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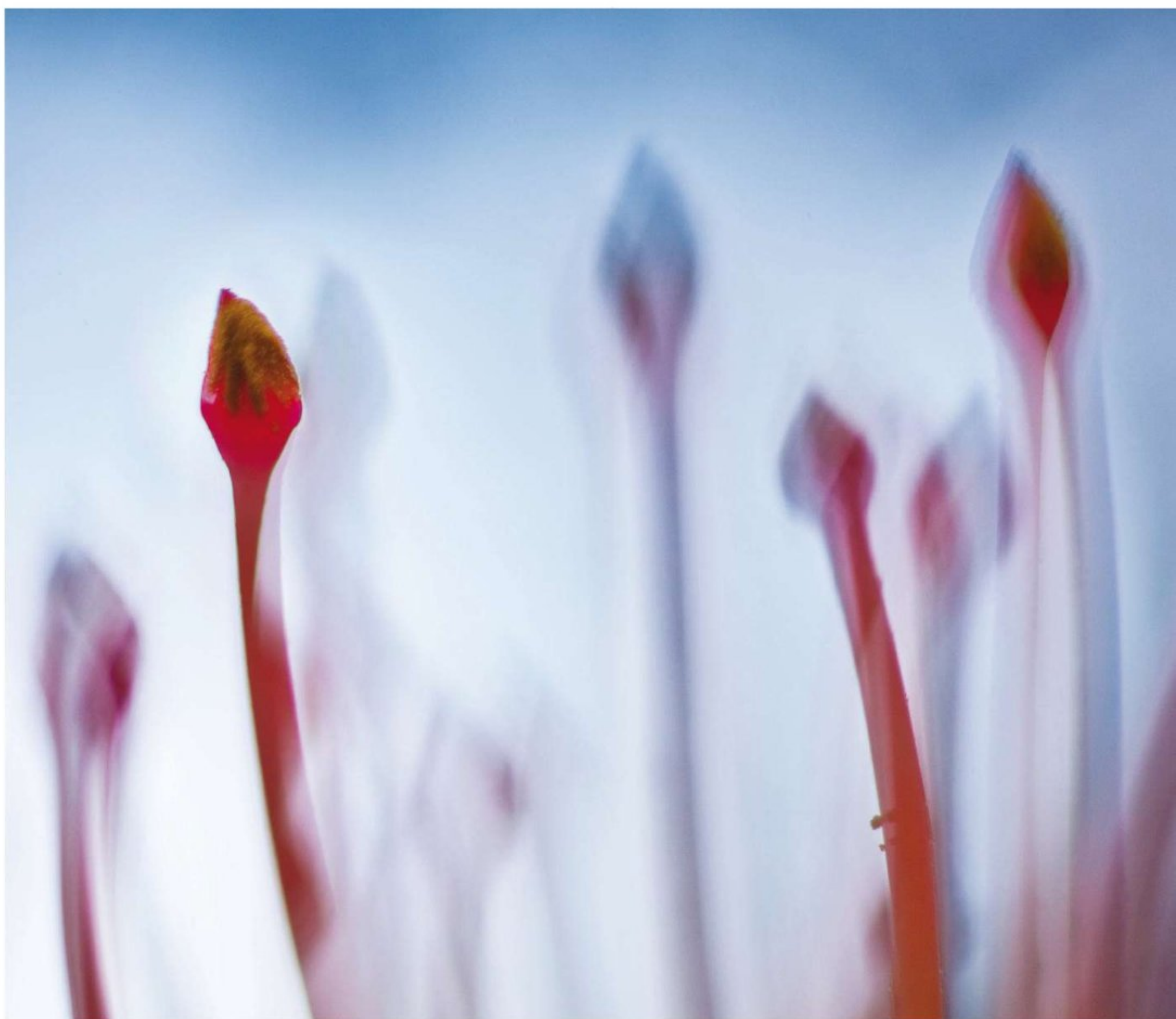
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“Ed Slattery said he wanted three things out of the house: universal design, sustainability, and that it be made in America.” —John Coplen, architect

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A businessman keeps an eye on his Napa retreat from the road, courtesy of a battery of smart gadgets.

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PHOTOS BY

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PHOTOS BY

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Outside of Madrid, a modular spaceship-inspired home has a futuristic “hub” with touch-button controls for all of the mechanical systems.

TEXT BY

Suzanne Wales

PHOTOS BY

Meritxell Arjalaguer

On the Cover: At a Virginia home, the owner utilizes a Caséta Wireless system to turn on the lights before arrival, p. 54. Photo by Eli Meir Kaplan

This page: Polished concrete floors with inset carpets allow a Baltimore residence easy wheelchair accessibility, p. 132. Photo by Ike Edeani



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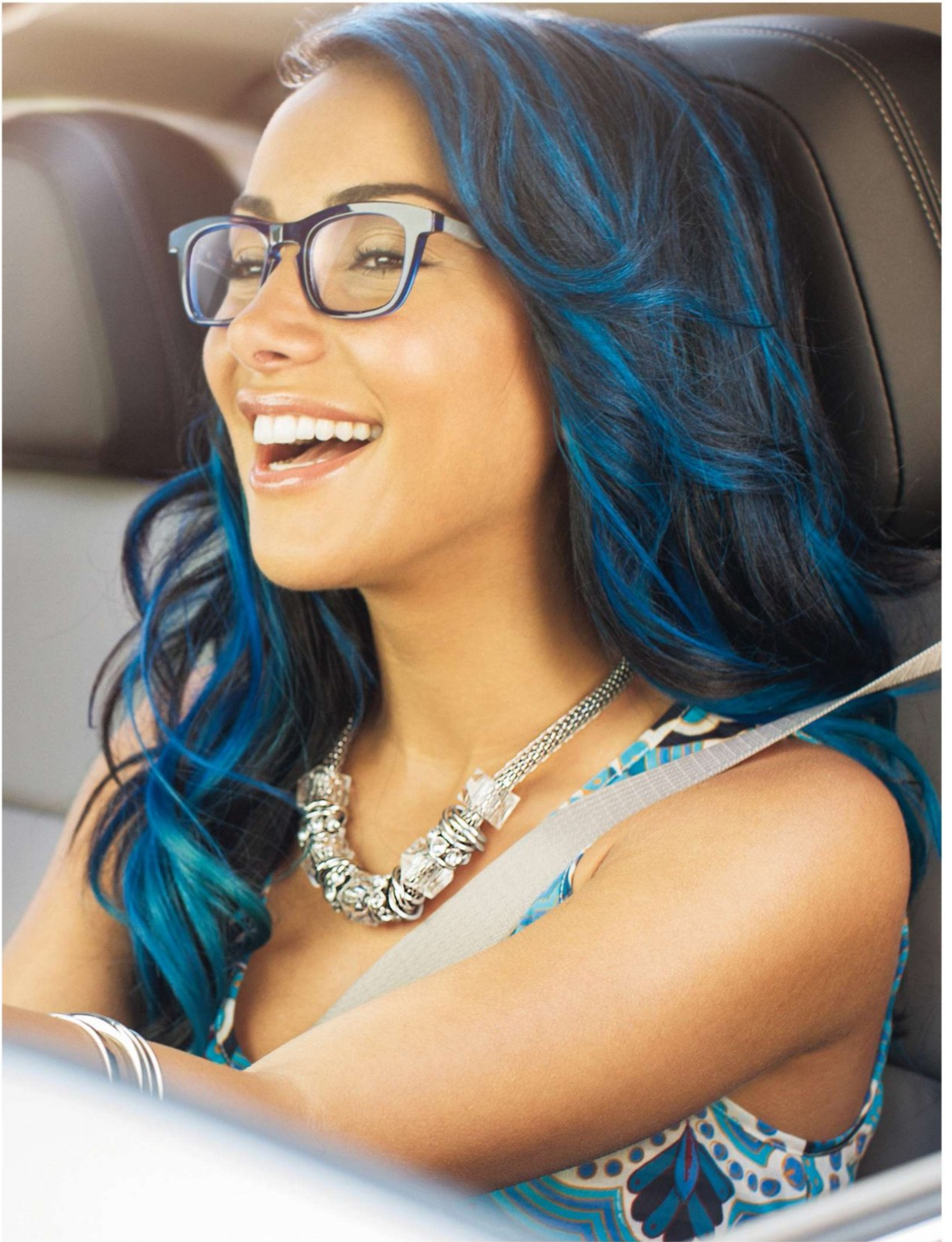
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The Sony Sports Walkman is just one of the iconic gadgets featured in *Sony Design: Making Modern* (Rizzoli, 2015), a 279-page tome showcased in our Smart Home product package. Head to [page 29](#) for more.



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We begin with a Smart Home product package, detailing the latest innovations from Naoto Fukasawa's new line of kitchen appliances for Muji to a stylish wi-fi solution from eero. We check out a Canadian home with a self-regulating interior climate, and get sage advice from home automation experts, OneButton. Then we explore a New Zealand prefab geared to outdoor living and a wired weekend retreat in rural Virginia. We also profile Ayah Bdeir, DIY electronics expert, and architect Chris Downey, who talks about new technologies that help him work without sight.

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British artist Dominic Wilcox takes a light-hearted look at technology.



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DWELL JULY/AUGUST 2015

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Today's Smart House

In this issue, we examine technology's place in the home, and the way the new buzz-phrase "Internet of Things" is making life easier, more accessible, and maybe even more vulnerable as we adapt to an uncharted era.

In our 15-year history, Dwell has pursued cutting-edge innovation through the question of what it means to be "at home in the modern world." Our audience of early adopters and adventurous thinkers champion progressive design concepts, and demonstrate how these ideas influence everyday lives. We're fascinated by the way that large corporations, independent start-ups, and energetic individuals are tapping into technology to devise solutions for better living. But we remain cautiously aware of how important it is to resist chasing the new simply for novelty's sake—we always come back to the concept that good design should endure. Technology, not to mention the user behaviors associated with emerging gizmos, applications, and platforms, changes so rapidly that the true challenge for the design community lies in whether or not it's possible to even keep up.

In our research on the potential of smart homes, we talked with Ted Booth, senior design director of Honeywell Connected Home, who compared today's spirit of innovation to the dawn of electrification, when a wealth of new products utilizing the new technology flooded the market. There's certainly noise in the marketplace, and with it comes the inevitable cultural dread that references a dystopic HAL 9000 lens. With new products come new issues, like safety and privacy, which we explore in the first of three features on home security penned by Geoff Manaugh (page 116). Surely electricity came with its safety challenges—as evidenced by the fire that erupted in J. Pierpont Morgan's home, the first electrified residence in New York, sparked by the system wired by Thomas Edison himself—but today, for much of the world, it's

impossible to think about life without electricity. The same will hold true for "smart tech"—in time.

Until then, we turn to those embracing technology at home. In Toronto, Prishram Jain of TACT Architecture created a smart house that incorporates the same Control4 system he uses in his own home (page 136). But the dwelling is hardly a shrine to high-tech—its nearly invisible integrated automation system is balanced by a generous application of natural materials. "It's what you expect in a home built in 2015," says Jain. "It wouldn't be right if we didn't employ current technology."

Whether you agree with him or not, today's advancements aren't just limited to gadgetry. In Baltimore (page 132) we meet a father whose quest for an accessible home for his son, who is disabled, inspired a second career leading a nonprofit focused on universal design. We also feature Chris Downey, one of the world's few architects practicing without sight, who shares the new tools that are making it easier for everyone—vision-impaired or not—to navigate the built environment (page 60).

Alongside challenge comes great opportunity. Today, through smart technology, it's possible to know that your house is safe and secure remotely or to control and track both interior and exterior environments. Matt Emmi, of the technology integrator OneButton, noted a remarkable change in his quality of life thanks to automated shades (page 34): "I wake up to the natural light of the sunrise but I fall asleep in complete darkness with the shades down. There couldn't be a more profound effect on my well-being."

For architect Jordan Goldstein, whose home outside Washington, D.C. is featured on the cover, automation helped his family spend more time together (page 54). "We wanted to create a modern gathering point for our family," he says. "The technology that we chose to integrate affords us that ability to do it with ease."

In addition to serving practical purposes, technology can be just plain fun, as is the case with a Spanish house built for a sci-fi fan (page 144). And it can be beautiful, like the sophisticated small electronics masterminded by Naoto Fukasawa for Muji (page 32).

And for all those Luddites out there who are reluctant to change, we have something for you, too: flip to page 104 for a story on a deliberately low-tech vacation home in Merricks Beach, Australia.

While the future is alive in the here and now, there are still a few technologies on which we're waiting. And so we close this issue on a light note, with a few out-there drawings by Dominic Wilcox (page 160). Who knows? As we see what was once unimaginable become commonplace, perhaps Wilcox's ideas will one day end up, fully realized, in the pages of Dwell.

Amanda Dameron, Editor-in-Chief

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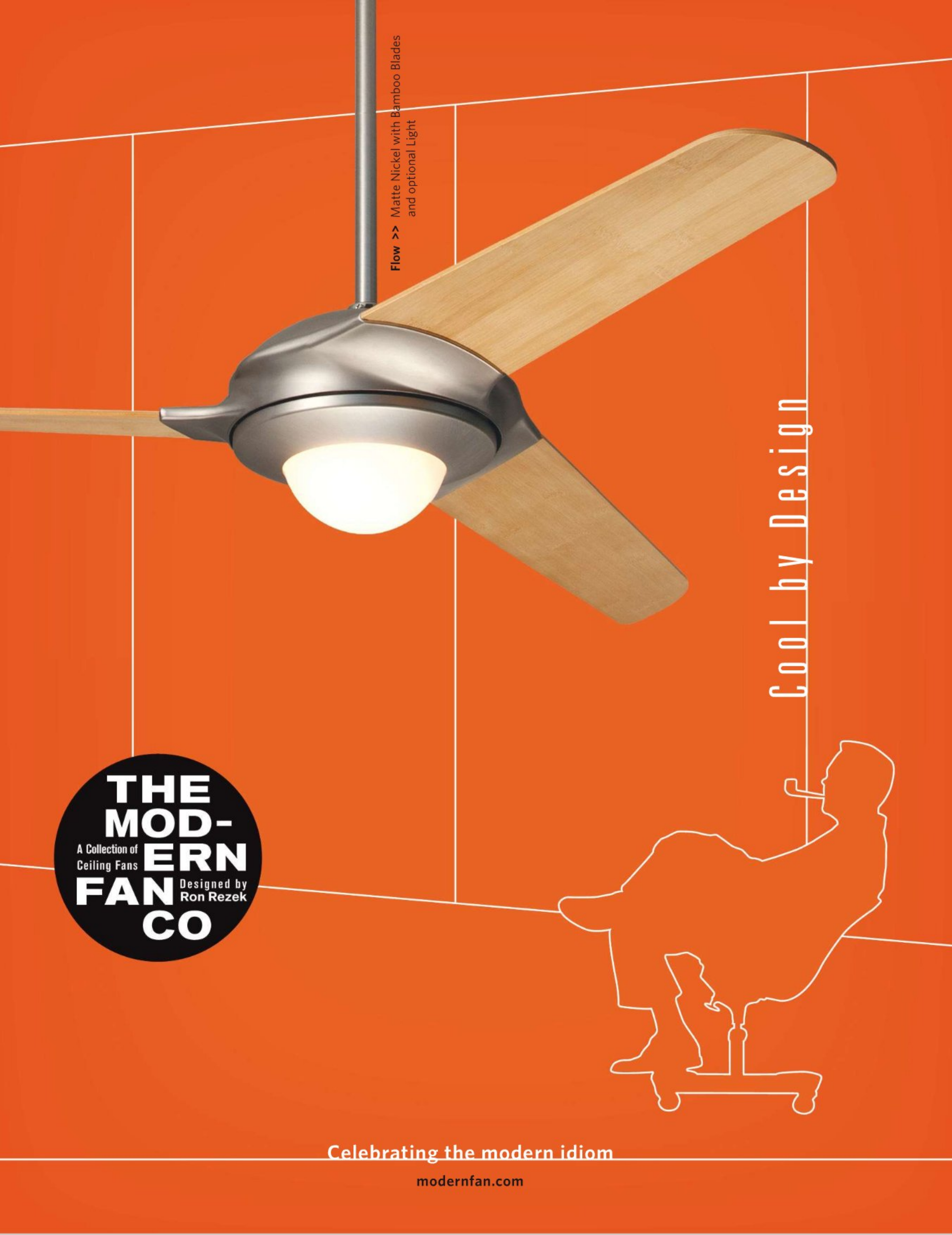
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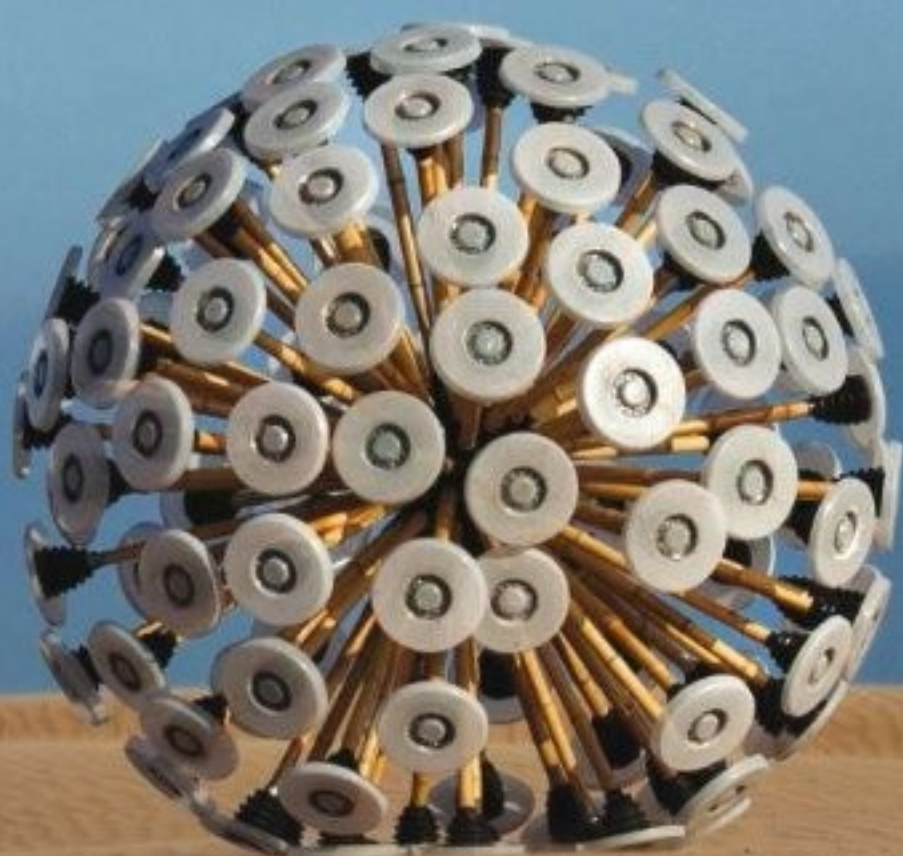
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Photo: Massoud and Mahmud Hassani, *Mine Kafon*, 2011, bamboo, iron, biodegradable plastic. The Museum of Craft and Design's exhibitions and programs are generously supported by the Windgate Charitable Foundation. This program is supported as part of the Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York.

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Feedback



My subscription is about to expire and I was considering not renewing, but “Passive Assertive” (Modern World, May 2015) went straight to my heart. I am very interested in seeing affordable housing that incorporates the energy-efficient principles used in those buildings. I can’t wait to visit Philadelphia and hope I can get a tour or talk to a resident. I hope to see more projects like this in Dwell. Gems like this make me afraid to not renew.

Joan C. Van Blake

Takoma Park, Maryland

LETTERS

I am entirely intrigued by the concept of a Passive House. Thank you for the article entitled “Passive Assertive” in the May issue. The wood planters on [page 76](#) inspired me. Can you share any information on how they’re made?

Stacy Dorris

Proctor, Maryland

Editor’s Note: The planters (shown above) are made from everyday wood pallets. The team at Onion Flats built drip irrigation into the structure and incorporated materials used in green roofs to ensure good drainage. [onionflats.com](#)

Great issue this month (The New American Home, May 2015). Loved all the homes that were featured inside.

@colanerijohn

Posted to Instagram

We are on the verge of an exciting new frontier in architecture and design. As “Passive Assertive” (Modern World, May 2015) illustrates, changes in the building standards for housing projects will soon transform urban life. From the power to control and monitor our appliances more efficiently using the “Internet of Things” to the very

materials used in construction, we will not only reduce our carbon footprints, but we will also enjoy greater economic benefits. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of these advancements is that they will raise the standard of living for so many impoverished communities worldwide, demonstrating how science and technology can truly make the world a better place.

Michael Aaron Gallagher

Syracuse, New York

I am trying to locate the name of the kitchen hood manufacturer in “Royan Treatment” (March 2015, [p. 86](#)). Any chance someone can help me out?

Grace Hasler

Sent via email

Editor’s Note: The range hood is by a French company called Roblin. [roblin.fr](#)



The Hill House is a stunning, clean design (My House, March 2015). I especially love the bedroom and outdoor space. Less is more. Judy Worth Friedsam
Posted to Facebook >

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DWELL ASKED

Would you live in a smart home?

It would need to come with free lifetime tech support.

Bradley H. Dilks
Posted to Facebook

No, I have a vision of the Umbrella Corporation taking over or of being trapped like in *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

@IHurd501
Posted to Facebook

I would. It's convenient, lowers utilities, and reduces gadget clutter and wall acne.

Jessica R. Walker
Posted to Facebook

If by smart home, you mean designed by an architect—yes.

@stevejudgeaz
Posted to Twitter



Absolutely, because it would lower utility costs and make access to information and other things easier.

Kevin Cardani
Posted to Facebook

TWEETS

@NiroWho:

@dwell needs to go ahead and just build me a smart home.

@KateBrennanHall:

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Enjoyed reading article on Lucia DeRespinis and am inspired to build a career with a breadth of design thinking.

PHOTO BY ELI MEIR KAPLAN (DWELL ASKED); PHOTO COURTESY LUCIA DERESPINIS (TWEETS)



SPOTLIGHT

@Massju on Instagram

Matthias Heiderich, a photographer based in Hamburg, Germany, composes pastel-toned architectural snapshots that capture the sculptural, geometric side of cityscapes. The way Heiderich highlights the bend of a banister, the dizzying spiral of a parking garage ramp, or the symmetry of a facade will make you look at your own city differently. >



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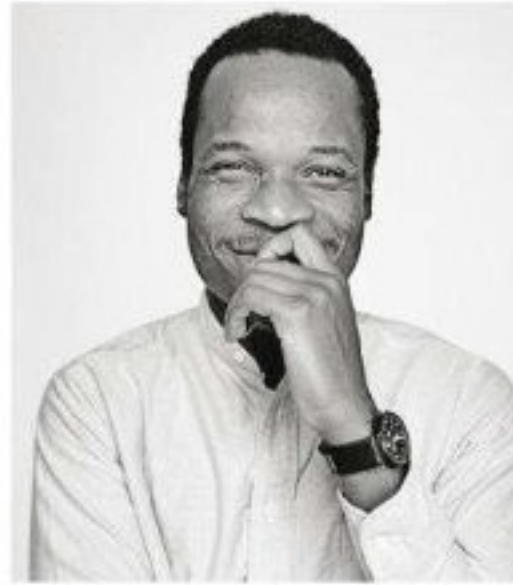
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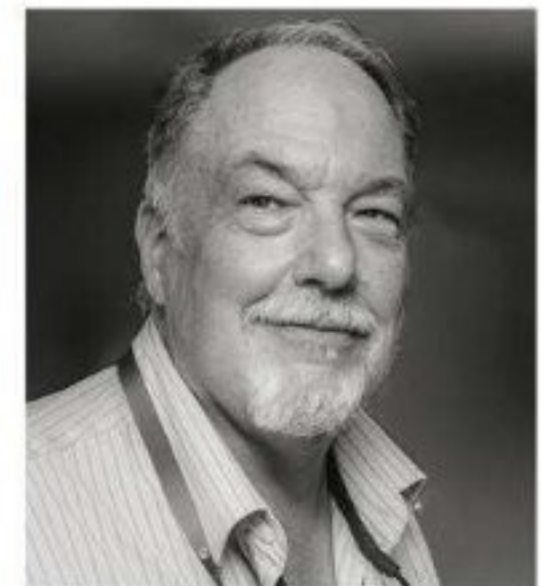
Born and raised in Enugu, Nigeria, Ike Edeani studied architecture before pursuing photography full-time. His work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Fader*, *Monocle*, and *Bloomberg Business*. "The most striking thing about shooting the Baltimore story ("Home Free" p. 132) was witnessing how Matthew can control every door, every light fixture, and even the temperature right from his wheelchair," Edeani says.

"Dumbest" thing in your house? "My little moka pot espresso maker, but I prefer it that way."

Bill Leebens

Trained in engineering and journalism, Bill Leebens has worked in the fields of audio, automobile racing, and medical imaging. "I'm fascinated by areas in which art and science meet," he says. "Researching the history of music at home (Concepts, p. 78) made me realize how little we appreciate the artistry that goes into the design of audio gear."

Dream tech item to own? "New stuff: a Tesla S, complete with a solar-charging system. Old tech: an Alfa-Romeo GTV coupé from around 1974—I'll take green, please."



Laura Mauk

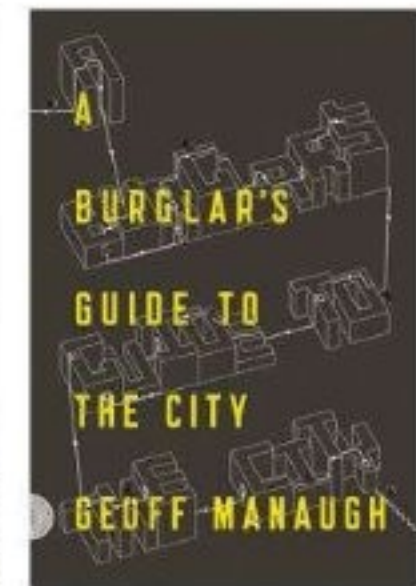
An architecture and design writer and editor for nearly 14 years, Laura Mauk worked on staff at *Architectural Digest* and *Western Interiors and Design*. "Ed Slattery and his son Matthew are superheroes ("Home Free," p. 132)," Mauk says. "They're even smarter than their house." She also wrote "Iron Giant" (Dwellings, p. 136). "Touring the Toronto house with the residents was like going on a light-filled odyssey."

Smartest thing in your house? "A toothbrush station in a kitchen corner so we don't have to walk upstairs to brush our teeth after eating breakfast."

Geoff Manaugh

On his website, *BLDG BLOG*, Geoff Manaugh writes about architectural speculation and the urban future. Formerly a senior editor at *Dwell*, his next book, *A Burglar's Guide to the City* (FSG Originals, October 2015), looks at the built environment through the eyes of burglars and the police who track them. His first in a three-part series on security debuts in this issue (Concepts, p. 116). Learning about radio-frequency vulnerabilities in the modern smart home and the oddly comic perils of hackable children's toys was just a reminder of how much he loves his job.

Smartest thing in your house? "I'd say my iPhone, frighteningly enough. The technology packed into today's smartphones makes architecture look positively archaic."



Matthew Williams

A New Zealand native, photographer Matthew Williams finds that the simple raw, beautiful landscapes and light of his homeland still influence his work today. He now lives in Brooklyn with his wife and daughter. "The Napa home ("Tech Support," p. 124) was an eye-opener on how seamlessly a house can function with technology while not distracting from the beauty and form of the architecture and environment."

"Dumbest" thing in your house? "My cat. It tries to sleep in the dryer." □



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- 60 **Nice Modernist: Chris Downey, Advocate for the Blind**

In its constant push to design highly functional and handsomely restrained modern furniture, the Italian company Arper has taken minimalism to the nth degree. The geometric Parentesit acoustic panels by Lievore Altherr Molina, launched at Salone del Mobile 2015, can arrive kitted out with ambient lighting and speakers. The Kinesit task chair is fully adjustable, but discreetly integrates the mechanisms for an uninterrupted silhouette. arper.com

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Minimalism is the Maxim

Naoto Fukasawa's new line of kitchen appliances for Muji embodies subtle sophistication.



Undeterred by the latest fads or trends, the Japanese retailer Muji has earned its reputation for being a “brand-less brand,” favoring timeless forms over of-the-moment detailing. As such, it only releases a handful of new offerings. This July, the company debuts three plug-in countertop appliances, its first for the American market. Tokyo-based designer Naoto Fukasawa, revered and lauded for his intuitive approach, masterminded the devices: a rice cooker, which will retail for \$195, a toaster and water kettle, \$95 each. Their use and interface determined the elegant silhouettes. “Things with which we physically interact, the kettle for example, have to fit well with our hands,” Fukasawa says. “I like a rounded cubic shape because people tend to find them friendly.” On the flip side, he argues that built-in appliances should be rectilinear since they nestle into a wall’s surface. The products have simple controls and clever details, like a spoon rest incorporated in to the rice cooker. “We should always base design on our intuitions,” Fukasawa says. “It is better to follow our subconscious behaviors.”>



Photos by David Elliott/Airbnb

Modern Hospitality



An Airbnb in the Hollywood Hills designed for entertaining and inspired by community.

In 2006, Judith and Marc, both composers based in Los Angeles, set about building their dream home on a sloped, cactus-dotted site about a mile from the Hollywood Sign. The couple planned a modern residence that would center on communal spaces for entertaining.

The warm, minimalist house created by their architect, Anna Hinton, surpassed the residents' expectations, but the four-year ideation and construction period was taxing. "We had a kind of a strenuous building process and we were looking to rent out a room to help us financially," says Judith. That's when she stumbled upon Airbnb online.

In addition to funding and inspiring their design dreams, becoming Airbnb hosts affords them the opportunity to use their space for what they always wanted, dining and socializing with new friends.

They often invite guests to join them for artisanal meals in their spacious, open-plan kitchen. "We want guests to come together and eat and have a drink," says Judith. "You can cook next to a big long table, and, when you get tired, go sit on the sofas. It's just one big community space."

The more visitors the couple receives, the further their home develops. Design inspiration comes from guest suggestions, as well as the trusted Airbnb community. Having stayed at Airbnbs from Canada to Costa Rica, Judith and Marc are always sourcing design tips and ideas from fellow hosts.

"We're constantly working on adding little things," says Judith. "It gives us pleasure and joy to be able to improve [our home] so that when people come here on holiday, they can feel really excited and comfortable where they are."

Savvy advice from home automation experts
on better livability through technology.

Button Down

OneButton specified Lutron's RadioRA 2 system to control lighting and motorized shades in a loft renovation by Architecture Outfit. "We use mostly Lutron because the products are incredibly reliable," says Michael Izatt, a cofounder of OneButton.



No two clients of OneButton, a Brooklyn-based technology integrator, walk in the door with the same request, but the firm usually focuses on three key areas. "Music throughout your home, a home-theater system, and lighting and shade automation bring the most value," says Michael Izatt, one of OneButton's cofounders, along with Matt Emmi. Izatt, Emmi, and their team liken their process to counselling as they coax out how their clients use technology, what gets them excited, and what frustrates them. Then, "you're kind of bound by two or three core values: price, performance, and aesthetics," Emmi says. "You get to pick two, and once you determine which are most important to you, that drives the decisions you make throughout the entire process.">

"There's a limit to the impact technology for technology's sake can produce. When it makes you feel more in tune with your world, that's where it becomes powerful."
—Matt Emmi, cofounder of OneButton



In-ceiling speakers were used to flood the kitchen of a New York City apartment with music (left). OneButton chose Definitive Technology's DI 6.5S models (above, left) for their superb sound quality and matte-white finish. A Corian grille hides the subwoofer.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN SCHULMAN (LOFT RENOVATION), MATTHEW EMMI (APARTMENT KITCHEN)

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Active Lifestyle

The architecture firm superkül and home builder Great Gulf create a prefab with a self-regulating indoor climate.

TEXT BY
Elizabeth Pagliacolo

Like many cities around the Great Lakes, Thorold in Ontario's wine country clenches its teeth through long, cold winters, but it's the climactic unpredictability that really rankles. For example, spring temperatures dip to 35 degrees Fahrenheit, clouds usurp sunny skies, and snow enters the mix. The Great Gulf Active House, in a new subdivision called Rolling Meadows, responds to these fluctuations and uses automation to cultivate a comfortable living environment.

The first of its kind in Canada, the prefabricated abode is the final result of a collaboration between Great Gulf, a home builder; superkül, a Toronto-based architecture firm; and the Active House Alliance, a European organization that seeks to create hyper efficient living spaces. Conceived as a smart house from the ground up, this design deploys high- and low-tech features to forge the ne plus ultra of modern living.

Outside, the two-story, brick-and-cedar-clad house stands out as a contemporary interpretation of the surrounding homes. "The subdivision had design guidelines," says Andre D'Elia, a founding principal, with Meg Graham, of superkül. "It wasn't 'Thou shalt not'—but you could understand why all the houses look the way they do." The firm saw the prescribed peaked roof as an opportunity to create a dramatic cathedral cant, all the better to accommodate 14 skylights by Velux and two solar collectors for heating water. Inside, a vestibule with a low ceiling gives way to a soaring living area, blasted with sunshine and naturally ventilated thanks to the stack effect of the open plan, which draws cool air in as hot air rises. >

PROJECT
Great Gulf Active House
ARCHITECT
superkül,
superkul.ca
LOCATION
Thorold, Ontario

Strategic site planning and smart technology help the 3,200-square-foot Great Gulf Active House achieve hyper-efficiency. The Toronto-based architecture firm, superkül, used triple-glazed windows; a solar hot water system; zoned heating; a fully automated HVAC system, skylights, and roller shades; LED lights; and spray foam insulation, among other green strategies.



PHOTO BY TORBEN ESKEROD



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Motorized skylights by Velux. 14 in all, welcome natural light into the house (far left). Low-flow bathroom fixtures by Hansgrohe reduce water consumption (left). An underground cistern collects rainwater to irrigate the yard and rooftop solar collectors heat water for domestic use (below). The panelized wood structure was prefabricated to reduce construction time and material waste.

The brains of the operation occupy the basement. The app-controlled Somfy Tahoma Smart House System augments the indoor air quality and thermal performance of the 3,200-square-foot house by activating skylights, windows, and roller blinds, and regulating heating and cooling in response to the weather. If the house needs to “breathe,” Somfy Tahoma opens the motorized skylights and a number of the 23 windows. Great Gulf programmed the home so that if the outside temperature surpasses 77 degrees Fahrenheit, the automated system (remote-controlled, thanks to wireless radio technology) shuts the open windows and turns on the air conditioner. Customizable settings also allow the homeowner to roll down the blinds to minimize solar heat gain and glare.

The residence’s three levels are thermally zoned, with separate thermostats ensuring the high-efficiency HVAC system never works on overdrive (for example: warming the second-floor bedrooms when everyone’s in the kitchen). Two heat-recovery ventilators automatically kick in to treat intake air, boosting HVAC performance and replenishing fresh air throughout the house.

Just as the home rarely needs artificial lighting (studies ensured sunlight would penetrate into every corner), it also consumes 35 percent less fresh water than a similar residence, thanks to its rainwater

cistern. Renewable energy supplied by Bullfrog Power, a green utility, brings the house to full self-sufficiency.

This is no cookie-cutter builder’s special. superkül sees it as a potential game changer in the suburban home development market. The firm is now working with Great Gulf on a second Active House, this

time in the Toronto borough of Etobicoke. “We see them as concept houses, except we’re building them for the real world,” says Christopher J. Wein, the president of Great Gulf. “There’s a segment of the population looking for energy-efficient homes with contemporary design and open spaces—I think you have to serve that market.” >



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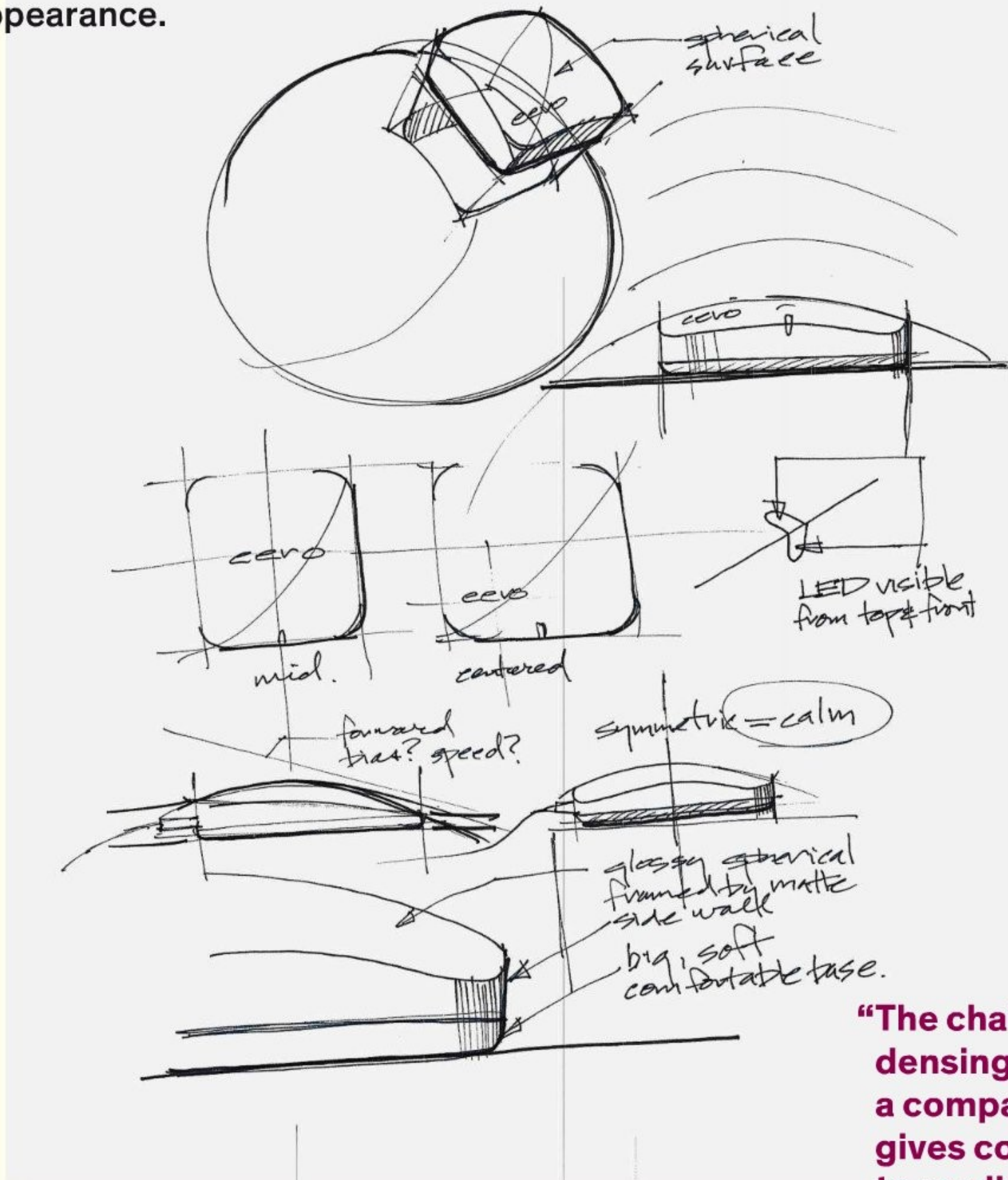
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TEXT BY
Allison McCarthy

Power to the People

Elevating the world of wi-fi, in both function and appearance.

eero combines a router and range extender in a single compact package (bottom). The device blankets the home in wi-fi using complex proprietary software. One per 1,000 square feet is recommended (\$199 each or three for \$499). Industrial designer Fred Bould pored over every detail (left) so the product would coalesce with modern interiors.

