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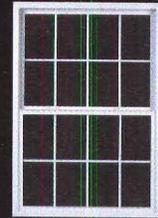
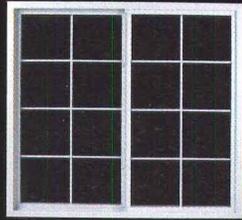
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# Outlook

## USABILITY-DRIVEN KITCHEN DESIGN

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD

The KitchenAid brand recently conducted extensive research to determine if consumers' lifestyle needs are being met in the kitchen. The answer we received was a resounding no! It seems that most new homes feature "old kitchens" to the extent that home builders are constructing kitchens based largely on the 50+ year-old principle of the kitchen work triangle.

Our research shows that there is a huge unmet need among homeowners for better kitchen design, even in brand new homes. Of those surveyed, nearly all would prefer kitchens designed to accommodate a variety of activities in multiple zones; the ultimate goal being mass customization versus a one-size-fits-all approach. KitchenAid® subsequently developed an experimental online tool for design professionals to share with their clients to explore this usability-driven design approach.



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We are experimenting with a progressive builder who will offer four distinct kitchen designs as semi-

custom options for their buyers. Each potential homebuyer is invited to experience a simplified version of the KitchenAid™ online tool to discover their ideal kitchen preferences. The results lead the buyer to the best

semi-custom design to fit their lifestyle needs. Perhaps the dream of mass-customization at an affordable price isn't so far off after all.

If you would like to take a test drive of the KitchenAid™ online tool, go to [www.kitchensforcooks.ca](http://www.kitchensforcooks.ca).



KitchenAid's online tool for design professionals and their clients.

Let me know what you think at [mark\\_r\\_johnson@whirlpool.com](mailto:mark_r_johnson@whirlpool.com).



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

[insideadvantage.com](http://insideadvantage.com)

### EVENTS OF INTEREST

#### Kitchen/Bath Industry Show & Conference

April 20-23, 2006  
McCormick Place  
Chicago, Illinois  
[www.kbis.com](http://www.kbis.com)

#### NAHB/BALA Design Institute

June 5-7, 2006  
Westin Charlotte  
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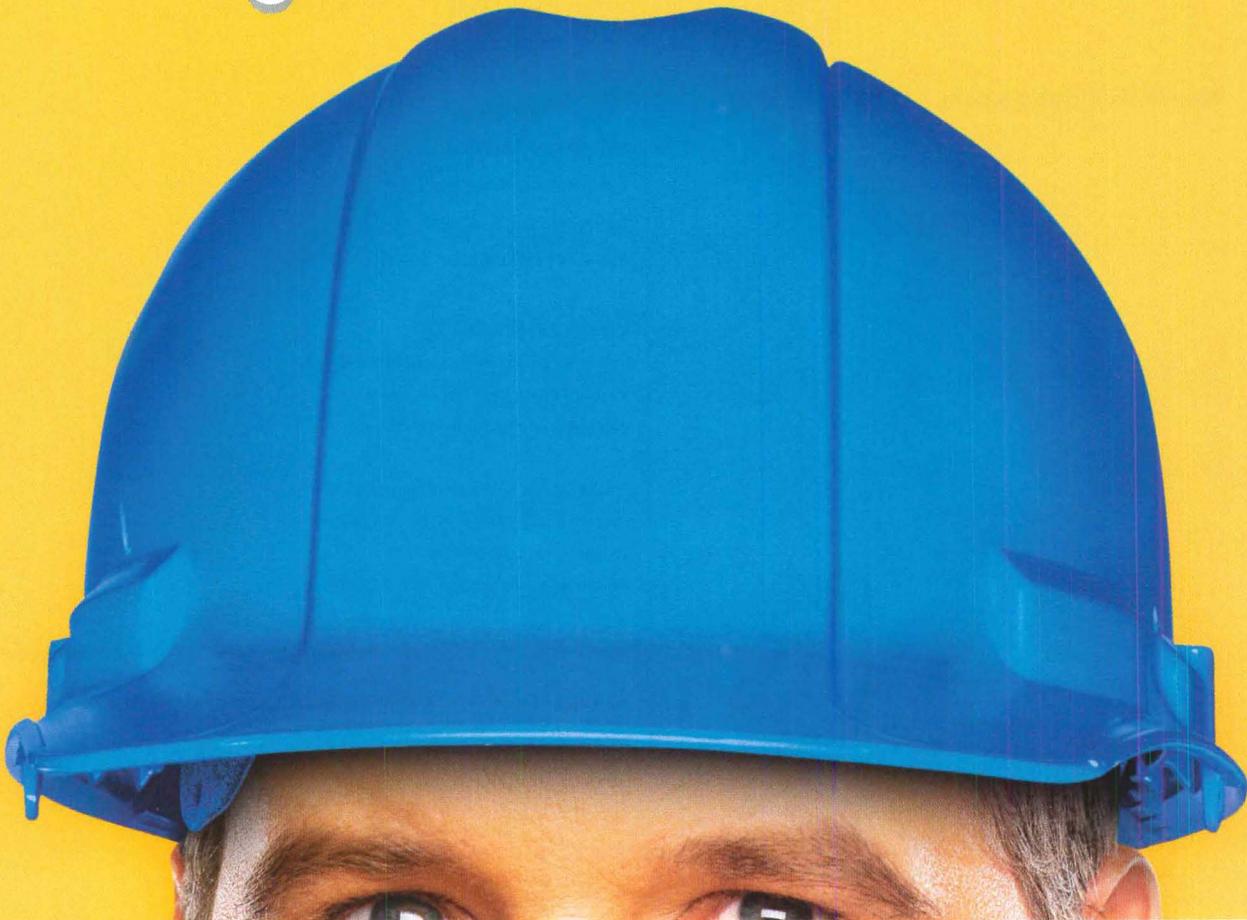
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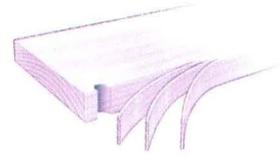
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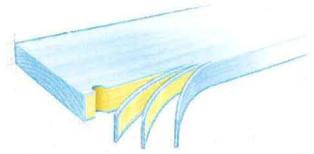
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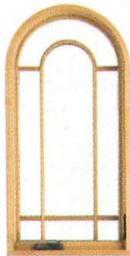
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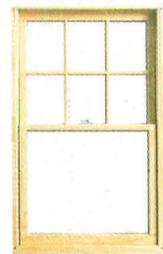
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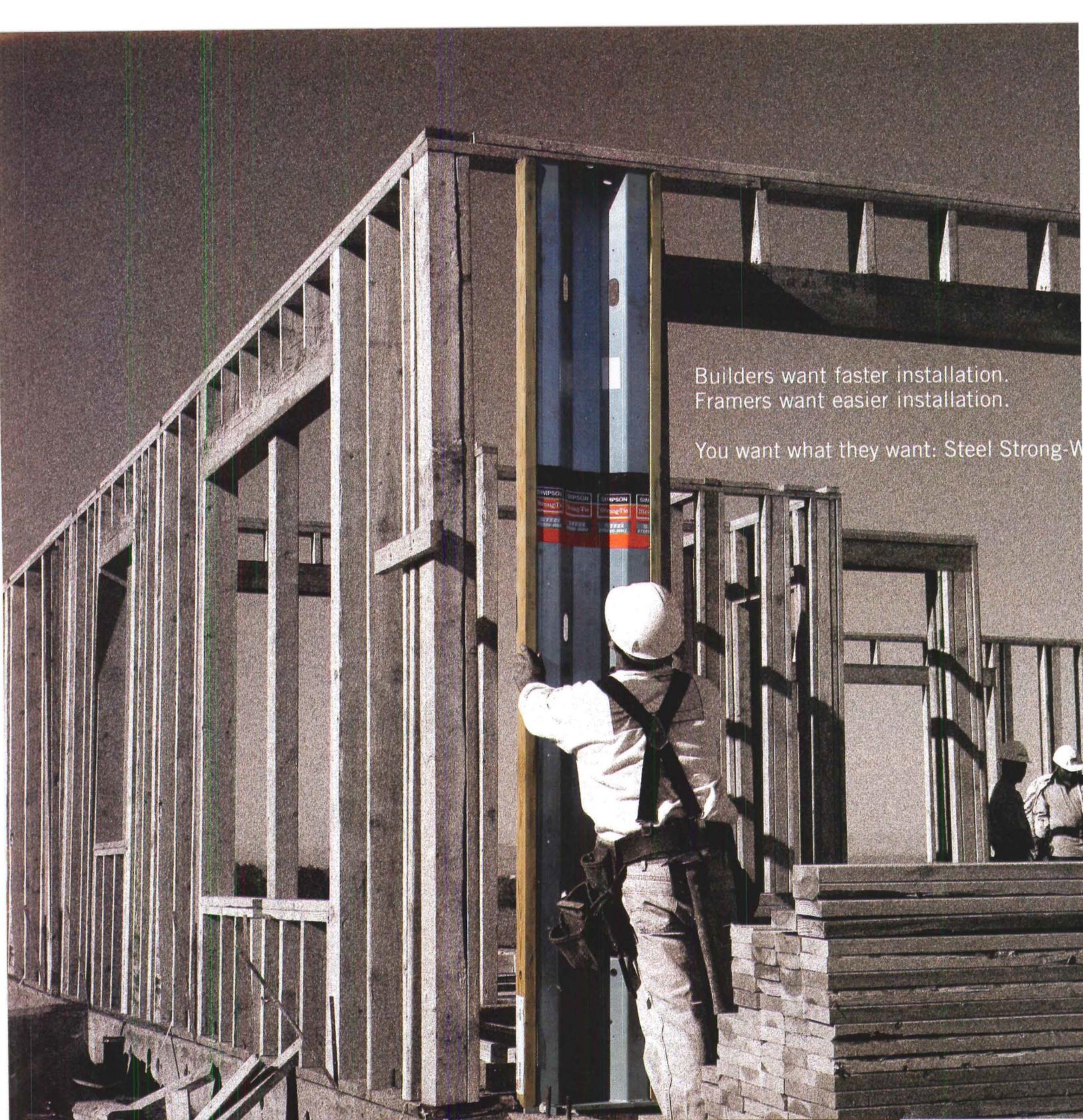


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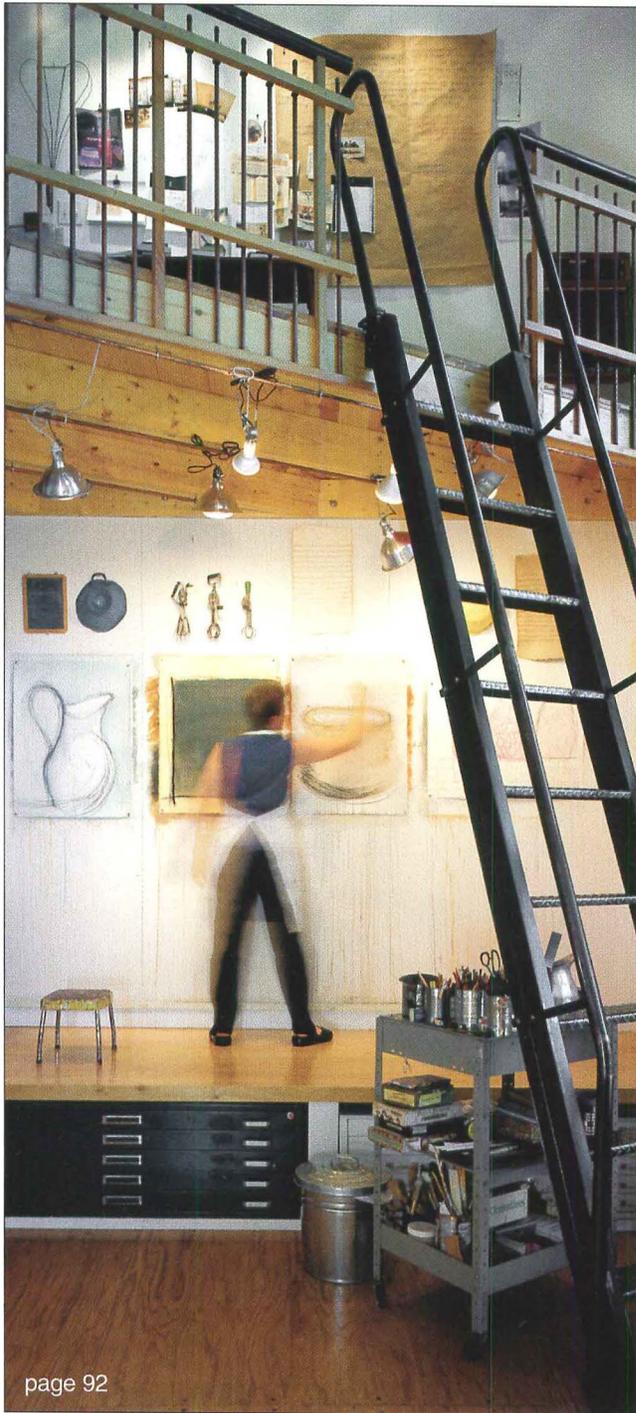
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# contents



page 92

Portrait of the artist as a happy client, by Rippeteau Architects. Photo: Anice Hoachlander/HD Photo. Cover photo: Max Hirshfeld. Cover products courtesy Alcoa Cladding Systems (Reynobond copper), Polygal USA (red polycarbonate), and 3form (Chroma clear, Chroma topaz, and Capiz ecoresin).

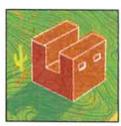
**from the editor**..page 15

**letters**..page 19

**home front**..page 22  
Reinvention revisited / Calendar

**k + b studio**..page 30  
KUBE Architecture performs a 21st century makeover on a timeworn Washington, D.C., row house.

**perspective**..page 39  
Architect-turned-furniture-maker Jonah Zuckerman thinks we've lost the fine art of craft.

 **practice**..page 45  
Is one office enough to get the jobs you really want and to hold on to your best talent? Some architects say branching out is the smartest decision they've made.

 **cover story**..page 61  
**architects' choice**  
Why pick your products through trial and error when you can learn from others' mistakes and successes? We've done the legwork for you, so just sit back and spec with confidence.  
*by Nigel F. Maynard and Shelley D. Hutchins*

 **imagine + create**..page 92  
Architecture plus art equals studio spaces that lift the spirit and ignite the muse.  
*by Meghan Drueding*

**doctor spec**..page 101  
Something there is that loves a different kind of wall.

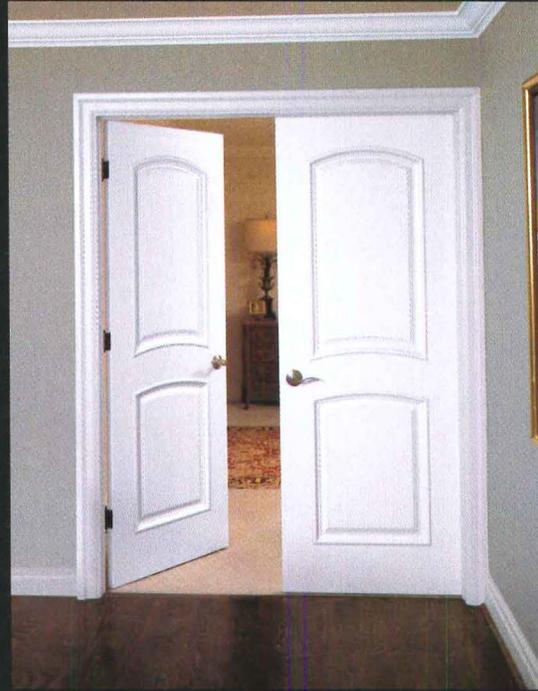
**new material**..page 107  
All the new that's fit to print.

**off the shelf**..page 109  
Of vessels and vanities.

**end quotes**..page 120  
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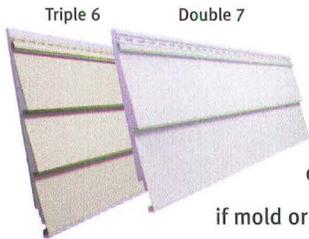
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# we want our truths self-evident

americans' search for meaning may mean a lot to architects.

by s. claire conroy

How do you describe the value architects bring to residential design? I've been working this question since I began editing this magazine seven years ago. And I know many architects struggle with this, too. The challenges about your worth come from all over—from potential clients, from other sources of design services, from the general public. What can you possibly offer that merits the cost and time you add to a building? There are many long answers to this question. But a short answer sticks in my mind lately: authenticity.

From the style of the house, to the products used to make it, to the spirit in which it was conceived, authenticity sets the architect-designed house apart from the others. Even when there's a sense of humor to the design, there's always sincerity in its execution, right down to the materials and products that give it shape.

During this housing boom, my inner-ring suburban neighborhood has sprouted several new infill spec houses. They're all designed by the builder or adapted from an existing plan to fit the lot and appeal to prospective buyers' "hot

buttons." Setting aside my quibbles with their design, what strikes me most powerfully is how plastic they are. Every material is a counterfeit for the real thing. Except for the kitchen counters and appliances (aforementioned hot buttons)—those must be granite and stainless steel, respectively. These are not cheap houses. They sell for close to \$1 million apiece. But their contrast to the less expensive, older, better-built houses in the neighborhood is glaring.

It makes me wonder if the surprisingly strong appeal of loft apartments lies, in part, in their use of some authentic materials. Concrete or wood floors, brick walls, stone counters, stainless steel appliances, commercial steel windows, exposed and honest structure. Those recognizable, straightforward materials have allowed developers to claim a huge price premium over conventional multifamily design.

It appears the taste for slick and unnaturally perfect may be dwindling. Indeed, we're seeing signs everywhere of this social shift. Reality doesn't bite, after all; it rules. The buying public is primed and ready to face reality—on television, in books, on the



Mark Robert Halper

Internet, in the bruised organic fruit we buy at the supermarket. And we're merciless if we feel we've been tricked, led astray, or lied to. We're nobody's fool.

We're searching for the truth and the value in everything these days. The word "natural" is one of the best-selling labels a marketer can slap on anything. Like the word "custom" in the housing market, it's certainly being abused and misused. But why not use these words and their proper meanings appropriately? Natural, real, authentic. This may be your best opportunity to differentiate yourselves from the pretenders in home design.

Architects are uniquely

qualified to understand the intrinsic value in the products they spec and in the design decisions they implement. They are taught the reason and substance behind every surface detail we see. It's this depth of understanding that often escapes those spec builders in my neighborhood. They rely on the symbols and gestures, without considering the meaning behind them. The value of architects is that they understand what's truly invaluable. **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](mailto:cconroy@hanleywood.com).

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# letters

exercise your right to write.

## seal of approval?

there is a very simple way to increase demand [for architectural services]: require an architect's stamp on anything that needs a permit! Ostensibly, we are licensed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Similarly, building permits are required to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. To be consistent, we either need to reduce the requirements for projects requiring permits ... or require a stamp for all such projects.

If we believe that all people, all projects, deserve the value we can bring, then we need to proactively fight for the requirement of an architect's stamp on everything [that needs] a permit. It's that simple. The fee situation gets fixed very quickly (supply and demand), and incomes for good architects finally begin to reflect our training and value.

*John Hrivnak  
Architect*

## color blind

as an educator, I teach my students that sustainability is not a black-and-white issue. All materials have positive and negative effects on our environment. For them to be architects,

they must learn how to select the option that best fits the problem.

As a green consultant, I teach other architects green building does not cost more. It does not cost more to design with the sun ... to design healthy spaces ... [or] to design with natural systems.

As an architect, I do not offer green materials as an option. All of our buildings are green, whether the client asks for it or not.

We have a responsibility to our clients to build something to code, something to resist gravity, something beautiful, [and] something environmentally responsible.

*Eric Corey Freed  
organicARCHITECT  
San Francisco*

## great expectations

our editorials are great, but they pose more questions than answers.

The letters you publish are great, but for the most part, they pose more complaints than solutions. The projects [you profile] are great, but many times, they are not for the "real world" we all live in.

I realize your publication is not required to solve the problems small-firm architect[s] must deal with, but the tone and content of many

of your editorials may have placed you in that unenviable position. The challenges small firms [face] are enormous and may seem insurmountable to many.

We need help! Where will it come from? The AIA is large-firm territory. Residential architecture is small-firm territory. Are the small-firm practitioners too disjointed to have any real effect on the Wal-Mart world of practitioners? Where is our place in this world of residential design?

These are questions that need answers. Where will they come from? I think I know the answer, but after 45 years of practice, I have yet to see it happen.

*William C. Herbert  
The Fountainhead Design  
Group  
Mount Horeb, Wis.*

## power play

few years back, potential clients began [showing] up better prepared.

They'd [researched] how to choose an architect, they'd made lists of their needs, and they'd read books and magazines about home design. It was a refreshing change ... to have clients who already understood some of the language of architecture and design and who were very excited and

motivated to participate in creating good design.

Lately, the trend's gotten out of control. We've had a spate of clients [who have] thought through every detail ... and have assembled it all into a floor plan. We ought to be happy about these highly involved clients, but we're not. They're often married to their sketches and don't want to hear our suggestions. With all the tact we can muster, we're easing them into understanding that a home design isn't a drawing of a floor plan; it's a three-dimensional object, at the very least. But too often they're pushing the other way ... [even though] "their way" is going to cost them more in fees and construction costs!

I'd like to know if others are having similar encounters and how they're dealing with it. I'd like to find a way to get clients to understand that our process works to their ultimate benefit, if they'd only work with us rather than against us.

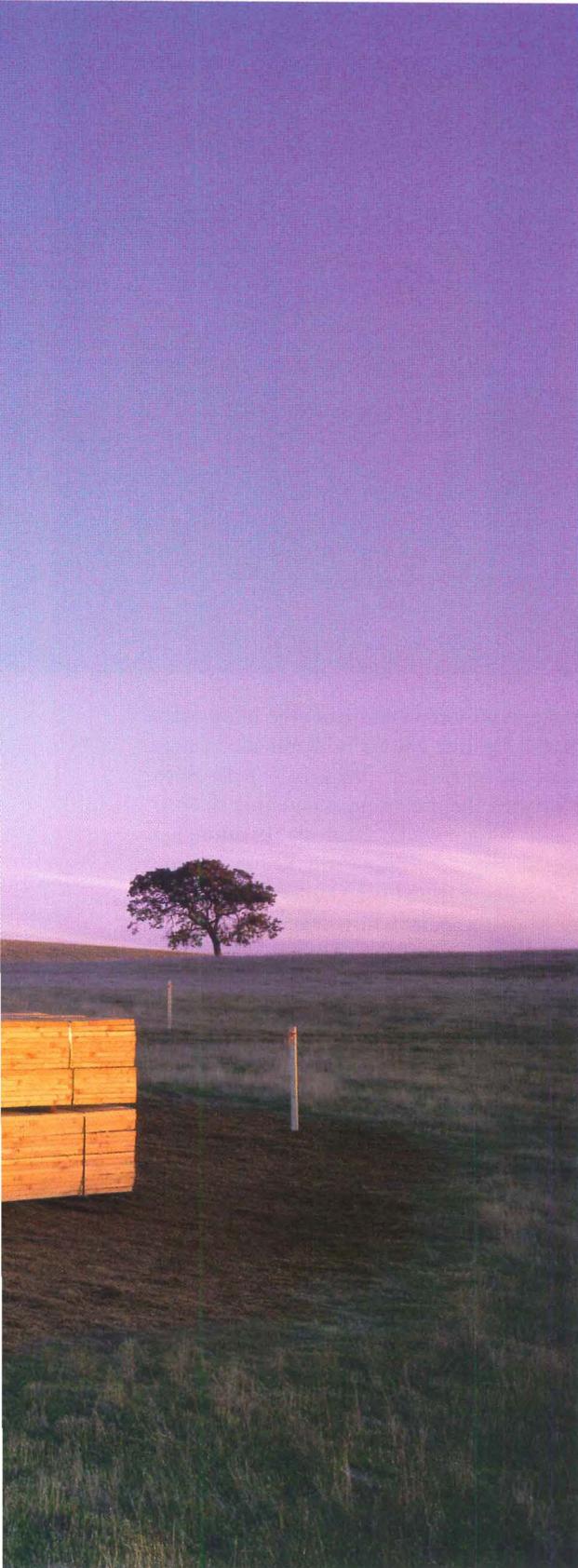
*Richard Taylor, AIA  
Richard Taylor Architects  
Dublin, Ohio*

## redlines

Brian Carlson's role in the Robbs Runn project was misidentified in the March 2006 issue. He served as project captain.

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## reinvention redux

**f**or those of you who were unable to trek down to Coral Gables, Fla., or for those of you who did make it but would like to relive the experience, we revisit “Reinvention 2005: Greening the American House.” This was *residential architect* magazine’s second symposium, and like the first, it sold out lickety-split. Apparently architects are very interested in making the houses they design more energy efficient, healthier, and more intimately connected to the landscape and climate they occupy. Or maybe they simply thought South Florida in December seemed like a fine idea.



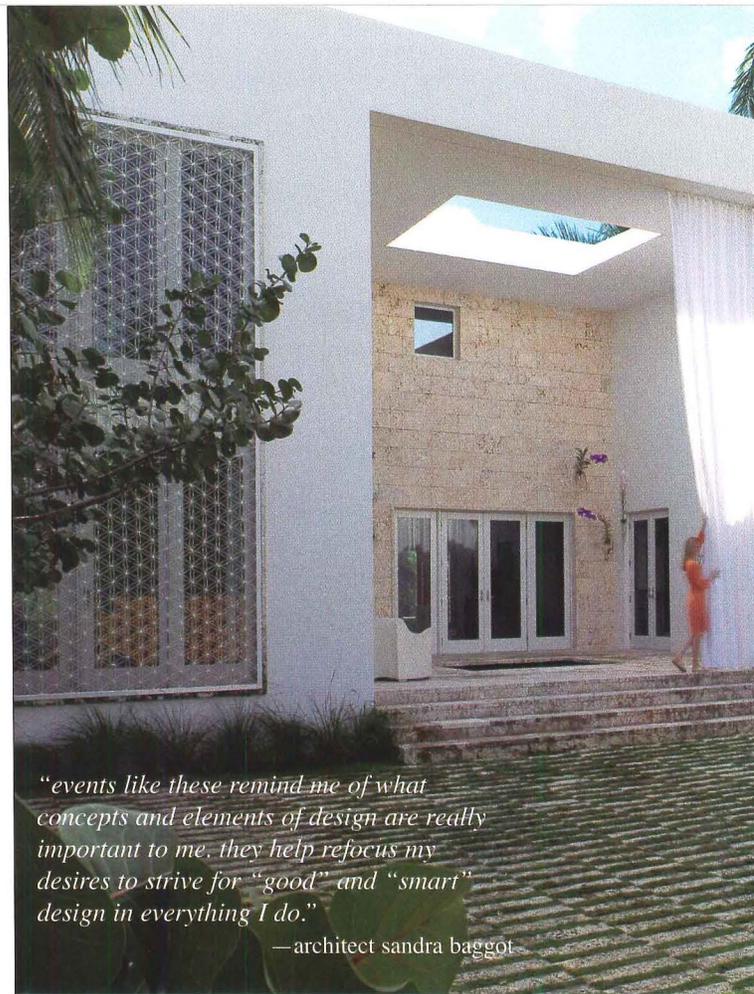
Christie's Photographic Studios

Architects Sim Van der Ryn, Frank Harmon, and David Hacin picked up their 2005 Leadership Awards at Reinvention.

More than 300 of you came from far and wide and Canada. Like last year, the event began with a housing tour. As impressive as the houses were, though, some of you thought the architectural highlight was our meeting place, The Biltmore Hotel, designed in 1925 by architect Leonard Schultz for the founder of Coral Gables, developer George E. Merrick. “The Biltmore is an enchanting place,” said architect/attendee Charles Paul Goebel, of Easton, Md. Yet, as with most buildings in Florida, the place was chilled to frigid, despite the moderate weather. In fact, our group—especially those from the region—concluded that Miami has a steep climb to reach sustainability.

Most of its architecture prioritizes views and combats the engulfing heat with SEER ratings.

But Max Strang, AIA, did take his Coconut Grove climate into consideration for his house, featured on the tour. The “tropical industrial” building is long and narrow, sending coastal breezes through its structure. He preserved as many trees on site as possible, borrowing their shade for passive cooling. Atop the house, a trellised outdoor room is comfortable on all but the hottest afternoons. Chad Oppenheim, AIA, also made handsome use of the setting for his showpiece house on Sunset Island III. The building opens



*“events like these remind me of what concepts and elements of design are really important to me. they help refocus my desires to strive for “good” and “smart” design in everything I do.”*

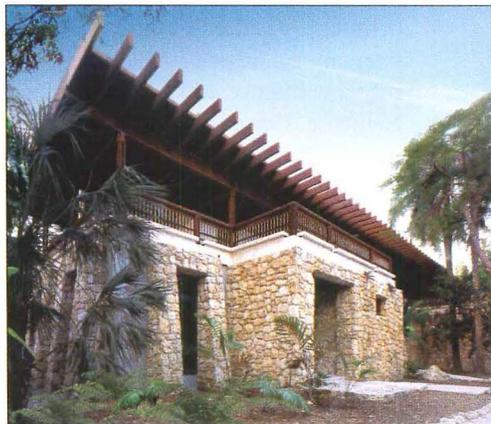
—architect sandra baggot

wide to views and air circulation from the intracoastal waterway. In this boating colony of manmade islands, it’s the front of the house that’s the private side. Here a striking courtyard shelters occupants within the protective planes of garden walls, the front elevation, and garage doors. Nearby, developer Craig Robins’ Aqua community on Allison Island is an equally dramatic backdrop for Miami’s social whirl. There, Duany Plater-Zyberk’s Ludwig Fontalvo-Abello detailed his firm’s 8.5-acre master plan of “tropical urban” mid-rise condos and townhouses for us. And architect Alexander Gorlin, FAIA, graciously guided us through his eponymous “Gorlin” building.

Not all of the housing aimed for sustainability, but it all showcased Florida’s natural splendor. And that’s an obligation for all who stake claim to a slice of land, said our keynote presenter, Brian MacKay-Lyons, FAIA, of Nova Scotia. His approach relies heavily on local wisdom, conditions of site and climate, and practical materials to create durable and enduring architecture. It’s a refrain we heard again in other sessions, from architects Ted Flato, FAIA; Frank Harmon, FAIA; and Sim Van der Ryn, among others. Allison Ewing, AIA, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, FAIA, and Ross Chapin, AIA, addressed sustainable design at the urban planning level, where concerns about social viability and friendly density enter the picture. And Ken Wilson, AIA, Rick



Photos (clockwise from top left): Courtesy Ken Hayden (above), Max Strang Architecture, and Dacra



Reinvention's home tour stopped in at Chad Oppenheim's photogenic house on Sunset Island III (top), Max Strang's "tropical industrial" abode in Coconut Grove (above right), and Alexander Gorlin's namesake condominium at Aqua (above left).

Harlan Schneider, AIA, Jason F. McLennan, and Peter Pfeiffer, FAIA, discussed the nitty-gritty of parsing systems, materials, and best practices for more sustainable results.

This winter's "Reinvention 2006: The Entrepreneurial Practice" gathers in San Diego to explore the many ways residential architects can apply their skills and talent beyond the traditional boundaries of single-family house design. Stay tuned.—*s. claire conroy*

## reinvention 2005: greening the american house

Attendees gathered by region to brainstorm the challenges and opportunities facing architects who wish to design more sustainably. Here's a digest of their ideas; see [www.residentialarchitect.com](http://www.residentialarchitect.com) for more detailed and region-specific results of the charrette.

