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MODERN IN DENVER



WINTER • TWENTY20



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Mid-Century Modern 2021

WHERE ARE WE NOW? The evolution
of Mid-Century Modern's appeal. P.112



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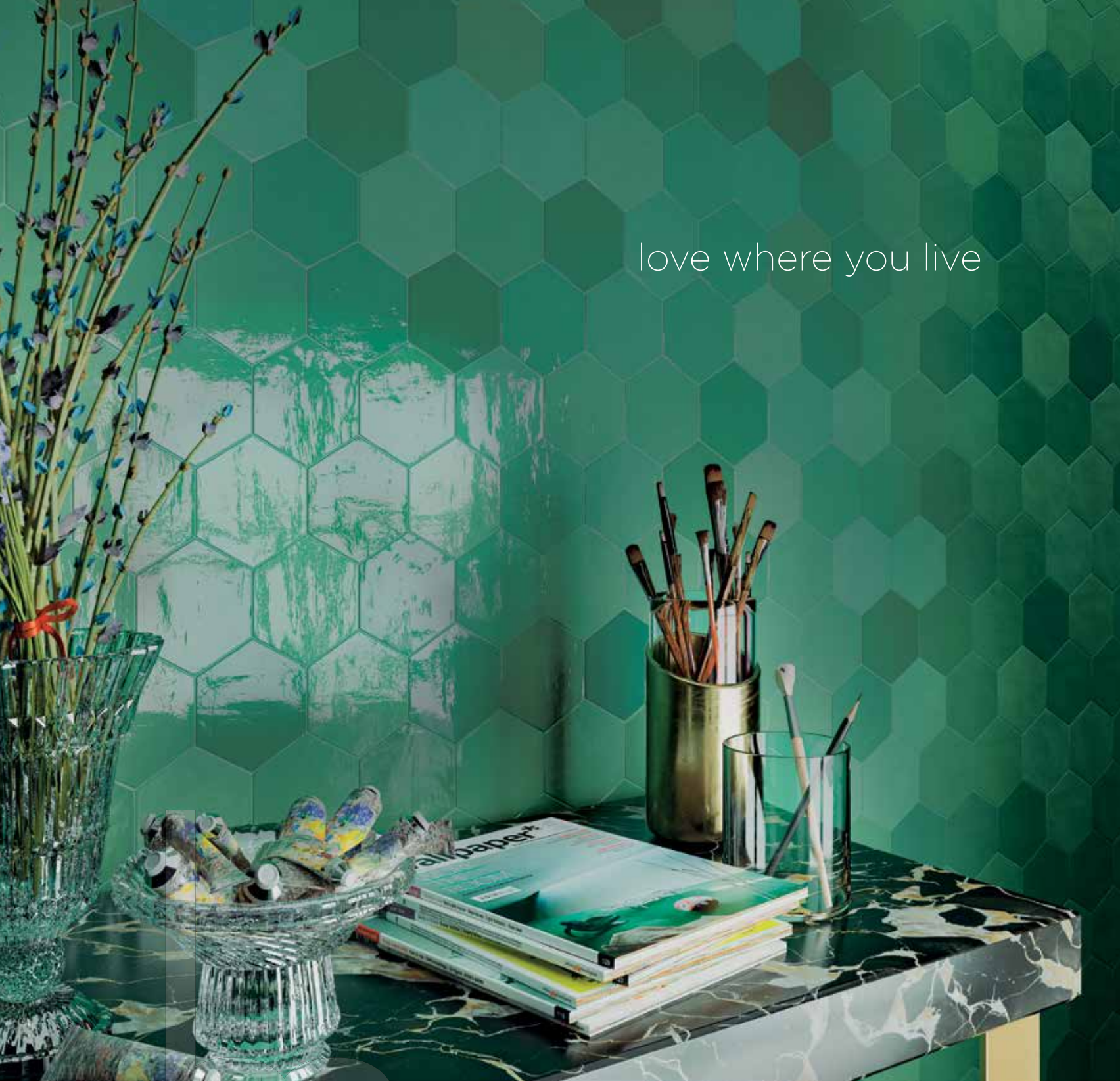
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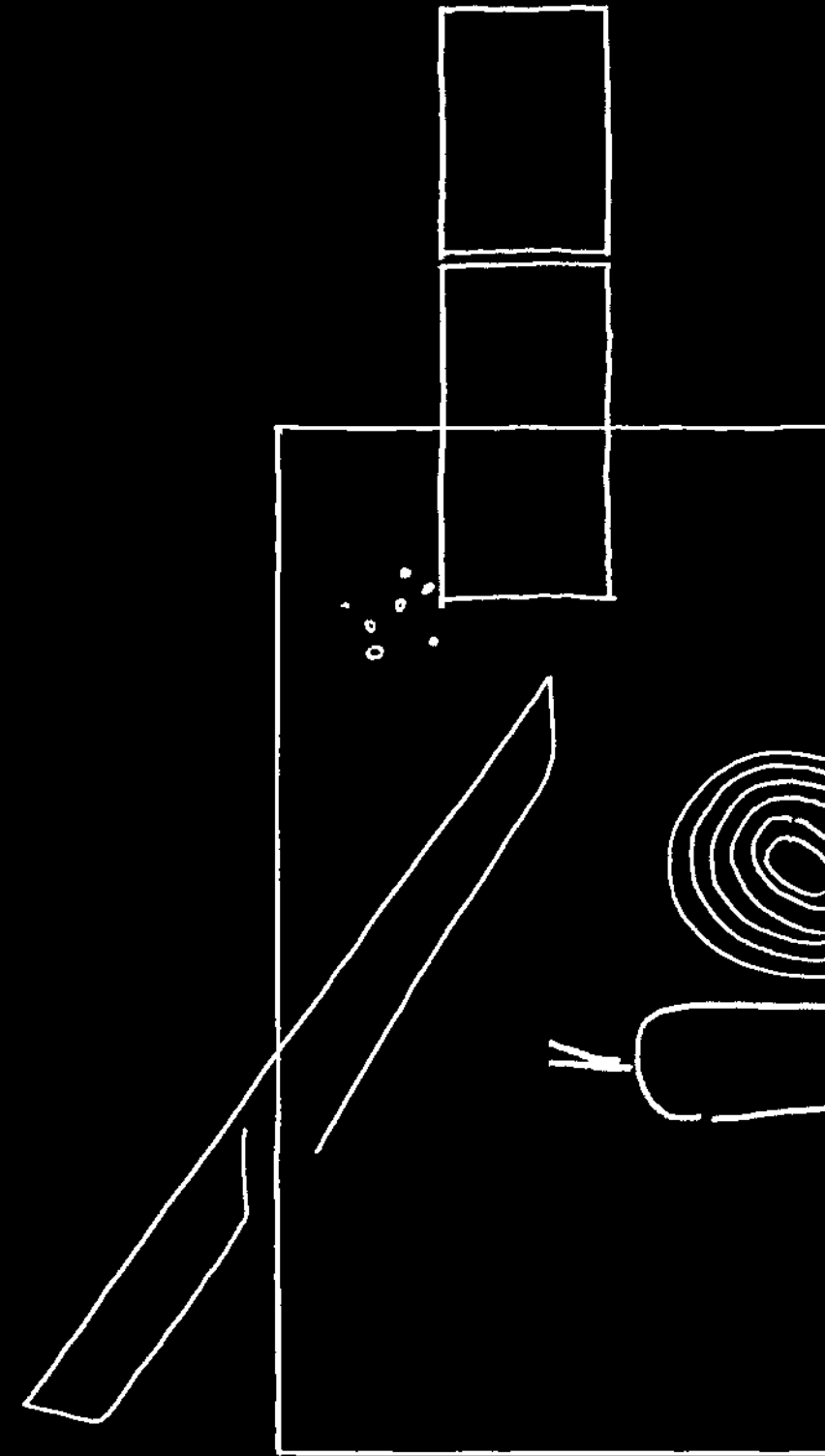


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MESSAGE / MATERIAL / TEXT / IDEAS - SUBSTANCE



FIELD STUDY / PAGE 36

This issue's survey of cool products includes a reinvented boombox, staircase-inspired side table, and fantastic felt artwork.



INSIDE >

ENJOY

SAVOR

CELEBRATE

BASK

REFLECT

REVIEW

INTEGRATE

CREATE

SMILE

YES YOU CAN.

TOC: WINTER 2020



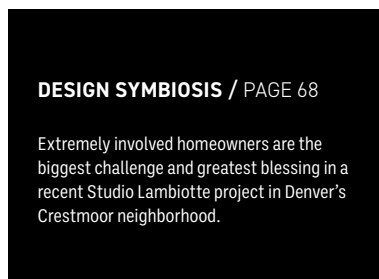
DESIGN! BUILD! PLAY! / PAGE 45

A pair of married architects in Sunnyside use leftover fence slats and a little quarantine-induced ingenuity to create a whimsical treehouse for their children.



FEELING FIKA / PAGE 54

Roth Sheppard draws inspiration from Swedish living rooms and the outdoors to create a Scandinavian sense of comfort in their award-winning design for new coffee house Kaffe Landskap.



DESIGN SYMBIOSIS / PAGE 68

Extremely involved homeowners are the biggest challenge and greatest blessing in a recent Studio Lambiotte project in Denver's Crestmoor neighborhood.



LIFFE CYCLE / PAGE 80

Colorado Building Workshop, The University of Colorado Denver's student-powered design-build program, tackles the challenge of creating two new sustainable bike shelters in the middle of a pandemic.



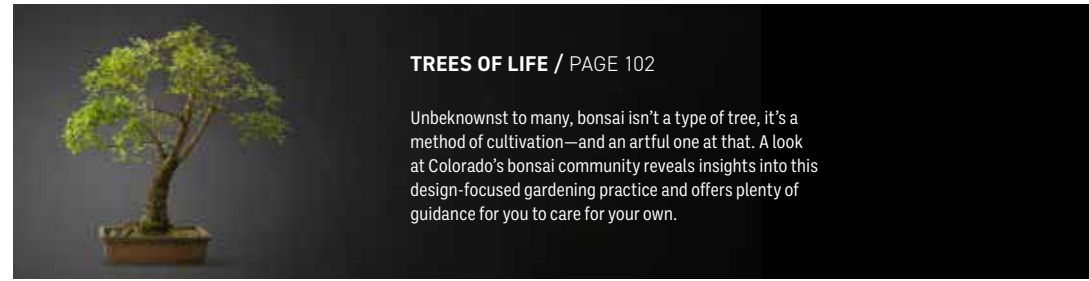
PERSPECTIVE PERSONIFIED / PAGE 88

Constrained by a semi-urban lot and pre-existing foundation, a home designed by Rowland+Broughton capitalizes on its Aspen views with an "upside down" floorplan and unique aperture windows inspired by a camera lens.



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TREES OF LIFE / PAGE 102

Unbeknownst to many, bonsai isn't a type of tree, it's a method of cultivation—and an artful one at that. A look at Colorado's bonsai community reveals insights into this design-focused gardening practice and offers plenty of guidance for you to care for your own.



MID-CENTURY MODERN TODAY / PAGE 112

Passion for Mid-century modern architecture and design has been on an almost 20 year run. How has its appeal evolved, where are we today, and will it endure for another 20 years? Writer Elizabeth Ellis explores these questions and looks at the difference between the trendy and the timeless.



GOOD BONES / PAGE 116

An Arapaho Hills remodel by ArcDen Studio carefully combines historical and innovative elements to create a mid-century-inspired modern retreat for humans and dogs alike.



MAY, THEIR WAY / PAGE 126

Two seasoned Cliff May renovators ditch mid-century purism for an aesthetic that balances their personal taste with period authenticity in their Harvey Park home.



THE CHANGING FACE OF AIA / PAGE 134

Now working from her new mid-century modern abode in Apple Blossom Lane, AIA Communications Director Amy Dvorak chats with Modern In Denver about how the century-old architecture organization is making diversity and inclusivity a priority.



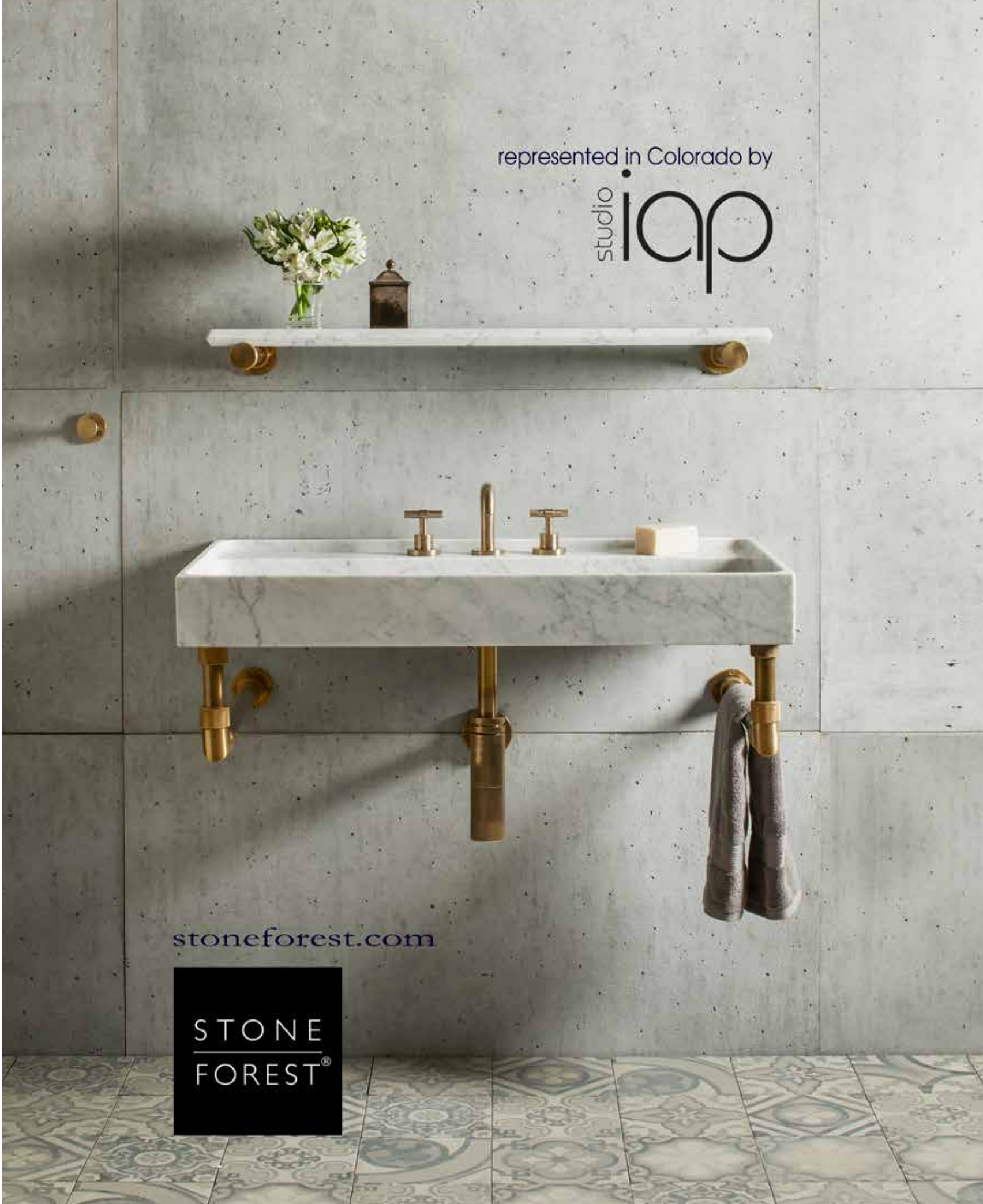
GOLD-MEDAL MUSEUM / PAGE 140

New York firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro brings world-class architecture to Colorado Springs with the opening of the United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum, one of the most accessible and interactive museums in the world.

INSIDE >

INVENT PAUSE CONSIDER RELAX REFLECT BUILD INTEGRATE IMAGINE LAUGH

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å være midt i smørøyet



I was around 12 years old when I first saw a Julius Shulman photograph. It was one of his iconic images of a modern home in California, shot around 1955. I hadn't seen anything like it. Growing up in suburban Aurora, I didn't know a house could hang over the side of a hill, have huge walls of glass and big, open rooms, and not be cluttered with furniture. It was astonishing and yet made perfect sense to me. I wanted to live in a house like that.

Shulman's images of homes designed by Richard Neutra, A. Quincy Jones, Pierre Koenig, and other innovative mid-century architects helped me understand the power and impact that good design could have and was a significant influence when I started *Modern In Denver* magazine.

Colorado's growth following World War II saw both new land being developed and an expanding population that was open to what was "new" and "next." This confluence provided great opportunities for regional talents like Victor Hornbein, Charles Haertling, Eugene Sternberg, Burnham Hoyt, and William Muchow to contribute to this fresh approach to design. It also generated a rich inventory of mid-century modern homes and buildings across our state, which continue to influence local architects and designers today.

Attention shifted away from mid-century design in the late seventies, but by 2000, the style began to gain a new generation of enthusiasts born in the seventies, eighties, and nineties. Demand for mid-century modern architecture exploded, and home prices started to climb. TV shows like *Mad Men* painted a stylish picture of mid-century design, and it seemed as if every other TV commercial featured a mid-century modern home as the backdrop.

Today, after almost 20 years of renewed interest in mid-century modern design, some may have begun to declare they are "over it" but interest is still vibrant and strong. For this issue, writer Elizabeth Ellis explores the

evolution of mid-century modern architecture and design and asks, "Where are we now?" She then visits two mid-century modern home renovations to see how they have adapted to modern living nearly 70 years after they were first built. Her stories begin on page 112.

In this issue, we also take a deep dive into the art of bonsai. Writer Alison Gwinn speaks to leaders in the local bonsai community and provides detailed tips on how to get your own start in this ancient Japanese art of cultivating small plants in pots based on principles of truth, goodness, and beauty. This story is on page 102.

We travel up to Aspen to explore a Rowland+Broughton-designed house whose striking "aperture windows" focus on the incredible surrounding views. See this house on page 88. We then head to Colorado Springs to get a first look at the new Olympic & Paralympic Museum, designed by world-renowned firm Diller Scofidio+Renfro. It is a world-class building, and one of the most accessible in the world—a perfect fit for the world-class athletes it honors. The story begins on page 140.

Here in Denver, we speak to interior designer Anna Lambiotte about the potential challenges and great rewards that can come from working with a highly engaged client; start reading on page 68. We learn about *fika* (the Scandinavian notion of "taking pause to relax and enjoy your friends") and how Roth Sheppard internalized *fika* in its design for independent coffee company Kaffe Landskap's two new Denver locations. The firm's use of natural wood and light has already received a number of awards. This story starts on page 54.

As we enter this challenging—and hopefully transitional—winter, I wish you *å være midt i smørøyet*, a Scandinavian phrase that means "to be in the middle of the butter eye," or simply "to be in a good place!"

Enjoy the issue and stay healthy and safe this winter.

William Logan
william@modernindenver.com

THE WINTER COVERS



For one of our covers, photographer Jess Blackwell captures the front of a renovated Cliff May home at dusk in the Harvey Park neighborhood. With a previous Cliff May renovation under their belt, the owners skillfully blended their personal taste without compromising the original intent of the architecture. This story starts on page 126. With over 9,000 aluminum panels and graceful curves, Diller Scofidio+Renfro's design for the recently opened Olympic and Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs captures the strength and elegance of the athletes it honors. Our cover, shot by photographer Nic Lehoux, shows the corner of the building next to the main entrance. This story is on page 140.

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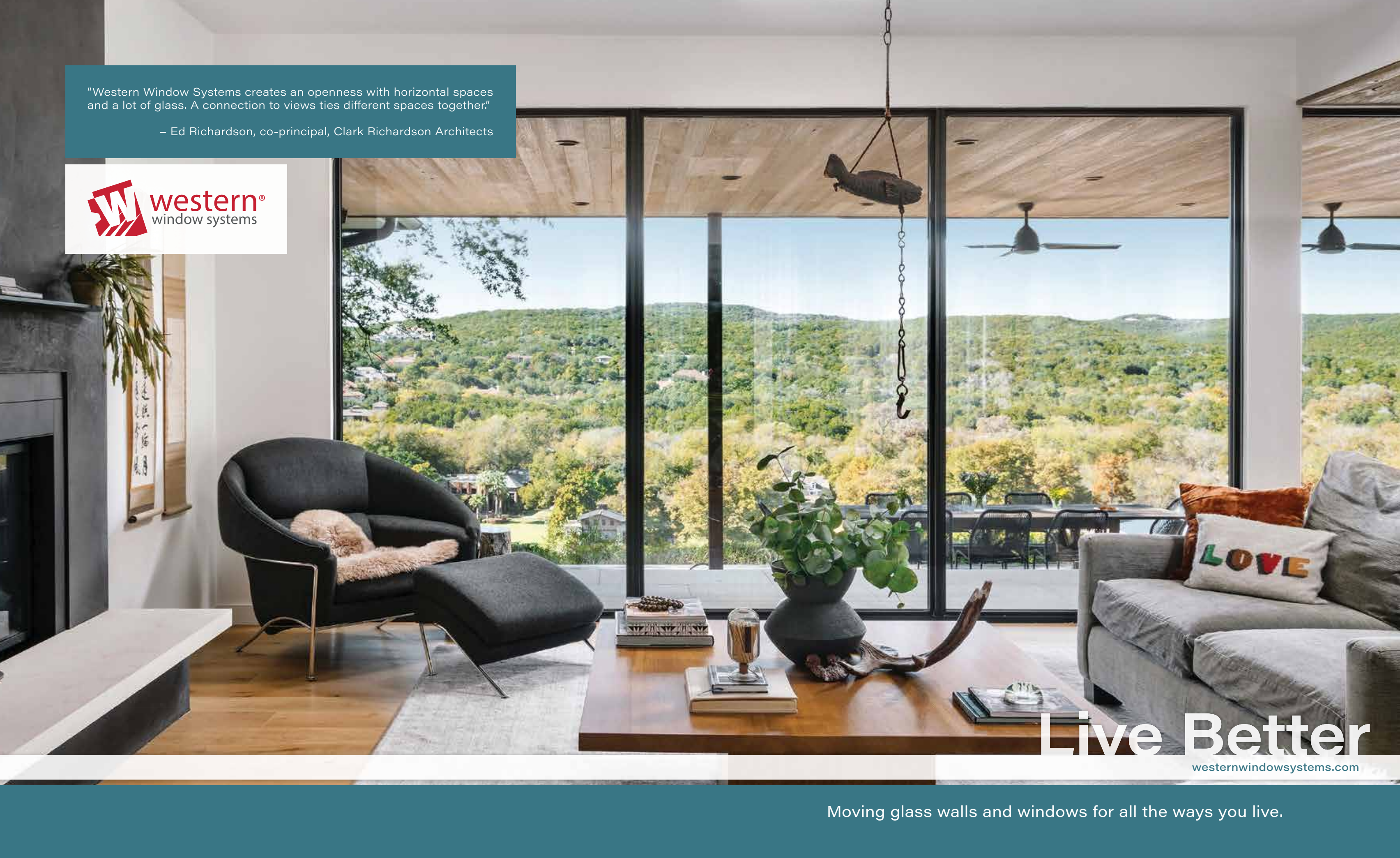
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- Lewis Carroll -

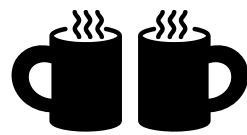
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WINTER ISSUE 2020 🍷



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



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using an iMac 27", Adobe InDesign CC, Illustrator CC, Photoshop CC, Trello, a
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pen, and a much-needed sense of humor.*

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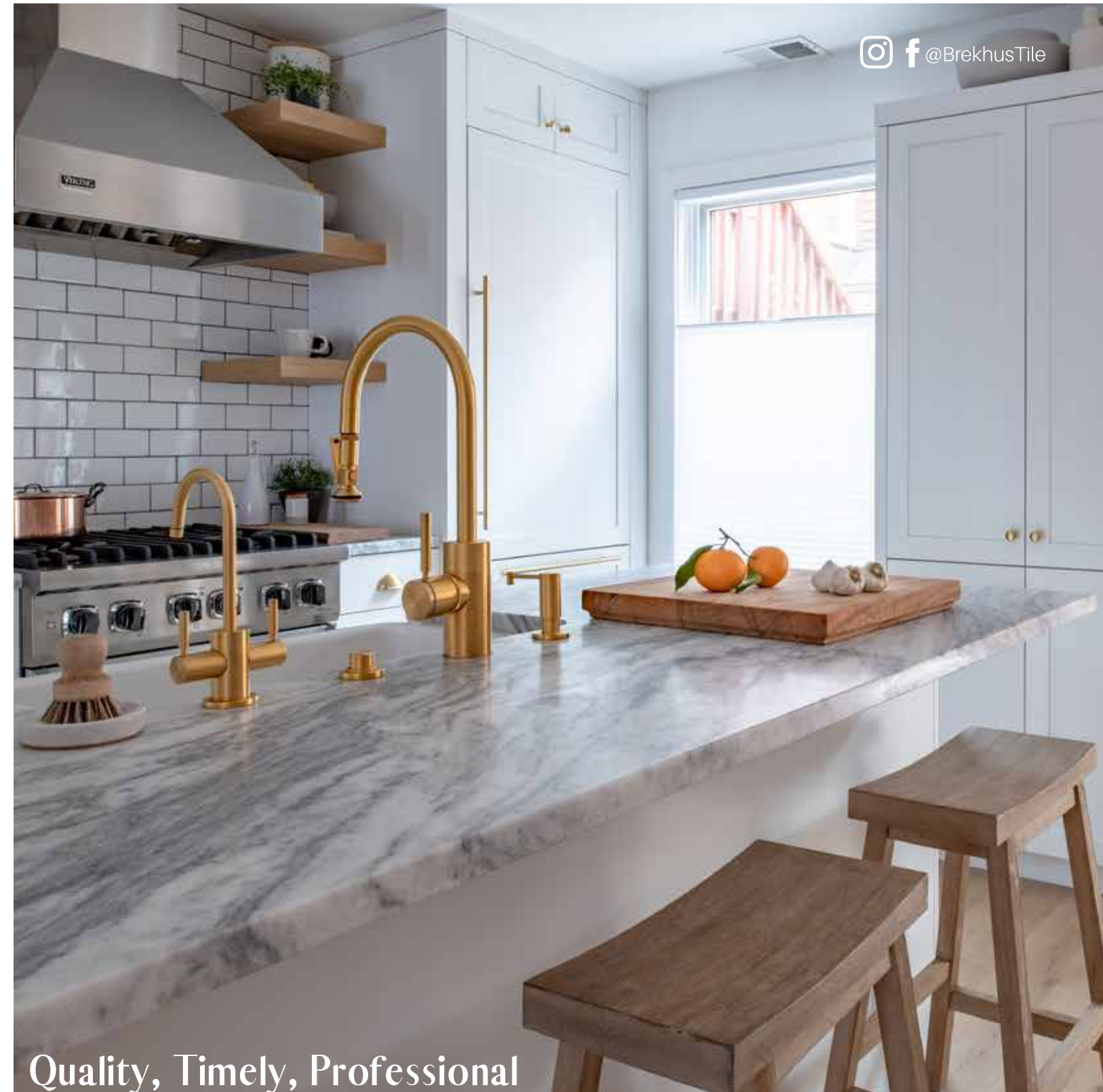
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INK ON PAPER / DESIGN BOOKS / PAGE 40

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WORDS: TAMARA CHUANG



SOUND CHECK

The reinvented boombox doesn't need a tape deck or radio (it has Bluetooth and audio inputs). But it does need really good sound. Teenage Engineering's OB-4 provides that quality audio with two bass drivers and a pair of neodymium tweeters. It's also portable. OB-4 is designed to—in the company's own words—be “carried on one shoulder with speaker elements facing the head.” But there's more. OB-4 adds a modern twist: the magic radio. The box records two hours worth of audio so one can rewind, remix, or just relisten in an endless loop.

