

residential
architect

hanley wood

APRIL 2005

**architects'
choice**

experts point us to their
favorite product picks



raising roofs / reinvention revisited /
stones at glass houses / gilding the cage /
welcome signs / frank lessons

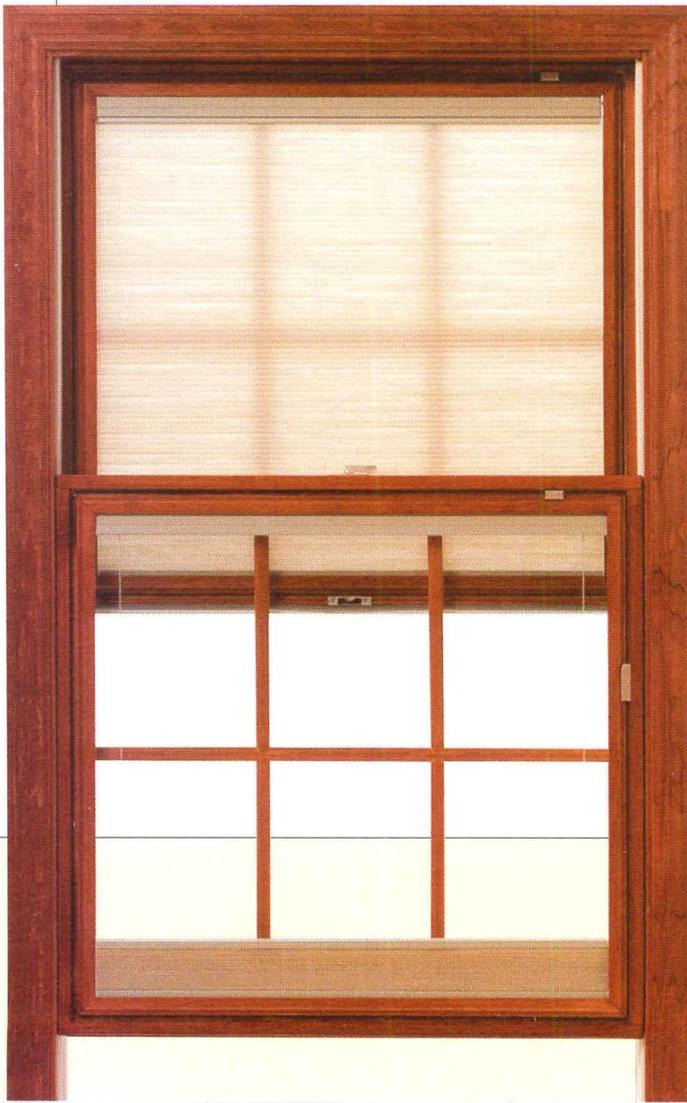
What's the secret of today's top architects?



uccessful architects capitalize on current consumer trends in the design of their homes. Today's most popular trend is self-expression. Consumers want their coffee drinks just the way they like them. And they download only their favorite songs. Architects can cash in on this demand and stand out in the marketplace by offering clients the designs and products that fulfill the need for customization, change and flexibility.

Attract clients with innovative design, convenience and safety features. Clients want choices. Pella — a leading manufacturer of innovative windows and doors since 1925 — has responded with new products that offer more design flexibility than ever before. Pella's Designer Series® windows and patio doors are now available with between-the-glass window fashions that snap in and out, so they're easy to change. Clients will be impressed by Pella's wide range of decorator blinds and fabric shades. They make a stylish statement without the need for roomside window treatments. Window fashions under glass stay protected from allergy-aggravating dust. And there are no roomside cords to harm children or pets.

A new, project-friendly design. No matter how innovative a product is, installation hassles waste time and money. The new Pella® Designer Series windows and patio doors are easy to install and finish. The snap-in between-the-glass window fashions arrive custom-fit and factory-installed. And Pella Designer Series' new all-aluminum-clad grilles don't need painting. Grilles with a wood interior are also available.



Between-the-glass options arrive custom-fit and factory-installed. Or window fashions can be easily snapped in later, delivering design flexibility for life.



New all-aluminum-clad grilles match the exterior cladding color for a uniform look.

Selection and ordering are easy — all Pella® Designer Series® products are available with snap-in between-the-glass blinds, fabric shades and removable grilles.



Some of the best-performing windows in the industry. Pella® Designer Series® windows and patio doors meet or exceed performance specifications direct from the factory — no add-ons are necessary. For advanced performance needs, up to DP70 is available on most products. And Pella's triple-pane glazing system is not only ENERGY STAR®-qualified; it can reduce outside noise — like lawnmowers and traffic — by up to 80%.*

Valuable selling points for clients. Smart architects leverage the brand name of quality products to market their homes. When architects use Pella's new Designer Series windows and patio doors, they enjoy the distinction of offering their customers the very latest feature from a premier manufacturer. Clients will also like the fact that they can enjoy Pella's beautiful windows and doors right away and roll the cost of the window fashions into their financing.

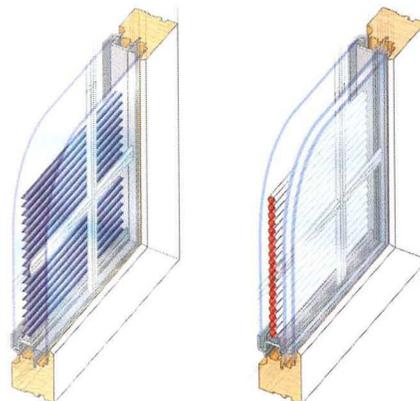
The differences that impact the project's bottom line. Architects can count on Pella's industry-leading warranty and service to build their reputations. Pella® products arrive on time, install easily and fit the specifications. They're built to perform, so there are no worries.

Circle no. 19

Stay on the forefront of home design trends while maximizing profit with a cost-efficient construction process. Pella is uniquely positioned to offer both the customizable cutting-edge products clients demand and the dedicated service and support that make an architect's job easier.

For more information about Pella products, please visit www.pella.com or call 866-829-9051.

With either double- or triple-pane glazing systems, there's room between the glass for snap-in blinds or shades plus removable grilles.



*Computer simulation average compared to single-pane wood windows. Actual savings may vary.



Outlook

LEARNING IN LAS VEGAS

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD

Whirlpool Corporation believes in the development of innovative products that shape the future of our industry as well as our daily lives. Part of this innovation can be seen in our company's commitment to continuing education programs that fuel the creative spirit within the design community. This year is no exception. Whirlpool Corporation has again invested in supporting the architectural community at the 2005 AIA National Convention in Las Vegas.

Innovation in education

This year we will offer three exclusive educational programs in the Whirlpool booth. The topics are relevant to today's hot design issues: *Universal Design in Appliances*, *New Kitchen Concepts*, and *Decentralized Appliance Applications*. These courses will be conducted eighteen times throughout the AIA Convention, so



KitchenAid® Refrigerated Drawer



Whirlpool® Fabric Freshener



Whirlpool® 24" Front Load Laundry Pair

there will be plenty of opportunities for attendees to sit in and learn. What's more, each course will be worth one quarter unit towards your AIA/CES requirement.

Innovative products

It takes a passion for innovation to consistently develop leading-edge appliance designs. Whirlpool continually strives to craft original products with the features, feel and functionality to exceed your clients' expectations. Our global design program is just one commitment to this end. At the AIA Convention, you'll have the opportunity to view some of the latest product innovations, including KitchenAid® Refrigerator Drawers, Whirlpool® 24" Front Load Laundry Pair and a new-to-the-world invention, the Whirlpool® Fabric Freshener.

All three products break new ground both in innovative design and appliance function for the home. KitchenAid® Refrigerator Drawers are destined to change the way you address refrigeration needs throughout the home, and support the up-and-coming design trend of creating work "zones" within the kitchen. Whirlpool's sleek new 24" Front Load Laundry Pair fits below a 34" countertop

for ADA applications or can be stacked for small laundry areas. Finally, the Whirlpool® Fabric Freshener freshens clothes without harsh chemicals. It also helps reduce trips to the cleaners while offering easy portability from room to room.

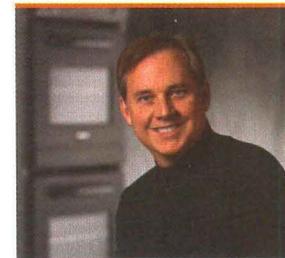
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And don't forget — we offer a number of helpful tools for architects and designers at our trade website: www.insideadvantage.com. There you'll find CSI downloadable product specifications, online education courses at no cost, and our courtesy discount program for your personal appliance needs. We look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas. I welcome the opportunity to meet you and hear your thoughts about our innovative new products.

EVENTS OF INTEREST

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araggambi@aia.org

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Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD
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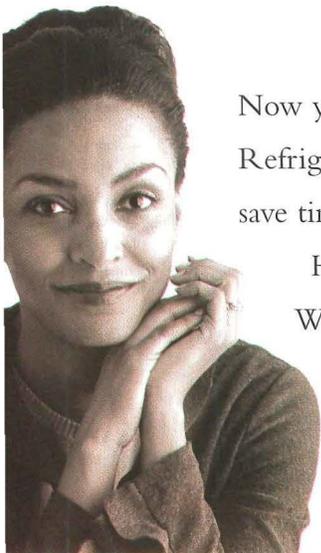


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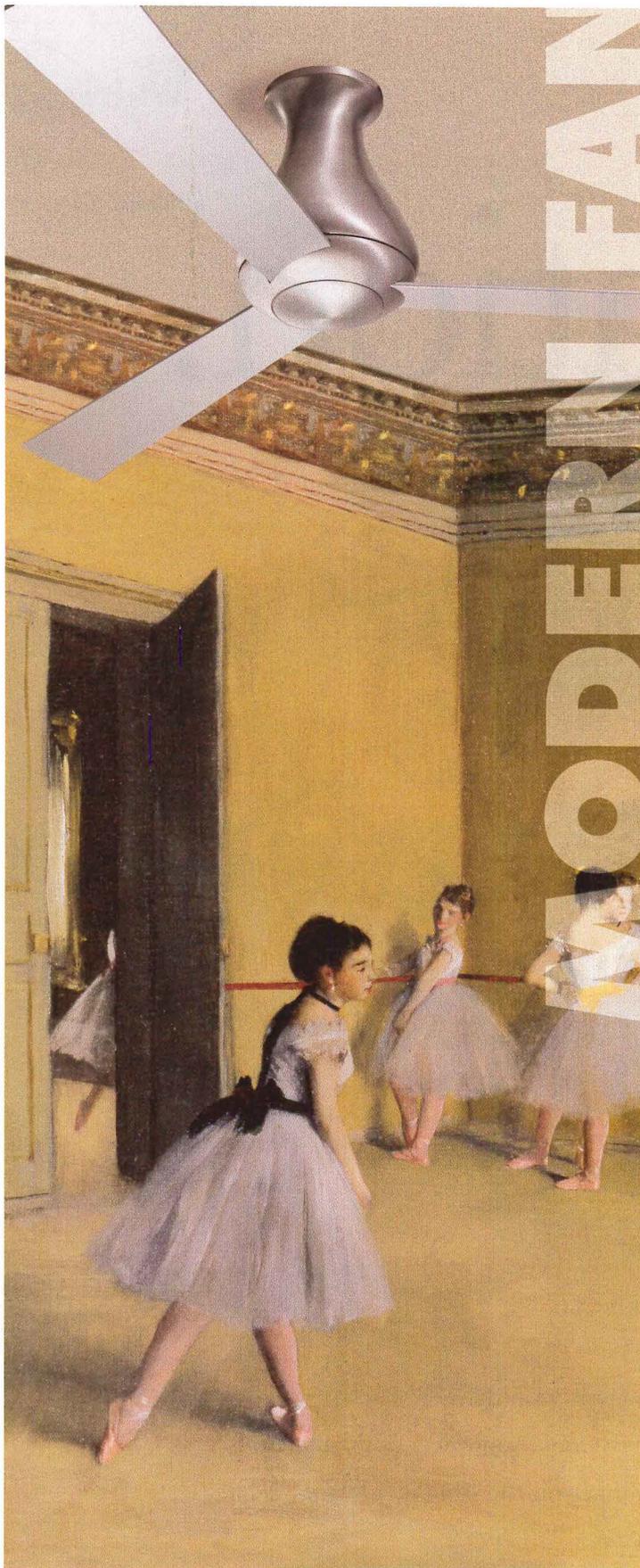


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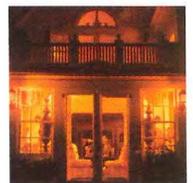


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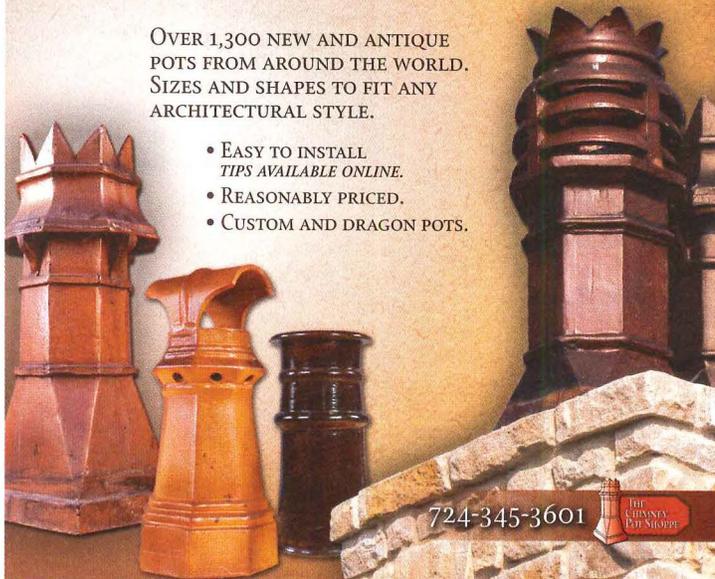
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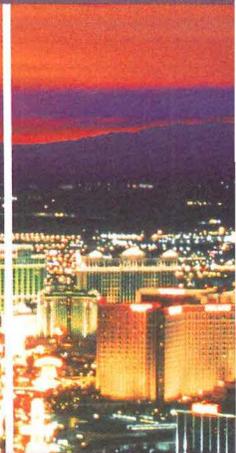
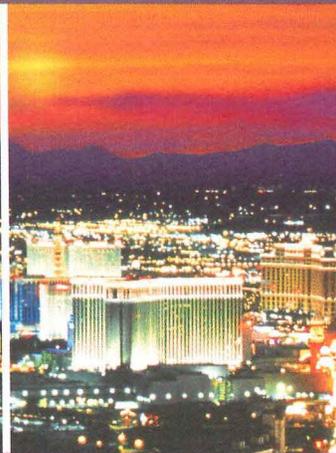
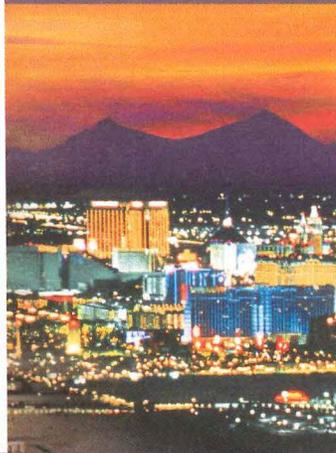
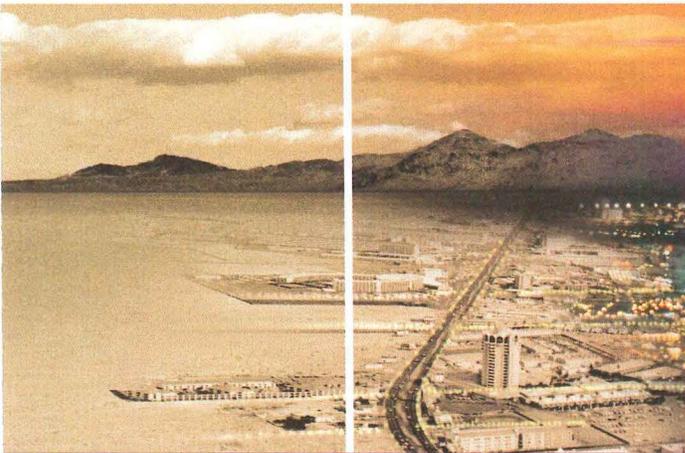
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Cross purposes: Hacin + Associates' flexible retail space for a well-known pen company is anything but stationary. Photo: Bob O'Connor. Cover photo: Max Hirshfeld

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The late Philip Johnson's Glass House owes much less to Mies van der Rohe's work than commonly thought, asserts architect Stuart Cohen.



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Firms that feel bigger isn't necessarily better have developed other ways to help talented employees advance their careers—without flying the coop.



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architects' choice

Finding products that make the cut is no easy task. That's why, each year, we ask some top architects for their preferred picks.

by Nigel F. Maynard and Shelley D. Hutchins



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Three customer-friendly venues explore the ins and outs of small-scale commercial design.

by Meghan Drueding

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European-style kitchen cabinets are just the ticket for high-end clients.

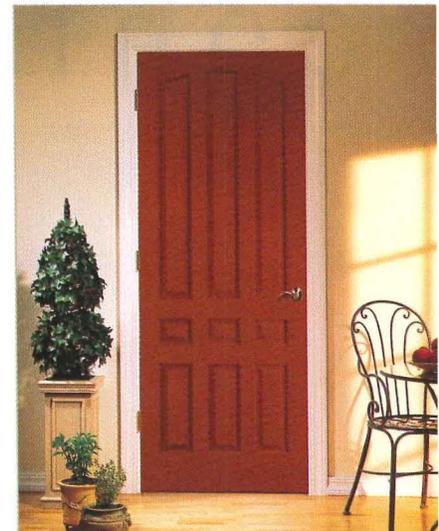
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Chill out with these stylish wine coolers.

end quote..page 120

Frank Lloyd Wright's hybrid Hollyhock House.

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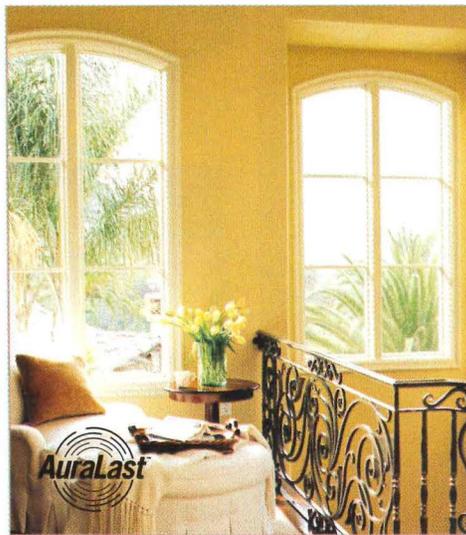
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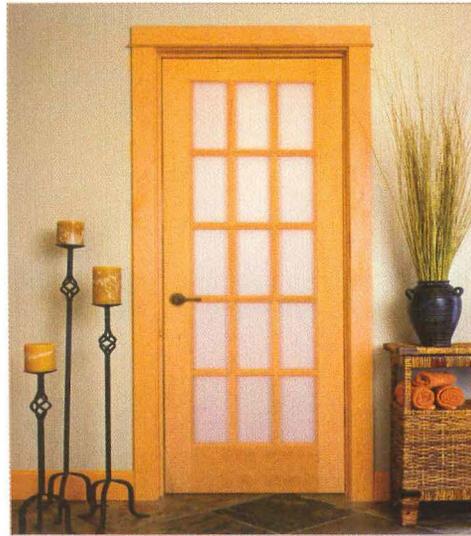
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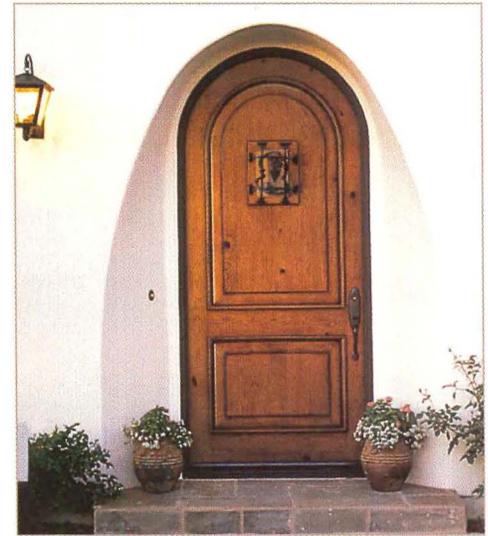
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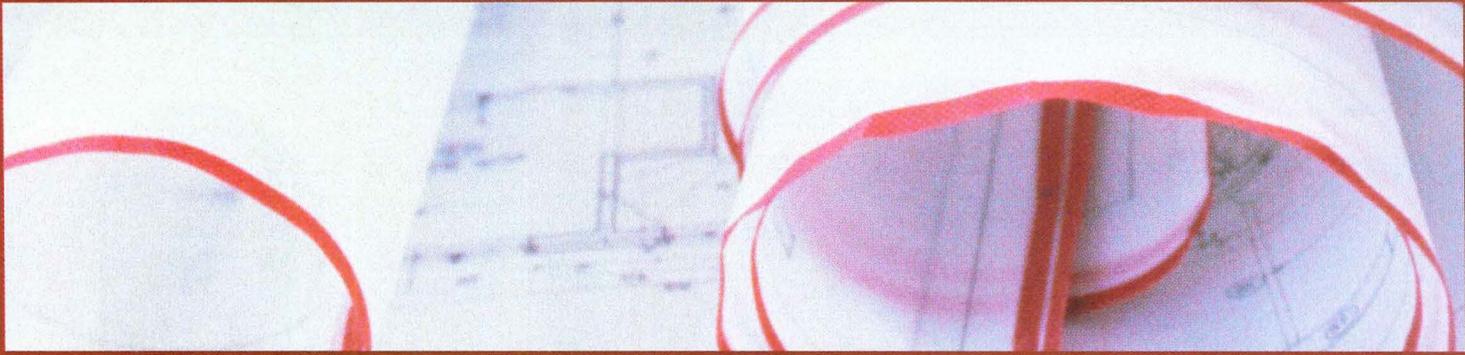
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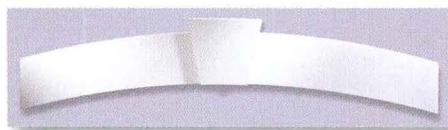
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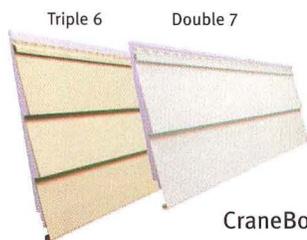
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care and feeding

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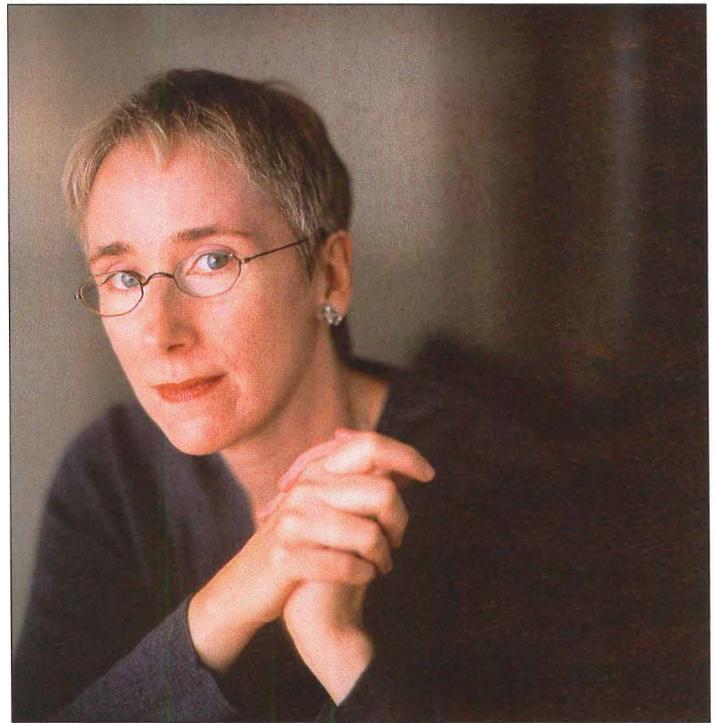
by s. claire conroy

I'm the first one to admit that I love gadgets. I've got a lightweight laptop with WiFi. I just bought a new cell phone with Bluetooth, speaker, and digital camera capabilities. I don't yet have a Blackberry, but I'm sure if I did I'd become another Crackberry statistic in no time. As a deadline-driven journalist, I am addicted to the buzz of information, the adrenaline rush of last-minute multitasking. I will check and reply to work e-mail at midnight or sunrise. I'll finish up my editor's column with breakfast and tweak a freelance writer's story with dinner. I'll polish a PowerPoint presentation on the plane to a conference. Like many busy professionals, I have succumbed to the siren call of productivity.

But am I really more productive? Possibly so, but at what cost? I know I'm losing time I once cherished. I used to start every morning with a strong cup of coffee, peaceful music, and a leisurely read of the newspaper. On plane rides, I used to delve into a novel or a literary magazine. I once spent hours sketching,

a wonderful reprieve from the endless flow of words my work entails. And when I traveled on business, I would drop my bags at the hotel and go wander in my new surroundings. Now I spend most downtime stuck in my room, catching up on looming deadlines, triaging frantic messages from equally pressured colleagues. I'm losing those interludes of expansive thinking that feed the creative mind. I suppose these are the necessary sacrifices of a maturing career, the seismic shift from implementer to decision-maker. But it does feel like one of nature's cruel jokes that in achieving so much creative control over my professional life, I'm left with so little time to be creative.

This is a familiar trajectory for professionals, especially those in artistic careers. Your strength in one area causes your life to clutter up in so many others. You're a talented designer, so your client roster grows, your staff blossoms, and suddenly you're a full-time manager, too. Whether you're good at it or not; whether you enjoy it or not. One day you find you have no time to design at the



Mark Robert Halper

office anymore. But that's the part you really love—it's why you entered the profession in the first place—so you take your project home to design after hours. The problem is, as we've become so accessible with our gadgetry, the busywork has spilled into every waking moment. There really isn't such a thing as after hours anymore. Those stretches of quiet contemplation are harder and harder to claim in our hectic lives.

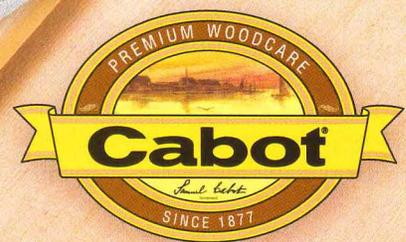
And yet claim them we must. The best work still requires complete immersion for a time. It demands a selfish solipsism that holds the needs of colleagues, friends, and even family temporarily

at bay. It means something else does not get done when and as well as it should be done. For those of us accustomed to doing most tasks pretty well when our lives were smaller, letting go of this universal standard rackets. But if the alternative is simply spreading thin and nowhere going deep, it's a compromise we must bear. You have to quiet the noise outside to hear the music within. **ra**

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



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Here in northern New Jersey, we also charge about 6 percent. We also have to compete with contractors “throwing in the plans for free.” We explain “plan stamping” and its legalities and the lack of liability coverage.