### What are the toughest barriers to green design?

- Finding accurate information about green product performance
- The American appetite for artificially heated and cooled space
- Fear of liability when innovating and pioneering
- Orientation for views, streets, and density instead of energy efficiency
- Lack of green materials and experienced contractors
- Competing issues like hurricanes, winds, and insects
- Lack of interest from government officials and the general public
- Tight building schedules and budgets
- Distance of most housing from public transportation
- Lack of regional product production
- The increase in second homes for baby boomers

### What are the cheapest and quickest changes we can make right now?

- Work with nature: Orient houses for passive heating and cooling
- Recycle, reuse, or relocate existing houses
- Specify recycled materials; create a Web site to redistribute resources
- Allow accessory dwelling units on single-family properties
- Offer incentives and tax breaks to promote energy conservation
- Build smaller and better
- Grant "location-efficient" mortgages
- Lead by example: Green our workplaces, provide efficient specs
- Encourage telecommuting from home
- "Green" sounds fringe; change the term to "smart"
- Preserve landscaping, replant trees, and xeriscape
- Use local materials
- Educate the public: Publish green projects, volunteer, guide field trips
- Harvest rainwater
- Design vented roof and wall assemblies
- Replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescents
- Specify programmable thermostats
- Provide basic elements to prepare for future green retrofits
- Specify Energy Star appliances
- Serve on commissions and boards to encourage sustainable practices
- Know your sustainable ideas sufficiently to convince others

### What radical changes need to take place for a more sustainable future?

- Institute a national energy standard and policy of rebates and tax credits
- Merge recycling centers with The Home Depot
- Allow sun "setbacks" within neighbors' daylight planes
- Eliminate lawns
- Limit allowable square footage per person
- Offer tax breaks for downsizing
- Limit one car per family
- Eliminate single-family housing
- Require green education curriculum in all schools
- Reconsider second-home culture
- Incorporate more factory construction in housing
- Abolish air conditioning and redesign accordingly
- Hope the next generation will see things differently

*A special thanks to Reinvention 2005 symposium partner Andersen Windows and sponsors CEDIA, Delta Faucet Co., Dryvit, Fypon, Knauf, NuTone, Schlage, Sherwin Williams, and Whirlpool Corp.*

calendar



Courtesy NCMA

**2006 ncma design awards of excellence**

entry deadline: june 16, 2006

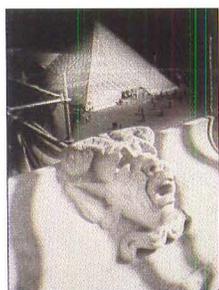
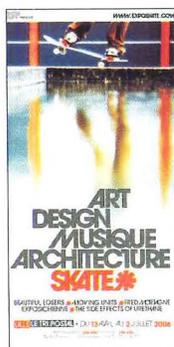
The National Concrete Masonry Association hosts an awards program honoring design innovations by architects using concrete masonry for residential, commercial, and landscape applications.

Shown: Last year's winning Dutra residential addition by James Brown, principal, Public, San Diego. Winners receive a monetary prize and will be honored during a ceremony at the 2007 NCMA annual convention in Orlando, Fla., February 22–24, 2007. Register online at [www.ncma.org](http://www.ncma.org) or call 703.713.1900.

**skate**

april 13–july 2  
le tri postal, lille, france

SKATE explores skating as a sport and as an urban social activity via artistic, architectural, design, video, graphic design, and musical expressions. The exhibition's main attraction is a 16,146-square-foot installation called Interstices. Developed by English architects, London's Side Effect of Urethane collective, and DSP, the installation features a city-landscape-cum-skateboard course. Along the way, architect, sociologist, Urbanist, and skateboarder commentators share their thoughts on urban revitalization. Visit [www.exposkate.com](http://www.exposkate.com) or e-mail [info@exposkate.com](mailto:info@exposkate.com) for more information.



Christophe Valsecchi

**secret cities: extraordinary urban photography**

april 14–june 17  
architech gallery, chicago

Photographers such as Jay King, Tony May, Madeleine Doering, and Christophe Valsecchi, whose image of the Louvre is shown, reveal the singular, hidden beauty within the bustle of our greatest cities.

Among their stops are Barcelona, Spain; Cairo, Egypt; Chicago; New York; Paris; and San Francisco. Visit [www.architechgallery.com](http://www.architechgallery.com) or call 312.475.1290 for gallery hours.

**archetype for the living city**

april 25–june 25  
design exchange, toronto

Co-developed by the Design Exchange and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Sustainable House competition challenges Canadian designers to create a demonstration center—in the form of a single-family house—that builds awareness and understanding of sustainable technologies and building practices. This exhibition will showcase the designs from the competition, and the winning house will be built and used as an education and training device for industry professionals and the general public. For details, go to [www.dx.org/sustainable](http://www.dx.org/sustainable) or call 416.363.6121.

**ding dong!**

april 6–april 28  
hamburg, germany

The Senseo Art Initiative's inaugural art festival features works from emerging artists on the subject of private spaces. Local and international artists from all media will move into a former department store in Hamburg, Germany, to live and work over a three-week period. During that time, each artist will create a room common to most houses (among them a bathroom, bedroom, children's room, dining room, kitchen, and living room). The event also includes concerts, readings, parties, and symposia. Visit [senseo-art-initiative.de](http://senseo-art-initiative.de) or e-mail [derek@dingdong.ag](mailto:derek@dingdong.ag) for details.



Courtesy Flora & Fauna Media

**continuing exhibits**

**Holabird & Root: 125 Years**, through April 30, Chicago Architecture Foundation, 312.922.3432; **The New Vision for the New Architecture: Czechoslovakia 1918–1938**, through April 22, Gallery 1, Royal Institute of British Architects, London, 44.20.7580.5533 or [www.riba.org](http://www.riba.org); **On Site: New Architecture in Spain**, through May 1, Museum of Modern Art, 212.708.9400; **Living in Motion: Design and Architecture for Flexible Dwelling**, through May 7, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 617.266.5152; **Between Form and Circumstance: Rethinking the Contemporary Landscape**, through May 24, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, Mass., 617.496.0057.

—shelley d. hutchins

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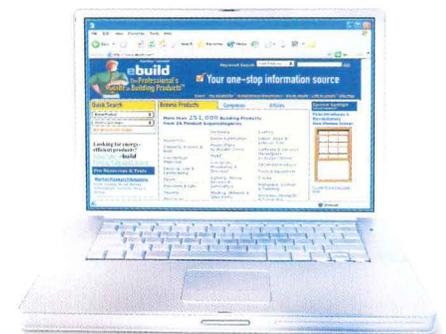
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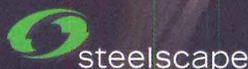
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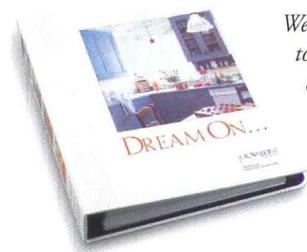
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# k + b studio

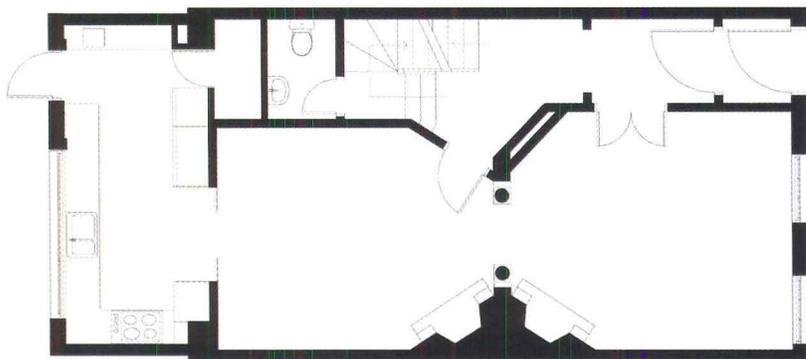
## kitchen: back story

Historic row houses are rich in elegant features such as high ceilings, tall windows, and gracefully proportioned reception rooms at the front of the house. But the kitchens usually suffer in silence, tucked in the rear in a dark, cramped space. At some point in this Washington, D.C., house's past, someone tried to remedy that situation with an uninspiring one-story rear structure that added 8 feet—the maximum extension allowed—for a functional kitchen and a powder room. This latest rendition, a jewel that enjoys its own modern identity while coexisting compatibly with the rest of the house, was part of a light-filled, back-of-the-house makeover that extends upward three stories.

The dining room, with its tall ceilings and crown molding, was clearly meant to be left alone. But to bridge the client's desire for a sleek, up-to-the-minute kitchen with the adjacent room, Janet Bloomberg, AIA, principal, KUBE Architecture, Washington, D.C., replaced the opening between the kitchen and dining room with a sweep of floor-to-ceiling, translucent pocket doors. Then she centered a large window and sink on the opening to share light between the rooms. "The doors tie the two sides together," Bloomberg says. "We also used very warm materials, which help to carry through the palette of an older house." Stylistic differences are neutralized with cherry-wood cabinets that complement the house's pine floors, Italian slate flooring with rich color variations, and a concrete countertop.

With its strong horizontal lines and clean details, the 18-foot-long kitchen is minimalist without appearing ultra-modern. Even a backsplash was deemed gratuitous; the aluminum window sits right on the countertop, which in turn slips between cabinetry under the microwave. "We liked the idea of the horizontal plane of counter not being stopped and connecting to the outside," Bloomberg says. A cooking area to the left as you enter the kitchen now occupies the former powder room, which was moved to the stair landing. At the far end is a square bar sink and compact computer space with a flat-screen monitor mounted beneath wall cabinets. And an existing 4-foot-by-4-foot pantry is tucked behind a full-height cabinetry door, so you don't know it's there. "We wanted to keep everything very flush to make it look neat and clean, which is what the clients wanted," Bloomberg says. The result is an unabashedly 21st century workspace, one with enough texture and warmth to span two time periods.

*project continued on page 32*





Light, reflective materials such as the aluminum-framed window and glass-and-aluminum cabinet doors extend the space visually. Translucent pocket doors help to mediate the modern kitchen and traditional dining room.

**architects:** Janet Bloomberg, AIA, and Richard Loosle-Ortega, KUBE Architecture, Washington, D.C.

**builder:** Madden Corp., Rockville, Md.

**resources:** cabinets: Burger Custom Cabinets; countertops: Concrete Jungle; dishwasher and oven: KitchenAid; hardware: Häfele America Co.; interior doors: Raydoor; kitchen and bath fittings and fixtures: Grohe; lighting: Illuminations Inc. and W.A.C. Lighting; paints: Duron Paints & Wallcoverings; patio doors: NanaWall Systems; refrigerator: Sub-Zero Freezer Co.; sinks: Blanco America; windows: Sherwood Windows

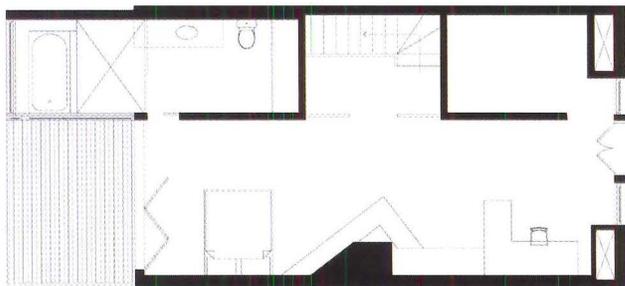
**photography:** Alan Karchmer

# k + b studio

## bath: interlocking pieces

The third-floor master bath, part of a new glass-and-copper addition that KUBE Architecture attached to the back of the house, had none of the kitchen's constraints. There were no historic details worth preserving in the privacy of the top floor, so Bloomberg wiped the canvas clean. The idea was to create something lightweight and lustrous as a counterpoint to the heavy masonry of the traditional row house.

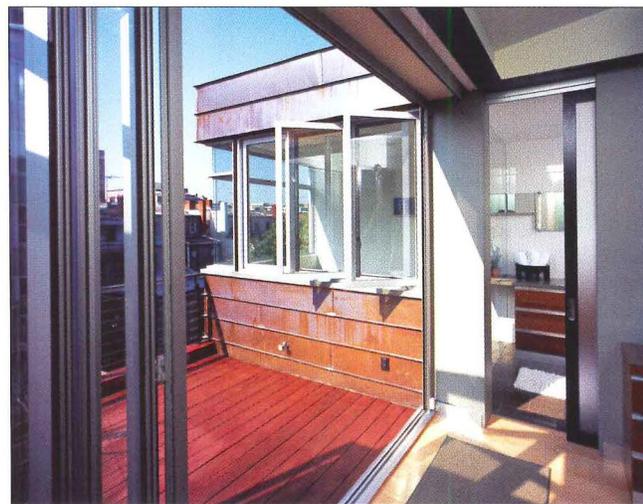
Bloomberg designed a seamless rectangle of a room with interlocking forms and materials. She wrapped the walls in 9-inch-by-12-inch polished ceramic tiles. The slate floor folds up over the tub, and the shower floor slopes imperceptibly toward a commercial pool drain that runs alongside the tub. "We had to come up with solutions that are more commercial because we were doing everything so minimally," Bloomberg says. The motorized translucent shades that descend from the ceiling are a commercial product she has used in offices, as are the large windows in 1-inch aluminum frames. As they do in the kitchen, the linear cherry-wood cabinet drawers and extruded-aluminum pulls guide the eye horizontally. Another sleek detail is the concrete countertop with an integral sink that slopes in one direction, toward a trough drain that was cast into it.



toward a trough drain that was cast into it.

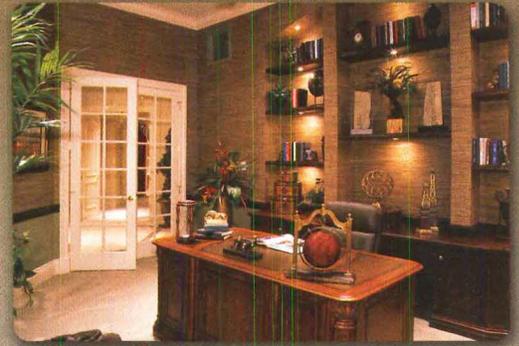
As thoroughly modern as the new bath is, it doesn't completely deny the house's history.

Bloomberg marked the point where the old ends and the new begins, while treating it as one continuous space. The frameless shower door is the point at which the original house connects to the modern extension. A notch in the glass allows the mirror and countertop to slide through. On the other side, the countertop becomes a shelf for soap and shaving supplies, and the mirror extends behind the showerhead, offering a handy place to shave.—*cheryl weber*



A floating glass-and-copper addition on the second and third stories holds the sleek master bath on top. A frameless shower door, pierced by the countertop and shaving mirror, marks the point where old and new converge.

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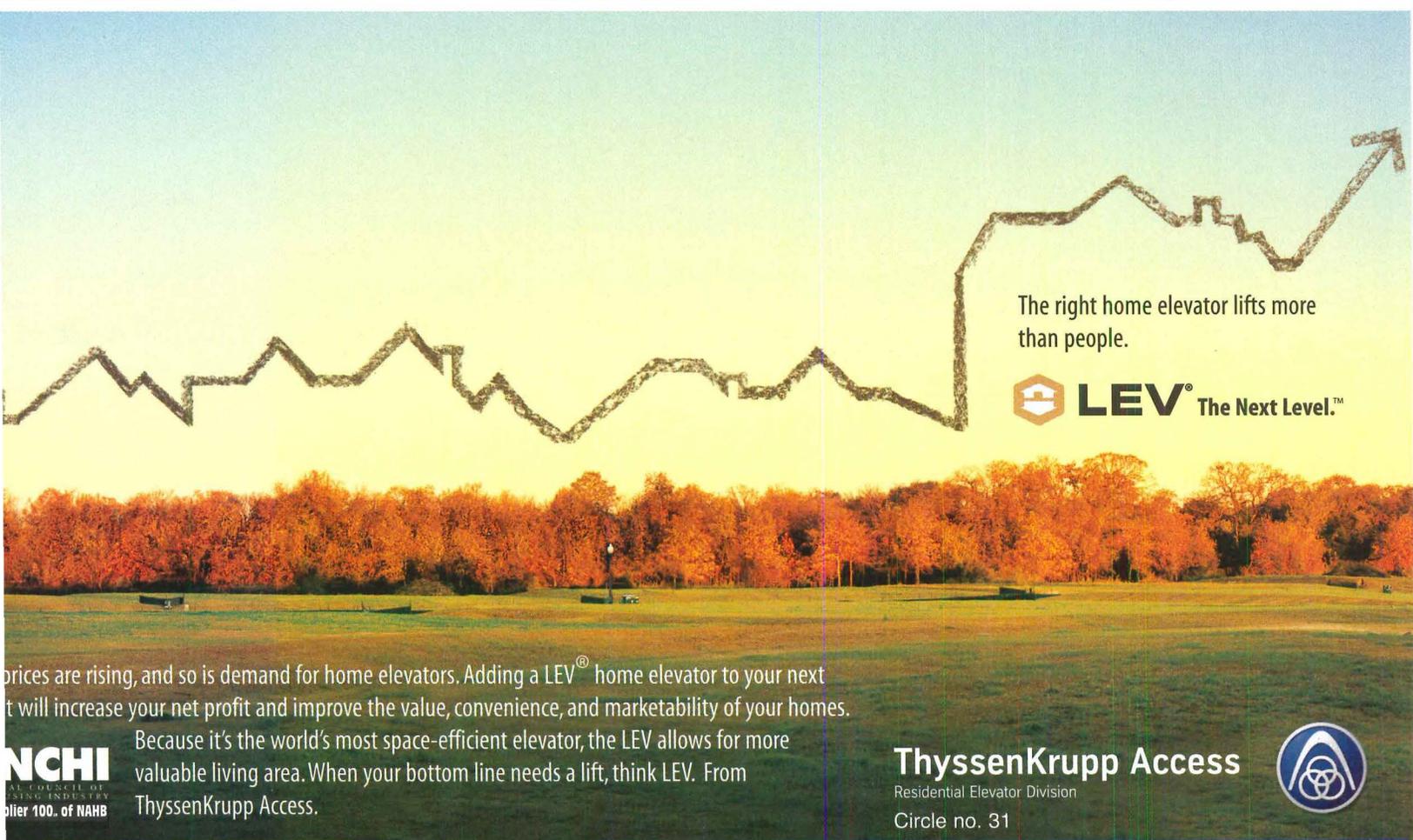
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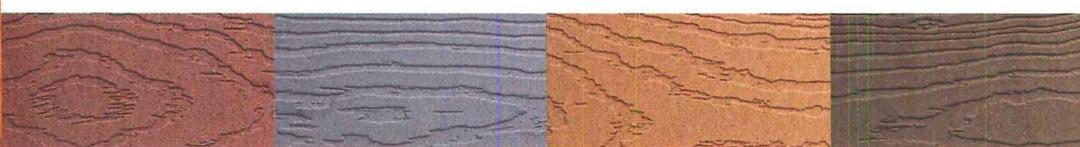
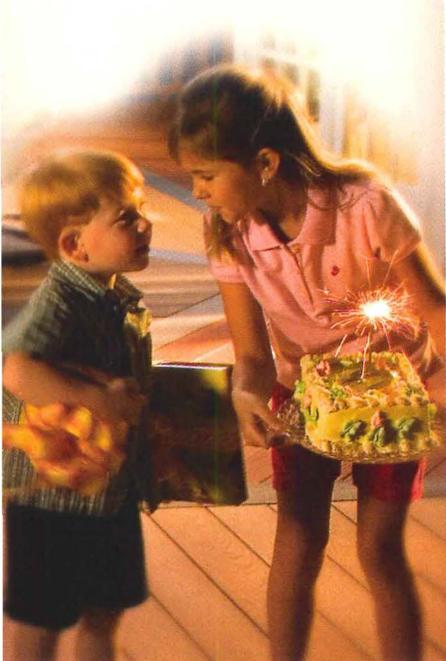
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# a country of craft dodgers

we've lost our appreciation for the fine art of craft.

by jonah zuckerman

As a furniture maker who was extensively trained as an architect, I spend much time pondering the relationship between small details and big spaces. In the process, I have become obsessed with the demise of craftsmanship in our building economy and culture. We need only open our eyes to see the general cheapness and standardization of our building methods. "Craft" itself has become a bad word in our high culture. When beautiful materials or fine workmanship do make their way into a luxury home or high-profile institutional building, they usually do so with little creativity on the part of the designer or builder. Though the cultural and economic reasons for this date back many decades, I believe we must lead a rescue of both the connotation and practice of craft.

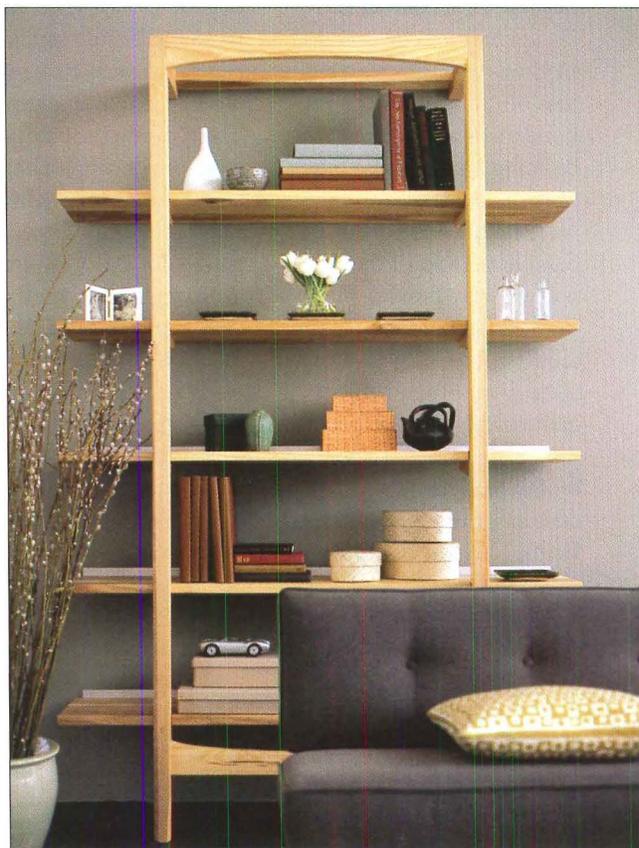
I should say up front that I am an avid proponent of Modernism and minimalism, and I try to incorporate many lessons from these movements into my own work. I believe in economy of detail and material richness. I also believe in the expression of structural and functional logics, and in cultivating the "accident" both in design and making. I believe you

can't have fine craftsmanship without good design, and the inverse. Also, I adore countless old buildings and objects, from many periods and cultures. Neither fanciful excess nor constricted rigor is enough to disqualify a thing or space in my eyes if it is exceptionally well-designed or made.

## devolution theory

The crisis in craftsmanship is perhaps best illustrated by the recent name change of the 50-year-old American Craft Museum in New York to the Museum of Arts & Design. Similarly, the California College of Arts and Crafts, another highly respected institution, dropped "Crafts" from its name in 2003 to become the California College of the Arts. The same year, the venerable Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts in Racine, Wis., opened an elaborate new building dedicated to craft and called it simply the Racine Art Museum.

Government and institutional building programs are happy to set aside a percentage of construction costs for public art. More often than not, however, they deny budget requests for unusual materials or inspired techniques. Similarly, high-end private developers often willingly invest in luxurious materials and fine workman-



Photos: Courtesy Jonah Zuckerman

Jonah Zuckerman explores the positive tension between art and craft with his furniture designs. Shown: City Joinery's Leaning Shelves (above) and Still Bed (left).

ship—at the expense of any creativity with which those materials are selected or worked. In my own experience, many professionals and consumers who consider themselves design aficionados view craft and craftsmanship as bad things. To them, "craft" is the opposite of both good design and fine

art. A craftsman is considered a rural dolt who should be responsible for no decisions beyond the purely technical. Fifty years ago, heralded designers and artists were proud to distinguish themselves by calling themselves craftspeople. Today, the opposite is the case.

*continued on page 40*

## perspective

Without a doubt, the vast majority of the world loathes contemporary architecture because of its associated cheapening of construction methods and the overall loss of craftsmanship. The builders of so many of these buildings just did not care much about how well they were made. Moreover, the hand and mind of the maker is in no way present in the final product. Most of the iconic Modernists, however, were great proponents of craftsmanship, at least when they were not overwhelmed by the realities of the 20th century building economy. Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, Louis Kahn, and Richard Meier have all created buildings that are rich in craft. These designers, among many others, have shown that the way something is made can de-emphasize its making, but still display excellent craftsmanship. Others, like Adolf Loos and Carlo Scarpa, artfully worked lush materials so they blended into the background, sly about their luxuriousness. Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas, and others have proven that cheap materials can be made glorious by thoughtful design and skillful workmanship.

### reality shows

Style, then, did not bring about the current crisis in

craftsmanship. In our age of middle-class living standards, labor unions, and elaborate building codes, the reasons are more significantly economic. Just building well has become so expensive. The typical consumer constructing or remodeling a house is so overwhelmed with technology-based expenses for HVAC systems, audio and video, alarm systems, and kitchen appliances, he has little left for fine materials and workmanship. The same applies to businesses and institutions that have to pay for elaborate fire protection, ADA-compliant fixtures, and seismic retrofits. Most architects are way too busy and strapped for time to spend excess hours worrying about detailed processes with which complex materials are worked. With giant insurance premiums and litigious clients, most builders are inherently risk-averse. The typical construction worker in almost every trade is happy enough doing the same thing each day.

Other reasons behind the decline of craft are complex and numerous. For one, the word “craft” has been cheapened by the ubiquitous “craft show” and the commercial “craft store.” Many “craft” projects and practices are marketed to amateurs as pleasant hobbies rather than

*“our society is mostly incapable of recognizing when something is exceptionally well-made.”*



Photos: William Boyd (above); courtesy City Joinery (below)

The author's architectural education informs his furniture creations, including the Hovering Console Table (left) and the Reading Chair (right).

serious endeavors. They have become known more for materials and handiwork than for thoughtful design. In addition, the education of many design professionals generally de-emphasizes materials and technique in favor of image. Also, photography—the principal medium with which we communicate about design and architecture—is hard-pressed to depict fine craftsmanship. Finally, our stark geographic and social separation from the creation of the things we consume further dehumanizes their makers in our eyes.

The result: Our rabidly building and consuming society is mostly incapable of recognizing or valuing when something is exceptionally well-made with exceptional materials. Indeed, many of our dominant standards of “good quality” in things grew from cheap mechanized production processes that arose in the 1950s. Good-quality construction today only needs to have clean taping, straight grout lines, and plumb doors to pass muster. Granite, one of nature's most glorious stones, has been belittled by its thoughtlessly repetitive use in so many kitchens.

Perhaps we need another version of the Arts & Crafts movement that began in England during the middle of the 19th century with A.W.N. Pugin, William Morris, and others. Such a movement should accept both the economic and environmental necessities of our time, however. It should embrace machines and mechanized production processes. It should not run from offshore production. It should utilize CAD and CAM. It should embrace the term and practice of “decorative art” and “functional design.” It should advocate for renewable and recycled materials and energy conservation. Most important, design and building practitioners should feel an ethical compulsion to include something special or unusual in every project, whether on a front façade, in a lobby, or peppered throughout a building. This something should celebrate the making of things and the wealth that our earth and industrial economy offer. **ra**

*Jonah Zuckerman is the owner of City Joinery ([www.cityjoinery.com](http://www.cityjoinery.com)), a 10-year-old made-to-order furniture design company in Brooklyn, N.Y.*



