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A VNU Business Publication

commercial interior design and architecture june 2003

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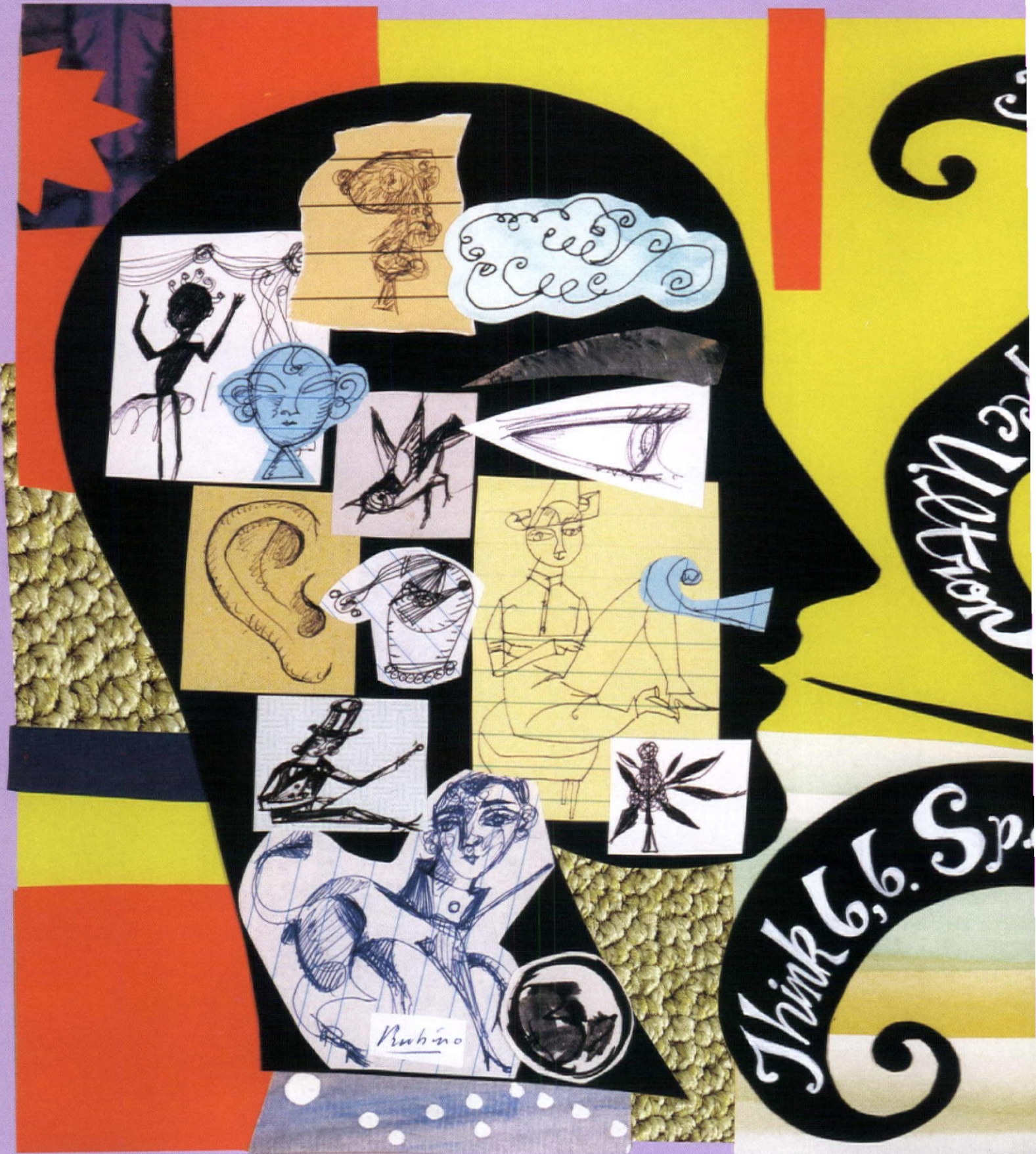
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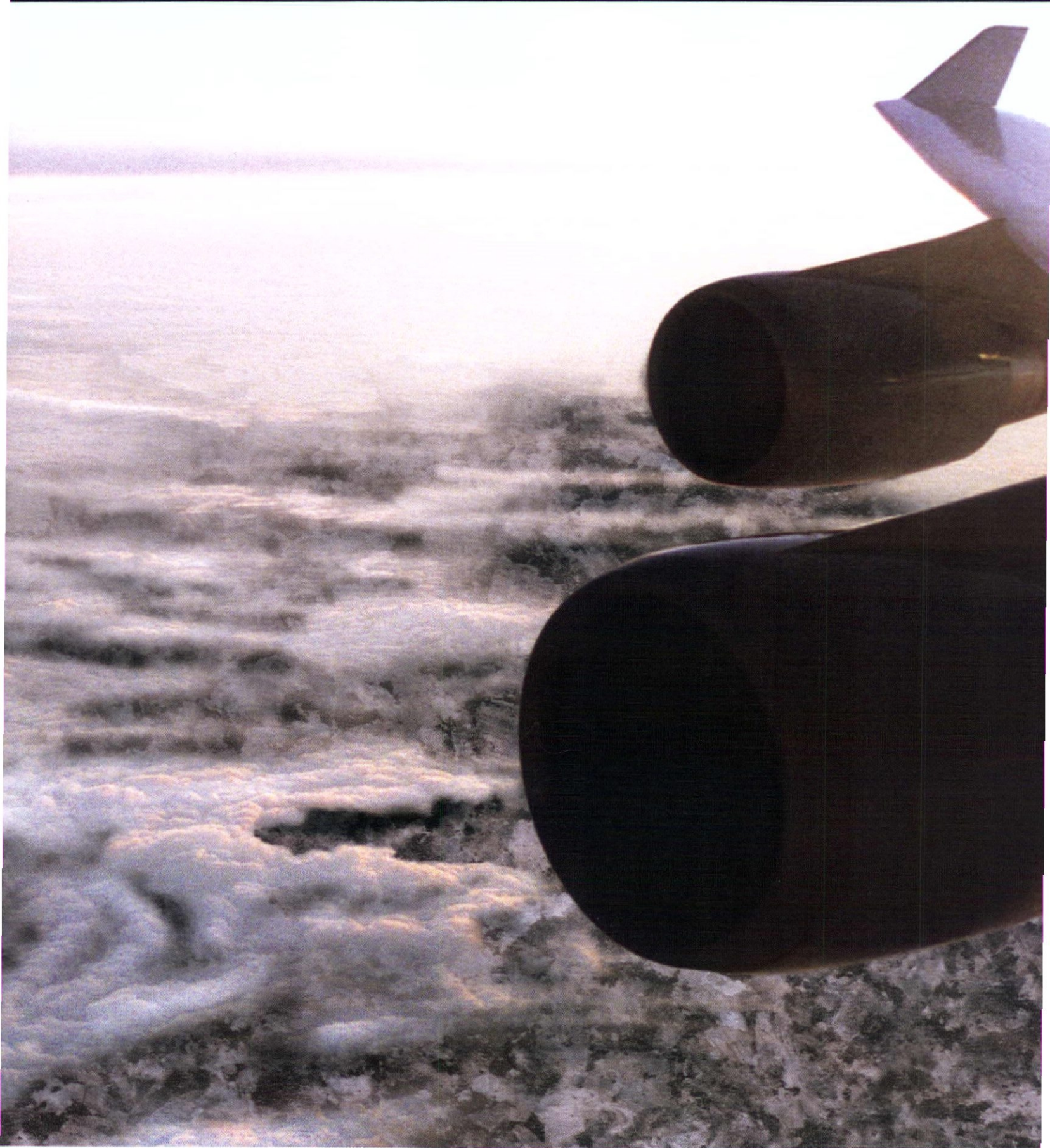



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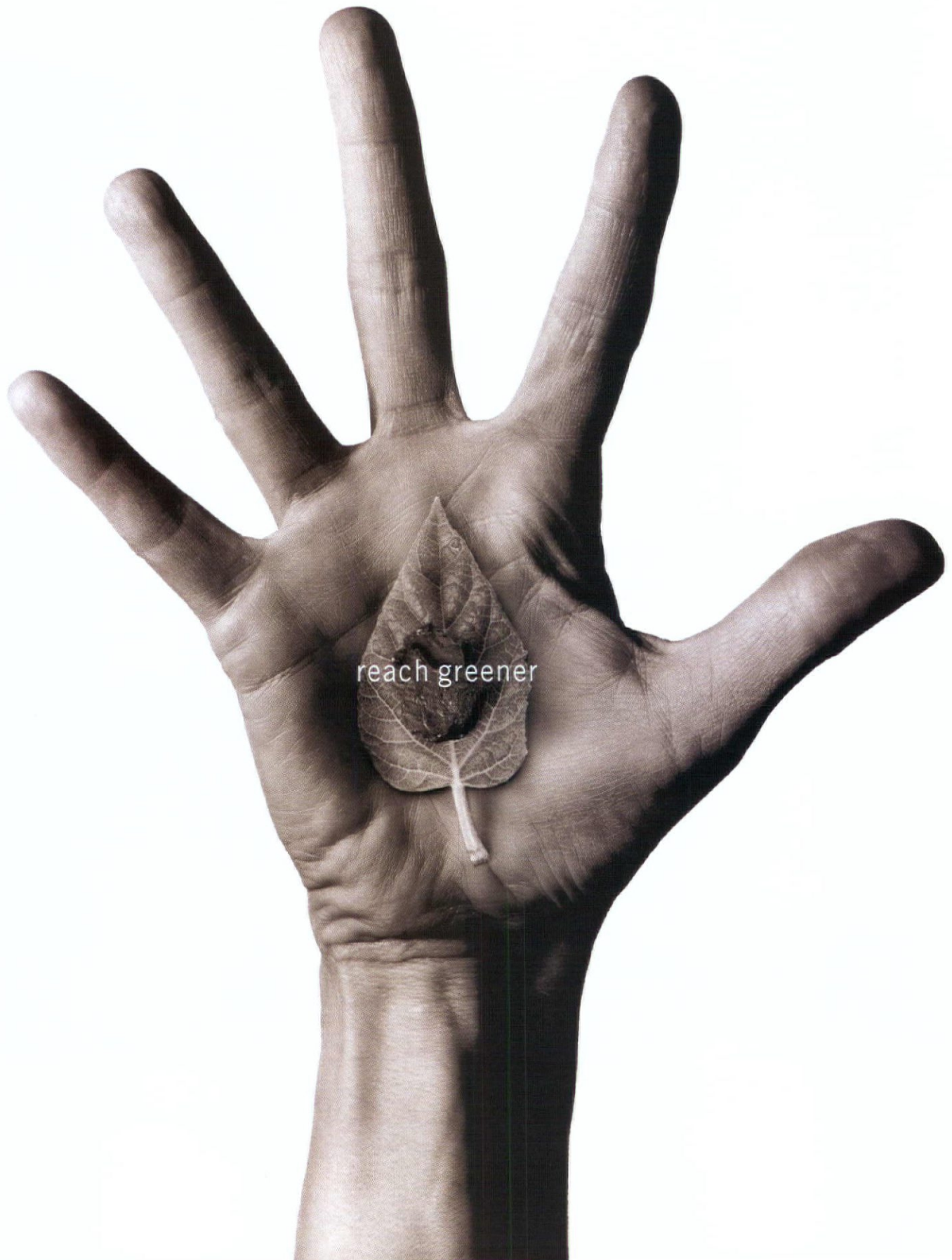
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focus

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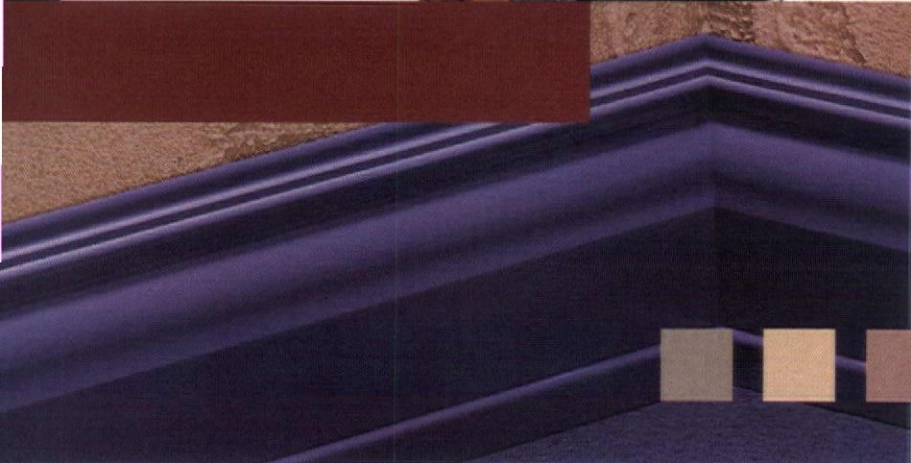
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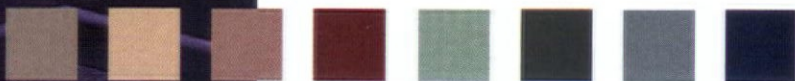
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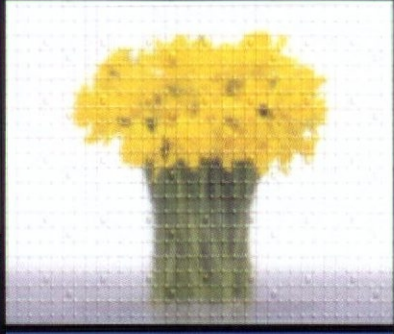
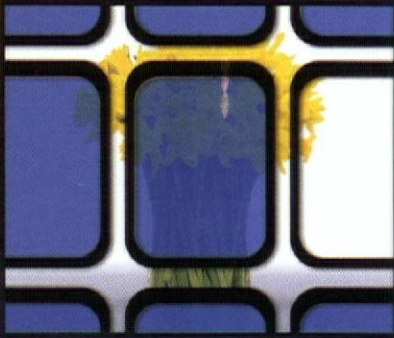
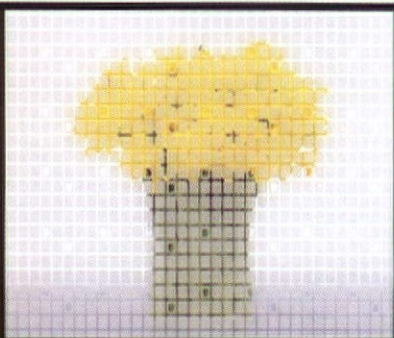
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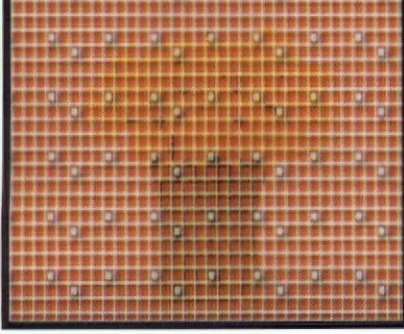
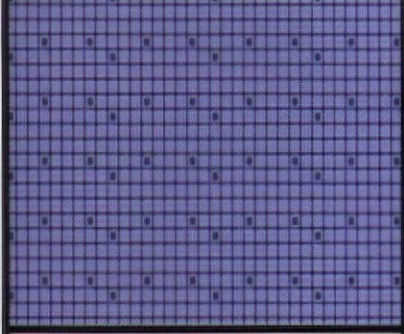
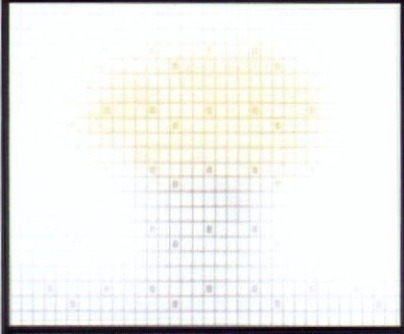
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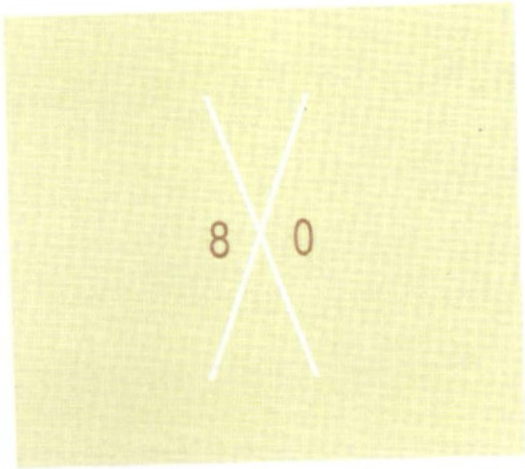
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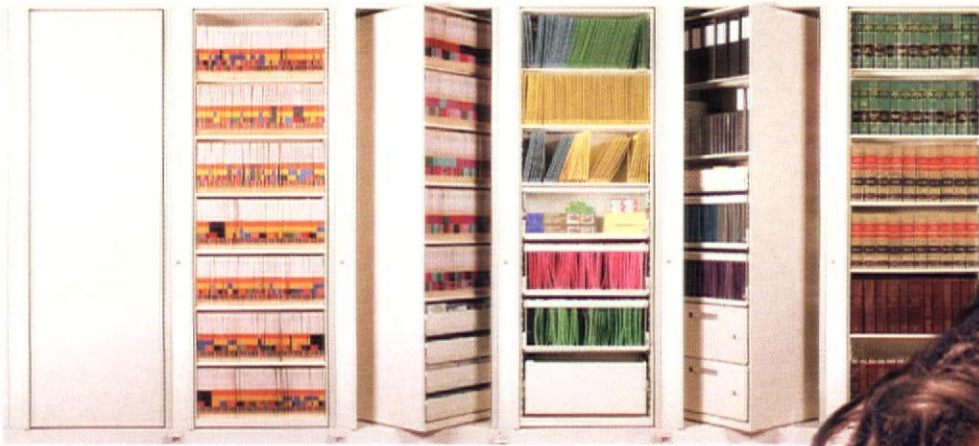
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design with the times



Jennifer Thiele Busch
Editor in Chief

If there was ever a timely topic (other than environmentally sustainable design), then right now, design on a tight budget would have to be it. In a prolonged depressed economy that is only showing weak signs of abating, the generous or even ample design budget is clearly a thing of the past. These days design firms are happy just to find work, and with few exceptions, those that do are routinely faced with financial limitations that could easily stifle enthusiasm and creativity.

As Jim Phillips of The Phillips Group so aptly points out in his critique titled "Faster, Cheaper, and Smarter—Pushing the Limits," recent technological and business trends—not to mention the jarring impact of home turf terrorism—have created a whole new professional landscape for designers, where low budgets are joined by fast track schedules to create design challenges once thought impossible to conquer. But it's no use complaining. If this is the new reality, then it's the job of the adaptable designer to meet the challenge head on.

We all know from watching the wildly popular *Trading Spaces* that interesting design on a tight budget is possible in a residential setting, even if you don't exactly appreciate painted placemats turned into window treatments. This issue of *Contract* offers ample proof that compelling, low budget design solutions are also possible in the commercial setting, and sometimes with stunning results. The projects and design firms we have profiled also make an important point about agility. One might expect the inventive design solutions that we have included from firms like O+A in San Francisco and Resistance Design in New York, as the funky, eclectic aesthetic that is often the hallmark of the small, young design firm. But also included are low budget projects by STUDIOS architecture, RTKL, and a consortium of the most established and venerable design firms in the San Francisco Bay Area. These firms, which are used to dealing with enormous projects and substantial budgets, have nonetheless displayed the ability to tailor their design

solutions to the needs—and limitations—of the project without sacrificing creativity. Size doesn't matter, but attitude certainly does.

As we approach NeoCon®, our industry's annual trade conference where many of the newest commercial furnishings and finishes products are introduced each year, we are also curious to see what impact the stark realities of the last 12 months have had on product design and development. Last year's show produced a healthy share of new product, if little in the way of real innovation. In 2003, we have no illusions about business activity ever returning to the highs experienced during the dot-com craze. And one would hope the furniture and finishes manufacturers that serve our industry will deliver product designs that rise to the same enormous creative challenges the A&D community are facing daily. The quality of our interior spaces depends upon it. ☐

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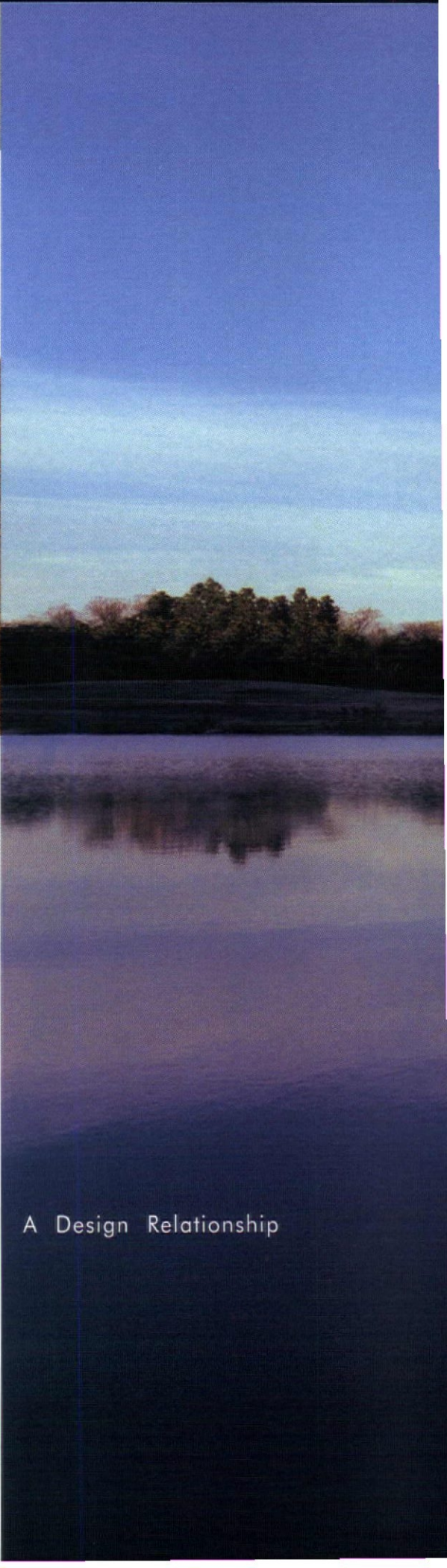
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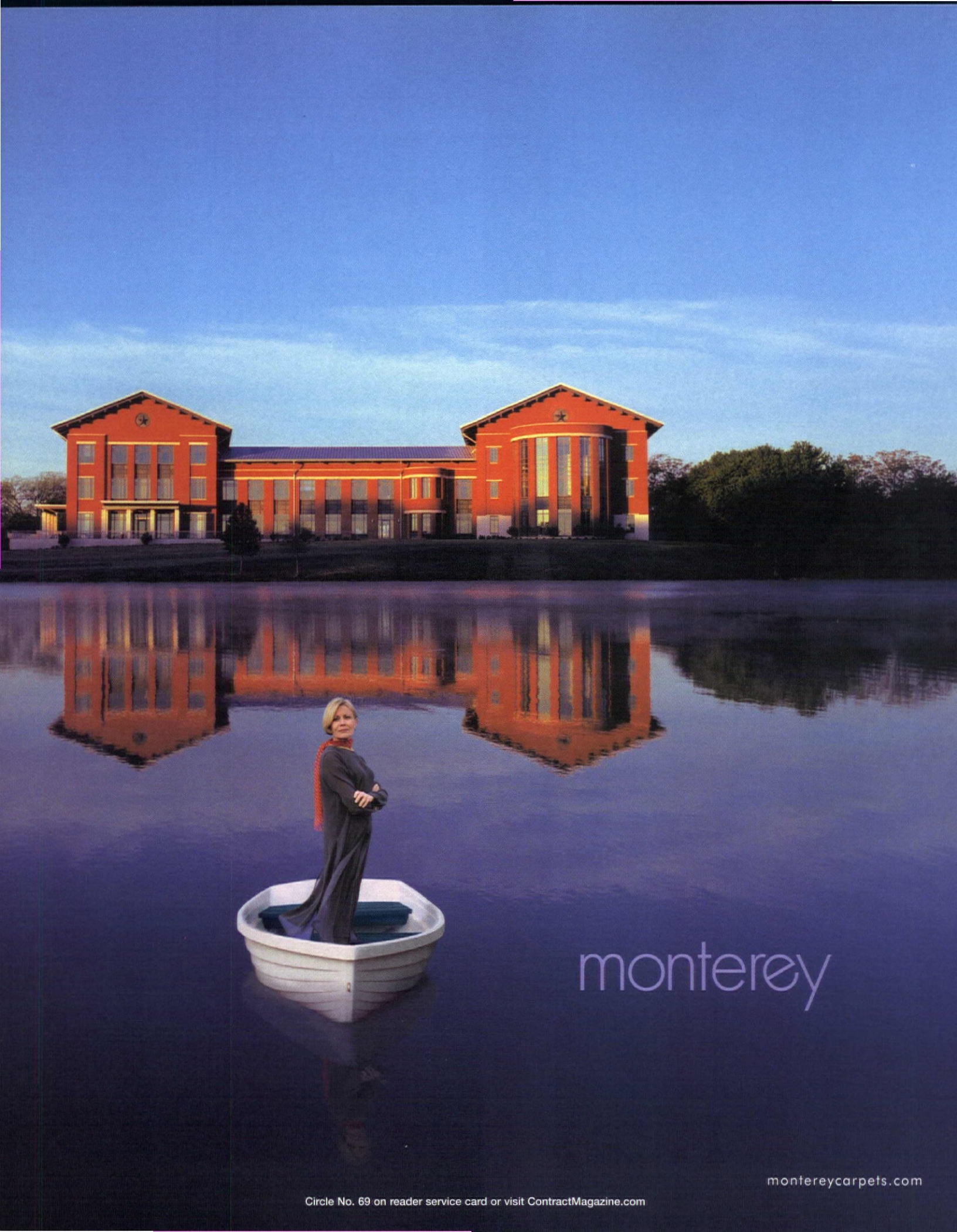


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letters

A Vote for Vinyl

I phoned you in hopes that we could discuss a way that the Vinyl Institute could respond to the March *Contract* article, "What Makes a Material Green?" (p. 92).