By the way, construction costs here are more like \$100 to \$150 per square foot. The architects out there charging $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent are the real problem. Or, as I describe it, “selling their souls for a nickel.” After all of the hard work, effort, and sacrifice getting their license, which becomes the license for their livelihood, why don’t they value this?

When I am confronted with this, my only answer to these potential clients is to make sure they are getting the same time, creativity, thought, and liability coverage. I cannot defend the guy working solitarily out of his basement, using his wife’s insurance, with no liability insurance, spitting out plans with little thought, concern, or effort just to make up for his low fee. His lack of self-esteem devalues the whole industry. His defense, I am sure, is that he is just making a living. Unfortunately that defense lowers the expectations of society and

turns architecture into a commodity.

*John Kedzierski, principal
MKP Design Center
Sparta, N.J.*

I started my own practice a year ago. I am a sole proprietor working out of my house, specializing in sustainable design and consulting. Most of my work, which is abundant at the moment, is local residential projects. As a registered architect with dues and continuing education constantly at my heels, I simply could not survive if I didn’t charge at least 6 percent per house. In fact, I tell prospective clients that I work at a given hourly rate and that my total fee will be between 7 and 9 percent of their construction budget. This allows me some freedom to give them what I hope is above-average service; my reputation is my marketing plan.

Having competed against other non-specialized firms here in Charlottesville, Va., I can tell you that firms are charging anywhere from 5 percent—a firm that hires outside consultants/non-licensed draftspeople to do their drawings for them—to 15 percent for the established brick and mortar office, and up to

17 percent for the self-glorified elite designer. By the way, the residential market in Charlottesville is very expensive; builders will charge anywhere from 15 to 20 percent, and construction costs below \$150 per square foot are rare. My mechanical engineer friend charges \$75 per hour and the structural engineer I use charges \$110 per hour. With this in mind, I often feel that my fees are too low.

I read recently that architects either sell their expertise and talent or their time. I have chosen the former, feeling very strongly that our profession lacks self-respect. Look at the plight of our interns for evidence of this.

*Jeff Sties, AIA
Sunbiosis, PLC
Charlottesville, Va.*

The 10 percent architectural fee is based on construction cost; real estate fees are based on the sale price, which includes land, development costs, and profit. This is easily double, and sometimes five times, the “hard” cost, as in premier locations. So the actual dollars that are paid to the broker for the same project are often much more than those

received by the architect.

Perhaps a clue to this inequity lies in the Perspective article in your August 2004 issue (“Client Commandments,” page 35). While Jonathan Held might have been tongue in cheek about his Commandments, these issues are truly what the public impression is in the hiring of architectural services: It will cost too much, take too long, and not deliver what was expected. As a profession, we need to change that attitude into one that sees value added as the client’s benefit of involving a professional.

Only then can we begin to command the fees that compensate us for extensive schooling, long work hours, broad responsibility, and unreasonable liability.

*Carl Kaiserman
RKT&B Architects
New York City*

redlines

Due to a printing error, two words were excised from Henry Siegel’s quotation on page 52 of “The Green House Effect” (March 2005). The full quotation reads: “A lot more resources get used on energy to heat and cool a house over its lifetime than on the materials to build it.”

the best of both worlds



When considering design elements, don't forget value

Virtually every client I talk to has a vision for the home they'd like me to design. They also have a budget in mind. Rarely do the two coincide.

The architect's dilemma is delivering the vision, albeit slightly altered, while honoring the budget. This requires an abiding respect for value, and the imagination to create a space that matches a client's emotional needs. My general rule of thumb is to spend more money where you live and less money where you simply vacuum and dust.

Consider the dining room, for example. Most clients want one. Unless they entertain 3-4 times a month, I advise them against it. I can create a much more satisfying – and multifunctional – space by investing that money in the kitchen, delivering a “wow” factor that far exceeds their expectations.

Use space wisely, use materials wisely

Value engineering is not a fancy way of saying spend less. In fact, as in the example of the kitchen above, value engineering means spending more in truly meaningful areas and spending less – or nothing at all – on areas of less importance.

This approach applies to materials, as well as space.

No matter how large the home, I most often begin my designs with a core rectangle. I keep the roof lines simple. The money saved by this discipline can be spent on leaded glass windows, corbels and chimney pots – exterior design elements that add to a home's curb appeal and value.

Those savings could also be spent on upgraded materials that maintain their beauty longer – granite countertops instead of laminate, steel siding instead of vinyl or aluminum, for example.

Proof again that less is more

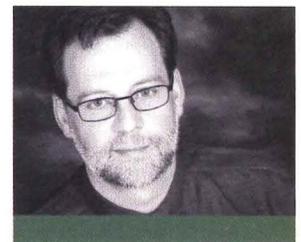
By embracing the notion of value engineering, the old design adage is proven true again.

Less money and less space invested in low traffic/low interest areas will always result in more impact, more comfort and more satisfaction where it really counts.

Value and conscientious design make for a client whose vision matches his budget. That is definitely the best of both worlds.



Wayne Visbeen
AIA, IIDA



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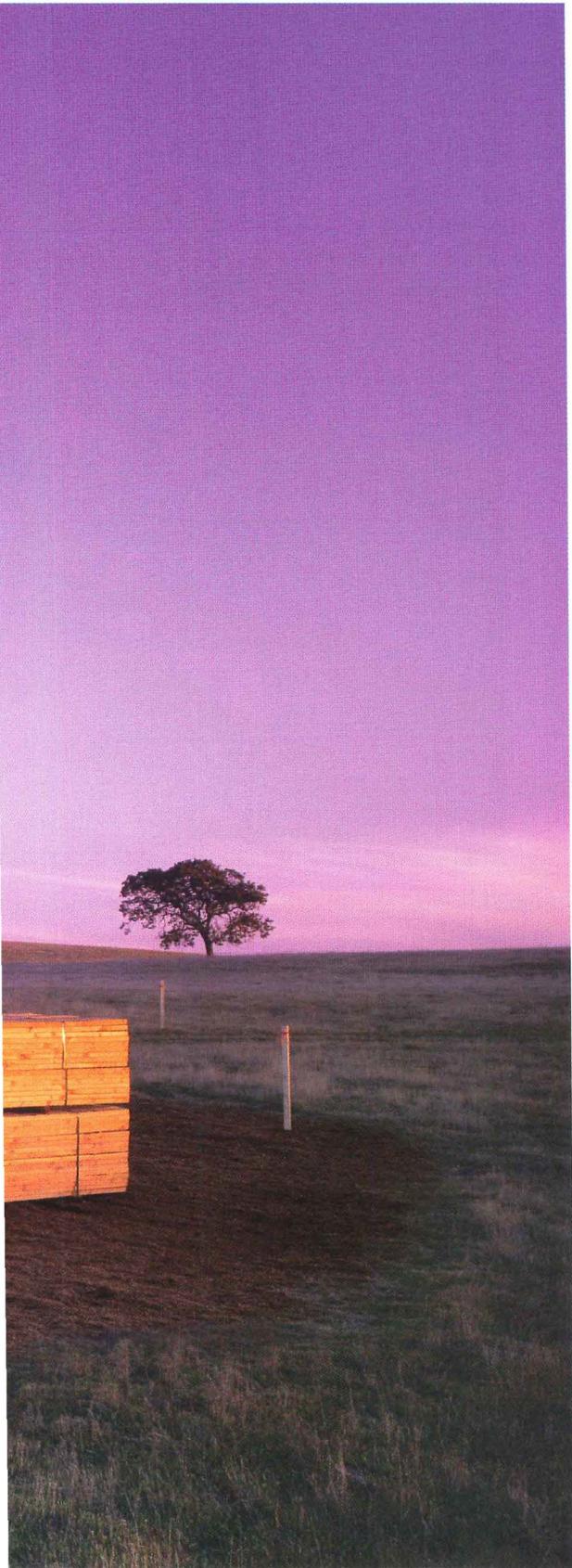
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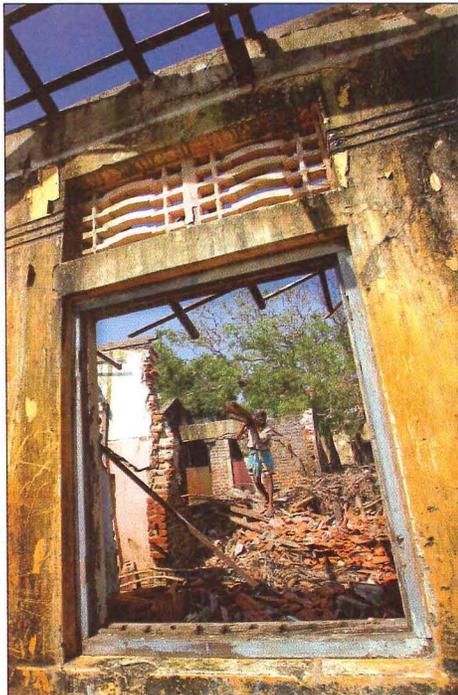
home front

news from the leading edge of residential design

raising roofs

Within days of the tsunami that swept away coastal villages across Southeast Asia last December, tens of thousands of people flooded the phone lines of relief organizations to pledge money and volunteer to help with the cleanup. Architects were part of the rush to respond. It didn't take long for Craig Williams, president of the North American chapter of Architects Without Borders, to collect the names of 500 architects and tradespeople who were willing to hop on a plane at a moment's notice. But while many other volunteers have headed to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, and Thailand to put up tents and pass out food, architects are gearing up for the long haul, partnering with their in-country counterparts to design and reconstruct entire towns.

Architects Without Borders, an international network of volunteers based in Sebastopol, Calif., has sent six teams into four countries and will soon deploy two dozen more. Working with other relief agencies and local governments, the teams are assessing the damage to existing structures, identifying potential building projects, and noting logistical challenges. In India they're helping to rebuild 98 villages, ranging in size from 28 to 500 houses. But Williams, whose day job is designing schools at TLCD Architecture in Santa Rosa, says it's not enough to simply roll out the tracing paper. "Architects are anxious to come up with schemes of what villages and houses might look like, but that's only part of what needs to happen," he says. "We're looking for good project managers who can do triage on disparate issues, deal with language barriers and corruption, and



Reuters/Arko Datta

Above: A Sri Lankan man salvages wood from the debris of tsunami-ravaged houses in Kalmunai, on Sri Lanka's east coast. Right: Villages lie in ruin in the country's Ampara region.



Reuters/Arko Datta

engage the local leadership in creating entrepreneurial opportunities."

In Sri Lanka, the group is working on charrettes with local architects to come up with a design for kit houses that go up fast and can be easily converted to permanent housing. Community development is at the core of the scheme, which is to set up small village enterprises for putting the kits together. Williams says that in Sri Lanka, where the building capacity was 5,000 homes a year and half a million people were displaced, limited supplies have unleashed price gouging and rampant opportunism. "Big construction companies out of Hong Kong are clamoring for a piece of the pie," Williams says. "We're looking for solutions that don't create a negative environmental impact."

Over the last six years, Shelter For Life, a nonprofit international group in Oshkosh, Wis., has built more than 250 permanent homes for Sri Lankans displaced by the civil war. Now it has raised almost \$300,000

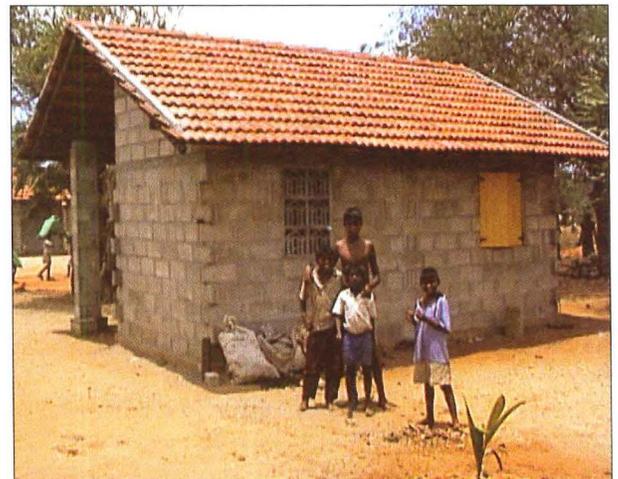
“a good architect is someone who listens to the needs of people but offers more than they’re asking for.” —harry van burik



In Sri Lanka, permanent houses such as these, designed by Shelter For Life for Sri Lankans displaced by the civil war, will soon house tsunami victims. The model at left shows a 10-foot-by-12-foot veranda that can be closed in to create an extra room.

for tsunami survivors. SFL plans to use that money, in addition to a \$1 million U.S. government grant, to build 2,000 temporary shelters comprising a metal frame, bitumen panels, and metal roofing covered with thatch to keep out the heat. Once land allocations are approved, the materials will be reused on permanent homes. “A good architect is someone who listens to the needs of people but offers more than they’re asking for,” says Dutch architect Harry van Burik, international program director at SFL. Working with local architects, the group has introduced plans for a two-room starter house made of cement blocks or adobe that can be expanded to six rooms in the future. SFL hopes to build 10,000 such permanent houses over the next four years, at a cost of roughly \$1,500 apiece. “The biggest hurdle to rebuilding lives is a permanent place to live,” van Burik says. “Once people have that, they take ownership of their lives because they have hope in the future.”

The philosophy guiding these organizations is that a thoughtful, collaborative approach is the foundation for restoring destroyed communities. Architecture for Humanity, a 5-year-old nonprofit association with members in more than 100 countries, has raised \$180,000 to begin constructing schools, clinics, and other public buildings in Kirinda and Pottuvil, Sri Lanka. “We’re looking for ways to create an economic



Photos courtesy Shelter For Life

continued on page 28

home front

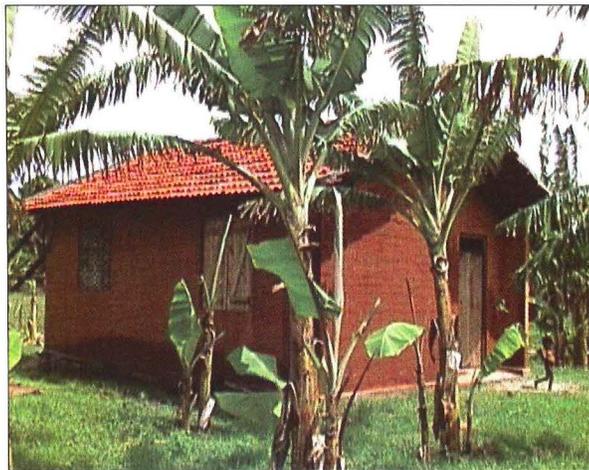
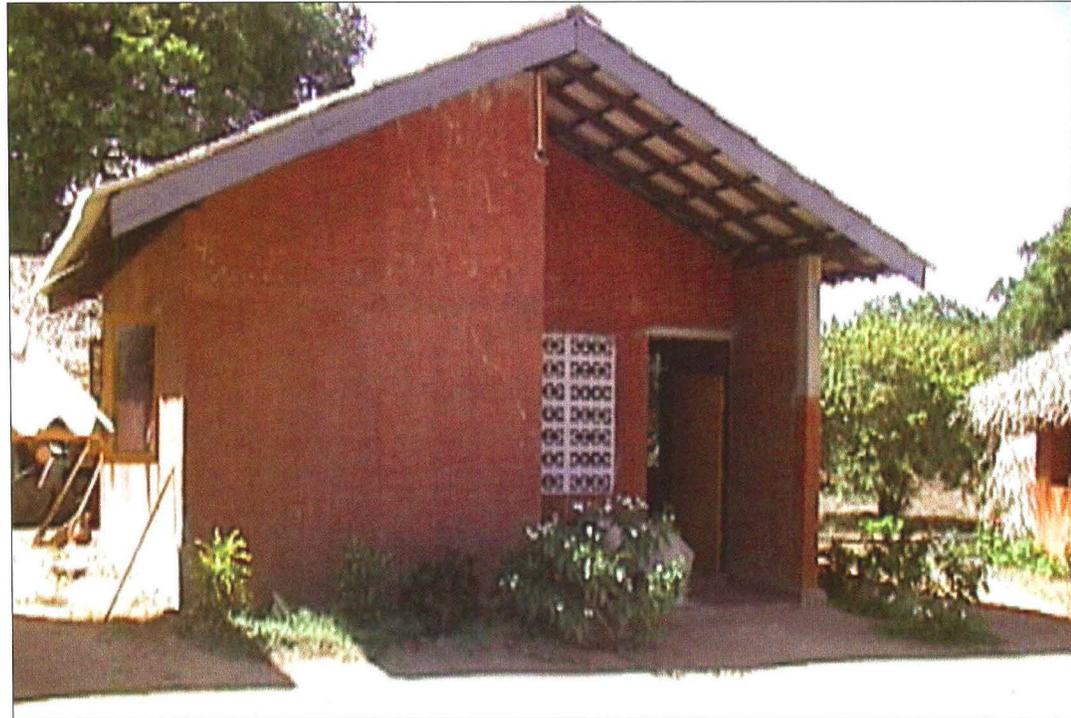
engine—re-establish a fish market and create marketplaces so the economy can grow,” says founder Cameron Sinclair, who also teaches architecture at Montana State University. His students are doing charrettes for houses in India and Indonesia that explore traditional vernacular forms, available materials, and passive heating and cooling. “I never dictate how something looks,” he says. “I’m the conduit and facilitator, making sure good design happens on all these projects.”

Architecture students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee are eager to do more than write checks too. Three of the university’s doctoral students in architecture are on the faculty of the University of Moratuwa, near Colombo, Sri Lanka, and have close ties with the government. So UWM is discussing plans to send studios of 12 to 14 students to work with Sri Lankan students on joint housing relief projects. “We have a strong ethic here at our school of getting involved, but we do it modestly; we’re not interested in being part of the problem,” says department chair Don Hanlon.

The American Institute of Architects takes a similar stance. It is also giving the affected countries a chance to recover to a point where they can begin thinking about redevelopment. David Downey, who heads up tsunami relief at the AIA, says it has compiled a list of non-government organizations that are legitimate and are targeting long-term building projects. In addition to convening an information-sharing meeting among design and building professionals and the U.S. Agency for International Development last January, the AIA is planning a reconnaissance trip with its sister organizations in Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Malaysia. “We’ve put out a call to our members for volunteers who are willing to serve” once a strategy gets under way,” says Downey, Associate AIA.

As media coverage of the disaster fades, the need for funds and volunteers will continue to grow. Craig Williams is grateful for the generosity of his employers, who pay him 12 hours a week to carry out his

“we have a strong ethic here at our school of getting involved, but we do it modestly; we’re not interested in being part of the problem.” —don hanlon



Photos courtesy Shelter For Life

Dutch architect Harry van Burik, director of Shelter For Life, introduced a compacted sand-and-cement foundation for Sri Lankan homes, similar to what is used in the Netherlands for small structures. The two-room starter houses can be easily expanded to six rooms in the future.

altruistic work. “Architects who’d like to contribute could have someone in their firm provide a stipend for them to go to Asia for a month, or for time to assist in a back-reach capacity,” he says. “We’re at a critical juncture where awareness has been raised. We need to stay focused on these issues.” —*cheryl weber*

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reinvention revisited

as we at *residential architect* busy ourselves with planning our next symposium, we thought we'd take a moment to recap the first one. When we first conceived of "Reinvention 2004: The Next American House" early last year, we envisioned a small event, hoping to attract 100 architects who were passionate about improving mainstream house design. The core goal, though, was to bring residential practitioners together, face-to-face, for an educational and networking experience designed just for them. Apparently, the time was right to do this because we closed the doors at 300 people—our maximum capacity at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles. Immediately following Reinvention was the inaugural meeting of the Congress of Residential Architects (CORA), which drew about 150 attendees to explore "Adding Value: Architects and the American House." The discussions at both events were far-ranging but a common refrain emerged: It's high time architects reach out at a grassroots and national level to improve design for all segments of the housing market.

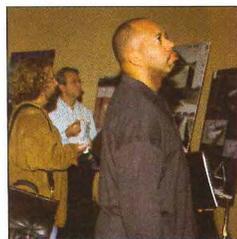
Reinvention kicked off with a house tour. Three of the four houses featured were architects' own, including Steven Ehrlich's infill house in Venice, Ray Kappe's in Pacific Palisades, and David Hertz's Venice house. Koning Eizenberg's Eleventh Street Residence for a private client in Santa Monica rounded out the roster. Each house had a distinct message to convey. Ehrlich's emphasized passive heating and cooling with a flexible structure that directs and diffuses the local climate. Kappe's showed how a structure can weave so intimately into the landscape it becomes one with its site. Hertz's employed his invention Syndecrete, a lightweight concrete made of recycled content, and other green materials and systems to reduce its energy consumption to zero. And Koning Eizenberg's demonstrated how off-the-shelf materials used in innovative ways can create a satisfyingly custom house on a tight budget.

The next morning, Sarah Susanka, FAIA, gave the breakfast keynote address, exhorting architects to reach out and teach the public about good design in words and ways they can understand. In the subsequent panel discussion, "Lessons From the American House," Ray Kappe, FAIA, of Kappe Architects and Planners, walked the audience through his 50 years of innovative design, noting a resurging interest in ideas he's tackled in the

past, including prefab housing; Jeremiah Eck, FAIA, Jeremiah Eck Architects, Boston, encouraged the audience to abandon the debate about architectural styles and work instead toward fundamentally better houses; and Russell Versaci, AIA, of Versaci Neuman & Partners, Middleburg, Va., urged architects to partner with production builders to bring more architecturally rigorous houses to market.

In "Houses to Go," architect/developer John Vetter, AIA, Vetter Denk Architects in Milwaukee, showed how his firm is using prefab and tilt-up construction to revitalize a waterfront parcel in downtown Milwaukee; John Tanney, AIA, of New York City's Resolution: 4 Architecture, explained why his modular component system

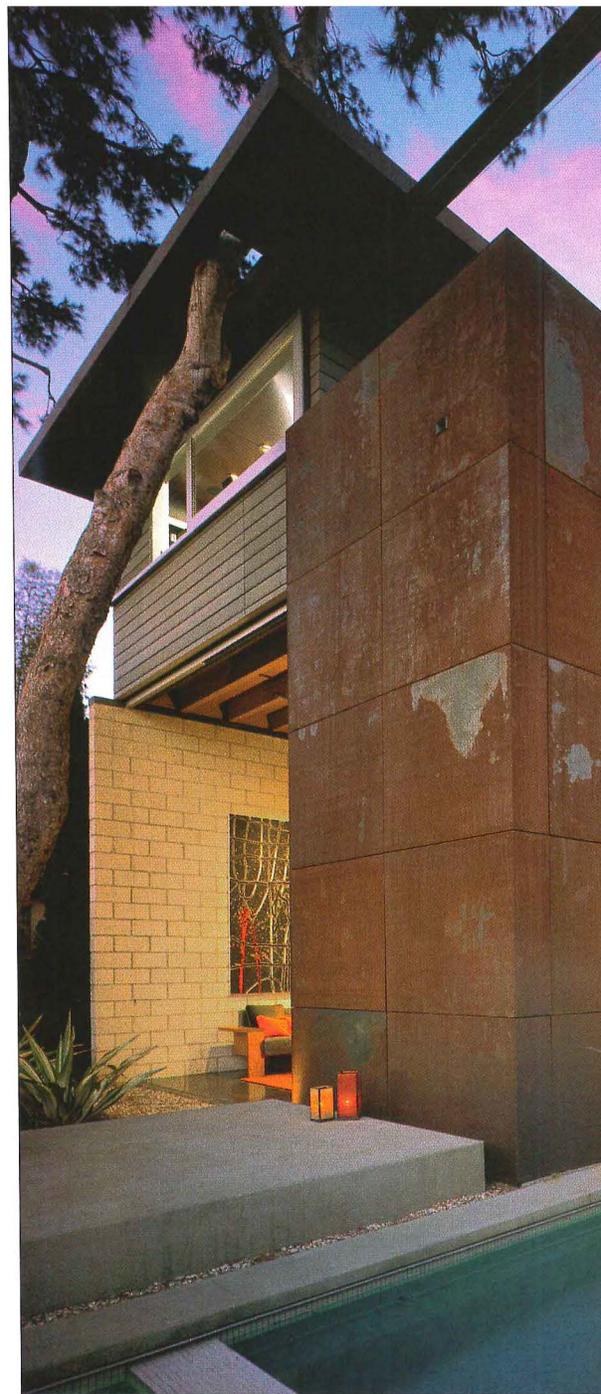
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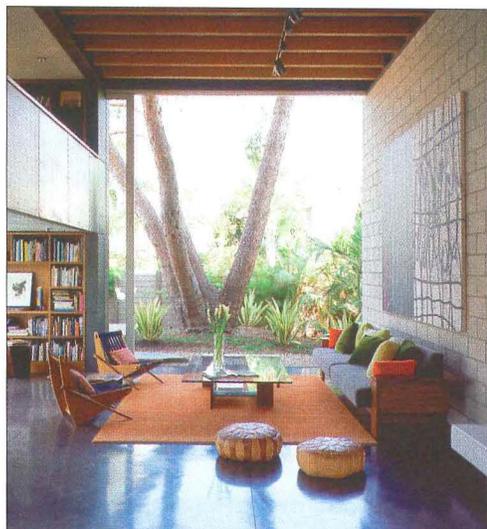
"architecture is a relatively low-risk enterprise, but developing is a risky profession. you really need to know your market and your neighborhood. ... don't compromise your values, but temper them with reality."

—speaker john vetter





Julius Shulman and Juergen Nogai



Above and top: Erhard Pfeiffer

Architect Steven Ehrlich's house in Venice, Calif., opens on three sides to capture breezes but limits harsh sun with prominent overhangs.

reinvention reiterated

Georgia Bizios, Bizios Architect, Durham, N.C.

I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to network with other residential architects. It was nice to see that many of the things I deal with as a residential architect other people deal with as well. And it was good to see other people are going in many of the directions I want to go in too.

Ross Chapin, Ross Chapin Architects, Langley, Wash.

The conference was excellent in terms of networking. I've been wanting for years to have conversations with architects from around the country, and that part was beyond my expectations. I applaud CORA for existing and tagging onto the conference. It dovetailed really well with the focus of the conference. ... The house tour was great. I really enjoyed being with other people along the way and having conversations and commentary woven in. ... The [breakout session] with John Vetter was wonderful. Here's a guy who's out in the field and clearly he's in practice. ... I was able to put a lot of that information to use in my work. A lot of the benefit came from hearing these case studies—seeing successes, hearing about challenges, talking about communication with city councils and planning departments, relationships with developers, how the market responds. Those actual stories say a lot.

Charles Shipp, Charles Shipp/Architect, Memphis, Tenn.

It's one of the few conferences aimed at residential design. It addressed the whole craft of making living spaces. I thought it was an excellent conference—I liked meeting other people who do what I do. A lot of the value was in the breakout times. As it continues there can be a community built that has real value. As you travel, you can know somebody in that city and go to see what they do. Cross-pollination is very helpful. ... I'd heard Sarah Susanka speak before, but I thought she was excellent. I thought tying the conference in with CORA was great because that was a good way to end it and build on what had been done.

David Jameson, David Jameson, Architect, Alexandria, Va.