+teenage.engineering



THE FELT FANTASTIC

David Hamlin, who grew up in Colorado, has a way with wall coverings. He was tapped by architectural firm Gensler to do a wall covering for a TV station in Los Angeles and he never went back. As the founder of Submaterial, based in Albuquerque, Hamlin creates sublime modern shapes and patterns made from 100 percent wool felt, like the striped “Myth Wall Panel.” Each stripe is a crisp snap where colors come together to literally make walls stand out.

+submaterial.com

FOR THE RECORD

Display a beloved record collection with the modern Record Rack by Tanner Goods, which manufactures the racks in Portland, Ore. The company has a reputation for fine leather goods, but, as the company's site says, “We create thoughtful products that are worth holding onto.” So, that's a solid yes to records. Made of bent stainless steel with a powder-coated finish, Record Rack holds around 40 records and is easy to grab and move around as needed.

+tannergoods.com

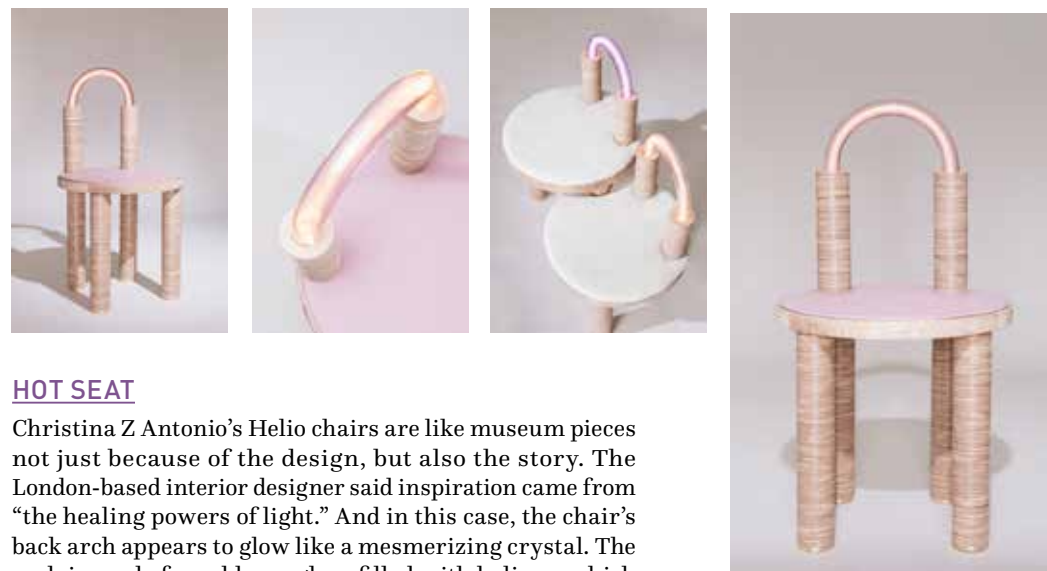




DOUBLE DUTY

Two wood pieces have a clever way of working together in Architect Bjarke Ballisager's Together and Apart series. The solid white oak wedges are cut on the diagonal to look like mini staircases. Pushed perfectly together, the interlocking wedges unify into a solid stool or a side table. When one tucks the "steps" of that, slide the "steps" to show some real edge, or add in more pieces to create larger or smaller shapes. There's no wrong way up.

+bjarkeballisager.com



HOT SEAT

Christina Z Antonio's Helio chairs are like museum pieces not just because of the design, but also the story. The London-based interior designer said inspiration came from "the healing powers of light." And in this case, the chair's back arch appears to glow like a mesmerizing crystal. The arch is made from blown glass filled with helium, which emits a soft neon glow, according to Design Milk.

+christinazantonio.com

architectural desires _ 04

BEAUTY



Arch
11

KITCHEN, CURATED

Fall in love with the taste of wood-fired pizza and you may find yourself craving a pizza oven for your backyard. You might just order up the latest from Gozney, makers of the Rocbox pizza oven. The new Dome, a professional-grade oven, is much larger so you can bake for a crowd. Visually, Dome has a retro feel, shaped like a ceramic hotel service bell. And it can be used to roast, smoke, steam, bake, and, most appetizingly, make lots of pizza.

+gozney.com



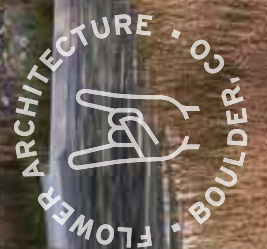
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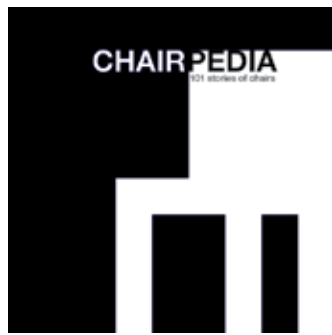
Don't call it an ebike, says ebike manufacturer Sondors. This is MadMods, an electric two wheeler that can be customized by mixing or matching bicycle parts from either street bikes (the Cafe kit), cruisers (Retro) or dirt bikes (Scrambler). The electric MadMods are build-to-suit with your choice of tires, handlebars or seats. What stays the same? The 28 mph, the range of 40 to 60 miles, and a 750-watt motor.

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FLOWER





HAVE A SEAT

Chairpedia, a new coffee-table book from Andreu World, tells the tales behind 101 iconic chairs, from Sigmund Freud’s custom seat to Lino Bo Bardi’s Bowl Chair.

WORDS: Alison Gwinn

The chair is a storied piece of furniture, whether we’re talking Mrs. Bates’s rickety rocker in *Psycho* or the seat that Rosa Parks refused to give up during the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott. Indeed, every chair has a story to tell, as evidenced by the new design lexicon *Chairpedia*, created by Spanish furnishings brand Andreu World.

In honor of its 65th anniversary this year, Andreu World came up with the idea for the book five years ago, gathering anecdotes about 101 iconic seats—from the iconic to the prosaic—for this coffee-table compendium, which features the writing of 20 authors, historians, and designers.

The stories—accompanied by 101 unique illustrations, 21 portraits and 245 classic chair drawings by Andreu World’s Antonio Solaz, in different graphic styles—was published by La Fábrica. “This book talks about our collective history while reviewing the history of some of the most famous chairs, the most avant-garde designs and

“While the chair works, man rests.” —Alessandro Mendini

also the humblest,” La Fábrica says. “And so, page by page, we see the importance of the chair in all aspects of our lives, in an exercise of humility and gratitude. Often we do not notice them, as usual, but they are nevertheless a real luxury, a tremendously valuable object not for their price or exclusivity, but for being part of our life more than we are able to see.”

WHO KNEW THAT THE CHAIR HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN SO MANY HIGH POINTS IN HISTORY?

Here are a few examples from *Chairpedia*, to whet your appetite:

César Ritz, the creator of the Ritz Hotels, asked his designers to reduce the size of chairs and tables so the Ritz’s rooms would appear larger.

Determined to subvert the dominant trend in industrial design (read: industrialist, male, and European), Lina Bo Bardi deliberately practiced a type of honest design, very Brazilian in ethos, to create her classic Bowl Chair.



While reading, Sigmund Freud liked to lie diagonally in a chair, his legs dangling over the arm, his



head unsupported and his book held upright—so his daughter gave him a chair designed by architect Felix Augenfeld for just that purpose.

The Wishbone chair, aka the Y or CH24 chair, is a Danish design, but it was influenced by 17th-century Ming Dynasty chairs. It has been produced nonstop since its invention in 1949, making it the sole rival to Thonet’s iconic No. 14 chair in popularity.

Author Gore Vidal had a secret: When at a party, he’d always take the chair next to someone in an extravagant dress (or a turban). When he did so, he knew he’d get his picture in the next day’s papers.

Writer Robert Louis Stevenson, a restless soul, once said his ideal work room should contain five tables but only two chairs. Indeed, the author of such classics as *Treasure Island* had his own favorite wicker chair, “very low and comfortable, backed by a corner,” where he would crouch low over his fictional works, a cigarette dangling from his long fingers.

Those are but a few of the 101 stories here—there could just as easily have been one thousand and one. So pull up a chair...and enjoy. ■



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THE QUARANTINE TREE HOUSE

TWO ARCHITECTS MAKE THE MOST OF THE QUARANTINE—AND SOME LEFTOVER TIMBER—BY DESIGNING A PLAYFUL TREE HOUSE FOR THEIR 4-YEAR-OLD SON.

DESIGN! BUILD! PLAY!

WORDS: Alison Gwinn
IMAGES: JC Buck

By now, most of us are all too familiar with the downsides of self-isolating at home with family.

But for architects Rebekah and Adam Wagoner, the pandemic provided a fortuitous moment to do something creative for their kids: to design and build a modern backyard tree house at their Sunnyside home.



Elijah, 4, in his new backyard tree house in Sunnyside. Wearing his own tool belt and ‘worker man boots,’ he helped his dad build the structure out of wood from an old fence, as well as donations that his architect parents found on Nextdoor.

THE QUARANTINE TREE HOUSE

“Like everybody, we’d been working at home together since March, just staring at this bad fence that was falling down between our property and our neighbor’s garage,” says Adam. “Meanwhile, our kids (four-year-old Elijah and 10-month-old Madelyn) were just bouncing off the walls. So one weekend, we tore down the fence. We were trying to figure out how to throw away the wood—it was just cedar slats—when we thought, ‘No, let’s make something out of it.’”

Designing around two nearby trees and an adjacent fence post, and supplementing the fence wood with things they found on nextdoor, the two put their heads together to create the structure, which has both vertical and horizontal two-by-fours, a pulley rope with a bucket, a swing underneath, and a hinged ladder (to keep enemies—and eventually even little sisters—at bay).

When it came to building, even little Elijah got involved. “He had his own little tool belt—which my mom made—and his snow boots, which he called his ‘worker man boots,’ and he’d hammer on things,” says Adam. “He said the horizontal pieces of wood were his bookshelves, so he’d fill them with little treasures, a rock or a ball or something.” (They followed up this project with an inside tree house and playroom in a vaulted space inside their home.)

“We’ve always lived in really small spaces,” says Rebekah. “In the Netherlands, our apartment was 250 square feet, and this house is around 800, so it’s pretty tight for a family of four. We’ve always taken on the challenge of how to make spaces multi-use. It’s really fun. Both being architects, we talk about space use all the time.”

The Wagoners are an unusual pair of married architects whose

studies and careers have taken them all over the world. Having grown up in Colorado Springs (Rebekah) and McPherson, Kan. (Adam), the two both earned five-year master’s degrees in architecture at Kansas State University and started dating while studying abroad in Italy. After graduation, their first stop was Wichita, where they designed and built a restaurant for Adam’s uncle and also rehabbed old downtown buildings into mixed-use projects.

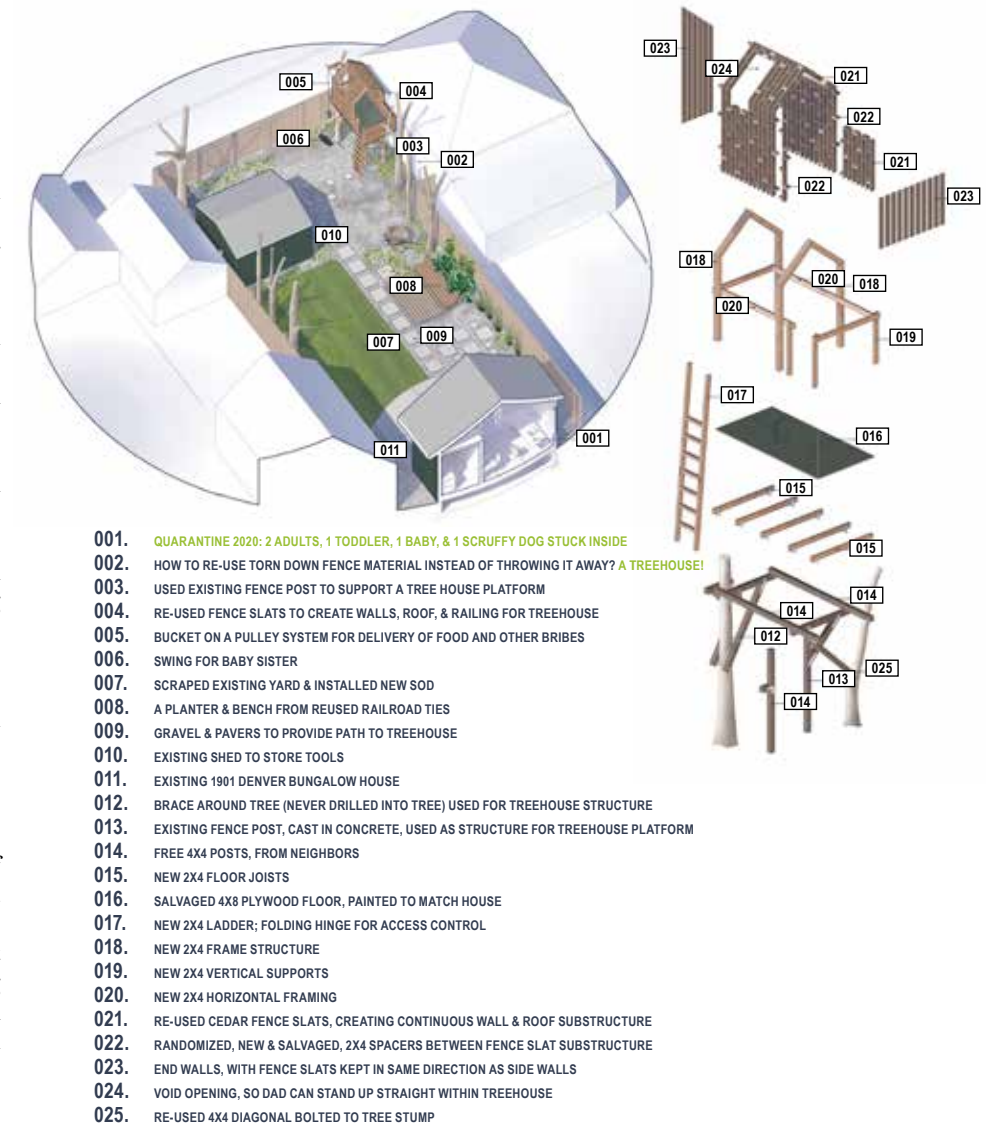
After that: grad school. First, they took off for the Netherlands, where Rebekah studied sustainable development at the Technical University of Delft. They then returned stateside, to New Haven, Conn., where Adam got a graduate degree at Yale and Rebekah worked for famed Argentine-American architect Cesar Pelli at Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects. Then it was off to Mexico City, where they worked on projects for one of Adam’s grad



school professors at Tatiana Bilbao Estudio, before moving to Colorado in 2016.

The two now work for local firms—Adam, 35, for Open Studio Architecture, and Rebekah, 34, for Gensler—but since 2009, they’ve also kept their own business, [RAW] Design (the initials stand for Rebekah Adam Wagoner). “Our firm has always been in the background,” Rebekah says. “Whenever we do a project together, it’s under that,” adds Adam. Adam also has a podcast, “Architect-ing,” for which he interviews Colorado architects about their lives and work, with the goal of building stronger connections within the design community.

The tree house was an unusual build for them—and a welcome one. “Normally we would really, really study something like this. We did do a bunch of digital models for it, but then we got to the point of just saying, ‘We just need to start building it.’ A lot of our projects are large or theoretical. It was a great moment for us to have something tangible that we could explore and get done.” Elijah and Madelyn would surely agree. ■



**WOOD
BURNING
STOVES**



LIGHT ~~MY~~ YOUR FIRE

GREAT DESIGN AND HIGH EFFICIENCY MARK A
NEW GENERATION OF WOOD BURNING STOVES

Nothing beats a wood fire: the snap and crackle of logs aflame, the hypnotic glow of burning embers... warming body and soul on many a winter's night. But the brightening embrace is darkened somewhat by the realities of climate change, especially in view of this year's unprecedented fire season.*

Even so, compared to the true carbon footprint of propane or natural gas, burning wood for fuel is not the bugaboo it's been cast as. While woodstoves emit more fine particulate matter than natural gas appliances, all of that "clean" energy comes with a high carbon price tag, not limited to disruption of communities at the extraction source, high methane emissions (a gas that traps heat at an exponentially greater rate than CO₂), and the high carbon costs

WORDS: Joseph Starr

of transportation. So especially if you can harvest your own wood (as many of us in the front range and surrounding communities can), it's a viable heating alternative—just remember to only use “standing dead” or fallen trees. We need the live ones to continue sequestering carbon!

Here's a roundup of some of the top woodstoves on the market today. All of these use state-of-the-art technology of multiple chamber combustion, meaning first the wood is burned, then the particulates and gases are captured in a secondary chamber and burned again—resulting in greater efficiency and fewer emissions.

1 BEST IN EUROPE THOR BY MCZ FIREPLACE

Europe's Ecodesign 2022 initiative mandates restrictions on efficiency and particulate emissions, and MCZ Fireplace offers multiple models that not only meet the new requirements but have been doing so for years. Thor is a slick and compact stove with an elliptical design. Its sealed structure means it gathers all the oxygen it needs from outside for greater burn control and very little impact on indoor air quality.



Thor by MCZ Fireplace



Colorado's burn ban technically expired on October 1. However, this restriction only applied to outdoor fires with no effect on indoor wood burning. Counties in the Denver Metro area (including Boulder) are regulated by “Air Quality Action” days during the Nov. 1 – March 31 heating season. On these days of high particulate emissions, only those with EPA Phase II or Colorado Phase III approved woodstoves (or approved pellet stoves) are permitted to burn wood. This year the EPA enacted Phase IV restrictions, meaning new woodstoves will be permitted for installation only if they meet the new requirements of maximum 2.5 grams per hour emissions. Both Stuv 30 and Rais Q-Tee 2 meet these new requirements. Because Europe uses a different method than the U.S. to calculate emissions, Speetbox and Thor are not approved for U.S. use, even though they are exceptionally clean-burning stoves.



Rais Q-Tee 2

**WOOD
BURNING
STOVES**

2 BEST AVAILABLE IN U.S.
RAIS Q-TEE 2

Manufactured in Denmark for distribution out of Oregon, the Q-Tee 2 is a triumph of space economy. It's super compact yet offers an oversized 17" firebox, allowing room for larger logs. This also translates to a large window with a great view of the fire. The Q-Tee 2 is a convection stove, meaning air is pulled from the base of the fireplace and up, so circulation remains high and the sides of the stove never get too hot. The Q-Tee 2's low emissions rate of .9 grams/hr. easily exceeds the latest EPA Phase IV restrictions on new stoves.

3 BEST LOCALLY AVAILABLE
STUV-30 COMPACT H

Like Thor, the Stuv-30 Compact H (available from Rocky Mountain Fireplace) is a cool and contained piece. A rotating drum feature adds novelty while always giving a good view of the flames, and a sealed combustion circuit with outdoor air capture improves efficiency. Lastly, Stuv-30 offers custom floor plate options for enhanced aesthetics.



STUV-30 Compact H



4 BEST OVERALL
PHILIPPE STARCK SPEETBOX

Back to Europe we go for Philippe Starck's Sublime Speetbox—an eco-friendly and innovative concept that transcends the notion of heating appliance to enter the realm of modular design. Speetbox features a small firebox surrounded by any number of matching units that may be used to store firewood or capture heat. The stones therein provide a compelling look while also maximizing efficiency—offering diffuse warmth long after the fire has gone out.








Speetbox



**BEFORE YOU
STRIKE A MATCH**

HOWS AND WHYS OF
WOODBURNING IN COLORADO

-  All stoves meeting EPA Phase II requirements are exempt from "Air Quality Action Day" restrictions, meaning you can burn wood or pellets year-round.
-  Older and non-conforming stoves may burn on days when no restrictions are in place.
-  Restrictions vary outside of the front range, so check your county or municipality for details.
-  Wood harvesting is allowed throughout Colorado with an approved permit, however the process is a bit complicated this year because of COVID and the high forest fire activity. For information see the USDA Forest Service at: www.fs.usda.gov/detail/arp/passes-permits/forestproducts
-  You should only burn "seasoned" firewood, meaning the wood has been dead for at least year in order to dry properly. You should never cut down live trees. Because of recent pine beetle infestations, Colorado's forests have an abundance of standing dead or fallen trees that are good for immediate burning.



