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Carlos Diniz**

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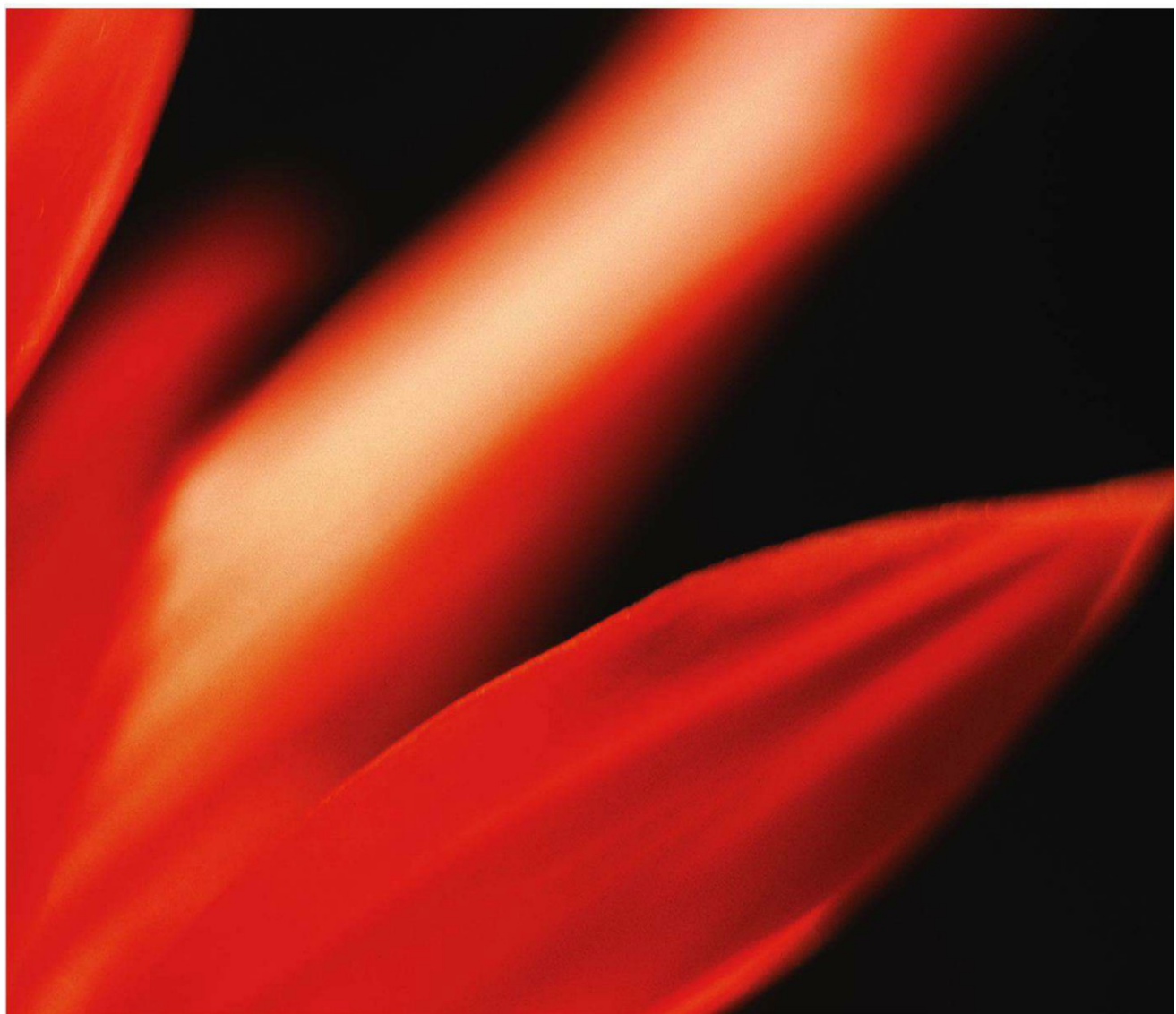


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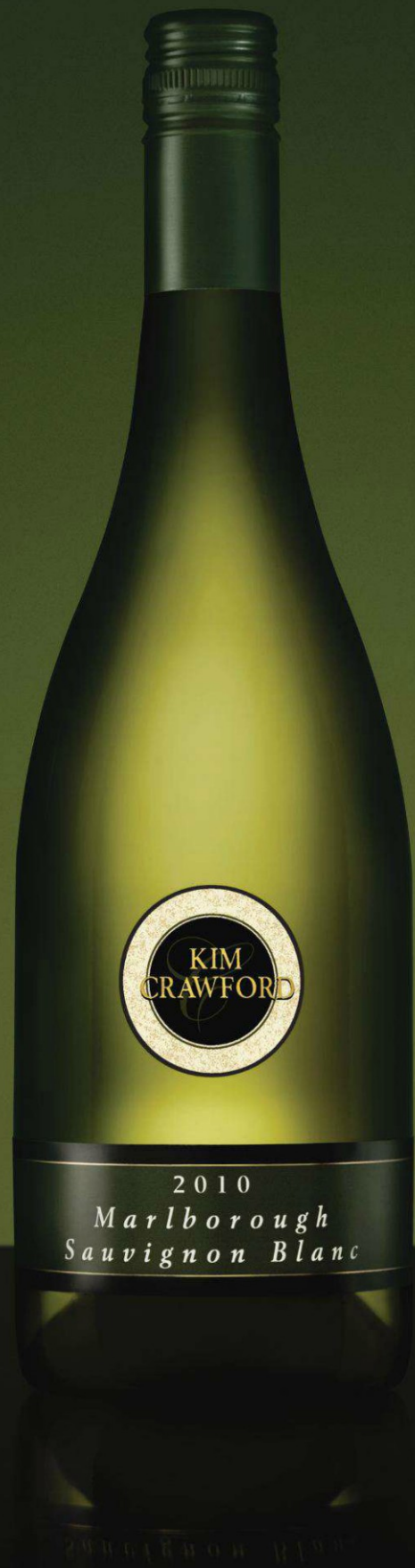
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82 Contained

When their street-art collection outgrew their previous home, Jeff Wardell and Claudia Sagan moved the works—and themselves—into a warehouse in San Francisco's Lower Pacific Heights. The space now accommodates a pair of stacked shipping containers, which hold a cozy office and a most unusual guest room.

By Emily Kaiser Thelin

Photos by Drew Kelly

90 A Simple Plan

It took just three months for Marmol Radziner to build a 2,200-square-foot prefab house in its factory for a pair of landscape architects, and but a single afternoon to assemble the ten steel modules on a remote site in Northern California.

By Jaime Gross

Photos by Dwight Eschliman

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Industrial designer Dror Benshetrit's clever QuaDror system provides the building blocks for everything from quickly erected prefab housing to a handsome desk.

By Marc Kristal



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Peeks at the prefab Burton Residence in Ukiah, California, by Marmol Radziner, p. 90
Photos by Dwight Eschliman

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46 My House

Organized around a peaceful central courtyard, this Los Angeles prefab is a minimalist respite from the bustling city.



Win a limited-edition Carlos Diniz screen print of your own (worth \$2,800!) as part of our Take Me Home series by visiting dwell.com/tmh

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Nestled in the trees on a small Finnish island, a prefab shed provides an idyllic spot in which to spend summer nights.

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The Possibilities of Prefab

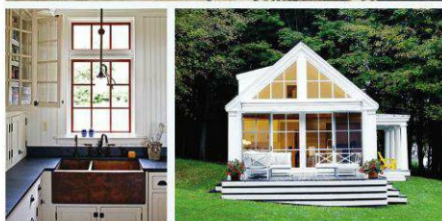
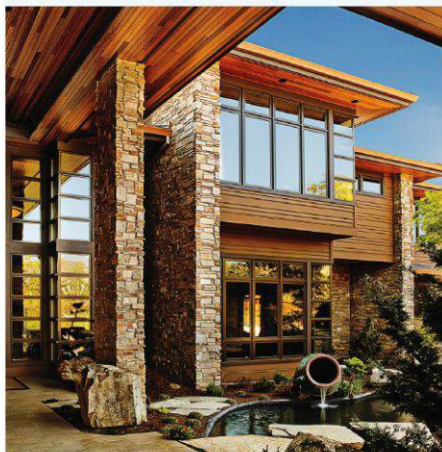
Since the first issue of Dwell we have championed one of the most creative, sustainable, and promising building systems that has been a part of the American housing landscape for more than a century. What we love about prefab is its creative pursuit of modern-home-as-product, with sustainability and authenticity at its core. And within these pages, Dwell explores innovative examples of how far prefab—promising for the masses and appealing to the well-heeled who love designing with a “kit of parts”—has come and just how far it still has to go.

The allure of prefab is that it continues to fascinate and propel architects, builders, and homeowners to experiment restlessly, hoping to capture prefab’s pledge of precision and economy. We devote 42 pages of this issue to those protagonists of prefab who march on, navigating the often upside-down realities of materials and supply, and who nonetheless continue to emerge with startling ideas, fresh solutions, and new perspectives.

So we will never abandon the pursuit of prefab. Nor will we cease asking ourselves what it means today, and what it could mean tomorrow, constantly learning from the successes and failures of the past, always keeping a clear eye out for the next discovery. For even if prefab perfection—affordable, elegant, sustainable, morally healthy structures available to buyers of all means—may still be a dream, we believe this continued quest is what truly matters.

Amanda Dameron, Executive Editor
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What a surprise to read your great piece about Marimekko (Process, September 2011). Thanks to writer Katja Lindroos and photographer Alex Subrizi for such a thorough story about what makes Marimekko so unique. In the 1970s, young architects like me loved Marimekko for its strong colors and patterns.

I am retired now but have a new career making large wall hangings and quilts out of Marimekko fabric from the remnant box at a Crate and Barrel outlet. I have made about 25 so far, and I must have more than 50 patterns in my ever-growing fabric inventory. The quality of the material is perfect, the colors are vibrant, and the patterns remain fresh and compelling.

Peter Hoyt
Cincinnati, Ohio

Thanks for the "Inspired by Japan" story (September 2011). The article will help many understand the similarities between modernism and the *wabi-sabi* aesthetic of Japan. The deconstructed traditional house, Katsura Imperial Villa, and Noguchi's Akari all exhibit the *wabi-sabi* way of thinking.

The Japanese aesthetic is best described in a slim volume written by Leonard Koren, *Wabi-Sabi: For Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*. *Wabi-sabi*, he writes, "is a beauty of things imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. It is a beauty of things modest and humble. It is a beauty of things unconventional." Whereas modernism

is slick, geometrical, polished, smooth, minimalist, and about perfection, *wabi-sabi* implies an intuitive cosmic view that is earthy, imperfect, and loaded with idiosyncratic design solutions that help people adapt to nature's eternal cycles of beginnings and endings.

J. Skuba
Lake Forest, Illinois

The Dwell Reports (July/August 2011) about modern play structures made me laugh out loud. Two hundred seventy-four dollars for a cardboard playhouse? I made one for my three-year-old out of a free washing-machine box from a home-improvement store. I am not particularly crafty or handy, but it took me all of two hours to make it using a utility knife and some packing tape. We later added paper shingles and a mailbox. It was sturdy, roomy enough for two, and extremely versatile, serving as house, restaurant, ice-cream shop, and veterinarian clinic throughout our long New Hampshire winter. The best part? When spring came, I took it down in ten minutes and then recycled it.

Tyrrell Albaugh
Fremont, New Hampshire

I love the concept of blackbox (Design Finder, July/August 2011). It's always good to connect traditions with the current times to make sure they survive and can be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike. I will definitely visit the shop on my next trip to Oaxaca!

Alice
Posted on dwell.com

Correction: In our "Inspired by Japan" story (September 2011), we incorrectly labeled the *okkake-daisen-tsugi* joint. The correct name for this joint is the rebated oblique scarf or scarph joint. We apologize for this error.

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Ty Cole

Ty Cole journeyed from his home in Brooklyn to the end of Long Island to photograph the Pryor Residence (Off the Grid, p. 58). Upon arriving in Montauk, he thought he might have taken a wrong turn. "No way that house is here," he recalls thinking. Nevertheless, he found the expansive, floating structure and the family at the end of a long, gravel driveway. "They were so hospitable and made the experience a real pleasure," Cole says.

Jessica Haye and Clark Hsiao

Los Angeles-based photographers Jessica Haye and Clark Hsiao visited Paul and Shoko Shoji's nearby home for this month's My House (p. 46). "While we were shooting, Shoko made a batch of homemade banana-nut muffins and packed them up for us with Japanese cookies and rice cakes in little ribbon-tied party bags," Haye says. "Paul joked that there is no one better at cute packaging than his wife, and we agree."

Drew Kelly

Photographer Drew Kelly racked up serious miles to photograph and video converted shipping containers for this issue. He traveled 300 miles from Jeff Wardell and Claudia Sagan's home in San Francisco ("Contained," p. 82) to Buellton, California, to visit custom builder Pat Carson, who worked on the two containers in the home. Then Kelly headed back to Oakland, his hometown, and finally to the container-housed pop-up restaurants and gallery in San Francisco's Hayes Valley.

Marc Kristal

New York contributing editor Marc Kristal thought he'd met his Waterloo when faced with the brain-twisting task of explaining how designer Dror Benshetrit's QuaDror system works ("Top Dror," p. 90). Fortunately, Benshetrit's enthusiasm for the system and patience in explaining its intricacies helped Kristal understand, appreciate, and translate its apparently endless applications. Kristal's latest collaborations, monographs with Los Angeles interior designer James Magni and

New York architect Gil Schafer, are now available from Abrams and Rizzoli.

William Lamb

For this month's Off the Grid (p. 58), Jersey City-based writer and editor William Lamb traveled to Montauk, New York, at the eastern edge of the Hamptons. There he found "an elegant beach house that was as far removed as possible from the fishing cottages that long dominated the coastline," he says. The three-hour trek also gave him an appreciation for how long Long Island really is.

Emily Kaiser Thelin

Writer Emily Kaiser Thelin tried to play it cool when she first saw the interior of Jeff Wardell and Claudia Sagan's apartment ("Contained," p. 82). But a lifelong obsession with container ships made it difficult for her to restrain her glee when she saw two containers stacked on top of each other and used as rooms. She hopes she didn't wear out her welcome when, under the guise of research, she tested the containers' many whimsical custom features, including the office's sleeping nook.

Laetitia Wolff

Laetitia Wolff is a New York-based writer, curator, founder of futureflair, and executive director of designNYC. She met with Jean-François Dingjian and Eloi Chafaï of Normal Studio (Profile, p. 64) in Paris, but since their office was in transit, they held the interview at the ENSCI-Les Ateliers design school. "We could not talk very loudly because our meeting was in the student library and the librarian kept saying 'Chut!' to silence us," Wolff says.

Mimi Zeiger

Writer Mimi Zeiger first learned about architectural illustrator Carlos Diniz, whom she profiled for this month's Archive (p. 104), on a trip to Los Angeles. Chalk it up to Diniz's ability to capture the essence of Southern California living—the loose boundaries between inside and outside; its chill mid-century vibe—she's since left her Brooklyn apartment to become an L.A. resident. ■■■



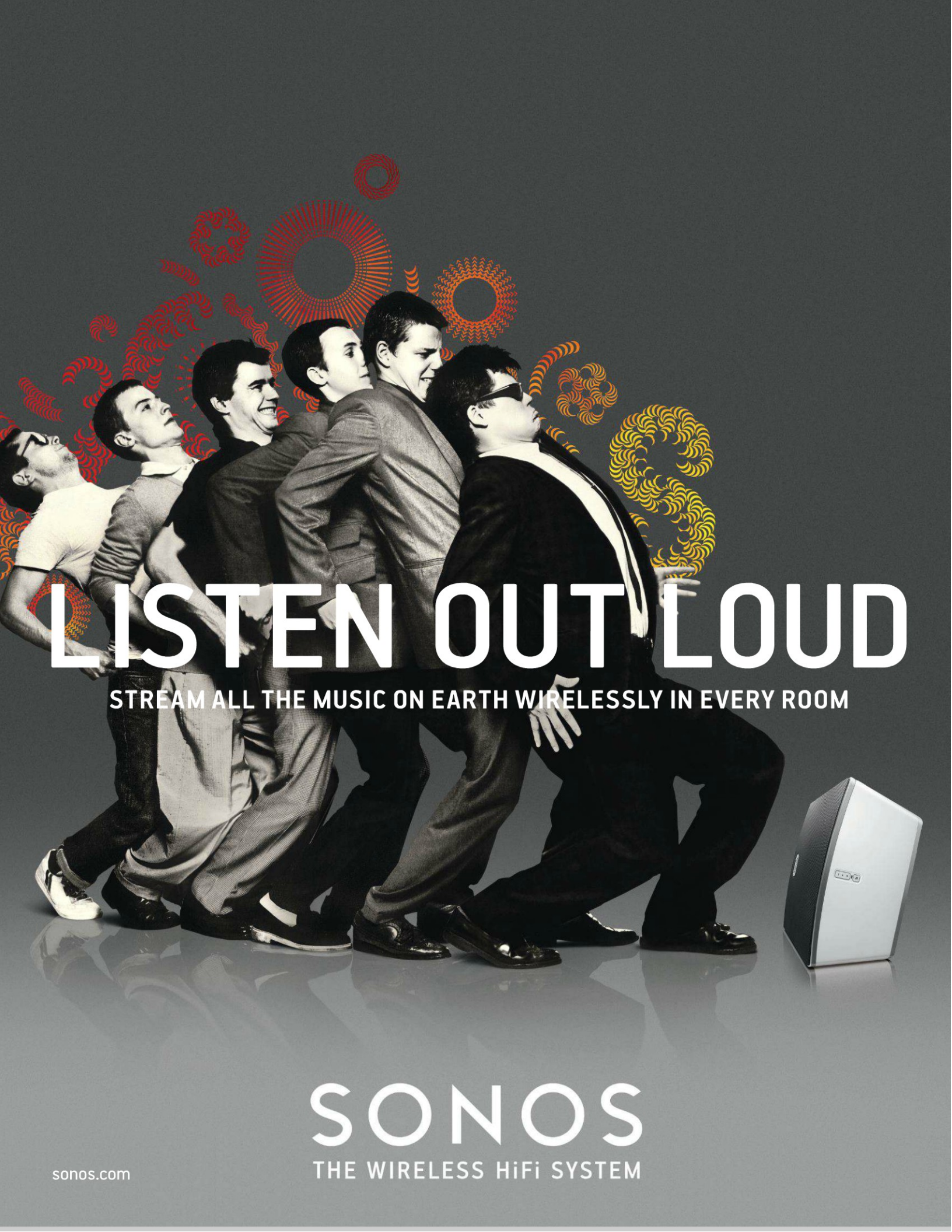
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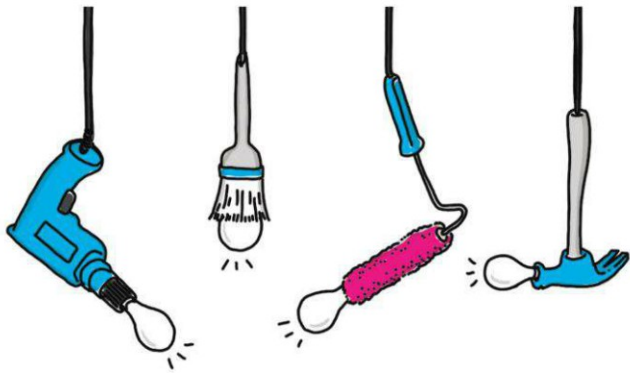
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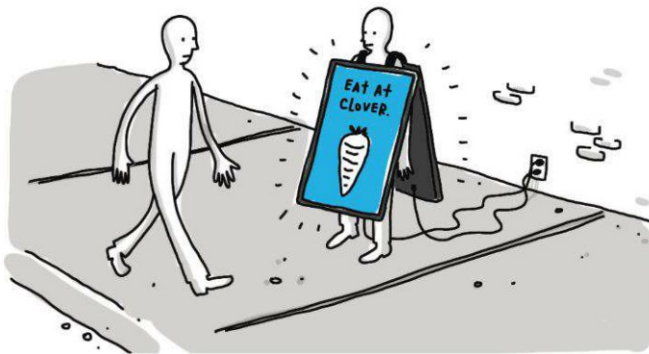
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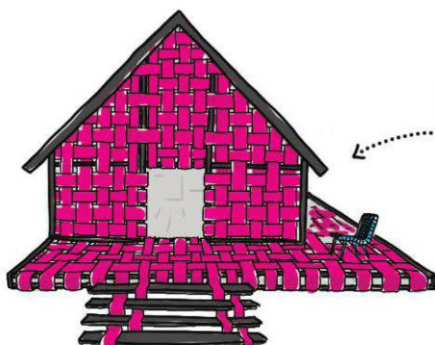
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40 This Fold House



WOVEN HOUSE
BY
JENS RISOM

42 A Ready-Made Risom

Illustrations by Craghton Berman



For more
In the Modern World—
including a video
one-on-one with design
legend Dieter Rams—visit
dwell.com/itmworld

Well Tooled



Though we couldn't see all 280-some events at the ninth-annual London Design Festival this September, a very hardworking furniture trend did catch our eye.



