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MODERN IN DENVER

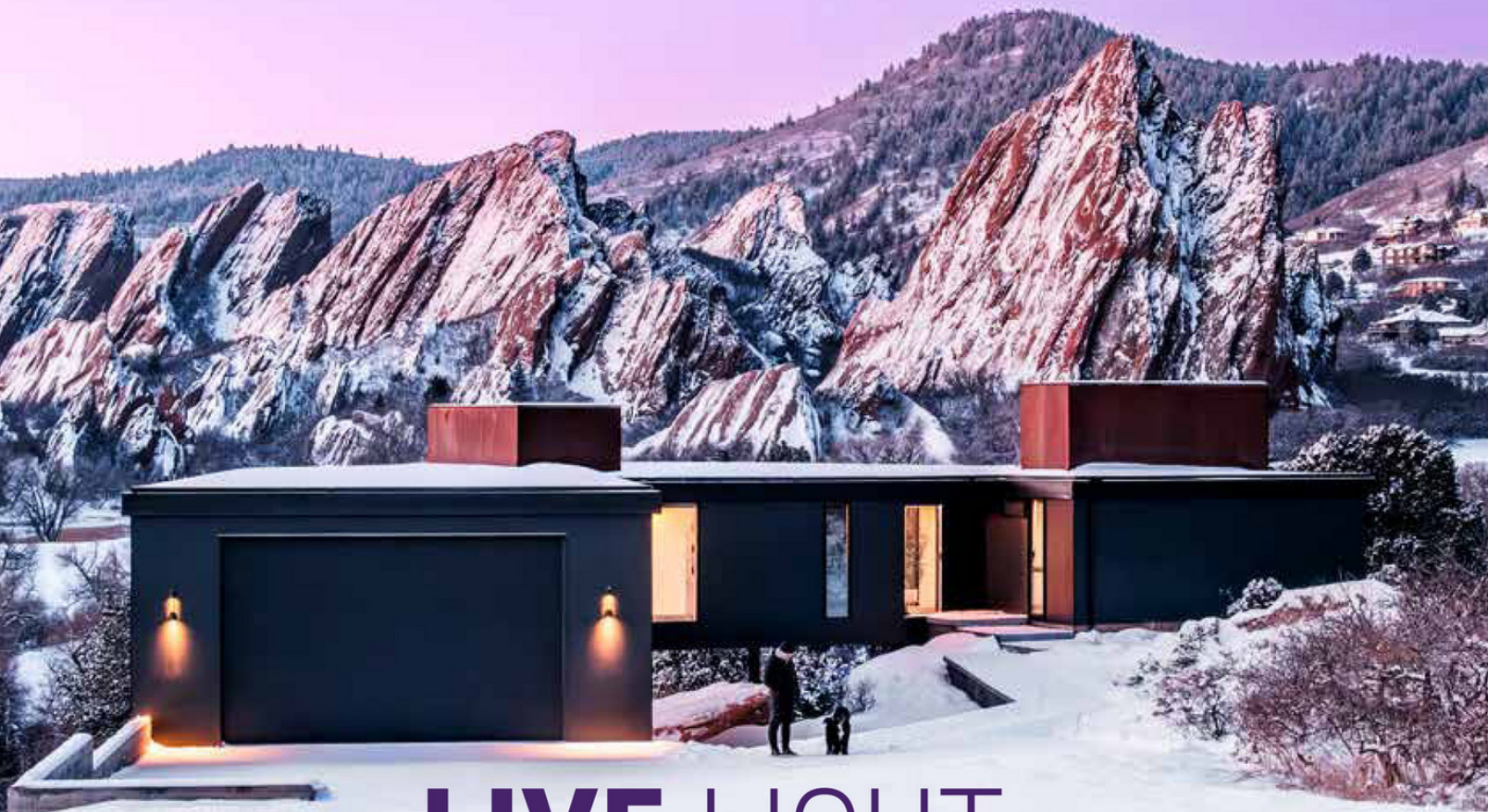


WINTER
ISSUE
20TWENTY-FIVE

ARCHITECTURE • INTERIORS • ART • DESIGN • PEOPLE!

INSIDE!

Lake Flato
John Pawson
Darcie Shively
Design Workshop
Dyna Architecture



LIVE LIGHT

A Davis Urban designed house on stilts makes a big impression while treading lightly on its Roxborough, Colorado location. p.126



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PHOTO ESSAY BY BRANDON HUTTENLOCHER P. 110



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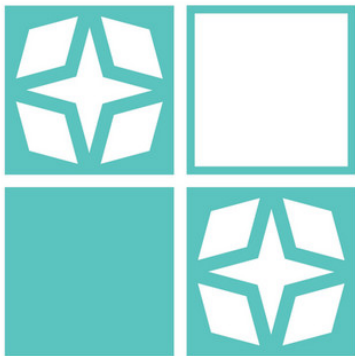
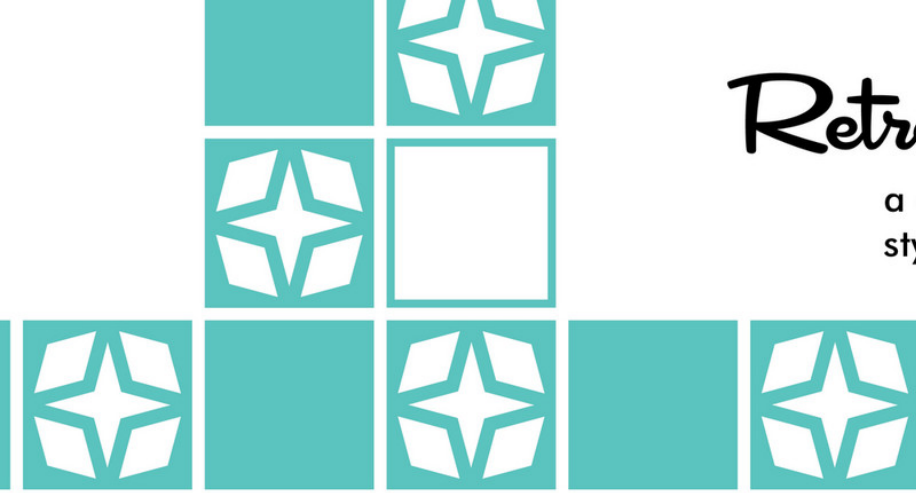
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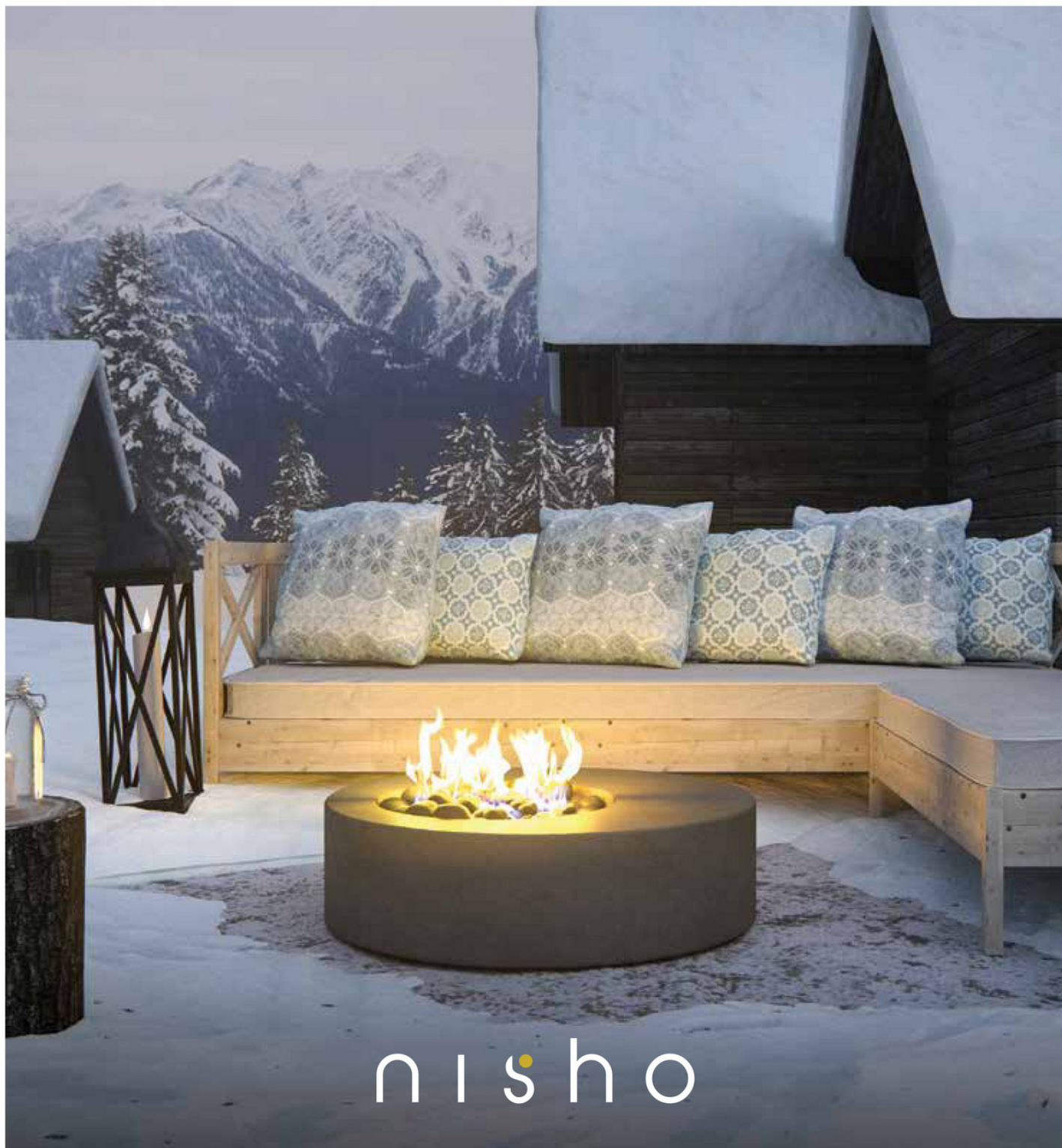
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A modern kitchen interior featuring dark, sleek cabinetry. On the left, a tall cabinet houses a built-in wine cooler with multiple wooden shelves displaying various wine bottles. To the right, upper cabinets with vertical wood-grain panels are visible above a dark, veined marble countertop. The countertop holds a brass faucet, a small potted plant, a framed picture, and a cake stand. Lower cabinets with solid dark doors and brass handles are positioned below the counter. The overall aesthetic is sophisticated and contemporary.

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“We borrow from nature the space upon which we build.”

— Tadao Ando

In architecture, we talk often about vision, about bold ideas, striking forms, and the ingenuity of design. But the projects that stay with us, the ones that deepen our understanding of what great architecture can be, tend to share something else: a genuine respect for the land they occupy. When architects allow the site to speak—when they respond to its contours, constraints, and character—the results can be transformative.

Consider Tadao Ando’s Chichu Art Museum or Herzog & de Meuron’s Dominus Winery. Both are widely admired examples of architecture shaped by sensitivity to place. The Chichu Art Museum, built largely underground to minimize its footprint, uses daylight with stunning precision to illuminate the works within. Dominus Winery, by contrast, employs gabion walls of local basalt to form a long, low-lying structure so integrated into its surroundings that it’s often called “the stealth winery.” These projects demonstrate that architecture rooted in site can elevate both structure and landscape.

This issue’s cover story is an example of what happens when that respect is more than conceptual. Designed by Davis Urban for clients Cale and Dorothy Fogel, this home sits within the rugged beauty of Roxborough Park, a setting defined by 300-million-year-old sandstone. It is a magnificent, but difficult landscape that requires extreme care. Rather than carve into those ancient formations, the architects chose to hover above them, anchoring the home on a series of precisely placed concrete footings and Corten steel columns. The effect is poetic and practical: the home seems to have landed onto the site rather than been imposed upon it.

This level of sensitivity is not easily achieved. It requires discipline, restraint, and the humility to acknowledge that the land existed long before us, and will remain long after. At the Fogel’s home, that humility guided every major decision. The result is a structure that protects the very rocks that inspired it, while simultaneously offering its inhabitants an intimate way to experience them, whether through a floating bridge above the terrain

or the discovery of wildlife moving freely beneath the structure. As the Fogels note, the animals don’t register the home as an intrusion—a success by any architectural measure. Their story begins on page 126.

Site and structure also intersect powerfully in photographer Brandon Huttenlocher’s work. On a recent trip to Norway, he turned his lens toward the country’s sculptural landscapes and the architecture that responds to them. We’re pleased to present a selection of his striking images in a photo essay titled *Synesthetic Scandinavia*, beginning on page 110.

Sensitivity to site is likewise central to another project featured in this issue: a car-free community of 10 residences in Snowmass designed by Lake Flato and Design Workshop. Thoughtful and deeply rooted in nature, the project prioritizes both landscape and the connections forged among its residents. You’ll find that story on page 98.

Lastly, this issue carries a milestone for both *Modern In Denver* and for me personally. This fall, we were honored to receive the AIA Colorado Impact Award—the first publication to do so. The award recognizes organizations that have made meaningful contributions to Colorado communities and the advancement of architecture. Being acknowledged by the very community we have covered and celebrated over the past 17 years was a profound moment. When AIA Colorado CEO Mike Waldinger asked to interview me about the magazine’s history and its place within the design ecosystem, I was grateful. We chose to share that conversation in this issue. It begins on page 136.

Thank you for your continued support of Colorado’s architecture and design community, and of *Modern In Denver*. Stay warm, and stay engaged.

Enjoy!

William Logan



ON THE COVER

Photographer Daniel Jenkins captures a sunrise shot of a Davis Urban-designed house set amidst 300-million-year-old rock formations in Roxborough, Colorado. The architecture firm designed a bridged house on stilts for a young family who wanted to minimize disturbance to the land and wildlife. “The wildlife doesn’t know we’re here,” homeowner Dorothy Fogel says. “Through the west window in the kitchen I’ve seen a mama bear with babies, a little bobcat that travels the rock formations, and deer.” Read more about this home in the feature on page 126.



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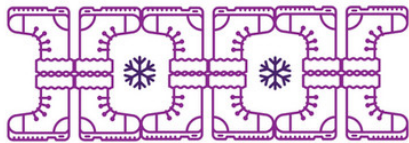
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**"We should attempt to bring nature, houses,
and human beings together in a higher unity."**

– Ludwig Mies van der Rohe



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Vanessa Kauffman Zimmerly

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS & PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tamara Chuang, James Florio, Fernando Gomes, Linne Halpern,
Brandon Huttenlocher, Daniel Jenkins, Laurie Lauletta-Boshart,
Eleanor Perry-Smith, Cory Phare, Alicita Rodríguez, Parrish Ruiz de
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flexgrip pen, and a much-needed sense of humor.

