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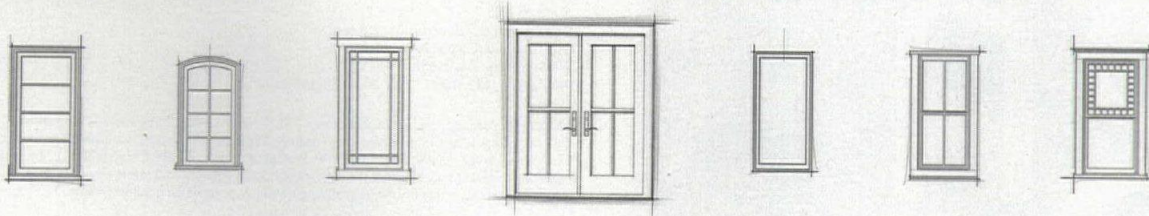
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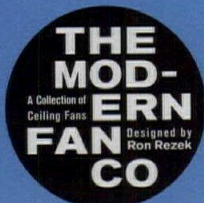


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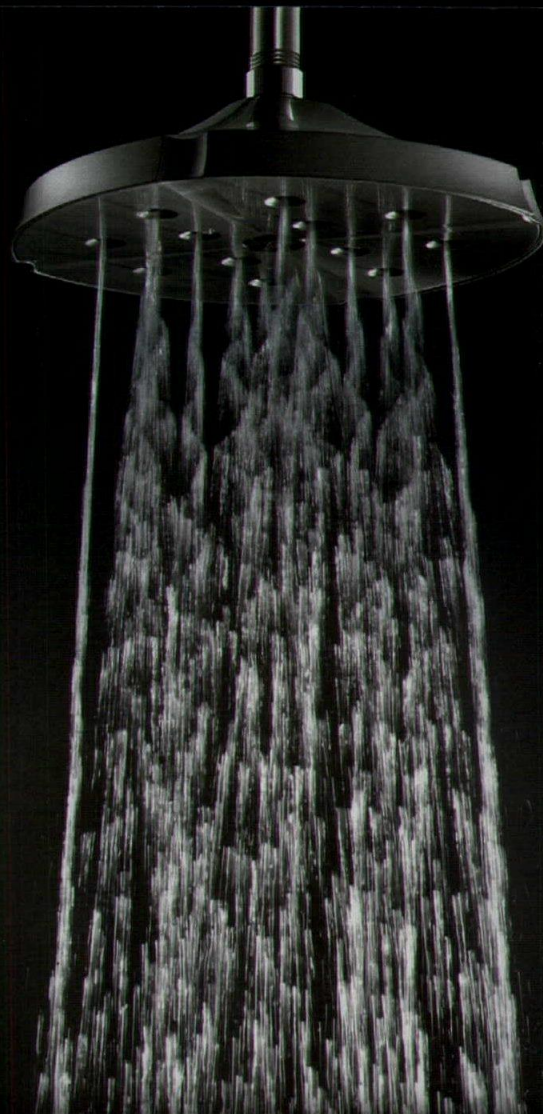
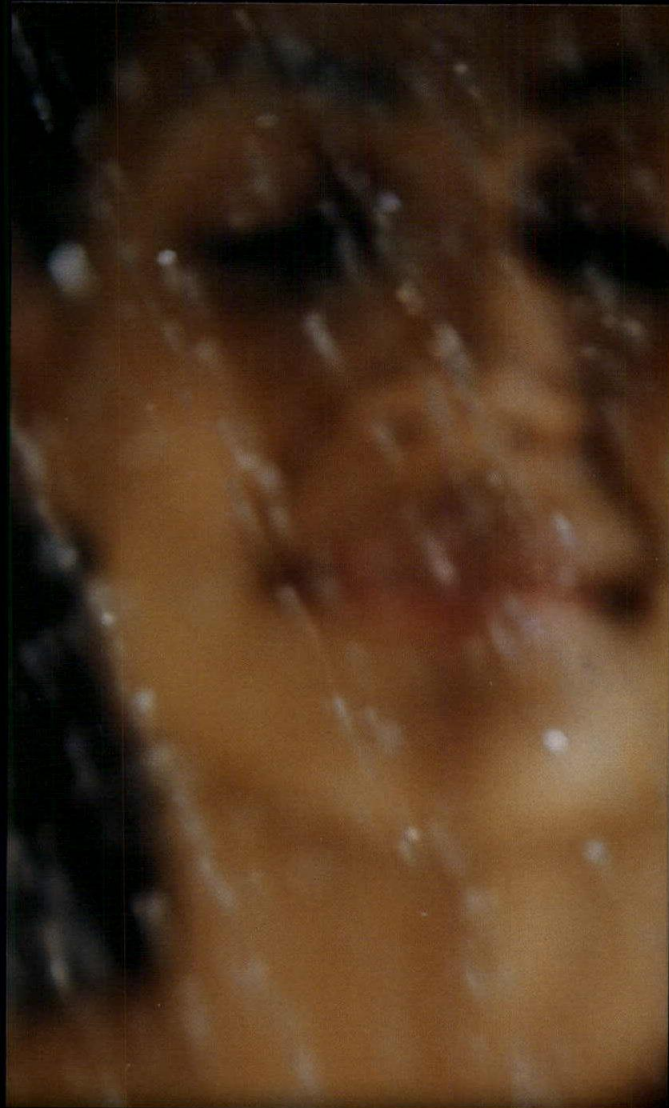
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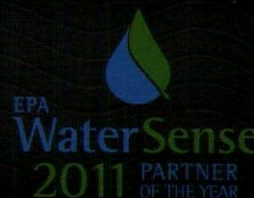


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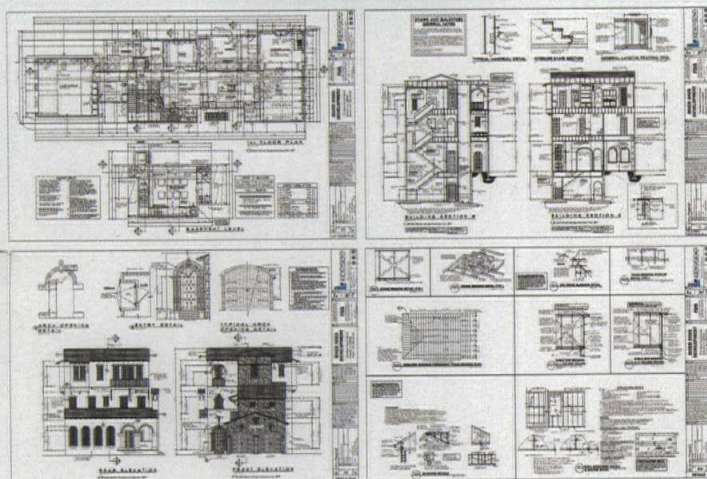
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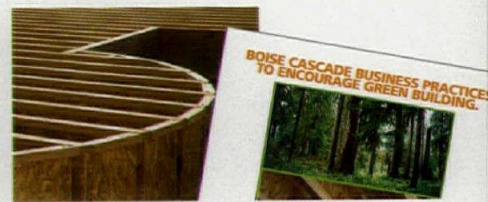
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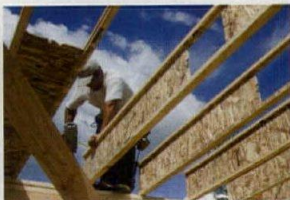
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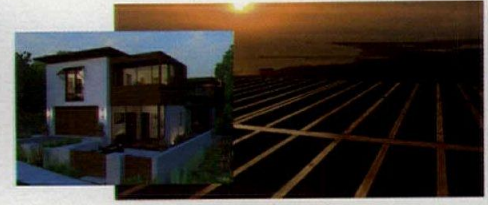
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Many great faces have graced the cover of our magazine in the past 15 years. Here, we highlight some of our favorite portraits.

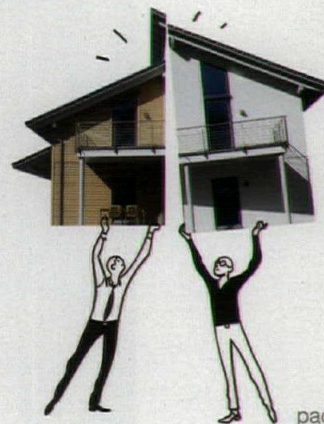
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25 practice

With such easy access to the Internet these days, how do architects protect their work and deal with copyright issues?

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We take a closer look at one of our most read Web stories on the reinventions of home.



15 years of residential architect

15 young firms to watch page 40

This collection of young firms (in practice for 15 years or less) showcases talent on the rise and leaves us optimistic about the future of residential architecture.

*by bruce d. snider, hallie busta,
meghan drueding, shelly d. hutchins,
and nigel f. maynard*

15 advances in residential practice page 56

As the profession has evolved, so, too, have the methods and tools used by architects.

In recent years, these 15 advances have propelled the residential practice forward.

by megan drueding and bruce d. snider

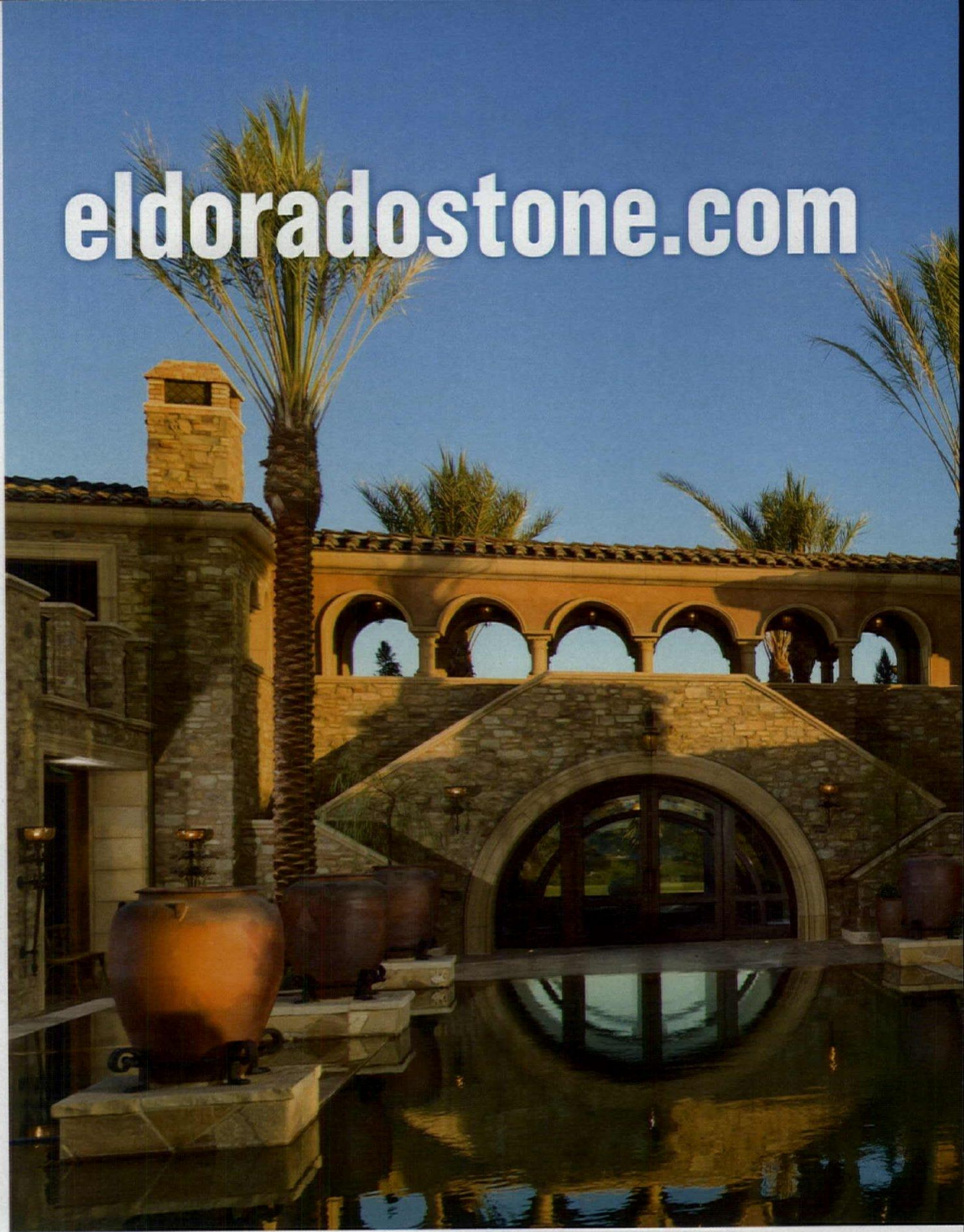
15 products architects can't live without page 60

A result of some thorough research and thought, we present to you 15 products that have been mainstays of the average custom home project over the years.

by nigel f. maynard

Cover photo: David Sharpe; rendering (above): Courtesy Interface Studio Architects; illustration: Kyle T. Webster

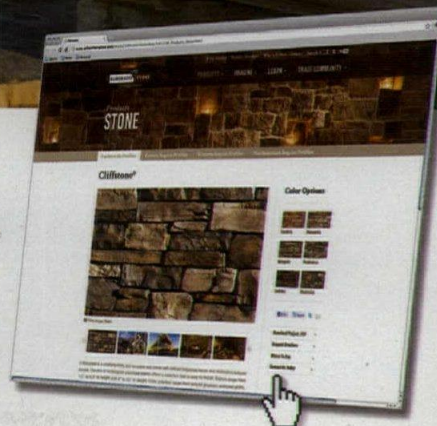
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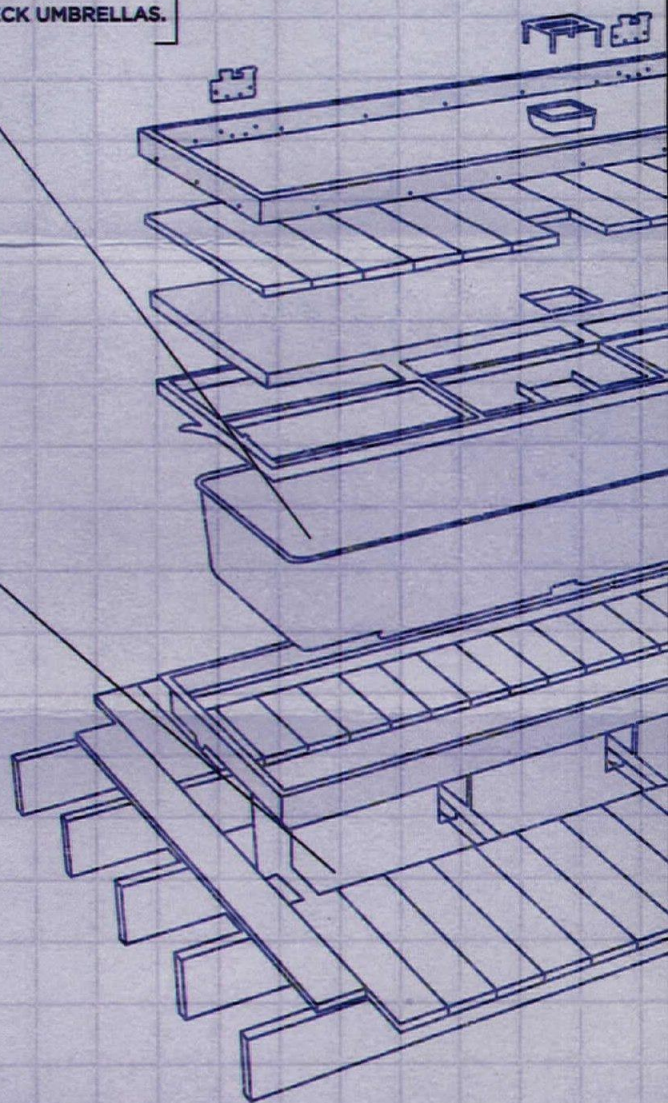
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from the editor

it's our birthday

and we invite you to join in the celebration.

by s. claire conroy

fifteen years ago this month, the first issue of this magazine appeared in the mailboxes of 30,000 residential architects across the country. For the first time in a very long stretch, designers of housing had a professional publication dedicated to the noble enterprise that is their life's passion. Their work was no longer ghettoized, relegated to the back of the bus as architecture magazines gave their front seats to big public or commercial buildings and star architects.

