Wallpaper* Architects' Directory 2026

When the Wallpaper* Architects' Directory was conceived in 2000, it was built as our bespoke international index of emerging architectural talent. Now in its 25th edition, our annual listing of promising practices from across the globe (now comprising more than 500 alumni) champions the best and most exciting young studios, showcasing inspiring work with an emphasis on the residential realm. This year's survey features 30 studios (in celebration of Wallpaper's 30th anniversary), which hail from Australia, Bahrain, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Ghana, Greece, Ivory Coast, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, India, Morocco, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, the US and Vietnam. ››

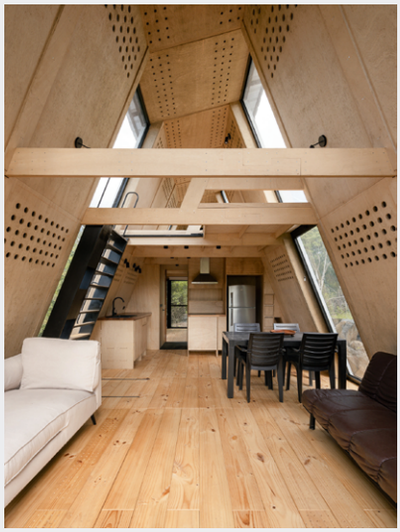
Architects' Directory



PLACE OF WORK, CANADA
Based in Halifax and Toronto, this young studio, founded four years ago by Jennifer Esposito, Duncan Patterson and Will Perkins, may still be emerging, but it has a range of ongoing projects across Atlantic Canada and Ontario. It consciously picks commissions that allow it to work very closely with clients and get stuck into the details, while discussions often come back to place. 'Not as a romantic idea, but as a physical and cultural reality,' they say. 'Architecture requires deep listening. Climate, topography, material culture and history are forces that shape our approach. But place doesn't mean anything without people. Architecture begins with human ritual: how people wake, gather and rest.' One of its latest works, **A House in a Meadow between the Forest and the Sea**, is a retreat for a retired couple on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and the team drew from the site's conditions to elevate its proposal: 'Light is treated as an orienting element. Clerestories bring in warmth, while north-facing openings frame views across the meadow. The architecture is shaped by site, climate and use – distinct from the landscape yet deeply tied to it.' *placeofwork.ca*



MATTAFORMA, US
Founded by Lindsey Wikstrom, Mattaforma scooped the 2026 National Design Award for Emerging Designer from the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum. The practice focuses on spaces centred on wellbeing, as well as environments that not only feel organic now, but also grow and adapt over time. Its **Parkview Mountain House** for Globizen, a city building company and community instigator, is a creative retreat on a forested hillside in Utah for writers, artists and scholars. The architects conceived the residence as a slender timber tower, with knotty cedar interiors, that reduces embodied carbon while creating the feeling of living among the trees. *mattaforma.com*



DIANA SALVADOR, ECUADOR
The landscape and a communion with nature are the biggest draws for Quito-based architect Diana Salvador, whose practice is driven by a quest for maximum efficiency, a desire for self-reliance, and a profound yearning to be able to build with her own two hands. Within this context, she adopts sustainable architecture principles, often working with eco-friendly materials and low-impact building solutions. 'Minimising our ecological footprint within construction practices is perhaps the most genuine act of reverence toward nature and the future generations that will inhabit it,' she says. Located amid subtropical foliage on the Galápagos island of Santa Cruz, **Casa Sula** is one of Salvador's key examples of respectful, sensitive building systems. The house was prefabricated in Quito over two months. Its components were then transported by sea, and the house was assembled in just 25 days. Smart passive cooling techniques were employed throughout to support the structure's bioclimatic behaviour. 'What sets me apart is how I inhabit my role as an architect, delivering a housing solution without leaving a scar on the environment,' says Salvador. *@diana_manzana_salvador*

Photography: Doublespace / Francesco Russo and Luca Piffaretti / Brandon Donnelly

