

AZURE

DESIGN | ARCHITECTURE | INTERIORS | CURIOSITY

AZUREMAGAZINE.COM

NEW SOUND BARRIERS
Acoustic panels with style P. 42

MASSIMILIANO FUKSAS
Q+A with the Italian legend P. 39

MILAN DESIGN WEEK
Highlights from the fair P. 114

SPOTLIGHT ON KITCHENS
Bring on the urban farm P. 51

2017 **AZ** AWARDS

**THE VERY
BEST IN...**
**ARCHITECTURE.
DESIGN.
INTERIORS.
CONCEPTS.
SOCIAL GOOD.
ENVIRONMENTAL
LEADERSHIP.
A+ STUDENT.**







27



WINNER OF
PEOPLE'S
CHOICE

28

RESIDENTIAL INTERIORS

22 RETURNING HUT Set in a treacherous landscape in Fujian, China, this rural getaway is a return to first principles, and an elemental oasis that combines rugged materials into unadorned spaces. The floor plan was shaped by gargantuan boulders that litter the sloping site – one even makes a cameo indoors, rising from a luxurious concrete bathtub sunk into the master bathroom floor. A soaring volume serves as the interior's main living area, with one wall turned over to a double-height grid of windows that face the sea. Throughout, sleek geometric

lines contrast with rough-hewn finishes that range from sawn-lumber millwork to the exposed bluestone masonry of the outer walls. **Location:** Fujian, China **Firm:** FM.X Interior Design, China **Team:** Xu Fu-Min

23 STRATA HOUSE The compact facade of this four-bedroom house in an upscale neighbourhood of Toronto, Canada, belies an expansive 2,800-square-metre interior of barely-contained effulgence. Configured in an L-shape hinged around a sculptural spiral staircase, its three floors back onto a terraced garden, offering generous views through expansive glass curtain walls. Local architects Audax teamed up with Pencil Design to detail the light-filled interiors in an opulent, mid-mod revival style. The space is characterized by

bold, contemporary lines and strictly curated spaces that overflow with such rich textures and materials as silk, marble, limestone, oak and brass. The ensuite master tub – carved from a single piece of meteor-like stone – is a real showstopper.

Location: Toronto, Canada **Firm:** Audax with Pencil Design, Canada **Team:** Bradley Denton, Johanna Peters and Gianpiero Pugliese with Donovan Bumanglag, Simon Chow, Laith El-Bahrani and Sacha Lee

71

COUNTRIES
HAVE
SUBMITTED
PROJECTS
TO THE
AZ AWARDS

COMMERCIAL INTERIORS

24 UBER ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES GROUP In Pittsburgh's frothing tech and manufacturing hub, Uber's 7,500-square-metre facility feels suitably industrial for a space devoted to digital mapping, vehicle safety and autonomous transportation. Assembly Design Studio honoured the city's history by accenting the futuristic prototyping plant with generous splashes of distressed Corten steel – a material used for everything from custom detailing to entire walls – much of it upcycled from salvaged materials by local furniture-maker Urban Tree. At the centre, two canted wooden grandstands double as vast stairways leading to the second floor, while in the showroom, the latest self-driving car prototypes are given exalted status: *deus in machina*. **Location:** Pittsburgh, U.S. **Firm:** Assembly Design Studio, U.S. **Team:** Denise Cherry and Liz Guerrero with Justin Ackerman, Sarah Dziuba, Hilary Hanhan, David Hunter, George Jordan and Alma Lopez

25 MIDWEST INLAND PORT FINANCIAL TOWN The Midwest Commodity Exchange Center, a marketplace for metal futures, is a seven-building complex in Xi'an – part of the Chinese government's trade infrastructure initiative. At its centre, an impressive five-storey main lobby features cascading and curved interior walls of specially extruded aluminum. These vertical slats encase towering LED displays that show scrolling commodity symbols and prices at a massive scale, their digits pixelated by the walls' slatted surfaces in a throwback to the traditional ticker displays of older exchanges. Undulating, tiered surfaces reappear throughout the interior, following a strict colour palette of white and grey varied with accents of gunmetal and wood.

Location: Xi'an, China **Firm:** Hallucinate Design Office, China **Team:** Wenliang Wang

26 NCTU INNOVATION CENTRE Taipei's Fieldvo Design Studio invoked the relationship between tree and bird for the interior of this university startup lab – a roost for student entrepreneurs hatching their ideas. Four wood-framed boxes with pitched surfaces are set into the dropped ceiling, defining the open-concept space's working areas from above, while maple key-inspired light fixtures spiral toward the ground, echoing the canopy theme. A system of metal frames secured to tracks in the ceiling holds large, pivoting plywood panels that serve as movable office partitions, with narrow gaps that offer smaller working groups privacy while maintaining a discreet visual link. **Location:** Hsinchu, Taiwan **Firm:** Fieldvo Design Studio, Taiwan **Team:** Bo-Yang, Lin, Sheng-Hsuan, Huang and Yue-Jing, He; with Han-Sheng, Hsu and Zhi-Ren, Pan

27 CLAUS PORTO FLAGSHIP STORE Like a portal through time, a marble staircase connects the two rooms of this split-level Lisbon shop, each with a distinct mood: past or future. Bold geometric patterns of floor tiles define each space, while wooden wall units act as a connective thread between the shop's distinct epochs. In the retro room, the service counter is a polished brass monolith that reflects the 130-year-old fragrance brand's beautifully packaged products, displayed in antique apothecary cabinets. Downstairs, the flagship storefront is a sleek and modern salon where doting stylists stow products out of sight in an archive of sleek wooden drawers. **Location:** Lisbon, Portugal **Firm:** João Mendes Ribeiro Arquitecto, Portugal **Team:** João Mendes Ribeiro with Joana Brandão, Filipe Catarino, Diogo Correia Duro, Maria da Luz Santiago, Ana Maria Feijão, Catarina Fortuna, Bruno Henriques and Pedro Teixeira

28 HOUSE OF SMART Maurice Mentjens didn't dabble in trend-driven colour schemes for this cannabis and psychedelics dispensary. Instead, he opted to give his retail concept in Eindhoven, Netherlands, a flatly monochromatic interior. He then enhanced the walls and ceiling of the 85-square-metre shop with a dense maze of criss-crossing wooden shafts connected at right angles – an immersive installation reminiscent of the classic 3-D Pipes screensaver. More practically, the horizontal spans double as shelving for merchandise. Painted a ponderous grey, Mentjens's eye-filling decor evokes neural networks, whether biological (like a brain's cerebral cortex) or artificial (like the circuitry of a motherboard). **Location:** Eindhoven, Netherlands **Firm:** Maurice Mentjens, Netherlands **Team:** Maurice Mentjens with Annet Butink and Lesley Ruijters