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We take a dynamic and innovative approach to the disciplines of architecture and design, juxtaposing bold graphics and striking visuals with lively and informative editorial. *hinge* brings you the design world – the global picture, in full technicolour features.

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Words From the Editor

It gives me particular pleasure to lead this month's issue with a Hong Kong rarity: a public project that hits every button and does virtually everything right. The former Police Married Quarters site on Hollywood Road in Central has sat unoccupied for years, while the area around it – namely Soho – has taken flight, both socially and economically. The more success enjoyed by its neighbours, the more risk attended the PMQ, because the unused public site is large, and the city's developers gazed upon it with near delirium; imagine what profits could be wrung from its ample proportions and spectacular address? Yet for once (or twice), the government did the right thing, and saved the building, revitalised it, and gave it a new life purpose. It is architecturally excellent, urbanistically strategic, and culturally meaningful. We sat down with the ASD brainpower behind the transformation, and learned the whole story.

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Axor Starck Organic

Follow your
Head
and your
Heart



Designed by Philippe Starck, Axor Starck Organic is very nature inspired and is of an organic-minimalist design. Its mixer comes with a flow rate of only 3.5 l/min, making this the pioneering low water flow rate. However, this new flow rate does not compromise the functionality of the mixer as it comes with a new type of spray with 90 nozzles, bringing a new sensation to washing. Find out more about the new bathroom collection, which will enable you to experience water in a completely new way, at www.head-and-heart.com.

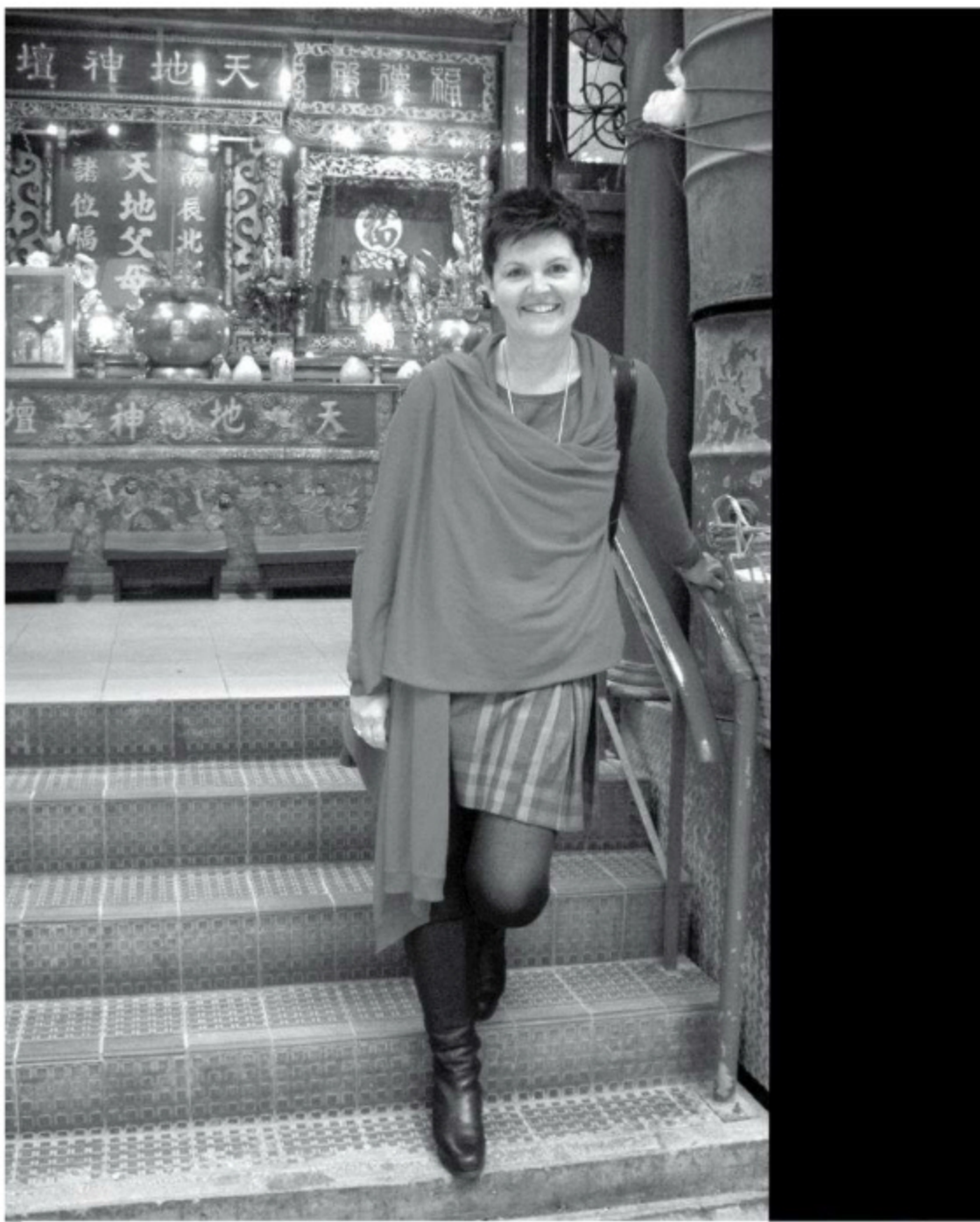
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KAREN HAY

Vivacious Karen Hay's enthusiasm for all things creative is contagious. The Scottish interior designer got her feet wet painting sets for repertory theatre in Edinburgh. Her journey to Hong Kong, Dubai and then back to Hong Kong has led her down a variety of design disciplines including retail and corporate interiors before coming full circle to the drama associated with hospitality spaces.

This hard-working mother of two young boys talks to **Rebecca Lo** about opportunities in the Middle East, the challenges of starting her own firm and the importance of being home for family dinners.

Do you come from a creative family?

Karen Hay: Not at all! My brother is an engineer. My mum always said that she can't even draw a straight line with a ruler. For some reason, I have this creative gene. I was always drawing, painting and making things. All throughout school, I was dodging other classes to go to the art room.

In my last year of secondary school, I did an art and design diploma. I knew that I wanted a career in the arts but I didn't know which medium. I studied ceramics, photography and fashion. I leaned towards fashion since I was interested in textiles. I then applied to several schools: The Glasgow School of Art, University of Dundee and Edinburgh Napier University. There was also Galashiels' School of Textile and Design, the biggest textile school in the U.K..

I narrowed it down to Napier and Galashiels. I wanted to study in a technical school, and Glasgow was known for being very arty farty—projects looked good but how do you build it? I drew up a long list of pros and cons for both schools. Then dad tossed a coin; and Napier won heads up. I have never looked back. And, except for a bit of theatre where it was more applied arts, I have been practicing interior design fulltime.

You worked in theatre?

After I graduated from Napier University with a major in interior design, I travelled and backpacked for about 18 months. Then I went back to Napier for some post graduate studies in administration and information management, to get an understanding about the business side.

My first job after graduation was in repertory theatre in Edinburgh. I designed stage sets for Royal Lyceum Theatre. My hair was in a ponytail and I lived in dungarees while building those stage sets. I loved it! The job was so creative and hands on. I did all the paint effects and even built a whole forest of trees. Then I came out to Hong Kong in 1994.

What drew you to Asia?

When I was backpacking, I travelled within Asia but didn't manage to get to Hong Kong. I wanted to come here. There was a lot of work at the time, and I was confident that I would find a job when I arrived.

I asked around after I got here and was interviewed by Joyce Lawson of Lawson & Co. Joyce worked with her husband Bill, and she gave me my first real job in interior design. She was working on a design competition for Duty Free Shopping and had two weeks to come up with a concept. She offered to hire me without pay; if we won the competition, I would get a job with her. Within those two weeks, if I had another interview, I was free to pursue it. I worked my butt off! And I got my first job in Hong Kong, where I stayed for three years. Joyce made me an associate director. We focused mostly on high end retail projects, such as Seibu and Lane Crawford.

Then you joined William Lim at CL3.

I was offered a design director job with CL3 in 1998. I stayed with the company for 6 ½ years. William made me a director with the company.

You worked on mostly corporate interiors while at CL3?

Many firms are really focused and specialised. CL3 moved with the times. When I was with CL3, the hospitality market crashed and hotels weren't spending money. They were just concentrating on filling rooms for the revenue. But office projects were really rife. Then those corporate projects fell away and hospitality picked up. CL3 had an ability to adapt. It was a case where a design practice could take on any type of projects.

I learned a lot working there. The best lesson was local knowledge. I managed to build up an extensive portfolio in a short space of time on some really amazing projects. If I worked for six years in Scotland, my portfolio would be a fraction of the size. Projects in Hong Kong live and move fast. Then you are on to next thing quickly. It was a brilliant lesson: learning to get it done and no messing about.

But then you left.

During the time that I was with CL3, I got married. My husband Richard is an architect and originally from London; we met here through mutual friends in the industry. Then I had my first son. I was travelling too much. I was very busy and felt burnt out. It was time for a change.

Richard and I discussed making a complete change. After 10 years in Hong Kong, we wanted to live somewhere else. He was offered a job with Atkins in Dubai and we went for it. It was originally intended to be a couple of years.

How did your firm Stickman evolve?

I was working with the Dubai office of dwp and left with the view to set up my own office. Marcos Cain and I worked together at dwp, and we wanted to have a smaller, more focused company specialising in hospitality—our passion. So we both left and established Stickman in a café halfway between his house and mine, with a blank piece of paper. I had an agreement with dwp that I would take Conrad and Shangri-La with me when I left, and we continued with those projects.

We set up in early 2009, at the height of the crash. A few clients said that we were insane. But we figured that there was no time like the present. We hit the ground running with a number of five star projects for Shangri-La in China. Then we landed a project with Conrad in Dubai.

And we have grown from there. I love having my own company; I should have done it years ago! It's very rewarding.

Why hospitality?

After 20 years, you know which kinds of projects shake your boat. I prefer hospitality. It is so much more interesting, with so much scope and that wow factor. We've been pigeonholed as F&B specialists. For us, every single restaurant and bar has to be completely different. And within a project, there is a lot of bespoke design: custom lighting, furniture and details.

We also take care of brand development: naming the venue, designing staff uniforms, even glassware selection. A lot of times those things are left to purchasing agents or chefs. Typically, designers only specify tables and chairs. We wanted everything in our restaurants to be part of our concept.

Now we are branching out further. Our Dubai office is doing a fully branded hotel. And I would love to get a three or four star boutique hotel project here in Asia. After two years in our Dubai office, we doubled in size and had to move to new offices. Then we set up in Hong Kong in 2012.

Why Hong Kong again?

We had previously put in a bid on a project in Hong Kong when we were in Dubai but didn't get the job because they wanted a local designer. And Shangri-La was paying for us to fly over here on Emirates business class about once a month. Losing that Hong Kong project was the final straw. We knew that we needed an office here.

Marcos is Australian and had also worked in Asia before. I had lived in Hong Kong for 10 years and knew a lot of people in town. We both felt that Hong Kong was our best base for Asia. It's central and on the doorstep to China. It made sense for our second office to be here.

We are slowly growing in Hong Kong. We initially came here to give our clients a bit of comfort. I saw our Asian clients regularly, marketed Stickman and developed our business. The plan was to do that for a year and then set up an office. We signed our office lease a year to the day after I landed in Hong Kong, and our fifth staff started March 1st.

Dubai is our head office with 20 people, and Marcos runs it. We have a brother and sister-like relationship. Marcos comes from the owner and operator side of hospitality. I'm from a pure interior design background and worked up the ranks as a consultant. We balance each other out. He's strong on the business side: everything is black and white. He's teaching me to be more astute and cutthroat. I'm stronger on business development. I'm not shy! I go out and meet people while he's more about the nuts and bolts of running an office. We Skype each other regularly, as the Hong Kong office concentrates on business development and concept, while CAD packages are done in Dubai along with our core business. Economically, space and salaries are higher in Hong Kong.

We have a democratic design process and give our designers a lot of latitude. Our Dubai studio is open, with long white benches. Marcos and I usually have music going full blast. We take on junior designers and graduates through a one year internship endorsed by universities in the U.S. and Canada in Dubai. We make our young designers part of the concept development and workshops. It just can't be Marcos and

I designing all the time! We will divvy up who heads the project while controlling the quality that goes out to make sure that the design meets the brief. We may not attend every single meeting, but we know what's going on.

What are the biggest differences between working in Dubai and Hong Kong?

Dubai is a lot slower, though it has picked up again recently. There are a lot of projects there, but getting them done requires a lot of starts and stops. After it won the 2020 World Expo, projects are moving faster now.

In Hong Kong, you work with Hong Kong people. With the exception of one or two gweilos, everyone at CL3 was from Hong Kong. Our clients were from Hong Kong. In Dubai, project managers, contractors and designers are all foreign workers or expats. There are not a lot of local Emirati working in our industry. Through our internship programme, we get Middle East students from countries such as Jordan, Syria and Egypt. It's difficult to hire an Emirati; they are only 10% of the Dubai population. Our entire office is comprised of expats: Irish, Scottish, Egyptian, American/Iranian, Filipino and Indian. And, of course, Aussies. It's an international office.

How has your experience in China changed over time?

Some of the Chinese developments are incredible. We are working on a Japanese restaurant for Shangri-La in Shenyang. We are working in more second and third tiered cities such as Chengdu, Nanjing and Hangzhou. I am always shocked at their level of sophistication. In Shenyang, it's all LV and Chanel stores built to quality and at an amazing scale. The streets and landscaping are incredible. I even saw trees with intravenous drip bags to feed them.

Before, it was hard finding materials in China. The country still has a bit of finishing issues but generally the quality is a lot better. Metalwork is very sophisticated and joinery is not a problem. Previously we would specify a fabric and, as hotels are not going to pay that kind of money for an imported fabric, suppliers tried to copy it. But it would be a bad copy. Now, suppliers are doing deals for the China market for a Chinese version with the same quality. These local suppliers pay a royalty to the original company; it's called a down weave. At the end of the day, it is China. The 40% import tax is a big deal if you're doing a 600 room hotel.

With offices and clients on two continents, how do you balance your family life?

I make a point of not working on weekends and dedicate that time to my kids. I try to be home every night to have dinner with them. My hours are flexible, and I try not to work late in the office. After they are in bed at 8:30 pm, I can jump onto emails. But I make sure a two hour slot is taken out of every night for dinner, homework, baths and brushing teeth. My husband is like a big kid; he needs attention, too! And the dog needs walking.

It's tricky for a working mum. We need to sign forms and check on homework. I take care of all the domestic stuff. I get phone calls in middle of day from school about bumps on head and I have to collect my son. But we mums get on and do it. It's not an issue; it's my job. Sometimes it's a strain when we're busy in the office, while other times I can duck out and join a school trip. Since it's my own company, I have the flexibility to do this. Design is not a nine-to-five job. Sometimes my kids will come into the office or I take them on business trips. I involve them as much as possible. Both Reuben and Zachary are attending Japanese international school here, and they both have the creative gene.

Do you feel that Hong Kong is home?

I prefer Hong Kong to Dubai. It's a vibrant city with a pulse. The majority of people here are Hong Kong Chinese. I love walking its streets. It's a very social place. There is street culture, with boutiques and galleries. Dubai has no street culture; it's all roads and highways and shopping malls. I missed that street culture. Coming back has been fantastic.

The last time I lived here, I was in a transient mode. I thought of it as an opportunity and that I would be here for a couple of years. This time, it was a conscious decision to be back as a family with kids. We bought a car and are living in a village. I love village culture: talking to neighbours and socialising with them. I feel like we're much more imbedded in Hong Kong this time. We are not going back; we are going forward.



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Industrially produced inspirational environments

Graphic Concrete Ltd manufactures and sells an innovative product known as graphic concrete. It enables durable patterns and images to be produced on prefabricated concrete surfaces such as facades, walls and pavement slabs. Graphic concrete is a patented technology invented by interior architect Samuli Naamanka. The inspiration was to create a real industrial product for large-scale surfaces, a tool with which architects could be more visually creative.

Since the late 1990s we have been working around the world with projects ranging from industrial buildings to fine art. Today our technology is a proven concept within the prefabrication concrete industry. An extensive number of reference buildings demonstrates the vast range of building designs in which graphic concrete can be used. Our goal is to enable architects and designers to turn their visions into reality. Our products can be tailored, and the outcome of each project is unique. We believe in building a better environment through the use of graphic concrete.

Graphic concrete – the product

Our end product is a membrane used in the prefabrication process of concrete. The desired image is printed on the membrane with a surface retarder, after which the membrane is sent to the local concrete prefabrication company. Concrete is cast on the membrane and when the retarder is washed away the image is revealed. The image results from the contrast between the fair face and the exposed aggregate surface.



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Silver Treasures

An exhibition of solid silver items is currently on display at Altfield Gallery in Hong Kong's Central district. The intricately designed vases, bowls and serving trays were produced by a group of highly skilled Asian silversmiths. According to Altfield, each piece is individually beaten out, shaped, carved and coaxed into its final form by hand, and therefore displays its own particular beauty. One of the highlights of the show is the silver swirl vase, a decorative 'work of art' resulting from hand-hammered repoussé and chasing techniques. www.altfield.com.hk



Expanding East

Axel Vervoordt Gallery has established a distinct new presence in Hong Kong. The gallery is principally located in Antwerp, Belgium, with its parent company, which specialises in antiques and interior design. "This is an exciting moment for the Axel Vervoordt Company. Following the success of the gallery in Antwerp, we have been planning our first international venture and Hong Kong is the obvious location from which to continue to explore the artistic dialogue between East and West, which is so central to the ethos of our organisation," says director Boris Vervoordt (standing right). The new exhibition space, which is managed by Mi Jeong Kim, will enable the gallery to grow its roster of artists and foster relationships with contemporary Asian talents, in particular. www.axel-vervoordt.com



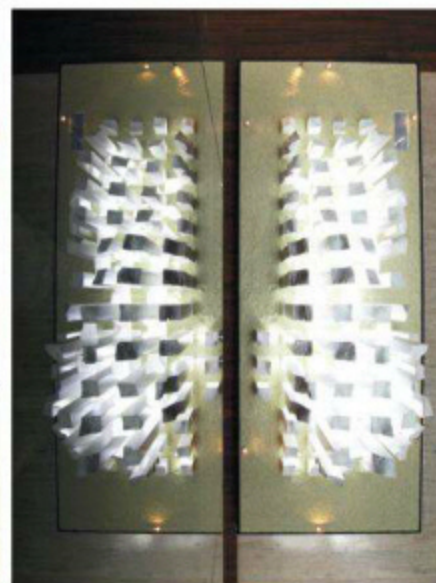
Fun Furniture

Italian designer Luca Valota has created a storage unit that mimics the look and, to an extent, the structure of the iconic game Connect Four. The abstract board game, invented by Milton Bradley in 1974, consists of a vertically suspended grid of circular hollows into which red or yellow discs are alternately dropped to form a single-colour row. In Valota's version, called DISK36, large discs can be hooked to the doors via an internal rolling mechanism, making it possible to change the look of the closet anytime by simply moving the red and yellow dots into different positions. The blue cupboard is made of a specially varnished wood, treated to reflect the look and feel of plastic used in the original game. DISK36 is available through E1+E4. www.e1e4.com



Mad for Metal

Italian contemporary plastic furniture brand Kartell is moving away from its signature style with a new collection of furniture, rendered in metal and aptly named Precious Kartell. "We want to focus attention on quality and preciousness, on the glamour and luxury of Kartell plastics, presented with brand new, exclusive and glossy faux metal finishes in gold, bronze, silver, gunmetal grey, and copper," says Kartell designer Ferruccio Laviani. The brand's bestsellers, including the Masters chair, the Shanghai vase and the Bloom lamp, have all been re-envisioned in shiny metallic finishes. To view the complete collection, visit www.kartell.it



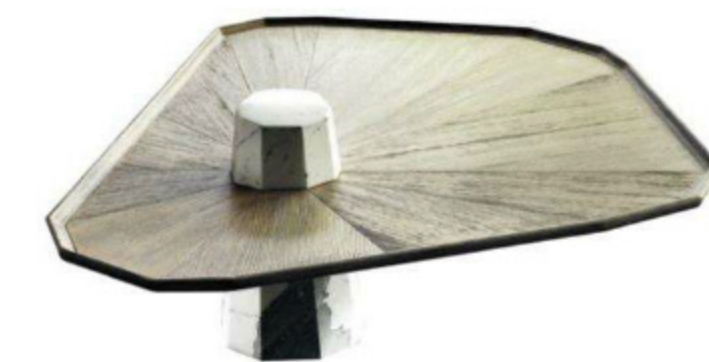
Ode to Mountains

The Opposite House in Beijing is showcasing a series of charcoal drawings and large-scale sculptures by artist Charles Chau. The exhibition presents Chau's 'Breathing Mountain' installation, a large, distinctive sculpture made from wood panels, coated paint and LED lighting. It is flanked by three charcoal drawings, 'Beyond', 'Transcend', and 'Reflect', each of which highlights a different perspective of the installation's form and topography. "In this new set of works, I have aimed to convey the solidity and space of the mountain range, the massiveness of peaks that thrust up from the earth's crust, and the welcome emergence of creeks and streams," explains Chau. Titled 'Mountain Vastness', the exhibition is being held at the hotel's lobby until the end of this month. www.theoppositehouse.com www.charleschauprojects.com



Barcelona in Hong Kong

Works by renowned Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí were the subject of a recent show at Times Square, in Causeway Bay. Organised by Times Square Hong Kong, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya and Basílica de la Sagrada Família, the exhibition featured fourteen of Gaudí's classic works, ranging from grand basilicas to diminutive objects such as door handles, chimneys and chairs. Local designer Dolphin Ngai was invited to create a 10m-tall paper model of La Sagrada Família, which, not surprisingly, caught the eye of many a passerby. Additionally, videos and rare photographs illustrating Gaudí's architectural concepts, sources of inspiration, and ideology transformed the mall's piazza into a pictorial space. www.timessquare.com.hk



Solid Stuff

Photography by Marie Clairin

The Webwood coffee table by French architect and designer Fabrice Ausset is the perfect accent piece for any style of decor. It has an irregularly shaped Oregon pine top and a polished marble monolith core. Says Ausset, "Offering an alliance between strength and lightness, Webwood is a metaphor for a net, or a web woven by a spider." Webwood is available in a limited edition through Philippe Hurel. www.philippe-hurel.com www.fabriceausset.net



New Perspectives

White Cube is hosting an exhibition of works by LA-based artist Mark Bradford, most famous for his multi-layered collage paintings. For this show, the artist created a series directly inspired by Hong Kong. Stacking up architectural blueprints of Hong Kong's public housing units and found objects such as billboard posters and newsprint, Bradford sands away at the layers to create complex and captivating "social abstractions" intended to highlight and explore "the power structures of the city". www.whitecube.com



Basket Chair

Renowned outdoor furniture brand Kettal presented Patricia Urquiola's new Maia Rope collection at this year's Milan Design Week. Acclaimed as one of the most original collections of the season, the stylish, high-back armchairs are suitable for virtually any modern outdoor living area. The chairs are "hand-braided" with nautical rope and come in a variety of shades. www.kettal.com



