

COLORADO'S DESIGN MAGAZINE

MODERN IN DENVER

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SUMMER



TWENTY20

A MUSIC BOX IN ASPEN **DESIGN IN HARMONY**

CCY ARCHITECTS STRIKE THE
RIGHT NOTE WITH A CHOPIN-
INSPIRED GUEST HOUSE P. 106



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COLORADO ARCHITECTS RESPOND TO THE PANDEMIC P. 102

OUR NEW WORLD

RESILIENCE & PASSION GUIDE ITALIAN DESIGN THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS P. 110

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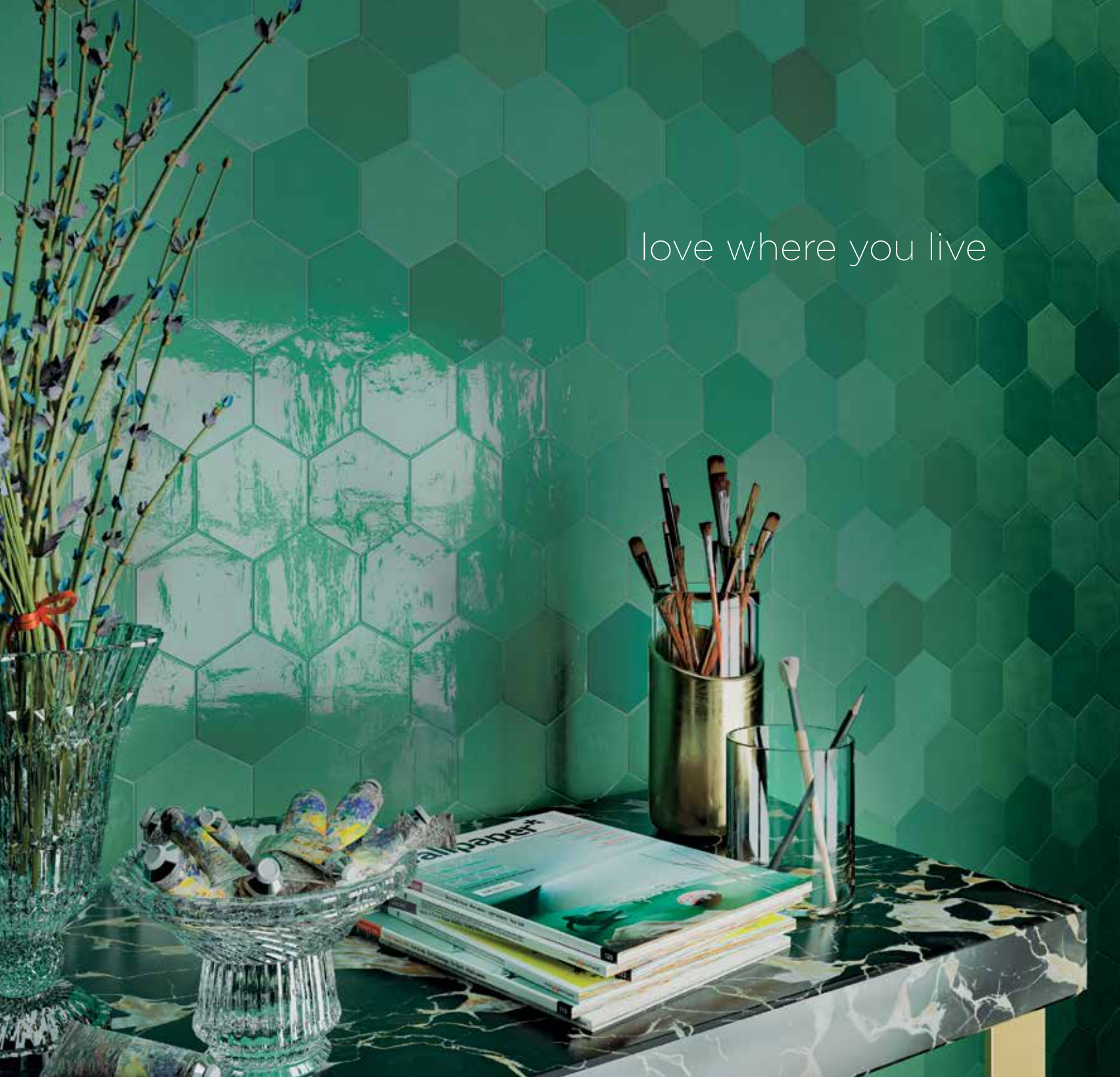
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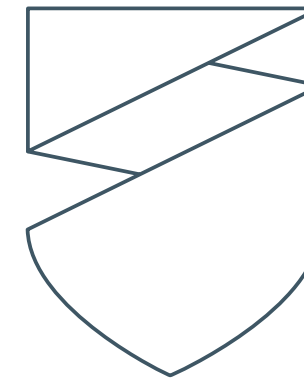
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6'



INSIDENJOY!

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Jazz up your summer with our curated list of tech gadgets, modern accessories, and other well-designed products.

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FRESH SQUEEZED

A new wallpaper collection collaboration by Tempaper and food photographer Brittany Wright adds bold flowers and fruits to your walls.

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THE MUSIC BOX

CCY Architects' renovation of an Aspen Victorian and new guest house helps a Texas couple respect the town's long history while also supporting their deep love of music.

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NON MOLLARE MAI!

With Italy particularly hard hit by the coronavirus, we take a look at how the Italian design industry has persevered through the history of one of its most famous fairs—the Salone del Mobile.



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"I FEEL THAT IF ONE ACCEPTS THINGS WHICH ONE DOES NOT APPROVE OF, IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE END, AND BY AND BY YOU GET MORE THINGS OF A SIMILAR NATURE."

- Alexander Calder

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ONE OF ONE

After waiting more than a decade for the perfect space, Unicom Capital moves into the top floor of 1144 Fifteen Street, replete with an unparalleled multi-use interior by IA Interior Architects.

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RIGHT AND AIRTIGHT

A leaky Congress Park home from 1916 gets the efficiency upgrade of a lifetime from Bonsai Design+Build—take a look at the five main energy-conscious steps.

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ALONE AGAIN, NATURALLY

The rise of the workspace "pod," now used as a means for social distancing and taming the open office floor plan, traces back some 34 years ago to a car-loving inventor, Douglas Ball.

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ALL CHOOK UP!

The second location of Chook, the chicken joint that got its name and inspiration from Down Under, gets a distinctly urban feel from the creative work of Shears Adkins Rockmore Architects.

146

ONE LAST THING

Japanese studio Nendo releases a minimalist purse that arrives as one flat piece of leather, cutting down on shipping costs and amping up the user's DIY spirit.



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Processing. Adapting. Healing. Growing. **Together.**

When we finished the spring issue of our magazine, there were eight confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Colorado. That was March 6. When we went on press four days later, the governor had declared a state of emergency. A few more days later, with the issue in hand, the world was no longer the same.

Processing everything was overwhelming. In what seemed like an instant, people were suffering and dying in huge numbers. Frontline workers were valiantly battling a virus that few had heard of a few months earlier. Our state was in quarantine, and the economy, like a lightbulb, was turned off.

At first, the idea of producing this summer issue seemed strange and out of sync with the reality around us. But, after speaking with our team, our advertisers, and others in our community, it became clear that regardless of the uncertainty, the right thing to do was to move forward. Supporting Colorado's design community has been our mission from the start, and now that was more important than ever.

First, we created a community update board to help our businesses and professionals connect, sharing news on a daily (sometimes hourly) basis. People responded. In just the first few days, the board had more than a thousand visits. Then we began work on this issue; again, people responded. Our writers, photographers, and subjects were enthusiastic and accommodating. Most of our advertisers were optimistic and on board. Despite a couple of canceled photo shoots and a few technical "work-arounds," we were able to put this issue together remotely.

Understandably, the meaning of "home" has been the focus of much discussion during these last few months. Beyond absorbing the functions of the office, the classroom, and the gym, the home as a place of safety and sanctuary has taken on a more tangible significance.

Though the story had been assigned before everything changed in March, a simple and elegant guest house in Aspen designed to be a refuge for the owners to play and listen to music became a natural and easy choice for our cover this summer. CCY Architects creatively translated the notes from a Chopin nocturne into a beautiful pattern for a privacy scrim that glows at night, warmly animating two of the home's exterior walls. It's a calming and comforting space so right for these difficult times. That story is on page 106.

Though we had a full slate of stories planned before the pandemic, we felt it was important to address COVID-19's current and possibly future effects on our industry. Writer Beth Mosenthal reached out to a number of regional architects to get their thoughts on the short- and long-term impacts of the coronavirus on our community. Her story, "The Future Is Now," starts on page 102.

The Salone Del Mobile in Milan, Italy, is the world's largest design fair, the place where the best new kitchen, lighting, and furniture design is introduced each year. We were devastated when the Lombardy region, which includes Milan, became an early coronavirus hotspot. The Italian design industry was shut down and the 2020 Salone was canceled for the first time in 60 years. Writer Katie Grogan took a look at the history of the Salone and how the leaders of the Italian design industry came together to find a path through the pandemic. Her story starts on page 110.

This crisis has been a struggle for all of us, and we are not yet on the other side of it. While there will be numerous challenges in the coming months, I am optimistic about the future and grateful to all of the courageous people here in Colorado and around the world who are working so hard to defeat this virus and create a new and better world for everyone.

Please stay well and enjoy our summer issue.

William Logan
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THE SUMMER COVER

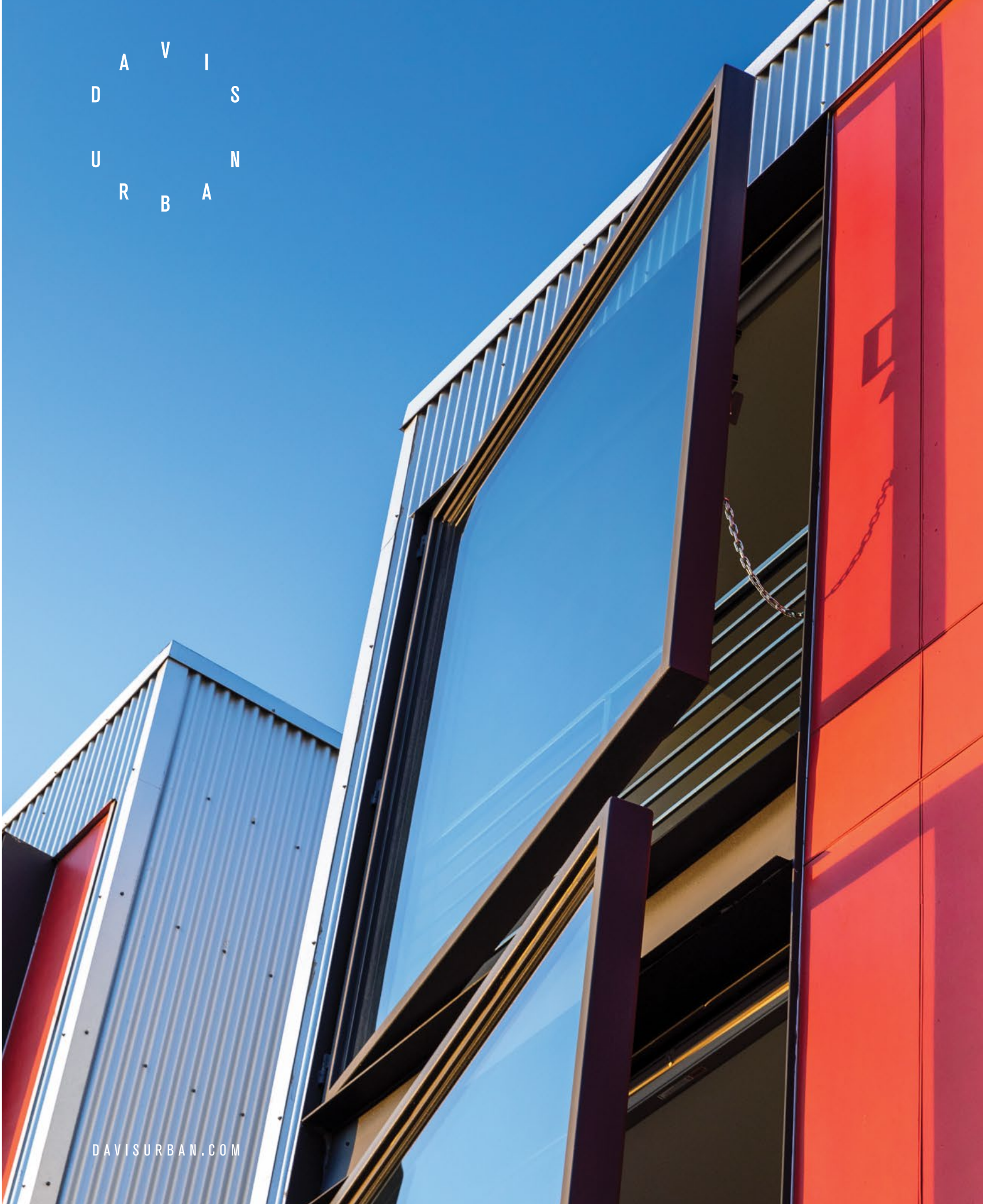


Following the scale, texture and proportions of a century old Victorian main house, CCY Architects designed a modern guest house that includes a privacy scrim that translates the notes from a Chopin Nocturne into a visually beautiful wall of light. For our cover, this Aspen residence was shot by photographer Draper White at dusk to show how light from inside the house illuminates the music inspired scrim. This story starts on page 106.



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Thank you to Modern In Denver and the Rocky Mountain design community for your continued support through this challenging time. We appreciate it sincerely and look forward to seeing you all soon.

- The Studio Como Team



You can fool some people sometimes
But you can't fool all the people all the time
So now we see the light (What you gonna do?) – The Wailers

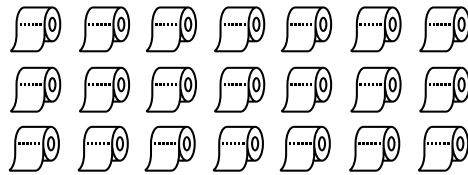


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YES, DO REACH OUT. *Now is a really good time.*



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 11 Pro, a Paper Mate flexgrip pen, and a much-needed sense of humor.

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SPEAKER SMARTS

Bang & Olufsen's latest smart speaker is more than a pretty picture. Shaped like a cloche, the wireless Beosound Balance offers room-filling sound by adapting to its position in any space. Place it next to a wall and it will reflect the sound beams back into the main room. Built-in proximity sensors will trigger the control panel to light up so a user can see how to easily adjust tracks or volume. The Balance, which is also available with Google Assistant built in, was a collaboration between the Danish speaker firm and Benjamin Hubert of Layer Design in London.

+bang-olufsen.com

ROUND OF PRODUCE

The Rotofarm indoor garden is not only eye catching, it can produce three-times more veggies than a flatbed occupying the same footprint since Rotofarm takes advantage of rarely used space: Above. The O-shaped gardening bed also is in constant rotation of one revolution per hour, and that means the soil-free plants grab water and nutrients stored in the base every hour, and benefit from zero-gravity growth when upside down. According to the company, zero-gravity speeds up plant growth. Crowdfunded in the spring, Rotofarm is expected to start shipping later this year.

+bace.co/rotofarm



LIGHTEN UP

Terracotta isn't just for floor tiles and pottery. But lighting? That made sense to Jeff Nordhues, an Art Institute of Colorado graduate and cofounder of Pax Lighting in Nebraska. There's a beauty to the earthenware when amplified by light. He designed the Emmet Sconce to celebrate the "hidden connections between materials while showcasing the beauty of glazed terracotta." The Emmet Sconce comes in two sizes and is available in seven terracotta finish options.

+paxlighting.com/product/emmet-sconce-large





IF YOU BUILD IT...

No tools are necessary to build your own Guggenheim Museum, the iconic New York art museum designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in the '50s. You don't even need to be a puzzle genius to figure out this much more manageable kit that is 1/500th the size of the original. There are only 60 pieces—including the rotunda. Made from Aspen, American Cherry and MDF wood, the architectural model from the Little Building Co. should keep folks stuck at home entertained for a good half hour or two.

+littlebuildingco.com



TONE IT DOWN

The superpower of these colorful planters isn't housing those leafy cohabitants that bring oxygen and numerous health benefits to your home or office—although it does that too. No, the beauty of the Buzziplanter is its interior layer of sound-absorbing foam, naturally reducing noise and reverberation. The newest acoustic solution from Belgium company Buzzispace, Buzziplanter comes in an array of colors and sizes that add a dash of fun to your decor while inconspicuously creating a whole lot of calm.

+pearwork.com



architectural desires _ 02

PLEASURE

Arch
11

WALL TRAVEL

Adored by fans, the Wooden World Map goes 3D as creators Enjoy The Wood introduce a new wall map made completely of... wood. Wooden World Map 2.0 is like a giant jigsaw puzzle of the world, with pieces in three depths and four shades of brown. Each piece is also numbered to make it easier to attach to the wall and be geographically accurate. Bonus options include LED lights and wooden push pins of iconic sites like the Eiffel Tower.

+enjoythewood.com



ROPED IN

Stretched taut and slid onto a shapely modern wood frame, the colorful fibers in the Padang series of seating by Tidelli designer Luciano Mandelli make the outdoor pieces work just as well indoors. But a closer look reveals why they will keep their strength in sun-soaked environs. They're made of synthetic nautical rope for added durability in the weather.

+hoffmiller.com



FLOWER



FRESH BREATH

Squeezing those last bits of paste from a toothpaste tube may feel satisfyingly efficient. But then you toss the tube into the trash where it's destined to lay waste in a landfill for years. Change Toothpaste addresses both waste issues with "zero-waste toothpaste." Change turned paste into fluoride-free tablets that froth up after some chewing and do their job cleaning with the help of a wet toothbrush.



