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ISSUE 302

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Silver Two Lever Switch

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Why Kinetic Switches Are Growing in Popularity

- No wiring between switch and light point
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- No batteries required
- No Wi-Fi required
- Modern, sleek frameless design
- Two-Way Switch enabled
- Reduced maintenance costs
- Eco-friendly



White Two Lever Switch

How Does the Receiver Work?

The receiver is installed within the light fitting and receives the wireless signal from the switch to switch the light on and off safely and efficiently.

Transmission Range varies:

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- Indoor = 12m (Concrete & Glass Walls)



Black One Lever Switch

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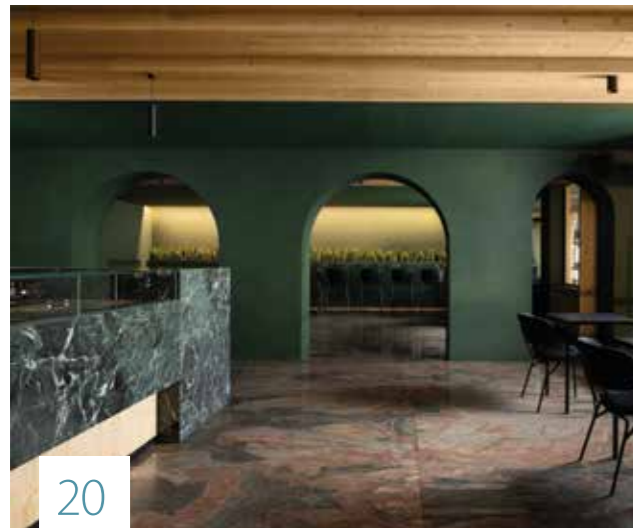


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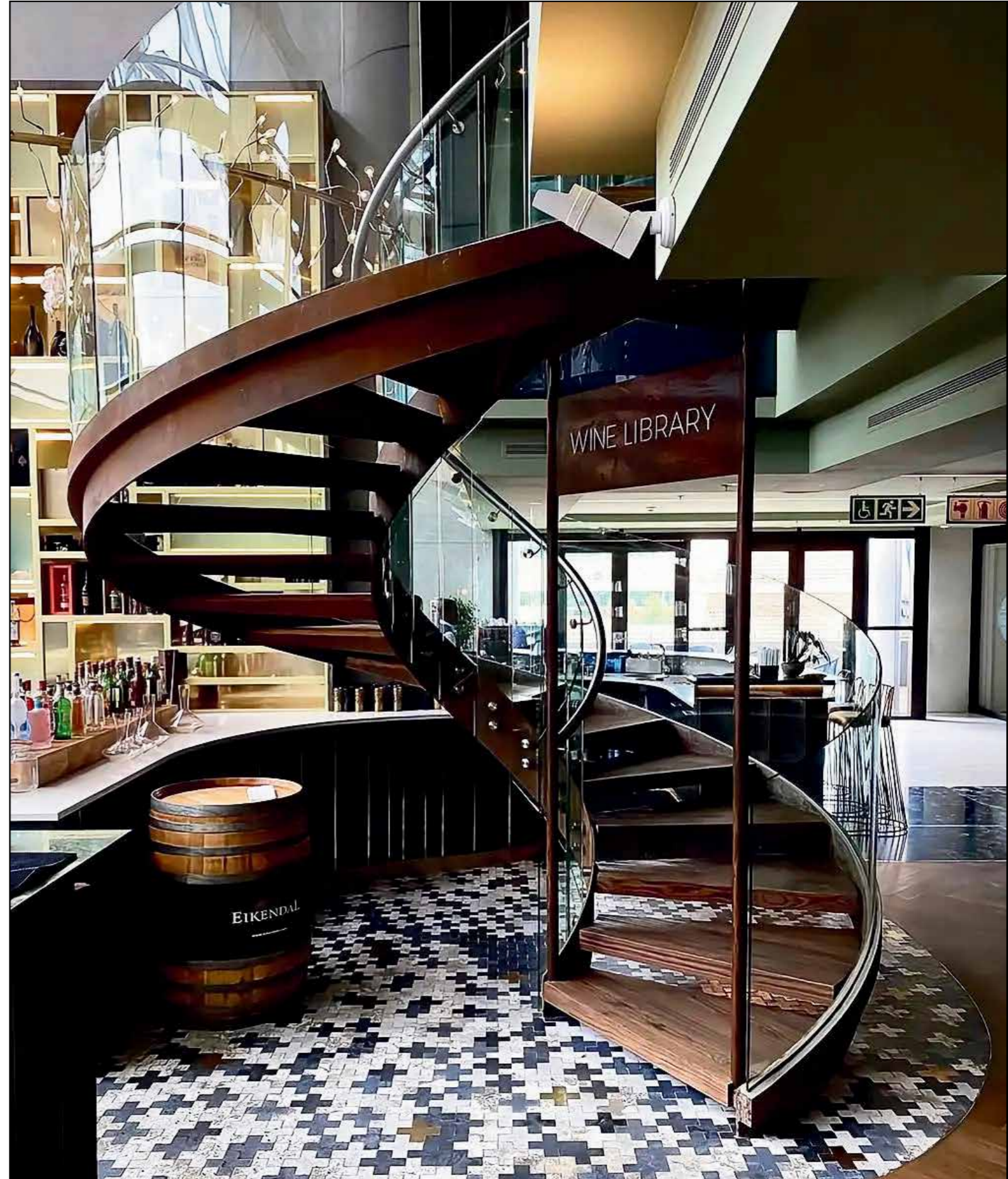
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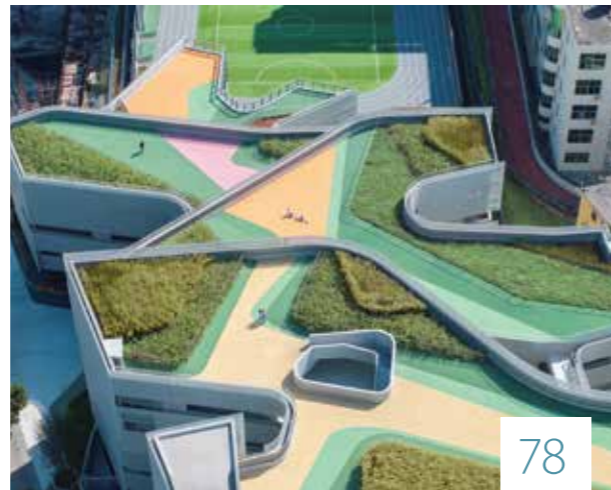
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Exciting new joint venture to enrich luxury coatings market in Southern Africa

Plascon and Versus Paint, two leading Southern African paint and coatings companies, have announced the formation of a joint venture to accelerate the growth of luxury, premium decorative wall finishes. This important strategic move will enhance the competitive position of both parties with the aim of delivering scalable and long-term growth.

‘The strategic joint venture will unlock significant sustainable and scalable growth opportunities for customers by delivering new specialist innovative product and service solutions, an enhanced brand experience, and expert technical excellence for both professional and retail customers,’ says Alan Cotton, General Manager of Plascon Southern Africa.



The joint venture brings together the complementary expertise, scale and capabilities of Plascon’s manufacturing, supply chain, market reach, and brand strength, with Versus Paint’s mastery of luxury coatings, specialist textures and applicator support services.

For Albano Prestia, Managing Director of Versus Paint, the venture is set to open doors: ‘I am excited about the new opportunities that the joint venture will deliver for customers, and Versus Paint is committed to ensuring a seamless rollout.’

The joint venture builds on the respective, existing complementary

strengths of both companies. Both have indicated that all their employees remain central to the success of the joint venture.

The combined strengths of these two companies creates a dynamic platform, that none of Plascon’s nor Versus Paint’s competitors have, to successfully expand the fast-growing luxury specialist coatings segment. The venture is set to deliver profitable growth to both companies and create new employee opportunities for learning, growth, career development and prosperity. dw

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Why Wabi-Sabi Is Defining the Next Wave of Wellness Spaces

In the world of luxury wellness, a quieter, more intentional design movement is taking hold. Moving away from polished perfection and overt opulence, today's most compelling spaces are embracing the principles of wabi-sabi - the Japanese philosophy that finds beauty in imperfection, authenticity, simplicity, and the natural world.

This shift reflects a broader evolution in how luxury is being defined. No longer driven solely by grandeur or excess, modern luxury wellness spaces are increasingly being shaped by feeling: calm over clutter, texture over gloss, restraint over spectacle. The result is a new design language that is softer, more sensory, and deeply restorative.

At The Hyding, Johannesburg's preventative wellness centre, this philosophy is expressed through an environment designed to soothe, ground, and reconnect. More than a visually striking space, The Hyding represents a growing movement in which architecture and interiors play an active role in supporting wellbeing.

Rather than relying on overly designed finishes or sterile minimalism, the space

embraces a more considered aesthetic - one that values tonal softness, natural materials, organic imperfection, and emotional resonance. It is a design approach that feels both elevated and deeply human, inviting visitors into an atmosphere of stillness and pause.

"Luxury today is no longer just about what a space looks like - it is about how a space makes you feel,"

says Nicole van Collier, Founder of The Hyding.

"There is a growing desire for environments that offer quiet, calm, and authenticity. Wabi-sabi speaks to that shift beautifully, and at The Hyding, it became an important lens through which the space was experienced."

As wellness continues to influence hospitality, residential, and commercial interiors, the appeal of wabi-sabi lies in its ability to bring depth and soul into contemporary spaces. Its influence can be seen in muted palettes, raw textures, imperfect finishes, sculptural forms, and

an overall sense of intentional restraint. In wellness design particularly, these elements do more than create visual appeal - they help shape emotional experience.

This is especially relevant in a time when people are seeking refuge from overstimulation and the demands of modern life. In response, luxury wellness spaces are being designed not just as destinations, but as sanctuaries - places where every detail contributes to a sense of restoration.

The Hyding reflects this new direction. Designed as an urban sanctuary, it captures a more nuanced expression of luxury: one rooted in atmosphere, balance, and quiet confidence. Here, beauty is not found in excess, but in the thoughtful interplay between space, materiality, and mood.

For the design world, the rise of wabi-sabi signals more than a passing trend. It points to a deeper cultural shift toward spaces that feel authentic, restorative, and emotionally intelligent. In the next wave of luxury wellness design, perfection is no longer the goal. Presence is. dw

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Outdoor Collection

by Roche Bobois

To mark Milan Design Week 2026, Roche Bobois unveils its new outdoor collection. Designed for terraces, gardens, and poolside settings, it expresses the brand's boldness, savoir-faire, and commitment to comfort, through an elegant and contemporary vision of outdoor design.

This collection is built around around two key pillars:

- A full collection by American designer Stephen Burks, who reunites with Roche Bobois to create Catalina. This outdoor collection combines design and savoir-faire, with particular attention paid to craftsmanship, finishes, and a choice of sustainable and responsibly sourced materials.
- The collaboration with Italian maison Missoni continues and evolves. It gives rise to Formentera, a captivating collection of outdoor seating where materials, colours, and patterns come together in a bold and vibrant style.

"At Roche Bobois, we are constantly striving to broaden our vision of design by embracing strong and unique creative sensibilities. Stephen Burks embodies this approach perfectly - his multicultural perspective and the attention he pays to craftsmanship bring a deeply human dimension to his creations."

Éric Amourdedieu, Roche Bobois Group Executive Director.

STEPHEN BURKS, DESIGNER

One of the most influential designers of his generation, American Stephen Burks (born in Chicago in 1969) has developed a singular practice bridging industrial design and craft.

After studying product design at The Illinois Institute of Technology, he then received a Master of Architecture from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation in New York. In 1997 he founded his Brooklyn studio, now known as Stephen Burks Man Made.

His work is characterised by a collaborative approach that synthesises



craft traditions and contemporary production. Firmly convinced that design should reflect cultural diversity, he develops projects with craftspeople worldwide, integrating traditional techniques such as weaving, basket making and cord work, into pieces destined for industrial manufacturing.

Stephen Burks has collaborated with numerous international companies, including Roche Bobois, who called upon him as early as 2014 for his first collaboration with an American designer, thus marking an important step in its development in the United States.

Stephen Burks' work has been the subject of major exhibitions at institutions such as the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

His designs were also presented at the 19th Architecture Biennale in Venice, as part of the 2025 United States Pavilion.

Burks is the first African-American designer to win the Smithsonian Cooper Hewitt National Design Award in 2015 and the only industrial designer to be awarded the Loeb Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Burks along with his partner Malika Leiper were recognised with the 2026 Wallpaper* Design Award for Best Helping Hands, honouring their collaborative and inclusive approach to design.

"With its soft curves and oversized frames, Catalina offers a new level of sensuous comfort to the Roche Bobois outdoor lifestyle. As the first collaboration since our groundbreaking Traveler collection, Catalina was a joy to develop. Its strong yet timeless vision had unanimous appeal to the Roche Bobois design team."

Stephen Burks



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POSITIONING INTERIOR DESIGN AS A KEY INDUSTRY DRIVER

How the IID is
strengthening the
interior design profession
in South Africa

Interior design in South Africa is evolving, not just in how spaces look, but in how the profession is understood, supported, and positioned within the built environment.

At the centre of this shift is the South African Institute of the Interior Design Professions (IID), functioning as a professional body should: as a connected ecosystem that supports, guides, and elevates designers at every stage of their careers.

Interior design is often misunderstood, reduced to aesthetics rather than recognised for its ability to create intentional spaces that meaningfully improve people's lives, health, and well-being within the built environment

A profession supported

One of the IID's most valuable roles happens in the day-to-day, in the real,



practical support offered to members navigating their businesses.

Designers regularly reach out for guidance on contracts, fee structures, insurance, and professional best practice. Whether it's understanding how to position a proposal, manage risk, or navigate client expectations, this kind of support provides confidence where it matters most.

These are often the unseen moments that shape stronger businesses, and ultimately, a stronger industry.

Preparing future designers through the IID Student Design Conversations

For students, entering the industry can feel uncertain. The gap between education and practice is real, and without context, even the most talented graduates can feel unprepared.

Through SIID Student Design Conversations and industry engagement,

the IID creates early exposure to how the industry actually works. Students gain insight into real projects, collaboration within the built environment, and the variety of career paths available to them.

More importantly, they begin to understand their role within the profession, not just as creatives, but as future contributors to a complex and evolving industry.

Supporting the next generation through the IID Young Designers Event

The transition from graduate to working Interior Designer is one of the most defining stages of a career.

This is where young designers begin to shape their direction, whether that means starting their own studio or growing within an established practice.

The IID creates space for these conversations, offering insight into the

business of interior design, professional positioning, and the realities of working within the industry. Through more intimate engagements, young designers are able to connect, ask questions, and learn from those who have navigated similar paths, and seasoned designers.

It's in this space that preparation begins to meet opportunity.

Equipping professionals for growth through professional events

For established designers, the focus shifts toward sustainability, refinement, and long-term growth.

The IID supports professionals through access to relevant tools, knowledge, and conversations that directly impact how practices operate. This includes business development, fee structuring, legal and contractual frameworks, health and safety considerations, and insurance awareness.

In addition, ongoing discussions around emerging methodologies, including BIM, WELL principles, and evolving technologies, ensure that designers remain informed and adaptable.

This is not about adding complexity, but about enabling better decisions.

A connected industry

Events and industry conversations bring interior designers together to exchange ideas, build relationships, and strengthen alignment within the built environment. This year alone, the IID has hosted six events, with over 700 designers attending, a clear sign of the industry's



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INTERIOR DESIGN
PROFESSIONS

appetite for connection and growth. These interactions create a more informed and connected collective, and if you're not part of it, you're missing out.

Repositioning interior design

Interior design is often misunderstood, reduced to aesthetics rather than recognised for its impact on functionality, well-being, and the built environment. In reality, it shapes how people live, work, and do business, directly influencing health and overall well-being.

