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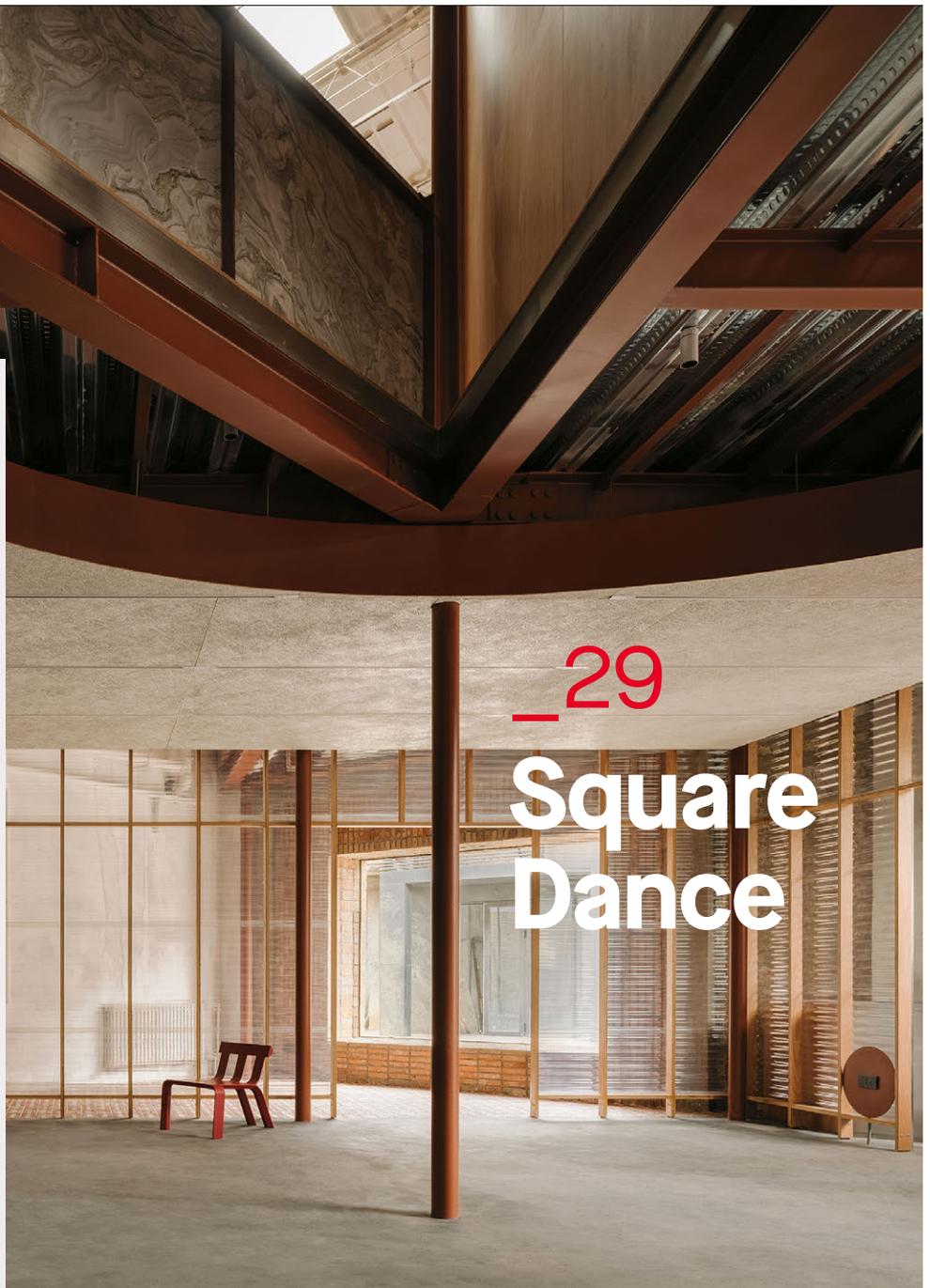
Buffalo's AKG Art Museum, by OMA, modernizes and expands the iconic Albright-Knox. Photo by Marco Cappelletti

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Molteni & C

FISHER & PAYKEL FOR AZURE

Coastal Connection

Fisher & Paykel appliances set the stage
for entertaining in a New Zealand home
by Studio John Irving Architects





LEFT: A French-door refrigerator and twin ovens are seamlessly integrated into the dark-stained wood cabinetry.

BELOW: At the heart of the home, a generous island declares that the kitchen is a social space.

When Sandi Young tapped Auckland architect John Irving

to design her home on New Zealand's northeastern coast, she wanted a space that would reflect her outgoing and welcoming personality yet also serve as a place of quiet sanctuary. Nestled into the undulating coastal landscape of Te Arai, the project, playfully dubbed Sandiland, more than delivers on this ask.

First and foremost, Irving sought to design a building that embodied respect for the natural beauty of its context. Past a tree-lined approach, the low-slung structure emerges as a collection of five cedar-clad volumes scattered among the dunes and topped with a striking planar roof. These "pods" responded to Young's desire for intimate spaces that she could retreat into; they house the home's more introverted areas, including a painting studio and private suites.

The house also had to do double duty, easily opening up for parties and hosting guests. To that end, the pods are linked by a generous communal living space. Open to the rest of the home for seamless entertaining, the kitchen exudes understated luxury down to the details. Under a cluster of geometric pendants, the massive island is the centrepiece of the space — and the social hub of the home.

At first glance, you might miss the state-of-the-art suite of appliances — and that's intentional. "Our usual approach is to do our best to make them disappear," Irving says. "Integrated appliances appeal because they fade into the background." The architect turned to Fisher & Paykel's Minimal products and integrated appliances for a pared-back look that didn't compromise on performance.

An integrated refrigerated drawer, dishwasher and French-door refrigerator-freezer with a bespoke timber pull handle recede into the cabinetry for a continuous material finish, while a black glass induction cooktop and twin ovens boast minimal gaps, melding with the luxe marble countertops and dark-stained timber finishes. The space has been laid out for ease of use, whether Young is hosting a group or enjoying the serenity of the coastal locale. In other words, entertaining is as simple as it looks.



With the appliances carefully concealed, the architecture — and the sweeping views framed by horizontal bands of windows and the dramatic roof plane — become the focal point. Though coastal homes are often light and bright, the kitchen's moody tones provide an inviting contrast to the surrounding sky, sea, dunes and forest.

Accessible via stacked sliding doors, an outdoor kitchen extends the interior cabinetry through to the sheltered deck, blurring the boundaries between indoors and out. Blending in with the rolling dunes, the silvered timber deck embraces the same social ethos as the interior and is replete with intimate gathering spaces, from a lounge vignette to a sunken circular firepit — and a cleverly hidden refrigerated drawer that can offer up chilled drinks and snacks at a moment's notice.

Deftly balancing comfort with hospitality, Sandiland serves as both a solitary refuge and a place for connection. fisherpaykel.ca

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York University's New Building Brings a Twist on

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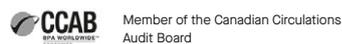
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A New Path

On the occasion of an anniversary, it's natural to think of the past, of the most significant memories, stations along your journey, achievements and flops, but especially of the extraordinary people you have met.

There are many of those moments, public and private. Thirty-eight years and 300 issues of *Azure* is a long time, and our Editor, Elizabeth Pagliacolo, points out some of the most significant milestones that have made *Azure* unique and allowed it to stand out in our industry's vast media publishing panorama.

My thoughts have gone into the past a lot recently, far and close, but now I can only think of the direction *Azure* needs to take next: a new path of discovery, where we carry in our backpack everything that made us — our identity, our precious story. But it's a path not yet open, just as it wasn't open 38 years ago when we started the enduring conversation about new movements in design and architecture in these pages.

Together, we share one enormous global concern, and it is creating environmental disasters, mass migrations and famine, wars and more marked inequalities. But there are organizations, companies and individuals in our industry already confronting and responding to what we humans have wrought.

And that is the path on which *Azure*, in its modest and humble way, needs to be: We have to focus on developing concrete ideas for a different way to build, to develop and manufacture products, to create thoughtful urban planning and alternative energy strategies, and much more.

In its content (print, digital and social) and through events and the AZ Awards, the AZURE Media platform will continue to focus on providing a meaningful perspective. Or as Nelda would say, "design that matters" — and this says it all.

Sergio Sgaramella, CEO

Major Impact

The magazine you are holding in your hands is a true source of pride for us: It's our 300th issue. Maybe you recall what first drew you to *Azure*: You received a subscription in architecture school, you're a lifelong reader or you just recently discovered us — whether in print or online. As someone who started here 20 years ago, I think back to my first memories of being a part of the team that puts it all together, including very subjective recollections of the planning that went into certain covers — our reinterpretation of *American Gothic*, starring a chicken, for a food–design issue (May 2010); the "Googlegram" of a raised fist to signify the green revolution in design (May 2007); and particular articles that melded great storytelling with vivid visuals. I'm still inspired by the pieces we published on the floating communities of Lagos, Nigeria (Sept 2007); Frank Gehry's just-completed Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles (Nov/Dec 2003); and Nelda Rodger's experience of "the Last Salone in Milan" (Jul/Aug 2005). One of *Azure*'s co-founders, Rodger brought her incisive wit and curiosity to the continuous evolution of the magazine's scope. She and Sergio Sgaramella turned a humble publication into an internationally renowned resource — and a place where both concrete projects and flights of fancy could be explored with equal enthusiasm.

One of the most ambitious editions *Azure* ever produced was our first-ever city-focused issue (Sept 2008). "How to Build a Great City" featured essays by Deyan Sudjic, Lisa Rochon and Evan Solomon alongside stories on Bogotá's exceptional transit system, the nascent urban practice of vertical farming and 3XN's paradigm-shifting Ørestad College. It dove into the various conversations then emerging around transportation, public space and cultural architecture. For that reason, we decided that "Civic Impact" should be the theme of this issue.

In these pages, we look at the rich history of social housing in Vienna, exciting new commercial developments in Detroit, and how Naples has put art and architecture at the centre of its subway expansion. We also spend some time in the gritty construction sites of Toronto's most anticipated hybrid communities. So often, we are tempted to uphold other cities' achievements while criticizing all that needs to change in our own. As Jane Jacobs told Robert Fulford back in our Oct/Nov 1997 issue, albeit when ours was a far different urban realm than it is today, "We have got a marvellous city — yet people hardly ever feel they can talk about it without emphasizing the problems." Let's raise a glass to Toronto — our cover star — and to the enduring power of print.

Elizabeth Pagliacolo, Editor



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All Dressed Up

Launched at NeoCon 2023, Keilhauer's latest collaboration with EOOS brings an elegant yet approachable aesthetic to the office

In an era where athleisure wear and denim dominate our closets, it may seem that formal attire has all but left the workplace. But a well-fitted suit never goes out of style. For more formal office spaces, Keilhauer's latest launch, designed by long-time collaborator EOOS, offers an aptly dressed-up solution. And just like its name suggests, the Tailored collection, which debuted at NeoCon 2023, feels contemporary and refined — but never stuffy.

Featuring four product families that range from conference seating to occasional tables, Tailored was conceived to be effortlessly mixed and matched to curate cohesive and functional workspaces. "With this collection, the idea was to



design something warm and sophisticated by having furniture archetypes as the starting point — one product in each category for the different rituals in the office,” says EOOS. “You will find different scales, footprints and functions — but with one language throughout all the products. Tailored is one comprehensive collection for all kinds of workplace scenarios.”

Take Symm, for instance: the hero product of the series. A modern take on the timeless tuxedo sofa, the modular offering also includes a complementary low-back lounge chair, a side chair and occasional tables. Elevated with premium details, the sofa simplifies a classic design with just one cross seam

per cushion. With the choice of either wooden or aluminum feet, Symm easily adapts from casual to corporate environments.

The lounge and side chairs boast a hexagonal seat shape that allows workers to sit and move around freely, with the same tailored cross-stitching detail. The corresponding occasional tables feature Cambria quartz tabletops in rectangular, circular or square models to suit any space. Meanwhile, the sculptural Fold table family is another well-matched pairing for Symm seating, and is available in diamond, square and side table configurations with exposed edging.

The equally versatile Swav series can make the leap from the boardroom to the office kitchen.

Clean-lined silhouettes, grid stitching and framed back details unify the Swav seating family.



Designed for everyday meetings, the mid-back conference chair offers an air of rich luxury and simple modernism. Its integrated-but-visible support shell and framed back detail add a sophisticated textural element while allowing for combo-cover upholstery (a scaled-down low-back version with a thinner side profile and classic loop arms is also available).

The Swav armless lounge chair, counter and bar stools feature the same signature design elements, with lightweight minimalist silhouettes that appear to float on their wooden frames. Like the Symm family, the pieces are unified by their clean lines and refined grid-stitched detailing.

Though designed to work together, the products within the Tailored collection can hold their own. The elegant Neesh lounge chair, for instance, has all the makings of a design classic. Crafted for comfort and concentration, the chair's roomy yet cozy form envelops the user, while its walnut or ash base adds a touch of warmth to any office.

Together, the Tailored collection caters to every need in the contemporary workplace, delivering both functionality and high style. [keilhauer.com](https://www.keilhauer.com)



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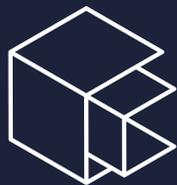
Rocky Mountain

While **Vancouver** has perhaps historically been better known for its natural peaks than it has for its architectural summits, the city has been steadily building up its skyline over the past few years. Completed in June, one of its most impressive landmarks yet comes courtesy of Kengo Kuma and developer Westbank. The Japanese architect's firm worked alongside local studio Merrick Architecture to design a sculptural 43-storey high-rise in the downtown Coal Harbour district. Portions of the building appear to have been scooped out, creating diagonally symmetrical concave sides. The curved tower's other signature element is its richly textured facade, which layers glass and aluminum panels into a kind of patchwork quilt. (Wooden details on the recessed balconies add some welcome warmth.) At the base, slanted structural beams enclose a courtyard anchored by a custom Kuma-designed Fazioli piano. The tower marks the midpoint of a serious building boom: BIG's Vancouver House was completed in 2020, while Shigeru Ban, Thomas Heatherwick and Revery Studio (founded by Bing Thom) all have their own skyscrapers in the works — meaning Vancouver's ascent has just begun. _ERIC MUTRIE

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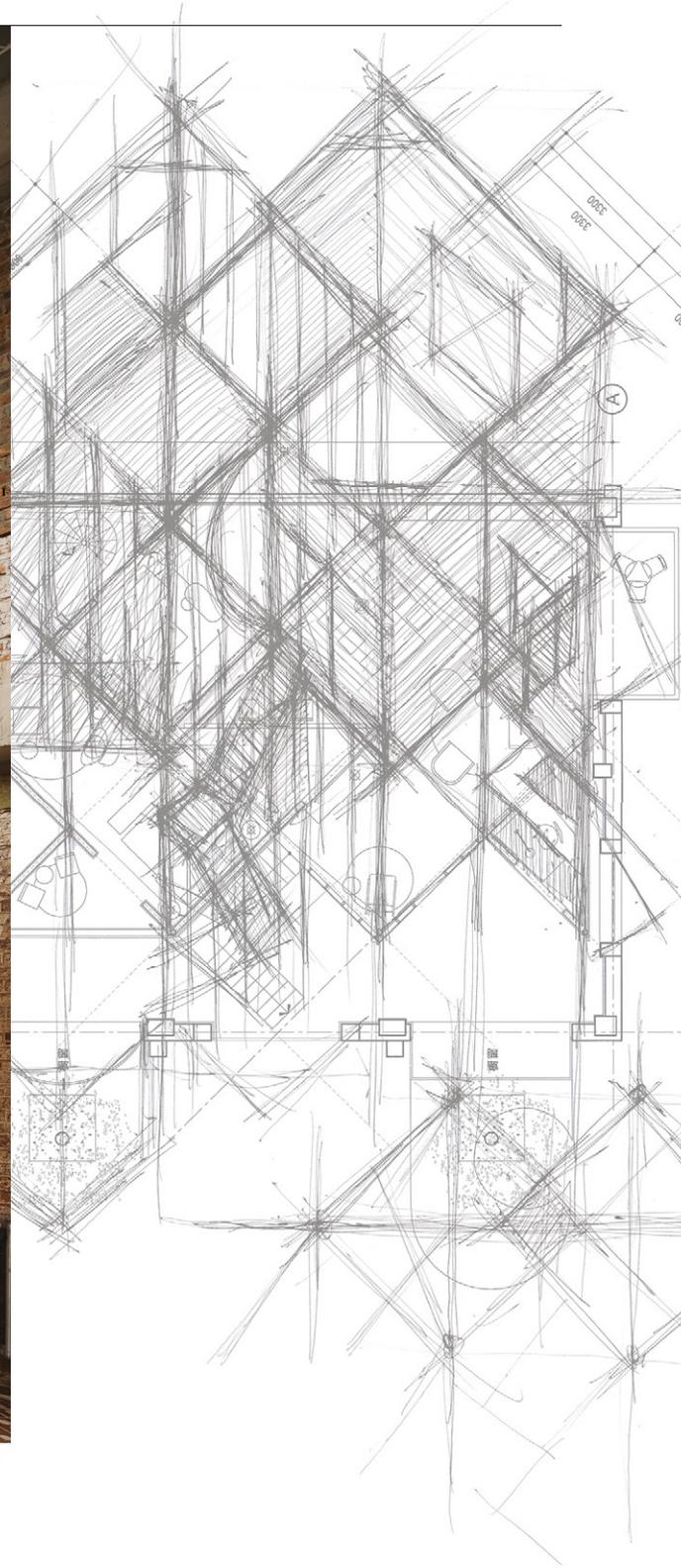
WORDS _Tom Arnstein
PHOTOS _Wen Studio

When the founders of fledgling furniture brand Ziinlife visited the offices of fellow Shanghai-based architecture firm Atelier tao+c, they immediately liked what they saw. The minimalist, industrial-leaning space made from affordable materials perfectly reflected the creative design brand's own mantra of "solving problems through design" — namely, by offering China's more cash-conscious but style-forward consumers trendy furnishings. This chance meeting three years ago is how Ziinlife's latest showroom and café, located in a repurposed Mao-era textile warehouse in the east of Beijing, came to be.

Lead architect Chunyan Cai's "house within a house" concept for the space arose from a necessity to augment its slight 186 square metres into something more substantial — without impacting versatility. "By rotating two intersected square frames 45 degrees, a diagonal relation is created between them and the existing walls," Cai explains. This oblique tension between the clean, wooden interior and the building's rustic, red-brick artifice



Inspired by the building's industrial shell, new inserts evoke a construction site with materials like steel and timber.



cannily expands the space's illusory depth. Meanwhile, a lone steel deck cleaves the second floor, tidily doubling the accessible floor space.

You reach this area via a single U-shaped staircase partly obscured by laminate wood panelling on the building's front side, which immaculately juts into the brick facade. The affected wall is replaced by a triangular window, forging a conversation between the delicate internal structure and its more pragmatic shell while also letting in light and tempting passersby.

Despite being predominantly made from exposed industrial materials — a skeleton of auburn steel I-beams and columns hoist the timber and transparent polycarbonate sheet casing, all buoyed

by two sparing slabs of grey marble — the internal structure retains a playful nimbleness. The effect is enhanced by clever geometric touches and deft use of negative space, as seen in cut-outs to the intricate easel-like contours of the staircase, a swooping semicircular inlay above the first-floor showroom and pin-neat gatefold windows opening out from the second-floor pergolas.

"We tried to let the layers demonstrate that a structure can be as beautiful as its finishing material," Cai says. The result is a clean, assured space that gives its occupants room to breathe while also allowing Ziinlife's designs to speak to the customer unburdened by noisy detail.

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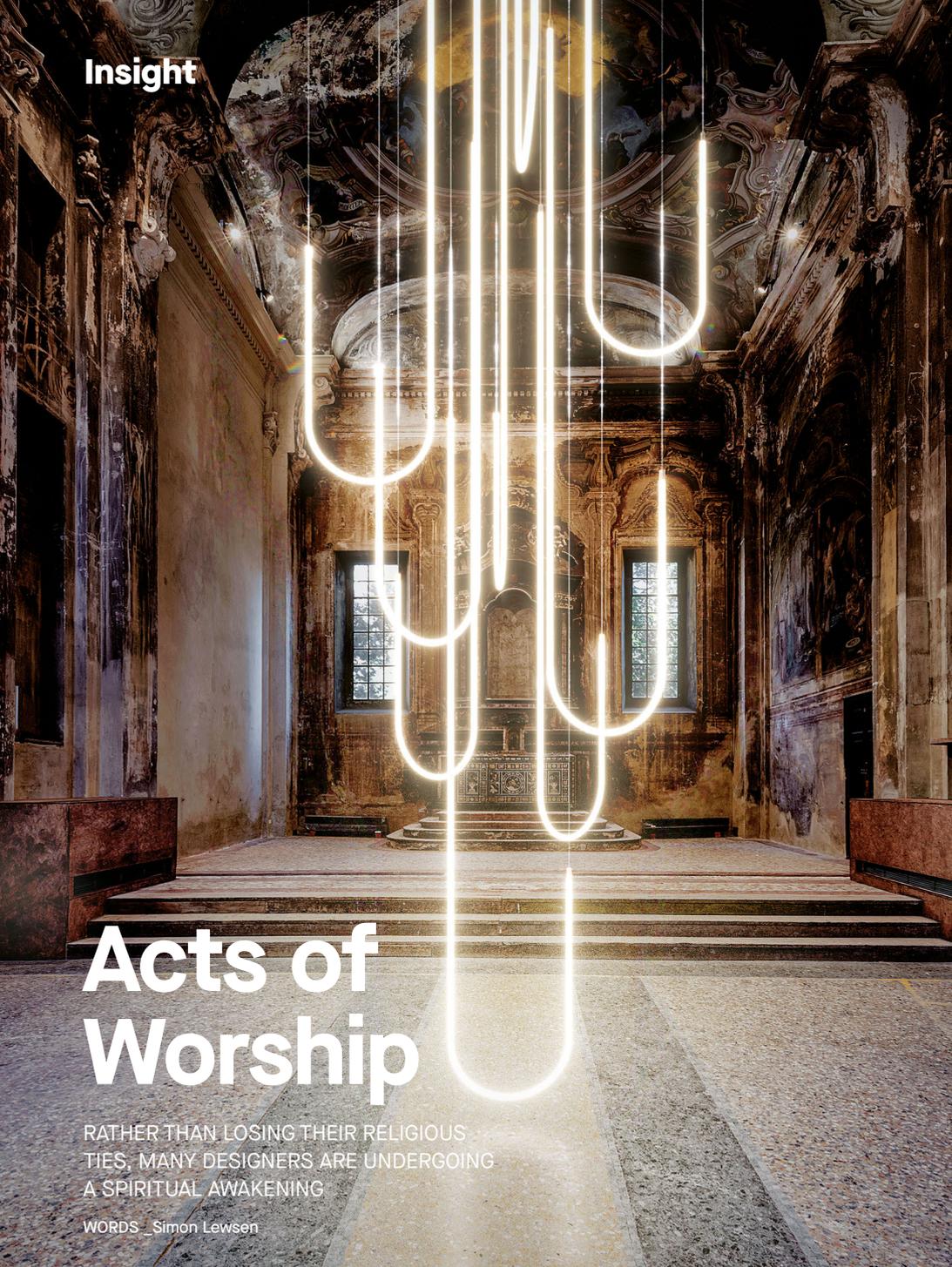
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Acts of Worship

RATHER THAN LOSING THEIR RELIGIOUS TIES, MANY DESIGNERS ARE UNDERGOING A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

WORDS _ Simon Lewsen

“Desacralized,” an exhibition held this April during Milan Design Week, was meant to explore the decline of religiosity in our contemporary culture. More than 20 designers contributed pieces displayed inside San Vittore e 40 Martiri, a deconsecrated church in central Milan. Morghen Studio created a chandelier composed of thin strands of light, a minimalist take on a once-ornate form. Andrés Monnier made a candelabrum that obliquely references the Holy Trinity. Rick Owens built a chair adorned with a moose antler — an artifact, perhaps, of a long-forgotten pagan cosmology.