+changetoothpaste.com

HEAVYWEIGHT

The Jumbo Table by Italian designer Gae Aulenti is making a comeback, thanks to Knoll's reissue of the iconic piece. The 440-pound marble coffee table is certainly worth its weight in modern living-room history. The hefty piece, introduced by Knoll in 1965, is known for its "cluster" legs that look like Roman pillars. It embodied modern Italian opulence. Jumbo Table is available in three marble finishes.



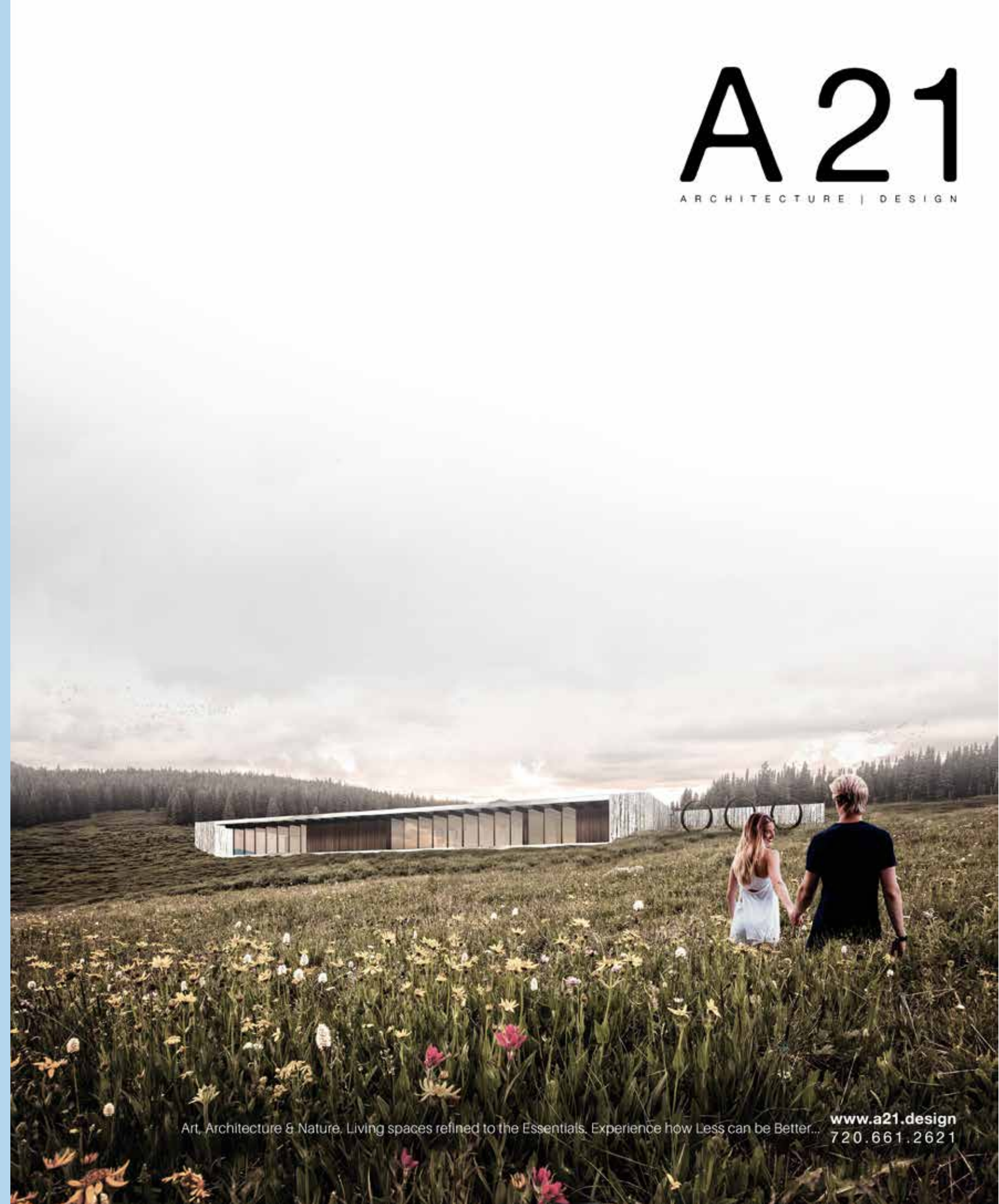
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One thing the coronavirus pandemic made us realize is how many germ surfaces our hands touch in a day. Enter the Clean-Key, a small brass touch tool designed to spare your hands from potentially contaminated door handles, keypads, and elevator buttons. Easily attachable to your keychain or its accompanying retractable carabiner, this little tool could make a big difference in getting you through viral outbreak and beyond.

+getkeysmart.com



WALLPAPER

FRESH SQUEEZED

Tempaper's new Wright Kitchen wallpaper collection makes walls explode with colorful, super-graphic fruits and flowers.

WORDS: Alison Gwinn

Elevating humble veggies and fruits to high art: That's the goal of San Diego food photographer Brittany Wright, who recently teamed with Tempaper for a bold new wallpaper collection.

"I like to joke that I'm trying to rebrand fruits and vegetables to make them cool," says Wright. "My truest, deepest passion is to focus on what the Earth naturally creates and to showcase those colors."

Tempaper selected Wright, who has worked with such companies as American Express, Vans, and Samsung, for what it's calling the Wright Kitchen Collection. It currently includes four patterns: clustered rows of tightly packed red, pink, and white dahlias; dancing orange papayas on a turquoise backdrop; green kiwis backed by shocking pink; and a gradient range of citrus



fruits, including lemons, oranges, and grapefruits. (The Wright line will eventually include a few more patterns, all based on the photographer's existing pieces of art; see them at wrightkitchen.com.)

Wright, who says her constant theme is "color," has photographed everything from carrots (yellow to orange to purple) to tomatoes (pale green to yellow to red to purplish) to richly hued spices. "I like to see people's minds being blown by the many varieties of citrus or carrots or potatoes," she says. "And I like making patterns that are aesthetically appealing."

She chose the four images in the Tempaper line for their ability to look good in a repeat pattern. "I had never done wallpaper before, so I wanted to see what would flow well and would repeat smoothly, but I also picked images I thought people would enjoy the most."

The peel-and-stick, removable wallpaper requires no pastes to apply and has a vinyl coating that makes it moisture- and steam-resistant. The fruits are sold in two-foot-by-four-foot and two-foot-by-eight-foot panels (\$45 and \$85 respectively); the dahlias are \$15 per square foot.

Though the papers are dubbed a kitchen collection, they can work equally well in bedrooms and dining rooms, either for an accent wall or—if you're very brave—a full four walls. "I'm really focused on getting food out of the kitchen," says Wright, "so the idea of getting fruits and vegetables into a room that really brightens the day—a bathroom, a yoga studio, a nutritionist's office—is a win for me. I've had people buy one of my prints and build an entire bathroom around it, which is the ultimate compliment." ■



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Straight out of Boulder comes the sleek, new Spark Grill, whose custom briq charcoal system makes it hotter, easier to control, and a snap to clean.

MEET THE NEW GRILL

(NOT LIKE YOUR OLD GRILL)

WORDS: Emily O'Brien



Ever since early man discovered fire, we humans have loved our food cooked over a flame outdoors. It's pretty hard to improve on the experience—but the new Boulder-based Spark Grills may have just found a way.

CEO and company founder Ben West fell in love with cooking with wood and charcoal while camping in the backcountry of Kenya, so West decided to try to replicate that experience in the States, where 70 percent of home grills use propane.

The result is the Spark Grill, a stylish, enamel cast-iron grill that uses charcoal briqs (unique to the company) to provide the, well, spark for your hamburgers (the grill can accommodate about 12 at once). Turn the ceramic electric igniter and the grill fires up way faster than traditional charcoal. "Anyone who's futzed around with traditional charcoal knows it isn't easy—or precise," West says, "so we set out to redesign the entire experience. Our blend of natural wood and charcoal creates the perfect smoky flavor."



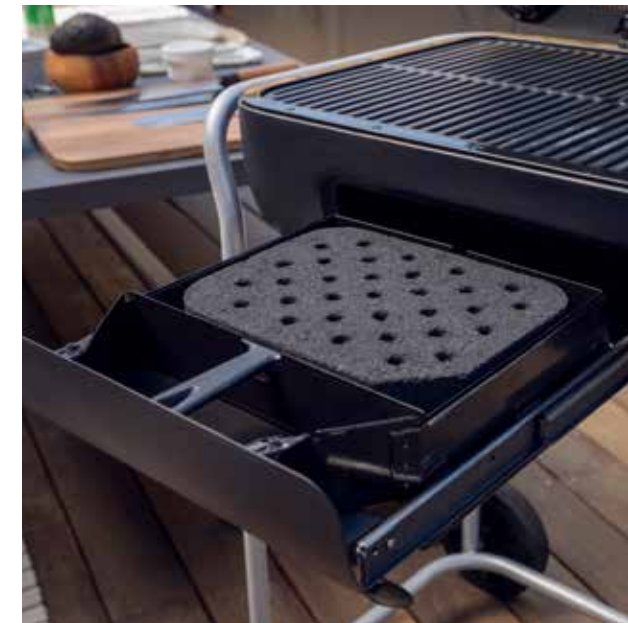
With the turn of the electric igniter, the grill fires up in an instant. Oxygen channels inside the briq allow for exact temperature control, just like an oven.



The compact briqs, engineered by food and biomass scientists out of charcoal mixed with hardwood, hickory, or applewood, contain oxygen channels that allow for precise air flow and temperature control, from 200 to 900 degrees Fahrenheit. What you get is more control, less mess, and built-in flavor (West hints that more wood options are in the works).

Even better, there is a nifty Spark app (a "digital sous chef," Spark says) to help make perfect cooking easier. The grill, the charcoal briq, and the app all work together as one system. The app pings you when the grill is up to temp and provides alerts via Bluetooth technology when your food is perfectly cooked. With the push of a button, it even allows you to reorder briqs delivered directly to your door.

"Our goal was to create a sincere and honest cooking experience that deepens a user's relationship with food," West says. "We worked to be ultra thoughtful about everything, with the end goal of providing the best tool we can for users to create the best possible food." ■



Wondering if the grill is fired up enough yet to toss one on? You can check your smartphone app while you're kicking back with a cold beer in your yard.



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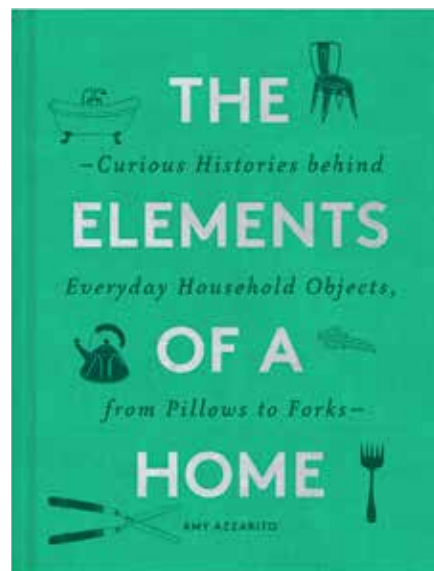
The Elements of a Home

Curious Histories behind Everyday Household Objects, from Pillows to Forks

Amy Azzarito

Illustrations: Alice Patullo

Chronicle Books



WORDS: Natalie Warady

If it weren't for French Royalty and its desire to keep orange trees alive in the dead of winter, we might not have the expansive floor-to-ceiling windows that are standard features of modern façades today. It turns out that, when it comes to this feature of modern buildings, we may owe a larger debt of gratitude to agriculture than to Mies van der Rohe.

That's one of the intriguing theses of Amy Azzarito's recent book, *Elements of a Home: Curious Histories behind Everyday Household Objects, from Pillows to Forks*. In this breezy tome, filled with fun facts and trivia for designer lovers, Azzarito drills down for the story behind more than 60 items in the home.

The book couldn't have come at a better time for design fans, who may still be housebound because of the corona virus pandemic. We've had plenty of time to stare at the walls, not to mention furnishings, and ponder the provenance of our favorite items, from bookshelves to showers to, well, windows.

Before the invention of glass-blowing, Azzarito writes, windows were mere slits in roofs that may or may not have been covered with fabric or thick glass. Progress was sluggish for thousands of years, with some headway made with the development of small stained-glass windows, she writes. It wasn't until Louis XVI's grandmother, Marie de Medici, queen of France at the time, decided that she wanted her orange trees to survive through winter and thus created the first orangeries, that larger panes of glass emerged. Her grandson followed in her royal heels, pushing for even larger greenhouses at Versailles, resulting in the first plate-glass windows. "To create the windows, molten glass was poured onto a flat, highly polished iron table, edged with bars," Azzarito writes. Those same iron windows, according to a quick glance at social media, show no signs of diminished popularity some 400 years later.

Azzarito said she first became intrigued with the story behind each design object while completing her master's in decorative design at Parsons Cooper Hewitt in 2009. At the time, Azzarito also worked as the managing editor at Design Sponge and began filing blog posts on the historic development of pieces of décor, starting with the chandelier. "Each post would take me 35 to 40 hours to do. I would not recommend," Azzarito says. "They were not sustainable."



The x-base of the popular Barcelona chair owes its heritage to thousands of years of design long reserved for nobility, military and kings.

"I was doing my own reading and research and I would stumble upon some weird fact, like Mary Antoinette basically using something that was like a bath bomb. I loved that," Azzarito says. "I would keep big Google sheets of information according to category."

Azzarito details the back and forth of mankind's preference for tubs versus showers, from the Greeks' insistence on bracing-cold showers to the Romans' luxe soaks in hot baths. Azzarito cites British historian Edward Gibbon's view that hot baths led to the demise of civilization, as written in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

For those still debating whether a shower is better than a tub, consider this literal proof of the age-old saying that we do our best thinking in the shower. A NASA scientist solved the broken Hubble Telescope while showering one day, Azzarito writes. He took note that the same system of sliding rods to move the shower head might also work in space. And it did.

"I WAS DOING MY OWN READING AND RESEARCH AND I WOULD STUMBLE UPON SOME WEIRD FACT, LIKE MARY ANTOINETTE BASICALLY USING SOMETHING THAT WAS LIKE A BATH BOMB. I LOVED THAT" - Amy Azzarito

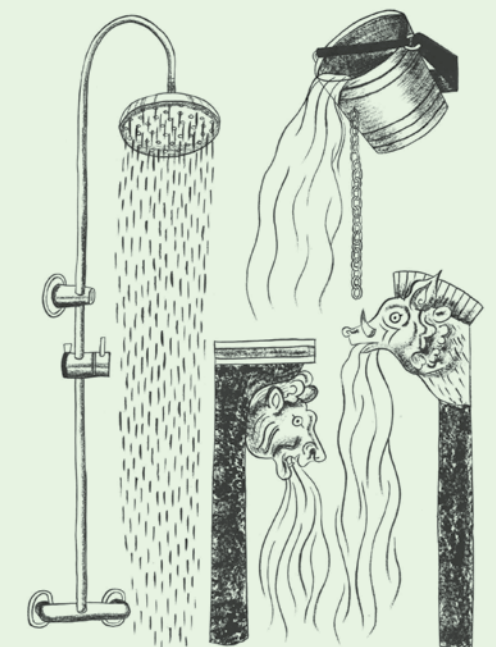
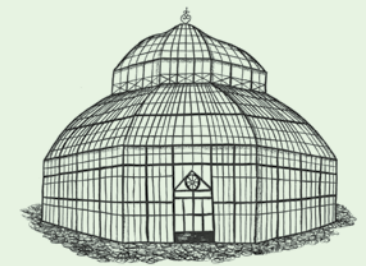
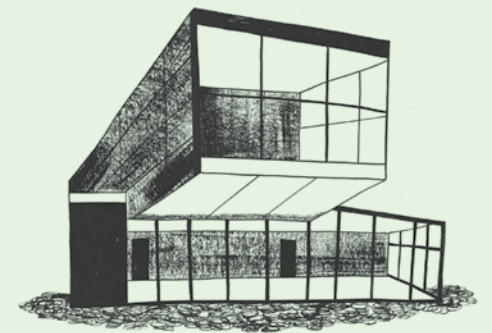
Azzarito cites another discovery that caught her by surprise. "The standing desk is this thing we think is super modern. Well, Thomas Jefferson designed his own standing desk!" exclaims Azzarito.

Azzarito says modern design fans also might be surprised to learn that Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona chair has links to long-ago eras. "I don't know that modern aficionados would necessarily look at the Barcelona chair and know this chair has a lineage back to Julius Caesar," says Azzarito.

She traces its form to curule chairs, which started as folding seats used by generals to oversee battles. The seat was adapted through generations of empires—from the Romans, whose version served Caesar in the 6th century BC, to the British, who added upholstered comfort for Charles II of England.

"The illustration in the book shows the x-shape at the bottom, which was very classic," Azzarito says, and it made its way to Van der Rohe's famous chair design for the International Exposition of 1929.

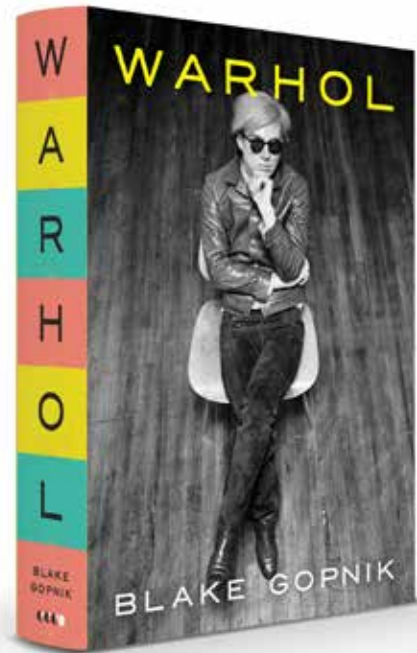
Either way, she says, for those doling out more than \$5,000 for their own classic perch: "You can sit a little easier knowing you have a chair fit for a king." ■



A bracing cold shower was long thought to be linked to strong moral character. Nevertheless, the first indoor shower in 1829 at the Hotel Tremont in Boston quickly inspired guests to install one at home.

