

MASS MATTERS: *Although attaining is still more fun, maintaining is the new name of the game.*

loftlife

THE LOFTSTYLE GUIDE TO LIFE IN THE CITY

- Stadium + Lofts = New Downtown
- Trickle-Down Ergonomics
- Mirrors: A New View Review
- MODA Goes on the Road
- The Hottest New Stuff from ICFF

THE FUTURE OF THE LOFT PAGE 36



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SAN FRANCISCO PAGE 50



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LETTER



Have a seat.

Since it's summer, may we suggest the Brothers Bouroullec's Vegetal chair  made by Vitra? "Shaped from the world of vegetation," the Vegetal was the winner of this year's Editors Award for "Outdoor Furniture" at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) in New York City. Not to be confused with this year's Modern Atlanta, NeoCon World's Trade Fair (in Chicago), the Salone Internazionale del Mobile (Milan), INDEX Dubai, or any of the hundreds of showcases—from regional to international—hawking the latest and greatest in furniture and design. (See page 22 for our ICFF faves.)

Like the glut of house and home shows on television, we know all of this material madness was in production long before the bottom fell out of the Nesting Decade. How do we now find a pleasant balance?


According to the Head of Product Development at Vitra, a company known for challenging the limits of the manufacturing process, the Vegetal was the "most complicated project" in his 45 years at the company. Therefore, one chair, in colors intended to further "emphasize the link to nature": basic dark, mauve grey, brick, cream, forest, or 'maron,' will set you back \$555. Which means a set of four will run you nearly \$2,500. Naturally.

Unless it would prolong the blemish on your credit score, our best suggestion is to buy a complete set and store them away in the original packaging. In about 20 years, the recession will be just a memory with an inevitable "Great" in front of it and you'll be able to sell them for fifteen times the price. They'll be like mint-condition "first editions" (and gorgeous ones at that) of a form and process that's destined to be second nature to designers and manufacturers of the future. (And perfect for "future lofts." See *Loftopia*, page 36.)

Or you could be completely crazy and actually *use* the fiber-reinforced polyamide beauties. If the design or the quality fails to speak to you, maybe the steep price tag will be sufficient—they'll be the *last* outdoor chairs you'll ever need. And isn't that one of the defining precepts of sustainability?

While we fret over needlessly deceptive options like "Paper or plastic?" (see page 11), the real questions of how and why something is made, or better yet, how it is used, remains of greater importance. (Such as sports arenas with living built-in, page 13; your own ergonomic home office, page 15; or a look at a new exhibit that explores green building in the Southeast, page 27.)

It seems that holding on to personal, lasting pieces is more important than rushing out to buy things that design judges tell us we should, knowing we can always just "recycle" (i.e., replace) them later.

Decorating and collecting have replaced hunting and gathering as an essential human instinct. It's just that these days, maintaining all that we've acquired without slipping (further) into debt may be the happy medium between stylish city living and a balanced city lifestyle. 

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ON THE COVER: Detail from a computer generated image of Five Franklin Place, a project conceived by Ben van Berkel's UN Design.



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modernfan.com



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Marcel, a Dutch native, is a managing partner & founder of Amsterdam's Springtime, an industrial design firm.

Illustrations by Graham Smith

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*The sum total of things was always such as it is now,
and such it will ever remain. - Epicurus*



Frank Gehry
Wiggle Side Chair
1972 (reissued 2007)
Made by Vitra
60 layers of corrugated
cardboard, hidden screws,
fiberboard edging.
H: 34.25"
W: 13.75"
D: 24"
seat height: 18.5"
\$985

Philippe Starck
Louis Ghost Chair
2002
Made by Kartell
Injection-molded
polycarbonate.
H: 36.2"
W: 21"
D: 21"
seat height: 18.7"
arm height: 26.25"
\$410; set of four \$1,500



91%

the difference in the amount of energy needed
to recycle 1 lb. of plastic to the energy it takes
to recycle 1 lb. of paper.

(Environmental Protection Agency)

ETIOPIA (ee-toe'-pee-uh) n.

“an environmentally conscious, pedestrian-
scale community shaped by technology,
which allows for virtual interactions and
decentralized production.”

(coined by William J. Mitchell in Dwell, Oct. 2008)

**If you turned back the clock and launched
both at the same time, the Kindle would
be outselling the iPod by 32%.**

Price of iPod on launch (10/23/01)	\$399
Second-generation iPod (07/01/02)	\$499
Units sold in first year:	378,000
Price of Kindle on launch (11/19/07)	\$399
Second-generation Kindle (02/23/09)	\$359
Units sold in first year:	500,000

(wikipedia.com and techcrunch.com)

PLASTIC BAGS: A Short History

- 1957** Plastic sandwich bag is born.
- 1966** Nearly 30% of bread packaging is plastic.
- 1969** NYC institutes plastic bag garbage disposal.
- 1974** Sears switches to plastic shopping bags.
- 1977** Supermarkets coin: “Paper or plastic?”
- 1994** Denmark creates first plastic bag tax.
- 1996** 80% of all bags used worldwide are plastic.
- 2002** Ireland: world's first consumer-paid bag tax.*
- 2007** SF, CA is first US city to ban plastic bags.
- 2009** China is first country to ban plastic bags.

(plasticbageconomics.com; npr.org; & thedailygreen.com)

* Tony Lowes, director of Friends of the Irish Environment
in County Cork, said the **15¢** tax introduced in 2002 has
resulted in a **95%** reduction in their use. “It's been an
extraordinary success.”

(National Geographic, Sept. 2003)

AVERAGE AMERICAN HOUSEHOLD HAS 24 ELECTRONIC DEVICES

(Consumer Electronics Association)

2,000 { paper bags = 280 lbs.
plastic bags = 30 lbs.

(Environmental Protection Agency)

US cities
considering
fees for, or bans
of, plastic bags:
Annapolis,
Austin,
Bakersfield,
Boston,
New Haven,
Phoenix, and
Portland (OR).

(npr.org)

\$7.26 BILLION

(record) amount of the “plastics
product deficit” the US has with
China.

*(“Plastic Facts Sheet,” The Society of the
Plastics Industry Inc., 2008)*

**In 2007 (the last year
recorded), the US
imported \$37.5 billion
worth of plastic and
exported \$48.37 billion
worth back to the world.**

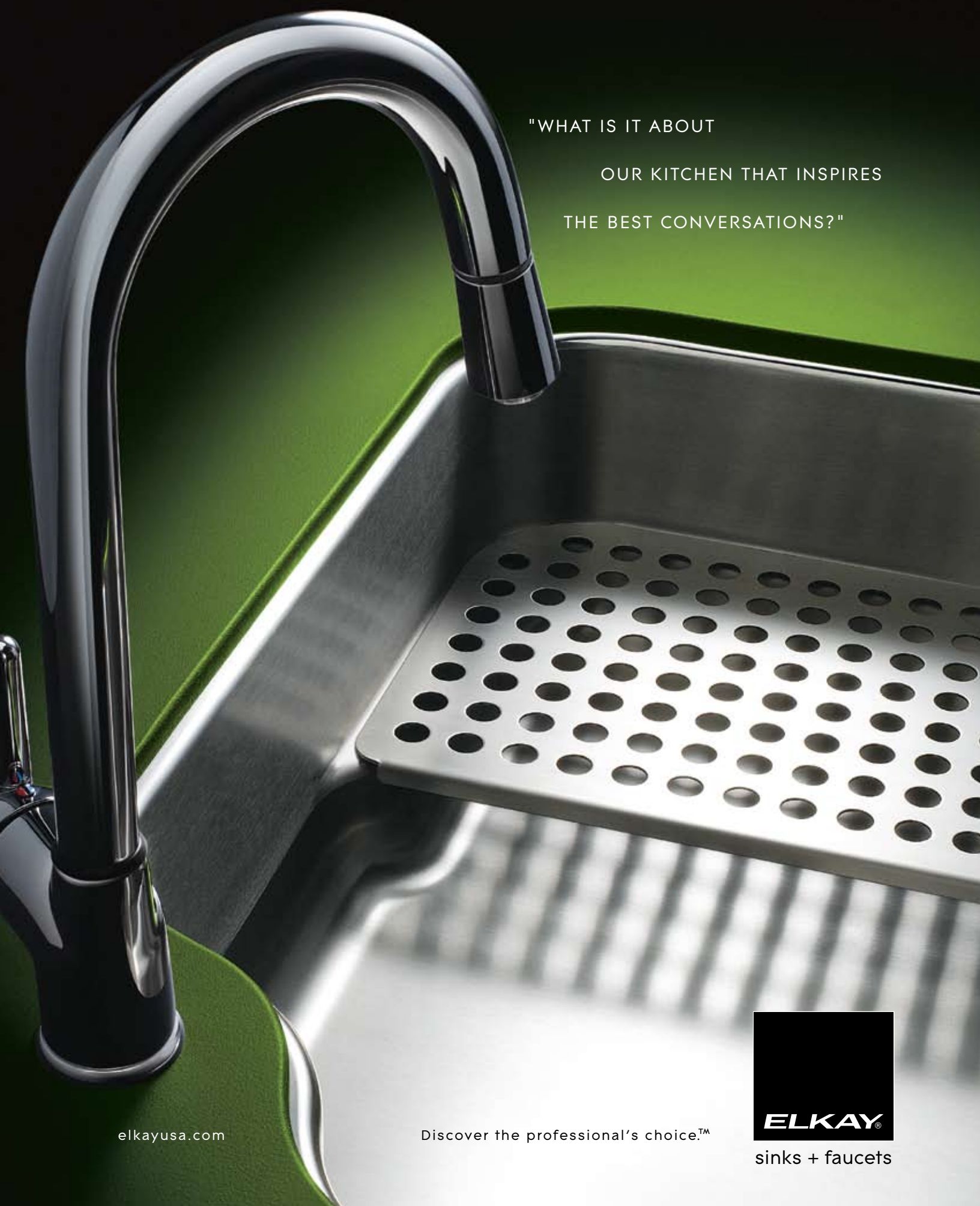
Top 5 export markets

Canada (22%)
Mexico (22%)
China (8%)
Belgium (4%)
Japan (4%)