The author starts out sensibly by pointing out some of the issues in determining whether a product is green and describing developments in life cycle analysis to help make decisions. Just when he seems to be making a convincing case, he contradicts himself and categorically rejects vinyl. Where's the LCA evidence? Where's the fairness?

[The article] is misleading and just plain wrong about vinyl. Vinyl does not create toxins in its use. How could it have become so widely used in healthcare facilities if it did? And, manufacturing and disposal of vinyl is not much different from the same processes with myriad other materials and products.

As I'm sure you know, we briefed Diana Mosher for [the article "Guilty Pleasure" in the Sept. 2002 issue of *Contract*] (p. 40), and we appreciated the facts that she used from our briefing. We might argue over whether vinyl is green. We tend to avoid the claim since some people reserve it for plant-based materials. But we definitely have good evidence that vinyl products offer energy and environmental benefits. I'd be very happy to share the evidence with you. (Please see www.vinylbydesign.com).

Furthermore, the vinyl industry believes in and practices environmental stewardship. I can show you proof.

Allen Blakey
Director, Public Affairs
The Vinyl Institute
Arlington, VA

Working With the Past

"Retrofit" in the April issue (p. 100) is a brilliant article on building conservation. It should be engraved on everyone's forehead!

The piece on "Where Did That Building Go?" (p. 58) is also right to the point. Except that, in addition to money, improved education in how to do the job on time, on budget, and still be sensitive to original design and fabric is needed, too.

Many of the problems in dealing with pre-1940 structures, such as aggravation, cost overruns, and irreversible damage, stem from unfamiliarity with older construction methods and materials. All three categories of professionals, public, and youth have to be made aware of the differences between modern and traditional techniques. There are many more of these existing buildings than new ones.

Gersil N. Kay
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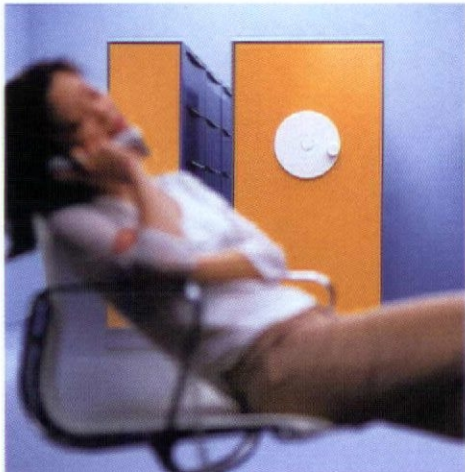
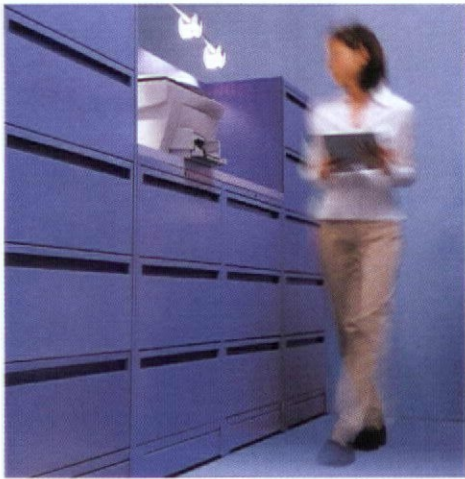
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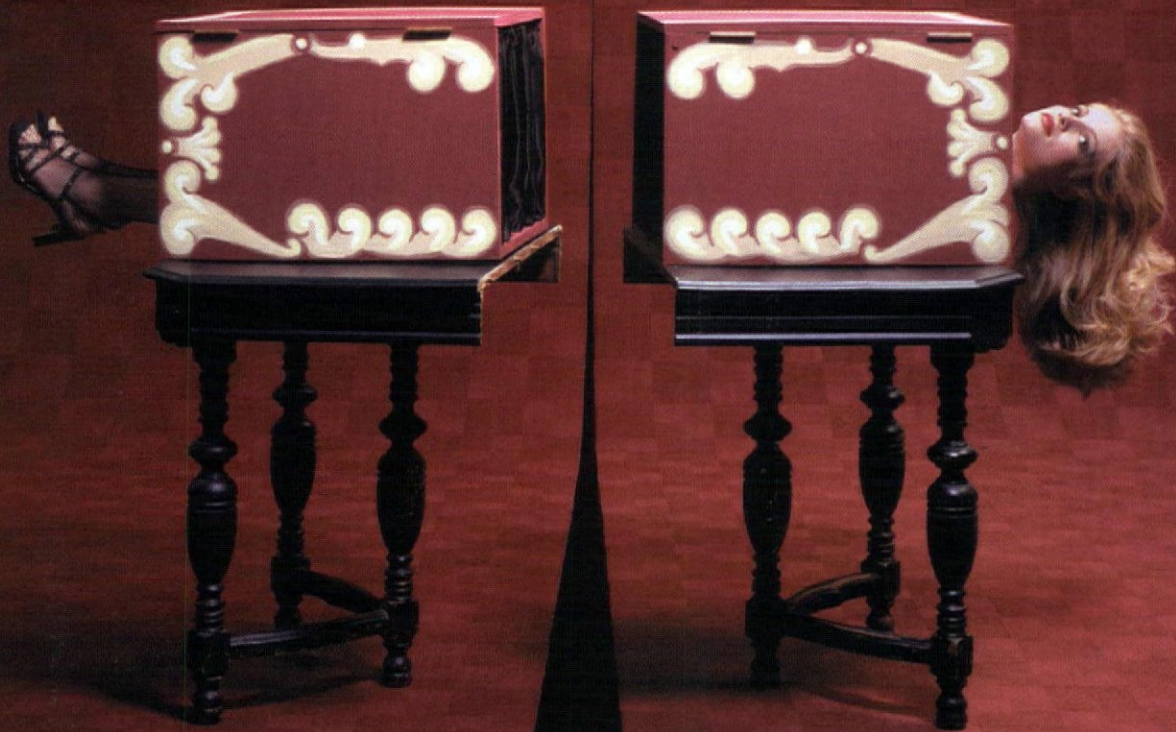
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Making Art Comfortable

Ridgefield, Conn.—A \$9-million renovation and expansion project will double the existing size of The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Conn. Designed by Tappé Associates of Boston, the plan incorporates the restoration of the museum's historic 1783 building, the construction of a new white clapboard and Connecticut granite structure, and the redesign of an extensive outdoor sculpture garden.

Founded in 1964 by collector and fashion designer Larry Aldrich, The Aldrich is a non-collecting museum that has served as a national leader in the exhibition of contemporary art. Aldrich's vision was that the museum would enable visitors to feel comfortable with contemporary art and possibly be inspired to live with it in their homes.

"The Aldrich had built a reputation as one of the nation's finest contemporary art museums, with a particular strength in its education programs for children and adults," says Aldrich director Harry Philbrick. "This expansion will allow us to further our goals in presenting cutting-edge art by emerging and mid-career artists, while updating our educational facilities to make them properly accessible to our community. The design ensures that the new building embraces our landmark 1783 building and is sensitive to our historic district."

When completed in 2004, the 25,000 sq. ft. of new and redesigned space will accommodate 12 galleries, including a screening room, sound gallery, project space, performance space, art education center, and revamped sculpture garden. The grand opening of the renovation will coincide with the museum's fortieth anniversary.

Indeed, planning around the museum's historic surrounds proved to be a design challenge, says Charles Mark Hay, design principal at Tappé. "The design is based on an abstraction of traditional New England architecture, emphasizing its context," he says. The restored original structure, known as "old Hundred," will house administrative offices and connect to a new two-story, 19,000-sq. ft. addition through an entrance plaza and terraced steps. The new building features a double-peaked, multi-leveled, lead-coated copper roof that slopes toward the back, moving the eye into the landscape. The rear lot, landscaped by Richard Burke Associates of Somerville, Mass., consists of a two-acre outdoor sculpture garden and entrance plaza that will offer grounds for hosting outdoor exhibits.



Heralding Young Architects

New York—The Architectural League of New York has announced the six winners of its 22nd annual competition for young architects and designers. An exhibition of the winners' work is on display at the Urban Center in New York City through June 25, at www.archleague.org, and in a catalogue to be published by Princeton Architectural Press.

This year's winners are Stephanie Forsythe & Todd MacAllen of Forsythe + MacAllen Design Associates; Steven Mankouche of Atelier Mankouche; Ben Checkwitsch of Gluckman Mayner Architects; Stella Betts of Leven Betts Studio; and Lisa Hsieh and Mike Latham of Arts Corporation.

Entrants for the competition must be out of undergraduate or graduate school 10 years or less, and submit a portfolio containing their work accompanied by a short text addressing the competition theme. The theme changes every year to reflect current issues in architectural design and theory. This year's theme was "Inhabiting Identity," which was "intended to examine today's flexible and fluid world with its faster modes of communication and travel and its subsequent dissolution of traditional boundaries of place," according to the League. Winners are selected by a jury, receive a \$1,000 honorarium, and are invited to exhibit their work and present a lecture.

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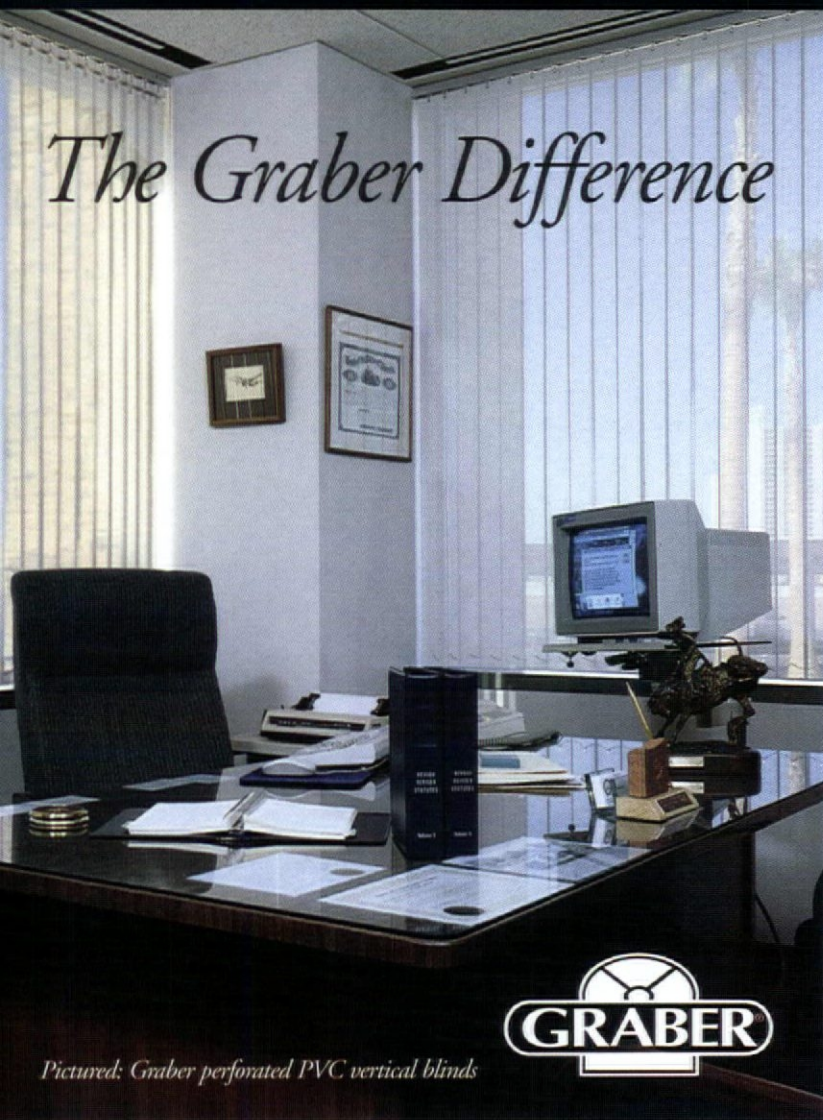
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Scientific Design



Kirkville, Mo.—HOK of St. Louis is heading up a \$24.4-million renovation and expansion of Truman State University's Magruder Hall in Kirkville, Mo. Designed by HOK with St. Louis-based Paric Corp. as the contractor, the new 145,000 sq. ft. structure is targeted for a spring 2005 completion.

Built in two phases in 1955 and 1965, the former 72,000 sq. ft. Science Hall housed two of Truman's four science disciplines, but the expanded Magruder Hall will consolidate all four of the university's sciences under one roof and will include advanced laboratories, a cyber café, and a multimedia center/planetarium.

The new space will wrap the existing building on three sides, with the lower two floors of the three-level complex devoted to teaching and student spaces. HOK has incorporated a number of design features to encourage discipline interaction with the highlight being a 75-seat multimedia dome that will be used to teach and showcase learning in a variety of disciplines in a multimedia format.

The Magruder Hall improvements are being funded by a \$22-million appropriation from the state of Missouri, with the remaining \$2.4 million from private contributions and institutional efforts. Founded in 1867, Truman State University is Missouri's only statewide public liberal arts and sciences university and has an enrollment of 6,000 students.



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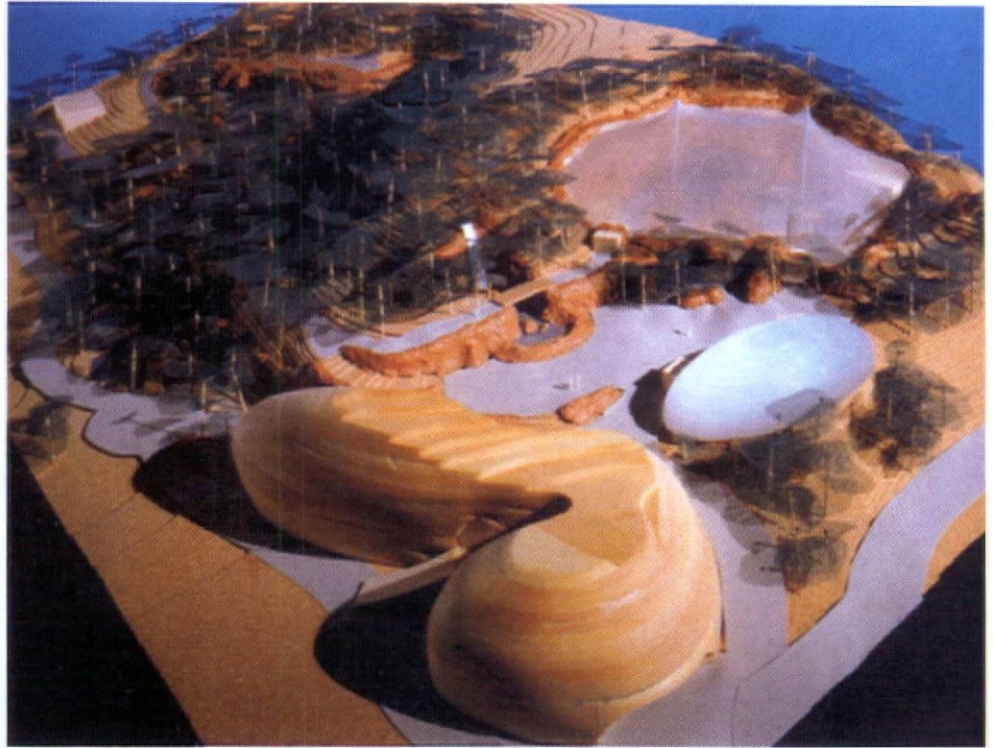
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It's a Zoo in There



Los Angeles—Explore the mist-shrouded forest floor and traverse suspension bridges through the treetops—it's all available at the Rain Forest of the Americas exhibit and the Reptile & Insect Interpretive Center, Los Angeles Zoo's newest additions designed by Leo A. Daly's (LAD) Los Angeles offices.

The Rain Forest of the Americas exhibit, adjacent to the Reptile & Insect Interpretive Center, will offer lush vegetation—both real and simulated—and mammals, reptiles, birds, and insects will be presented in “real-life” settings.

“The Rainforest of the Americas exhibit and the Reptile & Insect Interpretive Center will become a major focal point of the Los Angeles Zoo campus,” says Alex Ward, director of design for LAD. “It is our goal as design architect to create a rain forest immersion experience. By giving visitors an ‘up-close’ naturalistic view of the different species, we hope to bring about an intimacy between the viewers and the animals, and encourage a greater appreciation for the fragile ecosystem of the rain forest and its creatures.”

designed by William Sklaroff

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Are you Ready for Some Football?



St. Louis, Mo.—Kirkwood, Mo.-based O'Toole Design Associates has been selected to provide the interior design for the corporate headquarters/training facility of The Baltimore Ravens. The new 100,000-sq. ft. project for the NFL team is expected to be finished in early 2004 and will consist of corporate offices, a training facility, and a full indoor practice field.

The main objective, according to O'Toole Design and general contractor Clayco Construction, is to create a space that has classic design and traditional details, as well as a "home away from home" feeling for players and staff. Because the headquarters will house both corporate offices and the team's training center, the interiors will blend traditional elegance with more rugged finishes capable of withstanding NFL punishment. Some elements include a two-story stone fireplace with raised wood panel accents whose details continue up the stairs and down a "Hall of Fame" column and into a corporate boardroom. This is the third NFL training facility O'Toole has completed, following the firm's work for the St. Louis Rams and the Atlanta Falcons.

going green on the web

Washington, D.C.—Concerns about green design are continuing to grow. Due to an increased focus on using sustainable and renewable resources in design, the ASID has added a new section to its website devoted to the cause. Sponsored by Interface, the "Sustainable Design Information Center" is now located at www.asid.org/green.asp.

Offering green design tips for both commercial and residential interiors, definitions of common green design terms, helpful links to other green design-related websites, biographies of members of the ASID Sustainable Design Council, and a message board to stimulate discussions, the site serves as one strategy in a comprehensive plan to educate interior designers and others on the vitality of sustainable design.

"As the oldest and largest professional association of interior designers in the world, ASID has a tremendous responsibility to education its members, other professionals designing the built environment, and the public on sustainable design," says ASID president H. Don Bowen, FASID, AIA. "This is a great resource for interior designers so they can successfully incorporate green design practices and products in their projects. By putting green principles to work, interior designers can do their part to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Question of the Month

What is your best tool for attracting and retaining employees?

Visit www.contractmagazine.com and log in your response under "Question of the Month."

A graphic with a dark blue background. A large, light blue question mark is centered on the page. The text "Question of the Month" is written in white at the top. Below it, the question "What is your best tool for attracting and retaining employees?" is written in white. At the bottom, the instruction "Visit www.contractmagazine.com and log in your response under "Question of the Month." is written in white.

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The Moulthrop Legacy: Three Generations of Innovation in Wood

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Atlanta International Museum of Art and Design
Atlanta, Ga.
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Rotterdam, The Netherlands
31.10.440.1331
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Honoree: Stephen D. Rountree,
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Los Angeles, Calif.
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Summer Design Institute

July 14-18, 2003
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
New York, N.Y.
212.849.8385

Light Screen: The Leaded Glass of Frank Lloyd Wright

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Smithsonian American Art Museum
Washington, D.C.
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Targetti Collection at Chelsea Art Museum

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212.255.0719
www.chelseaartmuseum.com
www.targetti.com

Yukata Sone: The Garden

Through July 27, 2003
Museum of Contemporary Art and the Geffen Contemporary
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Botanicals

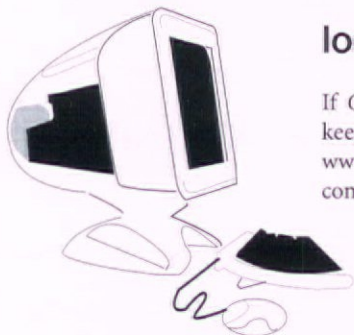
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So much to see

Pack your most comfortable shoes, clear your calendar, and bring an appetite for design: It's time for NeoCon®. Chicago will be abuzz from June 16-18 as designers descend on the Merchandise Mart to check out the latest from the A&D community. Get ready for three days of hot new collections, a wealth of networking opportunities, and little-to-no sleep.

3rd floor

1 Girsberger Office Seating Space No. 306

With variable seat depth options, multifunctional armrests, and adjustable lumbar support, Presto, developed by Dieter Stierli and Girsberger, delivers Swiss engineered comfort at an economical price.

Circle No. 218

2 Stylex Space No. 346

Sava Cvek Associates has designed the wood and cast aluminum Welcome Chair for Stylex as a pull-up stack seating option to suit multiple applications, from educational settings and waiting rooms to cafeterias and offices. Circle No. 219

3 Nessen Lighting Space No. 3-123

Nessen Lighting has teamed with KnollTextiles to create the new Imago™ acrylic textile shade material. Offering the inviting look of fabric with the strength and durability of acrylic, the shades are available in 10 colors and textural patterns.

Circle No. 220

6th floor

4 Duralee® Fabrics/Techstyle® Contract Division Space No. 6-167

Duralee® Fabrics/Techstyle® Contract Division spices up its line of Crypton fabrics with Crypton® III, a collection of woven jacquards, which resulted from a collaboration between leading design firms. Circle No. 221

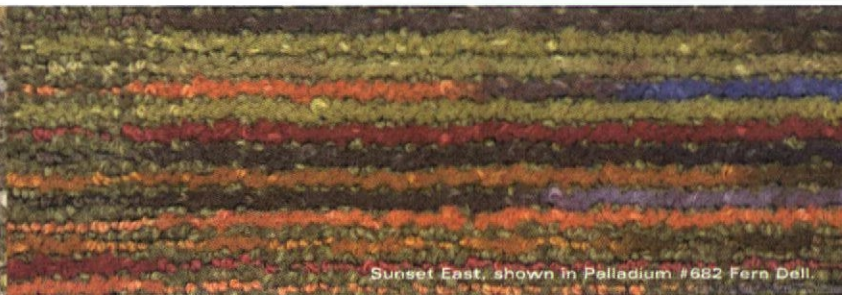




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8th floor

5 Whitehall Furniture Space No. C302

Whitehall Furniture's new collection—a lounge chair, settee, and sofa—combines a retro feel with stylish materials. The three pieces are available in a range of fabric, leather, and vinyl upholsteries to fit a number of environments and designs.

Circle No. 222

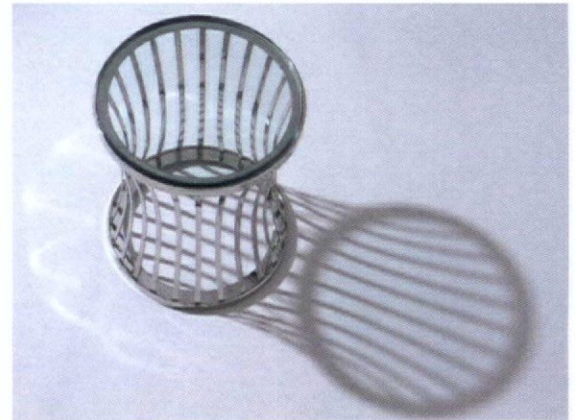


5

6 Gary Lee Partners Space No. A124

The Cavea Table, part of Gary Lee Partners' Modo Collection, features arced metal ribbons that are evenly spaced and connect two metal circular or oval rings at the top and bottom to create a new type of nesting table. Multiple heights are available to create a combination of clusters.

Circle No. 217



6

7 Bentley Prince Street Space No. E-234

Crepe Suzette from Bentley Prince Street is designed by Suzanne Tick, Inc., to expand the company's line of heavy textured materials. It is a new-wave shag created from a loopy crepe construction with increased face weights and density to improve durability. Colors fall into two categories: fun and groovy, and fun yet reserved.

Circle No. 223



7

8 Amtico International Space No. H242

Honister Slate from Amtico is derived from the Honister Quarry of the Cumbrian Mountains in the Lake District, England. Used for both modern urban styles and country aesthetics, these green slabs that mimic the appearance of slate are selected, cut, polished, and digitally re-mastered on site.

Circle No. 224

10th floor

9 Textus Space No. 10-147

Hazel Seigel celebrates her 40th year in the contract industry with the introduction of the Classics Collection. Targeted for use on task chairs and executive seating, the upholstery designs are based on an architectural grid to maximize visual interest and are punctuated by bright, fresh colors.