Warhol

Blake Gopnik
Ecco



WORDS: Alison Gwinn

HE was a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma. We're talking about Andy Warhol. Thirty-three years after his death, the art world is still trying to figure him out. Was he a painfully shy misfit or a savvy social climber and publicity hound? A shallow parodist or a fastidious workaholic? A joke or a genius?

At 976 pages, the exhaustive *Warhol: A Life as Art*, by esteemed art historian Blake Gopnik, attempts to answer those questions and more.

Gopnik is clearly a fan: He claims that Warhol “has overtaken Picasso as the most important and influential artist of the 20th century,” even ranking with the likes of Michelangelo and Rembrandt. Heady stuff. And it was all based on hundreds of interviews with Warhol’s surviving friends (and enemies) as well as years of researching 100,000 documents—diaries, business letters, tax returns, and boxes of ephemera like tickets to “Cats”—including those housed in the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, the artist’s hometown (Warhol evidently was a champion hoarder).

Among other things, Gopnik attempts to disabuse Warhol fans of certain myths: Far from being devoutly religious, Warhol hated Mass and avoided confession (too many sins for priests to gossip about), but liked the pomp and props of religion, even splashing holy water around his home “as a kind of heavenly disinfectant.” And those iconic Campbell’s soup cans? No, he didn’t fall in love with them as a child (the Warhola family was too poor to afford canned soup) but first noticed the beautiful red-and-cream label with the cursive font as an adult. But most important, this definitive biography lays bare the contradictions about this most contrary artist and paints an excruciatingly detailed portrait of a man who in his lifetime was able to successfully obfuscate his own story. ■



TOP: Marilyn, silkscreen, 1962, ABOVE: Andy Warhol in front of Brillo Box (Soap Pads), 1964

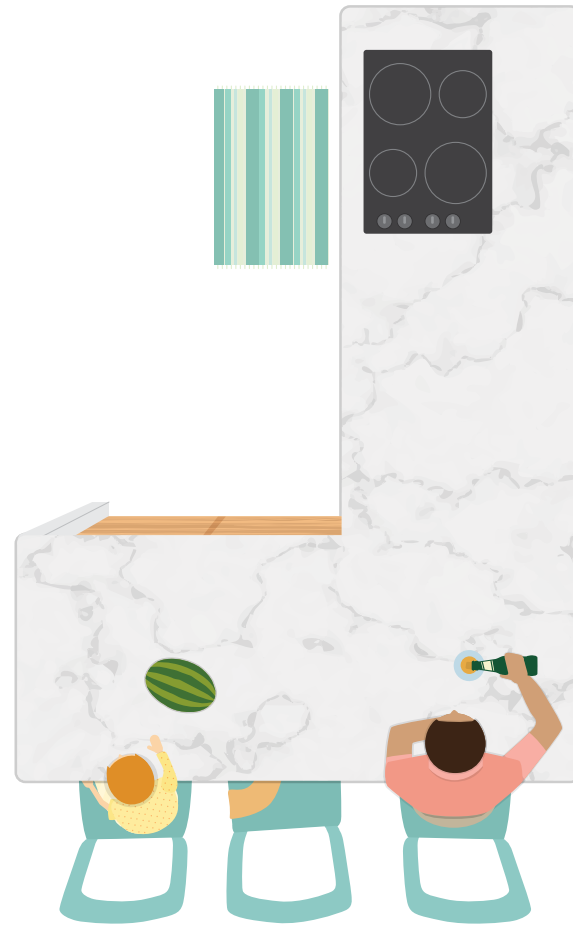
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FOR THE AGES

A striking new installation pays homage to Colorado's landscape using vivid, tiled animal heads made to last for centuries.

AT the edge of Barnum Park, a 42-foot-tall totem pole of seven vibrant animal heads gleams in the sunlight and towers over the surrounding landscape. Named "La Veleta" ("The Weathervane" in English), this art installation was dreamed up by artist Jaime Molina through Denver's "Arts and Venues" program.

Intricately designed with hand-cut tile depicting Colorado native animals, La Veleta asks, "How's the wind blowing?" That is, how is it blowing politically and environmentally in Colorado? How are we connecting with the native animals that inhabit the plains, the Platte River, and the foothills?

WORDS: Sara Webster
IMAGES: Jess Blackwell



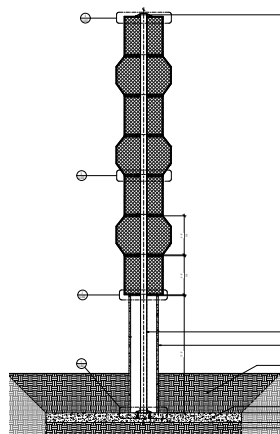
FOR THE AGES

To execute the piece, Molina approached Michael Moore at Tres Birds Workshop. “I immediately thought of them because they do such striking, innovative, unique projects,” said Molina. Although Tres Birds had commissioned Molina for past projects, this was their first collaboration.

Moore was immediately intrigued by both the beauty of the piece and the notion that it could last for centuries. “I believed in the vision,” he said, “and I believed that this piece could be positive for our city. I knew it would take invention to pull it off within budget.”

First, Molina designed the animal heads: a buffalo, bear, mountain lion, fox, ram, owl, and snake. Next, mockups of the heads were built at one-quarter scale and constructed out of the same tiles and materials they would use for the actual totem pole. The first completed mockup was placed on the Tres Birds roof for 16 months to test its durability in four seasons of elements. Creating mockups also allowed the team to develop and test the coloration and patterning of each animal.

Meanwhile, Moore devised a structural system to support the massive installation. Each animal head weighs 777 pounds; so the



Drawing of the Totem Pole showing the 10" diameter pipe running through the middle of the sculpture.



Though the totem pole took years to design, the actual assembly (above) took just one day. Each of the heads (top right) is individually tiled to resemble an animal; a smaller mockup of the totem pole (right) was constructed to test out the overall look as well as its ability to withstand the elements.



challenge was to make sure the delicate tile work could withstand the weight of seven heads, totaling over 5,000 pounds.

The solution: stacking segmented steel pipe so the heads rest on each segment and the pipe supports the weight. The heads are constructed in layers, like eggs. On the outside, the delicate “shell” is Molina’s hand-cut colorfast tiles, which sit on a layer of epoxy-based cementitious grout embedded with stainless steel mesh wire. This weatherproof material, often used in swimming pools, can withstand elements in all four seasons. The white matter of the “egg” is a high-density foam, and the sturdy yolk is the thick steel pipe.

The concept was simple, but the execution was tricky. With the pipe measuring 10 inches in diameter, they had to figure out how to funnel it through the four-foot-cubed heads. To create a hole, they nudged a pointed stick through the foam, then widened the hole using eighth-inch thick aircraft cabling. Finally, they pulsed electricity through an electrical cable that rotated inside the foam until it could accommodate the pipe.

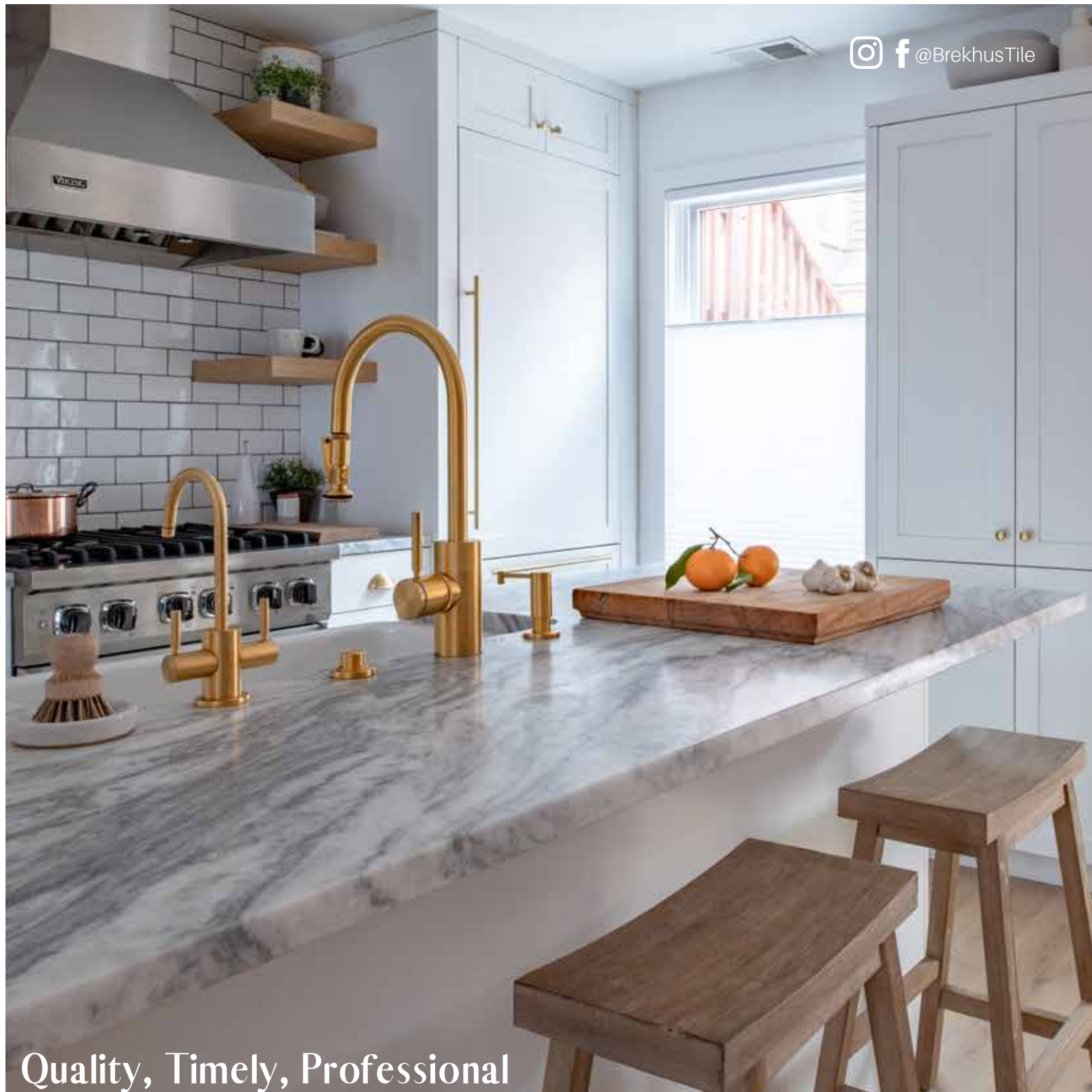
Once the heads were built, Molina did the tile work at the Tres Birds studio space. “I loved his presence,” Moore says. “It’s nice in an architectural studio to see the creative process as these spirit animals started to emerge over the months.”

It only took one day to assemble the totem pole. Integrated into each head is a pick point that could be hooked by a crane for easy transport. On-site, they created a below-grade foundation of rebar that is 18 feet square. The pipe extends down past Denver’s frost line to four feet below grade and fits into the foundation. An eight-foot-tall exposed plinth base was poured around the pipe to provide long-term stability before the heads were affixed using the crane.

Now, the totem pole stands proud, asking us to check ourselves, to check the wind. ■



“I BELIEVED IN THE VISION. I BELIEVED THAT THIS PIECE COULD BE POSITIVE FOR OUR CITY AND I KNEW IT WOULD TAKE INVENTION TO PULL IT OFF WITHIN BUDGET.” - Mike Moore, Tres Birds



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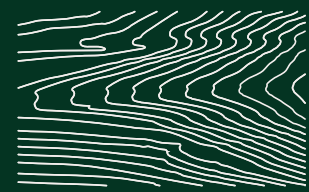
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A THEORY OF EVOLUTION

HMH Architecture + Interiors bridged the past with the present in this ‘new century modern’ house in Boulder.

WORDS: Emily O’Brien | IMAGES: David Lauer

THE FEATURES THAT MADE MID-CENTURY MODERN DESIGN SO PERFECT IN ITS HEYDAY—SIMPLICITY, NATURAL MATERIALS, OPEN INTERIOR FLOOR PLANS, AND FUNCTIONALITY—STILL RESONATE TODAY. BUT EVEN PERFECTION CAN BE IMPROVED ON, AND THAT’S WHAT HMH ARCHITECTURE + INTERIORS SET OUT TO DO WITH THIS BOULDER HOME.

The firm has even given the design a new name: new century modern. “It bridges past and present, with simple volumes and a restrained palette of stone, stucco, and wood,” says Cherie Goff, principal at HMH, who was the project architect on the home, working alongside interior designer Leah Civiok. “At the street, with its flat roofs, clerestory windows, and asymmetrical front façade, the home takes its cues from the mid-century modern houses in the neighborhood.”

Of course, mid-century homes were smaller than homes designed today. But in both cases, the emphasis is on a floor plan that works with the way people live. Rather than tucking away a small kitchen, for example, the new century modern style uses it as the home’s anchor, sandwiched between the living and dining room.

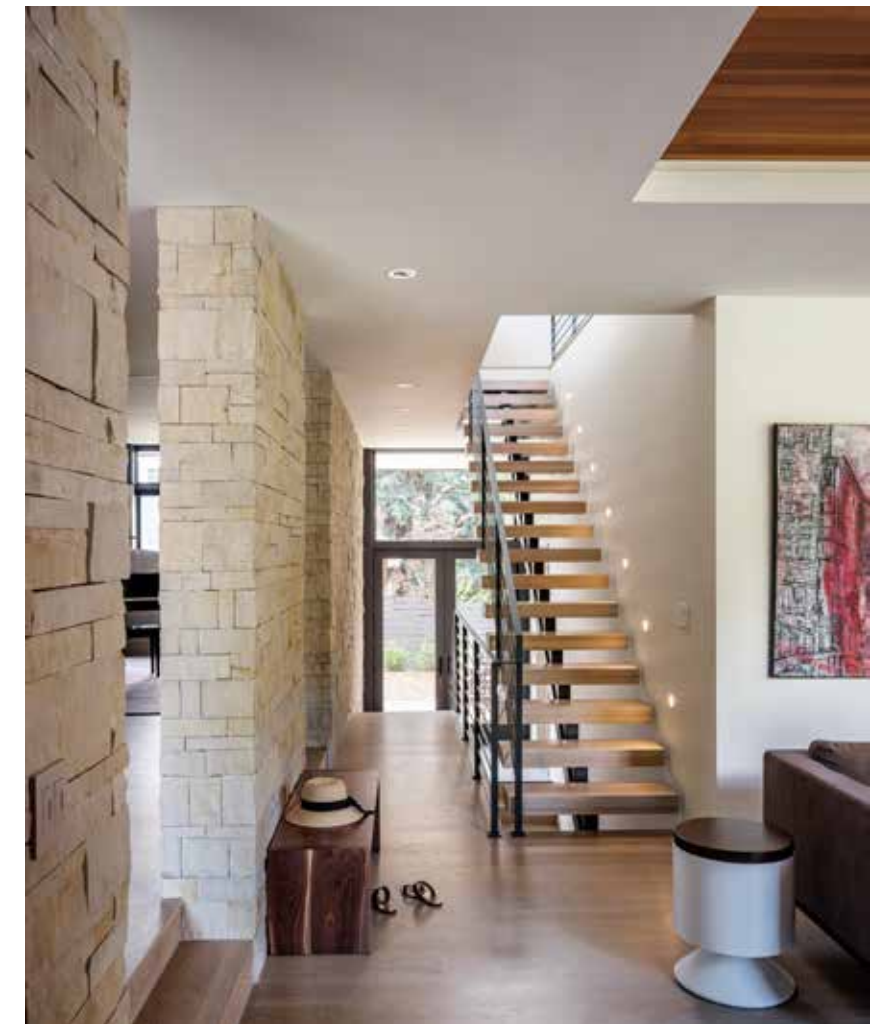
Though the house is decidedly 21st-century (for example, it’s quite efficient, with good insulation, fewer thermal breaks at the exterior walls, and PV panels), it follows a number of time-honored principles of modern architecture: an emphasis on rectilinear forms with well-defined planes and clean lines; low, horizontal roof lines; floor-to-ceiling windows that connect to nature and let in natural light; open floor plans in the kitchen, dining room, and living room; and minimal trim and ornamentation.

But this new style also takes advantage of different floor heights and ceiling planes. “Some areas—like the music room—have lower ceilings and clerestory windows, to create a cozy inward space,” says Goff.



“NEW CENTURY MODERN BRIDGES PAST AND PRESENT WITH SIMPLE VOLUMES AND A RESTRAINED PALETTE OF STONE, STUCCO AND WOOD. AT THE STREET, WITH ITS FLAT ROOFS, CLERESTORY WINDOWS, AND ASYMMETRICAL FRONT FAÇADE, THE HOME TAKES CUES FROM THE MID-CENTURY MODERN HOUSES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE BRIDGE TO ME IS A FLOOR PLAN THAT WORKS FOR TODAY’S LIFESTYLE COMBINED WITH AN AESTHETIC THAT HMH CALLS ‘WARM COLORADO MODERN.’ - Cherie Goff

ABOVE: A combination of natural elements—wood, stone, and glass—make the home inviting and welcoming. Locating the TV with the fireplace is always a challenge. In this house it was solved by placing the TV in a built in cabinet beside the fireplace hidden behind pivot pocketing doors. **OPPOSITE:** Colorado buff sandstone carried from the outside in creates an indoor/outdoor feel. The floors are stained white oak from Rock Solid Hardwoods.



A THEORY OF EVOLUTION

“Other areas—like the open-plan living/dining/kitchen—have floor-to-ceiling windows and higher ceilings, making them spacious and outward-looking.” And to honor the family’s modern “work-at-home/play-at-home” needs, HMH created two small office spaces designed around need (not just extra bedrooms that double as offices), as well as a stretching area and a music room.

