BEYOND BY LEXUS

A JOURNAL ON DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

ISSUE 3 2014

LEXUS

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BY LEXUS

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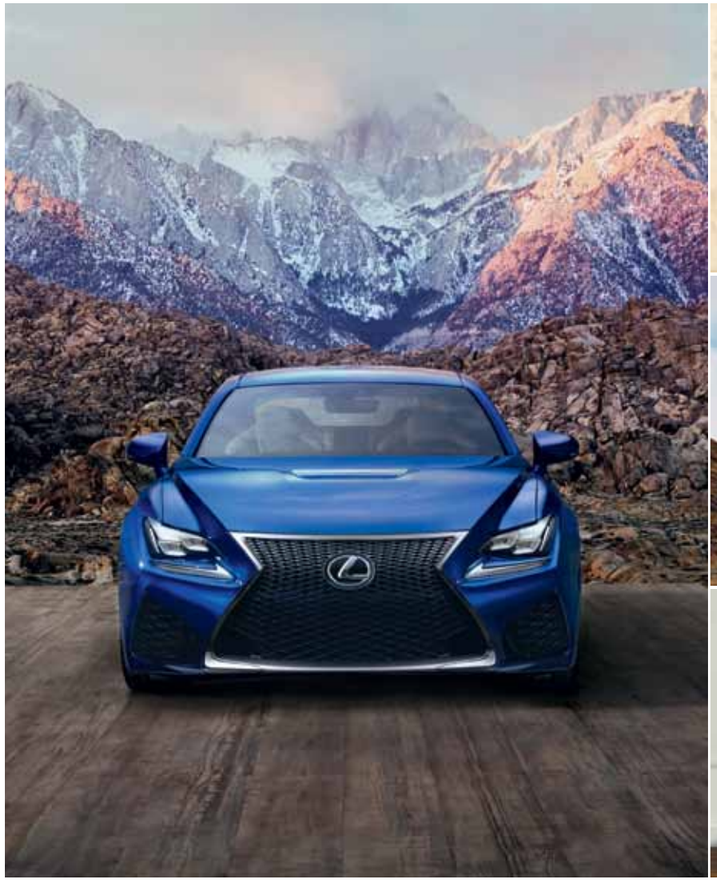

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INTRODUCTION

This year Lexus celebrates its 25th anniversary, a milestone achievement for a brand now widely respected for its dedication to performance, pioneering technology and precision craftsmanship, and for its commitment to the environment. Throughout our short history, we have aimed for perfection in all we do. We will continue to do so in the future.

Our focus on quality is evident throughout this issue of BEYOND BY LEXUS, and particularly in two stories: a stunning presentation of the RC F, a new Lexus coupe that sets the standard in high-performance vehicle design, and an intriguing behind-the-scenes look at what is currently the only Lexus manufacturing plant outside Japan. Both pieces exemplify our dedication to state-of-the-art engineering and technology, and represent our constant desire to exceed our customers' expectations.

BEYOND BY LEXUS is a window into the Lexus world. But this journal is just one of a group of initiatives in which we are presently involved. This year marks the second iteration of both the Lexus Design Award and the Lexus Short Films series, and again sees our participation at the Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan. Lexus will always strive to test the boundaries of car design. But equally, with these initiatives, we will push beyond all we have achieved in the past 25 years to new levels of outstanding.

KIYOTAKA ISE

President
Lexus International

BEYOND BY LEXUS

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Vehicle specifications are correct at the time of going to press. The car models shown may not be available in all countries. Please contact your local Lexus dealership for more information.

BEYOND BY LEXUS

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ISSUE N°

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SPRING/SUMMER
2014

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BEN OLIVER
WRITER

Based in Sussex, United Kingdom, Oliver is a contributing editor and columnist at *CAR* magazine. For BEYOND BY LEXUS, he reported from the Timmelsjoch pass, a high-altitude Alpine road that crosses the border of Austria and Italy. Oliver has already experienced his ultimate road trip, he says, "a 10-day, 3,000-kilometer trek from Delhi to Khardung La."

MICHAEL EDWARDS
PHOTOGRAPHER

Edwards, a photographer based in New York, has contributed to titles including *Esquire*, *Glamour* and the *New York Times Magazine*. For this issue of BEYOND BY LEXUS, he shot the Brooklyn-based photographer Sara Cwynar and the celebrated New York architect Rafael de Cardénas. His ultimate road trip? "Cruising through the desolate areas of southeastern Oregon and northern Nevada," he says.

ERIN WYLIE
WRITER

Based in New York City, Wylie reports on design, travel and fashion for magazines including *New York* and *Time Out*. For BEYOND BY LEXUS, she spoke to Andrew Whalley, deputy chairman of Grimshaw Architects, about the firm's recently completed ecological center in South Korea. Her ultimate road trip? "Driving along Milford Road in South Island, New Zealand," she says.

EMILY KING
WRITER

A writer and curator based in London, King has covered design, fashion, film and food for many titles, including *The Gentlewoman* and *Frieze*. For BEYOND BY LEXUS, she went to Paris to speak to the talented industrial designer Julie Richoz. King's favorite road trip? "I love driving to spend cozy weekends in the English countryside with my family," she says.

SHOGO HAGIWARA
WRITER

Shogo Hagiwara, BEYOND BY LEXUS's editor at large, lives in Tokyo, where he contributes to titles including *Monocle* and *Wired*. For this issue, he wrote about two of Lexus's latest models, the RC and the RC F, as well as the new state-of-the-art CT speaker. His ultimate road trip? "A South American tour ending in Patagonia," he says.

WILL LEW
PHOTOGRAPHER

An award-winning photographer based in Montréal, Lew shoots for the *Wall Street Journal* and other titles. For BEYOND BY LEXUS, he documented life at Lexus's only manufacturing factory outside Japan. Lew took his dream trip three years ago in Corsica: "Gorgeous shorelines and rolling hills and mountains you'll never forget," he says.

SHOW AND TELL

01

SAPPORO INTERNATIONAL ART FESTIVAL
SAPPORO

This year, Sapporo, one of Japan's largest cities, will inaugurate a new international arts festival staged to engage both locals and visitors with a broad range of art and culture. Opening in July and guest directed by Ryuichi Sakamoto, the venerable Japanese musician, activist, composer and actor, SIAF will center on a specific topic, "city and nature," and highlights will be many and varied in focus. A group of talented international artists, brought together by respected curator Shihoko Iida, will react to the festival's theme at the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art. Works by composer Akira Ifukube and photographer Genichiro Kakegawa will feature at the Former Hokkaido Government Office. A series of live shows will be staged at Moerenuma Park, a space designed by the celebrated Japanese American landscape artist Isamu Noguchi (see above). And Sakamoto himself will contribute a couple of live shows, one of which will feature German sound artist Carsten Nicolai, otherwise known as Alva Noto. The ultimate aim, says Fumio Ueda, SIAF's chairman and Sapporo's mayor, is to engage Japanese and foreign visitors with the city's vast reserves of culture and creativity. "We residents of Sapporo should be proud of our city," he writes in the festival's welcome letter, "and work to pass a better environment on to future generations. In order to achieve this, we must create new industries and new cultures with our fertile imaginations, through exchanges with people in Japan and elsewhere." More power to him. » AM

JULY 10–SEPTEMBER 28
SAPPORO-INTERNATIONALARTFESTIVAL.JP

02

SINGAPORE FOOD FESTIVAL
SINGAPORE

The Singapore Food Festival takes over the city-state every July, celebrating its multi-cultural heritage through culinary delights. From fine-dining restaurants to open-air food stalls, the monthlong festival's diverse venues offer exclusive tasting sessions and serve the best of the native Malay, Chinese, Indian and Indonesian cuisines mixed with Western-influenced flavors. Aspiring cooks can also broaden their skills with a varied program of cooking classes and culinary workshops, led by Singapore's top chefs. » AW

JULY
SINGAPOREFOODFESTIVAL.COM

03

SUPER GT
JAPAN AND MALAYSIA

Lexus has strengthened its racing credentials in 2014 by running a new RC F-based model in the GT500 class of the Super GT, a Japanese grand tour car racing series held at circuits in Japan and Malaysia throughout the year. Meanwhile, at the 2014 Geneva Motor Show, Lexus launched the RC F GT3 concept car, a move that represents the brand's global commitment to motorsport. Testing will begin this year, with a view to supporting sports car racing teams participating on the 2015 GT3 circuit. » SH

THROUGHOUT 2014
SUPERGT.NET/EN

04

BEIRUT DESIGN WEEK
BEIRUT

When a handful of Lebanese designers including Nada Debs and Rabih Kayrouz started exhibiting their work at renowned design festivals worldwide about a decade ago, Beirut slowly gained a reputation as a design hot spot. In 2012 the city held its first annual design week – a showcase of its ever-growing pool of creative talent. Now in its third edition, Beirut Design Week nurtures an interactive relationship between visitors and designers through a series of exhibitions, workshops, conferences and open studio visits, while anchoring the city's presence on the global design map. » AW

JUNE
BEIRUTDESIGNWEEK.ORG

Q&A

DOREEN TOUTIKIAN
ORGANIZER

» WHAT IS THE LOCAL DESIGN SCENE LIKE?
Beirut is the design capital of the Middle East and North Africa. There is a lot of talent here, and design is starting to play a significant part in our country's creative economy.

» WHAT MAKES BEIRUT DESIGN WEEK DIFFERENT FROM OTHER SUCH EVENTS?
The fact that it takes place in Beirut! I believe that the recent political turmoil and the slightly chaotic nature of the city have played an important role in the creative process of Lebanese designers. The outcome is very unique.

05

HABITAT EXPO
MEXICO CITY

For three days every May, Mexico City's World Trade Center hosts the country's biggest fair for interior design and architecture. Habitat Expo, which first opened in 2010, now attracts some 17,000 visitors and 270 international exhibitors in fields ranging from high-tech building materials to home decoration. Besides showcasing the latest trends in design, Habitat Expo also features a comprehensive conference, talks and awards program, the highlights being the Prisma and Promesas prizes – two renowned accolades that recognize the work of established and up-and-coming Mexican designers, respectively. » AW

MAY 29–31
TRADEX.MX/HABITAT

06

FRIEZE ART FAIR NEW YORK
NEW YORK

Frieze Art Fair in London's Regent Park – now in its 12th year – has become one of the most anticipated events on the calendar of every collector, dealer and aficionado of contemporary art. In spring 2012, an annual New York edition was launched on Randall's Island to complement the existing fair. "With its extraordinary range of museums, galleries, collectors and artists, New York is one of the most desirable cities in the world for an international art fair to be located," says cofounder Amanda Sharp. Returning this May, Frieze New York will yet again boast a strong contingent of the world's most forward-thinking galleries as well as an outdoor sculpture park. » AW

MAY 9–12
FRIEZENEWYORK.COM

07

INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
MONTRÉAL

This year's edition of the International Jazz Festival will celebrate the program's 35th birthday with a joint concert by two of the city's most prominent cultural ambassadors: pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre and the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. Over the course of the 10-day event, more than 3,000 national and international musicians will flock to Montréal to perform the best of jazz-related music to some two million visitors, making it the largest festival of its kind in the world. » AW

JUNE 26–JULY 6
MONTREALJAZZFEST.COM

08

LEXUS DESIGN AMAZING 2014
MILAN

In April, Lexus will return to the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan's renowned furniture fair, to showcase new and original installations by three established creatives (including Fabio Novembre, below). The Lexus Design Amazing 2014 exhibition will also feature prototypes and panels made by the 12 finalists of this year's Lexus Design Award, which offers up-and-coming designers the chance to explore their creative potential by working alongside respected design mentors. » SH

APRIL 8–13
LEXUS-INT.COM/DESIGN/LDA.HTML

09

ART ATHINA
ATHENS

Traditionally associated with ancient art from the classical period, Greece is rarely considered a hub for new and innovative work. But Art Athina, the International Contemporary Art Fair of Athens, proves the opposite. Established in 1993, Art Athina is one of the longest-lasting contemporary art fairs in Europe, and over the years has evolved into the largest of its kind in its host country. A number of parallel activities and educational programs are organized in the framework of the four-day event, all drawing a picture of the current state of contemporary visual art in Greece and beyond. » AW

MAY 15–18
ART-ATHINA.GR

10

SZIGET MUSIC FESTIVAL
BUDAPEST

Musical diversity is Sziget's chief concern. The acclaimed Hungarian festival, held annually on the small island of Óbuda, Budapest, presents an array of international artists who play everything from alt-country and hip-hop to rumba and ska. The audience, which hails from over 60 different countries, is as diverse as the acts it comes to see. Most visitors camp on the island overnight, to ensure they make the most of the 24-hour happening. This year performances will include sets by American rock band Queens of the Stone Age and the British producer Bonobo. » AM

AUGUST 11–18
SZIGETFESTIVAL.COM

» » » » » »

THE NEW RC F, THE LATEST MODEL IN THE PREMIUM LEXUS F RANGE, HAS ARRIVED, AND IT'S SETTING THE STANDARD IN HIGH PERFORMANCE VEHICLES

TEXT BY SHOGO HAGIWARA AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG WHITE

In 2007, Lexus unveiled the IS F, a fast, thrilling sports sedan that immediately resonated with drivers for its superb manoeuvrability, both on the road and on the track. The letter “F” has held special significance among Lexus owners and engineers ever since. Representing the word “Flagship” and referring to the Fuji Speedway, Lexus’s chief test-site, the marque is synonymous with speed, precision, innovation and technological progression.

The Lexus F project was initiated by one engineer, Yukihiko Yaguchi, who in the early 2000s pursued a personal dream to create a car with driving capabilities he could proudly announce as “the best around,” he says. In 2004, having experimented with automobile parts on his days off, Yaguchi built a prototype, later known as the IS F. The model attracted significant attention, firstly from other Lexus engineers, who would soon join forces with Yaguchi on the project, and secondly from the brand’s top executives, who recognised the engineer’s personal work as the beginnings of Lexus’s official foray into the high-performance vehicle market.

“What drove me to kick-start this project was a simple aim to build a car that would embody Lexus’s ideals,” Yaguchi says. “To that end, we focussed our attention on three things: steering response, sound, and acceleration – key factors that make the driver feel connected to the car.”

Now, a decade after that first prototype was built, Yaguchi and his team have unveiled the RC F, the second model in the Lexus F range. Equipped with a 5.0-liter V8 engine, the RC F, which was revealed at the Detroit Motor Show earlier this year, is an ultra high-performance coupe that produces 450-plus horsepower. Deemed the most powerful model in the Lexus line-up to date, it also comes with Torque Vectoring Differential (TVD), the world’s first engineering feature in a front-engine, rear-wheel-drive vehicle, a system designed to maximize driving pleasure by providing stability, nimble steering response and dynamic circuit performance.

“The RC F presented us with a tougher challenge than the IS F,” Yaguchi confesses. “We were, of course, under pressure when working on the IS F. But the weight of expectation was far heavier this time, now we’re in the second chapter of the “F” legacy. We had to create something much, much better than our previous models to impress. That was tough, to say the least.”

Yaguchi is modest, but his efforts have paid off. The RC F’s steering outperforms that of its predecessor, thanks in part to the car’s aerodynamic packaging, its highly sophisticated under body, its improved fenders and upgraded suspension. An electronic rear wing – a feature lifted from the LFA – has been built into the trunk lid to be deployed when the car exceeds speeds of 50mph. The model’s 19-inch alloy wheels and updated spindle grille will appeal to experienced drivers and Lexus newcomers alike.

“This car is purpose-built for the skill level of all driving enthusiasts, especially with the TVD” says Yaguchi with a smile. “With this car, you can cruise through town, but you can also have a go on a circuit if you’re into that sort of thing.”

AN ELEMENT

RAW MATERIAL

»»»»»

AN UNLIKELY NATURAL MATERIAL MAKES ITSELF HEARD IN THE NEW, TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED LEXUS CT SPEAKER

In 2008, when engineers at Panasonic first suggested the use of bamboo to improve the quality of the speakers installed in the Lexus CT, the idea raised more than a few eyebrows. The inclusion of bamboo in audio equipment was, at that point, unheard of. Why would a technologically progressive automotive brand feature such an everyday raw material in a new, state-of-the-art piece of equipment?

Koji Sano, chief engineer at Panasonic, knew the answer.

"We've been experimenting with bamboo since 2007," he explained, "so we knew the plant – harcoaled bamboo and bamboo fibers, to be precise – would make a lot of difference in our attempt to better sound quality inside the cabin."

Lexus speakers are divided into an array of collaborative parts, of which the diaphragm, a cone-shaped membrane that vibrates to produce sound, is one of the most crucial. A diaphragm must be light to create a loud noise; stiff to precisely hit high notes; rigid to minimize acoustic distortion; and flexible enough to dampen its own vibrations, to make sure of a crystal-clear sound. Sano knew that by using bamboo within the CT's diaphragm, all of the above could be achieved.

"You often see bamboo sway in strong winds, constantly moving in all directions without cracking," he said. "That's the sort of quality we seek in a diaphragm."

Engineers at Lexus had to be persuaded, but Sano's passion paid off. Following initial meetings, his team secluded themselves in a lab and conducted numerous phases of intense product development. In 2010 they created their first fully functional prototype, and in 2011 it was installed in the Lexus CT as a standard feature. Sound quality within the cabin was vastly improved; praise from the automotive community came in reams. But Sano felt more could be done – the diaphragm could be lighter, more rigid and more flexible. And, ultimately, sound could be better. Sano and his team went back to the drawing board and have developed a next-generation speaker, included in all new CTs, that is even further technologically advanced.

