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July/August 2018

VOLUME 2/NUMBER 4
The magazine of the
American Society of
Interior Designers and
the Interior Designers
of Canada

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THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

Passion and a well-rounded skill set are the building blocks to success—especially for the next generation of design talent and the educators, programs, and teaching methods necessary to prepare them for a changing industry.

BY ROBERT NIEMINEN



Image: Yasmine el Mansouri

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REDESIGNING HISTORY

Repurposing a historic building for greater function and contemporary needs is a balancing act, one that requires due diligence and adaptability as the old becomes “new” again.

BY BRIAN LIBBY

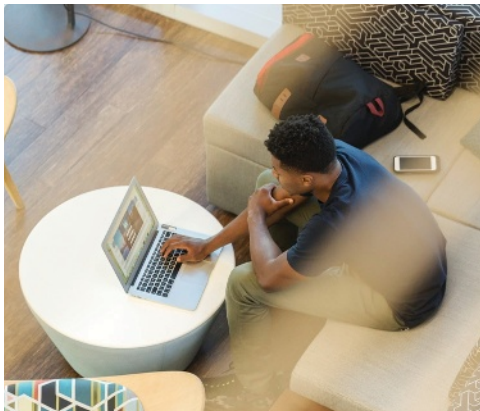


Image: LinkedIn Sales Navigator on Unsplash

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CLOSING THE GAP

Just as housing demographics evolve to address the makeup of a variety of homeowners, so too must the mindset of the interior designers entrusted with their clients’ budgets, requirements, and desires.

BY DIANA MOSHER



Image: Alain Laforest



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ICONIC PROFILE: DAN MENCHIONS & KEITH RUSHBROOK

The dynamic duo at Toronto-based II BY IV DESIGN continue to leave their distinctive mark on the industry, with collaborations on everything from hospitality and retail venues to living spaces.

BY AMBROSE CLANCY



Image: Chris Anagnostopoulos

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REST, RELAX, RECHARGE

Bedrooms are more than just a place to sleep; today's clients crave a peaceful space to restore their minds, bodies, and souls at every stage of their lives.

BY JESSE BRATTER

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ON THE COVER

Keeping families connected: Multigenerational housing solutions are on the rise. See "Closing the Gap," p. 34.



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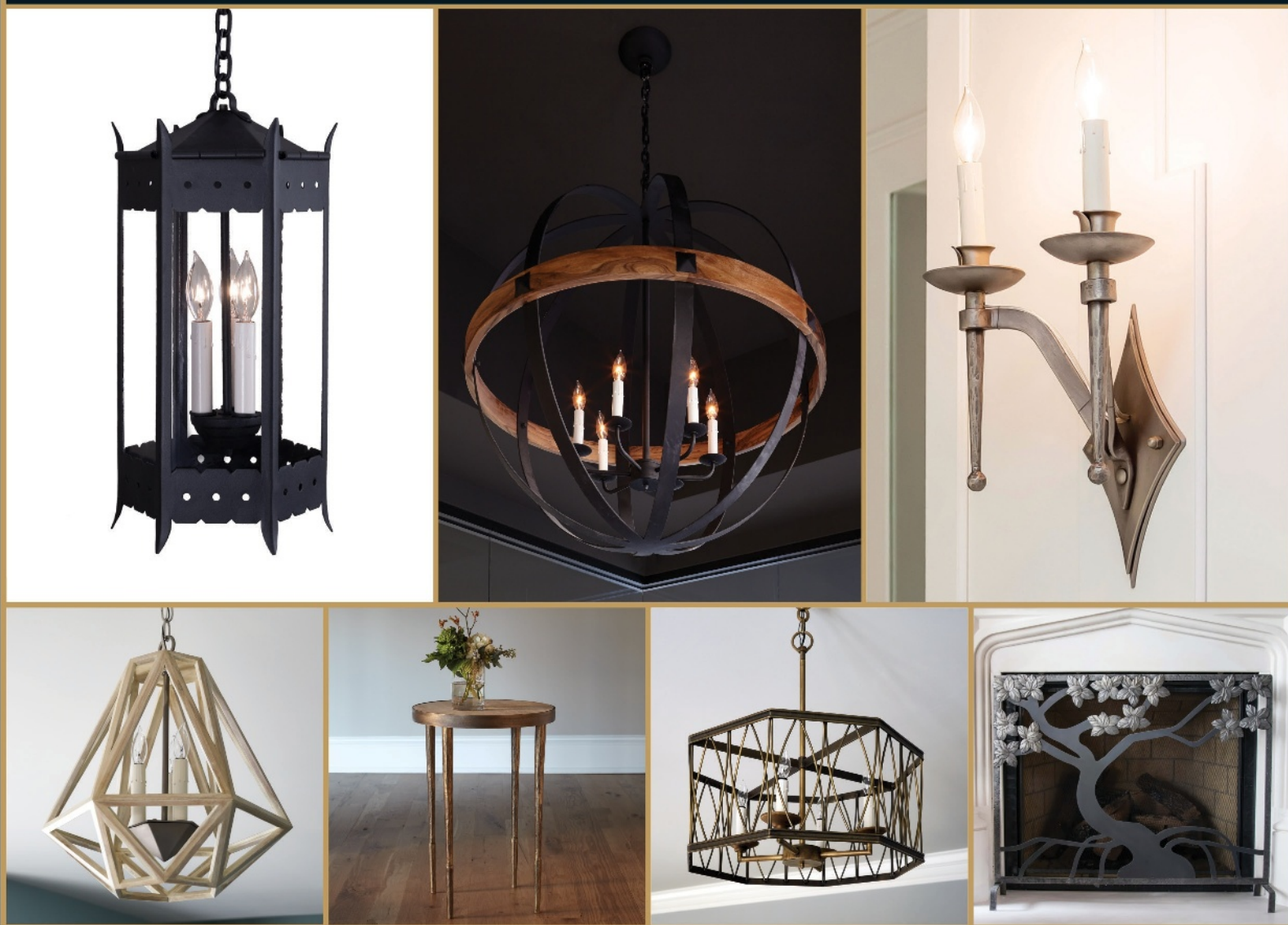
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PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE



Randy Fiser,
CEO, ASID, and
Tony Benders,
CEO, IDC.
(Image: Lindsay
Cephas)

It's long been said that age is just a number and never before has that notion rung so true in the field of design. Today's designers are better equipped than ever to create residential and commercial spaces that accept, support, and honor age in endless forms—from the age of a building itself to the range of ages of those who will occupy its interiors. Design professionals are creating a new future every day as they breathe new life into our historic structures and reinvent residential spaces to accommodate the ever-changing idea of home.

In this issue, *i+D* tackles the relationship between age and design in myriad ways. We look at generational shifts in living arrangements and the creative housing solutions they already have instigated (“Closing the Gap,” p. 34) and we examine the importance of honoring, preserving, and revitalizing our built environment (“Redesigning History,” p. 42). We dive into how best to educate and empower the next generation of designers (“The Power of Knowledge,” p. 24) and focus on a former power plant being transformed into a sprawling entertainment and hospitality complex (“Design Pulse: Savannah, Georgia,” p. 18).

Much as we look today at structures like ancient castles and 19th century tenements for clues to home life in previous times, designers and economists of future decades will research ideas like micro housing and multigenerational compounds to learn about how we lived today. It's a design imprint that will be relegated to the pages of history, further cementing the impact design has on everyday life and the role design professionals play in making life livable for all. ●

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An aerial rendering of Plant Riverside District marks the significance of this 4.5-acre rehabilitation along the Savannah River.
(Image: The Kessler Collection)

ROOTED IN HISTORY

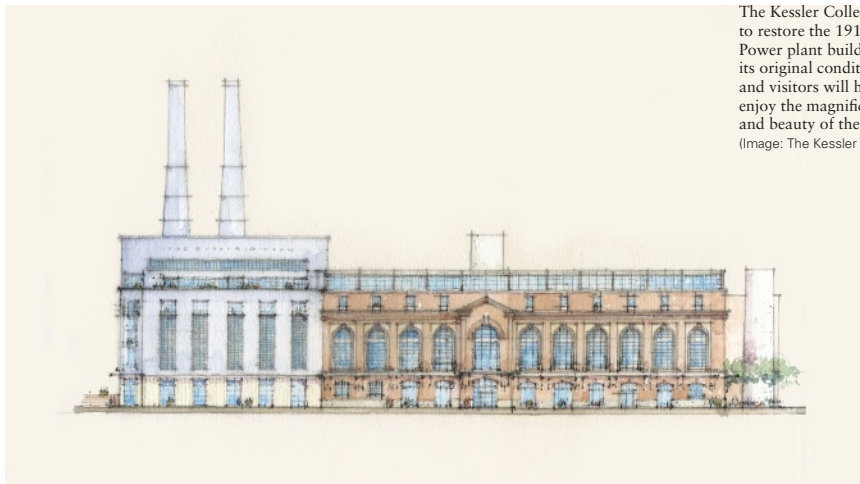
SAVANNAH IS A CITY WHERE THE PAST LIVES ON BEAUTIFULLY IN MODERN TIMES. From the antebellum architecture and manicured parks to the cobblestoned squares and grand oak trees draped in Spanish moss, the city itself is a lesson in architecture and design in many forms. But, don't let its lush historic nature fool you. While continuing to preserve its history, this city is making some decidedly modern moves. Earlier this summer, the city awarded an \$8.8 million stadium project to Perkins+Will. The firm will serve as primary architect for the project and will partner with multiple local businesses and consultants to bring the project to fruition.

And, that's not all. Add to the forthcoming stadium a 4.5-acre riverside rehabilitation (see "Powerful Plans") and the application for historic district designation by the Ardmore neighborhood and Ardsley Park/Chatham Crescent Neighborhood Association—thanks to research findings from students at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)—and Savannah speaks as a city where the future built history is set to be just as interesting as what came before it.

An officially designated Historic Landmark District—one of the largest in the United States—runs from East Broad Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and from the Savannah River to Gaston Street in Savannah, Georgia.
(Image: Natalia Bratslavsky)



Among the development plans for the Plant Riverside District are a new riverwalk, entertainment and hospitality space, plazas and public parks, and more.
(Image: The Kessler Collection)



The Kessler Collection intends to restore the 1912 historic Georgia Power plant building back to its original condition so locals and visitors will have the chance to enjoy the magnificent architecture and beauty of the design.
(Image: The Kessler Collection)

Powerful Plans

A new story is set to unfold along the tranquil shores of the historic Savannah River. Developed by The Kessler Collection, Savannah's Plant Riverside District will transform the decommissioned 106-year-old Georgia Power plant building and surrounding 4.5-acre waterfront property into an entertainment district complete with lodging and dining, cultural and entertainment experiences, and more. The area has been closed to the public for more than 100 years and is the largest piece of undeveloped, national historic district land in the United States.