There was no ambiguity about the exhibition’s theme: It was right there in the title. Yet when visitors entered this desacralized space, they responded with displays of religious reverence. They removed their hats and made the sign of the cross. One elderly woman knelt down and prayed. Their reactions

suggest that our relationship with religion is perhaps more vexed than the word “desacralized” would imply. Few of us attend weekly worship, but we still recognize the sacred when we see it — and we still, occasionally, make space for it in our lives.

Religion isn’t dying. It’s retreating, perhaps, and changing, for sure. Legacy institutions are in decline, but charismatic and syncretic religious practices are still ubiquitous. Immigration and multiculturalism have diversified the West, creating a tapestry of religious observances in a world where Roman Catholicism and mainline Protestantism once predominated. Houses of worship may sit empty more often than they used to, but they remain among the most storied architectural monuments in any city — and some designers are engaging with that heritage in bold new ways. Here, four speakers respond to the complexity of religion in the 21st century.



ABOVE: KPMB’s design for Tyndale Green.
LEFT: “Desacralized,” a Milan Design Week exhibition.

COMMUNITY

Bruno Weber, a partner at **KPMB Architects**, has worked with Markee Developments to design a new affordable residential community, Tyndale Green, on the property surrounding Tyndale University, an inter-denominational seminary in North Toronto with a modernist cathedral at its centre.

When you began working with Tyndale, it was in a familiar crisis experienced by many of today’s religious organizations.

Yes. The owners of the university had a building in need of continuous repairs. They’d also seen a reduction in the number of people wanting to pursue seminary studies. So they had an amazing property, but they lacked the monetary influx needed to support it. This is a common predicament.

Your solution was to build a planned neighbourhood around the university. How do you ensure that Tyndale scholars don’t feel displaced by the secular residents?

It’s all about alignment. The original Catholic sisterhood that founded Tyndale, before it became inter-denominational, believed deeply in community outreach. So our goal of creating affordable housing fits within Tyndale’s historical mission. The residential and religious communities at the site won’t always overlap, but community residents will use Tyndale’s amazing gym or library. And Tyndale, despite its drop in attendance, will once again be at the centre of a vibrant community.

PHOTOS BY MAISON MOUTON NOIR, COURTESY OF GALERIE PHILIA (“DESACRALIZED”); DOUBLESFACE (FIRST NARAYEVER CONGREGATION); SHAFI TARIN (MIPS)



ABOVE: LGA AP's renovation of a Toronto synagogue.
RIGHT: An Islamic mural by Muslims in Public Space.

CONTINUITY

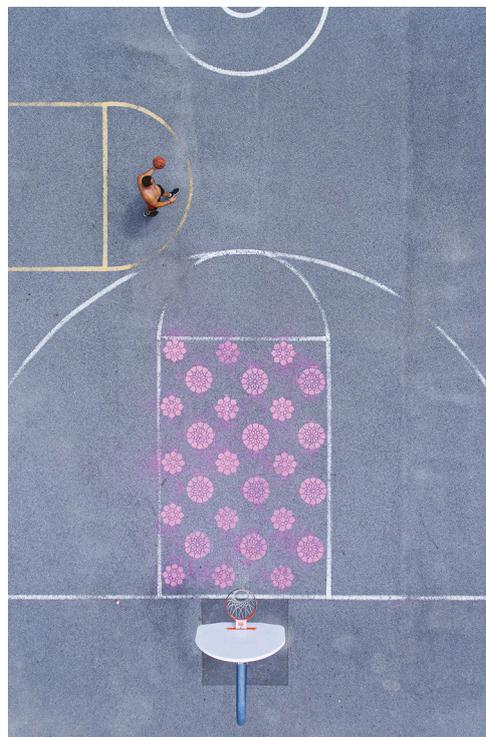
Angie Michail is a senior associate at **LGA Architectural Partners** and the project architect on the renovation of *First Narayever Congregation*, a 130-year-old synagogue in Toronto's Harbord Village neighbourhood.

What does this renovation tell us about the importance of upholding tradition?

The congregation is very attached to its building, but it needed to be made accessible. We wanted to ensure that everybody was able to come and go from the same entrance, which required us to locate an elevator and stairs in the front vestibule, where there was limited space. To accommodate those objects, we moved and rebuilt the entire sanctuary to the east, still within the footprint of the previous building.

How did you ensure that the rebuilt sanctuary felt like the original one?

We maintained its general design characteristics — the size, the proportions, the ceiling profile and the materials. The construction manager did a 3D scan of all the wooden elements, like the arc and the wall paneling. We then worked to salvage what we could of these pieces. For the parts we couldn't salvage, we built exact replicas. The primary heritage value is rooted in the people more than the building itself. The key was to support the community while modernizing the building to ensure its longevity.



VISIBILITY

Mehedi Khan is an urban planner and the founder of **Muslims in Public Space (MiPs)**, a Toronto non-profit that seeks to embed motifs from Islamic art in the cityscape.

Why did you found MiPs?

Because representation matters. Back in Dhaka, Bangladesh, my parents loved visiting public spaces. When they moved to Toronto, they explored

the city. But there was a time, around 2001, when many Muslims in Toronto feared being out in public. My goal is to fight that fear. When people from diverse backgrounds see their identities reflected in public spaces, it fosters a sense of belonging. Public art humanizes the built environment.

The city rejected your proposal to paint an electrical box in zellij iconography. How do you respond to setbacks like this?

The City of Toronto has insidious ways of saying no. We had a plan to paint a basketball court in Islamic geometric motifs, and the Parks, Forestry & Recreation department said we'd have to pay the city \$80,000 for them to do it. That's an amount that we, like many community organizations, cannot afford. Last summer, we ran a pilot project in Leonard Linton Park [an East Toronto green space] where community members painted a temporary Islamic mural on the basketball court using stencils and washable chalk spray. It cost us \$200. We documented the event and sent the images to the city to show that people have a serious interest in our project. This type of art shouldn't be foreign to the city. A permanent version of this initiative shouldn't be so difficult — and expensive — to do.

DESACRALIZATION

Ygaël Attali is the founder of **Galerie Philia**, whose recent exhibition at Milan Design Week, "*Desacralized*," featured more than 20 objects displayed in the ruins of a historic Catholic church.

In theory, there's nothing sacred going on in this exhibition. Yet the ambience feels... hallowed? Dare I say, sacred?

Very often, when we talk about desacralization, what we're talking about is the reinterpretation, or metamorphosis, of the sacred. Even when we go out of it, we're still in it. The music we chose for the exhibition was Mozart's *Requiem in D Minor*, but it was 600 per cent slower than usual. When people entered, they didn't instantly recognize the requiem, but they knew it from somewhere.

We're still receptive to religious experiences — and we want to experience them, don't we?

When Nietzsche said that God is dead, he wasn't just being provocative. He knew how important a kind of religiosity was in order to live. The sacred used to structure our societies, and those partly desacralized societies can feel empty today. There is a kind of sorrow, which we were trying to evoke in our exhibition. Visitors recognized this tension, which is why they responded the way they did. When people entered, they could feel vibrations reminding them of a sacred that is both disappearing and still paradoxically present.

COUNTRY →

Tortoise

Three hospitality designers — Ruoxi Wang, Chuan Wang and Hines Fischer — joined together to form Forces at Play, a new furniture brand that made its debut at ICFE. The supergroup's made-in-the-USA lounge chair features an ash base and a down-filled seat, shown here in a marshy Maharam fabric.



INDIE ROCK →

To You, Someday

This eclectic medley of maple and walnut veneers (not to mention blue leather) was a standout of Oakland, California, designer NJ Roseti's new collection, exhibited in WantedDesign Manhattan's Look Book section and awarded Best Body of Work.



Musical Chairs

REMIX →

Boe Bebop Lounge

Displayed at design gallery Colony, this collaboration between Studio Paolo Ferrari and Hiroko Takeda set out to demonstrate the difference between a knockoff and an homage — taking inspiration from a 1920s design by Pierre Chareau and Jean Lurçat but carrying it in a distinct new direction.



POP →

Crcl

At ICFE, textile design studio Minna showcased its collection of fabrics handwoven by Guatemalan and Mexican artisans. Two patterns — Sol Honey and Sol Hibiscus — are shown here on the pine-framed Crcl chair by Hudson, New York, furniture-maker LikeMindedObjects, which creates cushion stuffing from fast-fashion textile waste.



PHOTO BY KELI DZIKUNOO (OZO)



← HEAVY METAL

Amadeus

Wang Yichu wowed the crowd in WantedDesign Manhattan's Launch Pad section with this sculptural throne made from aluminum dryer exhaust tubes filled with urethane foam (meaning yes, you can sit on it!).



← CLASSICAL

Sieni

Named for the Finnish word for mushroom, this solid oak three-legged round chair (designed by Office of Tangible Space cofounder Michael Yarinsky) was presented by Nordic brand Made by Choice at the home of Finland's consulate general.



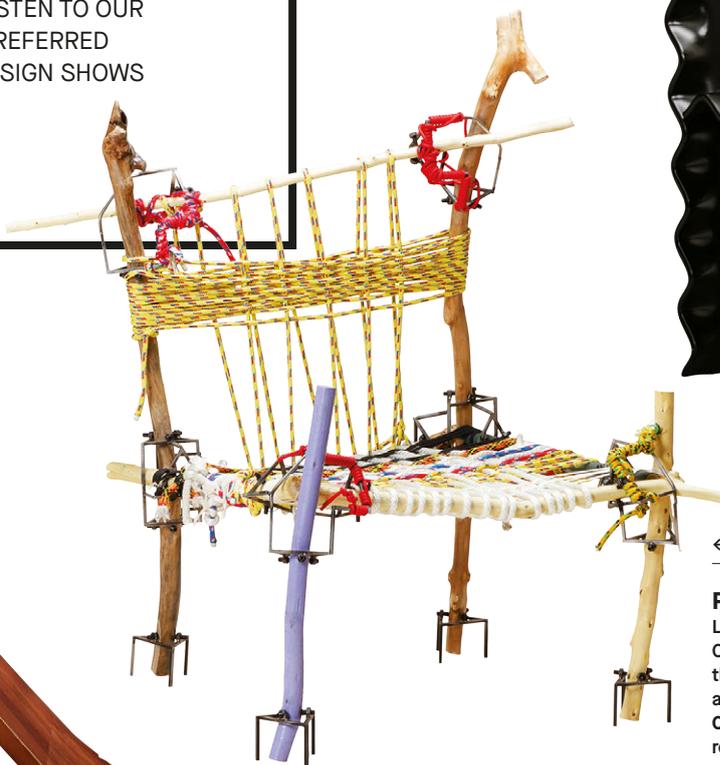
← PUNK

Noodle Throne

After charming us with a few pasta-inspired pieces during the 2022 edition of WantedDesign Manhattan, Caleb Ferris added another dish to his menu with this Baltic birch beauty, which took home this year's Best in Show award.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE'RE ALL JUST LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LISTEN TO OUR TUNES. NO MATTER YOUR PREFERRED GENRE, NEW YORK'S MAY DESIGN SHOWS HAD A SEAT TO MATCH

WORDS _Eric Mutrie



← EXPERIMENTAL

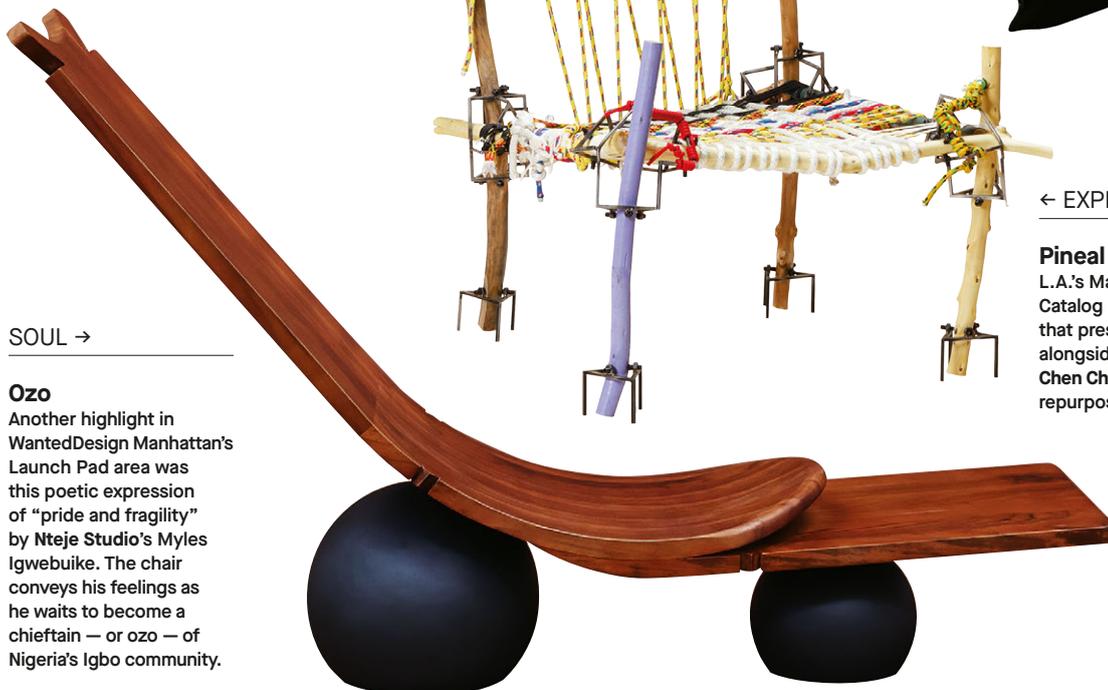
Pineal Lobotomy

L.A.'s Marta gallery teamed up with NYC auction house Catalog Sale to host Make-Do, a Chinatown exhibition that presented a dozen historical "improvised chairs" alongside 12 new commissions — including this one by Chen Chen and Kai Williams, who assembled it from rope, repurposed steel and tree branches in just three days.

SOUL →

Ozo

Another highlight in WantedDesign Manhattan's Launch Pad area was this poetic expression of "pride and fragility" by Nteje Studio's Myles Igwebuike. The chair conveys his feelings as he waits to become a chieftain — or ozo — of Nigeria's Igbo community.

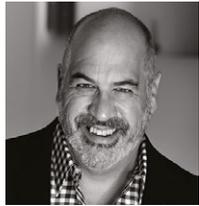


One Hell of a Ride

KEEPING UP WITH HELLER'S RAPID RE-EMERGENCE AS ONE OF THE BIGGEST BRANDS IN AMERICAN DESIGN

WORDS _Eric Mutrie

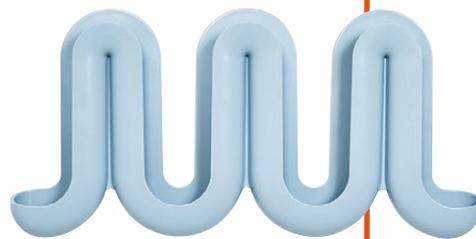
John Edelman's tenure at Design Within Reach proved that a lot can change in a decade. Back in 2009, the store was at the centre of a lawsuit for selling knockoffs of the Bellini chair produced by Alan Heller's eponymous furniture brand. Soon after, Edelman (originally of Edelman Leather fame) joined DWR as CEO. Within his first month, he met with Heller to apologize and outline his plan to rebuild the then-beleaguered retailer as a champion of original design. The two remained friends until Heller passed away in 2021. Last May, Edelman (who left DWR in 2019) embarked on the next chapter of his design career, buying Heller and plotting an ambitious growth strategy. Here's everything he's accomplished in his first 12 months on the job. (As it turns out, a lot can change in a year, too.)



2022 MAY
John Edelman buys Heller: "They had an incredible collection, but it was under-marketed," Edelman says of the 52-year-old company's appeal. "I also loved their all-plastic production technique. Once you make the mould, you're in business for the next 20 years." Mind you, he has made one major update to Heller's material palette, placing new emphasis on recycled — and recyclable — polymers.

Heller takes the keys to a 1977 VW van: After signing a new licensing deal with Frank Gehry (who designed Heller's Twist Cube back in 2004), Edelman was eager to reintroduce one of the company's greatest hits. Before NYCxDesign, he bought a camper van on eBay and mounted Gehry's cubes to the top. The van broke down a few days in, but it made a big splash on social media — and returned for NeoCon a month later.

Anna Dawson exhibits a Swell prototype: While visiting the Launch Pad section of WantedDesign Manhattan 2022, Edelman spotted a wall-mounted catchall modelled after ocean waves by Anna Dawson, who was then in her final year at RISD. (Originally from California, Dawson is an avid surfer.) "I could hear trumpets going off in my head," says Edelman. "It was meant to be a Heller product." Sure enough, Swell launched for purchase back at WantedDesign this May.



DECEMBER
The Vignelli Rocker rocks on: While Alan Heller had previously exhibited Lella and Massimo Vignelli's 2014 design — which rocks on a gently rounded base — it had never been widely available. "The legacy of the brand is incredible," says Edelman. "And when something is modern, it could have been designed 100 years ago or 100 years from now." Each chair is accompanied by a Digby-powered NFT to verify its authenticity for generations to come.



2023 JANUARY
Hellerware returns: Heller's stackable, supersaturated dinnerware was a staple of 1970s kitchens. Its revival has been such a hit that MoMA Design Store has sold out of the collection three times.



MAY
Heller launches two new chairs: Edelman found the perfect NYCxDesign venue in Chelsea's Heller Gallery (no relation). "Modern furniture belongs in your home but also holds its own in a museum," he says. Heller used the space to showcase two new seats designed by Hlynur Atlason in response to Edelman's three-word prompt: "Modern, comfortable and lounge." Atlason's team stress-tested their concepts — Limbo (top) and Bluff (bottom) — by taking them home and using them as movie night seating. The results prove that, with the right curves, plastic can provide long-term comfort.

2024...
On the horizon for Heller: More reissues (including the Excalibur toilet brush that Philippe Starck designed back in 1994) plus another new chair by Jumbo Studio.



arflex

italian design story



Marengo sofa design Mario Marengo

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If a Tree Falls

DURING COPENHAGEN'S ANNUAL DESIGN FEST, "WEIGHT OF WOOD" EXPLORED THE CHARACTER OF TIMBER

WORDS _Stefan Novakovic

PHOTOS _Claus Troelsgaard

The first thing that hit me was the smell. As I stepped off my bicycle and into the showroom, a warm, earthy and reassuring aroma filled the air. At Dinesen's Copenhagen hub, wood was everywhere, from the company's signature flooring to the furnishings, ceilings and wall finishes — as well as in the thought-provoking exhibition that animated the historic brand's space during the Danish capital's 3 Days of Design fair in early June. Yet while scent set the stage, mass and density stole the show.

A collaboration between Dinesen and local design duo Christian + Jade, "Weight of Wood" explored the life cycle of trees — from forests to timber and (eventually) furniture — with remarkable intimacy. The designers, Jade Chan and Christian Hammer Juhl, used offcuts from various tree species found in Germany's Black Forest (where the majority of Dinesen's wood is sourced) to study their varying densities through a series of playfully tactile prototypes. "We were fascinated by the idea that no two pieces of wood weigh the same — not even if they come from the same tree trunk," the designers explain.

Near the entrance, a row of 11 solid wood blocks introduced the conceit. Cut from black alder, ash, beech, cherry, Douglas fir, elm, hornbeam, maple, oak, pine and walnut, the samples all weighed 250 grams but varied substantially in size.

Picking up the pieces, I took in the varying textures and weights, moving from a long block of soft Douglas fir to another of luxuriously dark and somewhat knotty walnut (which, being a heavier wood, resulted in a slightly more compact form).

While the fact that different species of wood vary in weight is no revelation in itself, Christian + Jade's studied and creative approach paid remarkable dividends. The exhibit lovingly traces the conditions that shape every piece of wood, from the anatomy of individual trees — layers of cambium, sapwood, heartwood and pith all differ in weight — to the intricacies of grain and porosity across species. Their intelligent study extended to a group of interactive furniture prototypes (including a see-saw, a reclining chair and a rocking horse) all made from a blend of light and heavy woods. The see-saw, for instance, featured one seat made of Douglas fir and another made of denser oak wood, meaning it always leaned in one direction.

The childlike simplicity of the concept was part of its delightful appeal. Yet the exhibition also compels us to re-examine our relationship with nature. While the extractive timber industry approaches wood as a mere commodity, "Weight of Wood" invited us to see it as a living thing. On my way out, I received a gift: a sphere of Douglas fir and oak. It was an echo of the same concept explored in the show's see-saw; the volumes of wood were equal, but their weights were disparate. I still have the ball at home. And from time to time, I pick it up and study its grains of light, open fir and dark, compact oak. I raise it to my nose — thinking of its journey from acorn to tree, and then to the lumber mill and the showroom — and I feel its weight in my hand.

At Dinesen's Copenhagen showroom, Christian + Jade (above) constructed spheres (right) and conceptual furniture prototypes (below) that highlighted the weight discrepancies between different species of wood.





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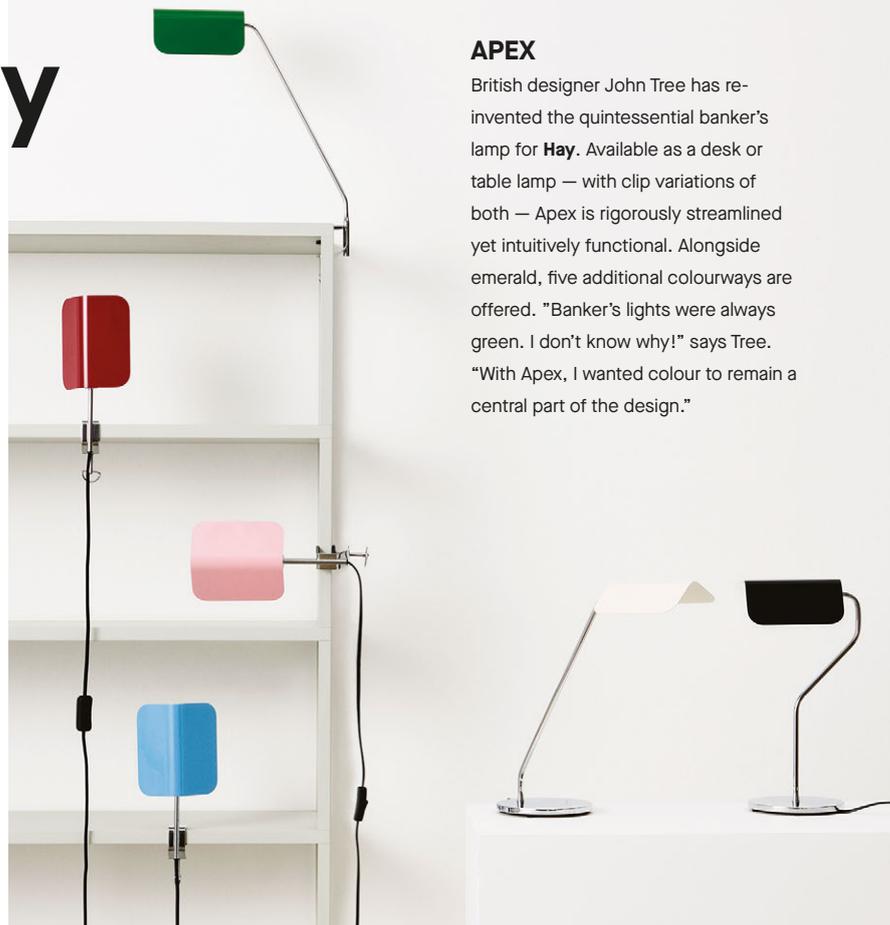
COPENHAGEN'S TOP LAUNCHES DEMONSTRATED THE TIMELESSNESS — AND REFRESHING EVOLUTION — OF DANISH STYLE

WORDS _Stefan Novakovic



GESTURE

Introduced in 1956, Hans Olsen's beloved dining chair is emblematic of comfortable, unfussy Danish modernism. And thanks to six vivid colourways (and new upholstery options) by Swiss Argentine maestro Alfredo Häberli, the **Warm Nordic** classic feels thoroughly reinvigorated, with hues that "emphasize and intensify the quality of what is already there," says Häberli.



APEX

British designer John Tree has re-invented the quintessential banker's lamp for **Hay**. Available as a desk or table lamp — with clip variations of both — Apex is rigorously streamlined yet intuitively functional. Alongside emerald, five additional colourways are offered. "Banker's lights were always green. I don't know why!" says Tree. "With Apex, I wanted colour to remain a central part of the design."



