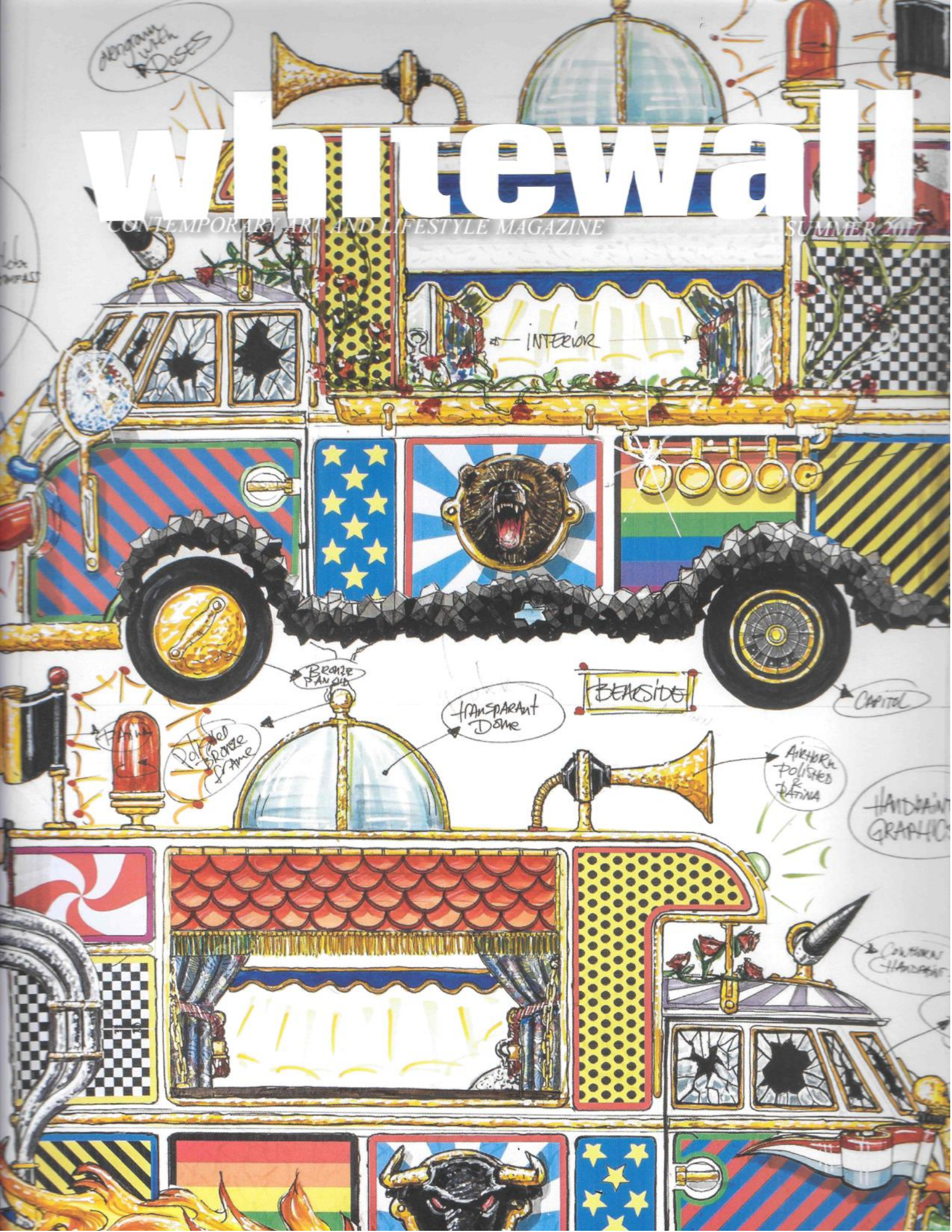


WhiteWall

CONTEMPORARY ART AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2017



ABRAM
LUNA
ROSES

INTERIOR

REAR
FAN ON

TRANSPARENT
DOME

BEAR SIDE

CAPITAL

POLISHED
SPRINGS
& FINE

AIR HORN
POLISHED
& FINISH

HANDPAINT
GRAPHIC

COURTESY
HANDBOARD

DESIGN ISSUE

For this summer issue, we spoke to some of the biggest names in design and architecture. What we discovered at studio visits, over coffee on trips to New York, between events during Salone del Mobile in Milan, and even (in the case of Patricia Urquiola) on the phone on the way to the airport, was how these path makers got to the top of their fields. They've managed to build a new space for their way of thinking, forming the future of the design world and forging a new understanding of what it means to make.

Our cover artists, Studio Job (made up of Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel) have arguably rocketed to their own planet. Their world is defined by Pop imagery, a mix of high and low material, and genre-bending objects that at times pose no practical function. As they told us, their goal is to be the least a designer as possible, while being as much of an artist as possible.

Another duo, Studio Drift, made up of Lonneke Gordijn and Ralph Nauta, would like to do away completely with the art-versus-design conversation. It doesn't serve their practice, which has produced things like a sculpture of light-emitting dandelions, kinetic floating chandeliers, a gravity-defying rotating block of concrete, and, recently, experimental forays into augmented reality.

Konstantin Grcic is more of a purist when it comes to design. His Chair One for Magis has been populating public outdoor spaces for years. With more than 25 years of experience in his field, he's seen the trade change drastically from analog to digital. Lately, he's focused his practice on getting back to what is pure and essential, relying on the expertise, resources, and rigorous research some have taken for granted or overlooked.

Over the winter we flew south to Miami to have lunch with Jean Nouvel and hear about his dreamy, greeny Monad Terrace plans. Nouvel is a consummate humanist, who sees architecture as a gift—if it doesn't offer pleasure, it's a failure. And while Urquiola made her way to JFK after a whirlwind post-Salone few days in New York, we heard about her vision for Cassina as it celebrates its 90th year making furniture and accessories. Acting as creative director is relatively new for Urquiola, and she's ready to redefine the role and solidify the historic Italian manufacturer's position in the 21st century.

