and went through various prototypes before ending up at KBIS 2018, where it made a big splash with its paradoxical ability to deliver a blissful shower experience—using 70 percent less water than a standard showerhead. Nebia's precision-tuned nozzles employ patented H2Micro™ technology to atomize water, creating both spray and steam that increase the total surface area of water by 10 times. A clean design, gliding arm, and removable wand add to its appeal.

+ [nebia.com](http://nebia.com)



### THERMASOL - SERENITY LIGHT, SOUND, RAIN HEAD

Made in the USA, Serenity Light, Sound, Rain Head by Thermasol turns the shower into an all-encompassing sensory experience with chromatherapy and stereo sound. The rain head has two rows of 82 easy-clean jets that produce a falling water sensation. Integrated mood lighting gradually shifts colors to enhance emotion. And a high-performance speaker system plays music via a Bluetooth®-nabled ThermaTouch 7" LCD touchscreen controller.

+ [thermasol.com](http://thermasol.com)  
+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)

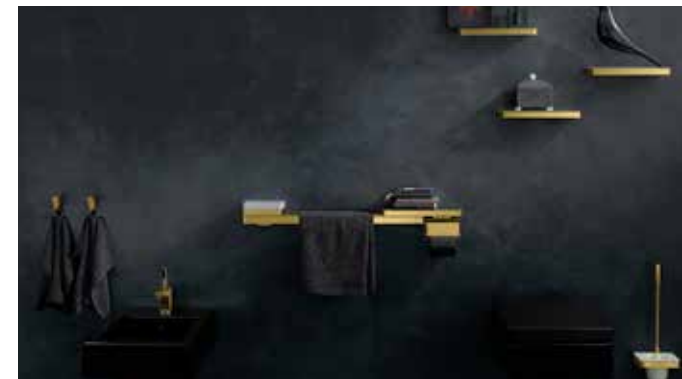
## ACCESSORIES



### AGAPE - DOT LINE

The days of clunky bathroom accessories are officially over. Now condensed to essential shapes, products from towel bars to toilet paper holders do nothing to intrude on the bath's clean aesthetics. Dot Line, designed by García Cumini for Italian manufacturer Agape, is as simple as punctuation, with accessories combining the "continuity of the line" with the "structural interruption" of the dot.

+ [rifugiomodern.com](http://rifugiomodern.com)



### AXOR - UNIVERSAL ACCESSORIES

Linearity defines Axor Universal Accessories, which recently added new finishes like brushed gold to the award-winning collection.

+ [axor-design.com](http://axor-design.com)  
+ [christophersshowroom.com](http://christophersshowroom.com)



### PORCELANOSA - FORMA

The Forma Collection of accessories revels in simple carved shapes, adding glamour with its resplendent finishes. In copper and chrome, rectangular shelves and towel racks hang alongside U-shaped robe hooks and horseshoe-shaped roll holders.

+ [porcelanosa-usa.com](http://porcelanosa-usa.com)

### EASY DRAIN - BOX SYSTEM

The BOX system of containers by Easy Drain makes clean work of bathroom storage. With open wall niches, mirrored wall niches, wall niches with door(s), and tileable wall niches, BOX can be hung or recessed. People who like to display bath items can do so, while those who prefer to have virtually invisible niches can hide everything. Either way, BOX always provides stylish storage.

+ [easydrain.com](http://easydrain.com)  
+ [interarchitectural.com](http://interarchitectural.com)



### SIMAS - FS4 MIRROR

The clever FS4 Mirror by Simas celebrates geometry with its perfect circular shape, but it's the magnetic lamp—also circular—that complicates the design. The LED magnetic lamp can be moved around to light whatever task is at hand, and its simple cord adds a splash of color and fun.

+ [simasusa.com](http://simasusa.com)  
+ [christophersshowroom.com](http://christophersshowroom.com)