We put residential architects on our covers. (You'll see some of the best of those in the following pages and in an expanded slideshow on our website.) And we helped them find their voice among the public and among their larger-firm peers. In so doing, they reached out to others in residential practice and formed their own interest groups. The first was the Congress of Residential Architecture in 2004, and the next was the Custom Residential Architects Network, which last year was made its own Knowledge Community within the American Institute of Architects. We're proud of the help we gave

and continue to give each group. Both are a mainstay of our annual Reinvention Symposium, now entering its ninth year.

Another long-term success that pleases us is our annual *residential architect* Design Awards. Founded in 2000, it's the largest and most competitive housing design program in the country. More than 10,000 entries have flowed through our doors since its inception and, winnowed down to fewer than 400 total winners, they demonstrate the amazing strength and breadth of work residential architects can achieve.

This year, we honored our 2012 winners on the show floor of the AIA National Convention in Washington, D.C., along with the winners of the AIA Housing Awards and the AIA/HUD Secretary's Awards. It was a magical moment to see our Architect Live Broadcast Center space filled to the brim with award winners and supporters of residential design. Our event was the biggest draw among all the center's programming. It really felt like residential architects had arrived. Not only did you have a seat at the table, you were at the head of it for a time.

Which brings me to yet another important



Mark Robert Halper

milestone in our journey. In January 2011, this magazine became a partner magazine of the AIA. So, that coveted seat at the table will last more than just a week for proponents of residential architecture and its practitioners.

With our website—re-launched in 2010—we expanded our reach beyond the architect-to-architect conversation, drawing in all house enthusiasts to explore what constitutes good design. The website has enjoyed very strong growth over the months, demonstrating that as we devote more energy to our digital audience, we'll reap returns for the residential architecture profession as

well. In conjunction with our sister magazine, CUSTOM HOME, we founded an "newsletter" magazine in February that we call Design Studio. It has helped double our impact on both magazines' websites with a concentrated focus on the custom residential work that architects and builders do so well.

As we celebrate our sweet 15, we have a sad milestone to recall as well. Our founding art director, Judy Neighbor, died four years ago. She helped make us what we are today and we share our 15 years of successes with her. *ra*

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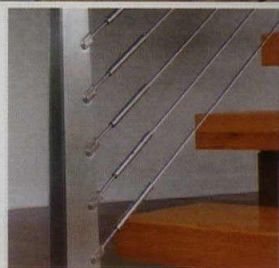
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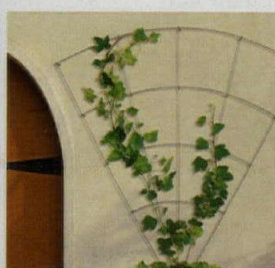
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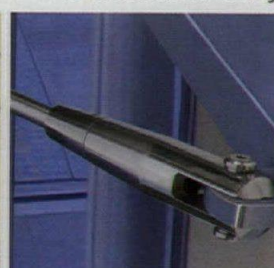
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john carney, faia

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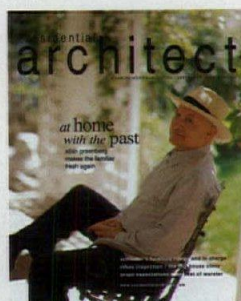
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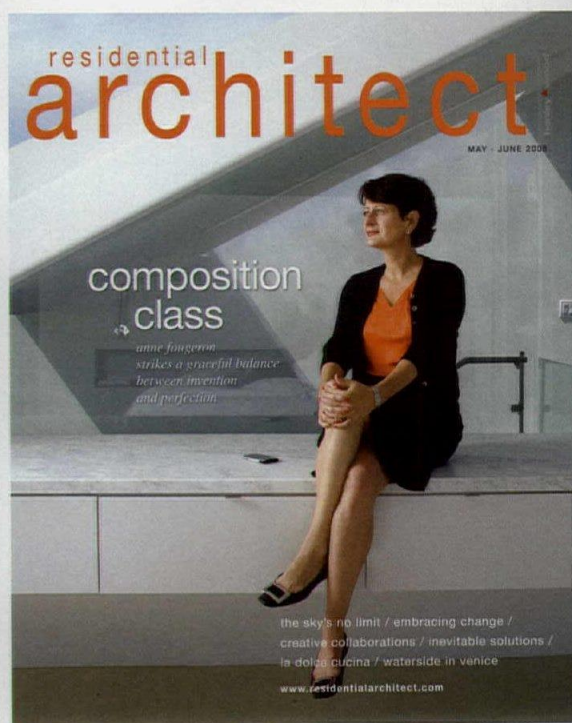
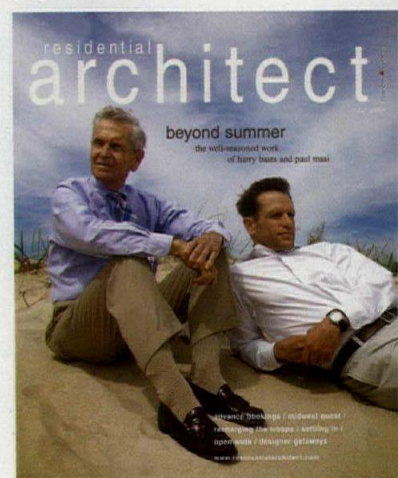
—christopher alexander

allan greenberg
september · october 2002

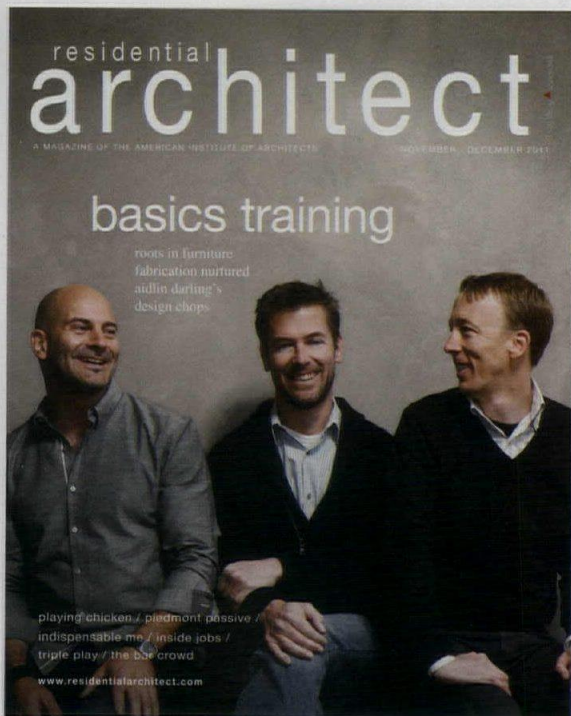


christopher alexander
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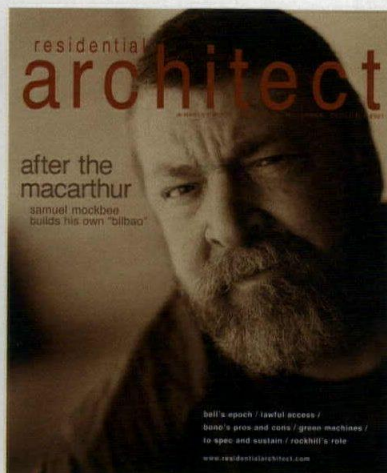
harry bates and paul masi
july 2006



anne fougeron
may · june 2008



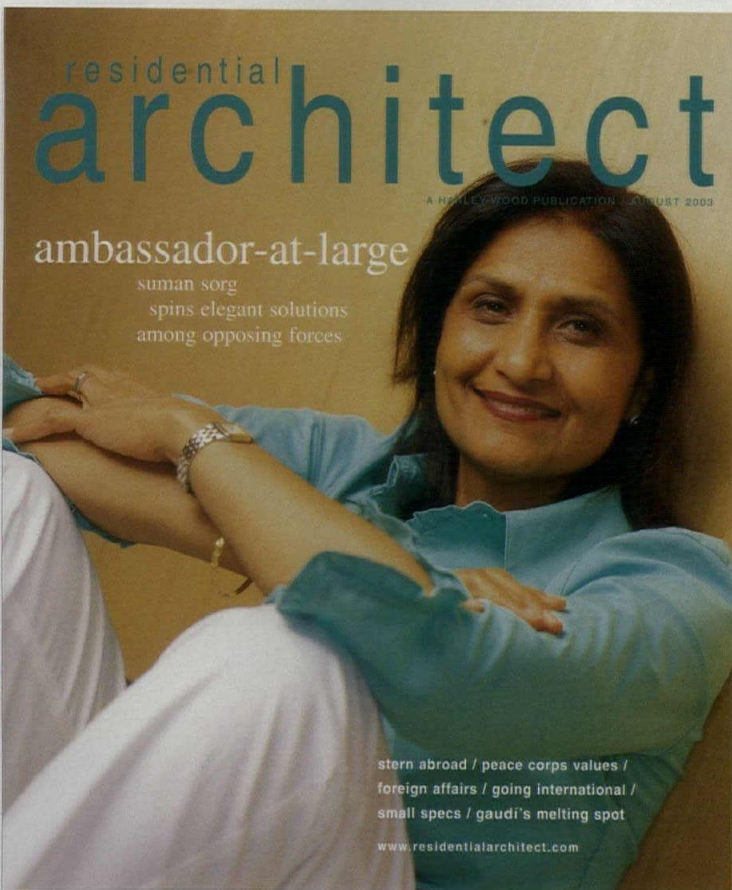
joshua aidlin,
david darling,
and peter larsen
november • december 2011



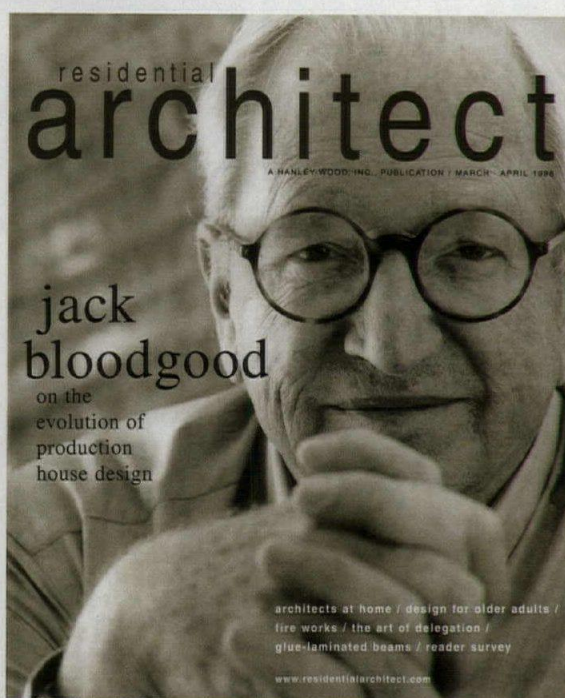
*"and so, professionally
... the big picture of the
rural studio ... that will
be my bilbao."*

—samuel mockbee

samuel mockbee
november • december 2001



suman sorg
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*"i realized how important it was
to have things in pedestrian
scale and neighbor-friendly."*

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REDOUBLING OF EFFORTS



PHOTO: GREGORY COWLEY

Twin architects, about 2,900 miles, and a burgeoning design practice

BY JOANNE FURIO

EVEN IN THE BEST ARCHITECTURAL PARTNERSHIPS, FISSURES can develop when disagreements arise. "That can be stressful," says Julie Dowling, AIA. "In our case it's not."

There are plenty of identical twins in the world who are, perhaps, less identical in their outlook. But Julie and her partner, Leslie Dowling, AIA, are identical twins who share an uncanny synchronicity. They often find themselves on the same page, and, more often than not, on the same paragraph. "We're always moving in the same direction and very open to the other's point of view," says Julie.

After working separately for 12 years, the twins united in 2010 to create Dowling Studios, a bicoastal practice that, at the moment, is doing a lot of West Coast work. The partnership is based in a San Francisco Victorian where Julie works out of ground-floor offices she shares with her husband, an art dealer. Leslie, on the other hand, works out of a home office in Princeton, N.J.

Digital design and files help shorten the 2,911 miles that separate them. "Sometimes it feels as if we are sitting next to each other," says Julie. Typically, they divvy up their work in an "I'll-do-the-floor-plan-and-you-do-the-ceiling-plan" fashion. Because of their synchronicity, "Leslie often ends up designing something very close to what I would have done," Julie explains. Plus, "we act as each other's second eye."

That has something to do with their shared professional background, too. Natives of Atlantic Beach, Fla., they graduated from the University of Florida with undergraduate degrees in architecture and went on to earn graduate degrees in architecture from Princeton. Both interned for Michael Graves, FAIA, their professor at Princeton, and immediately after



PHOTO: JESSICA MILLIGAN

AIA VOICES

TREADING LIGHTLY | ECOLOGY AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

Twenty years after the Congress for the New Urbanism's founding, Duany Plater-Zyberk + Co.'s Charlotte, N.C.-based partner, Thomas E. Low, AIA, believes water should exist at the center of community planning and design. For Low, water, once the domain of infrastructure, can—and should—guide building anew and conserving the local ecology. As a certified planner and a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, he also would like to see ecology evolve on multiple fronts. Sustainability, after all, is everyone's business.

I guess I'm a generalist—I find that I can do a better job that way. And, of course, LEED certification came along, as did some great opportunities to weave ecological issues into the place-making initiatives. I've become really interested in landscape urbanism as a result. CNU's principles are reference points. Walkability and compactness, connectivity, access to daily needs, mixed-use, broad choice of housing—these have gone from being an avant-garde proposition to becoming more mainstream. The big challenge for CNU is implementation in tough times. The economy impacted everyone, including me. Our work has really dropped off in North America. But we have created the tools and now it's a matter of putting them out there—calibrating the right tools for the right places.

Both Miami and Denver have adopted form-based code and, so, we're changing the DNA for how cities can be planned and

developed: less expensive, smarter growth. But engineering is very expensive, and it's also an area for improvement. To address this I launched the initiative "Light Imprint"—a framework for integrating ecology with community design. It's also about being intrinsically green—and in doing so, we can typically save around a third of the infrastructure costs.

There are two big challenges ahead: No. 1 is getting the word out about Light Imprint as a viable methodology for helping the significant number of civic leaders and landscape urbanists in their ecological-based design practice to become better at place-based design. The other side is to encourage New Urbanists to better understand stormwater management and infrastructure (which they had passed along to the engineers for years), and to be more proactive.

I think the current planning and design work we're doing is spectacular—and our projects are positively affected by things like natural drainage. Once people have a better understanding of the connection between community form and ecological concerns, it will be easier to jump-start the conversation on infrastructure as a design asset, rather than treating it as an afterthought. —As told to William Richards. **AIA**

➔ Learn more at lightimprint.org.

graduation for Juan Navarro Baldeweg's Madrid office. Then Julie returned to Graves' office before she headed out west, to San Francisco, in 1998. Leslie stayed with Baldeweg for another two years and served on the design team for Princeton's School of Music—a coup for someone right out of grad school. She also went back to Graves, in Princeton, helping to design the products in his first rollout for Target, and then in his New York architectural office.

In San Francisco, Julie was a store designer for Banana Republic, and later partnered with architect Lorissa Kimm to create Dowling Kimm Studios. The firm garnered lots of attention for its residential work, but after collaborating for a decade, the partners amicably separated.

Once solo, Julie found herself increasingly relying on her sister. By this time both had families, and Leslie had segued into part-time work, mostly designing eateries for her restaurateur husband. Working with her sister had tremendous appeal. "The whole backbone of my training up until that point had been custom residential," explains Leslie.

Julie: Leslie often ends up designing something very close to what I would have done. We act as each other's second eye.