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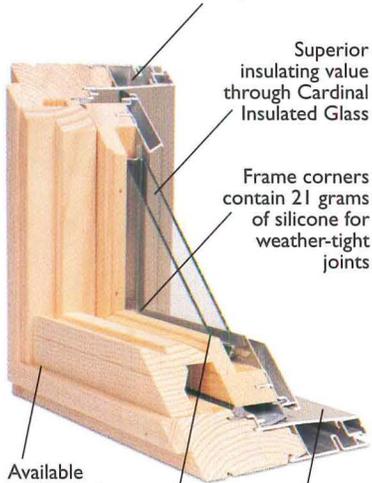
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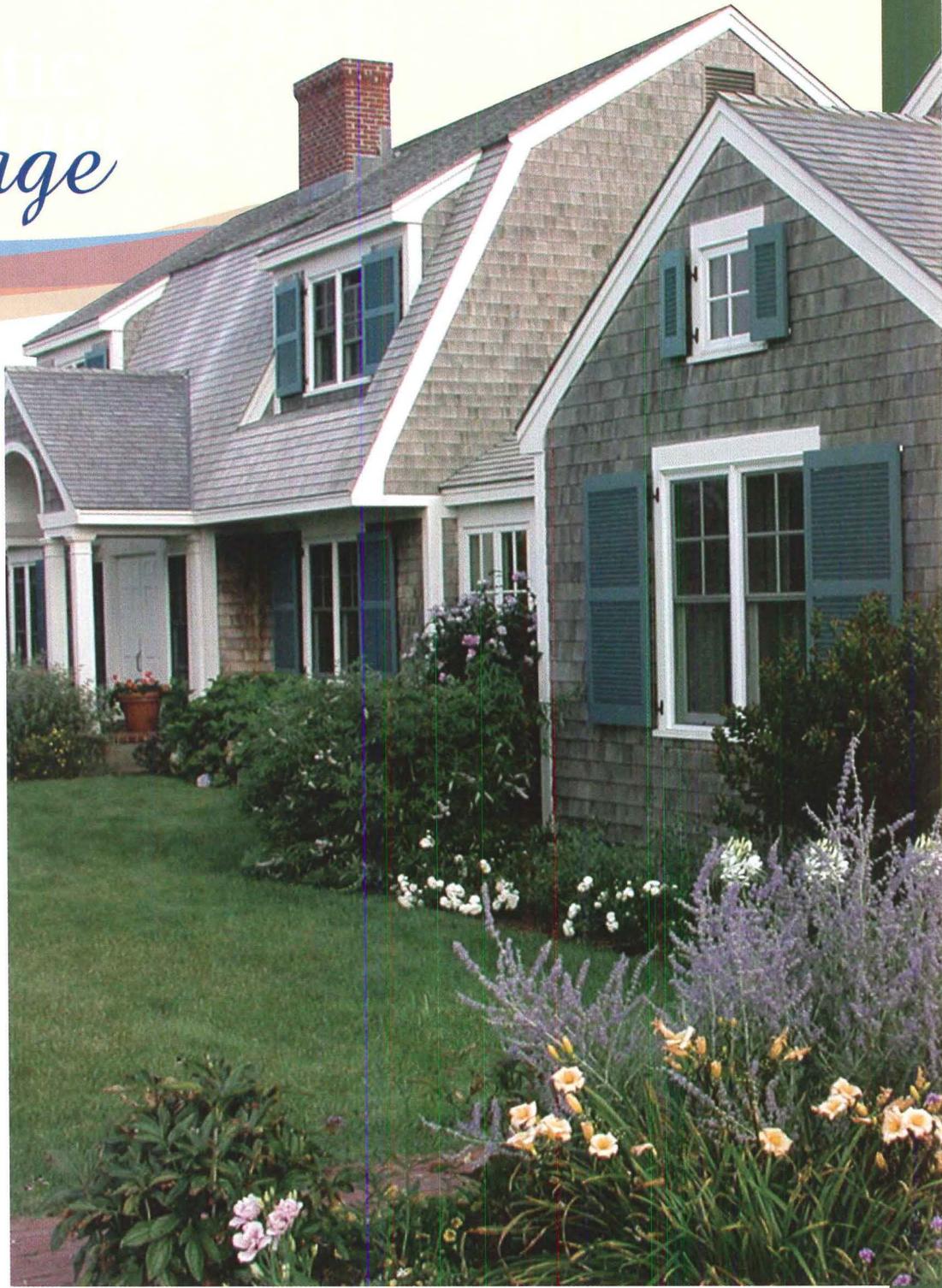
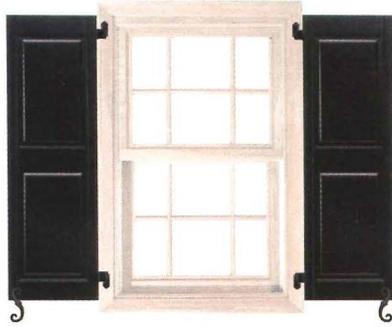
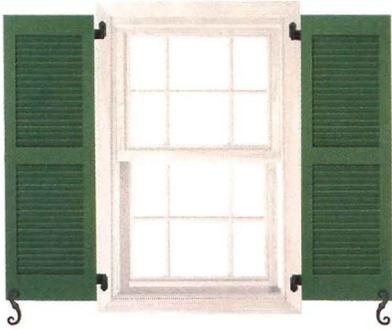
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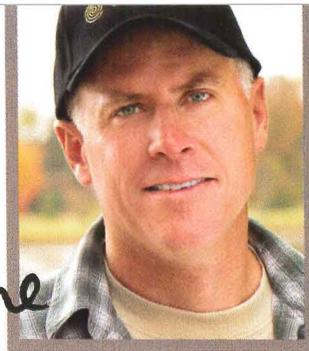
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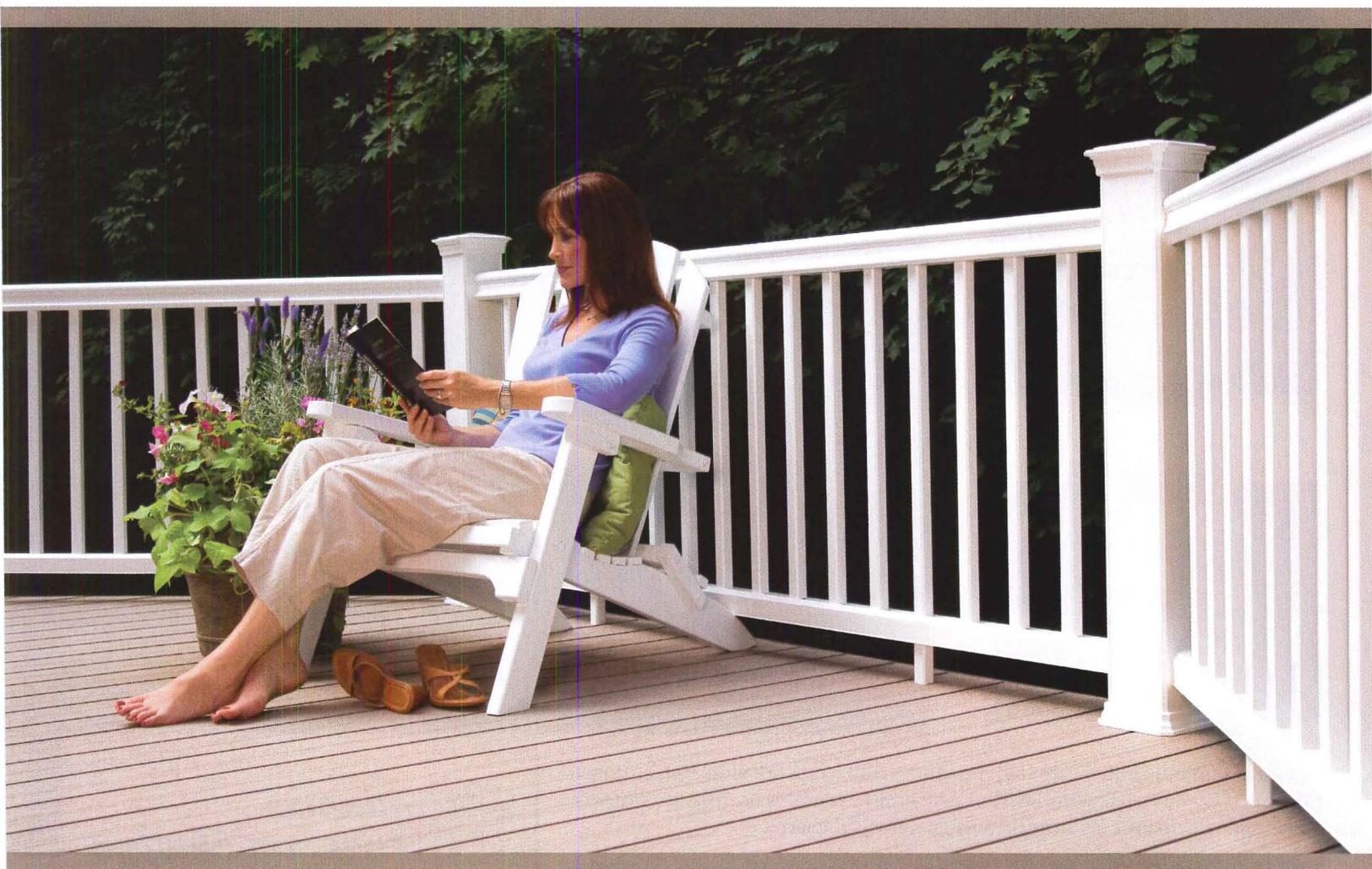
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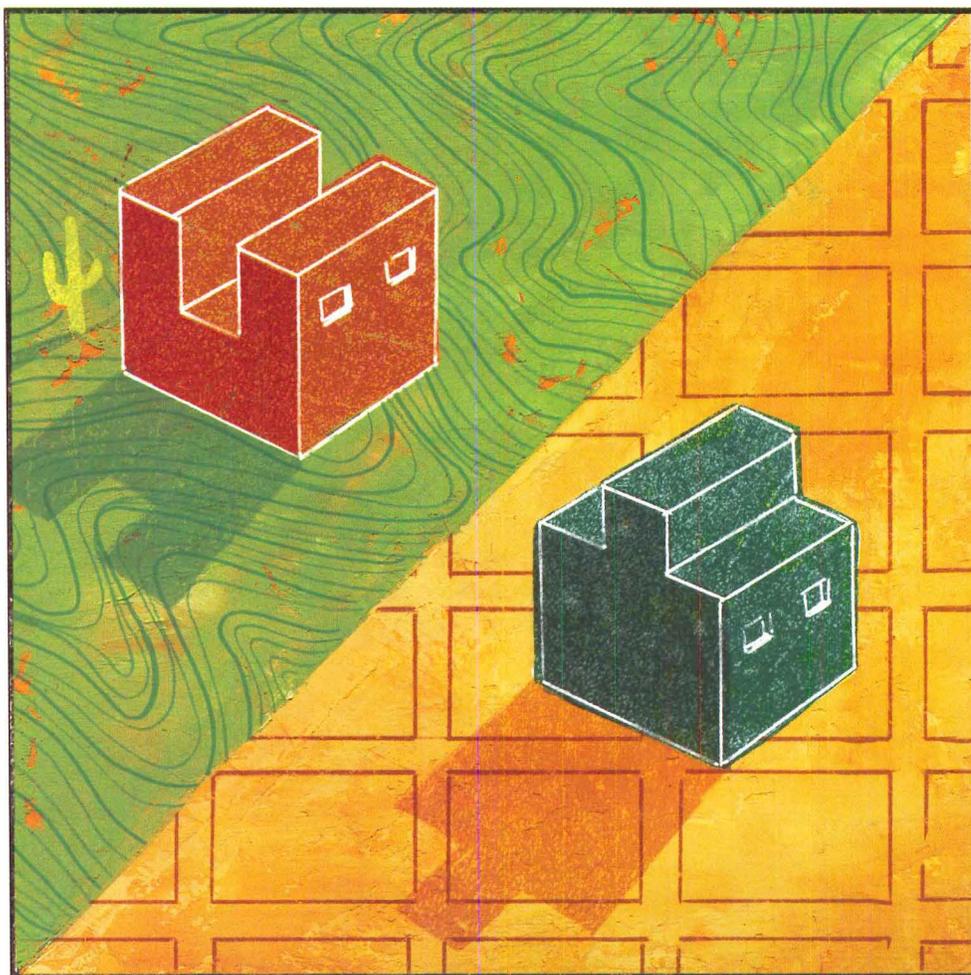
# cloning your practice

one office isn't always enough.

by cheryl weber

**m**ichael Woodley, AIA, leads a double life. An avid ice hockey fan, he has season tickets to see the Colorado Avalanche in Denver and the Mighty Ducks in Anaheim, Calif. He's an active member of the AIA and the Building Industry Association in Orange County, Calif., and he plays on an ice hockey team in Littleton, Colo., where he also coaches his 13-year-old daughter's soccer team. "For a long time, people didn't realize I wasn't living in California, and some still don't," says Woodley, whose firm, the Woodley Architectural Group, operates out of Littleton, Colo., and Costa Mesa, Calif. He moved his family from California to Colorado eight years ago and splits his time between the two offices, bouncing back and forth about three times a month.

While most architects probably don't think of themselves as full-fledged members of two communities, doing business in more than one place has become easier than ever. Thanks to cheap airfares and technology like BlackBerries, laptops, and networked offices, it matters less and less where



Hadley Hooper

architects with wide-ranging practices operate these days. Woodley happens to work for production builders all over the country, so the Colorado base puts him closer to his clients. Other architecture firms are setting up satellite shops to hone multiple specialties such as planning and mixed-use development or to take advantage of new markets.

But it's not just the large firms with a broad scope of services that are expanding

their presence. Paralleling the baby boomer trend toward second homes, some small firms have a city office and a country office. And as architects increasingly compete for gifted employees, second—and third and fourth—locations get launched for reasons as basic as trying to attract top talent by giving them choices about where they want to live. In the new migratory pattern, satellite offices are ranging from 20 miles apart to hun-

dreds or even thousands of miles apart.

Of course, being responsible for more than one office has its headaches. It means more overhead costs and administrative paperwork, not to mention accounting and management hurdles. And shuttling between locations can be expensive and time-consuming. "It's easier today than it was in the past," says Carson Looney, FAIA, founding partner of

*continued on page 46*

## practice

Looney Ricks Kiss, a Memphis, Tenn.-based firm with six offices in Florida, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Texas. Still, the time and effort must pay off. "If an office isn't self-sustaining, we'd shut it down," he says. "The only way we'd keep it open is if the office was serving an important client, or if the opportunity it was bringing to the rest of the firm outweighed its performance."

### use it or lose it

A surprising number of architects say that the main reason they open a branch office is to hang onto talented staff. Market opportunity often comes second. "We've found it very challenging over the last decade to find

### making it public

**W**hen they open satellite offices, architects are careful to send the right message to prospective clients. After he branched out from Martha's Vineyard to Falmouth, Mass., Mark Hutker, AIA, was concerned that the Vineyard community might think he was phasing out his presence. So he sent out 3,000 postcards letting people know that the firm would be catering to both locations. "If you're the village architect, as we like to think of ourselves, you've got to make sure people don't get the sense that you're moving on," Hutker says. "Communities feel a sense of ownership, and when they know you're doing work elsewhere, there's some sense of being jaded."

By contrast, when the Washington, D.C.-based Russell Versaci, AIA, and David E. Neumann, AIA, opened a duplicate office in Middleburg, Va., in 1989, they were just getting established and wanted to avoid the perception of being a local firm. So their announcement made it clear that the principal office was in D.C. "Implicit in being located in D.C. and on Main Street in Middleburg was that we would seek to do work regionally, rather than simply looking for whatever was immediately available in our backyard," Neumann says. Today, he adds, there would be less reason to make that distinction. —c.w.

the team members we're looking for," Looney confirms. LRK's Nashville office was born after a stellar employee quit to move to Nashville. Sometime after the move, the former em-

ployee let it be known that he loved Nashville but wished he'd never left the firm. "We said, 'Why not stay and open an office there?'" Looney says. It was a similar story at Rose-

mary Beach, Fla. When one of the firm's long-time principals built a house there and decided he'd rather live on the beach, LRK gave the green light to branch out.

*continued on page 48*

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## practice

"We've learned never to open an office without having a principal-level person there," Looney says. "The Nashville office struggled for a year or two because we didn't have a principal who was well-versed in how we service our clients. Anyone who's licensed can open an office, but you have to do it right. We set budgets for it and plan on a year for it to make its way."

The prospect of losing a highly valued employee also prompted Vero Beach, Fla., architect Scott Merrill, AIA, Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects, to open an Atlanta branch in 1999. David Colgan, AIA, who heads up the two-person office, had worked for Mer-

rill for five years when he took a break to help a former classmate build a winery on the West Coast. After Colgan returned to his hometown of Atlanta a year later, Merrill offered him a partnership, sweetening the pot by letting him stay put. "We've never had work in Atlanta, and I don't care if we ever have it," Merrill says. Colgan is kept busy on projects that aren't close to either office.

Merrill recognizes that although the firm's nationally acclaimed work on New Urbanist communities and luxury custom homes attracts young, single graduates, the sleepy town of Vero Beach may not meet their social needs. "In the future there might be others

who start in Vero Beach and end up wanting to go to a bigger city as well," Merrill says. "It wasn't that expensive to open a small office. It's more expensive to lose the people we train."

### going local

The lengthening commute time to offices in sprawling metro areas has also helped fuel the trend toward decentralization. Some partners have left their urban offices behind, setting up a second shop in the outlying areas where they prefer to live. Russell Versaci, AIA, of Versaci Neumann & Partners, lives near Middleburg, Va., an hour-and-a-half drive on a good day from the firm's office in downtown Wash-

ington, D.C. As it turns out, two of the architects who've been with the firm the longest also live there. In 1991, six years after launching the practice, Versaci opened a second office near his home in the heart of Virginia hunting country. "Spending three or four hours in the car each day was pretty grueling," says founding partner David E. Neumann, AIA. "Opening the Middleburg office was a quality-of-life issue."

It's no coincidence that the bucolic Middleburg area is also rich in the traditional architecture Versaci Neumann is known for: gracious Colonial-era estates, farmhouses, and summer cottages. The partners had a

*continued on page 50*



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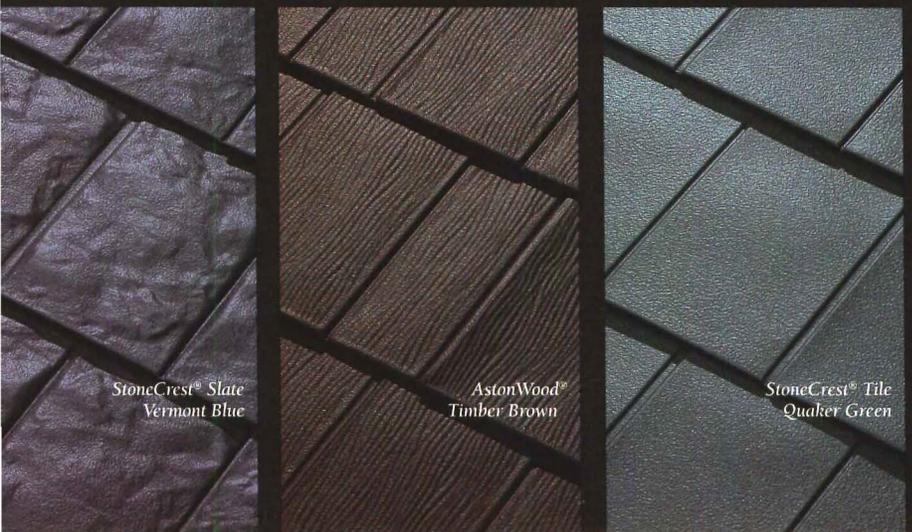
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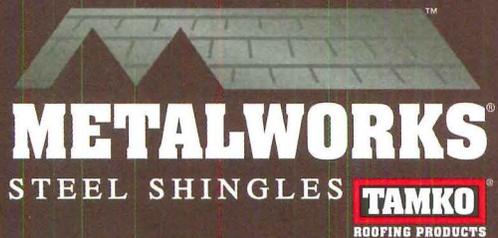
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## practice

number of projects under way there and felt that a local presence would be more convincing to prospective clients. Now, the rural office is twice the size of its urban counterpart, numbering eight architects and one marketing person to Washington, D.C.'s four architects and one business administrator. "We have had remarkable success in having long-term employees in the Middleburg office," Neumann says. "Everyone has a 10-minute to 15-minute drive through the Virginia countryside to get to the office. I can't imagine that the two people who became partners out there would have stayed with us had we [only] been in D.C."

The commuting issue is only partly solved, however. From a project-management standpoint, the offices operate as separate entities. And although there is some geographical basis for divvying up commissions, scheduling constraints and client requests for particular partners are thrown into the mix. "Both offices have projects in Charlottesville, Va., the Washington office recently did a project in West Virginia, and the Middleburg office is working on a house on the Eastern Shore of Maryland," Neumann says, "so that partner has to drive by the D.C. office on the way to the Eastern Shore. While we attempt to do things on a logistical basis, there are other factors that weigh in."

That's also the case at SALA Architects, where 40-

some staff members are tailoring their work lives to fit their preferred locations in Minneapolis, Stillwater, or Excelsior, Minn. Although each office works independently, there's an open-market system by which projects routinely get shifted to fill voids in other offices. Principal Eric Odor, AIA, Minneapolis, says the opening in 1997 of the Stillwater office, 20 miles east of Minneapolis, had as much to do with where the employees lived as the burgeoning market there. "At least half the office—10 to 12 people—lived in Stillwater," he says. "As the commute got worse and worse, they were interested in not doing it anymore." Then in 2002, the Minneapolis office sent an offshoot in the other direction, to Excelsior, a town 20 miles to the west on Lake Minnetonka. Although five of the six employees who started the Excelsior office lived there, and the commute was "simply awful," its booming housing market and acres of shoreline also made it a prime target for SALA's expansion.

The firm operates as a collaborative of 13 project architects. (Eight are principals, and three of those are managing partners.) Each architect is responsible for his or her own clients and contracts, but they all share administrative and technical staff. "Each office has a workload meeting once a week that's attended by someone from another location," Odor says. "If one office has more work than [it] can do, we will have

employees shift locales or share work. It's nice to have some built-in flexibility."

Divided offices not only help firms flex, but they ensure healthy diversity, too. "We like having people work in different offices because each one is unique in the way [it's] developed," Odor says. Each has "different design methodologies and ways of detailing and doing presentations," for example. "We spend a whole lot of time trying to keep aware of what everyone else is doing and knitting the offices together," he adds. "There's a strong tendency to be in our own little world."

## divide and conquer

Indeed, owners of firms with multiple offices routinely spend time figuring out how to draw the lines on project responsibilities but smudge the distinctions between locations so that staff feel connected to the larger effort. Unlike SALA, Versaci Neumann does not share work between offices; Neumann says it takes too long to get people up to speed. But the sibling offices regularly tour each other's projects to satisfy their curiosity about what's going on. And the marketing director recently started an electronic newsletter that profiles projects and employees every month or two. SALA also rents a bus for spring and fall project tours. "It's not mandatory, but it's highly attended," Odor says. At the Woodley Architectural Group, work flows seam-

*continued on page 52*



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lessly between California and Colorado, and their opposing locations offer a nice perk: companywide Christmas parties in the Colorado Rockies and summer picnics in California.

Like Woodley, Mark Hutker, AIA, Hutker Architects,

prefers the informal character of two small offices rather than one larger one. There are 15 people in each of his locations on Martha's Vineyard and on Cape Cod, in Falmouth, Mass. Hutker opened the Falmouth office eight years ago "after key

staff got up enough gump-tion to tell me they weren't going to make the 45-minute commute" from the mainland anymore and to broaden his geographical reach. Now, 60 percent of the firm's work is off Martha's Vineyard, and two years ago Hut-

ker moved his family to Falmouth. "We haven't lost market share on [the island], but [we have] expanded it in Falmouth," he says.

Hutker says the key to making two offices work is having strong managers and knowing how to delegate. Principal Charles Orr, AIA, heads up the Falmouth office, principal Phil Regan runs the Vineyard location, and Hutker, who is involved in the design of nearly every project, travels back and forth. "I see the offices as equal siblings," he says. "The people in the Falmouth office are a little older ... and almost everyone has a family, so the vibe from office to office is a tad different, but both are very creative." Of course, sometimes there's sibling rivalry. The Falmouth staff rents a beautifully renovated waterfront space outfitted with Knoll furniture, and now the Vineyard office is getting a makeover, too. "It does matter whether one office has new chairs and the other doesn't," Hutker jokes. "People keep tabs on that stuff."

In the best of scenarios, staff quickly mature when given an opportunity to run a branch office. "It takes a lot of mentoring, but you can see the professional development happening in a shorter period of time, and that's very gratifying," Hutker says. However, dispersing your energies, especially over a distance, can be a delicate balancing act that depends on the vicissitudes of talent and timing, as Charles-

*continued on page 54*

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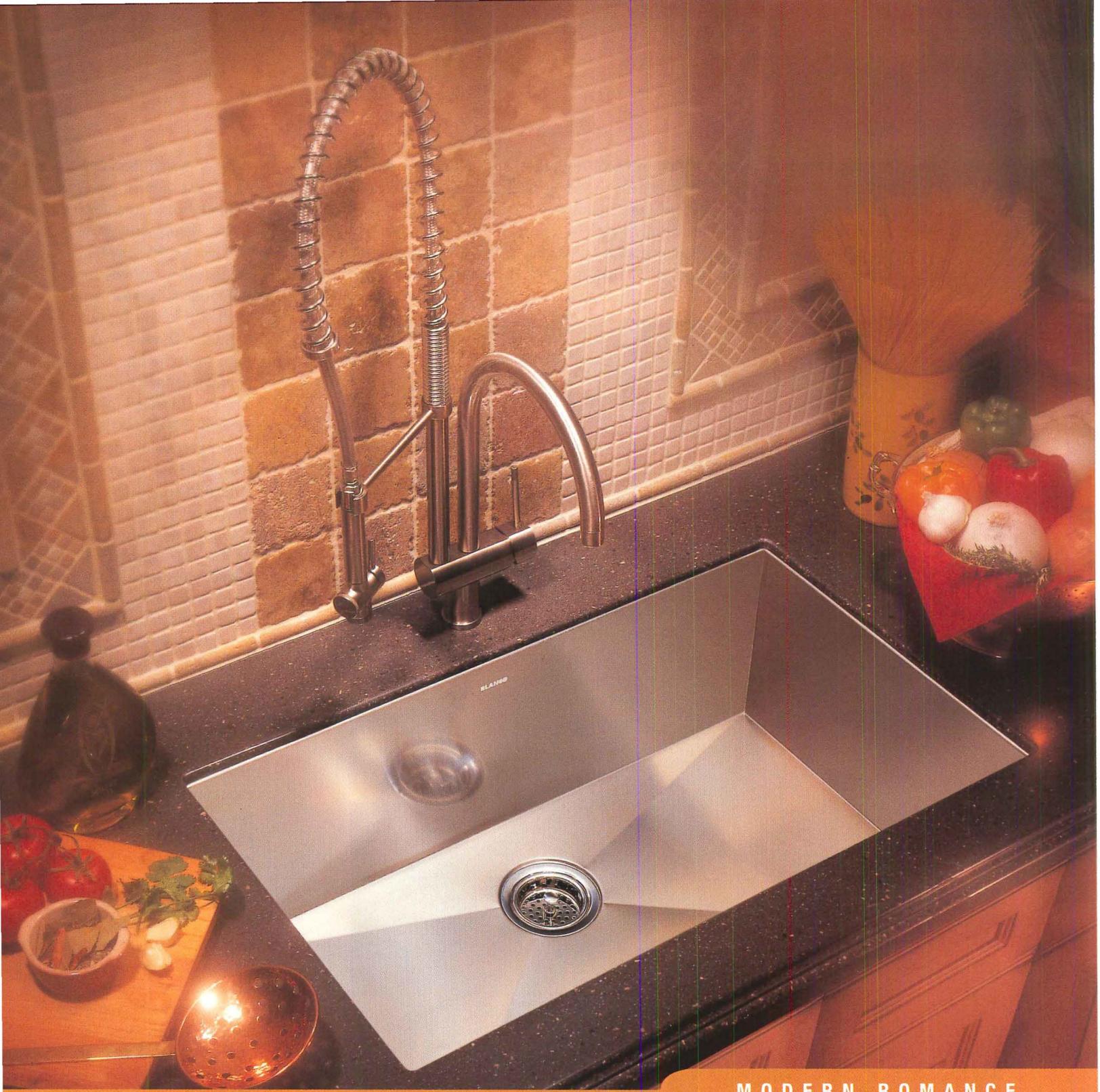
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ton, S.C.-based Schmitt Walker Architects recently discovered. Four years ago, Chris Schmitt, FAIA, opened a satellite office in Westerly, R.I., to take advantage of \$20

million worth of work that had come his way as a result of spending summers at the family beach house in Weekapaug. Schmitt sent north one of his strongest

architects—someone “who happened to really not like Charleston”—to hold down the fort full-time. “He complemented my skills ... and our clients thought he could

walk on water,” Schmitt says. Last summer, however, Schmitt had to shut down the office—temporarily, he hopes —when the 30-something architect and his wife moved to Florida to be near family.

“I said I can’t continue the office because I don’t have someone I have enough confidence in,” Schmitt says. The Rhode Island office generated \$900,000 worth of work a year, compared to the Charleston office, which typically completes \$1.2 million with eight people. “It had to do with the kind of fees you can get in Rhode Island, and the fact that we were working lean and mean,” Schmitt says. But the real fallout was back home. In his frequent absences, the Charleston office “declined enormously, to the point that one of the partners is no longer with the firm.” Because he was gone a week each month, a lot of prospective work never materialized. “One problem with a small office is getting your client base to accept the people you bring into positions of responsibility,” he says. “While I was off designing these projects in Rhode Island, the business in Charleston was suffering because the firm was too dependent on my persona.”

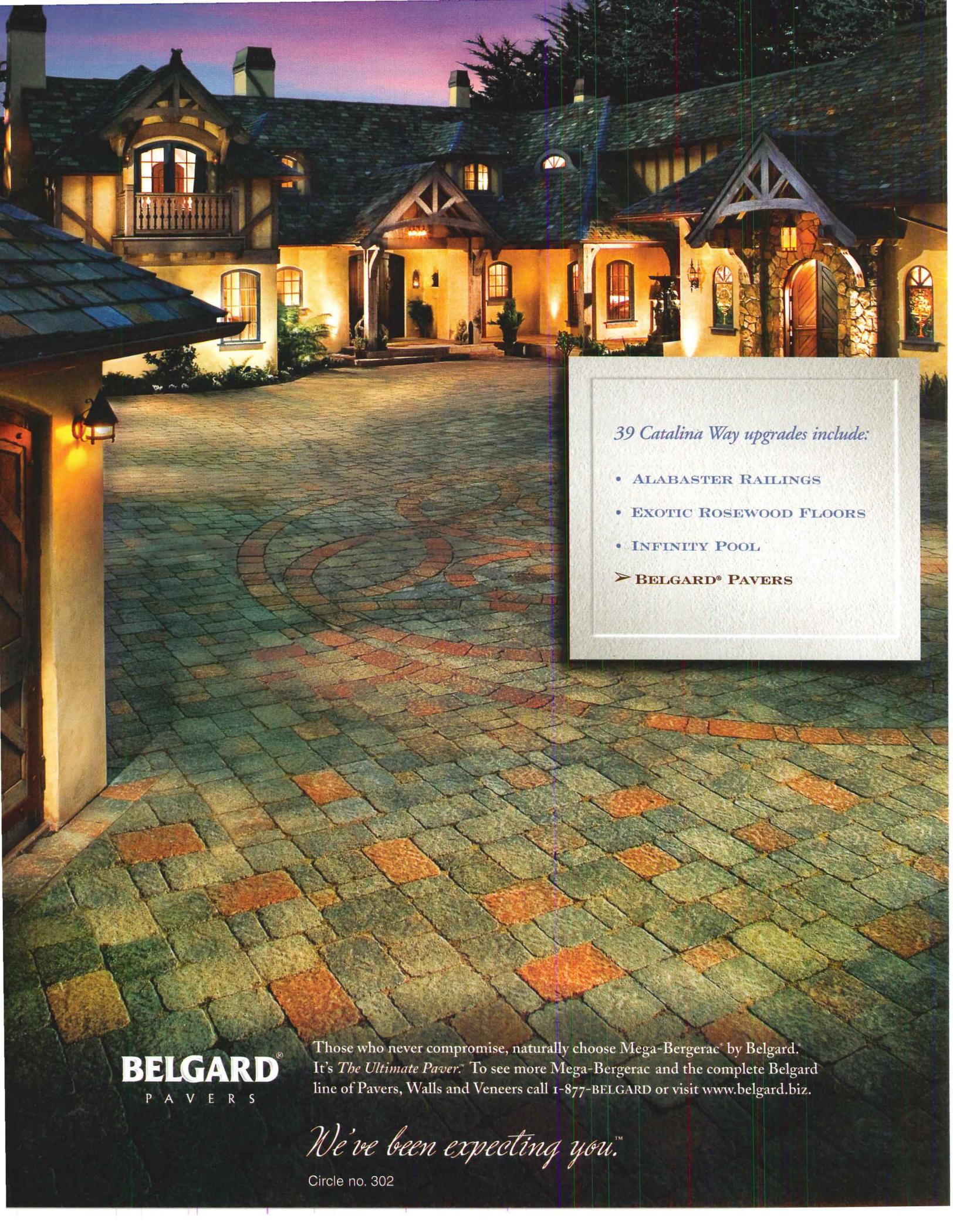
It might be a cautionary tale for Woodley, who is flirting with the idea of a third offspring in Hawaii. “We’re doing some work with the Navy, and an employee who manages the California office bought a house there,” Woodley says. Talk about sibling rivalry. **ra**