PLUSH

When designing this dining table, **dk3** founder Jacob Plejdrup favoured soft, organic shapes that emphasize the grain and texture of wood. Slender, solid wood tabletops (available in oak, smoked oak or walnut, and offered in two sizes) draw the eye to their natural beauty while creating an elegant contrast to the thick, sculptural legs below.



BOUQUET

Inspired by the intricate tulip arrangements seen at Italian flower markets, Sinja Svarrer Damkjær adapted floral forms into delicately pleated, hand-folded paper luminaires — a signature of Denmark's **Le Klint**. Initially introduced as a collection of chandeliers, the Bouquet series recently expanded to include table and desk lamps, which support the paper flower with a gracefully curved stem.



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BEAM

Channelling the 1970s in a way that's less "mom's basement" and more late-era *Mad Men*, **Nienkämper's** lounge seating allows for mix-and-match configurations of burnt sienna and mustard yellow upholstery. When creating arrangements of several chair and table modules, the design's exposed wood base becomes a central track linking everything together.

**RALIK**

This vivid **Arper** collection by Ichiro Iwasaki features seating and workstation modules that lend themselves just as well to colour coordination as to power-clashing. Alongside plenty of convenient details — removable backrests, attachable side tables, and parts that can be easily disassembled and recycled — the range boasts upholstery options from Spradling, Kvadrat and Maharam.

Creative Spark

AT THE MART AND IN CHICAGO'S FULTON MARKET, DESIGNERS EMBRACED ENERGIZING COLOURS STRAIGHT OUT OF THE CRAYON BOX

WORDS _Anjolie Rao

TANGRAM

The beloved rainy-day game of tangrams inspired this checkerboard pattern from **DesignTex**. One twist: The vinyl upholstery features triangles in both solid and striped patterns. Its six colourways include Colorwheel (shown), which draws on the full rainbow spectrum to create a super-saturated focal point.



PHOTO BY SALVA LOPEZ (ARPER)

**HEDGE**

While the flexible foam used to make this accordion-like bench is firm enough that its undulations can serve as a functional work surface, the material squishes as you sit down to deliver a fantastic sinking-in sensation. Presented in Australian brand **Schiavello's** first permanent North American showroom, the classic design gained a whole new following.

**WRAP**

Normal Studio's relaxed lounge chair for **Muuto** lays a padded jacket (offered in textiles from Kvadrat and Rohleder) over powder-coated steel. The design's oversized cushioning conceals its minimalist frame to create a chair that both looks and feels like a floating cloud. The gathering of fabric on the armrest — which recalls gentle smile lines — is a standout detail.

DOVE

Darran Furniture's Dove collection includes three styles — a dining chair, a rocking chair and a lounge chair (shown). A moulded PET shell tucks into the design's hardwood frame with a slight overhang, forming an intriguing lip that encourages you to take full advantage of the armrests.



Match the Drapes

OFFICE SEATING NODS TO RESIDENTIAL CURTAINS BY FOLDING UPHOLSTERY OVER STEEL OR WOOD FRAMES

WORDS _Anjulie Rao

**CAPE**

Offered as a loveseat and in two- or three-seater configurations, Jehs + Laub's design for **Davis Furniture** evokes a hug with relaxed, curved arms that drape outward to invite groups in. The sofa's simple steel frame is available in over 30 powder-coated colours, while its stitching is nearly invisible except for the strong French seam that runs along the edge to add a bit of couture flair.

PLUMON

Like an exquisitely tailored gown, Patricia Urquiola's lounge features a ribbed "dress" that hugs the curves of a teak frame. While modest in width, the **Kettal** armchair's deep seat still provides ample comfort. For an extra dose of coziness, the design is also offered in a range of bouclé fabrics.



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TWO INSTITUTIONS — ONE IN NEW YORK CITY, ONE IN BUFFALO — MEET THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MODERN MUSEUM WITH RADICAL YET RESPECTFUL ADDITIONS

WORDS _Eric Mutrie

Today's curators and scientists are equally well-versed in the subject of evolution. As galleries adapt to the new needs of contemporary artworks — usually by introducing bigger, more flexible exhibition spaces — many are also re-evaluating their collections to better spotlight previously overlooked talents. Meanwhile, science museum educators are working overtime to teach the value of research, study and analysis during a time of environmental and biological crisis.

Two of this year's major cultural architecture projects show how the latest generation of institutional expansions is navigating these shifts. In April, Studio Gang unveiled the Gilder Center, its long-awaited addition to New York's American Museum of Natural History. Two months later, OMA (which worked alongside Cooper Robertson as executive architect) welcomed visitors to the revamped Buffalo AKG Art Museum (formerly the Albright-Knox). In keeping with the recent tradition of museum architecture, both project teams have

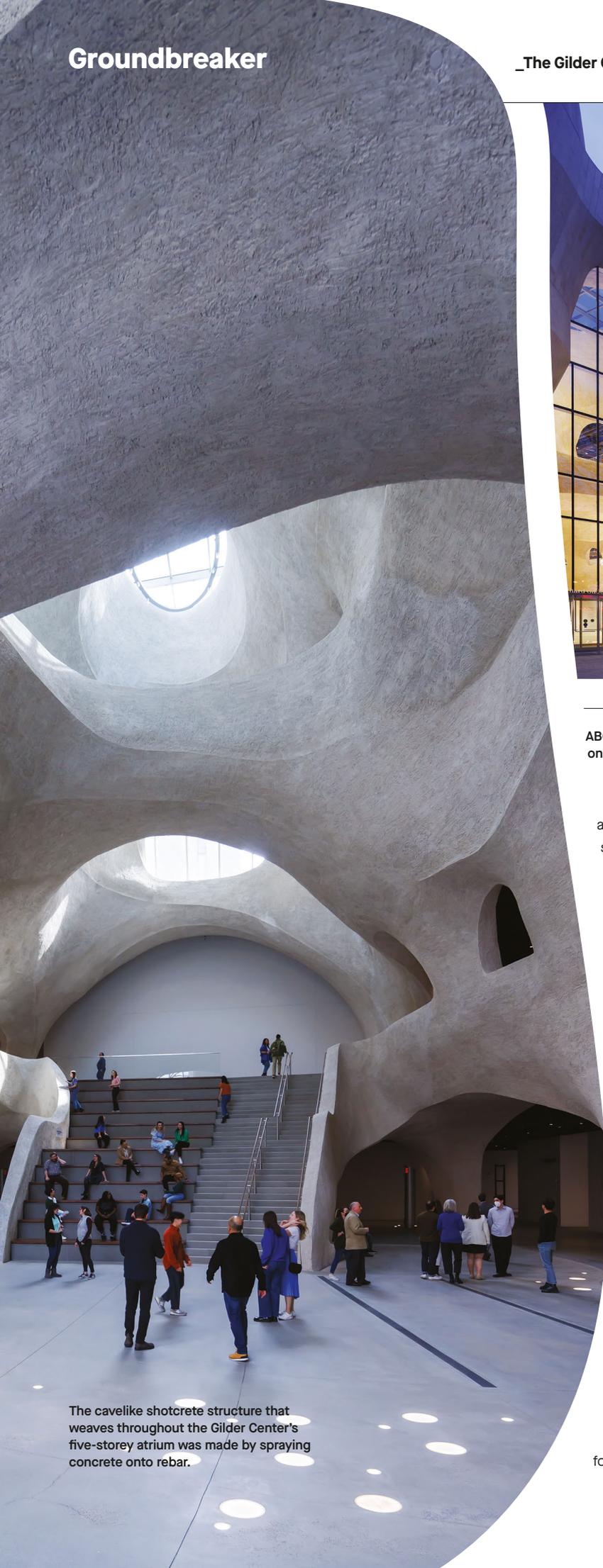
delivered the type of sculptural spectacle that has become a must ever since Gehry took Bilbao. But the beauty of the two structures is more than just skin deep.

—
At the AKG's new gemlike Jeffrey E. Gundlach Building, over 540 triangular glass panels create what OMA refers to as a "veil," which drapes over the building's cruciform core like a sheer tent, enclosing perimeter hallways that wrap around each floor's galleries. "It's a public engagement space that really promotes the diversity of activity that the museum has been conducting," says firm partner Shohei Shigematsu, who led the AKG's revitalization. "But it also creates a contrast with the existing buildings, which are more inward-looking."

Sure enough, the AKG's original home, the 1905 Robert and Elisabeth Wilmers Building designed by E.B. Green, is a stately neoclassical landmark that could nevertheless come across as stiff or exclusive at a time when art galleries are striving to cultivate transparency

OMA and Cooper Robertson's crystalline addition to the Buffalo AKG Art Museum introduces 13 new galleries.





The cave-like shotcrete structure that weaves throughout the Gilder Center's five-storey atrium was made by spraying concrete onto rebar.



ABOVE: The addition's facade features Milford pink granite — the same stone used on the Museum of Natural History's Central Park West entrance.

and openness. "We pride ourselves on being custodians of marvellous artworks, but sometimes the general public may have a difficult time feeling at home in the organization. So we wanted to create a museum that's a place where everybody could have a sense of belonging," explains AKG director Janne Sirén, who kicked off the museum's revitalization project — which includes the new Gundlach Building as well as renovations to its predecessors to create a full-blown museum campus — with nine months of community meetings.

The scope of the project also extends to the AKG's other historic facility, the Seymour H. Knox Building (designed by architect Gordon Bunshaft and completed in 1962). While rich in modernist beauty, the addition was not without its own baggage — namely, an internal courtyard that was hard to take advantage of during Buffalo's long winters. Post-transformation, this courtyard is now covered by a glass and steel canopy that flows down into a single vortex-like column. Technically a sculpture, *Common Sky* by Olafur Eliasson and Sebastian Behmann's firm Studio Other Spaces, this intervention is impressive not just for its savvy engineering (its tessellated web deftly manages sound and sunlight, creating gorgeous shadows while allowing for echo-free conversation) but also for being a way to navigate heritage sensitivities that made it easier to introduce a site-specific installation than to complete the full-blown architectural rethink that OMA originally attempted.

As a result, the courtyard is now a year-round, free-to-enter "town square" served by a new restaurant (itself accented by a vibrant nine-metre-long mural that artist Firelei Báez modelled after an Afrofuturist version of Atlantis). "Museums have a lot of difficulty in the dialogue between new and old, both because of aesthetic compatibility and because the role of the museum has been changing lately," says Shigematsu. "[The Town Square] is a place of community engagement — not just somewhere to see art but somewhere to have exchanges."

A similar social gathering spot sits at the heart of the American Museum of Natural History's new Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education and Innovation in the form of a five-storey atrium complete with bleacher seating. (Granted, as with all grand



ABOVE: A fourth-floor reading room is anchored by a mushroom-like column that integrates lighting and acoustic fins.

staircases, this feature has unfortunate accessibility limitations.) Designed to replace a previous back-of-house structure that served as the museum's Columbus Avenue entrance, the Gilder Center had a two-part mission: to facilitate easier movement between various parts of the museum and to deliver a major architectural jolt. If the AKG's Gundlach building takes inspiration from a veil, then the Gilder Center transports visitors to a canyon. Or perhaps it places them face-to-face with a giant fossil. "It was interesting to observe the museum's different science experts react to our early concept images," says Studio Gang partner Weston Walker, who leads the firm's New York office. "We were working with this fluid idea of architecture as something that could be sculpted. Some saw geology, some saw biology and some saw something in the cosmos."

Whichever scientific metaphor you pick, the addition's sinuous forms (created by spraying concrete over an elaborate rebar framework) weave their way throughout a space filled with bridges and apertures that reward exploration. The building's expressive bends and twists are also a major feat of continuity, facilitating links to neighbouring structures with different floor plates while simultaneously responding to the structural constraints introduced by the existing service



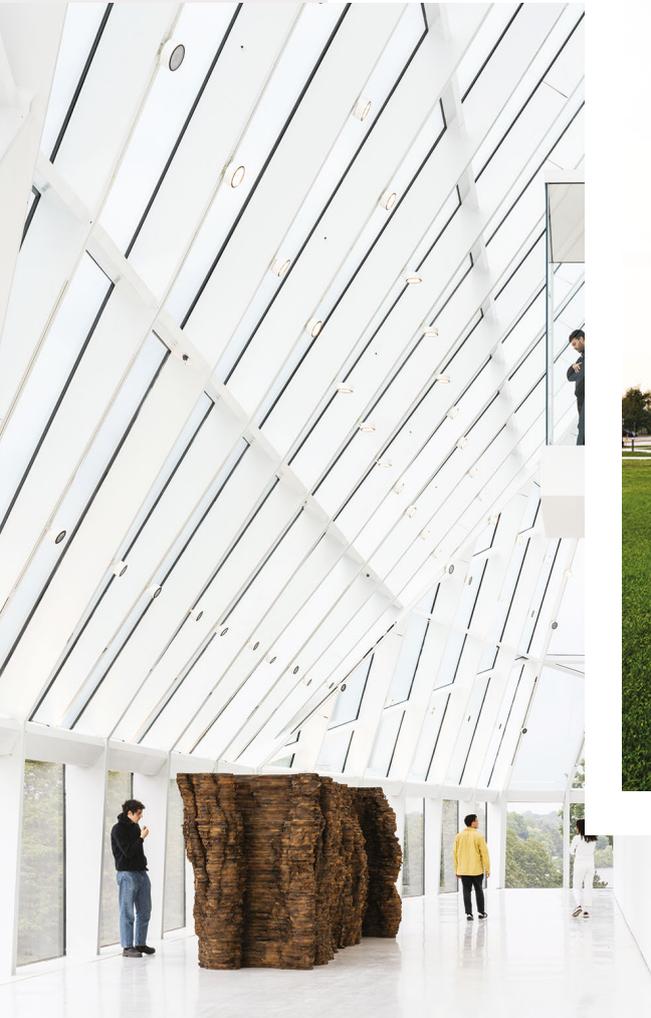
yard below. (With the help of structural engineering firm Arup and parametric design tools, the team coordinated the geometry of the structure such that walls are strategically positioned on top of areas of the foundation that are prepared to bear the load.)

In another poetic (if purely coincidental) reference to the museum's past, the shotcrete used to create these forms was invented by Carl Akeley, a pioneering taxidermist who hunted and mounted the gorillas found in one of the Museum of Natural History's dioramas. "He's legendary," says Walker. "He even has a museum hall named after him. But we didn't actually know about that connection until we were down that road already. When we found out, it felt like just another reason that this was the appropriate idea for this project."

For all their visual flair, both additions also manage to radically improve a visitor's relationship with their respective museum's collection. In the AKG's case, the 7,990 square metres of new space created by the Gundlach Building frees up the newly restored Wilmers Building for a greatly expanded showcase of its celebrated holdings. (Look for familiar masterpieces by Mark Rothko, Ed Ruscha and Joan Miró, but also for an arresting pairing of self-portraits by Horace Pippin and Jacob Lawrence — Black men who served in the armed forces during the

LEFT: Spread across three floors, glass display walls showcase some 3,000 objects while looking into rooms where other specimens are being studied.

RIGHT: The Buffalo AKG Art Museum's new Gundlach Building is framed in marble and draped in a "veil" made of mullions and glass.



LEFT: Ursula von Rydingsvard's *Blackened Word* holds court in the Gundlach Building's outer Sculpture Terrace.

First and Second World War, respectively — placed on either side of a doorway.) In 2007, the AKG (then the Albright-Knox) de-accessioned 200 of its premodern works to create an endowment that has since allowed for the acquisition of art by 21st-century greats like Simone Leigh, a recent Venice Biennale exhibitor known for her sculptures of Black women. These new works are found back over in the Gundlach Building, where vast, open rooms ensure that powerful sculptures (like Nick Cave's *Speak Louder*, which fuses megaphones, mannequins and mother-of-pearl buttons) and large-scale multimedia canvases (see: Mickalene Thomas's 6.1-metre-wide, rhinestone-adorned *Interior: Monet's Blue Foyer*) aren't left feeling constrained.

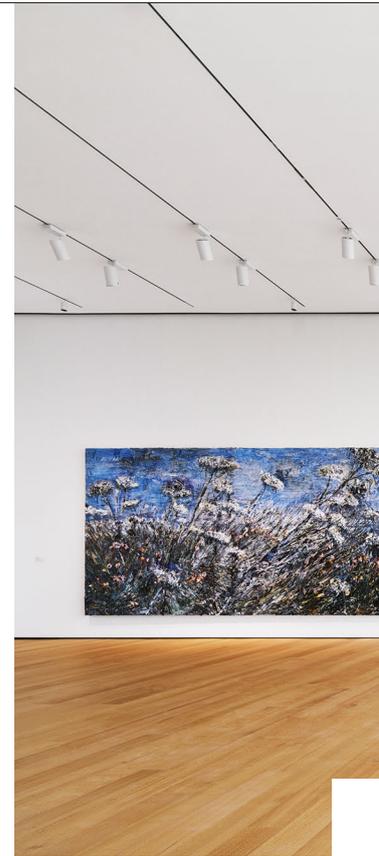
Meanwhile, in Manhattan, the Museum of Natural History's extra 21,370 square metres deliver a happy habitat for some of the city's tiniest creatures, including 80 species of butterflies in a new vivarium and, in the ground-floor insectarium, honey-pot ants that gorge on food until their abdomens have swollen to the size of grapes. (Both environments were designed by the team at Ralph Appelbaum Associates.) On the other end of the scale, the Gilder Center also accommodates

massive projections inside an immersive, interactive theatre equipped with floor-to-ceiling screens and motion-activated surfaces featuring animations that zoom in — way in — on leaves and sea creatures.

Given this focus on the earth's wonders, it is only appropriate that the Gilder Center also pays careful consideration to the nature outside. Along with creating a new western entrance to the Museum of Natural History, the project introduces landscaping improvements by Reed Hilderbrand to the surrounding section of Theodore Roosevelt Park at 79th Street and Columbus Avenue. Inside the building, jelly bean-shaped windows frame views of the tree canopy, making the classrooms and public reading room that line the building's outer perimeter feel like caves at the edge of a forest. (The mushroom-like column that anchors the addition's public reading room gives that space an extra dose of storybook magic.)

The AKG is even further-reaching in its regard for its site. By burying a parking lot, OMA reinstated the Wilmers Building's original grand staircase and made space for a sprawling front lawn (by landscape designer MVVA) that becomes an extension of the adjacent Frederick Law Olmsted-designed Delaware Park. The firm also introduced a reflective serpentine bridge to link the Gundlach and Wilmers buildings, thereby solving another former flaw: the AKG's lack of a true loading dock. (Previously, a crane was used to lift most artworks in through a side window.) While the ADA-compliant bridge makes for a fun visitor journey, its twisting arrangement also

ABOVE: A third-floor gallery featuring canvases by Anselm Kiefer looks out to the AKG's neoclassical Wilmers Building.





ABOVE: *Common Sky*, a sculpture by Olafur Eliasson and Sebastian Behmann of Studio Other Spaces, creates a canopy over the Knox Building's formerly open-air courtyard, which often went to waste during Buffalo's long winters.

ensures a gradual enough slope to allow for the safe transfer of art between the Gundlach Building's dedicated cargo area and the AKG's two older facilities.

The Gundlach Building also mirrors its predecessors in other ways. Delightfully chunky marble (sourced from the same quarry as the stone found in the Wilmers Building) borders the front doorway before continuing inside, where it frames dramatic passageways between rooms. Look down and you'll find that the floors match the fine-grained terrazzo floor of the Knox Building's Town Square in most areas but transition to a surprising supersize arrangement of stone in select corners.

As it turns out, effective institutional expansion is not just about making something bigger. It's about creating more space for fresh thinking. For Buffalo in particular — a city that fell into post-industrial malaise after its steel production boom, but now seems to be on the cusp of rebirth — the AKG's evolution serves as an inspiring example. And at the American Museum of Natural History, the Gilder Center demonstrates the type of morphological adaptation that would have left Darwin transfixed. As it turns out, architects know a thing or two about evolution themselves. **AZ**

ABOVE: The vortex-like column that supports the new roof structure takes the place of a hawthorn tree that once stood in the same spot.

Spotlight

Workspace

_ A Retrofit Wet Lab _ Hits from NeoCon _ UNStudio's Panorama

EDITOR _ Kendra Jackson

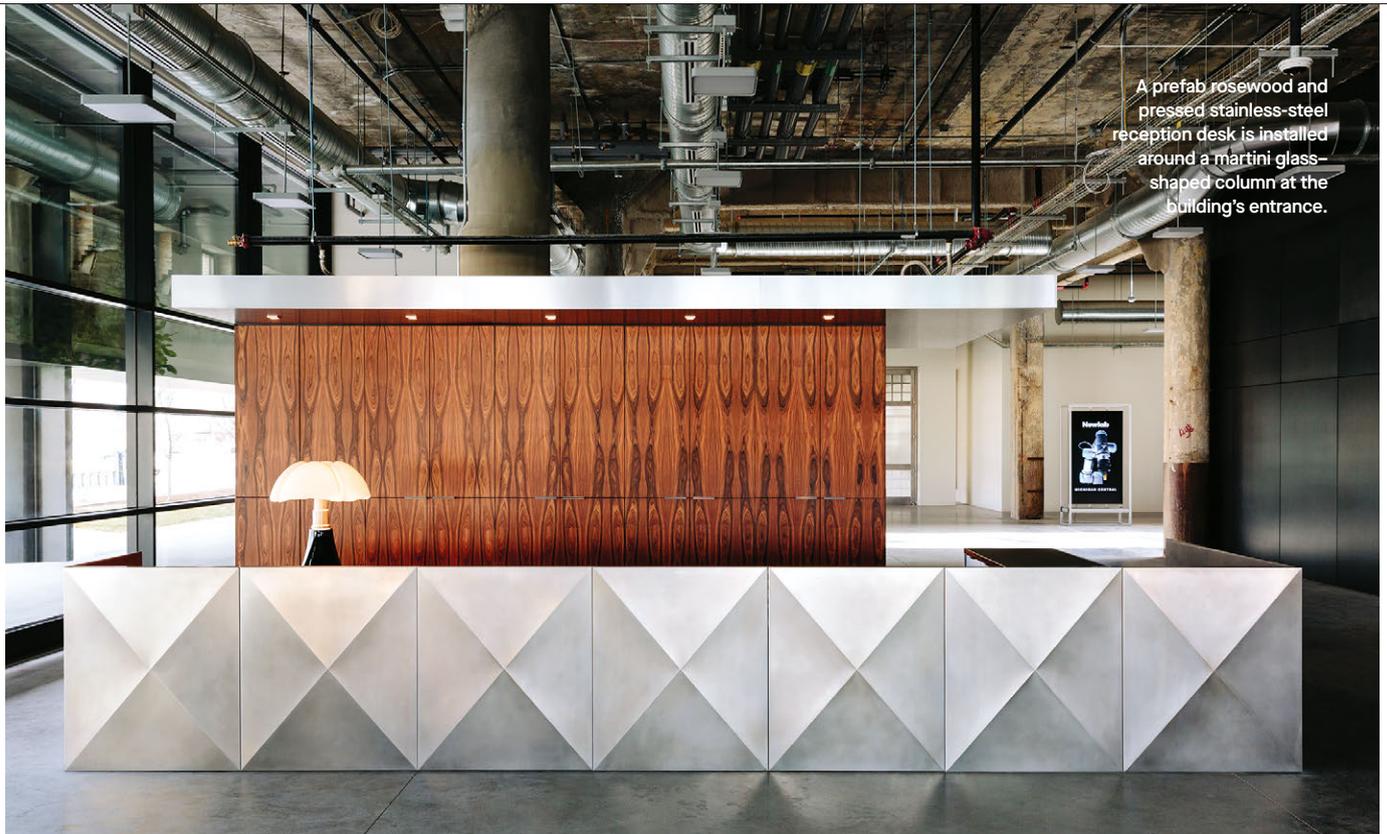
Industrial Revolution

IN DETROIT, CIVILIAN REVIVES AN ALBERT KAHN-DESIGNED POST OFFICE AND WAREHOUSE AS A VIBRANT INNOVATION HUB

WORDS _ Sydney Shilling

PHOTOS _ Brian W. Ferry

The double-height atrium resolves a key design challenge: bringing light into the centre of the building's deep square floor plate.



A prefab rosewood and pressed stainless-steel reception desk is installed around a martini glass-shaped column at the building's entrance.