Among the plans for the riverfront district are 1.5 acres of public parks and plazas, a quarter mile of new riverwalk, 670,000 square feet of entertainment and hospitality space, more than 22,000 square feet of meeting and event space, live entertainment venues, and three luxury hotels with a total of 419 guest rooms and suites. In addition to the culture and amenities Plant Riverside District will bring to the area, it also creates 700 new job opportunities for the community.

The overall venue intends to entertain all ages with boutique hotels from the JW Marriott brand, wine tasting rooms and rooftop bars, natural science exhibits and a kids recreation area, a 4,000-square-foot art gallery, and an outdoor park honoring Martin Luther King Jr. that will include a stage and seating for 700.

The anticipated opening of Savannah's Plant Riverside District will take place in two phases: Phase one will open in the first quarter of 2019, with the remainder of the project scheduled to open by the end of 2019. ●

WASTE LESS, DESIGN MORE

PRODUCT LAUNCHES AT RECENT TRADE SHOWS ILLUSTRATE THE DESIGN INDUSTRY'S DOGGED COMMITMENT to keeping unnecessary waste out of landfills and also out of places where it simply doesn't belong, like our oceans. Manufacturers and designers alike have identified everything from plastic water bottles to automotive parts to the products they themselves are making as having future material potential and are turning what could have been discarded products into an array of useful goods from lighting to flooring and many things in between.

These promising products are among those proving upcycling isn't just a clever idea for at-home crafts any longer, it's a global movement toward a more sustainable, livable planet, one that just happens to be beautifully designed as well. ●

1. SHAW CONTRACT. Made from 40 percent post-consumer PET (polyethylene terephthalate), environmental highlights for Shaw Contract's new PET Resilient flooring include 16 recycled plastic bottles per square foot and 64 recycled bottles per plank, plus, no plasticizers, chlorine, or PVC. Shown here is the first collection—Palette—that also offers free reclamation and recycling into itself.

2. INTERFACE, INC. Drawn Lines by Interface is produced with a controlled material stream so that it can then be reclaimed and recycled into the company's GlasBac RE recycled content backing. Drawn Lines also will be third-party verified as a carbon neutral product through Interface's Carbon Neutral Floors program.

3&5. WAKANINE. Designed by Stephen Pikus and distributed by wakaNINE, the TRuK lighting line upcycles discarded diesel engine air filters to create pendants and table lamps. Based in South Africa, Pikus provides work for local "micro recyclers," who are trained to seek out the goods the designer will morph into new lighting designs.

4. JM LIFESTYLES LLC. WoodForm Concrete is a lightweight, engineered composite from JM Lifestyles that looks like wood, but acts like stone. The product consists of more than 50 percent recycled content and produces zero waste in its own production. The product will not crack, stain, or rot, allowing for a wood-look in locations where real wood would be impractical.



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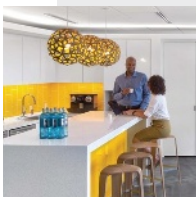
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PROJECT 1

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS HEADQUARTERS (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

In May 2016, ASID moved to its new headquarters in Washington, D.C. The primary goal of the space is to improve the health, wellness, and well-being of employees in order to improve the organization's productivity, engagement, and retention.



PROJECT 2

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THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

BY ROBERT NIEMINEN

As the profession of design continues to evolve, educators must equip students with more than technical skills to thrive in the global workplace

SPECULATING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DESIGN IS AN IMPRECISE UNDERTAKING. With rapidly advancing technology, lines between market segments virtually disappearing, and increasingly integrated and specialized project teams, there's no telling where the design of tomorrow will take us.

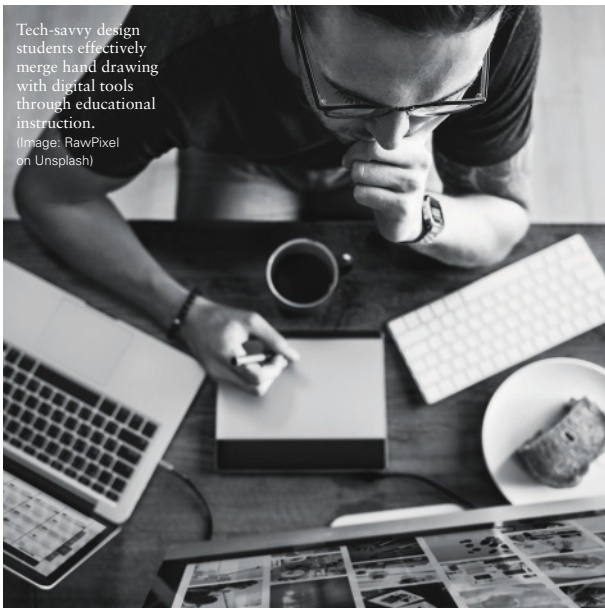
To catch a glimpse of the future of the profession, the most logical place to look is to design schools. After all, today's students are the ones who will carry the legacy of design forward and forge new paths toward a brighter tomorrow. Ensuring the next generation of designers is equipped to handle the challenges that lie ahead is precisely what design schools do daily. As such, *i+D* recently spoke with educators to learn how academia is preparing a new wave of designers in the context of an ever-evolving industry.

Many of today's students are
"digital natives" who are applying their tech-savvy
approach to the learning process in ways not
previously seen.

The Present: Making the Most of Technology

It's impossible to have a discussion about the next design generation without addressing technology. Many of today's students are "digital natives" who are applying their tech-savvy approach to the learning process in ways not previously seen.

"What I see that's really interesting happening with students is that they have a very native ability to combine and merge technology, whereas when I was in school or even teaching not that long ago, it was very discreet," notes Cotter Christian, assistant professor of interior design and BFA program director at The New School, Parsons. In the past, he explains, students would use Photoshop or CAD for specific tasks or projects, which was a more linear approach than today. "What I see with the students now is a much more fluid process," he says. "They use the technologies interdependently in a very native way, almost like it's instinct to do that, which I think is fascinating."



Tech-savvy design students effectively merge hand drawing with digital tools through educational instruction. (Image: RawPixel on Unsplash)

At the New York School of Interior Design (NYSID), proficiency in technology and digital drawing tools is taught as early as possible, according to Ellen Fisher, vice president of academic affairs and dean. "Students don't necessarily come in with a portfolio or even any drawing skills, but taking the idea that they want to be here—that they're driven to design—we give them those drawing tools from the beginning, both hand drawing as well as technology," she says. "By the time they graduate, they're quite skilled." Fisher points out that instruction in digital tools at NYSID includes a range of software programs, including Adobe Creative Cloud; Autodesk's Revit and 3ds Max; SketchUp; and others. However, she adds the end goal isn't simply learning a program; it also is about effective communication and understanding construction documentation—both of which are essential in the field.

Likewise, at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, design students are introduced to the latest design software as well as hand drawing to ensure they can communicate ideas quickly and effectively, explains Helen Evans Warren, associate professor and chair of the school's Department of Interior Design. "We incorporate [technology] every semester, but we fully believe in still keeping the hand sketching component for ideation and quick explorations of maybe a quick perspective, a sketch to communicate with our clients and/or contractors," she says. "It's so important that students understand these tools." Balancing hand sketching with digital tools is growing in importance, as Evans Warren adds she has observed a shift toward creating hybrid presentations to clients that blend photorealistic renderings with more hand-crafted qualities.

Another change that's been occurring, thanks to technology, is in the field of continuing education for professional designers, according to Brynell D'Mello, executive director of the Interior Design Continuing Education Council (IDCEC), based in Toronto. "The IDCEC system heavily depends on technology, and we have a paperless environment. All IDCEC operations are online and web-based," she notes. "We have also seen a huge shift in online continuing education where designers are keeping up with online CEUs." D'Mello adds that technology has made a big difference in the field, from programs used for design planning to how designers keep up with recent trends.

The Past: History as Context for Design

Design schools across the board continue to place emphasis on history to give students a much broader and more in-depth context for their designs, which involves expanding their view of history altogether. It's so important, in fact, that teaching history isn't an elective—it's a prerequisite.

"It's critical," Evans Warren suggests. "We're a CITA [Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation]-accredited program, and, as a part of that, we integrate design history and design theory. We teach our students to look at precedents: What are previous projects, whether they're related to the project you're looking at or not, that could inform your design?" She says that, as students learn from the past, it informs the future—a central tenet of the growing evidence-based design model.



- 1. Cotter Christian, The New School, Parsons in New York. (Image: Rod Goodman)
- 2. Ellen Fisher, New York School of Interior Design (NYSID). (Image: Chris Spinelli)
- 3. Brynell D'Mello, Interior Design Continuing Education Council (IDCEC) in Toronto.
- 4. Helen Evans Warren, Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

“We have to caution students at the same time about using history as only a sort of aesthetic opportunity and, instead, think about the prevailing forces that resulted in that history.”

—COTTER CHRISTIAN, THE NEW SCHOOL, PARSONS

Likewise, D’Mello explains that history always plays an important role in understanding how design has evolved. “If [students] don’t understand how we got here, then it would be difficult to have a vision of the future of design. With the changing environment, designers need to use all their resources to create new designs and serve future needs.”

While Christian notes that Parsons students take courses in design and architectural history to give them a broader context and help better position them in the field, he warns of the imprudence of a superficial approach to history. “We have to caution students at the same time about using history as only a sort of aesthetic opportunity and, instead, think about the prevailing forces that resulted in that history,” he says. Doing so can help provide insight not only into the past, but understanding the present as well.

Fisher is passionate about expanding students’ view of history and culture and has made a concerted effort as dean over the past seven years to offer courses at NYSID that highlight design and art history from around the world—not just the west. “I think the idea of design history could be expanded, as we’re expanding it here [at NYSID], to be not just the history of western design.” Fisher says it’s more important than ever for designers to be culturally fluent, meaning “to really understand the history of a culture, the history of a country, and that means their design and art history.”

Christian agrees, adding it is important to look critically at what students are being taught today. “I think we have a really big challenge right now of critiquing the architectural canon that we teach students. It’s been such a white, male-dominated canon,” he observes—a fact that has not painted an inclusive picture of history. In fact, Christian suggests the contributions of many cultures have been omitted. But, “when students see others making history—people who maybe look like them—that helps them feel empowered to make their own broad design decisions and thoughts, and that they have value and a voice as designers today.”