The Grand Panda Occupation

A troop of 1,600 papier-mache pandas has taken up residence in Hong Kong. Designed by French artist Paulo Grangeon, the sculptures have previously occupied Paris, Rome, Berlin and Taipei in an effort to bring attention to the plight of the panda. The result of a collaboration between Grangeon, the World Wildlife Fund, Hong Kong's nascent creative space PMQ, and creative studio AllRightsReserved, each sculpture represents one panda still alive today (Human activities have whittled the global population of pandas down to 1,596). The Hong Kong visit began this month and covers major tourist destinations, including the Hong Kong International Airport, Po Lin Monastery and Victoria Park. www.pmq.org.hk www.allrights-reserved.com www.wwf.org.hk



Green Taps

Bathroom amenities specialist Hansgrohe's new Logis mixers are characterised by clean lines, rounded contours and taut surfaces. They come in different heights and handle variants, with options for cloakrooms and larger household bathrooms. To ensure optimum use of resources, all the mixers are equipped with EcoSmart technology, enabling them to deliver up to five litres of water per minute. The Logis 70 and Logis 100 mixers are also available as CoolStart models. The water- and energy-saving features of the Logis range have earned it the top rating of Water Efficiency Label (WELL) Class A. www.hansgrohe.com



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Former Police Married Quarters (PMQ)

Hollywood Road, Hong Kong
Architectural Services Department



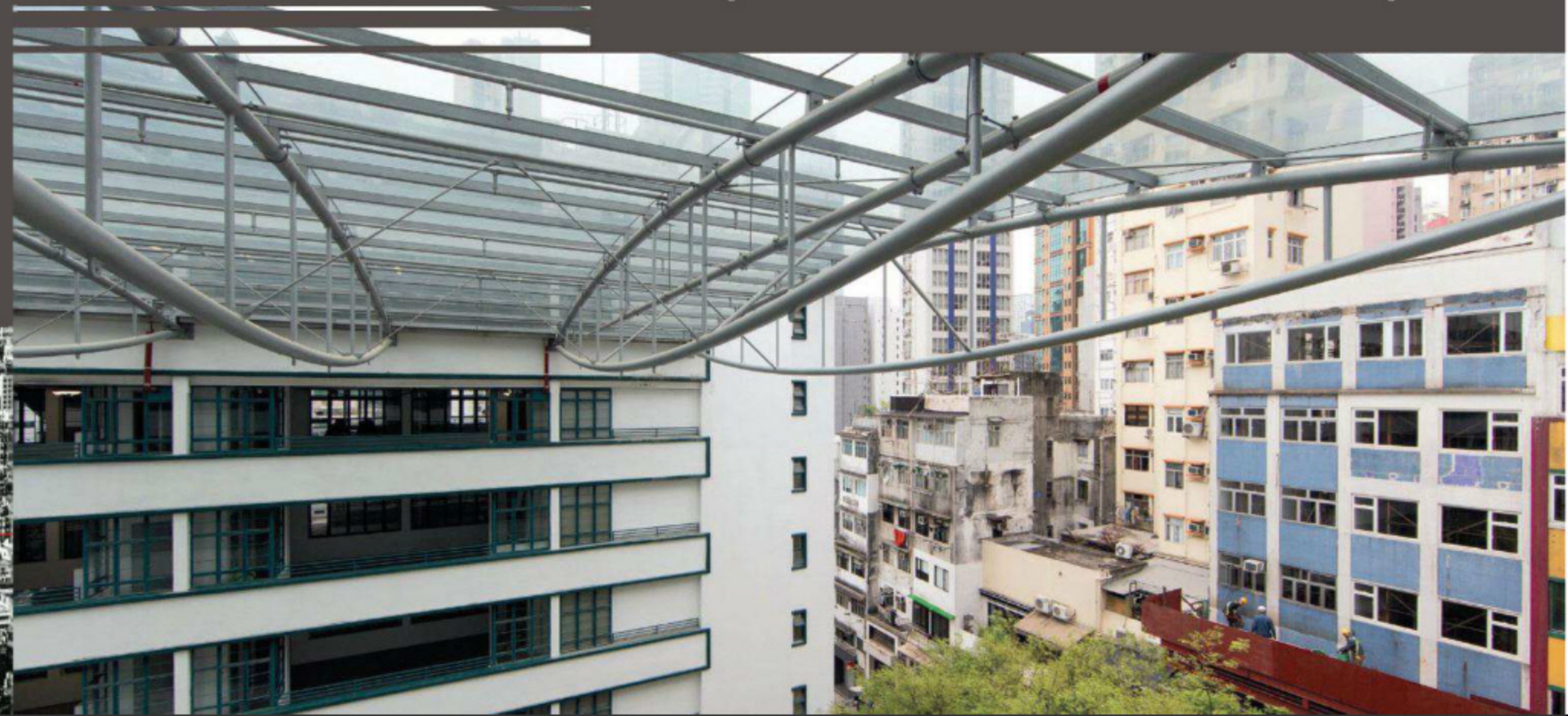
It is a rare occurrence in Hong Kong: a sizeable building plot in the city centre, housing a low-rise structure unused for years, survives the gluttonous appetites of local developers. Yet to not merely save such a relic but actually transform it into something fresh, exciting and useful that will contribute significantly to urban cultural health, is almost miraculous. That is exactly what has happened to the former Police Married Quarters, which straddles Hollywood Road, Staunton Street and Aberdeen Street, and is now the city's finest example of regenerative reuse: a multifunctional facility administered by a newly created non-profit organisation and dedicated to the arts and creative industries. It will house selective retail and F&B outlets, exhibition space, artists' studios and residences, as well as a sizeable public outdoor space for the general pleasure of citizens. In two short years, it has been transformed from a near-derelect, if architecturally characteristic, hulk into one of the most exciting foci of the city. How unusual for Hong Kong.



The site has historical significance, and not only because a former and the current Chief Executive of Hong Kong spent parts of their childhood living there. Even before the police facility existed, the site was home to the Central School, renamed Victoria College in 1889, then Queen's College in 1894, until that moved to Causeway Bay in 1950, having sustained damage during World War II. A new building replaced it on the

site: the first devoted to housing Asiatic married police staff and their families. It was a particularly fine example of a strain of architectural style prevalent during the fifties; one that echoed the best attributes of the European Bauhaus approach adapted to a semi-tropical climate, with an emphasis on expressed functional layout and minimal embellishment. The masterplanning rationally utilised a site that sloped down from Staunton to Hollywood, setting three building blocks laterally on a series of terraced levels formed by rubble-granite retaining walls. Two large rectilinear blocks [A and B]

of eight and seven storeys, respectively, protected a long, open courtyard between them, while a smaller, two-storey structure called the Junior Police Call Building [JPC] sat upon the Hollywood Road plateau. All three were constructed of reinforced concrete, and boasted lovely steel windows. During their use as residence for the police families, small individual apartments were accessed via open corridors facing the courtyard, with private recessed terraces for each unit facing outward, south and north. These terraces also provided small kitchen cubicles, and were ideal for cooking and





drying laundry, not to mention safe places for infants to play in. Cooking also took place in the wide, shared corridors, and various former occupants have attested to the general communal spirit and functioning of the PMQ, even if facilities for bathing had to be shared. A public latrine, located underneath Staunton Street at the corner of Aberdeen Street, had been built in 1918.

Still visible in the new project are most of the original granite perimeter and retaining walls onsite, and they have become a kind of palimpsest of the long history of the place. The architects at ASD have also taken care to preserve one of the most publicly recognised features

of the site: a series of monumental trees that have grown for decades along the massive stone walls along Hollywood Road and the site's fourth boundary. Shing Wong Street. These giant shade-givers have gained the status of local landmarks, looked upon very protectively by the neighbourhood residents, and it was determined they – and the walls they grow out of – could survive undisturbed.

With so few sites of architectural importance



remaining to be saved in Hong Kong, it would have been tragic to lose this one. Yet its survival was by no means ensured, until the government made its decision and invited NGOs to bid for its administration. Given its placement within the social hub of Soho and the cultural hub of Sheung Wan, its programme seems almost inevitable – in

retrospect. A mixture of small-scale eateries and coffee shops with innovative retail activity will provide a basic rental income to help subsidise rental studios for artists and creative enterprises, so that everything from design and fashion to fine art can be generated within the complex.

The ASD established certain important principles during the process. The existing structures would be refurbished, upgraded, enhanced with as much subtlety as possible, so that the final outcome would seem light-handed in the extreme. Since the work had to include major plumbing, wiring and safety upgrades, this was a challenging task. The result proves its success, however, as the current 'PMQ' looks more than anything like a well-rested version

of its former self, and the upgrades are as under the radar as possible. Even the original steel-mullioned windows have been replaced with new steel-mullioned windows, which required extensive custom manufacturing to pull off.

Another principle adopted was that the rich history of the site would be exhibited, and indeed it is. In fact, foundations revealed during the repair works forced an adaptation of the plan to include a new area where

visitors can see the archaeological finds. This is now an almost hidden treasure, open to urban sleuths curious about the city's past.

A third driving ideal was that the new site be as thoroughly accessible as possible to the general public. Porosity is achieved by opening multiple





access points to the various streets flanking the site. It is possible for visitors to wander in, through, and out of the site from almost all directions, and gateways will remain open for maximum lengths of time daily.

The only major architectural addition to the site is a glass box 'pavilion' inserted between the two main blocks, and now joining them. This houses a large flexible-use space that can be lent or leased out for events, shows, exhibitions and the like. It spans the courtyard's width,

and is raised one level above it, to provide a huge shaded 'loggia' space underneath, which complements the remaining open section of the courtyard. It is already clear that this central open space will be the lively anchor of the whole complex, a semi-public 'piazza' to be used and enjoyed by tenants and visitors alike.

The majority of the original studio units show hardly any obvious signs of renovation, which is good, since they were already almost ideal workspaces for artists and designers. With

their huge window walls and natural cross-ventilation, they appear to have been made – even originally – more for artists than for police kids. Walter Gropius would have felt right at home here, and doubtless the fortunate people who are now approved to use them will feel the same way.

The clearest proof that the ASD has succeeded with the PMQ is the understatement of its intervention here, in spite of the project's complexity; most visitors won't know where the

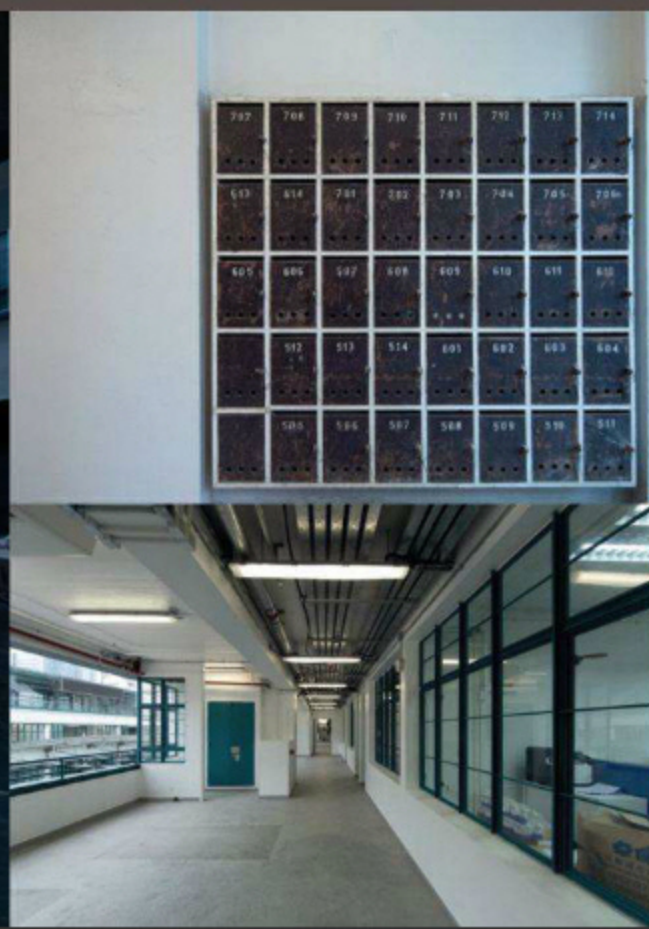
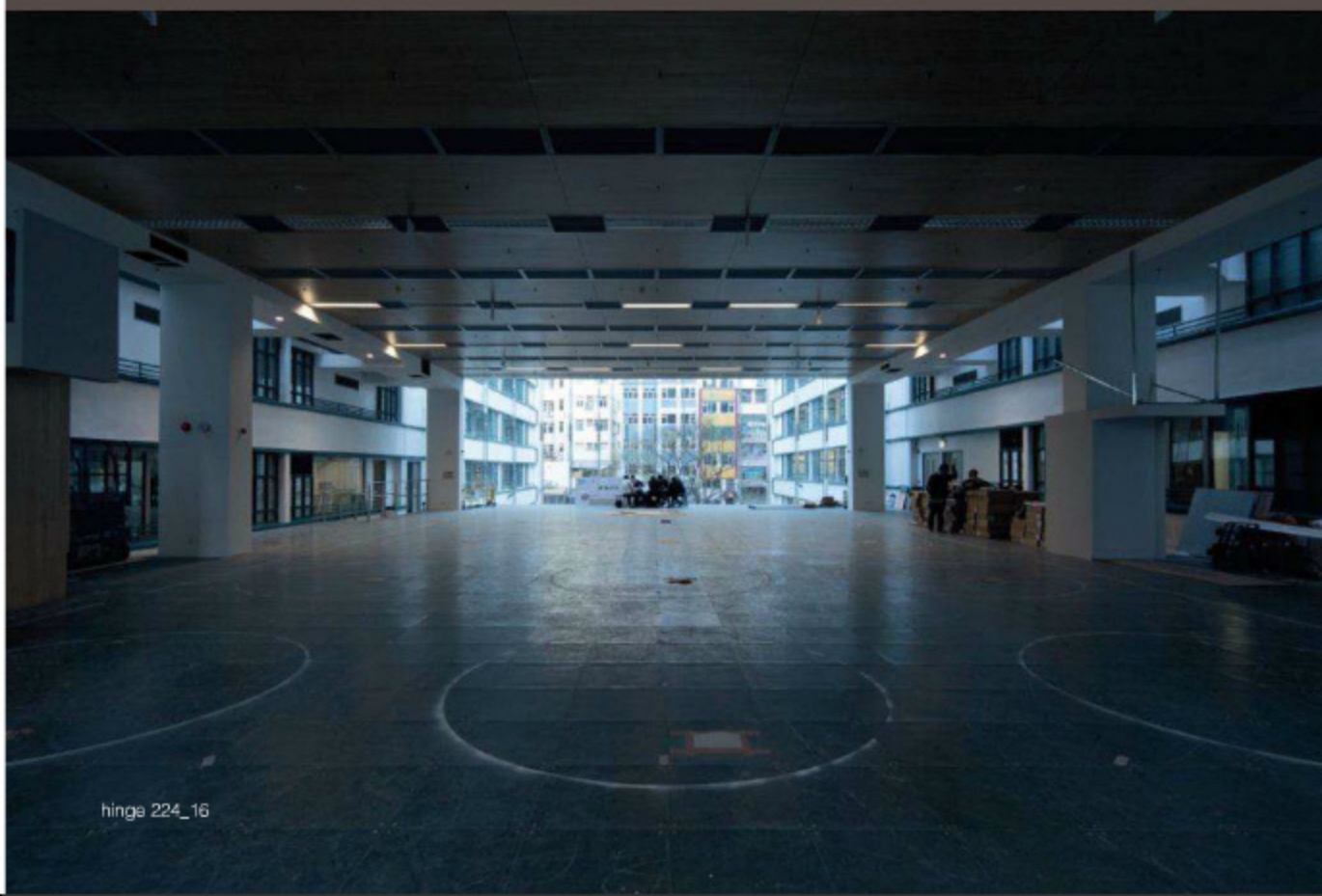


old meets the new. With such a stellar architectural artefact to begin with, the wisdom of 'standing back' and helping it to shine again is obvious. But that doesn't mean it was guaranteed. It is hard to imagine many private design firms being quite so humble. It is heartening to know, though, that a project of such worthiness can be undertaken with sensitive expertise. And here in Hong Kong! The PMQ must surely persuade any doubters of the value and abundant potential of adaptive reuse of our few remaining historical buildings and spaces. It is also a shining tribute to the capabilities of the



Architectural Services Department, when given a worthy challenge. It may be far too late to save and adapt countless of the city's older architectural gems – they have long disappeared – but for the few that have survived, and for anyone confused as to

what to do with them, the PMQ will now be Exhibit A. Hong Kong has the skills, the money and, sometimes, the will to make superb contributions to our urban realm.



GOING PLACES

House Unimog

Fabian Evers Architecture and Wezel Architektur
Tubingen, Germany

Photography by Sebastian Berger, except where noted



Photography by Michael Schnabel

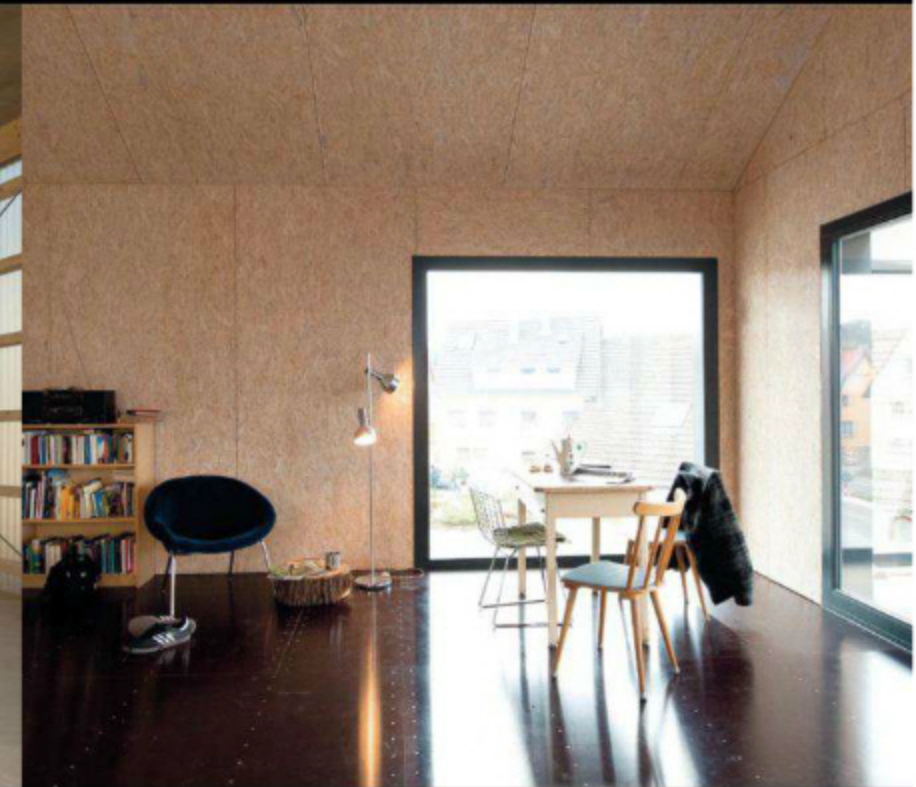


Photography by Michael Schnabel

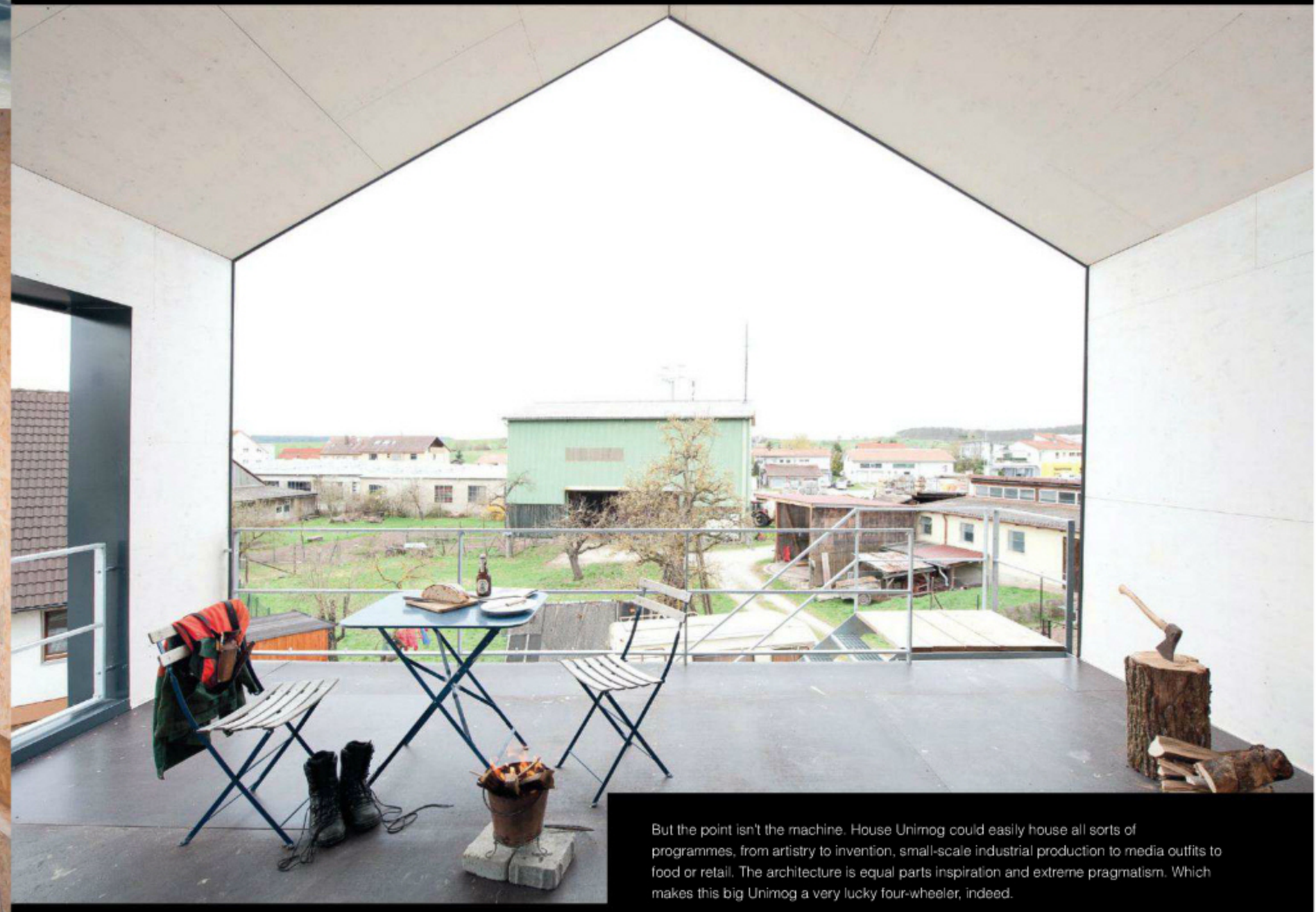
The trouble with buying a Unimog is where to put the thing. These plus-sized utility vehicles, produced by Mercedes Benz, may have near cult-status among those who lean that way, but they don't fit into your average residential garage. That was a main part of the project brief for the architects of this little building in Germany. The need was for a workshop, a garage for the Unimog, and a small residential space. All this had to squeeze into a rather dense village context, with petite houses or farms all round, and a busily trafficked street adjacent. Oh, and it had to be built for a very small amount of money (170,000 euros, eventually).