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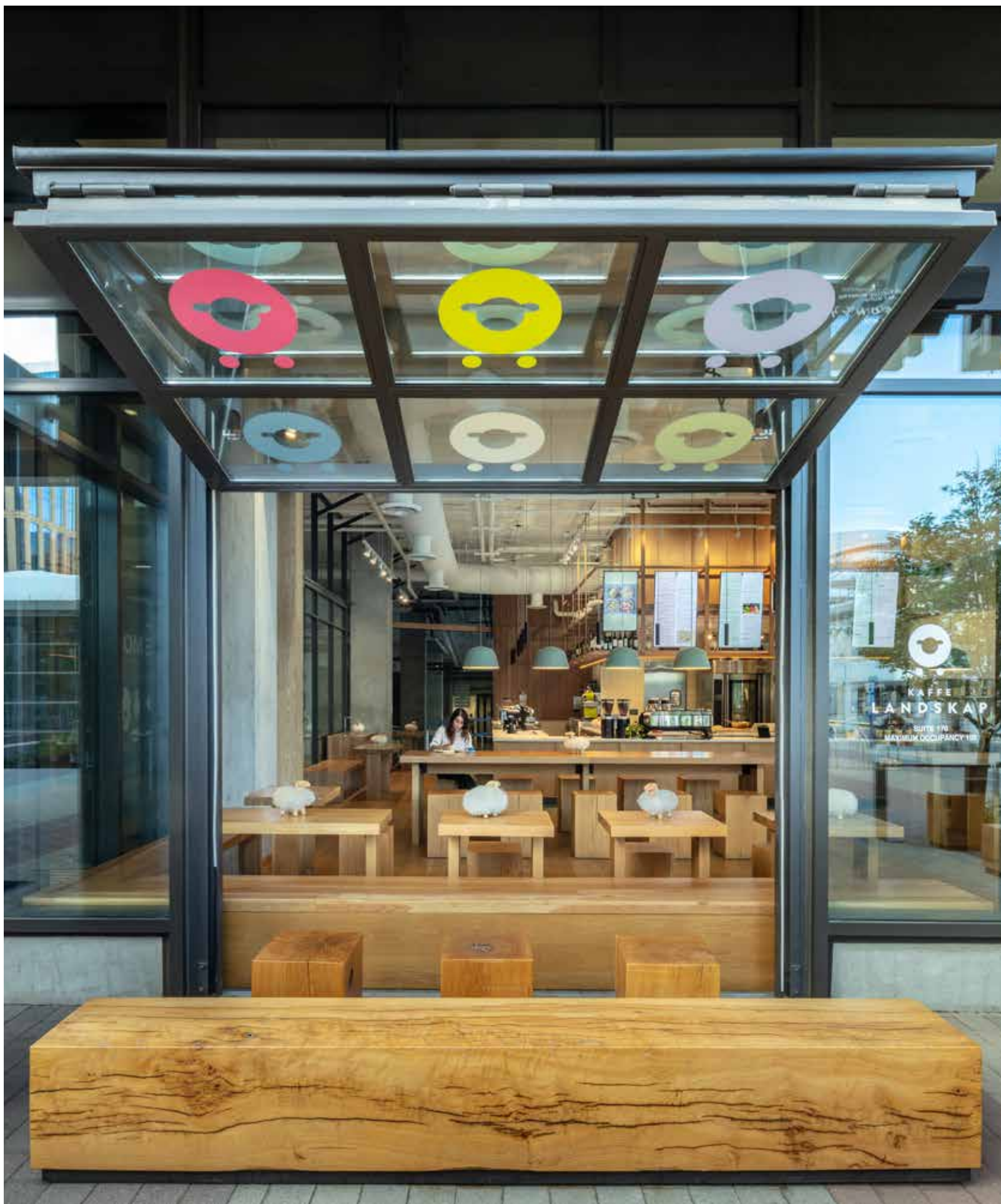
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RELAX, SLOW DOWN, HAVE SOME COFFEE

FEELING FIKA

ROTH SHEPPARD'S DESIGNS FOR KAFFE LANDSKAP EMPHASIZE NATURE AND A SCANDINAVIAN SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND COMFORT.

“Välkommen.”

That is the message embedded in the design of the new flagship Kaffe Landskap coffee shop and bakery in the Union Station neighborhood.

Warm, minimalistic, and above all welcoming, the café, which opened in late 2019, employs a simple palette of materials and a distinctly Scandinavian mindset to create a strikingly modern sense of comfort and ease.

“We wanted it to feel like a place where people would take a pause, enjoy themselves, and not feel in a rush,” says Chris Holzwart, project manager at Roth Sheppard Architects, the Denver firm behind the modern, playful design.

Roth Sheppard was brought on board for Kaffe Landskap when the independent coffee company’s owner decided to branch out from New York City and launch two new cafés in Denver (the second one is about a mile away, at 1401 Lawrence St. in LoDo). Owner Tomas Tjarnberg grew up in the mountains of Sweden, so Denver was a natural fit. He knew he wanted an open, airy space that matched the name (*kaffe* means coffee, and *landskap* means landscape) and felt connected to the land—or, as the company puts it, “a landscape of the community, existing to promote a sense of belonging and a balanced lifestyle, where people draw inspiration from the great outdoors and nature.”

Roth Sheppard Architects started with their own deep dive into that concept, knowing they also

WORDS: Alison Gwinn
IMAGES: James Florio



“WITH SCANDINAVIAN ROOTS, WE BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY OF THE SIMPLE THINGS IN LIFE. WE APPRECIATE THE GIFTS OF NATURE, THE POWER OF COLLABORATION, AND THE IMPACT OF A SMILE.” —Kaffe Landskap



“(FIKA) MEANS ENJOYING THE SPACE YOU’RE IN AND CREATING A PLAYFUL, RELAXING ATMOSPHERE, SOMETHING THAT’S NOT TOO SERIOUS AND FEELS APPROACHABLE.”

– Adam Harding, Partner, Roth Sheppard

FEELING FIKA



wanted to create a space where people could relax and recharge.

“We did our own research, to elevate these cafés to a new level for the company’s rebranding for Colorado,” says Holzwart. “Tomas is an active person, and Denver has an active population. He cares a lot about health and that’s reflected in his brand.”

Roth Sheppard wanted the space to imbue the feeling of *fika*, a Scandinavian term for a social ritual that involves taking time

each day to pause and enjoy friends’ company, often over a cup of coffee and a bite to eat. “It means enjoying the space you’re in and creating a playful, relaxing atmosphere, something that’s not too serious and feels approachable,” says Adam Harding, partner at Roth Sheppard.

The team emphasized the notion of community in a number of ways, including the overall layout. “The design is composed of perimeter seating around the windows, with two-tops as small meeting spots,” says Holzwart. “There are two long

community tables in the center of the space, for larger gatherings. Our goal was to offer different styles of meet-ups, to contribute to that notion of *fika*. The stacked timber benches that are both inside and outside allow people to sit and hang out on them in informal and playful ways, facing inwards or even outwards towards the patio.”

Wanting to use nature’s own materials for the space, Roth Sheppard chose tongue-and-groove white oak flooring to



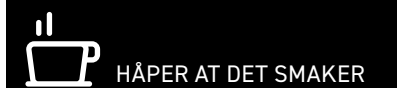
represent the land and designed all of the smooth-to-the-touch, solid white-oak timber furniture to look both natural and playful. “We looked at Swedish toy blocks, which are charming and simple,” says Holzwart. “Because we wanted the furniture to represent that simplicity, with no exposed hardware, we wanted to create an atmosphere of warmth and authenticity with the furniture.” (That sense of fun is also seen in the fluffy handcarved sheep that sit on many of the tables, as well as the sheep logos on the windows that take their shape from an upside down Swedish Ö.)

Adding color and texture, Kaffe Landskap’s bakery floors and walls are clad in a Swedish cement tile in lively patterns, meant to mimic the vividly tiled, wood-fired stoves called *kakelugns* that are a common

feature of Swedish living rooms. “Traditional *kakelugns* are the pride of a family, and they really warm a house,” says Holzwart. “We knew that the warm tone in the big, solid white oak pieces might seem monolithic, so we asked ourselves, ‘How do we get some vibrancy and texture into the space and contribute to both *fika* and *hygge* and make the space feel authentic?’”

The shelving over the L-shaped coffee bar continues that feel. “We pulled metaphorically from the notion of being in a forest,” says Harding. “You have the solid forest floor, which has a very woody texture—it’s grounded. Then the trees rise up from the ground—that’s the furniture. And in trying to translate the layers of a forest, where you get more lightness as you get higher, we added suspended open shelving to bring the scale of

In designing the solid oak furniture, Roth Sheppard was inspired by Swedish toy blocks, which are charming and playful but also solid. “We wanted to create an atmosphere of warmth and authenticity with the furniture,” says Chris Holzwart, project manager at the firm. The glass exterior emphasizes the indoor-outdoor design and a sense of community.





"IT IS COMMON IN SWEDEN TO WANT TO CAPTURE AS MUCH SUNLIGHT AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN. THERE ARE LONG STRETCHES OF THE YEAR WHERE THE SUN IS UP ONLY FOR A FEW HOURS A DAY. BUT THEIR SHORT SUMMER HAS NEARLY 24 HOURS OF DAYLIGHT BECAUSE THEY ARE SO FAR NORTH. SUNLIGHT TURNS OUT TO BE A PRECIOUS COMMODITY."

—Chris Holzwart, Project Manager, Roth Sheppard

FEELING FIKA

the space down and make it feel intimate. Vertical grooved slat walls hearken back to the idea of the dense Swedish forest as well, representing the verticality of the tall trees. "It's like walking along a forest trail," says Harding. "It's supposed to give a sense of harmony between solidity and openness, as well. We wanted customers to be able to see into the bakery, because the food is all natural and handmade." The farm-to-table menu includes not only a range of drinks (small-batch coffees, teas, kombuchas, beer, smoothies, and cold-pressed juices) but also healthy bowls (like the Golden Turmeric Bowl and the Matcha Mana Bowl), Greek yogurt bowls, health bars, and pastries, made fresh daily.

Under the 16-foot ceilings, simple yet oversized Swedish pendant lights painted a soft sage green are suspended low over the community tables to enhance the feeling of intimacy. The colors tie into the floor tiles around the service area as well.

Finally, thanks to extensive perimeter windows and vertical bifolding glass doors that surround the space, the café is suffused with light pouring deep into the interior. "It is common in Sweden to want to capture as much sunlight as you possibly can. There are long stretches of the year where the sun is up only for a few hours a day. But their short summer has nearly 24 hours of daylight because they are so far north. Sunlight turns out to be a precious commodity," says Holzwart.

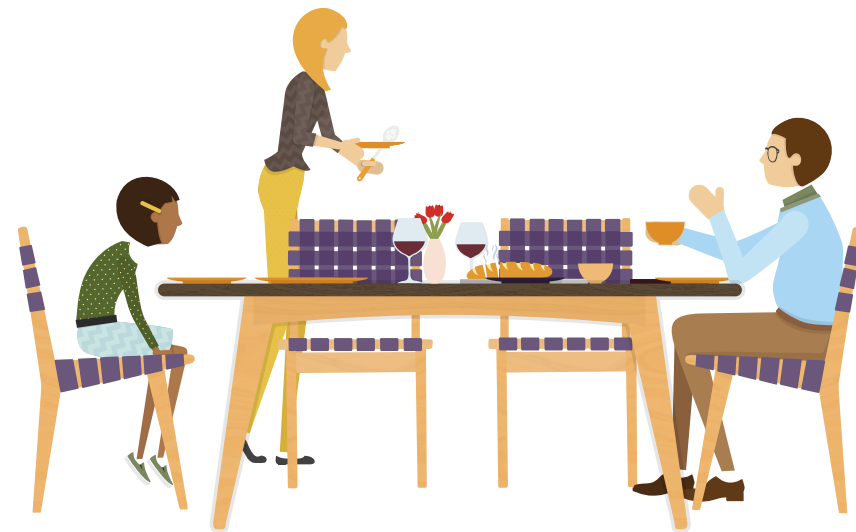
The surrounding glazing helps blur the lines between the indoors and the outdoors and between public and private. "It's really about creating this welcoming, inviting space that feels like it is extending from the outside in and the inside out," adds Harding.



The space recently won the Denver Award of Distinction, The IIDA Best Award for the Eat & Drink category, and the Award of Merit for AIA Colorado, with the judges noting the inner-exterior space connections: "Both feel unified through the use of wood furniture in each seating area and under the windows in the building façade. Very fluid from inside to out. The rest of the materials palette feels hospitable but lets the wood shine as the main attraction. Strong appeal to the space given its immediate proximity to the light rail stop at Union Station."

No matter how you say it—"Bienvenue," "Croeso," "Fáilte," "Dobrodosli"—the café greets visitors with a warm "Welcome." ■

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CEMENT

Flaviker
 Re_Tour, Ivory field tiles and a Decor Mix

2021 TILE TRENDS

NUOVO DI ZECCA BRAND NEW!

With trade shows like Cersaie canceled due to the pandemic, the world of Italian ceramic tile forges on with bold new designs.

For over 35 years, tens of thousands of people have descended on Bologna, Italy, to attend Cersaie (pronounced chur-SIGH), one of the largest trade shows of Italian tile. Like many events this year, Cersaie was canceled due to the pandemic, but that hasn't stopped Italian manufacturers from releasing new products that push the boundaries of versatility and design in the world of ceramics.

Unlike the more somber tone the world has taken on in 2020, the realm of Italian tile is looking quite cheery, with trends focusing on the natural, colorful, and playful. In terms of color palette, Italian manufacturers were inspired by autumn, focusing on organic hues like earthy browns, golden yellows, and burgundy reds, as well as the Pantone color of the year, classic blue. As for finishes, high-gloss tiles have made a comeback this year, offering a good option for surfaces that need frequent cleaning and adding drama to a space. Trends for patterns also looked distinctly playful, emphasizing the whimsical spontaneity of confetti and the bold geometric patterns of Art Deco. We've collected some of our favorites to inspire your next project. *Ciao!*

- TOP TRENDS FOR 2021
- AUTUMNAL
 - CEMENT
 - BLUE-GREEN
 - CONFETTI
 - ART-DECO
 - HIGH GLOSS



CONFETTI
 Atlas Concorde
 Prism Wiggle Decor



CEMENT
 ABK
 Blend Concrete Grey



HIGH GLOSS

Left:
Vogue
System

Right:
Ceramica Bardelli
Cromia



HIGH GLOSS

Porcelanosa
Crystal, Blue
Available from Porcelanosa Denver



BLUE GREEN

WOW
Ensō, Nakama & Kintsugi Green
Available from Decorative Materials



ART-DECO

Left: Ceramiche Piemme
Opulence

Center: Fioranese
Granum, Deco Arch Grigio

Right: FAP
Sheer



CEMENT

Porcelanosa
Bottega, Topo and Caliza
Available from Porcelanosa Denver

RIGHT HERE.
While the newest tiles to premiere at Cersaie will drive the look of design in 2021, some of them might not be available until spring of 2021 due to Covid-19 delays, but right here in Colorado, right now, there are many great tiles that are right on trend!

AUTUMNAL



Top: Ceramica Sant'Agostino
Fun, Solidbrick White

Above: Edimax Astor
Golden Age, Beige



Caesar
Materica Cementina, Mix Scorcio



Settecento
Matter, Bango Rope Sticks, Orange



CONFETTI

Iris Ceramica
Venezia, Zinc
Available from Decorative Materials



HIGH GLOSS

WOW
Bejmat, White Gloss and Ebony Gloss
Available from Crossville Studios

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DESIGN SYMBIOSIS

Working hand in glove with the homeowners, Studio Lambiotte turned a new build in Crestmoor into a sophisticated, family-friendly—and very personal—home.

HOW DOES A DESIGNER WORK WITH A VERY INVOLVED HOMEOWNER? LET US COUNT THE WAYS. SHE LISTENS. SHE OFFERS OPTIONS. SHE LISTENS SOME MORE. AND THEN SHE REFINES, REFINES, AND REFINES.

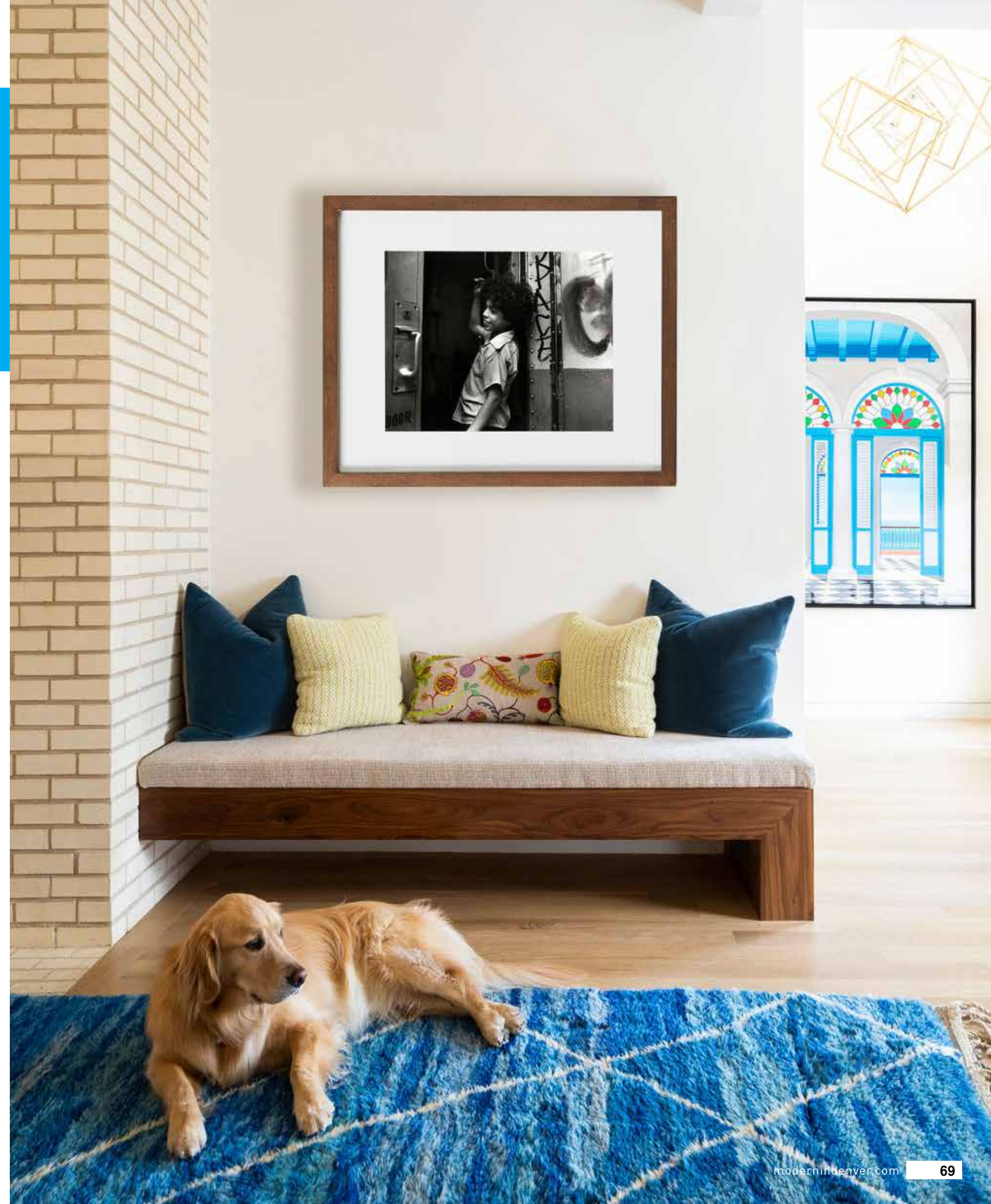
That was the case with this new build in Crestmoor, whose interiors were created by Anna Lambiotte, owner of Studio Lambiotte, with constant, careful input from the homeowners.

“The biggest challenge of the project was also its biggest blessing,” says Lambiotte. “The owners were extremely involved in every decision and relentless in their drive to make the best decisions possible. But that really pushed us to be our most creative selves and be even more attentive to all the little details. There was consistent synergy between our two camps that was refreshing and powerful.”

The goal for both Lambiotte and the homeowners (parents to three children, ages 9, 13, and 15) was to create a family home with staying power—something that had compelling, sophisticated design but was also unpretentious and even playful.

The couple had been living nine blocks away in Hilltop when the wife first saw this Crestmoor lot while out on a run and thought it might be the perfect location for their dream home. “We had drawn out our dream house on a napkin 20 years ago,” she says. “I wouldn’t say this home turned out exactly like that drawing, but that was the inspiration for it.”

WORDS: Alison Gwinn
IMAGES: Jess Blackwell



Both the homeowners and designer Anna Lambiotte wanted a home that was sophisticated enough for entertaining but comfortable enough for their entire family, including their beloved golden retriever.



The design of the great room all started with a spectacular blue Marc Phillips Barchi rug. “Blue is my favorite color,” says the husband. Adds Lambiotte: “I was so stoked when they went for that rug. It’s like a magical rug, because the blue goes with everything so it functioned as a neutral.”



“I love the dining room,” says the husband. “It really is the center of the house. The way the doors open up, it feels like you’re outside, because there are no columns and the corner just goes away. Denver gives you so many days off from winter.” The custom expandable dining table, built by local woodworker Ethan Hutchinson, is surrounded by refurbished vintage chairs from 1st Dibs and sits under a Roll & Hill light fixture.

The vibe they were after, says her husband, was an amalgamation of styles: “Something modern and Swedish, with an American vernacular, touches of New York, and the bohemianism of Miami.” Adds the wife: “We wanted something modern but warm and easy to live in, a family home that was good for entertaining.”

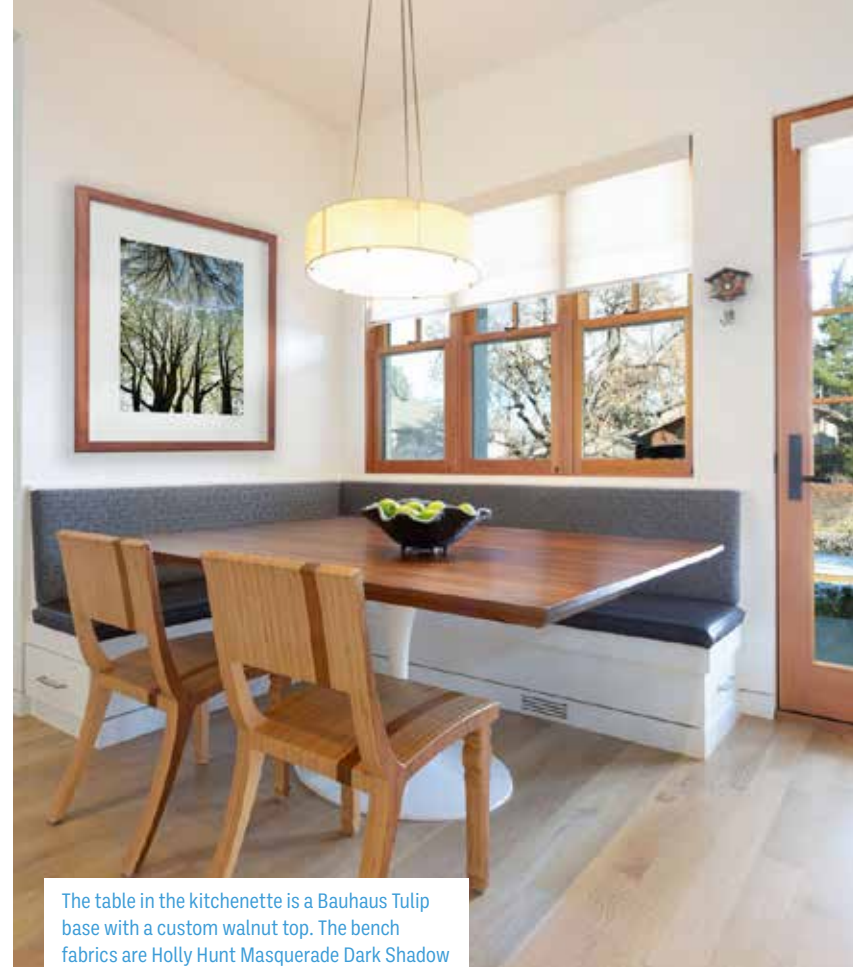
“From the very beginning,” says Lambiotte, “they knew they wanted a house to be impeccably designed but not fancy or fragile. They wanted it to function well so their family could really enjoy it. That meant high design that was carefully thought out.”

Making the design process easier was the fact that Lambiotte was friends with the homeowners. She had actually known the husband since childhood because their fathers worked together, and today he is a colleague of Lambiotte’s husband.

“Already knowing them made it easier for me to generate concepts,” says Lambiotte, who was brought on board after the construction—by Iris Building Group—was well under way.

“I enjoy the process, and the sooner I am involved, the more the project is part of my DNA. With all of my clients, I do a ton of research and come up with a number of concept designs. I visualize spaces as early as possible, which helps the creative process.”