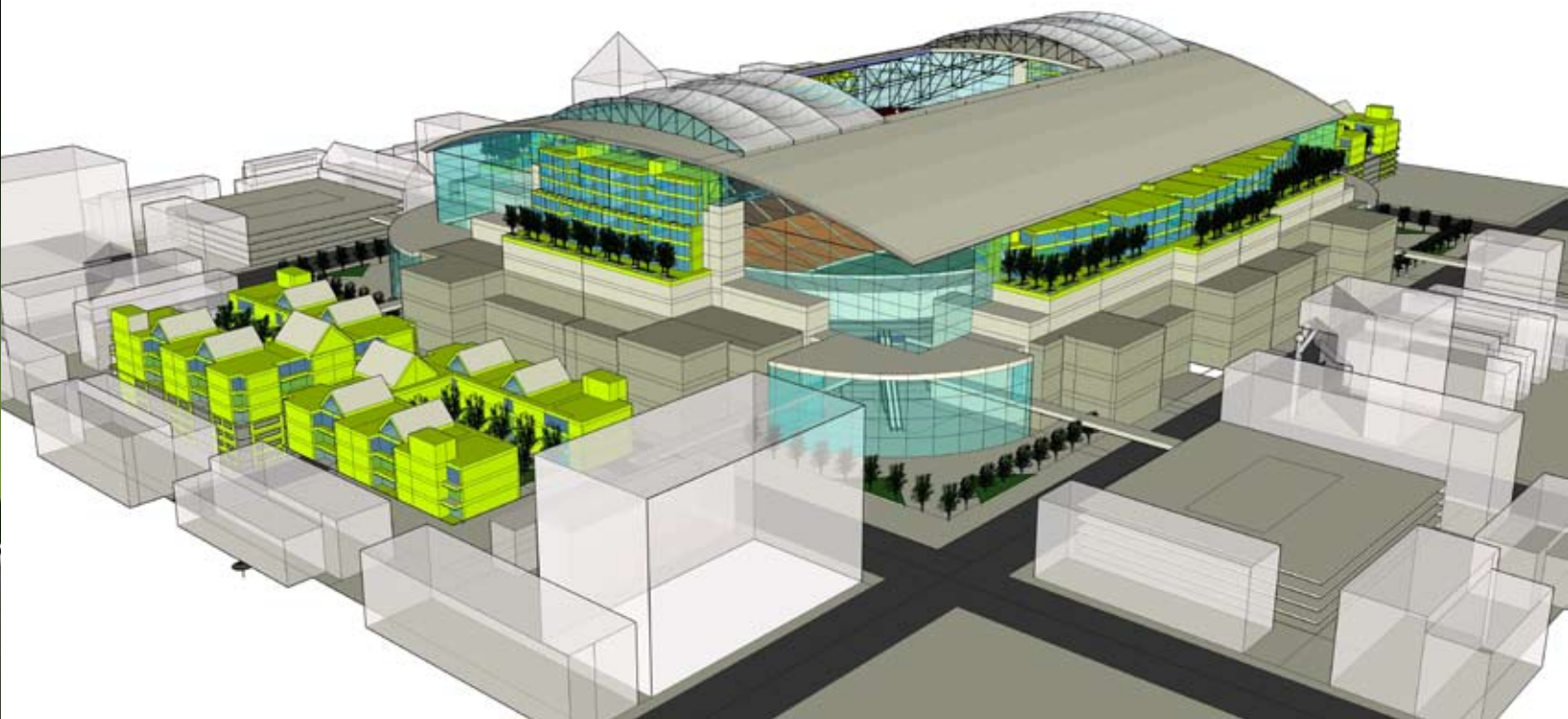
Top 5 import sources

Canada (31%)
China (22%)
Germany (7%)
Mexico (7%)
Japan (6%)

*(“Plastic Facts Sheet,” The Society of the
Plastics Industry Inc., 2008)*



"WHAT IS IT ABOUT
OUR KITCHEN THAT INSPIRES
THE BEST CONVERSATIONS?"



Living, Big League

Katie Black finds that it may take a bit more than athletic grandeur and some popcorn to invigorate our downtowns.

Krenson's future-vision: Glass-walled atriums with towering 50-foot ceilings serve as entry points to housing, shopping, and sports. Many proposed lofts have views inside and outside the stadium complex.

What's the most ideal location for a major league sports stadium? The suburbs, where land is plentiful and cheap? Or a city area, possibly blighted? Many franchise cities, such as Atlanta, have chosen the latter alternative, mainly for its perceived "revitalization impact." The Georgia Dome (which hosts the NFL Falcons), Turner Field (the MLB Braves), and Philips Arena (both the NBA Hawks and NHL Thrashers) are all in downtown Atlanta. Yet Atlanta's downtown still struggles to attract new residents. Turns out massive infusions of money and fans alone won't populate a downtown area.

According to Fred Krenson, VP of Rosser International Inc., and one of the architects of the Georgia Dome and Turner Field: "Baseball stadiums and [basketball/hockey] arenas go hand-in-hand," with downtown environments. Between the three, one team plays almost year-round, providing a constant flow of people. Professional football teams, however, have only ten home games a year.

"Tailgating is big, but no one wanders from the parking lot," says Krenson. The Georgia Dome, for example, was partially intended to increase the Georgia World Congress Center's usefulness as a meeting venue. While this may have worked to some degree, it's still mainly for out-of-towners with no intentions of living in the neighborhood.

To address this problem, Krenson envisions an idea "featuring two of America's greatest sports: football and shopping": an expansive stadium complex surrounded by an "urban fabric" of loft housing and retail space.

Walled with glass, many of the proposed lofts have views inside and outside the stadium. They are live-in equivalents of the Georgia Dome's skybox suites—with nearly 14 foot ceilings and spaces up to 2,700 square feet. Access from underground parking will be provided by elevators; park-like areas at the base of each loft cluster add a communal element.

Adds Krenson, "It's the mall idea that makes

the lofts work." Loft residents have access to shops and restaurants; football fans find a destination beyond tailgating, and might even shop at halftime—or even during the game. "The shoe stores would be popular," jokes Krenson.

The plan also envisions a nearby grocery store, allowing stadium residents to patronize surrounding businesses.

Although there's been some forward motion on a \$2.5 billion stadium-complex in San Francisco, it's astonishing that an idea like Krenson's hasn't yet been realized.

One large obstacle? NFL team owners, who want to maximize gameday revenue: income from ticket sales, concessions, catering, private box rentals, merchandise, parking—in short, everything. They have no motivation to encourage growth in surrounding areas.

It's clear that common ground must be found if professional sports are to ever successfully bolster the downtowns of the cities they represent.

Rendering created for *LoftLife* by Fred Krenson.



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Photo: Rachel Olsson

Sustaining the Human Environment

Using Humanscale's new line of "architect white" tools, expert **Jon Strassner** creates a home office that's ergonomically (and environmentally) sound.



ABOVE THE DESK Humanscale's **Element** is the only LED task light that combines a large, usable footprint of neutral white light, a single shadow, and unmatched energy efficiency. Free of knobs and levers, the **M2 Monitor Arm** can move your flat panel to the proper height and distance—or simply out of the way. Both tools save space while sparing your neck, shoulders, and eyes from strain.

BELOW THE DESK CPUs take up valuable space on a desktop. Humanscale's **CPU Holder** requires no tools. An articulating keyboard anchors any ergonomic workstation. The **6G Keyboard System** (shown) allows you to recline and type with the keyboard positioned just above your lap. The **Switch Mouse** can be adjusted for left or right hands of any size. It doesn't allow you to "mouse" in a way that will create long-term injury risks.

“When I talk about ‘sustaining the human environment,’ I’m talking about a holistic solution that benefits the environment as well as the people that work eight or nine hours a day, mostly in front of a computer, and then (in their spare time) surf the net and email. We can’t ignore the amount of time people spend on their computers. If we focus on the human environment, we can increase functionality and productivity with greater space efficiency, minimizing health

and safety issues that come with computer usage... I’ve had people tell me they’ve felt relief within the first few days of implementing these solutions. I think it depends on your current state. Many people, especially young people, insist they feel fine and don’t want to change the way they work. (But) we’re talking about preventing injuries that occur over time. They don’t happen instantly. It’s often a small postural problem, repeated for hours a

day, five days a week... If you apply a complete solution to your workspace—and by that I mean you need to address each element, your chair, keyboard support, monitor support, and light—you’ll be on your way to a healthier way of working. You’ll have a more relaxed posture with back support, keyboard within reach, monitor at the proper height and distance. Your wrists, neck, and back will no longer hurt. You’ll go to bed tired, but not sore.”

Photography by Darryl Patterson



SOMETHING LIGHT Laptops are lightweight, portable, and cool. They're also very bad computers to work on for any length of time, because they create the "laptop hunch," which is horrible for your posture and your long-term health. Using a **Laptop Holder** means you can use the screen at the right height and distance while freeing yourself from the confines of its small keyboard pad. The last place a laptop belongs is in your lap.

