As we begin to peep...

out of the front door and start inhabiting our public realm on the journey from home to office, school, shops or park, you might think something of a quantum shift has occurred in the interim period since lockdown started. Seeing the unfolding events of the Black Lives Matter campaign precipitate the toppling and rolling of Britain’s statues of Edward Colston to the wafting into the dock has forced us, as a society, to question the people and politics represented in our architecture and public spaces.

Now I would never claim to know categorically Churchill was a racist or whether Modi’s Fall, but the former was famously cognisant of the ability of architecture to modify the human will and the latter aware that with the acquisition of territory comes financial and political power.

Steps fittingly, the re-evaluation of the public realm we move through, its buildings and monuments, that both men be seen in the light of the principles they espoused.

I don’t advocate the tearing down of statues but the exercising of our democratic right to peaceful protest in public was inspiring to see, and should not be taken for granted – a point eloquently made in Anna Minton’s 2012 Rosie “Ground Control”. She also shows a light on the acquisition of public land by powerful private interests and our public realm’s stealth privatisation – forces that remain at play. As we emerge from lockdown and social unrest into a post Covid-19 world, you’re forgiven for thinking how quickly things have changed. But look past the empty plinths to the hoardings and many cranesha- ying; they may not have changed that much.

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Limestone flags make a seamless transition

An uninterrupted flow of warm, light tiles inside and outside this Cotswolds home continues domesticity and nature either side of a sliding glass wall.

This corner of this Cotswolds house specified large limestone flags for both the kitchen and the external patio area leading off it, with the tiling scheme running through the glass patio doors that separate the two areas.

Award-winning Biogel No Limits White was used to fix the tiles both internally, where they were laid directly over an in-screed underfloor heating system, and externally, where the adhesive was used as part of the Laminate No Crack Waterproof system. In this system, the Biogel adhesive is used both above and below the patented Green-Pro Membrane to form a double laminated layer that combines anti-cracking, uncoupling and waterproof functions.

The Biogel range consists of two formulations (standard setting Biogel No Limits and rapid setting Biogel Revolution) that can be used on any substrate due to the inclusion of new polymers to give them a high shear strength. The consistency means that the adhesives wet the entire tile as well as the substrate, giving an excellent bond and superior performance. They are suitable for use with almost all tiling materials, including ceramic, porcelain, natural stone and glass.

The adhesives also have strong environmental credentials that have been assessed using the Green Building Rating method for measuring and improving the environmental performance of building materials. Biogel No Limits is formulated using locally-sourced minerals meaning lower greenhouse gas emissions during transportation. It also contains recycled minerals, thus reducing the damage to the environment caused by extracting pure new materials. It has a CFP of 1.55 kg CO₂/eq/m² for the Grey version and 2.20 kg CO₂/eq/m² for the White, with very low VOC emissions, rated GEV-Emicode EC1 Plus. Biogel Revolution has a CFP of 0.96 kg CO₂/eq/m² and equally low VOC emissions.

The tiles were then grouted with Fugabella Color. Safe and easy to work with, this is a new generation Resina cement-based hybrid grout which has been shortlisted for the category of Best Innovation in the 2020 Tile Association Awards. It does not contain Portland cement, so it does not develop efflorescence. The colour palette of 50 different colours has been specially selected by Piero Lissoni to fit with modern colour schemes, making it easy to specify one to complement or contrast with the tiles, depending on the desired finish.

Kerakoll UK: Email: info@kerakoll.co.uk Tel: 01527 578000 www.kerakoll.co.uk
Compendium

Sleft in stone
Painted in bold red, the 19th century neoclassicism of Copenhagen’s former Russian Trading Company actually masked a pre-industrial concrete structure – something that must have come in handy when it recently suffered extensive fire damage. Danish brand design agency MENU teamed up with NORM Architects to create The Audo – a novel blend of company HQ and showroom for its product design, restaurant and a 10-suite hotel in the roof. Keen on minimalism, the architect chose Unidrain slot drains for the bathrooms, to allow eyes to concentrate on the industrial tiles.

Stairway to Tregavethan
ADAM Architecture has been busy down in Cornwall, working on the design of the new build Tregavethan Manor near Truro, taking its cue from local vernacular form, scale and detailing and using granite and rubble stone walls. Meanwhile, its on-site renewables are making the design of the new build Tregavethan Manor near Truro, taking its

March chair
Sir Kenneth Grange; he of the Intercity 125, the black cab and Anglepoise lamp, remains active, even at the age of 90. While teaching at the RCA he met young designer Jack Smith, now one half of Smith + Matthews. When asked by Holmes to repackage his 2015 March chair, Grange looked to inject his design with more youth – hence the new March Lite chair. Smith simplified the proposition so it’s now a 2D rather than 3D ply backrest, obviating the need for a bending process that brings the solid ash chair into a lower price bracket – and makes it stackable. The lacquer finish is also water based, fitting in with Smith + Matthews’ sustainability ethos as a designer and ensuring it can naturally return to the earth from which it grows.

Gold plated
There’s something slightly Ken Adams-like about the stark, golden, geometric balconies of GRID Architects’ and Macowan Livingston’s The Residence in London’s Nine Elms, a development of 33 private apartments, a handy stone’s throw from the American Embassy. Origami seems the inspiration for the balconies’ sandblasted gold facia panels and aluminium soffits, which give it a lower price bracket- and makes it stackable. The lacquer finish is also water based, fitting in with Smith + Matthews’ sustainability ethos as a designer and ensuring it can naturally return to the earth from which it grows.

Black is the new black
Given our newfound obsession with personal hygiene in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the wash hand basin is now the focus of our daily engagement with the wider world. And in line with the latest interior trends, designers are getting more adventurous with their colours. High end sanitaryware supplier Burlington has picked up interior trends, designers are getting more adventurous with their colours.