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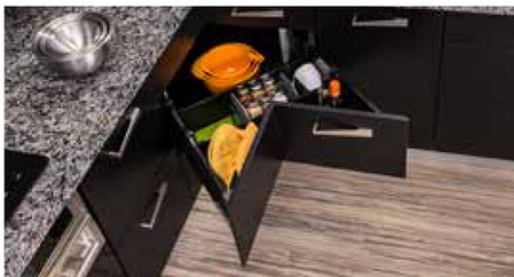
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WORDS: Tamara Chuang



MOVE OVER ROSIE

Finally we're getting somewhere. A robot that does chores! Hello NEO from 1X in Silicon Valley. NEO—which, in 1X's demo videos, looks like a really skinny person wearing a knit bodysuit—is a full-figured humanoid robot with two eyes, circles for ears, and opposable thumbs. It climbs stairs, opens doors, and even gets dirty (the body suit is washable). While NEO is autonomous by default, the initial early-adopter version coming out in 2026 is a robot in training. It needs to learn how to use the washer, fold clothes, vacuum, feed the dog, and do other household tasks.

[+1x.tech/neo](https://1x.tech/neo)





FLOWER POT TOP

If MOBJE's Lapel Raffia Vase seems inspired by an oversized summer hat, it probably was. The brand comes from the Fuji Hat Co., which sought to weave raffia palms into objets d'art. Raffia Vase is woven from raffia palm to create a flexible brim that can be tweaked into shape, just like the overhang of a sun hat. An included vessel inside the brim keeps dry flowers upright and fresh flowers quenched.

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TIME TWISTER

Besonder Design's NRH Mini is a twist on a far-from-ordinary desk clock. Numbers are printed on pieces of paper and attached to a unique set of clock gears that sit on a tripod. Add movement (powered by an AA battery) and the clock moves like a sideways pinwheel. As time ticks by, so does the card of the hour.

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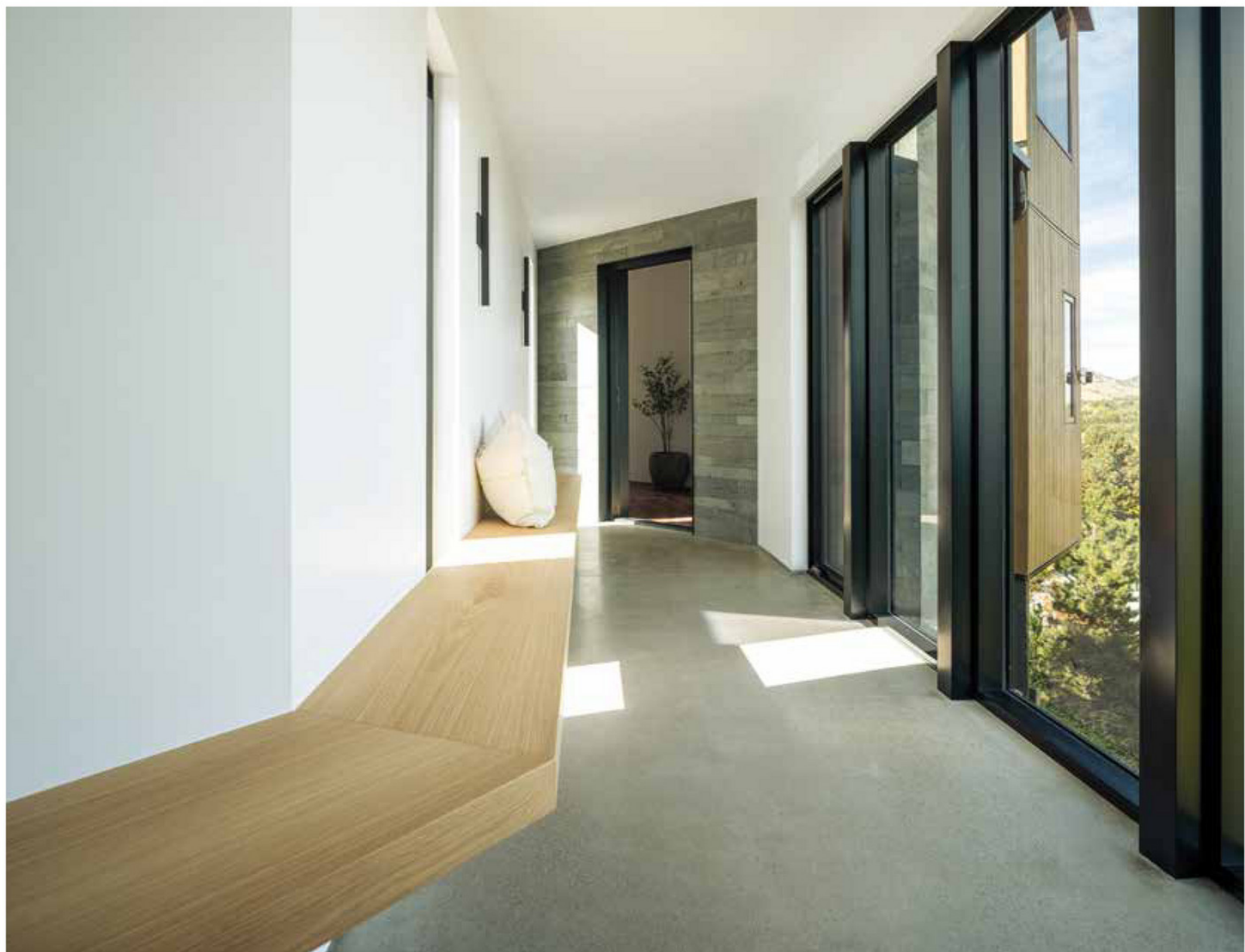
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SHELL SHOCKED

The name says it all: Nutcracker Guillotine. Forged by hand in Germany, this unique steel nutcracker is really meant for a public spectacle. A tip in the center works with the weight as it drops on the nut, allowing the "splitting wedge," as it's called, to provide extra force to crack any nut. On harder nuts, designers suggest users "drop the weight several times."

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MINI MONOLITH

With a nod to ancient Greek and Roman architecture, Temple Flashlight is machined aluminum made to mimic Corinthian columns with as little fuss as possible. It's the first flashlight from Craighill, which makes all sorts of handy desk tools, and is USB-C rechargeable, water resistant, and compact—the tool that certainly would have come in handy in antiquity, or any era.

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FOOD FOR BOX

Setting up a delectable display of snacks or hors d'oeuvres is so much simpler when you just fill in blanks. In the case of the Bamboo Tray No. 1, all that's asked is filling up the six colorful ceramic square bowls that fit perfectly in the tray. No food? No problem. The minimalist tray also looks like a design piece when empty.

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BIG NOISE, SMALL BOX

Morel's BIGGIE portable speaker wants you to focus on one thing: its big sound. The speaker is not large, at seven-by-seven inches. But inside the sleek design, there's a custom-designed four-inch woofer for those low tones, and a soft-dome tweeter for hitting the high notes. Plus, it uses Morel's own DSP (Digital Signal Processor) technology to optimize the audio signal. Bluetooth-friendly and more stylish than a Minecraft character wearing headphones, BIGGIE comes in nine colors.

+morelhifi.com



CATCH THE WAVE

Anna Dawson's surf-inspired hanging coat rack, Swell, was such a breakout hit that the designer is back with a scaled-down version called the Swell Mini. Doubling as 3D wall art, Swell Mini disguises convenient nubs to hang a jacket, bag, or cap on, as well as a spot to stash small items like keys in the cup-like ends. Its monochromatic nataform curve seems a bit cheeky, but it takes up less space than the original and catches the small necessities in life.

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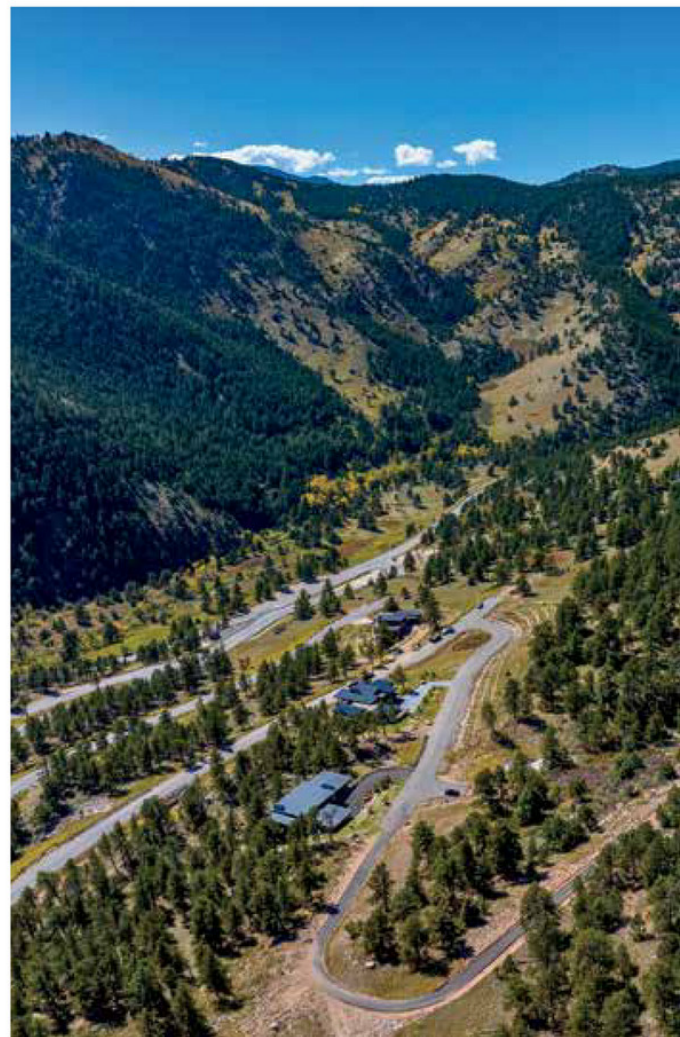




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RENOWNED & NEW

Illustrious architect John Pawson debuts the Drift Sofa group for Herman Miller, offering a unique opportunity to purchase a piece from one of the modernist movement's most legendary makers.

WORDS: Linne Halpern



John Pawson is one of modernism's preeminent contemporary voices. From architecture to furniture, and everything in between, the British designer has spent over 40 years making a name for himself with his rigorous minimalist style. His work spans from private homes to storied museums, prominent hotels, and cultural institutions all over the world. While many hear minimalism and conjure an image of cold starkness, Pawson's specific articulation is imbued with life and warmth. His physical spaces use proportion, surface, and light to offer quiet dialogues and moments of serenity. Meanwhile, his furniture collections prioritize user comfort and organic materials through depth and layered shapes.

A distinct formal perspective is evident throughout Pawson's diverse history, which seamlessly moves between circles of fashion's luxury elite to projects of extreme modesty, like religious monasteries and chapels. Past clients include such arbiters of taste as Calvin Klein, Karl Lagerfeld, and Martha Stewart. Having grown up in Yorkshire and spending his young adult years in Japan, Pawson's cross-cultural inspirations and far-ranging architectural references have informed his personal ideology with preoccupations of ritual and repetition. He counts Shiro Kuramata among his major influences, for the great 20th-century designer's use of industrial materials and major contributions to the Memphis Group's postmodern principles.

Though nearing his eighth decade, Pawson is more astute than ever. His latest invention is the Pawson Drift Sofa, a sofa group that includes Sofa, Lounge Chair, and Sectional, created in collaboration with



John Pawson's signature minimalism, evident through his decades-long architectural career, shines through the clean lines of his latest furniture collection. The Drift group achieves a quiet elegance through intentional geometry and elevated, organic materials.





**“A GOOD SOFA SHOULD BE ELEGANT, COMFORTABLE,
AND PEOPLE SHOULD LOOK GOOD ON IT.”** —John Pawson

and available exclusively through Herman Miller. The Drift Sofa’s design meets the functional needs of our contemporary lifestyles without sacrificing elegance or refinement. Inspired by the casualness of his personal country home, Pawson envisioned the Drift as a place for family to gather, to lounge and curl up together. It’s generously sized and intentionally deep for maximum relaxation—a sanctuary for body and mind. It’s rare to achieve the dual feats of plush, oversized cushions and a structural, polished frame, yet the Drift silhouette expertly performs both. Hard lines and soft, rounded shapes juxtapose in harmonious alignment.

Rendered with sustainability in mind, the sofa group is made

from 80 percent natural materials, utilizing a North American hardwood frame and plant-based latex cushions, in addition to responsibly-sourced down feather filling. Durable and sturdy, expert joinery makes the square-edge design come to life with precision, similarly to Pawson’s architecture. The recessed base creates a floating effect, elevated off the floor to appear simultaneously weighty in presence and daintily buoyant. Also pulling from Pawson’s architectural philosophy, the furniture piece is designed to feature from all angles, boasting a 360-degree approach intended to fit anywhere within a space. The Drift does not have to sit against a wall, as every element of its geometry is meant for perception and appreciation.

In addition to the tenants of physical comfort, which are essential for a sofa, Pawson speaks to the concept of “visual comfort,” a high modernist idea that objects should also look accessible and inviting for everyday use. A relatability of shape and familiarity of form aid in this goal, encouraging people to touch and feel with ease, without self-consciousness. Of course, the presentation of simplicity is achieved through the impressive feat of hyper-thoughtful engineering.

While his accreditations are exemplary, Pawson continues to touch all aspects of his projects with his designated humility, integrity, and ingenious spirit, offering the Drift Sofa as proof that he’s operating at the apex of his creativity. ■



The Drift design features a hardwood frame with a structured, recessed base and soft, rounded cushions for maximum comfort. The design exemplifies Pawson’s commitment to modernism’s intertwined ideals of form and function.

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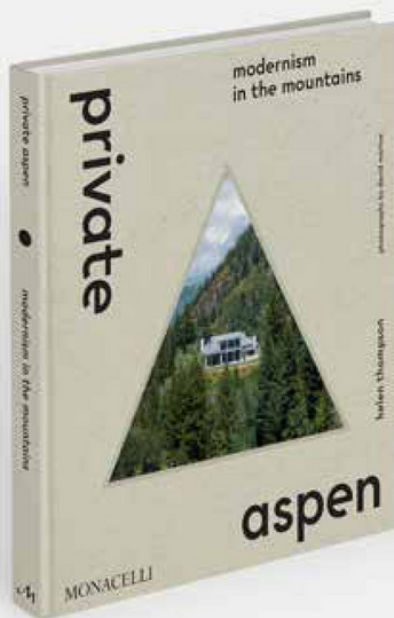
PEAK FORM

In a landscape known for its natural drama, *Private Aspen* makes the case for modernist architecture that's equally compelling and deeply contextual.

