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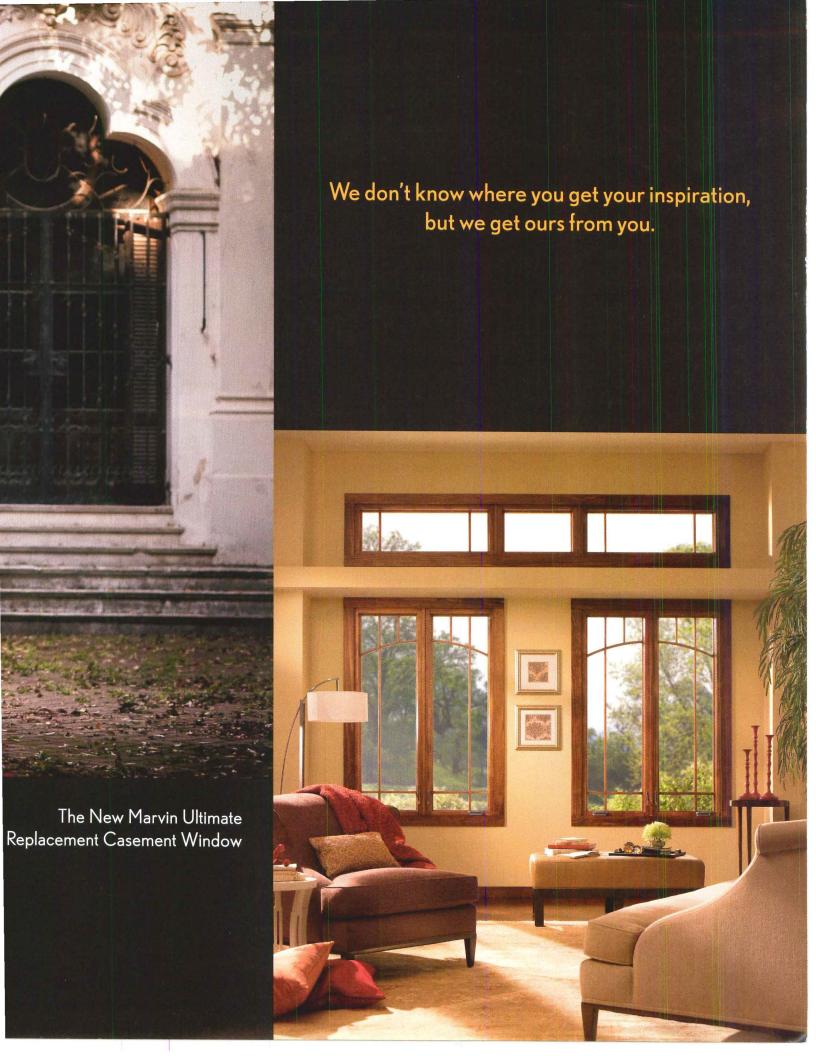
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Circle no. 99



# Outlook

THE INSIDE ADVANTAGE™



SUSTAINABLE

### A Sustainable Solution — Induction Cooking from Jenn-Air®

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, CKD, AIBD

As residential clients come of age in their desire to make a positive impact on the environment, they are asking for energy-efficient architectural solutions. The Jenn-Air® brand of Whirlpool Corporation has added a new appliance to its portfolio which has notable features contributing to reduced energy consumption. It's a bright spot in the area of new technology for the kitchen that is

quickly growing in popularity—the induction cooktop.

If you haven't seen or tried induction cooking, you're in for a



Induction cooktop with telescoping downdraft vent.



Jenn-Air® kitchen for urban loft project.

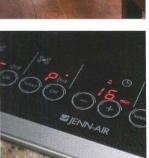
breathtaking experience. The electromagnetic technology that heats just the pan and its contents is so counterintuitive

to conventional
cooking that it seems
truly revolutionary.

Not surprisingly,
induction cooktops are already

popular in Europe where energy has historically been more expensive than in the U.S.

Induction cooking technology was first introduced in America years ago when energy was cheap, perhaps a reason it didn't gain market acceptance the first time around. But now that consumers have mastered terms like "carbon footprint" and "sustainable design," we believe induction cooking's time has come and the technology will become a mainstream alternative to conventional gas and electric cooktops. In fact, this technology has so many of the attributes preferred by professional chefs who cook with gas that some restaurants are taking a serious look at induction cooking for its instantaneous heat, energy conservation and shorter cooking times.



Touch tap controls on the Jenn-Air® induction cooktop.

Thanks to a world-class industrial design team, Jenn-Air® induction cooktops have an elegant, understated design with ceramic glass cooking surface and tap touch controls—no exposed knobs! At a time when bacteria from spoiled food is a growing concern, the touch tap controls contribute to an easy, thorough cleanup experience.

Here's another significant energy-saving aspect of induction cooking. Since the cooktop generates no heat and is about 90% efficient, the cooking

process creates less heat in the kitchen, reducing the cooling load for the overall home.

So whether you're designing for new construction or a remodel, Jenn-Air® induction cooktops in either 30" or 36 width are a great solution for clients read to go green. Check it out at *jennair.com* 



Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, CKD, AIBD Senior Manager, Architecture and Design Market

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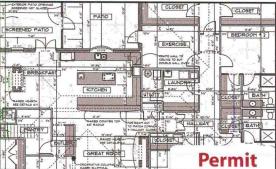
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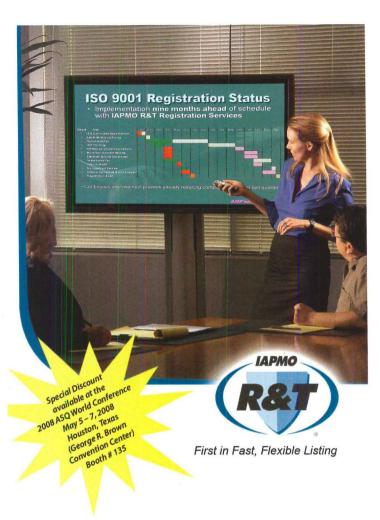












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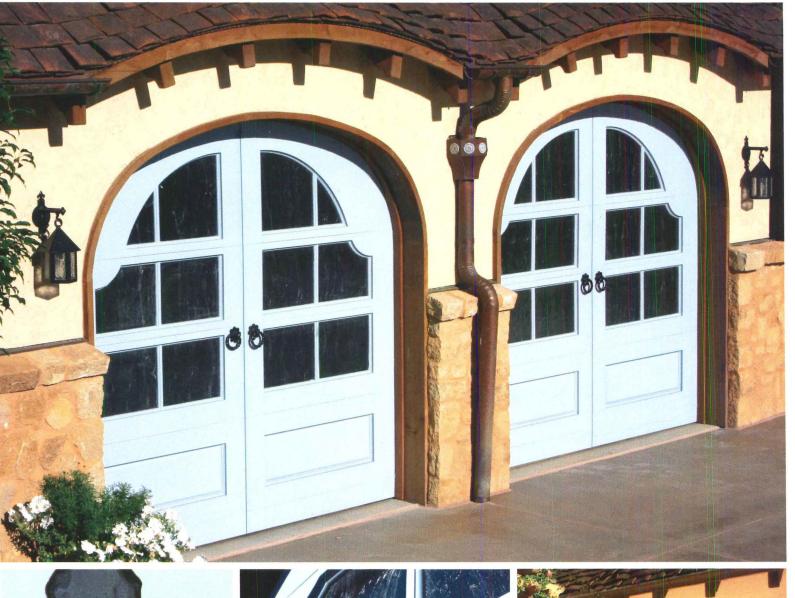
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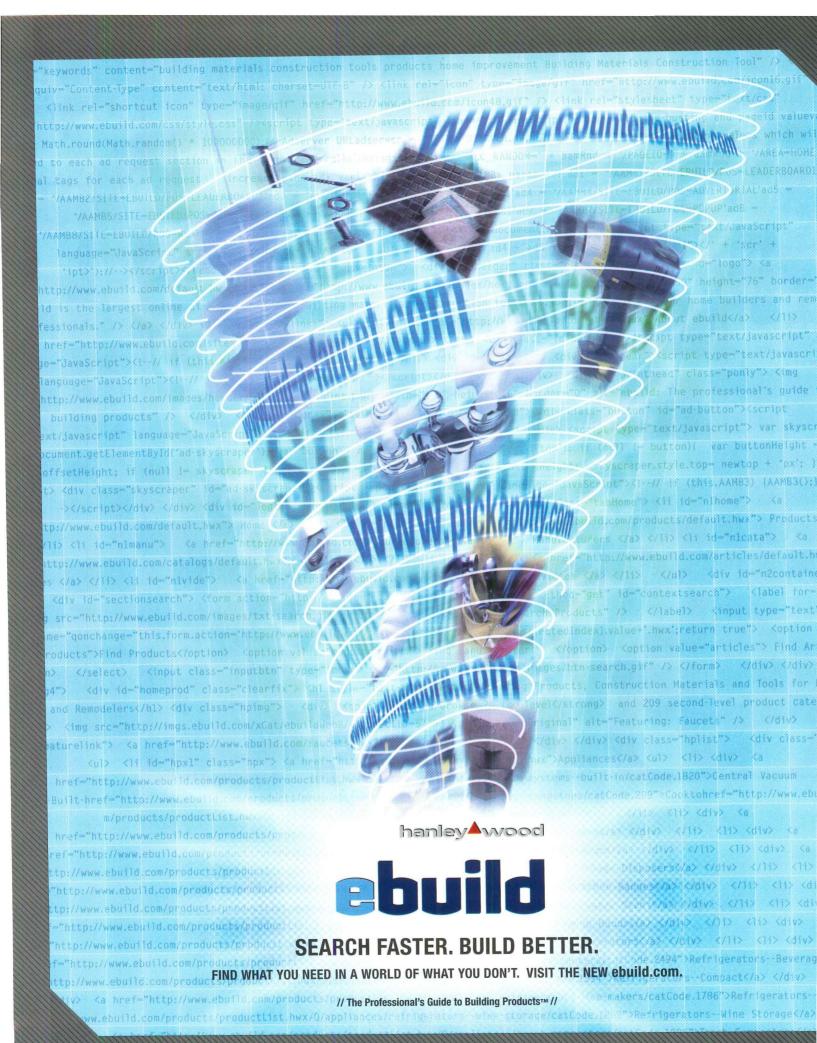


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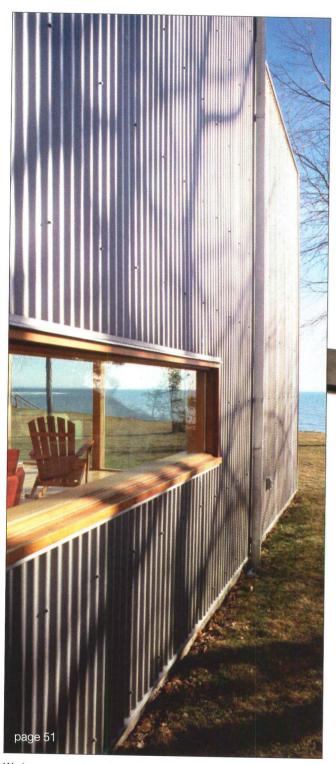
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### contents



We have a standing ovation for the standing seam in this year's Architects' Choice. Photo: Dave Whitaker. Cover photo: DavidSharpe.com.

from the editor..page 13

letters..page 15

home front..page 18

KieranTimberlake's firm appeal / Johnson's house waxes artistic / BaSiC training

green piece..page 23

A green vacation home development grows in Arkansas.

green pieces..page 24

Smarter choices for the future.

k + b studio..page 28

Stuart Cohen and Julie Hacker satisfy their clients' exuberantly eclectic tastes, while negotiating their own visual peace.



practice..page 35

Top-down firms still dominate the residential architecture profession, but some practitioners are inventing different ways to herd the creative cats.

cover story..page 51



architects' choice

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by Nigel F. Maynard

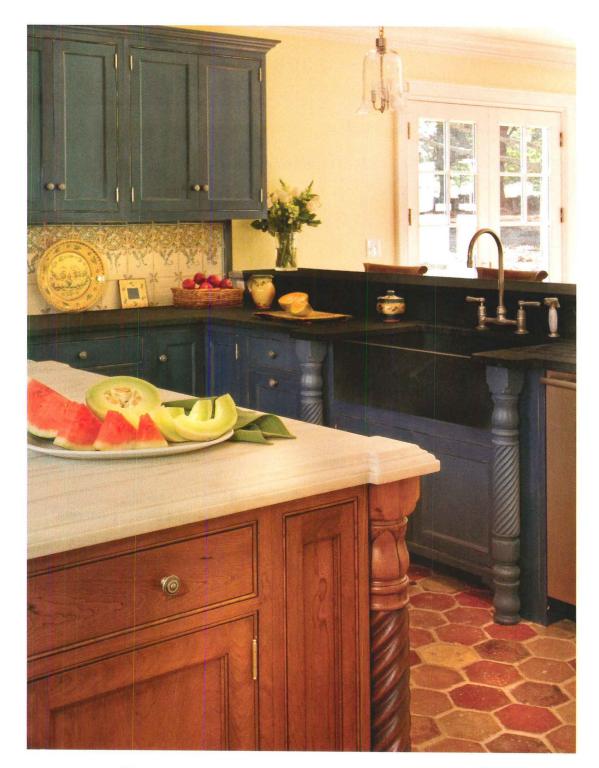
doctor spec..page 65

The well-meaning world is embracing the compact fluorescent bulb. But is that all there is to brighten our day and our night?

new material..page 69

All the new that's fit to print.

**Workspace..** page 80 Substance puts style in its place.



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### do diligence

when the next boom comes, there'll be no free ride.

by s. claire conroy

ot long ago, I made my obligatory pilgrimage to the NAHB's International Builders' Show. I've been going to the trade show for about 16 years now—since it was the plain old Homebuilders' Show—so I've seen some trends come and go. And I've seen attendance steadily rise until, most recently and for the first time in my memory, it fell.

This time, instead of giddy exuberance, there was an undercurrent of desperation as everyone went through the motions of this yearly ritual: bearing witness to the unveiling of new products. The hushed whispers conveyed the same questions: "How are you doing?" "How long do you think this will last?" Longer than we want to imagine, perhaps.

The super-wealthy and the architects they patronize may yet remain untouched by this market slowdown, but it's creeping up the economic ladder in many parts of the country. Some projects still laboring under construction loans are encountering a rude awakening when it comes time to close on the mortgage. So, in addition to the fabled overruns typical on a custom home build, owners are

facing appraisal and financing shortfalls. Remodeling has hitherto served as a bright spot, with its history of increased activity during new-construction lulls. But how many people will want to add on to their house when it's suddenly worth 10 percent less than it was last year? And if they do decide to forge ahead on that new kitchen/family room/master bedroom addition, will they find their home equity line of credit isn't as deep as they thought?

Projects scaled back; projects put on hold; projects cancelled. We're likely looking forward to leaner times for some time to come, and it may prove painful to practices dependent upon vulnerable client bases.

We're no longer in a market correction, many economists say, we're in a recession. No matter what the label, we were probably due for a day of reckoning. The problem with periods of plenty is they offer a bounty of everything but time to reflect. In this last boom, consumers consumed with little consideration for the consequences. Architects and builders scrambled to keep up with them-until some ended up ahead of the demand, overstaffed and overextended. Like Wile E. Coyote, who rushes down



Mark Robert Halper

the mountain road, only to find himself suddenly off the cliff, there are residential professionals poised for a fall.

In this kind of economy, it's not enough to cling to a rock for dear life. In the recession of the early 1990s, many architects couldn't hang on long enough and ended up leaving the profession for good. Now is the time to re-evaluate absolutely everything about your practice. What kind of clients should you take on? How should you bill for your services? How should you organize your practice? What kind of buildings should you design?

And certainly, you'll have to get very creative about the way you design your buildings and what you specify to go into them. Every extravagant curve or bump-out, every square foot of granite, will require justification. But really, they should have all along.

At the Builders' Show, there was one hopeful refrain running through each booth: Green. Nearly every manufacturer came prepared with a sustainability spiel. It was gratifying to see, if a bit suspect. I do believe the next boom we see will come in green building and remodeling. But this time, we really must think, research, and justify before we act. Our grace period is over. ra

Comments? E-mail: S. Claire Conroy at cconroy @hanleywood.com.



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### letters

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### fuzzy math?

egarding "The 98
Percent Solution"
(May 2007, page 15):
if only it were that
easy. You know by now that
I agree with most of what
you say, and I have often
expressed my gratitude for
your effort to help raise the
bar of residential awareness,
but with this editorial, I
must disagree.

If, by "architect," you mean those of us who are educated or registered as such, the claim that "the rest of the houses we see spread across our suburbs, for the most part, originated with architecture firms" isn't true. Certainly, architects design more than 2 percent of houses (Who knows the real percentage?) and are involved in a much higher percentage of bad houses than they claim. But one look on the Web site of the American Institute of Building Design will show you at least one more source (and there are others).

You are right—"It's all about control"—but joining a planning commission, building your own house, or being a developer will hardly make a dent. The only true antidote to our present greed-driven house-delivery system is an educated, common cultural sense of a good house. One

that involves homeowners, designers (note, I didn't say architects), and builders who care about their houses the way Italians care about their clothes or the French care about their food. Architects may be partly to blame, but if all of us stop buying these ugly, bloated houses, developers would scramble to find a better alternative (think car), and that's just what's happening in this current market slump.

In the end, it's about visual literacy, and as much as I jealously peruse your Design Awards pages each year, it won't get us there. However, better visual education for all of us just might.

Jeremiah Eck, FAIA Eck MacNeely Architects Boston

#### raising arizona

ood luck with the new abode ("Confessions of a Production Home Buyer," July 2007, page 13). My only comment was about your editorial's title.

It sounds like you bought a custom home, rather than a true production home. With all the builder had to go through to get the houses approved, this would not qualify as "production" here in Arizona. Try walking

through a tract home by just about any large-scale home builder in the outskirts of your city. You might be surprised by what is considered "workmanship" today.

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### up, where we belong

hough thought-provoking, your
August 2007 editorial included a statement with which I disagree:
"Almost no one thinks rebuilt neighborhoods should tower atop 12-foot-high foundations, and yet in some places that may happen" ("No Singular Solutions, Please," page 11).

New Orleans has always had two- and even three-story houses, built on 2-foot-high to 4-foot-high piers, with eave heights of 20 feet to 26 feet above ground. If an owner rightly desires the main living floor to be 10 feet or 12 feet above grade, this two-story construction provides greater protection from future floods and allows wonderful amenities, such as grade-level screened porches and parking under the house without ugly garage doors. Just because a house is built up in the air and open underneath doesn't mean it has a more deleterious

effect on its neighbors than the two-story houses mentioned above. It depends on how it's designed.

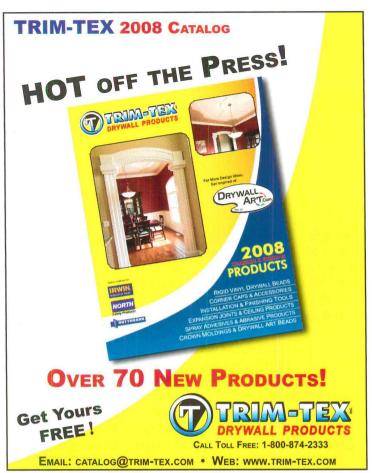
Raised Creole cottages, with open first-floor levels, have been around New Orleans for a long time. Over the years, unfounded trust in the levees has resulted in many of these first floors being closed in. Katrina caught many people by surprise, although government authorities knew all along what could happen.

In my opinion, anyone who builds a new house in New Orleans and doesn't raise it up 8 feet to 12 feet is foolish. Although making good progress in repairing levees, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has gone on record advising that it will take many more years—and billions of dollars—to fully protect New Orleans from another storm like Katrina.

We shouldn't discourage people from building up. We should help them do so by providing creative, economical solutions to this problem.

W.L. Argus Jr., AIA Argus Architecture Engineering New Orleans

Letters may be edited for clarity and length.



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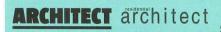
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### home front

news from the leading edge of residential design.

### smart work

The partners at KieranTimberlake Associates greeted the news that they'd won The American Institute of Architects' 2008 AIA Architecture Firm Award with a double dose of elation and humility. "Our initial reaction was to think how humbling it



Halkin Photography

Loblolly House (above) led to more prefab. from models for LivingHomes (top) to Cellophane House (right) for the MoMA show Home Delivery.

was to receive that accolade from our peers," says Stephen Kieran, FAIA. Then a sense of expectation set in, as the

Philadelphia-based firm pondered what to do next. "We have to begin again, in a way," he says.

He and James Timberlake, FAIA, have already started that process, with a new book coming out this spring. Loblolly

House: Elements of a New Architecture (Princeton Architectural Press, 2008) will explore the way the firm used Kieran's own vacation house (left) as a test case for its theories on prefabricated buildings. The two partners are teaching at the University of Washington this year, and they're hoping to write their next book based on their seminars and design research there. "We plan to map out a strategy for sustainability that goes beyond the environment and includes affordability, quality, time, and scope as part of the equation," Kieran explains.

The firm's body of research certainly contributed to its receiving the award. In addition to its long-term investigations into prefab, it has studied materials and products—and developed new ones, such as SmartWrap, a high-tech composite building envelope. The AIA also based





Renderings: Courtesy KieranTimberlake Associates

its vote on KieranTimberlake's design strength, especially with the institutional buildings that serve as a cornerstone of



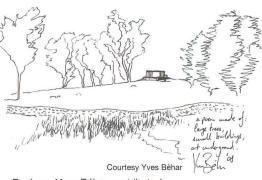
the practice. At the 2009 International Builders' Show, the firm's research and design skills will both be on display when it, prefab developer LivingHomes, ra's sister magazine Builder, and Home magazine team up to produce a prefab show house on the convention floor. And LivingHomes just announced a partnership with KieranTimberlake to build a line of prefab single-family homes (above) and townhouses. Overall, the 55-person firm carries a heavy workload, but Kieran has faith in his and Timberlake's staff. 'We try to work hard and we try to work smart," he says.—meghan drueding

### conversation piece

ince its 1949 completion, the Philip Johnson Glass House has acted as an incubator for architectural discourse. Now owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the building and its grounds are disseminating inspiration firsthand—through tours, discussions, and a new "interactive" sketchbook.

Twenty-nine architecture and design luminaries have contributed to the limited-edition sketchbook launching May 17 in conjunction with Moleskine, the Italian notebook company. Glass House-related sketches by the likes of Richard Meier, FAIA; Steven Holl, AIA; and Deborah Berke, FAIA, are interspersed with blank pages for your own drawings. The sketchbook (\$25.95) will be sold exclusively at the Glass House Visitor Center.

In February, Glass House executive director Christy MacLear and her staff introduced *Glass House Conversations*,



Designer Yves Béhar contributed one of 29 hand drawings by architects, designers, and artists for the forthcoming Glass House Moleskine sketchbook.

a series of invitation-only dialogues on design issues. The gatherings take place at the Glass House and will continue into May. Podcasts and photos from the sessions will be posted online this spring at philipjohnsonglasshouse.org.

And for those who simply want to visit the famously transparent structure, tour season starts next month. Public tours are sold out for 2008, but higher-priced private and patron tours are still available. See the Glass House Web site for details.—*m.d.* 

### save the date

### william massie: an american house 08

may 3–oct. 31 cranbrook art museum, bloomfield hills, mich.

William Massie, head of the architecture department and architect-in-residence at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, built the first in a series of 10 full-size, prefabricated structures for his exhibition, *An American House 08*, entirely inside his 12,000-square-foot studio near the Cranbrook campus. Using computer-based fabrication to design, select materials, and produce the pieces, he can customize the building according to visitors' reactions. Call 877.462.7262 or visit www.cranbrookart.edu/museum for details.



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Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture, April 24–Aug. 10, Somerset House (Embankment Galleries), www.somersethouse.org.uk;

Coverings 2008, April 29–May 2, Orange County Convention Center, www.coverings.com; National Green Building Conference, May 11–13, Sheraton New Orleans, www.nahb.org; EcoBuilding 2008, May 23–25, Paulista University, São Paulo, Brazil, www.anabbrasil.org/ecobuilding2008/en.

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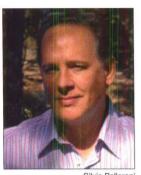
### home front

### perspective basic training

ergio Palleroni is the founder and director of the BaSiC Initiative, a community design program at the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture. BaSiC brings faculty and students together to work on design/build projects for low-income clients all over the globe, drawing in collaborators from other schools, nations, and disciplines. One of its most high-profile undertakings is the Katrina Furniture Project, for which students fashion furniture out of materials salvaged in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He spoke recently with *residential architect*.

#### What is the BaSiC Initiative's long-term objective?

"The end goal is to make reflective practitioners. We can't think of architecture as just work. Every act of creativity



Silvia Palleron

has the potential to affect the future of the world. My mission is to get students to begin to think of people of low income and little means as exciting clients. We want to make beautiful buildings and products, but we want to make those products accessible."

### Why does the program place such a strong emphasis on collaboration? "We look at a fundamental problem and think about how other resources at

the university can help. Design can't solve problems all by itself. We have to look at things from many different sides. We're hoping to get students to realize that collaboration is the mode of the future, to get them to leverage all the knowledge around them."

### What BaSiC Initiative projects are you most excited about?

"The Alley Flat Initiative in Austin—we're doing 600-square-foot to 850-square-foot houses to help people readopt the alley as a residential fabric. Maybe it will become the new green corridor of this city. For that project we're in the process of building the first two potentially net-zero houses in Texas. Also, we just finished (with a few other organizations) a house in Biloxi, Miss. It may be the first LEED-certified house on the Gulf Coast. The Katrina Furniture Project is a collaboration between the University of Texas, the University of Washington, and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif. It gets students to think about how you make use of a limited supply and teaches them to realize how precious material is. We're gearing up to start offering the furniture pieces for sale this fall—we slowed down while we went back and dealt with housing. Now we're going back to the furniture. I want to create a series of furniture-making workshops on the Gulf Coast."





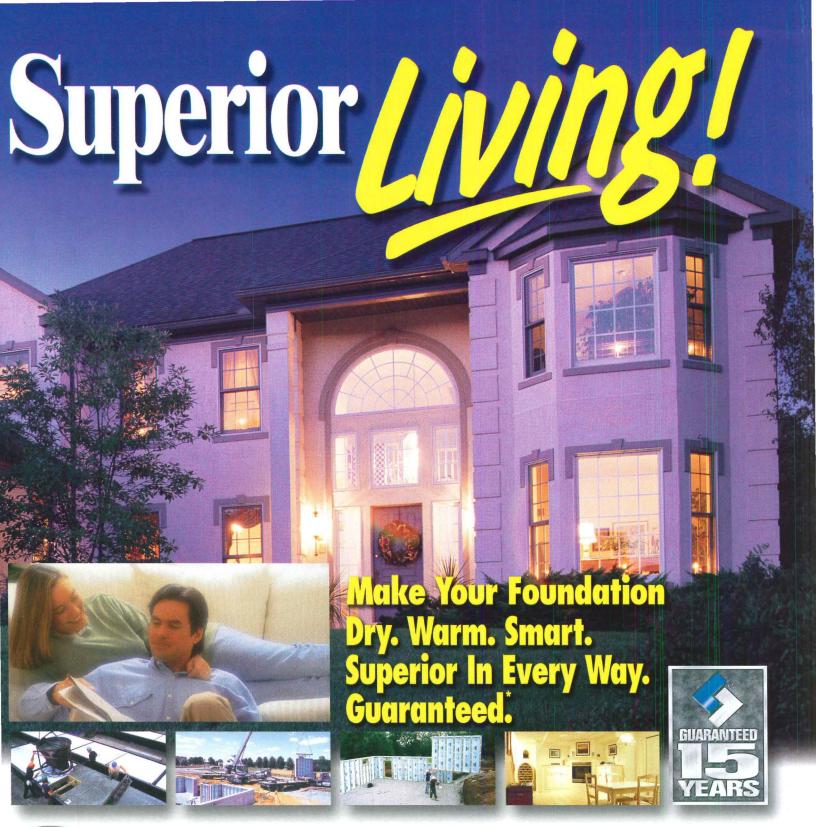


Photos: Brad De

Bookshelves and benches designed and built for the Katrina Furniture Project comprise materials salvaged from the wreckage of Hurricane Katrina. The program is a project of the BaSiC Initiative, run by Sergio Palleroni (far left).

### How do you have time to run your own practice?

"I'm blessed with an incredibly brilliant and organized wife, Margarette Leite. Our firm, Palleroni Leite Design Partnership, is working on several eco-houses, as well as a city in Taiwan and green community centers in Houston for Katrina refugees. I am immersed in all activities of the BaSiC Initiative, but having brilliant students and colleagues has allowed it to grow and mature in ways I could not have imagined or predicted. ... On one side, the Katrina Furniture Project, we're looking at the grain of a piece of wood, and on the other side, we're looking at a city and using the same design skills. That, to me, is one of the extraordinary things about design."—m.d.





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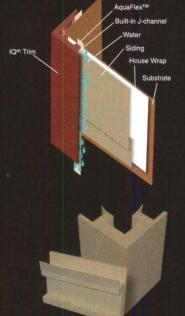
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### rock star

a sustainable vacation home community takes shape.

he environmental arguments against owning a second (or third) home seem irrefutable. An extra house perforce consumes extra building resources and operating energy, not to mention the fossil fuels used for transportation to and from the beach, mountains, or countryside. But the flip side of this view is that humans need contact with nature—more contact than most of us can get in our daily lives in the cities or suburbs. Spending the weekends immersed in a beautiful natural environment can spur a greater understanding of our need to protect and conserve it.

The team behind Lost Rock, a vacation home community in the Ozark Mountains of northwestern Arkansas, is taking the latter approach. Fayetteville, Ark., developers Morgan Hooker and Ward Davis have lined up Marlon Blackwell Architect of Fayetteville, Frank Harmon Architect of Raleigh, N.C., and buildingstudio of New Orleans to create a low-impact neighborhood on 160 lakeside acres. The project's 57 houses will be relatively small, some as diminutive as 950 square feet—and none will come with garages. "The houses will have fewer bedrooms and more bunk alcoves, so the owners can accommodate guests," says Marlon Blackwell, AIA. "They'll deliver more space for living in rather than

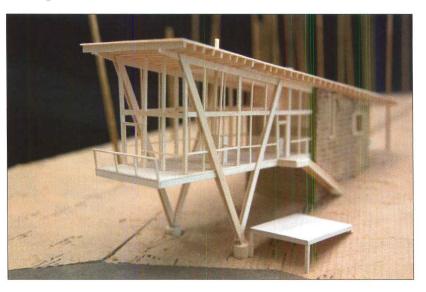
sleeping." Instead of evenly spacing the homes, the master plan (by landscape designer Stuart Fulbright, in conjunction with the developers) clusters them in pods, leaving more open space for the community to enjoy.

Before designing Lost Rock's prototypes, Blackwell, Frank Harmon, FAIA, and buildingstudio's Coleman Coker met up



Photos (above and top): Nicholas Hamon

A lakefront pavilion designed by Marlon Blackwell Architect will maximize the project's location on Arkansas' Beaver Lake. The building will contain a community kitchen, fireplace, baths, and 1,800 square feet of under-roof space for picnicking.





A screened porch helps define The Fisherman (above), a prototype house for Lost Rock designed by Frank Harmon Architect. The lakeside community's amenities will include boat docks (left) designed by buildingstudio.

Courtesy buildingstudio

for a series of two-day charrettes on the site. "I can't emphasize [enough] how important that was," Harmon says. The resulting buildings will sit lightly on their sloped sites, with minimal excavation. Their vernacular cabin architecture calls for organic elements like wood and stone, and the developers also hope to use recyclable materials with long life cycles. Natural ventilation will cool each house. "The goal was to capture the prevailing breeze from the south as it rolled up the Ozark Valley," Harmon adds. Native landscaping and options for solar panels, geothermal heat, and green roofs will enhance Lost Rock's sustainable standing.

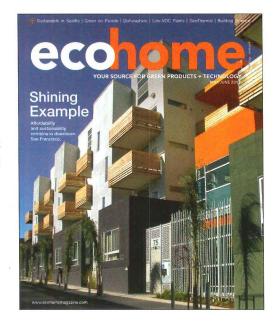
Residents will be able to take advantage of the area's natural assets through planned hiking trails, boat docks, and community pavilions equipped with kitchens and baths. Even an outdoor amphitheater is in the works. Currently Lost Rock is in the planning approval stage, and construction is expected to start on the first models this summer. For more information on the project, visit www.lostrockranch.com.—meghan drueding

### green pieces

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### home green home

ECOHOME magazine, residential architect's newest sister publication, is set to launch in May in both print and online formats. EcoHome will provide housing industry professionals (architects, remodelers, and builders) with comprehensive information on the latest green products and technologies. Jean Dimeo, who shares the chief editor role with Rick Schwolsky, says the magazine's primary focus is case studies of green residential housing types. "We hope to reach people who already practice sustainable design and construction, as well as those who are just developing an interest in going green," she says. Introduced simultaneously with



ECOHOME is the Michael J. Hanley Award for Vision and Leadership in Sustainable Building. The \$100,000 prize will be presented at an awards gala during the October EcoHome Expo in Austin, Texas. For details on the magazine, awards, or show, please visit www.hanleywood.com.



