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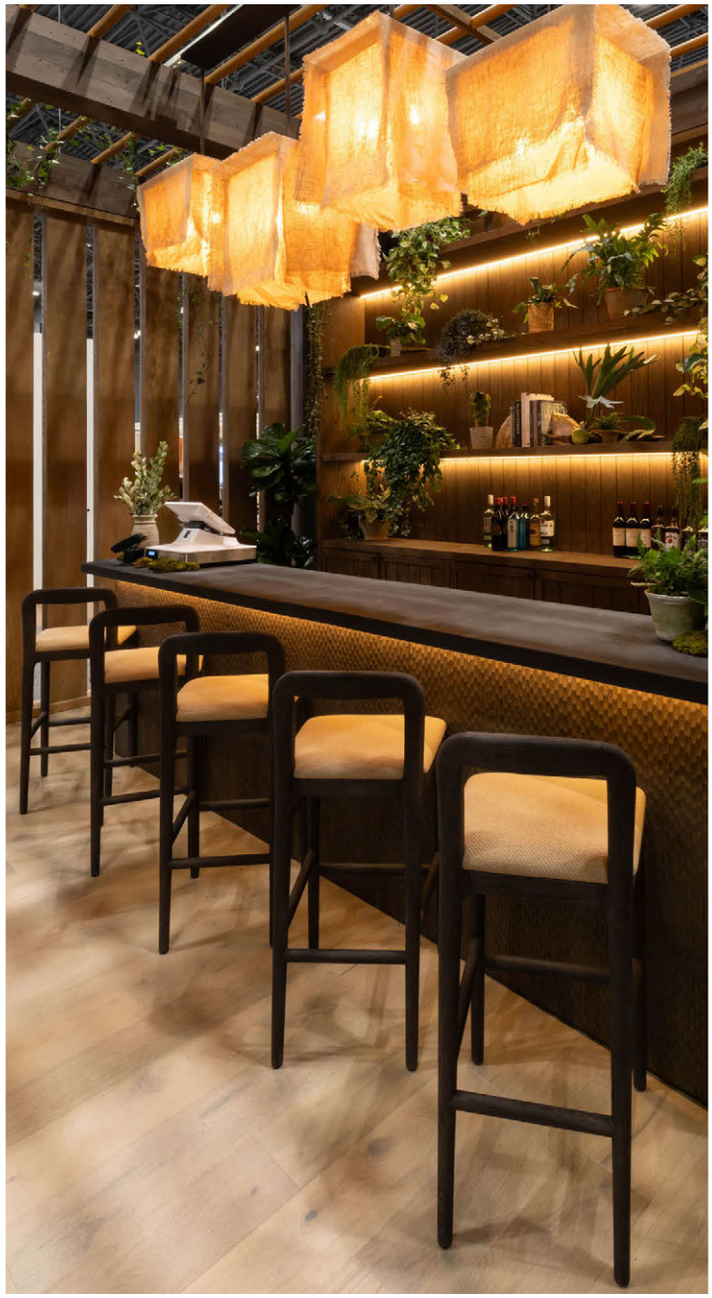

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In Australia, Erosion Mitigation Units create an underwater sculpture park for divers while alleviating shoreline degradation. Photo by Alex Goad/Reef Design Lab

ON THE COVER: As part of Rambla Climate-House, Andrés Jaque and his firm revived a ravine habitat. Photo by José Hevia

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The Climate Issue

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using contrasting materials and finishes.

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Complex Nature

Recently, I asked Tommaso Bitossi to explain "sufficiency before efficiency," a core philosophy of Transsolar, where he works as an associate partner. "It's about looking at how efficiency, in the past, has failed us," Bitossi told me. "In other words, our computers now are much more efficient than in 1995. However, now we have two laptops per person, one iPad, one smartphone et cetera. So our carbon emissions didn't change. Perhaps they increased! Or, our servers are now cooled very efficiently, but with the advent of A.I., we are exponentially increasing our need for data storage and computational power."

The gist: Technology will not save us. Or, technology alone will not save us. It's a fascinating standpoint for a climate engineering firm, but it resonates more and more throughout the world of architecture and design. We need to craft our spaces to employ passive strategies for thermal comfort — and that means making the most of the site and climate, of natural light and breezes, and choosing materials and processes that are easy on the Earth. This approach can then be augmented by new technologies, systems and means of reducing — or neutralizing — the carbon footprint of a building's construction and operations. First, let's accomplish more through good design.

This concept is echoed by José Toral, who describes how he and his partner, Marta Peris, approach their vibrant, innovative social housing projects in Spain with a similar mindset ("The Shared Experience," pg. 76). "Our strategy has a lot to do with not needing energy, rather than being very efficient — because efficiency is not the solution. There is this rebound effect: Every time we are more efficient, instead of using less energy, we consume more." Peris+Toral's bridging of sustainability and affordability also reflects the ever more complex needs that architecture must now meet. As Andrés Jaque, another activist architect featured in these pages, says, we have to embrace complexity and understand the myriad overlapping systems at work in any design undertaking. We must understand them and rise to the challenge of addressing them.

Our Nov/Dec edition, the climate issue that you hold in your hands, coincides with our inaugural Human/Nature conference — where Bitossi is a speaker — and it attempts to provide a snapshot of these overlapping realities just as the conference itself seeks to shed light on many perspectives from across the spectrum of design disciplines. In both this issue and at the conference, we spend time with Pat Hanson, whose Toronto firm, Gh3*, has brought profound beauty to urban infrastructure ("City Builder," pg. 58). Beauty is also a need, and one that — together with sustainability, affordability, equity, inclusivity and many other exigencies — should be part of every brief.

Elizabeth Pagliacolo, Editor

Neolith - New Classtone Collection - Himalaya Crystal

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Flower Crown

Greenery harnesses sunlight and rainwater to spectacular effect — and the best designers are following suit. In addition to introducing 25,000 new plants to Austin's Blanton Museum of Art, Snøhetta has also enhanced the institution's grounds (part of the larger University of Texas at Austin campus) with Moody Patio: a forest of 12 fan-like fibreglass sculptures that cultivate their own enchanting relationship with the elements. When it's sunny, the shade structures provide relief from the heat while decorating nearby pathways and facades with dappled shadows created by small perforations in each of their petal-shaped panels. And when the clouds roll in, the 12.2-metre-tall designs act as rain catchers, the small inner lips created by the punctures funnelling drops into an underground filtration system. It might not be quite as impressive as photosynthesis, but it is nevertheless an inspiring example of how to work with nature rather than against it. _ERIC MUTRIE **az**

PHOTO BY CASEY DUNN

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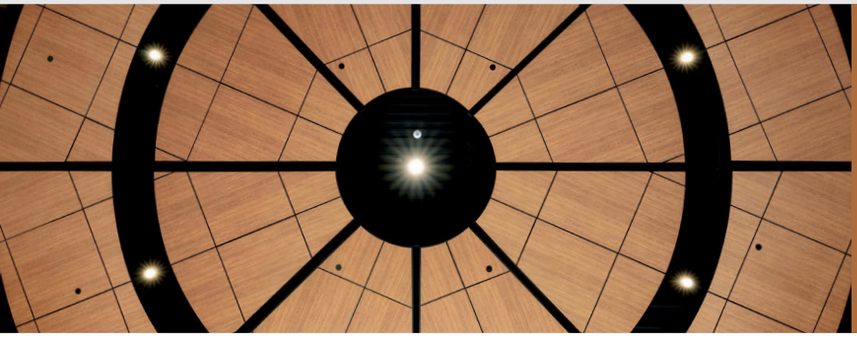

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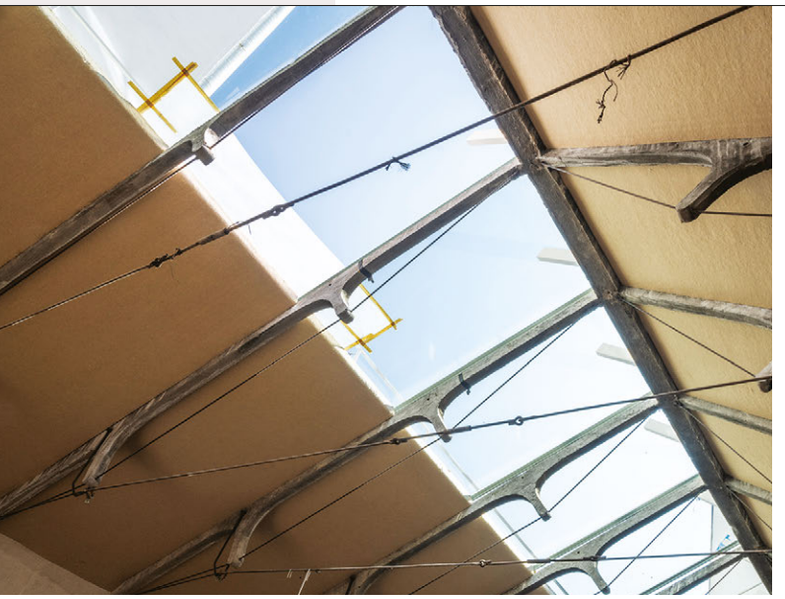
Roadside Attraction

ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF A MADRID GARAGE GIVES RISE TO THE ULTIMATE INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN

STORY _Eric Mutrie
PHOTOS _Juan Baraja

1. The Brief

Following the same road map that saw Michelin evolve from a tire manufacturer into a global culinary authority, a former Madrid auto shop recently reopened as Tramo: a buzzy restaurant that has, fittingly, already earned itself a place in the Michelin Guide. Tramo marks the second venture from Proyectos Conscientes, a hospitality group that prides itself on dining spots dedicated to responsible consumption. With that in mind, Madrid architecture firm SelgasCano (the brains behind the 2015 Serpentine Pavilion) and Andreu Carulla (a product and spatial designer specializing in old-school craftsmanship) worked together to refine — but not completely reform — the industrial space with low-waste, high-performance design. In other words, Tramo may look like a classic combustion engine, but it operates with the efficiency of a modern electric motor.



← 2. The Setting

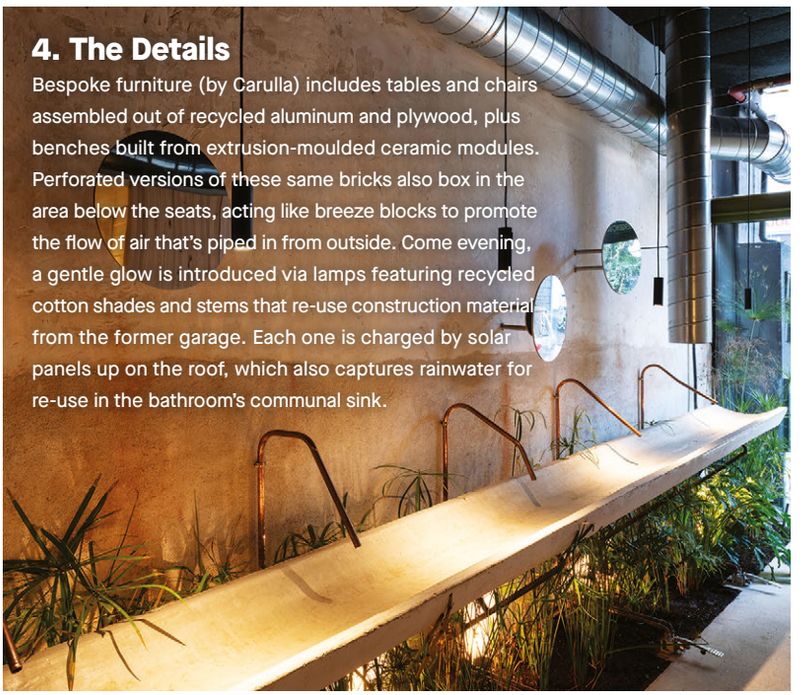
Part of Tramo's circa-1956 warehouse had previously been converted into Garaje Hermético, a club that operated alongside the building's mechanic shop until a few years ago. "It was a key spot for the city's 1980s countercultural movement, La Movida Madrileña," says Inés Olavarrieta, an architect at SelgasCano. (The bar's signature décor was a 1956 Jaguar built into the wall.) For the 466-square-metre building's latest chapter, SelgasCano sought to honour its history by preserving its raw beauty. To wit: The pitched roof, which features a spine of concrete and steel cable trusses lit by a row of skylights, endures as a key focal point, tweaked with GeoPannel acoustic and thermal-insulating panels made from recycled wool. "Even if you're not interested in structures, the roof captures your attention," says Olavarrieta.

↓ 3. The Design

The team then composed the dining room as a kind of amphitheatre, with a central staircase connecting a series of large landings wrapped in cushioned timber partitions that evoke construction site framing. At the highest end is a leafy back garden of potted plants, and at the lowest is the open kitchen, akin to a front stage. "The heart of a restaurant is always the kitchen, which is why we thought it should always be visible," says Olavarrieta. "The steps, besides enhancing the view, work with the scale of the venue to make it cozier." Washrooms are tucked to one side, while the other side cleverly repurposes the original car ramp as a grand entrance corridor.

4. The Details

Bespoke furniture (by Carulla) includes tables and chairs assembled out of recycled aluminum and plywood, plus benches built from extrusion-moulded ceramic modules. Perforated versions of these same bricks also box in the area below the seats, acting like breeze blocks to promote the flow of air that's piped in from outside. Come evening, a gentle glow is introduced via lamps featuring recycled cotton shades and stems that re-use construction material from the former garage. Each one is charged by solar panels up on the roof, which also captures rainwater for re-use in the bathroom's communal sink.



↓ 5. The Scene

While Tramo's chefs may have swapped out motor oil for cooking oil — and radiator parts for local ingredients sourced from small-scale farmers and organic butchers — they still maintain the same focus on careful assembly and harmonious calibration once practised by the building's former mechanics. Best of all, the restaurant's design keeps the beauty of skilful craft on full display. "Each dish has its own special character. But if you have to choose, the goat flan is truly exceptional," advises Olavarrieta. **az**

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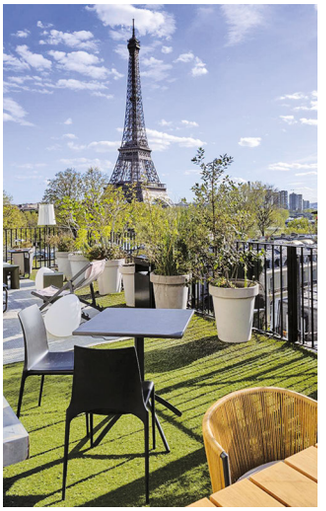
HOW LIGNE ROSET IS LEADING THE INDUSTRY IN A DELIBERATE, MORE PURPOSEFUL DIRECTION

AS TOLD TO _Elizabeth Pagliacolo

"If there is a model that I don't want to reach, it's the fast fashion model," Antoine Roset says. On the terrace of the Palais de Tokyo, the Eiffel Tower glorious in the distance, Roset explains how he and Olivier, his cousin and co-chief executive officer, have been easing the tempo at which their family's renowned brand, Ligne Roset, operates. From launching fewer products each year to showing them in an exhibition and mini trade fair at the Palais every April before Milan Design Week, they are embracing a praxis that's very much in contrast to the hyper-accelerated direction of much design production, both in how it's manufactured and how it's communicated. They are also responding to the very real economics that make selling furniture far different from selling frocks: The prototype debuts of this year might not be in production, and thus available to consumers, until next.



That's not to say that the brand isn't creating captivating collections: Over the course of four days in April, Ligne Roset launched novelties in curated vignettes that elegantly domesticated the raw interiors of the Palais de Tokyo and invited people to make themselves comfortable. "You can't judge a piece of furniture if you're not taking the time to sit in the piece," Roset says — a fact that, despite its seeming patency, bears repeating. At the same time, the company also reintroduced classics by mid-century modernist Pierre Guariche and staged a series of talks on the theme of sustainability, a core concern that Roset describes as part of the family DNA: "We are people who are close to the field and the countryside, and that respect of nature has always been strong in us."

Here are three takeaways from our conversation.

Sustainability

"We have to be carbon neutral within the next 10 years — and we have a sustainability plan to address everything, including design, materials and equipment. We're even going to switch out all our team's cars and delivery trucks for electric ones." As for materials, cork is the star (and anagram) of Kroc, a multi-use piece by Robin Thannberger that debuted this year.

Heritage

"We're a French manufacturer of contemporary furniture, but we also want to be a cultural reference and make sure that the greatest French design from the '50s, '60s and '70s is produced properly. That's why we have taken over the entire rights to the Pierre Guariche collection worldwide." Guariche designed the Vallée Blanche chaise longue in 1963 while collaborating on the La Plagne ski resort.

Big Talents

"Cinna, our young designer incubator, is an annual competition with participants from all around Europe and a prize at the end. It gives us a huge database of young designers to work with. For all our talent, new and existing, Ligne Roset remains attractive because we are an editor, manufacturer and distributor. We manage the entire chain of value, which is a great thing for a designer." In the budding talent roster, Constance Frapolli stood out for her many ingenious pieces, including the Soufflé pouffe and Ressac side tables; the well-established Sebastian Herkner debuted the Noka sofa system, a nod to Japanese design.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From Start to Finish

HOW MAJOR MANUFACTURERS ARE REIMAGINING THE AFTERLIFE OF DESIGN

BY _Eric Mutrie

Driven by their pursuit of ever-greater sustainability goals, many of the industry's top R&D departments are now adopting the same strategy: work backwards. By re-evaluating what happens to a rug or a piece of furniture after it hits the curb, manufacturers are introducing products that prioritize the lifespan of our planet over their own individual permanence. Mind you, this is not to say that they are creating throwaway designs. Indeed, this new generation of environmentally responsible statement pieces prides itself on being no less durable, comfortable or attractive than its predecessors — it just has the added benefit of also being easily composted or recycled when the time comes. Here is how three manufacturers are embracing the circular economy, step by step. **az**

↓ Catifa Carta chair by Arper

"Catifa Carta is more than just a product — it's a powerful driver that pushes us to adopt even more sustainable practices across our entire business, steering us toward a more responsible future."

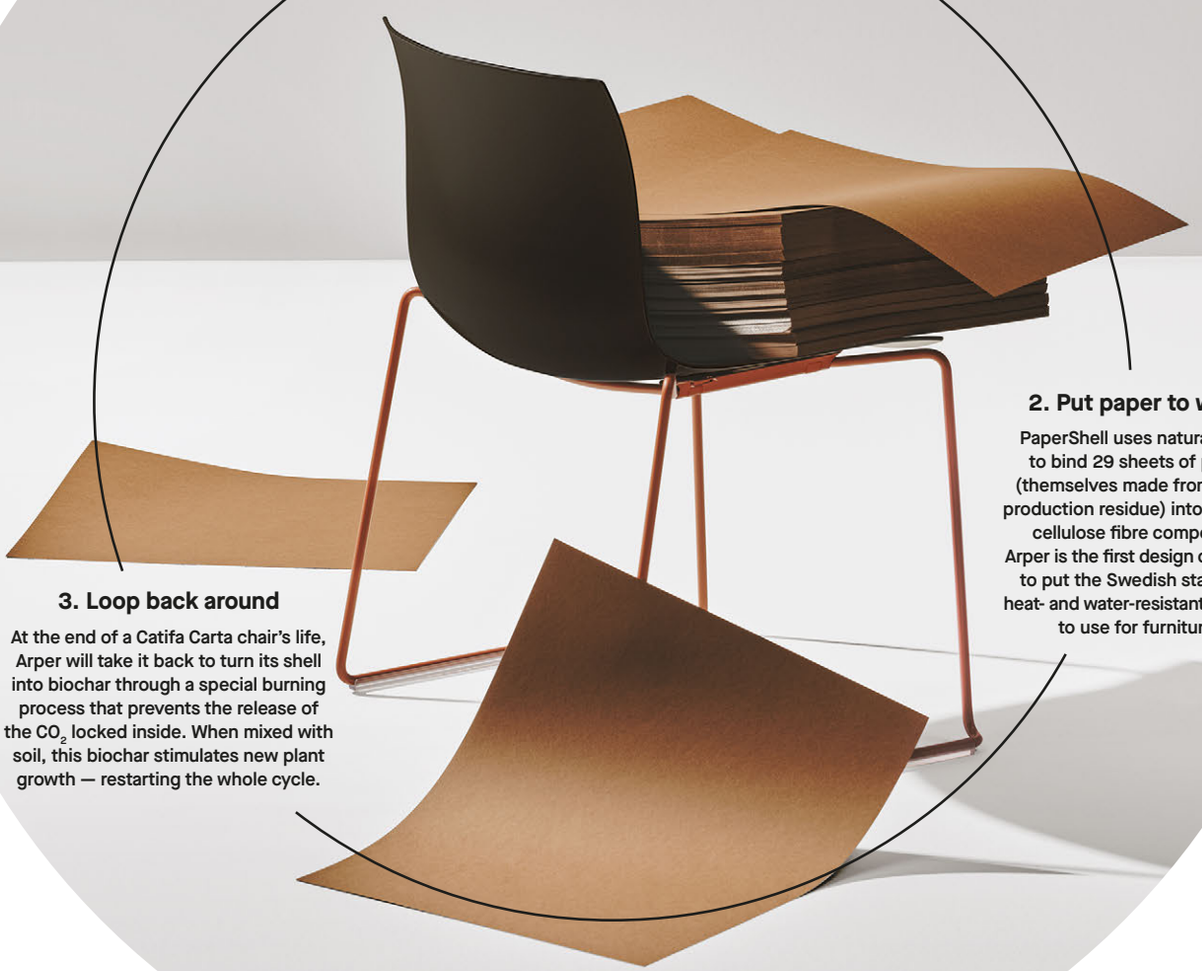
— Andrea Mulloni,
head of sustainability, Arper

1. Turn trash into treasure

Ege Carpets flooring earns Cradle to Cradle certification in part for its eco-friendly mix of materials: yarn from old fishing nets, Ecotrust or acoustic backings made from used plastic bottles, and recycled PVB adhesives made from discarded or broken car windows.