The IID is actively working to shift this perception by supporting designers in operating professionally and by creating awareness of the value they bring. Through this, interior designers are increasingly

recognised as key contributors within the broader industry

A professional body with purpose

At its core, the IID provides structure, support, and direction for the profession.

It offers guidance when it's needed, creates opportunities for growth, and builds connections that strengthen both individuals and the industry as a whole.

Because the reality is simple: if you are part of the interior design industry, you are already contributing to its future. dw

*You're already one of us.
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www.iidprofessions.org.za



KSA update, May 2026.

CT student and young designers day

Supporting new talent in the industry and encouraging the next generation of designers is something the KSA feels very passionately about. In May we joined forces with the IID to host the Young Designers event and our Cape Town Student Conversations.

The KSA and IID continue to grow their relationship. Both organisations are aligned in their belief in giving back to the industry and taking a leadership role in education, support and growth for our industries. We have found that we have a synergy and that our collaboration makes our offerings stronger.

We started with the Young Designers event hosted at Angel Shack at the Foreshore. The focus of the event was to get your designers working in the industry in the same space to share stories and talk opportunities. It was fantastic to see so many young designers from the kitchen and cabinetry sector there on the day.

We held three talks during the event – ‘Designing with Empathy’ which was a panel discussion which included KSA national manager Stephanie Forbes, Kate Wardle from Include Me and Charlene le Roux from Blum, and looked at how designing with empathy as they guide impacts the experience, particularly for those with hidden disabilities. We also enjoyed Lisa Bridgeford from DHKI taking us through her advice on avoiding design creep, and then a discussion with Monica Garcia from Rumour Has It and Amore Strauss from Studio Monochrome looking at the things they wish they had known, and the mistakes that taught them the most in their careers.

The student conversations event, hosted by WOMAG/Mobelli, was a buzz of energy from both the showcasing suppliers and the students. While students got to explore the huge WOMAG/Mobelli showrooms, they also had an opportunity to interact with representatives from Salvocorp, Loubser Wood Components, Rubio Monocoat, Grass, Max on Top and Blum.



Young Designers' event



Student Day



Student Day



Young Designers' event



Young Designers' event



Student Day



Young Designers' event



Student Day



Student Day



Young Designers' event



Student Day

Talks included a discussion with Tammy Legler, a cabinetry and kitchen designer from Easylife Kitchens Northgate. Tammy spoke to the students last year when she had just started her first job. We invited her back to share with the students what had changed, how she had grown and what she has learned. She was able to share a lot of valuable insights with the students that could help them as they enter the job market.

We held a panel discussion on careers, where the panel shared how their career journey had unfolded, and what kind of careers would be open to the students once they had graduated. Each panellist also shared advice and tips for the students as they get ready to move on from studying into the working environment.


Maria Day of the IID then did a talk on the things she wished she had known and the things she felt the students should know to further their careers. It included some really checks on how the real world will be.

Raghmah Solomen of Vortex Design Solutions also gave a talk on some of her projects, and the lessons she had learned in business and the problems she had overcome.

We ended the day with a discussion about the importance of projects and competitions to adding value to your portfolio, and getting engagement and honest feedback from industry.

It was an absolute privilege to host the students and to help them on their path. The engagement after the talks was fantastic, with many students waiting behind to ask questions and get advice.

Next on the KSA calendar we have

- Gauteng industry showcase – 28 May – Full CPD points for industry professionals that join for the full day – contact Niale on gauteng@ksa.co.za for more information.
- KZN networking and industry event – 8 July – to be held at Blum's showrooms in Durban. This event will include CPD talks and training – for more information contact Patsy on kzn@ksa.co.za 

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

ARCHITECTURE STUDENT CONTEST

ARCHITECTURE STUDENT CONTEST

Carol-Anne Grimshaw
Head of Solutions

Head of Solutions

Architecture Student Contest



From South Africa to the World

Young Architects Step Up to a Global Sustainability Challenge

As climate pressures, rapid urbanisation and resource constraints reshape how cities are built, a new generation of South African architects is being challenged to think beyond aesthetics and design for real-world impact.

This week, that challenge comes into sharp focus as students from across the country gather in Midrand for the national leg of the Saint-Gobain Architecture Student Contest (ASC). This global initiative by Saint-Gobain is fast becoming a proving ground for future industry leaders.

Now in its 21st year globally, with South Africa participating since 2016, the contest pushes students to respond to real-world architectural briefs under practical constraints, mirroring the complexities they will face in their professional careers. From energy efficiency and carbon reduction to occupant well-being and material innovation, the competition is designed to reflect the urgent priorities shaping the built environment today.

This year, students from Tshwane University of Technology, University of KwaZulu-Natal and Nelson Mandela University will compete for top honours at the national stage on 30 April at Saint-Gobain Africa's Head Office in Midrand, Johannesburg. The winning team will go on to represent South Africa at the international finals in Belgrade, Serbia, joining peers from around the world in

1st place winners



a three-day showcase of design thinking, innovation and collaboration.

"The Architecture Student Contest is about more than competition, it's about preparing students for the realities of an industry that is evolving rapidly," says Samukelisiwe Mkize, Academy Manager at Saint-Gobain South Africa. "We are seeing young designers engage deeply with sustainability, not as a concept, but as a responsibility. They understand that the decisions they make today will shape how people live, work and interact with their environments in the future."

The ASC was first launched in 2004 and expanded internationally in 2005, positioning itself as one of the few student competitions globally that simulates a live client brief. Each year, a host country is selected, and students are tasked with solving a real architectural challenge rooted in local social, cultural and environmental dynamics.

This year's international stage returns to Belgrade, where participants will present proposals that balance design excellence with measurable sustainability outcomes; spanning energy performance, circularity, and indoor environmental quality.

South Africa's track record in the competition has already demonstrated the calibre of local talent. In 2017, the country made its debut on the international stage with the University of Johannesburg securing second place in Madrid. A year later, the University of KwaZulu-Natal went one better, claiming first place in Dubai, an achievement that continues to resonate within the local architecture and academic community.

Beyond accolades, the contest has also begun to unlock broader opportunities across the continent. In Nigeria, for example, national winners have gone on to secure internships, highlighting how initiatives like the ASC can serve as a bridge between academia and industry. Competitions like this offer more than recognition; they provide a platform for students to test ideas, challenge conventions and engage with the kinds of constraints that define real-world projects.

For many participants, the journey from classroom to competition stage is a defining moment that signals the transition from theory to practice. And for South Africa, it is another opportunity to showcase its creative and technical talent on a global stage.



2nd place winners

3rd place winners



Watch it live and show your support.

The national stage of the Saint-Gobain Africa Architecture Student Contest will be streamed live from their Head Office and is open for all to experience.

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Winners:

1st place

- Rauen Smith
- Rudi Scholtz
- Nelson Mandela University

2nd Place

- Jacques Oostendurp
- Sarea Sewraj
- University of KwaZulu-Natal

3rd Place

- Reece Beukes
- Ekhardt Zeelie
- Tshwane University of Technology



Caffè Nazionale

In a borderland, forms and materials of Alpine tradition are reinterpreted in a contemporary key, creating a space for gathering and social interaction.

Caffè Nazionale reopens in Tarvisio, bringing back to life a name deeply rooted in the town's collective memory. A historic café now returns, reinterpreted along the main street. Tarvisio lies within a border landscape where Italy, Austria, and Slovenia meet and overlap - a territory shaped by exchange, transit, and arrival. The town marks the northern end of the Strada Statale Pontebbana, the historic route connecting Mestre to Coccau, at the Austrian border crossing.

In this setting, nestled between the peaks of the Julian Alps and immersed in the Tarvisio Forest, the new Caffè Nazionale takes shape.

The Space

The project occupies a large, vacant retail unit, fully glazed towards the street and internally structured by a sequence of columns that divide the floor into two parts. The interior design is inspired by the intention to create an elegant and contemporary atmosphere that engages in dialogue with the surrounding Alpine landscape.

The Arches

The first design move was to incorporate the existing columns into a wall articulated by a rhythmic series of arches that, beginning at the entrance, extend in length across the entire space. This architectural device filters the interior, distinguishing the bistro area from the more intimate lounge. Regular and measured, the arches establish a permeable threshold, suggesting spatial division without ever fully enclosing it.

The Wooden System

At the rear, a fir wood backdrop recalls the native tree species of the Tarvisio region. Warm and tactile, it separates the service areas from the public space. The wooden system is based on a 60 cm module. Vertical spruce elements clad the walls and define open shelving for the display of wine bottles. Following the same rhythm, these elements extend upward into the ceiling, where they become beams and panels, integrating the lighting system. This modular continuity establishes a clear spatial



order linking walls, furniture, and ceiling surfaces.

The Counter

The operational heart of the café brings together materials that evoke the Alpine environment: fir wood and green marble. Designed in an L shaped configuration with a central island, the counter accommodates generous work surfaces and a raised ledge for quick service while ensuring direct access to the basement and staff areas.

The Lounge

Along the glazed façade, a wooden bench runs parallel to the windows. The seating is upholstered in green leather padding, adding comfort and reinforcing the material palette of the interior. Heating elements are integrated behind slatted wood panels, allowing warm air to circulate while maintaining visual continuity with the timber surfaces.

The Table

In the lounge area, a large high table emerges as a distinctive and material focal point. Crafted in marble and fixed to the floor, it stands as a sculptural presence - solid yet refined - transforming this area into a place dedicated to conviviality.

Scenic Greenery

At the back of the lounge area, the project introduces a scenographic layer of greenery that brings the presence

of the surrounding landscape indoors. From a raised linear planter clad in glossy green ceramic tiles, plants grow to form a living backdrop that animates the wall and strengthens the relationship with the exterior environment.

Spatial Flexibility

The interior layout is designed to be highly flexible, structured around the rhythmic sequence of arches that divides the space into two main zones: the bistro area and the lounge area. This division allows each zone to support a different type of activity while maintaining a sense of visual continuity. From morning breakfasts and brunches in the bistro to afternoon aperitifs and evening live music performances in the lounge, circulation, seating, and furniture arrangements can adapt to changing uses. The combination of modular elements, open floor plan, and adaptable furnishings

ensures that the café remains inviting, functional, and engaging at any time, accommodating a variety of social and cultural events without compromising comfort or visual coherence.

Materials

The project originates from the existing marble flooring, characterised by shifting tones between forest green and deep reddish brown.

From this material base, a palette was developed that reinterprets the Alpine context: fir wood for walls and ceiling structures, green expressed through marble, glazed ceramics, and textured plaster, and living vegetation completing the composition.

In this way, Caffè Nazionale becomes a place of encounter and identity, in constant dialogue with the surrounding Alpine landscape.

dw





Estée Lauder Companies



AngloGold Ashanti

Giant Leap Award-Winning Workspaces

At Giant Leap, we don't just design offices - we create environments where people and businesses thrive. Our award-winning corporate interiors are crafted to go far beyond functionality. Each space is thoughtfully designed to inspire creativity, encourage innovation, and prioritise the wellbeing of the people who use it every day. Because we believe a truly successful workplace is one that

supports performance, culture, and human connection. Our purpose is simple yet powerful: to create **Thriving Workspaces**. Spaces designed for **People. Experience. Wellbeing.**

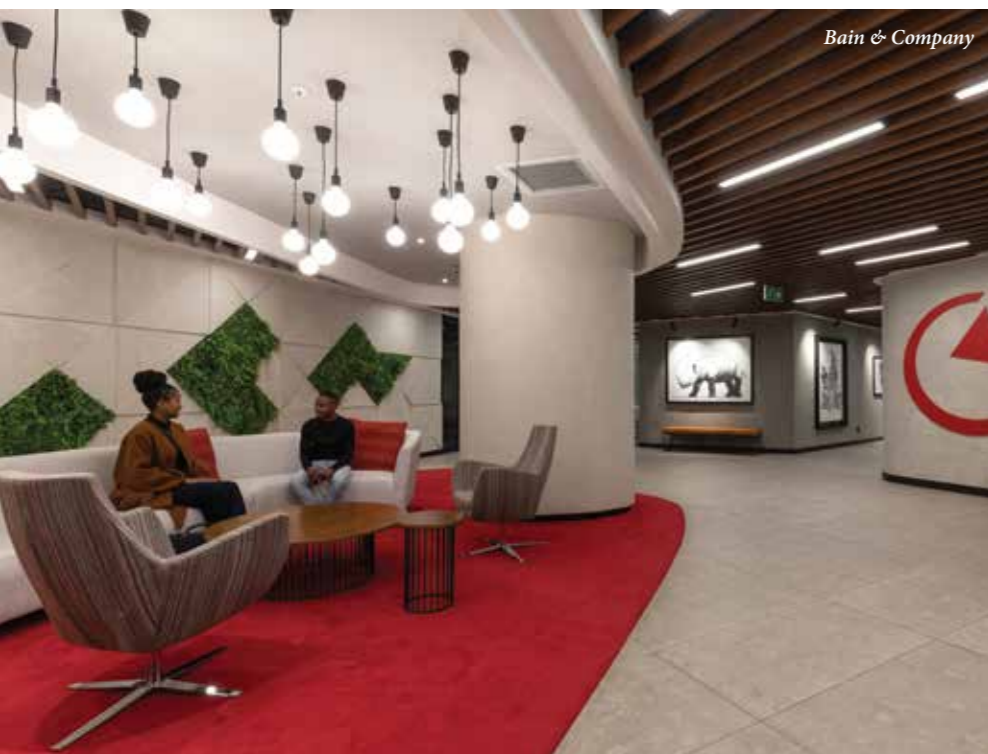
Celebrating Six Consecutive Years of Excellence

We are incredibly proud to have been recognised by the globally respected International Property Awards for six consecutive years - an achievement that reflects both consistency and excellence at the highest level of commercial interior design.

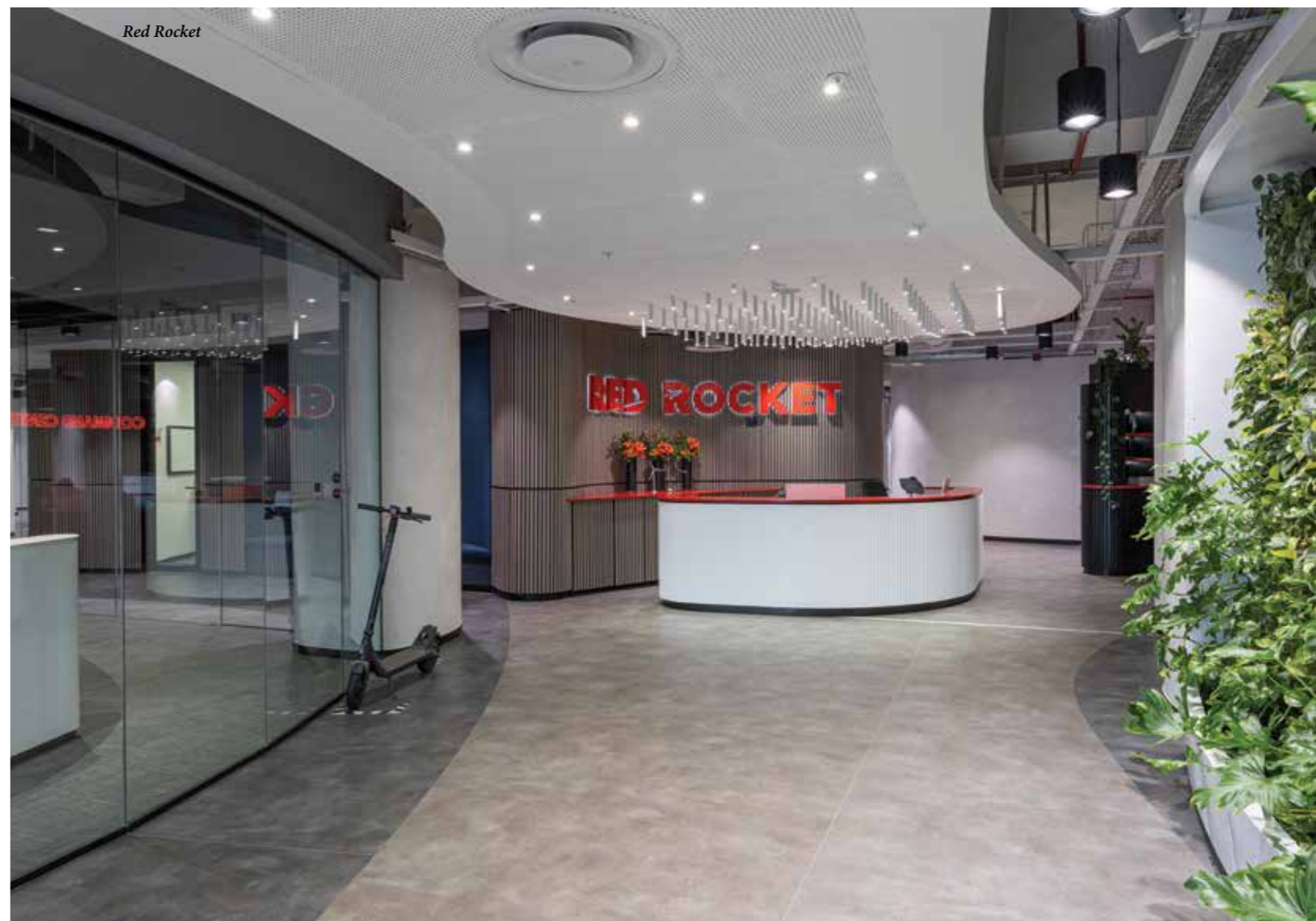
Twice during this period, we have been honoured with the **Regional Award for Best Office Interior Africa** - a distinction awarded to the top project across the continent.