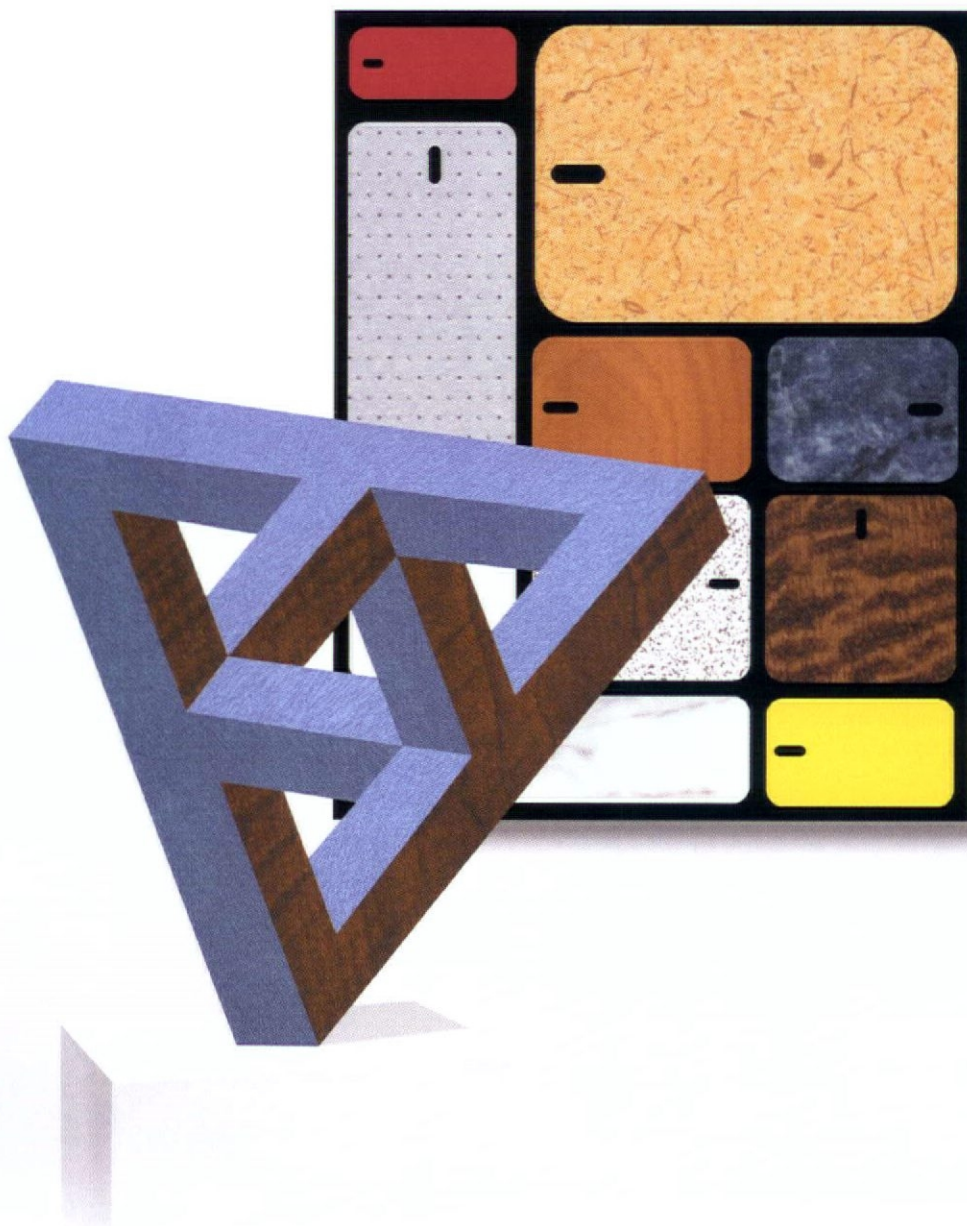
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9



8



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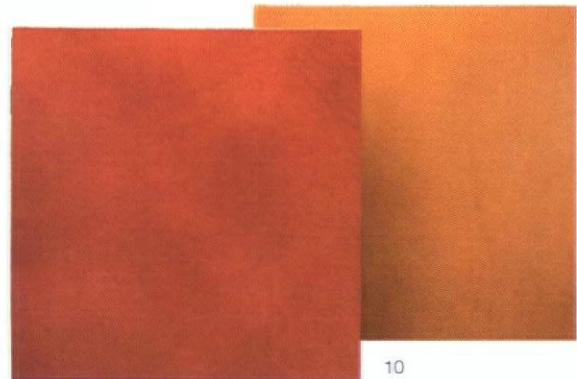
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11th floor

10 Spinneybeck Space No. 1111

Designed by Emanuela Frattini Magnusson, Spinneybeck's Leather Floor Tiles are available in five shapes, various sizes, and 12 colors, and may be customized. Made of a top layer of thick vegetable-tanned leather, the tile has a recycled leather back that offers stability. *Circle No. 226*



10

11 Thonet Space No. 1194

Designed by Komplot Design in Denmark, Thonet's Genus chair is offered as an arm/armless sled base or four-leg version which stacks and gangs. The durable, stain-resistant melamine shell finish comes in multiple colors. *Circle No. 227*



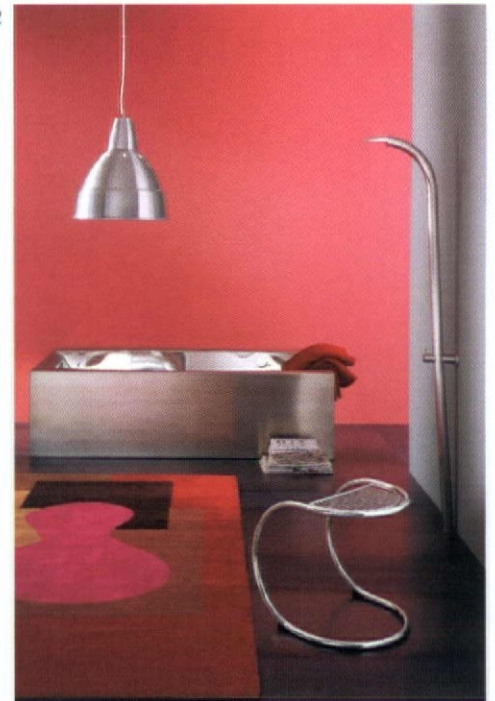
11

various floors

12 Hastings Tile Space No. 1381

Hastings' Il Bagno Collection is back with trend-setting designs from Italian bath furnishing manufacturer Rapsel. The Carezza Lake stainless steel tub designed by Peter Büchele juxtaposes a curvaceous ergonomic interior with the utilitarian angles of its profile. *Circle No. 228*

12



13 Lori Weitzner Design Space No. 1728

Lori Weitzner Design has created three new elegant, polished, and durable textiles: Lotus, Bagu, and Silkwood. Lotus—featuring a rhythmically repeated lotus flower—and Bagu are woven identically, and both patterns were inspired by Asian history. *Circle No. 229*



13

14 Tropitone Space No. 1780

Named after the Somerset Estate in rural England, Somerset Sling by Tropitone is a more formal design for the outdoor environment. The line features all-aluminum construction and a powder-coat finish, and includes high- and low-back dining chairs and swivel rockers, and a chaise lounge with a multi-position adjustable back. *Circle No. 230*



14

JULIE MOIR MESSERVY GARDEN DESIGNER
SPECIALIZING IN CONTEMPLATIVE GARDENS

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FLOORCOVERINGS

Bouncing Back

The industry may still be unsteady, but creativity, passion, and cutting-edge design rebound in Milan

By Katie Weeks



Edra Favela *Circle No. 203*

Heading into the 42nd annual Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan, there were pre-conference jitters among exhibitors and visitors alike. Would the unstable geopolitical situation limit turnout? Would a still-soft economy limit creativity and experimentation? This year's event, however, was a resounding success with more than 171,000 trade attendees, approximately 2,000 exhibitors, and a cornucopia of visually intriguing design.

Although the Salone is traditionally a residential show, it is becoming increasingly beneficial for those in the contract market as the boundaries between the two segments continue to blur. This year's addition of EuroLuce, the 22nd Biennial International Lighting Fair, offered additional appeal. The fair's presence was apparent from the get-go as it kicked off with *Immaginando Prometeo*, an event/installation interpretation of the metaphoric and evocative aspects of light with a focus on fire. Striking a contrast between historic architecture and avant-garde design, the installation occupied the first floor and portico of the 13th Century Palazzo della Ragione and overlooking the Piazza dei Mercanti in the heart of Milan.

Back on the fairgrounds, several trends emerged as the Salone progressed. Aesthetically, a minimalist-yet-functional style was popular. Designs were streamlined and simplistic, concentrating on small, crafted details instead of big, flashy form. Visually, many designers opted for a muted color palette anchored in rich darks with smaller touches of soft accent colors. Experimentation, however, was not missing.



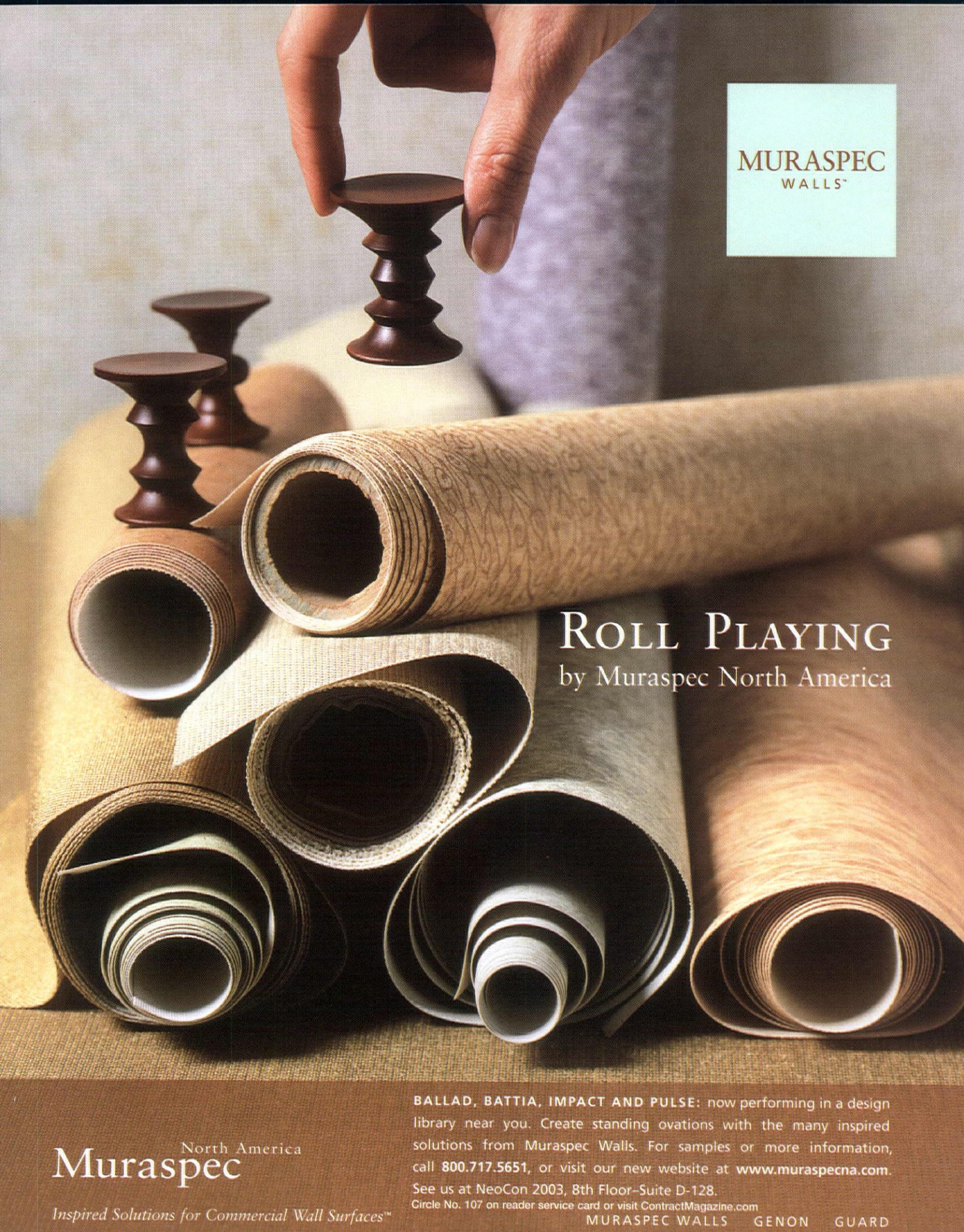
Luxit Ventura *Circle No. 204*



VGnewtrend woven wicker seat
by Gé-R Design *Circle No. 205*



Rexite Welcome *Circle No. 206*

A hand is shown holding a dark wooden mallet, poised to strike one of several rolls of wallpaper. The rolls are stacked and arranged in a way that shows their different textures and colors, ranging from light beige to dark brown. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

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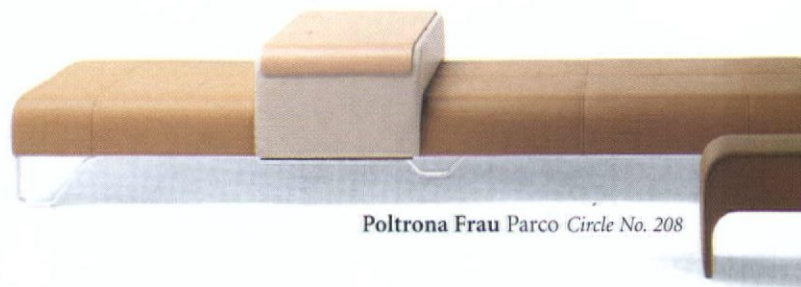
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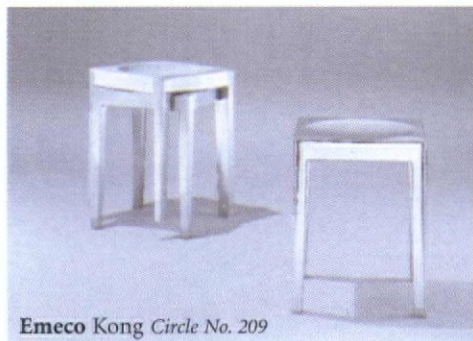
Alias Segesta Circle No. 207

Reinforcing a return to creativity from a modest 2002 was exploration with materials. Plastics were big, with Kartell leading the way with a vibrant, rainbow-hued exhibit space featuring various new seating options including Maria Antoinetta, a complementary piece for the Louis Ghost chair from Philippe Starck, and a new seating system from Piero Lissoni, called Plastics. This year, the bursts of vibrant colors did not appear so much as accents in bigger pieces, but as complete pieces in an all-or-nothing mentality. At EuroLuce, Ingo Mauer experimented with LEDs and created buzz with Luster, LED Bench, and Stardust—all featuring flat glass with sandwiched LEDs. Re-examining wood, Humberto and Fernando Campana's Favela chair for Edra resembled a puzzle of pieces of scrap wood artistically put together.

Other trends included the return of polished chrome and silver over the matte look popular in recent years, as seen in Kong by Philippe Starck for Emeco. Also, as *Contract* reported last year, seat height continues to diminish. Increasing, however, was the demand for mobility and modularity. To reduce consumer expenses, designers are creating pieces that can be used in a variety of situations, from conference rooms to workstations to guest seating applications. What's more, mobility—with castors and lighter weights, for instance—was evident, as seen in Raul Barbieri's Welcome stools for Rexite. Also in this vein, stacking chairs were abundant, such as Kristalia's Boum and Alias's Segesta, designed by Alfredo Häberli.



Poltrona Frau Parco Circle No. 208



Emeco Kong Circle No. 209



Ingo Mauer Stardust Circle No. 210



SIDI Topissimo Circle No. 211



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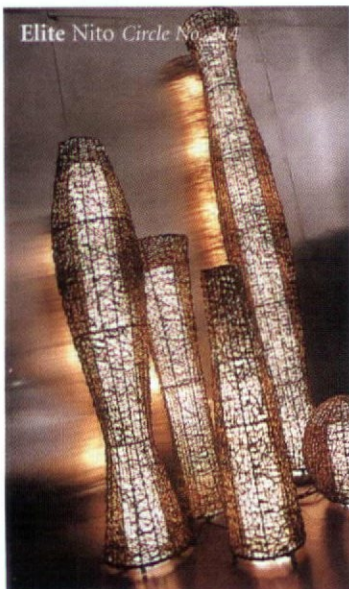
Kristalia Boum Circle No. 212

Additional highlights were: The blossoming design—literally—of Serien’s Magic and Magic Wand from Ulrich Becker, Georg Soanca-Pollack, and Peter Thammer, which opens its bimetal leaves as the light becomes brighter and warmer. Artemide’s Sistema Tela from Enzo Mari features clever simplicity in 10 lamps of various types. While the central element of each lamp is a ring that grips an elastic mesh or cloth fabric, the shape, diffuser, and dimension of each lamp are interchangeable. Also toying with fabric, Elite’s Nito lamps and screen filter light through a weave of Nitus, a trailing fern from the Philippines Islands. Luxit’s Ventura, designed by Hans Ansems, is a suspension light that can be mounted vertically, horizontally, or obliquely. And Poltrona Frau’s Parco seating system by Sezgin Aksu and Silvia Suardi capitalized on versatility. Fun was a key element in Topissimo by Nani Marquina for SIDI, and Marc Robson’s Fly for Zanotta also featured a whimsical nature.

At the end of the show, Salone organizers hailed the 2003 event as a success. Rosario Messina, the president of Cosmit, the organizer of the fair, notes, “It is safe to say that the Salone marks a watershed: recovery just around the corner”—a definite reason to celebrate with design. ☐



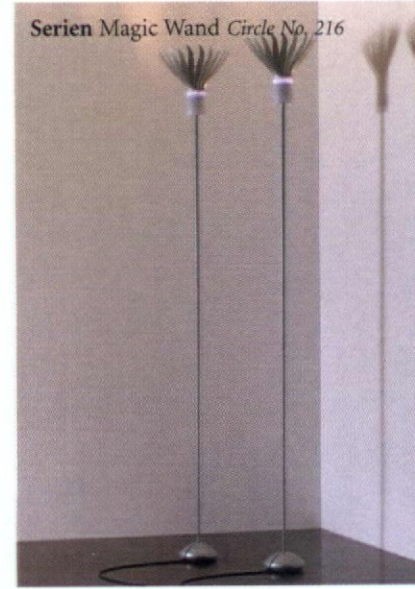
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Useful Life

Herman Miller's mid-priced Mirra chair, designed by Studio 7.5 Berlin, combines the benefits of great design with cradle-to-cradle sustainability

By Diana Mosher

EnvironDesign attendees are a busy lot, hurrying from one seminar to the next. But despite the information overload at the popular May event, the newly introduced Mirra chair made quite a splash among proponents of green design who were in attendance. A cross-performing work chair suitable for everything from general office to dedicated task work, Mirra is the first chair designed to meet Herman Miller's Design for the Environment (DfE) protocols, which focus on creating economic value while valuing the environment. Developed in collaboration with the international environmental leaders at McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC), these protocols help define Herman Miller's vision of sustainable capitalism—using benign, closed-loop materials and processes that protect and enhance the natural environment.

Mirra is PVC-free, and it utilizes steel, a 100-percent recyclable material. In fact, 96 percent of Mirra's materials can be recycled at the end of the chair's useful life. "Herman Miller's Mirra chair represents the most advanced and complete application of the cradle-to-cradle design protocols among any product manufacturer to date," says William McDonough, co-founder and principal of McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry. "The chair—and the company—confirm that great design and ecological and economic success are possible today."

But you don't have to be an environmentalist to appreciate Mirra's good looks, comfort, and affordability. Herman Miller believes the chair is poised to become the new leader in the mid-price category, a segment that represents more than 50 percent of all work chairs sold. Available in two

finishes and 10 seat and eight back colors, Mirra's name is derived from the chair's ability to mirror a sitter's natural body movement. It addresses comfort through self-contouring capabilities in the seat and in the TriFlex™ back. Its tilt performance follows the user's key pivot points at the ankle, knee, and hip, while providing a balanced ride and outstanding support in any position. The chair's fit range is highly adaptable—the self-contouring mesh seat and back accommodate 95 percent of the world's population.

"In terms of the science of seating, I have no qualms in stating that Mirra outperforms every competitor in our industry," says Don Goeman, vice president, Advance Development Group at Herman Miller. And it does so at a price point below chairs whose performance it exceeds. Mirra was designed with German precision by Studio 7.5 Berlin. "We drafted a straightforward design brief describing a best-in-class, mid-price chair," says Goeman. Studio 7.5 typically moves quickly when designing products for clients, progressing sometimes within a day or two from the concept stage to the model shop where they begin to create rough prototypes. The design team put the chair through numerous prototypes. "Mirra looks very different from what we first thought, planned, and designed," says Burkhard Schmitz of Studio 7.5, "but the main idea, the intention, is fully there."

The question is bound to be raised: Is Mirra competing with Herman Miller's Aeron in the work chair market? "Mirra is meant to complement, not compete with Aeron," says Keith McRobert, director of seating at Herman Miller. "Mirra sustains and builds on many of the elements that launched Aeron to its high profile status. We believe it's essential to offer our customers a wide array of seating solutions in a range of price categories, and Mirra supports this strategy." ■ Circle No. 200 NeoCon® Space No. 321



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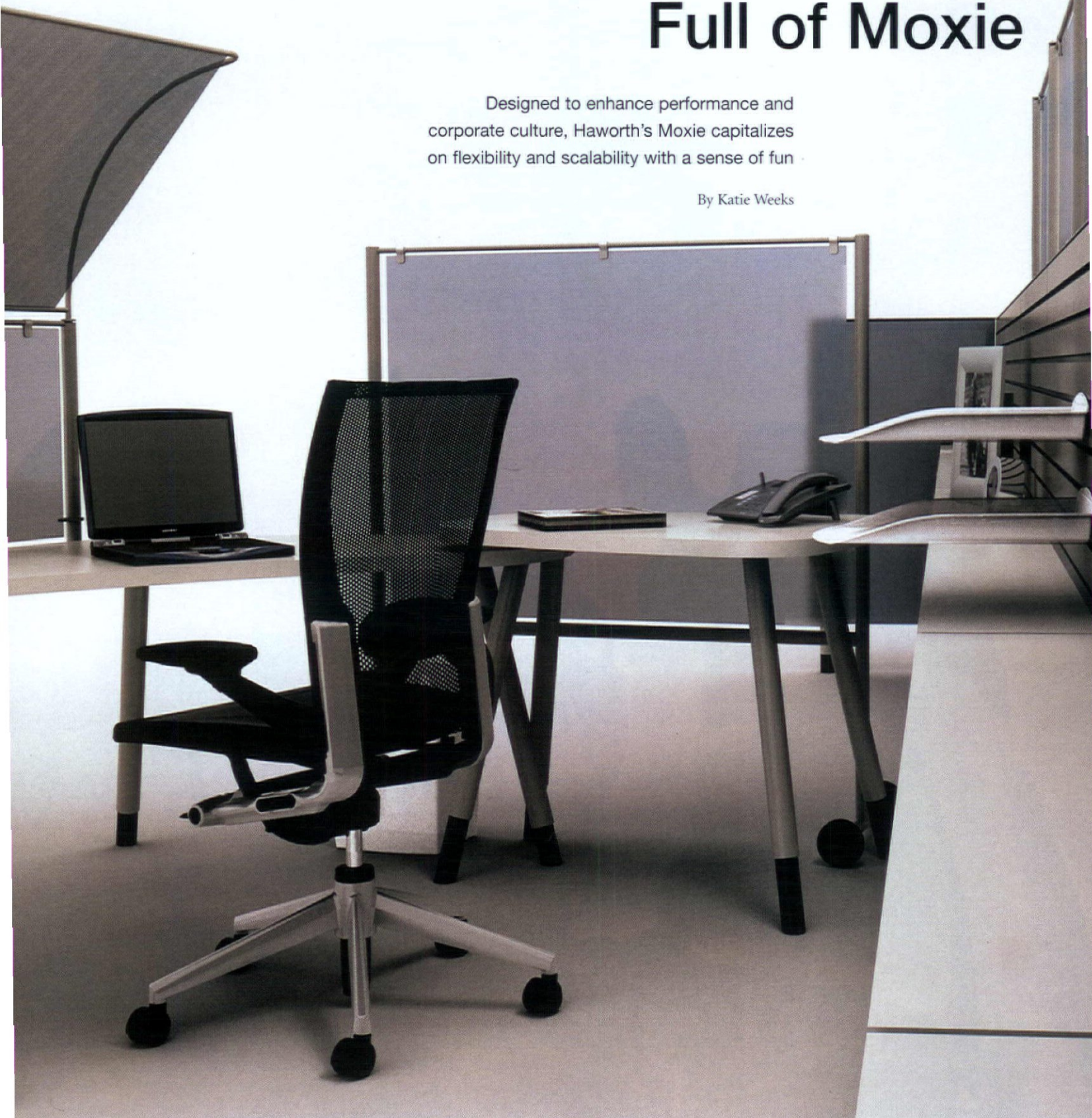
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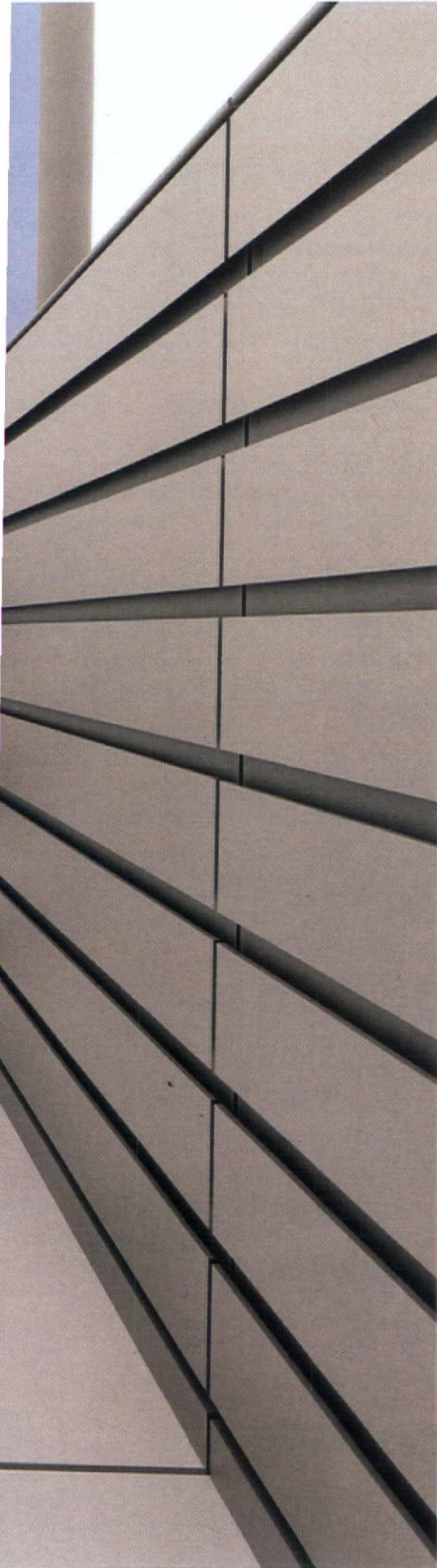
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Full of Moxie

Designed to enhance performance and corporate culture, Haworth's Moxie capitalizes on flexibility and scalability with a sense of fun

By Katie Weeks





When launching a product at NeoCon®, it always helps to have something with a spark—something that pops out from the crowd, with attitude, with spunk—which is exactly what Haworth had in mind with its new furniture system, Moxie.

The process behind Moxie began after company research identified customers' three major systems needs, says Haworth project manager Marta Mackraz. "One was creating intriguing environments and spaces that enhance performance and enhance corporate culture. Two was that human performance is becoming more critical, so how do you give occupants more control of their surroundings? And three was making the product easier to work with and bringing in more scale to allow people to evolve with modularity," she explains.

"In general, humans prefer a mid-range of complexity in the environments they inhabit. They don't like environments that are too complex or too simple," says Jeff Reuschel, director of the Ideation team at Haworth. "We wanted a product line that could span this broad range of complexity where people could find an individual balance." Ken Krayer, director of design, adds, "To begin, we wanted to make the system visually lighter and also allow more light to permeate the spaces." To do so, the team focused on establishing a clean aesthetic and using translucent materials that give the system an airier feel so users wouldn't feel trapped by their surroundings. "We kept the aesthetic at a parts level," Krayer says. "We were designing for the whole on the scale of the combined components so the system would be flexible." Moxie can vary in its complexity with each user, depending on how many components are installed and how they are positioned.

