



Living Tomorrow

INSIGHTS

REPORT

DELTALIGHT

ARCHITECT: GOVAERT & VANHOUTTE

Table of content.



04
INTRO - THE EVOLUTION
OF HOME & LIGHT

06
SIX CHANGES IN
RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

12
EXPERT DIALOGUES



FOREWORD

The way we live is constantly evolving. Not through major shifts, but through subtle transitions. With a growing awareness of our surroundings, of nature and sustainability, and of what really contributes to our wellbeing. In that movement, light inevitably follows and with it, expanding its role as a quiet, yet visible force that guides how we experience our living environment.

In this insights report we explore how residential spaces are developing, and how light plays a vital role in this process. More than just form or function, light brings atmosphere, calm, and connection. Together with architects, lighting designers and creatives, we shed light on insights and developments and how we will live tomorrow – and in the future.

At Deltalight, we dedicate ourselves day by day to create solutions that respond to these evolving needs. Solutions that unite technology and design, with a focus on sustainability.

***Thank you for reading,
we hope this sparks creativity.
Your Deltalight Team.***

Intro.

The Evolution of Home & Light

WHAT 'HOME' MEANS TODAY

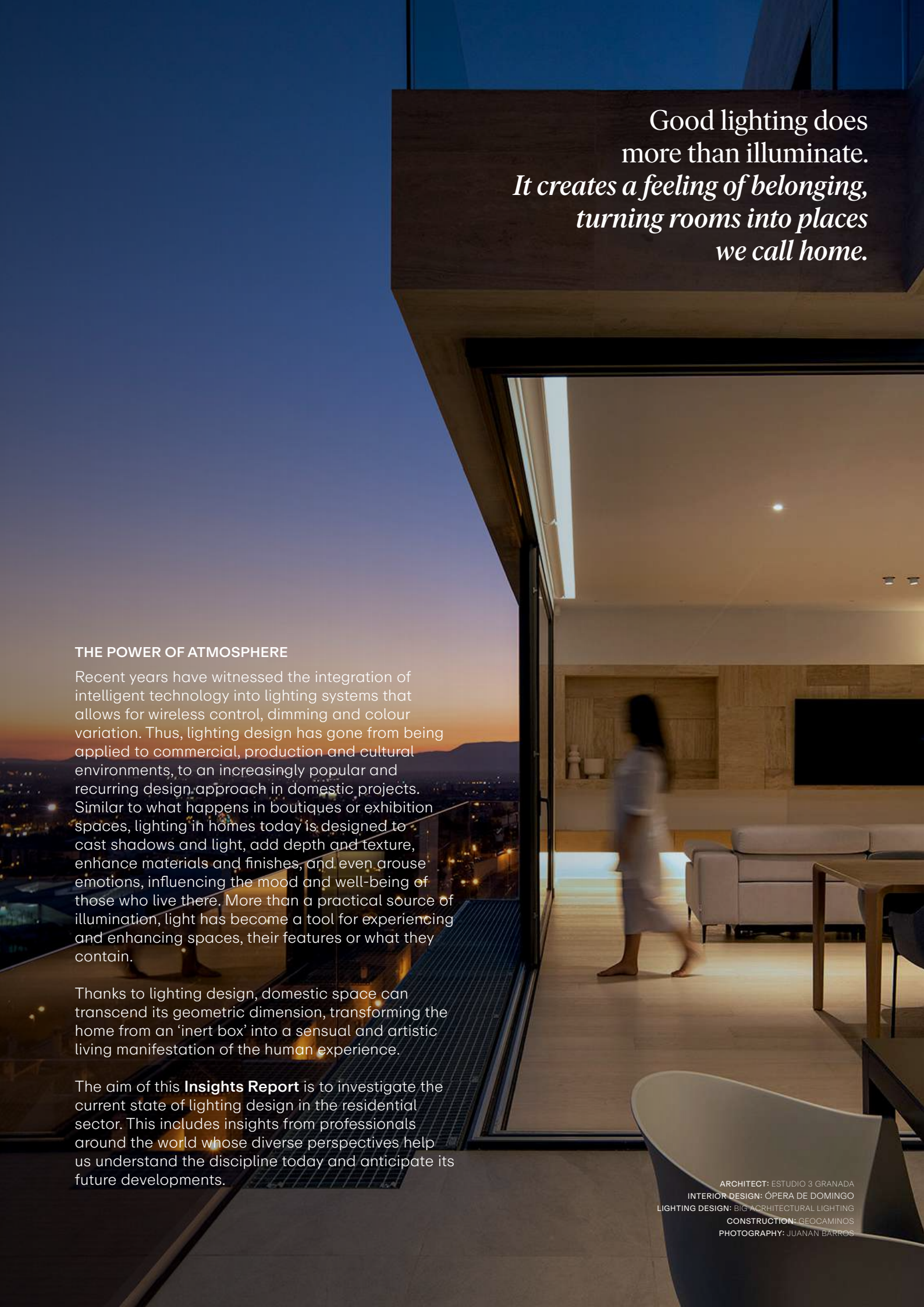
The concept of 'home' encompasses both tangible and intangible elements, becoming a multifaceted term that lends itself to the most varied interpretations. It ranges from the purely physical definition according to which a home is a structure or domicile in which individuals or families reside, to the more abstract and emotional meaning for which, in addition to its physicality, a home is often associated with feelings of comfort, security, belonging and love. For some, 'home' can also be an abstract idea linked to memories, relationships or even specific places that evoke a sense of familiarity.

Then there are cultural and symbolic aspects, for which 'home' may symbolise one's roots, heritage or identity, reflecting a cultural significance. Whichever way one interprets it, the house is the place where one feels or makes someone feel at home, where one takes refuge to collect and protect one's intimacy or opens its spaces to others to welcome them, and it is in these cases that light and its ability to create the right atmosphere come into play.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESIDENTIAL LIGHTING

The evolution of lighting in homes can be likened to a transformative journey, influenced by technological advances, economic factors and social preferences. Originally, homes were illuminated by fire, then by candles and oil lamps, which were used until the end of the 18th century, when the arrival of gas lighting, which was especially popular in urban areas, brought more intense light into homes, but also entailed inconveniences such as smoke and fire hazards.

With the introduction of incandescent light bulbs in 1879, electric lighting of homes began: with the flick of a switch, lighting began to completely transform a space, define its atmosphere and create a hypnotic, multi-sensory experience. In the late 1930s, the first fluorescent tubes were produced and after WWII, they were increasingly used in homes - especially in kitchens, garages, and basements - proving to be more efficient than traditional light bulbs. The energy crisis of the 1970s brought attention to energy efficiency, which led to the emergence of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and, in the following decades, the rise of light-emitting diodes (LEDs), far more energy efficient, durable and environmentally friendly to the point where they soon became the standard for home lighting.



Good lighting does
more than illuminate.
*It creates a feeling of belonging,
turning rooms into places
we call home.*

THE POWER OF ATMOSPHERE

Recent years have witnessed the integration of intelligent technology into lighting systems that allows for wireless control, dimming and colour variation. Thus, lighting design has gone from being applied to commercial, production and cultural environments, to an increasingly popular and recurring design approach in domestic projects. Similar to what happens in boutiques or exhibition spaces, lighting in homes today is designed to cast shadows and light, add depth and texture, enhance materials and finishes, and even arouse emotions, influencing the mood and well-being of those who live there. More than a practical source of illumination, light has become a tool for experiencing and enhancing spaces, their features or what they contain.

Thanks to lighting design, domestic space can transcend its geometric dimension, transforming the home from an 'inert box' into a sensual and artistic living manifestation of the human experience.

The aim of this **Insights Report** is to investigate the current state of lighting design in the residential sector. This includes insights from professionals around the world whose diverse perspectives help us understand the discipline today and anticipate its future developments.

ARCHITECT: ESTUDIO 3 GRANADA
INTERIOR DESIGN: ÓPERA DE DOMINGO
LIGHTING DESIGN: BIG ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING
CONSTRUCTION: GEOCAMINOS
PHOTOGRAPHY: JUANAN BARROS

Six significant changes

Reshaping Residential Design.



