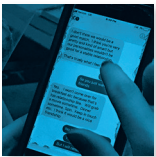
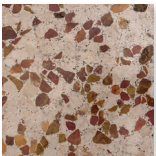
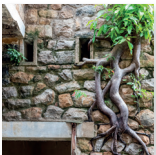
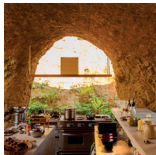
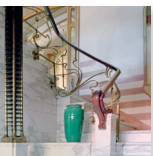


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Romy Cockx is curator at MoMu since 2019. She has curated exhibitions since 2008 for the Archive and Research Centre for Women's History in Brussels, the Fashion Museum in Hasselt and for DIVA, the Museum for Diamonds, Jewellery and Silversmithing in Antwerp. She has explored different curatorial approaches in collaboration with film and theatre directors and interior designers such as Axel Vervoordt and Gert Voorjans.



IBRAHIM KOMBARJI

Ibrahim Kombarji is an architect, researcher, and writer based in New York. His work explores the entanglements of design, ecology, and geopolitics. Until recently, he was part of *Formafantasma* in Milan. He has also collaborated with offices in Paris, London, and Beirut, which he considers his home base. Ibrahim graduated from *Columbia University's GSAPP* and was awarded the school's *Incubator Prize* in 2023. His most recent writings have been published in *PIN-UP magazine*, *Humboldt Books* and *Bartlett's Prospective Journal*.



MARK WIGLEY

Mark Wigley is Professor of Architecture and Dean Emeritus at Columbia University. He is a historian, theorist, and critic who explores the intersection of architecture, art, philosophy, culture, and technology. His recent books include: *Konrad Wachsmann's Television: Post-Architectural Transmissions*; *Passing Through Architecture: The 10 Years of Gordon Matta-Clark*; *Cutting Matta-Clark: The Anarchitecture Investigation*; *Are We Human? Notes on an Archaeology of Design* (with Beatriz Colomina); and *Buckminster Fuller Inc.: Architecture in the Age of Radio*. He has curated exhibitions at MoMA, The Drawing Center, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Het Nieuwe Instituut and the Canadian Centre for Architecture.



NATALIE DUBOIS

Natalie Dubois has been the curator of applied arts and design at the Centraal Museum, Utrecht since 2015. In this capacity, she is a Rietveld specialist and is responsible for the Rietveld Schröder House managed by the museum. Dubois studied art history at the University of Amsterdam and New York University as well as museology at the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam.



NIKLAS MAAK

Niklas Maak is the architecture critic of Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and has taught architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and at Frankfurt's Städelschule Institute of Fine Arts, where he initiated the "Frankfurt Prototype". His latest novel "Technophilia" is currently turned into a movie. Niklas Maak lives in Berlin.



PRISKA VON MINCKWITZ

Priska Schmückle von Minckwitz, is a Paris based freelance preservation consultant and writer on architectural history. Her specialisation on Henry van de Velde grew out of her consultancy for the restauration of the Villa Esche in Chemnitz that was achieved in 2002. Former member of the advisory boards of the "Henry van de Velde Societies" in Chemnitz and in Hagen, she is been member of the scientific committee of the "Fonds Henry van de Velde" in Brussels since its creation in 2004.



BEATRIZ COLOMINA

Beatriz Colomina is the Howard Crosby Butler Professor of the History of Architecture and the founding director of the Media and Modernity program at Princeton University. Her books include *Sexuality and Space* (1992), *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (1994), *Domesticity at War* (2007), *Clip/Stamp/Fold* (2010), *Are We Human? Notes on an Archaeology of Design* (2016), *X-Ray Architecture* (2019) and *Radical Pedagogies* (MIT, 2022). Among her exhibitions: *Clip/Stamp/Fold* (2006), *Playboy Architecture* (2012), *Radical Pedagogies* (2014) and *Sick Architecture* (2022). In 2016 she was co-curator of the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial.



JESSICA VAN GEEL

Jessica van Geel is a writer and historian. In 2018, she published a biography of Truus Schröder entitled *I love you, Rietveld*. In 2022, she released *Truus van Lier: Het leven van een verzetsvrouw*. Van Geel studied cultural history at Utrecht University and followed the PDOJ postgraduate course in journalism at Erasmus University Rotterdam. For many years she worked for the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* and she has written for *Vrij Nederland*, among others.



MARIE HONNAY

From fashion to collectible design, from craftsmanship to architecture or contemporary art, the subjects this Belgium-based journalist explores are numerous. Her hidden pleasure: matching her outfits to the art galleries she visits with passion. For this issue, this enthusiastic editor, who collaborates with several publications in Belgium and France, talks to Michèle Lamy, an artist she admires for her uncompromising sense of style and unconventional way of creating beauty.