1. Start with a classic

Back in 2001, Arper's Catifa 53 chair (designed by Lievore Altherr Molina) was its first product with an environmental declaration. For the company's latest sustainability milestone, it set out to reimagine the popular seating in an innovative new material: PaperShell.



2. Put paper to work

PaperShell uses natural resin to bind 29 sheets of paper (themselves made from wood production residue) into a strong cellulose fibre composite. Arper is the first design company to put the Swedish start-up's heat- and water-resistant material to use for furniture.

3. Loop back around

At the end of a Catifa Carta chair's life, Arper will take it back to turn its shell into biochar through a special burning process that prevents the release of the CO_2 locked inside. When mixed with soil, this biochar stimulates new plant growth — restarting the whole cycle.

PHOTO BY SALVA LÓPEZ (CATIFA CARTA)

2. Rewrite the endgame

But Ege also tackles another major environmental hurdle. Recognizing that many countries only recycle between one and three per cent of carpets, the Danish brand launched CircleBack. The takeback program began in Europe and will expand to the U.S. this year, and there are plans to eventually extend it globally.

← Rugs by Ege Carpets

"Sustainability has been deeply rooted in our Danish DNA since 1938. By using the latest technology, we are reinventing carpets to live fully circular and remain out of landfills and burn piles forever."

— Alex Lerian,
general manager, Ege Carpets Americas

3. Stay transparent

By recycling at least 98 per cent of a rug's components, Ege's CircleBack program cuts a carpet's end-of-life CO_2 emissions by up to 60 per cent. When the process is complete, the manufacturer issues clients a certificate detailing the exact CO_2 reduction.

2. Respect your materials

Knowing that eelgrass is an important part of marine life, Normann Copenhagen only harvests it after it has already washed ashore. The eelgrass and hemp stems are then shredded to create a textural, homogeneous surface that highlights their natural beauty.

1. Spark sea change

Danish studio Foersom & Hiort-Lorenzen spent over 20 years prototyping a bio-based chair before finally striking the right balance of sturdiness and beauty with Mat. Some of the range's shells are made entirely from hemp, while others mix in dried eelgrass seaweed for a darker finish.

3. Anticipate next steps

A recyclable binding agent allows Mat's core materials to be formed into sheets that are then compressed and moulded before being finished with VOC-free linseed oil. This production process ensures chairs can someday be shredded back down and remade once they're beyond repair.

→ Mat chair by Normann Copenhagen

"When Foersom & Hiort-Lorenzen approached us with their hemp chair project, we were immediately curious. Curiosity — along with a commitment to new and innovative production methods — has always been a driver for Normann Copenhagen."

— Jan Andersen,
co-founder and CEO, Normann Copenhagen

_Harbor Wetland _Baltimore, Maryland **_Ayers Saint Gross**

The Living Museum

A FLOATING WATER PARK CREATES AN EDUCATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ON CHESAPEAKE BAY

STORY _Stefan Novakovic
PHOTOS _Philip Smith

For 43 years, the National Aquarium has been a Baltimore institution. Unveiled in 1981 as part of an urban renewal effort on the city's waterfront, the public non-profit is now the most popular tourist destination in Maryland, drawing some 1.5 million visitors a year. Guided by a mandate to inspire the conservation of aquatic habitats and promote sustainability, the facility boasts over 17,000 specimens and 750 species. Until recently, the stunning biodiversity — and sense of adventure — stopped at the front door: The aquarium was framed by hard concrete quays and seemingly lifeless post-industrial waters. But now, something is stirring between the piers.

Opened in August, the 929-square-metre Harbor Wetland artfully extends the museum's program into the public realm, creating a community space that doubles as a free outdoor exhibition. Informed by a master plan for the aquarium developed by Studio Gang and designed by local architects Ayers Saint Gross, the water park is reached via a pair of steel truss bridges that move from the existing boardwalk to a new zigzag-shaped wooden pier floating in downtown's Inner Harbor.

Surrounding this platform, some 32,000 grasses and shrubs recreate Baltimore's former salt marsh shoreline. Roots extending down into the river will help to filter out pollutants, gradually improving the quality of the water and supporting a richer ecosystem. As marine life moves in, educational programs run by the aquarium invite visitors to admire the action first-hand from the Harbor Wetland's viewing platform. "At the last tour I attended, they pulled an eel right out of the water to explain to people, 'This is what's living in this habitat,'" says Ayers Saint Gross principal Amelle Schultz. Over the summer, pumpkinseed sunfish have also been spotted in the water, and snails and blue crabs have found shelter in the tall cordgrass.

The project is intent on becoming a comfortable human habitat, too — hence the addition of benches and shade structures. "We wanted to create a space that layers in different types of experiences," Schultz says. "Folks can come and sit down for 15 minutes during their lunch hour and just relax." **az**

ABOVE: Behind the new landscape, a mural by Baltimore artist Nether adds a colourful backdrop that reflects the changes bubbling beneath the surface.

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CLEAN LINES

Disciplined geometry brings a strong sense of rigour to holiday shopping

BY _Eric Mutrie

1 Metal Cubes table calendar by Zara Home
Some people say that going into the office is important for collaboration. We say it's important for the calming daily ritual of adjusting the blocks on this oak and aluminum desk ornament. $45

2 Fem bowl by Normann Copenhagen
In-season fruit is a sight to behold. Unripe bananas, not so much — unless, perhaps, they are arranged in this striking pentagonal vessel. (It turns out "fem" is Danish for "five" — great design, and a vocab lesson!) US$100

3 Aluminum bird feeder by Goodland
Thom Fougere's pitched-roof abode promises to woo even the most discerning of speckled warblers. $165

4 Molino grinder by Hem
A monolithic spice mill by Mexican designer Fabien Cappello delivers a welcome twist on a familiar tool. $210

5 Flute picture frame by Umbra
Two panes of ribbed glass encase modern masterpieces in a shapely reimagining of an artist's easel. $25

6 Original card holder by Rimowa
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7 Grooves bookends by Ethnicraft
This pair of dark brown–stained hand-carved mahogany shelf props is ready to hold its own against any architecture library's heftiest tomes (*S*,*M*,*L*,*XL*, we're looking at you). $320 for set of two

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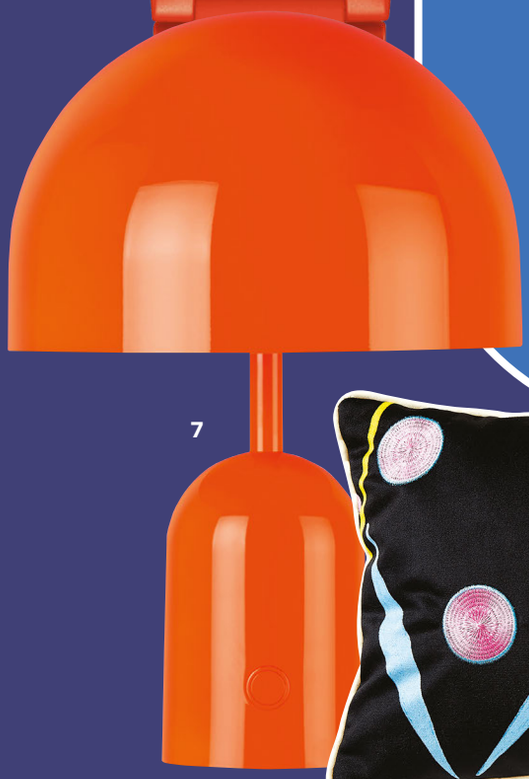

7

1 True Round Thinline Les Couleurs watch by Rado
Hurtling from one time zone to the next on the design week circuit can be disorienting. Keep important meetings (not to mention negroni hour at Bar Basso) top of mind with a wristwatch in a bright Aperol hue. $2,800

2 Itsumo Yunoki oval serving plate by Alessi
A memorable statement platter brings a deeper sense of place to table settings. Naoto Fukasawa fine-tuned the proportions while the late artist Samiro Yunoki devised its graphic pattern. FROM $65

3 OnTrac headphones by Dyson
Listen to Charli XCX (or a podcast about the rise of Brat style) with the latest in noise-cancellation tech. $700

4 The Pill travel cooler by Coming Soon
Toast the landscape architect behind your favourite park while drinking alfresco with Castor's bottle chiller. US$145

5 Chunky wine glass by Gustaf Westman
Sure, you *could* fill this hand-blown stemware with Cab Franc — but what it really craves is bubbly piquette. €85

6 Perdição Pontos cushion by Roche Bobois
Designed by exuberant Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos, this embroidered pillow is a cozy accompaniment to a long winter nap. (Expect visions of sugar plums to follow.) US$210

7 Bell portable lamp by Tom Dixon
When he first hit the scene, Tom Dixon was known for two things: his bass playing and his industrial style. But like any enduring star, the man knows how to reinvent himself. Here's the latest from his glossy pop era. $360

TWISTED TURNS

Wavy treasures prove that gift-giving doesn't need to follow a conventional path

1 Lukus vase by Cyrc
Digital fabrication meets handcrafted production in Montreal studio Cyrc's ruffled vessel. First 3D-printed as a simple cylinder, the design is then heated and moulded into its final silhouette. $110

2 Karla bag by Marimekko
Sweet tooths, rejoice: Not only is Anna Werner's elegantly pinched leather purse modelled after a candy wrapper, but the interior includes a zippered pocket ready to hold your secret Hi-Chew stash. $370

3 Gale candle holder by Ferm Living
Capture the swirling motion of the wind in recycled cast aluminum — the next best thing to *Twisters* in IMAX. $65

4 Luggage tag by Dusen Dusen
The Memphis revival rages on with this postmodern suitcase accessory made from recycled leather. US$30

5 Everything Nice butter dish by Areaware
Sophie Lou Jacobsen's rippled podium takes the prize for best butter sculpture. $95

6 Opaline placemats by Gohar World
Channel Laila Gohar's memorable design week feasts by elevating festive dinner parties with these scalloped placemats made from *shahi*, a striped Egyptian heritage fabric. $110 for set of two

7 Dog toy by Hay
Just as important as teaching dogs the art of tug-of-war is teaching them the merits of good design. Accomplish both feats with this coiled rope toy featuring a decidedly *au courant* colour palette. $30

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A sculpture by James Harry, a Vancouver-based Coast Salish artist from the Squamish Nation, anchors the building's south entrance.

Rules of Engagement

CANADA'S FIRST ZERO-CARBON AQUATIC CENTRE HONOURS ITS LOCAL HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE

STORY _Sydney Shilling
PHOTOS _Nic Lehoux

Like much of North America, New Westminster, BC, has a long and problematic colonial history. This dates all the way back to the city's founding in 1859, when settlers displaced Chief Tsimilano, an Indigenous Elder who lived in the area's Glenbrook Ravine (known as Stautlo by local First Nations people). In the 1960s, a portion of this lush landscape was then backfilled, making way for a community centre and an aquatic facility. Six decades later, with both buildings beyond repair, the city tapped Vancouver-based firm hcma architecture + design for a rebuild. To the design team, the project represented a chance to right past wrongs. "The erasure of the ravine was almost a metaphor for the erasure of Indigenous peoples, and we saw that as an opportunity to do things differently," says project architect Alexandra Kenyon.

The process began with a lengthy (and thoughtful) community engagement phase, which included input from Indigenous groups. Though the pool was beloved by high-performance athletes, it wasn't attracting the general public, and the architects wanted to find out why. The biggest request: a merged aquatic and community centre that combined the two previously separate entities and added on-site child care and more social gathering spaces. "[The city] said, 'We want this to be a de facto living room of the community,'" says hcma principal Paul Fast. As for the design, New Westminster's chief administrative officer, Lisa Spitale, defined the criteria. "She stood up in one of the first design meetings and said, 'It's got to be proud, stand tall and not be overly humble,'" says Fast.

With the təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre, hcma delivered all that and more. The black metal–clad structure asserts a strong civic presence, its wavelike precast concrete fins radiating outward to usher

It is in the building's aquatic areas that its exposed structure — a combination of concrete, steel and local glulam — really shines.

The north entrance serves as an indoor–outdoor space, allowing youth who aren't enrolled in a specific program to feel welcome attending drop-in and informal activities.

people inside. Despite its monumental scale (the 10,684-square-metre building runs the length of a city block), it is adeptly attuned to its site. In keeping with Indigenous sensibilities, the building was repositioned diagonal to the urban grid in New Westminster, toward cardinal north for solar orientation, and integrated with the landscape, revitalized by PFS Studio. The firm views this embrace of the natural world as an act of reconciliation.

Inside, swimming remains the heart of the building: An eight-lane competition lap pool is joined by a leisure pool with a lazy river and two hot pools, as well as a sauna and steam rooms. (Additional athletic facilities include two gymnasiums and a fitness centre.) But beyond the pool decks, there is also fresh focus on social zones. Spaces for celebration and storytelling are spread throughout the centre, in accordance with feedback gathered from the Indigenous advisory committee. The gymnasium, for instance, has appropriate ventilation for smudging during potlatch ceremonies, and its upstairs balcony serves as a breakaway space for dancing and music. "Although we didn't have an Indigenous co-designer, the project has been infused with Indigenous thinking and the opinions and stories that were shared with us," says Kenyon.

The building's name — gifted by the local Indigenous community — is another example of this. In the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ language, the word təməsewtxʷ means "sea otter house," and the lobby seeks to capture the animal's curious and playful nature. A dynamic steel spiral stair and colourful furnishings set the tone for a vibrant shared space accessed on either side via two civic plazas.

While the centre sold a record number of memberships during its opening weekend, the hope is to sustain or even grow this momentum in years to come. "One of the things we're learning from Indigenous communities is the need to look past the current generation in terms of how and what we design," says Fast. **az**

AT A GLANCE: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN STRATEGIES

- The aquatic centre is the first North American project to utilize the gravity-based inBlue pool filtration and disinfection system, which cuts pump energy consumption by nearly half while dramatically improving air and water quality.
- Passive design features include the sawtooth roof, which illuminates the lap pool with natural light; a high-performance thermal envelope with triple glazing; and large bi-fold doors for natural ventilation in the natatorium.
- The mass timber structure was sourced from a local vertically integrated manufacturer which manages everything from growing the forests to on-site installation.
- A new green space and rain garden connects the former ravine headwaters to the walking trails and park beyond while also improving on-site stormwater management.
- Rooftop PV produces five per cent of the all-electric facility's annual operating energy. During the summer months, operating costs have been about 50 per cent of what was budgeted.
- An agreement with the City will give hcma access to data from the facility, helping the firm to evaluate its performance over the next decade.

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EDITOR _Kendra Jackson

Great Outdoors

THE OUTHOUSE GETS A MAJOR MAKEOVER AT WASHINGTON'S SNOW PEAK LONG BEACH CAMPFIELD

STORY _Sydney Shilling
PHOTOS _Arthur Hitchcock

An exposed wood structure lends the wash house a sense of warmth and complements the serene atmosphere of the nearby Ofuro Spa.

RIGHT: In keeping with the aesthetic of Snow Peak's Japanese campsites, the wash house is finished in *shou sugi ban* cladding from Nakamoto Forestry.

BELOW RIGHT: The wash house's interior features black tiled shower stalls that mirror the exterior palette of Japanese cypress.

Washrooms (or the lack thereof) are rarely the highlight of a camping trip. But a new destination for nature lovers in Long Beach, Washington, makes for an elegant exception. Japanese outdoor lifestyle company Snow Peak worked with local firm EFA Architect — led by Erik Fagerland with his son Scott as lead designer — to bring the elevated experience of its branded campsites in Japan to the North American market. The architects were tasked with designing a welcome pavilion and store, as well as the wash house and a spa.

With a modest budget and big ambitions, the firm set out to create a campsite that stayed true to the company's ethos. To that end, they borrowed from the architectural language of Snow Peak's original locations, which spanned from elementary structures akin to college dorms to the meticulous, minimalist works of Kengo Kuma (who also designed the cabins, or *jyubakos*, dotted across the Long Beach site). "We knew we were going to go Northwest modern and bring Japanese architecture into it," Erik explains. But in lieu of the big shed roof and exposed glulam common in the local vernacular, they opted for a more subtle approach: simple pitched forms rendered in a minimal palette of charred *shou sugi ban* siding with blonde wood accents.

In addition to replicating the Snow Peak aesthetic, EFA also translated the company's core values into the campground architecture. "Takibi time, that communal time spent around the fire, is central to everything they do, and so we considered that in all our designs. Every building is sort of communal," says Scott. While the wash house includes individual black-tiled shower stalls and restrooms for privacy, an expansive sink station with a durable concrete backsplash and countertops serves as a social hub for chores like dishwashing.

The open-air Ofuro Spa, meanwhile, offers a quiet space to further commune with nature. "The Ofuro has a really simple roofline, and there's not much else to that building. It's just kind of sitting there in the trees. We strived to make it clean and blend into the landscape," Scott explains. The architects were also mindful of scale, ensuring the structure didn't compete with the beauty of the surrounding wetlands. With a heated soaking pool, sauna and cold plunge, all with picturesque views of nature, it's a far cry from the rusticity of traditional camping. "It's booked every moment it's open," says Erik. **az**


1


2


3


4

Shape of Water

EMPHASIZING PURE AND REFINED FORMS, THESE BASIN FAUCETS HAVE A STRONG VISUAL IMPACT

BY _Kendra Jackson


5

1 REEL

New tapware brand **Amphora** partnered with Studio Adolini for its debut faucet collection, Reel. Defined by a linear purity, the taps and mixers feature a shared circular handle with vertical grooves for textural impact. Made with a 316-steel exterior (in hand-brushed steel, black PVD or copper PVD) and lead-free brass interior, the faucets have an inset aerator and flow control valve to ensure a smooth stream of water.

2 FINOT

Influenced by modern sculptures, expertly tailored fashion and industrial design, New York studio Gachot appointed Finot for **Waterworks** with clean lines and refined details. Balancing rigour and simplicity, the extensive collection (which includes lighting, accessories and hardware) is offered in four standard finishes — chrome, nickel, brass and dark nickel — and can be custom-ordered in copper, gold, burnished brass and more.

3 SUPER

Milanese studio Calvi Brambilla calculated a precise geometric super circle — or squircle — to form the handles of its Super collection for **QuadroDesign**. The combined square and circle offers a generous surface for the hand and is accompanied by slender, slightly bent spouts in brushed stainless steel. The suite includes basin mixers, shower fixtures and more.

4 FLORA

Well-proportioned, highly tactile and ergonomic, the Flora collection by Vincent Van Duysen for **Fantini** is pleasing to the touch. At once modern, industrial and charming, the series — finished in a sophisticated matte gunmetal PVD — is defined by its single and double levers, which gracefully fan outward and lend the fixtures a nostalgic touch.

5 CARINTHIA

Referencing the Old World architecture and elegant bridges of European cities through classical curves and fluted detailing, the Carinthia collection by **Vogt** has a timeless appeal. The solid brass bodies can be finished in chrome, brushed or polished nickel and brushed gold with a matching or contrasting matte black handle.

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PICTURE

Studio Adolini equates its Picture collection for **Scarabeo Ceramiche** to a photographer's composition or an artist's canvas, in that it allows for completely personalized compilations. A series of sleek metal frames — three freestanding and three suspended — form the backdrop for one of nine storage elements (with or without open compartments), a round or rectangular mirror and a shelf. Further, four standard finishes (white, black, dark oak and Lindberg oak), 10 premium matte-lacquered colourways and two textures (fluted or smooth) are available to choose from.

Vanity Projects

VARIOUS COLOUR AND MATERIAL OPTIONS ALLOW FOR STORAGE SYSTEMS WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

BY _Kendra Jackson

DOT COLLECTION

Curved corners and large round handles lend the Dot vanity from **Hastings Bath Collection** a playful expression. Crafted in Italy using responsibly sourced solid ash, the units can be fronted with a set of double doors, two soft-close drawers or one drawer with an open base. A palette of 19 bold and neutral colourways is available for both the cabinets and graphic handles, which can be stained in matching or contrasting tones. The series also includes mirrors in multiple shapes (each with a trademark circle detail) and wall-mounted storage units.

AURENA COLLECTION

Designed by Italian architect Antonio Citterio, the Aurena collection from **Duravit** features impeccably balanced proportions based on the golden ratio. For the vanity (freestanding and wall-mount) and console units, a consistent through-line is an aluminum frame with integrated towel holders for practicality. Configurable with open or closed storage — or a combination of both in some versions — the vanities are topped with ceramic surfaces and can be paired with an integrated or above-counter Citterio-designed washbasin. Multiple materials and finishes are available for the series, which includes coordinating bathtubs, toilets, a bidet and mirror.

LAUNDRY SPACE

Laundry Space by Idelfonso Colombo for **Scavolini** integrates elements from the laundry room — folding surfaces, drying racks, a concealed ironing board, pull-out trolleys and storage units for appliances and accoutrements — into the bathroom to max out the space's functional potential. With refined styling and a range of material finish options, the organizational system can be paired with all of the brand's modular bathrooms; a specially designed mineral-marble washbasin with coordinating washboard can serve the needs of both spaces.

PROJECT: BUNKIE ON THE HILL
ARCHITECT: DUBBELDAM ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN
PHOTOGRAPHER: RILEY SNELLING

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Studio Animal lifted the "cloud" two steps above floor level to create a concealed cavity for the plumbing and drainage system; it also emphasizes the sense of passage from public space to private and vice versa.

Original Beauty

IN MADRID, TWO BATHROOMS WITH UNEXPECTED FORMS AND A BRILLIANT USE OF COLOUR

STORY _Kendra Jackson

BELOW LEFT AND RIGHT: The change in ceiling height from the main living space to the bathrooms carries through to the bedrooms and "creates a feeling of compression," lending them a nest-like atmosphere.

Casa Nube earned Studio Animal a special mention from the jury of the 2023 Tile of Spain Awards, as well as the FAD Award for Interior Design earlier this year. The basin faucets are part of the Collection A series from Spanish brand Icónico.