01

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS



02

GREEN & SUSTAINABLE BUILDING



03

FLEXIBILITY & ADAPTABILITY



04

DENSITY & URBANISATION



05

LIFESTYLE CHANGES & WELLNESS ORIENTATION



06

AESTHETIC EXPRESSION



PROJECT: BUtterFLY
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA ATTALI
ARCHITECT: NEFELI CHATZIMINA (ARCHITECTSCRIPTA)

01

Technological Advancements

The future of residential design is being defined by rapid technological innovation, with digital tools, automation, and data-driven systems fundamentally transforming how homes are conceived, built, and experienced.

Today, virtual replicas of residential projects, enhanced by real-time sensor data and AI, increasingly enable architects, builders, and clients to visualise, simulate, monitor, and optimise building performance throughout a home's lifecycle.

The evolution of Building Information Modelling (BIM) into 5D and 6D platforms allows real-time predictive analysis, cost estimation, and scenario planning, improving precision and financial oversight in residential projects. Meanwhile, the Internet of Things (IoT) connects environmental devices to improve energy efficiency, convenience, and personalized lighting and thermal comfort.

Artificial intelligence powers smart home systems that learn occupant behaviour, automate daily routines, and provide intelligent insights for both design and operation. AI also streamlines construction processes using autonomous drones and robots for tasks like surveying, inspections, and material handling. Robotics are increasingly used for precision construction tasks, while large-scale 3D printing enables rapid, cost-effective, and customisable building solutions.

These innovations collectively drive energy efficiency, environmental responsibility, and personalised living environments that respond intelligently to their inhabitants.

02

Green & Sustainable building

Sustainable and green building practices are making residential architecture greener, healthier, and more resilient, moving from niche considerations to industry standards driven by urgent environmental concerns, regulatory changes, and technological innovation. Stricter regulations and green certifications are increasingly pushing architects and builders to prioritise operational energy, embodied carbon, and biodiversity enhancement from the earliest design stages.

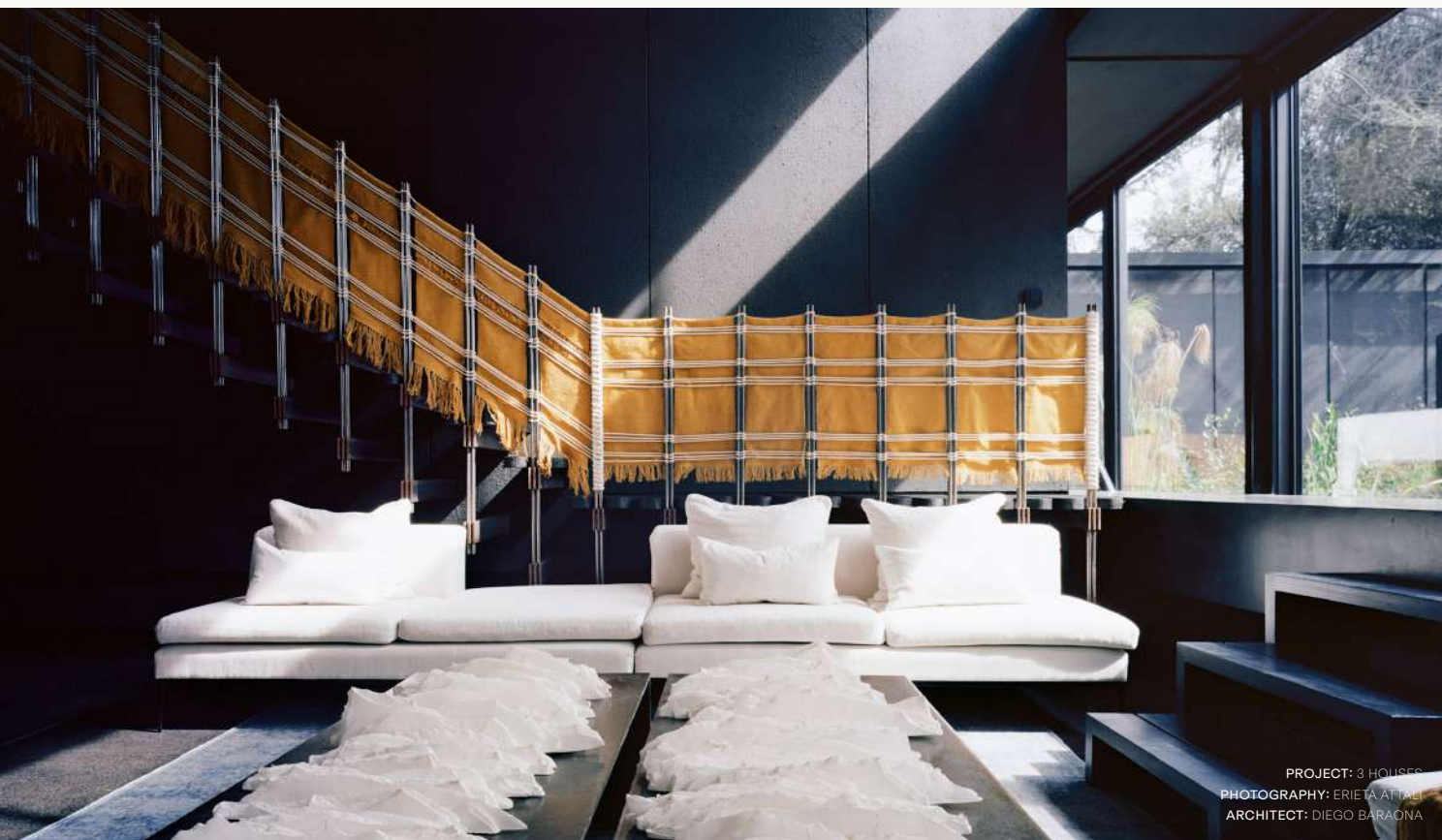
Now more than ever, residential design prioritises net-zero energy buildings; that is homes that generate as much energy as they consume. This is achieved through advanced insulation, airtight construction, and integration of renewable energy sources. Passive house principles, which focus on maximising natural light, airflow, and insulation, are becoming mainstream, significantly reducing operational energy needs.

Water conservation features such as rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling, and permeable surfaces, are integral, making homes more self-sufficient and resilient to climate challenges. There is also a marked shift towards using eco-friendly, recycled, and low-carbon materials, such as bamboo, recycled steel, reclaimed wood, and self-healing concrete. Circular construction principles, such as designing for deconstruction and material reuse, are gaining traction, minimising waste and embodied carbon across the building lifecycle.

Besides providing positive ecological contributions and enhance occupant well-being, the approaches mentioned above, generally offer long-term economic benefits through lower operating costs and increased property value.



PROJECT: GOLF
PHOTOGRAPHY: JAN VERLINDEN



PROJECT: 3 HOUSES
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA APTAI
ARCHITECT: DIEGO BARAONA

03

Flexibility & Adaptability

Adaptability is central to the present and next future of residential design, enabling homes to be dynamic, resilient, and personalised. Through flexible spatial configurations, smart technologies, climate-adaptive features, and modular construction, homes better accommodate evolving lifestyles, environmental challenges, and occupant preferences, ensuring long-term functionality and comfort.

Newly designed homes feature rooms and areas that can easily transform for different uses throughout the day or as family needs evolve. Examples include sliding walls, retractable partitions, modular furniture, and convertible rooms that shift between home offices, guest rooms, playrooms, or living spaces. This flexibility maximises utility without requiring larger footprints and reduces the need for costly renovations.

Modular building components allow homes to be expanded, reconfigured, or moved with relative ease. Prefabrication accelerates construction and reduces waste, while also supporting adaptable designs that can evolve with occupants' changing needs.

Integration of smart home technology further contributes to the flexibility of interior spaces, enabling environments to adapt automatically to inhabitants' moods, routines, and preferences. Lighting, temperature, and even soundscapes adjust dynamically, creating living spaces that are not only flexible in function but also in atmosphere and comfort.

With increasing climate variability, residential buildings are being designed to withstand extreme weather and temperature fluctuations. These adaptations ensure that homes remain safe, comfortable, and efficient under changing environmental conditions.



04

Density & Urbanisation

In the near future, design at all levels – from planning to landscape, architecture, and interior, will be increasingly challenged to balance density with sustainability, community as well as individual needs, in order to improve the quality of life.