#### super saver

Superuse.org, a Web site launched by the Dutch firm 2012 Architects, invites all creative types to submit projects that turn trash-bound materials into functional art. The site currently promotes works as varied as a project in Amsterdam, Netherlands, where cargo containers are being turned into live-and-learn housing for high school dropouts, and a chandelier made from Chiquita banana boxes. The easy-to-navigate pages separate projects into such categories as architecture, products, and concepts. A Polaroid-like snapshot for each entry links to the story and site visitor comments. Links to related Web sites and resources are also featured. Anyone can join and post to Superuse, but each submission is vetted by the site's editors. Superuse.org; www.superuse.org.

### material wealth

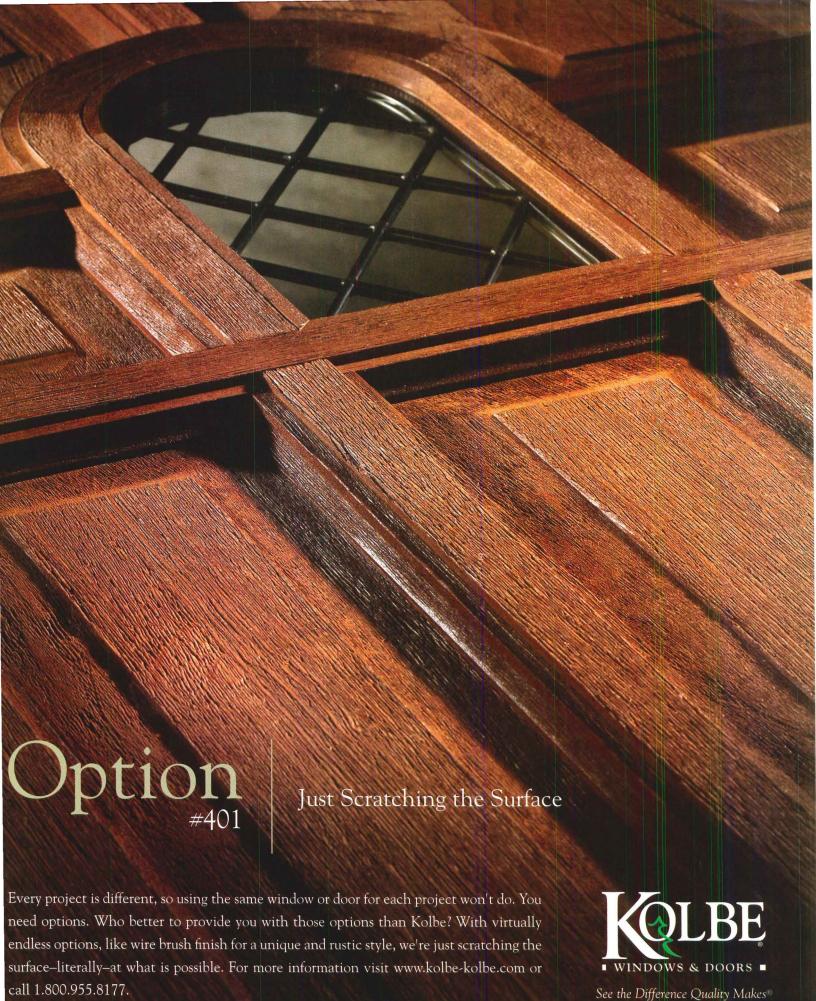
The ReUse People, a nonprofit that reclaims and resells reusable building materials, has opened a new recycling center and retail showroom in Los Angeles. Attend the Open House on Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and peruse the gently used windows, doors, lumber, sinks,

bricks, appliances, and fixtures offered at prices ranging from \$25 to \$200. The organization, which currently operates two other retail warehouses, says its northern California



facility alone has diverted more than 260,000 tons of building materials from landfills. The ReUse People of America, 888.588.9490; www.thereusepeople.org.

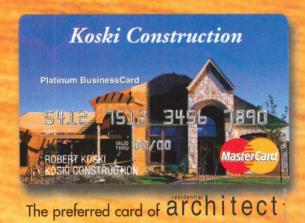
—shelley d. hutchins



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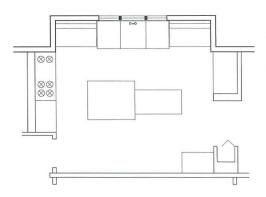


### k+b studio

### kitchen:

### structured whimsy

Architects Stuart Cohen, FAIA, and Julie Hacker, AIA, are known for their elegant, timeless designs. And nowhere is their talent more finely expressed than in the kitchen, where they filter a deep knowledge and affinity for classical details through a subtly modern lens. Typically this process ends in an understated palette of materials and precisely aligned clusters of cabinetry and glass. But the owner of this home in Highland Park, Ill., sought a more eclectic look, envisioning a hodgepodge combination of materials and furniturelike cabinetry as focal points. Instead of butting heads over their differences, owner and architects found solutions that struck an agreeable balance between the ordered and the whimsical. "We prefer a visual rhythm, so a space is calming," Hacker explains, "but we realized we could still have harmony and use varied materials."

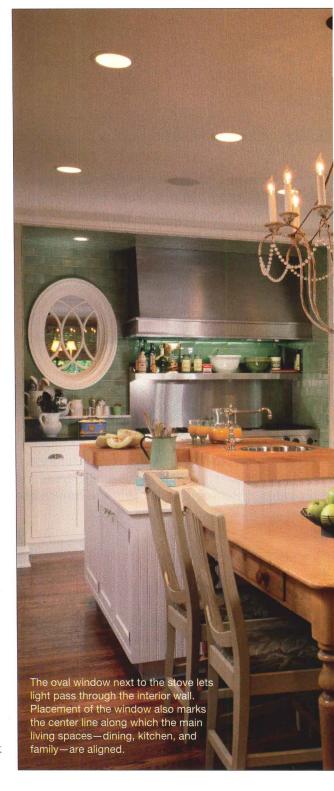


The architects' willingness to listen encouraged greater acceptance from their client for symmetry and proportion. For instance, an antique pine hutch takes center stage opposite the window wall, but the architects used it to set the scale and detailing for the rest of the space. Built-in cabinets are designed to look like freestanding pieces, with recessed toe-kicks and curved brackets. Proportions

of the custom-made cabinets match the hutch, but all millwork is painted white to counterbalance and soften the impact of the piece's elaborate woodwork.

To justify the varied palette, Cohen and Hacker changed planes to introduce each new material. For example, the marble pastry station on the butcher block island drops down. The change not only indicates the new material but gives the baker a better angle for rolling dough. Repeating materials around the kitchen

also results in a more structured atmosphere. The marble reappears as an elongated windowsill along the sink wall, again next to the stove, and also as a countertop on one of the cabinets. "If we make architectural demands on the organization of spaces," says Hacker, "it makes a big difference in the quality of the space and how it relates to connecting spaces."—shelley d. hutchins





Photos: Jon Miller/Hedrich Blessing



A change in countertop depth around the double sink (left) is indicated by carved legs on either side. White built-in cabinets pay homage to, but don't overshadow, the homeowner's prized pine hutch (below).



architect: Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects, Evanston, Ill.

general contractor: Windsor Builders, Northbrook, Ill.

cabinetmaker: Exclusive Woodworking, Waukegan, Ill.

interior furnishings: Stephanie Wohlner Design, Highland Park, Ill.

**resources:** dishwasher: Miele; lighting fixtures: Niermann Weeks; plumbing fittings: Harrington Brass Works; range: Viking Range Corp.; refrigerator and freezer: Sub-Zero; sinks: Franke Consumer Products

### k+b studio

### bath:

### tech meets tradition

Floor-to-ceiling windows along two walls are the first hint that this master bathroom remodel was designed for an adventurous person. The client, say architects Stuart Cohen, FAIA, and Julie Hacker, AIA, is a "very interesting guy who owns a telecommunications company and collects English Arts & Crafts furniture." The room, therefore, finds the intersection of this dynamic duality.

The house, situated in the suburbs of Chicago, perches on the edge of a wooded ravine, so the owner had no qualms about keeping the expansive openings of the former sun porch. Custom in-swing windows were made to fit the porch's existing archways. The other side of the room overlooks the more public views of the driveway, so old English painted-glass panels acquired by the owner at auction provide privacy behind the tub. Cohen and Hacker wanted some of the room's bountiful sunlight to migrate into the master bedroom: two interior windows do the trick. The windows also do another trick, going from



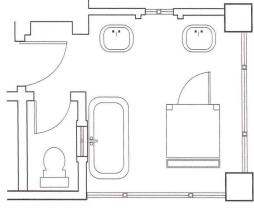
Photos: Alan Shortal

A tall marble wainscot backs the wet areas, protecting trim, windows, and medicine cabinets from rogue waves. It also provides a peaceful backdrop for the owner's ornate antique glass panels.

transparent to opaque with the flip of a switch.

"We would have solved that situation with shades," Cohen chuckles, "but our client found this liquid crystal that changes obscurity with the introduction of an electrical current."—s.d.h.





**architect:** Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects, Evanston, Ill.

**general contractor:** J.R. Simpson and Associates, Chicago

**resources:** accessories: Salvage One; ceramic tile: American Olean; lighting fixtures: Cavalier Antique Lighting; plumbing fixtures: Dornbracht Americas



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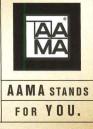
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### a different model

architects with alternative practice structures are redefining the way they do business.

#### by cheryl weber

magine you're about to graduate from architecture school when the economy is struggling, much as it is now. You're part of a close-knit group of master's program colleagues disaffected by the idea of an internship at a big firm and looking for a way to bridge academic camaraderie and practice. What are your options?

For John Jennings and Sasha Tarnopolsky, ASLA, principals of DRY Design, Los Angeles, the solution was to form a design collective. Launched in 1995 by 15 newly minted SCI-Arc grads, the HEDGE Design Collective, which only recently disbanded, became a one-stop design shop made up of architecturetrained professionals with interests ranging from architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering to graphic, floral, and clothing design. As members teamed up to take on client projects, the collective quickly reached its main goal, which was to help them find more fulfilling work than what they could attract on their own, and yet allow them to preserve their identities as individual designers.

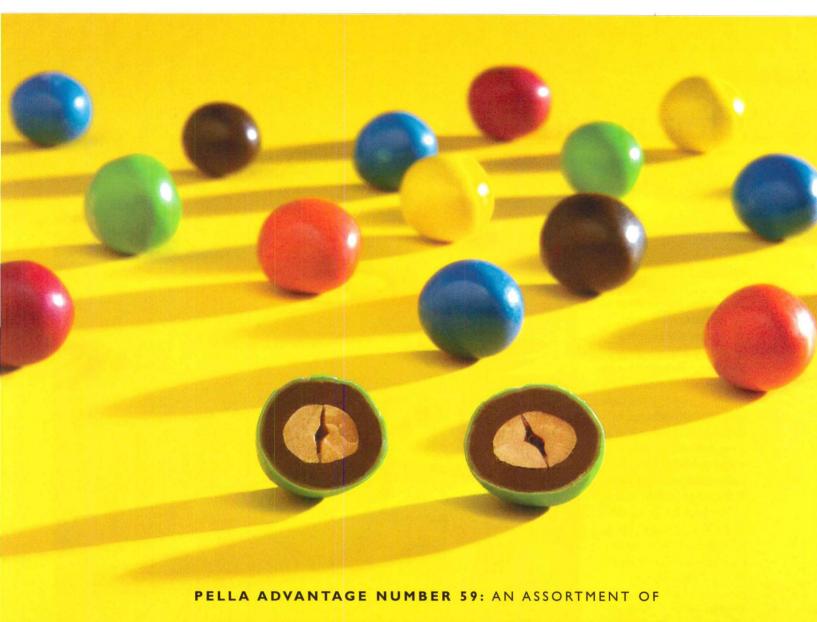


Peter Bennett

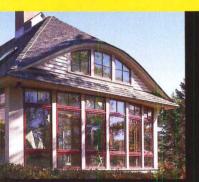
At the time, there were few precedents for such alternative practice models within the architecture profession, and as the idea began to catch on, HEDGE members were often invited to lecture on how the collective worked. Since then, interest in nontraditional firm structures has grown

exponentially, driven in part by the rising intensity and complexity of the marketplace. Some architects devise alternative business models as a way to leverage resources or add energy to a small office. Others are looking to expand their reach by broadening their products or services. What they all have in common—besides a love of architecture—is the desire to have more control over their everyday lives and destiny than either a solo practice or a top-down firm affords.

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But in the case of a sole practitioner, there's a practical limit to how much work one can take on. Cash flow can be erratic. And independent architects often find it hard to break into new project types, because they can't gain widespread experience when they're by themselves. Independents are also vulnerable to

professional loneliness. A single architect may have assistants but no real peers with whom to consult. Those were the problems HEDGE was initially hedging against. (In fact, the name came from the idea of creating a hedge of individuals who make up a single larger organism. "A hedge can create rooms," Jennings explains, noting the collective's mix of design disciplines and that Tarnopolsky is a landscape architect.)

#### sharing resources and ideas

To observers, the HEDGE Design Collective seemed to have everything a young architect could want. It was a continued on page 38

### the flat pack

y borrowing a law firm model, the principals of Minnesotabased SALA Architects think they've figured out how to create a strong firm while making work better for architects—even those who could easily succeed on their own. Here's why its flat organizational structure works:

1. SALA celebrates the part/whole dynamic of a firm. It encourages the 16 project architects (eight of whom are partners) to develop their individuality and niche in a way that does not compete with others, whether it's specializing in cabins, inner-city remodeling, or small green homes. As the number of architects and sectors grows, SALA broadens its market.

- 2. Being part of a group allows the partners to share resources and the administrative burden, while rotating management responsibilities. Each partner takes a three-year stint as a manager of marketing, personnel, or finances. Every three years, one of the three drops out and one of the other five rolls into that position. "It's a big job to run your own business," says managing partner Eric Odor, AIA. "There's a lot of flexibility in having five partners to choose from. Someone might not be good with numbers, or another might have a family crisis when he or she is slated to roll in."
- 3. There's an environment of collaboration and learning, as opposed to going it alone. The architects help each other meet their goals, rather than being judged by superiors who determine whether they get promoted or move on. And the nonhierarchical model most closely resembles the studio environment of architecture school. In an open, mentoring culture, everyone learns how to be profitable and serve clients well. "It works because of the scale of projects—it's rare to have more than three people working on a project," Odor says. "If we were doing high-rises, we would need a lot more hierarchy."
- **4.** Each architect is entrepreneurially empowered and responsible for the full spectrum of practice. They're all on their own—but help is there when they need it.
- 5. Individual authorship and recognition results in high morale. And with peers as their partners, the architects are both challenged and inspired.—c.w.



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### practice

"most of us came to realize the absolute complexity of trying to work in multiple design disciplines— it's something that can take a lifetime to master. some of us also realized that maybe our interests lay just in doing residential or commercial architecture and we started focusing on that, and the need for hedge went away."

—john jennings

relaxed, creative place, and for the first five years, the group met on Wednesday nights around pizza and beer to discuss everything from design philosophies to how the collective should be run. During its lifetime the group moved four times, sharing the rent, office equipment—even a table saw. In each location, open desks surrounded a central table, reflecting the nature of the work, and fees were usually structured as billable hours. Simultaneously, some members continued to work part time in larger firms to fulfill licensing requirements. Along the way, new designers were voted in, but only after they proved themselves by working collaboratively on at least one project.

Early on, HEDGE provided a platform that few architects could match on their own. "It was easier to promote HEDGE as an idea than John Jennings as a recent SCI-Arc graduate," Jennings says. Its novelty attracted publicity; magazine coverage brought in jobs, and members farmed themselves out to other firms when work was slow. However, the group soon realized that there were legal implications of working in different design fields under a single name, and within three years they started forming their own firms under the HEDGE umbrella. They used its name recognition only, since the collective was never a legal entity.

Of course, all good things evolve. As recently as three years ago, HEDGE had almost 20 members operating independently with their own staffs, but ultimately the advantages played themselves out. At some point group members could have chosen to legally formalize their diversified design shop,

but some felt the need to create an identity around their own firms. Others pursued different interests or relocated to other cities, and while DRY Design and two other original members still occupy HEDGE quarters, they no longer officially use the name. "We all started off interested in this diversity of design practices, and the idea of the collective as an incubator was a function that continued on as we owned separate firms," explains Jennings, who, with Tarnopolsky, heads a staff a six. However, "most of us came to realize the absolute complexity of trying to work in multiple design disciplines-it's something that can take a lifetime to master. Some of us also realized that maybe our interests lay just in doing residential or commercial architecture and we started focusing

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### practice

on that, and the need for HEDGE went away."

Residential architects serve a relatively small percentage of the population, though, and even veteran practitioners are vulnerable to economic ups and downs. In a competitive and fastpaced professional world, teaming up with partners can be a smart way to cope. In the case of SALA Architects, a unique business structure allows a relatively large number of partners to work collectively without abandoning their independence. Sizewise, with eight partners, 45 employees, and \$4 million in annual revenues, SALA occupies a middle ground between small offices and larger corporate-style firms.

Almost from the very beginning in 1983, the founders adopted a couple of key principles to help stabilize the typically freighted nature of partnerships, basing it loosely on a law firm model. Each of the 16 project architects runs his or her practice as a separate profit center, with a free hand in deciding which work to take on, how much to charge, and even how many hours to work. Half of the project architects are partners, and each project architect is expected to manage at least \$200,000 annually in fees. The three

offices—in Minneapolis, Stillwater, and Excelsior, Minn.—are not computernetworked and rarely share work or employees. Still, the original Minneapolis office functions as command central (it sits mid-point between Excelsior, roughly 25 miles west, and Stillwater, 25 miles east), and a revolving group of three managing kitchen and bath remodels to \$5 million new homes, it has profitability down pat. "We're pretty streamlined and good at what we do," Odor says. Collectively, the work is varied enough to weather business cycles. That's because the Minneapolis office does mostly remodeling and urban infill work. Excelsior is near Lake

"the web site is like our storefront: people can shop individual architects and their work."

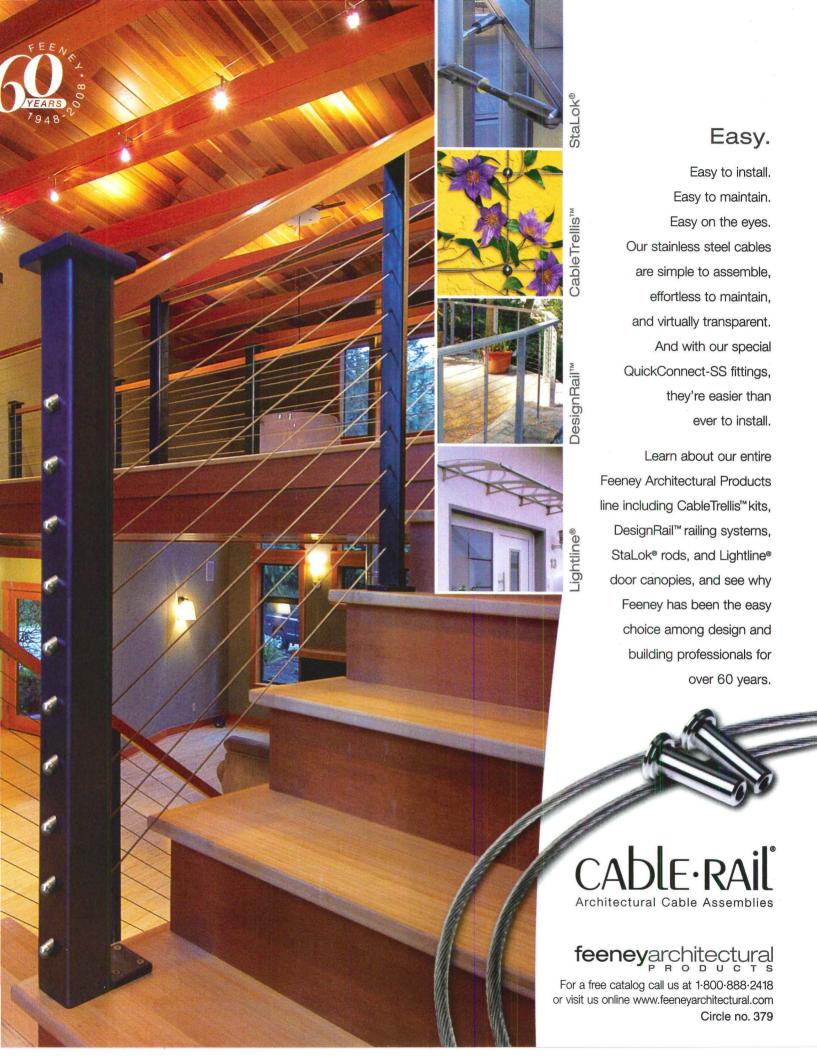
-eric odor, aia

partners meets monthly to run the firm.

Put into practice, those founding principles have some interesting consequences. "Because we have a collection of partners as opposed to, say, three, and everyone else is an associate, we don't have a vertical hierarchy," explains managing partner Eric Odor, AIA. "Each project architect is an office in itself-work is not coming from the managing partners. The Web site is like our storefront: people can shop individual architects and their work," relieving the partners of the burden of figuring out who would be best for a project. And since the firm focuses almost exclusively on residential work, from

Minnetonka, which is a magnet for cabins, and the Stillwater office attracts a bit of everything.

This broad-based horizontal structure allows SALA to reach more clients, staying involved in the largest percentage of work for the longest period of time. But for Odor and his colleagues, it's simply a better way to work, which is what good design is all about. "We're like 16 individual offices operating in a similar fashion, but each has its own focus," he says. "I think it's valuable to offer fourhour consultations for clients, but other architects here insist on doing only full-service work. Our fee structures range



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### practice

from hourly to 20 percent of construction. The flexibility we have really is the biggest part of what makes this [a good deal]." If there's a downside to that freedom, it's the built-in complexity and inefficiency of running 16 mini-firms among three locations. "It's hard to balance everyone's needs," Odor admits, "but that's part of the charm."

leveraging design Aside from the collective model, other firms have chosen to create multifaceted businesses that offset the time-consuming, one-off nature of residential work. Because a formal architecture education increasingly spans design disciplines, many architects are figuring out how to profit from related interests through their practices, often emerging as entrepreneurs. Case in point is Gregory A. Kearley, AIA, LEED AP, founding principal of Washington, D.C.-based Inscape Studio, who oversees a seven-member office dedicated to architecture and urban planning. Two years ago he made a strategic decision to become partowner of Project 4, a 900square-foot contemporary art gallery in downtown Washington's burgeoning arts district. "Architects are always thinking they're artists," he jokes.

"I taught an architecture studio at Catholic University where the students built an art installation, and they turned that into a museum for contemporary artists," Kearley explains. "The creative process has always been an interest of mine." Still, when he made the leap to art gallery owner with three friends—another architect, a journalist, and a Web and graphic designer it wasn't without trepidation. He says now, though, that the balancing act is paying off by feeding a lot of work to the firm. The partners hired a director and assistant director for Project 4, and he spends about 10 hours a week on the gallery, representing artists and hosting shows every six weeks.

"All the partners need to sell, and I have a better chance than some of the others because our architecture clients are all possible purchasers, especially if we're doing a commercial space," he explains. And vice versa. Inscape is working on a 25,000-square-foot commercial job that came about through a gallery relationship, and another building that mixes gallery, commercial, and condominium space is in the works. Kearley expects to break even financially on Project 4 next year, but for now he's happy to be profiting from the synergy he can create between art and architecture.

At Rios Clementi Hale Studios, Los Angeles, the design crossover is more direct. What began in 1985 as a firm dedicated to architecture and landscape architecture has evolved into a 50-member multidisciplinary endeavor and, since

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### practice

"when we looked at business models, the idea of designing something once and getting paid multiple times for it was intriguing to us, as opposed to a service model, which is what most architects do."

--julie smith-clementi, idsa

2001, a product arm called notNeutral. Heading up the spin-off is architect and CEO Julie Smith-Clementi, IDSA, who is also a principal of Rios Clementi Hale Studios, along with founding principal Mark Rios, FAIA, FASLA; Frank Clementi, AIA; and Robert Hale, FAIA. "When we looked at business models, the idea of designing something once and getting paid multiple times for it was intriguing to us, as opposed to a service model, which is what most architects do," says Smith-Clementi.

To be sure, most of the firm's revenue comes from a traditional service model, with architectural projects that range from custom homes to hotels, restaurants, and day-care centers. But the idea for notNeutral grew out of a soup-to-nuts restaurant commission that included custom-designed dishes and a graphic identity. "That experience of designing dishes was rewarding in how quickly you can get something done compared to architecture," Smith-Clementi says. Aimed at design-savvy consumers,

notNeutral started out with tabletop products and has since grown to include objects for home, garden, and kids. The kids categoryfurniture, carpets, quiltshad its genesis in a line of furniture the firm designed to go with a child-care center commission for Warner Bros. Studios in 1991. "Ten years later, people were still asking us about this furniture, so we redesigned it for the residential market," Smith-Clementi says. "It had to ship flat and didn't need to stack anymore, so we simplified the design."

While design constantly crosses between the two legal entities and they share a building, each has its own staff and financial structure. That's partly because notNeutral, which had more than \$1 million in revenues last year, carries product liability insurance and the S-corp architecture firm does not. "In the design firm everything is project-based, so accounting is very different from notNeutral, which has inventory and sales," Smith-Clementi explains.



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Circle no. 81

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### practice

Other than the Web site and a retail gallery below the architecture studio, most of its business is wholesale.

For an architect with no sales or trade show experience, managing notNeutral and its staff of five was a leap of faith. "There's the mentality that you jump in and learn by doing as opposed to thinking about it too much—we have an affinity for that," says Smith-Clementi, who splits her time between architectural commissions and notNeutral and clearly relishes the demands of both. "The client base is more stable and reliable on the architecture side," she says, "in contrast to dealing with consumer confidence in the economy. Will they spend \$50 or \$200 that day?"

Also expanding sideways is Manhattan architect Dennis Wedlick, AIA. whose newest venture is more of a counterpoint to his core business. Last October he opened The Hudson River Studio in upstate New York-the country cousin of his city firm. The new office's fulltime employees intend to immerse themselves in the typologies of rural architecture and planning, building on work that Wedlick is already doing in the region. "We're focusing on how we can contribute to residential development in rural areas,

with the intention of keeping them rural," Wedlick explains. "Some of these areas have a lot of history, yet they're struggling to survive, so there is a different set of planning and community issues than building in thriving urban areas. We wanted to actually become a rural-based business so we could apply those experiences to our own practice."

Wedlick views The Hudson River Studio as more than a satellite. Half the space he rents, in a former doll factory, is devoted to hosting conferences and exhibitions. The effort looks promising, as the firm's last four projects have originated there. Currently under way are a 49-home development where one-third of the land is in conservation, a 7,000-square-foot family compound that's 95 percent off the grid, and the restoration of the historic Antrim Lodge in Sullivan County, N.Y.

Alternative practice models may be nothing new, but in a world where the boundaries between work and pleasure, art and life, and partnership and independence are beginning to blur, nontraditional firms may start to become the norm. After all, if architecture is the antithesis of one-size-fits-all, why not apply it to practice too? ra





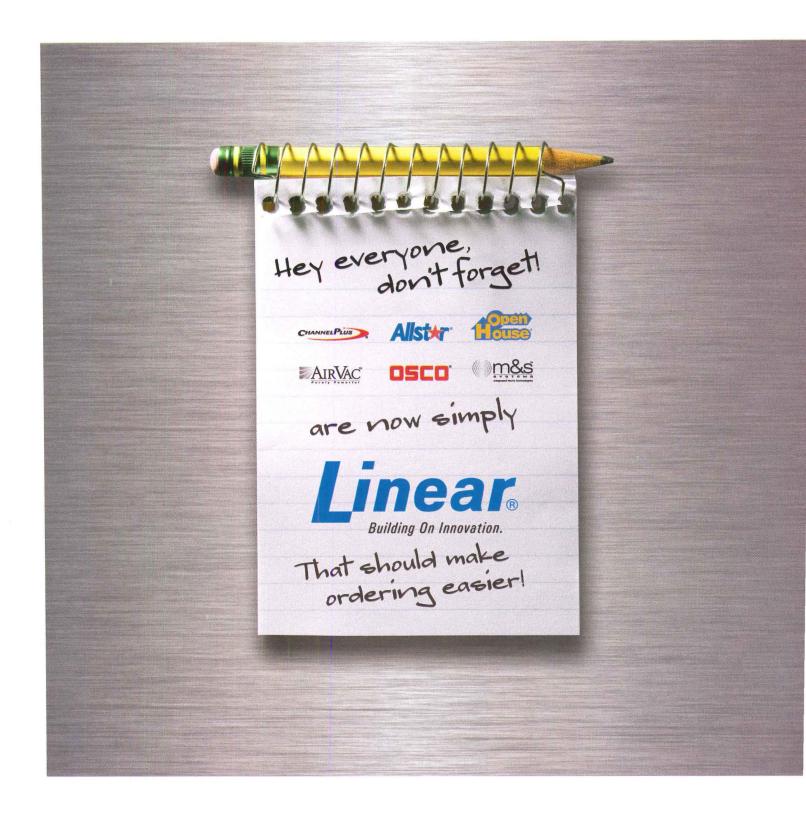
Because it's gas fireplaces made simple & with customizable surrounds. Here, in the home of Boston designer Frank Roop.

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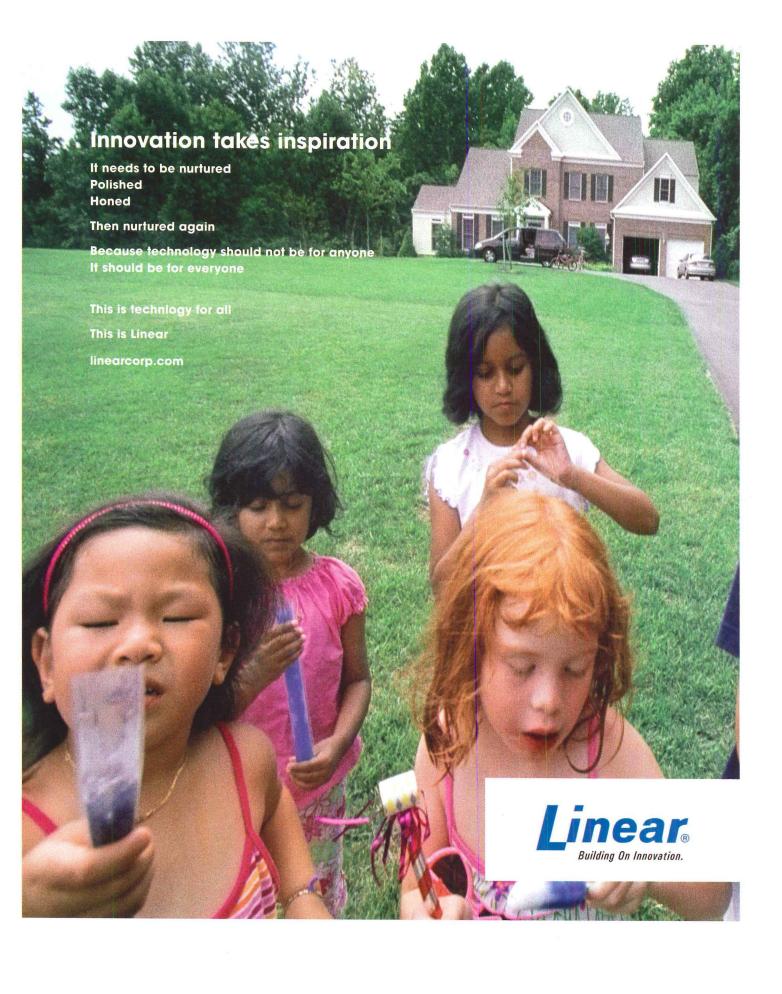


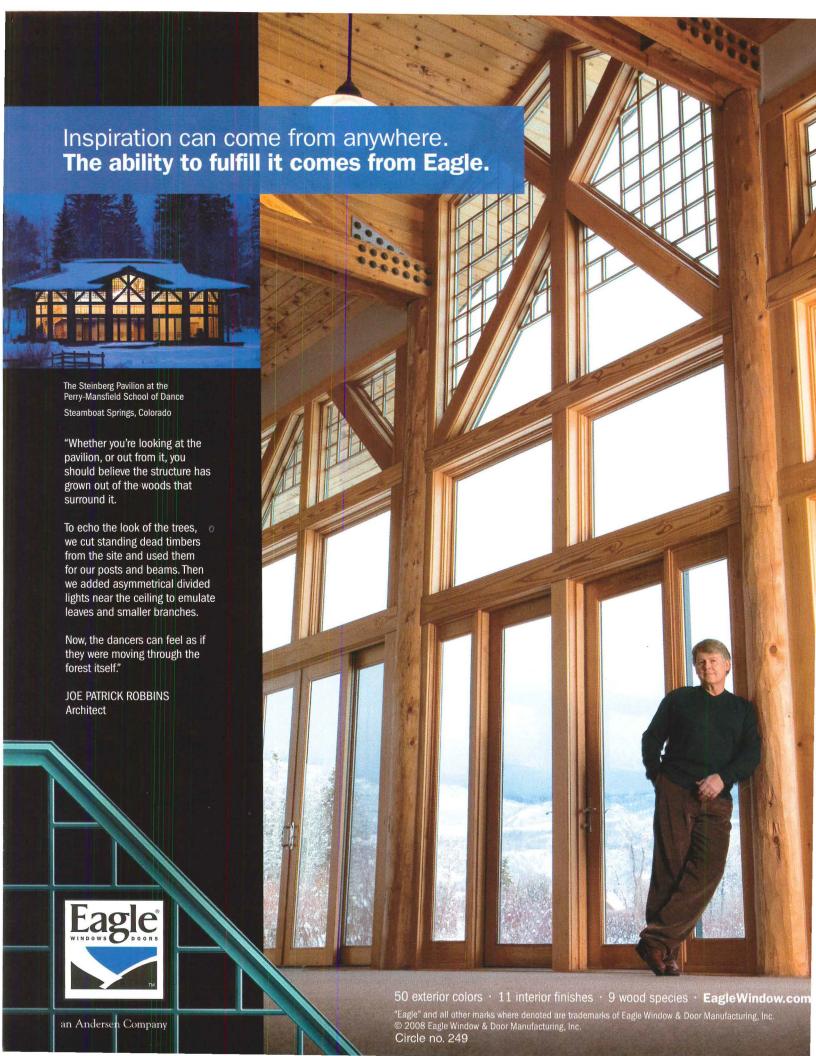


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## architects' choice

by nigel f. maynard

There's often a restful simplicity in the products manufacturers design for the exteriors of our buildings—straightforward materials, durable assemblies, pared-down aesthetics for multiple applications. So it's no wonder many architects have appropriated those outdoor specs for the interiors of the houses they design. What's simple enough for the outside is simply beautiful inside.