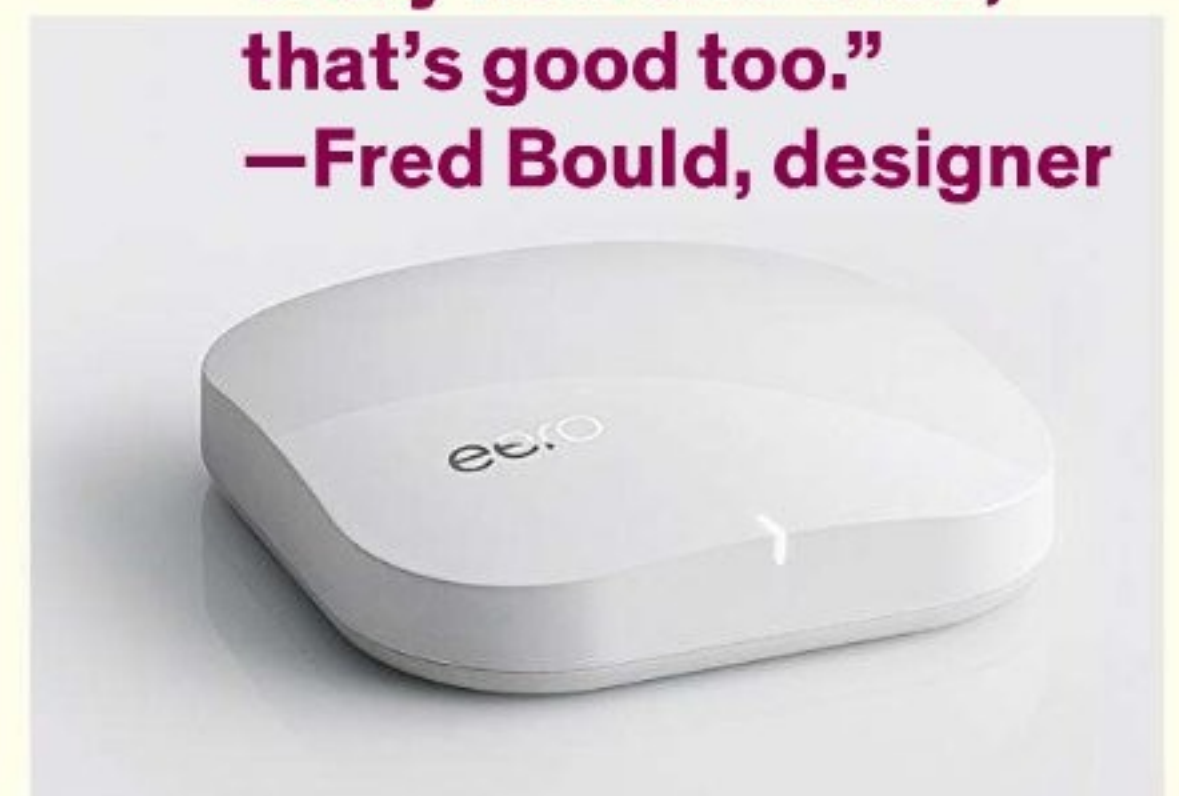


“The challenge is condensing technology into a compact package. If it gives consumers pause to meditate on the form every now and then, that’s good too.”
—Fred Bould, designer

Style has never been paramount in the connectivity sphere. Just glimpse the shelves of clunky, unreliable routers that haven’t changed in 10-plus years. “They have been black boxes for so long, but now wi-fi is becoming a core utility—like power and water,” says Nick Weaver, the CEO of eero, a product company that seeks to upend the home networking market.

eero offers a design-centric wi-fi solution, its hardware—in the form of a sleek, gently sloping square, with internal antennae, a soft-touch bottom, matte sides, and a

lustrous, light-reflecting top—was inspired by iconic architect Eero Saarinen. “We work with a lot of visionary innovations to try to reflect the elegance and spirit of technology in the industrial design,” says designer Fred Bould, who has worked with Nest Labs, GoPro, and Roku. Unlike other routers, the eero system uses complex proprietary software, allows for simultaneous streaming on multiple devices and use of multiple radio frequencies and channels, and includes a user-friendly app that makes setup easy. >



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Mortenson
construction

There are certain products that can conjure an entire era with a single mention. Case in point: the Sony Walkman. The iconic portable audio player, which turns 36 this year, is just one of 89 game-changing gadgets featured in the new book *Sony Design: Making Modern* (Rizzoli, 2015). Two hundred and seventy-nine pages document the electronic brand's history, from

its origins in postwar Japan with the TR-63, the world's first pocket-sized transistor radio, through Y2K-era robots and the Playstation gaming system to today's paper-thin touchscreens. Expert essays and lavishly photographed products do more than tell the story of a company—they chart how the ways we consume media have changed over the past half century. □

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Bach in Action

With a helicopter and a little elbow grease, a prefab escape arrives at a remote New Zealand beach.

PROJECT

Cora House

ARCHITECT

Bonnifait + Giesen

Atelierworkshop

atelierworkshop.com

LOCATION

Waiheke Island, New Zealand

TEXT BY

Luke Hopping

PHOTOS BY

Russell Kleyn

The Cora House's configuration maximizes views, while its siting limits environmental impact. Bonnifait + Giesen Atelierworkshop, the firm that designed the structure, retained the mature trees on the property.

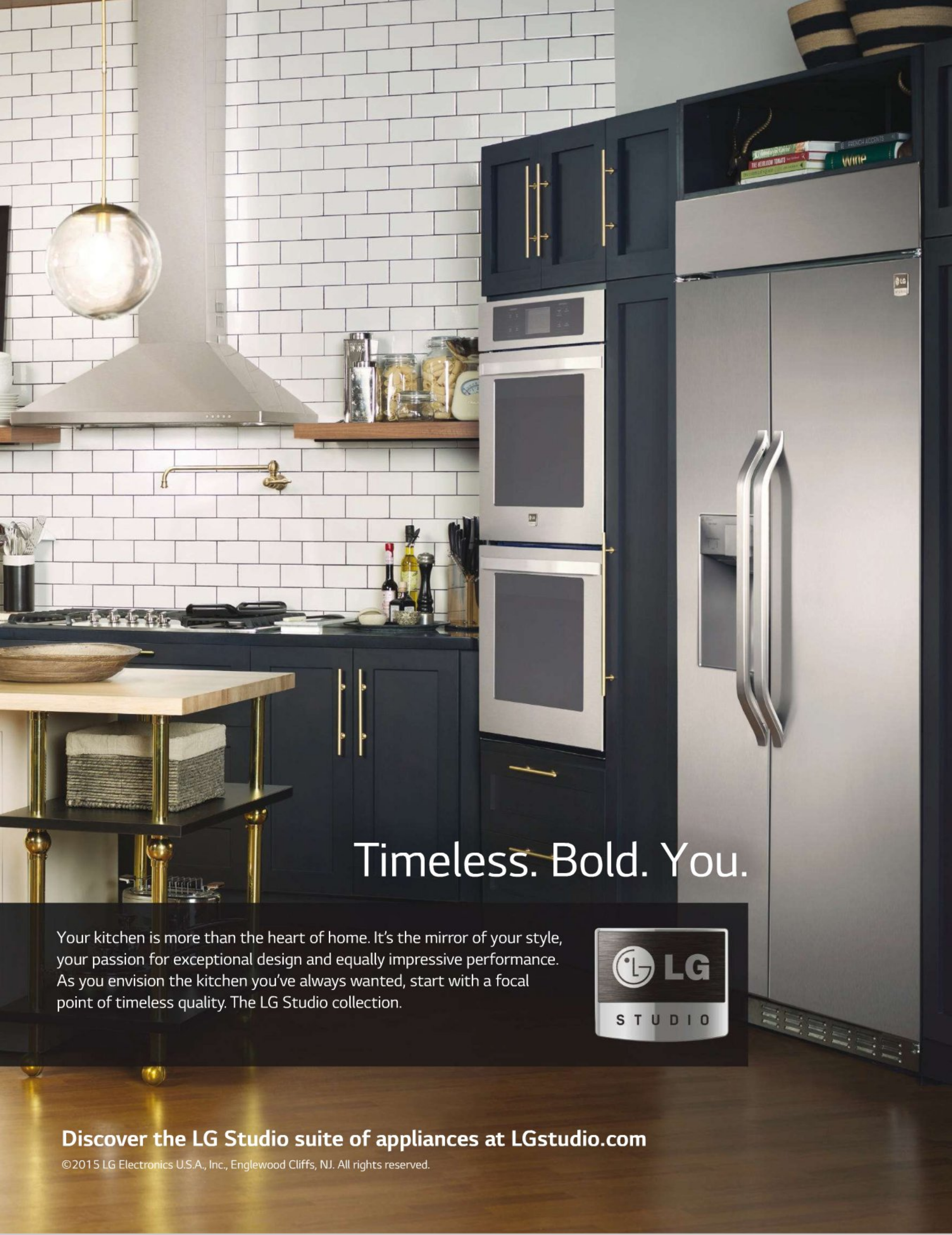
In New Zealand, a few weeks at the beach is regarded less as a luxury than a birthright. As transit improved in the postwar era, families migrated to the sea en masse to vacation in “baches,” modest cabins that make up for their diminutive size by annexing the outdoors into their living space.

Yet in a country with nearly twice as much coastline as the continental United States, many areas remain inaccessible by car, a fact architects Cecile Bonnifait and William Giesen of Bonnifait + Giesen Atelierworkshop confronted when a Wellington couple approached them to build a bach on the northern edge of Waiheke Island. Located approximately

800 feet from the nearest road, the property sits atop a thicketed cliff that falls sharply into Hekerua Bay.

“The site has no access other than a hair-raisingly steep paper road,” says Bonnifait, using a Kiwi term for a makeshift car route. This meant nearly all materials would have to be brought in one at a time, by hand. Undaunted, Bonnifait and Giesen devised a prefab solution that’s as sensitive to the site’s constraints as it is to its natural beauty. “There’s a gratitude that goes with experiencing life in a place as extraordinary as Hekerua Bay,” Giesen says.

By building horizontally along the slope, the architects spared the location heavy excavation and deforestation. Walls were >



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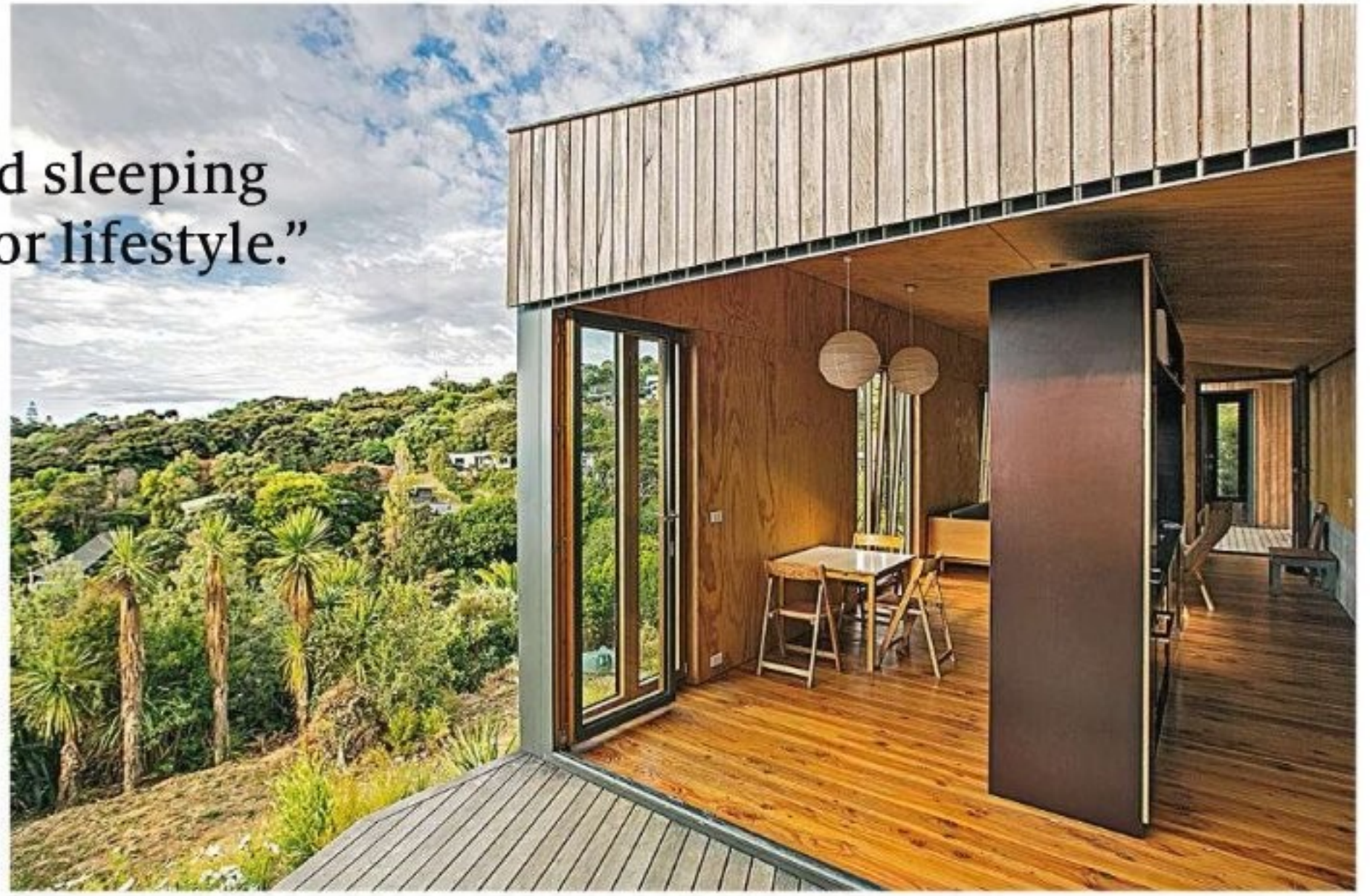
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“The bach offers minimal living and sleeping space, while privileging the outdoor lifestyle.”
—William Giesen, architect



fabricated off-site and walked in from the lane by teams of four to six. For the wood-panel flooring, which was too unwieldy to carry, the duo turned to a helicopter for assistance with delivery.

Building a year-round dwelling at such a laborious pace would have been impractical, but baches are a simple typology. Construction lasted only a year, and yielded an intimate retreat that articulates its way around the contours of the landscape. Ample deck space and floor-to-ceiling windows command expansive views of the bay below. A solar array cantilevered for optimal gain helps limit the home's broader environmental impact, while adding visual flair to the otherwise bare-bone structure.

In the spirit of traditional baches, the central living area and twin sleeping quarters are accessible only by stepping outdoors, an arrangement that suits the home's seasonal nature. The residents spend about a third of the year there, unwinding from the demands of city life.

“The bach is more of a shelter than a living space. It's based on spending your time outside enjoying the beach,” explains Bonnifait. “It peels away modern life, while integrating a controlled level of comfort.” □

The architects drew upon their own experiences vacationing in baches to develop the design. Approximately 1,000 square feet of interior spaces are connected by 270 square

feet of deck—a healthy ratio for indoor-outdoor living (left). The plywood-lined communal area is flanked by separate units that contain matching bedrooms (above).

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Go, Go Gadget

TEXT BY
Bryan Lufkin
PHOTOS BY
Brian W. Ferry

Through her company littleBits, MIT-trained engineer Ayah Bdeir turns humble objects into remote-controlled, Internet-connected tweeting machines.

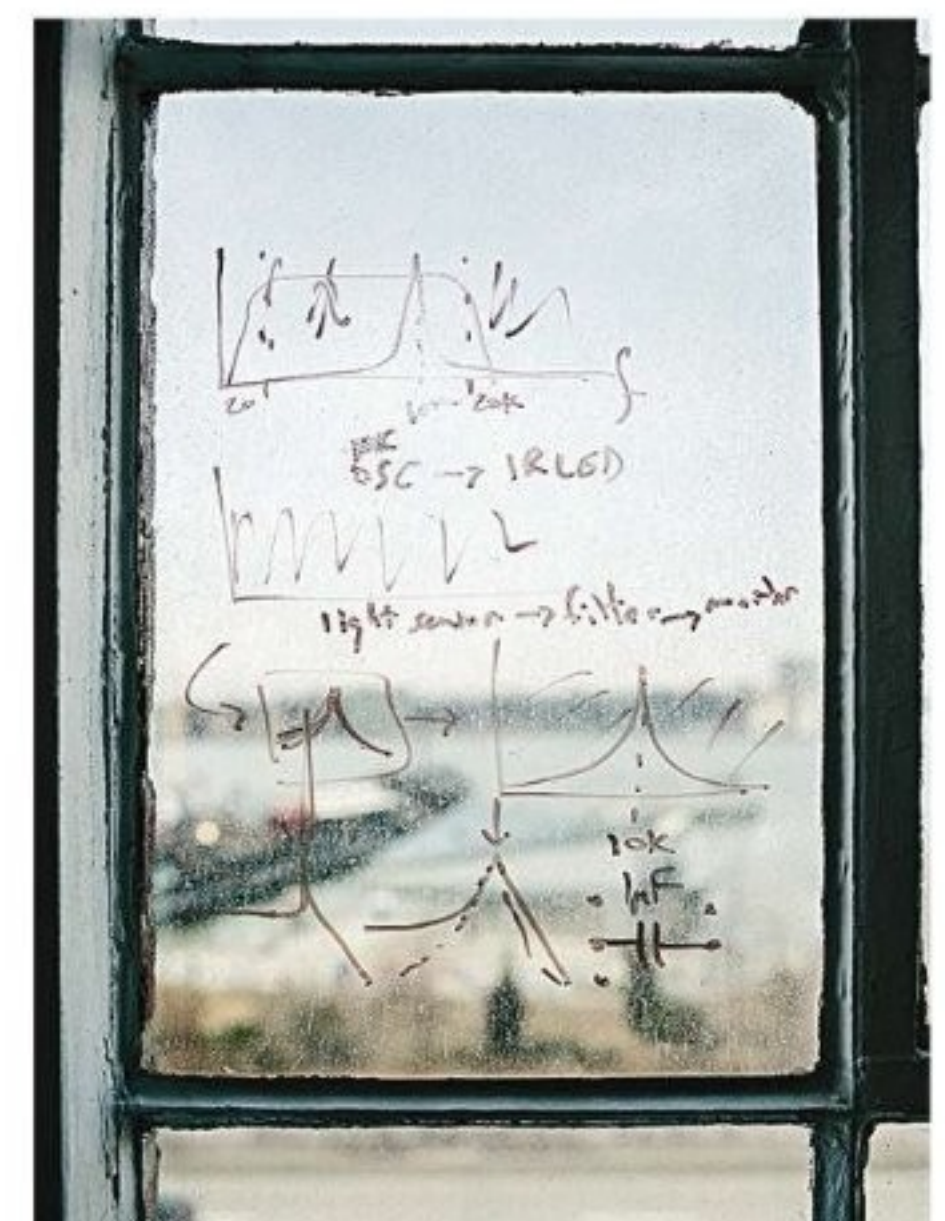
We're living in the age of weather-forecasting refrigerators and thermostats you control from your car. And, according to littleBits founder and CEO Ayah Bdeir, you shouldn't have to buy them—you should be able to turn your Reagan-era Mr. Coffee into an auto-brewing smart gadget yourself.

Bdeir is an engineer, MIT Media Lab alum, and TED senior fellow who wanted to inject more creativity and fun into her work, making math and science exciting to everyone. Her brainchild, littleBits, bills itself as "DIY electronics for prototyping and learning." They're magnetic, candy-colored modules that snap together to build circuits—no wiring, programming, or soldering required.

"It's like if you take a pottery class and make a pot—you become proud of the object," she says. "For some reason, we take no pride in our technology." >



Ayah Bdeir founded littleBits in 2011. The company produces a library of electronic modules that can be used to create all manner of devices, like a remote-controlled fish feeder and weather monitor (above) or synthesizer kit (right).



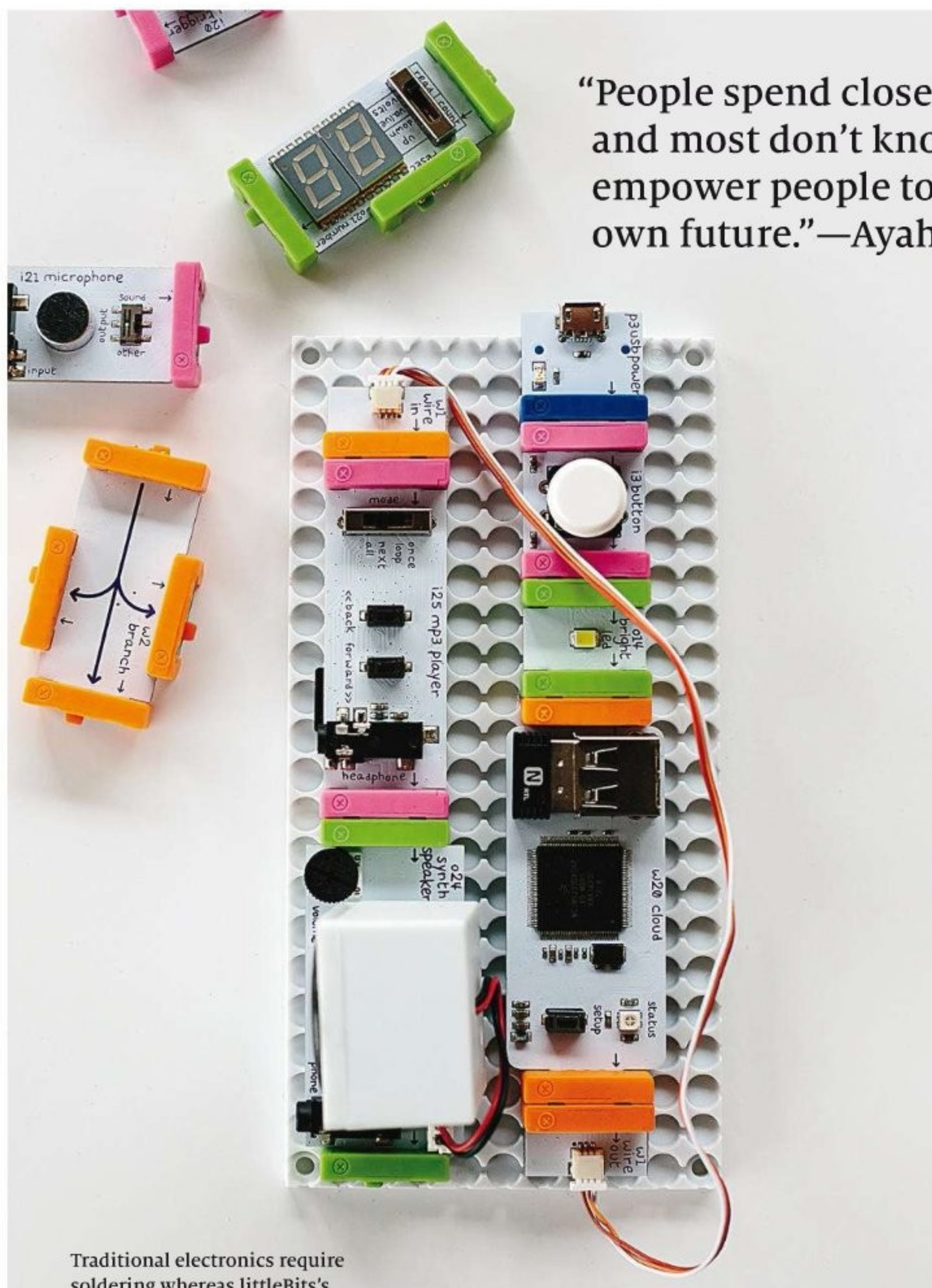
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“People spend close to 11 hours a day with electronics and most don’t know how they work. We want to empower people to learn and be able to invent their own future.”—Ayah Bdeir, littleBits founder and CEO

Traditional electronics require soldering whereas littleBits’s modules snap together with magnets to create things like a doorbell that sends text notifications (above). A littleBits employee prototypes a new project (below).



Bdeir’s main motivation was to equip people with the skills and interests needed to thrive in today’s tech-filled world. She regards technology as a language, and believes that nowadays, those who don’t speak it can be paralyzed. It isn’t okay to have someone constantly fix everything for you or buy everything for you, she says. You can master technology yourself—and with littleBits’s new Smart Home Kit, you don’t need to buy pricey home gadgets that’ll become obsolete in six months.

The Smart Home Kit is the company’s first foray into “the Internet of Things,” the trend of designing objects with software and features that connect them to the Internet. Prior to that, littleBits focused on packages and projects for educators, makers, programmers, and kids, including a preassembled kit of parts to build a music synthesizer or a “Mars Rover.” (The Museum of Modern Art, in New York, included littleBits in its 2011 exhibition *Talk to Me*, citing the company’s efforts to engage non-experts with technology.) The Smart Home Kit comes with 14 modules, 11 accessories, and 14 project guides with thousands of other user-generated ideas on the company’s website.

Use the included MP3 player module, servo, and synth speaker to build a system that will automatically open your curtains and play a wake-up tune every morning at a set time, for instance. Or assemble a contraption that automatically dispenses >

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New York firm MCDC designed littleBits's Chelsea office, which is outfitted with Togo sofas from Ligne Roset and an overhead fixture by Tech Lighting. The shelves hold books and play materials like Legos and K'nex (above). The company collaborated with Labour, a Brooklyn-based design studio, on "Art Handles," a 2013 installation for MoMA Design Store (left).



treats for pets. The idea is to take products that exist in users' homes and revamp them to embrace technology.

For example, the Smart Home Kit's "Coffee Control" project: a scheme that makes an ordinary brewer automatically prepare coffee with just the touch of a button. It can take almost an hour to set up, but sure enough, you'll soon be churning out a cup of French vanilla from across the kitchen. There's a very small learning curve to get acquainted with the various parts and modules, and initially connecting the kit to the Internet takes some time. After figuring out the lay of the land, though, everything's pretty intuitive.

However, it begs the question: Is it really worth going through all the trouble to outfit a dryer to send a text message when laundry's done? Why not just drive to the nearest electronics superstore and purchase ready-made gizmos? For design-minded folks, Bdeir says it pays off.

"Maybe you don't like the smart lamps that are out there," she says. "Maybe they're ugly, don't fit your décor, or are too expensive. Or maybe you have a vintage lamp you want to make smart. The Smart Home Kit respects your own aesthetic and products." □

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Sweet Virginia

A smart, rural vacation home fosters connectivity in every sense of the word.



In their years of trying to build a modern home in Washington D.C., architect Jordan Goldstein and his wife, Laurie, encountered ruthless bidding wars, restrictive zoning laws, and tiny lots. Then they looked beyond the Beltway. “Both my wife and I felt we should find a raw piece of land so we can start from scratch instead of dealing with constraints and existing infrastructure,” Goldstein explains.

The Goldsteins discovered 23 acres of former farmland in Rappahannock County, Virginia, enveloped by rolling hills and forests. “The second we pulled up to the property, the first words out of my daughter’s mouth were, ‘This is awesome,’” Goldstein recalls.

The managing director and principal

at the Washington D.C. outpost of Gensler, an international multidisciplinary design and architecture firm, Goldstein had fond childhood memories of spending time at his parents’ cozy Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania, retreat. “There were bedrooms, but everyone always hung out in one room and it was the kitchen, it was the dining room, it was the living room, it was the family room,” he says. “I wanted to modernize that experience but have a similar kind of sensation, with everyone being together in one room, surrounded by beautiful scenery.”

The 3,200-square-foot house offers plenty of space for Goldstein, Laurie, and their two daughters, Sari, nine, and Alexa, 13. Goldstein oriented the >

TEXT BY
Diana Budds
PHOTOS BY
Eli Meir Kaplan

PROJECT
Rappahannock House
ARCHITECT
Jordan Goldstein
LOCATION
Rappahannock County,
Virginia

Located about two hours from Washington, D.C., architect Jordan Goldstein’s retreat is series of stacked volumes comprised of granite, stucco and mahogany siding accents.

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structure to the west to capture afternoon sun. The master suite is on one side of the living area and the two kids' rooms on the other. A guest room and a media room occupy the basement level.

As striking as the house is—a boxy, white outcropping in a verdant field—it's the invisible features that make it stand out. Goldstein installed a fleet of tech products to increase energy efficiency, offer peace of mind, and help the family enjoy the house more. "Connectivity was a driver when we set out to do this," he says. "To have greater connectivity as a family, and then connectivity to the land."

Technology allowed Goldstein to better understand the building itself, too—how its systems performed and how secure it was. "If I'm aware of my energy use, I can actually do something about it," he says. "If I'm able to have a level of audio-visual control that's easy to use, that is very fluid, then I have more ability to affect the ambiance."

Goldstein advocates discussing technology goals early on in the planning process. He and his wife prioritized seamless integration with the design.

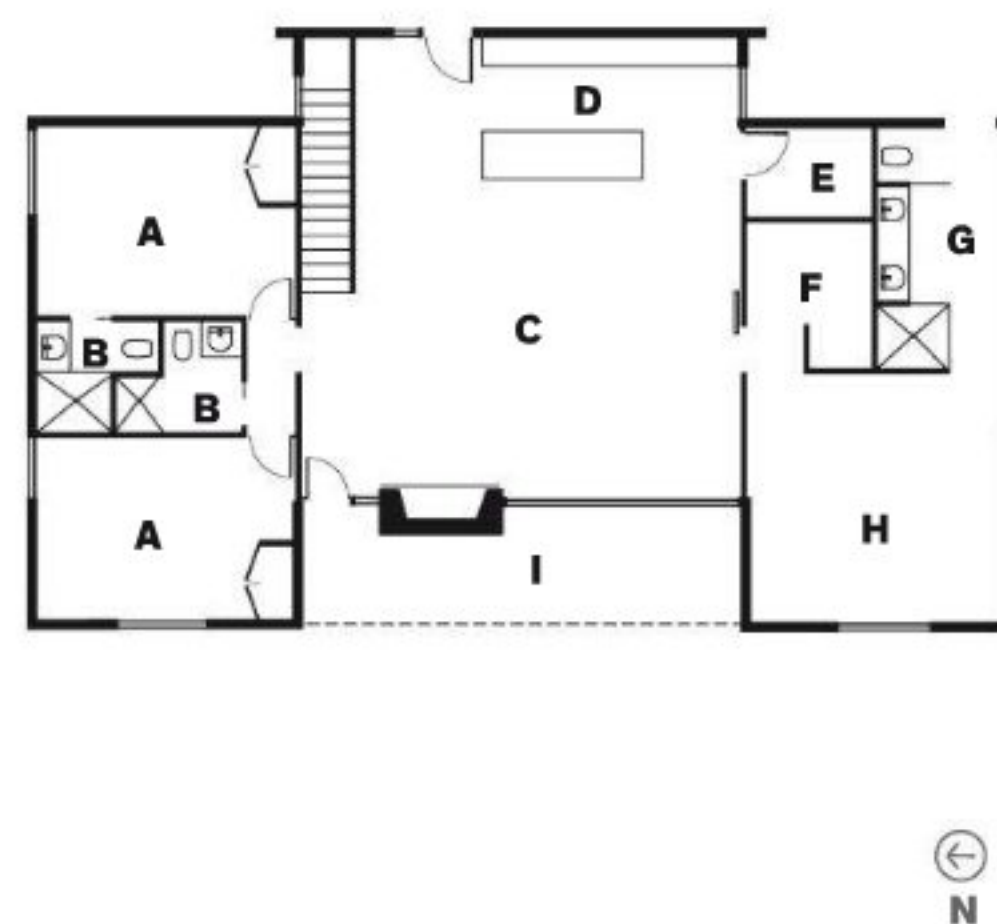
They also wanted the house to operate itself when the family is away. For example, the furnace turns off if it starts to operate inconsistently; a fire-suppression system recessed into the ceiling turns on automatically if it detects excess heat and smoke.

Having reliable Internet service in a rural area was a challenge, so Goldstein factored that into his decision making. "It's not like I can plug in FiOS because Verizon doesn't run cable this far out," he says. He discovered a home security company called SimpliSafe, which operates from a cellular network. From his mobile phone, Goldstein can monitor temperature, carbon-monoxide levels, smoke, and flood status (for leaks). All of the devices in the home communicate over a Local Area Network, a difficult system to penetrate and an extra layer of security for the family.

"I can't be there all the time, so how do I keep an eye on things and how do I, even when I'm there, still have the ability to understand what's going on in different parts of the property?" he says.

Because of his work as a commercial architect at a prominent firm, Goldstein

First Floor



Lower Level



Rappahannock House Plan

- A Bedroom
- B Bathroom
- C Great Room
- D Kitchen
- E Pantry
- F Closet
- G Master Bathroom
- H Master Bedroom
- I Porch
- J Home Theater
- K Game Room
- L Guest Room
- M Laundry Room



The kitchen—outfitted with Porcelanosa cabinets and Krypton surfaces—flows into the great room so the Goldstein family can easily spend time together. The lighting is by Flos and the dining tables and chairs are from Cella Luxuria.

The background of the advertisement is a photograph of a modern architectural space. It features a wall with horizontal stone tiles and two dark, curved LED light fixtures mounted on it. The fixtures are illuminated, casting a warm glow. To the left and right of the wall are dark wooden slatted screens. In the foreground, there is a large, dark, rounded planter with tall, thin green grasses. In the background, there are more plants, including a bamboo-like plant and some leafy green plants in a bed of white gravel. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and sophisticated.

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“Connectivity is the driver—as a family and to the land.” —Jordan Goldstein, resident



A Samsung Smart Series television is recessed into the wall (left). Goldstein's builder, Optiz Construction, customized the sliding door using Barn Door Hardware.

is often privy to new product announcements. “I approached this as, let’s not just look at the residential items out there,” he says. “Let’s throw commercial products into the mix and develop a palette that feels right for this house.” He was familiar with Lutron and, after learning about the Caséta system before it officially came on the market, specified the wireless dimmer system to control the LED lighting—set to a warm color temperature.

Goldstein researched both the Honeywell and Nest programmable thermostats, but preferred the latter because of its interface. The television is recessed into the living room wall and attached to a pivoting wall-mounted bracket so people in the kitchen can view what’s on the screen. Security cameras, with white housing virtually indistinguishable from the structure itself, help the Goldsteins keep an eye on things outside. An Apple AirPlay-based system provides audio throughout the property.

“It’s about creating great architecture or a great experience that matches with

your lifestyle,” Goldstein says. “We wanted a modern house that would be a gathering point for our family, a place to celebrate the property. The technology that we chose to integrate affords us the ability to do that with ease.”

Knowing that technology changes rapidly, Goldstein housed many of the control units in a feature he calls “the Brain.” About four feet tall and enclosed in glass, the niche is easily accessible. “I was concerned with inflexibility in the design—where changes require a hard construction project versus a do-it-yourself task,” he says. “If I ever need to swap something out, it’s easy.”

The way Goldstein mapped out the structure’s orientation demonstrates how modern devices factored into the home from the outset. After completing the drawings, he met his contractor on the lot and, with an iPhone and string in tow, outlined where the house should go. “Who would’ve thought a compass app would be used for landing a house?” he says. “Talk about technology driving design.” □

Let’s Get Technical

Problem-solving gadgets abound in the Rappahannock House’s design.



USB 15A Charger/Outlet by Hubbell Wiring Device-Kellems

Since the family frequently uses electronic devices, they opted for outlets that have USB connections. hubbell-wiring.com



Pico Remote by Lutron

A remote that’s smaller than a deck of cards operates the dimmable lighting in the great room. lutron.com



Rhapsody Fireplace by Lennox

The family chose this model for its clean look and because the temperature, flame height, and power can be remote controlled. hearthsideistributors.com



Photo courtesy of Tricia Shay Photography

Rainier® cable railing shown with wooden top railing and post stem reducer

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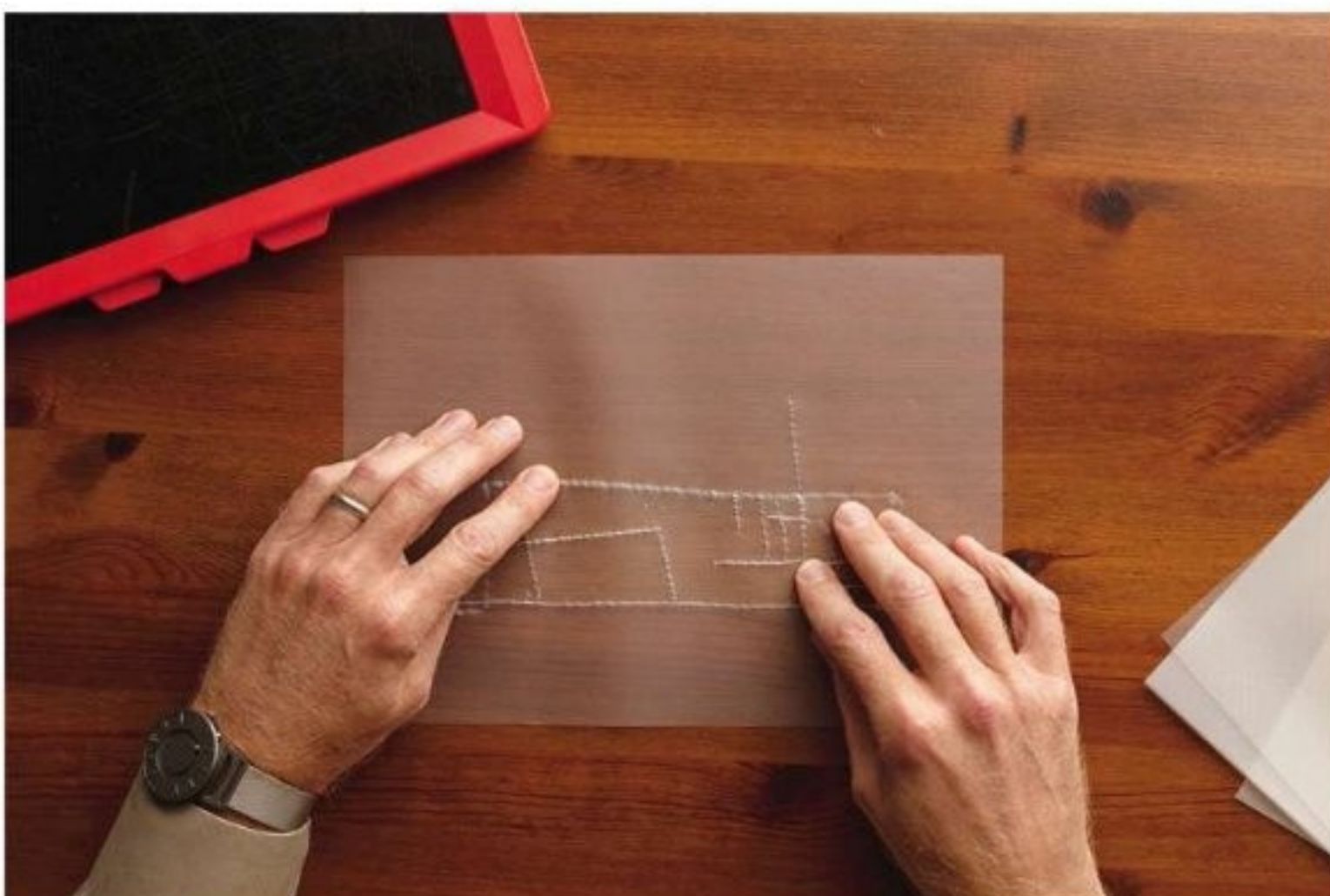
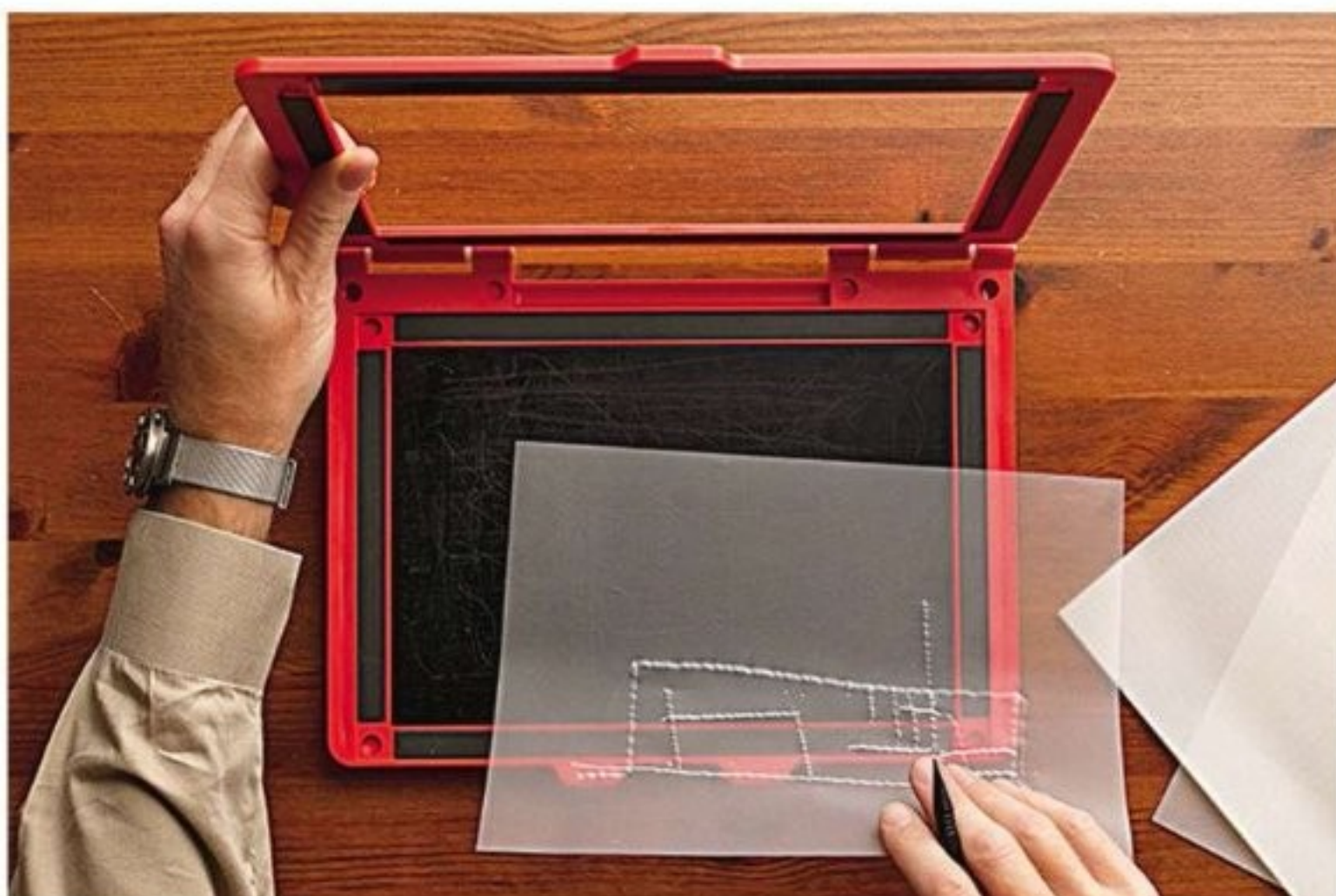
Photo courtesy of Martin Bydalek

Sometimes considered a secondary design element, railing systems should be anything but an afterthought. A critical component of the overall aesthetic feel, railing can be an exclamation point to any design – nicely merging spaces together towards an elegant and harmonious look. For more than two decades, AGS Stainless has been manufacturing railing systems for some of the world's most distinctive homes. Designed with CAD and prefabricated to ensure a precise, custom fit, our stainless steel railing systems can accommodate any vision and enhance any view. It's rare that beauty comes this easy.