I came to [Reinvention] because there's a problem in housing that needs to be acknowledged. The conference was excellent because it bridged together a lot of current ideas in housing and technology. I came away with the fact that you have to build a site-specific house for it to be good and that until we can figure out a way to do that on a larger scale there will always be a problem [delivering better design to a mainstream audience]. ... The house tour was fabulous! Really interesting. I thought the range of work in terms of when it was done and what the sites encompassed was really interesting. It got people excited and talking.

John DeForest, DeForest Ogden, Seattle

The house tour was a big reason I went—it ended up being a big plus. Steven Ehrlich's house was my favorite. The most exciting thing was having a critical mass of interesting people in the same place. A lot of the really good discussions happened on the bus to and from the tours. ... I came back to the office with lots of pictures of interesting houses and lots of energy. We're going to start researching other construction technologies and learn more about sustainable design. ... It was great to talk with people

continued on page 32

next american house predictions

From the "Brainstorming the Next American House" panel discussion with participants William Kreager, FAIA, Mithun Architects + Designers, Seattle; William Hezmalhalch Architects, Santa Ana, Calif.; Eric Naslund, FAIA, Studio E Architects, San Diego, Calif.; and Duo Dickinson, Duo Dickinson Architect, Madison, Conn.

- Must "do" or accommodate more—activities, types of people, living arrangements
- Multi-generational
- Cooperative ownership

- More home-based occupations
- Must have "go-away" space
- No formal dining or living room
- More mixed-use
- More modern
- More vertical
- More modular components
- Denser
- Smaller
- More urban
- Better use of space between buildings/more focus on outdoor space
- Must be more responsible and connected to surroundings and community

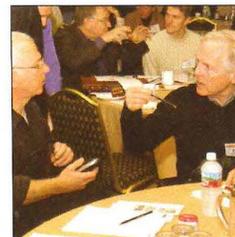
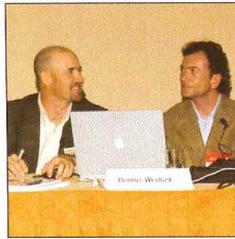
promises to bring efficiencies and economies to custom house design; and Jennifer Siegal, of The Office of Mobile Design in Santa Monica, shared her vision of more flexible, portable structures built to factory tolerances and, eventually, more affordable prices.

At lunch, *residential architect's* editor, Claire Conroy, gave out the magazine's annual Leadership Awards to Hall of Fame winner Ray Kappe, Top Firm Koning Eizenberg Architecture of Santa Monica, and Rising Star Jonathan Segal, FAIA, of La Jolla, Calif. Breakout sessions followed the lunch, with Segal, Tanney, and Vetter detailing their firms' approaches to improving the affordability and appeal of mainstream housing.

A panel discussion on sustainable design topped off the afternoon. David Arkin, AIA, Arkin Tilt Architects, Berkeley, Calif., described his firm's hybrid application of cutting-edge green technologies and low-tech salvage materials; Dennis Wedlick, AIA, Dennis Wedlick Architects, New York City, argued that architects should involve their clients directly in the search for sustainable products; and David Hertz, AIA, Syndesis Inc., Santa Monica, presented his blend of dynamic design, recycled materials, and reduced energy consumption for his largely high-end projects.

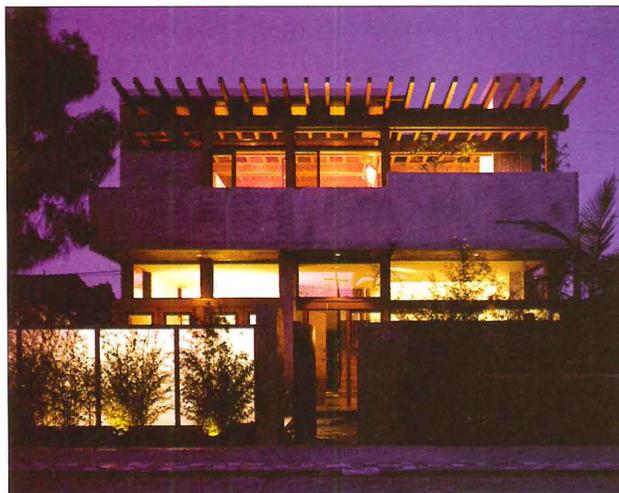
Reinvention concluded with a brainstorming session led by Advisory Board Chair William Kreager, FAIA, of Seattle-based Mithun, on the near future of American housing (see "Predictions," page 30), followed by an informal charrette and presentation of "Next American House" ideas. Audience members voted on their favorite presentations, and we'll publish the gussied up winners at a later date. Many attendees stayed on to continue the conversation with CORA.

Both events were marked by lively debate, emotion, and energy—the buzz of residential architects reinventing how they connect to their work, each other, and the public. Don't miss Reinvention 2005; details are coming soon.—*the residential architect staff*



Event Digital Photography Inc.

"don't design for somebody else and let them reap the profits. develop a product you can control and profit from." —speaker jonathan segal



Courtesy David Hertz, AIA, Architects

Using solar hot water, radiant heating and cooling, natural ventilation, and his own recycled-content concrete, David Hertz's house blunts its blow to the environment.

who are at the same point in their practice as I am, and also to have cross-fertilization with different firms.

Philip Mathews, AIA, Philip Mathews Architect, San Francisco

I enjoyed it a lot—the tour of houses, the seminars, Sarah Susanka was great. Jonathan Segal was great. On the house tour, Ehrlich's house was my favorite. I do all residential, so if I go to the AIA convention I get a little lost. I don't go to conferences often. The fact that this was all residential was one reason I came. I'll go again.

Chip Bohl, Bohl Architects, Annapolis, Md.

I was attracted to the idea of residential architects gathering and the concept of an event specifically about residential architecture. The houses on the tour were fabulous. ... The [overall] event was very well organized, informative, and led very easily to spontaneous conversations between people doing the same thing all over the country. The camaraderie was the most energizing part of it. It was very upbeat and very, very positive. ... I'm not a joiner—I was formerly president of our local AIA chapter and have been out of that for a long time, and rather contentedly out of the AIA and other organizations. But this event was well worth the time.

William Childs, AIA, William H. Childs Jr. & Associates, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

After Reinvention, I started looking into going the route of developing our own stuff. There's a local community that may sell us a site. I came back pumped and psyched—it's good to recharge your batteries and get refocused. It's good to think about aspects outside your daily grind.

Stuart Narofsky, Narofsky Architecture and Design, New York City

Everything was great—the breakout session, the lectures, the tour. The focus of the conference was good. ... I only had one negative: The charrette wasn't thought out well enough. ... I attended the breakout with [John Vetter] from Milwaukee—what a speaker and a great guy. He was unbelievable. There was also a lot of chemistry with people coming from all over the country. I have in front of me a stack of business cards. I have been getting emails from people. ... I really came back pumped up that there are more things I should be doing and considering.

Eric Zuziak, JZMK Partners, Newport Beach, Calif.

I think one of the things that was exciting is the work of John Vetter out of Minneapolis. I think his stuff is very strong, and the whole concept of the architect as developer is really intriguing. It was timely because a lot of people are getting into that or want to get into that.

Charles Cunniffe, Charles Cunniffe Architects, Aspen, Colo.

It was just terrific. The housing tour is actually one of the reasons I chose to attend the conference. It was the highlight for me. ... The quality of the content was really great. One of the things I noticed is that no one left early. I attend a lot of conferences and one of the things that happens close to the end is that people start to leave to make calls or check voice messages. I did not see anyone leave early. It was an indication of the quality of the content and the quality of the presenters.

A special thanks to Reinvention 2004 symposium partner Andersen Windows and sponsors Acenti by Leviton, Baldwin, Brizo, NuTone, Owens Corning, Tapco International, and Whirlpool.



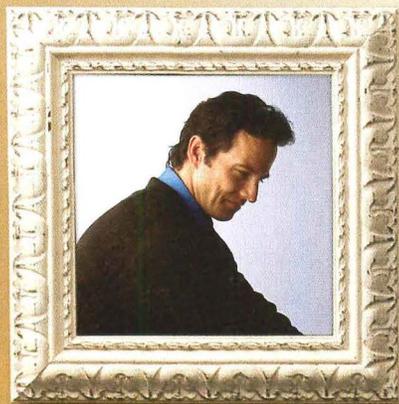
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calendar



Douglas Abel

**masonry construction:
project of the year contest**

deadline: may 1

residential architect's sister publication MASONRY CONSTRUCTION hosts its 6th annual competition honoring the best masonry projects built in the past two years. Categories include single and multifamily residential, fireplaces, landscaping, historic restoration, and commercial. For entry requirements, call 630.705.2604 or e-mail rholtzhauer@hanleywood.com.

john clancy award for socially responsible housing

deadline: june 13

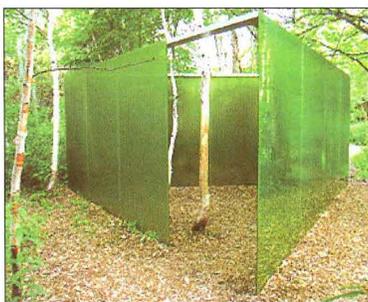
Any group or individual who has planned, designed, or built an appropriate project is eligible. Winners will receive certificates and widespread publication to recognize and encourage excellence in socially responsible urban housing, as exemplified by the Langham Court project (shown) designed by John Clancy, principal of Boston-based firm Good Clancy. Call 617.951.1433, ext. 225, or go to www.johnclancyaward.org for full details.



Stephen Rosenthal Architectural Photography

2005 solutia international design awards

deadline: june 30



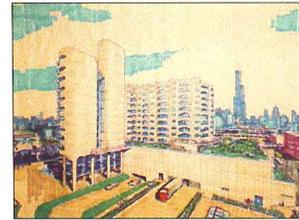
Courtesy Solutia

Any architect, designer, or industry professional may submit any project completed in 2004 that features the liberal use of Solutia's architectural laminated glass products. Up to four architectural winners will be recognized. Shown: Colored Reflections by Hal Ingberg, architect, Montreal, winner of a 2004 award. For entry requirements call 314.822.8860, e-mail janetryan@earthlink.net, or visit www.vancera.com/design.

**lying on paper:
architectural renderings of the 20th century**

april 1–june 4

architech gallery, chicago



Bertrand Goldberg

More akin to sales tools than architecturally accurate studies, presentation renderings often visualize a fantastical end result. Original drawings and prints by various architects and architectural students from the past century highlight these beautiful and partially imaginary creations. To learn more, call 312.475.1290 or visit www.architechgallery.com.



petra: lost city of stone

april 4–august 15

calvin college,
grand rapids, mich.

A decade-long effort resulted in this collection of 200 objects, many of which have never been on display in the United States. Stone sculptures and reliefs (such as this head of Medusa), ceramics, metalwork, various artworks, and other artifacts compose a comprehensive exhibition on the ancient Middle Eastern city of Petra and its creators. For display hours call 800.PETRA05 or go to www.calvin.edu/petra.

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april 6–7

seaport world trade center, boston

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extreme textiles: designing for high performance

april 8–january 15

cooper hewitt, new york city

More than 150 highly engineered materials created for extreme conditions will be displayed. Applications include architecture, aerospace, and medicine. For museum hours call 212.849.8400 or check out www.cooperhewitt.org.

continued on page 38

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**heather allen:
architectural textiles**

april 21–july 29
the octagon, washington, d.c.

Using cloth that is dyed, painted, and printed, artist Heather Allen creates compositions that communicate the architectural allure of partially opened doors, hallways, and spiral staircases leading to the unknown. Thirty of these multimedia textiles will demonstrate the artist's exploration of interior space. For museum hours, phone 202.638.3105 or visit www.theoctagon.org.



greening rooftops for sustainable communities conference

may 4–6
washington convention center

Courses in research, design, and policy relate to green roof technology and its potential to improve the health of communities across North America. Robert F.

Kennedy Jr. will present the keynote address. The trade show offers more than 100 exhibitors. Call 416.971.4494, ext. 229, to register, or visit www.greenroofs.org.



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may 11–13
hyatt regency burlingame,
san francisco



The Digital Home Conference and Showcase offers sessions covering the management of home networks and technologies. Exhibitions feature the latest appliances, services, and devices in the connected home. Register by calling 972.490.1113 or go to www.connectionsconference.com.

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may 14–17
piers 90–92, new york city

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**aia national convention
and design exposition**

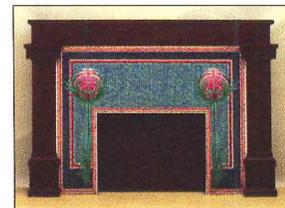
may 19–21
mandalay bay, las vegas



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**the arts and crafts
movement in europe
and america: 1880–1920
design for the
modern world**

may 19–september 5
milwaukee art museum



Courtesy Milwaukee Art Museum

The exhibition places this rich design era, which championed the integration of art into everyday life, within an international, social, and economic context. More than 300 arts and crafts objects including furniture, architectural drawings, metalwork, and ceramics will be displayed. Shown is a 1901 fireplace surround by George Washington Maher. Call 414.224.3200 for museum hours, or visit www.mam.org.

vanishing point

may 21–august 14
wexner center for the arts, columbus, ohio

The multimedia show strives to reveal the uncanny and often eerie appeal of everyday built environments. Photographs, paintings, drawings, video, and mixed-media installations investigate the dramatic ways that quotidian public "non-spaces," such as convenience stores, hotel lobbies, airport terminals, mall, and parking lots, affect us. To learn more, call 614.292.0330 or go to www.wexarts.org.

continuing exhibits

Currents 32: Gregor Schneider, through June 19, Milwaukee Art Museum, 414.224.3200; **Tools of the Imagination**, through Oct. 10, National Building Museum, Washington, D.C., 202.272.2448; **Designing Modern Life—A History of Modern Design**, through Oct. 28, Design Museum, London, 011.44.870.833.9955.

—shelley d. hutchins

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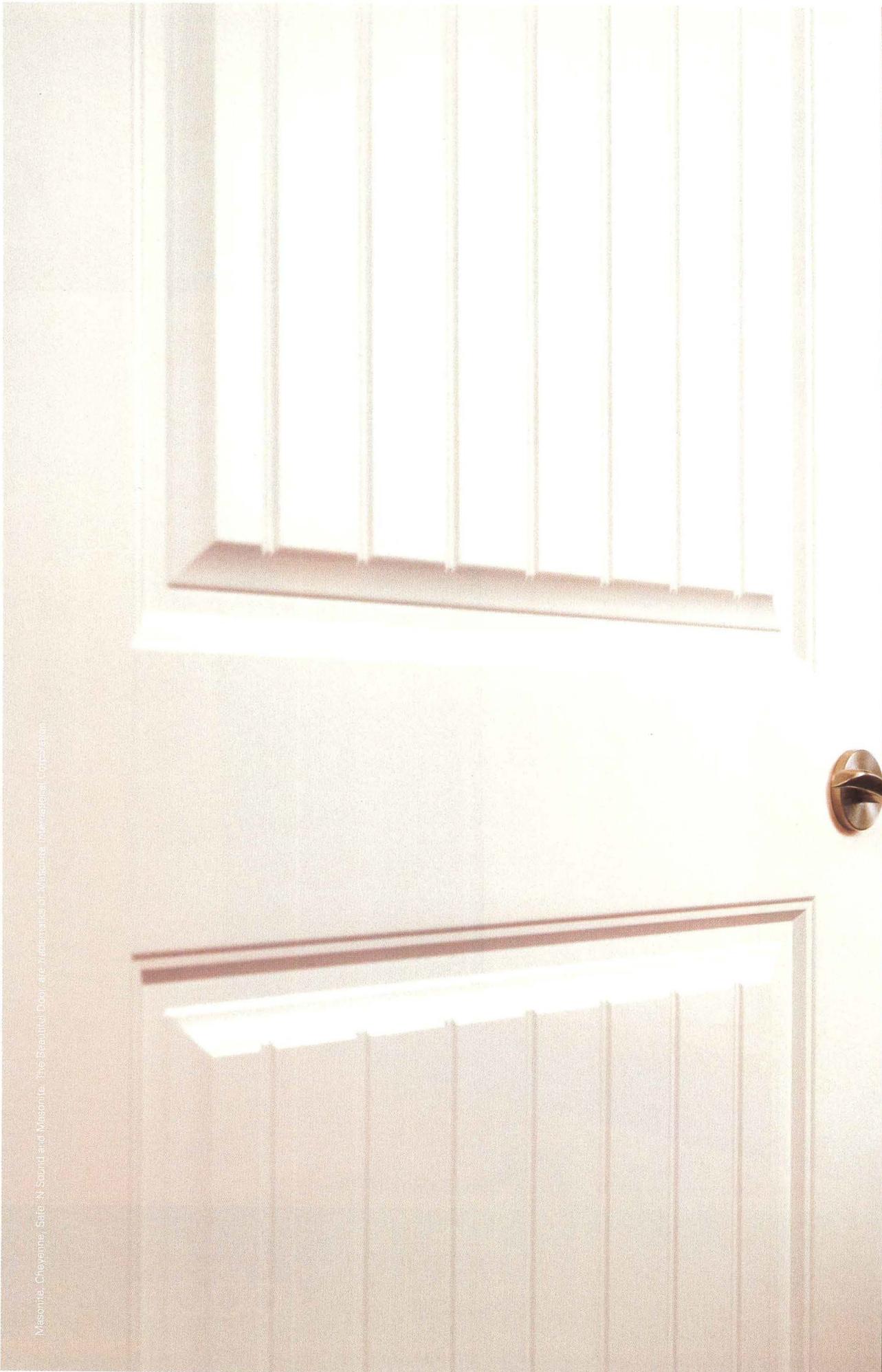
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k + b studio

kitchen: home entertainment

Preparing elaborate meals for an audience of friends, family, and even strangers is a major pastime for the owners of this Austin, Texas, home. “The kitchen is set up so that several people can be sitting along the bar to watch the cooking show,” says architect Dick Clark. The couple also hosts frequent charity events in their home overlooking Lake Austin, so the 300-square-foot kitchen had to serve caterers’ needs as well. “The house is primarily designed to be an entertaining space geared to hold hundreds of people,” adds Clark, “but it has to live like an intimate home the rest of the time.”

A cooking hub just shy of 12 feet long showcases the five-burner cooktop with side grill; a bar running the length of the brushed stainless backsplash puts every utensil and spice within reach. Twin double-wide cabinets flank the workstation and keep other essential supplies close at hand. The area between

the cooktop workspace and a roomy prep island is wide enough for two people to navigate. The indomitable Texas sunshine floods the room through a curved window wall, which provides lake views and access to the pool and two outdoor casual dining areas. For formal affairs, the kitchen closes off with sandblasted glass pocket doors located on either side of the refrigerator. Opposite the cooking area, a solid wall of cabinetry stores miscellaneous gizmos such as an espresso machine.

You can’t tell by its elegant finishes, but “every inch of this kitchen gets constant use,” says Clark. Hardworking, good-looking fir cabinetry and wall panels were carefully cut to highlight vertical grain and color variances. Honed stone floors provide natural slip resistance and connect the room visually with the pool deck, specced in the same material.

A 10-foot plaster ceiling drops 6 inches lower over the island to supply indirect and task lighting. But the real scene stealers are the multi-ply wood countertops overlaid in stainless steel, their edges left dramatically raw.

project continued on page 44



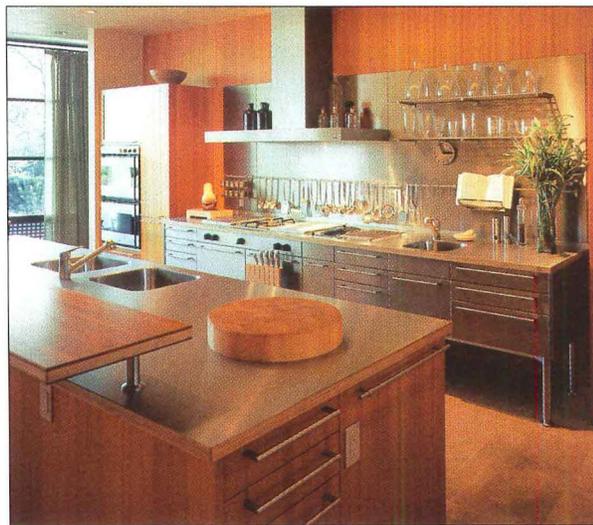
architect: Dick Clark Architecture, Austin, Texas

general contractor: Bill Dorman Construction, Austin

resources: cabinets: Bulthaup; oven: Gaggenau; plumbing fixtures: Franke, Dornbracht; refrigerator: Sub-Zero; tile: Ann Sacks; windows and doors: Hope’s Windows



Because the owner wanted only the bare necessities stored around his cooking center, Clark kept things light, with cabinets lifted off the floor. Matching wall panels allow fir cabinetry to fade into the scenery, while stainless cabinets surrounding the cooktop shine in the spotlight. Steel and glass doors (below) bookend the rectilinear room—clear to the exterior view at one end and sandblasted to screen formal dining at the other.



Photos: Paul Bardagjy

k + b studio

bath: shower play

Hidden behind a 7-foot-tall, free-floating headboard is a small passage to a simply sybaritic master bath. Its spare design belies the decadent offerings contained within the 270-square-foot space. A steel soaking tub contoured for two dips below the limestone tile floor. A tub-to-ceiling window gives glimpses of a distant Austin skyline through a screen of dense foliage. For less leisurely ablutions, an adjoining glass shower has a rainfall shower head and a wall of sprays. Its steel-and-glass double doors access a private terrace, so “you can open the doors wide while showering, and it becomes an outdoor shower,” says Clark.

The arrangement has a practical side as well. The terrace has stairs to the pool area, so the owners can go back and forth without dripping through the house. Uninterrupted limestone floors from bath to terrace link the indoor and outdoor areas. And the bath’s blue-green glass tiles give the walls an aquatic hue.

Across the room an L-shaped vanity runs the length of two walls, providing plenty of storage for him and her. At the far end of the limestone counter, a Juliet balcony overlooks the front of the house.

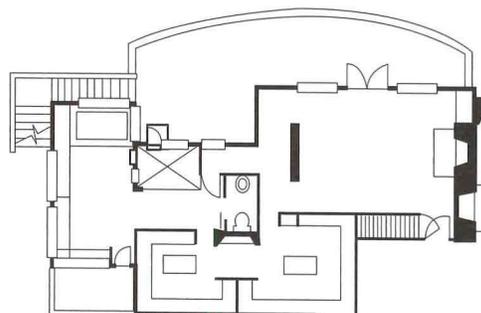
An enclosed water closet occupies the center of a circular traffic zone between the bath, the master bedroom, and a pair of walk-in closets, “so if you need to use it in the middle of the night it’s convenient,” says the ever-thoughtful architect. —*shelley d. hutchins*

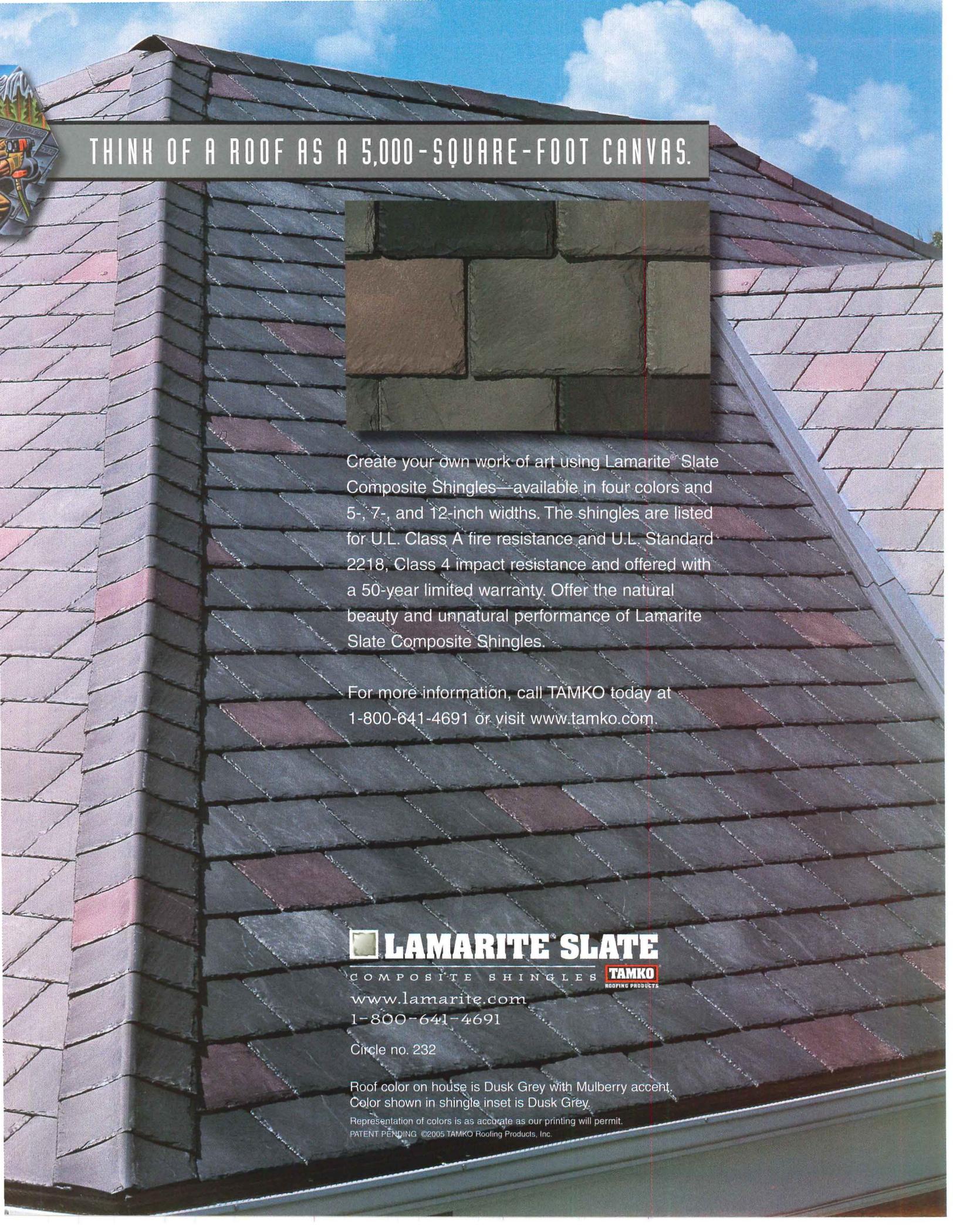


Photos: Paul Bardagjy



The oversized overhead rainfall fixture is centered between the terrace doors, which open wide to the great outdoors.





