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Outlook

QUALITY DESIGN FOR MULTIFAMILY HOMES

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD

"Architects build dreams, and we also have to help clients reconcile those dreams with real budgets," says Sarah Susanka, AIA and author of the *Not So Big House* series. At Whirlpool Corporation, we were delighted to have Sarah Susanka speak in our booth at the recent AIA convention. Sarah's commitment to helping architects bring quality design to smaller homes complements our goal of providing multifamily homeowners with well-designed appliances for smaller spaces.

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So for apartments, condos, lofts or anyplace your clients call "home," you can specify the Whirlpool® and Whirlpool Gold® appliances you need to complete your designs.



Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD
Manager, Architectural and Design Marketing

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contents



Window walls draw daylight deep in the heart of this Austin, Texas, building. Above photo: Greg Hursley. Cover photo: Danny Turner.

from the editor...page 13

letters...page 15

home front...page 22

Regeneration now / A theme for CORA /
Board talk / Calendar / Work at home

k+b studio...page 30

Studio B Architects casts a spell on an Aspen, Colo., condo renovation, while surgical precision brings a New York bathroom to life.

perspective...page 35

Architect Jonathan Held entreats all clients to abide these eight no-no's.



practice...page 41

When residential architects start out, the focus is simply on making a living. But sooner or later everyone confronts the question of whether—and how much—to grow.

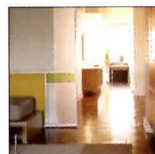


cover story...page 54

walking the walk

David Baker's roots as a self-proclaimed "radical hippie" have led him to his role today as one of the country's top affordable housing architects.

by Meghan Drueding



space in the city...page 62

Once dark and diminutive, three renovated apartments are now bright lights in the big city.

by Nigel F. Maynard, Meghan Drueding, and Shelley D. Hutchins

doctor spec...page 71

Manufacturers forge new wares to muffle a multifamily menace: noise.

architects' choice...page 75

Fetching selections from Ali R. Honarkar of Division One Architects.

new material...page 77

Piping-hot products for your next project.

off the shelf...page 79

Eye-catching flooring solutions invite you to walk their way.

end quote...page 96

Hassan Fathy's courtyard order.

residential architect

design awards

call for entries...page 81

A 4x5 grid of 20 images showcasing various window and door hardware components. The images are arranged in four rows and five columns. The first row shows a window handle with a white strap, a brass handle on a red door, two brass roller assemblies, a brass handle with a white knob, and a close-up of a brass handle. The second row features a white hinge, a window handle on a wooden frame, a window handle on a wooden frame, a black handle on a red door, and a window handle on a wooden frame. The third row displays a brass handle on a wooden frame, two black handles on a white door, three cylindrical rollers in different colors, a close-up of a roller, and two black handles on a wooden door. The fourth row includes a white handle on a wooden frame, a brass handle on a wooden frame, a close-up of a roller, a blue handle on a blue door, and a white handle on a white door.

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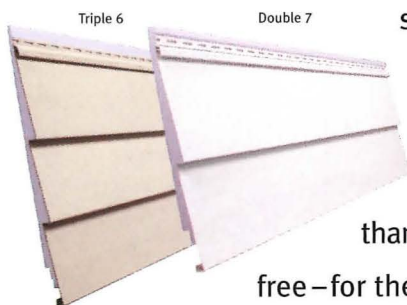
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from the editor

the charge brigade

what do you cost, and how can you justify it?

by s. claire conroy

Politics, religion, money. Bring up any of these subjects and you're bound to hit a nerve. If you mention architectural fees, you'll zap about 31 nerves. That's how many e-mails I received after I quoted a hypothetical fee in my April editorial, "Where's the Architect?" Thirty-one missives constitutes a hefty e-mail bag for our small magazine. The fee in question? Roughly 15 percent of construction costs. I mentioned a typical house size of 2,200 square feet and hard costs of about \$200 a foot. This is the prevailing rate in my Washington, D.C., market for a top-notch architect of high-end houses. Well, apparently I live in the Emerald City, and I need to take off the green glasses.

Many of my correspondents wrote to tell me they could retire now if they made that much per house. That fee is their American dream. No, they told me, their compensation for full architectural services (including construction observation) on a custom home amounts to what a real estate agent makes on the average sale of a house.

So for their year or two of effort, these architects pull in around 6 percent. In our hot real estate market in D.C., agents rake in their 6 percent for just a couple of weeks' work (although they often split it with another agent). Now, the architects who quoted that fee tend to work in smaller cities and towns where they compete head-to-head with builders who throw in the plan for free, building designers who charge less than 5 percent of construction costs, and stock plan businesses that sell reproducible vellums for \$1,000 a set. In their markets, you can buy an architect-designed custom house for the price of a loaded Toyota Camry.

Other architects told me they make anywhere from 5 percent to 10 percent of hard costs. Some well-known ones confided they make as much as 20 to 25 percent. And I happen to know construction costs can easily top \$200 a foot in big metro areas, their wealthy suburbs, or vacation destinations. This is some very fuzzy math, and it adds up to a great deal of confusion on the part of professionals and clients. How can you explain why you cost 10 percent



Mark Robert Halper

more than the guy down the street? Or how can you live on less than a real estate agent makes for a fraction of the work?

Buffeted by market forces and unmoored by the American Institute of Architects' inability to set and enforce professional fee guidelines (thanks to antitrust laws), architects have no dock in this storm. Each must decide upon and then justify those commissions to each potential client. And without a professional standard to guide them, those clients try to find their way in the dark, often ending up with the cheapest deal from the best salesperson.

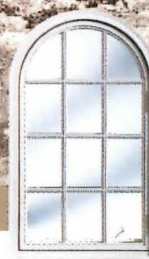
What's your recourse?

Because of those antitrust laws we can't just pick a price for all architects to follow and stick to it. But you can determine what your market will bear, what you can live with, and what your target customer can likely pay. There will always be a cheaper deal for them to take, you just have to be the best salesperson they talk to. You know you're worth the premium. Don't be humble, don't be shy. Tell them why. **ra**

Comments? Call: 202.736.3312; write: S. Claire Conroy, *residential architect*, One Thomas Circle, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20005; or e-mail: cconroy@hanleywood.com.



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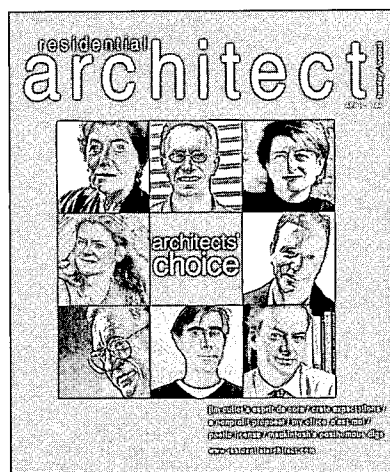
keep those cards, letters, and e-mails coming.

what price glory?

In response to your April editorial ("Where's the Architect?" page 11), I see two problems for this client. The first is an understanding of what an architect really does; the second is how much that service is worth. We are partial victims of an ever faster and cheaper society, and we are also not very good at marketing our services and their benefits.

First, how do you compete against a plan house that offers a set of "construction documents" for \$750 to \$1,500? I'm often approached by friends who want to build their dream home, and they present one of these plans. Inevitably they'd like to make just a few changes and to know how much that would cost. They are shocked to find out my hourly rate and how I cannot compete against the set prices of one of these plan houses. I explain to them the costly process of putting a set of plans together and that these plan houses recoup their investment because the plans are sold multiple times.

Second, what is our service worth? I like to use an example I learned long ago from a fellow architect. Real estate agents charge 6 percent to 7 percent for their services and no one



questions their worth. I think that stems from a "hidden" cost. When purchasing a house, few people question what the real estate commission is; they are concerned only with the bottom line and what the payments will be.

I feel I could provide a good service for 6 percent to 7 percent of the construction cost of a home but find few clients who are willing to pay that.

*George Killian,
architect/owner
Squarefoot, Inc.
Elkhorn, Neb.*

I just read your April editorial, and I find it difficult to accept that you would tell someone his only choice for getting a well designed 2,200-square-foot house is to pay some "AIA" person \$60,000. For

"real estate agents charge 6 percent to 7 percent for their services and no one questions their worth."

—george killian

a set of home plans! I don't blame him for calling it a rip-off. There are so many qualified home

designers out there who would do a wonderful job for a fraction of the cost.

Residential architects are constantly shooting themselves in the foot because of what I can only consider to be pure greed. My average design fee is less than \$1 per square foot. In the past 15 years I have designed more than 3,000 homes, many of them award winners. The biggest difference between an architect and me is that I don't have an AIA after my name.

There are many qualified home designers in this country who, for varied reasons, have elected not to become part of the self-promoting AIA organization. We offer the same, if not better, qualifications to potential clients at a more reasonable cost.

So why not tell your Midwestern custom-home

client that there are other choices. He can contact the AIBD for a list of qualified home designers in his area!

*Bill Wolfson, AIBD
by e-mail*

There are two problems with small projects and architects: fees and mentality.

We all know that the fees are out of reach for most Americans, so a home builder becomes the only option. I'm not saying that architects—good or bad, they all have payrolls to meet—should decrease their fees, but surely some form of agreement(s) could be reached to shorten a project's time frame. Perhaps limit the number of client meetings, reduce the amount of working drawings or, if the client is comfortable, remove one's self from construction observation. Simply put, client management could be reduced.

*Mentality is the second
continued on page 16*

problem—both on the client and the architect side of the project. The client needs to understand that a small investment in good design could increase the future resale value of the home or become an investment to be passed down to future generations. Additionally, the architect's notion that "such a small project is a waste of my time" has to change. To stop neighborhoods void in design from creeping up, architects need to appreciate that any chance to enhance the landscape that they live in is one that should not be ignored.

*J. Eric Rivera,
Associate AIA
Corpus Christi, Tex.*

as a Midwestern architect working in the residential market, I would love to have the chance to work on a project like the one you described in your editorial, especially the opportunity to collect a \$60,000 fee on a 2,200-square-foot residence. Most of our fees are based on scope of services, so we

begin by understanding the needs of the client and the project. It would not be surprising to see a \$7,000 fee for a custom 2,200-square-foot residence, and in most cases this fee would result in raised eyebrows from the client.

The AIA Northwestern Illinois chapter holds seminars to help educate homeowners on the benefits of working with an architect. I think that your response to the "frustrated custom home client" would be that he did not hire the right architect. In our seminars, we talk about how best to interview your prospective architect.

*Michael Elliott, AIA
Reinke + Associates
Architect
Aurora, Ill.*

I am a home designer for a building contractor. Ouch! I know what you're thinking. But open your mind to this: I came from architectural firms to work for this company, which has been in business for more than 100 years (third-generation, family owned). Quality is No. 1 and its reputation is

unmatched. I am assured that the projects I am working on will be for clients who are serious about quality design and construction—imagine that!

First I must emphasize that this "client" you write of made the wrong decision to hire this contractor to design his home—mainly because the contractor was unqualified. You stress that he did not hire an architect, though maybe you should have stressed that he did not "qualify" his designer. I am not a licensed architect, even though I have the required education and have completed the internship. (The test is the only remaining element.) There are architects out there who are more qualified and experienced than I am. There are also many who would hire me to design their homes before themselves. Hard evidence is what homeowners should be looking for—past projects, success stories, happy clients, technical skills.

How do we educate the public to choose a quality designer? Most people have to learn the hard way. The

AIA ran a TV ad a few years ago about choosing an AIA architect for a project. This was a good start and showed why they need to qualify the designer.

*Steven M. Connor,
Associate AIA
Designer*

*Michael F. Simon Builders
Waunakee, Wisc.*

how many times will someone pay 6 percent to a Realtor to sell their house while complaining about design fees? What is the difference? Timing. Realtors extract their fee at the back, architects at the front. It's much easier to pay 6 percent when you have 100 percent in hand than to pay 10 percent when you're waiting for a set of plans to take to a lender and/or builder.

So how do we "fix it"? I note the recent publication of speculative or design/build work by some very talented architects, and although I can't say for sure, my guess is that this type of client relationship yields a back-end reward and, yes, perhaps more risk, but we architects will have to respond to the market to make a difference and not expect the market to respond to us.

*Rex L. Carpenter, AIA
FKP Architects
Dallas*

"there are clients every day who want exactly what the client in your editorial wants, and there are virtually no affordable architects to give them this product."

—dwayne carruth

continued on page 18

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I believe that there are creative solutions to forging a high-quality and cost-effective niche for architects. Examining the scope of an architect's services and the project delivery mode is worthwhile. Perhaps a design consultation that focuses on the schematic design, materials selection, or even an aspect of construction detailing—whatever the overarching idea is toward making poetic, magical space—could be the service. And if the owner found a great contractor at the beginning of the project, that would ensure a degree of quality control through subsequent phases. I would imagine this to be structured as a negotiated contract with the contractor, not a design/build arrangement.

*Andy Pressman
Director and Professor,
Architecture Program
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, N.M.*

I have had my own residential-only practice for nearly eight years, and when I think there are people out there paying \$60,000 for house plans, it just turns my stomach.

My first job was with a local plan service (the market was dead, no architectural jobs anywhere). This thrust into residential design, something I had sworn never to do, was the best "temporary" job I ever had. Working every day with clients who wanted

"too many projects are driven by high expectation and low financial backing. too many clients are trying to keep up with the joneses."

—jeffrey d. featherston, associate aia

something great to call their home, spending the effort and money to get a great house, agonizing over the biggest investment most people will ever make, gave me a tremendous reality check. There are clients every day who want exactly what the client in your editorial wants, and there are virtually no affordable architects to give them this product.

I try very hard to produce a great product and can proudly say that I have, with many awards and publication mentions to my credit. I still price my services more like a plan service than an "architect." I have clients often asking why we are so "cheap," and it all goes back to trying to do something good for people who aren't related to the Kennedys. The special details that make our houses unique just don't take that much time, and as for the idea that maybe the client becomes difficult to work with or the wife keeps changing her mind, if you listen to the client then your job is not that hard.

When clients feel their home is as important to you as it is to them, and a little extra effort goes into making it into the project they

are striving for, great things can be achieved, even without the \$60,000 fee.

*Dwayne Carruth, architect
The Front Door, apac
Baton Rouge, La.*

you state that a 2,200-square-foot home would garner a \$60,000 design fee. I was shocked that this is the perceived norm. Here in Oregon, for a quality residential designer (I have 19 years in the business), I would never work in the business again if I were to expect such high pay for the services I provide, and I think you would be hard-pressed to find anyone charging any more than 5 percent to 10 percent of the fee you mention.

As I see it, the problem for your client friend is that he should be searching out a design professional, whether it is an architect or residential designer, who can provide the much-required direction but at a cost more fitting the scope of the average home buyer. I think this is the classic problem and the reason that home designers such as myself have flourished. We continue to

be a sound alternative to overpriced architects.

*Alan D. Brzycki
By e-mail*

my heart sunk as I read the dilemma; I feel it's all too true. I can relate to the Midwestern architect struggling to stay fresh while looking for that risk-taking client. Like many, I entered enthusiastically into the profession of architecture to be the next Frank Lloyd Wright. The dream of creating our own vision of space, form, and function gave us the endurance to finish school and go on to getting licensed. So many are leaving the profession because of the disappointment in settling. Too many projects are driven by high expectation and low financial backing. Too many clients are trying to keep up with the Joneses. Too often designs start looking more and more familiar. Too few clients are willing to take risks. I hope you'll continue to explore this problem.

*Jeffrey D. Featherston,
Associate AIA
by e-mail*



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home front

tips and trends from the world of residential design

regeneration now

two architecture firms joined forces to create a winning entry in the Green Building Design Competition for New

York City. The Regenerative Row

House, which won first place in the

single-family houses category, is the

brainchild of Studio 27 Architecture

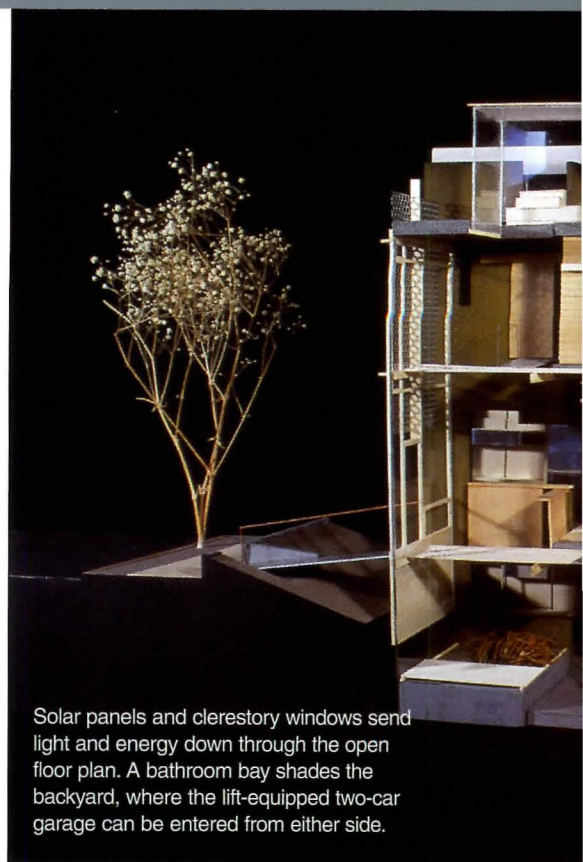
and Inscape Studio, both of Washing-

ton, D.C. Their design pulls the past

into the not too distant future and is

flexible enough to slip into a tight city lot or be made in multiples by a developer.