The solution is elegant and exceedingly simple. It stacks the residential space atop the workshop/garage within an elemental rectangular box. This allowed the house

above to enjoy views further afield, while the space below could get on with tasks at hand. After that, it was all about the facades, or rather, the cladding. For the lower level, translucent polycarbonate panels were chosen – which probably qualifies as a stroke of genius. They flood the interior space with luminous indirect natural daylight, while concealing the more messy, 'workshopy' activities inside from neighbours' potentially offended eyes. At night, when good hobbyists (and dedicated service providers) are slipping in a few extra hours of work after supper, the lower half of House Unimog becomes a vibrant lantern, veritably glowing with implied productivity. It is now the village lightbox, and it's hard to imagine nearby citizens not at least slightly disappointed when its warm, suggestive glow is doused at bedtime... or during holidays.



The upper floor is clad in anthracite-toned ribbed panelling, and sports crisply proportioned openings plus, at one end, a generous covered loggia. Otherwise, interior materials are kept to plywood panels and metal flooring – a logical and attractive elaboration of the workplace aesthetic begun downstairs. If doing so little ever looked better than this, we can't remember where. Large mullion-less apertures lend the main room a tinge of abstraction, and the ceiling follows the peaked roofline. It is a space to spend good amounts of time in, knowing your Unimog is safe and sound underfoot.



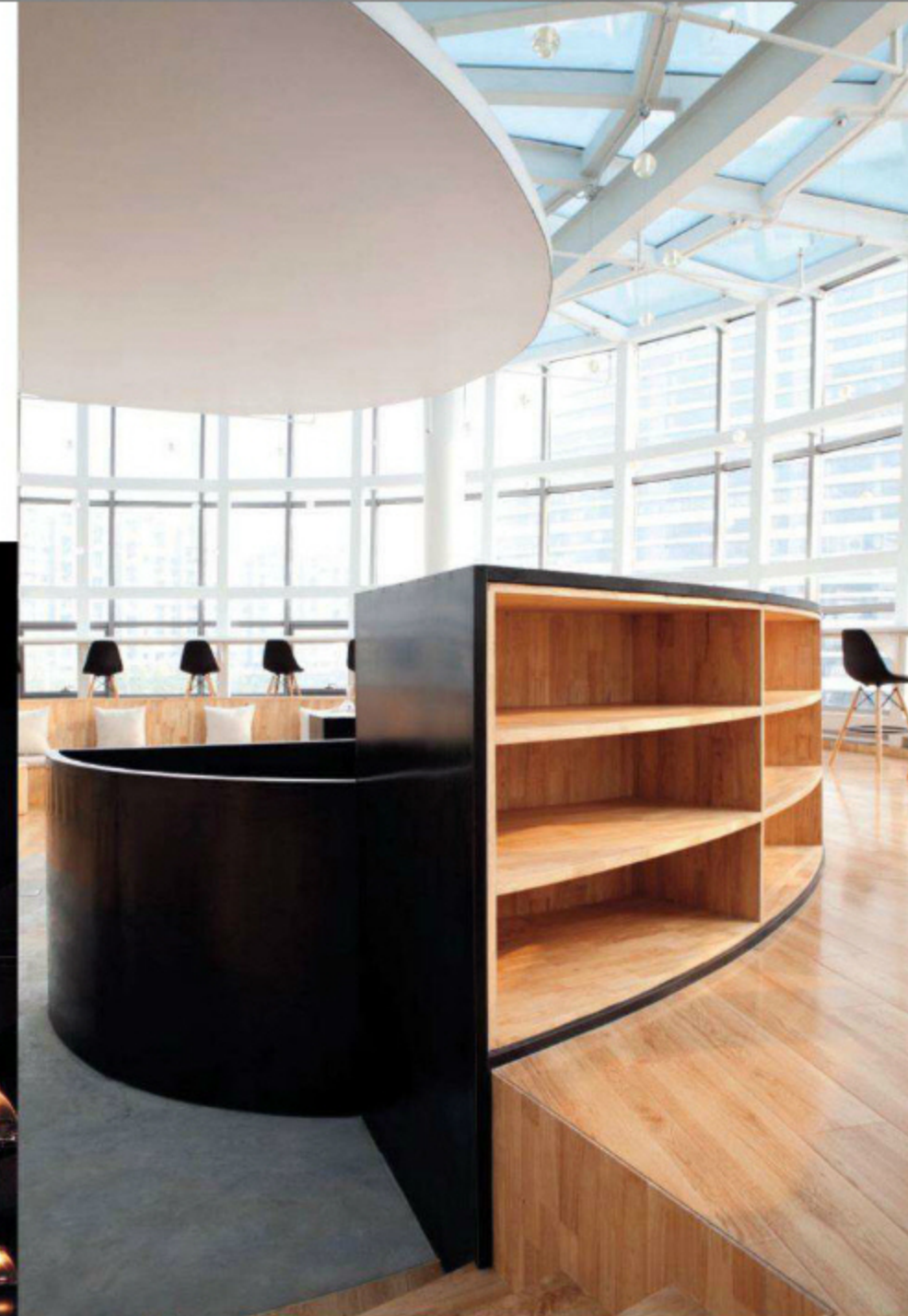
But the point isn't the machine. House Unimog could easily house all sorts of programmes, from artistry to invention, small-scale industrial production to media outfits to food or retail. The architecture is equal parts inspiration and extreme pragmatism. Which makes this big Unimog a very lucky four-wheeler, indeed.

CUP ONE

CAFE

WANGJING, BEIJING, CHINA

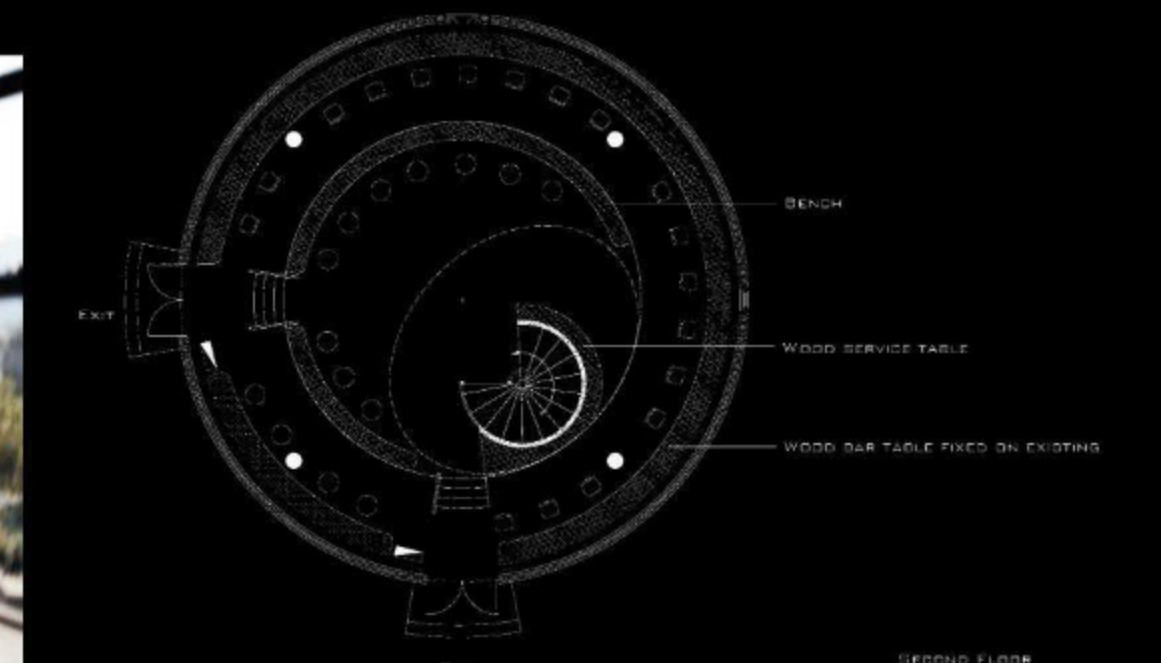
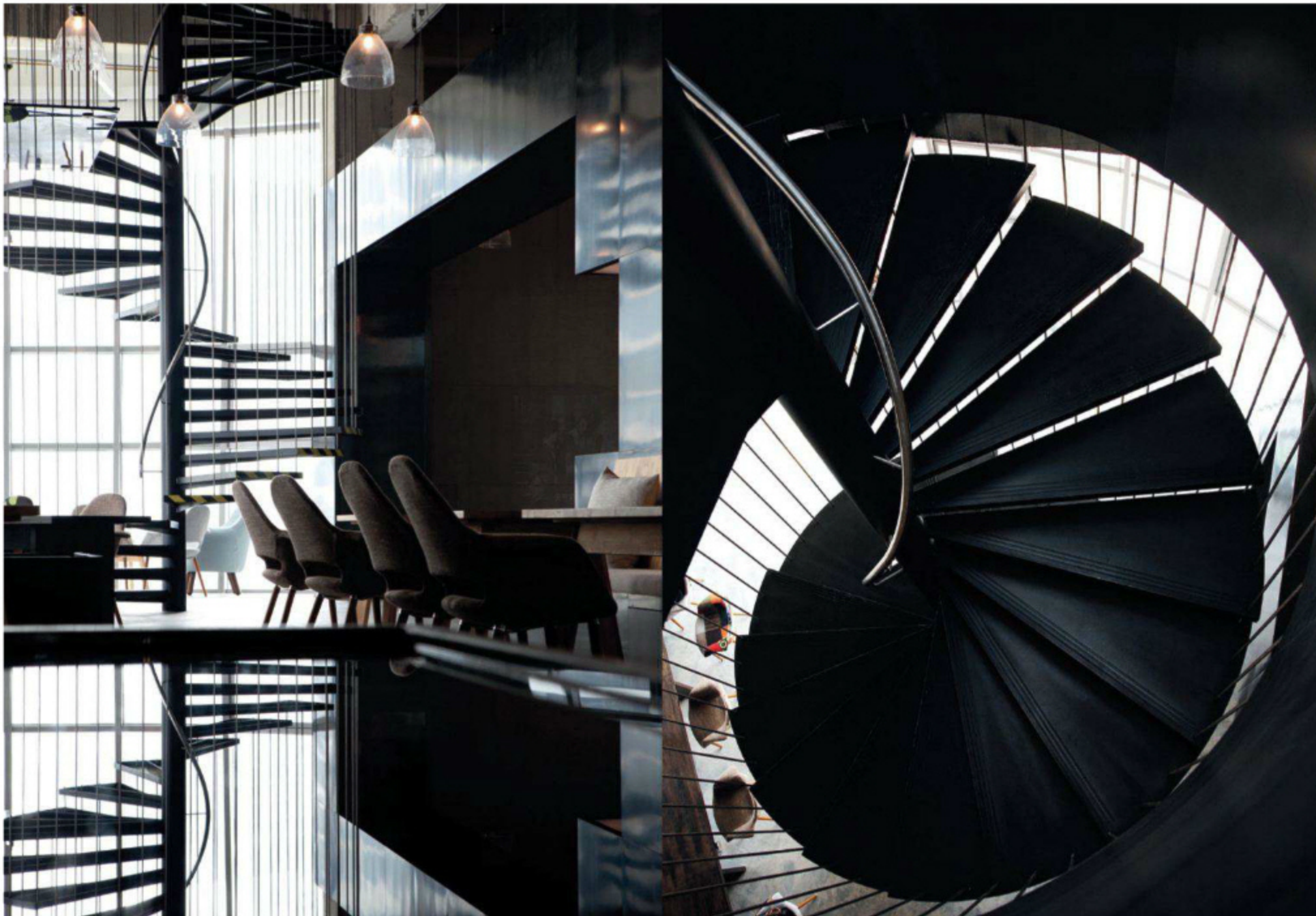
Latitude Studio



In modern urban culture, the coffee place is not only ubiquitous, it is also taken for granted, at least by users. We are easily frustrated if we can't caffeinate within a hundred metres of where we are at any given time – because usually we can. Never mind that we now fork out more for a simple medium latte than labourers pay for a lunch box; we expect real espresso, rapid service, comfortable seating, soft lighting, distracting reading material and fast WiFi. We demand these places be open earlier in the morning than we ever plan to rise, and stay open late into the evening for possible meetings – business or pleasure. The coffee shop, thanks largely to Starbucks' reinvention of the type, is our new communal family room, town square, library.

It's no surprise, then, that the design of these places has become as familiar as the aromas and muffin selection. The model is pretty good, so why do we need to be inventive? We don't. But the familiarity of it all ought to at least set general standards pretty high. This new coffee place in Beijing – Cup One Cafe – does virtually nothing new, but does it quite well.



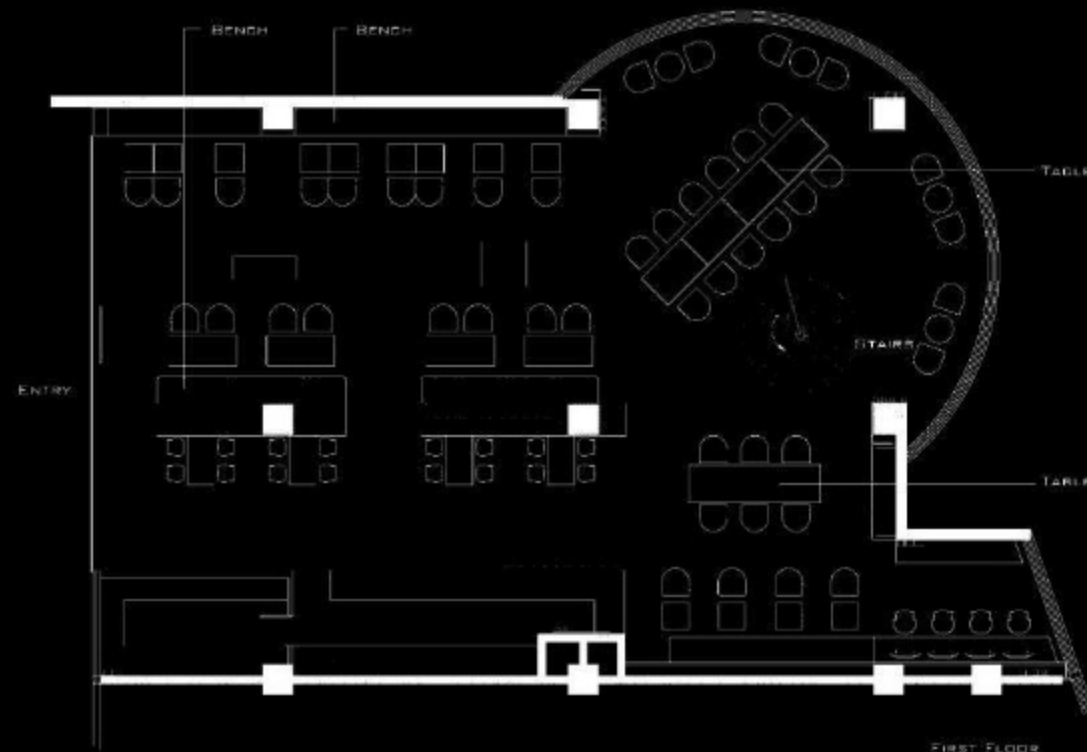


The circular staircase occupies a spot off-centre but prominent in the plan, and serves not only as the vertical circulation spine of Cup One, but also as a prime visual amenity. Constructed of steel, it is an open spiral ringed with vertical metal bars for safety and aesthetics. It could have been more 'designed', and we're very glad it wasn't. It leads to the quite different lounge above, which one can easily imagine being transformed for events, small installations or exhibits, talks, gatherings, company confabs and the like. But day to day, this quieter space, thanks in part to its being secluded by level, is simply a desirable nest to withdraw to with a close friend, a good read, or a bit of concentration-requiring laptop work. Latitude keeps with the round plan, installing a circular bench sofa to form an inner core, and an outer ring of stool seating and wrapping counter. Inward or outward, take your pick. It's a bit like a mini-pantheon for coffee and tea. The colour tones are warmer up here, with pale gray fabric softening the plywood bench, white paint surfaces, and timber flooring (downstairs the wood furniture is stained darker, to match the room palette).



Latitude Studio has done little more than bring good taste, exercise control over details, and ensure consistency throughout – even as they created a deliberate contrast between the two levels. In short, they did what good designers are always supposed to do, but often fail to. These small but important skills add up to a place we'd want to have near us. Like, now.

The two-storey space starts off by the book: in a corporate office tower with decent ceiling heights and large perimeter walls of glass to sit near and gaze out of, at the capital's commercial banality. Up a circular stairway is the primary surprise – a kind of glazed rotunda pavilion that pops above the roof and serves as an ideal getaway from the bustle all around. The designers at Latitude make the most of the two storeys, contrasting the upper 'lounge', bright with natural light, and the relatively dim, intimate, darkly outfitted lower level, which hews closely to precedent. There's a big open entryway (no traditional 'doorway' is allowed) inviting you in quickly toward a glowing, backlit coffee bar. Concrete floors, industrial-chic pendant lamps, and randomly scattered seating of different types, including at tables of varying sizes (perfect for small meetings, organised or spontaneous), pervade. Steel, concrete and subtle textiles ensure the references to similar spaces we know and love from all over the planet. It's a look that hasn't yet overstayed its welcome, and Latitude Studio has done its homework. There are some nice touches, such as the occasional contrasting of chair upholstery – a little wink and nod rather than a big 'look at me' – and the highly valued uncrowdedness of the layout.





WHAT Stacking Doughnut and Modular Flow, otherwise referred to as 'Glamping Architecture'. Got it?

WHERE Gyeonggi-do, Korea, in the middle of nature, with views of valley, forest and stream.

WHO ArchiWorkshop: HeJun Sim and SuJeong Park

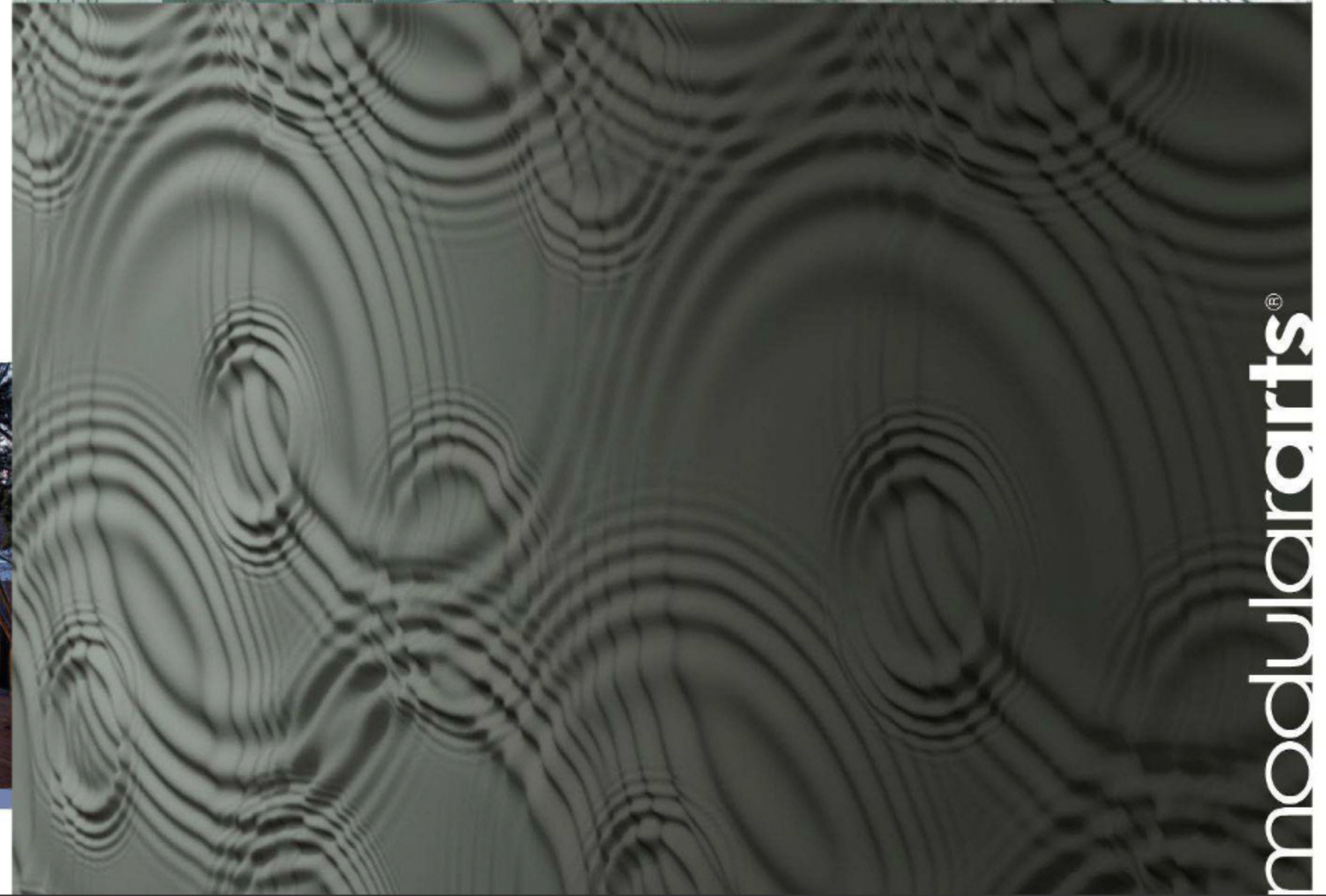
WHAT, PART 2 A new form of camping tent, in two formal options. Stacking Doughnut is (you guessed) circular, and was inspired by pebbles. Modular flow is linear and winding, and is extendable with modular floor panels. Both are constructed out of translucent membranes that are water-proof, fire resistant, and UV-defensive. The skins' double layers endure all four Korean seasons. Actually quite complex, the forms are modelled on computers, cut with 2d machines and welded together to ensure tautness and weather seals. Inside, it's clear that roughing it is for boy scouts; these babies boast toilets, wall art, architectural furniture and hip light qualities. After all, just because you're in the middle of nowhere, why should you have to sacrifice the mad cool of Milan, London or Seoul?

WHY Because it's high time the high-minded (and high-net-worth) types got back to nature. Because these things look damn good after dusk. Because digging foundations is so last century. Because little pavilions that look like worms – but in a sexy way – is hot.

WHAT, PART 3 "Glam" plus "Camping"... get it now?

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- WHAT** Hay Market, a brand new restaurant inspired by the English countryside.
- WHERE** On the mezzanine floor at Hong Kong's Sha Tin Racecourse.
- WHO** Award-winning architect and interior designer Joyce Wang.
- WHY** To give the track a more upscale atmosphere and allure. And to reach a younger, more sophisticated demographic.
- HOW** By mimicking the vibe of an old British horse stable, with solid wood, metal rails and rustic elements. Wang made use of Spanish tiles and marble to accentuate various areas of the restaurant. A nice touch is the staircase designed in the shape of a horseshoe, which connects the two private dining rooms to the main dining hall.