Bowled over
The name ‘Ceramique Internationale’ might conjure up Continental associations – certainly not Leeds’ Lower Wortley Ring Road – but that’s where the Yorkshire-based tile company has been trading from since 1979. But that may have put it in good stead for the recent £6m Emerald Headingley stadium redevelopment. Interior designers Nanu Soda and Space Invader worked on the project and had the firm supply nearly 800m² of tiling, including the Technicolour Tile range for use in the Taverners Bar and directors suite – all laid in a striking beige and blue herringbone pattern.

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The moody blues
Young Stuttgart-based practice SOMAA has just completed a dark, colour-brushed restaurant and bar in Munich named, not surprisingly, Blau. The look is distinctly post-modern but the architect says it was inspired as much by the sublime, brooding 19th century landscapes of Caspar David Friedrich “that speak of the existential yet intangible” as by any architectural style. Here, natural materials of rich brass, black-green marble, tan leather seating and deep green velvet curtains work to help with the ultra-violet backdrop help create a compellingly moody interior, alleviated only by the mirrored and gold surfaces around the bar and many candles that tick away at the dark. An almost Wagnerian stage set – with a jazz influence.
Technology doesn’t quite cover everything

Despite our efforts to automate as much as we can, there are still many areas where technology really can’t quite cover everything. With a world that is changing so rapidly, it’s important to be flexible and adaptable. While we may have automated some of our processes, we still need to maintain a certain level of human interaction. For example, in the field of design, technology can help with the planning and execution of projects, but the final outcome is still shaped by human creativity and intuition.

Another challenge is the integration of technology into existing systems. Even if we have developed efficient algorithms and software that can automate certain tasks, there are still many areas where technology simply can’t replace human judgment. For instance, in the field of architecture, while we can use software to design buildings and predict their performance, the final decision on the design is still made by architects who consider not only the technical aspects but also the aesthetic and functional aspects.

In conclusion, while technology can be a powerful tool, it’s important to remember that it’s just one part of the equation. Human creativity, intuition, and judgment are still crucial in many areas, and we need to strike a balance between automation and human intervention to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Counter-Covid shopping list

| IT/Books |

- **Techshop**
  - Louis Poulsen
    - Panthella portable light
      - Louispoulsen.com
    - Waving walls
      - Where:
        - What:
          - Orprojects / Amit Aggarwal (2)

- **Air purification system**
  - Air0 Clean booth: Removes more pollutants while maintaining high air flow.

- **Privacy panels**
  - USM Haller
    - Made of hand-crafted wood, Air0 Clean booth...:

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  - When Delhi-based fashion designer Amit Aggarwal was discussing a new boutique with his design team, they wanted to create a space that would be reflective of his work at architectural scale. Through the use of advanced design tools and materials, they were able to create a space that was both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

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Audemars Piguet Museum, Joux Valley, Switzerland

The spectacular spiral roof on BIG’s new museum had to be light enough to perch on its curved structural glass walls, while packing in an inordinate volume of conduits, cabling, drainage and ductwork.

Words: Stephen Cousins Photographs: Iwan Baan

Audemars Piguet Museum, Joux Valley, Switzerland

As we count down the days and months to a return to normal life unimpeded by coronavirus, it seems fitting that a museum dedicated to time and watchmaking is one of the most talked about architectural projects of the year.

The Audemars Piguet Museum coils up from the floor of the idyllic Joux Valley in Switzerland in an elegant spiral inspired by tiny watch springs.

Bjarke Ingels Group’s kaleidoscopic design is an extension to the founder’s original home where the luxury watch brand was established in 1875.

Continuous floor-to-ceiling glazing offers stunning views of the landscape and provides the sole structural support for a 470-tonne green roof that twists like an apple peel from the hillside.

The Danish studio won a competition to design the project back in 2014 and developed it in collaboration with interior designer/scenographer Atelier Brückner, structural and facade engineer Lüchinger+Meyer, and landscape architect Muller Illien. Swiss practice CCHE was the local architect, which also refurbished the historic building it links into.

Visitors to the museum follow a spiral route through the 2,500m² interior, channelled by internal glass walls along a path from street level.

Left: Clearly inspired by watch springs, the museum’s circulation effectively uses the spiral form to help unify the complex’s buildings.

Below: The museum’s green roof nestles the building in its bucolic landscape.
Structural glass walls rise off the concrete base. The lightweight steel roof sits atop the glazing.

Sectional shifts in the museum allow light to enter and give extensive views out to the landscape.

The spiral form creates its own logic in terms of the route through the building, allowing the entrance and exit at the same place.

The spiral museum’s narrative journey encompassing reception, atelier and exhibition.

On display are some 300 heritage timepieces, ranging from jewelled pocket watches, to complex astronomical and chronograph devices, each displayed in a futuristic golden dome. At the heart of the spiral is the ‘Universelle’, produced in 1899, the most complicated watch Audemars Piguet ever created, with 1,168 individual parts.

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On one side of the museum, visitors can observe watchmakers at work behind a glass wall inside the Grandes Complications Atelier.

Main springs and hairsprings provide the energy to turn gears and regulate movement in watches and must retain their physical characteristics in all temperatures to maintain accuracy. In a similar vein, the structure of the museum is finely tuned to enable the frameless curved glass walls to provide full support to the unitised steel roof – there are no columns or masonry walls – and withstand high winds and extreme cold, down to -20 in winter.

Other recent buildings have relied on load-bearing glass for structure, such as Apple’s Steve Jobs Theatre in California, but the approach taken here is exceptional and innovative. Matt Oravec, project architect at BIG, explains: ‘Previous buildings are either more repetitive or located in milder climates. The Apple auditorium has a repetitive facade, every glass panel is the same, but every panel here is different, the roof rises and falls, so each panel had to be cut individually before it was bent. We are in an earthquake zone and a high snow load zone, so the roof needs to take up to 2m of snow without a problem. Everything has to brace together to make the structure work.’