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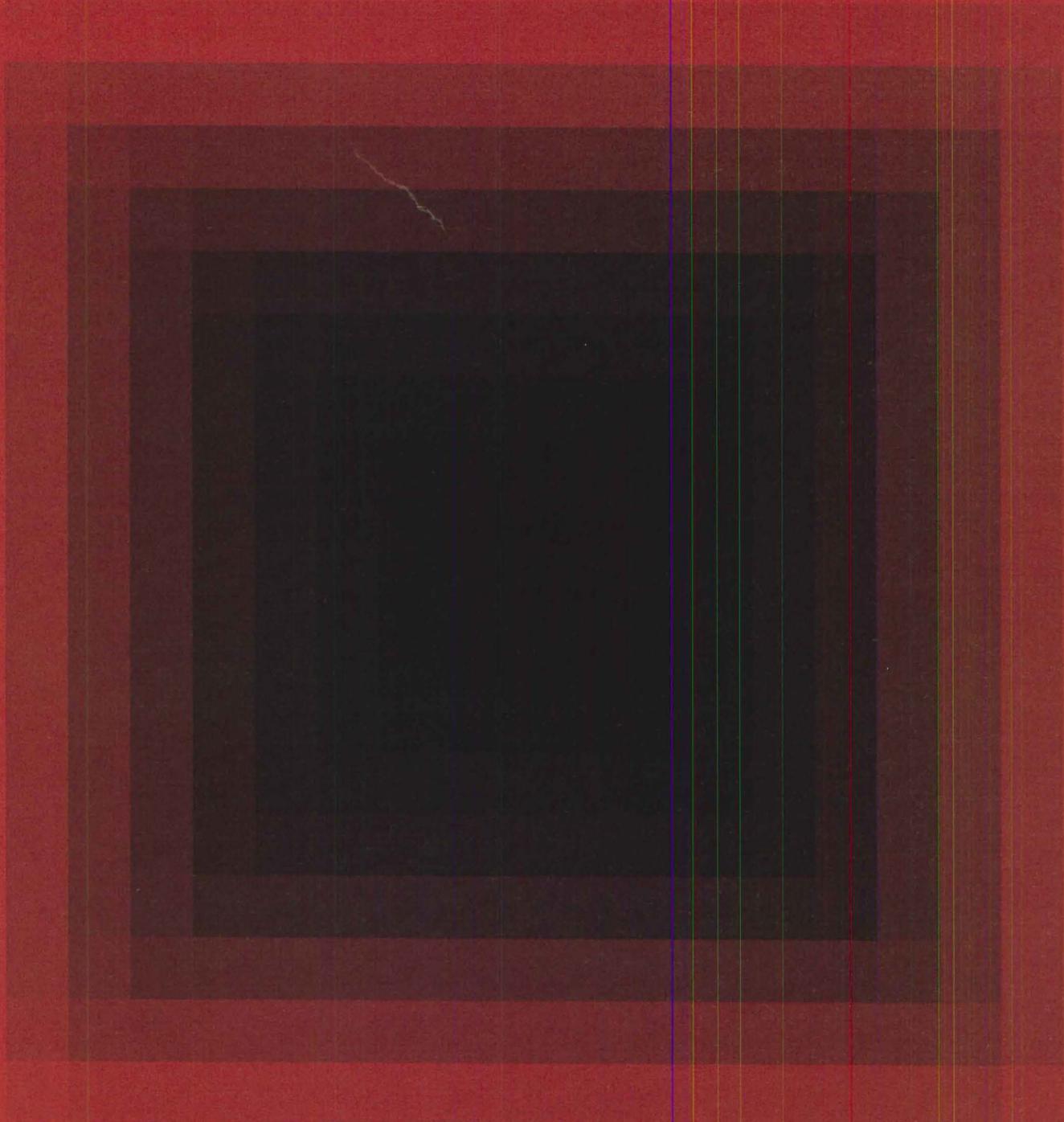
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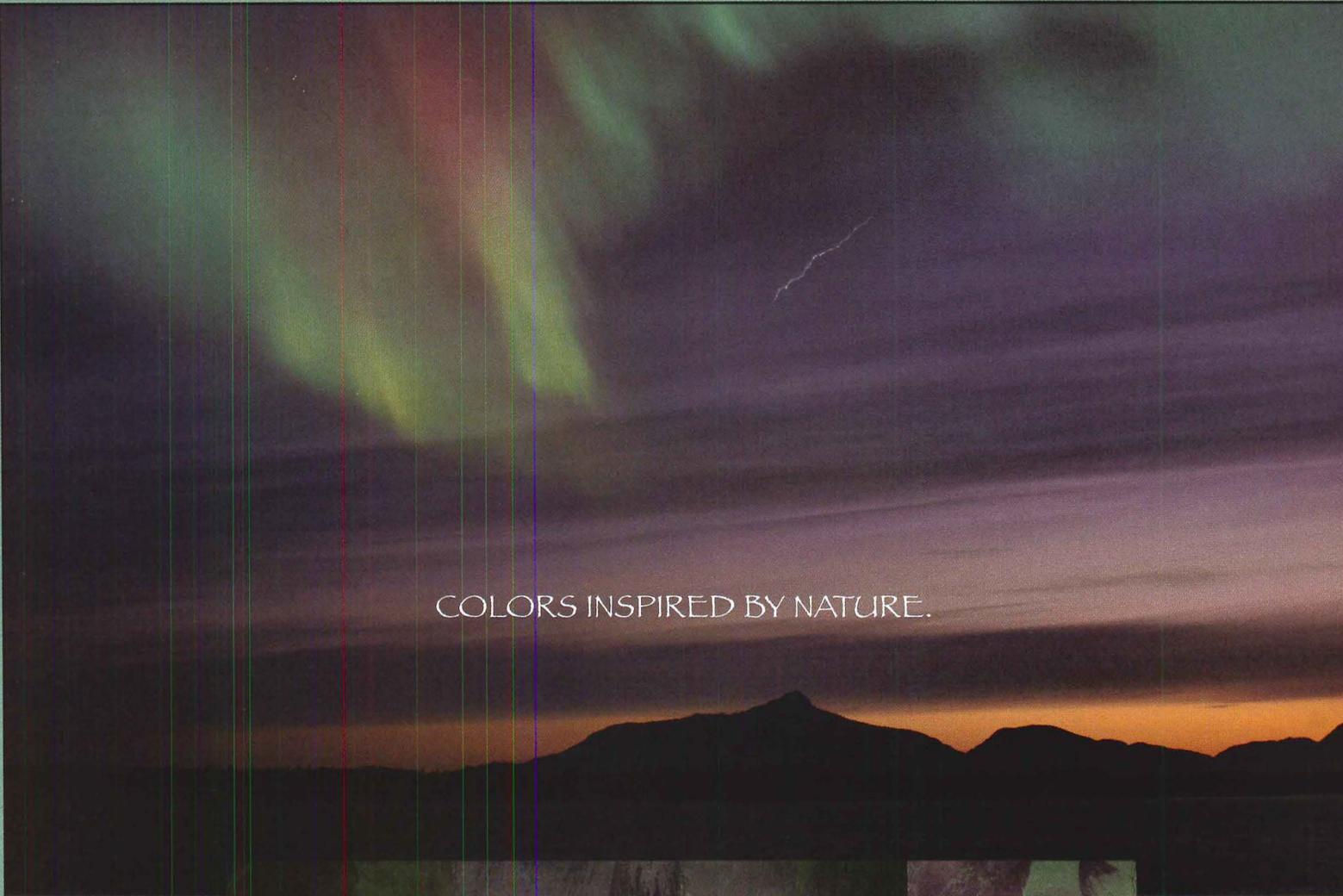
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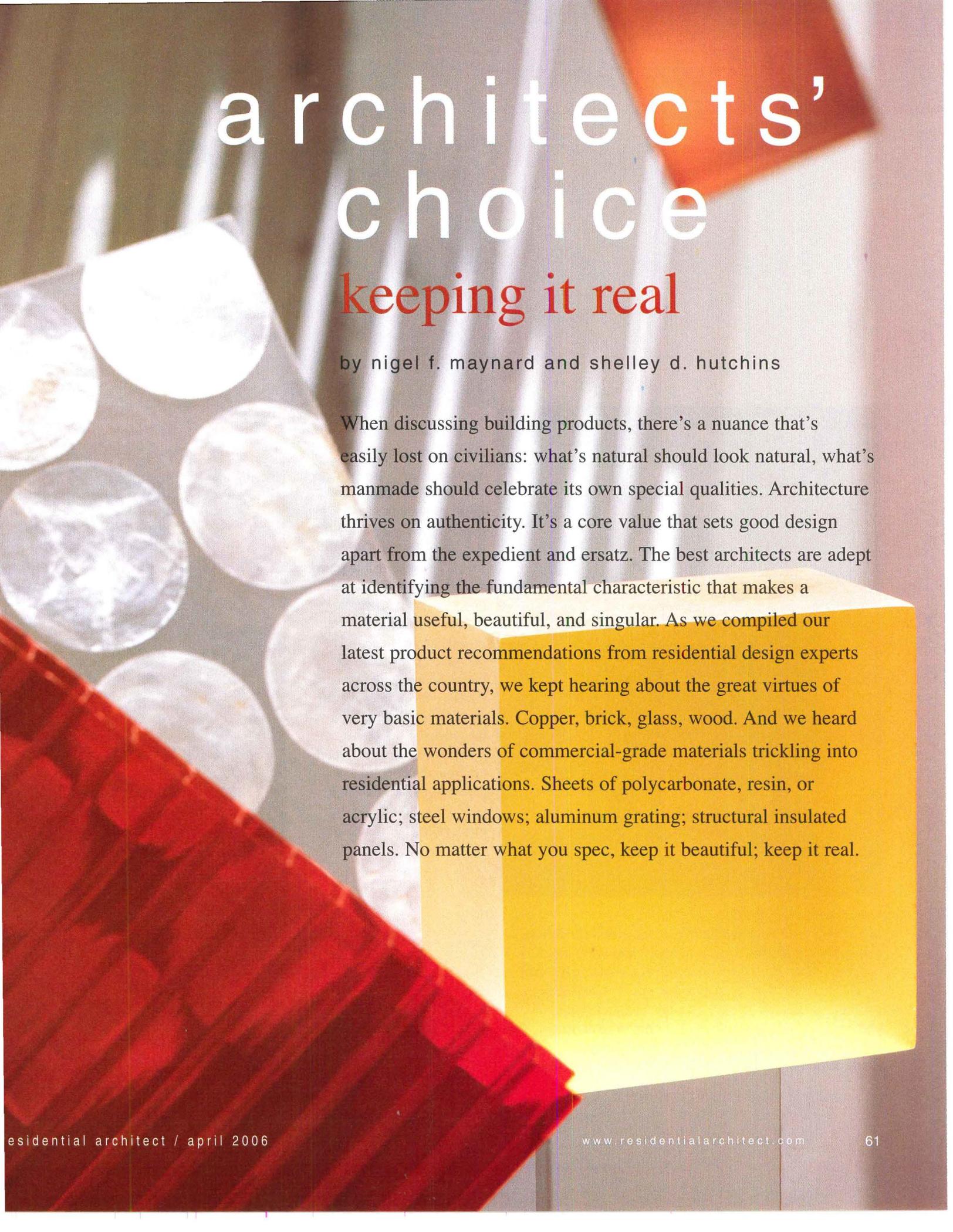
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# architects' choice

## keeping it real

by nigel f. maynard and shelley d. hutchins

When discussing building products, there's a nuance that's easily lost on civilians: what's natural should look natural, what's manmade should celebrate its own special qualities. Architecture thrives on authenticity. It's a core value that sets good design apart from the expedient and ersatz. The best architects are adept at identifying the fundamental characteristic that makes a material useful, beautiful, and singular. As we compiled our latest product recommendations from residential design experts across the country, we kept hearing about the great virtues of very basic materials. Copper, brick, glass, wood. And we heard about the wonders of commercial-grade materials trickling into residential applications. Sheets of polycarbonate, resin, or acrylic; steel windows; aluminum grating; structural insulated panels. No matter what you spec, keep it beautiful; keep it real.

architects'  
choice

# charles rose architects



somerville, mass.

charles rose, aia  
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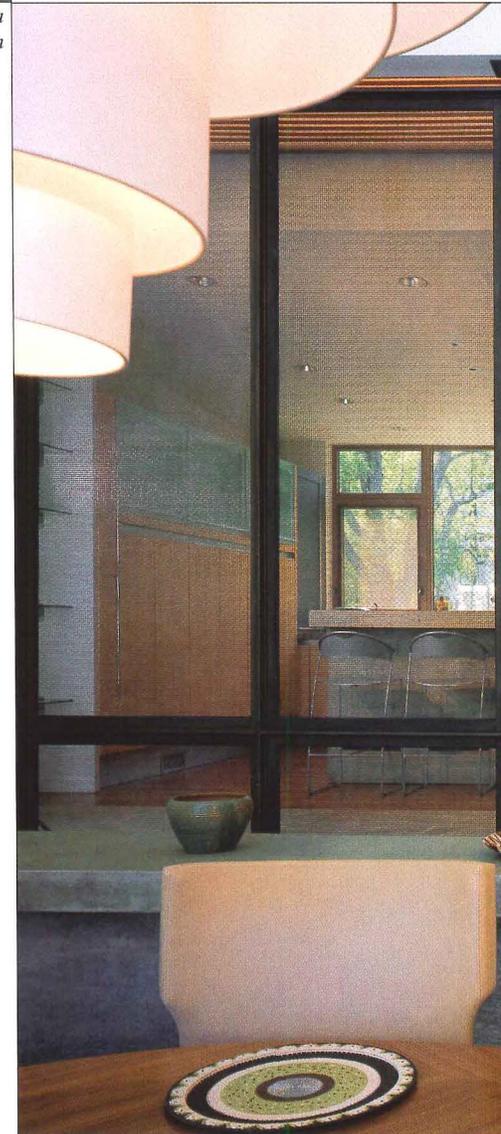
## ▶ good weave

Stainless steel mesh screens with a washed black-oxide finish provide privacy without completely closing off this Rose-designed dining room. The architect appreciates the finish in this application because it's "warmer and more suitable in a salty seaside environment." The manufacturer, GKD-USA, makes available to architects a large collection of woven-metal fabrics that are approved for indoor or outdoor use. The fabrics come in several different weights, weaves, and degrees of transparency. GKD-USA, 800.453.8616; [www.gkdmetalfabrics.com](http://www.gkdmetalfabrics.com).



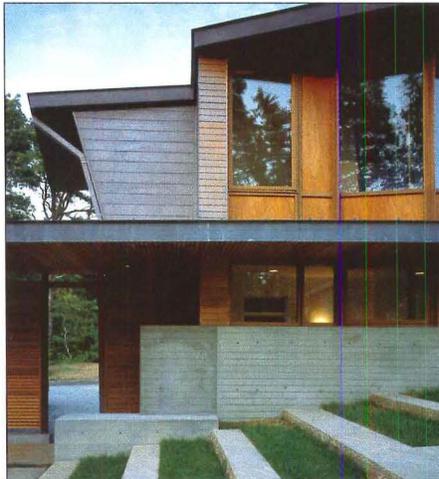
## ▲ planks to you

In addition to serving as stair treads, these structural glass planks convey natural light from above into lower-level living areas. "Our work tends to merge the outside with [the] inside," Rose says of the diaphanous stair, which Circle Redmont fabricated off site. The manufacturer claims the glass-panel planks can withstand excessive wear. Engineered for live loads, they also can be replaced if necessary. Circle Redmont, 800.358.3888; [www.circleredmont.com](http://www.circleredmont.com).



Photos: Portrait courtesy Charles Rose Architects; interiors and exterior by John Linden/[www.johnlindenphotographs.com](http://www.johnlindenphotographs.com)

*“we try to bring richness into spaces by juxtaposing warm natural materials with flowing modern architecture.”*

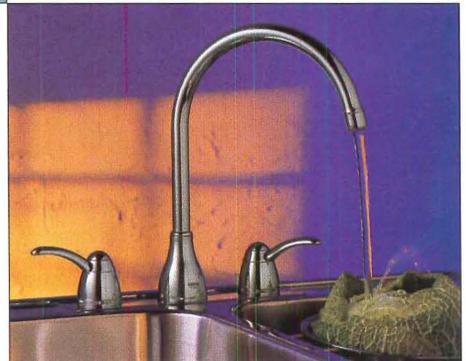


#### ▲ mega slim

“We look for windows that give us large areas of glass and the thinnest profiles possible,” Rose says. Megawood offers such a product. Fine mahogany wood encases 1¼-inch-thick insulating glass bonded to a concealed aluminum channel—a construction that allows oversized windows to pair with smaller frames. Rose balanced transparent expanses on this house with tactile materials like wood panels to “give an intimate sense of scale to the façade.” Megawood Industries, 908.686.4747; [www.megawood.com](http://www.megawood.com).

#### ▼ good leverage

Final touches are important to Rose, who likes Nanz hardware for its clean lines and hefty construction. He prefers levers like the No. 2079, which measures a lengthy 5⅜ inches at one end and tapers to a slim ⅛ inch at the other. Nearly 100 plated or patinaed finishes can be speced. The Nanz Co., 212.367.7000; [www.nanz.com](http://www.nanz.com).



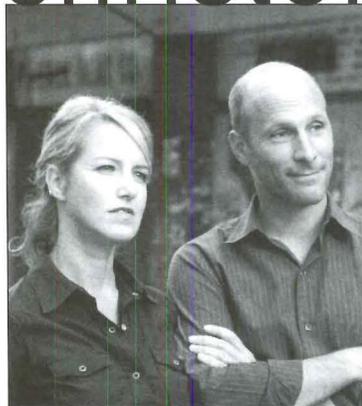
#### ▲ arch arrival

When it's time to spec plumbing fixtures, Rose says his team tends to favor “reliable companies such as Grohe.” They're looking for good design, of course, and “even better function,” he says. The Talia kitchen faucet seen here fits the bill. A lifetime warranty backs the mechanisms behind the fixture's sweeping lines. Finishes include chrome, polished brass, and velour chrome. Grohe America, 630.582.7711; [www.groheamerica.com](http://www.groheamerica.com).



architects'  
choice

# christoff:finio architecture



new york city

*"western red cedar ship-  
siding is warm but sharp"*

taryn christoff and martin finio, aia  
[www.christofffinio.com](http://www.christofffinio.com)

## ▶ stainless style

Wood remains the most popular material for kitchen cabinetry, but Finio says he chooses stainless steel for its "durability and clarity." The firm's favorite line, Varenna, shown in this Christoff:Finio project, features stainless steel doors, islands, and countertops. The company says some collections are available in aluminum, too. Poliform USA; 877.827.3662; [www.poliformusa.com](http://www.poliformusa.com).



## ▲ floor show

Christoff and Finio are fans of concrete floors, but they ask their subcontractors to grind down the surface for added interest. "By grinding the slab after it has cured, you expose the aggregate polished stone," Finio says. The grinding also tightens the pores for durability. The firm finished this floor with a clear penetrating sealer. Extreme Concrete Designs, 631.331.1665; [www.extremconcretedesign.com](http://www.extremconcretedesign.com).



## ◀ sinking feeling

While DuPont Corian is mostly used for countertops, the product is versatile enough for sinks. Finio raves that it "can be heat-formed" and that its seams "can be welded to invisibility, giving it a monolithic and precise quality." For its custom work, Christoff:Finio turns to Evans & Paul, which fabricated this custom sink. DuPont Corian, 800.906.7765; [www.corian.com](http://www.corian.com).

Photos: Portrait courtesy Christoff:Finio architecture; exterior, kitchen, and bath by Elizabeth Felicella; concrete flooring by Jan Staller

# ryker/nave design



## ▲ cedar light

Christoff:Finio praises cedar for its looks and durability. The wood naturally resists moisture, decay, and insect damage, and it's also dimensionally stable. According to the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association, a trade group for red cedar producers, the species also lies flat and holds fasteners well. No wonder the architects used generous amounts of it on this New Jersey beach house. Western Red Cedar Lumber Association, 866.778.9096; [www.wrcla.org](http://www.wrcla.org).



## ▲ old timers

Ryker, a fan of reclaimed wood's sustainability, says she likes "to use it in a modern context," as she did with this bathtub. One of her favorite suppliers is BT Timberworks, which sells lumber recycled from factories, warehouses, and bridges. The company says its wood is of a higher quality than current sources because it originates from old-growth forests. BT Timberworks, 406.763.4639; [www.bttimberworks.com](http://www.bttimberworks.com).

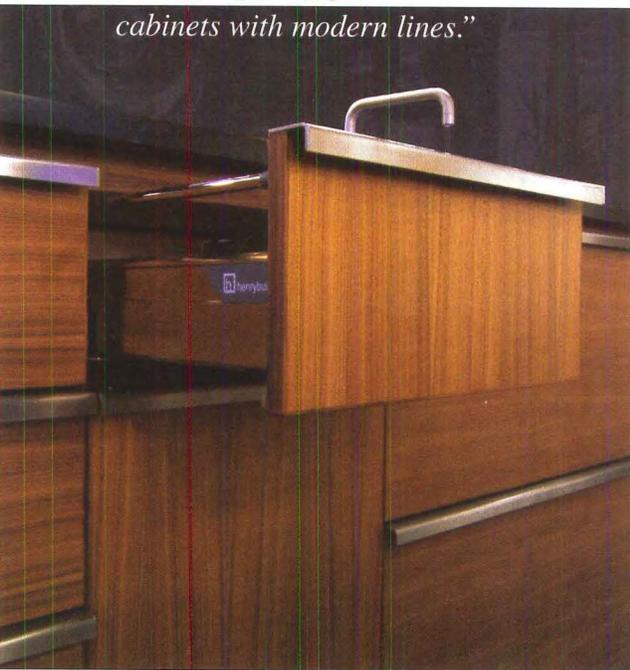
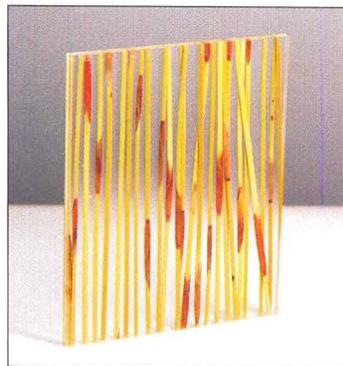


livingston, mont.

lori e. ryker  
[www.rykernave.com](http://www.rykernave.com)

## ▶ piece work

The Henrybuilt Modular Program allows architects to order individual cabinet components from a select menu of materials, including bamboo, laminate, and glass. Modular components are designed and built to the same standards as those in the company's Studio Program, with one exception: Modular products, which Ryker selected for this kitchen, are built from sustainable materials. Henrybuilt Corp., 866.624.9270; [www.henrybuilt.com](http://www.henrybuilt.com).



*"henrybuilt kitchen modulares are high-quality, functional cabinets with modern lines."*

## ◀ between acts

Lumicor is a translucent material that embeds wood, metal, paper, and foliage in high-performance resins. The manufacturer claims Lumicor has excellent clarity and UV resistance and is easy to fabricate. Ryker likes the fact that it's half the weight of glass. Possible applications include countertops, cabinet doors, shower doors, windows, and wall systems. Lumicor, 425.255.4000; [www.lumicor.com](http://www.lumicor.com).

*"the material adds light, color, and texture to a space and is recyclable."*

Photos: Portrait, kitchen, and bath courtesy Ryker/Nave Design

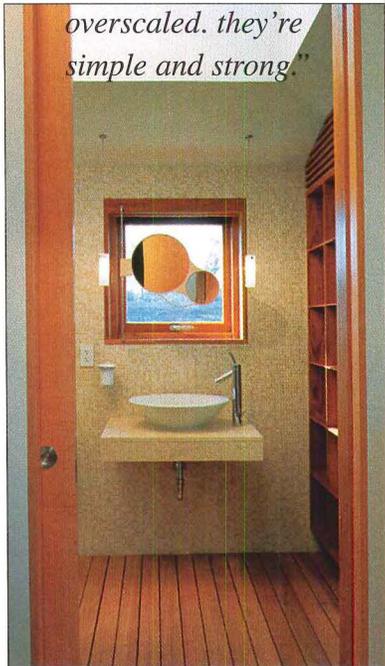
architects'  
choice

# meditch murphey architects



chevy chase, md.

*“the bowl and faucet ... worked well here because they are a bit overscaled. they’re simple and strong.”*



john dennis murphey, aia,  
and marcie meditch, aia  
www.meditchmurphey.com

## ▶ kitchen chameleon

Meditch Murphey believes Bulthaup’s System 20 is one of the most flexible kitchen cabinet systems on the market. Unlike traditional fitted cabinets, System 20’s modular elements can be relocated easily, mounted on either castors or standing feet. Choose components in aluminum, stainless steel, or wood-veneer. Bulthaup Corp., 800.808.2923; www.bulthaup.com.

*“for us, this system is the simplest and the most versatile. it looks good in a modern interior or, as in this case, a stick-built cottage.”*

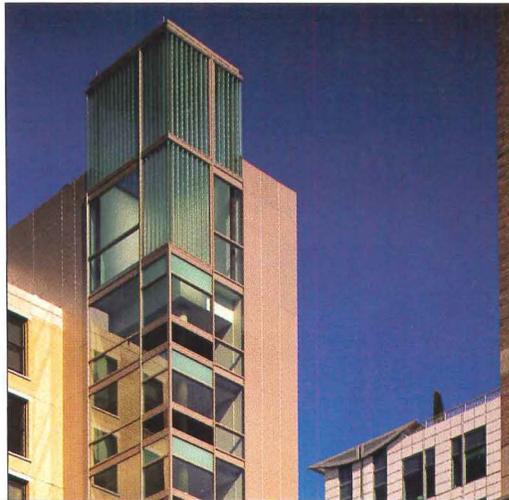


## ▲ tag team

The clean lines of Philippe Starck’s lavatory faucet and above-counter sink make a bold statement in this Meditch Murphey-designed powder room. Hansgrohe’s single-hole Axor faucet is designed for vessel sinks, making it perfect for Duravit’s 18½-inch-wide ceramic Starck 1 basin. Duravit USA, 888.387.2848; www.duravit.com and Hansgrohe, 800.719.1000; www.hansgrohe.com.

Photos: Portrait courtesy Meditch Murphey Architects; exteriors and bath by Maxwell MacKenzie

*"[this system] appeals to me because it's mullionless, has a good R value, and interacts beautifully with light."*



#### ◀ european channel

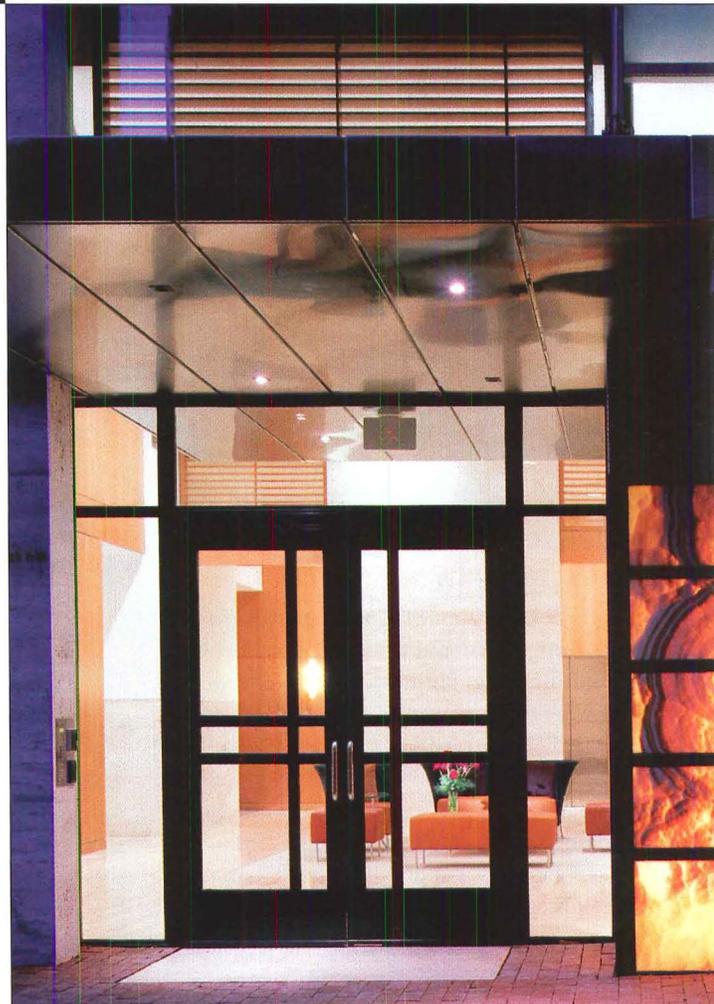
Meditch Murphey specs LINIT Channel Glass by Lamberts when it wants to bring in light but retain privacy, as in this project. Designed in Europe, the vertical-glass system claims to provide structural capacity without aluminum framing members. It's made in four widths, four surface textures, and a number of coatings. Bendheim Wall Systems, 800.221.7379; [www.bendheimwall.com](http://www.bendheimwall.com).

#### ▶ steel here

Architects spec steel windows for their slim, unfussy profiles. That's precisely the reason Murphey says his firm chose them for this project. "We wanted mullions to pick up on the rusticated base of the neighboring buildings, but we didn't want the profiles too wide," he says. Their supplier, Hope's Windows, custom fabricates its products from hot-rolled steel that's welded and ground smooth. Stainless steel screens are standard. Hope's Windows, 716.665.5124; [www.hopeswindows.com](http://www.hopeswindows.com).

#### ▼ flyte plan

The modest design of the Minka Aire Flyte fan appeals to Meditch Murphey on a primal level. Murphey likes the "straightforward expression of a stem, a motor, and three blades" and its "nice lines." The unit features 56-inch blades, a 9-inch down rod, and a wall-mount touch control. Minka Group, 951.735.9220; [www.minkagroup.net](http://www.minkagroup.net).

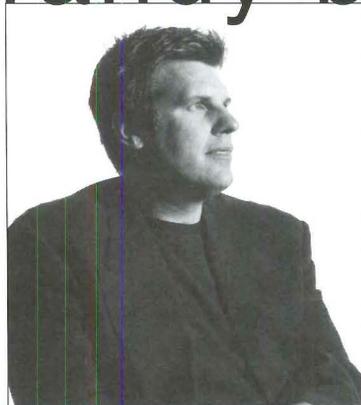


*"because we spend so much time trying to simplify the feel of our spaces, this fan fits right in."*



architects'  
choice

# randy brown architects



omaha, neb.

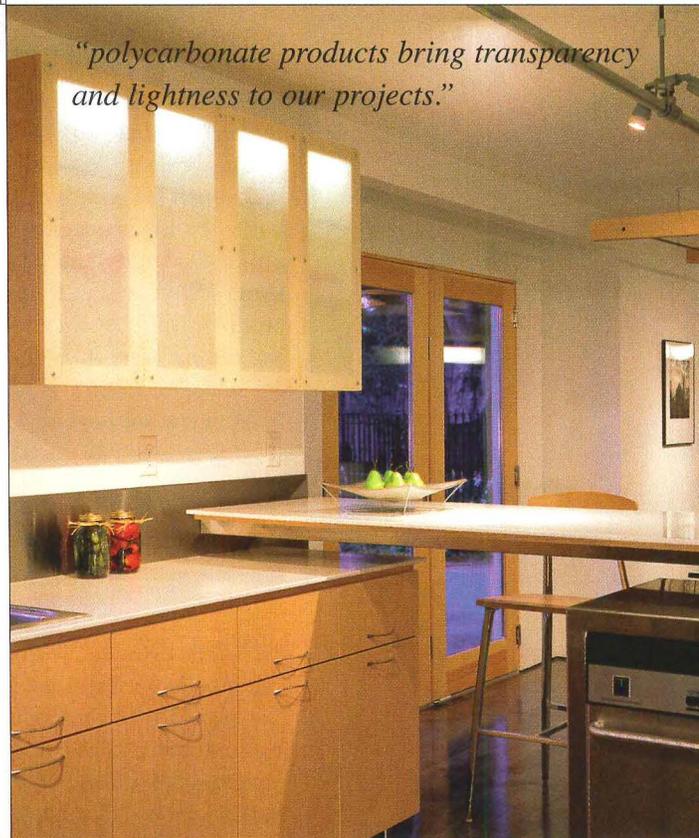
*“we like the transparency of the glass. it still has the function to allow soap dishes and flower vases to sit on the countertop.”*



randy brown, aia  
[www.randybrownarchitects.com](http://www.randybrownarchitects.com)

▶ **summa lumasite**  
Brown could have used glass for the upper cabinets in this kitchen, but instead he opted for thrifty LUMASite from American Acrylic Corp. The shatterproof sheets are cast from 100 percent acrylic or modified polyester resins and are reinforced with a web of glass fibers. The result is a “silken cobweb” effect that Brown says lightens up the kitchen. American Acrylic Corp., 800.627.9025; [www.americanacrylic.com](http://www.americanacrylic.com).