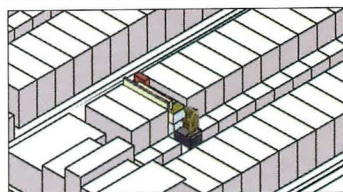
Studio 27, with technological input from Inscape, equipped the row house with elements that give back to a city's infrastructure. Rain flowing from the roof is collected in an underground cistern and reused. Atop the house, clerestories are crowned with solar panels and set over the stairwell, funneling light and energy to the lowest levels. Gardens, as low tech as they are, add options for sustainability. In addition to the backyard, part of the sod roof is given over to growing food or bamboo. Studio 27 principal Todd Ray, AIA, says the row house could be developed on its own, or in four-block sections, or as a cooperative. "As a single unit or over four city



Solar panels and clerestory windows send light and energy down through the open floor plan. A bathroom bay shades the backyard, where the lift-equipped two-car garage can be entered from either side.



Images courtesy Studio 27 Architecture with Inscape Studio



blocks, bamboo could create a blind for privacy," he says. "If you developed it as a coop, the bamboo could be harvested and sold as a collective fund."

The semi-kinetic floor plan and facade adapt to a site's orientation to the sun. Creating an abstract composition, the architects fitted

the front of the house with insulated concrete panels and photovoltaic glass. The transparent glass, embedded with cells that generate electricity, is the only technology on this row house that's speculative. In a coop situation, "you could link all the photovoltaic arrays and generate a storehouse of energy," Ray says. The house's future is uncertain, as Studio 27 looks for a site and funding. —*cheryl weber*

cora's core group

the nascent Congress of Residential Architects (CORA) took another step toward developing a full-fledged organization at a recent planning session in Washington, D.C. The gathering was spearheaded by architects Jeremiah Eck, Duo Dickinson, and Dennis Wedlick, whose mission statement appeared in the



Charles Steck

CORA's founding counselors met for the first time recently, in Washington, D.C.

May issue of *residential architect* (*ra*), and attended by 15 leading architects and invited guests from across the country. Hosted by the American Institute of Architects at its headquarters, the group of "founding counselors" mapped the agenda for CORA's inaugural meeting in Los Angeles on Dec. 8, following *ra*'s Reinvention 2004 symposium. Emerging from the session was the event's overall theme: "Adding Value: Architects and the American House." The theme of value, as it affects the design and practice of residential architecture, will be explored in a series of presentations in December. To register for both the conference and CORA's inaugural meeting, call 888.584.5665. —*s. claire conroy*

message doors

We live in the information age, so why waste space on uncommunicative passage doors? Simpson Door Co.'s new line of doors contains panels made of a magnetic, chalkboard-like material. The doors provide a handy spot to scribble or affix notes, make grocery lists, and doodle or draw. They come in three configurations: one door-length chalkboard panel; two vertically stacked chalkboards separated by a rail; and a chalkboard on top with a wood panel below. Available woods include Douglas fir, maple, cherry, Western hemlock, and American red oak. So many mediums, so many messages. —*meghan drueding*



Courtesy Simpson Door Co.

home front

calendar



Hester + Hardaway Photography

2005 residential architect design awards: call for entries

entry form and fee due: november 15
completed binders due: january 5

Our annual *residential architect* Design Awards program honors outstanding architecture in 14 categories including

custom, renovation, multifamily, and on the boards. Winning projects, chosen by an independent panel of design professionals, will be published in the May 2005 issue of *residential architect* and honored at the 2005 AIA Convention in Las Vegas. Shown: the 2004 Project of the Year by Lake/Flato, Austin, Texas. For an entry form, call 202.736.3407, visit www.residentialarchitect.com, or see page 81 of this magazine.



Courtesy Tilt-Up Concrete Association

tilt-up achievement awards competition

entry deadline: september 30

For projects using tilt-up concrete construction, this competition invites architects to submit housing as well as

commercial projects. The jury will look for aesthetic appeal, structural creativity, innovative applications, and advances in use of the product. Call 319.895.6911 for guidelines, or go to www.tilt-up.org.

green dollhouse

applications due: october 15
dollhouses due: december 15



Delightful doll dwellings used to inspire children and parents to make their homes a little greener will be judged on style, usability as a plaything, and ability to offer green guidance about one or more aspects of sustainable home building. Winning dollhouses will be featured at the Coyote Point Museum in San Mateo, Calif., in an exhibit that will eventually tour the country. Phone 650.599.1433 or go to www.greendollhouse.org for competition details.

contemporary silver: made in italy

august 5–february 13
powerhouse museum, sydney, australia

Helping to kick off Sydney Design Week, this exhibition showcases more than 150 pieces of silver produced by Italian studios in recent years. On display will be vases, tea sets, bowls, and other objects designed by such internationally renowned architects as Richard Meier, Michael Graves, Stanley Tigerman, and Zaha Hadid. Shown: Petalo candlesticks, 1990, designed by Gabriele De Vecchi. For museum hours, call 011.61.2.9217.0389 or check out www.phm.gov.au.



Courtesy De Vecchi

reinvention 2004

december 6–8
los angeles



hanley/wood

What's next for the single-family American house? *residential architect's* first symposium gathers industry leaders to brainstorm, develop, and plan the livable, lovable house of the future. Seminars will address issues of sustainability, notable ideas of the past, and cutting-edge ideas of the present. A design charrette will bring together the best thinking to generate The Next American House prototype.

Special Bonus Event: Introducing the inaugural Congress of Residential Architects. This newly formed organization of specialists in single-family residential architecture launches its first forum on The State of Residential Architecture immediately following Reinvention 2004. For registration call 888.584.5665 or e-mail reinvention2004@hanleywood.com. See page 68 for more information.

continuing exhibits

Richard Neutra's VDL Research House II, through Sept. 9, A+D Museum, West Hollywood, Calif., 310.659.2445; **Yves Béhar Fuseproject**, through Oct. 3, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 415.357.4000; **Austria West: New Alpine Architecture**, through Oct. 30, Austrian Cultural Forum, New York, 212.759.5165; **Santiago Calatrava: The Architect's Studio**, through Nov. 21, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, 206.543.2280; **Right at Home**, through Jan. 17, Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C., 202.357.2700.

—shelley d. hutchins

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When Architect John Fulton and Custom Home Builder Richard Farmer partnered to design and construct this 6,800 square foot residence, they turned to Kolbe & Kolbe windows & doors to help create their vision. A strong focus on quality details was the key to creating this English Country style home. Details such as the authenticity of Kolbe & Kolbe's simulated divided lites, paired with the versatility of their extensive product lines, made Kolbe & Kolbe the clear choice. Kolbe & Kolbe windows & doors are built from your perspective and to your exact specifications. So when you're required to concentrate on the big picture, it's nice to know that Kolbe & Kolbe is focused on the details.

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on the boards / above the store

mixed-use development is perking up urban neighborhoods across the country, and the Hillcrest section of San Diego, Calif., will soon get its own sleek landmark based on the live/work model. The 30,000-square-foot project, designed by local firm Safdie Rabines Architects, will stand on a prominent corner lot and combine upscale condominiums with commercial storefronts.

The four-story Cairo (so-named for the former Egyptian-immigrant neighborhood and its buildings with Egyptian motifs) will be made of glass, concrete block, and stucco—dark gray on the base, white to define the middle two floors, and light gray on top. With its streamlined curves, metal railings, and strong rectilinear forms, the building brings to mind a 1930s luxury liner. “The owner wanted it to be Art Deco-ish, a statement for the community,” says project architect Susan Richard. Its elegant, swooping roofline, which shelters outdoor terraces on the upper residences, will be up-lit at night.

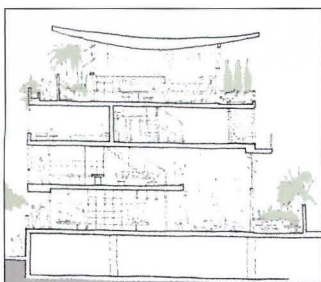
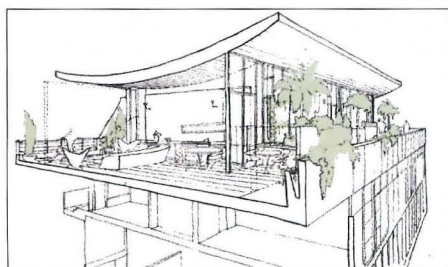
Of prime concern to the architects was designing units that live more like single-family homes, with an abundance of privacy, light, and leafy views. Because the site slopes down toward the rear, they were able to put a parking garage underground that’s entered at grade from the alley.

On top of the garage deck is a gracious courtyard garden, and the L-shaped building wraps around it. Inside are 14 two-story townhouses plus two glassy lofts located above the corner entrance on the second and third floors. Except for the lofts, each unit opens to a private terrace and the plant-filled courtyard at the rear.

The floor plans stack up to create differing views and orientation. Seven units on the first floor will be sold with adjoining commercial space that can be used for retail or an office. That space fronts the street but is set back to carve out room for a pedestrian-friendly arcade. The seven upper units have a reverse floor plan with bedrooms below and living spaces above, the better to capture city views. Scheduled for completion next year, the Cairo promises a fresh, urbane twist to the age-old idea of living above the store. —Cheryl Weber



Safdie Rabines' design for the 16-unit Cairo features sleek curves, ample privacy with terraces and courtyards, and seven townhouses attached to street-level commercial spaces, which form a pedestrian arcade.



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kitchen: small wonder

Can you really squeeze a family of four and their Aspen accoutrement into an 1,100-square-foot condominium renovation? No problem, says architect Scott Lindenau. Well, the masonry block construction, low ceilings, and paucity of windows were a conundrum, but you wouldn't know it by the result—especially the clever kitchen-in-a-mahogany-box solution.

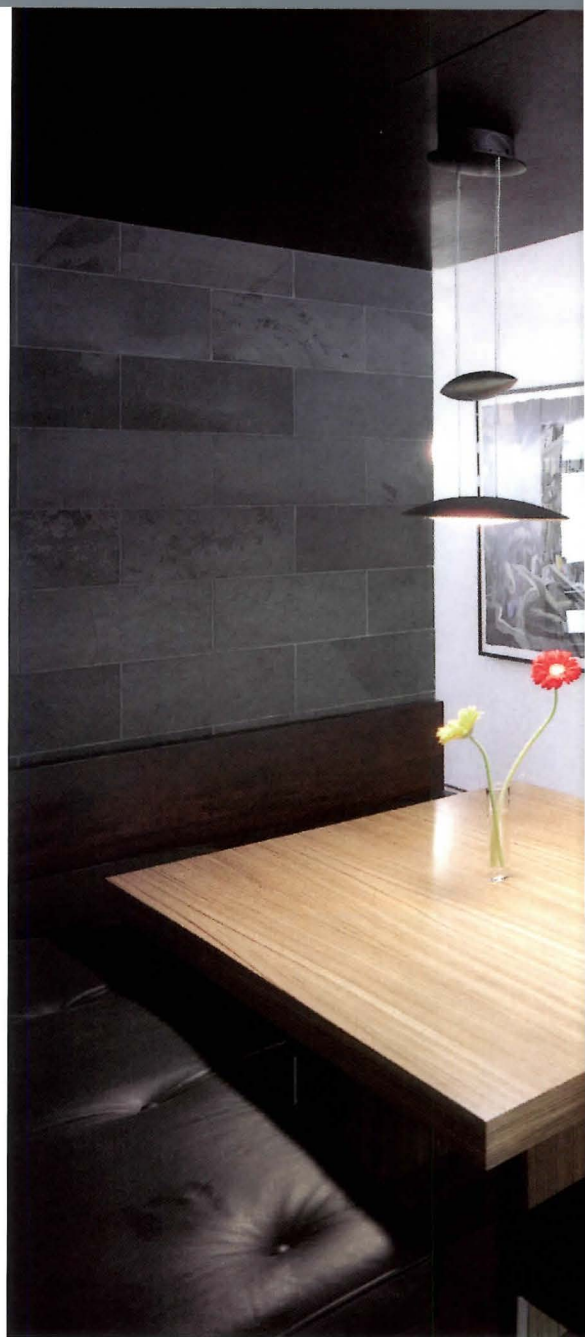
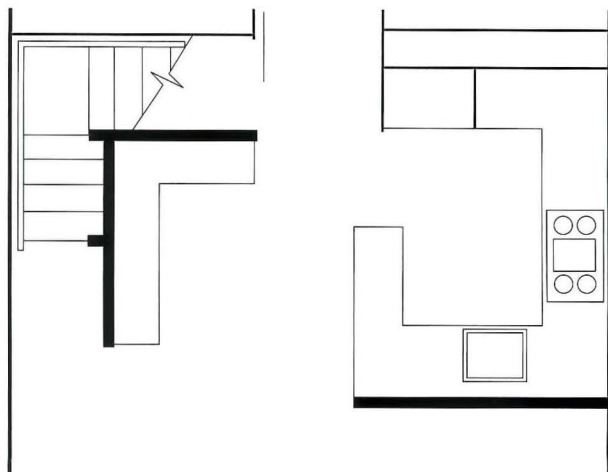
"The clients directed us to have fun and make it contemporary," says Lindenau. So he had the interiors stripped and coated the underlying masonry block with pale cream plaster.

He spec'd rich, contrasting mahogany cabinetry, but he trimmed it with maple accents for a warm transition to the walls. A glass tile backsplash introduces random splashes of color, and soapstone countertops and bamboo flooring complete the diverse palette.

Instead of using interior walls to define functions, Lindenau preserved the flow of natural light by dropping the ceiling over the kitchen and built-in dinette. Dark wood panels distinguish

these diminutive spaces but also hide plumbing and wiring, liberating precious inches from mechanical needs. To manage clutter, the architect rummaged through his entire bag of "storage tricks" for "pieces that pop up, swivel out, or tuck in."

He opened another book of spells to lighten the solidity of all those built-ins. For instance, a light and aerial suspension system supports the upper cabinets. And its steel rods also tether an open shelf. Base cabinets hover above the fray too; they're attached to the wall and raised slightly from the floor. And an inset reveal underlines the countertop. It's all delicately balanced and nicely done—an impressively small wonder. —*shelley d. hutchins*



Built-in dinette seating doubles as ski storage while granite wall tiles add texture to the sleek design (above). Close proximity of open dining and living areas means family and guests can hang out in the kitchen without actually being in the kitchen (right).



architect: Scott Lindenau,
Studio B Architects,
Aspen, Colo.

project manager:
Elish Warlop, Studio B
Architects

general contractor:
Tom Van Allen, Aspen

resources: cooktop:
Gaggenau; refrigerator:
Sub-Zero; tile: Ann Sacks



Photos: Wayne Thom

k + b studio

bath: stone heart

R

Renovating a bathroom is somewhat like surgery. First, you must do no harm. Working around existing plumbing, wiring, and venting, architect Alex Harrow skillfully inserted a new, more vigorous heart into this master bath: a custom solid granite tub weighing 2,500 pounds—empty.

To hold the heft, floors were gutted to their 19th-century support system of columns and

terra-cotta arches, and a reinforced concrete slab was poured.

A crane slotted the bathing behemoth through the window and into the waiting arms of seven men, who guided it to its resting place over the drain. “We

had to jump through hoops to make it work,” says Harrow, “but we wanted the focus to be this sculptural piece, with the room as just a backdrop.” The pale limestone floors and walls recede to showcase the tub’s hammered granite exterior and polished black interior. The bathtub is both beautiful and

functional. Harrow spent weeks researching tub design until he was sure that soaking in this one would be relaxing and comfortable. “The angles of the inside slope and the thickness of the sides had to work,” he says. “It was a risk, but the clients tell me it’s comfortable.”

A glass wall separates the shower and reflects natural light; shoji screens between the bath and bedroom withdraw into the walls to give the bather room to breathe. The overall effect is dramatic yet understated—and a fitting complement to the clients’ collection of Asian art and antiques.—*shelley d. hutchins*

architect: Warren Freyer and Alexander Harrow, Freyer Collaborative Architects, New York City

general contractor: Bob Schmidt, US Interiors, New York City

stonemason: Stone Forest, Santa Fe, N.M.

resources: lighting: Artimede, Bega; plumbing fittings: Duravit, Hastings Tile & Bath; plumbing fixtures: Hansgrohe, Kroin, Robern



Photos: Eduard Hueber

A glass shower helps the 145-square-foot bath remain open and airy (above). The granite tub is situated nearest the master bedroom opening, occupying front and center of views from every angle.