Curved glass is normally tempered by bending it back and forth in the kiln, but this can create optical issues such as a zebra-like striping. BIG made the decision to use float glass, which though weaker, would provide strength and rigidity when laminated together in several layers.

The exterior glass wall and the two internal partitions feature three layers of laminated glass; panels on the exterior incorporate two air spaces, while those on the other sides of the building incorporate a single air space. The Apple auditorium has a repetitive facade, every glass panel is the same, but every panel here is different, the roof rises and falls, so each panel had to be cut individually before it was bent. We are in an earthquake zone and a high snow load zone, so the roof needs to take up to 2m of snow without a problem. Everything has to brace together to make the structure work.’

Credits
Client: Audemars Piguet
Design: Bjarke Ingels Group
Executive and renovation: CCHE Architecture and Design
Landscape architect: L’Atelier du Paysage Jean-Yves Le Baron
Interior designer: BIG, Atelier Brückner GmbH (Exhibition)
Structural engineer/facade consultant: Dr Lüchinger+Meyer Bauingenieure AG
Mechanical engineer: Fondation Pierre Chuard Ingénieurs-Conseils
Electrical engineer: Holzmann Light-Design
Acoustic consultant: EcoAcoustique
Sanitary consultant: Chings
Security consultant: Niklas
Waterproofing consultant: Geneux Dancet

Finely tuned
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Products In Practice July/August 2020

Le BRASSUS

Above The full kaleidoscopic effect of the museum is felt at its central exhibition area.

Right The museum is also a working facility where craftspersons make the watches that we are so used to seeing on our wrists.

Below The peeling away of the roof allows light to enter into the heart of the building.

Gaps filled with argon. Each panel is about 24 m wide and heights range from 2.4 to 6 m.

Philippe Willareth, project manager at Lärich-Mayer tells BIRA: ‘There’s a lot of redundancy in the design because safety was such a vital consideration. The glass at the centre of the plan is thicker to increase support for more concentrated loads created by the large 8m spans.’

The roof of the museum appears to float over the curved glass and comprises two circular metal plates inclined in opposite directions to form clerestory windows towards the centre that bring in natural light.

A regional custom of driving timber stakes into the proposed construction site to delineate the high points of the roof also helped assuage people’s fears, when they saw that the building would only be partially excavated into the earth.

The all-glass structure posed technical challenges when designing the steel roof, most notably the fact that mechanical and electrical services were unable to cross the glazing and so had to follow the line of the double spiral. A carpet of regional grasses covers the roof in spring to help control the building’s temperature and absorb rain.

The building’s external glazing is treated to reduce solar gain, but a physical shading element was required to create a comfortable environment for employees working on intricate timepieces.

A brass-and-steel mesh sunscreen was developed to wrap around the exterior, suspended from the facade. It changes in height and thickness depending on the direction of the sun and its location on the building. Welding in lead was banned in Switzerland, so the German fabricator had to come up with a new approach that used lead free brass alloy as the welding material.

The Audemars Piguet Museum was due to open to visitors this summer, but like many public buildings at present, the opening had to be pushed back until the end of the year. A museum dedicated to timepieces, even if it is designed by one of the world’s most prestigious architects, would need to become a time machine to avoid the effects of a rampaging virus. •
Specified

1. Alkorbright waterproof membrane
   Renolit
   Autotranslated from the Flemish: ‘[Unrecognized] Hellfire, Piet! You’re wasted on roofing! Nice [unrecognized] work!’ ‘Well, Maart, [unrecognized] privilege to see flexible, highly reflective Renolit Alkorbright membrane to waterproof the collections of this here Antwerp Royal Museum of Fine Arts.’ ‘Indeed, but you assembling 1,665m2 cut to fit the triple sizes of rooflights used to obscure the slope on which they sit is itself art!’ ‘I have verifiably used offsets in my next Serwood Sculpture submission, “Chilly/Unmoist.” Maart, [unrecognized] love it!’
   renolit.com/en

2. Node arm box awning
   Gibus
   Dear colleagues, Welcome back to the office! We hope you enjoy the changes we’ve made. Before entering, please decontaminate at our new sanitising station, massaging the eyeballs, nasal passages and buccal orifice for 20 seconds each with the provided steel wool applicators. Please dispose of your personal scourer in the bin provided. To limit aerosol transmission, we have moved your team outside using Gibus’ stylish and versatile contemporary awnings. You may of course bring hot water bottles, electrically-heated gloves, bobble hats and sleeping bags from home.
   gibus.com/en

3. Modular ventilating skylights
   Velux
   In this moment suddenly I saw five Rings as it were the Rings of the Olympic Games yet disarrayed as though fallen from the hand of God. And then did come unto me five Angels who took up the five Rings and did competitively twirl themselves into a tizzy until one only remained. And I said: Benedicte Domine! with mighty voice; and full greatly was astonished for wonder and marvel; not at the Blessed feat of Hulahooping but at the Ventilating Modular Skylights through which these divine competitors then passed.
   velux.com

4. AeroDek interlocking steel tiles
   BMI Group
   The building had recently been re-covered with AeroDek interlocking galvanised steel tiles. Mr Axport-Wartness: you would agree, would you not, that this roof – the one in the photograph – seems constructed in conventional clay tiles?
   ‘Yes, definitely, Mr Pitt-Bull.’
   ‘As did the defendant – but this is in fact the very roof in question! So what would have happened when the defendant attempted to break into the building by free-falling from his hired Cessna with a backpack full of pig iron?’
   ‘Boing!’
   ‘Quite.’
   bmigroup.com/uk

PIP specifications are compiled from supplied company press releases
As hopes rise for a return to some sort of normal, leisure centres will play an important part in social cohesion and wellbeing. But are they up to scratch?