Teresita Fernández walked us through her recent exhibition at Lehmann Maupin on the Lower East Side, which challenged traditional concepts of landscape. She asks you to inquire, what's been erased here? What histories have been suppressed? And why?

Finally, we sat down with Jeff Koons in his sprawling Chelsea studio to discuss his blockbuster collaboration with Louis Vuitton, "Masters." Our conversation extended far beyond bags and into the metaphysical, as Koons is wont to do. He even shared how he wants to feel on his deathbed, and the power of art to morph our genes.

So dive into this summer issue, and see if the artists within these pages hold the power to morph your genes, dear reader.

WINKA DUBBELDAM

FOUNDER OF ARCHI-TECTONICS

BY KATY DONOGHUE



Portrait courtesy of Archi-Tectonics.

Winka Dubbeldam is the founder and president of the New York multidisciplinary firm Archi-Tectonics. Founded in 1998, her architecture studio has been involved in research-based design that ranges in scale from objects to buildings to cities. She has been behind residential buildings in New York, contemporary art galleries such as Frederieke Taylor, retail spaces including Ports 1961, spas and meditations spaces like Inscape, and even bottom-up urban planning projects for cities such as Bogotá.

Born in the Netherlands, Dubbeldam originally went to school for sculpture, but soon switched to studying architecture, interested in broadening the audience of the work she wanted to create. Her designs are informed by the visual arts while remaining grounded in rigorous analysis. She is currently professor and chair of the department of architecture at PennDesign in Philadelphia. *Whitewall* visited her in her office earlier this year to discuss the wide scope of her practice.

WHITEWALL: *You initially went to school to become a sculptor. And while you didn't end up pursuing that path, you've said that being at art school was formative for you because it really taught you how to think independently. Can you tell us more about that?*

and it is very good for analytical design but there was no came to Columbia and I loved Columbia—I was so happy planning to go back. I love Holland socially, but I don't as much.