Designing for exurban settings like Tahoe and upscale suburban locales in California's Marin County allowed the sisters to "develop the language and identity of our work because we can design these houses from scratch," says Julie. That "language and identity" is a minimalist Modernism they describe as "warm" and site-specific, often incorporating elements of the outdoors into the interiors.

As a result of past projects, the sisters are licensed in multiple states, which they hope will make them more marketable. Julie's licensed in New Jersey, Wyoming, and California; Leslie in New Jersey and New York.

So far, the Dowlings have completed three residences in California, including the first LEED Platinum house in Sonoma County. Among the six projects on the boards are a modern urban residence, ski house, and minimalist addition to a barn at Bella Vineyards in Healdsburg, Calif. "We have been so busy with those projects—one leading to the next—that we haven't had time to pursue work elsewhere," says Leslie. "But it is our goal to get more work on the East Coast."

As successful as they are at working together, the twins nevertheless have hit a few snags. First was managing the time difference. "If I wanted her to see something the next morning, I had to be sure to send it out the night before," Julie explains.

The other difficulty concerned one that's typical of twins: having too much in common. Discussions about permits and floor plans often were laced with updates on children, husbands, and parents. So they implemented a rule: On weekdays they are architectural partners, but on weeknights and weekends the sisters can just be sisters. **AIA**

➔ Learn more at dowling-studios.com

In the November/December 2011 issue of *residential architect*, the interview with Mark English, AIA, should be attributed to Sherin Wing, not Kim A. O'Connell. We regret the error.

AIA PERSPECTIVE

THE NEXT HOUSING CRISIS

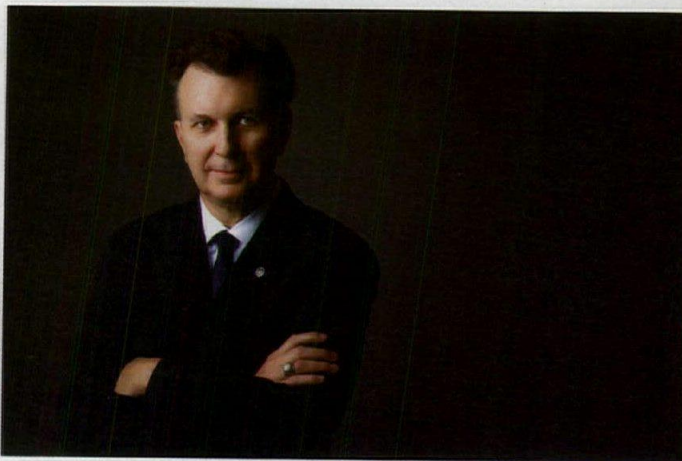


PHOTO: WILLIAM STEWART

WELL INTO THE 20TH CENTURY, MANY OF THOSE WHO ARRIVED on these shores in search of economic opportunities first settled in America's cities. Cities provided entry jobs and inexpensive housing for waves of immigrants. Today, a drive through the Maryland and Virginia suburbs of our nation's capital reveals a starkly different phenomenon: The suburbs have replaced cities as the destination of choice for many of the same reasons—inexpensive housing and economic opportunity.

While the new energy, creativity, and cuisines are welcome additions to the rich stew that is America, change has not been without its frictions, especially when it comes to housing. The standard detached Cape Cod tucked in a cul-de-sac without sidewalks seldom meets the cultural needs of the newest residents.

Almost everything about much of the suburban housing built after the World War II works against the kinds of connections that support a healthy, stable community: Schools are seldom walkable or even accessible by bike, markets and health services are distant, houses of worship scattered, and mass transit minimal.

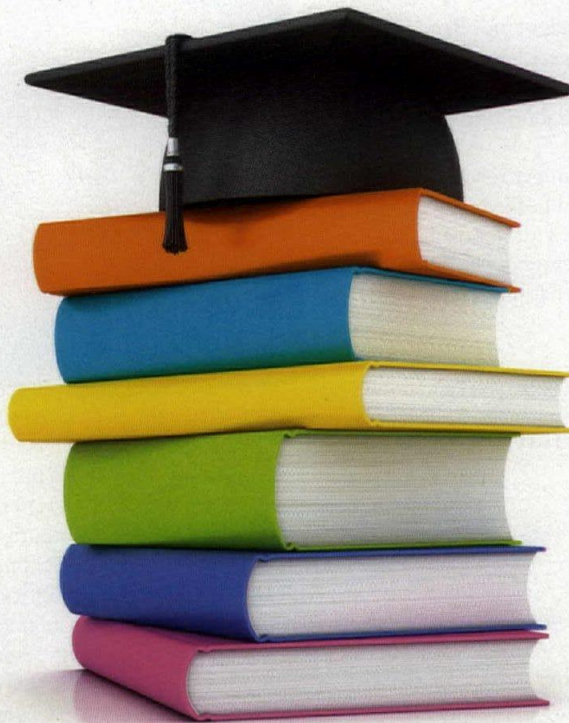
Alienation is the common theme for both the new arrivals and those who have aged in place. Zoning often has exacerbated the problem by separating our activities. The 19th-century Ukrainian steelworker living in Pittsburgh could walk to work and come home for lunch. Today's immigrant from Eritrea has to leave home before sunup to travel to a job at the very time fuel prices are approaching record levels.

The current lull in the housing market is an opportunity to take a broader view that sees suburban housing not in isolation, but as the anchor of emerging vibrant, diverse, and walkable communities—communities in which work, recreation, transportation, and schooling are mutually reinforcing threads of a larger healthy fabric. Jane Jacobs, whose *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was published 51 years ago this year, would have understood that community is not about development, but about the expansion of opportunities. To transform the mistakes of postwar housing that reduced economic and social opportunities into tomorrow's vibrant communities will require the collaboration of government, banks, and the home building industry.

It's a discussion about the future of America's suburbs in which architects are increasingly leading the way. **AIA**

Jeff Potter, FAIA, 2012 President

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copy cats

negotiating the copyright land mines of the online world.

by cheryl weber, lead ap

as an attorney at Wyche, a law firm in Greenville, S.C., Wallace K. Lightsey guards against copyright theft. The violations he's seen range from individuals who've purchased architectural plans and put them up for sale on eBay, to a Philippine company lifting house plans off a U.S. website and selling them verbatim, copyright intact, at a fraction of the licensed cost.

Some people are just blissfully unaware of what copyright means, Lightsey says. A well-worded letter usually does the trick. But others are clearly gaming the system. Case in point: a \$1.4 million verdict against Signature Homes this past February. The company was charged with illegally using eight copyrighted designs by Kennesaw, Ga.-based Frank Betz Associates to build and sell 78 homes in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

"Most of the time, copyright infringements are discovered through luck or coincidence," explains Lightsey, who co-prosecuted the Signature Homes case. "It happens all over the country, so there's no

way to police it."

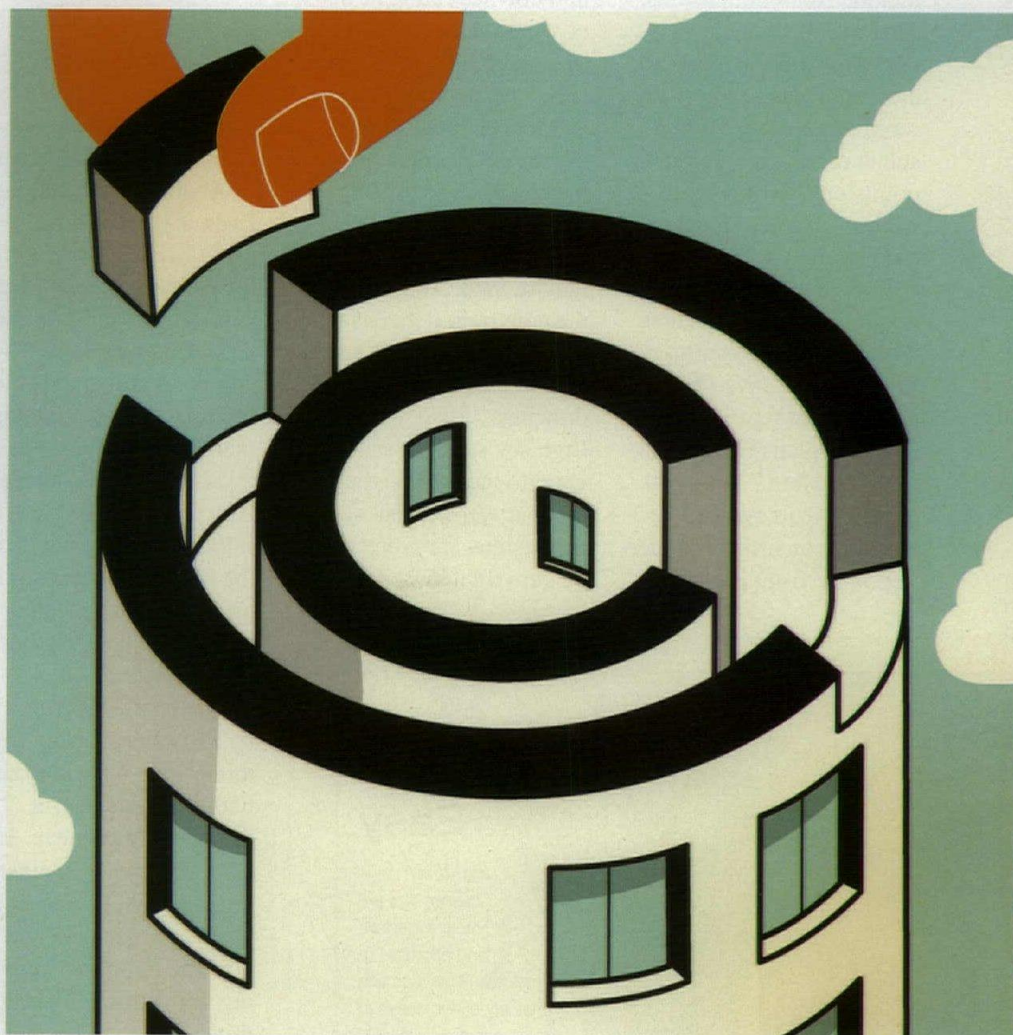
Once upon a time, it wasn't that hard to protect intellectual property. But it's so easy now to duplicate an image or design in the online world. There is virtually nothing in place to stop people from either taking credit for or profiting commercially from someone else's work. The growing popularity

of social media sites such as Pinterest and Houzz introduces another digital-era wrinkle, reflecting the broader debate about property rights online. Even if content isn't being stolen and resold, the authors have little control over who uses it, how it is credited, and the revenues it generates for others through display ads online.

double-edged sword

The potential for piracy presents a marketing quandary. Architects want their ideas to be visible, but not exploited. "We want people to see and enjoy our plans; there's no reason to hide anything," says Eric Taylor, vice president of design at Frank Betz As-

continued on page 26



Harry Campbell

sociates. Before licensing its plans, builders often advertise them on their websites, he says, so the promotional drawings include room dimensions. That makes them an easy target for theft. But a good draftsman can extrapolate room dimensions from a standard tub size, Lightsey points out, so they may as well be provided for potential buyers.

"Some home-design clients have experimented with disabling the print function," he says, "but people want to print and compare plans before making a decision." His home-design clients typically publicize an artistic rendering of the front elevation

and a simplified floor plan with the main dimensions, but not all of the detail. "You want to provide enough information that a homeowner can get a sense of what the house will feel like and look like from the curb," he says.

Most architects know the rules for protecting their work: Spend \$25 to register plans with the copyright office as soon as they're final. And although the copyright notice isn't required anymore, it's still a good idea to put it on the drawings. "It's a warning," Lightsey says. "It's also good to include language on your website that says the designs are protected by copyright laws and that

"it's good to include language on your website that says the designs are protected by copyright laws."

—wallace k. lightsey

there can be substantial penalties for infringement."

About those penalties. Even if you can't prove a profit loss or damages from the infringement, you can still ask for statutory damages, Lightsey says. They can be as high as \$150,000 if a jury finds the infringement was willful, or as low as \$200 if it was innocent. Any profits pocketed from selling houses made from the design also are up for grabs, as was reflected in the Signature Homes sentencing.

Taylor was tipped off by a draftsman who, he thinks, had a falling-out with the builder. But litigation isn't cheap. His company's case against Signature Homes took five years to prosecute, and now the builder is appealing the verdict. "Everyone thinks we got a big payday, but copyright costs a lot of money to defend," Taylor says. "The hard part is, we're a small firm and don't have the manpower to look for these things."

into the wild

The digital age has created a minefield not only for architects posting material on their own websites, but also on social media platforms that encourage users

to share other people's content, including copyrighted photos. Pinterest, for example, is an online bulletin board that lets participants organize and "pin" items of interest to their profiles. Participants can "follow" each other and pin others' images to their own idea boards (hopefully with credits attached), making it a useful marketing venue. According to a Shareaholic study in January, Pinterest drives more traffic to websites than YouTube, Google+, and LinkedIn combined.

In reality, it's impossible to control how information circulates on the Internet; technological capabilities have far outpaced legislative progress on this score. For example, current copyright laws are based on how widely licensed work is dispersed, Lightsey says. There are certain things a copyright owner can do that no one else can unless they have permission—broadcast the work, publish it, perform a play in a theater. When you show friends a photo or play music, you're not violating those rights. But when you do it publicly, you are. "Courts have had difficulty applying tradi-

continued on page 29



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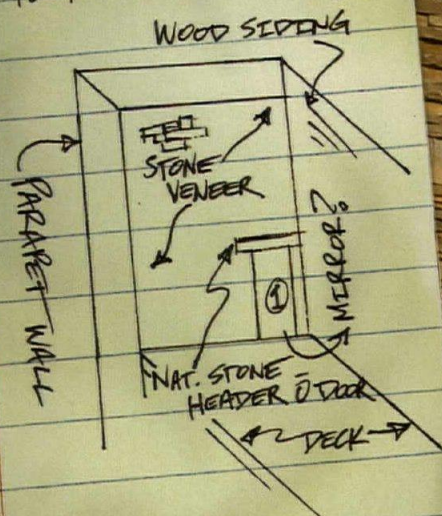


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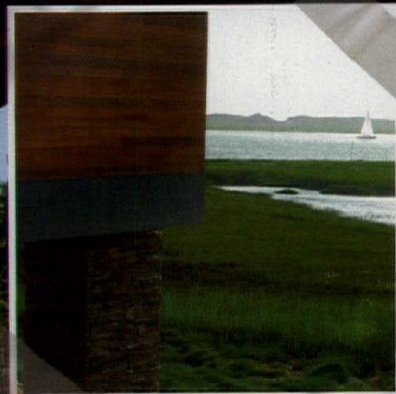
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tional copyright laws to electronic media,” Lightsey says. So it’s best to proceed with caution.

Several months ago, Bob Borson, AIA, LEED AP, associate principal at Bernbaum Magadini Architects in Dallas, started using Pinterest to organize his photo library, but now is scouting other options. “Most of the things I pin are my images,” he says. “Now I have hundreds of followers and, other than a few clients who share their idea boards, I know almost none of them. My concern is that I can’t make a specific board for a client without everybody seeing it, so it exposes us to copyright issues.”

Minneapolis architect Charlie Simmons, principal of Charlie & Co. Design, downloads photos of each new project onto Houzz, an online community focused on residential design. Although his photographers retain copyright, he is allowed to use the images for marketing, including online, as long as the photographer is credited. And he makes use of the site’s privacy settings. “I’ve only made three idea books, looking for a particular wall color, and I don’t share them with clients,” he says. “Most of my clients who have a Houzz account will create an idea book and send me a password.”

“my concern [with pinterest] is that i can’t make a specific board for a client without everybody seeing it.”

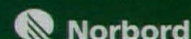
—bob borson, aia, leed ap

That’s one way to limit personal liability. On the other hand, while Houzz insists that users get permission to post copyrighted material, the terms of service on its website state that participants must “authorize us and our affiliates, licensees and sublicensees, without compensation to you or others, to copy, adapt, create derivative works of, reproduce, incorporate, distribute, publicly

display or otherwise use or exploit such content throughout the world in any format or media.”