SOMETHING BRIGHT You need five times more light to read a paper document than you need to view a monitor (since monitors generate light). The only way to deal with multi-tasking at your desk is to use a task light. It allows you to use the proper amount of light on printed materials without overlighting the monitor. The **Element** is the only LED on the market to meet all of the Department of Energy's criteria for LED task lights.

SOMETHING DIFFRIENT People like knobs and levers, yet less than two percent actually know how to adjust their techie office chairs. Designer Niels Diffrient created the **World Chair** for Humanscale with no bells or whistles. Made from only eight major parts, it weighs only 25 lbs. To get it to adapt to your body, all you have to do is sit. Plus, fewer resources are used in the manufacturing of the chair, so there's less impact on the environment.



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LOVE IN A DANISH HAMLET In 1939, hairdresser Marie Axelson and entrepreneur Holger Nielsen marry—and open a hair salon—in Randers, Denmark.



FROM HAIR TO ETERNITY Marie asks Holger to design a practical, hygienic waste bin to collect hair. He produces the Vipp, from *vippe*, Danish for the (stainless steel) tip lid, ingeniously activated by a rubber pedal.

The Vipp Pedal Bin

The Nielsen family honors their father's famous invention—a product of their mother's necessity.



VIPP 2.0 Marie's customers, as well as other hairdressers, doctors, and dentists, discover the Vipp and demand increases. In 1949, Holger perfects the pedal bin's smooth domed lid using a hydraulic press.



NIELSEN FAMILY Holger Nielsen dies in 1992 at the age of 78. His daughter, Jette Egelund (pictured with children and business partners, Kasper and Sofie) leaves her life in Copenhagen, returns to Randers, and assumes control.



LIKE FATHER, LIKE DAUGHTER Jette peddles the Vipp in high-end furnishing outlets like the Conran Shop. The Vipp II toilet brush (designed by Jette in 1997) and the Vipp soap dispenser soon follow.



BACK TO COPENHAGEN A 100-year-old printing house on Islands Brygge in Copenhagen becomes the new headquarters. After a year of renovation by architect Frank Maali, Vipp makes the move in 2005.

MAKE ART NOT TRASH Recognized by the Louvre as "iconic," the Vipp pedal bin has been reinterpreted by artists and celebrities and auctioned off for charitable causes.



Mattia Biagi Michael Stipe Alice Temperley Christy Turlington Tomàs Libertiny Bill Sofield Celerie Kemble Todd Oldham Dale Chihuly



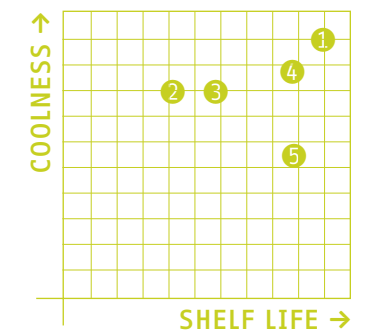
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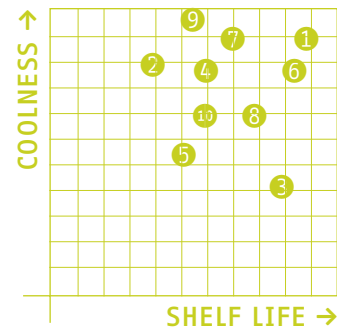
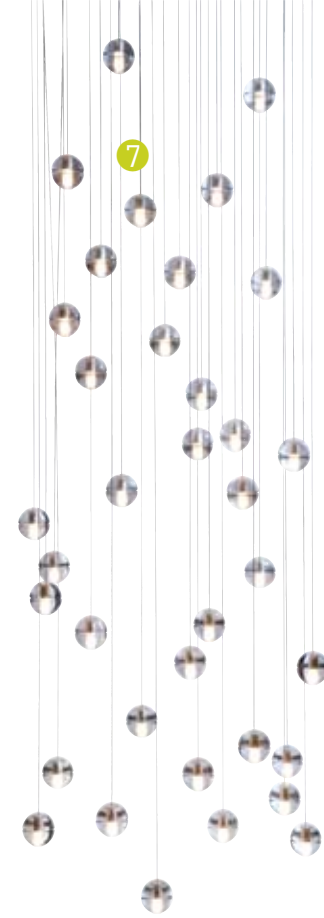
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Photograph by Andrew Giammarco



Peek-a-Boo

① The chemical treatment used for tufted fabrics known as “burnout” has been applied to the sheer **Wintertree II**, a new take on an old pattern. Alluding to the muted, yet striking colors of Chinese murals, famed textile designer Jack Lenor Larsen was the fabric’s original creator in 1968. 59” (w); cowtan.com ② Using interlocking linen strips, **Sussex** evokes a woven basket, but on a much larger scale. 62” (w); clarencehouse.com ③ The **Storm** pattern uses a cotton/polyester blend with a burnout sheen that glistens; day or night. 115” (w); creationbaumann.com ④ An award-winning pattern from a 1972 international student exhibition, **Cyclone** is light as a feather and comprised of delicate hand-woven threads. 59” (w); knoll.com ⑤ Made of sheer silk and chenille bouclé, the web-like pattern of **Artesanal** has a contemporary Gothic look to it. 54” (w); robertallendesign.com . Pricing available through designers.

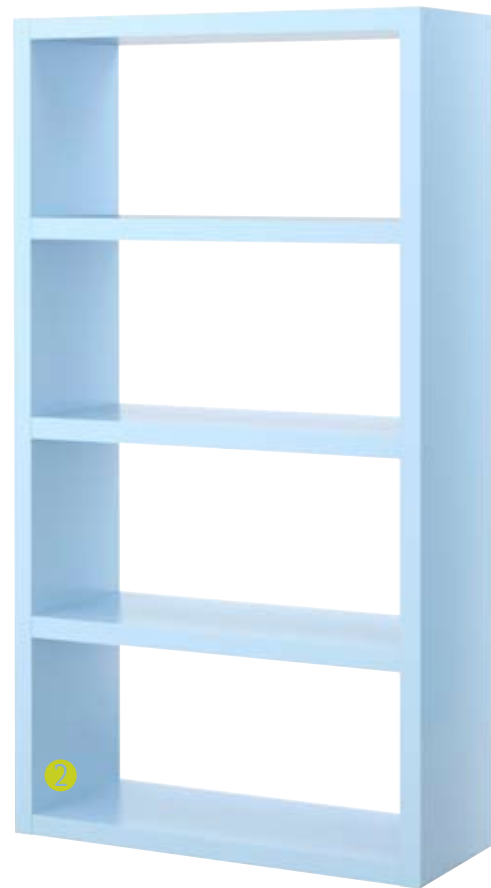
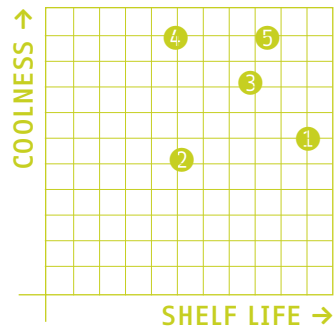


Wrap It Up: ICFE's Best

① British designer David J. Irwin created the **Timber Stacker** from European oak: strong, laminated, and easily stackable. 33.5" x 19.7" x 19.7"; contract purchase through deadgoodltd.co.uk
 ② Designer Patricia Urquiola's innovative **Night & Day** sofa folds into a bed with convenient custom storage compartments, so that you may never need to rise. 34" x 93.25" x 33.25"; price upon request; molteni.it
 ③ The **Denizen Secretary**, part of a novel live/work series from design team WilliamsSorel for Coalesse, makes the perfect desk... or a chic at-home bar. 68" x 52" x 19"; \$7,950; coalesse.com
 ④ Alluding to the layers of an onion, architect Carl Fredrik Svenstedt's **Infinity Bench** uses concentric hoops to give it an organic shape. 23.6" x 63" x 13.4"; \$4,200; lerival.com
 ⑤ The Front Design's entry to this year's IKEA booth was the bendable **PS SVARVA**, made by an old wood-turning technique. Table (shown) or floor size; \$129 or \$189; ikea.com
 ⑥

The ultimate architect's dream: **Crescendo C2 maximus**. This handcrafted drafting table has a nifty desktop that tilts upward or can be taken out completely. 20.7" x 50.4" (working height) and 51.2" x 34.6" (desktop); from \$4,898; stilvoll.de
 ⑦ This cluster of small, articulated cast glass sphere lights, called the **14.36-36 Pendant Round Canopy**, creates a subtle candle-like glow. 120" x 29.7"; prices upon request; bocci.ca
 ⑧ Design your own **Bookshelf** with this customized storage line, offering a wide range of powdercoated steel sliding doors. 41" x 79" x 16.8"; starting at \$700; loadbearing.com
 ⑨ Everything's detachable with MinHoo Park's **Unified Dining Table**, including the tableware. Dinner just got easier. 59" x 29"; price upon request; minhoopark@googlemail.com
 ⑩ The latest in water closet cabinetry, Philippe's **Starck 1** washbasin for Duravit, comes in a barrel shape (shown: Macassar veneer). 22" x 32.5" x 22.78"; \$3,749; fixtureuniverse.com