Forking Light

by Adam Xander

Adding a spun aluminum shade and bulb to this pitchfork prototype we saw at the TENT London show takes it from fully functional in the farmyard to a perfect fit for the foyer.

adamxander.co.uk



Shoehorn Hanger

by Faudet-Harrison for Tracey Neuls

The clothes hanger gains a rather pedestrian second use thanks to the London-based design firm Faudet-Harrison. This hanger, made for shoe maven Tracey Neuls's new store in Shoreditch, has a shoehorn on each end.

faudet-harrison.com



Coat Rack from the Pipework series

by Nick Fraser

The "recontextualization of familiar things" drives Nick Fraser's design. We came across the powder-coated copper pipes and brass fittings of Fraser's handsome hook at the 100% Design show at Earls Court.

nickfraser.co.uk



Spring Stool

by Tamasine Osher Design

Give the wooden seat of the Spring stool from Osher's debut collection a twist as you would the head of a screw, and its height adjusts accordingly.

tamasineosher.com

Clamp Lamp

by Plant and Moss

Made from an everyday industrial clamp threaded through with a stainless steel rod and aluminum shade, Clamp Lamp, by newcomers Plant and Moss, can be affixed nearly anywhere. It was a highlight of the excellent Tramshed show in the East End.

plantandmoss.com





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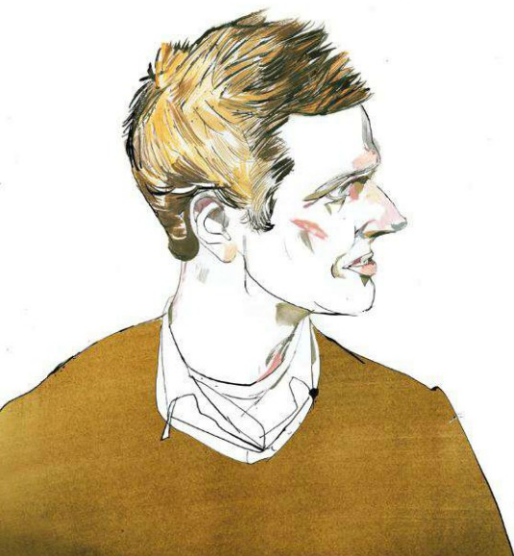
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Men about Town



Whilst in London, we met three talents who are making their marks on the local design scene. Soon you'll be uttering their names along side Morrison, Dixon, and Adjaye.

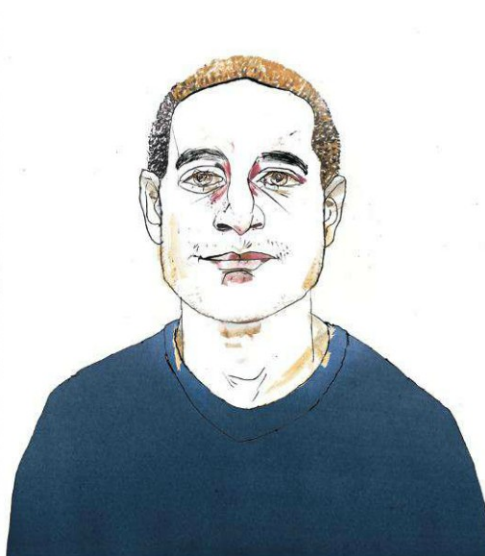


Max Fraser

At the tender age of 31, writer Max Fraser is already a ten-year veteran of the London Design scene and is increasingly one of its most indispensable fixtures. His first book—*Design UK*, a comprehensive shopping guide—was published in 2001, but it's the second edition of his *London Design Guide* (which debuted at the festival) that will keep him, and you, on the map.

Fraser's take on a traditional city guide is shot through with a critic's eye and a journalist's ear as he editorializes on the best stores, galleries, showrooms, and museums in the Big Smoke—and on everything from the chilly reception one can get in London shops to the best Indian snacks at Covent Garden (Dishoom, by the way).

londondesignguide.com



Peter Marigold

Peter Marigold seemed to be everywhere this year at the London Design Festival: British manufacturer Materialise commissioned some of Marigold's 3-D printed work for an exhibit curated by gallerist extraordinaire Murray Moss at the Victoria and Albert Museum; Marigold's SUM shelving was on display at SCP's Design Department Store in the East End; Design-Marketo had him modify a set of the classic Duralex tumblers for a show at its pop-up watering hole, Bar Alto; and he showed plaster and metal vases based on originals made from timber-molded wax (below) at the show *Methods of Imitation* put on by the Workshop for Potential Design.

Yet the man himself is anything but the megalomaniacal designer. "You know, Marigold is the leading brand of rubber gloves in the UK," he quipped when we inquired as to how such a busy man could have such a serene surname.

petermarigold.com



Tomás Alonso

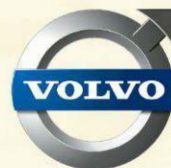
Spanish-born and London-based designer Tomás Alonso got his start in the most unlikely of places—designing car wheels for an Italian company in Miami, Florida. After stints in Australia and elsewhere, Alonso settled in London to study at the Royal College of Art, and subsequently set up shop. In 2006 he formed the design collective Okay Studio; this year, the group showed a clutch of wooden furniture made by the Dutch manufacturer Arco in a temporary space during the festival. It was Alonso's work in the show *Vera, Chapter One*, however, that really thrilled.

The one-off wall shelf, lantern, paper-weight, and tray (below) struck quiet notes, in no small part to the sublime vegetable-tanned leather straps enfolding each one. Asked by the show's curators to respond to a photo of two women gazing at a horse, Alonso took the strength and structure of a horse and applied it to these common household goods.

tomas-alonso.com



Portraits by Riccardo Vecchio



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This Is England



In London, we came across a pair of exhibits that showed off the highest of contemporary design while hearkening back to the stalwart Britain of yore.

Parlor Trick

For all the British design on display at the festival, nothing truly hit home—or recreated it—better than the Living Room, a stylishly cozy collection of English goods curated by design journalist Alyn Griffiths and designer Jonathan Krawczuk. The pair set up shop in a small room in the store Luna and Curious in East London, kitting out the diminutive space with the work of 18 different brands, all made in the UK.

Their selections included a few bold-faced names of contemporary British design—Established & Sons, Donna Wilson, Matthew Hilton—but a Drone table by Dare Studio, a teapot by welovekaoru, and a sideboard by Young & Norgate shone just as brightly. The teapot, Hilton's Kimble Windsor chair for De La Espada, and a screen print by Mitch Blunt all suggested a drizzly afternoon in with Miss Marple or Terence Conran. Krawczuk called the exhibit "a gallery for living"; if only more exhibitions dropped the white walls and sprawling concrete floors and offered a spot of tea.

livingroomexhibition.co.uk



Above, Max Lamb's Deadgood bookshelf, Dare Studio's Drone table, the Nautical tea set from welovekaoru, Hilton's Kimble Windsor chair for De la Espada, and a Chimney light by Benjamin Hubert for Viaduct.



Here we see Store jars from Established & Sons and a Cubic bowl from DesignedMade (above), and a Decanterlamp by Lee Broom, the Zimmer sideboard by Young & Norgate, and Embroidered Triangle wallpaper from Custhom (top).

Baked Goods

Falcon Enamelware, which we came across at the Tramshed show, has been around since the 1920s, and has gotten a recent boost from London design consultancy Kiwi and Pom, hired on to revitalize the brand's retro baking sets. The pie set and new cups have an immediate nostalgia that will play well on either side of the Atlantic, and with classic British colors like pillar box red and pigeon gray, Falcon offers the rarest confection: extreme minimalism that is as comforting as it is beautiful. falconenamelware.com



The
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who goes with
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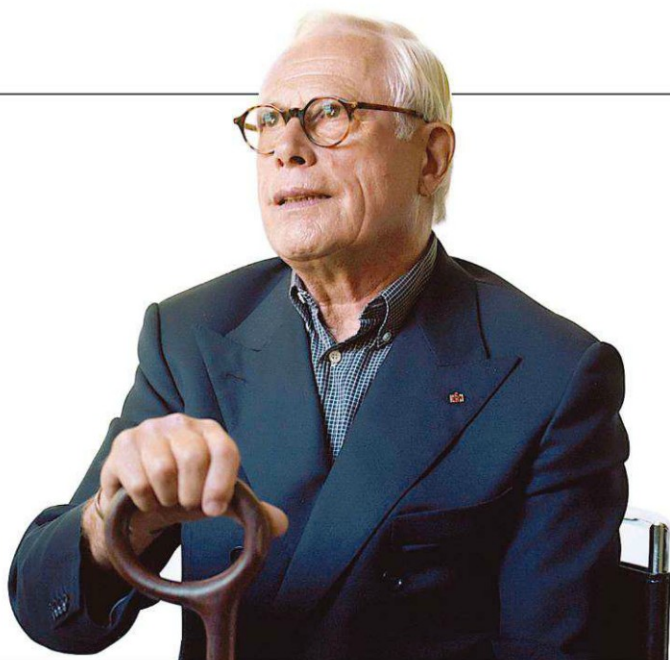


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Dieteronomy



By imbuing the most basic household wares—from wall shelves to stereo systems—with near-divine simplicity, Dieter Rams has built a masterful career by designing only what's necessary.



In his 40-years at the German company Braun, industrial-design icon Dieter Rams was responsible for creating a few electric shavers. How does a 1957 edition stack up against a contemporary model 51 years its junior?

@ To see a recent one-on-one chat with Dieter, visit dwell.com/dieter-rams

Combi DL 5 1957

Designer

Dieter Rams collaborated on this early Braun shaver with Gerd Alfred Müller, a specialist in electric razors.

Cost

The Combi DL 5 went for 68 Deutsche Mark (about \$129 today) in 1957.

Power

The Combi DL 5 had to be plugged in.

Water

Don't get that Combi wet. This old-timer is all about the dry shave.

Storage

You'd have stored the Combi DL 5 back in its box after use.

Use

Men used the Combi DL 5 as their everyday shaver.

The Cut

Hairs poke through the shaving foil head of the Combi DL 5 and are cut by the horizontal motion of a sharp cutting block.

Legacy

The Combi DL 5 was a reworking of the 300 special DL 3 razor that Artur Braun and Müller designed in 1955. It set the logo to the left, improved the grip, and paved the way for its successor, the Sixtant shaver.



Braun M-90 2008

Designer

Roland Ullman, who led Braun's shaver design from 1976 to 2010, created the M-90 MobileShave.

Cost

Braun's M-90 MobileShave goes for about \$25.

Power

The M-90 uses two AA batteries and can be operated continuously for an hour.

Water

Rinse your M-90 under the tap for a quick cleaning.

Storage

A 360-degree swiveling twist cap locks in place protecting the M-90 when it's not on the job. The cover can also act as an extension of the shaver's body allowing a better grip.

Use

The M-90 is intended for travel and touch-ups while a gent is on the go, not for his primary shaving needs.

The Cut

The essence of Braun's dry shave is unchanged, though the M-90's more advanced shaving foil allows for a better snip of hairs that grow in different directions.

Legacy

It's still too soon to know if the M-90 will become a classic, but it is the smallest of Braun's shavers and the M series includes its cousin, the M-60b.

More
Rams

Less and More The Design Ethos of Dieter Rams San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (through February 20, 2012)
This exhibit of Rams's work—which started at the Suntory Museum in Osaka, Japan, in 2008—makes its only U.S. stop in San Francisco. sfmoma.org





Storage boxes from \$19



Tree sculpture \$29



Letter sculpture \$19



Bowl, acacia wood \$119



Tealight holder \$16



Cushions from \$29



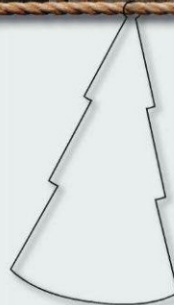
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On and On

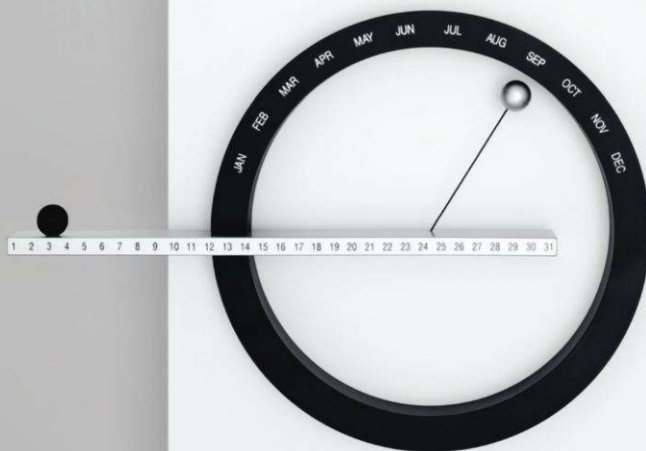
In this age of iCal, a perpetual desktop or wall calendar makes timekeeping an appealingly tactile pleasure. Just don't forget to make the manual adjustments!



Calendario Bilancia
by Enzo Mari
for Danese
3.5" H x 19" W
Move these wood strips side to side to align the date in the middle, but beware: They're a bit wobbly and won't stay completely parallel when left or right of center.
daneseemilano.com

Perpetual Calendar by Gideon Dagan for the Museum of Modern Art

9" H x 13" W x 2" D
Magnets rule! One sphere miraculously "floats" toward the month while the other slides along the horizontal rail to indicate the date.
momastore.org

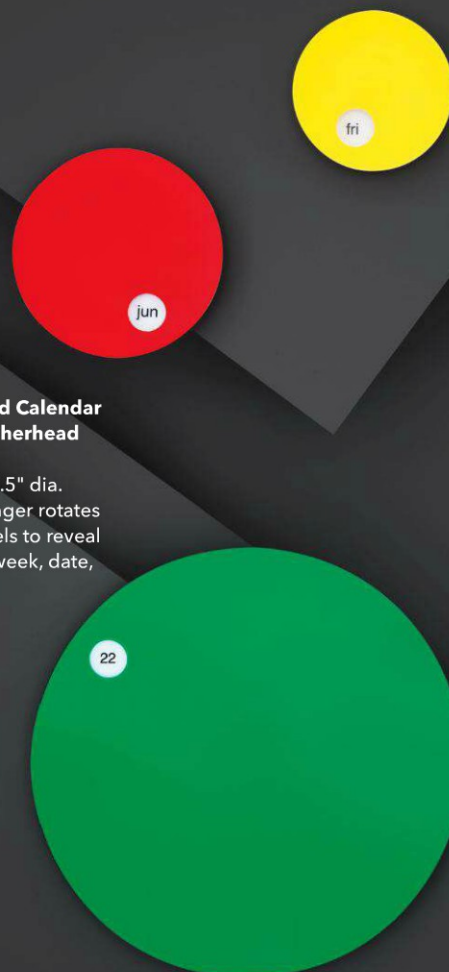


Cubes Perpetual Calendar by the Museum of Modern Art

2.25" H x 4.75" W x 1.75" D
A plastic rendition of classic wooden blocks, Cubes makes a splashy desktop addition. Its petite size keeps its bright colors from overtaking your workspace.
momastore.org

Round & Round Calendar by David Weatherhead for Seletti

12", 5.9", and 4.5" dia.
A spin of the finger rotates the plastic panels to reveal the day of the week, date, and month.
seletti.us



Photos by Nicholas Cope

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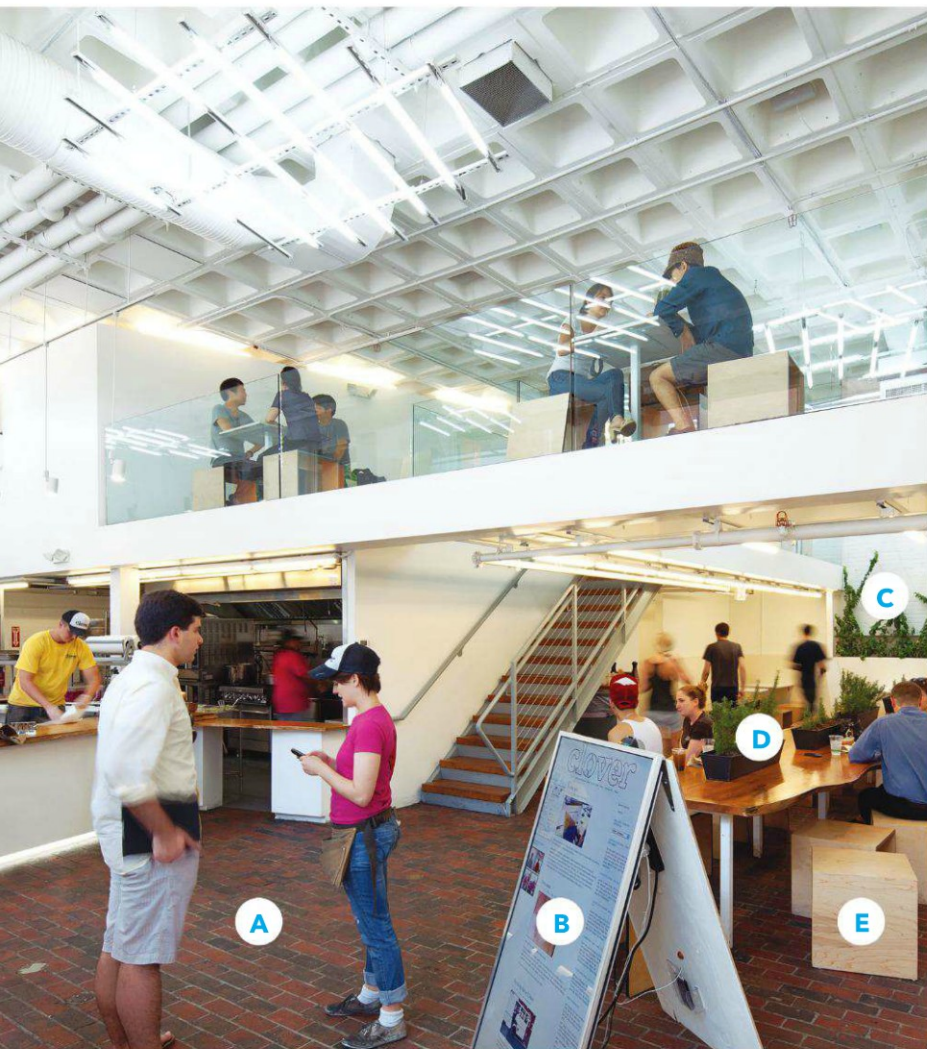
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Sert du Soleil



The revamp of Clover—a new fast-food joint in Harvard Square—complements the original interior and hidden skylight of the Josep Lluís Sert-designed building from 1966.



Clover Food Lab, a vegetarian restaurant in Cambridge, Massachusetts, began as a group of food carts. Recently, however, it opened stationary digs in the Holyoke Center, designed by Josep Lluís Sert, former dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Clover's founder, Ayr Muir, hoped to affect a dash of social change through the marriage of high design and healthy grub, so he turned to John Hong and Jinhee Park, principals of SsD Architecture. The low-budget build-out revealed a smorgasbord of Sert's stunning original details. cloverfoodlab.com

A. Brick of the Trade

In tearing out the office that previously occupied the space, the architects discovered the original brick floor, which extends to the side-walk in fine modernist-cum-Harvard Yard fashion.

C. Growing Up

Beneath the skylight, a mounting patch of ivy creeps upward along the brick back wall, trained along a matrix of steel cable and aluminum rods from Home Depot.

B. The Sandwich Network

Electronic sandwich boards display the menu and average prep times. Orders are placed with iPod touch-wielding waiters on a network designed by Muir and coded by MIT students.

D. Table Manners

The massive log that comprises the central communal table was milled in western Massachusetts. Rows of herbs offer privacy and delineate the eating space.

E. D-I-Ply

Hong and Park searched for seats under \$60 but in the end decided to make some themselves. The benches and chairs are simple, geometric plywood.

Dwell Kitchen: Pear-Parsnip Soup

For those who can't pop down to Clover on their lunch hours, Muir offers us a winter-in-New-England recipe from his kitchen that is bound to educate the "parsnip illiterate."