Most recently, our groundbreaking Red Rocket project received: **5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa (2025-2026)** as well as the **Regional Winner: Best Office Interior Africa (2025-2026)**

The Regional Award, announced in January at the prestigious awards ceremony in London, represents the highest accolade within the African region. It is a moment of immense pride for our team and our client, and a powerful affirmation of what thoughtful, people-centric design can achieve.



Bain & Company



Red Rocket



Barloworld

A Legacy of Award-Winning Projects

Our continued recognition reflects a portfolio of exceptional clients and transformative spaces:

- 2025–2026: Red Rocket – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa & Regional Winner Best Office Interior Africa
- 2024–2025: Estée Lauder Companies – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa
- 2023–2024: Bain & Company – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa & Regional Winner Best Office Interior Africa
- 2022–2023: AngloGold Ashanti – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa

- 2021–2022: Mary Oppenheimer Daughters – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa
- 2020–2021: Barloworld – 5 Star Best Office Interior South Africa

Each project reflects a tailored response to our clients' culture, strategy, and aspirations - proving that great design is never one-size-fits-all.

A World-Renowned Mark of Excellence

The International Property Awards celebrate the highest levels of achievement across the global property and real estate industry. To receive an award is to earn a world-renowned mark of excellence - judged by an independent panel of industry experts against rigorous international standards.

For us, these accolades are more than trophies. They are validation of our philosophy: that when workplaces are designed with intention, innovation, and care, they become catalysts for growth, culture, and success.

At Giant Leap, we will continue pushing boundaries, challenging conventions, and designing workspaces that don't just look exceptional - but feel exceptional.

Because thriving businesses start with thriving spaces. dw

www.giantleap.co.za



Mary Oppenheimer Daughters

Fashion



Fashion Trends

by Stienie Greyling

Latest 2026 fashion trends blend Y2K (the year 2000) styles with modern minimalism, featuring cargo pants, denim shorts and bold colour combinations.

Key trends include relaxed tailoring, soft femininity with ruffles and draped fabrics, and layered outfits. Key accessories and styles include bright tights, chunky bangles and lingerie-inspired outerwear.

Which Patterns and Prints are making a Statement This Year?

- Animal prints and vibrant colours are big trends in women's fashion this year. Leopard, zebra and bold stripes appear in many outfits, giving a fun twist to classic styles. Bright colours like yellow, orange and blue add energy to dresses, skirts and bags. These prints and colours dominate both runways and street style. Choose a piece that stands out and brings new life to your wardrobe this season.
- Lace, sheer and romantic details are shaping the latest fashion trends for women. Dresses and tops now feature lace trims, sheer sleeves and soft layers that add beauty and charm. These elements appear in many brand collections and are easy to wear for both day and evening. Embrace these details to give an outfit a delicate, stylish edge and a fresh sense of inspiration.



- Retro Silhouettes: Pedal pushers and Bermuda shorts are making a strong comeback in 2026 fashion trends. These styles are easy to wear and bring a fun, traditional vibe to women's outfits. Many brands now offer these shorts in bold prints and classic colours. Pair pedal pushers or Bermuda shorts with a stylish top or jacket for a look that is comfortable, modern and ready to wear for any season.

Top Textures and Fabric Trends for 2026.

- Breathable linens and denim mixes are top fabric choices in 2026.

Many women prefer linen clothes for spring and summer because they feel light and cool. Denim mixes, found in skirts, jackets and trousers, offer style and durability. These fabrics appear in street style looks and brand collections, giving outfits a modern feel. Add them to a wardrobe for comfort and a fresh touch each season.

- Suede, cotton and linen blends shape many of the latest fashion trends for women this year. Suede gives a soft touch to jackets and shoes, while cotton and linen blends

keep outfits light and comfortable. Many brands use these textures for stylish trousers, blazers and skirts. These fabrics let women enjoy both fashion and function, making each outfit stand out in any season for every occasion.

Accessory Trends to Complete the Look.

- Chunky sandals and thong slides are top shoe trends in women's fashion this year. These shoes offer comfort, support and a bold look for any outfit. Brands are featuring thick soles and simple designs that work

with dresses, skirts, or trousers. One can wear them for summer days or casual events. Chunky sandals and thong slides bring a fun, modern edge to a wardrobe this season.

- Shells, rope bags and nautical details are must-have accessories in the latest fashion trends for women. These elements bring a beach-inspired vibe to outfits, making them perfect for summer. Many brands now offer shell jewellery and rope handle bags in their collections. Add these accessories to dresses, skirts, or even casual street style looks. They

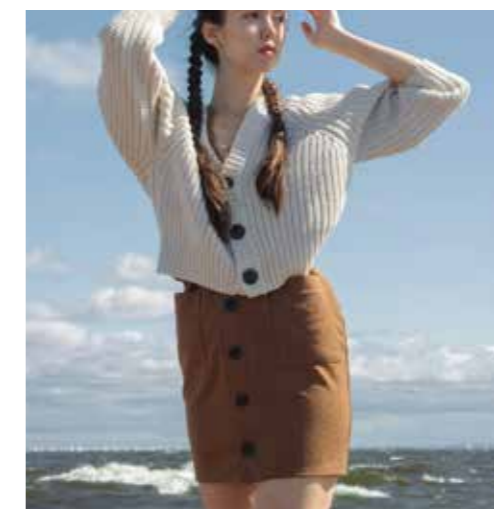
create a fresh, stylish touch that stand out in every season.

Long denim skirts are making a strong comeback in 2026. This trend stands out in street style and runways, showing the denim skirt's place in every wardrobe. Pair a long denim skirt with a simple top or a bold jacket. The look is easy to dress up or down, making it a favourite for many seasons.

Polka dot dresses are thriving in the latest fashion trends for women this year. This playful print gives every outfit a fun sense of style. Brands and designers show polka dots in many dress styles, from classy to modern cuts. A polka dot dress can be worn with sneakers for a casual look or paired it with stylish shoes for a special event. This trend brings flair and nostalgia to a wardrobe.

Floral printed dresses are a mainstay in the latest fashion trends for women. This style adds a sense of beauty and joy to any wardrobe. Many brands showcase these prints in their spring and summer collections. These dresses can be worn with a pair of sneakers or sandals for an easy, breezy look. Floral dresses offer both comfort and style making them a top pick for many women this spring and summer season.

Cardigan sets have become a favourite in women's fashion trends. This style is both comfortable and easy to wear for many occasions. Pair a matching cardigan and top with skirts or trousers for a fresh outfit idea. Many brands feature cardigan sets in their latest collections, showing this trend's strong presence. Choose soft or bold prints to add personality and confidence to your wardrobe this season.



Bershka Stockholm

Redefining The Retail Narrative At Gallerian

Bershka unveils its second Swedish flagship in Stockholm's iconic Gallerian shopping centre, debuting a sophisticated architectural concept developed in collaboration with El Departamento Studio.

The new 600-square-metre space, spanning two floors and housing the BERSHKA, BSK, and MAN collections, marks a significant departure from traditional mall retail design. Moving away from the conventional open-plan layout - which often results in a lack of spatial identity - the project introduces a curated sequence of "boxes" that structure the customer journey.

A dialogue between architecture and product rather than an expansive hall, the store is conceived as a continuous 360-degree loop. These architectural "boxes" act as self-contained micro-environments, introducing rhythm, deliberate pauses, and shifts in scale. This approach fosters a more intimate connection between the visitor and the collections, transforming the act of shopping into a discovery-led experience.



The design language embraces technical honesty. Construction systems, joints, and rear sections are left intentionally visible, integrating the building's logic into its aesthetic. This industrial transparency is mirrored in the open ceilings, where exposed installations allow the lighting design to take centre stage, defining distinct atmospheres and guiding the flow of movement.

Materiality and local context
Reflecting its Nordic setting, the material palette leans into natural textures and raw finishes:

- **Maple Wood:** Provides organic warmth and a sense of calm.
- **Ceramic Tiling:** A nod to domesticity, creating an approachable, tactile environment.
- **Essentialism:** By utilising the "boxes" as primary display backdrops,

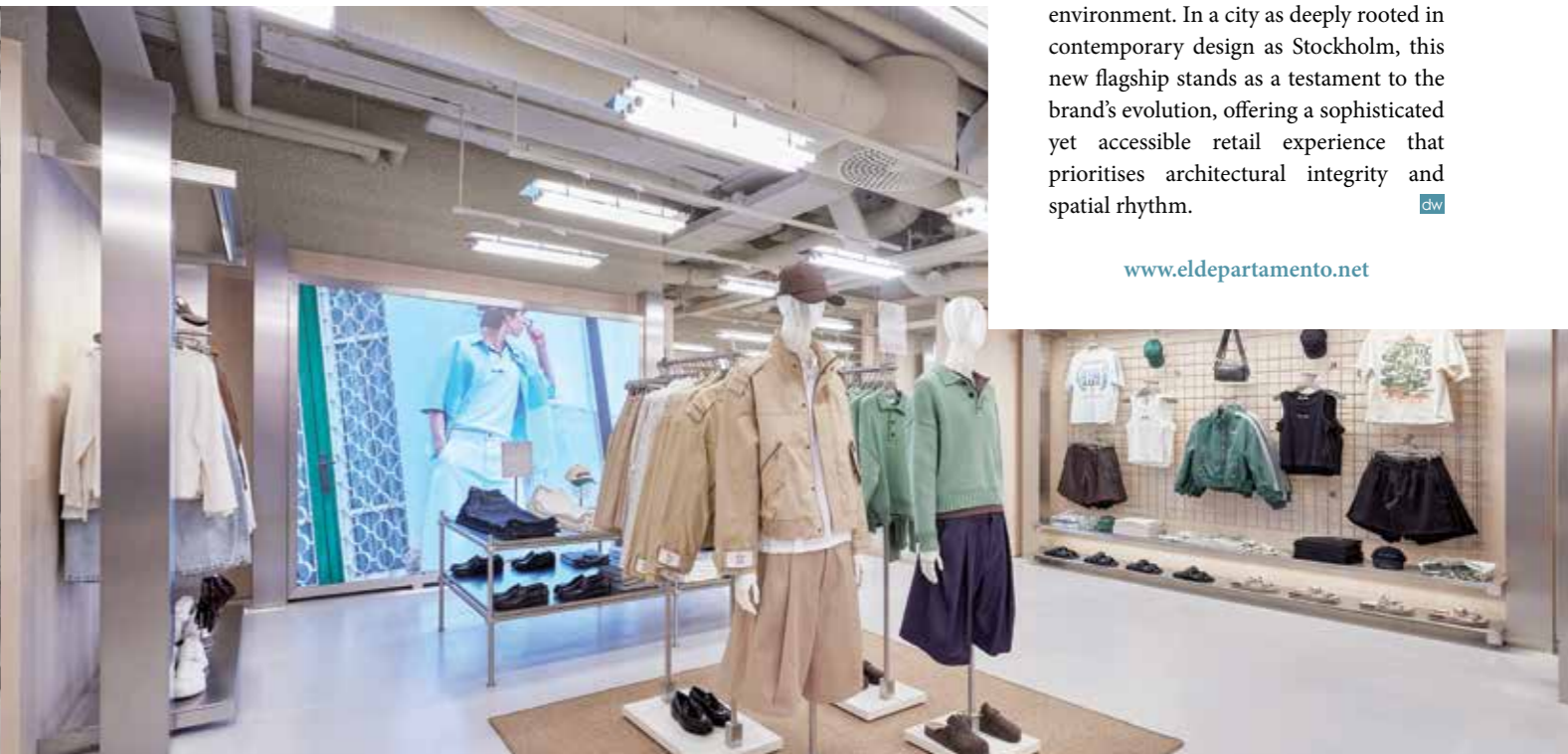
furniture is stripped back to its structural essence.

To balance this architectural rigour, Bershka incorporates dynamic graphic elements that resonate with its youth-driven audience, ensuring the space feels both elevated and high-energy.

A new vision for youth retail

The collaboration between Bershka and El Departamento Studio succeeds in creating a structured, multi-sensory environment. In a city as deeply rooted in contemporary design as Stockholm, this new flagship stands as a testament to the brand's evolution, offering a sophisticated yet accessible retail experience that prioritises architectural integrity and spatial rhythm. www.eldepartamento.net

www.eldepartamento.net





El Departamento designs Lady Pipa's new flagship store in Madrid: a dreamlike atmosphere welcomes you to the ultimate soirée

El Departamento has envisioned a theatrical, dreamlike space inspired by the cinematic universe of David Lynch. The store is conceived as an evening where the boundaries between reality and imagination blur, challenging the traditional retail model with a clear premise: if you're shopping for a party dress, why shouldn't the celebration begin the moment you step inside?

Architecture and interior design studio El Departamento has unveiled the new Lady Pipa flagship store, located at Calle Lagasca 33 in the heart of Madrid's prestigious Salamanca district. Spanning 106 square metres, the project reimagines traditional retail codes to immerse visitors in "Soirée Dreams" - a spatial concept where the limits between dreams and reality seamlessly blur.

The "Soirée Dreams" concept: where the party begins

True to their creative and multidisciplinary research approach, El Departamento co-founders Alberto Eltini and Marina Martín establish a profound dialogue between interior architecture



and the seventh art. Drawing inspiration from the theatrical and dreamlike aesthetic of David Lynch's Mulholland Drive, the space is envisioned as a surreal party. Based on the premise that for a guest-dress brand, the celebration should start the very moment of purchase, the studio has articulated a hypnotic space defined by chiaroscuro. A direct nod to the film greets visitors upon arrival: a retro metallic wall phone acts as a gateway to this unique universe, anticipating the brand's manifesto displayed in a neon sign: "Good girls go to heaven, bad girls go to Lady Pipa".

Soft textures, reflections, and a DJ booth

The interior journey is structured through a meticulous selection of materials that define the project's atmosphere. A continuous blue water-effect flooring engages in dialogue with walls coated in matching limewash paint, creating an immersive envelope. The checkout area, designed as a DJ booth welcoming visitors, is constructed from backlit corrugated glass blocks and crowned by a custom-designed suspended brushed aluminum luminaire.