WORDS: Laurie Lauletta-Boshart

Private Aspen

By Helen Thompson
with photographs by David Marlow
Monacelli Press



Renowned for its striking beauty, Aspen is a distinctive destination that defies capture on film or paper alone. One must experience it. Nestled in the Roaring Fork Valley and encircled by mountains on three sides, this beloved Colorado town blends luxurious grandeur with the spirit of outdoor adventure—and since the 1950s, a bold embrace of modern architecture.

In her latest work, *Private Aspen*, author Helen Thompson advances the notion that the best way to understand Aspen's true essence is through its architecture. Collaborating with photographer David Marlow, she offers readers an intimate look inside 18 modernist homes that reflect the town's evolving identity and timeless appeal. Published by Monacelli, the book is both a visual journey for design enthusiasts and a timely commentary on how architecture can—and must—respond to place.

Throughout the book, Thompson explores how modernism is reinterpreted in a mountain context. The featured homes are defined by their sensitivity to light, materials, and most importantly, environment. The author showcases residences that are deeply rooted in the topography and cultural heritage of the Rockies. Wide expanses of glass, sloped roofs, local stone, reclaimed timber, and steel appear as structural and environmental responses.

One of the book's greatest strengths is its regional context. Thompson highlights the work of prominent local architecture firms such as CCY Architects and Rowland + Broughton, whose longstanding presence has shaped much of Aspen's modern design language. These firms—and others featured in the book, like nationally acclaimed architects Peter Bohlin, Takashi Yanai, and Charles Gwathmey—



"THIS ISN'T ARCHITECTURE THAT COULD BE JUST ANYWHERE; IT'S ARCHITECTURE THAT BELONGS HERE, IN ASPEN."





understand the complexities of building in mountain settings: the challenging access, the need for thermal efficiency, and dramatic elevation changes. They also understand what it means to build with restraint in an environment that already offers so much visual drama.

Basalt-based firm CCY Architects has two featured residences. One traces its roots back to Aspen's silver mining era. An 1880s Victorian home, previously turned into a duplex with an inelegant addition, was restored by CCY. The architects replaced the addition with a detached guest house and recital space, forming a courtyard with the original structure. Dubbed the Music Box, the structure features perforated privacy siding cleverly inspired by a Chopin composition. The second project sits in a clearing among old-growth spruce trees with views of Garret Peak. Inspired by the homeowner's Norwegian heritage, the alpine retreat serves as a base camp for year-round outdoor activities, especially skiing. CCY also served as the architect of record for The Mollie, a modern boutique hotel mentioned in the book.

With studios in Aspen and Denver, Rowland + Broughton's two featured projects are Meadow House and Ridge House. Meadow House is sited on an expansive Aspen pasture with views of Mount Hayden. The owner, who previously lived in Austria, brought a deep appreciation

for mountain culture. The design features simple Scandinavian materials, generous glazing, and a custom-forged double-sided fireplace. The firm's Ridge House was originally designed by Ellie Brickham, the town's first practicing female architect. Built on 35 acres, it overlooks all four ski mountains. The residence was transformed and modernized with the original essence of the home's footprint and character retained. Rowland + Broughton also completed a renovation and expansion of the historic Hotel Jerome, and collaborated on the Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies at the Aspen Institute, and the Aspen Art Museum—all highlighted in the book.

For Colorado readers, *Private Aspen* especially resonates. It offers a lens into what makes the region's architecture distinct: not only its physical responses to mountain living, but also its cultural ones. These homes reflect a uniquely Colorado philosophy, blending sophistication with modesty, and design with durability.

David Marlow's photography brings it all to life. His images capture the shifting seasonal light and the seamless transition between indoors and out. The work is aspirational, but also grounded in a specific sense of place. This isn't architecture that could be just anywhere; it's architecture that belongs here, in Aspen. ■

ULTRA

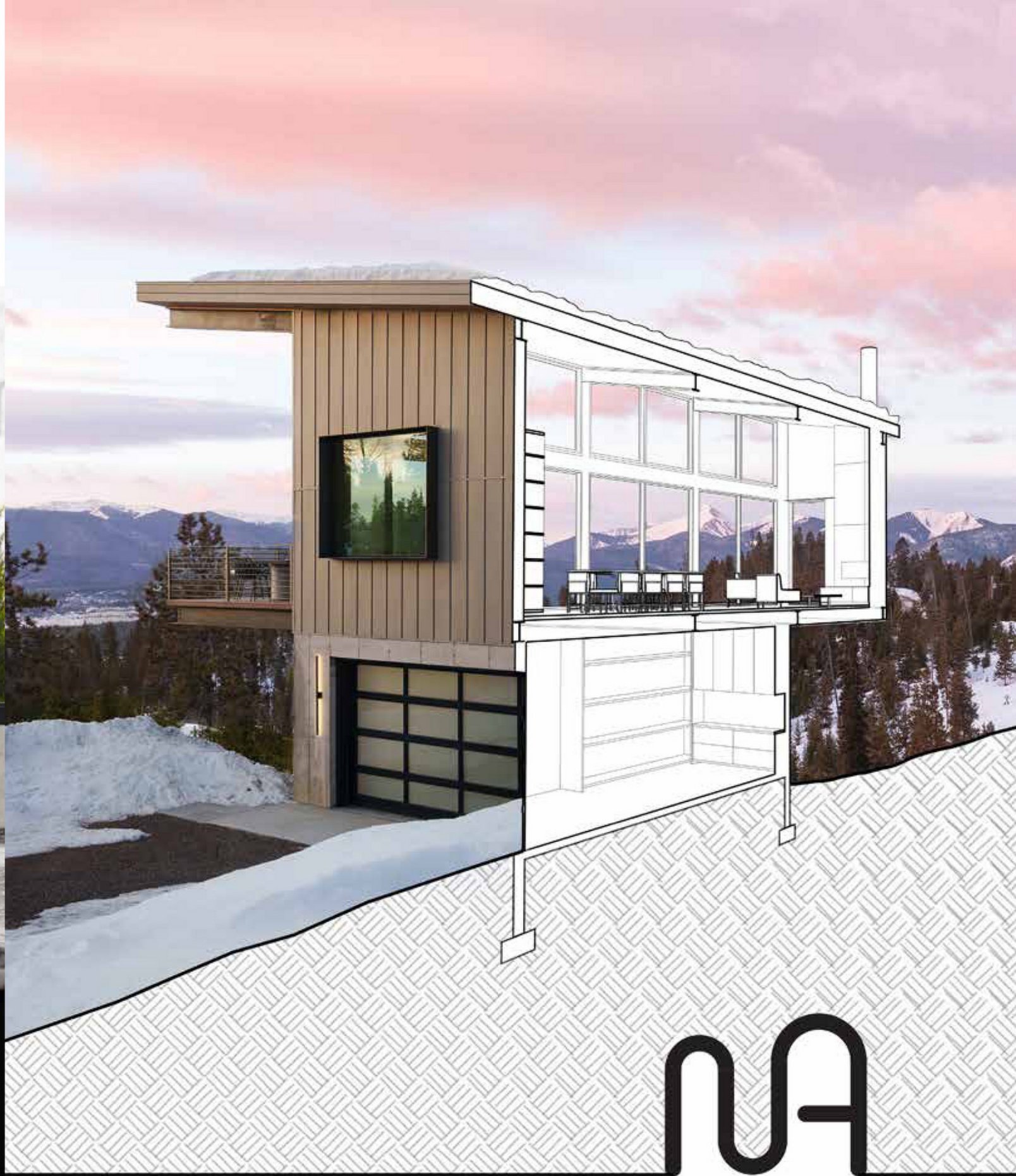
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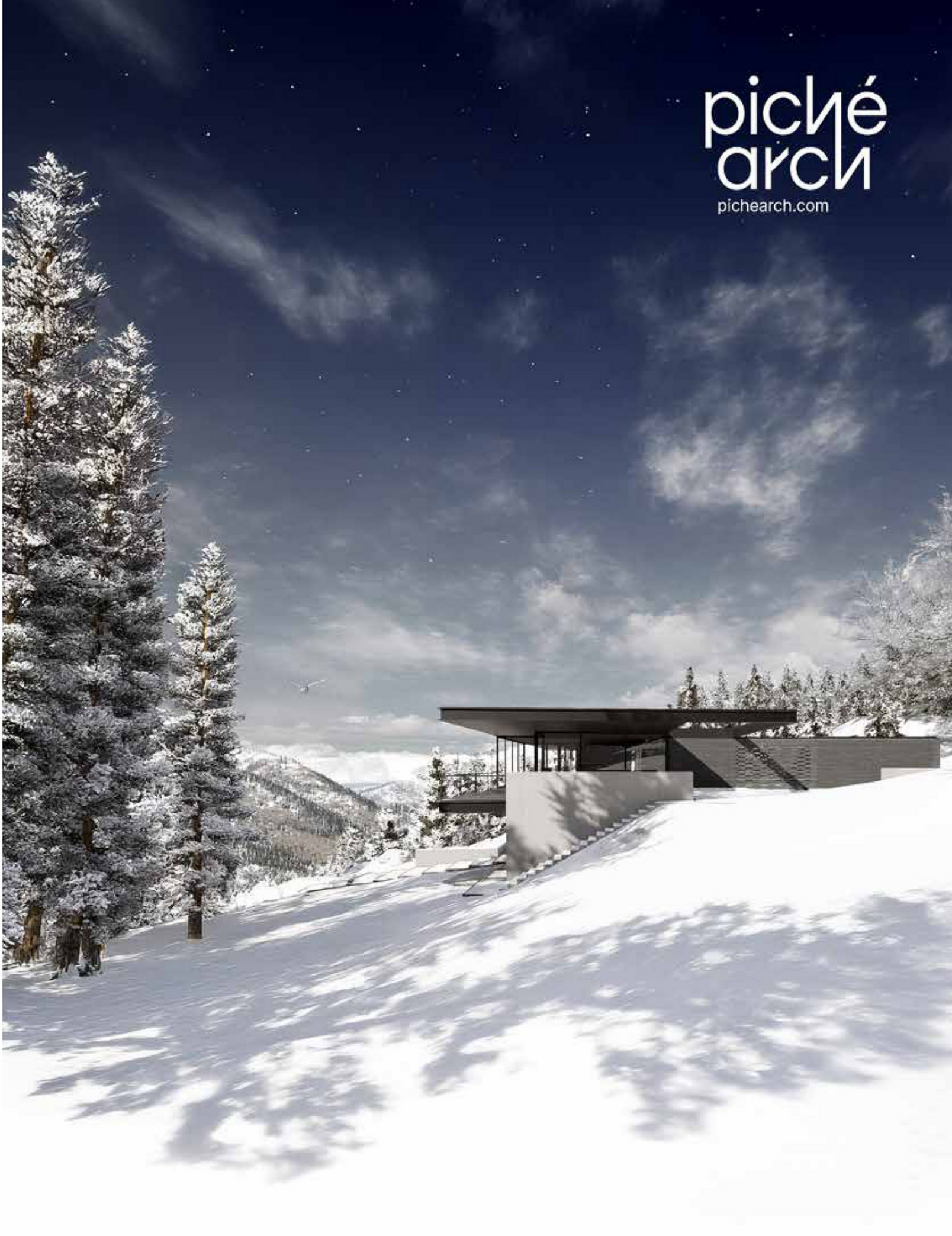


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STUDIOS



WHERE THE SPIRIT LEADS

In an unconventional storefront on Boulder's busy Pearl Street, artist Darcie Shively's multidimensional studio invites the unknown.

WORDS: Eleanor Perry-Smith

IMAGES: Daniel Jenkins



THE BUBBLY BLUE ENTRANCE OF TOP HAT SUPPLY FOR JOURNEYS ON BOULDER'S PEARL STREET PROJECTS PLAYFUL EASE, BUT INSIDE, THINGS ARE SERIOUSLY SPECIAL.

"One couple from Santa Barbara came in here while window shopping and left reconnected with their creativity," says artist Darcie Shively, who manifested this space over a year ago. "Turns out manifestation works."

In 2024, the City of Boulder awarded Shively a hearty grant to help infuse the area with community-minded creative programming. She hadn't even finished setting up her nonprofit yet when the grant was set before her. It was just meant to be.

It's difficult to describe a storefront in a shopping district that has little intention of selling things. Of course, there are the "Compassionate Star Being" hats and a handful of products selected to bolster creativity, but those proceeds go right back into the upkeep for the labor of love that is Top Hat Supply for Journeys.

So, what's in the name?

Years before, the adjacent space was indeed called Top Hat Supply, a shop for janitorial and paper products. Shively, a weaver, was looking for a large studio to hold her floor loom, with enough wall space to display ten years' worth of happenstance-laden textiles. Top Hat fit the bill. She set the intention of staying put so she could continue to craft her high-demand weaving commissions, and it grew into a desire to usher others into the existential freedom that she'd unlocked years before: "During the pandemic, I became aware of something opening up in me," she shares.

Shively made the conscious choice to move out of the stress-inducing world of advertising Apple products as a strategist and foray into the unknown. Then, last year, a patron

Artists Michelle Polizzi and Darcie Shively sit outside their studio at 1721 Pearl Street in Boulder. The painted window by John Kieselhorst sets the inviting tone for their open-door policy.



invited her to explore shamanistic practices in a year-long training bookended by visits to Cortes Island off the coast of British Columbia. This gave her the skill set to guide meditations—or journeys—for those hoping to connect with their inner spirit. Think hallucinogenic awakening minus the drugs. It's a truly magical experience.

For Shively and her studio partner, ceramist Michelle Polizzi, Top Hat Supply for Journeys is all about freeing people from a limited perspective of self. "The mission is to reconnect people with the creativity within themselves. And I don't mean only to art, but an expanded sense of possibility," says Shively, as Polizzi nods while shaping a robust star altar wall hanging out of clay.

The space has three levels—the main floor is where they work and host gatherings. Many times, it's their

Listening Nights where an artist or musician shares while others hone their ability to listen deeply. Up the sunny yellow stairs is a little lounge where people are welcome to come in and hang out or work on their own projects, no purchase necessary. "Someone referred to it as their dorm," Shively says. Next to that is a cozy nook where she hosts journeys, sometimes in groups, sometimes solo. All of the proceeds from her journeys and workshops go back into the nonprofit. In the basement is a large work table for messy creations along with Polizzi's kiln. Looking around, it feels like a beloved, inclusive clubhouse, like a treehouse where imagination runs rampant. Kids are welcome too. Shively hosts journeys for families, and kids can bring along a beloved stuffedie to comfort them or serve as a guide.

Shively sits at her floor loom, designed by the former Schacht Spindle Company, a family-owned Boulder company for 50 years. "I have a bigger loom at home," Shively laughs. "My son calls it the Pirate Ship." The artwork surrounding Polizzi's work table, central to the studio, is on rotation. Everything in the space is moveable in order to host events and workshops.