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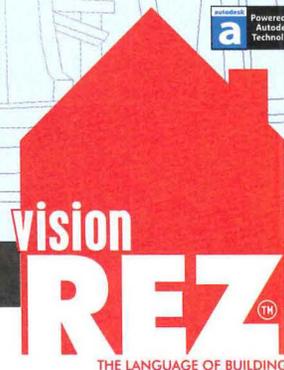
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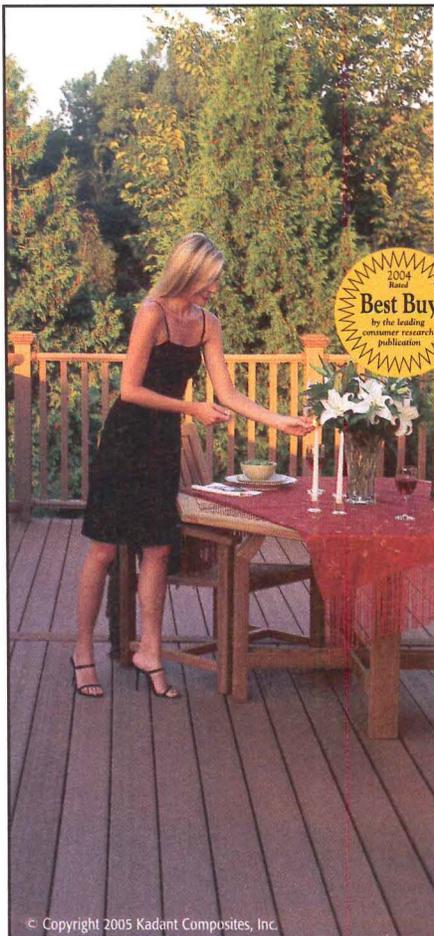
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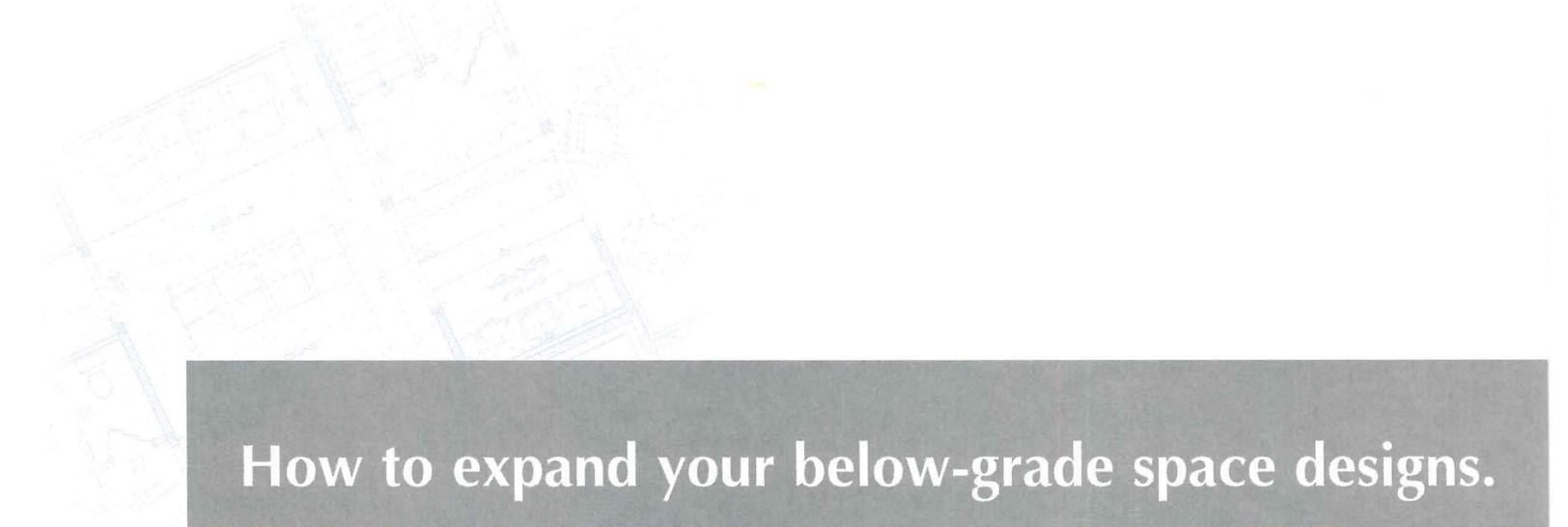
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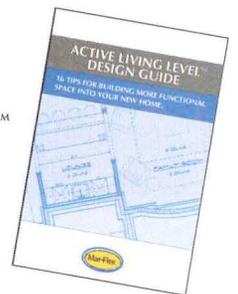
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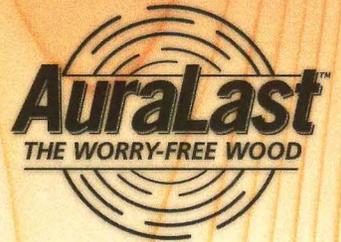
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a tale of two houses

the all-glass masterworks by philip johnson and
mies van der rohe are less connected than they seem.

by stuart cohen, faia

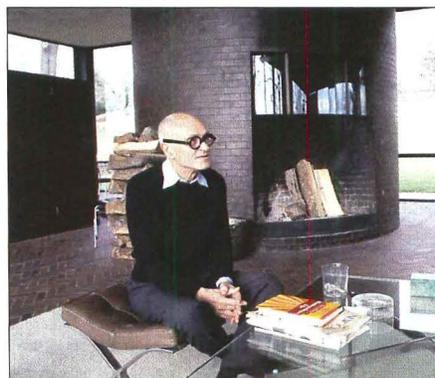
With the death of Philip Johnson at 98, America has lost one of its most prominent architects. In Johnson's *New York Times* obituary Paul Goldberger wrote, "Mr. Johnson was known less for his individual buildings than for the sheer force of his presence on the architectural scene." Goldberger suggests, as did Johnson himself, that neither the architect's individual buildings nor the mercurial array of designs characterizing his career are of lasting significance. While Johnson has been praised as a champion of theoretical ideas in architecture, most critics have dismissed even his best buildings as intellectually lightweight and stylistically derivative.

Johnson's Glass House (1949) is often cited as his best building. While it was completed before Mies van der Rohe's house for Dr. Edith Farnsworth, it is generally considered derivative of that project, even though the all-glass house was hardly invented by Mies. The Glass House, however, is more than just a knowing copy of Mies' work. The Glass House and the Farnsworth House are

diametrically opposite spatial conceptions, and they represent completely differing ideas about their relationship to the landscape. That Johnson was aware of the elemental nature of his design is suggested by his early plans for the Glass House and its relationship to the guest-house on the property. I suggest that in this project he did indeed create an architecture of ideas and that the building is undeserving of the many critical descriptions relegating it to a secondary position in 20th-century architectural history.

opposing views

In an article he wrote for *The Architectural Review* published in September



Richard Timothy Conroy

1950, Johnson catalogs his precedents for the Glass House. These include the work of Karl Friedrich Schinkel (classical pavilions); the Acropolis in Athens (classical pavilions with a site plan informed by the landscape); the planning of Le Corbusier (abstractly derived from the Acropolis); and Mies' design for the

Farnsworth House. Johnson also cites a De Stijl composition of rectangles by the Dutch architect Theo van Doesburg. In his introduction to *Philip Johnson: The Glass House* (Pantheon Books, 1993), Jeffrey Kipnis suggests that Johnson's essay has "shaped the scholarly treatment of the
continued on page 50



Ezra Stoller © Esto



Jon Miller © Hedrich Blessing

Mies located the Farnsworth House's pure white columns on the outside of the glass walls, conjuring up images of a classical temple.

Glass House." Kipnis demonstrates this when he writes: "The genius of the Glass House obtains from the fact that, although it derives its style from Modernism, the discrete ordered space it engenders belongs more to classical architecture. There is little disagreement among the critics on this point."

I would argue the opposite: that Johnson's Glass House is totally Modern in its use of International Style ideas about continuous space, the relationship of objects (enclosed cores, bathroom, fireplace, kitchen, etc.) to surrounding space, and the relationship of interior to exterior, whereas the Farnsworth

House is classical in the disposition of its symmetrical bathroom and kitchen core and in its treatment of the relationship of interior space to the exterior landscape.

The Glass House has its brick-paved floor set barely above the adjacent lawn. The visual effect is that of the horizontal extension of interior space out into the landscape (even with the columns defining the corners of the interior volume). The exterior steel is painted black, making it recessive with respect to the dark verdant colors of its surroundings and suggesting a diametrically opposite relationship to the landscape than at the

Farnsworth House. The travertine-paved floor of the latter is raised up above the landscape because of the flood plane of the Fox River. This removes the foreground from view and treats the landscape as a panoramic vista rather than a visual extension of the interior space. As a panorama, the landscape resembles the photo collage in Mies' famous interior perspective of the Resor House. Where Mies' disposition of interior elements implies a static or classicized subdivision of interior space, Johnson's "free plan" and De Stijl-like composition of linear freestanding cabinets and cylindrical brick core create a Modernist continuity of space around these elements.

Lastly is the difference between Mies' and Johnson's treatments of supporting columns. The Glass House's columns are in the plane of the glass wall but project

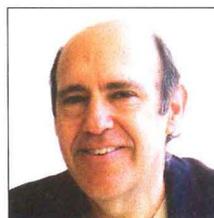
inward, placing them directly under the house's fascia. At the Farnsworth House the columns sit outside the glass wall with the fascia welded to the flange of their "I" profile. Johnson's design suppresses the visual importance of the columns, while Mies' accentuates it, making his pavilion temple-like. Mies disliked the Glass House and is said to have told Johnson that he got the design wrong. This further suggests that beyond the initial premise of making an all-glass house, the Glass House as an original work owes less to Mies than Johnson's critics have understood or acknowledged.

being there

For anyone who has visited both houses, the experience further suggests how little the one is indebted to the other. They are fundamentally different in terms of

continued on page 52

"the glass house owes less to mies than johnson's critics have acknowledged."





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perspective

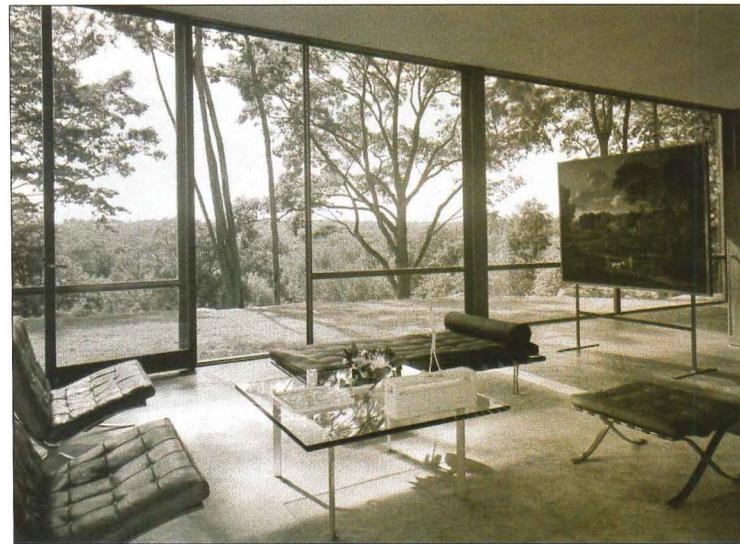
their sensibilities. The Farnsworth house is Zen-like in its sense of balance and serenity. One has the impression, as with a Greek temple, of being in the presence of a perfect object. Unlike the Barcelona Pavilion, with its directional Modernist space and unaligned column and paving grids, at the Farnsworth House the column centers align with the grid of the travertine floor, classicizing the design. Lest we miss the idealized nature of the house, the steel columns and beams are painted white. According to the late Myron Goldsmith, who worked on the house, Mies is said to have never used slotted screws on a project again when he realized the screw heads on the glazing stops could not be aligned, spoiling the perfection of his design.

At the detail level, Johnson's house, by contrast, is about tactile experience—not abstract perfection. The dark brown herringbone brick floor, which is waxed to a rich luster, has a warm sensual quality to it, suggesting languid luxury. The fireplace-bathroom core is also built of brick, but it is the inside of the bathroom that confirms the house's tactility. In the bathroom the curved walls are covered (except for the shower) by individual tan-colored leather tiles with beveled edges, cut to the size of bricks and applied in a running bond like the bricks on the bathroom core's exterior. Plumbing

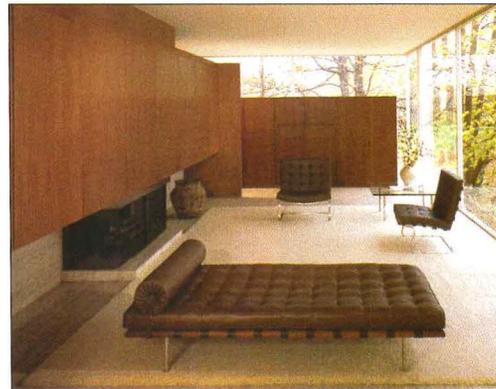
fittings are finished in polished brass. At the Farnsworth House the two bathrooms, in cool contrast, have pristine travertine floors and walls and chrome plumbing fittings.

conceptual level

Johnson's early development sketches imply a primary intellectual idea consistent with an understanding of the iconic nature of the design. This idea has nothing to do with the minimalist premise of Mies' glass house designs. From early in 1947 the Glass House was conceived as part of a composition that included a guesthouse. Johnson's citation of the Acropolis as a precedent suggests an interpretation that Johnson would have owed to Le Corbusier. That is, the interpretation of the Acropolis as an archetypal composition of primary building types: the Parthenon, a trabeated temple (columns and beams), and the Erechtheum, a building composed of walls. For Le Corbusier these building types became his Maison-Domino (columns and floor slabs) and his Maison Citrohan (parallel bearing walls), which Vincent Scully called a Megaron volume. Le Corbusier's designs for building complexes that he called Acropolitan incorporated both of these primary structural/spatial building types.



Ezra Stoller © Esto



Jon Miller © Hedrich Blessing

The houses treat the surrounding landscape very differently. The Farnsworth House (left) floats atop its site, while at the Glass House (above) the lawn seems an extension of the interior floor.

Johnson's scheme dated June 1947 placed the brick guesthouse at right angles to the Glass House, separating them by only a few feet. Thus the column and roof structure of the Glass House and the wall structure of the guesthouse would have been seen together forming a defined exterior space. As such, they would have presented an essay on the primary constructional and spatial means from which architecture is made. Johnson eventually understood that the visual impact of the Glass House would be diminished by this arrangement and located the guesthouse on the other side of the lawn, but the idea of the twinning of these opposite buildings still remained.

That the Glass House brought together at the highest level the art of architecture and theory suggests that the links between Philip Johnson's work, the world of architectural ideas, and his larger-than-life career may be more complex than we have acknowledged. **ra**

Stuart Cohen, FAIA, of Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects in Evanston, Ill., is a practicing residential architect and Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He worked for Philip Johnson and John Burgee from 1970 to 1971 and is the co-author of North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lakefront Suburbs, 1890-1940 (Acanthus Press, 2004).

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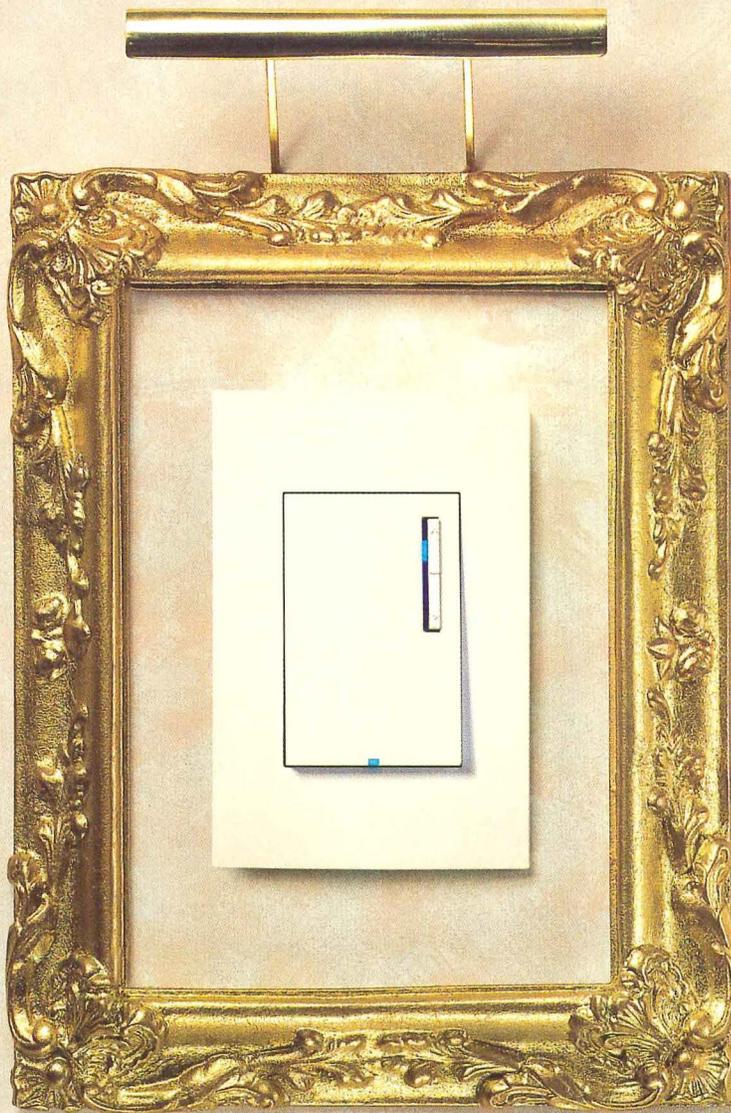


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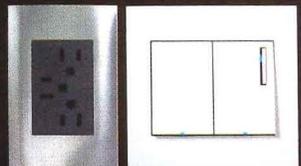


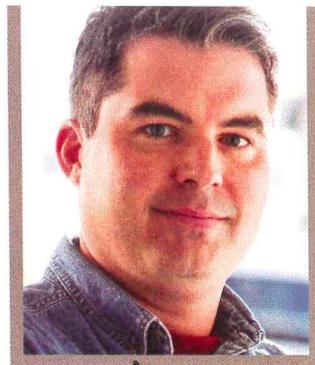
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by cheryl weber

a 47-year-old architect who owns a six-person firm in the Midwest is worried that her second-in-command is going to leave and start his own business. Her 15-year practice, which she incorporated five years ago, specializes in high-end residential remodeling, so she spends a lot of time training employees and hiring the right mix of personalities. The small office allows for a studio environment, and it's a size she feels comfortable managing. A partnership isn't part of the business plan, at least not right now. And that creates a potential problem. "I don't want this firm to be a revolving door," says the architect, speaking under the condition of anonymity. "Keeping the people I depend on is a huge challenge. It's not what I went to architecture school to learn."

This scenario plays out all across the country in small- to medium-sized firms, especially in hot job markets. Large offices have multiple partners, diverse opportunities for leadership, and a clearly mapped route to the top. But firms that have decided bigger isn't better have to figure out other ways to help talented

employees advance their careers—or their staff will likely move on.

Not every up-and-coming architect views firm ownership as a golden handcuff, of course. "I'd consider a partnership, but no one seems to be interested, because of the liability," the Midwest architect says. The financial risk scares off some young people. Others simply can't afford to pay their share out of pocket. Having a stake in

a firm, however, doesn't just mean owning a piece of it. Not-so-big firms can often do better than their large corporate counterparts in offering a high-quality work life: decent hours, a healthy office culture, recognition, and a managerial role.

the flat pack

Owners of small- to mid-sized firms seem to agree that an egalitarian environment goes a long way toward keeping

everyone engaged. Wheeler Kearns Architects, Chicago, with 12 architects including four partners, has had almost no turnover in its 18 years of practice. Dan Wheeler, FAIA, says the thing that's kept everyone happy is the autonomy they're given on projects from the very first day to closeout. Each person is a project architect, usually overseeing two jobs at a time.

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Arthur Giron

“The key component is to maintain as steep a learning curve as you can, giving employees increasingly challenging projects, either technically or in scale and project type,” Wheeler says. When the firm won a community-design award for a shelter for domestic violence on the Southwest side of Chicago recently, it was architect Jon Heinert—five years with the firm—who made the acceptance speech amid much fanfare, with the mayor present. “Whoever does the work gets the podium,” Wheeler says.

Philadelphia-based Brawer & Hauptman Architects is also 18 years old and a dozen people strong. Like Wheeler Kearns, the firm functions as a studio, although it recognizes junior and senior project architects. Partners David Brawer, AIA, and Michael Hauptman, AIA, who are approaching their mid-50s, are just starting to think seriously about adding associates so they can pass on the firm when they’re ready to retire.

Hauptman says he can’t compete with larger operations who offer more money and an upper rung on the corporate ladder. On the other hand, many of Brawer & Hauptman’s benefits are intangible. “We little guys have to offer a nicer place to work and make sure people are given a lot of responsibility and a variety of projects,” he says. “A lot of our work is for religious and nonprofit organizations. If you’re a project architect on that kind of job, you’ll

do everything—from client contact to picking finishes. Even junior architects, who work on very small projects, do soup to nuts.”

Of course, there’s no controlling the vicissitudes of fate and desire, either. “There are people we thought were terrific and we’d have been happy to have them stay. But they wanted to travel or follow their dream of having their own firm, and there’s very little you can do to keep them,” Hauptman says. “There tends to be a turnover of younger people in our office, whereas older people are looking for something more permanent. Those are the people you reward with bigger bonuses, if they’re continuing to produce.”

Cincinnati, Ohio, architect John Senhauser, FAIA, also believes a flat organizational structure gives people ample opportunity to grow. He encourages his employees to bring in clients and often passes potential clients on to them. The office of six is usually working on 15 projects at a time. “Our culture is about as horizontal as it can be,” he says. “Everybody is a project manager; I work on their projects, and they work on mine.”

That kind of give-and-take works very well for his staff, most of whom came aboard as students. One employee has worked at the firm four times over a 15-year period. Several others worked part time for a while after their children were born, and flexible schedules and paid comp

titles and entitlements

Highly successful architects are often smart about structuring an ownership transition program, but the design community as a whole hasn’t followed that path. “It’s a power issue with a small firm. It’s hard to give a piece of the practice to someone else while you’re still working,” says David Pfeffer, an attorney with LePatner & Associates, New York City, adding that planning should begin 10 years before retirement.

Small firms are beginning to use the term principal to connote a high-level manager, even though the person is not an equity partner. Law firms have been doing that for years. Although it’s perfectly legal, Pfeffer says architects should be aware that claims over billing rates or misrepresentation could arise from clients who think they’re dealing with an owner. “When someone holds themselves out as a principal, it connotes ownership to a lot of people,” he says. Although it’s a minor issue, “architects would just have to be careful not to imply they’re owners when they’re not.”

Likewise, promoting employees to associate doesn’t legally entitle them to a percentage of the firm’s profits. In fact, in rare cases being a minority shareholder may work against an employee. “They can be responsible for more than their share of liability if the firm is involved in a claim or malpractice suit,” LePatner says. “Firms are often sued for an amount appropriate to how many shareholders or partnerships there are.”—*C.W.*

time continue to accommodate competing demands. “We’re not working Saturdays or all night long,” says Senhauser. “I hope there’s still a studio culture but not one that rewards that sort of exploitation.” The straightforward, practical approach also translates to annual meetings, where budgets, and business and personal goals, are openly discussed.

“Being a partner isn’t always a good thing,” Senhauser says. “There are

times I feel like saying, ‘I’d make you a partner but I don’t think you could handle the cut in pay.’ There have been some difficult years in which there was a lot of financial risk to shoulder, and sometimes younger practitioners aren’t in a financial position to absorb it.” Still, ownership transition is on his mind. “For this firm to be worth something, I need a way to make everyone else here successful,” he says.

continued on page 60

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succession story

Sole proprietors may be reluctant to make even a small piece of their firms available to others. By the time they reach their 50s, however, most realize it's in their best interests to mentor employees who can take over the practice. Architectural business consultant Ralph Steinglass, FAIA, the founder of Teambuilders, Manhattan, points out that even if it takes the next-generation principals a long time to pay out the owner, a firm that possesses the talent to keep an office running may attract an outside buyer, if necessary.

Steinglass says the most

common strategy for small-firm succession is to put trusted employees in the operational loop, often by making them associates. Ask them to participate in policy discussions and strategic planning; although they might not be making the final decisions, treat them as if they were owners. "Give them significant roles, and compensate them for it," Steinglass says. For example, a talented designer can be made design director and oversee the firm's design work. Someone who understands the nuts and bolts of construction could be the technical director, in charge

of developing quality standards. "Those are very high-profile kinds of assignments," says Steinglass. "If you just gave them a raise without a role in the firm, it wouldn't be as meaningful."

Many architects at the helm of successful practices discourage staff from bringing in clients. They don't want to dilute the portfolio with clients who may be attracted to the firm's lesser talents. While that's a legitimate issue at many firms, other seasoned architects simply resist sharing the limelight. That's why one award-winning designer left a West Coast firm a few

years ago. "I reached a point where the next step was to establish my own practice, and the fact that there was no partnership track encouraged me to do that," he says, asking that his name not be revealed. "When someone has grown to become more of a directing person in the firm and there's no possibility for having a managerial stake in the practice, then there's really no choice for that person but to move on."

This architect notes that law offices rarely resist making people associates and partners. Yet it happens in architecture, partly

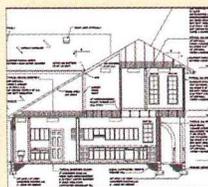
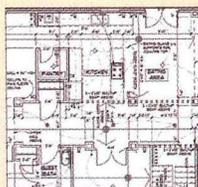
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because the founder's star power must be preserved. "The confusing thing about my experience was that the practice had developed to a point where there wasn't a singular designer, yet that was the perception," he says.

Attorney David Pfeffer, a partner at LePatner & Associates, New York City, who advises architecture firms, says it's rare to see firms last through the generations, because they don't plan for sustaining top talent. "What all these managing partners tell me is that it's about the money, but it's not about the money," he says. Their best employees "want the

money, the title, and the responsibility."

Fair compensation is part of any retention strategy, agrees Steinglass. The classic way to keep people is to pay them very well; he's seen examples of valued staff earning more than the principals in a given year. "Often in small firms, when times are tough, principals' draws are reduced but salaried employees don't have to suffer that way," he says. The reason partners need to be generous, he adds, is to ensure there are associate-level employees who care about improving profits and design quality. Performance-

based bonuses are a less risky way to encourage people to stay. Raising a salary is permanent, Steinglass notes, whereas bonuses may be given out in good years and omitted in bad ones.

A title can simply convey status or can promise things to come. The term associate sometimes applies only to people who are being mentored to be a principal, Steinglass says. Others use it as a reward for longtime employees who are never going to make it to the top. In that case, the diminished meaning can be offset by the authority the person is given, but the expectations

must be clear. "The title becomes problematic if nothing comes with it," Steinglass says.

stepping stones

Two longtime employees of a noted Washington, D.C.-area firm of seven will soon be made non-equity principals. The owner, who wants to remain anonymous because the paperwork isn't finalized, takes a three-pronged approach to a healthy practice: to give employees titles appropriate to their responsibilities, to give them public credit for projects they've done, and to

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For Stephen Muse, FAIA, another Washington, D.C., architect, a healthy firm with long-term prospects begins

with hiring the right people. It takes Muse Architects a month to hire a new person, making sure a candidate has the same values and sense of purpose. "We critique their portfolio and see if they get

involved with us in a conversation," Muse says. "If they get defensive, or roll over and play dead, we know they won't work out."