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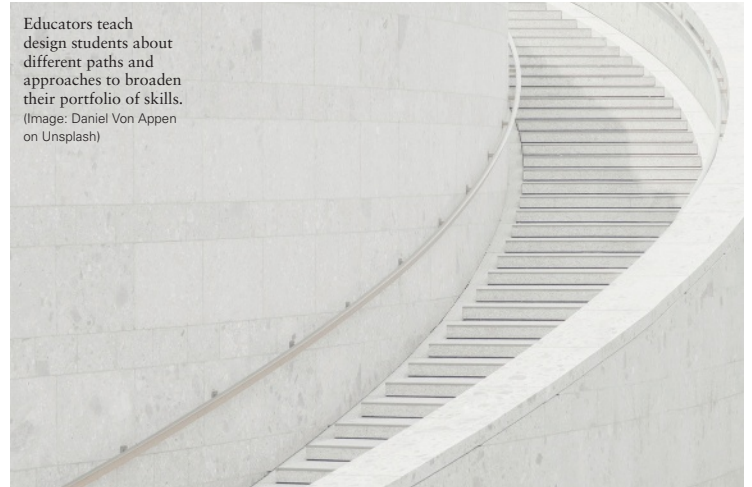
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Business of Design Education

Educators teach design students about different paths and approaches to broaden their portfolio of skills. (Image: Daniel Von Appen on Unsplash)



The Future: Skills for Tomorrow

Within the framework of an ever-changing industry, how do educators ensure students are prepared for an uncertain future? By making sure they're as well-rounded as possible, for starters, and by giving them the building blocks they need to succeed.

"You try and teach them the seeds of as many different paths as you can, or different threads that may develop in their future. [That way,] when they encounter it in their work life, they can pick up that thread where they started in school and develop it, really weave it into something that's part of their overall portfolio of skills," Fisher explains.

Echoing her comments, Christian says it's important for students to speak the language of other fields fluently and understand the broader impact of their work in terms of social responsibility and social justice. It's about taking responsibility for themselves as designers. "If students are able to do that well—to represent those unrepresented people in the built environment and really think about the broader consequences of the work they're doing—they can be nimble enough to work in any type of changing design climate," he says. "Having a comprehensive view of what your role is as a designer is one way we hope to prepare them for a changing field."

Similarly, Evans Warren adds the ability to communicate with a variety of tools, be it hand or digital, is key, as well as "understanding the meaning and the experience of spaces that you're creating and the impact of those spaces on the people that you're designing for—that's huge for us."

At the end of the day, according to Fisher, the most critical thing educators can pass on to the next design generation isn't skills. It's passion. "The truth is," she affirms, "we choose to be designers because this is what we love. I want students to be able to find a way to rise above all the things that can go wrong and find a sense of satisfaction and joy in the fact that something they have had as an idea is now a place, a space, a room, or a building into which they can walk and enjoy what they've created." ●

ROBERT NIEMINEN

is a freelance writer and regular contributor to The Architect's Newspaper, retrofit, and Retail Environments magazine, as well as the editor-at-large of interiors+sources. He also was a contributing author to the book, The State of the Interior Design Profession (Fairchild, 2010), which was placed on the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers' "50 Must Read, Must Have" list.

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UNDER ONE ROOF

BY HANNAH WISER

Family structures in the United States and Canada are facing historic levels of fluidity with multigenerational living on the rise, people waiting longer to marry, and high rates of divorce and remarriage. Two-parent households with children under 21 years of age, known as nuclear families, no longer dominate the domestic market. Additionally, a shrinking middle class, a record aging population, and a lack of single-occupancy living options are raising concerns over access to and affordability of living for all generations.

According to 2016 data from the U.S. Census Bureau and Statistics Canada, as well as The Vanier Institute of the Family in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., fewer than half of married couples—45 percent in Canada and 46 percent in America—have children under 25-years-old. The number of Canadian couples without children is at an all-time low, and nuclear families represent just 20 percent of American households. Single-parent American households have nearly tripled since 1950; today, 27 percent of American children live with a single parent. Single-parent households comprise 14 percent of American families and 16 percent of that same demographic in Canada.

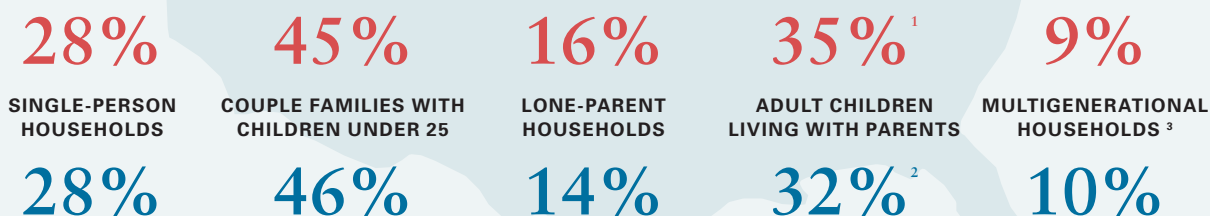
Also on the rise is the percentage of young adults living with their parents. Thirty-two (32) percent of Americans 18- to 34-years-old remain in their parents' household, close behind the 35 percent of 20- to 34-year-old Canadians living with at least one parent. Among young adults in America, living with a parent is the option most taken. Meanwhile, in Canada, one-person households are more common than any other living arrangement, at 28 percent. In America, single households are 28 percent of the total; however, less than 13 percent of apartments are designed for single use.

The elderly living with their children and grandchildren make up the fastest-growing demographic of households in Canada at 6.3 percent. In 2016, 9 percent of Canadian children and 10 percent of American children ages 0-14 lived with at least one grandparent. By 2050, the population of Americans 65 and older is expected to double, totaling 88 million people. This projection emphasizes the need for homes to be equipped with universal design for aging in place and comfort and convenience at every life stage.

For more on the changing face of the traditional household and the solutions being designed to satisfy such diverse arrangements, see “Closing the Gap,” p. 34. ●

Modern Household Demographics

CANADA
UNITED STATES



1. Aged 20-34

2. Aged 18-34

3. Children aged 0-14 living with at least one grandparent

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Statistics Canada, National Building Museum, The Vanier Institute of the Family

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Contributors

History tells its own story—just like the authors in this issue of *i+D*, who offer lessons learned while researching their specific assignments and reveal their perspectives about one of our featured topics: preserving older structures.

1. Robert Nieminen, *The Power of Knowledge*
Robert believes there's nothing more inherently sustainable than extending the useful life of an existing building. "Recycling used building materials into new construction projects is essential, but preserving the structures themselves eliminates even more waste and keeps embodied energy and carbon in place to lessen a project's impact on the environment," he explains. A different historical mindset was uncovered while developing his story on educating the next design generation (p. 24). According to Robert, "I was encouraged to learn many design schools are broadening the scope of design and art history instruction beyond western civilization to include the contributions of other cultures and nations that have often been omitted from the existing architectural canon. Students can feel more empowered and valued when they are exposed to the contributions of people and cultures with whom they can identify. By expanding students' views of history and culture, I believe the future of the profession will be much richer because of it."

2. Diana Mosher, *Closing the Gap*
Diana enjoyed the many interesting statistics and ideas that emerged during her interviews about housing trends (p. 34). "Designers are in the position to educate their clients about possibilities they never imagined existed, because [they] are continually exposed to new ideas through their own curiosity, continuing education opportunities, and exchanging information with colleagues. Designers who think outside the box to stay abreast of thought leadership in real estate, academic, and international design will be in the know about emerging ideas from around the globe and especially well-positioned to bring value to their clients," she states. With respect to preserving older structures, Diana feels an individual doesn't

have to be a history buff to appreciate or want to learn more about a beautiful adaptive-reuse project. "Preserving our built past is a way to connect with previous generations. While working on such projects, designers learn about the choices that were made in that era for materials and space configuration and can revisit these choices, sometimes discovering that what's old is new again," she says.

3. Jesse Bratter, *Rest, Relax, Recharge*
Jesse says she's always looked to using low- and no-VOC paints in her own home, but writing her article on bedroom design (p. 50) gave her a new awareness of other "healthy" materials that should be considered. "I've never given thought to the chemicals used in my mattress—hidden away underneath my sheets, it never seemed to be something I should be concerned about. There's been such a surge in appreciating organic and natural when it comes to the food we put into our bodies and the ingredients we use to take care of our skin, but sleeping on a mattress night after night, breathing in whatever those sheets and mattresses are made of, should be at front of mind as well," she notes. When it comes to historic structures, Jesse compares such influences in design to her own professional livelihood. "Just like knowing our social, economic, and political history helps us move forward in society or how reading the works of various authors makes you a better writer, learning from and preserving our built past provides the foundation for designing in the present and future," she asserts.

4. Brian Libby, *Redesigning History*
One thing that surprised Brian while working on his article, "Redesigning History" (p. 42), was a recognition that historic preservation is changing. "Today, it's often about preserving the essence

of a design, not maintaining every detail," he explains. "That can be a good thing, because it allows more creativity. But, we also must be mindful of historic integrity and not blur the lines between something truly historic and a cartoonish copy." He imagines that the overall appeal to this segment of the built environment is that "people want to visit and spend time in places with a connection to the past. Whether it's a small-town main street lined with old brick buildings or a historic mountain lodge constructed from massive timbers, the craftsmanship and beautiful materials give designers a great head start on creating an interior space people love. And, yet, whether it's a contemporary or a period-influenced approach, the room for creativity is as great as there would be in a new building."