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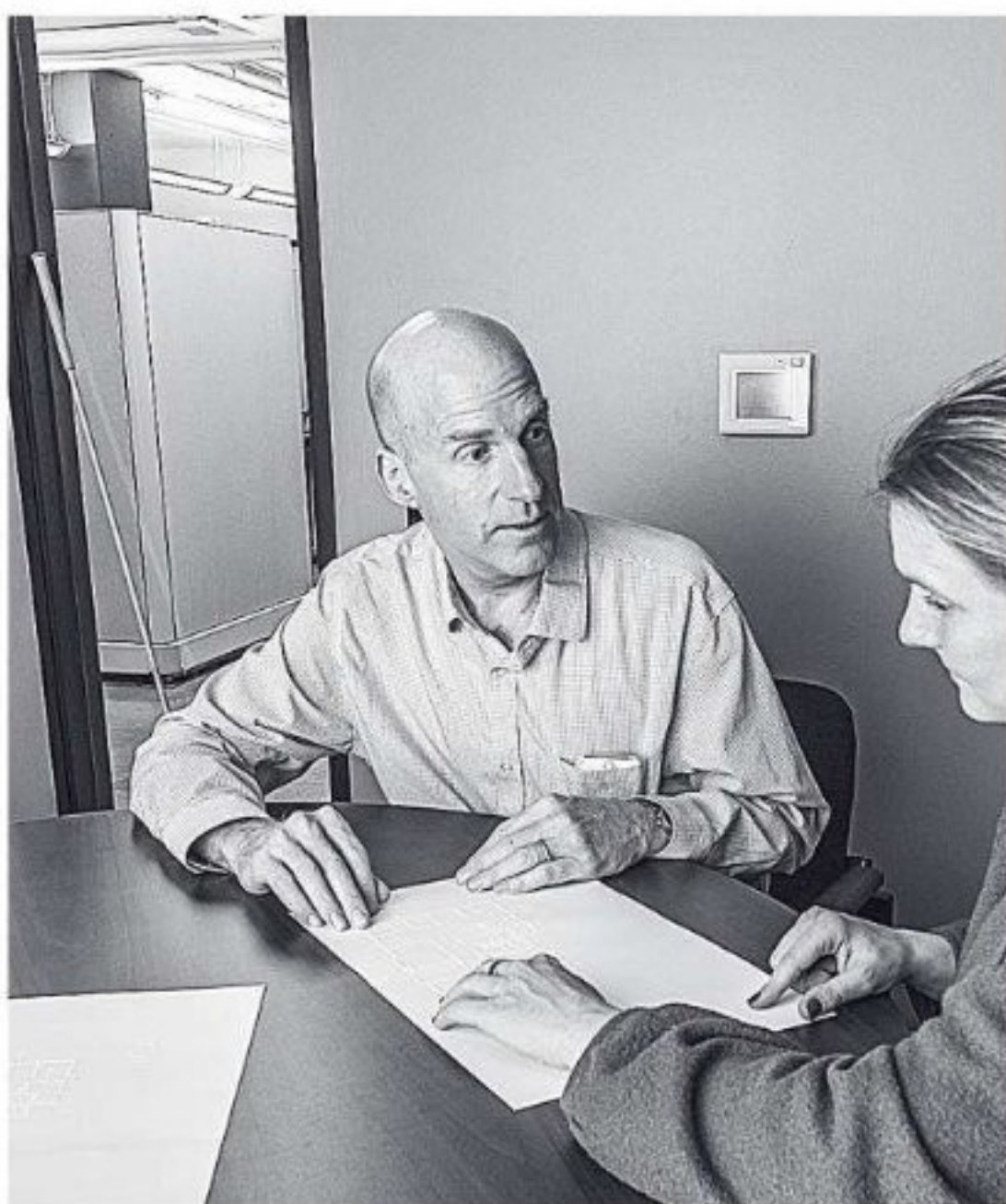
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Chris Downey

After losing his sight gave him a new perspective on design, an architect reveals how technology is making the world more accessible.



TEXT BY
Kelly Vencill Sanchez

Chris Downey says that it was terrifying to wake up blind after eye surgery, but he never considered giving up architecture. Today he consults on projects like the Independent Living Resource Center of San Francisco, providing insight into accessibility issues. Tools like the inTACT Sketchpad help him to draw and read plans (top).

As one of the few blind practicing architects in the world, Chris Downey occupies a unique place in design. When he lost his sight in 2008, Downey, who is based in San Francisco, began using his own experiences to transform interior and exterior spaces for those with—and without—visual impairments. Here, he shares his expertise on new and emerging technologies that could improve life for all of us.

When it comes to making the built environment easier to navigate, how can technology help?

The most promising interior wayfinding [tool], in my opinion, is beacon technology, which uses low-energy Bluetooth [signals] to send location information and notifications to a smartphone. The promise comes through its economy, the ease of incorporation within built space, and its indoor-mapping potential for the general public. The device is about the size of a watch face, has a four-year power supply, and has no infrastructure to be integrated into the architecture. The installation at Terminal 2 of the San Francisco International Airport is the result of a collaboration between the San Francisco >

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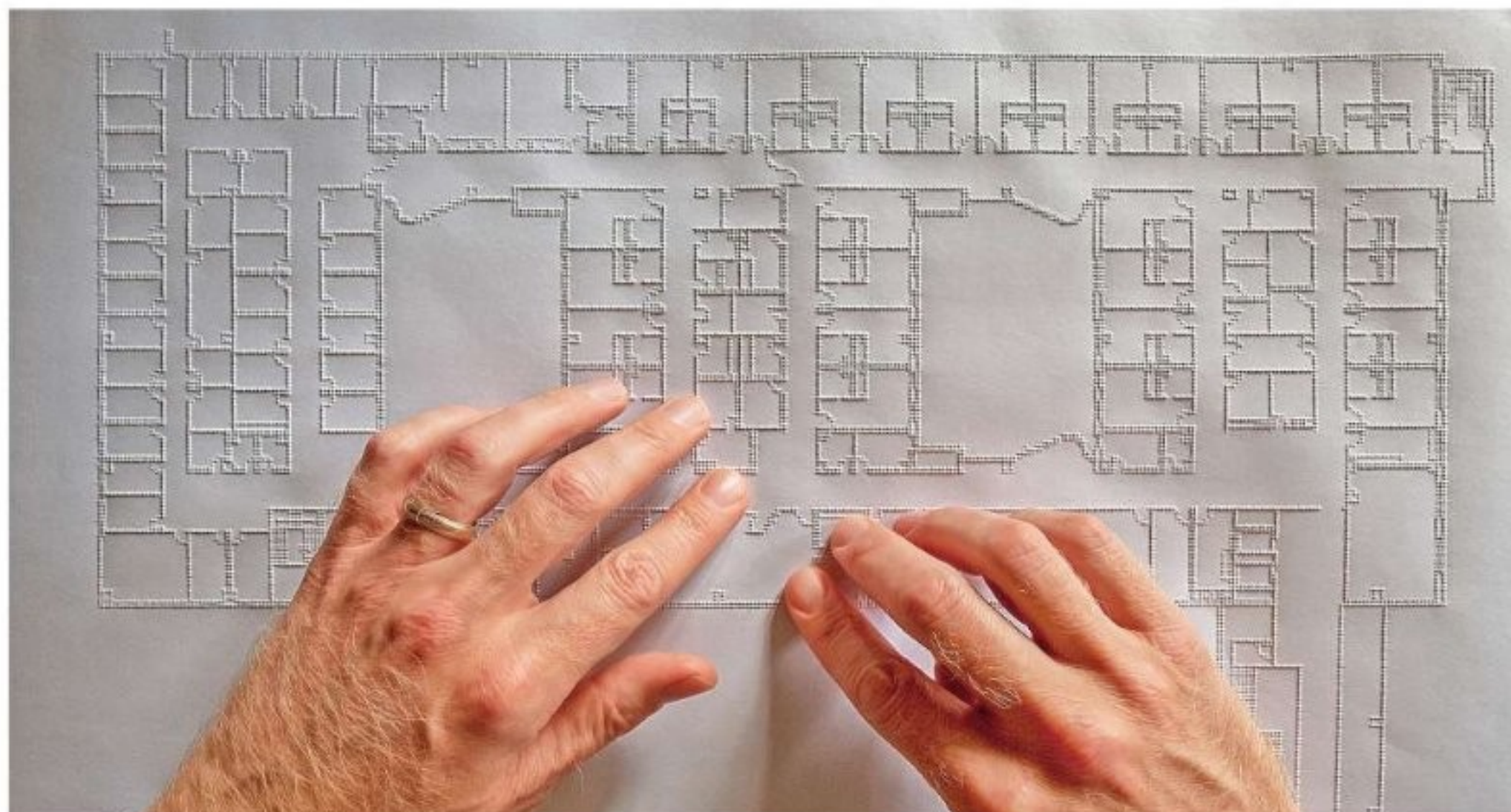
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mayor's office, the technology company indoo.rs, and the San Francisco LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. I've successfully used it, with no training or orientation, to locate my gate, the men's room, a bite to eat, coffee, and even electrical outlets. Finding an outlet in an airport is a real challenge—try it blind!

What are some other new technologies that show promise?

There's one on the cusp of development that could revolutionize how I work. With embossing printers and techniques for tactile drawing, architectural drawings can be accessed through touch. But I've not found a way for someone without sight to input graphic information into a computer. I'm now collaborating with the developers of the inTACT Sketchpad, which enables someone to draw on a tablet and feel the raised line that forms as the stylus passes over the surface. The graphic information can then be uploaded to the computer through a USB connection.



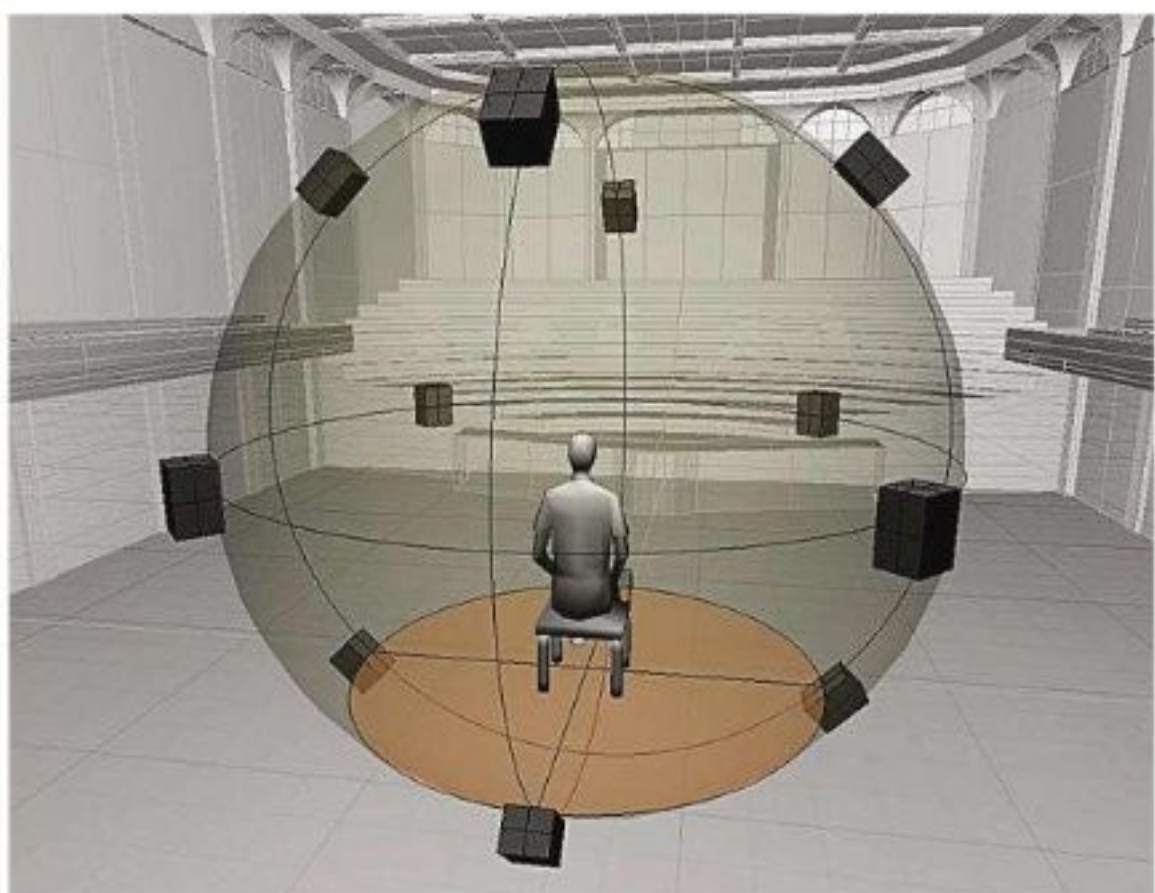
Tell us about your collaboration with the engineers at Arup on the acoustics for the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired's new headquarters in San Francisco.

Architects focus a lot on the visual aspects of architecture largely because it can be drawn. It's very hard to draw sound. The acoustic modeling technology developed and used by Arup's acoustic engineers in their SoundLab is important for the blind and visually impaired, who listen to space to recognize where they are and what they're looking for. Acoustic modeling of digital space during the design phase allows architects to make qualitative decisions to improve acoustic performance, which is promising for any space where acoustics play a significant role.

Are there dangers to viewing technology as a magic wand?

Many people view GPS and similar emerging interior-wayfinding technologies as a way to "solve the blind wayfinding challenge." But no handheld technology can safely guide a blind traveler who isn't tech-savvy or sufficiently independently mobile—and it's unpleasant to imagine a future in constant reliance on technology for guidance. There needs to be enough multisensory information, in the form of environmental landmarks and cues, that can be related spatially back to the directional information provided through that wayfinding technology. Architects still need to be better multisensory place-makers to design and create effective environments for the blind and visually impaired—which, in turn, will make those spaces more effective and enjoyable for all. □

A Tiger Pro embossing printer allows Downey to read plans by touch (above). Beacon technology like the indoo.rs system, currently in beta, enables users to navigate San Francisco International Airport with help from their cellphones (below). At Arup's Chicago SoundLab, audio engineers listen to and model a space's acoustics in order to optimize sound for performance and navigation purposes (left).



**"Technology will prove to be the easy part and may lull designers to consider the problem solved."
—Chris Downey, architect**





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my house

When Steve and Alexi Conine first sat down with architect Brad Hoyt to talk about the design of their vacation home in Jackson, Wyoming, they had an unusual feature in mind: an interior slide. "It was their idea from the word go," Hoyt says. "Usually, we're the ones pushing the design, but the Conines were a lot of fun."

In addition to the slide, the couple had a list of whimsical requests: flat-screen panels inlaid into the entryway floor for displaying videos and photos, a room for housing and heating sports

gear, a living roof complete with solar panels, a triple-stacked bunk bed in one of the kids' bedrooms, and a Picard steam-injection oven for baking the perfect baguette and making pizza with their three children.

"We decided to try to do things you might not do when designing a functional home," says Steve, who is a software engineer as well as the chief technology officer and cofounder of an e-commerce home-decor site. "Early on we went into mindset of 'take advantage of what we're doing here and try>



TEXT BY
Elise Craig
PHOTOS BY
Gibeon Photography

PROJECT
Conine Residence
ARCHITECT
Brad Hoyt/CTA Architects
ctaarchitectsengineers.com
LOCATION
Jackson, Wyoming

The Conine family's Jackson Hole hideaway is completely wired. Steve Conine, a software engineer, installed and programmed many of the details himself, like the Dell UltraSharp flat-screen panels inlaid into the entryway of the home.



World of Wonder

A young family builds a Wyoming vacation home filled with playful details from top to bottom.

PLOUM sofa by Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec
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As if
Gravity
or
attraction
that keeps me
here



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When building their dream retreat in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Steve and Alexi Conine worked with architect Brad Hoyt to create a smart house that fused technology and design. Like the rest of the home, the living-room furnishings blend high design,

comfort, and kid-friendliness, including a table by Isamu Noguchi for Herman Miller, a leather sectional sofa from Four Hands, a cashmere cable-knit-covered elk mount by Rachel Denny, and a custom, multicolored cowhide patchwork rug by Linie Design.

“We love all the open common space and innovative features in our home. It reflects our active, fun-loving, and creative family.”
—Alexi Conine, resident

things that haven’t been tried before.”

The first design challenge was that the double-sloped lot was subject to height restrictions: 37.5 feet from the highest point of the roof to the lowest point of grade. So Hoyt stacked the home’s three levels, raising the kitchen and dining area to accommodate a family room and guest suite underneath and bedrooms above. To ease the transition between spaces, he suggested heated concrete ramps instead of stairs, a “more seamless and unique” solution.

Hoyt’s firm also worked to lay out the slope and geometry of the slide. General contractor Chris Mommsen of Stewart Construction Services found a craftsman from Idaho Falls who tented off the area and spent two weeks shaping the fiberglass gel-coat material into the structure. The Conines then bought a \$400 Philips LED lighting kit to illuminate the slide’s interior; their 11-year-old daughter used the kit’s accompanying app to create multiple settings, manipulating the infinite palette of colors into themes for different holidays. “It’s been so much fun,” Alexi says. “We really don’t regret it.”

When it came to the techy details, it helped that Steve could program and build some of the features himself. In the foyer, the five high-definition computer monitors in the cement floor are controlled by an app he coded. The family can pick which photos or videos to display—everything from molten lava to mud to a video of the kids playing on the foundation of the house as it was being built. “Depending on who shows up, it can be fires of hell or a nice flash of light,” Steve says. He wrote a second app to control the family photos that cycle on the two monitors on the wall >



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Beams extending from the kitchen floor give the impression of an oversize butcher-block stage for a custom walnut-slab table and a dozen Molded Plastic

chairs by Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller (above). An interior slide was the first of the unexpected amenities the homeowners requested (right).

between the living and dining areas, and posted the codes for both apps on GitHub. A computer cabinet that he set up in the basement controls all of the screens in the house, plus features ranging from security to heating.

The Conines also devised a solution for the blazing late afternoon sun on the west side of the house. They knew they wanted some sort of system that could provide more shade than umbrellas and awnings, so they decided to experiment with screens that would run along the outside edge of the house. The first thought was to use magnets to hold fabric onto railings, but Jackson's strong winds made that impractical. Eventually, they started looking at the heavy trolley systems used by meat packers, mocked up their own version using sheets, and figured out the best material for the job: stainless-steel chain-mail mesh, which would be sturdy enough to handle the wind, yet transparent enough that the family could still enjoy the mountain view. It took the architect and builder four days of experimenting to make it work, but in the end, it was the perfect solution.

Of all the custom features in the house, though, it's the slide that's still the family's favorite. "It's totally the top of the list," Steve says. "The architect and the builder really worked on it to make it perfect," adds Alexi. "It's so much easier than taking the stairs. Everyone takes the slide." >

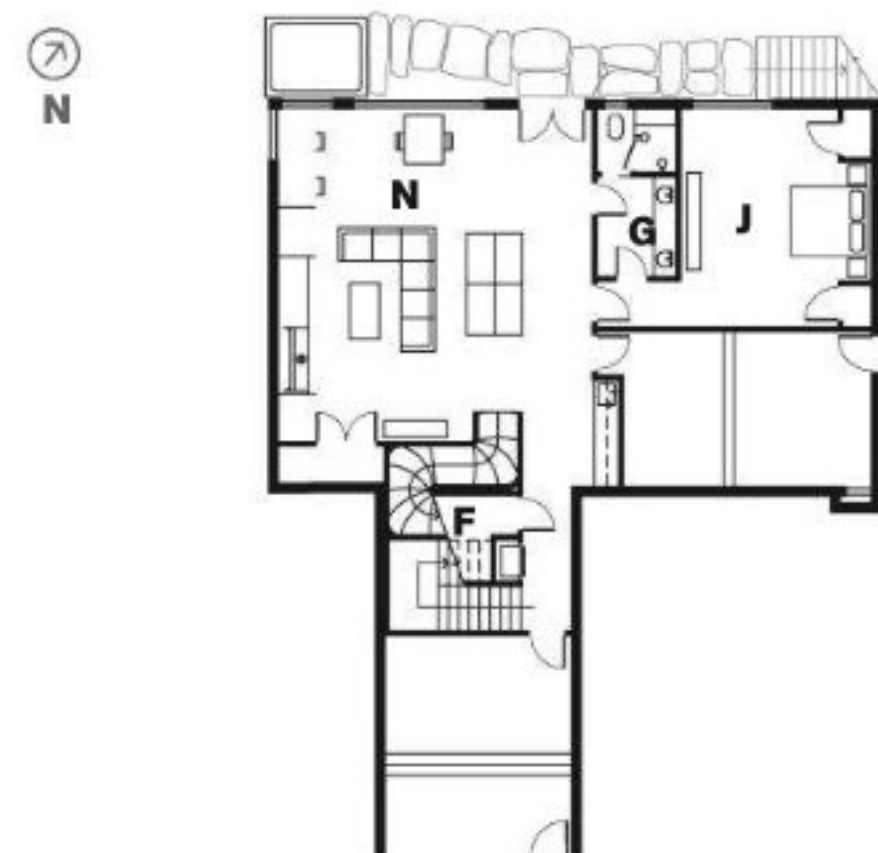
Second Floor



Third Floor



First Floor



Conine Residence Floor Plan

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| A Office | H Gear Room |
| B Kitchen | I Garage |
| C Deck | J Bedroom |
| D Dining Room | K Master Bedroom |
| E Living Room | L Master Bathroom |
| F Slide | M Laundry Room |
| G Bathroom | N Media Room |



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my house

It took a craftsman two weeks to shape the fiberglass gel-coat material into the shape of the slide, which connects a hallway off of the kitchen to the first-floor media room.>



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Catherine Bailey and Robin Petravic
Owners of Heath Ceramics
San Francisco, CA

Heath Ceramics is one of the few remaining mid-century American potteries still in existence. Their mission is to make, gather, and sell beautiful, functional, and enduring objects that enhance the way that people eat, live, and connect. In doing so, Cathy and Robin have brought Heath into the modern world while always paying homage to the notions of craftsmanship, timelessness, and thoughtful production from its heritage.



Tom Givone
Architectural Designer
Catskills, NY

Tom Givone is an innovator, a creative thinker, and a maker unlike any other. A self-taught architectural designer, Tom specializes in using cutting-edge technology, innovative industrial design techniques, and his own laser-like focus to rescue 18th-century farmhouses in upstate New York and transform them into modernist jewel boxes. When you step into one of Tom's works, you are immediately struck by amazing attention to detail; an understanding and appreciation for every decision, big and small, that contributes to his perfectly finished spaces.



Jenny Wu

Founder, Oyler Wu
Collaborative & Founder &
Design Director LACE
Los Angeles, CA

Jenny Wu is a classically trained architect who uses her background in avant-garde structural design as inspiration for her line of 3D wearables. Her pieces are an incredible showcase of how large-scale vision can translate to small-scale design, all coming to life using a 3D production process. Jenny is a testament to makers and visionaries who see the opportunity to innovate across platforms, combine skill sets, and experiment with new tools to bring forth the next generation of big thinking and creative production.



Todd Bertsch

Director of Design, HOK
Atlanta, GA

Todd Bertsch, VP and Director of Design at HOK, was the lead designer and chief visionary behind One Porsche Drive, a LEED certified building in Atlanta that is the new home of Porsche Cars North America. Todd infused notions of innovative design by constructing a high performance landmark building of exposed concrete, metal and glass to integrate connected spaces and a revolutionary track that runs underneath and through the building. "Good design is something that stirs your imagination, your passion, and challenges and nurtures the best things that we have to offer as human beings." -Bertsch says.

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Command Center ▲

The LED lighting in the slide is just one of the high-tech elements in the house that can be adjusted from a smartphone or tablet. A computer system in the basement controls the screens in the house as well as the security and heating systems.



Made in the Shade ▲

The Conine family engineered the stainless-steel chain-mail mesh curtain system themselves using bedsheets to mock up the design. In the final version, a sunscreen with grommets from Whiting & Davis blocks the blazing sun while standing up to the strong winds of the Jackson Hole valley.



◀ Triple Decker

Compact bedrooms mean more space for communal areas. The room designed for the Conine's daughter boasts a custom three-level bunkbed for sleepovers. The wool rug is by Chandra, the bedding is by Coyuchi, the desk is by Misewell, and the chair is by Jonathan Adler.



◀ Charging Station

Rooftop Sunpower X-Series solar panels installed by Creative Energies of Victor, Idaho, generate about a third of the energy for the house over the course of the year. On clear, sunny summer days, they can provide energy for the entire house. Another green feature, the planted roof, was inspired by a trip to Norway. □



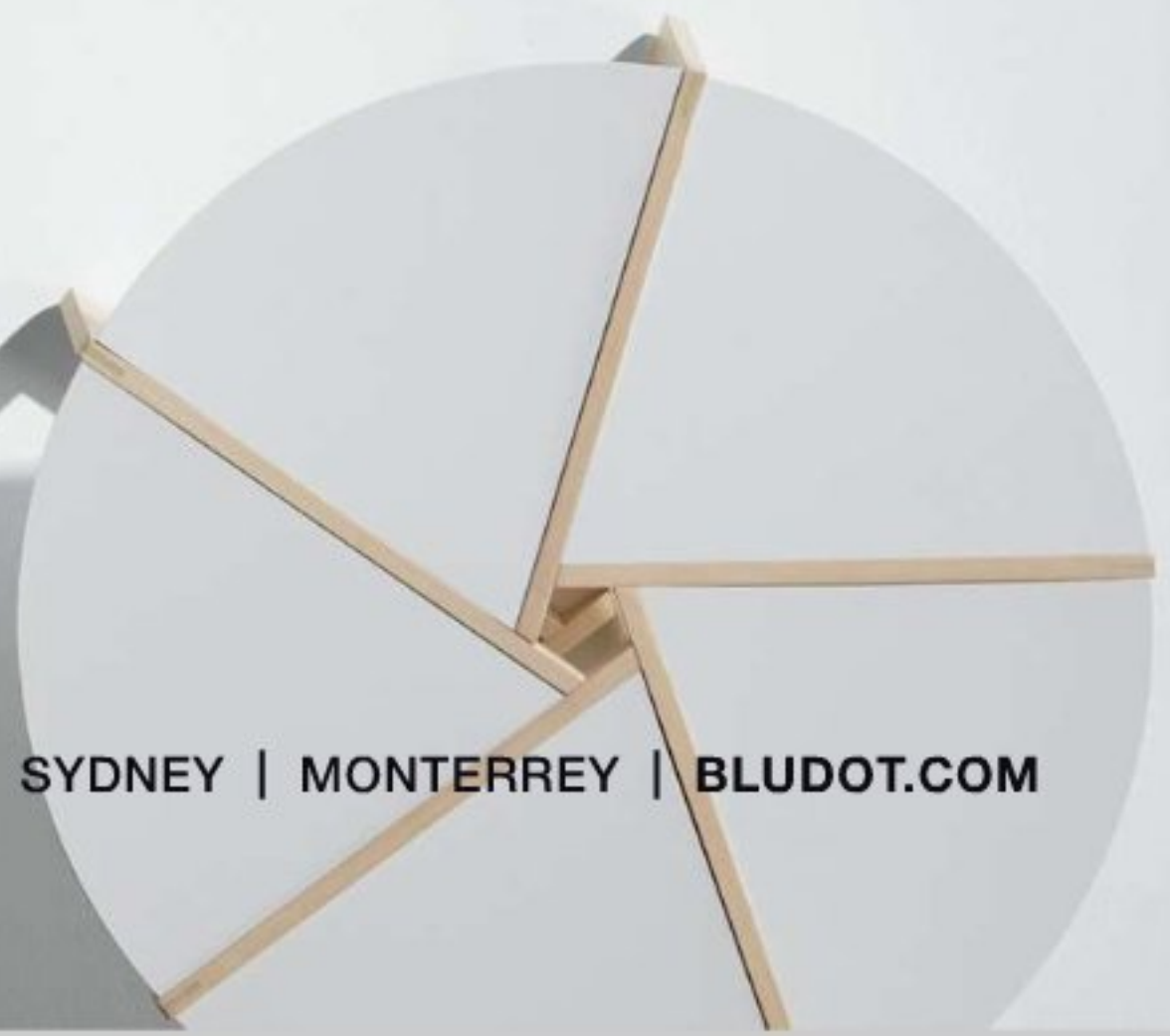
Tuning In

Sound and vision coalesce to create the ultimate acoustic experiences.

TEXT BY
Bill Leebens
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
Julien Pacaud

Until the arrival of the phonograph nearly 140 years ago, the only way to have music in the home was to perform it. Royals and the wealthy supported composers and performers to provide entertainment in their manor houses and castles; their residences often featured music rooms, where instrumentalists were presented front and center, like artwork on display. Other abodes placed the musicians in a separate room or loft, acoustically connected to grand halls to provide discreet accompaniment for banquets and events. Oddly enough, that dichotomy—show off the music, or hide it—still exists, even in our modern, electronic era.

In the early days of phonographs and radios, the novelty of the devices >



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ensured they would receive pride of place in the home. Accordingly, styling was ornate and dramatic, full of Victorian and Edwardian flourishes. The wealthy could buy massive consoles, reaching a peak with a 1929 Victrola costing \$1,750 at the time when a Ford Model A started at \$380. (A less-conspicuous Victrola tabletop phonograph could be had then for \$15.)

The end of World War II brought a glut in manufacturing production capacity and of surplus electronic components. Add in a large number of war-trained electronic designers and technicians, growth in disposable income, and Columbia's 1948 launch of the LP record, and you get a boom in home-entertainment products.

As hi-fi and television became popular in the '50s, devices that had previously been hidden in racks or confined to laboratories entered living rooms. Again, novelty ensured these devices would be seen—and the giant theater-style horn loudspeakers, black metal boxes, and rack mounts that early hi-fi hobbyists brought home from theaters and radio stations were no longer acceptable. Aesthetics became an important consideration in choosing the devices, and while Early American or Louis Quatorze speaker-and-equipment cabinets appeared, others led the way with modern design.

One of the pioneers of what we today call “high-end audio” was Saul Marantz. Graphic designer Marantz's electronics featured gold faceplates and elegant typography, which is still emblematic of his products 60 years later. Charles and Ray Eames famously designed speakers for Stephens Tru-Sonic, Inc., >



PHOTOS COURTESY BRAUN (SK 4/10 RADIO PHONOGRAPH), 1STDIBS (D 44000 PARAGON), EAMES OFFICE 2015 (STEPHENS-TRUSONIC, INC.)

“Technical products like hi-fi fit more easily into all kinds of surroundings than those old furniture look-alike ones.”
—Dieter Rams, designer

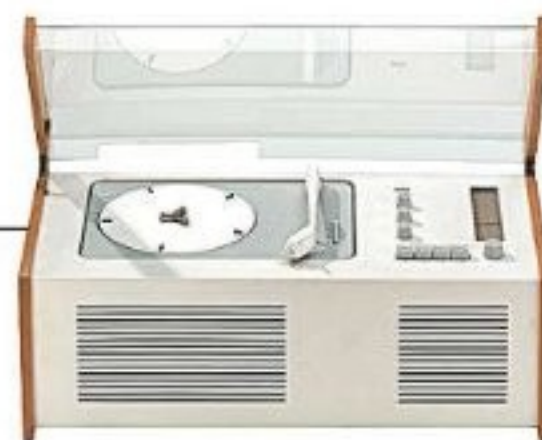
Machine Age

Iconic audio designs through the years, from phonographs to Bluetooth speakers.



1954

Model 1 Preamplifier by Saul Marantz



1956

SK 4/10 Radio Phonograph by Dieter Rams and Hans Gugelot for Braun



1956

Speaker by the Eames Office for Stephens-TruSonic, Inc.



1957

JBL D 44000 Paragon by Arnold Wolf

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but Arnold Wolf's speakers for JBL were more influential in the marketplace. Wolf's designs, such as the Paragon, were expanses of subtly curved woods reminiscent of George Nakashima or Finn Juhl's furniture. Worldwide, Dieter Rams's simple, spare electronics for Braun adopted an industrial aesthetic, which still shapes products by Apple and other design-centric companies, and are wildly sought-after objects. "Technical products like hi-fi fit

more easily into all kinds of surroundings than those old furniture look-alike ones," Rams says. His designs mimicked the changes seen in technology by replacing wood-grain and cloth grilles with laminates, paint, and perforated metal grilles. "People listen to music differently today; I would design according to that new way of listening and the new technology."

As mono turned to stereo, and space had to be found for two speakers,

"bookshelf" units such as those pioneered by Acoustic Research became the norm. Speaker design turned away from large, sculptural forms designed for the center of the room to rectangular boxes of standard sizes and proportions, which could be relegated to floors, corners—and shelves.

Similarly, as transistors replaced vacuum tubes, electronic components could be enclosed or hidden away, as the need for ventilation became less crucial. Today's amplifiers are small and cool-running enough that they can be built into speaker cabinets.

Now, massive, conspicuous amplifiers and loudspeakers are primarily the domain of audiophiles, who proudly display their equipment as they would a Henry Moore sculpture or a Ferrari. With that in mind, audiophile gear often features dramatic styling and elaborate machining.

The majority of "normal" homeowners, however, prefer equipment that will either blend in with their furnishings or disappear altogether, a need made more urgent by the rise in home theater systems with five or even seven channels of speakers. Although the style dates back to the '50s, Bose popularized tiny speakers for mid- and high frequencies, with a single woofer enclosure handling the bass—which many feel compromises sound quality. Some contemporary makers of quality speakers offer designs for in-ceiling, in-wall, and on-wall applications, offering solutions for custom installations.

Somewhere in between the two worlds is long-established Danish manufacturer Bang & Olufsen, whose products are clearly designed to be showpieces and often feature >



1958
T3 pocket radio by
Dieter Rams for Braun



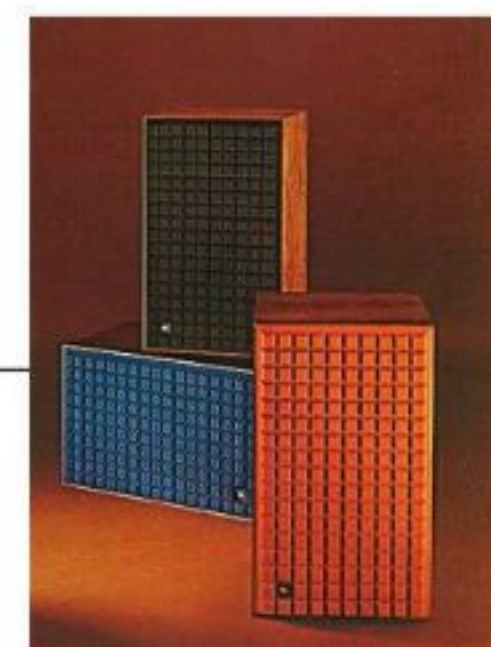
1965
Radiofonografo by Achille
and Pier Giacomo
Castiglioni for Brionvega



1967
Beovox 2500 speakers
by Bang & Olufsen



1970
Totem stereo system
by Mario Bellini for Brionvega



1970
L-100 bookshelf speakers
by Arnold Wolf for JBL

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concepts

motorized, moving elements. The industrial designer is king at B&O; speaker designers, for example, are presented with a form determined by an industrial designer, and must design the acoustic and electrical characteristics of the speaker to accommodate the predetermined form. Such a process is the reverse of most speaker-design methods, which begin with enclosure volumes and radiation characteristics, and derive the overall form from those. "The way people experience sound at home has evolved significantly since our doors opened 90 years ago," says Tue Mantoni, CEO of Bang & Olufsen. "But our attitude toward design remains constant. We emphasize user convenience and emotional appeal, as well as the integration and domestication of technology."