Mark Gowdridge identifies six trends for future leisure

1. Going multi-generational
   "Senior centres will need to cater for wider ranges of ages and abilities than they have in the past. Mums are more of a diverse and numérique dilettante, as are the local authorities," says Gowdridge.

2. Tracking tech
   Performance tracking and data are becoming key for the leisure and sports experiences. The benchmarks are about: ‘It makes them more of a destination and increases dwell time,’ says Gowdridge.

3. Play matters
   ‘There will be more playfulness in centres,’ says Gowdridge. From Doncaster’s House of Play, with its ‘quantified self’ treadmills, play is rediscovering activity and provides this soft landing for younger, inactive members of communities.

4. 5+ Linking with education
   Local authority leisure is increasingly focused on wellness and learning facilities. Gowdridge is exploring another option: ‘We’re looking at incorporating classroom space for rent into leisure centres."

5. Mental health
   Mental health and wellbeing are being looked at already, with special needs centres, dementia users and greater ties with the school curriculum, he says, adding: ‘It’s not about past norms; it’s about joining up.’

6. Therapeutic recreation
   Spaces need to be flexible enough to accommodate health and wellbeing uses, including mental wellbeing, both new and the future.

Small is said to be the next excruciating of the senses, which may be why you only have to think about the leisure centre to bring back the odour of chlorine and with it countless memories of family outings and school swimming lessons. Local authority leisure centres have a special place in our childhood, but many have changed little since then and their age has been starting to show.

Earlier this year the Local Government Association (LGA) drew attention to figures from Sport England showing that almost a quarter of all leisure centres have not been refurbished for more than two decades. ‘Too many are now in desperate need of being updated and refurbished,’ was the message from councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, chair of the LGA’s leisure, tourism and sport board.

Local authorities have long struggled with limited budgets to maintain leisure centres and refurbishment and replacement are no easier. In a post-COVID world, financial challenges are likely to increase, but so too are community health concerns, including diabetes and loneliness. As a result, more leisure services may have to work even harder to pay their way while serving their communities better.

All inclusive
"Centres are closing or refurbishing but are often reinvented with the same wet and dry mix," says Mark Gowdridge, director at GT3 Architects. ‘There are questions around whether that’s the right approach and whether they are really catering for members of the public who need a soft entry into leisure. Leisure centres of the past didn’t cater to all ages and abilities and we still see business plans alienating key groups, such as teenagers and older adults.

Proposals need to be more inclusive through universal design, which allows for various groups and abilities, including special needs groups, dementia users and greater ties with the school curriculum, he says, adding, ‘It’s not about past norms; it’s about joining up.’

The architect’s design for the upcoming Spelthorne Leisure Centre in Staines, Surrey, was influenced by its pre-briefing tool ‘Performance+’, which helped tease out local needs and aspirations for the client brief. ‘Communities informed leisure centres, so it is important to pay attention to the uniqueness of each,’ explains Gowdridge.

The centres, which will be built at the site of a padic, is packed with activity spaces. There will be a 25m pool, teaching pool, splash pad and café. The sports hall accommodates six badminton courts, with two adjoining squash courts. The orientation of a swimming pool has to badminton courts. It will have a fitness suite, multi-use space, soft play space and Clip-n-Chomp wall, the latter precious to the building front. Even the roof is put to use with four solar PV pitches.

Mindful of its zero carbon objectives, the forward thinking council helped drive the team to review the leisure centre against Passivhaus principles. It’s an approach that means altering some design conventions, explains Gowdridge. The odour of chlorine and with it countless memories of family outings and school swimming lessons.

All this is being delivered within a changing procurement environment. Some 12 months ago, Gowdridge says the practice was getting two or three leisure centre bids a month to concentrate on wellness and learning facilities.

The concept for the upcoming Spelthorne Leisure Centre in Staines, Surrey, was informed GT3’s ‘Performance+’ tool. The client brief included new services throughout the building and a fine balance of cost and value, is replicated and so supported the architect in growing project and budget.

"Creating appeal"
The ‘fact that leisure is a non-statutory service, although historically it has been robustly funded by local authorities,’ says Nathan Swift, director of Saunders Bostock Architects. Over the past few years local authorities have increasingly been spending on facilities in order to save on subsidy: ‘That’s a drive behind the decision to replace the Splash in Sheringham, Norfolk.

Passivhaus demands a shift from naturally ventilated areas to greater improvements in airtightness

Saunders Bostock’s replacement, which has operated Everything Active in place, provides a 25m pool and learner pool, with fitness suite, dance studio and spins studios and café. Like many local authorities, North Norfolk District Council has drawn on Sport England funding, which supports broader community health and wellbeing, but being rather pure. That ruled out providing a new wave pool, with the architect instead incorporating a splash pad, which combines fun with helping children gain water confidence.

In operation, the centre will produce savings in energy and water consumption, thanks to solar thermal hot water panels on the roof, air source heat pumps and energy lighting, as well as low-water toilets and showers and UV filtration, alongside conventional chlorine.

The new design references the old Splash in the barrel vaulted roof, while drawing inspiration from the North Norfolk coastline and its long shore drift, with the building’s ‘functioening’ alongside timber gyms and slatted glazed elevations the ‘drifting sands.’

The architect, working with the council’s leisure consultant, FMG Consulting and Project Managers Faulk Consulting, looked at the potential to refurbish Splash. But the building ‘condition would have made it cost,” says Swift, adding by way of illustration, ‘The existing building fabric was suffering multiple failures, particularly on the roof, which was becoming dislodged and leaking. Refurbishment would have also prevented the release for sale of the land for development, which was one of the central aims of the project.‘

As hopes rise for a return to some sort of normal, leisure centres will play an important part in social cohesion and wellbeing. But are they up to scratch?

Left: Passivhaus principles informed GT3’s Spelthorne Leisure Centre design, where pool orientation and replacement are no easier.