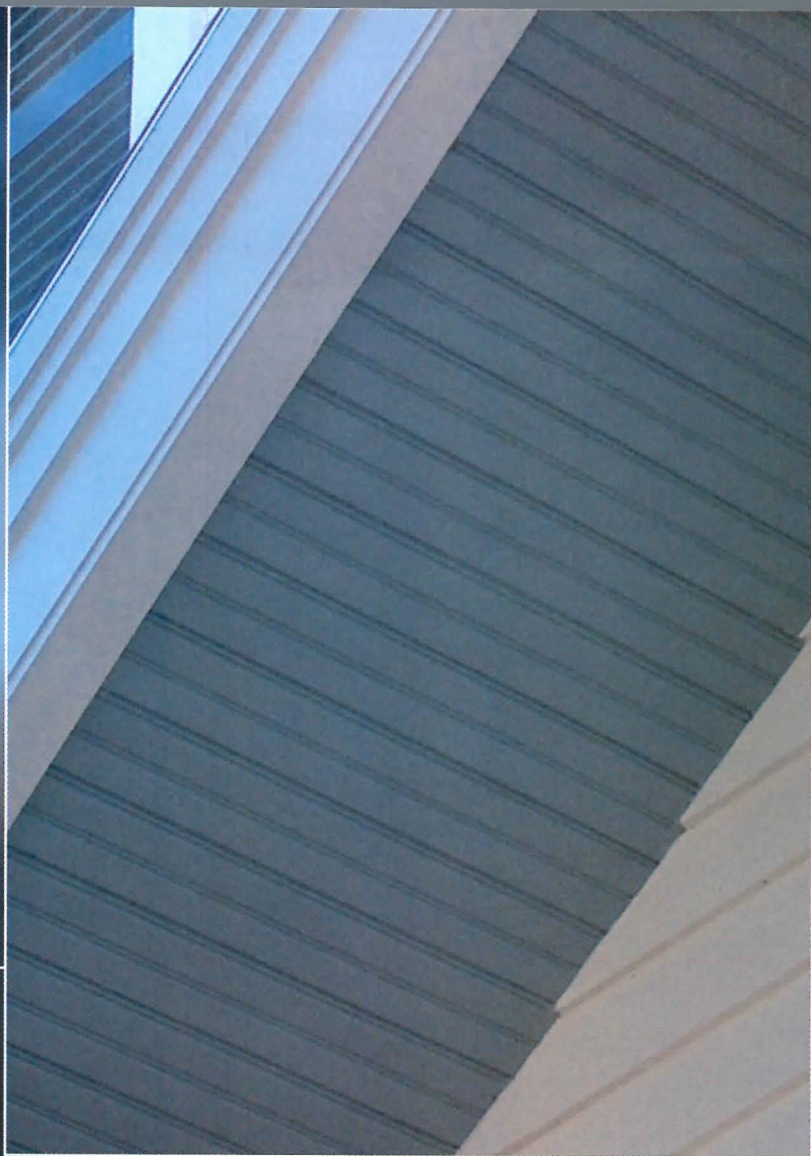
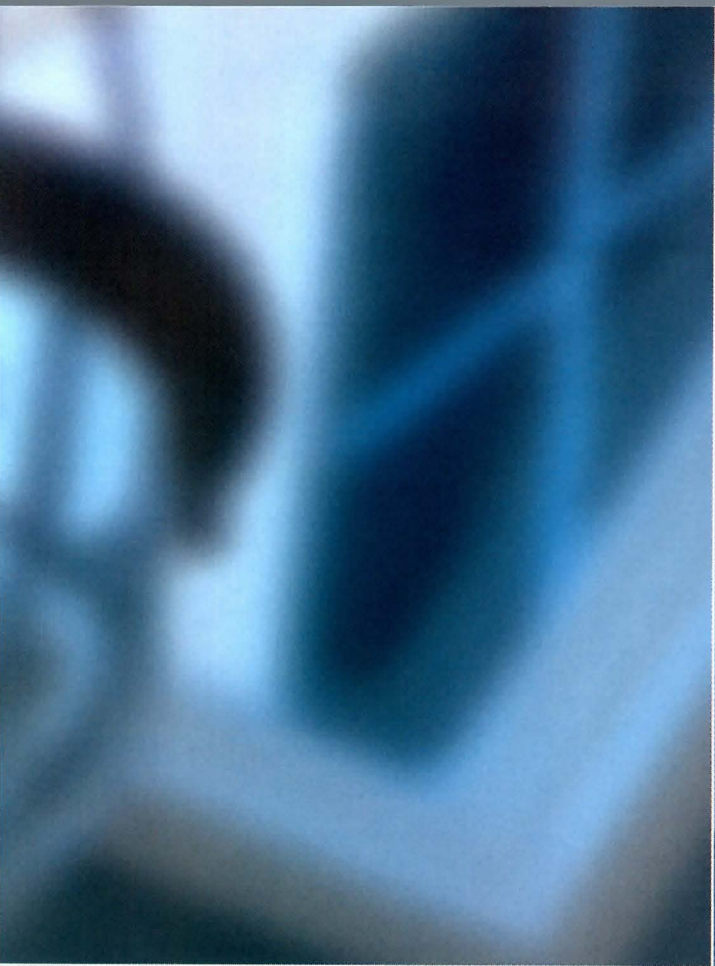


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client commandments

what a perfect client would never,
ever say to an architect.

by jonathan held, aia

■ f I sense that a prospective client has a sense of humor, or is going to be “troublesome,” I’ll give them a copy of the attached. I don’t know whether it accomplishes anything in their minds, but at least I’ve deluded myself into thinking that my rear end is covered.

Eight things your architect doesn’t want to hear:

1. “how much is this going to cost me?”

It’s one thing to commission an architect to take the time to develop an estimate. Given sufficient time and an intensive level of research, he can at least give you a ballpark figure. But it is pointless to put him on the spot. He will most likely either give you a number way higher than you thought you would have to spend (the “covering-himself” method) or an unrealistically low estimate (the “client-will-love-me-for-this” method). Particularly in low-scale construction and renovation jobs, the variables are simply too many for accurate estimating. I always say that the

best estimates are the ones you get from the bidding contractors. Be willing to wait for those.

2. “i only have blank to spend.”

Truth be told, your architect could probably care less about your misadventures in the stock market. If he is sensible, he will have forewarned you that the contractor’s estimate doesn’t represent everything you are going to have to spend to finish the project. Cost overruns are practically inevitable. What the architect is saying is that your money troubles are your own, not his. So don’t monopolize what little time he has with unproductive whining about money. Save everyone, including yourself, a lot of grief by certifying that you will have access to all the cash the project will require for its satisfactory completion.

3. “the workers just stand around not doing anything.”

Every time you stop by the jobsite to inspect progress, you notice that the workers don’t seem to be working very much. Sometimes they don’t seem to be working at all. Sometimes there aren’t



Chris Gall

even any workers there. Naturally you convey this to the architect, who dutifully reports this to the contractor. But don’t expect the architect to go storming around the site handing out shovels and pickaxes. That’s not his job. And he doesn’t need to hear this

complaint more than once. Some workers are great. Some do no more than they have to do to keep their jobs. That’s just the way it is nowadays. Believe me, it’s as frustrating to the contractor as it is to you. Just remember, you were

continued on page 36

the one who went with the lowest bidder. And if the workers aren't doing anything, then where did that big hole in the ground come from?

4. "if you had been here, this wouldn't have happened."

The contract you have with your architect probably stipulates something vague like "project management" or "construction supervision." In essence this means that the architect or someone from the architect's office is going to show up once or twice per week to hear all about your money woes and your complaints about the workers and, if there's time left, inspect to make sure that the project is proceeding according to plan. Nevertheless, there is often sufficient time between these visits for a builder to commit a serious gaffe that will have to be undone, frequently at the owner's expense. If you want to lessen the likelihood of that sort of thing happening, you'll have to pay your architect to have a representative on the site at least once a day, a costly premium that will probably run you more than what it

would take to remedy the occasional screw-up.

5. "where's my work permit?"

You've hired an architect who is experienced in the ways of building department procedures and who has told you it will take a certain amount of time to acquire a work permit. As with pricing, such "guessimates" are often unreliable. That's because usually during the permit acquisition process, something will happen to retard progress: A plan examiner will issue objections to your application. A plan examiner will be taken ill. A plan examiner will be indicted. You decide to add a bidet to the master bathroom. You decide not to add a bidet to the master bathroom. Aw, what the hell, you decide to put the bidet back in. The possibilities are endless. Try to remember that everyone is doing the best they can on jobs for which every owner has paid top dollar to be first in line. The permit will come through. It will. It must.

6. "i'm sorry to be calling so late, but..."

It's 10 p.m. You've just

noticed a crack in a newly poured footing. You pick up the phone and call the architect. Possibly he has already mentioned that you should call anytime, day or night or weekend. This is the sign of an architect who is desperate not to lose a client. Which isn't to say he isn't a good architect. But it is to say that he has allowed himself to be taken advantage of. Other architects may disagree with much of what has been written here, but on this I believe my colleagues and I concur: We are routinely exploited by clients who interpret our "scope of services" to mean everything up to and including driving their kids to school. So for goodness' sake, don't bother the architect with trivialities after, say, 8:30 p.m. And, unless the fee was exorbitant, weekend calls should be avoided altogether. Architects do work long hours, but not that long. Short of a house collapse, whatever it is, it can wait.

7. "i can get you a lot of work."

There may be architects out there who want to hear this, but in my experience this statement—often uttered during the first meeting and well before the architect has even been retained—is really meant to drive down his fee in exchange for the nebulous and often illusory hope of future work. In fact, when an architect hears this, his antennae

should twitch, because he is in the presence of an operator who haggles incessantly, schmoozes incessantly, complains incessantly, and is usually an all-around pain. Architects: Sometimes there's no choice but to take on a client who you know will be trouble, so make certain your fee proposal includes an allowance for the extra aggravation. And whatever you do, don't lower your fee just because the guy has an aunt somewhere who needs to legalize a shed.

8. "how long do you think it will take to finish this blank?"

Here there is no need for vagueness. Without even seeing the drawings, I can tell you exactly how long it will take to finish your job: It will take exactly as long as it takes, not a day more or a day less. Admittedly it is difficult to draw comfort from so glib and overriding a statement, but a willingness to compromise your vision and not micromanage the project will see you through. Be patient. It may seem like it will never get done, but it will. It's just not going to get done as quickly as you'd hoped or expected, and it'll probably cost much more money than you'd hoped.

Your architect must have told you that. But you probably didn't want to hear it, either. **ra**

Jonathan Held, AIA, is an architect in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"for goodness' sake,
don't bother the architect with
trivialities after, say, 8:30 p.m."



Courtesy Jonathan Held

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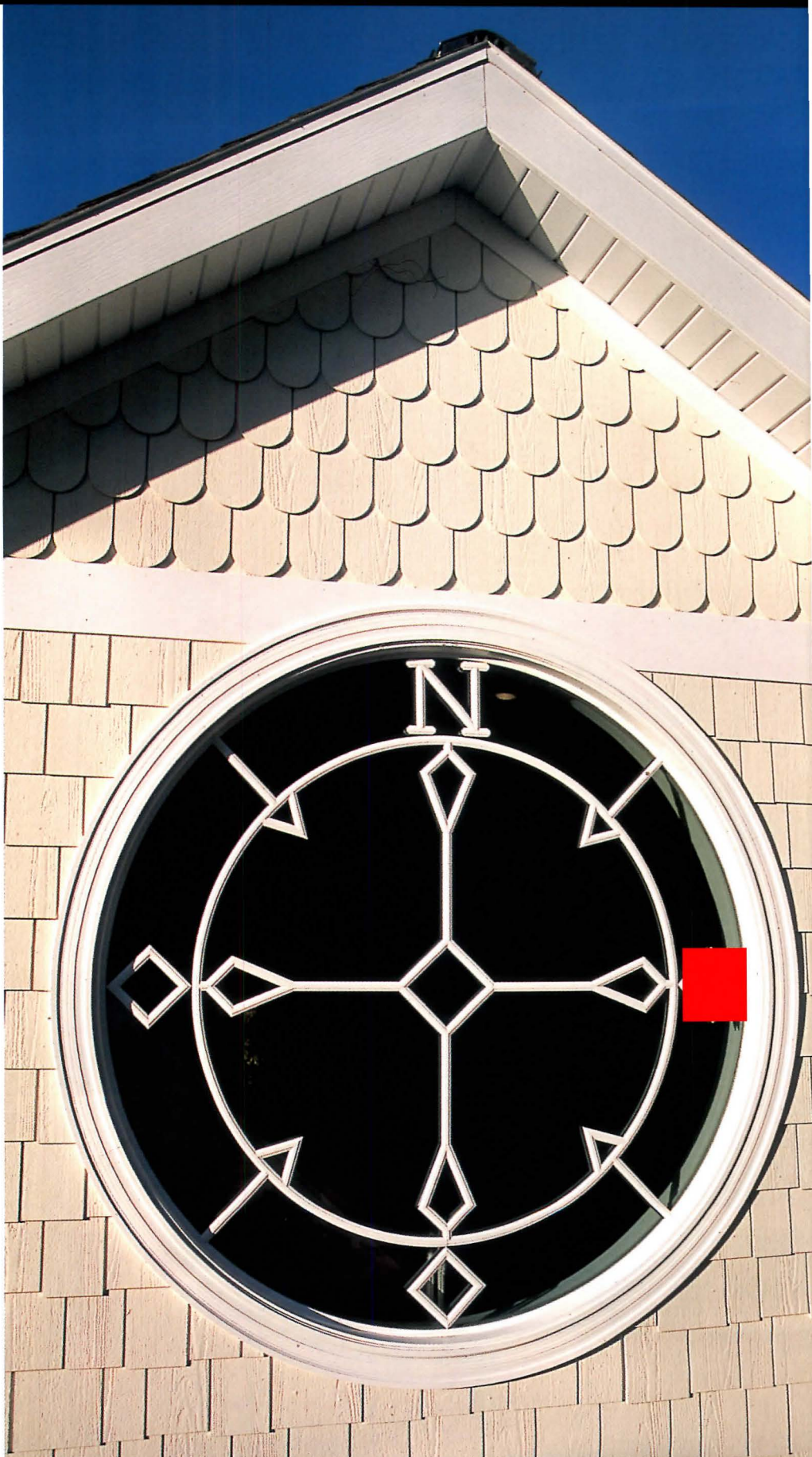
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smart growth

what's the right size for your firm?

by cheryl weber

the receptionist at a well-known architectural office in Chicago answers the phone with a friendly "Nagle Hartray." But the proper name—Nagle Hartray Danker Kagan McKay Penney Architects—rolls off the tongue like that of a corporate law firm, offering a clue to its size and ambitions. The architects, who last year had billings of \$4 million, specialize in selective types of multifamily housing. For the past decade, the office roster has held steady at 27 employees. But that's about to change. "We have a mature staff," says partner Don McKay, AIA. "We'd like to grow from where we are now to give them continued opportunities."

By contrast, nine is the magic number of employees for Jim Morter, FAIA. The Vail, Colo., architect has his \$1.5 million-a-year firm right where he wants it. Twice in his 32 years in business designing luxury homes for the jet set, he's had 16 people and two partners on payroll. But he didn't like it. "I've had excellent people as partners," Morter says. "But I tend to be more hands-on with everything that goes out of the office. When it



Ellen Weinstein

got to be different principals running different projects that I didn't have much involvement with, I felt uncomfortable." In retrospect, the question for his practice became: How big is too big?

Residential architects have profoundly different ways of thinking about their businesses—and profoundly different kinds of practices. Starting out, the focus is simply on making a living. But sooner or later everyone

confronts the question of whether to grow, and what size best fits the firm's mind-set and market niche. And although the business school approach to expansion is to follow a formal plan, in reality growth is also organic, a response to the market and the evolving talents of staff.

In the quest for bigger and better things, the most difficult step may be the first one. For a lone architect, taking on a second person represents a radical shift

to being the boss and, with it, a tax obligation. "If an architect hires an employee he'll spend \$50,000 plus provide benefits and computer equipment," says Mark Zweig, president and CEO of ZweigWhite, Natick, Mass., a business consulting firm for architects and engineers. "It costs maybe \$75,000 to do all that. Most architects just want to consume the income that comes in—that's the

continued on page 42

biggest barrier to growth. The more you take out for consumption, the less you have to spend on the things that make you grow."

Once architects do decide to invest in an enterprise that has a life beyond them, the second classic plateau occurs when they employ 10 to 12 people, according to Peter Piven, FAIA, The Coxie Group, Philadelphia. At that point a principal starts to feel stretched. There's not enough time to meet client and staff needs, and he or she will start looking for a partner. "You do find firms that grow without adding principals as they add staff," he says, "but it's very unusual, and they probably have people who act like principals even if they're not."

In the 20- to 30-employee range, a firm starts to become more structured, Piven says, requiring a middle layer of management and certainly someone who looks after marketing full time. Another important break occurs at roughly 50 employees. Then the office is large enough to warrant a full-time operations manager or the equivalent of several principals sharing the load of design, human resources, financial management, and business development.

creating value

Even in the earliest stages of growth, Piven recommends jotting down a strategic plan. "The old joke applies: It's hard to know if you're moving toward your objectives if you haven't clearly identified them," he says.

Architects contemplating their first hires should do a budget based on revenues and operating costs plus the projected salaries. The classic rule of thumb—that a practice needs to generate \$100,000 in net revenues per employee (gross revenue less direct expenses such as consultant fees)—still holds true, though it could be more or less depending on the job position and the nature of the practice.

Every dollar paid in salary, Piven says, will cost a young firm another 25 cents in benefits. (For tenured firms with substantial profit and benefit plans, the ratio is closer to 40 percent.) "You have to make a qualitative decision about whether it makes more sense to keep struggling to do the work yourself or hire a person to help you," says Piven. "I like to use the notion of highest and best use; people are more satisfied when they function that way. You make the change when your own time is being better spent at producing value for the firm—typically marketing, management, and front-end project leadership."