It’s a difficult moment for photographers, too. Images shared online are small JPEGs that can’t be enlarged with quality. But sometimes the credit line is dropped, says Susan Gilmore, a Minneapolis-based photographer. “I sat one morning and kept
continued on page 31

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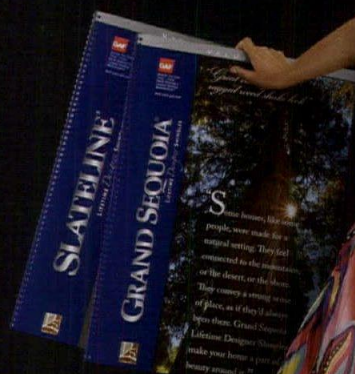
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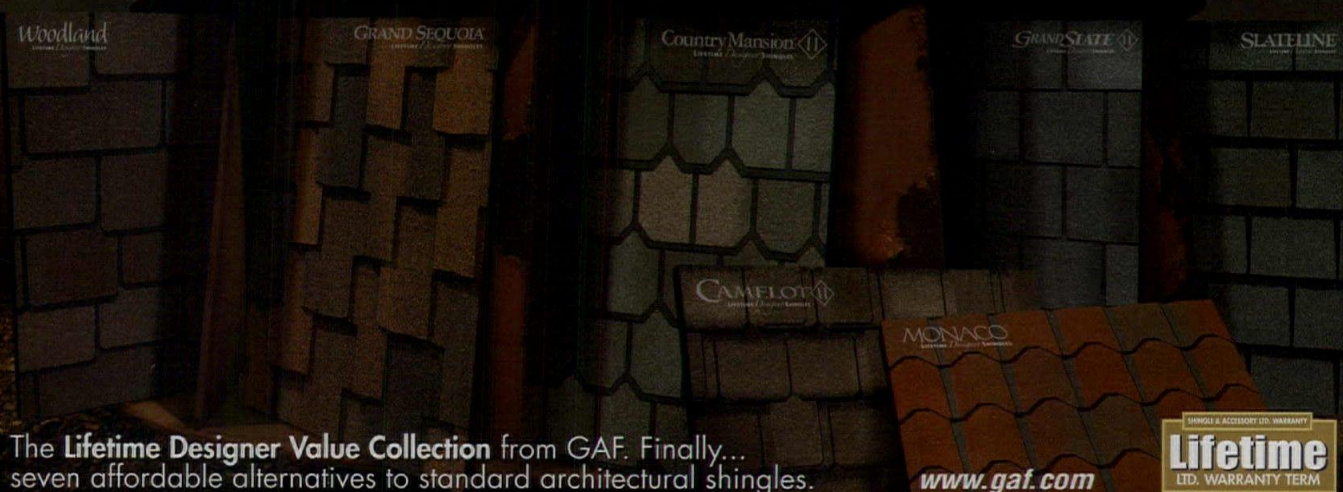
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adding my name to all the pictures on Pinterest that were mine. My copyright is in the metadata so it follows the image wherever it goes, but it's not always visible." She adds, "If someone wants to share my photos, come and ask me. If I'm in the loop I feel a little better."

There's no putting the genie back in the bottle. "You can say no for the first five minutes, but after that you can't," says Erica Stoller, director of Esto, an architectural photo agency in Mamaroneck, N.Y. "I guess you have to say social media is a method of communication. We're not going to send anybody a bill for sharing images on pinboards. If names are credited properly, that's the least you can do. And you have to ask nicely. Just say please and thank you."

Esto sees its photographer's copyrighted images as akin to the architectural drawings for a single-family client: They can be used to build one house, but not an entire neighborhood. "I'm making you an original piece of work and telling you what you can do with it," Stoller says. "By extension that's come to mean what the architect can do to make more work for the firm. So we did broaden the definition, but trust that the architect won't sell or give it to the sliding glass door manufacturer" for their marketing campaign.

Some photographers are charging more for the initial shoot to reflect a

online photo etiquette

Social media websites offer architects the opportunity to connect with other professionals and clients regardless of geographic location. But absent clear legislation about what can be shared electronically, common sense must prevail: Pay attention to copyright, give credit where it's due, and avoid online communities that disrespect creative rights.

For example, Seattle photographer Peter Vanderwarker shoots projects with the intention they will be widely viewed. But he won't release images without the approval of the architect, the building owner, and the major team players. "Some folks are sensitive about what's in the pictures," he says.

Liza Hausman, vice president of marketing at Houzz, says the website's photo-upload language explains that participants need to have rights to the images they're sharing. She reiterates Vanderwarker's approach to ethically navigating social-media websites. "Set expectations with the homeowner," she says. "Make sure you have a release from them, and that the use is clear. They should understand that the images might get broad exposure." In addition to getting rights from the photographers, she urges participants to credit them and the cast of professionals who contributed to the project. "Houzz provides an easy way to display this information on every photo," she says. When a copyright claim does arise, Hausman says the company works with legal professionals to verify and resolve them, and follows Digital Millennium Copyright Act procedures.—c.w.

broader distribution. "We frankly charge architects a lot at the outset to do the photos, and then we want to see them everywhere," says Boston-based photographer Peter Vanderwarker, who reluctantly is considering putting a watermark on his images. "These guys put my kids through college; I want them to be famous," he says. "What's important is that they spell my name correctly."

the giveaway

As a marketing tool,

social media is a mixed bag. With the saturation of the Internet comes the expectation that everything online is free, and architects struggle with how much intellectual content to provide gratis. Treff LaFleche, AIA, LEED AP, principal of LDa Architects, Cambridge, Mass., created a Houzz account two years ago. He recalls the Seattle woman who emailed for help solving a design problem. LaFleche took 10 minutes to

continued on page 32

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respond, but after four more email exchanges he politely advised her to hire an architect.

Simmons has had a similar experience. He says he gets “goofy” emails from homeowners every day asking for the source of a sofa or wall color they’ve seen in his portfolio—even requesting the plans for a particular house. “It’s dumbfounding that I spend a year creating this house for a client, and others expect to get it for free,” he says. Still, the effort has helped him broaden his reach beyond the local area. Recently he landed work on a new house in Boulder, Colo., and a remodel in Los Angeles.

It’s the architect’s responsibility not to enable people who abuse the situation, perhaps innocently, by squeezing out information, LaFleche says. “Our marketing person monitors the account, and if a question involves a five-minute response, we’re OK with that because it builds our brand, and we try to keep the conversation within Houzz because it benefits other people, too,” he says. “Architects don’t fight for our rights the way musicians have, but collaboration is in our nature. The Internet is just a more sophisticated version of a lifestyle magazine.”

LaFleche joined Houzz to draw traffic to the firm’s website. “It’s all part of establishing ourselves as thought leaders,” he adds. “We’re willing to shoulder

the risk of people ripping us off, because the upside is that we get good feedback on our work.”

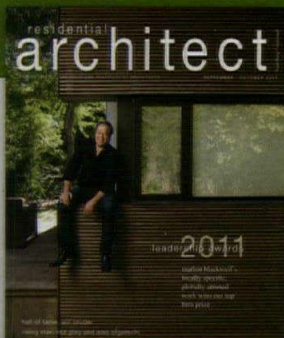
Mark English, AIA, principal of Mark English Architects, San Francisco, also answers three or four questions a day from homeowners on Houzz and says the flow to his website from there has doubled in the past nine months, to 28 percent of all traffic. (The number of photos circulating, the number of questions professionals answer, and the number of recommendations they give or get are part of the algorithm that determines visibility.) In fact, one client hired him after checking out his work and the way he answered questions from others. “It gave her a sense of my personality and that I’m helpful,” he says.

the vision thing

House plans are easy to rip off, architectural ideas less so. In an era when information is at our instantaneous disposal, architects will always own the alchemy that materializes on individual projects. That became clear when Taylor defended his house plans at the Signature Homes trial. “They kept saying, our kitchen is different, our great room is different,” he says. “I didn’t create all those elements, but it’s the way I arranged them that’s unique to me. There are little tells. In one of my designs I said to myself later, ‘I shouldn’t have done it that way,’ and

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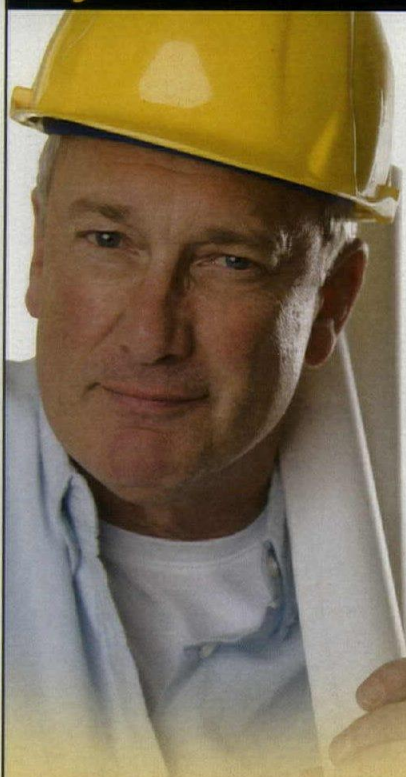
they copied it. I recognized my thought process, why the walls were lined up a certain way."

As Simmons, too, discovered, details can be copied, but vision cannot. Inspired by some of his work on Houzz, the two out-of-state clients Simmons recently acquired had asked local architects to adapt his ideas. When both failed, Simmons was asked to pick up the slack. "My first year in architecture school, I was told, 'If you think opening an architecture book is going to make you a good architect, quit now,'" he says. "You have to diagnose and create; architecture is art."

It's probably a given that others will abuse your copyright. But rather than overreact and lose the advantages of connecting widely with potential clients, many architects are treading carefully and learning to live with it. Jonathan Junker, Assoc. AIA, principal of Gray-pants, an architecture and product design firm in Seattle, says that as much work as he and his partner have put into copyrights and trademarks, what's most important at the end of the day is building a strong brand.

"I think it's still worth it to share ideas that are good," Junker says. "If anyone tries to copy our work, we'll still do a better job. We never want to stop innovating, pushing ideas farther, and trying to lead the way." ra

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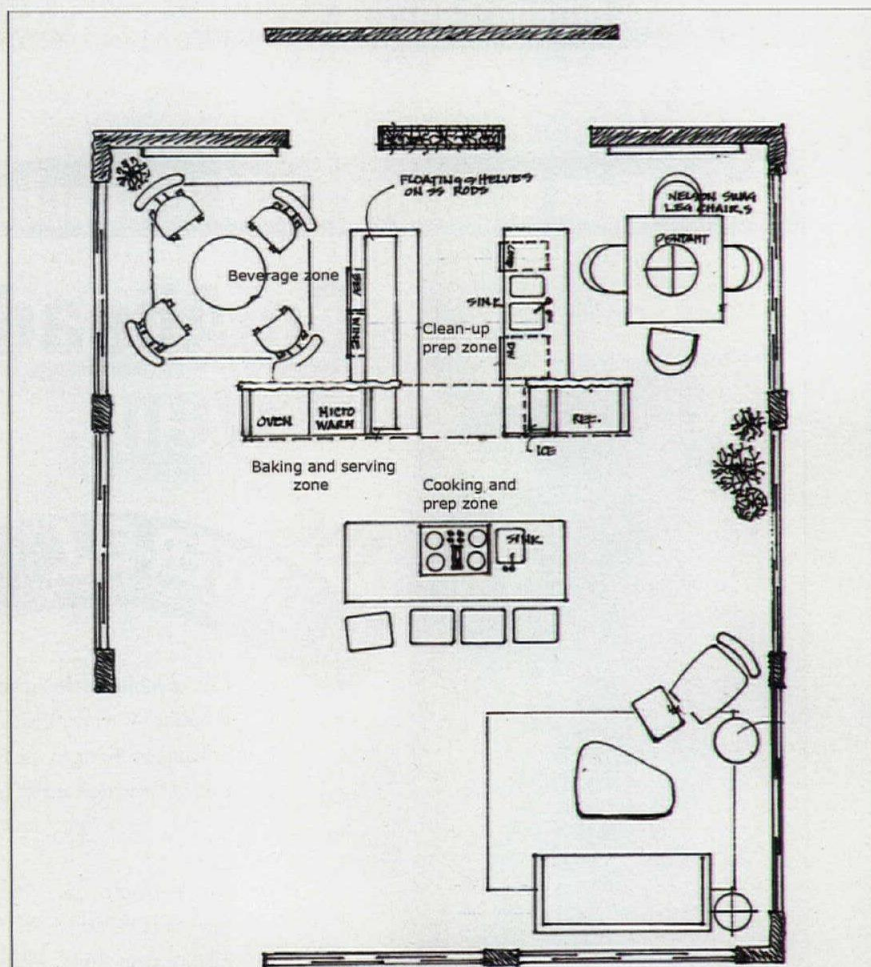
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Presents:

The New Face of Zone Design for the Kitchen

By: Mary Jo Peterson - CKD, CBD, CAPS, CAASH



This kitchen includes the generous traffic and work clearances and the multipurpose zones so critical in today's kitchens. (Jenn-Air)



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explore the differences in demands on kitchens today as compared to kitchens of the past.
2. Define the concept of work zones in the kitchen, and list the zones in today's kitchens.
3. Describe options in design concepts and products for the work zones of the kitchen.
4. Explore concepts for overlapping work zones in the kitchen.

In the 1950's, the kitchen was singularly focused- one cook, one refrigerator, one sink, and one range, with room for the family to eat at a table in the kitchen, closed off from the rest of the house. Since then, it has been evolving, and in 2012 the kitchen is more and less, but certainly changed. The kitchen is more important and has more space, but with the focus on the kitchen as the center of home life and entertaining, and there is often less space given to actual food preparation and more given to flexible space for socializing and other activities. There are many more appliances and more technology, and as their importance has grown, there is often a shortage of storage and even of work surfaces. There are more people in the kitchen, yet there is less time to prepare and enjoy meals. We spend less time on daily meals, but more time enjoying cooking as a leisure activity. There are more things on a client's wish list, but there is less willingness to spend without reason. The work triangle of old is more important than ever, but there are more of them, and so we will find ourselves at the centers of work that can be created in a kitchen to suit the way we live today.

WHAT MAKES A WORK ZONE?

Theoretically, a work zone can be created for almost any activity or hobby, taking into account the user who will use the zone, the equipment and tools that will be used, and the space required to do the work. In the kitchen, the main work zones have been defined by the appliances or fixtures that anchor them, and in the work triangle it has been the sink, the cooking or baking appliance, and the refrigerator. With our expanded use of the kitchen, we are going beyond these three main anchors to include secondary sinks, refrigerators, and cooking appliances to support additional zones. Within each work zone, there must be storage, a work surface and clear floor space to allow the cook to organize and operate.

WHICH WORK ZONES ARE RIGHT FOR YOUR CLIENT?

With most of us wanting the proverbial 10 pounds in a 5 pound bag, it is the designer's responsibility to help clients to prioritize the program and develop a space that sustains and enriches the clients and their lifestyle. One approach is to consider your clients' activities, the logical steps throughout the space and their day when planning zones. For this article, the sequence of the way our clients use the zones in-and-around the kitchen begins with the end of the school and work day, when groceries are brought home and preparation begins for dinner, and ends with leaving the house in the morning, and then considering how this changes in leisure time. Breaking down tasks into zones helps identify the storage, space and equipment needs for each of these daily tasks, and based on research, the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) has created standards to guide the process.

Drop Zone

This is the place where mail, keys, cell phones, wallets and purses are dropped, literally. Ideally, to keep this area from being junked with piles, a waste basket and a file drawer storage should be included or within reach of the drop zone so bills, statements, coupons, homework, and kids' artwork can be organized immediately. These files can be transferred to long term storage elsewhere in the house quarterly or yearly. It makes sense that items dropped at the end of the day are in one spot and convenient for pickup on the way out in the morning. This should also be where cell phones and other devices are charged every night so they won't be forgotten in the morning.