Muse likes to hire people right out of school or with

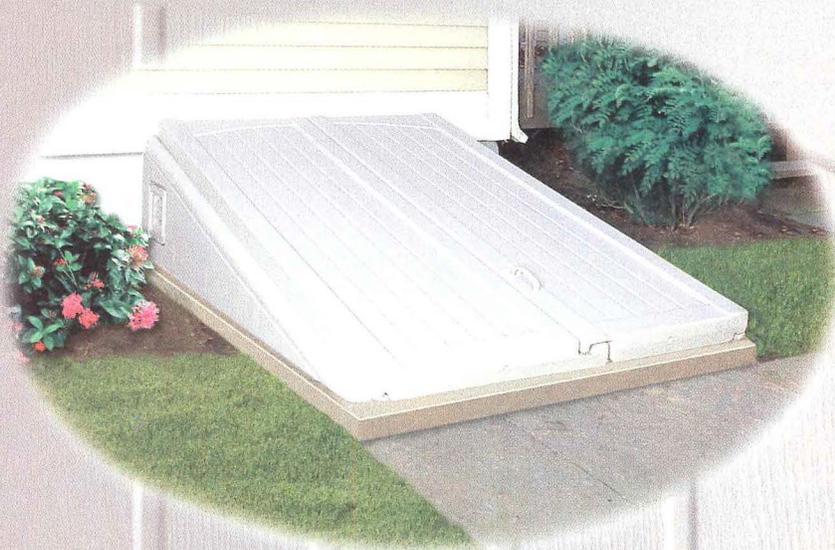
one or two years' experience, so he can train them. Staff architects occupy the first rung on the ladder, working with a project architect on a team. The next two rungs are for project architects and project managers, who oversee multiple jobs. "When I see a staff architect who is not able to step up to project architect after a couple of years, I say, 'Because you're not willing to take that kind of control, you may be better off working in a bigger firm where you can be part of a team,'" Muse says. "Usually they look around and end up leaving."

Project architects perform other tasks, too. One works with Muse on awards programs, tracking deadlines and putting entries together. Another person maintains the library. Someone else controls the computer systems. "I strongly believe if people are doing something besides working on projects, they'll feel a great sense of ownership in the firm," he says.

At age 54, Muse's retirement clock is ticking. He has three associates and is getting ready to make one of them a second principal. "I've always said the best things about working here are that we get very good commissions and that the staff is an incredible group of people who like each other," Muse says. Those are qualities that any architect can aspire to as a way of keeping top talent, regardless of the exit plan. **ra**

Cheryl Weber is a contributing writer in Severna Park, Md.

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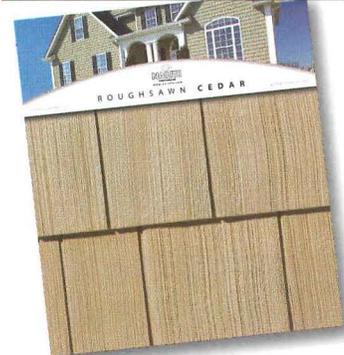


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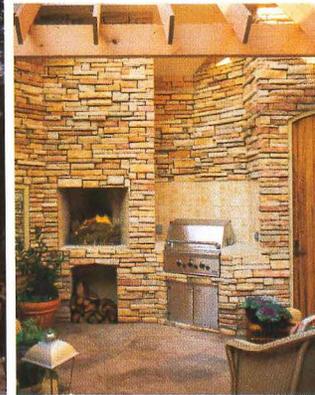

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Design by SFJones Architects. Photo by Weldon Brewster.



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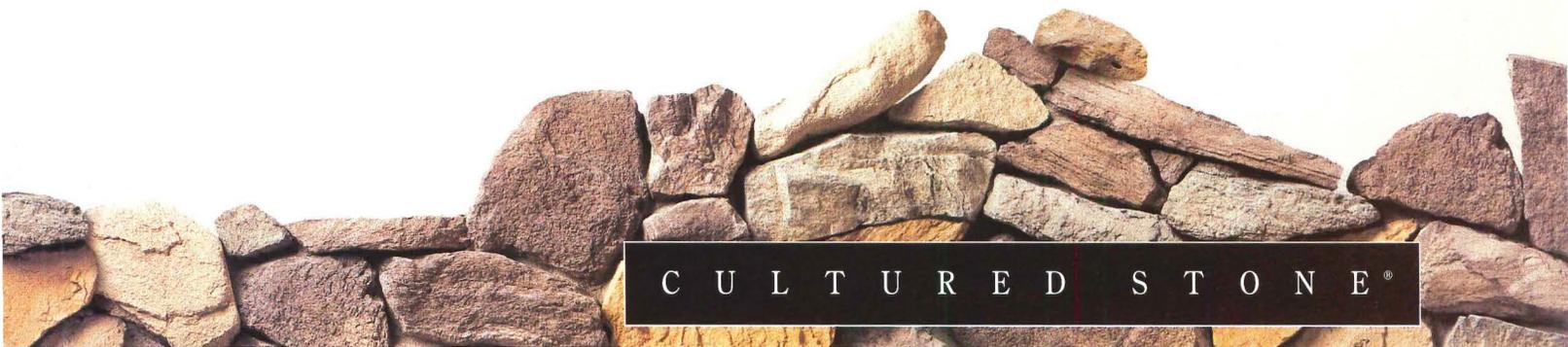




Design by SFJones Architects. Photo by Weldon Brewster.



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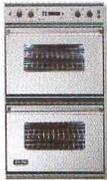
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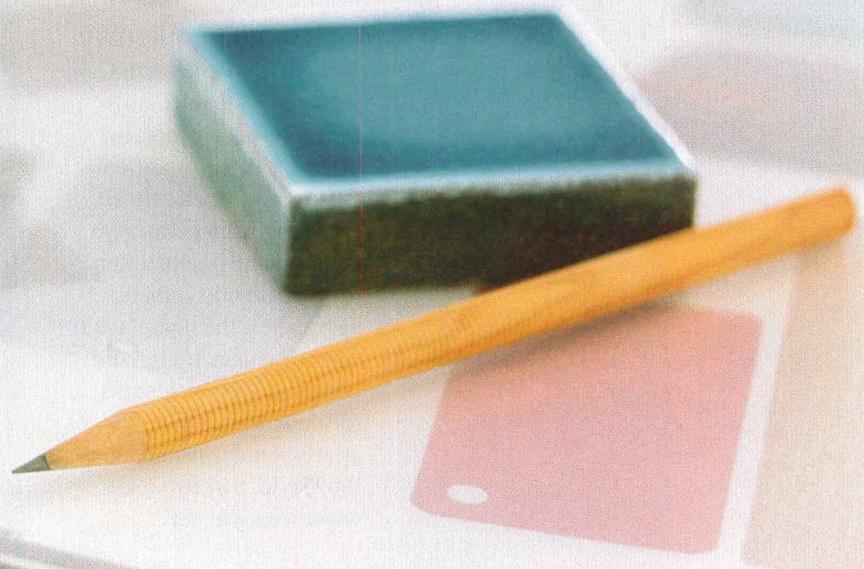
Circle no. 291

architects' choice

houses are what you spec, so choose deliberately.

by nigel f. maynard and shelley d. hutchins

If clothes can make the man, then without a doubt products help dress a house for success. It doesn't matter whether the material or product you select is expensive or economical, only that you choose deliberately, tailoring it carefully to the spirit and function of the building you design. Finding products that can make the cut—surviving tests of durability, beauty, and utility—is not an easy task. That's why we talk each year to some of the country's best architects to discover what's made it through their tough vetting processes. Maybe their choices will wear well with you, too.



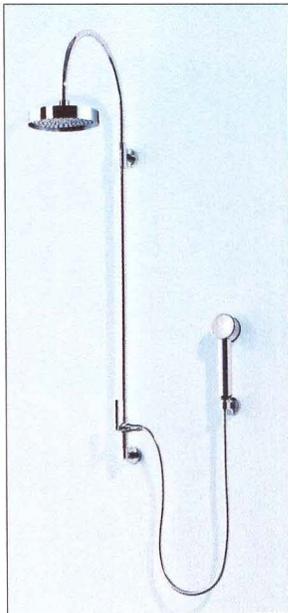
archi-tectonics



new york city

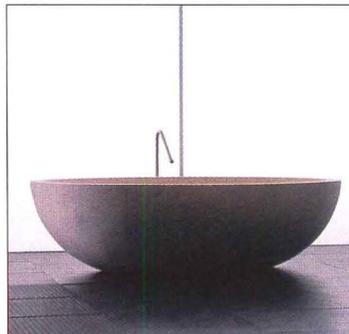
winka dubbeldam
www.archi-tectonics.com

"we like these because their surfaces are very matte and smooth. the design is minimal and elegant."



▶ **the real skinny**
Wet Style's Collection Cube sink earns Dubbeldam's praise for its elegant, flat design. The sinks are fabricated from a refined polyester resin composite containing a combination of natural and synthetic aggregates, the manufacturer says. The 4-inch-high unit comes in various lengths for undermount and above-counter installations. Wet Style, 514.977.3439; www.wetstyle.net.

▲ **fine form**
Dornbracht faucets are a top pick for many architects; Dubbeldam loves them for their "perfect form." The company's collections encompass many styles and mounting options, and all feature cast brass construction and ceramic disk valves. Dornbracht USA, 800.774.1181; www.dornbracht.com.



◀ **italian job**
Boffi offers a complete line of bath and kitchen furnishings that are uniquely Italian. Dubbeldam favors the bath fixtures, which she calls "modern, efficient, and innovative." The manufacturer's repertoire includes streamlined basins and sinks in limestone, ceramic, and stainless steel, as well as the iconic limestone freestanding oval tub. Boffi, 212.431.8282; www.boffi.com.

Photos: portrait courtesy Archi-Tectonics

kieran timberlake associates



▲ ave varia

For resin-based architectural panels, Dubbeldam turns to 3form. The manufacturer claims its Varia collection, made of inter-layers encapsulated within 100 percent “eco-resin,” is free of harmful volatile organic compounds, solvents, and emissions. Panels can be had in 4-by-8- and 4-by-10-foot sheets up to an inch thick. 3form, 800.726.0126; www.3-form.com.

“amazing textures that are usable for many different applications.”



▲ chia roofs

Green Roof Blocks filled with live plant and “growth media” make green roofing as easy as a walk in the park—at higher elevations. Timberlake is a fan because the roof “reduces stormwater runoff, removes pollutants, improves air quality, and provides great insulation.” The modular metal blocks measure 2 feet square. Green Roof Blocks, 314.972.8010; www.greenroofblocks.com.

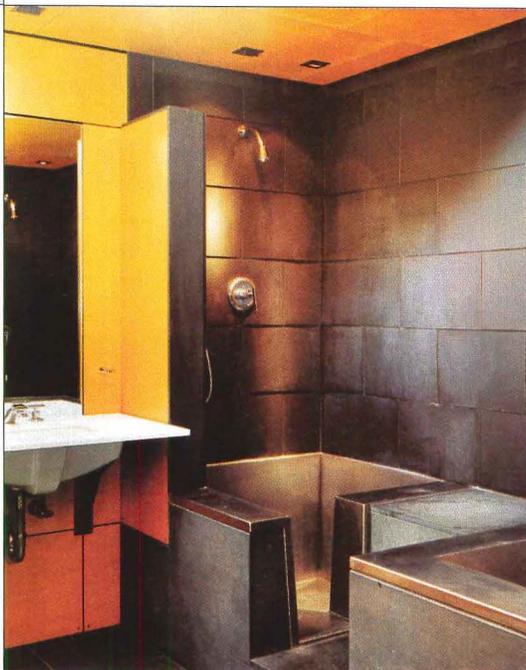


philadelphia

James Timberlake, FAIA
www.kierantimberlake.com

▶ think zink

Timberlake works Rheinzink panels into his designs from top (roofing) to bottom (the zinc-clad bath shown) because “this is a 50- to 100-year material” and “the gray to black color is really nice.” He also feels good about the ecological benefits of the material, which has a life cycle that requires little energy to extract and process, will endure both time and the elements, and is fully recyclable. Rheinzink America, 617.871.6777; www.rheinzink.com.



◀ green ground

InterfaceFlor tiles are made from recycled nylon (except the Spring Planting series made from corn) and can be returned to the company for recycling after use. Timberlake prefers the Sabi pattern and appreciates the flexibility of the 20-inch-square tiles, which can be mixed with different collections or laid in any direction. InterfaceFlor, 866.281.3567; www.interfaceinc.com.

“highly durable and beautiful.”

Photos: portrait by Ed Wheeler; bathroom by Barry Halkin Photography

vetter denk architecture



milwaukee

“offers diversity within a medium.”

john vetter, aia
www.vetterdenk.com

▶ poly morphous

“Accessible and easy to obtain and can be used in a variety of ways,” is how Vetter describes Polygal 100 percent recyclable polycarbonate sheets. He used it on this wine storage building to let light—but not too much light—seep in while keeping weather out. The multi-walled sheets provide high thermal insulation, controlled daylight transmission, and UV protection. Polygal Plastics Industries, 800.537.0095; www.polygal.com.

▲ hard choice

Roseburg’s hardwood plywood with an okoume wood veneer turns a traditional product into modern siding for this Vetter Denk lake house. Pre-finished panels with a UV top coat are available. Request FSC-certified plywood. Roseburg Forest Products, 800.245.1115; www.teamrpf.com.



“simple and clean.”

“we like to find ways to use it beyond even what the manufacturer envisions.”



▲ chicago chameleon

The wall-mounted 445-CP faucet shown in this Vetter Denk bath has been the architect’s preferred spec for years. Vetter touts the “timeless look that meshes well into any interior from industrial to sophisticated.” The fixture features solid brass construction and an adjustable center for easier installation. Chicago Faucets, 847.803.5000; www.chicagofaucets.com.

◀ plain pulls

“There’s a simplicity in all of our specs that works really well with various projects,” says Vetter. That philosophy led him to the elegant easy lines of flat, aluminum pulls by Häfele. Silver-colored anodized is the finish of choice for Vetter, but the company also carries chrome-plated, black, and gold colored polish. Häfele, 800.423.3531; www.hafeleamericas.com/usa.

tigerman mccurry architects



chicago

“all of these products are handsomely but authentically designed, with no extra ornamentation to them.”

*margaret l. mccurry, faia
www.tigerman-mccurry.com*

► no makeup

“I like to use a product that reveals what it is,” says McCurry, explaining her proclivity for specing simple asphalt shingles on a home. The material is economical, long lasting, and readily available. Instead of trying to disguise the shingles as something other than asphalt, McCurry “gives them a twist” by mixing colors into interesting patterns such as this green and gray checkerboard roof. CertainTeed, 800.233.8990; www.certainteed.com.



▲ side ways

Corrugated steel is a “practical, useful material,” says McCurry, “especially when building around the great lakes or ocean, where you get a lot of wind-driven sand.” She specs McElroy raw galvanized steel siding for projects such as this one, but also likes the product painted white and respects the longevity of McElroy’s Kynar 500 coatings. McElroy Metal, 888.245.3696; www.mcelroymetal.com.



◀ straight flush

Philippe Starck’s philosophy of distilling design down to its utilitarian essence finds a follower in McCurry, who chose the Starck 2 toilet for her own home. Wall-mounted or floor standing models are equipped with wash-down or washout flushing. Coordinating sink, tub, shower column, and faucets are presented as part of the Starck 2 series, Duravit, 888.DURAVIT; www.duravit.com.

architects'
choice

albertsson hansen architecture



minneapolis

todd hansen, aia, and
christine albertsson, aia
www.aharchitecture.com

▶ dutch treats

Dutch firm Royal Mosa manufactures traditional ceramic, metal, and glass tiles. For this kitchen, Albertsson Hansen used classic white Trocadero, a glazed ceramic product with beveled edges. "We love the shapes and sizes that [the] line offers, and especially love the tight grout joints and finish of the glazes," Albertsson says. Royal Mosa, 952.938.2599; www.royalmosa.com.



▲ viking conqueror

Viking ranges' combination of form and function has Albertsson Hansen hooked. "We frequently suggest these for projects because of their timeless styling," Albertsson says. The ranges come in gas, dual-fuel, and electric models, with convection baking and porcelain covered cast-iron grates. Viking, 888.845.4641; www.vikingrange.com.



"the price can't be beat."

◀ neat and thrifty

When budgets are tight, Ikea cabinets are a favorite spec among the design crowd. Albertsson Hansen, who used them for this project, is no exception, citing the products' rich design potential. Cabinets feature ¾-inch-thick particleboard, aluminum and tempered glass doors, and nickel-plated hinges. Ikea, 800.434.4532; www.ikea.com.

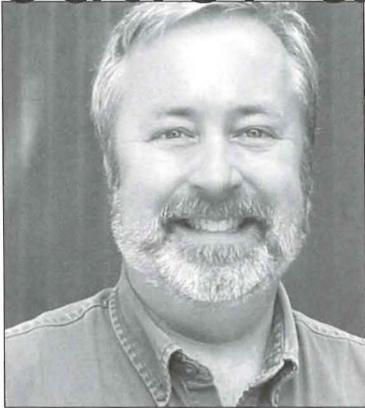
▶ hung over

Albertsson Hansen specs Marvin Windows & Doors "in as many projects as possible," and is especially fond of the Ultimate double hung. The windows feature 4⅞-inch jambs, a range of wood interiors, and clear insulating glass. Exterior options include wood or aluminum-clad. Marvin Windows & Doors, 888.537.7828; www.marvin.com.



Photos: portrait by John Noltner; kitchen by Peter Bastianelli Kerze; cabinets courtesy Albertsson Hansen Architecture

cutler anderson architects



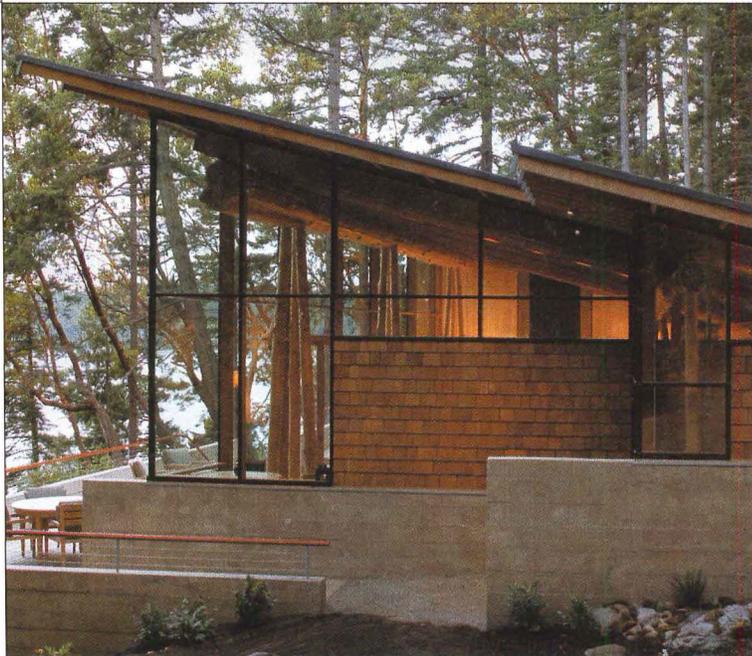
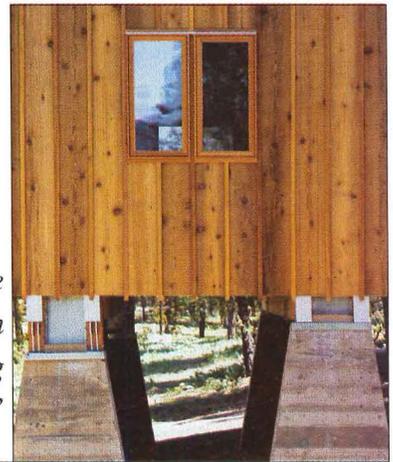
bruce anderson, aia
www.cutler-anderson.com

shingle power

Anderson prefers cedar shingles to skin a building, and his firm now does walls as planes of shingles. The product withstands 130-mph winds, has a high insulation value, and is a renewable resource. For the Long Residence (shown), Anderson clad the wall in 16-inch #1 Blue Label Hard 2 Pole Shingles, 360.987.2562.

bainbridge island, wash.

“we rarely specify concrete without some manipulation of its color, often warming it up with davis colors.”



▲ hint of color

While concrete in its natural gray form is adequate enough, to make it really pop Anderson uses Davis Colors. Mixed into the wet concrete, the colors are lightfast, lime-proof, weather resistant, and formulated to give long-lasting appeal to concrete, the company says. Available in granulated form, liquid pigments, and ready-mix bags. Anderson used Davis for the pine forest cabin shown. Davis Colors, 800.356.4848; www.daviscolors.com.

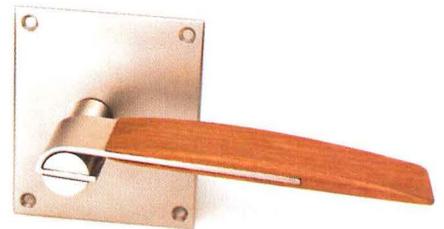


◀ able cable

Wherever Anderson needs a railing, there's usually a view to be captured too. That's why he specs CableRail from Feeney Wire Rope & Rigging, shown on the firm's Paulk Residence. The assemblies are made from 1/8-inch-diameter stainless steel cable and QuickConnect-SS fittings. Feeney Wire Rope & Rigging, 800.888.2418; www.feeneygateway.com.

▶ revealing outfit

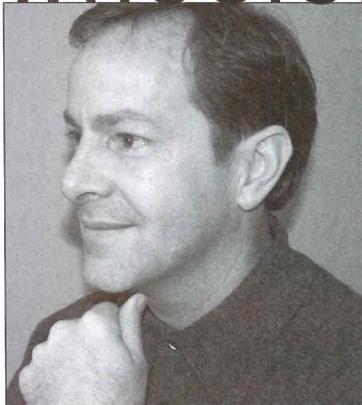
When Cutler Anderson can't find the right product, the architects design it themselves. Working with Reveal Designs, a company that partners with pros to bring products to market, Anderson's firm designed this sandblasted stainless and wood door handle. The lever suits passage or entry doors. Reveal Designs, 914.220.0277; www.reveal-designs.com.



“we've refined this door hardware through trial and error to have clean lines and express the nature of the mechanism usually hidden in a door.”

architects'
choice

wheeler kearns architects

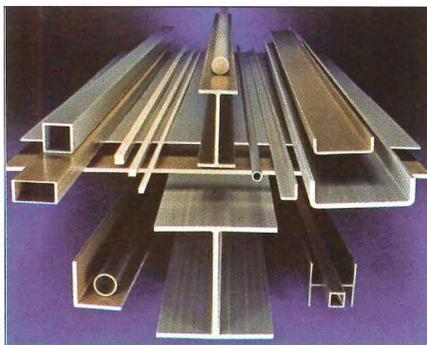


chicago

lawrence p. kearns, aia
www.wkarch.com

► cirque du solera

Where light and privacy are needed, Kearns specs Solera, a high-performance translucent glass glazing system suitable for vertical and overhead applications. He admires its “longevity and high insulation value.” An alternative to conventional plastic-based diffused glazing systems, Solera is shown here on the facade of one of the firm’s projects. Advanced Glazings, 902.794.2899; www.advancedglazings.com.

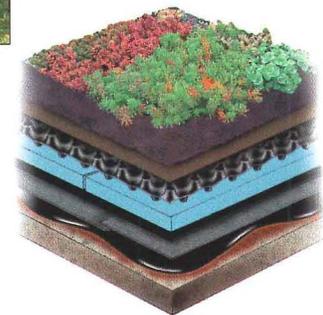


◀ polyester blend

Kearns specs Extren composite structural shapes and plates by Strongwell whenever he wants to reduce thermal bridging. Made from fiberglass reinforcements and thermosetting polyester, the products come in many shapes and are corrosion resistant, strong, lightweight, and dimensionally stable, the manufacturer says. Strongwell, 276.645.8000; www.strongwell.com.

► paradise above

American Hydrotech’s Garden Roof turns a simple flat roof into a garden oasis. The roof provides stormwater management, improves a building’s energy efficiency, processes airborne toxins, and re-oxygenates the air, the manufacturer says. American Hydrotech, 800.877.6125; www.hydrotechusa.com.



“american hydrotech offers one-stop shopping for a warrantable system of intensive or extensive roof gardens.”

“soft under foot but durable.”



▲ walk the cork

For environmentally friendly, durable, and good-looking flooring, Kearns chooses cork. Expanko, his preferred supplier, produces a floating floor laminated with medium density fiberboard and available in 12-by-36-inch planks or a range of tiles in dimensions up to 12 by 36 or 24 by 24 inches. Finished with a water-based polyurethane or a natural carnauba wax. Expanko, 610.593.3000; www.expanko.com.

stelle architects



bridgehampton, n.y.

frederick stelle, aia
www.stelleco.com

► go configure

Arcadia sliding aluminum doors and windows offer Stelle “great flexibility in mixing different sizes and types of windows together.” He also touts the company’s ability to produce a single piece of glazing up to 10 feet long. Curtain walls, sliding doors, transoms, and more can be finished in dark bronze or clear anodized and painted bronze or white. Optional thermal breaks and hurricane resistance. Arcadia Architectural Products, 800.423.6565; www.arcadia-products.com.



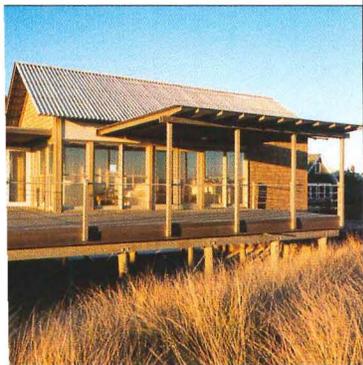
*“stylish and durable—
set it and forget it.”*

“cut and fit to size and very cost effective.”



▲ sturdy shell

“We tailor our specs to living in this climate,” says Long Island native Stelle. He likes Hardipanel because they require no prep and stand up to wind-driven sand and salt. As in the application shown, Stelle leaves the panels the way they come, with PrimePlus sealer and primer. James Hardie, 888.542.7343; www.jameshardie.com.



◀ concrete cover

Stelle specs corrugated concrete roofing for coastal projects like this one. “Anything out here turns to gray, so I like to use gray,” he says. “And the corrugation is allegorical waves.” The lightweight, cellulose-reinforced cement board withstands high winds and corrosion. Dansk Eternit distributed in the U.S. by Cement Board Fabricators, 800.366.5378; www.deh.dk.

► bud light

For a “solar powered light fixture that’s really cool-looking,” look no further. Stelle admires the unapologetically simple design of Luceplan’s Solar Bud and the ease of simply sticking it in the ground. The little light measures 0.6 inches in diameter and 15 inches in height, and it automatically turns on as the sun sets. Luceplan, 212.989.6265; www.luceplan.com.



Photos: portrait courtesy Fred Stelle; exteriors by Jeff Heatley

shope reno wharton associates



greenwich, conn.