This is our ninth year of talking with talented residential practitioners about the products and materials they admire most. Many of these choices aren't brand-new—they're just applied in unusually engaging ways.

Ready to throw your clients a few curves?

How about cedar siding vertically installed, rough edge out? Coated metal sheeting used as cladding, trimmed with sumptuous wood details? Bamboo flooring sealed on site with a luxurious custom finish?

This is the architect's art: envisioning a world of fresh possibilities in that old, reliable products catalog.

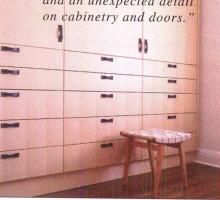
DavidSharpe.com

### architects'

efm design

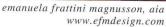
new york city

"made out of thick belting leather in bright colors, these pulls are a new use of a traditional material and an unexpected detail on cabinetry and doors."



### ▲ raging pull

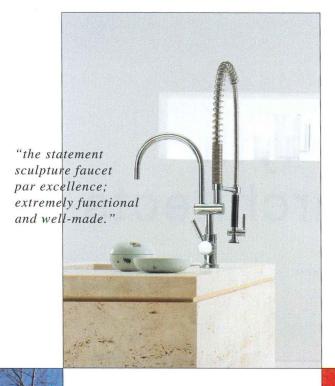
To inject the unexpected into her projects, Magnusson often specs the leather architectural pulls she designed for Spinneybeck. Shown here in one of her homes, the pulls are cut from full-grain leather and given a protective water-resistant finish. They're manufactured in 14 Bauhausinspired hues and nine styles. Spinneybeck, 800.482.7777; www.spinneybeck.com.



#### ▶ nom de lume

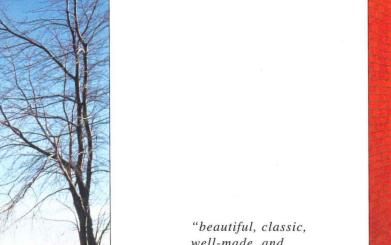
Zincalume corrugated metal is inherently utilitarian, but Magnusson says it has limitless potential as an architectural spec. "It's interesting to contrast the raw quality of the material with refined detailing," she notes. The metal sheets, shown on this EFM project, are coated with a 55 percent aluminum/zinc alloy to make them highly reflective and corrosion-resistant. BIEC International, 360.750.5791; www.galvalume.com.





#### 

Like many architects, Magnusson is a fan of Dornbracht's Tara Classic faucets by Sieger Design. The products—available in polished chrome and platinum matte-have cast brass waterways and ceramic disc valves. The kitchen unit shown here is Magnusson's favorite "when there are no overhead cabinets to worry about." Dornbracht Americas, 800.774.1181; www.dornbracht.com.



well-made, and well-proportioned."

### ▲ valli high

For door levers and cabinet pulls that blend form with function, Magnusson turns to products from Italian manufacturer Valli&Valli. Handles are produced from high-quality brass or stainless steel with a variety of brushed and polished finishes. Among Magnusson's favorites is this A2026 stainless steel pull. Valli&Valli (U.S.A.), 877.326.2565; www.vallivalli-us.com.

Photos: Portrait, leather pulls, and tiles courtesy EFM Design; exterior by Dave Whitaker; faucet courtesy Dornbracht Americas; stainless steel pull courtesy Valli&Valli (U.S.A.)

#### ▲ elements of tile

Magnusson likes the look of subway tiles, but she opts for Appiani's Anthologhia mini pieces because they offer "the same proportions on a reduced scale, a rich color palette, and a competitive price." The 1-inch-by-2-inch tiles are mounted on a fiberglass sheet measuring 11.8 inches by 10.8 inches. They're available in 36 colors, including the red Magnusson used for this bath. Appiani, 39.0422.502611; www.appiani.it.

### architects'

taylor smyth architects

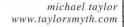
toronto

"because of the epoxy, river stone has a lot of visual depth."



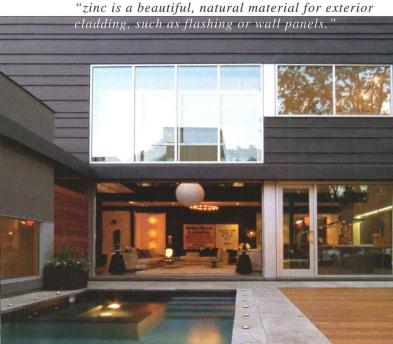
▲ set in stone

Taylor turns to Ciot's resinset river stones when he wants to shake things up a bit. Their surface "is just slightly rippled, so it feels nice on bare feet—especially when the floor is heated," he says. A variety of stones are available in slab or tile form. Ciot, 800.361.0869; www.ciot.com.



#### dark victory

For cladding that's handsome and durable, Taylor Smyth Architects turns to VM ZINC. According to its manufacturer, the titanium/zinc alloy is highly corrosion-resistant and will last 40 to 100 years. "It requires no painting," says Taylor, "and, in its natural state, will gradually darken over the years." The metal is shown on this Taylor Smyth house. Umicore Building Products USA, 919.874.7173; www.vmzinc-us.com.



### ■ british turn

The Gira door handle by British designer Jasper Morrison is constructed of solid brass, resulting in "a solidity and weight that makes it feel timeless," Taylor says. Manufactured by the Italian company Colombo Design and distributed in North America by Orion Hardware, Gira is available in matte chrome, matte black, and polished brass. Orion Hardware Corp., 800.226.6627; www.orionhardware.com.



Photos: Portrait and river stones courtesy Taylor Smyth Architects; exterior by Ben Rahn/A-Frame; door handle courtesy Orion Hardware Corp.

### kuth/ranieri architects



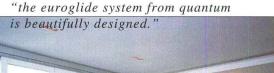
byron kuth, faia, leed ap, and elizabeth ranieri, aia, leed ap www.kuthranieri.com

### easy slider

Kuth/Ranieri uses Quantum's Euroglide lift-and-slide door system when it wants to blur the boundary between indoors and out, as it did on this project. Ideal for openings of up to 66 feet, the doors use levers and wheels to lift panels weighing up to 550 pounds. Quantum Windows & Doors, 800.287.6650; www.quantumwindows.com.

"the wolf range never disappoints. it's great-looking, simple to use, and has many heat and simmer

options."





### pack mentality

The 36-inch rangetop from Wolf Appliance is the firm's cooking product of choice. Available with two, four, or six burners, the unit comes with a stainless steel drip tray, cast iron grates, and infrared technology. Wolf Appliance, 800. 332.9513; www.wolfappliance.com.



#### above it all

RSA Lighting's COMBOLIGHT is a recessed multilamp fixture for a variety of applications. It has integral power supplies and a trimless assembly for installation in drywall ceilings. Available in configurations of up to six lights, it uses 20-watt to 35-watt halogen bulbs. RSA Lighting by Cooper Lighting, 770.486.4800; www.rsalighting.com.

#### ▶ fast track

Kuth/Ranieri gives this convection steam oven high points for its performance. Just 24 inches wide, the unit has automatic programs, a smart screen that stores menus to make complete meals in 30 minutes or less, and a warming option. Miele, 800.883.4537; www.miele.com.

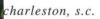


"the miele convection steam oven delivers quality and performance in a trim, elegant package."

Photos: Portrait courtesy Kuth/Ranieri Architects; interior by Sharon Risedorph; light fixture courtesy Cooper Lighting; rangetop courtesy Wolf Appliance; convection oven courtesy Miele

### architects'

### studio a

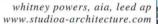


"smith & fong's plyboo flooring with flat grain and natural color is site-finished using a bonakemi finish. this is a twofer for the environment, with bamboo and the water-based, commercial-quality finish."



### ▲ recess time

For the bath, Powers favors Lacava's Twin Set semi-recessed sink. "We like using cabinetry in interesting ways, and this semi-recessed installation came off with a distinctive and clean shape," she says. The basin is crafted from porcelain ceramic with a 17-inch or 2034-inch diameter. Lacava, 888.522.2823; www.lacava.com.



#### ▶ sod fellows

Keeping buildings cooler is one of the many benefits sod roofs deliver. No need to convince Powers: she calls the technique "a beautiful thing to behold." To shore up her projects, including the house shown here, she turns to green roof waterproofing systems from Soprema. The company's product line includes reinforced hot rubber membranes, drainage boards, and flashing caps. Soprema, 800.356.3521; www.soprema.us.



### ▲ lasting planks

Powers appreciates bamboo flooring's sustainability. Her choice is Smith & Fong's Plyboo planks with an on-site finish. "By site-finishing, we get a stunning finish with incomparable durability," she says. Planks measure 33/4 inches wide and 761/4 inches long. Smith & Fong Co., 866.835.9859; www.plyboo.com.



### all that glass

When Powers wants her backsplash designs to stand out, she uses glass tiles from Waterworks. The material is an intriguing choice, the company says, because of its contradictions: modern, yet classic, it reflects and absorbs light. Waterworks offers four glass lines in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors, including Oystershell—a rare white. Waterworks, 800.899.6757; www.waterworks.com.

Photos: Portrait and exterior courtesy Studio A; sink courtesy Lacava; glass tiles courtesy Waterworks; bamboo flooring courtesy Smith & Fong Co.

### bercy chen studio

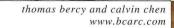
austin, texas

"acrylic sheeting's minimalism and clarity boldly offset natural material selections and allow us to integrate color and light into our form making."



▲ cheat sheet

Bercy Chen believes a material should be true to its nature, even when it's manmade. One of the firm's favorites—seen here in a recent projectis acrylic sheeting. "In the spirit of Louis Kahn, the engineered material is especially effective at creating spatial definition between served and serving spaces," Chen says. The firm's supplier of choice, Regal Plastics, offers them in a variety of colors, sizes, and textures. Regal Plastics, 800.441.1553; www.regal-plastics.com.



#### stock broker

Birch plywood is one of Bercy Chen's preferred interior wall and ceiling cladding materials. "Its modularity and uniformity make it incredibly versatile," Chen says of the material, which his team speced for this house. The firm relies on US Lumber Brokers, a supplier that not only ships the wood by the palette or truckload, but also negotiates with local lumberyards to help architects secure better prices. US Lumber Brokers, 512.247.3539; www.uslumberbrokers.com.



"birch plywood

is as economical

as it is beautiful.

### 

Bercy Chen uses gray-tinted architectural glass for increased energy efficiency, as it did for this living space. "A gray tint, as opposed to green or blue, reduces the penetration of both light and heat into a building while remaining tonally neutral and allowing the experience of colors through the glass to stay relatively true," Chen says. Oldcastle Glass offers the product in several thicknesses and colors. Oldcastle Glass, 866.653.2278; www.oldcastleglass.com.



'hotos: Courtesy Bercy Chen Studio

### architects'

sprocket designbuild "ex

denver

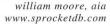
"exposed concrete is the most malleable and substantive material we use."

"atlantis wall sconce—always a favorite without getting tired."



#### ▲ outside in

Hinkley Lighting's 6-inch-by-16-inch Atlantis wall sconce has an extruded aluminum body, a tempered glass lens, and a bronze or titanium finish. The outdoor-rated fixture "works great for the interior as well," Moore says. Hinkley Lighting, 216.671.3300; www.hinkleylighting.com.



### rocky mountain dry

Because of Denver's dry climate, "exterior wood has always been a forbidden fruit," Moore says, so he uses wood/resin panels from Prodema instead. The cladding—seen here on a Sprocket project—brings "the warmth of real wood to the façade." Available in five colors, the panels are composed of a cellulose core faced with an acrylic-covered wood veneer and a resin bond. Prodema, 34.943.80.70.00; www.prodema.com.



"prodema panels have the flexibility to cut to any size or curve."

### ▲ commanding presence

Moore's always looking for ways to use exposed concrete, as he did on this wall. Nothing else "can produce the massive presence of concrete and still be somewhat feasible," he explains. The low-maintenance material can be infused with color too. Moore often specs it with color admixture from Davis Colors, Portland Cement Association, 847. 966.6200; www.cement.org Davis Colors, 800.356,4848 www.daviscolors.com.

Photos: Portrait, exterior, and interior courtesy Sprocket Design-Build; wall sconce courtesy Hinkley Lighting

### xten architecture



los angeles and sissach, switzerland

austin kelly, aia, and monika haefelfinger www.xtenarchitecture.com

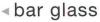
### ▶ design riga

XTEN's principals saw Riga Form plywood cladding on a train station in Switzerland and thought it would work equally well on an interior wall. This XTEN-designed Los Angeles live/work space proves the point. Produced by Latvian manufacturer Latvijas Finieris, Riga is a birch plywood overlaid with a phenol film. XTEN's supplier of choice, Anderson Plywood, offers it in multiple thicknesses, sizes, and colors. Anderson Plywood, 310.397.8229; www.andersonplywood.com.



### ▲ gessi work

Kelly says the Rettangolo line of faucets and tub fillers from Gessi is one of XTEN's favorites because of its "super-modern rectangular" designs. Manufactured in Italy rom solid cast stainess steel that's been plated with nickel, he products are ivailable in multiple onfigurations and inishes. Gessi USA, '14.808.0099; vww.gessiusa.com.



Ford-Brady custom-fabricates its New York line of glass tiles in almost any color and shape, but XTEN prefers the company's stock offering in a straight bar design. "It's an abstract, modern alternative to the ubiquitous square mosaics," Kelly says. Tiles are mounted on a 12-inch-by-12-inch fiberglass mesh. Custom orders have a 12-week lead time. Ford-Brady, 213.620.1066; www.fordbrady.com.

notos: Portrait by Joe Kidd; interior by Art Gray; ass tiles by George Brown; faucet courtesy Gessi USA

### architects' choice

### e. cobb architects



eric j. cobb, aia www.cobbarch.com

"these hinges are simple and economical, with excellent motion."





### ▲ pivotal move

When Cobb's projects call for heavy doors "to fill a void between architectural elements," he relies on RIXSON's top and bottom pivot hinges to support them. The virtually concealed 370/340 pivots are ideal for doors measuring up to 44 inches by 102 inches and weighing up to 500 pounds. RIXSON Specialty Door Controls, 866.474.9766; www.rixson.com.

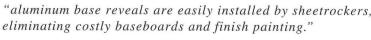
### ▶ the outsider

Western red cedar is often Cobb's preferred cladding, but he opts for a nontraditional installation: vertical, no Vgrooves, rough side out. It's "a very economical method for making a flat wall," he says. Plus, the material naturally resists moisture, decay, and insect damage. This Cobbdesigned house demonstrates the effect. Western Red Cedar Lumber Association, 866.778.9096; www.wrcla.org.



cases where sheetrock walls meet concrete floors. Made from extruded aluminum alloy and coated with a spackle-compatible protective film, each piece incorporates a tapered fin that's been pre-drilled for screws. Gordon Interior Specialties Division, 800.747.8954; www.gordonceilings .com/div9.

"aluminum base reveals are easily installed by sheetrockers,





alterstudio architects

austin, texas

kevin alter www.alterstudio.net

"duravit sinks are elegant and minimal, and have a wide variety of shapes and sizes."



happy days

Alter loves all Duravit sinks, but he's especially partial to the company's Happy D. line. The ceramic bowls can be wall-mounted or paired with Duravit's path furniture pieces. This above-counter version comes in two widths: 23½ nches and 15¾ inches. Duravit USA, 770.931.3575; www.duravit.us.



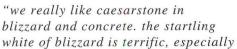
CaesarStone quartz surfacing is Alter's preferred alternative to stone. Comprised of 93 percent quartz and 7 percent resin, the material resists heat, cold, stains, and scratching. The manufacturer says it's also nonporous and impervious to mold and mildew. Alter used Concrete—one of 40 available shades—for this kitchen. CaesarStone USA, 877.978. 2789; www.caesarstoneus.com.

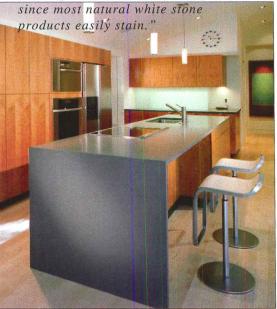


∢good parma

For Alter's money, Parma faucets from Danze are a top-notch choice. The contemporary line includes minimalist single-hole lavatory models, wall-mount options, and tub fillers. Pieces are made from cast brass and finished in chrome or brushed nickel. Danze, 877.530.3344; www.danze.com.

"danze has elegant lines and details without the very high price tag of some of the other high-end companies."





▲ chroma therapy

Chroma by 3form is a transparent polyresin plastic surfacing that can radiate deep hues. "The color of the edges is also especially intense, which adds a richness when seen from across the room," Alter says. Available in ½-inch, 1-inch, and 2-inch thicknesses, Chroma can be speced in standard and custom colors and various sheet sizes. 3form, 800.726.0126; www.3-form.com.

hotos: Portrait courtesy Alterstudio Architects; interior by Thomas McConnell; olyresin plastic by George Brown; sink courtesy Duravit USA; faucet courtesy Danze

### architects' choice

blip design

jim burton, aia

www.blipdesign.com



seattle

"european cement-board

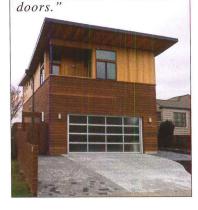
alternative to hardipanel,

with integral color and

denser material, so

edges are more stable

"attractive, reasonably priced aluminum garage



avante garde

For garage doors that comple-

ment his architecture, Burton

turns to the Avante collection

The aluminum doors, used on

this project of the firm's, have

21/8-inch frames, tongue-andgroove joints, and vinyl-bottom weather seals. Frosted glass or polycarbonate panels are avail-

able, as are various finishes.

Clopay Building Products, 800.

225.6729; www.clopaydoor.com.

from Clopay Building Products.

### ▶ big idea



#### counter move

Burton likes his countertops to break with convention, so he specs PaperStone's Certified Series instead. The FSCcertified material is made from 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper and bonded with waterbased petroleum-free resins. It comes in six colors. Paneltech International, 360.538.9815; www.paperstone products.com.



### ▼right lyte

In Burton's hands, the Stonco Roughlyte industrial fixture from Genlyte doubles as architectural lighting. The moisture-, heat-, and shock-resistant fixture is "appropriate in many contemporary exterior and interior applications," he says, and "very reasonably priced." Available in a variety of sizes for mounting on walls and ceilings, Roughlyte uses a 100-watt bulb. Genlyte Supply Division, 800.334.2212; www.stoncolighting.com.

> Photos: Portrait courtesy Blip Design; exteriors by Art Grice; PaperStone by George Brown; light fixture courtesy Genlyte Supply Division

### nandinee phookan architect

brooklyn, n.y.

"vola is a modern classic that works in any environment."

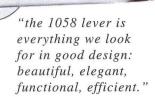


### clandestine arrangements

'oliform USA produces some f the most exquisite closet ystems around. "They look reat, feel good, and their ontemporary clean style and ttention to detail work well with ur projects," Phookan says. ustomization possibilities are ktensive, with an array of door esigns, accessories, handles, and nishes available. Poliform USA, 12.421.1220; www.poliform sa.com.



Phookan chooses Häfele's Hawa top-hung sliding door hardware for almost every project because it "glides smoothly without any unseemly floor tracks," she says. The line can be speced in different configurations for many door types; Phookan uses Junior 80/Z for wood panels, as seen in this project by the firm. Häfele America Co., 800.423.3531; www.hafele.com/us.





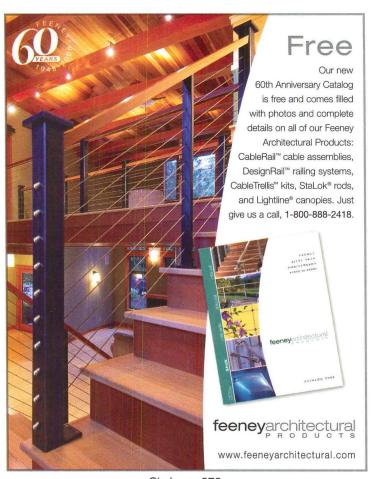
### enduring design

Architect Arne Jacobsen's faucet designs for Vola date as far back as 1961, but Phookan says they "still look fresh and contemporary." Each piece features solid brass construction and ceramic discs. Four finishes and 15 colors are available. Vola A/S, 45.7023.5500; www.vola.com.

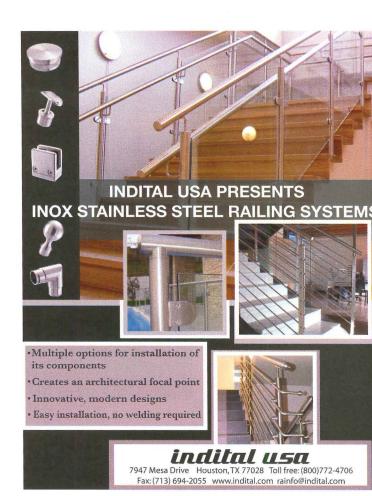
#### german curves

Phookan appreciates how the design of FSB's 1058 handle translates into sensible mechanics. "The form distills the functional and the aesthetic in a lever handle where every curve is designed to fit the curve of one's hand," she says. It measures roughly 5 inches long and can be speced in anodized aluminum or stainless steel. FSB USA, 203.404.4700; www.fsbusa.com.

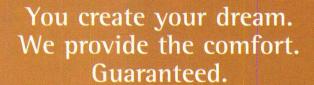
otos: Portrait courtesy Nandinee Phookan Architect; interior by Christopher Wesnofske; closet system urtesy Poliform USA; handle courtesy FSB USA; faucet courtesy Hastings Tile & Bath Collection







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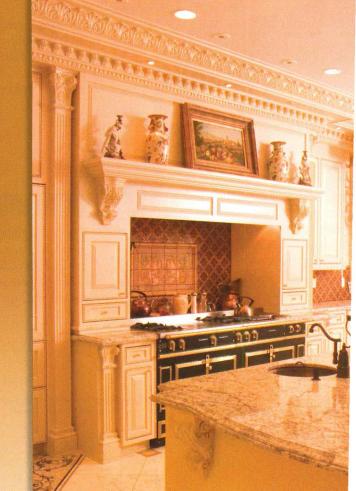


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### a bright future

there are more choices on the horizon for energy-conscious architectural lighting.

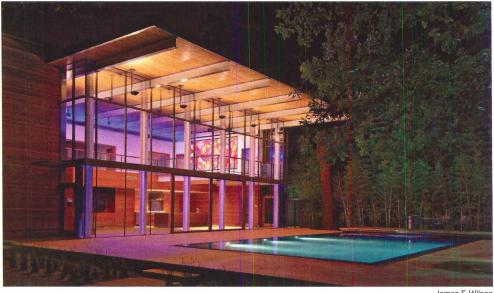
by nigel f. maynard

ast December, President Bush signed into law an energy bill that, among other things, raises automobile fuel-efficiency standards for the first time in 30 years. Buried in the bill was a little-noticed provision that phases out incandescent light bulbs over the next four to 12 years in favor of more energy-efficient technology.

Like other product categories, lighting has been put under a microscope due to the continued growth of sustainable building. Architects hoping to achieve LEED status or building to **Energy Star qualifications** must ensure that lighting sips rather than swills power. But as the bulb phaseout begins, there's concern as to whether new and existing technologies can truly achieve energy efficiency and maintain the performance people now expect from incandescent.



The dominant technology for more than 125 years, a standard bulb uses an electrical current that heats a fila-



James F. Wilson

For this pool house by Gary Cunningham, FAIA, lighting designer Pamela Hull Wilson used blue LED uplighting on the columns, but she also employed incandescent, cold cathode, and low-voltage throughout. Enough technologies exist to achieve energy-efficient, high-performance lighting, she believes.

ment to produce light. Mary Beth Gotti, manager of GE Consumer & Industrial's Lighting & Electrical Institute in Cleveland, explains its appeal: "The color quality of an incandescent bulb has a lot of red, so it produces a warm glow and is very flattering on the skin," she says. "It also comes in different shapes and sizes and is dimmable." That a bulb costs as little as \$1 is gravy.

The problem is that incandescent—available in halogen and parabolic aluminized reflector (PAR) lamp form—hogs energy, offering only 10 to 15 lumens per watt. "For all the energy it consumes, only 10 percent is visible light," Gotti says. The rest is heat. And even though "the initial cost is low, it's expensive to operate."

To date, the list of viable alternatives to incandescent is short, but its variety is rich. Of these options, compact fluorescent (CFL) is the most prominent. Strikingly different from the long tubes most people reviled, CFLs use an arc discharge through a phosphor-lined tube to generate light. According to ToolBase Services, the technical information resource of the NAHB Research Center in Upper Marlboro, Md., fluorescent lasts up to 10 times longer than incandescent. In the past, ToolBase says, this technology produced an undesirable "bluish" hue that discouraged people from using it, but "the warm tones of newer compact fluorescent lighting make it almost indistinguishable

from incandescent lighting."

Besides improved performance, CFL has a light output of 40 to 80 lumens per watt, so it's extremely efficient. ToolBase says the bulbs-which consist of a lamp, holder, and ballast -use 50 percent to 80 percent less energy than incandescent. Paul Vrabel, director of the energyefficient products group at Sea Gull Lighting Products in Riverside, N.J., agrees, noting that with CFL, "you get long life and brighter light in a smaller package."

The fluorescent bulbs consumers know have a spiral shape, but several other types—including pin-based T5 and T8 tubular units for architectural applications—are available. Medium-base

continued on page 66

vloda Light says the 15vatt MEZO LED light is cooler and more energyefficient than a halogen.

### doctor spec

bulbs screw into standard sockets, but Gotti says they perform more effectively in portable lamps or in fixtures that allow air to keep the bulb cool. Manufacturers are keeping pace, producing Energy Star-rated fixtures designed specifically to hold pin-based fluorescent bulbs. Such fixtures have an attached ballast (rather than one that's integrated with the bulb), so heat buildup isn't an issue.

#### feel the burn

Despite these improvements, CFLs do have shortcomings: they're better for general illumination and less effective for lights that are switched on and off with great frequency. In fact, Energy Star recommends installing CFLs in fixtures that are used for at least 15 minutes at a time or for several hours per day.

The solution to CFL's weaknesses, manufacturers say, is the light-emitting diode (LED), a technology that uses a semiconductor to convert electricity into light. According to ToolBase, LED fixtures incorporate a

> built-in driver (like a fluorescent ballast) or use a

Group says this LED bulb uses 80 percent less energy and lasts up to 25 times longer than incandescents. plug-in transformer that allows portable fixtures to run on standard AC power. Bulbs generate about 20 to 30 lumens per watt.

Although they've been around since the 1960s, LEDs are only now making strides in the market. Zachary Gibler, chief business development officer for Dallasbased LED manufacturer Lighting Science Group Corp., has even proclaimed 2008 "the year of the LED light." Why the confidence? Gibler says LEDs are "now at a point where they deliver comparable performance to incandescent. They can put out the same amount of light, the color temperature is similar, and the color rendering is now close to incandescent."

But some designers say LEDs have a long way to go. "I don't use [them] often because [the technology is] not mature enough," says Naomi Miller, FIALD, FIES, of Naomi Miller Lighting Design in Troy, N.Y. "The color rendering is not very good, and many flicker during operation with a dimmer." She concedes that LEDs are great for colored lights, but she says they're inconsistent for white light. The fixtures also don't generate as many lumens as manufacturers claim. "The technology is evolving very fast," she says, but adds that LEDs are still about five years away from perfection. "If you put in a fixture now and something goes wrong, you may have to replace the entire unit," she warns.



Mark Samson, CEO of Moda Light in Cape Coral, Fla., disagrees. He says his company, a manufacturer of LED fixtures exclusively, has developed products that are every bit as consistent as incandescent and more energy-efficient than CFL. They "use only a small amount of electricity, last in excess of 50,000 hours, and are maintenance-free," he says. One recently introduced 15-watt recessed unit is brighter than five 50-watt halogen bulbs, he claims.

Still, LEDs have hurdles to overcome too. They beam light in a single direction, so lenses or reflectors are needed to spread the illumination. They're also sensitive. "You have to radiate heat away from the bulb," Gibler says.

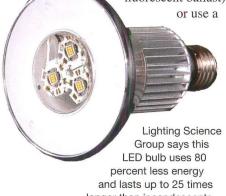
Even when the technology is perfected, price will prevent widespread usage. "On a first-cost basis, LED is significantly more expensive," Gibler explains. On the other hand, they're cheap to operate, using <sup>1</sup>/<sub>7</sub> the electricity of an incandescent bulb.

seeing the light Lighting designer Pamela Hull Wilson, IALD, still

believes there are enough lighting options available to meet efficiency and performance needs. It's just a matter of choosing the right product for the application. "I use a combination of all of the technologies," says Wilson, principal of Dallasbased PHW Architectural Lighting Design. She likes low-voltage MR16s in dining rooms and CFLs and T5s for general lighting, and though she agrees LEDs are still being perfected, she uses them anyway for decorative uplighting.

Miller takes a similar approach. She says MR16s are very effective and efficient and is a fan of the new dimmable T5 fluorescents. "There are plenty of fluorescents that can give you a warm color, but you have to know what to look for," she says. Choosing appropriate systems, she adds, "takes a little more education and a little more knowledge."

In the meantime, GE says it's building a better incandescent bulb-one that will be four times as efficient as current technology and potentially comparable to CFL. Kevin Nolan, GE's vice president of technology, says "consumers want more options, and we plan to respond to their needs and deliver environmental benefits too." ra





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# The Suite

### new material

by shelley d. hutchins

### finding emo

Digital printing has come a long way in recent years. In fact, Spanish tile manufacturer Ceracasa has found a new way to leverage the technology with its Emotile line. Using a CMYK ink-jet printing process, Ceracasa can produce a full-bleed transfer of photo-quality images on porcelain tile, allowing homeowners to transform their walls or floors into their favorite photograph, drawing, or any other visual element that can be copied. Images can also be transferred across multiple tiles. Like any ceramic tile, Emotile is bacteria-and mold-resistant and wipes clean with a wet cloth. Several finishes—polished, satin, and nonslip among them—will accept images; tile sizes range from 18½ inches square to a 19½-inch-by-26½-inch rectangle. Ceracasa S.A., 34.964.361.611; www.emotilebyceracasa.com.





#### front line

Bulthaup, maker of sleek kitchen cabinet systems, has added a four-burner gas cooktop to its offerings. Manufactured by Italy-based Foster, the appliance brings the burners front and center by moving the control knobs down to the cabinet face. Bulthaup says the design choice makes cooking easier and ess dangerous, because there's no reaching over hot pots in the front burners to access what's cooking in the back. Buitable for integration with any of Bulthaup's kitchen systems, the cooktop comes in two widths: 43 inches (with knobs in the front) and 47 inches (with knobs on the side). Bulthaup Corp., 800.808.2923; www.bulthaup.com.

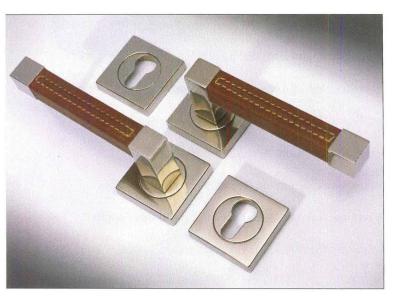
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#### new material



### added plus

Contemporary kitchen cabinet guru Poggenpohl aims to conquer the closet, too, with its new +Wardrobe Collection. Sixty closet system finishes—from flashy laminates and lacquers to exotic woods with glass and solid acrylic accents—match the look of the company's kitchen cabinetry for complete coordination. The flexible system can be fabricated to fit closets of any size; options like lazy Susan corner racks, see-through drawers, and divided pullout trays make organization a snap. Upscale hardware pieces by Blum and Häfele provide elegant punctuation. Poggenpohl U.S., 973.812.8900; www.poggenpohl-usa.com.



