DESIGN DIRECTORY 2008

We take the wraps off the year’s bespoke, bold and beautiful: from Alessi to Zanotta and Aston to the Z-Car

HOT PROPERTIES

50 new architects in 27 countries on 5 continents. Who are you going to call?

ZAHA SUPERCAR
Hadid’s new hot rod

FEEL THE FAUCET
This season’s best

BLOCK PARTY
NYC’s new design
AMERICAS & AFRICA
Photographed in New York, at the Lincoln Center project, by Diller Scofidio + Renfro

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSE CHEHAK
1. Noroof, US: Scott Oliver
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6. Ogrydziak Prillinger, US: Zoë Prillinger (6a) and Luke Ogrydziak (6b)
LINCOLN CENTER PROJECT,
NEW YORK. BY DILLER
SCOFIDIO + RENFRO

There are few Manhattan
locations as codified as the
Lincoln Center, a collection of
modernist slabs housing 13
celebrated opera, theatre and
orchestra companies, as well as
the Juilliard School, a symbol of
elite and competitive education
for starry-eyed performers
from around the world. Until
now, the physical entry has been
as difficult as the educational,
but Diller Scofidio + Renfro is
breaking down the door, literally,
expanding the building out
into an open triangle formed by
the sweep of Broadway, and
replacing the brutalist 1960s
façade with a double-layered glass
façade and a sloped cantilevered
roof. That’s not the only change.
Embracing the spectacle of
performance and turning
New York’s tradition of street-
side gawking into a prescribed
decision, the architects are
introducing a sloped hyperbolic
lawn over the North Plaza,
turning the cool stage set of
Alice Tully Hall into a glowing
cocoon, and engaging, in,
as Elizabeth Diller says,
‘an architectural striptease’.
Eva Hagberg
www.dillerscofidio.com
1. NOROOF A
NEW YORK, US
Tel: 1.347 415 4224
www.noroof.net

Noroof consists of Margarita McGrath and Scott Oliver. ’We are now in the sweet spot between young and old,’ they say mysteriously, alluding to their extensive global experience (including working in Vienna, Korea, and all across the US).

Self-described old-school modernists who cite Carlo Scarpa and Richard Serra as inspiration, they also believe that innovation comes from using less, an ‘unsensuous approach’ that is ’reductive not in order to diminish a project’s scope, but to amplify it by bearing down on what is left.’ Their passion for small-scale travel ( VW campers and sail boats) translates into beautifully detailed living spaces. They are currently completing the Finger Apartments, in New York’s East Village, which needed clever rejigging to maximise floorspace. The Slot House (above) is described as a ‘vertical loft’, a refurbishment that combines hard-wearing industrial materials with the restored remnants of the original structure.

2. STUDIO ST A
NEW YORK, US
Tel: 1.212 543 2600
www.studio-st.com, info@studio-st.com

Israeli-born Esther Sperber founded StudioST in 2003, following studies at the Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa and Columbia University in New York and a five-year stint in the offices of IM Pei. The firm is on a quest to generate new spatial experiences, using computer-intensive modelling methods to unleash a new form of domestic architecture. Swell House (above), designed with Guy Zucker, is a radical proposal for extending a small suburban house. An extruded addition appears as if the original structure has been subjected to extreme forces, twisting and stretching the shape. Sustainable design is high on the firm’s agenda, especially using passive energy as a means of heating and cooling its modest designs. Sperber and her team are also working on budget-conscious projects for real estate developers in the hope of raising standards across the board.

3. GREGORY KATZ A
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27.11 8344 4855
gak@vcdamall.co.za

Gregory Katz, 35, spent time in the offices of Daniel Libeskind and Zvi Hecker before setting up his own practice in 2005. ’I am a bit of a control freak,’ he says, admitting to doing everything from ’admin and invoicing to designing and detailing’. He admires the installation work of James Turrell, Olafur Elissasson and Dan Graham, people who ’push spatial experience, but not in a gratuitous, formal way like a lot of architects’. Concrete seems to come naturally, Katz’s own house (below) is one of three he built in Norwood, Johannesburg, each a rough-edged symphony of cast and poured concrete. Known as the Lot 424 project, it is far more than just a homage to Le Corbusier. A true exponent of the live/work space, Katz says he ’rejects the categories of residential or commercial space’, defining sustainable architecture as that which offers maximum flexibility, with concrete and steel providing a solid basis for a flexible future.

4. SPECHT HARPAN A
NEW YORK/AUSTIN, US
Tel: 1.212 239 1159, 1.512 382 7938
www.spechtharpman.com,
inquiries@spechtharpman.com

Scott Specht and Louise Harpman studied at the Yale School of Architecture before working in the offices of Daniel Libeskind, Kohn Pedersen Fox and Deborah Berke. They established their own office in 1995 and have evolved a residential architecture that focuses on the ’highly specific and custom crafted’, citing sources as disparate as Bruce Goff, Sir John Soane and Coney Island.

5. FRONT STUDIO A
NEW YORK, US
Tel: 1.212 334 6620
www.frontstudio.com, info@frontstudio.com

Yen Ha, 33, set up Front in 2001, before being joined by Michi Yanagisawa. 34, a few years later, with a remit covering projects in the allied fields of architecture, design and food.’ Their approach is straightforward and analytical, but spills out into a realm of juxtapositions and toying with the old and the new. Ultimately, their aim is to transcend fashion. Media junkies, foodies and unabashed novelty-seekers, the duo throw a multitude of influences into the pot. Able to combine renovation and restoration with new interventions, as well as conceptual designs that merge the natural with the urban environment Front has a well-rounded portfolio. Its concept for the Kautz House (above) in Callicoon, New York, proposed a rusted steel box as an addition to a country house. The Harlem Townhouse reconfigured an existing traditional structure into three units, using a modern extension at the rear and the careful insertion of a new staircase.

6. OGRYDIAK PRILLINGER A
SAN FRANCISCO, US
Tel: 1.415 474 0723
www.oparch.net, info@oparch.net

Luke Ogydiazak and Zoé Prillinger, both 37, set up their firm in 2000, after studying at Princeton. They find their best work comes through clients who ’are able to tap into their own interests’. These influence the project, determining the programme and form. Underpinning this approach is a rigorous system of digital design, allowing every project to be modelled down to the last detail. The Kayak House (above) has a serene site on the banks of the American River in Lotus, California, a great kayaking spot. Exposed steel and plywood give the interior a utilitarian, ready-for-anything feel, combined with a luxurious amount of double-height space and light generated by vast windows. A bright blue garage door, the only tone used on the exterior, mimics the colour of the owner’s favourite kayak.