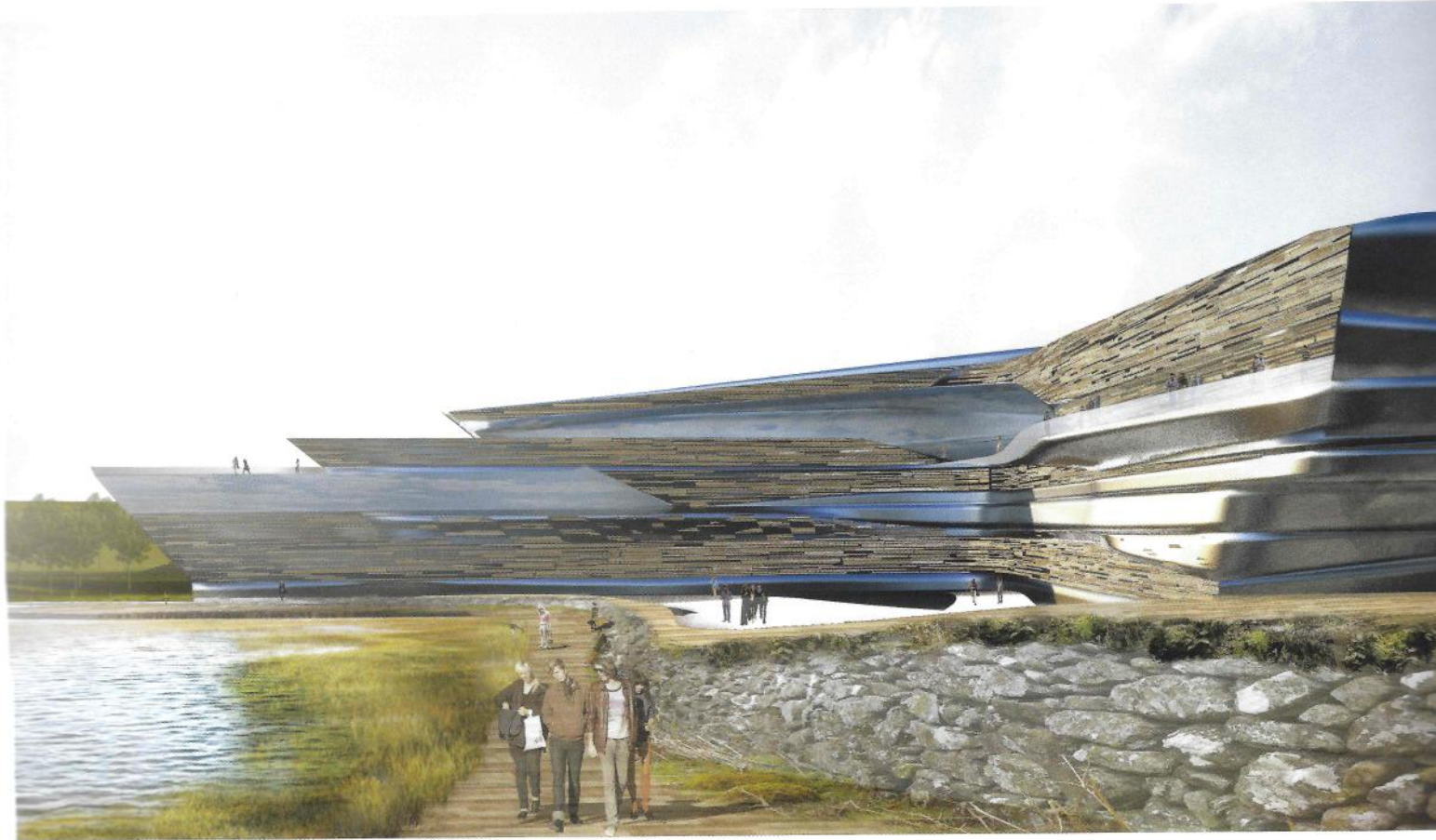
WW: *You have had so many projects in New York, so what's working here?*

WD: I love the fact in New York you can really be you extremely accepting of any foreigner or of any way of to be really, really fast, and things can flip overnight. Manhattan—it has been super-fun.