5. Ambrose Clancy, *ICONic Profile: Dan Mencións & Keith Rushbrook*
When asked about learning from and preserving our built past, Ambrose says "it seems that one trait we all share is a need to be connected to others, to a community, to people in general. Preserving structures connects us to past eras, but, more importantly, to the people who built them and dwelled in them." Always one to gain insight from his "ICONic Profile" interviews, this issue's focus on the principals of II BY IV DESIGN (p. 48) did not disappoint. According to Ambrose, he uncovered some great techniques to use when interviewing job applicants. He explains: "[Keith told me he] asked people what they were reading. Also, he asked them if they were without electronic devices, where would they go for inspiration. Kind of connecting to that idea of why we should preserve our architectural and design heritage." ●



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Closing

Designers can help clients navigate and outfit innovative housing models to suit generational shifts in living arrangements

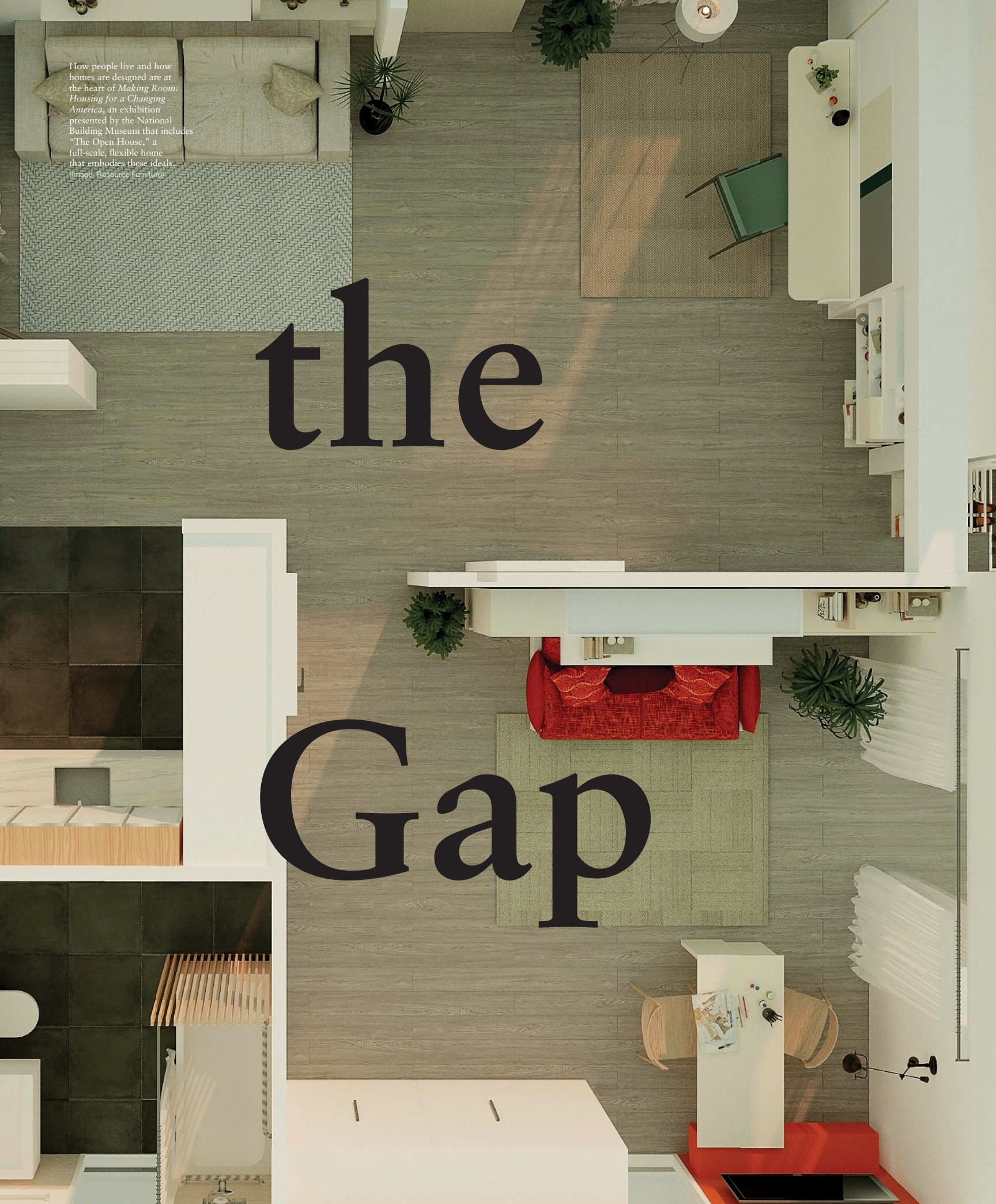
Shopping for a new home to buy or rent has never been easier. Technology enables the consumer to see every available property in their own locale—or anywhere in the world—from the convenience of their phone. But, does the available housing stock offer the right choices to meet the needs of a changing population? And, should the A&D community be doing a better job of adapting to who we are and how we want to live?

The demise of the dining room can be traced back to Gen X's desire to work at home. Millennials have driven the demand for a new breed of amenities in multifamily development...and who would have predicted that downsizing baby boomers and millennials would be attracted to the same rooftop fire pits, on-site yoga classes, and pet-washing amenities? Interior designers who can anticipate and also influence these new directions are an invaluable resource to new and existing clients who will need to navigate a changing housing market.

How people live and how homes are designed are at the heart of *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America*, an exhibition presented by the National Building Museum that includes "The Open House," a full-scale, flexible home that embodies these ideals. (Image: Resource Furniture)

the

Gap



Housing by the Numbers

The post-war housing boom was driven by nuclear families, a demographic that accounted for 43 percent of all households in 1950. “That number remained at 40 percent in 1970 so you can understand why in the ‘50s, ‘60s, and ‘70s we were just building those single-family homes,” says Chrysanthe B. Broikos, an architectural historian and curator at the National Building Museum, in Washington, D.C., who organized the exhibition *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America*. “But, when you look to see what’s happened since then, that single-family percentage has dropped in half basically, and all the other categories have shot up.”

Broikos believes housing should be more responsive to what’s happening in the market. “We’re seeing more acceptance of universal design,” she explains. “I would like to think that. However, we’re not seeing it everywhere.” Some counties are mandating a visibility standard that requires at least one no-step entrance into the home for wheelchair access, as well as one accessible bathroom on the main level. Arizona, Florida, and other areas with older populations are experimenting with that.

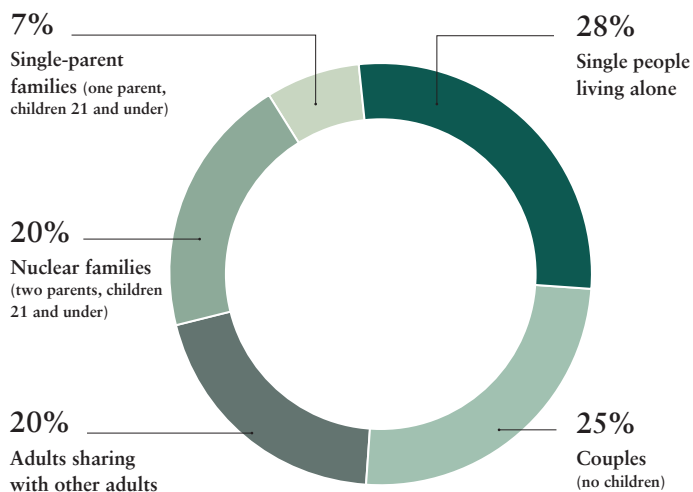
Living with several different generations of family under one roof is even more rewarding when everyone has a private place to call their own.

Broikos notes that people are frequently surprised when they see actual statistics, such as 50 percent of all households are either one or two people. “That’s pretty powerful,” she says. Other unexpected takeaways from data compiled by the Citizens Housing Planning Council (CHPC), a nonprofit education and research group based in New York, is that not all of those single people are millennials; more 18- to 34-year-olds live at home with parents than any other type of housing arrangement; and one out of every three kids is in a single-parent household. “That shocks folks. They react to these figures the most,” adds Broikos.

According to Nora Spinks, chief executive officer at The Vanier Institute of the Family in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the two fastest-growing types of households in Canada are single person and multigenerational. “We’re looking at a number of trends, including cohousing, where unrelated adults or families share a household without being in a romantic relationship.” One example might be five widows in their late 60s who share a home. Spinks also watches with interest the design evolution of family living spaces like the disappearance of the bathtub.

The Vanier Institute of the Family has seen a focus on progressive developers and designers in the early 2000s looking at ways of creating homes that recognize the needs of co-parenting and joint custody. These cleverly designed townhouses have a common living space in the center where the child resides and each parent has his or her own private space. Another concept that recognizes the need for intergenerational housing is “nanny” or “granny” flats—with independent but not necessarily separate living quarters in the back of the house, lower level, or upper level.

Housing Statistics 2016 (U.S.)



*Source: National Building Museum

Growing Pains

Living with several different generations of family under one roof is even more rewarding when everyone has a private place to call their own. This premise came to life for a Chinese-American family in the award-winning Choy House in Flushing, New York. “Our client lives with his wife and their two kids, his mother, and his brother and wife,” says Devin O’Neill, partner and co-founder of Brooklyn, New York-based O’Neill Rose Architects. It was preferable to rebuild on their existing property rather than leave the city.

The footprints for the houses in the neighborhood are very tiny and typically just a story and a half. “Most of the houses are very similar in size and scale to Levittown, the post-war homes built for people after they returned from the war,” notes O’Neill. “They retain that character, though many have been changed over time. We used the existing footprint, but then we elongated it at the back of the house and that allowed us to create spaces for the different pieces of the family.” The new layout accommodates four bathrooms and two kitchens.

The front piece that looks out onto the street is for the younger brother and his wife and is a duplex with kitchen and dining room downstairs and the bedroom upstairs. In the back, the addition that cantilevers out over the property and below that section is a triplex for O’Neill’s client, his wife, and two kids. The lower section—which relates to the garden and outside spaces—was designed for the grandmother. These different pieces of the house are connected through separate staircases that access the lower level, which is open to the garden.

“They each have their own home within the same footprint and their own identity within that home,” explains O’Neill. “The grandmother is the head of the family. She likes to garden and be part of the outside, and she keeps an eye on the kids during the day while she’s cooking for everyone. She’s in and out of the house with them all day long.”

Three separate but interconnected living spaces and a shared garden were the inspired, multigenerational solution for the Choy House in Flushing, New York. (Image: Michael Moran)

Multigenerational Trends (Canada)

+ 38%

Multigenerational households were the fastest-growing type between 2001 and 2016

6.3%

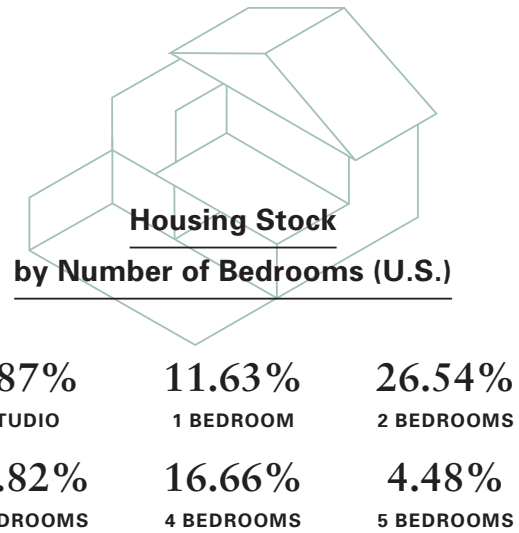
Percent of Canada’s population—more than 2.2 million people—living in multigenerational households in 2016

**Source: The Vanier Institute of the Family*





NOMAD's tiny homes are both highly livable and highly affordable. (Image: NOMAD Micro Homes)



**Source: National Building Museum*

Tiny Houses Have Low Impact

In contrast to more traditional and emerging single-family and multigenerational housing opportunities, micro homes are becoming the new solution for those who want to live alone but can't afford to.