"The secret behind our latest improvement is a material called plant opal," said Panasonic staff engineer Yohei Jin, "which we have extracted from bamboo leaves."

Plant opal is a microscopic structure found in the fringes of all grass plants, including bamboo. It is hard and clear, named for a likeness to the eponymous mineral. "The type of plant opal we use has the shape of a needle," Jin continued, referring to the 0.2 millimeter-long pieces selected specifically. "We use only a small amount of it, but as it bites into the diaphragm's resinous body, we can improve its overall rigidity and stiffness."

Compared with the first CT speaker, rigidity has been improved by 20 percent. Acoustic velocity – a yardstick by which frequency range is measured – was improved by 10 percent. The sound produced by the new speakers is much clearer, especially at high frequency. And the midrange has gained more depth.

"Bamboo is the ideal material for speakers," said Sano, "and its plant opal more importantly so. But we are the only one in the industry that has successfully tapped into the plant's massive potential. We are also aiming to introduce this plant opal speaker into the highest echelons of our home-audio lineup."

Why?

"Simply because it's that good." //

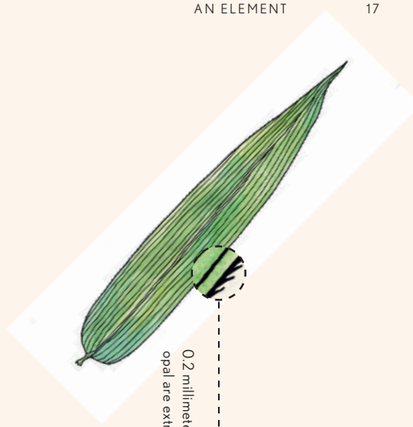
TEXT BY SHOGO HAGIWARA AND ILLUSTRATION BY DANILO AGUTOLI

01

Bamboo leaves are selected from the tree

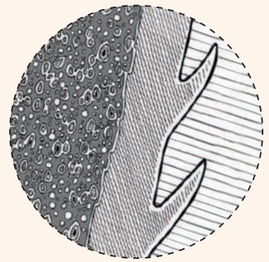
THE TECHNIQUE

To ensure sound quality is at an optimum within the Lexus CT, the vehicle's speaker diaphragms are formed from a material that mixes plant opal, a microscopic needle-like structure found at the fringes of the leaves, with charcoal. First, bamboo leaves are sourced from healthy trees. Next, plant opal is extracted and combined with bamboo charcoal to form a powder. That mix is then molded into a cone, and the result is a diaphragm that is light to create a loud noise, stiff to precisely hit high notes, rigid to minimize acoustic distortion, and flexible enough to dampen its own vibrations.



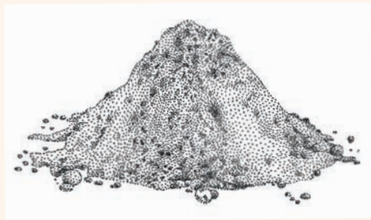
02

0.2 millimeter-long pieces of plant opal are extracted from the leaves



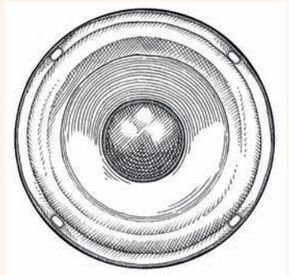
03

Next, the plant opal is mixed with bamboo charcoal



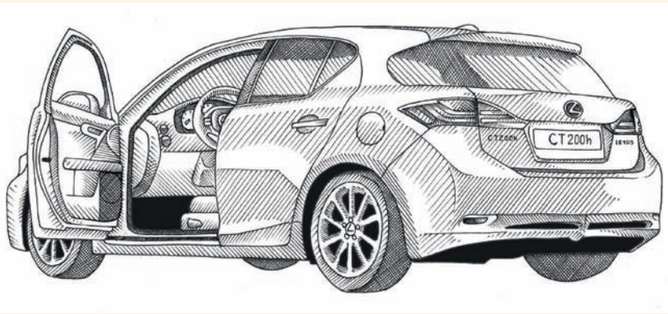
04

The powder is molded into the speaker diaphragm



05

And the speaker is then installed into the vehicle



ALWAYS ON TIME

»»»»»»

HERE'S TO THE MINIMALIST SWISS CLOCK, NOW 70 YEARS OLD, THAT KEEPS A NATION ON SCHEDULE

TEXT BY NICOLE SWENGLEY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHARLES NEGRE

Switzerland's international reputation for punctuality owes much to a 70-year-old clock displayed in most of its railway stations. Designed in 1944 by Hans Hilfiker, a Swiss engineer employed by Swiss Federal Railways, and produced by clock manufacturer Moser-Baer under the Mobatime trademark, the Swiss railway clock instantly became a design classic. Today it features in collections at London's Design Museum and New York's Museum of Modern Art and is used by homeowners around the world.

Visual simplicity and technical ingenuity account for its iconic status. Despite lacking numerals, the striking monochrome clockface can easily be read from a distance. Originally, only minute and hour hands were deemed necessary, but in 1953 Hilfiker added a red second hand, cleverly shaped like the signaling disc then used by railway guards, to highlight the Swiss rail network's impressive efficiency, as it allowed passengers to see precisely when trains arrived and departed.

All Swiss railway clocks are synchronized by a central master clock located in every station's communications room. At each full minute an electrical impulse is automatically sent via the power network to advance the minute hands. On Hilfiker's design, however, an internal electrical motor drives the second hand independently from the master clock. Ingeniously, the second hand's full rotation takes 58 seconds. The second hand then pauses for two seconds before receiving the minute impulse from the master clock to start a new rotation – a unique feature that ensures the precise departure of trains on the full minute across the entire Swiss rail system.

The clock's trademark and copyrights are still owned by Swiss Federal Railways. Since 1986, it has licensed the Zurich-based watchmaker Mondaine to make quartz-operated wall clocks, desk models and watches based on the design. Today the clock is sold at lifestyle shops internationally and is available via Amazon.com, an extraordinary achievement for a design conceived when neither radio- nor satellite-based timekeeping existed. //

THE TECHNIQUE

The Swiss railway clock's red second hand arrives at the numeral 12 position after a rotation taking 58 seconds. It then waits two seconds to receive an automatic electrical impulse sent each full minute from a central master clock located in the station, at which point the black minute hand jumps to the next minute position and the red second hand begins a new rotation.

The second hand, added in 1953, is shaped like the signaling disc used by railway guards

THE FIVE

LEXUS IS DEDICATED TO QUALITY DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP. HERE WE INTRODUCE FIVE CREATIVE FIGURES FROM AROUND THE WORLD WHO SHARE THAT SAME COMMITMENT

01

THE FIVE

» » » » » »

FROM AN INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER IN TAIPEI TO THE NEW GO-TO COUPLE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN PRODUCT DESIGN, WE MEET FIVE OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXCITING CREATIVE TALENTS

02

01

ARTHUR HUANG

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER, TAIPEI

"We're all buying too much stuff," says Arthur Huang, founder and managing director of the Taipei-based industrial design firm MINIWIZ. "And we throw away even more!" Opened in 2005, MINIWIZ is dedicated to turning trash into desirable consumer products and building materials. "The name is derived from the verb 'minimize,'" Huang says. "We want to minimize our carbon footprint. It sounds like a simple concept, but it is in fact really hard to do."

With the average individual generating close to 60 tons of waste a year, the availability of recyclable resources, such as plastic and precious metals, is plentiful. The development of attractive new applications for these reclaimed materials, however, is not. That's where Huang and his team of more than 50 engineers, designers and architects step in. In its mission to minimize, MINIWIZ creates projects that prove what consumers throw away is just as valuable as what they buy. The result is a series of versatile, innovative, low-carbon building technologies and fibers made from up-cycled materials such as post-consumer packaging, agricultural by-products and electronic waste.

While teaching at Cornell and Harvard Universities, Huang – himself an alumnus of both schools – realized that today's generation of designers was pursuing the wrong priorities and developed the philosophy behind his company. "To most designers, architects and engineers, the quality of design lies in form," he says. "Their creations have to have a beautiful shape, like a sculpture or a work of art. [But] even the smallest design detail an architect might choose for his or her building can imply huge costs and material waste. We want to avoid this by putting form at the very end."

Huang's pursuit of function over form led him to a set of design limitations enforced by nature and physics. "Limitations give you a lot of power in your design," he explains. "A lot of designers hate it because they think it's a limiting factor. We like it." For Huang and his team, restrictions don't obstruct the design process; they fuel it. MINIWIZ's architectural projects showcase the myriad possibilities of designing with limitations in mind. The EcoARK pavilion, for example, built for the 2010 Taipei International Flora Expo, had the airy, futuristic appearance of contemporary architecture. But unlike other buildings, it was constructed entirely of 1.5 million interlocking plastic beverage bottles, making it a landmark for low-carbon architecture. Not only is this modular system, known as Polli-Brick™, ecologically friendly and cheap, but it's also strong enough to withstand earthquakes, making it a particularly worthwhile building solution for regions of high seismic activity like Southeast Asia.

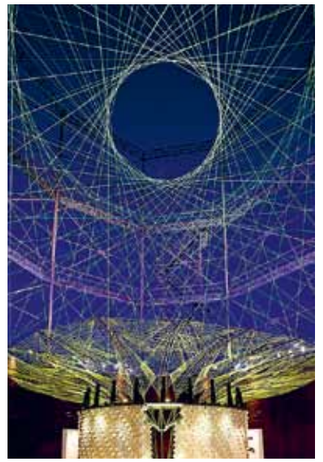
MINIWIZ conducts all its operations in the area, benefiting from the region's well-developed manufacturing techniques and the abundance of by-products from the agricultural, electronic and heavy-industry sectors. "The supply chain is very short here," Huang says. His journey ahead, however, is anything but. With each plastic bottle they recycle, Huang and his team are leading the way toward the future of sustainable design. » AW

miniwiz.com

03

MINIWIZ MATERIALS

- Polli-Ber: a polymer material manufactured from recycled plastic and processed agricultural waste
- Natrilon™: a revolutionary yarn technology made from recycled PET beverage bottles and rice husk
- Polli-Brick™: a brick system made from 100 percent recycled PET beverage bottles
- Rice Fold: an origami ceiling panel made with the Polli-Ber waste composite
- Eco-Morph: a modular shelf system made from recycled aluminum and postconsumer CDs



04

01 Arthur Huang in his Taipei studio 02 The EcoARK pavilion, in Taipei, built from 1.5 million recycled plastic bottles 03 Huang with MINIWIZ colleagues 04 The Nike Feather pavilion in Beijing, China 05 Huang reviewing sketches in notepads in his studio

Photography by Theodore Kaye

05

01

02

01 Dan Pearson in his London studio 02 Process photographs and sketches hang from a pinboard 03 Pearson and a design colleague discuss an ongoing project

Photography by Andrew Urwin

PEARSON IN JAPAN

The roof garden of Roppongi Hills, Tokyo, constructed by Minoru Mori in 2002

The 988-acre Millennium Forest on Hokkaido, commissioned by a newspaper entrepreneur with a view to make his business carbon neutral (2003–ongoing)

The garden design for Hamadayama, a residential complex on the outskirts of Tokyo developed by Mitsui Fudosan (2006)

02

DAN PEARSON

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER, LONDON

"Our work is heavily weighted towards good craftsmanship and an ability to work with plants in an uninhibited way," says British garden designer Dan Pearson, founder of Dan Pearson Studio, a London-based landscape design office. Since it opened in 1987, Pearson's practice has become renowned for its thoughtful landscaping, with projects ranging from private gardens for the likes of Paul Smith and Jonathan Ive, to sprawling ecological parks and urban green retreats designed in collaboration with Zaha Hadid, David Chipperfield and other notable architects.

What sets Pearson and his team of eight landscape designers and architects apart from other firms is their analytical approach to place making, based around a sensitive examination of a site, its building material, geology and local vernacular. "We want to get the interface between the architecture and the landscape working properly," Pearson says, "to pin down the essence of a place and find meeting points between the inside and the outside." Because of a strong grounding in horticulture – Pearson trained at the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley and at Kew Gardens – his philosophy, he says, lies in "making gardens rather than gardening gardens."

The simplicity and functionality of Pearson's landscapes bears evidence of his fascination with the Japanese sensibility. "In Japan everything is so refined," he says. "Studying the gardens there and seeing the way people live and eat has really helped me understand the importance of distilling the most essential elements." That the country is predominantly urbanized, with a population that is increasingly losing touch with the natural rhythms of the seasons, further inspires him. In Japan, as elsewhere, Pearson's creativity is sparked by the challenge of weaving an emotionally uplifting green fabric within dense city infrastructure.

Pearson's urban projects reflect his understanding of "distilling miniature landscapes into intense spaces," he says.

03

His studio's largest commission to date, the Garden Bridge, a Thomas Heatherwick–designed pedestrianized bridge spanning London's River Thames, features some 200 species of plants and, when it opens in 2017, will be an oasis amid noise and traffic. "I love exploring the tension between the vibrancy of the city and the calmness of a green space," Pearson says. "The juxtaposition of the two makes each more exciting. We are not just wanting to create idylls, though. Our spaces become idylls because of the abrasiveness around them." » AW

danpearsonstudio.com

03

SARA CWYNAR

PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW YORK

Visit the Brooklyn studio of Canadian still life photographer Sara Cwynar and you'll likely stumble on a mismatched collection of weird and wonderful artifacts. Look at Cwynar's work, however, and you'll find the same objects – rubber gloves, plastic flowers or faded postcards – carefully arranged into harmonious still lifes and monochromatic color studies. "There are so many things in our everyday lives, that we don't really see them anymore," says Cwynar. "In my studio, I'm organizing the world in my own terms." Viewers are invited to look twice at Cwynar's images, to reconsider the items that populate them. What might seem old and bland at first is suddenly new and sophisticated.

Cwynar's fascination with kitsch objects couldn't be more indicative of her background. A self-taught photographer, she studied literature at the University of British Columbia. "I tend to think about my work through literature," explains Cwynar, who cites 20th-century literary giants Roland Barthes and Milan Kundera among her inspirations. While literature provides a theoretical backdrop to Cwynar's work, her training as a graphic designer (she was a staff designer at the *New York Times Magazine*) has shaped her vision as a photographer. "My graphic design sensibility helps me arrange my compositions," she says. Her experience working in editorial design has provided her with the practical knowledge necessary to answer a question aroused by her love for literary theory: how do we create images in an oversaturated society?

In response to the query, Cwynar has published *Kitsch Encyclopedia*, which features her own still life photography as well as excerpts from literature by Kundera, Barthes and Jean Baudrillard that explore the relationship of kitsch to images. The message is the perfect summary of Cwynar's work: anything, even art, can become kitsch, and anything, even kitsch, can become art. » AW

aplaceofwork.com

01

CWYNAR'S PROPS

"My dad's red plastic camping mug. Barthes wrote about how plastics try, but fail, to replicate natural colors. I love this quality."

"A photo of an early nuclear explosion. I like to think about how much of the fear associated with this picture has been drained over the years."

"False teeth from a dental supply company. I love the way they look photographically – both morbid and funny, like a giant disembodied grin."

01 Sara Cwynar in her Brooklyn studio 02 Cwynar's desk, filled with an array of found objects 03 Cwynar organizes a selection of studio items into a still life formation 04 Cwynar's *Kitsch Encyclopedia*

Photography by Michael Edwards

03

02

04

04

DOKTER AND MISSES

PRODUCT DESIGNERS, JOHANNESBURG

What do you get when an industrial designer and a graphic designer team up to start their own company? A range of playful furniture and lighting designs replete with graphic patterns and modernist lines – at least if you look at the creative brainchild of Adriaan Hugo and Katy Taplin, the husband-and-wife duo behind South African design studio Dokter and Misses.

Hugo and Taplin together conceptualize all their products. Hugo, who studied industrial design at the University of Johannesburg, manages the manufacturing process; he was first immersed in the factory environment through an apprenticeship with South African furniture designer Gregor Jenkin. Taplin, who worked in branding in New York after receiving a degree in graphic design from the University of Pretoria, directs the identity of the company.

In 2007 the couple decided to form a professional partnership and took a lease out on a small shop in Brixton, Johannesburg. The space, in which they stocked their early design collaborations, such as accessories and small household objects, marked the first chapter in the company's history – it was called Dokter and Misses. In 2012 they expanded with the opening of CO-OP, a sister showroom for their furniture and lighting designs, and plans to work with distributors in the United States and the United Kingdom are afoot.

While the bold colors and geometric shapes of Dokter and Misses's collections hint at European modernist design movements like Bauhaus and Memphis, the creations are rooted in a South African aesthetic through the introduction of local materials and handmade elements. "It reminds us of what continent we're living on," says Taplin.