After refining an initial concept, the design team hit the mark on its second try and went about tweaking the final product. It was the scalability that provided the biggest challenge in testing ideas, Krayer says. "When you have that scalability, you can't go out with only one thing. You have to have different conversations with various renderings and images," he adds, noting that in developing so many components, continuity and consistency across all parts is essential.



Moxie starts with a stackable spine wall that offers 90- and 120-degree transitions. The wall has a slat tile surface that then supports shelves and accessories. The control and flexibility is supported by a simple collection of tools and surfaces—including shelves and storage units—to let users adapt stations to suit individual styles. The functional flexibility carries over into the aesthetic as well: The system comes in a range of finishes including silver, champagne, and gunmetal metallics, clean whites, and with wood trim. It also complements Haworth's Primus system.

New translucent textiles are being co-launched with Moxie, and raised bases allow natural light to permeate the system. The desks can also be freestanding tables, and desk-mounted screens allow users to adjust their privacy. Within the workstations, users are not locked into a certain orientation, as with many systems where a user must have their back toward the public, Reuschel notes. And Mackraz agrees that this option once again taps into the idea of balancing personal preferences like privacy.

Both Krayer and Reuschel say the biggest selling point is Moxie's flexibility. "Everybody has used the word 'scalability,' and that's a significant differentiation in the marketplace," Reuschel says. "With Moxie, you can literally create a space that looks rectilinear, architectural, and solid, or one that is very freeform and lightweight. The translucency and scale of the parts allow users to make choices, which gives Moxie a very broad range for one line." ■ Circle No. 201 NeoCon® Space No. 313

focus

Cat's Eye

Inspired by a trip to South America, a new furniture collection designed by William Sklaroff helps breathe new life into Harden Contract


By Danine Alati

"The puma is one of Nature's magnificent creatures. Strong, stealthy, lithe, and swift, it is the perfect blend of the divine," notes designer William Sklaroff. Upon returning from a trip to Peru, where he came to appreciate the puma as did the indigenous ancient Incas, who regarded the species as sacred, Sklaroff felt inspired to design a furniture collection based on the animal's characteristics. "The puma is a definitive statement of form follows function," he says. And there marked the starting point for his new collection of seating and tables for Harden Contract.

Known primarily for manufacturing traditional, solid wood furniture for more than 130 years, Harden has recently forged ahead with more transitional lines. Puma includes a comprehensive offering of mid- and high-back executive seating as the centerpiece of the collection, plus lounges, sofas, guest chairs, and complementary tables. A skilled product and interior designer with numerous awards to his credit, Sklaroff sought a departure from the buttons, levers, and other mechanisms of the typical executive chair. After a year of

collection is the perfect transition. It evolved out of one chair into a complete line." Puma lounge and guest chairs reflect the same sleek lines and contemporary aesthetic, and may be upholstered in a range of fabrics and leathers. The arm detail, alluding to the eye of the puma, is the hallmark expression of the line. "[This shape] is translated into a distinct icon made of pewter to identify all the chairs of the collection," explains Sklaroff. The same distinguishing mark is included on the leg of the solid wood tables, which are architectural in design and exhibit Harden's characteristic attention to detail with their mortised joinery, beveled edge tops, and tapered legs. Available as accent, cocktail, console, corner, and end tables, solid wood pieces are complemented by optional inlays of stone, olive burl, leather, or other wood top inserts for a stunning effect.

"I kept the word 'sleek' in mind with all these designs, like the sleekness of the puma. I wanted to have a new equation for comfort, with design and functionality, exceeding a higher level of performance to satisfy the needs of the client," Sklaroff says. "The Puma collection makes a taut, lean statement, comparative with a contemporary and transitional expression." Woodard sees Puma as a way to position her company in a new light. "Harden has always been known as a traditional company, and I can't see us moving away from that entirely," she says. "But we've needed a boost, and this is one step in transitioning our company into a new market segment."

After a 20-year relationship with Harden, Sklaroff was pleased to design this new line for the company he calls the "last remnant of true 'made in America' craftsmanship." He says, "I consider this collection a definitive study in product design and development, as the culmination of new materials and methods, cutting edge design, and experienced craftsmanship. It's made a lasting impression on me." Naturally Harden hopes Puma will have a similar effect on the design community at large.  Circle No. 202 NeoCon® Space No. 10-164

researching methods and materials, he developed a material known as Ultimate Comfort Gel (UCG), which would be used in the back and seat of the chair to passively respond to the way the user sits. "I wanted to conceive a seating line with no bells and whistles," Sklaroff says. "The chemistry of the gel reacts to the weight and modality of movement of the operator." This responsive material within the foam substrate of the upper chair back combines with lumbar support to eliminate long interval discomfort and provide an executive seat that accommodates any end user. "And the simple, elegant technique offers a lot of latitude of design," Sklaroff adds.

Christine Woodard, contract division manager at Harden, says, "We were seeing a lot of mesh and metal for executive chairs, and that's just not us. This



eco-friendly ergonomics

Ergonomic seating provides users with maximum comfort, but can it say the same for the environment?

By Katie Weeks



Humanscale Freedom Chair Circle No. 231



Steelcase Leap Circle No. 232



HÅG Capisco Circle No. 233

Ergonomics concentrate on maximizing comfort, ease of use, and the health benefits of a product. And increasingly, there is a mental comfort that is just as important. “The dynamic of ergonomics is about having a better day. And if you sit on a recycled or sustainable product, don’t you feel better?” asks Rune Akselberg, president of the U.S. division of HÅG. “Protecting the environment is becoming more of a current driver of the market,” says Steelcase’s director of design James Ludwig. “Anyone today not developing products with the environment in mind is sleepwalking and in for a rude awakening,” he adds.

Ergonomic seating manufacturers and designers are certainly paying attention. Recent launches have focused on reducing production waste, increasing recyclability, and reexamining materials. “What you need to do from an environmental standpoint is seek out materials and processes that are environmentally friendly and figure out how to use them in such ways as to create an end product that is healthy and comfortable for the end user,” says Tom Revelle, vice president of marketing for Humanscale.

The results: Humanscale’s Freedom Chair by Niels Diffrient contains 50 percent recycled aluminum and uses less materials for a lighter end weight. Steelcase has eight chairs on the market that are virtually 95 to 100 percent recyclable. The company also pioneered the elimination of CFC foam and was the first to use water-blown CFC-free foams in its products. When it comes to packaging, Steelcase ships its chairs in reusable containers and some, like Caché, ship uncrated. Herman Miller’s new Mirra chair by Studio 7.5 Berlin is the first to use the McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry Protocol that examines material chemistry, disassembly, and recyclability. Its design facilitates the removal of plastic components, uses 100 percent recyclable steel, and is 96 percent recyclable at the end of its useful life. Also reducing components, the new Factor X chair from HÅG—which will not release a chair unless it is 100 percent recyclable—is made with only 10 percent of the resources used for similar chairs.

Still, there is a lot of work to be done. “The world has a long, long way to go in seating. We’re just seeing the top of the iceberg,” says Akselberg.

Revelle agrees: “We’re right at the beginning stages of green design and really understanding what it means. I think everyone’s aware of it, but whether everyone’s able to do something about it is another question.”

It’s important to note that incorporating green design isn’t just about increasing a product’s recyclability. “You have to develop a corporate culture and an attitude where environmental responsibility is part of the company’s management systems,” Akselberg says. Ludwig agrees, noting, “It has to extend through the organization to where everyone who touches the product needs to be green.” He adds, “It’s a necessary investment. When you talk about ergonomic seating and being green, there’s not a trade off you need to make. We still provide all the benefit with respect to comfort and safety and health that you’ve come to demand from ergonomic seating. But, when we talk about focusing on the user here, in the context of working more effectively, we also feel part of this vision of people is having a healthy planet.”

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I AM PART #19



trade secret

Low-budget, high-impact drywall stretches the creativity of designers and subcontractors

By Diana Mosher

Time and again talented designers have shown that creativity can flourish in a low budget environment. Drywall is frequently a key ingredient in fabulous, low cost interiors—and it has been sited in expensive ones too. Either way, the most successful designs use this material in an unobtrusive way. “First you appreciate the incredible project, then you realize it’s the creative use of drywall that’s the main component,” says Joseph Valerio, principal of Valerio Dewalt Train in Chicago. This experience, he adds, is in sharp contrast to the results yielded from “projects that had a drywall budget but refused to acknowledge the fact. They tried to design at a higher level of finish and the results appear poverty stricken.”

Certainly no budget was ever broken by using drywall, a real bargain at about \$7-per four-by-eight-ft. sheet. But price isn’t the only factor in its favor. It’s also environmentally friendly, devoid of adverse health effects, naturally occurring, and plentiful. Drywall is a generic name for gypsum wallboard that is made from gypsum (calcium sulfate dihydrate), one of the most abundant minerals on the planet. The mineral is extracted through either surface or underground mining operations. U.S. Gypsum Company invented the material, but it’s not the only player in the drywall marketplace.

Drywall is strong, but when wet it can be easily shaped or bent and this characteristic makes it the ideal choice for interestingly shaped walls and the highly designed ceilings that are in such demand these days. “Clients are becoming more daring, and gypsum board allows you to do so many creative things,” says Michael Holliday, a principal in the Santa Barbara office of DesignARC Architecture + Interiors. “If you’re doing curved drywall shapes, you need a subcontractor who understands what you’re trying to do, and you need to involve him early in the process. Architects and designers can learn a lot from them about how this material responds.” The designers at DesignARC are partial to floating disks, undulating wave walls, partial spheres, and panels in front of panels. “You can put a concealed light source behind a wood panel which is suspended on the face of a drywall wall,” adds Holliday. Five levels of finish can add different dimensions and richness.

At the Paragon Group Corporate Headquarters in Tampa, Fla., designed by Tampa-based Urban Studio Architects, an ordinary stairwell was transformed with a pattern of square drywall voids aligned in a gridded pattern in the walls and ceiling. This added depth as well as a framing element to the original art displayed by the owner. “The entire stair enclosure is detailed in drywall with a painted finish on all surfaces,” says Mickey Jacob, a principal of Urban Studio Architects. “It was a fun and inexpensive solution to provide interest in a small space that was forced to be enclosed, while making it a focal point of the vertical circulation.” Drywall goes up fast, but its design impact lasts a long time. ■



Paragon Group Corporate Headquarters in Tampa, Fla., designed by Urban Studio Architects. Photo by George Cott

I AM
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HUMAN



#19

Knock It Off

When an original design is kidnapped and sold, the industry suffers, both financially and psychologically

By Linda Burnett

Sally Sirkin Lewis, founder of J. Robert Scott Textiles, has had it with knockoffs. To combat them, and to protect her more than 150 patented designs, she's established a foundation, she's sued manufacturers, and she's cried. From fabric patterns to famed chairs, the ignominious copycat is as prevalent in the industry as the incredibly talented. Unfortunately, as is true with fashion, film, and even literature, imitations often get mistaken and rewarded as being original. For the designer who has been inspired mid-sleep, who has slaved away on drafts and prototypes, who has spent endless hours and dollars on marketing, seeing a knockoff is more than a frustrating hiccup. And it's more than a financial cramp. For designers who have been ripped off, it can be psychological *hara-kiri*.

Sirkin Lewis has seen her fabric design on a hotel bedspread (she won that suit) and was told by a friend that her chair was torn apart so a manufacturer could remake it. "Artists don't knock off other artists," she says. "We are inspired by others, but we don't just take a photo and copy from it. But most people don't know the difference."

She cautions that protecting originals from being "raped" can be a business in itself. For this reason, she has tried most recently to extricate herself from the issue and, instead, has concentrated on simply designing. Sirkin Lewis says suing takes time away from the real business, gobs of money, and mental energy. And smaller independent designers don't have the resources to defend themselves, while the large manufacturers (both here and abroad), whose representatives often scan showrooms for designs to appropriate, have deep pockets—if shallow consciences.

The non-profit, San Francisco-based Foundation for Design Integrity, which Lewis helped create in 1994, educates designers, manufacturers, and specifiers on protecting original design. Susan

Farley, an intellectual property lawyer in Albany, N.Y., who is associated with the foundation, says the reigning attitude is: "It's OK as long as I don't get caught." But, she adds, "It's morally wrong. Students get kicked out of college for copying. In other areas it's black and white." The Supreme Court, meanwhile, has raised the bar on proving that a design is a knockoff, Farley says. Still, her work in representing major companies in landmark cases has resulted in multimillion-dollar verdicts and has shut the doors of some blatant offenders.

Legislation has been helpful, along with knowing your rights. Farley says fabrics and rugs can be copyrighted; if they get copied, you can stop it before it goes to market. And, even though furniture can't be copyrighted, it can be design patented. Her lawsuits have been successful, and she encourages them. One reason lawsuits haven't been more helpful overall is that the results often aren't made public. "It's embarrassing to get caught," says Farley. "They'll back down, settle, and pay damages." Aside from taking legal action, educating the industry and consumers on what constitutes a "designer" item is key.

For Sherri Donghia, executive vice president of design and marketing for Donghia, the worst culprits are the designers who specify. Instead of ordering an original design, they'll copy it and offer it to clients as an original piece. Meanwhile, the client doesn't know the difference. "It's about ego," says Donghia. "And it's a scam. They think they can do everything custom and not use existing product. But being a good interior designer is about being a good shopper. It's not about remaking someone else's piece and putting your name on it."

What about the argument that they can remake it more cheaply, thereby offering it to more people? First, knockoffs are still not cheap. Second, the

exterior only appears to be the same while the product is manufactured differently, thereby comprising the quality. And third, if you want a less expensive item, then specify something original that costs less but does the same job.

But wait a second: Isn't imitation the highest form of flattery? Good luck pushing that idea around. Whoever came up with this dictum—the mother of all rationalization—obviously didn't work in the design industry.

Defending the authenticity of Eames furniture is a full-time job for Eames Demetrios, director of the Eames Office and grandson of Charles and Ray Eames. "Designers know they're not immortal," says Demetrios, but they expect their designs to remain authentic to their standards, down to every aspect in the manufacturing. "The way it's made and the quality is part of the design," he says. A real Eames can only be specified through Herman Miller and Vitra. "It's a knockoff if people are trying to persuade you it's the real thing when it's not."

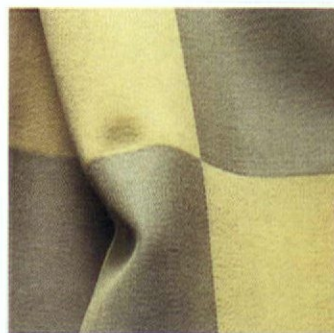
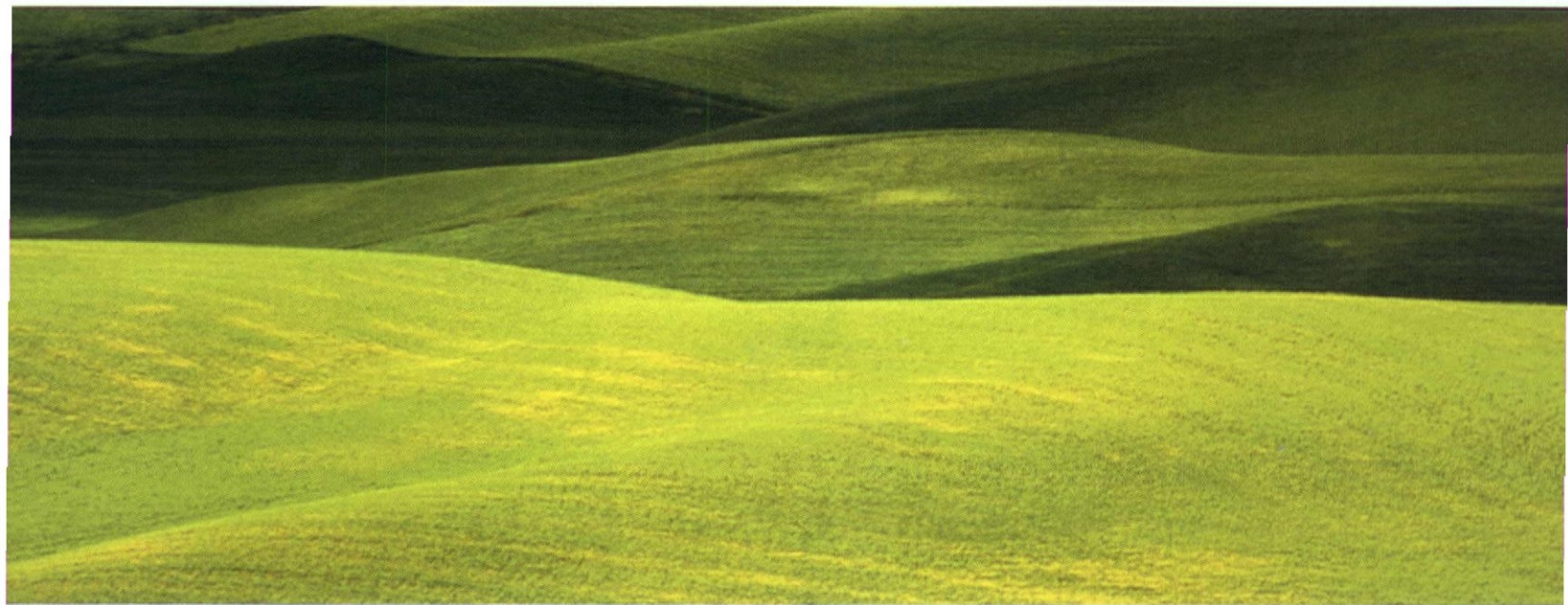
It's painful to see your own work in someone else's catalogue or window, but it also hurts business. "It's another customer who isn't buying your chair," says Demetrios.

There isn't an easy way to eliminate imitators. Until the makers meet their own makers, Donghia has established its subsidiary Donghia Studio to reinterpret classic Donghia designs at a lower price point, doing the copycats' work and getting the financial rewards.

Says Sirkin Lewis, "We need more roundtables between manufacturers and designers. Or, if a manufacturer wants my designs, license me. I'll design a line for them." ©

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Behind the Red Wall

CNI Design helps MaguirePartners rip off the doors in their new Los Angeles headquarters. But is it a case of too much too soon?

By Amy Milshtein
Photography by Benny Chan





Bye-bye private office. Once the marker of power and stature that grew with every opulent square foot, the private office—you know, the one with a window and a door—is gone. Or is it? For the answer, look to MaguirePartners' new Los Angeles corporate headquarters. Santa Monica-based CNI Design gave the real estate giant 22,000 sq. ft. with only one private office.

The move couldn't be a bigger shock to the firm's corporate culture. "We were organized like a traditional law office, broken up by groups and set behind closed doors," says Tim Walker, a partner at Maguire, of the 38-year-old company's last space. "It was comfortable, but there was no communication, no synergy; we needed more interaction."

So when the opportunity arose to move into the penthouse of Los Angeles's Gas Company Tower, MaguirePartners left its hierarchies, traditions, and private offices behind and called on long time collaborator CNI Design to create a new model. "Designers dream of the prospect of playing with tradition,"

says Clara Igonda, principal at CNI Design. "We knew right away this would be quite the fulfilling, and challenging, job."

Fitting an appropriate open plan into the Gas Company Tower's unique boat-shaped curves wasn't the only challenge. Sure, convincing senior people to give up their doors is always a hard sell, but CNI also had to create a contemporary interior with a limited budget and a very limited palette. "The color scheme came down from Mr. Maguire himself," remembers Igonda. "It's unusual for a client to be so involved in the details, but he wanted 'Maguire Red' and little else."

CNI rose to the challenges. A cool, Zen-like feeling, embodied in the soft grays and white, greets guests right off the elevator. A simple custom reception desk, backed by a large light box that actually hides audio/visual equipment for the adjoining conference room, continues the calm. Then BAM! Two paneled feature walls in that requested "Maguire Red" come into view. "It is meant to be a gallery space

A backlit glass box enhances the fresh, calm aesthetic of Maguire Partners reception area (above). The paneled feature wall in "Maguire Red" (left) shoots color into the otherwise placid pallet.



for Maguire projects," says CNI principal Marco Pizzo. "But even without models or pictures the red represents the company on its own."

Behind the reception desk, the main conference room reflects the new corporate culture. Aluminum framed, center pivot doors with ribbed glass insets create an unusual entry. When swung open, the doors almost disappear, when closed the glass still allows a glimpse of the action.

But the real story is in the private work areas, where little is actually private. Under a mostly exposed ceiling, "painted white to take off the raw edge," says Pizzo, CNI organized the space with a mixture of pendant light fixtures, suspended dry wall, and acoustical ceiling tiles. "The elements delineate areas without forming rigid boundaries."

Low, rectangular ceiling fins mark entrances into the partner workstations, while contrasting carpet treatments mirror the fins for further interest. The stations themselves are divided by low walls and glazing. Outside, support workstations break up the white and gray scheme with a shot of blue.

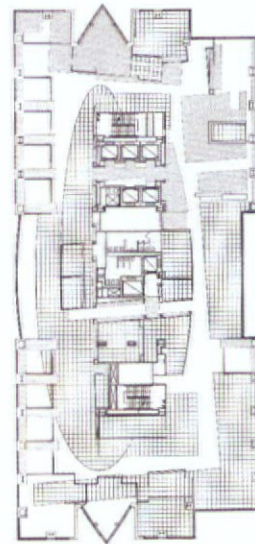
While the office is more egalitarian, executive status still has its privileges, as witnessed though

the partner's windows to the spectacular city views. Conference rooms and the lunch room also offer the vista. A television room and coffee bar make for casual break areas, while a playroom, complete with basketball hoops and foosball table, harkens back to California's dot-com days gone by.

With a home that is undeniably younger, hipper, and fresher than the last space, how has MaguirePartners adjusted to the new corporate culture? The playroom, a novelty at first, has lost some of its initial appeal. "No, it doesn't get used much," Walker reveals. However, the mixed-use training room right next door, furnished with low, small couches and one-armed-fixed-tablet seating, is another story. "That room is a success. We are always in there, moving furniture around for whatever is going on."

But what about the workstations? "Some of the partners are still having trouble getting used to the open plan," admits Walker. "Next time around I think we should include unassigned private offices that would be available as needed. A hybrid of closed and open space would probably work best for us." ☐

Project Summary



Who

Project, client: MaguirePartners. **Architect,** interior designer: CNI Design; Clara Igonda, principal project director; Marco Pizzo, interior planner; Mark Tagawa, project architect; Martina Linden, architectural designer. **Mechanical, electrical engineer:** Inmerman Engineering. **General contractor:** Howard CDM. **Lighting designer:** Light Vision. **Furniture dealer:** Western Office Interiors. **Photographer:** Benni Chan, Photoworks.

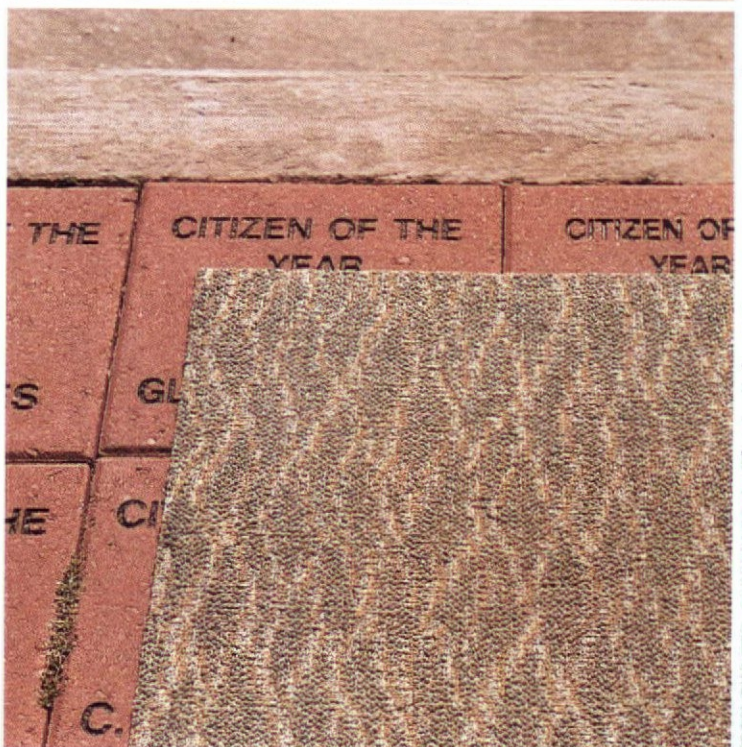
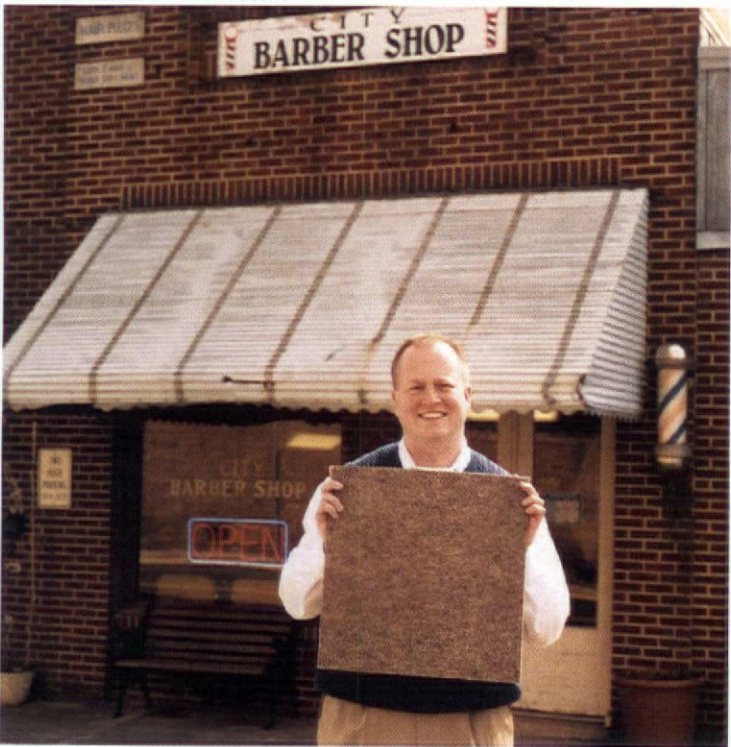
What

Paint: Frazee Paints, Dunn Edwards Paints, Zolatone. **Laminate:** Formica, Nevamar. **Carpet/carpet tile:** Prince Street, Bentley. **Carpet fiber:** Dupont Antron Legacy. **Ceiling:** Armstrong. **Lighting:** Cooper Lighting, Del Ray, Translite, Prudential. **Door hardware:** Sargent. **Window frames, wall systems:** Western Intergrated. **Window treatments:** Mecho Shade. **Files, workstations/seating, lounge, cafeteria, dining, auditorium seating:** Knoll. **Conference table:** Custom. **Cafeteria, dining, training tables:** Knoll. **Architectural woodworking, cabinetmaking:** Eppink of California. **Signage:** Ampesand.