In the store's display area, the energy is elevated by a sequence of three mirrored arches that multiply reflections from various angles, enhancing the

space's dreamlike quality. A textural counterpoint is provided by the backdrop of the dress displays, clad in silver faux fur. Meanwhile, the footwear collection claims its own distinct corner, showcased within niches upholstered in pink velvet on the inside and blue velvet on the outside.

The dance floor and the forbidden atelier

The scenographic climax of the retail space is reserved for the fitting room area, conceived as an exclusive dance floor. The perimeter is enveloped in subtle, shimmering gradient silk curtains, while custom mirrors with dotted frontal lighting evoke classic dressing rooms. Suspended from the centre of the ceiling shines the project's crown jewel: an imposing antique chandelier made of hand-blown Murano glass, measuring 1.40 metres in height and 1.10 metres in diameter. Chrome stools and purple velvet poufs round out this balanced interplay between contemporary design and curated antiques.

The final act of the journey is hidden on the lower floor. Descending the stairs leads to "L'Atelier", a dedicated event space that operates as the party's forbidden room. Here, the atmosphere shifts radically toward a more sober, intimate luxury: a dense green carpet covers the floor, while



FASHION

the walls are fully paneled in dark, natural Cathedral Sapelli wood veneer. It is a private sanctuary that retains the brand's signature elegance while elevating it to a more sensual, daring tone.


Project Data

- **Project:** Lady Pipa Flagship Store
- **Area:** 106m²
- **Location:** Calle Lagasca, 33 | 28001 Madrid, Spain

Team:

- **Studio:** El Departamento (www.eldepartamento.net)
- **Architecture & Interior Design:** Alberto Eltini & Marina Martín (oficina@eldepartamento.net)
- **Photography:** Sergio Pradana (www.sergioprada.info)

Suppliers & Contractors

- **General Contractor:** Nula Studio
- **Furniture Fabrication:** Nula Studio, Kimak
- **Furniture Design:** El Departamento
- **Flooring:** RCR Deco (seamless flooring), EGE (carpet)
- **Lighting:** HER, Judith San Quintín, Ecotex
- **Textiles:** Deco & You (drapery), Linum (velvet) 

www.eldepartamento.net



Designing Collaborative Office Spaces

by Stenie Greyling



Despite their value, collaboration spaces are often the first to go when companies are looking for ways to repopulate the workplace.

The workplace environment communicates with the people within it, both consciously and subconsciously. Incorporating collaboration spaces of different sizes and types, open and closed, tells people that collaboration is valued and encouraged by the organisation. Proximity and ample availability make collaboration easy to do, and more likely to happen.

Collaborative office spaces are evolving to prioritise flexibility, employee well-being and a mix of collaborative and focused work areas. Key themes include the rise of hybrid models, the integration of biophilic design and the need for intentionally designed, rather than just open spaces.

In the aftermath of the pandemic and the resulting shift to remote and hybrid work models, many organisations have reduced their real estate footprint, in some cases significantly. Today, as more and more companies look to increase office presence for employees, they are having to rethink their workplace strategies to accommodate a greater daily population.

Collaborative workspaces have gained popularity for a reason: They are designed to breakdown barriers, both literal



and metaphorical, between employees. These spaces encourage workers to come together, share ideas, and work collectively towards common goals. Whether it's an informal brainstorming session in a lounge area or a more structured meeting in a conference room, collaboration is at the heart of these design.

One of the main reasons for this shift is the recognition that teamwork drives innovation. When employees are encouraged to work together, their combined talents and perspectives lead to creative solutions that might not have been achieved in isolation. A well-designed collaborative office space not only facilitates these interactions, but also fosters a culture where teamwork is celebrated.

Effective collaborative workspaces begin with space planning. This involves analysing current layout, usage patterns and occupancy levels to ensure there is enough space for teams to work comfortably. Well-executed space planning can lead to significant cost savings while improving workplace effectiveness.

More importantly, proper space planning reveals areas of underutilisation, allowing organisations to repurpose or reconfigure these spaces to better serve team needs. This strategic organisation ensures that every square metre is used effectively, leading to both financial and operational benefits.

Zoning for different collaboration styles.

Not all collaboration is the same. Some tasks require energetic brainstorming, while others need focused discussion or quiet concentration. Effective workplace collaboration incorporates different zones to accommodate various working styles.

- Open collaborative areas for spontaneous interactions and group discussions.
- Group projects need semi-enclosed spaces for teams to work through ideas and make quick decisions.
- Private meeting rooms for confidential discussions and formal meetings.
- Quiet zones for focused work and concentration.
- Social places for informal interactions that build relationships and trust.

By clearly defining the purpose of each area, organisations create a more structured and supportive work environment, minimising distractions and enabling teams to collaborate more effectively.

Technology is the backbone of modern collaboration, providing the tools needed for seamless communication and efficient work. High-speed internet, video conferencing systems and digital presentation tools are valuable for supporting collaboration in both remote settings and in-person meetings.

Office acoustics are equally important, as poor sound management can lead to distractions and reduced concentration. The right acoustic treatment can reduce workplace stress and improve focus. Sound making systems, acoustic panels, soft furnishings, planting and strategic office layout can help control noise levels, making the workspace more conducive to productive collaboration.

dw





Bralco at Workspace Design Show Paris with My Belle Sofa System

Bralco is taking part these days in the Workspace Design Show Paris, a key event for contemporary workplace design, where the company is presenting My Belle Sofa System in preview - a new sofa system designed to bring flexibility and comfort to lounge and collaborative office areas.

At the centre of the stand, My Belle Sofa System interacts with the Aja Jour elements and B Sound acoustic panels, helping shape a welcoming and acoustically balanced environment.



OFFICE SPACES



The display is completed by Outline in its reception desk version, the Concerto collection for the materials library area, and the Nuvola table paired with My Belle seating, creating a coherent setup that reflects Bralco's approach to contemporary workplaces: functional, modular and focused on people's wellbeing.

With its presence in Paris, Bralco further strengthens its international path and confirms its ongoing research into furnishing systems capable of evolving alongside new ways of experiencing the workplace. [dw](#)

www.bralco.it/en/

Fabrics



Textiles with multidimensional designs

by Stienie Greyling

Textiles in 2026 are entering an era of multidimensional design – where craft meets computation and sustainability is embedded at the molecular level.

Current fabric trends emphasise sustainability, tactile comfort and bold maximalism, focusing on natural fibres like linen and wool, along with cosy textures like bouclé and velvet.

Key styles include earthy tones, vibrant jewel colours and innovative, eco-friendly recycled materials, with a strong trend toward layered, high-texture surfaces in both fashion and home interiors.

Trending fabrics for fashion include patterned cottons, blended weaves and printed canvas. These fabrics allow designers to express creativity while keeping pieces wearable. Patterned fabric is also popular for layering, making simple outfits feel intentional.

Upholstery fabric trends for 2026 embrace ‘soft luxury’ and tactile comfort, moving away from minimalism toward rich textures, including bouclé, matte velvets and chunky weaves. Key trends include organic, nature-inspired patterns, deep jewel toned colours and sustainable, durable materials like performance linens, alongside a nostalgic resurgence of 1970s inspired patterns and delicate lace.



Jewel toned colours

Colour Trends.

- Blue is back: but blues are moodier and darker in shades, ranging from cobalt and greys, blues to icy blues. Deluxe, Pinterest, Lick and Etsy all named blue as their colour of the year. These blues feel calm, grounded and timeless.
- Brown resurgence: rich chocolate tones replace the lighter cappuccino shades of the last two years and are being used on walls and upholstery to create a cocooning space.
- Earthy and natural tones, burgundy, ochre, rust and spice inspired shades are trending this Spring for a more grounded palette, more reminiscent of Autumn than Spring.
- Soft Neutrals and Prints: let's not forget that Pantone named Cloud Dancer their 2026 colour of the year, described as a billowy white. Neutral colours are used to create calm, comforting spaces

while complementary blush pink and terracotta lift the neutrals out of the ordinary.

Furnishing fabric trend 2026. Regenerated and regenerable fabrics: beyond ‘green washing’.

Not ‘sustainability’ in the generic sense – overused, worn out, often ineffective, but a circular economy applied with rigour and beauty. The textiles of Northern Europe are already patenting fibres deriving from production waste and post-consumer waste, without aesthetic compromises: recycled cottons with extra-soft finishes, regenerated wools with low chemical impact processes, mixed yarns obtained from fishing nets and marine polymers.

Multisensory textures: between touch, light and sound.

The fabric will no longer just be looked at or caressed: it will be experienced.

Interiors become multi-layered emotional spaces and fabric inaugurate a new multisensorial season.

- Fabrics that absorb sound pollution, introducing elegant acoustic control into residential and hospitality environments.
- Soft surfaces covered in photoluminescent fibres, capable of reflecting natural light during the day and restoring its poetry at night.
- Three-dimensional jacquards with tactile patterns that become haptic experiences, a perceptive stimulus that dialogues with the culture of wellness and experimental interiors.

These solutions are already being tested by Scandinavian and South Korean designers, and in 2026 high-end Italian boutiques will select them for tailor-made projects.

The bio-tech revolution from smart fabric to skin materials.

In 2024 and 2025 explored the theme of intelligent fabrics, 2026 will be the time for large-scale diffusion. We are talking about surfaces that:

- Regulate body temperature, adapting to humidity and heat.
- Capture fine dust, transforming coatings in active surfaces.
- Memorise the pressure of the body and ‘respond’ to it with targeted weights, ideal for the high-end residential world, but above all for interior wellness, hospitality, yacht and aircraft design.

It's not science fiction: companies like ByeWool (Japan) and Saltyco (UK) are already studying skin-materials, a new generation of fabrics that behave like human skin, reacting to stimuli.

In 2026 some Italian brands will bring these innovations to their mood boards intended for the most far-sighted interior designers.

The return of mohair in the living room.

In an era of apparent chromatic simplification, mohair returns to dominate as living room material with a museum-worthy personality. Shiny, warm, highly elastic, resistant to time and naturally antibacterial, mohair dyed in nuances such as oat milk, smoky peach, dusty lilac or lichen green, establishes itself as an irresistible texture for bold armchairs, padded headrests, body-sculpture poufs and iconic chaises longues. After years of absence, this sumptuous hand is conquering the most interesting collections of coverings. dw



Brown resurgence



Marianne Tiegen welcomes spring with outdoor spaces designed for living

Where architecture opens outward and nature becomes part of the home

Unlike many interior designers, Marianne Tiegen's journey into interiors began outdoors. Her background is rooted first in floristry, and then in gardens, an origin that continues to shape her design philosophy today.

Her interior design career began at Petersham Nurseries in London, where she worked as a buyer for garden and outdoor furniture. Gradually, her focus expanded to include interior furnishings and home décor, with a particular emphasis on antiques. While she was initially designing gardens and outdoor spaces for clients visiting the nursery, those same clients soon began asking her to design their homes as well.

She continued working as a buyer for major groups, specialising in antiques and outdoor furniture, before eventually launching her own interior design practice. As her London clients increasingly commissioned projects across the globe, her practice naturally expanded beyond

the city, leading her to establish studios in Paris, Verbier, and Los Angeles. From the very beginning, one principle guided her work: the seamless connection between indoor and outdoor living.

Curated Outdoor Spaces

For Marianne, outdoor spaces deserve the same level of care and intention as interiors. "You can't have a highly curated home filled with unique pieces and then place generic modern furniture outside," she explains. "The outdoor space is just as important."

Just like inside a home, contrast is essential. Materials, textures, and colours should interact and complement one another, not only through the plants themselves, but through the containers and furniture that accompany them. She often combines antique zinc planters such as dolly tubs or other zinc with antique terracotta vessels like Anduze pots. These are then balanced with more

contemporary pieces from makers such as Atelier Vierkrant or Potterie Ravel. But placement is key.

"You don't mix things randomly," she says. "You create clusters, play with heights, and allow for asymmetry."

Some areas, however, benefit from more structure and symmetry. Entrances, pathways, and formal approaches to a house often call for this kind of order, which helps emphasise the architecture and proportions of the building. In these cases, classic wooden Versailles Orangerie planters (from Jardin du Roi Soleil) work beautifully. And wherever possible, she recommends incorporating water. "Even a small water feature on a terrace can completely transform the outdoor experience."

Bringing Home Décor Outside

Outdoor living should feel as thoughtfully styled as any interior room.

Dressing an outdoor table, regardless of the season, is part of that philosophy. A dining table might feature a Médicis cast-iron urn filled with an arrangement gathered from the garden, the surrounding landscape, or from a good flower shop using seasonal flowers. Small terracotta pots with seasonal plants or herbs might also be placed along the table.

The same elements can appear both inside and outside, reinforcing the dialogue between the home and the garden. Terracotta pots filled with bulbs in winter and spring are another favorite detail, bringing a subtle sense of nature into both spaces.

These small gestures also ensure that an outdoor dining table always feels ready for an impromptu alfresco meal. Marianne often uses naturally dyed tablecloths inspired by the colours of the season, allowing the table to feel alive and connected to its environment.

Mixing Old and New

Outdoor furniture follows the same philosophy of thoughtful contrast. Marianne enjoys pairing 19th-century garden furniture, such as Arras chairs and benches, with more contemporary pieces from brands like Tectona. The

dialogue between eras creates richness and personality. In fact, when designing homes, the outdoor environment is always part of the process from the very beginning. Her studio's mood boards always include plants and outdoor imagery for every room, ensuring the house feels like a refuge, an oasis where nature is gently invited indoors.

Connecting Nature Through Fabric

One of the studio's most distinctive approaches to bringing nature inside lies in its fabrics. About half of the textiles used in their upholstery are dyed using a unique plant-based dyeing process. The remaining fabrics are left undyed, celebrating the natural tones of materials such as natural wool, linen, and hemp. Plant-dyed fabric walls are sometimes incorporated as well, reinforcing the connection between the interior and the natural world.

The team is also developing a natural water-repellent treatment for these fabrics to allow them to perform outdoors. In the meantime, clients who wish to use interior fabrics outside can apply water-repellent solutions themselves, provided they carefully follow the product instructions.

Using natural materials is not just

aesthetic. It is also an environmental commitment. Their bespoke furniture is made from materials that are fully biodegradable, further strengthening the link between design and nature.

Designing for Place

Each project calls for a distinct approach shaped by its surroundings. A home in the mountains, in the heart of a city, or by the ocean should feel naturally anchored to its environment. With studios in Paris, Verbier, and Los Angeles, the Marianne Tiegen team approaches each location through its own lens, beginning with a deep understanding of the region's native flora and landscape.

A balcony in Verbier, for example, might feature chunky furniture and stone-topped tables like those by Sempre. Often, these pieces are custom-made with local carpenters using reclaimed wood.

The patina of these materials gives newly built furniture a timeless quality that blends naturally with the surrounding landscape.

Unexpected pieces can also bring character. A florist's potting bench placed in a mountain chalet, for example, introduces an element of surprise, something singular that sparks curiosity.



Elsewhere, the tone shifts. An outdoor space in Los Angeles may feel more curated and relaxed, while a Parisian terrace will often feature antique French garden furniture. What gives a space its soul is this subtle mix of eras, origins, and local influences.

"There isn't a perfect formula," Marianne says. "You simply feel when something is harmonised."

To create that harmony, she believes you must genuinely love gardens and nature. The goal is to recreate, gently and thoughtfully, what the surrounding landscape already offers. Sustainability remains essential throughout the process. Whether antique or reclaimed, materials are chosen carefully so that design never comes at the expense of environmental responsibility.

Blurring the Boundaries

Sometimes the exchange between indoors and outdoors works both ways. Vintage outdoor pieces, such as those by Willy Guhl or Mathieu Matégot, are occasionally brought inside, their weathered patina adding character and authenticity to interior spaces.