DAVID ROBSON

David Robson is a British architect and academic who has spent a large part of his career in Sri Lanka. He first met Minnette de Silva during the early 1970s, whilst helping to develop the newly established Colombo School of Architecture, and invited her to take part in student criticisms. After a period working as the Chief Housing Architect for the new town of Washington, David returned to Colombo in 1980 where he worked as an adviser on the Government's 'Hundred Thousand Houses' programme. During the period he and his wife rented one of the Coomaraswamy Twin Houses that Minnette had built in 1972. Robson has published monographs on the work of Sri Lankan architects Geoffrey Bawa and C. Anjalendran as well as a number of articles on the life and work of Minnette de Silva.



EMANUELE COCCIA

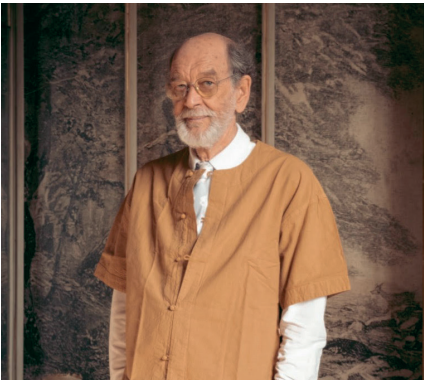
Emanuele Coccia is the author of *The Life of Plants* (2018), *Metamorphosis* (2021) and *Philosophy of the Home* (2024). He recently published a photo-theory book with Dutch photographer Viviane Sassen (*Modern Alchemy*, 2022), a philosophical epistolary on light with photographer Paolo Roversi (*Lettres sur la lumière*, 2024) and a book on the relationship between fashion and philosophy with Valentino's creative director Alessandro Michele (*The Life of forms. Philosophy or Re-enchantment*, 2024). Together with Olivier Saillard, he curated the exhibition "The Many Lives of a Garment" at ITS Arcademy, and together with Yuko Hasegawa an exhibition on Art and Ecology, "Dancing with All", at the Museum for 21st Century in Kanazawa (Japan).



AMOR IMMEUBLE

Amor Immeuble is an architecture practice based in Paris and Brussels whose work covers a wide field of projects, from material research to situated experimentation, from scenography to construction. Since 2020, the collective has been exploring the potential of dormant building elements uncovered across a variety of territories. Recent activities include a series of residencies, research initiatives, and exhibitions in France, Belgium, and Italy, reflecting the practice's approach on materials and their role in architectural narratives. Architect, author and publisher Pierre Chabard, Associate Professor of history and theory at the School of architecture Paris-la Villette who also runs the Éditions de la Villette has written the introduction to their "carte blanche".

Contributors



FULVIO FERRARI

Fulvio Ferrari is a chemist but has also been an antiquarian, a designer and manufacturer of lamps, a gallery owner, a curator and the author of 20 books dedicated mainly to Mollino, Sottsass and Italian design. Since 1997 he has been contributing editor of the American magazine *NEST*. In 1999 he founded the Museo Casa Mollino with his son Napoleone, discovering the enigma contained in this secret flat now open to the public. He is a lifetime member of MoMA since 2008.



MARION VIGNAL

Marion Vignal is an art and culture consultant and exhibition curator. A graduate in literature and art history from the Sorbonne, she founded her consultancy studio ida M. in Paris in 2015, after an initial career in the press. Since 2021, she has also been president and founder of the association Genius Loci, which promotes architectural heritage and contemporary creation. She produces and curates exhibitions in remarkable and secret places, reviving the spirit of the place through a dialogue between the arts.



DIETER ROELSTRAETE

Dieter Roelstraete is the curator at the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society at the University of Chicago, where he also teaches. He previously held curatorial positions at the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (2003-2011), the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2012-2015), and Documenta 14 (2015-2017). Trained as a philosopher at the University of Ghent, he has published extensively on contemporary art and related theoretical issues.



FREDDY MAMANI SILVESTRE

Freddy Mamani Silvestre was born in Catavi, Bolivia, in 1971. He is a builder, civil engineer, and architect known for pioneering the “Neo Andino” style, also called “Cholet”. After studying at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, he completed over 100 projects blending Andean culture with contemporary architecture. His work has been showcased in major international events, including the Fondation Cartier (Paris, 2018), the Katmandú Triennale (2022), and the Sydney Biennale (2024), highlighting his global impact on contemporary architecture.



BENJAMIN ZURSTRASSEN

A graduate in Philosophy and History (UCL) and Art History (ULB), he wrote his thesis on the furniture of Henry van de Velde. He has worked at the Horta Museum since 2014 and has been its curator and director since 2018. At the same time, he is a professor at the UDA-UCL and has published numerous articles and books on architecture, applied arts and the question of ornament and decoration, also between 1850 and 1950. He became president of the Art Nouveau Network in 2021.