Zweig puts another question to his clients: How will you attract top-notch talent? "There has to be a reason for someone to want to join," he says. "Most small firms are poorly managed, and often owners can't separate their personal life from their business life. Have you thought about why someone good would want to work there?"

At Morter Architects, part

market share

don McKay, AIA, marvels at the relative ease with which James Nagle, FAIA, launched an architectural practice in 1966. "There was so much work around, he didn't know any architect who failed," says McKay, a partner at Nagle Hartray Danker Kagan McKay Penney Architects, Chicago. "It's much harder for young architects to position themselves in the market today because there's more competition and not as much work around."

Mark Zweig, president and CEO of business consulting firm ZweigWhite, in Natick, Mass., agrees. "Most residential architects think if they do great projects, the world will beat a path to their door," he says. "But you have to be prepared to do more consistent promotion than you think you do. You have to drive the demand for what the firm does. Once demand is there, it's easier to hire people because the company has good projects."

For small firms, marketing can be as simple as having an eye-catching jobsite sign and a Web site to show the work you've done. Direct-mail marketing is another time-honored way to attract interest, but it needs to be focused on places where people have money to spend on design. One of Zweig's clients, a landscape architect with more than 30 employees, simply sends out two letters a year to the most elite zip codes in the area. "Sending 5,000 letters will cost \$2,500 to \$3,500," he says, "but the probability of success, with a 0.5 response rate, is 250 inquiries. That's not bad."—c.w.

of the answer lies in its human scale, sociability, and careful design. Morter hires talented generalists who manage their own projects from A to Z. No one is stuck cranking out construction drawings. "Everyone is an architect with a capital A," he says. "We tend to work linearly instead of compartmentalizing things. I like the continuity of having people involved from programming through post construction. It's more fun, and we have no problem with working for each other on projects."

a walkable firm

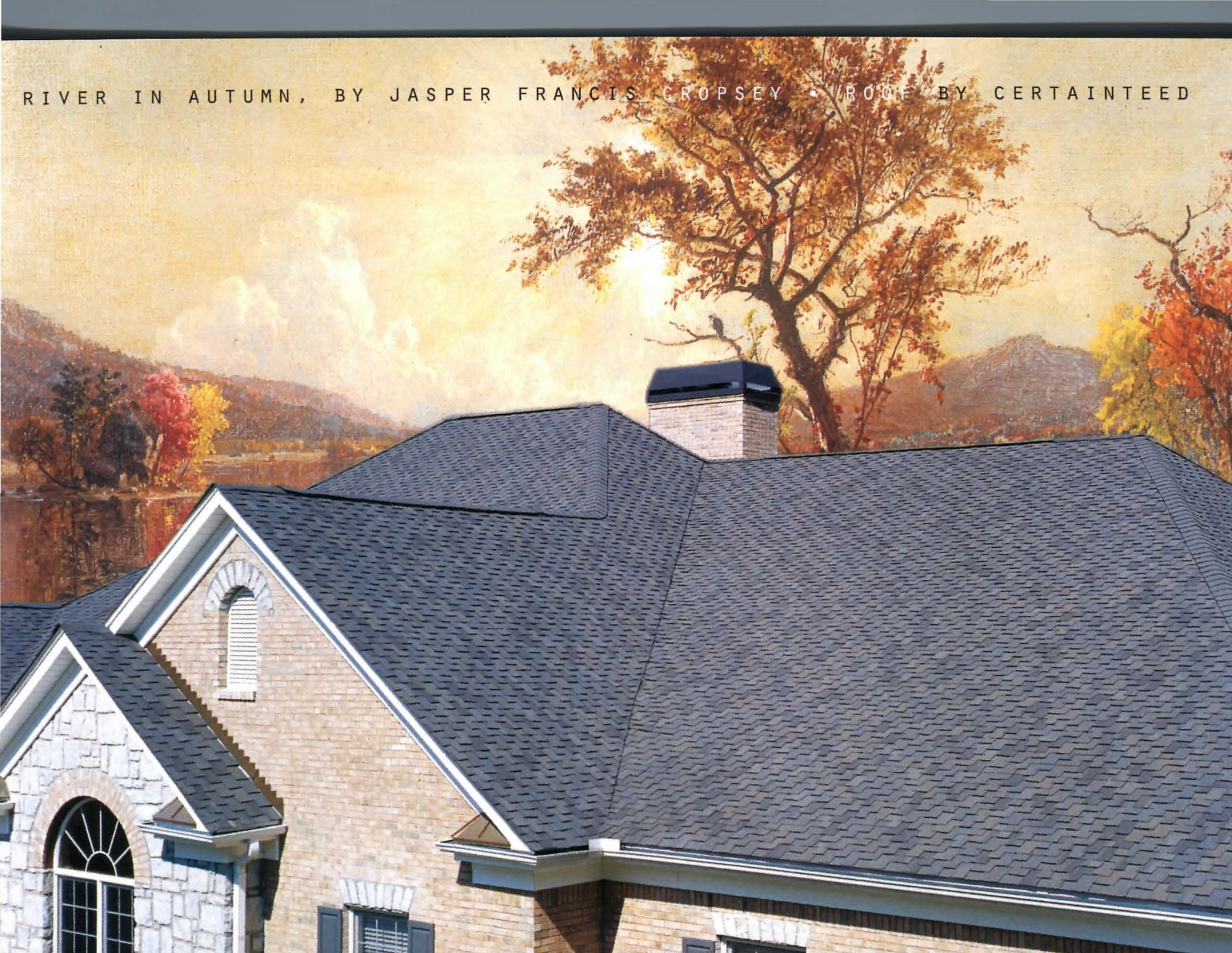
Like the old-fashioned small towns that are most vibrant when people can walk around to do their errands,

firms of 10 to 20 are walkable companies. They're big enough to generate multiple large jobs but not so big that the managers are cut off from their clients, isolated in a climate-controlled world of meetings. That was the fate Daniel Wheeler, FAIA, and Larry Kearns, AIA, hoped to avoid when they left Skidmore, Owings & Merrill to launch their Chicago firm in 1987. Since then, they've grown at a rate of one employee per year, literally one person at a time, and added two other principals—Mark Weber and Thomas Bader.

In a studio-oriented practice that's two-thirds residential and one-third

continued on page 44

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practice

institutional, the partners and their 11 employees run 20 to 30 jobs simultaneously. "What we've attempted to do is keep a very flat organization, so each one of our principals and our architects is responsible for a project from absolute beginning to absolute end," Wheeler says. "It also helps to have an office that's not so big that we can't be in one single room for design critiques. That would be a bad thing, in our opinion."

Whereas an office with just a few architects can be quite lonely, being surrounded by a diverse group of people fills the creative

well. Currently on Wheeler Kearns' roster are architects from Germany, Japan, Brazil, and Jamaica, along with people who've studied philosophy and literature. "We're keen on making sure there's a variety of backgrounds and voices," Wheeler says. "It helps spread the social understanding that the office has." Because of their careful hiring and deliberate pace of growth, the partners have never had to lay off an employee. Three of the four who have left the firm resigned because of family circumstances; the other quit architecture altogether.

Managers of mid-sized architecture firms know numbers, and they understand what makes their companies tick. And while natural evolution is part of the picture, it's no substitute for practical vision. That's why San Diego architect Brad Burke, the founder of Studio E Architects, has always navigated on paper. At 15 employees, two partners, and \$2 million in annual revenues, he's dead-on the plan he envisioned in 1986. Back then, Burke spelled out the types of residential projects and clients he wanted to take on and the goals for his staff and

work environment. "It's *not* like I followed it exactly," Burke says, "but the fact that I thought about it ahead of time and wrote it down was a great help."

Like Wheeler Kearns, Studio E has grown patiently, one person per year on average. Often that meant turning down attractive work while the firm established a solid base in the community. "A fundamental principle from day one was that unless we knew we could support someone full time for the foreseeable future, we'd not hire someone," he says. "I think we've been successful

continued on page 48

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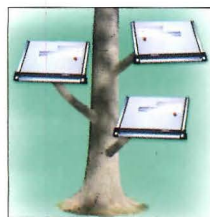
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practice



“most architects just want to consume the income that comes in. that’s the biggest barrier to growth.”

—mark zweig

by trying to stay close knit, keeping a staff that’s here for the long haul.” Still, offices that don’t bulk up to do bigger projects will continue to do the same work year after year. Burke’s incremental approach to growth, slowly filling his coffer with the kinds of people he wanted to keep, helped ensure that when the time came to shore up the company at the next level, there would be partners-in-waiting. For Studio E, that point came 10 years down the road, when Burke promoted long-time employees Eric Naslund and John Sheehan.

A two-year and a 10-year plan, which get tweaked at the annual staff retreat, keep the firm on course. Now that Studio E has hit its goal, Burke is thinking of restructuring at the principal level to grow a little more. He says it would mean bringing in a specialized person to mind the store—a task that the partners divvy up now—so they can stay involved in projects. “We want to be positioned in the market to take on some large five-story mixed-use urban development and even do design work on larger projects than that,” Burke says. “But we don’t want to get so large that we feel we’ve got to feed the machine to keep everyone here.”

sustainable practices

That’s the balance firms of all sizes try to achieve. The key to hiring on an even keel is to maintain a smaller workload when it could be larger and to work more efficiently when things are busy. When Studio E’s work pace picks up, Burke offers overtime. “Nobody is salaried,” he says, “We pay for every hour they work. If it seems like a year-plus crunch, we’ll go and hire someone.”

In a crisis, many firms get creative, relying on a network of independent architects who are willing to help out. “We have some fabulous people we can bring in and work with on a project; we develop those relationships,” says Julie Snow, FAIA, who employs 12 people at Julie Snow Architects, Minneapolis. “It suits people who can’t quite support a practice because they’re teaching at the University of Minnesota. We’ve used several other people as a stop-gap who are super independent and don’t want to be part of a firm. It’s a huge asset.” Much of her work is on multifamily projects that have a compressed time frame.

“You learn to work efficiently, and you make sure that young people coming in are mentored and fit well for the

continued on page 50

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practice

long haul," she says. "Everyone learns everyone else's skill set, so nobody feels like they're drawing in the dark."

Only once has Wheeler Kearns hired help on contract. Rather, the partners politely put clients on a waiting list. And they use summer interns for tasks that fall by the wayside when the office is racing deadlines. But as methodical as the firm's growth has been, the decision to add employees is also intuitive. "It's a matter of having the emotional confidence that you can handle more work and stretch your firm that much farther," he says. "I think people enjoy working with other people and other backgrounds, and that's the ultimate reason we want to hire people. If we see someone who looks like they'll enrich the work we do, we try to hire that person. The next year when we're looking at a mountain of work, it could be a great mesh."

a bigger sandbox

That is precisely how Nagel Hartray has swelled to its current size of 27: by slowly investing in gifted staff. The partners gauge the market by talking to other architecture firms. They hire as a last resort and ride out the dips, so that when there's a lot of work, they have good people to do it. Growth has resulted from the contacts they've made doing different projects, one thing leading to another. In the firm's early days, kitchen remodeling and single-family homes led to townhouse projects with

developers. Now its average-size job is \$5 million, with much of the work in the \$10 million to \$20 million range.

Nagle Hartray needs a certain volume of work in order to remain robust. A healthy ratio of revenues to employees was once \$100,000 to 1; now it's 25 to 30 percent more money than that, says McKay. So the firm is stepping up its marketing. Thanks to its long-standing reputation, single-family work pretty much walks in the door. Multifamily work, however, has become very competitive, with developers of greenfield sites buying architectural services almost like a commodity. "We're not well suited for that," McKay says. "Our goal is to continue to do multifamily projects, but our future lies with a select group of developers who are going into older downtown areas and delivering something to a particular type of site or client."

At somewhere between 15 and 20 employees, Nagle Hartray took on a full-time marketing person who responds to proposals and puts together materials for interviews and publications. But the formal business development role lies with the principals. "Now we'll have to be more specific about what markets and what clients to target, and pursue them before there's a job available," McKay says. "It's something we need to do much better if we're serious about growing." *ra*

cheryl weber is a contributing writer in severna park, md.

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Photos: Above: Michelle Peckham; top: Cesar Rubio; far right: Danny Turner

walking

Even in affordable housing such as 8th & Howard, Baker finds room for custom touches like a glass-and-steel entry gate (above).

david baker
weaves social
consciousness
through his life
and work.



the walk

by meghan drueding

David Baker, FAIA, doesn't own a car. It's not because he doesn't know how to drive one, and, as the head of an in-demand San Francisco firm, it's not because he can't afford to buy one. No, Baker got rid of all three of his cars a few years ago to make a point.

As a vocal advocate of pedestrian-friendly downtowns, he believes excessive auto-use causes environmental degradation, traffic congestion, and national dependence on foreign oil. What better way to back up his argument than to divest himself of his own four-wheeled vehicles? He now rides his folding bike to work, takes the BART underground rail system to the airport, and reserves a car from the city's CarShare program for weekend trips. "I think it's important to be committed in a consistent fashion," he says. "That's why I don't have a car."

Such personal commitment defines Baker's entire career. His roots as a self-proclaimed "radical hippie" have led him to his role today as one of the country's top housing architects. From his own small, urban house in San Francisco's Mission neighborhood to the leadership roles he plays in several community organizations, he lives the same sustainable, forward-thinking lifestyle his firm's award-winning buildings promote. Now in its 22nd year, David Baker + Partners has become so known for inventive design that developer clients use the firm's name front and center in their advertising.

free spirit

One of Baker's childhood homes, a rammed-earth, solar-powered house in Arizona, kindled his attraction to innovative architecture. The Modernist structure was built by his father, a self-trained designer who also studied sculpture and photography and worked at various times as a migrant farm worker, junkyard operator, gardener, and chauffeur. His parents owned plenty of books on Modern art and architecture, and at age 8, Baker tore through biographies of Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and other design luminaries. "I knew that was what I wanted to do," he says. "But I had a few detours along the way."

In true counterculture fashion he hitchhiked to Berkeley, Calif., in 1970. He then returned to Michigan, where he'd spent summers as a child, to attend the now-defunct Thomas Jefferson College. The invent-your-own-curriculum school nurtured his independent streak; a philosophy major, he designed and built a house as one of his classes. He also worked as a union carpenter, further honing his building skills with 1972 and '73 apprenticeships at Paolo

walking the walk

Soleri's Arcosanti in central Arizona. Heading back west for architecture school at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1974, he worked for Berkeley firm ELS Architects, which partnered with him on a solar design company called Sol-Arc from 1977 to 1982.

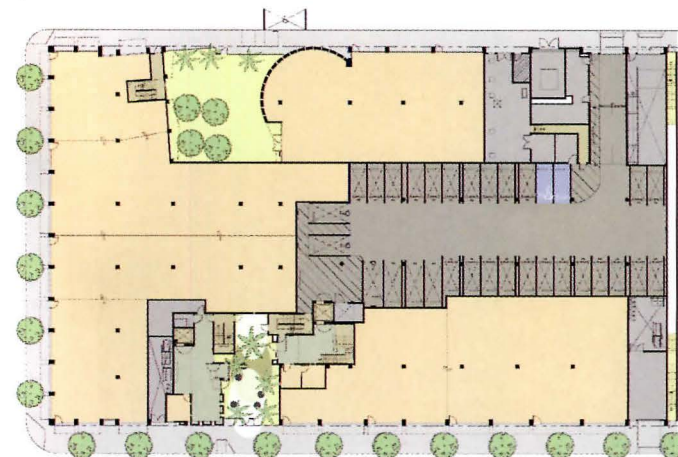
As the 1970s solar housing craze subsided, Baker found himself wanting to concentrate more holistically on architecture. In 1982 he started his own firm with a couple of colleagues, one of whom—Peter MacKenzie, AIA—is currently a partner. Around the same time Baker met developer Rick Holliday, who was just starting BRIDGE Housing Corp., today the largest nonprofit developer in California. Holliday chose the then inexperienced firm to design an affordable housing project in San Francisco, and his gamble paid off when the community opened to rave reviews. Holliday left BRIDGE to become a private developer in 1988, and he, as well as BRIDGE, remains one of Baker's main customers.

tech boom

Establishing relationships with longtime clients was an important step in Baker's early career. But something else equally significant happened to him in the '80s: He realized, far earlier than most of his peers, that computers were about to change the world. In 1983, he became just the fifth person anywhere to take out an AutoCAD license, which enabled his firm to produce drawings at a much faster pace than its competitors. "None of the other, big-name architects I'd seen had CAD," says Holliday. "Dave is one of those people who will see a technological shift way before anyone else." A little over a decade later Baker learned HTML and designed a Web site, years before many firms even thought about the Web.