“The building was going back to nature. There were trees growing inside of it, the basement was full of water and the concrete was damaged.” This is how architect Nicko Elliott of Civilian describes the undeserved fate of the Book Depository, one of many art deco landmarks that have shaped the city of Detroit. For 35 years, the Albert Kahn building — which first served as a post office branch and mail warehouse, then as a storage facility for the Detroit public school system — sat empty, slated for demolition after falling into disrepair following a devastating fire. That was until Ford Motor Company purchased it as part of a larger civic and urban redevelopment plan.

Completed in April, the ambitious adaptive re-use project is now home to Newlab, an innovation hub for entrepreneurs and inventors pioneering sustainable and equitable mobility solutions. Civilian is the Brooklyn design studio that was tapped to redesign the interiors of the derelict three-storey, 25,000-square-metre structure; Gensler’s Detroit office led the sensitive core-and-shell restoration that sought to enhance the original design while updating it for its new use.

“They approached the building with a sort of reverence,” says Elliott. Civilian, too, conceived of the interior fit-out in dialogue with Kahn’s design and his relationship with Fordism. “It was a beautiful thing to learn about the ethos with which he approached building spaces for factories, for people and for production,” he explains.

To that end, the studio leveraged unexpected programmatic adjacencies and visual connections to foster collaboration between production and social areas. Past the reception desk, a gate of stainless-steel and ribbed glass doors gives way to a gallery, and, at the building’s core, a 200-seat event space is wrapped by open studios and state-of-the-art robotics and prototyping facilities. Four massive lift doors roll up to transform the venue from closed-off to porous and open.

The building’s bones — namely, the brick facade, patinated concrete shell and grid of martini-cap columns — informed the key interior moves, but the architects also drew from an unexpected reference: the work of Charlotte Perriand. “Her interior approach was industrially influenced, super clean and unornamented. She was able to bring to bear an interesting mix of natural materials and highly finished materials in a way that is still resonant,” Elliott explains.

In keeping with this inspiration, the varied work zones — including desking, lounge vignettes, meeting rooms and classrooms — are furnished with carefully curated American design classics from Michigan-based brand MillerKnoll alongside restored vintage furniture, as well as bespoke contemporary pieces designed by Civilian, including solid ash and laminate tables and storage cabinets. With its contextual approach, the firm has transformed the Book Depository from a symbol of the city’s decline into one of its revival.



ABOVE: Civilian introduced warmth and colour into the lounge spaces with classic furnishings by MillerKnoll, refurbished vintage pieces, contemporary commissions and its own bespoke ash and laminate circular tables.

The new Bensen headquarters in the Railtown district, by Office of McFarlane Biggar Architects + Designers, features an internal series of mass timber bridges, while the glass and charcoal-aluminum fin facade (right) makes a gleaming addition to the industrial streetscape.



Vancouver's Bensen has been synonymous with the best of West Coast design for more than four decades and running. In recent years, Niels Bendtsen, the Danish Canadian designer who founded the furniture brand, decided to move production to Italy, but he wanted to continue to invest in the city he loves and the district — Railtown — where it all began. "It's an amazing neighbourhood and a hidden gem," Bendtsen says. "It has the best views of the city: overlooking the harbour and its containers and the North Shore." Now, at 411 Railway Street, he has inaugurated a building that will house the company's headquarters and energize its surroundings with a future commercial hub.

In fact, the building exemplifies new city zoning that encourages "creative product manufacturing," referring to the making of clothing, furniture and other types of light production. As dry as it sounds, "zoning was the key inspiration for the project," says Steve McFarlane, whose firm, Office of McFarlane Biggar Architects + Designers (OMB), created the six-storey, 10,400-square-metre beacon. "It was designed to be as flexible as possible," says OMB architect and associate Rory Fulber. "It is purpose-built for creative manufacturing, but it can also become any other kind of space."

Curving gently in tandem with the sidewalk, the architecture comprises two blocky halves that meet at a soaring central atrium, which is animated by its framed view of those vibrant shipping containers outside and the main circulation route it encases within. This, in

essence, is the project's masterstroke: a series of zigzagging mass timber bridges that slide through the twinned structures' concrete walls. The upper storeys of the building are wrapped in a glass and charcoal aluminum facade that peels back on the top two levels to provide tenants with three generous and lushly planted outdoor terraces. Its slender fins, which help mitigate solar gain, also subtly play with the light, allowing the building to morph from solid to transparent as you move past it.

The dynamism embodied in the architecture is articulated in the program. On the ground floor, several small design and architectural showrooms, a restaurant and a Pilates studio have separate porch-like entrances, and all spaces are wheelchair-accessible through the main internal corridor. For its part, Bensen will occupy the top floor — on both the west and east halves. With 400 to 600 people expected to work in the building, 411 Railway will see lots of movement on those fantastic bridges. "I'm hoping it will be a game-changer," says Bendtsen.

In the Zone

IN VANCOUVER'S EMERGING LIGHT MANUFACTURING DISTRICT, OMB HAS ALREADY CREATED A BEACON

WORDS _Elizabeth Pagliacolo

PHOTOS BY EMA PETER (LEFT); ANDREW LATRELLE (TOP RIGHT)

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Focus Groups

THREE DYNAMIC COLLECTIONS THAT CAN SUPPORT BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS, INFORMAL MEETINGS OR A CASUAL MEAL

WORDS _Anjolie Rao



← MANILLE

Named after the French card game, the Manille outdoor seating series by **Extremis** is more than a picnic bench for playing a few rounds. Its galvanized steel frame and European ash tabletop are covered by an awning with two options: an elegant soft fabric canopy or a fixed hard top. Multiple Manille pieces can be linked together for a sprawling table — but one alone makes for a simple, timeless gathering space. Backrests and bench seating accommodate diverse body types, and the table height and ends are wheelchair accessible, making it a more inclusive spot to come together.

→ COLAB

Through telltale shifts in pedagogy (namely, the ways in which Gen Z has been educated using technology, working more flexibly and gathering more informally), U.K. studio Pearson Lloyd saw coming changes to how we co-create that will require employers to ready themselves for an evolving workforce. The design firm's multi-piece CoLab collection for **Senator** provides an interesting solution, with a kit-of-parts for seating, zone definition and collaboration. Setups include tables with variable-height tops for standing and sitting that can be reconfigured to support large or small groups. Most exciting is the "spine," a functional object that provides not only power distribution but also a casual, supportive structure for leaning or perching during conversations or solo work.



← SUMMIT

Designed by Snøhetta for **+Halle** (through **Hightower** in North America), Summit is greater than the sum of its parts — five components, to be precise, which can be assembled to create a customizable collaboration space. Pieces include lightweight, gently sloping curvatures or rectilinear forms that users can stack and attach easily with integrated magnets. A lounge configuration can transform into a workstation using retractable power cords included in select pieces. The set-up becomes a clever, minimal installation for group work.



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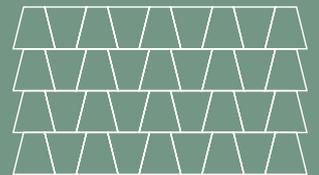
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Street Smarts

NASHVILLE ARTIST BRIAN WOODEN BRINGS HIS SINGULAR STYLE TO THE CONTRACT WORLD

WORDS _Anjolie Rao

Brian Wooden could teach us all a lesson in knowing thyself: The Nashville-based street artist, who grew up skateboarding and immersed in graffiti culture, always wanted to work in animation and fine art. Later on, as a student at the Savannah College of Art and Design, he found himself approaching realistic portraiture in what he calls a “soft, painterly way.” But, he says, he knew this path wasn’t true to his self.

“I wasn’t having much fun — it was just a little too serious for me,” he says. “So I made a hard transition one day and started going back into more illustrative work.” He returned to his passion for street art, composing massive outdoor wall murals with abstracted cartoon characters; his work is riotous, filled with movement and colour. Recently, he was invited to participate in Haworth’s DesignLab — a months-long collaboration between the contract furniture manufacturer and a handful of emerging



Displayed at Haworth’s showroom during NeoCon, Brian Wooden’s *Inter-Dimension* tapestry and ottoman installation (top) exemplifies his vibrant graffiti-art style.

artists and designers from across the U.S. and Mexico. Revealed during NeoCon in June, his interior installation entitled *Inter-Dimension* reaffirms his renewed commitment to his true aesthetic intentions.

The process of moving from street art to high design wasn’t easy — in fact, it was a bit intimidating. “At first, I was trying to scale it way back and kind of, like, hide myself a little and mute things a little,” he explains. “And then the pendulum started to swing back. And it was like, ‘No, I need to keep my personality.’” Instead of thinking about interiors, he thought about what he’d love to see: a giant cartoon character, something really bold.

Inter-Dimension consists of two pieces: a massive, colourful tapestry that cascades down from the wall and continues over the floor and, set atop that, a large, matching upholstered ottoman. The tapestry and circular ottoman pattern reflects Wooden’s loud cartoon aesthetic, fine-tuned for this project through a close collaboration with Gan Rugs and mentor Patricia Urquiola, who was brought on to work with

Haworth’s DesignLab participants. The tapestry features multi-piled tufts that create depth: Thick strokes of low-piled black outline vibrant blues, yellows and magentas in higher piles, rendering them brighter and more three-dimensional. Wooden decided the ottoman should blend in with the tapestry; while at first one might not notice the seat, the more a visitor explores the installation, the more they discover.

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*Test completed in a 100 m²/1000ft² (12.7m x 7.9m) room with the purifier placed in one corner and source of pollution in opposite corner. The room had 36 sensors to determine PM2.5 distribution and purification. Results may vary in practice. †Particle challenge by DEHS oil specified in EN1822 within a chamber specified in ASTM F3150. Tested in Max Mode, for whole machine efficiency above 99.95%.



Yatofu Creatives chose a high-gloss finish for the textured ceramic tiles to help reflect light; made at a local small-batch facility, they add a layer of authenticity and warmth.

Memory Lane

FOR A MODERN AD AGENCY IN SHANGHAI, YATOFU CREATIVES LOOKED TO A HISTORIC ELEMENT UNIQUE TO THE CITY

WORDS [_Kendra Jackson](#)

PHOTOS [_Wen Studio](#)

For nearly two centuries, Shanghai's residential alleyways — or *lilongs* — have been spirited hives of culture and community. Initially a haphazard response to an influx of rural migrants and foreign immigrants (from Europe, Japan and America) during the late 1800s through the mid-1900s, the narrow one- or multi-storey dwellings are an integral part of the urban fabric and an archetype that belongs solely to the city. Cloistered behind ornately carved wooden or stone doors, the homes — which often double as storefronts, grocers, tailors and other family-run businesses — feature small internal courtyards for social gatherings and combine traditional Chinese spatial arrangements and details with imported Western architectural elements.

"Many of the artifacts and architectures from this part of history are still visible in the area but are slowly being demolished by the growing metropolis," says

designer Angela Lindahl, the Taiwanese Canadian co-founder of Helsinki firm Yatofu Creatives. Lindahl and co-founding partner Yihan Xiang were influenced by this unique typology when conceiving a modern office for the InMedia advertising agency in the city's Hongkou district. "We wanted to honour the history without being too direct." The duo also looked to "similar ways of living in southern Europe, such as the south of Italy, where a comparable way of life takes place on small winding streets lined with residences," adds Yihan.

Working with an empty 300-square-metre shell, the designers divided the space into two distinct yet harmonious zones that are analogous to life in the *lilongs* — interior and exterior. The first is represented by a natural oak veneer-clad volume that contains a private office and two boardrooms positioned along one wall. Large windows visually connect this insertion to the main section "outside," where non-linear desking formations and differing floor levels introduce "opportunistic meeting points and seating that results from corners created through winding pathways," says Lindahl.

Textured ceramic tiles in a glossy deep crimson, new concrete floor tiles and oak veneer surfaces complement the original exposed concrete walls and columns and directly nod to materials typically found on *lilong* exteriors. Custom table and floor lights echo pedestrian street lamps in form and are rendered in a brilliant blue

to provide a counterpoint to the blood-red tiles and subtly conjure the dark blue of the night sky.

With this somewhat offbeat concept for an office design, Lindahl and Yihan have successfully translated Shanghai's urban streetscape into a dynamic environment that aims to foster an organic sense of community similar to that of the neighbourhoods that inspired it.



ABOVE: Bold blue lamps and table legs contrast the warm wood surfaces, while globe pendants suspended from the exposed ceiling (top) reference street lights to "evoke a sense of nostalgia without being too overbearing."

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Science Centre

AN ADAPTIVE RE-USE PROJECT BY PERKINS&WILL SUPPORTS NEW INDUSTRY GROWTH IN A HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOOD

WORDS _Sean Maciel

PHOTOS _Chris Cooper

You might not anticipate major scientific innovation in Long Island City, better known for its arts and culture scene. Just a couple blocks from MoMA PS1, however, a recently completed lab facility designed by Perkins&Will marks a notable development in the area's burgeoning life sciences industry. Innolabs, a 25,000-square-metre adaptive re-use project, faces the street boldly and creates a striking counterpoint to the historic neighbourhood. A slender black steel and glass addition provides a muscular contrast to the white historic facade of the original structure, driving home the former office building's unexpected second life.

"There are two compelling reasons why adaptive re-use of older buildings is viable for labs — one is that it's generally less expensive than a new build, and the second is speed to market," explains William Harris, regional managing director at Perkins&Will. "If tenants can get into their labs faster, they can ultimately get their products to trials and market faster."

Innolabs is Boston-based King Street Properties' first foray into New York City, but it's not an outlier. Lab-based tenancies are increasingly seen as a stable post-pandemic real estate investment, and Long Island City is one of a few decentralized life science districts emerging throughout NYC; in neighbourhoods where access to transit and nearby medical institutions haven't precluded affordable land costs, new developments seek to appeal to this kind of start-up.

These tenants can grow quickly, requiring maximum rental pliancy. Astutely, Perkins&Will seized on a key strategy during preplanning: "We were able to move the bathrooms and elevators to the side of the building, inside the front extension," Harris says, "opening the space and allowing us to more flexibly fit one, two or three tenants

per floor." Without a central core, the sprawling T-shaped building is replete with sunlit laboratory spaces ready for partitioning. While the open labs are complemented by closed support rooms and serviced by ceiling-integrated utility systems, different tenants are able to reconfigure the set-up depending on their individual needs.

Centralized amenities help enable the unique social environment of life science facilities. Relocating the original lobby entrance to the side of the building freed up space for a stylish café kiosk with exposed brick and tiered wooden benches, as well as a shared and subdividable multi-purpose event space. "In an office building with multiple tenants, they don't often talk to each other," Harris explains. "With lab buildings, there's a sense of community among the tenants. It's very important to support that."



TOP: The modern black steel-fronted addition is a striking companion to the historic facade of the original building, which was upgraded with high-performance windows to maximize efficiency.

ABOVE: Alongside a lobby café, the Innolabs building includes bike storage, locker rooms with showers and a multi-use event space behind a patterned glass wall (left) that can be opened or closed.



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Learning & Focus. For individuals and small groups, this scheme can include mini phone booths for private calls, partially partitioned workstations (equipped with an out-of-the-way magnetic cable run) and divider screens with movable slats to control sightlines and privacy.

The Big Picture

UNSTUDIO'S PANORAMA SYSTEM FOR FANTONI AIMS TO ADDRESS THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF TODAY'S OFFICE

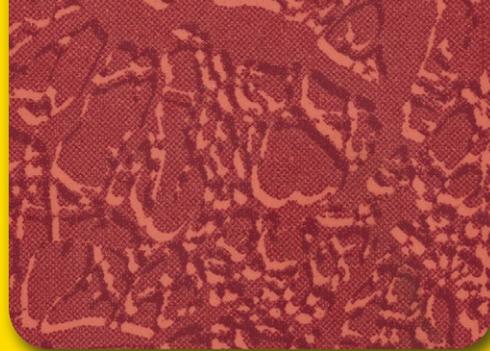
WORDS _Kendra Jackson

"The office landscape is no longer the classic, straight-forward grid organization where everyone works, but rather a highly creative landscape," says Ben van Berkel, co-founder of Dutch architectural practice UNStudio. In response to this shift — which has only been amplified with the rise of remote and hybrid scenarios — van Berkel and his team at UNSx, the experiential design arm of the firm, have developed Panorama for Italian manufacturer Fantoni. Described by the designers as "human-centric micro-architecture," the all-encompassing toolset is intended to carve out flexible, efficient and comfortable set-ups that are organized into three configurations: Collaboration, Social, and Learning & Focus. With silhouettes that were inspired by the mountain range that surrounds Fantoni's factory, the 57 components of Panorama are offered in three bold colourways, as well as two wood finishes and one textile covering (plus a range of upholstery options). What's more, the system is built using chipboard made from 100 per cent recycled wood, adding sustainability to its long list of positive attributes.

Collaboration. Encouraging teamwork and creative brainstorming sessions, the Panorama modules can be arranged for meetings of short duration using standing-height tables on castors, plush soft seating and other dynamic solutions.

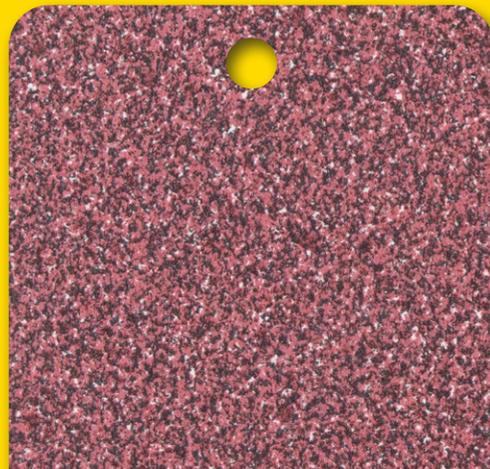


Social. Informal and impromptu meetings and social gatherings are an ever more familiar part of the workday. To this end, the third branch can feature freestanding single or double upholstered benches. Planters can be incorporated into any of the three scenarios to add the benefit of natural greenery.



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THE SOCIAL NETWORK

FOR ALMOST A CENTURY, **VIENNA** HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATING VIBRANT SOCIAL HOUSING INTO THE CITY. *LLOYD ALTER* FINDS OUT HOW





In 2023, Vienna once again topped the Economist Intelligence Unit's list of the world's most livable cities. It scored a perfect 100 for stability, healthcare, education and infrastructure — that last metric encompassing the high quality of its housing and public transport.

It wasn't always thus. At the end of the First World War, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the metropolis transformed from the centre of the world into an impoverished and overcrowded city so rife with tuberculosis that the illness became known as "the Viennese disease." Then, in 1923, the Social Democrat government approved a plan to build 25,000 housing units; they were paid for by taxes on luxury goods, traffic, land and even brothels. They could do this because of the Austrian capital's unprecedented independence thanks to "a constitutional law," according to the City of Vienna, that "separated Vienna from Lower Austria, turning Vienna into a separate Bundesland (state) with financial sovereignty and her own taxing authority." Only a decade later, at the end of the "Red Vienna" period, more than 60,000 apartments housing 220,000 people had been built.

Other major cities were only beginning to embark on social housing — places like New York in the '30s, London in the '60s, Toronto in the '70s. But ideological barriers were already in place. In one egregious example that has echoes in socio-economically discriminative zoning policies around the world, a ban on apartment buildings in residential neighbourhoods was enacted in Toronto in 1912. And in 1934, when Charles Hardy of the Brookings

ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: As part of its plan for the new central district of Wildgarten, Arenas Basabe Palacios designed 11 blocks of varying scales that contain 82 homes and boast a multitude of amenities: community spaces, collective bicycle parking and ground-floor shops. Known as the Sunflower Houses, the buildings are clad in ceramics, including bright yellow tiles, that make for an exuberant addition to Vienna's ever-growing stock of social housing.

Institution travelled to Vienna to write the first major study of housing in Vienna, he too readily concluded that it did not have application elsewhere. "The housing program was a development out of specific housing conditions, tax policies, building regulations, war-time adjustments and class controversies, most of which were peculiar to Vienna," Hardy wrote. He saw nothing that "goes far to demonstrate that the provision of shelter is in general one of those services which cannot be performed satisfactorily through private enterprise without governmental subsidy or governmental participation." A legacy one hundred years and running proves him wrong. To this day, Vienna has maintained all its original social housing stock and continues to build. The result: 60 per cent of the city's population lives in social housing.

A few years ago, after participating in a conference in Vienna, I toured a few projects with the American architect Michael Eliason. Many were in Aspern Seestadt, a community of 25,000 people built on a former airport in the city's northeast.



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OPPOSITE: The Sunflower Houses' different scales guarantee ample sunlight in all the interiors. Their organic connections to the outdoors via shared exterior stairs make them porous to the south-facing gardens and the open spaces between.

BELOW: In the massive development of Aspern Seestadt, Berger+Parkkinen, in collaboration with Querkraft Architekten, have created the Wood Housing complex: a total of 213 apartments and eight shops united by their warm timber cladding and jutting concrete balconies.

BOTTOM: In the centre of the complex, residents have access to the "canyon," a communal spot with stadium stairs and sloped sides that encourage different modes of play and gathering.



PHOTOS BY HERTHA HURVAUS/BERGER+PARKKINEN ARCHITECTEN/QUERKRAFT ARCHITECTEN (THIS PAGE); KURT HOERBST (OPPOSITE)

We rode our bikes around the cyclist-friendly development, which has been in progress since 2007, when the city approved a master plan by the Swedish firm Tovatt Architects & Planners in collaboration with N+ Objektmanagement. Among its first major completed works is a wood housing project by Berger+Parkkinen Architekten with Querkraft. It looks massive from the street, but from within, it breaks up to form slender buildings connected by open walkways and separated by some of the nicest urban green spaces I have seen anywhere.

Eliason is a housing expert who characterizes the Vienna model as a "100-year experiment in solidarity, building up community, and providing adequate and affordable housing." He explains how this history has evolved into an embrace of various building typologies. "Vienna is constantly working to improve itself," he says, "and to prioritize equity, sustainability and the environment. It has built some of the best new urban districts globally, numerous Passivhaus buildings, a broad array of decarbonized buildings, and social housing with amenities and community spaces rarely found elsewhere. The city is all-in on these issues and doing so many things right."

The success of the model is not explained by any single attribute but by a mix of initiatives and approaches. An embrace of good design has always been paramount: in the Red Vienna years, to build a "Versailles for the working class" at the iconic Karl-Marx-Hof housing estate; and, in more recent times, to create housing that is attractive to people of all economic strata, rather than signalling that this is low-cost housing for low-income residents. And it's one of the key contributors to Vienna's social housing success. Essentially, the model can be boiled down into six defining aspects:

Inclusive Zoning: There is no zoning for single-family housing. Whereas in many cities, social housing projects are built on the edges or the outskirts, like the *banlieues* of Paris, Vienna integrates them into the core, where they are built out consistently at six to eight storeys. This precedent long ago precluded NIMBYism, and by upholding the mid-rise character of the city's neighbourhoods, planners eliminate the spectre of tall buildings overlooking single-family private homes.

Better Building Codes: After seeing how well they work in Germany and Austria, Eliason has been promoting the use of single-exit stairs in North America. Permitted in Austrian buildings up to 32 metres tall, they allow for marvellous interior courtyards and much greater flexibility in design. Buildings then tend to be smaller (and much thinner — rarely more than 20 metres deep), since there are limits on the number of units that can be served on each floor by one stair. But this results in layouts with more sunlight and air. In many buildings, the stairwell itself is like an enclosed courtyard — a social space, often with a big skylight that opens for smoke abatement in emergencies. During COVID-19, these operable windows allowed fresh air to circulate through the common spaces.

Sometimes, architects use the freedom afforded by the single stair to break projects up into even smaller buildings; the vibrant Sunflower Houses in the new central neighbourhood of Wildgarten (by Madrid firm Arenas Basabe Palacios with engineering firm Buschina & Partner) are a collection of 11 small buildings, surrounded by green space, that feel more like houses than apartment buildings. This simply could not be done under



North American codes requiring two exit stairs and a corridor between them; it takes up too much space. Whereas North American buildings tend to bulk up to amortize the cost of multiple stairs and elevators over more units, the suites in the 11 Sunflower blocks all have multiple aspects for cross-ventilation; many of them have windows and views on three sides, where generous balconies cut a sculptural figure.