Although sometimes problematic in terms of logistics, their location has contributed to the success of the company. "When we started, design was almost nonexistent in South Africa," explains Hugo. "It was seen as a luxury. In recent years, the South African press has been very supportive of young designers. The local industry has been on the rise ever since." With the help of public incentives like Cape Town's World Design Capital 2014 bid, South African designers will make their voices heard on a global scale. Dokter and Misses will be key among them. » AW

dokterandmisses.com

01

02

SOUTH AFRICAN DESIGNERS TO WATCH

- Joe Paine: a Johannesburg-based product and furniture designer with a focus on outdoor, garden furniture
- Xandre Kriel: a Cape Town–based designer, best known for his sculptural benches and shelves
- Wiid Design: attention to detail marks the furniture and lighting collections of this Cape Town–based studio

03

01 Adriaan Hugo and Katy Taplin in their Johannesburg studio
02 The Doktor and Misses Heartbeat lamp in yellow 03 Hugo and Taplin move their Hotel Rail

Photography by Jason Larkin

01

02

01 Li Hua, one of China's foremost architects, inspects a model in his Beijing studio
02 Hua and one of TAO's 12 employees discuss a current project
03 One of the numerous architectural structures in the TAO office

Photography by Carmen Chan

05

LI HUA

ARCHITECT, BEIJING

A little more than a year ago, Li Hua, a Chinese architect and the founding principal of Trace Architecture Office (TAO), completed the Museum of Handcraft Paper, a multi-structured building in Yunnan, southwest China. Hua and a team of six architects had spent two years developing the project, and it had come to epitomize TAO's process, an approach that elevates the importance of geographical context and the use of natural materials. The museum, built by farmers local to the area, was constructed of wood, bamboo, volcanic stone and paper. Hua envisioned that the colors of the materials would fade naturally, so much so that, eventually, the building would develop a completely harmonious relationship with its landscape.

Much of Hua's work is like that: inspired by and firmly rooted in its immediate surroundings. Educated initially at Beijing's Tsinghua University and later at Yale, the 42-year-old Hua opened TAO in 2009, keen to create contemporary buildings driven not by aesthetics but by setting and history. "I don't look at architecture only as a form," he said recently from his Beijing office. "It's more about the place and what experience you're creating. The building must have a dialogue with its context in terms of geometry, scale and materials used."

Hua creates small-scale projects rich in cultural cachet: a sports clubhouse on the banks of the Yancheng River, a technically tricky elementary school (created in Sichuan to replace a structure damaged by an earthquake), a Beijing dining hall for disabled children. Next year Hua's practice will construct a tourist center in western China, a sensitively designed lakeside structure built into the hillside of a natural park. (The architect will use local stone.) Like many of TAO's projects, it's "about how to integrate architecture within the landscape," he explains. "The main space is sunken into the ground, and the roof is a water pool. The building is completely melded into the landscape, so it's pretty central to our design philosophy." » AM

t-a-o.cn

WORK BY TAO

- The Riverside Clubhouse: inspired by Mies van der Rohe, a series of weaving, looping structures that zigzag around riverside trees
- The TAO office: once an aeronautical factory, now a converted warehouse that provides Hua and his team with work spaces varying in size
- Xiaoquan Elementary School: built on a site devastated by the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, the building mimics the structure of its predecessor

03

LAUNCHING SEXY

» » » » »

THE NEW LEXUS RC PAIRS GLAMOUR WITH STRENGTH TO THRILLING EFFECT, AND REPRESENTS A NEW STAGE IN THE PREMIER AUTOMOTIVE BRAND'S EXCITING JOURNEY

TEXT BY SHOGO HAGIWARA AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKIO HASUI

BEAUTIFUL PACKAGING, A DYNAMIC STRUCTURE AND STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY

The latest fleet of Lexus concept and production models can be described as innovative and revolutionary, bold and cutting-edge. But sexy? That's an adjective few had associated with Japan's premier automotive brand – until the unveiling of the Lexus RC, that is.

A sharply styled coupe that evokes both glamour and elegance, the RC debuted at the 2013 Tokyo Motor Show last fall and takes its design cues from a number of its predecessors. The spindle grille, now a widely recognized Lexus motif of excellence, is the marque's widest and lowest application of a grille to date. (It is 30 millimeters wider, 35 millimeters lower and 70 millimeters shorter in wheelbase than that of the new IS line.) On either side of the grille sit triangular headlight casings inspired by the LFA, the most formidable Lexus vehicle to date.

At the rear, the combination taillight has been given an aggressive three-dimensional appearance, shaped into an L to emphasize its brand identity. The taillight's interior has been uniquely engineered to feature hairline carvings so that when the driver applies the brakes, the taillight illuminates as if from behind – a subtle design treatment that represents Lexus's meticulous attention to detail.

Inside, Lexus's first purpose-built lighting system illuminates upward to envelope the cabin in light. Genuine *shimamoku* (tightly layered wood) highlights emphasize the surrounding trim and provide opulent character.

"By 'sexy,'" explains Yasuo Kajino, chief designer at the Lexus Design Division, "we mean beautiful packaging, a visually dynamic structure and a low and wide body shape, all of which comes with Lexus's state-of-the-art technology."

The RC will fill a long-standing gap in the Lexus lineup. "When we looked at the freshly carved model of this car, we were immensely excited because we were doing what hadn't been done before: making a coupe," recalls Junichi Furuyama, previously chief engineer of the RC. "To strengthen the emotional value of the brand and to appeal to younger generations, introducing a coupe to the range was a must for Lexus."

Purposefully pared back to place focus on performance, the RC will provide one of the purest and most exhilarating Lexus driving experiences. It will be as luxurious as it is high performing, says Furuyama, and will "deliver superior drivability at a higher speed or in a higher g-force environment."

The RC is safe – it is the first Lexus model to adopt the upgraded Blind Spot Monitor system, which detects approaching vehicles at a higher speed and from a greater distance than the current system. And it is also impressively rigid. Its underbody rockers and door panels have been made extra thick to support driving performance, and many of its components have been welded by a laser beam, an existing technique that has been perfected here and which strengthens the vehicle's chassis. Wide, bulging fenders hang over 19-inch tires. Two large exhaust pipes protrude from the rear. The cabin, lean and quiet inside, is confident and sporty. The RC looks bold and strong because it is, and it has taken a lot of hard work to make it that way.

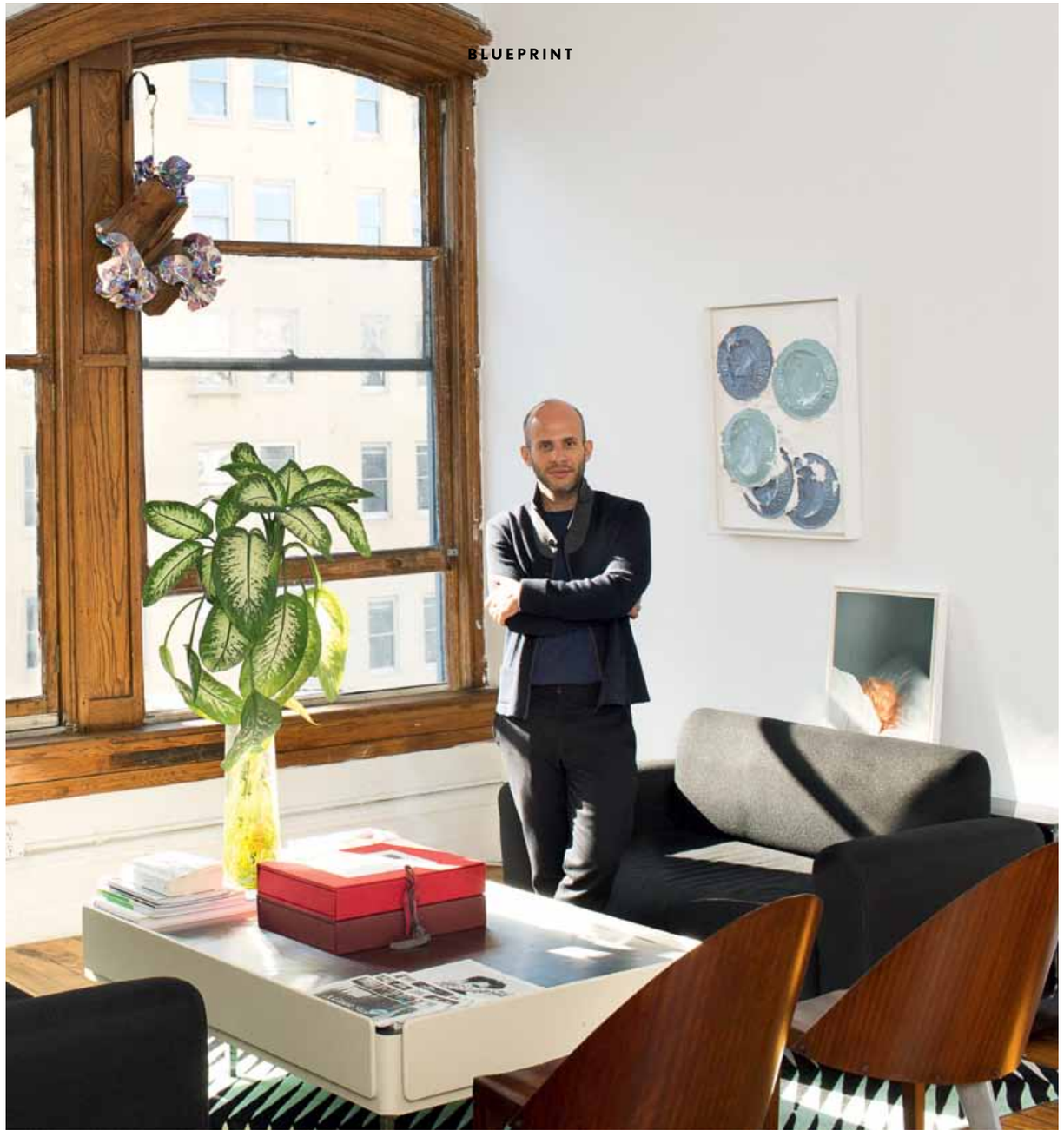
"It was very difficult to achieve an overall stiffness of the body," Furuyama says. "The challenge was, how could we achieve rigidity while staying true to Lexus's L-finesse philosophy?" (L-finesse is the brand's design guidance system, comprising three concepts: seamless anticipation, incisive simplicity and intriguing elegance.)

The answer, he says, was to take cues from acclaimed concept models – to masterfully package beautiful, technologically advanced elements into one comfortable and highly functional driving environment. //

THANKS TO THE NAKAGAWA-MACHI BATO HIROSHIGE MUSEUM OF ART

	RC 350 / RC 300h	
LENGTH	184.8in (4,695mm)	
HEIGHT	54.9in (1,395mm)	
WIDTH	72.4in (1,840mm)	
WHEELBASE	121.7in (3,090mm)	
SEATING CAPACITY	4	
DRIVEN WHEELS	Rear-Wheel Drive	
SUSPENSION	Front: Double Wishbone Rear: Multilink	
TIRE	235/40R19+265/35R19	
	RC 350	**RC 300h**
ENGINE TYPE	2GR-FSE	2AR-FSE
CYLINDERS	V6	V4
ENGINE OUTPUT	438hp 234/6,400kW/rpm	438hp 131/6,000kW/rpm
TORQUE	380/4,800Nm/rpm	221/4,200-4,800Nm/rpm
TRANSMISSION	8AT	E-CVT
TOTAL SYSTEM OUTPUT	-	162kW (220ps)

The Lexus RC comes in two different versions:
the RC 350, with a 3.5-liter V6 engine, and the RC 300h hybrid,
with a 2.5-liter engine.



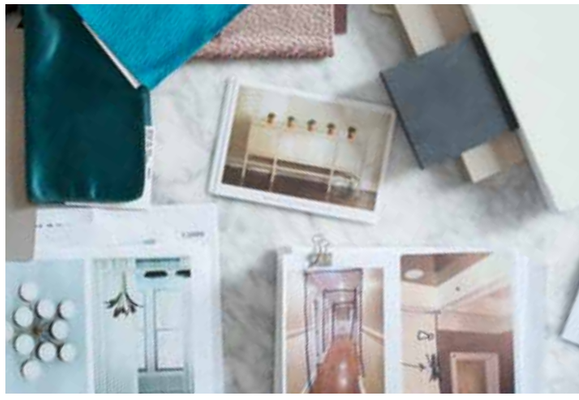
BLURRED LINES

TEXT BY ALEX MOSHAKIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL EDWARDS

ARCHITECT RAFAEL DE CÁRDENAS USES CLEVER GEOMETRY AND INTRIGUING MATERIALS TO CREATE EVERYTHING FROM GRAPHIC INTERIORS TO A LINE OF SHOES. WE PAID A VISIT TO HIS BUSTLING MANHATTAN STUDIO

01

01 Rafael de Cárdenas discusses the details of a current project
02 Reference material and swatches lie on the meeting room table



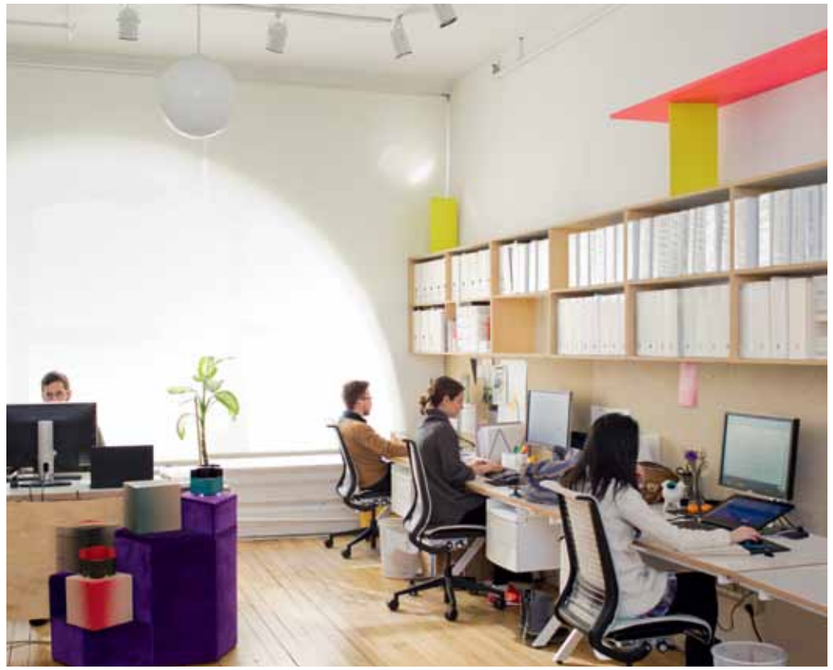
02

Twenty-four years ago, the New York-based architect Rafael de Cárdenas stood at his parents' kitchen counter, gazing at the Philippe Starck lemon juicer. De Cárdenas, then a teenager, had grown up around avant-garde design. His parents collected furniture produced by the Memphis Group, an experimental Italian design collective prominent in the 1980s. His mother wore elaborate, oversize outfits by the Japanese fashion label Comme des Garçons (often while performing everyday tasks, like picking her son up from school). But the lemon juicer, designed by Starck in 1990, was different: it led de Cárdenas to the sudden appreciation of an object's power and allure. That was "the moment I first thought of design in any self-aware capacity," he said recently. Design has played an essential part in the architect's life ever since.

De Cárdenas, who is wry and, at 39, greyhound lean, was talking in his studio, a large whitewashed space in Manhattan's Cable Building. Built in 1893 to house New York's trams, it now contains the offices of fashion designers, publishers, advertising firms and typographers. De Cárdenas moved into the building five years ago, eager to continue work at Architecture at Large, a creative agency he set up in 2006 which produces, among other things, the graphic interiors of offices, high-end fashion stores, pop-up shops, restaurants and large private residences. In eight years, with the help of a growing group of young architects – "the best team in the world," de Cárdenas said – he has worked for commercial clients including Nike,

Baccarat, Barneys and HBO; launched a line of op art-inspired canvas slip-ons with the shoe brand Rivieras; crafted a series of brightly colored geometric furniture pieces for the Johnson Trading Gallery; and refurbished luxurious homes for wealthy heiresses and well-known actors (including Anthony Edwards, who played the character Goose in *Top Gun* and with whom de Cárdenas has run two marathons). Although bound by a common approach, de Cárdenas's works are largely devoid of a single identifiable style, meaning his outcomes can vary, sometimes drastically, in scale, application and context. A monomath he is not.

As a kid, de Cárdenas never wanted to be an architect. Raised in Manhattan in a neighborhood that borders the southwestern corner of Central Park, he studied fashion at the Rhode Island School of Design before in 1999, at the suggestion of a friend, pursuing a master's degree in architecture at the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture, a course he hoped would allow him to merge his disparate interests. It was there that he caught the eye of faculty member (and revered architect-artist) Greg Lynn, who offered de Cárdenas a job on graduation. From Lynn's office in Venice, California, the pair worked together on a 2002 proposal for the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site, a commended bid that came close to winning. A year and a half later, de Cárdenas moved back to New York.



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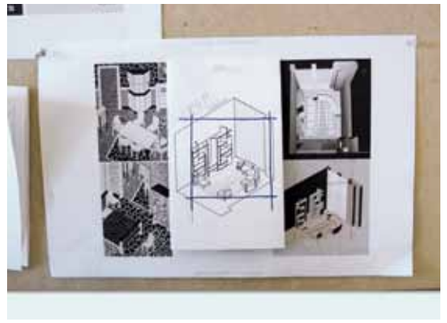


06

MY INTEREST IS IN POPULAR CULTURE AND HOW WHAT WE DO FITS INTO POPULAR CULTURE

03

RAFAEL DE CÁRDENAS RÉSUMÉ

1974 »	Born in Manhattan
1992 »	Studies fashion at the Rhode Island School of Design
1996 »	Starts working as a menswear designer for Calvin Klein
1999 »	Studies architecture in a master's program at UCLA
2002 »	Begins to work with respected architect-artist Greg Lynn, with whom he designs a commended proposal for the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site
2006 »	Sets up Architecture at Large
2013 »	Designs the Black Ocean Firehouse, one of the architect's most refined projects to date

03 De Cárdenas in his office 04 The design staff at Architecture at Large work on current projects 05 Design books rest on an office table 06 Plans and reference material for an upcoming work (including drawings by George Sowden) hang from a studio pinboard 07 De Cárdenas breaks briefly from discussing plans

07

Although he studied the subject, de Cárdenas doesn't consider himself an architect "like Tadao Ando is an architect," he said. Neither do the 10 people he employs, who have mostly experienced unorthodox career trajectories similar to the path of their boss, and who now sit at computer screens at the peripheries of the Architecture at Large studio. Screens display snippets of current projects. Design books and project folders line wooden shelves. Reference material is pinned in paper clusters to walls. Down the hall, in de Cárdenas's office, stands a sculpture by the California artist Sam Falls. Two pieces by the Brooklyn-based artist Nick van Woert (a lolling wall sculpture and a framed diptych) hang nearby, close to a large, imposing photograph by the Italian contemporary artist Vanessa Beecroft.