Density is and will be a crucial factor in the future of residential design, particularly as urbanisation increases, and land becomes scarcer. As populations grow, urbanisation is transforming cities worldwide, making residential design a focal point. Besides resorting to technology and adaptable living spaces, community-focused design is already shaping the future of residential architecture, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of residents.

The need for nature and a feeling of local community is likely to increase the number of medium-density developments in the future. This is because people are looking for housing in vibrant, walkable communities with access to parks and private gardens. The densification of areas typically leads to better utilisation of public infrastructure, which benefits from economies of scale, making it more efficient and cost-effective by serving more people in less space.

An increase in density can certainly build larger communities and promote greater social interaction, but thoughtful design is crucial to maintain a sense of community and quality of life in dense urban environments. In this regard, it is extremely important to consider when an ever-growing housing development reaches the tipping point of over-densification.

05

Lifestyle changes & Wellness orientation

There is a growing demand for homes that consciously support wellbeing by reducing stress and promoting calmness. For this reason, architects and designers are increasingly focused on creating environments that support mental, physical, and emotional health through their work. The main aim is to actively restore ecosystems and human communities by respecting natural, cultural, and economic history.

Inspired by ancient practices, professionals are exploring how spatial proportions, materials, and resonance can positively affect human physiology and balance. This includes using natural, eco-friendly materials, designing spaces for relaxation, and paying attention to acoustics and lighting to create soothing atmospheres. This approach integrates local materials and native landscapes to create homes that heal both the environment and occupants, fostering a deep connection between people and place.

The connection to nature has been shown to reduce stress, increase happiness, and improve air quality. In the coming years, many homes are expected to feature indoor gardens and natural elements to enhance mental balance and create peaceful environments.

Residential spaces are increasingly tailored to individual needs and personalities, with custom furniture, colours, and layouts that foster a sense of belonging and comfort. Personalisation enhances emotional connection to the home, boosting happiness and mental balance, in living spaces that nurture both people and planet.

06

Aesthetic expression

Residential spaces are increasingly influenced by a mix of changing social dynamics, sustainability, and technology – a process that resonates in their aesthetics.

The need for buildings that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate changing needs is becoming ever more pressing. In the case of residential spaces, this means homes built with modular systems and elements that make them easily upgradable, more sustainable and adaptable over time.

Environmental awareness also guides the choice of materials favouring natural and eco-sustainable elements such as wood and stone – including reclaimed varieties – characterised by the richness of their textures. Also increasing is the use of glass, which opens residential buildings to the landscape and natural light by day, projecting their interiors outwards at night.

In parallel, sophisticated technology is making its way into the interior of homes, although designed to be concealed behind walls and furnishings so as not to be too visible. This integration encourages a minimalist aesthetic in which every object has one or more functions, helping to reduce both physical and visual clutter. An increasingly global style is emerging, that integrates aspects of different cultures in a fluid, sophisticated, warmer and human-centred way. It increasingly reflects local climate and culture, with regional aesthetics blending harmoniously with the natural environment.



PROJECT: STE TROPEZ
PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM LETCH

Highlighting perspectives

Expert Dialogues.

The domestic space is not simply a physical place or an architectural artefact, but it is the environment that allows us to know the world and ourselves, both as individuals and as a collective. Within it, our lives are intertwined with those of others, whether they are people, animals, objects, or even natural elements.

The home is therefore not just a container, but a moral device that allows for the fusion and mixing of different identities, overcoming the traditional oppositions between inside and outside, human and non-human, private and public.

For all these reasons the lighting of a residential interior plays as much a functional as a symbolic role. Understanding this complexity requires the insight of professionals from various disciplines engaged in the design and interpretation of space and light.

According with this perspective, international experts – from scientific research and architectural design as well as lighting design and scenography, were asked a few simple questions aimed at conveying the different points of view along with design approaches and interpretations on the subject.





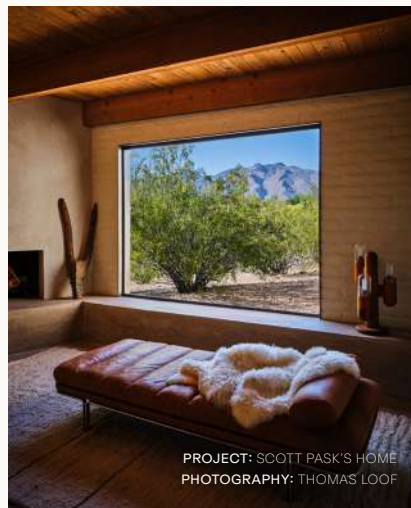
Bruno Erpicum

Architect and Founder of Studio Erpicum



Roxanne Kaye

Architect, Designer and Principal of Saota



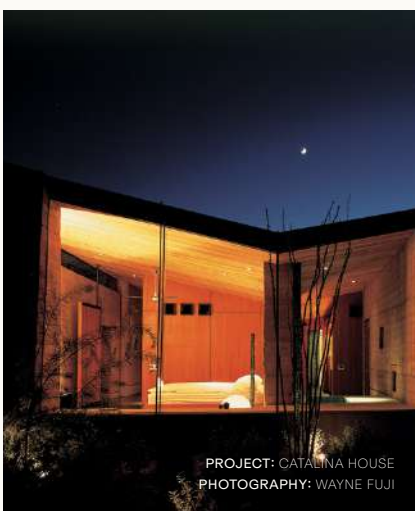
Scott Pask

Scenic Designer



Claudia Kappl - Joy

Lighting and Interior Designer - Lecturer



Rick Joy

Architect & Principal of Studio Rick Joy



Erieta Attali

Architecture and Landscape Photographer



Peter Smith

Prof Dr. Emeritus of Planetary Sciences

Bruno Erpicum

Architect |
Studio Erpicum |
Belgium

Architect Bruno Erpicum, who is based in Brussels where his offices are located, also works internationally. He views environmental constraints not as obstacles, but as fundamental to the design process:

"To design what will be built, one must first listen to all the components of the place where the construction will stand. Like a sculpture, a building occupies space; but it also has the privilege of being lived in from within. It is therefore up to us to orchestrate forces, materials, volumes, and light so that, beyond simply responding to the functional needs behind the design, an emotion is born from the experience of space."

Whether in an urban setting – such as London, where he notably built the Dalí Museum – or in the countryside of the Balearic Islands, he has always adapted his work with complete freedom, creating a contemporary architecture of great sensitivity.



PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHEL TRIPTYQUE



What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

Designing a residential space today is the most difficult thing to do because it's the place people live in for the largest part of their time. When appointed to design a house, we are asked to enter and affect someone else's life, becoming responsible for the joy of that person.

The quality of architecture lies in its ability to connect people to the context they live in.

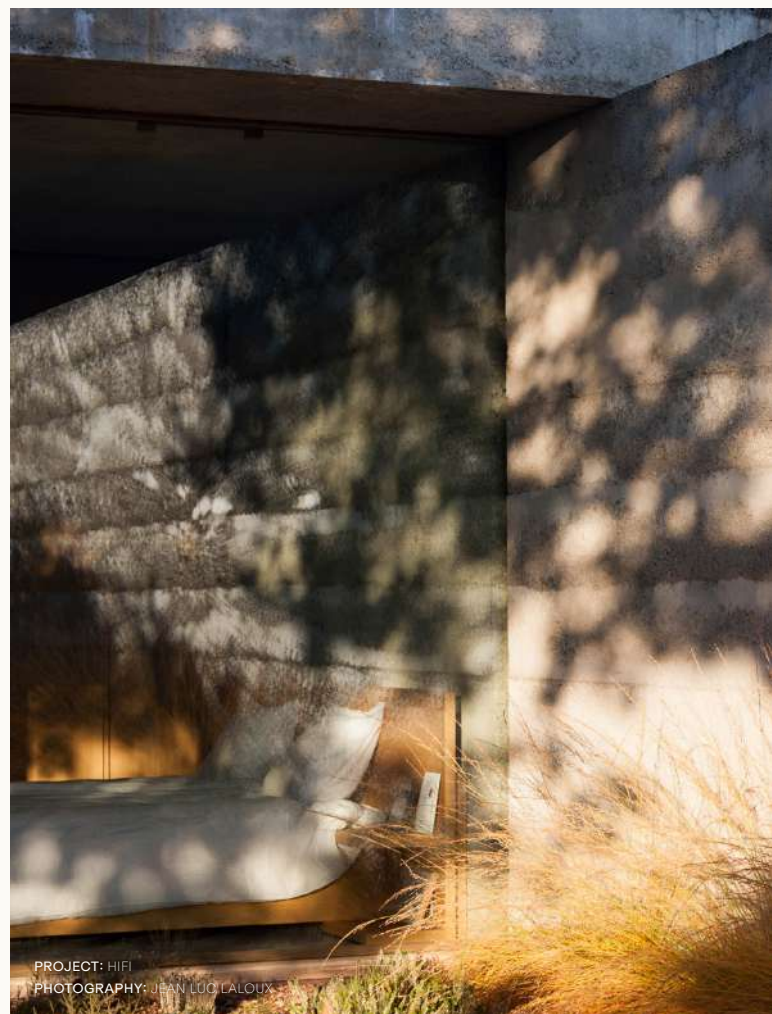
How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