*“polycarbonate products bring transparency and lightness to our projects.”*



## ▲ in cinque

Avante Bathroom Products believes glass is the perfect material for bathrooms. Brown tends to agree. For this project—a small powder room he wanted to make “feel larger”—Brown used Avante’s Cinque vanity. The unit is made from ½-inch-thick glass and integrates the sink and countertop for a seamless look. It’s available in 12 colors with a clear or sandblasted finish. Avante Bathroom Products, 44.113.201.2240; [www.avantebathrooms.com](http://www.avantebathrooms.com).

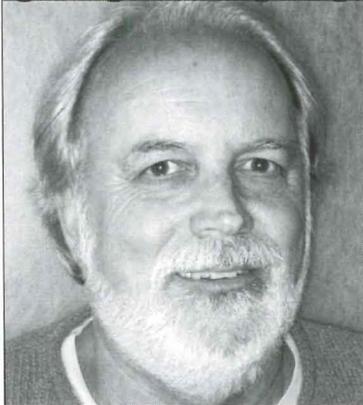


## ◀ value engineering

When designing projects with smaller budgets, Brown specifies prefinished, engineered wood floors from Mirage/Boa-Franc. Available in various wood species, the collection offers “a way for a client to get a real wood floor at almost half the cost of a traditional wood floor,” he says. It comes in ¾-inch-thick strips with micron V-joints on all four sides. Brown used American walnut flooring for this project. Mirage/Boa-Franc, 800.463.1303; [www.miragefloors.com](http://www.miragefloors.com).

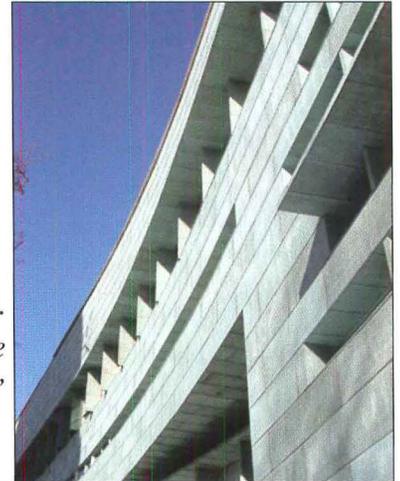
Photos: Portrait courtesy Randy Brown, AIA; interiors by Farshid Assassi

# dick clark architecture



austin, texas

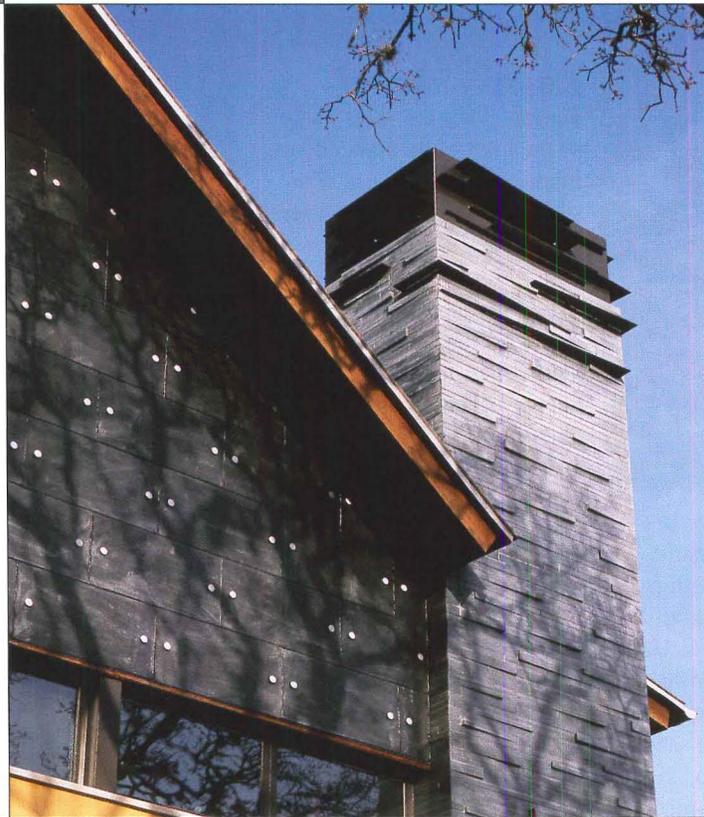
*“we think about maintenance,  
and low maintenance in architecture  
means inherent sustainability.”*



dick clark, aia  
www.dcarch.com

## ▶ clean slate

According to Young Stone, Clark's preferred fabricator, Brazilian black slate requires less care than other types of slate. Clark appreciates the stone's richness of color and matte texture—“smooth but not polished,” he says. He likes it so much, in fact, that he used roughly a metric ton of the material in different forms on the exterior of this Austin home. Flat tiles cap the end gables, while 1½-inch-thick bricks of irregular lengths twist and turn up the chimney. “The slate has great texture and casts amazing shadows throughout the day,” he says. Young Stone, 210.340.0339; www.youngstoneinc.com.



## ▲ patina real

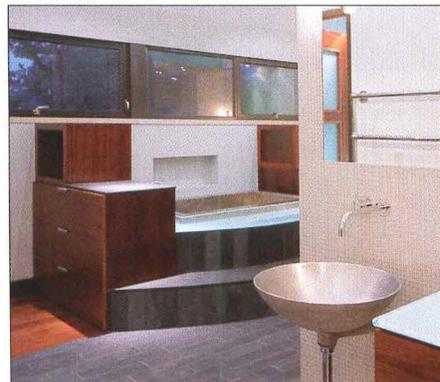
Revere Copper Products' EverGreen architectural copper develops a real patina through the company's proprietary manufacturing process, which duplicates and accelerates the metal's natural aging. The material, which Revere insists requires no maintenance, can be installed as exterior wall cladding, roofing, or architectural detailing. Clark just spec'd EverGreen on a new project. “We use a lot of metals in our architecture, but copper doesn't turn green in Texas,” he says of the decision. “I'm excited to try this.” Revere Copper Products, 800.448.1776; www.reverecopper.com.

## ◀ great white hope

You won't hear many architects liken sand-cast basins to “finely crafted musical instruments.” But Clark likes Bruce Tomb's sinks so much that he has even installed one in his own home. He's also spec'd them for several firm projects, including the one seen here. Clark's look of choice is white bronze, but the artist also works with silicon bronze, brass, and aluminum. The rough casting grain is left alone on the outer circle, while the inside is satin-polished. Infinite Fitting, 415.970.9210; www.infinitefitting.com.

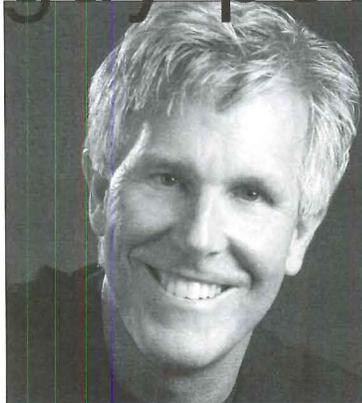
*“sexy and free-floating.”*

Photos: Portrait courtesy Dick Clark Architecture; slate exterior and bath by Paul Bardagjy



architects'  
choice

# guy peterson/ office for arch



sarasota, fla.

guy peterson, faia  
www.guypeterson.com

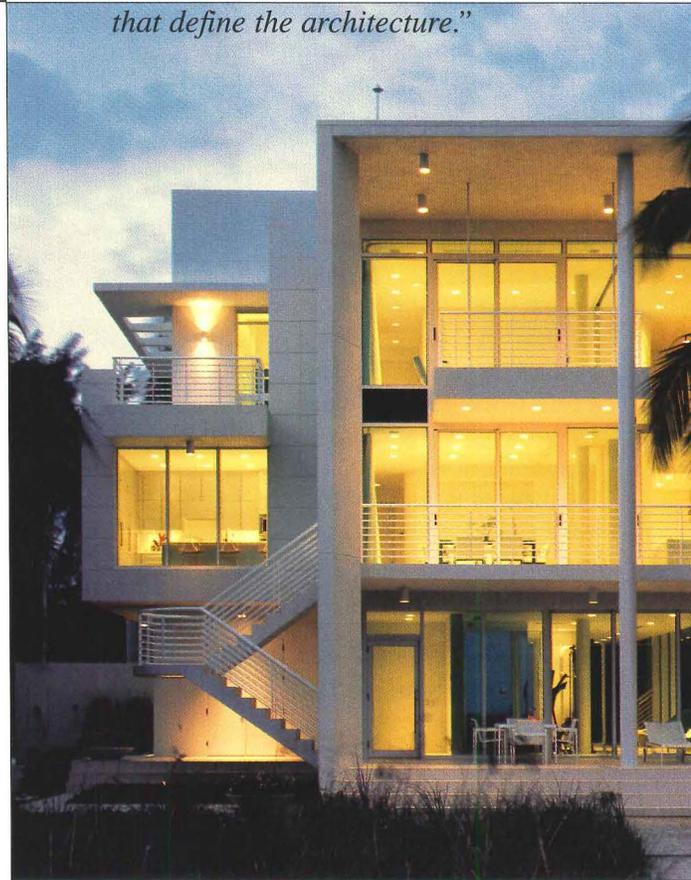
*"we try to use honest materials  
that define the architecture."*

## ► epoxy moxie

Peterson likes the "nice sheen" of the high-gloss epoxy coating he speced on these white steel columns. Manufactured by Porter Paints, the Dura-Glaze gloss epoxy features a two-component waterborne, low-odor finish for use over metal, masonry, drywall, and plaster surfaces. Although Peterson selects white to reflect the Florida sun's potent rays, the company offers the product in numerous washable colors. Porter Paints, 800.332.6270; www.porterpaints.com.

## ▲ white lights

For his hurricane-prone area, Peterson insists on windows strengthened with a polyvinyl butyral (PVB) membrane between two pieces of laminated glass. He often specs the PVB in white rather than clear for aesthetic and functional reasons. "It gives the glass a white sheen like sandblasted glass but it's easier to clean," he explains. "It also resolves a not-so-nice view without blocking natural light." For the Girl Scouts center seen here, Peterson designed an anodized-aluminum window wall with asymmetrical white and clear PVB panes accented by stainless steel sections. YKK AP America, 800.955.9551; www.ykkap.com.



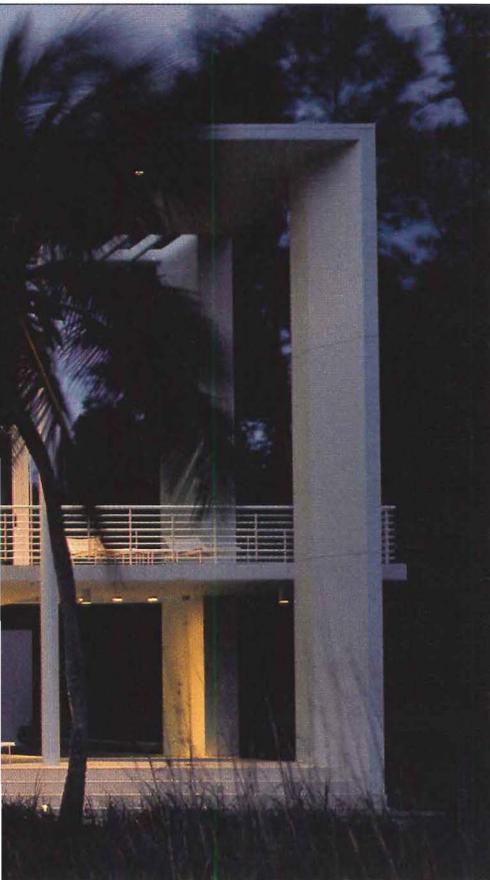
Photos: Portrait by Barbara Banks; exteriors and interiors by Steven Brooke Studios

ture



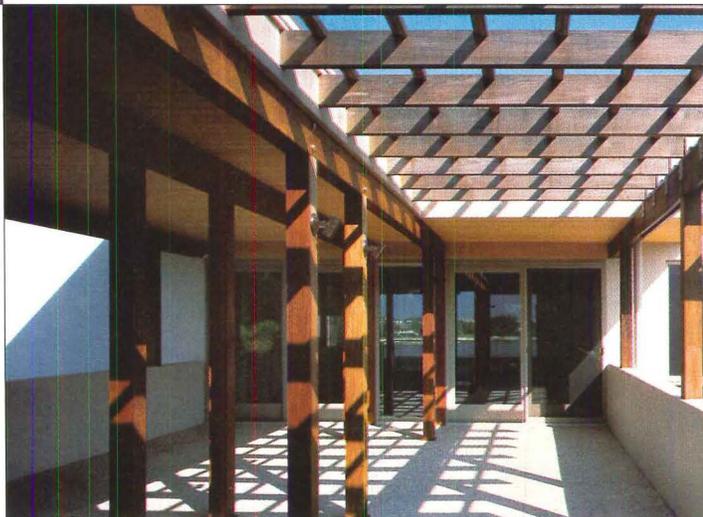
*“we work for a clean, modern, and sustainable result.”*

*“it’s a corrosive environment, so we try to find things that hold up.”*



▲ wholly rail

“We push our work toward minimalism and simplicity,” Peterson says of this railing system’s sleek horizontal movement. He also appreciates the black-powder-coated aluminum’s beautiful finish, noting that it stands up to even the harshest environments. The product is well-suited to both interior and exterior applications, facilitating a visual continuity appreciated by homeowners and designers alike. Kinney-Johnson Fabricators, 941.371.4800.



▲ balanced beams

Ipé timbers from sustainably harvested forests give this Peterson house a rhythmic entrance. Peterson says he often executes his sculptural designs in resilient materials and that he especially likes ipé because it’s “salt-tolerant.” According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ipé can survive extreme climates—hot and cold—and is both decay- and termite-resistant. Friendly Forest Products, 305.661.1464; [www.exotichardwood.com](http://www.exotichardwood.com).

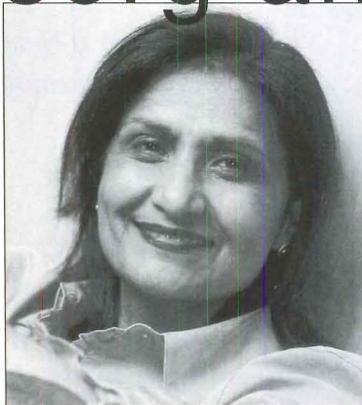
► lime time

Turkish limestone encloses the tub in this airy Peterson-designed bathroom. The architect says he used a “simple palette of materials” to make the tub a stylish focal point, without stealing thunder from the room’s breathtaking views of the Gulf Coast. Manasota Flooring, 888.443.5444; [www.manasotaonline.com](http://www.manasotaonline.com).



architects'  
choice

# sorg and associates



washington, d.c.

suman sorg, faia  
www.sorgandassociates.com

## ► clad tidings

Centria's aluminum cladding is one of Sorg's favorite exterior materials. The panels combine concealed fasteners and a lock-joint system to create a weather-resistant wall. Sorg used a similar system on this multifamily project in the Middle East. Stucco-embossed or smooth finishes enable design flexibility. Centria Architectural Systems, 800.759.7474; www.centria.com.



*"[centria's product is a] good exterior cladding material—lightweight, long-lasting, and low-maintenance."*

## ▲ hard times

The King's Grant specializes in custom cast-concrete mantles and columns, but Sorg is hooked on the manufacturer's countertops, which she calls a "great surface" with a "solid feel." She especially likes the different tones and colors that emerge during the casting process. Sorg specified concrete for the island in this Maryland kitchen. The King's Grant, 410.822.6979; www.the kingsgrant.com.



## ◀ outside story

Sorg opts for plywood panels from Georgia-Pacific when she wants to give her rooms warmth, as in this project. Made from rotary-cut or plain-sliced hardwood veneers with medium-density fiberboard or particleboard cores, the panels come standard in 4-foot-by-8-foot, 1/4-inch-thick sheets. A number of wood species, including pine and fir, are offered. Georgia-Pacific Corp., 800.284.5347; www.gp.com.

*"plywood-veneer paneling has a clean, slick appearance. [it] gives a room a feeling of warmth."*

Photos: Portrait by Bill Cramer; exterior courtesy Sorg and Associates; interiors by Roger Foley

# albert richter & tittmann architects



boston

*jacob albert, aia, jim richter, faia,  
and john tittmann, aia  
www.alriti.com*

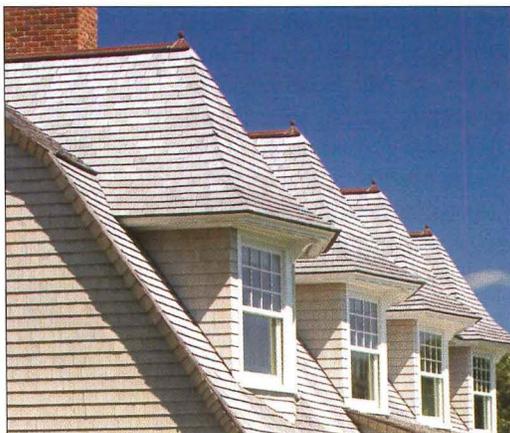


## ▲ bright buoy

“[This] building is meant to be a folly reminiscent of a jester’s hat, so the dangling balls aid that imagery,” Tittmann says of this coastal Maine home. Mooring buoys as eave lanterns aren’t a common spec for Tittmann’s firm, but they seemed appropriate here, he says. The whimsical transformation entailed dropping a light bulb through the hole in the buoy’s neck. Hamilton Marine, 800.639.2715; [www.hamiltonmarine.com](http://www.hamiltonmarine.com).

## ► friendly floor

Tittmann has high praise for Marmoleum. He likes that it’s an all-natural, low-maintenance, green material with no off-gassing properties. He also appreciates its ability to withstand everyday wear and tear. Possible applications are as basic or imaginative as the architect desires. Forbo Flooring, 866.627.6653; [www.themarmoleumstore.com](http://www.themarmoleumstore.com).



## ◀ dormer delight

For the ocean-fronting dormers on this island house, Tittmann opted for rugged Marvin windows. The architect picked a divided-light double-hung to blend with the seaside resort atmosphere. The windows’ extruded aluminum cladding is low-maintenance and durable, and their commercial-grade finishes resist fading and erosion—attributes Tittmann considers essential in salty-air environments. Marvin Windows and Doors, 800.346.3363; [www.marvin.com](http://www.marvin.com).

*“with waterfront homes, longevity is important.”*

Photos: Portrait and exterior courtesy Albert Richter & Tittmann Architects; windows by Chip Regal

architects'  
choice

# office of mobile design



venice, calif.

jennifer siegal  
www.designmobile.com

## ► archehype

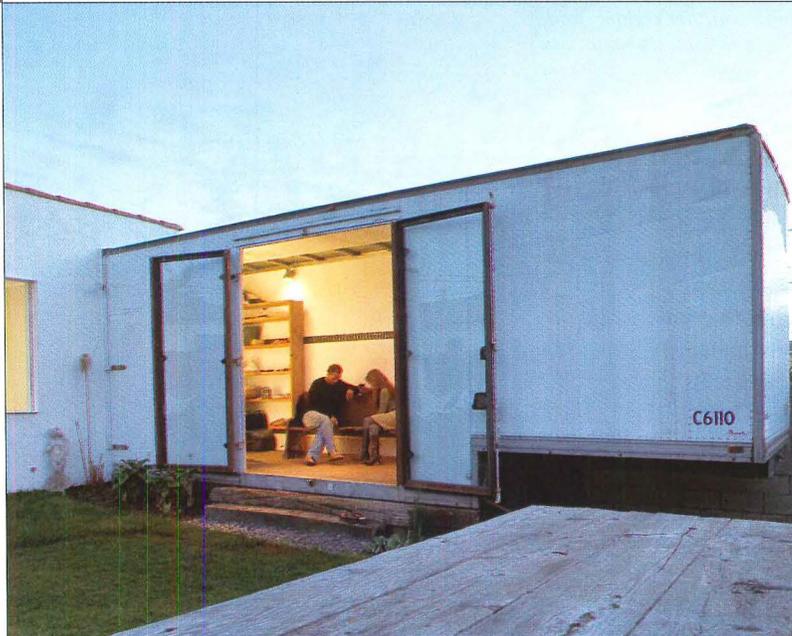
When Siegal wanted to integrate a discarded tractor-trailer into her own home, she turned to Hype Arc. The firm, which partners with architects and other industry pros on an array of projects, helped with the custom steel-and-glass doors that connect Siegal's instant addition to the backyard. Hype Arc also fabricates architectural components such as stairs, doors, and countertops. Hype Arc Design + Build, 310.333.0898; www.hypearc.com.

*"many clients are seeking someone who wants to talk about green materials."*



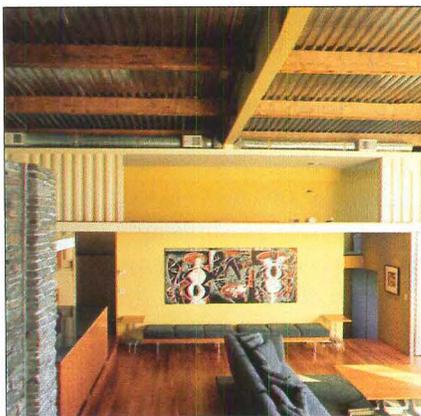
## ▲ sharing sips

Siegal had to fight for approval to build this L.A. house from structural insulated panels (SIPs), making it the first of its kind in the city. SIPs consist of rigid foam insulation sandwiched between two structural skins, usually made from oriented strand board (OSB). The panels increase energy efficiency in the finished home, while reducing labor, time, and waste on the construction site. Structural Insulated Panel Association, 253.858.7472; www.sips.org.



## ◀ discard yard ▶

Recycled and found materials often play important roles in Siegal's work. When designing this urban Los Angeles residence, she started with four shipping containers already on site. The large containers became perimeter spaces that surround an airy living area. Openings cut into the containers' sides allow free passage from room to room. Abandoned trailers also on the lot now house Koi ponds and an indoor water fountain. "We left the skin of the containers exposed in some places," Siegal says. "The texture is evidence of the home's origins." Shipping Container News; www.shippingcontainernews.com.



Photos: Portrait, SIPS, and Siegal home courtesy Office of Mobile Design; shipping container home interior and exterior by Undine Prohl

# envision design



washington, d.c.

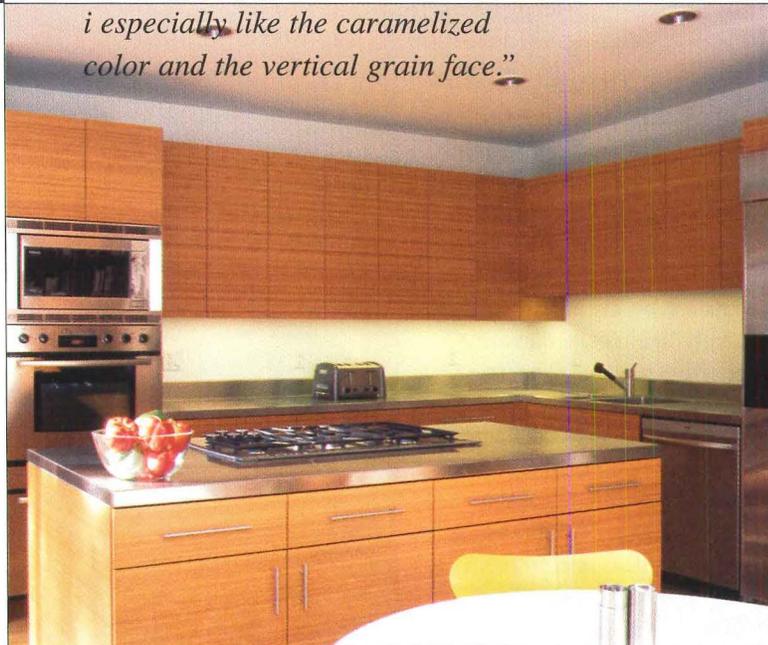
ken wilson, aia  
www.envisionsite.com

*"i like this product because it is so clever."*



*"solid bamboo panels are a beautiful product for millwork."*

*i especially like the caramelized color and the vertical grain face."*



▲ **under pressure**  
"Ingenious" is the word Wilson uses to describe Sloan's Flushmate pressure-assist toilet system. The high-performance, low-consumption system harnesses pressure from the water supply line to generate the energy needed to complete the flush. The unit can be retrofitted to most manufacturers' standard, gravity-fed toilets. Sloan Flushmate, 800.580.7141; www.flushmate.com.

► **bamboo shoots**  
Wilson eschews plywood in favor of bamboo veneer from Teragren. The three-ply-constructed panels, available in ¼ inch and ⅜ inch thicknesses, are made with a vertical core and a cross-laminated outer layer that eliminates the need for edge-banding. Wilson sped the product for his own kitchen cabinets. Teragren, 800.929.6333; www.teragren.com.

◀ **batting green**  
Johns Manville fiberglass batt insulation is one of Wilson's favorites because it's composed of recycled materials and contains no formaldehyde. Instead, the product uses an acrylic binder that doesn't off-gas. It's "better for the air," Wilson says. Its environmental impact is also lessened because it uses fewer "virgin materials," he adds. Johns Manville, 800.654.3103; www.jm.com.



► **sniff test**  
Wilson cares about indoor air quality, so he often turns to Benjamin Moore's Eco Spec low-odor paint. Sold in semi-gloss and flat finishes, the 100 percent acrylic, water-based paint emits no odors and dries quickly. The company says the product line can take a variety of color tints. Benjamin Moore & Co., 800.344.0400; www.benjaminmoore.com.



*"the paint is great quality, applies just the same, and doesn't give off any smell."*

architects'  
choice

# marlon blackwell architect



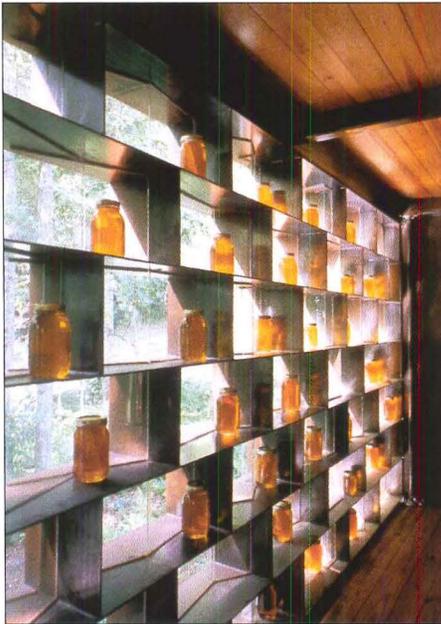
fayetteville, ark.

*“we want the finishes to complement the form.”*

marlon blackwell, aia  
[www.marlonblackwell.com](http://www.marlonblackwell.com)

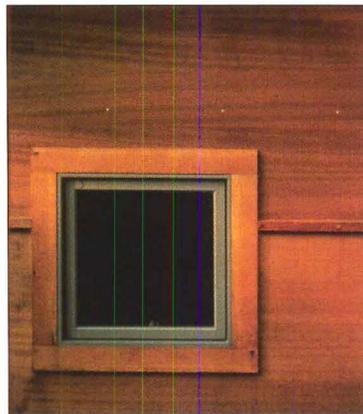
## ► side lines

Blackwell specced copper roofing for the siding on this University of Arkansas clubhouse. A strong vertical pattern in the metal sheathing contrasts with the building's tapered horizontal line. “We really like metals that are reactive to the atmosphere,” Blackwell says. He often looks to local artisans with a knack for manipulating materials. Franklin, he says, is “willing to work with us on unusual ideas and do them economically.” Franklin & Son, 479.267.5544.



## ▲ comb over

Blackwell prefers to work collaboratively, so he turned to Razorback Awning & Ironworks when he wanted a steel-and-glass grid to serve as abstracted honeycomb for a beekeeper's honey house in North Carolina. The Fayetteville-based company incorporated articulated shelving as a display area and filter for the site's abundant natural light. Razorback Awning & Ironworks, 479.444.0045.

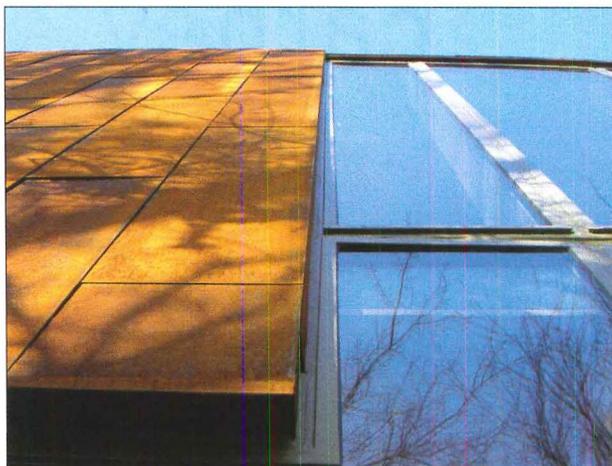


## ◀ honey do

“We think about the ways [something] might weather even if it's a material that tries to retard weathering,” Blackwell says. The marine-grade mahogany plywood he selected for the beekeeper's main house should do its part to stop North Carolina's elements from marring the ribbon-like grain. The architect counts on Boulter for its exacting standards and wide selection. Because the company deals primarily with boat builders, it stocks a wide range of water-resistant woods appropriate for exterior applications. Boulter Plywood Corp., 617.666.1340; [www.boulterplywood.com](http://www.boulterplywood.com).

Photos: Portrait courtesy Marlon Blackwell architect; exteriors and interior by Timothy Hursley

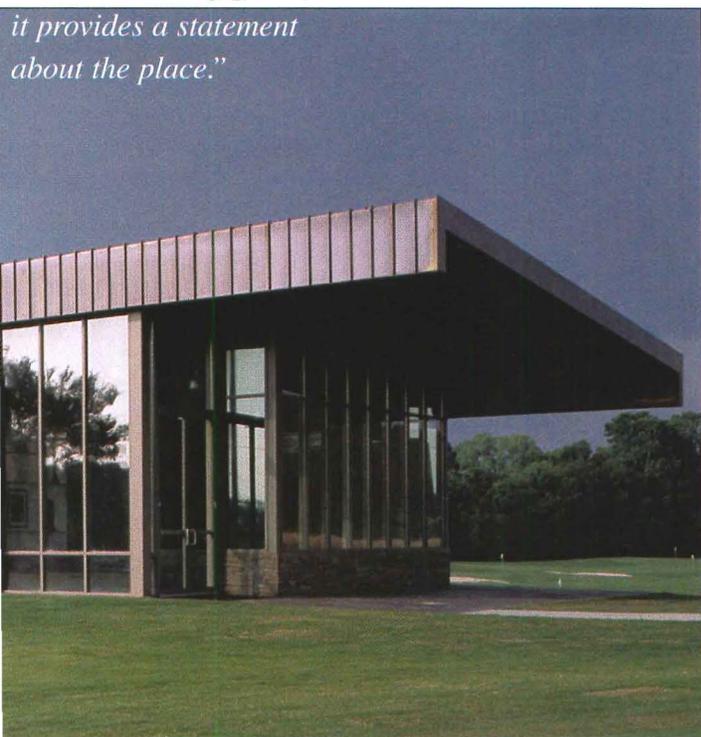
*“copper in northwest arkansas turns a leathery brown instead of green, so it provides a statement about the place.”*



#### ▲ steely eye

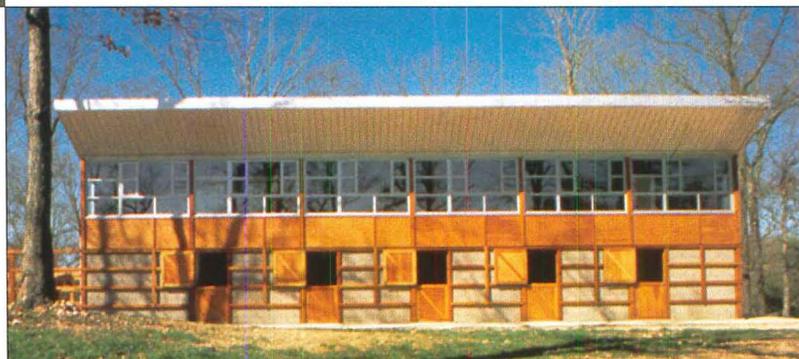
“We think about how the project might let the forces of nature imprint themselves upon it,” Blackwell says of the raw steel plates that clad the side of this Fayetteville home. The architect relies on Zahner to execute most of his metal work because he values the scope of its services and the support it provides from project conception through construction. The company has more than 100 years of experience in metal fabrication and reportedly counts Frank Gehry among its clients. Zahner Co., 816.474.8882; [www.azahner.com](http://www.azahner.com).

