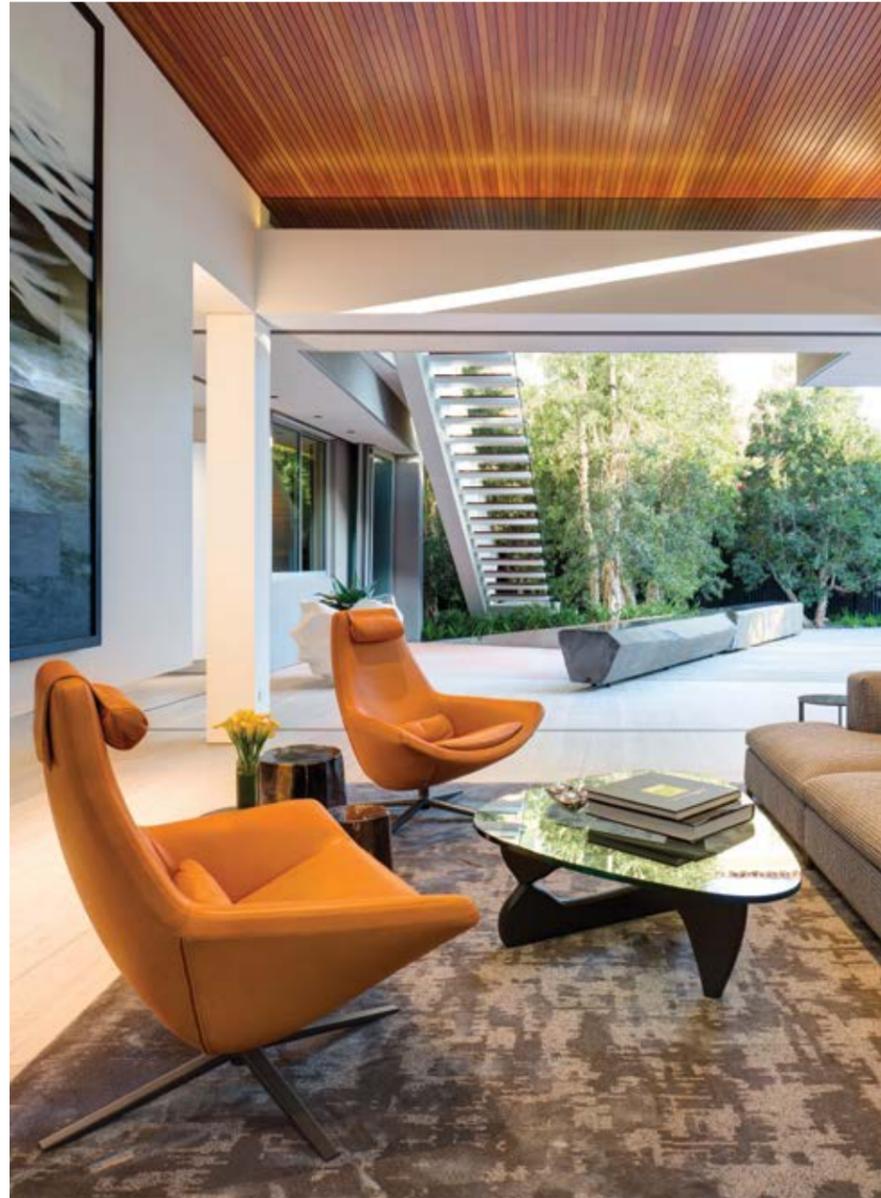


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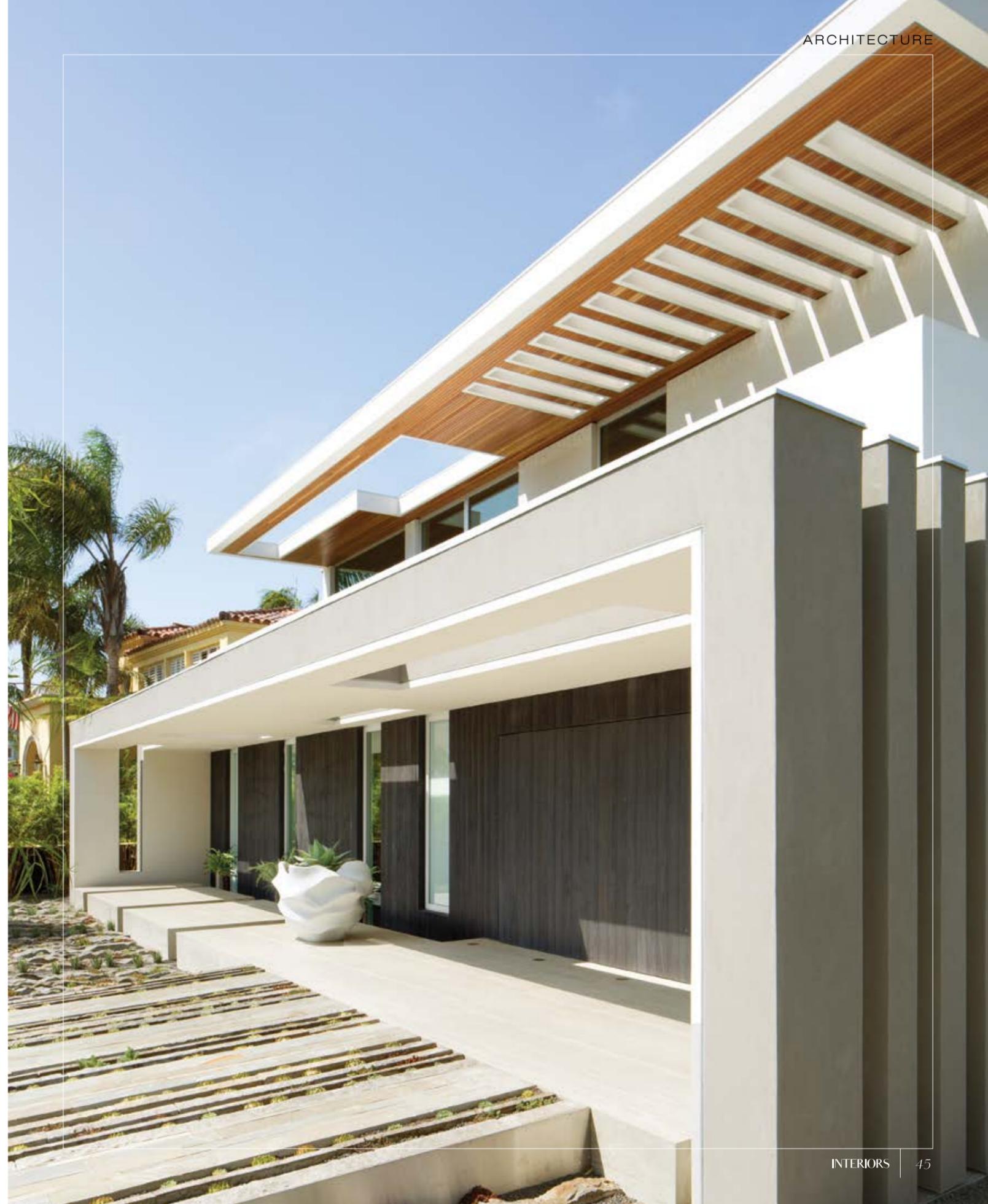


ON THE VERGE

ARCHITECTURE: CROSSMAN ARCHITECTURE

INTERIOR DESIGN: ESTUDIO FRISCH

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES BRADY





California's Coronado Island is a little slice of paradise off the coast of San Diego, and a fitting landscape for a new house by architect Martin Crossman of Crossman Architecture and designer Eduardo Frischwasser of Estudio Frisch. As on most islands, space on Coronado is tight, which helped drive the architectural plan. Another influence, the indoor-outdoor narrative, received a welcome script flip. "At our first meeting, the client surprised me—they didn't ask for an 'indoor-outdoor house,' they asked for 'indoor-outdoor confusion,'" Crossman says. "They wanted something that went beyond the usual simple blurring, something more radical, something that created an intensely visceral, even disorienting, experience. They also surprised me by saying they doubted I could propose anything that would frighten them. I took on that challenge, unsuccessfully."

The client's fearlessness helped inform dramatic elements such as the lap pool that would be placed on the second floor and face the street. "An audacious and expensive thing to do," Crossman says. "As you can see they didn't balk." Nor did they blink at Frischwasser's brilliant kids' "stage," the circular bench that plays off of the open-air oculus above the roof deck. It's all part of the inwardly focused courtyard plan—a smart response to site constraints. "The house effectively turns its back to the street, a move reflected in the comparatively subdued front facade," Crossman says. "Restrained though it may be, a view from the street reveals clues that there is more to the house than meets the eye, like in the way the water of the lap pool reflects light on the wall, in the shadow-casting elaborations of the overhangs, and in the general muscularity of the massing. Approach the front door and restraint starts to give way; move through the house and into the courtyard and the home's true, expressive spirit is exposed in an explosion of space, material, and, we hope, minds." ■ Crossman Architecture, crossmanarchitecture.com; Estudio Frisch, estudiofrisch.com —Erika Heet