OPPOSITE: Shively affixes charred wood to one of her newer works, "I was Burned into the Shape of an Outline," spun from black sheep's wool. "The black sheep just hasn't been celebrated enough," she says.



"THE MISSION IS TO RECONNECT PEOPLE WITH THE CREATIVITY WITHIN THEMSELVES. AND I DON'T MEAN ONLY TO ART, BUT AN EXPANDED SENSE OF POSSIBILITY." —Darcie Shively

It's easy to see why Boulder invested in the Top Hat Supply for Journeys concept. There is certainly a demand for outlets that give more than they take. For the next four years, Shively and Polizzi will keep an open door to their cosmic portal. According to local artist Jamie Kripke, who initiated Top Hat's Listening Nights, it's a delightful bolthole. "Downtown Boulder, and especially East Pearl, are pretty unique in that many of the commercial spaces are owned by a relatively small number of people. This makes rents pretty high and hard for independent businesses to afford. So it's a much-needed and welcomed addition to this part of town."

Anyone looking to volunteer and invest in the Top Hat Supply for Journeys vision is also welcome. Shively says they could use someone to help stay organized. For those hoping to attend a listening night, journey, or workshop, keep an eye on their Instagram. And while this venture is unfolding beautifully, Shively has yet another vision. The next door space where she keeps her loom and weavings is ripe for a refresh, and could hold much larger community events. In the meantime, it quietly houses her stunning weavings that were born of chance encounters.

Shively grins, looking up at a fetching black and white weaving that uses rectangles to represent documented rolls of the dice: "We played Craps over three nights for my parents' 50th wedding anniversary," she says, explaining how the piece's formal elements were determined.

WHERE THE SPIRIT LEADS



More weavings stretch along the wall, one designed by the wills of her grandmother's astrological birth and passing dates, another by Magic 8 Ball predictions, and one peppered with playdate dice rolls with her son. "He helped me to see again," she says.

Plans for future exhibits of these weavings are in the works. A couple stunning pieces are woven with black sheep's wool, others outlined with charred wood, and more dusted with ash have yet to meet the public's eye. They all tell a story that is both ancient and relevant. Especially now. "People are feeling chronic stress, but they sense we aren't meant to be like this—at each others' throats," Shively muses.

If one feels stuck or adrift, then Top Hat Supply for Journeys is a great place to start. True to its sartorial namesake, the space is both a whimsical topper for an evening out, and a mysterious black hole from which magic will certainly emerge. ■



TOP: Shively's love affair with color took her into new territory with "The Energy of Joy" on the left, and "Why I Wear Yellow" on the right, adorned with chunky cocoon features.

ABOVE: Up the studio's yellow stairs is a relaxed tea room that's open to the public, with an adjacent cozy space for journeying. Few things in the shop are for sale, but one can snag a delightfully boxy Compassionate Star Being hat or local art prints. "We think of it as a creative sanctuary," Shively says of the multipurpose space.



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FANTASTIC

A photograph of a minimalist interior space. On the left, a window with a white frame is partially visible, with a woven basket sitting on the sill. The wall is a light, neutral color. On the right, a large, solid orange abstract painting is mounted on the wall. Below the painting, a dark wooden coffee table is positioned. The floor is made of dark wood with a herringbone pattern. Sunlight is streaming in from the window, creating a pattern of light and shadow on the floor.

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GREEN WITH ENVY

WORDS: Rachel Walker Youngblade

AHH, THE AVOCADO. Once considered exotic, now a household and menu essential. This humble fruit has evolved from culinary fad to lifestyle statement, shaping how we eat, decorate, and even self-care.

For some, the avocado conjures a 1970s kitchen—refrigerators and tiles in that unmistakable yellow-green that suggests a calm, natural energy amid synthetic times. For others, it's kitschy cuteness, a nostalgic nod to the past, or the embodiment of health and wellness.

The avocado's meteoric rise to ubiquity is multifaceted: part food trend, part design muse. As a motif, it checks every design box: instantly recognizable, flexible in form, culturally relevant thanks to its photogenic nature, and emotionally charged with ideas of health, comfort, and abundance. Once mostly known for its signature color, the curvaceous shape of the fruit is now equally recognizable.

Once a delicacy, now a design muse, the avocado's journey from kitchen counter to cultural icon is a story of taste, color, and shape.

Beyond its visual appeal, the avocado earns its cult status on substance alone. Packed with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, potassium, and antioxidants, it supports everything from cardiovascular and brain health to glowing skin. When applied topically, avocado oil's vitamins C and E nourish and hydrate, boosting skin elasticity and appearance.

The fruit itself has never been more popular. Since the U.S. lifted its century-long ban on Mexican imports in the late 1990s, consumption has skyrocketed, climbing from less than one pound per person per year in the '70s to nearly nine pounds a year today.

On our plates, around the house, in our hair—there are avocados everywhere. The following finds celebrate the fruit's many forms, each one a reminder that good design, like good guacamole, is always in demand.



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No more runaway pits. This sleek, all-in-one tool from Japan slices, scoops, and de-pits with ergonomic precision—perfect for avocados and citrus alike. Available from Mise, the Japanese American-curated culinary shop, you can choose gift wrapping in hand-printed furoshiki cloth.

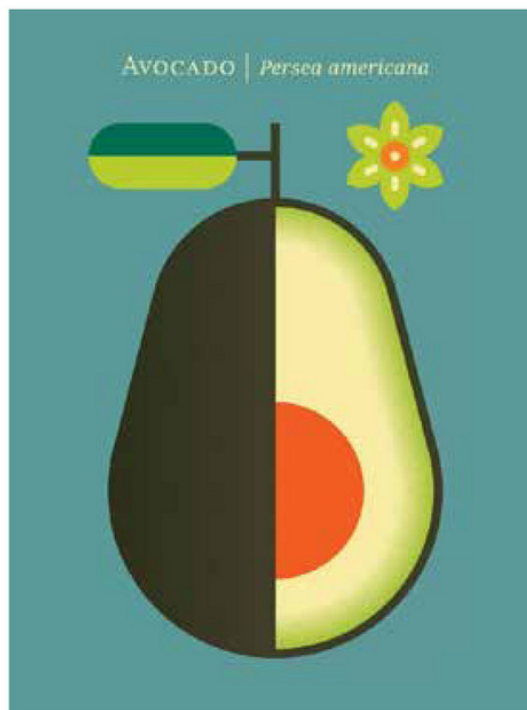
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AVOCADO PRINT

Graphic precision meets organic form. Designer and illustrator Christopher Dina distills the avocado's curves and color into modern minimalism, celebrating nature through clean geometry and saturated hue. Printed on archival paper, his fruit and vegetable series turns everyday produce into timeless pop art for the modern kitchen or gallery wall.

+christopherdina.com

GREEN WITH ENVY



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WIRE MESH BOWL

Let your avocados breathe. This powder-coated steel mesh bowl encourages air circulation for perfect ripening and longer-lasting fruit. Choose tonal green for subtle harmony or bold red or blue for contrast. Functional and sculptural, this bowl elevates your kitchen countertop.

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LIGNE ROSET TOGO FIRESIDE CHAIR

A 1970s icon reborn. Designed by Michel Ducaroy, the Togo's sculptural curves and plush quilting echo the avocado's gentle form. In deep green velvet—aptly named Farmland—it nods to the decade when avocado ruled interior palettes. Made in France, it's comfort and design history wrapped in one irresistible seat.

+dwr.com



ORNAMENT

For the true devotee. Handblown in Poland, John Derian's glass avocado turns everyday adoration into holiday art. It's a sparkling nod to the fruit that's as beloved on toast as it is dangling from a well-dressed tree.

+johnderian.com



TOAST TOPPERS

Give your toast a supporting cast. This curated box from Here Here Market brings together five small-batch standouts: spicy Green Chili Crisp, tangy Pickled Red Onion, luxe Truffle Salt, Jalapeño Ghee, and sweet Corn Relish. Crunchy, salty, and endlessly versatile, they turn every avocado toast into something new.

+hereheremarket.com

modernindenvver.com



AVOCADO VASE

Part science experiment, part sculpture. ILEX Studio's Avocado Vase turns kitchen scraps into living art—suspending a pit above water as roots unfurl below. Available in four elegant hues, including MoMA-exclusive colors inspired by Ellsworth Kelly, it's proof that good design can make even growth feel effortless.

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NEW FRAME OF MIND

A mountain home lacking coherence finds a better flow with the help of Dynia Architects and homeowners who embraced a “push me” mindset, resulting in a retreat for work, play, and calm.

WORDS: Rachel Walker Youngblade

IMAGES: Parrish Ruiz de Velasco





NEW FRAME OF MIND

In a Colorado mountain home, you expect a gorgeous view. Dynia Architects' Swan Lake residence in Breckenridge had one. Now, if only you could see it. Obscured and chopped up by unusually large eight-inch window mullions, the view was the first thing the homeowners wanted to fix when they hired Dynia to reimagine their mountain getaway.

"You have this gorgeous view, and you kill it with all these lines," lead architect Bob White says of starting with the most obvious opportunities. "We had to capitalize on what was already there."

That initial scope quickly morphed into a whole home renovation when the homeowners realized they had two choices: tweak a few small things, or take it down to the studs. To the studs they went. Now that they're through it, the pair is so glad they trusted their gut, and the team at Dynia, who became true partners in a project that carried them all to the edges of their comfort zones.

MULTI-USE SPACES FOR A MULTI-FACETED LIFE

The couple, co-founders of a tech company, moved their life and business from the Bay Area to Denver at the height of the pandemic, seeking a better balance between work and family. A mountain retreat was part of that vision: close enough to the city, but far enough to quiet the noise.



White walls act as a museum-like backdrop for 15-foot Japanese kites that soar above the great room. It's an artful nod to afternoons the homeowners spent flying kites on the front lawn with their daughter. The collection is both visually striking and a reminder of what the home is really about: experiencing life together. A rug shaped precisely to hug the hearth reflects Dynia's quietly precise craftsmanship.





“We lived in the house for 18 months to see what we liked and didn’t,” they say of their patient approach. “The biggest issues were usability.”

Rooms were oddly shaped, an exposed upper deck sat empty thanks to freezing wind in the winter and blistering summer sun, and the great room’s fireplace location on the far wall killed conversation instead of starting it.

“Everybody was looking in the same direction, not at each other,” White notes of the original home’s lack of flow and interaction. The homeowners found themselves and their guests working at makeshift desks in the garage or sitting on their beds with laptops. Not ideal, to say the least.

A key design goal was to create a multi-functional space: a family home, a workspace, a shareable vacation getaway, and a place where neighbors and business partners could gather. Dynia had their work cut out for them.

FROM FUNKY TO FLUID

White doesn’t mince words when describing the original structure: “The house was funky in all the wrong ways.” Multiple rooflines competed for attention, materials and styles clashed, and though the setting was enviable, the house itself had no clear identity or style.

With paneled appliances and no upper cabinets, the kitchen exudes calm. “We needed a house that would quiet our brains,” the homeowners share. Large windows open to views on multiple sides, while the discreet range and vent—tucked cleverly in front of a window—keeps the sightlines unobstructed.

OPPOSITE: A slatted wall with suspended glass shelves provides storage and separation while maintaining natural light. The long dining table doubles as a meeting space, epitomizing the home’s blend of function and hospitality.



“The original home had almost every roof form you could think of,” White explains. “Our job was to give it clarity and hierarchy.”

Some fixes were invisible but essential, like addressing water leaks and poor weatherproofing, which are par for the course in a large-scale renovation. But the design moves that transformed the home into a beautiful and functional structure are unmistakable.

By enlarging and simplifying the great room window, the mountain views took their rightful place at center stage. Relocating the fireplace created a strong central axis, laying the groundwork for easy conversation and connection. The unused upper deck was enclosed to create a light-filled office with panoramic views. Large glass sliders maintain an open, airy feel, as do the wood-slat ceiling and walls that continue from indoors to out.

REIMAGINING A MOUNTAIN HOME

The team was on the same page with the desired aesthetic: Yes, the home is in the mountains. But no, that didn’t necessitate rough-hewn logs or bear-themed decor.

“We wanted something with a modern feel—not a log cabin,” the couple share of their more contemporary

“IMAGINE A MUSEUM. IF IT’S BRIGHTLY COLORED, YOU CAN’T SEE THE WORK. THE HOUSE PLAYS A ROLE, BUT THAT ROLE ISN’T TO BE LOUDER THAN EVERYTHING ELSE.” –Bob White



A wall of *shou sugi ban* cladding carries from the interior office to the exterior façade, creating a seamless transition and the illusion of uninterrupted space. The charred wood adds texture and warmth within the home's restrained palette, complemented by textiles and furniture.

OPPOSITE: From the bedroom, a glimpse of the winding path to the sauna hints at the rhythm of the home, where moments of work, rest, and ritual are woven together.



taste. That aligned perfectly with Dynia's philosophy. For more than 30 years, the firm has reimagined mountain architecture, pushing beyond rustic clichés toward a contemporary vocabulary of clean lines, thoughtful materials, and contextual sensitivity.

At Swan Lake, that translates into dark, flat-roofed forms, warm cedar ceilings, and wood slat walls that call on texture and materiality to impart a sense of calm and relaxation. The result is a modern retreat deeply tied to its landscape.

RESTRAINT MEETS PLAYFULNESS

Dynia provided the architectural frame and a clean backdrop for the homeowners to infuse the space with their style and personality. "Imagine a museum," White explains. "If it's brightly colored, you can't see the work. The house plays a role, but that role isn't to be louder than everything else."

That restraint allows whimsical details to shine. Colorful 15-foot Japanese kites dance down the walls in the great room. A hidden door connects the upstairs office to the family room below, equal parts functional and fun.

In the stairwell, Dynia's addition of a skylight drew attention to the possibility of the space. The homeowners tapped Denver-based artist RUMTUM to fill the walls with a custom mural in bold swaths of color, morphing the stairwell from mundane pass-through to an explosion of fun. It's one of the family's new favorite spots.

In the primary suite, the couple debated whether to enlarge the bedroom but, with Dynia's guidance, realized size wasn't the real issue. What they craved was openness. The solution was a slatted wall with mirrors suspended on the bathroom side. The gesture cost far less than expanding the room, but delivered far more—an unexpected design moment that makes the space feel bigger, brighter, and delightfully unconventional.

The design process was anything but one-sided. In an impressive show of self-awareness, the homeowners asked White and team to push them beyond their initial instincts, quipping "left to our own devices, everything would be some shade of gray."

That push was all White needed: "Oh, they're down to dance," he remembers thinking excitedly. "This is going to be an amazing project."