Where

Location: Los Angeles, CA. **Total floor area:** 24,250 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 1. **Total staff size:** 65.

Interesting ceiling details (above) help organize the workstation spaces.



FROM THE TOP, CLOCKWISE 1: Classic, Ruby, Tufting Operator - 2: Fair Isle, Lisa, Director of Product Development - 3: Klimt
4: Cotswald (100% wool), Jeff, Plant Manager

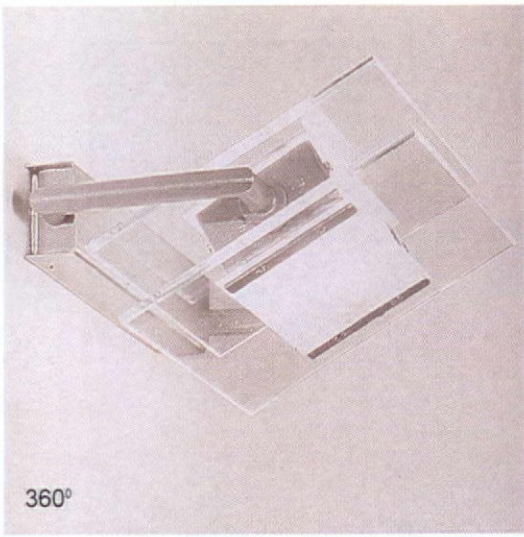
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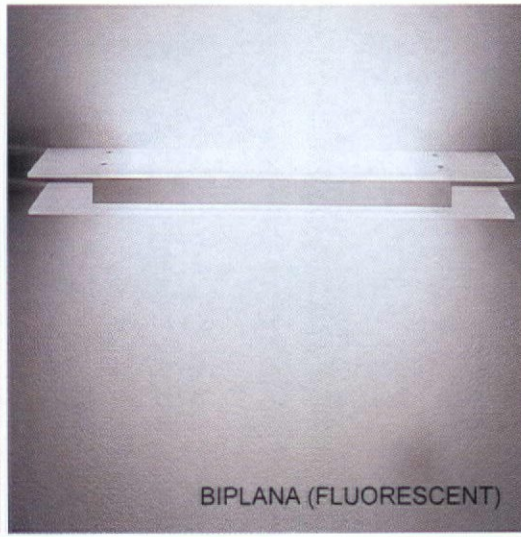
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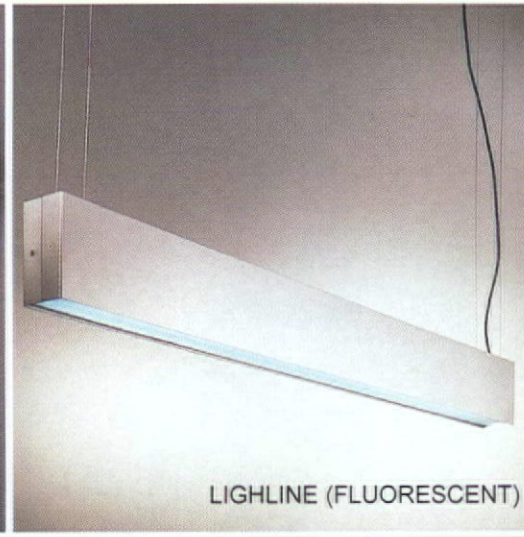
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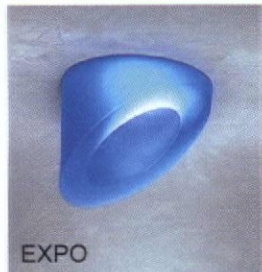
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A Media Spectacle

Penton's global headquarters in Cleveland, created by van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky, sets new standards for design

By Julie Leibowitz
Photography by Nick Merrick



One hundred eleven years old, more than 1,000 employees, and 20 offices worldwide—those are just a few impressive facts about Penton Media, the Cleveland-based business-to-business media company that is an industry leader in trade magazine publishing, online media, and conference events. A company this diverse needs a facility that accurately reflects its image. Recently, a re-branding campaign and cutting-edge new headquarters designed by van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky helped place Penton at the top of the market.

In 1999, facing the end of a lease term, Penton Media's executives needed to make some important real estate decisions. According to Ronald A. Reed, principal in charge of design at van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky (VWRL) in Cleveland, the executives at Penton had several goals for the future: They wanted to find a better

lease deal, reduce the square footage of the office and the company's overall operating costs, and re-brand Penton from publishing company to multimedia provider. "Penton wanted a shift from an environment of closed offices to one with a far greater percentage of open workstations, while keeping proper acoustics and ample lighting for writers and editors who need quiet work areas. An open plan that encouraged teaming and communication was extremely important in the new design," says Reed. And so Penton ended up with 170,000 sq. ft. of office space on five floors of a high-rise building in downtown Cleveland.

With VWRL heading the project, Kordalski Architects in Cleveland and Myles W. Glynn & Associates of Long Beach, Calif., were responsible for programming and facility planning, respectively. Steve Kordalski, principal at

The sleek, simple design of the 20th floor main reception penthouse (opposite) offers a comfortable waiting area with dramatic views of the city. Stainless steel, encaustic plaster, blonde millwork, dolomitic limestone, and slate establish a sophisticated yet subtle image (above).



Kordalski Architects, had worked with Penton at its previous Cleveland facility after a flood damaged two floors in the building. His knowledge of the company and its needs helped move the programming along at a rapid pace. Myles Glynn, who had once worked with Penton CEO Tom Kemp, was originally hired to manage a benchmarking study to effectively evaluate the company's needs and persuaded Penton to seek out new space rather than remodel the old. "It was a classic exercise in a corporation's experience in facing a big occupancy decision," says Glynn.

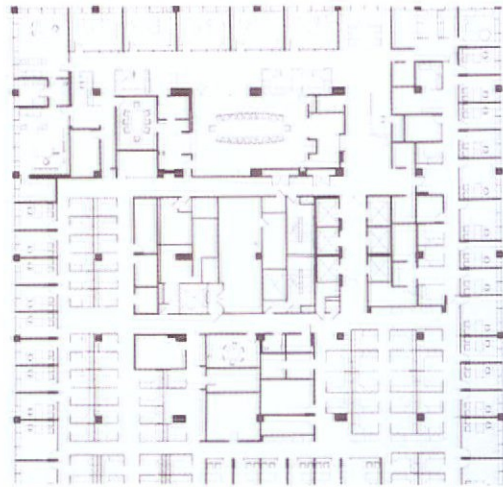
The three-firm team worked well together, executing the project in a tight time frame with programming that started in the fall of 1999, construction in June 2001, and occupancy in December 2001. According to Kordalski, "It's hard to get good design and detailing, while staying within the budget and time constraints. But we pushed hard and the project was successful." Glynn says, "VWRL had a good reputation, but designers often get bogged down by programming and can't spend time designing—the three parties made it an extremely effective team."

"Penton was concerned about not creating an excessive hierarchy," says Reed. "They didn't want anything in the design that was counter-intuitive to the teaming approach they were trying to implement by bringing the various subdivisions of the company closer together. All the floors have basically the same kind of materials, with the executive floor receiving only a minor upgrade, such as English sycamore wood instead of the maple on the other floors. Fifteen years ago in the corporate world, the executives would have had significantly better materials." Mary Abood, Penton's vice-president of corporate communications, says, "Our main idea was a simple yet sophisticated space, which would be more productive and inviting for employees, with a current, contemporary look, reflecting our media and Internet ties."

A unique feature of the facility is the 20th floor penthouse that serves as the main reception area and offers dramatic views to the street below. Conference room suites, kitchens, and communal areas exist on every floor in the same spot for easy wayfinding. Special attention was paid to the creation of numerous conference rooms in order to accommodate for the reduction in private office space and increased need for meeting areas. Kordalski's programming concepts coordinated the conference rooms in a vertical stacking scheme and the floor layouts were designed to accommodate changing numbers of employees over time. "Penton also wanted to involve employees as much as possible in the design process. Thus from time to time staff members were invited to test task chairs and sit in workstations," says Abood. "It was a way of getting staff comfortable in the new space." Since many employees would also be transferring from private offices to public workstations in the new open plan, it was important to Penton's management they make that transition as easily as possible.

According to Reed, "We had strategy meetings early on to set goals that were properly aligned with the budget. The budget stayed on track from the start, and there were no surprises. Penton was a wonderful client: they had a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve pragmatically and what the new image should be. And they gave the design team the space we needed to achieve this." ■

Project Summary



Light millwork in the executive boardroom (opposite, top left) projects a non-hierarchical image. Small reception areas on the lower floors (opposite, top right) and the administrative area surrounding the executive offices (above) feel open with use of varied clear and translucent specialty glass. High workstation walls and acoustically absorptive materials offer maximum privacy (opposite bottom).

Who

Project: Penton Media Corporate Office. **Client:** Penton Media. **Architect:** van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky, Kordalski Gatta Architects. **Interior designer, structural engineer:** van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky. **Mechanical, electrical engineer:** TEC. **General contractor:** The Albert M. Higley Co. **Lighting designer:** van Dijk Westlake Reed Leskosky, TEC. **Acoustician:** Patlin Electronics. **Furniture dealer:** Paramount Business Furnishings, S. Rose. **Photographer:** Nick Merrick © Hedrich Blessing.

What

Wallcoverings: KnollTextiles, Versa, RJF International. **Paint:** Evergreene Painting Studio, Benjamin Moore, Tnemec, Ralph Lauren. **Solid surfacing:** Avonite. **Laminate:** Nevamar. **Dry wall:** National Gypsum. **Flooring:** Mannington, Forbo, Daltile, Gammapar Vermont Structural Slate Co., Armstrong. **Carpet:** Lees, Constantine, Bloomsburg Carpet. **Carpet fiber:** Dupont, BASF, Solutia, Wool. **Ceiling:** Armstrong. **Acoustical wall panels:** MPC. **Lighting:** Finelite, Columbia, Kurt Versen, Elliptipar, Prescolite. **Doors:** Weyerhaeuser, Frameworks, Ceco. **Door hardware:** Best. **Glass:** Tempglass, Guardian, Perilstein, Oldcastle. **Window frames/wall systems:** Frameworks. **Window treatments:** Albert Herman Draperies, Levolor. **Glass tile:** Bisazza. **Workstations:** Knoll, Smed. **Workstation seating:** Herman Miller. **Lounge seating:** Keilhauer, Cassina, Bernhardt, Geiger. **Other seating:** Bernhardt, Knoll, Vitra. **Upholstery:** Spinneybeck, Knoll, Maharam, The Designtex Group, Edelman. **Conference table:** KP/Smed. **Cafeteria, dining, training tables:** Custom. **Other tables:** Geiger, B&B Italia. **Files:** Meridian. **Shelving:** Nucraft. **Architectural woodworking, cabinetmaking:** Nagele. **Planters, accessories:** Donghia, Artemide, Nessen, McDonald Products. **Signage:** Signets. **Access flooring:** Cook. **Plumbing fixtures:** Kroin, Kohler.

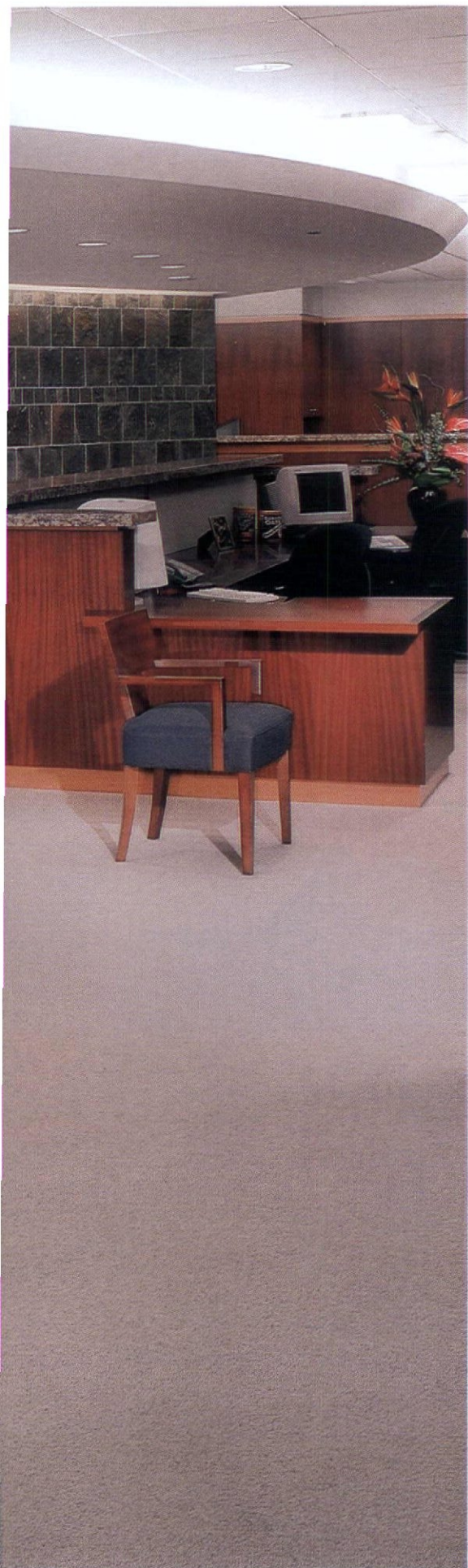
Where

Location: Cleveland, OH. **Total floor area:** 170,000 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 6. **Average floor size:** 25,670 sq. ft. **Total staff size:** 732. **Cost/sq. ft.:** \$50.

Sowing Their Oats

Quaker foods reaps the benefits of intelligent design
in a new Chicago headquarters by GHK

By Jean Nayar
Photography by Charlie Mayer



“Thirteen years ago, when the Quaker company moved its headquarters to a new building on the Chicago River, the office standards developed for the space were ahead of their time,” says Philip Deneau, vice president and design director for GHK, the Chicago-based firm that designed those offices for the 125-year-old food and beverage company. “It was also one of the first companies to move into an area of Chicago that needed revitalization, sparking growth in this location,” he recalls, adding “the company is a trend leader that way.” Given its pioneering spirit, it should come as no surprise that the company’s brand new headquarters—completed last August and also designed by GHK—incorporates the very latest office techniques and radiates vibrant energy.

Now located in the West Loop area, the next Chicago frontier in need of redevelopment, the new offices cover 400,000 sq. ft. of space on 17 floors of a new building occupied solely by the Quaker company. Prompted by the expiration of the lease for the offices in the Chicago River location, Quaker’s management decided it was wiser to move than renew the lease. “It was time for Quaker to refresh and reinvent itself and become even more efficient,” says Deneau. “But the cost and disruption of staying put and renovating wasn’t attractive,” he explains.



“It was economically better for us to move,” says Minnie Simkus, Quaker’s senior manager of facilities operations. “But we wanted to be sure the employees were excited about moving by giving them facilities that would be better than what they had. So we conducted focus groups to learn what they needed and wanted.” In the process, the architects discovered “amazing consistency,” in the employees’ desires, according to Deneau. “Everyone wanted flexibility, openness, natural light, and a friendly space that would foster a sense of community and spontaneous interaction,” he says.

During the dialogues, the architects also learned of a lessening distinction between the executive floor and the general office spaces and an increased focus on thinking beyond the norm. Furthermore, the employees wanted the offices to reflect their desire to strengthen and reinvent the identity of Quaker’s various branded products—which include Quaker Oats, Gatorade drinks

In an executive office area (left), workstations for administrative assistants feature Sapèle wood millwork and granite work surfaces. A slate tile wall hides the executive washroom, file room and copy area. A typical entry point just off the elevator (above) leads to a cafeteria area beyond the glass doors. Electronic totems provide a directory of the groups on each floor.



and snack bars, Aunt Jemima syrup and pancakes, as well as various cereal brands and granola bars. "What they wanted was an office with an extreme emphasis on function," says Deneau, "but not one that was regimented."

With a culture that revolves around reinvention—the company's churn rate averages 500 employees per year, according to Deneau—the primary challenge was to create an environment that could accommodate constant change without that change being labor intensive, time consuming, or obvious. "Flexibility was really key," says Simkus. "We do a lot of moving in our business; we're a dynamic organization in which teams keep changing, sometimes every six months—so we needed to be able to reconfigure with minimal cost and time."

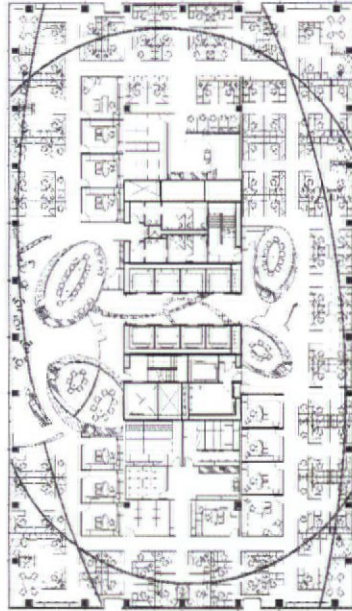
The architects' solution involved streamlining the churn process to a short list of steps. By limiting the standards of workstations and enclosed offices to two sizes each, and customizing moveable wall systems and non-modular workstation panels with a built-in power, data, and lighting infrastructure, the architects devised office systems that allow employees to unplug and set up somewhere new without the demolition and installation of new conduit and wiring that would be required to change a typical office constructed of drywall. "Instead, the change becomes simply a furniture installation with electrical and data hookups, which is significant in Chicago, where code calls for electrical connections to be hard-wired into conduit," says Deneau. The data and power infrastructure accepts workstation groupings and/or offices and the modular indirect lighting system can be quickly updated for pendant mounting in the offices or panel mounting in the workstation clusters.



In an attempt to clarify the "variety of means to convey the company's image," says Deneau, "we used key words from Quaker's mission statement—simplicity, passion and innovation—that evoke the qualities of Quaker's healthy, energizing foods created for sports-oriented active people." Relying on these key words as their impetus, the architects devised an atmosphere that exudes "the energy of a spinning top," says Deneau. A relaxed, open cafeteria—located just off the elevator—serves as a centerpiece of each floor. Surrounding it is a cluster of elliptically-shaped conference rooms defined with translucent walls and brightly colored fins. "These spaces and elliptical forms create a sense of the unexpected," says Deneau, "you can't see what's far beyond, which creates a feeling of spontaneity and energy." Beyond these forms, the glass-walled offices wrap the building core, while workstations stretch out to the window wall beyond reinforcing an airy openness with access to natural light for all.

And although these spaces change regularly—since January of this year the company has done 160 moves already—Quaker employees are as productive as ever. "The offices are working perfectly," Simkus says. "When employees have to move, we pick up their walls in the morning, take their boxes, and move them into their new space within two hours." ©

Project Summary



In a typical open office area, full-height glass walls enclosing offices and panels defining workstations were custom fitted with data and power for easy mobility (opposite left). Curved translucent walls form a conference room adjacent to the café, where wall-mounted displays showcase Quaker products (opposite right). A high-tech custom executive conference table includes built-in power/data plug-ins and microphones (above).

Who

Project/client: Quaker Foods and Beverages. **Interior architecture/design:** GHK. **Real estate consultant/project management:** Jones Lang LaSalle. **M.E.P. Engineer:** Environmental Systems Design (ESD). **General contractor:** Clune Construction. **Furniture dealer:** Corporate Office Systems, Johnson & Associates. **Photographer:** Charlie Mayer.

What

Wallcoverings: Custom by Luna Textiles, KnollTextiles, Merida, Maharam. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore. **Plastic laminate:** Nevamar, Lamin-Art. **Slate wall tiles:** Stone Design. **Carpet:** Constantine Commercial, Invision. **Carpet tiles:** Interface. **Carpet fiber:** DuPont Antron Lumena Nylon, Solutia Ultron VIP Nylon. **Vinyl flooring:** Lonseal. **Vinyl base:** Johnsonite. **Acoustic ceiling:** Armstrong. **Lighting:** Lightolier, Louis Poulsen, Luceplan, Columbia, Leucos. **Doors:** Custom by Parenti & Raffaelli. **Door hardware:** Schlage, CHMI, Gallery Specialty Hardware. **Glass:** Goldray, Solutia Vanceva Design Interlayers. **Movable wall system:** KI. **Window treatments:** MechoShade. **Raised floor:** Tate. **Workstations:** Herman Miller. **Casegoods:** Geiger, Councill. **Occasional tables:** Councill, Brayton, Bernhardt. **Workstation seating:** Steelcase. **Executive task seating:** HBF, Geiger, Steelcase. **Guest seating:** Knoll Studio. **Upholstery:** Maharam, Unika Vaev, The Designtex Group. **Lounge/conference seating:** Herman Miller. **Conference gallery/side seating:** Vitra. **Executive office guest/lounge seating:** Bernhardt. **Café tables/stools:** Knoll Studio. **Conference/training seating:** Vecta. **Conference/training tables:** Vecta, Geiger. **Files:** Meridian. **Architectural woodwork/cabinetry:** Parenti & Raffaelli. **Signage:** ASI Sign Systems. **Electronic directory, brand display, logo sculpture:** Cornelius+.

Where

Location: Chicago, IL. **Total Area:** 400,000 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 17. **Average Floor Size:** 25,000 sq. ft. **Total staff size:** 1,200.

Shoestring Design

It might sound like a contradiction of sorts, but with the right strategies, low budget and high design can both be attained in one project

By Danine Alati

Sure, things seem easier and less stressful when cash is free flowing—any education, home, car, or vacation could be at your disposal. But in the real world there are limitations. Budget constraints are inevitable in life, as they are in most construction projects. The task then becomes how to create a high design impact on a limited budget. Can it be accomplished? Of course it can; when architects and designers test the limits of their creativity, opportunities abound.

Every design project is tailored to a particular budget, since a \$500-per-sq. ft. project would not be constructed the same as a \$50-per sq. ft. space. Sara Elizabeth Caples, AIA, principal of New York-based firm Caples Jefferson, says that with each project her firm explores exactly how much can be spent—whether there are serious budget constraints or whether spending less is just wishful thinking. She says that her practice, a 15-year collaboration with fellow architect Everado Jefferson, approaches low budget issues the same as it would any other project. But Anne Fougeron, the owner and principal of Fougeron Architecture in San Francisco, who is quite accomplished in low budget work including numerous Planned Parenthood projects, acknowledges the difference in low budget design. “We approach each project with the budget in mind so that we don’t present to the client ideas that they can’t afford,” she says. “We are careful about not moving essential things and not doing any structural work. And we judiciously allocate funds to be spent in places where we feel we really need it, and not in others.”

It’s all about establishing priorities: What’s the worst thing about the space? What needs to be fixed the most and what can be left alone? Where can dollars be spent to have maximum impact? A

With little money and even less time budgeted for DeSimone Consulting’s new New York office design (right), Caples Jefferson aimed to show the process of construction by peeling back materials to expose raw concrete, applying finishes in layers, and introducing transparencies and views.

common strategy is to spend the money on public spaces, such as the lobby, in order to make a strong initial impact. But the challenge lies in carrying out a cohesive design scheme throughout, and not allowing all the style to present itself in the front while the back of house falls apart.

Knowledge is even more crucial to a successful design scheme than dollars. Having the know-how, expertise, creativity, and motivation to push the limits enables architects and designers to accomplish a high-design space even under strict budgetary constraints. “You have to be willing to put forth the effort and creativity to not just go

with the ‘classic solution’—with what’s easy to figure out, what you know works, and where the client gets something that’s just O.K.,” Fougeron urges. “We try to go beyond that scope, staying away from the normative, and being diligent about challenging assumptions. We feel that’s what makes good architecture.” For example, instead of employing the same staid cubicles, custom workstation solutions can be designed for no more of an expense, yet they will satisfy the specific need of the client. It’s imperative for architects and designers to not be complacent, but to utilize their skills to their fullest to devise unique solutions.





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“The level of craft in low budget is different than in high end work,” Caples explains, but luckily she comes from a technical background, and Jefferson has experience in construction. “We’ve had situations where the contractors could not read our drawings, and we’ve had to interpret them; we’ve been known to redetail systems,” she continues. “You have to be flexible to do low budget work.” It’s sometimes necessary to take ownership for issues that would not be the responsibility of the architect. And a low budget project could not come to fruition without a flexible and committed client. “On all projects the client is challenged in one way or another to

rethink and expedite, to do things for convenience and not for architectural integrity,” Caples notes. “Client commitment is a critical factor—they must be visionary and dedicated no matter what the budget.” And often they must be willing to forgo first-choice materials for less costly alternatives.

Perhaps surprising to many, there are a host of low budget materials that can make quite a design impact. Fougerson explains, “The key is knowing how to use the maximum architecture for the minimum amount of money. We’ve learned this over time by developing an architectural vocabulary. We have a sense of how much materials cost, how to get the most out of

them, and what effect we can achieve.” For example, Fougerson often favors cork flooring over carpeting for its ease of maintenance, durability, warm aesthetic, and sustainability. A material that works particularly well in the Planned Parenthood clinics her firm has designed, cork offers a cost-effective alternative to carpeting, which would need to be cleaned often and replaced every few years. Especially when budget is a top concern, Fougerson finds value in conducting a cost analysis to consider if spending extra money up front will cut costs in the long term.