LOUMA SALAMÉ

Louma Salamé is graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris and the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (Paris). Her career has included positions at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Mudam in Luxembourg, the Louvre Museum in Abu Dhabi (Communications Manager), Mathaf in Doha (Director of Communications and Audiences) and the Institut du Monde arabe in Paris. Since 2016, she has been General Director of the Boghossian Foundation – Villa Empain (Brussels), for which she has conceived the exhibitions *Melancholia* (2018), *Flamboyant* (2019), *The Light House* (2020-21), *How will it end?* with Alicia Knock (Centre Pompidou, Paris) (2021-22), *Water* (2023) and others. She is a visiting professor at Science Po Paris on museum management (2023-2024).



TL Magazine is published by Spazio Nobile

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In press shops
In bookstores
A list of distributors and sales outlets in bookstores in France, Europe and in the rest of the world is available on our website www.tlmagazine.com

TLmag is downloadable on tablets:
www.cafeyn.co/fr/publication/tl-mag

Subscription

Spazio Nobile
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BE0457 003 721
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IBAN BE45 0682 4906 3489
BIC GKCCBEBB

Subscribe to the magazine online and sign up for our TLmag Newsletter at: www.tlmagazine.com

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Printed in Belgium

Yearly Edition: 50€
Legal deposit: 2295-9769
TLmag#40 2024-2025
The Ideal Home
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Printing

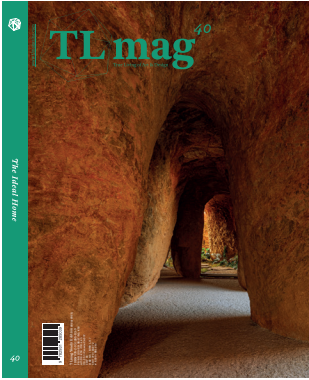
Graphius, Belgium
ISBN 978-2-931285-03-9

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Responsible Publishers

Spazio Nobile Editions
Lise Coirier & Gian Giuseppe Simeone,
Spazio Nobile, rue Franz Merjay 142 —
1050 Brussels, Belgium, November 2024

www.spazionobile.com
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Covers:
1 — **Brigitte Schindler**, *The Mallard's Nest*, Photograph, courtesy of Casa Mollino & Brigitte Schindler
2 — **Junya Ishigami**, Yamaguchi House, Japan. Photo: Yashiro Photo Office
3 — **Amor Immeuble**, *Foyer tricéphale*, Graphite on paper. Photo: Piet Janssens, Courtesy of Amor Immeuble
4 — **OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen**, 25 Columns, Plintsborg, Sweden.
Photo: Bas Princen, Courtesy of OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen



For a Felicitous Living

Chris Dercon
Guest Editor

“Ideal homes” are things of desire in more than just one way. The novel *“Things: A Story of the Sixties”* by Georges Perec from 1965 unforgettably tells the story of such a desire. In Perec’s novel, a young Parisian couple develops an almost maniacal yearning for the best “things,” read: design products— alas, which they ultimately cannot acquire. However, in Perec’s story we also detect another kind of desire. Namely for an upfront contemporaneous way of living. And for that, certain things are more fit to express that realisation than others.

But now a kind of riddle pops up: why do some homes— think of their interiors— created in the recent past, or even a long time ago, strike us often as more ideal than others, some of which include those of today. This is not always a question of taste, good or bad, it is probably because the category of contemporary living has been expanding continually in itself. If we are to believe

the hordes of magazines dedicated to “ideal homes” we sometimes, nearby, literally feel the past and see the future growing. Is it, that first and foremost, as Emanuele Coccia writes, “Because we build houses to live better. The essence of each house lies in this adjective. The foundation of each house is moral, not purely aesthetic or architectural.”