Smarter Transit: Vienna long ago recognized that housing and transit are inseparable. Before development began for Aspern Seestadt or any of its housing units went up, the city constructed the U2 underground subway connection. In this one district, the goal is to have 40 per cent of trips by transit, 40 per cent by bike or on foot, and only 20 per cent by car. If you're carrying a heavy load, a fleet of rental e-cargo bikes is at your disposal. So residents choosing to live in this new community not only save on rent, but they also avoid the need for car ownership.

Rental Tenure: Eighty per cent of Vienna's population rents, and for good reason: They have security of tenure that is almost equivalent to ownership. Rents are relatively low, 60 per cent of units are subsidized and there are no year-to-year leases. Tenants can stay in their apartments forever, even if they started in subsidized units, and can hand them down to their children. The mix of families on full, partial and zero subsidies in the same buildings rarely leads

ABOVE: Marchfeld Terrassen, by the firm Trans_City, is low-cost social housing located near a rambling park and the Ernst-Theumer-Hof development, which exemplifies 1980's Viennese social housing. The project consists of two vibrant white buildings with sculpturally undulating facades.

to conflict because multi-unit residential communities across the entire city reflect an assortment of different incomes. Conservatives in Austria sometimes complain that rich people should not be living in social housing, but according to Francesca Mari in the *New York Times*, authorities believe that the mix creates a more stable environment for everyone.

Land Ownership: In North America, cities rake in operating revenues by selling land to private developers. Vienna has different ambitions for its assets. Whereas in the Red Vienna days the city was the developer, today the Wohnfonds Wien land bank controls 325 hectares and makes it available for Bauträgerwettbewerbe (housing developer competitions). The winning projects are based as much on design quality as on other criteria. "Teams compete to develop and receive subsidies for individual projects and are judged by a diverse panel on the economics of the project, the architecture, the ecology of the building and the social

mix,” explains Eliason. “The city has effectively leveraged its purse to push the price of construction down, making interested parties compete on the merits and economics.”

Great Design: Design has been a critical attribute of housing in Vienna since the days of Karl-Marx-Hof and the Hundertwasser. In her book *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919–1934*, Eve Blau describes how the city rejected the modern movement and the German Model, instead embracing an indigenous urban building typology exemplified by smaller buildings that are worked into the city fabric — with playgrounds, wading pools and gardens in their central courtyards. But there were also large projects, often designed by students of Otto Wagner, as was Karl-Marx-Hof, which was envisioned by Wagner pupil Karl Ehn, trying to reconcile the old with the new. “As part of the city’s employment program, in this case for artists and artisans, they were in general elaborately and individually detailed with sculpture, moulded and painted decoration, glazed tiles, and ornamental brick and metalwork,” Blau writes. The modernists hated it (Sigfried Giedion ignored it altogether in the seminal modernist tome *Space, Time and Architecture*). But the occupants loved

the buildings, which were (and continue to be) affordable and well-served by public transportation.

A hundred years since the ground was broken for Karl-Marx-Hof, courtyards and playgrounds still abound; connections to public transportation are a given, as are access to daylight and air. The Woody M Buildings Tivoligasse by Freimüller Söllinger Architektur are a good example of how high-quality housing can be inserted into an existing community with less disruption and lower carbon emissions. It replaces a single-storey grocery store with a new shop topped by a landscaped podium and four small mass-timber apartment buildings. The additional units could have been housed in a single building with two stairs and perhaps two elevators; instead, we have four stairs and three elevators — this isn’t just about economy, it’s about quality. Each suite has two aspects and cross-ventilation, and shares the single-loaded corridor with a maximum of four other units. As the architects note, “The spaces between the buildings function as green open spaces with trees, bushes and meadows for the residents, and enable views between the neighbouring buildings.”

Vienna’s focus on quality and a strong tradition around community and solidarity has made it a beacon for contemporary planning. “The urban form they want is a city of short distances,” Eliason says. “It isn’t any one thing: Vienna’s successes and high quality of life stem from a massive amount of comprehensive planning and incredible efforts to build a better city. It all dovetails together.” **AZ**

BELOW: Also by Trans_City, FUX provides supervised housing for unaccompanied refugee minors in the rapidly evolving 11th District. The handsome building, clad in iridescent stained larchwood, arranges eight individual bedrooms on the second level and administration on the ground floor.



In **Detroit**, Philip Kafka is building a neighbourhood in a park. *Stefan Novakovic* meets up with the developer behind Prince Concepts — whose architecturally ambitious mixed-use projects are creating generous public spaces — and gives us the lay of the land

AND

ACROSS THE RIVER

As I cross the Ambassador Bridge from Canada, the Detroit skyline unfolds to my right. Past downtown's tight cluster of 19th- and 20th-century skyscrapers, the Renaissance Center asserts a dramatic and slightly isolated presence. The knot of gleaming tubular forms designed by John Portman features a commanding 73-storey tower at its centre; it's the tallest building in the city and in the state of Michigan. A couple of streets to the north, SHoP Architects' ongoing redevelopment of the former Hudson's Department Store site — owned by billionaire Dan Gilbert — will rise to nearly the same majestic height. I'm driving past it.

Just northwest of downtown, the evolving Core City is an entirely different milieu. As in much of central Detroit, the urban fabric is a patchwork. Driving up 16th Street, I see houses, apartment buildings and handsome churches interspersed with stretches of grass and broken sidewalk where homes, businesses and schools once stood. Then, an elongated Quonset hut appears; stretching out in front of the 59-metre span of shimmering steel is a wooden deck and a rich woodland landscape. Another block up, eight smaller Quonset huts are nestled among trees and grasses. I leave the car at the corner where 16th Street meets Grand River and Warren avenues, on a triangular lot; the parking spots are nearly swallowed up by a lush, permeable landscape of junipers, maples, sumacs and native flowers.

Across the street, at Cafe Prince, I meet Philip Kafka, the developer behind the Quonset huts, the parking lot and much of the surrounding neighbourhood — including the coffee shop where we drink espresso and eat raw carrots. An erstwhile professional tennis player turned New York City billboard entrepreneur, Kafka is an unconventional local real estate mogul. His company, Prince Concepts, now owns some seven contiguous hectares of land in Core City. It's an evolving urban

THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE:
On 16th Street, Prince Concepts' first Core City residential projects, True North (below) and The Caterpillar (right), are inspired by Second World War-era Quonset huts.





landscape of creative mixed-use typologies, contextually sensitive adaptive re-use projects, and ample and attractive green spaces, all with an emphasis on social interaction — and inventive design.

Kafka's journey started just over a decade ago. "I first visited Detroit towards the end of 2012," he tells me. The following year, he returned more or less every month. "I'd come for a weekend, rent a car and drive the entire city. I'd drive and drive, just taking it in. I really wanted to know and understand Detroit before I did anything." But as Kafka explored the city, its decades-long fiscal and demographic crisis deepened. From a mid-century peak of almost two million residents, white flight, deindustrialization and the collapse of American auto manufacturing fuelled a rapid exodus. By 2020, the population had fallen to just under 640,000. Amplified by suburbanization and the destructive, racist legacies of redlining, segregation and freeway

infrastructure, the city steadily grew smaller — and poorer. In 2013, Detroit declared bankruptcy, its eroding tax base reflected in a dilapidated urban landscape.

In the meantime, Kafka kept driving. “Grand River and Warren was this intersection I kept ending up at, not intentionally.” Located near downtown, Core City was substantially hollowed out by the urban exodus. Unlike most of central Detroit, however, the area was not designated a federal Opportunity Zone (a program offering tax advantages to spur investment in lower-income communities), though many of its commercial buildings and homes were either razed or sitting empty.

“There were four operational houses in the area when I first arrived,” says Kafka, “all owned and occupied by Detroit ‘old timers,’ the type of people that make Detroit Detroit. They were all north of 75 years old, all Black, all proud and all dedicated to the homes they’d owned since the 1960s. I greeted these residents in the same manner: ‘Hi, I’m Philip Kafka, I bought some property here that I will be developing. Some housing, some commerce. I work for you. You’ve owned stock in this neighbourhood for a long time, and everything that I do will increase the value of your stock.’” It didn’t take him long.

After converting a former garage into a restaurant in the city’s Corktown district in 2016, Kafka embarked on his first Core City project: a cluster of eight live-work Quonset huts containing 10 rental units, dubbed True North, which was designed by EC3’s Edwin Chan and completed in 2017. Although Second World War-era military typologies offered Kafka a point of inspiration, the elegantly staggered, angular site plan produced a warm, convivial setting on the 2,300-square-metre parcel framed by 40 new trees.

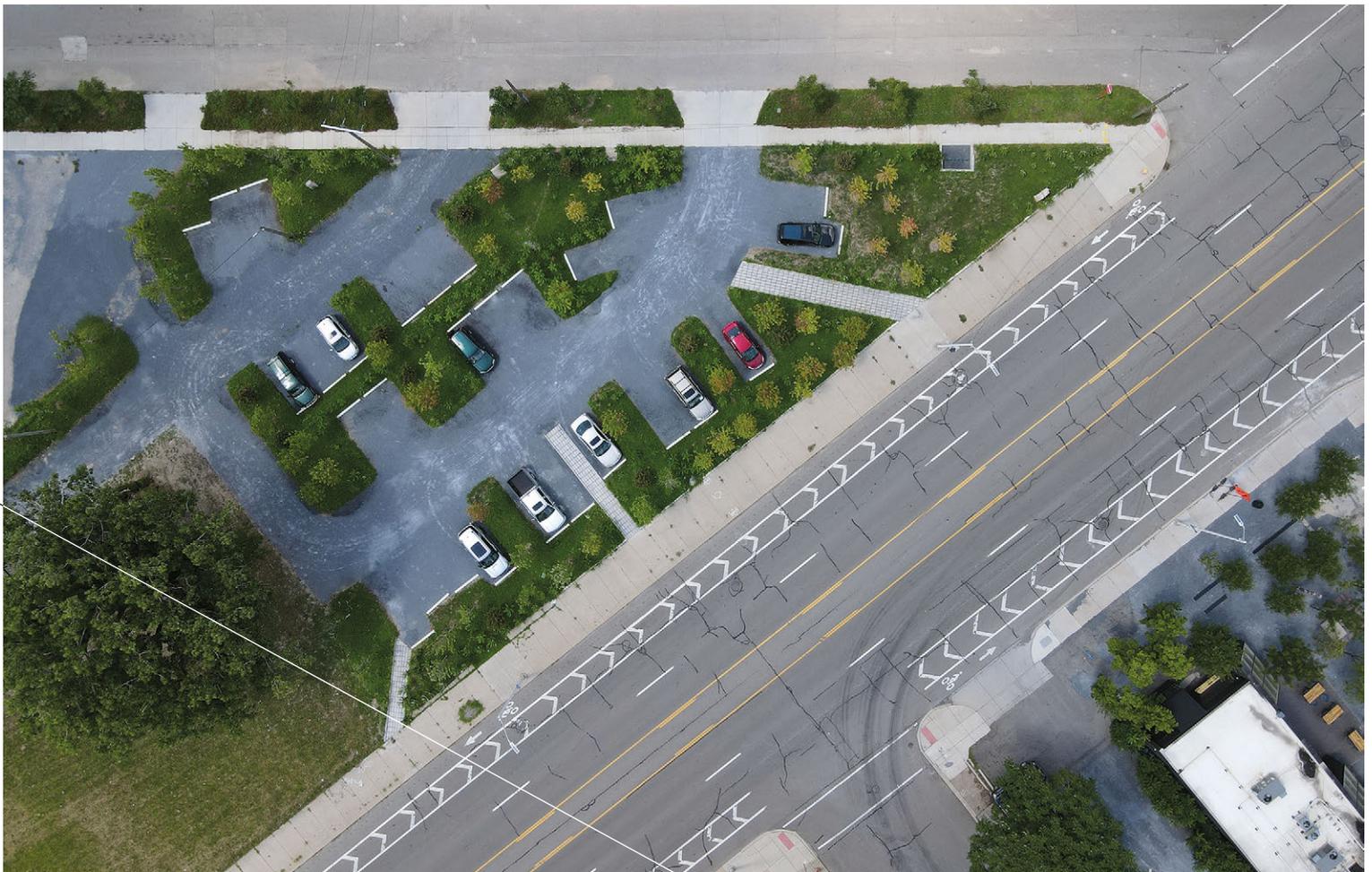
Inside, the flexible, open living spaces take advantage of the generous domed ceilings afforded by the distinct semicylindrical architectural form. A simple material palette of plywood walls and translucent polycarbonate panels animates the interiors, which are bathed in changing light throughout the day. Organized around a central volume that houses the kitchen and bathroom — and is topped by a

second-storey sleeping space — the layouts facilitate varied uses. Prince Concepts property manager Randall Pardy lives in one of the homes and has placed a small painting atelier, immersed in sunlight, at its centre.

Down the block, the “Caterpillar” building, designed by local architect and Undecorated founder Ishtiaq Rafiuddin and completed in 2021, adapts the Quonset hut into a more urban scale. The mixed-use volume comprises eight suites — two live-work spaces, including the office of Undecorated, and six apartments — and, like True North, harnesses the simple efficiency of the semicylindrical steel form to create high-ceilinged, open interior spaces. Two rows of dormer windows welcome ample natural light and introduce passive ventilation to each suite, while simple plywood finishes and streamlined white tile bathrooms round out the generous interiors. Framing the whole of the 59-metre-long building, a broad wooden deck creates a sort of communal front porch, one that invites interactions between residents, visitors and workers.

Caterpillar is embraced by a woolly thicket of greenery designed by D.I.R.T. studio founder Julie Bargmann — a landscape architect renowned for drawing out the beauty and distinctive character of industrial and often toxic environments. To complement the street’s majestically gnarly old catalpa trees, Bargmann introduced a careful layering of new plantings, what she describes as a “misfit forest” made up of trees from a local nursery that was liquidating its castoffs at \$25 a pop. The result is an eclectic landscape punctuated by the concrete pavers that link the deck to the sidewalk.

Throughout Core City, Bargmann’s pragmatic, humane and often playful ethos — and Kafka’s passion for greenery and public space — continues to shape an evolving terrain. Up the street, she recently worked with Prince’s in-house designer, Andrew Schwartz, to create a parking lot like no other in North America. Aptly dubbed PARK(ing), the 2,230-square-metre site combines a verdant landscape of 78 trees with a porous 28-spot lot that absorbs rainwater and mitigates the impacts of urban flooding; it mediates the reality of a car-dependent community within a



PHOTOS: PREVIOUS PAGES, BY JASON KEEN (TOP AND BELOW RIGHT); CHRIS MIELE (BELOW LEFT)
PHOTOS BY ANDREW SCHWARTZ (THIS PAGE); CHRIS MIELE (OPPOSITE PAGE)



OPPOSITE: On Grand River Avenue and 16th Street, PARK(ing) integrates the functions of a parking lot within a porous, green-filled urban space that also boasts public seating and bike parking.

TOP: Three courtyards were carved out of the industrial shell of 5000 Grand River Avenue in order to create light-filled indoor environments with access to greenery. In the courtyards (above), concrete floors were re-used to make pavers, tables and benches.

welcoming, pedestrian-oriented environment. The nerve centre of Kafka's endeavours, however, is right across the street. The 743-square-metre Core City Park is a bona fide urban woodland under a leafy canopy of 87 trees, including flowering dogwoods and locusts. Salvaged bricks and concrete from the adjacent buildings — which were being redeveloped at the same time — have been ingeniously re-used here as the permeable paving for the plaza, its pedestrian paths and its oversized concrete benches.

Flanking Core City Park, Kafka's adapted commercial properties include a mix of retail, hospitality and offices. At the east end of the park, Prince and Undecorated converted a defunct radiator shop into Magnet, an upscale bar and restaurant featuring vivid blue tile surfaces, a sunken bar and bold monochromatic lighting — all with a minimalist aesthetic rigour echoing that of the nearby residential interiors. (Following Magnet's pandemic-induced closure, the space is now occupied by Argentinian restaurant Barda.) At the west end of the park, the conjoined structures of The Pie and The Sawtooth (previously vacant commercial properties redeveloped by Prince and Undecorated in 2018 and 2019, respectively), feature new offices, including Prince's own headquarters, that benefit from street-level amenities like Cafe Prince (which is operated by Kafka's firm), a bagel shop, and a commercial kitchen and event space. On the north end of the park, another former industrial building, The Power Plant, has been converted into loft-style offices anchored by a local hub for popular language learning app Duolingo.

"I like to do adaptive re-use projects on buildings with no perceived architectural significance," says Kafka. "I find a lot of character in them." To that end, Prince Concepts' most radical and inventive project to date is arguably 5000 Grand River Avenue. Rafiuddin and Bargmann adapted a long-vacant former grocery store, transforming the deep — and dark — 1,254-square-metre floor plate by carving out a trio of inner courtyards from the rusted-out roof, bringing sunlight and fresh air deep inside. "It's so easy to build new in an empty lot, but demolishing doesn't sit right with us," says Rafiuddin. "These spaces have identities that can't be recreated with new architecture; they have an embodied energy. Why waste that?" Even the former concrete floors were re-used, returning to the tree-lined courtyards as



pavers, tables and benches. Although initially envisioned as a mixed-use building integrating residential apartments, the whole structure was leased as an office space during construction.

The admirable work continues. On 15th Street, Prince and EC3 are building 30 new rental homes in partnership with developers Ferlito Group and the Detroit Land Bank. The footprints are carefully planned to preserve existing trees while balancing privacy and openness along a shared pedestrian laneway. Nearby, another pair of vacant industrial buildings are gradually being adapted for new uses, and Kafka, Bargmann and Schwartz are at work on a second major Core City park. So far, excavation has revealed a treasure trove of concrete below the soil. The team is using the blocks to build a public plaza at the heart of the green space. As Bargmann puts it, the aim is to “bring forth the landscape that’s already there.”

Over a decade after Kafka first drove through Detroit, his company has radically transformed one of the city’s low-income neighbourhoods. Has it been for the better? Viewed through Kafka’s stock market analogy, the answer is an emphatic yes: Prince Concepts is achieving the goal of gradually expanding the local population and tax base while bringing in new businesses and contributing to higher property values. What’s more, the parks and public spaces add healthy communal amenities — as well as vital stormwater protection — to Core City. And compared to the ubiquitous “5-over-1” residential buildings going up across America, including pockets of Detroit, Kafka’s projects are more stylish, sustainable, contextually attuned and spatially (and socially) generous, not to mention much greener.

Yet Kafka has also been criticized for gentrifying the area. For starters, the homes he builds are relatively high-end properties, where rents start at \$1,350. As Aaron Mondry writes in *Detour Detroit*, Prince apartments are “not affordable to nearby residents or many Detroiters — the median family income in the census tract is estimated at \$28,029.” The restaurants have faced similar scrutiny. Reviewing Core City’s swanky Magnet in 2020, Jane Slaughter of *Detroit Metro Times* wrote that “if any restaurant is more emblematic of this decade’s gentrification, I have yet to visit it.”

More recently, Cafe Prince has been at the heart of a similar controversy. After sharing an image of the shop’s menu on Twitter — including the trademark “nude, raw, chilled” carrot, which sells for \$1.80, and the plate of “Two Brazil Nuts” offered at the same price — *BridgeDetroit* journalist Jena Brooker visited the joint and spoke to locals. Some Detroiters wondered why a high-concept coffee shop was introduced in lieu of a more practical retailer. As resident Bianca Garcia put it to Brooker, “Trying to be conceptual completely defeats the purpose of a food business, especially in an area that could use more options for groceries and dining.” By contrast, other patrons were quick to point out that they enjoy the space and nearby Core City Park, as well as the carrots.

For his part, Kafka hopes to build more affordable housing in the future. “I’m not good enough at what I do yet to make my housing affordable,” he tells me, explaining that relatively high prices offer an economic buffer that makes development viable. Speaking to Brooker in *BridgeDetroit*, he expresses a similar sentiment regarding a grocery store. “I don’t have the skills to do that right now, and eventually we will, but we’re not there right now.”

In a sense, the criticism is commensurate with the scale of Kafka’s ambitions. Transforming a neighbourhood is a complicated business — one that necessitates public scrutiny. In most cities, however, economic conditions and property values preclude a single developer from buying up so much contiguous urban land in the first place, which is probably for the better. And in a well-funded municipality, new parks and amenities are developed through a public process on public land. Detroit is different. The city’s urban condition led to a hollowed-out public sector, a reduced population and a shrinking tax base. In turn, this can foment a fetishistic strain of outsider thinking that views the city as empty or vacant, inviting a carte blanche approach where anything goes — as if there’s nothing there to gentrify.

According to some critics, Kafka is guilty of the latter. Yet he has also achieved something remarkable. In lieu of a rigid, site-based pro forma that maximizes profit and saleable floor area, Prince Concepts has transformed the neighbourhood through a holistic, if imperfect, vision. “I always try to figure out how to go in the direction that no other developer would take and make it work,” Kafka says. “That’s when I know I’m making a strictly site- and condition-specific decision.” He has also dissolved the boundary between design and development (he employs both a landscape designer and an architectural intern in his own firm) while contributing a distinctly adventurous and adaptable aesthetic sensibility.

Even Cafe Prince reflects this philosophy. The coffee shop doesn’t turn a profit, and wasn’t intended to, Kafka tells me. It’s an investment in the community of Core City. A financial logic still undergirds it, since Kafka owns so much of the adjacent land. But there is also an uncommon sensitivity to how culture and community create the conditions for urban development in the first place. Value, monetary or otherwise, isn’t situated within a building or site itself but in its context. “I believe that, with patience, the creation and consistent dedication to culture is followed by the creation of capital,” he says. It’s not the kind of thing most developers would say — or do. And if nothing else, I’ve never seen anyone plant so many damn trees.

As I prepare to cross back into Canada, my thoughts return to downtown Detroit, to Portman’s soaring Renaissance Center and the ongoing redevelopment of the Hudson’s Site. As its name suggests, the former mega-project was intended as a shot in the arm to the city’s economy. Originally conceived by Henry Ford II in 1970, the complex was an architectural moonshot, though it did not, ultimately, revive Detroit’s fortunes. On a recent visit, I found the place empty and austere, detached from its surroundings.

We’ve learned a lot since then. Over 40 years after the Renaissance Center’s unveiling, the Hudson’s redevelopment is now remaking the long-vacant site of the eponymous department store into another new downtown landmark. The mixed-use structure — incorporating retail, residential, hotel and office and a public outdoor space — is poised to be better-integrated into its urban surroundings. Developed by Rocket Mortgage founder Dan Gilbert and designed by New York’s SHoP Architects in partnership with Hamilton Anderson Associates — and controversially financed via a \$60 million tax credit — it promises to be a local icon. It also follows

OPPOSITE: The generous 743-square-metre Core City Park combines re-used concrete and brick with ample new greenery to create a porous civic space with lots of public seating.