Early on, Lambiotte usually has an overall idea of what an entire house will look like, but designing every room at once can be overwhelming. “It’s daunting and scary for clients, who will say, ‘How do we get from point A to point B?’ So it’s important to create trust. The process is really like putting a puzzle together. You do the edges first, the corners next, and then you start filling it in.”



The table in the kitchenette is a Bauhaus Tulip base with a custom walnut top. The bench fabrics are Holly Hunt Masquerade Dark Shadow and Perennials Concho. The Marsha pendant is from Arteriors. The chairs came from the client’s previous house. “When a client moves from another home,” says Lambiotte, “we always get the question, ‘Can we keep some of our furniture?’ I always say, ‘If you have an heirloom or something special and unique, show me. But let me design the home first, and we’ll see which pieces we can fit in.’”

In this case, Lambiotte spearheaded the selection of all finishes, including the flooring, baseboards, wall colors, lighting, decorative fixtures, cabinetry and countertops, tile, plumbing, and window coverings.

“It all starts with the flooring, because that’s the biggest visual material in a home,” says Lambiotte, who has a staff of three and cites designers Kelly Wearstler, Jay Jeffers, Amber Lewis, and Sarah Sherman Samuel among her inspirations. “I’ll also suggest a couple of different door styles and window styles and colors and find ideas for the kitchens and bathrooms that I think the client will respond to. I layer different pieces together into a mood board.

“THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF THE PROJECT WAS ALSO ITS BIGGEST BLESSING. THE OWNERS WERE EXTREMELY INVOLVED IN EVERY DECISION AND RELENTLESS IN THEIR DRIVE TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS POSSIBLE. BUT THAT REALLY PUSHED US TO BE OUR MOST CREATIVE SELVES AND BE EVEN MORE ATTENTIVE TO ALL THE LITTLE DETAILS. THERE WAS CONSISTENT SYNERGY BETWEEN OUR TWO CAMPS THAT WAS REFRESHING AND POWERFUL.” - Anna Lambiotte

That’s how we nail down the concept of a room. Then I’ll pick out specific pieces in the showroom before bringing the client there. I typically show clients a first pass at things. Sometimes we nail it on the first try, but other times it flops. But you just keep refining, refining, and refining. The process is very iterative.”

In this case, she says, “The homeowners were very involved in selecting everything to get exactly what they wanted. She is definitely a creative type and has a visual side. They are both very intelligent people with a fun, creative side.”

Says the wife: “We talked with Anna about how we would live in the house: Where would we hang out? How would we go from one space to another? How would we have spaces where we could be a family

together but also live in a way where we were not on top of each other? What are the sight lines from one room to another? And what would be the flow of the house, including to the outside?”

But they also relied heavily on her expertise. “We were very comfortable with Anna,” the wife continues. “We’d seen her own house and other jobs she’d worked on, and we knew she’d always find things we’d love. She knows us. Also, I would have been absolutely overwhelmed if I had to make every choice in the world; it was really nice to have her narrow down the options, so we were choosing from a shorter list of things.”

For Lambiotte, design is in her DNA. She grew up in Aspen, where her father is a real estate developer and her mother, an artist. “Those two influences naturally led me to interior design,” she says. “When your father is a real estate developer,



“FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THEY KNEW THEY WANTED A HOUSE TO BE IMPECCABLY DESIGNED BUT NOT FANCY OR FRAGILE. THEY WANTED IT TO FUNCTION WELL SO THEIR FAMILY COULD REALLY ENJOY IT. THAT MEANT HIGH DESIGN THAT WAS CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT.”

-Anna Lambiotte

ABOVE: In the den, which serves as both crash pad and office, the wall of bookshelves, with an inset space for a sofa, was the husband’s idea. He had seen a similar setup on a job and wanted to replicate it. The base of the ottoman/coffee table was custom made by Industrial Arts, with the top upholstered by Rooster Socks. It’s surrounded by two Lee sofas, the one by the window finished in Holly Hunt Great Plains fabric, and the other in Manual Conovas fabric, with Etsy and ABC Home throw pillows and blankets from Wallace and Sewell. The Eames Lounge chair from Design Within Reach is a favorite of Lambiotte’s. “It’s a chair I grew up with,” she says, “so it’s kind of a family thing. It’s one of those pieces that I often have to convince people to use, but then everyone will say, ‘That is the most comfortable chair I’ve ever owned and I will never live without it again. It’s a classic.’ And, in a room meant for family gatherings, that’s the family’s golden retriever in the photo.

LEFT: “We didn’t want huge bedrooms, because we didn’t want the kids to just live inside of locked rooms,” says the homeowner, “so we deliberately made the rooms a little small and then added this room, which is like a college dorm lounge, where they can do their homework and hang out.” The room includes a West Elm sofa and rug, a CB2 coffee table, and desks for each child—but no television. The In the Woods wallpaper comes from Cole and Sons, and the hanging basket chair from Serena and Lily.



DESIGN
SYMBIOSIS



“Our two girls had been sharing a bedroom before this house, and they were truly sad to be losing their joint room,” says the mom. “We knew they were getting older and would eventually appreciate having a room to themselves, but we decided to build a tunnel between their rooms so they would still have a connection to each other. The funny thing is that now, it’s really the dog that uses it.” This room, for the younger daughter, includes a Restoration Hardware bed covered with Serena and Lily bedding, Anthropologie pillows and nightstands, and Rejuvenation lamps.

you walk into a room and think, ‘Why does it work or not work?’ I grew up understanding proportion and scale and how to add layers to create interest. Design was second nature to me.”

After majoring in art history at the University of Virginia, where she later earned an MBA, Lambiotte met her husband in San Francisco and worked in Lake Tahoe for East West Partners, where her husband, Jay, is now the CFO. She started her own firm in 2006 after being asked to oversee the interior design of a 9,000-square-foot house. Since then, her work has ranged from residential design to interior work at the Viceroy in Snowmass

and the Coloradan near Denver’s Union Station.

Her ideal client, she says, allows her to be creative. “These clients are awesome and authentic. They brought cool, fun ideas and a vision to the table, but I still had a voice. They never got tired of the process—they always wanted to just go for it.”

The homeowners felt equally happy about the design process.

“Having a point of view about your house is a big deal, and a designer can help you form that,” says the husband. “We had a pretty strong point of view, but our house doesn’t

look anything like what I imagined, and that’s because of Anna. For example, I love mid-century modern furniture, and she helped us navigate through that so we didn’t end up with a house that looked like just a collection of mid-century modern furniture.

“I think people should always hire a designer,” he continues. “They can help clients with things they really struggle with, like the scale of furniture. On top of that, they can really see how things go together. After all, designers do this all day, every day.”

LEFT: In the powder room, the striking Artistic Tiles leaf accent wall (from Decorative Materials) plays off a custom-designed mirror by Industrial Arts and simple Leucos Lighting Fairy Pendants over a Thassos Marble slab sink.
CENTER: Each of the kids’ bedrooms has its own en suite bath, like this one for one of the girls.
RIGHT: The large shower in the master bath, with a sweet corner seat, is striking for its Ming Green tiles, from Artistic Tile.



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LIFE CYCLE

The student-powered Colorado Building Workshop takes on a pair of bike storage pavilions infused with ingenuity and sustainability.

WORDS: Laura Beausire
IMAGES: Jesse Kuroiwa



They might just be the most beautiful bike shelters ever built. But there's more than mere aesthetics behind Colorado Building Workshop's striking new bike pavilions on the Auraria campus. As the program's record shows, bold design concepts can emerge from modest beginnings. The secret? Unleashing the power of architecture students to solve problems that others might overlook.

The University of Colorado Denver's College of Architecture & Planning launched the Colorado Building Workshop (CBW) for graduate students eleven years ago. The design-build certificate program began winning international admiration and AIA awards right from the start, with projects as diverse and far-flung as high-altitude outhouses on Longs Peak, Colorado Outward Bound School micro cabins, New Mexico trekking camp bunk houses, an outdoor performance stage, exhibition

spaces, and more. Along the way, the program has earned a strong reputation for ingenuity fueled by a whole lot of hard work.

"We seek to help not-for-profit, town, and governmental agencies by designing and building overlooked small projects that benefit the arts, environment, and education," says Rick Sommerfeld, Assistant Professor and Director of Colorado Building Workshop. "We often accomplish this by leveraging innovative design solutions using common building materials that rely on labor intensive construction methods."

That's where the students come in. "We like to think of it as an architecture and construction firm run by the students," Sommerfeld says. "We are there to ask really hard questions, suggest innovative material solutions, and push them to research construction standards and immediately design solutions that exceed those standards."

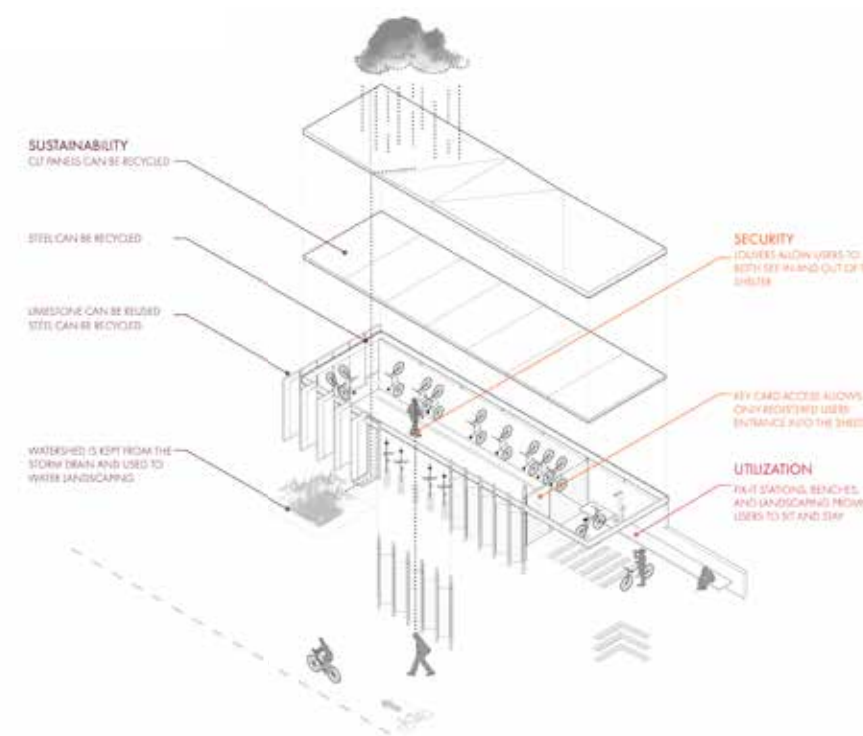
The projects may be considered small from a conventional perspective, but the clever

design concepts they showcase have sparked big curiosity. "We get requests from all over the world about details we've used and if we would be willing to share our ideas," Sommerfeld says. "We try and share the ideas openly, and I think they influence larger buildings, other architects, and students from other universities to some level."

So, when Chris Herr, Sustainability Officer of the Auraria Sustainable Campus Program, approached Sommerfeld last year with the idea of building a couple of bike storage facilities to help promote non-motorized transport while preventing bike theft, it sounded like a worthy challenge. "He was disappointed that the bids he was getting from fabricators were so expensive," Sommerfeld says. "Since the Auraria Sustainable Campus Program is funded by student fees he wanted a more sustainable solution that spent the students money more wisely. He had seen our work and wanted something better than a chain link fence and metal roof."



The Auraria Bike Pavilions are located in two locations on campus. The Curtis Street pavilion (TOP) is situated along the proposed 5280 bike loop next to the Auraria Library. The Larimer Street pavilion (ABOVE) is catty corner from the City Heights building slated for completion in summer 2021. BELOW: Students worked through numerous diagrams and models throughout the course of the spring semester to help communicate their ideas to the clients, consultants, and each other.



LIFE CYCLE



CBW students engage in the physical construction of the entire building. From tying the rebar and placing the concrete to installing the steel and CLT roof. The 2020 Colorado Building Workshop design-build cohort persevered through numerous COVID-19 delays and restrictions.



“I think at this point really everything we design or build has to be sustainable; it should be cooked into everything we do. We tried to be very aware of how much material we were using and trying to be as efficient and lean as possible while still creating a beautiful space.”

—Jake Cusick

The COVID-19 pandemic made in-person collaboration difficult, delaying the project by three months, but the students and faculty advisors were able to work together virtually. “We design as a group with lots of discussion, models, drawings, and iterations,” Sommerfeld says. “We work from the big idea into the details and eventually divide the project into parts so that each student can have a design and construction role that is more focused.” The 25 students grouped into six teams: foundation, walls, roof, doors and electrical, bikes and accessories, and landscape.

Together, they devised a plan for two secure, badge-access pavilions—each with the capacity to accommodate 50 bikes. Located

in two prominent areas of campus, both structures are integrated into a landscaped courtyard equipped with a handy bike fix-it station.

To help meet their sustainability goals, the students used Kieran Timberlake’s Tally® Lifecycle Assessment App, which analyzes a building’s overall environmental impact. “Our project uses minimal operational energy: We have all LED lights, a card reader, and a security camera—all of this can be run off of two 110v circuits, which is the equivalent of about two outlets in your house,” Sommerfeld explains. “Since our operational carbon was almost net-zero we focused on our embedded carbon footprint looking for ways to reduce it as much as possible.”

They wove three main sustainability strategies into their design: reducing the energy involved in the construction process, ensuring durability and low operational cost during the buildings’ lifespan, and designing the structures so that they could eventually be disassembled and the component materials recycled or re-used.

Materials matter, especially in a project with this meticulous attention to detail. The team decided to use carbon-sequestering Cross-laminated Timber (CLT) to build a roof with remarkable strength: Only four inches thick, it spans a 16-foot width. Limestone, which relates to neighboring buildings including St. Elizabeth’s Church, is dry-stacked into steel-framed, louvered columns that define



The limestone louvers allow visual connections between the context and interior of the pavilions maintaining visual transparency without sacrificing physical security. The orientation of the louvers accommodate 45 degree horizontal bicycle storage, wall hanging bike storage and at 90 degree louvers, secure storage for skateboards and scooters.

“The Colorado Building Workshop program prepares individuals for the real world. The chance to be part of the design-build program has not only broadened my horizons but has provided me with the experience, skills, as well as a competitive edge, necessary for the professional world.” —Lea Moguet



the bike parking spaces while also holding up the CLT canopy. Tall steel mesh panels allow semi-transparency between the louvered columns, revealing the bikes in an artful display while also maintaining security.

Donning hard hats and face masks, the students—many of whom had no prior building experience—began construction in the August heat. A generous group of local professionals—including Design Workshop, AE Design, Structuralist Engineers, Roth Sheppard Architects, MH Companies, Marx Okubo and Associates, TMW Stonemasons, and RAW Creative—stepped in to provide guidance as the structures took shape.

“The design-build program gave my career a jump start so I love giving back and staying involved with the projects and students,” says RAW Creative’s Breton Lujan, a CBW graduate. “For many students, it is their first time interfacing with a fabrication studio so I enjoy explaining our process and how we integrate with architecture and construction.”

It’s clear that this intense educational experience builds life lessons that endure. “We talk about CBW as more than a class; we are a family and network of alumni that support each other throughout our careers.”



Each louver individually articulates bike parking. The rhythm of light, at certain times of day, reinforces this organization abstractly creating parking stripes.



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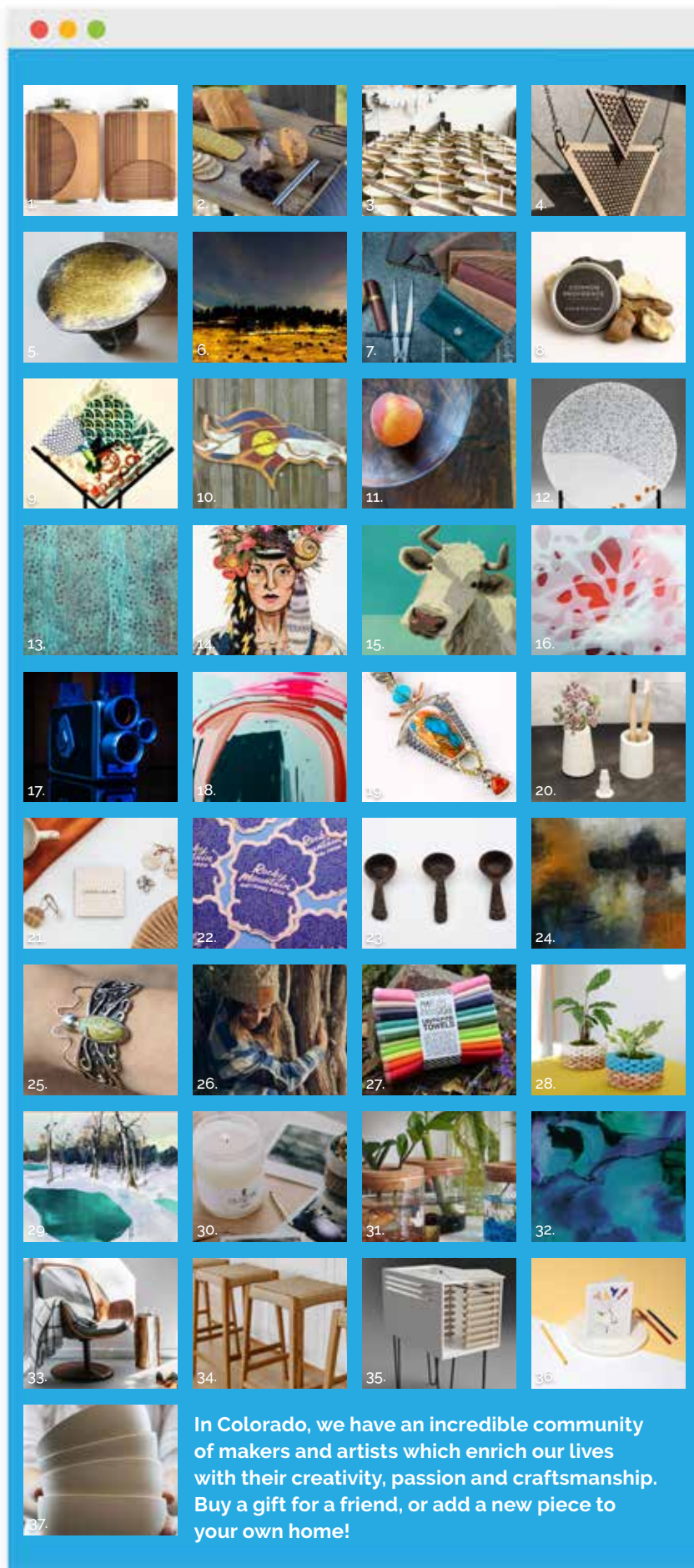
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PERSPECTIVE PERSONIFIED

A contemporary home tucked up against Aspen's Shadow Mountain unfolds to the views, thanks to a vertical configuration, unusual aperture windows, a giant skylight, and an expansive rooftop deck.

WORDS: Alison Gwinn
IMAGES: Brent Moss

ANY PHOTOGRAPHER WILL TELL YOU: IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE.

That is particularly true when the views are elusive. After all, it's easy to capture views from a house perched high up a mountainside, with the unobstructed world unfolding below. It's much more of a puzzle to create, and even enhance, the views when a house is sitting on a tight, semi-urban lot.

That was the challenge for the architectural team at Aspen's Rowland + Broughton when it came to designing this 4,672-square-foot home, which sits at the base of that town's iconic Shadow Mountain.

The location was ideal for the homeowners, empty nesters who have two grown daughters and a main house in Denver's Cherry Creek North. Though the lot was easily walk-able, sitting next to the Rio Grande path with downtown Aspen only 10 minutes away by foot, it was neither busy nor heavily trafficked. "They loved the location next to Shadow Mountain, with its beautiful forest," says Sarah Broughton, principal on the project. "They wanted to feel like they were in that forest as much as possible."

But the location also had its challenges, in part because there was already a foundation in the ground, which limited the design options. "We knew we needed the architects to be really creative and come up with new ways to look at the lot, because we didn't have ultimate freedom," says the homeowner. "We also needed them to be able to pack a lot into a small space because we couldn't go any deeper than the foundation, and there are height restrictions in Aspen."





“This lot is atypical,” adds Broughton. “It fronts an alley and a pedestrian path. It was a constrained lot, being so close to downtown, and it was challenging to conform to Aspen’s stringent residential design standards in a really innovative way that spoke to the lot. But, through the use of apertures and architectural form, we were able to really open up the architecture to the views in multiple directions.”

One key to the design: the home’s “upside down” configuration, with the social spaces on the upper floor. “Often on these urban lots where the views are spectacular, we want to put the public areas on the upper level so the views can be realized,” says Broughton. “This is not a large house, but it lives large because the architecture unfolds to the views. We were able to achieve that by really understanding the site, understanding the views and the distance, and editing the architecture to a point where it speaks to that goal.”

The builder, Kevin O’Donnell of Beck Building Co., who had worked with the homeowners before, building their Denver home, says, “Rowland + Broughton had so many limitations. There wasn’t a blank canvas where they could sit down with the clients, get their wish list, and create a space from scratch. What they did masterfully is create these spaces the clients wanted in a really beautiful way, each one incredibly unique. They nailed it.”



The house sits on an unusual, somewhat constrained lot in west Aspen, right up against Shadow Mountain. Without a lot of natural outdoor space (the front lawn, within the fence, is tight), the architects worked hard to make sure the house really unfolded to the views. Thanks to the skylight, which protrudes above the house’s silhouette, the overall shape of the house mimics the mountain behind.



Thanks to an enormous opening, folding doors, and a large patio, the living room (seen from three angles here) feels as if it sits right amid the forested slope of Shadow Mountain. The husband picked the green-yellow fabric for the large sectional, saying, “What about this?” And Broughton replied: “Let’s go for it! Why not?”



“IT WAS A CONSTRAINED LOT, BEING SO CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN, AND IT WAS CHALLENGING TO CONFORM TO ASPEN’S STRINGENT RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS IN A REALLY INNOVATIVE WAY THAT SPOKE TO THE LOT. BUT, THROUGH THE USE OF APERTURES AND ARCHITECTURAL FORM, WE WERE ABLE TO REALLY OPEN UP THE ARCHITECTURE TO THE VIEWS IN MULTIPLE DIRECTIONS.” —Sarah Broughton

The main entrance is on the home’s street level, which includes a master bedroom suite, powder room, mudroom, and garage. Go down one flight to the below-grade bottom floor, which includes a bedroom and a bunkroom, each with its own bath, as well as a gym, TV room, laundry room, wine closet. Go up a flight of stairs from the front door to the home’s upper level, where you’ll find the living room and dining room (off of which sits a generous patio), kitchen, and den, as well as a guest bedroom and bath. “We’ve never been ones who wanted grand master bedrooms; we were more interested in maximizing the common space,” says the homeowner. “That floor is very open and livable and has this indoor-outdoor feel.”

Topping it all off is a 622-square-foot rooftop deck, with a hot tub and fire bowl for chilly nights. “The rooftop deck was really, really important to us,” says the homeowner. “We love outdoor space, and the lot had little usable outdoor space. But being on the deck, you literally feel like you’re in a treehouse. It’s very, very special.”

And no matter where you turn, there are views—unusual for such an urban lot. “To the north, you look at Red Mountain,” says Broughton. “To the east, from the roof, you look at Independence Pass. And from the living room, with that awesome, beautiful aperture and terrace, you look at Shadow Mountain,” a steep, craggy west Aspen landmark that can be seen from everywhere in town.

THIS HOUSE'S NONTRADITIONAL FORM REALLY SPEAKS TO THE CONTEXT, WITH SHADOW MOUNTAIN RIGHT THERE. THE SHAPE OF SHADOW MOUNTAIN IS THE SHAPE OF THE HOUSE. THE TRIANGLE SHAPE THAT COMES UP TO CREATE THE SKYLIGHT IS THE SHAPE OF SHADOW MOUNTAIN. IT'S ABSTRACTED." - Sarah Broughton

To play up the views, Rowland+Broughton included in the design an enormous, 10'-3 1/2" x 12' skylight that sits over the central stairway. "It was the largest skylight we'd ever done up to that point," says Broughton. "It offers views mainly of the sky and the trees." They also added lift and slide doors in the living room, "so the whole wall opens up." But perhaps the most interesting design elements included are those aperture-style windows. "On four windows, we angled the sides of these apertures, to create a lens to the pointed views," says Broughton. "It's like creating an aperture on a camera where you're focusing on the subject. Instead of having a normal window, we extended the walls of the house out and tapered them back to emphasize the focus of the view."

"The little details like the aperture effect are really what make a project

sing," says O'Donnell. "Even though there wasn't a big canvas on this house, it has pop where it needs to have pop."