Light is crucial and lighting is needed. But then there is also shadow, which is even more important than light. If the latter is to be qualified, one needs shadow to be able to read a relief or the texture of a surface.

Natural light can enter through windows, rooflights, or any other type of opening in the building envelope. Artificial light, on the other hand, does not come from these openings, but in my view, it shouldn't come from the middle of the room either. I firmly believe that artificial light should be guided by surfaces.

In my view the light is better when coming from the top of the walls, driven by its reflection on materials which, in doing so, play a role and are not merely decorative.

“Designing a house means becoming responsible for someone else’s *joy*.”



How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

Nowadays, publications show many redundant interiors which are filled with light, colours, and so on, but we never stop and say 'oh, I wish I could live there'. Maybe we are missing something, and we need to rethink and steer the communication. As I said before, we spend more time in our houses than in any other space, and inhabiting a house is not only a necessity but a deliberate action. That's why the way we design living spaces must reflect their deeper purpose and emotional significance.

I believe in the increasing importance of details. I hate seeing a ceiling cluttered with too many lighting fixtures, a ventilation grid, sprinklers, loudspeakers, and all the technical equipment one can think of hovering above my head. The ceiling should be smooth, contributing to the quality of life, and designers must find a way to remove all the technical aspects from sight.

What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

They are all unique because every single site is unique, and I think that I don't really make any decisions myself. Reading the site that provides me with all the answers needed. If I place a building five or ten metres from its initial location, the design would be completely different. That's why I don't see it as work: *I collect all the information in my head and close my eyes and it's the context – not me – deciding on what needs be done.*

Currently, we are working on quite a lot of projects in a many different contexts. Twenty to thirty years ago, I used to say I wanted my work to be integrated into the context. Nowadays, I say I want to make my building disappear in its surroundings.



*“Light is essential,
but shadow is
what defines it.”*

Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

We have completed quite a number of residential buildings where, once finished and inhabited, we can no longer enter. But quite often people don't choose the right pieces or materials to furnish them.

I see no differentiation between architecture, interior design, and decoration; to me they are all parts of a whole. So, we have created Epicum Home in order to offer a full service to our clients, designing every object for their houses – be it furniture or silverware, including the toothbrushes, to perfectly suit the spaces.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

To me, aesthetics is more a question of integrity. Who am I to say something is or isn't beautiful, but I firmly believe that good work always draws inspiration from its context.

I never draw a building before it is completely defined in my head. Once it is, then I feel like I've tackled all its aspects; be it stability, proportion, impression, and so on. After that process, it only takes me a few minutes to put it on paper and the general quality of the project is already there, including even the smaller details.

A good project, for me, is the one that can be consistently summarised with one or two words. And in case there should be any subsequent question regarding the work, going back to those words helps one to find all the answers.



Roxanne Kaye

Architect & Designer |
Saota Architecture and Design |
South Africa

Roxanne completed her Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Cape Town in 2007. She joined SAOTA directly after graduating as an architect-in-training, gaining early experience in taking a project from concept through to construction.

She soon established herself within the company through her ambition, strong work ethic, and team spirit. Her design talent, project management skills, and dedication to delivering for the client while maintaining the integrity of design, has seen her quickly become a senior member of staff. Roxanne was appointed as Principal at SAOTA in 2022.

“Light is everything. It shapes space, influences mood, and defines the way we experience architecture.”

What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

Residential interiors today are about experience, adaptability, and well-being. Spaces are becoming more fluid and responsive, evolving alongside the way people live, work, and connect.

At SAOTA our “Light, Space, Life” approach reflects this shift: light enhances well-being and strengthens the connection to nature; space prioritises flexibility, adapting to new ways of living and working; life makes interiors intuitive, inspiring, and deeply connected to daily rituals.

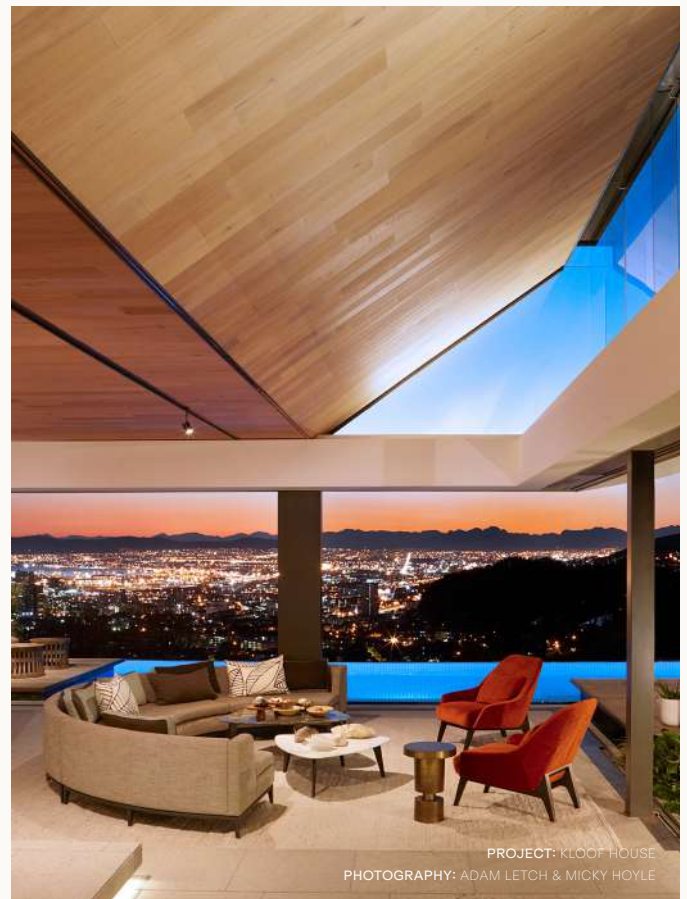
Today’s homes are designed for balance, between openness and intimacy, technology and nature, structure, and adaptability, creating environments that feel both functional and fulfilling.

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

Light is everything. It’s more than a design tool, it shapes space, influences mood, and defines the way we experience architecture. Natural light enhances volume, texture, and materiality, while artificial light refines atmosphere and functionality. It’s about finding that balance.



PROJECT: KLOOF HOUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM LETCH & MICKY HOYLE



PROJECT: KLOOF HOUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM LETCH & MICKY HOYLE

How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

Looking ahead, residential interiors will continue to embrace flexibility, connectivity, and personalisation. Spaces will be designed to adapt effortlessly, integrating smart lighting, sustainable materials, and multi-functional zones. The focus will always be on seamless transitions between inside and out, maximising light and spatial flow to create homes that feel alive, immersive, and deeply in tune with how people live.

What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

Some of the residential projects I'm working on are deeply personal, designed not just for luxury, but for a sense of place. Each project is shaped by its site, culture, and raw environment, ensuring that the design feels authentic and connected, rather than just imposed.

One of the most exciting aspects is achieving a balance between contemporary refinement and cultural resonance. The design reflects the client's lifestyle, while also embracing the spirit of the location, which can often be contrasting. We achieve this by using locally sourced materials, handcrafted details, or natural spatial flows and gathering patterns.

