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ELLE DECORATION

SOUTH AFRICA

*NATURAL
BY DESIGN
Beautiful Bathrooms*

African Luxe
SWAADY MARTIN'S
CHIC TEAROOM

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THE GREEN LIVING ISSUE - BATHROOMS

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ECO UPDATE: EDIBLE GARDENS · WATER WARRIORS · BOTANICAL BARS

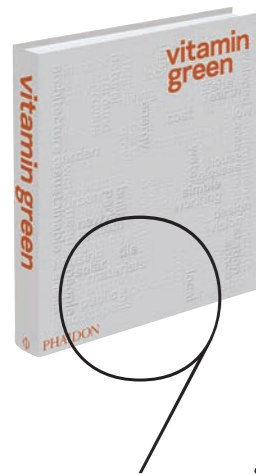
THE ARCHITECTS

Architecture company MAAK's Ashleigh Killa, Georgina Campbell and Max Melvill deliver engaged, socially conscious designs for world-class public buildings. 'When we sat down in 2016 to conjure up what is now MAAK, we wrote a short manifesto. Under the sub-title: 'Thoughts on How to Make Good Architecture', we wrote about being open, progressive, appropriate and beautiful. These are our founding principles,' says Melvill.



Tell us about your Nyanga project, The Community Curtain. It's a new public arts space in Nyanga, one of the oldest townships in Cape Town. It's defined by its operable 'pop-up'/'pop-down' curtain element, which is made up of crowd-funded fabric squares donated at R330 each by the public. This simple curtain feature (which is being put together with the help of a local sewing initiative) replaces existing walls that are no longer needed in the building, creating a new, multi-purpose space at the heart of the scheme. This will hopefully increase the reach and use of the facility, as well as improving the amount of natural light and ventilation. It's already won the Michael Ventris Award for Architecture, but the work isn't done yet: we still need more squares to be donated before realising this amazing initiative.

What's your take on sustainable design? We always talk about 'holistic sustainability', which incorporates everything from how something's made to what it's made for. Many of our projects are in areas where well thought-out design isn't the norm. It's our responsibility to challenge this and present an architecture that thoughtfully considers not only the environments we're hoping to shape, but also how these spaces can, in turn, shape the environments around them.
themaak.co.za, [@the.maak](https://www.instagram.com/the.maak)



THE COFFEE-TABLE INSPIRATION

Vitamin Green (Phaidon) covers sustainability with the sort of flair that makes this both an invaluable resource and a beautiful tome for your coffee table or bookshelf. Featuring discussions about architecture, landscape architecture and product design, as well as current projects nominated by international designers, curators, critics and thinkers, it's a must-have resource on green design around the world. phaidon.com, [@phaidonsnaps](https://www.instagram.com/phaidonsnaps)

(above left) The High Line reclaims 22 blocks of abandoned railway in downtown New York, turning them into an elevated urban park and a vital public space; (above right) The Improved Clay Stove is 60% more efficient than a typical Sudanese stove, reducing smoke and air pollution and halving the time needed for wood collection.



THE EDIBLE GARDEN

Since opening to the public in 2010, Babylonstoren has enthralled all who've experienced its thoughtfully designed and curated offerings. A new book, *The Garden of Babylonstoren* (Penguin Random House), by Franchesca Watson and Heidi Bertish, is a visually rich celebration of this ever-evolving locale. Designed by master garden architect Patrice Taravella, it encompasses a vast and varied food garden and impressive botanical collections. 'The aim of the garden is to grow food in traditional and organic ways, and to share such knowledge with visitors. With this comes the beauty of natural forms and geometric patterns, the pleasure of being grounded to the land, as well as the aspiration that we can all take a little of this away into our everyday lives,' writes Watson.
babylonstoren.com, [@babylonstoren](https://www.instagram.com/babylonstoren)



THE DROUGHT KITCHEN

Until the end of May, celebrated chef Luke Dale Roberts will be running his pop-up venture, The Drought Kitchen, at his award-winning Cape Town eatery, The Test Kitchen. 'I've had to re-evaluate how we approach what we do in the kitchen and the restaurant,' he explains. 'From preparation to plating, service and cleaning up, everything's impacted by using less water. It's been an eye-opener.' The restaurant takes practical water-conserving measures such as not using tablecloths, but rather disposable napkins, serving each of its six courses on disposable cards, rather than crockery, and preparing dishes with minimal sauces, thus reducing the need for water in cooking. thetestkitchen.co.za, [@thetestkitchencnt](https://www.instagram.com/thetestkitchencnt)