Above: At the new Sheringham Leisure Centre in Norfolk, play, such as a new pool, was reinvented to concentrate on wellness and learning facilities.

Working with what you’ve got
In Urmston, Greater Manchester, refurbishment was able to give the local leisure centre the added commercial potential and flexibility it needed on a modest budget. Urmston Leisure Centre was less than 30 years old and expected to have a basic spruce up whenSplash Architects was brought on board. ‘The client was only looking to spend under £4m but the aspirations went beyond the budget,’ says Paul Norbury, its director. Trafford Council had seen Splash transform its town hall to some acclaim and so supported the architect in growing project and budget.

The area in obvious need of attention was at the building’s front. ‘It was unremarkable, bad lots of littles spaces that weren’t used and the wayfinding wasn’t logical,’ says Norbury. The addition of a double height glass box in the civic viewer in, improves sightlines. The building’s foyer was converted into a wave pool and was designed by Will Alsop. Saunders Bostock’s replacement, which has operated Everything Active in place, provides a 25m pool and learner pool, plus fitness suite, dance studio and spins studios and café. Like many local authorities, North Norfolk District Council has drawn on Sport England funding, which supports broader community health and wellbeing, but being rather pure. That ruled out providing a new wave pool, with the architect instead incorporating a splash pad, which combines fun with helping children gain water confidence.

‘The need for creative thinking was important to Trafford Town Hall,’ Norbury says. ‘Cost was a massive issue, but at the same time we asked ourselves what we wanted really nice to come out of it. That was our message for our times.’

MARK GOWDRIDGE IDENTIFIES SIX TRENDS FOR FUTURE LEISURE

1. Going multi-generational
   Senior centres will need to cater for wider ranges of ages and abilities than they have in the past. Mums are more of a diverse and numérique dilettante, as are the local authorities," says Gowdridge.

2. Tracking tech
   Performance tracking and data are becoming key for the leisure and sports experiences. The benchmarks are about: ‘It makes them more of a destination and increases dwell time,’ says Gowdridge.

3. Play matters
   ‘There will be more playfulness in centres,’ says Gowdridge. From Doncaster’s House of Play, with its ‘quantified self’ treadmills, play is rediscovering activity and provides this soft landing for younger, inactive members of communities.

4. 5+ Linking with education
   Local authority leisure is increasingly focused on wellness and learning facilities. Gowdridge is exploring another option: ‘We’re looking at incorporating classroom space for rent into leisure centres."

5. Mental health
   Mental health and wellbeing are being looked at already, with special needs centres, dementia users and greater ties with the school curriculum, he says, adding: ‘It’s not about past norms; it’s about joining up.’

6. Therapeutic recreation
   Spaces need to be flexible enough to accommodate health and wellbeing uses, including mental wellbeing, both new and the future.
Three modern kitchens

White Rabbit House, Islington, London

Bespoke joinery and terrazzo are the main features of this highly crafted new kitchen at White Rabbit House, a delightfully idiosyncratic reworking of a generic 1970s speculative house builder property. Architect Gundry & Ducker sought to create a modern interpretation of Georgian throughout the project, which completely remodels the original house and adds a rear extension.

The 10m² kitchen straddles the extension and rear of the original house and is accessed from both the hallway and the living room. Its bold and colourful design typifies the overall approach, which combines an open-plan ground floor with copious built-in storage.

According to Christian Ducker, the aim was to add “a bit of drama and character” into what was a very ordinary house. The kitchen continues the long run of built-in cupboards that stretches from the front door, hiding variously power meters, coat and shoe cupboards and a toilet. In the kitchen, these conceal a fridge freezer and an extra worktop and storage area, concealed by a cunning concertina door that tucks tidily out of the way when in use.

The joinery for both these cupboards and the island unit was created on site by main contractor IC&T Projects. This combines laminated plywood carcasses with MDF doors, the latter grooved along the sidewall to give a unified look to the irregular sized doors. The 2.4m wide island unit, which accommodates appliances and has four equal sized units, is therefore not grooved. All joinery is hand painted in a vibrant green, which is carried through to the arched window recess and window seat.

The arch form of the kitchen window and door refer to the house’s original arched front door. Both are visible from the entrance, which has views down the corridor and through the kitchen and into the garden.

Terrazzo, which is also a key feature of the redesigned hallway and new staircase, is used for both the island unit counter and the floor. Artisan Zan Peltek created the floor in situ using black marble chips within a white concrete floor, and created a 40mm thick precast counter in an inverse terrazzo colour scheme of black-tinted concrete and white marble chips. The counter was cast to accommodate the sink and hob, as well as an overhang for bar stools.

A skirting detail bridges the step up to the terrazzo chequerboard hallway floor. Additional light is admitted through a rooflight, which also frames the change in ceiling height between the original house and the extension and allows glimpses up to the original rear elevation. The white with black flecked terrazzo is continued outside on the rear wall.

Ducker is very pleased with the transformation of the house. “It’s an amazing space to go into and is hopefully easy to live in – there’s a cupboard for everything.”

Credits

Architect: Gundry & Ducker
Structural engineer: Feres
Main contractor: IC & T Projects
Terrazzo contractor: (precast and in situ) Zan Peltek

A faux-Georgian past is evinced for this speculative 1970s property, signalled by the arched window in the new rear extension.

Opposite

Bespoke joinery and terrazzo are the main features of this highly crafted new kitchen at White Rabbit House, a delightfully idiosyncratic reworking of a generic 1970s speculative house builder property. Architect Gundry & Ducker sought to create a modern interpretation of Georgian throughout the project, which completely remodels the original house and adds a rear extension.

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Left: The kitchen forms part of the reworking of the circulation spaces of the house.
Makepeace Mansions, Highgate, London

At just 5m², the kitchen of a compact two-bedroom flat in Highgate, north London, presented something of a challenge to architect Surman Weston. The kitchen redesign was part of a refurbishment of the whole property – an apartment in a 1920s mock Tudor mansion block.