“Today’s homes are designed for balance: between openness and intimacy, technology and nature, structure and adaptability.”



PROJECT: KLOOF HOUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM LETCH AND MICKY HOYLE



Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

We have been working on a special residential project in São Paulo, which is now on site. It embodies our vision for modern residential design as a seamless fusion of architecture, landscape, and interiors, where contemporary sophistication is deeply grounded in the site's raw beauty and cultural context.

Inspired by Brazilian modernism, the home embraces fluid indoor-outdoor transitions, dissolving barriers through sliding glass doors, framed views, and materials that echo the landscape. Off-shutter concrete, natural stone, and soft timber cladding give it a tactile truth, ensuring it feels embedded in its environment rather than imposed upon it.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

Aesthetics are not just about style; they define how a space is experienced.

We focus on how light, materials, and spatial composition interact. We see light as more than illumination, it sculpts space, defines volume, and enhances movement. Architectural lighting should seamlessly integrate into a space, working with different design elements to elevate both form and function.

Material selection is key to achieving both beauty and practicality. Finishes should complement the architecture, not compete with it.

While architectural lighting remains subtle, decorative fixtures serve as sculptural elements that anchor the space's appeal, while also enhancing its function. In certain areas, this visual identity is essential to expressing the space's purpose.



Scott Pask

Scenic Designer |
Scott Pask Studio |
United States

Scott Pask is an award-winning American scenic designer, known for his visually rich and emotionally powerful stage environments. With a background in architecture – he received both his Bachelor of Architecture degree and an Honorary Doctorate in 2014 from the University of Arizona – and a Master of Fine Arts in Design from the Yale School of Drama, Pask brings a refined and spatially intuitive sensibility to his work in theatre.

Raised in Yuma, Arizona, his early interest in space and structure laid the foundation for a career defined with creativity in a theatrical environment. He has designed over 50 productions on Broadway, including celebrated shows such as *The Book of Mormon*, *The Coast of Utopia*, *The Pillowman*, *Waitress*, *Mean Girls*, and *The Band's Visit*. His work has earned multiple Tony Awards, including for *The Coast of Utopia*, *The Pillowman*, and *The Book of Mormon*. Beyond Broadway, Pask has contributed to numerous Off-Broadway, West End, and international productions, including work for the Metropolitan Opera, National Theatre, and Cirque du Soleil.

Known for his collaborative approach and deep understanding of narrative and mood, Pask seamlessly blends theatrical storytelling with architectural precision. His studio's work spans a wide range of styles and genres, consistently marked by a commitment to visual storytelling and innovation.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOAN MARCUS

“Aesthetics in my work aren’t just visuals, they become characters in the story.”



FROM CONCEPT SKETCH TO FINAL REALISATION (BELOW)

What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

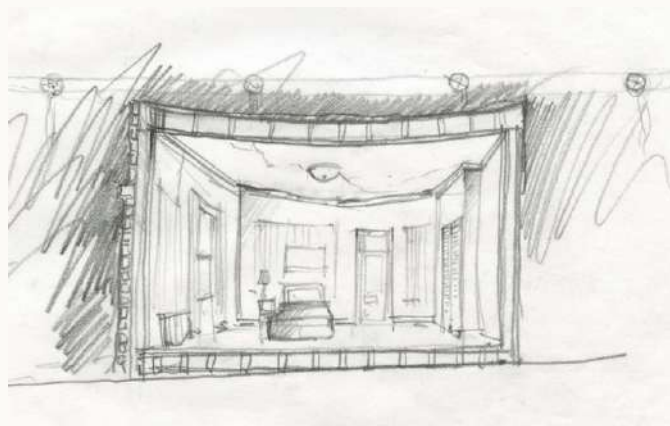
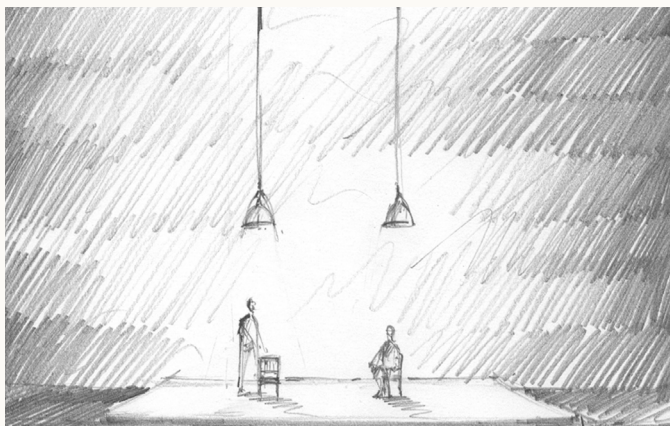
Interiors in my work suggest the mood of a play while also reflecting the personality of the narrative and its characters. The atmosphere of light in a certain space can span a wide range of intensities and temperatures, warm or cold – soft or bright – and an infinite spectrum of possibilities that helps to illuminate or even to subtly suggest or focus key moments on stage, with the innate ability to shift and adapt over time as needed..

When I designed the John Logan play, *I'll Eat You Last: A Chat with Sue Mengers* on Broadway, starring Bette Midler – a play about Hollywood’s first female agent to truly break the glass ceiling for women in that industry – the scene was set in her Hollywood Regency-style home. It featured a sweeping expanse of large faceted glass windows overlooking part of a courtyard - an iconic home, though abstracted for the stage.

The space transformed throughout the performance through its illumination, which began brightly lit in the late afternoon, sun streaming in, and continued to shift softly into golden hour, then sunset, and into dusk and darkness outside. It was a magical transformation by lighting designer Hugh Vanstone, which showed the character losing her emotional power over the course of the play. By the end of the play, the interior lighting and the fixtures became the primary sources of light, accentuating her fragility as the destructive phone call she had been awaiting, finally arrived, bring the story to its close.



PROJECT: I'LL EAT YOU LAST: A CHAT WITH SUE MENGERS
PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOTT PASK STUDIO



FROM DRAWING BOARD TO STAGE. THE PRELIMINARY STAGE SKETCHES (ABOVE) AND REALISED SETS (BELOW)

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

As a scenic designer for the stage, my work is so highly dependent on illumination, as light is the instrument, the lens, through which my work is seen. Lighting is critical, as it's deeply important that the colours, materials, and textures that we have worked on designing for months, and sometimes years, are visible as intended. Again, the quality, the definition, the colour temperature of a space can be greatly altered for chosen effect, and dramatically shaped by lighting.

I am a huge fan of the tonalities and beauty of candlelight, when its use is appropriate. Its warmth and how people look in that light, is seductive, and to me, natural. It is the tone of light I am most happy to be within at home.

LED light has quickly become the source of choice for most contemporary work, and with very good reason. Though I hope that lighting manufacturers understand the responsibility of what needs to be spiritually conveyed by the colours and temperatures of light and continue to develop the warmth of that source. LED technology is still evolving very quickly, and although its tonalities and warmth aren't replicating with the greatest of authenticity the qualities of candlelight, I'm confident that it will get there.

Lighting can literally support and enhance the narrative of a theatrical space as well as the people who are onstage. In residential spaces, I find it essential to design lighting that responds to the changing qualities of light throughout the day, enhancing the beauty of the environments we live in.

How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

I feel like residential interiors are always the most seductive when there is a level of warmth to which light and lighting, of course, crucially contribute.

The evolution of lighting products happens quite quickly. If I think of when I was a student to the work landscape today, we have shifted away from incandescent and tungsten sources to automated LED sources that can shift shape, colour, and texture very quickly. That goes to show that evolution will always be ongoing, and I think it will continue to improve in its facility, focus, and colour spectrum to reach more natural tones more successfully, as in the tones of candlelight, sunlight, filtered daylight, to name a few.

I always refer to the warmth of light, but I can't say if that necessarily implies an evolution. To me, it's almost a devolution, because when one goes back to time before electricity, that's probably when there was the most sensual lighting, which is candlelight. And people often strive for that kind of quality, that beauty.





What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

I have a house in the Arizona desert that I extensively renovated. It's an old adobe house that was built in the sixties. Designed as a kind of International Style pavilion, very modern, with lots of glass and blackened steel window frames.

During the day, the adobe walls contrast the darkness of the glass of the windows and their recesses.