*“professional and inventive. the best in the country.”*



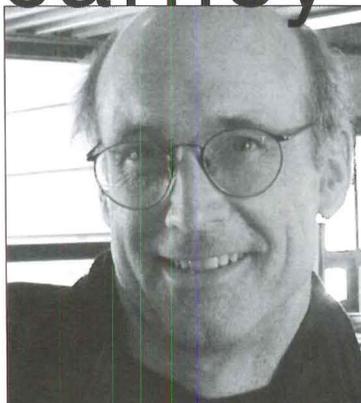
#### ► horsing around

EFCO's clear anodized commercial windows punctuate this Blackwell-designed barn house. The upper-level living spaces benefit from a full-length window wall conveying abundant light and panoramic views. According to Blackwell, the Monett, Mo.-based manufacturer had no problem creating the project's fenestration pattern, which mirrors the stall-door openings in the stables below. EFCO Corp., 417.235.3193; [www.efcocorp.com](http://www.efcocorp.com).



architects'  
choice

# carney architects



jackson, wyo.

*“in a severe climate  
you really want to make  
an efficient envelope.”*

john carney, aia  
[www.carneyarchitects.com](http://www.carneyarchitects.com)

## ► cold comfort

Hard-working windows are essential to stave off Wyoming's cold and snow. Carney says Case windows' German engineering and fine hardwood frames do the trick. The manufacturer's patented low-E insulating glass will accept large expanses of glazing without sacrificing interior heat. Carney goes for the tilt-turn or casement hardware so windows will open wider. South American mahogany, Douglas fir, and Burmese teak are just a few of the wood trims available. The Carney design seen here features extruded aluminum cladding. Case Window and Door, 800.227.3957; [www.casewindow.com](http://www.casewindow.com).

## ▲ basic black

“About 80 percent of our projects have in-floor radiant heat,” Carney says of his propensity for bare concrete floors. To add warmth and liveliness, Carney prefers Scofield's Lithochrome Chemstain, an acid-etched concrete stain with a variegated translucent effect that resembles leather. Because it becomes part of the surface through a chemical reaction, the color doesn't fade, peel, or chip away. Carney says it's easy to sell the idea to clients: He simply shows off his own Chemstained office floors, seen here in black. L.M. Scofield Co., 800.800.9900; [www.scofield.com](http://www.scofield.com).



## ◀ crafty exchange

Spearhead Timberworks has “these amazing millwork machines hooked up to computers that turn out beautifully crafted pieces,” Carney boasts. The kitchen in this Carney project shows off Spearhead's cabinets and ceiling treatments. Spearhead Timberworks, 877.815.1932; [www.spearheadtimberworks.com](http://www.spearheadtimberworks.com).

Photos: Portrait and exterior courtesy Carney Architects; studio by Greg Hursley; kitchen by Ken Gutmaker; office by David Swift

# sarah nettleton architects



minneapolis

sarah nettleton, aia  
www.sarah-architects.com



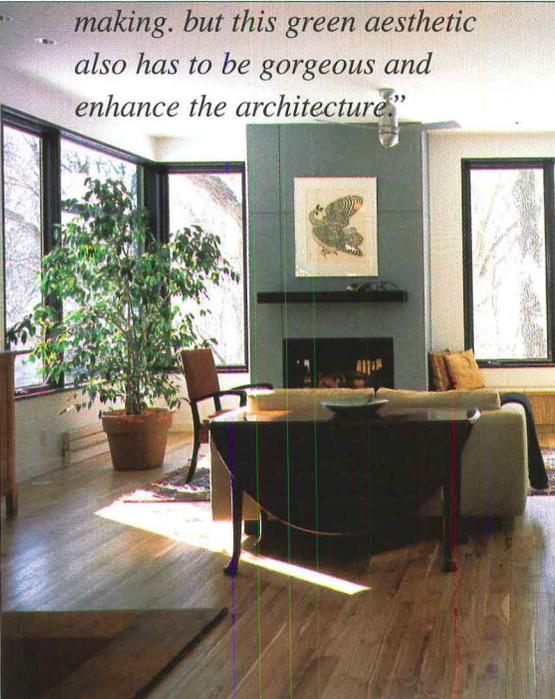
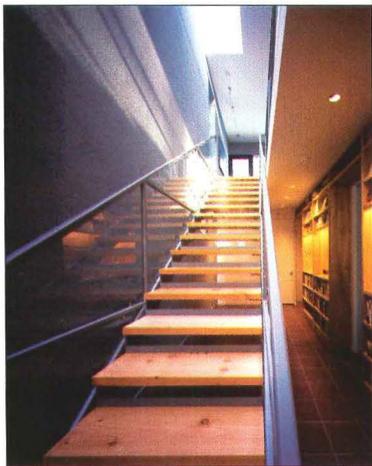
## ▲ cutting-edge wedge

Carney strives to create architecture that's appropriate to his Wyoming locale and to his firm's modern aesthetic. One way to ease the stylistic tension is to apply a contemporary twist to tried-and-true elements such as trusses, as he did with the ones in his home studio. Carney chose Belfer's halogen wedge to show off these raffish rafters. Speced in black, the fixture is delightfully discreet. "It's a little triangle that lights the ceiling beautifully," he says. Belfer, 732.493.2666; www.belfer.com.

*"we prefer the honest expression of seeing the structure exposed."*

## ▶ loewen behold

"We love Loewen windows," Nettleton says of the Manitoba-based window and door manufacturer. She especially appreciates Canada's energy code, which she says "is stricter than U.S. code." The company emphasizes its commitment to environmental stewardship, highlighting its reliance on certified sustainable forests for Douglas fir and mahogany and its recycling of sawdust to heat its factory. Loewen, 877.563.9368; www.loewen.com.



*"i have a sustainable philosophy that is intrinsic in my decision-making. but this green aesthetic also has to be gorgeous and enhance the architecture"*

## ◀ wall art

For this stairwell wall, Nettleton speced a Sto Powerwall Silco system in dark gray. She enjoys the resilient, reflective, and color-fast wall cladding it provides by combining "real concrete stucco" and a silicon-enhanced elastomeric finish. Better still, the manufacturer claims the water-based product emits no gasses. Sto Corp., 800.221.2397; www.stocorp.com.

*"it allows water to migrate through and dry out, so no mold issues."*



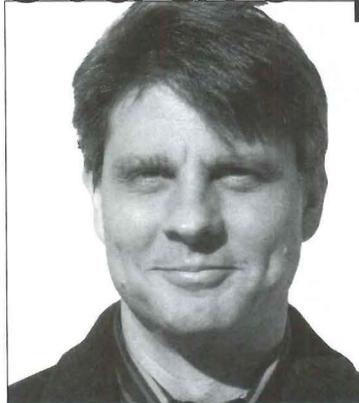
## ▲ black box

Frustrated in her search for an attractive street number display, Nettleton designed one herself. As dusk falls, a photovoltaic lens illuminates the silhouetted numbers in the powder-coated steel box. Nettleton says her invention, with its easy-to-spot style and size, has been so well-received she's now producing the device. Sarah Nettleton Architects, 612.334.9667.

Photos: Portrait by Dani Werner; street number display courtesy Sarah Nettleton Architects; interiors by Peter Kerze

architects'  
choice

# studio pali fekete



Culver City, Calif.

*“teak plywood is reasonably affordable, comes in 4-foot-by-8-foot sheets, and is easy to install.”*

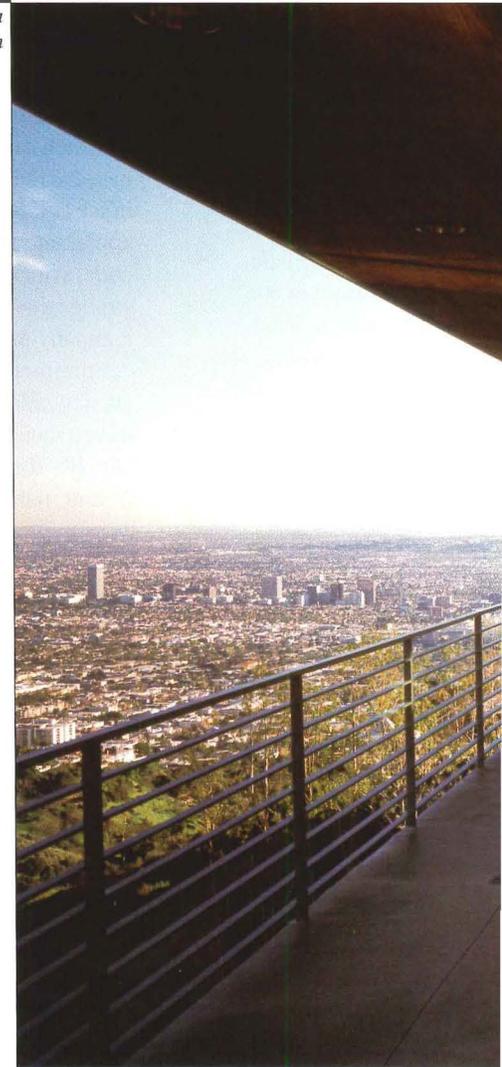
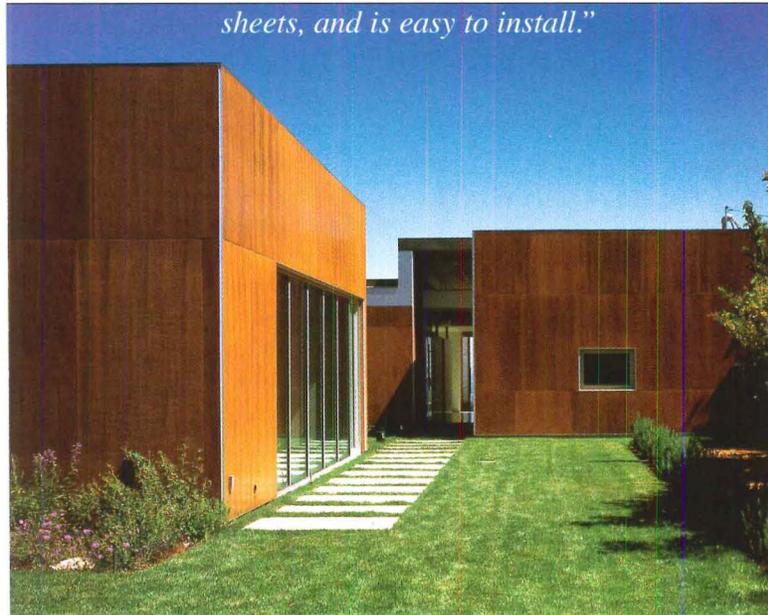
zoltan e. pali, faia  
[www.spfa.com](http://www.spfa.com)

## ► sliding doors

Pali opts for sliding doors from Fleetwood Windows & Doors when he's after a strong connection to the outdoors. Fleetwood's sliders boast a range of water-performance levels and in-sill heights that meet ADA requirements. Manufactured in multipanel, pocket, and 90-degree corner configurations, the doors are shown here in an SPF:a project. Fleetwood Windows & Doors, 800.736.7363; [www.fleetwoodusa.com](http://www.fleetwoodusa.com).

## ▲ teak performance

Teak is a dense hardwood permeated with natural oils that make it resistant to water, fungal decay, and termites. According to the Hardwood Plywood & Veneer Association, the boat-building industry often turns to teak plywood because it retains many of the species' qualities. Pali says he favors teak plywood in his projects, including the one seen here, because stucco is “so boring.” Hardwood Plywood & Veneer Association, 703.435.2900; [www.hpva.org](http://www.hpva.org).



Photos: Portrait courtesy Studio Pali Fekete architects; exteriors and interior by John Linden/[www.johnlindenphotographs.com](http://www.johnlindenphotographs.com)

# rchitects (spf:a)

## ► aluminum foil

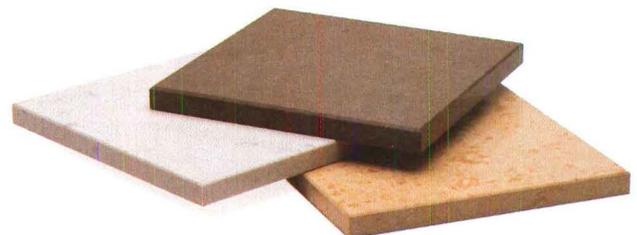
With a little imagination, a material as commonplace as aluminum grating can appear sophisticated. Pali cites this handrail as a prime example. He's partial to bar grating from BarnettBates Corp., which manufactures aluminum grating in 1-inch and 2½-inch I-bars or in flat rectangular bearing bars measuring 1 inch by ⅛ inches and up to 2½ inches by 2⅝ inches. BarnettBates Corp., 800.541.3912; [www.barnettbates.com](http://www.barnettbates.com).



## ▼ hard times

Pali often chooses “virtually maintenance-free” quartz surfacing over natural stone because it’s “one of the most sanitary materials to use for the kitchen.” The firm’s preferred product, Caesar-Stone, is said to resist most stains, cracks, and scratches. It’s available in 40 colors and patterns. U.S. Quartz Products, 877.978.2789; [www.caesarstoneus.com](http://www.caesarstoneus.com).

*“[quartz.] is more durable than any stone, and because it’s nonporous, it doesn’t require sealing.”*



architects'  
choice

# el dorado



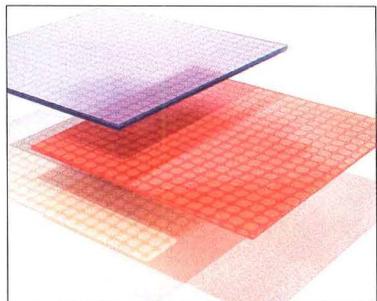
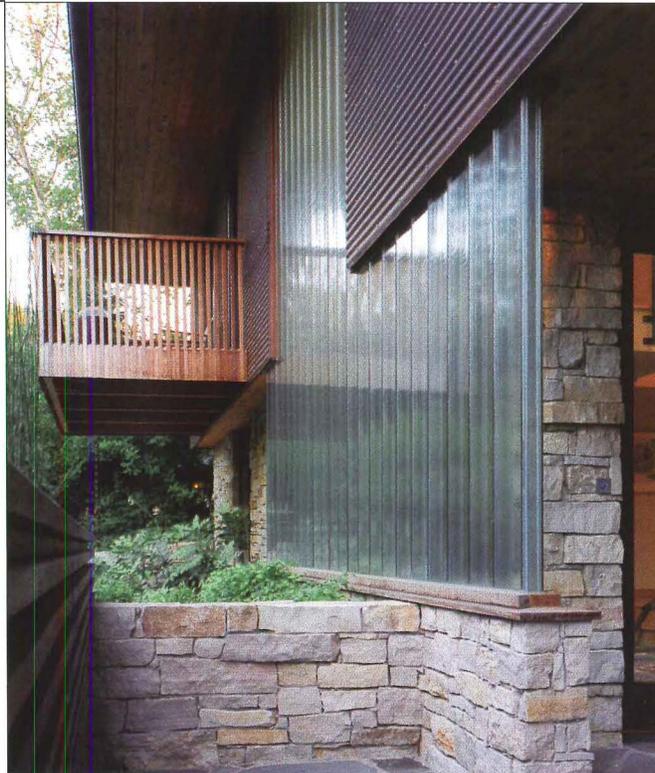
kansas city, mo.

jamie darnell

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

## ► profilit center

The Pilkington Profilit glazing system consists of self-supporting glass channels with opaque glazing members that allow light but no view—a benefit Darnell appreciates. Fabricated in channels up to 22 feet long, the glass comes in different colors, textures, and degrees of translucency. The manufacturer says the system is also energy-efficient and conducive to curved-wall applications. It's shown here on an El Dorado project. Pilkington North America, 419.247.3731; [www.pilkington.com](http://www.pilkington.com).

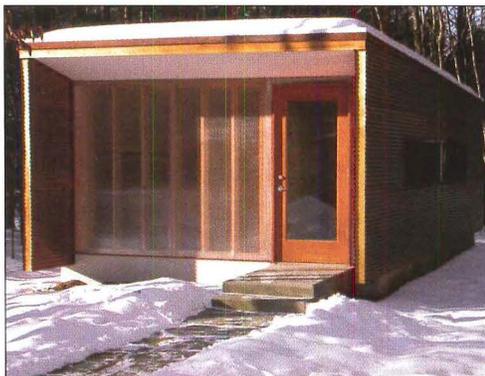


*“there’s something about the fabric embedded in the sheets that’s nicer than some other products on the market.”*

## ▲ resin brand

KnollTextiles’ Imago line encapsulates fabric between thin sheets of high-performance resin. The resulting hard surfaces substitute for glass in cabinets and sliding doors, but Darnell also heat-forms the material for corner applications. The product is available in 4-foot-by-8-foot sheets and in many thicknesses and patterns. KnollTextiles, 877.615.6655; [www.knoll.com](http://www.knoll.com).

*“copper is an industrial material with an organic quality because it transforms itself and develops a rich patina.”*

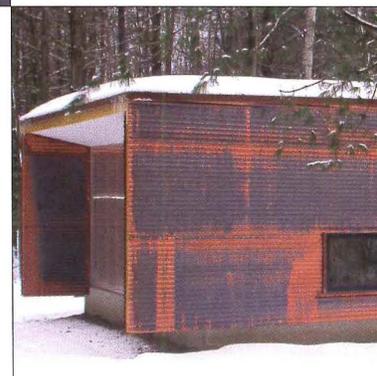


## ◀ polymorphous

El Dorado specs Polygal polycarbonate for interior doors and exterior glazing, as it did for this project, because it’s a lightweight alternative to glass. Virtually unbreakable, it transmits light and maintains privacy. Polygal, 800.537.0095; [www.polygal.com](http://www.polygal.com).

## ► agribusiness

Darnell favors corrugated copper for residential roofs and siding. The 16-ounce copper material is stocked in painted and anodized finishes. For this house, Darnell chose untreated copper. Firestone Metal Products/UNA-CLAD, 800.426.7737; [www.unaclad.com](http://www.unaclad.com).



Photos: Portrait courtesy el dorado; Pilkington glazing system by Mike Sinclair; other exteriors by Jamie Darnell

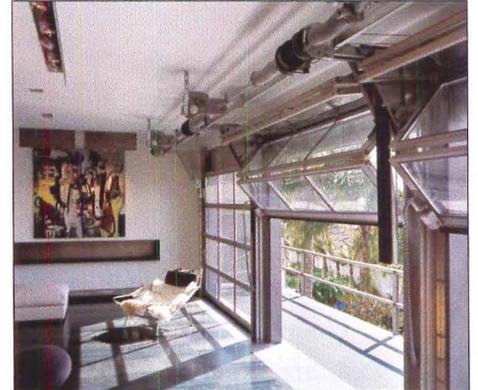
# luce et studio architects



san diego

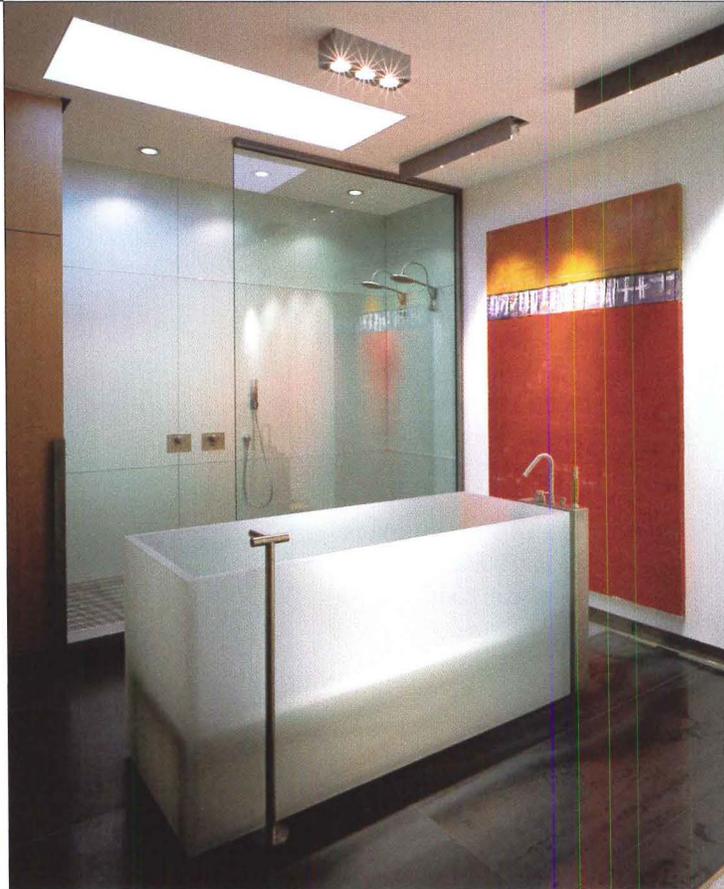
jennifer luce, aia  
www.lucestudio.com

*“it sits in the room like a light box.”*



## ▶ **atta tub**

When Luce was asked to put a bathtub in this home’s master bedroom, she knew it would need to function as more than a cleansing place; it needed to be a piece of art, too. The architect looked to Atta to create a poured-resin sculpture that, thanks to careful fixture placement, exudes a nacreous glow. Atta’s translucent resin material, available in matte or glossy finishes, can be pigmented any color, molded into almost any shape, or embedded with objects as varied as computer parts, rose petals, and soda bottles. A protective topcoat adds scratch resistance. Atta, 212.295.7763; www.attainc.com.



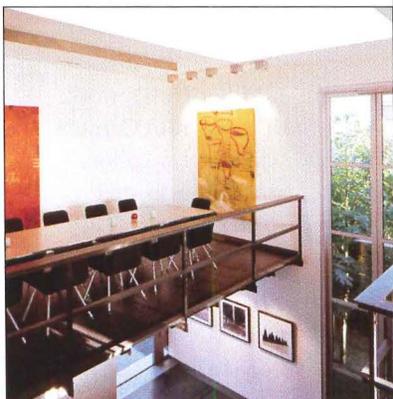
## ▲ **fire escape**

“These are firehouse doors from England that bifold up, so they basically disappear,” Luce says of the Crawford 240, one of her favorite door products. Unlike traditional overhead doors, the 240 requires minimum height and depth clearances above the door—a spec that allows Luce to put the ceiling to other uses, as she did with this Southern California home. She selected clear anodized aluminum frames and clear glass panes to maximize the home’s views to the Pacific. The company says it can customize a mix of transparent and opaque sections using colored, frosted, or hardened glass and acrylic that can be combined with metal panes in several colors. Crawford Hafa, 44.114.257.4330; www.crawfordamber.co.uk.

## ◀ **take cover**

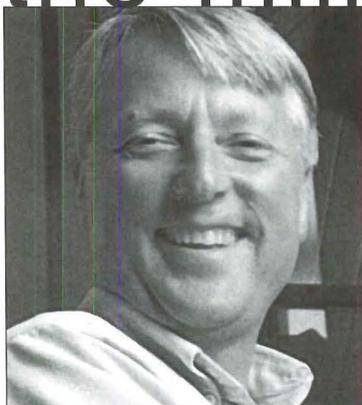
“We wanted a huge amount of light but didn’t want the opening to feel overwhelming,” Luce says of this Southern California project, so she turned to Barrisol’s stretch ceilings to diffuse the direct rays coming through the room’s spacious skylight. The material’s taut fabric panel, made from recycled materials, sits flush with the ceiling opening, allowing it to virtually vanish. More than 90 colors are available. Normalu-Barrisol, 33.3.89.83.20.20; www.barrisol.com.

Photos: Portrait by Claudia Bestor; interiors by Paül Rivera



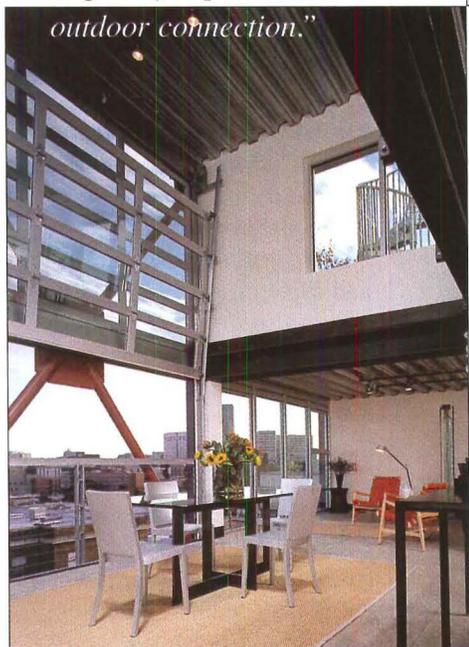
architects'  
choice

# the miller/hull partnership



seattle

*“the overhead door product gives us the design freedom to greatly expand the indoor/outdoor connection.”*



bob hull, faia  
[www.millerhull.com](http://www.millerhull.com)

## ▶ side job

AEP Span manufactures a variety of architectural metal roofing and wall systems, but Miller/Hull used its standing-seam metal as siding on this house. The roll-formed product is made from 24-gauge or 22-gauge Galvalume steel and is coated with a paint finish of 70 percent fluorocarbon with Kynar 500 and Hylar 5000 resins. Warranted for 20 years, the roofing comes in 24 standard colors. AEP Span, 800.527.2503; [www.aep-span.com](http://www.aep-span.com).



## ▲ park place

Garage doors aren't just for garages, as Miller/Hull proved with this condo project. The home's 13-foot-wide sectional door, by Overhead Door Corp., features aluminum frames and insulated glazing. To prevent water intrusion, the firm specified a custom Z-shaped, steel-plate sill with end dams. Doors are made in widths of up to 26 feet. Overhead Door Corp., 877.534.3580; [www.overhaddoor.com](http://www.overhaddoor.com).



## ◀ slight flush

Because conservation is important in Miller/Hull's work, the firm uses the Caravelle dual-flush toilet from Caroma USA. The one-piece unit offers the standard 1.6-gallon flush as well as a 0.8-gallon water-conserving second flush. Color choices are white or biscuit. Caroma USA, 800.605.4218; [www.caromausa.com](http://www.caromausa.com).



### ▲ deep thoughts

Hull says it's hard to find a tall tub these days, but Zuma Collection products do the trick. Zuma's acrylic tub configurations include soaking, traditional whirlpool, and airbath models. This center-drain unit is 66 inches long, 32 inches wide, and 21 inches tall. Zuma Collection by Americh, 800.453.1463; [www.zumacollection.com](http://www.zumacollection.com).



### ▲ shop talk

Store-front glazing is a popular spec in commercial architecture, but residential pros enjoy the twist on conventional fenestration, too. Miller/Hull used a Kawneer system for this house. The manufacturer's line of architectural aluminum products includes windows, sliding doors, and curtain walls. Designers may choose 2-inch members or opt for models with thermal breaks for increased energy performance. Kawneer North America, 877.767.9107; [www.kawneer.com](http://www.kawneer.com).

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architects'  
choice

# kanner architects

*“minimal shapes keep the aesthetic together, but we like to use a variety of colors and materials.”*



santa monica, calif.

stephen h. kanner, faia  
[www.kannerarch.com](http://www.kannerarch.com)

## ▶ smooth moves

“We like to contrast inexpensive materials with more high-end stuff,” Kanner says, listing his own bathroom as an example. An exposed-edge plywood countertop with a laminate finish seems to hover above corrugated fiberglass cabinet doors. Green glass mosaic tiles from Ann Sacks’ Beaulieu collection provide the luxurious backdrop. Glass mosaic lovers can choose among numerous shapes and color palettes. Ann Sacks, 800.278.8453; [www.annsacks.com/home.html](http://www.annsacks.com/home.html).

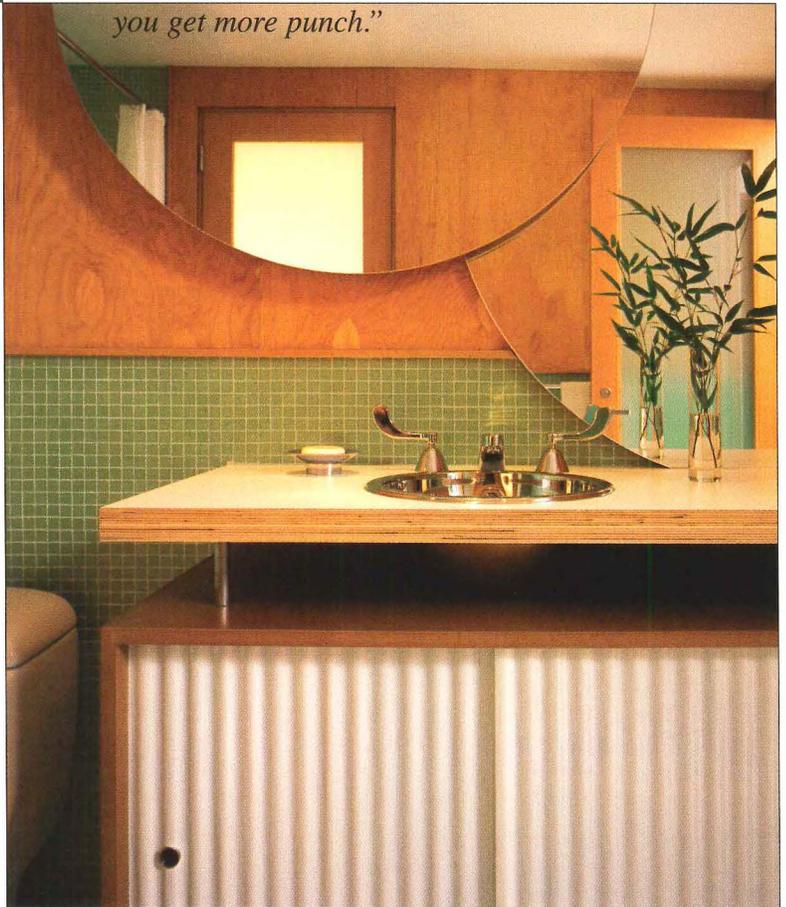
## ▲ scratch game

Kanner favors finishes with texture, including the plaster cladding on his house. He’s particularly fond of plaster because it’s a ubiquitous material that can be found all over the world. When working with plaster providers, Kanner says he requests a final application of scratch coat because “it’s another way of [cutting] costs, and you get these beautiful trowel marks.” The Portland Cement Association, 847.966.6200; [www.cement.org](http://www.cement.org).