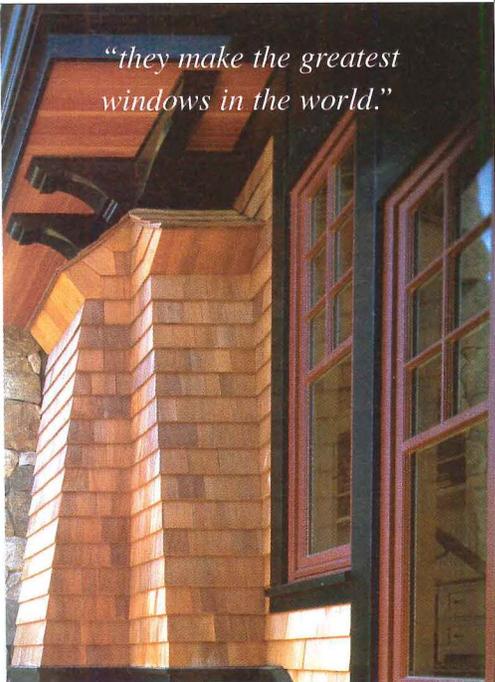
*"it's recycled and texturally be
and basically lasts fo*

allan Shope, aia
www.shoperenowharton.com

► back-up plan

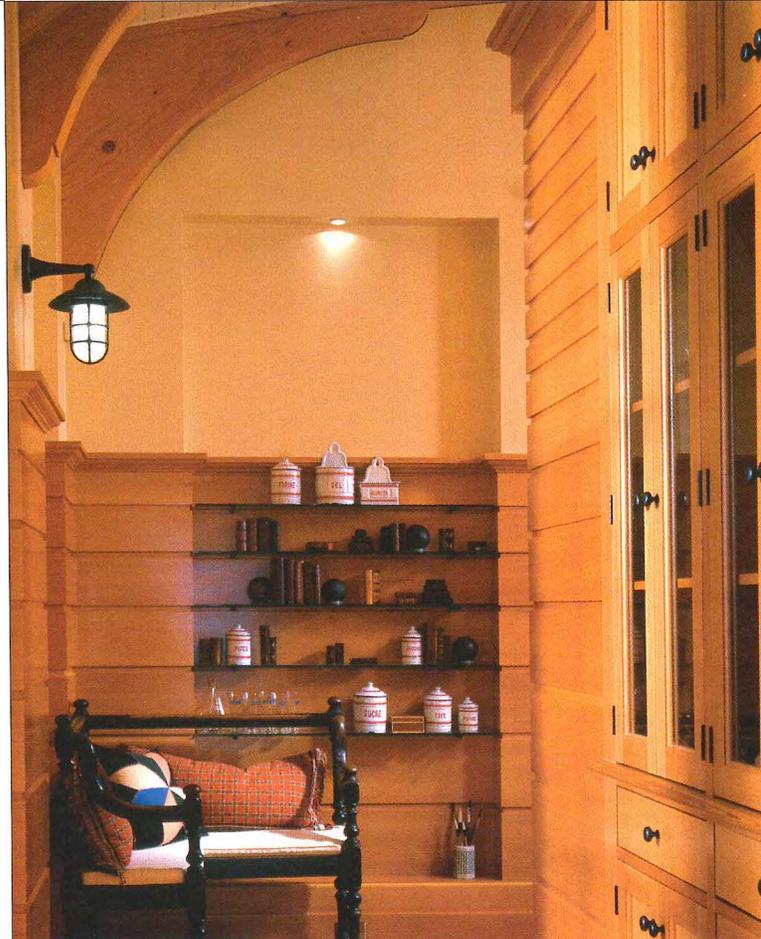
Fairfield Woodworks takes the wood left over after veneers are sliced off and recycles it into wainscoting and other trim materials. Shope favors vertical grain, old growth Douglas fir for producing inspired exterior and interior finishes such as this graduated horizontal hallway treatment. Fairfield Woodworks, 203.380.9842.

*"they make the greatest
windows in the world."*



▲ favorite Sohn

Shope applauds Tischler und Sohn's "consistently good products" and its steadfast service. "We give them shop drawings and they send us windows that fit, with no leaking or other problems," Shope says. The company offers an array of species and configurations. Shope is fond of the mahogany casement windows (shown in one of his projects). Tischler und Sohn, 800.282.9911; www.tischlerwindows.com.



◀ foam home

Shope credits Icynene's soft foam insulation system with a dramatic decrease in leaking and ice damming challenges. "On an energy level it makes a lot of difference, as well as on a maintenance level," he says. The water-based, environmentally friendly material is sprayed into a cavity and then expands to 100 times its original volume. Icynene, 800.758.7325; www.icynene.com.

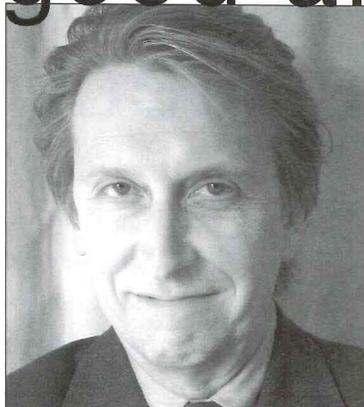
Photos: portrait by Charles Steck; hallway and windows by Durston Saylo

good architecture



▲ **floor encore**
Paris Ceramics antique limestone floors reclaimed from French chateaus or Jerusalem courtyards frequently find their way into Shope's Connecticut houses. The company searches out old stone floors and cleans and sorts them to fit today's homes. Paris Ceramics, 212.664.2782; www.parisceramics.com.

▼ **good cover**
Temple-Inland's 95-to-99-percent recycled content drywall "is an overlooked product," says Shope. For the "same cost and performance" as normal drywall, architects and builders can spec this eco-friendly alternative. Temple-Inland, 800.262.5512; www.temple.com.



annapolis, md.

wayne l. good, faia
www.goodarchitecture.com

► **weather not**
You can never overestimate the harsh impact of coastal weather on a house, warns Good. That's why he specs Dover's custom wood windows and doors (shown in this Maryland project). Laminated cores give the doors dimensional stability; the windows feature insulated glass, mortise-and-tenon sashes, and two layers of weather-stripping. Dover Windows and Doors, 302.349.5070; www.doverwindows.com.

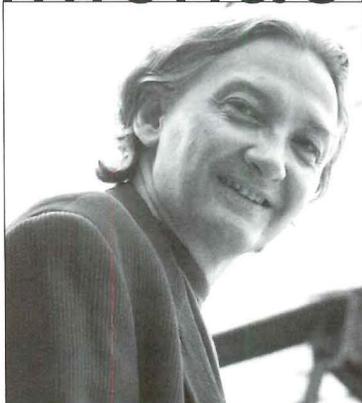


◀ **cuisine supreme**
Good proclaims LaCanche Ranges "both excellent and beautiful" and a must-have for serious cooks. Produced in the Burgundy region of France, the units come in several sizes with removable searing grills and griddle plates, plate-warming cabinets, and external rotisseries. The 18,000-BTU burners "give an intensity of heat and control that is unsurpassed," adds Good. Choose from 10 colors. LaCanche, 800.570.2433; www.lacancheusa.com.

"satisfyingly 'tight,' with an evenness of heat that's a joy to bake with."

Photos: portrait courtesy Good Architecture; exterior by Celia Pearson

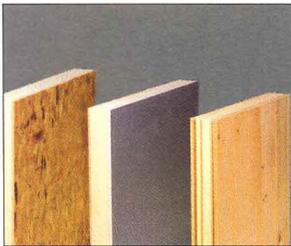
michael mcdonough architect



new york city

“engineered lumber’s answer to all the warped, wet, poorly cut, steroid-laced junk that passes for framing these days.”

michael mcdonough
www.michaelmcdonough.com



▲ panel decision

The structural insulated panel (SIP) is one of McDonough’s favorite products. Composed of foam insulation sandwiched between two sheets of oriented strand board, SIPs create a tight home and save lumber. Winter Panel offers a range of products in 4½-inch and 6½-inch thicknesses. Winter Panel Home Construction, 802.254.3435; www.winterpanel.com.

“an american innovation that competes with any advanced building system anywhere.”

▶ golden lumbers

As the quality of solid framing lumber declines, McDonough chooses Trus Joist’s TimberStrand engineered products. Made from laminated strand lumber, the framing members do not twist and are free of knots, the company says. “It’s all perfect all the time,” says McDonough. Trus Joist, 866.859.6757; www.trusjoist.com.



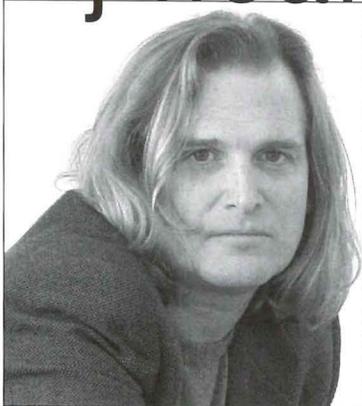
◀ coup de grass

Smith & Fong bamboo flooring is “beautiful and strong as an ox,” McDonough says. Made from laminated strips of what is essentially a grass, the product comes in unfinished or pre-finished formats measuring 3¾ by 75 inches. Finished products are available in natural and amber. Smith & Fong, 866.835.9859; www.plyboo.com.

▶ moore please

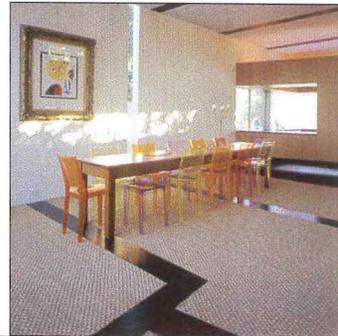
McDonough’s passion for sustainable building extends to his use of Benjamin Moore’s Pristine Eco-Spec paints. The low-odor, water-based paint provides high hiding, excellent touch-up, and a uniform flat finish, the manufacturer says. Offered in flat, eggshell, and semi-gloss. Benjamin Moore, 201.573.9600; www.benjaminmoore.com.

mj neal architects



austin, texas

*“easy on the feet
and easy to clean.”*

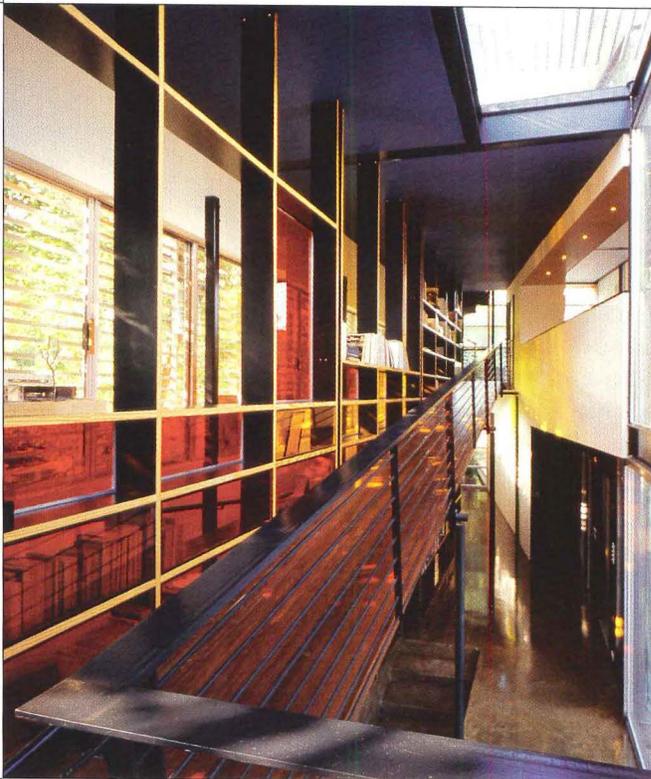


*mj neal, aia
www.mjneal.com*

▶ wood care

The folks at Everwood Decking actually “go to Brazil to make sure the mill is really certified for sustainability,” which is crucial with an exotic hardwood such as Ipé, says Neal. He relies on the wood’s density and structural properties to bridge longer distances. In this house, he used a 3½-inch-thick piece that spans 12 feet up a ramp. Everwood Decking, 512.929.7005; www.ipe-wood.com.

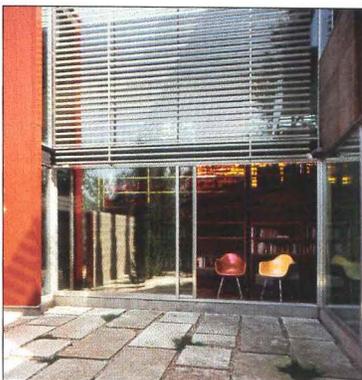
*“it has a bit of play
and roughness to give it
liveliness and charm.”*



▲ re-tired

Old tires reincarnated into Tuflex flooring find their way into a lot of Neal’s architecture, as shown. “I really like it for kitchens,” he says, adding, “If you drop a dish, it probably won’t break.” Available since the 1950s, these time-tested smooth square tiles measure 2 by 2 feet. More than 16 colors are stocked; Neal likes black. Tuflex, 800.543.0290; www.tuflex.com.

*chemistry at
best, with
emphasis on
performance,
availability,
dependability,
quick occupancy,
and healthy
environments.”*



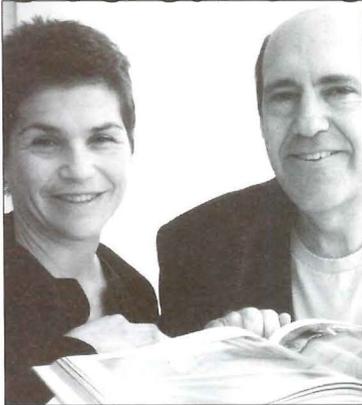
◀ tall guarantee

Neal swears by the oversized aluminum doors from Peterson Architectural Products and so does the company, which bolsters its reputation with a five-year warranty. When Neal first started using the doors, Peterson provided the only guarantee around for the 8- to 10-foot-tall sliders he uses. Other advantages include easy operation, insulated glass, and the ability to mix fixed glass with operable panels, as shown in this Neal design. Peterson Window, 800.521.7932; www.petersonwindow.com.

Photos: portrait by Kirk Tuck; interiors and exteriors by Joe Pettyjohn

architects'
choice

stuart cohen & julie hacker architects



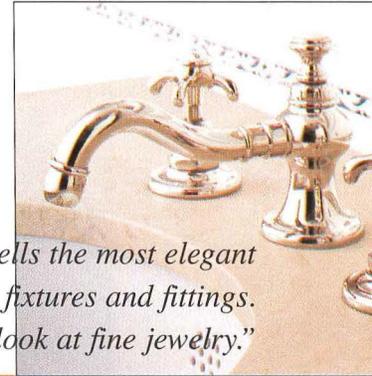
julie hacker and stuart cohen, faia
www.cohen-hacker.com

▶ pella appeal

“Well-engineered and nicely crafted” are just some of the plaudits Cohen Hacker gives the Pella Architect Series windows (shown in one of the firm’s houses). “The windows have the best-looking sticking and beading in the industry,” adds Cohen. Products have mortise-and-tenon construction, exterior-grade glue, and metal fasteners. Pella Windows & Doors, 641.621.1000; www.pella.com.

evanston, ill.

“waterworks makes and sells the most elegant vintage style plumbing fixtures and fittings. visiting their stores is like going to look at fine jewelry.”



▲ euro current

Waterworks’ faucets remind the husband-and-wife team of the bathrooms in London’s Savoy Hotel. Little wonder: The products feature authentic European design and detailing, along with solid brass construction and ceramic disk cartridges. Etoile lav faucets have *chaud-* and *froid-*marked indices and dew-drop cross handles. Waterworks, 800.998.2284; www.waterworks.com.

◀ open invitation

Designer Doors makes custom garage doors to fit design specifications, but Cohen Hacker finds the company’s standard lines equally well made. Shown on a Cohen-Hacker project, the doors include solid 1½-inch Douglas fir frames, polystyrene insulation, and Western red cedar or medium density overlay plywood fronts. Designer Doors, 715.426.1100; www.designerdoors.com.

▶ strong turn

Cohen Hacker appreciates the quality of a good door handle. The firm’s first choice for hardware is Estate Collection lock and levers from Baldwin Hardware. The solid forged brass knobs are pick-resistant, saw-proof, and kick-proof, the manufacturer says. Numerous finishes are available. Baldwin Hardware, 800.566.1986; www.baldwinhardware.com.



“well-made and beautifully finished.”



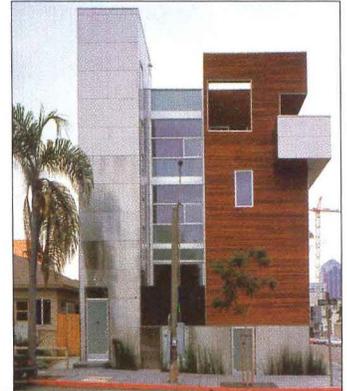
Photos: portrait courtesy Cohen-Hacker Architects; exteriors by Jon Miller/Hedrich Blessing

ms-31



la jolla, calif.

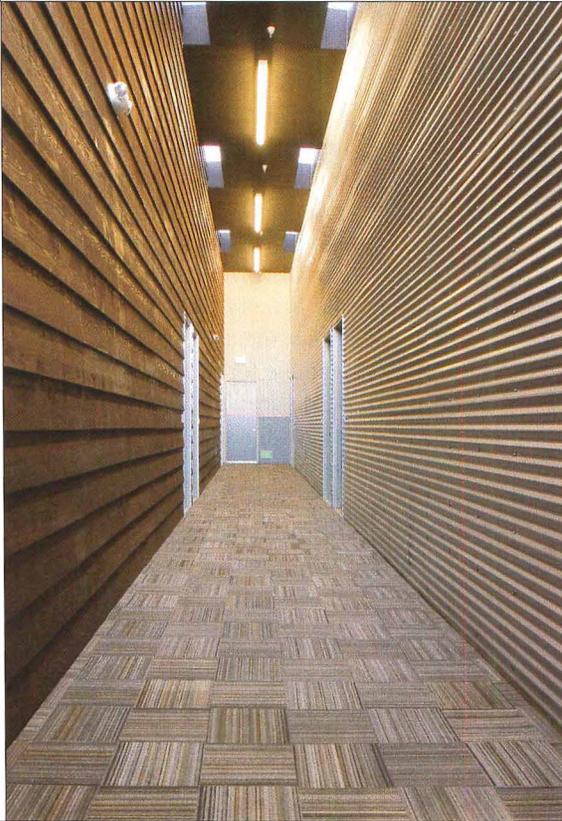
“long lasting and has a great modern look.”



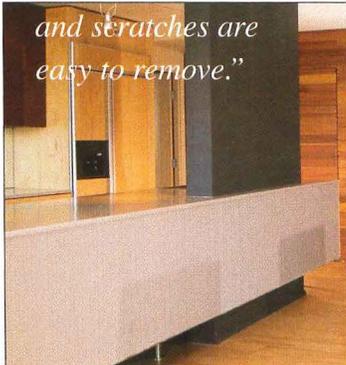
sebastian mariscal
www.ms-31.com

▶ the wheel reinvented

“We used them in the hallways of this apartment building to absorb and reduce noise,” says Mariscal of Roppe rubber tiles. The firm also values the product’s industrial look for its contemporary architecture. Made from recycled tires, the 12-inch-by-12-inch tiles come in pine, crimson, indigo, and earthtone (shown). Roppe, 800.537.9527; www.roppe.com.



“we like this material because it’s translucent, can be custom sized, and scratches are easy to remove.”



◀ solid pretender

For this refined kitchen remodel, Mariscal speced Frosted Glass solid surfaces, part of Avonite’s Studio Collection. Inspired by the trend to bring commercial kitchens into the home, this series emulates glass, concrete, and metal. Solid and variegated styles come in a range of funky textures and colors, with some using recycled content. Avonite Surfaces, 800.354.9858; www.avonite surfaces.com.

▲ shiny side up

Mariscal chose stainless steel siding for his urban home because of its durability, low maintenance, and cool contrast to warm wood siding. “It creates a unique look,” he says, adding, “It also aligns with the concept of a light architectural expression.” Ideal Mechanical, 619.449.6116.



▲ sliding high

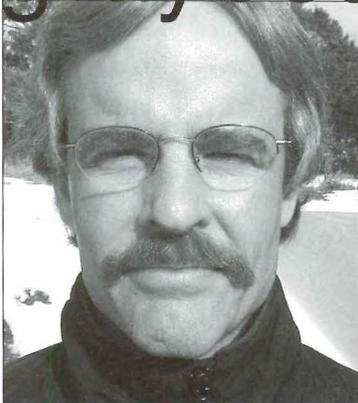
Mariscal literally elevates sliding doors to a new level, raising them about 3 feet above the floor to create 8-foot-square operable windows. High ceilings (shown in these lofts by ms-31) are vital for this door-to-window maneuver. “They are great because they provide huge windows that open,” says Mariscal. And he likes that these expanded views are available on a budget. Milgard’s aluminum patio doors come with low-E glass and mechanically joined corners that stay square and dry. Milgard Windows, 800.Milgard; www.milgard.com.

Photos: portrait, interiors, and sliding doors by Roberto Zeballos; stainless exterior by Hisao Suzuki

architects'
choice

graybeal architects

“sandhill’s recycled glass tiles come in many wonderful colors and in matte or glossy finishes.”



carbondale, colo.

doug graybeal, aia
www.graybealarchitects.com

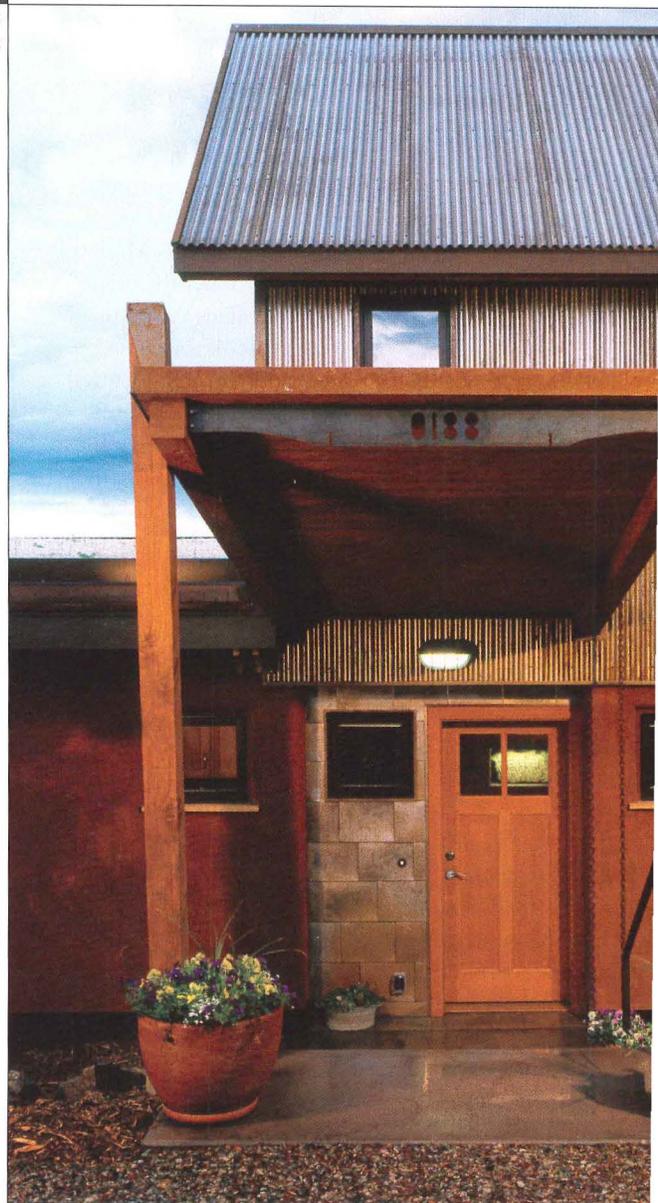
► lime twist

Graybeal specs Le Décor lime plaster for its beauty and its ability to be repaired if damaged. Using centuries-old techniques, the product is made from natural lime and is free of acrylics and resins, the company says. Suitable for interior or exterior applications, the product is shown here on a Graybeal project. TransMineral USA, 707.769.0661; www.transmineralusa.com.

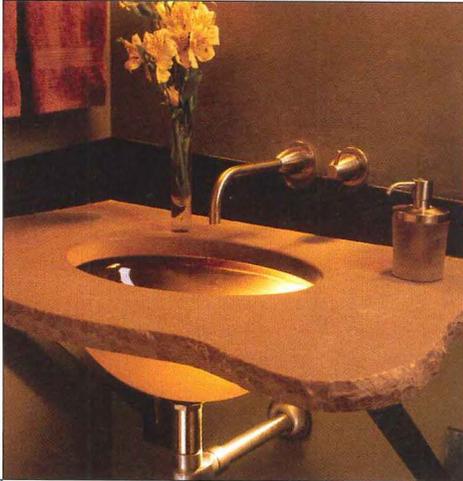


▲ color wash

Graybeal admires the translucency and depth that glass tiles offer. His preferred supplier is Sandhill Industries, which fabricates tiles in numerous colors and sizes and from 100 percent recycled material. The company’s 4-by-4-inch field tiles are shown in this Graybeal bath. Sandhill Industries, 208.345.6508; www.sandhillind.com.



Photos: portrait courtesy Graybeal Architects; interiors and exteriors by Sud Meier

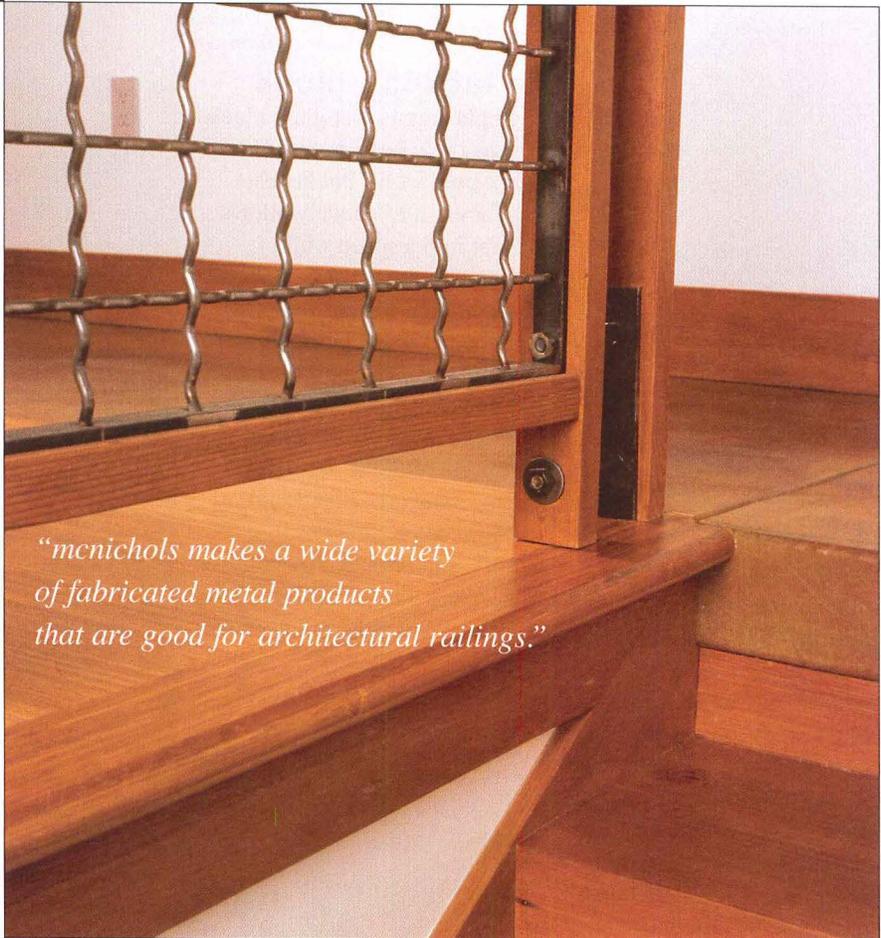


◀ best in glass

To brighten up the baths he designs (such as the one shown), Graybeal specs colored sinks from Vitraform. Also available for freestanding or above-counter installations, the sinks are made from a double layer of laminated glass. Bowls come in two shapes and 12 colors. Vitraform, 888.338.5725; www.vitraform.com.