Casa Nube, Studio Animal

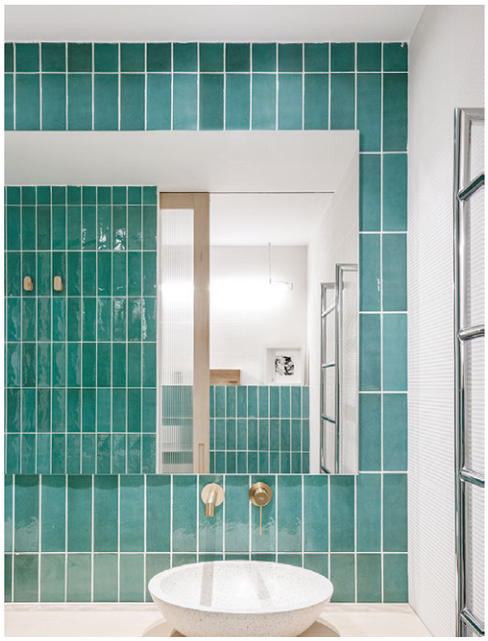
Once a rabbit warren of small rooms, narrow corridors and an isolated kitchen, this 1950s apartment near Madrid's El Retiro Park is now spacious, light-filled and splashed with colour thanks to architect Javier Jiménez Iniesta of local design practice Studio Animal (which also has an office in Barcelona). Addressing the overly compartmentalized layout by doing away with it completely, Jiménez Iniesta clustered the living, dining and reading areas into one all-white, three-metre-high communal space that is open to the kitchen. This move not only created a free-flowing floor plan that better supports the mother and son who live here, it also lets sunlight pour in from two sides and allows for natural temperature regulation through cross-ventilation. The designer then sequestered the bathrooms and bedrooms behind a truly spectacular intervention: a sculptural curved wall that signifies the transition from public to private.

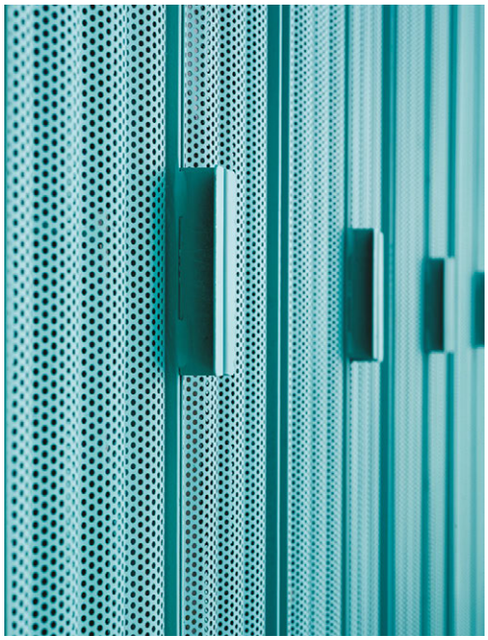
"The cloud," as Jiménez Iniesta refers to it, is a self-supporting wall (constructed from drywall with a metal substructure that is anchored to the floor and ceiling) in a compelling semicircular geometry, with two arches opening to reveal passages to the bedrooms (one for the homeowner and one for her son) through two symmetrical yet separate bathrooms. "The house is born from the idea of passing through, of the vaporous, the soft, the voluminous," says Jiménez Iniesta of the unique arrangement. "Passing through that cloud had to be an experience."

The curvatures continue inside, dictating the usage of each bathroom by forming individual nooks for the toilet, sink, shower (in the son's space) and bathtub (in the mother's). In both, every surface is finished with 2.5-by-2.5-centimetre glass mosaic tiles, compounding the architectural interest through colour saturation — all-pink chosen by her, all-tangerine chosen by him. Serving as intermediate spaces, the bathrooms create a sense of ritual for the inhabitants as they move from the privacy of their bedrooms to the main shared living area. **az**

PHOTOS BY JOSÉ HEVIA

ABOVE: Supporting the needs of three separate spaces (study, bathroom, bedroom) through one central volume, architect Carlos Rebolo has created an unconventional yet flexible layout.





PHOTOS BY HIPERFOCAL

ABOVE LEFT: Inside the bathroom, turquoise glazed ceramic tiles reference the metal exterior and are complemented by white sinks and brass fixtures and accessories.

LEFT: "The colour of the skin relies on the concept of understanding the core as a strange element that crashed into the domestic space," says Rebolo of the unexpected structure that now dominates his apartment.

On the study side of the cube, a row of openable panels grants access to storage, while a pocket door can close off the space from the rest of the apartment as desired.

Metalcore, Taller CRAC

For architects Carlos Rebolo and Alejandro Caraballo — who co-founded their Madrid-based firm CRAC in 2020 — the purpose of architecture is not simply to build but to investigate and examine how one interacts with and is influenced behaviourally by their surroundings. So when it came to renovating his own apartment (which he shares with his partner), Rebolo naturally experimented by transforming a conventional three-bedroom layout with a closed-off living room and kitchen into a bright, open one-bedroom space centred around a large metal-wrapped cube that contains the bathroom, as well as storage for a study on one end and the bedroom closet on the other.

Dubbed Metalcore, the square volume is clad in a turquoise wavy metal skin that is perforated to play with transparency and privacy. "The perforated sheet allows you to see through the skin, not with a clear view but a mysterious one," says Rebolo. "[It] subverts the classic concept of a bathroom by transforming its programmatic conception into a playful and hedonistic one."

Conceived as a geode or hidden gem, the bathroom itself pairs rectangular glazed tiles in the same watery tones as the metal exterior with white dimpled tiles, the two working together to create a calm, spa-like atmosphere. Designed as a "rough subtraction of the wall," the bathtub can be glimpsed from outside through the hazy veil; mirrors and translucent doors continue the "game of glances and hidden places." **az**

Water Savers

SUSTAINABLY MINDED PRODUCTS THAT PRIORITIZE HYGIENE WHILE MINIMIZING CONSUMPTION

BY _Kendra Jackson

KOHLER LOOPE

A far cry from its bulky predecessors, the Kohler Loope waterless toilet has a minimalist design that doesn't compromise on comfort. Made from recycled polyethylene, the container-based fixture was developed by **Kohler**'s in-house incubator, Innovation for Good, to address the safe sanitation needs of densely populated urban environments where access to clean water is not always guaranteed. Functional without water, electricity or a sewer connection, the modular loo has separate and easy-to-access (and empty) waste compartments and can accommodate a family of four with twice-weekly servicing.

GROHE EVERSTREAM

Significantly reducing water consumption while still delivering a satisfying shower experience, the Grohe Everstream is the latest addition to **Grohe**'s sustainable offerings. The cutting-edge water-circulating process curtails water usage by up to 75 per cent and energy by up to 66 per cent (for a 10-minute shower). How it works: Starting with fresh water, the integrated mechanism is manually switched after sudsing up and shampooing to pump the grey water collected in the drain through a circuit that hygienically treats it (while also maintaining its temperature) and recycles it through the system. Once the shower is complete, it auto-cleans for the next user.

RUBBISH REFLOW

Santa Monica–based studio **Minarc** designed the RUBBiSH ReFlow sink to help minimize daily water wastage and promote conscious consumption. Made from crisp white Corian and lined with a recycled rubber mat, the elongated sink recycles and repurposes water from daily rituals like face washing and toothbrushing to be used for toilet flushing. A gentle slope in the basin drains every drop directly into the tank, creating an "automatic, continuous and passive conservation of water."

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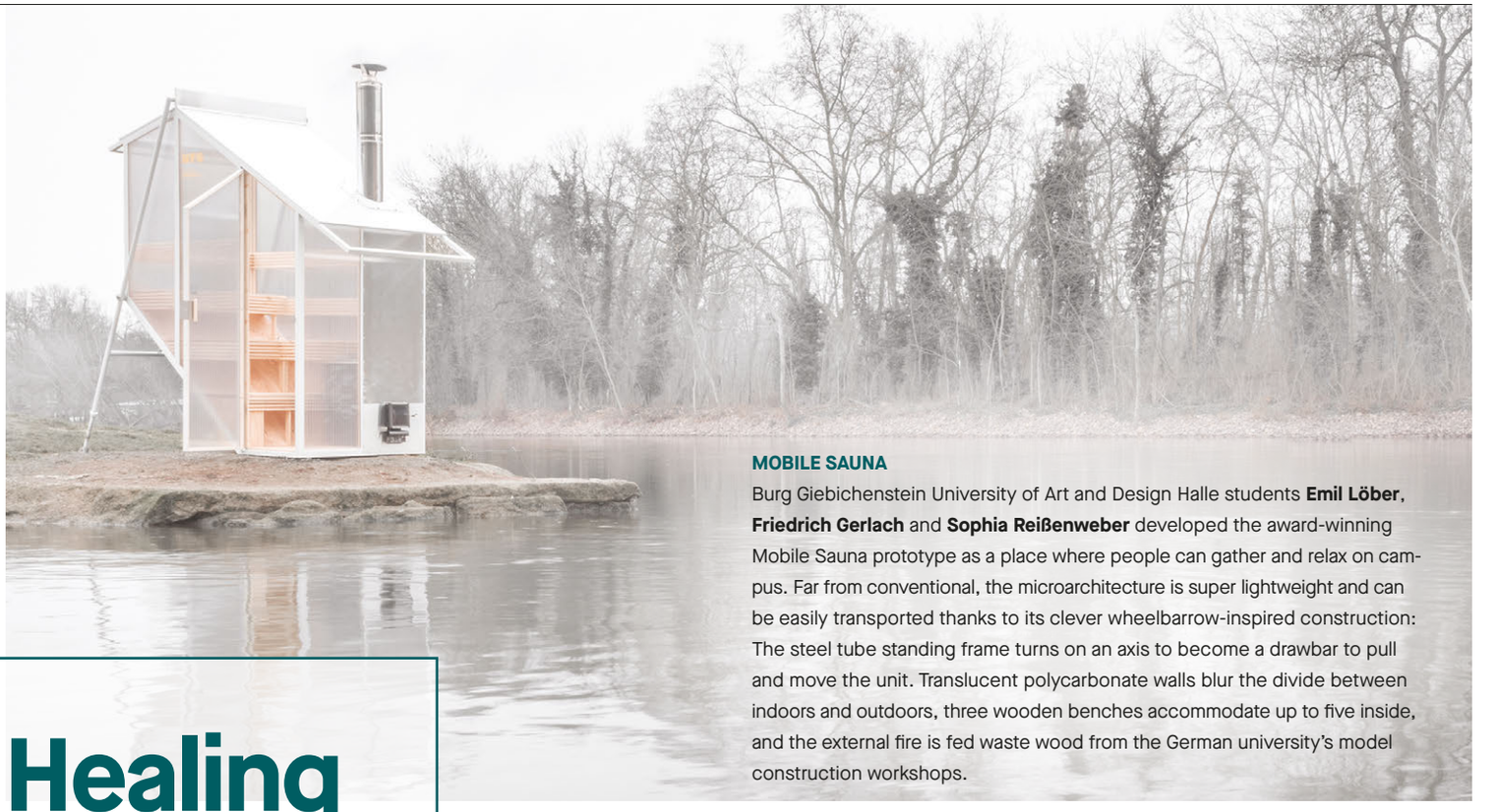


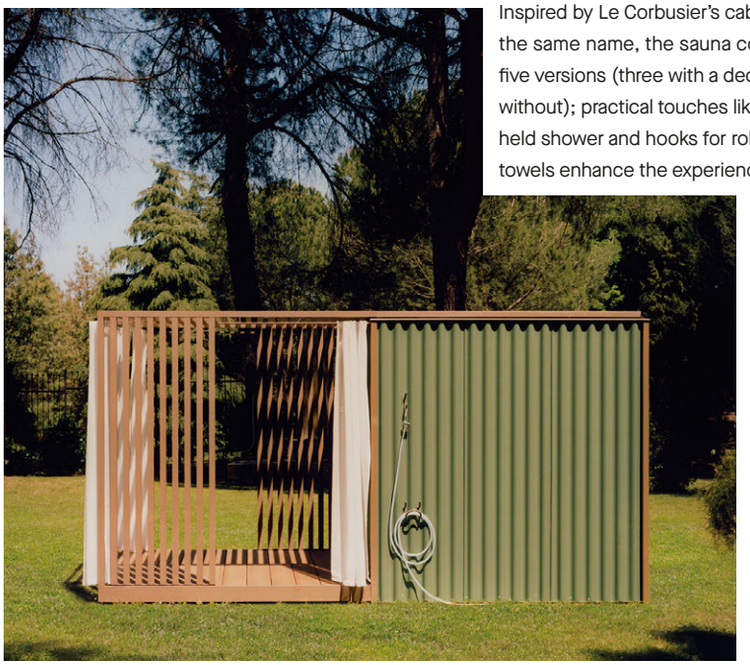
MOBILE SAUNA

Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design Halle students **Emil Löber**, **Friedrich Gerlach** and **Sophia Reißenweber** developed the award-winning Mobile Sauna prototype as a place where people can gather and relax on campus. Far from conventional, the microarchitecture is super lightweight and can be easily transported thanks to its clever wheelbarrow-inspired construction: The steel tube standing frame turns on an axis to become a drawbar to pull and move the unit. Translucent polycarbonate walls blur the divide between indoors and outdoors, three wooden benches accommodate up to five inside, and the external fire is fed waste wood from the German university's model construction workshops.

Healing Heat

THREE OUTDOOR SAUNAS THAT OFFER A WELLNESS RETREAT IN A WELL-DESIGNED STRUCTURE

BY _Kendra Jackson



CABANON

Tapping into the long-celebrated tradition of the Finnish sauna, architect Rodolfo Dordoni designed the Cabanon for Italy's **Effe** to be a destination unto itself. Corrugated aluminum exterior walls (painted Orange, Moss or Cement) withstand even harsh climates, while the interiors are lined with heat-treated aspen wood in smooth or boiserie textures. Inspired by Le Corbusier's cabin with the same name, the sauna comes in five versions (three with a deck, two without); practical touches like a hand-held shower and hooks for robes and towels enhance the experience.

FLAT-PACK SAUNA

Specializing in modern and sustainable prefab cabins and homes for both residential and hospitality settings, U.K.-based **Koto** recently released this flat-pack design for the outdoors. Made from quality eco-responsible timber with charred timber exterior cladding, the striking structure delivers a traditional sauna experience in lightweight panels that are easily assembled on site by a small team. All structural boards come precut, numbered and pre-finished, and include insulation, a vapour barrier and a breather membrane. With crisp, minimalist lines, the sauna is a true expression of the brand's attention to detail and expert blending of Scandinavian and Japanese design principles.

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While it's always comforting to return to your favourite artwork in a museum's permanent collection, part of the thrill of going to a gallery is seeing what's new. Special exhibitions speak directly to the current cultural moment, providing an exciting backdrop to a particular point in time.

In that same spirit, Samsung created The Frame as a way to introduce a rotating series of canvases to your home. A lot of domestic art can become so familiar that you stop even noticing it, so it can be refreshing to add one ever-changing work into the mix — especially when that artwork is also an innovative multi-tasker.

When in use, The Frame is a premium television ready to screen the latest must-see programming. But between movies and television episodes, it becomes a dynamic gallery unto itself. The Samsung Art Store allows for ongoing customization with an ever-growing collection of artworks and designs. As your personal tastes, moods and decor shift, The Frame makes it easy to reinvent your space with just a few clicks of the remote.

The Frame's mission to bring art into your life extends outside the home, too. In October, Samsung brought an installation by Canadian artist Nicolas Abtan to The Well in Toronto. Abtan is known for creating mixed-media works that appear to be in the midst of transformation, with sculptural elements that often extend beyond the borders of a painting's canvas. For his work at The Well, he looked to Canada's landscapes and seasons for inspiration, sculpting three-dimensional elements on top of The Frame's bezels and connecting them to the visuals being shown on its screen. The partnership demonstrated both the wonder of art and technology's ability to make that wonder more accessible. As the seasons change, The Frame by Samsung ensures there's always something new to admire. ***samsung.com/ca/tvs/the-frame***

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In his teaching, writing and radical built works, Madrid- and New York–based architect Andrés Jaque emphasizes the rich complexities of overlapping systems of life — and urges optimism for the yet-to-come

Interview by
SEBASTIÁN
LÓPEZ CARDOZO

PHOTO BY JOSE HEVIA

Andrés Jaque (centre) stands in front of the Transspecies Kitchen. His firm, Office for Political Innovation, staged the marble-boulder installation (in collaboration with Natalie Schrauwen and Elder Lab) outside Middelheim Museum in Antwerp over the summer. By relying primarily on fermentation, the kitchen decarbonizes food preparation.

Now more than ever, architects are endeavouring to design with sustainability in mind. Yet the world's slow adoption of a climate-focused mindset signals a reluctance (or inability) to fully confront the realities of the warming planet. The COVID-19 pandemic heightens this tension, as the collective desire to return to "normal" clashes with escalating signs of environmental distress — record-breaking temperatures, haze-filled skies and devastating floods. This discord underscores a broader issue: the tendency of most new construction to perpetuate familiar comforts and the status quo.

Andrés Jaque, the pioneering Spanish architect behind Office for Political Innovation (or Offpolinn, founded in 2003) understands this problem first-hand. By contrast, his work is about making space for the layers of living systems beyond the human. Two of his firm's recent projects immediately come to mind: In Molina de Segura (Murcia), where decades of suburbanization have led to the loss of ravine ecosystems known as "ramblas" — and gradually flattened the land's natural contours and diminished its capacity for cooling and carbon sequestration — Rambla Climate-House restores the land it sits on and then some. Where there was little to nothing before, myrtles, oleanders and mastic trees now grow and insects and birds roam. The Reggio School in Madrid embodies this ethos, too, recognizing that as climate-related challenges intensify, adaptive strategies — such as inviting flora and fauna to intervene on the architecture itself — will become essential, and not just for our own comfort as humans.

These interconnections across scales and among species define Jaque's approach to everything. In his writing, his practice and his role as dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP), Jaque consistently challenges complacency, promoting an

ABOVE: Encircling its own central ecosystem, the Rambla Climate-House is a response to the land-flattening and ravine-destroying suburbanization taking place around its site in the once-rural municipality of Molina de Segura in Murcia, Spain.

LEFT: The eclectic home collects rainfall from its roof and greywater from its plumbing systems to spray onto the remains of the rambla (Spanish for "ravine") and regenerate it.

PHOTOS BY JOSÉ HEVIA

honest engagement with the evolving realities of climate change and the overlapping systems in which we live, from colonialism and its attendant extractivism to technocracy and anthropocentrism. To him, the future of architecture lies in embracing complexity: He is firm in his conviction that, for the crises we confront, "there are no shortcuts."

As we speak, the northern hemisphere is experiencing yet another summer of record-setting temperatures. What role do architects and architecture play in addressing the climate crisis?
Architecture faces the challenge of redefining how we relate with reality. The climate crisis is not an isolated phenomenon; it happens at the intersection of multiple processes like carbonization, colonialism, racialization, patriarchy and extreme capitalism. Architecture's role is not to patch things up and maintain business as usual. It has to redefine how we relate to reality and make clear that the planet is confronting the intersection of all these forms of extractivism.

If architecture has an evolving relationship with reality, how do you represent it?
I love reality and I want what I do to be real. The work we do with Offpolinn is not about purifying reality but celebrating its complexity and its diversity. When we do that, reality is shown in its entire richness. That richness — the complex entanglement between bodies, technologies and environments — is what people often find in projects like the Reggio School or the Plasencia Care Home.

The problem is that, most of the time, architecture is about purity, about repression, about removing things. So architecture can be a practised celebration of complexity, diversity and inclusiveness, or it can be a practice of repression, purification and depuration.

The former possibility implies optimism. Is optimism important in confronting the climate crisis? In a world that often feels pessimistic, your work feels like proof that things can change — that in itself is exciting and optimistic.
We're living in a moment in which so many things are cracking. The thin layer of reality is cracking, allowing many other forms of culture and other ecologies to emerge. And in the cracks of this are posthumanism, queer culture, transness, radical forms of ecology, the circularity of the body with the landscape: transscalarities. There are all these forms of existence and coexistence that are emerging and that for me are incredibly exciting. I don't feel nostalgic for what is behind us. The damage of this crisis is unequally distributed, and that's a serious issue, but what is growing in the cracks is a source of energy.

When it comes to particular projects, in Molina de Segura (Murcia), for instance, overdevelopment produced an impoverished, fragile urbanism. It takes a house that operates differently, like the Rambla Climate-House, to allow a form of biodiversity that is unknown to emerge. And that house is not necessarily restituting what existed — it produces a new diverse mixture that I think is beautiful and exciting. Pushing against existing extractive paradigms can give rise to other paradigms (like mutual care and interspecies justice) and provide a vehicle and an opportunity to address questions of inequality and injustice. It's not difficult to produce a sense of optimism and richness; you just have to open the gate and let reality happen.

Amid a growing distrust of institutions, to look at a building and feel a sense of trust in what it represents is a form of optimism, isn't it? The Reggio School, for example, embodies this trust.
Yes, this is very important. Architecture, as a practice and as a discipline, faces the challenge of building trust on the notion of

"I consider architecture an experimental practice — its ultimate mission is to multiply the realm of the possible."

togetherness. The discourse of the aughts was that the city was a place where difference could be manifested and articulated. We now see that cities have become something very different: They became battlegrounds of gentrification, of exclusion. We can no longer take for granted that there's a space where the plurality of societies and ecosystems can be brought together.

I consider architecture an experimental practice, and its ultimate mission is to multiply the realm of the possible. When hegemonic entities control a big part of the production of reality, expanding the realm of the possible and supporting the emergence of the yet-to-come is an act of dissidence. That's a key feature of the times we live in.

Two years ago at ETH Zürich, Andreas Ruby asked you whether architecture is a good place to practise politics, and whether it would be more effective to go into politics instead. Politics structure our collectiveness. If, in 20th-century avant-garde movements, the key discursive engine was materials and space, now it's politics. We relate to each other through politics. If architecture (or any other discipline) wants to be relevant, it needs to be aware of this function.