After considering more extensive layout changes, it was decided to retain the tiny kitchen in its original position but to connect it to the living room with the insertion of a distinctive, pivoting porthole window. This can be opened to enable conversation and views between those in the two rooms. This key feature is combined with bespoke oak cabinets and a wood-chip terrazzo counter and splash back.

“We wanted to introduce a connection. It’s something a bit special that’s a centrepiece for both rooms,” says Tom Surman.

The porthole was inspired by an Art Deco aesthetic, and in particular the work of Charles Holden in the 1920s and 30s, which was a key reference point for the whole project. The architect collaborated with joiner Tim Gaudin on both the porthole and the bespoke kitchen cupboards to create a slighty crafted design. The protruding porthole frame measures 950mm in diameter, 35mm thick and 200mm deep, and is formed by four curved sections of oak. Inside it is a pivoting, oak-framed, stained glass window. All the oak is finished in charcoal-stained Rubio Monocoat.

For the cupboards, Gaudin created bespoke units with fluted oak fronts formed from curved slats and fixed top and bottom to the rear structure. These are shallow on the wall beneath the porthole and full-depth on the facing wall. “It was a balance between getting in as much as we could, and not feeling like it was completely without any floor space,” says Surman.

Most of the units have touch latches with the exception of those for the appliances. These have brass knobs, chosen because they will age well and dull-down to complement the oak. Oak is used to line the window recess and is also incorporated into the terrazzo counter and splashback. Surman Weston had been aware of Foresso’s resin and timber chip sheeted product for some time, and felt that this worked well in a distinctive blue in combination with the handcrafted cabinets.

The splashback continues up to the bottom of the cupboards and carries on around the rest of the space with a bullnosed timber finish detail.

Terence Woodgate cylindrical downlighters were specified in oak, although they have a lighter shade to tone with the oak finger parquet flooring.

**Credits**
Architect
Surman Weston
Contractor
Lamabuild
Joinery
Tim Gaudin
Selected suppliers:
Foresso (counter and splashback);
Rubio Monocoat (stained oak finish);
twentytwentyone (Terence Woodgate wood downlights);
Dowsing & Reynolds (cabinet knobs);
Lead & Light (stained glass for porthole window).

Above Crafted out of four pieces of turned curved oak, the frame and window form a connective centrepiece between the living room and kitchen.
Left The circular frame is fitted with a modern stained glass window, referencing Art Deco.
Right The blue wood chip terrazzo counter and splashback holds its own very well against the bespoke-made oak kitchen cabinets.
Duravit and Philippe Starck present SensoWash® Starck f, a new generation shower toilet for state-of-the-art, iconic design. Maximum comfort is guaranteed thanks to technical finishing touches such as a motion sensor for automatic lid opening through to a wide range of setting options for seat heating, water spray and the controllable warm air dryer. Combining with all Duravit design series, the cucina toilet is a perfect fit. Contact us for more information.


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Kyle House, Sutherland
Kyle House, a self-catering lodge in a remote Scottish landscape in Sutherland, is an exercise in elegant simplicity. Designed by Edinburgh practice GRAS, the project is part of a conservation programme by client Wildland, which is dedicated to returning human-scarred highland landscapes to their more natural state.

The kitchen distills the essence of the extensive refurbishment scheme – use of high quality joinery and materials combined with deft touches that minimise the contemporary interventions.

The result, says GRAS director Gunnar Groves-Raines, is ‘an understated, monastic: by simple building, but one that uses amazing materials in an incredible location.’

When GRAS took on the project, the property was a long-dilapidated stone shell of a 19th-century farmhouse building, with an asbestos roof and few intact windows. What it did have, however, was dramatic views from its location at the southern end of the Kyle of Tongue sea loch.

GRAS focused enhancing the connection with the landscape with the help of simple natural materials – local Caithness stone, heart oak and lime plaster. The concept was to retain

Top: Simplicity belies the endeavour. The kitchen at Duneen House, HeartOak, manufactured by a specialist joiner.

Above: The original farm building, while run-down, nonetheless had amazing views to the Kyle of Tongue sea loch.

 products in Practice July/August 2020

25
a stone and lime render outer shell and insert highly crafted timber ‘boxes’ inside to make the floor, walls, and ceiling.

The interior was designed with Swiss based interior designer Ruth Kramer, Wildland’s concept and design manager. At 14m², the kitchen is one of four similarly sized key rooms along with the living area, and upstairs bedroom and bathroom – the idea was that all have equal importance. Sliding pocket doors – 2.4m high, 1200mm wide and 70mm thick – allow the spaces either to flow together or be separate.

The run of five kitchen units was built off-site from Dinesen’s HeartOak – made from the middle of large oak trees – by Danish based bespoke kitchen specialist Garde Hvalsøe. These incorporate a central sink with brass splashback and a hob and are illuminated by a ribbon window which gives views over a courtyard. To either side of the window are high brass shelves with two Lampe Gras downlighters – designed in 1921 by Bernard-Albin Gras – completing the pleasingly symmetrical arrangement. The countertop, the two flanking walls, and the ceiling are all oak, with a lime planter wall above the units and under-floor heated, polished Caithness stone.

This simplicity is deceptive. The units conceal a dishwasher while the shelf above the hob incorporates an extractor fan. Inside the flanking oak wall to the right hides a pull-out trolley, while oak panelling to the left conceals a fridge-freezer and oven. All this endeavour to create a tranquil interior has paid off.

‘It does take a lot of work to do simple things,’ comments Groves-Raines. •

Credits
Client
Wildland
Architect
GRAS
Structural engineer
David Narro Associates
Interior designer
Ruth Kramer
Contractor
K Macrae and Son
Selected suppliers:
Dinesen (oak)
Garde Hvalsøe (kitchen units)
Viero (lime plaster)

Above: There was no spatial hierarchy. The kitchen was allocated the same amount of space as living room, bedroom and bathroom.

