

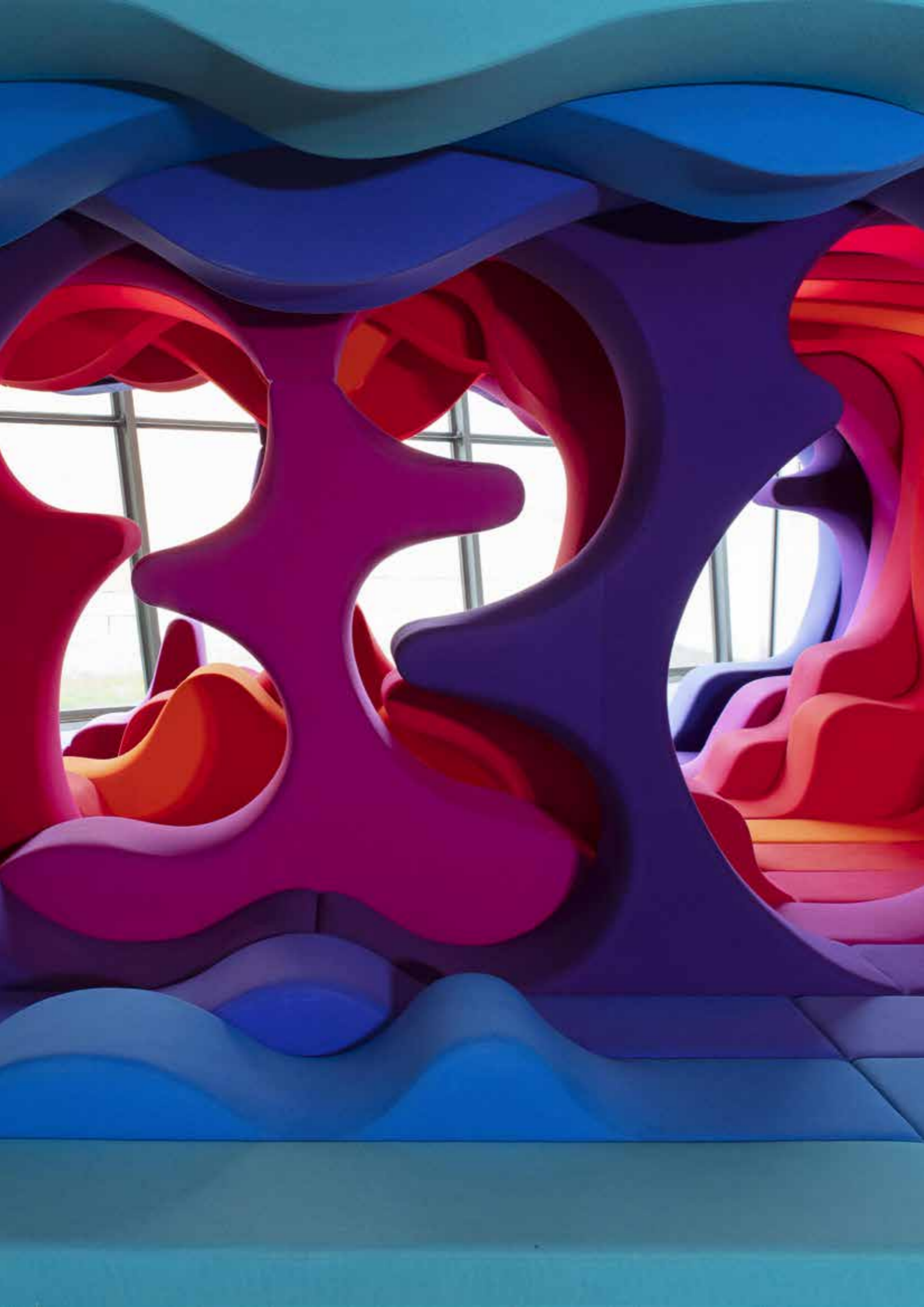
Home Stories

100 Years, 20 Visionary Interiors



Exhibition Concept

**Vitra
Design
Museum**



Contents

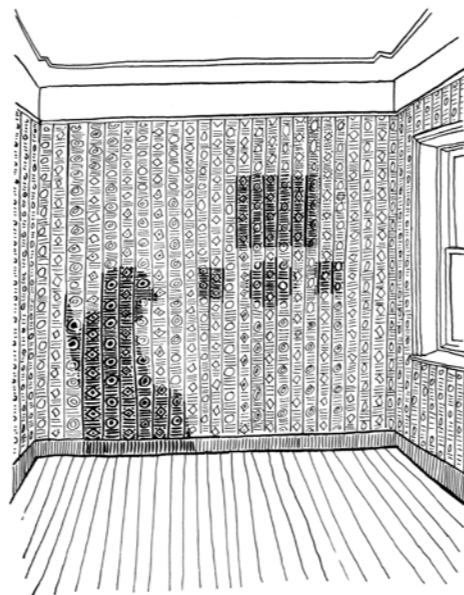
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Exhibition Concept



Introduction

Our homes are an expression of the way we live, they shape our everyday routines and fundamentally affect our well-being. Interior design for the home sustains a giant, global supply chain of furniture, textiles, decorations, and lifestyle accessories. Likewise, both past and present trends from the world of domestic interiors feed an entire branch of the media, including magazines, television programming, blogs, and social media channels. However, while a growing number of questions regarding housing are at the forefront of both the private and political agendas today, the question of dwelling, or how to live, is found to be increasingly lacking in serious discourse. It is time to review the interior design of our homes.

