

RESTLESS LIVING

"... restlessly dedicated to contemporary living."



VOLUME 31



BACHELOR PAD

Melbourne, Australia

How do you design a home for a single male while still making the home fit for a future relationship and family expansion? The project formally named »Bachelor Pad« sought to address this question. To enlighten us about the project, we spoke to Penny del Castillo, who is the Founder and Creative Director of In Design International.

Penny initially says: "Our long-term brief was to convert this bachelor pad into a home more suitable for his »future wife & family«. Our short-term brief was to introduce a more contemporary ambience to reflect the owners' personal style." One of the main concerns was the kitchen, since the bachelor enjoys to spend time there – both in terms of its obvious use but also for conversation. As Penny mentions: "This bachelors' life really does revolve around his kitchen, particularly at the moment, as he does not own a dining table yet! The kitchen is his main area for entertaining, alone or with guests. It serves as the food storage and prep area along with dining, serving coffee, cocktails and drinks plus for now, it doubles up as the electronic hub station home office when required!" The kitchen includes an oversized island bench with a couple of bar stools; a setup that perfectly responds to the desire of making the kitchen a multi space – for work, friends, and dining. Penny says: "(It, ed.) allows for an entertainment factor and also provides the opportunity to express personal décor style as it may change over the years." Oftentimes, bachelor pads



become a bit cold in its material expression. As Penny indicates: "Selections of materials and finishes were all keenly channeled to reinvent the key areas of concern in this home. Almost monochromatic in our choices, a heavy use of greys, charcoals and blacks off set with muted metallic and stain the linen and broom closet as stage one." Despite the fact that the personal style is currently expressed through the bachelor's masculinity, the design team have already implemented warmer design features that are more compatible with a future family. The bathroom door, as an example, shows how cozy and decorative design finishes have been implemented to bridge the lifestyle of a bachelor with the expectation of what a family would want in a comfortable home.

Architecture by **In Design International**

Photography by **Isamu Sawa**





THE PAVILION

In the rolling Californian hills of Silicon Valley, the effortless modern architectural home named «The Pavilion» sits high overlooking the City of San Jose. Immersed with its landscape, the simple, elegant, ranch style home provides an escape from the bustling city beneath; a city housing a booming high tech industry. We spoke to the Founder of Feldman Architecture, Jonathan Feldman.

6 When our clients purchased a stunning lot nestled among the hills above San Jose, they dreamed

of an equally stunning structure that sat lightly on the dramatic hill slope. The original building had burned down some years before, leaving behind its foundation and an unnaturally flat plot cut into the hillside”, Jonathan says. Understandably, the flat spot of the site made the placement of a house easier, but also left the design team with more opportunity to effectively embrace the landscape. Jonathan explains: “Our design team, upon initial visits to the site, aimed to construct a home that both made whole the scarred terrain and benefited from the

San Jose, California, United States

unusually flat land. These conditions encouraged our designers to push the house deeper into the hillside, nestling the building naturally into the surrounding landscape”, and he continues: “The result provides sweeping views of San Jose and elevated privacy levels. The house is hidden from public view from all but a few spots, organically blending into the surrounding geography.” This is also a result that responds very well to the needs of the client family. When thinking of their future home, the clients had a strong desire to accommodate a growing fam- 7

ily; making enough space for children to play both inside and outside, and to embrace their inherited love for gardening and the outdoors. Consequently, many of the spaces float directly into the surrounding landscape, patios, and gardens. The house consists of three main structures: the glass pavilion, a South wing and a North wing. Jonathan explains: "Two stucco wings stand as the home's anchors, grounding the glass core and structure to the earth. To the South, a single-story section lies close to the land and houses a master suite and two smaller bedrooms. The