Proportions are extremely important in modern design, Goff says. “People tend to want higher ceilings than were built in the past, and this creates an extra challenge with modern design” because if something is oversized, it’s harder to make it look good. Goff says her approach is “to create warm, modern ‘right-sized’ homes by using the fundamental principles of modern design and rethinking how clean, functional spaces can improve life—allowing us to recharge and reconnect to family, community and nature.”

On the exterior, Goff wanted to avoid a massive, box-like feeling that would overwhelm the neighboring homes. “I did this by bringing in depth and dimension to the façade with large overhangs and a deep covered porch,” she says. “The façade is composed of the tall vertical fireplace balanced with the horizontality of the balcony wall and roof overhang.”



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Flooring and ceiling materials extend from the outside in, allowing for a stronger connection to the outdoors. The island countertop is Taj Mahal, a leathered natural stone from The Stone Collection.

The second-floor balcony is wrapped with cedar, creating a picture-perfect frame of which to view the Flatirons through.

To extend the uncomplicated living space, a sliding wall opens up to a semi-private front courtyard.

Black granite natural stone slabs make up the kitchen backsplash behind the range. White oak cabinets, created by Aspen Leaf, are warmed with a charcoal gray stain.



As with mid-century modern, the new century modern design plays with natural materials—think wood siding and sandstone contrasted by bright clean walls and ceilings. “The combination of the two creates a comfortable balance of brightness and warmth,” says Goff. “Materials extend from the outside in, creating a stronger connection to the outdoors.”

As a geologist, the homeowner was intimately involved in selecting the stone walls and natural stone countertops. “There’s something truly fundamental about natural

stone,” the owner says. “It has a history—each piece is unique. We both love nature and the outdoors so much, it seemed fitting that we should surround our home with natural stone.”

The homeowners also wanted indoor/outdoor dining that took advantage of the fantastic Flatirons views, so HMM designed two outdoor living areas, one off the living/dining/kitchen and a second one directly above, with the upstairs deck doubling as the ceiling to the downstairs porch. “The covered patio extends from



Large floor-to-ceiling windows help create a bedroom that feels more like a covered outdoor patio than an enclosed space. Optimized for sleeping, the room is not oversized, creating a cozy and comfortable room free of other distractions.

A Caesarstone quartz countertop in Misty Carrera, combined with custom espresso-stained cabinetry and large-format porcelain tiles, create a sense of luxury in the bathroom.



the kitchen and visually blurs the lines from outside to inside,” says Goff. “And because it is cradled into the house and has recessed heaters, the couple has been able to enjoy outdoor eating most of the year.”

“The patio is where we eat whenever the weather allows,” says the homeowner. “And when it doesn’t, we have the same views from our living room, dining room, and kitchen. We never tire of the view of the Flatirons—from inside or outside—so we always feel like we get to enjoy living in Colorado.” ■

PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN
HMH Architecture + Interiors

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS
DLK Engineers

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Cottonwood Custom Builders

DOORS & WINDOWS
Andersen Windows and Doors, E-series

CABINETS
Aspen Leaf Kitchens

KITCHEN & LIGHTING
HMH Architecture + Interiors

Landscape
K. Dakin Design



Image: Jess Blackwell

360 DEGREES OF INSPIRATION

Acquilano has turned the traditional notion of a workspace upside down with its innovative designs for the new CiviCO and Rallyday Partners spaces.

STUFFY. UPTIGHT. CLOSED-OFF. HIERARCHICAL. ACQUILANO THREW OUT THAT PART OF THE DICTIONARY WHEN IT DESIGNED THE NEW OFFICES OF CIVICO AND ITS OFFSHOOT, RALLYDAY PARTNERS.

Instead, the Acquilano team focused on words like these: Inspiring. Flexible. Unpredictable. Synergistic. Welcoming.

The two conjoining Cherry Creek office spaces—10,000 square feet for CiviCO, completed in January 2019, and 3,000 square feet for Rallyday, open for business this past January—are linked both physically and psychologically. CiviCO, a 501c3 nonprofit leadership development organization including many former CEOs, last year spawned Rallyday Partners, a private equity firm that supports entrepreneurs through personal coaching and capital.

Both are bold, out-of-the-box organizations—and that’s the vibe they wanted in their offices. The CiviCO space includes a unique entry that eschews the typical reception desk for a bar and includes a central learning center, as well as conference rooms that can expand and contract via movable glass walls to accommodate leadership training programs and other large events. “Flexibility is the key to it all,” says Marcus Appleby, the Acquilano project architect who oversaw the designs.

WORDS: Alison Gwinn

“I didn’t want the spaces to feel snooty,” says Ryan Heckman, chairman of CiviCO and a co-founder of Rallyday Partners. “I wanted them to be accessible and inclusive. We want people to come in feeling one way and to leave feeling happy and inspired. That was really the emotion we were going for.”

When CiviCO hired Acquilano, a Denver interior architecture firm, known for its notable headquarter projects for companies including DaVita, Janus Henderson Investors, and RE/MAX, it offered one directive: Go for it. It was an architect’s dream assignment. “Ryan’s the first client who has ever said at the first meeting, ‘I hired you for a reason. I trust you. You know what this organization is about. Do what you think is right,’” says Appleby. “He is a former Olympian (Heckman competed in the Nordic combined event in the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, Canada), and he has an Olympian’s personality: He wanted to go fast and go big. He wanted the space to feel exciting. He wanted someone who stepped into the CiviCO office to immediately get that impression.”

That feeling starts with the entry. Walk in and you instantly face a huge digital wall from Four Winds Interactive that has a video loop of inspiring images of Colorado. “There’s no obstruction when you walk into the space, so the video wall almost invites you in,” says Heckman. “It’s a lot of motion, showing people playing, leading, and learning in our state.”



Image: Cooperthwaite Productions

“I DIDN’T WANT THE SPACES TO FEEL SNOOTY. I WANTED THEM TO BE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE. WE WANT PEOPLE TO COME IN FEELING ONE WAY AND TO LEAVE FEELING HAPPY AND INSPIRED. THAT WAS REALLY THE EMOTION WE WERE GOING FOR.” – Ryan Heckman, CiviCO and Rallyday Managing Partner

The next thing visitors see: instead of a reception desk, a bar space. “The bar was a fixation of mine,” says Heckman. “I wanted it to have authentic bar stools, bolted to the ground. I have a theory that people talk differently when they’re on chairlifts or when they’re at a bar. Somehow sitting side by side and sharing an experience together creates a certain intimacy. And as you sit at the bar, you look up at the ‘We and Me’ art fixture. It inspires a different mindset: not to be focused on yourself but to be focused on what you can do in Colorado for Colorado. And then to the side is the state flag that hung over the Capitol when we became a state in 1876. The idea was that no matter where you looked, you couldn’t hide from inspiration. The whole space is playfully classic—and authentically Colorado.”

Above the bar is a light fixture hung in the shape of a wave. “Every component of the space is intentional,” says Acquilano project designer Sydney Madison. “The island is highly customized, and the light fixture grounds the whole space. It is sculptural in form so not only is it providing light, but it’s almost like artwork.”

Those entryway pieces are emblematic of the art throughout the offices. “A huge component of the project was CiviCO’s partnership with local artists, as well as the History of Colorado Museum,” says Appleby. Throughout the space are commissioned pieces, as well as artifacts like vintage photos of the Tenth Mountain Division in the hallway.

The art includes what Heckman refers to as an “architectural tattoo” for the space. “We hired an artist named Anthony Garcia, who has spent the last 20 years covering up gang-related graffiti with inspiring graffiti. The notion is to replace something very negative with art that is very positive. We just gave him a massive wall and said, ‘Make this. Do your thing. And make it about Colorado.’”

Throughout both spaces, Madison says, there are also subtler nods to CiviCO’s and Rallyday’s energies. “We wanted the finishes and textures to excite a whole breadth of generations of diverse individuals. We wanted it to feel fresh for younger, up-and-coming leaders but

This is definitely not your usual office entryway. At CiviCO, visitors are greeted not with a reception desk but with a huge digital wall by Four Winds Interactive showing images of Colorado and a bar space (complete with swiveling bar stools and a unique wave-patterned light fixture).

360 DEGREES OF INSPIRATION



Images: Cooperthwaite Productions

The CiviCO office contains a lot of locally commissioned artwork, including the work (top photo) in the entry bar by Joel Swanson, as well as a mural by Anthony Garcia (middle right photo). The office also features Colorado memorabilia including an American flag from 1876, the year Colorado joined the union. The glass private office fronts (middle left photo) have mountain-and-city motif and feature favorite inspiring quotes.



Image: Jess Blackwell

also to have a sense of sophistication for those who are more established. So while the textures all feel modern and fresh, the stone and woods really bring out a warm character to compliment the timeless feel.”

Indeed, the guests and events in the space have been wide-ranging, from Mayor Hancock to former Gov. John Hickenlooper, a co-founder in 1999 of CiviCO’s predecessor, Quarterly Forum. “We held over 260 events for nonprofits and other civic organizations in our space last year,” says Heckman, including Hickenlooper’s announcement of his 2020 presidential run and a mayoral debate. “We wanted a place where community leaders could host events that would elevate their sense of possibility, their sense of impact, their connectedness to Colorado values.”

Custom touches throughout include lighting that changes color from cool to warm and custom graphics on the glass office fronts (about 20 former CEOs and community leaders have permanent offices in the CiviCO space) that depict Colorado’s unique topography. “The abstracted linear pattern could be interpreted in multiple ways such as Colorado city skylines to mountain formations. They represent the entire state from the eastern planes to the western slope,” says Appleby. “We also wanted to

personalize each office, so every person was asked to provide a quote they found powerful and motivational, to provide a bit more identity and context to who they are as a person.”

In addition to offices and conference rooms, says Heckman, “We have a lot of lingering spaces—places for people to be on their phones or just hang out. We wanted our tenants to feel like this was their hideaway. A lot of them, as former CEOs, have a lot of demands on their lives. We wanted to create a space that was designed for their wellbeing and care.”

After the groundbreaking CiviCO offices were complete, Acquilano was given a new assignment: “About a year after building that space, Ryan said, ‘Let’s play off what we’ve created here with this organization full of leaders and create a for-profit venture capital firm. And let’s connect the two spaces.’”

The initial challenge, says Heckman, “was that the potential Rallyday space was fairly small, but because we had such a great entry/exit to the CiviCO bar and common area, we thought, ‘How cool would it be if we actually embedded Rallyday into the CiviCO space?’ We realized that there’s some cool symmetry—and some

The Rallyday offices are entered through the CiviCO offices. Instead of a formal reception desk, visitors quickly come upon the leadership library (seen in all three photos). It has no door and the outer walls are made of vertical slats to telegraph the notion of transparency; the inside feels intimate and protected, to encourage close conversations.

360 DEGREES OF INSPIRATION



Images: Jess Blackwell



nice symbolism, too—to having a for-profit entity under the same roof as a nonprofit entity.”

Using many of the same wood tones and coloration as in CiviCO, Acquilano designed the Rallyday space “to be inviting to other entrepreneurs who wanted to build great businesses,” says Heckman. “We wanted it to be different from typical financial services organizations, which can be formal, stuffy, and opulent. We wanted this space to give people a sense of possibility, to make them feel at once elevated, comfortable, and excited about the future. I even wanted to get a couple of disco balls in there—because business at its highest level should be as much about your right brain as your left brain—but I was overruled. But when you are really at the peak of your game in business, you should enjoy coming to work, and work should enjoy you being there.”

Despite the symbiosis between the two organizations, Rallyday’s purpose was fundamentally different from CiviCO’s and Acquilano wanted to reflect those differences. “Ryan wanted the Rallyday office to metaphorically express the sequence of forming a business relationship. It is a long and narrow space, and we wanted the sequential layout of elements to reflect how this relationship is built.”

So when you walk into the Rallyday space, which you access through the CiviCO offices, you find a self-serve island where you can get yourself coffee and casually talk to someone, like an informal introduction.

Next to that is the leadership library, which is really the heart of the space. “It represents the second part of a business relationship: sitting down and having an intimate conversation with someone,” says Appleby. “Ryan felt like one of the most important parts is just getting to know someone on a real level, so we wanted this space to feel somewhat open. There is no door, and the outer walls are made of slats, which provide a sense

of transparency. If you are standing straight on, you can see into the space, but if you are down the hall, there is a perception of privacy. There are no down lights; the sources of light are all concealed. We wanted the lounge to feel protected for intimate conversations.”

On one side of the lounge is a wall of custom slatted bookshelves, which physically intersect with the conference room. “That represents the third part of the business relationship, the traditional idea of ‘let’s get this deal done,’ ” says Appleby. “We wanted to continue the theme of celebrating local artists and craftsmen, so the table is custom made by Art Builders Guild, a local furniture fabricator.” The conference room is used not only for meetings but also as a “touchdown space” where employees have an extra place to work. There are also eight permanent offices for employees of the firm, including the founders.

“In both of these spaces, I wanted a sense of wow,” says Heckman. “It’s all about being uplifting and being a little different. There’s a lot of gray out there. I wanted to speak to people’s souls first, then their hearts, and then their brains, in that order. Architecture is a funny thing. A space can either take or give, and these spaces give.” ■

PROJECT CREDITS

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE
Acquilano

MEP ENGINEERS
ME Engineers

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS
Jirsa Hedrick

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
i2 Construction

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- Lindsay Brown, architect, The Brown Studio



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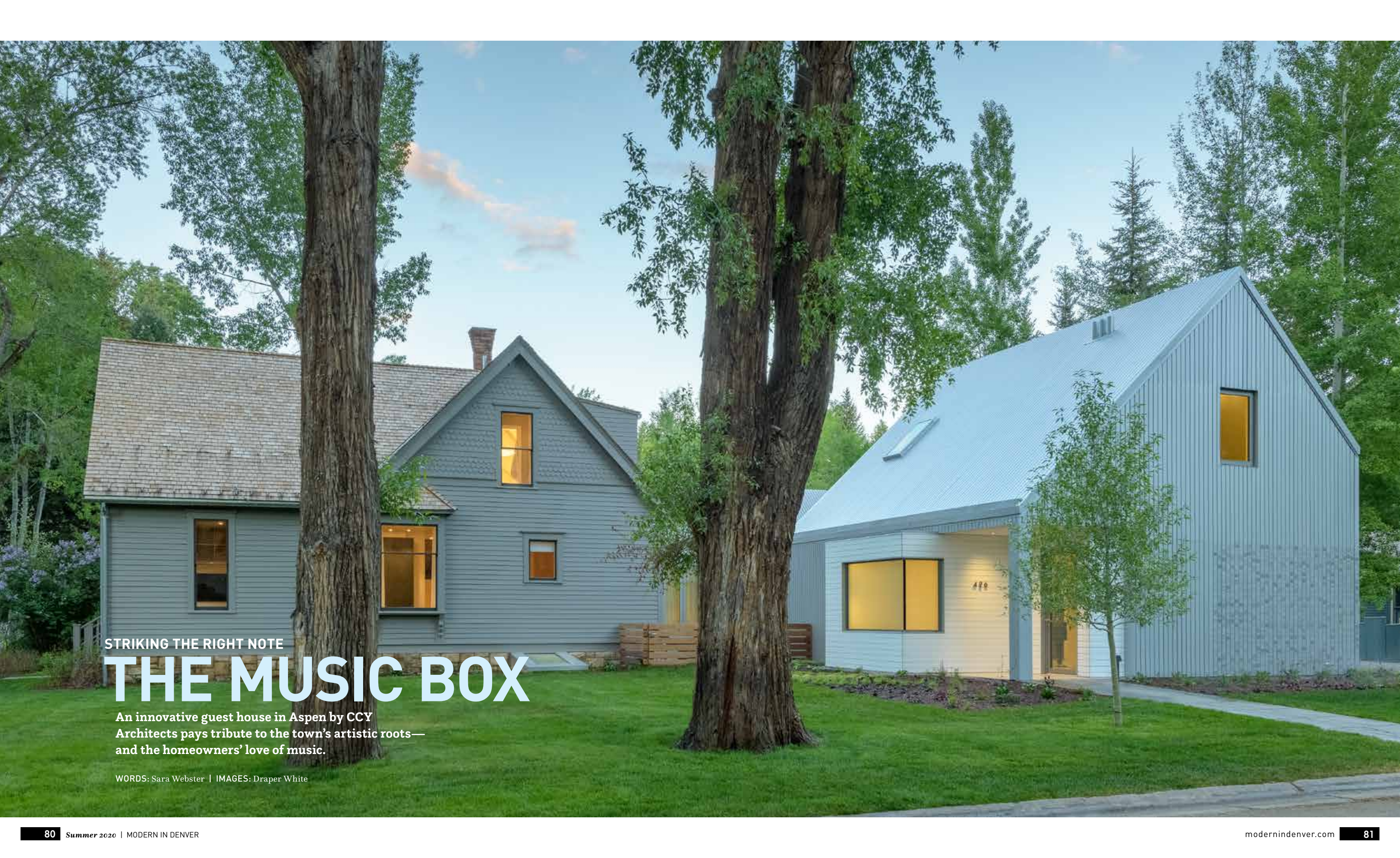
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STRIKING THE RIGHT NOTE

THE MUSIC BOX

An innovative guest house in Aspen by CCY Architects pays tribute to the town's artistic roots—and the homeowners' love of music.

WORDS: Sara Webster | IMAGES: Draper White

THE INGENUOUS RENOVATION OF AN ASPEN VICTORIAN AND ITS NEW GUEST HOUSE IS AS FINELY TUNED AS A STEINWAY GRAND AND AS CAREFULLY COMPOSED AS THE PIECE BY CHOPIN THAT SERVES AS ONE OF ITS INSPIRATIONS.

When a couple from Highland Park, Texas bought the West End property, it included an 1880s Victorian house, and its duplex addition. Both needed an update, but the process of integrating the airy, light-filled, modern style they wanted while keeping within the Historic Preservation Commission's (HPC) guidelines was far more challenging than they imagined. "We were really naïve; we didn't realize what we were getting into," say the new homeowners.