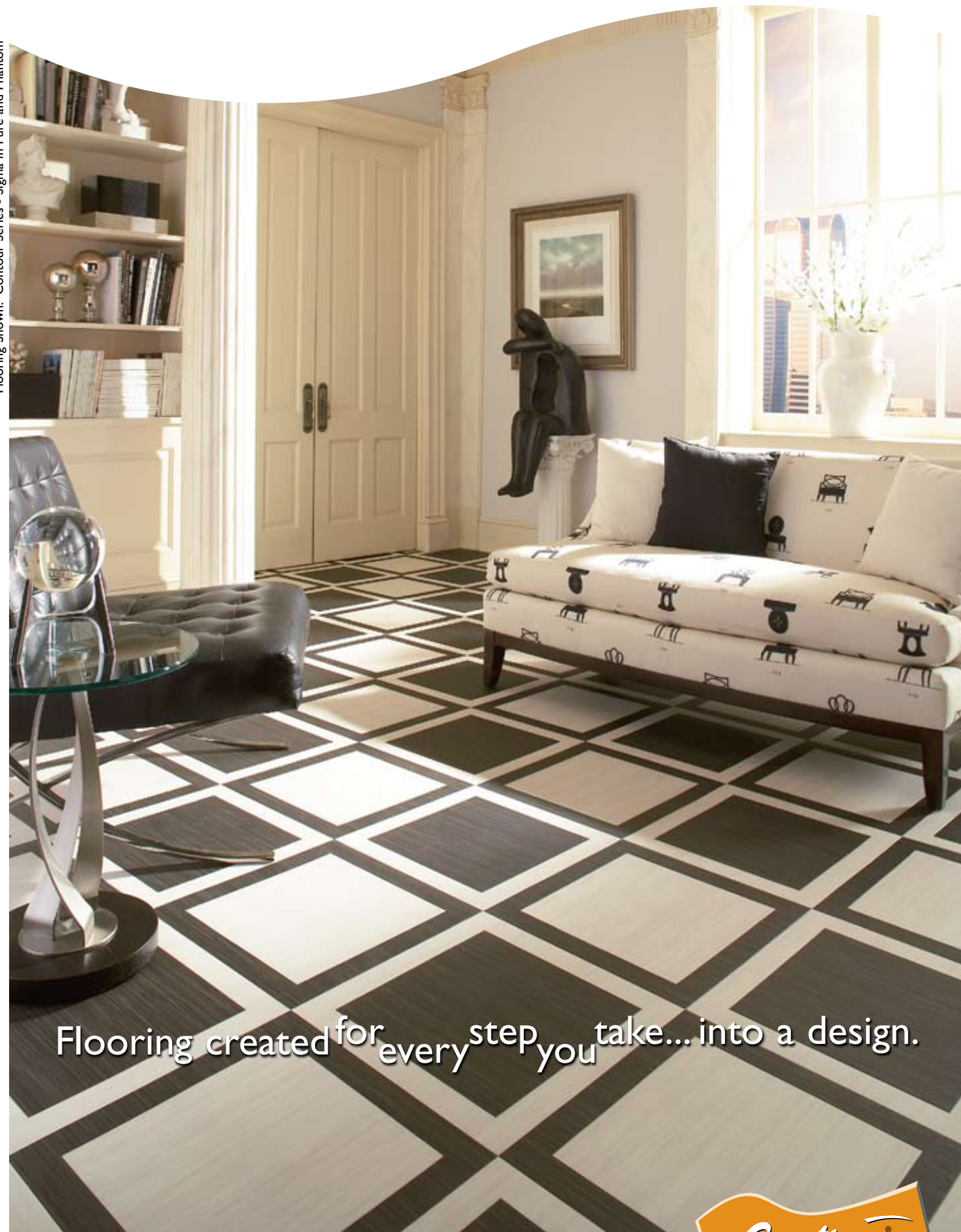
WANTED



Pigments of Imagination

① Originally manufactured in 1948 by Charles and Ray in fiberglass-reinforced plastic, the iconic **Eames Molded Plastic Rocker** is made in new, softer polypropylene (an eco-friendlier material) in colors such as lime yellow and light blue. 26.5" x 24.5" x 27"; \$479; dwr.com ② The fun and affordable **LACK bookcase's** simple, geometric design (shown: light blue) is a playful way to store. 74.75" x 41.37" x 15"; \$129; ikea.com ③ Upholstered in "kiwi leather," the **Tufted Ditte Sofa** combines modern functionality with Edwardian luxury. 36.5" x 85" x 33.5"; \$4,998; anthropologie.com ④ Explore the world right in your own living room with the **Mint Table Globe**, featuring silver land masses. 16" x 12" x 12"; \$295; dwr.com ⑤ Step it up a culinary notch with a quintessential cast-iron range, the **Aga Three Oven Cooker - Gas Model**, which uses radiant heat to lock in juices, nutrients, and flavors. 33.5" x 26.75" x 38.87"; \$14,263; aga-ranges.com

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Southface's Eco Office brings the institute's already considerable track record in environmentally sustainable residential construction to the commercial arena.

MODAvational Ideas

Our eco-expert, **Jim Hackler** takes an inside look at the Museum of Design Atlanta's new exhibit to see who's *really* gone green.

The Southface Energy Institute's new Eco Office near downtown Atlanta is about as "green" as an 8,300-square-foot office building gets. Combining products and design that are resource-efficient with a 6.4 kW solar photovoltaic system, the building—one of a handful in the Southeast to achieve a LEED Platinum rating from the US Green Building Council—has become a national model for sustainability. It's also prominently featured in a new traveling exhibit called *ATLANTA: Beyond Bricks and Sticks*, originating at the Museum of Design Atlanta (MODA).

"It's the largest and most ambitious show we've ever created," says Brenda Galena, MODA's Executive Director. "It's also the first time we've taken an exhibit on the road that will make stops in highly visible places like the atrium of the CNN Center, Lenox Square Mall, and Cobb Galleria."

As the title suggests, the show goes beyond just the physical features that make a building eco-friendly. The exhibit tells the stories of the people who live, work, play, and learn in the Atlanta metropolitan area's diverse mix of "green" projects, ranging from the 19,000-seat Philips Arena to the tiny Blue Eyed Daisy Bakeshop in the Serenbe community.

One of the highlights of the exhibit: student updates from their first year at Arabia Mountain High School in Lithonia, GA, the first LEED Silver public high school in the state. Creatively incorporating the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area, a 2,000-acre preserve that backs up to the school to serve as a living classroom for students, the magnet school offers college preparatory classes in medicine, engineering, and environmental studies.

ATLANTA: Beyond Bricks and Sticks also displays projects that adhere to the standards of

the EarthCraft House program, created by the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association and the Eco Office's main tenant, Southface, ten years ago. A special focus on affordability features a profile on a family living in a Habitat for Humanity house—the Atlanta Habitat affiliate, the second largest in the country, is one of the few that certifies all of its homes "green."

While the story of Atlanta's diverse mix of green buildings is the main theme of MODA's new exhibit, visitors can also calculate their carbon footprints on interactive screens. You'll also find the city's first comprehensive "green map" to guide you to eco-conscious retailers, restaurants, as well as cultural and civic resources. The exhibit even offers real-time job searches on CareerEco, an Atlanta-based online community for like-minded employers and those in need of a little green to supplement their "green."

Concept sketch of Southface's Eco Office, courtesy of Lord, Aeck & Sargent.

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1



EXPERT SAYS: "Do you get seven years bad luck just for buying this one? I like this fractured look, but wonder if it wouldn't add more lines to my face!"

—Jon Strassner

The Fairest of Them All

Known for their ability to enlarge a room, mirrors also do wonders to enliven your big blank wall.



3



EXPERT SAYS: "I tried to replicate this mirror for a restaurant I designed. It's all about the edges—and these guys do it right. Boy, I didn't!"

—Miguel Calvo

BIG BLANK WALL



2



EXPERT SAYS: "I love this mirror, by far my favorite. Decadent and modern, it does a nice job of pairing down ornate detail into a functional yet dramatic piece."

—Deirdre Zahl

1 GLACIER WALL MIRROR Fragmented clear mirror made of 36 panes designed by Zuo Modern. 47" x 31.5"; zuomod.com

2 MAXIME VENETIAN WALL MIRROR Handcrafted reproduction from Venetian Gems. 76" x 41"; venetiangems.com

3 FUNHOUSE MINI Sculptural mirror designed by John Balough and Forrest Butler. 42" x 22.5"; hemlockdesign.com

BIG BLANK WALL



4



EXPERT SAYS: "A stylish change from the typical full-length mirror that keeps it simple, but is large enough to bring light and depth into the dark corners of a room."

—Jim Hackler

4 PARADOX Full-length mirror made of varied horizontal strips designed by Piero Lissoni. 108" x 210"; glasitalia.com



5



EXPERT SAYS: "Another fun reflecting mirror, great for a stairwell with a sun roof. It's sure to cast off zillions of reflections."

—Jan Halvarson

5 FIVE x FIVE MIRROR Composed of 25 miniature mirrored panels at varied angles designed by Suck UK. 21.7" x 21.7"; suck.uk.com

6 WOODEN MIRROR Interactive mechanical mirror designed by Daniel Rozin. 67" x 80" x 10"; smoothware.com/danny

7 TRELIS MIRROR Ladder mirror featuring towel rack designed by Michelle Ivankovic. 16" x 60"; umbra.com



EXPERT SAYS: "I love the mobility. No need to commit to a permanent location to get a full-length view."

—Jon Strassner



7



EXPERT SAYS: "This is the Chuck Close mirror. What a cool idea to divide up a reflection in geometric shapes not only squares, but octagonally. It breaks you down into pixel-like pieces."

—Deirdre Zahl



6



WICKER

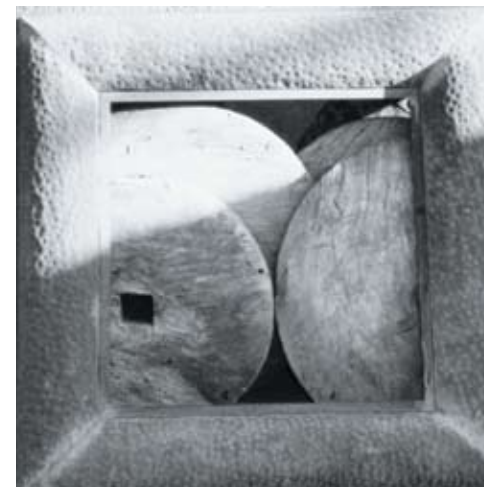
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EXPERT SAYS: "I like how these mirrors float away from the wall and are attached by a simple mounting."