The strongest trend in home audio is in wireless, multiroom systems and, to that end, many well-established audio manufacturers are developing systems to compete with the hugely popular Sonos, probably the biggest audio success story of the past 20 years. Physical media such as LPs, tapes, and CDs required the user to change them periodically; digital downloads and streaming audio no longer require an "attendant," and inter-house setups can provide different music in every room.

Times change, tastes change, and technologies change, but the desire for music in the home remains universal. □



"We emphasize user convenience and emotional appeal." —Tue Mantoni, CEO of Bang & Olufsen



1972
Beogram 4000 record player by Jacob Jensen for Bang & Olufsen



1981
JVC RC-M90 boom box



1987
Acoustic Mass speakers by Bose



1999
Wall-mounted CD player by Naoto Fukasawa for Muji



2014
Play:1 Bluetooth speaker by Sonos

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Sound Off

Five products that turn the listening experience up to 11.



Digital Audio Devotee

The Zero 1, made by the German company Avantgarde Acoustic, contains a complete digital audio system within the speakers' polyethylene cabinets. AirPort Express can be used to connect the speakers to a source. Each cabinet contains a DAC (digital-to-analog converter), allowing direct connection to digital sources; the signal is then routed through a digital crossover network and DSP (digital signal processing), which can correct for room acoustics. The three speaker drivers each have their own power amplifiers, and the two speakers communicate via radio link. \$18,500 per pair. avantgarde-acoustic.de



The Audiophile

To some, speakers are the most alluring part of any audio system, and for most audiophiles, the stark, machined-aluminum enclosures of the Magico Q7 Mk II loudspeakers are equivalent to a stealth fighter jet. Where most speakers have screwed-together fiber-board boxes, Magicos feature aluminum skeletons and skins and are bolted together for a sturdy build. The speaker drivers have graphene cones, and the high-frequency tweeter has a diaphragm of diamond-coated beryllium for maximum rigidity and sound transmission. Pricing matches the stratospheric aspirations at \$229,000 per pair. magico.net



The Minimalist

The tiny Lepai LP-2020A+ amplifier can be found on Amazon for an amazing \$25—less than you'd pay in shipping for other equipment—and provides enough power for modest speakers like the Dayton Audio B652s, available online for \$40, among the best speakers available for under \$100 per pair. The Lepai is compatible with Bluetooth adapters, preamps for record players, and even CD players. lepai.us



The Vinyl Lover

Why not commit to a turntable built to last a lifetime? The Scout Jr. by VPI is a newly introduced, simplified version of the popular Scout turntable that has been made for over a decade. The Scout Jr. is a belt-drive turntable with a fully isolated AC synchronous motor, a nine-inch stainless-steel tonearm, and a premounted Ortofon 2M Red cartridge. A separate phono preamp is needed. Scout Jr. isn't cheap, but it represents excellent value: Many products from VPI's initial production runs are still in daily use. \$1,499. vpiindustries.com



The Newbie

Peachtree Audio's Deepblue2 is a Bluetooth speaker, like hundreds of others, but this heavy one-piece system sounds more like a high-quality audio setup than you'd expect. Deepblue2 features five speaker drivers, including a central woofer, and 440 watts of power. There's an optical digital input for connection to a CD player or other digital source, but even YouTube sounds terrific using aptX Bluetooth compression technology. Its \$399 price may seem high for a Bluetooth speaker, but given its quality, performance, and versatility, it's a deal. peachtreeaudio.com

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Home for Good

A couple turns a cramped Montreal quadruplex into a spacious and flexible family home on the very street where one of them grew up.

TEXT BY
William Lamb
PHOTOS BY
Dominique Lafond

PROJECT
Résidence Saint-Vallier
ARCHITECT
Blouin Tardif
Architecture-Environnement
btae.ca
LOCATION
Montreal, Quebec

When Molly Alexander and Graeme Anthony were looking for a house to renovate for their growing family—including five-year-old Chloe, seen here—they didn't expect to find it right next door to Alexander's own childhood home. The light-filled sanctuary they created features vintage Singer sewing stools at the American walnut-topped kitchen island and hanging lamps from Ikea.

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By the end of the aughts, Molly

Alexander and Graeme Anthony were getting restless in the Victorian that they had owned since their 20s in Montreal's lively Plateau neighborhood. Their son, Max, was five, and Alexander says she had grown "tired of having drunks lying on my stoop and yelling at three o'clock in the morning. I was like, 'I'm over this.'"

The couple had long entertained a fantasy of buying a multiunit building in La Petite-Patrie—a gentrifying, formerly working-class neighborhood northwest of downtown, where Alexander had grown up—and renovating it into a spacious family home. One Saturday in 2009, they visited Alexander's childhood home, where her mother, Patricia, still lived, and saw a For Sale sign on an unremarkable four-unit building next door.

They put in a bid the next day, despite what Alexander encountered when she went inside: a warren of light-starved rooms and a series of questionable decorating choices, including a hot-pink wall and garish artificial grass on an upstairs balcony. A series of cheap renovations had stripped the building, which dates to the 1920s, of any period charm, making it easy for the couple to gut the inside and start from scratch. "We didn't say, 'Oh, maybe we'll keep a wooden beam,'" says Alexander, a union organizer. "The idea was: The uglier, >



A staircase beneath a skylight at the center of the house sacrificed square footage, but made up for it by adding much-needed light to a formerly dark home (left). The homeowners wanted to keep the traditional quadruplex structure typical of the

Petite-Patrie neighborhood, but transform it into a spacious family home plus rental unit (top left). In the kitchen, slate-gray Ikea cabinets and a KitchenAid refrigerator provide a sleek counterpoint to American walnut floors with a matte lacquer finish (above).

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**“We wanted to have a modern house in an old structure. We’d always said, ‘Wouldn’t it be nice to just get a shell and do what we want with it?’”
—Molly Alexander, resident**

Large windows by Alumilex and an operable Velux skylight—with built-in rain sensor to automatically close it in case of unexpected showers—flood the home with light. A glass wall surrounding the staircase reflects a chalk mural by artist Tyson Bodnarchuk.

July/August

Number Crunch

The Facts on Smart Homes

In our first-ever issue dedicated to smart homes, we visit tech-savvy residences from Virginia to California. Online, we reveal the statistics behind smart-tech trends to see how soon you can expect a connected home to arrive on your block. dwell.com/smart-home-stats



Smart Outdoors

The Founder of a Garden Tech Startup Shares His Mission

When Charles Willson travels for work, he keeps tabs on his prized Napa garden with a tap of his smartphone (p. 124). Learn all about connected landscaping systems, and check out an interview with the CEO and founder of garden monitor startup Edyn, online. dwell.com/smart-tech-garden



By Ear

10 Speaker Systems We Love

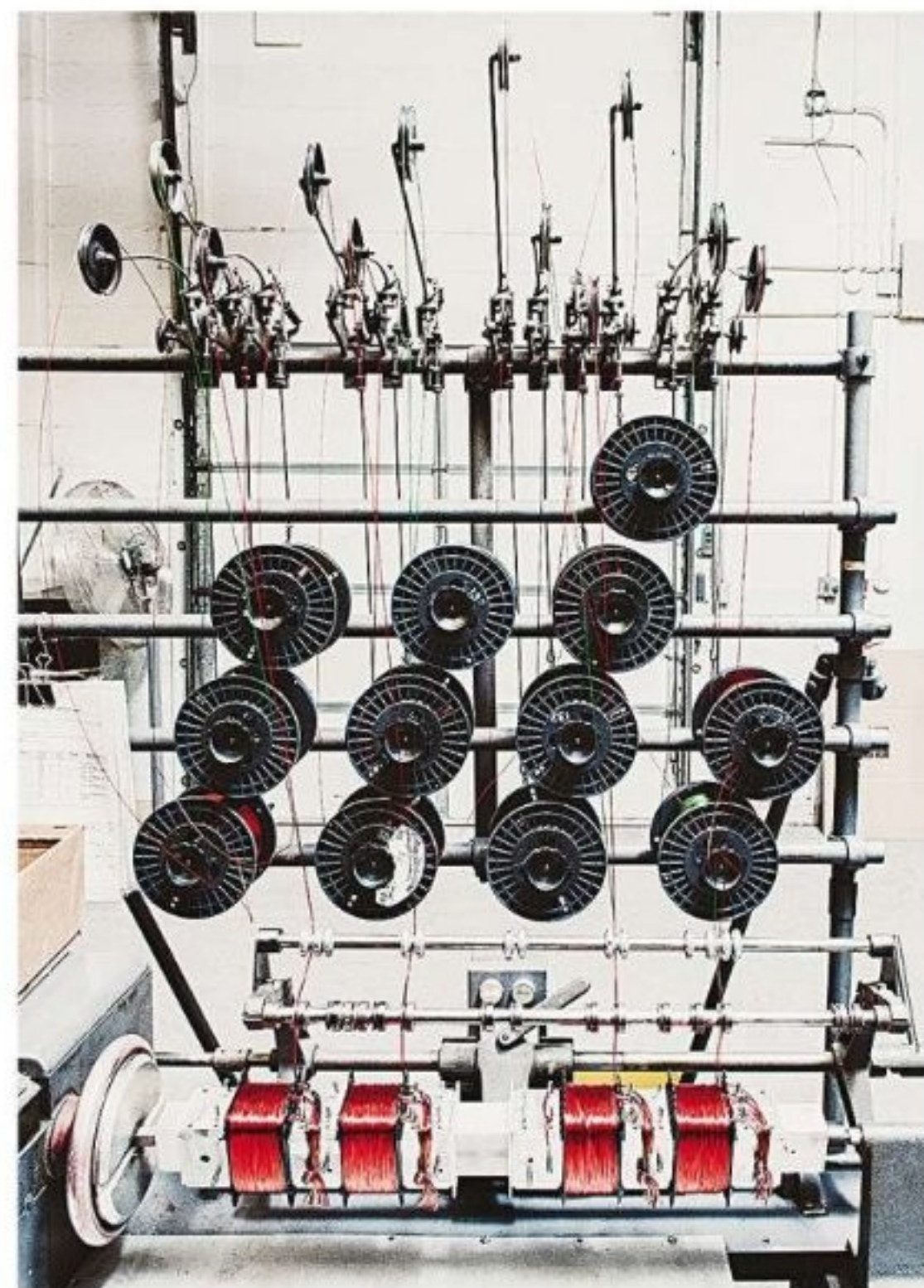
From phonographs to Bluetooth, we recapped over 100 years of audio technology (p. 76). Now, discover the latest in acoustic design and performance in our complete guide to contemporary speakers. dwell.com/10-speakers



Video Tour

Watch a Legendary Maker at Work

McIntosh Laboratory has handcrafted some of the most trusted audio equipment on the market for more half a century (p. 96). Head online for a behind-the-scenes look at the company's storied heritage, including their role at Woodstock. dwell.com/mcintosh-laboratory



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Floor-to-ceiling Alumilex windows framed by curtains in fabric designed by Kristine Mandsberg for Ikea are the focal point of the living room, creating an airy sanctuary in what was once dark and cramped quarters (above). Among the family heirlooms on display are a pair of

Hans Wegner Shell chairs from 1963, a rug picked up on vacation in Tibet (right), and a coffee table made by one of the homeowners' grandfathers; modern touches include an Isao chair by Mitz Takahashi with a tiger camouflage print pillow by Petite Patrie (below).



"We wanted the back to be as much 'window' as possible." —Graeme Anthony, resident



the better; the cheaper I can get it, the better—because I wanted to rip it down."

Alexander and Anthony, the manager and shoe buyer at a men's streetwear clothing store called Off the Hook, wasted little time finding the right architect. Anthony recalled taking Max to a birthday party at the renovated home of Alexandre Blouin, a founder of the Montreal firm Blouin Tardif, and being impressed with how the architect had opened up an older structure. "I don't think we even talked about hiring anybody else," Anthony says.

Blouin designed a rectangular staircase at the center of the house, positioning it beneath an operable skylight that draws in sunshine that otherwise would have struggled to penetrate the core of the building, which is 50 feet deep. The kitchen was moved from the rear of the house closer to the middle, freeing up space at the back for a new sitting room and a set of floor-to-ceiling windows.

A shallow crawl space beneath the house was excavated and turned into a finished basement, with a new family room and a door that opens onto a patio where a driveway used to be. A steel footbridge provides direct access to the main level from the garden.

The renovation, executed while Alexander was pregnant with the couple's second child, took about nine months and was completed in the summer of 2011. Alexander and Anthony share a >



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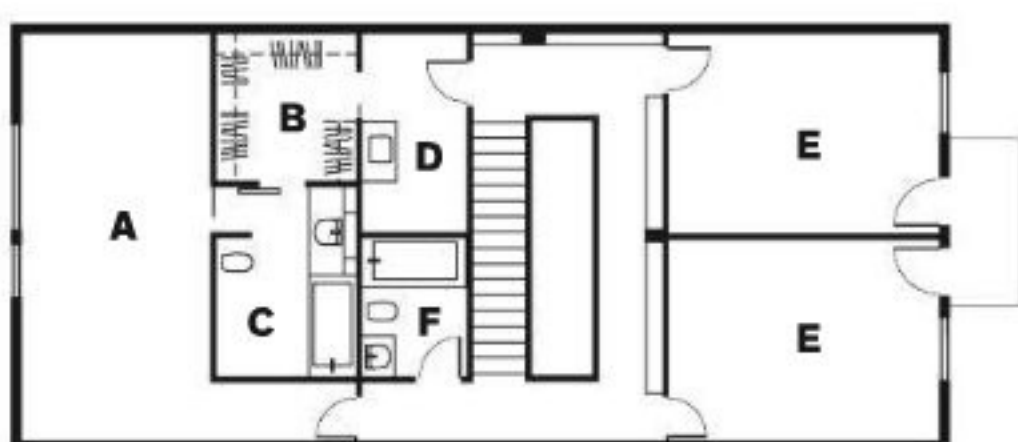


At the rear of the house, exterior steel cladding by Vicwest updates the look of the facade, while a steel footbridge connects the garden to the main floor of the house (above).

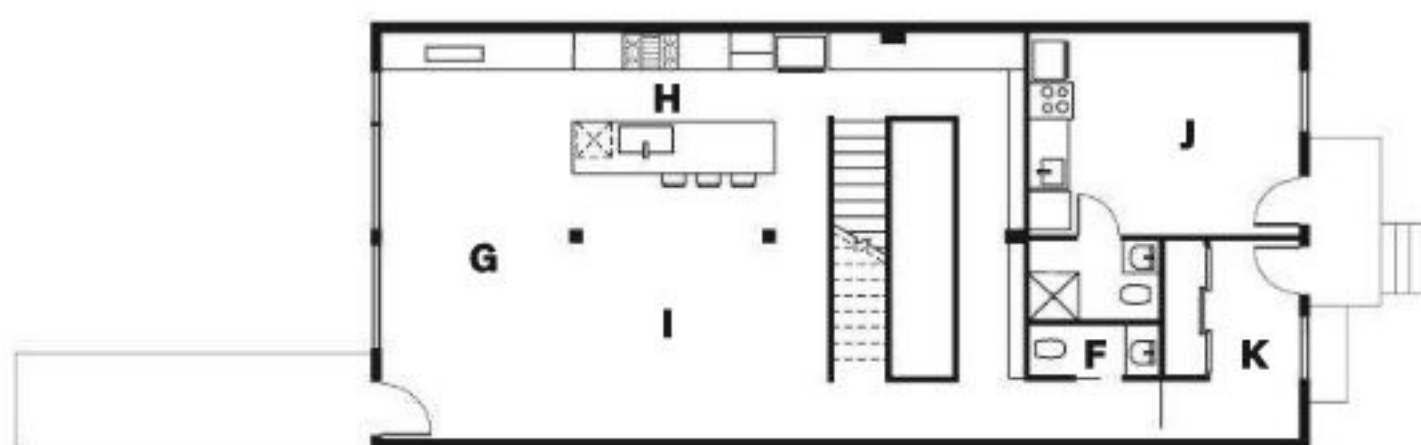
The new family room in the finished basement—in what was once a crawlspace—opens up onto a planted patio that replaces a driveway (right).

Résidence Saint-Vallier Floor Plan

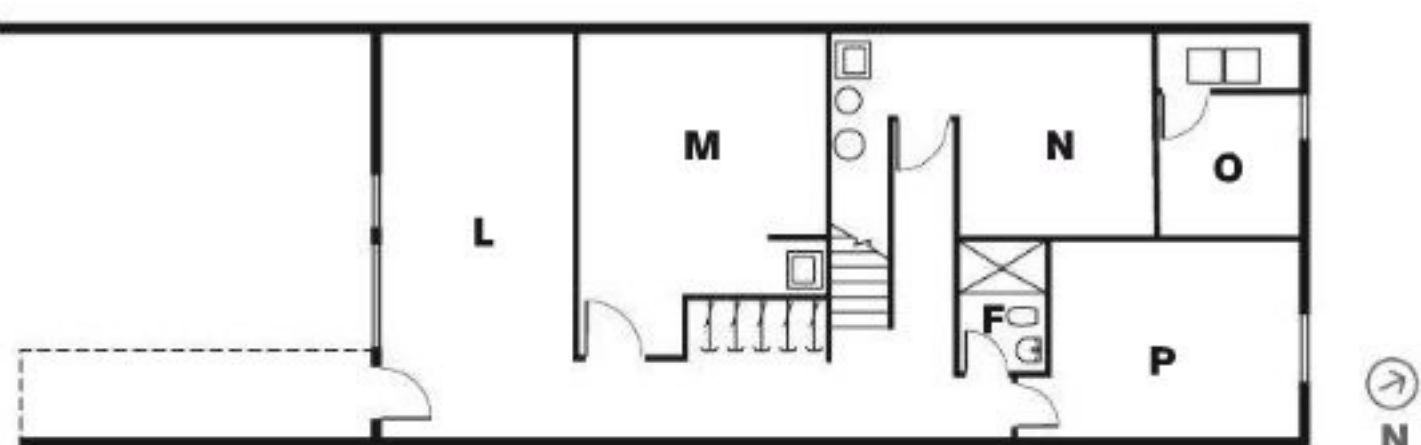
- A Master Bedroom
- B Walk-in Closet
- C Master Bathroom
- D Laundry Room
- E Bedroom
- F Bathroom
- G Living Room
- H Kitchen
- I Dining Room
- J Rental Unit
- K Vestibule
- L Family Room
- M Work Room
- N Storage
- O Cold Storage
- P Office



Second Floor



First Floor



Ground Floor



generously sized master suite at the back of the second floor, while Max, 11, and Chloe, five, each have a room at the front, with a shared balcony.

Signs of happy children at play abound—but more in the form of errant toys than paint colors or permanent architectural features. “I was very conscious when we were designing the house to not design it for children,” Anthony says, “because 10 years from now they’re not going to be kids.”

The decision to design with the future in mind makes the house a flexible space that Alexander and Anthony conceived as a landing spot for the long term. “I wanted to live in a place where I could get old,” Alexander says. “When the kids are teenagers, the house works for that. The kids move out, I can still live here. The idea was: The place is ours regardless of how life changes.” □

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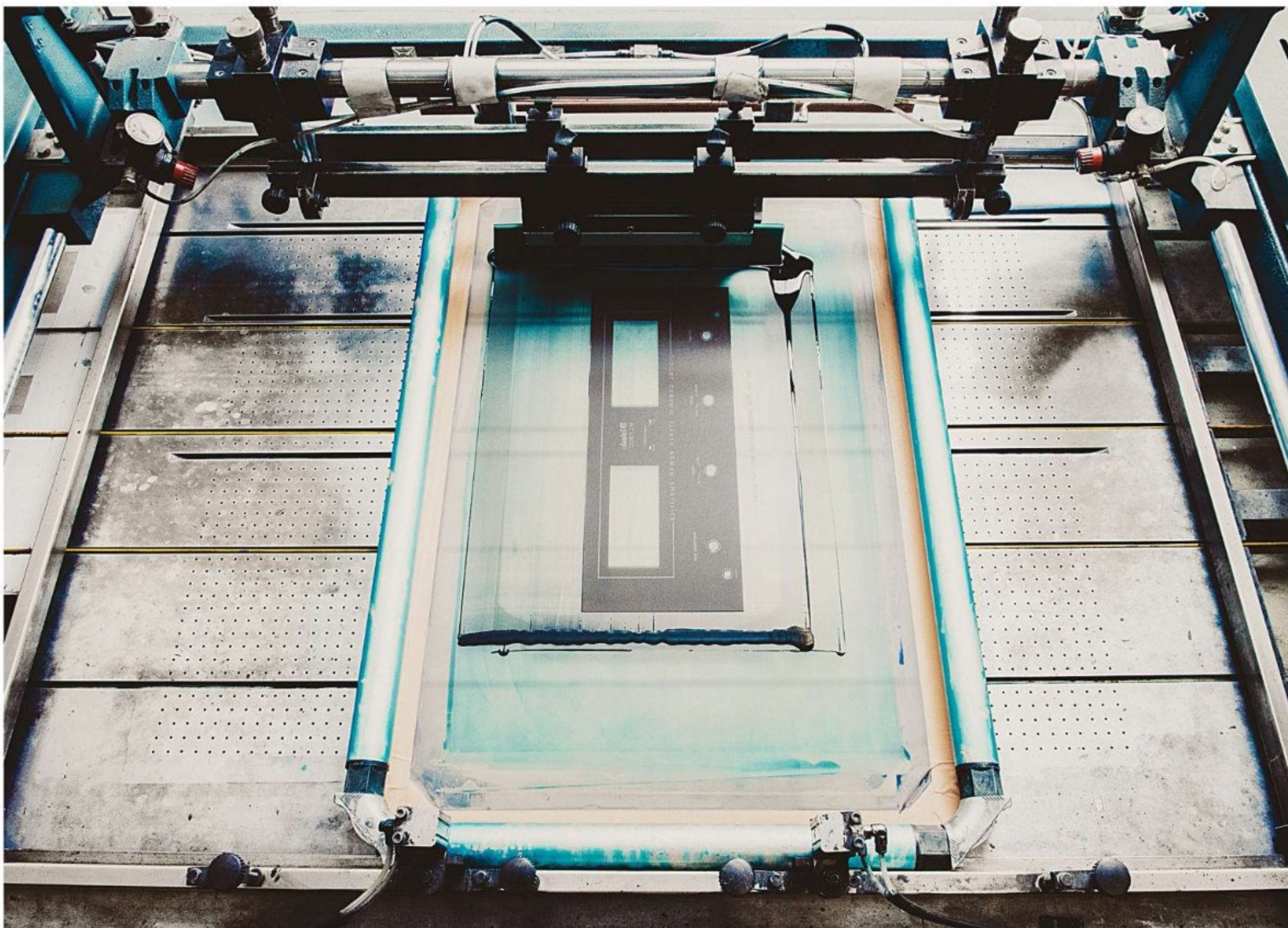
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High Fidelity

McIntosh Laboratory, long revered by audiophiles, maintains a dedication to American manufacturing.

TEXT BY
Diana Budds
PHOTOS BY
Jamie Chung

The majority of consumer electronics manufacturing has moved overseas, but McIntosh Laboratory has kept its production stateside. Every step of making its wares—like screen printing glass faceplates—takes place in its Binghamton, New York, factory.

In an age where electronics are often viewed as disposable commodities and planned obsolescence is rote, McIntosh is an aberration—a business that believes in building devices that last, that are worth fixing, and that are intended to be passed down from generation to generation. This ethos has fueled the company since Frank McIntosh and Gordon Gow created the pioneering brand in 1949.

Originally based in Silver Spring, Maryland, McIntosh Laboratory relocated to Binghamton, New York, in 1956. Design, manufacturing, and testing take place under one roof, where more than 150 employees create hi-fi amplifiers, speakers, and tuners, among other electronics, that have earned the outfit a cult following—and command price tags to match. (The recently launched

MHA100 headphone amplifier runs about \$4,500, and the headphones will set you back \$2,000.) While McIntosh may not be a household name, you might recognize the Wall of Sound it created for the Grateful Dead's 1974 tour or the unmistakable blue glow of the amplifiers—its signature product—from your audiophile uncle's stereo setup.

Today, McIntosh is one of the few electronics companies that still manufacture in the United States. The median tenure of employees is about 17 years, and while computer-operated machines have taken over some of the circuit-board building and glass cutting, much takes place by hand: delicate soldering, metal stamping and folding, screen printing, painting, winding transformers, assembly, and testing. Here, we share images from a recent factory visit. >

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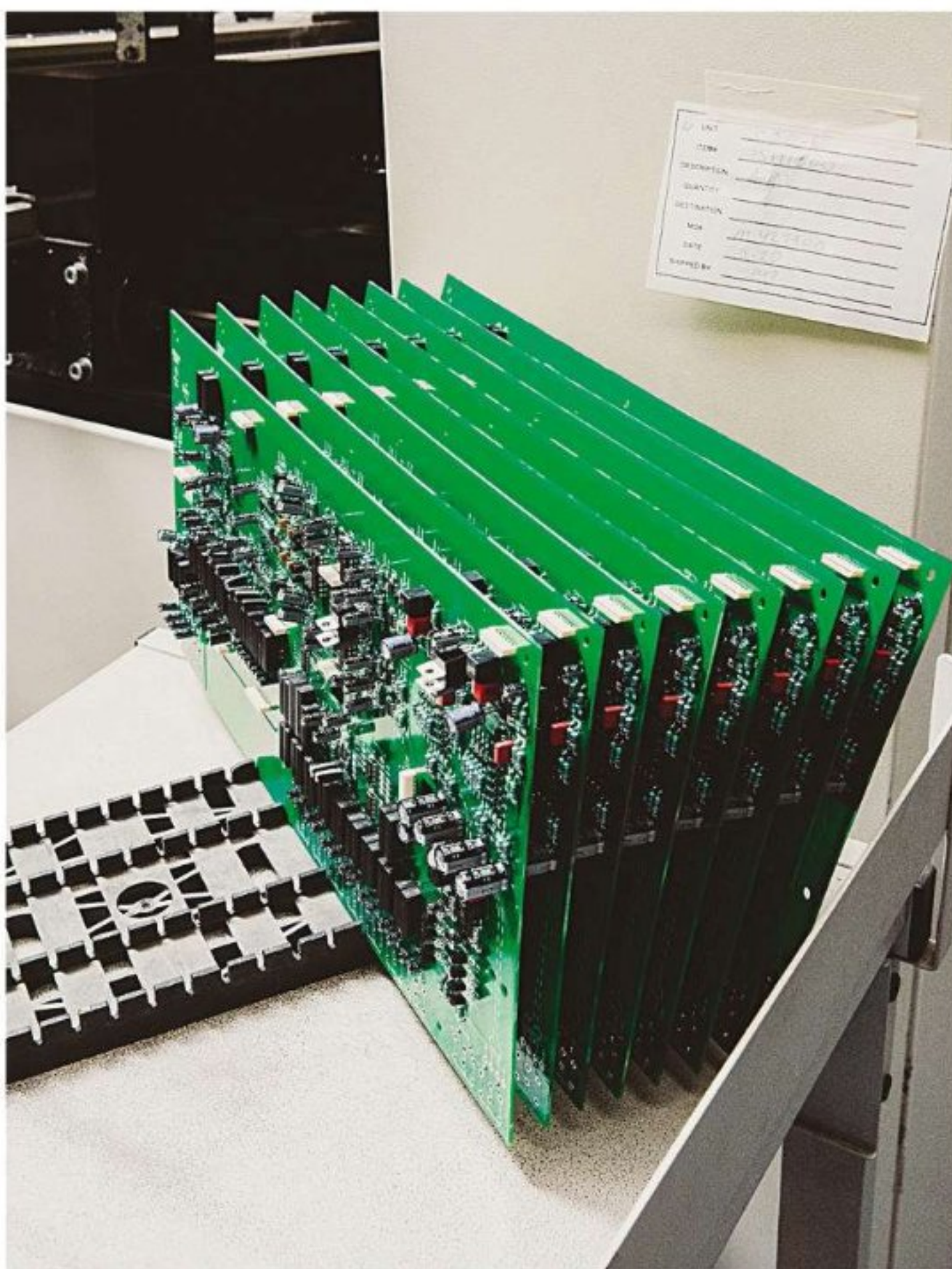
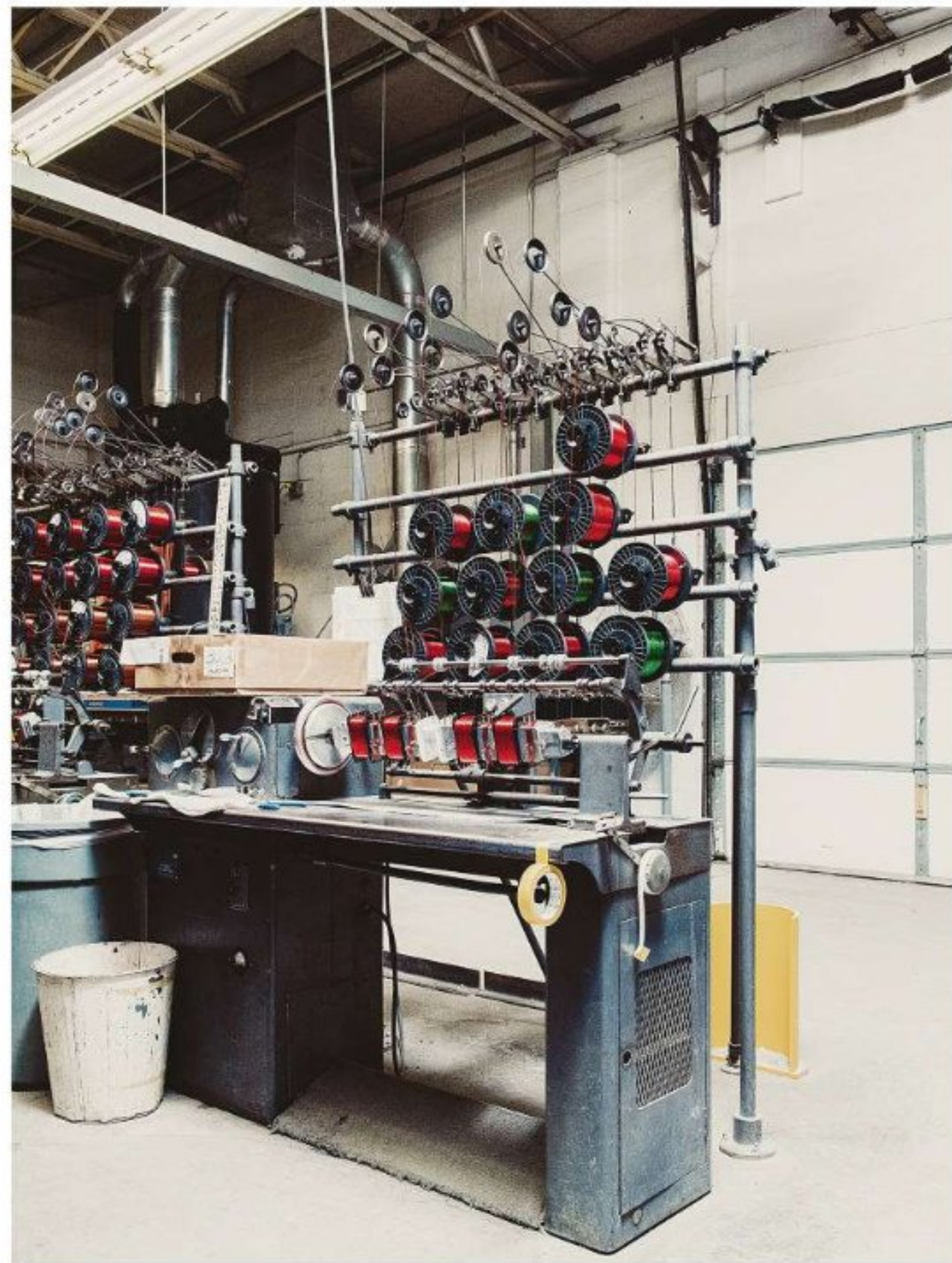
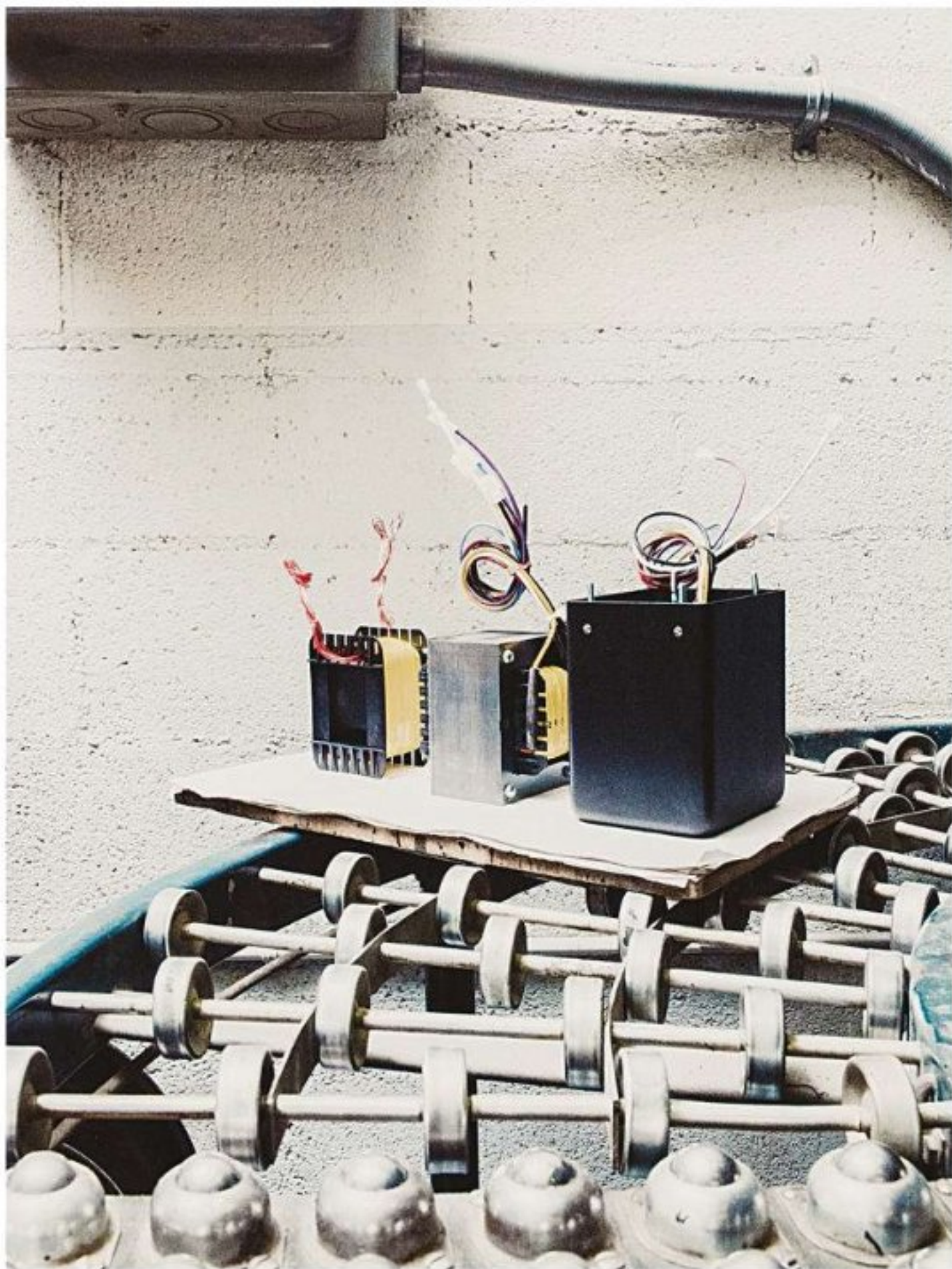
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The company is best known for its amplifiers. They receive power via transformers, which are shown in various stages of assembly (top left). First, an elaborate hand-operated

machine (top right) wraps wire around a bobbin. Layers of steel are affixed around the coil. The transformer is set into metal housing, which is then filled with tar.

A water-jet cutter (bottom right) applies 60,000 PSI to precisely carve out apertures for glass faceplates. Garnet dust is added to the water to yield finer results.