For kids, this is a place where school bags are dropped, in cubbies or on hooks off the floor. This drop zone should be located between the entry door or mudroom, and the kitchen. It should be where kids seem to go for a snack right after getting home from school and convenient to where they do homework. There should be a landing counter where papers are organized, for example: homework requiring action (sign, information and dates to transfer to a

calendar or to-do list), artwork to keep forever, and a recycle bin.

Command Zone

With the growth of home offices and computer work spaces in the rest of the house, the traditional desk in the kitchen has evolved to include storage for the message center, calendar, cookbooks, and related items and often not a separate place to sit to do this work. It may be a telephone and a calendar hidden behind a cabinet door, near a standing work counter where a laptop might be used, or it may simply be a smart phone or tablet which don't need a work surface and leave the house with us; client habits and equipment will influence this part of the design. Another growing concept is the small space near the kitchen, where the "commander" might still see kitchen activities but be able to conceal the mess of organizing the household when not engaged in the task. This zone may also be a place where stamps, envelopes, and pens are stored, or where batteries are stored, along with the screw driver, flash light and other general maintenance tools. Your client may still want a

traditional command zone with a place to sit in the kitchen proper, or he/she may prefer the more common small station near, or combined with the drop zone, and convenient to the family.

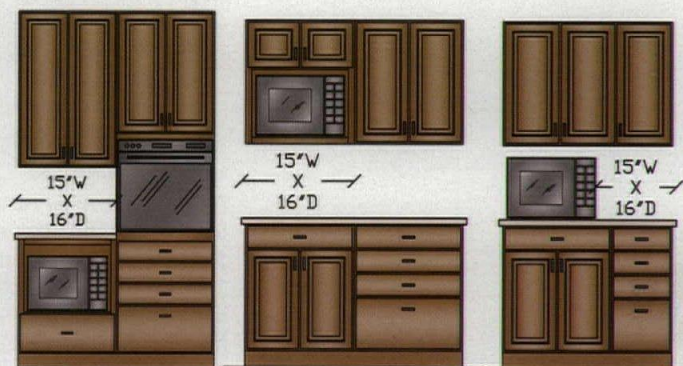
Storage Zone

Because the actual preparation area in the kitchen may be divided into specific task areas, and because we have so many appliances to augment our cooking efforts, some amount of storage is often adjacent-to, but not located in the kitchen proper. The storage zone is a combination of this storage space outside the kitchen used for bulk items and back-up, as well as storage at-hand in the kitchen. Rare is the client who has enough storage at the point of use, so this separate zone can be the answer. Ideally, when the storage zone

is a dedicated area off the kitchen or garage, there is a rolling cart that can be moved to and from the kitchen. Often, clients have a love affair with the concept of a walk-in pantry, and remote storage can be very desirable, but careful consideration must be paid to the amount of clear floor space given up to access the walk-in pantry. Often, a cabinet pantry can make better use of the available space and prove more convenient to the cook.

Kids' Zone

The kids' zone can be broken down into snacks, food preparation, and children's kitchen activities. They may get snacks independently or they may help an adult prepare a meal or a school lunch. As part of the morning routine, the lunch box zone could simply be a



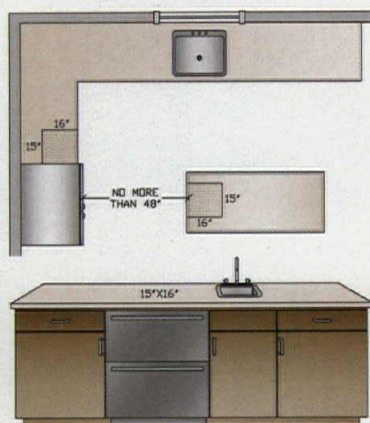
NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 22. Of the NKBA-recommended microwave landing areas, the undercounter and on-the-counter options work best for children.

drawer, near a refrigeration appliance, that is deep enough to store a lunch bag, thermos, containers, and any pantry items such as peanut butter, crackers or fruit snacks that are used daily. These items used and consumed by children can be placed in a cabinet within reach and with a work surface at proper height for their safe access, possibly the table or counter where they will eat and play or do homework. For toddlers and children too young to be independent in the kitchen, a bottom drawer of toys and activities to keep them busy while the adult is preparing food, cooking or cleaning, can evolve into a snack or lunch zone as they age.

Snack foods, breakfast foods, and school lunch items might be included here, as well as the tableware and equipment used for these activities. If this zone can

be created near the casual eating area of the kitchen, the table or counter will be at a comfortable height and will do double duty for both snacking and doing homework or other activities. To be within reach, these items must be stored not higher than the child's reach range, and 48" above the finished floor (A.F.F) is a maximum height to include. This is a good zone in which to consider a small refrigerator, a sink, and a microwave oven, depending on the age of the children and their ability to use these items safely.

Ideally, microwaves are placed within the universal reach range of 15" to 48" above the floor, which is comfortable for children as well as all family



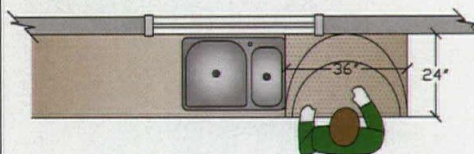
NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 16. Refrigerator Landing Areas

members and guests. Given that the range of height for an 11-year old is approximately 53" to 62", microwaves placed in a base cabinet on the counter, or under a raised snack bar are both within reach. Research has indicated that the best and safest use of the microwave results when it is placed between 2" below the cook's elbow and 3" below his/her shoulder (NKBA Guideline 21). A landing counter at least 15" wide by minimum 16" deep should be immediately above, below or adjacent to the microwave (NKBA Guideline 22). These parameters exclude the over-the-range microwave but leave many choices, especially considering the drawer microwaves available today. As with any equipment, safe use can only be dictated by responsible parents.

If a refrigerator can be dedicated to this zone, drawers or a small undercounter style will be within the child's reach, and this can encourage a child to choose healthy snacks. The landing counter for a refrigerator should be a minimum 15" wide by 16" deep, above or adjacent to the handle side of the door (NKBA guideline 16), needed when children lift heavy objects, like a gallon container of milk.

Preparation Zones

Beginning with a look at the traditional kitchen, where there was only one of most things, the prep center included work surfaces and storage near the sink, and often between the sink and the refrigerator.



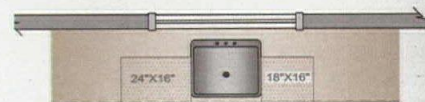
NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 12: Preparation/Work Area

At least one prep zone should be included in the kitchen, a minimum 36" wide by 24" deep (NKBA guideline 12). The depth suggested in this area is greater than the recommended minimum counter depth of 16" because the cook will assemble ingredients in the back portion of the work surface and actually mix, measure and prep in the front section. Based on an average of at least 24" in each direction, or 48" total side reach, the 36" width makes a good minimum, and it might easily grow if space allows. Multiple counter heights can allow for children to comfortably help an adult with food preparation and for the seated cook. This lower counter may be a table, a counter above a 30" inch high base cabinet, or a pull-out work surface.

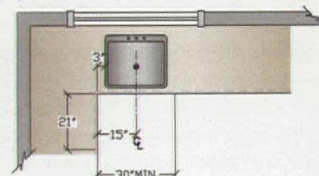
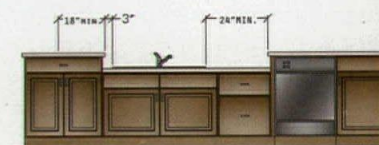
The lower counters can also be useful for adults when mixing and baking (see baking zone below). Storage must include the bowls, equipment and utensils used to prepare food, and today, the diversity and the options are greater. Also included should be a waste container or disposer or both, and

sometimes staples and frequently used food items. Proximity to a refrigerator helps, and small appliances used in prep like a toaster or food processor, might be stored in this area. Instant hot and chilled water are sometimes added to this zone.

The sink is the main anchor in this zone, and the size of this sink will be influenced by its intended purpose. The landing areas for the main sink should include a minimum of 24" to one side and 18" on the other, and the landing areas for a smaller prep or auxiliary sink should include a minimum of 18" to one side and only 3" on the other.



NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 11: Clean-up/Prep Sink Landing Area.



NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 15: Auxiliary Sink Landing Area

The refrigerator is often the other anchor to the prep zone. Full-door refrigerators and freezers, or side-by-side refrigerators place both refrigerator and freezer storage at a comfortable and safe height. The newer style French door refrigerator also provides a second drawer for frequently used items, speaking to children, and results in energy savings as the main doors are not opened as frequently.

Microwaves are also often included in the prep zone, used for defrosting, reheating and melting. With all these appliance options, storage is at a premium, and we have incredible accessories to help make best use of every bit of space.

When extra depth is available on the work surface, the Europeans have given us caddies that recess into the rear space for storage of small items, knives and utensils. Backsplash storage systems offer additional storage. As storage gets pushed into the pantries, a rolling cart is a way to gather ingredients from the walk-in pantry and bring them to the prep zone. When multiple prep centers exist, the storage plan will need to include duplicates of certain items, according to planned activities.



This side-by-side refrigerator provides full access to both the refrigerator and freezer. The knee space and stool provide a place for someone to sit during food preparation. (Jenn-Air)

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO CREATE A SECOND PREP ZONE?

It takes a work surface, and a smaller width than a main work, plus storage for utensils and equipment. Although not a requirement, if space and budget allow, the addition of a small second sink for prep frees up the main sink for clean-up, cutting down on two cooks overlapping. There are ways of creating an additional prep zone without changing the kitchen footprint. One design solution is to replace the small table and chairs in an eat-in kitchen with an island, which can make an excellent primary or secondary prep zone, with a sink, generous work surface, the storage not provided by a table, and the chance to face a view or to socialize.

An island also provides an easy opportunity to change counter materials based on the activity planned for the space, and to stack or otherwise vary heights to accommodate cooks of various sizes. It can even offer knee space for the team member who prefers to sit. Often the island itself will guide or control the work flow, so multiple cooks do not cross paths.



This cooking zone includes a second sink, supporting two prep zones, the second that can also function as a beverage or serving zone when entertaining. (Jenn-Air)

Saving the most important for last, our client will be our best guide in terms of what to plan where, how each space will be used, and what each prep zone must include. Determine if meals planned from scratch with fresh food or if frozen dinners the standard. Ask if there is one cook or many. Are the cooks tall or short, and who does what?

Are the multiple cooks doing the same tasks or is one making a salad and one grilling?

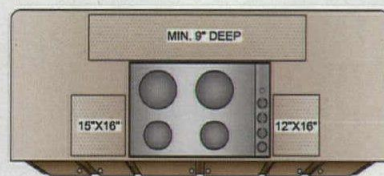
We have a responsibility to guide them in terms of options based on what is available and what is appropriate in a given space, and then to change roles and listen to them as they define what their space priorities are.

Cooking Zones

The cooking zone can be broken down into several activity centers; the first anchored by the cooktop; the second by the oven; and the rest anchored by the many appliances available today to support necessary and leisure-time cooking activities.

The Cooktop

The cooktop is a primary cooking center because of its relation to the tasks of the other main zones in the kitchen. Safety issues connected to heat make the landing spaces here critical, and they should include a minimum of 12" on one side, 15" on the other side, and in the case of an island or peninsula, 9" behind the cooktop (NKBA guideline 17).



NKBA Kitchen Planning Guideline 17. Cooking Surface Landing Area



This allows for preparation of food, safer moving of hot pots, and protection of surfaces adjacent to the heat. Work surface materials should be heat-resistant for the same safety reasons. Given the size and design of surface cooking appliances today, a continuous grill or a smooth top can double as additional landing space for cooking pots. Multiple cooks and activities in the kitchen increase the need for care in maintaining these clearances for safety.

The location of the cooktop will be influenced by the habits and preferences of the client. Traditionally it has been placed against a wall, with

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LIVE FREE STYLE



It's our birthday and we're throwing ourselves a sweet 15 party right here in this issue of the magazine. We've invited 15 compelling young firms to share in the festivities. And we've gone hunting for a number of other notable sets of 15 as well—including significant advances in residential practice and high-performance products now de rigueur on everyone's spec sheets. It's quite a road we've traveled together. Help us blow out the candles and join us in a wish for many happy years ahead for the profession we all love and admire.



young firms to watch

by bruce d. snider, hallie busta, megan drueding,
shelley d. hutchins, and nigel f. maynard

None of the firms we profile here were around when we launched the magazine 15 years ago, but they've since established a trajectory that we're eager to track in the years to come.

chen + suchart studio

phoenix

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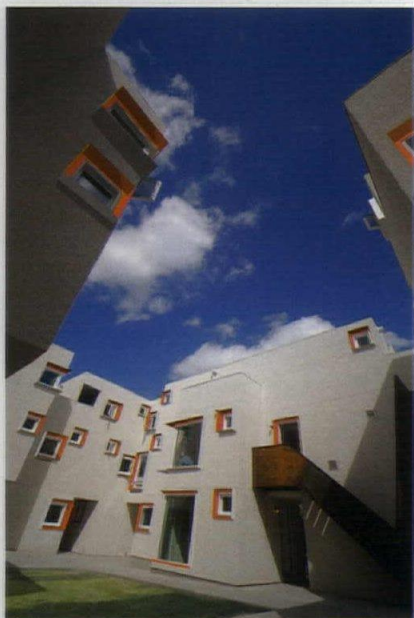
Patricia Chen Suchart and Thamarit Suchart

years in practice: 8 / **projects completed in 2011:** 0 (3 currently under construction) / **firm size:** 2 / **area of interest:** residential

Thamarit Suchart and Patricia Chen Suchart have been partners—both professionally and personally—for a long time. They went through the Rhode Island School of Design and Harvard University's Graduate School of Design together, marrying after moving to Phoenix in 2002. There they found work in separate offices—Thamarit at Wendell Burnette Architects and Patricia at Jones Studio—but soon they were working together again. Patricia resigned to start Chen + Suchart Studio in 2003. Thamarit

kept his day job, devoting nights and early mornings to the family firm, until 2010. Together at the helm at last, they now devote their efforts solely to their own work, which marries precise modern geometries with the timeless Southwest landscape.

Almost diagrammatic in their simplicity, Chen + Suchart houses reflect the partners' immersive approach to construction detail and their interest in exploring the potential of such everyday materials as concrete block and rusted steel. "How do you take



Courtesy 5468796 architecture

5468796 architecture's growing multifamily portfolio includes Centre Village (above), which combines a bold exterior, modular design, and a central courtyard.

5468796 architecture

winnipeg, manitoba, canada

www.5468796.ca

You may know them for the Bond Tower, a narrow, 11-story mixed-use office complex on the boards for Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. But 5468796 architecture also is making inroads into multifamily with projects that renegotiate the category's conventional living arrangements and strike a contrast with the conservative nature of the region's built environment. One recent project features a publicly accessible courtyard in place of a fence as a fluid boundary, and another, which finished first-phase construction in 2011, segments its 18 three- and four-story townhouses with an architectural wrap.

"There didn't seem to be a lot going on in terms of pushing the edge of design in our context here," says co-founder Johanna Hurme. Hurme,

a Helsinki, Finland, native, and co-founder Sasa Radulovic, who hails from Sarajevo in the former Yugoslavia, think an outsider's perspective might be one factor in their breaking the mold.

Upon launching the firm in May 2007, Hurme says they received a commission daily for the first three weeks. Now, the 12-person team goes by a name that gives every indication of a highly collaborative ethos. "When we first incorporated the company, 5468796 was the number we were handed," Hurme explains. "We'd rather not be named after ourselves ... everybody in the group can identify under the numbers."—*h.b.*



Johanna Hurme and Sasa Radulovic

years in practice: 5 / **projects completed in 2011:** 4 / **firm size:** 12 / **areas of interest:** multi-family, mixed-use, single-family

something so utilitarian and elevate it?" Thamarit asks. The answer begins in design, but depends equally on execution. "My wife and I take great pride in the construction process and working with the contractors and subcontractors," he says. "We're not just drawing things and handing them off to people; we're following through."—*b.d.s.*

The Yerger Residence's sophisticated use of utilitarian materials and clear, simple geometry are typical of the firm's work.



