

# RESTLESSLIVING

*"...restlessly dedicated to contemporary living."*



VOLUME 69





## LA EXTRAVIADA HOUSE

Mazunte, Oaxaca, Mexico

In the quietness of nature, La Extraviada House is the realization of a vacation house overlooking the sea by Mermejita Beach. The building uncovers itself amid lush greenery, and it bears a resemblance to the mountain. Almost handmade to that exact spot, La Extraviada is a home that aims at creating spaces that bring the surrounding nature into focus. We invited Ivan Esquada, Architect at em-estudio, to tell the tale of the project.

“[La Extraviada] is a house thought for rest and inspiration, where each space has its own character and purpose. A home that can fully open to let the sun and air in, and that can close to give privacy and protect us from the weather”, Ivan begins. The house is a dream that Ivan and his wife, interior designer Gala Sánchez-Renero, shared in common. Curiously, ‘La Extraviada’ refers to a fish called ‘extraviado’ which is essentially translated to ‘lost’ or ‘stray’. To contextualize this reference, Ivan explains: “La Extraviada is a fish that turned into a dream, that turned into a project, that turned into a house overlooking the sea.” Nature was the main motivator of the design thus allowing “a project that seeks to blend with the mountain by adapting to its topography so that the experience of the house is lived according to that nature, where the spaces are discovered while you go up and down the hill”, as Ivan puts it. A great understanding of regional factors and contextual elements also played an important role. “The shape and orientation of the project is determined by the topography of the land, adapting to it and trying to appear like it has always been there.” In addition, given the locality and its hot climate, the house was designed to embrace views of the sea and facilitate the cross-flow of air









that refreshes the spaces. From afar the house seems like a series of blocks that are interconnected as they go down the hill. This configuration generates a spatial experience that is dynamic and feels like the house is calling to be explored. The main entrance is located at the highest level along with a parking lot and one accesses the house through a set of stairs enclosed by walls leading to a stone vestibule-patio. The interiors are given a fresh and vivid atmosphere by means of large wooden windows or doors that open up completely to either render a sense of openness or privacy. Additionally, each block has its own pool and two can function as independent studios as they have their own kitchen and entrance. “The social area is enclosed in a pavilion with a wooden structure and a roof covered with clay tiles, which opens onto the terrace and pool that face the sea, and is complemented by the stone patio, which contains the space and allows the flow of air”, Ivan mentions. As La Extraviada House was intentionally built to act as an extension of the land, most of the materials were locally procured; such as macuil wood, guanipol wood and stone from local quarries.

In sum, La Extraviada House is a vacation home that connects one with the calming nature that encloses it. It is an endless invitation to seek peace within oneself while exploring the impressive Mexican landscape.

Architecture by **em-estudio**

Photos by **Emanuel Velásquez**, **Nin Solis** and **Diego Padilla Magallanes**







*"The kitchen area is made of blackened steel and walnut veneered cabinets with brass accents."*

**– Kristen Becker, Mutuus Studio**





## HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE

Los Angeles, California, United States

Perched atop the famous hills of Hollywood, the Hollywood Hills House manifests a desire for an architecture that is modest and highly influenced by design concepts. It is a home that encapsulates its owner's interest for design and generates a comfortable and expressive environment. We have contacted architect at Mutuus Studio, Kristen Becker, who was formerly mentored by the renowned architect Tom Kundig of Olson Kundig.