The natural patina that develops on pieces left outdoors over time is impossible to replicate. A stone table or sculpture that has remained outside for decades acquires a surface that becomes almost like a work of art. Only nature can create this perfectly imperfect beauty. Whenever possible, Tiegen likes to bring one of these naturally weathered pieces indoors. They reconnect the interiors with nature. Years of searching for antiques allow us to discover these rare and unique objects. Whenever possible, Marianne Tiegen also enjoys creating small orangerie-

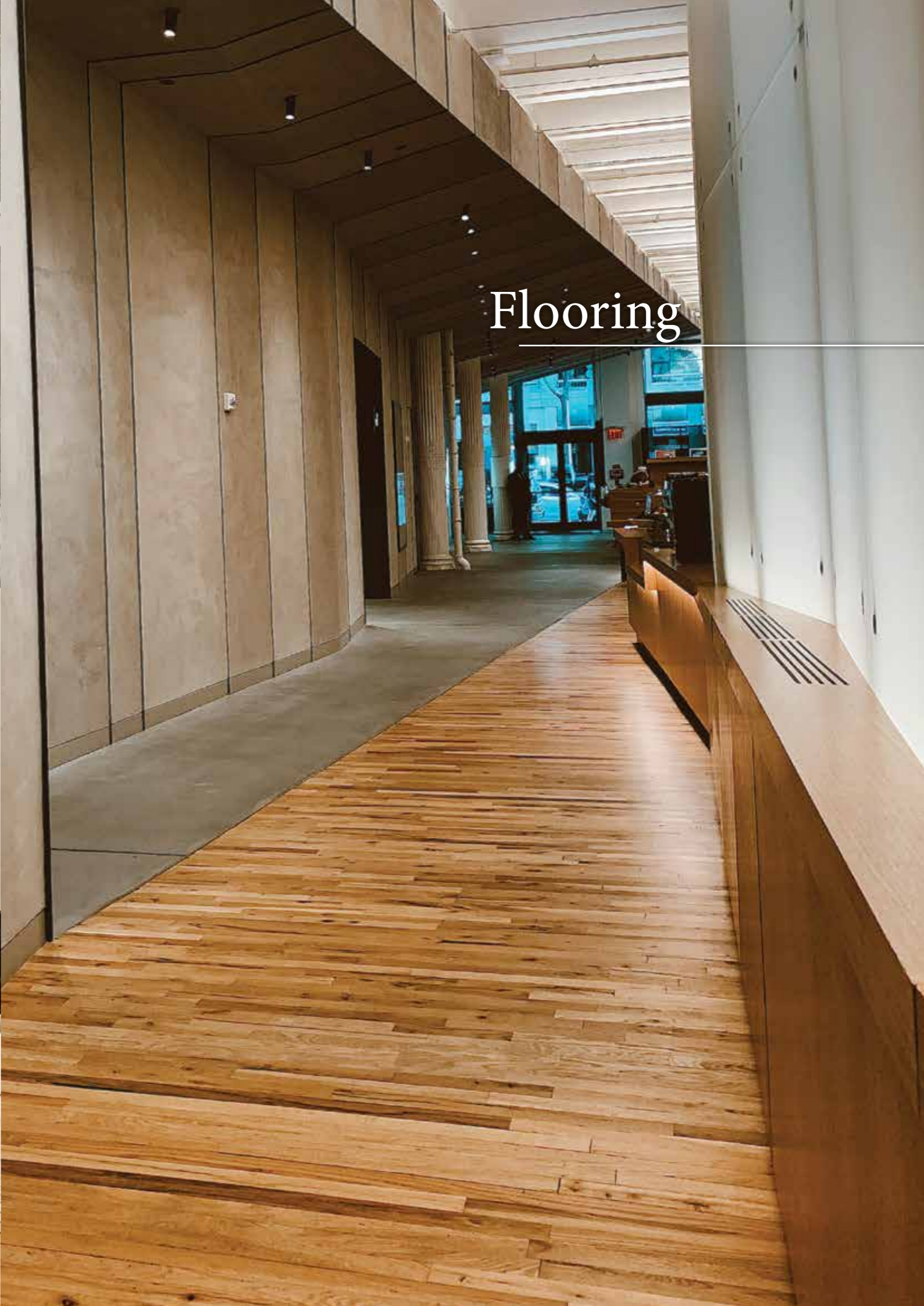
like spaces within a home: light-filled sanctuaries where plants can thrive and inhabitants can retreat.

At the completion of a project, she always presents the home adorned with flower arrangements and a curated selection of vases and pots, guiding clients on how to continue bringing seasonal flowers and nature into their daily lives. Because, ultimately, the home and the garden are never separate. They are part of the same living landscape. [dw](#)

www.mariannetiegen.com



Flooring



Flooring trends for 2026

by Stienie Greyling



The latest flooring trends for 2026 emphasise natural textures, bold self-expression, and sustainable materials. Homeowners are moving away from safe neutrals and embracing organic finishes, imperfect surfaces, and innovative designs that make the floor a central design element.

Not only is flooring for a home a significant investment, but it's a permanent fixture that affects the overall look, comfort level, and feel of the space. Whether planning a home renovation or building a house from ground up, getting the flooring right is essential.

Wood flooring will be making a shift toward warmer tones and more traditional style throughout 2026. Warm neutral and natural tones are leading the palette, with soft honeyed colours, mid-oak finishes, and muted browns replacing cooler greys. These tones work beautifully across both flooring and wall surfaces, and create seamless layered interiors that feel grounded and connected to nature. Rich browns, soft beiges and natural colours of raw wood will become more popular, as homeowners and designers seek to bring a sense of nature-inspired comfort and homeliness into interiors.

Patterned wood flooring is a trend that experts say will remain strong this year. Designs like herringbone and chevron offer dynamic visual interest and can dramatically influence how a space feels.

These patterns introduce a sense of rhythm and movement, while variations in scale have the ability to transform a room's mood. Larger patterns lend calm and balance, while tighter layouts add energy and texture. Herringbone patterns

will have a strong presence, especially in creative variations like double herringbone.

When it comes to rugs that will be trending, it looks like 2026 will be all about cosy comfort. Soft-touch, plush rugs are becoming more popular as consumers search for cosy and comforting tactility in their homes. High-pile rugs with soft, underfoot comfort and warmth and cosiness to both shared and intimate spaces, it is predicted that they will continue to play a key role in creating inviting interiors. Easy care and performance rugs will continue to be important for consumers, as their lifestyle are increasingly busy and time-stretched.

When it comes to upcoming rug design trends: bold, playful bright in geometric patterns and colour blocking continue to be trending interior aesthetics. Another trend that's gaining momentum for 2026 is the understated look. The resurgence of softer colours in nostalgic hues that complement gentle, timeless patterns and capture the essence of slow living.

Wood in all its forms, flooring, panelling, and bespoke detailing, is taking centre stage in interior design. There is a continued shift toward natural materials and craftsmanship, where wood becomes both a functional foundation and a statement of artistry. Clients are



increasingly looking for solutions that combine sustainability, texture, and warmth, bringing a sense of calm and sophistication into their spaces. There is also a renewed focus on custom woodwork – like fluted wall panels and architectural detailing that adds depth and individuality to every design.

Wide plank flooring is timeless and will continue to make appearance this year. The generous scale of longer and wider planks visually elongates a room, enhancing light and proportion while also grounding a space with natural authenticity. Long, wide planks arranged symmetrically create order and calm, which makes them especially well-suited for bedrooms and other spaces that are designed for rest and reflection.

Carpets are making a strong return and are favoured for their cosy aesthetic. Styles like grandmillennial and grandpa chic perfectly complement the warmth and comfort that carpets provide. Design experts anticipate colour will play a significant role in this resurgence, with shades such as burgundy, orange, and rust capturing the nostalgic vibe of 1960s and 1970s design style. Vibrant reds will be trending, especially the shade of, ruby red.

In addition to these retro colours, plush or shag carpeting is also making a comeback. It's perfect for adding a



playful element to children's bedrooms or TV rooms, where comfort is important. Patterns also add to visual appeal; options like plaid, floral, stripe, or geometric designs can give a space an ultimate maximalist look. Carpeting offers a cost-effective alternative to most hardwood and engineered wood flooring.

Wall-to-wall carpeting is experiencing a revival with a fresh and exciting new look. Carpets don't have to stick to neutral, understated greys or beiges like they have in the past. Wall-to-wall carpeting can be just as bold and eye-catching with vibrant

colours transforming it into the standout feature of any room in the home. If there's one design feature that designers can't get enough of this year, it is tile. The latest floor tile trends for 2026 emphasise large-format porcelain, textured surfaces, and luxurious, natural aesthetics. Key trends include bold marble-look tile, metallic accents, matter finishes, and geometric, patterned designs that prioritise personalised, high-impact spaces. Increased use of durable, sustainable materials with low-maintenance, realistic finishes is also dominant.



Elitis Outdoor Rugs

by St Leger & Viney

Add the elegance of ELITIS to gardens and terraces and make the exterior a natural extension of your interior decoration.

ELITIS offers a range of fabrics, rugs and accessories specially created for outdoor use. Designed to inspire gardens and patios that make the outdoors live and release a world of relaxation where only the present moment exists.

www.stleger.co.za



Kalahari in Matcha, with outdoor scatter cushions in Happy, Mirage, Canyon in colourway Matcha



Scatter cushion designs: Canyon; Happy; Manuka; Casoar and Mirage featured in colourways: Outremer, Miel and Minuit



Wallis in colourway Sable



Outdoor Rug Kalahari in colourway Matcha, with the scatter cushions: Manuka, Mirage, Casoar and Canyon, in colourways Miel and Minuit



MILANO DESIGN WEEK
2026 | NOVELTY 2026

Gemelli, The New Complementary Rugs Designed By
Deanna Comellini For G.T.Design



On the occasion of Milan Design Week 2026, Deanna Comellini, founder and creative director of G.T.DESIGN, has given a preview of her new eponymous label, due to launch this autumn. These unique pieces and signature designs represent the highest and most personal expression of her vision: the label's first collection, I Gemelli.

I Gemelli by Deanna Comellini

I Gemelli proposal consists of two complementary rugs that dialogue with each other like kindred presences, inspired by both natural and formal elegance. The models, Isabella and Otto, evoke an intimate imagery recalling the proportions of the human body. As two variations of the same language, they express a harmonious duality where form becomes narrative.

The relationship between materials is central: merino wool and tencel alternate in a sophisticated dialogue. Wool provides a satin-like, rich and enveloping effect; tencel introduces a lighter, more fluid quality capable of capturing and reflecting light.



FLOORING

The result is a material balance reminiscent of jewelry, where forms move through space like precious elements. Configurations are fully customisable, reinforcing the bespoke nature of the brand's offerings.

Deanna Comellini

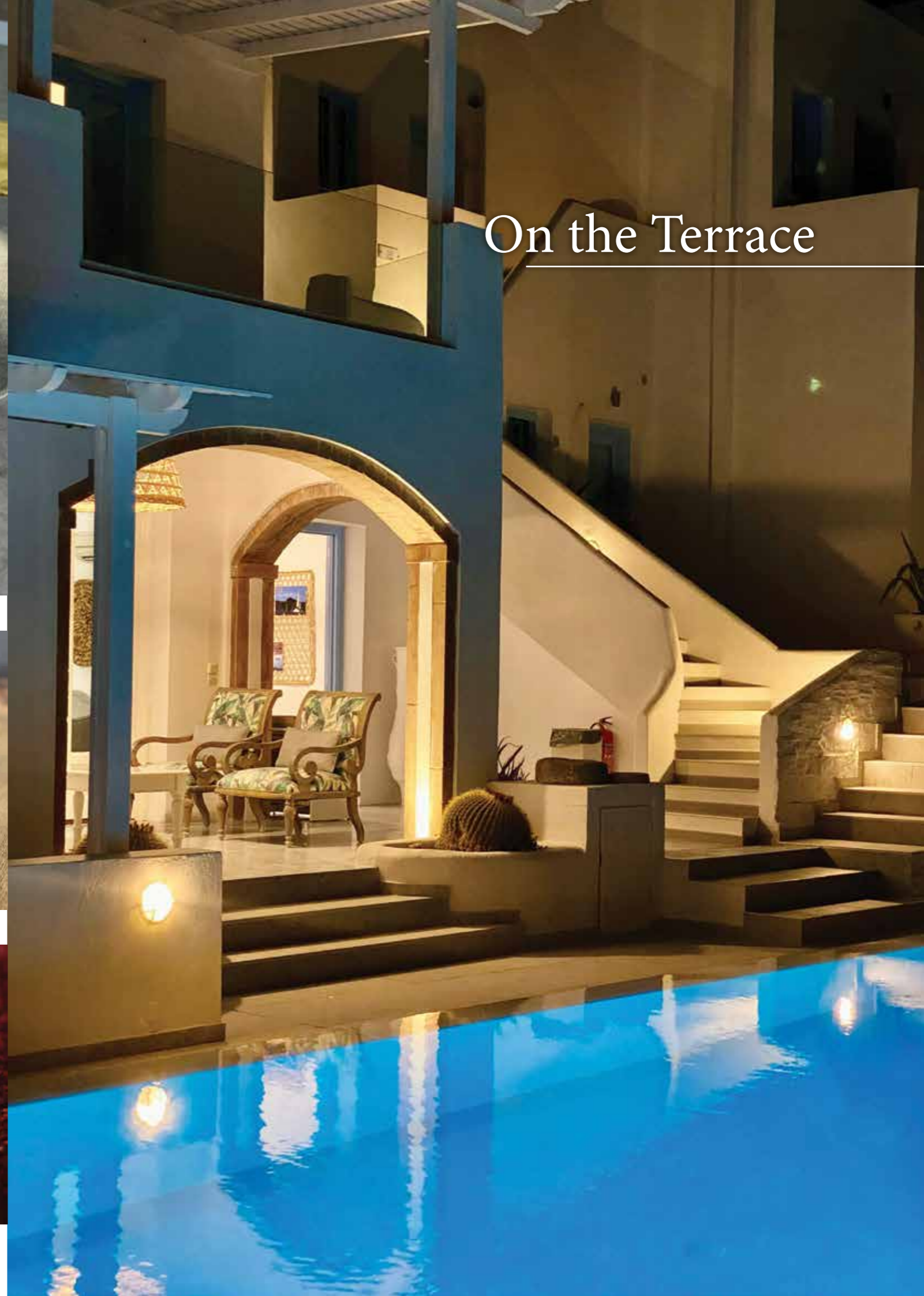
Deanna Comellini is an artist and designer. For over 40 years she has explored the meeting of craftsmanship and industrial design, first working on product design and then on textile design. She developed the concept of "imperfect design," a philosophy that transcends time, focusing on researching and enhancing imperfections to celebrate authenticity. Since 1977 she has been the creative director of G.T.DESIGN, the company she founded. In the 1990s she focused on the concept of the contemporary rug and natural materials, innovating the sector with a new vision of textiles in interior design. She has participated in prestigious international exhibitions and collaborated with leading architectural figures such as

Toyo Ito and Zaha Hadid Architects. She has been a guest lecturer at universities including NABA and IULM. In 2022, Deanna Comellini was selected by Forbes among the 100 most influential women in Italy, and in 2025 she was featured on the cover of Forbes Italia Small Giants.

G.T.DESIGN

A pioneer of the contemporary rug, G.T.DESIGN combines artisanal craftsmanship with advanced technologies to create luxury, customisable products. Using natural materials and high-performance fibres of the highest quality, its exclusive rug collections and bespoke projects are distinguished by unmatched attention to detail. By working with international architects and interior designers to integrate textiles into their projects, G.T.DESIGN has transformed the perception of the contemporary rug into an essential element of interior design. [dw](#)

www ghenos.net



On the Terrace

CREST NINE

Anjarle, India

Situated on a steeply contoured hill overlooking the ocean in Anjarle, Maharashtra, India, Crest Nine is a community centre designed as a recreational hub for a gated villa enclave. The site drops sharply from the approach road, allowing the building to emerge gradually from the natural terrain, rather than sit upon it.