In the playroom, a partial wall carves out more usable space while keeping the energy light and flexible. The home's neutral palette takes on a playful tone in this space, with a grass-green rug, insect sculptures climbing the walls, and leaf-shaped pillows bringing the outdoors in.

Prior renovation stumbles meant the homeowners learned a few lessons the hard way, including the value of trust. “We had a lot of trust in Bob. He was very aligned with our vision and our original budget. With any new idea, he’d prompt us, ‘Does it still align with your value statement?’”

“We learned how to do the tango with each other and push the design forward in a way that wasn’t just a cookie cutter spec home,” White says of building a collaborative

relationship over time. “If a client challenges you to design something, that’s always exciting.”

ENJOYING THE VIEW

The Swan Lake Residence is still evolving. A gear shed, music studio, expanded cold plunge, and new landscaping are in the works. But the heart of the project is complete. “It was about creating a place that felt calm, warm, and welcoming—where the outside views mattered

more than the inside ones,” the homeowners reflect.

What started with a new window evolved into a new home, and in hindsight, it was the only way to get it right. Now they’re excited to close this renovation chapter and live in the mountain home of their dreams. “No more work on that house,” they laugh. “We’ll find other projects.” ■



The spa outbuilding fulfills a dream years in the making. Built to exact specifications, the sauna includes a window framing a private mountain view. “Typically, a sauna is inward-focused,” says architect Bob White. “But if your only view is a panorama of the mountains, it’s hard to say that’s not also inward-focused.”

PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTURE

Dynia Architects

INTERIOR DESIGNER

Honed Studio, Dynia Architects

GENERAL CONTRACTOR + BUILDER

OCG

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

KL&A Engineers and Builders

MILLWORK

Vonmod

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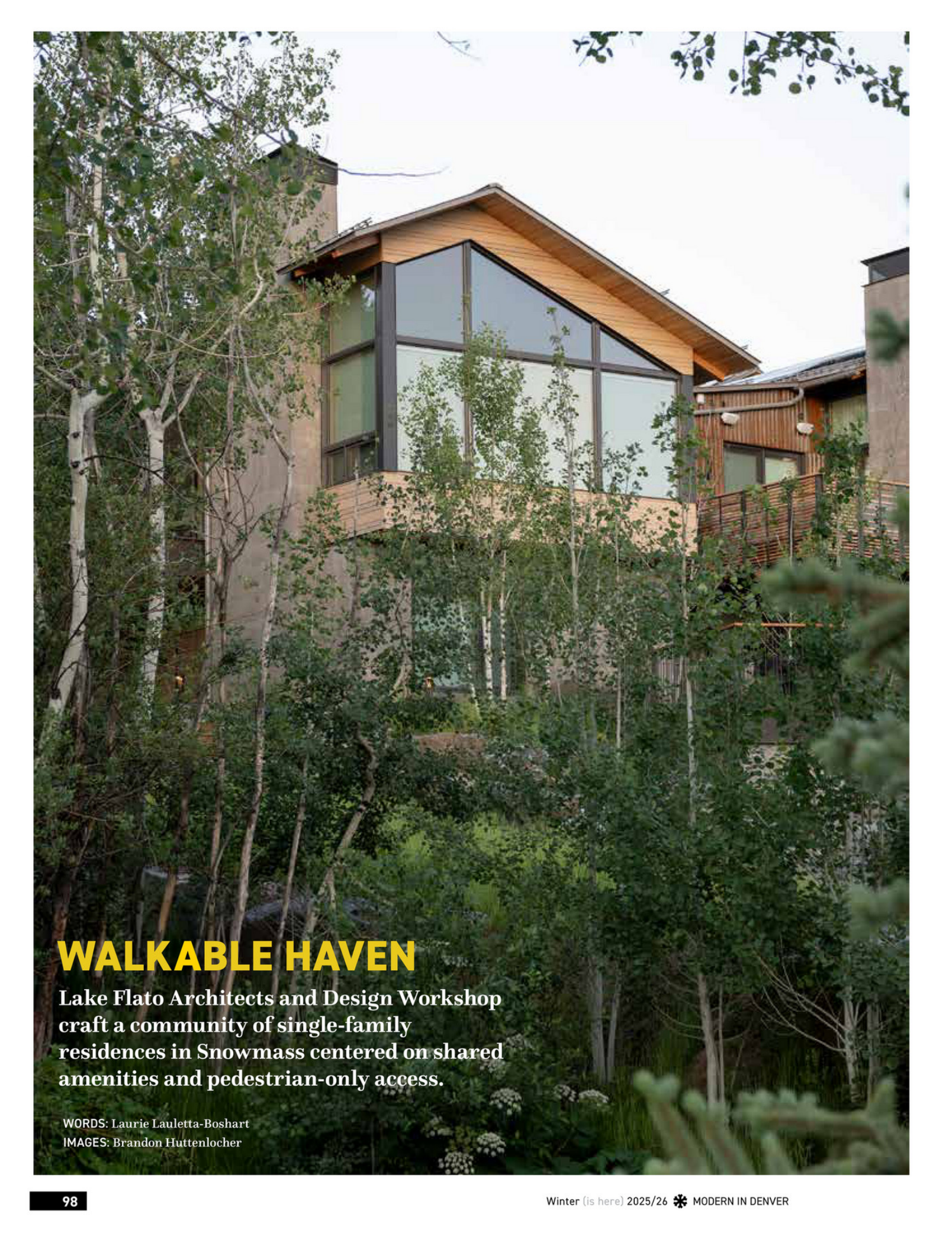
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WALKABLE HAVEN

Lake Flato Architects and Design Workshop craft a community of single-family residences in Snowmass centered on shared amenities and pedestrian-only access.

WORDS: Laurie Lauletta-Boshart

IMAGES: Brandon Huttenlocher



The pressure to maximize land use in resort mountain towns has pushed many developers to prioritize car-centric, high-density housing over shared community space and connection to the environment. The Havens, an award-winning series of 10 single-family residences by San Antonio-based architects Lake Flato and Aspen-based master planner and landscape architects Design Workshop, eschewed that philosophy. Situated slope-side near the base of Fanny Hill in popular Snowmass, the modern alpine residences are arranged to maximize the community's connection to nature, and provide access to an extensive network of recreational amenities. The pedestrian-focused design stands in stark contrast to the surrounding sea of high-rise condominiums.

Detailed grading and site studies illustrated the adverse impact of a conventional, car-oriented approach, prompting the team to reimagine the site as a more connected, walkable community. "Lake Flato were wonderful partners throughout, adapting building forms and contributing to the design dialogue that made this master plan so successful," says Mike Albert, landscape architect with Design Workshop.

The spirit of collaboration evolved into a shared design ethos—one rooted in connection to the land, to the community, and to the experience of place.

"Our projects always strive to create meaningful connections with the landscape, and to foster vibrant communities," says Graham Beach, Lake Flato associate partner and co-leader of the firm's Eco-Conservation Studio, which places environmental stewardship

WALKABLE HAVEN



Designed to maximize interaction with the surrounding landscape, the Havens modern alpine residences provide access to an extensive network of recreational and shared amenities. By relocating parking underground, the plan eliminates vehicle traffic above grade, linking the community through a network of pedestrian pathways and native plantings of aspen, meadow grasses, and wild lupine.

at the forefront of projects and decisions. “Ultimately, the success of the project is a direct result of a close and fruitful collaboration with Design Workshop and developer East West Partners,” he says. Working with a very constrained 1.5-acre site, the design team was charged with creating a pedestrian-oriented residential community that accommodated the desired density of residences and shared community amenities.

“The primary challenge was access to these homes,” explains Beach. “We had an adjacent aspen grove to protect, some steeply sloped terrain, and a wetland in the middle of the site, so it was really about managing the site constraints.” The design team used the site’s natural slope to configure a 27-car parking garage underground, preserving both the natural landscape and mountain views, while crafting a car-free community.

“We literally built homes and landscape on top of the parking garage, which immediately opened up the site,” he says. Residents reach the elevated ground level by elevator, arriving at a central amenity building. There they enter a completely pedestrian world linked by a series of shared pathways and native landscape. A pedestrian buggy is available for residents to haul luggage and groceries to their homes, and a snow melt system keeps the circulation paths clear in the winter.

The residences were intentionally positioned to offer privacy, but also connect to mountain views and the surrounding foliage. “We elevated the primary living spaces to provide unobstructed views over adjacent neighbors, while providing a sense of seclusion and separation from the ground plane, which is accentuated by communal gathering spaces,” says Beach.

Landscape architects Mike Albert and Darla Callaway of Design Workshop served as the master planner and landscape architect, working hand-in-hand with Beach to ensure a successful outcome.



“Usually the car drives everything, but this site begged for a pedestrian, human-scale approach that engaged with the ski slope,” says Albert. “It really feels like a hamlet in a mountain village.” Instead of individualized gardens or conventional lawns, Design Workshop used a restrained palette of wild lupines, tall native grasses, and aspen woodlands that ensured continuity with the natural landscape. “It was just about restoring and enhancing what should be there,” he says.

Using the topography and elevation, the goal was to make sure each building had a connected view to the mountains, as well as a filtered

privacy screen of aspen trees. Shared spaces that celebrate the seasonal landscape were prioritized in the Havens. A communal fire pit ringed with boulders is a modern take on a traditional campfire, and is sited on the ski slope side of the hill. A neighborhood ski way between the aspen forest and the homes offers convenient ski in and ski out access. In the summer, picnic and overlook lawn areas provide proximity to the base village events and activities.

“These are intimate amenities that are meant to be shared and foster a sense of community,” says Albert.

The architecture embraced durable natural site materials that felt

Located at the base of Fanny Hill in Snowmass, the residences are carefully oriented to capture mountain views while maintaining privacy through a natural screen of aspen trees. Expansive double-height glazing in the main living spaces frames panoramic vistas of the surrounding peaks.



"WE WERE TRYING TO CREATE AN APPROACHABLE VILLAGE THAT HAD A MODERNIST TAKE ON ALPINE ARCHITECTURE, BUT ALSO AIMED TOWARDS SIMPLICITY." —Graham Beach

familiar, including treated hemlock, concrete, and Corten metal siding. Custom steel railings and a standing seam metal roof were specified to withstand the elements.

"We were trying to create an approachable village that had a modernist take on alpine architecture, but also aimed towards simplicity," says Beach. Inside, the aspiration was to create comfortable spaces that would appeal to the aesthetics of the various buyers. Biophilic materials like white oak flooring, wood slatting, and marble and quartz countertops were thoughtfully selected to enhance the connection to the surrounding environment.

"We came up with a few palette options to start with, but almost every home's interior was customized to a certain degree," Beach says. Interior Designer Jennifer Tidwell, co-founder and principal designer with California-based The Workroom Interiors, was hired to design two of the residences, which are owned by the same client.

"The homes had a great contemporary design to start with, which allowed us to come in and add our own flair to the interiors," says Tidwell. The designer showcased the oversized glazing in the great room with multi-dimensional lighting. A custom-designed natural brass lighting sculpture by Lindsey Adelman

features rod-mounted bolts; mixed metals lighting by Apparatus and Allied Maker were also installed. For the textiles, Tidwell employed a layered approach, anchoring the design with richly patterned Turkish Oushak rugs. She added natural linens on the sofas and chairs, and headboards were wrapped in shearling. Built-in bunk beds with custom cabinetry were designed for the kids' rooms.

"The goal was to make each room inviting and unique, but also cohesive," she says. Tidwell sourced some of the furniture from Aspen-based Gorsuch, but also tapped into her Los Angeles vendor network of Lawson Fenning, ➔106



Planned as a collection of 10 single-family residences, the Havens community redefines alpine living with a pedestrian-focused design that encourages connection and community. The homes are thoughtfully situated among the existing aspen grove and the surrounding Elk Mountains, and ideally positioned along a major ski way for convenient ski in, ski out access.





The interiors embrace a layered design approach, starting with Turkish Oushak rugs and then building texture through shearling, hides, and plaids. A natural, but simple material palette of plain sawn white oak, vertical grain Douglas fir, marble, and quartz add warmth to the rooms. Custom built-in bunk beds create functional, yet comfy sleeping quarters for the kids' spaces. Walls of expansive glass bring in natural light.



“USUALLY THE CAR DRIVES EVERYTHING, BUT THIS SITE BEGGED FOR A PEDESTRIAN, HUMAN-SCALE APPROACH THAT ENGAGED WITH THE SKI SLOPE...THESE ARE INTIMATE AMENITIES THAT ARE MEANT TO BE SHARED AND FOSTER A SENSE OF COMMUNITY.” –Mike Albert

Thomas Hayes, and Community Manufacturing. In response to the client’s desire to incorporate curated art pieces, Tidwell added locally blown glass, vibrant ceramic works from Mexico, and a selection of photography. “It was a pleasure to step in as a designer and enhance what the architect had already done,” she says. “Their work provided a great canvas for us to build on.”