"In consideration of the environment and the desire to simplify, the clients yearned for a smaller footprint for their family residence, much like their New York City Penthouse loft", Kristen begins. The lot's topography represented a challenge for the design team as it has a 45 percent slope. Consequently, the program consisted in creating a home that would have its entrance at the highest level while arranging all spaces down the hill. This configuration then renders a feeling of being led to a great hall as one enters through the main door. Kristen mentions that the spaces take cues from the client's Irish travels and visits to castles of Europe, and these cues manifest through a "protective fortress" feeling that extends to the material palette as well. "The kitchen area is made of blackened steel and walnut veneered cabinets with brass accents. The dining area is made up of caramel leather chairs and Finn Juhl dining table and features a circular, dark central hearth acting as a subtle separative element between the kitchen and living area", Kristen explains. Expressing a strong interest for design elements, the house is filled with eclectic artifacts adding character to the spaces. These artifacts include "African masks, a willy Daro bronze table, and cast from a childhood bone break displayed like a relic", Kristen adds. Light is brought indoors by black steel Brombal windows. Southwards, a far wall of glass and steel frames views of Los Angeles in the horizon and sets the tone for a chill late afternoon watching the city as it lights up. "One of the most notable features of the living space is a heavy metal gear-and-chain pivoting window, not only an opulent gesture that complements the interior objects but also an emphasis on the idea of ever changing, interweaving spaces", Kristen continues. The designer's background in dance translated into this sense of motion as one walks through the house, rejecting the traditional sequence of spaces. The program proposed a separation of private and public spaces by means of a double stair. As Kristen elaborates: "The public continues down to the media, the private on the other hand, introduced the private quarters. All intentionally nestled back into the mountain, cozy and anchored reassuring a level of safety and nurture that marks the end of the performance started at the bridge."

Everything considered, Hollywood Hills House is a home that binds together two worlds, the old of medieval Irish castles and the new contemporary Californian style. The outcome is a beautiful home that speaks for itself.

Architecture by **Mutuus Studio**

Photography by **Kevin Scott**





## THIS HOUSE NEVER ENDS

Melbourne, Australia

Once architect Steffen Welsch understood his new clients' cultural background and aspirations for a new home, he immediately knew he would have to challenge the traditional Australian approach to home design. Located in a protected inner-city suburb of Melbourne that blends in beautifully traditional and contemporary homes, the location's aesthetic diversification served as a catalyst for Steffen to create a home that would speak to both his clients and setting.

"When we design we always want to understand our clients' cultural background, what do they value, how do they use and feel about a space. Our clients were a family with a European background who also worked and lived in Europe previously. In their brief they often used terms familiar to them, like 'Wohnküche' or 'Essecke'", Steffen begins. A traditional Australian residence, according to Steffen, has a "very clear layout", meaning, a front yard that is rarely used, bedrooms facing the street while the kitchen and living room are placed in the back with access to a backyard. Nevertheless, Steffen believed that this configuration was too predictable and did not match the client's personality. "It appeared to us we wanted to create a physical environment that resembles the experience of being in a small European town with cozy





little courtyards and squares, winding passages, diverse facades and so on – an environment that takes some time to ‘read’ but then gradually reveals itself.” Thus, the proposal was to rotate the new building 45 degrees and elongate it over the whole block. This arrangement resulted in a new spatial experience composed by little corners, spaces that are somehow visually connected and an urgent feeling of exploration. As the city is eclectic in terms of building and styles, an eclectic soul is intensified in the house by means of materials. “Building form, scale and color are similar to our neighbors but materials add a new element to the mix. We opted for timber screens and recycled brick from a local brickyard for our main materials”, Steffen explains.

In sum, as Steffen aimed to design a home that wakes up one’s inner explorer, a visitor over the house confirmed he has achieved his goal. As he was showing the place to his children, after going around the house for a while, his son yelled: “Oh, my God, this house never ends!” Steffen conclusively says: “Mission accomplished!”

Architecture by **Steffen Welsch Architects**

Photography by **Shannon McGrath**





*“... contemporary yet critically traditional, consists of the harmonic integration of a cube made of fair face concrete hovering over the existing stone mass.”*

– Aristides Dallas, Architect







## **A TOUCH OF NEW**

**Tinos, Greece**

In the Greek island of Tinos, a house reflects tradition with a hint of modern living. A Touch of New is a residence that takes architectural cues from the stone dovecotes built on the island, combining it with an emphasis of highness. The composition resulted in a home deeply rooted to its context while flirting with the principles contemporary architecture.

“Having adopted the subtractive approach and sought for the minimum intervention possible in the overall landscape, the architectural proposal, contemporary yet critically traditional, consists of the harmonic integration of a cube made of fair face concrete hovering over the existing stone mass”, the architect Aristides Dallas begins. Therefore, the construction consists of an ‘old’ volume combined with a ‘new’, and it can be seen as the house extends upwards. “The existing Tinian stone of the ground floor alternates with the fair face ochre plaster of the additions, in an attempt of getting a clear distinction between the old and the new”, Aristides elaborates. The house plan consists of two levels linked by a stair contained by walls that lead to a bedroom. Atop of this very bedroom, a terrace was placed to take advantage of the views and topography, from there one overlooks views of the sea and surrounding hills. Indoors, the home renders a feeling of calmness through its white walls and raw concrete elements. Angular apertures make room for black steel windows which create a nice contrast with the softer hues.