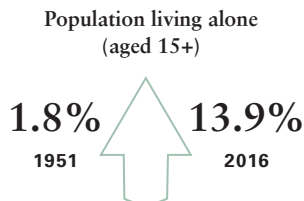
According to Ian Kent, founder and CEO of NOMAD Micro Homes Inc. in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, "You could double the density of neighborhoods just by allowing these units in the backyards. They are not much larger than a garden shed and could provide a return on investment, which is completely unheard of in the real estate industry because rents are high and our unit is very low cost—only \$32,000."

NOMAD's Cube can be shipped worldwide. "Our model differentiates itself through mass production, flat-packed product, do-it-yourself assembly, and high-tech materials," adds Kent. "We are now 3-D printing our homes completely on computer programs."

There's pretty much only one layout that works in a 12-by-12-foot space, and Kent has found it. "If you try moving any of those components around, it won't work," he says. Once you've minimized the bathroom to code, that leaves one wall for a kitchen. The layout of the kitchen—including the cabinets and their dimensions—is dictated by the appliances selected.

The only space that's a bit in question, notes Kent, is a flex space that can be used for storage space, a desk, or a washer/dryer. But, even with few layout decisions, there are ample opportunities for talented interior designers skilled in making tiny spaces highly livable, specifically advising decisions on materials, cabinets, lighting, and furniture.

Living Alone (Canada)



**Source: The Vanier Institute of the Family*



1.



2.

1. Depending on a household's configuration, two adjacent living areas can function separately or as a larger, combined space. (Image: Alan Sprecher)
2. A shower with collapsible walls offers extra space and a full-length mirror when not in use. (Image: Carl Cox)
3. At the *Making Room* exhibition, a micro-kitchen, complete with all the amenities, hides behind a folding wall. (Image: Yassine El Mansouri)



3.

The Transformative Power of Furniture



A highlight of *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America*, an exhibition at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., is a 1,000-square-foot home that enables visitors to get up close and personal with innovative housing concepts. The space was reconfigured twice during the exhibition to show three different living scenarios within the same footprint.

“Certain household typographies are underserved in the housing market,” says Lisa Blecker, director of marketing at Resource Furniture, which specializes in wall-beds and a range of transformational furniture that can be experienced throughout the exhibit home. “No one is building enough housing for these groups because they’re somewhat under the radar, but they’re all increasing dramatically and they have very distinct needs within a home.”

At the exhibition, the three scenarios have focused on unrelated adults living together as roommates; multigenerational households—another hugely growing segment; and older people aging in place. “We thought it would be extremely interesting to show how one structure can be designed—without changing any walls—to serve all three of those household scenarios by only changing the furniture,” explains Blecker.

A critical structural element that made this possible is Hufcor’s acoustical sound partition wall system. According to Blecker, they’re more acoustically sound than drywall and they do not require tracks in the floor. “With the push of a button, you can separate one large space into two, and it functions like two separate rooms with a wall in between—or you can open it up. So, that allows a lot of flexibility.”

In a roommates scenario, that wall could be closed most of the time. When roommates want to socialize with one another or others, the wall could be open. In the multigenerational home, the wall could be open during the day because it separated a mother’s and child’s room, but would be closed at nighttime. “Because our furniture in all three of the spaces is transforming furniture, there’s no bed visible during the day,” notes Blecker.

In an aging-in-place situation, the space is configured as two rooms. The smaller 200-square-foot space is a micro apartment and the larger space—with the partition wall—becomes a larger studio for an older couple. They have an easy-to-operate motorized bed, as well as hidden bunk beds for when grandchildren come to visit.

“The kitchen has a unique feature that works really well for all three scenarios,” says Blecker. The cooking surface is an induction cooktop on a peninsula that is adjustable from dining height to counter height, which enables individuals to sit or stand to cook. ADA-compliant features, such as electric drawers, backlit handles, and easy-to-open appliances, blend in. “You wouldn’t know any of these lovely features are for people with eyesight or mobility issues unless we pointed it out to you,” explains Blecker.

One of the two bathrooms features a Duravit OpenSpace by EOOS corner shower with doors that fold away when not in use.

With so much innovation in place, it’s important to note none of the furniture in use in the exhibit home is a prototype. “This is not the house of the future,” urges Blecker. “It’s the house of the present. It’s what’s possible if you know what’s available.”

The *Making Room* exhibit is open through January 6, 2019.

Creating Community in the Kitchen

The concept of work-live-play has spawned even more housing options. The space-sharing model popularized by WeWork is not only for edgy start-ups and solopreneurs in search of office space anymore. The concept has gone mainstream and also inspired a coliving brand. In 2016, WeLive launched in two locations: WeLive Wall Street in New York and WeLive Crystal City in Virginia. A third location in Seattle will open in spring 2020, and WeLive has stated it's looking for other opportunities to enter new markets in the future.

Each WeLive apartment—models range from studios to four bedrooms—is fully furnished with everything members need to move right in: complete kitchen supplies, bed linens, towels, HDTVs, high-speed internet, and much more. Already serving hundreds of members across 400 apartments, it's safe to say WeLive isn't only for millennials. Members run the gamut, from young people moving to a new city to parents with small children, from commuters who want to cut down on their daily travel time to retirees and empty nesters—and everyone in between.

The WeLive app enables residents to make connections with neighbors, book apartment cleaning, or check out such social offerings as happy-hour gatherings; cooking classes; Sunday night suppers; big game/big event nights; and health, fitness, and wellness classes. For many, the communal kitchen is at the heart of their WeLive experience. The social connections forged can make the move to a new city—or new state of life—feel much less formidable.

With the traditional nuclear family in decline, such new ideas for housing will continue to emerge. The interior design community has an important role to play in the conversation about which new directions make sense and why. Designers who stay abreast of even the most radical new housing concepts will be in demand as clients think beyond the traditional concept of a home. ●



Shared spaces at WeLive offer everything from happy hours to cooking classes and foster connections in the community. (Image: WeLive/WeWork)

DIANA MOSHER, Allied ASID, is a New York-based interior designer and media consultant. She also is the 2017-2019 communications director for the ASID New York Metro chapter.

WeWork's coliving apartments are fully furnished, dorm-style apartments that challenge traditional apartment living and foster a new sense of community. (Image: WeLive/WeWork)



CET Designer Awards 2018



A haven of peace in the heart of the Old Quebec, *Le Monastère des Augustines* has been respectfully restored, with original buildings blending with the new construction's contemporary architecture.
(Image: Stéphane Groleau)

Redesignin



From centuries-old architecture to modernism of the recent past, designers are finding new ways to keep history alive

g History

In the year 1639, well over a century before America declared independence from Britain, a group of nuns on order from King Louis XIII of France established in Quebec City, Quebec, the first hospital north of Mexico—L'Hôtel-Dieu—and a larger monastery cloisters, the *Monastère des Augustines*, which has endured, like the hospital, over the centuries as a home for hundreds of Augustinian Sisters serving the needy.

Flash forward to 2003, however, and the monastery was being vacated as the order's numbers dwindled. "They said, 'It will be our place of memory,'" recalls Bernard Serge Gagné, a senior partner at Quebec City architecture firm ABCP. The process was a long one, with the Sisters preferring a museum, but Quebec's Ministry of Culture and Communications pushing back with skepticism about funding another cultural space. It was then that the architects and their client arrived at a new idea: to convert a part of the building into a hotel, which would then underwrite a museum devoted to the *Monastère des Augustines'* history.

"We wanted to respect that kind of order, keeping it open to the community and on the upper floors the rooms," Gagné explains. Today, *Le Monastère des Augustines* has been transformed into a wellness hotel, operated as a nonprofit to perpetuate the nuns' original mission of healing. Guests can book a room in one of the small original nuns' rooms, with replica single beds and a shared bathroom down the hall, or a roomier and contemporary fourth-floor suite. And, whether in a hotel room, a new farm-to-table restaurant, or in the ground-floor museum, the centuries-old timber beams and floors combine with stone and plaster walls and cast-iron fixtures to give the space a sense of texture and authenticity. Only in a new entrance hall, made of steel and glass, is there a contemporary insertion.

“We wanted to work with that language,” Gagné says. “We wanted to express, of course, our time, our epoch. But, keeping the same old materials, which are almost eternal. Since the building hadn’t changed much, we wanted to maintain the spirit of it. It was bare of any ornament. We wanted to keep it very clean, very Zen as an interior atmosphere.”

This transformation is just one example of the value of historic preservation and the opportunity offered to design professionals to channel the design language of one era into a repurposed future. Yet, each project is fraught with challenges. A historic building nearly always reveals surprises with regard to its structure and material condition. There will be a host of restrictions, be they local codes or national protections of its historic value. And, from modern heating and air-conditioning systems to restrooms to an added sense of transparency, modern needs have to be accommodated without diminishing the building’s historic integrity.

Yet, old buildings have an intrinsic value. Particularly structures built before World War II tend to be built with higher-quality materials, such as wood from old-growth forests that no longer exist. Prewar buildings also were built by different standards. A century-old building might be a better long-term bet because of its solidity and craftsmanship than its brand-new counterparts. Legendary urbanism activist Jane Jacobs in her landmark 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, also has impacted a generation of designers by characterizing old buildings as places where the culture that enlivens us—bookstores, ethnic restaurants, antique stores, neighborhood pubs, and especially small start-ups—can best thrive.



Guests at *Le Monastère des Augustines* can choose between contemporary quarters (pictured here) or authentic rooms that reflect the spirit of the former nuns’ residence “cells.”
(Image: Le Monastère des Augustines)

“Every building will require change. What we do is manage the change intelligently. Fitting functions into space for which it was not intended. The challenge is to do it in a way that’s appropriate and marries to the building.”