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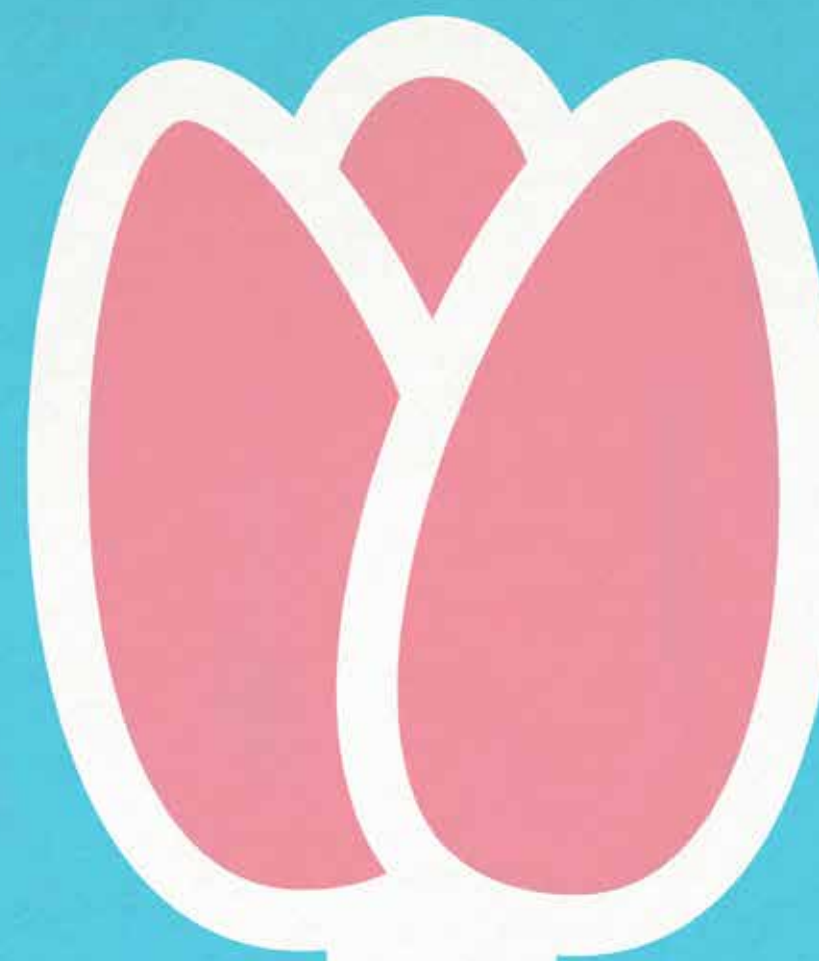
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## ONE LAST THING

A Person, Place or Object we LOVE



# ROLL WITH IT

WORDS: Andrew Weaver

THE DUBLIN-BASED COMPANY IZZY WHEELS ADDS A STYLISH TOUCH TO WHEELCHAIR DESIGN.

Good design solves problems. Great design redefines them. Someone probably said that once, but if not, we're declaring it now, with special reference to an innovative young company that has caught our eye here at *Modern In Denver*. Izzy Wheels, founded in 2015 and based in Dublin, has undertaken the mission of imbuing contemporary wheelchair design with a quality it has (sorely, conspicuously) lacked for decades: style.

The method is simple but effective. Izzy Wheels produces polyurethane discs, decorated with designs from well-known artists, that

attach to the spokes of manual wheelchairs via three Velcro straps. The designs range from floral to funky, elegant to edgy, and each springs to life in its own unique way when the kinetic element of its real-world use—rotation around a wheel axle—comes into play. The result is an instant facelift for any wheelchair, a transformation from sterility to hipness.

It's a fantastic idea in its own right, but the story behind Izzy Wheels makes the company even more enticing. Galway-born sisters Ailbhe and Izzy Keane, the masterminds of the project, have close personal experience to the

"WE WANT TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT WHEELCHAIRS CAN BE SO MUCH MORE THAN MEDICAL DEVICES. THEY CAN BE PIECES OF ARTISTIC SELF-EXPRESSION."

limitations of modern wheelchair design. Izzy, 20, was born with spina bifida, an affliction of the spinal column, that rendered her paralyzed from the waist down as a child. Ailbhe, 25, who grew up witnessing strangers' reactions to her younger sister's condition, was bothered by the barriers of preconception that Izzy's wheelchair imposed upon her. People tended to notice the chair first—Izzy second. So Ailbhe, an entrepreneur who attended Dublin's National College of Art and Design, set out to change that.

"Our mission with Izzy Wheels is to challenge negative associations with wheelchairs," Ailbhe says, emphasizing the company's drive to redefine the "problem" of a wheelchair by transforming an object of medical utility into an instrument of personal expression. "We want to show the world that wheelchairs can be so much more

than medical devices. They can be pieces of artistic self-expression." "Izzy Wheels empowers wheelchair users to make a statement about themselves," says Izzy, who considers her own wheelchair a symbol of freedom. "It makes a person's wheelchair into a friendly object, rather than something purely functional. Having stylish wheels on your chair that match your outfit or show off your interests immediately addresses the chair and opens conversation."