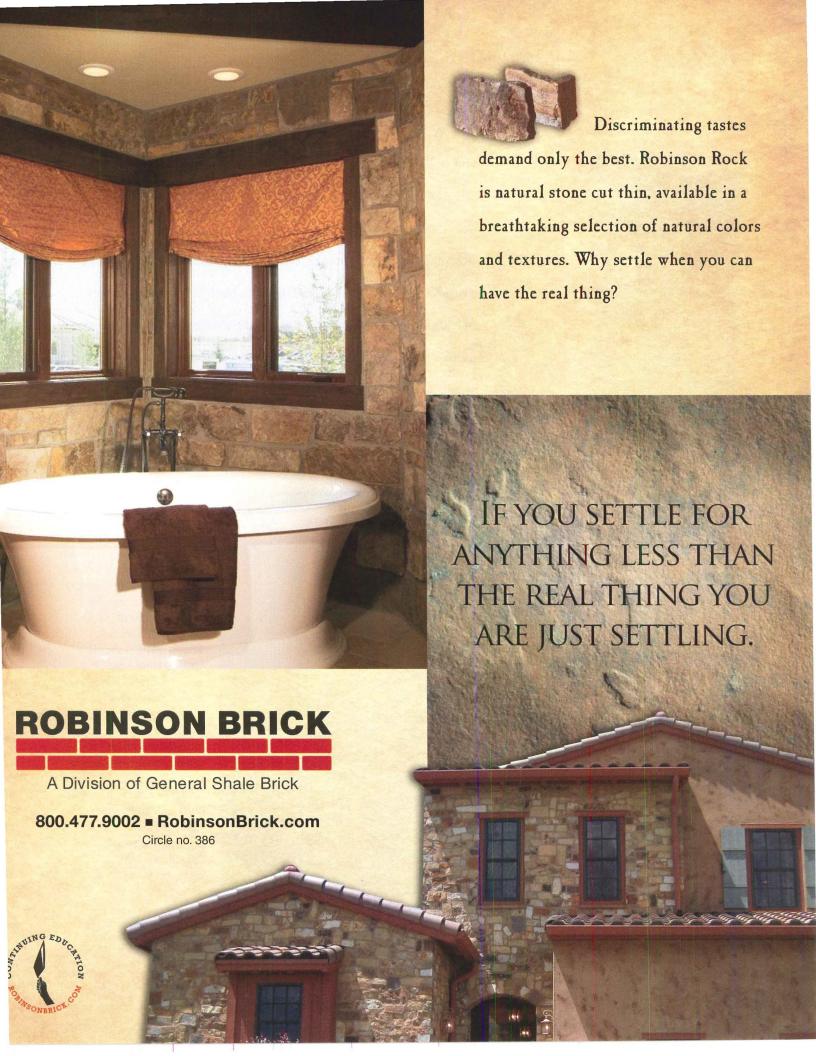
#### show hide

These drum-dyed, bridle leatherwrapped door levers and pulls from Turnstyle Designs feature contrasting stitching and a lowmaintenance waxed finish. Their clean lines and symmetrical shapes give the timeless material an edgy vibe, while the metal frames-in bright chrome, satin or polished nickel, and dark bronze finishes-add heft. Choose from six hues of supple leather, including chestnut, racing green, and jazz red. Turnstyle Designs, 44.1271.325.325; www.turnstyledesigns.com.



### que bellissima

Studio Italia Design's Bellissima luminaire can be wall-mounted or suspended from adjustable steel tension wires. Red, amber, and white handblown glass in concave and convex segments form a ring around a polished steel frame, diffusing the incandescent lamps to create a soft light. The circular pendant is nearly 14 inches tall with a diameter of 26<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches; the wall sconce measures approximately 10 inches wide by 14 inches tall. Studio Italia Design USA, 305.621.9602; www.sid-usa.com.



## new material



#### snack size

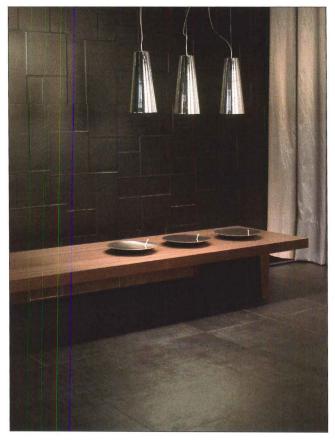
These 15-inch-wide refrigerator drawerstouted by the manufacturer as the world's first-are well-suited for lofts, wet bars, master suites, and any compact space where a few cold drinks and snacks are wanted. Despite the unit's narrow footprint, the fullextension drawers are deep enough to easily accommodate tall bottles and full gallons of milk. Plus, their stainless steel interiors are naturally antibacterial and easy to clean. The stand-alone model (shown) offers stainless sides and top to match the drawer fronts. Perlick Corp., 800.558.5592; www.bringperlickhome.com.

#### clean silhouette

Protruding a mere ½ inch from the ceiling, the Silhouette smoke alarm from Kidde delivers innovative



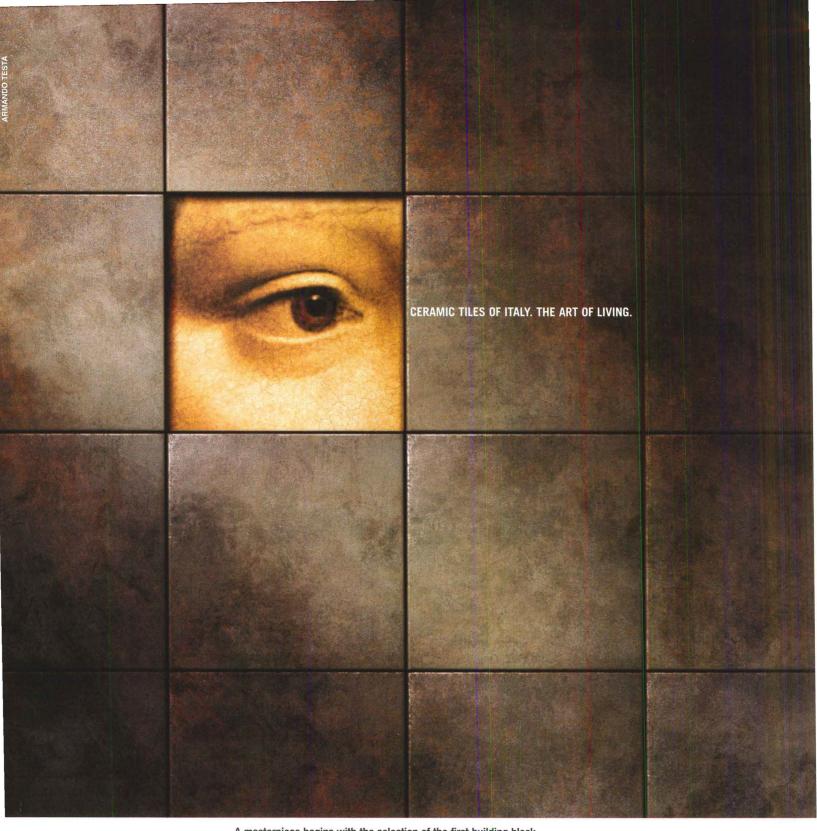
technology in a stylish package. The device uses an ionization sensor that detects changes in voltage caused by small particles (such as those from smoke) entering the sensing chamber. It also contains a rechargeable lithium battery—sealed inside the unit—that recharges automatically from the home's electrical system. A matching carbon monoxide detector will be available this fall. Kidde, 800.880.6788; www.kiddeus.com.



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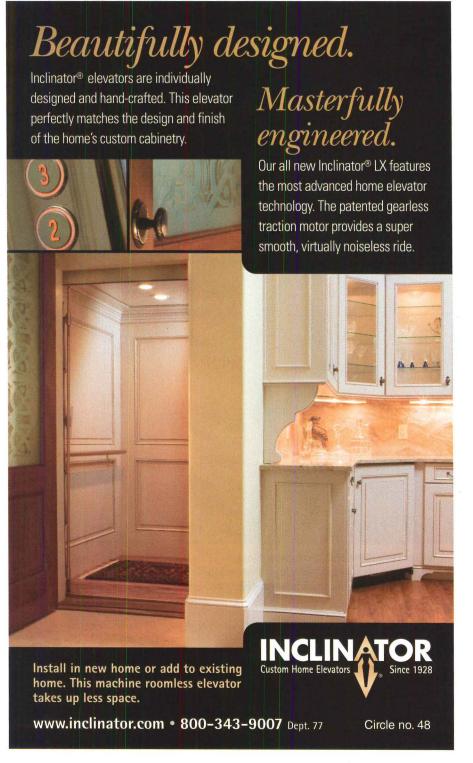
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# rchitect

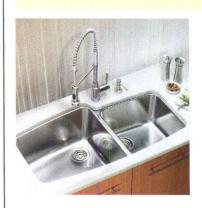
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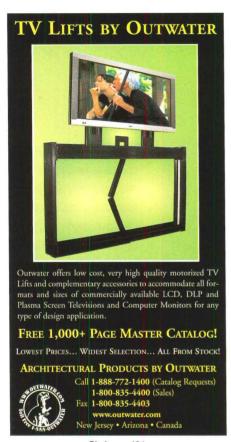
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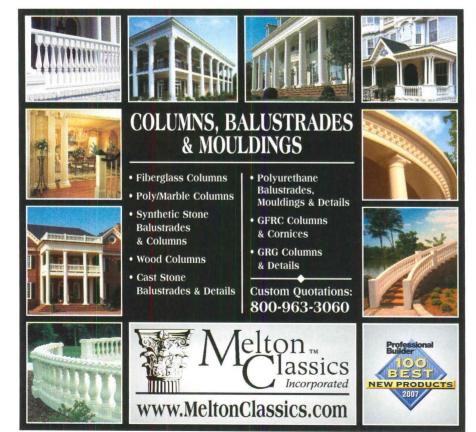
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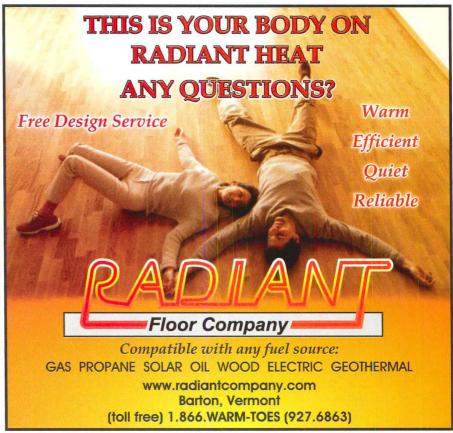
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# architect's showcase





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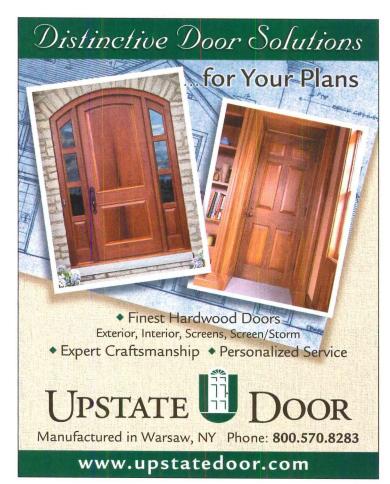
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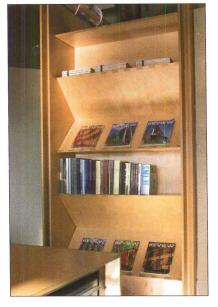
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# workspace

## substance

www.substancearchitecture.com

The first time Paul Mankins, FAIA, LEED AP, saw his firm's future office space, he couldn't believe his luck. The former 1920s car dealership in Des Moines, Iowa, had 15-foot ceilings, beautifully preserved wood trusses,



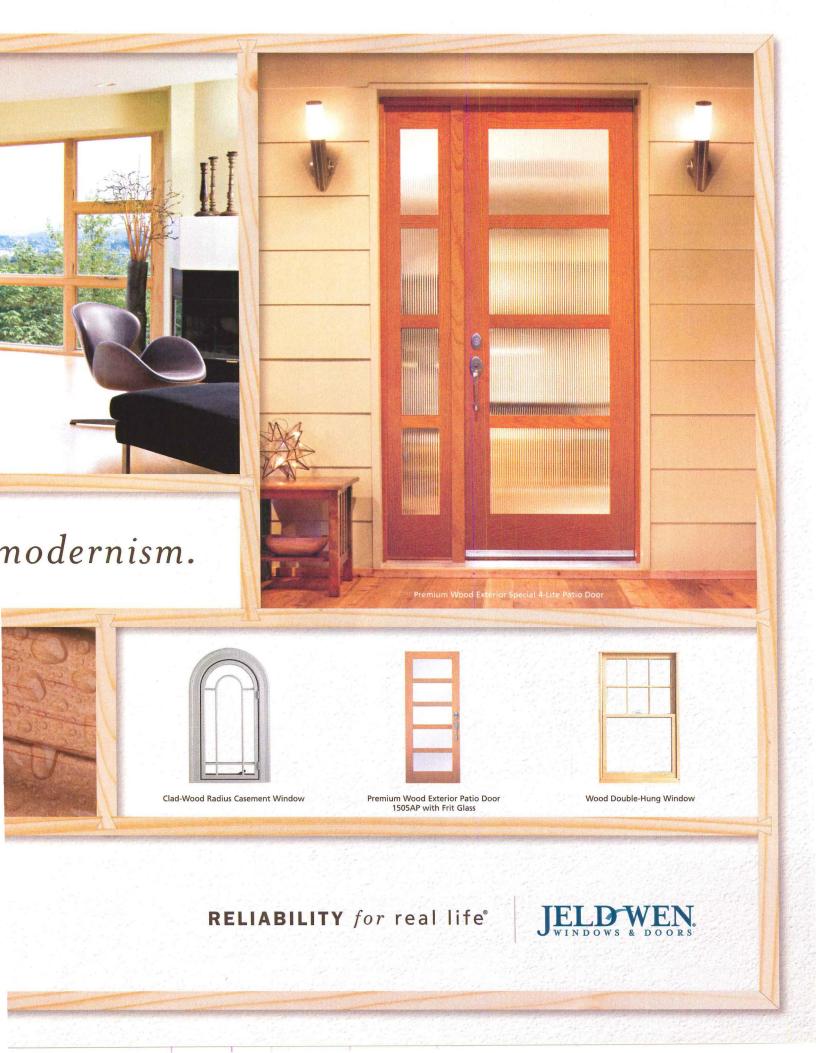
exposed brick walls, and views in three directions.

Mankins and the firm, known as substance, saved and highlighted these features in their 2005 renovation. They designed a ribbon of Baltic birch that snakes around the office, forming bookshelves, clustered workstations for 16 employees, 45-degree divots for paper storage, and the sides and tops of file cabinets. A similar detail of plate steel travels down the wall and across the floor of each workstation before morphing into a central gathering table.

The added elements are



easily movable and could be transferred to another space later, should substance ever relocate. And the open desk arrangement encourages collaboration. Work surfaces sit higher than usual, allowing staffers walking by to make eye contact with those at their desks. "I think it actually works," Mankins says. "People are more likely to converse and collaborate if the physical environment supports that."-meghan drueding





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# Outlook

# Whirlpool Corporation raises the bar on sustainability.

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, CKD, AIBD

It's always a welcome opportunity to share great news and insights with the architecture and design community. But this is especially true when the subject is so timely. Whirlpool Corporation has received the ENERGY STAR® Award



for Sustained Excellence for the second year in a row, making

it our eighth year with an ENERGY STAR® Award win.

Granted, green isn't a new topic in the headlines you read. However, formerly loose notions of sustainability are very rapidly focusing into compelling facts average consumers understand and embrace. For instance, if every household in the United States used a Duet® washer, we would save around 1.4 trillion

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Whirlpool Corporation is pleased to ponsor this course at no cost at www.aecdaily.com:

The Greening of "White Goods": Environmental Considerations When Specifying Appliances

This course provides an overview of he importance of sustainability when electing appliances, as well as information how to evaluate, compare and pecify energy-efficient products for he kitchen and laundry space. It is eligible for HSW requirements.

gallons of water per year.\* As Whirlpool Corporation expects growing numbers of your clients to demand energy-wise designs, expect us to keep you apprised on our endeavors.

The ENERGY STAR® Award for Sustained Excellence in particular demonstrates that our commitment to the environment is

both ongoing and notable. Criteria for winning included exemplary achievement year after year, as well as a lineup of 590 ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances. Also cited were our efforts in the training and education of our employees, coupled with meaningfully messaged community outreach events.

As we strengthen this partnership with ENERGY STAR®, expect Whirlpool Corporation thought leadership to show up in many other places. For example, we're pleased to be part of the first Optimum Performance Home,™ a zeroenergy consuming home being built in Sea Ranch, California. Plans include a full range of products from KitchenAid and Whirlpool brands. The home can be seen at www.ultimatehomedesign.com.

We're also eager to team up again with conservation-minded university students in the 2007 Solar Decathlon. This biennial U.S. Department of Energy



Some of Whirlpool Corporation's most efficient appliances are specified for the Optimum Performance Home.

event challenges our next generation of architects to design and build the most attractive and energy-efficient solar-powered house. In 2005, we sponsored six teams—including the winner of the Appliance Competition, Cal Poly of San Luis Obispo, California.

For one last example of how we're putting our knowledge to work in the real world, here's a personal invitation: The course listed to the left will give you a great feel for specifying appliances while keeping sustainable design and overall lifecycle costs in mind.

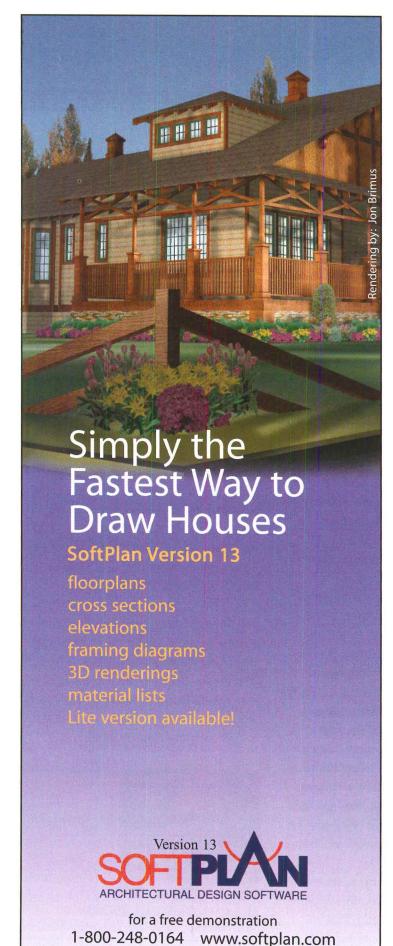


Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, CKD, AIBD Senior Manager, Architecture and Design Marketing

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<sup>\*</sup> Population based on U.S. Census 2002 estimated household data. Water savings of 12,584 gal./yr. compared to an average conventional washer, 10 loads of laundry per week. © 2007 Whirlpool Corporation. All rights reserved. © Registered trademark/TM of Whirlpool, U.S.A. © ENERGY STAR is a U.S. registered mark.

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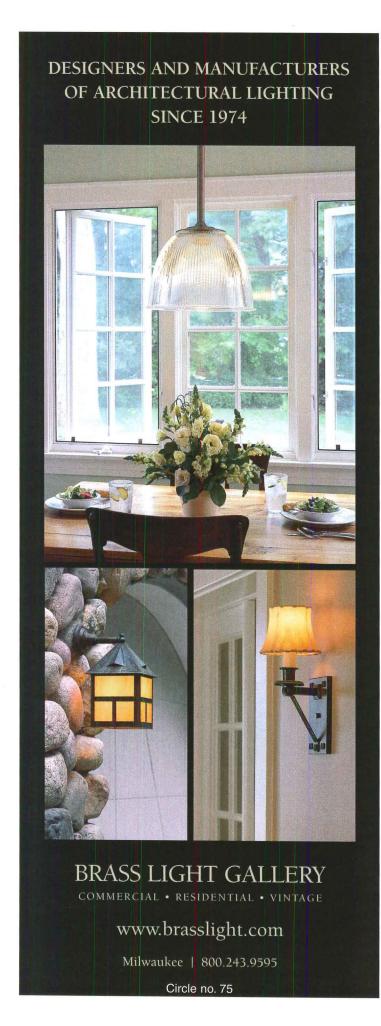
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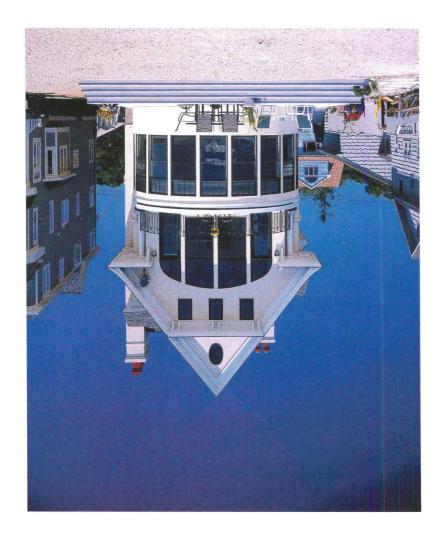
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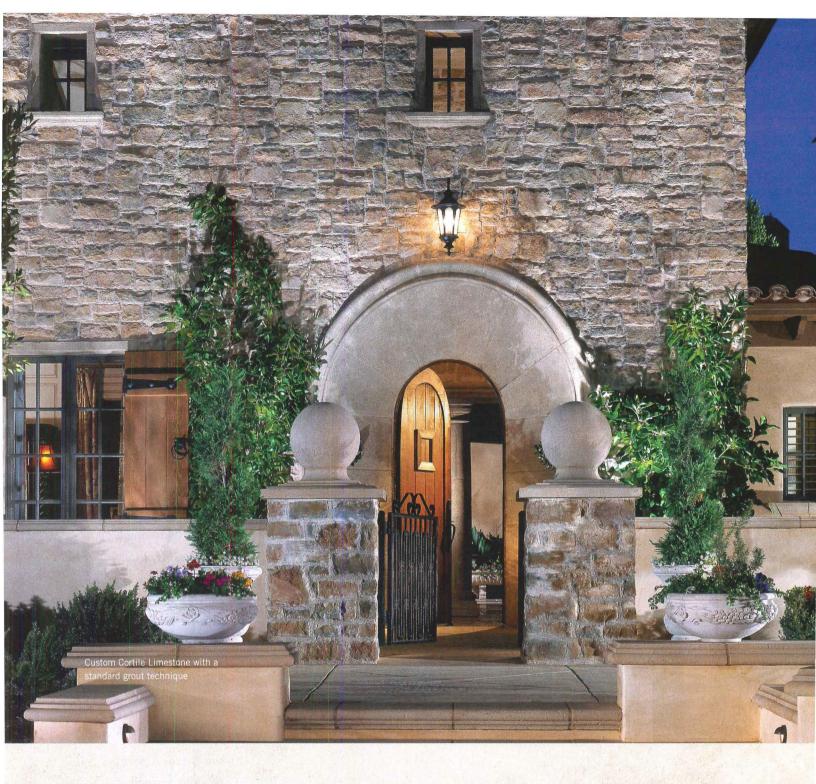
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By Julie Smith-Taylor

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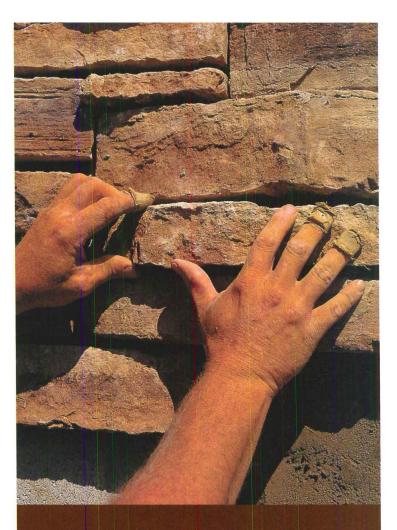
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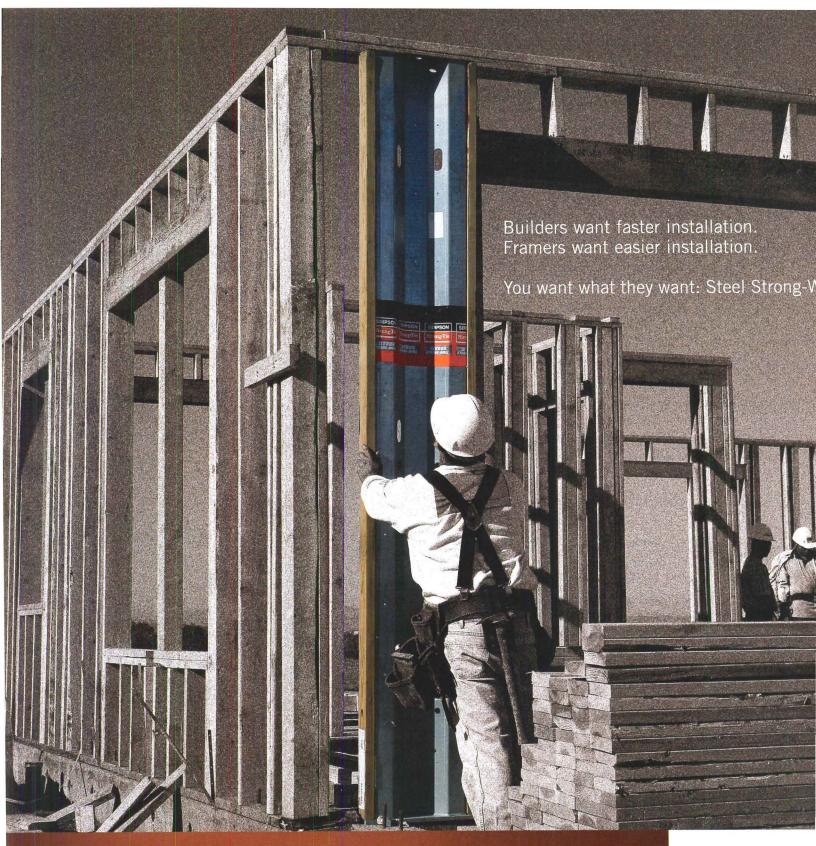
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# contents



A coup de Gracia Studio: Jorge Gracia's own house is a testing ground for product experimentations. Photo: Eduardo de Regules. Cover photo: DavidSharpe.com.

from the editor..page 15

letters..page 19

home front..page 22 America's choice / Kanner in Africa / Calendar

k + b studio..page 30

Acanthus Ferguson Mann Architects turns a British brewery into a sober, sophisticated take on industrial modernism.

perspective..page 37

Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects puts into practice what it posits in theory—and finds both endeavors are the better for it.

practice..page 41

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at real estate development? Why not start with your firm's office building?



# cover story..page 55 architects' choice

The new and the bold, or the tried and true— which products should you spec? Our accomplished architects have tested them all and share their most rewarding product choices with you.

by Nigel F. Maynard

**doctor spec..** page 87 What your building wears says a lot about it and you.

**digital home..** page 91 A new vista in home automation.

**new material.**.page 95 All the new that's fit to print.

off the shelf..page 97 Everybody wins with these super bowls.

**Workspace.**.page 112 Archimania's wise enterprise.



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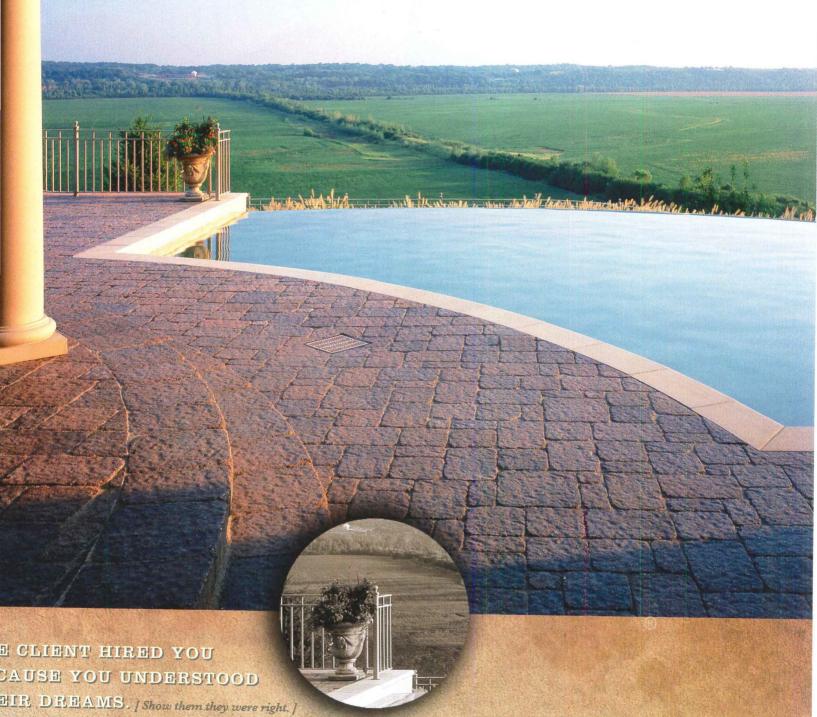


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# what custom really means

don't let the marketing world commandeer your livelihood.

by s. claire conroy

mericans love choice. We can't resist having everything our way, from burgers to BMWs. Click on a few options, and voilà, we've "custom-designed" our new Trek bike—in "starry-night black" with a lovely contrasting logo in silver. Click on too many upgrades, though, and our new bicycle can cost as much as a Harley-Davidson. But hey, it's custom.

Well, not really. That bike is still a mass-produced item, assembled from an inventory of stock parts. Computers have radically changed the way almost everyone does business. And what they've changed most is our ability to make changes to almost anything, quickly and at far less cost than ever before. This has revolutionized the manufacturing industry, and it's severely—perhaps critically—conflated the concept of choice with the idea of custom. The two are not synonymous, and their confusion in the minds of the purchasing public is harming architects. Why? Because now any builder with a keyboard and a CAD program can "customize" a kit of parts for a home buyer and call the result a "custom home."

What truly qualifies as a custom home? Houses that are designed from scratch for a particular site and a specific client's program. A real human being's program -not a hypothetical demographic profile, even if it's very narrowly defined. What doesn't qualify? An existing house plan that's been altered according to the client's wishes, a production home that's had upgrades installed, or a speculative home designed for a target buyer—no matter how "upscale." Choice does not equal custom, but thanks to the marketing efforts of savvy builders, few home buyers understand the distinction anymore—if they ever did in the first place.

Given complete freedom, most custom residential architects would abandon all preconceived notions of what a house should look like each time a new commission came along. And you would never open a single specification guide for any of your projects. Instead, you'd reinvent every element yourselves, down to the hinges on a cabinet or the levers on a door. Alas, drilling the design down to the smallest detail is a privilege only a handful of the top architects have. And it's a wondrous



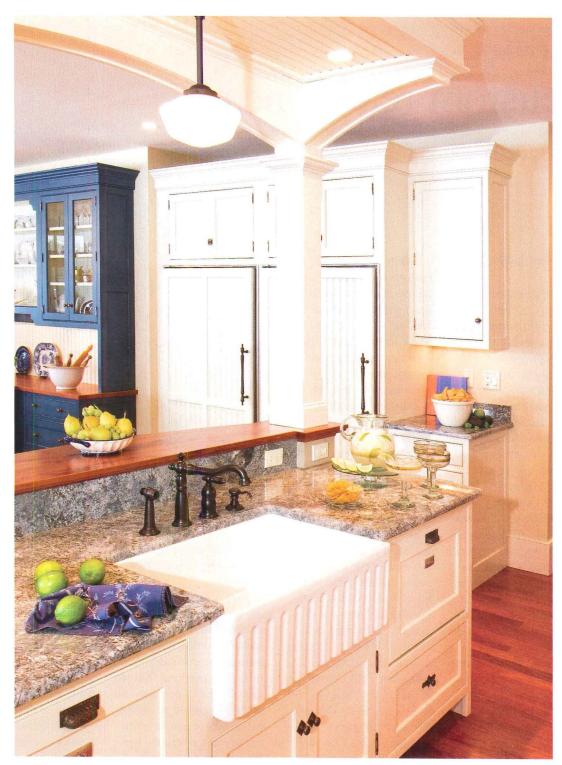
Mark Robert Halper

thing to behold. Those houses are the very definition of custom.

Most of us must live in the off-the-rack world. We can't afford to have a tastemaker evaluate, guide, or even create every design we bring into our lives. But we do have the wherewithal to make choices, to personalize and particularize what we buy and where we live. We can choose to avail ourselves of the considerable economies and value production builders have brought to residential construction. But we shouldn't kid ourselves, if we make that choice, that we've nabbed ourselves a custom home at a great price. Even if we've had a little tailoring done to suit.

So how do architects fight the incursions of customizers into your rightful territory? I think, ironically, you do so by becoming experts in choice. Most of you won't have the opportunity to reinvent every component in your houses, but you can wield a catalog of options so vast, so discerning, and so imaginative that no builder of multiples could ever compete. No menu of good, better, and best for your clients. Only the best of everything, by design. 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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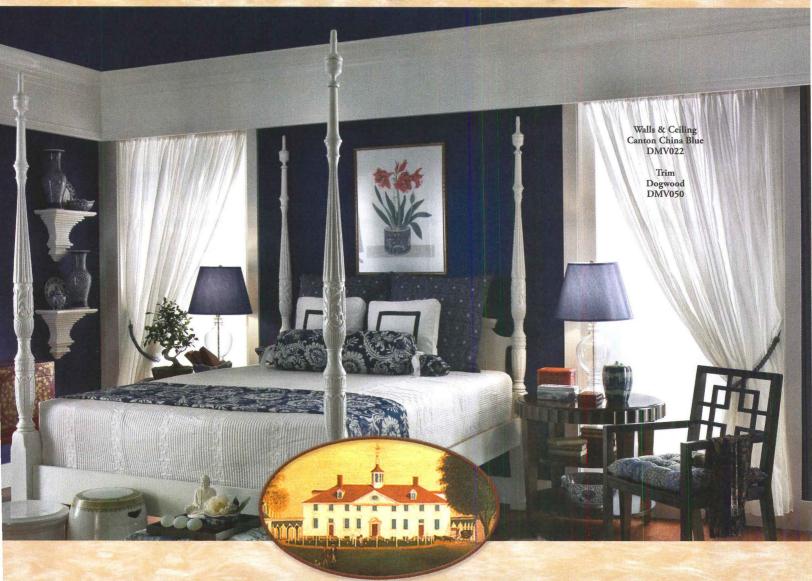
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# letters

exercise your right to write.