Steel and glass also offer infinite possibilities in low budget projects, since they are inexpensive, easy to use and install, wear well, require less maintenance than other materials, and offer options of interesting architectural designs, Fougerson notes. Caples adds, “Often at a low price point, the urge is to use all gypsum board, which is boring.” Caples Jefferson skillfully designed an 8,000-sq. ft. Harlem headquarters building for Heritage Health and Housing, a social agency that finds housing for recently released prisoners, on a severely meager budget, but managed to “vary the palette of materials for a greater tactile range,” she says. “We looked at reusing existing and exposed structures like industrial floors, wood, and concrete, and used a low palette of materials to achieve tactile richness.”

It does not necessarily take donations from a caring philanthropist or a multimillion-dollar company’s exorbitant design budget fund innovative contract interiors—just architects and designers with the creativity and passion to challenge preconceived notions of how things have always been. There are no “have tos” with low budget design—except limiting cost. Otherwise, the wealth of possibilities extend well beyond the realm of normative thinking. ■

After collaborating with Planned Parenthood on several projects, Fougerson Architecture has established a palette of materials that works for the organization. This call center in San Mateo (above) employs mixed use of glass and steel to create functional, inexpensive workstations with high tactile quality.

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design



the comforts of home

For visiting families, the Ronald McDonald House of San Francisco is a temporary home while children are treated in local hospitals—for the A&D community, its renovation was a chance to unite through design

By Katie Weeks

Photography by David Wakely

Having a seriously ill child is a parent's worst nightmare. Everyday tasks take a backseat to hospital bills, treatment options, and bedside visits. For families that must travel for treatment, the last thing they want to worry about after a long day at the hospital is where they'll spend the night. Which is why the Ronald McDonald House of San Francisco provides a much-needed haven.

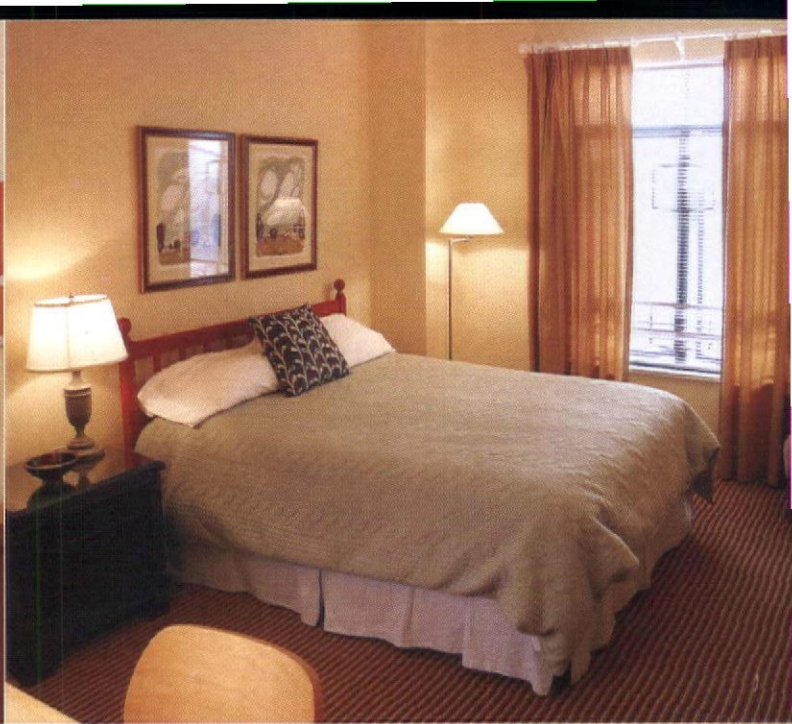
"Our goal is to offer a beautiful, soothing, and healing environment—a safe place to return to after a day at the hospital," says Peggy McGuire, executive director of the Ronald McDonald House. Since it was built in 1989, the building has housed more than 2,500 families of children undergoing treatment for life-threatening illnesses. While most families stay once for an average of two weeks, some have stayed nearly a year and others have made multiple visits. But after 13 years, it was time for an update.

In 2001, the board of directors committed \$100,000 to address structural concerns including upgrading the exhaust, fire safety, and electrical systems, removing an unused fireplace, expanding public spaces, providing adequate workspace for staff and office volunteers, and giving families email access. "We expanded our communal space to bring family members out of the isolation of their rooms to meet each other," McGuire says. "They're going through an incredible shared experience no matter what the diagnosis."

Steve Rajninger of Locus Architecture and David Galbraith of Re/Construction, both in San Francisco, worked together on redesigning the house's center atrium and planned for the expansion. At the same time, the repairs provided a chance to reexamine the house's interiors. "We took a structural project and turned it into a complete makeover," says McGuire. Inspired by a local showcase house where various designers each redesigned a room, Ronald McDonald House's then-development director Nancy McClusky-Moore contacted local designer Nanci Scoular, who had helped organize the project, about accomplishing a similar feat with the Ronald McDonald House.

"I loved what Ronald McDonald House was about and wanted to help," recalls Scoular. Armed with the title of designer recruitment, Scoular set out to recruit cohorts to tackle the house's 10 bedrooms and nine bathrooms. "Residential designers do this work on an everyday basis, but I thought it would be fun for designers who do office spaces, institutional work, hospitals, and educational facilities to have

The Ronald McDonald House renovation includes increasing public space like dining rooms (opposite, top left) and living rooms (opposite, top right) to draw families out of their rooms. The aesthetic of these spaces, designed by TSAO Design Group, plays off the natural light from an atrium by Lotus Architecture (opposite bottom).



Using a similar palette, the designers wanted a sophisticated, boutique hotel feel, as seen in TSAO's (top left) and Babey Moulton Jue & Booth's rooms (top right). Throughout the rooms, small accents, like intriguing textiles in RMW's (middle left) and Huntsman's rooms (bottom right), and sheer curtains in LA's room (middle right), added personality.

Project Summary

a chance to do something like this," she says of targeting contract firms. Although hesitant to ask her friends to donate time, effort, and materials during a down economy, she was overwhelmed by enthusiastic replies.

The firms on board were a who's-who of local talent: Locus Architecture, TSAO Design Group, ADD, Inc., Babey Moulton Jue & Booth, Gordon H. Chong & Partners, Huntsman Architectural Group, IA Interior Architects, RMW, SmithGroup, and SMWM. "It looked like the kind of thing where many hands make light work," says Jim Archibald, interior designer and associate at RMW. Tony Garret, principal at IA, agrees. "It gave everyone a feeling of contributing to the community and doing something related to design that could be a fun diversion from normal work," he says.

The overriding goal was to leave the house's previous look and feel behind in favor of a more calming environment. The original aesthetic "was filled with lots of children's references, felt very childlike, and was loud and expressive," says Ellen Schumm, principal at TSAO. "When you come home, what you really want is something quiet, calming, serene, restful, and warm. This was an opportunity to create a boutique hotel environment without the edge."

To design their rooms, the groups received guidelines to ensure that the project would end up being cohesive without each firm trying to outdo the others. Color schemes had to be synchronized with common spaces. Bedrooms had to be practical, taking into consideration that the families provide primary maintenance. They had to be functional and child-friendly. The existing maple furniture—armoire, desk, and full-size bed—had to remain and could not be altered. "Dealing with the existing furniture and trying to do something was a challenge," says John Kastl, associate at Babey Moulton Jue & Booth. "Some of the rooms had too much furniture so we ended up simplifying."

Another stipulation: Any new supplies, from carpeting to furnishings to paint, needed to be donated. "It's a challenge to work in a completely donated situation," notes Schumm. "You had to be nimble with quick changes in case something fell through." Luckily, the designers found manufacturers more than willing to help, including Benjamin Moore, Luna Textiles, Herman Miller, Knoll, and Steelcase. "The list of donations is incredible," says Scoular.

After designers completed their concepts, they had to work around the families—the house was occupied during the entire renovation, which was completed in September 2002. "In spite of tremendous disruption, we never received a complaint," says McGuire. "The families were so grateful to be here and understood the intent of the project," she adds. In the end, both designers and house residents benefited from the makeover. "Design can be very competitive and often all about the ego, but this project wasn't about that," says Mark Harbick, AIA, design partner at Huntsman Architectural Group. He recalls how everyone came together, sharing materials and ideas to create a strong camaraderie. "It wasn't a competition," he says, "this was about the project itself, about the house." ■

Public Spaces

Atrium architect: Locus, Steve Rajninger; Re/Construction, David Galbraith. **Designer:** TSAO Design Group; Leora Goren, Allyson Kovas, Ellen Schumm, Niki Vazifdar, Tom Worden. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Creative Paint & Wallpaper. **Carpet:** Bentley Prince Street, Rafael Carpets. **Lighting:** C.J. Welch-North, IKEA, Juno Lighting, Lightsmiths Design Group, Nessen Lighting, Nova Industries, Sea Gull Lighting, Zurier Co. **Upholstery:** The Designtex Group, Nancy McCluskey-Moore. **Seating:** Brayton, CRI, Herman Miller, One Workplace, OP Contract, Service West, Steelcase. **Dining, occasional, banquette tables:** Vecta, West Coast Industries. **Surfacing:** Butler-Johnson Corporation, DuPont Corian, National Kitchen & Bath Association. **Laminate:** Wilsonart. **Furniture refinishing:** VIDA. **Hardware/storage:** DF/m, Hafele, In-Sink Erator, Kohler, Quality Doors. **Screens:** AFS Creates. **Logo:** Lebas Lashley.

Bedroom 1

Designer: TSAO Design Group; Leora Goren, Allyson Kovas, Ellen Schumm, Niki Vazifdar, Tom Worden. **Electric:** Dynalectic. **Construction:** Hathaway Dinwiddie Construction Co. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Creative Paint & Wallpaper. **Lighting, frames, table, shelving, drapery hardware:** IKEA. **Flooring:** B.R. Funsten, Interface. **Textiles:** Luna Textiles. **Sconces:** Nessen Lighting, C.J. Welch-North. **Hardware/accessories:** Bauerware, Gatco, Kohler. **Bed linens, artwork:** TSAO Design Group, Nancy McCluskey-Moore.

Bedroom 2

Designer: Huntsman Architectural Group; Mark Harbick, Aaron Vinson, Alison Smith. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Creative Paint & Wallpaper. **Lighting:** Artemide, IKEA. **Carpet:** Conklin Brothers, Karastan Contract. **Bed linens:** Donghia, Maharam. **Headboard frame:** George Slack Cabinetmakers. **Drapery:** Henry Calvin Fabrics, Installation Service Corp. **Fabric:** ICF Group, Maharam, Pollack. **Lounge seating:** IKEA. **Hardware:** Kohler. **Plants:** Floorcraft Nursery. **Upholstery:** Mary Cravens Design.

Bedrooms 5, 6

Designer: IA Interior Architects; Tony Garrett, Aaron Wong, Debbie Ohlsson, Anthony Luk, Frederick Regala, Shad Beazer. **Carpet:** Rafael Carpets, Masland, Shaw. **Drapery:** Ron & Rachel Rothe. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Creative Paint & Wallpaper. **Bedding, drapery:** IA Interior Architects. **Fabric:** Luna Textiles, Maharam. **Wall base:** Johnsonite. **Sconces:** Lighting Systems, Sea Gull Lighting/Zurier Company. **Artwork, mirrors:** Nextmonet. **Hardware/accessories:** Bed Bath & Beyond, Gatco, Kohler, NuTone/Zurier Co.

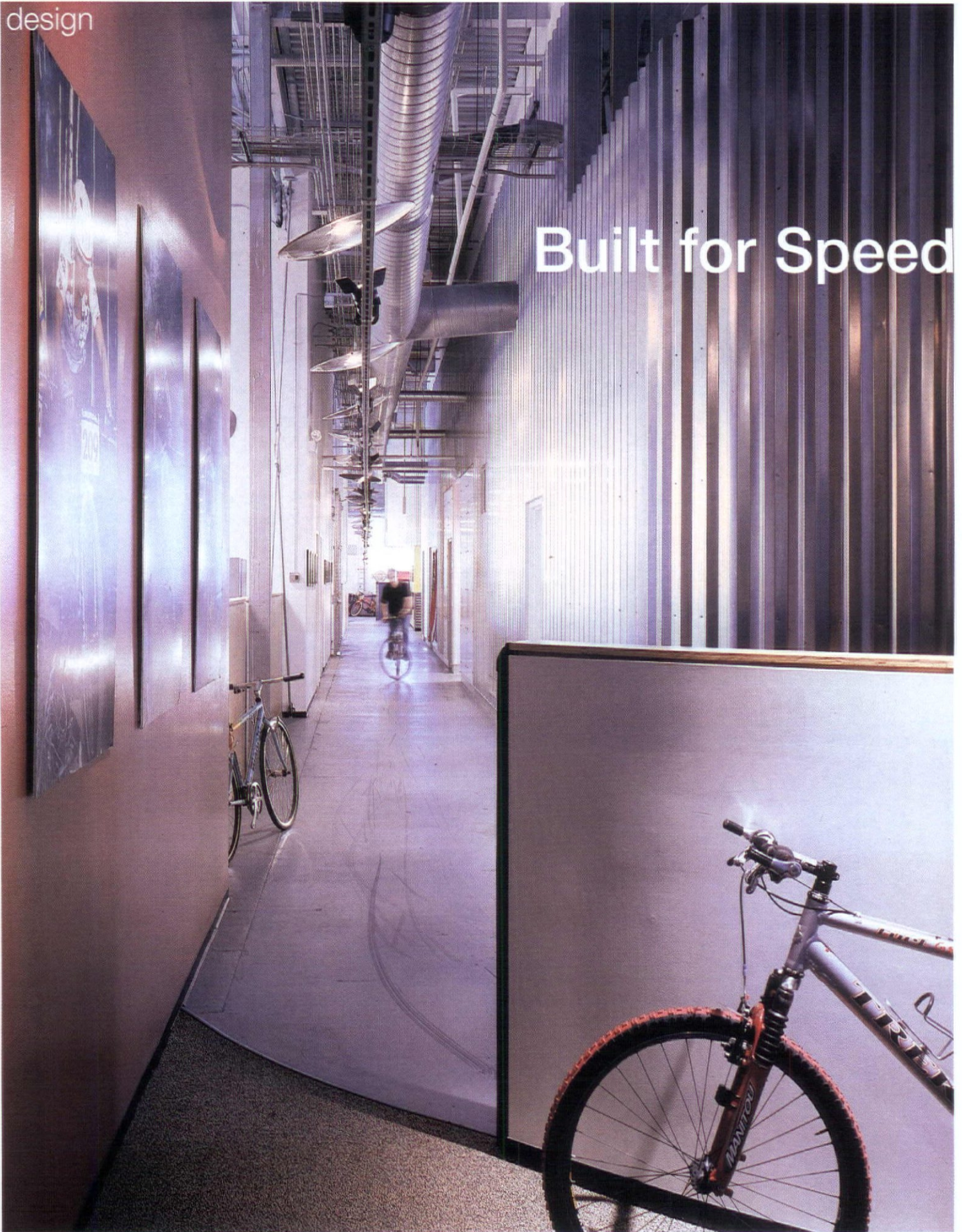
Bedroom 7

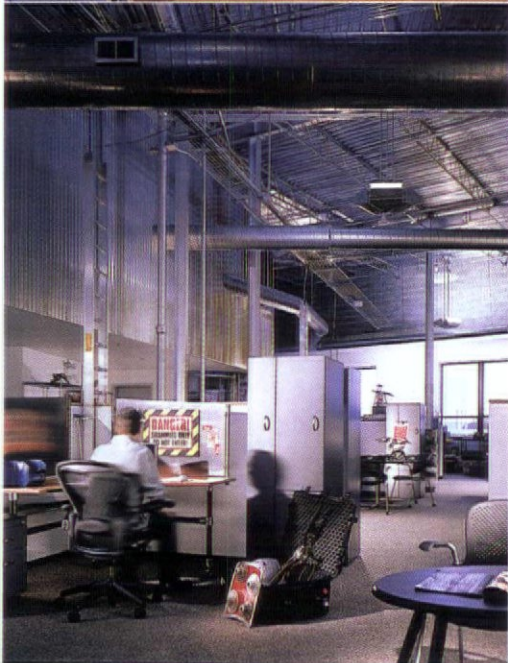
Designer: RMW; Jim Archibald, Jennifer Narozniak, Robbin McDonald. **Carpet:** Rafael Carpets, Shaw Contract. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Creative Paint & Wallpaper. **Glass tiles:** Ann Sacks Tile & Stone. **Lighting:** Artemide, Pottery Barn. **Bedding:** Henry Calvin Fabrics, Knoll Textiles, Suzanne Tick Inc., Malatesta & Company. **Seating:** ICF Group, Risa Ograskin Associates. **Shutters:** San Francisco Shutter Company. **Wall base:** Johnsonite, Spectra Contract Flooring. **Closets:** Closet Dimensions. **Hardware/accessories:** Kohler, NuTone, Waterworks. **Artwork:** Robyn Color Labs, S. Conway Frame Studio, Susan Rattenbury, Ted Hochschwender.

Bedroom 10

Designer: Babey Moulton Jue & Booth; Jon Kastl. **Carpentry:** Leo Ickovic Construction. **Flooring:** Abbey Carpet, Beronio Lumber, Clayton Miller, Torrillon. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore. **Fabric, furniture, art:** A. Rudin, Babey Moulton Jue & Booth, It Fits. **Artwork:** Elizabeth Weiner Fine Art International, Steve Henry. **Drapery:** Henry Calvin Fabrics, Trickey Studio. **Floor lamp:** John Anderson. **Hardware/accessories:** Dornbracht USA, Kohler, Lloyd Marketing, Paige Glass.

Built for Speed





SRAM's funky headquarters in an industrial loft building includes a 650-ft. oval bike test track that doubles as a pedestrian circulation path (opposite). In the reception area, an upholstered wall, inspired by the texture of thermal underwear, reinforces the company's image (above). Corrugated galvanized steel is an ever present material that keeps SRAM's employees connected to its culture (above, top).

SRAM bicycle components start their race to the marketplace in a highly-reconfigurable loft headquarters, designed by RTKL

By Diana Mosher
Photography by Christopher Barrett

The riders get top billing on the professional bicycle racing circuit, but there are other stars behind the scenes—like the bicycle components themselves—that keep things moving. Speed is valued by component manufacturing companies like SRAM as much as by the cyclists they serve; and this high-gear attitude made for an enjoyable project when SRAM hired RTKL to design its new global headquarters in Chicago. “The client was prepared to make decisions very quickly,” says Kim Heartwell, director of the workplace group in RTKL’s Washington, D.C., office. “It was amazing. In a three-hour stakeholder’s workshop we came up with an initial design concept that could have taken up to two weeks. This experience kicked off the process and told us what the energy level would be,” she says.

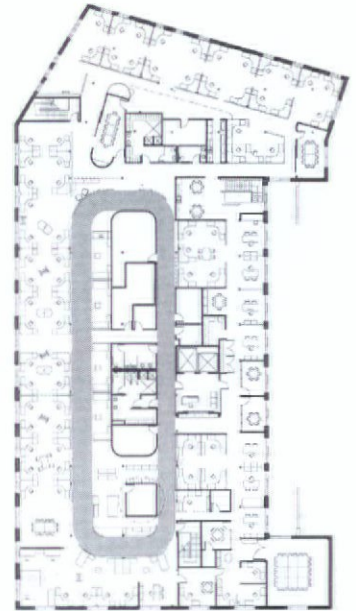
Since its founding in 1987, SRAM has grown from an outfit of six to an international organization with offices in The Netherlands, Taiwan, and Chicago. There are now 64 employees in Chicago. “At our old location we practiced ground up space planning. As we acquired a function, or when we needed to hire, we grew walls of corrugated steel,” explains David Zimmeroff, SRAM’s global communications manager. So, long before the move to the new building, the design aesthetic was established and also executed by the industrial and graphic designers on SRAM’s product development team. When RTKL came on board to design the new headquarters, SRAM’s directive was to

evolve the existing raw industrial look so fitting to the bicycle component industry. SRAM also wanted a high-performing but comfortable workplace that would support its non-corporate “intellectual-cool” culture, encourage cross-functional teaming, and increase collaboration. “We needed to be up and running in the quickest amount of time and with the fewest resources,” adds Zimmeroff, a key client representative during the design project.

The new space, which covers three floors in an industrial loft building, was occupied on time only five months from project initiation, with minimal construction occurring for a two-month period after occupancy. The fast-paced project was facilitated by weekly meetings with architect, contractor, and representatives of each of the client’s seven departments. “It was a highly interactive process with lots of face-to-face time across the table,” says Heartwell. The collaboration between client and architect went far beyond meetings. Designers from both SRAM and RTKL worked closely to create a specialized system of mobile tables and storage towers that can accommodate most job functions and support alternative work processes. The extra-sturdy furniture—which was manufactured by SRAM’s own prototype fabrication consultant—was also designed to hold heavy equipment during reconfiguration. The new workspace and its collaborative tools are expected to serve as a catalyst to improved creativity, productivity, efficiency, and speed to market. “We talk



Project Summary



Who

Project: SRAM World Headquarters. **Client:** SRAM. **Architect, interior designer:** RTKL. **Structural engineer:** C.E. Anderson & Associates. **MEP engineer:** Consulting/Construction Services. **Data/network consultant:** Engineering Plus. **General contractor:** Turner SPD. **Furniture dealer:** Office Equipment Co. **Photographer:** Christopher Barrett © Hedrich Blessing.

What

Wallcoverings: Lonseal, WallTalker, Blumenthal, The Designtex Group. **Tile:** DalTile. **Pin-up board:** Forbo. **Paint:** Benjamin Moore, Pittsburgh Paints. **Laminate:** Pionite, Abet Laminati. **Flooring:** Oregon Lumber, Azrock, 3M. **Carpet:** Mannington. **Ceiling:** USG. **Lighting:** Lightolier, Shaper Lighting, Cooper Lighting. **Door hardware:** Hager, Ilco, Sargent, Glynn Johnson, Stanley Ives. **Glazing:** Polygal. **Metal panel:** Flexospan. **Window treatments:** Mermet. **Workstations, workstation/lounge seating:** Steelcase, Turnstone. **Reception desk:** DatesWeiser. **Coffee table:** Arconas. **Upholstery:** The Designtex Group, Unika Vaev, Architex. **Files:** Steelcase. **Architectural woodworking:** Marc Woodworking.

Where

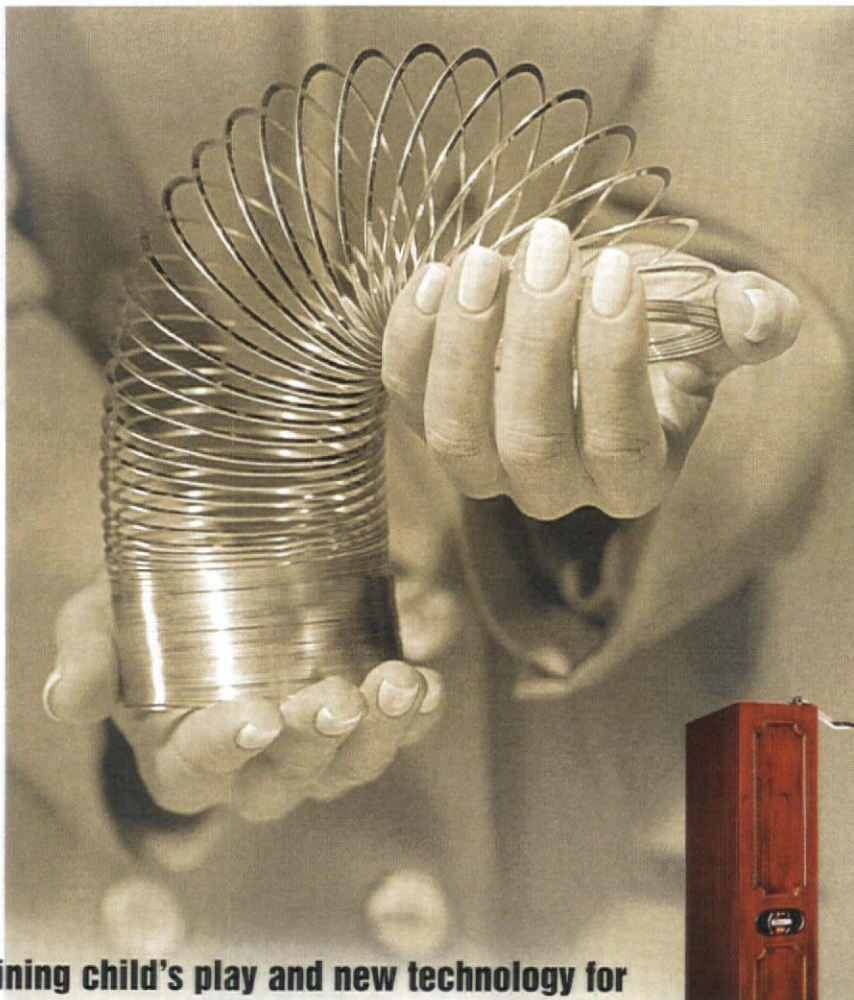
Location: Chicago, IL. **Total Floor Area:** 30,800 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 3. **Primary floor size:** 22,100 sq. ft. **Total staff size:** 80. **Cost/sq. ft.:** \$45.

to each other more. The layout of the space allows us to communicate more regularly with people we used to see only once a week," says Tim Smith, SRAM's director of engineering.

The cross-functional, flexible workspace includes a 650-ft. oval bike test track that doubles as a primary pedestrian circulation path; a machine shop for the development of prototypical components; a warehouse/staging area; and amenities for the largely bicycle-riding staff, such as locker rooms and showers, bicycle storage, and even a bike wash. "The space is for our people, to make them creative and happy," says Zimmeroff. The materials and forms within the space reflect SRAM's functional requirements and correspond to the expertise and interest of its high-tech, creative occupants. Curved walls covered in corrugated galvanized steel and a reception area featuring an upholstered wall inspired by the pillow-like texture of thermal outerwear reinforce the company's image without reinventing it.