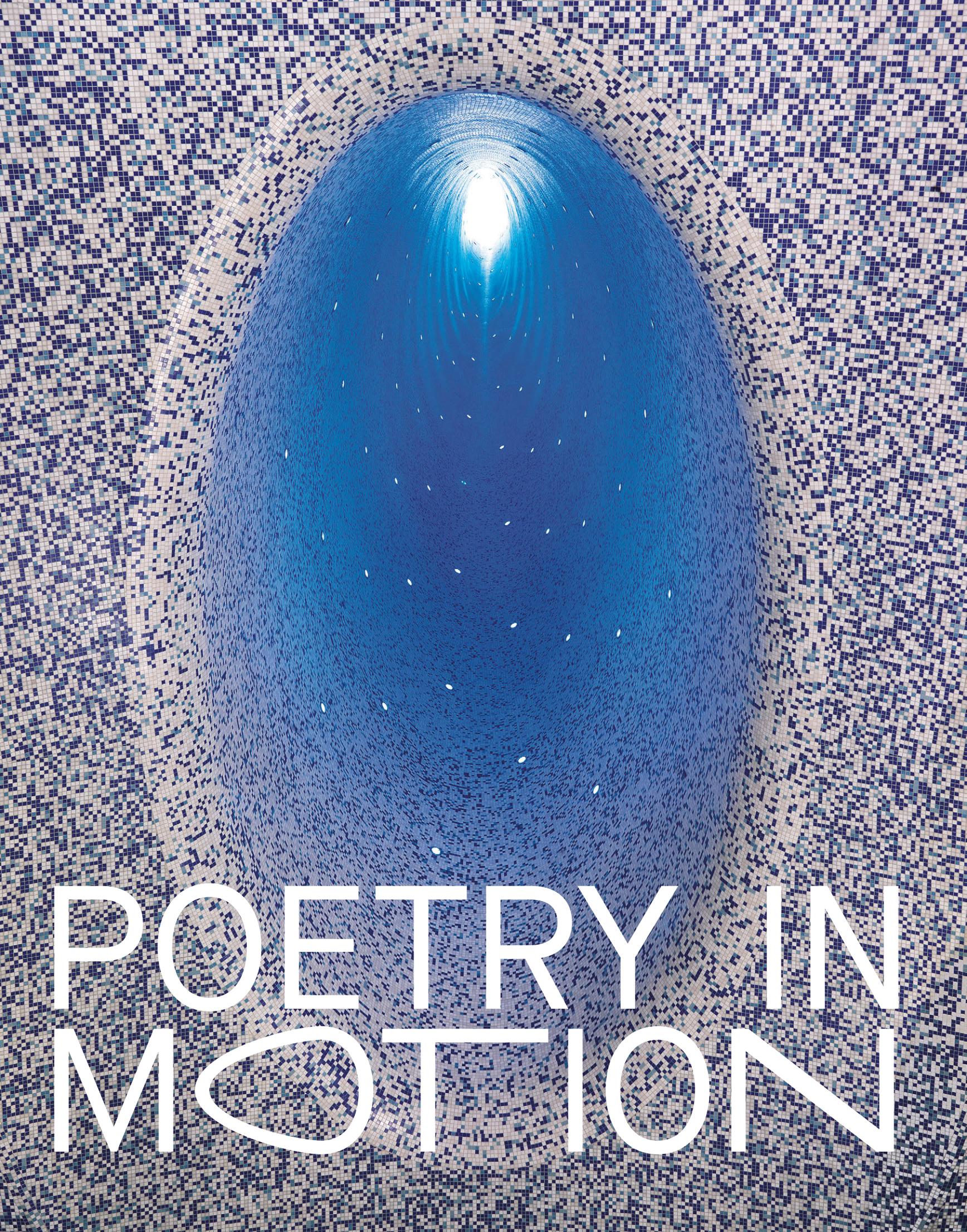
THIS PAGE: Ongoing Prince projects include a residential community that will eventually comprise 30 homes (right), as well as a landmark extension of Core City Park (below).



well-established best practices for 21st-century urban development. In other words, I suspect it's not what Philip Kafka would do.

"You know what I'd do: I'd build a park," he tells me. Though the two developers work at different urban scales — and are billions of dollars apart in wealth — Gilbert's extensive downtown real estate portfolio offers a rare analogy to Core City. "Since he owns everything around it, I would've taken this historic, prime location and built a world-class public space," says Kafka. That way, the value of the surrounding office properties would rise, he argues. As it is, the new office spaces may make neighbouring properties pale in comparison. It's a very different way of getting to the bottom line.

Back across the Ambassador Bridge, the Detroit skyline and the city around it recedes into the background. On the highway to Toronto, I brace myself for a radically different urban context: pristine glass towers, astronomical property values and a swelling population, all in a global financial hub. In a crisis of success, much of our urban development is constricted by the narrow pecuniary calculus of cramming as many shoebox units (and as few elevators) as possible into slender condo towers. For better and worse, the eccentricity and generosity of Core City belongs back across the border, on the other side of the Detroit River. Still, it's on my mind the whole way home. **AZ**



POETRY IN MOTION

Over several decades, Naples has transformed its subway system with major works of art. *Odile Hénault* takes us on a journey through the stations

As you descend into *stazione Toledo*, a blue mosaic ceiling wraps you in the magic of a pointillist cone of light. A few hundred metres away, all your senses are challenged as *stazione Università*'s psychedelic floors morph beneath your feet. It sounds unreal, especially if you're used to travelling the cash-strapped transit systems of many big cities. In Naples, Italy, however, a major program of architecture, art and archaeology — the “three As” — animates the public transportation network.

Known for many of the wrong reasons, but also for its remarkable heritage and beauty, Naples embarked on the formidable infrastructure undertaking in the 1980s. From the start, the idea was to revamp the city's image while upgrading and expanding its subway system. Sixteen stations were targeted along Linea 1 and Linea 6, both under the management of *Metropolitana di Napoli*, a private consortium created in 1976. The truly innovative idea: inviting renowned architects and artists, from Italy and elsewhere, to take part in this revitalization.

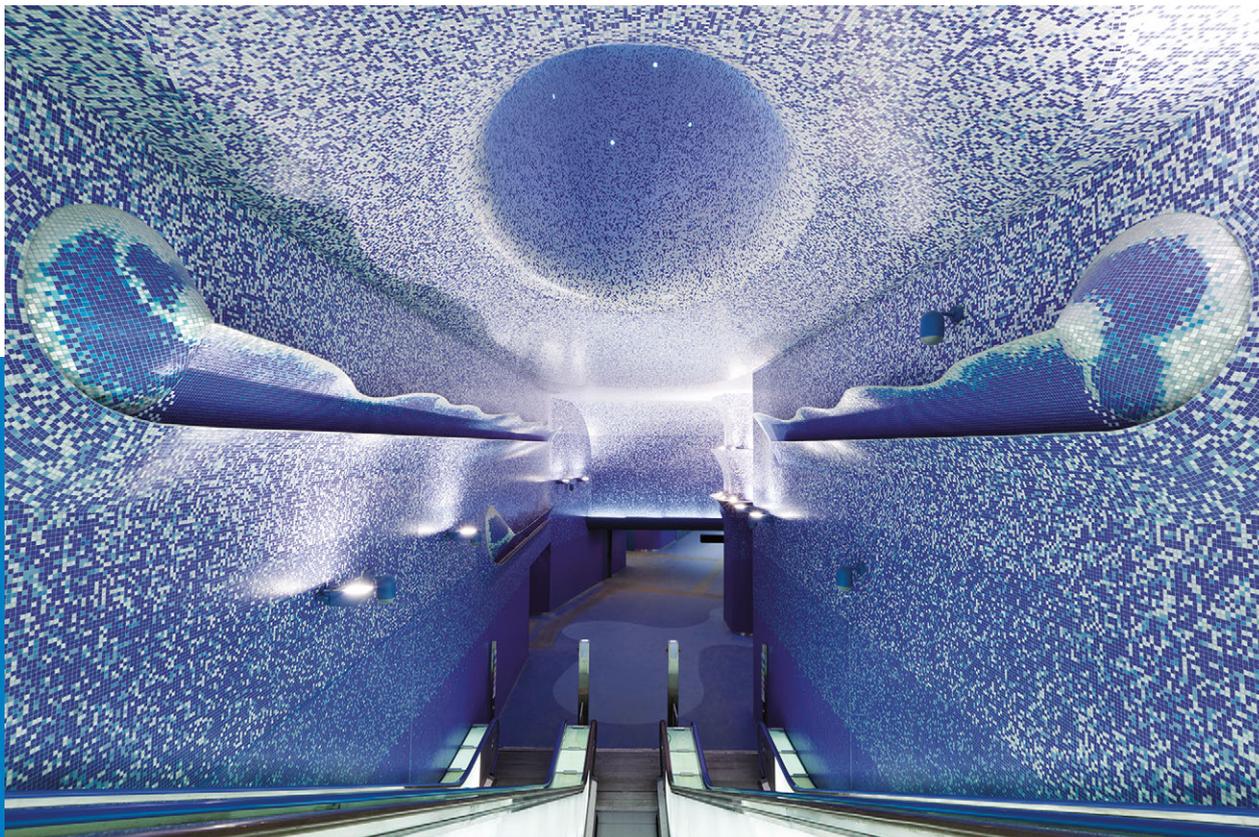
Surprisingly, few people are aware of the program's scope, even in the Campania capital. In 2020, the Italian journal *Economia della Cultura* published an interview with two of the main players: Ennio Cascetta, who acted as adviser, then CEO and finally chairman of *Metropolitana*; and art critic and curator Achille Bonito Oliva, who led *Metropolitana*'s artistic direction. Both attributed the program's success to a climate of “continuity” and “transparency” enabled by 30 years of stability at the municipal level, and an enduring collaboration between municipal leaders and their counterparts at the regional and provincial levels. “The idea,” Cascetta explains in the interview, “came from politicians who had a ‘noble’ vision of the city. We faced a lot of criticism: ‘Naples is a city of beggars and you allow yourselves great architecture, you allow yourselves contemporary art...’”

When centre-left Antonio Bassolino became mayor in 1993, Naples (like the rest of the nation) was in shambles. This did not stop him from overseeing the adoption of a new municipal transportation plan that *Metropolitana* would take the reins on. (Key to the plan's success was Giannegidio Silva, who chaired the consortium

before Cascetta's tenure until his untimely death in 2015.) That *Metropolitana* was responsible for designing and building the stations was an atypical circumstance for Italy. “Today, we'd have to go through the tendering process in order to select the architects, designers, artists, construction companies and so on,” Cascetta explains. But back then, everything was managed by *Metropolitana* in agreement with the city. “We were given the opportunity — and we used it to the full — to propose some of the world's best designers to the municipality.”

From 2001 on, a succession of “Art Stations” opened: *Museo* (2001), *Salvator Rosa* (2001), *Quattro Giornate* (2001), *Dante* (2002), *Materdei* (2003), *Vanvitelli* (first opened in 1993 and revamped in 2005). The architects involved in this first phase were mostly Italian: *Atelier Mendini*, *Gae Aulenti*, *Michele and Lorenzo Capobianco*, and *Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas* (who are still at work on *stazione Duomo*). *Karim Rashid* was also commissioned; he produced a unique, colourful series of sculptures and icons — and spellbinding graphics — integrated into the architecture of *stazione Università*. Some of the best Italian and foreign artists — among them *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, *Sol LeWitt*, *Mimmo Jodice*, *William Kentridge* and *Shirin Neshat* — produced works for the stations or exhibited existing ones therein.

Another unique aspect of the program — most unthinkable for North American observers — was its involvement of academics in decision-making processes related to city development. The late *Benedetto Gravagnuolo*, the former dean of the faculty of architecture at the University of Naples *Federico II*, played a strong role in proposing architects for the new stations. So did *Alessandro Mendini*, who, along with being a key figure on the architectural and design scene, had served as editor of *Casabella* (1970 to 1976) and *Domus* (1979 to 1985). His intimate knowledge of who was doing what and where likely explains the presence of architects *Álvaro Siza Vieira*, *Óscar Tusquets Blanca* and *Gae Aulenti* in Naples, as well as other personalities revered for their thoughtful approach to architecture. *Mendini* and his brother *Francesco* (who also worked at *Atelier Mendini*) designed *stazione Salvator Rosa*



OPPOSITE AND LEFT: *Stazione Toledo*'s conical opening toward the sky was originally created to remove volcanic sediments during excavation and was meant to be closed after work ended. Thankfully, architect *Óscar Tusquets Blanca* chose to exploit its full poetic potential, cladding it in *Bisazza* tiles.

and were later hired to coordinate development on several stations by other architects.

The artists were brought in as the architectural concepts evolved: According to Metropolitana's 2023 figures, there are now 180 works of art by 90 artists exhibited in Naples's "three As" stations. This meshing of creative minds has resulted in a remarkable legacy for Naples and a shining example for other cities to follow.

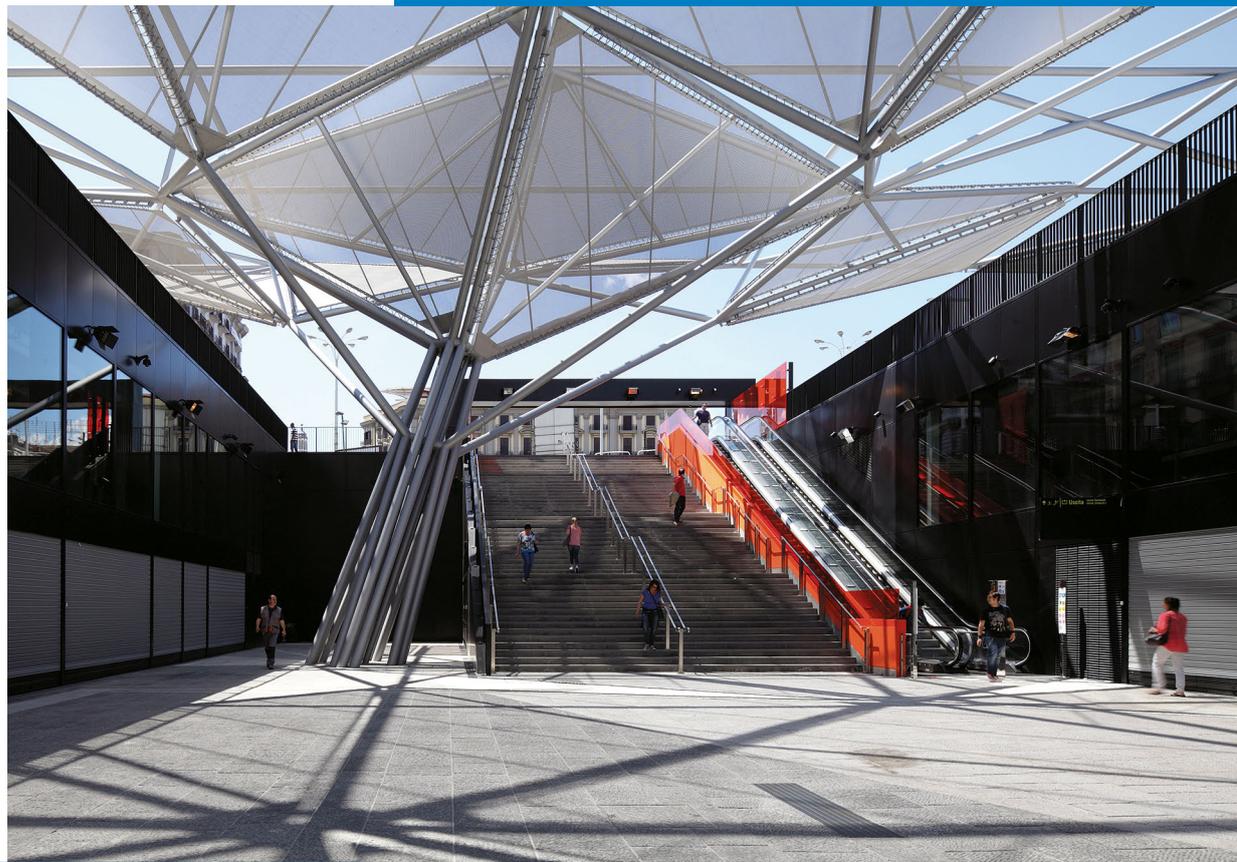
The effect of this astounding collaboration can be intensely felt at stazione Toledo, designed by Òscar Tusquets Blanca. On the steep descent toward the platform level, 38 metres below the piazza above, one is struck by the Catalan architect's whimsical blue mosaic intervention, somewhat reminiscent of Barcelona's Modernista masterpieces while celebrating the nearby Mediterranean Sea. Playful waves pop off the walls on either side of the giant conical skylight enhanced by American artist Robert Wilson's subtle LED installation. South African artist William Kentridge also contributed to the station: above ground with his ironic *Il Cavaliere di Toledo*, and on the subterranean levels with a series of giant wall mosaics executed by teams of craftspeople carrying on a millenary tradition. They illustrate Naples's

BELOW: With Mount Vesuvius looming in the distance, Álvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura's Piazza del Municipio surfaces a complex transportation hub below. In coming years, significant ruins and artifacts found in situ will be displayed for public viewing.



OPPOSITE TOP: Piazza Garibaldi spans the footprint of Naples's old train station. Its minimalist design (eluded to in the "Tarzan" illustration, top) is enhanced by a playful pergola-like spatial device that protects people from the strong Mediterranean light.

RIGHT: Eight metallic tree-like structures emerge from below the plaza, where circulation corridors from various underground stations converge. The atrium allows for much deeper penetration of natural light.



urban transformation and pay homage to utopian architect Lamont Young, who by the early 1880s had already come up with a plan for the city's first subterranean transport system.

Inaugurated in 2012, the highly photogenic stazione Toledo grabbed the attention of the international press. In the U.K., the *Telegraph* went as far as branding it "the most beautiful subway station in Europe." The well-deserved recognition was almost entirely focused on this one station and made little or no mention of the much larger project at hand — a complex feat which was not only addressing the stations themselves but also the concurrent rehabilitation and *ex novo* creation of urban squares.

Piazza Garibaldi, for instance, now gathers people where the old train station once stood. When the building was demolished in the 1950s, it left a huge scar in the urban landscape — a blank canvas proffering French architect Dominique Perrault the freedom to invent what is now, at 62,000 square metres, the largest square in Naples and one of the largest in Europe. Its salient feature is an elongated "pergola" that is influenced by the work of Pier Luigi Nervi, the hallowed architect of the nearby stazione Napoli Centrale. The train station's triangular roof modules inspired Perrault as he created the eight 16.5-metre-tall metallic trees that rise from below the ground and extend textile-wrapped prismatic "branches" to protect passersby from the sun. An orange glass parapet adds a fleeting touch of colour.

Below street level — where national, regional and local rail infrastructures converge — Perrault was entrusted with the difficult task of fitting a new Linea 1 station into an already crowded maze. Part of the solution was to bring riders down to the platforms via parallel escalators inserted into a circulation shaft where mirrors and clever lighting transform a banal journey underground into an exceptional visual experience.

Perhaps the most challenging project of the entire Linea 1 program is stazione Municipio and its eponymous piazza. The 47,000-square-metre site abuts significant monuments: the 13th-century Castel Nuovo, the 17th-century Fountain of Neptune and the late-19th-century Galleria Umberto I. Located a short distance from the main port, the new station — which connects Linea 1 with the elongated Linea 6 — presented Portuguese architects Álvaro Siza Vieira and Eduardo Souto de Moura with

extreme technical complexities due to significant archaeological findings: The dig revealed ruins — including the remains of several wooden ships, three of them in a remarkably preserved state — from successive eras that had gradually built over the ancient Roman harbour of Neapolis. (Some relics are exhibited in stazione Museo; others will go in the galleries of Municipio's subway junction.)

Stazione Municipio was operational as of 2015, even though there was still work to be done. Undeterred, Siza told Italian national newspaper *la Repubblica* in 2018, "Ruins and new architecture coexist here, different from Pompeii where the ruins are isolated. Archaeology and architecture are made of the same material as the city. It is a unique case." Today, Siza and Souto de Moura have spent over two decades working on the site, transforming their project more than 20 times and demonstrating what architectural writer Giancarlo Ferulano described in *Exibart* as "the delicacy and commitment necessary for the protection and enhancement of the historical evidence found...far beyond anything anyone could have predicted."

In his new book, *Diario di un viaggio nei trasporti e non solo* (Rubbettino, 2023), Ennio Cascetta describes his personal journey through the subway revitalization. The book exposes all the technical, political, financial and psychological hurdles to be overcome in creating a legacy such as this. It also argues that qualitative improvements — beauty, that is — measurably benefit the well-being of citizens and the image of a city. "The cost of the 'art stations' was only three to five per cent higher than that of the 'regular stations,'" Cascetta writes. "However, every euro invested in 'beauty' generated three times its value in terms of increased use of public transportation, which in turn meant less car traffic and lower levels of pollution."

Naples's unique initiative has already borne fruit beyond Metropolitana's jurisdiction — and the city limits. A striking example is stazione Napoli Afragola, on the city's outskirts and part of its high-speed rail, designed by Zaha Hadid. At a smaller scale is the in-progress stazione Monte Sant'Angelo: In June 2023, *la Repubblica* published a photo of world-renowned artist Anish Kapoor in front of his impressive tubular sculpture that Linea 7 users will go through to enter the station, by London's AL_A. The model is spreading. Hopefully, it will reach other cities. **AZ**

TORONTO: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

A hard-hat tour, via photography by Ryan Walker and Vid Ingelevics, through a few of the city's most anticipated projects. Words by Elizabeth Pagliacolo, Stefan Novakovic, Eric Mutrie and Sydney Shilling

We all know it too well: The warmer months in many major North American cities are overtaken by countless construction projects — infrastructure tweaks that divert cars and buses onto clogged detour routes, cacophonous building developments that cloak us in dust. All of it is necessary. Some of it is downright incredible. In Toronto, the undisputed crane capital of North America (current count: 238), the perpetual campaign to retrofit and reimagine the urban realm is giving shape to some of the city's — and the world's — boldest developments.

Photographers Ryan Walker and Vid Ingelevics have been documenting one of them for a while now: the renaturalization of the Don River on the city's East End, which will see the river's mouth reconnected with Lake Ontario. A vibrant quartet of bridges, two of which have been installed, will link the channel to the surrounding streets.

On the opposite side of the downtown core are a number of projects that feel just as unprecedented. Billed as the largest urban mixed-use development in Canada, The Well, an all-new neighbourhood named after its main perch on Wellington Street West, may be the most ambitious, and it hews to the distinct Toronto model of development, which sees a variety of commercial, residential and public green spaces that (when done right) merge into one walkable — dare we say, 15-minute — neighbourhood. Nearby, Mirvish Village is also a masterstroke in uniting building typologies, its 33 micro-towers that house apartment suites and retail units filling in a dense and beloved corner.

The two other places we donned PPE for are KING Toronto and the Waterworks. While it's a luxury condo, the former will bring a jolt of excitement to the streetscape; the manner in which BIG's staggered cube formations wind through the heritage fabric also feels of a piece with the Toronto way of marrying old and new. Meanwhile, the Waterworks building, a European-style food hall in a painstakingly restored and updated 1930s utility building, is gearing up to serve as a much-needed amenity in a flourishing Richmond Street West neighbourhood. On the cusp of their completion, we present a look at these exciting projects in gestation.

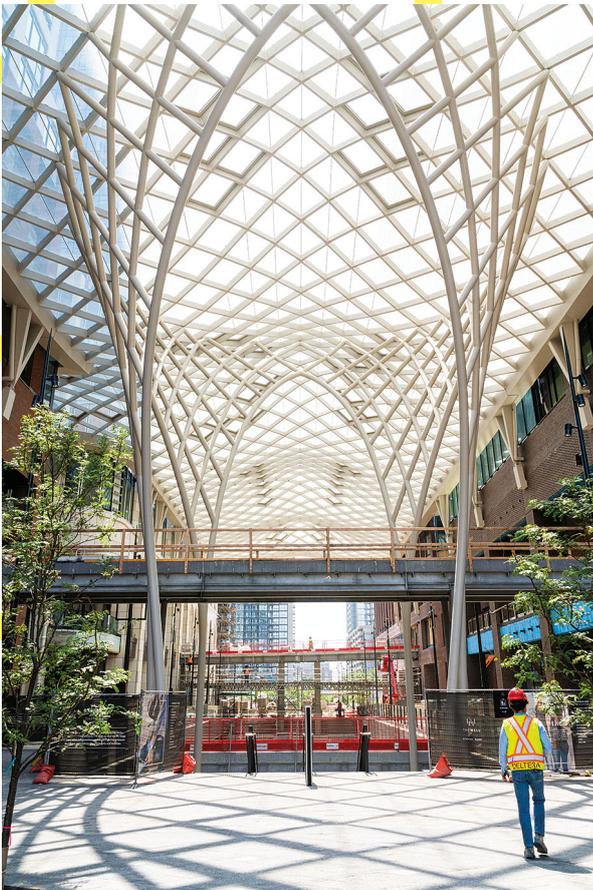




PORT LANDS

To describe the Port Lands redevelopment (which spans landscape design, river remediation, housing and transportation infrastructure) as ambitious would be an understatement. Though construction began in 2017, the project is now visibly taking shape along the Toronto waterfront. The first two of four bridges, designed by Entuitive with Grimshaw and Schlaich Bergermann, were installed in 2022 (the remainder are slated for completion by the end of this year). Surrounded by diggers and heaps of earth, their futuristic steel forms make for a striking contrast with the landscaping currently underway. In July, crews began the final stage of the river valley excavation near the “west plug,” a dam-like underground structure designed to prevent lake water from entering the valley — a task that carries a minor risk of flooding. If all goes to plan, next year, a new river valley will run through the Port Lands, creating a forward-thinking mixed-use community dubbed Villiers Island. It represents everything the city should be: With access to abundant green space, density to limit sprawl, and a climate-positive mandate, it's a place to grow sustainably.