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Photography by Daici Aino



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WHAT

The Roof and Mushrooms Pavilion on a university campus in the Land of the Rising Sun.

WHERE

Kyoto University of Art and Design, in Japan's pre-Meiji Restoration capital.

WHO

The project is a collaboration between architect Ryue Nishizawa and design studio Nendo.

WHY

"The pavilion's spatial experience is intended to remind visitors of walking in the mountains under thick tree cover," says Nendo. As well as being the island nation's ancient capital, Kyoto is the country's pavilion-and-shrine capital. The old city is peppered with delicate timber structures. One more can't hurt.

HOW

Stone steps cut a path up a steep slope near a plum tree grove. An incline-hugging wood roof provides a little shelter or shade for those tackling the gradient on rainy or sunny days. Handmade metal stools – poles rise from the ground and twist and turn to form circular perches – are dotted along the route, for those short of breath or who simply wish to stop to smell the sakura. The stools are designed to resemble fungi, and they have been laid out in clusters, à la the way wild mushrooms grow.



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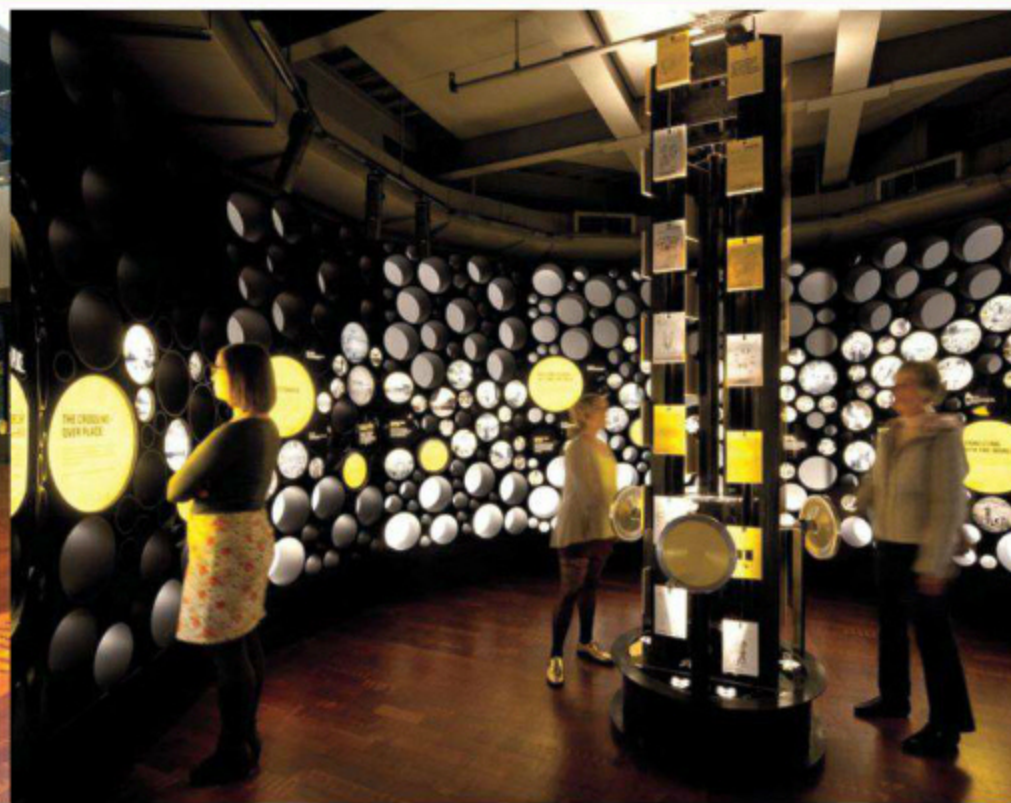
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Photography by Lara Swimmer

**WHAT**

Bezos Center for Innovation, an exhibition devoted to the theme of Seattle's culture of innovation.

WHERE

At the Museum of History & Industry [MOHAI] in Seattle, USA, home of Amazon (and Microsoft, and Boeing...).

WHO

Olson Kundig Architects, possibly the most innovative architectural practice in the area.

WHY

With an aspiration to inspire visitors and "ignite the innovator within" them, the show explicates the creative history of the city, inviting viewers to partake, if once removed from, the process of creativity itself. Because in a world with problems to spare, great new innovators won't go to waste.

HOW

Through a series of interactive installations with such titles as "The Idea Lab" and "We Shape our City", visitors are engaged directly in issues and ideas and the creation of solutions to problems or challenges. This experience-based approach helps teach the process of innovation, rather than simply record it, and conveys ideas about the definition of a great concept, the common traits of innovators or what it takes to bring an idea to positive fruition.



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CHEUNG FAI BUILDING – HONG KONG



Dutch architectural practice MVRDV has been commissioned to convert an old 14-storey warehouse into a modern business centre. Located in the industrial Kwun Tong area of East Kowloon, the building will be stripped down to its primary structure, which will be left raw and exposed. An open-plan interior scheme and a glass facade will maximise the amount of natural light reaching the 37 commercial units to be housed in the revamped edifice. The ground floor will be given over to retail and parking functions; the two levels above will contain restaurants. Atop the building will be a communal terrace, where staff can take a break or hold informal meetings, with views of Victoria Harbour in the background. Completion is scheduled for 2015.

ZEITZ MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART AFRICA – CAPE TOWN



FIFTH HOTEL TOWER, CITY OF DREAMS – COTAI



Across the water, in Macau, plans are afoot for a fifth tower at the City of Dreams complex on the Cotai Strip. Designed by Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, the yet-unnamed new 40-storey landmark will have a sculptural quality, with organically shaped voids at its centre. "The holes create a unique appearance and offer opportunities for exciting internal spaces," says developer Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. The structure is in essence two towers joined at podium and roof levels, with two midway bridges increasing inter-tower connections. The rectangular volume's facade will feature an exposed exoskeleton mesh. The first three storeys will house public functions and that Macau staple: a casino. Situated on the higher floors will be a 750-room luxury hotel, and all the trimmings that go with that: fancy restaurants and lounges, a swimming pool and a VIP gaming room.

RESIDENTIAL TOWER – BERLIN

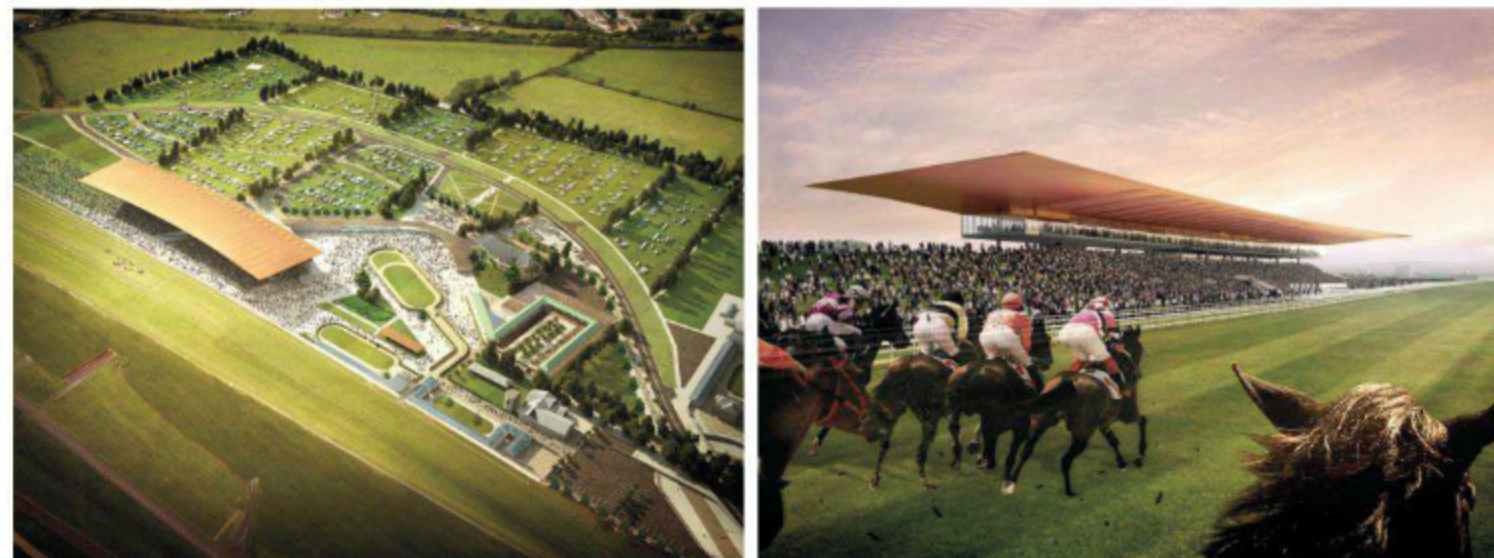


STATION MALL – HSINCHU CITY



Taiwan's 'Windy City' is to get a new transportation hub. Designed by Benoy, the facility will serve a station on the Hsinchu High-Speed Rail line, and will house retail and dining outlets, as well as an amphitheatre and cinemas. The project will endeavour to lower its carbon footprint by using sustainably sourced building materials and green roof insulation; solar power will be harnessed; rainwater will be collected and greywater will be recycled. The scheme will also incorporate glass facades, water features, metal sculptures and landscaped areas. "Hsin Chu Station Mall is set to become a green icon for the city," says Benoy divisional director Sarah Lee. "The development really is a strong example of how to integrate the environment with commercial design to deliver viable and inventive spaces [that] enrich the lifestyle of our communities."

CURRAGE RACECOURSE GRANDSTAND – NEWBURY



Ireland's premier racecourse is on track to get a makeover. Crossing the line first in an international competition to select an architectural practice to produce a concept design for the course's redevelopment was a thoroughbred jointly ridden by Grimshaw Architects and Newenham Mulligan & Associates. The proposal updates the venue's facilities, making it better able to maintain its preeminence on the international horseracing circuit while retaining the character and sense of history of the existing course. The scheme will comprise a new grandstand and masterplan that celebrates the topography of the site. "The integration of the new grandstand into this beautiful setting will be carefully and sensitively handled to establish a connection and balance between the natural and the manmade," says Grimshaw partner Kirsten Lees.

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TOY BOX

HEIMSPIEL HOUSE – EASY PLAYING

Franz zt gmbh

Photography by Kurt Kuball



When the clients' first daughter was born, so was the idea to move to a countryside village for a healthier lifestyle and more room for play. A modest house with renovation potential and a large garden answered the clients' needs. The project's limited budget, however, was largely consumed by necessary works to the original building, and by the time the planned addition was commenced, a second child had arrived. This prompted client and architect to emphasise spatial flexibility with an accent on space for play, plus a granny flat.

The addition took the form of a two-storey box with a mezzanine and a semi-basement flat (which could later be converted into a doctor's clinic). A strip of windows delivers daylight to the lower level, and this is recessed from the perimeter above, forcing the box to 'float' on the green landscape. Sanitary facilities occupy a freestanding core that also divides the plan into sleeping and living areas. The principal space is a high-ceilinged box opening onto the garden and flooded with natural light. It is basically the ideal





kids' playroom, with almost institutional dimensions, a climbing wall, swing and football goal. Later, when the children grow up, the space will be adapted to whatever the family needs, including possible division into rooms. The strategy is rather intelligent: build the simplest box for the least money now, when the kids just want to run around together, then modify it to more specific dimensions later, when needs require and finances allow.

The base of the building is constructed in in-situ concrete, while the 'box' above is largely in timber. Larchwood panels line the room interior. On the exterior, the new box is lathed in diagonal strips of grey wood, while the older house is now a white stucco form. The pitched roof of the senior structure helps to abstract it into almost a children's definition of 'house'. The juxtaposition is handsome, and the gap between the two forms is used as a link and for the staircase down to the granny flat.

The project outlines a model for multigenerational living that can evolve over time as families do. Certainly all houses do some of this, but a good-sized box is about as adaptable as it gets, whether it's used for toys or for people.

OPEN SOURCE

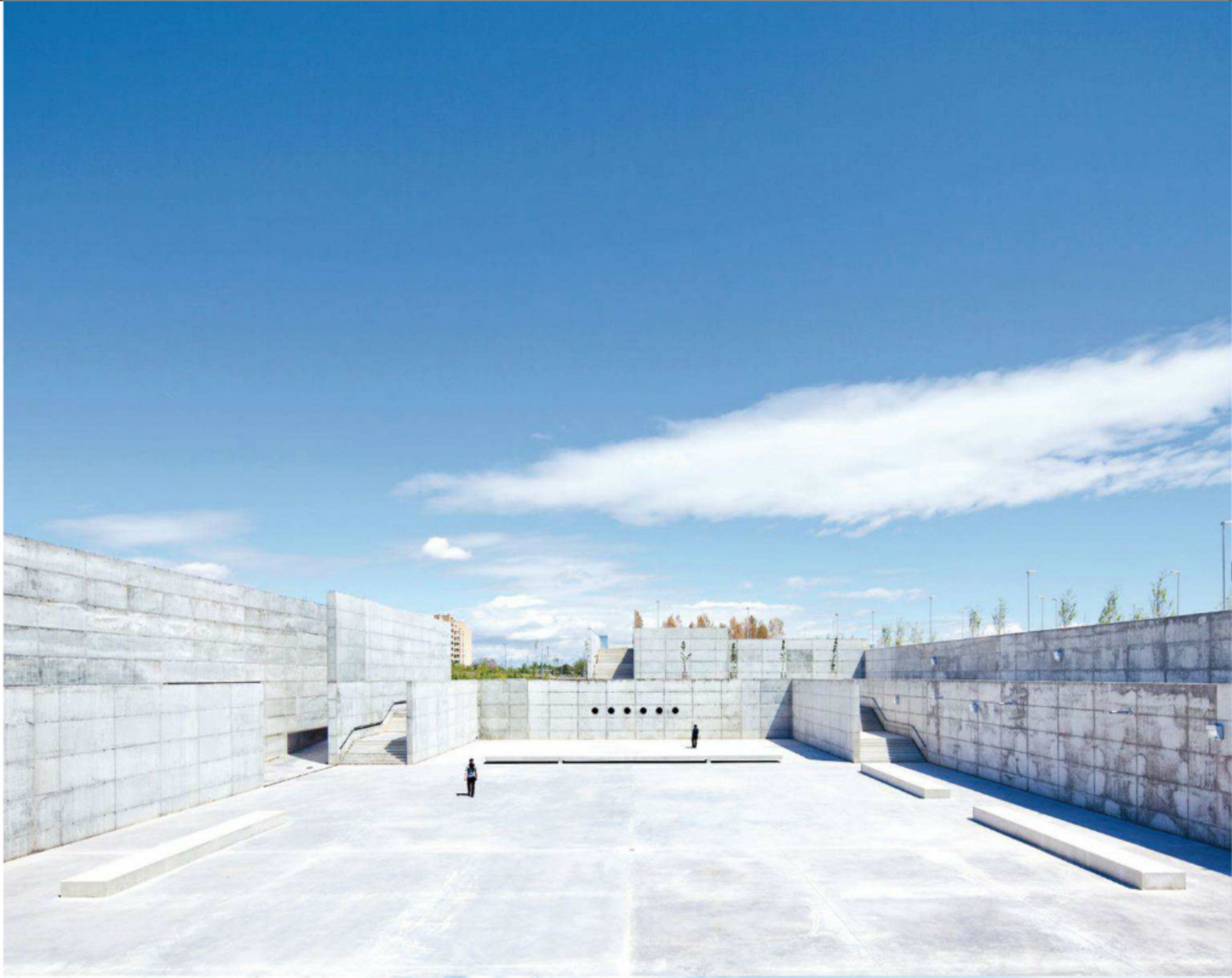
VENECIA PARK

Architects: Hector Fernandez Elorza and Manuel Fernandez Ramirez
Completed: January 2012
Scale: 2.5 hectares
Budget: 2.6 million euros



This public landscape project could be defined as a successful marriage of necessity and benefit. Intended to solve a handful of practical problems at the urban scale, it nonetheless provides valuable public space to local citizens. Conceived to alleviate acoustic pollution from a busy nearby ring road, as well as to help drain storm rainfall, the largely hard-surface solution creates a 14m-high series of levels and platforms out of evocative architectural forms made of concrete, stone, reinforced earth and steel. Four stepped gabion walls of galvanised steel mesh and large gravel stones furnish the acoustic mass that blocks the traffic noise. It is not accidental, though, that the composition suggests modern archaeological ruins – or that it can be used inventively by playful youths. On the other side of the site, a 100m-long concrete wall does the same duty as a sound barrier, while becoming something of a representational icon for the local community. Along this wall also is access to the underground plaza.





The latter space doubles as a water collector during heavy rainfalls, relieving taxed existing drainage systems for the short but intense periods of cloudbursts that characterise this area. When it's dry, however (and that's most of the time), it serves as an enticing public space protected from wind. The space is accessed through staircases placed in the four corners, connecting it to the neighbourhood above. Wider access for vehicles is placed within the walls.

The cleverness of this infrastructural solution is entirely in its formal language of elemental walls and platforms, elaborated in a strict palette of materials and realised at a scale that links it to a history of large urban public spaces. It is a measure of the architects' successful work here that Venecia Park's functional role with water and sound is only secondarily apparent, whereas its social contribution as a welcoming public place – and its aesthetic attractiveness – is immediately appreciated.



CENTRAL STATEMENT

Rotterdam Centraal Station

Bentham Crouwel Architects, MVSA Meyer en Van Schooten
Architecten and West 8

Photography by Jannes Linders, except where noted



The new Rotterdam Centraal Station is one of the busiest transport hubs in the Netherlands. It is connected to the European High-Speed Train network, as well as the domestic Randstadrail (light rail system), and currently receives 110,000 passengers a day. The original station terminus, designed in 1957 by Dutch architect Sybold van Ravesteijn, was unable to cope with increasing passenger numbers and network requirements, and was therefore demolished. The site was redeveloped by Team CS – an ad hoc architectural ensemble comprising Bentham Crouwel Architects, MVSA Meyer en Van Schooten Architecten and West 8. The new, modern volume offers better connections and delivers more space, enabling it

to accommodate greater human traffic, which, according to analysts, is projected to reach a daily peak of 323,000 by 2025.

The station is located between two distinct neighbours, and the scheme tries to respect the architecture of both. "One of the fundamental challenges of Rotterdam Centraal station was [to address] the difference in the urban character of the north and south sides of the station," reads a Team CS statement. The north-facing entrance of the terminal "has a modest design, appropriate to the character of Provenierswijk", a provincial area featuring many 19th-century-era buildings. The south entrance is



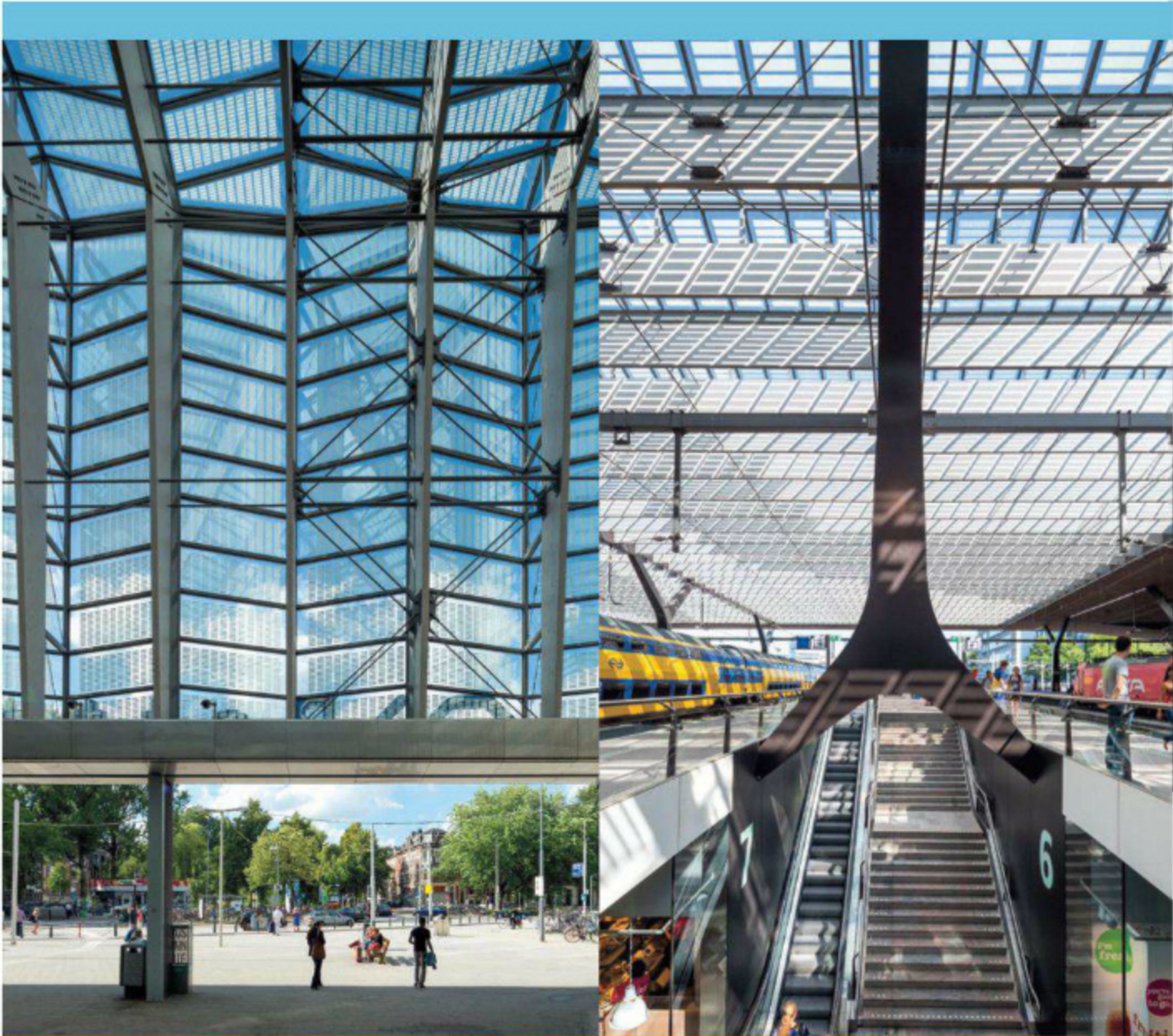
Photography by Luke Harley



grander, with a large concourse and hall covered by an angular stainless-steel roof that points skywards, to dovetail with the high-rises of Rotterdam's central district. The interior features of the main entrance hall include granite stone floors, timber-clad ceilings and structural wood beams, which bring a sense of warmth to the scheme. There are also two granite sculptures, which provide a visual and material connection to the building's former incarnation.

Above the station's 16 tracks is a 250m-long roof, a large section of which is transparent, ensuring that platforms get plenty of natural light. A third of the roof's surface has been fitted with 130,000 solar cells that generate an estimated 320 megawatts of energy per annum – making the facility one of the largest rooftop solar-power projects in Europe. The site also accommodates commercial units, restaurants, a lounge, cafes, and parking for 750 cars plus, this being Holland, 5,200 bicycles.