So they turned to CCY Architects, an award-winning Basalt-based firm known for its high-end design that respects place. "We really do work together—we don't have private offices in our firm. It's important to get everyone's input," says John Cottle, CCY principal, who oversaw the project, working with CCY project architect John Schenck and Evan Barrett, architect and project manager.

The goal for both CCY and the clients was to take the Victorian and addition and create two distinct, updated structures that maintained the historic integrity and fit the scale and texture of the town's West End, known for its home preservations. They wanted to make the guest house a slightly smaller version of the Victorian, both in deference to the historic nature and to establish unity on the lot. Inside both structures, the clients wanted bright, sun-filled environments—but they also wanted to accommodate their love of music in the guest house by creating an airy recital space that engaged with the outdoors.

Music is important to the owners. In fact, it was during their annual visits to the Aspen Music Festival that they fell in love with the town. "Aspen was intriguing to us and attractive on a number of levels: on a personal level, on an intellectual level, and also a creative level," says the owners.

The main house has classic, gorgeous bones that served as the North Star for the guest house, dubbed "The Music Box." The challenge was the limited space. At 1,600 square feet, there wasn't much room to elaborate into a multifunctional design. The solution was to scale down and make the structure's exterior appear traditional in form. "We wanted to honor the site and the history of the place, and tried to find a number of ways to do that," Cottle says.

The build has a below-grade program that allows the tight space to live bigger without overwhelming the lot or interfering with the neighborhood scale. Above grade, to reference the original Victorian and create cohesion with the guest house, CCY included a gable roof and brought down the eaves. The result is something "like an iceberg," with most of the living area below grade, while the space at elevation is clean and airy.

The Music Box had to accommodate many requirements, but primarily this was a musical refuge meant to weave into the cultural fabric of the West End. First and foremost, the architects needed to consider the listening experience. As Cottle says, "It wouldn't be much of a music box if the music didn't sound very good." To that end, the ceiling is acoustical plaster overlaying Acousti-Mat, which dampens reverberation time. By the staircase, a warm oak wall is detailed with vertical kerf cuts that give a textured appearance like



Aspen Historical Society, Reid Collection

Aspen's West End maintains its beauty through historic preservation guidelines. Working with the codes, CCY created a guest house come recital space that both pays deference to the 1880s style while integrating modern design. The vintage image was taken in 1961.



The build has a below-grade program that allows the tight space to live bigger without overwhelming the lot or interfering with the neighborhood scale.



1 VICTORIAN
2 MUSIC BOX
3 COURTYARD
4 GARAGE W/AUTO LIFT

corduroy, further regulating the space's acoustical qualities.

The musical experience extends outside. Pivot doors open up to an outdoor living space and courtyard that can serve as a second recital space so music can be enjoyed during a patio party or even from inside the main house when the windows are open.

For exterior continuity, the Victorian's horizontal siding influences the Music Box's vertical siding. When restoring the Victorian, CCY restored and reused most of the siding, among other materials like windows and bricks, which accommodated the HPC's wishes that the rebuild include as many original materials as possible. To keep the structures united, each has four-inch boards, but the siding on the Music Box is a Galvalume aluminum metal bent to the same texture and scale as the Victorian's.

The coda to the project is truly musical: An alley runs beside the Music Box, with a neighbor's house just on the other side, creating a privacy concern. To complicate matters, that wall is a west-facing source of afternoon light, and in the arid mountains, the late-day sun is harsh.

So CCY got creative, integrating a metal scrim with strategically drilled holes to provide privacy and let in gentle sunlight. For the scrim's motif, they found inspiration in the concept of a player piano; when a rolled-up scroll of perforated sheet music on the piano unravels, air passes through the holes and plays the notes, free of human interaction.

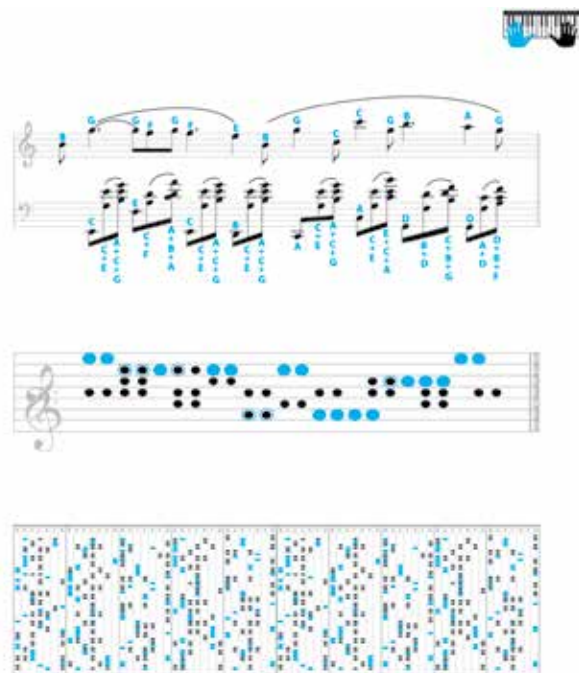
CCY created space by working below grade. Because the original build was designated as a duplex in existing codes, below-grade, a wall joins the Victorian with the Music Box to uphold guidelines. There is no connection between the buildings, however. A garage was also built on the lot, with an extra carport that lowers into the ground.



The Music Box integrates elements from the Victorian's redesign to create a sibling relationship on the property. Light and dark Carlisle wide plank hickory is found throughout both the Victorian (top) and the Music Box (bottom). Both structures access light to blend the interior with the exterior while creating the bright, airy element the homeowners requested.



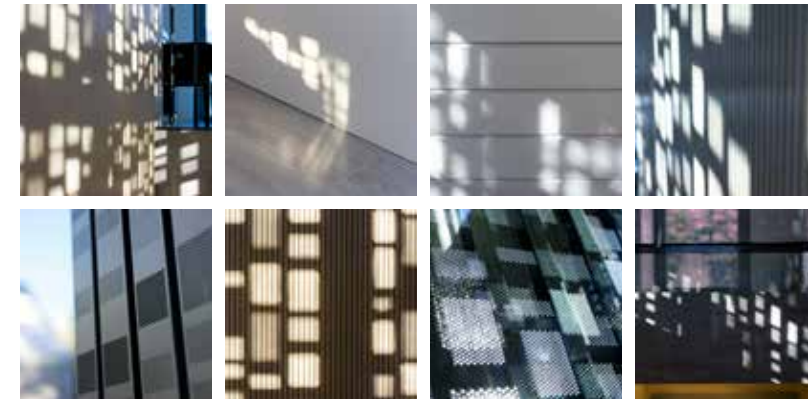
The owner chose the scrim's score: Chopin's Nocturne in E-Flat Major, Op, 9, No. 2. "Of course, it's not really about the scrim," says Cottle. "It's about what happens inside of it. It's about the light quality, and how it makes the music real, and in an unexpected way."



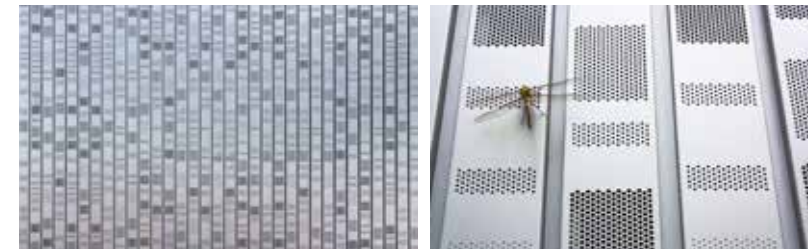
CCY replicated the scroll's perforated note concept for the scrim, but to apply the score to the facade, each musical element was reinterpreted by a new variable. Most importantly, the round notes are represented by squares that vary in size according to note length. To control light, each square note contains tiny holes drilled into the metal. The scrim's score is one of the owners' favorite pieces: Chopin's Nocturne in E-Flat Major, Op, 9, No. 2. "Of course, it's not really about the scrim," says Cottle. "It's about what happens inside of it. It's about the light quality, and how it makes the music real, and in an unexpected way."

In daylight, the sun filters through the scrim, so notes dance across the walls as the sun lowers in the sky. A perforated metal staircase (fabricated by Living Design Studio) winds beside the scrim and ascends to a bedroom,

A new nomenclature uses concepts from a player piano. In this score, the bass and treble clefs merge into one staff. Each note's hole size signals pitch and the number of holes inside a square indicate the note's duration.



Above images: Lena Nicholson



A dance of light flickers on the walls with the midday sun. Notes shift with the sun to add a magical element and create movement. The light floods down the stairs to add natural sunshine to a subgrade level.





PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTURE

CCY Architects

INTERIORS

Cheryl Troxel

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Koru Construction Limited

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

KL&A

CIVIL ENGINEER

Roaring Fork Engineering

LIGHTING CONSULTANT

Scott Oldner Lighting & David Electric

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Living Design Studios - Metalsmiths



OPPOSITE: Pivot doors open to a courtyard patio to blur the boundaries between the outdoors and interior. When open, music flows to the courtyard and can be heard inside the Victorian just on the other side of the patio. A small seating bleacher is perfect for summertime music performances.

and descends subgrade to three more bedrooms. Because the stairs are translucent, the sun's rays wash down to the lower level to provide natural light in an area normally inaccessible. The Victorian has the same stairs, which also allow light to shine below grade, while keeping the sibling relationship between the buildings intact.

But something else happens, too. At night, when the sun sets and the notes

no longer shine inside the Music Box, the house lights up. Yellow lamplight filters through the scrim, so the notes glow to the outside.

The property is truly a magical, musical respite. "It's so harmonically tuned," says the owners. "It's a masterpiece." ■

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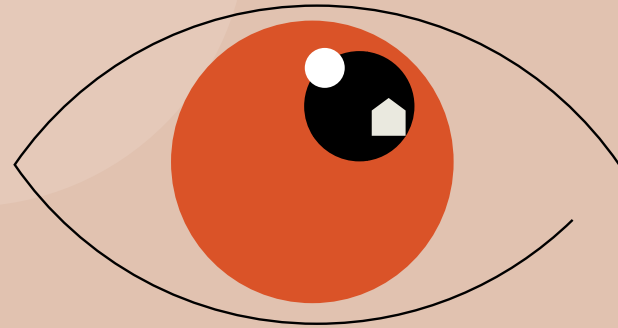


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THE FUTURE IS NOW



THE COLORADO DESIGN COMMUNITY WEIGHS IN ON THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS ON ARCHITECTURAL AND INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECTS AND PRACTICE.

WORDS: Beth Mosenthal, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

The design industry is no stranger to economic instability, but the professional landscape during the pandemic invokes the title of Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel, *Brave New World*. While industries such as tech embrace reinvention, the architecture and design industry's output of often-complex physical objects and environments relies on processes that stress permanence.

So it's no surprise that the architecture and design industry has been in a tailspin since early 2020. Stay-at-home orders required highly collaborative studios to transition to dispersed, virtual practices within a matter of days, if not hours. Project work and expertise have been disrupted by a sea change in human behavior and preferences. In short, as the design industry aims to make sense of the novel coronavirus's impact on design—and life—as we know it, speculation has become the new currency in validating design's relevancy.

Articles, webinars, and think pieces about the pandemic's short- and long-term impacts on design and designers provide some thought-provoking seeds of discourse, encouraging designers to use the pandemic as both a rare moment for reflection and an urgent call to arms. In an interview with *Dezeen*, trend forecaster Li Edelkoort suggests that the novel coronavirus has offered “a blank page for a new beginning.” In the same vein, product designer Hella Jongerius has shared, “From now on, a concerned approach to design will not simply mean returning to past ideas and making more meaningless stuff.... We now could crack the nut with all our global problems. And for us designers, let's take this change. Let's see it as a chance to get away from old beliefs—from what we thought was the norm—and take action to reassess our priorities.”

As the pandemic unfolds globally, *Modern In Denver* touched base with members of the Colorado design community to see how they are responding. As businesses reopen and architectural and interior design projects proceed, how will the pandemic impact the design profession moving forward? On these pages, Colorado architects, interior designers, and educators weigh in on the pandemic's influence on their practices and projects, and how the “big picture” is evolving.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Overall Impacts

The pandemic has changed the world, socially, and economically. What are the biggest changes brought about by COVID-19?

Many design professionals have noticed a reevaluation of priorities and values. When asked what the biggest changes brought about by the novel coronavirus might be, many noted a new recognition of humankind's interdependence, both as a global society and as a species dependent on the earth's resources.

"This is the first time a slowing like this has happened in our lifetime, and I don't think we yet know what the outcomes will be. Being forced to slow down and quietly reassess priorities can be uncomfortable, but it can also be a source of creative growth and inspiration. Our planet is breathing a quick sigh of relief, and we hope that our collective community will decide that now is the time to make the big lifestyle changes needed to continue to coexist on this earth. At the very least it seems to have shaken the human species into understanding that we are all connected and knowing that we are responsible for one another."

Brian Dale
Architect/Co-founder - Sort Studio

"The broadest global change I see that has been brought about by COVID-19 is learning to live with less—less material consumption, less everyday chaos, and less human interaction. It's astonishing how quickly we needed to adapt in order to survive."

Gillian Johnson, Principal-Anderson Mason Dale Architects

"The vulnerability revealed by the pandemic has also revealed the interdependence that we have on one another, not only culturally and economically, but with the natural world. The word 'reset' has been coming up again and again in conversation these past weeks. We are seeing natural systems do that: Air is clearer; sound pollution is diminished; waterways are seeing the return of aquatic life; and wildlife is re-inhabiting places they haven't been in decades. Now, as a profession, we are faced with not only how we practice, but how we reset the values of the built environment itself. We truly are a global culture. This pandemic only reminds us that we need to act in planetary terms, with little place for parochialism."

E.J. Meade
Principal - Arch11

"There's a heightened awareness of cleanliness and safety. In the workplace, for example, employees will expect that their employers have taken the necessary measures to provide a safe work environment. Whether it's temporary solutions like de-densification of seating or temperature screening to larger measures like on-site clinics or wellness centers, there's an understanding that the concept of the workplace has changed."

Michelle Liebling
Co-Managing Director, Principal-Gensler Denver



"[Distance learning] has exposed new pathways to teach and learn.... We now get to set aside normative formats for teaching and ask ourselves, 'What if...?'"

Rachel Brown
Director of Professional Development & Internships -
University of Colorado Denver's College of Architecture & Planning

"Remote working has allowed us to explore a new set of tools that we will continue to utilize for collaboration and communication as we move back into our next state of normal."

John McIntyre
Principal -Tryba Architects

Professional Practice

How are you responding to these new changes in terms of your processes, professional practice (as an individual or firm), and your design education?

While the biggest change to professional practice for most firms has been adapting to working from home, an increased focus on designing for health and well-being has become top of mind. Tracy Boyer notes, "I am excited that a post COVID-19 world will demand us all to take a more holistic approach to design," while Gillian Johnson writes that "the subject of fresh, clean air is constantly at the forefront of my mind" as a priority that should be addressed early on in the design process. From an operational standpoint, transitioning to a remote workplace has also helped firms test and expand upon existing work-from-home capabilities. Design education, once reliant on in-person desk critiques and studio reviews involving a presenting student and jurors, has also been impacted by the transition to online learning.

"The biggest impact that changes how we design in the workplace will be shifting paradigms from designing to bring people together to fostering innovation and collaboration to designing for safety and physical distancing. Being connected to your team, coworkers and community are critical for well-being. The new equation is more complex by adding in physical distancing.... Looking to what healthcare design is already adept at doing (more fresh air exchanges, thoughtful design that make cleaning easier, etc.) will be important."

Tracy Boyer
Leader, Interior Design Studio -
OZ Architecture

"The pandemic reminds us of the importance of advocating for the world we want as we emerge from this crisis, in a way that leverages existing strengths.... There is power in our collective wisdom and action, so much greater than the sum of our parts."

Nan Ellin
Dean-University of Colorado
Denver College of Architecture
& Planning

"I've had to become more nimble in communicating via different methods with clients, consultants and builders to ensure projects are still being executed with the same level of care and attention to detail."

Joey Pruett
Founder- A21 Architecture

THE FUTURE IS NOW



Changes to how (and what) you design

What impacts do you believe the pandemic will have on how you approach the design typology you most commonly practice (residential, commercial office, workplace, hospitality, etc.)?

Regardless of the design typology, Brian Dale articulated the question on all design professionals' minds: "How will what we are living through now change the way we inhabit these spaces in future?" It is still unclear how the pandemic will disrupt design expertise and principles honed through years of practice and application.

"A lot of changes will come out of this in the healthcare market. The use and reliance on telemedicine has advanced years in a month or so of stay-at-home orders.... Hospitals and other outpatient facilities are grappling with how to accommodate events like this [the pandemic] in the future. Facilities are looking at how they design their patient rooms, operating rooms, emergency departments, and overall facilities to accommodate both COVID-type patients and otherwise 'healthy' patients in the future without having to shut down. The redundancies in systems and adaptability of spaces will be critical to being able to accommodate multiple patient acuities and types of illnesses."

Angela Tirri-Van Do
Senior Associate - Boulder Associates

"There will be a focus on scale and optionality within public and circulation spaces that offers the opportunity to manage proximity and retain freedom of choice and movement while still gathering socially."

John McIntyre
Principal - Tryba Architects

"How we work, play, live, and dine together will all undergo new scrutiny."

E.J. Meade
Principal - Arch11

"I believe our philosophy of building smaller, quality projects just hit a speed bump. We promote healthier lifestyles by living smaller, which encourages people to spend more time outside. We have already seen a few of our clients increase their programs to accommodate dedicated spaces for work as our mobility has quickly been diminished. In our efforts to convince people to live efficiently, we are concerned that the reflexive reaction to add space will only increase project sizes and further tax our natural resources."

Brad Tomecek
Founder - Tomecek Studio Architecture

“ Opportunities

Are there any unexpected opportunities or outcomes of the pandemic that might have a positive impact on how people practice and/or approach design?

