





**RUNNER-UP**  
**ASHOK PATEL RESIDENCE,**  
**AHMEDABAD, INDIA**  
**ARCHITECT: MATHAROO ASSOCIATES**

This house, for a well-to-do Indian family, takes its starting point from the traditional Pol house of Ahmedabad, which looks inwards to avoid over-heating. Matharoo Associates points out that 'the trend is for more and more houses that look right into each other with perpetually closed windows and curtains drawn'.

By contrast, the Ashok Patel residence looks into a central courtyard that protects it from the road and draws in nature. The back wall has pivoting windows opening up the main living space to the sky.

The house is constructed from reinforced concrete, which allows the structural elements to be relatively thin. 'Columns, walls and beams appear to be woven into an intricate lattice that comes alive with the strong sun falling on it', says the architect. A 50mm-thick stair is entirely cantilevered on its risers and is composed as a square helix.



**RUNNER-UP**  
**OSH HOUSE, NEAR DORKING,**  
**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**ARCHITECT: TOH SHIMAZAKI**

The Open and Shut House by the London-based architect Toh Shimazaki, takes its name from the way that the new building unfolds into its surroundings and walls break to open the interior to the landscape.

Located in the grounds of a large 19th-century manor house (now demolished), the Osh house is in the tradition of English country houses and is inspired by vernacular architecture and the English landscape. For the full story see pages 54

show a critique of tradition, heritage and architectural expression.

The winning house by Polish architect Robert Konieczny of KWK Promes applies this critique on a number of levels and executes the ideas in an architectural solution with elegance and finesse. It inverts fundamental conventions of how a house is structured and thus how we live. By cleverly manipulating the local customary 'cube' house it deals with the issue of arrival, thresholds and privacy. It is accepted that because of the house's location it will be reached by car, although this approach conflicts with the natural desired orientation of the house towards

the sun. By bringing the driveway and entrance under the building, one overcomes this and enters in the middle of the house – inverting what is considered back and front, inside and outside, public and private. A subtle game is played by placing one at the centre of the home as one arrives: almost within it, while still outside. This blurs the distinction of public and private, making it unclear when one crosses the threshold between them. The house also appears to satisfy the client by displaying status through grandeur, but – by referencing a local aesthetic – it grounds the house in a physical and cultural context.

In the case of the Old House in Melbourne, featured on the front cover, the application of a 1:1 photograph of the demolished house to the facade of the new building critiques and challenges how we preserve, and why we revere existing buildings and streetscapes. It questions the nature of the image, the facade as a communicator and the role a particular surface can play in a dialogue. This has been raised by another Melbourne architectural firm, Cassandra Complex. In this case a billboard-size image of Pamela Anderson is applied to the front facade.

While these are ideas that can and have been explored by public buildings,