This summer, Instagram featured Izzy Wheels on its company account, earning the Keane sisters tens of thousands of social media followers. Since then, Izzy Wheels

has added magazine features, newspaper articles, and TV appearances to its list of press accolades, culminating in a spot on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list for Izzy and Ailbhe in 2018.

With interest in the company's mission growing every day, the Keane sisters have their sights set firmly on the future. One day, they hope, wheelchairs will be viewed across the culture as a kind of medical accessory, like eyeglasses—an enhancement of personal style—rather than a burden. If the current trajectory of Izzy Wheels' success is any indication, that shift might come sooner than we think. ■





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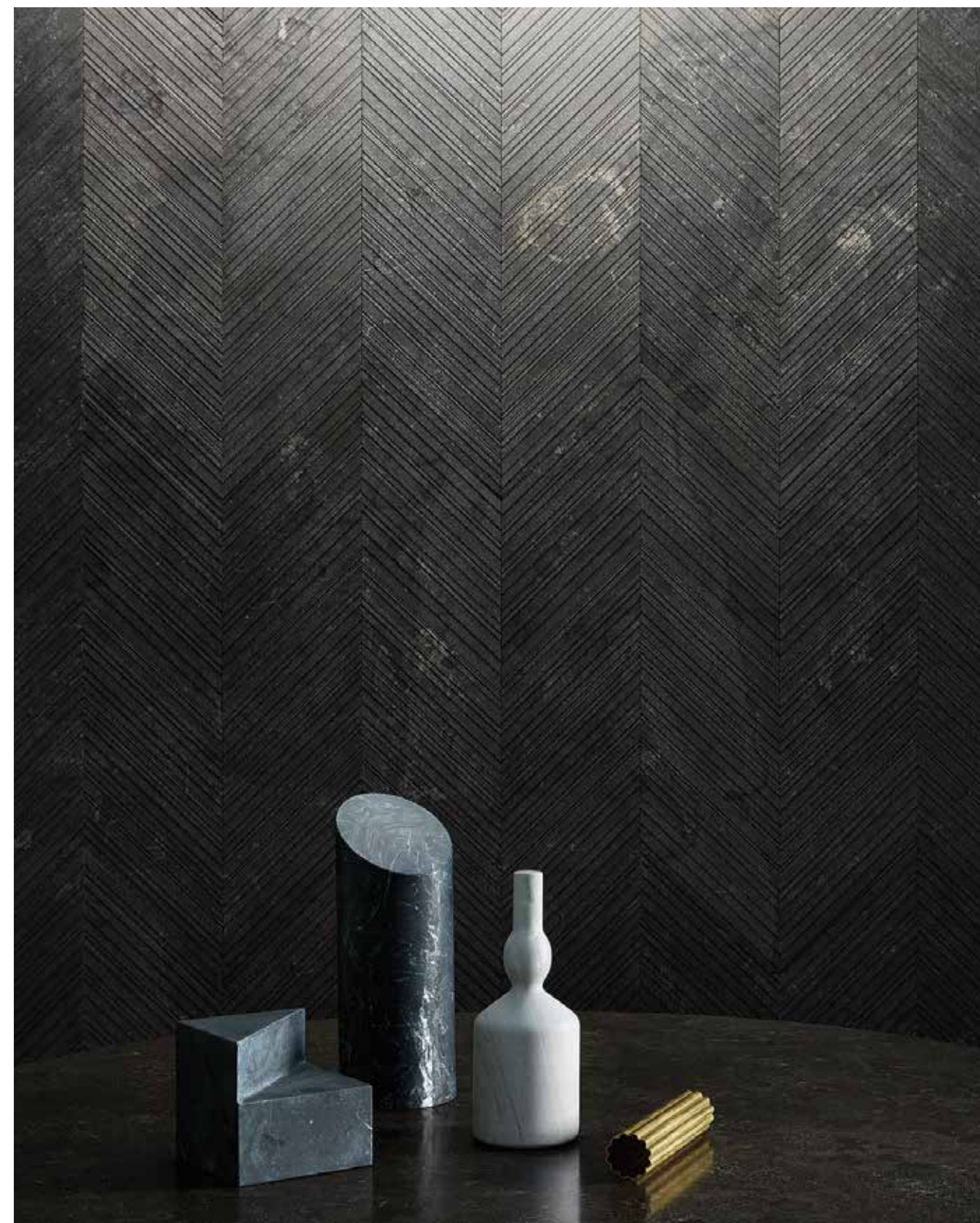


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