When asked what positive, unexpected opportunities the pandemic might have on design, much of the Colorado design community reinforced messages of industry collaboration, environmental stewardship, and the notion of doing more with less.

"If there's anything we know for sure, it's that we don't yet know how this will shape things. But talented architects and designers will continue to be nimble, learn as we go, collaborate, and respond intelligently and soulfully."

Katie Donahue
Associate Architect, Handel Architects, lecturer -
CU Denver's College of Architecture and Planning

"There will be an opportunity to create synergies and take insights across industries. As the home becomes an office, hotels become healthcare spaces, or the workplace becomes more wellness-minded, design practices around global health will become universal."

Michelle Liebling
Co-Managing Director, Principal - Gensler Denver

Looking Forward

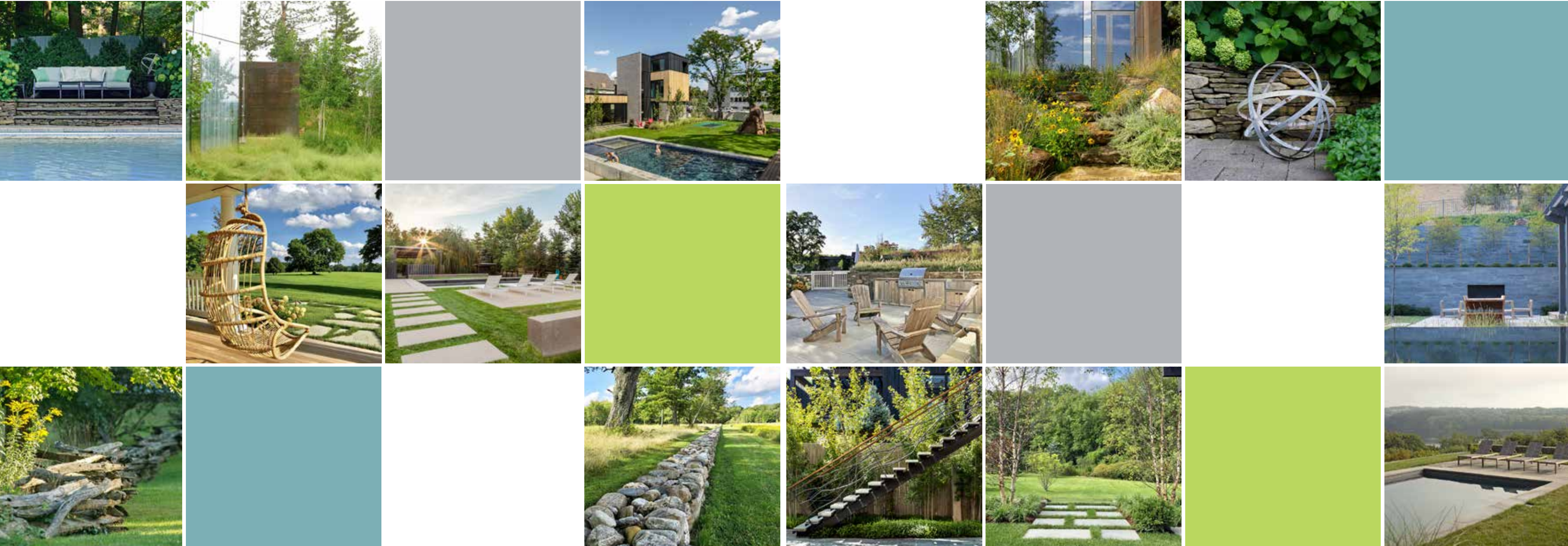
While the impacts of the pandemic will be determined over the long arc of time, the Colorado creative community will continue to adapt and problem solve in real time. While we don't yet know what the brave new world actually looks like, these responses indicate hope, opportunity, and most importantly—thoughtful reinvention that will hopefully have a positive impact on generations to come.

"More than ever we are practicing gratitude for what we have in this world and are looking for ways through design to more equally distribute that level of security and resilience to more members of our community."

E.J. Meade
Principal - Arch11

"We are optimists, and our collective design thinking can be applied to much more than buildings. Beyond this crisis, there is so much positive work that needs to be done to bring balance to our co-existence with our home planet. Our quick shifts in how we interact have shown us it is possible to effect major change in our behavior. As architects, artists, and designers, we have a huge role to play in re-shaping the way we occupy our world. The future is now."

Brian Dale
Architect/co-founder - Sort Studio





Non Mollare Mai!

'NEVER GIVE UP!' IS THE MOTTO OF ITALY'S DESIGN INDUSTRY—AND ITS RENOWNED SALONE.

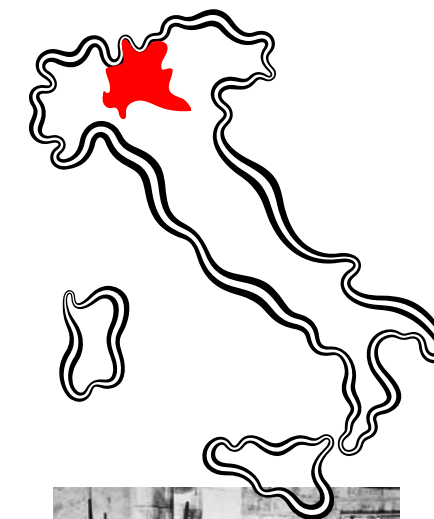
WORDS: Katie Grogan

Design doesn't give up. That's the clear message coming out of Italy—and its renowned design trade fair, Salone del Mobile—as companies pick up the pieces from a spring unlike any other.

When COVID-19 spread around the globe, it hit Italy—particularly the Lombardy region and its design hub Milan—with a vengeance. It not only claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands but threatened the survival of some of Italy's oldest, most successful design businesses, which ground to a halt for more than a month under a government-mandated quarantine.

Also silenced was Salone, one of the furniture industry's largest events, drawing 2,500 companies and over 400,000 attendees to Milan every spring. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, one of Salone's signature qualities—its ability to bring the global design community together to share and celebrate design innovation—became its biggest threat. The organizers of Salone held on to hope for this year's fair as long as they could, but as the extent of the virus became clearer, the 2020 edition was ultimately canceled for the first time since its 1961 debut.

But Italy's design industry has been in jeopardy before: In the late 1950s, with the Italian economy recovered after WWII, more Italians joined the middle class, buying homes and the furniture to go inside. Italian industrial design entered an era of unprecedented creativity, with new materials and technologies developed during WWII being reimagined as products for the home. In the hands of visionary designers like Gio Ponti, steel, rubber, and



The original founders (below) of Salone del Mobile were some of the top furniture makers in Italy. A long-time collaborator of several of these manufacturers, Italian architect and designer Gio Ponti (pictured ABOVE with his Superleggera chair made for Cassina), covered Salone del Mobile in his magazine *Domus*, helping give Salone the media attention it needed to become an international sensation.





polyurethane foam found new life as chairs, lighting, and other domestic products. What once had been an industry characterized by superior quality but little deviation from the French style du jour now embraced radically innovative designs.

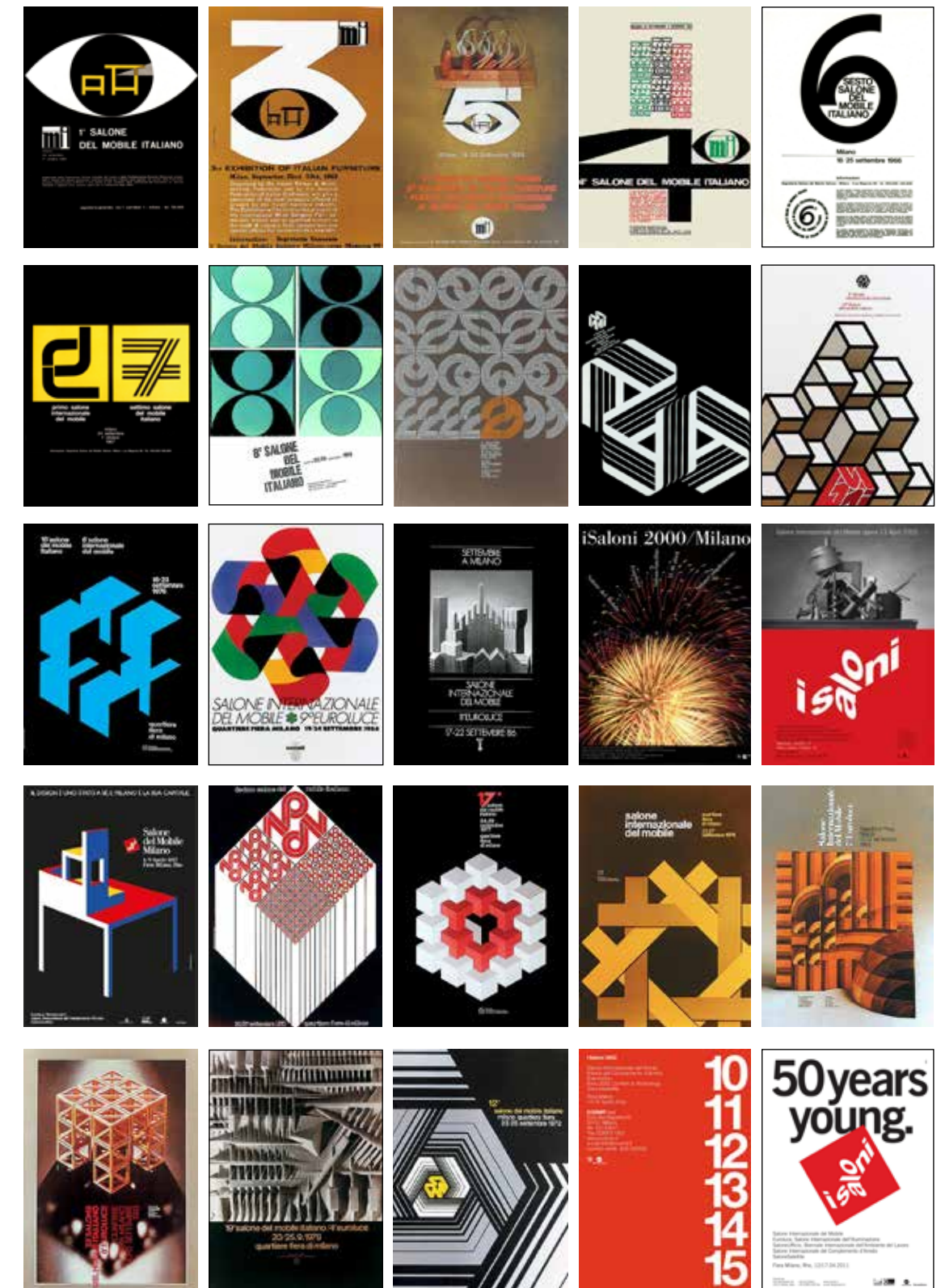
But the top 13 Italian furniture makers, worried about the threat of a saturated domestic market, decided they needed to expand their exports and launched a specialist furniture fair to attract international buyers. They dubbed it the Salone del Mobile, initially funding it themselves. That first year, the 328 stands of Italian vendors attracted nearly 12,000 people, but only about 1,000 of them were international.

Still, the organizers pushed on, and three years later, exports had more than tripled, media coverage had increased, and priorities began to shift from promoting



ABOVE: Since 2005, the Salone del Mobile has taken place at Fiera Milano in the city of Rho, outside of Milan. The complex, designed by Italian architect Massimiliano Fuksas, consists of eight buildings lining a central pedestrian walkway that spans nearly a mile. Each year Salone attracts over 2,500 companies and around 400,000 visitors from all over the world.

OPPOSITE: Formed by the original founders in 1961, the Comitato Organizzatore del Salone del Mobile Italiano or Cosmit became the organizational and promotional force behind Salone. Each year, the group commissioned an Italian designer or firm to design a poster to be used in advertising and that, subsequently, became the visual identity for that year's fair. When taken together, the posters form a graphic evolution of Salone over its almost 60 years.



Non Mollare Mai!



Italian exports to celebrating design innovation. That innovation, combined with the trademark quality of Italian craftsmanship, eventually caught the attention of the world. In 1967, Salone opened up participation to international companies and organizers began to expand the scope of the event, adding biennial fairs for the kitchen (EuroCucina) in 1974 and lighting (Euroluce) in 1976. Today, the fair is one of the largest design events in the world.

“Design,” says Milan native Laura Folgoni, a principal at Veselbrand Studios in Denver, “is a fundamental resource of the cultural patrimony of Italy—and Milan in particular.”

That love of design has a long and storied history: Located at the crossroads of numerous trade and transportation routes, Milan has always been an industrial and financial powerhouse. Since the time of the Roman Empire, wealthy and powerful citizens have lived near Milan in lavish villas, initially attracting artisans like carpenters, glaziers, decorators, and upholsterers to the area and later, during industrialization, Milan’s furniture factories.



Located in the Brianza region, Cassina’s first factory was built in the early 1940s and now serves as the company’s headquarters. For its 90th anniversary in 2017, the company enlisted world-renowned designer Patricia Urquiola to overhaul the space by restoring its courtyard and adding a refreshing communal space for guests and workers. **OPPOSITE:** Two workers in the Boffi factory located in Lentate sul Seveso, a town in the Brianza region of Italy.

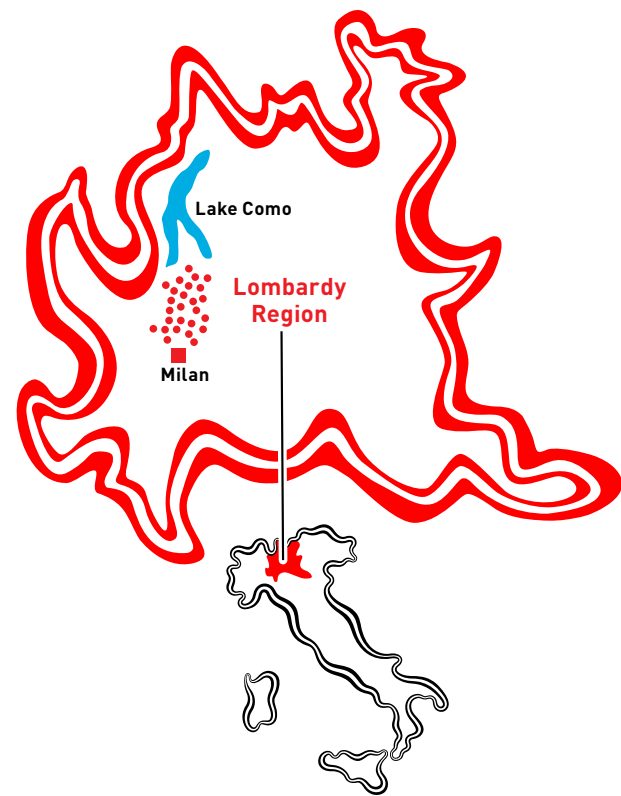
“Milan has the capability to converse with the old and the new in a perfect balance that makes it dynamic and design forward.” - Laura Folgoni



Non Mollare Mai!

The passion for design is built into the very structure of these factories, which Italian companies want to make as beautiful as the pieces they produce. Furniture company Cassina even hired world-renowned architect Patricia Urquiola in 2017 to renovate its headquarters and production center in Brianza. Folgoni says this kind of investment stems from Italians' profound respect for beauty and their deeply rooted sense of pride in the designs they produce.

Italian designers are leaning on those tenets now more than ever. In April, motivated to alleviate the economic toll and emboldened by falling COVID-19 case numbers, the furniture and design industry banded together again,



The Brianza region, located in between Milan and Lake Como, boasts the highest concentration of furniture companies in the country. The map above shows just 26 of the many furniture factories in the area, including Boffi, MDF Italia, Living Divani, and Cassina, that are all located within 75 miles of each other.



ABOVE: The architecture of the Minotti, B&B Italia, and Rimadesio factories illustrate that time and resources are put into making sure the factories themselves reflect the care and beauty of the products made within.

as they had done 60 years prior. Founding Salone companies including Cassina and the Molteni Group launched a campaign titled “*Design Doesn’t Give Up*,” to convince the Italian government that it was safe to reopen their factories. By early May, companies had resumed production, with the goal of getting back to full force by the end of the year, if not sooner.

As for the Salone, in 2021, the 60th fair is projected to be bigger than ever. For the first time, all biennial exhibitions, including the EuroCucina and EuroLuce, are scheduled to happen simultaneously with the furniture fair. The International Furnishing Accessories Exhibition, Workplace 3.0, S.Project, SaloneSatellite, and the International Bathroom Exhibition will also happen at the same time, creating a truly one-of-a-kind event. With its centuries-old tradition of craftsmanship and a profound sense of communal pride, Italian design is truly showing that it will never give up. ■

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ONE OF ONE

40 STORIES UP,
IA INTERIOR ARCHITECTS
CREATE AN OFFICE
EXPERIENCE UNLIKE
ANY OTHER FOR
UNICOM CAPITAL

WORDS: Sean O'Keefe | IMAGES: James Florio

QUALITY IS EASY TO RECOGNIZE, AND PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE – PREMIUM PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH GLOBAL EQUITY INVESTMENT FIRM UNICOM CAPITAL HAS ELEVATED ITS OFFICE EXPERIENCE.

Unicom Capital’s first office in 1996 was a svelte 2,000 square feet on the 36th floor of Republic Plaza in downtown Denver. Though initially a small space, the prominent location established Unicom’s pursuit of a high standard of excellence and strategic growth. With growth, piece by piece, Unicom took over more of floor 36 until eventually, they had it all. As the firm grew, Wall Street veteran and CEO, Richard Diecidue, began filling the halls with pieces of modern art.

But Unicom was also keeping its eye out for other real estate in anticipation of a more substantial move. Scott Mueller, Sr. Vice President of Unicom, is the CEO’s right-hand man. He was tasked with leading the execution of each successive build-out at Republic Plaza and then appraising prospective real estate in anticipation of a much more substantial move. “We have been considering opportunities to relocate since about 2005,” says Mueller. “Honestly, we looked at every top-tier, new office building coming to downtown over the last 15 years waiting for something that really spoke to us.”