North wing rises dramatically above the rest of the residence, extending from a subterranean garage, through a casual den, to culminate in a loft above." Even upon entry, nothing is left to chance. As Jonathan mentions: "The entryway welcomes visitors into its defining feature: a glass pavilion that serves as the home's great room. The glass walls disappear into the hills, eliminating visual barriers between the home and the valley below. The exposed steel structure elegantly breaks and frames views. Natural light filters into the space throughout the day,

while panoramic vistas sweep out across San Jose to the Golden Gate Bridge in the distance." With these design elements in mind, the result is exactly what the team had hoped for. As Jonathan conclusively expresses: "(By creating, ed.) the epitome of effortless Californian modern architecture, we were so honored to be part of shaping, designing, and realizing our clients' family sanctuary."

Architecture by **Feldman Architecture**

Photography by **Joe Fletcher**





MAR MEDITERRANEO 34

Mexico City, Mexico

Mexico City is well-known for its strong cultural and architectural heritage that unfolds in many neighborhoods around the city. Northwest to the downtown, the neighborhood Tacuba is located and is one of the areas in the city that have, over the time, undergone a social and urban transformation. We got in touch with the Mexican architect, Inca Hernandez, who transformed a French styled building built back in 1910 into a contemporary home – while maintaining the characteristically original elements to preserve and highlight the historical legacy.

About the neighborhood, Inca says: “At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Tacuba became one of the wealthiest areas of the city with large country houses, which over time and different political changes were abandoned and many were collapsed. However, among these vestiges the house of »Mar Mediterraneo 34« remained.” Yet, the two volumes of the original house were in really terrible condition. In fact, the volume with views towards the main patio was in ruins. “Based on these characteristics, the restoration and intervention of the original elements of the era are implemented, where the spaces are regenerated with a new materiality, and the multiple artistic and artisanal elements are recovered from the main facade such as the carved quarry from the balconies and lintels, the iron railings, the large



windows and the glass roof tiles, intending to rehabilitate the new urban image”, Inca explains. As the main façade was restored to its glory, the building respects the honor of the historical setting and presents an authentic experience in the eye of the public. On the other hand, the patio volume and the interior follow a much more contemporary approach, where styles and elements of the present have been favored. “The interior is reconstructed as a reinterpretation of the past through a contemporary perspective, where a volume is raised up framing the sky in the existing main patio and portrays the arrangement of the old portals as a sequence of light and shadow. This is how these openings rise intermittently from the ground floor in double height and become a solid element of introspective architecture”, Inca mentions. In fact, when the home is entered, one is met with a minimalistic loft style that highlights the intention of the project: “The project intends to fusion what prevails and what is reborn through a linear connection between two eras [...] to generate a legacy that encourages the transformation of Tacuba to enhance and rescue its heritage value, by taking advantage of spaces in a sustainable way to give life to the magical neighborhood”, Inca concludes.

Architecture by **Inca Hernández**

Photography by **João Morgado**



The »Interview of the Month«, August edition, brings you closer to nature – or to put it in another way – brings you »into« nature. Back in 2016, the Croatian architecture firm, PROARH, unveiled their ambitious residential project named Issa Megaron that is completely integrated with its natural environment on the Croatian island of Vis. We invited Vedrana Jančić of PROARH, to share her perspectives on topographical architecture and thus discover how homes can become an extension of the land itself.

Let's get started!