"The new Rotterdam Centraal Station is a pleasant, open and transparent public transport terminal which functions as an iconic meeting point," says Team CS. "Interwoven into the urban network, the station connects the diverse characters of the city and marks the beginning of Rotterdam's cultural axis." Rotterdam being the largest port in Europe, its new cavernous, modern railway terminus consolidates the place's position as a gateway city.



Photography by James Linders

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HIP REPLACEMENT

Hipped-Roof House

Naoi Architecture & Design Office

Photography by Hiroshi Ueda



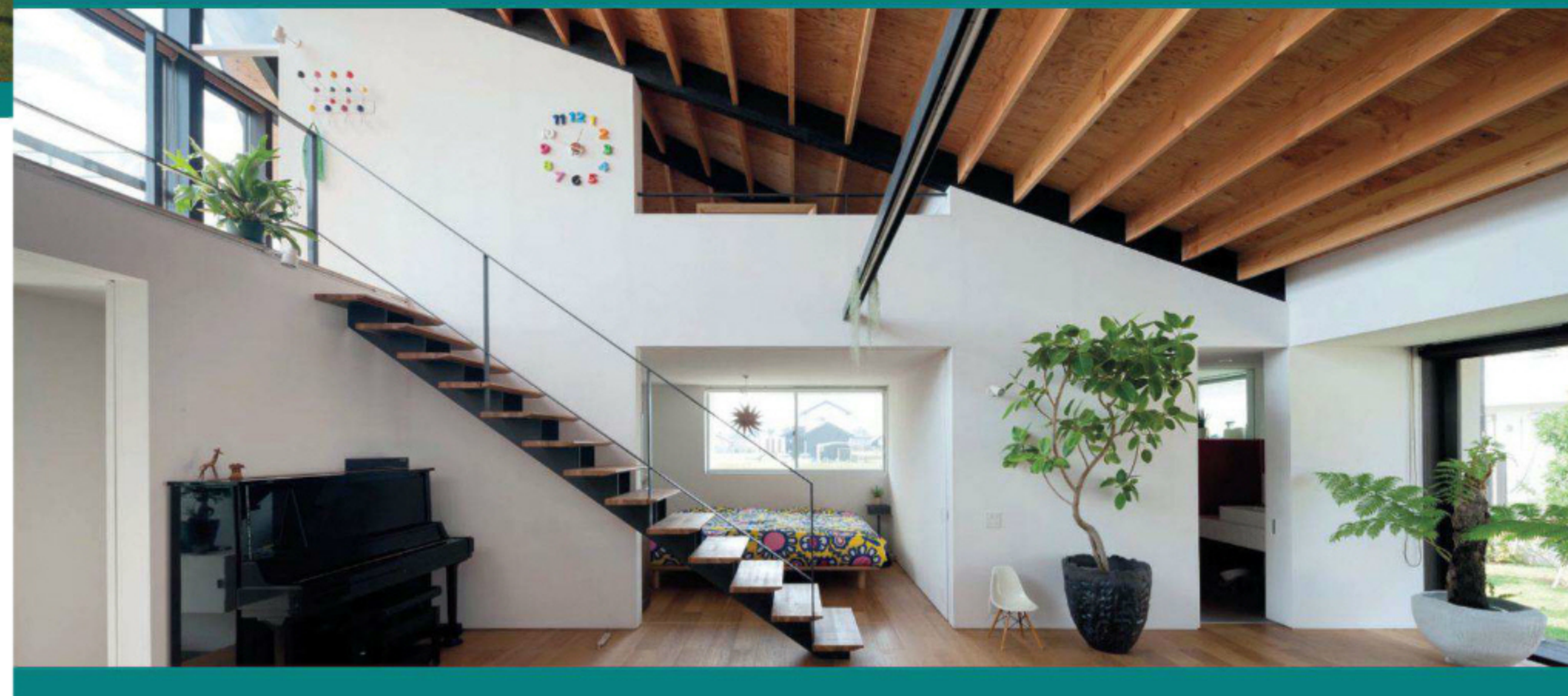
surrounding neighbourhood. At night, when the house is lit up from within, the roof becomes something else again: a kind of cartoon image of an idealised house, with the side angles outlining its profile.

There was a desire to enhance the interior-exterior living experience, so on the main floor there are large sections of glazing to enjoy garden spaces both front and back. In this sense, Hipped-Roof House is less introverted than average houses in Japan, and establishes a nice relationship with the street. The building was constructed largely of timber frame, with plenty of wood used on the finish surfaces of the rooms. A carport is pushed forward toward the street as a separate pavilion, partially sheltering a kind of open courtyard near the front entrance, and lending a measure of privacy. With the formal emphasis of traditional Japanese (and most Asian) architecture held in the roof form, perhaps this house is making a subtle reference to its domestic ancestry. Or maybe the raw space created by the hipped form suggested its own use. Either way, both inside and out, it's all about the roof.



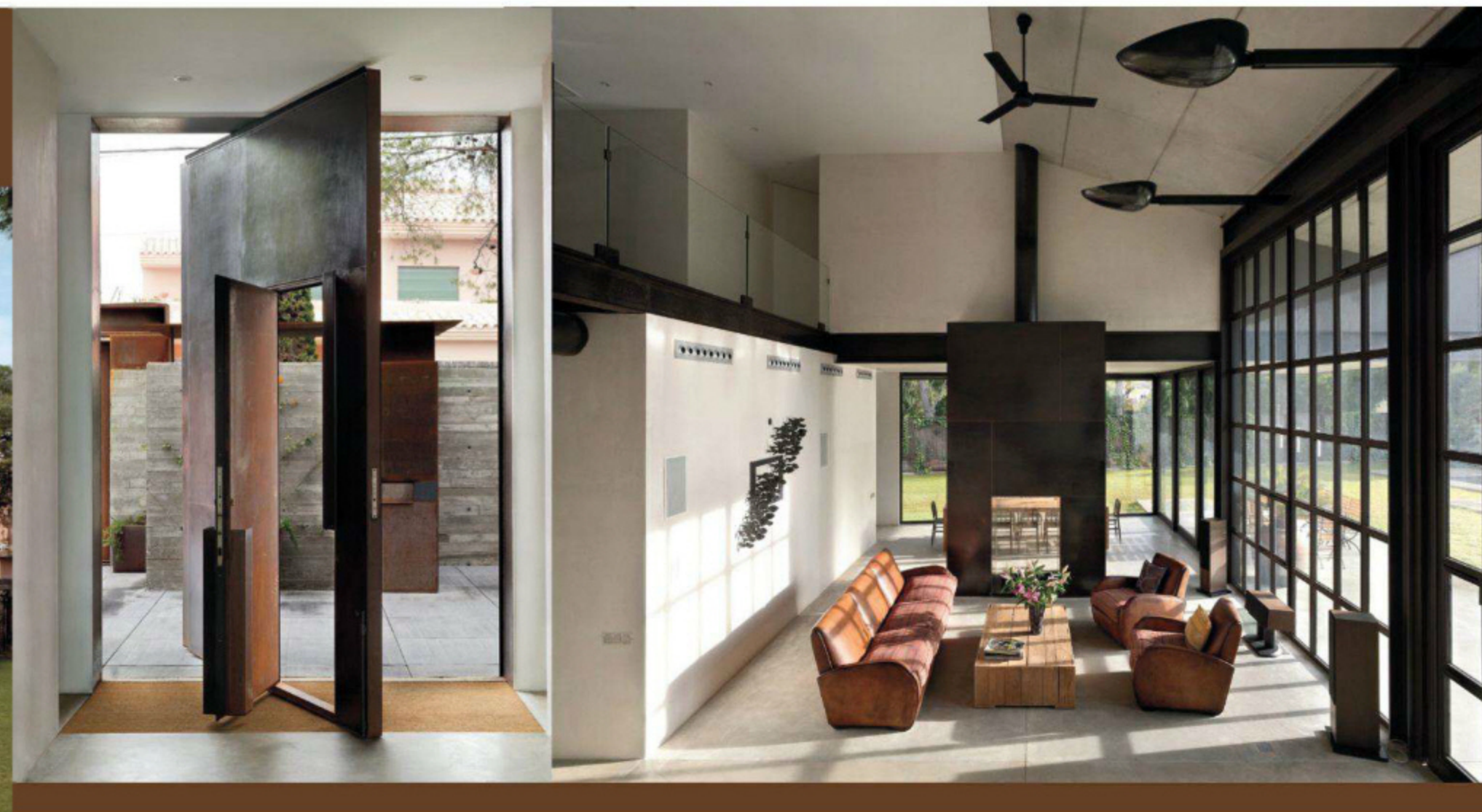
Although this newly built house in a suburban development is dominated on one facade by its oversized hipped roof, all is not as it first seems. The building is a very simple boxlike arrangement, and the relatively oversized hip roof is obviously the central idea to it; the roof is cut open on its most vertical side to provide a recessed terrace and an expansively glazed mezzanine behind it. Otherwise this is a fairly typical bungalow type. The living space is centrally located on the ground level, with bedrooms and subsidiary functions around it to the perimeter. But because the roof is asymmetrically displaced by the terrace cutting into it, the interior space seems capped by a shed roof instead of a true hip. A staircase leads up to the mezzanine, terrace, and two small rooms on either end.

This is a hybrid: not really a pure bungalow, not really a pure hip roof (nor a shed). The result is nonetheless fairly successful in terms of spatial quality, and, to be sure, the upper-level spaces are a bonus, not least because of the terrace, which allows occupants to sort of loom over the



LIVE, WORK, PLAY

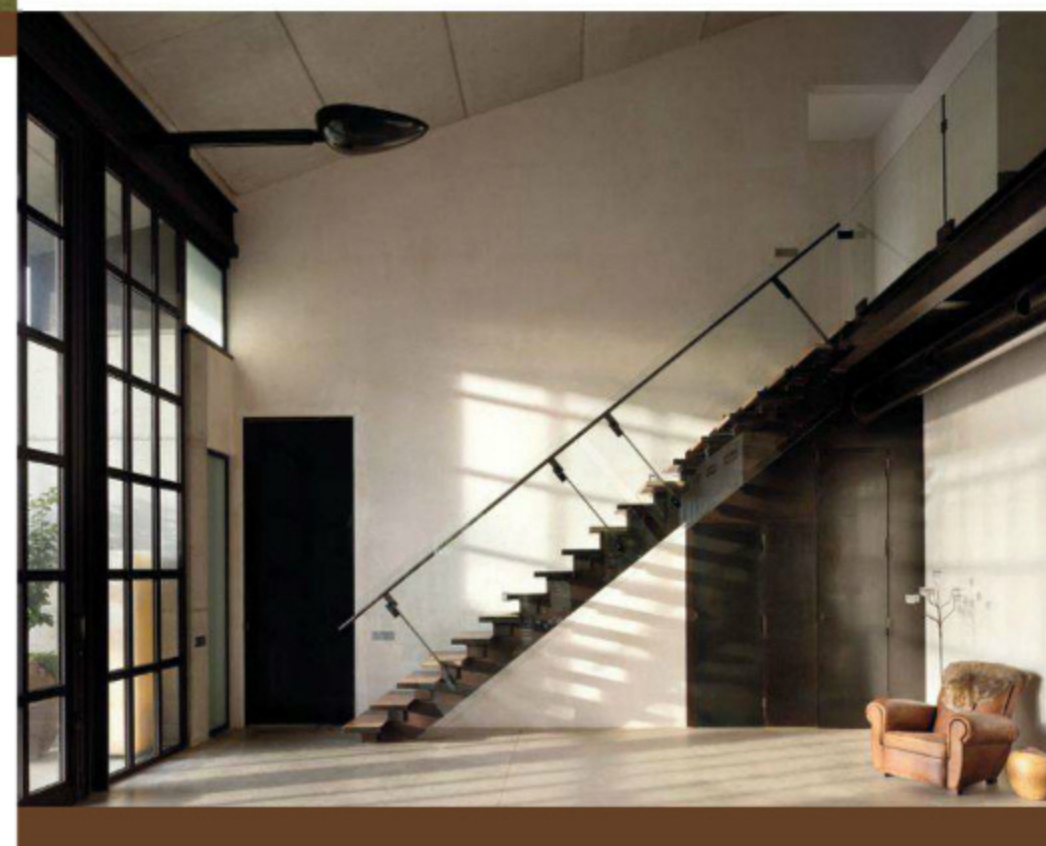
Sitges Studio Olson Kundig Architects



Designed for a photographer and his family, this alluring studio-home in Sitges, not far from Barcelona on Spain's Mediterranean coast, invites work and living in equal quality. Organised vertically with photography workshops below grade, a middle level for entertaining and an upper floor for more private living spaces, plus a small rooftop atelier, the building was conceived as a 'continuous' environment for creative activity. In other words, a true 'studio'.

On the street-facing facade, a rough concrete wall with steel inserts introduces the building – or perhaps conceals it. A rolling gate reveals a garage and a driveway that slopes down to the studios. Corten panels rise up and over to form the roof. A tall steel pivot door – by now virtually a Tom Kundig signature – creates the focal entry. Inside, the lower-level studios are large, raw and evocative. Cycloramas suggest infinite space. Cars or equipment have easy access via the driveway, and there is a glass-floor viewing mezzanine overhead, plus spaces for dressing, makeup and spa.

On the ground-level mid-storey, the spaces can be opened up to the garden with large sliding and pivot doors, taking full advantage of the area's beneficent climate. Above this level, the master suite is linked to other bedrooms via a bridge. These spaces in turn open onto terraces or over the garden and pool below. A lift joins the floors.



The materials hew to Kundig's favourites: concrete, handcrafted steel, Corten, and so on, and seem entirely appropriate to the spirit and function of the house. If anyone has made industrial chic more interesting and, uh, chic, it is Tom Kundig, and with the generous scale (and budget) of this commission, he's totally in his element. There is over 1,000sq m of architecture here, and all of it is conceived and realised with characteristic panache and restraint, in balanced measure. Sitges Studio may be a place in which to work or to play, but either way, you'd hardly want to leave.



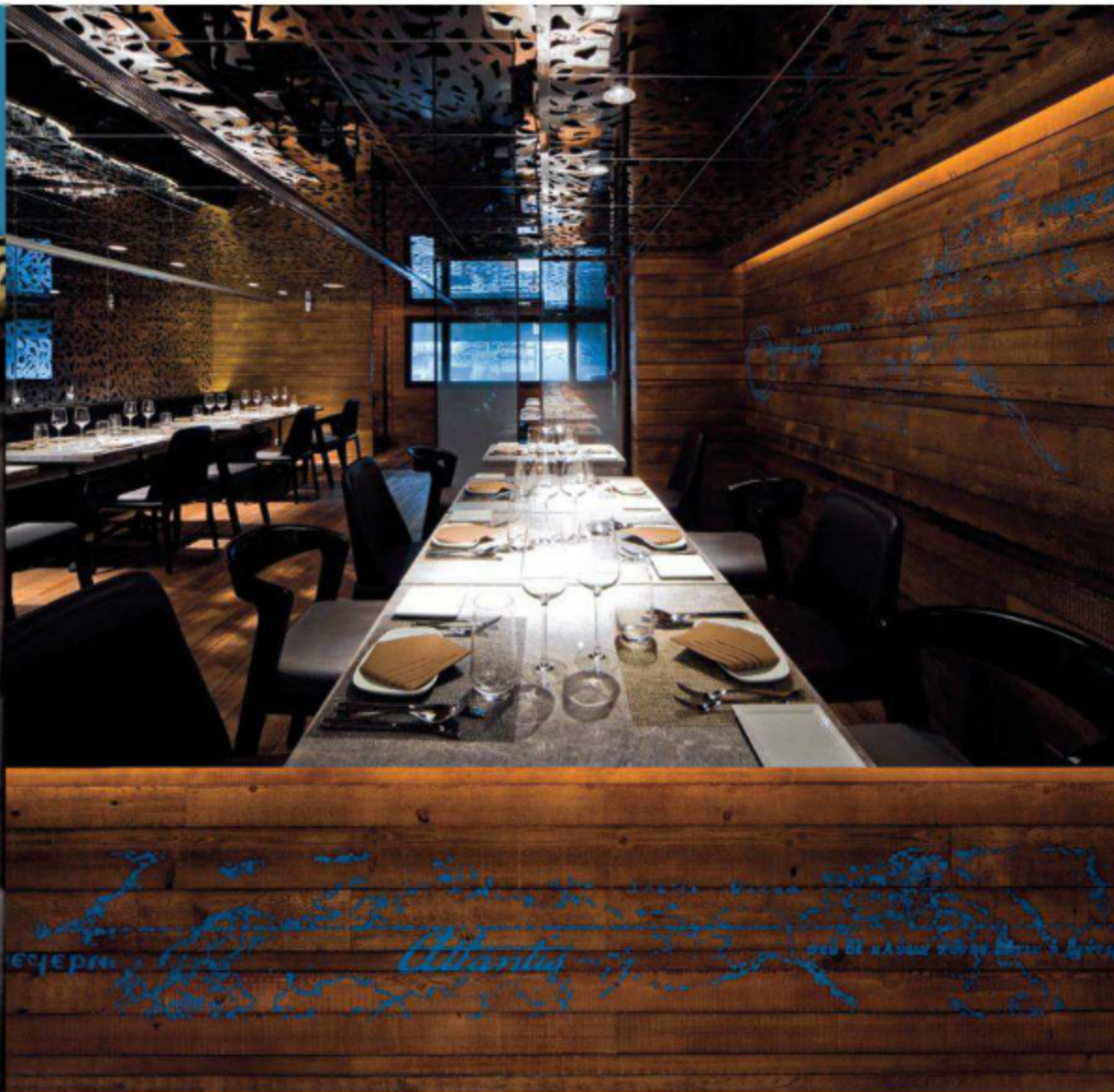
BUOYANT

Atlantis Blue PANORAMA

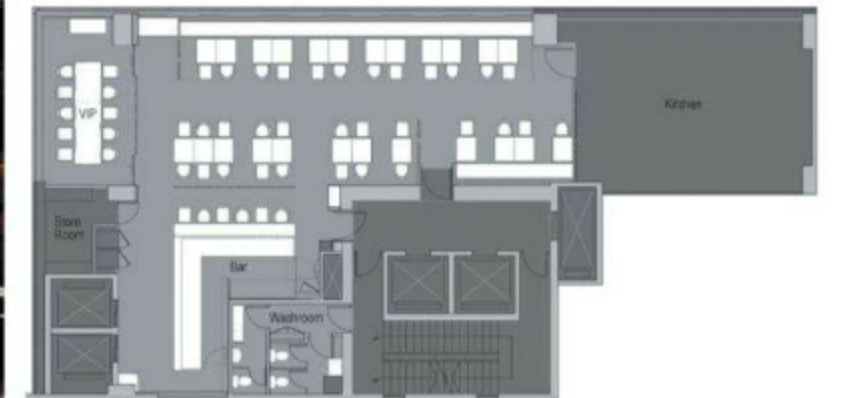
Photography by Ng Siu Fung

Named after the legendary Greek island, Atlantis Blue is a new concept restaurant in the heart of Lan Kwai Fong, Hong Kong's party central. Designed by homegrown interior-architecture-and-branding solutions firm Panorama, the 200sq m Mediterranean eatery specialises in, of course, seafood.

Rather surprisingly, given its location in the thick of daytime commercial buzz and after-hours revelry, the restaurant offers an intimate setting, with only 64 seats, and a private dining room that can host up to ten persons. Upon entry, customers are greeted with a cool and contemporary space, with warm-hued reclaimed timber used on both the flooring and walls to create the feel of a ship's lower deck, as it were. A stainless steel ceiling-cum-window screen separates the restaurant from the bustling streets while still allowing daylight to seep through. Finished in an intricate laser-cut pattern inspired by underwater movements and features, the screen creates intriguing shadow patterns throughout the restaurant. Another nod to the Atlantis myth comes in the form of illuminated ancient Greek maps and hieroglyphics imprinted in cobalt blue on the walls and kitchen windows.



"Through a mysterious, story-telling design concept, Atlantis Blue aims to move the fine dining experience to a new level of trendiness," notes Horace Pan, founder of Panorama. More contemporary accents can be found in the grey marble tables, dark wood chairs, spotlights and near-translucent screens that split up the dining area, resulting in an unmistakably glamorous setting. In an area where 'that sinking feeling' is well known to outfits pressured by astronomical rents on the one hand and whimsical customer tastes on the other, this one should float... at least for a while.

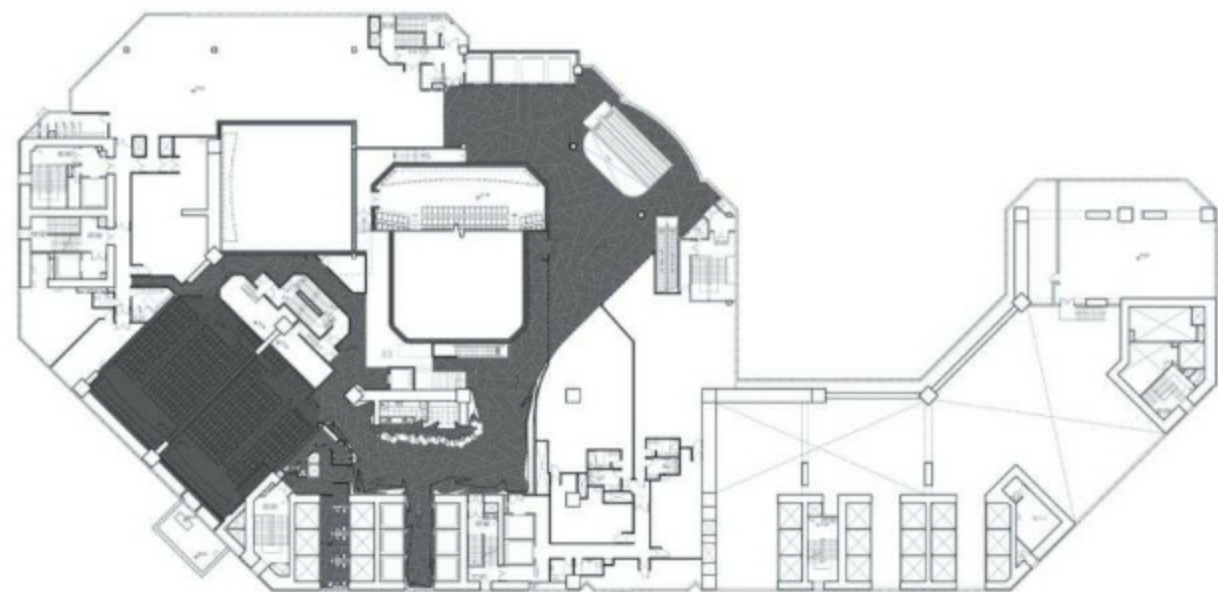


REELING IT IN

UA Cine Times, Times Square OnePlus Partnership

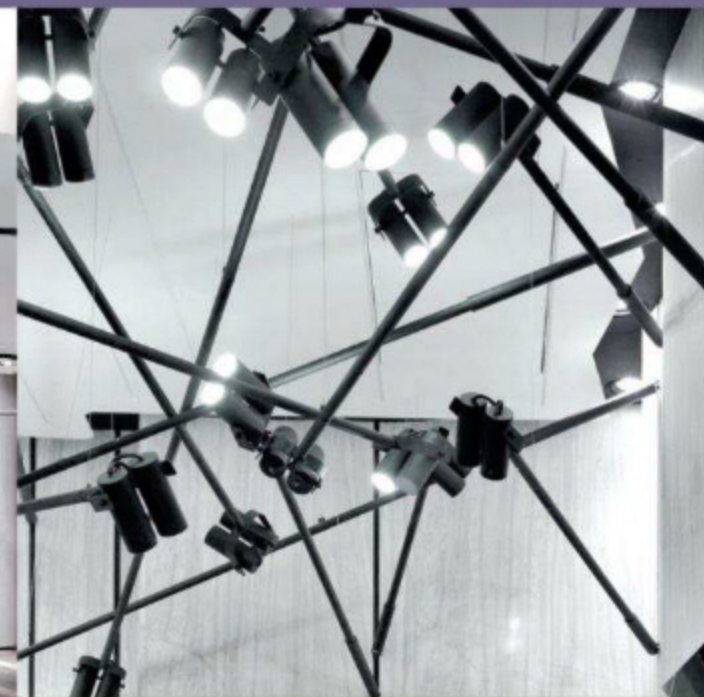
Something of a specialisation for Hong Kong interior design studio OnePlus Partnership, cinemas may seem like a throwback in the era of easily streamed video entertainment and constant, on-the-go digital content. However, if the industry is to be believed, there are plenty of souls still willing and eager to trek to the multiplex, wait in queues, buy their treats and watch the latest blockbusters. Especially in China. In fact, it was something like nostalgia for this almost century-old ritual that inspired OnePlus in its latest outing, in Hong Kong's bustling Causeway Bay branch of UA Cinemas.