▶ holey rail

Perforated metal may not be the most exciting material, but a skillful architect can bring it to life, as Graybeal did in this stair rail. His preferred spec comes from McNichols, which offers myriad metal products for architectural applications. The company says the products are lightweight, economical, and easily customized. Choose from numerous hole patterns, gauges, materials, and sizes. McNichols, 813.282.3828; www.mcnichols.com.



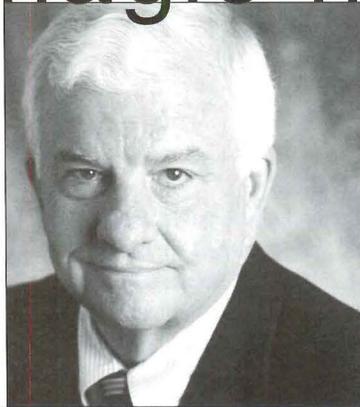
“mcnichols makes a wide variety of fabricated metal products that are good for architectural railings.”

◀ paper work

Paper is no longer just a disposable commodity. Graybeal uses Richlite’s paper-based surfacing in architectural applications. Made from resin-treated paper that is pressed and baked into solid sheets, the material resists heat and stains, the company says. Although the product will scratch, it can be sanded, Graybeal says. “A protective coat is recommended.” Choose from seven colors. Richlite, 888.383.5533; www.richlite.com.



nagle hartray danker kagan mckay penney



chicago

James I. Nagle, FAIA
www.nhdkmp.com

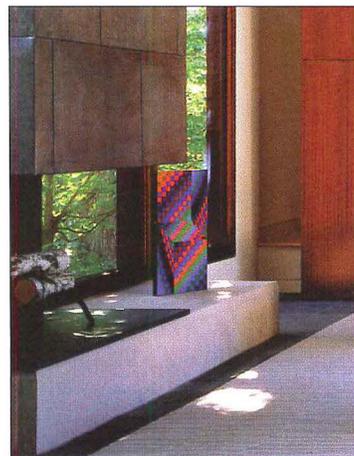
▶ tackling block

Nagle admits that glass block “has often been overused or not used well,” but he also believes it effectively allows light into a space while maintaining privacy. He specified it for this house as a geometric backdrop to a metal stair. Pittsburgh Corning manufactures the blocks in an assortment of patterns, shapes, and sizes. The company recently introduced colored blocks in blue, pink, and bronze. Pittsburgh Corning, 724.327.6100; www.pittsburghcorning.com.



▲ essential oil

Penofin natural wood oil provides the finishing touch for Nagle’s trademark custom sunscreens that “become an extension of the residence, but work to control the sun penetration,” Nagle explains. The Brazilian Rosewood oil penetrates wood, hardening and protecting individual fibers. Because the sunscreen on Nagle’s own home “forms an outdoor room and completes the composition of the structure,” he specs Penofin in a natural finish to maintain the wood’s original hues. Penofin, 800.PENOFIN; www.penofin.com.



◀ fire brand

“We often use lead-coated copper on the exterior of residences and inside to make a fireplace enclosure [shown in this NHDKMP house],” says Nagle. According to the Copper Development Association, copper is the most recycled engineered metal today. Copper Development Association, 212.251.7200; www.copper.org.

“it affords continuity and can be shaped a number of ways.”

Photos: portrait by Brian Fritz; staircase by Howard Kaplan; fireplace by Bruce Van Inwegen; exterior by Hedrich Blessing

michael g. imber, architect



san antonio

michael imber, aia
www.michaeltgimber.com



▲ cool disguise
Nagle specs Sub-Zero refrigerator drawers “when the kitchen is part of the living room or other more formal spaces.” He appreciates the subtlety of the drawers, which can be integrated completely into the cabinetry and fitted with matching custom fronts. Part of Sub-Zero’s 700 series, the drawers are 27 inches wide, 24 inches deep, and come as a set of two drawers that can be configured in any combination of refrigerator and freezer. Sub-Zero, 800.222.7820; www.subzero.com.

► flex tile

“It works well stylistically in a broad range of projects,” says Imber of Ann Sacks 1x1 glass mosaic tiles in the Beaulieu line. “We use it in our traditional work to give a contemporary edge or in modern homes.” Tiles come attached to 12³/₄-by-12³/₄-inch netted sheets. Colors can be monolithic, such as the arctic white shown here in Imber’s work, or in blends. The frost-resistant tile works for pool surrounds and interior applications. Ann Sacks, 800.278.8453; www.annsacks.com.



▲ voc this way
VOC emissions have never been an issue for Farrow & Ball paints and coordinating wallpapers. Imber says the pigments are “so pure that you get true color saturation, with the effect of changing hues throughout the day.” The company has used a raw material formula for its paints and wallpapers for more than 100 years. Farrow & Ball, 845.369.4912; www.farrow-ball.com.

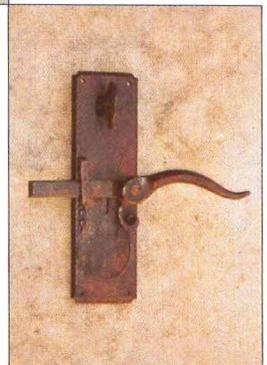


◀ new depths

Imber used Deep Landing’s handcrafted fixtures for his own house. Although traditional in form, the products have a “twist that indicates a new look for our generation.” Deep Landing Workshop, 877.778.4042; www.deeplandingworkshop.com.

► action hero

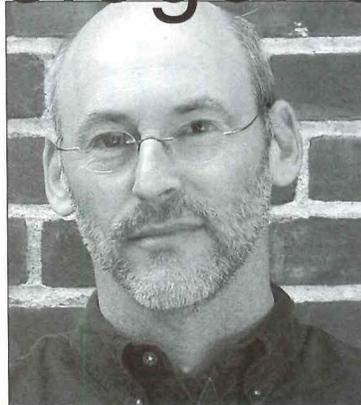
Strike-bar spring latches hand-forged by Hardware Renaissance have Imber “enamored.” The centuries-old mechanisms “create a fun interaction between user and home.” Hardware Renaissance, 505.983.2644; www.hardwarerenaissance.com.



Photos: portrait and tiles courtesy Michael G. Imber, Architect

architects'
choice

siegel & strain architects



emeryville, calif.

henry siegel, faia
www.siegelstrain.com

► ash decision

Siegel substitutes fly ash for cement in about half of the firm's concrete installations. "We started using it because it was green, and we use more of it now because it slows the curing time, leading to less porous and stronger concrete," he says. Fly ash comes from waste produced by coal-fueled power plants. "Plus," says Siegel, "most local concrete suppliers carry it and contractors like working with it more." Headwaters Resources, 800.236.6236; www.flyash.com.



◀ yesterday's news

"We like natural materials—we try to avoid petroleum or plastics in our products," says Siegel, explaining his firm's switch to Cocoon insulation made from old newspapers. The insulation can be sprayed in wet or blown in dry, is fire resistant, and comes with a lifetime warranty. U.S. GreenFiber, 888.592.7684; www.cocooninsulation.com.



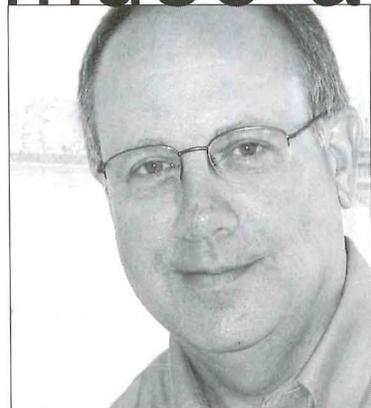
▲ bread winner

What better endorsement for a product recycled from discarded wheat stalks than "it smells like bread when you cut it"! Wheat straw engineered with formaldehyde-free, emissions-free synthetic resin produces a lightweight board the company says is harder and more moisture resistant than other particleboards and MDF. In addition to cabinetry and furniture, Siegel also specs wheat board as a wall finish material, as shown in this cabin. PrimeBoard, 701.642.1152; www.primeboard.com.



"we try to balance green materials with things that don't have to be shipped."

muse architects

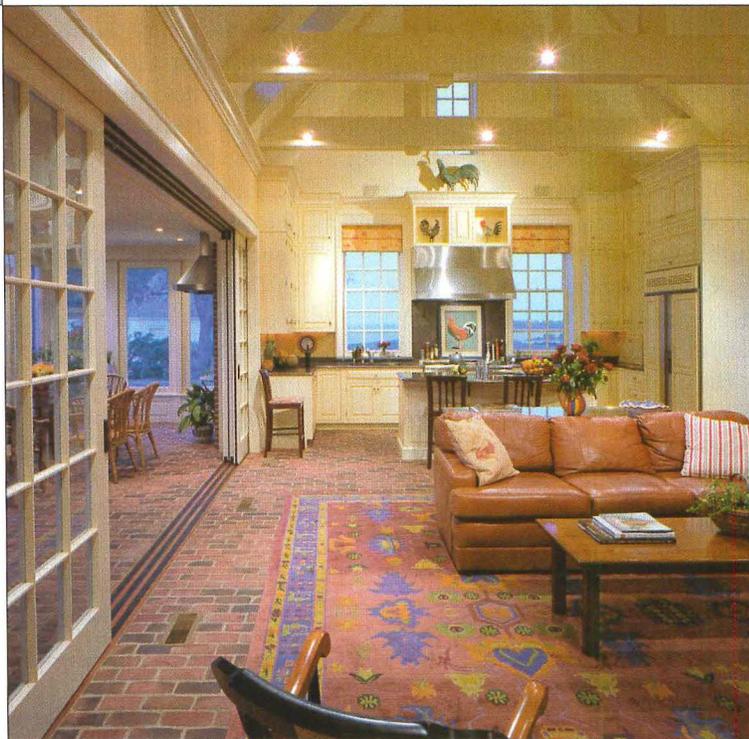


washington, d.c.

stephen muse, faia
www.musearchitects.com

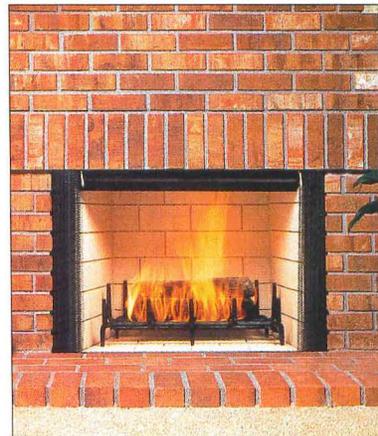
► inside slider

To create space within a space, Muse opts for G-U Hardware's Lift/Slide hardware system. Shown in a firm project, the system permits the "effortless opening of multiple sets of large pocket doors," says Muse. Parts are made from steel and zinc die casting. G-U Hardware, 757.877.9020; www.g-u.com.

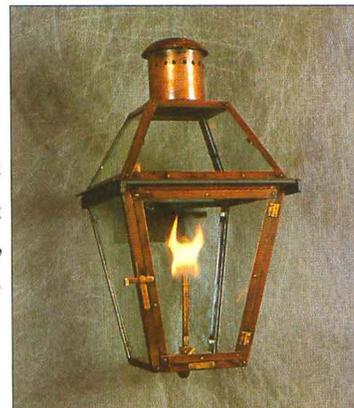


◀ big box

When tight budgets or field conditions prevent Muse from specing a true masonry fireplace, he turns to Lennox Hearth Products' Superior TM-4500 prefabricated box and flue. The 45-inch-wide clean-faced product is one of the largest in the industry, the manufacturer claims. A realistic brick interior houses the 2-foot firebox. Lennox Hearth Products, 714.921.6000; www.lennoxhearthproducts.com.



"classic in proportion and extremely well-made."



▲ light touch

Muse gives high praise for Bevolo Lights, which makes gas and electric antique and traditional lighting. Fashioned from copper and brass, fixtures may be adapted from the some of the company's popular designs or built to exacting custom specs. Bevolo Gas and Electric Lights, 504.522.9485; www.bevolo.com.

welcome

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signs

by meghan drueding

cross purposes

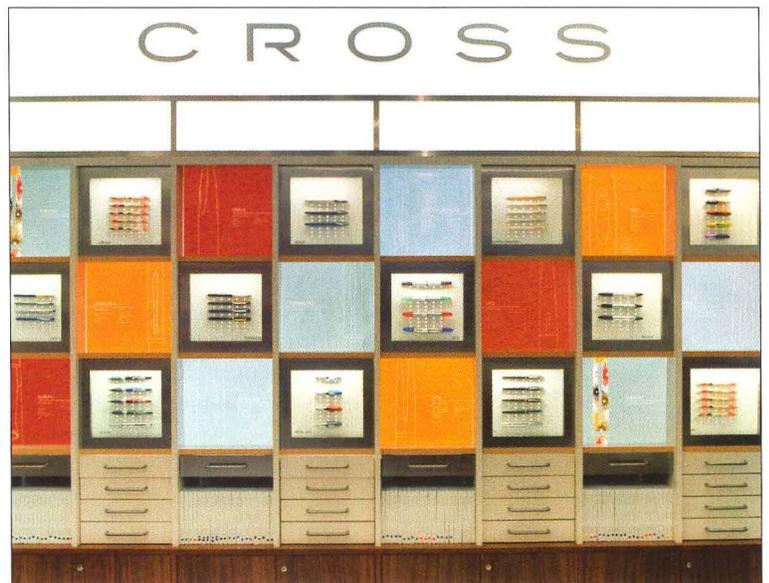
The ascent of the big-box retailer hasn't been kind to elite writing instrument makers like the A.T. Cross Co. "With the demise of the small stationery store and the rise of the superstore, Cross had lost control of the way its product was presented," says Boston architect David Hacin, AIA. As part of its rebranding and repositioning strategy, the company hired his firm to design a prototype store for its products, which include pens, writing pads, and small leather goods.

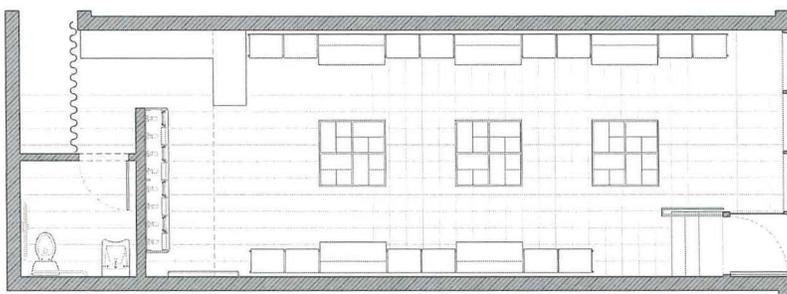
Having already designed several shops for the skin-care company Fresh, Hacin knew the value of a space that can easily adapt to varying product lines and presentation formats. His Cross store, on Harvard Square in Cambridge, Mass., consists of three main elements: a "pen wall" displaying the company's signature product in a colorful, well-lit grid; a "bookcase wall" containing individual desk vignettes; and a bin in the middle of the

store showcasing writing accessories. Much of the shelving can be pulled out and reconfigured, and in the pen wall the colored acrylic panels flip to reveal a different color on the reverse side.

Materials reminiscent of mid-century Modern design (laminates, terrazzo tiled floors, steel, and wood) enhance Cross's overall message, as do furnishings inspired by the same era. "That whole mid-century period was very functional and utilitarian," says Lily Gordon, president of Cross Retail Ventures. "A lot of what we're offering today is about utility and lifestyle." For his part, Hacin likens his store design to a custom-home commission. "In private residential work, we do a lot of custom-built furniture to organize people's stuff. This store is doing just that—it's organizing product in a clear, modern way." Now it's doing so in two places: A second version of the prototype just opened in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

The highlight of the Cross store's design, a colorful "pen wall" at the back of the space, is pointedly visible from the street.





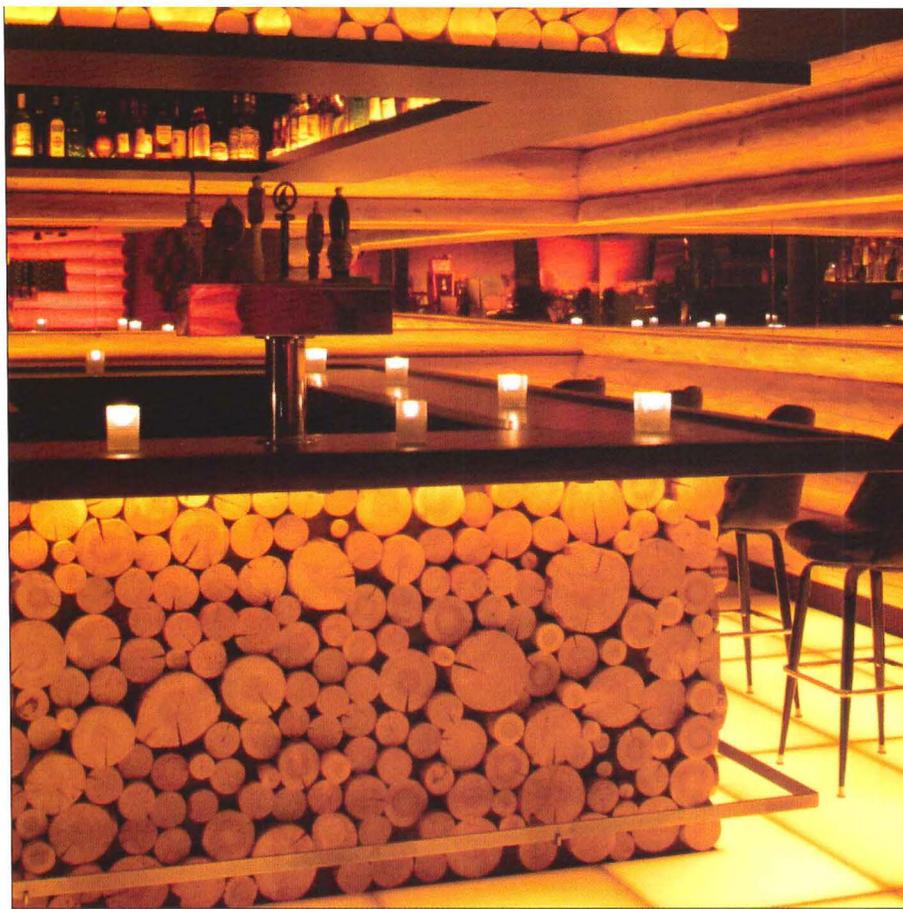
project: Cross Retail Store, Cambridge, Mass.
architect: Hacin + Associates, Boston
contractor: Shawmut Design and Construction, Boston
project size: 600 square feet
construction cost: Withheld
photos: Bob O'Connor

welcome signs

log haven

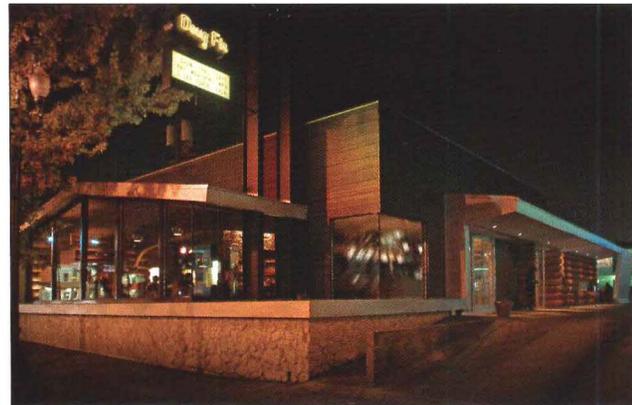
When Jeff Kovel left his first job out of architecture school, at a firm that designed high-end log homes in Telluride, Colo., little did he know the log cabin motif would reappear later in his career. After nine years spent working on hip, contemporary residential and commercial projects, the Portland, Ore.-based architect designed Doug Fir, a restaurant, lounge, and music venue heavy on hunting-lodge imagery. “The primary move was to take the log cabin style and translate it into a modern, sophisticated way of detailing,” he says.

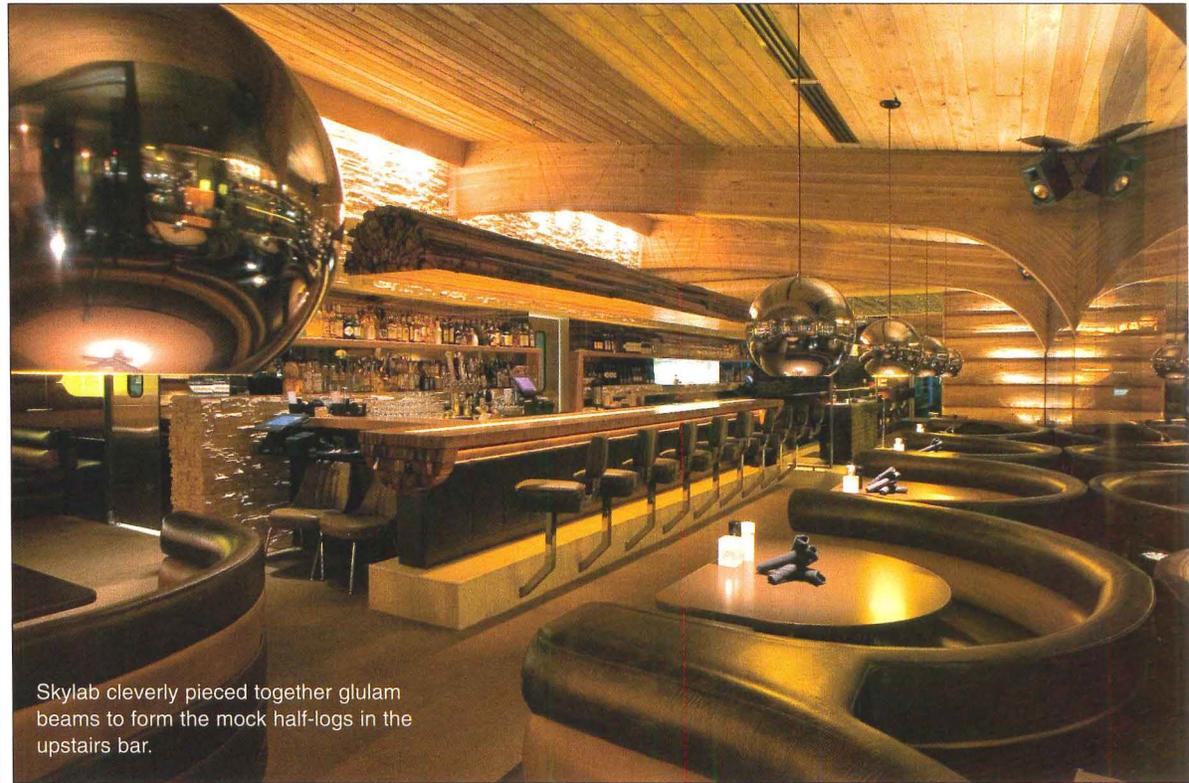
He didn’t have to work hard to convince his client. Kovel, AIA, owns Doug Fir himself, along with a couple of friends. The group saw potential in the dilapidated first floor and basement of a renovated Portland hotel, and once they came up with a name and concept the materials palette and design details came together. A tree farm in Canada supplied them with the 2,700 linear feet of Douglas fir logs needed to clad the 9,000-square-foot interior. The glass and metal detailing provides a modern



edge, while cultured stone and faux fur elements enhance the hearthside atmosphere. Salvaged building parts—including barstools, honeycomb ceiling lighting, and the log slices that cover the downstairs bar—help the space to retain its retro feel. And the uneven textures of the wood help absorb excess sound during music performances, a trick that Kovel learned working on a home studio for singer Lenny Kravitz while with another firm. “The past and future collide in this project,” the architect says. “We tried to create a sort of in-between vocabulary that wouldn’t necessarily exist anywhere else.” In other words, Doug Fir gives patrons exactly what they’re looking for when they go out at night—a haven from the real world.

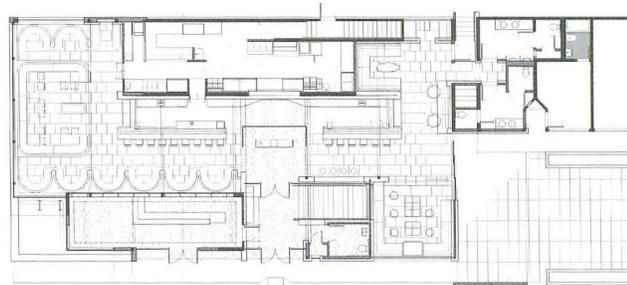
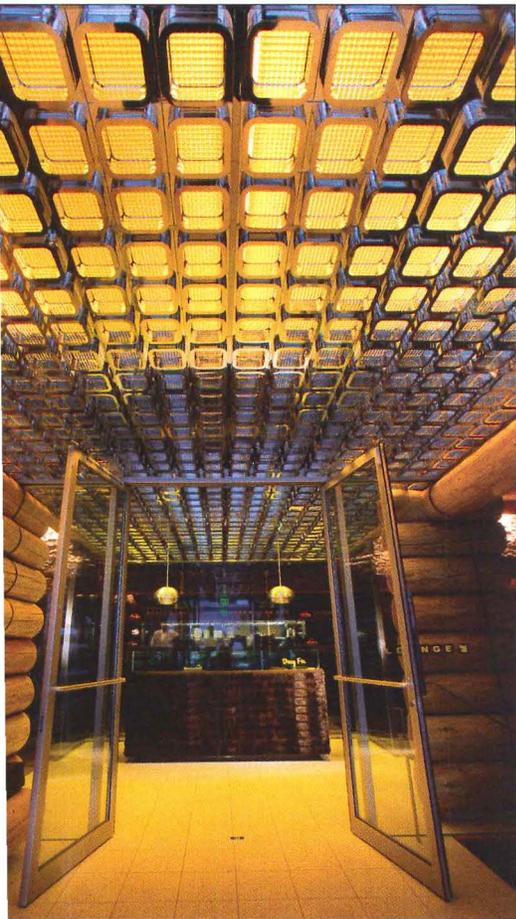
The imagery of Route 66 and Googie coffee shops influenced Doug Fir’s design. “We wanted to do a contemporary play on 1960s motels,” says architect Jeff Kovel of Skylab Design.



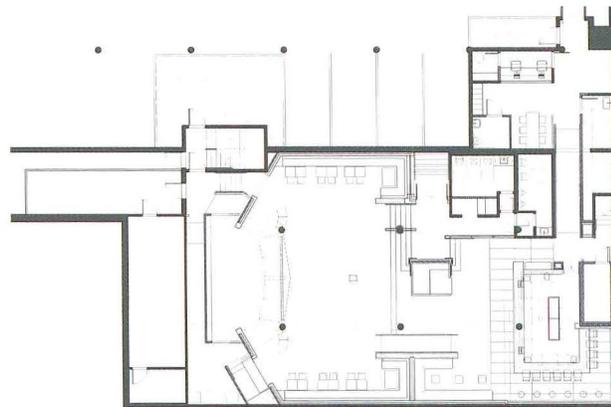


Skylab cleverly pieced together glulam beams to form the mock half-logs in the upstairs bar.