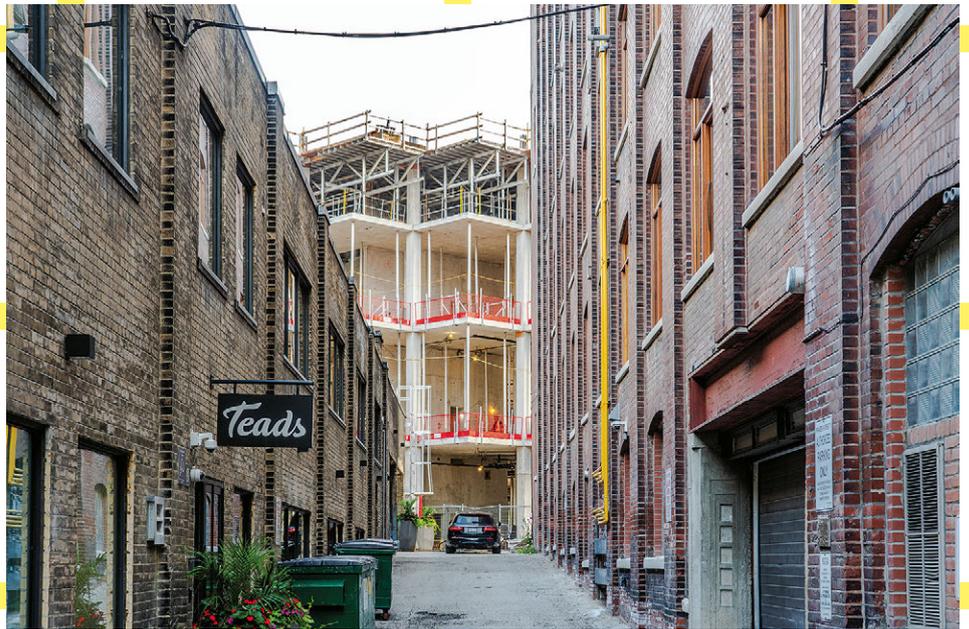




THE WELL

At 3.16 hectares, The Well, by developers Allied, RioCan, DiamondCorp and Tridel, is by far the largest construction site in the downtown core. Yet the careful mix of scales and uses, as well as textures and materials, creates a surprisingly intimate milieu that — visually, at least — feels compatible with the city around it. The project, master-planned by Hariri Pontarini, combines over 100,000 square metres of office space and 39,000 square metres of retail (including a food hall) with 1,700 homes (though there are concerns that the rents are inaccessible to most). It's distinguished by its pedestrian realm, especially the covered retail galleries that carve through the site (BDP is in charge of retail design) and its standout landscape architecture, care of Montreal's CCxA: On Wellington Street, broad grey brick sidewalks and ample public seating already signal an assertive cosmopolitanism.





KING TORONTO

Spilling out from the surrounding brick buildings, KING Toronto is already changing the very character of King and Portland Street, the main intersection of an ever-evolving nightlife district. Like Mirvish Village (and Kengo Kuma's Alberni Tower in Vancouver, page 27), this is a Westbank development (with Allied Properties REIT) — meaning the wow factor is of the upmost importance. Although it consists of just one building, KING gives the impression of containing multitudes: Its 440 units across 16 storeys take the shape of glass block cubes that seem to cascade across adjacent heritage facades. While it's definitely a luxury condo — future penthouse occupants include Elton John — it gives something special back to the city.



MIRVISH VILLAGE

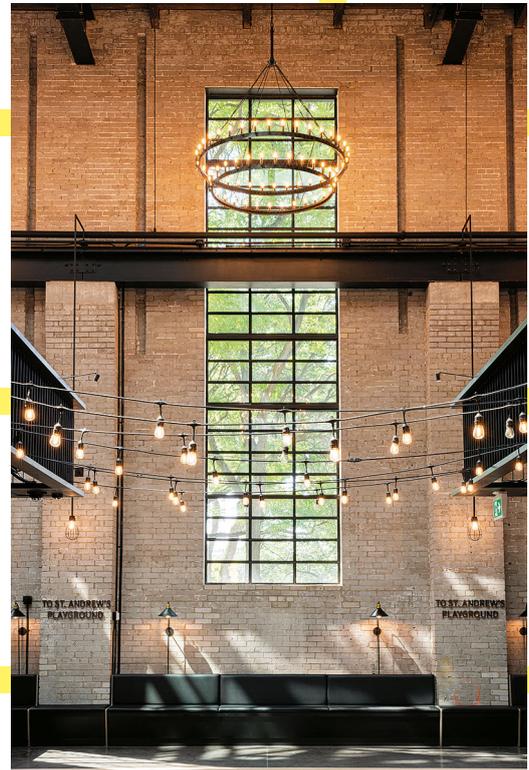
Taking the place of Honest Ed's, a legendary discount megastore that closed in 2016, Mirvish Village will introduce some 900 rental homes (with nearly 10 per cent of these designated affordable housing) while maintaining its site's history of eclectic commercial activity. Crucial to this strategy is a focus on fine-grained retail units, with some clustered into a neon-lit corridor modelled after Tokyo's alleyways and others integrated into the (newly restored) Victorians that line Markham Street (below, right). The architecture shows a similar regard for scale: Henriquez Partners Architects (working with Diamond Schmitt as architect of record) has broken the development into 33 buildings, including clusters of skinny micro-towers all with their own distinct facade treatments. Two tenants have moved in so far — an LCBO and a new mini-campus of Niagara College — with even more exciting destinations (like The Kitchen, a food hall, market and music venue) still to come.





WATERWORKS FOOD HALL

Under the auspices of Woodcliffe Landmark Properties and MOD Developments, Waterworks is on the verge of opening inside the monumental municipal utility, replete with reintroduced art deco flourishes, at 505 Richmond Street West. The sensitive adaptive re-use (by a team including Diamond Schmitt, ERA Architects, Cecconi Simone and Janet Rosenberg + Studio) entailed uncovering the original pitched ceiling — and its magnificent skylights — and making thoughtful connections to the neighbours, with signage pointing to St. Andrew's Playground and a courtyard that connects the brick building to an integrated glass and steel condo complex, a soon-to-open YMCA and the patio for Susur Lee's relocated flagship restaurant. Most impressive: The team excavated below the building to carve out a basement where everything that goes into running a bustling food hall — with some 30 vendors — can be discreetly tucked away.





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The Future of a Dream / The Past Is Not Past

THE 18TH VENICE BIENNALE OF ARCHITECTURE
IS BOTH A LABORATORY OF THE FUTURE AND A
RECKONING WITH COLONIALISM, EXPLOITATION
AND EXCLUSION By Elizabeth Pagliacolo

The plan was to meet Walter Hood at the Scarpa Garden in the Central Pavilion. But when he arrived, and as we gazed from the doorway into the crowded little courtyard transformed with scaled-up versions of his basket-weave pavilions, we instead decided to walk over to the installation. But that, too, was a popular spot, so Hood, the landscape architect whose firm is based in Oakland, California, began to speak to the group of us gathered, his backdrop a historical timeline of Phillips, a 405-hectare rural agricultural settlement in South Carolina. It was once a plantation; in the 1870s, those who were formerly enslaved there, now freedmen, purchased 10-acre parcels and founded the Phillips Community. And Hood marvelled at the beautiful logic by which the people — known as the Gullah Geechee — apportioned their land. They would gain recognition for the baskets they weaved from native sweetgrass: the stuff growing free and rampant along a rural edge of water, the “overgrown” that fades out into nothingness in the maps of 18th-century cartographer William de Brahm.

Yet more recent history would see the settlement boxed in by suburban development. “They wanted to ram a six-lane road through,” Hood explained, “so we came up with a plan to help them fight the road and that helped them also become a historic district.” Now that he has worked with the people to protect Phillips from further encroachment, Hood is proposing something called an Arts Lifeway — a network of pavilions along Route 1, the path where craftspeople have long made and sold their baskets. This is the installation’s focal point: a collection of wooden models that iterate what these structures, constructed from renewable wood harvested from the overgrown, could look like.

I want to begin with Hood’s project for two reasons:

It carries you on a journey to a place where most of us have not been — in the tourist mecca of Venice, a slice of South Carolina’s Lowcountry — and second, it features architectural models. The first point speaks to the

narratives that bring into view an often hidden subtext; the second shows off the very tangible fruits of architectural labour.

For many critics of the Biennale (most voluble of them all is Patrik Schumacher, whose words, bouncing back to me via DM and LinkedIn, seem to constitute their own echo chamber), there was too much of the former, not enough of the latter. This hyperbolic reaction — that the Biennale is “an event that does not show any architecture” — rolled in faster than anyone could possibly process such a complex exhibition. But such is the velocity with which criticism is dispatched.

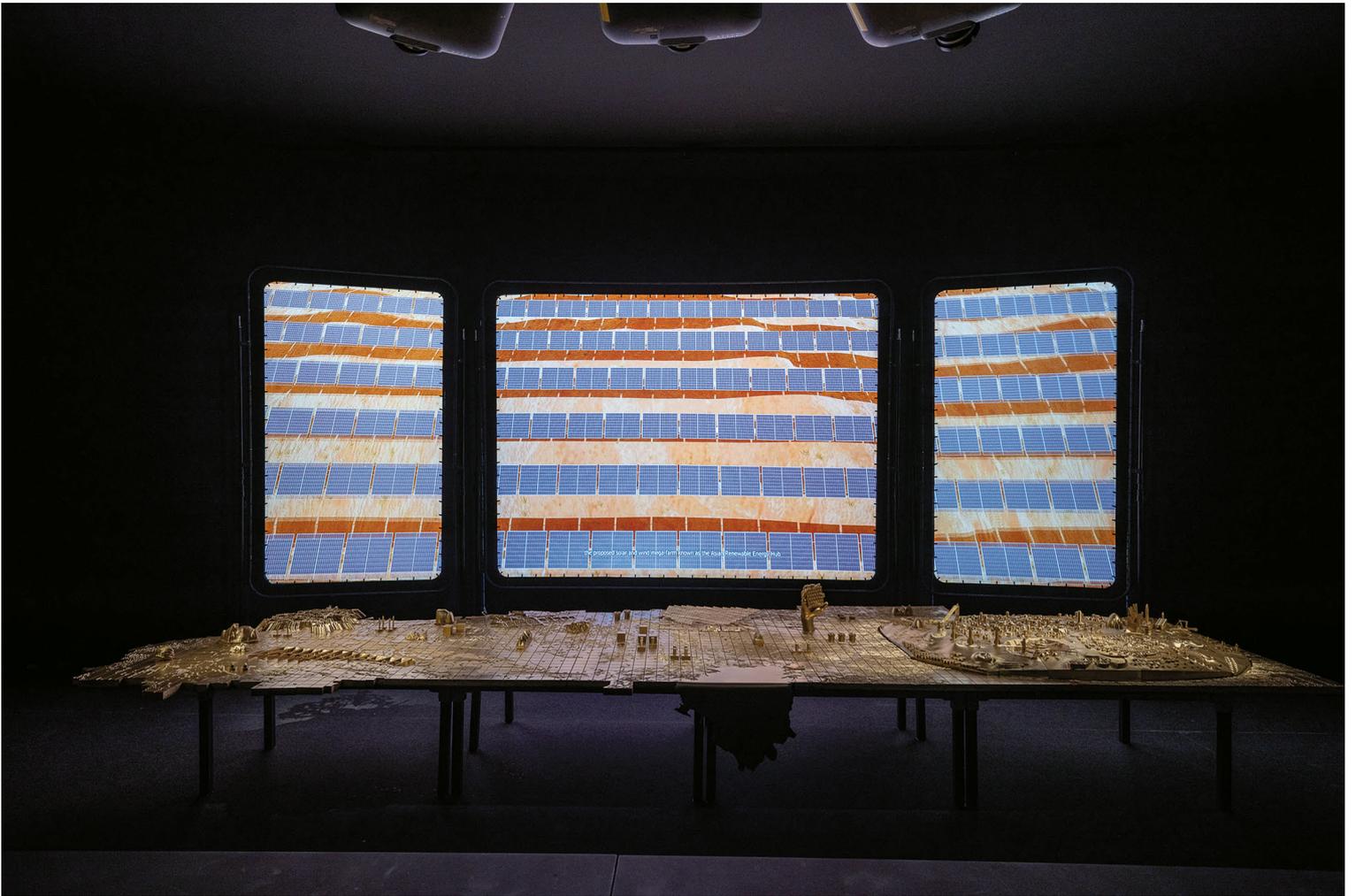
Bona fide architecture critics are routinely perplexed by the Biennale. Should it be an architectural menagerie? Surely not. Of 2018’s “Freespace,” wherein the curators asked participants to recreate sections of projects at scalable dimensions, Tom Wilkinson wrote in the *Architectural Review*, “A curator has to curate, and fairly ruthlessly at that, otherwise objects might as well be chosen at random and visitors may ask themselves, ‘Why am I here?’” Should a biennale show works by the most prominent architects, elucidating the state of the art through a selection of the *crème de la crème*? That’s what David Chipperfield attempted in a 2012 show that included “an awful lot of stars” but was deemed by Christopher Hawthorne in the *Los Angeles Times* “limited, exclusive, stiff, starched and a bit cloistered.” Should it venture beyond architecture to explore how the practice collaborates with, is influenced by and can influence other disciplines, entirely other realms? Yes, of course. But Hashim Sarkis was lambasted by Oliver Wainwright in the *Guardian* for his 2021 biennale, “How Will We Live Together”: a “muddled pick ‘n’ mix of arcane academic research” in a show that “jumps from moon rocks to migration, biotech to bird boxes, showcasing architects’ voracious appetite

OPPOSITE: The Scarpa Garden features an installation of the basket weave-inspired pavilions Walter Hood proposes for a South Carolina community.

BELOW: Atelier Masomi has wall-mounted models in ways that provide fascinating glimpses of building sections.



PHOTOS BY MATTEO DE MAYDA (THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE)



TOP LEFT: DAAR's Golden Lion-winning installation includes benches that riff on the fascist architecture foisted on Syracuse, Sicily, during the Mussolini era.

TOP RIGHT: The structural columns of classic Western architecture are subverted in Studio Barnes's *Griot*, which posits that their precedents are African.

ABOVE: Is the solar economy another sham? Grandeza Studio's multimedia presentation interrogates the ongoing resource exploitation of Pilbara in Australia.



ABOVE: At the Canada Pavilion, “Not for Sale!” puts forth an array of approaches to building equitable housing.

for tackling territories beyond buildings, with often dubious results.” In 2014, Rem Koolhaas prevailed, somewhat ironically, receiving both high praise and a grudging pass, although he displayed no contemporary architecture at all in his Central Pavilion, instead focusing on the building components that have reduced “architecture today” to “little more than cardboard.”

It makes one wonder why anyone would want to take on the curatorial mantle. If the popular desire is to see a proliferation of standout architecture projects around the world (an odd expectation of any professional discourse), there should be no curator at all. No theme. Just a world’s expo of architecture. In critiquing and even condemning Lesley Lokko’s “Laboratory of the Future” biennale, whose twin themes are decolonization and decarbonization with a special focus on practitioners from Africa and the African diaspora, the hot take that there is no architecture feels especially persuasive, even seductive. It’s a handy way to dismiss a show that requires a lot of brain work. And it would be relevant — architects have a right to be angry if they feel left out of the most important international platform for their profession, one meant to reflect their praxis and world-making back to them — were it true.

At the crux of Schumacher’s criticism, directed mostly at the national pavilions, is the valid argument that architecture should be the medium through which we examine the issues brought up in Lokko’s exhibition. The exception, he contends, is the national pavilion of China, a showcase of the many ambitious architectural projects that will continue to accommodate its unprecedented urbanization. But if one were

concerned about how human rights abuses (one of the Republic’s most concerning issues) intersect with architecture, they would want to spend time in the Arsenale installation *Investigating Xinjiang’s Network of Detention Camps* by Alison Killing of Killing Architects, dedicated to the alleged Uyghur “re-education” camps uncovered through her forensic architecture work alongside a robust journalistic investigation. That these two realities could coexist in one biennale is a credit to Lokko. (China responded to Killing’s work with a threat to shutter its pavilion; according to the Biennale’s press office, it remains open.)

There is also the sentiment that the Biennale (which includes dozens of ancillary events) has long been fomenting in practitioners a bummer of a guilty conscience over the collateral damage caused by the major architectural developments they are involved in. Yet the profession itself — and its elites — have been hammering this message for years now: The practice of architecture is inextricably linked to everything from resource exploitation and human rights abuses to displacement caused by gentrification and the climate crisis. The Canadian pavilion refreshingly embraces the truth of this reality as a rallying call to rethink housing. Rich in ideas, provocations and projects already underway, it shows how architects working with local activists, communities and organizations can create new models to address possibilities like “on the land housing” for Indigenous reservations, shelter for the unhoused on city land, new multi-generational typologies, a gentrification tax that would support the retrofitting of affordable rental units and more.

Beautiful architecture from African and African diaspora practitioners — in the manner of projects that celebrate form, aesthetic and placemaking — abounds in the curated components as well, especially in the Central Pavilion, under the banner of “Force Majeure.” Lokko states that its 16 participants “individually and collectively” are “irresistible examples of the richly creative power of the Black Atlantic, a culture whose roots extend a thousand years into the past, equally stretching towards the future.” Concerning the latter, there is much pondering over a future that might have been, hope for a future that ought to be — one where local communities can thrive in a globalized world — and a foreboding for a future that likely will be, where there is more exploitation of people and resources.

My favourites here are Sumayya Vally and Moad Musbahi's *The African Post Office*, or *APO*, which shows off a speculative future in which African nations have co-created a communication system of poles based on minarets and totems that bypass the power structures of Western colonialism; and Olalekan Jeyifous's *ACE/AAP (African Conservation Effort/All-Africa Protoport)*, a retrofuturistic vision of what might have been an international travel network across air, land and sea based in post-liberation Africa. Or perhaps both are nebulously situated in time, hinting as much at what could have been as at what still might be, seeding a fantastical future.

There is also the tangible now: inspiring projects underway across Africa. Niger's Atelier Masōmī shows off architecture that "brings local narratives to the fore, translating dispossessed identities and history into architectural form" (including the HIKMA Community Complex in Niger, Bēt-bi Art Museum in Senegal and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development in Liberia) in models that are wall-mounted to provide fascinating glimpses of building sections. Francis Kéré creates an installation that is fully experiential — with curved clay walls and a timber ceiling that seem to envelop you — while also presenting videos of the processes behind locally constructed works inside circular peepholes that you have to lean into. A stunning menagerie of illuminated wooden models — of the Thabo Mbeki Presidential Library in Johannesburg; the Edo Museum of West African Art and MOWAA Creative District in Benin City, Nigeria; the Newton Enslaved Burial Ground Memorial and Museum project in Barbados; and the Africa Institute of Sharjah — is dedicated to the growing oeuvre of Adjaye Associates. The firm also erected a black pyramidal structure, called *Kwaæ* after a Ghanaian word for "forest," that is skewed in form, perforated like a sponge and punctured by two oculi: "a space for listening to the past" programmed with music, poetry, debates and lectures.

(As it came to be, in early July, three women who once worked for David Adjaye accused him of sexual misconduct. The Ghanaian British architect denied the charges but resigned as architectural advisor to the mayor of London; the Sharjah project was immediately cancelled, the first of

many works either scrapped or put on hold. The now-apparent power imbalances at his international firm alone could bolster the thesis that architecture is about much more than buildings.)

Mostly, the ideas presented in the Biennale are expressed in film, performance and other intangible (and not always compelling) arty stuff. It often gives the observer the impression of being at an art show. On the one hand, a variety of representations of architectural thought and discourse is necessary to convey a multitude of diverse stories about architecture's influence on complex systems and vice versa. (Unlike physical models, however, they demand much more from the visitor: patience, imagination and, especially, time — which no one ever has enough of.) On the other, their overrepresentation made the scarcity of more typical architectural communication tools — especially advanced rendering and modelling systems — more pronounced.

Still, the contribution that has stuck with me the most is Grandeza Studio's "Pilbara Interregnum: Seven Political Allegories." The title alone might megaphone its intellectual pretensions and serve to prove the point of the naysayers, yet it is one of the most memorable pieces in the Arsenale. The rich mineral deposits of Pilbara, in Western Australia, have made the tiny territory the powerhouse of the nation — and, with the recent discovery of lithium, the site of a "21st-century green gold rush" — even though its local, mostly Aboriginal population lives with "infrastructural underdevelopment" and suffers high rates of "racialized social exclusion." On a triptych



RIGHT: Joar Nango's "Girjegumpi: The Sámi Architecture Library" filled the Nordic Countries Pavilion with marvellous spaces for gathering.

OPPOSITE: A retro-futuristic vision for a travel network based in post-liberation Africa, Olalekan Jeyifous's contribution to the Biennale epitomizes its focus on African and African diaspora perspectives.



of screens fronted by a table-long, gold-tinted model of a dystopian solar development, guerrilla-styled activists wearing balaclavas spit anti-capitalist rhetoric.

Is the solar economy another sham of resource-intensive exploitation? This combination of performance art and physical model posited what seems to be the Biennale's central point and inexorable narrative: that so much of architectural production, especially in big developments, relies on exploitation; that colonialism continues, in the guise of hyper-globalized capitalism, with its complex modern supply chains obscuring rich nations' subjugation of poorer places. And it might eventually put you in a nihilist funk. Or, in raising important questions that poke at the underwater mass beneath the tip of the architectural iceberg, which is what we typically have access to, it might leave you inspired to ask more of your own.

Grandeza's eccentric installation is in the Arsenale, the domain of "Dangerous Liaisons," where Lokko "focuses on practitioners working at the productive edge between architecture and its myriad 'others' — landscape, ecology, policy, finance, data, public health, AI, heritage, history, conflict and identity, to name a few..." Conflict (and conflicting narratives) come to the fore here, where you first encounter *Griot*, the work of Germane Barnes. The Chicago-born, Miami-based architect has been researching elements of classic European architecture — specifically the columnar orders in Rome — that have precedents in the wooden pillars of North African structures. In his installation, Barnes subverts all the rules set out by the Greeks and the Romans, then superimposes his subversions onto blueprints of the historically Black institution of Howard University. "Why would those buildings be adorned with non-Black columns?" Barnes asks by way of explanation. In the centre of the Arsenale, he has installed a 2.75-tonne pillar of knobby Spanish Marquina Black Marble whose uneven surface

is robotically sculpted but finished by hand to feel like bark and mimic Black hair. By redesigning the column, he is also recentring its precedent in architectural history and hauling it out of the anthropological shadows.

Correcting the historical document is also the subject of *Ente di Decolonizzazione, Borgo Rizza*, by DAAR — Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal. Their Golden Lion-winning installation in the Arsenale shows that colonialism wasn't just something that Italy practised outside its borders: In the Mussolini era, the city of Syracuse, Sicily, was deemed a backwards and "empty" place just as desperate for despotic oversight. The government established a rural settlement there, populated with "modernist-colonial-fascist architecture." Flattened versions of the style's prominent features are recreated in the installation as benches.

The act of erasure by way of architectural development is best exemplified in Brazil's exhibition, "Terra," which reckons with Brasília's legacy in a pavilion paved in fragrant earth. Even the most hallowed of modernist architecture emblems hides a local reality — in a place that was also deemed "void," despite its being on Indigenous and Quilombola territory — that is too problematic to contemplate. It too won a Golden Lion, not least for the Indigenous and African Brazilian forms of architecture it honours, which "present a decolonial view of heritage."