The concept behind the renovation was based on the original method of storing and showing film: on large spools of film tape, lodged in heavy metal canisters and hoisted onto enormous projector machines in booths at the back of theatre halls. OnePlus is enamoured of using strong, often monochromatic, colour tones, and this time around it selected a black-white-and-grey palette, to represent the physical nature of film reels themselves. The lobby area of UA Cine Times is doused in white, with reveals in black, symbolising the frames of film on rolls. This adds up to a series of panelled surfaces in differently sized rectangles. Ceiling-mounted LED spotlights on long arms play off the walls at different angles, producing intentional shadows and varying light intensities around the spaces, again referencing the physical nature of celluloid film projection. Black flooring striped in grey slices the ground plane into different geometric shapes in a pattern more vibrant than that on the walls. The edges of certain details – such as in



the ticketing desk – are rounded, in an indirect nod to the edges of film frames.

The space is pleasantly muted, quieter and brighter than many typical cinema lobbies existing currently – which is a nice contrast. It lends the cinema a kind of 'adult' character, suggesting more interesting fare than your average action mega-movie. Obviously, the crowds that will ply the space to see those will bring the colour and movement to the spaces; the interior design can afford to play it quiet. Like actual film – in the old days, when it was still used – the material itself is quite blank. It's what goes on it that is the show.



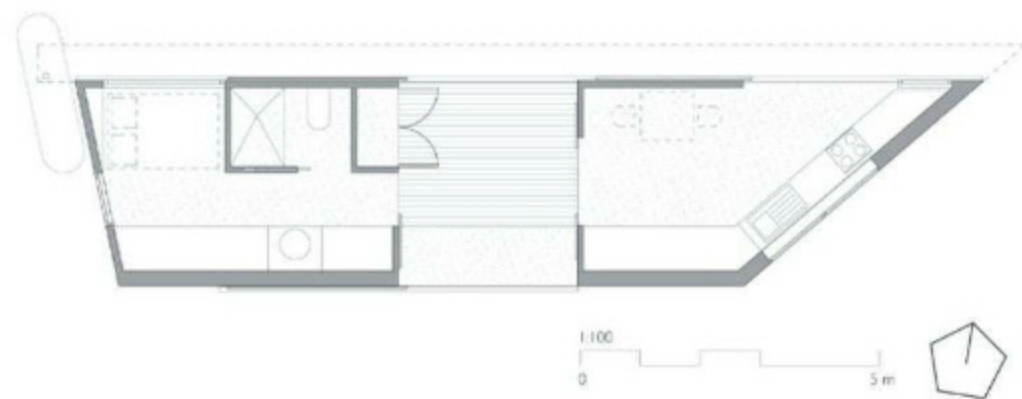
JUSTIFIED

Keperra House Atelier Chen Hung

Photography by Alicia Taylor

Occupying an edge of its site in the suburbs of Brisbane, this small standalone granny flat sits in the garden of a larger house. Forming a protective barrier for the garden while enjoying the land's falloff to capitalise on outward views, the house takes the form of a rectangle with one chamfered end. The building splits apart at its centre to provide a covered loggia or verandah that functions as a shaded, open-air living room, enjoying cross-breezes and opposing views framing landscape or original house. This void also acts as a welcoming entrance to the interiors on either side, one way to bed and bathroom, the other to kitchen and eating space. The facades are largely glazed, with sliding panels that can modulate privacy, light and views, depending on function, time, weather or whim. With the central bay of the plan open to outside temperatures, using the house means being constantly aware of weather conditions, admittedly pretty favourable most of the time.

To keep the construction budget within modest limits, and to minimise maintenance over the long term, the house is built of resilient, simple materials, often in their raw state, and these lend the project its dominant aesthetic character: Poured-in-place concrete shows its formwork scars; galvanised metal cladding panels soften reflected light and seasonal colour tones; and a deep overhang provides shade along the northern [sunward] elevation. The exterior presents a somewhat rough-and-ready image, as if the little house were poised to



battle whatever elements happened upon it.

The interiors deliberately contrast this with a tilt toward warm tones, achieved largely through the use of raw pine plywood panels. It feels almost like a camp building, albeit one that has been well planned. The intimate scale of the three main spaces emphasizes this, as well as the constant visual connection to the outdoors. No doubt the building has a specific appeal to writers, poets, painters, dreamers... anyone drawn to places that seem to edit life down to a few, fundamental parts.



FRENCH TWIST

An Nam Steve Leung Designers Ltd



Stepping into the recently opened An Nam restaurant in Hong Kong's Causeway Bay district feels like going through a time warp. Taking inspiration from Vietnam's colonial past, award-winning architect and designer Steve Leung has conceived a space that blends traditional Indochine influences with contemporary design.

The 3,900sq ft restaurant seats up to 139 people and is bathed in eye-catching teal. At the reception, a gigantic feature wall made up of dark brown wood panels and grilles culled from old houses in Vietnam pays homage to traditional Vietnamese craftsmanship. Patrons are ushered through a long hallway, paved with vintage patterned ceramic tiles, that serves as a divider between a banquet seating area and two VIP rooms. In the former, Chinese latticed partitions make for a more intimate dining experience. The VIP rooms, on the other hand, feature round wood dining tables, grey fabric dining chairs, vintage-style Chinese panels, mood lighting, and Vietnamese pendant fans – all of which contribute to the restaurant's sensually rich vibe.

Further down the hallway, one finds the main dining area, which is decidedly more laidback. The high ceiling, decorated with silk lantern pendants, lends a bright, open feel. In addition, French louvres, old-fashioned window grilles and antique mirrors lining the wall recreate the architectural splendours of Vietnam's colonial era. This continues into the balcony, where silk lantern lights, dark rattan dining tables and aqua blue-cushioned rattan chairs evoke an atmosphere of old-world elegance. The artistically inclined will also enjoy the Vietnamese-style paintings on display, as well as the brightly coloured faux antique bowls and plates.

The restaurant's classically inspired look even extends to its staff, who come decked in bespoke traditional attire. Says Leung, "An Nam embodies the beauty and romance of times past, providing a tranquil and graceful environment for an authentic Vietnamese dining experience." Peaceful, chic and nostalgic, everything from the rattan furniture to the wall adornments encapsulates Vietnam's unique east-meets-west culture.

HORSE TALE

Arqana Auction House Agence Francois Champsaur



French interior designer Francois Champsaur was charged with renovating the premises of Arqana, perhaps the world's best known auction house for thoroughbred horses, in Normandy's coastal town of Deauville. The project, which took two years to complete, has given rise to a swanky new sales arena characterised by bold graphics, rich materials and an aesthetic 'purity' that echoes the values of equestrianism.

"Exquisite thoroughbreds deserve exquisite surroundings" was the client's motto – and the starting point for Champsaur's team when they set out to design the complex. "Arqana was thinking for a long time to [bring] a touch of modernity to a world [that] is not used to that sort of thing. [Thus] I was free to make a new version of this very traditional kind of place," says Champsaur, who transformed the formerly run-down, rather sombre setting into one with a fresh and colourful style. In the process, he also remodelled the building so that the horses could enter directly from the paddock into the waterdrop-shaped sales ring in the auditorium.

The auditorium seats up to 416 people and features vibrantly coloured leather chairs, red-hued acoustic ceiling, suspended lights by Tom Dixon and oak wall paneling. Notes Champsaur: "The place welcomes sales of the most powerful and graceful horses, so the project was about rhythm and harmony, from the global space down to the smallest details. The materials are a mix of sophistication and simplicity, the softness of the leather is contrasted with the roughness of the wood and the sand in the sales ring."

After a vigorous bidding session, bidders can unwind in one of several stylish restaurants and bars within the complex. Le Resto benefits from an outdoor terrace, while Le 360 offers spectacular views of the sales ring. Both eateries have a clean aesthetic that incorporates organic materials and brightly painted furniture. Located in the main yard, Le Zinc is ideal for those in need of a quick bite. Additionally, the complex boasts new offices as well as a spacious business centre.

Since Arqana's reopening last year, the feedback from buyers, vendors and the public alike has been overwhelmingly positive. The attractive venue also hosts regular art exhibitions and concerts. Through Champsaur's thoughtful interplay of design details and subtle references to the bloodstock world, Arqana's contemporary look proves it is the place for some serious shopping.



CASTLE MADE OF SAND

School Floating in the Sky

Kikuma Watanabe

About five hours' drive northwest of Bangkok is a part of Thailand that is both rugged and underprivileged. Sangkhlaburi village, near the border with Burma, is idyllic and off the tourist trail for all but the hardiest of backpackers. This rural outpost has few creature comforts and lacks educational provisions. Japanese non-profit organisation Kagayaku Inochi and compatriot architect Kikuma Watanabe have designed and built a school using natural materials and local labour, for the community's most impoverished children, many of whom are Burmese orphans.

A teacher had asked the local kids to draw an image of their dream school. One child drew a flying ship-like entity, and this image became the inspiration for the design of the building... as well as its name: School Floating in the Sky.

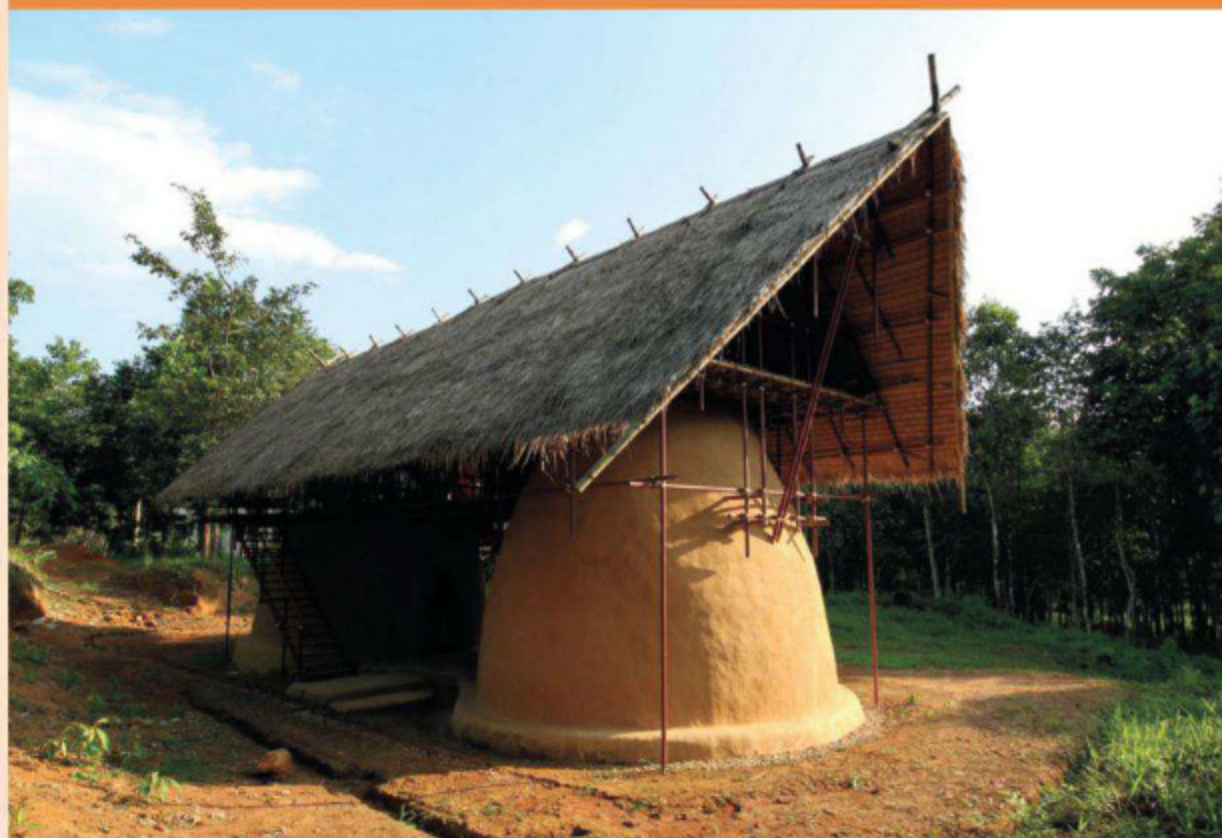
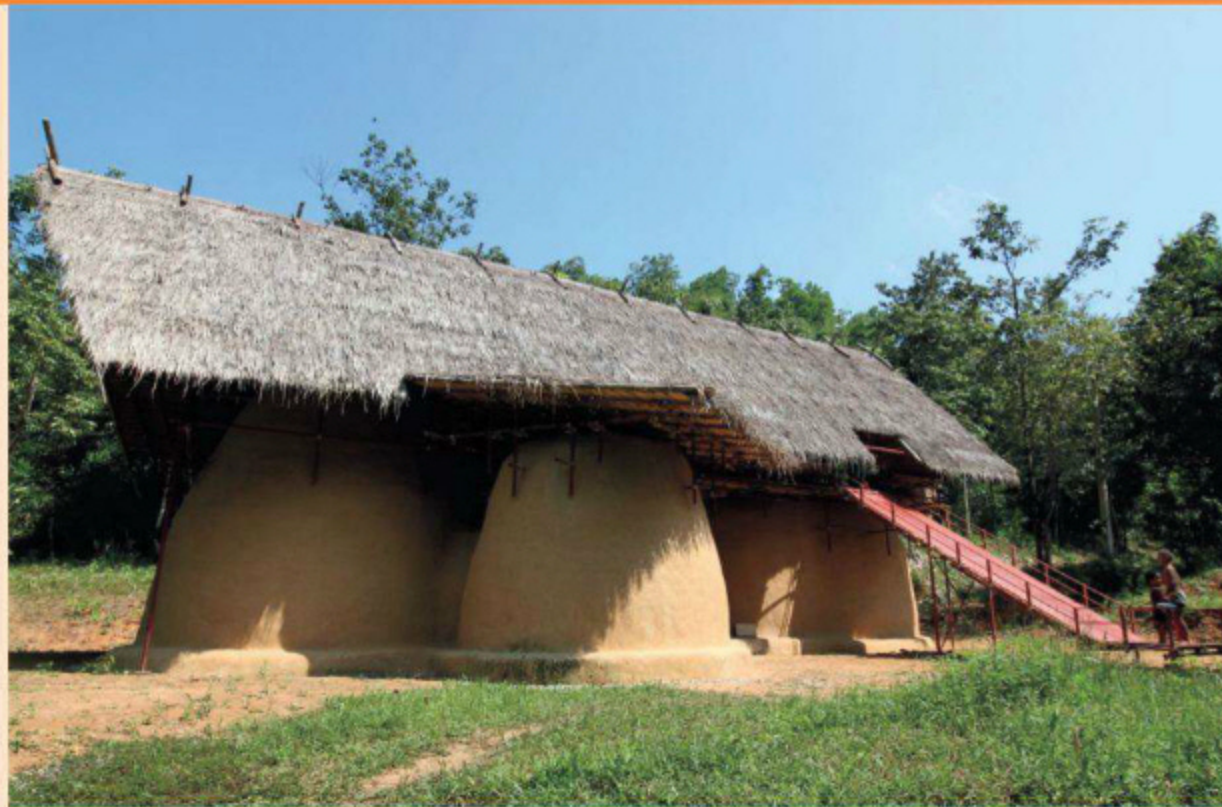
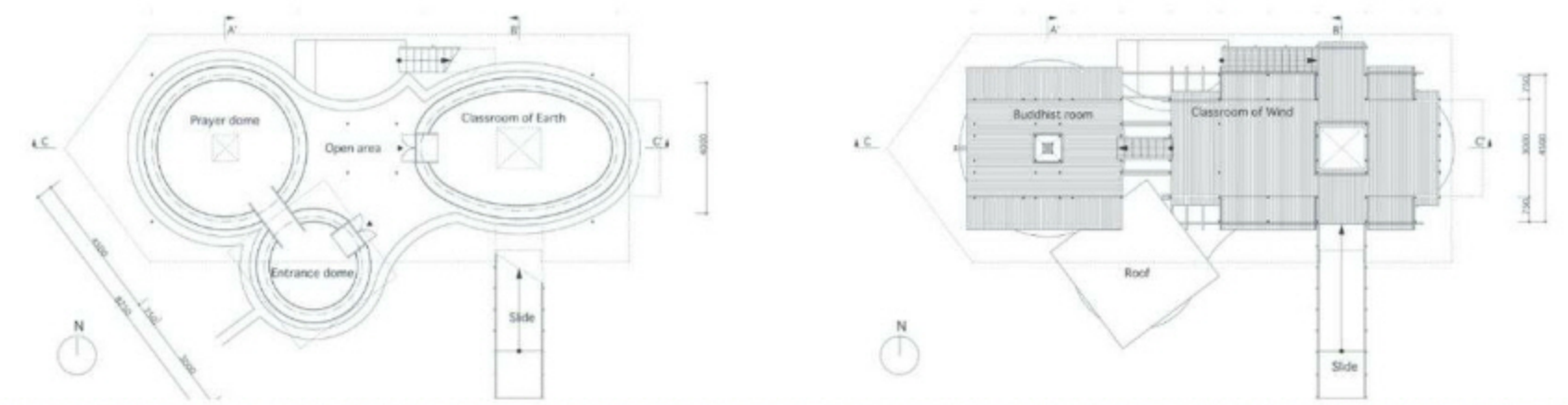
Watanabe, who has previously created a number of sustainably built earthwork habitations in places such as Jordan and Uganda, designed a two-storey structure comprising three domes at grade, which support an elevated steel-and-bamboo platform with a double-pitched grass roof. "The earthbag domes are thought of as a 'launching pad' that supplies the ship with the energy of Mother Earth," says Watanabe. "And the upper steel building as the ship that is soaring in the sky."

The domes have been built by stacking sandbags – filled with earth from the site and cement – in circles, and by plastering the outside walls. Wire supports have been integrated to provide a level of earthquake resistance. The three domes house an entrance area, a prayer room and the 'Classroom of Earth'. "The round volumes create a warm interior, fostering a sense of comfort for the children," adds Watanabe.

The upper level contains a 'Buddhist Room' and the 'Classroom of Wind'. The materials used – grass for the roof, bamboo for the floors and bench seating, and steelpipe infrastructure – together with gables that flip up, all promote natural ventilation. "A gentle breeze flows through the thatched roof, giving the feeling of being in a ship," says the architect.

Construction of the school took eight months, and was completed with the help and expertise of D Environmental Design System Laboratory, Watanabe's architectural practice, carpenters from the region, and students from Kochi University of Technology in Japan, where Watanabe is an associate professor.

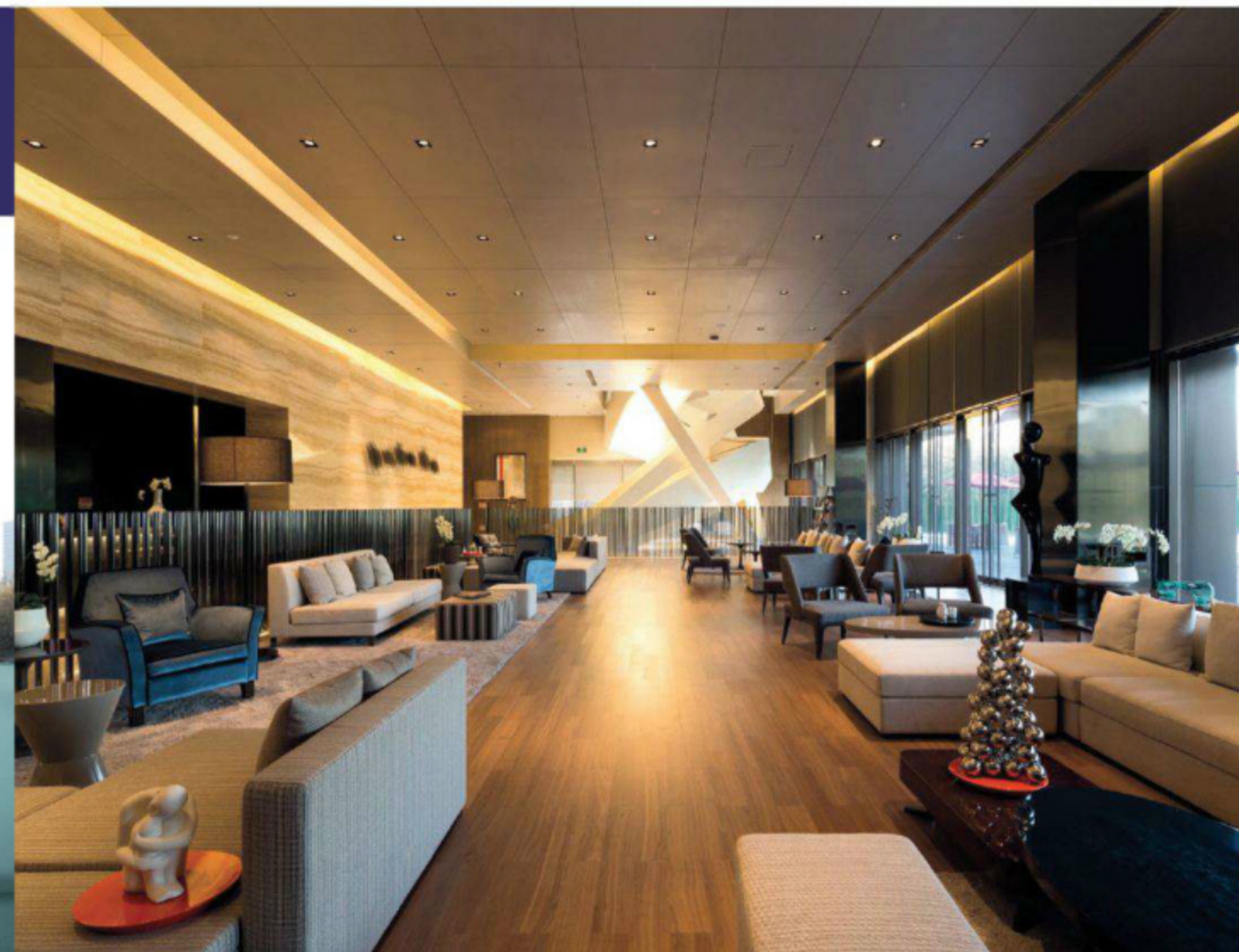
"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," the recently departed Nelson Mandela once said. Kagayaku Inochi and Watanabe have helped ensure that the orphans of Sangkhlaburi have a fair chance to change their world.