Sustainability and cost savings were considered when a decision was made to reuse two large gridded sliding doors that had been left in the space by the previous tenant. Semi-transparent polycarbonate panels were inserted into the grid, and the doors were repositioned to guard public access to the client's intellectual property. The reuse of lighting, ductwork, electrical distributions, and some carpeting reduced typical renovation costs by \$15-per sq. ft., allowing adherence to the limited budget. "It was a fun and unique experience working with RTKL," observes Zimmeroff. "They were very creative, on time, and on budget." The high-tech casual ambience at SRAM's new headquarters is also having a positive effect on employee recruitment, especially in product development and creative departments. This bonus (unexpected by SRAM) demonstrates that you don't always get what you pay for: sometimes you get even more. ☐

The materials and forms within the space reflect SRAM's functional requirements and correspond to the expertise and interests of its creative occupants (above).



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design



Two Thumbs Up

It takes a special type of space to accommodate filmmakers. The environment must foster creativity at all times, promote collaboration sometimes yet allow for privacy at others, and offer capabilities for directors to watch and edit footage. Other than Hollywood, New York might be the next best place for filmmakers to stake their flag. But with real estate at such exorbitant prices, what's a small independent filmmaking company like Madstone Films to do? Call in the expertise of a New York City design firm that knows just how to transform a 12,000-sq. ft. former showroom into a space that looks like a million bucks but costs a whole lot less.

Given the parameters of keeping the office as open as possible and letting in abundant natural light while offering privacy at the same time, New York design firm STUDIOS architecture was challenged to realize the goals of Madstone Films on a severely strict budget. "We were looking to capture collaboration with privacy—it's a delicate balance," explains Tom Gruenberg, co-CEO of Madstone Films, the digital film and production company that he co-founded with co-CEO Chip Seelig in 1999 to harvest young filmmakers. The mission of the company is to provide emerging filmmakers with a two-year, \$50,000-per year contract, a budget of \$500,000 to \$1.5 million to create a film, and a cooperative office setting where they can support one another's endeavors. STUDIOS played a crucial role in cultivating these up-and-coming directors with its designs for an office space that so expertly promotes the collaborative nature of their work and the overall purpose of Madstone Films.

With a limited furniture budget, STUDIOS included bold green stationary work-surface counters and moveable wall partitions in the construction budget—no dry wall was employed in the space at all. "Walls" that define workstations are really hanging Plexiglass panels of varying levels of transparency, constructed with sleek aluminum rods and frames. At the onset of the project, Madstone executives were unsure how many directors would be utilizing the space, so they needed flexibility built in. Partition panels hung from the ceiling can roll along to collapse and expand the office to loft-like proportions or construct individual workstations when necessary.

"The size of the space lent itself to what we were trying to do," says Tom Krizmanic, associate principal at STUDIOS. "Madstone described how they wanted the space to 'feel.'" And the designers had to figure out how to accomplish such a flexible workplace. One of STUDIOS' designers, Kevin Estrada, really wanted to emphasize the light. He sought to

STUDIOS architecture helps give tactile form to the creative mission of New York indie film production company Madstone Films

By Danine Alati
Photography by Andrew Bordwin



High light levels and an overall openness is maintained throughout Madstone Films' office with the use of mixed transparent and translucent materials to permit and reflect illumination. And reusing all existing light fixtures helped cut costs (above and opposite).

use glass and other clear and translucent materials to reflect light, “to grab it from the windows and explode it on the inside,” Krizmanic recalls. In addition to extensive use of Plexiglass, executive offices, the co-CEO’s shared office, and conference rooms sport glass fronts and sliding glass doors to maintain the open feel and encourage collaboration. Three “light/dark rooms” tucked in the back are the only closed off spaces to accommodate movie screening and editing.

The existing cherry wood floor adds rich contrast to the cool aluminum and glass panels. “Maybe if we had a greater budget, we would have ripped up the floor because the cherry wood does not exactly meld with the concept of a filmmaker’s office,” Krizmanic admits. “But it *does* work here. It was in such

great condition that we couldn’t tear it up. And it adds an overall richness, especially with the furniture selections—we got a real high-design impact with the furniture.” With deft use of inexpensive materials, the designers were able to add a few signature furniture pieces to really make a statement. Existing lighting was also reused to further conserve resources.

Surprisingly enough, the greatest challenge in this project was not necessarily the budget constraints. The designers skillfully maneuvered the budget to accommodate supplies that they needed and successfully maximized use of existing materials available to them. Instead, Krizmanic says he was most challenged to help the clients “see something they couldn’t see.” He says, “They wanted something open and wanted the business to be collaborative,

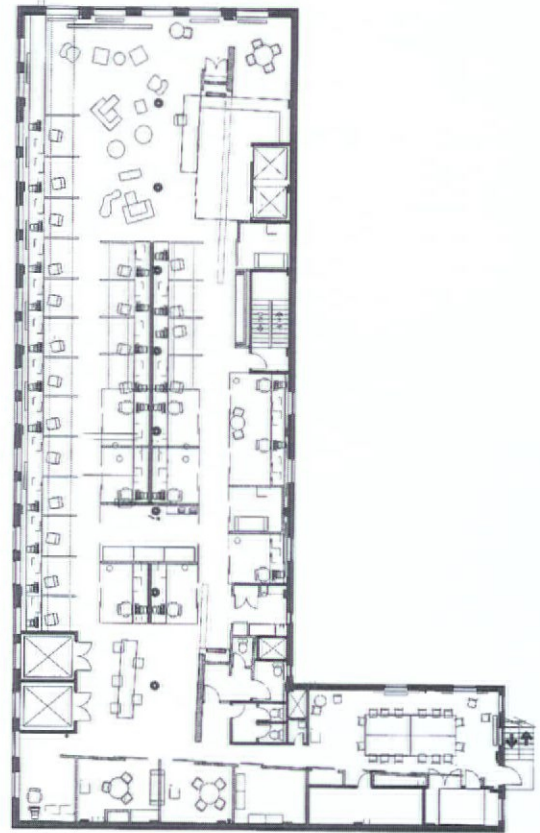


Project Summary

but they couldn't picture what we were planning to accomplish. We had to reassure them that we were in fact listening to what they wanted and help them visualize it."

But in the end Gruenberg, Seelig, and the rest of the Madstone Films staff had no problem focusing on the vast success of the new office space. "It's a functioning architectural statement," Gruenberg says. "Validation always comes from the outside, and it's amazing the amount of compliments I get on this office—from filmmakers, producers, artists, personalities, everyone. The space is a great emblem for what we as a company have accomplished." And it's a great testament to the fact that not only *money* talks, but great design—on any budget—speaks volumes. ■

Designers succeed in drawing in light from outside and exploding it inside the glass-fronted partners' office and the facing conference room (opposite top). Incorporating hanging Plexiglass panels and the ubiquitous green counter/workstation surface into the construction budget (opposite, bottom middle and below) left funds for a few striking furniture pieces (opposite, bottom left and right).



Who

Client: Madstone Films. **Architect, interior designer, lighting designer:** STUDIOS architecture. **Structural/mechanical engineer:** Mack Engineer. **General contractor:** Interior Construction. **Furniture dealer:** Danker, Sellew & Douglas. **Photographer:** Andrew Bordwin.

What

Paint: Benjamin Moore, Color Preview. **Laminate:** Abet Laminati. **Lighting:** Luceplan, Edison Price, Legion Lighting. **Doors:** Hafele. **Door hardware:** Hafele, Rockwood, Hawa. **Window frames/wall systems:** Custom by Panelite. **Workstations, cafeteria/dining/training tables:** Custom. **Workstation seating:** Knoll, Bulldog. **Lounge chairs:** Cbi, Totem Design. **Lounge cushions, tables:** Innovation, Totem Design. **Cafeteria, dining, auditorium seating, stools:** Pur Design. **Teaming seating:** Design Within Reach, ICF. **Upholstery:** KnollTextiles, Una. **Conference table:** Knoll. **Files:** Herman Miller, Design Within Reach. **Plumbing fixtures:** Chicago Faucets, American Standard.

Where

Project: Madstone Films. **Location:** New York, NY. **No. of floors:** 1. **Floor size:** 12,000 sq. ft. **Total staff size:** approximately 40.

design

Spare Change





A less-is-more aesthetic by Resistance Design establishes
NetAid's identity and reinforces its humanitarian values

By Diana Mosher

Photography by Mark Loette and Eric Mailaender

Employee productivity is paramount at the New York City offices of NetAid, a humanitarian, non-profit organization battling world poverty and hunger. So good design—the kind that attracts the best people and makes them want to come to the office on Saturday—was a key requirement when Manhattan-based Resistance Design was hired to create a new Fifth Avenue headquarters for the organization.

“These are good people doing good work,” says Eric Mailaender, principal of Resistance Design in New York. “They’re part of the current discourse of the world.” His firm responded by designing a spare yet engaging environment for the primarily youthful workforce. There are plenty of places for employees to sit and chat as

well as inviting conference rooms and private nooks for phone calls, but these comforts are balanced by a feeling of bareness that doesn’t compete with the serious nature of NetAid’s mission. “The main thing was to not break a certain level of luxury,” explains Mailaender. “In this setting luxe would have been absurd.”

NetAid was formed as a public-private partnership between the United Nations Development Program and Cisco Systems with a mission of raising public awareness and action in the fight against extreme poverty. It was launched in October 1999 with a series of high-profile rock concerts in New York, London, and Geneva. Up until NetAid’s move to Fifth Avenue, the organization had no well-defined headquarters,

and it resided in a number of offices scattered around San Francisco, New York, and Bonn, Germany. During the site search, other Manhattan locations with more personality (like old wood floors and huge windows) were passed over in favor of the Fifth Avenue location which Mailaender describes as banal. But, as he points out, the fact that the space was a concrete box with no drama became an advantage because it afforded NetAid an empty canvas and the opportunity to figure out the image it wanted to project. The completely raw space—just a concrete slab and plaster—offered financial benefits as well, because the shell was fairly clean. “It wasn’t an old dilapidated space that would eat up the budget,” explains Mailaender.

Despite its modest design budget, NetAid's New York headquarters is a highly engaging space whose spareness reinforces the organization's humanitarian mission (opposite). A generous open “street” is dominated by a steel-clad structure containing NetAid.org's server (above).

When Resistance Design came on board, NetAid's president, David Morrison, wasn't sure what direction he wanted the design to take, but he knew he didn't want to see mahogany panels or other elements synonymous with money. "Eric continually pushed and stretched us to see the possibility of what could be accomplished on our tight budget. We're very happy," says Morrison. "He didn't compromise on the fundamentals of design. But, the spare aesthetic mirrors our culture of using resources wisely.

"NetAid is a knowledge organization, and the design program facilitates a working environment in which people can exchange knowledge seamlessly," Morrison adds. "We also stand for being transparent and efficient." These qualities have been replicated in the design, which is basically one big, open space with a single office. The non-hierarchical work environment can accommodate 30 people. Originally it was going to be entirely open plan, but a glass-walled corner office was added for Morrison. "He receives major dignitaries and United Nations people who want to visit in his office, not in a conference room," explains Mailaender. A glass wall allows visual contact with those outside the office while affording acoustical privacy.

In keeping with the basic design solution, which was to leave things open and not build too much, Mailaender opted for a translucent panelite wall rather than drywall. Hung from a soffit and raised five inches from the floor on a metal frame, it possesses a floating quality against a heavy, concrete structure. "It's really successful," says Mailaender. The panelite is the only luxury material in the space, but it appears more industrial and low-budget than glass, which was first considered for the long wall that introduces NetAid's offices to visitors. Mailaender also made efficient use of the infrastructure. Rather than installing a drop ceiling, he created compelling new elements by attaching lights to the conduits. Money was also saved on the poured, self-leveling concrete floor applied to the existing slab.

"This is a great place to work, and it says something about who we are as an organization," says Morrison. "Motivated" is one adjective that immediately comes to mind, given the organization's desire to see world poverty cut in half by 2015. NetAid's flagship online program has made it easy for ordinary people to volunteer in a number of areas including research, writing, programming, and networking without even leaving home. NetAid's New York employees, on the other hand, can't wait to get to the office. ☐



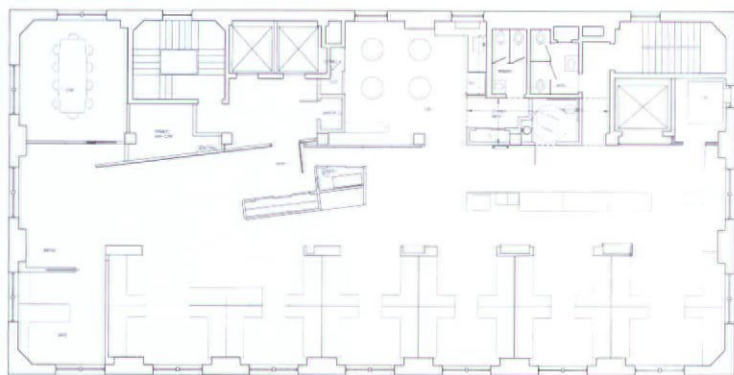
The space is organized into three simple linear zones: workstations at the windowed perimeter (opposite), service and gathering spaces within the opposite bay, and internal circulation between them. The panelite wall, the project's one luxury material, was selected because of its industrial and low-budget appearance (above).



Project Summary

Who

Client: NetAid, David Morrison, president.
Architect, interior designer, lighting designer, structural/mechanical engineer: Resistance Design, Eric Mailaender, principal.
Photographers: Mark Loette Photography, Resistance Design.



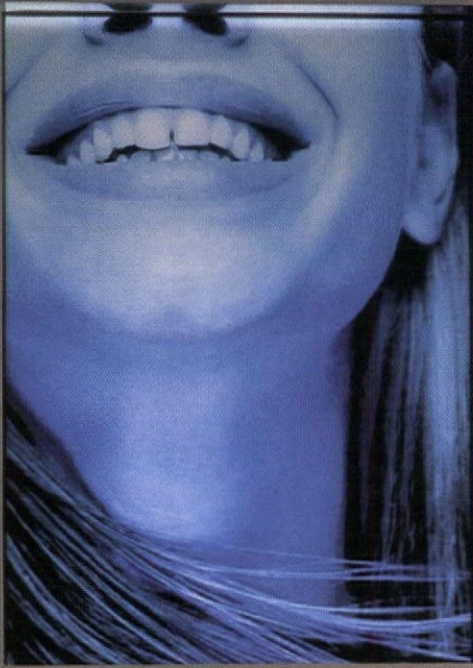
What

Paint: Benjamin Moore. **Masonry:** Sonneborn. **Carpet/carpet tile:** Eurotex Tretford. **Lighting:** Luceplan, Artemede, custom by Resistance. **Door hardware:** Schlage. **Structural fiberglass panels:** Panelite custom. **Framing:** Product & Design. **Window treatments:** Solar Shade. **Workstation seating:** Herman Miller. **Lounge seating:** Herman Miller, Offect. **Cafeteria, dining, auditorium seating, other tables:** Pure Design. **Files:** Hon. **Shelving:** Millennium Steel. **HVAC:** Carrier. **Plumbing fixtures:** American Standard, Elkay.

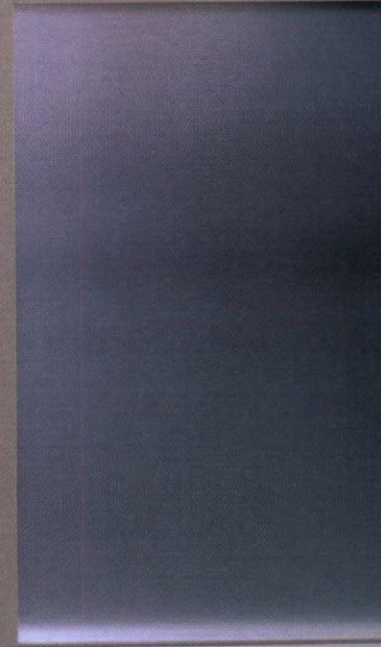
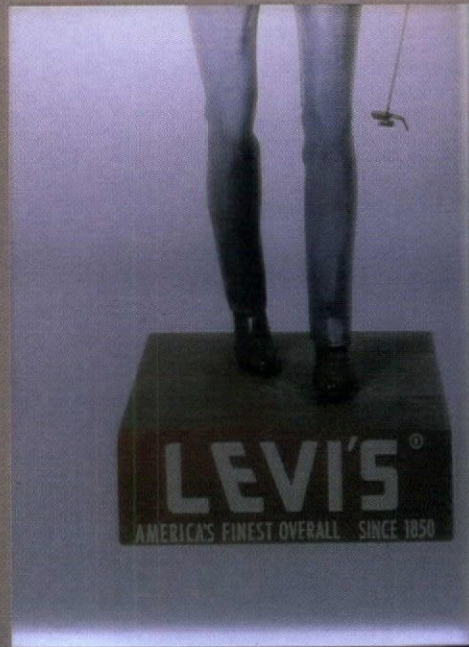
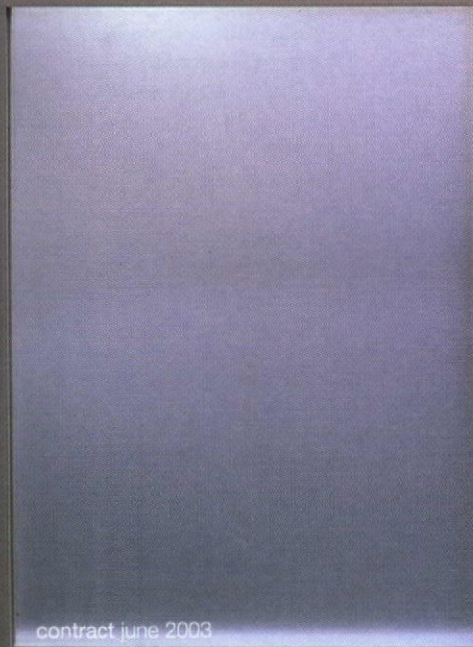
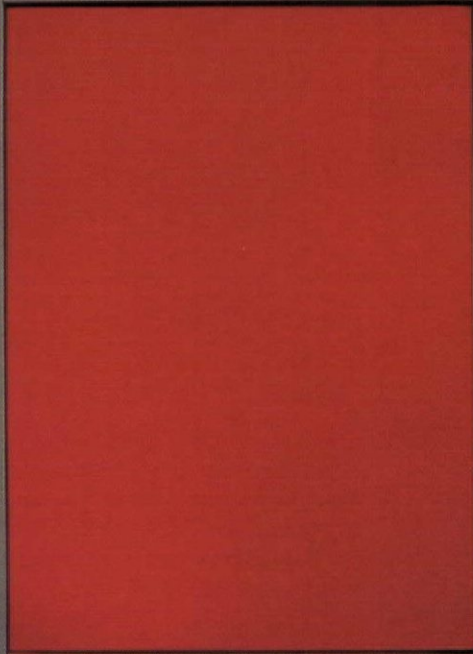
Where

Project: NetAid Foundation. **Location:** New York, NY. **Total floor area:** 5,000 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 1. **Total staff size:** 30. **Cost/sq. ft.:** \$36.

design



dress the part





O+A transforms a sea of cubicles into an open, energetic environment for Levi's, where vintage takes on new meaning

By Jennifer Thiele Busch
Photography by Donna Kempner

The fast-track, low budget design of Levi's Red Tab design studio places emphasis on the lobby, where classic, found furniture pieces (above left), silk screen graphic images from the company's advertising archives (opposite), and a three-dimensional form of the famous red tab (above right), create an energetic, high-impact image.

Since 1853, when Hungarian immigrant Levi Strauss founded the San Francisco dry-goods business that would become a global clothing company, Levi's blue jeans have been considered about as American as baseball, apple pie, and Chevrolet. But when declining sales in recent years—down to \$4.14 billion in 2002, compared to \$7.1 billion in 1996—recently caused Levi's executives to take stock of its business, the company's Red Tab label (under which all the blue jeans are marketed) explored a decidedly European solution with help from San Francisco-based O+A.

Robert Hanson, former head of Levi's European division, was brought to San Francisco with the mission of reinvigorating the sales of the Red Tab label. With him he brought business acumen, creative enthusiasm, and a concept for space design that he hoped would inject a new level of energy into the Red Tab design studio. Common



in Europe but less so in the United States—and certainly foreign to Levi Strauss & Co.'s traditional model for its facilities according to Levi's property service manager Rusty Quintana—Hanson proposed the elimination of the company's standard private-office-and-cubicle format in favor of a completely open plan environment for the Red Tab label's three floors in Levi's Plaza in downtown San Francisco.

"Upon arrival at the plaza, I was astounded at the lack of communication," notes Hanson. "Employees were not sharing information cross-functionally and were essentially hiding out in their offices and cubes. My vision was to build an infrastructure, both physically and technically, that would align the new organization cross-functionally and promote effective communication between partners. After all, some of the most important ideas arise out of casual conversation."



Project Summary



The design team of Primo Orpilla and Verda Alexander, known as O+A, was hired to effect the transformation of the existing space, and was given little time and even fewer resources to accomplish it. “Robert Hanson wanted to employ the same strategies that he had in Europe,” explains Orpilla. “We constructed a fantastic little package that was essentially a paint, graphics, and workstations project—mostly cosmetic upgrades, with a little bit of architecture.”

As often happens in low budget projects, most of the design emphasis was applied to the space with the highest impact—in this case, the building lobby. Here O+A created a far more dynamic and energetic space by designing an art wall featuring a three dimensional form of the famous Levi’s red tab, applying silk-screened images from the company’s advertising archive on the existing interior glass walls, and recladding the security desk in inexpensive plastic. “This is a vibrant brand, and the people who work there are the super hip of hip,” says Orpilla. “This space had to dress the part.”

In work areas O+A’s budget didn’t even allow for the replacement of carpet, but client and designer

both knew that the cubicles had to go. “The idea was to get away from the Dilbert village,” says Orpilla. Replacing the cubes are custom-made workstations that basically consist of a laminate top, with simple metal legs, “a cool accessory panel,” according to Orpilla, and no partitions. A 120-degree pinwheel configuration has increased density as well as interaction. The result is an atmosphere that is far more casual—and far more effective. “Employees are now operating in an environment that allows for spontaneous interaction,” reports Hanson. “I walk around and see directors sitting on the floor with their team looking at samples and having open discussions. We spend less time on email and more time innovating and collaborating as a team.”

Rounding out the functionality of the space are team lounge areas and private retreat spaces for phone calls, etc. An eclectic collection of classic Bertoia, Corbusier, and Aalto pieces that were found among the furniture holdings in Levi’s warehouses are supplementary, where necessary. “Given the history of Levi’s, they loved the vintage look,” says Orpilla. If the jeans fit wear them. ☐

Who

Project, client: Levi Strauss & Co. **Architect:** Clem Soga of Studio O+A. **Interior designer:** Primo Orpilla, Verda Alexander, Perry Stephney, Kris Orpilla. **Furniture dealer:** O+A. **Photographer:** Donna Kempner.

What

Paint: Fuller O’Brien. **Laminate:** Nevamar. **Flooring:** Atmosphere Rubber Flooring. **Carpet/carpet tile:** Shaw. **Carpet backing:** Action Back. **Ceiling:** USG. **Lighting:** Lightolier. **Doors:** Weyerhaeuser. **Door hardware:** Schlage. **Window treatments:** Window film Graphics Oracal. **Workstations:** Commercial Worksurfaces (designed by O+A). **Workstation seating:** Vitra, Girsberger, Encore. **Lounge seating:** Ikea, Pallazetti, Knoll, Herman Miller. **Other tables:** Ikea. **Shelving:** Lyons. **Signage:** Thomas Swann, ME Productions. **Elevators:** Otis.

Where

Location: San Francisco CA. **Total floor area:** 90,000 sq. ft. **No. of floors:** 3. **Average floor size:** 30,000 sq. ft. **Total staff size:** 340. **Cost/sq. ft.:** \$11.

A cubicle village was replaced with custom workstations that are completely open for increased interaction—and more found furniture pieces. Each workstation came in at around \$500 (above).

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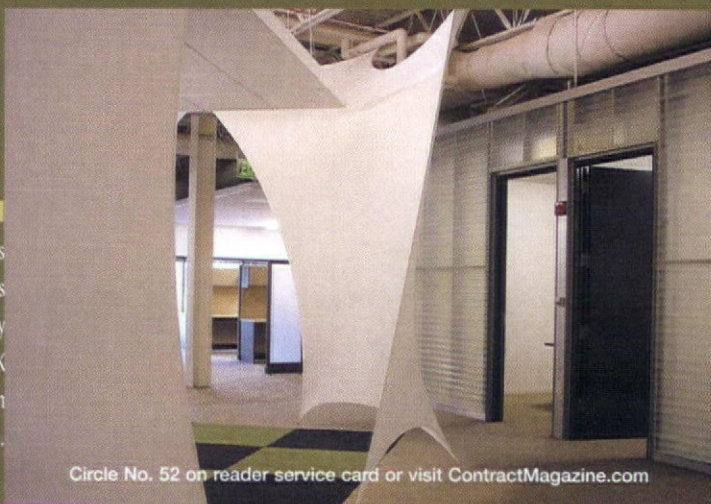
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Finders Keepers

Even in a down economy, attracting and retaining employees is a No. 1 concern

By Linda Burnett

It's easy to feel as disposable as a hand-wipe, not just in this wimpy economy but during a lifetime (we're just a spec in the evolution of the universe). Right now, doesn't everyone have a resume swirling around in the black hole once known as employment? Job openings are filled as soon as they are advertised, and e-mail consists of spam or laid-off friends groveling for counsel. If you haven't been let go, as they politely say, indicating something more benign like a freeing of doves, surely you know pals, relatives, or the last souls hired to the team who have been. If it's not the individual toiling at a workstation, then what is most valuable to a design firm?

Michael Pinto, president of ideaspans in Atlanta, says on the contrary that securing great employees and retaining them are extremely important to a firm's business strategy and its success. "Once you get a person who fits with your culture, the value is immeasurable," says

Pinto. "They're familiar with the procedure and system and the nonverbal communication. The cost of training and hiring is also mediated by a lack in turnover." And when a client sits down with a member of the design team and asks point blank about the length of a designer's tenure with that firm, the answer is best when it falls within the five-year range. "That's the safety zone," says Pinto. "The longer the person is with an organization, the more powerful the message is with a client."