All that patience has paid off handsomely. Today, Unicom’s new digs, on the top floor of 1144 Fifteenth, dazzle. The largest speculative office addition to Denver in more than 30 years and now the fourth tallest building in the Denver skyline, 1144 Fifteenth is a soaring crystal sail gracefully cutting across the cityscape developed by Hines. Designed by internationally acclaimed Connecticut architectural firm Pickard Chilton, 1144 Fifteenth’s gentle curves and endless glass reflect the brilliance of the surroundings and allow exterior light to penetrate floor plates a full 42 feet into the building’s inner core.

“The ability to bring the outside in is what really makes the building special,” says Mueller. On the 40th floor of 1144 Fifteenth, where Unicom resides, the floor-to-floor height starts at 18 feet and extends to an enormous 27 feet of Colorado sky soaring over the trading room floor.



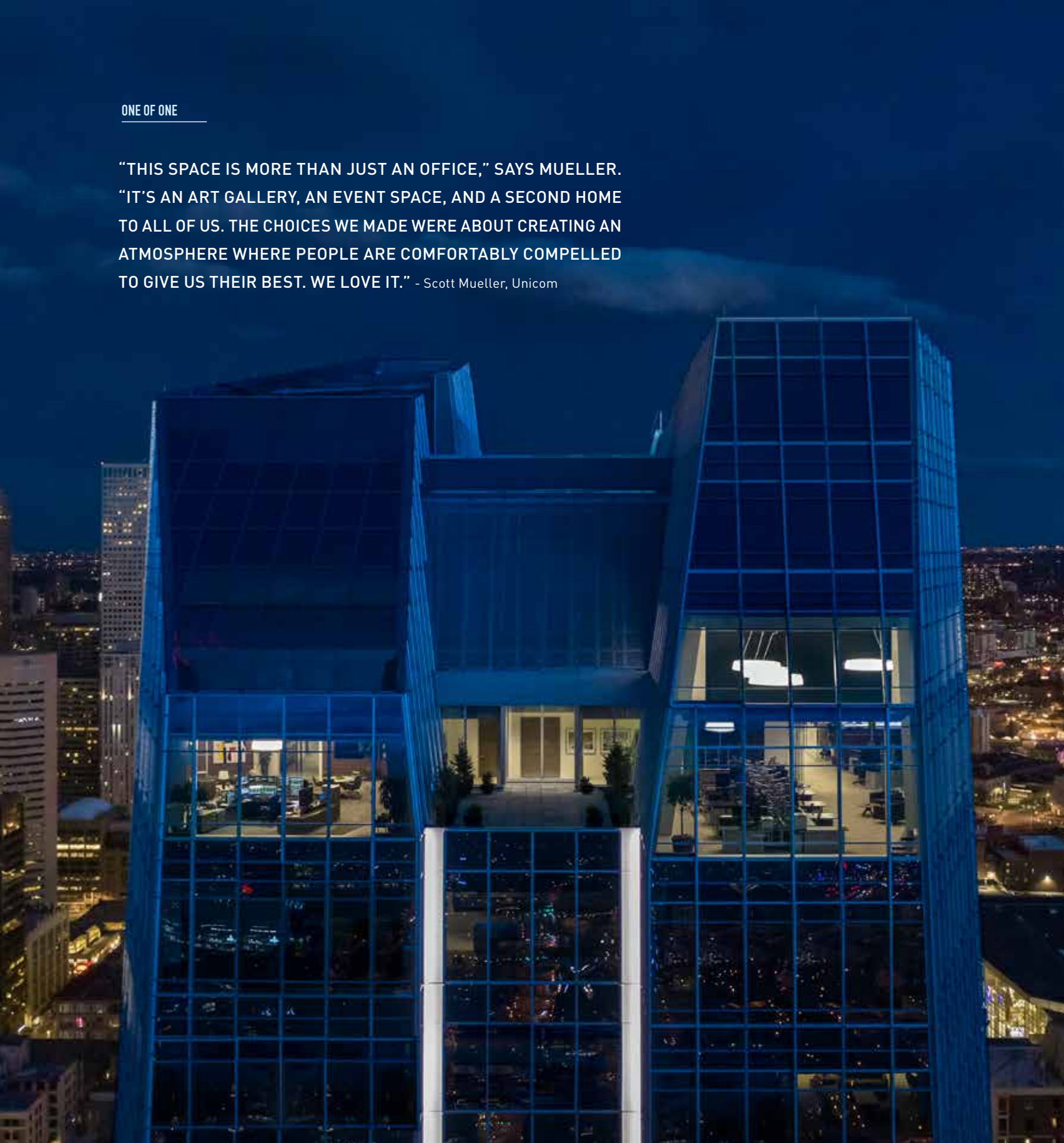
“We wanted engagement with the city and the world around us and an office experience unlike any other,” says Mueller—and Unicom got it.

Floor to ceiling, no office in Denver is quite like Unicom’s—the elegant interior is a flowing tapestry of infinitesimally intricate articulation that merges exotic materials, a gallery-quality art collection, and infinity views over every edge.

The task of enunciating the nuances was bestowed upon IA Interior Architects with construction services provided by Provident Construction and their artisans and craftsmen, all contributing to the success of the project. With 23 offices globally, IA Interior Architects focuses on human-centric, experiential corporate office interiors. David Key, a senior interior designer in IA’s Denver office, was key in envisioning and realizing Unicom’s interior design. “The stated objective was best-in-class, an interior befitting the building itself,” says Key, whose 20 years of experience include five

ABOVE: The impact upon entry is immediate. Geometric planes cast across the ceiling set the stage for a dynamic medley of design and materiality. Calacatta Bettogli marble, hand-selected Eucalyptus veneer, and gallery-worthy art intrigue the eye. **LEFT:** A curated assembly of art graces the walls and halls of Unicom Capital. Part collection, part showcase, the elegantly lit rotation includes pieces from private collections, a local gallery, and featured artists that continually rotate to infuse excitement into the office.

“THIS SPACE IS MORE THAN JUST AN OFFICE,” SAYS MUELLER. “IT’S AN ART GALLERY, AN EVENT SPACE, AND A SECOND HOME TO ALL OF US. THE CHOICES WE MADE WERE ABOUT CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE PEOPLE ARE COMFORTABLY COMPELLED TO GIVE US THEIR BEST. WE LOVE IT.” - Scott Mueller, Unicom



LEFT & ABOVE: A perch in the sky, Unicom’s fastidious selection of the top floor of 1144 Fifteen Street came to fruition after a more than a decade of anticipation.

with IA. “Unicom Capital wanted the best office in Denver, second to none. That’s a tall order and welcome challenge.”

Elevating the office experience meant converging the obligations of a high-performance equity trading firm with the aspirations of an event-ready art gallery and adding all the comforts of home. The owner’s first insistence was no ceiling tiles, a directive that’s not easy on the top floor of a high rise. Inspired by the building’s angled exterior, the lobby’s ceiling is an elegantly elongated diamond pattern expertly conceived by local drywall craftsmen—something of its own work of art. Overhead access panels had to be deftly concealed within the pattern, a task akin to the demanding fit and fitment of a concours-class automobile. Overhead, each intersection sparkles with a pinpoint of light poised above a visit-worthy collection of modern art displayed on walls both fixed and not. “We took our cues from many

great galleries,” Key says, “where vibrant art comes to life against a neutral background. Individually lit and easily reconfigured, the movable displays showcase the collection and open the space up for entertaining, training, and events.”

With the walls white, IA turned to materials to establish prestige. Custom stained, end-grain, fumed white oak floors stretch across the central lobby, part of an elite medley of materials embellished by furnishings with a residential flavor. Hand-selected Calacatta Bettogli marble contact surfaces provide cachet. The reception desk, cabinetry, and wall panels are trimmed in a hand-sourced, eucalyptus veneer initially taken from a single tree. When paneling ran out, Architectural Veneers International went to the same grove of trees to find a second specimen of a similar age and grain pattern.

“We were challenged to find ultra-high-end materials that



BELOW: Within the CEO's suite, the lines between work and relaxation have been blurred by quieting the office experience with residential quality furnishings from Room & Board. **LEFT:** The dual-purpose kitchen is deftly partitioned into chef's side and staff side and adorned in Sub Zero cold units and Wolf warm appliances.



speak to exceptionalism,” Key says. “Furnishings targeted a residential appeal but also had to stand up to workplace use. Mr. Diecidue was very invested in the design process. He even got a set of VR goggles so he could see, touch, and feel everything virtually as we designed it. At the end of the week, he’d jump into the design, see what was going on and give us immediate feedback. This pushed every detail toward custom.”

Because success in equity trading requires long hours, intense demands, and relentless commitment, the office’s point of respite is the kitchen. Traders get a gourmet breakfast and lunch prepared daily by corporate chef John Schenk in the chef’s kitchen, which is adjoined by a staff mingling space. Sub Zero refrigeration drawers, a built-in refrigerator/

freezer, and Wolf L Series built-in wall ovens and microwave allow the chef to prepare bistro-quality meals without having to meet food-service quality building codes.

The CEO’s suite is a home away from home, segmented into office, contemplation, and conferencing, with graceful, residentially styled furnishings from Room & Board, including Reese Sofas, Charles Swivel Chairs, Parsons Coffee Tables, and Tenley Office Chairs.

“This space is more than just an office,” says Mueller. “It’s an art gallery, an event space, and a second home to all of us. The choices we made were about creating an atmosphere where people are comfortably compelled to give us their best. We love it.” ■

On the trading room floor, the focus is forward. Custom-made trader desks feature ten displays per station, while the video wall by Planar sits above a retractable folding glass wall by Modernfold. Overhead, OCL Loop Lighting is joined by the abundance of daylight.



1 2 3 4 5

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

RIGHT AND AIRTIGHT

WORDS: Alison Gwinn | IMAGES: Daniel O'Connor

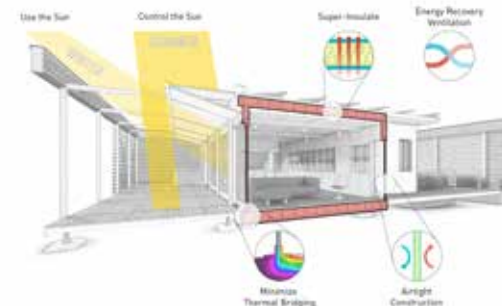
No furnace or AC? No problem. Using passive design elements, Bonsai Design+Build renovated this historic 1916 Congress Park home into a model of energy efficiency.

WALK INTO MOST HISTORIC HOUSES IN DENVER, AND YOU CAN FEEL A FAINT BREEZE WAFTING THROUGH THE THINLY INSULATED ATTIC AND THE OLD SINGLE-PANE WINDOWS, AND HEAR THE OLD FORCED-AIR HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEM CHUGGING TO KEEP THE INTERIOR AT A COMFORTABLE TEMPERATURE.

Not this 1916 home in Congress Park. When homeowners Greg Leja and Lisa Woods decided to renovate the solid-brick house—which had changed in mostly minor cosmetic ways since its pre-World War I construction—they wanted to modernize the home in every way, including doing a deep energy retrofit. So they turned to Bonsai Design+Build, a Denver architecture and construction firm that specializes in sustainable design and high-performance building techniques. “There’s nothing more sustainable than working with existing building stock, with this home being a prime example,” says Bonsai architect Josh Oqueli, who is a passive house-certified designer. “We took an existing building—its original bones and structure—and re-created an energy-efficient home that’s going to go for another 100 years.”

One of the biggest challenges, Oqueli says, is that the 2,100-square-foot home was in a landmark district, which meant that none of the exterior architecture could be changed. So Bonsai gutted the interior (all that remained were the exterior walls) and incorporated the five passive design techniques highlighted on these pages. Though in general a passive design house costs 10 to 15 percent more to build from scratch, the energy savings can be significant: Now the home is airtight, healthy, and comfortable, and the homeowners can control their electricity room by room, keeping their utility bills down.

Read on to see the five steps that Bonsai incorporated to turn porous into perfection.



1. ADD TOP-NOTCH INSULATION.
2. MAKE THE CONSTRUCTION AIRTIGHT.
3. MINIMIZE THERMAL BRIDGES.
4. ADD HIGH-PERFORMANCE FENESTRATIONS.
5. CREATE CONTINUOUS VENTILATION AND HEAT RECOVERY.



// STEP 1

ADD TOP-NOTCH INSULATION.

The original house had a voluminous, empty cold attic space, with inadequate, thin insulation on the attic floor. “It had decrepit, 100-year-old insulation up there,” says Oqueli. “The house was getting a lot of energy loss through the roof, as well as ice dams around the gutters that you typically see when it’s warmer on the inside and cold on the outside.” Bonsai restructured the top of the house from the inside, pushing the interior up into the attic space and creating an encapsulating roof by adding a 10-inch-thick cavity and filling it with closed-cell-foam insulation rated near an R-60. (The “R” refers to thermal resistance, or how much energy escapes through a wall to the outside. Typically, building codes require that roofs rate an R-49. “Closed cell” foam insulation is vapor closed so it serves as a vapor barrier; that plus taping and sealing every joint before drywalling provided a barrier.) By pushing up, Bonsai was able to add a loft that serves as an office, reached by a new stairway, and to enclose a new attic space for storage (also within the hyper-insulated roof), accessed by a drop-down ladder in the hallway. Even though the loft made the interior more open, the overall space is efficient to keep warm. “With a larger building, it’s actually easier to be more energy efficient,” Oqueli says.



“THERE’S NOTHING MORE SUSTAINABLE THAN WORKING WITH EXISTING BUILDING STOCK, WITH THIS HOME BEING A PRIME EXAMPLE. WE TOOK AN EXISTING BUILDING—ITS ORIGINAL BONES AND STRUCTURE—AND RE-CREATED AN ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOME THAT’S GOING TO GO FOR ANOTHER 100 YEARS.” – Josh Oqueli



// STEP 2

MAKE THE CONSTRUCTION AIRTIGHT.

“The exterior of the house is double- or triple-wythe brick walls, with no insulation,” says Oqueli. “We couldn’t change those walls or add insulation to the exterior, so we framed in a 2-by-4 wall on the interior, adjacent to the brick wall, and then filled that cavity with foam insulation.” The Bonsai team also dealt with the problem of condensation. “Condensation often travels through walls, and if you don’t have a good vapor barrier installed, which most homes don’t, cold air on the outside comes in and the warm air on the inside hits that wall and condensates inside the wall, which wets the insulation. Mold can grow, leading to respiratory health issues.”

// STEP 3

MINIMIZE THERMAL BRIDGES.

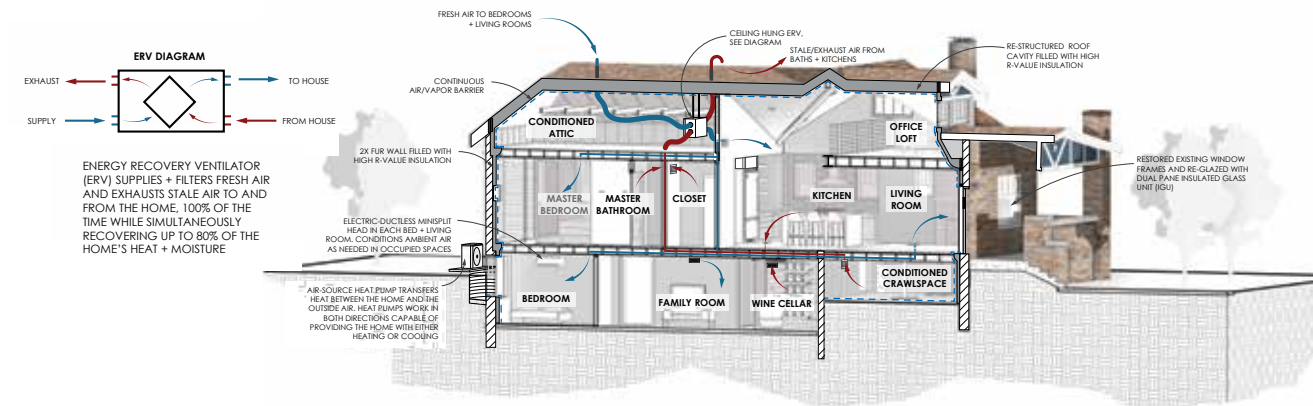
Thermal bridges are places where warm air can escape to the outside—and you want as few of them as possible. “On a typical code-built house, you have a stud that’s faced every 16 inches on center, with cladding on the exterior, finished drywall on the interior, and insulation between the studs,” says Oqueli. “But every stud is a thermal bridge; that is where your energy escapes. We minimized this by standing off the furred wall by an inch to create straight 90-degree corners, which made it more economical to install finishes and meant that when we blew in insulation, the foam got behind the studs. We also framed the fur wall to 24” on center, which minimized the bridges.”

1
2
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4
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// STEP 4

ADD HIGH-PERFORMANCE FENESTRATIONS.

Because the house was in a historic district, the exterior—even those century-old doors and windows—could not be visually changed. Bonsai Design hired a local company, Phoenix Windows, which removed the 100-year-old windows, deconstructed them, removed the old single-pane pieces of glass, replaced them with double panes, and put them all back together again. “The single panes have no thermal resistance,” says Oqueli, “and the dual panes have a resistance of R3 or R4, so this was a huge, huge help.” (Triple panes are the pinnacle, but they would not have fit into these old windows.) As for that front door, it was similarly restored; the back door, because it didn’t face the street, was replaced with a modern, energy-efficient model.



This diagram from Bonsai Design+Build shows the multiple factors that have gone into making this leaky century-old house into a model of energy efficiency.