*“the company has great pulls and hardware.”*

*“when you juxtapose materials, you get more punch.”*



## ◀ asian influence

“It’s what you touch so it needs to be nice,” Kanner says of the high-end choices he makes when specing hardware. He cites Sugatsune as a favorite supplier because the company’s products meet his quality standards and match his firm’s minimalist aesthetic. The manufacturer of pulls, handles, knobs, and other door and drawer components works primarily in brass, zinc alloy, stainless steel, and aluminum. Sugatsune America, 800.562.5267; [www.sugatsune.com](http://www.sugatsune.com).

Photos: Portrait by Jeff Kravitz; exterior and interior by John Linden/[www.johnlindenphotographs.com](http://www.johnlindenphotographs.com)

# alison spear, aia



miami

*“refrigerated drawers are a breakthrough. the kitchen can be extended into zones based on workspace.”*



**big grille**  
Seiho makes grilles and registers in stylish forms. Most of its units are constructed from heavy-gauge aluminum and anodized for extra strength. The lattice grille seen here is available in duct sizes ranging from 8 inches to 16 inches in diameter. Most registers come standard in natural aluminum or gloss white and in custom colors upon request. “It’s all part of the composition,” Tanner says. Seiho International, 800.248.030; www.seiho.com.



**▲ big drawer**  
U-Line claims its undercounter drawer refrigerators offer 30 percent more capacity than competing models. Standard features include full-extension stainless steel interior drawers, a three-piece organizing system, digital controls, and a crisper shelf. The 5.5-cubic-foot unit measures 24 inches wide and accepts ¾-inch wood overlays. U-Line Corp., 414.354.0300; www.u-line.com.

alison spear, aia  
www.alisonspearaia.com

**▶ on the glow**  
Gas fireplaces are often homely devices, providing function with little flair. For that reason, Spear opts for custom fireplace burners from Gulassa & Co. Made from hand-forged metal, each burner is custom fabricated to suit any firebox and design intent. The unit can be configured to ignite manually, with a pilot light, or with an electronic ignition. Gulassa & Co., 206.283.1810; www.gulassaco.com.

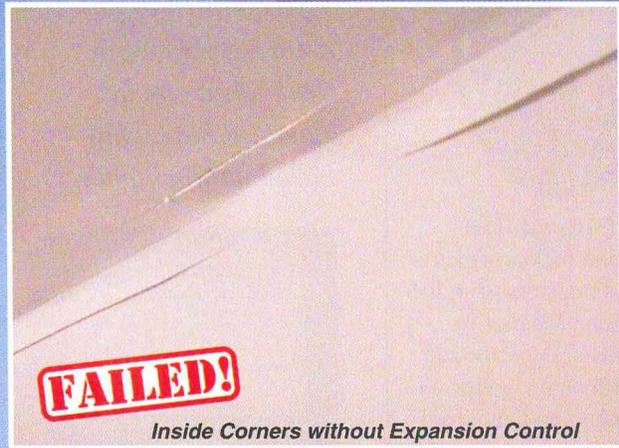
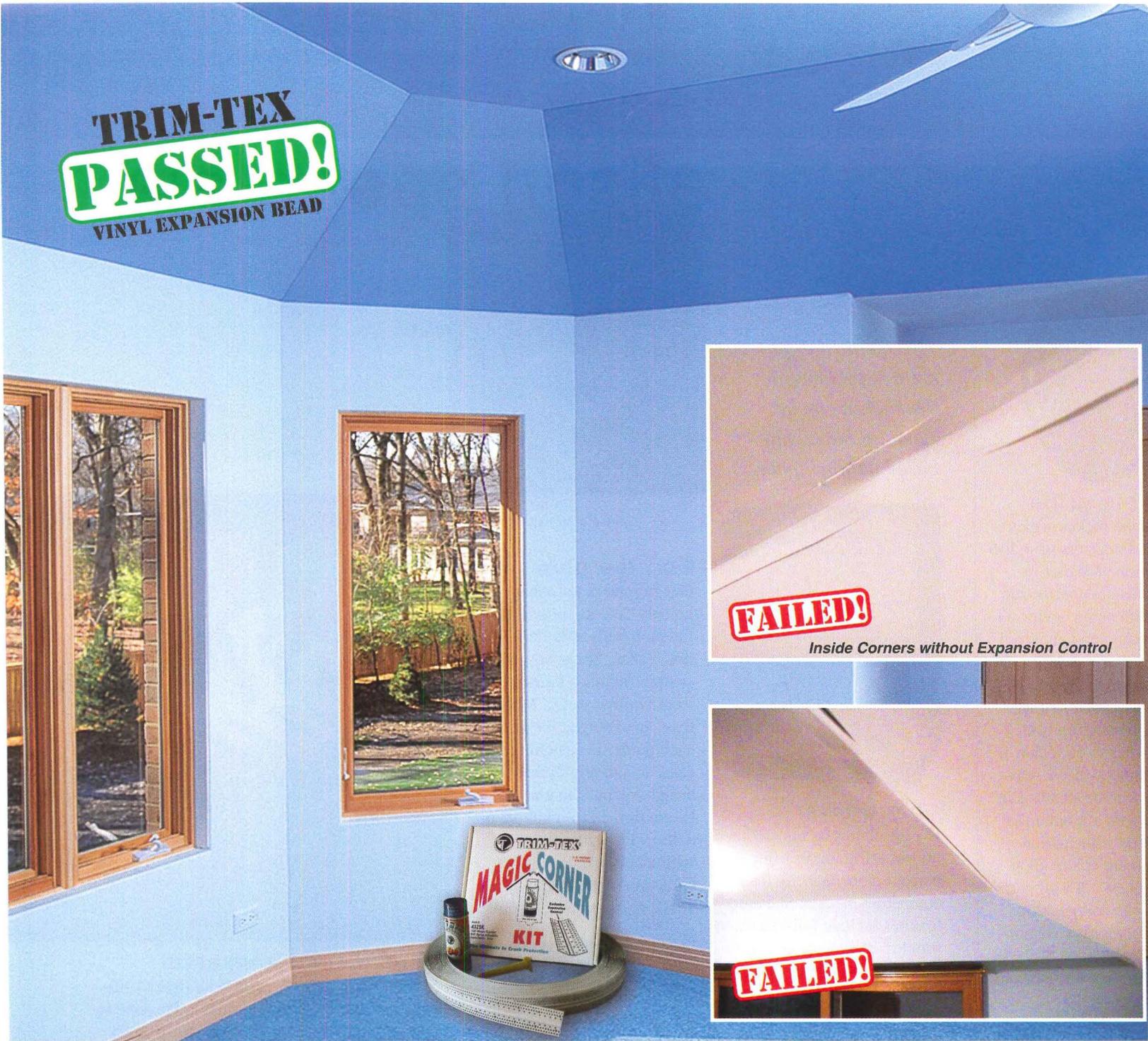


*“great, classic, contemporary.”*

**◀ suspended animation**  
Spear specifies Erco’s Axis walk light to animate the routine of stair climbing. Powered by light-emitting diode technology, the 10-inch-by-2-inch fixture has an asymmetrical reflector-lens system that generates what the company calls a “soft, brilliant” light. The company also touts the LED as efficient, and the fixture as long lasting. Erco Lighting, 732.225.8856; www.erco.com.

Portrait: Courtesy Alison Spear, AIA

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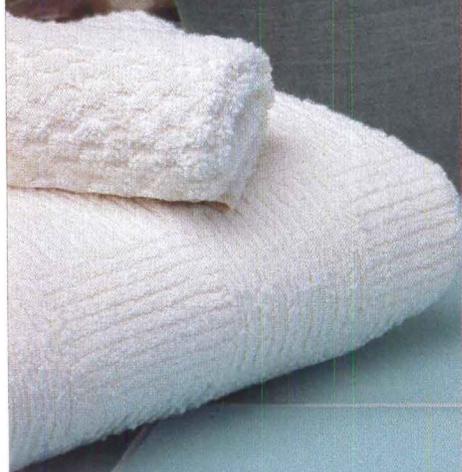
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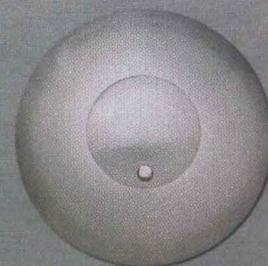
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WALL MOUNT FAUCET  
(Shown with Cross Handles)



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# imagine + create

*art studios lure the muse from the mundanity.*

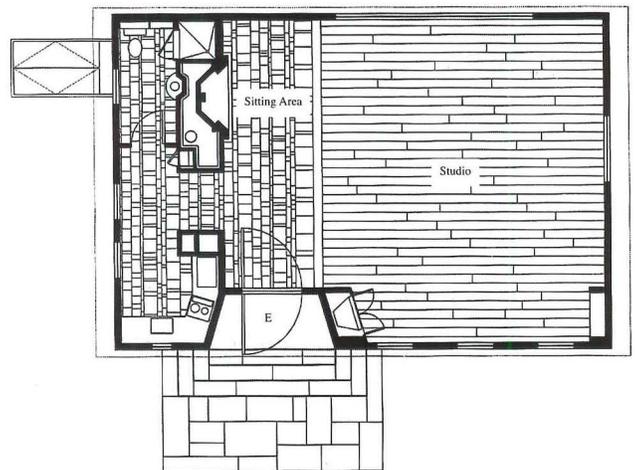
by meghan drueding

## a piece of quiet

Right-brain and left-brain thinking meet happily at this Connecticut sculptor's studio. The 1,100-square-foot building's large, loft-like windows and Shaker-influenced simplicity satisfy the artist's intuitive side, giving him the mental breathing space he needs to conceptualize his modernist metal sculptures. But it also alludes to his passion for mathematics: Much of the studio's dimensioning follows the Fibonacci sequence, a string of numbers in which each figure equals the sum of the previous two numbers. "He and I are both lovers of the Fibonacci sequence," says architect Mark Simon, FAIA. "It became a running joke."

Simon designed a desk for the sculptor with a tilt-up top for sketching out ideas. The top folds down to a flat surface used for making models, known as maquettes. The wainscoting that rings the studio's interior supports a sill wide enough to hold the maquettes, so the artist can keep them in sight rather than store them. "[This way] he can look at a maquette and judge it and put it aside and come back to it," Simon explains. "It's constantly visually present." A small kitchen and bathroom allow the owner to stay at work for long spans of time when the mood strikes him.

Actual fabrication of the sculptures takes place on a property down the road, freeing the studio from the constraints of housing heavy metalworking equipment. Instead the project feels refined, from the soft hues of its slate and maple floors to the intensity of its interior and exterior paint palette, assembled by well-known colorists Donald Kaufman and Taffy Dahl. Like the sculptor's work, the building possesses a sense of playfulness, most evident in its oversized chimney and whimsically arched roof forms. Located about 150 yards from the main residence, it gestures stylistically to the 18th century house without resorting to mimicry. "It feels like a friendly younger neighbor," Simon says.





**project:**  
 Connecticut Sculptor's Studio

**architect:**  
 Mark Simon, FAIA, Centerbrook  
 Architects and Planners, Centerbrook,  
 Conn.

**contractor:**  
 Owner

**structural engineer:**  
 Gibble Norden Champion Brown,  
 Old Saybrook, Conn.

**interior designer:**  
 Gomez Associates, New York City

**color consultant:**  
 Donald Kaufman Color, New York City

**project size:**  
 1,100 square feet

**construction cost:**  
 Withheld

**photography:**  
 Scott Frances/Esto

The studio's biggest window faces north to bring in even, diffuse light. Another, east-facing window (not pictured) frames a serene view of a distant meadow. "We wanted it to be a really pleasant place where he could also sit and think and read," Simon says.

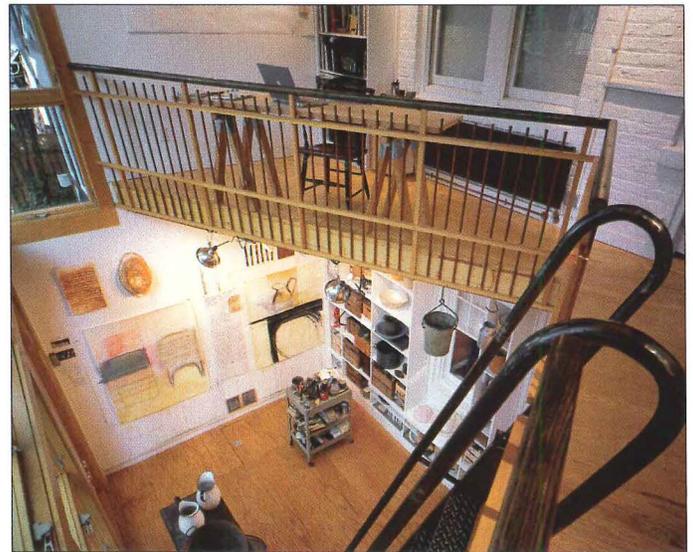
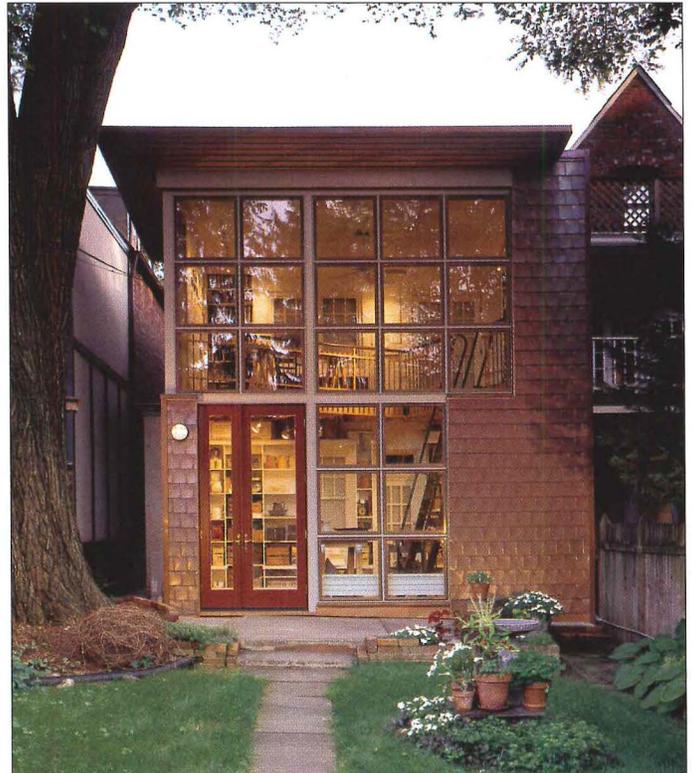
# imagine + create

## outside influence

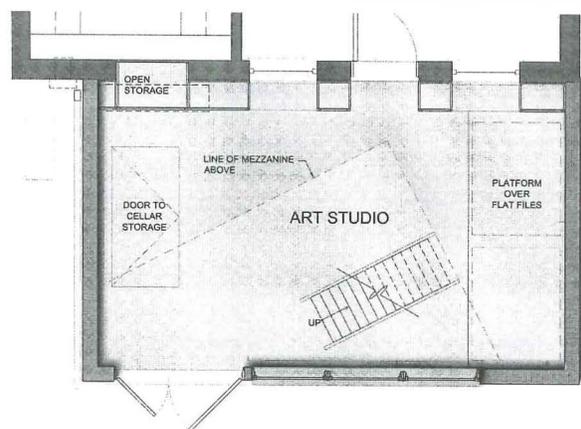
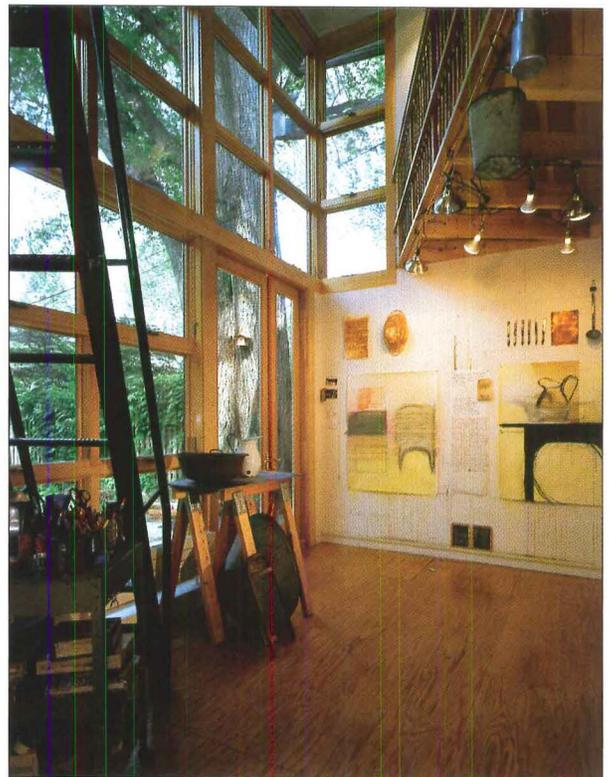
Washington, D.C., artist Brece Honeycutt finds creative stimulation in nature, preferring to sculpt and draw with organic media like wool, paper, earth, charcoal, and pastels. So when she tapped local designers Darrel Rippeteau, AIA, and Annica Emilsson, Associate AIA, to create her in-home studio, it only made sense for them to try and relate it to the outdoors as much as possible.

They tore down an old addition on the rear of the 1890s Federal-style row house Honeycutt shares with her husband and built a double-height space in its place. Square, copper-clad windows cover most of the studio's main façade, highlighting views of a giant elm tree in the backyard. The windows also bathe the interiors in soft northern light, which artists prefer because it doesn't create glare or interfere with color perception. A coat of copper roof shingles sheathes the rest of the exterior. "We tried to think of something that would age with the house," Emilsson says.

Because Honeycutt's process often involves found objects—vintage pitchers used as forms for cast-paper sculptures, for example—storage played a major role in the design. Rippeteau and Emilsson stowed a set of flat file drawers under a raised platform where Honeycutt can stand and draw; a painted Homasote wall over a plywood underlayer serves as her work surface. Tall shelves fill the room's southern edge. Upstairs, a mezzanine level angled toward the elm tree holds a small office space, where she can delve into the historical research that informs her work. Although the house's second floor contains a door to the office, she gets there by climbing a custom steel ladder from the studio's main level. This arrangement prevents her from having to leave her workspace and break her concentration. The studio functions as an independent world, allowing Honeycutt to immerse herself in her art.



Unfussy copper rods act as balusters on the mezzanine level and as tracks for movable clamp lights in the main workspace. The material ties them to the studio's burnished exterior.



**project:**  
Studio Brece, Washington, D.C.

**architect:**  
Rippeteau Architects, Washington

**contractor:**  
Marion B. Crabill Contractor,  
Olney, Md.

**project size:**  
435 square feet

**construction cost:**  
Withheld

**photography:**  
Anice Hoachlander/HD Photo

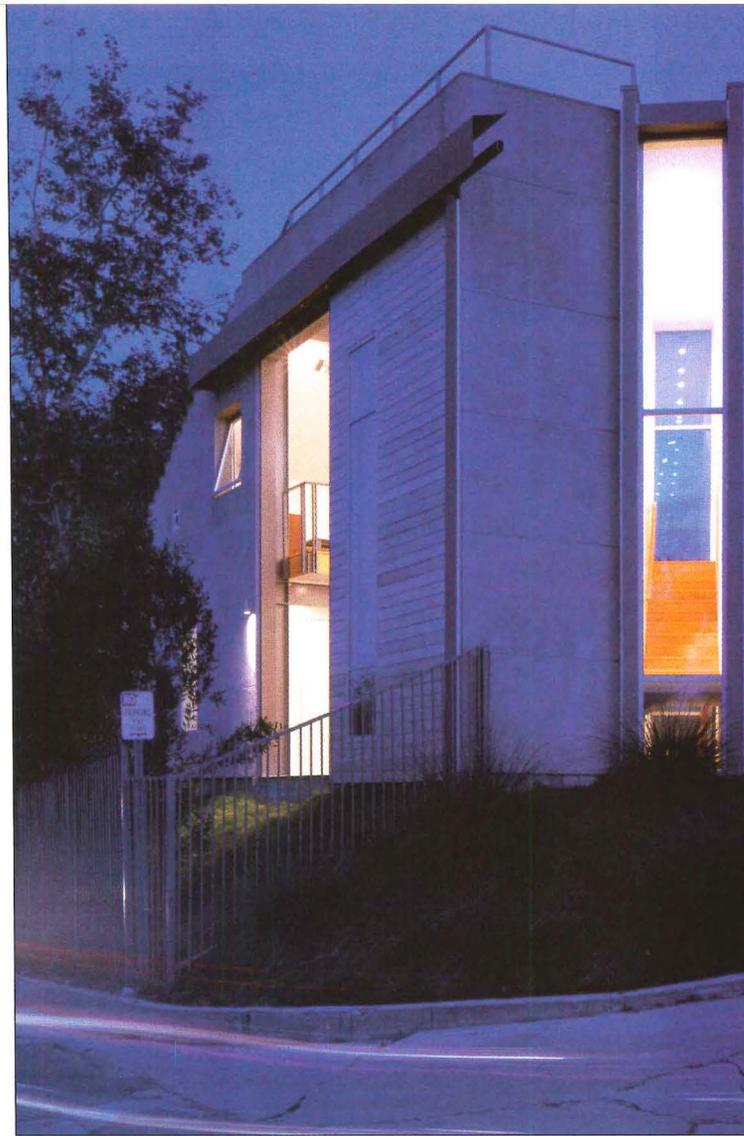
# imagine + create

## local color

Some artists seek the peace they need for their creative processes by retreating from the urbanity around them. Not the owner of this Los Angeles studio, who paints in oils as a sideline to his job in the entertainment industry. Architect Patrick Tighe, AIA, designed the 1,800-square-foot building to connect intimately with its home city. He sited it close to the street, where it doesn't compete with the painter's 1947 Wallace Neff house. Strategically placed windows frame various views of the Griffith Observatory next door and the surrounding lush vegetation. A rooftop terrace lays claim to some of the region's most iconic vistas, including the hillside Hollywood sign and the twinkling L.A. nightscape.

Tighe layered the studio so each space generates a new experience. A 14-foot-long glassed-in walkway links the main house to the double-height studio area. The owner also uses the project as a master suite, so a bedroom, kitchenette, and bath round out the ground floor. Up a narrow set of stairs lies an expansive loft office. From there, an outdoor stairway of precast-concrete planks leads to the roof terrace. "A huge part of the project is going up and through the building," Tighe says. "You have all [these] different views, so the openings are oriented to different things."

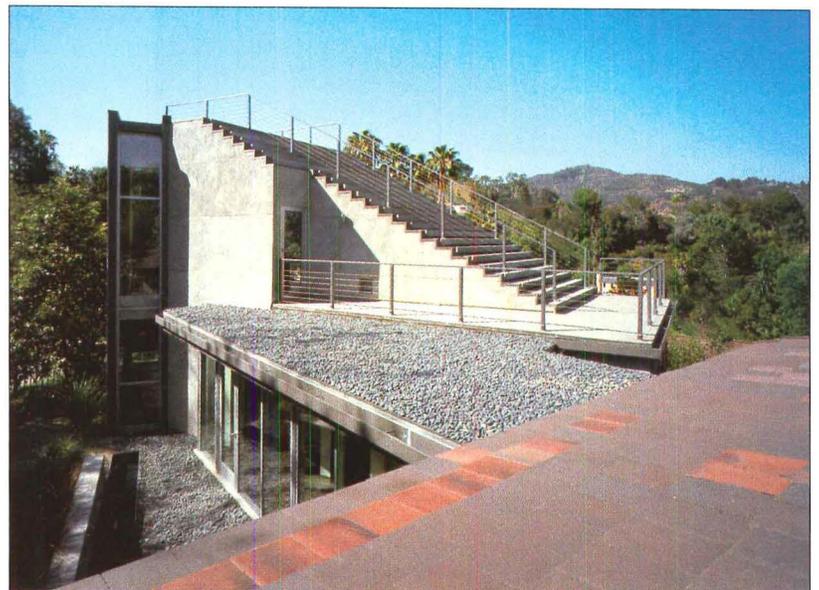
The studio's sleek lines respectfully contrast with Neff's romanticism while meeting the owner's program. "He wanted an open, versatile space that could be used for large canvases," Tighe says. A massive, 10-foot-by-20-foot glass-and-wood sliding door easily handles ventilation needs. And a simple palette of materials—concrete slab floors, drywall, and tongue-and-groove cedar—lets the artwork in progress take center stage.



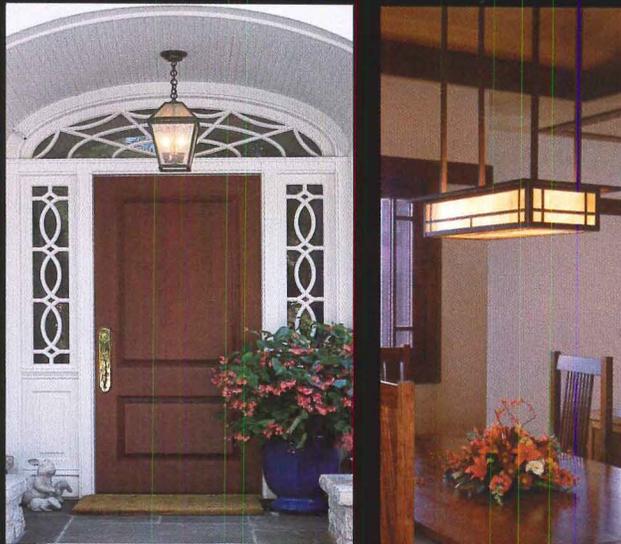


The building's massing echoes the shapes of the surrounding mountains. From its carefully placed windows and rooftop deck (below right) the artist can survey the striking scenery of Los Angeles.

**project:**  
Live Oak Studio, Los Angeles  
**architect:**  
Tighe Architecture, Santa Monica,  
Calif.  
**contractor:**  
Maeco Construction, Los Angeles  
**project size:**  
1,800 square feet  
**construction cost:**  
\$225 per square foot  
**photography:**  
Art Gray



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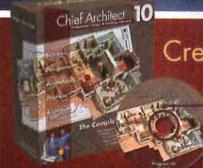
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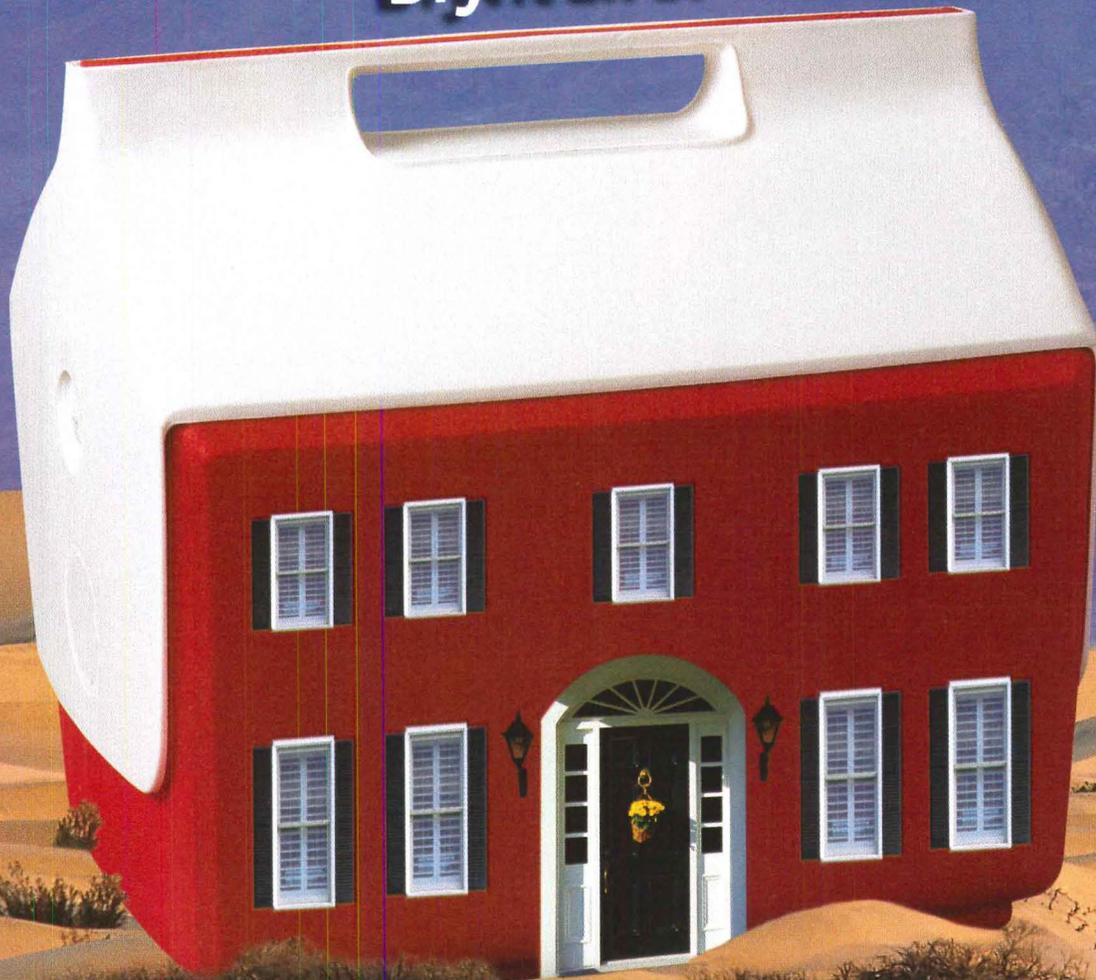


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# upward mobility

gypsum isn't the be-all, end-all for walls.

by nigel f. maynard

The Washington, D.C.-based Gypsum Association estimates that at least 90 percent of all new and remodeled homes are constructed with gypsum interior walls. Considering the material's design versatility, easy installation, and relatively low cost, it's not hard to understand why contractors favor it. Some architects, on the other hand, consider drywall a bit banal. "The walls are the primary surfaces you see when you enter the house," says Steven House, AIA, principal, House + House Architects, San Francisco. In his view, wall surfaces need more than drywall and paint. They're the place, he says, where you need to create "great impact."

The low-budget way to generate that impact is with bold-colored paint, but there are more imaginative, high-design choices available. Wood and bamboo veneers, fiberboard, glass and ceramic tile, decorative laminates, plastic and polycarbonate sheets, leather, cork, and even wood paneling will certainly turn heads. Exterior materials such as corrugated metal, stainless steel, copper, zinc, masonry blocks, and brick are also worth a double take inside the house.



Alex Steinberg

Instead of a solid gypsum wall, Minneapolis-based DJR Architecture designed this light-filtering plane with 1-inch-by-6-inch pine panels. The spaces between each panel allow light to enter the stairwell.

"Any opportunity beyond gypsum is always a nicer choice," says Alexandria, Va.-based architect David Jameson, AIA.

## planes talking

Naturally, wall material isn't just about the wall, it's about the house, too. That's why Jameson always examines the overall project and considers how different materials might connect or contrast with each other. That evaluation process sometimes leads him to products such as plywood and plaster or even to decidedly unexpected materials like oriented strand board—a product not nor-

mally celebrated for its intrinsic beauty. In one recent project, Jameson used OSB for the master bedroom's walls, floor, and ceiling, creating what he calls "a material blanket."

Randy Brown, AIA, principal, Randy Brown Architects, favors OSB for the same reasons most people disdain it. "We like its inexpensive cost," the Omaha, Neb.-based architect explains, "and the pattern and texture camouflage dirt and scratches." Typically a "rough" product, OSB takes on new life once it's cleaned up and finished with polyurethane, he adds.