—Patricia Gray



EXPERT SAYS: "Somewhere between Christmas trees, disco, and classic lamp shapes, these mirrors always fit . . . great to check out 'cuties' without being obvious."

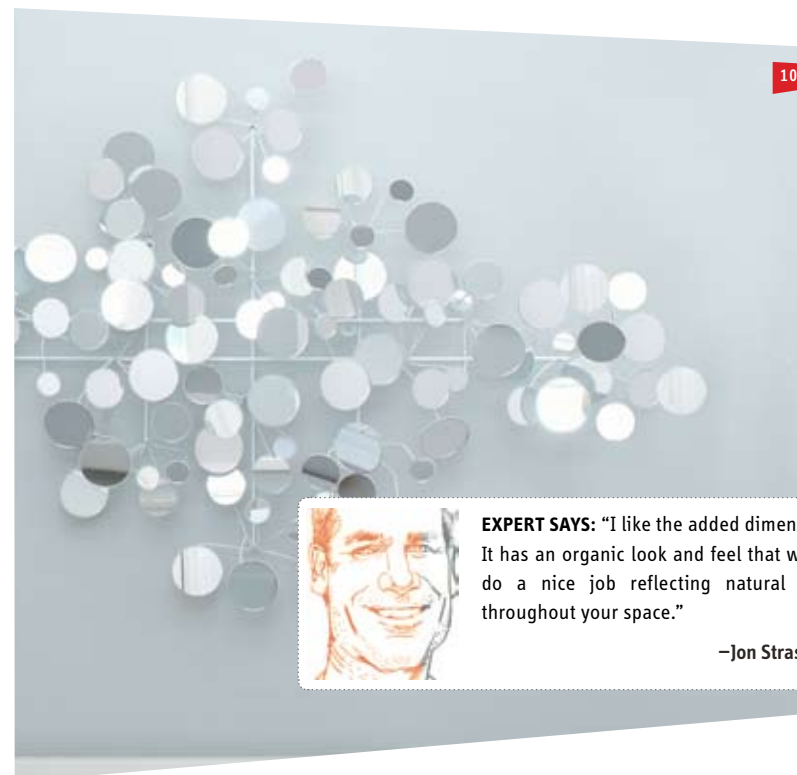
—Marcel Schreuder

11 MY TIME MIRROR CLOCK Designed by Antonio Aravelo for Fusion. 10.2" or 19.7" in diameter; leighharmer.com



EXPERT SAYS: "Better wear a watch as a backup. This conceptual mirror/clock will have you tilting sideways to see the time. Its off-kilter personality is just off to me."

—Deirdre Zahl



EXPERT SAYS: "I like the added dimension. It has an organic look and feel that would do a nice job reflecting natural light throughout your space."

—Jon Strassner





12



EXPERT SAYS: "Had I not known the name, I would have thought of something different, like pickup sticks or bamboo. It seems perfect for a space-age bachelor pad."

—Jan Halvarson

12 BLOW UP MIRROR Stainless steel mirror designed by Fratelli Campana. 34" x 29.3"; alesi.com

13 EDDA DESIGNER MIRROR Full length oval mirrors designed by Spacify. Sized to order; spacify.com

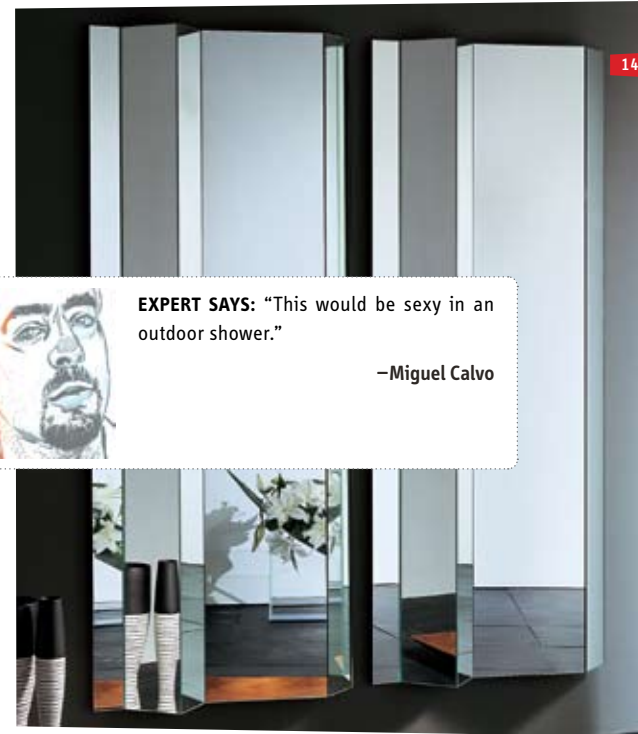


EXPERT SAYS: "I'm drawn to what these mirrors do to the wall and space behind them. They completely change this space and become important to the room."

—Jon Strassner



13



14



EXPERT SAYS: "This would be sexy in an outdoor shower."

—Miguel Calvo

14 KINGDOM Undulating rectangular wall mirror designed by Nanda Vigo. 39.3" x 35.4"; glasitalia.com

15 MIRROR BALL Optical illusion spiral mirror designed by Pearson Lloyd. Sized to order; pearsonlloyd.co.uk



15



EXPERT SAYS: "The bull's-eye design of this mirror definitely brings the cool factor. It makes me wish I had some mirrored darts to go along with it."

—Deirdre Zahl



Jonathan Adler

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Loftopia

Once coveted for their history and proximity to city life, dream lofts are now being created from scratch.



Story by David Hay

On a cul-de-sac not far from the Las Vegas Strip, in a neighborhood that's home to Wayne Newton, Stone Canyon is a wildly-successful community of 23 "loft homes." From the outside, these stuccoed, box-like, mini-fortresses are quite unlike the adapted warehouses that have spawned a revolution of loft conversions in cities around the world. But inside they are lofts gone wild: wide, unstructured spaces with ceilings up to 22 feet high and huge windows that open into courtyards. The brainchild of a company called Blue Heron, Stone Canyon proved such a success that three similar developments followed and late last year, Marquis, with 14 larger versions—some over 10,000 square feet and costing up to \$5 million—were ready for sale. Tyler Jones, one of Blue Heron's principals, attributes their success to "the type of casual living that lofts promote."

How 'casual' depends upon the buyer. "Most of our homes include separated areas, like bedrooms," says Jones, "but they've been designed to be flexible. Any or all of the interior walls can be removed as the homeowner desires." So, the possibility is there. In the middle of the Mojave Desert: a spacious, city-ready loft.

Stone Canyon, it turns out, is hardly the most novel of the loft designs coming into their own. Expansive interiors with double-high ceilings continue to denote 'adventure' and 'freedom' in the American real estate vernacular. For builders and architects these spaces are even more favored: lofts are unusually adaptable in the design phase, and in most cases, they remain one of the cheapest types of housing to construct.

The desire for free-flowing interiors goes back more than 80 years when Modernist architects argued that families didn't want the separation, or isolation, of traditional housing plans. They responded with open floor layouts that broke down the barriers between inside and outside and emphasized affordable building materials, yet they failed to speak to housing in our aging cities.

It was left to the very antithesis of these design pioneers—the

PREVIOUS PAGE: A computer-generated image of the futuristic lobby of Ben Van Berkel's Five Franklin Place. The building's planned rooftop takes a cue from the ships that traverse the nearby Hudson River. A CGI rendering of Five Franklin Place's ethereal "Sky Penthouse" living room.



It was left to the *Hair*-generation of bohemians living in New York to discover how such expansiveness could be had.

Hair-generation of bohemians living in New York—to discover how such expansiveness could be had. By turning the abandoned industrial spaces of SoHo into live/work areas, the loft as we know it was born. These new homes were a mirror of those living in them: adventurous, even subversive.

Lynnette Widder, an associate professor at RISD and a partner in New York-based firm, aardvarchitecture, recalls: “Back in first grade, around 1969, I went to a New York loft for a sleepover. It was a long, long space unlike the pre-war apartments that all my other friends lived in. The kids didn’t have bedrooms, just sculptural loft beds with integrated closets, built and painted by their father. We all slept out in the middle of the room, on the floor. It was pretty wild.”

These lofts were among the least expensive places available in Manhattan. And the grungy, limitless spaces were perfect for artists. Such Minimalists as Richard Serra and Dan Flavin

depended on the loft’s raw, dilapidated look for both inspiration and context. It’s no coincidence that perhaps the most effective gallery space for Minimalism today, Dia:Beacon (just up the Hudson from Manhattan) was once a Nabisco box-printing facility.

This gritty history of conversion has since been replicated from Portland, OR to Providence, RI. Architects are building “lofts” from the ground-up in places with little industrial space adaptable for housing. These new lofts, designed on a much broader canvas, take on many forms.

➤ More designs for salivating: a stream-lined kitchen, master bath, living room, and master bedroom in the proposed “trophy lofts” of Five Franklin Place. ➤ A computer-generated image of the loft’s entryway, perfect for those who wouldn’t mind living in a contemporary art museum.

Five Franklin Place images provided © Five Franklin Place





NYLO's guests embrace the bare-bones aesthetic of their lodgings, such as poured concrete floors and exposed brick.