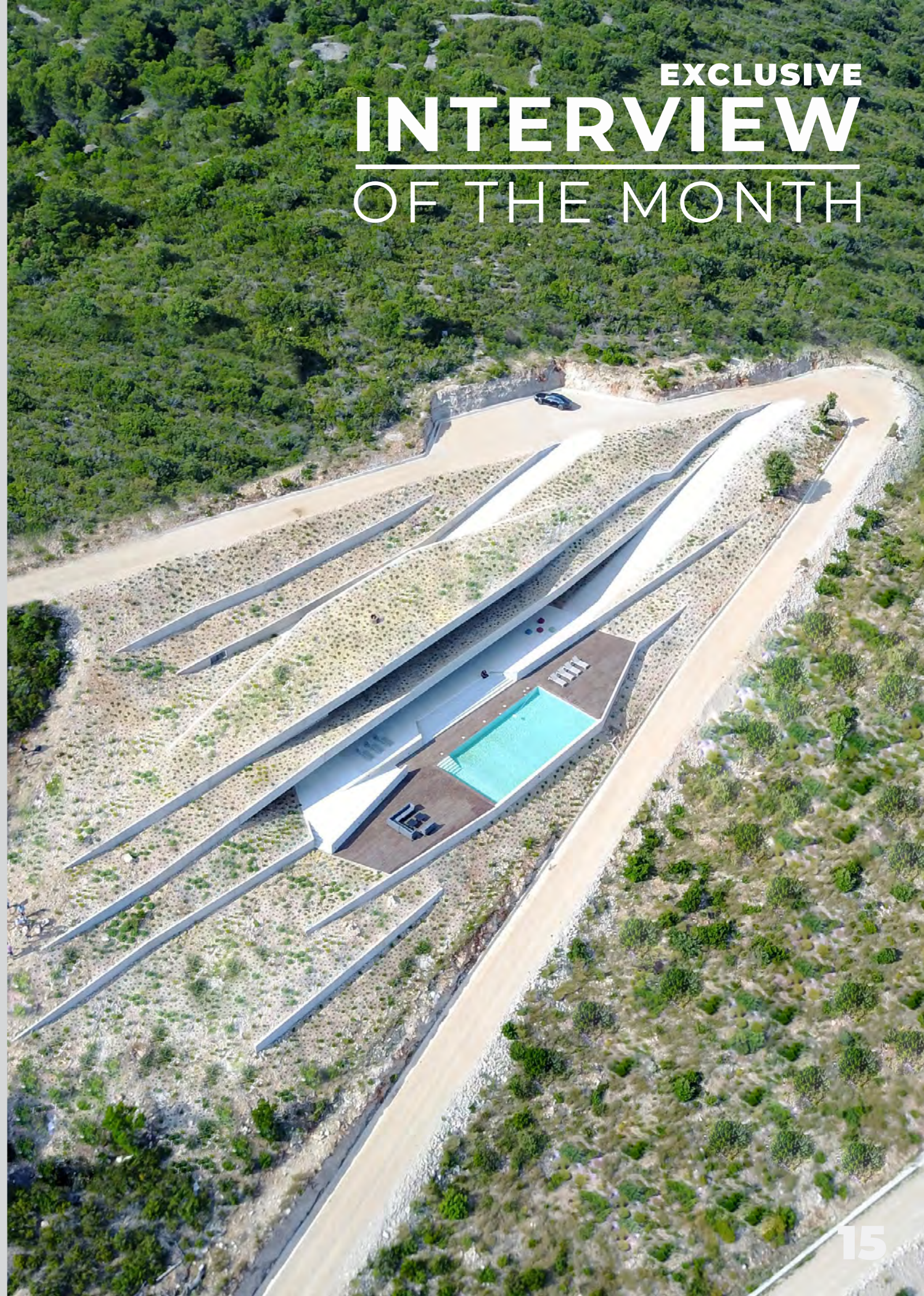
How did you come up with the idea behind the design of Issa Megaron?