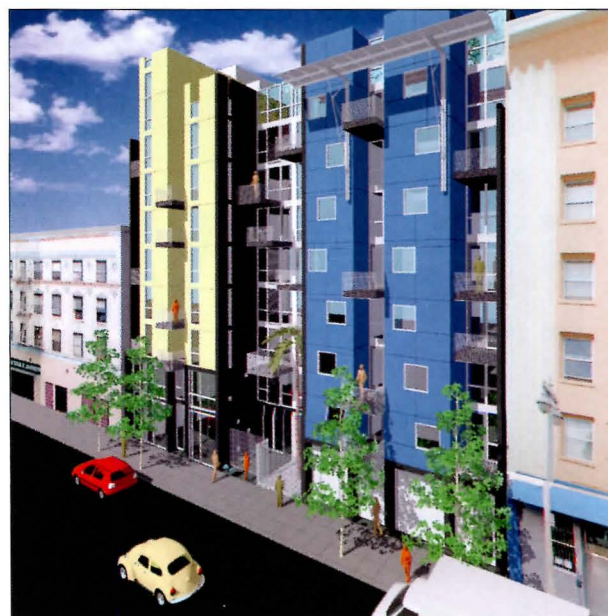
The site is still maintained in-house by interior designer Michelle Peckham and office manager Peggy Olson. Much more comprehensive than the standard architect's Web site, it contains detailed program, size, cost, density, and parking statistics on dozens of projects. And it includes the Web addresses and phone numbers of the contractors, developers, and consultants involved, so potential clients have multiple contacts right at their fingertips. Although 90 percent of the firm's work comes from repeat clients, it doesn't hurt to be able to refer new ones to the site. "The Web site is our main presentation tool," says Peckham.

Baker's initial fervor over computer technology hasn't abated. He, MacKenzie, and the firm's third partner, Kevin Wilcock, AIA, are bullish on the Autodesk Revit 3-D building design and documentation software they've been using since 2003. "We're very efficient designers, because



David Baker + Partners

Where appropriate, the firm encourages unbundled parking; 8th & Howard (above) holds just 0.38 spaces per resident.



With the goal of a walkable city in mind, Baker designed ground-floor retail into Curran House, affordable housing under construction in San Francisco.

David Baker + Partners



Photos: Left: Michelle Peckham; above: Cesar Rubio

Decks and a rain chain fountain provide places for relaxation at this seniors' affordable housing (2002) in San Jose, Calif.

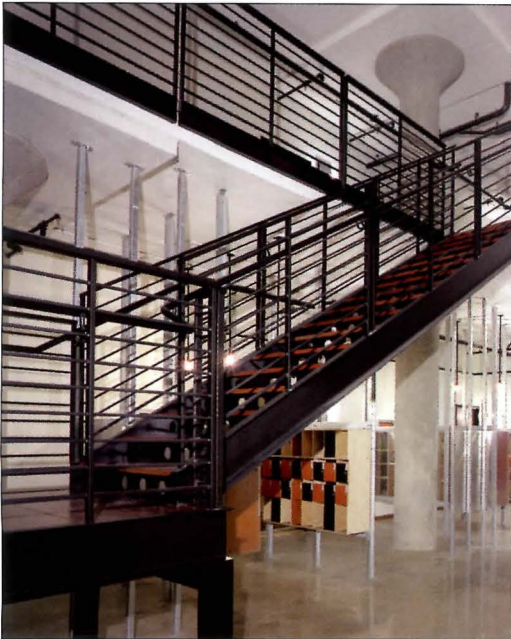
"i think it's important to be committed in a consistent fashion. that's why i don't have a car."



Photos: Left: David Wakely; above: Michelle Peckham

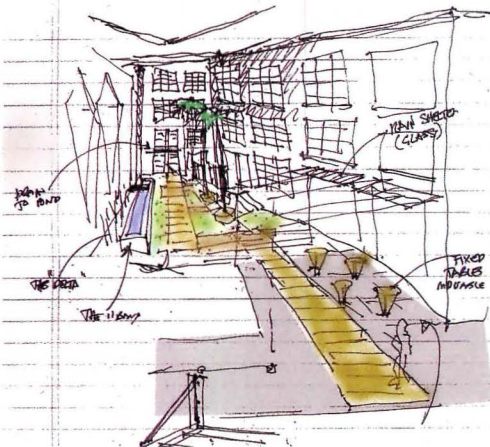
Lush interior courtyards bestow an almost tropical feel on the live/work Clocktower Lofts (1992).

walking the walk



Top left and above photos: Brian Rose; left photo: David Wakely; sketch: David Baker

Best known for affordable housing, the firm also excels at boutique infill like the Emeryville Warehouse Lofts (1999) in Emeryville, Calif.



"the problem of housing won't be solved by cheap custom homes in the suburbs."

our software systems are sophisticated," says Wilcock. Their technological expertise helps explain a production volume that seems almost impossibly high for a 12-person operation. The firm has more than 3,700 multifamily or single-family production housing units built or under construction and 2,600 more in the design phase. It also takes on an occasional custom home or commercial project.

home base

David Baker + Partners' own headquarters occupies a ground-floor space in the Clocktower Lofts, a former lithography plant whose 1992 renovation it designed. The building, located in San Francisco's gritty South of Market Area (SoMa), exemplifies the community-based principles that govern the firm's work. Its two-story atrium entry, for example, encourages people to take the open-air staircase rather than the elevator. "People will use the stairs when there's only one flight to navigate," Wilcock says.

To reach their office, the staff walks through a courtyard with a small fountain, where the soothing sound of running water mingles with the chirping of birds. "It's a decompression zone," says Baker, whose interest in fountains was sparked by an online AIA continuing education course he took on feng shui. "You come in here and your blood pressure goes down." The firm enjoys the courtyard so much, in fact, that it now designs outdoor rooms into each of its projects. "It's almost as if the buildings are there to mold the exterior spaces," says Jim Chappell, president of San Francisco Planning and Urban Research, a public policy think tank of which Baker is a director.

The Clocktower's very density (99 units per acre), the fact that it reuses an existing building, and its live/work nature all reinforce Baker's philosophy of low-impact living. "I'm interested in higher density," he says. "The problem of housing won't be solved by cheap custom homes in the suburbs." His interest in solar power and energy efficiency still runs deep. The 1904 house he's renovating with his wife, architect/artist/color consultant Jane Martin, holds rooftop photovoltaic panels, and he's looking into using PVs at a community the firm is designing in Oakland, Calif. To help qualify for tax credits, every affordable housing project Baker and his team have done exceeds the Department of Energy's Energy Star requirements by 15 percent. Overall, though, he tends to approach sustainability from a land-use point of view. "A rundown apartment in the city is more sustainable than a 5,000-square-foot solar mansion, because the BTUs per person are vastly lower," he continues. "Low density is not a sustainable future. You need that land to grow things on or replenish the watershed."



Gutsy blocks of color make this market-rate San Francisco rental project (2000) pop against a blue sky.

Brian Rose

learning experience

Low-density housing may be out of the question, but that still leaves plenty of high-density variations to try. And the more complex a program, the better Baker likes it. About half the firm's housing work is affordable and the other half market-rate—often the two are blended within the same project. For-sale and rental units also coexist within many jobs, as do different uses. (When designing condominiums, Baker has the developer indemnify him from any litigation that may arise due to California's strict liability laws for condos.) Project settings and user groups contrast wildly. Recently completed work includes 8th & Howard, a mix of affordable SROs (single-room occupancy) and family housing in SoMa with street-level retail, daycare, and CarShare parking; and the Hotel Healdsburg, a luxury wine country hotel containing boutiques, a high-end restaurant, and a spa.

Such variety allows Baker and his staff to apply knowledge gained from one kind of project to the design of another. Take the Clocktower and other loft projects' handcrafted lobby staircases created by local artisans. For the Hotel Healdsburg the firm took its focus on vertical circulation a step further, designing a sunlit "green stair" lined with

walking the walk

bamboo plants. And at 8th & Howard and other projects, it turned its attention to the upper-level stairwells, designing windows into each one so no resident is ever trapped in a windowless zone. Each hallway in most of its work ends in a window too, allowing double-loaded corridors to breathe. “We have some peculiar things that we make important, and daylight in corridors is one of them,” Baker says.

Parking is another building component the firm continually refines. In several projects, garages are embedded on different floors within the building. This strategy enables residents who live on the same floor to park on the same level, creating a friendlier parking experience than the anonymity of a big underground garage. Baker favors unbundled parking in many cases, especially when the project is near public transportation and rentable parking spaces in the area are plentiful. He cited both reasons when persuading local officials to let him eliminate parking at Curran House, affordable housing that just broke ground in San Francisco’s Tenderloin section.

equal opportunity

The firm’s Modern, quirky designs don’t please everyone. Martin, who often serves as a color consultant for her husband’s firm, remembers a SoMa dweller calling the mayor’s office to complain about the bright exterior colors at a neighboring market-rate rental project. But the people who live in David Baker + Partners’ buildings generally love their homes. “The real test is how the residents feel,” says Scott Falcone, senior project manager at Charities Housing Corp., a developer of 8th & Howard. “We did a survey of the tenants at 8th & Howard after they’d lived there about a year, and they’re just glowing. They appreciate the units, the amenities, the open space, the layout.”

Baker’s egalitarian nature comes through in his view that the high-end and low-end projects he’s worked on really aren’t that different. “Hotels are very much like affordable housing—you’re trying to get rooms in,” he says. “An SRO is like a custom home, only the rooms in the house are individual units.” His sense of democracy extends to the office, where everyone, including the partners, works in cubicles. He’s even opening up his popular, periodic tours of Bay area housing to include projects by architects other than his firm. “I try not to be endlessly self-promoting,” he explains. The tours, of course, take place on bikes. He wouldn’t have it any other way. **ra**



Michelle Peckham

The market-rate townhomes at Magnolia Row (2003) boost a neighborhood revitalization in Oakland, Calif.

“we have some peculiar things that we make important, and daylight in corridors is one of them.”

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space *in the city*

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floating in light

one common drawback to

apartments is that views are often unidirectional. This apartment was different. Located in New York City, it had views in three directions, including sightlines to Central Park, but it failed to fully exploit their potential. That's the principal problem the owners sought architect Louise Braverman's help to correct. "The main goal of the project was to open it up and bring in the light," she says.

Braverman first gutted most of the interior and positioned new walls to achieve uninterrupted sightlines. "I wanted to create axial and cross-axial views to get the sense you are in a tower," she says. Now the owners can sit in one space and see into a second or third area of the apartment. The spatial trick "makes the apartment feel expansive and gives the illusion that it is bigger than the square footage." Sliding doors open it up even more or, when needed, sever the space into private sleeping alcoves for visitors.

The apartment has an ethereal quality thanks to an abundance of windows bringing in copious daylight. The quality is underscored by a combination of strategic artificial lighting, including downlights for the clients' art collection and general purpose up-lighting. Additionally, light trays built into the ceiling further augment the illusion of ample space while also contributing architectural interest.

This was an enjoyable project, Braverman says, because the clients were open to ideas like the light trays and floating glass shelves. "These contribute to the lightness of the space," she says. "The design makes it seem as if everything is floating."—*n.f.m.*

Architect Louise Braverman used aluminum and satin-etched glass sliding doors (above, center, and far right) to control public and private spaces in this Manhattan apartment.

**project:**

Tower Apartment, New York City

architect:

Louise Braverman, Architect, New York City

general contractor:

T. Fox Contracting, New York City

project size:

1,900 square feet

construction cost:

Withheld

photographer:

Scott Frances



The reorganized interior creates the illusion of more space with new sightlines among public rooms and the central hall (above). Large windows filter light into the living room (top right) and through the hall to the dining room and kitchen (above far right). Italian cabinetry in the kitchen and Pietra Cardoza stone countertops in the bathrooms (above right) maintain the clean lines and luxurious appeal of the design.



space in the city

paradise loft

before semple brown design

got to it, this downtown Denver loft in a former saddle factory counted as many minuses as it did plusses. Original exposed-brick walls and cast iron-clad timber pillars defined its 1,530 square feet of space, giving it the lived-in patina that makes lofts such a hot property type. But it only received sunlight from the north side of the building and contained little separation between its public and private spaces.

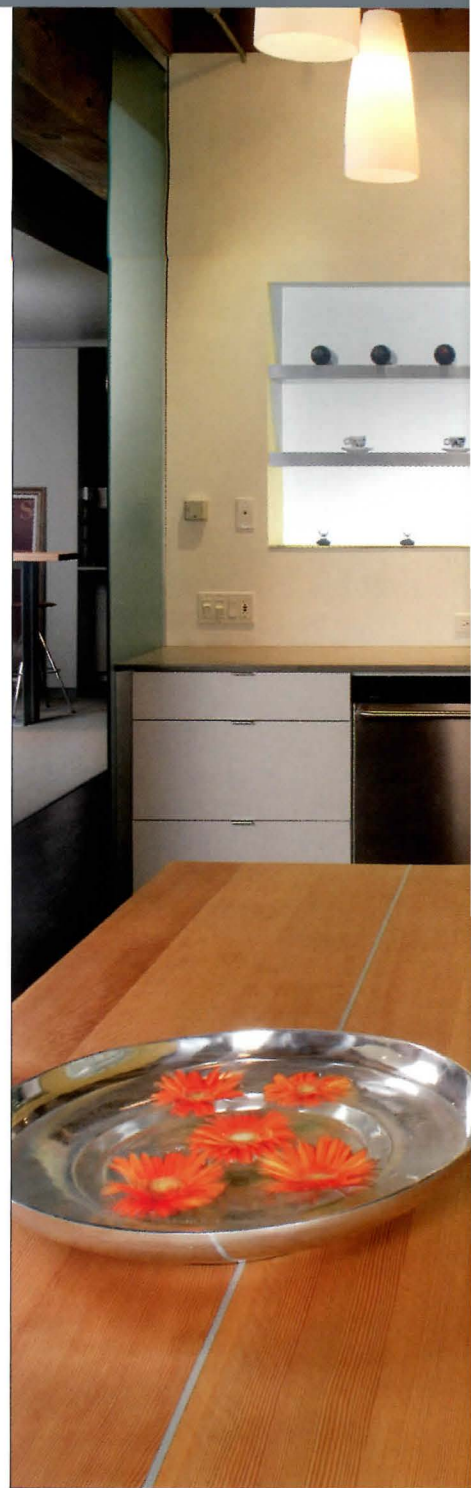
With the blessings of their Vail, Colo., clients, who use the loft as their city residence, project architect Dave Robb and his colleagues Kristen Sidell, Chris Craver, and Megan Hudacky engineered a transformational makeover. They divided the bedroom and bath corridor from the rest of the project with a series of translucent glass panels and sliding MDF doors. They also added a dropped, white-painted ceiling to the eastern half of the unit, hiding a new air conditioning system and providing a reflective surface for natural and artificial light.

Bright yellow plastic laminate cabinetry, another light-enhancer, lines the dining room and kitchen. And Robb's experience in retail design helped him devise the back-lit, translucent-glass-and-aluminum shelving that illuminates both rooms. Other thoughtful touches crop up throughout the loft. In the entry, built-in storage cupboards and a compact bar area lend clarity to a previously featureless vestibule. A sliding door in the master bath can be closed to make an independent half bath for the privacy of family or friends staying in the den/guest bedroom. Every new move the architects made, though, balances an old element they left in place. "The idea was to create a new skin inside the rough space, mixing the old vocabulary with crisp materials," says Robb.—*m.d.*

"the idea was to create a new skin inside the rough space."



Translucent glass wall segments invite the flow of natural and artificial light through the once dark loft.



project:

Arnold Loft, Denver

architect/interior designer:

Semple Brown Design, Denver

general contractor:

Cherry Hills Home Improvement, Denver

project size:

1,530 square feet

construction cost:

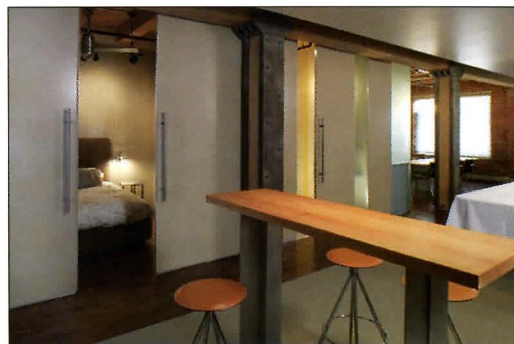
\$92 per square foot

photographer:

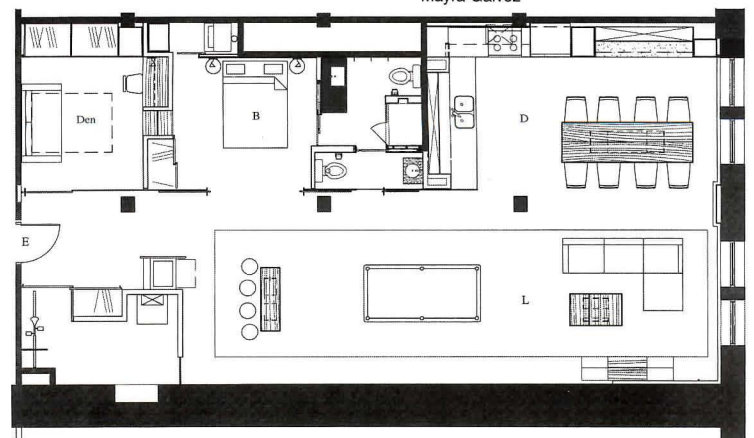
Ron Pollard, except where noted



Semple Brown left alone existing features such as original double-hung windows, exposed brick walls, and cast iron-covered pillars, keeping the project's rough-edged charm intact.



Mayra Galvez



space in the city

capital improvement congress avenue in austin,

Texas, leads directly to the towering pink state capitol dome. Lining the shady thoroughfare are a series of mid-19th century storefronts, ripe for live/work renovation. Seizing the opportunity, one owner approached architect Hobson Crow to design a bright and airy townhouse with retail space on the first level. She has just one caveat: He must recreate the original 1850s facade. A self-proclaimed Modernist, Crow was intrigued by the prospect of a historical restoration. "It was our first historical analysis," he says. "Very little original construction was left, so we worked from old photographs and with help from the city."