A sweeping curvilinear form follows the natural gradient of the land, with the entrance positioned six metres below the access road level. Visitors descend via a wide staircase and a gently curving ramp that runs alongside a sloping landscaped garden, arriving at the main circulation spine that stretches across the length of the building.

The built form transitions dramatically from a simple curvilinear entrance façade

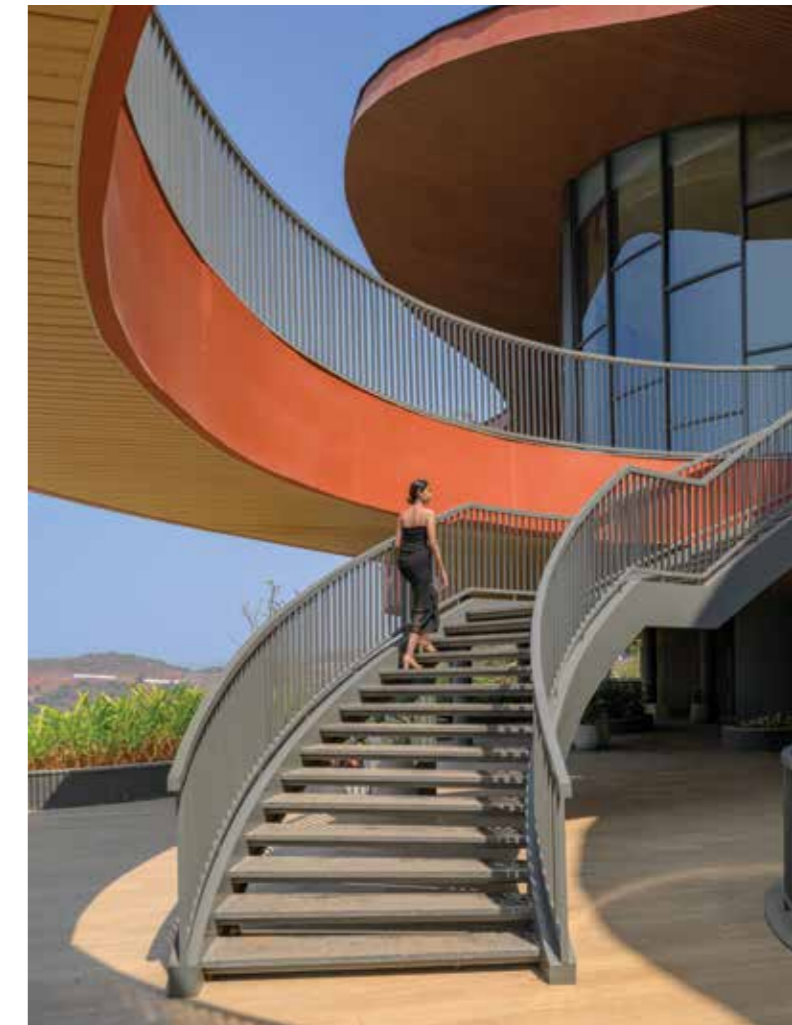
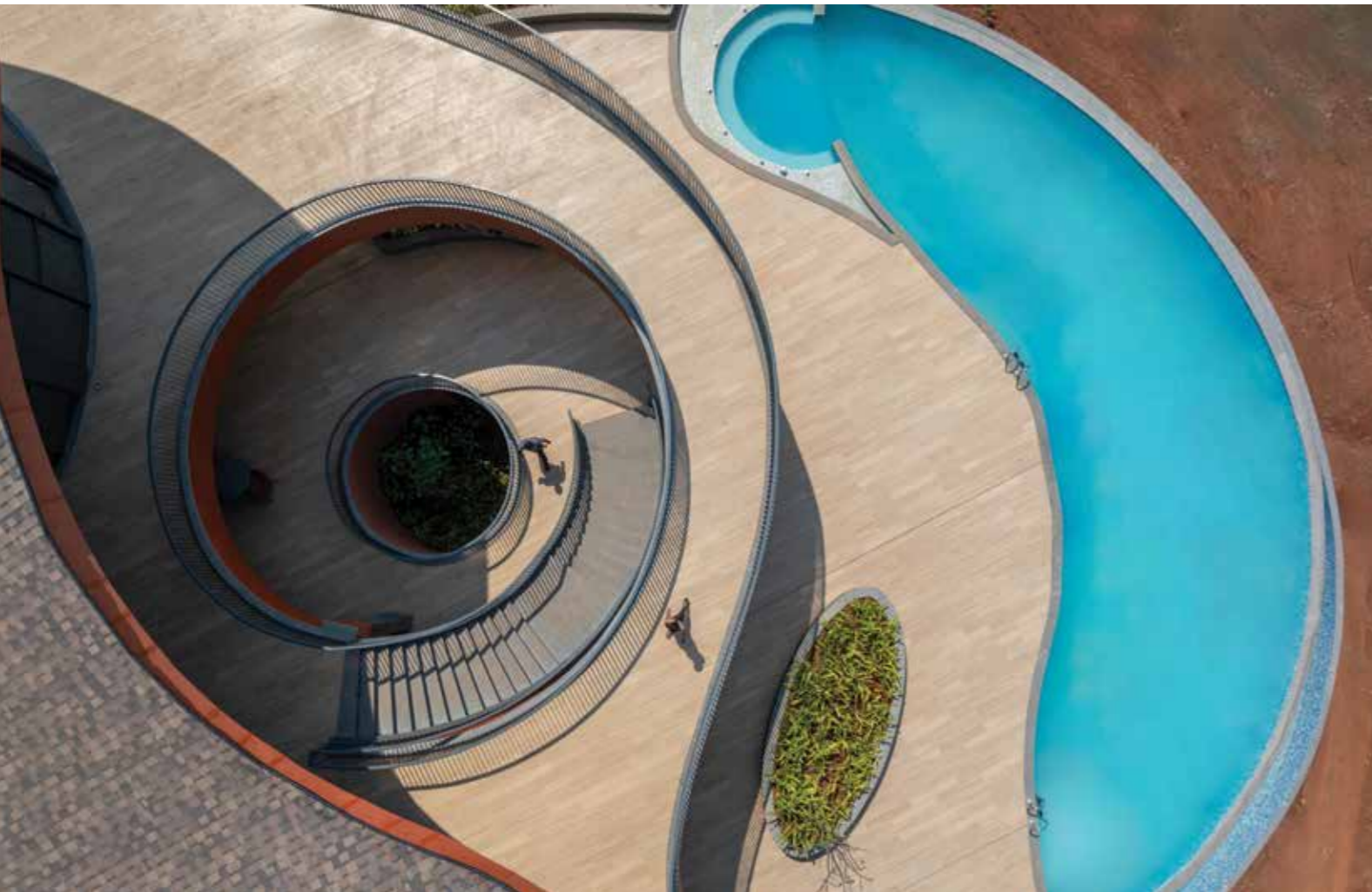


into a sequence of parabolic volumes of varying heights. These sculpted forms are interspersed with courtyards and landscaped pockets, creating a rhythmic interplay of built and open spaces.

The parabolic volumes house an indoor sports room, gymnasium, restaurant, bar, and four guest bedrooms. Each space opens onto generous curvilinear decks that frame expansive ocean views to the west. Above, a sectionally curved roof undulates across the structure - rising prominently above primary volumes and dipping between them to define intimate courtyard spaces. Deep overhangs extend over the decks, providing protection from sun and monsoon rains.

At the centre, an open stairway wraps around a circular courtyard, descending to the swimming pool level below. This lower level accommodates three pools, a health club, and an open cafeteria connected to a large, naturally ventilated multifunctional deck.

The building employs locally sourced laterite stone for its walls, rooting the





structure materially and visually within its coastal context. Every internal space receives natural light, and nearly 70% of the built areas are naturally ventilated and non-air-conditioned. The roof structure comprises a metal framework finished with shingles.

By prioritising local materials and local contract labour, the project achieves a significantly reduced embodied carbon footprint. Its reliance on passive cooling, natural ventilation, and daylighting further minimises lifecycle carbon emissions.

Integrated seamlessly with the existing terrain, the community centre is perceived as a series of interconnected volumes of varying scales, linked by landscaped open

spaces that encourage social interaction and flexible use.

Technical sheet

- **Client Name:** House of Abhinandan Lodha (HOABL)
- **Start Date:** December 2022
- **Completion Date:** January 2026
- **Carpet Area:** 32,000 SQ.FT.
- **Cost:** 28cr. (\$3.08 million USD)
- **Architect:** Sanjay Puri Architects
- **Lead Architect:** Sanjay Puri
- **Design Team:** Sanya Gupta, Madhavi Belsare, Akshay Chikhalkar, Payal Raut
- **Photo credit:** Vinay Panjwani

www.sanjaypuriarchitects.com



Allan Gardens Palm House Restoration Honoured with Lieutenant Governor's Award as Momentum Builds for Conservatory Expansion

Toronto, Canada

The award marks a defining moment for the 1910 landmark, designed by City Architect Robert McCallum, and reinforces the growing public momentum to further invest in the future of Allan Gardens Conservatory.

Led by the City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry & Recreation division, with Zeidler Architecture as prime consultant and Architects Rasch Eckler Associates Ltd. (AREA) as heritage architect, the \$11-million revitalisation restored the Palm House's defining architectural elements, while upgrading performance, accessibility, and long-term durability.

A civic landmark, reinstated

A central component of the restoration was the reinstatement of the original

east portico entrance—removed in the mid-20th century—restoring the historic processional axis and reconnecting the building to its front plaza. The new barrier-free entrance accommodates both public access and operational needs, strengthening the Palm House's role as a welcoming civic space.

Overhead glazing across the 16-sided dome and cupolas was replaced with laminated glass panels engineered for safety and performance, including ceramic fritting to reduce summer solar gain while preserving the building's luminous character. Deteriorated framing was rehabilitated or replaced with profiles that emulate the original 1909 design.

Stonework, wood detailing, finials, clerestory windows, and the 1909



entablature were carefully restored, ensuring the building's heritage attributes remain legible and intact. New sandstone was sourced from the same quarry used for the original construction, reinforcing continuity between the restored entrance and the existing heritage fabric.

The conservatory remained open to the public throughout construction, underscoring its importance as one of downtown Toronto's most beloved green sanctuaries.

Looking forward: A broader vision for Allan Gardens

The Palm House restoration represents more than the renewal of a single structure. It forms part of a broader civic vision supported by the Friends of Allan Gardens to enhance programming, accessibility, and long-term stewardship of the conservatory complex.

As public conversations continue around expanding and strengthening the role of Allan Gardens within Toronto's downtown core, the restoration of the Palm House demonstrates what is possible when heritage conservation, environmental performance, and inclusive design are aligned within a single project.

Originally conceived as a venue for horticultural exhibitions, concerts, and civic gatherings, Allan Gardens has long served as a cultural stage for Toronto. With the Palm House restored for its next century of use, renewed investment in the broader conservatory complex offers

an opportunity to build on that legacy—strengthening its role as a year-round destination for education, community programming, and public life.

A model for urban heritage stewardship

Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and recognised for its architectural and cultural value, the Palm House stands as a tangible link between Toronto's horticultural history and its evolving urban identity.

Recognition through the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Excellence in Conservation acknowledges not only the technical rigour of the restoration, but also the continuing civic importance of heritage places that remain active parts of contemporary public life.

More than 115 years after its construction, the Palm House once again frames the sky above downtown Toronto—restored, resilient, and ready for the future.

Technical sheet

- **Client:** City of Toronto
- **Design and Executive Architects:** Zeidler Architecture Inc.
- **Heritage Architect:** Architects Rasch Eckler Associates Ltd. (AREA)
- **Structural Engineer/Glazing:** Read Jones Christoffersen Ltd. (RJC)
- **Mechanical + Electrical Engineer:** The HIDI Group Inc.
- **Contractor:** HRI Group
- **Photo Credit:** Adrien Williams 

www.zeidler.com





International Jury Puts Zululami Estate at the Top Nationally

A residential estate on KwaZulu-Natal's North Coast is drawing international attention, not for how quickly it was built, but for how deliberately it was shaped. Zululami Luxury Coastal Estate has been recognised as Landscape Architecture Project of the Year 2025 at the internationally recognised Scape Awards

of Excellence, hosted by Scape Magazine in partnership with Infinity Surfaces and Oggie Hardwood Flooring, positioning it among a new generation of developments redefining the relationship between land, design and long-term value.

For Collins Residential, the accolade marks more than a project milestone. It signals growing global recognition

for the scale of investment and level of coordination now shaping development along the North Coast, where environmental restoration, infrastructure delivery and long-term planning are increasingly central to how projects are brought to life. Judged by an international panel of 60 design specialists, the Scape Awards celebrate projects that balance ecological integrity, design excellence and community impact. Zululami stood out for its large-scale landscape regeneration, transforming a 140-hectare monocropped sugarcane farm into a functioning ecological and residential environment.

Central to this outcome was a deeply collaborative process between Collins Residential and Land Art Studio, led by landscape architect Bernice Rumble. Rather than applying a conventional development framework, the team adopted a landscape-led approach, allowing the site's natural systems to inform the structure and pace of development. "We were given the opportunity to respond to the land in an honest and meaningful way," says Rumble. "That meant prioritising restoration from the outset and allowing natural systems the time they needed to recover. The result is a landscape that is not only functional



ON THE TERRACE

but deeply connected to the people who experience it.”

More than 40 hectares of wetlands, grasslands and coastal forest have been rehabilitated, with a 14-hectare valley now forming the ecological and social heart of the estate. Biodiversity corridors, water systems and open space networks have been integrated into the development framework, ensuring that environmental infrastructure is treated as a core component of the estate’s long-term performance.


