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WORKBOOK



Brastemp

Habitats for Humanity

Shaping the spaces we call home



RR House

Location: São Paulo, Brazil
Designer: Studio Guilherme Torres
Website: guilhermetorres.com

Brazilian interior designer and architect Guilherme Torres has a penchant for creating bold and irreverent interiors. So when his client, a young bachelor who would be living on his own for the first time, gave him a wish list that included a pool table in the living room, Torres didn't flinch.

"We wanted to create a young and sophisticated atmosphere," says Torres, who began the project by bringing down the walls of the 2,600-square-foot penthouse apartment and starting from scratch. He kept the floor plan open downstairs, where the kitchen and living area flow together, and placed the master bedroom and media room on the second floor. Walls and floors were coated with textured grey polymer cement, giving the whole space a cohesive muted feel.

When choosing furnishings, Torres opted for graphic and colorful pieces that would pop against the subdued backdrop. Pink Slow chairs and shiny red Metal Side tables by the Bouroullec brothers for Vitra outfit the living area, which is lined floor to ceiling with custom box-like bookshelves. On the other side of the room, where one might expect to find a dining table, stands a bright blue pool table.

An open staircase leads upstairs, where striped textiles play off the grey walls of the bedroom and media room, and whimsical touches—like an orange Puppy sculpture by Magis and a framed *Lolita* poster—keep things surprising.



Photography by Denilson Machado (MCA Estúdio)



The East Village

Location: Austin, TX

Designer: Bercy Chen Studio LP

Website: bcarc.com

"Our cities are littered with generic projects that make our urban experience bland and uninspiring," says Thomas Bercy, principal of Bercy Chen Studio LP. "Every building should have a distinguishable quality." His firm accomplished that task and more with the new East Village mixed-use project in the East 11th Street neighborhood of Austin, Texas.

The four-story building will house eleven retail stores and offices and, on the top three floors, twenty residential condominiums, measuring between 500 to 1,300 square feet. The entire ground floor is wrapped in floor-to-ceiling glass, and a steel truss, which supports the upper floors across a 65-foot span, creates an open central walkway. "This model fosters a more efficient lifestyle where one can work, shop and live in the same area," says Bercy, who chose painted hardboard for the exterior walls and Massaranduba hardwood floors inside.

Inspired by the location, the firm punctuated the south and west facades with vibrantly colored powder-coated steel panels. "The corridor on which the project was built is historically an African-American street, which had quite a few jazz venues," says Bercy. "The panels play off an African color palette organized in a recognizable pattern that emulates improvisation in jazz." Each panel, acting as both a shading device and balcony guardrail, represents a note in the score.

The building's eco-conscious design—which includes Low-E glazing, no-VOC paints, recycled materials, R-19 insulated walls and R-30 insulated roofing—earned it a 3-Star Green Building Rating, and landscaped roof decks offer downtown views.

Photography by Ryan Michael





Copper Cube

Location: Werder, Germany

Designer: Baumraum

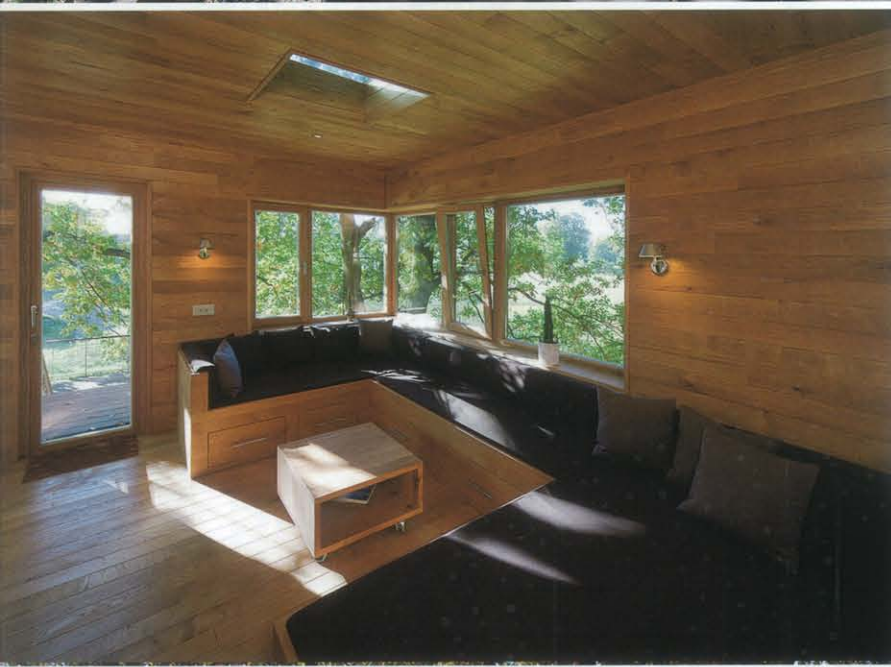
Website: baumraum.de

"Tree houses give us adventure," says architect Andreas Wenning, founder of the German firm Baumraum, which specializes in modern tree house design. "They provide a small concentrated space that brings people close to the natural environment."