WRITER: ELLIE STATHAKI

RICEHOUSE, ITALY
Founded in Piedmont in 2016 by bio-ecological architect Tiziana Monterisi and Alessio Colombo, a geologist with a background in research and material innovation, Ricehouse transforms the by-products of the rice production supply chain into natural building materials for lower-impact living environments. At the end of their life cycle, the products created can be reused or returned to nature. Its single-storey house **Casa LH**, in Piedmont, is built using materials sourced from the rice supply chain and is conceived according to the principles of green building. Rice waste is used as insulation between the prefabricated fir panel walls, and external bamboo decking was installed for its durability. Inside, all furnishings, including the bed, table and sofa structure, were constructed from oak. A mechanical ventilation system provides for heating and cooling, while the majority of the triple-glazed openings are located on the south elevation and feature a low-emissivity coating. A garden roof provides natural thermal regulation and filtration, and is a haven for biodiversity. Trees and plants, such as the existing wisteria, provide shading – this dies back in the winter to allow passive solar gain. The team's architectural approach is part of a wider biological and territorial system. 'We work with materials often overlooked and transform them into building solutions with a strong environmental and cultural value,' they say. 'What motivates us is the possibility of giving new value to a resource that is considered a waste.' *ricehouse.it*



Photography: Tommaso Riva / French + Tye





TEMPLETON FORD, UK
Based in London and Sussex, this studio, founded in 2025 by André and Jessica Templeton Ford, draws on vernacular architecture and craft traditions to create buildings that feel inseparable from their setting but have a distinct sense of character that enlivens everyday life. This often results in work that looks unexpected, yet as if it had always been there. **Clay Rise**, in Hoathly Hill, balances heritage and contemporary architectural expression by using traditional Sussex brick and a distinctive sloping roofline. The house is constructed from a prefabricated timber frame system and is embedded deep into the site, creating a slope to the rear and a dramatic curved form. *templetonford.com*

WRITER: IFEOLUWA ADEDEJI







HITOTOMORI, JAPAN
Founded in 2019 in Nara, near Mount Kasuga Primeval Forest, by Yoshiaki Nagasaka, Hitotomori (a name with a dual meaning in Japanese: either 'people and forest' or 'one light') is located in a renovated, 140-year-old multipurpose machiya building with a small shop/café (run by Nagasaka's wife), a one-room hotel (run by the studio), and the architectural office of its small team of five people.

Having worked for a large general contractor for almost 30 years, Nagasaka longed for more freedom and 'the opportunity to pursue more creative projects in an environment where I could work closely with friends,' he says, describing his reasons for setting up his own practice. 'This freedom is now the driving force behind my work.'

Nagasaka's no-frills design approach and clever use of ordinary materials have attracted quite a following, keeping the small studio constantly busy with a wide variety of residential, commercial and hospitality projects. His main influences are the architecture of Alvar Aalto, the thinking of Louis Kahn ('structure is the giver of light' and 'even a common, ordinary brick wants to be something more than it is'), and the work of his friend and fellow architect Taro Tsuruta, of Tsuruta Architects in London.

Completed in 2024, the **House in Asuka** is quintessentially Hitotomori. Designed over five months and built in six, the compact 65 sq m home sits on a corner site in the small village of Asuka in Nara Prefecture. It is partly screened from the two roads by a simple wooden fence, above which only the tiled roof, required by local regulations, is visible. Concrete steps set in grey gravel lead up to a small porch and the front door. Inside, the interior is kept simple, with cedar floorboards, lauan doors and bespoke furniture, painted walls, and Hitotomori's original concrete tiles forming the kitchen splashback. Nagasaka added several small loft spaces, accessible by a staggered staircase in one location and a simple ladder in another, while lighting is provided by one of Nagasaka's collaborators, New Light Pottery, with its 'Mob 26' wall lamp used throughout the space. *hitotomori.net*

Photography: Hiroki Kawata

WRITER: JENS JENSEN

MARILIA PELLEGRINI, BRAZIL
Marilia Pellegrini set up her studio in São Paulo in 2016, having learned from some of Brazil's most prominent architects. 'Gustavo Penna taught me poetry. The sensitivity of a project begins with the pencil stroke. Rene Gonzalez, a master of composition and trained by Richard Meier, taught me that no line exists on its own. He taught me to compose. Last but not least, Arthur Casas taught me balance – colour scheme, textures and materials, harmony – between curves and straight lines.'