The Issa Megaron project is dealing with questions regarding the context on a „void“; a blank space with the deception that context is non-existent. The assignment was to design a house for a temporary family retreat on a site without infrastructure, at the same time completely satisfying the needs of the user. We used several elements specific to the location and the topography, given that the “genius loci” (the location’s distinctive atmosphere, ed.) is not only the plot – the island of Vis – but actually the Mediterranean. We conceive the house reinterpreting the ancient stone drywalls and creating a new rural man-made topography using simple construction technologies. The house is envisioned as a dug in volume, a residential pocket between the stretches of space forming walls, an artificial grotto, a memory of a primitive shelter. It consists of two levels: the sleeping quarters or lounge on the first floor, and the downstairs open space dining/kitchen area opened to the covered and uncovered terraces and pool deck. All the bearing elements are made of reinforced concrete, which in the interior are also a finished look. The complete lack of infrastructure and general inaccessibility imply that self-sustainability is prerogative – natural cooling and ventilation, rainwater exploitation, solar panels, and other elaborate ways of exploiting natural resources, enabling the facility to function as a place for life and work. Sustainable design has shown to be the only solution for the completion of the project, that encompasses the plausibility of the project, minimal costs, satisfaction of all user needs, local government and urban plans as well as the architectural expression. The design that emerges from such conditions is unobtrusive, subtly, and creates a symbiosis with the new/old stonewall topography.

What makes the understanding of topography so important?

We believe that understanding all of the context, not only the topography, is important. Our dedication of making architecture, genuine and authentic does not mean architecture has to be invisible and embedded in an existing environment, it has to be new and exciting but based on the character of the space where it is emerging. That does not collide with us striving to

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH





have a contemporary design and using new building technologies and materials. We all must aspire to progress in every aspect of our creation and use every new tool, but sometimes it is very rewarding to look back and learn from how building history dealt with some specific topography.

What is the main challenge designing a home embedded to its topography?

The main challenge – except maybe the problems with accessibility and construction itself – is designing the house to be recognized as architecture and not a hidden object – even though it is corresponding with the topo-

graphy and respecting the location. As an architect, you have this constant clash of the abstract, the imagined and the feasible possible. Topographical architecture is usually related to some kind of specific, remote topography. So, you have to include and add a special kind of specific location sensitivity into that, before-mentioned, clash.

What is your advice to successfully integrating a house into its landscape?

As mentioned before, to successfully integrate (a house, ed.) into the landscape, for us, it is not about blending in, but finding this fine balance

“The main challenge [...] is designing the house to be recognized as architecture and not a hidden object.”

–Vedrana Jančić, PROARH

between the natural and man-made structures. So the advice would be: Respect the character of the location, do not hide the architecture and follow your own design expression.

What do you think the future holds for topographical architecture?

New construction technologies and fast spreading infrastructure are making us build in before impossible places and exploring different locations. On one hand, this is exciting and we are looking forward to see architects interventions in different landscapes and environments all over the world, and how it is going, maybe, also out of this world... On the other hand, there is always

the question of possible degradation of a specific environment by human intervention. These architectural »to build or not to build« reflections must find much needed balance between our artistic desires and reasonable mind.

A thank you must go to PROARCH and Vedrana Jančić, for sharing their insights about the Issa Megaron project and their view on how a habitable structure can be seamlessly integrated with its topography. It is definitely an area we will explore even further in the future.

Architecture by **PROARCH**

Photography by **Miljenko Bernfest** (Page 15) and **Damir Fabijanić** (Page 16-21)



Words of the Week



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I have always been fascinated by »hidden architecture« or topographical architecture, so I think it was really interesting to hear how Vedrana Jančić and PROARH worked on the Issa Megaron project. Vedrana also presented an interesting dilemma – or trade-off – that I have not really thought about before: The trade-off between making the building hidden and making it architecturally significant. Most people’s perception of architecture, including my own (at least to a certain extent), is often involved around something visible. We have gotten used to consider a building as something visible to the eye. Yet, I personally believe that the significance of architecture is not really about the visible but about the intention. Ask yourself the question: How is it hidden? Why is it hidden? Of course, when a building is hidden, it is increasingly difficult to notice it. But, when one finally notices it and understands the intention behind, it is important to not only judge by the visible but also take the intention into account.

I hope you enjoyed hearing about topographical architecture. See you again next Friday!

CHRISTIAN TRAMPEDACH
FOUNDER, RESTLESS