In this way and many more, the Biennale makes space for a taking back by communities that have often been threatened with erasure. Most successful to my mind is the Nordic Countries' pavilion. It is entirely dedicated to the work of Joar Nango, who has gathered written materials about Indigenous architecture for the past 15 years for his "Girjegumpi: The Sámi Architecture Library." The hewn-log amphitheatre, hide-draped screening tents and multimedia micro-libraries throughout the natural light-filled pavilion are magnificent, every hyper-vernacular material seemingly carved, skinned, strung and otherwise assembled by many hands. Combining both the vital work of revising — and augmenting — the architectural canon and the tangible fruits of architectural labour, it is as visceral an architectural pavilion as any that can be imagined. While I was there — and I did not want to leave — kids scampered about, jumping from level to level on the gathering platform; people huddled together watching the *Post-Capitalist Architecture-TV* series; and official participants dressed in traditional Sámi clothing made themselves available to discuss aspects of the vibrant installation to anyone and everyone. It felt like being in a timeless place connected to the Earth and welcoming of all. **AZ**



The Life

Cycle

Hemmed in by a tangle of railway tracks and storage depots, the Copenhagen neighbourhood of Jernbanebyen finds itself slightly off the beaten path even though it lies close to the city centre. The district has emerged as a haven for exploring new ways of living, from a community food hub and garden to indoor-outdoor co-housing, making it fertile ground for an ambitious redevelopment. This scrappy, rapidly evolving context also makes a fitting — and fittingly temporary — home for the Living Places prototype, an experiment in decarbonized living.

Led by Danish window manufacturer Velux and designed by local firm Effekt Architects with input from energy consultancy Artelia, the prototype consists of two full-scale homes and five open pavilions for hosting educational exhibitions and events, and all seven structures share a wooden deck. In between, trees and productive gardens are interspersed with public benches. It's an ambitious test bed for healthy, socially oriented and low-carbon future communities; the homes boast substantially better air quality than the Danish average, and only a third of the embodied and operational carbon footprint. Yet it looks like something that could be assembled after a few weekend trips to Home Depot. What gives?

According to Effekt founding partner Sinus Lyngø, simplicity is the point. "You don't need rocket science to achieve a radical reduction," he says. "We're only using building components and materials that you can buy at any construction market." By meticulously studying every material, design choice and building technique — and how they fit together — through a comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment, the designers prove that a transformation in building practices is possible with a basic low-tech kit of parts. "The most important learning for us was to start visualizing the carbon footprint as a budget. For every building component, we knew exactly how much CO₂ it would emit over the life cycle of the building," says Lyngø.

The assessment started with the foundation. A screw pile system was chosen for its relatively low up-front carbon costs and ease of disassembly. It also allows the structures to sit lightly on the landscape, preserving much of the ecology. While the five pavilions are pared-down timber frames

THE RESIDENTIAL EXPERIMENT LIVING PLACES COPENHAGEN ACHIEVES RADICAL SUSTAINABILITY FROM A SIMPLE KIT OF PARTS

Story by Stefan Novakovic
Photography by Adam Mørk

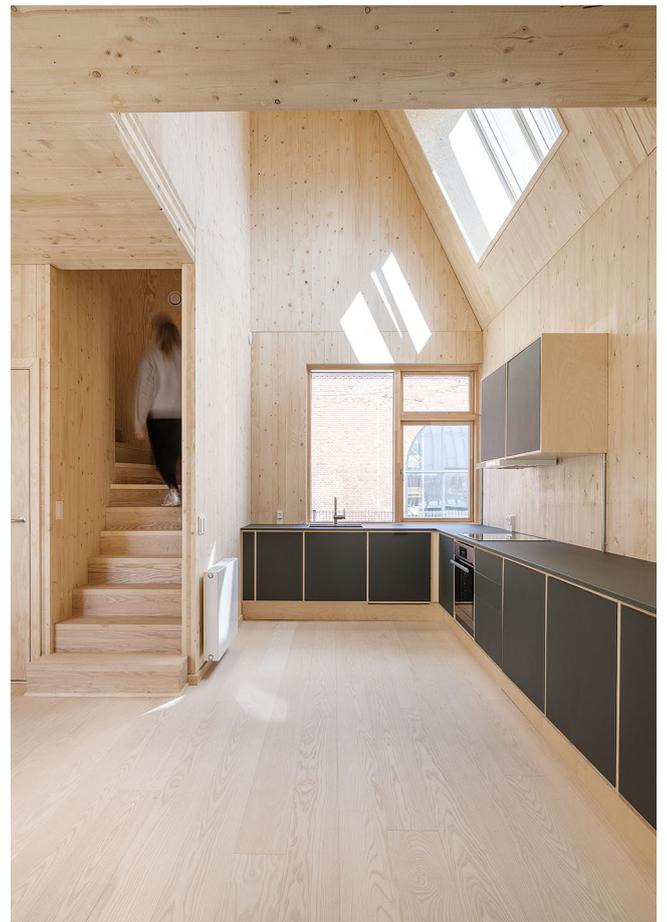


ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: In Copenhagen's old rail district, two houses and five open pavilions for hosting educational events make up Living Places Copenhagen, designed by Effekt Architects.

RIGHT: The structures are constructed from a kit of parts that includes timber frames and a sloped roof clad in zinc magnesium-treated steel plates and punctured with Velux windows.

FAR RIGHT: Inside, untreated plywood walls and floors and exuberant geometries create a warm, light-filled and dynamic ambience.





partially enclosed with translucent polycarbonate, the two Living Places model homes are fully functional (though unoccupied) residential prototypes.

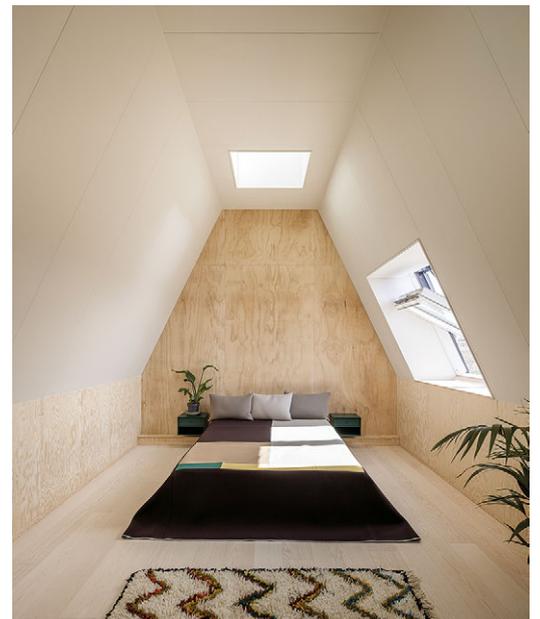
The two residences are built with different materials and mechanical systems, yet both feature the same two-storey form, accented with a steep, eye-catching sloped roof that welcomes natural light and facilitates airflow. One prototype, constructed with a standard timber frame and all-wood window trim, emphasizes fully natural ventilation; the other features a CLT structure, wood and aluminum windows, and a hybrid ventilation system that incorporates both passive and mechanical cooling. Crucially, both achieve similar reductions in embodied and operational carbon, with an independently certified annual footprint of just 3.8 kilograms of CO₂ per square metre — less than a third of the Danish average.

Inside, the homes are outfitted with minimal, surprisingly elegant finishes. Plywood ceilings, natural wood surfaces and environmentally friendly lime paint make up the simple material palette, which amplifies the effect of the tall ceilings and sunlit rooms. Upstairs, the operable windows are carefully positioned to facilitate natural ventilation and improve air quality. As Lynge puts it, the whole of it was basically assembled “with a screwdriver,” allowing for easy repair and replacement. Appliances and windows are installed without glue, while even plumbing and electrical systems are housed behind screwed-in panels. “That was the dogma: to design for disassembly.”

And that’s exactly what will happen here. Throughout 2023, the homes and pavilions will host a series of educational lectures, debates and exhibitions, all focused on sustainable design. Then come the screwdrivers: Living Places will be disassembled, leaving little trace of ever having been here. For the two residential prototypes, the next test is relocation — and new sites are now being sought. In the meantime, the quaint setting feels full of life. “It was important to show how these homes are part of a community,” says Lynge. “And even though it’s not a ‘real’ community, you kind of get the understanding that a home is part of a village.” **AZ**

ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT: Kitchens by the sustainable Danish brand Stykka, based on a prefabricated modular system that can be made to adapt to any space, are used in both home models.

RIGHT: Skylights and operable windows ensure fresh air circulates even on the uppermost level, the perfect spot for a cozy, attic-like bedroom.



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SELECTIONS _Kendra Jackson

1

Sofas

1 Wrinkled Link

Challenging the convention of what a sofa can be, Eindhoven design studio Raw Color developed Link as a practical piece of art that can support rest. An expansion of an existing design, this new one has a removable wrinkled cover.

Materials Injection-moulded foam, quilted fibre

Dimensions 72 H × 248 L × 105 D

Manufacturer Sancal, sancal.com

2 Supermax

Antonio Citterio updated his iconic design from 1983 with more generous proportions, extra padding in the kidney-shaped seat, a larger sitting cushion and grosgrain piping.

Materials Tubular metal (in multiple finishes and colours), polyurethane foam, goose down

Dimensions 68 H × 234 L × 127 D

Manufacturer Flexform, flexform.it

3 Coquille

Taking inspiration from the protective nature of shells, designer Simone Cagnazzo appointed this sofa with a tall wraparound back that creates an enveloping nest-like configuration.

Materials Steel, solid fir, plywood, polyurethane, cotton canvas, metal

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Liu Jo Living, liujoliving.com

2



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5





6

4 Antoine

Handcrafted in Montreal using time-honoured furniture-making techniques, modular Antoine, with gently sloped arms and a low-slung profile, comfortably straddles the line between modern and traditional.

Materials Solid maple, high-density foam, feather and down fill

Dimensions Multiple (81 H × 309 L × 121 D shown)

Manufacturer Montauk Sofa, montauksofa.com

5 Clan

A recent addition to the Clan collection of curved, high-backed armchairs by Piero Lissoni, the sofa version fosters conversation with its embracing form and deep seats.

Materials Poplar, fir, steel, polyurethane foam

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Living Divani, livingdivani.it

6 A-Propos

Expansive cushions sit on an unobtrusive wooden base to form an inviting landscape in this modular sofa by designer Maurizio Manzoni. Backrests can be fixed or integrated with a mechanism to move them forward and backward.

Materials Fir, pine, linden, polyurethane foam, goose and duck feather down

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Roche Bobois, roche-bobois.com

7 Togo Special Edition

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Togo by Michel Ducaroy, a new limited-edition covering has been released — La toile du peintre by Pierre Frey, a large-scale interpretation of a graphic freehand painting by artist Heather Chontos.

Materials Three densities of foam

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Ligne Roset, ligne-roset.com

8 Mr Loveland

A sustainable revision of Patricia Urquiola's 2000 system, this upholstered version replaces its tubular steel components with solid wooden bases and softer, gentler seats and backrests — all while maintaining its inherent architectural qualities.

Materials Wood, polyurethane foam

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Moroso, moroso.it



7



8

Lounge Chairs

1 Cinnamon

A first-time collaboration with Japanese designer Naoto Fukasawa, Cinnamon has a simple U-shaped base that belies its technically complex construction. The generous proportions cradle the sitter while subtle tailored detailing lends it sophistication.

Materials Metal, cold-foam polyurethane, steel

Dimensions 69.5 H × 120 W × 91 D

Manufacturer Molteni&C, molteni.it

2 Figure

A statement seat inspired by the jewellery designs of architect Josef Hoffmann, the Figure lounge chair — part of a seating series designed by Luca Nichetto — comprises two elements: a protective backrest that adds stability to the organically shaped seat.

Materials Metal, beech, polymousse foam

Dimensions 77 H × 101 W × 83 D

Manufacturer Wittmann, wittmann.at

3 Torii Bold

This circular armchair (fixed or swivel) by Nendo features the same slender backrest as the original sofa but with a more compact footprint. Vertical quilting on the back and piping add a sartorial quality.

Materials Metal, plywood, polyurethane foam

Dimensions Multiple, from 82 H × 82 W × 80 D

Manufacturer Minotti, minotti.com

4 Yuzu Lounge Chair

Curved voids in the legs and a rounded shape give the Yuzu chair, designed by Claesson Koivisto Rune, a curious, almost animal-like characteristic.

Materials Metal, moulded polyurethane foam, polyethylene

Dimensions 78 H × 84 W × 84 D

Manufacturer Arflex, arflex.com

5 Soffi Swivel Chair

With a playful and voluminous form inspired by inflatable furniture from the 1960s and '70s, Gabriel Tan's swivel-based Soffi chair has a commanding — and inviting — presence.

Materials Iron, cold-moulded polyurethane foam

Dimensions 75 H × 102 W × 89.9 D

Manufacturer Design Within Reach, dwr.com





1



2

Occasional Chairs

1 Adèl

With an understated elegance, curated details, refined materials and considered proportions, Adèl makes an ideal companion in any space.

Materials Solid wood, Vienna straw

Dimensions 79 H × 54.2 W × 60 D

Manufacturer Calligaris, calligaris.com

2 Heri O'

Italian designer Monica Armani nods to the charm and pop styling of the 1960s with Heri O', an updated take on the archetypal rounded wood slat chair.

Materials Solid wood, cold-formed polyurethane foam, polyester fibre

Dimensions 78 H × 60 W × 62 D

Manufacturer B&B Italia, bebitalia.com

3 Eye Lounge Chair

The shapely curved backrest of this chair is a cheeky reference to a wink of the eye. Sleek, angular front legs and a generous seat complete the low-slung lounge.

Materials Solid oak

Dimensions 73 H × 74 W × 77 D

Manufacturer Ethnicraft, ethnicraft.com

4 Youpi

Resembling a stylized human figure proffering a welcoming embrace, the Youpi chair by French designer Fabrice Berrux adds a sense of lightness to any room. A flared conical base is also available.

Materials Metal, fabric

Dimensions 82 H × 58 W × 55 D

Manufacturer Bonaldo, bonaldo.com

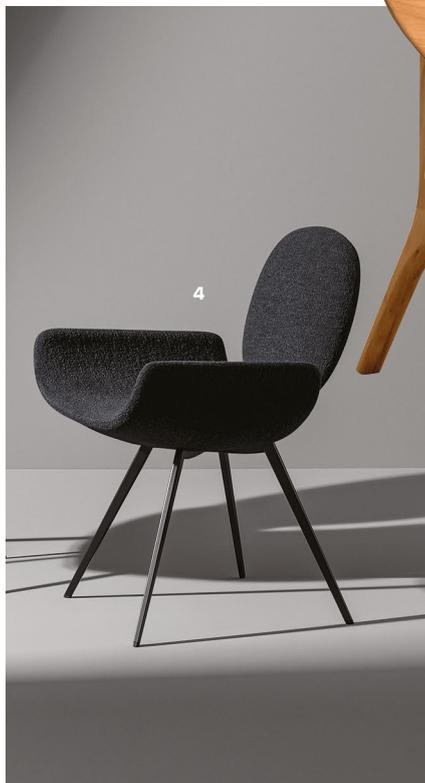
5 Lightly

Super lightweight Lightly has some heavy-hitting qualities: It's contoured and flexible to support postural shifts, has a sloped-edge seat to reduce pressure under the legs, stacks 10 high and is mainly made from plant-based polymers and post-consumer recycled waste.

Materials Plant-based EcoPaXX, post-consumer recycled ASA

Dimensions 75 H × 50 W × 46.4 D

Manufacturer Noho, noho.co



4



3



5

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Transparent Solutions

SELECTIONS _Eric Mutrie



Architectural Glass and Resin

1 Ivory Flora

By pressing dried botanicals between sheets of resin, 3form brings the outdoors in. Three biophilic patterns — including Anahaw Palm, shown — are offered in two panel sizes (1.22 by 2.44 or 1.22 by 3.05 metres) and can be ordered in understated neutrals or vibrant colour treatments. [3-form.com](https://www.3-form.com)

2 Dichroic

Coated with layers of different metallic oxides, Nathan Allan's shimmering glass changes colour based on viewing angles and lighting conditions. Panels are offered in a variety of finishes, with options including a striped pattern and a mottled texture. [nathanallan.com](https://www.nathanallan.com)

3 ViviGraphix Gradiance

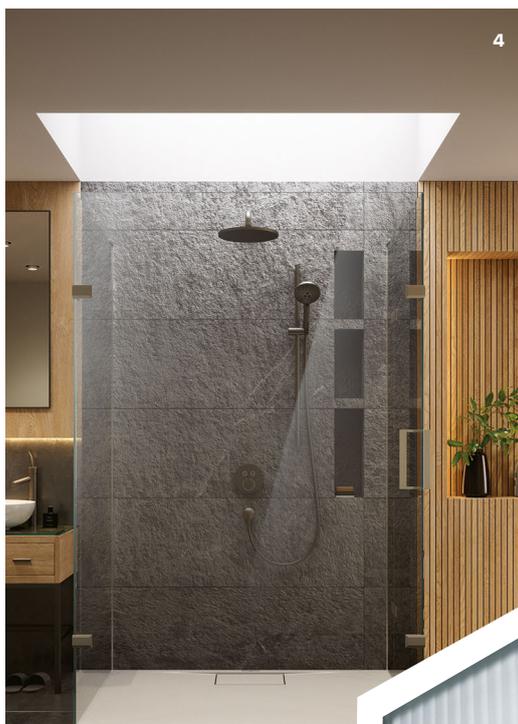
Sandwiching graphic interlayers between sheets of glass, Forms+Surfaces balances privacy and openness. Five new patterns — including the painterly Ascension, shown — can be customized in myriad colours and extended across multiple panels without noticeable repeats. [forms-surfaces.com](https://www.forms-surfaces.com)

4 ShowerGuard

The protective coating on this bathroom-ready glass is chemically bonded right to its smooth, non-porous surface, preventing the discoloration that results from the infiltration of limescale and dirt. For an extra dose of clarity, the product can also be manufactured with low-iron glass. [guardianglass.com](https://www.guardianglass.com)

5 Evolution

A fluted texture brings an elegant sense of rhythm to Bendheim's etched mirrored glass. Offered in silver, grey or bronze metallics as well as custom hues, the fingerprint-resistant cladding is available in a maximum size of 1.52 by 3 metres, in sheets measuring 12 millimetres thick. [bendheim.com](https://www.bendheim.com)





Interior Doors and Partitions

1 Pocket Door System

Maiden's made-in-California steel doors feature single-pane tempered glass available in clear or etched finishes. Designed to recede into a pocket opening on a hidden sliding-track system, the doors are custom-welded to specified dimensions. maidensteel.com

2 Glide

Designed by Piero Lissoni, Porro's collection of sliding partitions includes a wide range of frames. While some feature stylish geometric accents, Miru (shown) keeps the focus fully on the view ahead. Choose from cuvée, white or black metal finishes. porro.com

3 Air

Giuseppe Bavuso's pivot doors are made to measure, and can be installed without a jamb or integrated into Rimadesio's Modular wall panelling system. Aluminum frames can be finished in brown, bronze, grey or black, as well as walnut and oak veneers. rimadesio.it

4 Ikigai

Ornare's room dividers (shown here in a São Paulo project by architects Carlos Rossi and Pablo Slemenson and interior designer Jader Almeida) border glass with a thin aluminum frame. Both fixed and sliding doors are available, with the option to add shelving to stationary partitions. ornare.com

5 Tip and Tap

Offered in hinged, sliding, pivot or folding configurations, Barousse's doors can be ordered with a variety of glass treatments (including digitally printed decorative patterns), as well as a selection of geometric overlays, executed in wood or aluminum. barousse.com



3

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5

City Living

THREE TITLES THAT CAPTURE THE BEAUTY — AND CHALLENGES — OF THE MODERN URBAN EXPERIENCE

WORDS _Sydney Shilling

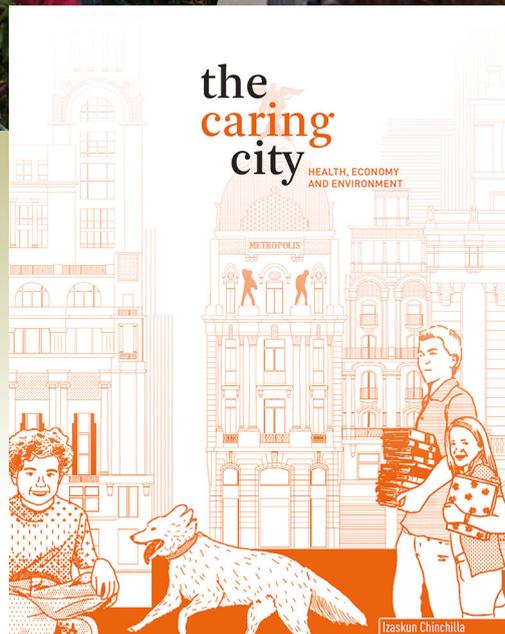
The Caring City

In the post-industrial world, cities are better designed to optimize productivity than to meet our basic needs. This book by Izaskun Chinchilla Moreno enlists ordinary citizens (rather than urban planners) to rethink this — placing particular emphasis on the need to deliver equitable spaces. “It is important to recall and insist that citizens cannot be defective: not having a home, not speaking a language, being a child or an elderly person, not hearing well, or not being able to walk are not deficiencies per se. It is the context that turns citizens’ characteristics into vulnerabilities,” Chinchilla Moreno writes. In workshops with kids, the architect explores London through their lens. Drawing on their insights, she then proposes ways to design more people-centred cities, eschewing bollards and gated playgrounds in favour of loanable urban furniture and “pixel gardens.”



Where We Grow Older

Increased lifespans and a growing aging population are reshaping the way we think about architecture. In this film (the last in a three-part series by the Canadian Centre for Architecture), director Daniel Schwartz presents case studies of two distinct approaches to senior living: Alí Bei, a government-run housing project in Barcelona that embeds its residents in city life, and Carehaus, a developer-led co-housing initiative for seniors and their caregivers in Baltimore — the first of its kind in the country. Interviews with experts, residents, caregivers and activists reveal vital lessons: At Alí Bei, for instance, life expectancy exceeds the city average, keeping turnover rates lower than predicted.



Concrete Valley

Inspired in part by director Antoine Bourges’s own journey as a newcomer to Canada, this film (which premiered at TIFF 2022) plays out against the backdrop of Toronto’s Thorncliffe Park neighbourhood. “The area is sometimes described as an “arrival city,” a first landing spot for many new immigrants in Canada,” says Bourges. Its high-rise buildings and neighbouring landscapes, like the Don Valley, set the scene for *Concrete Valley*’s character-driven narrative, which follows Syrian doctor Rashid (Hussam Douhna), his wife Farah (Amani Ibrahim) and son Ammar (Abdullah Nadaf) as they adjust to their new life. Informed by months of interviews, the movie’s story (co-written by Bourges and Teyama Alkamli) merges fact and fiction and is performed by a combination of first- and second-generation Canadian actors alongside non-actor locals.

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These Women's Work

A VENICE EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS FEMALE PERSPECTIVES ON THE HOUSING CRISIS

WORDS _Elizabeth Pagliacolo

What is remarkable about how women architects approach livability? That is the question at the heart of “Reconceptualizing Urban Housing,” an exhibition within the Venice Biennale—adjacent “Time Space Existence” show at Palazzo Mora. The answers, as expected, are manifold. Spearheaded by the European Cultural Centre, the presentation is a collaboration between nine female-led firms. Each one works on human-centred developments that carve out opportunities for the creation of better spaces within multi-unit residential projects — and quite literally, in the case of Heather Dubbeldam. With her In-Vert Apartments, the Toronto architect proposes slicing into existing low-rise rental buildings to slot in plant-filled, inverted balconies and topping the whole thing off with additional tiers. This gentle densification accomplishes two needed goals: hacking neighbourhoods for the incremental insertion of more housing units and doing so in a way that allows for dynamic and inspiring modes of living.

“The current conversation around the housing crisis is largely focused on bringing more units to market, with less discussion about social sustainability and livability. The bigger picture should also consider how to create amazing places to live,” says Dubbeldam. All nine featured firms are pushing the boundaries in this regard, and then finding a way to get their paradigm-shifting work built around the world. They include Uganda’s Adengo Architecture, led by Doreen Adengo, who died in 2022 at the age of 45 after a long illness. She sought to make affordable housing in her city of Kampala a rich territory for both developers and community. One of her projects envisions seven three-storey apartment blocks, each with 10 units, that make magic with offset stair structures. Shared between apartment blocks and wrapped in alternating raw-earth bricks, these public spaces create communal areas of repose while ushering natural light and air into the individual units. It exemplifies the dual sense of sustainability that Adengo, Dubbeldam and their peers celebrate in this small but mighty showcase: the environmental and social.



Concepts presented at “Reconceptualizing Urban Housing” included Adengo Architecture’s Kampala apartment blocks designed around offset staircases (top) and Heather Dubbeldam’s In-Vert Apartments featuring inverted balconies (bottom).



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