The celebrated project recently took home the 2025 Award of Excellence in Commercial Residential Landscape Design from World Landscape Architecture, and was also recognized by the Colorado chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, underscoring the strength of the project’s collaborative design process. “We are really proud of these awards because they recognize and highlight a new way of living,” says

Albert. Beach elaborates by noting that central to the Havens’ appeal is its commitment to fostering a walkable, engaging environment that’s unlike anything nearby. “We were trying to create really great, comfortable houses that allowed for a connection to the Colorado Rockies, views to the mountains, access to the environment, and shared communal spaces. Based on the overwhelmingly positive response we’ve received to this community, I believe we’ve been successful,” he says. ■

PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTURE
Lake Flato

MASTER PLANNING
Design Workshop

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Design Workshop

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Shaw Construction

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
KL&A

MILLWORK
Edge Construction Specialties

FLOORING
Ruggs Benedict

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LIGHTING
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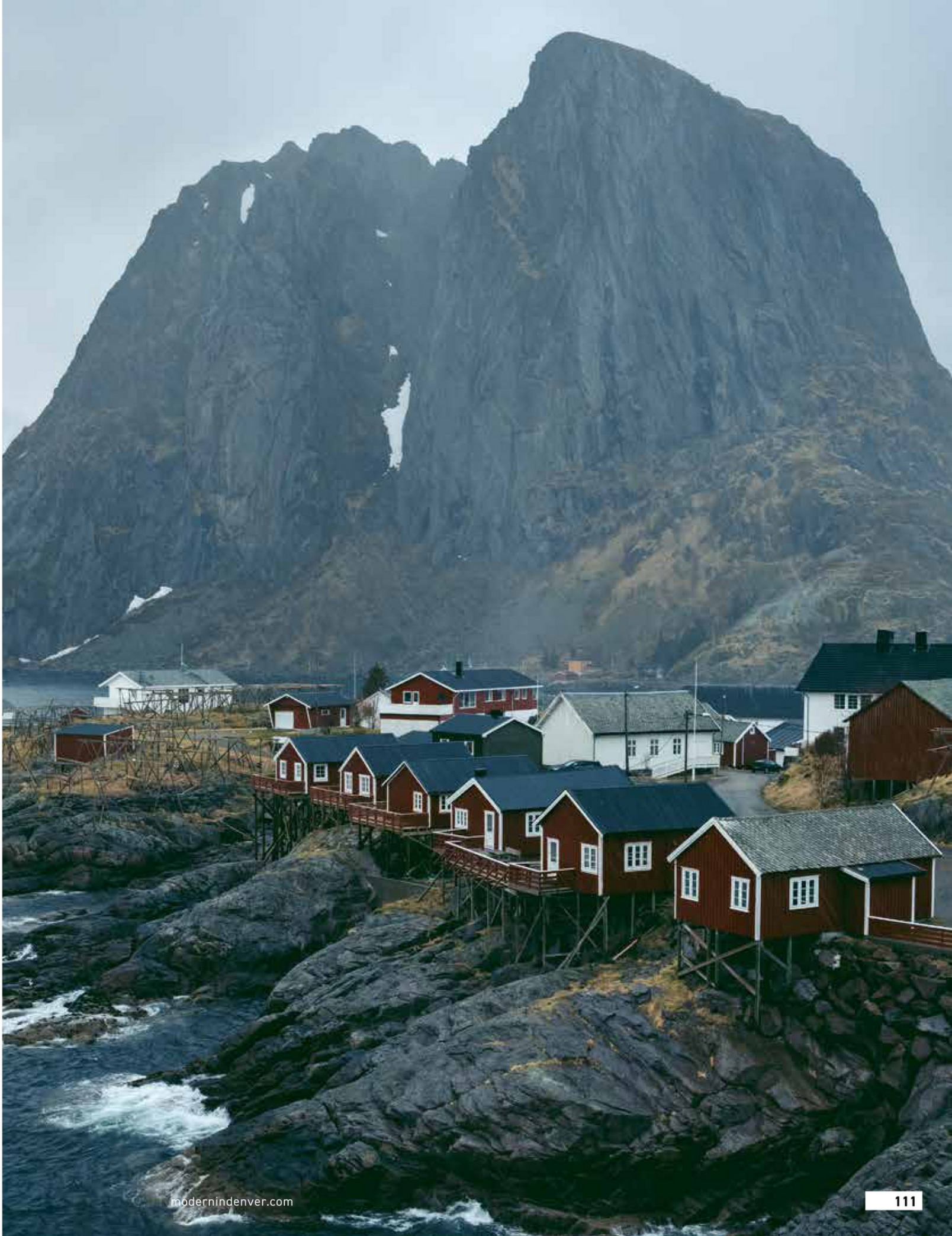
SYNESTHETIC SCANDINAVIA

From a recent trip to Norway, Brandon Huttenlocher's photographs blur the line between natural and built, inviting viewers to feel rather than see their location—from a snow-buried ski hut to the whip of wind across the landscape.

WORDS: Cory Phare

IMAGES: Brandon Huttenlocher





Traversing Norway's expansive Lyngen Alps, Brandon Huttenlocher wasn't sure what he was in search of. Yet with years of experience as a staff photographer for landscape architecture firm Design Workshop, as well as capturing snowboarding excursions, he knew he'd know it when he saw it.

Then, at sunset, inspiration struck: a simple warming hut with angled beams, his skis and poles, similarly listing and stuck in the bank outside, against an imposing, dazzling backdrop of ice, snow, and earth.

"There was the natural world and architectural world, all together in this beautiful environment," Huttenlocher says.

"That's when I knew it wasn't just a snowboard trip anymore."

Huttenlocher's images explore the interplay between the natural and built environments. Through his craft and consideration of composition, light, and subject matter, the viewer experiences an intermingling of the senses, a cross-section that encapsulates not only a visual field but also a perception of place. The sting of cold, the whistle of wind, and the crunch of frost underfoot are a kind of synesthetic metadata. Each frame carries atmosphere as well as image, leading to the realization that "we belong to the landscape, not the other way around."

Elements and structures have long shaped Huttenlocher's path. Originally from Galena, Illinois, he moved west to snowboard, studied photography in Santa Barbara, and spent years traveling the world documenting his sport before settling in Aspen and joining Design Workshop.

Today, his portfolio spans architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, and the broader built environment, with clients ranging from boutique studios to internationally recognized firms including Olson Kundig, Gensler, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, Pearson Design Group, and Eigelberger Architecture and Design. Across projects nationwide, Huttenlocher captures the intersections of site, structure, and story, guided by a belief that architecture thrives when it amplifies and belongs to its setting.

That perspective traces back to his roots in the mountains. "Snow was always the backbone; the photography came through that," he says.

The 2023 trip to Norway brought those ideas into sharp relief. Returning to a place he had visited a decade →120



Photographer Brandon Huttenlocher overlooking Reine in the Lofoten archipelago, where mountains drop straight into the sea. Here, atmosphere becomes subject and scale is relative; light, weather, and landscape shape the image as much as the camera does.



A modest warming hut in the Lyngen Alps, where snow, timber, and silence converge. Here, Huttenlocher first saw the landscape in conversation with itself, and the trip shifted from travel to study. “The natural world and the architectural world were all together in this beautiful environment,” he says.





In Norway's Lofoten Islands, the Henningsvær football pitch nestles between sea and stone. The field appears carved from the rock, illustrating the region's conversation between the built and natural worlds. The scene is a striking reminder of how everyday life endures within even the most rugged circumstances.





Huttenlocher's photographs of weathered wood and simple forms reflect an expansive, understated Norwegian ethos, echoing across generations. ABOVE: Timber-clad cabins withstand the elements to adapt with the land. OPPOSITE, ABOVE: A seasonal bathing platform designed by students of the Oslo School of Architecture and Design features a massive underbuild and permeable terrace for winter sea squalls. Set in the historically protected cod fishing village of Nusfjord, the project illustrates how architecture can adapt to the land.







Connecting the islands of Kvaløya and Sommarøy, the pressed-concrete, cantilevered Sommarøy Bridge spans pristine waters—and, evidently, time itself. Watches left behind by visitors adorn a section of the bridge as a tribute to 24-hour sunlight from May 18 to July 26, leading the locale to officially declare itself a time-free zone.

SYNESTHETIC SCANDINAVIA

earlier, Huttenlocher arrived with a snowboard, camera, and an open itinerary. Beyond knowing a few regions he hoped to explore—Senja, Lofoten, and the Lyngen Alps—and architectural tips from a Swedish friend, he let the landscape decide the journey, rather than impose one himself.

What began as a freeform adventure soon unfolded into an impromptu design study. With camera in hand, Huttenlocher documented how Nordic architecture “listens” to its environment: roofs angled against snow and wind, houses lifted on stilts or partially buried, timbers weathered silver by salt and time. Structures are built for permanence, yet are shaped by impermanence—an echo, his work suggests, of life itself.

His process, meanwhile, emphasizes framing and restraint. “I try to see structures as set within the landscape,” Huttenlocher explains. “What you don’t show is just as important as what you do.”

Another critical dynamic includes balancing elements that stand out, versus blending in. Quiet vernacular cabins contrast with a roadside installation by Oslo’s Morfeus Arkitekter, a “sculptural interruption that frames the land.” This intentional interruption-as-art is also on display in murals dotted across the sparsely populated landscape as visual markers of life and culture—restrained, rooted in fishing traditions, but never tipping into cliché. A weathered shack painted with marine motifs, or mirrored glass silently reflecting fjords in all their tempered majesty, remind viewers that design can be both humble and commanding, often at the same time.

It’s fitting that Huttenlocher’s multisensory approach to photography would include drawing attention to atmosphere as a critical component of the subject. By nature, weather is unpredictable. Howling storm winds never blow the same way twice: compressing and expanding, their fingerprints as individualized as constituent snowflakes. A cloudless sky might delight, but it replicates itself endlessly; a storm, however, is singular—difficult, dramatic, and impossible to copy.

“Bluebird days are repeatable; weather days aren’t,” Huttenlocher says. “That unpredictability is what makes them special.” This embrace of atmosphere is what sets his work apart. Architects themselves have told him they’re drawn to the way his photographs carry not just image, but also mood—interiors that breathe with shadow, exteriors alive with shifting skies. It’s as if the buildings themselves are caught mid-conversation with the elements.

Scandinavian design serves as an optimal corollary to this philosophy. Simple and functional, the material-driven approach encourages thoughtfulness and



TOP: Pitched roofs and dark timber cladding absorb the surrounding light, a sculptural counterpoint to the soaring peaks in their frozen fjord setting. ABOVE: a raw-wood-rendered minimalist lookout rises among trees in observation, echoing the vertical rhythm of the forest itself.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Slung low against the slope, a coastal home seems to grow from the terrain, its angular, silvery façade aging in harmony with sea, snow, and sky. OPPOSITE, BELOW: A mirrored rest stop by Morfeus Arkitekter stands as both frame and reflection: an intentional interruption that invites travelers to pause and see themselves within the landscape.



"BEFORE I EVER PICK UP A CAMERA, I LIKE TO WALK THE SITE AND LISTEN. EVERY PLACE HAS A RHYTHM—WIND IN THE TREES, WAVES HITTING ROCKS—AND THAT'S WHAT I TRY TO CAPTURE...IN THE END, WE'RE MEANT TO BUILD WITH THE ENVIRONMENT, NOT APART FROM IT." -Brandon Huttenlocher







sensitivity to the surroundings. Off-angle timber cladding and subtle asymmetries signal a respect for natural irregularities, rather than a need to impose rigid order. And for a landscape bathed in darkness half the year, it's no surprise that light—along with its absence—plays a central role in how the region views itself in relation to both the natural and human-made world.

As Huttenlocher puts it, the approach is “simple, clean, functional—thoughtful about light and views, and grounded in good materials.”

His images of Norway remind us that architecture is most powerful when it doesn't dominate, but when it listens and responds within context. A mirrored rest stop, silvered boathouse, and ski hut tucked into the Alps all remind us that humanity, for all its brilliance and complexity, is joyfully insignificant, a blink of an eye on the timeline that shaped the Lyngen range itself. “It's a good reminder that we should build with the environment and not separate ourselves,” he says, “after all, we're a part of it.”

This humility, paradoxically, is what gives his work its resonance. Huttenlocher shows us that to see architecture clearly is to see it as part of a larger story: one where weather, light, and time are equal collaborators. ■

In a region where darkness defines half the year, light becomes material itself, alongside timber, water, and sky. Coastal sheds show how function and restraint create harmony between structure and landscape, blending form, color, and material, while drying cod, grassy roofs, and a sea-sprayed horizon share the same salty air that has harbored centuries of subsistence and shelter.



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DO NOT DISTURB

Designed by Davis Urban, a foothills house on stilts drops a family into Roxborough Park's magnificent rockscape.

WORDS: Alicita Rodríguez + Joseph Starr

IMAGES: Daniel Jenkins



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION. WHILE WE OFTEN HEAR THAT MANTRA, FEW PEOPLE TAKE IT QUITE AS SERIOUSLY AS CALE AND DOROTHY FOGEL, WHO MOVED FROM DENVER TO ROXBOROUGH, COLORADO IN ORDER TO RECONNECT WITH THE EARTH.

Their foothills neighborhood abuts Roxborough State Park, which offers more than 3,400 acres of pristine grasslands, woodlands, and red rock formations—part of a geological wonder known as the Fountain Formation. This 300-million-year-old sandstone creation, born of the Ancestral Rocky Mountains, inspired the Fogels to purchase the land. As someone who grew up in Colorado's Western Slope, Cale missed the piñon forest and oak brush.

Dorothy, on the other hand, grew up in Chicago. Her outsider perspective, however, only intensified her love for the land. "I'd never lived outside a city," she admits. "I can't believe you can build homes in a place like this—I'm in awe of that." The Fogels' only child was equally awestruck. "I loved watching my daughter visit the lot," Dorothy says. "She would lay down on the rock formations and look at the sky and exhale—and that's when I knew we needed to live here."

Before Cale purchased the land, he wanted assurance that his dream home could be built in the existing neighborhood. More than anything else, he wanted a house on stilts in order to avoid destroying the very rocks he had fallen in love with. After one fateful trip to a homeowners' association meeting, he knew the design committee would work with him to achieve his vision. "I didn't anticipate a positive response," he says, "but the whole design committee was really open."

After that first step, the Fogel family knew exactly where to go, as they had previously fallen in love with a home in their Denver neighborhood designed by architecture firm Davis Urban. Principal architect Matt Davis sums up the Rox House, as it came to be known: "Most importantly, this project is site-sensitive—it's delicate on the earth." The overhead images help put the site challenges—and solutions—in perspective. The home appears as if it were helicoptered in and gently set down amidst the rocky landscape. By working with the terrain instead of against it, Davis Urban was able to meet the project guidelines with a cost per square foot likely lower than many other homes in the neighborhood.

Rather than using a conventional foundation—which would involve the common practice of blasting rock and removing it—the architects employed a system of concrete footings and Corten steel posts, spaced around the perimeter. Davis characterizes them as "strategic surgical columns" placed to minimize impact, preserve the rock forms, and maintain the open feel of the landscape.

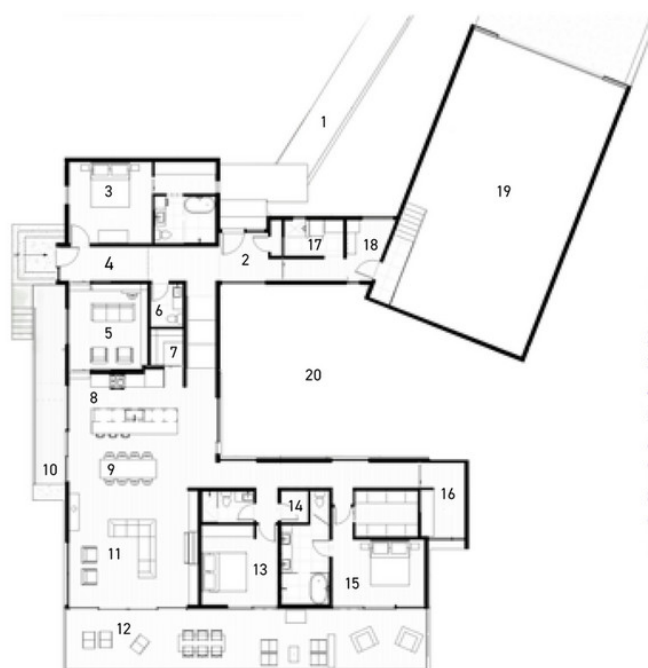
As someone who grew up in Roxborough, project architect Marika McCullough recognized the importance of honoring the landscape. "What's special are definitely the rocks," she asserts. "They are breathtaking—you get the sense of being in this unique covered setting at the foot of the mountains with these rocks cascading down." In order to preserve the geological history of the site, McCullough and the team at Davis Urban designed the house with a connecting segment leading from the freestanding garage to the main house. "The bridge element was a key component from the beginning, as a way of not tearing up the rocks and of creating a place to sit, reflect, and float over them," she says.