Once inside, the design skips several centuries to Crow's comfort zone—a contemporary loft aesthetic of glass, steel, and sustainable materials combined with refurbished character from the old structure. Existing interiors were excavated to expose limestone rubble party walls and to uncover longleaf pine ceiling joists supporting ceiling heights of 12 to 16 feet. Although in fine condition, the joists were removed to meet fire codes, but Crow salvaged them for use as flooring, floating ceiling panels, and even reconstituted joists.

The deficit of daylight, however, was not such an easy fix. The 185-foot-long-by-25-foot-wide structure was open to illumination only at each end. In this case, historical restrictions presented the solution. To add a new third level to the structure, Crow had to set it back from street view. This opened the roof to a party deck with a view of the capitol and allowed room for clerestory boxes to funnel light into the center of the building.

Inside, Crow removed all cross dividers so daylight now flows unimpeded between oversized windows at each end. A kitchen and bathroom pod runs lengthwise in plan, squeezing light through at each side. Cabinetry screens public areas from private sleeping quarters and the office. "Our goal was to make live/work spaces that could function with only natural light throughout the day—it's another way to practice sustainable design," says Crow.—s.d.h

*"our goal was to make
live/work spaces that could
function with only natural light
throughout the day."*

A suspended stair passes through the ground floor retail (above), offering a private approach to the second-floor apartment as well as the top-floor studio (top).



project:

Metz-Fielding Building, Austin, Texas

architect:

Hobson Crow Architects, Austin

general contractor:

Pamela Fielding, Austin

project size:

2,200 square feet, retail; 2,600 square feet, apartment/office; 1,800 square feet, studio

construction cost:

Withheld

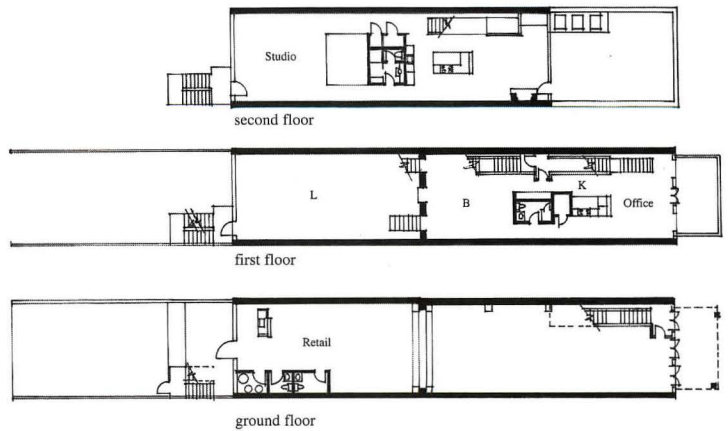
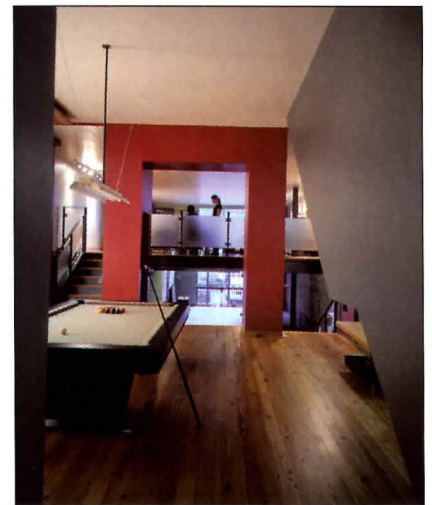
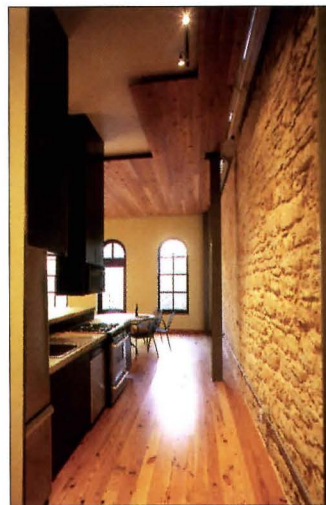
photographer:

Greg Hursley, except where noted



Courtesy Hobson Crowe Architects

Crow used photos of the original building (left) to recreate the facade. The long, sleek apartment (above, right) features open living space facing the street. Beyond the central kitchen, ceilings soar up to 16 feet, so Crow used the extra height to split the private spaces into an office loft above a sunken bedroom.



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- **Houses to Go –**
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- **Can Good Design and Good Business Coexist? –**
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- **Redesigning the American House –**
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Schedule Of Events

Monday, December 6

House Tour

Idea Houses of the Past and Present

Reinvention 2004

Welcome Reception

Tuesday, December 7

Keynote Address

The Golden Age of Design

Panel Discussion

Great Housing Ideas of the Past

Panel Discussion

Houses to Go

Awards Luncheon

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Rising Star: Jonathan Segal, Jonathan Segal FAIA, La Jolla, CA

Afternoon Sessions

Roundtable Discussions

- 1) Can Good Design and Good Business Co-Exist?
- 2) Partnering with Builders and Developers to Bring Innovative Houses to Market
- 3) Launching an Innovative House Plans Business

Panel Discussion

Sustaining the Next American House

Reception and Exhibition

The American Institute of Architects' 2004 "New Home on the Range" Competition

Wednesday, December 8

Breakfast Panel Discussion

Brainstorming the Next American House

Design Charrette

Redesigning the American House
Industry leaders draw the Next American House prototype

Presentation of The Next American House

Reinvention conference adjourns

Special Events

House Tour

Ray Kappe Residence, Pacific Palisades
Steven Ehrlich Residence, Venice
Eleventh Street Residence, Santa Monica

Awards Luncheon

The 2004 *residential architect* Leadership Awards Salute California Innovators

Ray Kappe, Kappe Architects Planners
Pacific Palisades, CA

Koning Eizenberg Architecture
Santa Monica, CA

Jonathan Segal, Jonathan Segal FAIA
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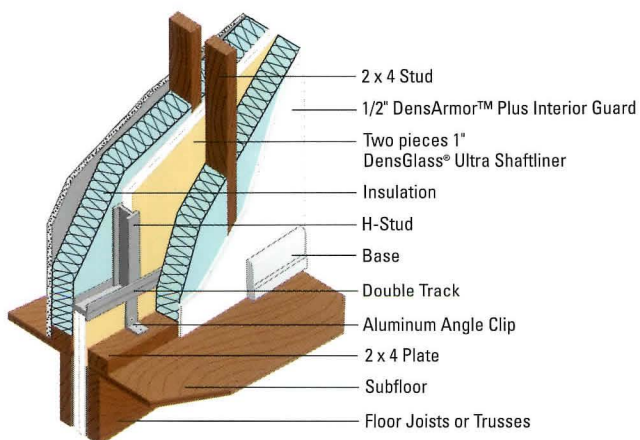


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Circle no. 233

quiet time

hushing the hubbub in multifamily design.

by nigel f. maynard

It goes without saying that doing an attached multifamily project is a world apart from designing a custom home. After taming site conditions, an architect must tackle such key issues as structure and energy. Less obvious but equally important: noise transmission, a consideration that has become increasingly more significant and something that no architect can afford to ignore.

"As you move into different pockets of the country, the issue is becoming more high profile," says John LoVerde, an associate principal at Veneklasen Associates, an acoustical consultation firm in Santa Monica, Calif. "What I've seen is that the policies [have changed] and the amount of design that goes into buildings has grown."

Kristin Gonsar agrees. "Units that are isolated for sound are important to the comfort of the end user and speak to the quality of the project," says the project architect with San Francisco-based Seidel/Holzman, a firm known for its award-winning multifamily projects.

Though the issue of noise is nothing new, its significance has risen in direct correlation to the



Bill Sanders

For his first multifamily project, Avenue Lofts (2004) in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., architect Michael J. Krupnick set HVAC units on springs, insulated plumbing pipes, and used cork underlayment (sandwiched between two layers of concrete) to decrease sound transmission.

growth in high-end urban infill development and condo projects. Today's buyers expect a certain level of quality and see a quiet unit as a must-have feature. At the same time, the stylistic shift toward open floor plans and away from carpeting toward wood and hard surface flooring makes controlling sound that much harder.

California appears to be center stage in the new battle. Following 10 years of sluggish growth, the state has seen an increase in multifamily development, and new codes address noise concerns in that building type. "It is a hot topic on the radar," says Sandra C. Stewart, a construction

attorney and partner in the litigation department of Los Angeles-based Cox Castle & Nicholson, a firm that represents developers. Historically, Stewart says, builders and developers have not faced large acoustics-related claims, but a recent state statute giving unit owners more rights is about to change that.

"Prior to Jan. 1, 2003, different jurisdictions had different noise regulations, and you applied different legal standards," so a case was difficult to prove, Stewart says. "This law simply adds a new awareness and new hook for a claim, so instead of proving four things, a person now only needs to prove one."

Noise has become a critical concern for Michael J. Krupnick, a Corrales, N.M.-based architect who is now doing attached housing. "It's something we have looked into seriously now that we are doing this type of work," he says. And how he handles sound depends on the type of building. For example, Krupnick's most recent project, Avenue Lofts, was a heavy-mass concrete structure that provides some built-in sound insulation, but he still took other precautions. He insulated the plumbing pipes, caulked the sill plate, and set the HVAC units on springs. Cork underlayment, solid-core

continued on page 72

doors, and carpet in the common halls muffle noise. "The assembly is very good, but you still hear high-heel footsteps," Krupnick says. "Impact noise is very hard to [solve]."

Though Seidel/Holzman occasionally hires consultants to review construction assemblies, the firm has developed tried and true specs. Its party walls usually include a metal resilient channel separated by a 2-inch air space, and acoustic isolator pads keep items from touching. "We also use acoustic sealant around all gaps in the wall to prevent sound from passing through," Gonsar explains.

A veteran of multifamily projects, DJR Architects in Minneapolis knows a thing or two about what type of assembly works. "The sound rating for footsteps and dropped products is the most important [acoustical] aspect of a building," says Scott Nelson, an architect with the firm. "And the

floor-to-ceiling assembly is the biggest issue we focus on." The firm prefers cork or Gyp-crete poured cementitious underlayments to help deal with footsteps. Moreover, a 1-inch air space between double walls on separate plates makes a big difference in controlling sound, Nelson adds.

"Noise certainly is something that we have to be conscious of," says Washington, D.C.-based architect Eric Colbert. To that end, Colbert also constructs his walls and ceilings with a resilient metal channel that is screwed to the framing members to isolate sound. Insulated cast iron plumbing—instead of PVC—provides greater sound control, and because everyone wants wood floors these days, Colbert specs a cork underlayment to squelch footsteps.

Wall and floor assemblies may be the most important elements in noise control, but special acoustical products can also help hush the hubbub. Two such products from Sunnyvale, Calif.-based Quiet Solutions are QuietRock soundproof drywall and QuietWood plywood underlayment. Both products contain viscoelastic polymers "that turn acoustic energy into heat, which stays in the separation wall," says company chairman Marc Porat, Ph.D. Northfield, Ill.-based

Knight-Celotex offers SoundStop, an organic fiberboard that installs behind drywall to help prevent sound transmission; West Trenton, N.J.-based Homasote Co. makes 440 Sound Barrier cellulose fiberboard and Nova Cork—a finished interior panel consisting of cork laminated to the 440 product; and Toledo, Ohio-based Owens Corning's QuietZone line has a wall framing system with a built-in resilient metal clip.

There's also a smorgasbord of cork flooring from Dodge-Regupol in Lancaster, Pa., Natural Cork in Augusta, Ga., and WE Cork in Exeter, N.H. Sound absorbing rubber products are also available from Allstate Rubber in Ozone Park, N.Y., To Market in Oklahoma City, Okla., and Hacker Industries in Newport Beach, Calif.

Windows are now more specialized for sound as well. Companies such as Philips Products in Elkhart, Ind., North Brunswick, N.J.-based Silver Line, and Tacoma, Wash.-based Milgard Windows offer units that boast multiple glazing and construction that reduces exterior noise.

Given what's at stake, experts say architects and builders need to scrutinize design elements carefully. "We tell our developer

clients that this is an area [they] definitely want to micromanage," says attorney Sandra Stewart. It's also a good idea to hire a consultant for difficult projects, she says. Installation is equally important, as it's often the source of problems. "You should have a protocol to verify that products are being installed correctly," Stewart says.

Acoustical consultant John LoVerde says footsteps and plumbing noise are what his firm gets calls on the most in court cases, so he recommends that architects pay particular attention to these areas. Don't locate a kitchen near a bedroom, he warns. A stacked design in which areas of like function are together works best. "Eighty percent of the problems are taken care of when you know your adjacencies," he says.

And while it may be tempting to "value engineer" when the budget gets tight, architect Scott Nelson says this is always a bad idea. "It's not that expensive to make sure units are properly isolated, and it's an area you don't want to skimp on."

But neither should you simply settle for the most expensive sound isolation system, LoVerde advises. It is important to know when to put in the expensive system, when to go beyond the code, and when not to go overboard. "It's all about controlling sound in a way that makes sense for the building," he says. **ra**



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Owens Corning's QuietZone acoustic wall framing features Tembec engineered lumber and Selectem LVL with a built-in resilient metal clip to reduce sound transmission.



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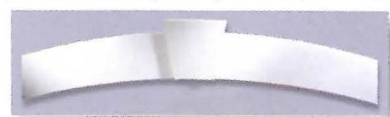
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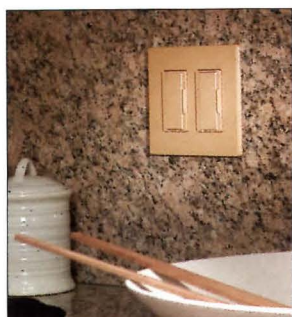
starck lines

To complement the firm's Modern bathrooms, Honarkar specs Hansgrohe's Axor Starck lavatory and bath faucets. "The products bring out a little bit of high design for the bathroom," he says. Designed by Philippe Starck, the single-hole sink faucet measures 8½ inches tall and uses ceramic cartridges. The shower unit has a 36-inch wall bar with hose and hand shower and a 6-inch showerhead. Faucets are available in chrome and satin. Hansgrohe USA, 800.719.1000; www.hansgrohe-usa.com.



discreet attachments

Division One likes its wall switches to be screw-free and have a little bit of color to blend with



the wall. The units that satisfy both those requirements are Lutron Electronics' Satin Colors—a line of dimmers and accessories that come in 15 colors, including kiwi, ochre, and sea glass. "The products give us a variety of looks because we are able to match the colors to the walls," Honarkar says. "This gives us flexibility." And because the wall plates snap on, there are no visible screws. Lutron Electronics Co., 877.258.8766; www.lutron.com.

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© Debi Fox Photography

heavenly blow

Honarkar has a thing for unusually designed fixtures, which is why he likes the uniqueness of Luceplan's funky Blow ceiling fan (shown in this townhouse). Unlike most fans, Blow's bulb is mounted above the blades so light filters down through the unit's transparent methacrylate blades and polycarbonate diffuser. "We love the idea that it looks like a floating fixture," Honarkar says. It comes with a set of three transparent or multicolor blades. Luceplan USA, 212.989.6265; www.luceplanusa.com.

—nigel f. maynard

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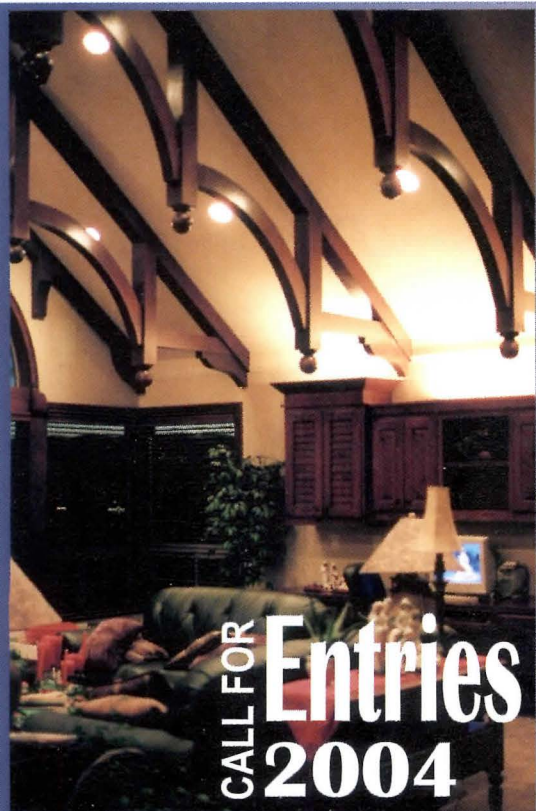
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GYPSUM ASSOCIATION EXCELLENCE IN GYPSUM BOARD DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Architects, drywall contractors, and builders or general contractors in the United States and Canada are invited to submit their finest, most innovative gypsum board projects from 2004 for consideration in the **Excellence in Gypsum Board Design and Construction** awards program. Large or small, residential or nonresidential, all innovative designs are eligible to participate.

Projects substantially completed by December 31, 2004 are eligible. One residential and one nonresidential project will be selected as winners. Top awards include \$3,000 for each winning project team. In addition, all qualified entries will be displayed on the Gypsum Association's Web site.