MARKET-READY

Jinan Vanke Marketing Centre Yamato Planning

Photography by Masao Nishikawa



It is by now fairly regular for new residential developments in China, often quite vast in scale, to first build a sales or marketing building on or near the site, in order to introduce the forthcoming offering to potential buyers. These buildings hold a pretty simple programme initially: exhibition space for sales materials (usually including scale models), meeting rooms, office space, pantry and restrooms. But most of the time, they are also planned for a programmatic adaptation later, once the development is completed or sold out. Thus they tend to be either bland sheds or the opposite, as in over-designed 'image' structures meant to catch the eye and summarise the originality of the budding buildings. Vanke's Jinan Marketing Centre isn't really either of these.

In the first place, the centre occupies an important site position in the whole mixed-development project, and is meant to remain one of its flagship properties. It is situated strategically to both introduce the site, as a gateway building, and to shield it somewhat from adjacent urban sprawl; a kind of buffer that sets the mood through its architectural language and the repose of its landscaped garden. It will transition visitors between the commercial and residential quarters of the precinct.

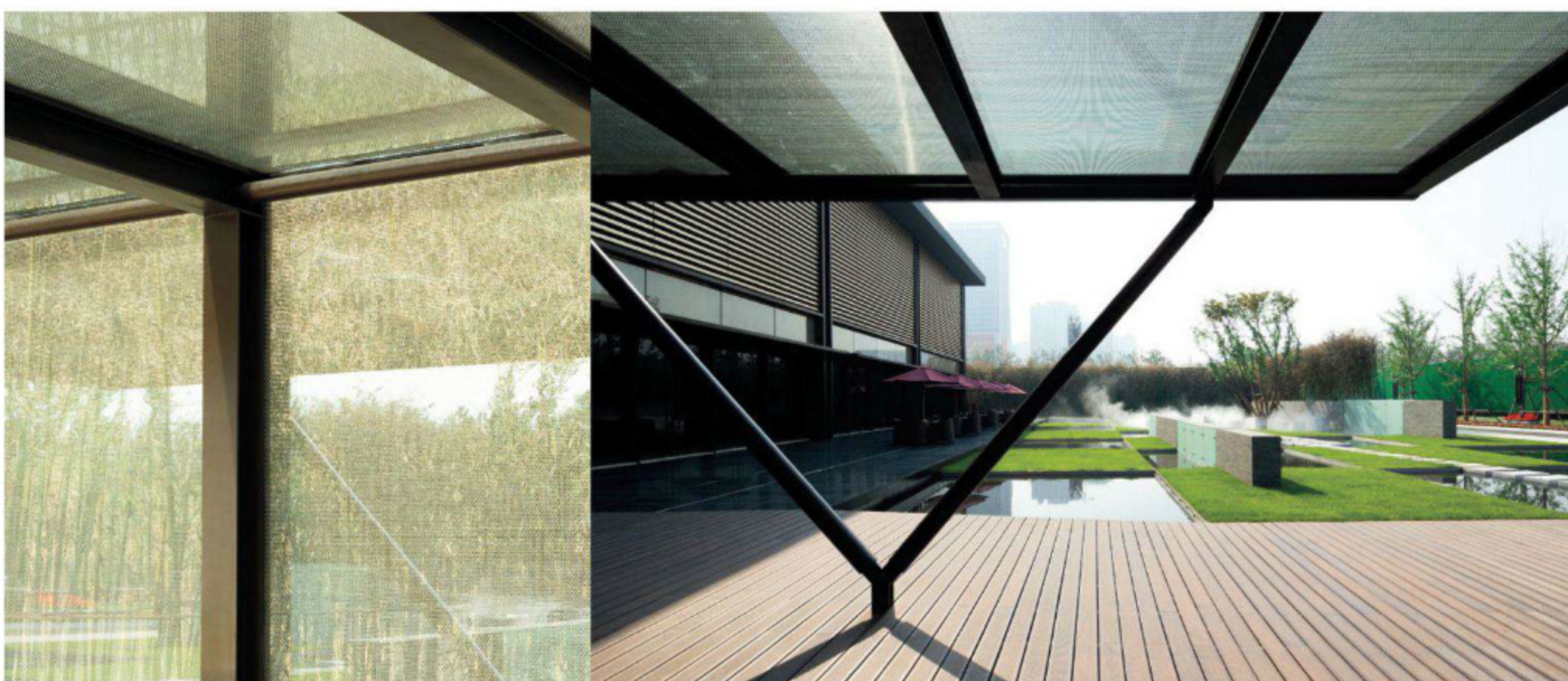
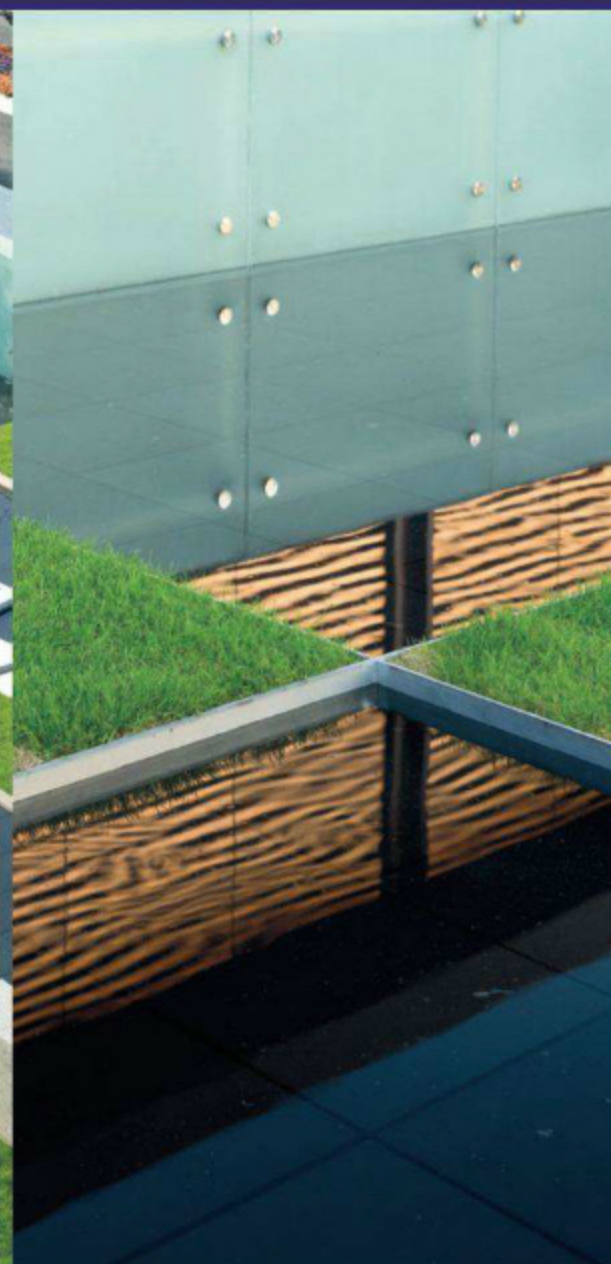
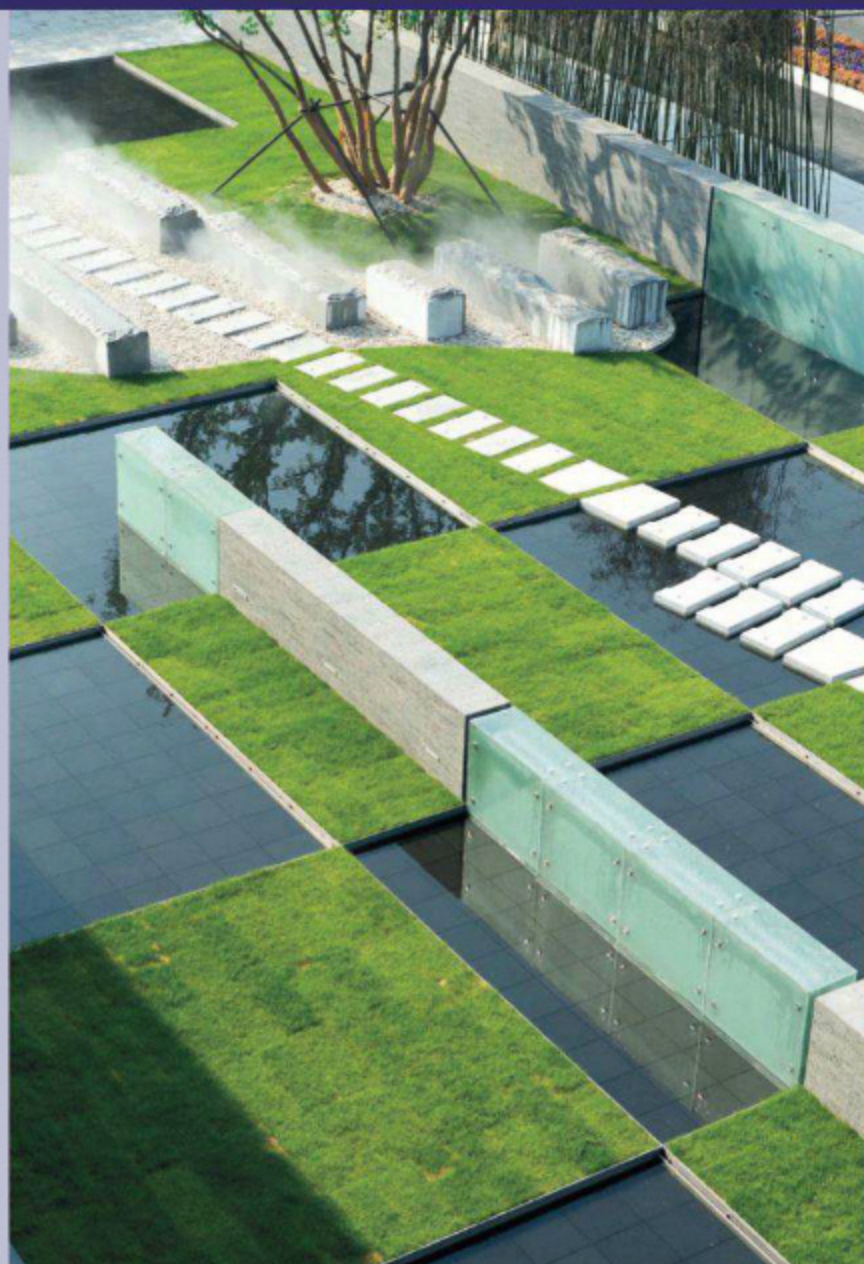
The building itself is a handsome two-storey rectangular box with a ground level of openable glass panels and an upper level clad in pleasing horizontal metal louvres. The garden court flanking the building provides a large, inviting space accessible from the ground floor, so that the large space there can enjoy it visually or actually, and makes the building feel something akin to a garden pavilion. At the generous entrance canopy and on segments of the facade, the



architects introduced a custom metal mesh between layers of glass, which creates a semi-transparent effect, shading the interiors from sunlight and, after dark, producing a lantern quality.

The landscaped garden is arranged as an abstracted world of water pools and floating terraces, with pathways, seating, misting fountain, and small shade trees. It is best viewed from the second storey.

There is nothing revolutionary here, but the Jinan Marketing Centre could easily be transformed into a residents' clubhouse, social venue, commercial hub, or small gallery/museum, so it seems a wise investment by the developer. More importantly, in the short term, it announces the character and quality of other Vanke buildings to come... like a subtle billboard for good aesthetics and welcome understatement. One hopes the rest of the development maintains this standard.



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EXPANSIVE

SND District Urban Planning Exhibition Hall BDP



This new 12,000sq m exhibition hall is integrated into the Science and Technology Smart City in Suzhou New District, located at the edge of a new parkland area. The programme was fairly straightforward, accommodating a 1,000sq m scale model of the still-developing Suzhou district, a 3D viewing gallery as well as other interactive displays, conference spaces, and multipurpose exhibition halls.

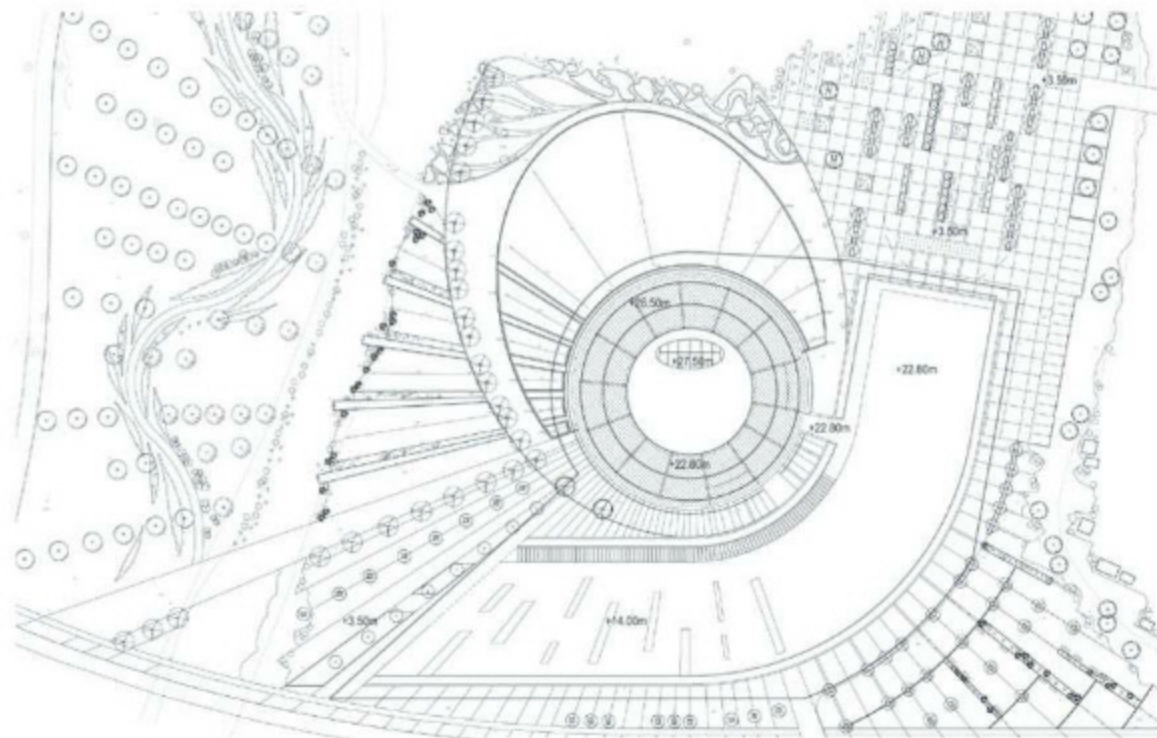
The centrepiece architecturally reflects the focal point of the exhibition material: the large model. This is housed in an oversized cylindrical glass pavilion that also gives views toward the green mountains nearby. Solar shading helps moderate heat gain in summer months, and a green roof assists in reaching sustainability goals. In fact, the centre is quite fully integrated into the park, and makes the most of the landscaped environment, with plenty of exterior promenades adjacent to the buildings, including a gently ramped pathway that spirals around the exhibition drum. BDP designed the landscaping and exterior lighting to emphasise the shape of the architecture as it is seen from varying angles.





Flanking the drum is a boomerang-shaped wedge of a building that takes on some of the other functions, including raw exhibition space. The relationship in masterplan of the two volumes, with the spiral steps between them, is what gives the project its largest-scale interest. In the rather enormous context of the parkland and plaza, it was helpful to nestle the rotunda building in the 'embrace' of the boomerang, lest it seem dropped in from nowhere. As in so many instances in contemporary urban China, the scale of public space becomes both the challenge and the opportunity... and here BDP seems to have risen to both.

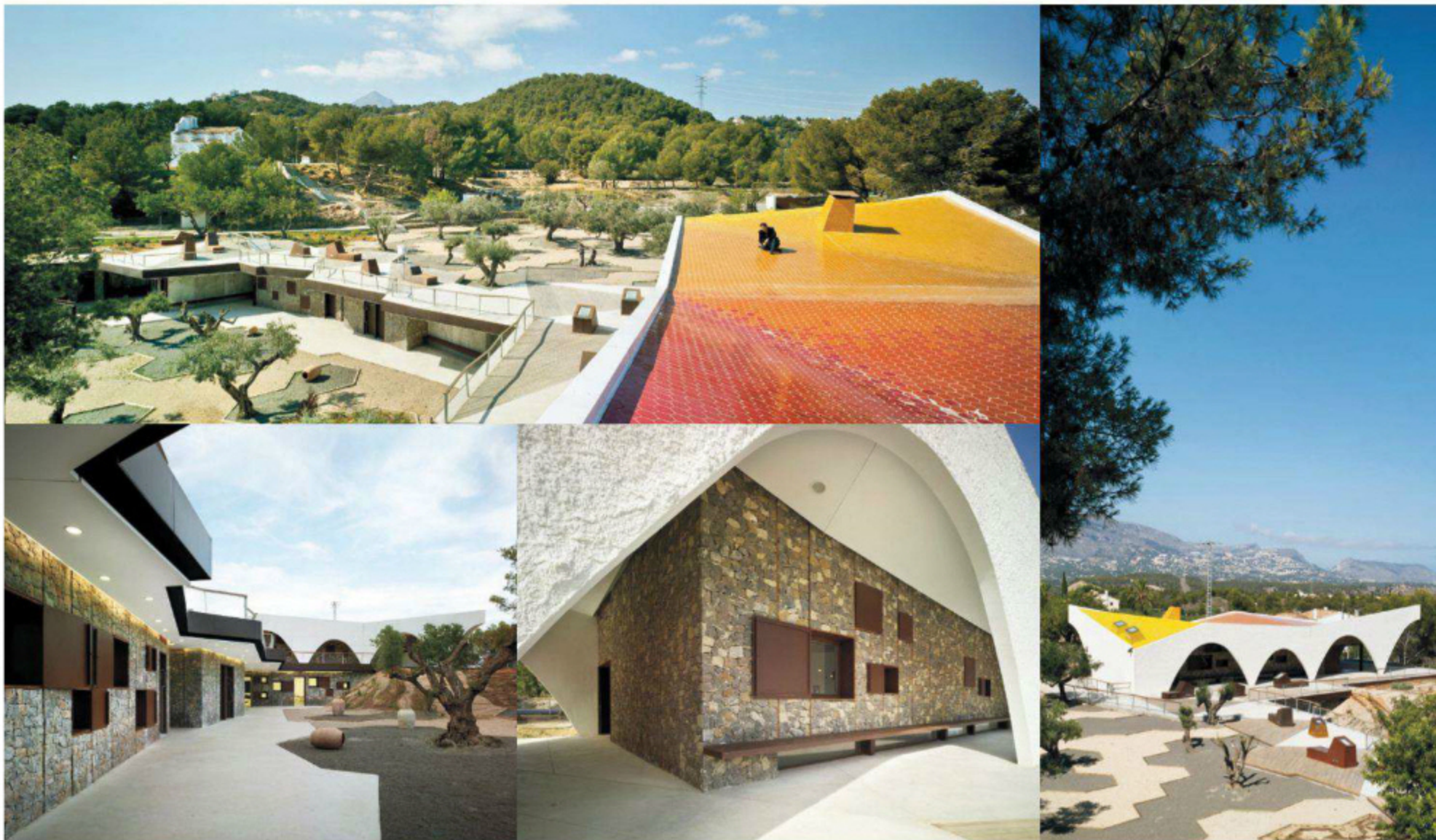
Planned to be eventually linked to a new metro line, this centre will be a focal point for virtually all future development meetings; a kind of brain centre for anything to do with the planning and development of Suzhou New District. Thus the environmental credits were important, demonstrating subtle lessons for other would-be developers and investors in the area. Local material sourcing, the green roof, water collection and reuse, and sun shading are some of the passive eco-measures incorporated by BDP. The scheme resulted from a competition win in 2011, and was realised rapidly.



CRYSTALZOO

ALICANTE, SPAIN

This studio was founded upon the principle of a discussion forum, with an emphasis on research into new techniques, and the practice of design as a process of learning. The goal is to remain nimble in the face of the varying demands of urban architecture, and to adapt each response to its particular context, moment, environment, requirements. Crystalzoo is also expert at low-cost solutions. The staff includes different abilities, training and specialties. Together this forms a multidisciplinary collective that can be tapped for, and adapted to, appropriate tasks. The hope is that this approach yields a richer methodological experience, not to mention superior design solutions.