Wenning recently completed a tree house that will serve as a guesthouse for a family near Berlin. The oak-and-plywood cubic form is positioned over 16 feet high between four fir trees and supported by steel stilts. A terrace—13 feet high and wrapped around the trunk of a tree—branches off the structure and is held in place by steel ropes and textile belts fastened to an oak tree.

The contemporary structure creates "an interesting tension between the complex and natural shape of the tree," says Wenning, who clad the façade with copper panels. "We look for materials that can be used in a natural and authentic way. We don't like to paint or color the material, and copper has a wonderful color on its own." The interior of the 183-square-foot space is appointed with a built-in bed and a small bathroom. Pipes supplying water and electricity are hidden in one of the stilts, and windows, including two dormers, offer views in all directions.

Photography by Markus Bollen



Sierra Bonita Apartments

Location: West Hollywood, CA

Designer: Patrick Tighe Architecture

Website: tighearchitecture.com

"The design came out of a series of constraints," Patrick Tighe, FAIA, says of the Sierra Bonita mixed-use affordable housing complex he designed for the City of West Hollywood. "We were given a mandate to create a sustainable building that would house as many apartments as we could fit, two levels of subterranean parking, retail space at grade, shared common spaces and outdoor areas—all within a 13,000-square-foot lot."

Tighe delivered on all points. The five-story development—built for less than \$300 per square foot—features 42 one-bedroom units, commercial space along Santa Monica Boulevard, underground parking for residents and a large central courtyard. In addition, the structure met or exceeded all of the city's Green Building Ordinance requirements. "Our scheme was to create an efficient, compact, dense building," says Tighe. "The sustainable components were integrated into the architecture."

Starting with the exterior, web-like screens made from laser-cut sheets of aluminum act as railings and offer privacy, while reducing heat gain and creating a striking facade. Inside, the bamboo-landscaped interior courtyard allows for cross-ventilation and creates a microclimate within the building. "The courtyard is the heart of the project," says Tighe, who designed all of the units to have "front porches" overlooking the outdoor space. "To compensate for the void created within the building, an eccentric braced frame was expressed as a five-story lattice in the garden and encased in pink fiberglass."

The building's location "brings higher density into the urban core of the city," says Tighe, and it ensures the residents—currently a mix of seniors, disabled people and low-income families—"direct access to local businesses and services."

Photography by Art Gray





Veloz Residence

Location: Glendale, CA

Designer: FormLA Landscaping, Inc.

Website: formlainc.com

Given the temperate climate of Southern California, it's not unusual for people to spend as much time outdoors as they do inside. For a project in Glendale, California, FormLA Landscaping gave their clients even more reason to linger outside by integrating ten distinct living spaces into their hillside lot. "The family has four children of varying ages," says president and cofounder Cassy Aoyagi, LEED AP. "They needed spaces that would allow for play and interaction as well as privacy and relaxation."

As soon as guests walk through the front door, their focus is pulled outside to a sculptural copper waterfall built into a ledger-stone retaining wall. "The home is so open it was key to orient a spectacular feature to serve as an art piece and draw people into the outdoor spaces," says Aoyagi, who used poured-in-place concrete pavers to lead people through a variety of experiences.

One side of a long patio is anchored with a custom-designed fire pit positioned near a saltwater "spool" for easy interaction. On the other side, a fully equipped kitchen and 8' by 8' wine cellar are built into a retaining wall. The outdoor eating area is appointed with a grill, full sink, beverage cooler and a raised breakfast bar with two stools. Off the kitchen and throughout the garden, poured-in-place concrete benches designed by FormLA offer places to relax. "Moveable furniture can squeeze a space," says Aoyagi, "but built-in pieces keep it open."

Simple timber walls create a network of terraces along the sloping hill for the family's children to explore, and a decomposed-granite patio, furnished with two Adirondack chairs, sits at the top of the property. "In the end," says Aoyagi, "each element should call people to live in it and enjoy it."

Photography by Orly Oliver