"Ground-up" Lofts

Building in downtown San Diego, architect Lloyd Russell insists on keeping many qualities of the archetypal loft. "I like anything that exposes the structure of the building," he says, "including columns, joists, trusses, concrete, or masonry walls." Russell partnered with Ted Smith on the Merrimac and the Essex, two award-winning loft complexes in that city's Little Italy, but one of his latest "ground-up" loft projects can be found in the Hillcrest section.

In order to keep the 25 Hillcrest lofts affordable Russell prefers to build what he calls a "no infrastructure" building, which means no elevators, lobbies, hallways, or structured parking (when possible). Aside from the obvious efficiencies, there

are other benefits: without hallways, all units have cross-ventilation, and without having to offset the costs of structured parking, Russell isn't forced to max out the building envelope, which results in ceilings as high as 14 feet. Additionally, circulation outside the building increases tenant interactivity, contributing to better security and a sense of community.

"I put high value on the drama of the space, as does our target market: young professionals aware of architecture." And as it turns out, "the ones that rent the quickest are those with

☑ Clockwise: a suite at the NYLO Hotel in Plano, TX; the bars of Plano at Legacy; NYLO Dallas/Las Colinas; and NYLO Providence/Warwick (RI). ☑ An exterior and interior look at Lloyd Russell's R3 Triangle Building in San Diego's Little Italy.

NYLO hotel images courtesy of NYLO Hotels LLC; R3 Triangle Building photographs by Dave Harrison





Opposite page top: American Woodmark Corp.; bottom: RM Design Studio. This page top: RM Design Studio; bottom left to right: RM Design Studio; photo by Jim Scolari; RM Design Studio

These stuccoed mini-fortresses have little in common with the warehouses that spawned countless loft conversions in cities.

the smallest square footage.” Some come with rents as low as \$1,000 a month. Adds the architect, “I design Minimalism that’s affordable.”

In San Francisco, Stanley Saitowitz of Natoma Architects has taken the loft in a different direction. “Lofts are typically tall in height,” he observes. “I like to create the same quality, but horizontally.”

By opting for a loft over a conventional apartment, Saitowitz argues he can build better quality spaces more inexpensively, and that resonates with upscale San Franciscans.

Nowhere is this more evident than in his elegant SoMa complex, 1234 Howard Street. Dividing the lot into three rectangles, he built on the outer two, leaving the center empty to form a

courtyard. Each outer block is divided by a light well and the remaining space creates extraordinary light. Other benefits of construction cost savings include black bamboo floors and black stained wood cabinetry. “The materials are very important because in such a blank space they provide the texture,” he says.

Perhaps the *coup de grâce* for Saitowitz is the chance to use as few materials as possible, such as the anodized aluminum

☑ The Marquis and Stone Canyon offer quiet and picturesque courtyards, both communal and private. ☑ A model unit at Stone Canyon provides residents with their own personal courtyard that flows into a kitchen/dining space.



1234 Howard Street. Photography by Rien van Rijnthoven except three small images second row this page by Dwight Eschliman. Following page photography by Rien van Rijnthoven.



Black bamboo floors and wood cabinetry “are very important, because in such a blank space they provide the texture.”

exterior. “Maintenance-free, I use it everywhere so it adds great simplicity to the building.”

Lofts to Let

For NYLO, the Atlanta-based boutique hotelier that recently opened three loft hotels, it seems the advantages of space and economy might prove critical. “We are bringing the loft lifestyle to hotels in markets where it’s still fairly new,” says John Russell, NYLO’s CEO, referring to their hotels in Plano, TX, Providence, RI, and Las Colinas, on the outskirts of Dallas. If the economy behaves, franchised versions might soon spring up in Broomfield, CO, Kansas City, MO and even the loft’s

birthplace, downtown Manhattan.

Not only are NYLO’s guests embracing the bare-bones aesthetic of their overnight lodgings, the sense of space, and engaging industrial details have proven a welcome change from most chain hotels. Furthermore, according to Russell, NYLO’s loft hotels are less expensive to clean and maintain as well.

☞ A street view of 1234 Howard showcases the building’s transparent grid structure. ☞ Natoma Architects designed “bridges.” Residents move freely across the central court; from the library, the bedroom, or the living room. ☞ NEXT PAGE: Rows of windows line both the central court and the Howard Street façade.

“I put high value on the drama of the space, as does our target market: young professionals aware of architecture.”

Trophy Lofts

Still, not everyone's exploiting the 'lower costs' to create lofts. Projects like Five Franklin Place, a complex of townhomes, apartments, and lofts (currently under more legal clouds than actual construction) in Manhattan's Tribeca neighborhood, are heading in the opposite direction.

According to Leo Tsimmer, one of the project's developers, their lofts were designed to emphasize 'grandeur,' as well they might, with 20-foot ceilings. Some are even meant to feature floating bedroom mezzanines that partially break up the spaces.

Designed by Ben van Berkel and his Rotterdam-based UN Studio, these "trophy lofts," which have exteriors ringed with ribbons of steel, were conceived with a 'wow' in mind. Just before the economic downturn, dizzyingly high price tags were bandied about: \$4.85 million, anyone? But now, as with many other construction projects, whether or not they ever see the light of lower Manhattan remains to be seen.

If any type of city dwelling is destined to be an exception to the anemic housing market, the 'trophy loft' may be it. The loft's lower costs and adventurous-looking raw space should keep it popular. It's no coincidence that Modernism's emphasis on cheap building materials and open space came about during the Great Depression. Hard times bode well for housing that promotes more relaxed and unconfined living.

Indeed, the biggest threat to the loft's future is the very attribute that makes it attractive: adaptability. Even as designers increasingly come up with new uses for the loft, they still leave much of the interior design to the buyer, most often a single person or a couple. But when this situation changes—particularly when children arrive—the loft, too, may be in for a shock.

"Casual living has to be balanced with the demands of privacy and modesty," maintains Widder, whose firm has specialized in loft conversions for over a decade in Manhattan. "At least one-third of the lawyers and bankers who bought lofts ten years ago have changed them into classic pre-war apartments," she says. "If they start having children, this is easier to do than finding somewhere else to live."

But even this loft aficionado believes there is little stopping what she refers to as "the simple rebellion against the 'put-your-functions-in-a-box' mentality of the apartment. In the aftermath of Victorian privacy (the corridor plan) and Functionalist extremism, right now the loft remains the ideal antidote to cookie-cutter housing."

EXIT





Cultivating Extraordinary Taste is No Ordinary Mission

A cook-turned-restaurateur makes out like a thief as he and his wife fall in love with their new life in San Francisco.

Story by Cate West Zahl

Photography by Matthew Millman

Christopher Losa freely admits to being “OCD.” “I need to exist in a space that’s free of clutter,” he claims, and it’s this compulsion that led him, in 2003, to his present home in San Francisco.

At first glance the empty loft condo seemed run-of-the-mill, but Losa had a strong vision for the space and high hopes for his new life in the Mission District. He and his wife, Elizabeth, tired of the Beltway-driven life in Washington, DC, moved to the Bay Area to find an environment with more cultural stimulation. Losa, an independent supply-chain management consultant for 16 years, an excellent cook, and longtime food connoisseur, dreamed of opening his own restaurant.

They opted for a loft because “it’s a clean way of living,” says Losa. “It’s a beautiful thing to come home to a space that opens up. In a way, it’s everything that ‘urban’ isn’t.”

The transplanted couple’s 1,400-square-foot unit had the usual: tall ceilings, concrete floors, large windows, no walls; “a big white box,” in Losa’s words. In order to remodel it to fit their needs, they hired Joshua Aidlin (of Aidlin Darling

☑ In the dining area, an original Le Corbusier table base has been given a fresh red laminate top that makes a bold statement when illuminated by the Atomic pendant light above. A handcrafted oak screen shields the 17-foot windows.



Design), who based his eventual design around what he calls “a generous amount of eastern morning light” that streams in from tall ground-floor windows.

Aidlin conceived a plan made up of five architectonic elements: “the cradle,” “the zipper,” “the hearth,” “the stage,” and “the scrim.” After two years of renovation, the loft was transformed into a radiant interior dotted with mid-Century treasures.

Essential to the space is a 17-by-15 foot screen—more Mondrian than *shoji*—that covers the wall of windows, deftly providing privacy while diffusing the natural light. On the ground floor, an old fireplace was modernized with gun-blue and black steel casing, and the surrounding wall was expanded to include storage cabinets. The same materials were used to create the steel and oak staircase that Aidlin refers to as “the zipper” because it “ties the whole space together.” Floor-to-ceiling shelves, crafted from Douglas fir, display books and artwork as they flank the stairs.

Everything has been kept spare, which was actually a slight point of contention between Losa and his wife, whose father collected antiques. “She grew up with a New England

☞ A Kazuhide Takahama for Knoll sofa from 1972 faces a vintage rocker made of leather and bent steel, resulting in a casual, but highly contemporary, sitting area. ☞ Known as “the zipper,” the gun metal staircase leads to a small lofted bedroom.



“It’s a beautiful thing to come home to a space that opens up. It’s everything that ‘urban’ isn’t.”