Circuit boards await the quality control department's eagle eye (bottom left). Every component undergoes rigorous testing before placement into a product.>

Dine Outdoors

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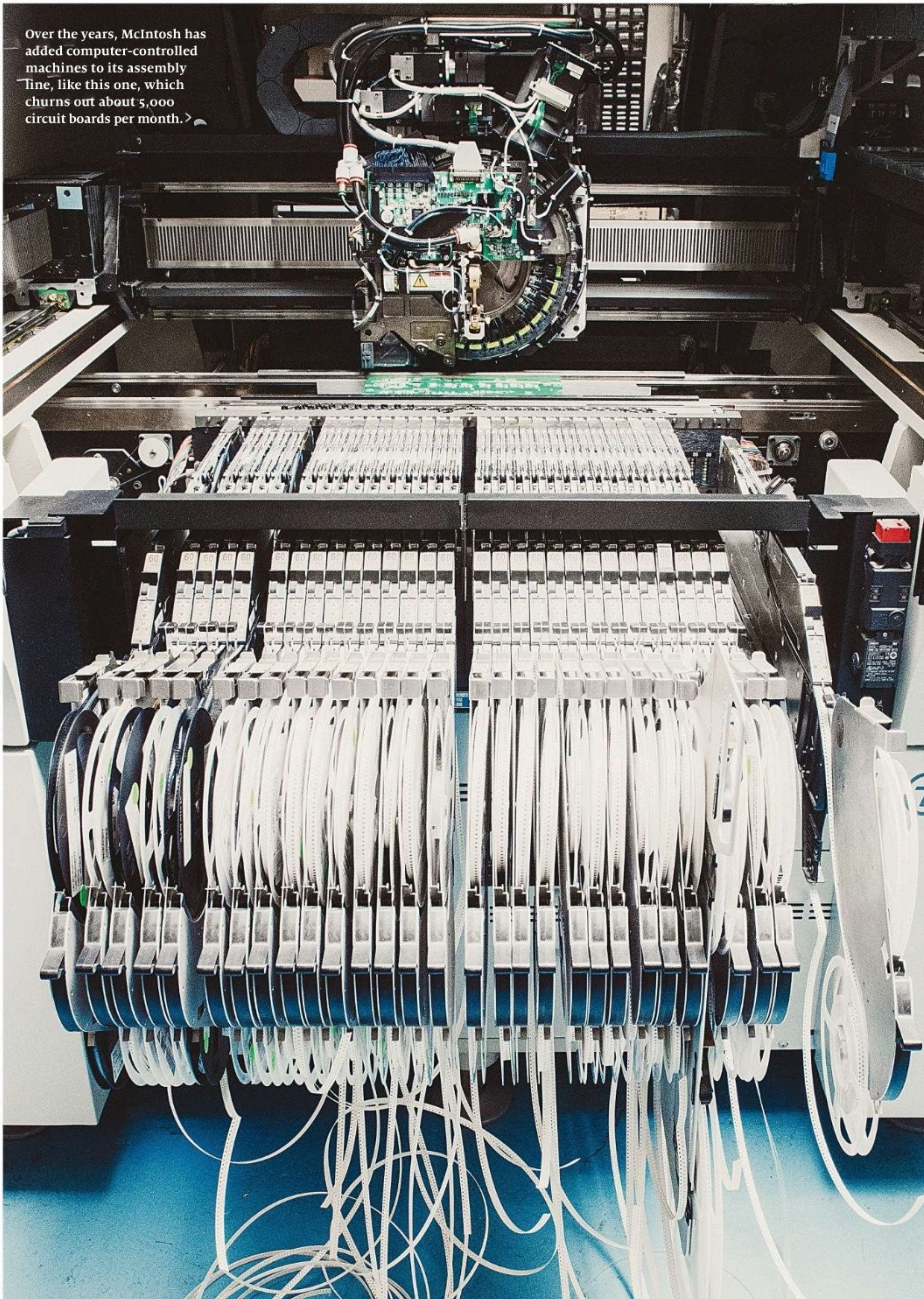


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Over the years, McIntosh has added computer-controlled machines to its assembly line, like this one, which churns out about 5,000 circuit boards per month. >



"I have two systems with McIntosh gear, and the blue lights have become part of the room and part of the music. It's like being hungry late at night and driving the streets looking for anything that's open. Then you see the Open neon sign in a window, and it's suddenly the best place on earth." —Henry Rollins, former Black Flag front man



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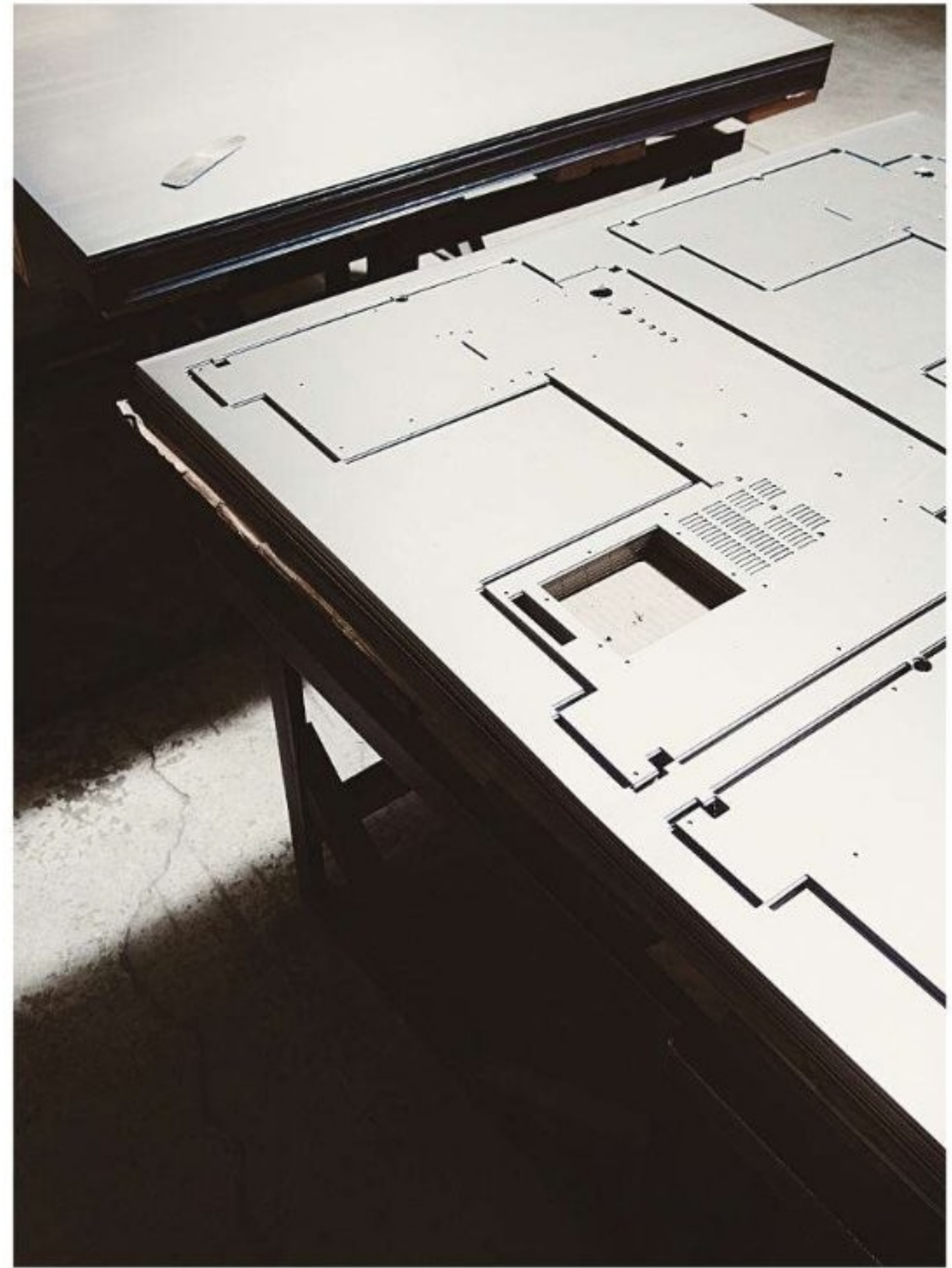
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Machines have streamlined some aspects of circuit board production, but the final soldering happens by hand (top left). McIntosh cuts and folds

all of the metal used to house its products (top right). Silk screens are stored in speed racks and labeled by model and ink color (bottom right).

Completed units await boxing (bottom left). Incandescent bulbs once produced the iconic blue glow. Now it comes courtesy of LEDs calibrated to the

original hue. McIntosh will service any of its machines, no matter how old. Lightbulb replacement, of all things, is the most common repair. □

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big idea

Simpler Times

Robust materials and a flexible floor plan help the owners of an Australian vacation home reap maximum rewards.

TEXT BY
Diana Budds
PHOTOS BY
Sean Fennessy

PROJECT
Merricks Beach House
ARCHITECT
Kennedy Nolan
kennedynolan.com.au
LOCATION
Merricks Beach, Australia

Rachel Nolan and Steven Farrell's weekend house is located a couple of blocks from the beach on Australia's Mornington Peninsula. Built with passive principles in mind, the low-slung structure features double-thick brick walls for thermal massing. The vertical wood cladding is unfinished spotted gum, a local timber. >





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The appeal of a getaway just an hour's drive south of bustling Melbourne has lured many to Merricks Beach, a small seaside community on Australia's Mornington Peninsula. Originally farmland, the area experienced a brief building boom in the 1960s, when vacation homes sprouted among the dirt roads and gum trees. Little has been developed since then, and the enclave retains its pastoral appeal; few houses and even fewer vacant lots end up on the market. So when architect Rachel Nolan and her husband, Steven Farrell—longtime visitors to the area—discovered an empty parcel in 2010, they immediately scooped it up and hatched plans to build a modest weekend retreat.

Nolan and her business partner, Patrick Kennedy, established their Melbourne practice, Kennedy Nolan, 16 years ago and have since developed a diverse portfolio of projects, ranging from residences and schoolyards to mixed-use developments. Their work

expresses the modernist principles of rationality, utility, and sensitivity to location. When it came to designing a vacation home of Nolan's own, those principles remained paramount.

"We thought carefully from the start about what is different about the 'weekender,' about how we experience time away from our city life," Nolan says. "This house had to make us feel a certain way. There are emotional associations from when you're on holiday as a child, and those things that appeal to your senses or memories are quite evocative when you think about how you're going to live in a particular place."

Beyond the intangible, the house needed to fulfill certain practical criteria. It had to be inexpensive to build, easy to maintain, and durable enough to withstand heavy use. Nolan and Farrell wanted to rent out the place when they weren't using it, a decision that guided the design from the start. For example, they originally specified a complex >

A no-fuss sensibility permeates the house. For example, the utilitarian kitchen has laminate cabinets, a stainless-steel countertop, and a Miele stove and dishwasher. The refrigerator is by Fisher & Paykel. No. 18 chairs from Thonet and a reclaimed-hardwood table are stationed atop a vintage Persian soumak rug from Turkey.

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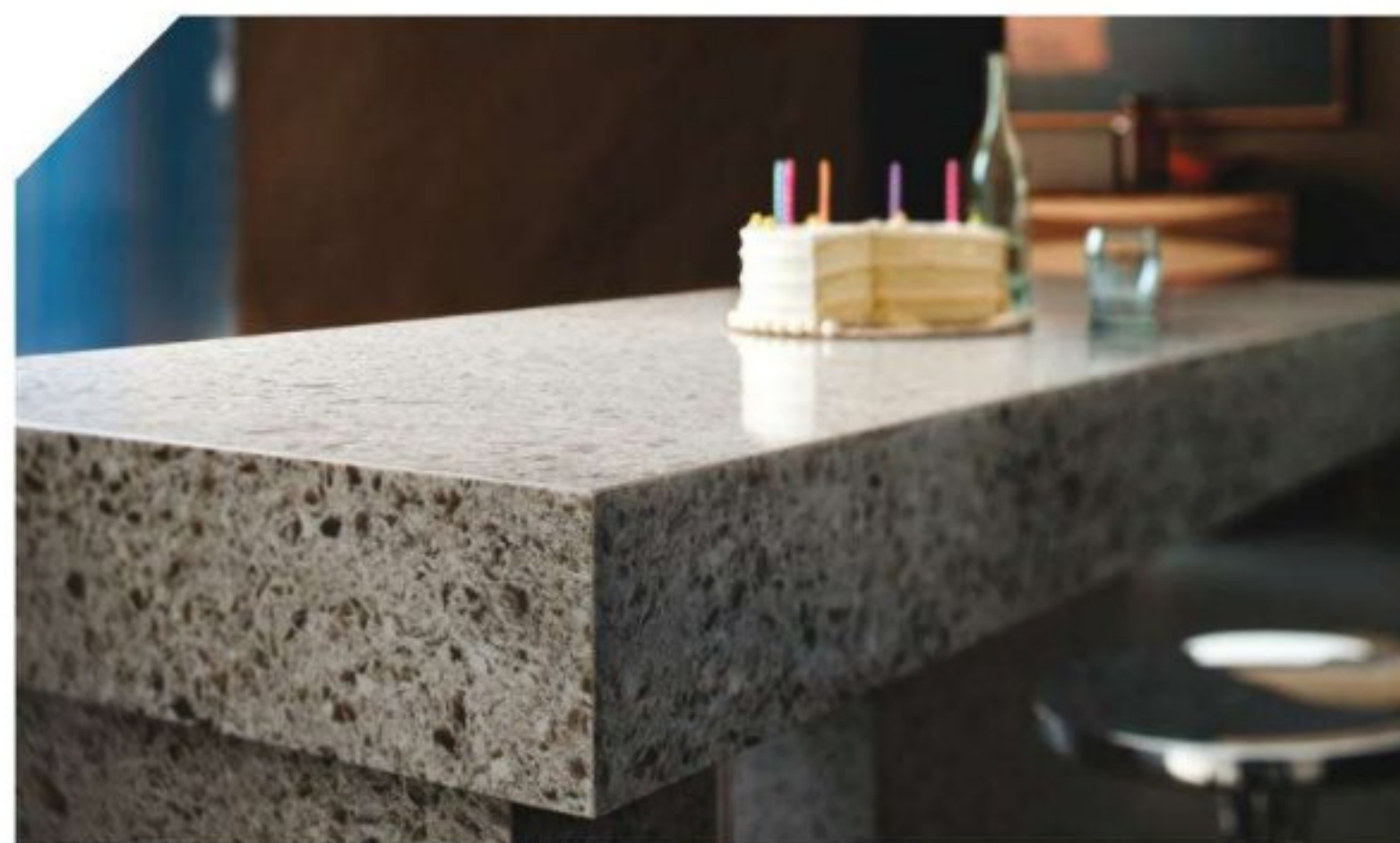
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To instill a soft juxtaposition to the brick and concrete in the house, Nolan specified Hycraft's Carramar wool carpet in the living area (above). Set a step down, the "pit," as Nolan refers to it, receives the low winter sun but is shielded from harsh summer rays by the deep eaves. The ledge becomes a casual seating area. "The idea is not needing too much furniture for the house to work," Nolan says. The sofa is from Melbourne's Jardim, the floor lamp is Ikea, and the rocking chair is vintage. In winter, the family often gathers around the Nectre wood stove, the sole heating element in the house (left).

folding-door system but scrapped the idea, favoring ease of use over esoteric details. "If we were renting to someone who didn't know how to use that, it would easily break," Nolan explains.

Nolan and Kennedy selected robust materials, such as concrete, brick, and spotted gum and tea tree wood, that are likely to hold up to a parade of renters while staying true to the firm's signature sensibility. "Materials are a big part of the practice and what we call 'handmade modernism'—that strength that comes from something being built by somebody, not machine-made," Nolan says. She and Kennedy avoided fragile finishes in favor of surfaces that would weather and build character—"materials that really hold their beauty and age in a lovely way," Nolan says. She used drywall only on the ceiling.

Environmental responsibility and privacy were at the heart of Nolan, Kennedy, and Farrell's vision. The architects optimized the structure's >



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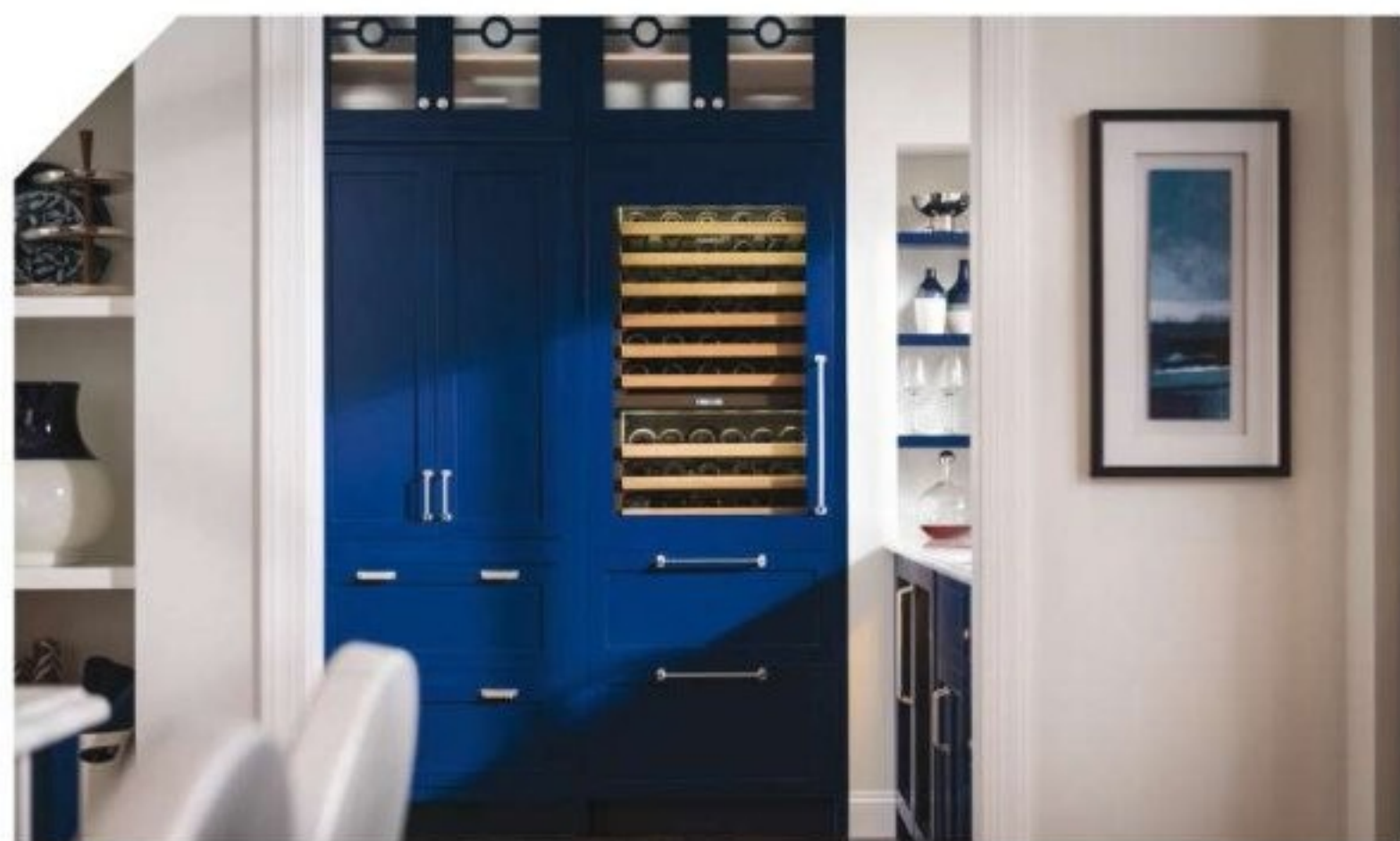
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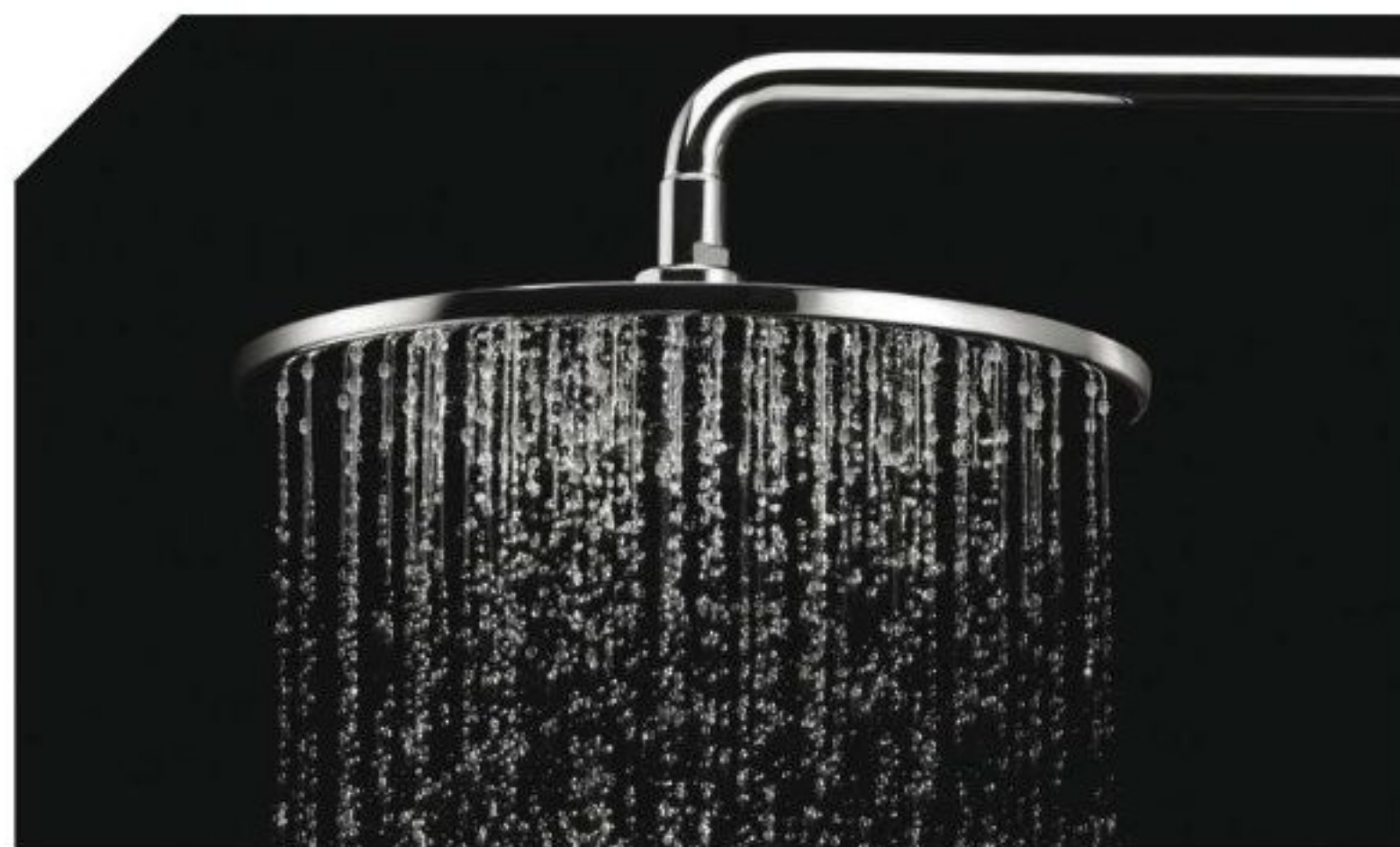


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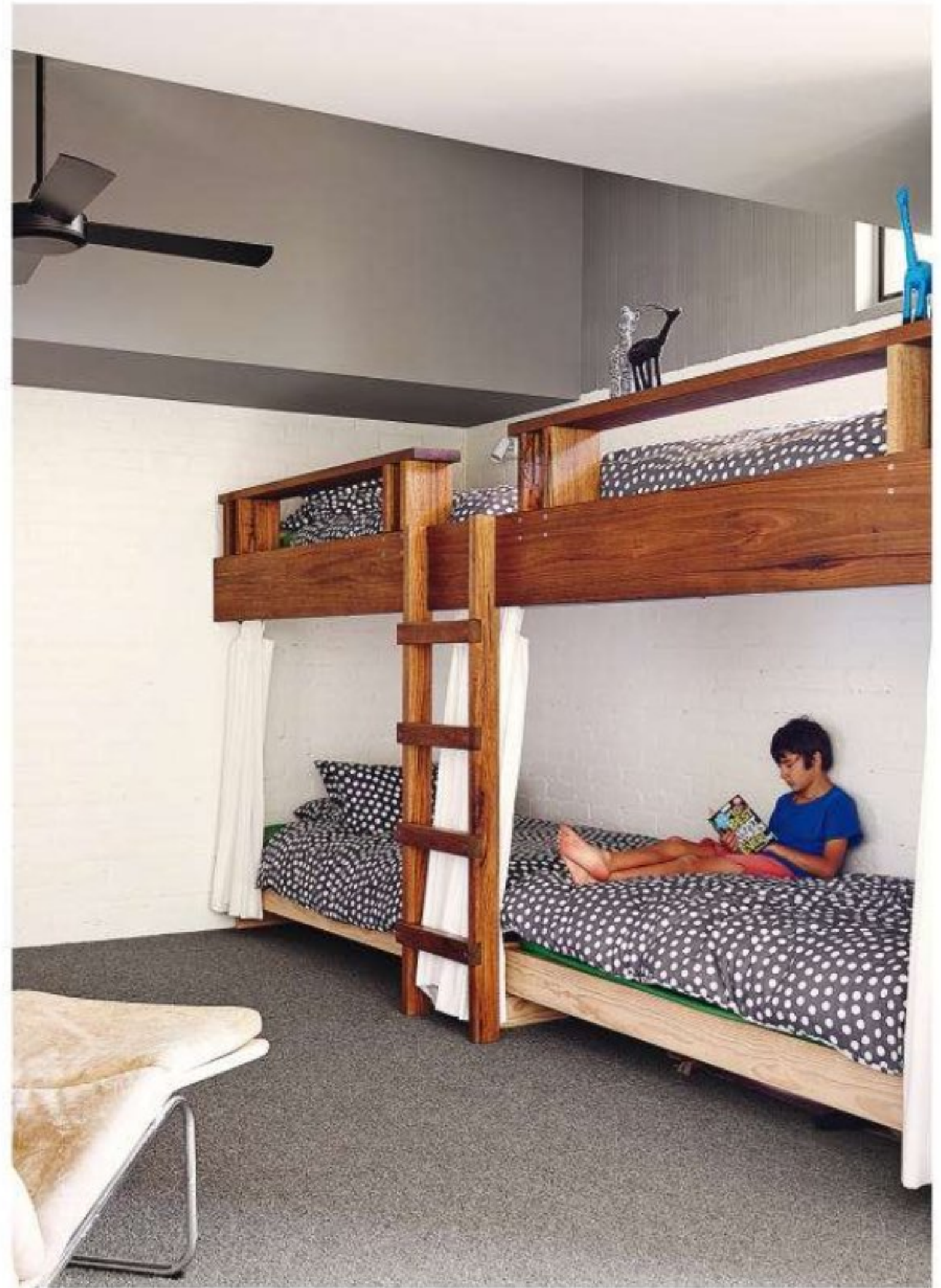
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Merricks Beach House Floor Plan

- A** Entry/Storage
- B** Bunk Room
- C** Deck
- D** Bedroom
- E** Bathroom
- F** Kitchen-Dining Area
- G** Barbecue Area
- H** Living Area

Made from Tasmanian oak, the bunk beds, covered in Kivet duvets by Marimekko, can accommodate four (right). A Hunter Pacific fan cools the master bedroom, which has a custom hardwood bed (below).



orientation and ensured cross ventilation to keep heating and cooling to a minimum—and also to block views from passersby. “People park and walk around, so it feels like a little country town,” Nolan says. “It really had to be private from the get-go.” To that end, the single-story, 670-square-foot house wraps around a central courtyard, the main outdoor gathering space. Nolan and Kennedy restricted floor-to-ceiling windows to the inward-facing sections and kept most of the street side opaque. Deep eaves shield the glazing, allowing Nolan and Farrell to forgo drapes and blinds. Rooftop solar panels produce energy for the house—“Kind of a no-brainer,” Nolan says.

For Nolan, Farrell, and their three children—Ignatius, Nell, and Clare—time in Merricks Beach is about togetherness and flexibility, priorities that are reflected in the open layout of their home. The kitchen, dining area, and living room flow together so that people

can easily converse throughout the house. When the sliding glass doors are opened, the space merges with the courtyard and becomes an expansive indoor-outdoor room.

To further the classic Australian-weekender vibe, Nolan and Farrell outfitted a spacious room with four bunk beds. “A bunk is so exciting for the kids,” Nolan says. The room, set away from the central living area, has become a secondary lounging and play area for the children, where horsing around needn’t interfere with the adults’ enjoyment. “We wanted the opportunity to have two types of living rooms because there’s often lots of kids down there, and they can very easily drive you crazy,” Nolan says.

In the winter months, the family often drags spare mattresses onto the ledge surrounding the sunken living room and huddles around the wood-burning stove. “There’s something really lovely about going down there >



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"The house is homogenous in how it's designed. There's no real feature. It's simple and uncomplicated and I had to work very hard to do that."
—Rachel Nolan, architect



Nolan and her business partner, Patrick Kennedy, strove for a practical structure that reads as a vacation house. They opted for prototypical materials, like cinder blocks for a privacy screen, to hit that note. "It has an association with old beach houses and public buildings at the shore," Nolan says. After trying

different self-supporting configurations, they chose a zigzag pattern. The wall shields the courtyard from wind and doubles as a step for gutter maintenance. During parties, the family likes to place candles into the recesses. "That wall's got a little bit of poetry, but it's also doing a few jobs as well." >

Designed Well



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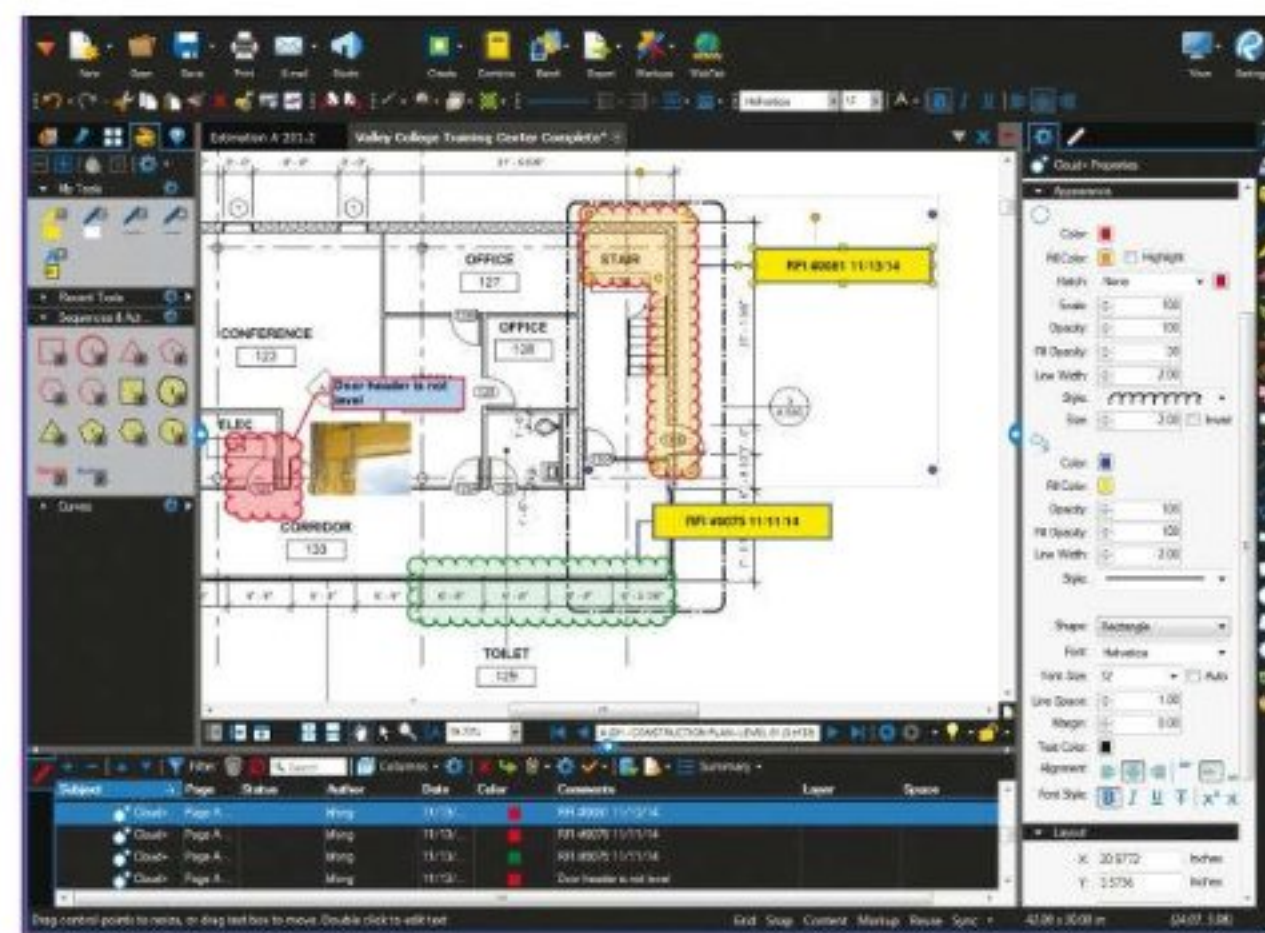


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The house has three outdoor deck areas. A table made of recycled hardwood from Flinders Pier is stationed in the central courtyard where Nolan and her family frequently take their meals (left and bottom). Interior floors are concrete: easy to maintain and virtually indestructible (below).



in the quietness of winter," Nolan says. "I really enjoy sitting quietly at the fire because we don't get to do that very often in daily life."

If there is an overarching theme, it's simplicity—from the hardy materials to the uncluttered layout and the utilitarian details. There isn't a "razzle-dazzle" moment in the design, Nolan says. Rather, the house features a number of deftly executed, understated elements. She cites the Australian modernist Robin Boyd, who wrote in his influential 1970 tome, *Living in Australia*: "The object of a design, in architecture as in anything else, is to say or do the essential thing as simply and directly and purely as possible."

"As an architect, I sometimes feel almost a little defensive about how simple this house is," Nolan says. "But ultimately it is its simplicity that I crave when I am not there." □



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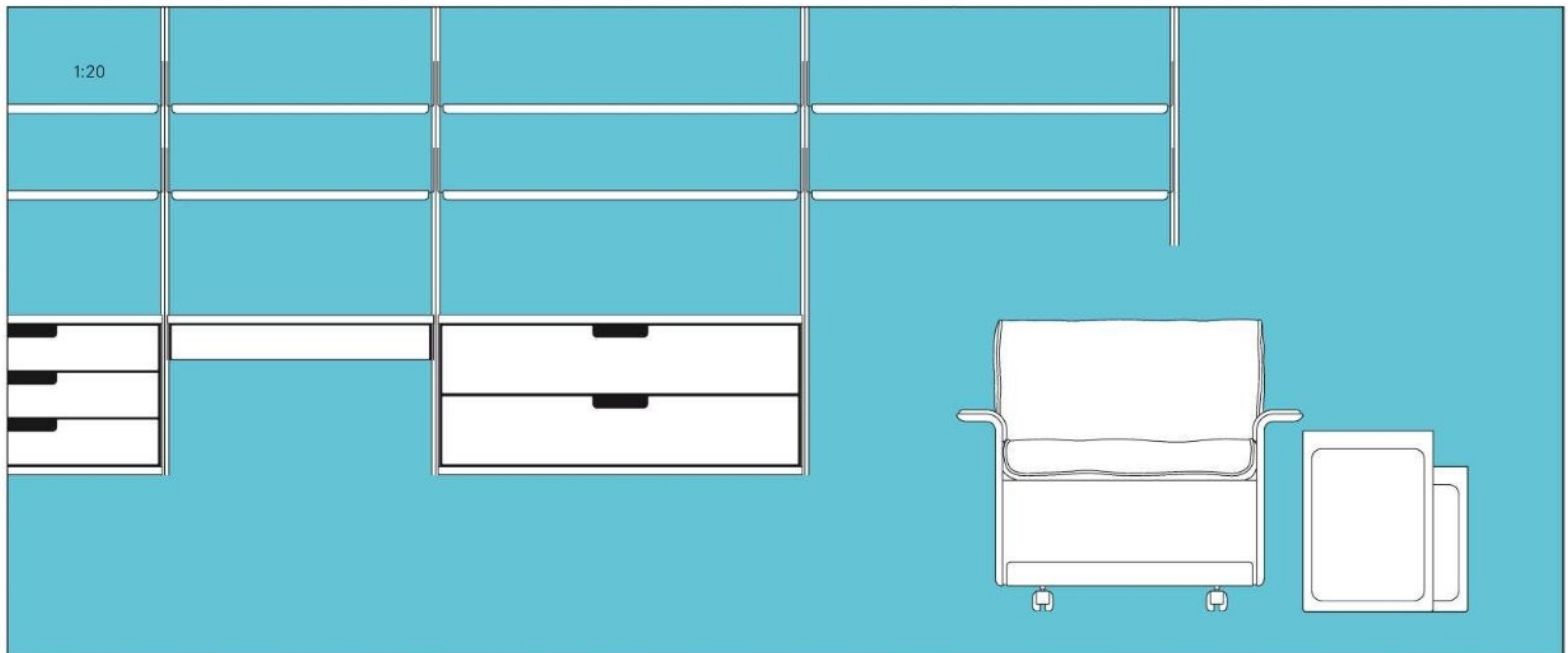
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The English butler

Dieter Rams has often said that his designs are "akin to the English butler: always present but rarely seen."

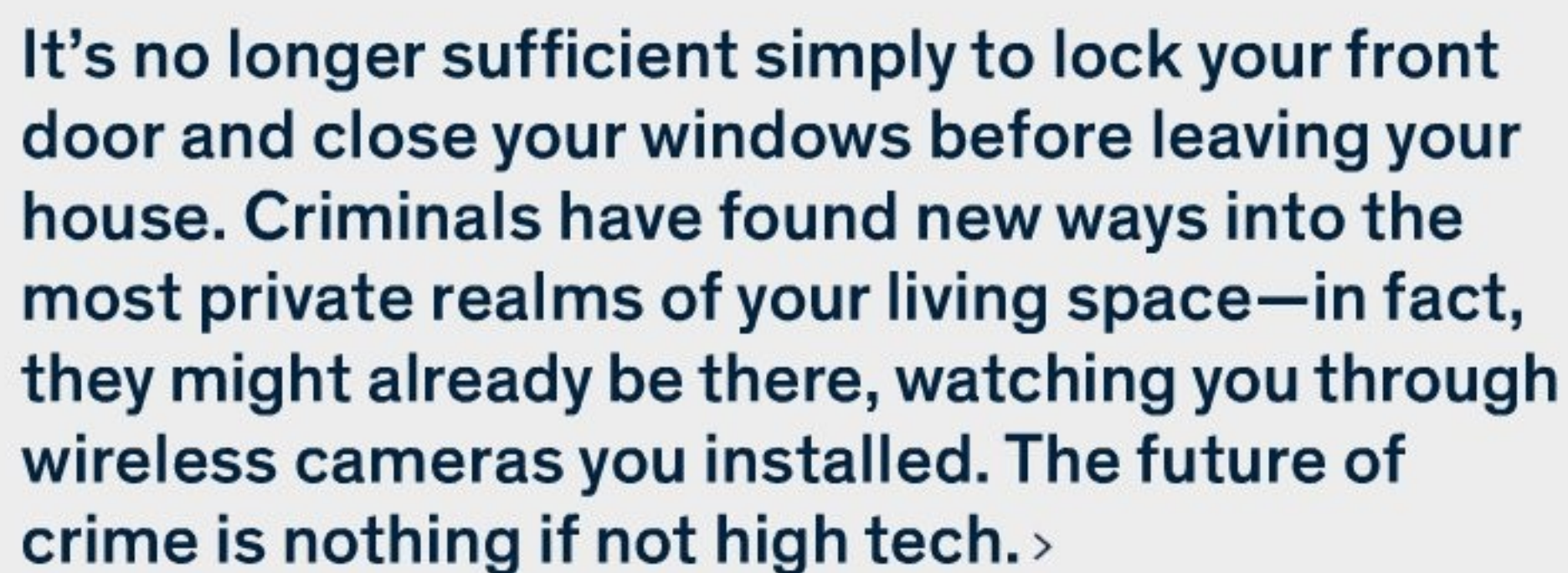
In 1960 he designed the **606 Universal Shelving System** for

Vitsoe to allow you to start small, add to it when needed, and take it with you when you move.

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Yet you could be forgiven for not noticing any of the above. Rams's discreet furniture for Vitsoe is intent on remaining in the background right up to that moment when you need it.



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Updates Ready to Install

Hidden among the many benefits of a Smart Home are subtle vulnerabilities that today's security researchers are just beginning to understand.

You noticed the car earlier but didn't think much of it. It rolled slowly up the street before circling back through the neighborhood, driven by what looked like teenagers. They were probably just looking for a friend's house, you thought—but then the lights in your hallway go out, your TV won't turn on, and your security alarm starts to blare. Beneath the din, you can hear your neighbor's alarm now ringing, and the house across the street joins in, too.

In the age of smart homes, this could be the future of pranking, warns Rob Ragan, senior security associate at Bishop Fox. A total stranger can now, rather than just ringing the doorbell and running, jam your security alarm, turn off your interior lights, and even permanently disable the electronic systems in your house, all without crossing the property line. Ragan emphasized that home security no longer starts at the curb; it now extends deep into the cloud, as the devices and systems in your home can be accessed from anywhere in the world.

In fact, drive-by teens looking for lulz are, in some ways, the least of your concerns. The connected home, with its smart appliances and Internet of Things (IoT) functionality, has become a target-rich environment, vulnerable to anyone with a signal-jamming device or radio manipulator. Anything you currently access via wi-fi, Bluetooth, radio frequency identification (RFID), or near field communication (NFC) is exposed, whether it's your snazzy new digital door lock, your Apple keyboard, or your wireless nanny cam. Indeed, as security researchers, such as Kashmir Hill, have shown, hackers can easily bypass the weak security measures on typical home baby monitors and not only watch and listen to your children but even talk to them, while you're not in the room.

To counter these and other threats, a rapidly growing private-security market, dedicated to protecting smart-home consumers from exactly these sorts of attacks, has emerged. Synack is one such company; CEO Jay Kaplan's background as an NSA security analyst is just one indication of how serious some of these threats can be (and how lucrative the field is set to become). Colby Moore, one of Synack's lead security research engineers, explains that "a lot of these devices are being made by people without security backgrounds, or they're simply being pushed out the door so quickly that they don't have a well-established security audit in place." Not only are such devices ripe for attack, they are also, in many ways, totally unstudied. Indeed, Moore adds, "With a lot of the newest products on the market, you just don't

know what you're getting."

