

# PIN-UP

Featuring **Liz Diller, Konstantin Grcic, Iris van Herpen, Charles Hollis Jones**  
and

ALSO: Nanu Al-Hamad, Apparatus, Arquitectura-G, Atelier Biagetti, BLESS, Luca Cipelletti, Debi Cornwall, Rafael de Cárdenas, Gripner Hägglund, Marc Hundley, Olalekan Jeyifous, June 14, Nynke Koster, Max Lamb, Reinaldo Leandro, Naihan Li, Philippe Malouin, Jonathan Olivares, Ifeanyi Oganwu, Leon Ransmeier, Reinaldo Sanguino, Scholten & Baijings, Soft Baroque, Katie Stout, Studio Swine, and Frank Lloyd Wright

THE COMFORT ISSUE

PLUS

ARCHITECTS,  
TOILETS, AND  
THE POWER OF  
PERFUME



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A pleasant panoply of books, exhibitions,  
objects, people, and ideas all readers  
should be aware of.



Let's  
face it: being  
pregnant is tough! There's  
a new life growing inside you and  
you might be facing some third-trimester  
fatigue. But now is the time to get that beauty rest  
because once that little bundle of joy arrives, shuteye will be in  
short supply. And what better place to do just that than on a cushy  
sectional? Take for example the *Turner* seating system, designed in 2008 by the late  
Swiss designer Hannes Wettstein for MOLTENI&C. Available with settees, corner pieces,  
chaise longues, and poufs in various sizes, the *Turner* offers seemingly endless  
possibilities for configuration. Thanks to Wettstein's ingenuity, the *Turner's* depth of  
seating can be adjusted by a mere flip of the hand. Perfect for the exhausted mommy-to-  
be. The quilted *Coin du feu* blanket is by HERMÈS. The beige dress, turtleneck, and red  
thigh-high boots are all by HERMÈS, too.

PHOTOGRAPHY  
VINCENT DILIO

COUCH POTATO I





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Designer Katie Stout grew up in bucolic Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, roaming the woods behind her suburban childhood home. Before she began “stealing pizza money to go tanning,” Stout benefited from having her own playroom and borrowed art supplies from her artist mother. Together they painted clouds and stars all over her bedroom, which was filled with stuffed animals and plastered with Stout’s drawings. It’s seemingly mawkish memories like these that helped shape Stout’s design sensibility, which continuously challenges the more rigid paradigms of furniture, particularly in the domestic realm. Stout, whose general giggliness belies a strong sense of self-determination, was consumed by the idea that the conventional home her parents strove for had to be turned upside down. “Everything was very traditional and nice,” she reminisces, “and it wasn’t that easy to say, ‘This isn’t for me.’ Yet at the same time I knew my home life wasn’t normal. That surface niceness was actually a cover-up for a dysfunctional situation.”



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020, 027 Stout's exhibition *Side Dish* (2017) at R & Company gallery features the *Bench in three marbles*, the *Manic Botanic* carpet, and wallpaper produced by Flavor Paper.

021 *Unique Red* and *Unique Pink* table lamps (2017); painted ceramic.

022 *Unique Girl* toilet paper holder (2017); painted ceramic.

023 *Unique Girl* lamp (2017); painted ceramic with pinched clay and gold textured shade.

024 *Unique Girl* hand mirror (2017); painted ceramic.

025 Designer Katie Stout casually leans back in her Brooklyn studio flipping through a Franz West exhibition catalog.

026 One of Stout's "girls" appears to pierce a mirror with her breasts.

028 *Girl Lamp* (2017); ceramic with purple and pink double-girl base and gold textured shade. Available through R & Company.

029 Latticed paper pulp stool in Stout's studio.

030 *Unique Shelf* (2017); paper pulp.

031 Group of *Girl Lamps* (2017); painted ceramic with pinched clay and textured shades. Available through R & Company.

032 *Girl Mirror* (2016); ceramic and glass. Available through R & Company.

033 *Stool* (2017); marble. Available through R & Company.



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Not heeding her mother’s warnings of the unprofitability of art, Stout enrolled at RISD to study furniture design. It was there that she met her friend and future studio mate, designer Misha Kahn. “I was the worst studio troll ever,” laughs Stout about the time when they shared a Brooklyn space. And while she and Kahn never did a project together (“We’re too similar”), Stout enjoyed several collaborations with other artists, including her friend Sean Gerstley, and also Bjarne Melgaard. “He taught me to be more fucked up and to be okay with that,” she says of the Norwegian provocateur.