But the politics of architecture are not the same as those that are mobilized in political party discourse. They are connected, but they're not the same. Architecture makes politics through materiality, through infrastructural design, through dimensions, through its ability to instigate or trigger relationships — or make them unlikely. That's why we decided to call our office the Office for Political Innovation: Any form of ecological or societal rearticulation is a political endeavour, and to be relevant in these processes, we need to operate politically.

Schools and houses are formative for those that inhabit them and are, in a sense, at the forefront of politics. How important are these institutions — if we may call them that — for confronting the climate crisis?
Houses and schools participate in the making of existence and reality in a very intense way, as you've implied. They connect what happens at the scale of the human body with what happens at the scale of the planet. Both schools and houses are what I call trans-scalar constructions. For instance, schools mediate the way humans relate to other humans, to their broader environment, the air, the soil, the insects and pollen. They produce and mobilize knowledge. Architecture can intervene in that process and create an environment that allows bodies to understand their interdependence with other more-than-human forms of life. This is at the core of what the Reggio School is about. And that's something that would be impossible without the architecture.

ABOVE: Plasencia Care Home, in Cáceres, transformed a former seminary into a clergy house for retired priests.

BELOW: A zigzagging roofline and porthole windows animate the Reggio School in Madrid. Its yellow cork cladding is expected to attract colonies of lichen and fungi, while its gardens are designed to entice wildlife including birds, bats and butterflies.

Houses do something similar. They're a node of connections and dependencies. If you remove the walls and the ceilings, you end up with a knob of pipes and wires and signals...and the exchange of food, waste, organic and fecal material. The most important phenomena in architecture, the realities it mobilizes, are difficult for humans to sense. Houses provide an opportunity to intervene in these planetary networks that are defining how bodies are together with other bodies and how they become part of ecosystems. The impact of the final layer that you give to that is minor; it matters less whether it looks minimalistic or baroque. I don't really care about style.

I would say that what is true relationally about houses and schools is also true about hospitals, libraries and other types of buildings. The challenge is that the architectural commission has become increasingly reductive, and new, progressive ideas are heavily repressed. In the past, architecture embraced experimentation and critical discourse, but it hardly does now. I see this as a reflection on the power of architecture. Architecture has a huge capacity to reconstruct societies, and this is often challenged by forces that want societies to remain as they are.

Architects often aim to make their solutions and prototypes replicable to achieve broader impact. Given your approach, you might be skeptical of some versions of this idea. How do you envision scaling the impact, especially with projects like schools and houses?
I believe in a kind of experimental approach to architecture. By that I mean that there's uncertainty. And architecture is

PHOTOS BY MIGUEL DE GUZMÁN (PLASENCIA); JOSE HEVIA (REGGIO SCHOOL)

always complex. Each time there's a jump in scale, inevitably there's a collective management of unexpected events. When architecture transitions across scales, it mobilizes and makes the complexity of societies manifest. This requires a kind of infrastructure for political discussion, a collective space of dissidence and difference — what Bruno Latour calls "the parliament." And that is where I think architecture is very relevant: It has the capacity to provide this kind of infrastructure for things to grow or shrink or be replicated. I would claim that scaling up and scaling down is how architecture intervenes in the making of a society. Architecture is not about space; it's not about the provision of boxes that society inhabits or steps into. It is about how things relate to each other and how architecture intervenes in those relationships.

We've put this into practice with Offpolinn in many projects. For instance, in the Tupper Home project, we thought of a system that could replicate itself, but as we explain it, it was not just something that would be a material device that could be repeated and industrially produced and massively consumed. It was the construction of a whole network. Or for instance, in the Rolling House for the Rolling Society, we tested what it means for a model of coexistence (sharing homes) to expand. And that was actually the making of a society itself.

Is it important to build lasting relationships with the people and communities — or societies — you work with?

Often, the role of the architect is designing buildings, overseeing the construction, and then the buildings are given to the users and they take it over. But it's a bit naive to think this way. For Offpolinn, there's no such thing as a moment that marks the division between design and use; it's a continuum. Our installation at the Barcelona Pavilion in 2012, *Phantom: Mies as Rendered Society*, is an attempt to show this. Architecture intervenes on existing networks of associations; these then become something else and ultimately have a life of their own.

We don't do many buildings; we build relationships, and that means that we need to dedicate time. The way we work often means a lifetime commitment to those that inhabit and use the building. And not all of those that inhabit it and are part of it are humans. They are also landscapes, ecosystems, insects, earth.

What is at stake in complicating the stories we tell ourselves about buildings and about the world more broadly?

I've dedicated so much time to listening that, in a sense, I've developed an architectural practice out of it. I started out by placing a recording device and asking people to tell me what they did the day before, from the moment they woke up to when they went to sleep. I probably have close to a thousand hours of recorded interviews at this point. So for me, I'm already working when I'm helping others or listening to others unfold this complexity. I refuse to work through simplification. And I would say simplification is anti-architecture.

By listening, you start connecting with the world of others, and how they share it with still others. It becomes a planetary construction full of specificity and difference and conflict and lack of consistency. To me, that's architecture. When you listen to people, they start telling you how they put things together, how they sleep, or miss, or grieve someone, what they eat, but also what is their political affiliation, and how they imagine and observe things around them.

There's a trans-scalar component in the way we speak and narrate things. You can move from an appreciation of the planet to something tiny; you can make reference to humanity's time scale and, in the same sentence, reduce it to an event that happened to you. The world can be presented, disputed and reconstructed by the way we speak about it. If I had to say what the ultimate format of representation of architectural complexity is, I would say it's narrative, or the observation and narration of reality — and reality containing also literature, imagination and projection of the yet-to-come.

ABOVE: This site-specific intervention in the basement of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion uncovers the building's hidden context — "the networks of people, technologies and institutions that made it possible."

As dean of GSAPP at Columbia University, how do you see the school's role in preparing students to address the yet-to-come as it relates to the climate crisis?

GSAPP anticipates that any question of climate requires transdisciplinarity and recognizes that confronting the future is a process that demands political and critical thinking. There's no way to address something as complex as the climate crisis without the convening of and collaboration between all the disciplines of the built environment and beyond. At the school, there are people reinventing materials and patenting them (like Lola Ben-Alon), people looking at the histories of climate (Felicity Scott), people experimenting with what it means to do an architecture of decarbonization, and people in real estate (Kate Ascher) looking at solutions across scales, from invention and prototyping to big impact — with the aim of transforming things with enough time to address these crises.

The future of the world depends on understanding that the climate crisis is not an isolated phenomenon but has historical implications and intersects many realities. This brings about the question of how we create impact without simplification — how we produce a shift in the way we understand and construct the world without going back to the modern system of segregation of realities and solution-making. So how do we address the urgency through complexity? We cannot avoid the fact that there's no way to keep business as usual; there are no shortcuts here. **AZ**

For almost two decades, architect **Pat Hanson** and her firm, Gh3*, have been bringing uncommon beauty to sustainable urban infrastructure in Toronto and Edmonton — and she's only just begun

City Builder

Story by
SIMON LEWSEN

This past September, I drove out with Pat Hanson, director of the firm Gh3*, to see her most recent Toronto build, a sculptural folly in the city's Port Lands district. The work — a 13.5-metre-tall cylindrical concrete column with four arched openings — affords sweeping views of Leslie Lookout Park, a new public space by the late, great landscape architect Claude Cormier. The park is paved with asphalt, the permeable kind that absorbs rainwater, and it features a sandy expanse on a shipping channel. On one side is a suite of silos belonging to a concrete manufacturer; on the other are mountains of dusty aggregate. "It's a great place to have a beach," Hanson said, without a hint of irony.

It's also a great place to view one of her designs, which look especially good in scrappy industrial contexts. Hanson specializes in dusky, monolithic buildings, as clean as still water, as seemingly permanent as bedrock. Her simple forms connote rigour and honesty; her materials possess elemental beauty. Hanson's folly in the Port Lands, with its thick concrete walls and simple apertures, harks back to a pre-Renaissance era before

PORTRAIT BY NICHOLAS CALLIES (OPPOSITE)

Pat Hanson peers out from the tower at the new Leslie Lookout Park in Toronto. Her silo-like folly is part of a landscape by CCxA that brings an urban beach to an industrial setting.

design got fussy and ornamental. On the day we visited the park, it was the main attraction, generating more intrigue even than the nearby Akira Miyawaki–inspired forest. Visitors were drawn to it, as if compelled by some primitive instinct to seek shelter behind fortified walls.

Hanson is getting used to success. She founded her now-26-member firm in 2006. This year, she was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal from the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. When asked how many Governor General's Awards her firm has won, she first has to pause to do some mental arithmetic (the number is five). The best thing about Gh3* is that it brings a boutique sensibility to large public works. While the firm does its share of private homes and businesses, its portfolio includes parks, garages and water-treatment plants, many of which push the boundaries of sustainable design.

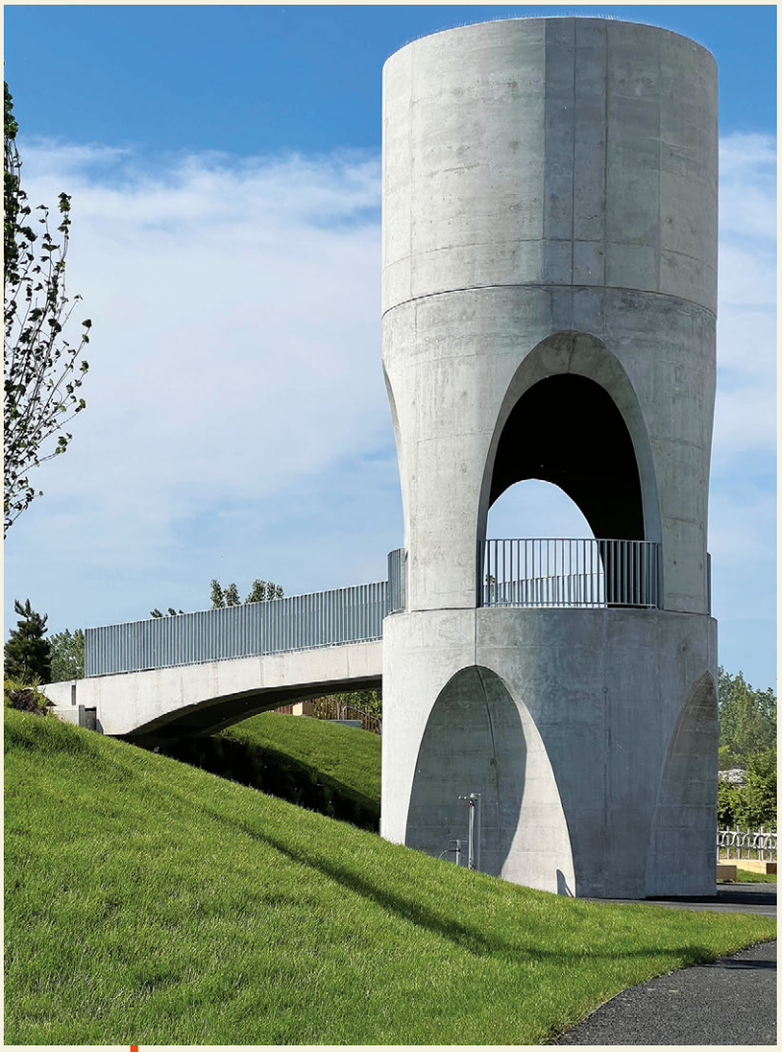
To get into the infrastructure game, Hanson has learned to win over bureaucrats — to be aesthetically resolute yet skilled in the art of the compromise. "She bears the cultural influence of Manitoba, where she studied, and Saskatchewan, where she grew up," says John van Nostrand, founding principal of the Toronto firm SvN and a mentor to Hanson. People on the Prairies, he explains, have a kind of pragmatism that's reflected in their no-nonsense work ethic, and also in their built forms, which are tough and durable and made for civic purposes. "In every village, there's a grain elevator," a tower constructed of hardy timber against a flat landscape, van Nostrand says.

Hanson never intended to start her own shop. In the '80s, she worked for van Nostrand, who focused almost exclusively on affordable housing, then went back to her former employer, the Toronto stalwart Diamond Schmitt. She was eventually hired as a partner at architects–Alliance, a firm specializing in condos and hotels. Business was lucrative, but relationships at the top became tense, and Hanson felt pressure to resign. To finish off projects and ensure a good settlement, she continued coming in to work for eight months after giving notice. The experience, she says, was humiliating: "I was nearing 50, and I had no idea what I was going to do with my time."

She knew this much, though: She would never work for anybody else again. Instead, she founded Gh3* with a landscape architect colleague. (The "G" was for her co-founder, the "h" was for Hanson, and the "3" represented the firm's intended practice areas: landscape, architecture and urban design.) The goal was to carve out a niche as an integrated practice able to take on projects of any type and scale.

But the procurement process in Canada heavily favours incumbency. To be commissioned for, say, a fire hall, it helps to have designed two or three fire halls already. But you can't build up that track record if nobody will hire you in the first place. That's why most public buildings today are done by big institutional shops known more for dependability than excellence. In 2009, to stimulate the flagging economy, the federal government put out a slew of RFPs for university buildings. Gh3* submitted 20 applications. Each took two weeks of labour. None panned out.

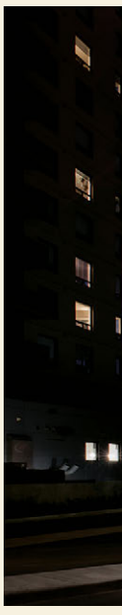
Hanson hunted instead for under-the-radar opportunities, including an RFP from the municipal agency Waterfront Toronto to design — with the help of an engineering firm — a stormwater treatment plant near the lakeshore. The facility would gather rainwater from the surrounding catchment area through a system of pipes and ducts. It would then purify the water with filters and ultraviolet light before releasing it back into Lake Ontario. This



ABOVE: The Leslie Lookout Park's tower features irregular arches that frame the future of Toronto's ambitious Port Lands development.

BELOW: One of Gh3*'s many public works projects in Edmonton, the Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage is a heroic structure sheathed in metal. Its five rooftop light wells are capped in sculptures by Berlin artist Thorsten Goldberg.

PHOTOS BY RAYMOND CHOW (THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE)



ABOVE: Also in Edmonton, the Borden Park Natural Swimming Pool is a marvel of both architecture and engineering that features chemical-free water purification.

BELOW: As elemental as a drum and as luminous as a lantern — thanks to its glass-block facade — the Real Time Control Building #3 in Edmonton is central to the City's ecological water-treatment strategy.

process was a marked improvement on the common practice of simply allowing stormwater to mix with sewage, which risked overwhelming the plant that then flowed the polluted water back into the lake.

The project was so small and cheap that basically no one wanted it. But Hanson offered to do the architecture for a miniscule fee because she saw a chance to build something special. "I've done a lot of residential work in my lifetime," she says. "But there's only so much you can do with a home. You're constrained. There are rules around bedroom sizes and windows." A stormwater facility, though, is a mere container, a hard shell protecting mechanical systems from the outside world. She envisioned a simple rectangle with a prismatic roof, like a cistern turned inside out.

A second big opportunity came from Edmonton, perhaps the only municipality in Canada to put design excellence at the centre of its commissioning strategy. It helps that Edmonton has a city architect, a post held since 2009 by Carol Bélanger. "My mandate from then-mayor Stephen Mandel was simple: No more crap buildings," he says. Applications in Edmonton are open to all firms, big and small, local and international. The price for each project is set by the city based on established guidelines, which means a firm can't win a competition by lowballing its fees. Experience counts, of course, but so does talent. A young firm with a slim portfolio can compensate by putting in the best proposal possible.

That was Hanson's strategy. When, in 2011, Edmonton announced competitions for five park pavilions across the city, she shut down her office for three weeks and told her staff, then nine, to focus exclusively on the proposals. They applied to all five competitions and won two, beating over a hundred submissions. Bélanger was bowled over by the tasteful simplicity of Hanson's park buildings, both of which were completed in 2014. The circular pavilion at Borden Park, in the city's northeast, resembles a mirrored drum or a carrousel. The pavilion at Castle Downs Park, in the northwest, is a sprawling, low-lying structure clad in crinkly reflective glass, like a prairie mirage.

The works, Bélanger says, were as fully realized in life as they were on paper. Deep into the construction of the Borden pavilion, he recalls, Hanson decided

that the caulking between the mirrored panels was just a shade too dark. It would stand out, she reasoned, creating a visual distraction on an otherwise clean surface. “I told her, ‘We’re on a tight budget,’” Bélanger says. There wasn’t much he could do. So Hanson cut a cheque to the city, paying out of pocket for a new shipment of caulking.

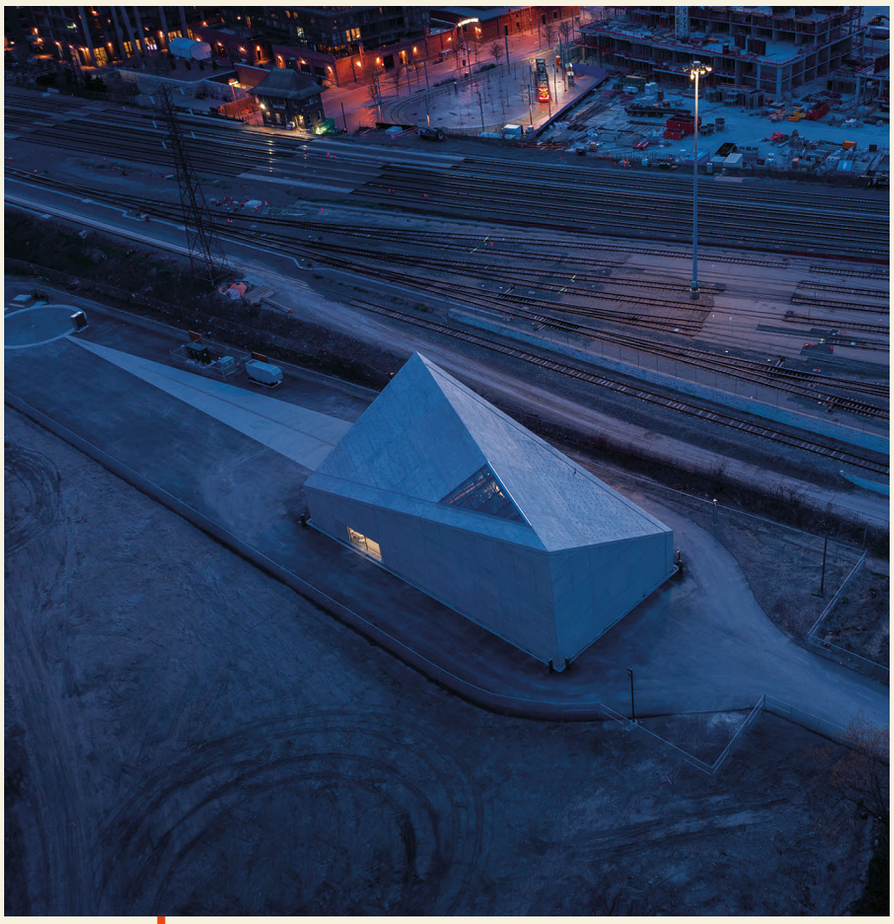
Pretty much everyone who works with Hanson has an anecdote like this one about the lengths she will take to safeguard the integrity of her work. Brenda Webster, an urban strategist with the engineering firm Stantec and a former planner at Waterfront Toronto, had the unenviable job of steering the stormwater facility through completion, a process that took over a decade. At times, Webster doubted that the project would ever get built, because the city kept reducing the budget.

One day, in desperation, she asked the engineers how much they would spend just to build a corrugated metal shack to house the core equipment. They quoted her a figure for a prefab steel structure. She took it to Hanson, reasoning that it was at least a stable minimum. Improbably, Hanson made her original design work. Instead of putting a skin atop a structural wall, Hanson opted to use cast-in-place concrete on the outside of the building, where it would do double duty as both wall and wall cladding. “She did everything she could to keep that project alive,” Webster says.

The Storm Water Quality Facility (SWQF) finally opened in 2020 and went on to win the Governor General’s Award and the Civic Trust Award from the U.K., which has honoured international heavyweights like Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue and Daniel Libeskind. The building is simple, yet it possesses a quiet kind of dignity, with its monumental form and its clean surface shorn of visual blemishes. It also made a statement: Anything can be beautiful. No building, regardless of price or purpose, is so humble that it merits thoughtless design.

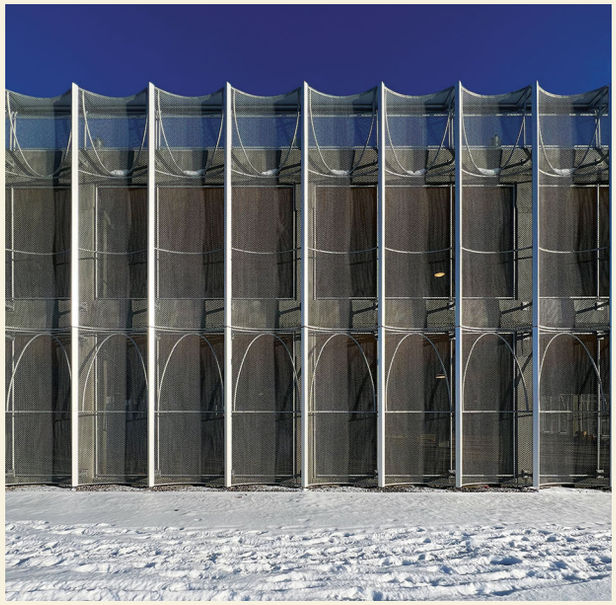
The SWQF was Hanson’s first public commission, but in the 12 long years between procurement and completion, her firm had evolved considerably. By 2017, the partnership between the two co-founders had broken down over an interpersonal dispute and Hanson terminated the relationship. (“It was tragic,” she says. “Depressing.”) She then added an asterisk to the firm’s name, enabling her to reincorporate it without losing the brand identity. By this time, she’d taken on several key principals: Raymond Chow, an image-maker of the highest order; Joel Di Giacomo, a wizard at 3D modelling software; and John McKenna, a writer whose rhetorical skills give the firm’s proposals a competitive edge. She also has a director of landscape, Elise Shelley, who ensures that all of the landscape work is integrated seamlessly with the architecture. The brand had amassed some serious clout, too, thanks to a growing portfolio of even bigger Edmonton projects, each built around a succinct visual motif and featuring a single exterior material chosen for its evocative potential.