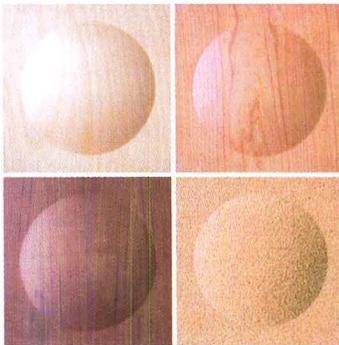
Other architects take a less radical approach. "For us, it's not about using unusual materials," House says. "We think of ways to use typical materials in innovative ways." Just recently, House specified maple plywood walls for one of his houses, but he chose an extruded-aluminum channel system from Fry Reglet Corp. to bridge the spaces between the panels. The application resulted in a wall that's casual yet refined. House also uses polycarbonate sheets to filter light into his rooms, and he specs laminate and stucco for interior

*continued on page 102*

walls. “Many times we use stucco on the outside and bring it into the house to create a strong indoor/outdoor connection,” he says.

According to Todd Walker, AIA, principal, Archimania, the fusion of indoor and outdoor environments is an underutilized architectural device. “In a recent project, we used a stone wall exterior that goes into the volume of the house,” making the wall essentially a “sculptural piece,” the Memphis, Tenn.-based architect explains. “We could have used drywall, but it would have lost the effect.” Bringing the stone inside invites full expression of the material, something Walker and his clients enjoy. Such a detail comes at a premium, but its cost is somewhat mitigated in the long run. Drywall needs repainting or repairing, he says, but “there’s no maintenance requirement for stone, corrugated metal, or masonry block.”

Solid woods and wood veneers also require little maintenance, but they are more vulnerable to impact



Courtesy Hightower Group

These form-pressed plywood panels, also known as POP panels, have a three-dimensional rounded surface that can add zest to an interior wall.

damage. Walker, Jameson, and DJR Architecture in Minneapolis spec them plentifully as well. Walker favors plywood, Jameson opts for 1-inch-by-6-inch Doug fir, and DJR’s architects prefer pine. Installed on 2x4 framing with a ½-inch-to-1-inch gap, the 6-inch solid boards filter light into adjacent rooms. The expression of the wood and the fasteners, meanwhile, can strike a bold statement in a loft or other open space.

Really, just about any material is fair game for wall cladding, as long as it’s within your clients’ comfort zone. Traditionalists might tolerate wood flooring on their walls or solid surfacing, carpet, or glass tiles. The more adventuresome might sign off on 18-inch-by-18-inch engineered wood tiles from Shawano, Wis.-based Weber Veneer and Plywood Corp., or even POP panels, three-dimensional pressed-plywood panels from Brainwood in Finland and the Hightower Group in North America. If your clients think intricate glass tile mosaics should stay in the bathroom, they might accept a bigger version made of 12-inch-by-12-inch or 12-inch-by-6-inch glass field tiles from Mirage Tile in Newport News, Va.

### up the wall

Although alternative materials are loaded with potential, they’re not without peril. One factor to consider is how the material will be installed. In many cases, you’re working with a prod-

uct that’s typically used in a different way or covered over by finish material. When the rough material is the finished product, installation is critical to the success of the application. “The joints and how [the product] is attached to the studs are where you end

up spending a lot of design time,” says William Ruhl, AIA, principal, Ruhl Walker Architects, Boston.

Finding the right contractor takes on greater importance as well. All residential contractors are familiar with gypsum on the wall and plywood as sheathing, but will they know how to install cement board as a finished product? “Any time you use a material in a different way, contractors are going to ask why,” Jameson says. It’s important to find the right people and to explain to them clearly what you’re trying to do, he says.

Oh, and don’t be seduced by an alternative material’s low up-front costs. Price is misleading, Ruhl warns, because it’s highly dependent on the design detailing and the labor required to install it. “Best case is, they’re the same, but they often aren’t cheaper,” he says. House suggests reining in costs by designing



David Duncan Livingston

Steven House, AIA, faced this home’s divider wall with natural-stained maple plywood panels held in place with aluminum channels. The plywood- and mango-colored plaster walls give the space a dramatic backdrop.

strategically. The material “doesn’t have to be everywhere,” he says. “It could just be an accent”—for instance, the fireplace or entry wall.

Managing client expectations can also be tricky. Do your clients want a refined look? Will they be comfortable with expressive detailing? Do they fully understand and appreciate the material’s attributes? When Ruhl Walker designed the entrance for its Boston office, the staff spec’d a Homasote fiberboard wall because the material “has a soft, attractive appearance that’s just begging to be touched,” Ruhl says.

Apparently few can resist its siren call. And when someone with greasy fingers does touch that winsome wall, the imprint is there to stay. A lovely patina or a client callback? It’s all in the eye of the beholder. Your best bet: Think, ask, and double-check before you spec. **ra**



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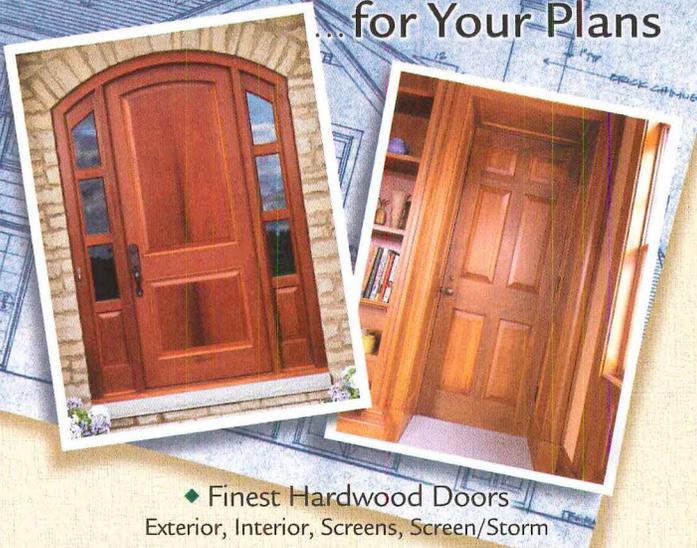
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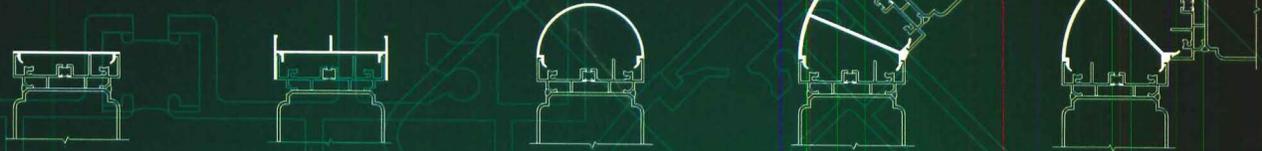
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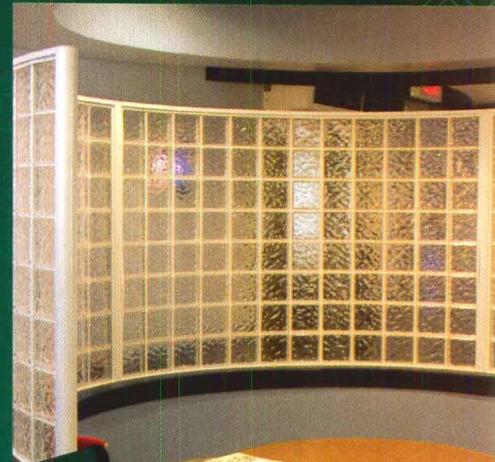


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45-degree corner caps were used to connect Hy-Lite panels to form this neo-angle shower. Flat caps were used to finish off the top and sides of the doorway, while a flat cap and mounting channel were used to attach the panels to the curb and wall.



Round caps finished off the ends of this radius wall perfectly. Aluminum mulls were used to connect the three radius walls together, while a flat cap mounted the units to the top of the curved wall.



90-degree corner caps were used to connect four acrylic block panels together to form decorative, lit towers. The panels were mounted to the base and top piece with flat caps.



Aluminum mulls were used to connect these flat panels and radius walls together. A flat cap and mounting channel were used to mount the units to the base and the walls. Flat caps were also used to connect the desktop to the top of the panels.

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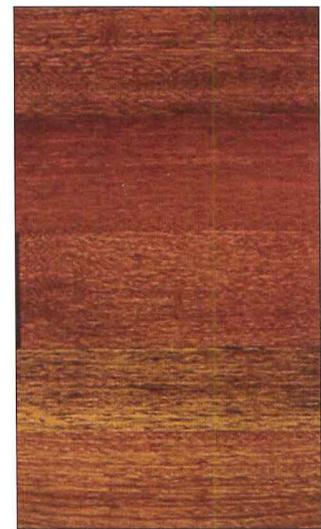
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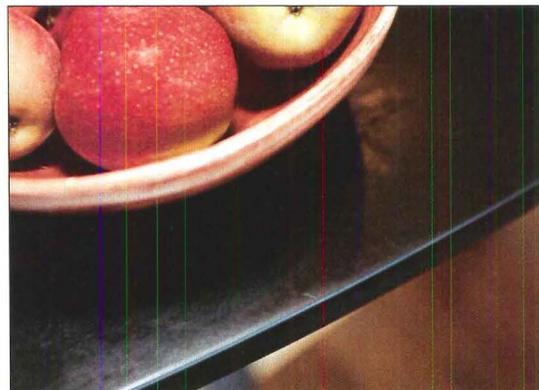
### kitchen conscience

Berkeley Mills is on a quest to make kitchen cabinets more sustainable, so the Berkeley, Calif.-based cabinetry and furniture maker has introduced two lines that use reclaimed materials, Forest Stewardship Council-certified woods, and water-based glues and varnishes. The units can be made from a variety of solid or engineered wood products that contain little or no formaldehyde. The Sereno design, shown here, features bamboo boxes, drawers, and drawer fronts. Berkeley Mills, 510.549.2854; [www.berkeleymills.com](http://www.berkeleymills.com).



### off the tracks

Environmentally conscious architects can spice up their projects by using old building products in new ways. TerraMai's Cinnamon Mix flooring, reclaimed from antique railway ties, is a good place to start. Comprised of Merbau, Alan Batu, Dtang, and other tropical rainforest species, Cinnamon Mix is available in finger-jointed, solid, and edge-joined tongue-and-groove configurations. Planks measure  $\frac{5}{8}$  inches thick, 2 inches to 6 inches wide, and up to 72 inches long. TerraMai, 800.220.9062; [www.terramai.com](http://www.terramai.com).



### local news

Now you can read the morning paper while eating on a countertop made from yesterday's edition. Manufactured by Hoquiam, Wash.-based KlipTech Composites, PaperStone Certified surfacing combines 100 percent postconsumer recycled paper with a water-based resin. KlipTech claims that the environmentally sensitive product boasts natural stone's beauty, steel's strength, and wood's easy workability. It's available in seven colors, including slate black, mocha brown, and forest green. KlipTech Composites, 360.538.9815; [www.kliptech.com](http://www.kliptech.com).

—nigel f. maynard



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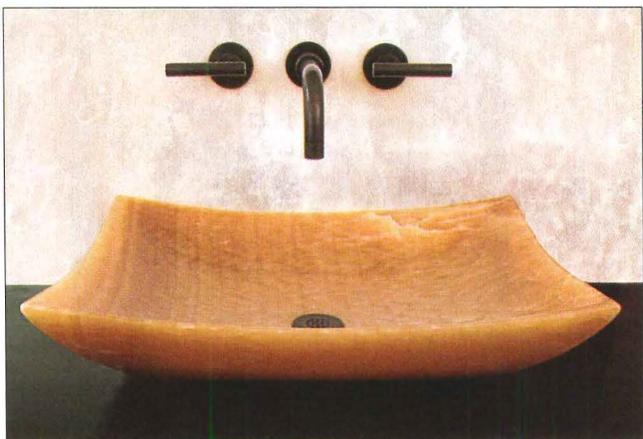
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off the shelf

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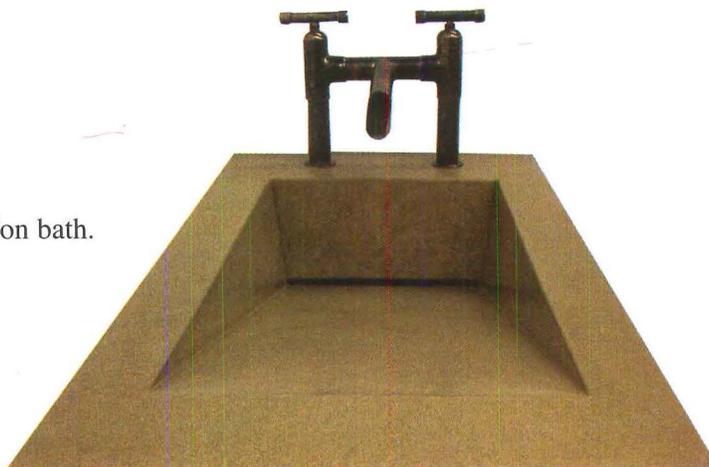


## sound and fuera

Crafted from a single piece of onyx or granite, Fuera vessels keep a low, albeit lovely, profile. Part of Terra Acqua's Montecito Stone collection, the Fuera is available in two sizes—21 inches by 16½ inches by 5 inches or 18½ inches by 14½ inches by 5 inches. The vessel may be speced in translucent green onyx, warm honey onyx, or chic black pearl granite. Terra Acqua, 805.899.8888; [www.terracqua.net](http://www.terracqua.net).

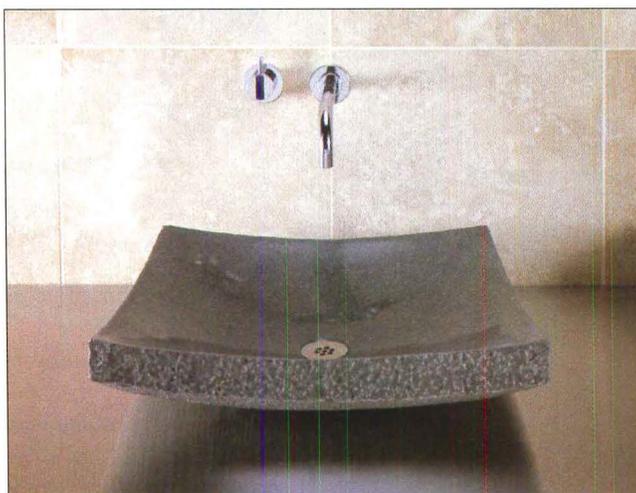
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*continued on page 110*



### urban legends

Straight edges and sleek details give Cole & Co.'s Urban Theory collection a clean look. Three models, among them the Terre version seen here, offer variations on a cubist theme. Five different leg styles in polished chrome or brushed nickel add sparkle to oak or maple-veneered vanities. Finishes include natural wood or sienna, noir, honey, chai, or coffee. Coordinating mirrors, sinks, and faucets are also available. Cole & Co., 888.653.2284; [www.vanitybath.com](http://www.vanitybath.com).



### veni, vidi, venecia

The Venecia line, like all of Sonia's bath furniture, is constructed from marine-grade wood for greater water resistance. With its open shelves, side cubbies behind glass doors, and shallow drawers for easy reaching, the curved Venecia features plenty of storage options. High-pressure-formed sink/counter combos come in snowy or frosted glass as well as white fire clay. Select beech or wenge-wood finishes. Sonia, S.A., 954.572.5454; [www.sonia-sa.com](http://www.sonia-sa.com).



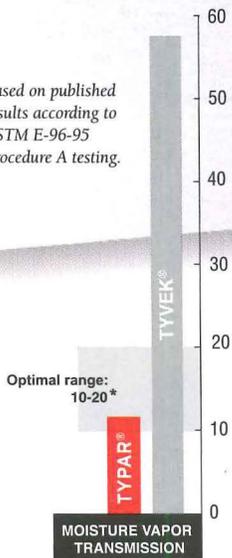
### prix de due

The Piu Due suite balances geometric bath furniture with free-form fixtures. Rectangular cabinets in oak feature full-length satin-chrome pulls. The sculptural countertop sink is available in round, oval, and asymmetric triangle configurations. Matching accessories keep things tidy with rotating, wall-mounted shelves and a rolling drawer with integrated laundry hamper. Vitra USA, 877.658.4872; [www.vitra-usa.com](http://www.vitra-usa.com).

—shelley d. hutchins

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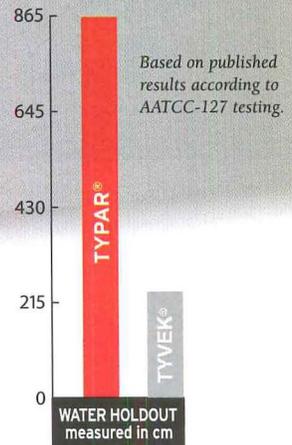


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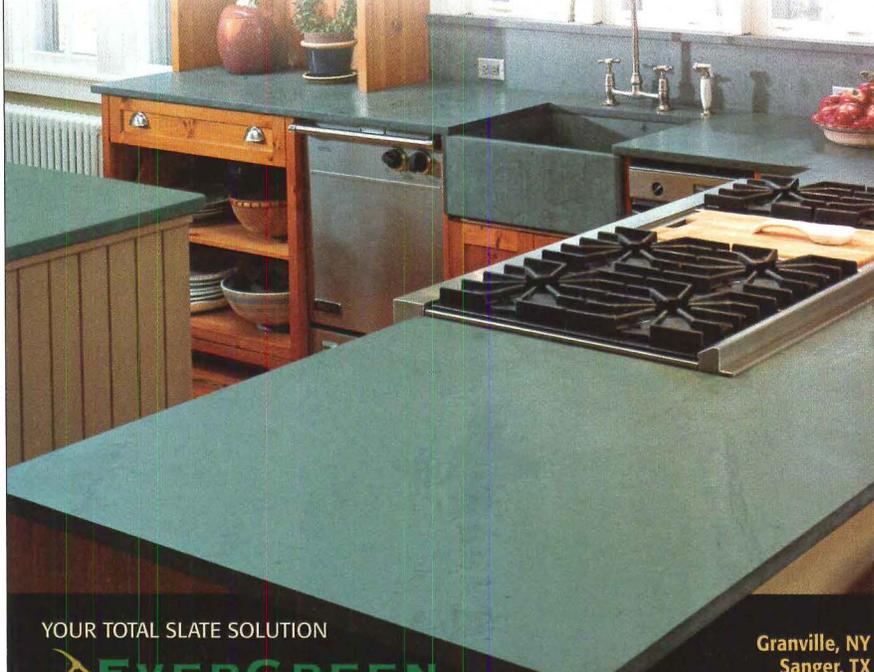
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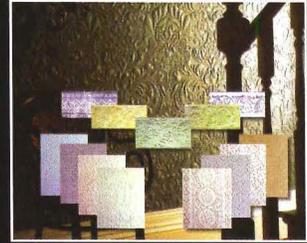
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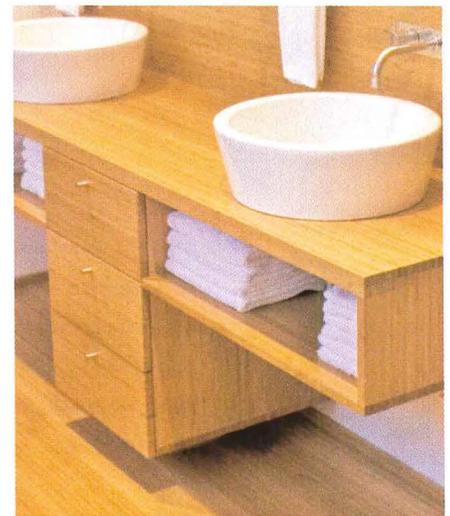
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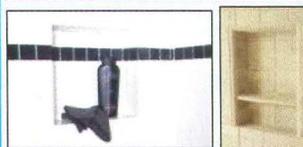
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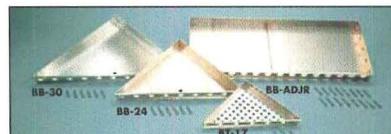


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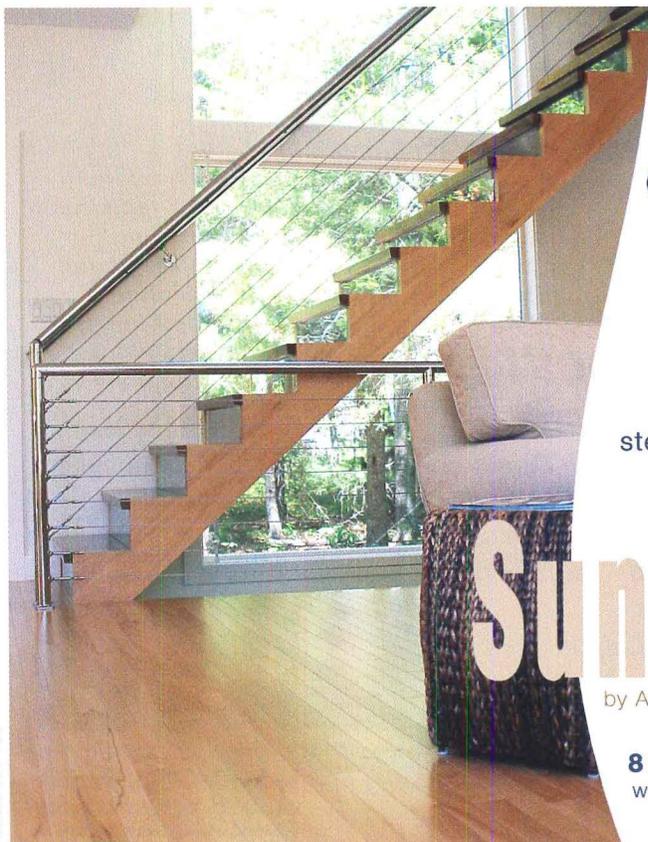


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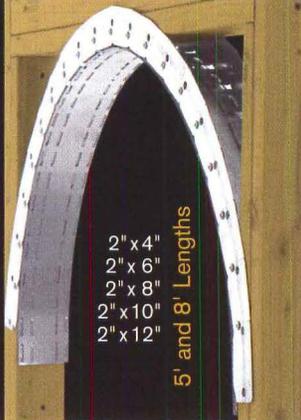
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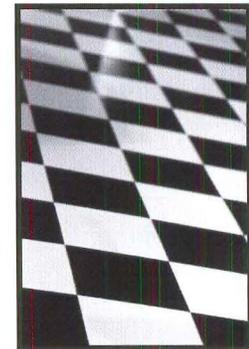
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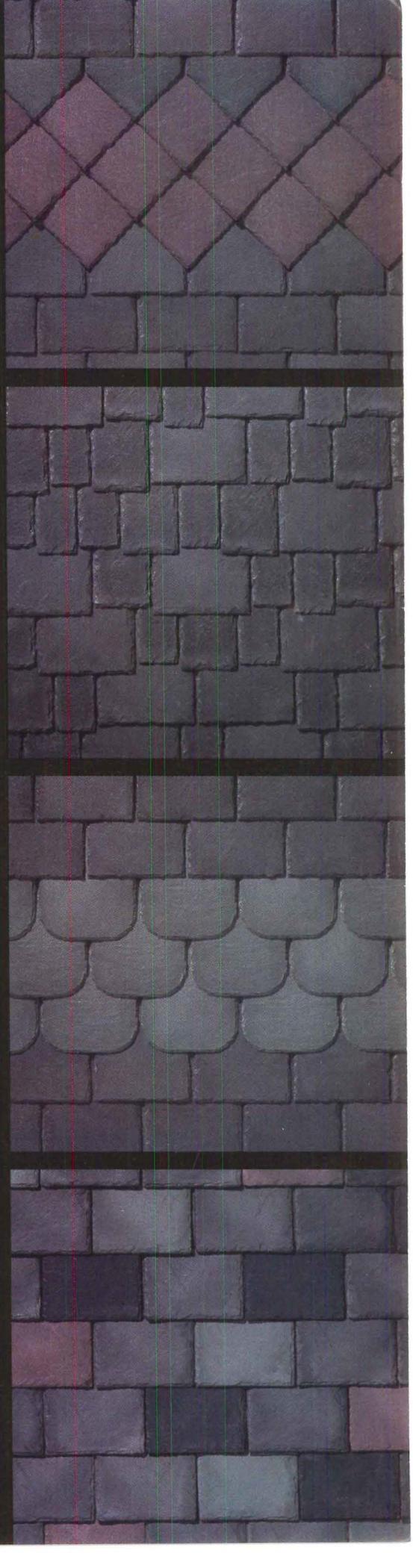
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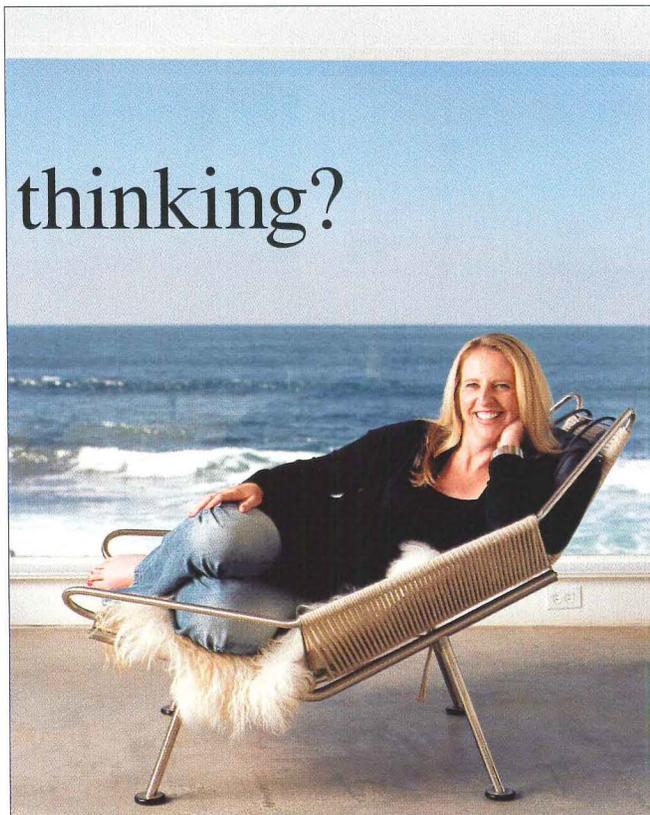
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end quotes

# where do you do your most creative thinking?

**Marcie Meditch, AIA**  
Meditch Murphey Architects, Chevy Chase, Md.  
*"When I take an early morning walk."*

**Guy Peterson, FAIA**  
Guy Peterson/Office for Architecture, Sarasota, Fla.  
*"In the swimming pool. I swim every day at lunch and it's amazing how many problems I solve."*



**Jennifer Luce, AIA**  
LUCE et studio architects, San Diego  
*"I do my best work staring out at the ocean view I have from my house [shown above]. It's such an infinite image it reminds me the possibilities are endless. Fifty feet of glass right on the ocean. It's really changed my life."*



**Sarah Nettleton, AIA**  
Sarah Nettleton Architects, Minneapolis

*"I love sitting at my desk ... [shown above] because we have a wonderful office with lots of light. And I love bouncing ideas off my colleagues."*



**Ken Wilson, AIA**  
Envision Design, Washington, D.C.  
*"I often get ideas in the shower, or while I am sitting in traffic. (I drive a Toyota Prius, so there is no emission generated!)"*

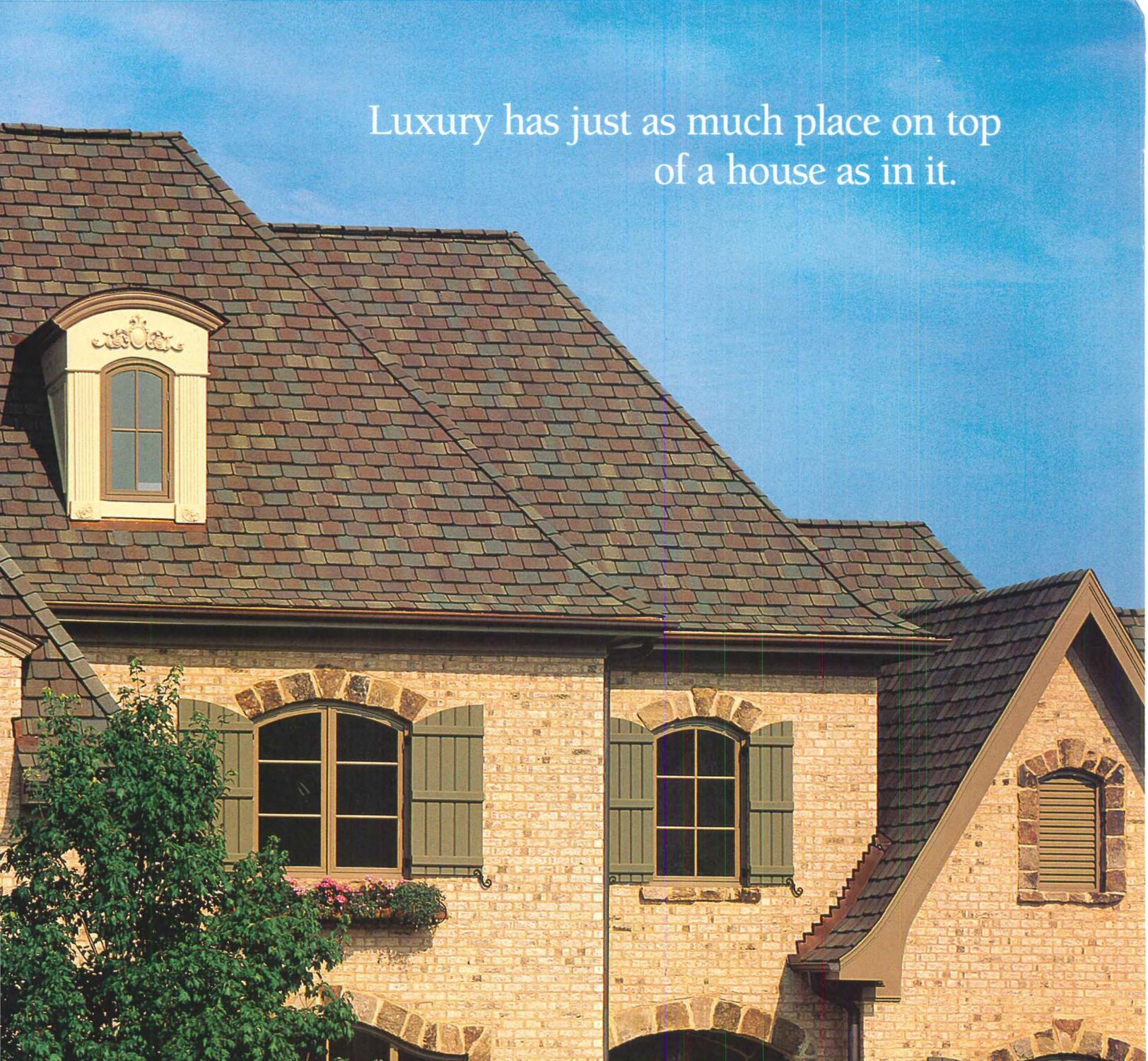


**Stephen H. Kanner, FAIA**  
Kanner Architects, Santa Monica, Calif.

*"I tend to do a lot of my best thinking on airplanes. The beauty of that is you're in an environment where you can really focus."*

Photos (clockwise from top right): Wendy Jones Fletcher (Luce at home); Courtesy Toyota Motor North America (Prius); Virgin Atlantic Airways (airplane cabin); and Sarah Nettleton Architects (Nettleton's office)

—nigel f. maynard



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