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These days Stout plays best alone. Following her solo show *Side Dish* at R & Company gallery in New York in September 2017, she has been engaged in notions of coming-of-age in womanhood, and considers herself an avid feminist designer. In her studio she messes around with fabric scraps, and pins sketches of rainbow-colored female nudes to the wall gestating future lamps, rugs, or chairs. “I want to make these domestic objects where the girls are sort of misbehaving — they’re totally distracted from their task. They’re naked, but I don’t want them to be overly sexual, just playful.” At the time of PIN-UP’s visit, Stout was also working on *Sweetie Honey Pie Angel Cake*, an exhibition to be shown at Miami’s Nina Johnson gallery in December 2017, for which she envisages a temple of wicker girls gathered together, taking on different roles in ceremonial yet playful positions. “It’s gonna be a more introspective take on the female form, and how women relate to each other and the things around them — it’s a little more secretive,” she explains. But this doesn’t mean it’ll be any less unapologetic. “The newer lamps have touch nipples: you have to press on them for an awkward amount of time for them to turn on. Which makes it so funny.” — NATALIA TORIJA



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# GIRL CAMP

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Portrait by Antwan Duncan for PIN-UP. All other images courtesy R & Company, New York.



# PILLARS OF SOCIETY

## Nordic Architecture’s (Stifling) Comfort Zones

BY JAMES TAYLOR-FOSTER

1. You shall not believe that *you* are someone.
2. You shall not believe that *you* are as good as *we* are.
3. You shall not believe that *you* are any wiser than *we* are.
4. You shall never indulge in the conceit of imagining that *you* are better than *we* are.
5. You shall not believe that *you* know more than *we* do.
6. You shall not believe that *you* are more important than *we* are.
7. You shall not believe that *you* are going to amount to anything.
8. You shall not laugh at *us*.
9. You shall not believe that anyone cares about *you*.
10. You shall not believe that *you* can teach *us* anything.

as they’re known, provides a checklist for good, civilized society, and its edicts have, for better or worse, bled from the pages of fiction into the Nordic subconscious. Most indications point to the fact that Sandemose was a sorely amoral and entirely contemptible individual (one of his sons accused him of incest, pedophilia, and bigamy, and he is also reputed to have committed a murder). His writing was no less contentious: *A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks* (1933), in which he first outlined this existential code, takes place in “Jante” — a sleepy, rather remote Danish village modeled, it is said, on his birthplace, Nykøbing Mors. Set against the backdrop of a murder and narrated through obscure dreamscapes, it portrays a society in which prejudice and partisanship, bigotry and “radical inclusivity” (though not described as such), reign supreme, stifling its inhabitants in a stranglehold of self-



These are, according to the controversial Dano-Norwegian author Aksel Sandemose (1899–1965), ten commandments by which to live a virtuous Nordic existence. The “Law of Jante,”

effacement and tightly imposed insularity. The tangible implications of the “Law of Jante” as an observational critique spread and, over time, became quietly accepted.

Since the dawn of the 20th century, the Nordic region — Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland — has benefited, more often than not, from the moral high ground. It has been largely on the political left, socially inclusive, and at the technological vanguard, having developed comparatively stable and streamlined economies, industries, and welfare models. The built environment has been integral to this moral ascendancy, trying its utmost to improve, incrementally, overall standards of living. As a result, Nordic architecture has itself suffered from rhetoric on repeat. A region closely associated with some of Modernism’s greatest built accomplishments, it achieved a state of renown from a position of comparative privilege and, importantly, ideological security. In 1971, as the excavators and bulldozers were bearing down on the Pruitt–Igoe project in St. Louis, Missouri, architect Peter Celsing’s Kulturhuset (a cultural center combining a theater and exhibition space) was still under construction in central Stockholm. This building, commissioned in the mid 1960s, stands among the greatest testaments to post-war Swedish Modernism and, by extension, to the role of art, cinema, and music at the heart of civic life. By 1974 (when it finally opened), however, the tides had started to shift; Modernist ideals were, on the whole, being dismissed as a rather embarrassing misfire. For some, they had failed entirely.

But did Modernism “fail” in the Nordic countries? Perhaps not, or perhaps only aesthetically so. Perhaps it merely transitioned into the landscape of today: an architecture in which core values, each agreed upon approximately 70 years ago — openness and transparency, a considered relationship to landscape and terrain, aspirations to equality and high standards of living — still, thankfully, hold water. And yet the sacrifice made in the name of stability is continuity, which cannot always be assumed to be constructive. The “Law of Jante,” today largely dismissed, has in fact been dressed in a new, more clean-cut outfit. In 2014, the phrase

*åsiktskorridor* (known as *meningskorridor* in Norwegian, or “opinion corridor”) was formally acknowledged by the Swedish Language Council. It’s used to represent a collection of tried and tested modes of thinking that should be adhered to in polite conversation, politically, and when it comes to the delicate and persistent project of shaping society. To step out from or even walk parallel to the opinion corridor is tantamount to national insurrection. The Nordic nations’ culture of consensus — the notion that general agreement and deference to the majority is a far better mechanism for progress than promoting individual opinions — has established a complex web of comfort zones that have an institutional tendency to smother the different, the experimental, and the disruptive.