#### leaders of the bland

t's not hard to fathom why this country's creativity is stifled if you've had to run the gauntlet of design review committees, zoning boards of appeal, and irate, selfaggrandizing neighbors with more property rights than the property owners ("Home of the Brave?" September/October 2006, page 17). By the time we get through all the BS, the only architecture left is tucked away in a safe corner in the back of our minds that we journey to in the wee hours of the night.

> Dennis Parsons, AIA Hinsdale, Ill.

panish "imposition."
You got that right.
Why are we afraid
of our futures?

Joseph M. Pahl, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP Pahl Architecture Denver

emphatically agree with
your editorial on the
appalling lack of diversity
in housing styles and
offerings in merchantbuilt homes in the United
States. I maintained a predominantly residential
practice in California for 28
years and became painfully

aware of the Spanish "imposition" to which you referand its close cousin, Tuscan Revival. The sad truth is that, at least in California, most people have been convinced that their home is, first and foremost, an investment rather than a shelter. When one's driving concern is what it will take to sell the house he or she is buying, people deprive themselves of things that actually suit individual lifestyles in favor of what they have been told will appeal to the largest number of potential buyers at some undetermined date in the distant future.

This represents a change in thought from the first half of the 20th century, when home was the place where people raised families and lived in what was, to them —at a time of newly won security—a refuge from what had been a difficult world. Lenders and the real estate industry have certainly fueled this change of attitude. Spec-building a cookiecutter version of a house, even of the sometimes-Brobdingnagian proportions that you no doubt saw on your tour of Orange County, is something that lenders are more than willing to finance. Doing an innovative contemporary design on spec almost requires the developer to pay cash to take



what the banks see as a massive risk.

Exacerbating this problem is the vast majority of real estate agents who will tell you that the only thing that will sell is what they sold yesterday. For the longest time, that was a four-bedroom house with a large family room, an utterly wasted living room, and a three-car garage whose gaping maw was often the only thing one could see from the street. Only recently has the development industry recognized that there is a large portion of the market for whom a great room will work better and that home offices and media rooms are becoming more and more of a necessity. Sadly, at least in suburban areas, they are still usually wrapped in unoriginal, crypto-traditional styles that make each house barely distinguishable from its neighbor.

In the end, it is the responsibility of architects who are retained by spec builders to push their clients away from the endless

repetition of these painfully bland houses and to suggest new programs and styles that will excite the buying public. I learned a long time ago, designing houses for individual clients, that the biggest disservice I could perform was to underestimate their taste, intelligence, or willingness to try something new. It's a lot better to provide every client with the absolute best design you can give them and get it rejected as too wild once in a while than to buy into these same stale ideas of what is safe in residential architecture that lenders, real estate professionals, and developers have propagated since the 1970s.

Almost without exception, when I have attempted to educate my clients about what they can have, they have risen to the occasion and stretched their minds—and their wallets—to build significant homes. Given the chance, I believe the American public wants a better house; we are the ones who have to initiate the process of their getting just that.

Steven Goldstein Asheville, N.C.

Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

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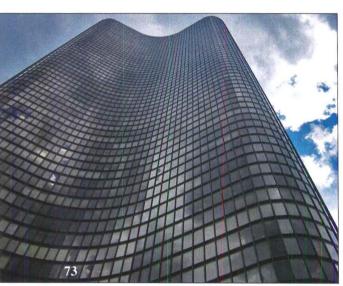


# home front

news from the leading edge of residential design.

# america's favorite dwellings

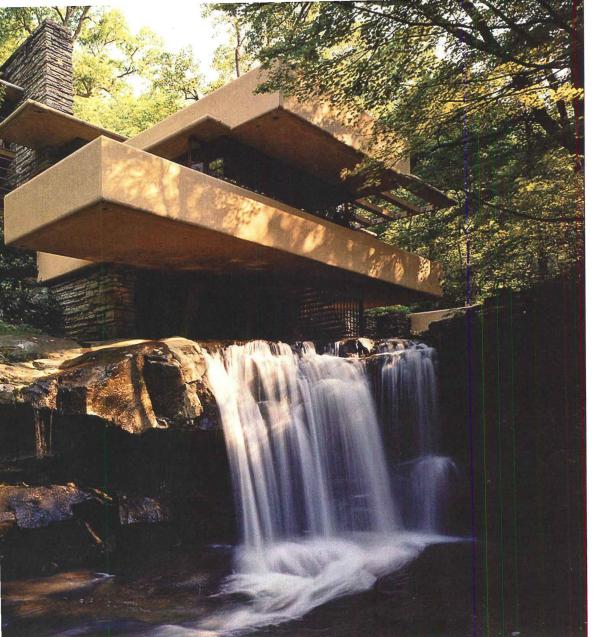
Just 17 residential buildings earned slots in The American Institute of Architects' top 150 buildings survey, but they're keepers. In honor of its 150th anniversary, the institute commissioned a Harris Interactive poll of more than 1,800 members of the American public, asking them to rank their favorite examples of American architecture. They chose from a larger list of 248 buildings suggested by a random sample of more than 2,400 AIA members. What didn't make the cut? Philip Johnson's Glass House, the Charles and Ray Eames house, and Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, among others. Here are the winners, in order of their rank in the larger survey. For full survey results and an opportunity to set the rankings straight, according to your opinions, visit www.residentialarchitect.com. But who doesn't like Frank?—s. claire conroy



Caren Crystal Bagan



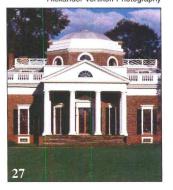
- 2 The White House, Washington, D.C. James Hoban
- **8** Biltmore Estate (Vanderbilt Residence), Asheville, N.C. *Richard Morris Hunt, FAIA*
- 27 Monticello, Charlottesville, Va. Thomas Jefferson
- 29 Kaufmann Residence (Fallingwater), Bear Run, Pa. Frank Lloyd Wright
- 30 Taliesin, Spring Green, Wis. Frank Lloyd Wright
- 41 Hearst Residence (Hearst Castle), San Simeon, Calif. *Julia Morgan*
- 66 Gamble House, Pasadena, Calif. Greene and Greene
- 73 Lake Point Tower, Chicago Schipporeit-Heinrich Associates; Graham, Anderson, Probst & White
- 83 Glessner House, Chicago Henry Hobson Richardson, FAIA
- 87 The Dakota, New York City Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, FAIA
- **105** Time Warner Center, New York City *David Childs*, *Skidmore*, *Owings & Merrill*
- 114 Dana-Thomas House, Springfield, Ill. Frank Lloyd Wright



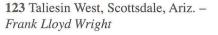
Courtesy Hearst Castle/ California State Parks



Alexander Vertikoff Photography



Courtesy Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

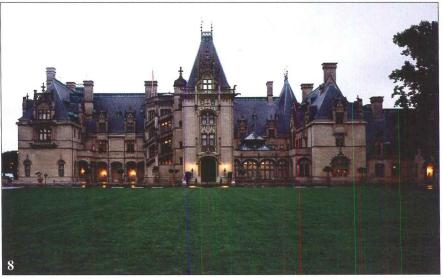


**130** Douglas House, Harbor Springs, Mich. – *Richard Meier, FAIA* 

131 Hollyhock House, Los Angeles – Frank Lloyd Wright

138 Robie House, Chicago - Frank Lloyd Wright

**140** Stahl House (Case Study House No. 22), Los Angeles – *Pierre Koenig* 



Photos (2, 8, and 27): Carol Highsmith

#### home front

# on the boards / green in accra



Renderings: Courtesy Kanner Architects

alifornia-based Stephen H. Kanner, FAIA, has expanded his practice to another West coast—the one in Africa. Accra, the capital of Ghana, has captured both his attention and his creative passion. "Ghana is on the coast and faces the same direction—southwest—as Los Angeles," he says, so its conditions are not entirely alien to him. But Kanner's chief lure was best friend and longtime collaborator Joe Addo, who moved back to his birthplace four years ago.

On his first visit there, Kanner was so impressed by Addo's efforts to revitalize his hometown, he offered the full support of his firm and his own financial investment. "Joe is really involved in

political issues that will better the quality of life through roads, water systems, and schools," Kanner explains. Together they've formed a development group called Concept Ghana, with a focus on improving low-income housing, aiding in neighborhood and city planning, and designing upscale housing to help lure wealthy Ghanaians back home.

The Augustino Neto Condominiums, slated for completion in 2008, are among the for-profit projects. The 1,500-square-foot units will sell for about U.S. \$300,000. All 25 condos have two bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths, and two balconies opposite each other for unimpeded cross-ventilation. The ¾-acre site is on the airport road, which also houses the city's embassy row. "The town grew around

Deep overhangs along southern and western windows, coupled with large openings to the north and east (shown), encourage cooling via Mother Nature. But solar panels stand by when air conditioning is needed.

the airport, and the wealthiest district happens to be right below the flight path," Kanner says. But the building's debut of Concept Ghana's soon-to-be-patented material, PozzoGhana, will help insulate against jet-engine noise. The green building product, which combines local sedimentous soils, waste palm kernels, and Portland cement, will form the exposed structure of the condo building.

The condos will showcase other sustainable materials easy to come by in Ghana: bamboo for the poolside cabana and balcony railing; adobe plasters for the walls; and recycled oil drums as large-format shingle siding. Responsibly harvested native woods in wide planks will lend clean, contemporary lines to wall panels. "The building's frame is our concrete product," Kanner says, "then we mixed in ancient local building materials in a modern way."—*shelley d. hutchins* 



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## home front

# calendar



Bill Timmerman

## 2007 ncma design awards of excellence

entry deadline: june 15

The National Concrete Masonry Association's annual design awards of excellence showcase innovations by architects using concrete masonry for residential, commercial, and landscape applications. Honorees receive a

monetary prize and will be honored during a ceremony and gallery display at the 2008 NCMA annual convention in Denver, February 22-24, 2008. Shown: The Downing Residence, Tucson, Ariz., by Ibarra Rosano Design Architects, a 2006 award winner. Register online at www.ncma.org or call 703.713.1900.

#### african cities, a photographic survey by david adjaye

through may 23 gund hall gallery, harvard university graduate school of design, cambridge, mass.



London-based architect David Adjaye, a native of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, returned to Africa to record the architecture of more than 50 capital cities. On display in this exhibit are hundreds of photographs that capture the architectural aesthetics of cities as diverse as Accra, Ghana; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Cairo, Egypt; Kigali, Rwanda; and Nairobi, Kenya. Adjaye hopes to use

his research to study new patterns of urbanism and city dwelling. Visit www.gsd.harvard.edu for more information.

## enlightened development

through may 31

a+d architecture and design museum, los angeles

The drawings, photos, and models that comprise this exhibit cover a broad spectrum of commercial and residential projects. "Enlightened" developers were selected because they embody sustainable practices, use emerging architects, demonstrate resourceful design, or employ combinations of all three tenets. Participants include Habitat Group, Livable Places, and Urban Partners. For further details, call 323.932. 9393 or go to www.aplusd.org.

#### modernism: designing a new world 1914-1939

through july 29 corcoran gallery of art, washington, d.c.

The Corcoran is the only U.S. venue for a touring exhibition celebrating design, art, and architecture of the early 20th century. Nearly 400 objects—including architectural models, film clips, paintings, posters, and chairs by the likes of Alvar Aalto, Marcel Breuer, and Mies van der Roheexplore how modernist philosophy strove to improve the world through simple forms and bold colors. Shown: A model of the Schröder House (Utrecht, the Netherlands, 1924) by Gerrit Rietveld. Call 202.639.1700 or visit www.corcoran.org for museum hours.



Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York / Beeldrecht, Amsterdar

## design for the other 90%

may 4-september 23 cooper-hewitt, national design museum, new york city

This exhibit explores how designers are focusing on affordable and socially responsible products for the billions of people who lack the means to afford their services. Artifacts are grouped into categories that include shelter, health and sanitation, education, food, water, energy, and transportation. They include solutions created to serve



Architecture for Humanity and Grenada Recovery, and Reconstr

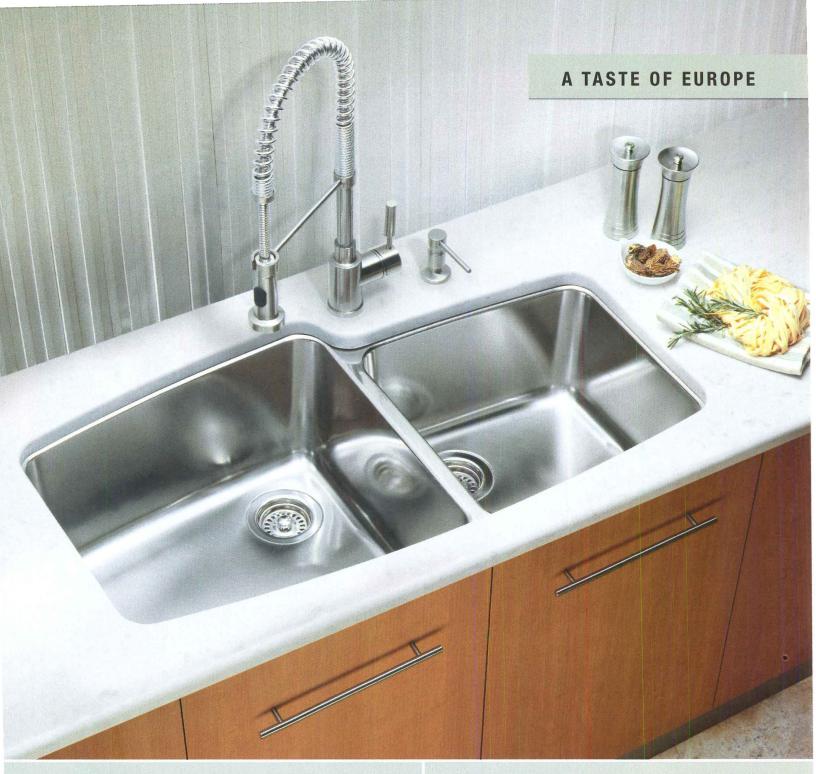
populations living in poverty or recovering from disaster, such as the corrugated-cardboard Global Village Shelter (by Ferrara Design and Architecture for Humanity) seen here. Call 212.849.8400 for more information, or go to www.cooperhewitt.org.

## bklyn designs

may 11-13 various venues, brooklyn, n.y.

The 5th anniversary celebration of this event kicks off New York City's Design Week. Multiple venues in Brooklyn's hip DUMBO ("Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass") district will Courtesy Elucidesign host selected artists displaying their never-beforeseen designs. Attendees can view and even purchase exhibiting creations - among them the Virus Cabinet by Elucidesign seen here. For schedules, locations, and ticket information, visit www.bklyndesigns.com.

-shelley d. hutchins



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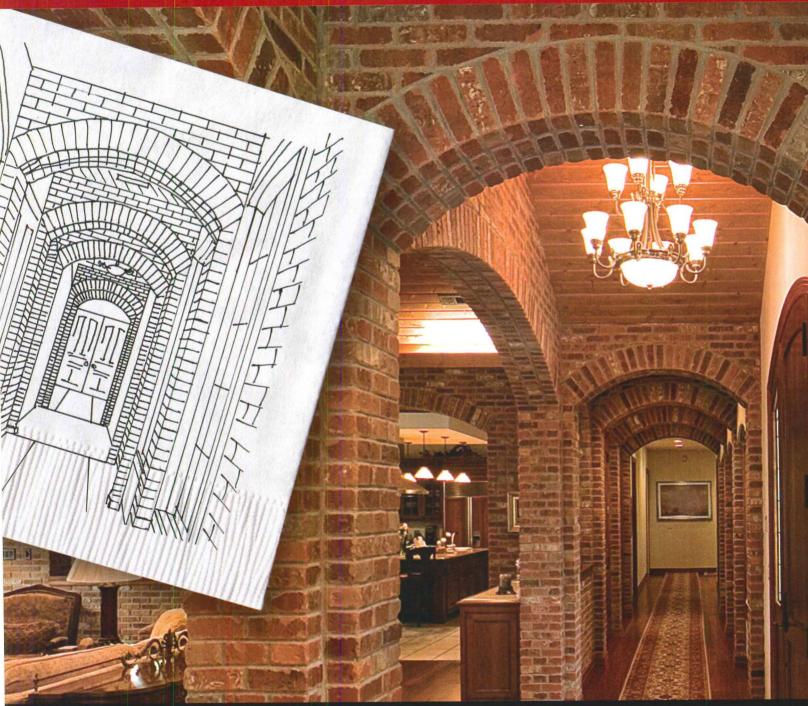
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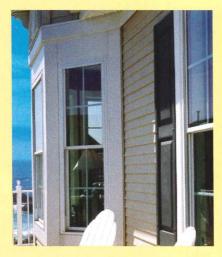
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## k+b studio

#### kitchen:

#### sincerely austere

How does one insert ultramodern living spaces into a former industrial military building? Acanthus Ferguson Mann Architects of Bristol, England, accomplished it with a kitchen and bath retrofit that's bold enough to hold its own inside the heavyweight building, yet is also sleek and translucent.

The Brewhouse, which dates to around 1825, is one of seven buildings at the Royal William Yard in Plymouth, Devon, that supplied victuals to navy ships of that era and was originally designed for brewing

the beer that sailors drank on board. Defunct for quite some time, the entire complex is now being adapted as an upscale mixed-use development that includes 130 apartments, an art gallery, and restaurants. "Plymouth traditionally relied heavily on the navy supporting it, and certain areas have become a bit run-down," says project architect Hugh Clegg, who is now at Devon, Englandbased Fuse Architecture. "This conversion has helped to kickstart the area."

As warehouses go, the build-

ings are unusually ornate, with thick limestone walls, timber floors, and fluted cast iron columns. Responding to their heft, the architects kept the palette of materials to a minimum, choosing just a few robust, reflective materials that complement the building's colors and textures. In a nod to the modern-day penchant for socializing around the cooktop, the kitchen directly faces the living room, though fixed-glass screens partially separate the two rooms, admitting light while editing views. Defined also by a level change and a clear limestone floor, the kitchen runs along just one wall and is completely devoid of distracting details. The work surface and integrated sink are made of stainless steel that's been shot-blasted for a slightly matte finish. Electrical sockets are hidden from view under the front edge of the cupboards, which are constructed of MDF spray-

To create some separation between the kitchen and adjoining living room, the architects raised the floor a few inches and covered it in limestone. A sparkling enameled-glass backsplash is paired with a matte-finish stainless steel countertop.

The kitchen's minimal, hard-edged palette was a response to the robust simplicity of the old building, which features heavy timber floors and cast iron columns.

painted to a hard finish. The light-reflecting backsplash provides another antidote to the heaviness of the building. It's made of glass that has been spray-painted on the back with white enamel.

This model show flat was designed to attract fast-paced professionals, many of whom eat out or order in much of the time. Ample cabinets keep everyday essentials within reach, while down the hall, "a utility area doubles as a pantry for all their other bits," Clegg says. The components add up to a workspace that's stylishly austere, and yet fully functional.

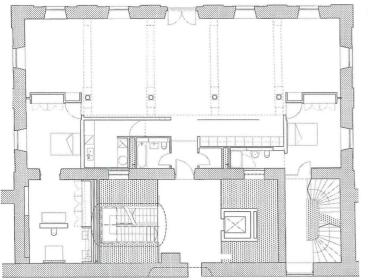
project continued on page 32



Fixed translucent-glass panels define the kitchen's edges while allowing light to filter through.



Photos: Nicholas Kane/arcaid.co.uk



**architect:** Acanthus Ferguson Mann Architects, Bristol, England

**general contractor:** Midas Group, Devon, England

developer: Urban Splash, Manchester, England

structural engineer: Alan Baxter & Associates,

London

kitchen fabricator: Ergonom, London

resources: bathtub and shower: William Garvey Ltd.; cabinets: Ergonom; dishwasher and refrigerator: AB Electrolux; glass backsplash: Pilkington Group; oven: Baumatic; washbasins and toilet: Duravit

## k+b studio

#### bath:

#### pointed counterpoint

The rejuvenated Brewhouse's hard-edged aesthetic is echoed in the bath, where polished surfaces stand in contrast to the chunky interior stone walls. Like the kitchen/living room relationship, the bath is largely open to the adjoining master bedroom. And, again, seamlessness is the operative idea. "The scale of things is large, so we didn't want a lot of fine detail," Clegg explains. Everything—from the wall-mounted toilet to the recessed mirror and lighting—was chosen for its clean design ethos. Limestone



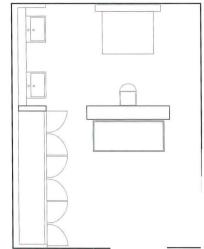
Photos: Nicholas Kane/arcaid.co.uk

on the floor folds upward behind the toilet and reappears above the washbasin backsplash, which is covered in clear mosaic glass tiles. "We picked stuff that was quite angular rather than curved," Clegg says. "Everything is very rectilinear, which has to do with the planes in the space."

An exception is the original stone archway—added as a decorative feature to break up the wall a bit, Clegg guesses—under which the architects installed a radiator. The stone walls were simply cleaned up and repointed. Like the kitchen, the bath also evokes luxury with its white sinks and gleaming surfaces. The crowning touch is the handmade teak bathtub and shower back panel, which were made to order by a local company. Completed in 2006, the Brewhouse's 80 apartments range in size from 1,000 square feet to 1,700 square feet.

To hear Clegg tell it, the Royal William Yard redevelopment is helping the city shed its industrial past, while reinvigorating a piece of its history. "Plymouth is being seen as a desirable place to live," he says.—cheryl weber





Clean, rectilinear forms complement the bath's stone walls. The limestone floor. sleek washbasins, and handmade teak bathtub and shower panel lend a crisp, luxurious look.



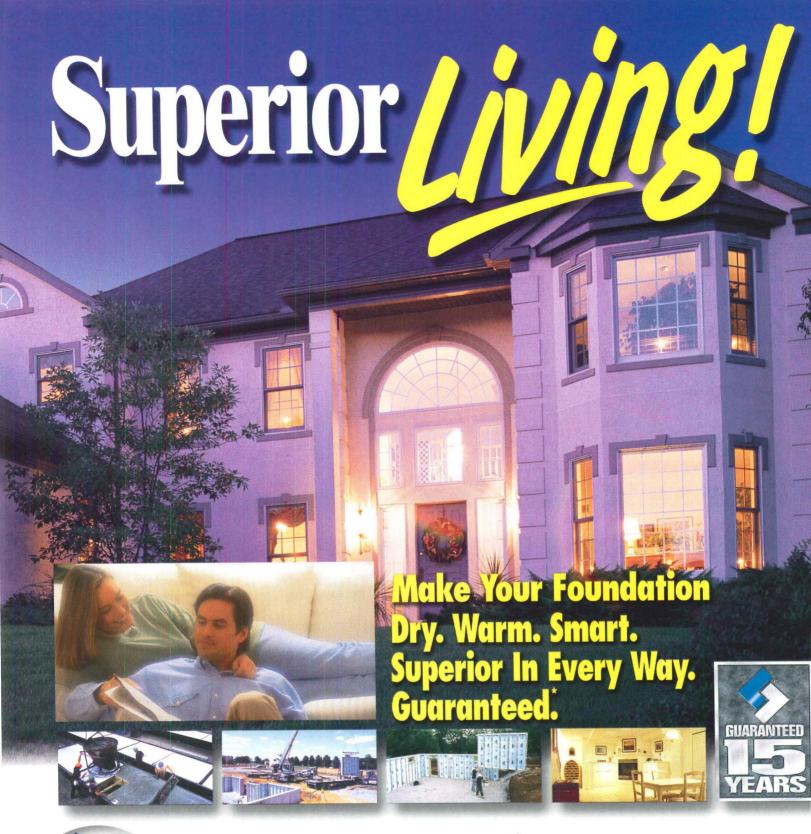
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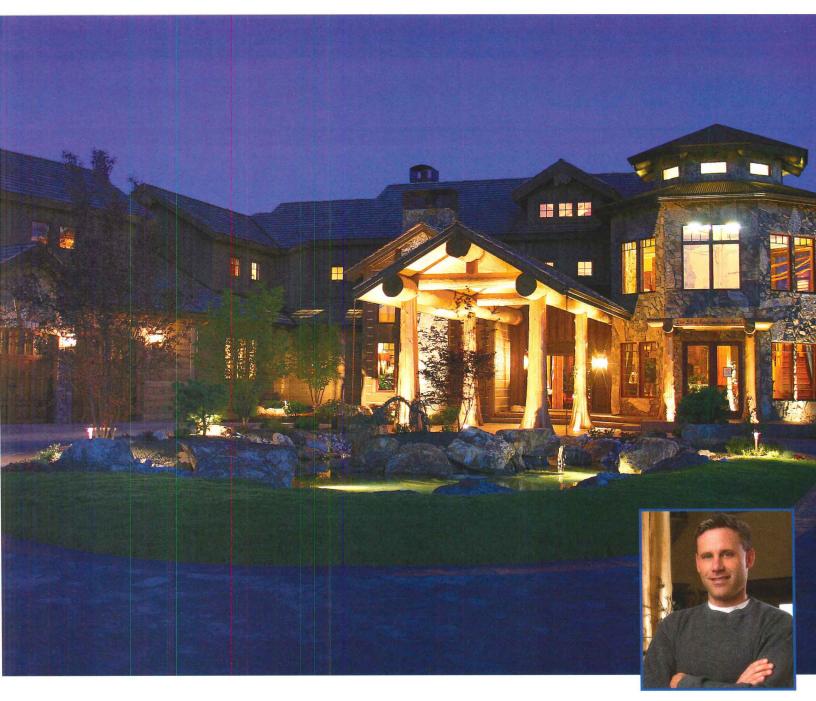
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## theory vs. practice

mining the tension between the

conceptual and the built.

by zoë prillinger and luke ogrydziak, aia

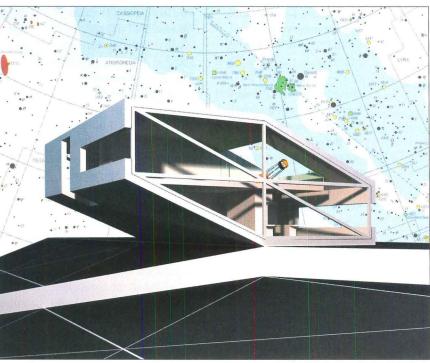
ur studio relationship began at Princeton University, which we attended as both undergraduate and graduate students. There we established a way of thinking about architecture that we have tried to maintain as we have progressed from an academic environment into a working practice. We quickly realized that while the perfect isolation of a studio at school encouraged clarity and criticality in design, those qualities often suffer when a project is exposed to the complexity of external constraints one finds in a practice.

Even without the demands imposed by clients, budgets, planning agencies, and building codes, it's hard enough to create the mental space to focus on and define the basic questions that structure a given project. And yet this initial definition of terms—the demarcation of a playing field within all the possible worlds of design —is perhaps the principal intellectual and creative duty of the architect. Once established, a project's initially coherent idea is vulnerable to all the potential depredations of a project's

development, whether theoretical or real, and must adapt and mutate to retain relevance and legibility. Accordingly, one of the primary challenges of architecture lies not only in the creation but also the protection of a project's internal consistency

as it clears the hurdles of conceptual and physical enactment.

Theoretical and built projects both offer avenues for investigating architectural questions. Each process presents distinct challenges as well as different modes of seeing and testing an architectural idea. For us, architecture resides in many forms, in many media, no one more privileged than another. It makes appearances in diagrams, drawings, models, and buildings, each a mode of representation that renders certain aspects visible while hiding



Courtesy Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects

The authors intentionally make room in their thriving practice for conceptual projects, such as the 20 Degree Isometric House (above), which won a 2005 Honor Award in Unbuilt Design from AIA San Francisco.

others. We want to operate simultaneously within theoretical and built worlds of design because we think both are valid forms of inquiry that bring different issues to the surface. Practically speaking, in our office we try to sustain a 1:3 ratio of research projects to built work.

#### space exploration

We use our research projects to ask ourselves what we might be taking for granted. For the past year or so, our theoretical work has raised the deceptively simple question: What is space? It seems elementary, but it can be difficult to articulate the specific qualities of the kind of space organized by architecture, especially since every vision of space carries with it a world view. Space is both a concept and something physical. The duality between ideal and real space creates a difficulty in thinking or speaking clearly about it. Operating as an architect, one tends to have a highly developed (if unconscious) model of space already in place. This model serves as a kind of continued on page 38

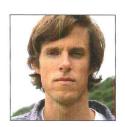
#### perspective

medium within which the design process occurs. In our recent research, we have attempted to embed several quite different spatial models at the core of the design process. Each of these conceptual projects strives to formally manifest these core models-the systems that structure the design process itself. Attempting to articulate these typically mute assumptions serves as a form of discipline and self-critique: How can we manifest these spatial frameworks within an architectural object?

The resulting projects tend to be quite abstract and are already beginning to inform the way we approach aspects of current built work. For instance, the 20 Degree Isometric House analyzes the infinite space implicit within the isometric, axonometric, and orthogonal systems of projective geometry. The form of this project emerges from a recursive isometric projection process

performed on a simple rectangle. Another project, the Conway House, develops from a single threedimensional tile and the chain of relationships its specific geometry prescribes. This tile is a generic biprism -a polyhedron that can be apprehended as a discrete unit but when multiplied implies a vast tessellated array that fills the universe without gaps or overlaps. Finally, our recent Vector House extends this logic of a "thick space" already latent with possibility even when apparently empty. In opposition to the modernist paradigm of the extensible Cartesian grid, space in this project is always already full and is simply awaiting a trigger to manifest its embedded rules.

virtual reality
Just as all design work,
whether theoretical or built,
begins with an idea, all
projects begin their lives as
virtual projects. All architects spend an inordinate



"relying exclusively
on built work to create
opportunities for
radical design places an
unrealistic expectation
on clients' interests
and budgets."





Photos: Tim Griffith (above and top); courtesy Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects (below left)

Ogrydziak/Prillinger's research projects help energize their built work, including the Kayak House (above) in Lotus, Calif.—a collaboration with Ogrydziak Architects—and the T House in San Francisco (left).

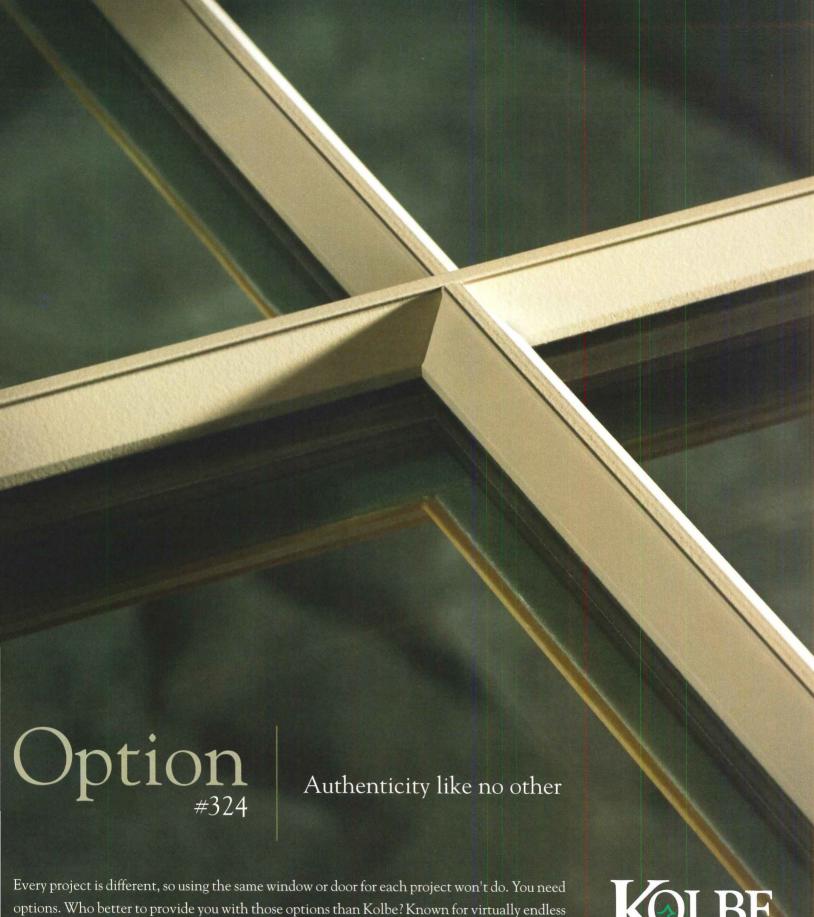
amount of time in the virtual realm and oscillate between different modes of representation to control the architectural product. Ideally, we ourselves would love all of our projects (conceptual and built) to undergo multiple stages of enactment (virtual and real), including construction. We think of building a project as another "test" of the success or failure of the ideas. For, despite the proliferation of the virtual, we (happily) still can be surprised on jobsites.

Our hope is to invigorate our built work through our theoretical explorations and to inform our conceptual reach with the challenges we confront in the built environment. For young practicing architects, relying exclusively on built work to create opportunities for radical design places an

unrealistic expectation on clients' interests and budgets. The obvious alternative is an academic career spent influencing the general architectural discourse through the publication of theoretical projects and lectures.

Both options seem limited, but in different ways. On the one hand, pure building without space or time for reflection can result in the use of borrowed idioms or stylistic repetition. On the other hand, strong conceptual work petitions to be applied to another level of development. It seems obvious to us that both practices should coexist. ra

Zoë Prillinger and Luke Ogrydziak, AIA, are the principals of Ogrydziak/ Prillinger Architects in San Francisco.



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## shop talk

savvy architects are investing long-term by owning their buildings.