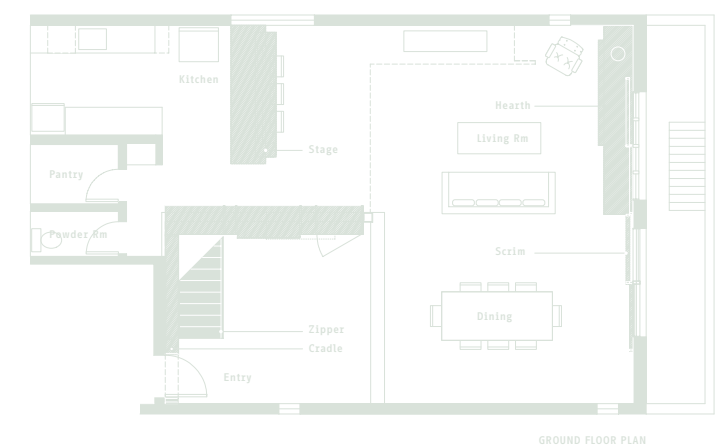
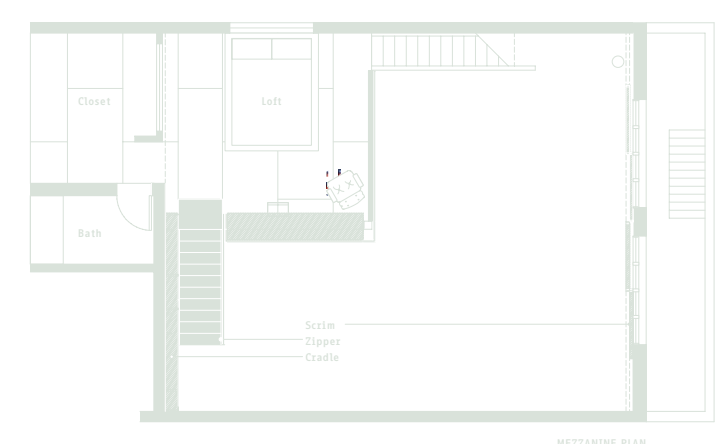
farmhouse aesthetic whereas I grew up in Germany, surrounded by the Bauhaus.” Most of Losa’s childhood was spent in Germany because his father was in the Foreign Service, and he says it was there that the “stark, Germanic aesthetic sunk in.”

To compromise, the Losas have gradually acquired a choice collection of furnishings together. In the dining area, a Le Corbusier table has been updated with a red laminate top in place of the standard glass. An Atomic pendant lamp above it provides a subtle glow in the evening. A Knoll sofa—a 1972 Kazuhide Takahama design—has been paired with a brown leather rocker of unknown origin.

The most important expansion, the kitchen, was where all of Aidlin’s and Losa’s plans began to mesh. “One of the major perks was that Losa would invite me over and cook these

☞ Dubbed “the stage,” Christopher Losa’s kitchen features an ever-burning \$18,000 Aga range and stainless steel accessories. ☞ The couple’s floating bedroom, sparsely appointed with a bed, desk, and single chair, proves that serenity often lies in simplicity.





“I would get investors on-board by inviting them to the loft and cooking for them.”

amazing meals while we discussed ideas,” says Aidlin. “That’s when it became clear to me that the kitchen was his *stage*.”

Using concrete, Aidlin leveled the floor flush with the rest of the space, rectifying the poorly designed multi-level layout original to the floor plan. He added an island-countertop made out of resin, which helps transmit the original light Aidlin first fell for. The main attraction is the always-on Aga range, an \$18,000 investment that has been worth every penny, according to Losa. “We have a natural source of heat that lasts us all year. And everything is more tender cooked on this stove.”

When it came time for Losa to purchase a restaurant space, the kitchen was key. “I would get investors on-board by inviting them to the loft and cooking for them on *that* stove, in *that* kitchen,” says Losa.

☞ Shelving hewn from Douglas fir houses a work station; an exercise ball serves double duty as a chair. ☞ The kitchen that bore Bar Bambino: black shelves and stainless steel complement the Aga range.



In 2005, it came time for the home chef to become a restaurateur, so Losa called on Aidlin once again and, in 2007, Bar Bambino was born. Located on the same gritty stretch of the Mission the Losas call home, they took a much different aesthetic approach with their regional Italian bistro than they did with their home. The restaurant has dark wood floors, textured walls made of T-11 siding strips stained white and framed in steel, wine bottle chandeliers, and room for 50, placed *oh-so-close* together. Bringing in Marco Pierre White protégée, Elizabeth Binder, as head chef was another wise move.

“I didn’t want to thrust my idea of design on the restaurant,” adds Losa. “I wanted it to feel communal, warm, and inviting.”

After six years, Losa’s move to San Francisco has paid off. Thanks to his dual tastes for modern design and hearty Italian cuisine, his dreams of owning a clutter-free home and a successful restaurant have been fully realized.

Mission accomplished.

EXIT

☞ Bar Bambino’s quaint *al fresco* eating area was full of chicken huts when the Losas first arrived. It now seats 20 *human* diners. ☞ Inside the restaurant, Losa recreates a traditional Italian *enoteca*.





From the Mini-Apple to Manhattan

If Andrew Flesher and his interior design firm can make it here . . .
they're gonna' make it (anywhere) after all.



“I think that people in Minneapolis are more conservative than people in New York. That’s one of the reasons why I wanted to do some work in New York, because I felt creatively I needed a change, I needed to push myself a little further.”



Q & A by Erin Ryder

Portrait by Tom Ackerman, Interior Photography by Susan Gilmore

LOFLIFE: We loved your space at the Kips Bay Decorator Show House. Tell us about the vision you had, to keep it cohesive. Were you trying to keep the flow between the other designers in the house or did you have your own singular vision?

ANDREW FLESHER: I just had my own vision. That’s one of the great things about a show house. It’s similar to doing your own house in that you just don’t have any limitations. Nobody’s going to say, “You can’t do that.” When I designed the space for Kips Bay, the His master bathroom, the way I thought about it was: How would I like that space for myself. And basically that’s what I did; I created a bathroom that I would like.

LL: Your firm, Gunkelman Flesher, now has offices in New York and Minneapolis. Do you see a change in the taste of your clients from city to city?

ANDREW: Yeah, I think that people in Minneapolis are more conservative than people in New York. That’s one of the reasons why I wanted to do some work in New York, because I felt creatively I needed a change, I needed to push myself a little further. And I didn’t feel like I was doing that so much in Minneapolis.

LL: As you know, your gorgeous white loft back in Minneapolis got a lot of attention when we first posted pictures of it on our website. What was your thought process?

LL: Box-like shelving doubles as room partition and display case for a mix of books, artwork, and wire sculptures. **LL:** An oil painting of a Midwestern businessman, symmetrically placed between rock-crystal sconces: the perfect backdrop for Flesher’s Louis Philippe desk; a Venetian mirror adds classic glamour to the bathroom.



“I wanted to do a place . . . like a gallery space that shows objects really well.”

ANDREW: Well, I love white. I always wanted to do a place that had white floors, like a gallery space that shows objects really well. I was living in a conversion loft: brick walls, raw. There was a building going up down the street, so I checked it out. I found the floor plan really great, with 60 feet of glass across the front, floor to ceiling. I found the challenge of dividing the space and creating something in a glass cube very interesting. It was also part of my love of architecture, Mies’ Farnsworth House, Philip Johnson’s Glass House, that kind of thing. I always wanted to try it. So I did.

LL: Aside from the idea of mirroring a gallery space, tell us more about why white is your palette of choice.

ANDREW: It’s so pure. It’s a place for your eye to rest, I think. Your eye doesn’t have to break anything apart in a white space,

📍 White laminated geometric cabinets set the tone in this blindingly clean kitchen. 📍 Flesher commissioned “Anonymous Collective” from Harold Hollingsworth to anchor the more “casual” seating area in the loft. It hangs solo on the back of the bookshelf to add some color.





“I found the challenge of dividing the space and creating something in a glass cube very interesting.”

it gives you this great backdrop to put pieces in that act as sculpture. Furniture in a white space is almost like art and that was my concept. I wanted a place to showcase the things I had collected over the years.

LL: Besides the obvious space challenge in New York, how was your experience transitioning to your home in Tribeca?

ANDREW: I think the great thing about New York is that there’s such a vast supply of resources—there’s really no reason why your place has to look like anybody else’s place! You can personalize your home so easily because there’s so much available.

EXIT

For the full interview, visit: loftlifemag.com/andrewflesher

☞ Groupings of tailored furniture divide up the space; an R. Jones sofa upholstered in Bergamo fabric takes center stage. ☞ An antique chest of drawers adds a traditional twist to the otherwise modern, white surroundings.



Bit by Bit

A Chicago-based photographer fixes up his Greektown loft by taking his time and stripping down.



“I get stressed out when my house is cluttered . . . I am so much more focused when I only have things around me that are important and beautiful.”

Story by Cate West Zahl
Photography by Andreas Larsson

Andreas Larsson is a man who knows exactly what he likes. In no rush to reach perfection, he patiently and thoughtfully collects pieces one at a time.

“A lot of people feel like you have to buy everything at once. They confuse ‘want’ from ‘need’ and end up with regrets,” says the Swedish-born photographer.

What Larsson needs is a simple, functional living environment that doesn’t include things that aren’t important to him. “I get stressed out when my house is cluttered by things that I don’t care about. I am so much more focused when I only have things around me that are important and beautiful.” In fact, Larsson prefers to rotate his objects and furnishings and often puts some in storage.

Larsson searched a long time for his “ideal” loft in Chicago’s Greektown neighborhood. After extensive scouring back in 2006, during which he thinks he “drove his real estate agent insane,” Larsson decided to go with a 1,000-sq.-ft. fixer-upper. It only took a month and a half of work, most of which he did on his own, including painting everything white and installing new fixtures. Then, he furnished the space slowly, making steady, intentional choices. Today, because of Larsson’s stewardship, his loft demonstrates the efficacy of restraint.