This idea also extends to architectural production in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. It’s as if the great Nordic architects of the 20th century — often incorrectly perceived to be a group of isolated geniuses, usually male, and almost exclusively white — are shouting from beyond the grave: “You shall not believe that you know more than we do. You shall not believe that you are more important than we are.” For contemporary architects, this poses the ultimate Catch-22. If “radicality” is not possible, then ideas remain paperbound and unresolved. There is a legacy to uphold, no doubt, but it must be occupied, and harnessed, and transposed into something which reacts and responds to a society which appears to be tussling with its own contemporary identity. For architects, this means that, contrary to the Jante decrees, the frontline of this new paradigm is in fact within grasp.

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A bidet in plain view of Le Corbusier's living space, Paris (1931–34): "Challenging the prevailing codes of the day and arousing charges of immorality"

have invented the idea of toilet bowls suspended off the wall for ease of cleaning, along with the partitions between them, in the Larkin Company administration building (Buffalo, New York, 1906). Indeed he was so proud that he published the toilet bowl in question — invented, what's more, for a company whose products included Oatmeal toilet soap — in the April 1908 issue of *The House Beautiful*. He was always sensitive to the proximity, cleanliness, and view of toilets, argued that combined modern sanitary units could be delivered to houses like cars, and was convinced that squatting was the most healthful way to defecate. The toilet with large windows overlooking the landscape in his most famous house, Fallingwater (Mill Run, Pennsylvania, 1937), is therefore just 10.5 inches off the floor.

Le Corbusier's first demand in his short *Manuel de l'habitation* — published in the chapter "Eyes That Do Not See" of *Towards a New Architecture* (1923) — was for a bathroom with a wall all of windows that would take the place of the drawing room, the traditional room for meeting visitors, with the toilet immediately adjacent. Sanitary fittings were to be proudly

exhibited not hidden. Loos was a great influence on him, and in 1924 he placed a bidet in the pages of his journal *L'Esprit nouveau* heading the article "Other Icons, the Museums," where he wrote, "The true museum is the one that contains everything." The bidet is seen by the architect as an everyday object that one day will be in a museum and will speak about the culture of the 20th century. The bidet was also a major polemical device in Le Corbusier's domestic architecture. He always placed it on view, challenging the prevailing codes of the day and arousing charges of immorality. In the Weissenhofsiedlung (Stuttgart, 1927), where all the leading architects of the time presented their concept of domestic life, Le Corbusier was denounced for having the bidet in the middle of the open space, which is simultaneously bedroom and living space. Newspaper articles attacked him for an arrangement which, they claimed, would only make sense in a brothel. The press was also scandalized by the half-height wall screening the bathroom from the bedroom. In an article in the magazine *Das Werk* (no. 19, 1927), a Swiss critic wrote:

"Are we, in the future, to disregard the smell and the noise for the sake of an interesting

spatial creation ... and where the bed is always there for a model and girlfriend, complemented by bath and bidet?"

In the Spring Summer 1928 issue of *Architecture Vivante* Le Corbusier responded with an article called "The Meaning of the Weissenhof Garden City in Stuttgart," insisting that:

It would not be the last time Le Corbusier used plumbing fixtures in a polemical way. In his own apartment (Paris, 1934), he put the bidet in the middle of the space, apparently embarrassing even his wife, Yvonne, who used to cover it with a tea towel when they had visitors. Le Corbusier considered the toilet "one of the most beautiful objects industry has produced." In his little Cabanon in the south of France (Roquebrune, 1951), he left the toilet open to the space, with little holes in the walls on either side for cross ventilation. In the Villa Savoye (Poissy, 1931), his most famous house, the first thing you see

A rare shot of Buckminster Fuller's rear, testing out his Dymaxion Bathroom (1938): "Happily cocooned in the heart of the heart of his world"



Earl S. Lincoln Photograph Collection, 1920–68 (1928). Used with the permission from the Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Penn State University Libraries. Opposite page: Photograph by Abin Salain. Courtesy of Archives Fondation Le Corbusier © FLOARS, 2017.