The 4.5-hectare Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage, a heroic building that flaunts its heroism, is clad in stainless steel, which shifts in hue, as the sun recedes, from icy white to amber to blue. The garage accomodates 350 workers and housing 300 buses. Its main feature is a skylit bus lot with a columnless Miesian floor plate. Yet it conveys a grandeur, and an exaltation of public works, that is in tune with Gh3*’s other projects. “The design…argues for an architecture that can perform at the scale of urban infrastructure, at the scale of highways,” the firm explains in the building description.

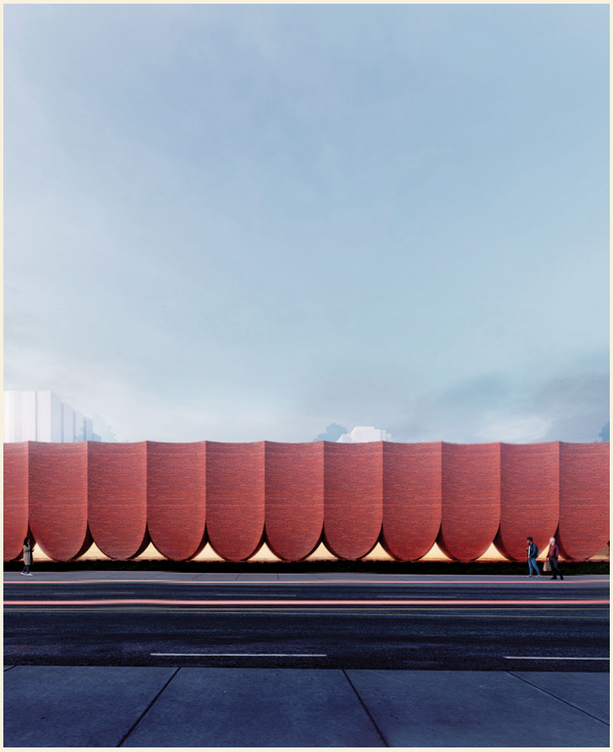


ABOVE: In Toronto, the Storm Water Quality Facility is a prismatic building sculpted in cast-in-place concrete.

BELOW: Even a parkade — at Edmonton’s Orange Hub — gets the Gh3* treatment of employing a singular material to extraordinary effect.



PHOTOS BY ADRIAN OZEMIK (TOP); RAYMOND CHOW (BOTTOM)



ABOVE: Gh3*'s future projects include the Wastewater Innovation Centre for the City of Barrie, north of Toronto.

BELOW: Back in Edmonton, the firm is also working on Blatchford District Energy SHX, which will provide a new residential development with energy derived from sewage trunks. It's composed of two side-by-side volumes — one with a soaring 22-metre-tall chimney stack.

The Windermere Fire Station, a net-zero fire hall, has monochrome brick cladding textured like the surface of a rattan basket. It's topped with a simple gable gently sloped to maximize space for solar panels. Beneath the building are geothermal wells, which moderate the interior climate by transferring heat (or coolness) from the ground below.

Perhaps the firm's most celebrated public work is the Borden Natural Swimming Pool (another Civic Trust winner), which treats water without chemicals. To handle the engineering, Gh3* partnered with Polyplan Kreikenbaum, a German firm that specializes in aquatic systems. Water at the pool is pumped to a gravel bed and then flows through two on-site ponds. The first aerates the water to stimulate microbial growth; the second shades it beneath lilies, creating a habitat ideal for zooplankton, which eat up harmful bacteria and toxins. The layout — a play of nested rectangles — has the geometric rigour of a Mondrian painting, and the site and its change room facilities are lined in permeable gabion walls, a metaphor for filtration. "With each project," says Hanson, "we're trying to do something simple and economical, with familiar materials used in unfamiliar ways."

That commitment to conceptual clarity is on full display in a recent Edmonton commission, a district energy station for a planned community that will pump heat from two massive underground sewage trunks. The pumping system will reside in a railcar-shaped volume that runs along the ground. An exhaust vent will be housed in a similarly sized adjacent volume, which bends upward. Form follows function. It's classic Gh3*.

So far, the firm hasn't had an outsize presence in Toronto — despite a few public commissions, including June Callwood Park, a medley of granite planks, pink vinyl pavers and crabapple trees — but it's now making an impact at home too. Upcoming commissions include a Tamil Community Centre, condo buildings above and beyond the usual, and a net-zero EMS building (the first of its type to be constructed with mass timber).

And, of course, there's the folly in the Port Lands. By 1 p.m., the day was getting hot, prompting people to flee the shade-less beach for the sanctuary of the tower. I had a remaining question for Hanson: Why bother to beautify infrastructure at all? After all, it derives its value from functionality. So if it hurts to look at, who cares? It wasn't built to be looked at anyway.

"Whenever you do anything, you should do it well," Hanson responded, adding that the marginal cost of good design is miniscule relative to the cost of a building itself. An ugly water-treatment plant is a pricey undertaking; a beautiful one is only slightly more pricey. So why not spend that little bit extra? "Toronto owns hundreds, maybe thousands, of buildings," she said. "Can you imagine what the city would look like if all of them were beautiful?"

I mentioned to Hanson that, at some point during our conversations, I'd started to sense a connection between her architecture and her life. There's a recursive element to her designs: They are built to respond to changes in light or to tap into natural processes. Her own story has a cyclical quality, too: Disappointments have given way to breakthroughs, setbacks to life-changing opportunities. "I've never really thought about things that way," Hanson told me.

In Edmonton, two hours behind Toronto, the day was still heating up. But the Windermere Fire Station would remain cool thanks to the thermostatic properties of the earth beneath it. At the Borden Pool, not too far away from the fire station, dirty water was flowing into adjacent ponds. Then it was flowing back clean again. **AZ**

The Second

Story by
STEFAN NOVAKOVIC

Photography by
JASON KEEN

Coming

OMA transformed a former commercial bakery and warehouse into Lantern, where the courtyard serves as a shared porch for several mixed-use tenants.

In Detroit's Little Village, a restored church anchors an ambitious community envisioned as an eclectic creative heaven

In a Catholic church, the figure of Christ comes in many guises. From the cross atop the steeple and the constellation of representative paintings and stained-glass windows that frame the altar to the ritual transubstantiation of the Eucharist, a divine spirit permeates. On Parkview Street in Detroit, however, the blood of Christ is channelled into a surprising vessel.

Inside the Romanesque Revival parish, a portrait by American artist Jordan Eagles has painted the Saviour using fluid drawn from the vein of an HIV survivor. While the composition is a nod to Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi* — which the wall text notes set a record for the most expensive painting ever sold — the medium evokes the belief that Jesus gave his blood for all of humanity. Standing before it, I find myself contemplating both the meaning of Christianity and the commodification of art — and then a more prosaic reality: This is no ordinary church.

I'm not sure whether to call it a church at all. After closing its doors in 2016, the house of worship then known as the Good Shepherd Catholic Church sat vacant. While the congregation merged with another parish, the majestic building itself faced an inauspicious future. Situated in an inconspicuous pocket of the city between the affluent communities of Indian Village and Grosse Pointe, the church — which anchored a once-thriving neighbourhood — was surrounded by a landscape of vacant lots and soon-to-be demolished homes, reflecting the pattern of post-industrial divestment and depopulation that shapes much of central Detroit. In 2021, however, the 110-year-old structure was announced as a future home for gallerists Library Street Collective, led by Anthony and JJ Curis.

Three years later, the former church sits at the heart of the nascent but fast-growing Little Village arts campus. Framed by a new public sculpture garden and an inviting urban park, the venue now known simply as The Shepherd is a 1,300-square-metre gallery, library and community hub. Carefully restored and adapted by Brooklyn-based architects Peterson Rich Office (PRO), the intervention retains both the building's imposing bones and its delicately intricate interior details. On the exterior, only the weathered steel arch that frames the main entry subtly signals the transformation from a sacred setting into a secular one.

Past the front door, the metamorphosis is at once obvious and understated. The vestibule has been turned into a reception and a new gallery volume has been inserted into the back of the nave. From the entrance, however, the interior maintains a long open view to the altar, preserving a sense of spatial and spiritual order. Combining the minimalism of a white cube with subtle texture and patina, the room is one of two similar exhibition spaces slotted into the building, while another new gallery space is tucked into the cruciform interior's north transept. Beyond the

Little Village is anchored by The Shepherd, a former church adapted into a gallery (right) and community hub.

LEFT: At Lantern, OMA paid homage to the original structure's industrial simplicity while introducing rows of glass-filled perforations.

two rooms, exhibited art is subtly woven through the church interior; larger works rest on the open floor, and smaller pieces adorn the columns — where I encounter Eagles's *Vinci* — and the restored altar. Meanwhile, the south transept is given over to the Little Village Library, a reading room and book collection curated by Black Art Library founder Asmaa Walton.

Complemented by comfortable tables and private reading rooms (adapted from erstwhile confessionals), the eclectic yet accessible collection spans from rare and historic art volumes to children's books. A long stone bookshelf anchors the space, inviting visitors to read, study and hang out. "In an art gallery, people don't think they can touch the books; they think it's part of the work. So it's important to have these spaces where you can interact with the books, take them off the shelf and read," says Walton. Meanwhile, the altar and retained nave create an open space for community events and performances. (Days after my visit, a panel discussion and orchestral tribute to John Coltrane activated the space.)

The integration of art with public space and community-building is central to both The Shepherd and the surrounding Little Village community. "The planning and transformation of the church was very much grounded in the idea of bringing people together," says PRO co-founder Miriam Peterson. It's a deft architectural feat. While the mix of uses feels intuitive and uncluttered, it's an unusual medley — facilitated by equally unconventional design strategies. "On some level, it's kind of a weird and radical thing to do, to put such big volumes into an existing building," says Peterson, explaining that the new exhibition spaces "support the technical program of contemporary art gallery, but without undermining the ability of the church to continue to function in the way that a church historically has in a community."

This spirit animates the whole of the campus, where a landscape designed by New York–based OSD conveys visitors through the block. Alongside ample new seating and greenery (composed entirely of native plantings), a prominent sculpture garden honours legendary Detroit artist Charles McGee, extending the art program into the public realm. And, as with the gallery, the visitors comprise a mix of regulars and curious tourists, as well as neighbours and Detroiters of all stripes, including a trickle of former parishioners. As Shepherd artistic director Allison Glenn puts it, "We thought of the whole building — and the block — as a canvas. It's all an invitation to explore."

The varied setting – which also includes a skate park designed by iconic skateboarder Tony Hawk and artist McArthur Binion and a gently elevated rolling lawn (a subtle nod to the curved apse of The Shepherd) – is knit together by gardens and footpaths. The porous network of gravel walkways elegantly transitions into a flood-resistant permeable parking lot that, when free of cars, doubles as a seamless extension of the pedestrian space. The walkways are enhanced by the addition of red brick, the interplay of hues introducing another sinuous highlight; the crushed masonry, salvaged from a local demolished building, also pays quiet homage to architectural context. "This is a place with history and meaning, and it should be respected," says OSD founder Simon David. "There's beauty in repair and re-use."

Between the skate park and the raised lawn, a pair of houses has been combined into one. The two homes — a handsome Victorian and a 20th-century Detroit duplex — were both likely to be razed under the municipal Detroit

RIGHT: At BridgeHouse, two vacant homes were adapted into a restaurant and a bakery framed by a shared porch.

Demolition Program. Fortunately, Library Street's Anthony and JJ Curis had other plans. The duo commissioned local architect and Undecorated founder Ishtiaq Rafiuddin to reimagine the homes as a commercial setting with a bakery and a restaurant. Ingeniously, they are joined together by a shared porch. "Detroit has a really strong front porch culture, and we wanted to extend that tradition — where neighbours hang out and spend time together — into more of a public setting," says Rafiuddin.

It's one of several works in progress. Across the street from Rafiuddin's BridgeHouse, Los Angeles–based Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects is leading the development of a new venue for Library Street's Louis Buhl & Co. gallery, which is devoted to celebrating divergent practices and showcasing artists at all stages of their careers. Also in the neighbourhood, the Curises have purchased, restored and sold a handful of formerly vacant and slated-for-demolition homes while working with Rafiuddin to add a modest influx of new housing stock. So far, recent neighbours include Canadian designer Brian Richer, local gallerist Isabelle Weiss and fine art photographer and former Detroit Lions defensive end Romeo Okwara.

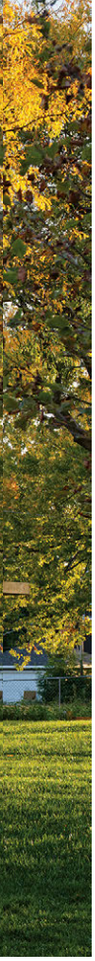
There's plenty more to come. Alongside BridgeHouse, a rear annex to The Shepherd is set to be filled out by a cocktail bar playfully dubbed "Father Forgive Me." In the meantime, the old rectory has already been converted into a small bed and breakfast (ALEO), and its top floor now houses the headquarters of Modern Ancient Brown Foundation, a non-profit providing mentorship and support to emerging BIPOC artists and writers, including an on-site artist residency program. A block to the south, Library Street has engaged celebrated New York designers SO – IL to reimagine an underused marina and boat storage complex as an extension of the cultural hub, stretching Little Village to meet the Detroit River waterfront.

Two blocks north of The Shepherd, the latest addition to the neighbourhood is Lantern, an adaptive re-use complex designed by OMA. Largely surrounded by vacant land, the building's crisp white exterior — perforated by rows of cylindrical glass blocks — emits an almost otherworldly evening glow. I'm having a hard time believing that OMA — freakin' OMA — really has a project at the corner of Kercheval and McClellan. But as I start walking toward it, I don't know if I'll like what I see. From a distance, the pristine, glowing white box is all austere spectacle and starchitecture, with little hint of community or local culture. Still, I can't deny how cool it looks, and I find myself quickening my stride in excitement as I approach.

Up close, the place tells an entirely different story. I'm charmed to find the gleaming surface dissolves into a simple array of cinder blocks, the paint chipping into the visible grout lines and the spectacle resolving into an honest and ordinary Midwestern beauty. "We found a builder who would cut even holes into the cinder blocks, and then used relatively inexpensive, standard, mass-produced rounded glass to fill in the perforations," says OMA partner Jason Long. The glass apertures, which playfully adapt the solid CMU wall originally constructed as a low-budget warehouse addition to the commercial bakery that previously occupied the site, signal a new public presence while maintaining the site's industrial simplicity.

The entrance is around the corner and through a sheltered inner courtyard. Here, a broad public stoop announces a 2,071-square-metre mixed-use complex. Within the white volume, the courtyard — which combines accessible circulation with ad hoc seating — slides into the interior of popular watering hole Collect Beer Bar. On a Friday evening, the joint is packed. In the older side of the building, meanwhile, the former bakery is now home to non-profit letterpress studio and education hub Signal-Return, as well as the Progressive Art Studio Collective (PASC), which is dedicated to supporting artists with developmental disabilities and mental health differences. The Lantern is also set to welcome a clothing store and a café.

On the patio, I sit down for a drink with Anthony Curis. I'd been nervous about meeting him. While I'm used to interviewing architects, many of whom relish self-important, pretentious language, they're rank amateurs compared to their counterparts in the art world. Much as I'm genuinely impressed by what Library Street Collective has accomplished, I'm bracing for something esoteric. Yet I'm relieved to find that the man sitting across from me sounds more like a plain-spoken Midwestern hockey dad than a heavyweight gallerist and property developer. "We're not by any means saviours to the neighbourhood or anything like that," says Detroit-born Curis.



“This is a place with history and meaning, and it should be respected. There’s beauty in repair and re-use.”

ABOVE: The former rector’s house is now the ALEO bed and breakfast, as well as the headquarters for non-profit Modern Ancient Brown Foundation.

A partially demolished structure is set to be revived as a new home for Library Street’s Louis Buhl & Co. Gallery.

“And our goal isn’t to play landlord but to help others build equity. None of this is even a real estate play — it’s about creating interesting and welcoming spaces and finding new ways to celebrate art.”

As Curis puts it, Little Village started with a new gallery — The Shepherd — and organically grew from there. “Instead of expanding to another city, we decided to double down in Detroit,” he says. Although the intent was never to build a neighbourhood, supporting a thriving arts community means more than renovating a church into a gallery. To bring people to the neighbourhood, whether as visitors or residents, you have to build new housing and hospitality venues, as well as green spaces and other public amenities. In the coming years, Library Street will also turn its focus to addressing more complex yet fundamental community needs, including a grocery market and non-profit artist housing. Throughout, the Curises have consistently partnered with — and celebrated — the Detroit community, from renowned artists to emerging voices.

These are good intentions. And good outcomes. Yet Little Village is also a reflection of Detroit’s uniquely depleted urban condition. Amid the demolition and depopulation, whole swathes of the city have been monopolized by individual actors. Businessman Sanford Nelson gradually purchased much of Detroit’s thriving Eastern Market neighbourhood — long a popular destination; these property acquisitions were followed by headlines proclaiming rising rents, store closures and perpetual conflicts with beloved local businesses. As Nelson himself told the *Detroit News*, some consider him “the devil incarnate.”

Closer to Little Village, John Hantz vowed to transform Detroit’s lower east side into a utopian urban woodland. Although some 2,000 lots were cleared and thousands of trees were planted, the high-minded enterprise has produced little more than cover for simple speculation: As stretches of scraggly monoculture forest amounted to a half-assed attempt at beautification, the investor reaped the benefits of growing property values. And while Dan Gilbert (whose real estate firm Bedrock owns a large stock of downtown) has genuinely revived much of the urban core, fellow billionaire land baron Matty Moroun shamelessly consigned the iconic Michigan Central Station to decades of decay until its purchase and restoration by the Ford Motor Company. Even award-winning Core City developer Philip Kafka has faced well-publicized tensions with tenants and community members.

In a more socio-economically healthy city, such real estate monopolies are all but impossible. While the results vary, those in Detroit carry inherent risks not found in other cities, where the caprices of individual landlords are balanced out by a more varied and competitive market. So far, Anthony and JJ Curis have made the right decisions. Still, as I walk back from the bar into the warmth of the late summer evening, I find myself wondering about the degree to which their vision — as genuinely altruistic and down-to-earth as it is — is shared by the wider local community.

I’m spending the night at ALEO, the church rectory lovingly transformed into a bed and breakfast. By the time I get into bed, the last of the lingering sun has disappeared behind the horizon. I worry about how well I’ll sleep, especially given how dead quiet Detroit can be at night. As a lifelong city guy, I prefer a din. And luckily, I get it. Outside, a group of casual revellers has gathered in OSD’s gravel parking lot turned community space. Their cars are parked with the doors open and music playing. I’m thankful for the noise, but more importantly, I’m relieved to see the place truly alive. They must have done something right after all.

In the morning, I awaken to a very different noise. It’s early on a Saturday, and I’m usually loath to leave bed on a weekend. But the peals of children’s laughter and the rolling thrum of rubber wheels on concrete pique my interest. I start to feel the excitement emanating from the crowd gathered at the skate park. Before I know it, I’m brushing my teeth and getting dressed. I can’t wait to see what’s up. **AZ**

A look at six inspiring projects around the world that embrace new ways of building, planting and remediating for a greener future.