At night, the personality of the house completely changes, as everything that was dark before becomes one glow of candlelight from within, with the luminosity of the interior reflected outside.

I'm always fascinated by how the personality of a residential space can shift so remarkably and specifically.

Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

If you look at residential interior magazines, they're all about the romance of a lifestyle, as opposed to the forensic observation of an object within a residential situation.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

Aesthetics are probably the most important aspect of my projects, because so many of them are about visual expression.

Aesthetics become in character of the narrative as well as in the environments that I create.

So, aesthetics are always top of mind. How an environment is viewed, or how it's acted upon by light, can be overarching, almost like a tonal shift. It may start looking one way or end up looking another; the space itself doesn't change at all, but the light does. And that, in the simplest of terms, is a kind of spatial transformation.



“The warmth and cool of a space can be altered dramatically by light. It's the instrument through which all is seen.”

Claudia Kappl - Joy

Lighting & Interior Designer - Lecturer |
CLL - Concept Lighting Lab |
United States



PHOTOGRAPHY: LOGAN HAVEN

Based in Tucson, Arizona, Claudia Kappl-Joy is the co-founder of the award-winning lighting and interior design consultancy studio, CLL – Concept Lighting Lab, LLC, with Rick Joy.

She holds a Master's Degree in Architecture (TU in GRAZ, Austria) and Architectural Lighting Design (KTH in Stockholm, Sweden) and has more than 20 years of professional experience in both fields. Claudia is a regular faculty advisor at The University of Arizona College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture (Arizona CAPLA), inspiring students from the faculties of Architecture, Landscape and Engineering Schools to engage in Lighting.

She co-chairs award juries, attends reviews and desk critiques, and regularly lectures at international conferences at the intersection of science, light and design. She is a Certified Lighting Designer (CLD), a professional member of the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD), an associate member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), a Women in Lighting (WIL) member, and holds a registration for Technisches Büro für Innenausbau (WKO) in Austria.

Claudia is fascinated with the ephemeral quality of light and its essential role in creating moving atmospheric space.

What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

Today, I think there's a lot of interest in wellness and, by consequence in our circadian rhythm.

A lot of research feeds into a better understanding of how we sleep; how we eat; and how we go about our days. Intuitively, I believe we know what feels good. Now, we can sense, document, and quantify processes and behaviours.

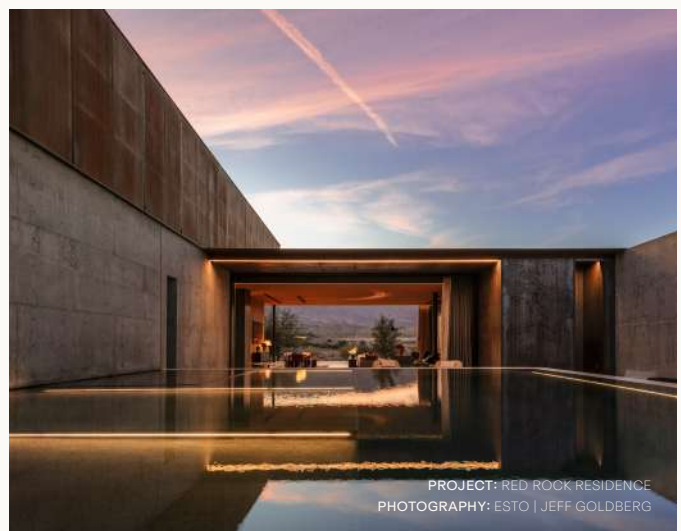
The intuitive can be substantiated by data to confirm what we already knew – if one pays attention –, and these new means and methods of collecting data and information help clarify, especially with people who don't trust their instincts.

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

At CLL, we regularly work with residential lighting. We design for our clients to live happily in their residences. We work with their requirements to meet their preferences, which might sometimes give way to fulfilling a more radical strategy.

We sometimes lean towards strategies that are unusual for residential settings, for instance, implementing fewer downlights, where typically many would be seen.

We do manage to keep strong ideas that still ensure good lighting. Perhaps not every project photographs that well, but it definitely feels good to be in those spaces and we are more focused on making spaces feel good.



“It’s not about what the lighting looks like, but what the lighting does.”

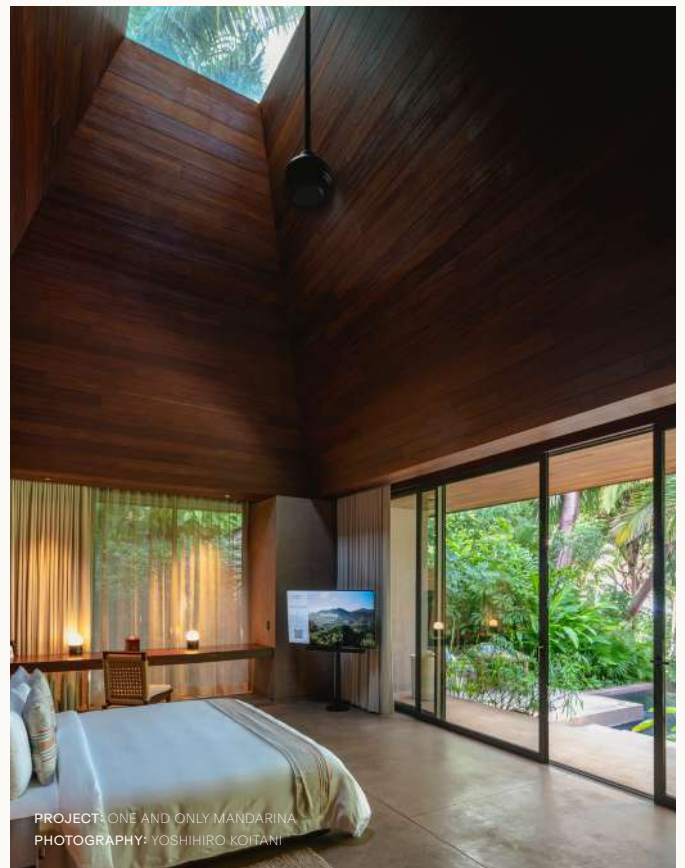
How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

I don't know that one can generalise, and I have a hard time to try to give you a vision for the future. I think it depends, it is space-specific.

What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

We are lucky to work with amazing designers and teams who have very strong visions and aesthetics. Sometimes the architecture firm we collaborate with has a brand identity, and projects in different locations maintain a similar aesthetic and material expression.

Other firms have a strong philosophy. Their architectures are site-specific. Buildings have different contexts, structures, materials, and very different lighting requirements. There may be details; like a door or a window, that you might have seen before, but the overall structure is site-specific and responsive. It can't be the same, if the environment and building culture of place varies.



“We’re less about aesthetics as an object, and more about the magic of light being felt, not seen.”

Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

At CLL, we are very interested in performative lighting, minimal in aesthetic and waste, guaranteeing high precision and great versatility with lasting quality.

We are interested in intentional lighting. We are not layering lighting on top of lighting on top of lighting. Rather, we introduce lighting schemes or strategies that serve a need with less light.

Fewer points of light that actually do what they're meant to do. Light then becomes less interchangeable and more specific; more intentional, and through it, probably more site-specific, but also not redundant.

We encourage our clients to do more with less; that not always as much light is needed, which allows one to also enjoy the dark.

We try to introduce darkness. We live in the Sonoran Desert, an environment where we need to mitigate the intense brightness of daylight. So, we are geared towards shade and shadow. This is very different from other environments, where you might need to amplify the little light you might have. Here in the desert, we are very interested in the calm of the dark, which becomes a parameter of light and a principle in lighting design.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

Depending on the project and teams we work with, there are various interests to balance and pick up on. We carefully listen to the end-users' preferences and try to support the designer's intent and client's needs.

We provide technical expertise or understanding what's feasible and possible, with reducing the presence of the fitting or light fixture in favour of the light's ambiance, effect and atmosphere. This is our approach, too.

We are less interested in the aesthetic expression of a light fixture but rather in the magic of light.