Bill Timmerman

max strang architecture

miami

www.strangarchitecture.com

After winning AIA Miami's Firm of the Year prize, the last thing most architects would do is leave Miami. But then, most architects aren't Max Strang, AIA. In 2010, just after Max



Max Strang

Strang Architecture snagged the coveted firm award, the quietly confident Strang and his wife, Tamara, decided to move their family to Telluride, Colo. They had few ties

there, but they loved the area's small-town, outdoors-oriented atmosphere and natural beauty.

The firm already had built a strong regional reputation for site-sensitive modernism, so it stayed put in Miami. Strang visits monthly and works

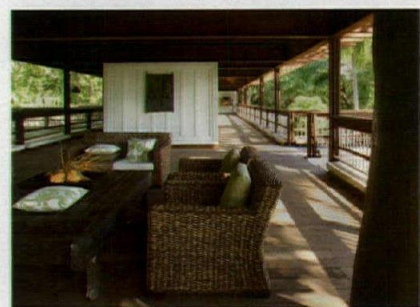
remotely the rest of the time. So far, his telecommuting experiment is working. "Being here in Telluride, I'm immersed in nature," he says. "I find myself able to focus and be more creative for longer periods of time."

Taking risks has become something of a habit for Strang. The University of Florida and Columbia University graduate started his firm after working for Gene Leedy, Zaha Hadid, and SHoP Architects. Strang initially took on both residential and commercial jobs, but over the past few years he and firm director Jason Richard Adams, Assoc. AIA, have opted to focus mostly on custom homes. They and their staff now have about 10 houses in the works. "We've never been busier," Strang says.—*m.d.*

years in practice: 12 / **projects completed in 2011:** 3 / **firm size:** 8 / **area of interest:** custom homes



Calder Wilson



Claudia Uribe Touri

Sustainable design is a top priority for Max Strang. Natural ventilation cools his firm's projects, including the Strang Residence in Miami (above), built in 2004, and the Lakehouse Residence in Winter Haven, Fla. (top), completed in 2011.

in situ studio

raleigh, n.c.

www.insitustudio.us



Matthew Griffith, Nicole Alvarez, and Erin Sterling Lewis

Launching an architecture firm in the depths of a recession is not for the faint of heart. But that's what Erin Sterling Lewis, AIA, LEED AP, and Matthew Henning Griffith, AIA, did when they founded in situ studio in 2010. Their optimism and knack for doing a lot with a little proved a winning combination for the times. "Our motto is, we don't say no to anything," Sterling Lewis says. "This is not a hobby practice for us; we both have families." Alumni of the Raleigh-based firm Frank Harmon

Architect, the partners bring big-league talent and rookie enthusiasm to even the most modest projects. "We've never liked the idea that you can only design houses that you could never afford," says Sterling Lewis. "We'd like everyone to be able to afford good design." The partners point with pride to a new green custom home the firm brought in (with some owner sweat equity) at \$115 per square foot.

Public and commercial projects draw the firm's interest as well,

years in practice: 2 / **projects completed in 2011:** 8 / **firm size:** 3 / **areas of interest:** residential, commercial, public

bercy chen studio

austin, texas

www.bcarc.com

Brussels-born Thomas Bercy and Calvin Chen, Assoc. AIA, who hails from Taiwan by way of Australia, have vastly different backgrounds. Yet the former University of Texas schoolmates

share such a similar design tactic that they draw on each other's sketches. Launched in 2001,

Austin, Texas-based Bercy Chen Studio has since won more than 20

awards from 12 countries. They credit the recognition to their international influences and collaborative approach.

The firm's portfolio splits almost evenly between residential and commercial, but Bercy and Chen agree that

designing a single-family custom home is a welcome luxury for two people who grew up in dense cities. "It's rare in Asia and Europe to design single-family," Chen explains.

In addition to designing—and sometimes building—gorgeous projects, Bercy and Chen also get involved in community issues. "Architects in the U.S. are at the periphery of the building industry," Bercy laments. Both partners serve on arts and design boards or committees, and the firm took part in a task force to create a cultural master plan for Austin. "There's no American equivalent to Rem Koolhaas," Chen observes. "He's working with different groups on housing for the future or city planning, and you don't see famous American architects involved in policy."—*s.d.h.*

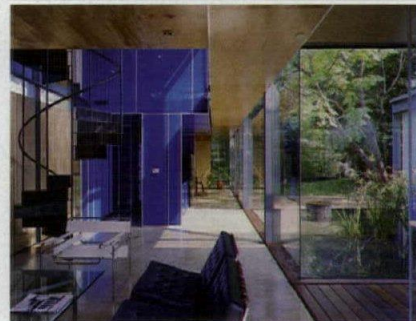
years in practice: 10 / **projects completed in 2011:** 5 / **firm size:** 10 / **areas of interest:** residential, commercial



Thomas Bercy and Calvin Chen



Photos: Courtesy Bercy Chen Studio



An early and influential project, this house shows the firm's taste for experimentation in materials and inside-out spaces.

notes Griffith, who finds time to teach design studio at the North Carolina State University School of Architecture. But residential work remains the primary focus for now. "It's really appropriate to start a practice on," Sterling Lewis says. "We've learned so much so fast that we don't want to transition out of that very quickly."—*b.d.s.*

The Goodman House features a hybrid structural system that combines precast concrete wall panels and wood framing.



Rendering: Courtesy in situ studio

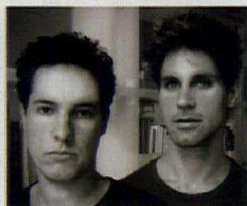
15 young firms to watch

grzywinski + pons

new york

www.gp-arch.com

Matthew Grzywinski, 34, and Amador Pons, 36, weren't officially a firm when they submitted design proposals for a hotel project on Manhattan's



Amador Pons and Matthew Grzywinski

Lower East Side, but that didn't stop the two 20-somethings from winning the large commission. "We put together the proposal with the developer not knowing how young we were,"

Grzywinski says.

The resulting project, Hotel on Rivington, is a 27-floor glass tower with luxe interiors and a window wall system that blurs and diffuses the building's orthogonal steel grid, one magazine wrote. Despite pursu-

ing separate interests after college (where they met), the Rivington job reunited the duo and signaled their potential, leading them to launch Grzywinski + Pons.

Today, the firm does a variety of architectural work, but it's very interested in designing building types that interact with the public such as education complexes and hotels. Still, about 50 percent of its work is residential, including multifamily and single-family homes. The partners are interested in beautiful buildings, but they're also cognizant of the things around their projects. "We try to pay attention to context in our work," Grzywinski explains. "We use materials that are unapologetic, honest, and those that will age well with patina."—*n.f.m.*

years in practice: 8 / **projects completed in 2011:** 3 / **firm size:** 3 / **areas of interest:** residential, hospitality, commercial, education, transportation, urban planning



Photos: Floto + Warner

The Nolitan Hotel in New York (top) highlights the duo's skill with large projects, while the Bayside Residence (above) shows they can play small ball just as well.

ssd

cambridge, mass.

www.ssdarchitecture.com



John Hong and Jinhee Park

years in practice: 9 / **projects completed in 2011:** 3 / **firm size:** 7 / **areas of interest:** single-family, multifamily, commercial, research, museums, education

Early in their practice when clients asked Jinhee Park, AIA, and John Hong, AIA, LEED AP, to design a house with 600,000 pounds of steel and concrete salvaged from Boston's Big Dig highway project, the duo produced an aggressive yet beautiful 4,300-square-foot home that was widely published. It's the kind of out-of-the box sustainable thinking upon which the young firm built its reputation.

With offices in New York, Boston, and Seoul, Korea, SsD has moved on to bigger projects, but it still ap-

plies the same logic to its work. "We started [Big Dig] not as a house, but as a research project on the potential of the materials," Park says.

SsD specializes in modern design—"minimum form takes maximum effect," it believes—that blends architecture, landscape, history, social systems, and sustainability. "Design should use minimum means to create maximum effect," Park explains. "We call this 'sustainable minimalism.'"

SsD is working on micro-unit housing in Seoul, an early education center,



Photos: Peter Bennetts



The Tattoo House's two-story addition meets local design requirements for 70 percent opacity on second-story windows by using oversized UV-resistant stickers created from photos taken in a nearby park.

andrew maynard architects

melbourne, australia

www.maynardarchitects.com

Andrew Maynard has been drawing, sketching, and illustrating things since he can remember. In college, studying architecture let him indulge his artistic passion and support himself. "Also," Maynard adds, "I like the fact that architecture is a type of art that the everyday public must interact with."

After graduating from the University of Tasmania, Maynard worked for big firms including Six Degrees Architects, Allom Lovell (now Lovell Chen), and Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners. During this time, he won regional and international awards, but he craved more creative freedom. As a result, he returned to his hometown of Melbourne to start his eponymous firm in 2002.

Andrew Maynard Architects focuses on sustainable, primarily residential

design, but it's also interested in myriad concepts that help green our planet—like a zero waste table, a suburb-eating robot, and a high-tech house with a low-brow name (Poop House) that builds itself using household waste. For his built projects, Maynard looks to inform clients that living in bold but efficient spaces with indoor-outdoor integration considerably improves the occupants' quality of life. "In residential architecture we need to convince our clients that small is better," Maynard says. "Large houses are unhealthy, unsustainable, they separate families, and most important they dislocate us from outdoor space."—*s.d.h.*

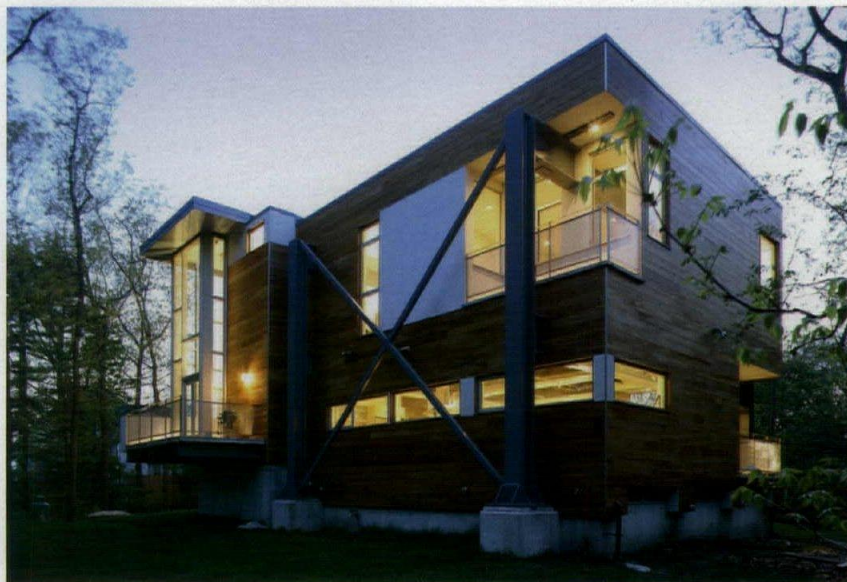


Andrew Maynard

years in practice: 10 / **projects completed in 2011:** 5 / **firm size:** 5 / **areas of interest:** residential, prefab, affordable

and a vegetarian food network with hubs, restaurants, and food trucks, but residential work is important to the firm. "The impact of the client's involvement is critical in residential projects," Park explains. "We are always excited to draw out unexpected exciting design solutions through the collaboration with clients."—*n.f.m.*

Considered a feat of ingenuity and creativity, the Big Dig House uses roadway overpass materials salvaged from portions of I-93 in Boston that were dismantled from the nation's most expensive highway project.



Courtesy SsD

15 young firms to watch

workshop/apd

new york

www.workshopapd.com

Matthew Berman, Assoc. AIA, and Andrew Kotchen, Assoc. AIA, first rose to national prominence in 2006, when they won Global Green USA's



Matthew Berman and Andrew Kotchen

design competition for energy-efficient affordable housing in New Orleans. Since then their New York-based firm, workshop/apd, has continued to explore ways to bring

good design to more people—while still doing the high-end, custom residential projects that make up the majority of its work.

For example, Berman and Kotchen designed a product line for the Italian kitchen company Aster Cucine that launched in 2011. They've also

developed SpruceBox, a Web-based visualization tool for kitchens and baths, to help consumers make decisions on products, layouts, and finishes. SpruceBox currently is on hold, but it may return as the economy rebounds.

The firm's interiors department has grown over the past couple of years, as has its range of project types. In addition to apartment and loft renovations, Berman and Kotchen have their first restaurant under construction, as well as a conversion of an existing West Village building into 55 multi-family units. And their commitment to sustainability has remained strong. "A high-performance building is a responsible building," Kotchen says. "Any good professional today is doing them."—*m.d.*

years in practice: 13 / **projects completed in 2011:** 21 / **firm size:** 22 / **areas of interest:** custom, multifamily, interiors, commercial, digital fabrication, hospitality / **portrait:** Arthur Cohen



Photos: T.G. Olcott



Workshop/apd's clean-lined residential work includes both new houses (above) and interior renovations (top).

made

brooklyn, n.y.

www.made-nyc.com

years in practice: 10 / **projects completed in 2011:** 4 / **firm size:** 9 / **areas of interest:** custom residential, commercial, renovation, design/build, custom furniture / **portrait:** Adam Golfer



Ben Bischoff

MADE started in 2002 as a bold young design/build company based in Brooklyn's Red Hook neighborhood. Founded by three friends from the Yale School of Architecture—Ben Bischoff, Oliver Freundlich, and Brian Papa—the firm rented space in a converted warehouse and fabricated its own millwork. "In the early stages, it was very hands-on and guerrilla-style," Bischoff says.

Whole-house renovations now make up the majority of MADE's commissions, rather than its ini-

tial smaller projects. The firm still designs and builds its work, but the "build" aspect is more of a supervisory and management role. "We very quickly realized our limitations as Sheetrockers," Bischoff explains. "We're partnering with much more skilled trades."

Bischoff currently leads the nine-person company, as Freundlich and Papa departed in August 2011. MADE has expanded its original Red Hook studio space, transforming its production shop into a laboratory



Sam Oberter

The Modules' 72 stick-framed units were manufactured off site and stacked on a concrete and steel plinth. Designed as student housing, the project includes a green roof and a bicycle garage.

interface studio architects

philadelphia

www.cargocollective.com/isaphila

In practice for less than eight years, Interface Studio has racked up an impressive list of accolades, including a 2011 AIA National Housing Award for its urban, green, and economical 100K House. Partners Brian Phillips, AIA, LEED AP, and Daryn Edwards, AIA, LEED AP, also have established an unusually ambitious reach for their firm. Their design practice focuses on urban residential and mixed-use projects. "But it's not just about designing buildings," Phillips says. "It's curating exhibits, teaching, doing research, getting grants." In 2011, the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage awarded Phillips a fellowship, which has allowed Interface to enter a number of design competitions "that let us work on different building types and in

different ways than we'd be able to do with client work."