A perfect example: The team chose an interior color scheme to match the natural world outside. "We got pretty excited about the colors," says Broughton. "The homeowners love color, so we said, 'Well, let's not just put color in the house. Let's have a scheme to our color. So we did a graduation of color throughout the floors: The basement is purples and reds, which you can see in the bunk room. The main floor is blues, which you can see in the master bedroom and the powder room. And the upper level is all greens, to go with the forest. We had never done this before; it was a fun way to focus the color."

"The homeowners were really great to work with. One of my favorite

memories of the project was when we were picking fabric. You see that couch upstairs that's almost a neon green-yellow, with the dark green ottoman and that multicolored rug? The husband picked that fabric for the couch. He said, 'What about this?' and I said, 'Let's go for it! Why not?'"

The bright colors sit against a neutral palette, with white oak floors and white oak millwork. In the kitchen, there is a beautiful black metal hood, a black island and black stools, "so even the furniture dissolves into the island," Broughton says. "I'm really in love with that white marble with the green and black veining along the perimeter."

Another example: the stair design. "It was really important," says Broughton, because we wanted to be able to get as much light through the house as possible. We came up



The unusual aperture-style windows, like the one below on the guest bedroom, play up the views. "It's like creating an aperture on a camera where you're focusing on the subject," says architect Broughton. "We extended the walls of the house out and tapered them back to emphasize the focus of the view."



The architects used glass on the central stairway to play up the sense of lightness throughout the house. On the bottom floor, the workout room is surrounded by elegant smoked glass, to privatize that space but still allow someone working out inside to still feel connected.



"The rooftop deck was really important to us," says the homeowner of this 622-square-foot space, which includes a hot tub and fire bowl. "We love outdoor space. Being on the deck, you literally feel like you're in a treehouse."

"THE LITTLE DETAILS LIKE THE APERTURE EFFECT ARE REALLY WHAT MAKE A PROJECT SING. EVEN THOUGH THERE WASN'T A BIG CANVAS ON THIS HOUSE, IT HAS POP WHERE IT NEEDS TO HAVE POP."

- Kevin O'Donnell, Builder

with the idea of having it sit right underneath the skylight, go over the fireplace and on up to the rooftop. It was a super big challenge getting the fireplace flue underneath the stair and out—it took some clever space planning, just utilizing every square inch."

Viewed from the outside, the exterior of the home makes it feel like part of the mountain behind. "It's always important to us to be



contextual," says Broughton. "People will tell us, 'You guys have a really good sensibility of site and context.' This house's nontraditional form really speaks to the context, with Shadow Mountain right there. The shape of Shadow Mountain is the shape of the house. The triangle shape that comes up to create the skylight is the shape of Shadow Mountain. It's abstracted."

To further root the house into its surroundings, Rowland + Broughton clad the main level in a stucco to create a subdued, monolithic base, with a more expressive champagne-color seam metal siding on the upper volume. "We had never used it before, but we thought it would be warmer and would be complementary to the surrounding forest," says Broughton. "We told

the clients we thought it would be gorgeous, and they said, 'Let's go for it.'" One end is covered with barnwood, "as if you were peeling back the champagne metal."

"We were just pushing the architecture and innovating, doing things we hadn't done before," says Broughton. The results were worth it. "We love the form of this house. The shape. We love the photos at dusk with the berm in front, taken from the old Midland Trail right next to the house, with that beautiful grass and the berm. It's cool. Every house presents opportunities, and every client presents even more opportunities. We love to create something unique for each client and each property." ■

PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTS
Rowland + Broughton, Aspen

CONTRACTOR
Beck Building Co., Vail

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
Monroe Newell Engineers Inc., Denver

MEP ENGINEER
BGBuildingWorks, Avon

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Bluegreen, Aspen



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"YOU AREN'T JUST
WORKING ON THE TREE;
IT IS WORKING ON YOU."

—John Yoshio Naka, master bonsai cultivator



Common Name: Colorado Blue Spruce
Botanical Name: *Picea pungens glauca*
In Training: 3 years
Estimated Age: 300 years
Artist: Will Kerns
Pot: Japanese Rectangle w/ inset frame

photo: Jess Blackwell



SMALL BUT MIGHTY

TREES OF LIFE



For the design-savvy, bonsai—potted trees trained into artful, miniaturized shapes—are so seductive they can become a lifelong obsession.

If a bonsai could post on a “personals” website, its entry might read like this: Looking for a partner who is devoted, patient, artistic, caring, and interested in a forever relationship.

That last requirement is key, because bonsai—technically any plant (but usually a tree) grown in a pot, with an artistic, mini-silhouette—can live for centuries.

These botanical marvels range from conifers (like cedars, junipers, spruces, redwoods, and pines) to deciduous trees (maples, oaks, ashes, beeches, alders, birches) to tropicals (Chinese peppers, bougainvilleas, acacias, baobabs) and shrubs (cotoneasters, roses, bearberries, spireas). No matter the species, they are not only long-lived but prized for their understated beauty: With proper care, they can become perfect Lilliputian replicas of their full-sized brethren in the wild.

But they are more than mere horticultural outliers; they have mystical depths, too. According to Japanese tradition, bonsai represent the three virtues of *shin-zen-bi*, which translates to truth, goodness, and beauty. There is a zen quality associated with tending bonsai, a sense that it is both a disciplined and a therapeutic practice, enhancing one's inner peace and love of nature. “The saying is that you aren't just working on the tree; it is working on you,” the late master bonsai cultivator John Yoshio Naka (a Fort Lupton native) once said.

“It is very personal, but the reward you get is infinite,” says Harold Sasaki, a local legend among bonsai lovers who still teaches bonsai growing techniques at both his

WORDS: Alison Gwinn



BONSAI / TREES OF LIFE

home in Wheat Ridge and the Denver Botanic Gardens. “That’s because a bonsai has a soul. And whatever you do, you are in partnership with Mother Nature.”

That relationship between humans and these petite horticultural charmers goes back many centuries. Bonsai as we know it derives from *penjing*, a 7th- and 8th-century practice among China’s elite. In the 12th century, the Japanese started copying the art form—its name comes from *bon* (for pot) and *sai* (for tree)—and after World War II, bonsai became popular in both the U.S. and Europe.

The reason for their popularity is obvious. “A bonsai is a living sculpture. It’s about making art,” says local bonsai artist Will Kerns, who has been training bonsai for

more than two decades and is an active member of the Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society.

But like all rewarding relationships, the one with your bonsai takes work. “People often ask me, ‘Should I get a bonsai for a friend for his birthday?’” says Larry Jackel, bonsai specialist at the Denver Botanic Gardens. “And I always say, ‘Well, would you get this person a puppy?’ If they say, ‘No way,’ then I suggest first buying the friend a nice book on bonsai to see if they want to do it. But if you can grow a houseplant, you can probably grow a bonsai.”

“This is an obsession,” says Kerns, who has about 60 bonsais in his Wheat Ridge backyard, including native trees like Colorado blue spruces, Rocky Mountain → 106

Larry Jackel, bonsai specialist at the Denver Botanic Gardens, prunes a Bougainvillea, one of the garden’s approximately 60 bonsai specimens. Jackel, who teaches bonsai classes there, says that the most common thing he hears from visitors is “I had one of those once, but it died.” That’s because bonsai need devoted care. “You’re working with another living thing, and it totally depends on you.”

HOW TO SPEAK BONSAI

CHOKKAN
Formal, upright form

CHU OR CHUHIN
medium-tall bonsai
(16 to 24 inches)

DAI
Tall bonsai (over 2 feet tall)

FUKINAGASHI
windswept form

ISHI SEKI
Planted on rock

JIN
Deadwood branch

KABUDACHI
Multi-trunk

KENGAI
Cascade



READY, SET, GO

Ready to get your first bonsai? Start here.

and nice sea-green foliage,” says Kerns), or a Colorado blue spruce (which both Kerns and Jackel recommend). It depends on your personal taste. Some folks grow only Japanese species, herbs, or deciduous trees. Jackel cites a group that works with chrysanthemum bonsai. “Lots of bonsai are not true trees; they’re shrubs,” he says. “A big misconception is that you can only do a bonsai with a juniper or pine. One of my goals with this Botanic Garden collection is to have a wide variety of plants—succulents, cactus, all kinds of things—that I treat in a bonsai way, so people say, ‘Hey, I can try it.’”

WHERE CAN I GET MY FIRST BONSAI?

You can try a bonsai specialty store (see “Where to Go for Help” for local places), online stores (like houseofbonsai.com or easternleaf.com), and garden centers. You can even try grocery stores and big-box home stores—if you know what to look for. “You can find good material at any nursery,” says Kerns. “You could also go to a Home Depot and find a maple. You don’t need to spend a lot.” If you’re very patient, you can even order seeds from a nursery and grow a tree from them, but that is the toughest way to raise a bonsai. “Not in your lifetime will you ever find a trunk like this growing from seed,” says Kerns, pointing to a gnarly backyard beauty. “It will take you a lot longer to realize a really great bonsai design if you’re growing it from seed, as opposed to nursery stock that’s already grown.” Finally, you can go out on hikes and collect material from the wild—but only with a permit.

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A POTENTIAL BONSAI?

In a word, interest. “Look for a woody, barked trunk and smaller, compact foliage,” says Kerns. “Look for an interesting shape, as well as the nebari, which is the root flair. So when combing through nursery stock, look for a tree that is actually pushing some of the soil away around the base of the trunk. Exposing some of the roots will help it look like an old tree.”

WHAT ARE THE BEST SPECIES?

Many species work well for bonsais. But first ask yourself: Do I plan to grow and train the tree indoors or out? If strictly indoors, try a tropical. If outdoors, try a native tree, like a Ponderosa pine, a Rocky Mountain juniper (“the king of American bonsai because of its sculptural deadwood

“LOOK FOR A WOODY, BARKY TRUNK AND SMALLER, COMPACT FOLIAGE. LOOK FOR AN INTERESTING SHAPE, AS WELL AS THE NEBARI, WHICH IS THE ROOT FLAIR.” - Will Kerns

some of the elements of design—like line, form, structure, and texture—that’s what they look for. You want to try to embellish traits to make the tree look more like a bonsai than a nursery stock tree. Most bonsai have an asymmetrical triangular balance, so you can get that flow with the way the trunk looks and the foliage grows. You put wire on to adjust a branch so it looks like a bonsai. As you grow more expert in looking at trees, you start to develop a taste for what you want.”

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE POT IT RESTS IN?

Very important. “A bonsai pot is like the frame on a painting,” says Jackel. “You wouldn’t put ‘The Mona Lisa’ in a chrome frame, right? Usually bonsai pots are shallow, because the visual scale looks better. But if you have a cascading bonsai, you want it to look as if it’s flowing down the face of a cliff, so you go with a deeper pot.” Traditional bonsai containers are earthenware (it’s non-absorbent) and are made in Japan and China. The glaze should complement the colors of the bonsai, whether the bark, leaves, or flowers, according to Akira Takahashi’s book *Bonsai: A Beginner’s Guide on How to Cultivate and Care for Bonsai Trees*.

SHOULD I TAKE A CLASS OR JOIN A CLUB?

By all means, do. “Our No. 1 goal is to make everyone in class a better grower,” says Jackel of the Denver Botanic Gardens, which (in non-Covid times, at least) offers both spring and fall beginner bonsai classes and recently added an advanced class. “The best way to learn about bonsai is from somebody who’s done it,” he says. “We provide all the material, including a little juniper called *procumbens* ‘Nana.’ It is a very hardy, very forgiving grower and can take a little bit of abuse. It will live inside close to a window, but then you can put it back outside in the spring, summer and fall when it’s above 50 degrees all the time. We show students how to design it and make it look like a bonsai, how to wire and style and prune and clip. We bring in a couple of bonsai we’ve done so they get an idea. Most people will spend 20 minutes studying the tree trying to figure out what they want to do. If you look at



junipers, limber pines, and Ponderosa pines (several of which were photographed for this story). “It takes years to take one tree to the level of refinement and finish that it’s a finished bonsai. It’s a serious amount of work.”

But the results—and the chance to team up with Mother Nature—are worth it. “I could never make a trunk that looks like this no matter how hard I tried,” says Kerns, pointing to one of his prized specimens. “The only way I could ever realize this is by collecting it from nature. Only nature can do this. Maybe this tree got hit by a rock. Maybe it got snow-loaded. This tree is probably over 100 years old, and Mother Nature has made it interesting. You want to maximize the amount of drama in a tree. You want to see every twist and turn the trunk makes. You want the tree to tell a story—and this tree tells a story of life and death.”

Becoming a true bonsai artist takes time. “Bonsai is not an art until you master it to a point where it becomes an art,” says Sasaki, who grew up on a coffee farm in Hawaii and came to Colorado in 1962, studying forestry at Colorado A&M (now Colorado State). It was really here that he learned about bonsai—from older Japanese immigrants who had moved from the West Coast because of World War II.

“At first, your work with a bonsai is mechanical,” Sasaki says. “You trim it and stand back and ask, ‘How did I do?’ It is subjective. It depends on how you feel your tree should look. There is no rule that says it has to have this, this, and this to look right.”

“It’s like painting. What makes a good painter? Whatever they put on the canvas, right? Same thing with bonsai, except this is alive and constantly changing. You continually learn and you become very humble. You are manipulating Mother Nature’s product, and she will let you know when you screw up.” → 108



Common Name: Dwarf Korean Lilac
Botanical Name: *Syringa patula* ‘Miss Kim’
In Training: 10 years
Estimated Age: 25 years
Artist: Will Kerns
Potter: Peter Karner Pottery

photo: Michael Smiley

Will Kerns with one of his bonsai Ponderosa pines at his Wheat Ridge home, where the tree is sitting on top of a Cold Frame structure he built to protect bonsai during the winter months. “It takes years to take one tree to the level of refinement and finish that it’s a finished bonsai,” he says. “It’s a serious amount of work.” But it is a labor of love for Kerns: He has about 60 bonsais in his personal collection.



photo: Jess Blackwell

HOW TO SPEAK BONSAI

- KIFU**
Medium Bonsai
(7 to 16 inches)
- MAME**
Miniature Bonsai
(up to 2 inches)
- NEBARI**
Trunk base and surface roots
- SHAKAN**
Slanting form
- SHIDARF-ZUKURI**
Weeping
- SHOHIN**
Small bonsai (up to 5 inches)
- TOKONOMA**
Traditional display area
- YAMADORI**
Collected from nature

THE CARE & FEEDING OF A BONSAI

You can do it—as long as you’re patient and attentive.



DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT PESTS?

In Denver? Not a lot, say the experts—particularly if you are using a native specimen and keeping it healthy. “With native trees, you have fewer pests and disease,” says Kerns. If you do notice problems with your bonsai—either falling, discolored leaves or insects like aphids—bring your bonsai to a club meeting or store to get advice from more experienced growers.

DO I NEED TO FERTILIZE?

Because bonsais are grown in small pots with a limited volume of soil, not in nutrient-rich outdoor soil, they need periodic fertilization. “I use a fertilizer called Biogold (available at bonsaioutlet.com or local bonsai nurseries), which I sometimes keep inside a teabag next to the tree to keep it from washing away,” Kerns says. For best results, limit your fertilizing to the plant’s growing season.

IS DENVER’S WINTER WEATHER A CONCERN?

Yes, because temperatures can drop from 80 degrees to 15 within 24 hours. So be prepared. “Bonsai are often grown outdoors, so climate really does matter,” says Kerns. “So in the fall, I mulch in my bonsai pots and bury them in a garden box that protects them from the wind.” Similarly, Jackel has built gravel bunkers behind the Botanic Gardens’ Bill Hosokawa Bonsai Pavilion and buries the native trees’ pots. Anything more tender, like a bougainvillea or ficus, goes into a greenhouse. In the spring, when you bring your bonsais back outside or from under a shelter, do it gently. “Plants are like people: If you went straight out into full sun in the spring, you’d get fried,” says Sasaki. Plants are the same way; they need to adapt, so start them in a shady area at first.



HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO PRUNE A BONSAI?

“If you don’t trim on an ongoing basis,” Sasaki says, “a bonsai becomes a wild-looking tree and is virtually valueless.” Remember, says Kerns, “The process of being in a pot and being trimmed and pruned helps to dwarf the foliage on certain species,” while giving the plant its shape and design. If you are unsure at the start where to prune, just cut back new growth to the tree’s original shape; eventually, after you have watched your tree’s growth pattern and looked at bonsais you admire, you will get more skilled at pruning.

WHAT TOOLS DO I NEED?

“You don’t really need special tools for a bonsai,” says Jackel. “Kitchen shears work great. And you can use any tool that you find in the hardware store that works for plants.” Once you get a bit more advanced, you can get tools like Kerns’s: Pliers (for wiring), a wire cutter, the wire itself, scissors for pruning, a concave cutter for taking off branches and not leaving a big scar, and spherical knob cutters.

WHAT ABOUT WIRING A BONSAI?

“Wires are like braces on teeth,” says Kerns. “They’re on temporarily. Wires set the structure of the tree, but then they come off.” Kerns uses annealed copper wire for conifers—it’s soft and easy to apply, but gets harder after it’s put on. “I will take it off after a couple of years,” he says, “after it starts to get in-grown—that’s when you know the branch is probably going to hold the position.” He uses anodized aluminum wire, which is softer, on deciduous trees, which he says do not need as much holding power.

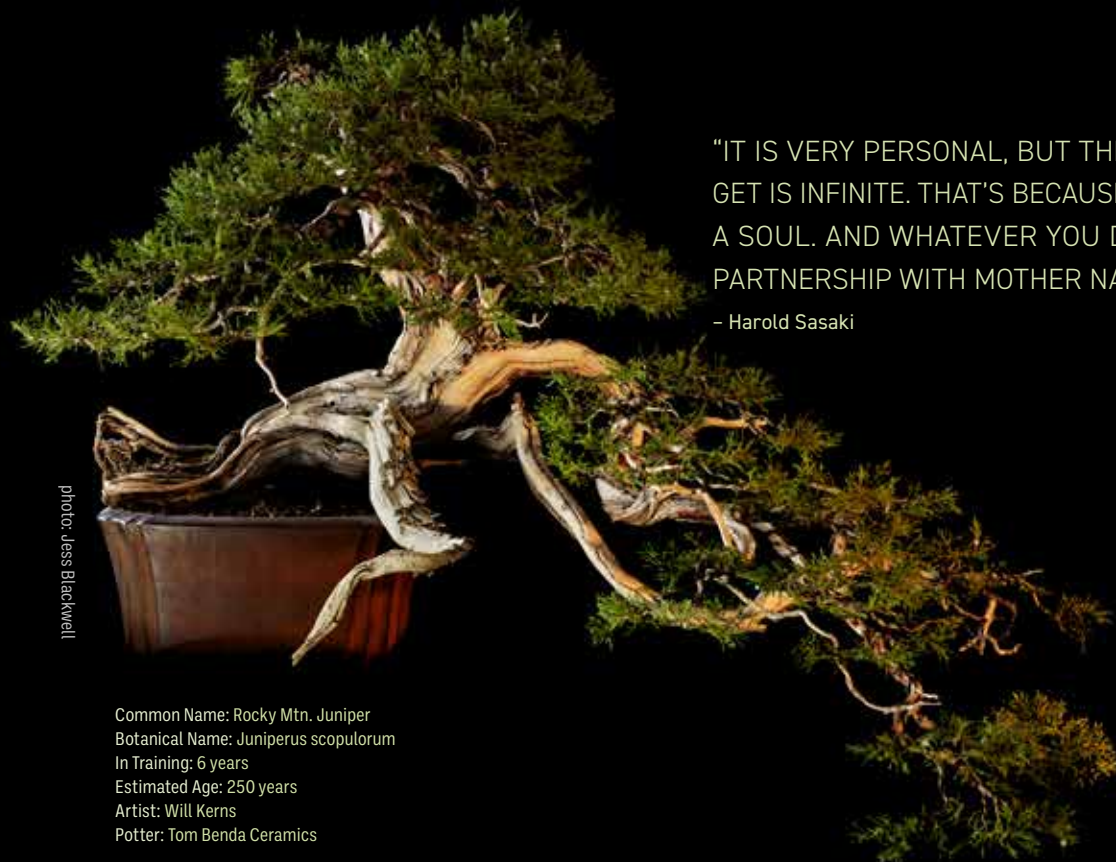


photo: Jess Blackwell

Common Name: Rocky Mtn. Juniper
 Botanical Name: *Juniperus scopulorum*
 In Training: 6 years
 Estimated Age: 250 years
 Artist: Will Kerns
 Potter: Tom Benda Ceramics

"IT IS VERY PERSONAL, BUT THE REWARD YOU GET IS INFINITE. THAT'S BECAUSE A BONSAI HAS A SOUL. AND WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU ARE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MOTHER NATURE."

– Harold Sasaki

For many local bonsai artists, part of the challenge—and the fun—is collecting potential bonsai from nature. Early on in his bonsai education, says Sasaki, "I saw all these bonsai-like things growing on the forest floor, and I said to myself, 'Gee, I can collect that and make almost an instant bonsai.' Mother Nature had stressed the material so it didn't have a perfect Christmas tree look but instead gave you the impression that it had been there a long, long time. Even if a tree has only been in nature for 20 or 30 years, you want to imagine it's been there for eons. Mother Nature has a great, great influence on its shape."

(Where do collectors go around here? That's a trade secret. "It's sort of a joke," says Jackel, "but when someone asks, 'Where did you get that bonsai?' the answer is always, 'The mountains west of Denver.' You never want to tell anybody where you got your stuff.")

Kerns is just such a collector. "I like to grow Colorado native species because they make great

bonsai," he says, while showing off a bristlecone pine that he plucked out of the mountains on National Forest Service land, with what is called a transplant permit. "We're incredibly lucky here to have the species we have. I put this tree into a growing box, where it will stay for a couple of years and grow roots and get acclimated to being in a container. Then I will eventually move it into a pot. When a tree goes into a bonsai pot, it technically becomes a bonsai."

At that point, the work really begins—the pruning, the wiring, the watering and feeding, all with the goal of taking nature and confining it artfully within a small space. "I have a living thing here," says Jackel, "and caring for it does good things for my mental health and my attitude. That's what gardening does for a lot of people."

Jackel oversees a collection of about 60 bonsai at the Botanic Gardens, almost all donated material. "If I collect a tree from the mountains that is 200 years old, which is not uncommon, I put it in a container



"I HAVE A LIVING THING HERE, AND CARING FOR IT DOES GOOD THINGS FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH AND MY ATTITUDE. THAT'S WHAT GARDENING DOES FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE." – Larry Jackel

and grow it for a couple of years, and then start developing it as a bonsai. A good stylist will look at a plant and see what it has to offer and try to enhance that."

Visitors to the Gardens often wonder about the markers they see on the bonsais. "The trees are tagged, and the tag might say, 'In training since 1985.' People will ask me what that means, and I say, 'That's the time that the plant and the person came together and started working on each other.' Then I'll pose the question 'Who is training who?'" These bonsai may well live for hundreds of years. "These are trees that hopefully will live longer than our lifetimes," says Jackel. "I hope that some of the trees I have here will have three or four generations of caretakers after I've gone into the bonsai sunset."

Often visitors will admit that they once had a bonsai, too. "The most common thing I hear is, 'I had one of those once, but it died,'" says Jackel. "Most of the time, people are talking about a small tree in a container. It has to have regular care. You're working with another living thing, and it totally depends on you."

As bonsai artists often say, it's all about listening to the tree. ■



WHERE TO GO

A selection of great sources.

DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

Its four-hour spring and fall bonsai classes are super popular, so sign up fast. And next spring, watch for the Gardens' full bonsai collection to come out from winter storage. You can learn a lot just studying the bonsai there.

COLORADO BONSAI

coloradobonsai.com

303.232.8700

Harold Sasaki offers classes and still sells some plants out of his backyard.

First Branch Bonsai

firstbranchbonsai.com

720.309.0060

todd.schlafer@gmail.com

Todd Schlafer offers classes, native American trees, and supplies.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BONSAI NURSERY

rockymtnbonsainursery.com

3750 S. Federal Blvd., Englewood

303.761.3066

It offers a range of trees, pots, and supplies and puts out a popular blog.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BONSAI SOCIETY

rmbonsai.org

This very active club, over a half-century old (Sasaki is a charter member), helps curate the collection at the Denver Botanic Gardens. It welcomes members of all skill levels and has monthly meetings (virtual during Covid) and educational programs.