In early 2015, Moore and his team at Synack released a white paper detailing a slew of eye-popping security vulnerabilities that they had found in networked home devices, ranging from thermostats and surveillance cameras to smoke detectors. Moore cautioned that the range of potential targets has continued to expand and that the possibility for exploitation now extends even to our wearable devices. Smartwatches equipped with cameras and microphones—not to mention, easily trackable by GPS—can be used, for example, to spy on a homeowner's daily routine and to check if they are home before executing a burglary.

For Jay Kaplan, however, the story is much bigger than just the future of home burglary; he sees smart appliances as the newest front in corporate spying. After all, if your CEO owns a vulnerable, easily hacked wireless nanny cam, then industrial espionage has found a whole new, deeply troubling arena. Literally billions of dollars could be at stake, due to just one unprotected conversation. Now substitute "diplomat," "senator," or "military leader" for "CEO," and you can see how Kaplan's background at the NSA inspired this concern about home security. Are you sure you know who's listening?

▲ The term "Internet of Things" was first documented by British visionary **Kevin Ashton** in 1999.

▲ The first Internet appliance was a **Coke machine at Carnegie Mellon University** in the early 1980s. The programmers could connect to the machine over the Internet, check the status of the machine and determine whether or not there would be a cold drink awaiting them, should they decide to make the trip down to the machine.



Recipe for Mayhem

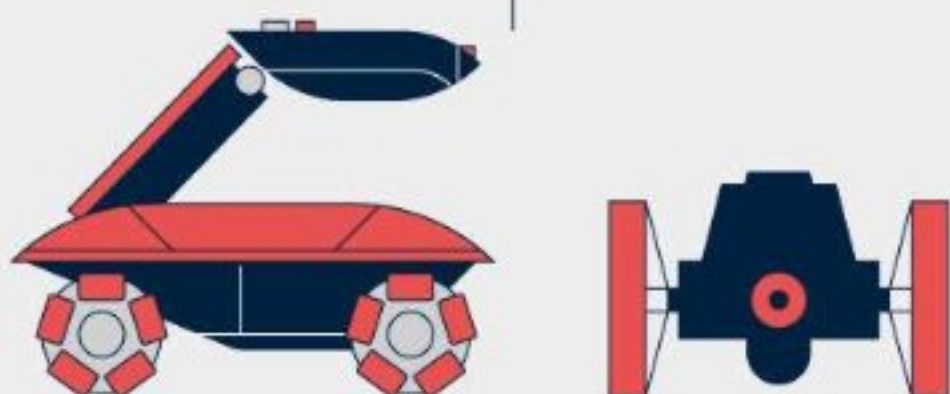
A team of graduate student researchers at the University of Washington, led by Tamara Denning, now an assistant professor at the University of Utah, wrote what is known in their field as an “attack paper”—an attempt to find vulnerabilities in everyday products or services before the bad guys do. Denning and her team discovered that specific combinations of remote-control children’s toys could be hacked by ambitious burglars to do everything from watching you leave on your next vacation to searching your home for hidden valuables.

Time: 24 Hours

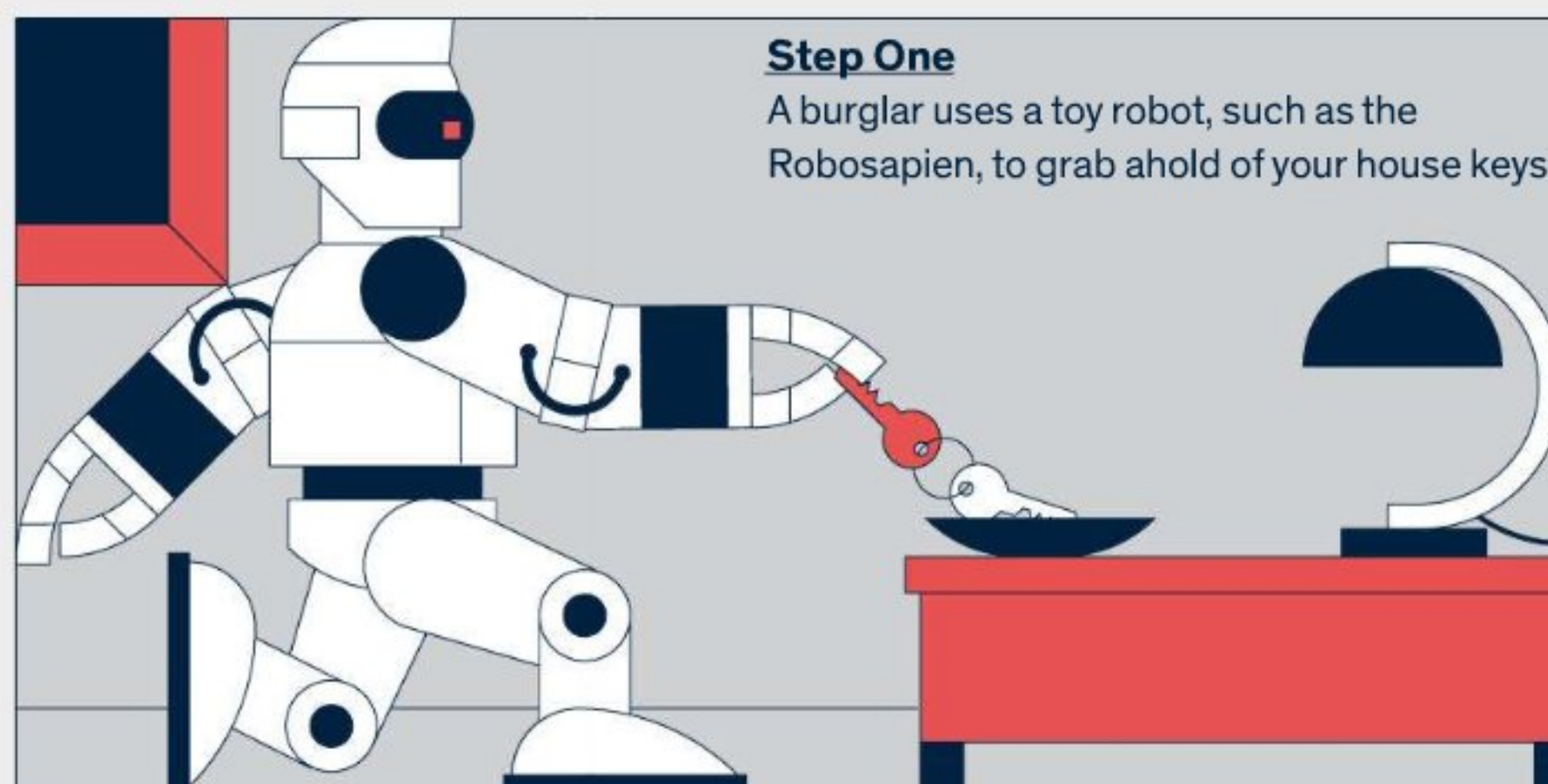
1 Robosapien



1 Rovio or Parrot's Jumping Sumo



1 Order from KeyMe or Keys Duplicated

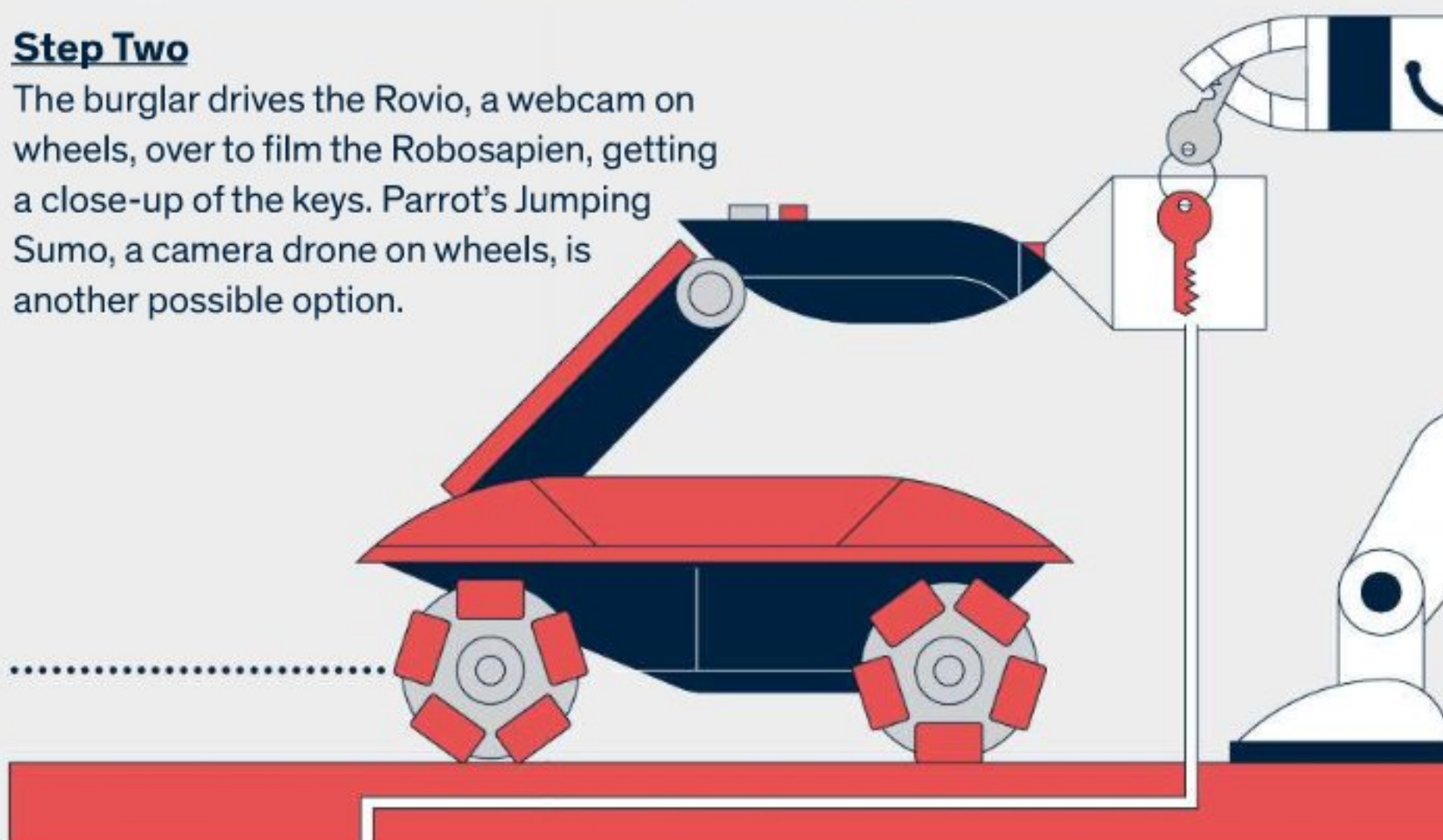


Step One

A burglar uses a toy robot, such as the Robosapien, to grab ahold of your house keys.

Step Two

The burglar drives the Rovio, a webcam on wheels, over to film the Robosapien, getting a close-up of the keys. Parrot's Jumping Sumo, a camera drone on wheels, is another possible option.



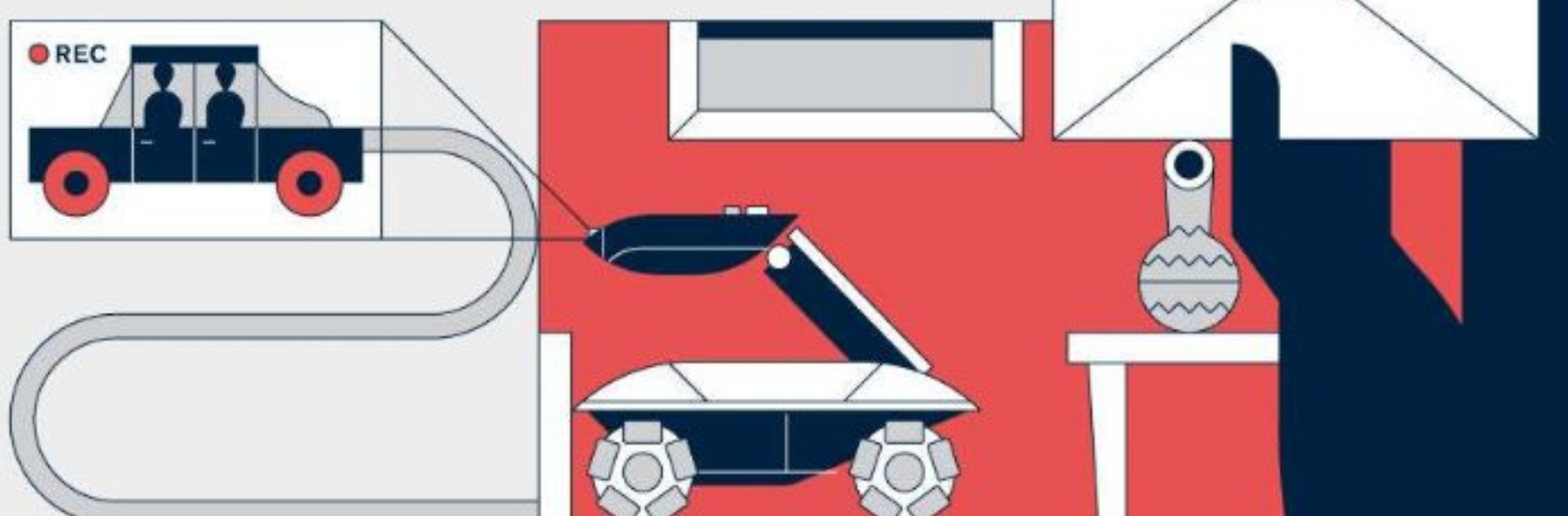
Step Three

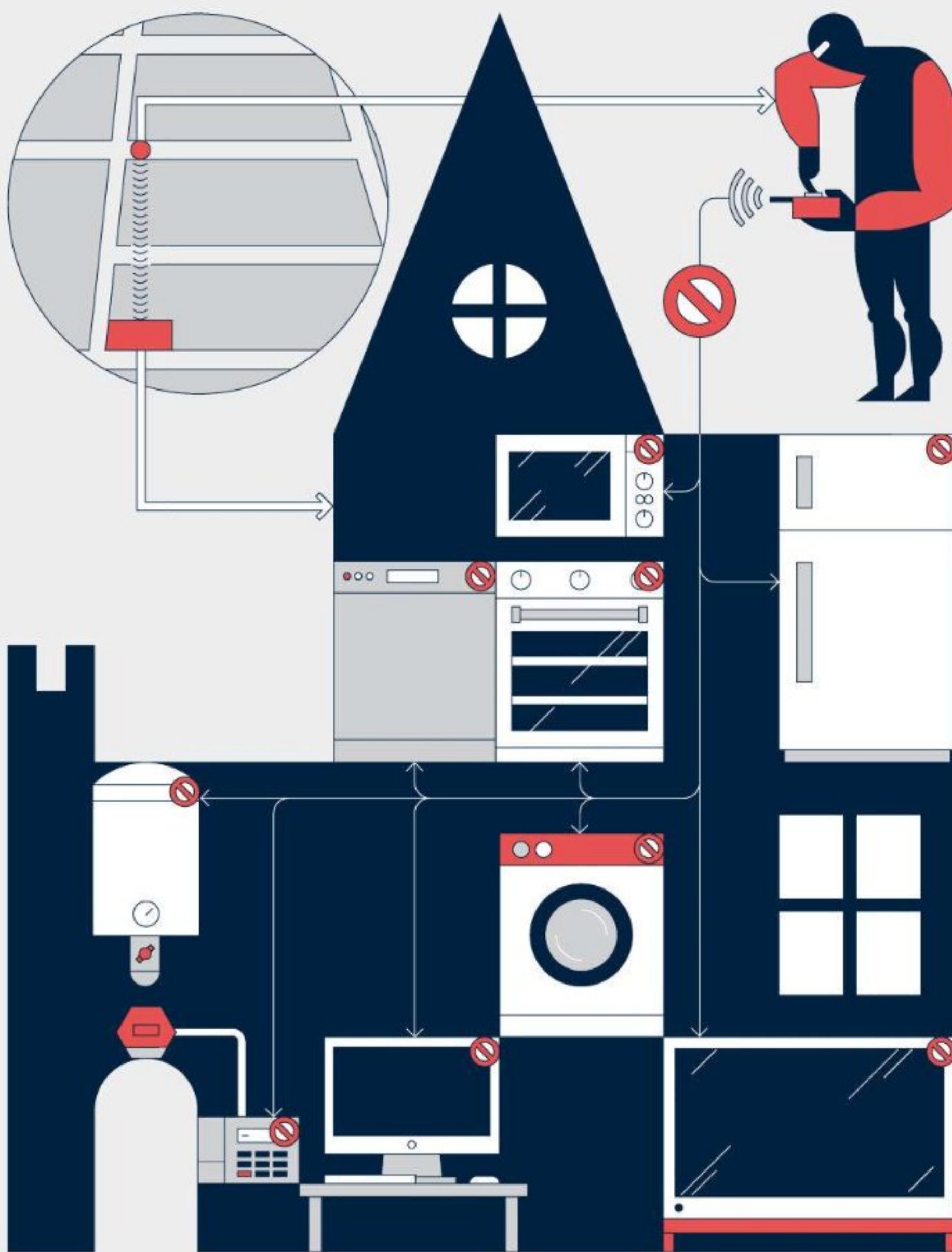
The resulting high-resolution images of your keys are uploaded to a service such as KeyMe, which describes itself as a “convenient way to copy, share, and personalize keys.”



Step Four

Working duplicates of your keys are mailed out the same day to the prospective burglar; he strikes the next time your hacked Rovio films you leaving to drive the kids to school. >





Q+A: Drew Porter

The burglars' tools of tomorrow will look more like robots and radios than lockpicks and crowbars. A security expert weighs in.

Founder and principal security researcher of a newly launched firm called Red Mesa, Drew Porter has his eye on the future of home crime. Porter imagines a world where pocket-size devices can turn off entire smart homes, reducing them to useless "bricks" of dead electronics. Alarming, Porter has successfully implemented just such a device—a \$400 radio transmitter that can shut down tens of thousands of dollars' worth of networked home devices—and he spoke to Dwell about the frightening implications.

Dwell: What drew you to study these new security threats targeting smart homes?

Drew Porter: My current research looks at vulnerabilities in connected houses and the Internet of Things, and how those vulnerabilities can be used against you. This actually started by accident when I was fooling around in my house with an older system I'd developed. Its purpose was to intercept cellular signals. I was standing particularly close to my home alarm panel at the time, and I saw that the panel not only restarted, it also jumped onto the cellular network I was running. In other words, I had intercepted my own alarm system—and that definitely should not have happened!

Dwell: What could a criminal do with that device?

Porter: At the very minimum, they could intercept an alarm's signals and then block it from reporting out.

Now, the point of this research is not to enable people to break into other people's houses, obviously; it's to make sure that people are aware that these types of things can happen if they have everything interconnected and if security has not been considered in a detailed manner.

Dwell: Has this changed how you live or how you secure your own house?

Porter: My wife and I recently bought a house, and we had the option of selecting the "smart home" setup. My wife was actually in disbelief when I said yes to it, because she's seen my research. But now we own a smart house.

This is funny because I started looking into all this again, a few months ago, and discovered the complete owning of home-security systems. This is a no-bar, everything-gets-owned compromise. Other researchers and I have made radio devices that fit in your pocket and can bypass all major home-security systems. Some specifically target ZigBee systems. Your wall switches and alarms probably have ZigBee systems in them; your toaster, refrigerator, washer and dryer—they all can have ZigBee systems in them. All of those are vulnerable.

That \$20,000 smart-home upgrade you just paid for? It can now be nullified for about \$400—which is a little depressing! Worse, it's not like you can just turn the house back on; I haven't found a way to reverse it yet. It's completely bricked. All your smart lights, all your wall switches, your security alarm—they become inoperable and you have to replace them.

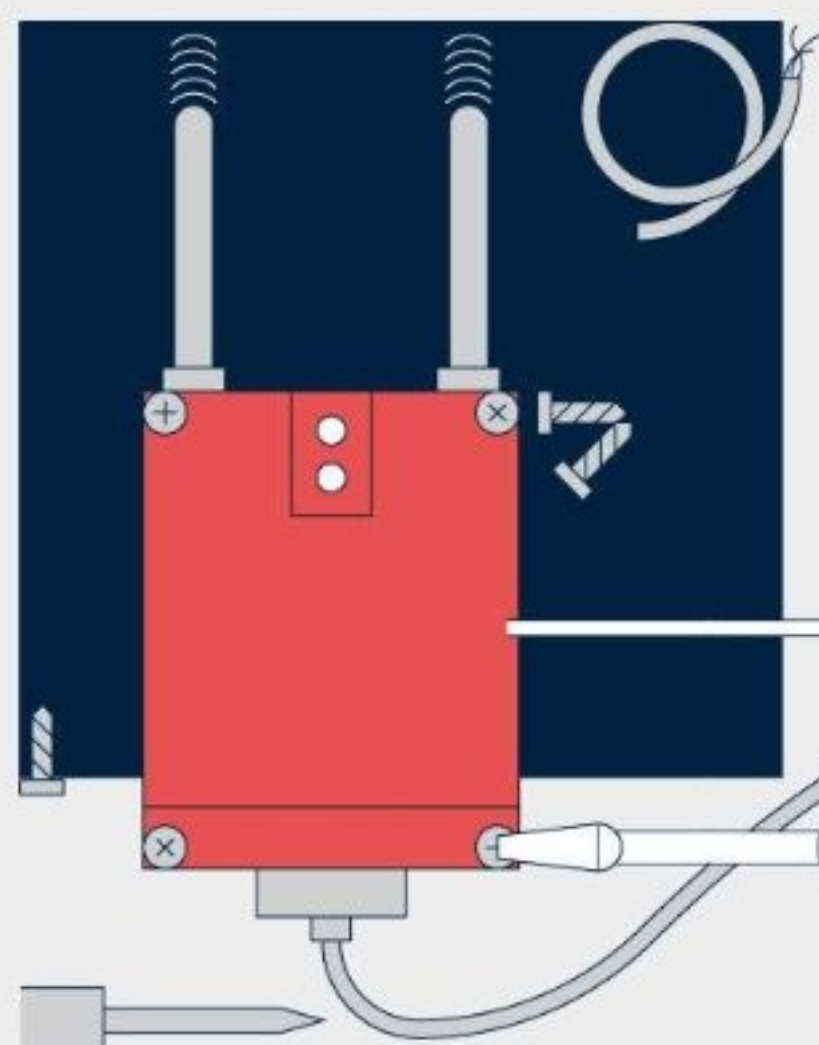
Dwell: How does it work?

Porter: Well, I can't give away many details yet—I'm presenting this research at the end of the year—but it operates through a software-defined radio. A conservative estimate would say that this device can be effective three or more blocks away from its target. That's a guaranteed hit right there.

redmesa.io

Recipe for Mayhem II

Is that a drone hovering near your property line? Drew Porter's pocket-size radio device for compromising entire smart homes can be effective three or more blocks away from a target. This means that if a burglar can't physically approach your house because of a camera or an alarm, they can still fly a signal-jamming device into your neighborhood, using an off-the-shelf drone, to switch things off from afar. Drone attacks on the suburbs are already considered enough of a threat that UAV-detection systems can be installed to listen for the telltale whir of tiny rotors. **Time: 30 minutes**



Step Two

The burglars order a Parrot drone from Amazon or learn how to build their own custom UAV, using the voluminous information available at DIY Drones.

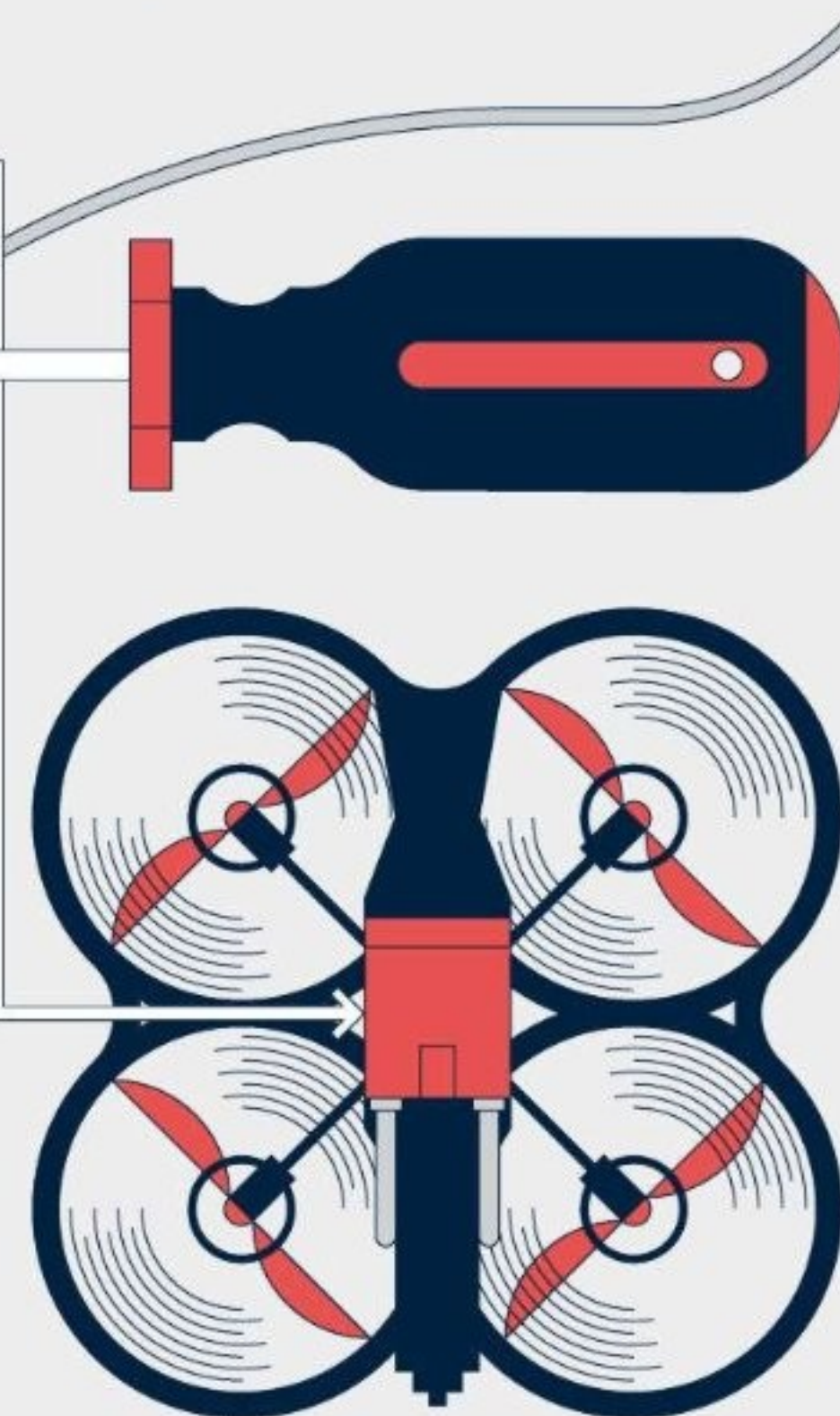
Step Three

They attach the radio manipulator to the drone and approach your neighborhood.



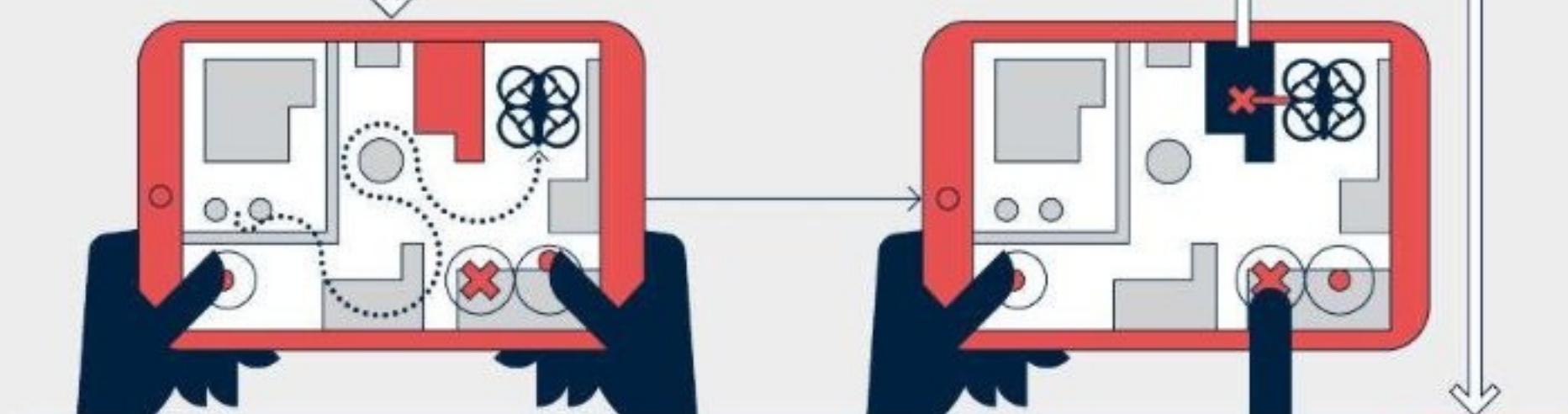
Step One

After studying a video of Drew Porter's upcoming presentation, our prospective burglars learn to build a software-defined radio manipulator, using off-the-shelf parts, for only \$400.



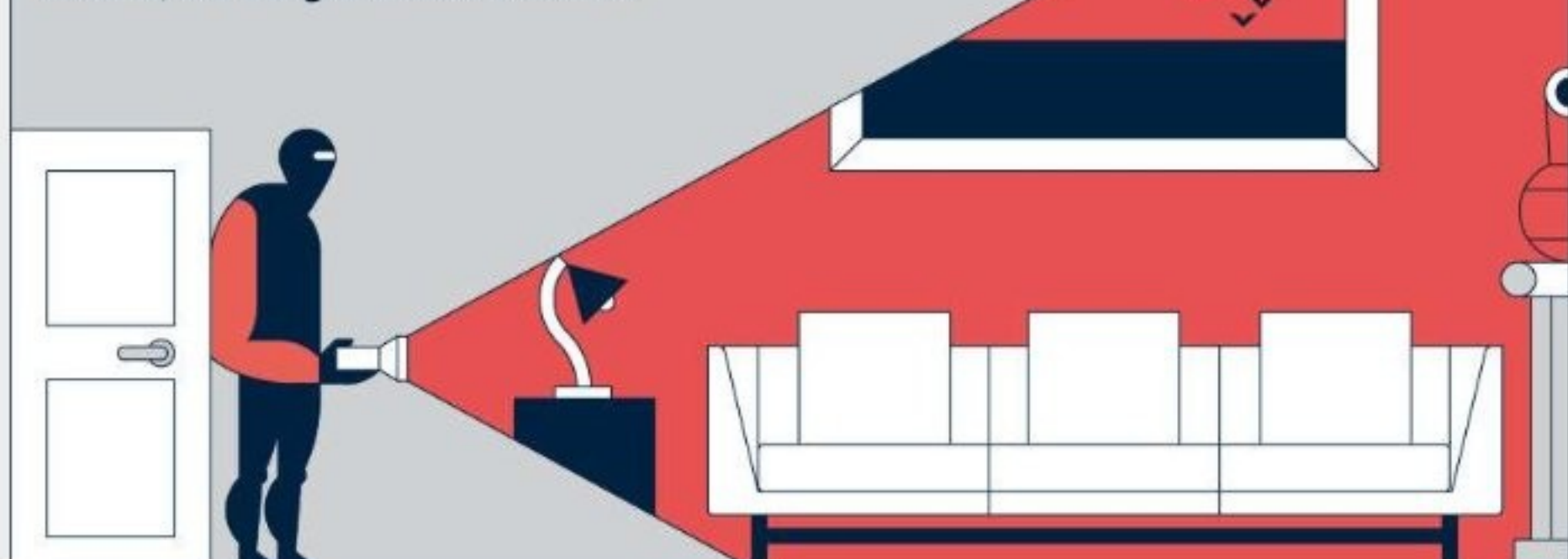
Step Four

Controlling the drone from a well-chosen hiding place, steering it over property fences or perimeter alarms, they activate the radio device and "brick" your home.



Step Five

With no cameras, emergency lights, or alarms, the burglars head inside. □





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Tech Support

In Napa, a custom menu of apps help a frequent traveler keep track of security—and his garden—from afar.

TEXT BY
Allie Weiss
PHOTOS BY
Matthew Williams

PROJECT
Willson Residence
ARCHITECT
Stillwater Dwellings
LOCATION
Napa, California

To install Charles Willson's prefab house, Stillwater Dwellings lifted the structure over an existing barn on the one-acre property, which also includes a rental unit and several outdoor living areas (opposite). Willson, who is often on the road, wired the house with the latest in smart technology.







Landscape architect Josh Chandler installed a 13-by-61-foot bocce court alongside Russian sage and caper plants (opposite). A glass slab bench, embedded with LEDs, lights up at night. Inside the prefab residence, molded plastic Eames chairs from Design Within Reach rest beneath a Splügen Brau pendant light from Flos (above). Pam stools from Ligne Roset pull up to the kitchen island; the custom birch cabinetry complements a Caesarstone Raven countertop (above right).

Charles Willson travels from his home in Napa, California, to San Francisco and New York City every week for work, but in a way he never really leaves. When he's across the country or even in the air, a bevy of smart technology systems ping him with updates on his iPhone and iPad. "I'm on a flight and it's lighting up, saying, hey, somebody's walking down your walkway," Willson says. He can immediately pull up his Canary or Dropcam cameras to take a look. "It's probably the UPS man," he says with a laugh.

Willson, who consults for pharmaceutical companies on marketing digital innovation, is what you might call a tech junkie. His one-acre property is outfitted with systems that allow him to control security, climate, lighting, and irrigation remotely. "It gives me incredible peace of mind to be able to know if someone has walked around the property," he says. He even uses cameras, along with a Netatmo weather station, to keep an eye on the beer and wine making he's picked up as a hobby. The beer needs to stay at 65 to 70 degrees when it's fermenting, so Willson receives alerts when it gets out of range and can adjust the temperature on the vats.

Will motion detectors and the ability to sound an alarm to scare away intruders—a feature that Canary offers—stop a robbery from happening? Maybe not. "I think it's a big difference for me to be able to know if something's wrong immediately," Willson says. The downsides of this level of connectivity are constant notifications and the occasional false alarm. Three invisible geo-fences update security, heating, and

lighting depending on Willson's location, so he receives more notifications when he leaves the property and less on site. His Nest Protect smoke detectors occasionally mistake dust for smoke, however, which has led to a few disconcerting alerts.

The technology systems help connect the various areas of the property. When Willson purchased it, the space consisted of a nondescript house and barn with an unruly vineyard in the backyard. He hired a team to clear the plantings in the yard, which now houses the 1,200-square-foot prefab by Stillwater Dwellings where he lives. The existing house hasn't been touched, and serves as a rental property—Willson has plans to knock it down and install a new prefab house in its place in the future. The barn, a dated red model with a shingled gambrel roof, received six inches of foam insulation and a new cladding of Cor-Ten steel and corrugated tin found on Craigslist. It now houses a workshop on the ground level and an apartment for guests upstairs.

To develop the master plan for the site, Willson hired landscape architect and contractor Josh Chandler. He knew he wanted to work with Chandler when he expressed a similar vision for the property. "Josh comes up and says, 'Don't have them knock [the barn] down, I can reuse corrugated tin on the roof!'" Willson recalls. "And I said, I found my guy!" On the execution, Willson decided to act as his own general contractor, working closely with one builder and enlisting Chandler's help on certain projects, such as the gabion walls and bocce court. >



The living area opens up to a patio with views of a neighboring vineyard. Paulistano armchairs from Design Within Reach and a Ligne Roset Togo sofa surround a Dunn coffee table from Room & Board. The fireplace is from Montigo.

Willson worked with architect Matthew Stannard, who founded Stillwater Dwellings in 2008, to fine-tune the cottage that would become his own residence. He was drawn to the ease of modular building but wanted something that would showcase the adjacent vineyard, which led him to Stillwater's site. "We try to get the indoor-outdoor balance right," Stannard says. Willson settled on the sd121 model—the firm's most popular design—which has two bedrooms and an open-plan living and eating area. "I remember almost trying to cajole Charles to come and visit a Stillwater home before he bought one, but he was adamant that he didn't need to," Stannard recalls. "He was very sure of himself about it." Willson opted for a version with a higher ceiling, and the two agreed to expand the size of the bedrooms, adding 200 square feet to the house. "It was a flawless process," Willson says. "I grew to completely trust in Matthew's decisions." The structure was manufactured in Utah and installed on site in six weeks.

The house opens up to an outdoor kitchen and dining area that is used year-round. Raised garden beds and fruit trees on the property provide everything from blood oranges, artichokes, and white figs to Australian finger limes. Willson is currently testing Edyn, a smart plant sensor, to measure moisture, temperature, fertilizer, and sunshine levels. Combined with Cyber Rain, a Wi-Fi-enabled irrigation system that adjusts its schedules based on the weather, Willson significantly saves on his water bills. "I want things to grow and be healthy," he says. "Otherwise

you learn by mistakes. I want to cut out mistakes."

The property uses Nest thermostats to control heating, Sonos for sound, and Belkin WeMo switches for light. All systems speak to each other through IFTTT (If This Then That), a service that allows users to designate actions to be taken when certain conditions apply. "If the nighttime temperature drops below 35 degrees, the anti-frost light turns on in the orchard and the chicken coop warming light goes on," Willson says.

The installation of the technology on site was surprisingly simple. Stannard's team had worked with Nest thermostats before, and they ran special cabling for the high-definition TV. They also added outlets to support cameras as well as wireless routers. Willson handled the rest of the setup after construction.

The yard required multiple Wi-Fi base stations to make sure connectivity would not be lost on the site. "Some people might get one or two smart tech items in their yard," Chandler says. "Charles has a lot of items. Sometimes you think those things might be a little idiosyncratic and not work, but we haven't had any callbacks. It's been really maintenance-free."

Willson is constantly researching new home tech developments and backing interesting projects on Kickstarter. His attraction to home tech is above all its flexibility. "I think a lot of people approach these things as a one and done—they stay with it for a long time," he says. "I quite understand disposing of technology. It's okay to make a few mistakes." After all, he adds, "Tech doesn't age as well as architecture does." >

Get Smart

These indoor and outdoor technologies help the homeowner control security, lighting, climate, and then some.