Good Works

From the Ground Up

EARTH FOREST CAMPUS
/Barcelona, Spain

PHOTO BY IWAN BAAN

→ Until recently, 3D-printed construction and traditional earth buildings existed at opposite ends of the technological spectrum. But the innovative Earth Forest Campus in Barcelona's Collserola Natural Park, developed by the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC) with international architecture firm Hassell, combines the best of both worlds, marrying cutting-edge techniques with vernacular design. The product of more than a decade of research, the 100-square-metre structure is a full-scale prototype for sustainable and affordable construction. Though 3D-printed architecture is typically made of carbon-intensive concrete, the Earth Forest Campus was printed on site using local soil and natural materials sourced from just a few metres away — and completed in only 10 days. Set atop a stone foundation for stability and drainage, the porous earth walls help regulate heat and humidity, framing small openings for light, views and ventilation. While initially intended for housing applications, the construction method is also being leveraged by Hassell for a community building in Tanzania, set to be completed in 2025.
– SYDNEY SHILLING

Reef Relief

EROSION MITIGATION UNITS (EMU)
/Melbourne, Australia

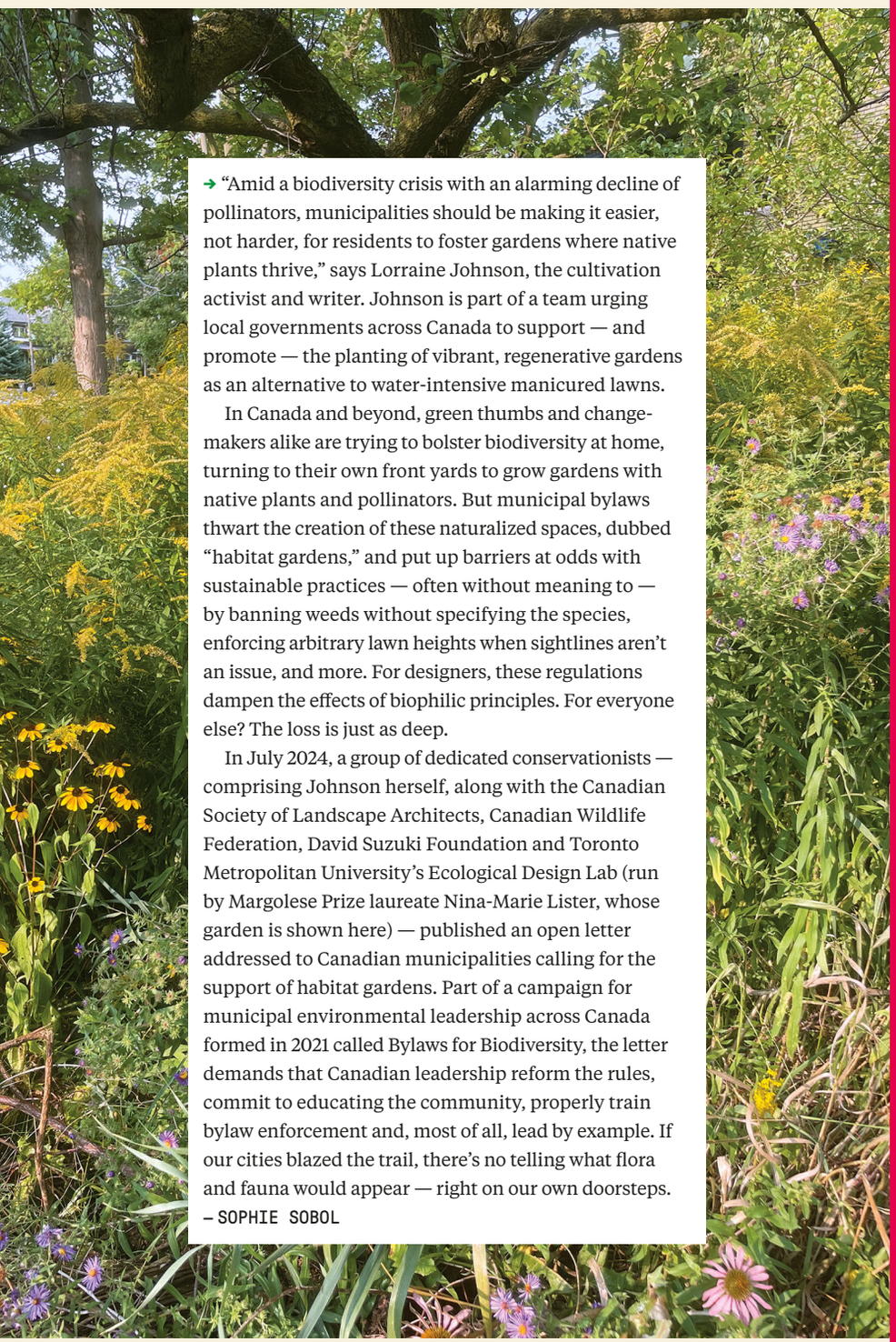
→ Since October 2022, a group of strange creatures has been gathered off the coast of Clifton Springs, a seaside town on the Bellarine Peninsula in Australia. But while the 46 masses possess the eerie beauty of deep-sea animals, they are far from an invading species intent on doing harm. Quite the opposite, in fact. Developed by industrial designer Alex Goad and his team at Melbourne-based Reef Design Lab, the curious objects have been installed as part of an ongoing campaign, with the City of Greater Geelong, to rehabilitate the area's marine ecosystems.

Called EMUs — or Erosion Mitigation Units — the 200-centimetre-wide, 1.6-tonne dome-shaped modules are precast in specialized moulds; made from locally sourced recycled shells and low-carbon concrete (cement combined with 30 per cent fly ash), they serve a threefold purpose. First, to aid in the alleviation of shoreline erosion, the EMUs provide wave attenuation that reduces the height and energy of incoming waves. Second, their rough texture and intentional nooks, crannies and holes support and offer protection to a range of marine organisms (even when the tide is low, the small rock pools remain filled with water). And finally, they create an underwater sculpture park for snorkellers, scuba divers and swimmers to explore.

While the man-made reef is still being monitored and its benefits measured, a second troupe of EMUs has already been installed further northwest near Kingscote, Kangaroo Island, signalling the positive impact the artificial structures will have on the natural environment. – KENDRA JACKSON

The Personal (Garden) Is Political

BYLAWS FOR BIODIVERSITY
/Canada



→ "Amid a biodiversity crisis with an alarming decline of pollinators, municipalities should be making it easier, not harder, for residents to foster gardens where native plants thrive," says Lorraine Johnson, the cultivation activist and writer. Johnson is part of a team urging local governments across Canada to support — and promote — the planting of vibrant, regenerative gardens as an alternative to water-intensive manicured lawns.

In Canada and beyond, green thumbs and change-makers alike are trying to bolster biodiversity at home, turning to their own front yards to grow gardens with native plants and pollinators. But municipal bylaws thwart the creation of these naturalized spaces, dubbed "habitat gardens," and put up barriers at odds with sustainable practices — often without meaning to — by banning weeds without specifying the species, enforcing arbitrary lawn heights when sightlines aren't an issue, and more. For designers, these regulations dampen the effects of biophilic principles. For everyone else? The loss is just as deep.

In July 2024, a group of dedicated conservationists — comprising Johnson herself, along with the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, Canadian Wildlife Federation, David Suzuki Foundation and Toronto Metropolitan University's Ecological Design Lab (run by Margolese Prize laureate Nina-Marie Lister, whose garden is shown here) — published an open letter addressed to Canadian municipalities calling for the support of habitat gardens. Part of a campaign for municipal environmental leadership across Canada formed in 2021 called Bylaws for Biodiversity, the letter demands that Canadian leadership reform the rules, commit to educating the community, properly train bylaw enforcement and, most of all, lead by example. If our cities blazed the trail, there's no telling what flora and fauna would appear — right on our own doorsteps.
– SOPHIE SOBOL

Nuts and Bolts

TAISUGAR CIRCULAR VILLAGE
/Tainan, Taiwan

→ In the southern Taiwanese city of Tainan, the Taisugar Circular Village proudly shows its seams. Designed by Bio-architecture Formosana, the masterplanned community unfolds in visible modules of prefabricated panels, an exterior steel structure and solar panels prominently affixed to gable roofs. Envisioned as a test bed for circularity, the transit-oriented 351-unit development optimizes ease of maintenance and replacement — in essence, it's a system that can be taken apart and reassembled with little more than a socket wrench and a screwdriver. While the sociable site plan incorporates urban agriculture, communal cooking and a farmer's market, as well as a resident-led repair studio, the architecture is thoughtfully pared down and catalogued. From the kitchen cabinetry and electrical wiring to the partitions between units, prefab facade system and structural core, the design allows for streamlined, isolated fixes, eliminating the need for welding, glue and demolition, all while incorporating low-carbon materials, including salvaged timber. Moreover, every building component used is tracked via an exhaustive material library, allowing discarded elements to be returned to their manufacturers and recycled. – STEFAN NOVAKOVIC

PHOTOS BY STUDIO MILLSPACE

Flying through the Woods

PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
/Portland, Oregon

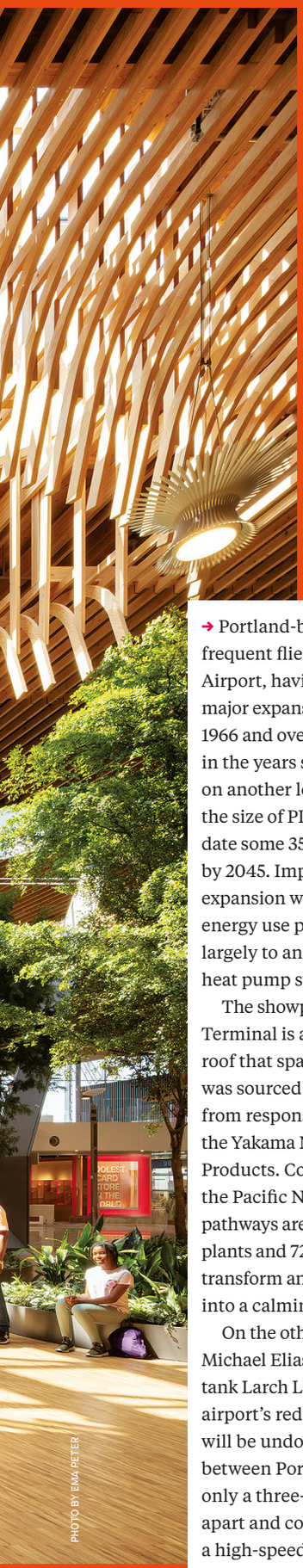


PHOTO BY EMA PETER

→ Portland-based ZGF Architects is a frequent flier at Portland International Airport, having led the transit hub's first major expansion plan all the way back in 1966 and overseen many subsequent renos in the years since. Now, it has embarked on another long-haul journey, doubling the size of PDX to prepare it to accommodate some 35 million annual passengers by 2045. Impressively, it is executing this expansion while also halving the airport's energy use per square foot — thanks largely to an all-electric ground-source heat pump system.

The showpiece of the reimagined Main Terminal is an undulating mass timber roof that spans 3.64 hectares. All wood was sourced within a 300-mile radius from responsible suppliers that include the Yakama Nation–owned Yakama Forest Products. Continuing the showcase of the Pacific Northwest's natural beauty, pathways are landscaped with some 5,000 plants and 72 trees — using biophilia to transform an often stressful environment into a calming oasis.

On the other hand, critics like architect Michael Eliason (founder of the green think tank Larch Lab) have pointed out that the airport's reductions in embodied carbon will be undone by just 23 days of flights between Portland and Seattle, which are only a three-and-a-half-hour train ride apart and could be made even closer by a high-speed route. If we really want to make airports more eco-friendly, we need to start by integrating them into a larger transportation rethink. – ERIC MUTRIE

River Revamp

WILD MILE
/Chicago, Illinois

→ In the 1850s, the Chicago River became a casualty of the city's industrial progress as pollution from steel mills, lumber yards and meat-processing factories (among other enterprises that made their home along the riverbank) emptied into its waters. "Most astonishingly," notes the architectural firm SOM, "the River's flow was reversed to send the city's sewage downstream in 1900, a move which has impacted the ecology of Lake Michigan, the Mississippi River and their tributaries ever since."

Part of a larger restoration project to remediate this amphibious landscape, the Wild Mile is an initiative by SOM and Urban Rivers. The floating eco-park, the first phase of which was completed in 2021, resides in the North Branch Canal, where it provides a new gathering space and river access to the entire community. The living laboratory has also become a hub for the River Rangers, or "citizen scientists," who collect data on plants, wildlife and other phenomena in the area — from the 99 bird species clocked here to the thousands of pieces of trash (carelessly) left behind by visitors. The boardwalk's kit of parts includes various modules — overlook, path, pier, access ramp, habitat rafts, and activity and classroom platforms — that allow it to scale up. Envisioned to expand, the initiative has just completed its second phase, which doubles its original size. – ELIZABETH PAGLIACOLO

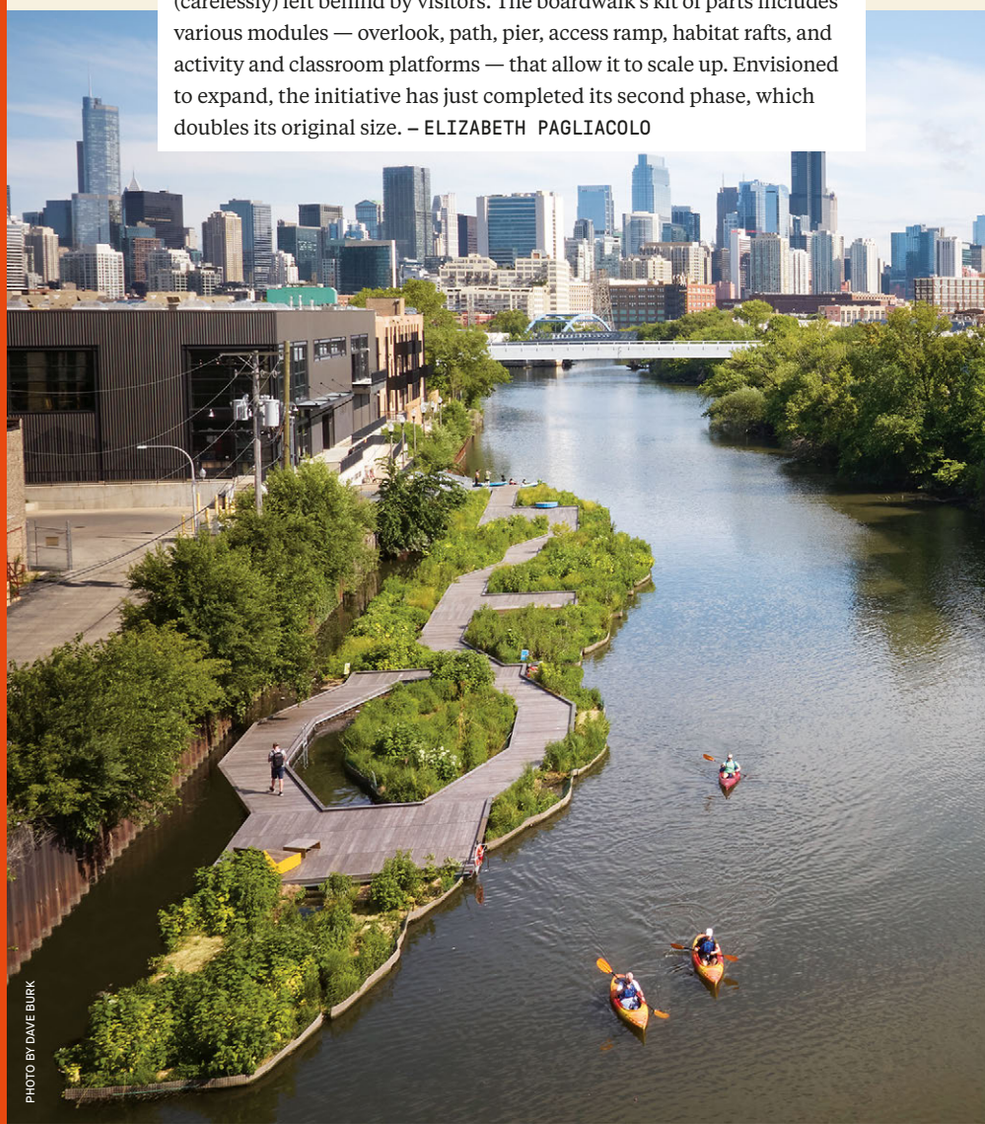
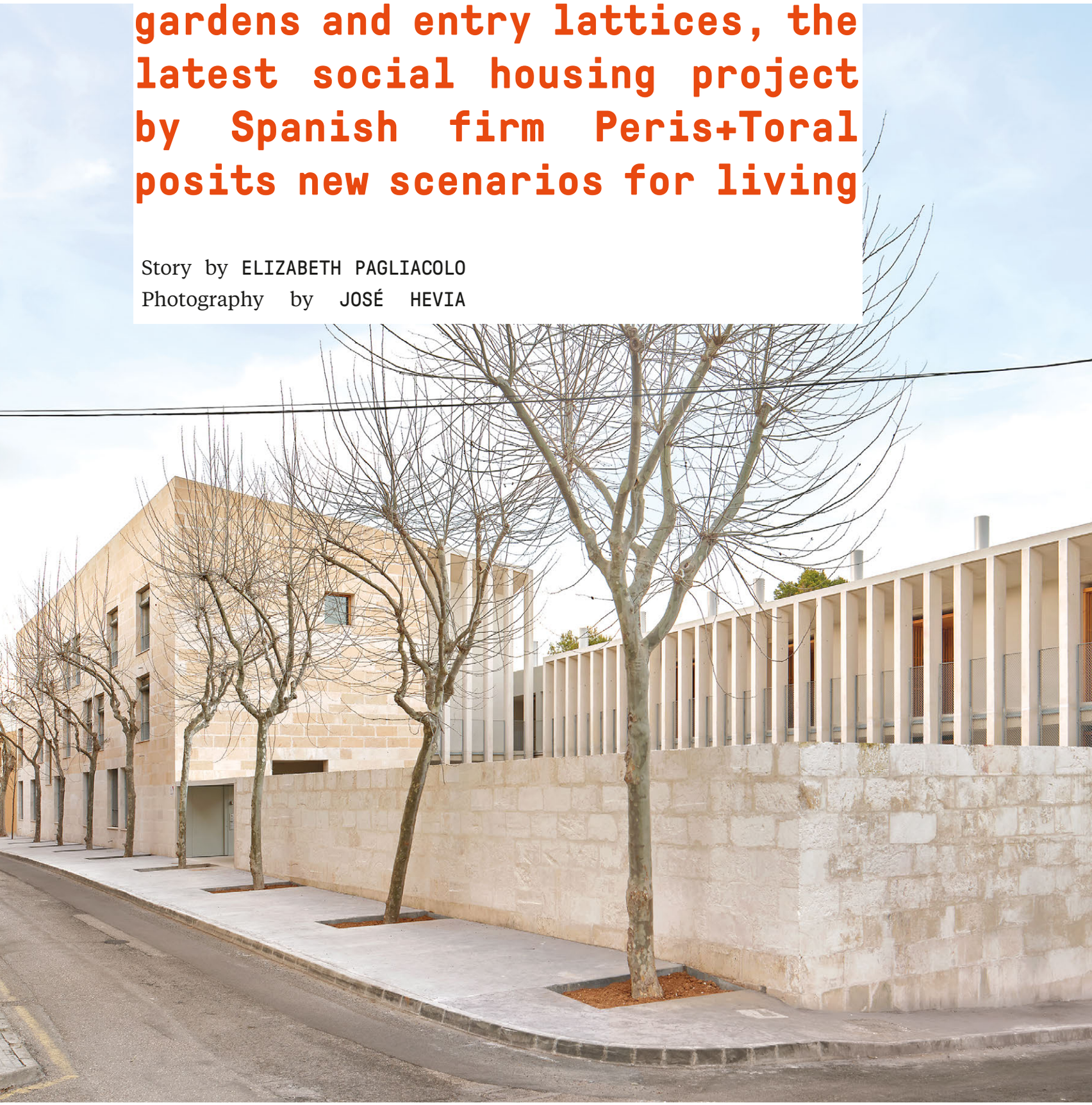


PHOTO BY DAVE BURK

With common streets, winter gardens and entry lattices, the latest social housing project by Spanish firm Peris+Toral posits new scenarios for living

Story by ELIZABETH PAGLIACOLO
Photography by JOSÉ HEVIA

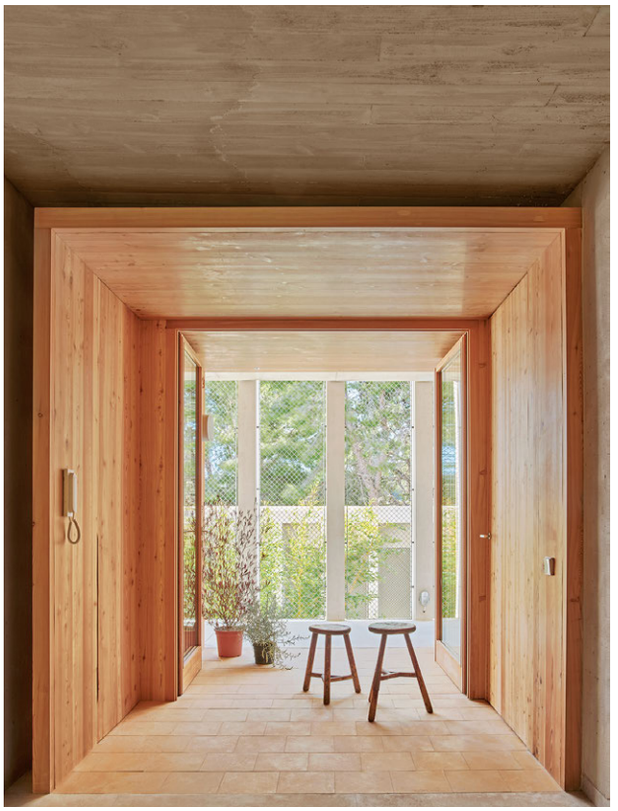


The Shared Experience

"Living in Limestone," as the firm calls its project in Mallorca, is an eco-friendly affordable housing complex in two walkway-linked volumes.

In idyllic Son Servera on the island of Mallorca, Barcelona firm Peris+Toral Arquitectes has created an affordable housing project that feels of a piece with its surroundings. Its two buildings feature self-supporting facades composed of ashlars (square-cut masonry units) made of marés, the sandstone and limestone specific to the Balearic Islands. Positioned in parallel, yet staggered on the plot, the dual volumes break up the form of the whole in order to render it in scale with its broader context. They also negotiate uneven terrain. "Each adapts to the topography: Although both have three floors, the one facing the landscape appears to have one floor less due to the higher street level," explains José Toral, who co-founded Peris+Toral with his partner, Marta Peris, in 2005. The buildings' arrangement on the plot resulted in expansive geometries that the architects fashioned into shared (and walled) courtyards.

"Common streets" — ones as wide as the thoroughfares in the small town — knit the buildings together on all three levels. They are delineated by elegant slats that visually stretch the building vertically coupled with metal mesh barriers that enclose cuts in the floor slab between units (which help cross breezes circulate throughout the buildings and allow sunlight to



LEFT: The residences are accessed via indoor–outdoor wooden "lattices" that extend out to the walkways, which the firm refers to as "common streets."

BELOW: On the upper levels, the common streets are delineated with vertical slats coupled with metal mesh barriers. The walkways are finished with cork ETICS clad in lime plaster.

penetrate down to the lower floors). Along these routes, residents step into their individual homes via wooden "lattices," intermediate spaces that, as Toral says, "filter the relationship between the private and the shared." The capacious portals feel as big as rooms and many people treat them as porches, pulling out a chair to hang out in them.

Inside, the layouts of the 42 units are spare and informed by passive strategies. In one version of the interior layout, you first enter the kitchen and living–dining areas; deeper inside, the bedrooms connect to an indoor terrace through glass doors. This "winter garden," Toral explains, "captures the energy into the bedroom." Solar heat is absorbed by the concrete floor and released into the interiors during winter; window blinds (and ceiling fans) help moderate heat in the summer. The idea is that the homes are comfortable throughout the seasons.