#### by cheryl weber

he last decade's blistering real estate performance has rather painfully separated the owners from the renters—the clear winners being those who staked out a property or two on the proverbial boardwalk. As the tide turns, real estate prices are no longer "guaranteed" to go up, and no one knows precisely what lies ahead. But for successful architects with growing practices, owning the space in which they work is almost always a smart business move. It's a way to escape the whims of the rental market while reaping substantial tax benefits. It's a formula for controlling your destiny: Purchase more square footage than you need, lease the surplus, and grow into the extra space as tenant contracts expire. A building that exemplifies your design talent is also great PR-and a sound retirement strategy. Architects often make more money on the sale of their office building than on the sale of their business when they stop working, says Jacklyn Jordan, president and CEO of Capital Access Group, San Francisco.

Coming up with a down payment on commercial headquarters can be tough,



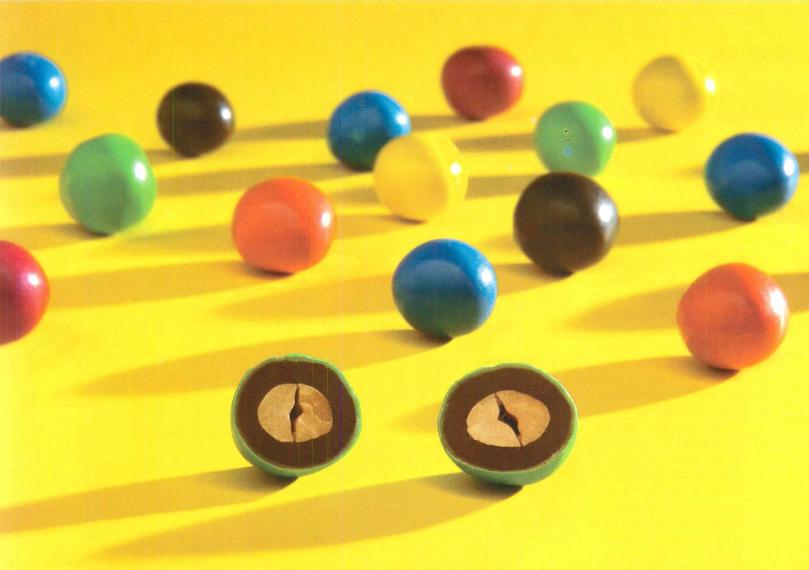
Martin O'Neill

however—especially for architects with small- to medium-size practices. Owners of startups struggle to take home a decent salary, and mid-career architects are folding the profits back into their business. The costs may be out of reach for those who work in exclusive vacation enclaves too. Just ask Mark Hutker, AIA, who

has two offices. One is on Martha's Vineyard, where he owns a spacious suite in a 20,000-square-foot mixeduse waterfront building. The other is in Falmouth, Mass., where he rents prime space in a former restaurant—also on the water—that his firm recently adapted as offices for a local client. "At least three of our clients

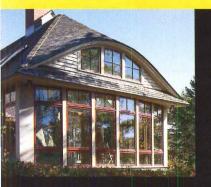
have come to design meetings in their Hinckley picnic boats," Hutker explains.
"We lease the Falmouth office because there's a lot of cachet we wouldn't otherwise be able to afford. The cost to own would be prohibitive."

Like the first commission, the first employee, the first continued on page 43



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partner, buying office space is one of the big milestones. Whether ownership status is the result of serendipitous events or research and calculated risk, it is born out of need, desire, and creativity as architects' fortunes, along with their neighborhoods, begin to change. For Hutker, ownership of the Vineyard office was originally a case of being in the right place at the right time. In 1984, just as the building was being completed, he was invited to form a partnership with the developer, who worked out of one of the condo units. When Hutker spun off the architecture wing of the business a few years later, he purchased that unit, expanding to three adjoining condos over the next 20 years as his bank accounts allowed.

#### long-term leverage

As they look to the future, many savvy architects go the landlord route, choosing a location that will attract good tenants who deliver a steady stream of rental income. When Darrel Rippeteau, AIA, set up his practice in Washington, D.C., in 1978, "if I did have a long-term vision, it was to own real estate," he says. In 1986 he and his wife, Judy, borrowed money to purchase a "crummy little building," a remnant one-story warehouse used to store hot dog-vendor carts at night. After doing basic repairs,

#### purchasing power

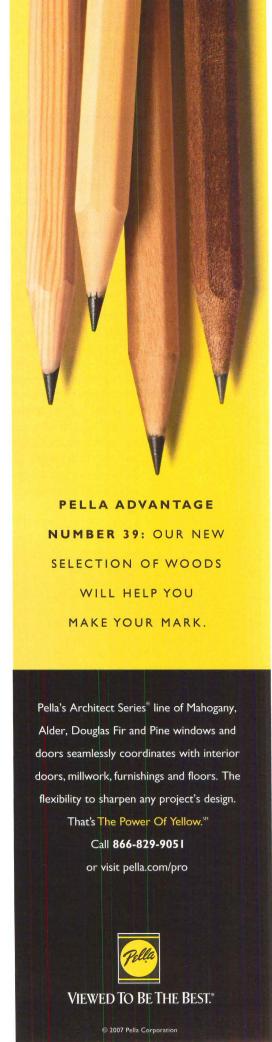
hen Taylor Lombardo Architects was scrambling to purchase an office building in San Francisco, it found affordable financing through the U.S. Small Business Administration's CDC/504 loan program. Aimed at healthy, growing companies that are unable to pay cash, the loan allows borrowers to put 10 percent down (compared to the 20 percent or 30 percent required by banks) and charges a flat interest rate —currently about 6.2 percent. The SBA lends up to 40 percent of the project cost and arranges conventional financing for the remaining 50 percent.

"If the purchase is a big stretch because a firm is hoping to grow into a building much bigger than it needs at the moment, we'll stretch out the amortization to 40 years instead of 20," says Jacklyn Jordan, president and CEO of San Francisco-based Capital Access Group, the SBA lender with whom Taylor Lombardo worked. In qualifying businesses, "We look at the personal financial statement," she continues. "Maybe there's nothing left on the bottom line, but maybe the owner is making more than he or she actually needs to live on and can add it back to cash flow." What's more, she adds, the loan "is assumable if someone else acquires the property, and that's a nice thing to be able to advertise if you need to sell." -c.w.

Rippeteau Architects moved in, paying rent to the Rippeteaus, who also leased part of the parking lot to a neighbor. It was a gritty block back then. But Rippeteau couldn't help noticing, as he rollerskated to work, that the neighborhood's dangers were "vastly overstated and overreported." Sure enough, by 2002, real estate values were on the rise and, with the loan paid off, he considered cashing in. But when Whole Foods and other upscale businesses began investing nearby, he decided to use the equity to design a mixed-use building on par with the emerging neighborhood.

In the new iteration, street-level retail space is occupied by gallery plan b, an art gallery for established and emerging local talent. Rippeteau Architects is on the second floor, and a third floor houses two 900-squarefoot rental apartments with double-height living spaces and outdoor terraces. "My wife and I got an inflatable mattress and stayed overnight in each one just to get the

continued on page 44



residential architect / april 2007

experience," he says. "We would have moved in in a minute. Because we had to borrow money, part of our business plan was that we would sell our house and move in if we had to."

Rippeteau was fairly sure of the commercial component. But with the city's recent condo explosion, he was less certain he could fill the apartments. He tried to capture the discriminating renter by making them theatrical and arty, appealing to people who've made their major investment elsewhere but want to have a foot in D.C. "We've leased to people who are happy to have a stylish, urbane place with their car parked out back," Rippeteau says.

If there's one bit of advice to offer, he says, it's this: be certain about your leasing—as certain as you can be. "When I bought this property initially, I knew that, as a tenant, I could make the rent and pay down the loan. And I knew that when I redeveloped it, the strength of my business would carry this deal," he explains. "I just needed to design something that would attract one or two other tenants. But as an investment strategy, knowing that I was going to build something my architecture firm would pay rent to is a powerful part of why it works for me."

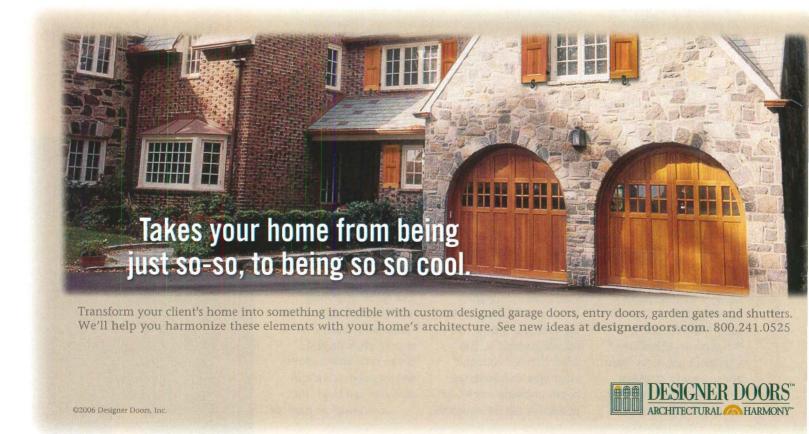
Indeed, as business owners and design-and-

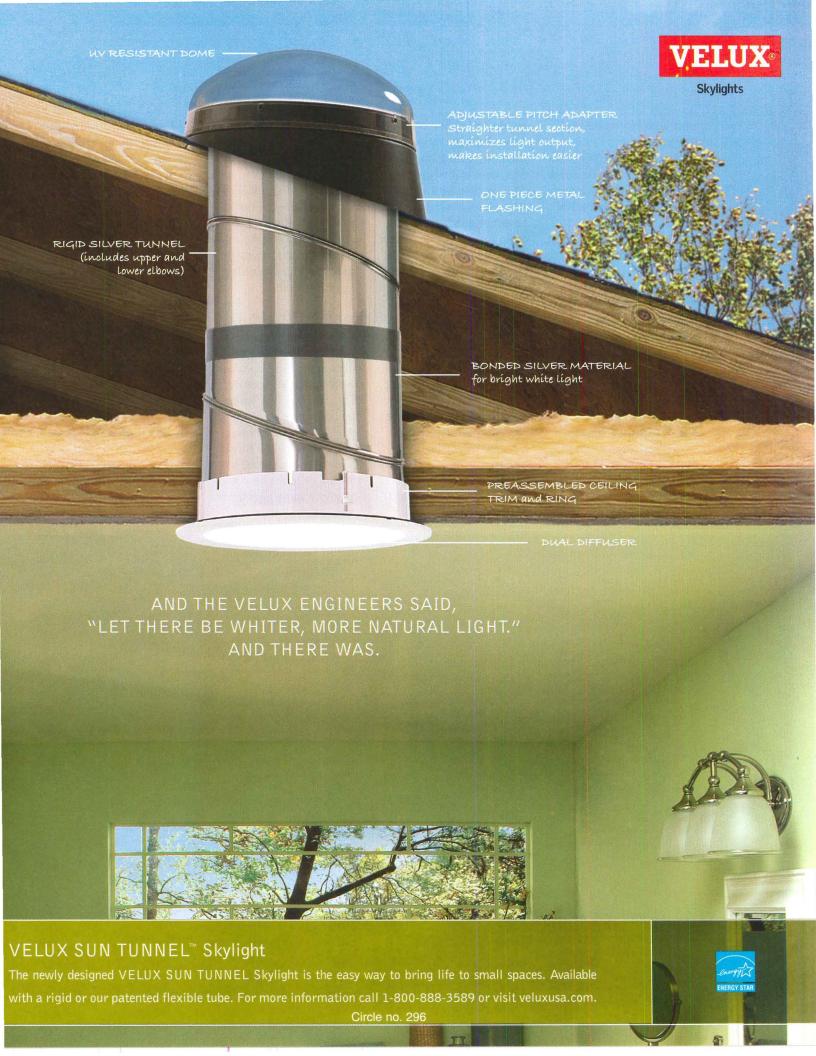
construction experts, architects are uniquely positioned to leverage their real estate assets long-term. Through creative financing and some sweat equity, Geoffrey T. Prentiss, AIA, found a spot for his staff of seven in a pricey Seattle neighborhood see our coverage on page 70 of the January/February 2007 issue]. Prentiss was working out of his home for 12 years and bursting at the seams when he began renting space a few blocks away, in a building owned by a friend. After the owner abandoned plans to redevelop the property in 2003, Prentiss bought it for \$485,000. He put \$100,000 down, financing the rest with a five-year balloon

loan from the owner. The monthly mortgage worked out to be just slightly more than he'd been paying in rent.

But Prentiss didn't stop there. Over the next 18 months, he completed a renovation and 3,000square-foot addition that comprises, in total, two commercial first-floor units and two apartments above. "It was a good hands-on experience," Prentiss says of the project. "I made sure everyone in the office took responsibility for a section and made it their job to deal with the subcontractors." One commercial unit houses his studio; the other is occupied by an

continued on page 46





organic coffeehouse on a 10-year lease.

To pay for the \$600,000 project, Prentiss refinanced his house, getting an interest rate two points lower than he would have paid on a commercial loan. As planned, his income from the building covers the \$10,000 monthly mortgage. "The first year was a little bit of gritting the teeth," he admits. "You still have this big thing leaning against you, and you have to gamble that things are going to stay relatively steady. But this is where architects will get ahead, using the wisdom we've gained in contracting to do something ourselves."

One architect who has done this twice advises

architects to plan for more room than they think they'll need. In 1995, John Carney, AIA, principal of Carney Architects in Jackson, Wyo., built a two-story commercial structure with room for a first-floor tenant. But within a few years, his business had grown beyond the dozen or so staff he had anticipated. Carney sold the building and designed another one downtown, on property he bought from a client. His current digs include 4,500 square feet of workspace, plus 1,500 square feet of tenant space. Now that the staff roster has doubled, he plans to take over a 500-square-foot tenant lease that's set to expire shortly. To execute

the project, "We created an ownership entity outside the firm, and my kids own a piece of it," he says. "Eventually I'm hoping my partners will too. I think owning a building is about ensuring the ongoing nature of the firm and having this great building that people become vested in."

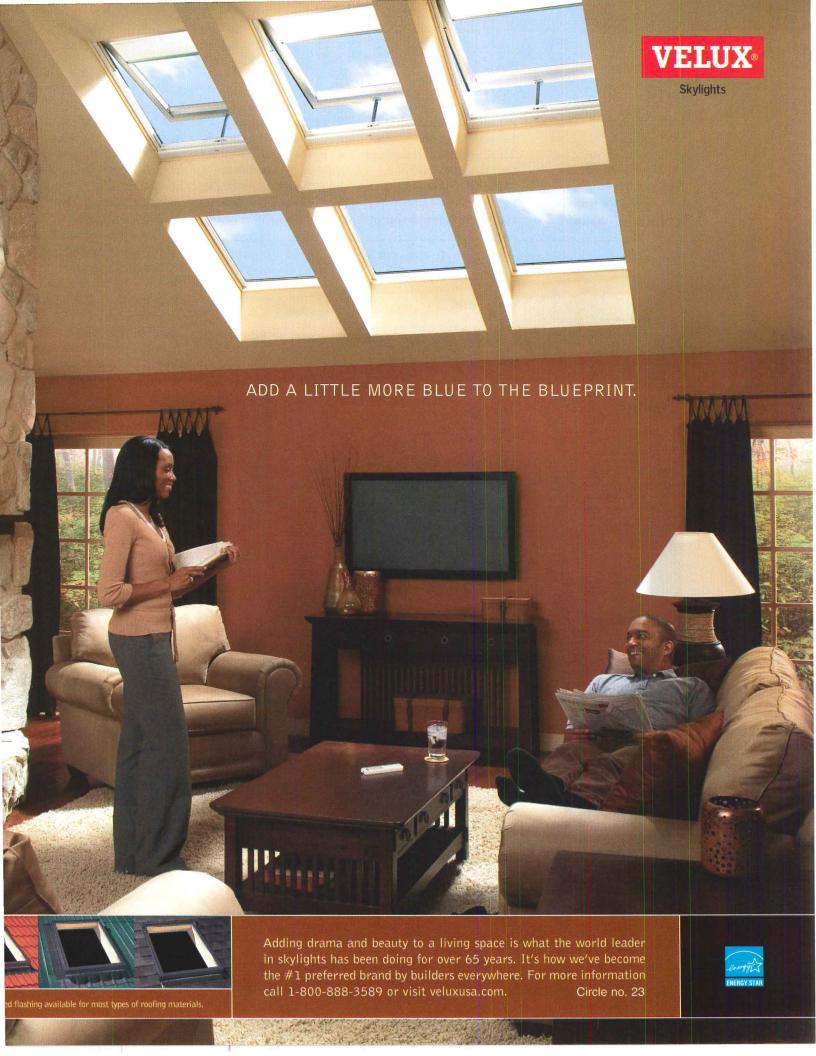
footing the bill
When you analyze the
potential payoff, buying
might seem like a no-brainer.
But until the dust settles,
financing that first building
can be frightening. For some,
like Maurice Lombardo,
AIA, a principal of Taylor
Lombardo Architects, getting a foot in the door takes
creativity and a high thresh-

old for risk. Lombardo had all but given up on San Francisco's outrageous real estate prices when a broker friend told him about an 11,000-square-foot building on the market for \$3.2 million. Its location near the Transamerica Pyramid was perfect, and a restaurant was renting the ground floor. But the three stories above it needed work, and Lombardo couldn't swing the remodel. So instead, the broker suggested a lease-toown option.

After negotiating a price of \$2.775 million, "we put an offer together to lease with an option to purchase in 18 months, using Small Business Administration

continued on page 48





loans," Lombardo says.
That arrangement locked
in the purchase price but
would have allowed the
firm to sell it for a higher
(or lower) price when the
lease was up, had they failed

to qualify for the loan. Meanwhile, he and partner Tom Taylor, AIA, refinanced their homes to pay for a \$500,000 remodel of the top two floors—money that counted as a down payment.

"It was extremely risky to remodel without owning it, but it was the only way we could do it," Lombardo says. "We moved in on the third floor and had debris falling in our coffee mugs,

but we couldn't afford to pay two rents." In November 2004, with the remodel completed, the firm applied for and received an SBA loan (see sidebar). The loan required that it put 10 percent down and occupy 50 percent of the building.

Lombardo says the building's tenant income, including the \$10,000 per month his firm pays for use of the third and fourth floors, covers the building's costs. "The rent is about the same as we paid before, but it comes out to be a lot less once you put it all together," Lombardo explains. "It's a nice way for architects to create a forced savings plan, and it's much better than a 401(k), because you get to use it."

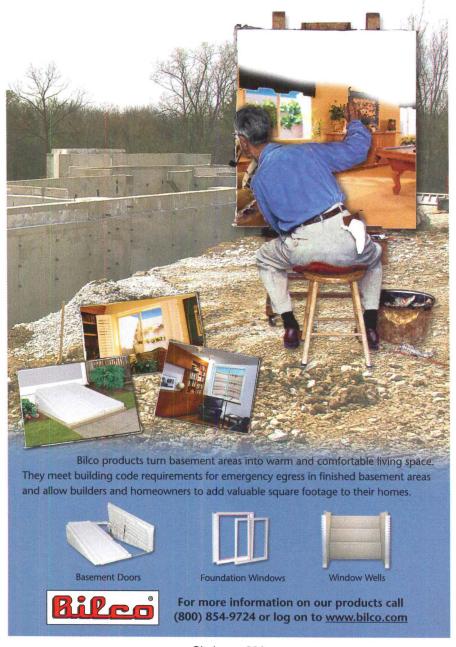
When it comes to financ-

ing, other architects swear by the good will they've garnered with local banks. "We've been giving a local bank here in Omaha, Neb., all of our business—private, commercial, and residential accounts-and that was a really wise move," says Randy Brown, FAIA, principal of Randy Brown Architects, who also owns Quantum Quality Real Estate, a development firm. "We could sometimes get better rates, and the bank will sometimes finance things before we are 50 percent pre-leased." In 1999 the development company —Brown plus two partners -went to work on a 10,000-

borrowing 90 percent of its continued on page 50

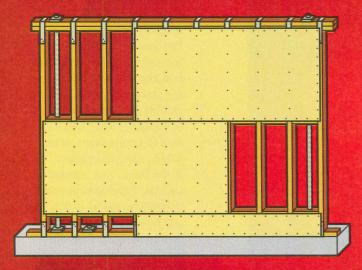
square-foot office building to house the two entities,

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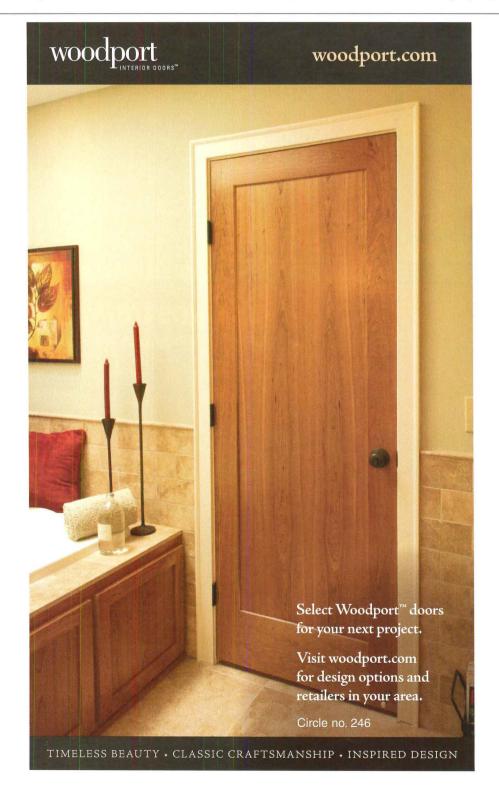
estimated value. "It was a million-dollar investment, plus the cost of the land," says Brown, who has 14 employees. "We brought the building in at \$100 a square foot."

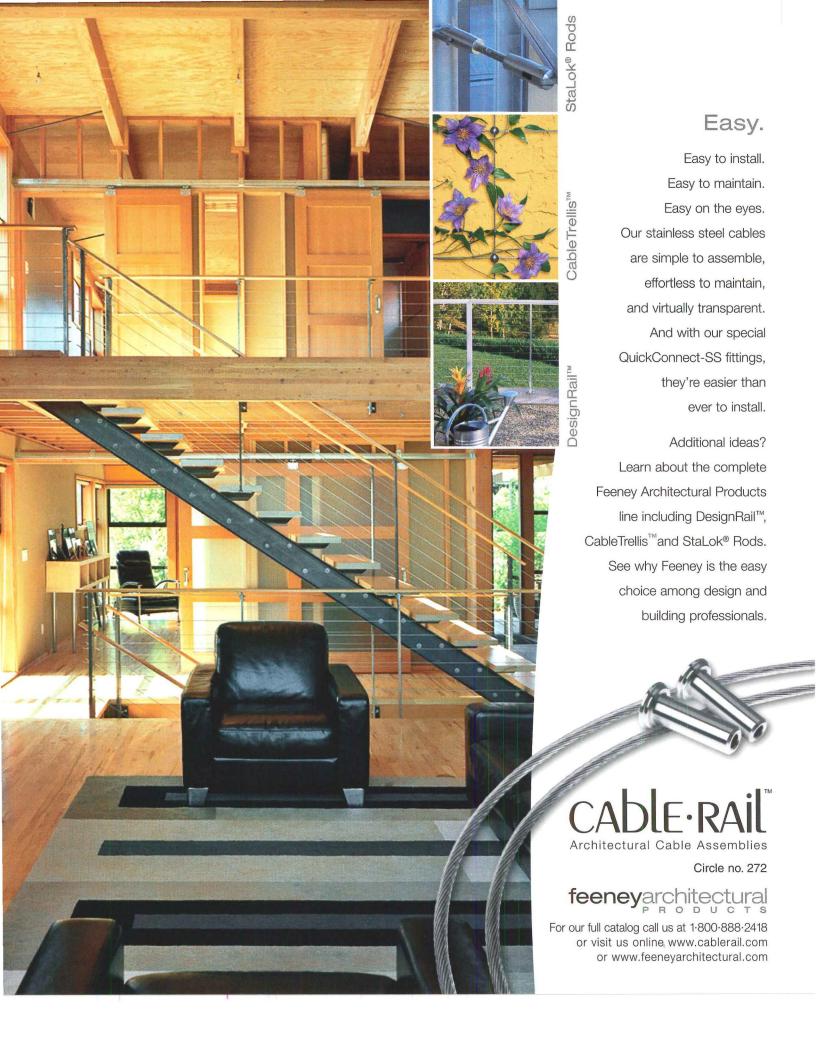
A \$1.2 million retail phase followed in 2002. Brown says the 8,000-squarefoot addition was 50 percent pre-leased and 100 percent bank-financed. Four years later, the building achieves a positive cash flow, including the roughly \$50,000 a year his architecture firm puts into the pot. It's another example of architects using their design/build expertise to add value as property owners. "I don't see a lot of risk because, at the end of the day, you've built something that can be sold," he says. "For me, that was the fallback."

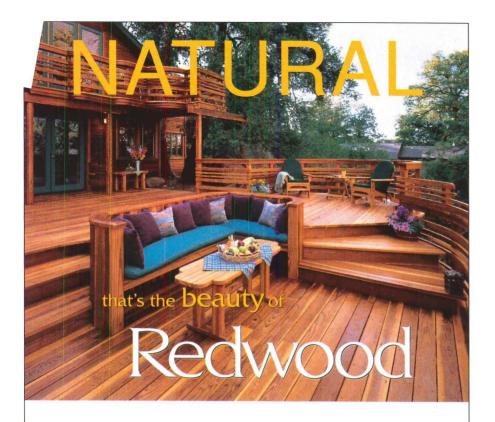
Another cost-efficient option is to buy or build in a redevelopment zone. Vetter Denk Architects is receiving tax credits and low-interest loans to design a commanding commercial building that will house the practice in an up-andcoming part of downtown Milwaukee. After winning an RFP competition, John Vetter, AIA, and partner, Kelly Denk, AIA, created a separate development entity to purchase the \$145,000 lot and hired their architecture firm to design a four-story building, valued at \$4.5 million. "The city's interest is in creating business opportunities and a tax base, so they're not out to get top dollar," Vetter says.

Still, the partners spent a year trying to make the project work financially. Originally, they'd hoped to include residential lofts but abandoned those plans in order to qualify for two loan programs geared toward retail commercial. When the building is finished this year, it will include a street-level retail space and three floors of offices, plus a built-out basement and a commonuse rooftop pavilion.

portfolio power
The flexibility of small
firms makes space options
even more interesting. In a
continued on page 52









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Project: Scott Padgett, Design/Build Idylwild, California Circle no. 40

#### practice

modern riff on the classic cottage industry, some architects have designed snazzy studios where they live. Christopher Hays, AIA, and Allison Ewing, AIA, LEED AP, the principals of Hays + Ewing Design Studio, Charlottesville, Va., work in a detached studio with their master bedroom above, which connects to the house via a second-story bridge. "We imagined that it would be strategic to have a space we could rent out as a separate unit" or devote to an aging parent, Ewing says. "We usually show people our house as a portfolio project, so the studio has been a good thing. The space shows a quality of life that pictures don't convey."

In Berkeley, Calif., Sheahan + Quandt Architects principals Patrick Sheahan and Cathleen Quandt teamed with two other professionals to develop a rare sliver of land that's zoned as residential/commercial. They paid cash for the land, and each used a third of the equity to create live/work spaces for themselves [see our coverage on page 104 of the January/February 2007 issue]. The couple can write off depreciation on the 40 percent of the building they use for business, and lowering their personal taxes frees up money to pay down the loan. "When it's an investment in both your business and your personal life, there's a different financial dynamic," Sheahan says. "Everything is at stake, but you have everything to gain." ra



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# architects' choice

by nigel f. maynard

n our fast-paced, supersaturated lives, we've reached the point where we're no longer empowered by choice, we're burdened by it. Your clients are overwhelmed by it, you're conflicted by it, and project budgets are stretched by it. That product you're about to specis it beautiful enough, practical enough, sustainable enough, durable enough, and economical enough? Do you love it, but you need to make a case for it with your client? Do the two of you love it, but the general contractor thinks you're both foolhardy? Well, have no fear. Turn the page and you'll find the ammunition you need. Or you may just discover something you've never even thought of. This is our eighth annual compendium of architects' favorite products and materials. Our experts have done the hard work to make life a little easier for you.



## architects' choice

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wilkes-barre, pa.



#### secret attachment

Bohlin uses EB-TY hidden deck fasteners for "their nearly invisible design," which he says helps maintain "the clean lines of the surrounding architecture." Made of UV-resistant polypropylene, the 2¾-inchlong fasteners have a ½-inch profile that delivers automatic, consistent spacing between boards. Blue Heron Enterprises, 800.438.3289; www.ebty.com.

"using eb-ty deck fasteners eliminates the need for screws and nails, along with the problems that accompany such hardware—rust, pop-ups, splinters, and puddle areas."

#### www.bcj.com

peter q. bohlin, faia

#### ▶ g whiz

When oversized doors must be moved. Bohlin turns to G-U's lift-slide hardware. The aluminum-constructed handles feature zinc die castings and aluminum-alloy fittings and can support sashes weighing up to 198 pounds. Bohlin also appreciates the hardware's "impressive, environmentally friendly surface coating," which provides "excellent protection against corrosion." He used the hardware to move the large panels on this house. G-U Hardware, 757.877.9020; www.g-u.com.



Photos: Interior by Nic Lehoux; Polygal by George Brown

"g-u's lift-slide hardware is great for large, oversized door systems. these fittings are available for timber,



#### ▲ into the light

Polygal weighs ¼ as much as glass and has 200 times the impact strength. Both of these factors, plus the material's versatility, make Bohlin a fan. "The product maintains a light, modern feeling," he says, "and at night, it takes on a special, magical quality when light filters through it." Polygal structured sheets have a ribbed configuration that provides thermal insulation and can be speced in various gauges, colors, and thicknesses. Polygal, 800.537.0095; www.polygal.com.



#### ◆ brass brand

Sugatsune's concealed hinges are great for projects where Bohlin wants the hardware to maintain a low profile. Even so, he's quick to point out that each hinge is "beautifully machined in its own right." When a door is open, he says, "the hinge helps maintain the elegance of the design." Each solidbrass piece is finished in polished brass or satin chrome and measures 8 inches long. Three hinges can support a door weight of 110 pounds. Sugatsune America, 800.562.5267; www.sugatsune.com.

## architects' choice

# audrey matlock architect

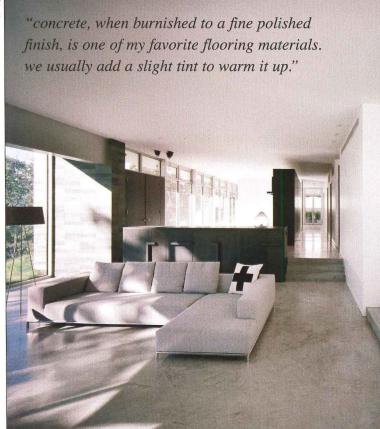
new york city



audrey matlock www.audreymatlock.com

#### gray matter

Concrete is known as a utilitarian material, but in the right hands it can also be a thing of beauty. "You can create large continuous surfaces with the addition of any texture you want," Matlock says. Low-maintenance and strong, concrete is also incredibly adaptable (it can be stamped, polished, or acid-etched). A polished installation is shown in this Matlock project. Portland Cement Association, 847. 966.6200; www.cement.org.



#### ▲ roll on

Cotterman's single-mounted rolling ladder provides easy access to hard-to-reach items, such as these files in Matlock's office. She calls its "straightforward" design "beautifully minimal and functional." Crafted of welded steel with up to 11 5-inch-by-14-inch steps, the ladder has a rolling upper track and wheels. When in use, it's positioned at an 80-degree angle and extends 50 inches to 110 inches high. Cotterman Co., 800.552. 3337; www.cotterman.com.

#### ≪ slim pick

Elegance and versatility are the reasons Matlock is drawn to the T5 fluorescent light. The linear fixture is made from a cast zinc-aluminum alloy in 2-foot, 3-foot, and 4-foot lengths. Dimming is possible on certain models. "We have mounted it vertically and horizontally," she says of the light, which she often specs in bathrooms and working environments. Delray Lighting, 818.767.3793; www.delraylighting.com.



## max strang architecture

miami



max strang, aia www.strangarchitects.com

▶ foiling aluminum

Who says metal is only for roofs? Not Strang, who used it on this house. "It coordinates well and brings added variation to the walls," he explains. His preferred spec is 26-gauge corrugated Galvalume aluminum zinccoated sheets, which he says are lightweight and strong. Panels feature two coats of baked-on paint finish. BIEC International, 360.750.5791; www.galvalume.com.



#### going global

"Architects don't typically specify wallpaper, but there was one time I couldn't resist," Strang says. "By strategically slicing up this popular World Map product, I was able to get a dramatic effect and full coverage." The mural is printed on 80-pound paper and ships as eight panels, which can be applied like regular wallpaper. Environmental Graphics, 800.328. 3869; www.environmentalgraphics.com.



Because architects in hurricaneprone Miami can't afford to be cavalier about windows, Strang specs WinGuard products from PGT. The vinyl windows have impact-resistant laminated glass and multichambered frames; the aluminum windows are made with a clear polyvinylbutyral interlayer between sheets of glass. Windows can be speced in operable or fixed styles. PGT Industries, 800.282. 6019; www.pgt industries.com.



With Modern Masters' Metal Effects decorative painting system, Strand can create patinaed and oxidized metal finishes for his projects' architectural elements. "Although [the look] isn't for everyone, it can really warm up a space," he says. The water-based paints are sold in 6ounce and 16-ounce bottles in seven colors. Modern Masters, 800. 942.3166; www.modern mastersinc.com.