Conceived as the ultimate urban sanctuary, **Casa das Palmeiras**, located in the São Paulo enclave of Alphaville, is a low-lying, single-storey, modernist-inspired volume, slightly sunken into the terrain and engulfed in greenery from a leafy garden framed by palm trees. Behind a relatively opaque street-facing exterior, a flowing, breezy interior unfolds, where indoor and outdoor living spaces blend seamlessly. A neutral, predominantly light-coloured surface palette underlines a softness inside and out, composed of beige stone and pale wood. The project includes four bedroom suites, a guest bathroom, a gym and an expansive, open-plan living space for relaxing, cooking and entertaining. *mariliapellegrini.com*





CIVIL, BAHRAIN / KUWAIT
Founded in 2017, Civil is the brainchild of Ali Ismail Karimi and Hamed Bukhamseen, who ask what it means to 'produce architecture in a decidedly uncivil time.' Sited in the suburban neighbourhood of Diyar Al Muharraq in Bahrain, **House with Seven Gardens** inverts the ancient courtyard typology of Gulf region houses, using the space created by mandatory plot setbacks to generate a series of miniature courtyard gardens, balancing privacy traditions with contemporary building codes. *civilarchitecture.org*





Photography: Fran Parente / Camille Zakharia / Koo Guo Jie

GOY, SINGAPORE
The Singaporean perspective is invaluable in the work of Goy Zhenru. 'Years of working in Southeast Asia has shaped my belief in vernacular intelligence and regional specificity,' she says. 'I design for the equatorial climate, drawing inspiration from local traditions while interpreting them in a contemporary voice.'

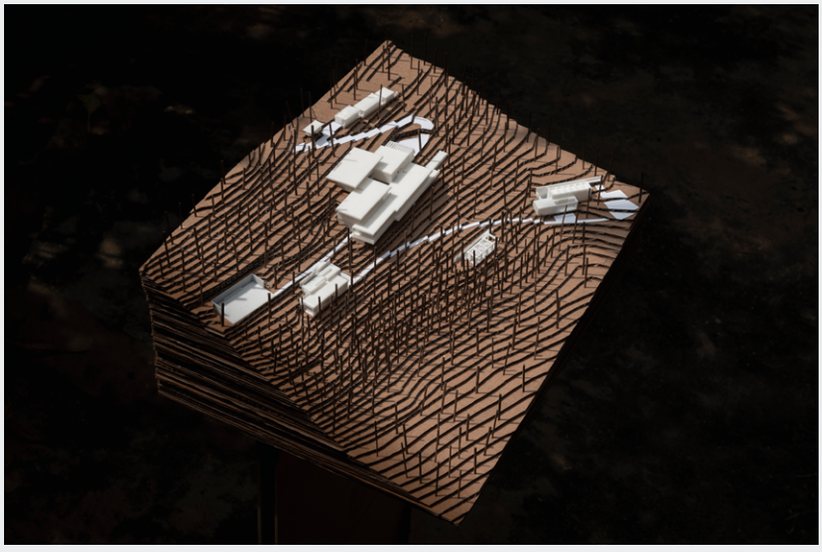
Namly, in Bukit Timah, was a 1950s single-storey house with important sentimental value. The family home's seven users were in need of more space, but the building's architectural features were much loved. Adding a sympathetic extension was key to the solution. Goy's strategy integrated a newly landscaped courtyard garden with a material palette of cement, sand tiles and brickwork, referencing the original design. *goyarchitects.com*

WRITER: ELLIE STATHAKI

DEROCHE PROJECTS, GHANA
Civic, community-centred work sits at the heart of DeRoche Projects, the Accra-based studio founded in 2022 by Glenn DeRoche. Recent completions include the Backyard Community Club, a youth-focused community and sports centre in Accra's Osu neighbourhood, with an innovative rammed-earth structure.

The studio is currently developing several residential schemes, both single and multi-family housing, explored with the same experimental spirit and eco-friendly materials as all past, more public-facing works.