The materials are sustainable, with no cosmetic finishes applied to them. The concrete floors and ceilings, for instance, show off their exposed joints and formwork ribs, and the load-bearing ceramic walls are made of hollow bricks fired with biomass from local industry (and filled with sand for thermo-acoustic control). Overall, the palette exudes raw character. "In our architecture, this is a constant," Toral explains. "We try to simplify the solutions, and the aesthetics of the building have a lot to do with the construction of the building: This makes it more economical and more ecological." It's also more sensitive to exigencies: Limestone and lime-plaster are not chosen just because they visually fit the context — they boast hygrothermal properties that also help regulate indoor heat and moisture in a seaside locale that experiences up to 80 per cent humidity.

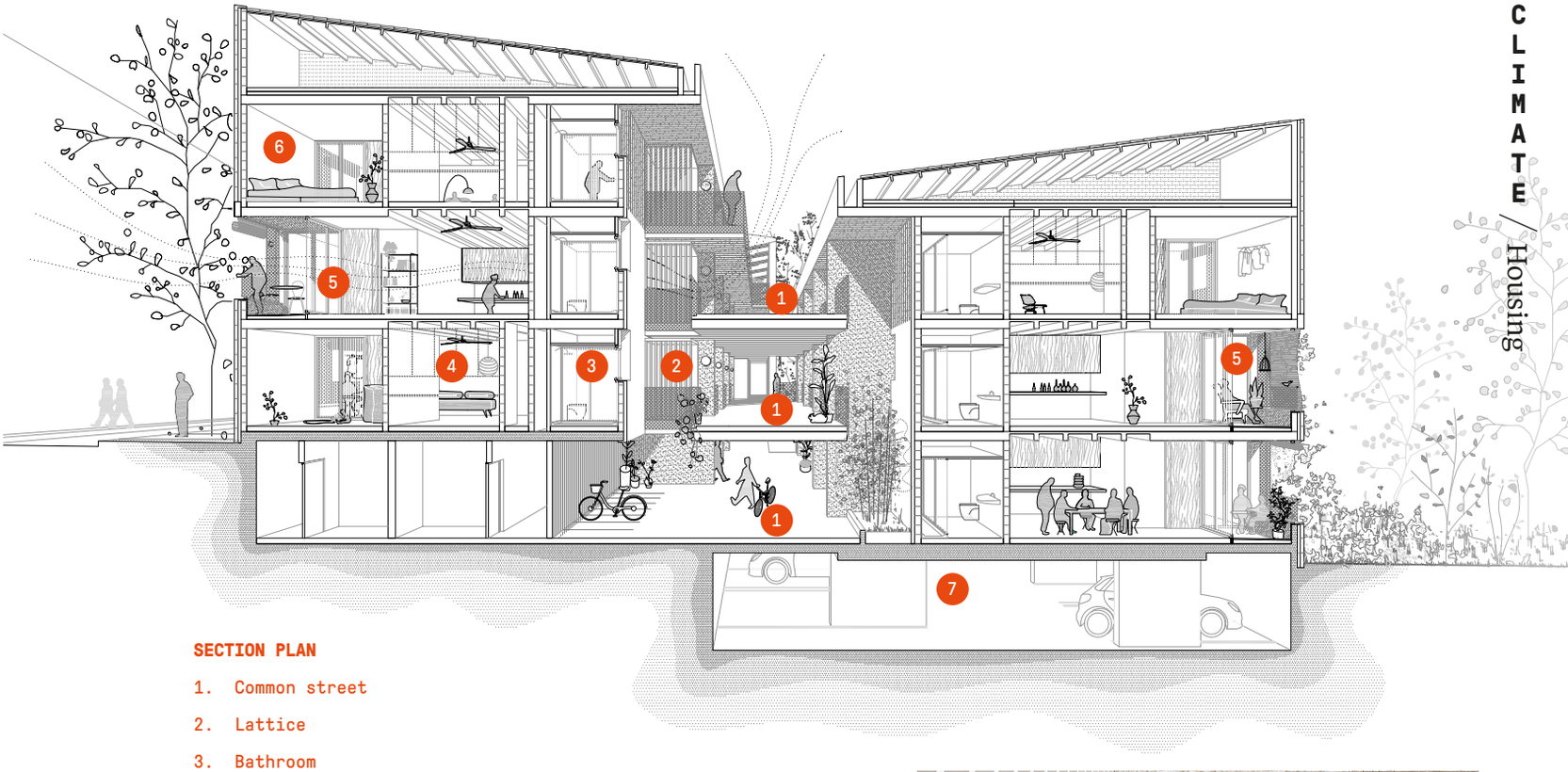
Founded in the 13th century, Son Servera is a municipality of 11,000 or so residents. Today, it's known for its tourist attractions (golf and beaches, mainly) and its singular architectural marvel: the century-old Església Nova, an unfinished Gothic church by Gaudí protégé Joan Rubió i Bellver. While not quite as long in the making, Peris+Toral's big project on the small island also took considerable time to be completed. It won a competition in 2009; after the financial crisis and the first, world-shaking years of the COVID pandemic, it's finally finished some 15 years later.

Peris+Toral has sought out competitions from its beginnings because they afford the firm opportunities to try new ideas and push the envelope in an area — affordable

At the rear of a residential unit, the winter garden faces a capacious window with roll-up blinds. This indoor-outdoor space funnels passive energy into the home. Raw concrete and warm wood are the main interior materials.

ABOVE: The Son Servera social housing features 42 units, stacked on three levels. The floor slabs between them are carved to let breezes circulate and sunlight reach the lower levels.

“We try to simplify solutions, and the aesthetics of the building have a lot to do with the construction of the building.”



SECTION PLAN

1. Common street
2. Lattice
3. Bathroom
4. Kitchen-living-dining area
5. Winter garden
6. Bedroom
7. Underground parking

ABOVE: Shared courtyards and gardens were crafted in the voids created by the buildings' arrangement on the site.

housing — that often feels prescribed. "We always had the goal to do public housing," Toral explains. "And the best way we found to propose new ways of living was through competitions. Because the private market doesn't want to take any risk."

Central to the firm's work is the idea of activating the home, of making it dynamic for the people living in it and in its relation to the community. The innovation of building systems — and collaborating with local trades to expand the possibilities of construction techniques like rammed earth, precast concrete and mass timber — also figures greatly in its approach. Every project is different, but the intention remains the same: to choose the most ecologically viable mode of building for the context at hand. And while the practice exploits the possibilities of photovoltaics — all of its housing projects feature solar panels — it maximizes passive energy for both environmental and economic purposes.

"In our social housing, we can often fight energy poverty," Toral says. "You know, the people that live in our buildings cannot afford to pay the rising costs of energy." He references world events, like the onset of the war in Ukraine, that make energy prices unstable for all of Europe. "In our building, however, this was not an issue. Our strategy has a lot to do with not needing energy, rather than being very efficient — because efficiency is not the solution. There is this rebound effect: Every time we are more efficient, instead of using less energy, we consume more."

Exemplifying two decades of expertise in crafting sustainable social housing, Peris+Toral's project in Son Servera is both humble and remarkable. Like the firm's other works, it is deferential to and deeply embedded in its place: The textures and proportions are drawn specifically from the local context, and the project is designed with the unique climate of the island in mind. And it's remarkable for all the reasons that make the studio's portfolio stand out on the global stage: It boasts a compelling form, it's crafted with time-honoured materials chosen for their durability and sustainability, and it invites tenants to experiment with their domestic setting.

Here, residents can improvise how to share their public spaces; conviviality is built into the combined ideas of the common street and the lattice, that warm wood entrance that forms a portal between interior and exterior. "The strategy of sharing," Toral says, "is very important to us."

As Peris and Toral have returned to the project time and again, they've seen kids playing in the shared courtyards and walkways and people enjoying their entrance portals in different ways. One tenant has put a library in his, filling it with books that the community can share. In these ways and more, Toral says, "you can understand that the whole building belongs to you." **AZ**

Emerging Eco Materials

SELECTIONS _Kendra Jackson

1

For furniture

1 Matek

Developed by Copenhagen green-tech design brand **Mater**, Matek is made from a variety of waste materials and debris (coffee bean husks, sawdust, textiles et cetera) combined with a biodegradable plastic binder derived from sugarcane. The resultant press-mouldable material is water-repellent and durable, and can replicate the look of natural stone, terrazzo or marble. Patricia Urquiola's indoor–outdoor Alder collection of tables and stools highlights the biodegradable material's appealing tactility and expressive nature.

2 Plant-Based Lumber

A hardwood alternative, plant-based lumber from Poland's **The True Green** in partnership with **Green Lanes** is composed of fibres and stems from fast-growing annuals, like hemp or flax, and eco-adhesives. Suitable for furniture (Husarska Design Studio's HempStool, for example), interior fittings and construction timber, the hardy material reduces the demand for tree felling, absorbs more than a tonne of CO_2 per cubic metre and can play a key role in rehabilitating and reconstructing ecosystems.

2

3 Quartz Sand

For his Contourage console table, Johan Wilén, designer and co-founder of Stockholm-based **Studio TOOJ**, worked with Germany's **Sandhelden**, an expert in sustainable 3D printing methods. Along with locally sourced quartz sand, the manufacturer uses furan-based binders that are derived from corn husks, rice hulls, sugarcane and other biomaterials; to further lessen its overall material consumption, the vivid cobalt-blue console is printed as a hollow structure and finished by hand to retain a rugged texture.

3

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PHOTO BY NICKLAS HEMMING (MATEK)

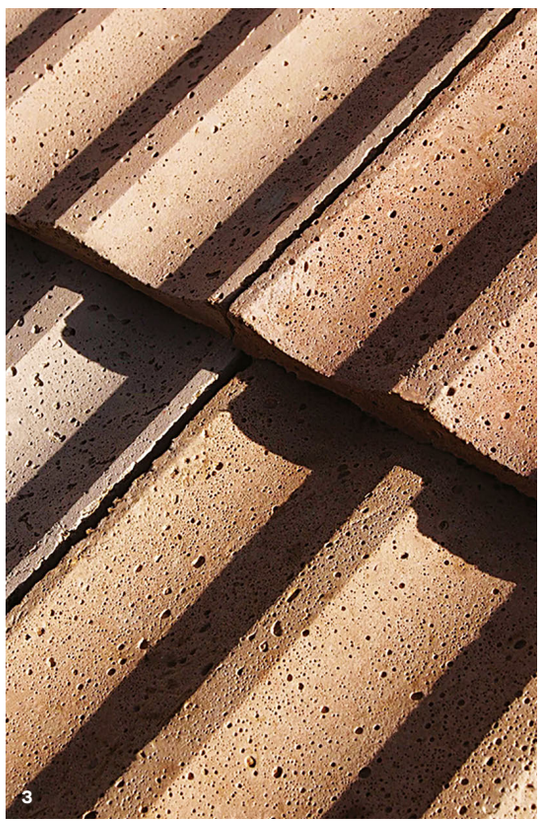
Hard surfaces

1 Earthic

A collaboration between **Cosentino** and research-based design studio **Formafantasma**, Earthic by Silestone is an innovative surface that limits the extraction of raw materials through its use of premium minerals, post-industrial recycled glass, PET, post-consumer bioresin and Dekton fragments. Manufactured with a maximum of 10 per cent silica using 99 per cent recycled water and 100 per cent renewable electric energy, the collection comes in a range of patterns and colours.

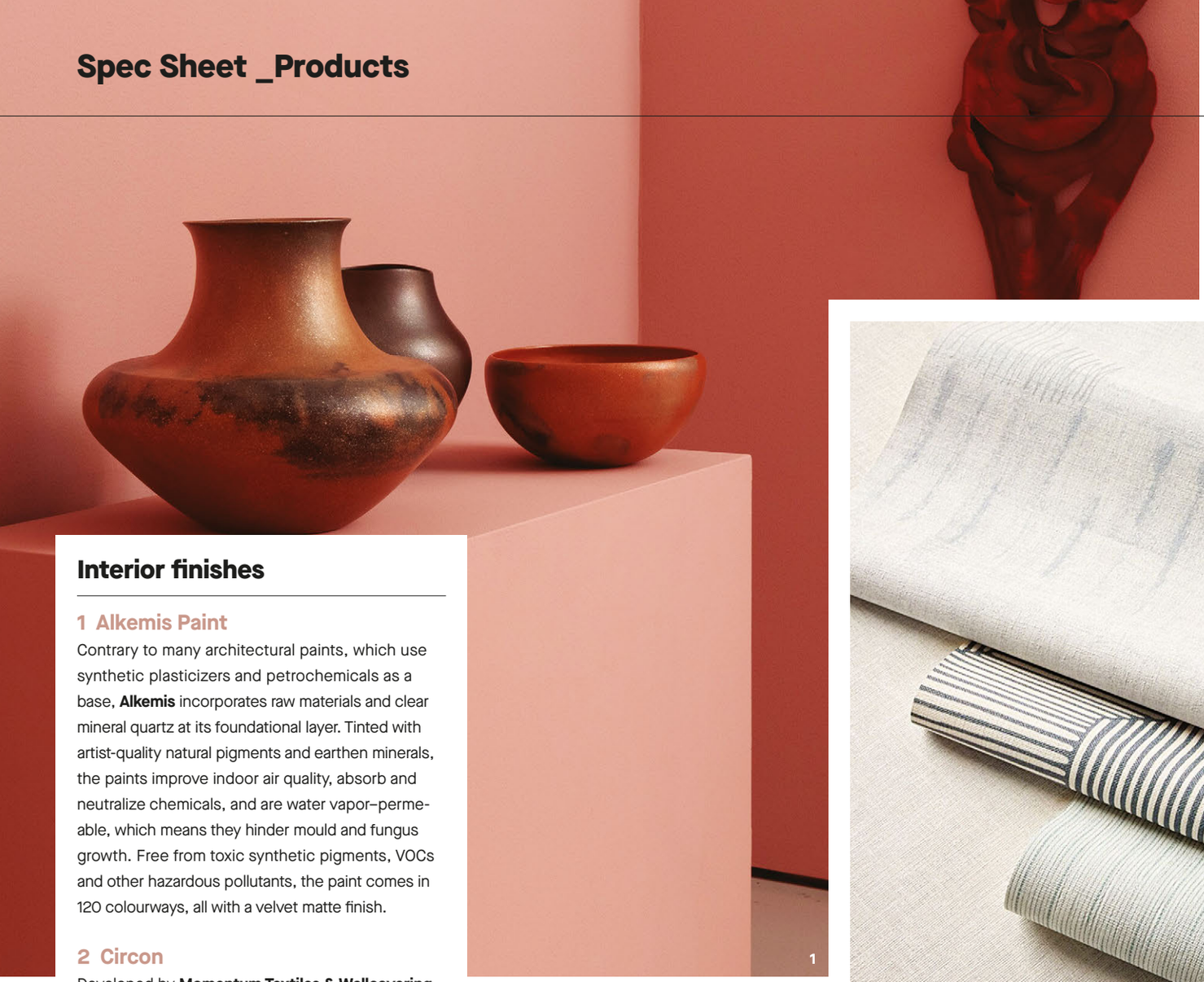
2 Polygood Translucent Collection

A new addition to **The Good Plastic Company**'s Polygood series of fully recycled and recyclable plastic panels, the Translucent Collection transforms clear CD cases into high-quality fire- and UV-resistant and waterproof interior–exterior surfacing. Elements like recycled industrial tubes, spools, acoustic panels and single-use cutlery are added during production to create the 19 vibrant patterns available.



3 Wasted Treasure

German industrial designer **Carolin Schelkle** has created roof tiles and shingles using palm leaves, stems and empty fruit bunches left over from palm oil production. Once shredded and dried, the fibres are mixed with a limestone-based mortar to become a rigid building material that is water- and fire-resistant and insulating. Ground remnant bricks can be added to tint the shingles.



Interior finishes

1 Alkemis Paint

Contrary to many architectural paints, which use synthetic plasticizers and petrochemicals as a base, **Alkemis** incorporates raw materials and clear mineral quartz at its foundational layer. Tinted with artist-quality natural pigments and earthen minerals, the paints improve indoor air quality, absorb and neutralize chemicals, and are water vapor–permeable, which means they hinder mould and fungus growth. Free from toxic synthetic pigments, VOCs and other hazardous pollutants, the paint comes in 120 colourways, all with a velvet matte finish.

2 Circon

Developed by **Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering** with **Versa Designed Surfaces**, Circon possesses the durability of conventional Type II vinyl but has an environmentally sensitive formulation: Made from 70 per cent bio-sourced, rapidly renewable resources — sustainably forested wood-based feedstock, an algae-like base material that sequesters carbon during its production and a proprietary renewable backing material that also absorbs carbon during growth — the recyclable wallcoverings have a closed-loop life cycle. A collection of four nature- and art-inspired patterns introduced Circon, which can also be specified for more than 100 of the brand's other designs and collections.

3 EcoAx

A recent innovation from **Creative Matters**, EcoAx is an environmentally responsible woven Axminster made from wool with a biodegradable jute backing that decomposes within 12 months, enriching the soil as it does so. An alternative to synthetics like nylon, the new material will be an option available for all of the brand's commercial and residential rugs and carpets, with a no-glue installation method to keep the flooring fully biodegradable. At end of life, the carpets can be recycled, upcycled and even shredded for compost.

1

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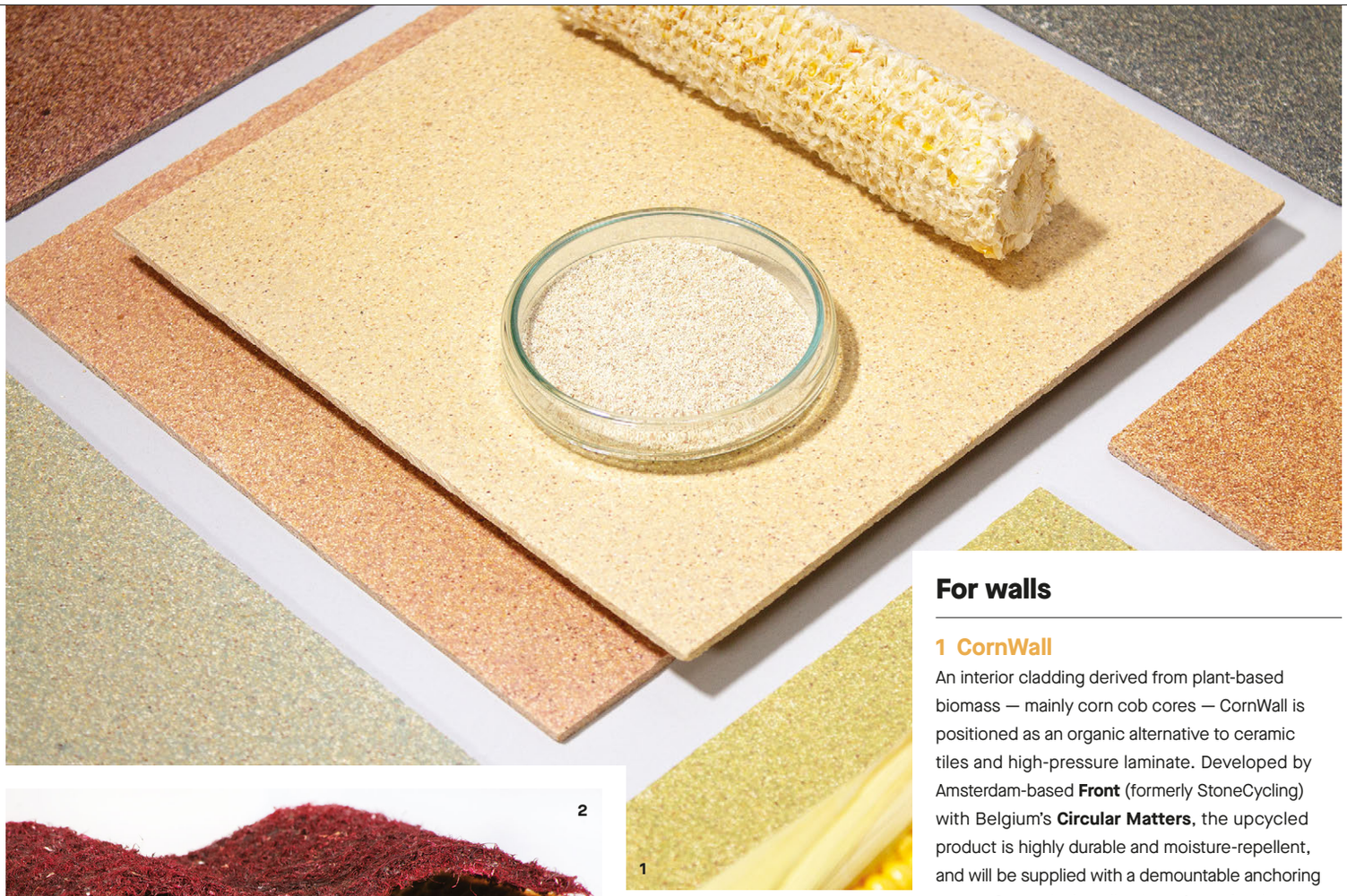
PHOTO BY LOGAN JACKSON (ALKEMIS)



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For walls

1 CornWall

An interior cladding derived from plant-based biomass — mainly corn cob cores — CornWall is positioned as an organic alternative to ceramic tiles and high-pressure laminate. Developed by Amsterdam-based **Front** (formerly StoneCycling) with Belgium's **Circular Matters**, the upcycled product is highly durable and moisture-repellent, and will be supplied with a demountable anchoring system for vertical applications. It can be tinted with biodegradable pigments and, since no glue is needed, the carbon-neutral material is completely re-usable and recyclable.

2 Seawool

Seastex spent years researching and experimenting with the potential of mussel "beards" (the inedible natural threads these mollusks use to cling to rocks and seabeds that are removed and discarded before cooking), eventually transforming the byssus fibres into a "cloud-like substance" named Seawool, a structurally sound, naturally fire-retardant material with unique acoustic and insulation properties. Its first product — ABC Tiles — is 100 per cent renewable, recyclable and biodegradable and can be used on walls and ceilings to improve sound quality and noise levels in a range of interior spaces.