A Touch of New is a residence that speaks to its region and at the same creates a language of its own. As Aristides conclusively mentions: “The residence introduces a contemporary architectural vocabulary, in a harmonic mixture of the traditional and modernist features of the Greek countryside.”

Architecture by **Aristides Dallas Architects**

Photography by **Evelyn Foskolou**

**George Messaritakis**

**Panagiotis Voumvakis**





## TECLA – A 3D PRINTED HOUSE

3D printing has been around for quite some years now and the technology has had an impact on how objects and materials come to life. In architecture, 3D can be utilized not only to build conceptual models but also entire buildings. That is the exact case for the TECLA House; a residence that was 3D printed and addresses environmental issues and housing emergencies in face of emigration and natural disasters. The Project Manager of the TECLA project, Irene Giglio, will elaborate on the insights of this different but fascinating project.

“Metaphorically inspired by one of Italo Calvino’s ‘invisible cities’ – the city in continuous construction – the name TECLA evokes the strong link between past and future by combining the matter and spirit of timeless ancient homes with the world of 21st-century technological production”, Irene begins. Essentially, TECLA House calls for a present that meets past and future. “The whole project is suspended between the use of the latest technologies and the ability to resort to old-as-mankind knowledge”, so vernacular architecture was fundamental for the

conception of TECLA. “Vernacular architecture has demonstrated that buildings that are empathic with the climate for which they are conceived and are based on the use of locally available materials, can ensure a high level of comfort without harming the environment”, Irene continues. TECLA was basically a dream that Mario Cucinella and Massimo Moretti, Founder at WASP, shared: A dream of fully 3D printing an eco-sustainable home made with local soil. Due to extensive research on eco-sustainability performed by SOS, School of Sustainability, and