For Collins Residential, this recognition reflects a broader philosophy that has guided its work across the North Coast, where multiple projects such as Seaton Estate and Lalela Estate have contributed to a growing, interconnected coastal node supported by infrastructure upgrades and sustained residential demand. “This recognition speaks to the scale of delivery and long-term investment shaping the region,” says Geoff Perkins, Managing Director of Collins Residential. “It reflects the role that coordinated



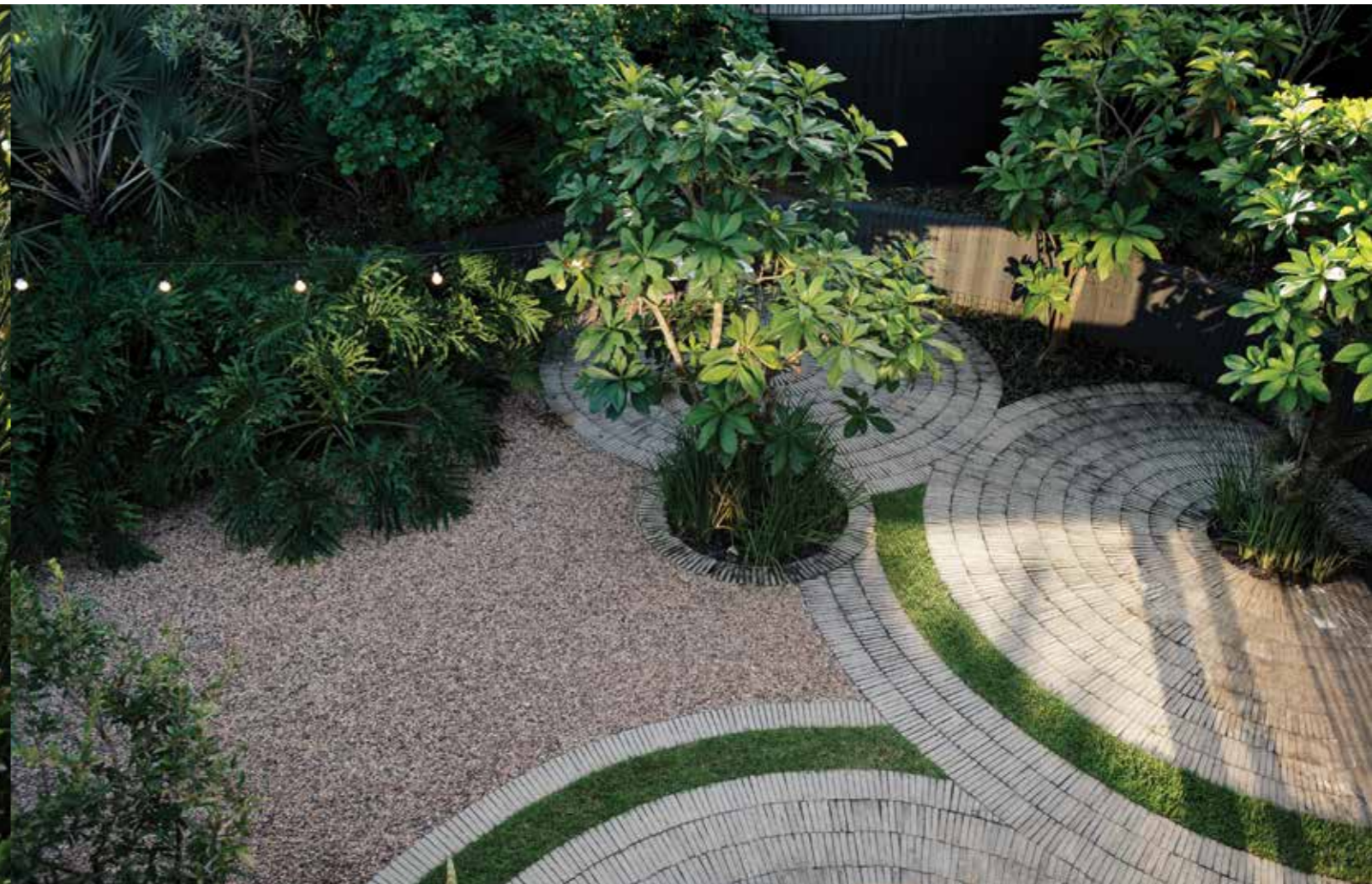
development and the right partnerships play in creating places that deliver value over time, environmentally, socially and commercially.”

The award also highlights the importance of collaboration in delivering complex, future-focused developments. By aligning developer intent with specialist expertise, the project demonstrates how integrated thinking can unlock outcomes that extend beyond traditional measures of success.

As the North Coast continues to evolve, projects like Zululami are helping to shape a new development narrative, one that moves beyond expansion for its own sake and instead focuses on quality, resilience and long-term impact. For Collins Residential, the recognition reinforces a clear trajectory: that the future of development in the region will be defined not just by growth, but by how that growth is achieved.

Images: Images of Zululami Luxury Coastal Estate 

www.collinsresidential.co.za





Reimei Kobashi and Hoshino Architects
Win 2025 Architecture MasterPrize
for Tokyo Pedestrian Bridge

Reimei Kobashi, a pedestrian bridge located in Chuo-ku, Tokyo, has been awarded Winner in the “ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN Infrastructure” category at the Architecture MasterPrize 2025, an international award recognising excellence in architectural design. Hoshino Architects Inc. served as the Master Design Architect for the project.

The Pedestrian Bridge “Reimei Kobashi”

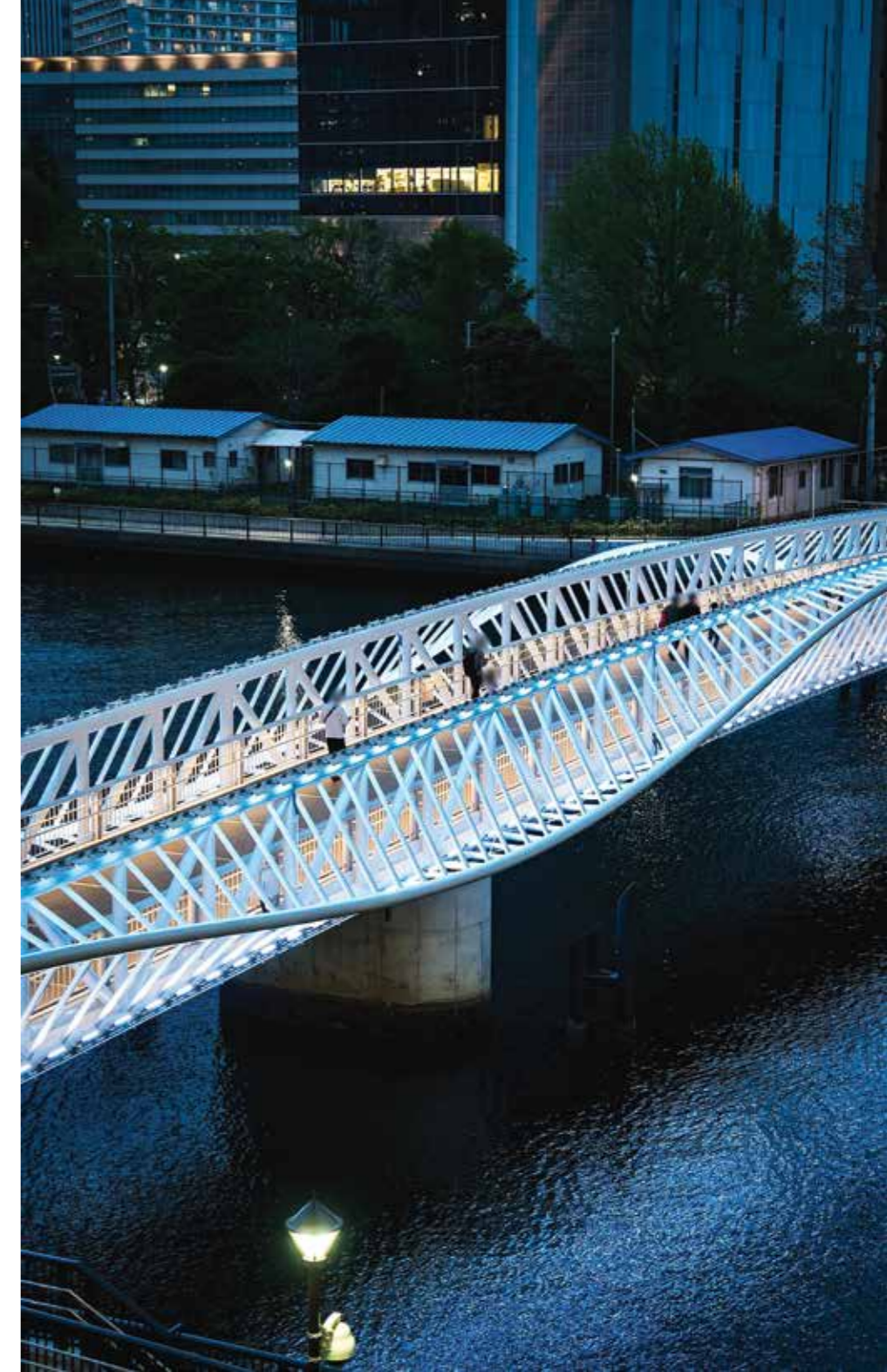
Reimei Kobashi footbridge, which connects Kachidoki Station and Harumi 3-chome in Tokyo’s waterfront district, opened to the public on March 25, 2024. This footbridge crosses the Asashio Canal to Grand Marina Tokyo, with a soft arching design reminiscent of gentle waves rolling over the water’s surface.

The continuous white structure of the bridge hovering above emphasises the rhythm of the water’s surface through its subtle, undulating form.

The shadow of the bridge, cast onto the water’s surface, enhances the imagination even more with a congregation of waves seeming to wash over one another.

The design, presenting one fluid motion from three-dimensional geometric changes,





provides pedestrians walking across with that feel of movement.


Design

The lighting is programmed to change colours gradually, depending on the season and day of the week. By changing the rhythm of the lighting programme for the top and bottom of the three-dimensional rippled shape, the different colour combinations are designed to create a variety of impressions. In this way, the nightscape of this newly developed area, where the number of residents is increasing, can be enjoyed daily for its momentary colourful combinations and movements.

AMP 2025 Architecture Awards WINNER

- Architecture MasterPrize 2025 Reimei Kobashi: <https://architectureprize.com/winners/winner.php?id=8577>
- Architecture MasterPrize 2025 Winners: <https://architectureprize.com/winners/>
- The design process and photos of other Hoshino Architects projects are available on its official Instagram account: https://www.instagram.com/hoshino_architects/

The Architecture MasterPrize is a global architecture award recognizing design excellence and advancing appreciation for quality architectural design.

In 2025, the Architecture MasterPrize received submissions from 72 countries, reflecting the global reach of the programme. This recognition marks Hoshino Architects' second consecutive year as a Winner, following its award in the High Rise Buildings category in 2024. 

Technical sheet

- **Project name:** Reimei Kobashi
- **Location:** 5-chôme-1-9 Harumi, Chuo City, Tokyo 104-0053, Japan
- **Completion:** March 25, 2024
- **Size:** Floor area 425m²
- **Master Design Architect:** Hoshino Architects INC.
- **Contractor:** Shimizu Corporation
- **Lighting Designer:** Izumi Okayasu Lighting Design Office
- **Client:** Kachidoki East District Urban Redevelopment Association
- **Photo credit:** ebi_times

www.hoshinoarchitects.com/project/reimeikobashi

Architecture MasterPrize Opens 2026 Global Call for Entries Following Record Participation from 72 Countries

The Architecture MasterPrize today announced its 2026 call for entries, inviting architects, designers, and studios from around the world to submit work across architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, product design, and architectural photography.

The announcement follows a 2025 edition that recognized work from 72 countries, including projects by Pritzker Prize laureate Álvaro Siza Vieira, alongside internationally recognised practices such as Kengo Kuma, Zaha Hadid Architects, Shigeru Ban, Safdie Architects, Snøhetta, Perkins&Will,

Ennead Architects, Aedas, Alison Brooks Architects, Atelier Brückner, and OKRA landscape architects.

"Architecture today navigates urgent questions about climate adaptation, social equity, and how communities shape their futures," said Hossein Farmani, President of the Architecture MasterPrize. "The work we're seeing from every continent showcases that design excellence and environmental accountability are no longer separate ambitions - they are inseparable. The 2026 edition will continue to honour projects that reflect both creative vision and cultural responsibility."



2026 Architecture MasterPrize Top Honors Open to Established and Emerging Voices

The 2026 edition welcomes submissions from established firms, independent practitioners, emerging designers, and multidisciplinary studios across major categories and programs:

- Architectural Design
- Interior Design
- Landscape Architecture
- Architectural Product Design
- Architectural Photography
- Firm of the Year and Design of the Year Awards

Entries are evaluated by an international jury of academics, media professionals, and industry leaders. Winners receive global recognition through editorial coverage, official

certification, use of the AMP winner seal, inclusion in the online winners gallery, and promotion across international channels.

Submission Deadlines

- Early: February 28, 2026
- Regular: June 30, 2026
- Final: August 31, 2026

About the Architecture MasterPrize

Founded in 2016 by Farmani Group, the Architecture MasterPrize recognises design excellence across architecture, interiors, landscape, product design, and photography. The programme provides international visibility to both established practices and emerging voices shaping the global built environment. [dw](#)

www.architectureprize.com





Bain & Company

Sandton CBD, Johannesburg.

Bain & Company

Sandton CBD, Johannesburg.

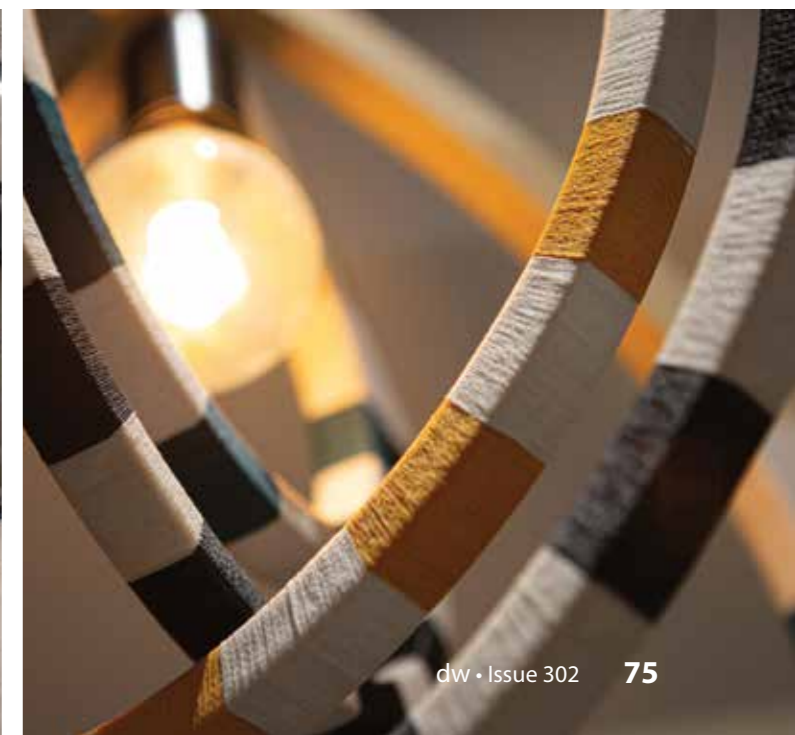
Bain & Company is a top management consulting firm situated in the Sandton CBD, Johannesburg. Giant Leap were appointed to provide a seamless end-to-end turnkey design and build for their new 1200m² office space, based in Tower 1 in the multi-use development known as The MARC.

The MARC was designed and constructed to be environmentally sustainable. The development has a 5-star Green Rating, an independent standard awarded by the Green Building Council SA for the environmental sustainability of the design, construction and management of a building.

Bain & Company South Africa has invested in the growth and development of more than 60 companies in sub-Saharan Africa and served more than 350 projects to date. Building on their global platform with Africa specific knowledge, they have served a broad range of clients across the continent's largest, most rapidly changing sectors in almost every market. Bain is strongly committed to Africa and is firmly invested in and committed to creating enduring change and positive economic and social impact across the continent. With this in mind, Giant Leap worked closely with the Bain & Company global team to design a customised workspace, meeting the specific needs of the local team whilst incorporating the global workplace guidelines.

The design brief for the project was to design a familiar, practical and bold office. The new workspace was an opportunity for their brand to come to life, adhering to their global standard while maintaining a local flavour. A chance for them to show clients, recruits and employees what they stand for. After working closely with the client through the design development, Giant Leap created the design theme: From Dusk till Dawn.







This design theme is based on Bold ideas & Extraordinary teams, drawing from the South African landscape, people and culture. From mountains and coastlines, to fauna & flora, inspired from the diverse scenery and colours of our beautiful country.

The new workspace uses bold, yet warm, inviting colours in the reception and waiting area, with welcoming comfortable seating and vibrant living walls. The work café is a bright, modern, multifunctional space, designed for connectivity with different settings for informal collaboration and socialisation. Natural light floods the area and the use of greenery in the space brings nature indoors, creating a space for employee well-being. There is also a 'work hard, play hard' area within the café, with football and ping pong tables.

A neutral palette has been used in the open plan office space, with pops of colour in greenery and collaborative areas. Studies have shown that by introducing elements of nature into the workplace, staff productivity, creativity, morale and workplace well-being have all increased. A mixture of modern and African art is displayed throughout the space. The art collection has been specifically chosen to represent different ethnic groups living in South Africa.