## architects' choice

richardson architects

mill valley, calif.

"metro shelving is inexpensive, strong, and versatile."



www.richardsonarchitects.com

heidi richardson

#### ► moon glow

Conceived by the prolific Philippe Starck, the Flos Romeo Moon S1 pendant strikes a bold chord in this Richardson-designed kitchen. The fixture is 8½ inches tall and has an acid-etched pressed borosilicate glass internal diffuser, a pressed-glass shade, and an injection-molded transparent polycarbonate diffuser support. It hangs from a steel suspension cable. Flos, 631.549.2745; www.flos.com.



#### ▲ set with erecta

Metro Wire Super Erecta shelving, distributed by New York Store Fixture Co., is a simple, yet rugged, system designed to support uniformly distributed loads of up to 800 pounds. Components come in a handy range of widths and lengths - 14 inches by 24 inches at the low end and 36 inches by 72 inches at the highand can be speced in black, chrome, stainless steel, or custom colors. Richardson installed Super Erecta in the storage areas of her office and has even used it as a sink vanity. New York Store Fixture Co., 800. 336.8353, www.nystorefixture.com.

DuPont's Zodiaq surfacing is made from 93 percent quartz crystal, giving it a depth and radiance and making it strong, durable, and heat- and scratchresistant. According to the manufacturer, the product is also easy to maintain and highly resistant to staining. It comes in 39 colors, but Richardson prefers the lighter shades. DuPont, 800. 906.7765; www.zodiaq.com.





▶ over the edge Richardson says she uses low-profile Tydix edge pulls when she doesn't want hardware to be "a decorative element." The pulls are made from solid brass or solid bronze with ¼-inch, 5/16-inch, 3/8-inch, and 1/2inch diameters. Finishes include polished and satin nickel, polished and satin chrome, and oilrubbed bronze. Tydix Products, 805.788.0588; www.tydix.com.





tanks again

In lieu of traditional hot water tanks, Richardson uses on-demand tankless heaters, which save money and space. Unlike standard water heaters, tankless systems heat water on-demand and deliver a continuous supply of hot water for as long as you need it. Rinnai manufactures a full line of systems with outputs ranging from 15,000 BTU to 237,000 BTU. Rinnai America Corp., 678.829.1700; www.foreverhotwater.com.

"a 21st-century product for the 21st-century house. saves space and energy. all of our new houses have them."

## architects'

moskow architects



keith moskow, aia

www.moskowarchitects.com

boston

"rais woodburning stoves are efficient, beautifully designed heating elements."



#### ▲ sound cork

Anyone can install cork on the floor, but Moskow says the all-natural material makes a fine wall covering too. "It deadens sound and allows for easy pin-ups," he explains. His cork of choice is Wicanders. The collection's manufacturer says cork's aircell structure functions as a miniature sound and thermal insulator. Amorim Flooring North America, 410.553.6062; www.wicanders.com.



Moskow says unfading green slate tiles are "perfect for interior and exterior use," which is why he specs them for floors, chimney cladding, and walls (as seen here in this Moskow project). His preferred pick from Camara Slate Products is available in square and rectangular sizes, such as 6 inches by 18 inches and 9 inches by 24 inches, and in six natural colors. Camara Slate Products, 802.265.3200; www.camaraslate.com.





#### 

CableRail by Feeney Architectural Products is one of the easiest ways to create a railing that preserves sight lines. Ideal for exterior or interior use, it includes a standard cable-assembly infill system, custom cable assemblies, and fittings. The standard assemblies are made from stainless steel cable with ¼-inch, ¾6-inch, and ¼-inch diameters and come in 5-foot increments spanning up to 70 feet. Feeney Architectural Products, 800.888.2418; www.feeneygateway.com.

RAIS Komba woodburning stoves for their form as well as their function. The Scandinaviandesigned units' fire-

▲ slow burn

Moskow specs

boxes are tightly sealed to burn efficiently and are powerful enough to heat up to 1,292 square feet of space. "The stoves can be adjusted so that a few logs will burn and heat all night long," Moskow says. The 24¾-inch-by-22-inch-by-43¼-

inch stoves come

with soapstone or

steel panels and a

soapstone baking

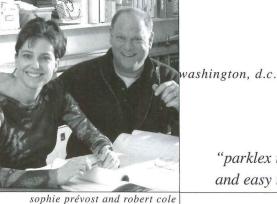
www.rais.com.

liner and top plate.

RAIS, 888.724.7789;

Photos: Interior by Eric Roth; cork flooring by George Brown

cole prévost



www.coleprevost.net

"parklex is stable, water-resistant, and easy to work with."

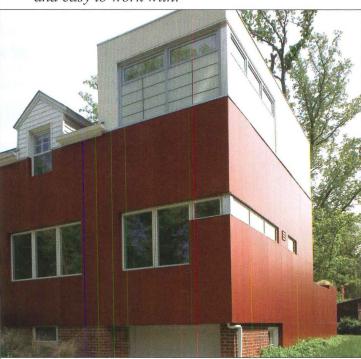


gropius grip

Then specifying details people will such, Cole Prévost seeks the highestlatity products. Its principals therefore in to Walter Gropius' 1923 Bauhaus wer. Manufactured by TECNOLINE, handle comes in two lengths (4½ ches and 4½ inches) and four finishes atin or polished nickel, polished rome, and polished brass). Two signs are available: square rose the visible screws or round rose the concealed screws. TECNOLINE, 4.421.437350; www.tecnoline.de.



Cole says Parklex 1000 is a versatile wood-resin composite panel that can be used for cabinetry or as a rainscreen (seen here on a Cole Prévost house). Made by Spain-based Composites Gurea and distributed by Finland Color Plywood Corp., Parklex has a natural wood surface that resists rain, extreme sunlight, wind, and snow. Finland Color Plywood Corp., 310.396. 9991; www.fincolorply.com.



"we love dornbracht fixtures because they are innately well-constructed and easy to maintain. and they perform exceedingly well."



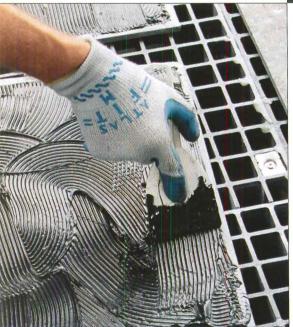
### 

A new addition to Dornbracht's famed faucet lines, Maro exemplifies what the company calls the trend toward more angular, expressive shapes. Finished in polished chrome or matte platinum, the faucet projects 9½ inches and rises 13½ inches high. It's made from cast brass and uses ceramic disc cartridges. Dornbracht Americas, 800.774. 1181; www.dornbracht.com.

# architects'

michelle kaufmann designs

oakland, calif.



▲ above it all

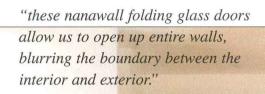
GratedeX from deXstone is Kaufmann's choice for achieving a stone deck above grade. The system—comprised of a fiberglass underlayment that's installed over traditional wood framing—uses stainless steel fasteners and adhesive to accept natural stone or tile. Its 16-inch stones are installed with an ¼-inch joint spacing to promote water drainage. deXstone, 503.439.8872; www.dexstone.com.

www.mkd-arc.com ► fresh breeze

michelle kaufmann, aia

To open up her homes to the great outdoors, Kaufmann uses folding patio doors from NanaWall. "One can moderate the temperature in the space by how much [you] open the doors, using the breezes for natural cooling," she says of the product, seen here on her Sunset Breezehouse, Available in custom sizes with multipoint hardware, the systems can be fabricated in such species as sapeli mahogany and speced with aluminum cladding. NanaWall Systems, 800.873.

5673; www.nanawall.com.





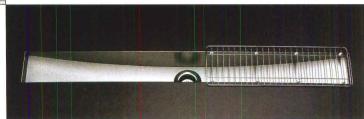


"i have always loved the tiles from heath ceramics, their mixture of handcrafted feel with clean lines is so lovely."



### ▲ greater good

Heath Ceramics is known for its glazed, handcrafted tiles, but Kaufmann, who is designing a line of recycled tiles for Heath, also appreciates its environmental conscience. Made from high-fire stoneware, Heath tiles can be used for floors, walls, pools, or fountains. Their 2-inch, 3-inch, 4-inch, 6-inch, and 12-inch configurations are available in more than 80 crackle, matte, and glossy glazes. Heath Ceramics, 415.332. 3732; www.heathceramics.com.



### ▲ trough love

Kaufmann appreciates the versatility of Kohler's stainless steel trough sink. "We have this in our Glidehouse and have served sushi over ice in it," she says. The undercounter design is 33 inches long with a basin depth of nearly 6 inches; a wire rack and wire storage basket are included accessories. Sound-absorbing pads minimize noise and vibration. Kohler, 800.456.4537; www.kohler.com.

"this long, linear sink is functional and aesthetically clean. you can fill it with ice and serve white wine or sodas."



Kaufmann eschews traditional water heaters in favor of tankless versions that conserve energy and save money. "Another advantage to this technology is that you can never run out of hot water," she says. Her favorite orand, Takagi, manufactures models with a variety of capacities. Takagi Industrial Co. USA, 888.882.5244; www.takagi.com.



"tankless hot water heaters are another excellent way to conserve energy."

# architects'

"this line of hvac diffusers adds interest and great design to a toooften-overlooked

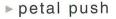
interior element."



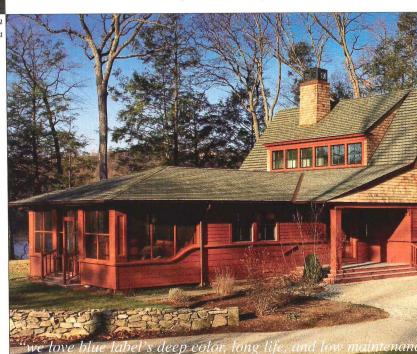
▲ run, spot, run Seiho says its Aluminum SpotDiffuser is ideal for moving conditioned air from an inaccessible place to a work environment such as a kitchen. Function aside, Powers is drawn to its "contemporary, almost aeronautical style" and its "soft lines, [which] harmonize well with more traditional interiors too." The unit is crafted from heavygauge anodized aluminum in sizes ranging from 3 inches to 20 inches. Seiho International, 800.248.0030; www.seiho.com.

donald powers architects

providence, r.i.



"There's not a better-looking \$25 light fixture anywhere," Powers says of Ikea's Knappa pendant lamp. Made from white polypropylene, the fixture measures 18 inches wide and 14¼ inches tall. Ikea, 800.434.4532; www.ikea.com.



donald powers, aia www.donaldpowersarchitects.com

### real appeal

No. 1 Grade Blue Label shingles, seen here on a Powers-designed house, are a premium-grade product for roofs and sidewalls. Powers especially likes the way they can be steamed for curved applications. Comprised of 100 percent defect-free heartwood with a 100 percent edge grain, the shingles are manufactured in 16-inch, 18-inch, and 24inch lengths with a number of thicknesses. Cedar Shake & Shingle Bureau, 604.820. 7700; www.cedarbureau.org.

### 

For durable exteriors that look like wood, Powers turns to Hardiplank from James Hardie. "It does a far better job of simulating true clapboards than other products in its class," he says. The fiber-cement siding resists rotting, cracking, and moisture. Each 12-foot plank is primed and sealed. Prefinished planks are also available. James Hardie Building Products, 800. 348.1811; www.jameshardie.com.

### ▶ light bridge

Powers turns to Brass Light Gallery for lighting fixtures that bridge the gaps among architectural styles. "The basic designs are mainly traditional, but the range of options for shades and glass types make them adaptable to more contemporary interiors," he says. Products come in a variety of sizes and finishes. Brass Light Gallery, 800.243. 9595; www.brasslight.com.

## coop 15



seattle

"cembonit cladding sheets are stable and durable, requiring no paint or sealer. our clients love the low maintenance."

jill lewis, aia www.coop15.com

### ▶ wild tile

Royal Mosa's Romain series of unglazed floor tiles lends a decidedly European flair to this COOP 15 bath. Special manufacturing techniques make each tile unique, while conventional and unconventional sizes make them versatile. "The proportion of these tiles is very different from typical square options," says Lewis, who favors the 4-inchby-24-inch absolute black tile shown here. Royal Mosa, 31.43. 368.9444; www.royalmosa.com.



### ▲ high and dry

Lewis says Cembonit cementbased cladding sheets hold up to the rigors of her climate. "Installed as part of a rainscreen system, these panels handle the wet Northwest weather well," she says. Crafted from cement, cellulose fibers, and fillers, the product is lightweight and low-maintenance, says its maker. Sheets come in thicknesses of ¼ inch and 5/6 inch and measure up to 4 feet by 10 feet. Cement Board Fabricators, 800.366.5378; www.cbf11.com.

### ▶ the anti-log

Moderustic glass rocks function as a decorative alternative to conventional gas fireplace designs. "Rather than a fake log set, flames simply emerge from the glass rocks," Lewis explains. The company says the glass is processed to burn clean with no cinders, embers, or smells. More than 350 products are available in a range of colors and sizes. Moderustic, 909.989.6129; www.moderustic.com.



### architects' choice

van dam architecture and design

portland, maine



▲ original species

Van Dam says he's a fan of all-wood windows from Kolbe & Kolbe because "the wood is a good low-maintenance alternative to aluminum." Available in casement, awning, double-hung, and slider styles, the windows' exterior components are immersed in a lifeprolonging preservative treatment before assembly. Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Co., 800.955.8177; www.kolbe-kolbe.com.

### warm steel

Van Dam appreciates Ideal Roofing because the company offers "great profiles and accessories" at a "competitive cost." Its oven-baked, prepainted, corrugated steel roofs can be custom-cut to lengths of up to 40 feet in 30 colors. Sheets are available in four profiles and in thicknesses ranging from 0.015 inches to 0.026 inches. Van Dam used the material as siding and roofing on this house. Ideal Roofing Co., 800.267.0860; www.ideal roofing.com.





"the simple shapes and compact size make the 6230 varial useful for a wide range of interior design directions. they are very well-made and relatively inexpensive."

### ▲ cool design

Architects are attracted to Sub-Zero refrigerators for a number of reasons; for Van Dam, it's the aesthetics. The "minimally detailed clean surfaces pick up light and reflect it into a room, dissolving the bulkiness of kitchens," he explains. The handbuilt refrigerator/freezers are designed with dual cooling systems, electronic controls, and an alarm to alert homeowners when the door is ajar. Sub-Zero Freezer Co., 800.222.7820; www.subzero.com.

### ▼ right light

The 6230 Varial sconce from Belfer is one of Van Dam's favorite light fixtures. Made from cast aluminum, the Varial has a clear tempered-Pyrex diffuser and an adjustable housing that pivots 34 degrees to light vaulted ceilings. It operates on a 100-watt or 150-watt halogen bulb and can be speced in powder-coat black or white or in copper, raw aluminum, or custom finishes. Belfer, 800.726.5759; www.belfergroup.com.



# architects'

# steely architecture

san francisco

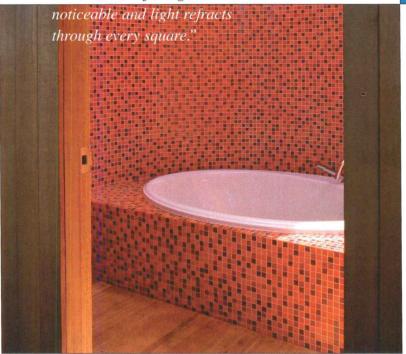
"balance a great exterior view with this in the interior. all oscar niemeyer curves. very beautiful."



craig steely www.craigsteely.com

### rules of refraction

Like many architects, Steely is a fan of glass tiles; his favorite is the Cobbletones series from Interstyle, seen here in one of his bath projects. Impervious to liquids and resistant to fading, staining, and discoloration, the 1-inch-by-1-inch mosaics are mesh-mounted on 12-inch-square sheets. They can be speced in 12 color groupings, including berry and peacock. Interstyle Ceramic & Glass, 604. 421.7229; www.interstyle.ca.



"strike the grout low, and when light hits the surface from above,

the thickness of the glass is

A fire in the sky
Why spec an earthbound
fireplace when you can opt
for this high-flying number
suspended from the ceiling?
Designed by Doug Garofalo,
AIA, the spun-steel Fireorb
has an overall width of 40
inches and a fire window
that's 13 inches high by 24
inches wide. The 8.375-inchwide flue can be produced in
virtually any length. Fireorb,

847.454.9198; www.fireorb.net.



In Steely's hands, this 17-inch-tall oil-fueled ship's lamp is no mere bauble; it becomes an architectural element. The sleek stainless steel design "is sexier than an electric light or even candles," he says. Steely suggests hanging it above a dining table so you can "make a big deal out of taking it down, lighting it, and hanging it up again." Stelton, 45.39.62.30.55; www.stelton.com.

### ▶ directors' cut

Valli&Valli's vcr line of hardware is designed by renowned architects, so it's easy to see why other architects favor it. Constructed of solid brass or zinc with chrome, satin chrome, and stainless steel finishes, vcr handles, pulls, and knobs "feel good in your hand," Steely says. He also likes that they're "reasonably priced." Valli&Valli (U.S.A.), 877.326. 2565; www.vallievalli.com.



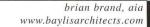
# baylis architects





red state

Even a modernist like Brand can appreciate the "timeless beauty and color" of clear western red cedar siding. Locally grown in the Pacific Northwest, cedar contains natural preservatives that resist moisture, decay, and insect damage. It's also dimensionally stable and lightweight. Western Red Cedar Lumber Association, 866. 778.9096; www.wrcla.org.



### easy does it

Brand favors products that enhance the modernist look and spirit of his work. He says Easy Lock standing-seam metal roofing from Taylor Metal Products delivers the aesthetic he's seeking, with "clean lines, longevity, and beauty," among other traits. Easy Lock's 16-gauge and 24-gauge steel has no visible fasteners and a zero-siphoning lock system that stands up to wind gusts of up to 140 miles per hour. The system is shown here on one of the firm's houses. Taylor Metal Products, 800.574.1388; www.taylormetal.com.





### axor answer

Hansgrohe's Axor plumbing line is Brand's choice for faucets. Available in a wide range of styles for the kitchen and bath, the faucets feature solid cast-brass housing and M2 ceramic disc cartridges, giving the faucets a slimmer profile. Axor can be speced in chrome, brushed nickel, and satinox, as well as with PVD finishes. Hansgrohe, 800.334.0455; www.hansgrohe-usa.com.

# architects'

# val glitsch, faia, architect

houston

"not glittery, like other, cheaper wannabes."



### glass menagerie

When Glitsch wants glass tile, she turns to Ann Sacks. The line includes Clover mini mosaics in a soft and light color palette, Constellation glass in iridescent colors, and Beaulieu custom color blends. Tiles are mesh-mounted on sheets measuring 12 inches or 13 inches square. Ann Sacks Tile & Stone, 800.278.8453; www.annsacks.com.



val glitsch, faia www.valglitsch.com

### ► frosty views

LUMAsite translucent panels from American Acrylic are a lightweight alternative to frosted glass. The shatter-proof sheets are cast from 100 percent acrylic or modified polyester resins and reinforced with fiberglass. In design applications, such as the fence on this house by Glitsch, the fibers are often left visible to create a "silken cobweb" effect. Panels are available in a variety of sizes. American Acrylic Corp., 800.627.9025; www.americanacrylic.com.



### 

Glitsch describes IceStone surfacing as pretty but rugged. Combining 100 percent recycled glass and cement yields a heat- and scratch-resistant terrazzolike material that's said to be free of volatile organic compounds. IceStone slabs measure 52½ inches wide, 96 inches long, and 1½ inches thick and come in standard or custom colors. IceStone, 718.624.4900; www.icestone.biz.



Silestone Leather quartz-based surfacing suggests a texture more animal than mineral. It has "flecks in it, so it's not monotonous" and has a "satin sheen so it doesn't look like fake granite," Glitsch says. Made from 93 percent quartz and 7 percent resins and color, its maker says the material is nonporous and scratch- and stain-resistant. Microban antimicrobial protection is built-in. Cosentino USA, 800.291.1311; www.silestoneusa.com.



"very machined and german."

### ▶ germane german

If the budget permits, Glitsch chooses high-end cabinets from Bulthaup for their "minimalist design and maximalist tolerances." The company's system 20 line offers design freedom with freestanding or mobile elements, while system b3 allows wall-hung base cabinets to float off the floor. Design elements can be speced in veneers, stainless steel, and aluminum. Bulthaup Corp., 800.808.2923; www.bulthaup.com.



### architects' choice

# giulietti/schouten, aia architects

portland, ore.

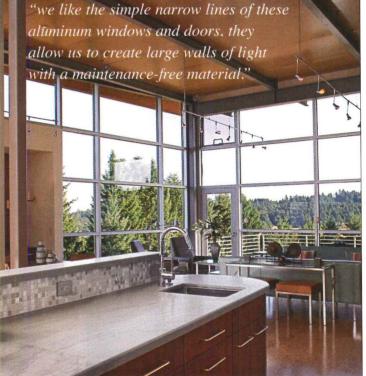
"these are fun, resin-based panels we like to use in the interior for special sliding panels or for screen walls or furniture."



david giulietti, aia www.giuliettiassoc.com

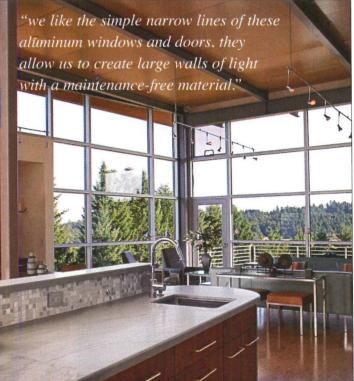
### minding the store

Giulietti/Schouten believes storefront windows are as much at home on a house as they are on a store. That's why it used products from Arcadia for this residence. The company's line of custom products includes thermally and nonthermally broken storefronts and doors; casement, hopper, and ventilating windows are available as well. Arcadia, 800.423.6565; www.arcadiaproducts.com.



### a shoe-in

Leather is ideal for personal goods, but its sound insulation properties and comfort underfoot make it suitable for architectural applications too. "Leather tiles provide a certain warm touch; subtle aroma; and clean, refined lines," Giulietti says, "and they just look great." Blackstock Leather's tiles are made in standard and custom sizes and colors from the same material used for shoe soles. Blackstock Leather, 800.663.6657; www.blackstockleather.com.



### ▲ a touch of grass

"They provide privacy while being translucent and can be fabricated with grasses or other natural elements embedded in them." Giulietti says of 3form's environmentally friendly resin-based panels with decorative interlayers. The line includes a family of panels made of 100 percent recycled materials. Sheets measure 48 inches wide by 96 inches or 120 inches long. 3form, 800.726. 0126; www.3-form.com.



# merle thorpe architects

washington, d.c.



merle thorpe, ncarb www.merlethorpearchitects.com

# building materials as diverse as steel and glass, he turns to Harmon. The custom fabricator specializes in structural steel and glazing assemblies, including curtain walls and glass exteriors, for small- and large-scale newconstruction and renovation projects. Thorpe and Harmon teamed on this pyramid-shaped conservatory/greenhouse addition. Harmon, 952.944.5700; www.harmoninc.com.



### ▲ crossed star

Thorpe says he appreciates the proportions, finishes, and technical excellence of Jado's Colonial 850 cross-handle faucet. Made from cast brass, the faucet uses ceramic disc valves and has three handle options. Finishes include antique nickel, old bronze, and polished chrome. Jado Corp., 800.227.2734; www.jadousa.com.



When outside noise is a concern, Thorpe specs push-out casement windows from Loewen. When combined with RC-1 resilient furring products from USG, Loewen casements "reduce sound-wave transmission into bedrooms and studies," he says. Product features include Douglas fir interiors, low-E glass, and extruded-aluminum cladding in 36 colors. Stock casements come with a standard sound-transmission coefficient of 33 but may be built to even higher specifications. Loewen, 800.563.9367; www.loewen.com. USG Corp., 800.874.4968; www.usg.com.



### architects' choice

fung + blatt architects

los angeles



open casement Fung + Blatt touts the "utilitarian, low-profile" design of Milgard's aluminum casement windows. The windows have clean, narrow sight lines; special hinges that allow them to completely open outward; and mechanically joined corners. They can be speced in white, tan, clear anodized, and bronze anodized finishes with a variety of glass options. Milgard, 800.645.4273; www.milgard.com. michael rosner blatt and alice fung www.fungandblatt.com

plastic makes perfect

Everyone loves frosted glass, but if the budget doesn't permit it, Fung + Blatt opts for inexpensive Lexan Thermoclear cellular polycarbonate from GE Plastics. The stiff, yet lightweight, material transmits light while maintaining privacy and offering flame and UV resistance. It's also virtually unbreakable and comes in a wide range of colors. The material filters light and controls privacy on the husband-and-wife team's home, seen here. GE Plastics, 413.448.7110; www.geplastics.com.

"lexan thermoclear is a light, inexpensive alternative for large expanses of obscured glass."



Photo: Interior by Deborah Bird



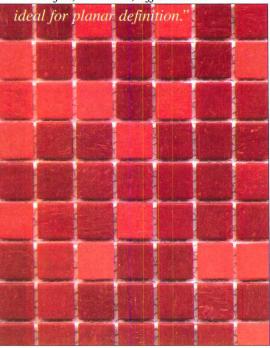
### ▲ rohl with it

The Shaws Original handmade farmhouse kitchen sink from ROHL is made from acid- and alkali-resistant fireclay, so it can be cleaned with abrasive pads and powders. Fung says her firm appreciates the product's "clean lines and deep basin." Sinks come in a variety of sizes and in single- and double-bowl configurations. ROHL, 800.777. 9762; www.rohlhome.com.

### ▼ industrial evolution

The Chicago Faucet Co. manufactures hardworking faucets that are mainstays in commercial and industrial applications, but Fung + Blatt specifies the products in residential work for their "classic good design," Fung says. The faucets are made with cast brass and ceramic disc valves. The Chicago Faucet Co., 847.803.5000; www.chicagofaucets.com.

"colorful, timeless, affordable.



### giving tanks

Unlike typical hot water boilers, an on-demand tankless gas heater from Noritz America takes up little space. But Fung + Blatt also likes the unit's efficiency. Traditional boilers heat water constantly; tankless systems heat water only when it's needed, which may reduce monthly water-heating bills by up to 50 percent. Noritz America Corp., 866.766.7489; www.noritz.com.

### 

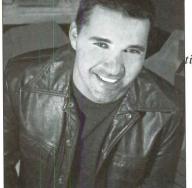
Fung + Blatt is a fan of Hakatai Enterprises' Cartglass mosaic tiles, the company's topselling line. Durable and low-maintenance, the Classic series of ¾-inchthick tiles are mounted on 13-inch-square sheets in 43 colors, 23 blends, and five standard gradients. Hakatai Enterprises, 888.667.2429; www.hakatai.com.





# architects'

Check out Lumber Liquidatus gracia studio



tijuana, mexico



▶ wood times

For siding, Gracia likes to go natural. His preference is California redwood, which he calls "one of nature's most maintenance-free building materials." According to the California Redwood Association, the species accepts finishes well because of its open-celled structure and naturally resists shrinking, warping, and checking. It's also resistant to decay and insects. Dark-stained redwood is shown here on the architect's own home in Mexico. California Redwood Association, 888.225.7339; www.calredwood.org.



Gracia turns to supplier Lumber Liquidators for most of his flooring needs. Lisbon Cork tiles are among his favorites because the insulating material is both warm and resilient. It's also harvested without harming the tree, making it environmentally sustainable. Lumber Liquidators' prefinished cork comes in four colors and as glue-down 6-inch tiles or 12-inch-by-24-inch floating floor planks. Lumber Liquidators, 800.366.4204; www.lumberliquidators.com.

"cork flooring is another material i like to use because it's soft and warm."



### stain alive

When Gracia uses wood siding, he stains it with Cabot products, which he says penetrate deep into the material. Available in 74 colors, Cabot water- and oil-based semi-solid stains are guaranteed not to crack, peel, or blister, even under harsh weather conditions. Cabot, 800.877.8246; www.cabotstain.com.

"redwood's natural stability means

most other woods."

it shrinks, warps, and splits less than

Photos: Exterior by Eduardo de Regules; cork tiles by George Brown

dixon weinstein architects

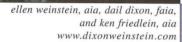
chapel hill, n.c.





wall with a view

Commonly used for greenhouses, Suntuf polycarbonate panels from Palram take on an architectural character in Gracia's hands. "We used it as siding for a house in Γijuana, Mexico, because it's translucent," he says. The choice, he adds, "gave us an opportunity [to allow] light in between the corrugated shapes." Stronger than fiberglass, Suntuf comes in a variety of colors and sizes the maker says are fadeand chip-resistant. Palram Americas, 800.999.9459; www.suntuf.com.



blaze of glory
Dixon Weinstein uses the
multisided fireplace from
Majestic's Designer Series
Regal Group to separate
spaces and preserve views.
The gas-powered unit, shown
here on a Dixon Weinstein
project, comes with a standing pilot or electronic ignition with manual adjustable
controls and is approved as
a vented gas fireplace heater.
CFM Corp., 800.668.5323;

www.majesticproducts.com.



▲ plain good The Plano pendant from LBL Lighting is a natural complement to Dixon Weinstein's spare, yet comfortable, architecture. Measuring 22 inches wide and 7¼ inches high, the pendant has an Italian glass shade with nickel metal accents. The telescopic stem measures 42½ inches long and is available in black or white. LBL Lighting, 708.755.2100; www.lbllighting.com.



### ◆ bella bell

Dixon Weinstein is a fan of spOre's illuminated doorbell buttons because of the drama they create. They "elevate the sense of arrival," Dixon says, "adding a touch of ceremony to a visitor's entrance." The buttons are light-emitting diodes that consume less than a watt of power and are manufactured with a satin-aluminum finish in amber, blue, green, red, and white. spOre, 206.624.9573; www.sporeinc.com.

Photo: Interior by JWestProductions.com

# architects' choice

roger ferris + partners

westport, conn.



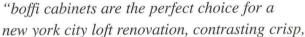
▲ warm by design
In Ferris' view, the form of the Spoon bathtub by Italy-based Agape "perfectly complements the bathroom interior." The white, egg-shaped vessel, shown here in a Roger Ferris + Partners-designed loft, is crafted from a resin/quartz powder composite that reportedly allows the tub to retain heat. It measures 71½ inches by 38¾ inches by 17¾ inches. Agape, 39.0376.250311; www.agapedesign.it.

### www.ferrisarch.com

roger ferris, aia, riba

### ▶ forma and function

Italian kitchen and bath systems provider Boffi represents the height of Euromodernism, but Ferris insists its products are highly functional as well. From Case System 5.0 to Factory 00, Boffi designs are manufactured in a diverse mix of materials-stainless steel, anodized aluminum, and wood veneers among them. Base and upper units can be speced in a variety of sizes. Boffi USA, 212.431.8282; www.boffi-usa.com.







Duratherm Window Corp. is known for producing custom wood windows and doors with two species on the same frame. Popular solid woods include African mahogany, cypress, Douglas fir, and teak. Products have frame depths of up to 10 inches, continuous extruded-silicone weather stripping, and removable interior glass stops, among other advantages. Duratherm Window Corp., 800.996 5558; www.durathermwindow.com.





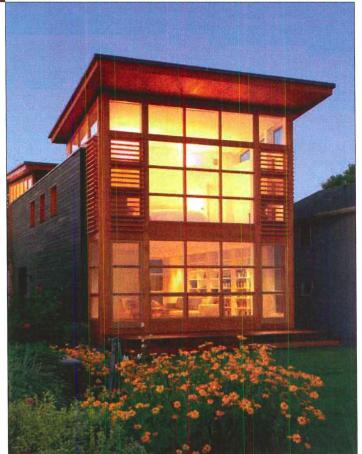
### hide and sleek

Edelman Leather claims its unusual products are just the thing for architectural applications in residential work. Ferris agrees, saying they "offer a unique look" not found in other flooring materials. Floor and wall tiles are cut from the thickest parts of the hide and come in a range of sizes, including 2 inches by 8 inches, 4 inches by 8 inches, and 18 inches square. Various colors, shapes, and patterns are available. Edelman Leather, 800.886.8339; www.edelmanleather.com.



### ▶ good trade

This project by the firm uses a wood curtain wall system with a light-gauge steel frame for maximum wall transparency—a testament, Ferris says, to the versatility of Tradewood Windows and Doors. Tradewood products come with stainless steel or brass fasteners; dadoed, sealed, and screwed joints; and optional steel reinforcing. Tradewood Windows and Doors, 800.410.0268; www.tradewoodindustries.com.