Design firms use various strategies to dig for good people, from headhunters to advertisements, but the overriding method seems to be in-house referrals. "We rely on people who already work for us to refer others," says Steve Polo, partner at OPX in Washington, D.C., which hired four people in the last eight months. Recruiters can cost a bundle, and they don't weed people out with an eye on personality. And it is

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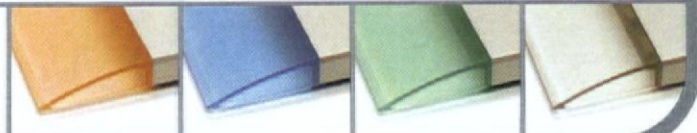
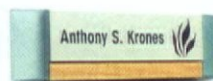
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often personality that, at least in a better economy, can be the difference between the seat and door.

"You hire people for skills, and you let them go for behavior," says Polo. "People have to fit in culturally with a firm. If they don't, it doesn't mean they're bad people or wouldn't fit somewhere else. It's about a state of mind, not about staying late." Positive attitudes, sense of urgency, honesty, and willingness to acknowledge mistakes are as important as being a talented and conscientious designer. One might think that hiring personnel these days would be a snap, considering the number of qualified applicants out there. Not so. "Hiring employees is still hard because it's about finding the right person," says Polo. It's especially true for a firm at its small size of 50, that prides itself on low turnover of less than 2 percent.

Firms compete in attracting the best. "The quality of work a firm does is a key component," says Guy Geier, principal at NBBJ in New York, where they're actually hiring. Size is also a factor. "Some people are more cut out to work at a larger

firm than others. They want the resources and the support system." And the actual working environment is important, too. Is the organization hierarchical? What does a typical work week look like? NBBJ, for example, is divided into smaller studios; it's a flat organization, which means everyone works in an open plan, and Fridays are officially four-hour workdays. These are important details to the potential employee.

NBBJ has several programs to train and develop its staff, a resource Geier thinks helps in retaining its employees. Among these programs is one called Oregano in which 16 employees are handpicked each year to go on a two-week trip to learn about ancient cultures and to feed their idea pool. Another program involves local hiking trips for its Seattle office.

Staff raiding is happening a great deal. "It's part of the business," says Kimberly Williams, principal, director of interiors with Philadelphia-based Kling Lindquist, a nine-year-old firm. "We know people are recruiting our people, or at least

attempts are being made." To keep from being poached she suggests that firms need to communicate with employees and create an enjoyable work place. Otherwise, sometimes it's best to accept that employees want to move on, and once they realize the grass isn't greener, they might come back.

For those looking for work, the advice is as follows: Pay attention to that resume. Make sure there are no typos, it is laid out well, and everything on it is relevant to the job. "A resume will be put aside for the easiest reasons," says Geier of NBBJ, adding that portfolios should be appropriate for the position and the firm and be well presented.

"Don't assume the opportunities aren't there," says Kling Lindquist's Williams. "We're growing, and we're hiring. Be proactive and contact places where you want to work and meet with them. This business ebbs and flows. If they can't use you now, they might call you back." And keep those spirits up. A firm is its people. ☐

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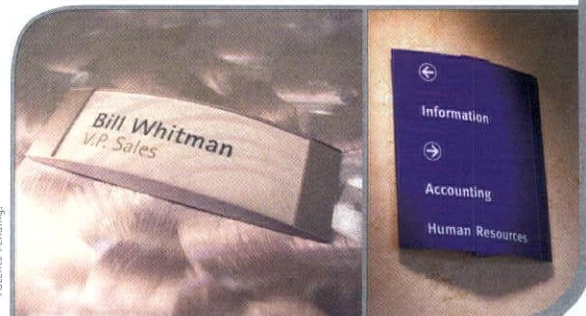
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Dollars and Sense

Value engineering is here to stay.
Does good design need to be compromised?

By Diana Mosher

Is “value engineering” one of the most dreaded phrases for new designers today? Francisco Laurier, director of interior design at Ewing Cole Cherry Brott in Philadelphia, thinks so, and many of his design industry colleagues would probably concur. But, regardless of the negative connotation this process may have, value engineering is a reality that can’t be ignored. The design community is taking it in stride and devising proactive ways to accommodate the trend that’s gaining popularity among clients.

“I define value engineering as ‘the art of compromising without compromising the integrity of the design concept,’” says Laurier. For this definition to work, there must be a design concept that has been articulated to and accepted by the client. “I am a strong believer that great design transcends expensive finishes,” adds Laurier. “If you have strong architectural elements, their strength is going to be more powerful than the finishes you apply on them.”

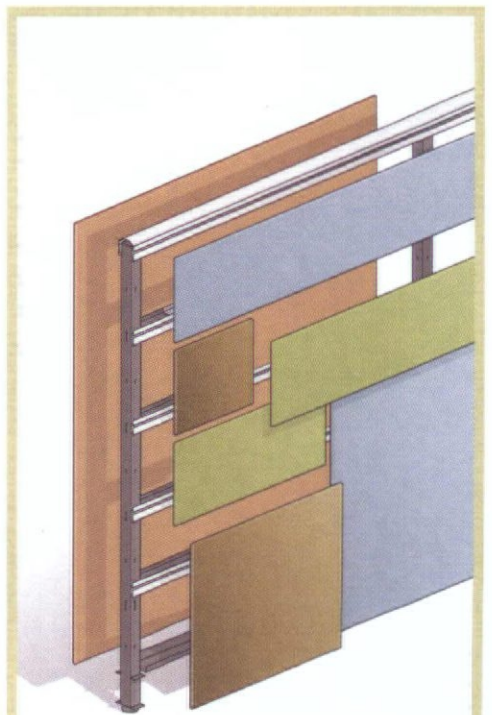
Value engineering was originally devised as a tool to bring a project within an original budget, but now some clients are deciding to add this process because they see it as a way to bring the project *under* the original budget. The boundaries of value engineering vary from project to project depending on the client, and (most importantly) depending on how proactive the designer is in designing to budget, and in conveying and selling to the client the value of the design concept. “If the project is over budget, value engineering has to be expected,” says Laurier. “If at a point in the design process, we feel that going over budget

will add value to our client, we first discuss it with them and get their validation.” A cost estimating department and careful monitoring of construction costs are integral to Ewing Cole Cherry Brott’s practice.

“It’s detrimental when an outside group (like the construction manager, for example) begins to derive a list of deducts without any concern for the design,” says Nick Luziotti, principal of VOA’s Chicago office. Luziotti views value engineering as part of the design service and thinks the design team should perform the process. In this

“I am a strong believer that great design transcends expensive finishes.”

—Francisco Laurier
interior design director
Ewing Cole Cherry Brott



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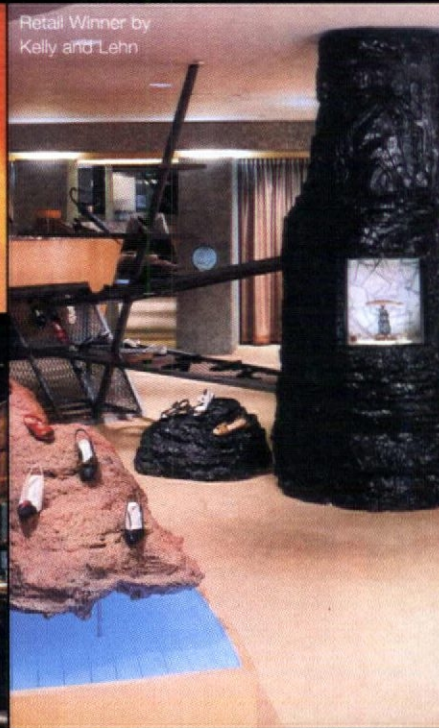
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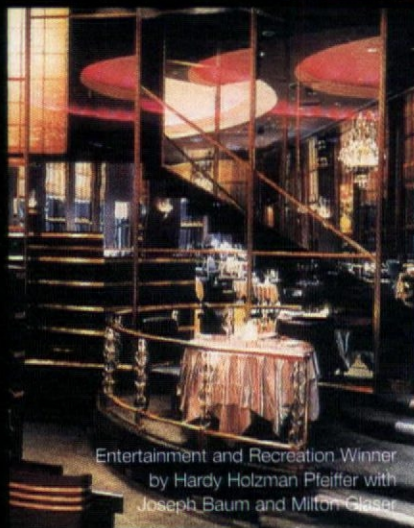
Scott Strasser, Designer of the Year



Retail Winner by
Kelly and Lehn



Hotel Winner by
Ron and Hannah Hunn



Entertainment and Recreation Winner
by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer with
Joseph Baum and Milton Glaser

Scott Strasser, Designer of the Year 1989, gained a reputation for his "unincorporate" interiors that created elegance without expense by balancing a strong structural grounding with an artistic sensibility. In its ten year history, the Interiors Awards had also gained a reputation. The industry praised the competition for celebrating special areas of design in categories, which ranged from corporate to entertainment to low-budget design. And although the category names may have changed, the spirit of variety is still being championed and applauded.

25 years later we are still celebrating the best in contract design with our silver anniversary Interiors Awards. And we hope that this year, it is *your* time.

"[Clients] want to be assured they're getting the most value for the dollar."

—Scott Allen, principal
Olson Sundberg Kundig
Allen Architects

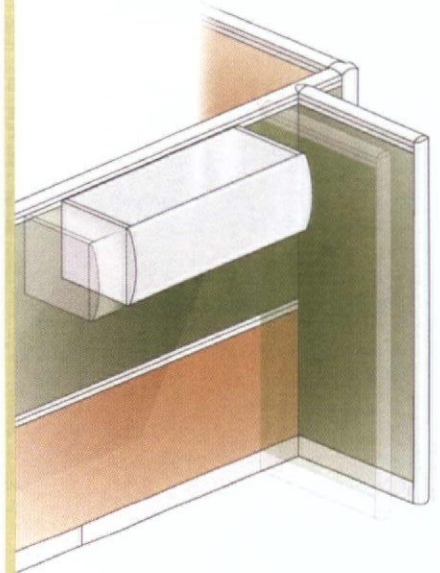
scenario it's actually a positive thing. He offers two guidelines for taking money from a project without compromising design integrity. First, look hard at the HVAC/power and communication costs. "Typically, we assume they're a necessity and don't scrutinize how prices have climbed dramatically. Today, they're usually about 60 percent of the construction costs compared to the 30 percent of 10 years ago," Luzietti explains.

He also suggests examining items of the greatest quantity. "If you dial down density of the carpet or use lesser quality acoustical tile, those quantities will give you the greatest deduction," he adds. Luzietti and his team always incorporate alternatives to design solutions because there are no guarantees as to how the project will be priced out. For instance, knowing that lacquer paneled walls can be converted to dry wall with reveals assures you that you will achieve the aesthetic you're looking for, and the design can virtually be the same.

"[It's understandable that] people want accountability for how their money will be spent," says Scott Allen, a principal of Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects in Seattle. "They want to be assured they're getting the most value for the dollar." But, he points out that when the architect is in sync with the project, and has worked hand in hand all the way through, appropriate substitutions that don't compromise the design integrity are already being made. "These intuitive decisions are made every day. It goes without saying—that's part of what good architects should do," says Allen.

According to Allen, when architecture firms work for the State of Washington, an independent consultant looks at all building systems as part of the value analysis process. This specialty has grown over the last 15 to 20 years. On the other hand, at the private, non-profit Tacoma Art Museum, the contractor was on board early to do a pricing analysis (where 20 different cuts were made). Like others, Allen believes value engineering needs to happen early enough so that changes can be accommodated most easily, ideally at the end of design development but before detailed contract documents are created.

"At one point value engineering seemed like a cost cutting exercise with the potential of taking the poetry out of a building," observes Allen. But he finds this situation has improved in the last few years. "Our society places more value on good design. More people are interested these days," he adds. "We live almost our whole lives inside buildings, they might as well be nice." ■



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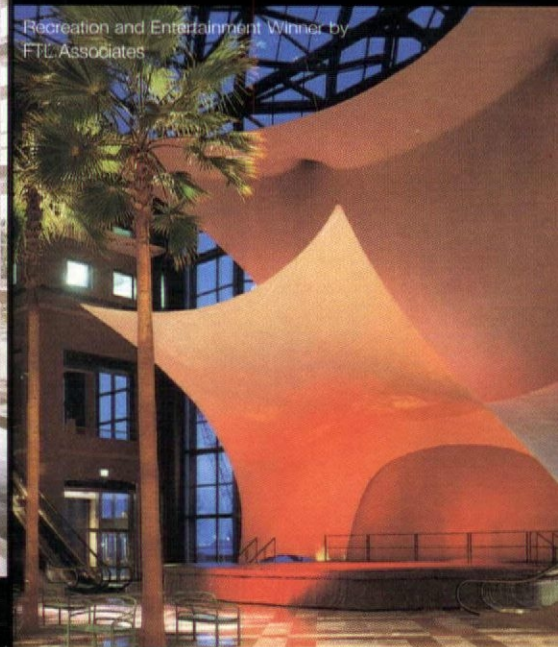
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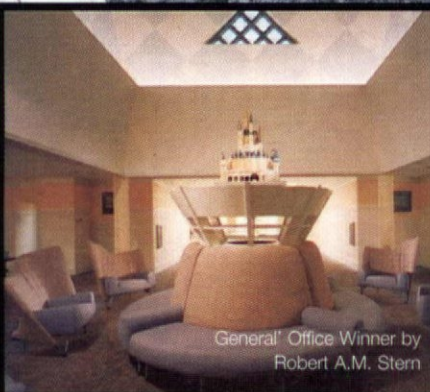
Designer of the Year
Karen Daroff



Financial Institution Winner by
Associated Space Design



Recreation and Entertainment Winner by
FTL Associates



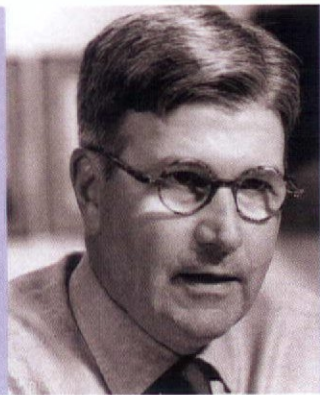
General Office Winner by
Robert A.M. Stern

The choice of Karen Daroff as Designer of the Year 1990 symbolized the metamorphoses of the industry. Her work clearly displayed a mastery of business which equaled her design standards. Over its brief eleven year history, the Interiors Award had received 5,661 entries, presented 141 awards, and named 11 Designers of the Year. Because of all this, the competition had become a respected force in the industry.

25 years later we are still celebrating the best in contract design with our silver anniversary Interiors Awards. And we hope that this year, it is *your* time.

Faster, Cheaper, and Smarter—Pushing the Limits

By James G. Phillips

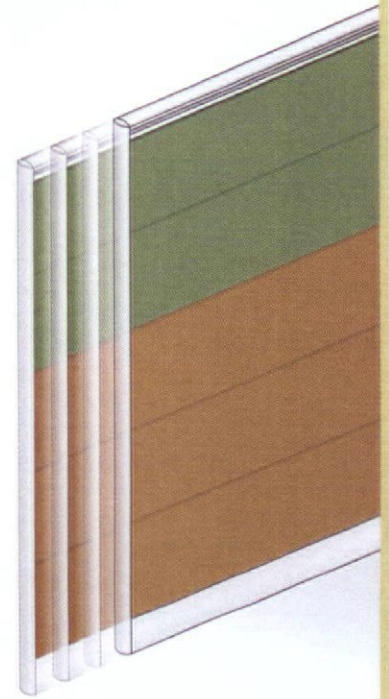


Our world has changed dramatically in the past half a dozen years or so. I reference three specific phenomena: the ascension of the Web and the dot-com craze, the tragic events surrounding 9/11, and the economic conditions brought about by the current recession that dates back to the second half of 2000. All of these factors have, singularly and collectively, created our current market conditions and driven commercial architects and designers to provide solutions that are faster, cheaper, and smarter.

Let's think back to the dot-com rage and concurrent technical revolution (remember Y2K?) which brought us into a 24/7 real time global marketplace. With a drive to be first to market, these Web-oriented businesses demanded the immediate electronic exchange of information, irrespective of time or place, and have changed the rate business is conducted forever. We have migrated from snail mail, messenger service, and faxes to e-mail and blackberries. Consequently, as client servers, we are never away from work regardless of where we are in the world.

For those of us who practice in the New York metropolitan area, the events that followed the tragedy of 9/11 have dramatically changed the expectations of corporations with respect to speed and cost. In one morning, 30 million sq. ft. of office space was either destroyed or rendered unusable, affecting 100,000 workers. Businesses needed to completely reconstruct themselves within days and weeks, not months. By and large within eight weeks almost all of these displaced businesses were operational in some other location, complete with furniture, equipment, and technology. Some were functioning from temporary locations, but they were operational nonetheless. The CFOs and facilities managers of these firms will not forget how quickly, efficiently, and cost effectively this emergency work was completed. The consultant and vendor teams provided a mission critical service to the business community under time-is-of-the-essence conditions.

As I mentioned above, economic conditions began to decline in mid-2000, long before September 11, 2001, and with the economic downturn have come layoffs and consolidations. Corporations correspondingly have been instructed to seek alternatives to reduce expenses, including the cost of building and outfitting office space, and the rate at which they occupy space. Thus, we have a two-pronged mandate: expense reduction and warp speed, too. The construction process permits little in the way



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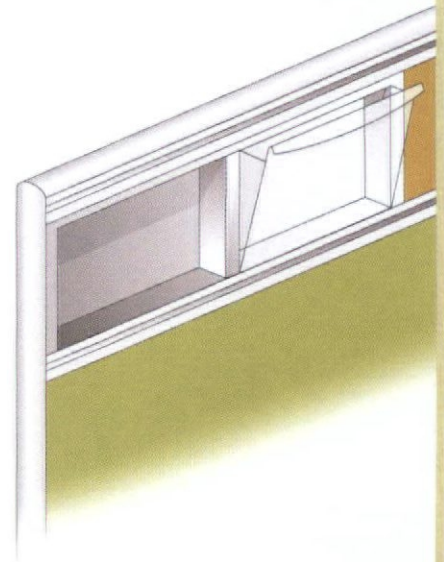
of compressed schedules—whether it's mortar applied to bricks or screw gun applied to sheetrock, the same manpower and time frames apply that have for most of my professional career. In fact the construction process, if anything, has become lengthier due to the complexity of the technology that goes into an office space. Thus, the pressure to compress the schedule has fallen principally on the design phase.

Where do these factors lead the design community? The Phillips Group is a commercial architectural practice, meaning our clients are businesses; consequently we believe that as service providers we must be able to respond to the business drivers of our clients. The firms that recognize these drivers and have the experience and wherewithal to perform will succeed and flourish.

The high infrastructure costs required to support business today leave little room for discretionary design spending. Thus, we believe we must also reassess traditional design thinking with respect to the use of precious and expensive materials and details. Special fabrications are giving way to system assemblies that save construction time and help reduce construction costs. These conditions do not mean design isn't important today; just that it's different, and we are required to focus our ingenuity as problem solvers on a somewhat different set of problems. The demand for flexibility to respond to change remains critical and requires a high degree of creativity on the part of architects and designers. The traditional work of the planner, and the principles underlying solid planning, are still valid and are called upon continually. In short, design solutions, in order to be responsive, are distilled to their essentials. We are focusing on building high performance work environments, and a new aesthetic will grow out of these "machines for working."

It is important to reiterate that good design is still of paramount importance, and we should not lose sight of it in the drive to perform in today's challenging business environment. Enlightened businesses still recognize the importance of the workplace in enabling their knowledge workers, promoting culture and employee morale, and encouraging productivity and collaboration. As designers and architects, our designs must still nourish the human spirit and inspire creativity and innovation. Yet we are asked to do all this faster and cheaper. That is a given which we do not control. These are not necessarily divergent drivers and aspirations. They are just harder to achieve. Consequently, we must do it smarter in order to meet the demands of the business marketplace while producing high quality work that we, as designers, can stand behind...Jack be nimble. Jack be quick. ■

James G. Phillips is founder of The Phillips Group/TPG Architecture based in New York City.



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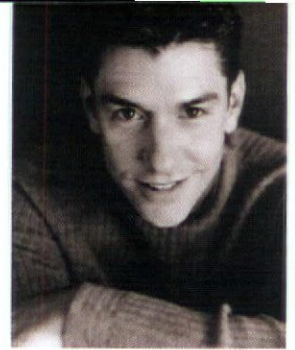
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Marco Pizzo, CID

With an appreciation for Modernism and reverence for the past, Marco Pizzo gleans inspiration from people, places, and life events to forward his design and create insightful interiors



Education

BS Environmental Design, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, Calif.

Position

Principal, CNI Design

Notable professional works

ValleyCrest Companies in Calabasas, Calif.; Sutro & Co., in Pasadena, Calif.; Campbell Ewald Advertising in Santa Monica, Calif.; Cal Poly Pomona University Union; and Nike Town Portland.

What inspired you to pursue interior design?

I enjoy the ability to affect people's emotions when entering and interacting within a space. I love the theatrical nature of interior design and carrying out the concept through all the details of a project.

If you could have selected any other career, what might you have been?

Actor/Dancer

From where do you draw your design inspiration?

Collected experiences—I seem to always be analyzing spaces and environments, which enable me to constantly reinvent or create solutions in my head. I also get inspired by looking into the future with a reference to the past.

What do you find to be the most exhilarating interior space you have ever been in?

Musee d'Orsay in Paris. I love the pairing of historical and modern elements.

Who taught you your most valuable lesson, and what was it?

A college instructor, Norman Millar, who always insisted on designing a space for what *it* wants to be rather than what *you* want it to be.

How would you describe your sense of style?

Modern, with respect for the past

What is one furnishing that you could not live without?

My pair of Barcelona chairs

Name your one guilty pleasure.

A box of See's chocolates

What is your favorite spot on American soil?

My home, it's a place that allows me the creativity and opportunity to pursue three of my favorite things: designing, gardening, and cooking.

What is your favorite season?

Spring, because it's very motivating.

What's one thing that you have always wanted to do, but have never done?

Learn to play a musical instrument (violin)

What is the best way to start your day?

Without an alarm clock

What daily task do you most abhor?

Paying bills

Recall your favorite childhood memory?

Being chosen out of my class to paint the Book Drive whale banner in the 2nd grade.

If a movie were ever to be made of your life what famous actor would you want to play you?

Eric McCormack

What word, saying, or expression do you most overuse?

"That's interesting."

How would your coworkers describe you?

Easy to work with

What is the one thing that you think people would be most surprised to know about you?

I love to figure skate.

What are you glad about?

Living out life's experiences in a free country

If you were not at work, where would you most like to be?

Traveling, gardening, or at the ice rink

What would you like to leave as your legacy?

Leaving behind environments that people will enjoy

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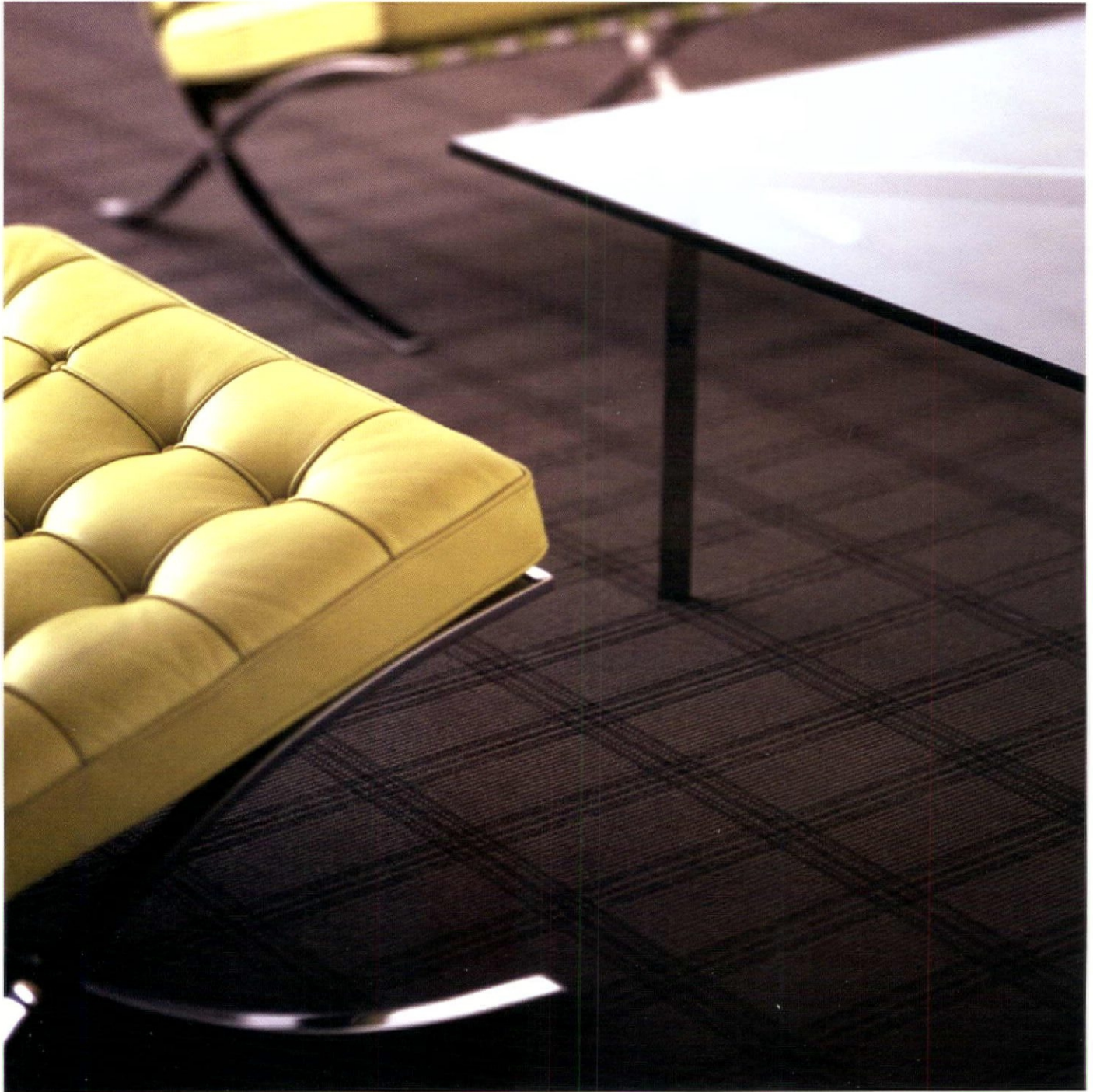
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