While the firm's existing body of work shows a precocious confidence with both form and method, its competition entries—including a mid-rise housing project for New Orleans, a flamboyant mixed-use parking garage for Hong Kong, and an urban precinct design for Croatia—offer glimpses of even greater things to come. And the partners' expansive definition of practice promises to lend stability to the firm while spreading the wealth of their talent within the profession and the community.—*b.d.s.*



Daryn Edwards and Brian Phillips

years in practice: 7 / **projects completed in 2011:** 4 / **firm size:** 5 / **areas of interest:** single-family, multifamily, mixed-use / **portrait:** Colin Lenton

for testing ideas. Custom residential work remains a primary focus. "We find the kind of attitude and approach we have is well-suited to someone's home," Bischoff says. "It's a very intensive involvement ... how people are going to live and inhabit the space is very important to us." The company is designing its first all-new residential buildings—a pool house and guest house in Westchester County, N.Y., and a house in Red Hook—as well as its first large-scale commercial project.—*m.d.*



Thibault Jeanson

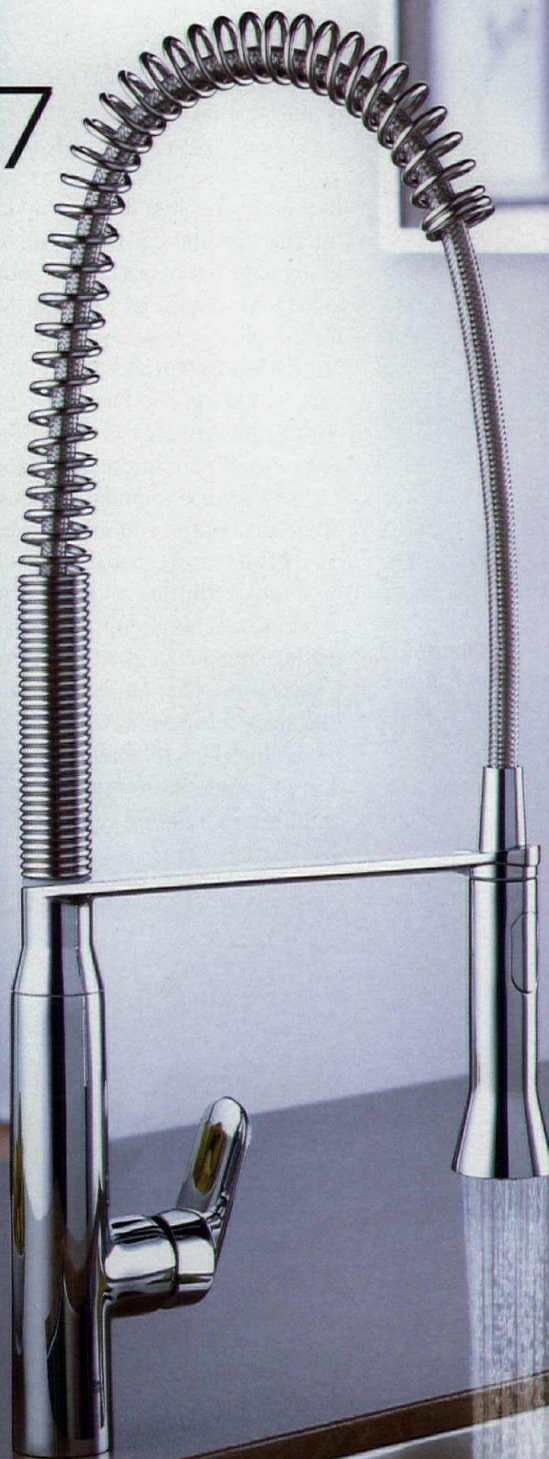
MADE prides itself on tailoring each project to the individual client. The firm's work on the Ocean Boulevard Apartment (right) and the West Village Townhouse (above) displays its versatility.



Trevor Tondro

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# 15 young firms to watch

## merge architects

boston

[www.mergearchitects.com](http://www.mergearchitects.com)

Elizabeth Whittaker, Assoc. AIA, had covered a lot of professional ground by the time she founded Merge Architects, working for firms in New York,

Los Angeles (Frank O. Gehry & Associates), Berlin, and Boston.

Still, the initiative to start her own firm came as much from her clients as from her own ambition. "I was getting these side jobs,"

Whittaker says, "and my day job [for Boston-based Brian Healy Architects] was pretty intense." She considered turning down outside projects altogether, she says. "But then I thought, 'This is a sign. I should just go off and start my own thing.' That's how it happened: I had work."

Starting with loft build-outs, Whittaker's portfolio quickly expanded to include multifamily, commercial, and institutional projects. The work is characterized by bright, uncluttered spaces, sophisticated uses of everyday materials, and deceptively simple, knowing moves that generate a lot of surprise per dollar. Whittaker, who also is an adjunct professor at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, talks of "socially charging the design"—manipulating space and form to foster interactions among the people who use her buildings—and "hybridizing the program" to find novel combinations of uses. The language may sound academic, but it translates into buildings that are inventive, functional, and fun.—*b.d.s.*



Anton Grassl

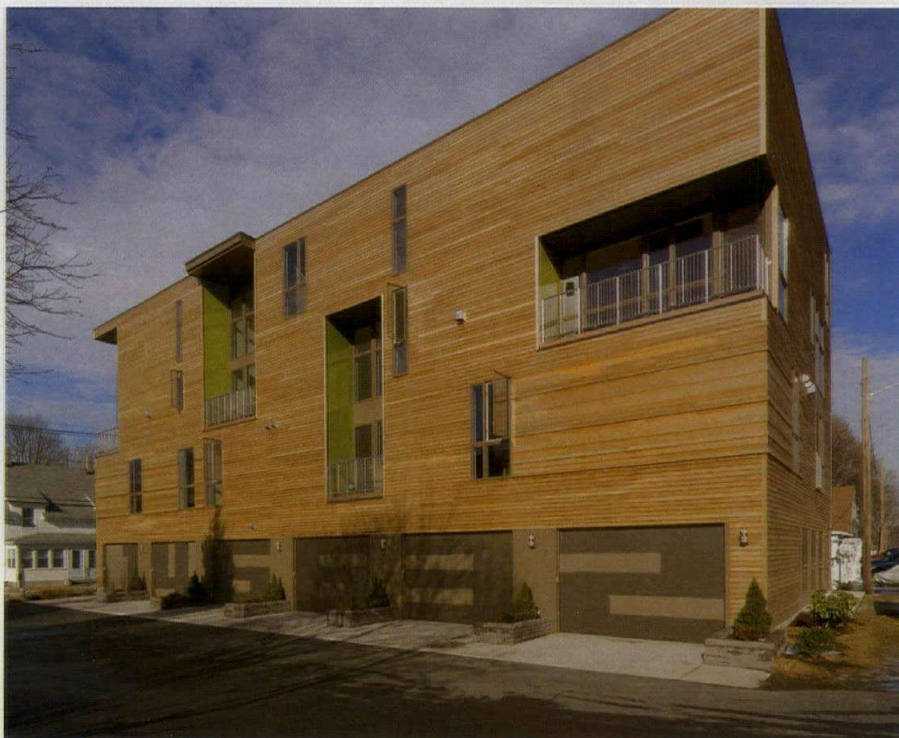


Elizabeth Whittaker



The E+ Housing project (above) is designed to feed energy back to the utility grid. Recessed balconies animate Penn Street Lofts' street façades (right). The Barry Loft master bath typifies the firm's knack for elevating commonplace materials (top, right).

**years in practice:** 9 / **projects completed in 2011:** 5 / **firm size:** 6 / **areas of interest:** custom residential, multifamily, commercial, institutional, health care



John Horner




Builder|Risinger Homes  
Architect/Designer|FAB Architecture  
Photo|Casey Dunn

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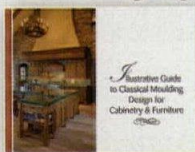
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# 15 young firms to watch

## hufft projects

kansas city, mo.

[www.hufft.com](http://www.hufft.com)

Matthew Hufft, AIA, LEED AP, believes there's never been a better time to run a nontraditional design firm. "We're coming out of the worst recession in the country's history," he says. "The building industry is so scared, people are willing to think about different ways of doing things."

The company he founded, Hufft Projects, provides a perfect example. Along with several architects and designers, the 18-person staff also includes a team of skilled craftspeople who fabricate wood and metal details, cabinetry, and furniture. The firm's Kansas City, Mo., compound encompasses a metal studio and a digital studio, complete with an extra-large

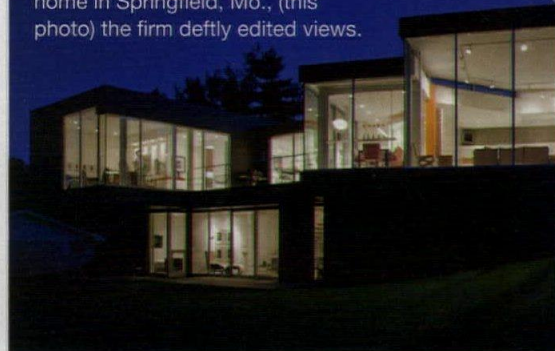
CNC machine.

This interest and expertise in fabrication recently has led the firm to explore design/build. One such project is a house for Hufft and his wife, Jesse (who are both directors at Hufft Projects, along with Clayton Vogel and Kimball Hales, AIA, LEED AP). It also has taken on several mixed-use, multifamily projects in addition to its custom residential and commercial work. In May, Vogel and Matthew Hufft officially introduced Edwin Blue, a furniture line and sister company to Hufft Projects. Says Matthew: "We survived the recession based on determination and also diversification." —*m.d.*



Rendering: Courtesy Hufft Projects

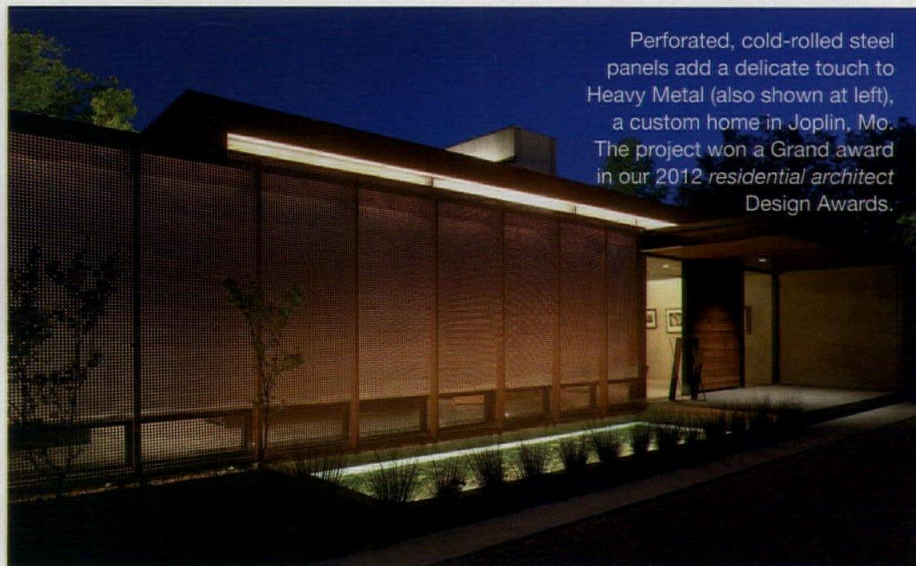
Woodside Village (above) is a mixed-use, multifamily project in Westwood, Kan. At a custom home in Springfield, Mo., (this photo) the firm deftly edited views.



Matthew Hufft



From left: Clayton Vogel, Jesse Hufft, Kimball Hales, and Matthew Hufft



Perforated, cold-rolled steel panels add a delicate touch to Heavy Metal (also shown at left), a custom home in Joplin, Mo. The project won a Grand award in our 2012 *residential architect* Design Awards.

Courtesy Hufft Projects

years in practice: 7 / projects completed in 2011: 30 / firm size: 18 / areas of interest: multifamily, custom residential, commercial, mixed-use



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# 15 young firms to watch

## altius architecture

toronto

[www.altius.net](http://www.altius.net)

Altius Architecture's founders bootstrapped their firm into existence. "We basically decided to start a firm right out of school," says principal Cathy Garrido, AIA, LEED AP. Partners Graham Smith, MBAIC, LEED AP, and Trevor McIvor, MBAIC, piloted the firm's early design/build projects. Garrido helped structure and manage the practice, while booking enough internship hours at her day job to sit for her license. After three years, she joined her former schoolmates full time, helped them get licensed, and, as they say, Bob's your uncle.

Modernists with a commitment to sustainability, the partners have built a portfolio of houses whose bold geometries—on urban infill sites or

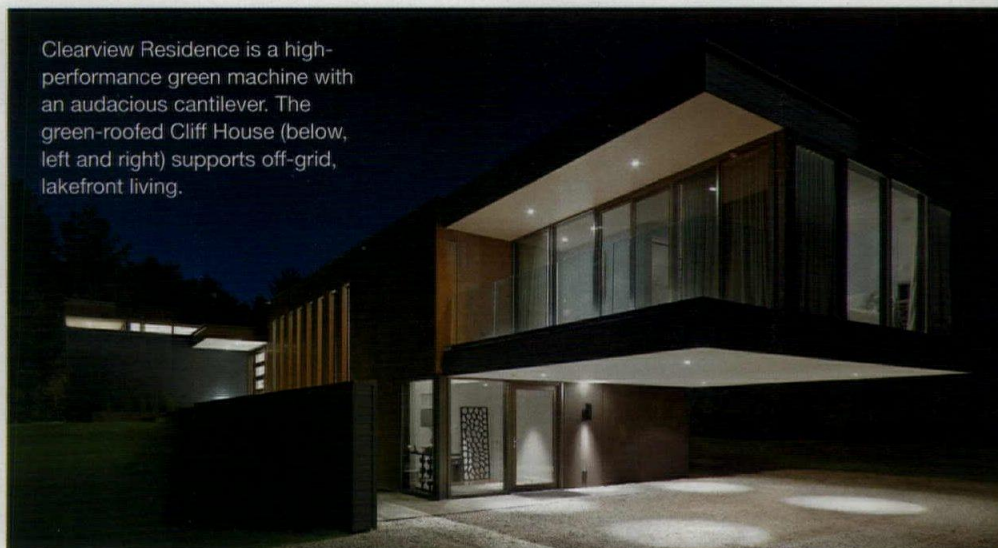
the dramatic lakefronts of Ontario's "cottage country"—prove their self-confidence was not misplaced. Equally distinctive is the firm's heads-up approach to business. Despite complaints from others in the field, Garrido says,

"we thought there was

no reason why we shouldn't be able to make a decent living as architects." The ability to perform construction management helps Altius stand out in the market, she says, and maintaining a business plan, setting revenue targets, and following a marketing plan have yielded their intended result. "For the past 10 years, it's been pretty steady growth."—*b.d.s.*



Graham Smith, Cathy Garrido, and Trevor McIvor



Clearview Residence is a high-performance green machine with an audacious cantilever. The green-roofed Cliff House (below, left and right) supports off-grid, lakefront living.

Photos (above and below, left and right): Jonathan Savoie



The North Kingsway remodel applied the firm's standard of sustainability-with-style to a conventional tract house.

Courtesy Altius Architecture

years in practice: 10 / projects completed in 2011: 30 / firm size: 27 / areas of interest: residential, commercial / portrait: Jonathan Savoie



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## höweler + yoon architecture

boston

[www.hyarchitecture.com](http://www.hyarchitecture.com)

Pigeonholing Meejin Yoon and Eric Höweler, AIA, LEED AP, seems downright impossible—and that's exactly how they want it. "We're all over the place," Höweler says of the project types their firm, Höweler + Yoon Architecture, designs. The married, Boston-based duo has worked on public spaces, commercial interiors, houses, institutional buildings, and more, throwing

themselves into researching each commission. "When a project seems challenging or interesting in some way, we say yes," Yoon explains.

Höweler and Yoon met as undergraduates at Cornell, and their different backgrounds contribute to their diverse practice. Höweler grew up in

Colombia and Thailand, and worked at Kohn Pedersen Fox and Diller + Scofidio (now Diller Scofidio + Renfro) before joining forces with Yoon, a Seoul, Korea, native raised in the United States. Yoon's work experience at Dean/Wolf Architects sparked her interest in residential design. "I love residential because you can get really, really fine-scaled," she says. "It's a very intimate type of work." She and Höweler have just completed a house in Arlington, Va., and are working on a multiphased single-family renovation in Boston.