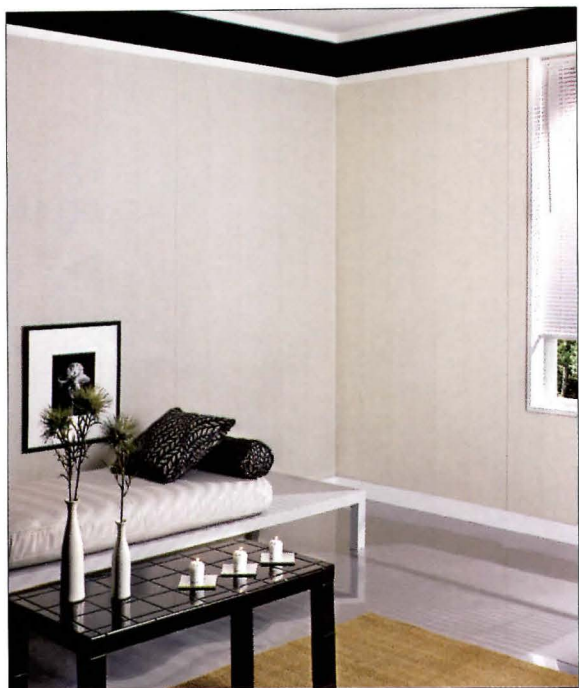
2003 Residential Winner
Brown Home, Cedarhills, Utah

To obtain an entry form, visit us online
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hide and chic

StyleLine decorative wall panels break the monotony of drywall expanses. Panels come in assorted faux patterns and textures from leather to linen and in a range of vibrant and subdued colors and perforated styles (Elegant Pine in bone white is shown). Manufactured by Atlanta-based Georgia-Pacific, the panels are medium-density fiberboard made of 100 percent recovered and recycled fibers. Standard size is 4 by 8 feet, but some styles are available in 32-by-48 inch sheets. Georgia-Pacific, 404.652.4000; www.gp.com.



ergo sum

The newest introduction from Israel's leading brass faucet manufacturer, Ergo is a high-arc kitchen faucet with sweeping lines, a slender 360-degree spout, and two handle options: the joystick Olympus (shown) or the 45-degree Everest style. It's constructed of cast solid brass, uses ceramic disc cartridges, and comes in either a stainless steel or polished chrome finish. Hamat USA, 866.524.2628; www.hamatusa.com.



grass skirt

Broomfield, Colo.-based Diamond Spas is known for its modern stainless steel and copper products. With this Japanese soaking tub, the manufacturer introduces bamboo to its palette. The stainless soaking tub has a low bench seat and a skirt fabricated from 3-inch bamboo poles. It measures 48 by 48 by 35 inches. Custom dimensions are also made. Diamond Spas, 800.951.7727; www.diamondspas.com.

—nigel f. maynard

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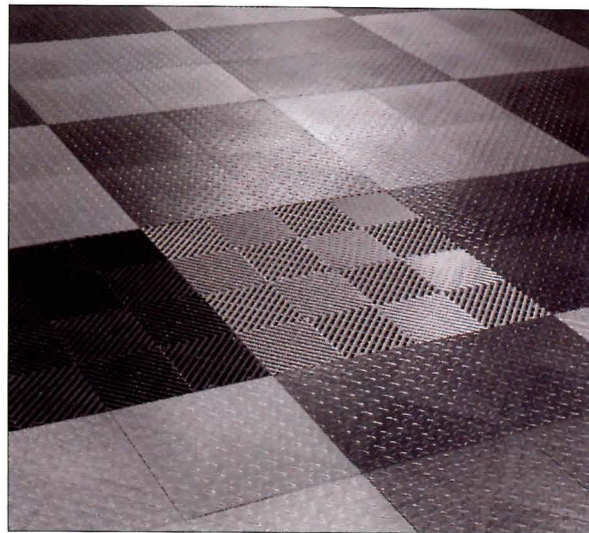
the fab floor

new flooring styles look fantastic underfoot.



tile tale

Rikett's 70 percent quartz crystal composition adds flexibility and strength to vinyl tiles. Natural pigments carry through the material, which means no waxing, stripping, or harsh cleaning is needed to preserve the slip-resistant satin sheen. The 12-inch and 24-inch squares resist cracking, scratches, and indentation. Marbled and solid color choices include espresso, jelly bean, butter cream, and raindrop blue. Rikett, 800.356.0740; www.rikettquartz.com.



gray matter

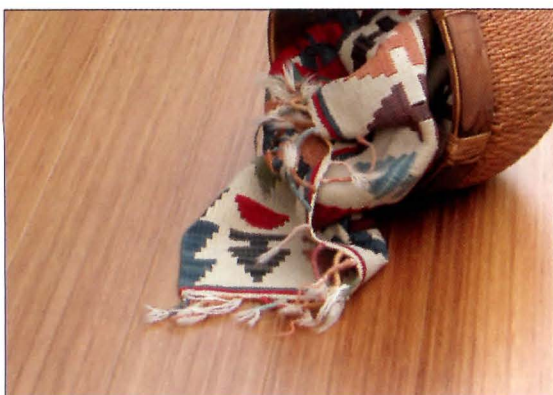
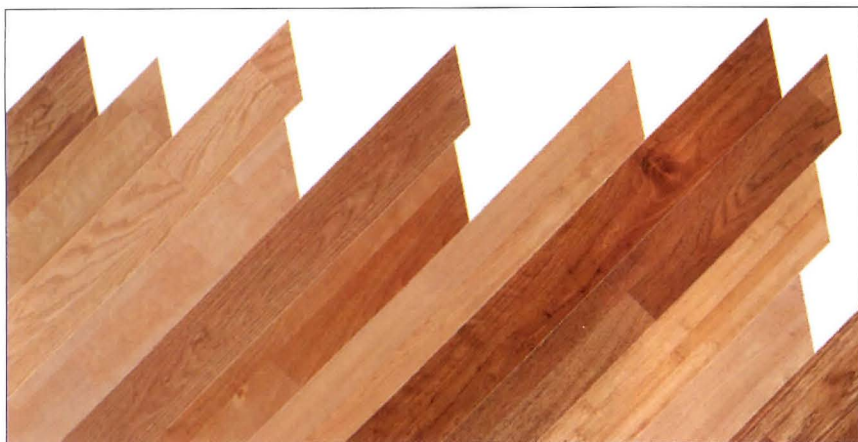
Gladiator Tile flooring features locking tabs for quick installation and nonporous PVC construction for heavy-duty uses. The 12-inch-square tiles have a textured surface excellent for wet areas. An anti-microbial additive keeps mold and fungus at bay. Choose silver or charcoal or create a geometric configuration using both. Whirlpool, 866.342.4089; www.gladiatorgw.com.

aged beauty

Twenty-foot-long Ancient Chinese Elm timbers are being reclaimed from demolished 400-year-old Ming Dynasty structures to be milled into exquisite flooring. Nails were never used, so nearly all of the 25-inch-thick logs can be recycled into especially wide planks. Milling yields a rich butterscotch color with a deep chocolate swirled grain. Mountain Lumber, 800.445.2671; www.mountainlumber.com.

continued on page 80

off the shelf



green tree

Teragren's 6x6 plank bamboo flooring can be glued, nailed, stapled, or floated on, above, or below grade. Formaldehyde-free adhesives and a water-based coating help the highly renewable, 100 percent bamboo layers maintain their environmental advantage. According to the company, the 6-inch-wide-by-6-foot-long plank is harder than oak and more dimensionally sound than maple. Natural and caramelized colors in either vertical or flat grain finishes are available. Teragren, 800.929.6333; www.teragren.com.

on tap

The Contact line of laminated floors offers 19 plank and seven tile patterns. A stain-, wear-, and fade-resistant commercial grade overlay tops the high-density fiberboard core, while an acoustic attenuation layer and impact-resistant bottom layer complete the durable composition. The flooring features Tap-N-Lock installation—using two tongue-and-groove joints for extra strength—plus a hot wax emulsion the company says eliminates moisture intrusion. Wilsonart, 800.710.8846; www.wilsonartflooring.com.



rug rage

InterfaceFlor has introduced a modular carpet system for residential applications. Twenty-inch-square tiles come in various textures, patterns, weaves, and colors. Tiles are made of recycled materials—mostly nylon fibers with rubber backing. (The Spring Planting collection, made from corn husks, is an exception.) Contemporary graphics can be combined with solid colors to create custom area rugs or wall-to-wall floor coverings. Individual tiles are removable for cleaning or replacing, making this a low-maintenance product. Easy installation with peel-and-stick adhesive dots. InterfaceFlor, 866.281.FLOR; www.interfaceflor.com.

—shelley d. hutchins

call for entries

residential architect design awards

2005

the sixth annual

residential architect Design Awards, sponsored by *residential architect* magazine, honor the best in American housing. Awards will be given in 14 categories, encompassing custom home design, renovation, kitchens, baths, design details, outbuilding, multifamily housing, single-family production housing, affordable housing, seniors housing, campus housing, and work on the boards. From the winners, the judges will choose a Project of the Year. Note: Entries in the outbuilding, kitchen, bath, design detail, and on the boards categories are not eligible for Best Project.

who's eligible?

Architects and designers. Other building industry professionals may submit projects on behalf of an architect or designer. Hanley Wood employees, their relatives, and regular contributors to the magazine are not eligible.

what's eligible?

Any home or project completed after January 1, 2000.

when's the deadline?

Entry forms and fees are due no later than November 15, 2004. Completed binders are due January 5, 2005.

where will winning projects appear?

Winning projects will be published in the May 2005 issue of *residential architect* magazine.

how will projects be judged?

A panel of respected architects and design professionals will independently select winners based on design excellence. They may withhold awards in any category at their discretion.

entry form

To register, you may do any of the following:

call Shelley Hutchins at *residential architect*, 202.736.3407

mail this form to Shelley Hutchins, *residential architect* Design Awards 2005, One Thomas Circle, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20005

fax this form to Shelley Hutchins at 202.785.1974

e-mail this form to shutchins@hanleywood.com

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☐ Send more information.

☐ Please send entry binder(s) and instructions now (must be prepaid).

☐ Payment for _____ standard entries at \$125 each and/or _____ on the boards, kitchen, bath, outbuilding, or design detail entries at \$95 each is enclosed.

☐ Check for \$_____ (payable to *residential architect*) is enclosed.

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number of entries _____ categories _____

- _____ 1. Custom Home, 3,500 square feet or less
- _____ 2. Custom Home, more than 3,500 square feet
- _____ 3. Renovation (residential remodeling and additions)
- _____ 4. Multifamily Housing
- _____ 5. Single-Family Production Housing, detached
- _____ 6. Single-Family Production Housing, attached
- _____ 7. Affordable Housing (At least 20 percent of the units must be affordable to families earning 80 percent to 120 percent of the local Median Family Income. Consult your area HUD office or local government office for the MFI.)
- _____ 8. Seniors Housing
- _____ 9. Campus Housing
- _____ 10. Outbuilding
- _____ 11. Kitchen
- _____ 12. Bath
- _____ 13. Architectural Detail
- _____ 14. On the Boards

deadlines entry form and fee: november 15, 2004
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Need building-product information? You have a choice.

Choice #1

1. Client shows me a picture in a magazine. "I want this," she says. 2. Call manufacturer's sales rep. 3. Visit manufacturer's Web site. 4. Spend next two evenings going through trade catalogs. 5. Ask my contact at local supply house. 6. Hunt down Frank at the lumberyard. 7. Frank thinks that product was discontinued. 8. Attend trade show one week later. 9. Success! I found the manufacturer! 10. Sales rep in booth will call me back with local distributor contact. 11. Wait one week. 12. Sales rep calls with distributor name. 13. Call distributor, leave message with Jessica, the receptionist. 14. Wait two more days. 15. Sales rep calls back, can't fully answer my warranty questions. 16. Or my specifications questions. 17. And he can't give me CAD drawings. 18. Order product. 19. Wait two weeks for delivery. 20. Product arrives—with no manual. 21. Call sales rep, leave message with Jessica. 22. Grasp hair firmly at temples. 23. Bellow loudly. 24. Pull hair out. 25. Discover installation instructions are also missing. 26. Wonder why you didn't listen to your mother and become one of those nice park rangers. 27. Or a piano player, like cousin Geoffrey. 28. Inform client of delay. 29. Switch to another job for the rest of the week. 30. Next week, sales rep returns call, promises manufacturer will overnight warranty information, manual, and installation instructions. 31. "Overnight" apparently means "within 7 to 10 business days." 32. Receive collateral materials. 33. Install product. 34. Send résumé to National Park Service. 35. Rent "Grizzly

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Accessible Products

Universal design is one of the fastest growing trends in the housing industry, in large part because of Baby Boomers looking toward their retirement years. A home that features universal design elements may include raised outlets, lowered light switches, wider doorways and hallways, and no-step entries, for example.

Accessible products often are required in a home designed with special needs in mind. From elevators to automatic doors, these products help ease the lifestyle of aging families and persons with physical needs.

By knowing what's available on the market, you can help your clients maximize the comfort and accessibility of their home. Read on to learn about innovative products on the market today.

ELEVATOR DESIGN ACHIEVES NEW LEVELS

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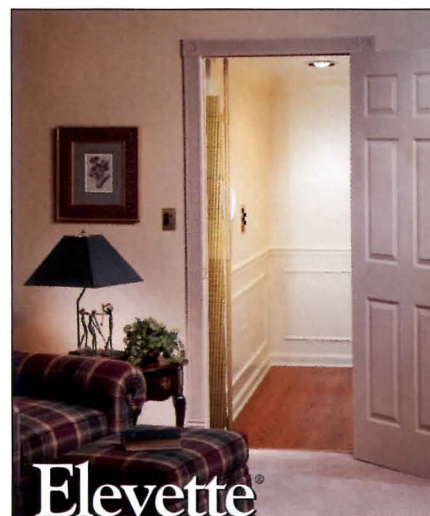
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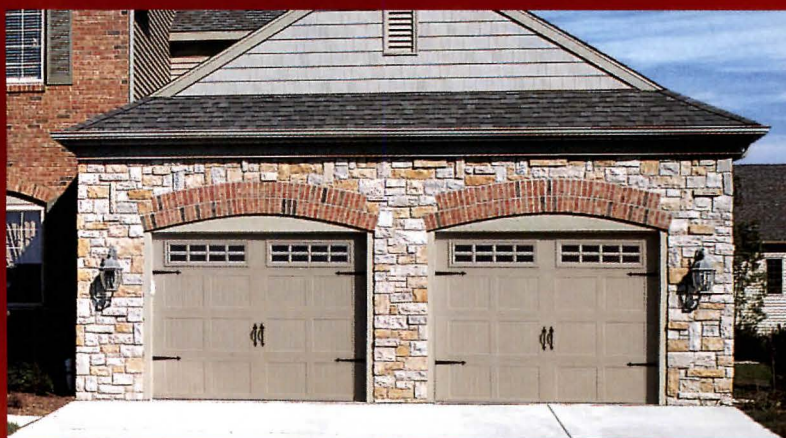
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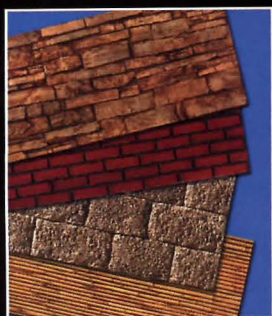
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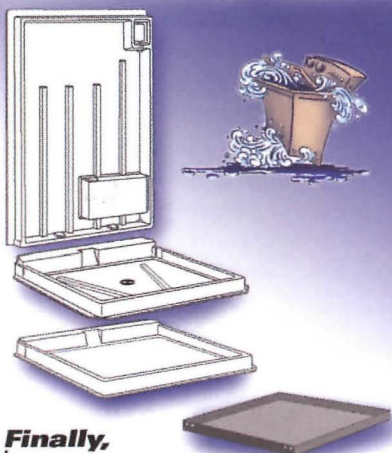


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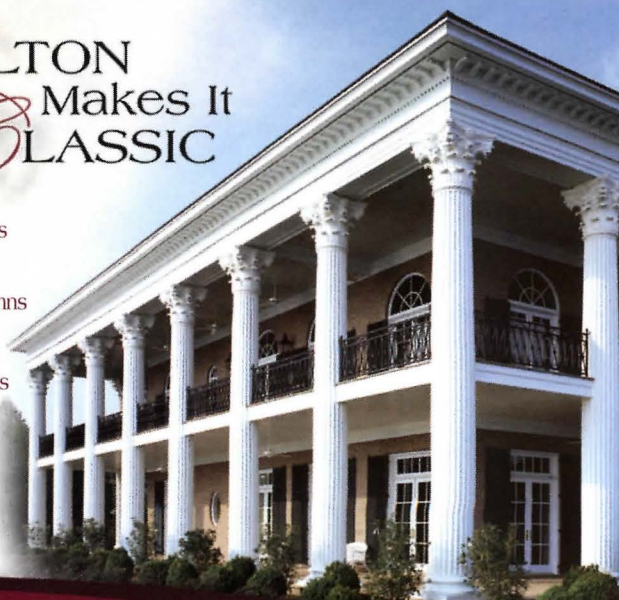