A Netatmo Weather Station

These hubs monitor climate changes in various areas and deliver warnings if the temperature gets out of range. netatmo.com

B Dropcam Camera

Wi-Fi-enabled cameras with motion detectors are installed throughout the property. Willson also uses them to manage beer and wine fermentation remotely. dropcam.com

C Canary Security System

These cameras detect motion and send Willson alerts with a video clip of the activity. From the app, he can summon law enforcement if desired. canary.is

D Nest Thermostat

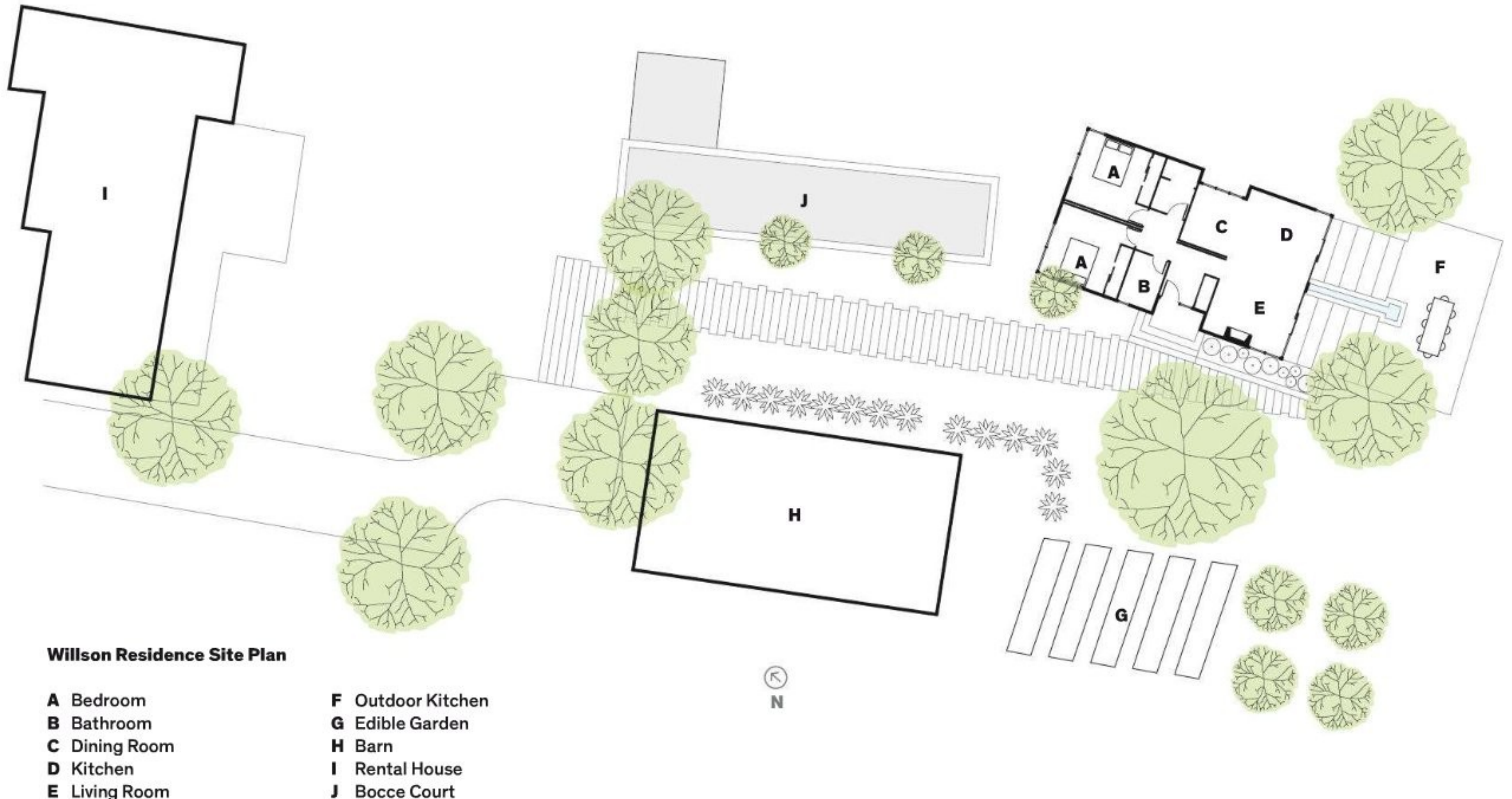
When Willson is within 30 miles of the house and the temperature is below a certain level, his thermostats are programmed to heat it up to 70 degrees. nest.com



Willson uses Edyn, a smart garden sensor, to track moisture, temperature, fertilizer, and sunshine levels (right). It automatically updates irrigation patterns based on its findings. An outdoor dining area is shaded by a mesh canopy suspended by old drilling pipes (far right). A variety of drought-tolerant plants cascade down a 10-foot-wide vertical garden wall near the entrance to the property (opposite). □



“I wanted to integrate technology that could be updated. I always hated built-in audio systems and alarms that quickly looked so dated.”
—Charles Willson, resident









Silver linings aren't always easy to find, but Ed Slattery sees them. "I tell people how lucky I am, and they look at me like I'm crazy," he says.

Almost five years ago, Slattery's wife, Susan, drove their sons, Matthew and Peter, from their home in Baltimore, Maryland, to a family reunion in Ohio. On their way back, a truck driver fell asleep at the wheel and crashed into them. Peter broke his pelvis and eye socket but eventually recovered. Matthew, who suffered a traumatic brain injury, lost his ability to walk. Susan lost her life.

As Ed spent almost a month helping his sons recover at the Akron Children's Hospital, he realized they needed a house with a ramp to come home to. His friends found a rental property, but a ramp was its only accessible feature. When Matthew was well enough to drive a powered wheelchair, "he made holes in the walls and knocked doors off hinges," Ed says. "He can't see well, and his cognitive processing is slower."

So, with settlement money from the trucking company and support from friends, Ed commissioned >

Home Free

A Baltimore father builds a house with accessibility in mind—and finds a new calling in the process.

TEXT BY
Laura Mauk
PHOTOS BY
Ike Edeani

PROJECT
Slattery Residence
ARCHITECT
Alter Urban Design
Collaborative
LOCATION
Baltimore, Maryland

Ed Slattery, seen here with his son Matthew, wanted to create a sustainable home that is accessible without feeling like a hospital (above). Inside, cedar beams add warmth while polished concrete floors provide easy passage for Matthew's wheelchair (opposite). Other universal-design features include drop-down mechanisms for the kitchen counters and cooktop from Freedom Lift Systems.





architects John Coplen, John Sage, and Adam Bridge, from Alter Urban Design Collaborative, to design a home that offered Matthew universal access.

"We calculated the distance Matthew had to travel between spaces he interacts with in a regular day," Sage explains. "The kitchen, his room, his bathroom, and the exercise area are grouped primarily at the core"—letting Matthew navigate fewer corners and hallways. "Twelve-inch baseboards catch the wheels of his chair if he bumps into a wall," Coplen says. "The floors are radiant-heated concrete with inset rugs, so transitions are flat."

A partial wall of reclaimed barn board in the kitchen and dining area has dark brown and gray tones that contrast with the blond hue of the cedar canopying the living room—visual cues to help Matthew orient himself.

Toward the rear of the house, a tower offers epic views of the lush landscape. To reach the top, Matthew pulls himself up with a chairlift designed by Versicor, the Michigan-based controls and electronics company run by Coplen's sister Christie. The power-assist system uses pulleys and a high-tech mix of Kevlar rope, lasers, and embedded electronics to measure the

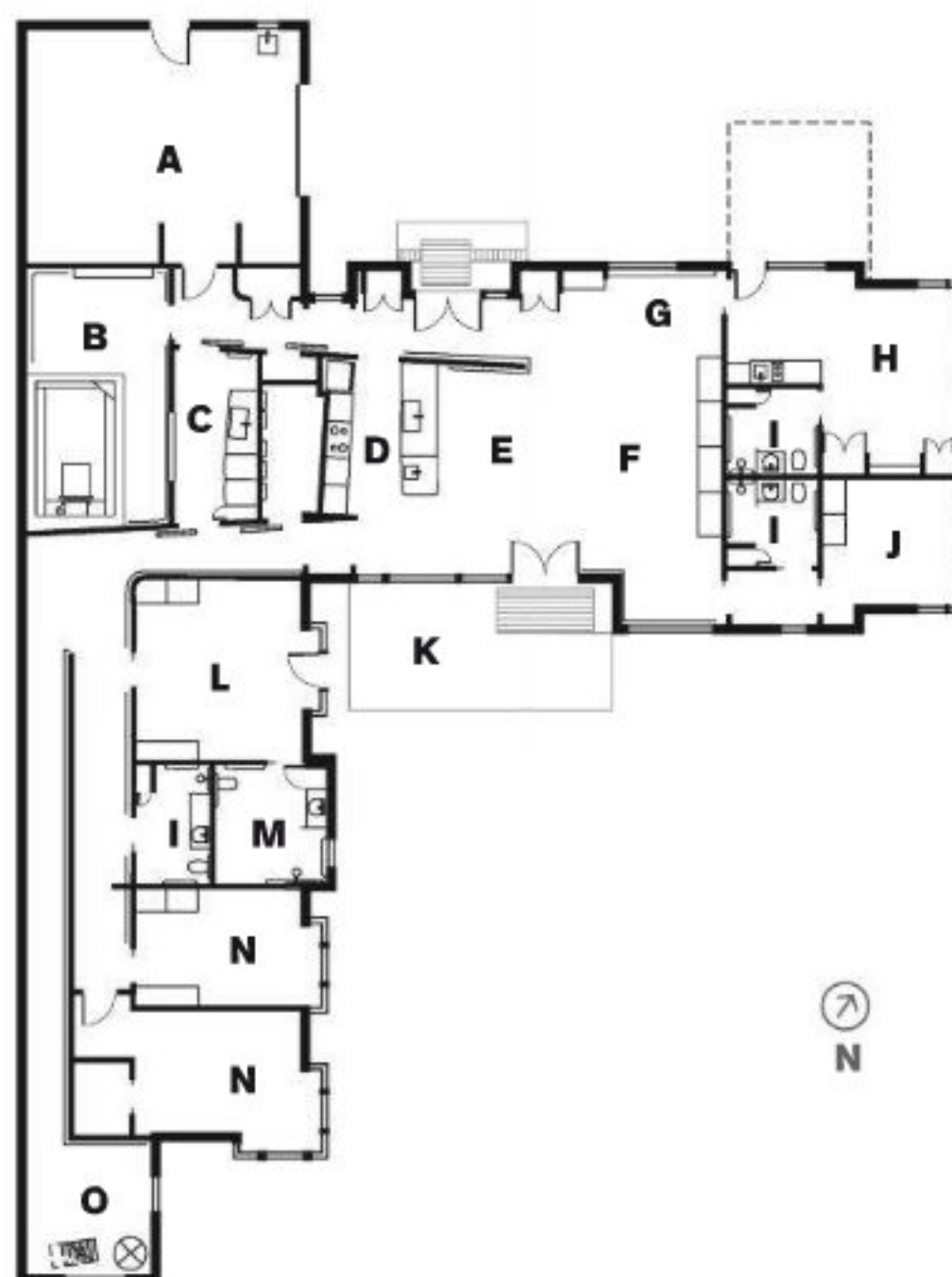
user's weight and allows the operator to set the resistance, based on strength. Savant, an automation system, allows Matthew to open doors, windows, and shades by pushing a button on his iPad.

To create a home that was accessible from the street through to the very back of the yard, without having to include too many switchbacks, the architects dropped the house down a foot to get the proper slope. Now, Matthew is free to explore the organic garden and orchard or check out the 10-kilowatt solar panel system. He can also visit the green roof, which is planted with herbs. "The new house liberated him," Ed says.

Like all Alter Urban projects, the Slattery residence had an overarching theme: Finding a New Normal. Seeing the transformative effect of the home on Matthew's independence and well-being, Ed was inspired to start a nonprofit, also called Finding a New Normal, to help create accessible homes and universal design products for those dealing with disabilities. Christie and John Coplen sit on the board of the foundation, and serve as vice president and treasurer, respectively. "I know I'm lucky," Ed says. "I want to help families that aren't." □

Color and material cues help Matthew navigate the house. Reclaimed wood from a local barn marks the dining room, which also features a table from BoConcept, a Graypants pendant lamp, and molded-fiberglass chairs by Charles and Ray Eames. In the living room, the color palette of the Design Within Reach sofa and built-in bookshelves was inspired by maple trees in fall. "That's really what universal design is about: making it as stylish as anything you'd put in anyone else's house, but having the ability for it to be accessible," says Coplen.

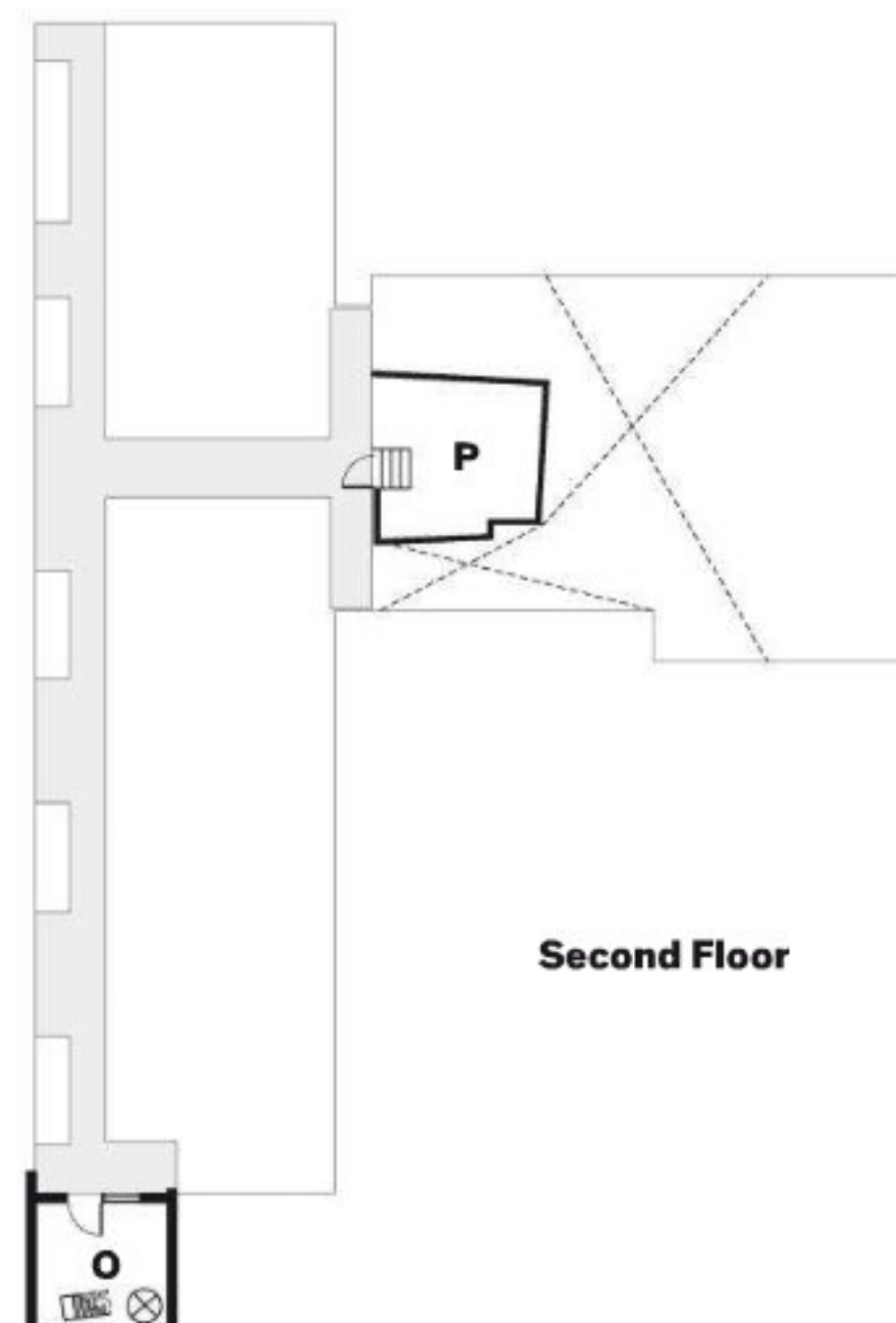
“The new house has really liberated Matthew. My goal is that he will have access to everything by one means or another.”
—Ed Slattery, resident



**Slattery Residence
Floor Plan**

- A Garage
- B Exercise Pool
- C Laundry Room
- D Kitchen
- E Dining Room
- F Living Room
- G Library
- H Master Suite
- I Bathroom
- J Guest Bedroom
- K Patio
- L Matthew's Bedroom
- M Matthew's Bathroom
- N Bedroom
- O Tower
- P Art Loft

First Floor



Second Floor



One of the home's more fanciful features is a meditation tower that offers views to Baltimore's Loch Raven Reservoir and beyond (above). A custom-designed chairlift system from Versicor allows Matthew access to the tower (top left). In Matthew's room, a Guldmann lift system joins a Hudson bed from Room & Board, while Atlas Industries bookshelves showcase personal treasures. Carpet by Bloomsburg, backed with rubber padding so the wheelchair doesn't sink, is inlaid to prevent trip hazards (left).

TEXT BY
Laura Mauk
PHOTOS BY
Michael Graydon &
Nikole Herriott

PROJECT
Heathdale Residence
ARCHITECT
TACT Architecture
LOCATION
Toronto, Ontario

Iron Giant

In a woody Toronto neighborhood, a Cor-Ten-clad family home is wired for the future.



When the Casali family gave Michael Krus and Prishram Jain of TACT Architecture free rein to work with unconventional materials, the architects responded by creating a geometric 4,300-square-foot smart home encased in aluminum panels by Agway Metals. The front facade features Cor-Ten steel fabricated by Praxy Cladding (opposite).





The house that TACT Architecture built in Toronto's Cedarvale neighborhood for Vince and April Casali is as provocative as one of Richard Serra's massive steel sculptures. It, too, features Cor-Ten—in burnt-orange panels on the facade—and is a thing of beauty or a behemoth, depending on the perspective. And much like a Serra sculpture, it inspires wonder. Behind its weathering steel is a home brimming with sunlight, wooded landscape views, and the latest technology.

The Casalis, who are part owners of an advertising firm, selected Michael Krus and Prishram Jain from TACT as their architects because they'd worked with them for years and had always loved their unapologetically modern buildings. "We wanted a house that

would make a statement," Vince says, "something people would have to acknowledge." But before the couple was thinking about building anew, April was becoming attached to their future neighborhood. "I'd take walks on my lunch break through a park close to our business," she says. "I felt like I was in a Jane Austen novel." That idyllic park, also called Cedarvale, is distinguished by mature trees, meandering paths, and a ravine. And now it's on the edge of the Casalis' backyard: When a house along the ravine went up for sale, Vince and April entered into a bidding war—and won. "The fact that you can live five minutes from downtown and still be on a ravine blew our minds," April says. "But the house was a hundred years old and needed new everything.

With Control4 automation, everything from music to lighting can be managed with the tap of a touchscreen. The Casalis balanced their home's high-tech features with rich materials including a marble backsplash by Ciot, a wood table from Kantelberg + Co., and quartz countertops by Caesarstone. The casual dining area features Kartell Masters chairs and an airy Triumph chandelier by Eurofase.



We started to renovate and realized it would cost less to start from scratch."

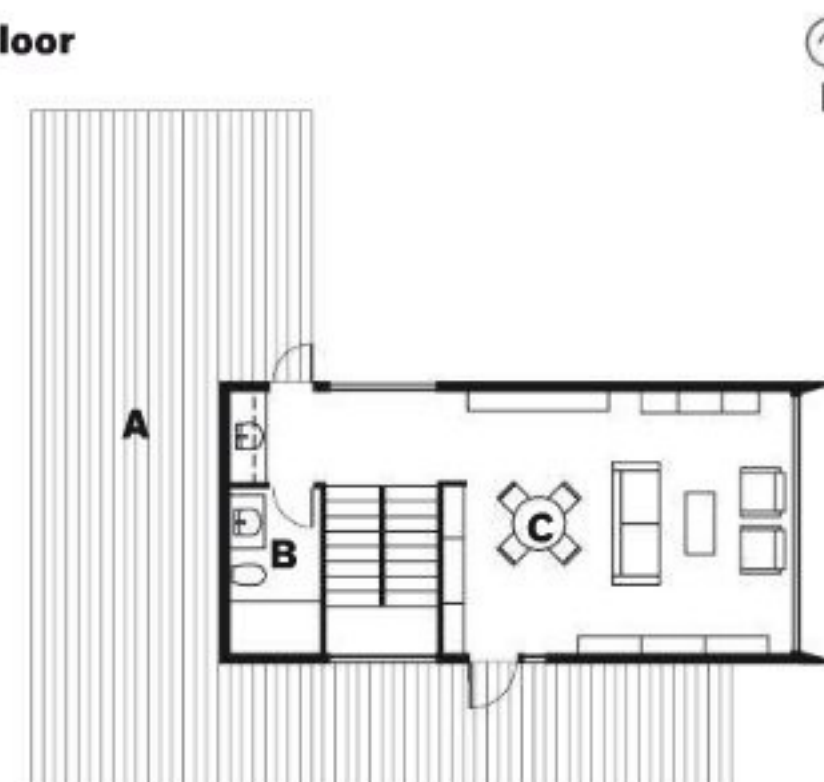
Jain got to work designing a thoroughly modern home, insisting on high-tech details including an automation system. "It's what you expect in a home built in 2015," he says. "It wouldn't be right if we didn't employ current technology." The architects outfitted the residence with Control4, the automation system Jain uses in his own home. It manages the lighting, audio, security, televisions, fireplace and heating, air conditioning, and ventilation. "All of these things are wi-fi controlled," Jain explains. "You can manipulate them remotely from your cell phone or iPad."

The system integrates the controls for most of the >

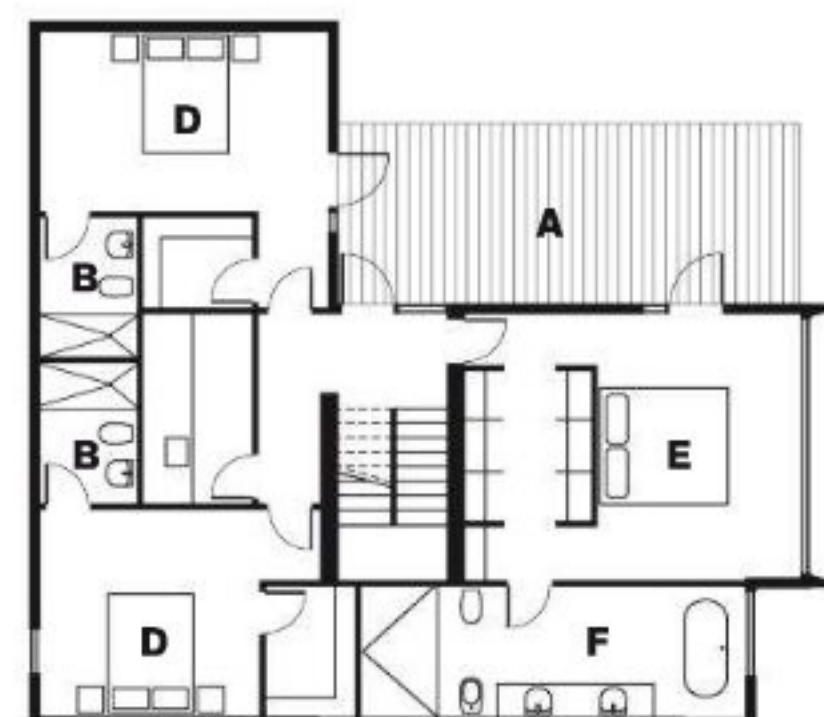
Heathdale Residence Floor Plan

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| A Terrace | H Family Room |
| B Bathroom | I Casual Dining |
| C Study | J Kitchen |
| D Bedroom | K Media Room |
| E Master Bedroom | L Art Studio |
| F Master Bath | M Gym |
| G Dining Room | |

Third Floor



Second Floor



Ground Floor



Basement



Wood is used throughout the home, as in a sculptural staircase designed by TACT (left), gray-stained white-oak floors and a dining room table from Restoration Hardware (bottom left), and a living room TV cabinet by Muti Kitchen & Bath, which is surrounded by a sofa and chairs from ELTE and side tables from Kantelberg + Co. (bottom right). Matte-finish Chantilly Lace paint from Benjamin Moore provides a bright backdrop.



wired elements in the house so the family can also make adjustments from in-wall touch panels rather than walking around the 4,300-square-foot house flipping switches. “You can turn lights on or off from your office,” Jain says. “Or the system can tell you you’ve left the garage door open. You can turn the heat or air conditioning up or down instead of letting it run all day or night. You can tailor the system. If the Casalis are having a dinner party, they can push one button that dims 10 different lights to preset levels and plays specific music at a chosen volume, setting a mood based on preferences.”

When the Casalis have had their fill of technology, all they need to do is look out back for respite. Krus and Jain addressed the ravine by using mostly glass for the rear facade of the house. “We wanted as much openness and light as possible,” Krus says. “The largest pane is seven feet tall and 15 feet wide—the rear explodes

with uninterrupted views of trees and the ravine.”

Sunlight also pours into the house by way of a skylight at the top of the stairs on the third level, where a large pane looks out mostly onto treetops. “It’s like a tree house,” Krus says. “We designed this loft-like space for April and her books.” April, who worked for the Toronto Public Library for about 20 years, has always collected books. “Most of them sat in boxes for years,” she says. “Now I’m surrounded by them.”

Vince and April’s bedroom also looks to the ravine and shares the second level with bedrooms for Caterina, who is 15 years old, and Valentine, who is 21. The ground level is public space and comprises two dining areas, a living room, and the kitchen. Three terraces, one on each level, were created from negative exterior space and are audio-wired. A media room, a workout area, and an art studio are in the basement, where there’s also a control room so complex it brings >





to mind fictional supercomputer HAL 9000 from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. "It's the network hub," says Brian Longhurst, who owns Automation Design Group and installed Control4 for the Casalis. "Almost everything in automation now has an IP address and is network-based. There's a master controller and that's where all of the communication between devices happens."

These techy tools are balanced by natural materials like wood and stone, which Krus says make the house warmer and softer. The architects used marble in the kitchen and the baths and customized walnut cabinetry for above the black slate and Algonquin stone of the fire surround. Where the flooring isn't radiant-heated porcelain tile, it's oak. The staircase, including the handrail, is oak too, and it looks like a minimalist sculpture at the center of the house. Vince and April selected rough-hewn reclaimed

wood tables for the dining areas. "Our fathers were woodworkers," April says. "We feel at home with wood."

The steel facade also offers a warmth of its own. "Cor-Ten is very rich and textural," says Krus. "It captures light and changes color. It's not stagnant." That depth, along with its easy maintenance, may explain why the material pioneered by Eero Saarinen at the John Deere World Headquarters in 1964 is gaining in popularity with adventurous homeowners.

"These clients asked for a strong aesthetic—something that engaged people," says Jain. And without a doubt, the Casali home has been attracting attention since day one. "The first time we ordered pizza," April says, "I opened the door and the delivery guy looked up [at the patina on the facade] and asked, 'How are you going to fix that?' You can't build a house like this and not expect a reaction. That's what we wanted. And that's what we got." □



Vince chose most of the furnishings in the house, including a pair of Marcel Breuer's Wassily chairs for Knoll in the library (left). The home's built-in technology includes speakers by Current Audio installed in the ceiling in Valentine's room (above right). The master bathroom features Pro Tec windows framed in European pine, a freestanding tub by Wetstyle, and a marble vanity top from Ciot (right).



**“The only direction we gave TACT was that we wanted a house that people had to acknowledge.”
—April Casali, resident**

dwellings

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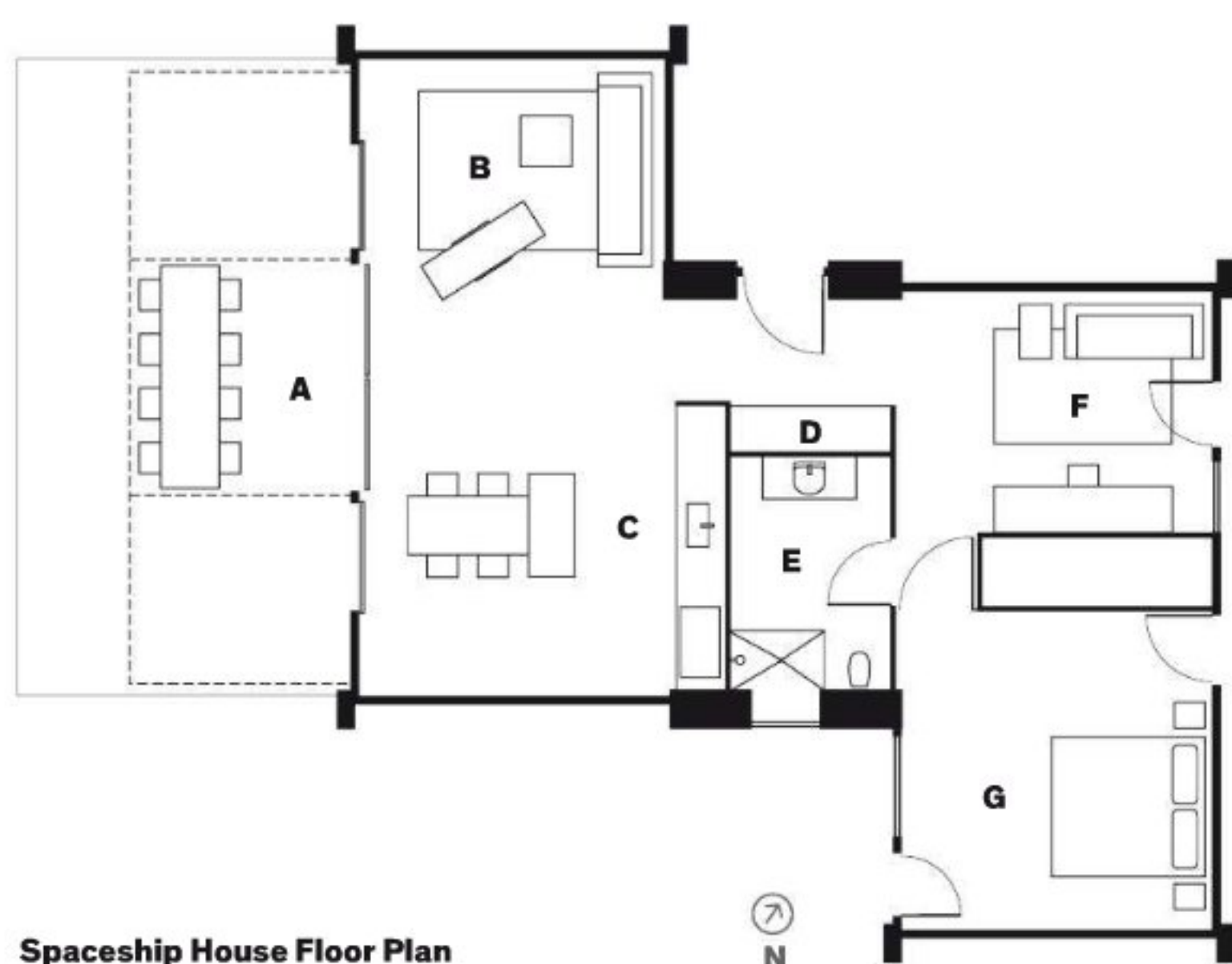


NOEM, a Barcelona-based architecture firm, created a metal-clad house for a young client just outside Madrid. It's raised 12 feet off the ground to offer better views of the landscape, lending it "the futuristic feeling that it just landed," says Pol Guiu, one of NOEM's cofounders.

TEXT BY
Suzanne Wales

PROJECT
Spaceship House
ARCHITECT
NOEM
LOCATION
La Moraleja, Spain





Spaceship House Floor Plan

- A Deck
- B Living Area
- C Kitchen-Dining Area
- D Hub-Mechanical Systems
- E Bathroom
- F Studio
- G Bedroom

A UFO has landed in La Moraleja, a leafy enclave on the outskirts of Madrid. Passersby may assume it's a folly put up by one of the neighborhood's well-heeled residents for their kids, but this retro-futuristic structure is a functioning home for adults. It brings together sustainable building design, smart home technology, and the vision of its owner, a die-hard science-fiction fan.

NOEM, a young, Barcelona-based design-build firm, conceived the Spaceship House. Specializing in passive housing fitted with varying degrees of smart technology, NOEM designs houses in modules, made from Pyrenean pinewood in local factories and put together on-site, a process that can take as little as six weeks from start to finish. The architects use BIM (building information modeling) software, which leaves virtually no room for construction errors—vital for the correct functioning of the hardware the owner chooses to install. Even if they do not, NOEM claims that by making the modules completely airtight, wrapping them in a nearly 10-inch-thick layer of wool insulation, and installing a heat-recovery ventilation system, the houses consume 75 percent less energy than a traditional structure of the same dimensions. While the owner of the Spaceship House was attracted to NOEM's use of technology and commitment to sustainability, he also had quite a few aesthetic demands. "He basically told us he wanted a mother ship," says Pol Guiu, cofounder of NOEM.

The Spaceship House is made up of three polished metal-clad modules. One contains the bedroom-studio; one the living area; and another holds the kitchen,

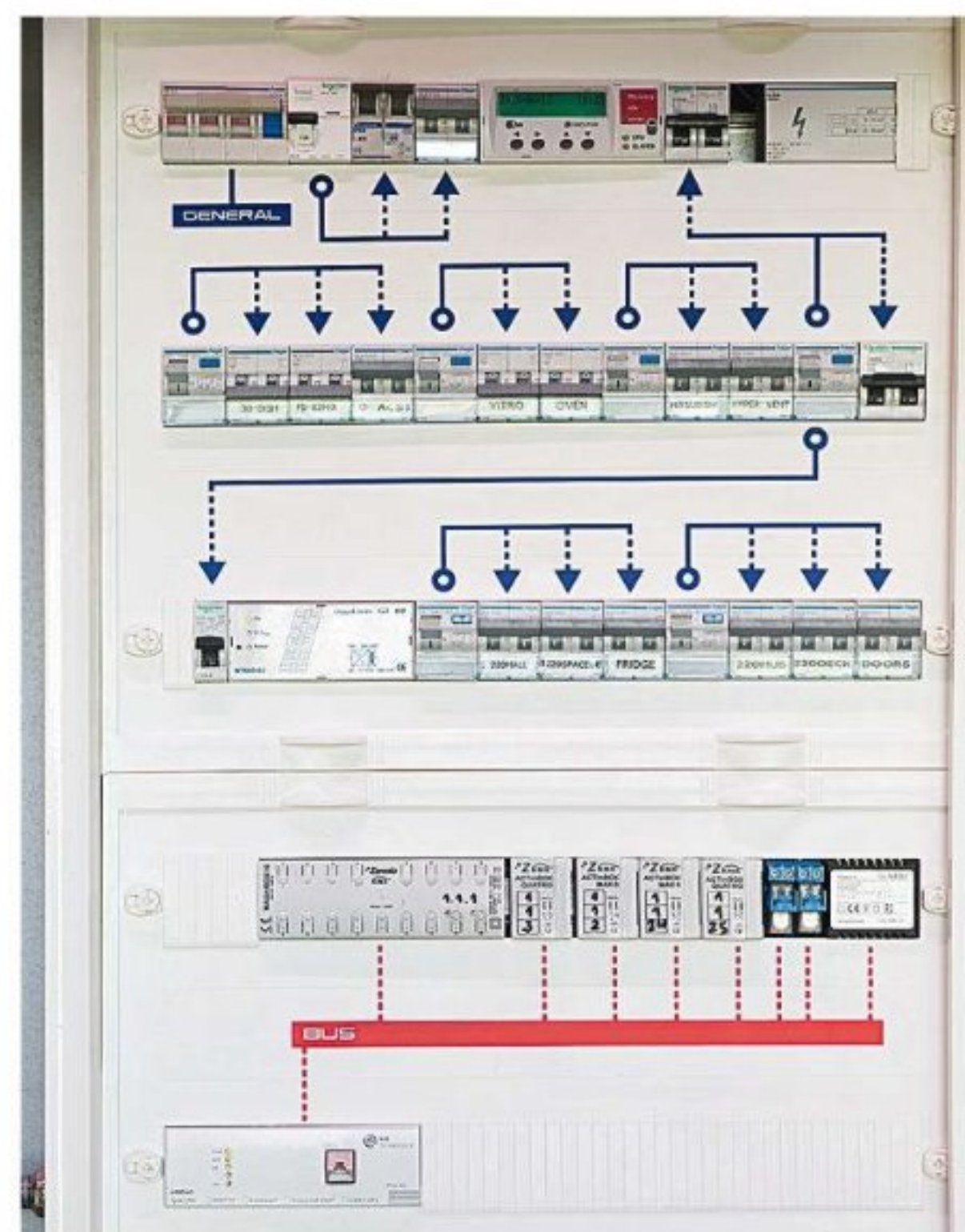
bathroom, and "hub"—the impressive nerve center of the home with its sleek, violet control panel. At the touch of two built-in iPads (or his own smartphone), the owner can manipulate water and air temperature, heating and cooling, electricity consumption, illumination, security devices, and blinds, as well as read a real-time picture of the night sky. "We used available technology and made an open-hardware interface that integrates the whole thing," Guiu says. "We always use standard protocols that are readily available, so that the home automation system can be added to and altered in the future by the users. It's a type of hacking—but with a deeper philosophy." NOEM worked with a firm called Eco High Tech to specify the products and hardware, and with Securalis, a French company, to test the system's security.

The architects studied real spaceships to fine-tune the concept. Visual cues from sci-fi culture provided details such as signage executed in the Star Wars font, blinking LED tubes fitted into the seams of the exterior, and the hub's on-off master switch identified by the name HAL.

Reassuringly, one of the Spaceship House's most distinctive features plays to the natural world. The owner wished to take full advantage of the plot's verdant views, so it's raised about 12 feet above the ground, an exact measurement that is also optimal for viewing air traffic at Madrid's Barajas airport from the terrace. "Elevating the home also gives the impression that the structure has 'just landed,'" Guiu says. "And that it could get up and 'walk' away at any moment. But we needed the whole thing to have consistency, so we had to think hard about the staircase. How does one ascend a spaceship?"

The architects settled on an airplane staircase from a defunct airline company. Problem solved. Then another one arose: How does one enter a spaceship? NOEM found a door from an Italian yacht maker. It slides open via sensory recognition as the owner ascends the staircase.

With its futuristic design and high level of gadgetry, the Spaceship House has been NOEM's most challenging and idiosyncratic project to date. Yet they claim their clients are generally defined by the creed "Less is more." "They don't want an 'object,'" says Rosa Vilarasau, NOEM's second cofounder. "Maybe they are a bit geeky, but they want technology to serve them, not the other way around. We always take a lot of time discussing with them how far they want to go. We want them to be in control." □



Top row, left to right: Automated shutters overhead provide privacy when closed and shade the deck when open. An electric car-charging station is situated underneath the house. Middle row, left to right: Spruce clads the interior walls and ceilings. NEOM integrated the mechanical systems behind a purple screen for users to access. This “hub” is the first thing visible upon opening the front door. “The plan was to enter the house through the machine room, like in Han Solo’s spaceship, the Millennium Falcon,” Guu says. Bottom row, left to right: The rooftop is fitted with a solar array that’s operated by a device in the hub. A built-in desk by NOEM FabLab folds into the wall when not in use.