Its **Aburi Artist Retreat**, a short drive from Accra, is a residential project idyllically set within seven acres of forest overlooking the leafy Akwapim Ridge. Conceived as a family of structures, the project negotiates its site's steep level changes while remaining discreet and organically embedded into its natural surroundings. The result is a campus of six pavilions of varying sizes, connected through pathways across the landscape, designed to encourage interaction with nature. The design consists of dwellings, space for artists' residencies, a wellness pavilion, a private gallery, a padel court and a productive farm. Large glazed expanses set on deeply recessed façades ensure both effortless visual and physical connections with the outdoors and shading to support thermal comfort indoors. Meanwhile, all primary materials, craft methods and labour have been sourced from within the country. *derocheprojects.com*





STUDIO MEHTA, KENYA
Amar Mehta founded his studio in his hometown of Nairobi in 2019, 'driven by the idea of creating work that feels rooted in Kenya while pushing contemporary design forward through thoughtful detail, local materials and collaborative thinking'. **Ua House**, Mehta's own home, a 120 sq m residence set among rich foliage on the Kilifi coast, blends traditional Omani and Swahili design. All set on a single level, it involves a luxurious relationship with the outdoors through the presence of numerous outdoor areas. Mehta's goal was to showcase what can be achieved by clever decisions and a hyperlocal approach. *studiomehta.com*





SOLAR.XYZ, SPAIN
Founded by Pablo Canga and Ana Herreros in 2022, this young studio won the COAM Emerging Award in Spain in 2024, the same year its **Casa Castelar** project, a refurbished house in the 19th-century Madrid Moderno enclave, was completed just outside the Spanish capital. Blending old and new to craft a 21st-century family home, the studio added thermal insulation, aerothermal solutions and cross ventilation where necessary, reducing the house's energy consumption by more than 70 percent. *solarestudio.xyz*

Photography: DeRoche Projects / Amar Mehta / Adrià Goula

WRITER: ELLIE STATHAKI

NWANKPA DESIGN, US
Founded in Southern California in 2016 by Susan Nwankpa Gillespie, this studio creates spaces rooted in bold elegance, paying particular attention to the human experience and the power of storytelling. 'Our approach is immersive and experiential, treating space as moments in a larger narrative that unfold as you move through it,' says Nwankpa Gillespie.

In Inglewood, California, a dress owned by Nwankpa Gillespie was the source of inspiration for **Textile House 2**, its colourful West African prints transplanted into an architectural form, uniting bold patterns with minimalism. The façade mimics that of the neighbouring houses – two pitched gables with one framing a porch and the other a picture window. On closer inspection, exterior brick patterns take a graphic quality, as the solid black offset brick contrasts with the soft grey mortar, similar to a woven textile. Towards the rear, the house adopts a more modern language, with wider gables framing two distinct entrances to the residence's living spaces and the primary bedroom. Inside, the brick pattern continues through the flooring, allowing spaces to seamlessly flow into one another, divided only by colour and materiality. *nwankpadesign.com*



Photography: Bruce Damonte / Nicholas Worley



FARID KARIM DESIGN, UK
Farid Karim, who founded his studio in 2021 in London, gravitates towards creating spaces with 'strong identities that emerge from close collaboration with clients, careful attention to context, and a deep engagement with materials.' The biggest influence on the studio is the relationship between architecture and craft, drawing inspiration from art deco and modernist interiors, and contemporary art. Karim's approach is further exhanced by an active artistic practice, with work exhibited at past Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions. This fusion of art, architecture and design informs a philosophy that values spatial experience and material expression.

Deco House, in West London, eschews the more subdued, contemporary extensions of terraced homes in favour of a bold, neo-art deco style. The design increases the original floorplan from around 100 sq m to 170 sq m, through the loft and rear ground floor addition and summer outhouse, as well as a reconfiguration of space internally. Drawing on art deco references, the extension plays with colour, texture and materiality, using glazed ceramic tiles, brass fixtures and timber finishes, complemented by marble worktops, to create a warm, cohesive finish. The landscape of the garden also plays a role – an existing koi pond was integrated into the design as well as a curvy summer house, used as a home office – with the entire project showcasing the studio's keen interest in 'how materials age, how light interacts with surfaces, and how carefully considered details can enrich everyday life.' *faridkarimdesign.com*