PREVIOUS PAGE: The stainless steel kitchen includes Akrum cabinets and drawers from IKEA. The Super Elliptical table is by Piet Hein and Bruno Mathson. Larsson made and wired the pendant lights himself using basics bought from Chicago’s Bright Electric Supply. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** His prized possession: an original Florence Knoll desk. **In Larsson’s stripped down bedroom,** a Hans Wegner nightstand is paired with a Florence Knoll bed and headboard; an Eames plywood chair flanks the bed. **THIS PAGE:** A George Nelson coat rack and a vintage farmer’s cabinet from the Kane County Market greet visitors. **The self-installed white steel storage door from Steel Building is Larsson’s proudest DIY accomplishment.**





📍 The loft as it stood upon purchase. Tan walls, wooden floors, and exposed red brick dominated the dark interior space. 📍 Now light and airy, the living room exhibits the power of paint, post-renovation. White walls and ceiling offer a contrast with the shiny black floor; Havana sofa from DWR complements an original Eames rocker.

EXIT





STEDELIJK MUSEUM

KOM BINNEN IN

Welkom in de Bouwkeet

DO TOT 20 UUR

STEDELIJK MUSEUM

Off The Beaten Canal

From Reitveld to right now: our *LoftLife* experts provide a gilded guide to the future of Amsterdam design.



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Story by Sherry Jo Williams
Photography by Jonas Briels

Amsterdam is a petite but powerful magnet for travelers of every stripe—be they hippies seeking out green-stickered coffee shops or the cultured, craving Van Gogh and Vermeer—or vice versa. To a visitor, the city’s incongruity of the traditional and the avant-garde is clearly evident. To a local, it’s relished like a good pipe.

Even A’dam’s preferred modes of transportation reflect this sense of cultural democracy. Whereas cars outnumber bikes in American cities, the reverse is true in this shortlisted candidate for “European Green Capital 2010.”

So, to travel like a denizen, rent a bicycle, lease an electric bike-taxi, or take advantage of the world-class public transportation system and hop on a tram, bus, metro, or ferry. At least one serpentine cruise along the canals is mandatory.

Near Centraal Station, you’ll find The 9 Straatjes, a suite of cozy, but bustling streets that almost magically become elaborate bridges that meander over sudden canals. It’s here that

quintessential Dutch contemporary designs can be found. Many of the shops along these cobblestone roads are teeming with opportunity, but **2 THE FROZEN FOUNTAIN** is a definite winner. More gallery than shop, its mix of limited-edition furniture, fabrics, rugs, and accessories, is often commissioned from Dutch masters such as Hella Jongerius and Piet Hein Eek. Paul Koeleman, a prominent book and graphic designer says, “Frozen Fountain’s commitment to Dutch artisans, both known and emerging, is invaluable.”

After roaming through this chic neighborhood, take a moment to pause at **3 DROOG**, the dramatically appointed headquarters of the powerful design brand. In a refurbished three-story structure which dates back to 1641, passionate fans of 21st-Century design can experience the infamous “Chest of Drawers” by Tejo Remy or Marcel Wanders’ “Knotted Chair.”

Another inspiring example of recycled architecture is **8 SPRMRKT**. *LofiLife’s* other A’dam expert, Marcel Schreuder

from Springtime design (an international firm with clients ranging from Coca-Cola to Nike), loves this place. “The name is a clever abbreviation from its previous incarnation as a supermarket,” explains Shreuder. Not far from the 9 Straatjes, SPRMRKT mixes furniture and fashion from local designers with an impressive bookstore stocked with publications like vintage *Domus* magazines, plus an inviting café.

Surrounding the 9 Straatjes is the much larger Jordaan district. Built in the 1600s, it was established as central housing for the workers of this rapidly expanding city. Strolling through The Jordaan, you’ll find a broad menu of shopping options. The major must-see is **7 JESSICA PADT’s** marvelous upholstery workshop and showroom. Her success hinges on an impressive assortment: from work by Kvadrat Maharam to the unique, vintage textiles she’s found. She welcomes “classic to modern, retro to kitsch” pieces and specializes in Artifort (an important Dutch upholstery label from the 60s). Given the

lean global economy, there’s been a newfound appreciation for her refreshing heirlooms that are more than reasonably priced. Koeleman is an unabashed fan of Jessica Padt’s studio and her skills, calling her “an indispensable asset.”

At the northern tip of The Jordaan, stands the distinguished **9 WESTERHUIS**. Founded by design icon, Marcel Wanders, this former schoolhouse is now a hive of activity with **THE MOOOI** a prominent gallery showcased on the ground floor, firms specializing in art and culture throughout, and The Hub, an open-plan space on the top floor with temporary desks, internet access, and a library. For those who skipped “Dutch Design 101,” Rietveld’s revolutionary red and blue lacquered lounge chair in the 1920s established the Netherlands as a leader in the world of design, and The Westerhuis is further proof that this trend is alive and kicking.

If you’re into the vintage look, check out **4 ANNO** for exceptional late 20th-Century furnishings. Our experts, Koeleman



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and Schreuder, both love Anno's sexy 60s upholstery by Pierre Paulin. Anno also carry 70s pieces from Magis, as well as current labels like Kartell, and Dutch super-star, ARP, known for their beautifully executed wooden tables and seating, a natural choice for any sparse space.

Heading south to the Museumplein, it's impossible to miss **THE STEDELIJK**, "the MoMA of Holland." Established in 1895, renovations to this grand old building are expected to be completed December 2009. Until then, with typical Dutch resourcefulness, a portable initiative is touring the city via pre-fab construction cabins. Called **1 "STEDELIJK GOES TO TOWN"** these newsstand-sized mobile units keep the museum's collection available by housing temporary art exhibitions and performances.

Next to investigate is De Pijp, a quaint area with a vibrant scene. Like its neighboring 'hoods, De Pijp is a study in contradictions. Juxtaposing Amsterdam's charm with the super-hip is **10 SID LEE COLLECTIVE**, an international creative agency focused on communications and branding. The Collective sports an expansive gallery, boutique, and café, ideal for those hungry for design or food. As Koeleman points out: "It's great—music, art, cuisine, *and* in my neighborhood!"

Nearby is the popular **5 VINTAGE HOME**, a highly recommended high-end source of furnishings from Aalto to Eames, plus surprises from the 30s to 80s. Constantly changing the look of the showroom, the founder is eager to display these important classics in a comfy setting. It's a great place to treat yourself to an Aldo van den Nieuwelaar collectible, a 70s

Grundig hi-fi speaker, or a 60s Saarinen marble table.

Before leaving the De Pijp—or Amsterdam for that matter, all sightseers must explore at least one of the dozens of specialty outdoor markets. The Albert Cuyp Market is the largest and most well known of the open-air bazaars around town and is conveniently open six days a week. Packed with a lively mix of antiques, Asian imports, and obligatory bric-a-brac, the Albert Cuyp Market is also well stocked with fresh, local food purveyors.

Both Schreuder and Koeleman insist that any guide to this unique city is incomplete without a suggested walk through the transitional neighborhood of KNSM Eiland. Here, you'll discover a real prize, **6 THE POLS POTTEN WINKEL** (winkel=shop), a mixture of private label and top name furniture and products.

Pols Potten pride themselves on selling handmade goods that are "subtle, innovative, with a hint of quirkiness," in other words, the epitome of Amsterdam.

Amsterdam still sits squarely on the shoulders of sturdy dikes, technically below sea level, but obviously well above the common ground in architecture, interiors, and innovation. A visit to the capital of the Netherlands, for the first or fiftieth time, is guaranteed to satisfy the most blasé urbanite. The wise and weathered Dutch still offer the fruit of 400 years of savvy experience and international trade, plus the bonus of world-class designers from the last ten years. And all are equally welcome to explore Amsterdam's notorious neighborhoods, share its Old World warmth, and revel in the future projected by its rich design.

EXIT



"Laundry Day" (2004) by Miles Hochstein; taken on Portland's NE Alberta Street.

Keepin' It Weird

Writer **David Cohen** finds his spirit renewed after a return to the eccentric city that reared him.

➔ Alongside *The Catcher in the Rye* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, my teenage bookshelves were lined with titles by Alan Watts, Leo Buscaglia, and Louise Hay: writers who (in one way or another) conveyed that developing a relationship with one's "inner child" was tonic for life's ennui.

After a melancholy period spent in New York in my early 20s—so gloomy I deemed Ingmar Bergman's lenses rose-colored—I moved back to my childhood home of Portland, OR, to reconnect with that 15-year-old anti-conformist who read self-help authors voraciously.


Now living on Portland's NE Alberta Street, I hobnob with Nintendo ninjas, bearded

bicyclists, and radical fairies, especially during the "Last Thursday" art walks. Rows of makeshift sidewalk arts and craft displays are exhibited for the city's shaggy-haired hippies, retired iconoclasts, and transitory students clad in American Apparel who together make up the flock of black sheep forever striving to simply *be* amidst an economically precarious era.

My unofficial docent, Jan, a telecommuting pet psychic in her 60s with long silver hair and a billowy, mustard yellow skirt, walks me past rows and rows of varied felt hats, hand-knit scarves, portraits of children with eerily oversized eyes, paintings of vomiting unicorns,...

Crossing the street we pass a tattooed mama in her 40s, wearing a short, black dress and army surplus boots and bouncing a baby on her hip; with her available hand, she sips a free-trade coffee concoction. I catch a snippet of the conversation she and her bike-mounted companion are engaged in about the *true* "eco-friendliness" of the street's new condos.

My eyes drift to the bumper sticker on a nearby Volkswagen: "Keep Portland Weird." And I smile.

Within Alberta Street's open sea of misfits and mavericks, I find myself home and hopeful, a dreamer among dreamers: my inner oddball renewed. 

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