—JULIA GERSOVITZ, EVOQ

Balancing Acts

That said, no old or historic building can simply be brought back to its original condition without considering new purposes and programs. “Every building requires some modification because there’s been a pattern of use since it was opened,” explains Julia Gersovitz, a founding partner of Montreal- and Toronto-based architecture firm EVOQ. Gersovitz leads the firm’s large-scale heritage projects, including the award-winning *Hôtel Gault*, a 19th century Montreal commercial building that now, like *Le Monastère des Augustines*, operates as a popular hotel, as well as a restoration of St. Patrick’s Basilica. “Every building will require change. What we do is manage the change intelligently. Fitting functions into space for which it was not intended. The challenge is to do it in a way that’s appropriate and marries to the building,” she says.

For its work to restore and rehabilitate the Elgin County Courthouse in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, EVOQ received an Award of Merit for the Conservation of Buildings from the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals. (Image: EVOQ)



Creativity Within Guidelines

When restoring historic buildings, designers must negotiate a web of local, state/provincial, and national regulations, but they also can look to government for guidance on how to proceed, as well as for financial assistance. “We need laws where buildings can’t be torn down, but there has to be carefully managed flexibility,” explains Ashley R. Wilson, who oversees national historic sites for the Washington, D.C.-based National Trust for Historic Preservation, a former U.S. government entity now acting as an independent nonprofit. “You’re saving the character-defining features, but you’re acknowledging there are lots of little things that can’t be saved. It’s more about saving a feel and the place.”

Wilson recommends consulting key guidelines, such as the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. “Basically, if your building is in a designated historic district or it’s listed on the National Register of Historic Places, then you always end up referencing that,” she says. “They’re really the best practices.” The Secretary’s Standards divides the field into four categories: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. But within those confines, Wilson says, there is still plenty of room for interior creativity that is not necessarily a slave to the past.

“For many of us, working with a historic building is a huge bonus,” she notes. “You have this historic character that’s already there. And, your work can set it off. It’s so rare as a designer that you have a blank slate, without context. Preservation is just one of those contexts. There are limitations set up for new buildings, too: the size of the windows or the materials you can use. Interior designers can come to understand a building’s history so they can weave it, play with it, and even be ironic with it, within the fabric of the building.”

“For many of us, working with a historic building is a huge bonus. You have this historic character that’s already there. And, your work can set it off. It’s so rare as a designer that you have a blank slate, without context. Preservation is just one of those contexts.”

—ASHLEY R. WILSON, NATIONAL TRUST
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Not every restoration move should ape a historic interior, however. In fact, a well-established tenet of historic preservation is to make a clear distinction between old and new. On the Elgin County Courthouse in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, for example, EVOQ was charged with incorporating a security checkpoint into a Palladian-style courthouse dating to 1852. “There was discussion with the client about [whether] the screening machines should be outfitted with Victorian decoration and woodwork,” Gersovitz recalls. “We felt that was not going to be a good idea. You didn’t need to make it look like a Victorian scanning machine. Not everything will look like it’s designed into the original building, but you can make sure it fits its new role and its new era.”



Opening up connections between inside and out during its renovation resulted in more daylighting and better wayfinding in the Herbert Hoover Building. (Image: CallisonRTKL, David Whitcom)

Letting There Be Light

Oftentimes, an old or historic building is closed off to its surroundings and lacking the wide-open interior spaces desired for such contemporary uses as commercial office space. For example, headquarters to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Herbert Hoover Building in Washington, D.C., was once the largest office building in the world with more than 1.8 million square feet of space. The circa-1932 structure was renovated by CallisonRTKL, largely by opening up connections between inside and out and from one section to another.

“Prior to renovation, you could be anywhere in any corridor and see no daylight,” recalls Wendy Phillips, an associate vice president at CallisonRTKL. “You had a hard time knowing where you were. What we did was open up along the west side at the end of every cross corridor an entire bay, which faces the national mall. It really did provide better wayfinding. It brought in so much light, you didn’t feel like you were in this endless corridor.”

“We always want it to be clear what is old and what is new, but the real goal is matter of continuity.”

—BERNARD SERGE GAGNÉ, ABCP

Old-New Hybrids

Sometimes a building doesn't just invite, but almost commands change. The Portland Building in Portland, Oregon, for example, is National Register-listed for its place in history as the first major building in America designed in a postmodern style. But, while the exterior façade (now being entirely re-clad) offered a playful blend of color and historical references, the interior of this city office building was dark and mostly just a simple drywalled space. The architects, Portland and Seattle-based DLR Group, answered their clients' call for a more contemporary office setting by not only making shaded façade glass clear to add light, but also removing the old high-walled cubicles in favor of flexible sit-to-stand workstations divided only by small, colorful fabric screens. "We wanted the inside to have the same excitement as the exterior," explains DLR Group Senior Associate Carla Weinheimer. The designers also took inspiration from the original concrete structure itself, never before exposed but now part of the interior. "I've been enjoying the dialogue between the preciousness outside and the muscular actual structure inside the building," says Weinheimer. "We felt we needed to expose that because the floor-to-floor ratio is fairly low. But, it was an opportunity to put a new spin on what was always there."

Of course, there is no one specific formula for how to restore a historic building. The key, designers and architects say, is to listen to what the building needs and where the opportunities lie. "We always want it to be clear what is old and what is new, but the real goal is matter of continuity," says ABCP's Gagné, now that the *Monastère des Augustines* has been given new life. "We have to be humble and recognize the building's qualities. But, within those parameters, you can create entirely new spaces." ●



BRIAN LIBBY
is a journalist, photographer, and award-winning filmmaker. His articles have appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, and Architectural Digest.

To add light inside the Portland Building, an award-winning postmodern structure, the architects replaced exterior glass and interior cubicle walls. (Image: DLR Group)

Next-Gen Preservation

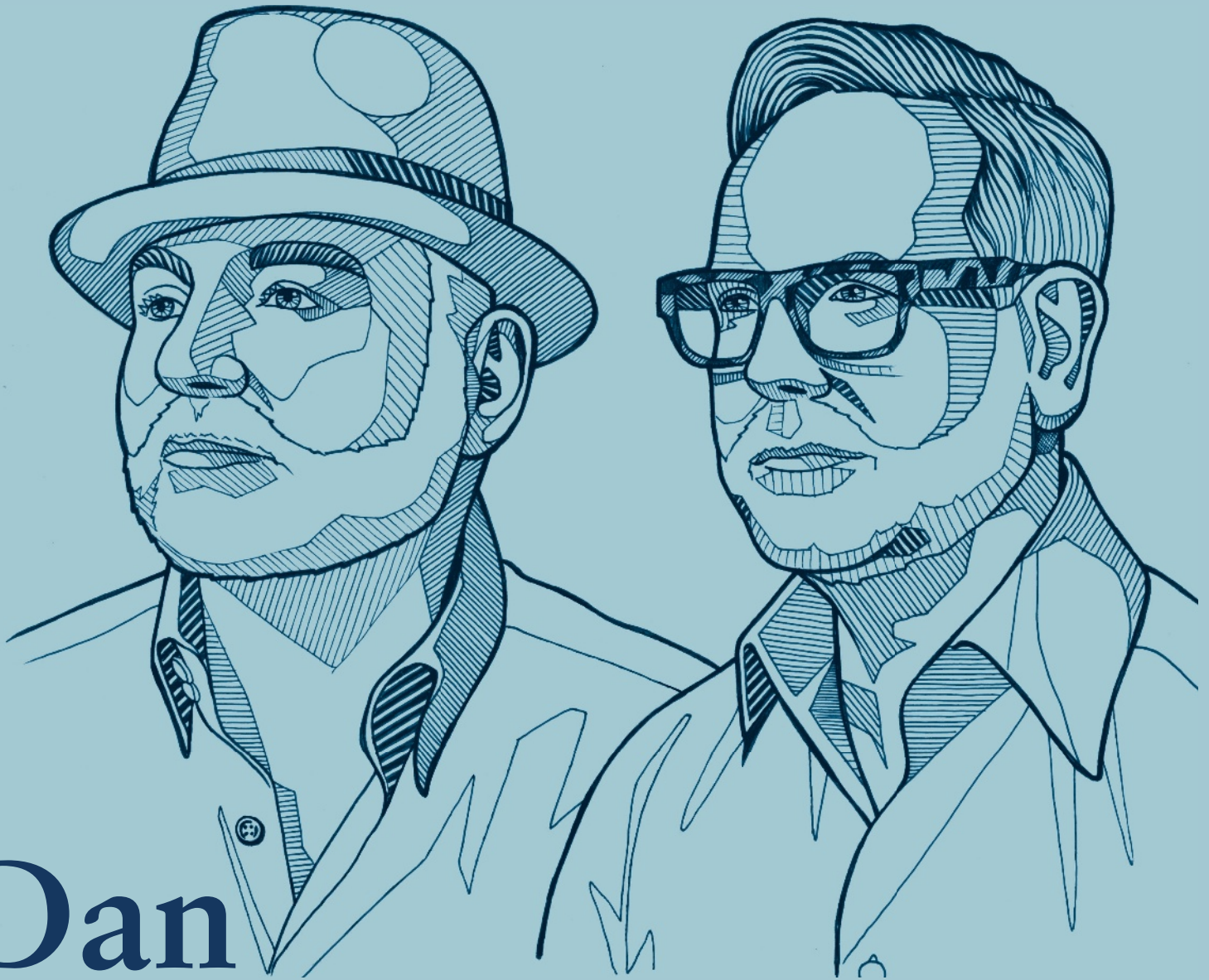


If historic preservation is an evolving set of best practices, perhaps that's best reflected by an evolving way of teaching preservation: combining conservation with design entrepreneurship.

Take the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) in Georgia, which has created the nation's first preservation design degree program. "We found that our graduates, though successful and well-equipped, were having difficulty finding sustained employment that would pay a living wage," explains Ivan Chow, dean of the college's School of Building Arts. "They could secure jobs with public historic preservation programs and private museums. But, those jobs are limited in number. So, we began discussing broadening our program to equip students with a more expanded skill set. Our traditional historic curriculum would train them how to conserve, but not to design. We've introduced a component in design, and we have courses that teach fundamentals of entrepreneurship to encourage them to take control of properties instead of waiting for a developer or a bank: to form companies focused on historic preservation. This is something that's been missing."