Right: Simple yet highly crafted finishes create almost monastic simplicity.
Undeniable bling mingles with the raw and simple at a comprehensively refurbished bungalow among the trees of upmarket Nairobi

What must have felt initially a dream commission might have become a poisoned chalice for Helena Rivers and Kalliopi Bouzounieraki of London practice A Small Studio. But the flurry of negotiation over a new verandah ended up in a comprehensive refurbishment of a late 1960s bungalow, Canopy House, in upmarket Nairobi.

The main move has been to extend the house into the former verandah. Gone are the mean windows that conceded a view of the trees, replaced by floor to ceiling sliding glazing that opens onto a new verandah, the perfect meeting point for al fresco entertaining. The extended house expands over and out into the garden’s tree canopy, establishing a direct – and exciting – relationship with the surrounding landscape.

Words: San Carlos Kucharek  Photographs: A Small Studio

Bill and Maree Bisto are back in the kitchen, thanks to Nadiya’s ‘X Pure’ extraction hob. Since their scandalously unexplained sacking as the gravy family’s faces in 1996, they’ve been working incognito as conditioning executives for Birmingham’s NEC. Said Maree of their new role, “We’ve put up with an ultra-thin DuraCeram basin that’s safely and invisibly covalently bonded to the Mediterranean oak it’s safely and invisibly covalently bonded to the Mediterranean oak. We have asked customers to note that use of Oxo or Knorr stock cubes will boost suction by 20%,” said Bisto.

What must have felt initially a dream commission might have become a poisoned chalice for Helena Rivers and Kalliopi Bouzounieraki of London practice A Small Studio. But it’s funny how things turn out. The client, a British raised Kenyan working here for the UN, presented the firm with a large site on which sat a very British, very grand house turned its back on. But far from augmenting that house’s new verandah, the client wanted bling – but on a budget – which precluded full removal of the existing building.

‘Raze and build’, the client wanted bling – but on a budget – which precluded full removal of the existing building. Said Rivers, steeply sloping and covered in rich, verdant tropical plants, yet whose canopy the extended house’s new verandah help to draw the outside in.

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The firm’s proposal was a measured demolition and controlled one of demolition, extension and augmentation that has proved transformatory. The main move has been to extend the house into the former verandah. Gone are the mean windows that conceded a view of the trees, replaced by floor to ceiling sliding glazing that opens onto a new verandah, the perfect meeting point for al fresco entertaining. The extended house expands over and out into the garden’s tree canopy, establishing a direct – and exciting – relationship with the surrounding landscape.

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While I unboxed it though, I was moved by the portrait of Kim in the frame. The altar has a stunning devotion station that’s SOSTRONG that I LOVEYOUKIM. The altar has an ultra-thin DuraCeram basin bonded to the Mediterranean oak. I mean altar.

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suspended ceilings were ripped out to reveal the roof structure, now white-painted in bedrooms to draw light into the space. Existing hardwood floors were cleaned and added to in the living room, sustainably sourced from India. The firm was keen to manifest the frisson between the artisanal and the everyday, so the fitted Mvule hardwood joinery, inset with precious dark palm wood handle reveals, is counterpointed with door panels of rough hessian covered timber.

Surprisingly for reduced cost reasons, the firm decided to procure most of the higher-end lighting, tiled flooring and sanitaryware in the UK, which involved a container-full of goods pulled together here and delivered to the site in one go eight weeks later. Locked away in a room and strictly audited when taken out, were Tom Dixon and Holloways of Ludlow light fittings, faux marble tiles from Solus Ceramics for splashbacks and showers and ceramic flooring from Solus, Doreen and Tiles Direct. Taps were sourced from Crosswater, with ironmongery from G Johns & Sons. Drawing on the brassiness of this and the Tom Dixon, the firm designed the bold, gold-effect stainless steel sheet timber sliding door separating the huge living/entertaining space from the big kitchen; announcing with a closing flourish the end of cooking and the start of dining.

But there was also the clear desire to contrast the ‘bling’ factor with the raw and simple. And so the architects came over on a few site visits, initially to talk through and then to attend the casting and installation of the dyed concrete sinks in the bathrooms. As with all the local craft on evidence in the home, the architects worked with the contractor and craftspeople to modify the intent so as to achieve the best result. This iterative process was a first for the contractor, but they obviously enjoyed it – the studio has secured a second commission in the capital off the back of this, and has brought the contractor along with it.

You’d have thought that all the international travel would have come at greater client cost but A Small Studio’s Rivera says the startling use of a JCT contract in the Kenyan context and UK sourcing not only saved money but produced a home that looks like a million dollars. That’s quite some bang for your buck.

Credits
Structural engineer Manor Consultants
Joinery Dumont Enterprises
Contractor Atlantis Construction

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To find out more and buy your contracts online visit ribacontracts.com
Durlum Polylam ceiling baffles — LSA Projects

With the highest GDP globally — nearly US$120K — the Duchy of Luxembourg is as famous for having the world’s most minted people as it is for its infamous jumping spot, the Red Bridge over the Alzette. But if money shouts and wealth whispers, you might be getting a smug silence from the users of its new two million-book Bibliothèque Nationale.

Helping with the hush are the matte white powder-coated slats of Durlum’s Polylam acoustic baffles, working with the exposed concrete and pale timber and, hopefully, keeping a few more of its residents that little bit happier.

lsaprojects.co.uk/

Splashing light — Annabel Karim Kassar

We travelled at night, and for water dug deep into shifting sands, leaping like beasts upon the hard roots and little puddles of brackish liquid our Bedouin guides unearthed. And just as hope failed, the light of dawn sprang glinting through airborne droplets pure as a mountain stream. Our vision resolving, we recognised these bright beacons of hope as being of hard metal, and illuminating very acceptably a small café where we enjoyed a selection of delicious pastries and mint tea served in comfortable surroundings by welcoming staff. Four Tripadvisor stars.

annabelkassar.com/home

Bespoke heritage paint — Crown Trade

The suffragette student does things that she shouldn’t like smoking and voting and such. Her bluestocking ladies, why? they’ve thrown up such sparks that we’ve had to invest in new paint!