// STEP 5

CREATE CONTINUOUS VENTILATION AND HEAT RECOVERY. “Because we built the house so air-tight, very little energy is escaping the envelope,” says Oqueli. “So we had to introduce mechanical ventilation through something called an ERV, which stands for energy recovery ventilator. It uses very simple mechanics—just two fans—and costs only about \$2,000. The ERV operates 24/7, constantly bringing in fresh, filtered air to living spaces like living rooms and bedrooms and continually exhausting stale air from places where it accumulates, like bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms. As humans, we need fresh air because when air reaches a certain CO2 level, it becomes toxic for us.” But there is no furnace in this home, so how is all that interior air heated in the winter? “If you build a home well enough, it takes very little energy input to heat it—people living in the home produce energy by doing things like showering and cooking, and that heat stays within the building

envelope,” says Oqueli. “So your first line of defense is the building envelope—the insulation and windows. Your second line of defense is the ERV; as it pulls hot air out and exhausts it, it’s also bringing in fresh air that crosses that energy path and delivers conditioned air to the space.” Bonsai also installed something called a mini-split system in the house. “They’re big in Europe and Asia—really everywhere except the U.S.,” says Oqueli. “The system includes seven small, zone-specific, wall-mounted heads that suck in the ambient air, condition it on the spot and blow it out at whatever temperature you’ve set it at. They operate off an electric air-source heat pump that sits outside.” Because they operate off of remotes, Leja says, he turns them on when he needs a room to be heated or uses a motion control sensor to activate them. “I like the fact that I am not heating or cooling an entire house all the time,” he says. For example, he rarely heats the two bedrooms in the basement, which he says stay in the low sixties on their own. ■



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Alone Again, Naturally

If you can't get enough of all this self-isolation, check out these ergonomic workspace products

WORDS: Joseph Starr



Images above and opposite provided courtesy of Douglas Ball

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

IMAGINE AN ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO FOR YOUR WORKSPACE.

ONE IN WHICH YOU DIDN'T MERELY PLOP DOWN ONTO A BENCH OR AN ERGONOMIC TASK CHAIR, BUT RATHER EASED INTO A SLEEK AND SLICK "CONTAINMENT APPARATUS," AN ENCOMPASSING POD THAT CRADLED YOUR BODY FROM TIP TO TOE—LIKE THE DRIVER'S SEAT OF A RACE CAR OR THE COCKPIT OF A FIGHTER JET. THIS WAS THE VISION OF DESIGNER DOUGLAS BALL, CONCEIVED AND CONCEPTUALIZED SOME 34 YEARS BACK. HE CALLED IT CAPSULE.

Both aerodynamic and futuristic, Capsule resembled nothing that had come before, at least in the context of industrial design and especially within the medium of a dedicated workspace. For Ball, it was a decidedly personal project. He had just obtained an Alias computer-aided 3D modeling system that required a steep learning curve. The prospect of eye and neck strain made him reluctant to commit to the long hours requisite to mastery: "Then I woke up one night thinking about a long drive the previous weekend and made the connection... by morning, a concept was in place."

Ball had realized that driving made him feel good: the low, comfortable seat, the high positioning of the arms, the even support all along the spine from lower back to upper neck. So the initial Capsule design was effectively a replica of Ball's very own Audi, with a reclining seat, a computer monitor set level with the eyes, and a retractable canopy to control light and shut out distractions. "It was fabulous," says Ball. "I would work in it for two to three hours without getting out, then use my other unit for a flight simulator program."



Clipper CS-1, circa 1993, side and interior views
Clipper had a solid wood body and a Lexan canopy that "opened skyward like the doors of a DeLorean."

FOR ALL ITS INNOVATIONS, CAPSULE NEVER REALLY GOT A FOOTHOLD IN THE WORKPLACE MARKET. BUT THEN, IT WASN'T REALLY MEANT TO.



LEFT: The designer with an early Capsule prototype, circa 1986. BELOW: Capsule's sliding seat mechanism accommodated users of all sizes.

Capsule's ergonomic successes were built on a few simple principles. Most notably, the weight of the head—taxing on ligaments and muscles in traditional upright seating—is naturally supported when the back is reclined and the legs are set low. Further, a sliding seat mechanism allowed users of differing dimensions to experience the same level of comfort. Ball reported satisfaction among users as diminutive as 4'9" and as tall as 6'7". Capsule also employed a forward-thinking innovation to adjust work height: The weight of the then-gigantic monitors could be supported by leg strength while the work surface slid up or down easily.

For all its innovations, Capsule never really got a foothold in the workplace market. But then, it wasn't really meant to. Ball had developed the prototype for personal use only. It was some seven years later, with



Images provided courtesy of Douglas Ball

the collaboration of former Knoll president Robert Cadwallader, at the time a consultant with Texas-based Newspace, that it came to market: "Newspace was a small company," says Ball. "Tooling it up didn't cost a lot. We thought, maybe it will click. Maybe the cards will fall into place."

In 1993, what had been Capsule debuted as "Clipper CS-1," an evolved version with a Lexan plastic canopy—which opened skyward like the winged doors of a DeLorean—and a solid wood body. Clipper exhibited in 1993 at the Atlanta Ergonomics Show and later that year at NeoCon: "It caught everyone's eye, but then it sort of petered out," says Ball. "The cliché is that it was ahead of its time."

Clipper's trajectory from personal project to cool curio speaks to the current cachet of the contemporary pod—the phone booth-style units that are helping to attenuate the lack of privacy and noisiness of many open office environments. It's not that there's a seamless evolutionary link, but rather that both represent flexible approaches to providing on-demand solitude. With Clipper, the enclosed environs facilitated long bouts of focused work, while today's pods represent one element in a broader strategy to achieve workplace comfort and productivity. Today's pods run the gamut, from phone booth to acoustically enhanced high-back sofas and modular glass-walled rooms that are easy to set up and take down.



OFS: LEAN TO
The modular units save space by integrating seamlessly with existing architecture.





HAWORTH: OPENEST
Designed by Patricia Urquiola, Openest provides a visual and acoustic barrier without the confines of complete enclosure.

The latter category is the most prevalent. Both managers and employees find that single-person pods provide a needed respite—to make calls, enhance focus, or just shut out the ambient noise that can cause “environmental fatigue.” Framery offers a single-person booth that’s soundproof and echo-free, with a slick white-walled aesthetic to boot. Spacestor’s Residence Work units exemplify the company’s California Modern aesthetic—with furniture-grade laminated wood on the exterior/trim and vibrantly colored interior walls. And TalkBox takes the phone booth analogy and runs with it. The single-person standing units include sliding doors with privacy panels, Dry-Erase surfaces, and customized branding and graphics.

Then there are midway privacy options like Patricia Urquiola’s Openest for Haworth, which takes the habitual comforts of a cushy sofa and turns them into bastions for focused collaborative sessions. Openest provides a visual barrier without completely isolating users from their surroundings. LeanTo from OFS enhances privacy with an open design. A modular furnishing made to inhabit nooks, alcoves, corridors, and stairs, LeanTo offers an impromptu escape for both individuals and small groups.

Last, the Air Series by Steelcase-brand Orangebox is a reconfigurable modular space that can be set up and taken down in a couple of hours. Providing the flexibility of an internal room without the permanence, Air features acoustically engineered paneling on two sides—with glass on the other two—as well as louvered roofs, ADA lighting, air circulation fans, whiteboards, and locking doors. In short, it offers the same functionality as a meeting room while being totally independent from the building.

The above products are a small cross-section of the assorted pods, booths, and modular rooms that have recently been deployed to combat the occasional chaos of the open office. Though they may not be intended for hours of immersive work like Capsule was, they are a palpable representation of current thinking about workplace comfort—a multi-pronged approach to help balance the pros and cons of the open office. ■



ORANGEBOX: AIR3
Modular rooms offering complete enclosure and privacy without visual disruption: “The same functionality as a meeting room with total independence from the building.”





ALL CHOOK UP!

AT THE LATEST OUTPOST OF THE AUSSIE CHICKEN JOINT CHOOK, SA+R ARCHITECTS DESIGN A DÉCOR THAT ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY AND EMBRACES A MELBOURNE VIBE, AS SEEN THROUGH CHOOK'S SIGNATURE COLORFUL, TEARABLE POSTER WALL

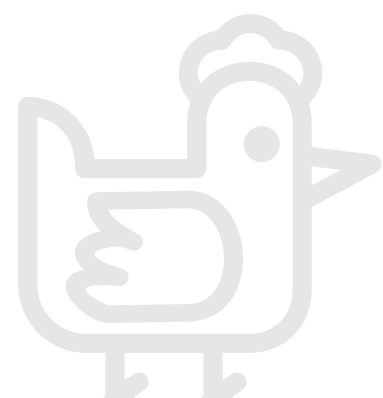
WORDS: Sara Webster | IMAGES: Jess Blackwell

Food is having a moment in Denver. Restaurants test boundaries with new, innovative cuisine that's changing the fabric of the city. Just look at the latest venture from Snooze's Adam Schlegel. After a stint in Melbourne, Schlegel fell in love with the bonhomie, community aspect of the neighborhood charcoal chicken shop, an Australian staple. So in 2018, he brought the down under concept to the Mile High City on South Pearl Street. The chicken shop fits in with Denver like a hand to a glove. A second location opened at Birch Street and 8th Avenue in late 2019.

The restaurant is called Chook, which is Aussie slang for chicken. Partnering with James Beard winner Alex Seidel, of Fruition and Mercantile, and barman Randy Layman, the trio came together to make the Denver chook shop a reality. The goal was to create a space that was all about community, with a family-friendly ambiance and affordable, healthy, delicious charcoal chicken.

To bring the vision to life, the trio came to Shears Adkins Rockmore Architects (SA+R). "They wanted a space that reflects their cuisine and their mission, which is to provide healthy meals for families," says architect Aleks Kaplan. "They wanted to give back to the community." Kaplan, now at Swan Dive Design Studio, worked with Preston Reed at SA+R on the look for the most recent Chook outpost.

The design theory behind Chook integrates layers with a fresh, simple, clean, and vibrant tone. Inspiration first came from the colorful wheatpaste posters that fill Melbourne's alleys and posts, reinterpreted into an urban wallpaper. "They kind of tear and rip, and it creates this beautiful composition in the end, with all these different layers," says Kaplan. "So, we created our own Chook version." SA+R collaborated with the firm Make West to create a wheatpaste poster wall, and, like the real deal, the destruction enhances the art. "If it tears, all you do is rip it off the wall. It can change constantly."





ALL CHOOK UP!

Chook's design channels Melbourne's bright and airy aesthetic, and community bonds. White hexagon tiles reference chicken wire and elevate the light tone of the space, further emphasized by the light wood flooring. The back wall adds a vibrant splash of color in homage to wheatpaste posters found throughout Melbourne. The poster wallpaper can be torn away, for fresh interactive design that's kid-friendly.

“THEY KIND OF TEAR AND RIP, AND IT CREATES THIS BEAUTIFUL COMPOSITION IN THE END, WITH ALL THESE DIFFERENT LAYERS, SO WE CREATED OUR OWN CHOOK VERSION. IF IT TEARS, ALL YOU DO IS RIP IT OFF THE WALL. IT CAN CHANGE CONSTANTLY.” — Aleks Kaplan



Clever details supplement the poster wallpaper, like a ten-inch-high strip that wraps along the ground. As the datum travels through the space, the composition and tone morph with each section’s aesthetic, bringing the elements together just as Chook unites the neighborhood.

While Melbourne inspired, most design elements find influence from the all-mighty chicken. Black grout outlines white hexagon tile as a play on chicken wire and metalwork on “bird perch” booth seating channels a farmhouse weathervane, while the children’s egg-themed nook has a bit of whimsy. The charcoal-filled columns that greet patrons emphasize the authenticity of the cuisine.

The latest Chook has more space that enabled the team to add a bar section. While integrating with the overall aesthetic, the new bar maintains its own presence. “The bar palette keeps the same colors, but flips the script,” Reed says. Here, there’s a heavier emphasis on woodwork than tile. For example, the front of the bar is simple, cost-effective, yet playful plywood, created by Housefish.



The new bar area at Birch Street allowed creativity in design. The front of the bar features wooden plywood, a low cost solution that had natural style. Steel bird perch chairs harken a weathervane, while charcoal walls play off the cooked chicken concept. A datum coasts along the ground to create cohesion. Here, the datum is charcoal hexagon tile at the counter, but takes the texture of plywood as it arrives at the bar while retaining its charcoal color.



The creativity extends to the tabletops, which blaze with burnt edges and ends, like chicken skin. “This dark color is burning and moving throughout the space,” says Reed.

A fluid layout and communal seating invite that sacred act of breaking bread together, and an outdoor patio invites fresh air gathering during warmer months. At the end of the day, it’s the chook that brings everyone together for a healthier, close-knit city. “They just want to do the right thing, for families, for the community,” says Kaplan. “It’s been a pleasure to create a design that helps them with that kind of vision and mission.” ■

PROJECT CREDITS

- ARCHITECTURE
Shears Adkins Rockmore Architects (SA+R)
- STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS
Peak Engineering, Inc.
- GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Spectrum General Contractors, Inc.
- MEP ENGINEERS
Ramirez, Johnson, & Associates
- MILLWORK & FABRICATION
Housefish Design
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Fold 'Em

A CLEVER NEW BAG FROM THE JAPANESE STUDIO NENDO ARRIVES AS ONE FLAT PIECE OF LEATHER—YOU FOLD IT INTO A PURSE AT HOME.

What Coco Chanel did for hands-free style in 1955 with her “2.55 flap bag,” Louis Vuitton did for sixties women-on-the-go with its “Speedy” bag, and Hermès did for Jane Birkin and other eighties style mavens with its Birkin bag, the Japanese studio Nendo has done for the 21st-century minimalist and do-it-yourselfer.

Nendo has created a new bag, dubbed Mai after the Japanese term “ichi-mai” (or “one sheet”), that is brilliant in both its simplicity and its style. Having previously made a bag in collaboration with the luxury accessory brands Tod’s and Longchamp, Nendo (whose mission is to “deliver small moments of sudden insight”) created its latest purse for the Italian online platform Up to You Anthology. The Italian online platform was launched last December as a startup e-commerce platform where visitors can design their own bag or buy one made by a well-known designer.

Mai comes in either laser-cut leather or thick recycled felt and a variety of plant-dyed colors, including black, dark brown, khaki, teal, mustard yellow, coral pink, and loden. It is shipped as one flat piece, to be folded by the customer into a three-dimensional form that is fastened via a few rivets and pre-cut holes (no tools needed other than your brain). That beautiful simplicity has meant that Up To You Anthology can simplify manufacturing and lower inventory and shipping costs. Genius.

What’s even more so is that the bag is foldable into different sizes depending on what you want to carry inside. A stylish shape shifter? It’s in the bag. ■

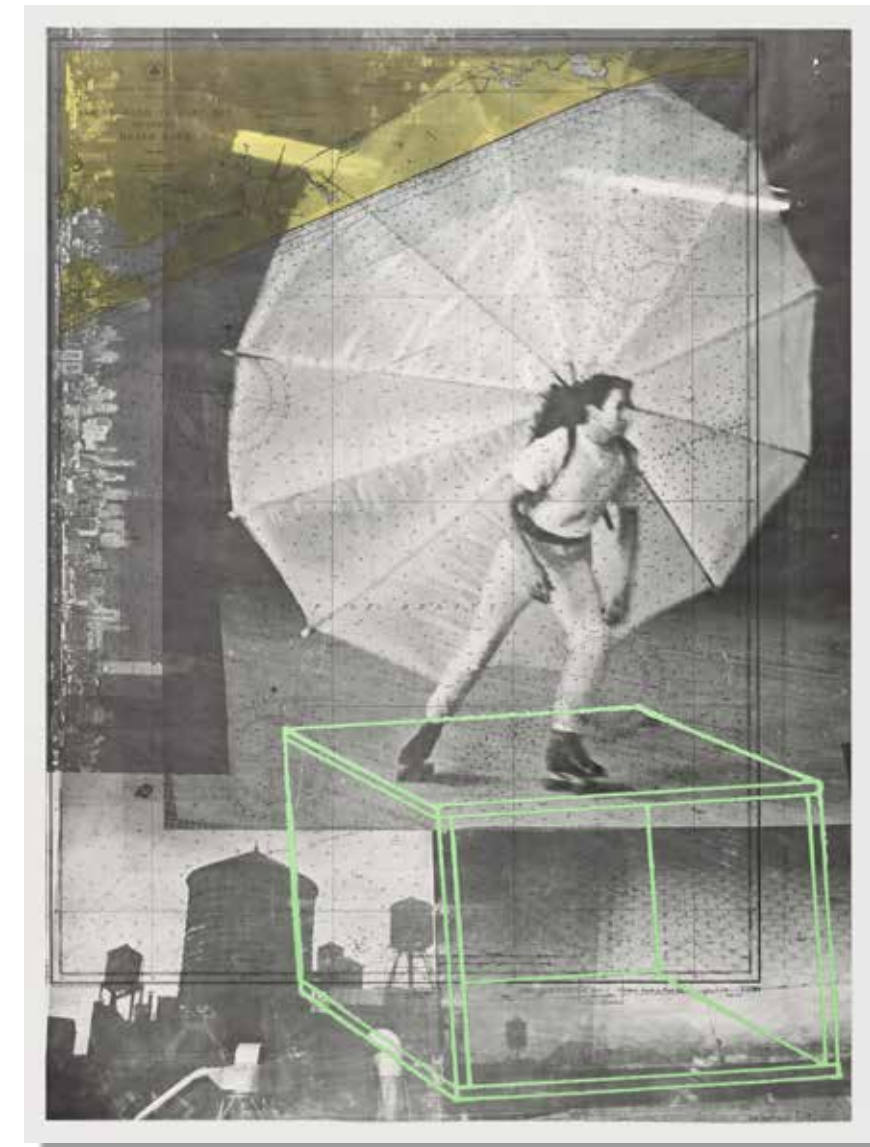
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Rauschenberg

Reflections and Ruminations

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Robert Rauschenberg, *Autobiography*, 1968 (sheet 3 of 3 detail). Offset lithograph on paper. Collection of the Museum of Outdoor Arts.

Robert Rauschenberg (1925 - 2008)

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