Similarly, the Université de Montréal offers one of the few master's programs in North America entirely dedicated to conservation, where the focus is on balancing traditional preservation methodology with creative solutions. "I think intuition is a very strong element in the practice of design, but when it comes to a building with heritage value, intuition should be enhanced with methodology," explains Claudine Déom, who heads the master's program in Conservation of the Built Environment. "It's not a recipe, but it provides the opportunity to deepen the understanding and, therefore, to perhaps intervene with the existing, instead of viewing it as a hindrance." The university has introduced a new design studio to make sure theoretical knowledge can be put into practice. "That's an important aspect of our work," she says. "While some programs are more involved in heritage studies, we try to get students in the workforce who can work in interdisciplinary teams of professionals and bring their views to the table."

ICONic Profile



**Dan
Menchions
& Keith
Rushbrook**

Partners in life and business for more than 30 years, Dan Menchions and Keith Rushbrook own and operate Toronto-based II BY IV DESIGN, a name chosen as a tribute to a collaborative spirit and an essential building block of construction. The duo's innovative and eye-popping work is represented on four continents. The modern hospitality industry is one of their specialties, with hotels, stadiums, cruise ships, restaurants, and condominium developments all bearing II BY IV DESIGN's distinctive mark. In addition, high-end, instantly recognizable brands' retail spaces, highlighted by Menchions' and Rushbrook's elegant and comfortable standards, are in capital cities around the world. Winners of multiple design awards, last year in London II BY IV DESIGN took home the prestigious ABB LEAF (Leading European Architecture Forum) Award in international design in two categories, including Overall Winner of the Year.

The reach of their reputation landed them a contract to be part of the extensive renovations of Yankee Stadium, with the firm creating a 37,000-square-foot space that encloses restaurants, bars, and clubs. II BY IV DESIGN also has established its own product lines in luxury goods and amenities.

Living and working in downtown Toronto, Menchions and Rushbrook are in their Manhattan studio at least one week out of every six. i+D caught up with the couple at their Toronto studio.

i+D: What's the first thing you notice getting off the plane from Toronto and landing in New York?

Rushbrook: Busy. (Both laugh) Busy, busy.

Menchions: And, we're very happy LaGuardia is finally renovating.

i+D: How did you two meet?

Rushbrook: Dan was offered a freelance job where I worked and asked me to help him. And, I did. We worked on separate drafting boards and said, "Let's get together in a couple of hours." We had some Depeche Mode on, great coffee, and after two hours we looked and saw we had come up with exactly the same design.

Menchions: We're a rare couple who spends 24/7 together and have through almost 30 years. Someone asked recently, "Life, work, travel together, how do you guys do it?" I said, "How do we not do it?"

i+D: The Yankees are so keyed to tradition—did you have to consider how to satisfy the diehard keepers of the eternal Yankees flame?

Menchions: Let's say you don't venture too far from the brand. There are two shades of Yankees

blue and those are the shades you use. But, we were able to work with them, and successfully expand their brand in a different way. There are nods to the historic nature of the Yankees and bringing that into the future.

i+D: There's been a sea change in designing living spaces, with designers catching up to ideas that some young adults are reluctant to leave the nest, multiple generations are living together, and the "tiny house" movement is rising. What challenges do these cultural shifts present?

Rushbrook: The first challenge is understanding the relationship between parent and child. You'll always be a child to your parents no matter what age you are. So, living together, there have to be boundaries and independence.

Menchions: If you're in a house or a condominium development, there can be individual apartments for privacy. We're seeing generations within condos, with parents in one suite, grandparents in another, and children in another. It's a great way to look after each other, be near each other, and still have a real sense of independence.

Rushbrook: We've designed the first micro condos in Canada, called Smart House. Some units of 253 square feet, or 758 square feet with two bedrooms, two bathrooms. It's learning how to be creative with small spaces, whether you're a single person or a family.

i+D: What's the first thing you designed or built?

Rushbrook: Growing up in New Brunswick, there were lots of woods around us and we'd get up in the morning and be outside playing for the entire day. We'd build tree forts.

Menchions: I grew up an urban kid here in Toronto, so we'd use furnishings to create interior forts.

i+D: Designing a restaurant—what's the first consideration?

Menchions: Who is the clientele?

Rushbrook: What is the menu? What is the price of the food? What is the neighborhood?

Menchions: That cliché of designing only for the client? We really do.

i+D: Of course, you design for the client, but don't you design for yourself, for your own aesthetic sense?

Menchions: Not at all. We're not ego designers. It's something we learned early in our careers. When someone would critique our work, we'd take it personally. Finally we said, "This isn't for us." I have to remind our young designers to not design for themselves, to think about who you're designing for and don't take their criticism personally.

i+D: What do you always have with you?

Rushbrook: My black Moleskine Notebook—it has to have an envelope in the back to put papers, things I've ripped from magazines—and a black felt-tip marker.

i+D: Do you work too hard?

Menchions: It's our life; we don't know any different. It took us a long time to understand the work levels of people we work with and what the expectations are for them.

Rushbrook: We're the first two in the studio every day and we have about 90 minutes before the staff comes in. We crank the music and get caught up.

i+D: What are you listening to these days?

Rushbrook: (Laughing) What ever the young ones are. We have really crazy rock, or Top 40. Some of it's jazzy, electronic. Everything.

i+D: What was your first job?

Menchions: When I was five or six, I made paintings and sold them door-to-door.

i+D: Lessons learned?

Menchions: Start early and go door-to-door. It will lead to a lot of places.

i+D: What do you disregard when looking at a job applicant's résumé?

Rushbrook: I don't disregard anything. But, what I'm most interested in is what they do when they're not working. What are they reading? Where do they and their friends go when they go out to eat? And, I always ask: "If I turned off your computer, where would you go for inspiration?" With Pinterest and design blogs, everyone is looking at the same thing.

i+D: What's your sport?

Rushbrook: Shopping.

Menchions: (Laughing) We do yoga three times a week. We were addicted to working out for many years, but gave it up because we were in so much pain.

i+D: Do you ever unplug?

Rushbrook: That would be on an airplane. Because (Laughing) sometimes, the technology doesn't work. But, I really like that time.

Menchions: And, on the other side of the world. With different time zones and the rest of the studio sleeping. ●

AMBROSE CLANCY

is the editor of the Shelter Island Reporter and a novelist, nonfiction author, and journalist. His work has appeared in GQ, The Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times.

To create a restful space, Designer Brian Gluckstein will use draperies and a heavy dose of upholstery to absorb sound from the outside world.
(Image: APlusCreative)

Rest, Recharge



Relax,

A sanctuary for wellness and restoration, the bedroom is a whole lot more than a room with a bed in it

**By
Jesse Bratter**

No matter your age or chapter of life, how you use your bedroom or for how many years, there's a design for everyone. This is a room where the details make all the difference—the height of a bed or table; the makeup of the materials used on walls, floors, and bedding; the control of light and sound; all these factors and more go into the creation of a sanctuary that contributes to a person's general wellbeing by promoting rest. Designers are employing carefully planned tactics to create bedrooms that suit their clients' physical, sensory, and material demands and weaving layers of wellness into well-designed spaces.

Nurturing the Mind & Soul

Just ask Brian Gluckstein, principal of Gluckstein Design Planning based in Toronto. His approach treats the bedroom as a personal retreat and looks to myriad elements to help inform his design. "I like monochromatic schemes in the bedroom because it creates a more peaceful environment. There isn't a lot of contrast or pattern to distract. With a monochromatic palette, I'll rely on texture more than pattern to create visual interest," he says. Think natural materials, such as cotton, linen, and wool. Even more specifically, he likes to use wall coverings, fabrics, and carpets with low VOCs. "I also use a lot of upholstery and drapery to absorb sound from the outside world, especially in urban environments. Oversize headboards, upholstered walls behind the bed, sun blinds to filter the light, and drapery for blackout and sound absorption all work well when creating a restful space," explains Gluckstein.

Evelyn Eshun of Evelyn Eshun Design Inc. in Concord, Ontario, Canada, also tends toward soothing and serene when homing in on the feeling she wants to create through her clients' bedroom designs. In fact, she keeps luxury hotel suites front of mind when it comes to execution and defining the space, paying close attention to how the color palettes, textures, and materials she chooses will affect the emotions and psyche of the sleeper. But, her calming strategy shifts when dreaming up a visual bedtime story for adolescents, who call for more youthful, energetic environments that engage the mind and reflect the personal expression of inhabitants. "We recently completed a space for a teenage girl who was fortunate enough to have parents who realized that if they invested in creating a room that expressed her personality, it would give her the opportunity to feel home pride," Eshun recalls. "We chatted with her to understand how she wanted to use the room and, with that information, we selected materials and created storage systems for her particular needs. Built-in nightstands with hardware made of various precious stones provide storage for clothes so that they are not strewn about, and the upholstered headboard not only looks great, but it also functions to absorb sound," making the room quiet and calm after all. And, in the spirit of efficiency and dual functions, the desk area doubles as a makeup vanity, offering shelving for storage as well as a mirror.

Designer Evelyn Eshun focuses on how the color palettes, textures, and materials she chooses will affect the emotions and psyche of the sleeper. (Image: Arnal Photography)



Holly George of Holly George Interior Design, LLC, in New Jersey, also changes her approach to bedroom design when different ages and abilities are in play, especially when it comes to the height and reach of furniture and objects. "For a toddler, everything is sized closer to the ground, with the exception of the things they shouldn't be able to reach," she says. "Teenagers appreciate the extremes, so I like to use low places for lounging with friends and high places to 'escape' to, such as beds they can climb up to. Pre-teens put a lot of energy into shedding their child identity and just want their room to look like their version of 'cool.' Creating a space for them to hang posters and maybe even write on the wall is easy and inexpensive with magnetic paint and chalkboard paint, which can be painted over when they've moved on. Busy adults appreciate the type of space that allows them to be present—a place that can function without a lot of fuss, a place to reset for the next day." (Gluckstein, too, shares this philosophy and therefore discourages incorporating desks into adults' bedrooms lest they turn into workspaces.) And, for the aging client, keeping things within reach, seating that is high enough to get out of easily on their own, and a bed that adjusts are all considerations George takes into account, while, of course, including familiar objects, her client's favorite piece of furniture, and family photos—all of which elicit sentimentality.

Individual Demands

But, what about when designers must consider different physical and mental ability levels—ones that might not even have surfaced yet? Suddenly, planning for a client's needs and potential needs becomes an even more challenging challenge. From choosing first-floor master suites that avoid stairs, to wider doors and closets that allow for wheelchair or walker access, to motion-detected lighting upon entry to the room, and even down to accessible outlets placed where they can be used for medical equipment or for a bed with mechanical features: Designers must strike a delicate balance between style and functionality. "I firmly believe that a room that functions for the elderly and disabled does not need to look like it was copied from the rehab facility," George stresses.