Massa Lombarda, Italy



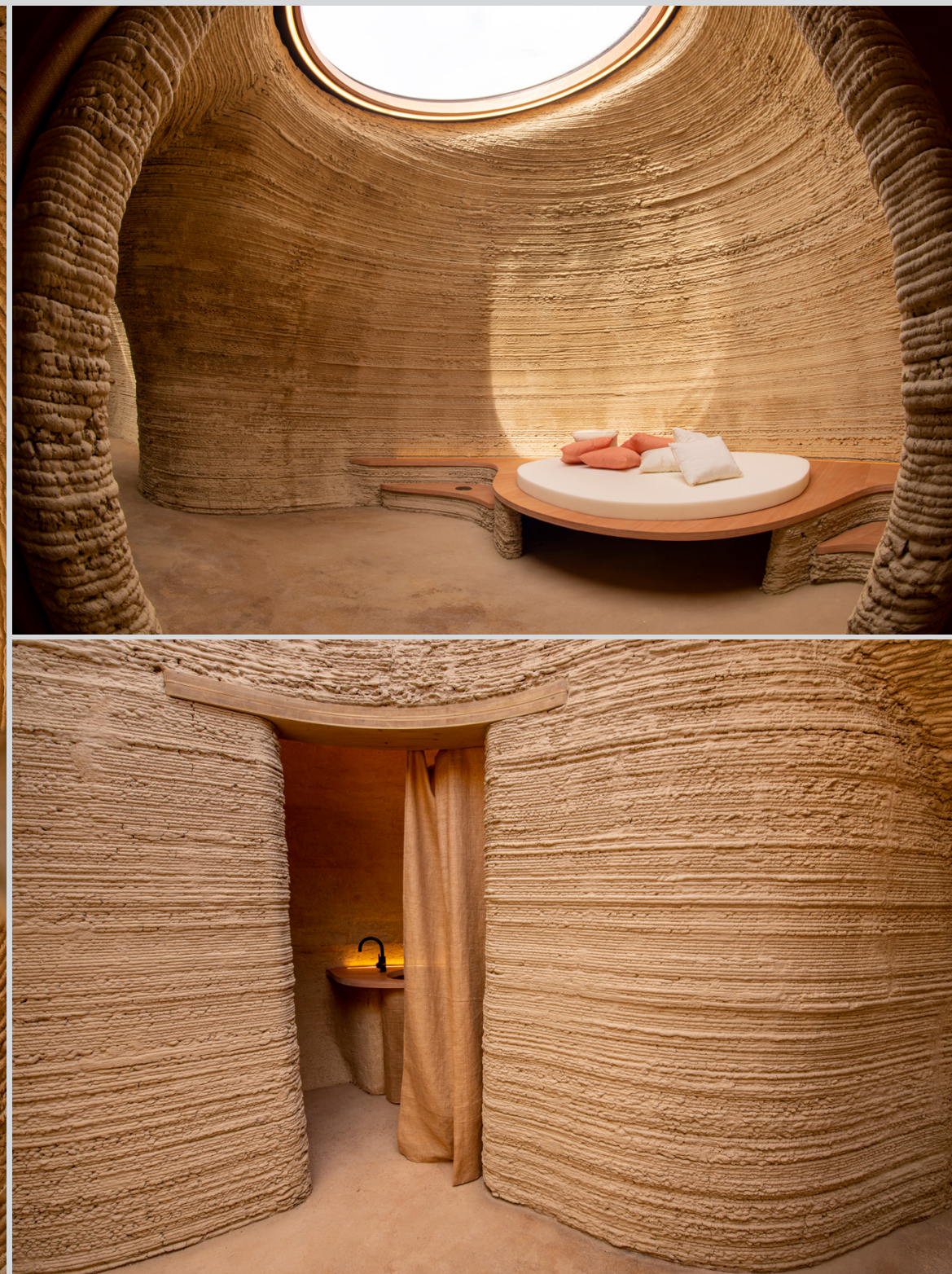
collaborative technology by WASP, the vision was made possible. “It is a nearly zero-emission project. Its casing and the use of an entirely local material allows for the reduction of waste and scraps. This and the use of raw earth make TECLA a pioneering example of low-carbon housing”, Irene adds. As the house reflects local traditions, it is responsive towards its environment, and according to Mario, this is the very concept of TECLA. “The model changes in shape, in the envelope and in aggregation. In addition, the composition of the earth mixture responds to local climatic conditions and can also change

since the soil is added with various local waste materials. In the first prototype, built in a place that is rich in rice fields, we have used rice husks, but we are also evaluating the use of other fibres.” Unique in materiality and form, the residence consists of two intertwined circular elements with central apertures watching the sky. “The atypical shape, from the geometry to the external ridges, has enabled the structural balance of the construction – both during the 3D printing phase of the envelope and once the covering is completed – giving life to an organic and visually coherent design”, Irene elaborates.

It is safe to assume that TECLA does not only speak to its region, but also to a global concern that is climate change. As the house is built to have the least carbon footprint possible and thought to respond to emergency housing, it can be delivered in 200 hours of printing. It reflects the purpose of architecture to improve human life – both in the short and long term – while proposing a refreshing shift away from the modern cubic architecture.

Architecture by **Mario Cucinella Architects**

Photography by **Iago Corazza**





## **Words of the Week**



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*Change is inevitable. The South African psychologist once stated: “Discomfort is the price of admission to a meaningful life.” And by ‘life’, it is all its facets – both personally and professionally. Change is not just inevitable, it is encouraged. We must urge to change to create better solutions and develop ourselves. Over time, status quo leads to backtracking and decay, so it is necessary to challenge what we know now and build upon it. In this week’s issue, I attempted to tell the stories behind projects that are moving beyond the architects’ comfort zones; e.g. by employing new technology as Mario Cucinella did, moving away from the safe Australian approach to design as Steffen Welsch did, or combining old and new as Aristides Dallas did.*

*Discomfort is – needless to say – uncomfortable. But, it is temporary and will eventually lead to new learning and new solutions because one gets to balance on the edge of the unknown. To cross the next frontier of architecture and design, we must welcome and embrace change and discomfort.*

*Thank you so much for reading along. I wish you all a great weekend. See you again next Friday!*

CHRISTIAN TRAMPEDACH  
FOUNDER, RESTLESS