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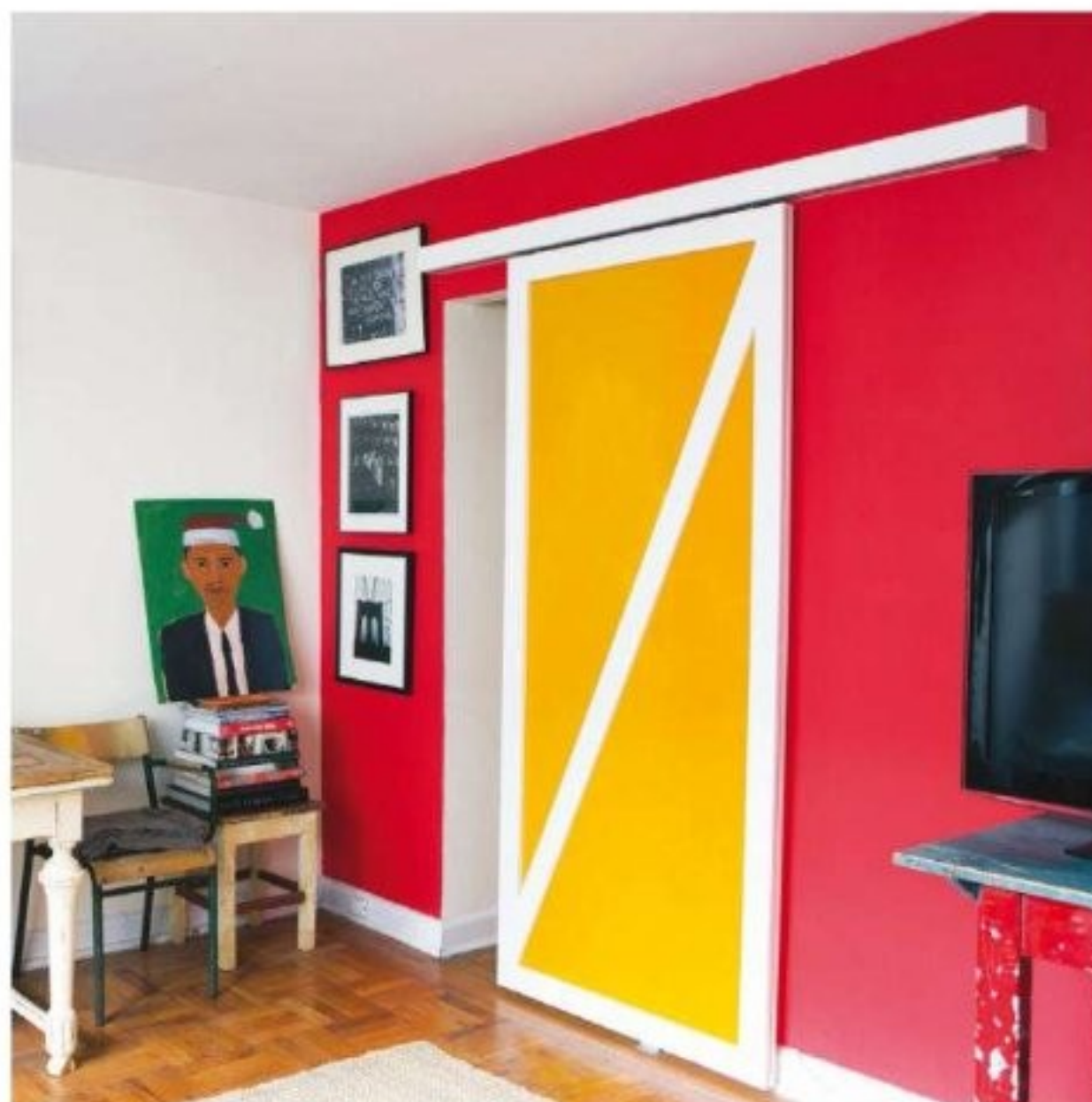
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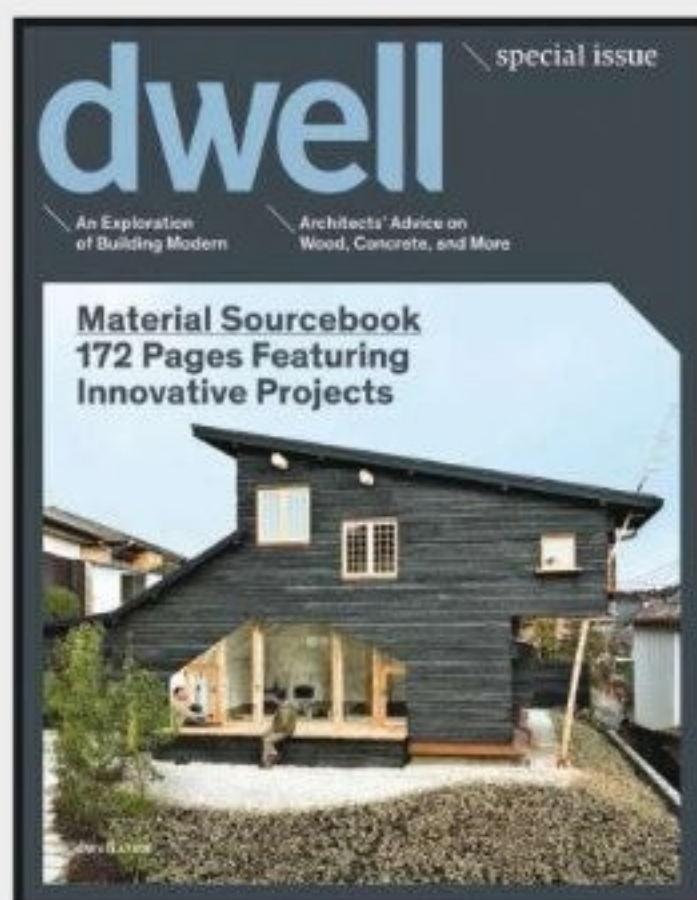


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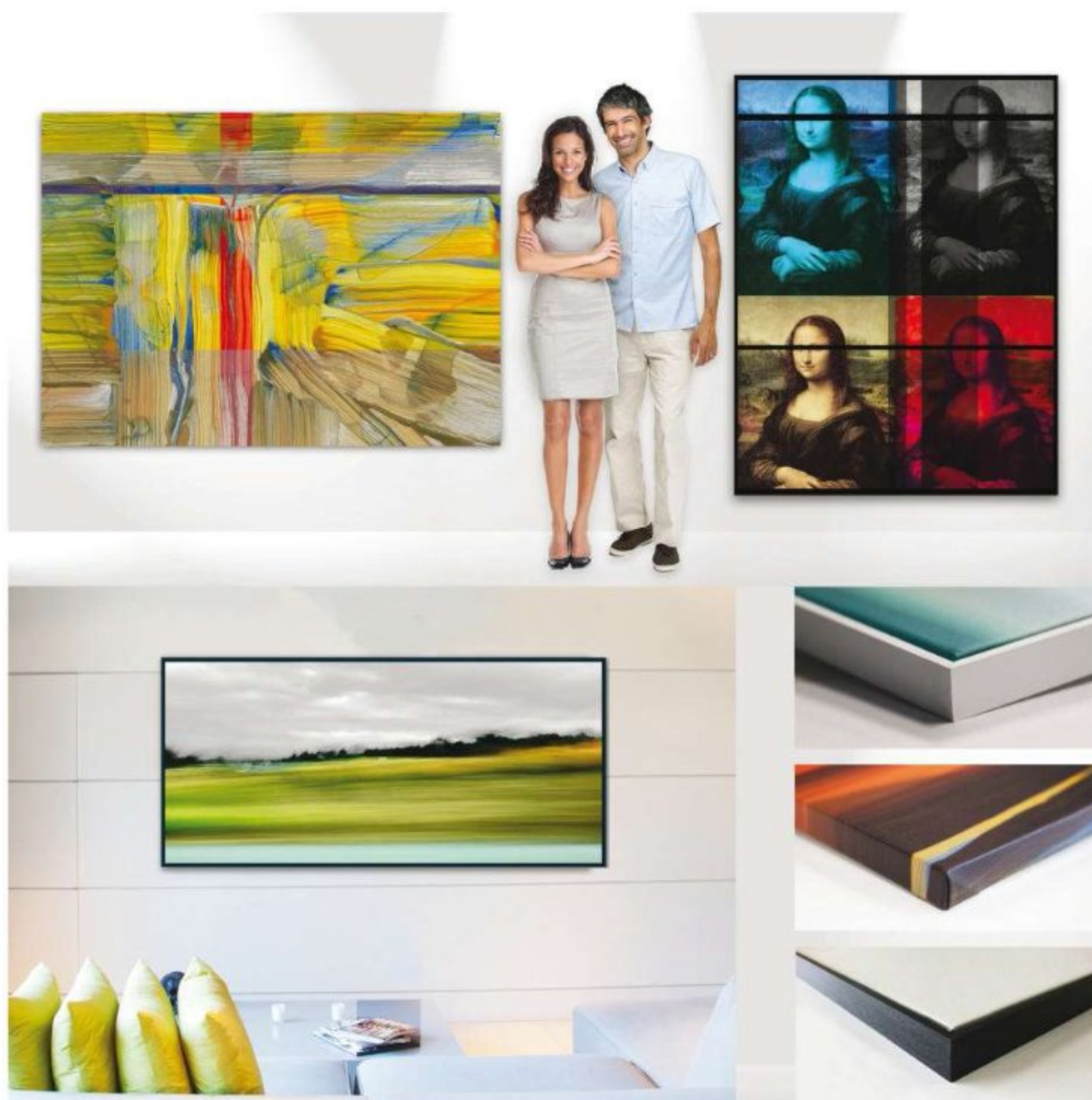
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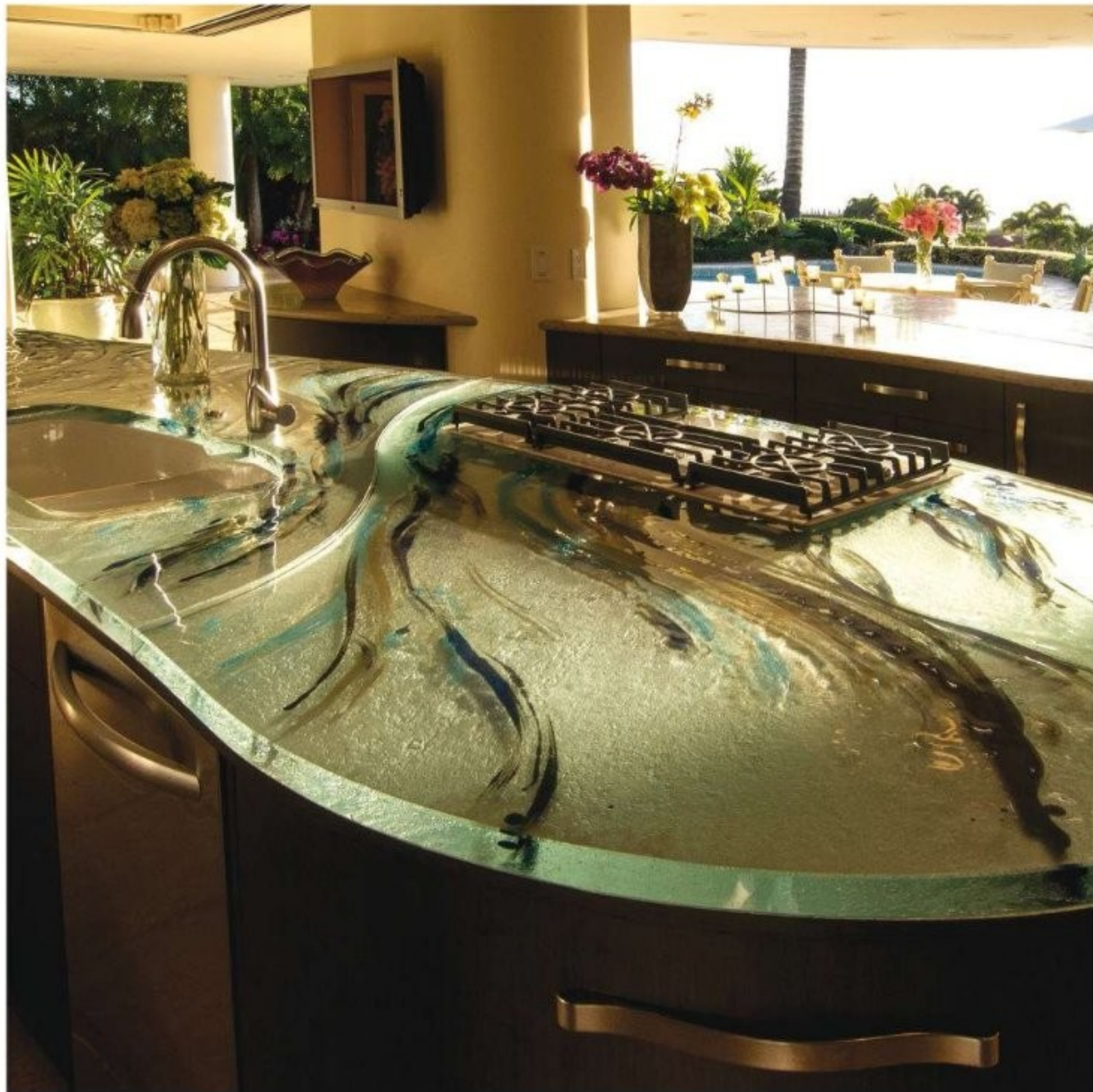
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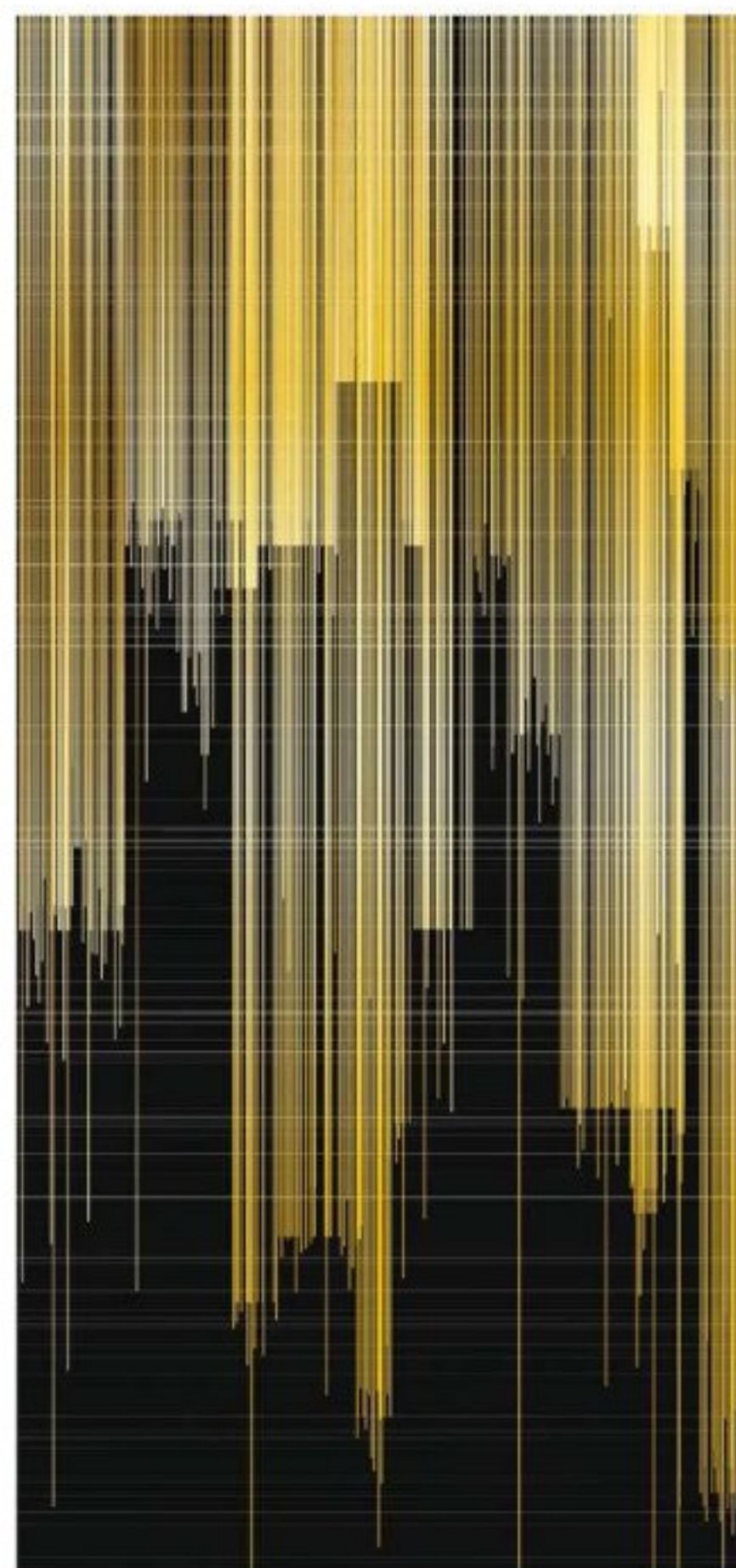
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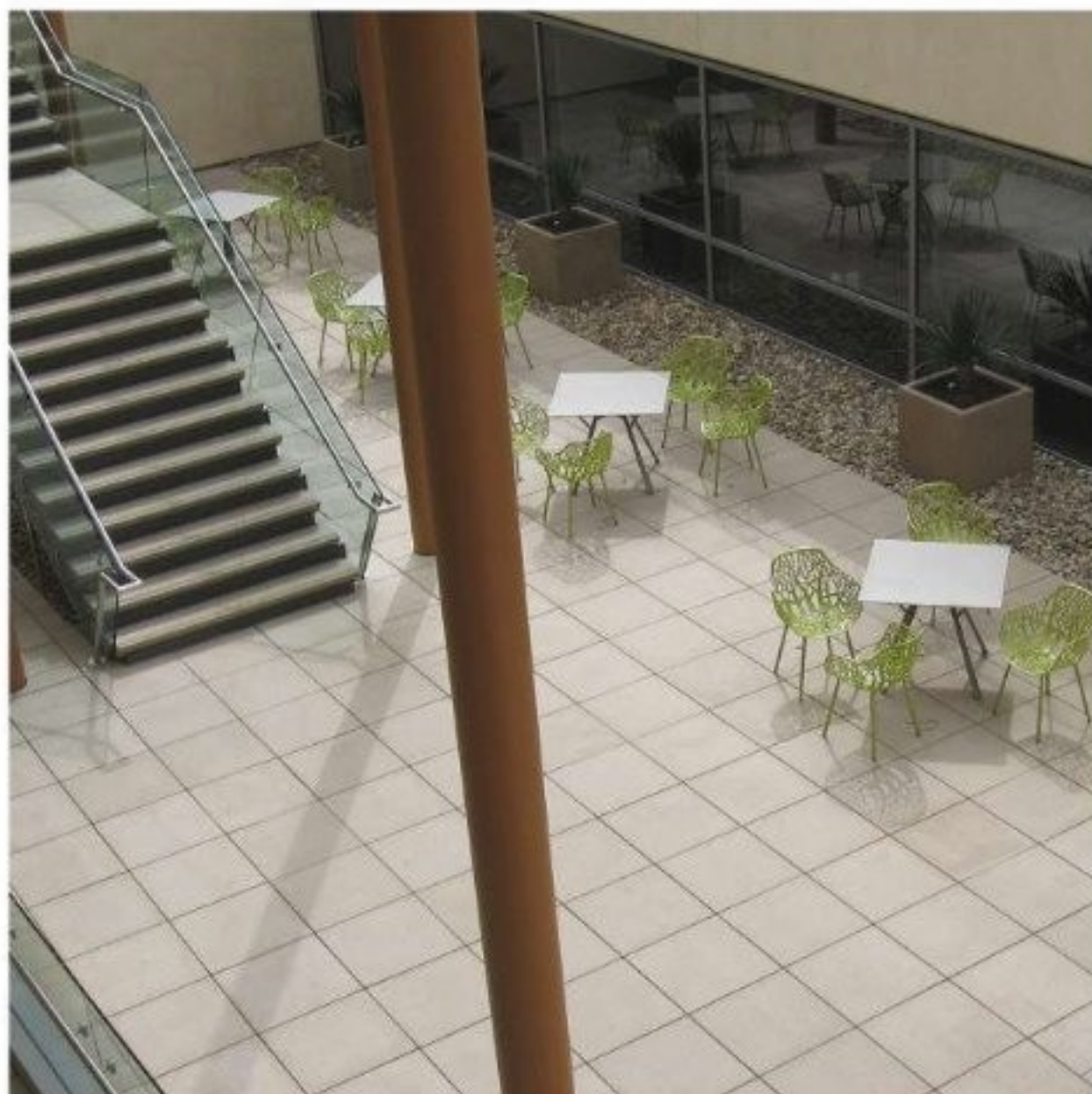
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teakwarehouse.com



Mono B Wall Clock

This simple clock is minimal and clean in design, while maintaining a striking visual impact with its black and white palette and aluminum frame.

Lemnos, \$150
store.dwell.com



Bruer Cold Brew Coffee Maker

The Bruer is an innovative kitchen product that allows people to brew cold brew coffee in their own homes. It is constructed in durable borosilicate glass and features silicone accents and a stainless steel filter.

Bruer, \$75
store.dwell.com



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Toll-free 800-428-2881
bdiusa.com



Yamazaki Desktop Magazine Rack

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Yamazaki, \$35
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Clug, \$20
store.dwell.com



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Rabbit Air, \$370-\$400
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Wittus — Fire by Design
Tel. 914-764-5679
wittus.com



Nelson Ball Clock

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Vitra, \$395
store.dwell.com



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richardscudderart.com



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Sourcing

The products, furniture, architects, designers, and builders featured in this issue.

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OneButton onebuttonlife.com
eero eero.com
Sony Design: Making Modern (Rizzoli, 2015) rizzoliusa.com
Atelierworkshop atelierworkshop.com
littleBits littlebits.cc
Gensler gensler.com
Opitz Construction opitzconstruction.com
Reclaimed wood dining table and Thompson chairs from Cella Luxuria cellaluxuria.com
Petrie sofa from Crate & Barrel crateandbarrel.com
Smart Series 55-inch TV by Samsung samsung.com
Sliding door hardware by Barn Door Hardware barndoorhardware.com
Ray F pendant lights and Ray S floor lamp by Flos usa.flos.com
Tibetan bar stools from Pottery Barn potterybarn.com
Kitchen cabinets, Krion countertops, and Max Black Lappato floor tile by Porcelanosa porcelanosa-usa.com
Windows by Marvin marvin.com
Cooktop and hood by Miele mieleusa.com
Thermostat by Nest nest.com
Caséta Wireless system by Lutron casetawireless.com
Rhapsody fireplace by Lennox hearthsidedistributors.com
USB 15A Charger/Outlet by Hubbell Wiring Device-Kellems zoro.com
SimpliSafe simplisafe.com
AirPlay by Apple apple.com

60 Nice Modernist

Chris Downey arch4blind.com
Independent Living Resource Center of San Francisco ilrcsf.org
Arup Soundlab arup.com
indoo.rs Bluetooth beacons indoo.rs
LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired lighthouse-sf.org

64 My House

CTA Architects ctaarchitectsengineers.com
Stewart Construction stewconstruction.com
Steam-injection oven by Picard picardovens.com

UltraSharp flat-panel monitors by Dell dell.com
Table by Isamu Noguchi and Molded Plastic chairs by Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller store.hermanmiller.com
Leather sectional sofa by Four Hands fourhands.com
Custom rug by Linie Design liniedesign.com
LED lighting kit from Philips philips.com
Nicklas 6 Light Mini chandelier from Control Brand controlbrand.com
Island hood by Viking Range vikingrange.com
Refrigerator by Sub-Zero subzero-wolf.com
Patio seating by MamaGreen askmamagreen.com
Wool rug by Chandra shopchandra.com
Bedding by Coyuchi coyuchi.com
Desk by Misewell misewell.com
Chair by Jonathan Adler jonathanadler.com
X-Series solar panels by SunPower us.sunpower.com

76 Concepts

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Braun braun.com
Brionvega brionvega.it
JVC jvc.com
Bose bose.com
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Muji muji.com
Sonos sonos.com
Eames Office eamesoffice.com

86 Renovation

Blouin Tardif Architecture-Environnement btae.ca
Praxi praxi.qc.ca
Rear exterior steel cladding by Vicwest vicwest.com
Rear windows by Alumilex alumilex.com
Front windows by Jeld-Wen jeld-wen.com
Skylight by Velux veluxusa.com
Tiles by Ceragres ceragres.ca
Hanging lamp, dining table, cabinets, and curtains from Ikea ikea.com
Refrigerator by KitchenAid kitchenaid.com
Isao chairs by Mitz Takahashi mitztakahashi.com

96 Focus

McIntosh Laboratory mcintoshlabs.com
104 Big Idea
Kennedy Nolan kennedynolan.com.au
Matt Johnson Building Services mjbs.net.au
Worn White exterior paint by Haymes haymespaint.com.au
Chair No. 18 by Thonet thonet.de
Refrigerator by Fisher & Paykel fisherpaykel.com
Stove and dishwasher by Miele mieleusa.com
Hood by Qasair condari.com.au
Drawer pulls from Ikea ikea.com
Yeva kitchen faucet by Reece reece.com.au
Sofa by Jordan jordan.com.au
Wood stove by Nectre nectre.com
Kivet bedding by Marimekko marimekko.com
Ceilings fans by Hunter Pacific hunterpacific.com.au

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Stillwater Dwellings stillwaterdwellings.com
Josh Chandler - JAC Designs joshchandlerdesigns.com
Montecito lounge chairs from Restoration Hardware restorationhardware.com
Mason coffee tables from Crate & Barrel crateandbarrel.com
Molded Plastic chairs by Charles and Ray Eames from Design Within Reach dwr.com
Splügen Brau pendant by Flos usa.flos.com
Raven countertops by Caesarstone caesarstoneus.com
Pam stools and Togo sofa by Ligne Roset ligne-roset-usa.com
Refrigerator, oven, and range hood by Frigidaire frigidaire.com
Kitchen sink by Elkay elkay.com
Parma faucet by Danze danze.com
Pensi fan by The Modern Fan Company modernfan.com
Fireplace by Montigo montigo.com
Paulistano armchairs from Design Within Reach dwr.com

Dunn cocktail table from Room & Board roomandboard.com

132 Home for Good

Alter Urban alterurban.com
JPaul Builders jpaulbuilders.com
Core Studio Design corestudiodesign.com
Kanics Inclusive Design Services imkanics@mindspring.com
FANN (Finding a New Normal) findinganewnormal.com
Custom kitchen cabinets, counters, and living room bookcase by Artisan Interiors 410-243-1045
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Refrigerator by KitchenAid kitchenaid.com
Table by BoConcept boconcept.com
Pendant Lamp by Graypants graypants.com
Molded Plastic chairs by Charles and Ray Eames from Herman Miller store.hermanmiller.com
Drop-down mechanisms for counters and cooktop from Freedom Lift Systems from Accessibility Professionals freedomliftsystems.com
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Prefabricated aluminum panels by Agway Metals agwaymetals.com
Marble backsplash, Algonquin stone and slate on fire surround, and Grigio Chario porcelain floor tiles by Ciot ciot.com
Kitchen table and living room side tables from Kantelberg + Co. kantelbergco.com
Quartz countertops by Caesarstone caesarstoneus.com
Masters chairs by Philippe Starck and Eugeni Quitllet for Kartell from Elte elte.com
Triumph chandelier by Eurofase eurofase.com
Custom hood by Forged Design forgeddesign.com
Dining table and library sofa from Restoration Hardware restorationhardware.com
Kitchen cabinetry, TV cabinet, and bathroom vanity by Muti Kitchen & Bath mutikb.com
Wassily chairs by Marcel Breuer for Knoll from Quasi Modo Modern Furniture quasimodomodern.com
Chair by SohoConcept sohoconcept.com
Speakers by Current Audio currentaudio.com
Television by Samsung samsung.com
Freestanding tub by Wetstyle wetstyle.com

144 Space Jam

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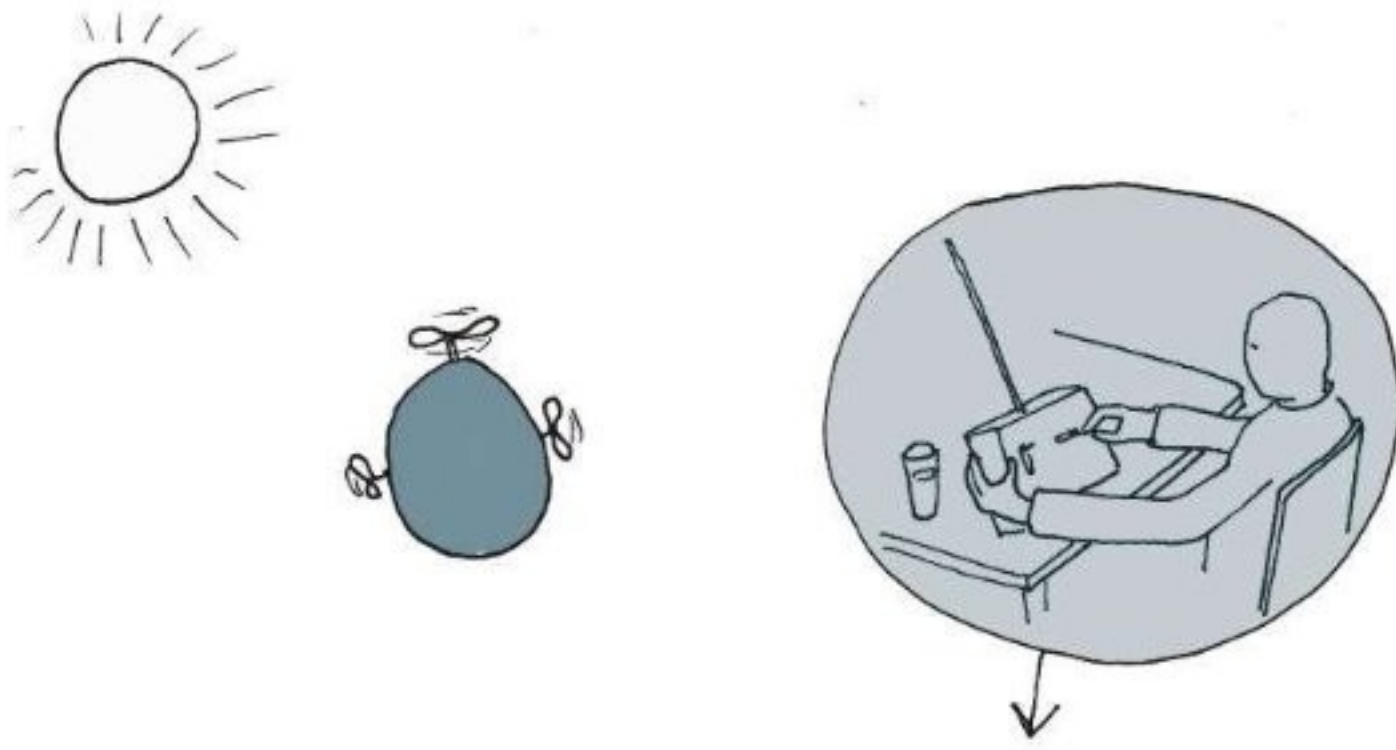
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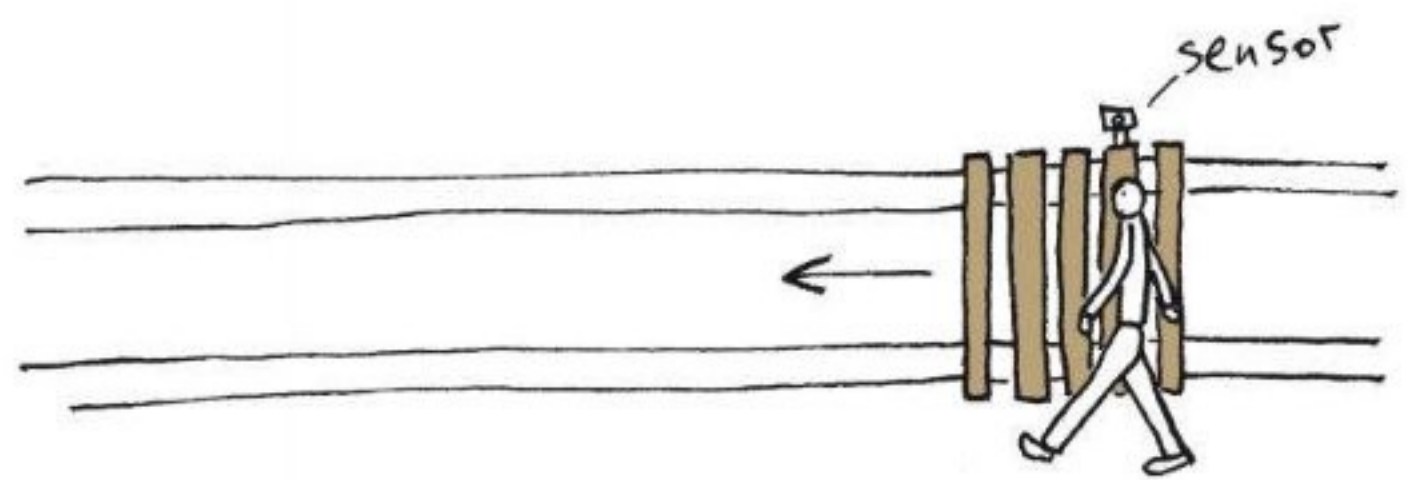
Variations on a Theme

British artist and designer Dominic Wilcox illustrates inventive—and admittedly outlandish—ways technology can potentially streamline our lives.



Remote control Sun Shade

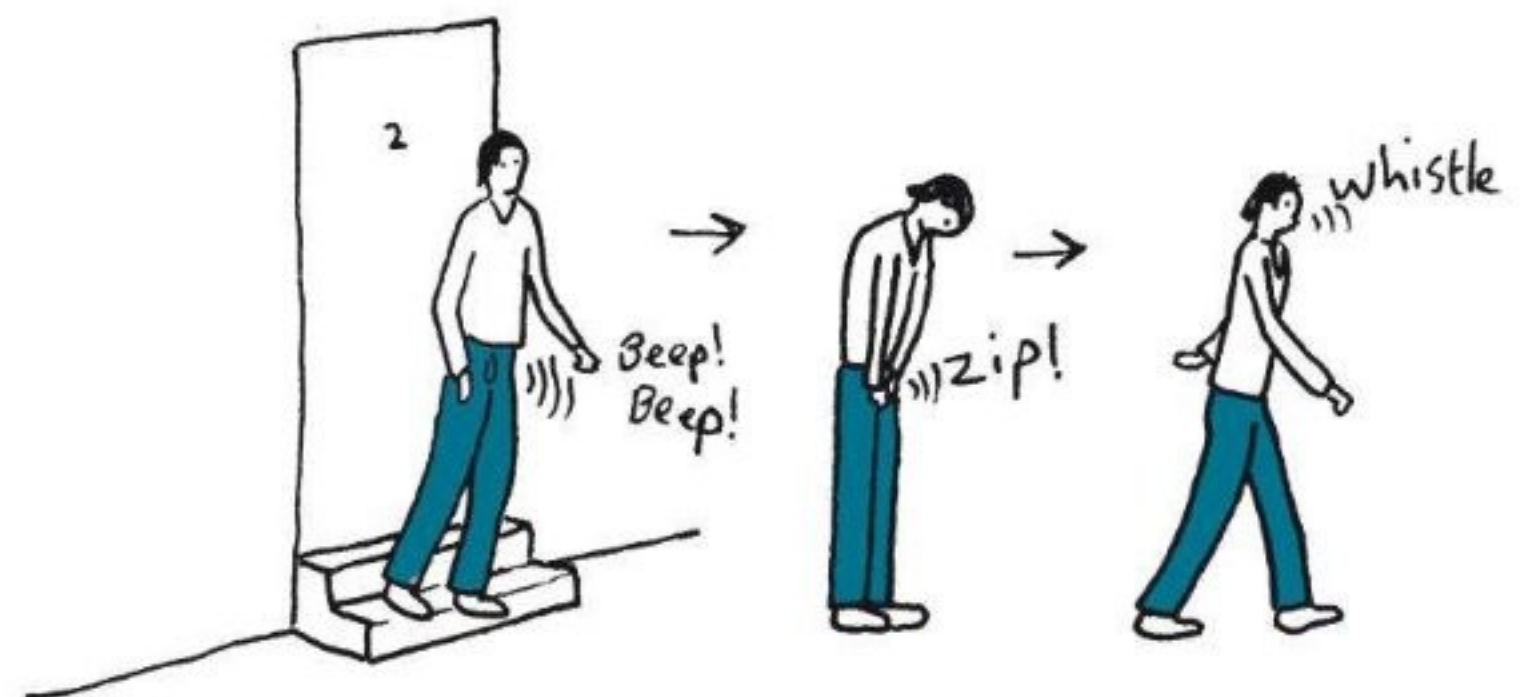
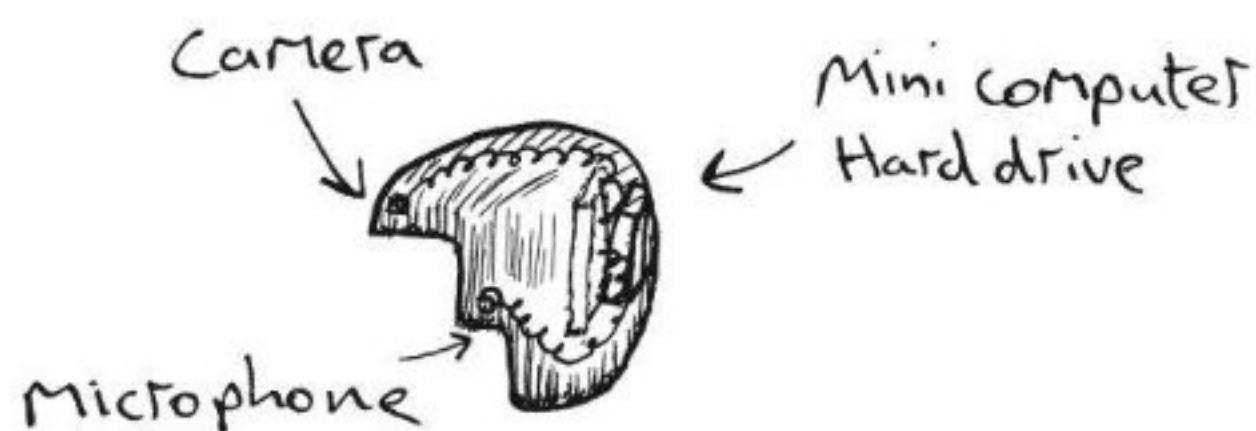
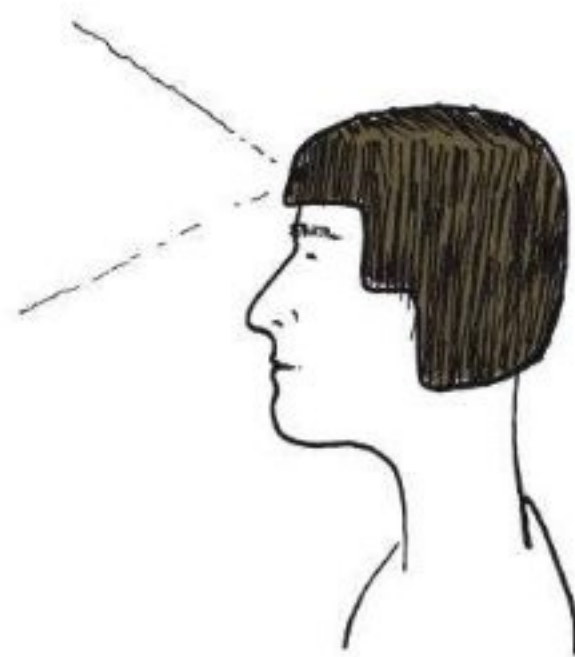
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sensor detects position of person and moves fence accordingly

2nd Brain

wig with built-in camera and microphone to act as a memory back-up.



Fly down warning device

"I take ideas to an extreme conclusion," Dominic Wilcox says.

"There's a ridiculousness about them, but a strong footing in logic." In a series of illustrations featured in his new book *Variations on Normal*, Wilcox sets forth problem-solving concepts that reflect society's constant push for invention. He argues that smart tech makes sense only if it makes life easier, more enjoyable, or more productive. "People have the same desires as always—food, sex, friends, convenience, conversation, and so on," he says. "Technology enables us to get more of those things—or at least to have more options." □

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