BONSAIMIRAI.COM

Oregon-based Ryan Neil offers excellent online classes.

BOOKS

Bonsai: A Beginner's Guide on How to Cultivate and Care for Bonsai Trees, Akira Takahashi

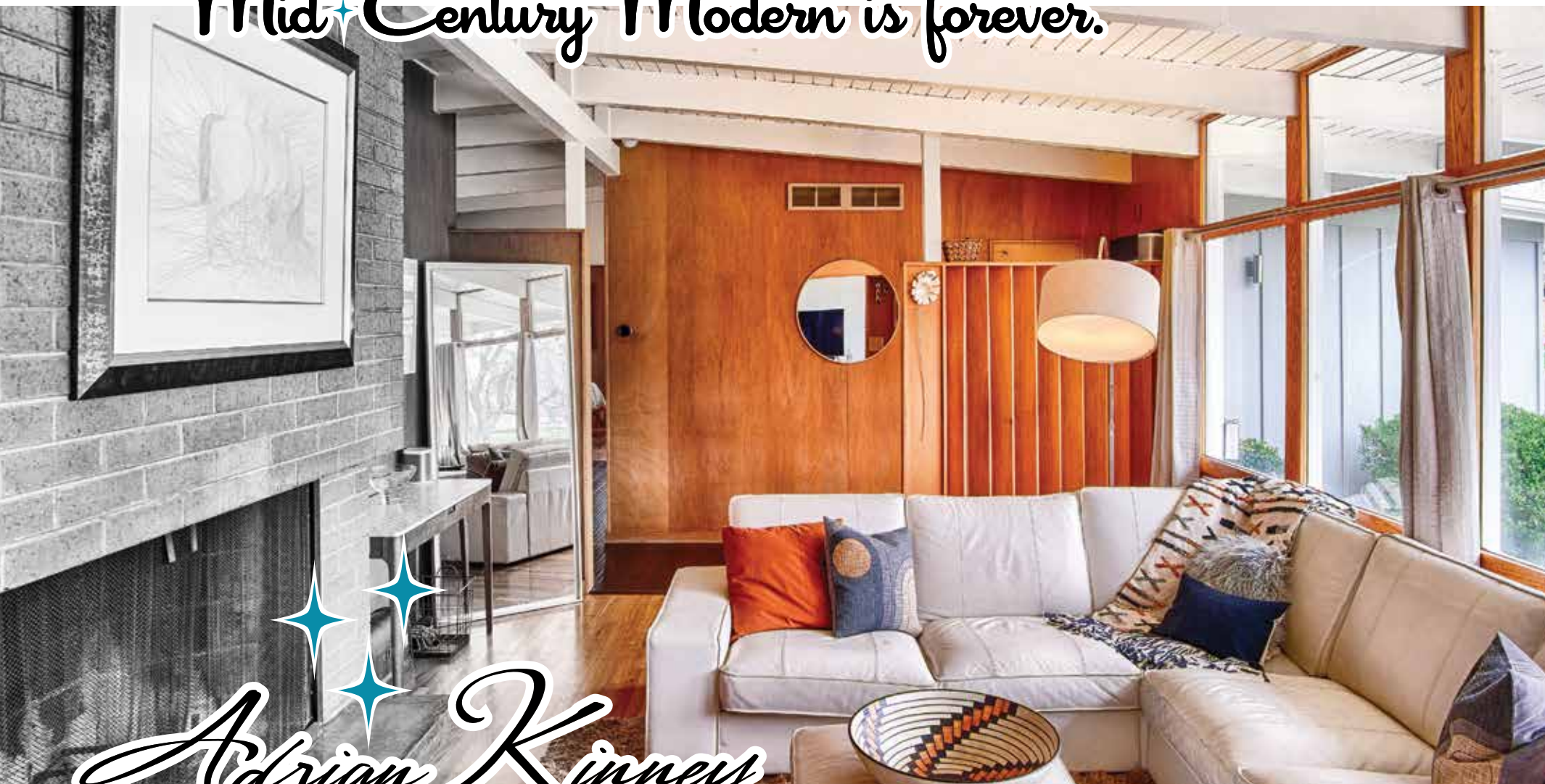
Bonsai Techniques, John Naka (find used on Amazon)

Bonsai: An Illustrated Guide to an Ancient Art, Sunset Books (find used on Amazon)

The Bonsai Beginner's Bible, Peter Chan

Botany for Gardeners, Brian Capon

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Adrian Kinney

Real estate and design advisor for
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The Braun House | 2290 Carr Street, Lakewood
 Architect: Robert M. Braun
 2,758 sq. ft., 5 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$691,500



2590 S Newton Street, Harvey Park
 Architects: Cliff May/Chris Choate
 1,074 sq. ft., 3 beds, 1 bath
 SOLD for \$430,500



**7820 Grove Street
 Apple Blossom Lane**
 2,300 sq. ft., 3 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$445,100



11481 W 29th Place, Applewood Knolls
 Architect: R.S. Adnan
 2,942 sq. ft., 3 beds, 3 baths
 SOLD for \$630,000



2027 S Vrain Street, Harvey Park
 Architect: Norton Polivnick
 2,332 sq. ft., 4 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$464,000



1330 S Dahlia Street, Krisana Park
 Architect: Frenchie Gratts
 1,549 sq. ft., 3 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$680,000



2596 S Newton Street, Harvey Park
 Architects: Cliff May/Chris Choate
 1,226 sq. ft., 3 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$505,000



**912 S Beech Street
 Green Mountain Estates**
 2,400 sq. ft., 4 beds, 3 baths
 SOLD for \$565,000



**1695 Quay Street
 Lakewood Square**
 1,950 sq. ft., 4 beds, 3 baths
 SOLD for \$588,900



**10350 W 35th Avenue
 Wheat Ridge**
 4,914 sq. ft., 4 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$560,000

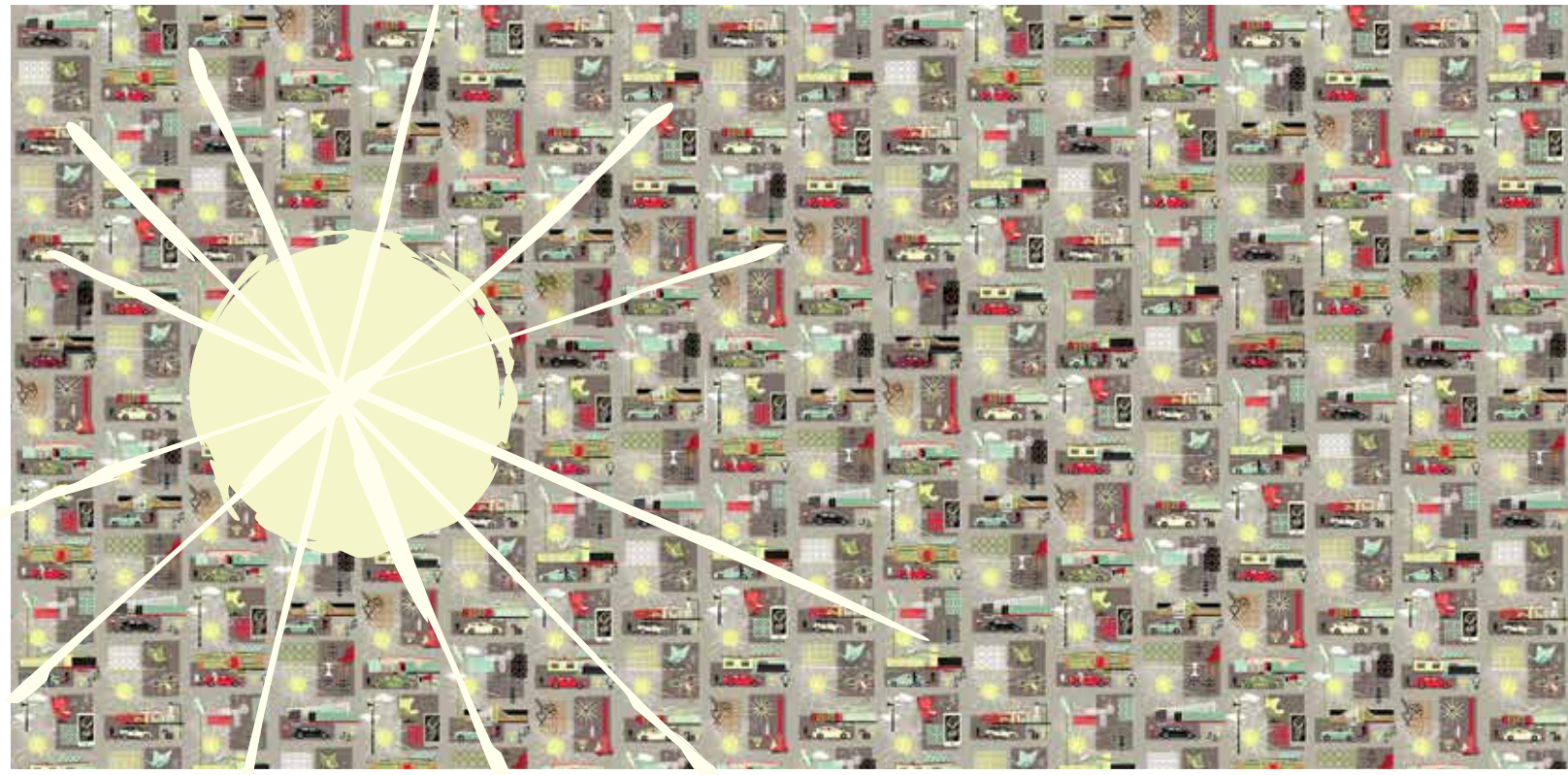


2671 S Dennison Court, University Hills
 Architect: Eugene D. Sternberg
 1,340 sq. ft., 3 beds, 2 baths
 SOLD for \$488,000



2403 S Dahlia Lane, South Dahlia Lane
 Architect: Eugene D. Sternberg
 2,500 sq. ft., 6 beds, 3 baths
 SOLD for \$645,000

SELLING MID-MOD DENVER



Mid-Century Modern Today

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis
ILLUSTRATION: Christian Mussleman



MID-CENTURY MODERN 2021

Where are we now?

ORANGE AND TEAL KITSCH MAY BE ON THE WANE, BUT MCM IS HERE TO STAY. TODAY'S MID-CENTURY MODERN SPACES ARE BREAKING NEW GROUND (AND A FEW RULES!) - WITHOUT LOSING A SHRED OF THEIR ORIGINAL APPEAL.

“Please let 2020 be the year mid-century modern design finally dies.” So pleads a headline from a popular lifestyle site. We’re pretty sure the design philosophy that has spawned some of history’s greatest structures is not on the brink of extinction. But underneath her glib hater headline, the author raises a point that’s worth considering: In a world where mid-century modern style is as ubiquitous as Target, is it really all that exciting anymore? Why—and how—will MCM continue to command our attention in the decades ahead?

As sensory creatures, we’re bound to embrace aesthetic trends only to grow restless and itch for something new. So of course in the 10-plus years since Don Draper first poured a drink at his louvered credenza and sparked a mid-century craze, our lens on MCM has evolved. But to conflate such predictable shifts in style with the demise of the deeper mid-century modern philosophy is to grossly oversimplify. Fashions in decor may come and go, but the underlying principles of great mid-century architecture and design—functionalism, simplicity, thoughtful selection of materials and mindful integration of spaces—endure.





Rather than dying away as one cranky columnist predicted, the mid-century modern spaces of 2021 will flourish more richly than ever. They'll hold faithful to the principles of great design born in the post-war era, while flexing and stretching to embrace the aesthetic and cultural hallmarks of today: the handmade, the global, the glam, the natural...above all, the personal.



Where are we now?

MID-CENTURY MODERN 2021

an orange that," he jokes. But after many years living in mid-century homes, Nistler takes a different view, swapping classic period colors and materials for more subdued, more personal choices, while still leaning boldly into mid-century design ideals like indoor-outdoor integration. "[Today] our most important design choices are less about what's inside the home, and more focussed on the home itself," he explains.

Realtor Peter Blank notes the same trend, observing that the Denver MCM home market shows no sign of waning, even as homebuyers' individual style expressions grow more varied. "People will pay a significantly higher premium for architecture," he asserts. "It's hard to say specifically how much higher, depending on a property's condition and overall appeal, but a general guideline could be 20%."

Rather than dying away as one cranky columnist predicted, the mid-century modern spaces of 2021 will flourish more richly than ever. They'll hold faithful to

the principles of great design born in the post-war era, while flexing and stretching to embrace the aesthetic and cultural hallmarks of today; the handmade, the global, the glam, the natural...above all, the personal. And, we might add, the sustainable. In a testament to the adaptability of great design, mid-century modern architecture has already taken its place at the forefront of the green building movement, and we can only expect to see more of that leadership in the years ahead.

Architectural giant William Krisel described modernism as "a philosophy that creates better living through design." It is this principle, more than any signature silhouette, material or color palette, that gives mid-century modern design its enduring power. And as times change, so shall the definitions of "better living" we choose to adopt for ourselves. Many of us first came to know mid-century design through the narrow lens of sleek chrome, polished teak and molded plastic. Today, with a broader view, we have the opportunity to know it even better – and love it even more. ■

"It's not all about the Nelson bubble lamp anymore," asserts Peter Blank of milehimodern. "Nobody wants to live in a mid-century museum; that's way too predictable and it's become boring...But the architecture itself? That's as popular now as it was 10 years ago, and as it was when it was first built, because design rules. There's a soul to these houses, and new construction just doesn't have it."

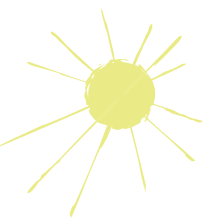
As we roll into the new millennium's third decade, mid-century aficionados can expect to enter a more flexible, eclectic and interpretive phase, but one that still resonates with the qualities that drew us to MCM in the first place. Maybe an iconic Knoll sofa takes on new drama with the surprise of luxe embroidered pillows. Or perhaps a clean-lined Cliff May interior becomes softer and more lived-in with tactile, neutral furnishings and earthy accessories. In other words, the mid-century lines and spaces we've long loved are going strong, but the purist's eye has most definitely begun to wander.

We can thank Instagram. Recall that the social media platform we now breathe like air was barely nascent 10 years ago as the mid-century modern craze swept the

nation. In those early days, many strove to replicate mid-century homes with flawless historical integrity, adhering strictly to original palettes and scouring thrift stores for iconic accessories. But over the past decade, as social feeds have made private spaces unrelentingly public and "personal brand" has entered our vocabulary without irony, individual distinctiveness has trumped period authenticity as the new holy grail. If everybody's doing purist MCM—and we can see everybody doing it daily in our Instagram feeds—a certain sense of sameness creeps in. Add the mass-market prevalence of knockoff mid-century lookalikes, and what began as an exercise in historical reverence could start to feel a bit like hollow trend-chasing. No wonder we're feeling an urge to shake things up.

Far from harking the death knell of mid-century design's popularity, this dynamic instead invites a deepening, a maturation of our relationship to mid-century principles and their role in our homes. Graeme Nistler, a Denver realtor and serial Cliff May remodeler has lived this evolution first-hand. "Early on with our first home, we were so in love with the kitsch... it was like 'welcome to the club, now you need a teal this and





Good Bones

ArcDen Studio balances restoration and innovation to create a sunny Arapaho Hills retreat for humans... and their pups!

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis
IMAGES: Justin Martin

When Jason Smith and Michael Kearns purchased their 1958 Arapaho Hills fixer-upper, they knew exactly what they wanted from the design team at ArcDen Studio; abundant sunlight, a spacious master suite, welcoming guest quarters and pet-friendliness galore. ArcDen principals Hans Osheim and Joana Emhof jumped at the challenge, and challenge was indeed the operative word. Aside from a large yard, the existing house had none of the specifics outlined in the brief. But it did have distinctive mid-century lines, a glass facade and a spectacular floor-to-ceiling redrock chimney — more than enough magic for the owners and architects to know they'd hit the jackpot.

Uncovering original intent, and then some.

A study of the structure's original plans confirmed what the ArcDen duo had intuited: while dark finishes and awkward additions obscured much of the home's initial design intent, the basic bones were priceless. But this was no straightforward restoration. Rather, it proved to be an exercise in what Emhof terms "careful combining"; merging historical and innovative elements to create a space that



A vintage Saarinen tulip table and chairs, which belonged to the owner's grandparents, takes the spotlight beneath a simple Corso fixture from WAC Lighting. ArcDen worked with Denver-based Circular Reference Design to source and refurbish a vintage credenza for the living room. Callan chairs from Room & Board maintain the room's light, airy feeling while providing loungeable comfort.



“Indoor-outdoor sensibility, horizontality and lightness were essential. It was a typical ‘50s home of small little boxes and a galley kitchen, that’s where we really asked ArcDen to honor the spirit of mid-century, but create a layout for a 21st-century couple who want to live here, and age here.” - Jason Smith



ABOVE: A largely glass facade — unusual for mid-century homes — immediately captured the owners’ attention. OPPOSITE TOP: The original galley kitchen is transformed by a new open floor plan and cabinets and counters from Granite Source. OPPOSITE BELOW: A mid-century-inspired bench and screen (hand-crafted in place by R.W. Design & Build) provides both utility and a moment of visual pause upon entry.

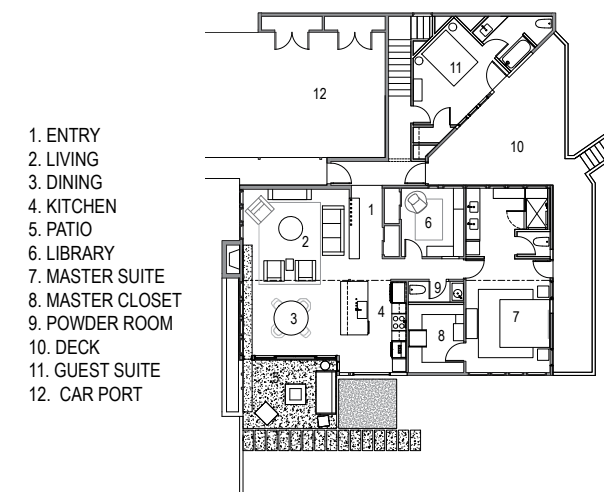


preserves the home’s mid-century heritage while satisfying today’s needs.

“Indoor-outdoor sensibility, horizontality and lightness were essential,” asserts owner Jason Smith, while acknowledging that much of the house was ripe for reinvention. “It was a typical ‘50s home of small little boxes and a galley kitchen,” says Smith. “That’s where we really asked Hans and Jo to honor the spirit of mid-century, but create a layout for a 21st-century couple who want to live here, and age here.”

Rethinking the layout to reveal hidden strengths.

By removing walls, adding windows and skylights and reconfiguring closets and bathrooms, the team achieved the open-concept kitchen, large master suite and guest quarters of the owners’ dreams. The inherent adaptability of the original post-and-beam construction worked in their favor, allowing ample flexibility without structural concern. To answer the call for a bright, sun-filled space, the team opted for light, expansive Terrazzo floor tile, and altered





the louvers on the facade to admit more sunshine while also better showcasing the home's classic, low-profile roofline.

Against all intuition, sunrooms that had been added as later-stage enhancements turned out to be the opposite of sunny, obstructing the flow of light into the main living spaces and interrupting critical points of indoor-outdoor continuity. Removing an addition restored the design integrity of one of the home's most beautiful period features: a 30-foot black concrete hearth bench that runs the length of the living room, extending through the exterior wall into the patio beyond. "Usually we're taxed with adding

square footage to make a space bigger," explains Osheim. "But in this case, it was clear to us walking in that the additions had to go so we could bring back a real strength of the original design." Ultimately, Osheim was so enamored with the house's elegant bench motif that he invented a way to echo it in the master bath, extending an attractive and practical black concrete shower bench into the adjacent dressing area.

Bending conventions with care.

Another mid-century hallmark, the exposed ceiling beams were high

on the architects' list of features to cherish. Yet the ceiling's dark stain finish fought against the drive for a lighter, brighter mood. "This was one of the harder decisions," says Emhof. "We definitely didn't take the idea of eliminating natural wood lightly." But after scrutinizing historical references and working through extensive visualization studies, the pair made the unexpected recommendation to paint the beams white. This bold move dramatically brightened the space while creating pleasing contrast with the adjacent warm wood walls and darker ceiling panels. "We felt great about it in the end, but only because we'd done the work of studying 1950s drawings



TOP: In the main bedroom suite, a sleek concrete bench uniting the shower and dressing area echoes the striking indoor-outdoor bench that accents the living room and patio. LEFT & ABOVE: The ArcDen team sourced accessories from Denver-based Two Pals & A Pup to furnish the basement-level canine retreat. OPPOSITE: Artificial turf provides low-maintenance year-round beauty and pet-friendly convenience in the patio area.



and finding some precedents that supported the choice," says Emhof. "It's okay to make changes, but it's really important to be careful when you're dealing with an MCM home, and think through the changes in depth. If you act impulsively, do too much and go too far, you're going to take away from the character of the home."

Customized spaces in unexpected places.

Another awkward legacy addition in the guest room area posed still more challenges, but ultimately sparked a whole new idea that changed the game for certain (furry) residents. "I knew we had the right architect when Hans solved the puzzle of the triangular addition," says owner Jason Smith. By overhauling the existing layout and moving a problematic stairway, Osheim

not only established an inviting guest suite, but also drew a flow of light into the property's large basement. The result: inspiration for a downstairs puppy paradise, complete with an epoxy floor, built-in dog beds, a dog spa with floor drain, and a dedicated laundry area for pet-related washables. With direct outdoor access, the basement became a highly practical "mud room for dogs" and all-around canine wonderland. While hardly typical of '50s-era homes, the innovative pet space is in fact a marvelous example of mid-century design philosophy in action: form follows function in the service of better living. And if you have any doubts, just ask the latest four-legged family member, Leia. ■

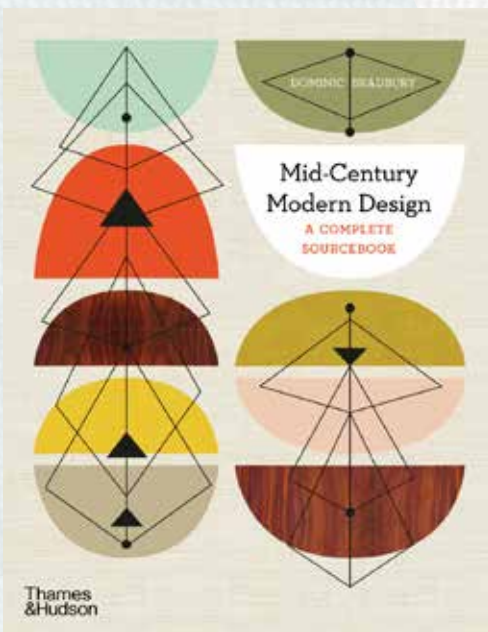
PROJECT CREDITS

- ARCHITECTS
ArcDen Studio
- INTERIOR DESIGN
ArcDen Studio
- BUILDER
RW Design & Build
- STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
DL Engineering
- LANDSCAPE
Denver Tree & Landscape
- ROOFER
Elite Roofing
- FIREPLACE
Fireplace Warehouse
- DOG ROOM ACCESSORIES
Two Pals & A Pup

MID MOD READS

Clear space on your shelf for a few recently published books celebrating all things mid-century design.

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis



**Mid-Century Modern Design:
A Complete Sourcebook**
By Dominic Bradbury

“SOURCEBOOK” almost seems too dry a word to characterize this visually delicious volume from design and lifestyle authority Dominic Bradbury, whose body of work includes more than 20 books and countless international publications. Intelligently organized into three sections covering applied arts, homes and an A-Z of influential makers, this definitive compendium spans the globe to put a wealth of mid-century data at your fingertips in bold, illustrated style.

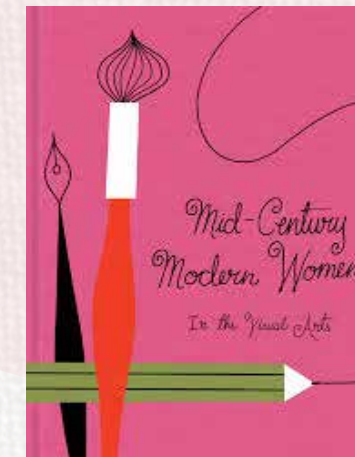
“Media and Masters” covers six different territories of applied design, exploring the furnishings, lighting, ceramics, textiles, industrial design and graphic expressions that define the mid-century aesthetic. “Houses and Interiors” spotlights 20 exemplary domestic design masterworks, while nearly 100 entries



in the “A-Z” section provide a deeper look at major creators including Dieter Rams, Robin Day, Isamu Noguchi, Lucie Rie, Charles and Ray Eames, Alvar Aalto, and Oscar Niemeyer.