While the idea of a view beneath the house may seem quirky, even esoteric, the ingenuity of it is not lost on migrating wildlife. "I love sitting in my favorite chair in the living room and watching the three big bucks who hang out under the garage—I call them the frat boys," Cale says. "The wildlife doesn't know we're here," Dorothy adds. "Through the west window in the kitchen I've seen a mama bear with babies, a little bobcat that travels the rock formations, and deer."

Davis considers this an architectural success: "The home has become a shelter for wildlife. We started with the premise of being delicate on the ground and the net result is that it's become a welcoming spot for wildlife." Cale agrees. "The fact that all the critters move under and through and around the house—that's the proof of the pudding that it worked."

Human passersby, to the contrary, are very much cognizant of the home's presence. With its ➔132





MAIN LEVEL

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. ENTRY WALK | 11. LIVING |
| 2. ENTRY | 12. COVERED DECK |
| 3. BEDROOM | 13. BEDROOM |
| 4. HANGING CARGO NET | 14. MECHANICAL |
| 5. FLEX ROOM | 15. PRIMARY SUITE |
| 6. BATHROOM | 16. OFFICE |
| 7. PANTRY | 17. LAUNDRY ROOM |
| 8. KITCHEN | 18. MUD ROOM |
| 9. DINING | 19. GARAGE |
| 10. DECK | 20. COURTYARD |



The blueprint illustrates how the different elements of Rox House sketch out a spacious center courtyard. The connecting bridge links the garage and walkway to the main house while also incorporating utilitarian spaces including the laundry, mudroom, and principal entry. The view from a few paces back dramatizes the home's ethereal nature, as it seems to levitate above the surrounding piñon and scrub oak. Davis Urban's innovative construction method involved the use of Corten steel posts, spaced evenly to lift the house into the air, leaving the landscape virtually undisturbed. A typical vista (this one from the west-facing deck) takes in the region's dramatic up-thrusting rocks, a geological feature common to the region.

“WHAT’S SPECIAL ARE DEFINITELY THE ROCKS...THE BRIDGE ELEMENT WAS A KEY COMPONENT FROM THE BEGINNING, AS A WAY OF NOT TEARING UP THE ROCKS AND OF CREATING A PLACE TO SIT, REFLECT, AND FLOAT OVER THEM.” –Marika McCullough

geometric, L-shaped layout and subdued color palette, it strikes a balance between asserting itself architecturally and conforming to the aesthetic of the surrounding hillside. The charcoal-colored cement fiberboard siding contrasts with the rustic Corten steel—a juxtaposition of light and dark that evokes the light of the low winter sun. “It’s a simple palette of rich, rust earth tones,” says Dorothy, “that highlights the rocks by making the house drop into the shadows.”

Inside, the architects took cues from Frank Lloyd Wright. The entry offers a subtle sense of compression that funnels down the stairs and into the main living area where visitors are met with 10-foot-tall ceilings—a room flooded with light and spectacular vistas of the area’s signature rock outcroppings. Notwithstanding the dramatic great room, the interior of the house is modest, characterized by connecting passages with sun-lit end points. The two bedroom suites are positioned at the far ends of the L—“celebrated private space,” says Davis, that lead to an intuitive gathering place at the heart of the home.

The metaphor of connection is writ large—in the bridging structures seen from the exterior, the interior

passageways, and the upward thrusting rocks that form a geologic continuum spanning south to north as Garden of the Gods, Roxborough, Red Rocks amphitheater, and the Boulder Flatirons. “The connection of all those pieces is reflected in the way Rox House spans across space without disturbing it,” says McCullough.

Rox House also reflects the character of natural rock in the interior’s balance between openness and intimate little niches. Just as one might discover a cozy cave-like space beneath a monolith of slanting rock, Dorothy relishes the small scale of her living room. “It’s my favorite spot in the house,” she says. “Even though it’s kind of a ‘back-of-the-house’ room, it’s a perfect spot to have a cup of coffee and look out past the deck and across the valley.” What’s encompassed in this view? Yet more of the dramatic Fountain Formation rocks, drifting towards the sky just as Rox House floats above its virtually undisturbed site—an artful suspension that, from each and every angle, keeps the beautiful terrain front and center. ■





Rox House's basic architectural strategy involves passageways as connecting elements. The hallways direct traffic toward intuitive endpoints that offer a tantalizing glimpse of light. Integrated features make the most of the space: a clever wall rack provides bike storage; a lean vertical ladder leads to a secreted cargo net. Flanked by a wall of wooden slats that encloses a linear fireplace, the great room/dining area is flooded with natural light. Translucent curtains offer privacy and reveal the show-stopping natural surroundings. The kitchen's white palette and wood elements echo the colors of the Roxborough landscape. Colorful chairs offer lively contrast.





PROJECT CREDITS

ARCHITECTURE

Davis Urban, project architect Marika McCullough, principal Matt Davis

INTERIOR DESIGN

Davis Urban, Cecilia Richey

GENERAL CONTRACTOR + BUILDER

Prestige Custom Homes

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

IMEG

CIVIL ENGINEER

Proof Civil

MILLWORK

Tharp Custom Cabinetry

FLOORING

Stuga, Porcelanosa, Daltile

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Hi Velocity, Bosch, Resideo (Honeywell)

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LANDSCAPE DESIGN + BUILD

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BETWEEN THE LINES

How does a magazine influence a design community?

AIA Colorado CEO Mike Waldinger talks with *Modern In Denver* founder and publisher William Logan about what motivated him to start the magazine, the ways it has changed how he sees design, and how the media can shape the look, feel, and meaning of our built environment.

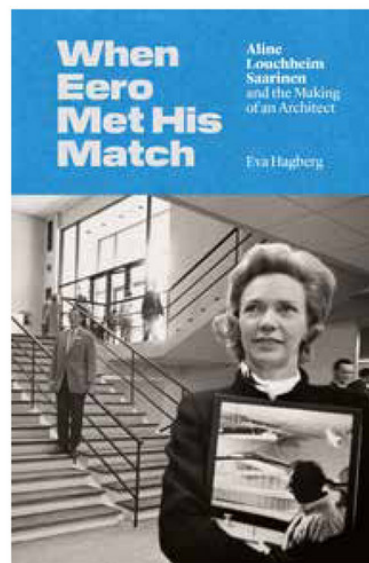
This fall, *Modern In Denver* received the AIA Colorado 2025 Impact Award—the first publication to do so—in recognition of its 17 years covering and contributing to Colorado’s architecture and design community. Invited into conversation by AIA Colorado CEO Mike Waldinger, MID founder and publisher William Logan reflected on the publication’s origins, the importance of design storytelling, and the evolving landscape of architecture in Colorado.

Architectural media doesn’t simply educate people about design; it actively shapes the way design is understood. It influences the kinds of buildings, environments, and objects that will be made next. In 2022, *Modern In Denver* covered architectural historian Eva Hagberg’s book *When Eero Met His Match*, which reexamines the careers of Eero and Aline Saarinen. Hagberg argues that Eero’s ascent was inseparable from Aline’s work as a published art and architecture critic and skilled publicist. By shaping how the public understood his buildings, she helped craft the narrative that drove his legacy.

Another example is the Case Study House program. Launched by *Arts & Architecture* magazine in 1945, it commissioned experimental homes to explore new ideas in modern living, an editorial initiative that went on to redefine residential architecture in America. A book of Julius Shulman’s photographs—including many Case Study homes—captivated a young William Logan, leaving an impression that would resurface decades later as he began planning *Modern In Denver*.

Most people will never step inside the world’s most significant buildings or private homes. Residential architecture remains largely inaccessible, and travel limitations mean most of us experience only a fraction of important works firsthand. This gives architecture and design publications an extraordinary role: images and text become not just a window into key projects, but often the only way we will ever encounter them. Even within Colorado—where MID’s coverage is highly local—99 percent of readers will never visit the homes and buildings featured in its pages. This reality underscores the value of thoughtful design journalism.

To follow, Logan speaks with Waldinger about the publication’s journey and the meaning behind this year’s award.



Eva Hagberg’s book *When Eero Met His Match* (2022), uses the relationship between architect Eero Saarinen and his wife, art critic and publicist Aline Louchheim Saarinen, to illustrate the necessary symbiosis between architectural design and the media.

Arts & Architecture magazine announced the Case Study House program in the fall 1945 issue. The program, which ran for over 20 years, commissioned prominent architects, like Charles and Ray Eames, Richard Neutra, and Pierre Koenig, to create design-forward homes that could be easily and affordably made to address the post war housing shortage in America.

Q+A:

AIA COLORADO – MIKE WALDINGER:

*When you started **Modern In Denver**, you were fresh off the heels of a more traditional graphic design career. What compelled you to make a magazine? What did you hope a publication like **Modern In Denver** could do?*

MODERN IN DENVER – WILLIAM LOGAN:

In the early 2000s, Denver was seeing a surge of interesting new architecture and a rapidly growing creative community—yet much of that work wasn't being covered locally. At the time, I was running a small graphic design studio and felt there was an opportunity for a publication that focused on this rising interest in architecture and design across the state.

Although I wasn't directly connected to the architecture and design community at the time, I had published an underground music and urban culture magazine called *The Seed* in the early '90s. That experience gave me confidence in the technical side of producing a publication.

My interest in architecture was sparked in part by Julius Shulman's photographs. His images of Richard Neutra's Kaufmann House in Palm Springs were especially captivating. Growing up in the suburbs of Aurora, I had never seen anything like it. The fluidity of the lines and the indoor-outdoor connection showed me how elevated residential architecture could be. Years later, exploring Denver's mid-century neighborhoods—Krisana Park, Lynwood, Hilltop, Arapahoe Acres—I felt some of that same energy. I eventually bought a home in Lynwood, and soon after created the first issue of *Modern In Denver* in early 2008.



Modern In Denver founder and publisher William Logan at his home office. Photo by Daniel Jenkins.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Magazines have always been influential for me. They can be as beautiful and informative as books, yet their immediacy makes them feel of the moment. They can be experimental, tactile, visual, and direct. *The Face* magazine from the '80s, and later titles like *Emigre*, *Relax*, *Elle Decoration*, *Speak*, *Nest*, and the early issues of *Dwell* were all very inspiring to me.

The goal from the beginning was to create an interesting, relevant, and entertaining platform that shows how good design can elevate our lives. As someone who has lived most of my life in Colorado, I also wanted the publication to celebrate the creative talent here. I believe it's on par with any major city, and our mission is to find and tell those stories.



Modern In Denver has been published quarterly for 17 years, with its covers showcasing the region's best architecture, captured by award-winning local photographers. This is its 71st issue.



AIA Colorado CEO Mike Waldinger at the organization's office in downtown Denver. Photo by Daniel Jenkins.

MW:

You've been publishing Modern In Denver for 17 years. Tell us a little bit about the impact design storytelling has had on the local architecture community across the magazine's lifespan. What architectural trends or movements are you most excited, or most concerned, about right now?

WL:

Design storytelling matters because it provides context and insight. It opens doors for readers, exposing them to architecture and design they may never experience in person.

Our impact comes from connecting readers with the architecture. When we're doing our job well, there's a synergy between us, the designers, and the audience. As a regional magazine, our role extends beyond reporting—we're part of the community. Through editorial decisions, events, and relationships with local companies and organizations, we've helped elevate certain typologies, influenced preservation conversations, and facilitated dialogue that shapes the direction of our design culture.

As for concerns, I'm watching how AI and other new technologies evolve. I'm also concerned about political pressures that can limit true creative expression, and I worry about complacency in design. But I'm inspired by those who continue to push forward, whether in architecture, building science, materials, landscape, or planning.



© J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004. R. 10)

A Julius Shulman photograph of the Kaufmann Desert House in Palm Springs, designed by architect Richard Neutra in 1947, caught Logan's eye as a young teen and spurred a growing interest in modern architecture that would eventually lead him to create *Modern In Denver*.

"OUR IMPACT COMES FROM CONNECTING READERS WITH THE ARCHITECTURE. WHEN WE'RE DOING OUR JOB WELL, THERE'S A SYNERGY BETWEEN US, THE DESIGNERS, AND THE AUDIENCE. AS A REGIONAL MAGAZINE, OUR ROLE EXTENDS BEYOND REPORTING—WE'RE PART OF THE COMMUNITY. THROUGH EDITORIAL DECISIONS, EVENTS, AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, WE'VE HELPED ELEVATE CERTAIN TYPOLOGIES, INFLUENCED PRESERVATION CONVERSATIONS, AND FACILITATED DIALOGUE THAT SHAPES THE DIRECTION OF OUR DESIGN CULTURE."

– William Logan

MW:

This year's AIA Colorado Honors Jury, composed of practicing architects, awarded Modern In Denver the Impact Award, the first time a publication has received this honor. What do you believe the architects on this year's jury are saying about the role publishing plays in the design ecosystem?

WL:

I think the architects on the jury—and hopefully all architects who read MID—recognize the value we place on storytelling as a way to advance the industry. We've always aimed for our coverage and events to speak to design professionals and enthusiasts alike.

This dual audience gives us a unique position: we can communicate directly with architects while also advocating for the profession to the broader public, helping more people appreciate the work happening in our community.

There's also tremendous value in how a publication preserves architecture through documentation. We frequently publish stories about historic architecture—from the 1920s through the '70s—and we're also chronicling what's happening now. Future journalists, historians, and design lovers will be able to look back at this era of Colorado architecture because of what's being recorded today.



Modern In Denver received the AIA Colorado 2025 Impact Award in September. Founder and publisher William Logan is center, alongside operations director Daniel Burns and editor Vanessa Kauffman Zimmerly.



Logan reviews printed magazine sheets for color balance and accuracy at a press check. Each issue of *Modern In Denver* is printed and bound locally by Publication Printers in Denver. Photos: James Florio.



MW:

How has working so closely with architects influenced how you see the craft of architecture itself?

WL:

Above all, it's given me access to architects and designers, their work, and everything it takes to bring a project from inception to final design. Seeing that process up close has deepened my respect for the entire industry: architects, builders, engineers, tradespeople—everyone who contributes to shaping the built environment.

Architecture is a particularly complex pursuit. A building must work for the people who use it, but it also must respond to its site, its neighborhood, its broader environmental impact. The architects who recognize and navigate all of that complexity are the ones we try to spotlight. We're grateful to know so many who take that responsibility seriously and who generously share both their projects and their process with our readers.