PROJECT: OHL AND ONE MANDARINA
PHOTOGRAPHY: YOSHIHIRO KOITANI

Rick Joy

Architect |
Studio Rick Joy |
United States

Rick Joy, originally from Maine, studied music at the University of Maine and fine arts at the Portland School of Art. He was a classical percussionist as well as a funk and blues drummer until the age of 28. In 1985, he moved to Tucson to study Architecture at the University of Arizona. After graduating in 1990, he joined William Bruder Architects, contributing to the design of the 280,000-square-foot Phoenix Central Library.

In 1993, he founded Rick Joy Architects, renamed Studio Rick Joy in 2019 to reflect its collaborative spirit. Based in Tucson, the 18-person studio works across architecture, interiors, and planning. He also co-founded CLL Concept Lighting Lab with his wife, Claudia Kappl Joy.

Studio Rick Joy's work has been widely published, exhibited, and awarded, including the 2002 American Academy of Arts and Letters Award and the 2004 National Design Award from the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Rick has taught at Harvard GSD, MIT, Rice, the University of Arizona, and others, and frequently lectures internationally.

The studio's projects span the U.S., Mexico, and the Caribbean, from bespoke residences to luxury resorts and masterplans. Recent work includes a new train station and campus gateway for Princeton University and a five-story luxury apartment building in Polanco, Mexico City, alongside active residential commissions in Austin, Miami, Joshua Tree, East Cabo, Greer, Mendocino, and Puerto Rico.



PHOTOGRAPHY: KATHARINA NIMMERVOEL



PROJECT: RUBIO
PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES MCGOON

What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

Residential interiors are fundamentally about creating atmosphere and evoking emotion. Architecture should be “experientially driven”, crafting spaces that are not just seen but deeply felt.

Because of my very financially challenging upbringing, I learned early on that nature is the ultimate luxury, and in every project, I strive to bring nature into people’s lives. The best example of how hard I work with my team to achieve this, is a five-storey apartment building in Mexico City. It is right in the middle of the city – urban, with five-storey buildings on three sides – and yet it incorporates nature through a lightwell, plantings, and gardens in every room except for the closets.

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

I have a very direct vision about it and that is that I insist on only lighting life. Not the building or art, but only life itself. I find that nature is the ultimate luxury in the world. Thinking about circadian rhythms, sunrise, sunset, reading the sun and welcoming it into the world and then saying goodnight at the end of the day – that’s the healthiest way of living and that’s how I think about lighting for a residence.

It goes back to the idea of lighting life first, rather than the building. This stems from my early days in architecture school, walking late at night, trying to study and memorise things on walks through the neighbourhood, feeling and seeing the light emanating from the inside of homes. For example, one apartment would have a guy watching a basketball game with big bright blue light flickering from the TV, while another apartment glows with warmth of a family having dinner under orange light.

When it comes to lighting, a great example of this is the main office at my studio, where a large earthen wall faces the north side. Sunlight enters from the south, bounces off that wall, and lights the room. So we never need electric lighting during the day because we simply bring it in from nature. And I try to do that in every single project.

With my team, we are always trying to create architecture and spaces that are very calm and in part that has to do with light to a certain extent.

“Nature is the ultimate luxury, and I strive to bring it into people’s lives in every project.”



PROJECT: RUBIO
PHOTOGRAPHY: JOE FLETCHER



PROJECT: TENNYSON 205
PHOTOGRAPHY: JOE FLETCHER



PROJECT: TENNYSON 205
PHOTOGRAPHY: JOE FLETCHER

How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

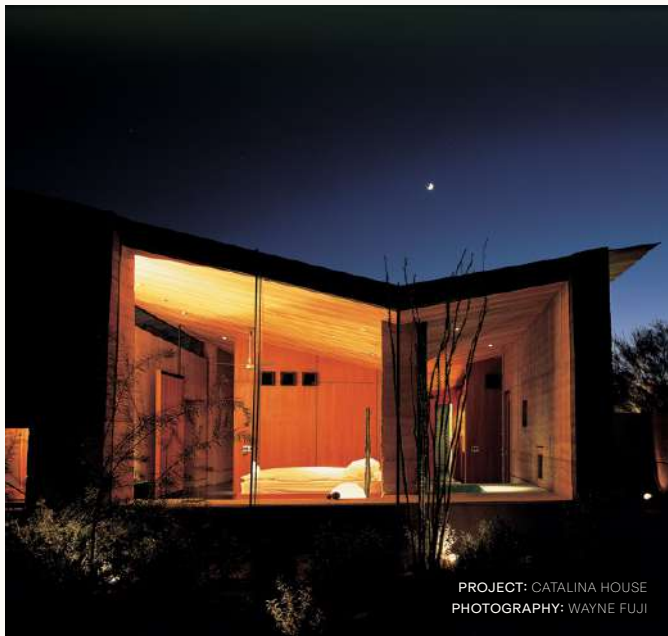
I believe residential interiors should prioritise atmosphere, sensory experience, and a deep connection to nature, rather than simply follow trends or technological advancements. Interior spaces should be crafted to evoke grace, calm, and a sense of place.

Architecture is a stage for life through which one experiences the building. You live in the building, and the building, if it's a truly great one, lives in you.

What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

We are building a house in the Redwoods, Northern California, and the vision for it stemmed from trying to understand the history of the area where most of the redwood trees were cut down to build San Francisco, Vancouver and Seattle.

From the site, you can almost imagine seeing Japan, so I was drawn to the history of the Japanese immigration to the United States from Vancouver, Canada, all the way down to San Francisco. We started from that, and that is why it is a very Japanese-inspired design, post and beam with beautiful joinery and details.



“You don’t just live
in a great building,
it lives in you.”

Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

The one project that stands out in my whole career is the Catalina House, my first house with a kitchen and a garage. It’s a remodelling of a house for my family and for myself.

That project feels like the song that puts a songwriter into the charts, resonating with both the artist and their audience, and then they spend the remaining of their career trying to recapture that. The Catalina House, the as I like to put it, is the rabbit. I have been chasing throughout my life and career, always trying to return to that feeling, to create something that felt so meaningful.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

Well, honestly, I don’t really try to express myself in architecture, and neither does the team. We do always think about the scenario and the details of life; walking through a threshold, or looking through a window for the first time.

To quote Juhani Pallasmaa:
“It’s more about the verb than the noun.”

Erieta Attali

Architecture and Landscape Photographer |
Studio Erieta Attali |
United States



PHOTOGRAPHY: PARIS TAVITIAN

Erieta Attali is a fine art landscape and architectural photographer working across Eurasia, Australia, and the Americas. For over 30 years, she has explored the relationship between architecture and landscape, pioneering an approach that inverts content and context. Drawing on her background in archaeology, she examines how extreme environments prompt architectural responses that recentre humanity.

Attali has taught photography at Columbia University (2003–2018), the National University of Singapore (2021–2023), and other leading institutions. From 2020 to 2023, she was artist-in-residence at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Fondation Hellénique. Her current research focuses on the archaeological landscapes of Delos, the Aegean Sea, and sacred sites in medieval and contemporary Japan.

Attali had published several photography books and received prestigious awards. Her work has been widely exhibited and is held in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Chicago Athenaeum. Represented by Galerie BSL (Paris), she co-authored *Mirror in the Mirror* (Hartmann Books, 2024) with Kengo Kuma, winner of the DAM International Architecture Book Award.

What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

Because of my profession, I spend most of my time travelling, living in hotels, on airplanes, and in lounges, so my understanding of residential interiors comes from a nomadic experience.

What I observe during my travels, is a very interesting use of lighting designed to create a variety of spaces, but above all, to generate warmth. Today, I perceive a real effort to create different ambiances and atmospheres within a singular specific space, making it more intimate and more focused for people who travel and work around the world, living in this kind of secondary home.

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

My work is about interpreting architecture rather than documenting it; that is why I prefer working with a selected number of designers, delving into their design philosophy and working process.

In my work process, I seek to explore how materials and light, both artificial and natural, blend together, creating a unified, powerful world of dynamic coexistence at sunrise, twilight, or throughout the day.

How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

The layout of an interior depends on its geographical location. Nowadays, northern countries are sunnier than they used to be, while southern countries are experiencing greater heat, suffering from heatwaves that make them increasingly unbearable. This will have a big influence on future interior design.

With the climate crisis and the growing impossibility of being outside in many parts of the world, I imagine there will be a growing number of artificial environments. This will lead to a greater demand for lighting specialists who can create varied atmospheres within houses and apartments of all sizes.