Art has become important to de Cárdenas. He collects for himself and his clients, regularly furnishing the buildings he designs with complementary works. To complete the plush interior of a large London mansion he designed in 2012, for example, he introduced works by Yayoi Kusama, Jim Lambie and Tauba Auerbach. Elsewhere he's installed works by Walead Beshty and James Turrell.

De Cárdenas's taste in art reflects the interiors he produces. Auerbach's work is brightly colorful and often employs geometric patterns, as does Lambie's, as does de Cárdenas's. A store that de Cárdenas designed for Nike in 2010 features fluorescent crisscrossing lines that create grids of brilliant color. In 2011 he furnished

MEMPHIS GROUP

Founded in 1981 by Italian architect Ettore Sottsass, the Memphis Group was a collective of furniture and product designers based in Milan. Named for a Bob Dylan track ("Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again") that played repeatedly during the group's inaugural meeting, the collective created furniture that paired colorful materials with asymmetrical decoration. The Memphis Group included the designers George Sowden, Nathalie du Pasquier and Matteo Thun, among others, who created works emblazoned with kitsch geometric patterns inspired by art deco and Pop art, which rebuked the plain design of the time. The pieces were not to mainstream taste. "You were either for it or against it," Bill Moggridge, cofounder of the design group IDEO once said. "All the boring designers hated it. The rest of us loved it."

08

DE CÁRDENAS SITS IN FRONT OF WORKS BY SAM FALLS AND NICK VAN WOERT

08 A piece of Architecture at Large signage sits on a studio windowsill

Unknown Union, a fashion boutique in Cape Town, with custom-made geometric display units spray-painted in a variety of vivid gradients. De Cárdenas's use of color has led many to compare his work to that of the Memphis Group. But the architect is rightly reluctant to draw immediate parallels. His portfolio is filled equally with refined interiors rendered in calm, graceful materials and tones and brightly colorful spaces replete with post-modern materials (see next page). And his references span far beyond Memphis, beyond the design world, to art, dance, fashion, music and numerous sub-cultures. He considers the documentary film *Paris Is Burning* to be one of the most important (and personally significant) of all time. And he'll talk animatedly (for 30 minutes straight, I found out) about the American fashion designer Halston. Popular culture is the architect's great love and greatest influence. "Space-making is the thing we're doing," de Cárdenas said, "but my interest is in popular culture and how what we do fits into popular culture. That's actually what I've always been into, starting before the juicer."

I MAKE THINGS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE THINGS I'M INTERESTED IN

De Cárdenas's work splits opinion, and it's tricky to characterize: it can be bright and energetic one moment, calm and Waspy the next. Asked to define the kind of work he makes – to describe an overarching tone or aesthetic – de Cárdenas stuttered.

"Basically," he said, "I think about myself, and the things I like and the things I like to feel. I don't make things for everybody. I make things for people who are interested in the things I'm interested in, which I think is a lot of people. I grew up listening to Madonna and Michael Jackson like everyone else. Chances are, what I like, a lot of other people will like, too." So far, he has been right.

THE RAFAEL DE CÁRDENAS PORTFOLIO

01

02

03

04

01
BLACK OCEAN FIREHOUSE, 2013

One of de Cárdenas's most refined projects is the Black Ocean Firehouse featuring offices in various sizes for tech start-ups. Stadium lounge seating allows for impromptu meetings. Wood paneling and graphic fluorescent lighting are present throughout.

02
NIKE BOWERY STADIUM, 2010

An adjustable commercial space in New York, the Nike Bowery Stadium showcases products in spaces that can be rearranged depending on the event – a photography show, for example, or a skate park. Polygonal modular boxes are used for seating.

03
NIKO RESTAURANT, 2011

An exercise in symmetry, New York's Niko restaurant (accessed from Mercer Street in SoHo) features a network of ropes stitched across the ceiling and walls. Works by the artist Jim Drain hang above the bar. Natural materials are used to provide a feeling of warmth.

04
GLEBE PLACE RESIDENCE, 2011

A five-bedroom home in London, Glebe Place welcomes visitors through an entryway lined in dark limed oak paneling. Elsewhere, a timeless, restrained palette of materials features splashes of brightly colored furnishings and artworks.

THE TEN

PLANNING A TRIP? HERE ARE 10 PLACES TO VISIT, THINGS TO DO AND SIGHTS TO SEE IN SOME OF THE GREATEST SETTINGS ON EARTH

10

» » » » » »

WE HAVE SCOURED THE GLOBE TO BRING YOU THE 10 MOST INTERESTING OPENINGS IN THE WORLDS OF RETAIL, CULTURE, DESIGN AND HOSPITALITY

AMANO'I RESORT
VIETNAM

1

At Amano'i, a new resort on the shores of Vietnam's East Sea, 31 secluded guest pavilions sit in a 100-acre sprawl of forest that hinges on the coast of Nui Chua National Park, a reserve known for dramatic rock formations and beaches that are sometimes home to nesting turtles. Visitors can enjoy two pools: the cliffside pool or the 130-foot-long saltwater Beach Club pool, where they can take a dip in the cobalt blue sea of Vinh Hy Bay.

Known for championing local design vernacular, the Amano'i hotel celebrates traditional Vietnamese architecture in a 20,000-square-foot spa that offers chemical-free treatments using Vietnamese ingredients such as rice and coffee. For sporty types looking beyond manicures, blow-drys and facials, the resort organizes classes in Pilates and yoga and has opened an extensive fitness center. » AK

AMANRESORTS.COM

LEAPRUS 3912
CAUCASUS

2

Located 3,912 meters (12,835 feet) above sea level, in the untamed wilderness of Mount Elbrus's southern glacier, LEAPrus 3912 is an unlikely new holiday destination. The eco-hotel and restaurant, which opened in September and takes its name from its altitude, is an impressive exercise in energy efficiency. The firm tasked with designing the hotel was LEAPfactory, an Italian company that specializes in the kind of zero-impact dwellings required when building on environmentally protected areas in remote locations. "The biggest challenge was to create an eco-hotel in such an extreme place so everything is self-generated by new integrated systems," says project designer Davide Barreri. For this assignment, the company constructed four prefabricated modules in Italy that were then transported by helicopter to the hotel location and assembled by specialist technicians on-site.

Commissioned by the Russian North Caucasus Mountain Club, the venture is a launch-pad for a wider push to promote and develop tourism in the little-known mountain region north of the Russian Caucasus. Unsurprisingly, it will capitalize on the area's dramatic and unspoiled landscapes. » AK

LEAPFACTORY.IT

UN HEADQUARTERS DELEGATES' LOUNGE
NEW YORK

3

As part of a larger and ongoing renovation of the historic headquarters of the United Nations in New York, Dutch designer Hella Jongerius was recently tasked with reincarnating the existing North Delegates' Lounge. Working alongside OMA architect Rem Koolhaas, graphic designer Irma Boom and artist Gabriel Lester, Jongerius has reimagined a rectangular space originally designed in the late 1940s by heavyweights Le Corbusier, Oscar Niemeyer and Wallace Harrison.

An official gift from the Netherlands to the United Nations, the room's Dutch DNA was essential to the project, and the political and cultural significance of the new interior was not lost on Jongerius. Aware that real decisions are made here after official meetings, Jongerius devised chairs with wheels for impromptu gatherings, and Sphere Tables, which offer a degree of privacy for delegates who need space to read top-secret files. » AK

VISIT.UN.ORG

UNIVERSIDAD DE MONTERREY
MONTERREY

4

The new Roberto Garza Sada Center of Art, Architecture and Design at the Universidad de Monterrey, in Mexico, is Japanese architect Tadao Ando's first project in Latin America. Despite opening less than a year ago, the $49 million building has already earned a majestic moniker: it's known as the gate of creation, a name taken from the effect of walking through the structure's vast triangular opening.

The six-story building houses studios, lecture rooms and facilities for up to 500 students enrolled in various design-related courses. Geometrically precise and constructed in concrete (Ando's signature material), the building has been designed to inspire a new generation of architects and designers that pass through its doors. José Martín Gómez Tagle Morales, a university architect involved in the project, says: "It is not simply a complex piece of architecture. Ando wanted it to represent the idea of a space devoted to inspire students to transcend and live in an atmosphere of legacy." » AK

UDEM.EDU.MX/CENTROROBERTOGARZASADA

GOLDEN AGE CINEMA AND BAR
SYDNEY
5

Thanks to the regeneration of the iconic art deco Paramount House, Sydney's well-heeled Surry Hills has a hip new hangout. Barrie Barton, strategy and insights director of Right Angle Studio, has spent the past three years turning the former offices of Paramount Pictures into a basement cinema and bar. "Film is a beautiful art form often presented in dreadful environments," Barton says. "We wanted to create a cinema equal to the beauty of film." The 60-seat space is an update of Paramount's original screening room (used during World War II to play newsreels). And its intimate atmosphere and adjacent bar have already struck a chord among locals, who can enjoy a a maple pecan old-fashioned in the glow of the Robert Haussmann-designed lights. » AK

OURGOLDENAGE.COM.AU

BUTTERFLY HOUSE
BAHIA
7

Throwing a peanut at a world map to decide where to open your first hotel isn't a conventional approach, but British hotelier Chloe Gibbs, who did just that, embraces the unorthodox. Armed with a DIY attitude, Gibbs has spent the past six years building an idyllic eco-lodge from scratch in the Brazilian jungle – without cutting down a single tree. "The hotel currently runs off a generator or solar power," Gibbs says, "but the dream is to take this hotel off the grid completely by running on bio fuel from coconut oil." Located on the Maraú Peninsula in Bahia, the hotel offers eight luxury bungalows clad in intricate Moroccan tiling and Colombian bamboo. Named after the area's indigenous butterflies, the hotel is a short walk from more than 40 kilometers of pristine sandy beaches. Guests are encouraged to leave 10 percent of their bill to Flap Your Wings, a fund Gibbs set up to help the career development of locals. » AK

BUTTERFLYHOUSEBAHIA.COM

MERCAT PRINCESA
BARCELONA
6

In recent years the once gritty neighborhood El Born, in Barcelona, has been transformed into the gentrified bohemian enclave that is now home to Mercat Princesa, the city's first "gastronomic" market. A passion project run by Spanish multimedia artist Justo Almendros, the market is located in a former 14th-century palace. Restored by Almendros himself, the medieval building now hosts 16 international food stalls and seats up to 200 people on chairs and stools designed by the owner.

"We wanted a market that was highly visual," says manager Sara Guerrero, "so everything has to be cooked and prepared in front of visitors and made to order." The hip and the hungry have been flocking here for La Planxa's *butifarras*, Indonesian food by Mekong by Indochine and faultless *patatas bravas* from potato specialists Patates. Pop in for cocktails, catch one of the rotating photography shows or even book a private dinner. » AK

MERCATPRINCESA.COM

BALE MOUNTAIN LODGE
SOUTH CENTRAL ETHIOPIA
9

Despite no previous hotel experience, husband-and-wife team Guy and Yvonne Levene are behind Ethiopia's unique Bale Mountain Lodge, a picturesque retreat nestled within the undiscovered Bale Mountains National Park. Surrounded by wilderness, the lodge is a cozy 30-bed haven equipped with furniture and fabrics made by artisanal talent in Addis Ababa, 250 miles northwest of the park. But although efforts have resulted in a hotel with the usual trimmings of luxury accommodations, the Levenes' project is an impressive example of sustainable hospitality. Electricity comes from a hydro plant the couple built themselves, and gas for cooking, heating and laundry will come from biogas created by the hotel's compostable waste. The duo also hopes to use the hotel to increase conservation efforts in a landscape rich with wildlife and endangered species – some 240 types of birds roam the surrounding area. » AK

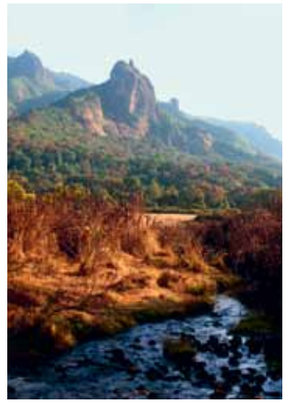
BALEMOUNTAINLODGE.COM

ASTERISK WINERY
BEIJING
8

Demand for wine in China is growing rapidly and its consumers are acquiring increasingly sophisticated tastes. Catering to this new demand, wineries are popping up across the country. The Asterisk winery, near Beijing, is a breath of fresh air in a landscape of vineyard architecture populated by the look du jour of faux French villas and castles. Designed by Japanese architect Keiichiro Sako, founder of SAKO Architects, Asterisk takes its name from its unusual five-pronged shape, which juts into its grassy surroundings.

Located just outside the city on a man-made island, the 22,000-square-foot, two-story space boasts a wine showroom, a bar and extensive basement wine cellars, as well as an indoor-outdoor restaurant for the city's new wave of wine connoisseurs. The steel structure is clad in Selangan Batu timber, which lends the building its distinctive brown hue. » AK

SAKO.CO.JP



SAINT PIERRE
SINGAPORE
10

In February 2013 talented Belgian chef Emmanuel Stroobant disappointed Singapore's culinary elite by closing down Saint Pierre, a restaurant that quickly became one of the city's most popular French fine-dining destinations when he first opened it more than a decade ago. Regulars will be pleased to know the eatery is back in evolved form. Bright, airy and slightly more casual, Stroobant's new Saint Pierre overlooks the picturesque Sentosa Cove marina and features blond wood interiors designed by Terence Chan, founder of Terre, a design studio in Singapore. The menu, thankfully, is just as vibrant as it always was. An eclectic mix of dishes include oven-baked black cod, barley risotto and roasted lobster, and grilled zucchini. For a treat, try the Plat de Cotes Fume, which features beef short rib smoked for 48 hours. » AM

SAINTPIERRE.COM.SG

ON THE RISE

JULIE RICHOZ, A RISING STAR ON EUROPE'S INDUSTRIAL DESIGN CIRCUIT, TAKES AN INSPIRATIONAL RIDE THROUGH PARIS, REFLECTING ON HER LIFE, HER WORK AND THE WONDER OF HER ADOPTED CITY

TEXT BY EMILY KING
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLÉMENT JOLIN

STYLIST: SARAH MARIE COLLINS STRUCTURED SHIRT: VANSTEPH
HACKNEY COAT: CECILIA HAMMARBORG SPECIAL THANKS TO SWANFIELDBOUTIQUE.COM

Julie Richoz lives in the most typical of Parisian apartments. A sixth-floor *chambre de bonne*, it is flooded with light by windows that overlook a choppy sea of lead roofs and chimneys. This is Richoz's second Parisian home, and she moved in only a couple of months before we met. Outsize potted plants fill the living room. Contemporary design tomes line a row of shelves. A table, which doubles as Richoz's desk, is finished by a pair of Enzo Mari's Mariolina chairs. Born and educated in Lausanne but raised in La Rochelle, on the west coast of France, Richoz relocated to Paris a year ago, keen to sample life in a city that she deems ripe with dynamism and potential. "This," she said recently, "is a city where lots of things are happening."

It was a cold December morning, and Richoz, a talented industrial designer who many predict will become an industry star, stood outside her apartment block in front of a gleaming white Lexus CT200h, about to embark on a journey across the city she now happily calls home. Her first Parisian address, in Abbesses, between the Moulin Rouge and the Sacré Coeur, featured young tourists photographing each other in front of key attractions. Her current home, a short tumble down the hill in the Ninth Arrondissement, stands close to the Rue des Martyrs, which, over the past 10 years, has become one of the liveliest neighborhoods in Paris. Streets here are narrow and crowded, lined by vehicles on each side and then by *boulangeries* and butchers, restaurants and cafés. To drive in the district, a car must be quick, agile, responsive to its surroundings. The CT200h, the marque's first full hybrid luxury compact, is exactly that.