- 1 tsp. canola oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, roughly chopped
- 1 pound parsnips, roughly chopped
- 1 medium potato, roughly chopped
- 2 quarts vegetable stock
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig fresh thyme, finely chopped
- ½ pound pears, unpeeled, cored, roughly chopped
- ½ cup half-and-half (optional)
- Salt and sugar to taste
- Splash of white-wine vinegar

Cooking Method

1. Heat a soup pot on medium-high heat.
2. Add canola oil, garlic, and onion. Sweat for 10 minutes (be sure not to brown the vegetables).
3. Add parsnips, potato, vegetable stock, bay leaf, and thyme. Simmer about 10 minutes.
4. Add pears and half-and-half and simmer for an additional 15 minutes.
5. Remove the bay leaf and blend soup until super-smooth.
6. Season to taste with salt, sugar, and vinegar.

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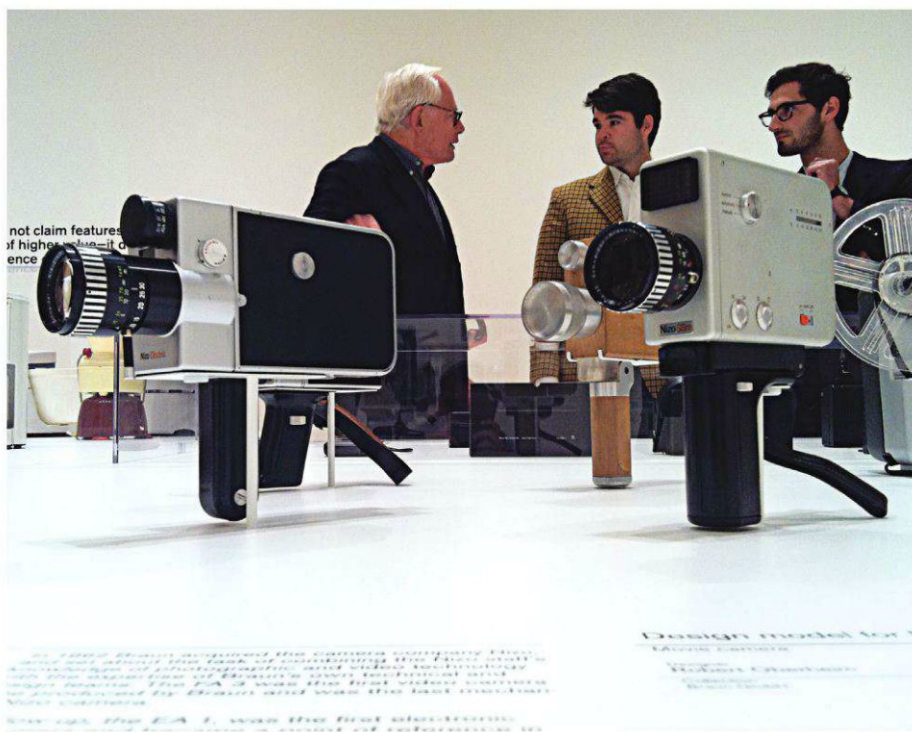
Dwell in the Digital World

VIDEO//

Dieter Rams

We spoke one-on-one with industrial design pioneer Dieter Rams at a retrospective of his work on now at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In his 40 years at the German company Braun, Rams saw through one of the most well-articulated complete design visions in history. From the stereos, household appliances and electronics he designed for Braun to his classic shelving system for Vitsoe, Rams' formidable fingerprints are all over post-war material culture. We asked this icon how his ten dictums of good design stand up now, how he captained Braun's ship for four decades, and who on the contemporary scene is getting it right.

dwell.com/dieter-rams



GIVEAWAY//

Marimekko

We're excited to join Marimekko in celebrating their 60th anniversary by paying tribute to six decades of bold, colorful prints. We'll pose a selection of timeless Marimekko patterns, and it will be up to you to vote on your favorite. One lucky voter will be selected at random and bestowed with a \$250 Marimekko gift card. To the polls, Dwellers—it is going to be a tough choice.

dwell.com/marimekko



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TAKE ME HOME//

Limited-Edition Print

Ever coveted an item, product, or piece of furniture from a Dwell story? Keep your eyes peeled for our new Take Me Home icon denoting a hand-picked item we'll be giving away per issue. Up for grabs this time is a 1961 limited-edition print by architectural illustrator Carlos Diniz, *Monarch Bay Homes, Outdoor Dining Room*. Flip over to *Return from Render* to learn more on Diniz, p. 102.

dwell.com/take-me-home



VIDEO//

Contained

In a quest to create some private space in a soaring loft, two San Franciscans turned to shipping containers as a design solution. View the final transformation, which includes a teak-and-copper bathroom, an eye-catching home office, a guest room with a custom Murphy bed, and a high-tech wall of 'switch glass' that transitions from clear to opaque with the push of a button.

dwell.com/contained





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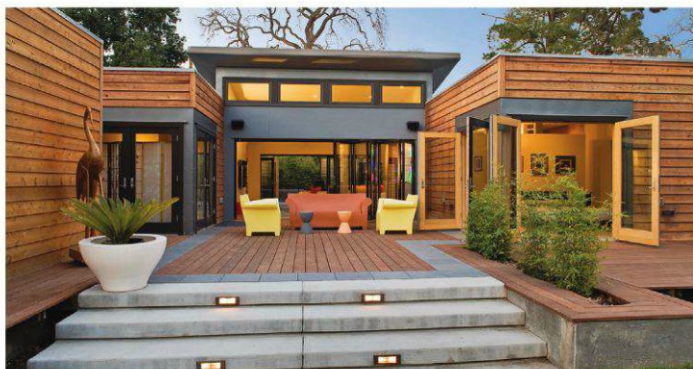
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Superior Logic



Prefab construction simplified the building process of this northern Wisconsin summer home, where all materials required ferrying across Lake Superior.

Project: Week'nder
Location: Madeline Island, Wisconsin
Architect: Charlie Lazor
flatpakhouse.com



When architect Charlie Lazor was commissioned to design an affordable, durable summer retreat on Lake Superior's historic Madeline Island, he was aware of the location's challenges. Because of its relative isolation, site-building results in a 20 percent up-charge for ferrying materials and equipment, such as a weighty concrete mixer, to the wooded site. The clients envisioned a modern cabin that evoked a rustic simplicity; Lazor, creator of the panelized FlatPak

house, developed a new modular 1,600-square-foot open-plan Week'nder sporting a screened porch, traditional porcelain fixtures, and shed door latches. Mounted on tubular steel posts to minimize its ecological footprint (and the number of ferry crossings), the home stands out amongst the trees as a testament to both prefab's tenacity against the elements and its environmental ethos.

—Mason Riddle

Photos by George Heinrich

Carnegie

Creative textiles for inspired spaces

carnegiefabrics.com



Xorel Pixie Applique, Whimsy, Grid

This Fold House



It took a mere six months—three in the factory and three on-site—for this prefab to come to fruition on the shore of Sweden's Mösö Island.

Project: Folded Roof House
Location: Mösö, Sweden
Architect: Claesson Koivisto Rune
ckr.se

Prefab ubiquity remains a pipe dream in the United States, but the process is a specialty in Scandinavia. Multi-disciplinary Swedish firm Claesson Koivisto Rune created the plans for this home for design-minded kit-house manufacturer Arkitektus. Considering the unique balance of the facade, as well as its climate-specific construction—the

asymmetrical “lifted” roof allows for both water drainage and maximum light during the dark winter months—Claesson Koivisto Rune’s approach to the project is somewhat surprising. “We design buildings from the inside out,” explains principal Eero Koivisto. “The exterior is more or less a product of the interior plans.”



Photo by Louise Billgert



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Toronto, ON Canada • www.royallighting.com



A Ready-Made Risom



When Danish furniture designer Jens Risom built his summer house in 1967, it was a marvel of prefab design. Almost a half-century later, it's just as novel.

Project: Prefab Weekend House
Location: Block Island, Rhode Island
Architect: Jens Risom
 risom.com



By the Numbers

8: Weeks it took to assemble the cabin
1967: Year the cabin was published in *Life* magazine
6-8: Copies of the residence known to Risom



In the mid-1960s, Jens Risom and his wife, Henny, decided to build a home on a rugged and remote seven-acre plot of land on Block Island, Rhode Island. They wanted something simple and attractive—a haven for summering and enjoying the scenery that reminded them of their native Denmark. “When we looked at listings in the area, they were very, very expensive,” says Risom, now 95. “Prefab was only a fraction of the cost.” He found a basic but flexible model by

Massachusetts-based builder Stanmar, Inc., and added custom touches to the design: a cedar shingle roof, a longer footprint, a nicer fireplace, and a fenestrated facade stretching from the peak of the gabled roof right down to the floor.

“What I like most is the double-height living room,” he says of the light-filled space. “It makes it easy to enjoy this beautiful piece of land.” To this day, the Risom family still makes annual summer pilgrimages to the cabin.

Prefabricated parts of the Risom home—ranging from the staircase to the windows to the kitchen cabinetry—are arranged behind the frame for the facade (left).



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IT'S 2011.

SO WHY IS THIS OUR FIRST HYBRID?

It's not a question you'd expect from the world's fourth largest automaker.

Especially when technology like hybrid cars, augmented reality and even jetpacks have been around for years. To some it might imply that we're late to the game. To others, that we're merely following a trend.

At Hyundai, we don't see it that way.

Truth is, we could have followed other car companies and licensed an existing hybrid platform years ago. But making progress is not about following. We wanted to make something better. And, like a lot of people when it comes to hybrids, there were certain perceptions we held, too.

"Hybrids are weird looking."

Most hybrids are designed to be invisible to the wind. But when it comes to style they're also pretty invisible to the eye. We think if you're doing something good by driving a hybrid, you should get to look good, too. So we found a way to work with the design qualities we built into our Sonata to create a coefficient of drag of 0.25, equal to that of the Prius.

"Hybrids are too small."

Achieving greater mileage in a hybrid typically meant giving up interior space to accommodate a bulky battery. We didn't think that was a sacrifice that people should have to make. Then we discovered

a new battery technology that would provide more than a little wiggle room. Lithium polymer properties allow us to shape the battery to the car, not the other way around. And the Sonata Hybrid, with the largest interior in its class, is the first non-plug-in hybrid to feature this technology.

"Hybrids have no guts."

Drive a hybrid and surrender power. Until now, that's been the conventional thinking. But it's hardly a fair trade. That's why every Sonata Hybrid also comes with a class-leading 206 net hp and our proprietary 6-speed automatic transmission to enhance performance. But it's not just a show of strength, considering that the Sonata Hybrid is equally gentle when transitioning from engine-powered to hybrid-drive mode, while also delivering better highway MPG than any other vehicle in its class.

So why is this our first hybrid?

Because we're not ones to jump on a bandwagon, no matter how fuel-efficient it may be. And because technology has caught up to where we can build a hybrid that not only goes beyond what's expected, but is also more like what we've wanted all along: a comfortable, roomier, more stylish car that's also better for the environment. The Sonata Hybrid.

To learn more, visit HyundaiSonata.com



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Looking Inward

For Paul and Shoko Shoji, a pair of retiring Angelenos, the goal was to shut out the neighborhood but bring in the sunny skies.

Their new prefab home, the Tatami House, designed by Swiss architect Roger Kurath of Design*21, makes a central courtyard the physical, and maybe even the spiritual, center of the home.

On a fine Marina del Rey morning, Paul shows us around. »

As told to Aaron Britt
Photos by Jessica Haye and Clark Hsiao

@ Extended slideshow at
dwell.com/magazine



A handful of modernist classics—an Eames Lounge, a Bubble Lamp by George Nelson, and a shell armchair from Modernica—kit out the living room and kitchen.



"At first, we really wanted an Eichler, but it just did not work out. But after seeing a few we knew we had to have a courtyard home."



Paul and Shoko (above, left) stand on the ipe deck with their dog, Mei. The unadorned street-facing facade of the house (above right) belies the light, open, tranquil space

During our house hunt in and around Los Angeles, we discovered the Eichler homes in Granada Hills and in Orange County, many of which have a courtyard layout. At first we really wanted an Eichler, but it just did not work out. But after seeing a few we knew that we had to have a courtyard home. We're pretty private, so it was important that we had a home that faced inward. We didn't want to open our curtains or blinds and see the neighbors.

When we were looking for a home we stumbled upon a building Roger Kurath of Design*21 had remodeled in Marina del Rey. We had never heard of him, but we took a look at his other projects, and his style really matched our taste. Shortly afterward, we found a lot nearby and hired Roger.

We gave him a list of our wants during our first meetings. The top three were a courtyard, a nice office, and an open kitchen. The design actually didn't change much from Roger's original concept. Some walls were moved and bathroom layouts changed, but it is pretty much the same. Our courtyard is one of the most important elements of the house. It provides lots of natural light and constant views of the sky from the "public" spaces—the kitchen, dining room, living room, and office—around it. The courtyard also goes with the traditional Japanese concept of bringing the outside in.

Actually, prefab was not on our minds when we started. It was Roger who presented the idea to us and we were intrigued by his take. Instead of the whole house being prefabricated and arriving on the bed of a truck, only the exterior walls were. The wall panel formwork was laid on top of the foundation slab and the prefabricated metal stud walls laid into the prepared formwork, then two-and-a-half inches of concrete was poured in. After that was set, the wall panels were lifted with a forklift (Roger designed it this way to avoid using a crane) and set into place.

We elected to go for it to save time and money—though it took the builder longer than expected to set up the walls, extending construction time a lot. But going prefab did provide other important benefits: The concrete

inside. From the kitchen and living room (top) you're well connected to the courtyard and the rest of the house. The trim and accents are white oak; the kitchen is by Leicht.

SIMPLICITY

DURABILITY

BEAUTY



"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

– Leonardo da Vinci

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"We're taking a 'slow-life' approach to decorating, putting things up at an easy pace and not stressing about having to fill a wall just because it's blank."



panels do a great job of blocking the sounds from the outside, we get great thermal benefits during the summer and the winter, and aesthetically, I've always liked the look of raw concrete.

The house is mainly designed for my wife, Shoko, who spends a lot of time here. She works from home doing all sorts of handcrafts—sewing, cross-stitching, embroidery, and crocheting, to name a few—so the office space was really important. The goal was to create a studio for her where she'll have enough desk and table space to lay out fabric, access her library of craft books, work on her computer, and store her supplies. There is even enough room for a sofa so she can take a break and relax.

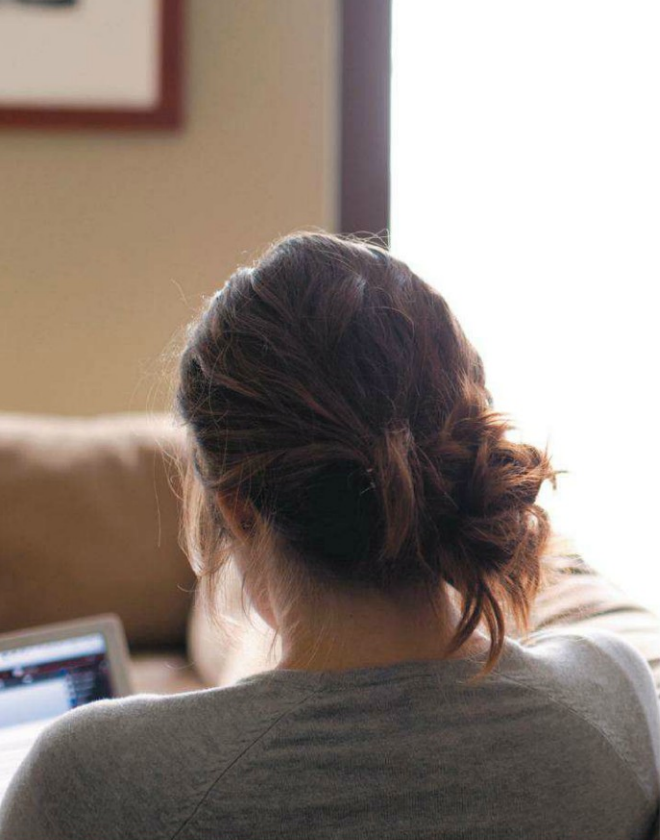
Since most of my time is spent working away at an office [in the design department of an entertainment firm], I only need a little desk at home. I'm a big movie watcher and video-game player so the master bedroom is my man-cave on the weekends. It's one of the few rooms where I can close the door and turn up the speakers and not disturb my wife in the office.

We are slowly populating the house with the stuff we've collected over the years: Shoko's extensive book collections, our old Polaroid cameras, locally handblown glass pieces that add some color around the house. We have little to nothing on the walls right now, but eventually we will find art or blow up some Polaroids. We're taking a "slow-life" approach to decorating, putting things up at an easy pace and not stressing about having to fill a wall just because it's blank.

Because we like the clean look—white drywall, white cabinets, white oak on the windows and shelving to give a needed amount of warmth—it was important we had some form of nature in the courtyard. We chose a single Japanese coral maple tree, which is in the physical center of the house. It is only about six feet tall now, but we plan to let it grow to about ten to 12 feet to fill out the space and provide a nice canopy. Part of our enjoyment of this place will be experiencing the tree's growth as we live here for many years to come. ▮

Organization is critical in keeping the Tatami House's minimalist vibe intact. Shoko keeps the kitchen drawers tidy (top, left) and enjoys cooking (top, right).

The walls are fairly bare, but the couple's collections of books, pottery, and carvings (above, left and right) are displayed on built-in shelves in the office and hallways.



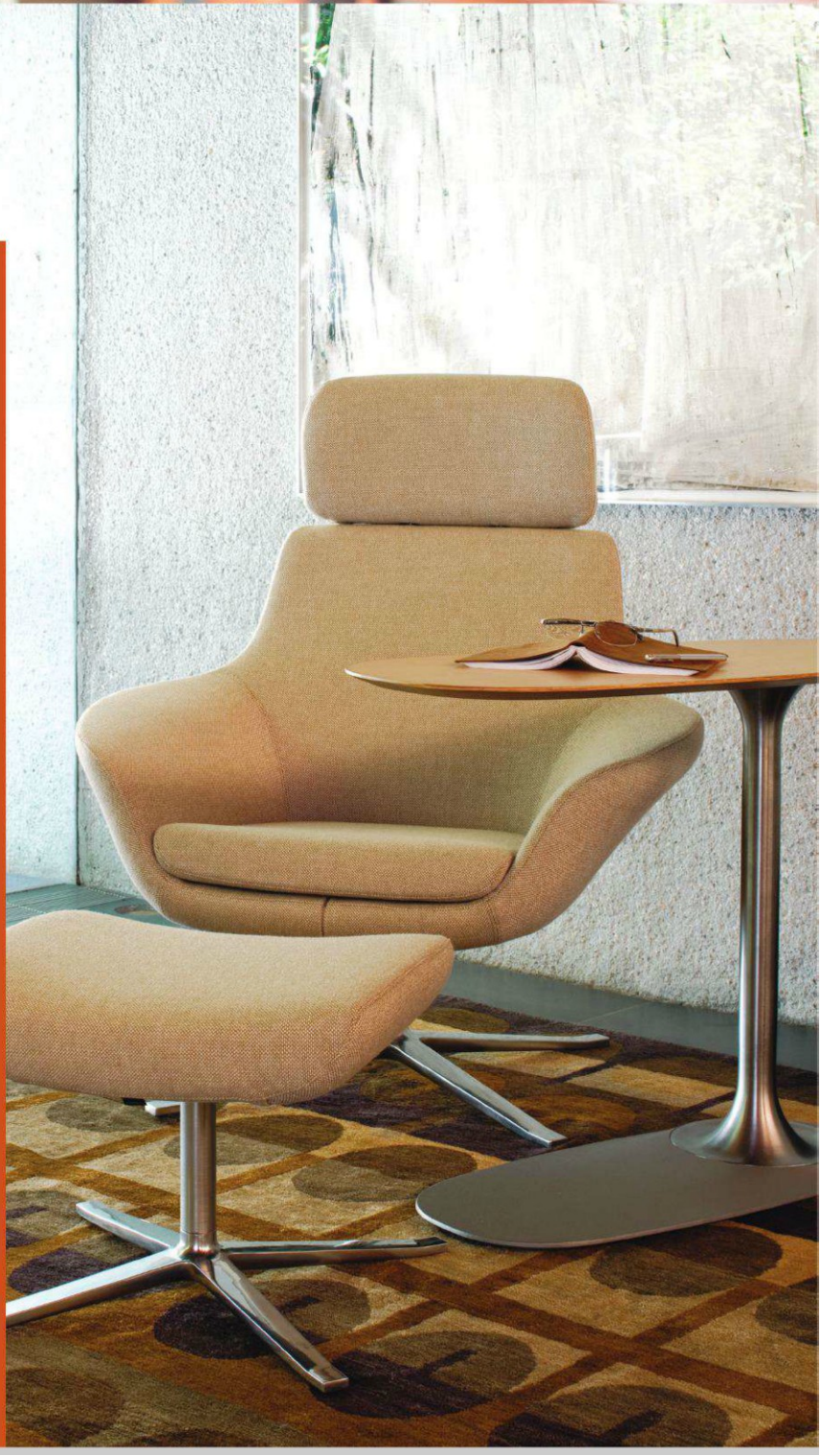
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Alex the Great