In addition to Bradbury’s impeccable surveys of every major medium of the period, the sourcebook features 13 specially commissioned essays by other leading experts in the field. More than 1,000 vivid illustrations ensure that every page delivers both rich practical information and plenty of artistic enjoyment.

For collectors and design professionals, we predict this superb reference will quickly earn a place on an easy-to-reach shelf. For more casual fans of the period — or anyone seeking inspiration to create their own spaces — we can think of no better addition to the coffee table.



Mid-Century Modern Women in the Visual Arts

By Gloria Fowler, Illustrated by Ellen Surrey

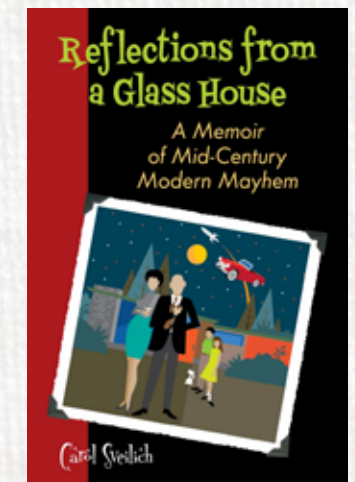
Candy for the eyes meets balm for the soul in a delightful illustrated celebration of 25 women who broke new ground in the visual arts between 1930 and 1960. From Twiggy to Yayoi Kusama, the collection shines light on the extraordinary diversity of female talent and perspective that has shaped our modern creative sensibility. In addition to a thoughtful biography, each entry includes a hand-painted portrait and inspiring quote from the featured artist, all rendered in Ellen Surrey’s signature playful style. Both powerful and entertaining (and extremely giftable!), this is the inspiration we need right now.

Reflections from a Glass House: A Memoir of Mid-Century Modern Mayhem

By Carol Sveilich

For mid-mod passionistas, classic Eichler homes inspire more than just aesthetic appreciation. These spaces open a portal to California circa 1965; a luminous world of free thought, free love and unfettered self-expression. And if architecture opens the door, Carol Sveilich’s rollicking memoir grabs you by the elbow, drags you in and offers you a token.

Misfits, angst and patchouli abound in a coming-of-age tale set against the backdrop of Bay Area 60s and 70s counterculture. The story sparkles with enough detail to satisfy any mid-century culture buff, but *Reflections from a Glass House* is no mere history book. It’s the deeply personal, often hilarious story of a family you’d probably love to visit (but might not want to live with).



Atlas of Mid-Century Modern Houses

By Dominic Bradbury

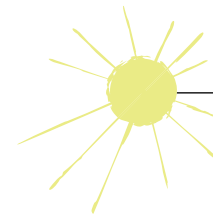
Do you know your Neutra from your Niemeyer? If not, you will soon thanks to this satisfyingly hefty survey of more than 400 mid-century modern architectural treasures. Bradbury showcases the genre’s most legendary examples with thoroughly researched descriptions and magnificent photography, covering American and European icons as well as masterworks from Australia, Africa and Asia. Offering a truly global perspective, this eye-catching volume promises to educate and inspire even those well versed in the field.



The Shape(s) of Things to Come

ELEVATING THE SIMPLE POWER OF GRAPHIC REPETITION TO HIGH ART, ORLA KIELY'S NEW TEXTILE LINE BORROWS FROM THE PAST, YET FEELS UNDENIABLY "NOW."

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis

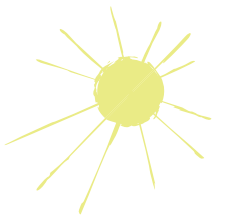


When the designers at Egg and Dart Textiles decided to introduce patterns into their assortment of premium solid upholsteries, they found all the inspiration they needed in their own Palm Desert, California backyard. Long synonymous with mid-century modern design, the Palm Desert / Palm Springs area embodies all the nostalgia of boxy glass houses, bubble lamps and boomerang prints, but filters this history through a stylish contemporary lens. Seeking a fresh take on the Palm Springs legacy, the Egg and Dart team knew just which collaborator to call.

Even if you don't know Orla Kiely's name, chances are you'll immediately recognize the Irish designer's iconic, sixties-inspired pattern style, made famous on everything from handbags to housewares. Exploring scale and rhythm through the use of simple graphic leaf, floral and butterfly motifs, Kiely's patterns combine the playful spirit of mid-century kitsch with the sophisticated eclecticism of 2020 and beyond. Sometimes bold, sometimes subtle, all the prints have in common a fundamental purity and simplicity that makes them supremely versatile.

The collection, which launched this spring and is available exclusively through Egg and Dart showrooms, features 42 original Keily patterns, all custom-designed for color compatibility with popular Egg and Dart solids. From delicate, petite tone-on-tone prints to assertive graphic florals, the assortment provides a range of options for bringing a subtle — or not-so-subtle — note of mid-century charm to sofas, chairs, pillows and other upholstered accents. (And for those who can't get enough Orla Kiely, watch for a complementary line of lightweight drapery textiles coming in early 2021.) ■





May, Their Way

TWO CLIFF MAY MAVENS FIND THE PERFECT BALANCE OF PERSONAL EXPRESSION AND PERIOD AUTHENTICITY IN THEIR HARVEY PARK RETREAT.

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis • IMAGES: Jess Blackwell

An Eames-inspired Wayfair table makes a comfy perch for an original Bitossi ceramic cat (scored for \$3 at a thrift store!). Poufs from CB2 and a simple IKEA rug keep the scene soft with inviting, organic texture.



For realtors and self-taught designers Megan Leddy and Graeme Nistler, updating Cliff May houses is not so much a project as a way of life. They purchased their first Cliff May in 2008, transitioning to their current Harvey Park home in 2011 to begin an extended remodeling adventure that culminated just this year. The couple's passion for mid-century design runs deep, but as with any lasting love affair, the relationship has altered over time. "In our first house, we were like 'what should we put in it? Let's just do what Don Draper would do!'" jokes Nistler. Bold color pops and iconic period accessories dominated the decor in a playful, energetic celebration of mid-century kitsch. But all that has changed in their current abode, where a neutral palette and clean, intentional organization of space combine to highlight the home's essential architectural lines.

Nistler and Leddy credit some of this evolution to the maturing of their personal tastes, which have drifted from the kinetic to the serene with passing years. They also point out that the structure of the home itself forced a degree of minimalism in decor. "There are just so many windows," explains Leddy. "We really don't have any place to hang art even if we wanted to, and bright decor just feels jarring when so much of the outdoors is visible from inside." So, as a cherished Shag print and other mod treasures were packed away, the space gained something marvelous in exchange: a pervasive aura of calm and profound sense of integration with the deck and yard beyond.

Interior and exterior, reimagined as one.

"The indoor-outdoor aspect was the most important for me by far," asserts Nistler, who craved—and

achieved—direct egress from every room in the house except the bathroom. Measuring a modest 1,364 square feet, the house boasts a whopping 15 exterior doors (many in the form of French pairs), carrying the concepts of spatial economy and indoor-outdoor living to their ultimate functional expression. "I don't even use the hallway. It's quicker to use the doors to navigate from room to room, and I love the mental break of just stepping outside," says Nistler. This courtyard-inspired feeling also creates the illusion of additional square footage in the modestly sized home.

To enhance indoor-outdoor continuity, the couple chose a crisp white for interior walls, complemented by a similar, but slightly warmer, white exterior. "You see the L of the bedroom from the windows of the main living space, so the interaction of the inside

May, Their Way

"In our first house, we were like 'what should we put in it? Let's just do what Don Draper would do!'" – Graeme Nistler

ABOVE: "I'm a budget bitch," asserts Leddy, who thrifted vintage Magis Lyra bar stools for \$8 apiece, then refurbished them with custom black powder coating. Nistler installed a striking IKEA walnut laminate countertop himself, insisting that "the hardest part was getting it home from the store."

FOLLOWING PAGE: Nistler adapted standard deck lighting from Amazon to cast a soft glow over patio plants, and chose the same CB2 concrete planters to accent both interior and exterior walls.

and outside colors really matters," Leddy explains. Harmonious use of wood tones and concrete elements between the interior and patio further enhance the linkage, as does the couple's enthusiastic embrace of houseplants.

Mid-century principles meet personal aesthetics.

True to the home's mid-century modern heritage, Leddy and Nistler kept proportion and geometry top of mind in every choice, right down to the square sticking on the doors. "I'm kind of a weirdo about math... I tend to think in numbers and I like it when things come out even," say Nistler, who imagined the outdoor area in equal thirds of stone, wood and living plants. Similarly, Leddy conceived the interior in planes defined by traffic and usage, placing livable rugs and furnishings — many of them vintage — to articulate the space

without introducing any stiffness or formality. Rather than establishing visual focal points, Leddy created a restful, fluid environment in which the eye roams freely inside and out. Even design choices that aren't strictly true to the period, like installing sliding barn doors for two small bedrooms, were fully grounded in the mid-century ideals of space efficiency and utility. "If the ghost of Cliff May came to haunt our house, I don't think he'd be too disappointed in anything we did," says Nistler.

An efficiency revolution.

After many years in Cliff May houses, Leddy and Nistler knew all too well that indoor-outdoor living has its limits. Specifically, they'd shivered and sweated through many a season in these beautiful — but virtually uninsulated — structures, which were originally designed for California's gentle

“I don’t even use the hallway. It’s quicker to use the doors to navigate from room to room, and I love the mental break of just stepping outside.”

– Graeme Nistler





TOP: In the primary bedroom, vintage rope chairs from a thrift store complement the CB2 bed frame and enhance the room's comfortable, lived-in appeal.

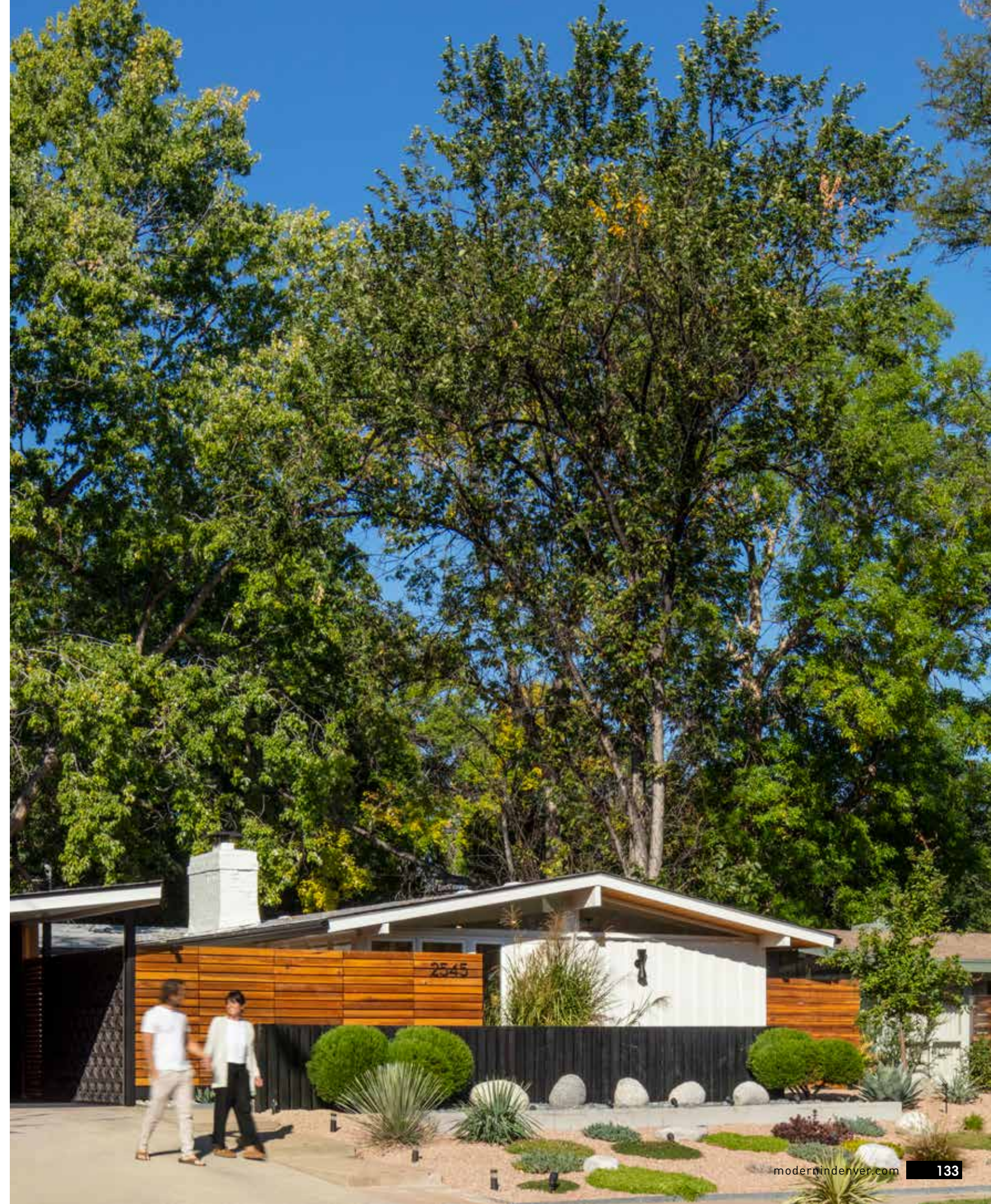
ABOVE: Nistler topped a basic IKEA cabinet with a custom walnut slab to create a built-in corner desk.

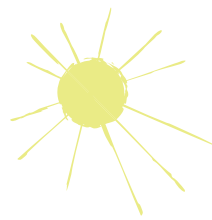
climate. "It's like we were living in the world's fanciest tent," says Nistler of the frozen winter nights and broiling summer afternoons. When a leak in the original tar-and-gravel roof prompted repairs, they decided it was time to tackle the problem head-on with an efficiency reskin of the entire property. And in this case, they threw historical purism right out of their drafty, single-paned windows.

First, they stripped away the original wood board and batten siding, filling in the cross-stud construction with foam. After layering on 1 3/4-inch insulating foam board, they finished the exterior with cement board siding and composite battens. (As a bonus, tearing out the original siding made it easy to add a few more windows to the already heavily fenestrated home.) The couple chose double-paned vinyl windows and French doors as an economical and functional alternative to traditional wood. A roof of reflective white shingles, rather than typical tar-and-gravel or common dark shingles, deflects summer heat.

Nistler and Leddy acknowledge that their departure from traditional materials in service of energy conservation has raised a few eyebrows among their design-conscious neighbors. But enviable utility bills and year-round comfort have the last word. Moreover, one could easily argue that a functional, economical and progressive perspective on materials is more an homage to mid-century design ideals than a betrayal. Should the ghost of Cliff May return to haunt this winter, he won't just be warm and cozy — he'll be proud. ■

May, Their Way





“THIS IS THE NEW AIA. ... THIS CONFERENCE AND WHAT YOU’VE PULLED TOGETHER HERE, THE PEOPLE YOU PULLED TOGETHER, THE WAY YOU PRESENTED IT—TO ME— IS KIND OF NEW AIA, WHICH IS LOOKING AT LARGER ISSUES THAN THE BOTTOM LINE. YOU’RE LOOKING AT REALLY THE HEART OF WHAT THIS PROFESSION CAN BE. I FIND THAT VERY INSPIRING.”

-**Billie Tsien** *Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects*
Said during AIA Colorado’s 2020 Practice + Design Conference

Q&A

THE CHANGING
FACE
OF AIA COLORADO

AIA’S AMY DVORAK REVEALS HOW THE ONCE-TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATION IS MAKING CHANGE — AND CREATING SPACE AT THE (VIRTUAL) TABLE FOR DESIGNERS AND CREATORS FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE.

WORDS: Elizabeth Ellis
IMAGES: Jess Blackwell

Lifelong design aficionado Amy Dvorak, Assoc. AIA, describes her role at AIA Colorado as “the intersection of media, design and nonprofits.” Uniting her personal and professional passions, the position finds Dvorak right at home — quite literally, thanks to 2020’s new ways of working.

We caught up with Dvorak in her mid-century modern home office in the Apple Blossom Lane neighborhood for an insider’s view of the venerable American Institute of Architects’ Colorado Chapter. As it turns out, this century-old institution is more than ready to shake things up, both virtually and IRL.

YOU JOINED AIA COLORADO AS COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR IN MAY 2020. WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING, HOW HAS THAT EXPERIENCE BEEN?

Having been an active volunteer co-chairing its Equity, Diversity and Inclusiveness (EDI) Committee prior to becoming staff, I appreciate having had camaraderie with members before shifting solely to screens. For members, the online pivot makes the association far more accessible across all four corners of the state. It has changed the dynamic for the better, creating space for some incredibly humble and vulnerable conversations — invaluable as members navigate today’s crucial social issues.

AIA COLORADO HAS BEEN AROUND FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY. HOW DOES SUCH A HISTORIC INSTITUTION STAY RELEVANT?

Therein lies the crux of all associations. We must constantly be on the pulse of members’ needs, listening, pivoting, and delivering relevant resources (60 virtual programs already this year — and a socially distant celebration at the drive-in). We’re here for it!

Our team is nimble, and we care about design. To be relevant in association leadership, it helps to have worked in the industry and understand first-hand the issues your members face. We’ve been there, we’re quickly



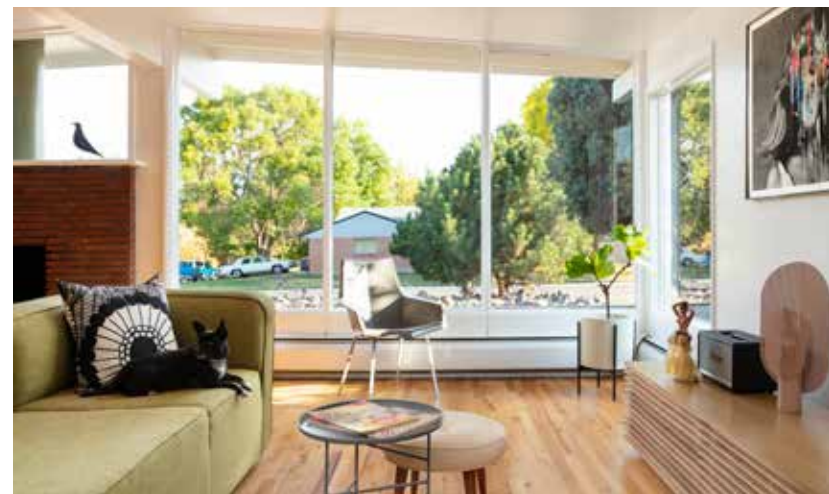
“
staying relevant”

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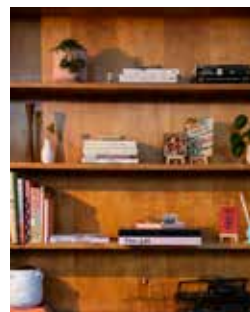


“”
working from home

My home was built 65 years ago, and its design has withstood the test of time with its clean lines, large expanses of glass, and open floor plan. I find myself more inspired and productive, appreciating little things like natural light pouring in from the clerestory windows.



Dvorak's work-from-home haven touts a familiar mix of modern and mid-century monikers like McCobb, Modernica, Milo Baughman, and naturally, the Eameses, alongside unique finds from frequent travels. Cherished objets d'art include the hula figurine hailing from a vintage store on the outskirts of Bangkok to titles from the rare book room of the iconic Powell's in Portland, an 1800s heirloom from her grandfather's typewriter shop in Chicago, and manipulated media from Mexico City, complementing her eclectic art collection. Rude Osolnik-inspired candlesticks woodturned by Dvorak complete the mid-century built-ins.



adapting to member needs, and through it, destigmatizing the perception that AIA is a stuffy old boys' club. That couldn't be further from the truth. Under new CEO Mike Waldinger, Hon. AIA, we're offering more leadership opportunities than ever for emerging professionals, and today's boardroom looks a whole lot different. I also love the energy and dedication of our volunteers — 100+ members strong, young, diverse, and on a mission. Empowerment is where change truly occurs, and together, we're rolling up our sleeves and eschewing stagnancy.

WHAT SPECIFIC INITIATIVES ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

Hands down, our EDI work, but I'm a little biased (and fully acknowledge that double entendre). We're committed to creating a more equitable profession, from curating resources on racial equity to partnerships with Denver Public Schools and higher education institutions to diversify the pipeline — personally meaningful as a first-generation college student. We also produced a project, "Women in Architecture," calling attention to the gender gap, as a whopping 70 percent of AIA Colorado members are men. After asking 130 female and nonbinary architects what it would take to break down barriers for women in architecture, we projected those quotes, names, and faces onto the Daniels & Fisher Tower throughout October. It was powerful and moving beyond words to see members see themselves finally being recognized — and to experience an entire culture shift before our eyes. I can only hope we inspired a few young girls along the way.

DO YOU THINK COLORADO HAS A SPECIFIC CULTURE WHEN IT COMES TO DESIGN?

While mountain chalets will always be a special part of Colorado's architectural repertoire, we're working to expand that perception, pushing members' creative boundaries and elevating design. But culture change goes beyond aesthetics. We're focused on making architecture more accessible. That means broadening the definition of who can be a client and imagining how that might change not only the profession, but also our neighborhoods and cities.

LET'S SHIFT GEARS TO YOUR PERSONAL ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE. IT'S CLEAR FROM YOUR HOME THAT YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT DESIGN. WHAT DREW YOU TO THE MID-CENTURY STYLE?

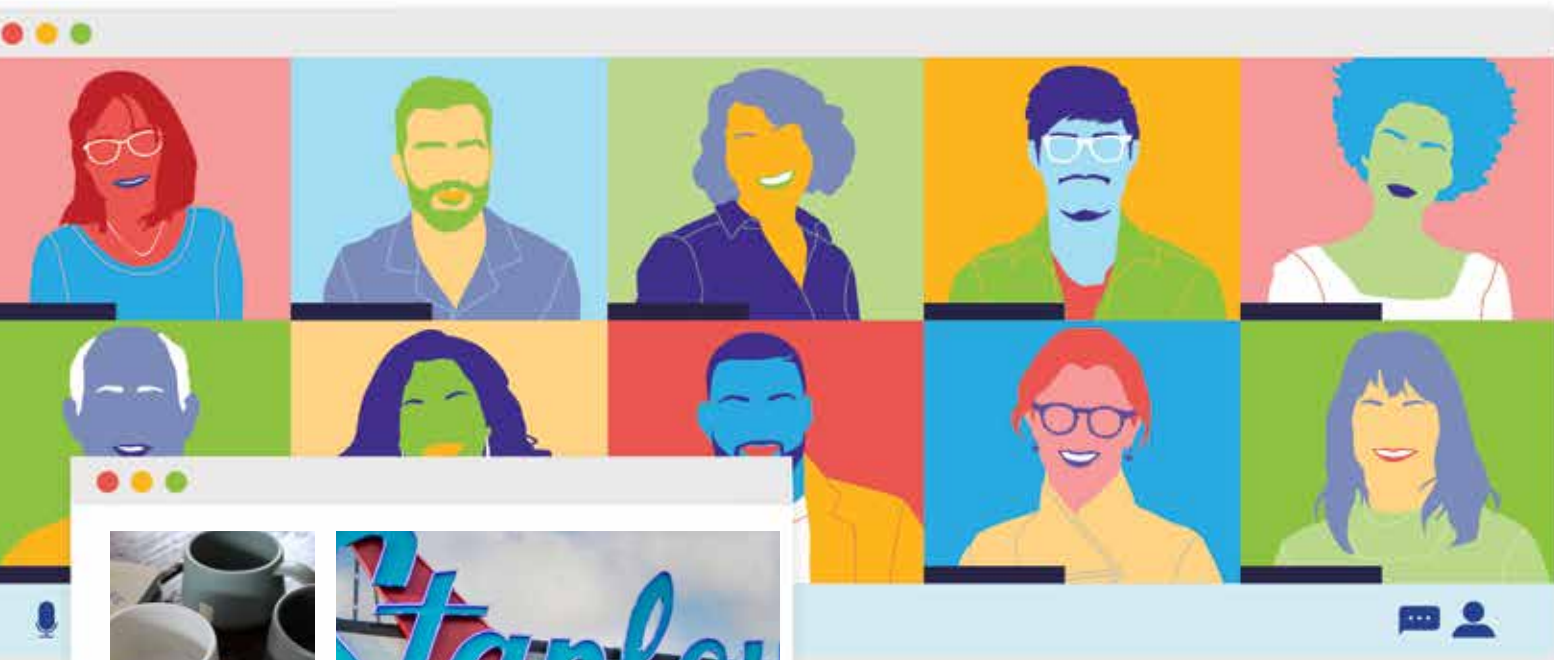
I believe that good design can have a meaningful impact on our lives. I believe that modernism goes beyond style and is, rather, a movement. And I believe that good design endures. My home was built 65 years ago, and its design has withstood the test of time with its clean lines, large expanses of glass, and open floor plan. I find myself more inspired and productive, appreciating little things like natural light pouring in from the clerestory windows. What's been most telling though is how guests respond — they always wind up sticking around for a few days longer than anticipated.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING AT HOME?