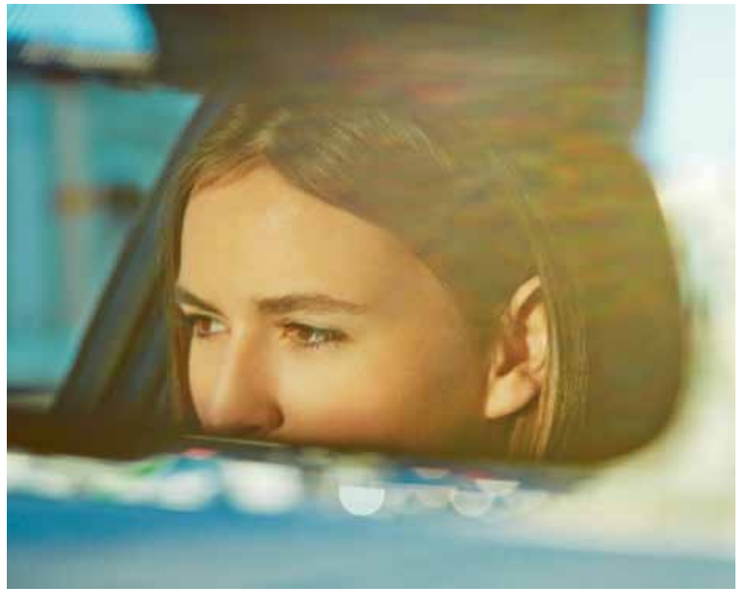
Richoz, who is 23, drove through the cobbled streets of the Place Saint-Georges to a Montmartre café, where she drank tea and discussed her work. Educated at the École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne, Richoz makes housewares that are light and colorful, vibrant and sculptural. She has made desk trays that reference the sliding movement of crumb collectors; long hanging lamps that double as mobiles; a collection of spring steel containers influenced by handcrafts like crochet and knitting. She is interested in systems, geometry, layers and materials. And often she is inspired by the kind of everyday observations – a piece of ornate architectural decoration, say – that, thankfully, a designer can readily experience in a city like the French capital.

"What I like about Paris is that you can go from one point to another – go through different places – and there will always be things you haven't seen," Richoz explained. "There are always things to discover. There are moments where there are really long avenues, and really large and impressive buildings. And then you find yourself in much quieter, smaller spaces. This is what I like in the city: to be always surprised."

A few months before we met, Richoz had considered moving to Berlin, traditionally a haven for artists and designers. Given that city's abundance of space, had she made the move, she would have been able to rent a vast studio space in which to work. (At the moment, Richoz designs either at the Ivry-sur-Seine studio of respected furniture designer Pierre Charpin, one of Richoz's former ECAL tutors, with whom she works, or at her apartment.) But when she spent a few days in the German capital, she found it "too peaceful," she explained. "The atmosphere [in Berlin] is really different. There's a lot more energy in Paris, and I'm starting to feel at home here. I've met people, and I'm beginning to know the city better." (The "people" she referred to are a talented, now tight-knit group of ECAL graduates who have all relocated to the area.)

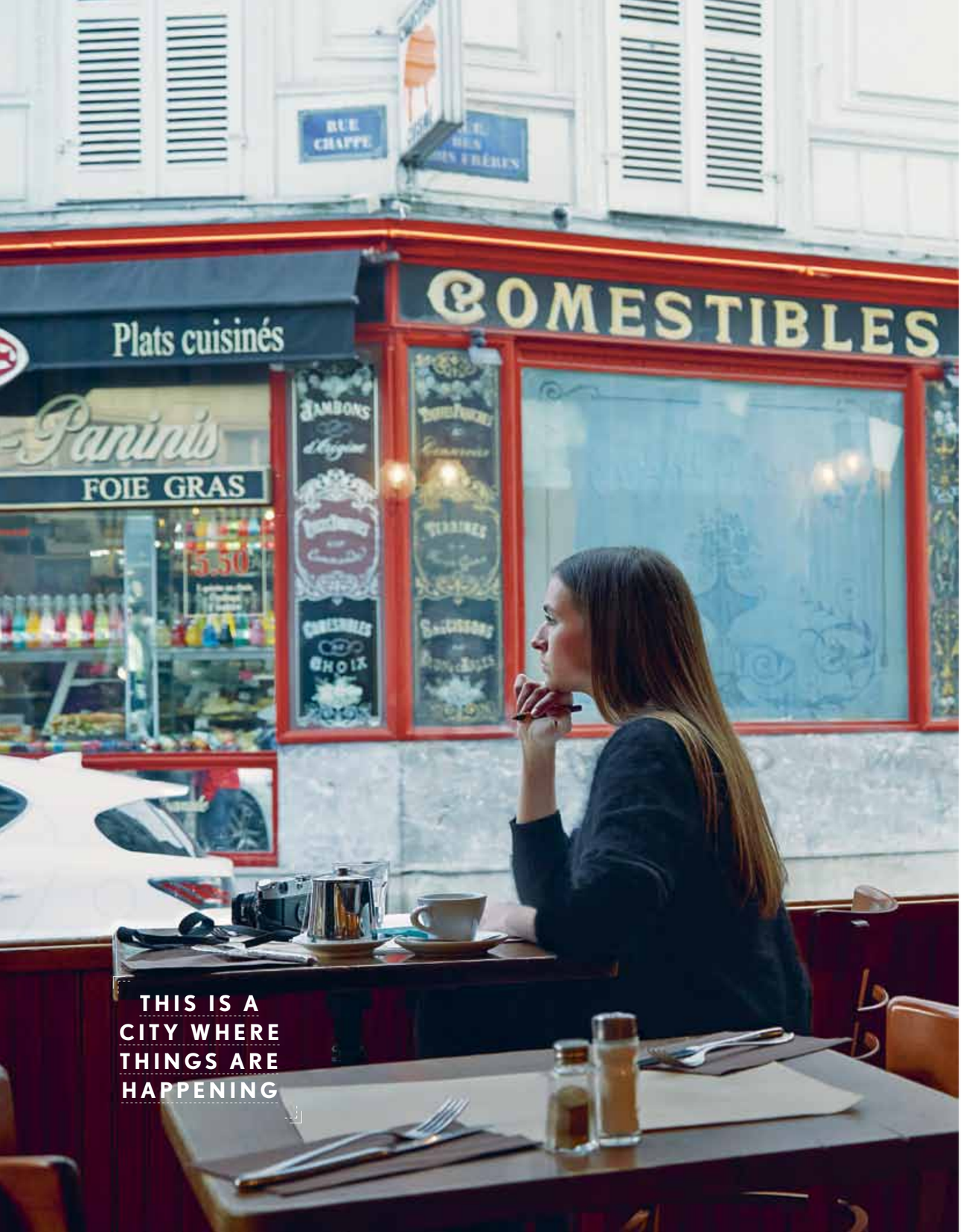
As the engine of the CT fired up outside the café, ready to begin the next leg of its journey, Richoz continued to talk about why Paris is the right city for her. She likes it for its ambience, its beauty, its diverse cultural mix. What else? "There are lots of galleries," she said. "And so many museums and things to see!"

Paris is well known as the home of several of the world's greatest museums. Richoz's favorite is the Palais de Tokyo, one of the city's more recent additions. Situated in a dramatic structure built for the Paris International Exhibition of 1937, the museum is renowned for innovative contemporary art. (On the day we visited, the work of French art star Philippe Parreno was on view.) For Richoz, the institution – the building's architecture, the exhibitions it shows and its iconic location – is a place of constant inspiration. As we arrived, the CT having nimbly navigated both small cobbled streets and



JULIE RICHOZ RÉSUMÉ

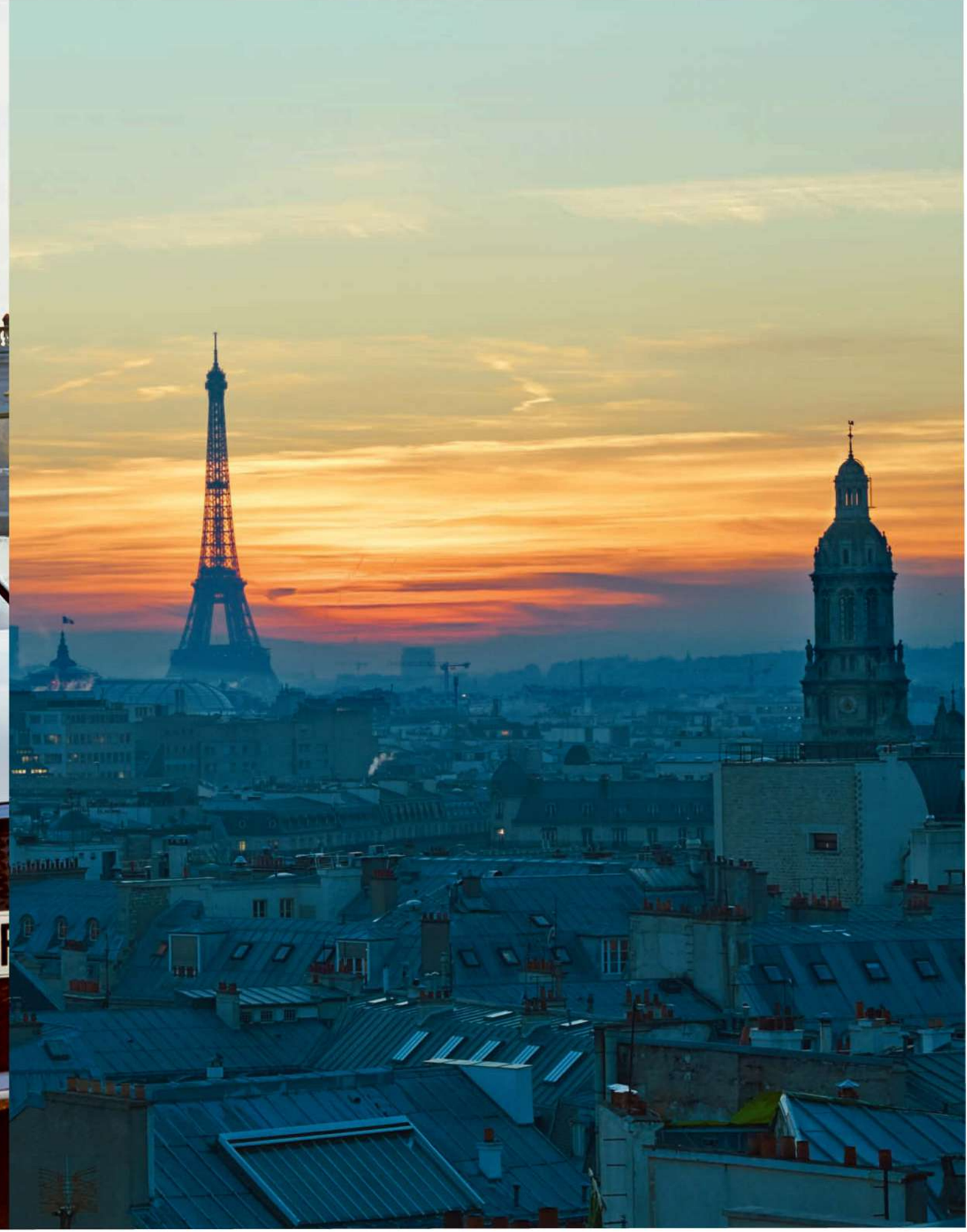
1991 »	Born in Lausanne
1998 »	Moves to La Rochelle
2012 »	Completes a degree in industrial design at ECAL and wins the Grand Prix at the Design Parade at Villa Noailles
2012 »	Completes residencies at CIRVA, Marseille, and Cité de la Céramique, Paris
2013 »	Exhibits at Design Miami with Gallery Libby Sellers
2014 »	Exhibits at Passagen, the Cologne Interior Design Week

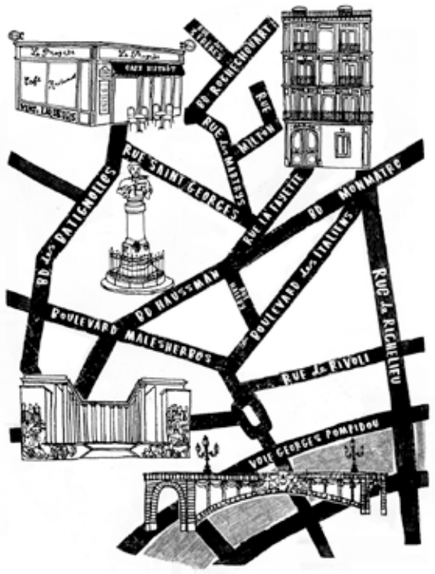


THIS IS A CITY WHERE THINGS ARE HAPPENING

wide, sprawling avenues, I was struck by the incidental beauty of Paris. The day was bright, and the shadows on the art deco terrace that connects the Palais de Tokyo to the neighboring Musée d'Art Moderne could not have been sharper. Just over the river stands the Eiffel Tower. At one moment, when the low winter sun was tucked behind its pointy metal tip, it cast long shadows in the sky like those caused by an eclipse. On days like these, Paris has very little trouble making its case.

When Richoz graduated from ECAL, in 2012, she won the Grand Prix at the Design Parade at Villa Noailles, an extremely prestigious competition awarded to young designers for excellence in their field. She won the prize for her student work, which included a series of paper structures she titled *Armand*. Made from sheets of colored paper laser cut and formed into cylinders, the objects hovered between the categories of drawing and model, and brought her to the attention of the British design doyenne Libby Sellers, the gallerist who now represents Richoz. (Sellers exhibited *Armand* at Design Basel last year.) Richoz is fascinated by the relationship between two and three dimensions. Often she'll slice precise and delicate incisions into sheets of material before molding them into forms. In other cases, as with a pair of vase works, *Coques* and *Oreilles*, created during a 2012 residency at the reputable Marseille glass museum





CT200h F SPORT			
LENGTH	4,350mm	ENGINE OUTPUT	73/5,200kW/rpm
HEIGHT	1,455mm	MAX TORQUE	142/2,800-4,400Nm/rpm
WIDTH	1,765mm	TOTAL SYSTEM OUTPUT W/MOTOR	100hp
WHEELBASE	2,600mm	TRANSMISSION	CVT
SEATING CAPACITY	5	SUSPENSION	Front: MacPherson Strut Rear: Double Wishbone
DRIVE WHEELS	2WD		
ENGINE TYPE	2ZR-FXE		
CYLINDERS	4		

CIRVA, Richoz layers materials that are more rigid, experimenting with new structural possibilities and limitations. “Glass I really like,” Richoz said of the work, “because of the material, the color and the way it is very luminous.” In January Richoz showed several new glass pieces in an exhibition titled *Arrêt sur l’Objet* during Passagen, the Cologne Interior Design Week, Germany’s biggest design event.

By the time Richoz had finished at the museum, the city’s light was beginning to fade, so she drove to enjoy the sunset at an architectural peak near her apartment. Once there, it was again a case of Paris being its own argument: the mélange of architectural styles laid out before us, the last of the sunlight picking out everything from the elaborate glass dome of the Grand Palais to the plate windows of the Tour Montparnasse (and the windows of the CT, too), the sun sinking at the feet of the Eiffel Tower. After sunset, a more typical day would have seen Richoz speeding off to spend time with friends in the area around the Canal Saint-Martin, perhaps eating in an Asian or North African restaurant or, if she’s feeling particularly French, ordering boudin, a kind of white-pork sausage, at the Café de l’Industrie, close to Bastille. But that evening she went for a drive, clipping past the city’s lights, enjoying the theater of Paris at night through the frame of her CT’s cockpit.

Richoz’s generation of designers have to make up their professional lives as they go along. Gone are the days of traditional design employment – of permanent in-house work at a reputable manufacturer. But Richoz doesn’t have to worry. For someone of her talent, the new world order has advantages. Richoz’s pieces are light and flexible, and so too is her mind. She has already shown work at the Parisian design gallery Kreo, and Sellers is expecting more work in the future. Richoz is in demand all over the world. Paris is right for now, but chances are that it will be just one stop along her professional arc. Where’s the next one? There’s always New York, or London, or São Paulo or Shanghai. Asked how long she’ll stay in Paris, she replied: “I don’t know, but for the moment, I really like being here.” So Richoz likes Paris, and having spent time with her in the city, clocking the admiring glances she attracted from all quarters, it’s safe to say Paris likes Richoz. //

IN A WORLD

»»»»»»

THE ECORIUM, AT THE RECENTLY COMPLETED NATIONAL ECOLOGICAL INSTITUTE IN SEOCHEON, SOUTH KOREA, BRINGS THE EARTH'S BIODIVERSITY TO LIFE

TEXT BY ERIN WYLIE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY YOUNG CHAE PARK

Visiting a small-scale replica of the Earth sounds like some kind of postapocalyptic tourism. In fact, it's a contemporary educational concept brought to life at the Ecorium, part of the National Ecological Institute, an immersive ecological learning and research center in Seocheon, South Korea. Inside the stunning ecoplex, a type of futuristic time travel is possible: visitors are invited to walk through living re-creations of five of the Earth's distinct biomes – from tropical to polar – in just one day.

The Ecorium's main goal is to explore the fragility of ecosystems and the importance of biodiversity. "We can alter how we use energy and carbon emissions in a way that may actually help reduce global warming," says Andrew Whalley, deputy chairman of Grimshaw Architects, the firm whose design won the competition for the large-scale ecology project hosted by Korea's Ministry of Environment. "But we can't re-create species that we've made extinct."

Eco-architecture is something of a specialty of Grimshaw's; the firm is most renowned for the Eden Project, an ecology center built in the United Kingdom in 2001. With knowledge amassed from that project, and the help of multiple consultants (engineering from Thornton Tomasetti, environmental systems by Atelier Ten), Grimshaw completed the design in three months alongside SAMOO Architects & Engineers, based in Seoul. In March 2013, 13 months after a design was chosen, Samsung Construction completed the 355,000-square-feet nature reserve. (The Ecorium is currently in a soft opening phase and will be fully open to the public later this spring.)