The custom white-oak desk that Kurath designed for the office ably houses both Paul's and Shoko's computers with support from a decidedly off-the-shelf source: Ikea. Paul replaced the casters on two Alex drawer units with short legs from an Ikea kitchen system. Tucked beneath the desktop, the standalone storage divides the desk into work stations, houses office supplies, and shows how high design plays well with a bit of DIY ingenuity. ikea.com



In the Doghouse

Paul and Shoko's dog, Mei, has lucked into a small prefab home of her own. Making use of a waterjet cutter at his office, and using Adobe Illustrator as his design tool, Paul fashioned a series of panels that slot together without any nails or screws. adobe.com

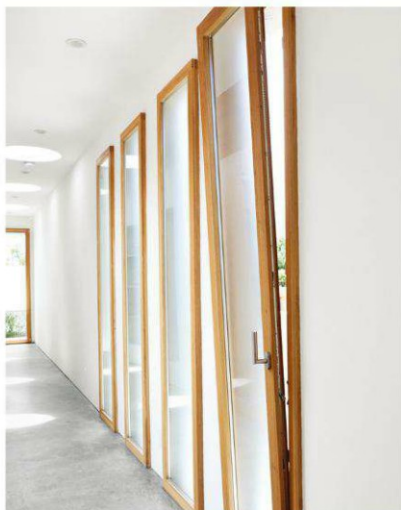
Hide Your Food Away

The aesthetic throughout the house is supremely uncluttered, and that goes double for the kitchen, which dominates the central public space. "My wife is the master organizer," says Paul. "In Japan space is so tight, I think it is in their DNA." The kitchen and wall-storage system by the German company Leicht continues the muted design palette and conceals it all from the microwave to the dishes. leicht.de



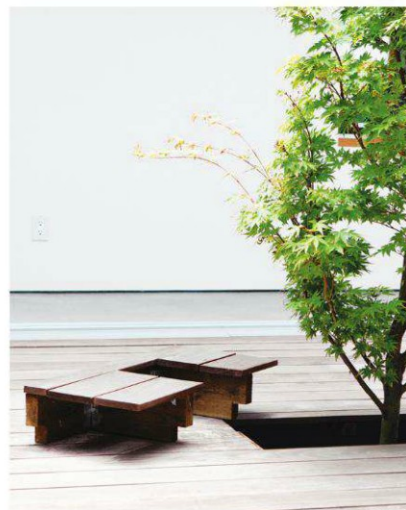
Easy Breezy

A deft cross-ventilation system keeps things cool in the summer. A series of tilt-turn low-E wood window-doors by Swiss manufacturer Gautschi not only allows passage to the side yard and a bit of extra natural light but, when tilted down, permits breezes to pass through the house. gautschi-ag.ch



Life Panel

Because the Japanese maple in the courtyard had to be planted before the ipe deck was laid, Kurath designed a small removable panel to allow access to the tree's base. The Shozis can pull up the bit of decking to tend to the tree and replace it when they're through. And because the boards line up perfectly, only the gardener need know it's there. ■■■



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Everything is Illuminated



Searching high and low for your ideal
table lamp? Brighter days are ahead.

By Diana Budds
Photos by Peter Belanger



Capable of casting a warm glow or shining as bright as high noon, a lamp can define a space and give it character. Looking to set the mood for a night in? Need a direct

beam for your nighttime reading? We plugged in, turned on, and tested out an array of lamps, from a futuristic LED to a retro walnut model, to see how they shine. ▶

PROS & CONS



Table Light
by Iacoli & McAllister
8" W x 12" H
\$198
shop.iacolimcallister.com

Pros: It's short and squat, but this lamp's stubby looks—matte black shade, oiled oak legs, and aqua cord—grew on us.

Changing bulbs is a breeze—just reach in from the top. The design also accommodates LEDs, which are often awkwardly sized. Just keep 'em at 75 watts or under.

Cons: This was our favorite lamp of the group. Too bad it takes four weeks to get. Each one is made by hand in Iacoli & McAllister's two-person Seattle studio.



Rook Lamp
by Blu Dot
14.5" W x 19.5" H
\$199
bludot.com

Pros: The linen shade and the chunky walnut base channel a mid-century vibe while bringing it up to date. You can also tilt the base to balance on one leg. Two lamps in one!

The cord reaches a length of 80 inches—handy if your outlets are few or far between.

Cons: When poised on a single leg, the Rook is a bit unstable.

Rook takes up a lot of space, both in height and width, and would domineer small bedside tables or desks. Reserve for roomier perches.



Lean Table Lamp
by Tom Dixon
5" W x 17" H
\$380-\$445
lumens.com

Pros: Minimal and restrained, this sand-cast iron design comes in pitch-black or glossy, fire-engine red.

A small divot at the base accommodates the cord, ensuring that the lamp sits flat and doesn't wobble.

Cons: The Lean only accommodates small bulbs up to 40 watts, which left us craving more light. Good for bedside reading or burning the mid-night oil, but not for brightening bigger spaces.



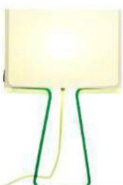
Panthella Lamp
by Verner Panton
for Louis Poulsen
15.7" W x 21.5" H
\$628
ylighting.com

Pros: Danish designer Verner Panton conceived Panthella in 1971 and it's still chic as ever: a little mod and a little Saarinen.

A soft, luminous glow emanates from the hemispherical shade, which appears to hover over a slim tapered stem.

Cons: \$628 feels like a lot to spend on a lamp that's entirely plastic (even if it is made of extra-strong ABS).

Considering the price, we'd like to see more features, like a dimmer or three-way switch.



Tube Top Colors
by Peter Stathis
for Pablo Designs
9" W x 14" H
\$110
pablodesigns.com

Pros: It's affordable, dimmable, and available in six jewel-toned hues: yellow, red, hot pink, navy blue, sky blue, and bright green.

Cons: The top-heavy design is unstable and tips over easily.

Though the acrylic base is virtually shatterproof, the white mesh shade is a magnet for smudges and dings.



F/K/A Lamp
by Jonah Takagi
for Mattermade
14" W x 15.4" H
\$1,800
mattermatters.com

Pros: An attractive energy-efficient lamp on the market! An LED bulb illuminates the F/K/A.

The design is pleasantly eccentric: The pull is reminiscent of a vintage library light, and a colorful cord snakes through one of the legs.

Cons: The brass plating is a beacon for fingerprints and scratches. Opt for the powder-coated version instead.

The opaque steel shade channels light directly downward—fine for a desk or as an accent, but don't expect beams to reach every dark corner.



Bright 1
by Ville Kokkonen
for Artek Studio
8.7" L x 6.7" W x 17.8" H
\$735
artek.fi

Pros: If you desire maximum luminosity from a minimalist design, this one's for you.

Who says design can't do a body good? Bright 1 is certified for bright-light therapy—a treatment for insomnia, depression, and seasonal affective disorder—and will look much better in your living room than most therapeutic lamps on the market.

Cons: This. Lamp. Will. Get. Bright. It's blinding at its highest setting. Use the dimmer switch to dial it down a notch.



Snoopy Lamp
by Achille Castiglioni
for Flos
16" W x 14.5" H
\$924
ylighting.com

Pros: Is it a Goomba from Super Mario Bros.? A strange breed of mushroom? Castiglioni's striking 1967 marble, glass, and metal design is a surefire conversation starter.

It's versatile: Focused light emanates below, while the holes in its top disperse a gentle glow.

Cons: The Snoopy's finicky touch-sensitive three-way dimmer is difficult to master. When we tried to dim the light, a gentle tap often sent us into the dark. Our frustrations were enough to warrant a Clapper. ■■■

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A Sweetheart Deal

Decades after they met as teenagers on a Montauk beach, Manhattanites Victoria and Greg Pryor returned to Long Island to build a sustainable second home together.



Victoria and Greg Pryor met on the beach in Montauk, New York, when they were both just 13 years old. The Hamptons hamlet, the setting of so many idyllic childhood summers, continued to exert a strong pull on the couple into adulthood. So when they decided to build a retreat for escaping Manhattan's bustle with their boys, Dylan and Lucas, it didn't make sense to do it anywhere else.

Nor did it make sense to work with anyone other than Victoria's younger brother, Paul Masi of Bates Masi + Architects. For his sister and brother-in-law, Masi designed a house whose defining feature is a double-height living-dining-kitchen space that opens to the outdoors when large glass pocket doors slide out of sight. "We wanted to bring the outdoors in and make it a seamless transition," Victoria

says. After two years of construction, the house was completed in 2008.

Green features such as a prefabricated foundation and a geothermal heating and cooling system are buried below ground. Nontoxic finishes and passive systems inside the home add to its sustainable cred and helped keep the project on budget. The result is an elegant beach house that is perfectly in tune with its environment. »

By William Lamb
Photos by Ty Cole

@ See more details of the house in our slideshow at dwell.com/magazine

The Pryors relax at their Montauk retreat among modular furniture from Richard Schultz's Swell Seating collection and chaise longues from his 1966 Collection for Knoll.

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Prototype and concept vehicles shown with options. Production model may vary. ©2011 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

toyota.com/priusfamily





Passive Heating and Cooling

The living-dining-kitchen space opens completely on two sides, allowing for natural ventilation in spring and fall. An overhang blocks direct sunlight in summer, but in winter, when the sun sits low in the sky, light and warmth flood the space.

Two layers of aluminum woven-coil drapes hang outside the large, south-facing windows above the living area. The drapes keep the house from overheating in August and can be pulled aside to help the sun warm the space during chillier seasons. Similar in texture and appearance to fireplace netting, the drapes are made of recycled scrap metal by an Oregon company, Cascade Coil Drapery, that also supplies the hearth market.

Geothermal Heating and Cooling

The open-loop geothermal system uses the constant 55-degree temperature of the site's groundwater to heat and cool the house. The requisite equipment fits in a basement utility room, so there was no need for an exterior condenser. "Out here, the salt air just corrodes them," Masi says. "So to be able to do geothermal and get rid of [the condenser] was huge." ▶

YOUR TURN:

GEOTHERMAL HEATING AND COOLING

There are several types of geothermal systems, though all use the Earth's constant temperature—warmer than the open air in winter and cooler in summer—to heat and cool buildings. Which kind to use, and whether it makes sense to install one, depends on several factors.

Open versus closed loop.

In an open-loop system like the Pryors', pipes draw well water into the house, where a pump extracts excess heat to—the water before it is returned to the ground. In a closed-loop system, the pipes are buried underground and filled with

a solution that acts as a heat exchanger. If a well can supply enough clean water to the heat pump, an open-loop system is often more economical as it requires less excavation.

Types of closed loops.

A pond-loop system submerges pipes in a body of water. If one isn't handy, a horizontal-loop system buries them six feet underground. For small lots, vertical-loop systems may be best, though burying pipes up to 400 feet down can be cost-prohibitive.

Affordability. *Geothermal systems are more expensive to install but over the long run are more economical to operate and maintain than gas furnaces and air-conditioning systems. Annual energy savings can reach up to 60 percent, and tax incentives often help offset the upfront cost.*



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Prefab Design and Construction

Insulated concrete panels by Superior Walls of the Hudson Valley were delivered to the site, craned into place, and bolted together to form the structure's foundation. The panels, made of a dense, water-resistant concrete mix, did not require waterproofing and eliminated the need for coatings that can leach into the soil.

An early plan to prefabricate the exterior walls was scrapped when it proved more expensive than building on site. However, factory-made panels from Cement Board Fabricators were used for the rain screen. The panels help the house stay cool by absorbing heat and transferring it up through ventilation gaps between the panels and siding.

Nontoxic Finishes

Throughout the house, Masi specified finishes low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs), toxic chemicals such as benzene and formaldehyde. Interior walls were painted with Benjamin Moore Aura matte paint. The American walnut floors were sealed with Osmo Polyx-Oil, a finish made with sunflower, soybean, and thistle oils. ■■■

YOUR TURN: NONTOXIC FINISHES

Limit your exposure to off-gassing, the emission of VOCs into the air, by using nontoxic paints and finishes from these manufacturers.

AFM Safecoat
afmsafecoat.com

Benjamin Moore
benjaminmoore.com

BioShield
bioshieldpaint.com

Bona
bona.com

Citron Paint
citronpaint.com

Mythic
mythicpaint.com

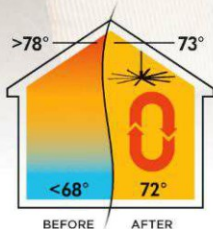
Osmo
osmona.com

Sydney Harbour Paint Company
sydneyharbourpaints.com

Unearthed Paints
unearthedpaints.com

Yolo Colorhouse
yolocolorhouse.com

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With its fresh take on minimalism, French design duo Normal Studio is ushering in a new machine age.

By Laetitia Wolff
Photos by Jens Passoth

Designers Jean-François Dingjian (left) and Eloi Chafaï (right), cofounders of Normal Studio, inside their firm's new studio in Montreuil, a suburb east of Paris, France.

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Jean-François Dingjian and Eloi Chafaï, cofounders of the burgeoning design firm Normal Studio, met as master and apprentice. In 2000, Dingjian taught a workshop at ENSCI-Les Ateliers, one of the leading design schools in France. Chafaï was his student. Until that point, Chafaï had been unapologetically “design-uneducated,” as he puts it. His main activity from ages 14 to 26 was spray-painting graffiti throughout the Parisian suburbs. “The city was my playground, scale 1:1,” he says. “I was drawing letters, not representing forms. It gave me a sense of how to project proportion onto an object.”

Recognizing his raw talent, Dingjian took Chafaï on as his intern, then as his design collaborator, and then, in 2006, as cofounder of Normal Studio. In the past six years, the pair has developed a diverse portfolio that encompasses everything from lighting to tableware, graphics to exhibition

design, technological innovations to site-specific installations. Recently relocated to a 2,000-square-foot former warehouse in Montreuil, one of the more ethnically diverse suburbs east of Paris, the studio has added two assistants and one intern. They like to keep things small and hands-on.

The 13-year age difference between the founders does not imply a hierarchy; they seamlessly finish each other’s sentences. “In design, the term that really matters is industrial,” they chime almost in unison. It’s a neat summary of Normal Studio’s philosophy. Like nostalgic futurists, Dingjian and Chafaï believe in the power of the machine. They despise what they call “Dutcheries”: anything that remotely reminds them of the quaint, quirky, and traditionalist design movements of Northern Europe. Eliminating gestural, decorative, and expressive forms, Normal Studio prides itself on making



objects that are reproducible in small- or large-scale series and always systemic in terms of both process and thinking. Their work is grounded in the fabrication process, inspired by the technical limitations, machinery, and deep, untapped knowledge of traditional French industries.

“Thanks to the technique of metal sheet folding, we’ve been able to create rich and complex forms, shifting from 2-D to 3-D but nonetheless never appearing angular,” says Chafaï. Take *Séléné*, an elegant set of lights created for Artuce by folding an aluminum sheet at a single point. The light source is masked behind white polycarbonate, which emits a mysterious halo. The shieldlike forms are soft, vegetal, and feminine, yet extremely precise.

They’ve taken a similar approach as in-house art directors for Tolix, the Burgundy-based company best known for the A chair, a ubiquitous garden

Incarnations of the iconic A chair by Tolix occupy a corner of the studio (above). An early prototype for the 2007 Diamond Boxes collection (top right), a range of

domestic lights utilizing photographic reflectors, never made it to market, but the limited-edition *Trépied* (bottom right) was produced by ToolsGalerie.

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chair conceived in the 1930s by Xavier Pauchard. In the summer of 2004, Tolix was on the verge of bankruptcy when Chantal Andriot, its former financial director, decided to buy and restructure the company. Normal Studio, brought in informally by Andriot to suggest a new product for the brand, began its collaboration by exploring Tolix's legendary patrimony: the industrial know-how of galvanized sheet metal.

Normal expanded Tolix's talent pool, bringing in guest designers such as Sebastian Bergne, who developed office coat racks, and the Lyon-based studio Superscript2, which updated the company's visual identity. In the meantime, Normal tried to maintain the company's original smart and sustainable design ethos whenever possible, using existing machinery to produce new products. "The A chair

is the first stackable chair in the world!" says Chafaï excitedly. "We tried to apply this systemic thinking to our new designs by, for instance, producing four similar feet that can be adapted to a variety of products—chairs, benches, low tables." Additionally, perforating the A chair helped cut its weight in half and lower costs; producing it in new bright colors added a distinctive modern twist and transformed the historical artifact into a contemporary icon.

Technological evolution is another driver for Normal's design. Dingjian believes that because technology is incrementally shrinking, digitizing, and dematerializing (think LEDs and GPS sensors), design has to offer a new materiality—it cannot just contain technology, but should also become an autonomous and smart interface. Last year, for an invitational group

show organized by the Belgian venue Grand-Hornu, Normal Studio devised *Augmented Wall*, a seven-ton adobe wall cast using soil from within a six-mile radius. The piece, inspired by traditional French agrarian architecture, is a sort of über-natural radiator with a futuristic bent: It contains photovoltaic cells silkscreened onto a glass cage that generates a greenhouse effect and naturally retains the adobe's heat. "Evolution operates either by obliteration or by integration," remarks Dingjian. "Augmented Wall is the proof that archaic building techniques can cohabit with forward technologies." The studio explored similar ancestral terra-cotta techniques at another scale with their *Brique à Vin* wine cooler. Designed in 2010 for the French manufacturer ENO, it utilizes the natural insulating qualities of porous clay to keep liquid chilled.

Most recently the pair was hired by the global giant Schneider Electric to create an affordable light switch. The resulting design is a simple but sensual oval-shaped fixture. With millions launching this fall at \$6 apiece, this humble object could be the team's most impactful design yet. Asked what attracted the company to Normal Studio, Frédéric Beuvry, a senior vice-president at Schneider Electric, replies: "Normal Studio knows how to express super-normality in an abnormal way."

Dingjian and Chafaï are happy to let their designs stay in the background. "To make a successful industrial design, one has to be humble," says Dingjian. Their creations are never about ego. "Normal Studio seeks neither the extraordinary nor the exceptional," writes design critic Jeanne Quéheillard in the catalog that accompanied *Elementary Design*, their first two-man show, held at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in the summer of 2010. "The normal aims to do away with remarkableness while reaffirming the anthropological and cultural value of design." To the critic and consumer alike, Normal's designs celebrate the ubiquity of everyday objects and their power to change our lives—design as utility, not as artistic expression. ■

Created for ENO (Editor of New Objects) in 2008 and available in three sizes, the *Ajours* table features a latticed lacquered-wood seat affixed to a steel base (above).



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Normal Studio

1992

Jean-François Dingjian graduates from École Supérieure d'Art et Design Saint-Étienne.



2006

Eloi Chafaï graduates from ENSCI-Les Ateliers.

2006

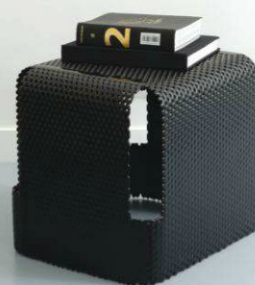
Dingjian and Chafaï found Normal Studio.



2007

Greyscale exhibition at the ToolsGalerie in Paris premieres the limited-edition *Block/2007*, a form made of gum-coated punched sheet metal.

Block/2007



2008

Multiplug lamp, designed for Ligne Roset.



2008

Normal Studio wins the Label VIA for the Tolix collection; the prize for best collaboration between designer and enterprise; and is included in Fond National d'Art Contemporain, the French permanent collections of art and design.

2008

Tolix collection



2010

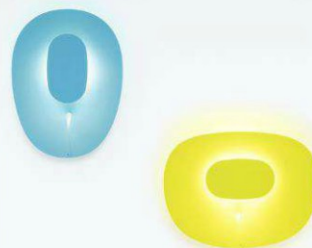
Elementary Design



Elementary Design, a two-man show of Normal Studio's work, opens at Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

2011

Launch of the new Séléné light collection for Artuce.



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Sasithorn Saehoo, Hye-Jin Kim, Jin Park



AMERICAN PREFAB

A SHOPPER'S GUIDE

The American consumer has struggled with the question of how to best go prefab since at least 1906, when the Michigan company Aladdin offered the first proper kit house. Sears, Roebuck & Co. followed suit in 1908, offering sets of mail-order plans and numbered pieces, and selling nearly 100,000 by 1940. In 1921, Hollywood (a decent indicator of when an idea starts to stick) contended with prefab in the short Buster Keaton film *One Week*. In it, the elastic slapstick master wrestles with a recalcitrant build-by-the-numbers kit of parts in what might be the first (and only) prefab comedy.