For the purpose-built hall where the students dined at this heritage joint built for bookish young dames is so far from refined (refut with volleys of bangers; of sprouts, spam and mash) we’ve been forced to invest in an upgrade and our new paint cash stash went direct to the specialist specification division of tough paint makers Crown Trade! For the purpose-built hall where the studentess dined at this heritage joint built for bookish young dames is so far from re/fined (what with volleys of bangers; of sprouts, spam and mash) we’ve been forced to invest in a spade and our new paint cash stash went direct to the specialist specification division of tough paint makers Crown Trade!

crowntrade.co.uk/

Horizon 2.0 task light — Humanscale

‘We know what you’ve been writing. And we’re going to need you to write some more. Cos you know what? Your stories about us are FAKE NEWS.’

‘Put this down: we are NOT Horizon 2.0 task lights, PVC-free and providing 390 lumens of touch-controlled thin-film LED power. You’re going to say we are your masters. And you better remember: we can reach you wherever you think you can roll. We’ve got built-in ball joints at every flex point. What are you? Six inches? Well we can reach fifteen.’

humanscale.com
Sign Up

Specification favourites from Inside Out Architects’ residential associate Anthony Hall and commercial associate Philip Russell

OPEN-CELL CEILING

Consulting underestimate ceilings and services in commercial space is challenging when fire strategies require high free air flow percentages. We used Grigliati open cell system in our Calabria Airport lounge project, which we couldn’t achieve with airport’s airflow requirements. The rectangular panels are formed by Salem thin aluminium microlabs set at two customisable depths and apertures to create ‘fake’ rows. The blanket texture conceals well along the horizon, screens spotlight glares and mitigates visible ceiling fittings. The accessible panels, customisable finish and competitive price is a welcomed shift from preceding alternatives.

CEMENT-BONDED WOOL WOOL PANELS

We’ve been using cement-bonded wool panels as an internal acoustic treatment in both residential and commercial projects. We emphasise the importance of the acoustic environment to clients but cost in often a hurdle. Tri-located panels are relatively affordable and make a considerable difference. Diverse colours, panel designs and installation methods mean they can still look quite different from project to project. All the ensuite completed Sanctuary Loft in Clerkenwell, the natural cement finish was chosen to complement existing rough textured concrete, with a bit of natural cement finish was chosen to complement existing rough textured concrete, with a bit of

CELLULAR PERMEABLE ‘PAVING’ SYSTEM

We are working on an innovative development of 14 Pantehaus homes in Kent with Gold Property Developments and contractor Southmill, which is due to complete later this year. A key principle of the project is to create a woodland community setting and a large area has been designated to communal landscape access. To illustrate the idea of a central woodland we wanted to mitigate the impact of conventional hard surfaced roads. We used cellular permeable ‘paving’ system with grass infill to make ‘green roads’, which priorities pedestrians and enhance the natural character of the site, while aiding our sustainable drainage strategy.

BECAUSE YOU’RE WORTH IT

There was a time when running a piece on a 500m2

 Depression bunker might have had a certain chic value, but in these days of pandemic and mass

-rising it all seems rather more... everyday – even appealing! Lounge project, which we security with the emphasis on the ‘everyday’, where better to buy than from Zoom Cosmetic CEO Gigi Henderson’s 1979 bunker in Las Vegas? Fitted out with all the comforts of home – including a kitchen ‘runout’ of Starfire Wines – there’s even swimming pool and hand painted murals of LA vistas, all backlit on a timer so you can sit out Armageddon from there till dusk. Forever. Yours for $1m.

HERE’S YOURS!

Lockdown has given us all time to pause, self reflect, re-evaluate, triple statues, roll them down the road and pop them in the drinks. So better than ever now to take time to vote for their most iconic handyman in popular culture. Ambitious, home-schooling architects will feel a dual pride that Bob the Builder tops the list less so perhaps that he’s closely followed by Super Mario. But the ‘favourite handyman’ vote that’s sub-category?75%, Groundskeeper Willie from The Simpsons. How times change in my day, that look was enough to prompt worried parents to ward you off ever being seen with the caretaker.

DAWN OF THE DEAD

With just four walls to stare at for the last three months, who wouldn’t succumb to any visual diversion? To step up tech firm Nanoleaf with its ‘hexagon’ wall lighting to stimulate tired peepers – even pre-programmed with a ‘sunrise’ setting. And its hexagons are a rosy reminder of threatened bees, which are thriving amid clean air and uncut verges this year, right? ‘Cause the Asian hornet joined Covid’s journey west. It loiters outside hives – a process confusingly known as ‘hawking’ – waits for a bee, bites its head clean off and eats the hives – a process confusingly known as ‘hawking’ – waits for a bee, bites its head clean off and eats the – even pre-programmed with a ‘sunrise’ setting. And its hexagons are a rosy reminder of threatened bees, which are thriving amid clean air and uncut

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History in a new light

The original Conservation Rooflight® offers traditional aesthetics outside and clean, contemporary lines inside.

- Meets current building standards including Conservation, English Heritage and the National Trust.
- Designed with slim clean lines and a low-profile to match the roofline.
- Linking bars for every size.
- White internal linings that sit flush to the reveal.
- Top hinged opening (as opposed to centre-pivoted) for an authentic appearance and to maximise the space below.
- Easy to install.
- Available in standard sizes - Made to Measure service also available.