INSIDE THE ECORIUM, A TYPE OF FUTURISTIC TIME TRAVEL IS POSSIBLE

01

BEHIND THE BIOMES

1. Biome: Tropical/Area: 32,292 ft²
Features mangroves, flowering gingers, banana plants and Madagascar lemurs

2. Biome: Subtropical/Area: 16,146 ft²
Features low shrubs and bunch grasses, endangered pupfish and burrowing owls

3. Biome: Mediterranean/Area: 14,316 ft²
Features evergreen oak trees, ferns, wildflowers, lavender and rosemary

4. Biome: Temperate/Area: 19,375 ft²
Features freshwater wetlands and saltwater ponds, coastal birds and reptiles

5. Biome: Polar/Area: 15,285 ft²
Features rocky pools and tundra, springtime flowers and Antarctic penguins

02

01 A CGI impression of the completed Ecorium 02 A peek inside the tropical biome, which houses sacred figs, flying foxes and Amazonian trees

Composed mainly of steel and glass, the Ecorium resembles an intergalactic city. The center's entryway is tucked underneath a grass roof to give "the sense that you are going into the landscape," says Whalley. Seen from above, the building's large compressive steel arches evoke the meandering flow of a river that splits off into different pools. Each is covered by a wedge-shaped glass greenhouse (there are four in diminishing sizes) that contains a different biome: tropical, subtropical, Mediterranean and temperate. The fifth zone is represented in a subterranean exhibit that mimics the low-light conditions and maintains the subzero temperatures of the Arctic. "As on Earth, each region interconnects in order to form a complete biosphere," explains Whalley.

Inside, visitors will feel the temperature change and notice the landscape adjust – a far cry from the static dioramas at natural history museums. A continuous walkway snakes through the entire building, its succession of functional ecosystems containing waterfalls, miniature mountains, 240 types of living animals and 4,300 plant species. The tropical zone, for example, stands 115 feet tall to accommodate sacred figs and other Amazonian trees, and under its canopy is a mix of mangroves, banana trees, schools of colorful fish, a Burmese python and even flying foxes. The temperate zone, a reproduction of the Gotjawal Forest on South Korea's Jeju Island, contains wild chickadees. The polar exhibit is home to penguins.

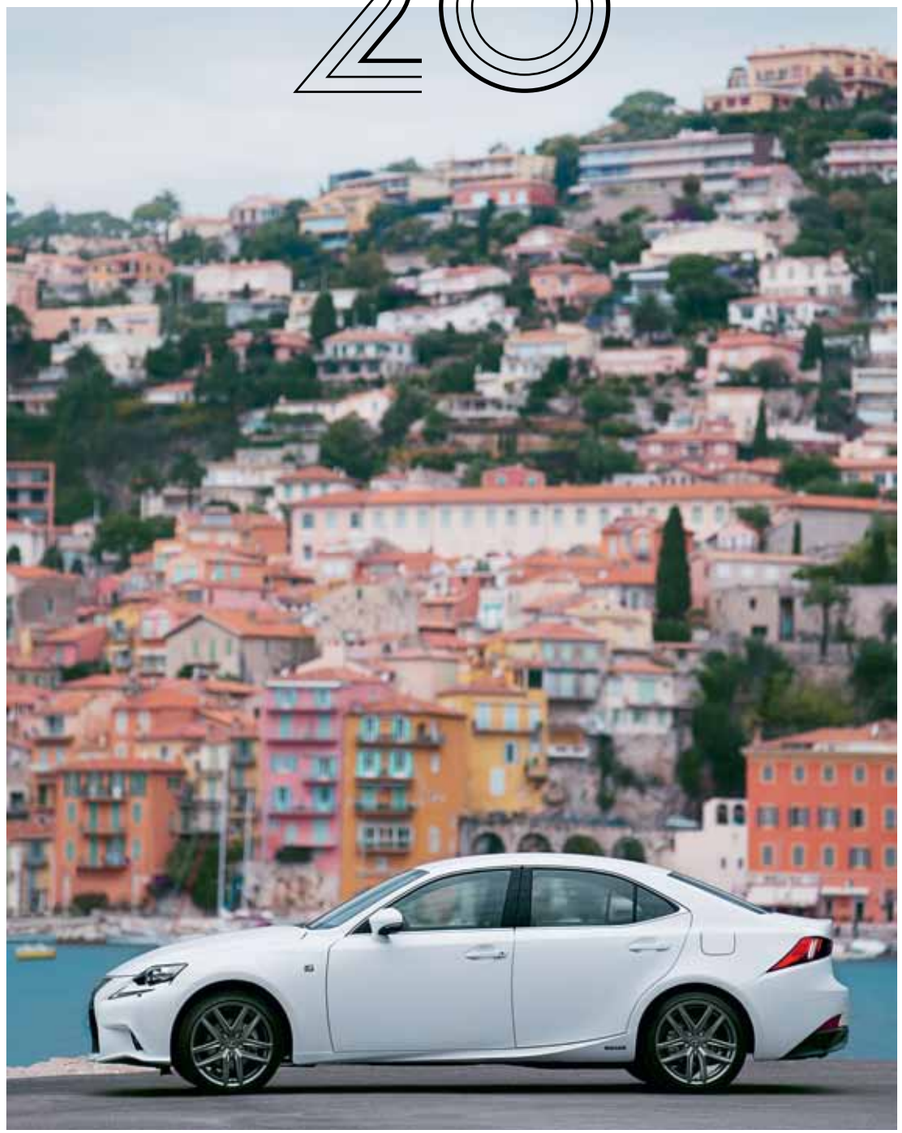
To create an environment in which all these species could thrive, Grimshaw analyzed how the sun would work year-round and what light levels to expect. "We look at model buildings in 3-D and place them in that part of the world, so we know the exact angles of the building and anticipate the levels of light on the floor," says Whalley. The shape of each greenhouse dictates its climate: the tropical zone is the largest, not just to accommodate large trees but to allow the full spectrum of light to shine in.

"People ask, Why go to the trouble of building a rain forest in South Korea when you can see it for real?" says Whalley. The reality, he continues, is that few people can afford to go to the Amazon and explore. "It's very important to bring it to people." //

THE TWENTY

FROM SUNGLASSES TO FRAGRANCES, HERE IS OUR
SELECTION OF GLOBAL TRAVEL GEAR TO PACK FOR YOUR
UPCOMING SUMMER TRIP

20



» » » » » »

THE LEXUS IS 250 F SPORT IS MADE FOR A MEDITERRANEAN GETAWAY. HERE ARE 20 SUMMER TRAVEL ESSENTIALS TO TAKE WITH YOU ON THAT ROAD TRIP TO THE COAST

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEVIN BLAIR AND STYLING BY MICHELLE DUGUID

01 **FRAGRANCE** COMME DES GARÇONS

02 **SUNGLASSES** EYE RESPECT AT TRUNK CLOTHIERS

03 **MEN'S SHOE** BALLY 04 **BAG** LOUIS VUITTON 05 **TOWEL** MISSONI 06 **HAT** ASPREY

07 **BOOK** *WHERE CHEFS EAT*, PHAIDON

08 **DIGITAL CAMERA** LEICA

09 **MAC** FENDI

10 **BLANKET** MISSONI

11 **BAG** FENDI 12 **NECKLACE** ANNDRA NEEN 13 **CHESS CASE** ASPREY

14 **FRAGRANCE** TOM FORD 15 **SPEAKER** JAWBONE 16 **BAG** BOTTEGA VENETA

17 **WOMEN'S SHOE** BOTTEGA VENETA

18 **PASSPORT COVER** SMYTHSON

19 **WATCH** TAG HEUER

20 **PEN** FABER-CASTELL AT TRUNK CLOTHIERS

PASS OUT

» » » » » »

NOW LINED WITH AN ARRAY OF INTRIGUING ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURES, THE TIMMELSJOCH ALPINE PASS IS ONE OF THE MOST THRILLING ROADS IN THE WORLD. BEN OLIVER FINDS OUT WHY

TEXT BY BEN OLIVER AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLAF UNVERZART

01 A winding section of the Timmelsjoch pass, seen from above 02 The Pass Museum, which is free to enter, overlooks the border between Italy and Austria

LOFTY AMBITIONS

Rounding off at an impressive 8,117 feet, the Timmelsjoch pass is one of the highest paved roads in Europe, but it's not quite the tallest. At just over 11,000 feet, that title goes to the access road that winds to the summit of Veleta, the second-highest peak in the Sierra Nevada, Spain. The Abano pass (9,350 feet), the highest paved road in Russia's Caucasus region, claims second place, and the Ötztal Glacier Road (9,285 feet), the highest pass in the Alps, comes in third. The loftiest drivable road in the world? That's disputed, but most point to Khardung La, India (more than 18,000 feet).

03

Fast, high, deserted and running through some of the most extraordinary, eye-widening scenery on earth, the Timmelsjoch Alpine pass is the antidote to our dull, clogged urban arteries. A life-threateningly high gap that is only open to drivers when the weather allows, the pass links Austria to Italy through one of the few indentations in the long ridge that divides the two countries. From late October until summer, it rests locked beneath snow and ice; even when it thaws out, be prepared to negotiate its 30 hairpin bends through a sudden snowstorm or a dense bank of clouds. This is high-stakes driving, but the rewards more than justify that faint sense of jeopardy.

Timmelsjoch provides all those glamorous Alpine driving tropes we've absorbed from 1960s films. Hairpins sweep out into nothingness. Straights sway as they cleave to mountainsides, square-cut rock face on one side, plain sky on the other. At the pass itself you think it's the view of snowy, jagged peaks that has taken your breath away. Then you notice the clouds are now beneath you, and you remember you're more than 8,200 feet up and the oxygen is noticeably thinner here.

The first paved section of road from the Austrian side of the pass to the summit opened in 1959. Fifty years later, local architect Werner Tscholl was asked to build five roadside structures to mark the feat. You might wonder what even the best architecture could add to the views here, and whether humanity ought to be leaving further marks on this landscape. Tscholl didn't. To him and his team, the structures offered an opportunity to celebrate the pass's great history.

People have used Timmelsjoch for transit since the pre-Christian era, and it encouraged trade and cultural links between settlements on either side. As with the other famous Alpine passes, building it required a disregard for danger and human frailty. It was largely constructed by hand; images from the 1950s show smiling workers in lederhosen standing in front of 16-foot-high banks of snow. Tscholl's structures don't set out to surpass their environment; that would be impossible. Instead they honor it – their plain, reddish concrete construction and subtle faceting reflecting the hue and shape of the mountains in which they are set.

The first, Walkway, offers a pier that soars out over a steep valley for a vertiginous view. The second, Smugglers, an irregular cube that houses a single museum room devoted to the history of smuggling over the pass, shows real wit. The entry and exit, cut into the concrete on each side in the shape of a hat-wearing Kraxentrager smuggler, look like the shadows you might have glimpsed centuries ago as runners darted over the secret paths that led to the goods and profits to be had far below.

At the summit is the biggest structure, the Pass Museum, another single room that is much more ambitious in its form. Its foundation sits on the Austrian side of the border, but its entire structure cantilevers into Italian airspace, its precarious, improbable look a subtle, intelligent nod to the extreme geology that surrounds it.

Driving down into Italy, you meet Telescope, two open-ended rhomboids, each of which frame a different peak in the distance. And finally there is Garnets, tucked away at the end of a parking lot as you approach the Italian village of Moos im Passeier, which marks the end of the pass. It's the least auspicious structure of the five but still manages to add to the scenery. Inspired by the minerals found in the mountains, one of the two spheres is built into the rock face and glazed, allowing you to step out into the air high over the village for a chest-tightening view down into it.

You could, of course, just get into your Lexus and cannon over a pass like this, never stopping. But as each hairpin reveals another "Oh, wow!" view, you'll be torn between the desire to press on and enjoy the drive, and the need to take more photographs. Tscholl's structures provide the excuse to stop. You can stand with your back to them and admire the mountains. But see them in context and you'll understand they deserve to be here. Each amplifies the other, and the combined effect is worth the climb and the hairpins and the dizziness and the constant, gentle thrill of this wild, bleak place.

AN ANTIDOTE TO OUR DULL, CLOGGED URBAN ARTERIES

MEET THE LOCAL

The five Timmelsjoch structures were devised by the 59-year-old architect Werner Tscholl. Born in Latsch, in northern Italy, Tscholl has a practice that is based in Morter, a small Tyrolean town about 50 miles from the pass. Here the architect designs offices, private homes and historical renovations unified by the use of natural materials and a keen appreciation of geographical context. Much of Tscholl's work reacts to and engages with the surrounding mountainous landscape, as illustrated by the Timmelsjoch structures, which exist firmly in harmony with their locations.

04

05

03 Smugglers, one of five architectural structures that line the pass, is entered through a smuggler-shaped hole
04 Telescope provides visitors with views of two distant mountains
05 A view of the pass at dusk

AMAZING IN MOTION

INSIDE SWARM

» » » » » »

LEXUS'S "AMAZING IN MOTION" CAMPAIGN CONTINUES WITH SWARM, A CLEVER, WITTY SHORT FILM CREATED BY ACCLAIMED ENGLISH DIRECTOR SAM BROWN

TEXT BY ALEX MOSHAKIS

Last year Lexus launched a series of projects with the tagline "Amazing in Motion," which aimed to display the marque's commitment to design, technology, materials and movement. For the second film in the campaign, the brand turned to Rogue Films's Sam Brown, an acclaimed London-based director renowned for his originality. Brown has created music videos for Adele, Elbow and Jay Z, and produced innovative ads for the BBC, Samsung and Virgin Media. For Lexus the director and a team of designers, engineers and character animators set out to push the boundaries of movement, enhancing quadrotor and motion capture technology to create an ad filled with progressive science and personality. Here Brown discusses concepts, challenges and legions of tiny, curious flying vehicles.

01

01 An engineer mends the interior mechanics of a quadrotor
02 A quadrotor hovers in a scene from *Swarm*

02

lexus-int.com/amazinginmotion/swarm

INTERVIEW: SAM BROWN

» Let's start with the brief. What were you asked to create?

The idea was to use and develop existing technology to articulate the idea "Amazing in Motion" but also to show how technology can tell a human story. What Lexus is all about is humanizing technology – making it relevant to people. That was a really big part of the brief.

» You worked with quadrotors – experimental flying vehicles – first developed by KMel Robotics in Philadelphia. They're inanimate machines, yet in the film they have a lot of character. Was that important?

We felt the quadrotors came into this project with certain stereotypes. The challenge Lexus gave us was to humanize them, to give them personality, to turn something that could be cold and impersonal into something with character.

» How did you achieve it?

Our way of humanizing them was to think of them as children, to try to give them childlike personalities: completely open, inquisitive, up for a laugh, fun. We looked at stories like *Toy Story* and *The Nutcracker*. You could almost substitute the quadrotors with children; the way they engage with the world is very childlike. You put kids in any situation and they just throw themselves into it. The quadrotors are the same – they're enthusiastic little things that just want to have fun. That comes across in the story not only in what they're doing but in the music, which was inspired by the scores used in *Tom and Jerry* cartoons. That immediately takes you back to being a kid again.

» The quadrotors are also wonderfully choreographed.

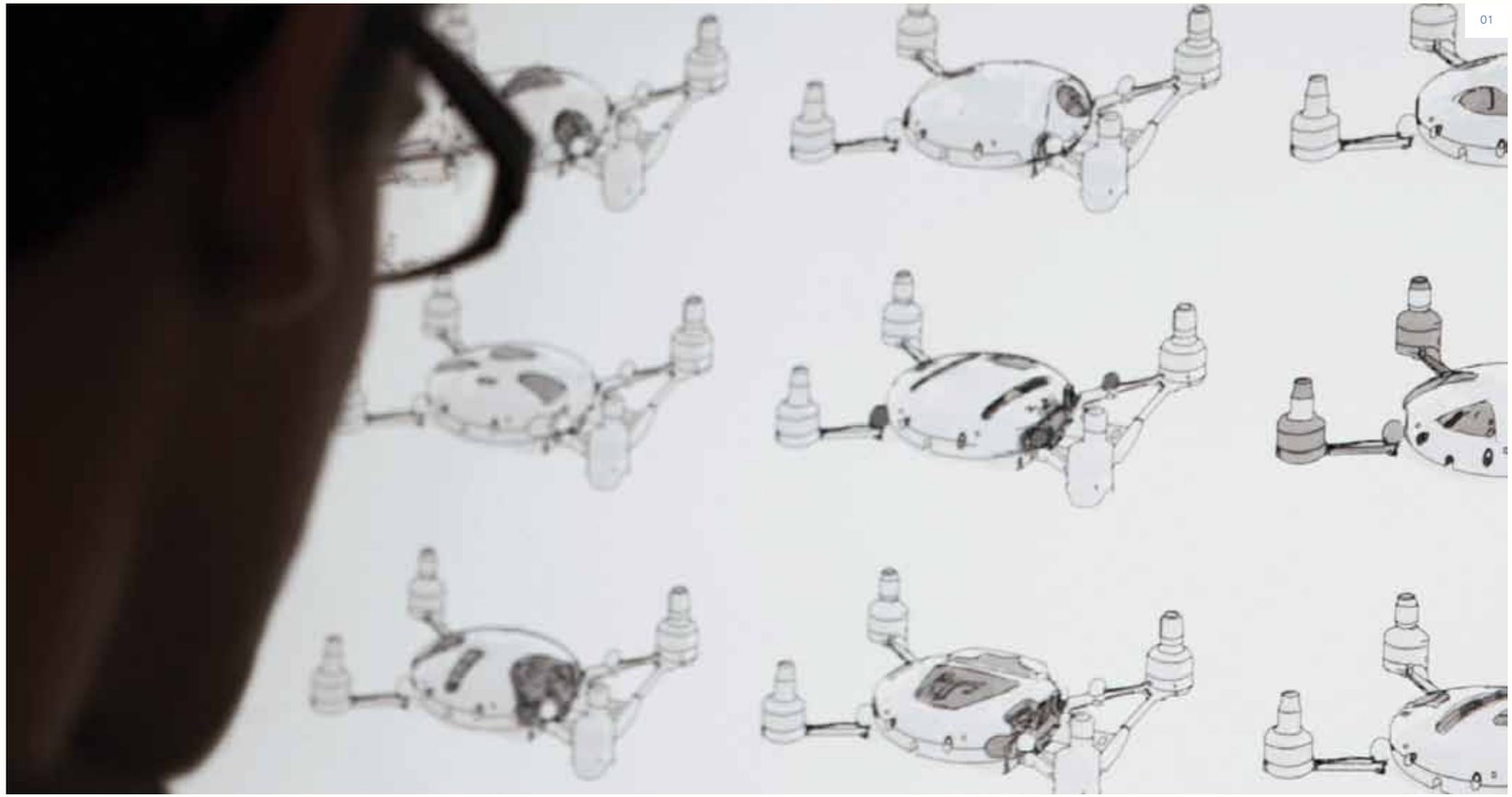
Another reference I had was Busby Berkeley, a choreographer who did these very elaborate song-and-dance routines. There was a big vogue in the 1960s for that kind of thing – vast choreographed numbers with lots of bodies moving around and spinning. I had that in mind.