Some 90 years on, odds are good you'll fare better than Keaton did, but the first-time prefabber still has a few things to sort out. For example, do you want the new manse trucked to your lot in two big modules and screwed together over a long weekend? Maybe you and your architect want to design the place using a kit of parts. Or perhaps it's the predictability and efficiency of a one-off custom job made in a factory that gets your motor running.

@ To learn more, visit
dwell.com/prefab

So you're building a house. You've done a little research, and, after a hazy half-calculation of your carbon footprint and liquid assets, you think that prefab is the way to go. Here's the bad news: You haven't decided much.

As the stigma that "prefab" is code for "trailer park" continues to fade, an ever-expanding array of options is hitting the market. But how do you know which is the quickest, greenest, cheapest path to your future front door?

Is a Rocio Romero LV home right for you if you live on the Upper Peninsula? (It's got a snow load of 20 pounds per square foot.) Should you build an E-Space System if you can't tell a socket wrench from a cat's paw? (It bolts together easily and can take as little as two days to erect.) Where does an architect come in if your house is arriving in pieces that need only to be welded together? (What you really need is a welder.)

We at Dwell have been singing from the prefab hymnal for a good decade now, and this handy guide is designed to help make your prefab dreams a reality. Read on for a carefully edited mix of builders, architects, and kit makers and to discover both the methodology and the firm that are right for you.

By Aaron Britt, Diana Budds, Jaime Gross,
Jordan Kushins, and Miyoko Ohtake

This design for a zero-energy house in Brooklyn, the Koby Cottage (top right), and scores of houses for the US Border Patrol (bottom right) all rely on factory-built modules to save time, money, and resources in construction.



GARRISON ARCHITECTS

Location: Brooklyn, New York

Cost per square foot: Construction on residential projects averages \$250.

Methodology: Custom design using prefab construction and modular housing

Timeline: About four months

garrisonarchitects.com

"Prefab is bubbling up in all kinds of buildings," says New York-based architect James Garrison, principal of Garrison Architects. "People who build all the time have become so frustrated [with conventional construction] that we want an alternative."

Though the 20-year-old practice wasn't founded as a prefab-only shop, Garrison is increasingly moving in that direction. At present, the architect reckons that about a quarter of his work is prefab, though his firm treats it as a "technique rather than a product."

Garrison Architects has embraced prefabrication on a variety of scales: Large civic projects such as a childcare center at Lehman College in the Bronx were built quickly using prefabricated pieces, and a handful of exciting residential projects the firm has underway promise high degrees of sustainability and offer consumers a chance to avoid

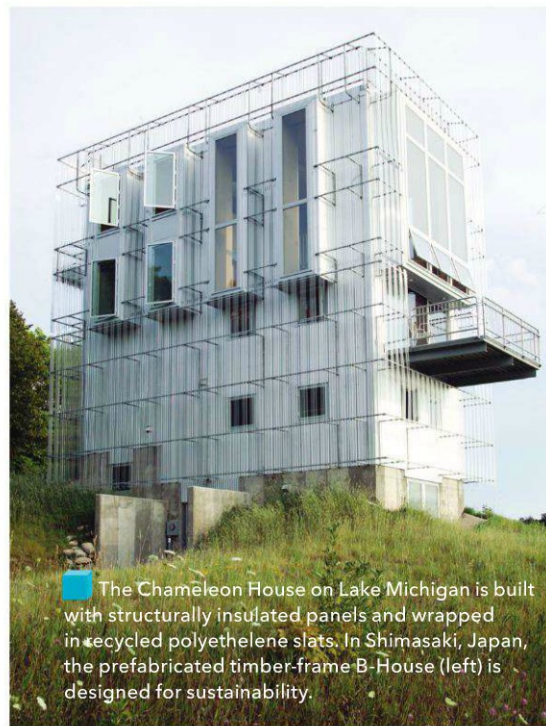
the curveballs that onsite construction can throw.

One such spot is Koby Cottage, a guest house for troubled teens and their families on the Albion, Michigan, campus of Starr Commonwealth. The firm describes this steel-framed structure as "a welded, factory-produced frame chassis akin to the trellis frame on a Formula One racing car," and it was erected in just a day. In Red Hook, Brooklyn, Garrison is in the midst of a zero-energy building made from a stack of four prefabricated modules.

Perhaps the most exciting prefab work the company has on the boards, however, is a legion of green modular homes for the United States Border Patrol. "We've got two housing prototypes for the federal government for our north and south borders that are prefabricated, high-performance residences built to LEED platinum certi-

fication requirements," Garrison says. The houses' solar and climatic orientations differ based on whether they're strung along the Canadian or the Mexican border, and agents will rent them for the length of their tenure. Any unique design challenges in meeting the needs of these very particular clients? "Big garages," Garrison says. "Those guys drive huge trucks."

Though scores of homes for the Border Patrol may well be Garrison's most ambitious residential project, at bottom he sees a host of efficiencies, such as predictability, speed, sustainability, and affordability, as prefab's *raison d'être*. "For us prefabrication is a tool, one which is extremely important and needs to be developed." Many conventional architects are starting to agree. —A.B.



The Chameleon House on Lake Michigan is built with structurally insulated panels and wrapped in recycled polyethylene slats. In Shimasaki, Japan, the prefabricated timber-frame B-House (left) is designed for sustainability.

ANDERSON ANDERSON ARCHITECTURE

Locations: San Francisco, California, and Honolulu, Hawaii **Cost per square foot:** Widely variable—a factory-built house in Menlo Park, California, came in at \$150 plus another \$100 for delivery and site work. **Methodology:** Licensed as both architects and general contractors, the firm picks the system that best suits the circumstance. Options include factory-built wood or steel modules, concrete-based prefabricated systems, and heavy timber-frame and log buildings. **Timeline:** Widely variable—for the Menlo Park house, two months for factory construction and three months on site.

andersonanderson.com

Brothers Mark and Peter Anderson of the firm Anderson Anderson credit the plethora of building toys their parents supplied when they were kids—Legos, Erector Sets, Lincoln Logs—with shaping them “into architects who think in terms of assembly modules.” We asked Peter about the past, present, and future of prefab.

Early in your career you specialized in custom, site-built work. What drew you to prefab?

During the big construction boom in Japan in the late 1980s and early 1990s, we started exporting raw materials from Seattle, where we were based. Then eventually we started sending whole panelized buildings. At that time, “prefab” was a dirty word in the United States; people thought it meant trailer homes. Working in Japan encouraged us to reintroduce some of these efficiencies back into the

building systems here. Before long, we started using prefab techniques for some of our local projects.

What’s good about prefab?

There is a lot of waste in the process of doing a completely site-built home: waste in time, money, and materials, with obvious environmental impacts. Prefabrication can save 20 to 50 percent of the site construction time.

Misperceptions about prefabricated housing still abound. Which one irks you most?

That it’s always cheaper. Sometimes it works out that way, but only if it’s designed into the process. That said, we’re finding that large factory-built modules are the most cost-effective approach for simple buildings.

How are you guys different from other prefab-oriented designers?

We are builders as well as architects, so we have hands-on experience and can efficiently design for many prefab forms, from factory-built modules to steel- or concrete-based systems. We’ve also done a lot of experimental work with manufacturers (and crackpot inventors) to develop new systems, like steel building components that are fabricated on the same production line as shipping containers.

Any new technologies you’re particularly thrilled by?

We’re excited about digital fabrication and the potential for architects and builders to extend their reach deeper into the fabrication process, to the heart of structural building systems and assembly. A much closer integration of the design and production process is most definitely the future of our industry. —J.G.



WEEHOUSES BY ALCHEMY ARCHITECTS

Location: St. Paul, Minnesota

Cost per square foot: \$115 to \$180 buys the module complete with appliances, fixtures, cabinetry, finishes, and covers design fees.

Methodology: Factory-built module trucked to the site includes everything except utility hookups, foundation, and furniture.

Timeline: Six to nine months

weehouses.com



PIECEHOMES

Location: Los Angeles, California and Bainbridge Island, Washington

Cost per square foot: \$215 for the module (structure, exteriors, interiors, appliances, and fixtures), site prep, foundation work, utilities, delivery, installation and architectural, engineering, and permit fees.

Methodology: Factory-built modules trucked to the site. You can buy the predesigned, Standard, Premium, extraPieces and multifamily plans or you can commission a custom design.

Timeline: Three to six months for factory construction; a day to one month for onsite construction.

piecehomes.com

How long do you reckon it takes to go from signing a contract to standing inside your finished home? St. Paul, Minnesota-based Alchemy Architects has managed it in just months with its weeHouse, thanks to the fact that it delivers a unit that's 95 percent complete.

Alchemy offers a line of four factory-built homes, which range in size from a one-module studio-size home to a four-bedroom, 2,350-square-foot residence made up of four modules. WeeHouses are built to order using a combination of custom and ready-to-go options. The package includes all plumbing, electrical, cabinetry, and tile work, though you can handpick everything from finishes to faucets to green features to include in the final budget. "It's like a bag of groceries: [The cost] depends on what's inside," says Scott Ervin, managing partner and designer at Alchemy. He adds that the degree of design flexibility is what most pleases his customers. And just in case you need one last push, Alchemy has clients in Oregon, Minnesota, New York, and Ontario that rent out their homes, so you can try one on for size. —D.B.

"‘Prefab’ means many things to so many people," says Mary Jo Davis. She and her husband, Jonathan, opt for a slight semantic shift, referring to the homes they design with their Los Angeles company pieceHomes as "factory-built modular." The term makes sense considering their approach: Each element for every home, including kitchen, bathrooms, and finishes, is completed and constructed in a factory. "The more work we can do in the factory, the more the process can be controlled, the better the pricing will be, with a quicker timeline and higher quality and efficiency," Jonathan says. —J.K.



MINARC

Location: Santa Monica, California

Cost per square foot: \$255, including foundation, for a prototype house in Venice, California.

Methodology: Kit-of-parts houses built from a library of preselected materials.

Timeline: Four months to assemble a one-story kit-of-parts house onsite

minarc.com

"Controlled manufacturing and assembly of homes is long overdue. Almost everything around you is made that way, yet we are still building homes by cutting and fabricating on site. It doesn't make sense." —Tryggvi Thorsteinsson

"We come from Iceland, an island where resources are scarce and everything is valued, used, reused, and re-reused," says Erla Dögg Ingjaldsdóttir of Minarc. "We want our work to represent how we choose to live in this world: Maximize materials, minimize waste." To that end, she and partner Tryggvi Thorsteinsson developed mnm-MOD, a new way to manufacture houses from a preselected library of standard off-the-shelf materials and patented connections. All components arrive onsite precut and predrilled, and then are assembled by an mnm-MOD-approved builder. This new generation of energy-efficient kit houses has metal-framed walls with Cradle to Cradle-certified foam insulation (no plywood or wood studs); low window openings that draw cool air into the houses at night; and green materials such as recycled tire laminate on kitchen cabinets and concrete panel exterior siding made of 30 percent recycled fibers. —J.G.



E-SPACE SYSTEMS

Location: Inglewood, California

Cost per square foot: \$200 (estimated; to date only one home has been built).

Methodology: Engineered structural components

Timeline: Framing for a home can be erected in two days.

e-spacesystems.net

If there's one thing that Barry Rosengrant wants to make clear, it's that E-Space Systems aren't prefab. They're "engineered structural components." Rosengrant, a 30-year veteran of the building industry, wondered why homes were stuck in the Dark Ages of construction technology. In his search for a better way to build, he turned his attention to skyscrapers and the incredibly strong earthquake- and windproof moment frames that hold them up.

Rosengrant wanted a truly sustainable structural system—one that would endure the test of time, take a minimum of resources to construct, and promote energy efficiency in the finished product. He repurposed a commercial building technique for residential use: bolted-together steel parts that can be configured into custom layouts and easily reconfigured should an owner opt to renovate down the line.

What does this mean for the consumer? For starters, there is virtually no construction waste. And erecting a structure with this made-to-spec set of components takes days, not months. Since the load is carried by the space frame, the roof can go on almost immediately, protecting both the interior of the house from damage and letting your hired workers go home in time for dinner. —D.B.



PROTO HOMES

Location: Los Angeles, California

Cost per square foot: \$210 for everything except permits, land, and site preparation.

Methodology: Hybrid-panelized and Proto Core system made in Los Angeles, then transported to and assembled at the site.

Timeline: Three to four months

protohomes.com

Frank Vafaee, CEO of Los Angeles-based prefab company Proto Homes, likes to compare his houses to cars. He refers to the homes as upgradable products; he works with real estate brokerage Partners Trust, whose agents sell homes just like auto dealership salespeople sell cars; and he even calls the company's patent-pending Proto Core, which contains the home's infrastructure, the "chassis" of the house. "When you buy a car, you expect it to be innovative and have the latest updates; that's what we're trying to do with homes," he says.

Vafaee founded Proto Homes with designer Manish Desai and builder Andre Farhang in 2008 to offer innovative, affordable, intelligently designed and built houses. The company offers five models: Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, and Extra Large, though at the moment they're only building in Southern California. In the company's 4,000-square-foot factory in L.A., workers prefabricate two- and three-story wall panels and the Proto Core, which is the heart of each house and the heart of the business model.

"What kills construction time is building the infrastructure, not the structure itself," Vafaee says. By situating the furnace, condensers, HVAC, water heater, and other such systems within the eight-foot-wide, eight-foot-long, 22-foot-tall Proto Core, the labor-intensive infrastructure is constructed within the controlled environment of the factory, and a house can be built onsite around it in as little as three months.

To outfit the interiors, Proto Homes offers a catalog of products to choose from or credits homeowners the built-in cost of each toilet, light fixture, or countertop purchased elsewhere. Homeowners can add or subtract up to three bedrooms by repositioning floor-to-ceiling cabinet partitions.

So far, Proto Homes, which is now part of the Dwell Homes Collection, has built just one house in Baldwin Hills in Los Angeles. With a price tag of just \$210 per square foot (including all costs "from the foundation to the iPad that controls the house," save land, permit fees, and site prep), it's likely we'll see more soon. —M.O.▶



Dwell

SANDER ARCHITECTS

Location: Venice, California

Cost per square foot: Approximately \$25 for the Hybrid House's prefabricated steel shell (including frames, supports, skin, roof, and sometimes interior raised floors); hard construction plus permits and consultant and architect fees run between \$200 and \$240.

Methodology: Custom architecture using light-gauge metal building structures

Timeline: Six to nine months for design and permits; nine months to a year more for construction.

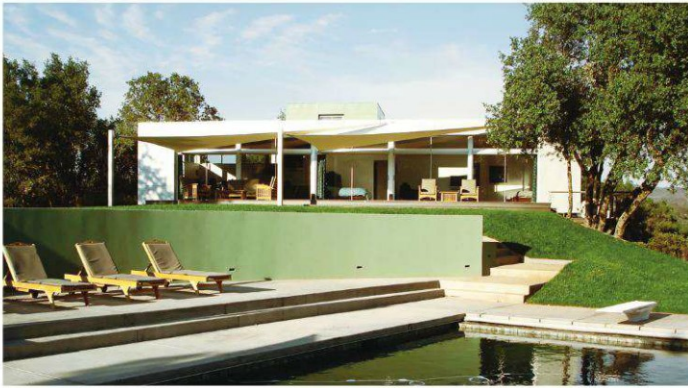
sanderarchitects.com

A chance conversation with the contractor on a San Francisco commission back in 1990 introduced architect Whitney Sander to the concept of building with light-gauge metal. The century-old industry produces pre-cut steel parts—once designed by hand, now engineered entirely by computer programs—in specialized factories that are conveniently located all over the globe. “All the frames are particular to each job, which is why they’re so efficient,” Sander says of the process, which relies on domestic, recycled steel and offers customization equal to that of more standard methods. “We’re traditional architects designing specifically for the client, the site, and the jurisdiction. We’ve just come up with a silver bullet: an inexpensive structure that’s prefab and good for the planet.” —J.K.

The dog-friendly Residence for a Briard in Culver City, California (top), was the first Hybrid House that was designed by Sander Architects. Acrylic panels allow the Residence at the Butte (below) to illuminate the shadows of Oregon's Smith Rock.



Photos by Sharon Risedorph (Residence for a Briard), Patricia Freeman-Martin (Residence at the Butte), Richard Orme (Asul construction), Cy Keener (Asul finished home), Richard Sprengler (Rocio Romero)



ROCIO ROMERO

Location: St. Louis, Missouri

Cost per square foot: \$120 to \$195 for the kit of parts, which includes exterior wall siding, open wall panels, post-and-beam structure, roofing materials, and a binder with a full set of construction documents and a list of materials and parts to be purchased.

Methodology: Kit of parts

Timeline: Three to six months after the design and permit process

rocioromero.com

ASUL

Location: Phoenix, Arizona

Cost per square foot: \$125 to \$200 for construction, not including site work.

Methodology: Custom designs using modular components; kit-of-parts construction using locally sourced materials

Timeline: Four to six months to build

asul.us

If you yearn for a prefab design with crisp, sharp detailing, seek out Rocio Romero. Her clean sensibilities aren't the only reason, though—her kit of parts comes flat packed, making transportation more efficient and less costly than it is for prefab modules. This streamlined shipping method means homes reach a width of 26 feet—something you can't squeeze onto a flatbed when fully built. Romero estimates that the cost of her kits is equivalent to or slightly under that of local stick-built homes, but costs vary regionally. "It's a

methodology," she says. "We've built 135 units and learned from it—it's a science that we're delivering to our customers."

That science was recently updated and now includes a series of add-ons, including the LV2, a second-story addition, and a courtyard and tower that permit more customization or the chance to revamp an existing Romero design. Though the homes have an art gallery-like elegance about them, they're also remarkably sturdy—they can withstand 120 m.p.h. winds and a snow load of 20 pounds per square foot. —D.B.

After five years of research and three prototypes, Asul founder Tim Russell landed on a business model that he feels addresses something overlooked in the prefab industry: the ability to fully customize one's home based on size, site, layout, and aesthetics—without compromising affordability. "It's called mass customization," says Russell, "and it's quite common in other industries. Companies like Nike and Apple allow customers to personalize their products while maintaining the affordability and predictability of mass production."

Asul's system allows both standardization and customization on two levels. Custom-designed floor plans incorporate repetitive but swappable components, including ten room sizes and three ceiling heights. The structure itself is built using a steel-frame system whose moment connections allow flexible placement of windows and walls. Architects are taking notice: Russell has begun collaborating with firms to create custom homes for half the price of traditional architect-designed, contractor-built projects. —J.G. ▮



METHOD HOMES

Location: Seattle, Washington (factory in Ferndale, Washington) **Cost per square foot:** \$125 to \$200, with average cost of \$155 for the modules only; site plans, foundations, transportation, and installation cost extra. **Methodology:** Factory-built modules (80 to 95 percent complete) trucked to the site **Timeline:** Two to four months for construction

methodhomes.net



Method Homes' bread and butter is building modular, prefab houses like the M2 (top), which combines two of its proprietary M models designed by Balance Associates. Their latest ventures include a collaboration with Skylab Architecture on a patent-pending triangular-module-based building system called Homb (above).

Method Homes cofounders Mark Rylant and Brian Abramson are not architects, nor designers at all. Rylant is a builder and Abramson has a background in real estate and business. "That sets us apart," Rylant says. "We're able to execute just about anything, and execute it well."

In 2007, Rylant and Abramson combined their construction and development backgrounds to launch Method Homes, a high-end custom prefab manufacturing company. "We saw an opportunity to be more innovative in the way homes are built," Rylant says. "With prefab, you get a fixed cost and predictable timeline, which puts you pretty far ahead of the game going up against site-built projects."

Method Homes offers a modular system: Units of the house (a kitchen, a bathroom, a bedroom, and so on) are made as modules in the company's 55,000-square-foot, two-building factory in Ferndale, Washington (or at a partner manufacturing facility, depending on the modules' destinations), and then trucked to the site 80 to 95 percent complete. Prospective homeowners can choose one of Method Homes' proprietary models: the Cabin, the M, or the S-M-L series, designed by Balance Associates, as well as collections by PB Elemental and Grouparchitect. Each home is tweaked

for each site, client program, and corresponding climate. Alternately, clients can work with an architect and bring their own modular design for Method Homes to manufacture. "We're limited only to what we can put on a truck," Abramson says.

By the end of 2011, Method Homes will have completed more than 30 residential projects located all across the United States and Canada.