This project earned us Best Office Interior South Africa and the regional award for Best Office Interior Africa at the International Property Awards 2023–2024 - the highest recognition in the region, and an achievement we're incredibly proud of. dw

www.bain.com
www.giantleap.co.za

Cuizhu Foreign Language School

Shenzhen, China



South sportfield viewpoint
Photo credit: Bai Yu



Street viewpoint
Photo credit: Bai Yu

Cuizhu Foreign Language School

Shenzhen, China

Located in the heart of Shenzhen's historical district, Cuizhu School establishes a new typology for schools in high-density subtropical urban environments. Based on a terraced massing, classrooms sit loosely on large public platforms, forming a series of shaded outdoor spaces which extend traditional learning spaces. Six courtyards are carved out of the massing to respond to and extend the surrounding context, and also to bring light and fresh air into every corner of the school. A series of roof terraces populated with lush plantings returns nature to the campus and rewards the city with a beautiful fifth elevation (the roof plane).

Site and inspiration

The oddly shaped project site exists at the intersection of two major urban thoroughfares. The massing responds to this by creating a strong urban wall on the northwest and northeast sides of the project to create a strong civic presence. Existing historical pathways are conceptually reconfigured on the site as courtyards that bring light and air into the project, creating a porous urban condition that breaks down the strong urban massing. Inspired by images of historic rice paddies, the urban mass terraces to the south create a stepped landscape with a dynamic program layout.

Form and landscape

The design of the Cuizhu School reveals a deliberate strategy that spatially and compositionally links the landscape design and massing to the site and its environs beyond. The terraced massing of the school steps down to the south to allow access to light and air, and to promote a congenial relationship to the open athletic spaces associated with the school. The voids in the massing create urban entry spaces on the northwest, and conceptually extend exterior open spaces to the south and west. Linking the massing to the angled programme layout creates a dynamic terraced form that extends the landscape from the ground level to the roof of the school. A dynamic exterior landscape adds an additional level of nuance for children and visitors, while promoting exterior programmatic differentiation.

Massing and layout

The programme layout, the massing, and the civic space strategy of the Cuizhu School are all carefully linked to maximise the potential of each in relation to the other. The programme bars are arranged from a position of basic clarity. Regular classrooms, special classrooms, and offices are arranged for clarity and adjacency, and are adjusted to match the particulars of the site and desired compositional goals. The hard edges of the adjusted programme massing are curved to create figural voids. The floors of these voids are lifted to create raised courtyards that create public amenities for students and faculty. A roof garden on top of the terraced massing creates a fifth façade, visible from nearby high-rises, and a programmed public space for users.

- <http://link-arc.com/>
- <http://link-arc.com/project/cuizhu-foreign-language-school/>



Zoom in view
Photo credit: Bai Yu



Campus embedded in the urban context
Photo credit: Bai Yu



Student activities in grey area
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



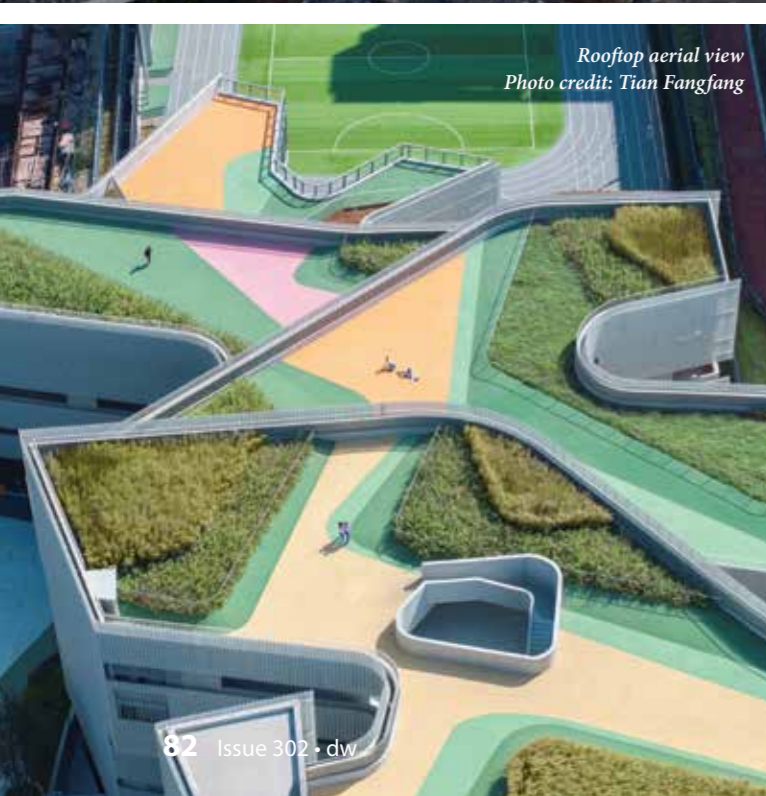
View from the teaching building towards the surrounding residential buildings
Photo credit: Bai Yu



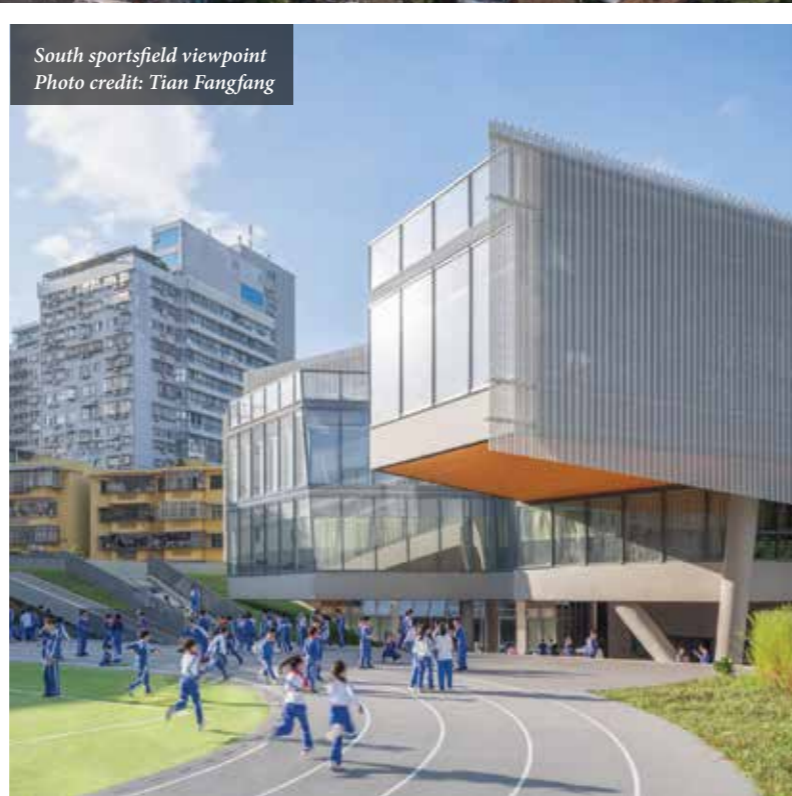
Aerial view
Photo credit: Bai Yu



Everyday life in courtyards
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



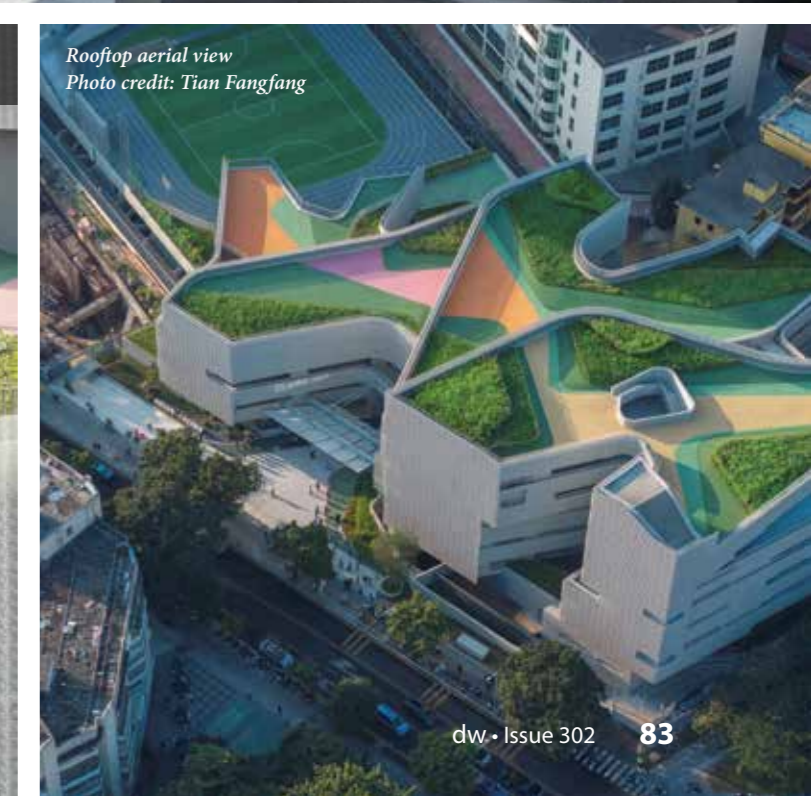
Rooftop aerial view
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



South sportsfield viewpoint
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



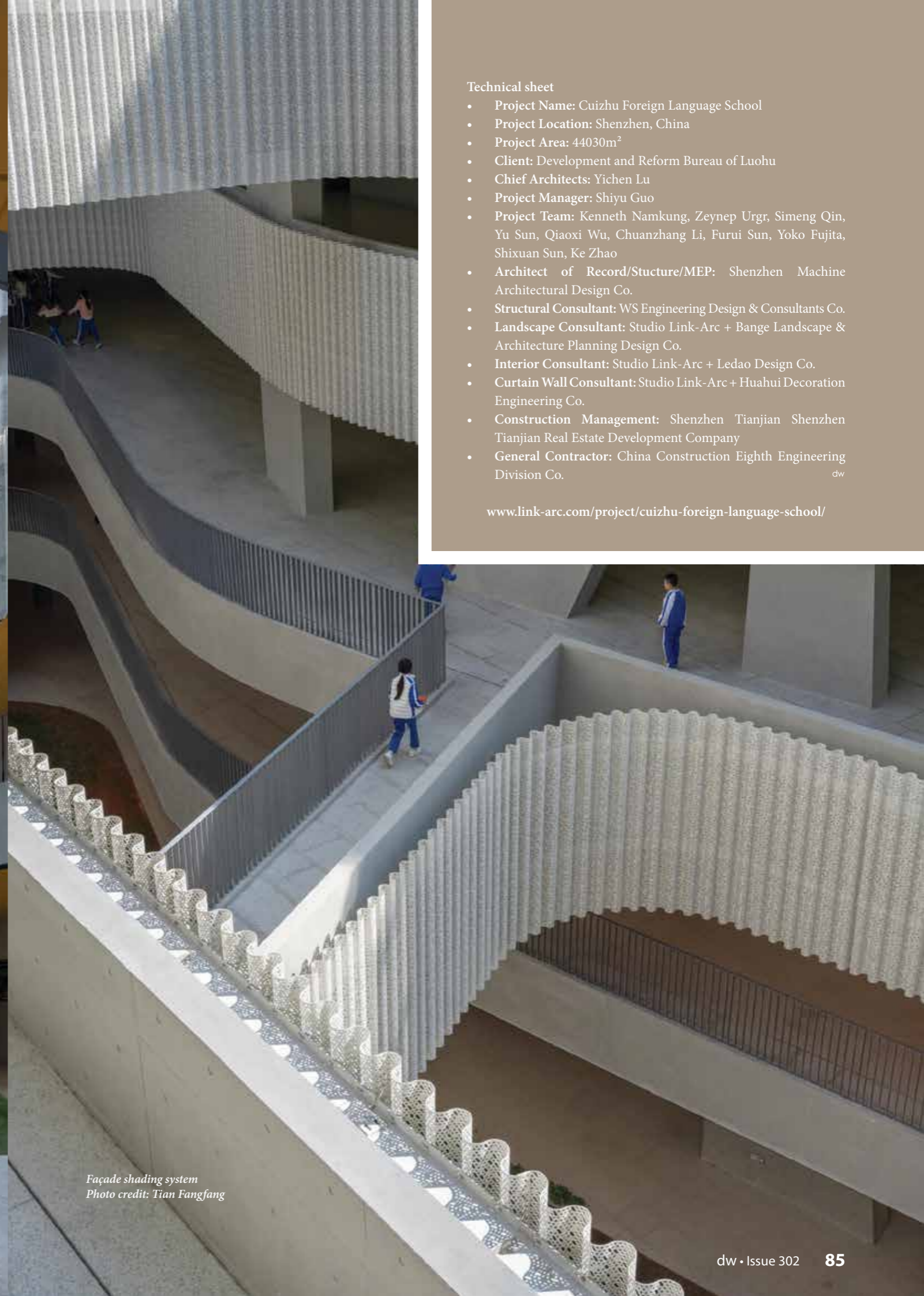
Everyday Life on Rooftop Garden
Photo credit: Guo Shiyu



Rooftop aerial view
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



Everyday Life in Courtyards
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang



Façade shading system
Photo credit: Tian Fangfang

Technical sheet

- Project Name: Cuizhu Foreign Language School
- Project Location: Shenzhen, China
- Project Area: 44030m²
- Client: Development and Reform Bureau of Luohu
- Chief Architects: Yichen Lu
- Project Manager: Shiyu Guo
- Project Team: Kenneth Namkung, Zeynep Urgr, Simeng Qin, Yu Sun, Qiaoxi Wu, Chuazhang Li, Furui Sun, Yoko Fujita, Shixuan Sun, Ke Zhao
- Architect of Record/Structure/MEP: Shenzhen Machine Architectural Design Co.
- Structural Consultant: WS Engineering Design & Consultants Co.
- Landscape Consultant: Studio Link-Arc + Bange Landscape & Architecture Planning Design Co.
- Interior Consultant: Studio Link-Arc + Ledao Design Co.
- Curtain Wall Consultant: Studio Link-Arc + Huahui Decoration Engineering Co.
- Construction Management: Shenzhen Tianjian Shenzhen Tianjian Real Estate Development Company
- General Contractor: China Construction Eighth Engineering Division Co. dw

www.link-arc.com/project/cuizhu-foreign-language-school/



TAIL OF THE DOG

Field of Dreams

People who love Johannesburg never fail to deliver. The newest surprise is the Field of Dreams, a full-sized soccer pitch in Selby, on the southwest edge of the central business district, tucked into the corner of the intersecting motorways that run south and east.

the north of this east-west motorway. If you look to the south, you will see that the buildings there are no more than two or three storeys high.

in the area are being turned into low-cost accommodation for the MII students.

This project has been driven and funded by the Standard Bank on land owned by them, Dr Ali Bacher (Mr Cricket South Africa), Jozi My Jozi and the Maharishi Invincibility Institute, which is based nearby. The ground itself has been sitting unused for a while, half-heartedly designated as a park. It is based on 'unstable ground' so an area not suitable for any high rise building as there are mining works below. In fact, the whole area to the south of the M2 East motorway is 'unstable ground', so the high-rise buildings are all to

The Jozi My Jozi offices are based in the beautiful art deco Anglo American building on Main Street, and directly opposite is one of the main centres of the Maharishi Invincibility Institute. This was a building owned by Anglo American, and when they moved their head office to London and subsidiary offices to Rosebank Johannesburg, the building was given to the MII. It is now a college that takes in high school and older students from the inner city, offering a 'skills-to-work' education. One of their main offerings is the Security Mastery Academy programme lasting three years, where graduates are guaranteed employment at the end. The unused mining head offices

The Field of Dreams is the first full sized football field in the inner city in over 100 years (and Johannesburg is only 139 years old). There are other smaller pitches on rooftops, or in parks, but to have this open space is remarkable. In the mornings, small children from inner city schools are bussed in to play there. Nearby is another sports area, a baseball court called the Field of Giants. Next to this is a small five-a-side football pitch.

With all the naysaying about Johannesburg, it is wonderful that there are enthusiasts and philanthropists that actually make things like this happen.

Gill Butler

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