PROJECT: CHALET 7 HOUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA ATTALI
ARCHITECT: MAX NUNEZ & NICOLAS DEL RIO

“I explore how materials and light, both artificial and natural, blend together to create a unified, dynamic world.”



PROJECT: 3 HOUSES
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA ATTALI
ARCHITECT: DIEGO BARAONA



PROJECT: 3 HOUSES
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA ATTALI
ARCHITECT: DIEGO BARAONA

What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

I photographed a residential complex designed by Diego Baraona, a young and extremely talented Chilean architect who conceives architecture as a sculptural exploration of plasticity and materiality, while always dealing with light in a very peculiar way. The windows of the complex face the Andes on one side and lush vegetation on the other, with translucent domes softly diffusing light in the interior.

Recently, I also worked on a house in Kyoto designed by Kengo Kuma, where he used bamboo and paper screens to filter light and create layered spaces. It is a building set within an incredible landscape, adjoining a traditional tea house. I spent three days there studying it, as it challenges the conventional approach to photography. The interior layout is completely altered by the screens, which, when closed, isolate each individual room but, when slid open, transform the space into a single large room.



PROJECT: 3 HOUSES
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIETA ATTALI
ARCHITECT: DIEGO BARAONA



Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

There is a Greek architect called Nefeli Chatzimina, whose office is called ArchitectScripta. Her work is based on AI design. She designs residential buildings embedded within the urban fabric, which are, I would say, strangely beautiful yet unsettling, defying conventional aesthetic criteria. I find her architectural language deeply challenging on every level. In her most recent multi-storey building in Athens, she explored how to create specific light conditions with the help of lighting designers.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

In 2015, I made a narrative-based photography monograph on the Glass/Wood House by Kengo Kuma in the forest of New Canaan, Connecticut. It is an extension of a late-1950s modernist house and, given its nuanced complexity, interpreting it became a study of the relationship between light and architecture.

I photographed the house over two years, visiting more than 22 times, analysing what it means to live in a glass house, as well as how one experiences the transition between day and night, and the changing seasons within that specific space.

It was quite an experimental, research-based project, studying natural light, but also the relationship between the interior and natural lighting. The owner happens to be a lighting designer.

That house has become my case study in terms of aesthetics because it blends with its surroundings just as its interior lighting blends with the natural light.

Peter Smith

Prof. Dr. Emeritus of Planetary Sciences |
United States

Dr. Peter Smith is a Professor Emeritus of Planetary Sciences at the University of Arizona, where he held the Thomas R. Brown Distinguished Chair of Integrated Science and retired in 2013. His career spans NASA's golden age of solar system exploration, contributing to missions to Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Titan through his expertise in optical sciences and planetary geology.

In 1997, he led the development of the camera system for the Mars Pathfinder mission which returned iconic images of the Chryse Planitia, where the team remotely studied the Martian rocks and soils with a small rover – later featured in the film *The Martian*.

In 2008, Smith led the Phoenix mission to the icy northern plains of Mars, discovering potential habitable zones.

Later, he contributed to the OSIRIS-Rex mission, that returned samples from a nearby asteroid and was a co-investigator on both the Opportunity Rover and the Mars 2020 Mission. He has won numerous awards including the prestigious NASA Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal.

Smith has prepared for his missions in some of Earth's most extreme environments, including Antarctica, the Death Valley, Iceland and Devon Island, where you can find a simulated Mars environment. As a co-investigator to the MOXIE experiment on NASA's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover, he was part of the team responsible for demonstrating how to produce oxygen from the Martian atmosphere, useful for future human missions.



What do residential interiors represent today? How do they reflect broader societal trends?

It is commonly accepted that rooms and houses have a “soul.” Certain rooms – in my house, it’s the kitchen – become social centres where visitors comfortably gather. When alone at home, we often have favourite spots to sit and read, or work on the computer.

I look for a balance between watching a screen or reading a book and looking out towards a garden or landscape. A veranda is important when visitors arrive, offering a view of our beautiful desert surroundings, with its palo verdes and saguaros.

I have noticed that people search for a respite from the anxieties of modern life when choosing a home; gardens, landscape views and water features provide this. Another consideration of great importance today is the energy efficiency of the lighting, as LED lights are favoured for this reason.

How do you define the role of light in residential interiors, and what does it symbolise or achieve in your work?

My wife and I collect art so lighting must illuminate our walls to highlight the paintings and sculptures, bringing out the true colours. In addition, good reading lamps are needed.

Finally, a variety of light features allow us to adjust the light to the occasion: dimmers are important, and the colour temperature of the lamps is crucial, changing between rooms depending on their prime activities.

How do you imagine residential interiors in the near future?

Thirty years of research has shown that there is another way that the eye experiences light besides forming colour images.

Blue light of a certain wavelength can stimulate the non-imaging sensors in the retina producing melanopsin that directly stimulates portions of the brain that regulate behaviour.

Light modulates sleep, circadian rhythms, alertness, neuroendocrine functions and mood. Modern house lighting can be characterised by its melanopic equivalence so that users, particularly in northern winters, can improve their moods during long periods of darkness.

Although I live in the Tucson desert where we enjoy more than 300 days of bright sunlight per year, I feel that this aspect of lighting will become important as people realise its positive influence.



What residential interiors are you currently working on, and what makes these projects unique?

The latest addition of the lighting of my house came after a visit to a camera tradeshow and the realisation that movie production lighting is now affordable. I bought a professional stagelight and projector to illuminate various objects in the living room.

There are dozens of options to create mood and colour with filters of all kinds. These are terrifically fun to play with and the effects are astounding.

Could you share insights into a recent project that reflects your vision for modern residential design?

When I was building my house, designed by W. Bruder and R. Joy, I asked for a special skylight. The idea was to bring the changing seasons into the room throughout the year in an alignment between the sun at noontime and the moon at various times of night; the light cast through the skylight interacts with objects placed underneath to create spectral patterns and unexpected reflections. This gives a Stonehenge-like significance to the interior as the patterns change daily and seasonally.

What role do aesthetics play in your projects? How do you enhance the visual appeal and functionality of residential interiors?

Our lighting in the dining room is primarily with a chandelier that we tend to decorate with streamers and other ornaments depending on the occasion.

Chandeliers are a marvellous way to centralise the lighting in a room and allowing flexibility in their design helps keep the lighting fresh and fun.



“Movie production lights are now in our living room — playful, creative, and full of possibility. Residential lighting can be pure joy.”

About the editor

Alessio Rosati

Alessio Rosati (1971) was born in Rome, where he studied at the local school of architecture.

While working for some of Italy's leading cultural institutions, including the Auditorium Parco della Musica and Rome International Film Fest, he founded an independent design firm.

In 2010, he began his collaboration with MAXXI - Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, where he previously directed the Research Department, curating exhibitions and editing publications.

He currently leads the Institutional Projects office, developing research and curating events ranging from art to architecture, literature to film, and more.

In addition to regularly writing for ELLE DECOR magazine, he teaches at North American architecture schools and lectures both in Europe and overseas. Whenever possible, he continues to practise as a professional designer.



Epilogue.

Rooted proudly in Belgian heritage since 1989, Deltalight crafts premium architectural lighting solutions that enhance residential homes, offices, landscapes and retail spaces. Our focus is on creating enduring comfort, where simple, timeless design meets thoughtful, unexpected details: from carefully exposed fixtures to nature-inspired functionality, and the subtle beauty that develops gracefully over time.

All our minimal, in-house made products are designed to last, reflecting our commitment to quality and sustainability. Guided by warmth and a locally inspired spirit, we've grown to bring light to over 80 countries worldwide.

We don't just create lighting, we build lasting partnerships, putting meticulous care and passion into every step of the process.

We invite you to also explore our Residential Thesaurus, your guide to the language of light within living spaces, where inspiration meets innovation.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. Here's to lighting your world beautifully and thoughtfully.

Your Deltalight Team.

A vertical architectural detail featuring a narrow opening framed by dark, polished wood. The opening reveals a bright, textured concrete wall with horizontal bands of different shades of grey and white. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

Light, natural or human-made,
is there to provide comfort.

DELTALIGHT