The company is also exploring larger, multifamily projects, and the principals have developed a patent-pending modular building system with Skylab Architecture called Homb. It's based on triangular modules that allow a house or building to easily grow or shrink. "If you no longer need a bedroom unit, for example, you could disengage it and sell it for a good resale value," Abramson explains. Thus far, Homb is still finding its feet, with experiments in micro-retail in the works. But the R&D-heavy project shows that the duo have their eyes on more than just the next jobsite.

Back at the factory, Rylant and Abramson continue to encounter the same issues that site-built projects do. "We just face them more quickly," Rylant says. "Our goal is to streamline the construction process and make prefab as accessible and available to as many people as possible." —M.O.



BLU HOMES

Location: Waltham, Massachusetts

Cost per square foot: \$250 gets you everything but land, foundation, utility hookups, and permits, though Blu will handle the paperwork.

Methodology: Factory-built module trucked to the site

Timeline: Six to eight weeks in the factory; one to two weeks onsite

bluhomes.com

Before founding Blu Homes in 2007, Maura McCarthy and Bill Haney identified three major problems with prefab housing: The business model was service- rather than product-based, the process was complicated, and transportation was expensive. So they created a “soup to nuts” approach in which Blu Homes’ coast-to-coast network of employees handles everything from permits to general contracting to site visits to final assembly.

It’s during assembly, though, when Blu Home’s great prefab trick literally unfolds. A factory-built, steel-framed module shows up on a truck and, with the help of a crane, unfolds into a house, minimizing site work and construction time. Blu also offers a 3-D rendering program that prospective buyers can use to select and customize their own layouts.

The company claims that its energy-efficient fixtures, fewer wasted building materials, and lower labor costs than stick-built homes, combine to give the consumer a green brand of prefab with its sights set squarely on the middle class. Blu Homes has also just launched its Lofthouse model, a prefab design that straddles the modernist-traditional divide. —D.B.



TURKEL DESIGN

Location: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Cost per square foot: Construction ranges from \$150 to \$425, with an average cost of \$275.

Methodology: Nonvolumetric (kit of parts); component-based (panelized, either open wall or closed and insulated wall); volumetric (modular)

Timeline: About eight months for design, estimates, and engineering. Eight months more for fabrication, delivery, installation, and construction.

turkeldesign.com

Joel Turkel acknowledges the wide belief—or truth, depending on whom you ask—that modern prefab design is more expensive than traditional alternatives. However, the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based architect offers a compelling argument for the practice that can be summed up in a single word: predictability. Which is not to say his residential work is staid (if it were, he and Lindal Cedar Homes wouldn’t design houses for our Dwell Homes Collection.) On the contrary, every job is customized to the individual client’s needs. “Manufacturing multiples of a home to drive costs down works only if people are willing to live in the same house,” he says. “And they’re not.”

By “predictability,” Turkel is referring to the relative ease of monitoring the cost of a new development. Unforeseen expenses (a rock ledge six feet below grade; a bungled lumber order) can balloon when using conventional building methods, but prefabrication allows for a

clear estimate at the outset.

To achieve this sweet spot between efficiency and flexibility, he collaborates with a variety of prefab providers who work with kit-of-parts, component-based, and modular systems. A client’s budget is weighed against his wish list, requirements for finishes and extras, and municipal restrictions, and the home is then designed, making the most of the type of prefab that fits best.

After the methodology is established, Turkel employs a practice that he calls “continual estimating.” “Every time we do a drawing, we update our calculation. So if a house is growing in price, we see it immediately,” he explains. “For example: ‘Mr. and Mrs. Jones, you wanted to build a 2,000-square-foot house for \$480,000. That’s acceptable, but [the budget] required you to spend \$15,000 on cabinetry, and you just went to Boffi and picked out a \$60,000 kitchen.’ As designers, we can only do so much.” —J.K. ■



2407619

MAX. GROSS

30 480 kg
67 200 lbs

TARE

2 250 kg
4 960 lbs

MAX. PAYLOAD

28 230 kg
62 240 lbs

CUBE

331 m³
1 170 cuft



Hapag-Lloyd

SESU
206507 5
2261

IC
81

2.6m
8'6"



CONTAINED

TWO SAN FRANCISCO ART AND TRAVEL ADDICTS
OVERHAULED A LOFT—AND CUSTOMIZED A PAIR
OF SHIPPING CONTAINERS—TO ACCOMMODATE
THEIR COLLECTION AND REFLECT THEIR PASSIONS.

By Emily Kaiser Thelin
Photos by Drew Kelly

Project: Wardell/Sagan Residence
Location: San Francisco, California

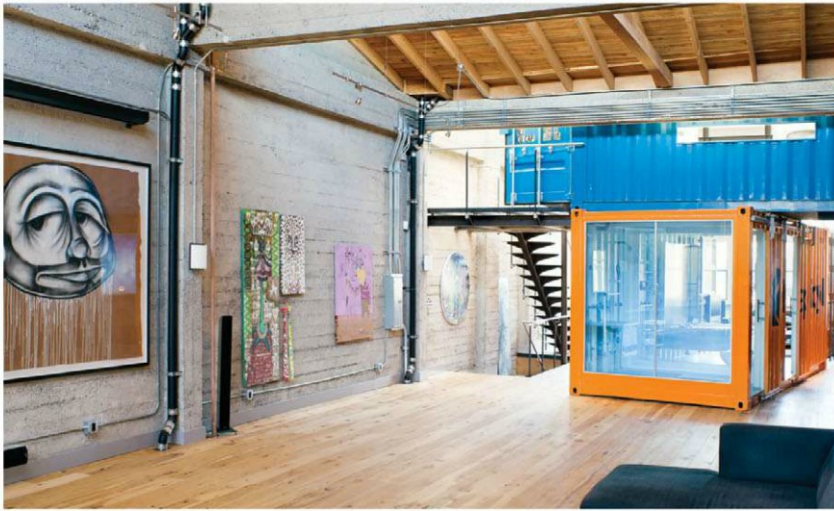
In the pursuit of their hobbies, Jeff Wardell and Claudia Sagan are not laid-back. When the San Francisco couple says they love to travel, they don't mean trips to Napa. Over the past three summers Wardell put 15,500 miles on a motorcycle he and Sagan keep in Milan on rides from the Arctic Circle to southwestern Portugal. When Wardell began collecting street art in the mid-1990s, he admits, "it quickly became an obsession." When he began dating Sagan several years ago, "we got serious about buying big." Starting with local graffiti artist Barry McGee, they bought ever-more ambitious installations by stars like Shepard Fairey, JR, and Os Gemeos—until they needed a bigger home to accommodate their approximately 120-piece collection.

In February of 2007 they purchased a 3,200-square-foot former Chinese laundry and tooth-powder factory with column-free interiors and a zigzagging sawtooth roof in lower Pacific Heights. As a former VP of real estate for Williams-Sonoma, "Claudia knew right away it had excellent bones," says Wardell, a former financial advisor. The travelers also loved how the 127-foot-long loft seemed to stretch out to the horizon. "I walked up those front stairs, and I felt like I was at the edge of a highway, like I could keep going forever," Sagan says. "I loved that feeling."

Where some might box the cavernous space into cozier rooms, Wardell and Sagan wanted "to celebrate that length," Sagan says. The apartment lies on a north-south axis with large windows at either

The shipping containers (opposite, top) were stacked, joined with steel tubes, and lashed to reinforced floor joints to make them earthquake-safe. The bottom container houses a guest room; the top is Wardell's office (right), with a rectangular cutout the couple calls the "dinner's ready slot" for its bird's-eye perspective on the kitchen.





Ship It

If you'd like to incorporate shipping containers into your house—or build a structure entirely out of them—these architects and designers are good resources:

Robert Humble and Joel Egan, HyBrid Architecture, Seattle, Washington

Their prefab Cargotecture homes incorporate shipping containers, with prices starting at \$29,500. They also consult on D.I.Y. projects. hybridarc.com

Peter DeMaria and Michael Sylvester, Logical Homes, Manhattan Beach, California

Prefab Logical Homes, some incorporating shipping containers, start at 160 square feet for \$25,000. logicalhomes.com

Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Ligano, LOT-EK, New York, New York

Pioneers of the field, they use containers to build offices and residences around the world. lot-ek.com

Jennifer Siegal, Office of Mobile Design (OMD), Los Angeles, California

Siegal integrates containers into homes priced from \$230 to \$280 per square foot. In 2013, she will launch a line of Take Home container homes, with prices starting at \$100,000. designmobile.com

Geoffrey Warner, Alchemy Architects, St. Paul, Minnesota

Builds containers into his custom projects and offers prefab wooden weeHouses starting at \$79,000. weehouse.com

Adam Kalkin, Quik House, Bernardsville, New Jersey, and Paris, France

Known for high-concept designs, including a three-bedroom \$119,000 Quik House made from six containers. architectureandhygiene.com



@ Learn more about the containers in our behind-the-scenes video at dwell.com/magazine



end. To showcase the art and maximize daylight, they decided to situate the master bedroom at the back, away from the street, but keep everything else open, with a central kitchen and living room and a den facing the street. They hired a local company to sandblast the interior to expose the board-formed concrete walls and replaced the carpeted floors with Georgia hickory pecan planks—the longest, knottiest boards they could find—to further lengthen the loft and make it look more like a warehouse. The next question was, “how do we make a home office and a guest bedroom happen without cluttering the space?” Sagan says.

For the guest room, “we wanted something our friends would tell everyone they knew about, but not so comfortable they would never leave,” Wardell explains. He wanted it to be a self-contained space with a Murphy bed, an element he remembered fondly from a train ride he took across Europe in his 20s. After considering plunking the interior compartment of a Pullman train car in the middle of the apartment, they landed on shipping containers.

“I contacted Hapag-Lloyd looking for an orange one in newer condition,” Wardell says. “But they’re German. They have rules. They wouldn’t sell us one, but they put out a call that these nuts in San

Furniture designer Pat Carson created a plethora of custom fixtures for the guest room, including a riveted aluminum Murphy bed (above and bottom left) operated with a hand-cranked wheel and pulley, and a teak-and-steel sink (opposite) surrounded by exposed copper piping. One wall of the container was replaced with liquid crystal PolyTronix glass (top right and left), which changes from clear to opaque at the flick of a switch.





In his home office (above), Wardell runs his online art gallery Chester's Blacksmith Shop and researches his next project: opening a boutique hotel in New Zealand. His nephew peeks down from the "napping nook" secreted above

the office. The desk is from Room & Board, as is the sofa in the living room (opposite) where Wardell and Sagan hang out with their niece and nephew beneath "Super Chango," a large-scale piece by the Date Farmers.

BY THE NUMBERS

Containers in use worldwide: 17 million

Dimensions: Generally 8 feet wide by 8.5 feet high by 20 or 40 feet long

Cost to purchase a 20-foot container: about \$2,500

National dealer: ConGlobal Industries, cgini.com

Francisco wanted containers for their house. In late 2007, we got word that the Port of Oakland had some used ones." Sagan examined several before choosing. "A ton are just a mess," she says. "You'll see a huge dent in the side and go, Wow, a wave did that? It's important to smell them, too, because they pick up odors from their cargo."

In 2008, while a container reseller prepped the containers (replacing the original pesticide-treated floors, repainting the walls, cutting out holes for windows and plumbing), a structural engineer and builder reinforced the loft's floor with wooden joists to accommodate the nine-ton load. The containers arrived by flatbed truck one morning in late July; by midday, a crane had lowered them in through an opening in the roof, cantilevering the blue one, Wardell's future home office, atop the orange one, the guest room.

For the container interiors, "the mood we wanted was raw," Wardell says. There was only one caveat: The guest room "had to pass the Dottie test," Sagan says. Her mother would be their first visitor that Christmas. "She was mortified by the idea of sleeping in a container," Sagan says. "She said it sounded like a coffin."

To customize the apartment and containers, Wardell brought in Pat Carson, a furniture designer and builder who shares the couple's love for travel and industrial design. When asked why his pieces have so many rivets, Carson grins, "I'm that guy on the airplane by the window, staring at the wings." Over six months Carson designed and constructed 75 custom fixtures for the apartment, many with a kinetic, gadget-like charm. "A lot of the creative ideas I've had in the past 20 years are manifested in this house," Wardell says.

The carbon fiber dining table, for example, opens on a hinge to form a V, an L or a straight line, with ball casters embedded in the legs so it can glide easily. Woven-leather bar stools swivel between the table and the kitchen island. Surrounded by exposed copper piping, the guest bathroom's teak-and-steel sink evokes the utilitarian atmosphere of a train car or ship cabin; in the master bathroom, tilt-out shelves in the shower hide shampoos. Just about the only convertible fixture Carson didn't build in its entirety is the liquid crystal "privacy wall" in the guest bath, which changes from clear to opaque at the flick of a switch.

Shortly before Dottie arrived, Carson installed the custom Murphy bed, which is clad in aluminum with dozens of rivets and rolls up on a pulley made from a mill wheel. The unconventional guest room passed with flying colors. "She was pleasantly surprised at how spacious and comfortable it was," Sagan says. It's been a hit with subsequent guests as well. "We've found the container self-selects," Wardell says. "Our friends who are the most fun choose to stay here." ■





IMPLE PLAN

By Jaime Gross
Photos by Dwight Eschliman

Project: Burton Residence
Architect: Marmol Radziner
Location: Ukiah, California

A Marmol Radziner-designed prefab house, trucked onto a remote Northern California site, takes the pain out of the construction process.



When Abbie and Bill Burton hired Marmol Radziner to design their prefab weekend home, their two requests were “simple-simple, replaceable materials,” says Abbie—such as concrete floors (poured offsite in Marmol Radziner’s factory) and metal panel siding—and “the ability to be indoors or outdoors with ease.” Deep overhangs provide shade and

protection from rain, so the Burtons can leave their doors open year-round and hang out on their 70-foot-long deck even in inclement weather. They visit the house once a month, usually for a week at a time, with Vinnie and Stella, their rescue Bernese Mountain dogs. Their two adult children occasionally join them. The couple hopes to one day retire here. ▮

"WE VISITED THE FACTORY ONCE.
THE FIRST TIME WE SAW THE
HOUSE WAS WHEN IT ARRIVED
ON OUR SITE AND THEY TORE THE
SHRINK WRAP OFF"—BILL BURTON





Bill and Abbie Burton have experienced their share of construction drama. The Solana Beach, California-based landscape architects have been working together for 25 years, overhauling landscapes and buildings alike. So when the time came to build a vacation house on the 330-acre oak-speckled woodland they purchased in Mendocino County, nine-and-a-half hours north of their main residence, they opted for the easy way out: a custom prefab house designed by Los Angeles firm Marmol Radziner. “We weren’t able to make lots of trips up here, so we couldn’t babysit the process,” says Bill. “Stick-built construction requires a lot of hand-holding. Going prefab made it pretty seamless.”

The couple met with the firm just six times to hammer out the design: a two-bedroom, 2,200-square-foot house with an additional 1,440 square feet of covered decks. Made up of ten prefabricated steel modules, the structure took three months to build in Marmol Radziner’s dedicated factory, including installation of all cabinetry, plumbing, fixtures, and drywall. The modules were trucked to the site one morning, and were swiftly craned into place atop concrete block piers.

“We literally sat on the hill in lawn chairs and watched the house come together,” says Bill. “It was instantaneous. We went from having just a foundation on our site to walking around our house a few hours later. You never see architecture come together like that.” Six weeks later the finish work was complete—seams where the modules met were patched, an 18-foot kitchen island was installed—and the Burtons moved in. ■

In the foreground are Float beanbag chairs and poufs from Paola Lenti. Mamagreen sofas nestle near the house on the sun-dappled deck. A 9.5-foot-tall shade cloth curtain seals off the entire length of the house when the couple is away, keeping the heat out of the interior and preventing accidental bird suicides against the floor-to-ceiling glass walls.

Located just off the kitchen, this room was originally designed for dining—the adjustable Ligne Roset Crescendo coffee table can be raised to 28.75 inches—but most days Bill and Abbie prefer to eat outside or at their casual Caesarstone-topped kitchen island. Today the space serves as a sunny reading spot and guest room, with a convertible futon (from Ligne Roset, since discontinued) and a set of leather-and-steel Paulistano armchairs from Design Within Reach.



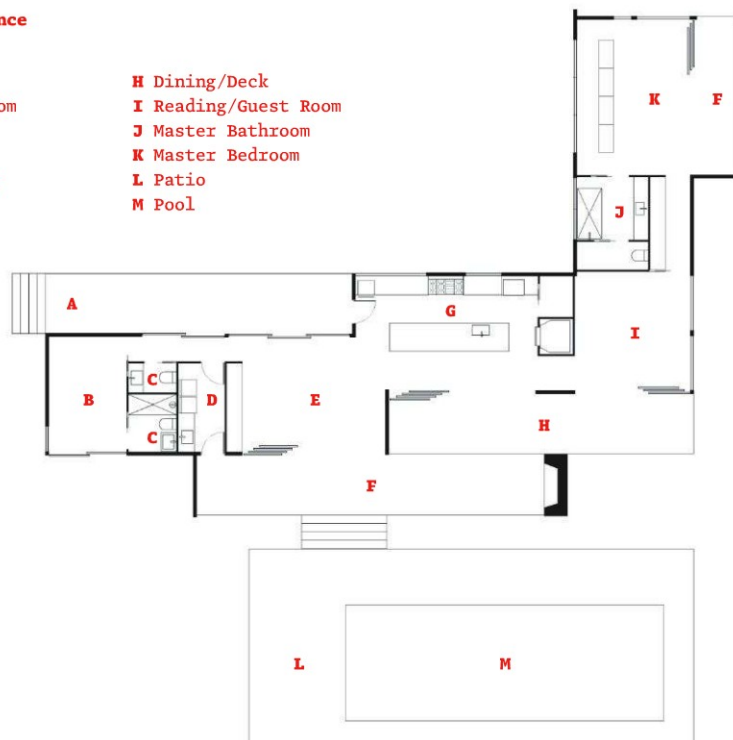


The Mikado 2 sofa by Hans Hopfer for Roche Bobois is a bright and cheery centerpiece in the otherwise sedate living room. The nubby wool Photon rug from Design Within Reach warms up the expanse of concrete. The framed drawing is by the Los Angeles-based artist Daniel Brice. Huge sliding doors open the house to the outdoors and virtually double the Burtons' living space.

As seen in the plan to the right, the Burton Residence is comprised of ten recycled steel frame modules ranging in size from 25 feet and 1 inch by 8 feet and 9 inches to 48 feet and 9 inches by 8 feet and 9 inches. The modules were trucked to the site with all walls, appliances, fixtures, and cabinets already installed, then craned into place to form an L arrangement; bolted together; and finally welded to steel plates on the concrete block foundation. ▶

Burton Residence Floor Plan

- A** Entry
- B** Guest Bedroom
- C** Bathroom
- D** Laundry
- E** Living Room
- F** Deck
- G** Kitchen
- H** Dining/Deck
- I** Reading/Guest Room
- J** Master Bathroom
- K** Master Bedroom
- L** Patio
- M** Pool







Passionate cooks, the Burtons installed a Mugnaini wood-fired oven in their kitchen and had a custom Grillery fireplace-barbecue built into the concrete block wall on their deck (opposite). Beneath the grill they store oak firewood collected from their property.

Though the Burtons are landscape architects, they took an intentionally hands-off approach to their own land (right), which is part of the 1,800-acre Long Valley Ranch, a former cattle ranch. "We made very few moves, beyond planting fifty olive trees and some native shrubs and grasses," says Bill. "We wanted nothing in the landscape to be edible or pretty, nothing to attract animals to the house." Nevertheless, they've spotted plenty of fauna thanks to motion-activated "trail cams" they use to spy on local wildlife. To date they've snapped photos of mountain lions, bobcats, wild pigs, and a bear. ■



@ See the prefab house come together at dwell.com/magazine

TOP DROR



Industrial designer Dror Benshetrit's new building system, QuaDror, can be applied to make just about anything from architecture to table bases.



Nee Approve

Inflate the scale of the support trestles, add floors and ceilings, and you have the core of the QuaDror prefab house. The QD 01-06 dwellings, created in partnership with Minnesota prefab outfit weeHouse, range from 900 to 3,000 square feet—"single and double story, and two versions that are elevated off the ground, which is beneficial for certain climates," Benshetrit says. As with the trestles, the QD interlocking frame modules, constructed from eight beams, are shipped flat and set up onsite. "The whole house shouldn't take more than a few days to assemble," the designer says. "It's really and truly a kit—a lucid system that results in a product you park on your land." QD 01-06 houses will be available this spring.

By Marc Kristal

"I feel we have not done justice describing it yet," says the Israeli-born, New York-based designer Dror Benshetrit, creator of the diabolically brain-twisting QuaDror system—"and I don't think the press has, either." No self-respecting member of the Fourth Estate can ignore such a challenge, yet after 20 minutes of listening to Benshetrit explain (and re-explain) what Studio Dror's literature calls "a unique space truss geometry," the simple brilliance of the structural building blocks becomes unmissable.