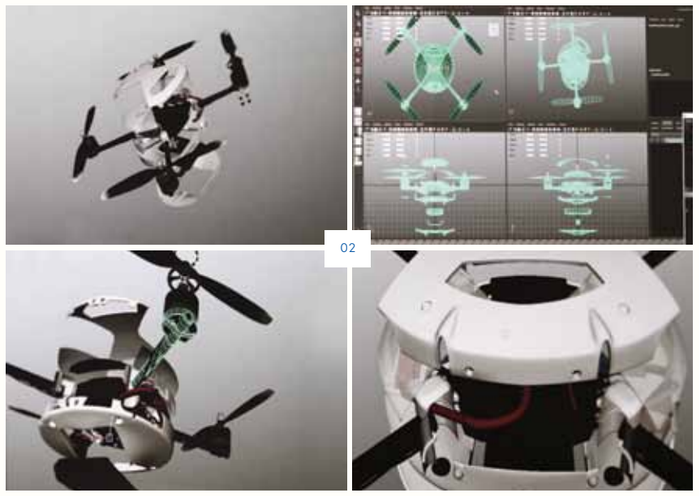
» How much did you and Lexus have to further develop the quadrotors?

KMel Robotics were already developing this technology for engineering purposes, but they were very primitive little things. The resources we provided helped them to move their technology forward quite significantly, and in doing this project they suddenly found themselves able to do stuff they previously couldn't do. The way they look was developed by us; we managed to take what was a fairly large package and reduce it to a much smaller one.

The other thing is that their motion was not inherently graceful. If you were to start a quadrotor at one end of a space, ask it to negotiate a couple of objects and end up at the other end, it would take the most efficient path, not the most graceful one. That graceful motion is entirely a product of our development. It's something we had to teach them to do. In effect, controlling their motion was like meticulous puppeteering. Everything they needed to do had to be dictated by us.

01





02

01

DEVELOPING CHARACTERS

Quadrotors, inanimate flying robots, lack human characteristics, but Brown was keen to give them personality. To do so, he worked with an experienced character animator to provide the vehicles with recognizable expressions. "We took films like *Wall-E* as a guide," Brown says. "You need to take your guide from characters like that – inexpressive characters that suddenly become expressive with animation." It worked. Daniel Mellinger, cofounder of KMel Robotics, recalls: "The first time we put a shell on one of the vehicles and ran one of the moves, it looked like it was looking around, like it was curious. These vehicles actually came to life through the technology we put into them."

02

CODING MOTION

One of the project's great challenges was to take an existing studio technology and apply it in a public setting. "That was a massive thing for Lexus," Brown explains. "There was a lot of development, research, trial and error involved in trying to get the quadrotors to fly in this very precise way and to interact with everyday objects and spaces." It proved a challenge for the team, but one they were more than capable of meeting. "Once we had the ideas for the moves, we actually had to make them happen, whether it would be with maps and algorithms or through animation," says Mellinger, whose firm used a series of motion capture frames to create virtual maps that determined in real time where the vehicles were in the real world. Alex Kushleyev, cofounder of KMel Robotics, says: "Every component of the system had to work almost to the limit of its performance to achieve this graceful behavior."

THE LAB

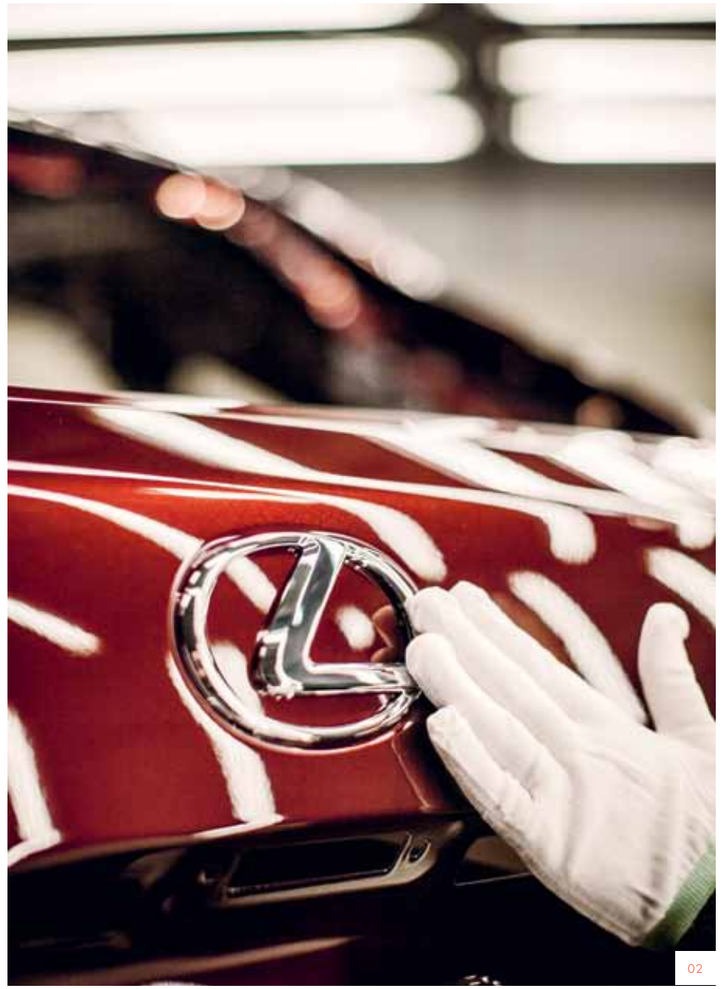
FLAWLESS

» » » » » »

THE CANADIAN LEXUS PLANT, IN CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, IS THE BRAND'S ONLY MANUFACTURING PLANT OUTSIDE JAPAN. IT'S WHERE THE RX 350 IS MADE, AS PERFECTLY AS POSSIBLE

TEXT BY ALEX MOSHAKIS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILL LEW

01



02

01 An RX 350 awaits inspection
02 A paint shop team member wipes a trunk clean of lint

Susan Graves is feeling for defects, running her fingers across a suspended bumper in pursuit of blots and blotches, bumps and blemishes. Nearby, under white strip lighting, her colleagues perform similar tasks, circling plastic on the lookout for flaws. Sometimes they'll shut their eyes, heightening their sense of touch to more accurately locate faults. Not Graves. "I follow my fingers with my eyes," she says. She feels better that way.

Slight, with surprisingly perceptive fingertips, Graves is one of a select group of Lexus team members tasked with identifying potential problems, no matter how small, in plastic car components. She trained intensively for a month to do this one specific job, off-line initially, where the stakes are lower and the sensory aptitude required on the factory floor can be improved. As far as she knows, she has never missed a defect. She's worked here for two and a half years.

It's a Wednesday afternoon, and Graves is gearing up for a nine-hour night shift. The Lexus plant, in Cambridge, Ontario, bustles. Team members file into several different departments: the weld shop, paint, assembly or plastics, where Graves works. Currently the only Lexus manufacturing center outside Japan, the Cambridge plant has provided the North American market with various incarnations of the Lexus RX, the popular SUV, since 2003, and occupies a vast, 1.5-million-square-foot space about 50 miles from Toronto. As many as 120,000 vehicles are made here annually, including the RX 450h, the first hybrid vehicle built in Canada. Such is the plant's success that Lexus will soon open a second factory in North America. Beginning in 2015, the ES 350, a luxury sedan, will be produced in Georgetown, Kentucky.

More than 2,000 people work here, at the Cambridge plant, in various capacities and at various stages of the manufacturing process. There are team members who apply sealant, who wipe hoods clean of lint, who maintain welding arms or function machinery that creates foam-injected dashboards. In assembly, it is one employee's job to make sure the right sound – a reassuring thud – reverberates when a passenger door slams shut. (A revolving team will open and close doors all day, bringing attention to any vehicle lacking the correct kind of closing clunk.) Lexus customers expect detail and quality; team members, fueled by pride and equipped with technical ability, provide it.

On average, it takes 24 hours to make an RX 350 – 10 hours are spent just in the paint shop – and about 2,400 components are required. Parts are fitted with painstaking precision and checked repeatedly by team members throughout the assembly process. Every blemish found is fixed immediately, and every imperfection is recorded and traced to its source, where appropriate measures are taken to ensure the same mistake will never occur again.

As Luc Haman, a Lexus veteran, puts it: "We won't ship a defect."

Haman, an Ontario native, has worked at the Cambridge plant since it first opened and now oversees a shift of the factory's weld shop, the only department in which robots dominate the line. Mechanical arms piece panels together, set parts into place, transfer vehicle frames onto a slow-moving assembly line. Around 98 percent of the weld shop is automated. Machines are maintained by a crew of engineers, but their role is supplementary to the main event.

Still, despite the precision with which machinery can perform certain tasks, Haman says, he can't imagine robots ever running the weld shop entirely. Why? "You need craftsmanship," he says, "especially for judging." Basically, robots don't have senses, and here senses are crucial.

For nine years, Haman, whose role at the plant now centers on safety, productivity and quality, oversaw the dimensional accuracy department, a specific Lexus unit that focuses on constructing the RX frame as close to perfectly as possible. When Haman first landed the job, his supervisor challenged the shop to achieve a 96 percent body accuracy rate, an assembly level previously unheard of. "We're now over 98 percent," Haman says. "It's been the best Lexus plant in body accuracy for the last 10 years running."

Much of the shop's reputation for detail stems from a specific section of its line: install. Here team members carry out the shop's 12 necessarily human welds. (Machines handle all welds except those that involve "Circle L" elements – sections of the vehicle a customer can see or experience – because they lack the ability to identify whether a finish is up to Lexus's standards.)

It's here, too, that team members measure and correct gaps between adjacent body panels – the hood and the fender, for example, or the A-pillar and the roof – making sure divisions are as accurate as possible. Mostly, team members will use electronic verniers to measure spaces digitally, but their dexterity training is so extensive that sometimes they'll rely on their fingers. "We give them plus/minus 0.5 millimeters to work with," Haman says, referring to a variable width as thin as a piece of pencil lead, "even though the design spec is plus/minus one millimeter."

The design spec isn't high enough?

"No," Haman says. "Continuous improvement. That's the message we push here. Don't settle for the status quo; make it better. We challenge everybody to be perfect. We want to make the perfect vehicle."

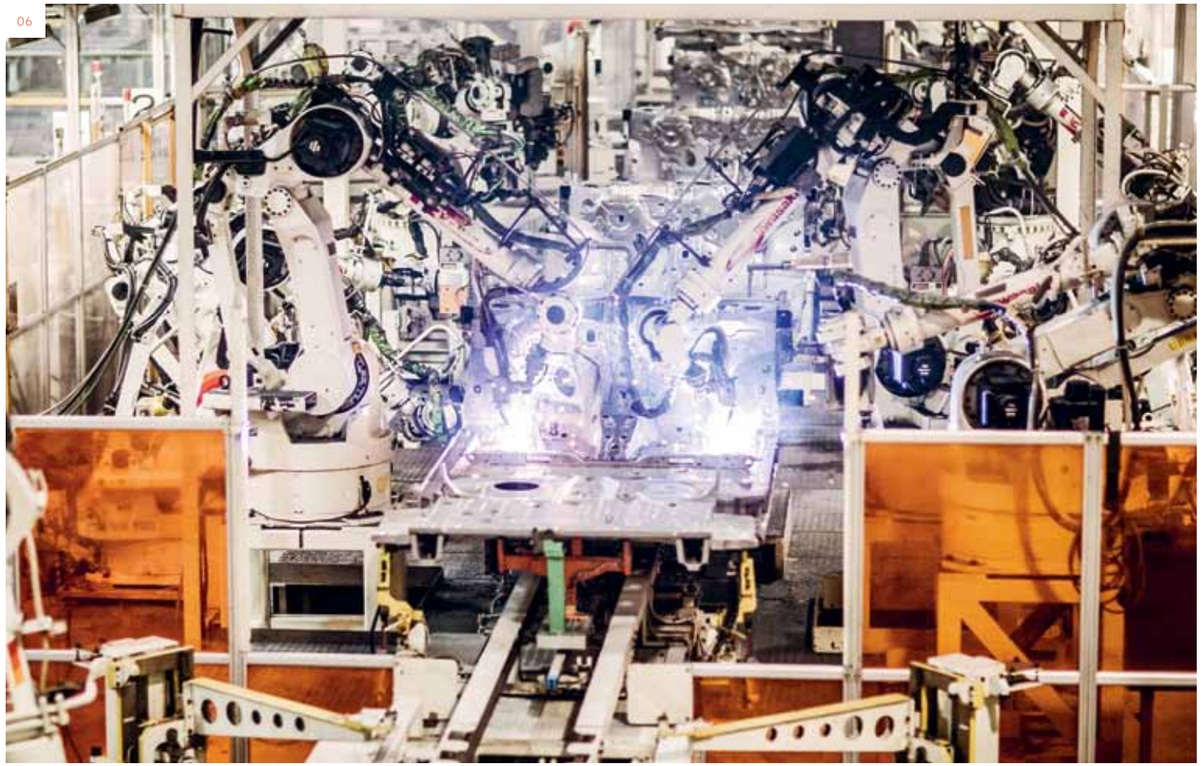
03

04

05

03 The Lexus marque welcomes team members and visitors to the Cambridge plant 04 A huge "Godzilla" machine transfers vehicle frames from one part of the line to the next 05 Susan Graves has been a Lexus team member for two and a half years. Here she checks an RX 350 bumper for blots and blemishes. She has 90 seconds to check each unit before moving on to the next

06



LUC HAMAN
WELD SHOP

"Continuous improvement," says Luc Haman. "That's the message we push here. Don't settle for the status quo; make it better. We challenge everybody to be perfect. We want to make the perfect vehicle." Haman has worked in manufacturing for 28 years, first as a weld shop team member and now as the department's assistant manager. He knows what it takes to make a Lexus vehicle – accuracy, dedication, pride – and he knows what skills and abilities team members must have. "It's a mindset," he says. "That's what makes the difference – to care about what you do. Everybody cares." Team members, he says, are taught to feel pride in what they do as soon as they begin their training, which can initially last up to six weeks. "Everyone is encouraged to learn and understand that mindset from the beginning. And team members get a minimum of 20 hours of training on one process. We show them everything they need to know, so when they start they know exactly what they're going to be doing."

07

06 In the weld shop, robotic arms use intense heat to weld panels together 07 RX transmissions await assembly on the engine line 08 Canisters of repair paint hang ready for use 09 A robot transfers parts from one line to another 10 and 11 An employee applies sealant on the sealer line

08

09

THE SEALER LINE

Lexus prides itself on its employees' skill and expertise. That's why all team members undergo intensive training, to ensure they can perform specific tasks repetitively and to the height of their ability. For example, it takes six weeks of training for a sealer team member to work on line, says Brian King, production manager of the paint shop, who oversees the process. What skills does a sealer need? "You must have the mindset to make a perfect car," King says. "It's like an art. It really is a craft. You need the dexterity and movement to be able to apply sealant like a craftsman and not just like a robot. Sealers have to be very precise. They have to be fussy, picky."

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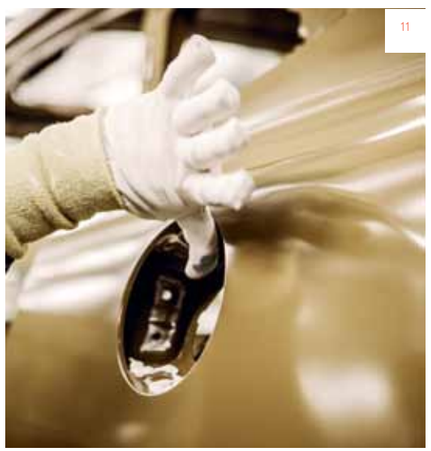

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THE RGB ROOM

At the Cambridge plant, two unique lighting systems help paint shop team members detect even the tiniest defects in vehicles. The first employs bright white fluorescent lighting against black walls to reveal bumps and blemishes. The second is more evolved. Using RGB (red, green, blue) lighting, team members can find imperfections they might otherwise have missed in natural light. All cars at the plant are examined thoroughly at a number of points along the assembly line and by numerous employees. When a defect is discovered, the imperfection is traced back to its source, where adjustments are made to ensure it never occurs again.