WRITERS: TIANNA WILLIAMS, NANA AMA OWUSU-ANSAH



ATELIER KO, BENIN
Osvaldo Gounon and Kemi Amede founded Atelier Ko in 2022 to help improve the architectural landscape in West Africa, and the team is inspired by local culture, materials, climate and ways of living. Benin itself is the strongest influence on their practice, but they are also driven by 'the need to reinterpret local know-how in a contemporary way, so that our projects are not nostalgic, but anchored and relevant'. For their **Maison Itan** project, the restoration of a traditional Afro-Brazilian house, the façade was renovated and finished in a pink Siena earth coating. Bespoke timber joinery was employed for the columns, decking and screening, while the roof was covered in terracotta tiles that complement the façade's pink hue. *atelier-ko.com*





MOYÉSOA, IVORY COAST
Founded by William Tailly and Natacha Djédjé in 2024, Moyésoa translates to 'house of happiness' in the Baoulé language, embodying an essence imbued into every aspect of their work. The studio, which will be representing Ivory Coast at the inaugural Pan-African Architecture Biennale, seeks to 'reveal the beauty of local materials and forgotten construction knowledge while responding to contemporary ways of living'.

Its **Pavilion Essoa** is an eco-lodge built on the edge of a lagoon, surrounded by botanical gardens. Inspired by tropical vernacular architecture, the villa is designed around ecological and bioclimatic principles, combining modularity, self-sufficiency and contemporary design. Rammed earth walls and terracotta floors regulate indoor temperatures, while wooden screens, with removable plexiglass panels, allow for natural ventilation and thermal insulation. The villa is powered by solar panels, and also features a private well for water. The architects say, 'Instead of importing architectural languages, we reinterpret local construction traditions through modern spatial thinking, refined detailing and carefully crafted atmospheres.' *@moyesoa*



DEHLI GROLIMUND, SWITZERLAND
Founded by Christian Dehli and Andrea Grolimund in Zurich in 2019, this studio is driven by curiosity and a belief in architecture's afterlife. The late Japanese architect Kazuo Shinohara remains a key influence, and its reconstruction of his **Umbrella House** shows the studio at its most forensic. Originally built in Tokyo in 1961, it was saved from demolition and relocated to the Vitra Campus in Weil am Rhein, Germany, in 2020. The studio oversaw the reconstruction with scholarly precision, from site positioning to materials, colours, documentation and possible future uses. *dehligrolimund.com*

Photography: Ambre Alfredo / Marc Sawaya + William Tailly + Noura Diaby / Damian Poffet

WRITERS: IFEOLUWA ADEDEJI, NANA AMA OWUSU-ANSAH, SOFIA DE LA CRUZ

OTHMANE BENGEBARA STUDIO, MOROCCO
This studio was founded in 2020 by French-Moroccan architect and designer Othmane Bengebara, who has contributed to prestigious projects from royal residences to global Louis Vuitton flagship stores, under the direction of Peter Marino. Recent studio projects include the scenography for the Uzbekistan Pavilion at the 2024 Venice Biennale, and it is currently planning a private aviation facility in Morocco for the 2030 FIFA World Cup.

DDAR House, in Essaouira, is a minimalist villa conceived as both a private retreat and a place for gatherings. The house is made up of interconnected spaces, a sequence of living areas and bedrooms, and each one has a distinct atmosphere and maintains a close relationship with the landscape. The restrained palette allows the architecture to sit quietly within the setting. The house also takes a sustainable approach, using passive ventilation, solar energy and water management systems. *@othmane.bengebara*





Photography: Iman Zaoin

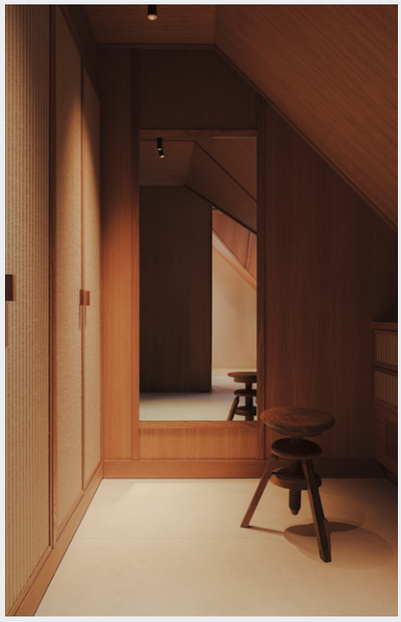
DHARQ, CHILE
Founded in 2019 in Santiago by Patricio Huidobro, Dharq is motivated by the question of how architecture can enable habitation in territories where infrastructure is scarce or absent. The studio is interested in how minimalist structures can organise space and climate to support daily living.