This comes as little surprise, as Benshetrit's work has always had a formalist panache. The rigorous undulations of his Peacock chair for Cappellini are formed by just three pieces of folded felt, and his dorm-room collection for Target offers a collapsible clock and eminently rearrangeable shelving made from a few strong components.

Fundamentally, QuaDror consists of four identical L-shaped pieces, with each edge of each piece cut to the same slight angle—"15 degrees is ideal," Benshetrit says. The four parts are formed into two squares, which are then set back to back (the lower edges of the 15-degree angles meeting), with one square oriented horizontally, the other vertically. "That gives you four overlapping areas between the two squares along the diagonal," Benshetrit says, drawing them in his sketch pad, "each

of which you connect using glue, bolts, or screws." Picking up a QuaDror model, he sets it upright on his desk, lets go, and presto! The connection points form a natural hinge, and the flat sandwich falls open to create a freestanding object that is triangular on all four sides.

"It's very strong and stable," Benshetrit says. "The triangulations are always opposite—you have a V on one side and an A on the other—so the supports are constantly in tension. It's always parallel to the ground [the 15-degree angles are self-correcting] so you can stack them, and in terms of compression load, it's almost as sturdy as a block. And you can use thin L-shaped pieces, which give you a trestle, or thicker ones, so it looks like a solid object."

Though Benshetrit came up with QuaDror by accident while trying to create two interlocking squares as a frame for a chandelier, he instantly recognized its potential. "We've been working on this for four years, coming up with more and more applications, to show the system's ability to become a lot of different things." An exciting prefab architecture use of the system is at left, and three more of the myriad QuaDror manifestations follow on the next two pages. ▮

Sweet Relief

The QuaDror disaster-relief house frame reduces the system's interlocking module to four so-called universal joints and eight corner pieces (for stiffening and stability) that are attached to a locally sourced material (even bamboo) to form eight support beams. The structure can then be skinned in anything that's available. "In one 40-foot container we can ship 1,300 kits—that's 1,300 dwellings," says Benshetrit. Best of all: The house needn't be temporary. "It gives people something that can be moved, re-skinned, and improved—a real home."



CONNECTORS

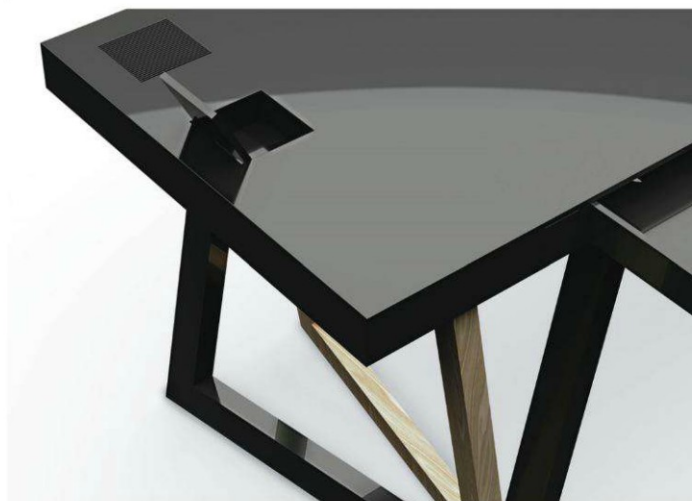


FRAME



SHIPPING

= 1,300 homes



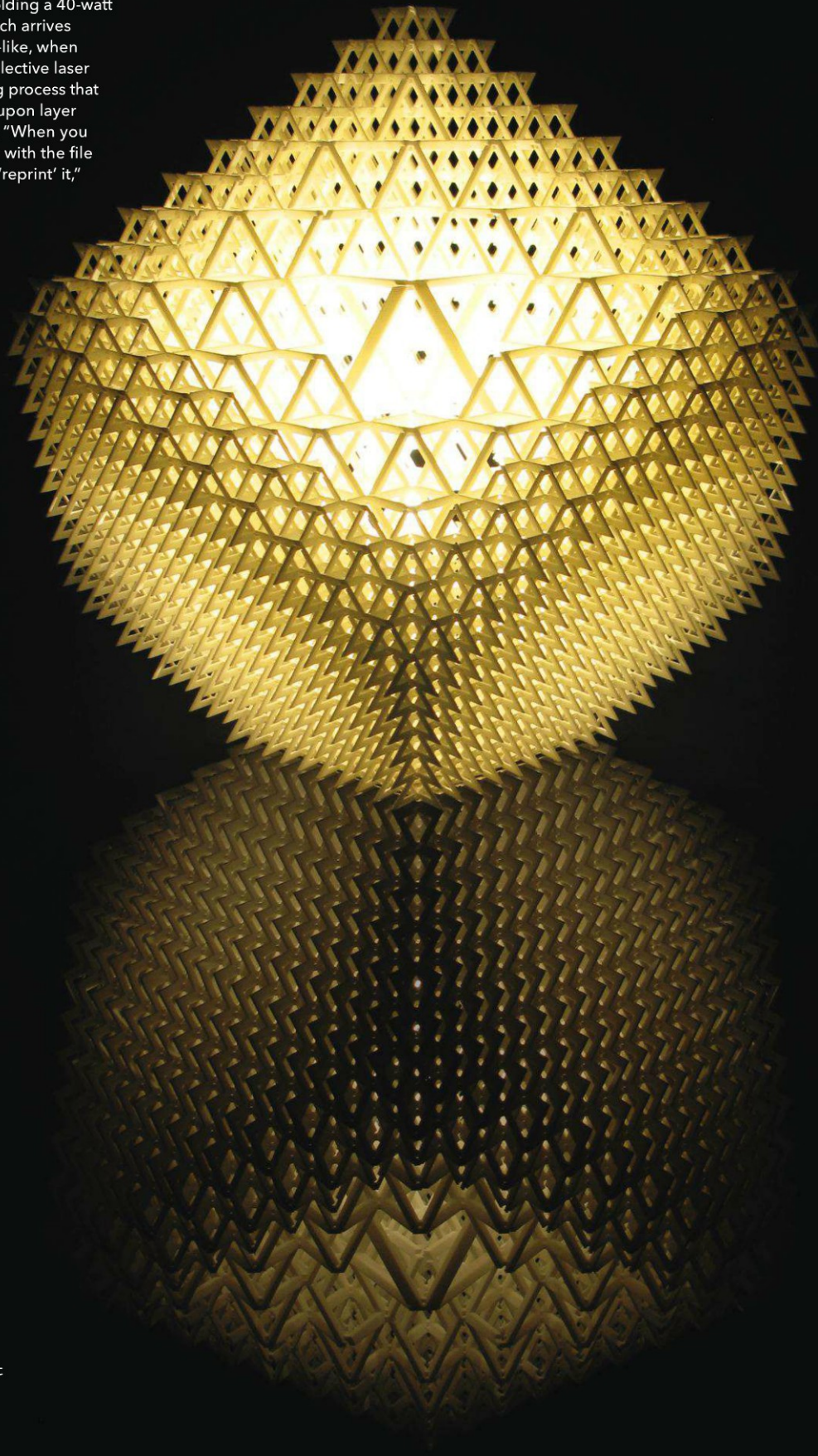
Compact Desk

"Designers always like the idea of sawhorses for desks," Benshetrit says. "They're cheap and easy to move, multiply, and put away." The QuaDror version has a slightly smaller footprint than a standard sawhorse, which means more lateral leg room, "and if you orient the V side of the triangle toward where you're sitting, it's even roomier." Additionally, "it folds flat, doesn't require assembly, and works with any desktop." Studio Dror plans to self-market the desk, first on the Web, then through selected stores, and to hit different price points depending on the quality of the wood. "I like the Johnnie Walker approach—birch is Red Label, mahogany is Blue."



Shine a Light

Benshetrit's table lamp, for the lighting and furniture company .MGX by Materialise uses QuaDror's infinitely scalable geometry to create a honeycomb of 1,200 modules that fits over a metal base holding a 40-watt halogen bulb. The lamp, which arrives flat and expands, accordion-like, when lifted, is manufactured via selective laser sintering (SLS), a 3-D printing process that uses a laser to solidify layer upon layer of powdered resin particles. "When you buy the lamp, you get a disc with the file on it, so if it breaks, you can 'reprint' it," Benshetrit says. ■■■



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Return to Render

Carlos Diniz's astounding hand-done renderings, illustrations, and screen-prints helped to push more than just a handful of buildings—they sold the very idea of modernism itself.

Architectural illustrator Carlos Diniz (1928–2001) is one of those characters in the history of modernism who ends up filed away in the archives as styles and technologies change. But without him and his immense talent, some of the most iconic buildings and developments of the movement might never have gotten off the drawing boards. For more than three decades, Diniz's pen propelled the spread of mid-century design. One of the top renderers of his generation, he was the go-to illustrator in Southern California from the late 1950s until the early 1990s, and his influential hand-drawn perspectives were commissioned by some of the preeminent architects and real estate firms of the time. ▶



By Mimi Zeiger



Extended slideshow at
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This heroic view of the Hollywood Suites at Sunset and Vine in Los Angeles is indicative of Diniz's style—epic architecture rising out of the surrounding bustle.

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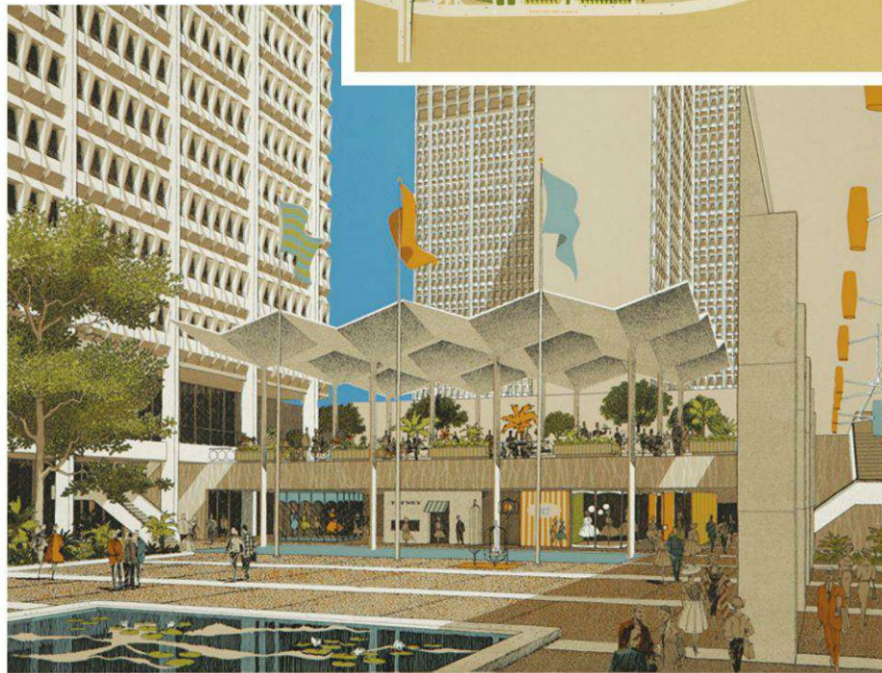
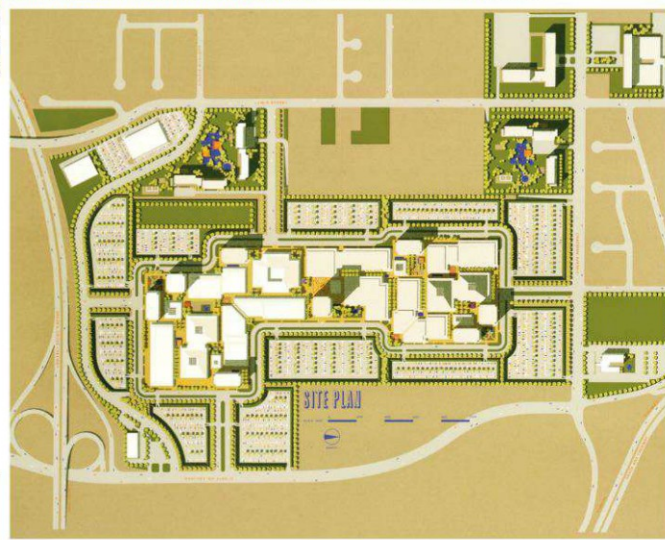
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Born in 1928 in Phoenix, Arizona, Diniz trained in industrial design and architecture at the Art Center College of Design, then located in Los Angeles, California. After school, he first worked as a designer in the large architecture and planning firm of Victor Gruen Associates. But as he found his footing in graphic presentation, he left to open his own rendering studio in the late 1950s. At Gruen's office, he met Frank Gehry, who would later become part of a client roster of architects that included Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; Craig Ellwood; Cesar Pelli; and others.

The renderer's job went beyond mocking-up the project; Diniz had to draw all parties into a shared reality. "He'd visualize the buildings as people would use them," says gallerist Edward Cella of Diniz's signature "entourage" illustrations. Diniz's ink renderings and screenprints of buildings such as Minoru Yamasaki's Century Plaza Hotel and World Trade Center represented three-dimensional spaces staged with contemporary furniture and filled with people. His visualizations won over developers, corporate boards, banks, insurance companies, and community review panels. With perspectives, slide presentations, and brochures, his Los Angeles-based studio, Carlos Diniz Associates, could transform a sterile stack of blueprints into a world brimming with activity. "Diniz always chose decorative objects and fashions of the day that created an affluent sense of the future," says Cella. "He created optimism through the details."

Diniz passed away in 2001, but a decade later there's a groundswell of interest in his work. Edward Cella Art+Architecture gallery represents the Diniz family archive and in 2008 exhibited *Visualizing a New Los Angeles: Architectural Renderings of Carlos Diniz, 1962-1992*. The show featured a treasure trove of screenprints found stacked in the defunct Los Angeles offices of commercial screen printer Art Krebs. This past fall the Los Angeles County Museum of Art celebrated the illustrator's contributions by including his work in *California Design, 1930-1965: "Living in a Modern Way."* His hand-drawn optimism lives on. ▶

One of Diniz's most vaunted clients was architect Minoru Yamasaki, whose "City" development in Orange County, California, got the Diniz treatment in 1965 with a

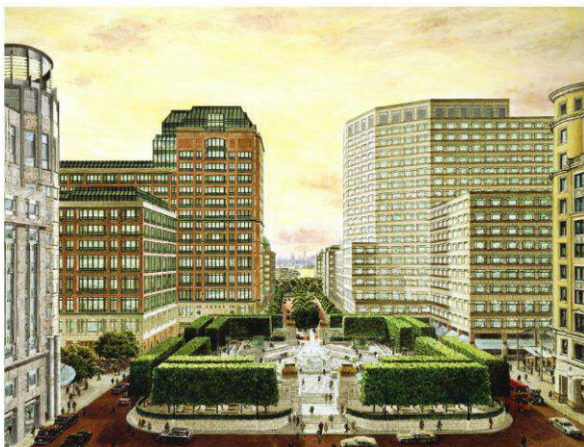
wholly modern office interior (top) and a site plan (middle). The esplanade of the 1961 Hollywood Suites (above) suggests both the California sun and the push of progress.

Chill.

Couchoid

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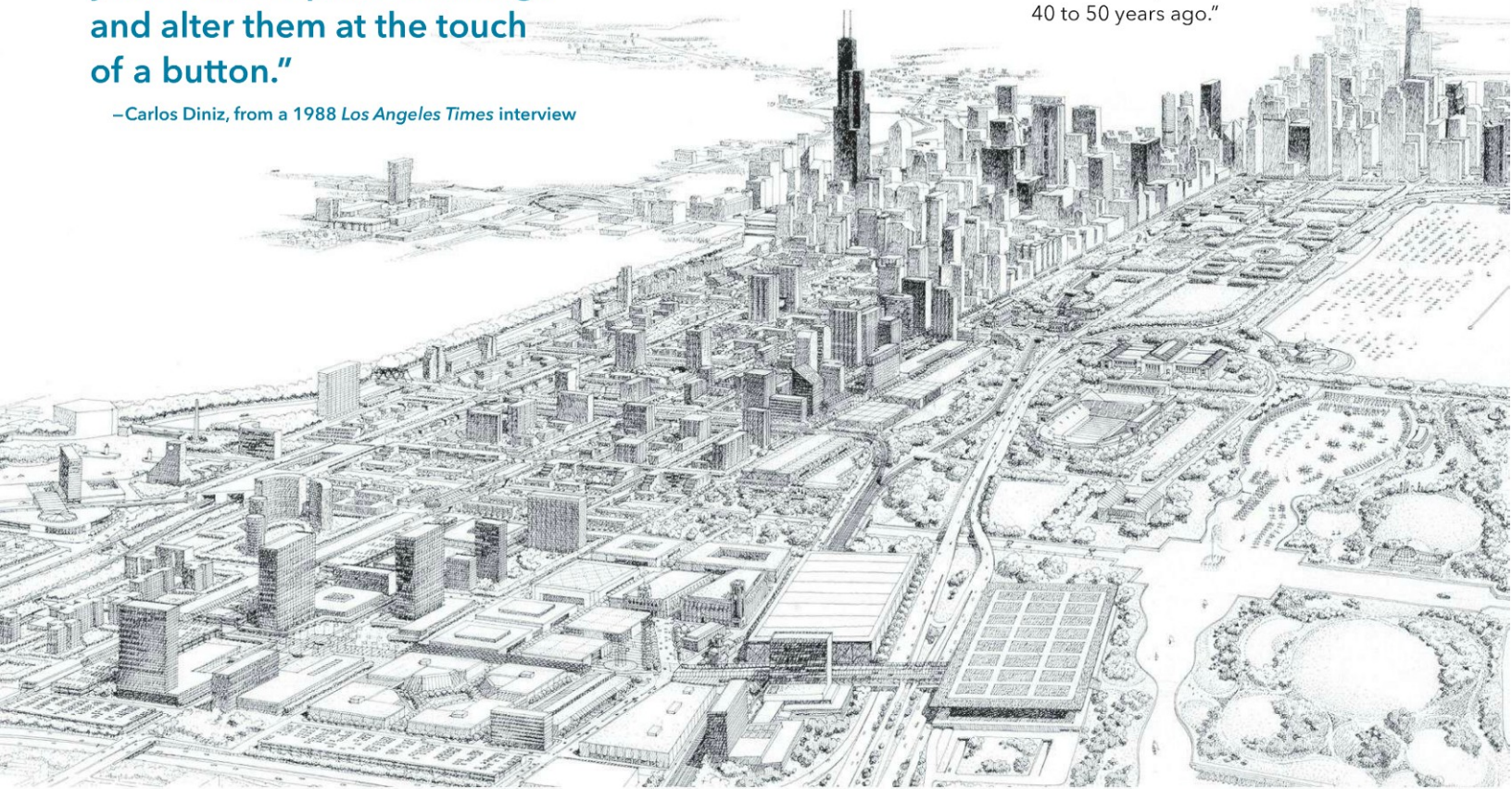


"CAD systems can create and manipulate visual imagery so much faster than the pen... Canary Wharf would have taken months of painful labor to accomplish in the old days of pen and ink. Now you can set up the drawings and alter them at the touch of a button."

—Carlos Diniz, from a 1988 *Los Angeles Times* interview

Civic Projects

Diniz's practice flourished as he took on large-scale civic and commercial developments. In the 1960s and 1970s real estate in California was booming, and his early renderings for Minoru Yamasaki's World Trade Center helped bring in high-profile clients. At its height, Diniz's office employed dozens of illustrators. Teams that once rendered icons such as Ellwood's Art Center building in Pasadena turned their attention to urban-scale redevelopments as Diniz's firm expanded its scope to capture the exploding field of corporate architecture. Two career-defining works were Benjamin Thompson & Associates' Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston and the 14-million-square-foot Canary Wharf along the Thames in London. "His work reflects that architecture changed in scale considerably after the 1960s," explains Cella, noting that the newer developments dwarfed even the most civic-minded projects from the 1920s and 1930s. "It's not one house or building, but 500 houses. It's where China is today, but where we were 40 to 50 years ago."