Basil Childers



main floor



lower floor

project: Doug Fir, Portland, Ore.
architect: Skylab Design, Portland
contractor: White Dog Construction, Portland
project size: 9,000 square feet
construction cost: Withheld
photos: Steve Cridland, except where noted

welcome signs

in salsa veritas

At 150 square feet, Big Ten Burrito is a tiny space. But the Ann Arbor, Mich., eatery carves out an identity with some deft design moves by local firm PLY Architecture. First and foremost, principals Karl Daubmann and Craig Borum, AIA, selected FinnForm, a red resin-coated plywood product, for the walls. “Because of the project’s small size, we needed something uniform to define the space,” says Borum. The red walls do that—and they also help draw the attention of pedestrian passers-by.

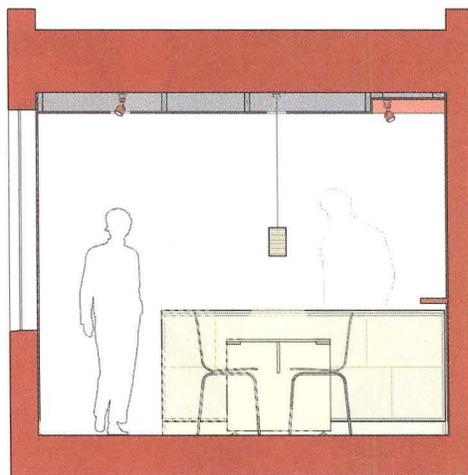
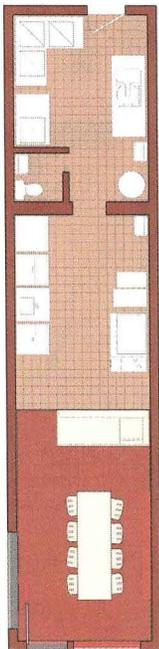
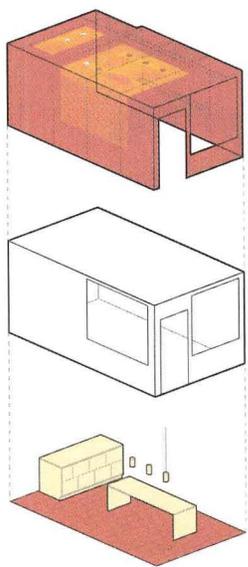
Custom plywood screens layered over the ceiling and side window accomplish several goals in one swoop. The Computerized Numerical Control-milled screens block the view of the restaurant next door and hide the mechanicals overhead. The factory process used to cut the 1/4-inch-thick pieces of wood produced relatively little waste. And the screens’ warm color and groovy wave pattern turns an ordinary takeout place into a space with a strong visual impact. PLY also employed

Humble plywood takes on a central importance at Big Ten Burrito, covering the takeout counter and walls with eye-catching dips and curves.



the CNC process to carve subtle curves into the plywood tiles covering the takeout counter, as well as the wood rings that stack to create cylindrical lamp shades. “With the lamps, if you cut the plywood thin enough, it starts to glow,” Daubmann says. “A CNC machine allows those types of tolerances.”

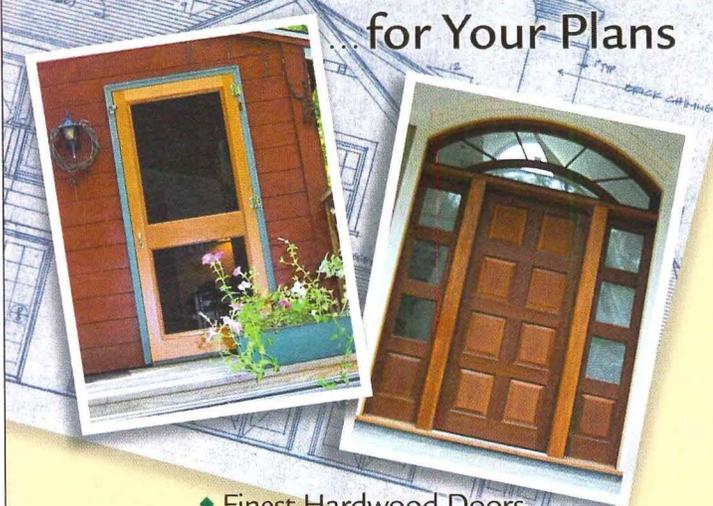
The 6-year-old firm is beginning to see more parallels between its custom residential and retail work. “They start to cross over when we start working on really specific moments, such as the quality of light in a space or the way things feel to the touch,” says Borum. He, Daubmann, and their staff must be happy with the moments they’ve experienced at Big Ten Burrito: Since construction ended, they find themselves eating lunch there once or twice a week.



project: Big Ten Burrito, Ann Arbor, Mich.
architect/contractor: PLY Architecture,
 Ann Arbor
project size: 150 square feet
construction cost: \$75 per square foot
photos: Howard Doughty

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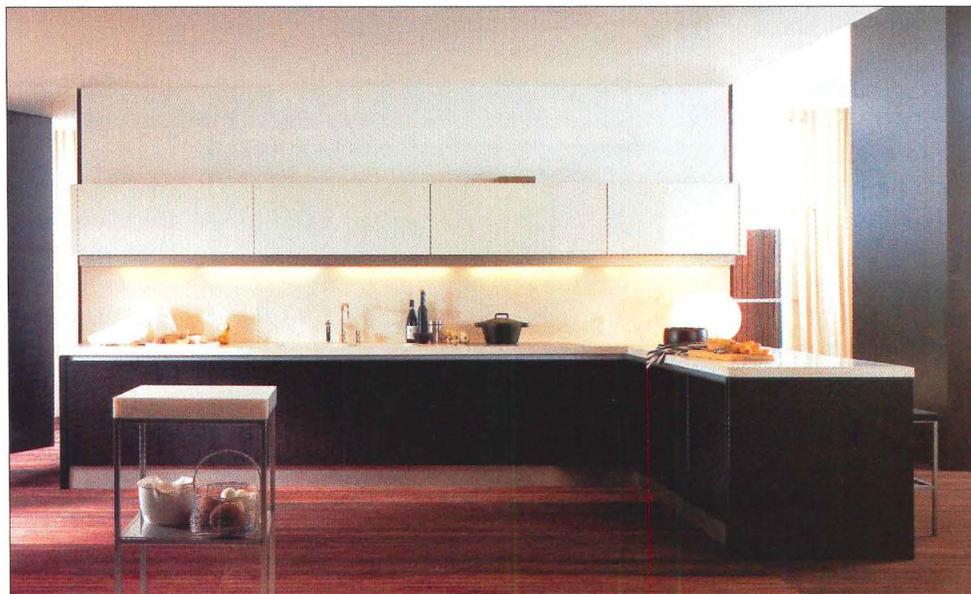
kitchen exponential

need to really impress your high-end clients? try european-style cabinets.

by nigel f. maynard

As a residential architect, you endeavor to design houses that delight, inspire, and endure. It's certainly difficult to accomplish such lofty goals on a budget-driven project. But pros know that, counterintuitively, it's trickier still on the high-end project for the demanding, well-heeled client. Expectations are high, and satisfaction is hard to come by.

The kitchen is one area where hopes spring eternal and infernal. Today's wealthy homeowners want tremendous function, jewel-like dazzle, and flawless craftsmanship in this hard-working room. The vagaries of site-built construction, however, can make such standards nearly impossible to achieve. That's why you may need an ace up your sleeve for these lavish projects: the European-style kitchen system.



Courtesy Varenna

New York City-based Varenna's Alea (shown in wenge) typifies top-notch European design, while Snaidero's Skyline (below), which can be adapted for wheelchair users, shows the functional side.

overseas view

As many world travelers know, Europeans view their kitchen cabinetry quite differently than Americans typically do. It's not a commodity to convey when you sell the house; it's the family heirloom to relocate and reinstall in the next home-stead. European systems are designed with this in mind. Although the concept of the moveable American kitchen hasn't taken off, these high-quality, high-style European products definitely have.

"In the United States, everything [on the high end] is custom built," says architect Nick Noyes, of Nick Noyes Architecture in San Francisco, "but the European systems cannot be beat. They are so well

engineered. The doors work well, the hinges work, and the quality is excellent."

Echoing that view, architect Adele Chang also points to the superior finishes. "There is a difference between the two," explains the principal of Lim Chang Rohling & Associates in Pasadena, Calif. "The word 'custom' sounds good, but the level of finishes can't compare. In the factory, they're better able to do a quality job." That's important, says Noyes, who explains that it's difficult to get good finishes on cabinets in California because strict environmental regulations prevent the application of durable lacquers, except in a controlled factory situation. "Pre-made cabinets don't

have these issues," he says. "And besides, the finish is superior to anything a [custom cabinet] shop can do."

Mark McInturff agrees that European quality is superior, and he likes the aesthetic, too. "It's largely due to the style," says the principal of McInturff Architects in Bethesda, Md. "They have an evolved look with interesting finishes and details. They also lift the cabinets off the floor."

The list of European cabinet companies includes New York City-based Varenna by Poliform; Los Angeles-based Snaidero; New York City-based Boffi; Roseland, N.J.-based Bulthaup; Siematic in Bensalem, Pa.; Downsview

continued on page 102



Courtesy Snaidero

doctor spec

Kitchens in Mississauga, Ontario; Studio Becker in Alameda, Calif.; and Poggenpohl in Wayne, N.J.

Snaidero's vast line of sophisticated contemporary cabinets boasts a high degree of customization. Favored by Miami-based firm Arquitectonica, products come in wood, veneers, stainless steel, acrylic, and laminate, along with a variety of accessories.

Noyes is a fan of Varenna, another Italian company with more than nine lines. Its latest, Alea, comes in wenge wood, laminate, aluminum and etched glass, and stainless steel. Lacquered finishes are offered, as are Carrara marble, granite, and stone countertops.

Chang does few custom homes these days, but when she does, she often specs Siematic, a German company that makes more than 81 door styles and 90 standard finishes. She's particularly impressed by the company's vast list of accessories.

Bulthaup is another German company whose kitchen systems have an impressive reputation. Architect Steven Ehrlich in Culver City, Calif., calls it the "Rolls Royce of kitchen mechanics." Manufactured in Aich, the offerings include System 20,



Courtesy Bulthaup



Courtesy Siematic

a modular line that can be fitted with wood or glass doors and casters, and the new b3, which allows elements of varying materials to be suspended ethereally from the wall.

euro summit

Specing a European system is relatively painless, architects say. You will not need to relinquish design control, but those who have used the systems say the manufacturers' design staffs are very helpful in figuring out details, attachments, and accessories.

"It's a good idea to meet pretty early because some [companies] can't do certain things," says McInturff, who has used Siematic, Bulthaup, Snaidero, and Varenna. "You need to know the dimensions they use," to design within their parameters. Katherine Gallagher, marketing manager with Bulthaup says the

company's designers like to establish how clients will use the kitchen, to help in the design process. And because lead times can be long, meeting early also ensures on-time delivery.

High on style and quality, European systems are also lofty in price—the only drawback architects identify. Although a pared-back order achieves modest savings, it's generally acknowledged that using European systems is an economic commitment. "They are ideally suited—perhaps only suited—to a custom home," Chang says.

For architects hankering for that high-end look at a fraction of the cost, Ikea is a popular spec. Architect James Biber looked at European systems for his own house until economic realities forced him to eye the Ikea alternative. "It's an extremely good value," says the principal with Pentagram Architecture in New York City. "It works well stylistically and is very functional."

Natalye Appel, FAIA, used Ikea for her own house as well. "It was the only place I could get doors with aluminum frames and frosted

glass at a price I could afford," says the principal of Natalye Appel + Associates Architects in Houston. She now uses Ikea for commercial and residential projects, but instead of using the entire system, she uses site-built boxes and orders the glass doors.

Despite the value Ikea offers, Biber and Appel feel the products have their limitations. Says Appel, "The Ikea system doesn't have a lot of variety," which could be a problem for some architects. She, however, welcomes the predictability. "It's easier," she says.

Biber adds that you give up detail and long-term durability with Ikea systems. He also recommends using the cabinets without much modification. "They are not building blocks. They are systems, so use them exactly as they are designed." Still, the value can't be beat, he says. "I am in awe of how Ikea manages to produce this level of finish and quality for what they charge."

Fussy high-end clients might not think Ikea impressive or exclusive enough for their rarefied tastes. Luckily for them, mainland Europe has an infinite number of ways to spend their money. **ra**

Made from thinner, lighter members Bulthaup's b3 (left) permits cabinets to be suspended from the functional wall. Siematic's versatile cabinets (below) can be freestanding or modular.

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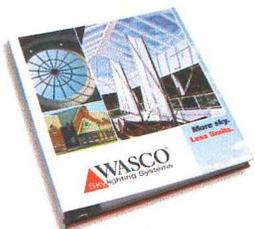
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off the shelf

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continued on page 108

off the shelf

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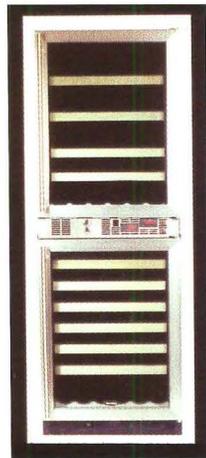
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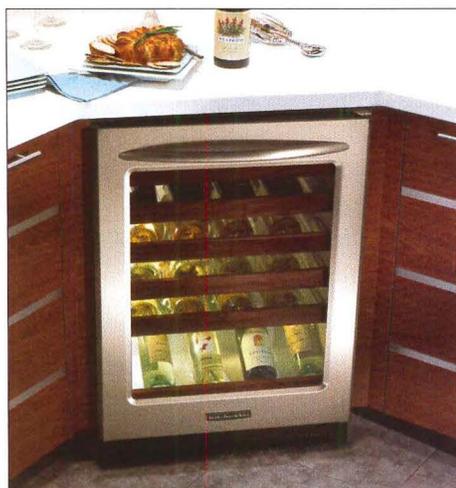
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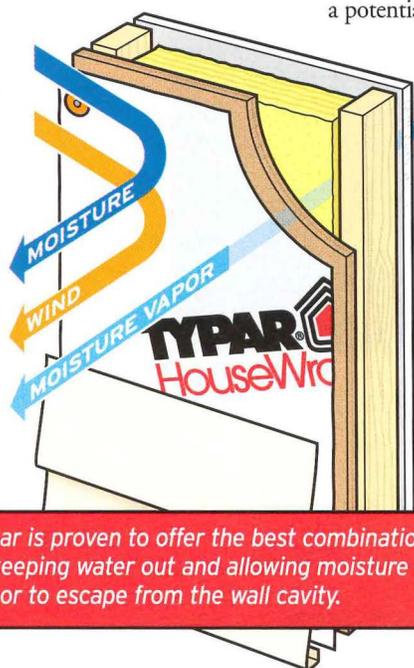


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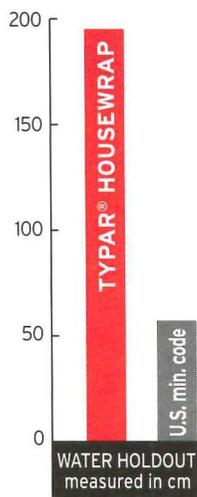
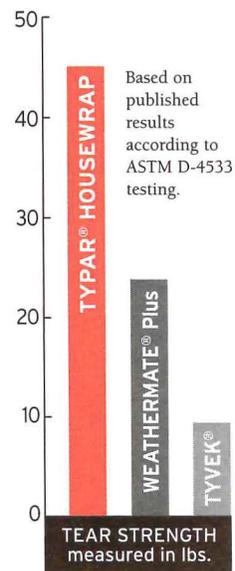
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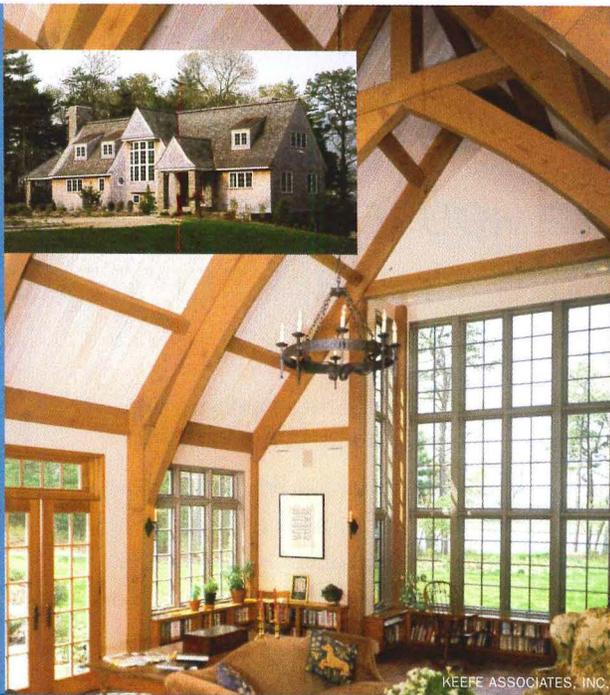
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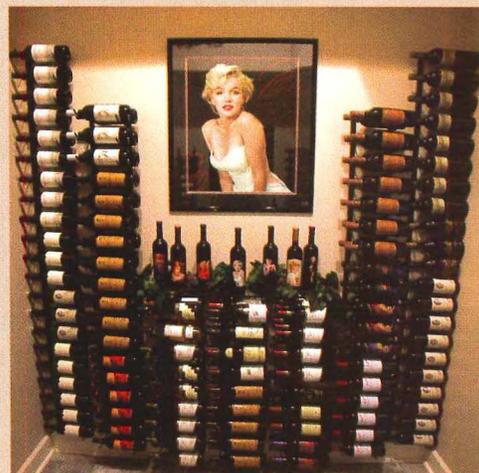
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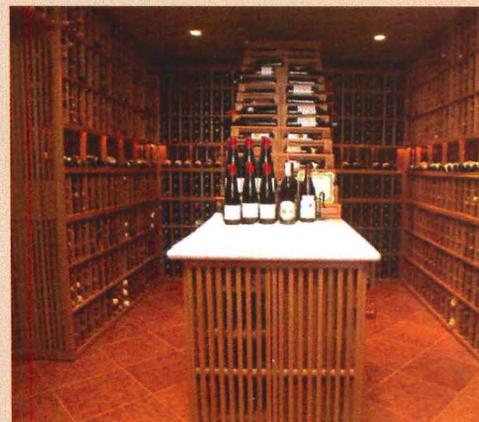


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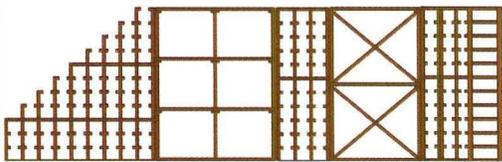
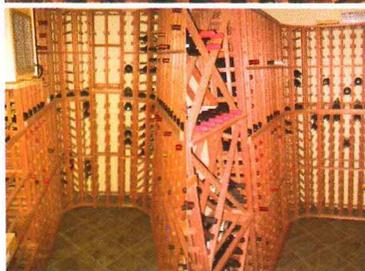
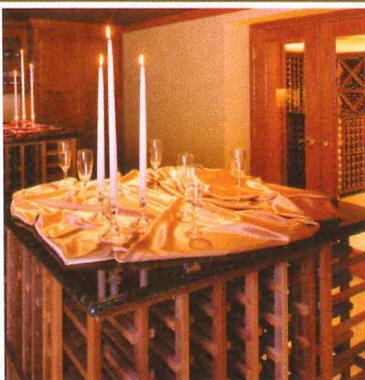
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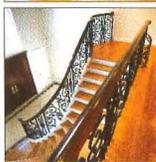
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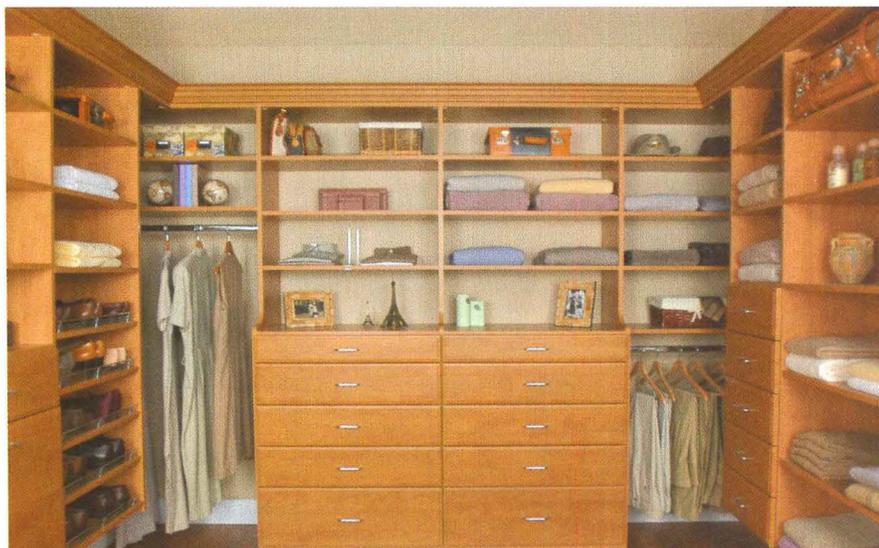
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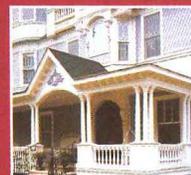
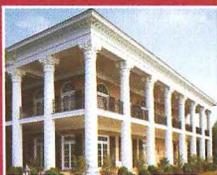
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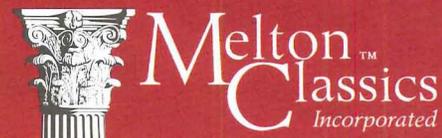
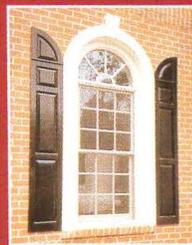
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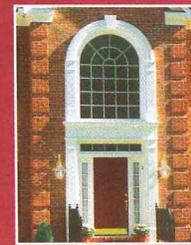
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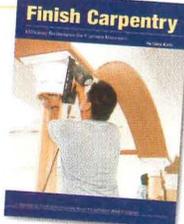
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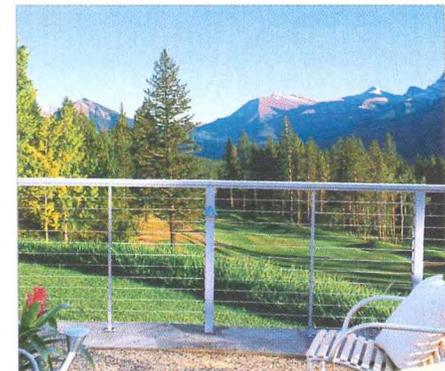
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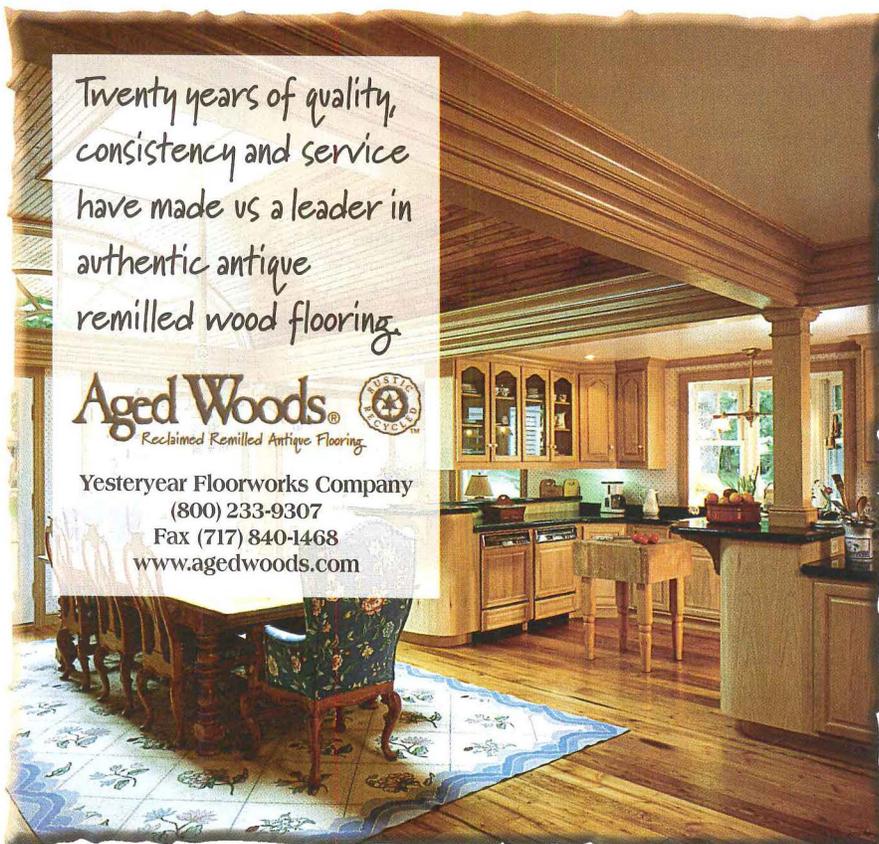
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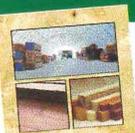
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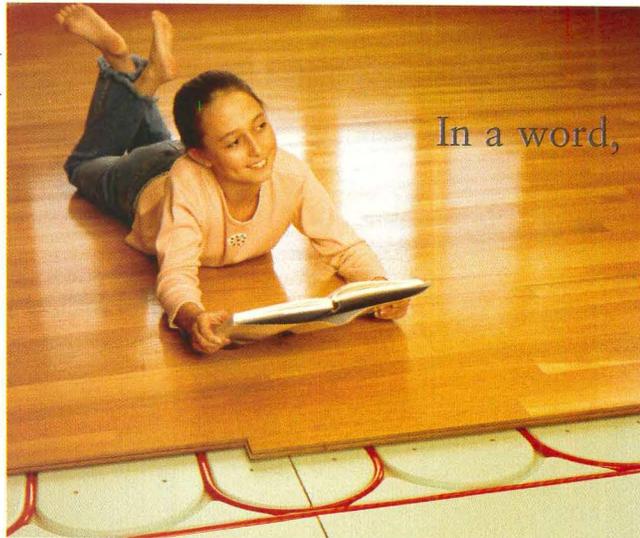


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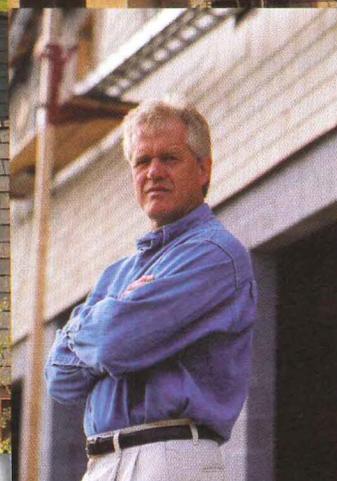


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