MW:

What's next for Modern In Denver?

WL:

Modern In Denver has come a long way in the last 17 years. We've learned and grown alongside the industry in step with Colorado's population, design, and lifestyle boom. We have always been motivated by the region's growth, and are enthusiastic about keeping the publication fresh, relevant, and dynamic in response. On a personal level, I'm excited to see two new leaders—Vanessa Kauffman Zimmerly and Daniel Burns—step further into their roles in 2026. I'm looking forward to how their energy, experience, and vision will shape the magazine and the broader design community. Just like people, healthy publications grow—and they evolve. Onward. ■



heck yea

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Set against the backdrop of Denver's design culture, the Deep Dive explores themes that resonate across disciplines: rethinking identity and stigma, designing across cultures, the evolving relationship between AI and craft, immersive narrative technology, and the role of empathy in shaping the built and digital environment.

Register at idsa.org





Photo: James Florio



DINE-IN DESIGN

New architecture-forward restaurants and bars in Denver titillate more than tastebuds with immersive design.

WORDS: Linne Halpern

While the function of a restaurant is to provide a delectable gourmet meal, its formal qualities can be just as nourishing for the soul. Restaurants and bars offer guests the opportunity to be immersed in a fully-designed environment. When executed thoughtfully, the experience can far surpass mere food or drink. From the big picture of wall coverings or floor materials down to the minute details of menus and dishware, each element is a chance for aesthetic engagement.

With our culture's collective craving for more intentional "third spaces," eateries and bars are stepping in as sites for social engagements, culinary events, and emotional journeys. A new crop of architecture-forward restaurants and bars has recently opened in Denver. Denchu Den, Laws Whiskey House, and Cholon Lakehouse/Gusto are all conceived by some of the city's leading firms—contributing different visions to the Denver dining scene, yet connected by their shared commitment to storytelling through design.

Ahead, we speak with the designers responsible for inviting diners on adventures that touch the senses beyond taste.



Photo: Chris Holzwart

Denchu Den

1551 S. Pearl Street

kizakiden.com

margotdenver.com

Architect:

Roth Sheppard Architects

Denchu Den is the newest addition to chef Toshi Kizaki's growing Sushi Den empire on South Pearl Street. Tucked away in a new building designed by Roth Sheppard Architects, the project is an architectural marvel that guides visitors through a hidden forest of unfolding delights that emulate the intention and evolution within the *omakase* experience.

Denchu Den houses two Michelin-rated restaurants: Kizaki, chef Toshi's specialty Japanese omakase concept, and Margot, chef Justin Fulton's eight-seat chef's counter

featuring upscale American cuisine. The exterior appears unassuming, a stone box that organically fits into the existing vernacular of Pearl Street. Yet, step inside and become drawn into an extended, 35-foot corridor with fluted textured walls transporting you from the outside environment into another realm. "It's designed to be a long break from the hard urban scape into a new world of serenity," says Roth Sheppard Architects principal Adam Harding.

Moving deeper through the space, materials morph from hard black stone to softer, warm woods, enveloping visitors in a more intimate energy. A lattice ceiling, referencing historic Japanese woodworking techniques, flanks another hallway with a canopy effect, ushering visitors from the cozy chef's

counters into further concealed quarters, revealing tranquil restrooms that provide a moment of reflection. Inlaid into the stone restroom walls are elongated gold bands—alluding to the Japanese art of *kintsugi*, the practice of mending broken ceramics with gold.

At Denchu Den, Japanese aesthetic traditions and culinary flavors meet the raw, natural beauty of the Rocky Mountain West, immersing guests into revelations of enchantment.



The Japanese philosophies of wabi sabi and kintsugi—finding beauty in imperfection and brokenness—are utilized throughout Roth Sheppard's design, from the diverse veining inherent in the dining room's natural stone work to the gold bands inlaid in the bathroom tiling. The hallway's latticed ceiling references historic Japanese woodworking techniques.



Photos: James Florio [TOP], Chris Holzwart [ABOVE]



LAWS Whiskey House

80 W. Arkansas Avenue
lawswhiskeyhouse.com

Architect:
BOSS.architecture

“The act of making whiskey is an art form in itself,” says Chris Davis, principal at BOSS.architecture. “They’re craftsmen at what they do—distilling the perfect pour, thinking about every detail down to the shape of the bottle and how the logo sits,” he continues, commenting on the LAWS Whiskey owners and staff. The design team at BOSS—including Davis, principal Kevin Stephenson, and architect Jessica Hunter—approach their craft similarly. Naturally, the partnership with LAWS felt organic and aligned from the start.

Inspired by the pragmatism and grit of the LAWS ethos, BOSS leaned on grain silos to inform the building’s Brutalist architecture, mimicking a rotunda shape and utilizing raw, utilitarian materials. “Our building was designed to embody the expression of hard work—no frills, no shortcuts, no superfluous decoration,” says Davis.

The first floor comprises entry and seating areas, a tasting bar, and the central spiral staircase, culminating in the Whiskey Chapel: an homage to the team’s religious devotion to their whiskey production. A soaring two-story, Gothic-style window frames the room, with wooden pews where visitors are encouraged to look out towards the working silos for an educational experience.

A grouping of 119 slender steel bars form a sculptural effect encircling

the staircase—bringing a dose of refinement to the otherwise edgy project, guiding visitors to ascend to the second-floor’s final bar destination. Though an elevated and architectural use-case, the materials at play remain humble.

And just like the making of whiskey, BOSS alchemized honest ingredients to create a space more exceptional than the sum of its parts: the LAWS project received the 2025 AIA Colorado Design Award of Excellence.



"We liked the idea of creating a space that would hold up, that wasn't precious, that could withstand a whiskey glass being thrown at the wall and splashing everywhere," BOSS.architecture principal Chris Davis says of LAWS's design. "We wanted the building to embody that toughness, to wear and weather and streak and fade with time and lived experience."

Photos: Parrish Ruiz de Velasco



Cholon Lakehouse + Gusto

1691 N. Raleigh Street
cholonlakehouse.com

Architect:
 UNUM Collaborative

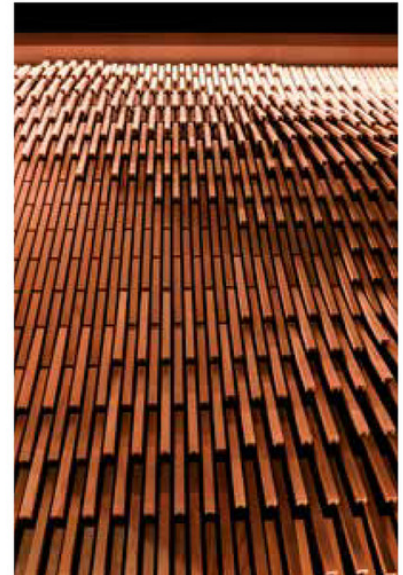
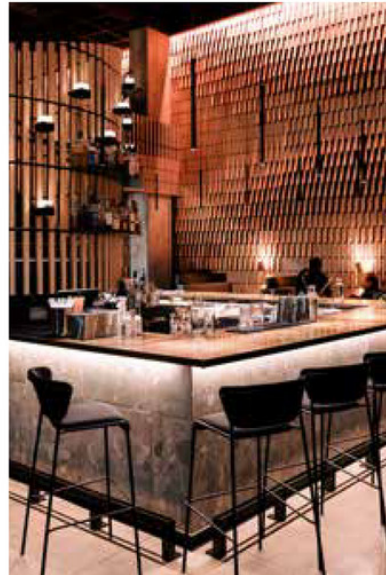
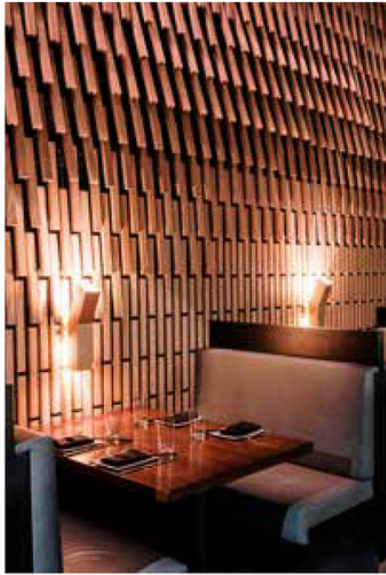
Cholon Lakehouse presents several spatial questions. The Sloan's Lake restaurant neighbors and shares an adjoining footprint with Italian restaurant Gusto, both owned by Cholon Restaurant Concepts. Chef Lon Symensma offers modern Asian fare at Cholon, an existing concept with another location downtown, and worked with UNUM Collaborative (who also designed Gusto) to create a space that is individual, yet interconnected with its neighbor.

"We decided to design the kitchen to support both restaurants. It was a challenge, but ended up working seamlessly," says UNUM principal Adam Steinbach. Meanwhile, the building's existing large-scale glass windows—though showcasing lake views—required the construction of cozy pockets and cocooned nooks to generate a feeling of intimacy throughout.

At Cholon Lakehouse, UNUM designed a second-story mezzanine as an anchoring architectural element alongside a 20-foot slatted wood feature wall, evoking the movement of water. "We were thinking about the idea of a wake, or a wave created from a boat, but frozen in time," says Steinbach,

nodding to the nautical themes also on display at the downtown location. The way light and shadows play off the fixture further allude to a memory, dynamic and dappled.

Cholon's aquatic character responds to Gusto's Italian tradition of dining al fresco amidst the region's ancient ruins. Here, a mix of concrete block, brick, terra-cotta, and mosaic tile combine with organic vegetation suspended from the ceiling to bring the outdoors in. These gestural dialogues between the natural world, cultural ritual, and culinary experience connect the two restaurants with formal and material simplicity, and modern refinement.



RESTAURANTS AND BARS OFFER GUESTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE IMMERSED IN A FULLY-DESIGNED ENVIRONMENT. WHEN EXECUTED THOUGHTFULLY, THE EXPERIENCE CAN FAR SURPASS MERE FOOD OR DRINK.

Dynamism and texture are created through natural materials in Cholon Lakehouse and Gusto, both designed by UNUM Collaborative. At Cholon (ABOVE), the 20-foot slatted feature wall uses wood to create a watery ripple effect. While next door at Gusto (RIGHT), brick and concrete combine in mosaic fashion to reveal a layered and historic feel.



Photos: Fernando Gomes



ONE LAST THING

People, places, and things we LOVE

A THING IS A THING IS A THING

WORDS: Linne Halpern

Inspired by Marvin Minsky's 1952 Ultimate Machine, Olivier Mével's contemporary La Machine invites joyful questioning.

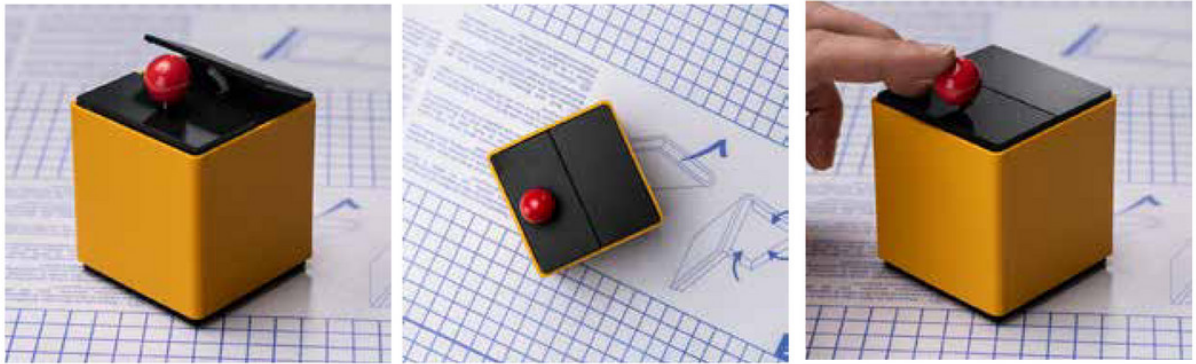
IF a machine is, as the Oxford English Dictionary says, “a mechanical or electrical device that transmits or modifies energy to perform a task,” what task is engineer Olivier Mével's La Machine performing? The answer is nothing! And the uselessness is the whole point.

Inspired by Marvin Minsky's 1952 Ultimate Machine, Mével's contemporary interpretation is designed on the same principles of absurdity and philosophical paradox as the original. Minsky, then a young student at the

prestigious Bell Labs, who later went on to become one of the pioneers of artificial intelligence and a cofounder of MIT's AI Laboratory, was fascinated with the idea of making something so simplistic that it refuted its own reason for being. His Ultimate Machine comprised a small box equipped with a switch that triggers a hand-like mechanism to pop out with the express purpose of turning itself off. At the time, colleagues and fans remarked on the “sinister” nature of an invention that refuses utility.



Much like Marvin Minsky's original Ultimate Machine [ABOVE], Olivier Mével's new La Machine [LEFT] is a small, toy-like box with little purpose other than turning itself off—and inviting philosophical questions. The contemporary iteration is rendered in vivid, primary colors, and made in France from recycled materials; its idiosyncratic movements and sounds invoke the random exaltation of human experience.



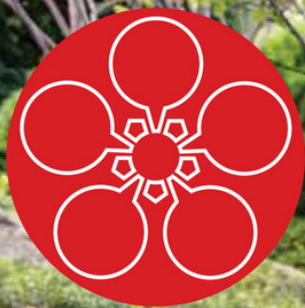
Mével's machine, made in collaboration with Elium Studio, musician Alexis Malbert, and software engineer Antoine Schmitt, has sounds and movements that were crafted to be individual and idiosyncratic. No two machines function in the same way, and the unpredictability becomes part of the fun. Coded in the programming language Erlang, and designed using 100 percent open source materials, the existence of La Machine comments on the self-referential loop of a technological ouroboros.

The aesthetic influence for the new machine was found in the archive of Ettore Sottsass's bold, geometric, and playful 1960s designs. Sottsass, one of the founding members of the Memphis Milano movement, was known for his radical spirit and outrageous style that pushed the boundaries of what was traditionally considered "good taste." La Machine's vibrant primary palette and delightful silliness stem from his Postmodern contributions.

This is an apt moment for Mével to bring back the machine. At a time when our ever-increasing relationship to technology, especially as experienced through the emerging lens of AI, is under scrutiny for both its productivity and its harm, La Machine is humorous, subversive, and daring in its simultaneous utilizations and rejections of advancement.

When you let La Machine sit unattended for too long, it might even outstretch its little arm to nudge you of its presence. In its quest for attention, the fabricated innovation reveals something essential about human nature, and asks existential questions: What is the purpose of any output or action? What if all we really want is to turn our brains off, or to turn technology off, or to rest, or find a return to meaning? La Machine celebrates that none of us have the answers, even—or especially—the machines, so we might as well have fun with it. ■





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