



PRACTICE

STYLE

INSPIRATION

KEY PROJECT

1 Brian MacKay-Lyons
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'Modernist,
minimalist and
critical regionalist.'

'The Barcelona pavilion set the grammar of modern architecture,' says MacKay-Lyons, mentioning Kahn's Kimbell Museum and the Great Mosque of Córdoba as personal favourites. Murrut and Moore also get a look in.

MacKay-Lyons gets to make the most of some spectacular sites. Evoking the spirit of the great post-war private houses, the firm's work is an enduring development of neo-vernacular modernism. House #22, is a wooden-clad box, which looms above the Nova Scotian coastline, while the low-budget White/Leger house draws on the simplicity of farm buildings.

Office of Mobile
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American hi-tech
with a modest
environmental edge.
OMD is minimal in
impact, maximal in
flexibility.

Siegal subscribes to the Eames's maxim, 'good design for the masses'. Citing the engineer Frei Otto, and the sci-fi, but usually unbuilt, architecture of the late 1960s and 1970s as influences, she is also studying the mass production techniques developed by the auto industry - 'why can't architecture instil the same mobile/global sensibility?'

Jennifer Siegal founded OMD in 1998, having studied at SCI-Arch and taught widely. 'I believe that I look at architecture in a holistic way, merging contemporary industrial design, product design, graphics, and the environment with built form and spatial experience,' she says. The firm's prototype, Portable House, is for an eco-sensitive site in downtown Los Angeles.

2 Thomas Deckker Architects
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Forms that address
the site and function,
without being
overbearing or
unnecessarily
complex.

Deckker draws inspiration from the relationship between objects, their components and their sites - an old wooden boat reduced to planks, or the way shifting sands are contained by wooden breakwaters. His is an architecture of spatial experience - he cites the work of artists such as Richard Serra and Donald Judd as influences.

Just outside Brasilia sits Deckker's Magalhães House, a striking white cube that conceals a glassy garden aspect. The plan is also split, with bathrooms and bedrooms confined to the rear, while the living area and first floor master bedroom get all the prime views. Trained at the AA, Deckker worked at Rick Mather in London, before setting up on his own in 1995.

Platane Architecture
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'We're somewhere
between landscape
and the mechanical,'
says architect Platane
Beres, 'a situation
where you can live
between inside
and outside.'

Eclectic: Beres admits to loving TV - but raises the cultural stakes with a passion for fourteenth and fifteenth-century painting.

The Descamps House is a speculative look at how a tiny site in the centre of Paris might be transformed into a luxurious living space. Raised above the ground on angled steel columns, the walls form a curving shell enclosing an open-plan living space, courtyard and service area.

3 William Russell Architects
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Contemporary British
architecture at its
best - rational, calm
and a positive
addition to the
surrounding
environment.

The firm draws inspiration from eclectic sources, as much from the traditional vernacular as high design - 'anything can be inspirational'.

William Russell started his practice in 2000, after a partnership with David Adjaye. 'I have a relaxed attitude to "style",' he claims, 'each space or building is a specific response to an individual brief/client.' The firm's brand new house just off Brick Lane certainly challenges expectations. A metal-clad cube, its sliding windows open up to the bustling local market outside.

4 Plasma Studio
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Plasma Studio
describes itself
as 'contemporary,
sensual, innovative,
experimental and
complex.'

'We are most inspired by kinetic art, as well as the French architect Claude Parent, expressionist Hans Scharoun, and the artists Constant and Jakob Bakema,' they say. Somewhat more eclectically, they also cite the Jetsons, LTJ Bukem, John Coltrane, Jacques Cousteau, Fellini and David Lynch as inspirations.

Formed by Venezuelan architect Eva Castro Iraola and German Holger Kehne in 1999, Plasma Studio's most recent projects include a house refurbishment for a London musician and a live/work space for a silversmith.