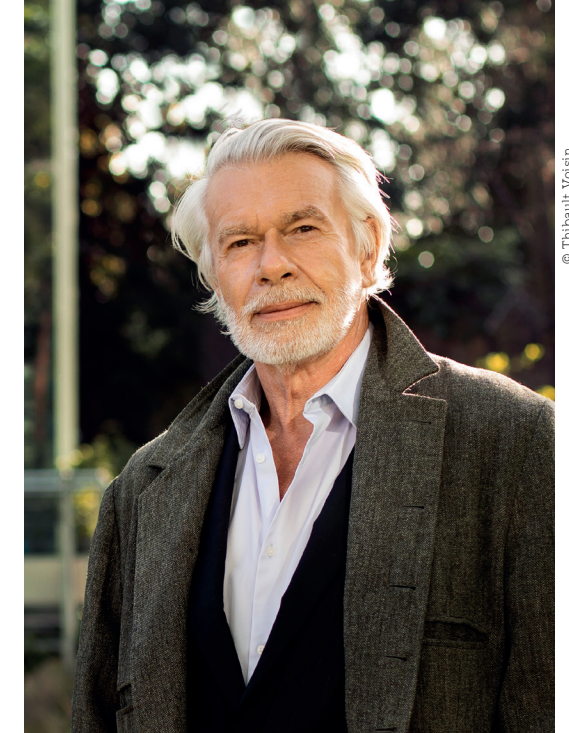
I thought about this as I remembered sitting on the terrace of Gio Ponti’s seaside house overlooking the Mediterranean, the Villa Allungata (The Long House) at Capo Perla in the municipality of Capoliveri on Elba. The Long House has a markedly long plan, it has an extended front with a view of the sea from every room. Inside, the plan is laid out to provide a balanced communal life, generous sleeping quarters make it possible for each individual to withdraw while still enjoying the view. I added one thing to Ponti’s huge reddish terrace, a ping-pong table, an all-weather 722 C-Cornilleau, painted in that striking olive green colour, listed as Pantone 357-U. The thin tubular metal under-structure equipped with rubber wheels, and the large green wooden plane circumscribed with lines in clear white did not contradict the perfection of Ponti. I had now reached an even more ideal home. For a ‘felicitous living’ was Ponti’s ideal.

What does this expression really mean and where does it come from? In this issue we are exploring many different expressions of past, present and future felicitous living through the minds and eyes of theoreticians, curators, designers, artists, writers and even inhabitants of “ideal homes,” of both different regions and times: a diverse annexations of disciplines, not unlike the game of ping pong.

At the end of our journey, exploring ideal homes, if the term is even still applicable, we present instead of an index an annex, about why words and architecture do so well with one another.

I hope you enjoy this issue. ◇

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Season XXXII –
Vincent Fournier, Solo Show
Flora Incognita
Photo Brussels Festival, Brussels, Belgium
23.I-23.2.2025

After his first solo exhibition *Post Natural History* at the opening of the gallery in 2016, Vincent Fournier returned to Spazio Nobile with a second personal exhibition *Super Specimens: Sensations of the Extraordinary* in 2023. In this solo exhibition, *Flora Incognita*, Vincent Fournier gives us a glimpse of the possible and infinite transformations of the flower, which unfolds with delicacy and majesty.



© Vincent Fournier

Vincent Fournier, *Cryolucens borealis* [Gliese 436b], 2024, inkjet print on HR Ilfoflex prestige paper, framed in American oak box, museum glass, and brass plate, ed.10

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Love or the Mystery of the Ideal Home

Lise Coirier
Founder, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

Far from the classical definitions, I would like to talk about the mystery that surrounds ideal homes, whether in terms of their presence or their unique souls. The search for a “home” is a highly subjective philosophy, based on a particular vision of life, and it is supported by architects, anthropologists, writers and poets, as well as by the protagonists, who are guided by a visible or invisible force and by the desire to create their own domestic environment, in their own image, sometimes even as a work of art. This environment, which offers a living space, is a kind of promise of happiness, a place to anchor oneself and a projection towards an ‘elsewhere’. With the cliché of a jetty jutting out into the sea, facing a horizon that promises a better life, the ideal home prefigures an escape from everyday life and the increasingly pervasive global standardisation. By pursuing this ideal with courage and determination, man faces the myth of a foundation that does not yet exist, comparable to the crystallisation that Stendhal spoke of a century earlier in his novel *De l'amour*, and which creates a link between himself and the world, whether real or imaginary. This need to exist through a house, under a roof, in a ‘haven

of peace’ that can protect us, goes back to the dawn of time; it is also in symbiosis with our desire to love and to transmit values that take shape over time, like an experience ‘to be lived’ and shared. The concept of the “In-betweenness” also applies to the theme of the ideal home, which our Guest Editor Chris Dercon sketches with a keen eye in this special issue, ignoring the clichés that are often associated with it. Off the beaten track, Chris Dercon guides us through the artistic and hidden intricacies of these ideal homes, which are so unusual and fascinating because of their highly personal and intimate nature. This visual and intellectual stroll opens up avenues of thought that are far from trivial, questioning the very nature of living and living in harmony with one’s environment. Emanuele Coccia talks about this in his book *Filosofia della casa. Lo spazio domestico e la felicità* (2021) and defines this ideal house, in contrast to the “living machine” and beyond its space-time and architecture, as a “villa of mysteries”, to evoke Pompeii, or the true “temple of love”. ✧

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