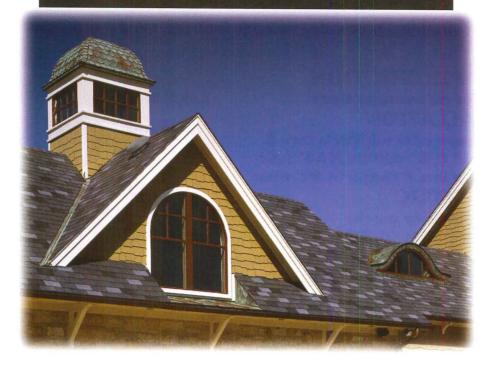


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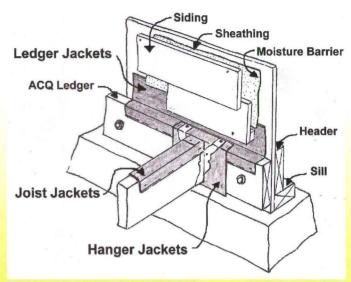
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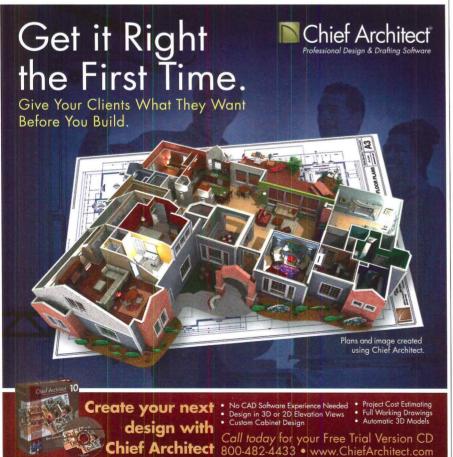
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# surface appeal

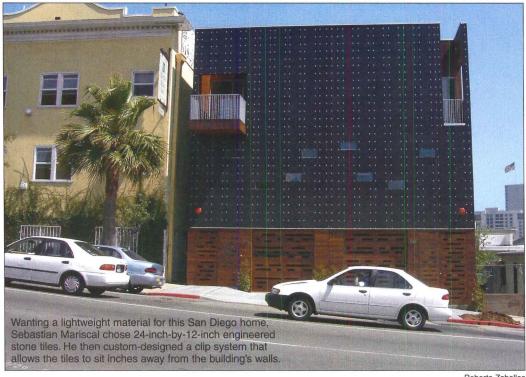
exploring the new depths of unconventional cladding.

### by nigel f. maynard

t's not easy to design a handsome building, no matter what its type. You have to get so many elements just right if you want it to rise above the mediocre or mundane. You have to nail the usual to-do list of massing, scale, proportion, and detail. But great buildings usually have another thing going for them too: a great skin. The best ones are clad in an attractive material, with details resolved in a skillful, nuanced way. Says Sebastian Schmaling, AIA, principal of Milwaukeebased Johnsen Schmaling Architects, "It's the dress of the building—the thing people see first; the thing they want to touch."

A few years ago, this magazine examined intriguing new cladding specs gaining traction—Cor-Ten steel and Parklex among them—and some evergreens (copper and zinc, for example) making a comeback. Today, new options are emerging faster than it takes the ink to dry on your construction drawings. Figuring out which options will endure takes diligence, patience, and ingenuity.

clad tidings
For firms like Johnsen
Schmaling, cladding provides
an opportunity to explore



Roberto Zeballos

the possibilities of what structure can be. "We sometimes work backwards," Schmaling admits. "We have an image of the building in mind and then find something to match. We have some of the craziest ideas of what we want to put on the building, but then we get a reality check."

Reality check notwithstanding, Johnsen Schmaling will often consider unusual or unlikely materials, such as CYRO Industries' Acrylite translucent acrylic sheets. "We wanted to use it as cladding on a small house" and backlight it "to create a glowing cube," Schmaling explains. "But the product moves a lot, so it's hard to control the joints" when it's used as siding. One material the firm has had luck with is Baq+—a high-density resin panel faced with natural wood. According to Prodema, its Spanish manufacturer, Baq+ is coated with an acrylic finish to stand up to harsh environments. Each panel measures 96 inches by 48 inches and comes in five colors.

Architect Sebastian
Mariscal, principal of an
eponymous studio in San
Diego, also spends a fair
amount of time researching
materials for his buildings,
and he's particular in what
he expects from them. "For
me," he says, "the skin has
to be light. I don't believe
in heavy or wet skin, like

stucco. It should be thin, lightweight, and dry."

Mariscal's search has led him to such modern classics as wood, stainless steel, and Cor-Ten, but his new favorite comes from GranitiFiandre, an Italian manufacturer with a U.S. office in Itasca, Ill. Produced as part of the company's Geologica series, NewStone engineered stone is thin, lightweight, and strong, says Mariscal. The tiles come in sizes measuring 12 inches by 24 inches and 12 inches and 24 inches square.

Other architects opt for more familiar materials but put a new spin on them to update their looks. Jill Bouratoglou, RA, and her husband, John, wanted

continued on page 88

### doctor spec

fiber-cement siding on their Brooklyn, N.Y., home, so they clad it with 4-foot-by-8-foot Cembonit panels. "We wanted some masonry to fit the neighborhood," Jill explains, "but we're modernists, so we opted for the [large] cement boards. They're lightweight and durable and allowed us to layer the building with traditional brick." Louisville, Kv.-based Cement Board Fabricators manufactures Cembonit in eight prefinished colors (including granite, jade, and pearl) in sheets as large as 4 feet by 10 feet.

A recent entry in the exterior cladding market is PaperStone XP rainscreen cladding from Hoquiam, Wash.-based KlipTech Bio Composites, which manufactures paper-based countertop surfacing of the same name. According to company founder and vice president Joel Klippert, the FSC-certified cladding is made from up to 100 percent postconsumer recycled paper, contains an aluminum oxide for durability, and has a UV inhibitor to prevent fading. It can be machined and installed like wood in 4-foot and 5-foot widths: 8-foot, 10-foot, and 12-foot lengths; and thicknesses of % inch or ½ inch. Thirteen colors, including denim and slate black, are available.

One product on the rise here in the United States actually originated in the Netherlands. Trespa International's Meteon is a decorative exterior cladding made from thermosetting resins reinforced with wood fiber and laminated under high pressure and heat. The moisture- and UV-resistant panels are particularly wellsuited for rainscreen applications, the company says. Panels can be speced in three standard sizes (60 inches by 120 inches, 73 inches by 100 inches, and 73 inches by 143 inches) and thicknesses of up to ½ inch. Color options are extensive, because the material can be manufactured in dark and light neutrals, midtones, wood

décors, and even metallics. Indianapolis-based Citadel Architectural Products also manufactures a metallic cladding suitable for exterior applications. Panel 15 is a prefinished composite panel comprised of a textured aluminum skin laminated to Douglas fir exterior-grade plywood. A fiberglassreinforced kraft/foil scrim backer steadies the panel and acts as a moisture barrier. Panel 15 comes in a variety of texture finishes and sizes of up to 5 feet by 10 feet.

Yet another option is true stainless steel from Millennium Tiles in Elkhorn, Wis. The company's 15-inch-by-91/4-inch corrosion-resistant tiles are constructed from 75 percent recycled materials and are protected by a 50year warranty. They can be produced in their natural color state or subjected to a special process that creates permanently chip-, fade-, and peel-resistant finishes, including amber bronze, slate, and custom colors.



Courtesy Millennium Tiles

Made largely from recycled materials, these lightweight steel panels from Millennium have a self-aligning tab and a 3/8-inch edge (above). KlipTech's paperbased surfacing (right) reportedly holds its own in most weather conditions



Courtesy KlipTech Bio Composites

In some cases, exciting new options are right in plain sight. When Steven Ehrlich, FAIA, was designing his house in the Los Angeles area, he wanted to clad it in something unique. "One of the hopes I had was that the materials would not need maintenance, coatings, or paint and would not need to be resurfaced," the Culver City, Calif.-based architect says. His search led him to Cor-Ten steel and an unlikely option: Trex composite decking from Winchester, Va.-based Trex Co. "It's made from recycled plastic and wood, so it's sustainable," Ehrlich says. "It won't need paint or oil, and there are no splinters." He also appreciates the fact that the material will fade slightly over time. "I like products where I can see the process of weathering," he says.

### thorns in your siding

Having an opportunity to use alternative materials is exciting, but such explora-

tions and experimentations come with caveats. "Cost is often the big driver," says Terry A. Willis, AIA, a senior associate at Denver-based 4240 Architecture. "But context is huge too. We [prefer] to design buildings that fit the area, so we often can't use the materials we'd like."

Although his firm investigates all the hip materials, Willis says it's important for architects to consider how a material will hold up in a project's regional climate before specing something unconventional. "With our harsh sun and high freezethaw cycles, materials undergo a lot of stress," he warns.

Of course, it's also important to ensure that the sheathing underneath is just as sturdy as the cladding that conceals it. After all, when it comes to great design, beauty isn't merely skin deep. ra

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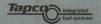
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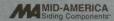
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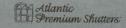


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# new perspective

vista widens the world of home automation.

by rebecca day

icrosoft has been dabbling in home entertainment for a decade now, acquiring WebTV in 1997 and introducing the original Media Center PC in 2002. The first, a set-top box and service for the TV that the company later rebranded as MSNTV, flunked the consumer-satisfaction test; the second faltered out of the gate, as consumers have been slow to embrace the marriage of the TV and PC.

But the convergence we've been hearing about for so long is coming, and maybe the third time-with a nudge from Microsoft's new Vista operating system—will be the charm. Released in late January, the consumer version of Vista is entertainmentdriven, promising to enhance the capabilities of the latest version of the Media Center PC, which stores digital photos, music, and both standard and high-definition television programming.

Windows Vista and Media Center PCs are just the beginning: Microsoft, in fact, envisions a plugand-play world in which all types of consumer gadgets communicate with each other over the Web Services for Devices cross-platform standard. WSD is a commonly accepted language that compatible products use to communicate on a network, eliminating the need for errorprone programming and drivers. Microsoft hopes to extend WSD compatibility to printers, digital cameras, routers, and even cell phones.

### homecoming parade

WSD is coming home, too —in a big way. In 2006, Westerville, Ohio-based Exceptional Innovation (EI) launched Lifelware, a WSDbased software package designed to extend the Media Center platform to home control. Lifelware adds control of lighting, security systems, and climate to the same interface homeowners use to manage their TV shows, music, and digital pictures. One remote allows users to control functions as varied as selecting music and setting a lighting scheme, for example.

Home control through a simplified interface isn't new to the custom electronics market. AMX and Crestron Electronics have been integrating the control of subsystems into nobrainer touchpanel interfaces for years. But building a database of proprietary





Life|ware controls a home's lighting, security, climate, and digital entertainment options through a simplified user interface.

control codes and having installers write lengthy programs is expensive. EI believes Lifelware offers a less time-consuming and more scalable solution to accomplish the same kind of digital home management. According to Mike Seamons, EI's vice president of marketing, traditional control systems can't be installed cost-effectively for a 3,000-square-foot home. Lifelware, on the other hand, "can create a package that's customized to the economics of any size of home," he says.

EI describes Lifelware as "software bridges" between compatible partner products, enabling rapid, reliable, and robust two-way communications between devices. Such communications could power several subsystems to act as part of a macro command. In Leave mode, for instance, the security system arms,

lights go off, thermostats set to a predetermined level, and music shuts off. Through WSD, Lifelware is compatible with products from lighting companies CentraLite Systems, Leviton Manufacturing Co., Smarthome, and Vantage Controls; audio companies Nuvo Technologies and Russound; and media center manufacturers Ace Computers/Ace Digital Home, Hewlett-Packard, Inteset, and Niveus Media.

User interfaces include remote controls and homeowners' TVs, which are connected to the network via Media Center PCs, Media Center Extenders, or Xbox game players. Additionally, Lifelware touchscreen controllers are available for areas where TV control isn't practical, such as a foyer. In the future, PDAs and Web tablets will double as

continued on page 92

### digital home

Lifelware remote controls—using the same intuitive interface to manage music, videos, pictures, and homecontrol functions—from inside or outside the home.

### life preserver?

As WSD capability is built into more subsystems-a crucial part of the equation —the benefits to homeowners and installers will increase, since the network automatically discovers each new device or system. The simplified configuration and programming toolset built into Lifelware should cut down on the time installers have to spend in the field and reduce errors. Because the system is Internet-based, installers can upload configurations to the client's network, which could save an expensive truck roll.

And because an Internetbased control world appears to be the way of the future, EI encourages dealers to add its Lifelcontroller to the mix. Seamons describes the product as "an appliance that runs Windows XP Embedded," noting that "its job, 100 percent, is to manage the house." One selling point is that the Lifelcontroller is not exposed to virus threats or hackers through Internet browsing and e-mail, as a standard PC would be. For backup, EI recommends support products such as the Lifelstorage server, a heavyduty hard drive that provides redundant storage for music files, digital images, recorded TV shows, and videos. To enhance the entertainment experience, EI also offers



Life|ware makes all electronic media in the house instantly accessible. Files may be stored on a central server or spread across the network on a variety of Media Centers.

Lifelvision, a digital TV server that streams four video programs simultaneously, allowing family members to view different programs at the same time.

Seamons sees Lifelware as an extension of a structured wiring package. "It's difficult for consumers to emotionally connect with copper wire in the wall," he reasons. "Adding things that connect to copper wire, such as a Media Center entertainment package in the living room, becomes an emotionally connected sale for the customer. They're not looking at wire anymore. They're looking at a whole new way to use the TV in the living room."

To broaden the system's appeal, EI is working with builders to offer a good/ better/best approach for new-home packages. With a Category-5 cable network as the lifeline, a starter system might include a Media Center PC, a 42-inch plasma TV, a networked camera at the front door, a single-zone music system, a smart thermostat, and six light switches. A higher-end package might include a Media Center PC, a 50-inch TV, an Xbox 360, 28 light switches, two thermostats, three security cameras, and four music zones.

The company also encourages builders to use Lifelware in model homes as a sales tool for technology packages, as well as for the builders themselves. "The entertainment aspect of it is key," Seamons says. "It's most effective when builders have customers sit down, pick up a remote control, and experience it themselves." He also encourages builders to use the Media Center PCs and TVs to run videos about their companies.

### cost of living

Pricing for a Lifelware system typically runs \$1 per square foot for a basic system to \$2 per square foot for a complete installation. EI also offers homeowners three tiers of support packages, beginning with automatic software updates, which run homeowners 9 percent of the cost of Lifelware software per year. (Lifelware software is priced according to the number of devices and clients on the network.)

Control support accounts for an additional 12 percent of the software cost. If the light switch doesn't come on when it's supposed to, customers can call the support center for remote diagnostics. If it can't be fixed remotely, the support center calls the dealer to arrange for a house call.

Media support covers PC or DVD player issues and other entertainment-related problems. Such support runs an additional 9 percent of the software cost, bringing a complete support package to 30 percent of the cost of the software per year.

Seamons sees consumer awareness and manufacturer support as key challenges to Lifelware's success. "Manufacturers need to embrace WSD and put it on thermostats and on lightingcontrol systems," he says. "You can imagine the initial reaction from companies that are making proprietary products," he notes. "They say, 'If I subscribe to this common language, my competitors will be just as good as me."

EI hopes the "rising tide lifts all boats" aphorism will take hold—a tough sell in an industry defined by proprietary, custom solutions. "When we create a platform where everyone can play, the consumer gets more opportunities and buys more, so everyone sells more," Seamons says. "As an industry, we grow." ra

Rebecca Day specializes in writing about home electronics. She can be reached at customhomerd@aol.com. A version of this article originally appeared in residential architect's sister publication Custom Home.



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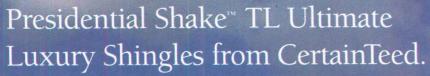


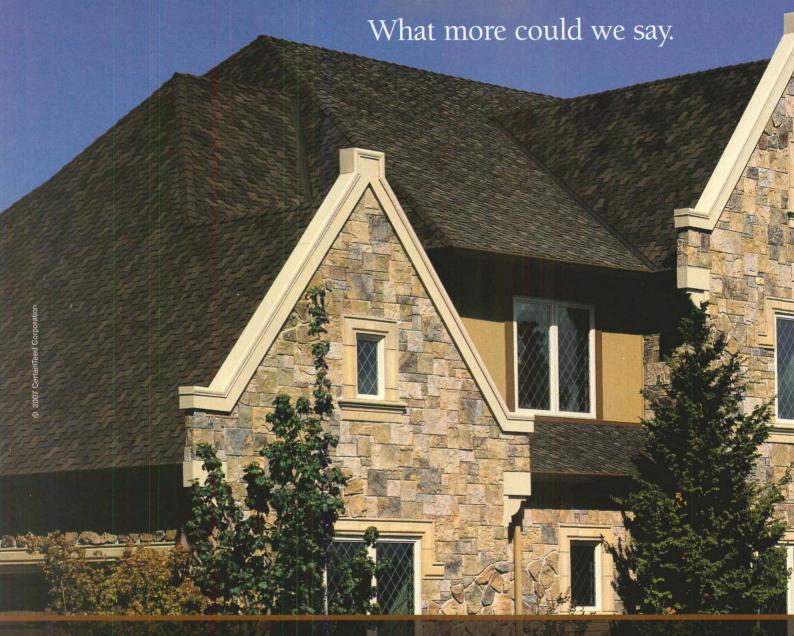


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Manufactured using Imago, a material from KnollTextiles that heat-encapsulates fine fabrics between sheets of resin, the David 23 pendant from Resolute glows vibrantly. Its 1/6-inch-thick



shade is 10 inches wide by 23 inches long and suspends 8 feet on a stainless steel aircraft cable. Six stock shade materials are available, though architects can customize using other Imago patterns. Resolute, 206.343.9323; www.resolute online.com. KnollTextiles, 877.615.6655; www.knoll.com.

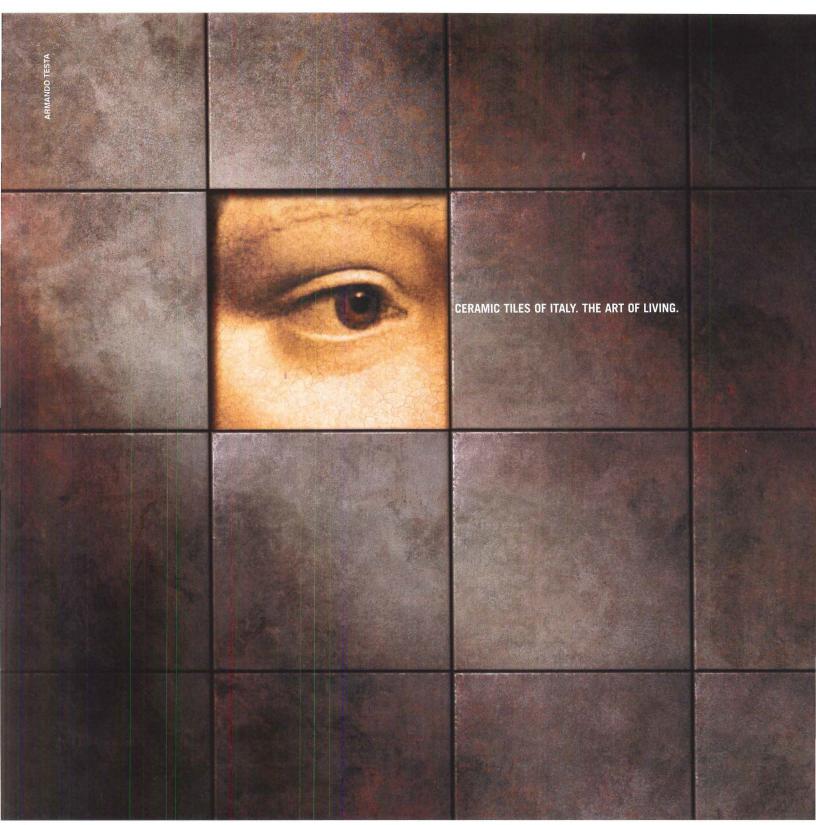
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### off the shelf

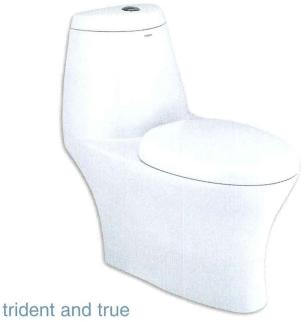
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The dual-flush system that comes standard on Neptune's one-piece Parma toilet reportedly saves 0.8 gallons per flush when the low-volume button is depressed. The unit's specially engineered antiblockage trap, "whisper-quiet" flushing, and bacteria-resistant double-glazed porcelain enhance its otherworldly allure. Neptune, 450.773.7058; www.neptuneb.com.

### whistle clean

The patented EverClean antimicrobial glaze used on the Cadet 3 toilet will keep it sparkling like new even after years of use. Or so says manufacturer American Standard, which promises dirt-, mold-, mildew-, and bacteria-resistant toilet



surfaces for the lifetime of the toilet. Another company innovation, the "Flush Right Flushing System," uses an oversized flapper and 3-inch valve to ensure reliable and smooth flushing. Choose from black, bone, linen, silver, or white. American Standard, 800.442.1902; www.american standard-us.com.

continued on page 98

### off the shelf



### all swashed up

A contoured, heated, and germ-resistant seat is the first of many luxuries provided by Brondell's Swash line of high-tech toilet seats. Personalized settings programmed into a wireless remote adjust water and seat

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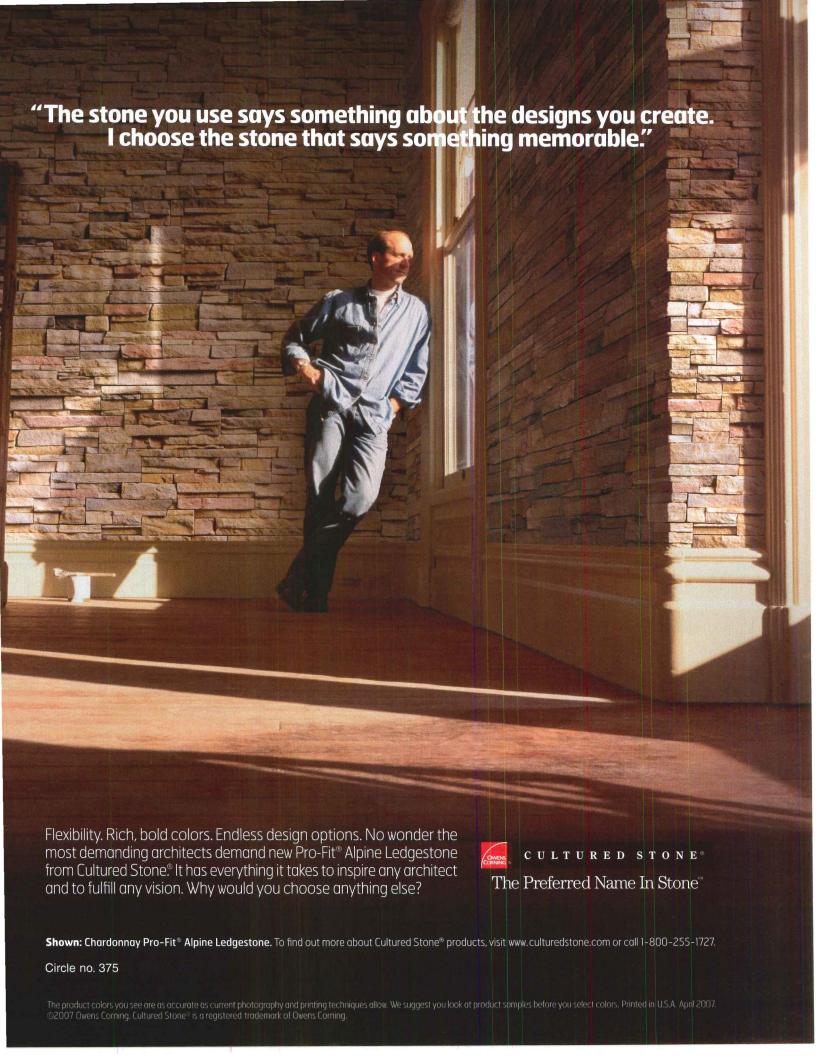
a ceramic duct, where a carbon filter attracts and absorbs odor molecules and recirculates fresh air. The toilet is powered using regular batteries, a plug-in-module, or an in-wall transformer. Villeroy & Boch, 877.505.5350; www.villeroy-boch.com.



### dry state

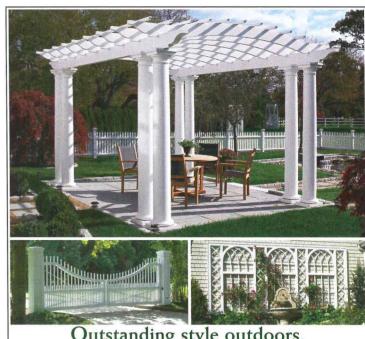
Duravit says its Dry urinal can save a family of four up to 35,000 gallons of water annually because the device doesn't have to be connected to a water source. Instead, Dry runs on a specially developed plant-based fluid, dubbed Dry Blue, that's heavier than liquid waste and powerful enough to force waste directly into the sewage system. The recommended amount reportedly lasts for around 5,000 uses before a refill becomes necessary. The urinal, meanwhile, has a porefree surface that resists dirt and bacteria. Duravit USA, 888.387.2848; www.duravit.us.

-shelley d. hutchins





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### **Product Listings Make Your Project Better!**

The next few pages showcase a variety of kitchen & bath building materials from some of the leading manufacturers in the industry. This special section is a great way to compare and contrast the options available for both new construction and renovation projects. Take a moment to scan these listings and learn more about the wide array of products on the market and what differentiates each from the next. Be sure to contact the manufacturer directly or use the reader service card inside this magazine to get more information on each item listed.

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# KITCHEN + BATH

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### The Benefits Of Membership

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www.nkba.org. 1-800-THE-NKBA.

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www.eldoradostone.com. 1-800-925-1491.

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Medora blends beautifully into granite and other solid-surface countertops for an upscale, clean look. The single-lever handle offers easy-to-use temperature and flow control, while the ergonomically-designed pullout wand makes performing everyday tasks in and around the sink



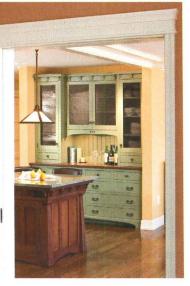
easy. Users can switch between several water flow patterns, including stronger and veggie spray. Homeowners can also choose Moen's patented patentee, which instantly stops and starts the flow of water.

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Crown Point Cabinetry, a family owned and operated custom cabinetmaker, handcrafts the finest quality cabinetry for kitchens, baths, and other rooms. Using all-wood construction, they craft period styles in Shaker, Arts & Crafts, Early American, and Victorian. Beautiful hardwoods include quartersawn white oak, cherry, sapele mahogany, and maple. Custom finishes, including Old Fashioned Milk Paint, rich glazes over stain, or their Classical paint are also available.

v.crownpointcabinetry.com. 1-800-999-4994.

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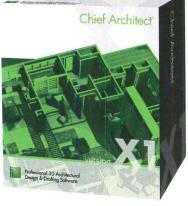


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# KITCHEN + BATH

### **Robinson Brick Company**



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www.robinsonbrick.com

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### **Enkeboll Designs**

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www.enkeboll.com. 1-800-745-5507.

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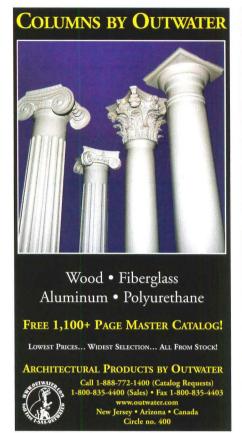
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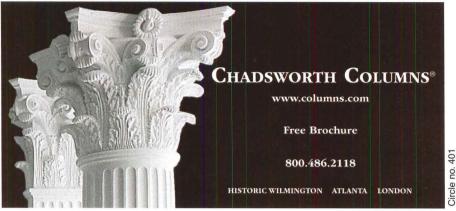
www.italytile.com

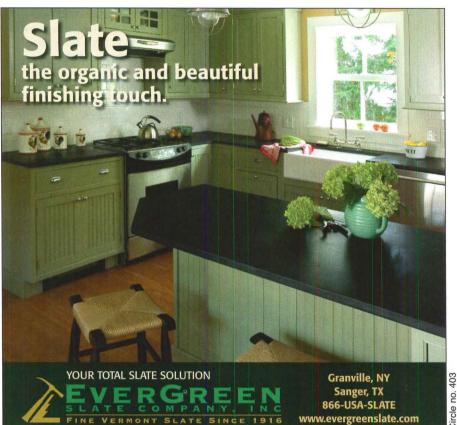
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# kitchen & bath/architect's showcase





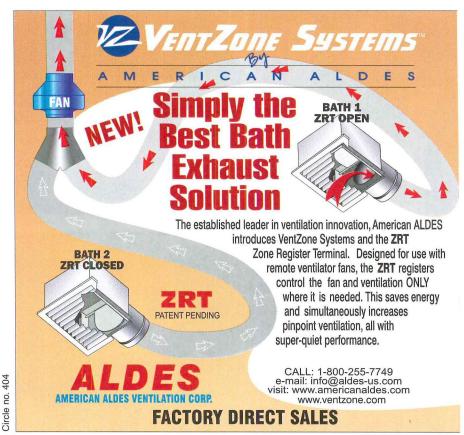


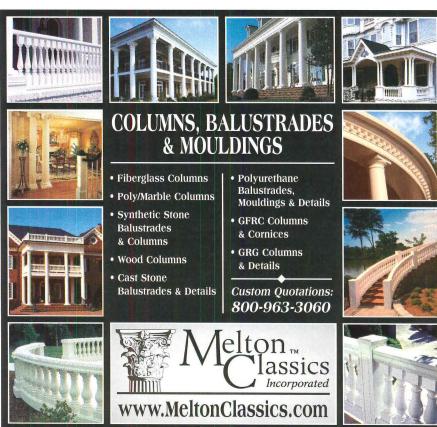


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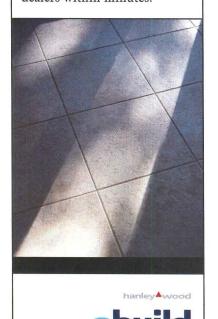
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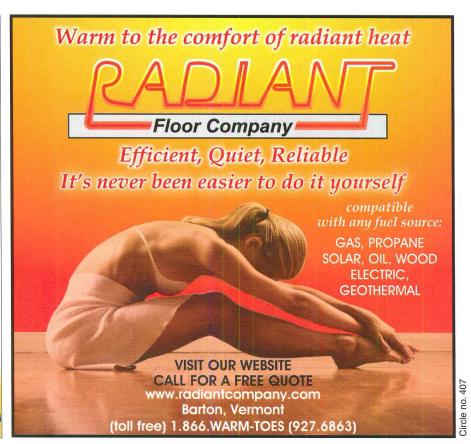
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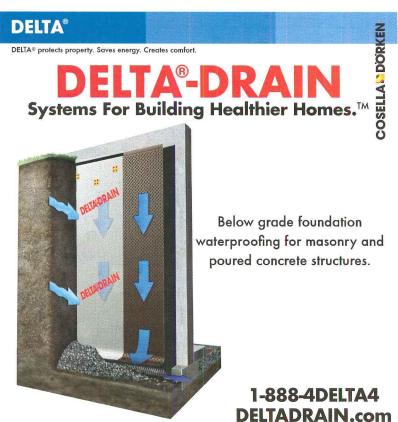
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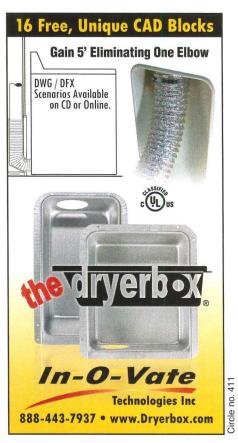














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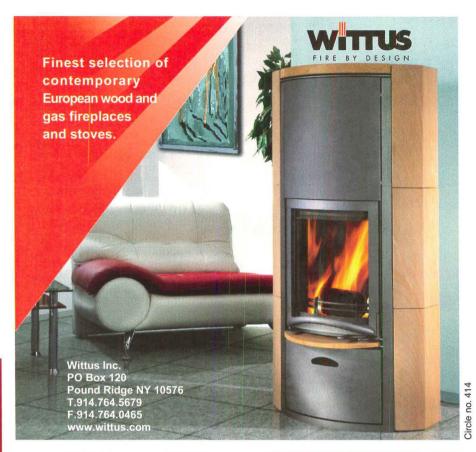
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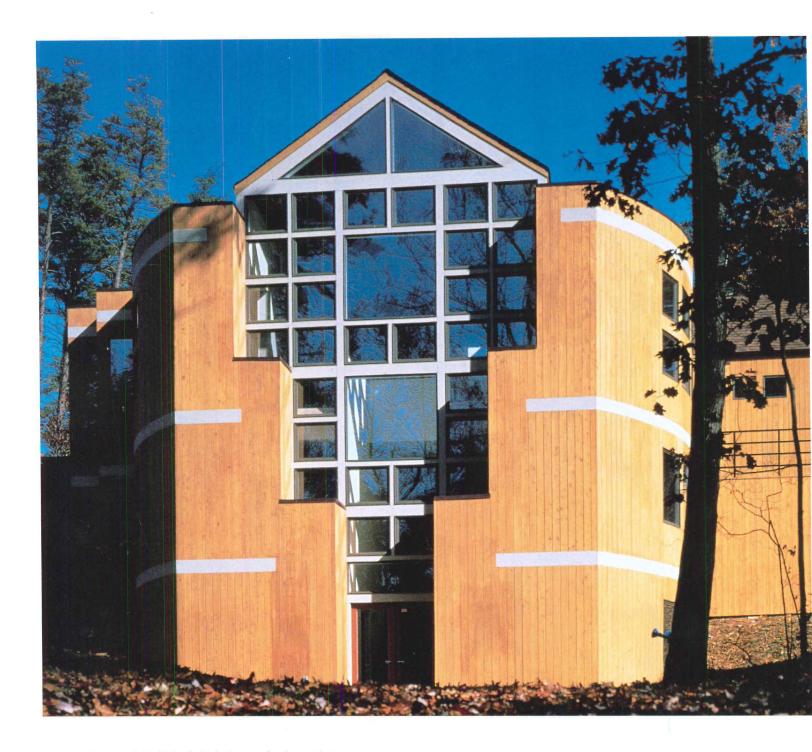


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