WW: *I think it's interesting, too, that some of your early galleries like Frederieke Taylor. What kind of considerations make when designing a space for showcasing art?*

WD: My first project was an art gallery on Broadway. I and architecture. It was kind of natural, I guess. In that g





a square box, so why would we make a square box? And light is not guided the best way by straight walls, nor is sound. And that was also the idea for Inscape.

WW: Right, Inscape, the meditation space you designed in New York. What was the initial brief on that project?

WD: I know the owner, Khajak Keledjian, very well. One day he invited me for lunch, and he explained to me how he was working on a new concept and asked if I had some advice for a young architect who could help him out. I guess he knew me from doing buildings. But as he was explaining the concept of Inscape to me, I was like, “Khajak, I have done yoga since high school and meditated for 20 years—I would love to work with you on that.” I have always been interested—and it probably comes from my sculpture background—in looking at how architecture could learn from industrial design. It is mesmerizing, if you think about your car, how you push a button and a window goes down. And in most buildings you can’t open the windows because they are painted shut!

I wanted to make a space that from the outside is not very telling of what it is on the inside. I also wanted it to look like some heavy volume that was hanging from the ceiling that lightly touched the floor, but inside it is encapsulating you. Having done yoga and been in spas, there are always





the ocean or in a desert or a landscape where you have a horizon. So the goal was to make a space where you have no corners—infinite. So this ring of light, when you maybe freak out halfway through the meditation, you can close your eyes and know where you are.

And then the other thought was to make a bench so you could sit upright or lean against, and then when you are finally comfortable you can sit cross-legged in the middle on a little pad that we also developed. We did industrial design on the pads, and we worked with a car-design company on the whole room. It's fun that the idea of industrial design was something I could totally get into this, and it was great to work with those people.

You've also worked on urban planning, like for downtown Bogotá in Colombia. Can you tell us what it's like to work on that scale?

We learned a few things in the sixties. One is that you can't start a new city from scratch. It's not a holistic model, and it is just too dictatorial. We learned that suburbs are not necessarily the best models, so people are coming back into cities.

I think it was probably one of the most amazing questions that I got in the office, a client saying, "I would like you to design me a plan for downtown Bogotá." This is the first time that someone asked a question that completely combined academic research with practice. Bogotá has 33 percent schools and universities in its downtown region and 1.8 million people commuting into the downtown area, and a million of them were cars. So we said the most important thing is to get the traffic jams out

of the way to create more life in downtown and more services in downtown. We start creating micro housing and student housing, buying up old office buildings that were empty. That was instant and a quick move. Then we developed a terminal where you had big box stores at the edge of the center. It was very cheap parking and all of the public transport moved into the downtown. So you switch the point where you could do all this shopping before you take public transport.

Bogotá sits at the bottom of an area that used to be wetlands. When it rains, the whole thing floods like three or four times a year. It is a nightmare, so we proposed bringing one river to the natural riverbed to create more wetlands to allow urban agriculture so people could start to grow things and could use it for recreation to solve the flooding. Allowing for farmers markets creates a new economy for these people, and you solve flooding.

We offered solutions based on the idea that you don't superimpose architecture on urban infrastructures. You really do it in a way that grows social, cultural, political, and economic inputs.

WW: *Is art still a passion for you?*

WD: Oh, definitely. And I see architecture as art. I feel that every project that we do is one major innovation that I want to push through. I think we make things very sculptural. When architecture has a certain shape, it creates a completely different environment. Light hits it differently, it is different to move through it, and your relationship to it is different. And to me that is much more important than if it is formal.