Designed for a Good Night's Sleep

Even the most unassuming details can help a space feel more like a warm and personal bedroom rather than a cold hospital room. “A pale pastel on the ceiling lends softness and quiets the room, whereas white, the color of primer, can be harsh, creates glare, and looks unfinished,” she continues. “For someone who is bedridden, looking up at a pale peach, fern green, blue-gray, or lavender can be so much more pleasant and soothing.” She also opts for contrasting switch plates that “stand out more easily to aging eyes or those with cognitive or learning disabilities,” using wall paint colors to delineate pathways to the bathroom, closet, and entry/exit to the room. George also steers clear of using, for instance, a dark rug on a light floor, which “might be perceived as a hole to someone with cognitive impairment,” she points out.

George put her design philosophies to the test when designing spaces for Katie’s House, a nonprofit organization that oversees small group homes with a live-in caregiver. She first designed a bedroom for Katie (who has physical and developmental disabilities) when she was 21, then a second bedroom for her 10 years later. George also designed for two young men with autism. “It was important to understand the capabilities and limitations unique to each, but because these homes were the first opportunity for them to live independent of their parents’ immediate care, there were also style choices to make based on their personal preferences,” she recalls. “While the design choices were what made the rooms safe and functionally appropriate for their unique needs, the style choices were what gave each individual joy and, in the case of one of the autistic young men, comfort, helping to ease the difficult transition from the familiar to the new.”

Features like motorized shades allowed one of the men to proudly operate the shades himself, and Katie was able to enjoy her requested color scheme—red and purple—while the designer addressed furniture layout, easy-to-operate lights and shades, oversize knobs and pulls, potential for falls, and future wheelchair use. “In the planning stages, I repeatedly do visual walk-throughs of my designs, looking for problems I can’t see on a floor plan; I try to remain sensitive to anything that feels uncomfortable on these mental reviews and address issues before the hammers are swinging. I imagine what it is like to enter a room from both a standing and seated point of view,” George says, stressing, “Entry to a bedroom is usually likewise the exit so it is imperative that the area be free of furniture, the door should swing clear, and the handle should be easy to grasp and operate for the occupant who has the greatest challenges.” The designer pointed to ASID Industry Partners, such as Periwinkle Skies, Sherwin Williams, and Kravet, that all pitched in to help her designs for Katie’s House come to fruition.

When New Jersey-based designer Holly George sets out to design a bedroom, she doesn’t wait for her clients to request wellness-minded or eco-friendly options. She simply presents them as the only option. “I have been specifying low-VOC and zero-VOC paint products since their introduction to the market,” she says. “While I have had occasion to defend the price of a particular manufacturer’s product over another, explaining, for example, that in order to truly be zero-VOC the pigments must also be zero-VOC, I honestly don’t make *not* using these healthier products an option. I believe it highly important for the painters on my projects as well; after all, they are exposed to these products fresh from the can every day.”

Luckily, paint brands offer paint and primer selections that fall right in line. Take Benjamin Moore, for example: Its Natura paint not only is zero-VOC and has zero emissions (the Natura primer is low-VOC), but it also has been certified as asthma and allergy friendly by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. That’s good news for asthma and allergy sufferers, newborns, or basically anyone who wants to breathe and rest easy.



But, let’s take a look at the bed itself. People lie on it every single day, breathing in its composition. In fact, studies show individuals spend one-third of their entire life in bed. And, so it stands to reason that choosing a mattress is, perhaps, one of the most important home decisions you can make for your clients’ health and wellbeing.

That’s why Hästens handcrafts its mattresses from its eco-minded home base of Sweden using ethically sourced, sustainable resources and natural materials. “We have been using the same materials for over 100 years and will continue to do so since these are the purest materials and what we believe gives people the best sleep,” says Jan Ryde, fifth-generation Hästens leader, CEO, and executive chairman. “These materials are all specially combined to give the best comfort, but also support to the neck, lower back, and the whole body. Cotton and wool keeps you warm during the winter and cools you down during summertime, and the horse hair takes away all the moisture, which is very powerful since we sweat a lot while we are sleeping.” And, Hästens’ commitment to staying sans-synthetics extends to its other sleep products as well, including bedding, headboards, sleepwear, and bedroom items for kids. [»](#)



Hästens handcrafts its mattresses using ethically sourced, sustainable resources, and natural materials. (Image: Philip Karlberg)

Handcrafted in northern Greece, COCO-MAT mattresses combine cotton, wool, and horse hair with soothing lavender to promote relaxation and eucalyptus to aid in breathing. (Image: Vassilios Skopelitis)



Likewise, COCO-MAT, whose very tagline is to sleep on nature, handcrafts mattresses in northern Greece also using cotton, wool, and horse hair—but with a few extra materials thrown in for good measure. Coconut fiber to insulate, fragrant lavender to soothe and promote relaxation, and essential oil distilled from eucalyptus leaves to aid with breathing are a stark contrast to the metals, glue, chemicals, and toxins found in many mainstream mattresses.

And, when an individual is in that bed, light matters. Natural light, artificial light, electronics, and ambient lighting, all affect a person's eyes, sleep patterns, and circadian rhythms. According to the National Sleep Foundation, exposure to light right before bedtime affects the nerves, which, in turn, affects the brain, which controls all the functions of the body that might keep a person awake or help them fall asleep. Through its PowerView Motorization system, Hunter Douglas allows an individual to not only automatically raise and lower the shades, but also schedule ahead of time when they should be raised or lowered through an app or voice commands when used in conjunction with virtual assistants. (That's a plus when it comes to child safety since there are no cords to play with.) And, their window treatments provide a range of privacy and light levels. "Today, there are innovative furnishings and fixtures to promote better sleep, such as light and noise-blocking solutions. All of our window treatments, for instance, provide a measure of light control but some products offer more room darkening benefits than others," says Sue Rainville, director of marketing for Hunter Douglas Canada. "A key consideration in coverings is the fabric or material type and color. Sheer fabrics typically soften and filter sunlight, while semi-opaque and opaque versions almost completely block it out." The company's Vignette Duolite roman shade allows the user to select dual opacities at the same time.

Manufacturers like these are invested in providing products that foster a good night's sleep and that will serve as a great investment in a homeowners' wellbeing as well. ☺

Living by Design Bedrooms

Life Cycles

And, where high beds had their shining moment for some time, Gluckstein notes a movement away from height and oversize mattresses, as they can pose challenges. "We're looking at beds that are around 26 inches high now—not too low, but not overly high either," he says. "For a while, the trend was pillow top and oversize, but, as you age, it's harder to get in and out of that kind of bed." Instead, he likes to create a sitting area or some other alternative seating to the bed elsewhere in the room. "It's a nice area to unwind at the end of the day, with reading or quiet conversation, and transition to bedtime," he says.

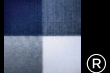
Gluckstein adds that various sources of lighting in the bedroom are important for creating ambience. "I use lamps on the bedside tables and in the sitting area, and I'll put dimmers on the overhead lighting. You want to create soft pools of light in the bedroom." And, thanks to advanced technologies, window treatments have come a long way in doing their part when it comes to the natural lighting of a room. "Opposing requirements—enjoying the view, but maintaining privacy; letting in the light, but cutting glare; heavy black-out for sleeping, yet maintaining a light and fresh look—are possible in one treatment without having to choose one over the other," according to George.

Regardless of age, abilities, and how one is using the bedroom, it's arguably among the most important spaces in a home—the most personal, the most restorative, the most centered on wellness. "The bedroom is the place where we begin and end our day," Eshun says. "It's a space where we rest our bodies, our souls, and our minds in order to take on the day and, therefore, it should not only be restful, but it should also express our personal style with items that make us comfortable." ●



When designing for Katie's House, Designer Holly George addressed her client's unique needs, including fall risk and future wheelchair use, via a strategic furniture layout, easy-to-operate lights and shades, and oversize knobs and pulls. (Image: Holly George)

JESSE BRATTER
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PROFESSIONALS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

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Resource Furniture

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National Building Museum

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The Vanier Institute of the Family

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David Dunne, Ph.D., B. Comm. Professor
Director, MBA Programs, Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria



Creating & Capturing New Value through Business Design

Heather M.A. Fraser, Founder & CEO, Vuka Innovation
Adjunct Professor, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Co-Founder Rotman DesignWorks

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FORMULA FOR DESIGN

No matter if we are sleeping or awake, at work or at home, every moment of our lives we are in contact with both science and design. The scientific world touches everything to do with interior design—from the ingredients that go into a can of paint to the microbes we experience and leave behind when we enter and exit a space. In the September/October issue, *i+D* will explore the science behind design through topics to include color theory, the biology of the built environment, and the chemical makeup of the materials we use to design today's spaces. It's a crossroads where the research laboratory and the design studio meet and create a positive impact for all who experience the results. ●

(ABOVE) Sedentary lifestyles have been linked to everything from obesity to cardiovascular health. Celliant is a new responsive textile from Designtex that reflects naturally emitted infrared energy back to the user's body to provide performance, health, and wellness benefits. Celliant has been proven to increase oxygen levels and improve blood circulation and has been designated as a medical device by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). (Image: Designtex)



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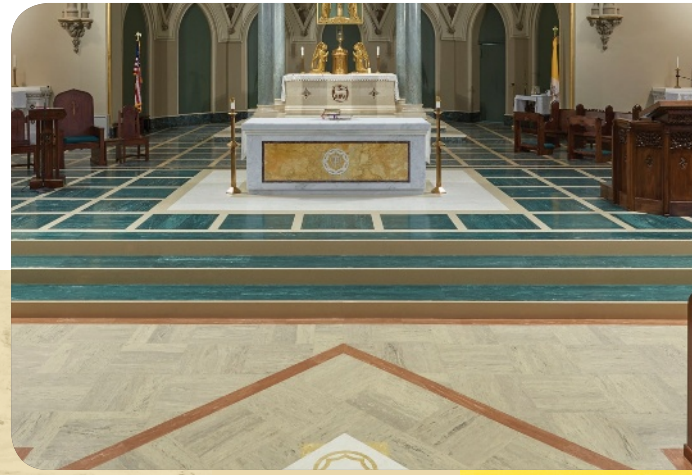
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