Chile's Casablanca Valley is just 30km from the Pacific Ocean, welcoming sea breezes and a refreshingly cool climate. Nestled in this coastal valley is **Sliding Doors House (Casa Corredera)**, a single-family dwelling surrounded by pine forests and agricultural land. Dharq explores the relationship between indoor and outdoor living through the installation of 22 sliding panels. These sliding doors help regulate light, ventilation and privacy. The structure takes on a form similar to a pavilion. Its lightweight timber form is topped by a galvanised steel roof, which is suspended on concrete piers, allowing it to be raised above its context. When the panels are opened, the residence becomes an open space, fully immersed in the environment. Says Huidobro, 'The architecture operates less as a fixed object and more as a climatic device capable of modulating transparency, air and views throughout the day.' *dharq.cl*









IN SINU, FRANCE
Founded in 2024 by Cassandre Verdier and Elena Cadouin, and based between Paris and Barbizon, In Sinu means 'within the folds', a phrase that reflects its philosophy. 'More than in situ, we seek to create an architecture that settles within the folds of a territory to establish a meaningful relationship between place and project.' **Maison de l'Orée**, nestled in woodland in Barbizon, is clad in ochre-toned timber, which mirrors the site's pine trees and foliage. Inside, the natural material palette continues with oak joinery and a sandstone fireplace. A brushed stainless steel kitchen island adds a contemporary touch, as well as reflecting both daylight and the shifting shadows of the trees. *insinuarchitectes.com*

PENSAER, UK
Based in London, and founded by Rhys Howell Owen in 2020, Pensaer (Welsh for 'lead craftsman') focuses on a collaborative approach, working with skilled makers and craftsmen to make every space seem effortless and memorable. 'At the start of every project, we ask clients: "What is your architecture?",' says Howell Owen. 'This opens up a conversation about how someone lives, what they value, what materials they are drawn to, and what kind of spaces feel right for them.' Born from a desire to create a 'warm and welcoming' feeling for his clients, **Clay House**, in Peckham Rye, boasts a new extension that provides multiple pockets for putting one's feet up, as well as a muted colour palette of warm oak joinery and concrete flooring. A kitchen skylight filters light throughout the space, dappling walls with rays of sunshine. *pensaer.london*

Photography: Felipe Fontecilla / Jean-Baptiste Thiriet / Peter Molloy

WRITER: TIANNA WILLIAMS

KAVIAR, INDIA
Kasturi Wagh and Vineet Hingorani studied architecture in Mumbai, then at New York's Pratt Institute, before setting up Kaviar. From characterful Mumbai cafés to home interiors that balance personality with practicality, you won't find them following trends. Secluded upon its own peninsula, **House by the Lake**, in Kamshet, Maharashtra, has been imagined as a series of 'viewing galleries' that accentuate the serenity of the water, with the architects describing it as 'a vessel to reunite with nature'. Stone-clad walls ground the house in the landscape, with concrete and wood bringing texture to the minimalist interiors, while soaring ceilings and vast windows give an airy feel. *@kaviar.collaborative*







LOCAL LOCAL, GREECE
Founded in Athens in 2022 by Sofia Xanthakou, after completing degrees at New York's Pratt Institute and Harvard, Local Local keeps away from transient trends, preferring to use fluidity and intuition as key tools. 'Architecture, for me, is a rewarding, iterative journey rather than just an end product,' says Xanthakou. 'I love the process of design, starting from an idea or rough sketch and seeing it come to life after lots of hard work, meticulous planning, and a good amount of trial and error. I've learnt not to view failure as a setback but as a necessary step in the evolution of my practice. Design isn't a linear process, and I find that so fulfilling.'