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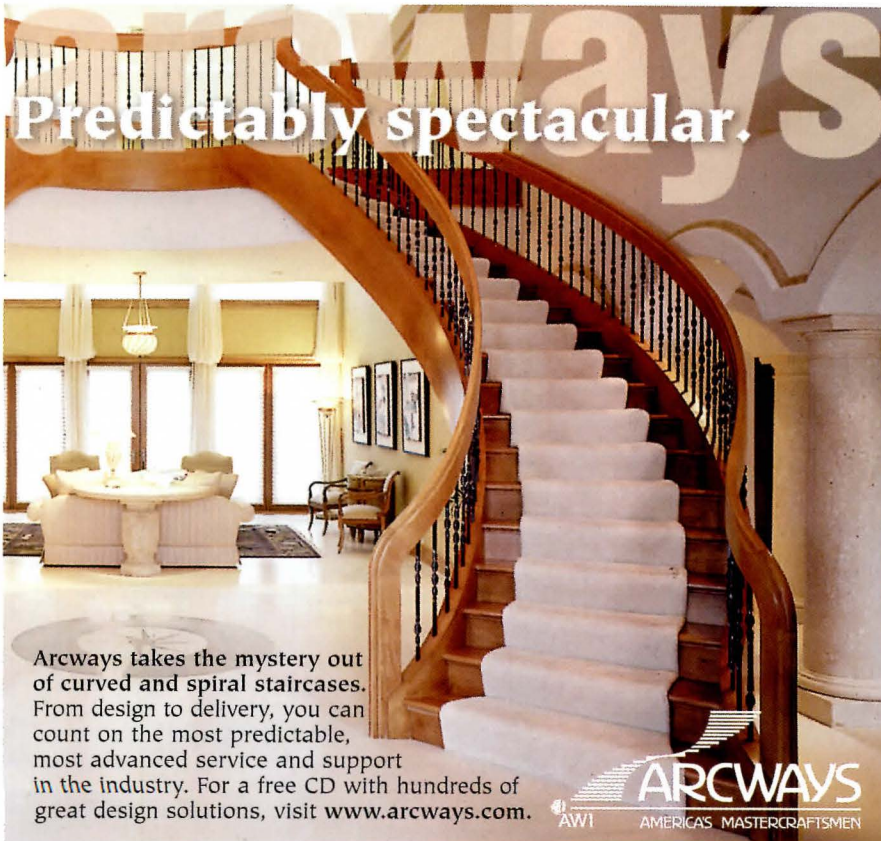
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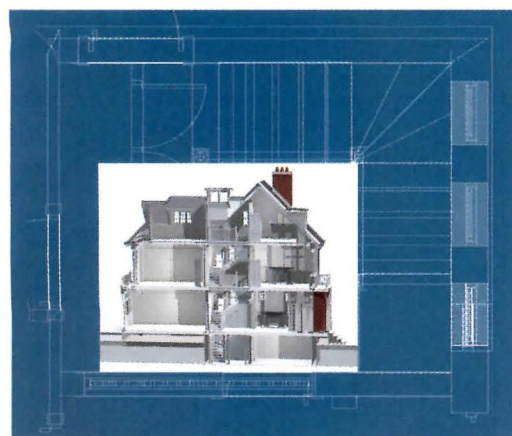
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Choice #1

1. Client shows me a picture in a magazine. "I want this," she says. 2. Call manufacturer's sales rep. 3. Get voice mail, leave message. 4. Wait one week for callback. 5. No callback. 6. Visit manufacturer's Web site. 7. Fumble through incomplete Web site, give up. 8. Spend next two evenings going through trade catalogs. 9. No dice. 10. Ask my contact at local supply house. 11. Get blank stare. 12. Hunt down Frank at the lumberyard. 13. Frank thinks the product was discontinued, but he's not sure. 14. Attend trade show one week later. 15. Success! I found the manufacturer! 16. Sales rep in booth will call me back with local distributor contact. 17. Wait one more week. 18. Sales rep calls with distributor name. 19. Call distributor, leave message with receptionist, Laura. 20. Wait two more days. 21. Distributor calls back, chewing on his lunch, promises to "look into that" for me. 22. Wait four more days. 23. Try to deal with other projects while waiting for distributor callback. 24. Distributor calls back: They don't have it in stock, but they can get it. 25. But not in the color the client wants. 26. Call client to find out if "ecru" is close enough to "beige." 27. "Well, I suppose it will have to be." 28. Call distributor back. 29. "I'm sorry, he, like, stepped out for a moment," Laura says. 30. Leave message, wait for Laura to hang up. 31. Scream at top of lungs. 32. Throw cell phone into next county. 33. Chase it down; crush it underfoot. 34. Wait two days for callback from distributor. 35. Distributor calls back with product availability. 36. Order product. 37. Wait two weeks for delivery. 38. Product arrives. 39. Install product; collect payment. 40. Go shopping for new cell phone. 41. No store carries the

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Session highlights include:

- **Sustaining the Next American House –**
How can we integrate such innovations as site-sensitive design into single-family housing?
- **Houses to Go –**
Are architect-designed, factory-built, site-assembled houses the wave of the future?
- **Can Good Design and Good Business Coexist? –**
Target, IKEA, and Apple have shown that great design sells. How can we use those lessons?
- **Redesigning the American House –**
Industry leaders and audience members will conceive and design the Next American House prototype.

Schedule Of Events

Monday, December 6

House Tour

Idea Houses of the Past and Present

Reinvention 2004

Welcome Reception

Tuesday, December 7

Keynote Address

The Golden Age of Design

Panel Discussion

Great Housing Ideas of the Past

Panel Discussion

Houses to Go

Awards Luncheon

The 2004 *residential architect* Leadership Awards Salute California Innovators

Presenting the winners

Hall of Fame: Ray Kappe, Kappe Architects Planners, Pacific Palisades, CA

Architecture Firm of the Year: Koning Eizenberg Architecture, Santa Monica, CA

Rising Star: Jonathan Segal, Jonathan Segal FAIA, La Jolla, CA

Afternoon Sessions

Roundtable Discussions

- 1) Can Good Design and Good Business Co-Exist?
- 2) Partnering with Builders and Developers to Bring Innovative Houses to Market
- 3) Launching an Innovative House Plans Business

Panel Discussion

Sustaining the Next American House

Reception and Exhibition

The American Institute of Architects' 2004 "New Home on the Range" Competition

Wednesday, December 8

Breakfast Panel Discussion

Brainstorming the Next American House

Design Charrette

Redesigning the American House
Industry leaders draw the Next American House prototype

Presentation of The Next American House

Reinvention conference adjourns

Special Events

House Tour

Ray Kappe Residence, Pacific Palisades
Steven Ehrlich Residence, Venice
Eleventh Street Residence, Santa Monica

Awards Luncheon

The 2004 *residential architect* Leadership Awards Salute California Innovators

Ray Kappe, Kappe Architects Planners
Pacific Palisades, CA

Koning Eizenberg Architecture
Santa Monica, CA

Jonathan Segal, Jonathan Segal FAIA
La Jolla, CA

Congress of Residential Architects Inaugural Meeting

Luxury Kitchen & Bath Collection
Begins Thursday, December 9

Reinvention

The Next American House

2004

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Special Bonus Event!

The first-ever Congress of Residential Architects. This new organization of specialists in single-family residential architecture launches its first forum on The State of Residential Architecture following Reinvention 2004 on Wednesday, December 8 at 1:30 pm.

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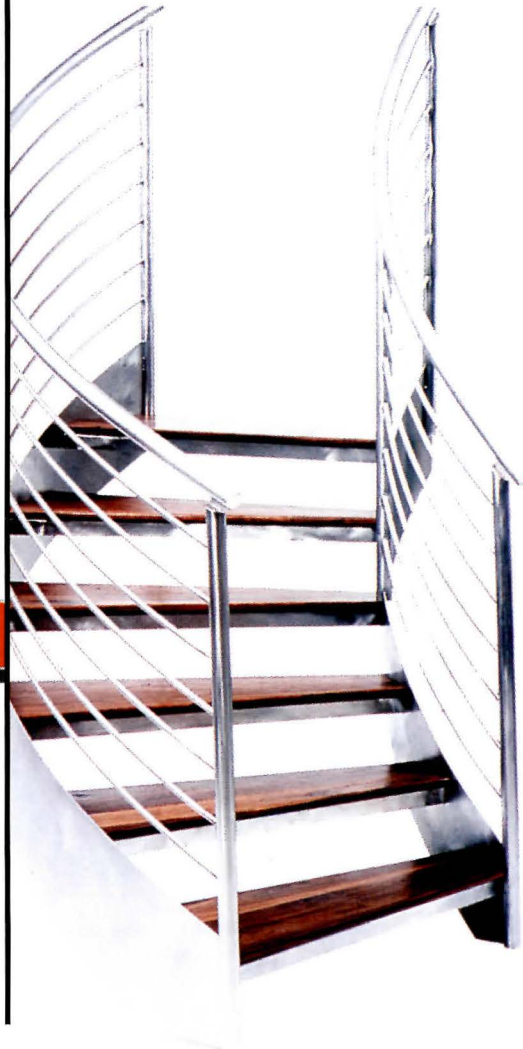


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folk wisdom

new gourn, egypt, 1948

hassan fathy

“if possible, i want to bridge the gulf that separates folk architecture from architect’s architecture.” —hassan fathy



Christopher Little/Aga Khan Trust for Culture

hassan Fathy’s most famous project didn’t turn out to be the utopian success he had envisioned. The government of his native country, Egypt, hired him to design a mixed-use village near Luxor to house 7,000 low-income residents. But, according to most accounts, bureaucratic slowdowns and the residents’ distrust of the project hampered the building process. Only a fraction of the village, known as New Gourn, was ever completed.

Many architects and historians think that Fathy’s village arrived ahead of its time. Not only do its mud-brick walls and abundant courtyards possess an ethereal beauty, they also illustrate the benefits of using natural materials, the cultural value of indigenous building styles, and the importance of working with a climate rather than fighting it. Such concepts apply to architecture across the budgetary spectrum, from the low end to the highbrow.—*meghan drueding*

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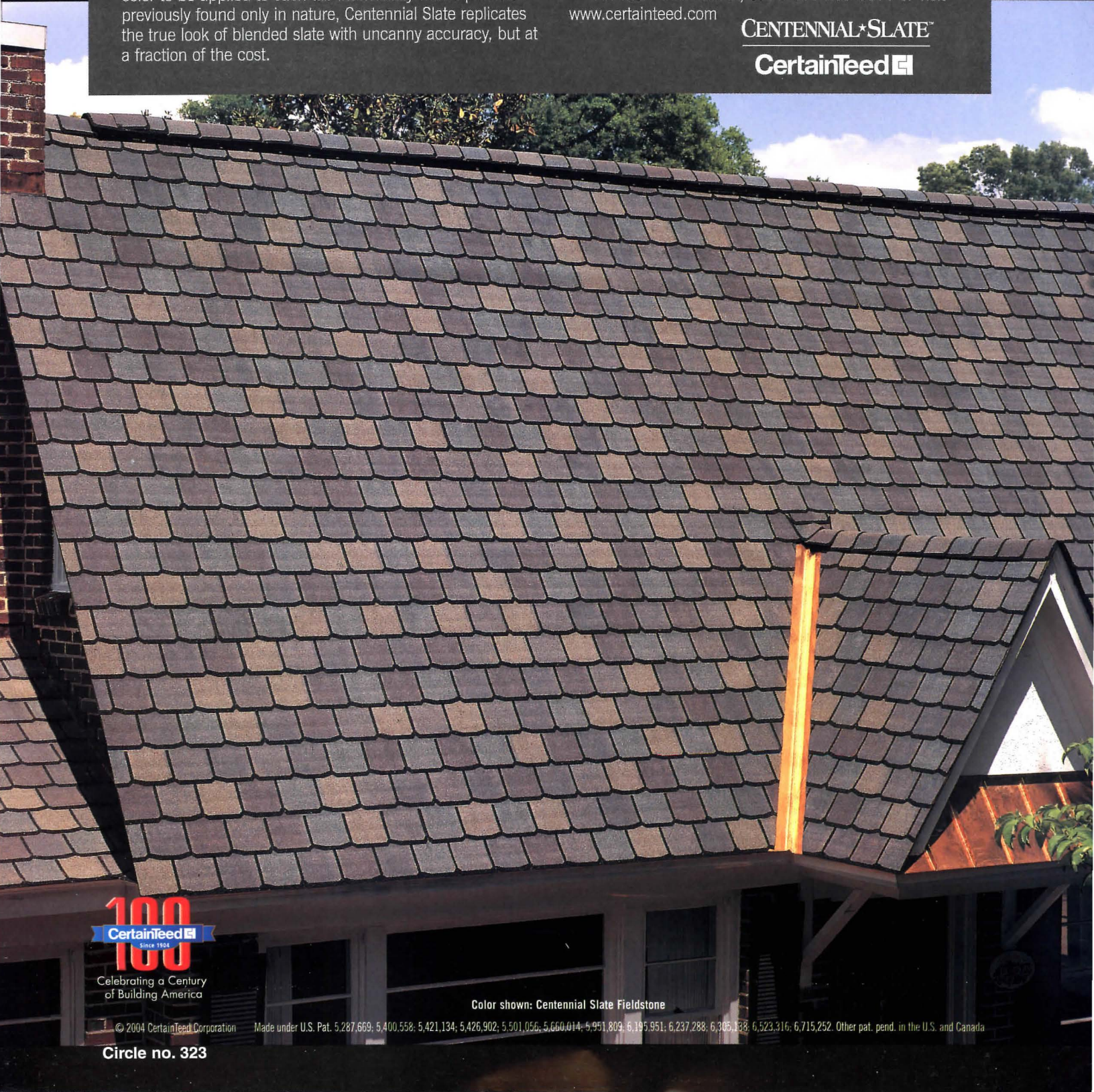
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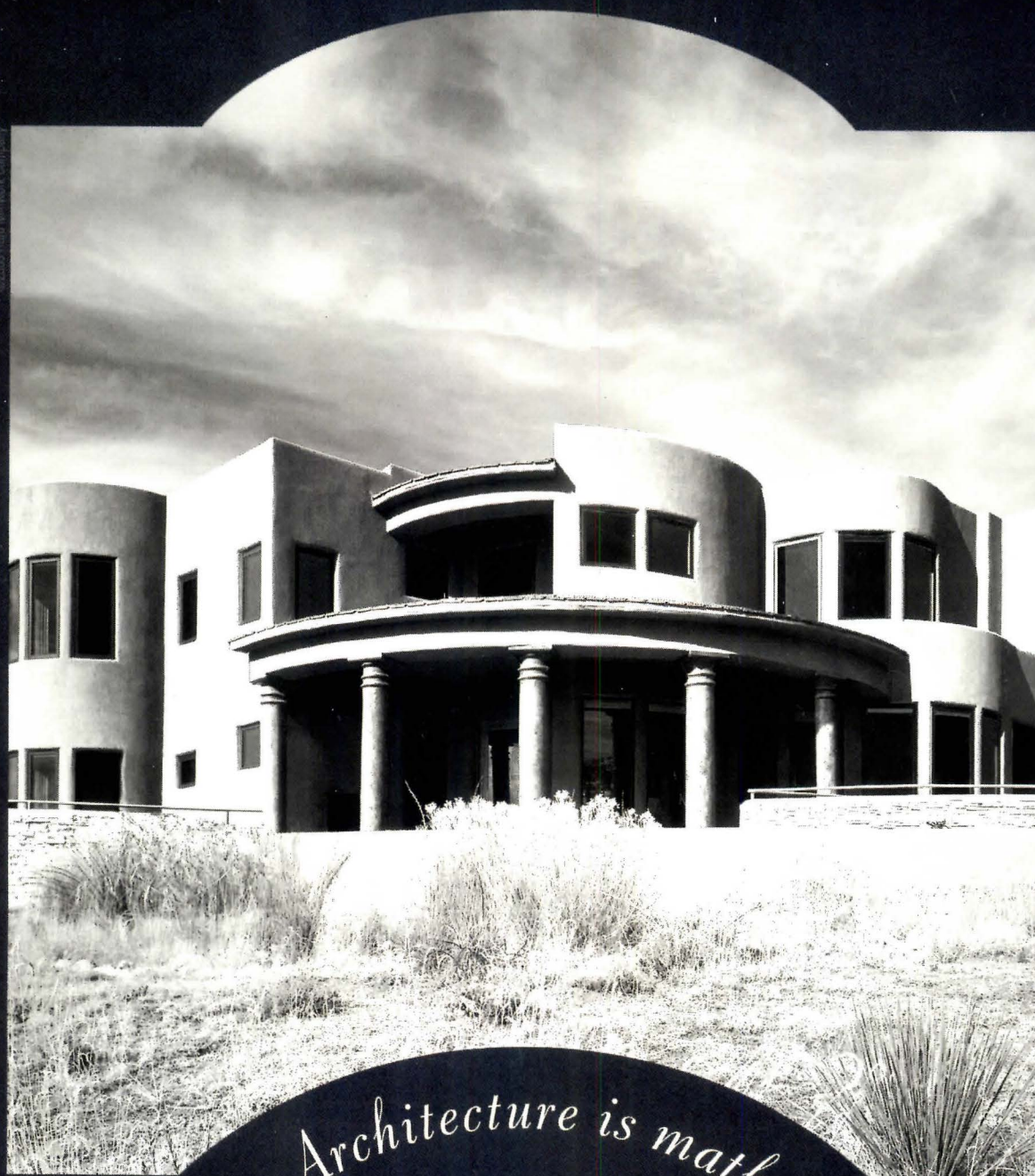
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