The access. AIA Colorado represents firms statewide, and through this digital shift, geographical barriers have become obsolete. The ability for architects to connect has never been stronger. But let's be honest — we all know my pup, Donut, is the real perk here. 🐾

“”
initiatives

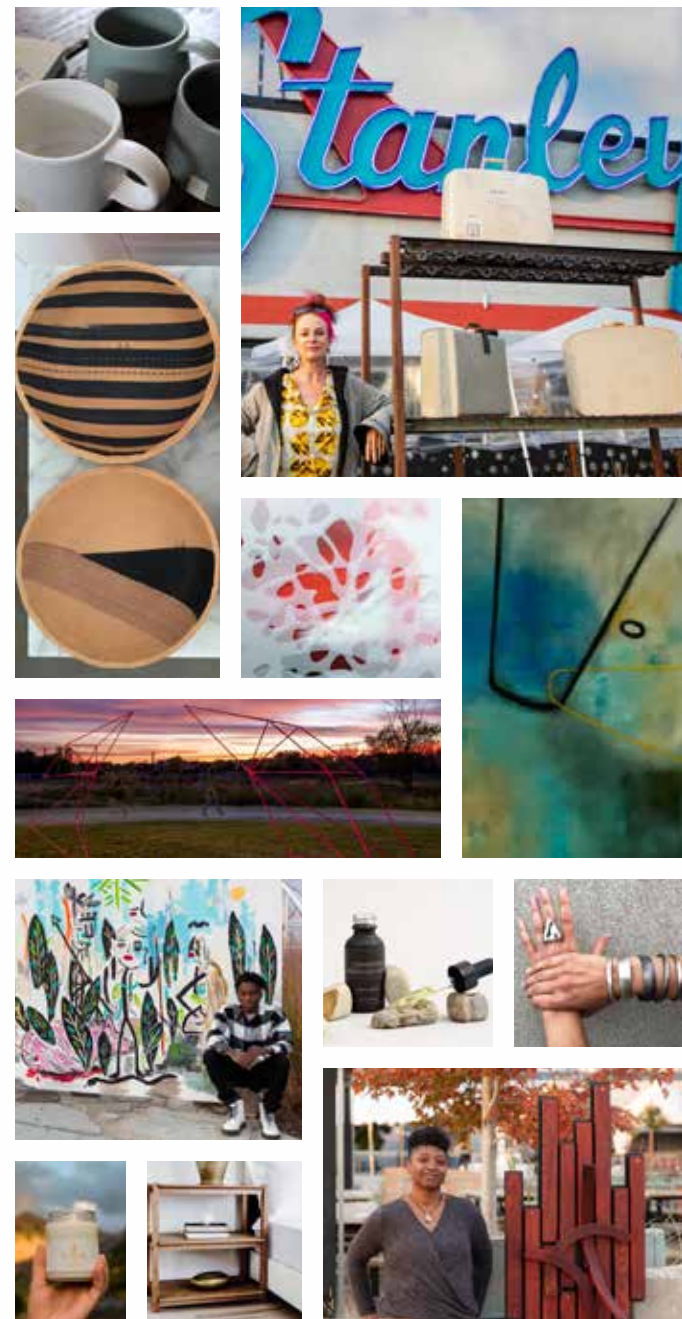
We're committed to creating a more equitable profession, from curating resources on racial equity to partnerships with Denver Public Schools and higher education institutions to diversify the pipeline — personally meaningful as a first-generation college student.



DENVER DESIGN WEEK 2020

THANK YOU!

While this year's Denver Design Week was (almost) fully virtual, we'd like to extend a huge thank you to everyone for coming together despite the challenges to celebrate the fantastic design happening in our community. In its most unique year yet, Design Week 2020 consisted of 25 digital talks and sessions, an outdoor installation space at Stanley Marketplace showcasing the work of 6 local artists, and an online Colorado Creatives Showcase with over 35 makers and artists. From the event sponsors who created compelling video content to our committed sponsors for making this all possible: thank you. And if you missed any of the talks, the 25+ videos are available until September 2021 and \$20 passes can be purchased at denverdesignweek.com. We can't wait for next year!



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Many thanks to our 2020 sponsors for giving back to the Colorado creative community.

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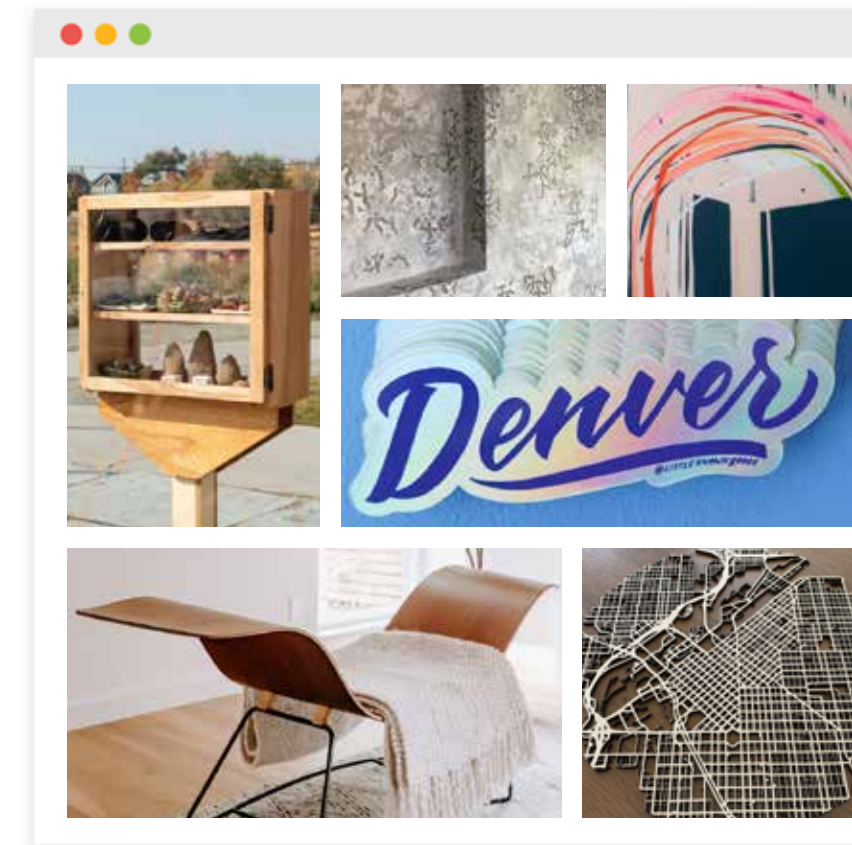
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GOLD-MEDAL MUSEUM

The new Olympic & Paralympic Museum, one of the world's most acclaimed new designs, rises from the center of Colorado Springs like an athlete springing into motion.

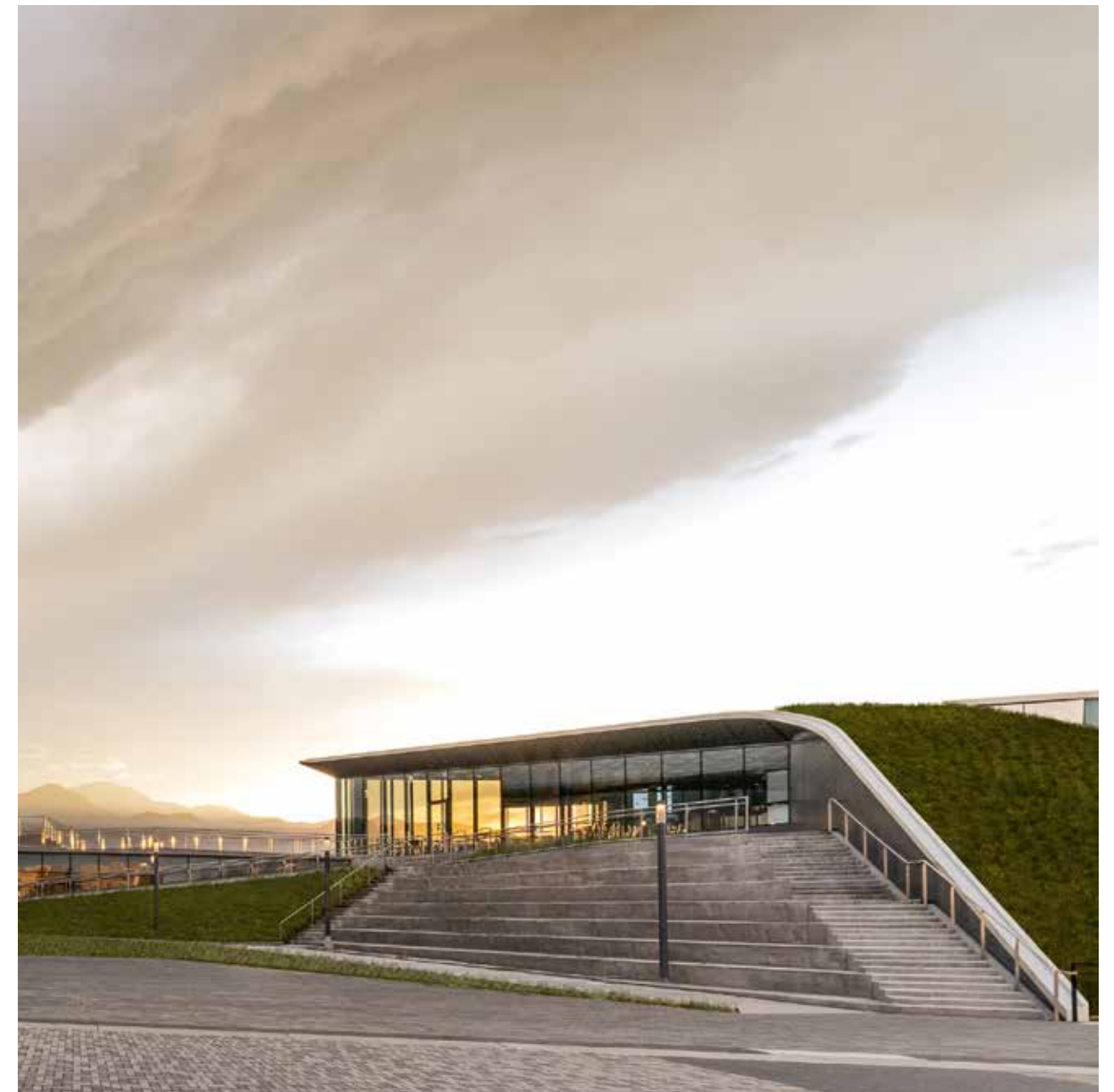
WORDS: Alison Gwinn



Image: Jason O'Rear

THE RECENTLY OPENED UNITED STATES OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC MUSEUM IN SOUTHWEST COLORADO SPRINGS IS AS DYNAMIC AND, YES, WORLD-CLASS AS THE ATHLETES IT PAYS TRIBUTE TO. ONE OF THE MOST ACCESSIBLE AND INTERACTIVE MUSEUMS IN THE WORLD, IT HAS BEEN CITED AS ONE OF THE DESIGN WORLD'S MAJOR NEW BUILDINGS OF 2020.

Diller Scofidio + Renfro—the New York architecture firm behind Manhattan's acclaimed High Line and the recent redesign of the Museum of Modern Art—designed the 60,000-square-foot museum to mimic the arc of an athlete's motion. "The building has a dynamic spiraling form that draws inspiration from the energy and grace of Olympic and Paralympic athletes during competitions," says Ben Gilmartin, the DS+R principal who led the design team.



The \$91 million U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum complex, which opened over the summer in Colorado Springs, centers on a terraced hardscape plaza, with the museum building (opposite page) sitting on the south and a café, retail, and educational space sited on the north. Standing between the buildings, visitors have panoramic views of the Rockies, including Pikes Peak.

The \$91 million museum complex, which took three years to build, centers on a terraced hardscape plaza, with the museum building on the south side and a café, retail, and educational space on the north. That siting, on the Vermijo Road axis (the main approach from Pikes Peak to downtown Colorado Springs), was meant to give visitors postcard views of that famous mountain and the surrounding Rockies. The outdoor plaza, which includes an amphitheater that can accommodate 230 people, was designed "to be enjoyed by locals and museum-goers alike," says Gilmartin, "cradled by the two parts of the building." The views continue on the inside. "In every corner of the museum," he says, "the galleries have vast, panoramic windows overlooking the surrounding landscape and the city."



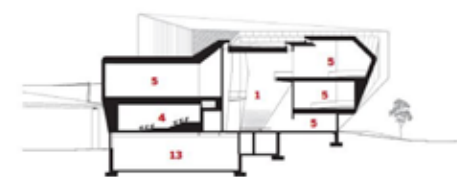
“ANY VISITOR, REGARDLESS OF ABILITY, IS ABLE TO MOVE THROUGH QUARTER-LEVEL STEPS OF GALLERIES AROUND THE CENTRAL ATRIUM THAT UNFOLD IN A CONTINUOUS NARRATIVE APPROACH. IT’S A UNIVERSAL PATHWAY, A SINGULAR ROUTE THAT ENABLES A SHARED, COMMON EXPERIENCE.”

– Ben Gilmartin, Diller Scofidio + Renfro

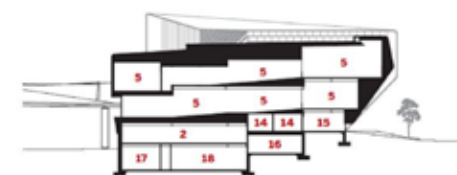
GOLD-MEDAL MUSEUM



The designers consulted with a committee of Paralympic athletes and others with disabilities to make sure the museum was totally accessible. The building includes a state-of-the-art check-in system where guests can note any personal needs (such as being hard of hearing or having trouble reading small print) on an electronic tag, to customize their viewing experience.



SECTION A - A



SECTION B - B

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| 1 ATRIUM | 7 EVENT SPACE | 13 MECHANICAL |
| 2 TICKETING | 8 TERRACE | 14 RESTROOM |
| 3 ADMINISTRATION | 9 CAFÉ | 15 COAT CHECK |
| 4 THEATER | 10 EDUCATION | 16 LOADING DOCK |
| 5 GALLERY | 11 COURTYARD | 17 BOILER |
| 6 MUSEUM STORE | 12 BOARDROOM | 18 ARCHIVE |

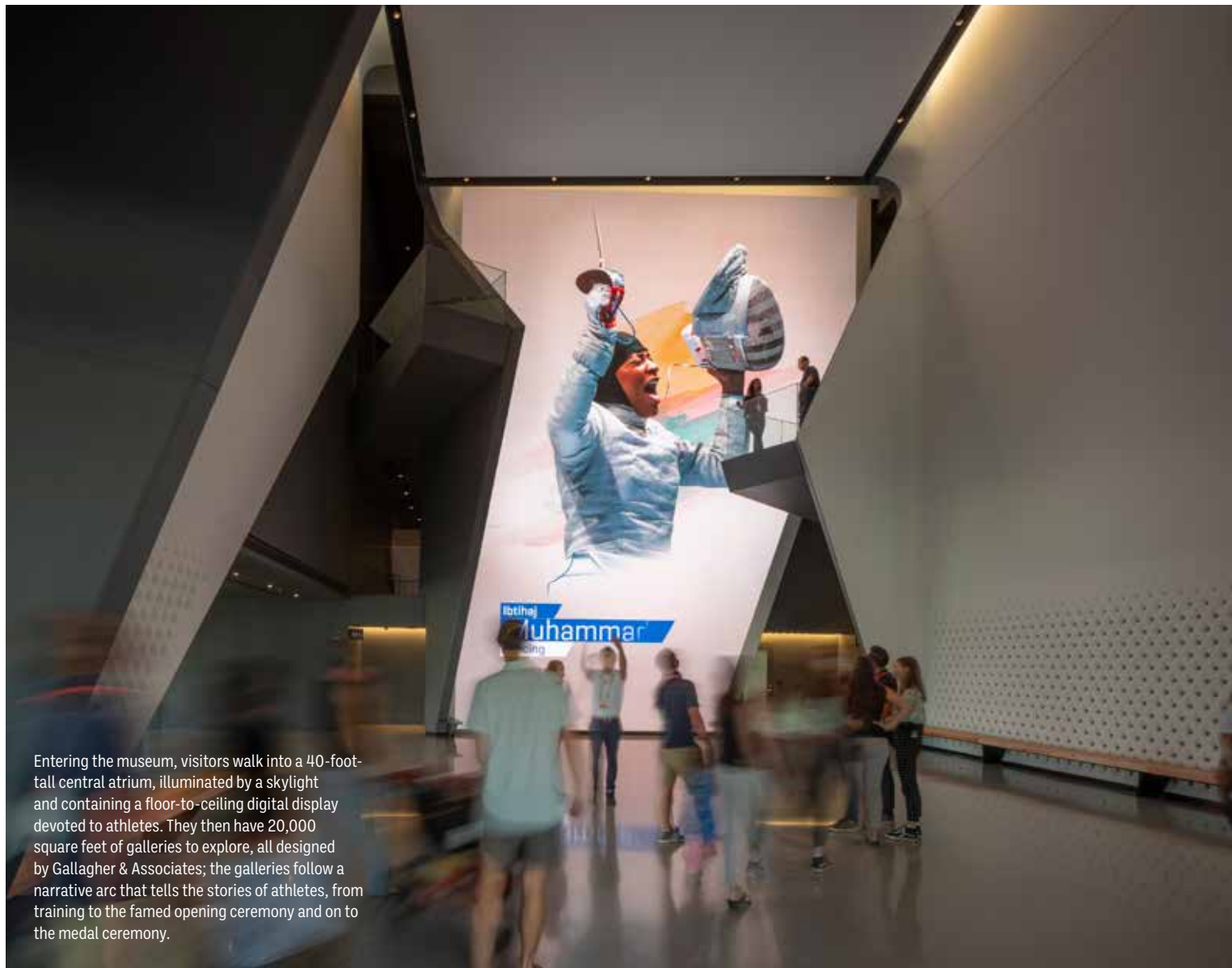
Images opposite and above: Nic Lehoux

The building’s taut, glistening skin is made up of more than 9,000 folded, anodized diamond-shaped aluminum panels constructed by MG McGrath of Minnesota, each one unique in both size and shape. Together, they form a curved sheath that wraps around the four overlapping petals spiraling around the museum’s central structure. “Each metallic panel is animated by the extraordinary light quality in Colorado Springs,” says Gilmartin, “producing gradients of color and shade that give the building another sense of motion and dynamism.”

Inside, the museum is equally spectacular. After walking through the entry plaza, visitors pass the ticket desk as they enter the museum’s 40-foot-tall central atrium, which includes an integrated floor-to-ceiling digital display devoted to athletes, designed by Gallagher & Associates, a museum planning and design firm with offices across the country. Four balconies of varying heights overlook the central space, with a skylight illuminating it all.

After entering, visitors take an elevator to the top floor, after which descending six-foot-wide ramps (which can accommodate two people side by side, one in a wheelchair) guide them past 12 galleries along a gentle-grade downhill circulation path. “Any visitor, regardless of ability, is able to move through quarter-level steps of galleries around the central atrium that unfold in a continuous narrative approach,” Gilmartin says. “It’s a universal pathway, a singular route that enables a shared, common experience.” To make the museum further accessible, guardrails are made of glass to accommodate visitors who are seated, cane guards are integrated into benches, floors are smooth, and seats in the café are movable to accommodate wheelchairs.

The design team consulted with a committee of Paralympic athletes and other people with disabilities to make sure the museum was totally accessible. “The museum incorporates a state-of-the-art check-in system where visitors can register any personal needs on an electronic tag, such as being hard of hearing or having difficulty reading small print,” Gilmartin says. “The



Entering the museum, visitors walk into a 40-foot-tall central atrium, illuminated by a skylight and containing a floor-to-ceiling digital display devoted to athletes. They then have 20,000 square feet of galleries to explore, all designed by Gallagher & Associates; the galleries follow a narrative arc that tells the stories of athletes, from training to the famed opening ceremony and on to the medal ceremony.

exhibits are pre-programmed to automatically adjust to meet those requirements.”

The 20,000 square feet of gallery space on levels one, two and three—all designed by Gallagher & Associates—follow a narrative arc, telling athletes’ personal stories and describing their journeys to becoming Olympic or Paralympic competitors. The galleries, each one unique, start by talking about the history of the Olympics, then follow

the athletes as they experience rigorous training and then participate in the Parade of Nations/Opening Ceremony (including a 360-degree film capturing that emotional moment). Then it’s visitors’ turn to be spectators of both the Summer and Winter Games, including exploring artifacts and equipment. The galleries end with an immersive, interactive gallery dedicated to the medal ceremony, the iconic culmination to the athletes’ journey.

Rounding out the museum’s features are a 2,000-square foot, state-of-the-art theater on level one, which can hold 130 people, with two rows of seats removable to accommodate up to 26 wheelchairs; a 1,300-square-foot event space on level two that has wide views of downtown Colorado Springs and the mountains and can be opened up to a 500-square-foot outdoor terrace; and the 2,800-square-foot café, which has 400 additional square feet outside and can also be used for educational



Images opposite and above: Nic Lehoux

“EACH METALLIC PANEL IS ANIMATED BY THE EXTRAORDINARY LIGHT QUALITY IN COLORADO SPRINGS, PRODUCING GRADIENTS OF COLOR AND SHADE THAT GIVE THE BUILDING ANOTHER SENSE OF MOTION AND DYNAMISM.” –Ben Gilmartin, Diller Scofidio + Renfro

events or as meeting space. The café’s roof is landscaped with native plants to express the change of seasons.

The final touch will be a new Southwest Downtown Pedestrian Bridge, which spans 250 feet over an active rail yard to connect the museum complex to the America the Beautiful Park. The bridge extends an existing bike network, connecting downtown Colorado Springs to the Midland Trail and preserving views from downtown to Pikes Peak; it will open in 2021.

Buildings are ADA compliant, and the design team targeted LEED Gold

by using sustainability practices, including building systems that operate at maximum efficiency and using brown field development (the rail yard dates back to the late 1800s and is the centerpiece of a larger redevelopment plan for the area).

For Colorado Springs, known as Olympic City USA and home to more than 50 national sports organizations, more than 20 national Olympic governing bodies, and the Olympic & Paralympic Training Center, the museum is a fitting tribute to the athletes who have come there in hopes of achieving their own gold-medal dreams. ■

PROJECT CREDITS

- DESIGN ARCHITECT
Diller Scofidio + Renfro
- ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Anderson Mason Dale Architects
- EXHIBITION DESIGNERS
Gallagher & Associates
- MUSEUM & CONTENT DEVELOPMENT
Barrie Projects
- STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
KL&A, in collaboration with Arup
- ACOUSTICS, AUDIO/VISUAL/THEATER
Arup
- ACCESSIBILITY
Ileana Rodriguez
- LIGHTING
Tillotson Design Associates
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
NES Inc., in collaboration with Hargreaves Jones
- ENERGY MODELING
Iconenergy
- FAÇADE FABRICATION
MG McGrath



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Person, place or object we **LOVE**

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WORDS: Katie Grogan

After a tough year, it's finally time to turn the page on 2020 and welcome 2021. And that means a new calendar—or does it?

Max 365 is a perpetual date keeper that helps you track the day of the month in one daily flip. The spiral-bound square calendar was designed in 1975 by Massimo Vignelli, an Italian designer perhaps best known for his design of the New York City subway map and signage. Following his trademark minimalist aesthetic, Max 365's design is boldly simple: white numbers on a black background printed in Helvetica—one of Vignelli's (and the world's) go-to typefaces.

Once a collector's item, Max 365 is being printed once again by online design retailer Generate (+gnr8.biz). With its timeless design, this is one calendar that will never be out of date. ■



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