3 Eelgrass

Danish manufacturer **Søuld** has been reviving a centuries-old tradition of drying and pressing the marine plant eelgrass into durable sheets that can be used for interior wall panels and baffles. Now, **FilzFelt** has added this 100 per cent recyclable and texturally rich material to its portfolio of acoustic solutions. The Søuld eelgrass acoustic panels can be used bare or be paired with any of FilzFelt's wool felts in over 90 colours (with chamfered or wrapped edges).

Tiles

SELECTIONS _Eric Mutrie


1

Rusty Red

1 Wish

Dreaming of something with artisanal flair? Wish granted. Uneven edges and a semi-matte finish add a crafted feel to **Ragno**'s porcelain stoneware, shown here in Brick. Each rectangle measures 5.3 by 30 centimetres.

2 Lofoten

Italian designer Federica Biasi based **Decoratori Bassanesi**'s 31-by-80-centimetre tiles on the tongue-and-groove planks that clad Norwegian fishing cabins. Choose from options with thin or thick ridges, in white, beige, grey, blue, red or green.

3 ArtCraft

Using the latest manufacturing techniques to evoke time-worn tradition, **Marazzi** developed this textural collection offered in three shapes — a square, a hexagon and the 5.3-by-30-centimetre listels featured — and seven colours, including Cotto (shown).

4 Pour

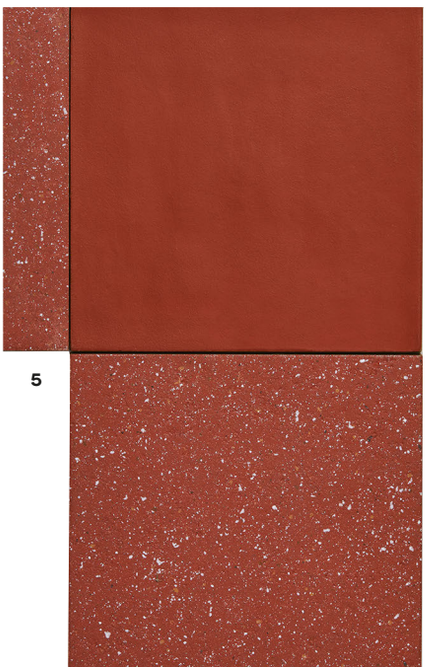
Bert & May collaborated with British fashion designer turned ceramicist Henry Holland to develop these hand-poured encaustic and printed glazed tiles that reflect his signature marbled style. Hexagonal, square, block and herringbone shapes are all on offer.

5 Time

Marking a decade of collaboration between **Mutina** and Barber and Osgerby, this range takes inspiration from geological weathering. By juxtaposing smooth and rough finishes in three sizes and eight colours, designers can bring a sense of history to new spaces.


2


3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4

Textural White

1 Geo Deco

L'Antic Colonial puts a contemporary spin on hieroglyphics. Geometric relief patterns are available in six colours, including white (shown) and a series of subtle earth tones. Best of all, the 12.4-by-44.3-centimetre slabs are suitable as shower walls.

2 M Saraiva

Architect Miguel Saraiva collaborated with **Viúva Lamego** to develop 14-by-14-centimetre tiles featuring a mix of embossed and indented squares, circles or triangles. Suitable for indoors and out, designs are available in white or green.

3 Mar Di

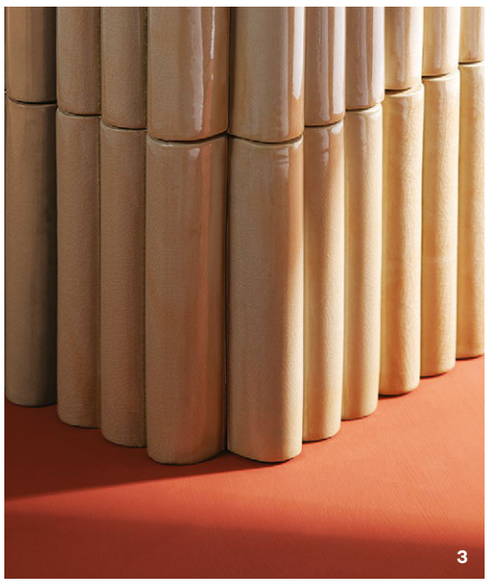
Ocean travel — and the rippling waves of the sea — served as Studiopepe's starting points for its new collection for **Theia Creative Tiles**. Four designs (including Kara, shown) feature undulating surfaces devised to interact with light and evoke far-off lands.

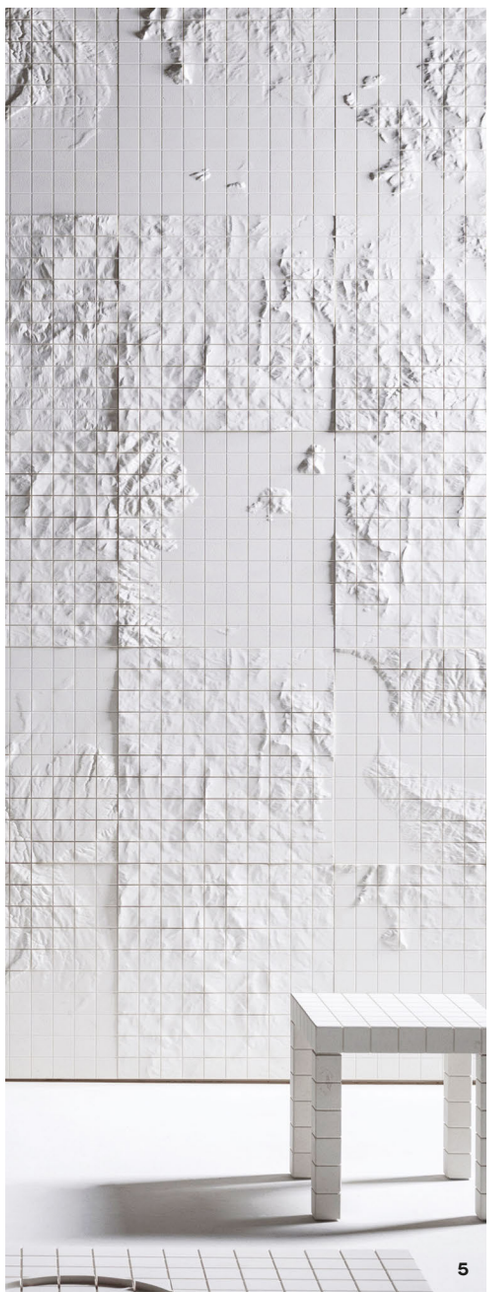
4 Traccia

Claesson Koivisto Rune carves a series of oblique grooves into **Monitillo 1980**'s marble tiles. Each 40-by-40- or 20-by-20-centimetre square is half textured, half smooth, allowing for dynamic compositions in indoor or outdoor environments, including wet areas.

5 Geografia

Like a topographic map recreated in pixels, **Lithea**'s latest sculptural wonder pays tribute to Superstudio's 1960s grid drawings. Tiles measuring 320 by 320 centimetres feature randomized combinations of 6-by-6-centimetre squares based on Sicily's terrain.





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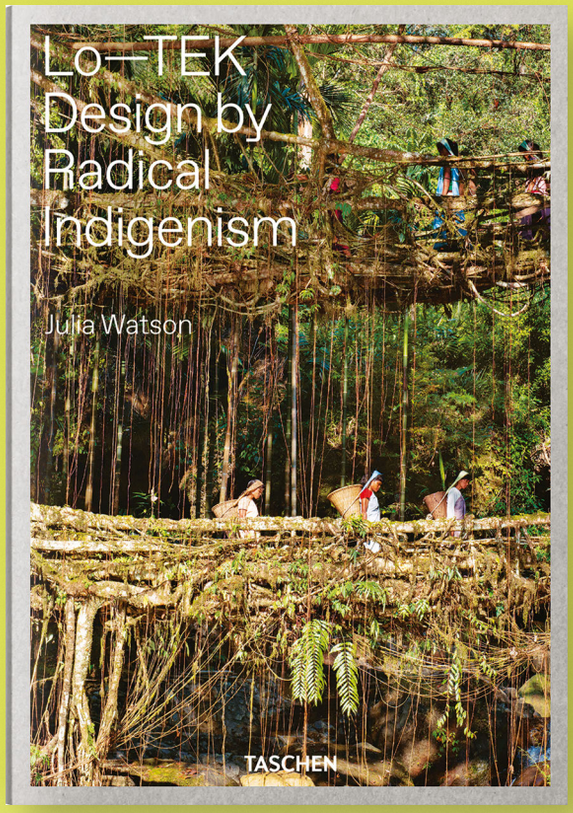
PHOTOS BY BARTUCCIO NINO (GEOGRAFIA); BETH DAVIS (POUR); CLAUDIA ZALLA (TIME); STEFANI ZANETTI (LOFOTEN)

Speaker Spotlight

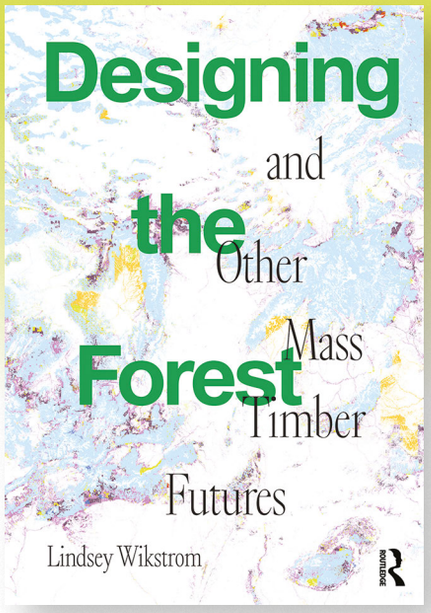
THREE OF OUR HUMAN/NATURE CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTORS DIVE INTO SUSTAINABLE DESIGN SOLUTIONS

BY _Sydney Shilling



Lo-Tek: Design by Radical Indigenism

When it comes to the future of sustainable architecture, the natural inclination is to turn to emerging technologies as tools to reduce our environmental impact. Julia Watson, who coined the Lo-Tek movement, believes that in order to move forward, we need to look back to the multi-generational wisdom of Indigenous peoples. By embracing the vernacular, she argues, we can not only resist the idea that Indigenous practices are primitive but also harness the benefits of place-based design that works with rather than against its context. Four chapters hone in on different climates — mountains, forests, deserts and wetlands — highlighting case studies from 18 countries across the world, from the rice terraces of Bali and the Philippines to the underground aqueducts of Iran.

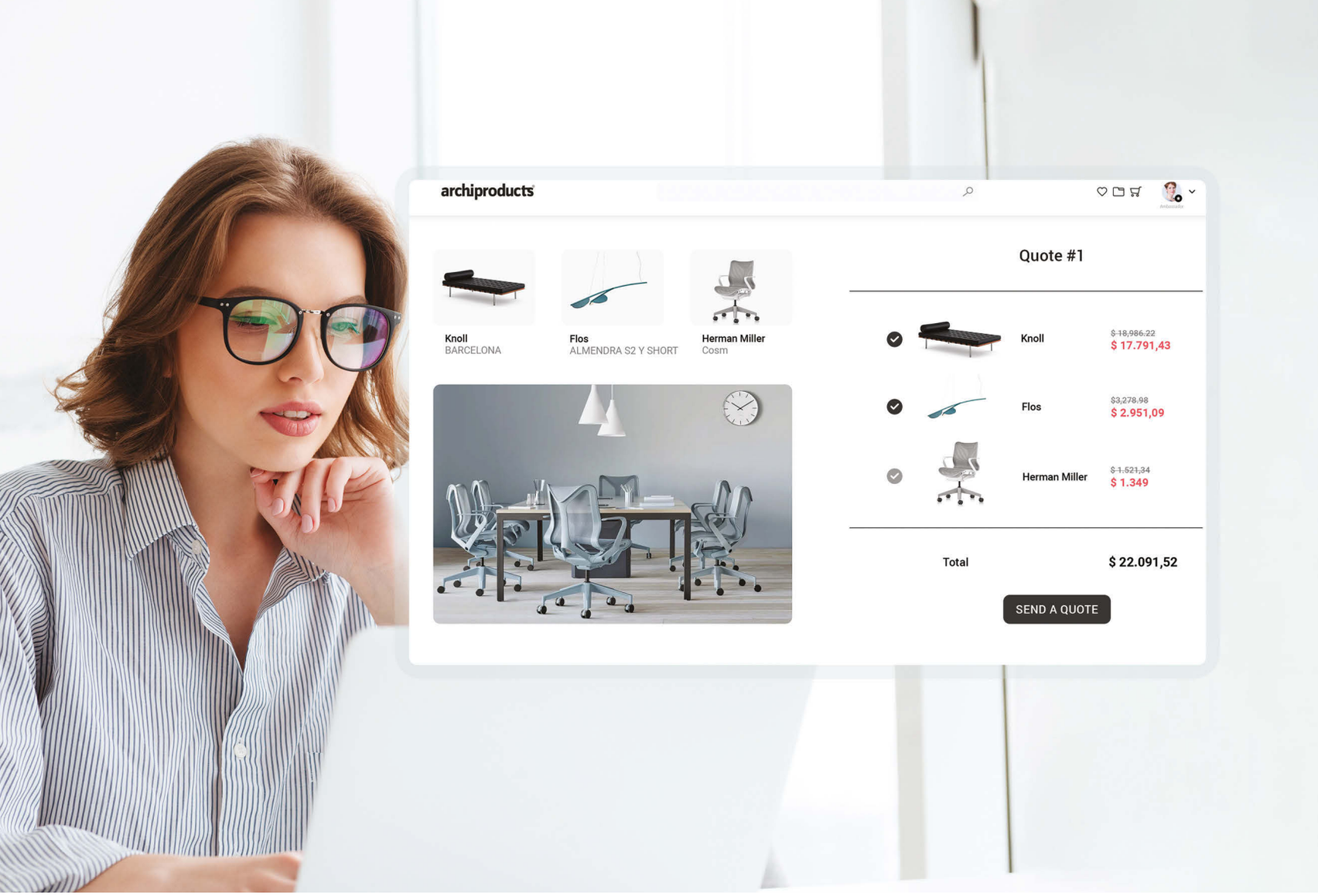


Designing the Forest and Other Mass Timber Futures

Mass timber has been positioned as a panacea for the highly carbon-intensive construction industry. But as founding principal of Mattaforma Lindsey Wikstrom explains in the introduction of her debut book, “mass timber has the potential to be non-extractive, but is not inevitably so.” In subsequent chapters, she explores how we can use timber in a responsible way and the challenges of doing so. Tracing the supply chain from the forest to the construction site, she debunks common myths about building with wood, including its fire performance and strength. “Buildings should be seen in less linear ways — extract, build, demolish — and more like material banks that are continuously traded between the forest and the city,” she proposes.

Constructing Health: How the Built Environment Enhances Your Mind’s Health

What if health was the basis for judging every public space and building? This is the question at the core of architect Tye Farrow’s book. With the understanding that buildings communicate to their users, and as such have the ability to improve (or worsen) their mental and physical health, Farrow approaches the design of architecture through a scientific lens. After an extensive theoretical overview, he unpacks tangible examples of salubrious design strategies at the scale of cities, single-family homes, educational buildings and healthcare spaces. And if this tome didn’t offer enough in the way of reading material, he closes with a recommendation of 50 books for additional exploration.



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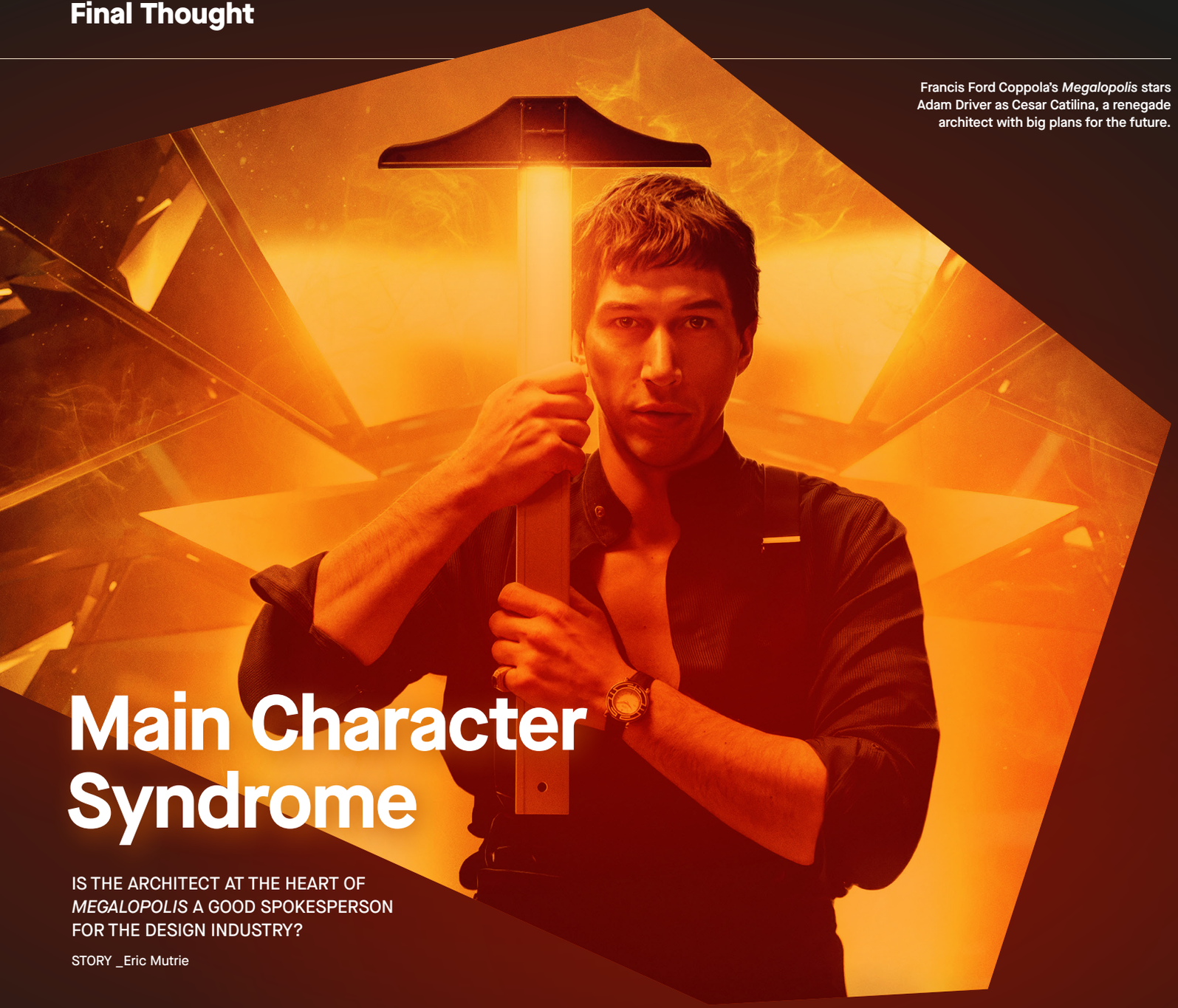

Francis Ford Coppola's *Megalopolis* stars Adam Driver as Cesar Catilina, a renegade architect with big plans for the future.

Main Character Syndrome

IS THE ARCHITECT AT THE HEART OF *MEGALOPOLIS* A GOOD SPOKESPERSON FOR THE DESIGN INDUSTRY?

STORY _Eric Mutrie

"Don't let the now destroy the forever." That is the philosophy preached by Cesar Catilina, an architect played by Adam Driver in *Megalopolis*, the messy magnum opus from director Francis Ford Coppola that hit theatres this fall. The main idea: To create a utopia, you must dream big — and knock down anything in your path.

In the Q and A that followed the movie's Toronto International Film Festival screening, Driver said that he based his performance in part on Robert Moses. In one early scene, Catilina goes rogue and demolishes a building without the proper approvals. (The movie's setting is a bizarro version of New York dubbed New Rome, reaffirming that the male obsession with the Roman Empire was no passing TikTok fad.) As the tower falls, Catilina uses his ability to freeze time to admire the billow of smoke that the structure has been reduced to, embodied carbon be damned. Ultimately, this superpower is not that important to the plot. On the other hand, it underscores an old idea of architects as gods of creation who should have special authority when it comes to deciding what must be created and what should endure. No wonder marketing for *Megalopolis* features Driver holding a T-square the way a knight holds a sword: Cesar Catilina is a man on a crusade. Who needs zoning bylaws when you're an uncompromising genius straight out of *The Fountainhead*?

For his part, Coppola describes the movie as being about hope and optimism. Evidently, Catilina is a stand-in for the director himself — someone with a bold artistic vision that he feels he must pursue at all costs for the sake of a brighter future. Mind you, while Coppola's zany creativity is on full display throughout *Megalopolis*, the film depicts architecture as something more akin to war or wizardry than work. Catilina is eager to remake his city with Megalon, a pseudo-organic material based in part on designs by Neri Oxman. Yet this material gives rise to orchid-like structures with seemingly no effort required. Sure, these might be better than the casino that Catilina's main opponent, Mayor Cicero, wanted to build. But they're also part of a pure imaginationland that avoids engaging with any of the actual human needs or site constraints that make real architecture compelling.

Speaking of reality, an early trailer for *Megalopolis* included excerpts from past reviews critical of Coppola's work. The only problem: These quotes didn't really exist. Internet commenters speculated they had been A.I.-generated and the trailer was quickly pulled. Adding to the film's rocky reputation, *Variety* has reported that Coppola surprised extras during filming with spontaneous kisses. (Coppola, in turn, is suing *Variety* for libel.) Perhaps creativity shouldn't be allowed to run amok after all.

Meanwhile, there is already another fictional architect on his way to reimagine life in *The Brutalist*, starring Adrien Brody. Early buzz from film festivals suggests it's a masterpiece. And if it's not, another egotistical Hollywood architect will be along soon to demolish it and build something else. **az**

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