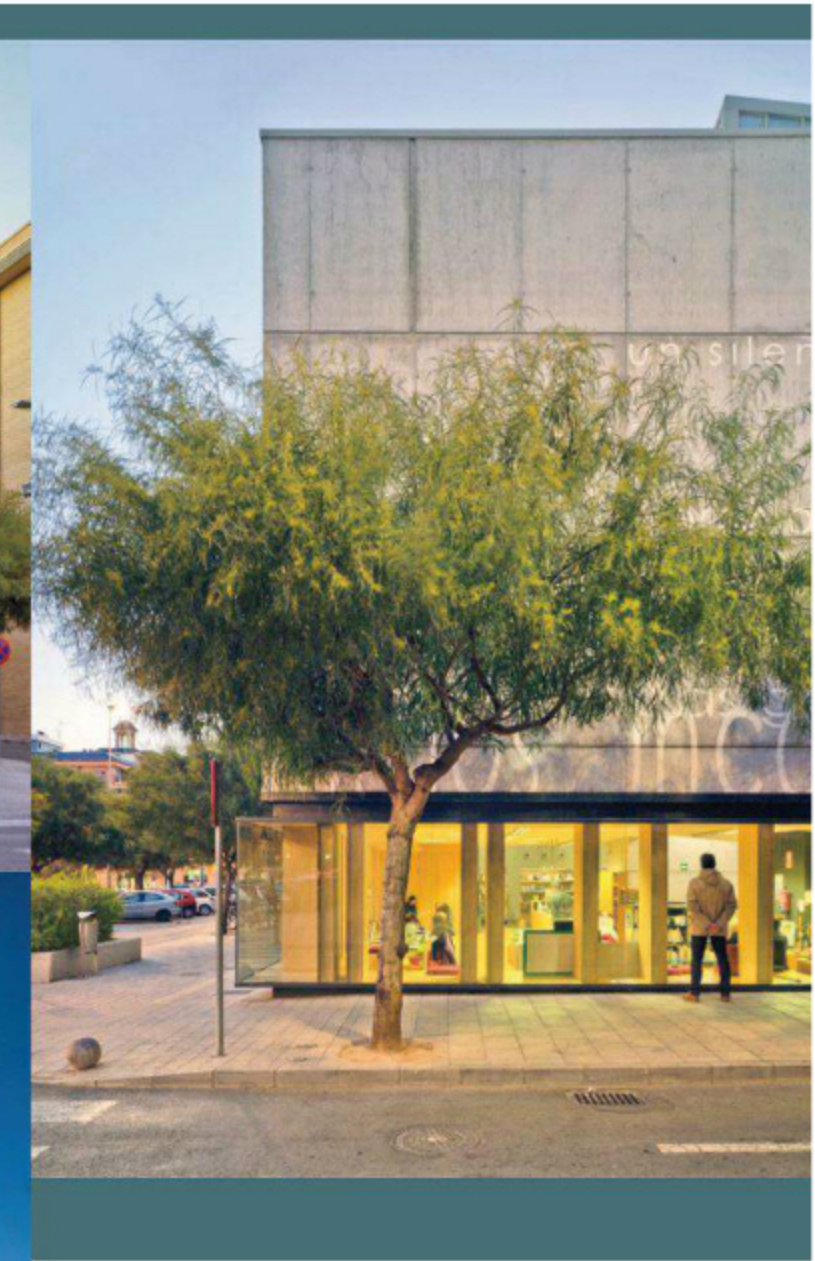


/ ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE

'EL CAPTIVADOR'

LA NUCIA, ALICANTE, SPAIN

This complex building rambles across its site, making deliberate and abstracted references to its context and architectural traditions while never suggesting it is anything but new and inventive. Functioning almost like building-as-landscape, the centre accommodates various functions in a village of forms nestled down into the site, incorporating olive groves, other vegetation and open terraces to make the exterior realm as interesting as the interior. Phased in three parts, with an extensive roof terrace clad in bright colours, distorted archways and a plethora of building and finish materials, from stucco to stone to steel, the centre does its best to, indeed, 'captive'.



/ LIBRARY

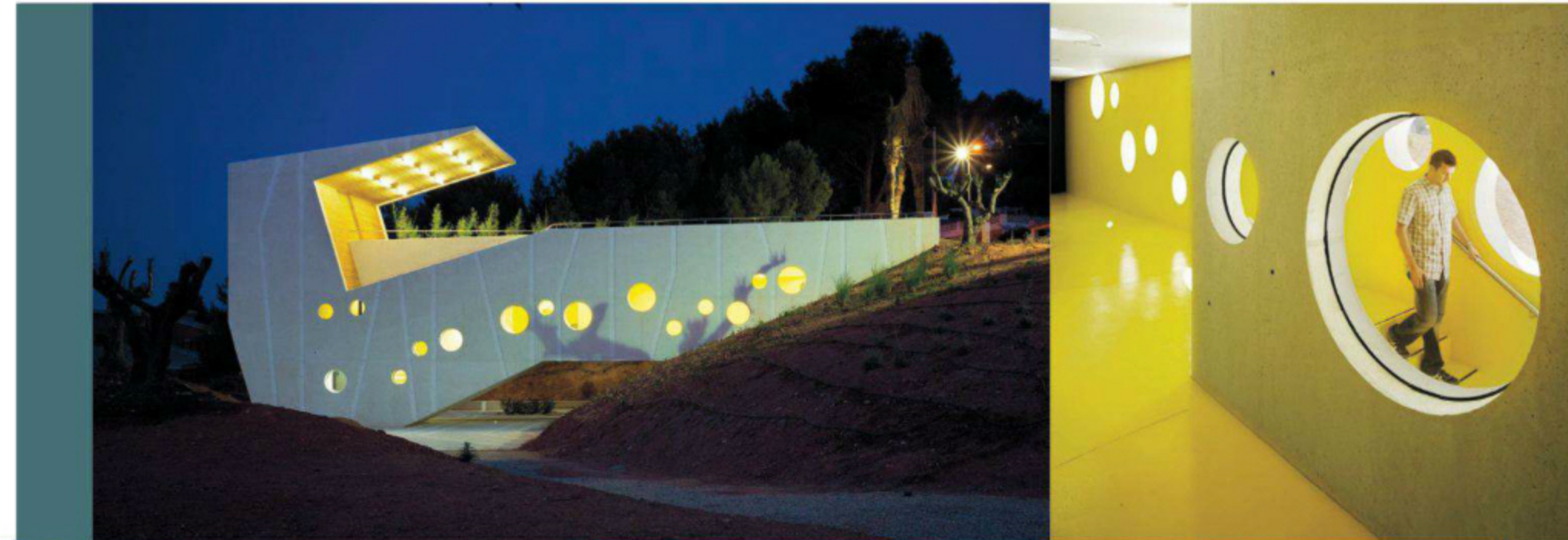
SAN VICENTE DEL RASPEIG, ALICANTE, SPAIN

This medium-scaled municipal institution is a reinforced concrete box enlivened imaginatively through a series of manipulations internal and external. Commissioned in part to help rehabilitate a 'difficult' section of town, the proportionately 'tough' box is lightened by extensive ground-floor glazing as well as alphabetical super-graphics splashed across its grey facades. This instantly states its purpose and boldly engages citizens outside in a veritable challenge: to come inside and explore, exchange, engage with books (and film, and music, and each other). A large ramp climbs upward as a metaphor for learning, through spaces that are unexpectedly bright and unforbidding. It is evidence of the architects' skill that the concrete surfaces are moulded into casually inviting envelopes around comfortable spaces. Internal views are lively and diverse, all enclosed by a perimeter insulation of books storage. The library is something of a treasure box: suggestive but quiet outside, containing pleasurable surprises within.

/SECONDARY SCHOOL RAFAL, ALICANTE, SPAIN

This forceful composition in concrete doesn't hedge its bets: it makes a bold statement about academic environments and the power of architecture to provide an evocative setting for important activity. Appearing almost as a fortress for learning, the parti pairs two L-shaped buildings to the perimeter of the site, with the structures facing one another across a courtyard space that is both formally rich and deceptively simple. Crystalzoo cleverly plays with the classroom module to compose a series of interlocking boxes that push and pull, creating a zigzag 'comb' pattern of solid and void (terraces),

bringing a drama to the space that is – because of its audacious scale – somehow also playful. It does other things as well, such as manipulate shade and light, enhance cross-ventilation and natural lighting, and supply outside gathering spaces at usefully different scales. It seems like a village conceived in model form, and what's most convincing about the result is the juxtaposition of a potentially off-putting severity of scale and material with an enticing liveliness in execution and details. If a large monochrome bastion can be inviting and even fanciful, it surely has the power to charm.



/SOCIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE – VIEWPOINT SQUARE 'EL TOSSAL' LA NUCIA, ALICANTE, SPAIN

Conceived with an ultra-simple programme brief and a low budget, this small community centre building in rural Spain aims to provide straightforward social space for its residents to use as they need or want, with minimum fuss and maintenance. Using the sloping site to its advantage, Crystalzoo designed a cantilevered box beam structure that rests on the bank, and

provides multiple levels of use, including its rooftop, for gatherings. Inside is a large events room plus some smaller work rooms. Below the span is sheltered public space. The roof is ideal for individual use, or smaller groups. The long side-elevations sport scattered porthole windows. Lemon yellow is the colour chosen to 'decorate' the concrete structure's interior.

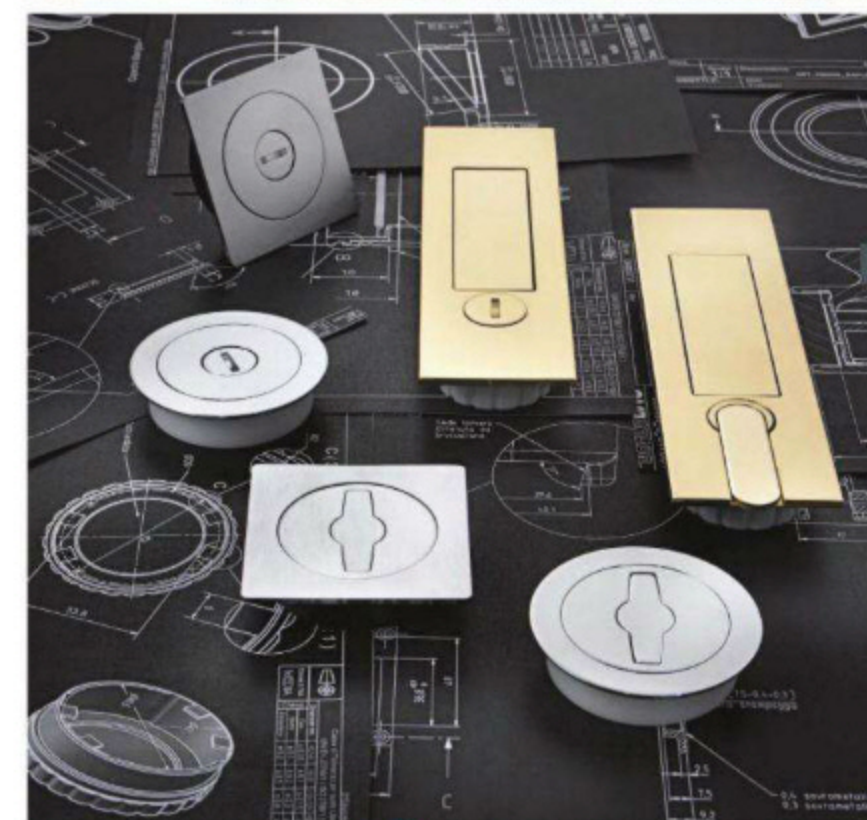
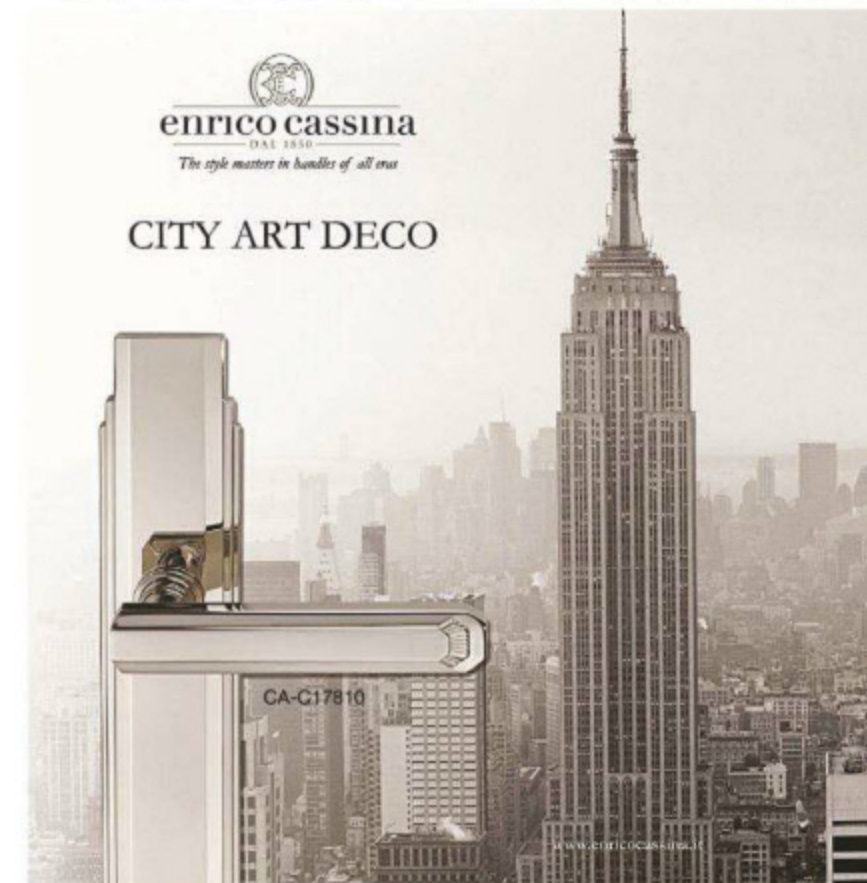




/CASAL DE LA JUVENTUD YOUTH CENTRE NOVELDA, ALICANTE, SPAIN

Count this one as an adventuresome renovation and transformation of an older, existing building. Crystalzoo wasn't shy about taking a hammer (and knife, and sandpaper...) to the old structure, sheathing it in a new, luminous, translucent panelled facade dolloped with rainbow-toned openings, and mildly 'deconstructing' the perimeter envelope of the mass. The result is an entirely rejuvenated, youthful (mind the puns) social building that fairly calls out to be used, trampled over and explored. A new plaza space in front begs for skateboards, chatter and flirting, and the overall scale of the place feels just right; big enough to be taken functionally seriously, small enough to be cute. It's hard for architecture to address an age group, at least without seeming either cliched or condescending. Casal de la Juventud is neither. This youth isn't wasted on the young.

NOVELTY FOR MODERN HOSPITALITY



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Time To Celebrate

Leading ironmongery supplier Tung Fat Ho Building Material Ltd (TFH) celebrated its 30th anniversary last month with a party for their colleagues, friends and clients at the Show Club in Hong Kong's Lan Kwai Fong. "Thirty years marks a significant milestone for TFH," says Simon Leung, the company's general manager. "We began as a small business selling timber products in Mong Kok in the 1950s. Since the past thirty years, we have been providing high-quality products, professional and reliable ironmongery hardware consultation, flexible product range and good customer services to our clients." The company recently set up a showroom in Wanchai, where product demonstrations, gatherings and seminars are often held.



City Farms

Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) celebrated the first summer harvest of its Urban Farm, together with social enterprise partners Time to Grow and Sowers Exchange. First launched in March, the Urban Farm is situated in the heart of Central, on the roof of the Bank of America Tower. The aim of initiating organic urban farming in Hong Kong is to raise awareness about the potential to make the city more liveable, healthy and sustainable. "We are very excited to celebrate the first summer harvest of JLL's Urban Farm today. With the dedicated team effort from our NGO partners, we believe the urban farming project will continue to grow, with more people realising the importance of leading a sustainable lifestyle," says William Lai, head of property management at JLL. The summer harvest crops included amaranth greens, water spinach and green onion.



Art Attack

The Asia Contemporary Art Show returned to Hong Kong last month with a line-up of 100 exhibiting galleries from 18 countries in Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America. The exhibitors presented more than 3,000 works, spanning from original paintings, limited editions, sculpture and photography. "With this our fourth edition, we are delighted to be the largest and most influential 'satellite' event to Art Basel Hong Kong, which is held at the same time," notes Mark Saunderson, director of the Asia Contemporary Art Show. "The demand to meet and sell to Hong Kong collectors is very strong, which means we can select from some of the world's most interesting up-and-coming galleries and artists to present at the Show." The event ran for three days at Conrad Hong Kong.

Next in hinge

Photography by Miguel de Guzman



Les Ascension del Senor Church by AGI Architects

Cover story

New education architecture

Project File

Two houses in Tokyo, a restaurant in NYC, a tea house in Porto Alegre, et al

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SHIGERU BAN

won the 36th 2014

Pritzker

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"MOON" - door handle designed by Shigeru Ban

"Just like a master of Tameshi - giri, the difficult Japanese martial art of sword cutting, Ban reveals the essence of the object with a rapid movement, an instantaneous action which, in traditional Japanese arts, represents the creation of beauty: but the hand must be steady, and the mind clear."



OLIVARI

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068



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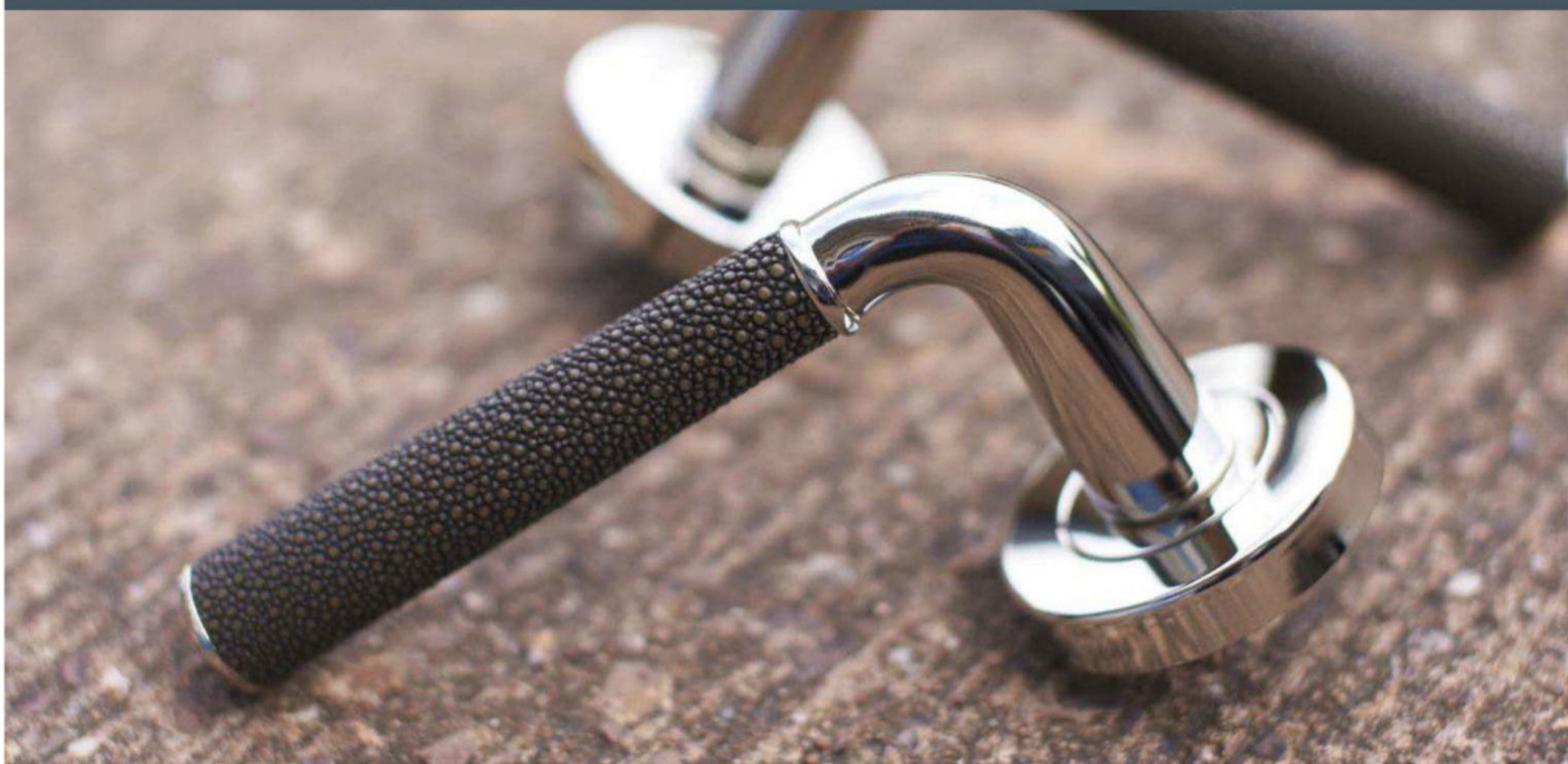
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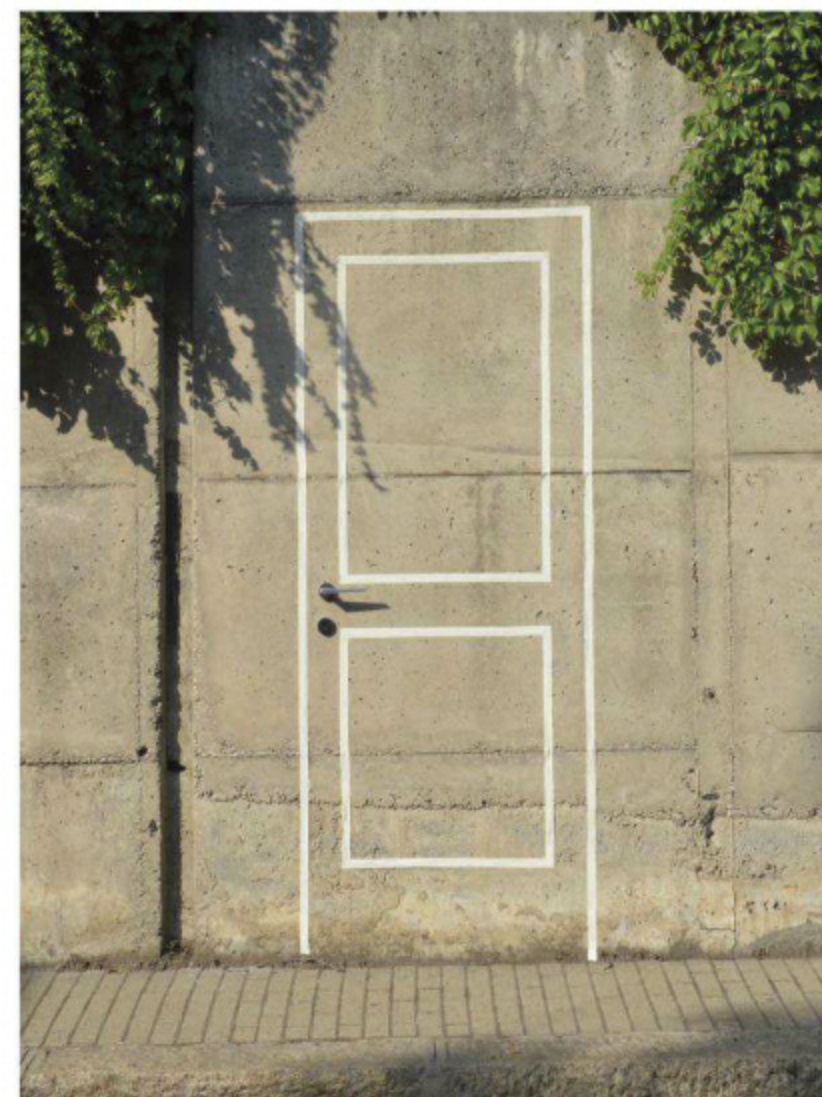
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OLIVARI 
 design, taken by the hand



Nina OL-M234
design by Daniel Libeskind



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- Classification according to EN 1935
- Fire resistant according to standard EN 1634-1 : 2008 and classified according to EN13501-2:2007



S-5
Up to 80 kg

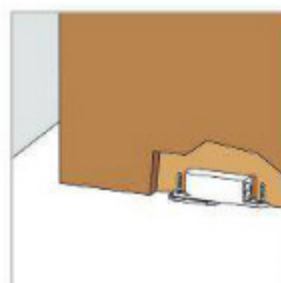
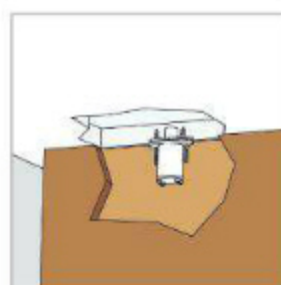
M-6
Up to 100 kg

L-7
Up to 150 kg



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- Door closer
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