Plaka House, in the ancient Athenian neighbourhood of Plaka, is a fitting example of Xanthakou's work. The reimagining of a 19th-century neoclassical townhouse, on a narrow stone-paved alley, draws out the area's character and the original building's features, bringing them into the 21st century. Living spaces, bedrooms, guest and staff rooms, an office and a tranquil courtyard span across two levels, clad in an almost entirely white palette across walls, ceilings and joinery. The ground level's typical Athenian terrazzo flooring was uncovered and restored, while light grey solid oak was used on the upper floor bedrooms, underlining a warmer, more private space. A rooftop terrace, offering views across the city to the Acropolis, is an added bonus. *localocal.org*



HØYER, DENMARK
Thomas Høyer, who founded his studio in 2022 in Ebeltoft, Jutland, works on a variety of projects that explore architecture's relationship with nature. The studio's **House in Ebeltoft** project exemplifies how gentle architectural construction and a preference for organic materials can offer a result that is friendly to its natural surroundings. Placed gently on a high plateau formed of ancient glacial meltwater valleys and hills during the last ice age, this modest timber house is defined by its prominent roof with deep overhangs and a central atrium that connects users with the tree canopy and sky above. *hoyerarkitektur.co*

Photography: Saurabh Suryan and Lokesh Dang / Lorenzo Zandri / Hampus Berndtson

WRITERS: HARRIET THORPE, ELLIE STATHAKI

Architects' Directory

EXUTOIRE, VIETNAM

Founded in Oslo in 2019 by Paul-Antoine Lucas and Bui Quy Son, the now-Hanoi-based studio works across design, building, curating, teaching, writing and publishing, with subjects ranging from queer methodologies and transnormativity in public space to housing rights and collective life. They will co-curate the Luxembourg Pavilion at the 2027 Venice Architecture Biennale with Céline Zimmer. Their first book, *Housing, Micropolitics, and Pedagogies: Designing and Practising Collectivity*, was published by Ruby Press in 2025. They are especially drawn to renovation and adaptation, treating existing buildings as evidence of social life rather than raw material for erasure.

22YB1 is Exutoire's house and studio in central Hanoi. It renovates an early-1990s tube house, the long, narrow housing type that shifted state-subsidised living to the market-oriented real estate sector following Vietnam's 1986 economic reforms. The plot is only 3m wide by 12m deep, across three and a half storeys, presenting a compact urban condition with familiar problems: darkness, poor ventilation, limited durability. Exutoire's intervention is surgical. The staircase moves from the middle to the rear; rooms open up so air and light can travel. The front façade keeps traces of the old house, while the rear is rebuilt in glass brick for ambient light. New windows and an open stairwell improve cross and stack ventilation. The material palette has a useful bluntness: granito, raw concrete, galvanised steel, corrugated metal, white paint, yellow tiles, royal blue cabinets and lacquer-red handrails.

The ground floor hosts Exutoire's studio; above, the house is arranged for non-nuclear living, guests and friends. A bas-relief on the façade marks its address and completion date, giving the renovation a civic note as well as a domestic one. *exutoireexutoire.com*





VARIOUS ASSOCIATES, CHINA

From a skatepark in Qinhuangdao to an Adidas flagship in Seoul, the work of Various Associates is indeed varied. As well as architects, the Shenzhen-based studio, co-founded by Qianyi Lin and Dongzi Yang in 2017, also employs artists, material engineers, and graphic and experience designers, resulting in spaces where architecture, art and technology are blended and experiential potential is endless.

Gong's House, in Yongjia, is designed for the families of six siblings, and its challenge was to consolidate cross-generational needs and a rural-urban divide of lifestyles. Spacious rooms are linked and layered with open connections, while natural light and countryside views flow in through the abstract composition of windows that pepper the façade. *various-associates.com*



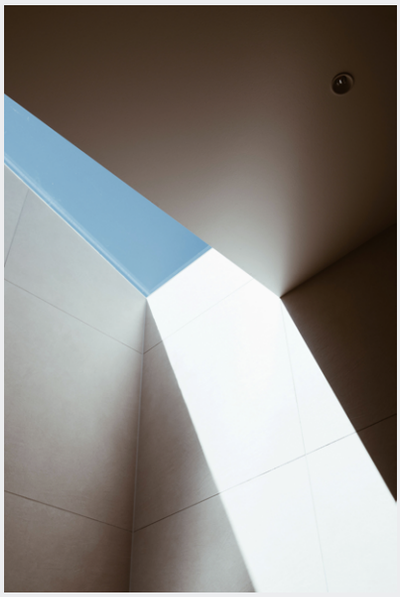
Photography: Maxime Delvaux / Jonathan Leijonhufvud