The couple and their 19-month-old daughter live in a downtown Boston loft, just a block from their office. Both teach part time, which Höweler says informs their architecture: "Teaching does keep us on our toes, I think, in the practice."—*m.d.*



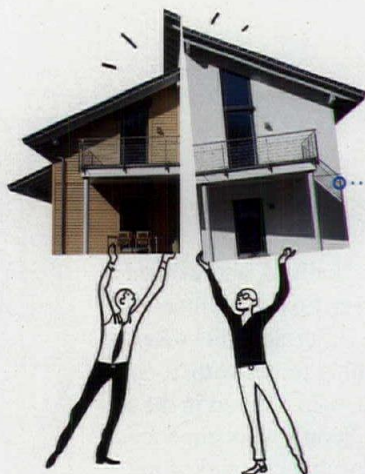
The firm's design for the Cliff Street House in Ithaca, N.Y., overlooks a wooded gorge. At the Davol Loft in Boston (right), a courtyard and skylights bring in natural light.

Photos: Courtesy Höweler + Yoon Architecture

**years in practice:** 7 / **projects completed in 2011:** 4 / **firm size:** 4 / **areas of interest:**

commercial, residential, planning, institutional, public art





*As we've watched the profession evolve over the past 15 years, these means and methods have migrated from the fringes to the center of architecture's arsenal of best practices.*

## 15 advances in residential practice

by meghan drueding and bruce d. snider

### ■ design/build

Updating the time-honored master builder model, architect-led design/build firms offer clients an experience that is integrated from start to finish. The arrangement forgoes some checks and balances of the conventional approach, but it allows accurate job costing earlier in the design process and can put more design talent out on the jobsite.

### ■ new modernism

Once reserved for the homes of movie villains, modern residential architecture has gone mainstream. The kinder, gentler Modernism of the 21st century uses agricultural and industrial references to connect with its region. And its popularity continues to grow among younger generations.

### ■ common grounds

Gen-X and Gen-Y city dwellers are looking for a sense of community, even within their apartment or condominium buildings. New and recent multifamily projects feature gyms, courtyards, movie rooms, rooftop decks, and even lobby coffee bars—all serving as layers of shared space between the street and the unit.

### ■ new urbanism

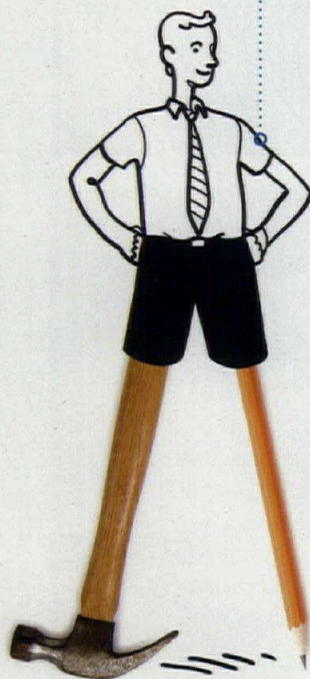
New Urbanism began as an insurgent movement against the car-centered orthodoxy of conventional planning wisdom. By resurrecting and codifying old-fashioned ideas about mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities—and by persuading developers of their value—New Urbanists have transformed the real estate landscape.

### ■ disaster relief housing

News of natural and man-made disasters now spreads with a speed that was unthinkable 15 years ago. Architects have responded accordingly, using their unique skills to provide post-disaster design and rebuilding help—especially through Architecture for Humanity, which started in 1999 and now has 70 chapters in 25 countries.

### ■ prefabricated housing

The dream of high-design prefab housing picked up steam during the boom, as a clutch of innovative firms drew international acclaim for their sophisticated prefab plans and manufacturing methods. Despite a housing bust-induced slowdown, consumer awareness of architect-led prefab is now higher than ever.





■ **collaborative practice**

Traditional hierarchies have given way to newly democratic firm structures, heralded by open workspaces and abstract company names. Today's firms often work across disciplines, incorporating interiors, landscape, construction, and furniture—and they're ready and willing to team up with other designers.

■ **new traditional architecture**

With mass market housing mired in a historical pastiche, a cadre of dedicated classicists and masters of regional vernacular hold the line on authenticity in traditional architecture.

■ **information technology and tools**

Email and digital photography have transformed communication among architects, clients, and builders. Meanwhile, the Internet has given practices that before were strictly local access to national—and even international—markets.

■ **environmental accountability**

Structured sustainability programs like LEED and Passive House apply objective standards to the ideal of green design, giving architects verifiable paths to high-performance, environmentally responsible buildings.



■ **small house consciousness**

Doing more with less has always been at the heart of architecture. Now environmental awareness and a reset in the economics of homeownership have given minimalist housing mainstream cachet.

■ **social media**

Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other social media have provided architects with potent new marketing tools. Their casual nature enables companies to connect with people quickly and informally, and to reveal more about the personalities behind the firm.

■ **design software**

Extending the dominance of CAD, building information modeling, or BIM, has expanded the capability of

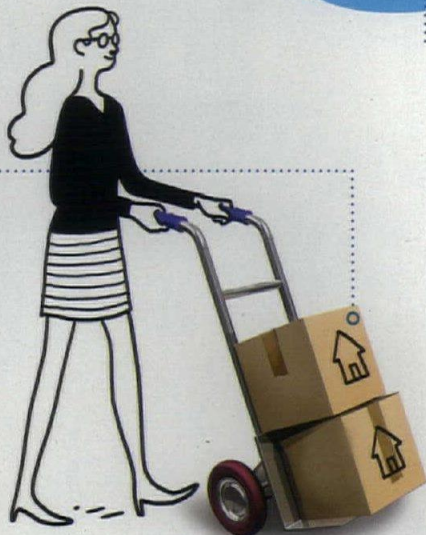
architectural documents to include not only the third spatial dimension, but also light and the crucial element of performance over time.

■ **strong indoor/outdoor connections**

Sunbelt climates invited architects to dissolve the exterior wall, while improvements in glazing gave them the means to do so. Temperate regions got in on the act, too; every house can use a little more nature.

■ **open floor plans**

Modernism introduced open-plan living, but the concept has become virtually universal. Neo-traditional detailing may rule the suburbs, but only the most hidebound traditionalist would tolerate a door between the kitchen and dining area.





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# 15 products architects can't live without

by nigel f. maynard

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## ■ cable rail

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## ■ quartz-based surfacing

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## ■ high-performance hvac

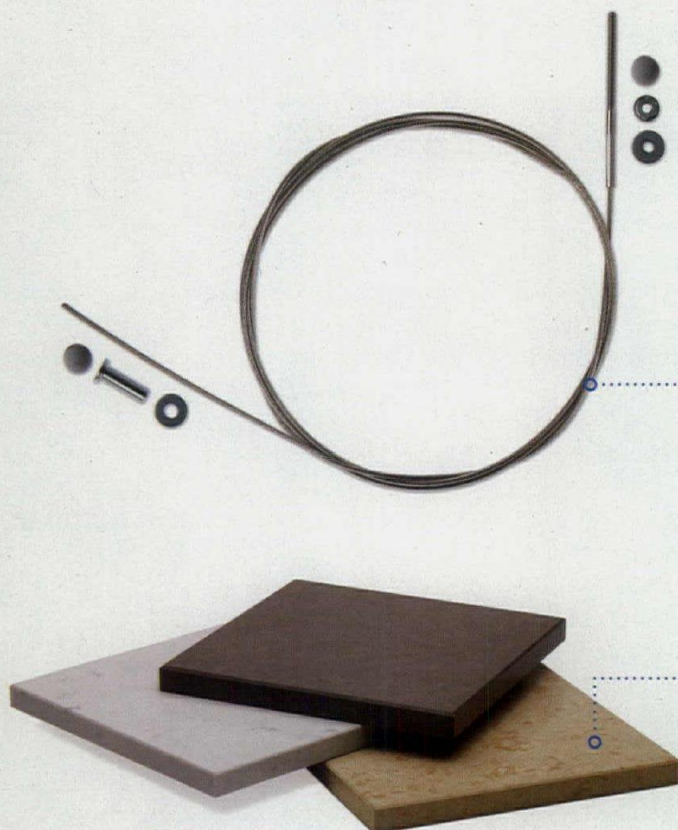
Air conditioning is the most expensive part of maintaining a home, which is why architects spec high-performing HVAC systems to minimize energy consumption. Some heat pumps offer SEER ratings as high as 21.

## ■ fiber cement siding

Made from cement, wood pulp, and sand, the material has become one of the most oft-specified exterior claddings among residential architects. It promises rot and moisture resistance and protection from decay.

## ■ engineered structural products

Architects no longer have to deal with jobsite calcula-





tions, waste, and inconsistent dimensional lumber. Engineered wood products offer faster installation, precut roof and floor joints, and straight laminated strand lumber.

■ **low-voc paints**

The development of “cleaner” organic compounds, advances in resin technology, and water-based latex polymers have helped make high-performance no- and low-VOC paints possible. Some of these are just as good as—or better than—solvent-based finishes.

■ **spray foam insulation**

Depending on the budget and the location, foam insulation is the preferred spec for some residential pros.

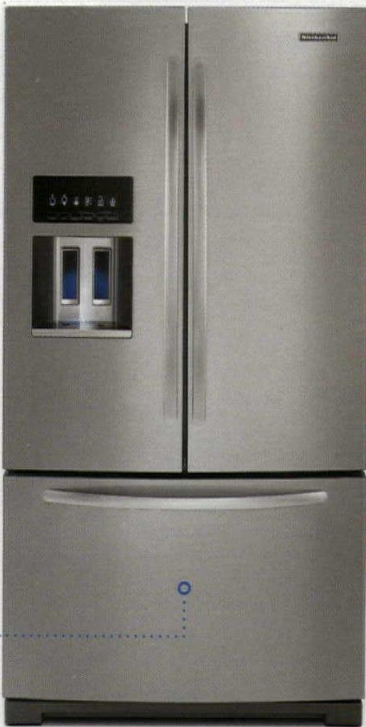
It may have to do with the product’s R-value of about 7 per inch, or it might be that the product is an air and vapor barrier in one.

■ **polycarbonate/resin panels**

Polycarbonate and resin panels are popular for several reasons: frosted glass can be heavy and impractical; they permit light but maintain privacy; and some products feature interlayers of fabric, foliage, and metal for architectural interest and color.

■ **energy-efficient appliances**

Gone are the days when energy-hogging refrigerators, dishwashers, and clothes washers were the norm.



Energy Star appliances, in some cases, are up to 140 percent more efficient than government standards.

■ **tankless water heaters**

Instead of heating and reheating water in a tank, a tankless unit turns on only when needed. As a result, they cost about \$170 per year to operate versus \$285 for a traditional storage heater.

■ **low-flow plumbing fixtures**

Toilets once used up to 3.5 gallons of water per flush. But that was before the 1992 Energy Policy Act and before manufacturers developed dual-flush technology and units that use as little as 0.8 gallons.

■ **energy-efficient lighting**

Saving energy on lights used

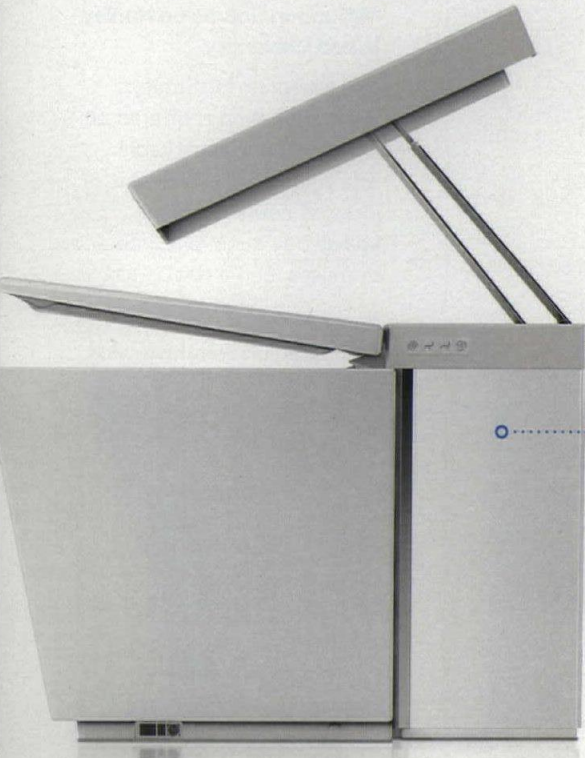
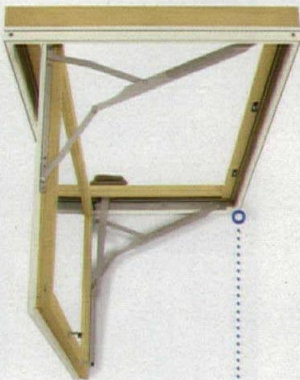
to consist of an incandescent bulb on a dimmer, but the improvement of the compact fluorescent and the development of the LED makes saving energy easy.

■ **high-performance windows**

We’ve come a long way from inefficient single-pane windows. Today, architects have at their disposal windows with low-E double and even triple panes, argon and krypton gasses, and units with R-values as high as 11.

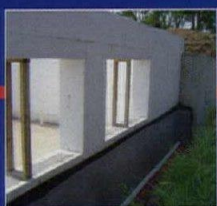
■ **radiant-heated floors**

Radiant-heated floors are more efficient than baseboard heating and usually more efficient than forced-air heating because no energy is lost through ducts. It saves up to 40 percent on heating costs and puts heat at floor level where it’s needed.





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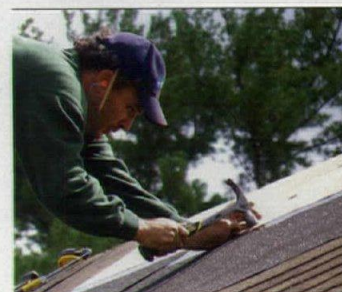
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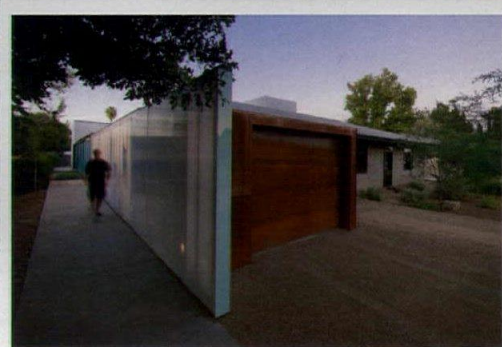
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## reinventing the ranch

our website has seen remarkable growth in its 14 years, but one story remains a favorite.

Aside from our annual design awards winners, the most viewed story on *residential architect's* website is a 2004 piece on remodeling ubiquitous American house types—including mid-20th century suburban homes. This topic's popularity is no doubt driven by the thousands of homeowners saddled with outdated housing located in desirable neighborhoods. Although architects love to tackle the new custom homes that often win our awards,

their best supply of work may come from unlocking the potential of these aging ranches and split-levels. Above, Matthew and Maria Salenger, AIA, of colab studio, created an exciting example of design's transformative power with their own 1950s ranch remodel in Tempe, Ariz. And yes—it, too, won a *residential architect* Design Award. Architects are the masters of reinvention—a skill we'll need more than ever in the next 15 years we chronicle.

### ra online

Visit [go.hw.net/ra-revisions-of-home.com](http://go.hw.net/ra-revisions-of-home.com) for our most read Web story about remodeling popular suburban housing types and a slideshow of recent mid-century makeovers.

Photos: Bill Timmerman





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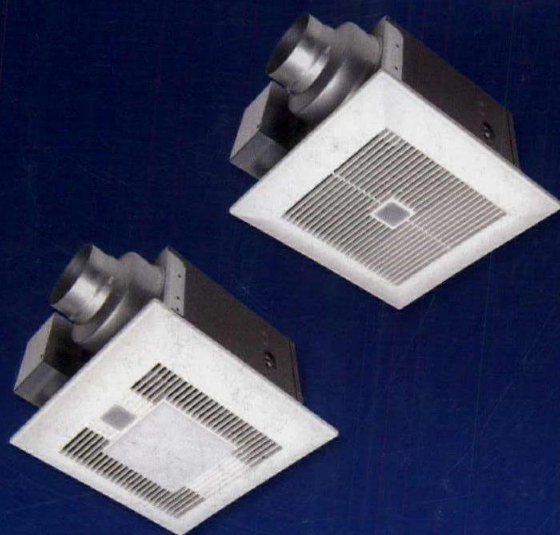
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