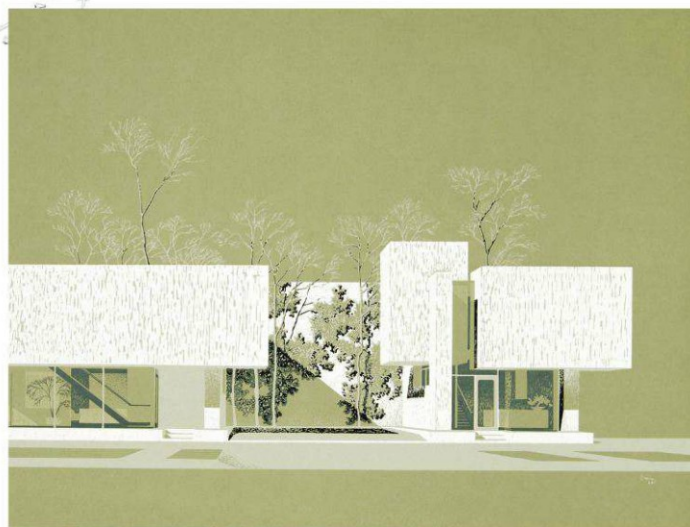
Though some of Diniz's output had a kind of flat, highly graphic feel, he was unquestionably a master of perspective and could work in various visual modes. His renderings for

the massive Canary Wharf development in London (top) shows a clean, realist style. A masterplan for Chicago (above) from 1983 is inspiring for its detail and depth.



"The programmed computer does all the donkey work—but the artist is still king. His imagination, his capacity to conceptualize something solid out of thin air, are the seeds from which everything still springs."

—Carlos Diniz, from the same interview



Residential Work

Near the beginning of his career, Diniz illustrated the marketing material for the Monarch Bay homes, an early 1960s suburban development just off the Pacific Coast Highway in Orange County, California. Following the designs of Ladd and Kelsey Architects, he softened his precise linework with lush landscapes. Ferns, palms, and Japanese maples underscored one of the key tenets of California modernism: Connect inside and outside.

This breezy approach carried through to his renderings of Westlake Village, McIntire & Quiros's resortlike development built between the mid-1960s and the 1970s north of Malibu, California. A bird's-eye visualization of the project hung in the project's sales office. In it, Diniz shows an idyllic community nestled in a canyon with homes and shopping areas connected by lakeside pathways. ■■■

Diniz's 1961 renderings of the Monarch Bay Homes (top and middle) designed by Ladd and Kelsey Architects offer a bucolic vision of mid-century living. Starker is his portrayal

of the Danziger House (above) by Frank Gehry in 1964. Win a 20-inch-by-26-inch silkscreen print of this Monarch Bay house (middle) by visiting dwell.com/tmh.



Love at first sight is a powerful thing.

Wiet Hekking had worked as a buyer in the Dutch textile industry for almost two decades when, in 1988, he first spotted the chair that changed his life—Grete Jalk's iconic GJ, a 1963 marvel made out of almost impossibly bent plywood. The design potential of this industrial process was a revelation to Hekking; his infatuation with the seat provided the foundation for a personal collection of like pieces that eventually outgrew both his home and the storage space he rented to accommodate it.

In 1999, he opened a small storefront called, appropriately, WonderWood. "I put aside a few items that I wanted to save," Hekking says, "and began to sell the rest of my finds." He has since moved locations to a site in Amsterdam's old city center (formerly occupied by the design store Droog). The canalside building's ground floor boasts one of the city's oldest painted ceilings—dating from 1565—and a basement ideal for storing and showcasing a trove of chairs from throughout the ages. WonderWood has expanded its repertoire to include classic and reissued furniture, books, vintage toys, and rotating art shows, all the while promoting the prowess of bent plywood—the only shop in the world to do so, he says. **ll**

The Wood Life

Wiet Hekking's specialty shop in the heart of Amsterdam displays the best of bent-ply furniture, past and present.

By Jordan Kushins
Photos by Mirjam Bleeker

Amsterdam's fertile and relatively tight-knit design community provides the ideal setting for Wiet Hekking's longtime passion project, WonderWood.



@ See a choice selection of WonderWood's chairs at dwell.com/magazine

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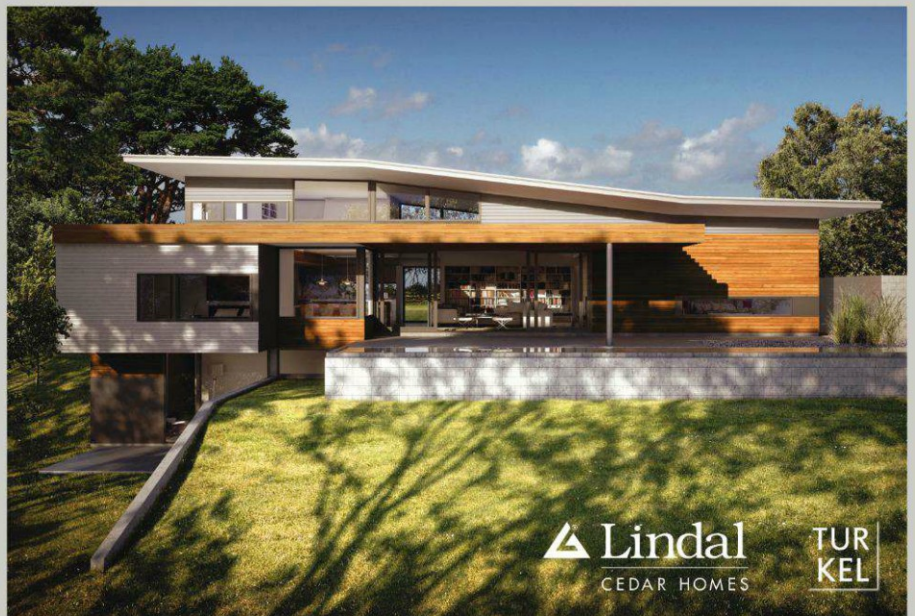
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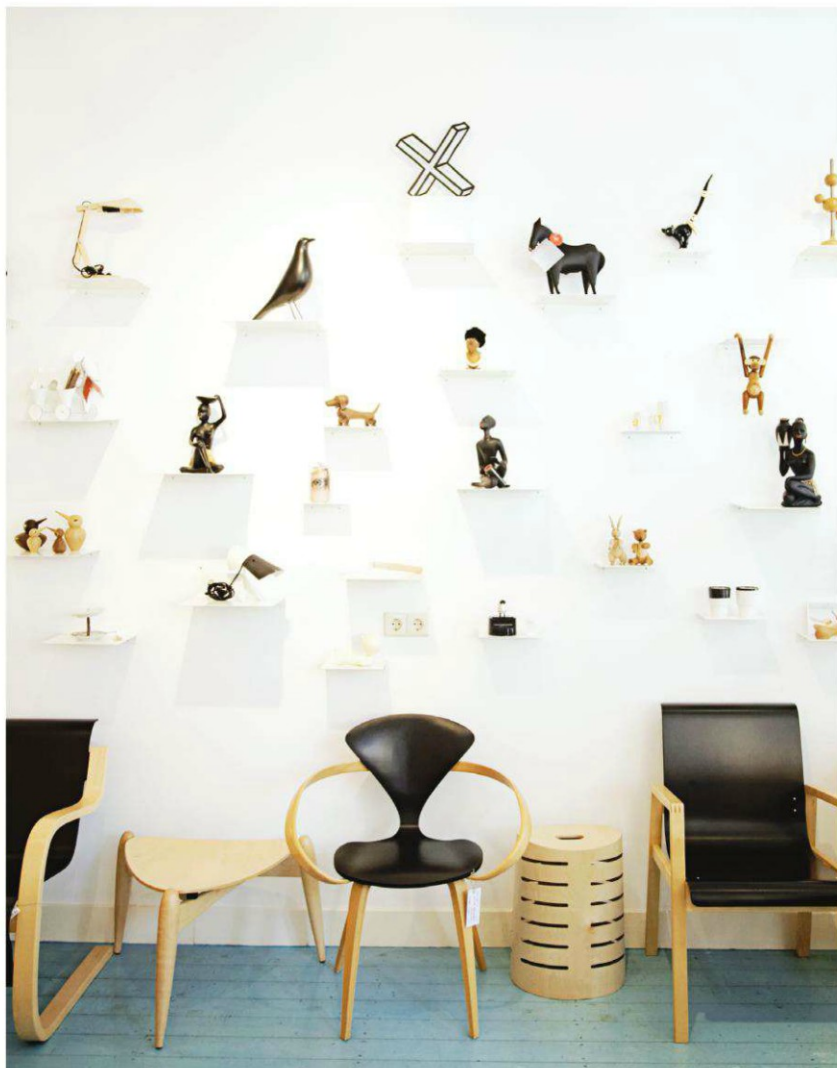
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The warmth and livability of a modern Turkel Design Lindal home comes from clean, uncluttered lines and the inspired use of natural materials.





The shop does have a comfortable, lived-in feel, like a well-curated—but not precious—home.

It can be nice to see something fantastic against a big white wall in a gallery, but I like to show how it can be presented in a domestic setting. I'll put it on a table, then position different chairs around that table, and maybe include a standing drawing by Jeroen Henneman, who is a famous artist here. I'm dealing with pieces that are rare and special, but they should be used and enjoyed.

Who are your customers?

I'm covering a niche market, so I meet a lot of collectors and dealers, but people of all ages pass by, drop in, and have a look. I recently received a phone call from a man in Portugal who had bought a sidechair by [Italian designer] Vittorio Nobili here. He was so happy with it that he phoned just to say hello. Those kinds of reactions are very nice.

Any trends we should watch?

Rattan is becoming very important. But, to be honest, it's always changing.

What's next for WonderWood?

I will continue giving lectures to students here, and I'm busy developing more art exhibitions that fit well in the shop. People really like those, and I like them myself. ■■■

It's been almost 25 years since you first laid eyes on the GJ. Are you still entranced?

The shape is fantastic, and it was so technically advanced for its time. It's a masterpiece and still one of the most exciting plywood chairs there is.

Do originals always stand the test of time?

The patina of an older piece is often ten times nicer than the look of a re-edition. Early Alvar Aalto furniture has this beautiful unfinished aesthetic; the new ones look almost ugly in comparison.

But you also sell reissues.

I do—from certain designers. In fact, I like to show the differences between the vintage piece and the new one.

Has your definition of good design changed since you started WonderWood?

My own taste has certainly developed. For example, Cees Braakman is a Dutch mid-century designer who is quite well known in the Netherlands, and he more or less copied the Eameses in the 1940s and '50s. I used to carry a lot of his work, but it's not my favorite anymore. Meanwhile, there are other designers I've grown to respect more and more.

How do you choose what to stock?

I have to know exactly where I want to put something before I buy it. Space is limited and unfortunately I can't have everything, so I try to guide myself in this way. It's a good rule to use in the home as well.

Though chairs are Hekking's pride and joy, WonderWood's proximity to a handful of hotels in the area makes other wares popular with touring shoppers as well.

The smaller items on offer provide opportunities for more portable purchases, while still aligning perfectly with the store's sentiment of a smart and engaging collection.

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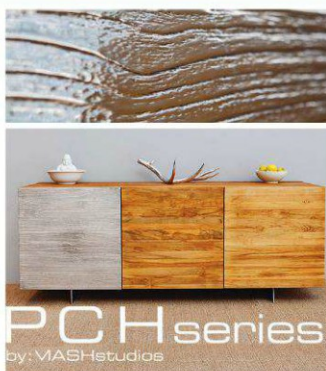
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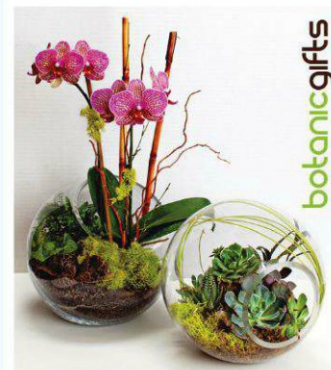
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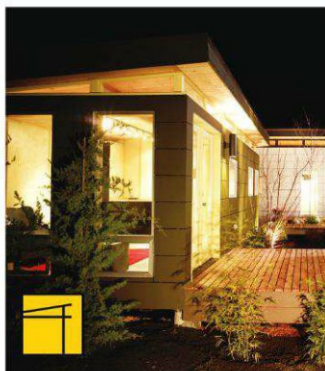
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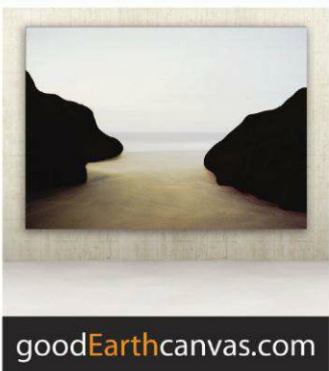
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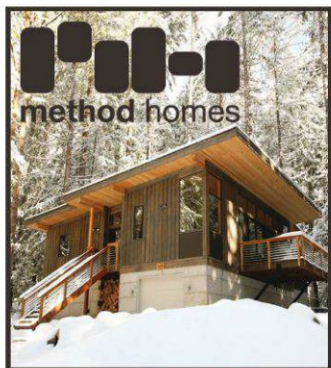


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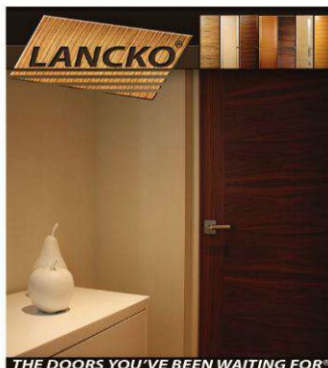


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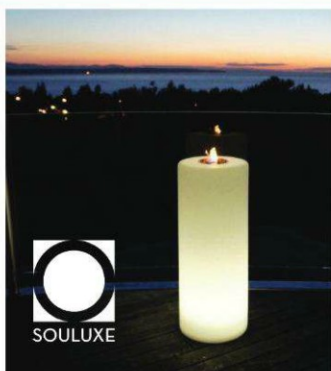
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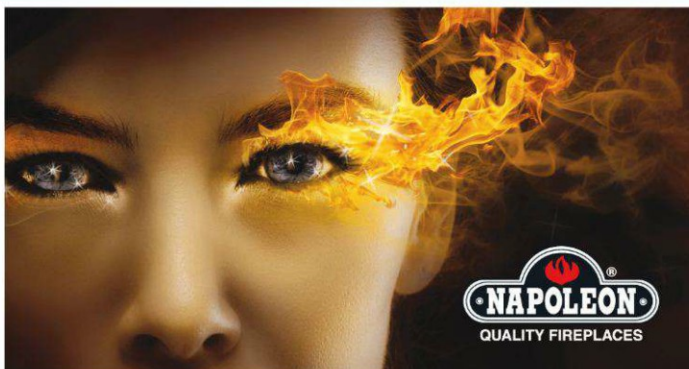


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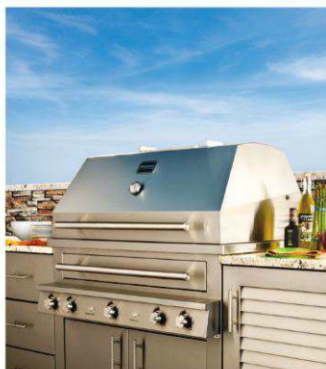


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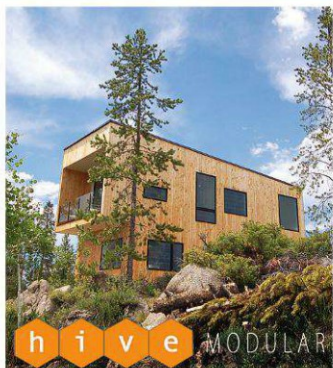
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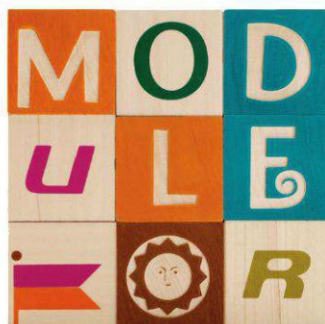
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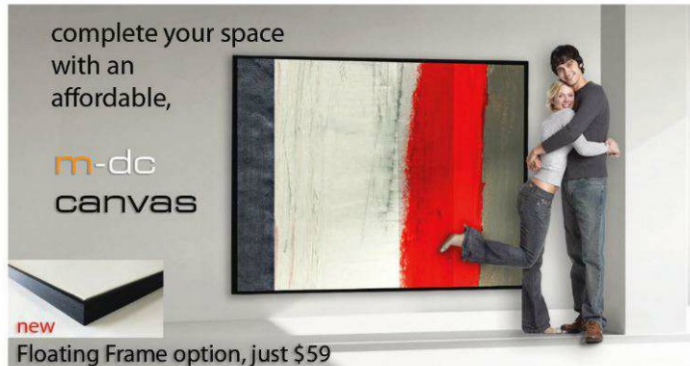


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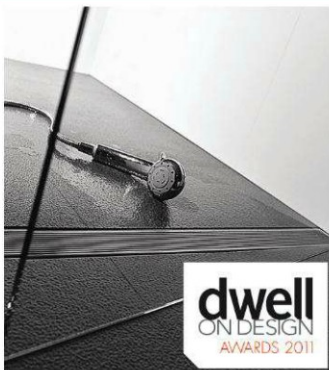


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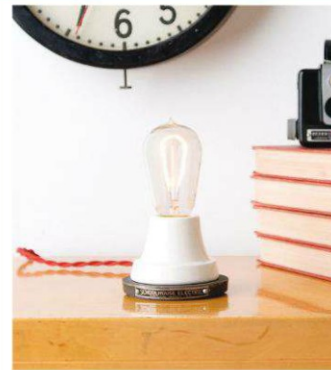


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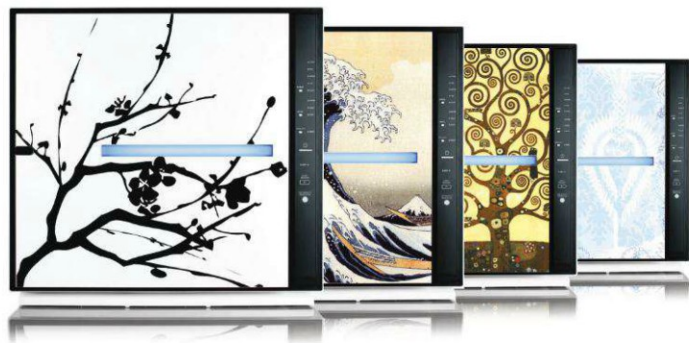


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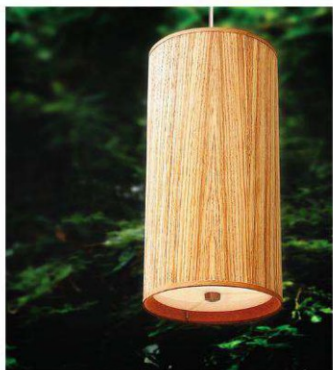
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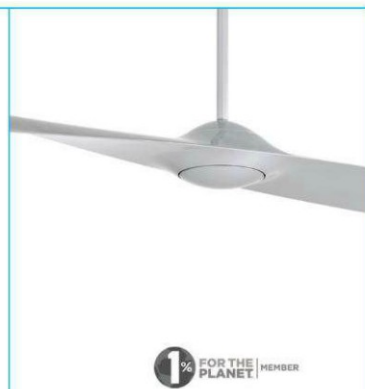
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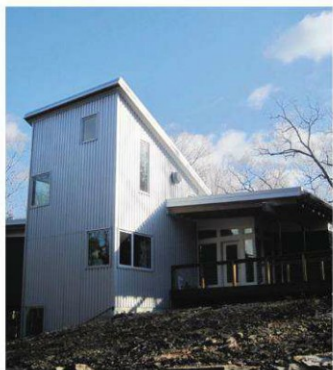


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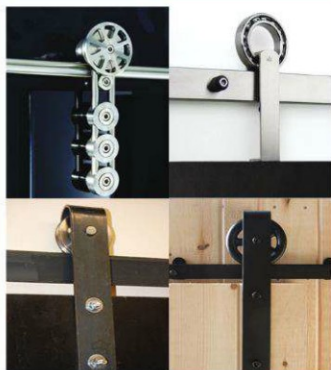


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Shedded Bliss

A prefabricated shed sited on a Finnish island provides a perfect summer getaway.

By Jordan Kushins

Linda Bergroth had gardening and storage in mind when she developed this scaled-down prefab prototype. The Finnish designer collaborated with Helsinki-based Avanto Architects for two years to perfect the compact unit—now available for purchase from outdoor brand Kekkilä—which artfully merges shed and greenhouse into one wood-framed, gabled-roof, glass-walled structure.

Sensing its greater potential, she adapted one into a warm-weather retreat for herself on the small island owned by her parents, where she spent childhood summers. Going out to sleep in the shed might sound like an admonition for some, but for Bergroth the opportunity is divine. “The first night I spent there beat any five-star hotel or chateau,” she says. “Nothing has ever felt as luxurious.” ■■■

Photo by Arsi Ikäheimonen

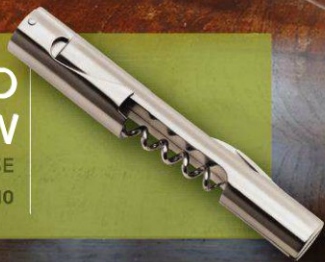
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