WRITERS: SOFIA DE LA CRUZ, HARRIET THORPE



SYN, SAUDI ARABIA
Founded in 2018 by Sara Alissa and Nojoud Alsudairi, Syn looks to create buildings that are contextually aware. The pair are the co-founders of saudiarchitecture.org, which aims to research and archive modernist and postmodernist buildings in Saudi Arabia, and have also established the Um Slaim collective, a critical investigation into the displacement of vernacular Najdi architecture. In Najd, traditional houses are built from mudbricks, while the roofs and doors are made from tamarisk wood. Using this as inspiration, Syn created **Project Orion**, comprising three villas, as a contemporary response. Located in Riyadh, the three villas showcase how openness, light and outdoor living can coexist with seclusion. Each was carefully situated to allow in natural light, while balancing selective views. The limestone façade highlights the fortress-like silhouette, which merges into the landscape, and instead of the typical jutting-out balconies, terraces are carved into the building's mass, providing both privacy and shade. Imbued with a sense of cool sturdiness, as well as a play of shadow and light, Project Orion feels deeply rooted in place while offering a contemporary slant to the city's landscape. *syn.sa*

FINELINE, NEW ZEALAND
Founded by Magdalena Garbarczyk and Mathew Hay in Aotearoa in 2021, Fineline holds to a simple principle: keep only what's necessary, choose materials that age honestly, and resist anything added for show. For its **Sharlands House**, in the South Island town of Nelson, the studio captures the natural rhythms of daily life without any whistles and bells. The timber-lined space creates cosy cocoons to retreat to, while the kitchen feels like a warm embrace when it glows in the late afternoon sun. *finelinearchitecture.co.nz*





MGAO, AUSTRALIA
Founded in 2016 by Matt Goodman, MGAO likes to strip back complex project briefs and inject them with a minimalist simplicity. For the **Olive Street Cabin**, perched on a hillside in Separation Creek, Victoria, he faced a challenging client – himself. The modern fibro beach shack is designed to reinstate the character of the region's houses lost in a 2016 bushfire. A contemporary take on 1950s holiday cabins, this single-storey rectangular volume is robust and bushfire-safe, constructed from Colorbond steel, blackbutt timber, and Barestone cladding, while the back window wall frames the ocean. Every detail serves the sole purpose to enjoy the views. *mgao.com.au*

Photography: Hassan Al Shatti / Materiem Studio x Studio Indy / Anthony Richardson

WRITER: TIANNA WILLIAMS







STUDIO KHOA VU, US / VIETNAM
Khoa Vu founded his practice in 2023. Moving towards international work sparked an interest in how spatial traditions evolve through daily life, weather, and material economies. Many of his projects begin by studying spatial heritage, such as overlooked building types and vernacular houses. 'Working between the US and Southeast Asia offers a distinctive vantage point,' he says. 'The studio navigates rapidly changing urban conditions while remaining attentive to vernacular intelligence and cultural continuity.'

Lunar Cavern, in Ho Chi Minh City, is a perfect example of a residence grounded in culture and climate. The studio worked alongside its musician-artist client to transform a duplex residence, using the moon and its cycles as the main source of inspiration. The interior flows with smooth, curved plastered walls, which create a cave-like atmosphere.

Inspired by the bright side of the moon, the entrance hall and living area feature dynamic double-height ceilings, arched detailing and rough-textured surfaces speckled with sunlight. Upstairs, the dark side of the moon casts its shadowy influence. Up a spiral staircase is a moody, Venetian-red studio space designed for deep thinking. The darkness offers comfort, rather than austerity, inviting creative introspection and an intimate retreat from the city. Carved openings layer light, shadow and depth while framing selective views toward the Saigon River. *khoavu.com*

Photography: Chuong Nguyen

WRITER: TIANNA WILLIAMS