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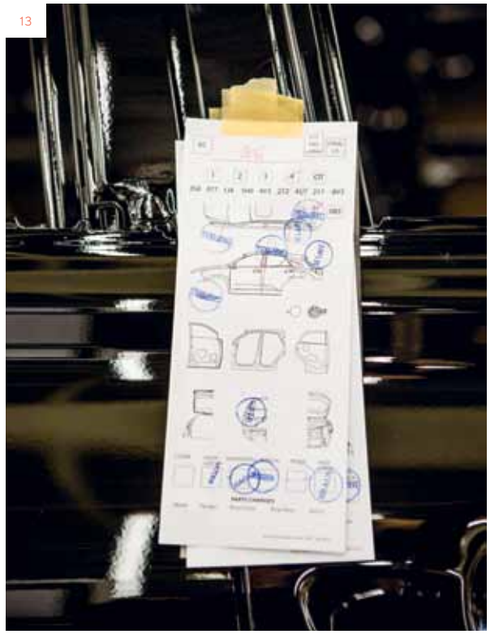

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12 An RX 350 frame moves through a white light room, ready to be checked for blemishes 13 Engineering sheets bear marks made during checks for paint quality 14 A skilled team member polishes paint 15 A Lexus team member examines a vehicle for defects under RGB lighting 16 A red RX 350 awaits inspection

RAY TANGUAY
CHAIRMAN

Chairman Ray Tanguay has been recognized as a leading proponent of innovation and ergonomics since he joined Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (TMMC) more than 20 years ago. With Tanguay at the helm, the Cambridge plant became the first manufacturing base outside Japan to produce Lexus vehicles, and it continues to be one of the automotive brand's most successful plants. "Cambridge makes sure to be in line with, if not better than, all other Lexus plants," Tanguay says. "You cannot allow yourself to have differences with other plants. It's all about trying to continuously improve, make a better system. You've got to involve everyone in problem solving. We're all trying to target zero." Throughout his career, Tanguay has continued to ask one specific question: how do we make this car better? "[We] always go above and beyond," he says. "We build cars with senses rather than just with specifications. The judgment in the eye of the customer comes from the senses. It's more emotional."

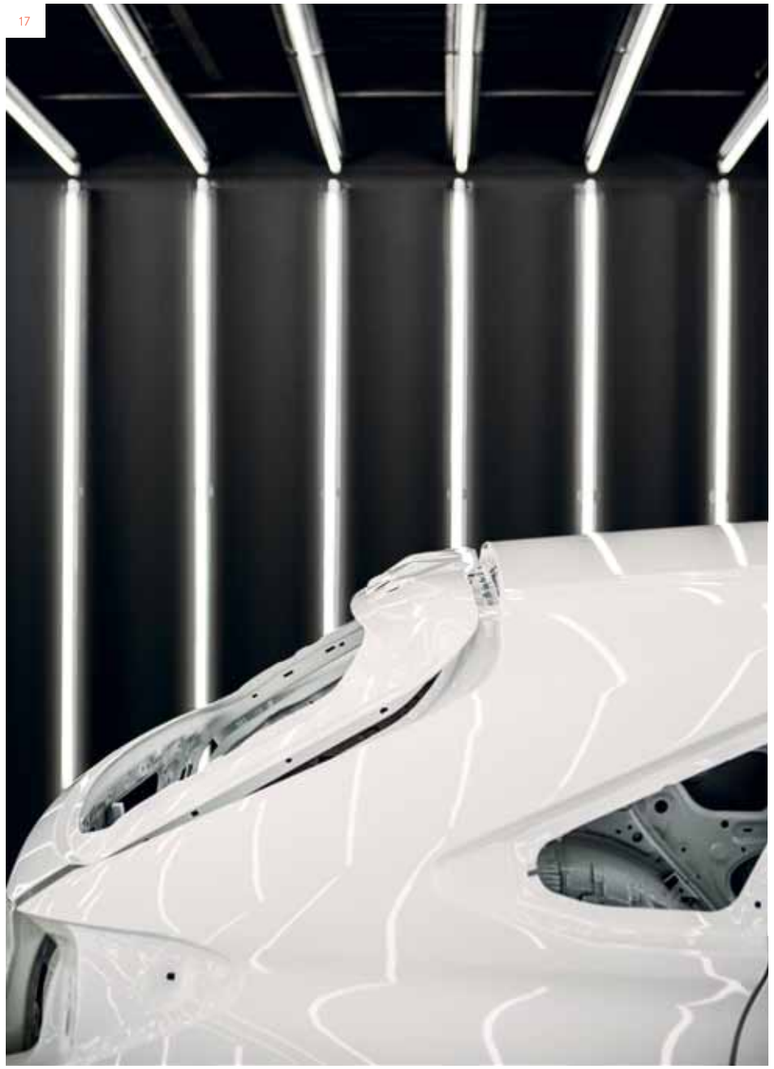
IF THE WELD SHOP IS MUSCLE AND POWER, THE PAINT SHOP IS TACT AND PRECISION

Like Haman, Brian King begins his day at 7 am, with a kickoff meeting designed to pinpoint production risks or issues, breakdowns or quality concerns. King, a gray-haired Scot who speaks quickly and with confidence, runs the Cambridge plant's paint shop, a laboratory-like space flooded with bright white light. If the weld shop is muscle and power, the paint shop is tact and precision. It's hermetically sealed to control the spread of airborne dust particles, and team members pass through air showers before entering. Overalls are lint-reducing (lint is the worst nightmare of the paint shop team member – it can interfere with quality control both here and farther down the line), and boots are washed and dried at least twice daily.

King expects a lot from the team members in his shop. He asks for exactness, focus and quality, and he encourages input into how a process can be improved, a potential problem ironed out. Team member suggestions (or *kaizens*, Japanese for "improvements") line the paint shop's walls. They can be large and interdepartmental: how best to avoid welts originating in the weld shop, for example. Or they can be small and local: how to most effectively wipe clean a hood when the paint process is complete. Some suggestions take as little as two weeks to address. Others can take three years.

As in the weld shop, robots contribute in paint. They apply primer, topcoat and sealant (in hard-to-reach places) to frames. But here, too, human craftsmanship is essential. Paint shop team members are trained rigorously, often only in one skill at a time. It takes six weeks for a sealer to reach a line-ready level of ability, for example – a process that includes lessons in technique and the specifics of application, as well as an hours-long orientation in Lexus customer expectations. Team members are encouraged to work on cars as if they're their own. It shows in the results.

17



King refers to his sealers as craftsmen and describes their process as an art. A good sealer, he says, combines a quality-focused mindset with above-average dexterity, and must be picky, fussy and incredibly precise. In the past three years, only one car has left the sealer line with a defect. (A piece of sealant wasn't applied properly, which led to a leak in a customer's car, which led to a small amount of rust – a minor problem that is easily fixed.) One car in three years. A blip. A minor anomaly. King still shudders when it's mentioned.

Ray Tanguay knows how King feels. The Cambridge plant's chairman, Tanguay has worked here for 23 years. He's proud of the staff he has assembled. He's proud of the cars they produce. And he's proud of the plant in which they produce them.

But he's not entirely happy. Now 64, he continues to be driven by one question: how do we make this car better?

"It's about trying to continuously improve," he says.

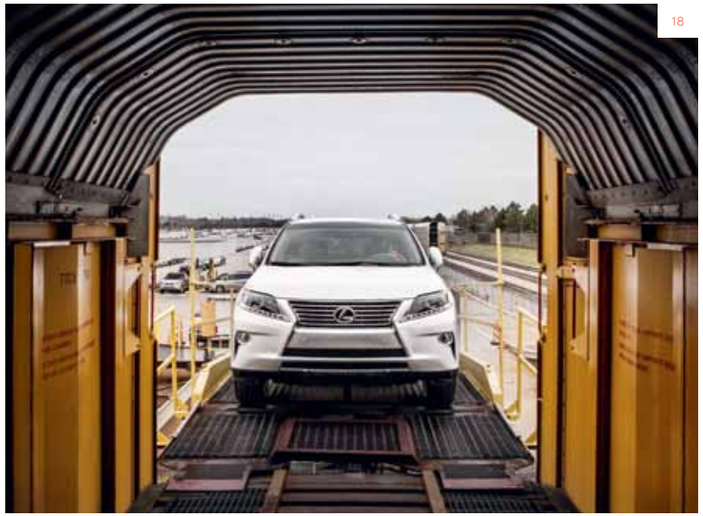
Tanguay is sitting in the factory's art-filled boardroom. He has just been asked to outline exactly what makes a Lexus a Lexus.

"We build cars with senses rather than just specifications," he says. "It's more emotional."

He pauses, folds his right hand into his left and looks up.

"Skill set and mindset," he says. "That's what makes a Lexus a Lexus."

18



RAIL LOADING

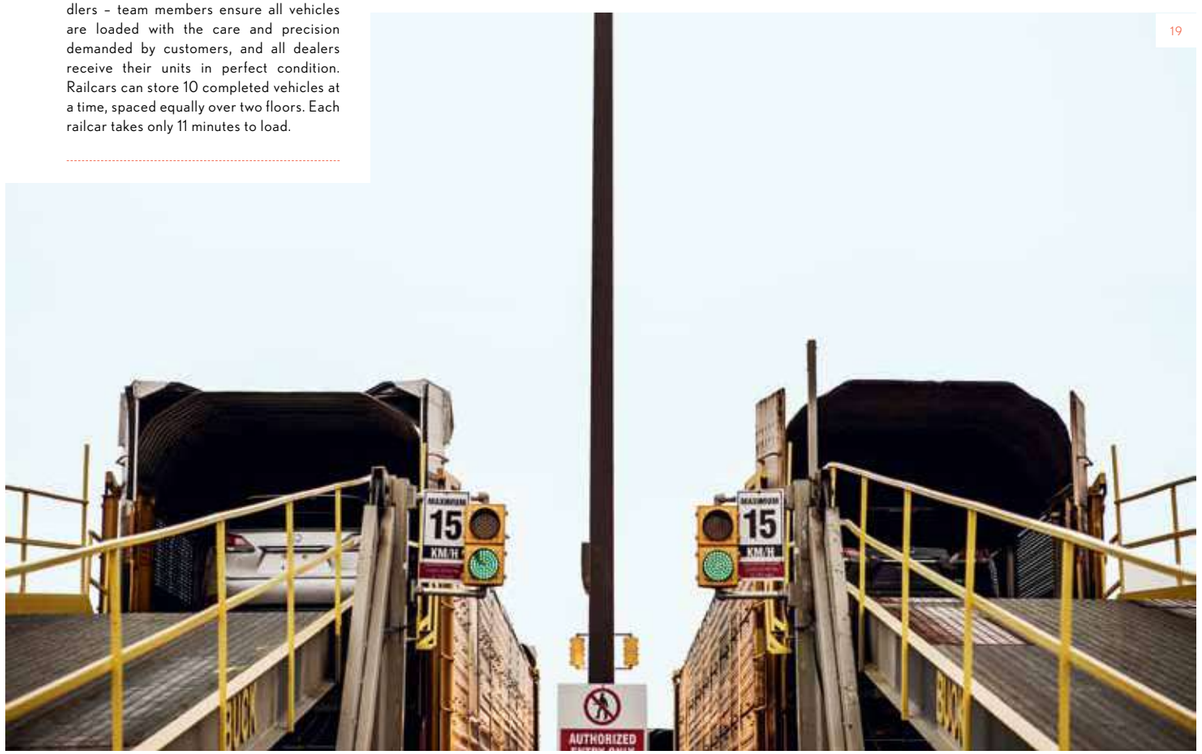
At Lexus quality and precision are key. That's why the Cambridge plant handles every element of the assembly process, including distribution. All vehicles made here are transported to destinations around the country by railcars loaded at the site itself. There are no middlemen or handlers – team members ensure all vehicles are loaded with the care and precision demanded by customers, and all dealers receive their units in perfect condition. Railcars can store 10 completed vehicles at a time, spaced equally over two floors. Each railcar takes only 11 minutes to load.

17 A fully checked white RX 350 frame is on its way from the paint shop to assembly 18 A fully assembled vehicle is driven from the plant onto a railcar 19 Railcars prepare to leave the plant

BRIAN KING
PAINT SHOP

Brian King, assistant general manager at the Cambridge plant, likes to celebrate his sealer line craftsmen. "No matter how many robots we can get to apply the sealer," he says, "we still need people to apply to the highly visible areas, because they have to be able to judge what's good and what's not good. A robot will just keep applying, but people can feel when something's not right. They can feel if there's a material issue – if it's too thick, too thin, or if it needs heating up. We need a certain number of team members to apply the high-skill finesse work." A total of 12 sealers work on the sealer line, applying sealant at the optimum 30-degree angle. Other team members check frames for defects in bright white rooms or wipe lint from hoods using black [UVA] light. King oversees it all. "I go myself and look at vehicles," he says. "I look at them at primer, I look at them at topcoat and then I look at the final vehicles." He's fastidious. "I'll go and check them in assembly," he says, "just to see if there are any issues."

19



MEET THE CRAFTSPEOPLE

CRAFTED FOR LEXUS IS A CAREFULLY SELECTED COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL, SOPHISTICATED AND TIMELESS ACCESSORIES PRODUCED BY A NEW GENERATION OF JAPANESE MASTER CRAFTSPEOPLE. HERE WE MEET MASUKO UNAYAMA AND TAMAKI NIIME, TWO OF THE TALENTED ARTISANS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE RANGE

MASUKO UNAYAMA

Tokyo-based designer Masuko Unayama runs SyuRo, a housewares store that stocks original, brilliantly crafted items either selected or designed by Unayama herself. For CRAFTED FOR LEXUS, Unayama contributed a key tray made by Sotatsu Kamikawa of Nisshin Kikinzoku, a company that creates products inspired by traditional Japanese silverware.

FOUNDER, SYURO

SPECIALTY: HOUSEWARES

HOMETOWN: TAITO, TOKYO

Where and when did you learn your craft?
Craftsmanship has been familiar to me since I was a child; my dad was a jewelry designer. I went to art school, learned design, then took a design course at university, which allowed me to cover ceramics, woodwork, metalwork, architecture and packaging – that was where I learned most of the basics.

How do your creations differ from more traditional designs?
The products I make are fundamentally crafted for everyday use. Traditional items are important, but they do not necessarily suit contemporary lifestyles. My products are not really art [like a lot of traditional items are]. My products are useful; I want them to enrich people's day-to-day lives.

What is your design philosophy?
I want to make users happy. I want my products to be things you want to give to others as a gift. And I want the items themselves to be environmentally friendly. It's also important that my work appeals to each of the five senses.

Why did you decide to contribute to the CRAFTED FOR LEXUS *collection?*
When Lexus first contacted me, they told me they wanted an object that appealed to both men and women. Their interest in and dedication to craftsmanship was similar to mine, which made me want to work with them, and it was a great opportunity to collaborate with people who work in a different sector. I got excited when I heard about it.

01

THE HAMMER
The shape of SyuRo's key tray is created using a hammering technique that stretches the metal gradually, blow by blow. A metal tray is cut into a circle and then hammered against a curved dolly as it is rotated.

02

THE OUTCOME
The faint marks made by the hammer remain visible in the finished tray to give the item the warmth and integrity of an object made by hand. Scratches, too, are left on the tray's surface to add to the distinctive look.

TAMAKI NIIME

The talented artisan Tamaki Niime creates soft, textured, one-of-a-kind shawls from her workshop in Nishiwaki, Hyogo, on Honshu Island. The shawls are made on a 1965 power loom that Niime operates herself, using *banshu-ori*, a traditional weaving technique local to the area since the Edo period. Niime's shawls, which vary in pattern and consist of natural fibers made of cotton and wool, represent a successful marriage of age-old Japanese manufacturing methods and a contemporary approach to design and material. For CRAFTED FOR LEXUS, Niime has produced a line of shawls in a selection of colors unique to the collection.

FOUNDER, TAMAKI NIIME

SPECIALTY: TEXTILES

HOMETOWN: NISHIWAKI, HYOGO

Where and when did you learn your craft?
I learned branding and design at Esmod in Osaka. I launched my own brand, moved to Nishiwaki and learned how to weave there.

How do your creations differ from more traditional designs?
Banshu-ori originated from Nishiwaki-shi, and then became popular across Japan by word of mouth. Existing banshu-ori was made from firm material and was used to make suits and shirts, but our shawls are soft and textured.

What is your design philosophy?
We concentrate on low-volume manufacturing. We only make 10 of the same item, which makes each unique. And we create the shawls ourselves, using designs that could only be made from this [specific] manufacturing technique.

01

THE MATERIAL
Niime uses soft fibers made of fine cotton and wool to make her one-of-a-kind shawls, and she uses various colors in a myriad of different patterns. Once she has chosen a colorway, she combines the threads into a smooth and delicate weave.

02

THE LOOM
Niime uses a power loom made in 1965, a large machine that is difficult to operate but can be adjusted to produce textures that look handwoven. Her aim is extreme softness, achieved through years of methodical trial and error.

03

THE FINISH
As soon as the weaving is finished, Niime washes the shawls and then dries them in the sun. The designer considers this an essential part of the process: the weave tightens slightly in fresh air, making it softer, and the wind removes dust.

Tell us about your production process.
We decide on the design and choose the material. Then we weave, wash the fibers, let them dry naturally and, once the shawls are finished, we sell them.

Why did you decide to contribute to the CRAFTED FOR LEXUS *collection?*
Lexus is the top brand in the automobile industry. I was very interested in how they associated themselves with craft and fashion.

BEYOND BY LEXUS
ISSUE 3