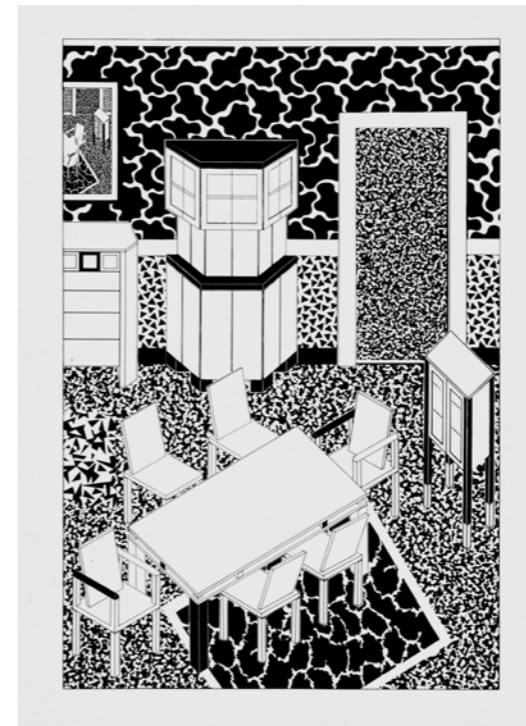


Cover: Illustration by Daniel Streat, Visual Fields; Lina Bo Bardi, Casa de Vidro, São Paulo, 1952. p2: Exhibition view, Vitra Design Museum, 2020. p4: Brandlhuber + Emde, Burlon, Antivilla, Kramnitz, Germany, 2010-15. Opposite page: Saul Steinberg, Untitled, 1946-49 (Originally published in Steinberg, The Art of Living, 1949) Above: Karl Lagerfeld's Monte Carlo apartment with Memphis design objects by Michele De Lucchi (Pacific Wardrobe and Oceanic Table Lamp, both 1981) and by Peter Shire (Brazil Table, 1981), 1982.

The Exhibition

From February 2020 to February 2021, the Vitra Design Museum presented a major exhibition on the contemporary private interior and its evolution. In a captivating narrative beginning in the present day and leading visitors backwards in time, the exhibition highlights important shifts that have shaped interiors over the past 100 years. From current issues facing the domestic domain — such as the more efficient use of dwindling urban space to the blurring of work-life boundaries — the journey includes our fascination with loft-living in the 1970s, the shift from formal to informal dwelling in the 1960s, the rise of household appliances in the 1950s, and the introduction of open-space planning in the 1920s. The exhibition is organized around 20 iconic interiors by architects such as Adolf Loos, Finn Juhl, Lina Bo Bardi, and Assemble; artists like Andy Warhol, as well as interior designers

such as Elsie de Wolfe and Cecil Beaton. In presenting interiors by outstanding representatives from different fields, the exhibition reflects on how interior design has always been inspired, enriched, and shaped by other disciplines, including not only architecture and product design, but also fashion and the performing arts. Constituting a compelling sensorial journey through the past decades of the domestic sphere, the exhibition includes models, drawings, furniture, films, and other media. The exhibition design, conceived by Milan-based studio Space Caviar, features a contemporary setting for both recent and historic interiors in order to emphasize their continuous relevance. After its initial presentation at the Vitra Design Museum, the exhibition began an international tour to selected museums and institutions.



1 Villa Tugendhat, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Brno, Czech Republic, 1928-30. 2 George Sowden, Drawing for interiors 2, 1983 © George Sowden 3 Living room of the Antivilla by Brandhuber + Emde, Burlon, Krampnitz, Germany, 2010-15. 4 Finn Juhl, Chieftain Chair, 1949

Residential Space as a Resource

2000 – Today

»I refuse to define rooms. I leave it open whether a room is suitable for living or working.«

Arno Brandlhuber

In the last decade, rising real estate prices and high rents have led to a dramatic shortage of affordable living space. Micro-housing design utilizes built-in and convertible furniture, as seen in »Yojigen Poketto« (which translates to 4D pocket), an apartment designed by the architecture studio Eii in Madrid (2017). At the same time, innovative renovations, such as Arno Brandlhuber's »Antivilla« near Berlin (2014) — which uses textiles as movable space dividers — offer strategies for efficiently optimizing space.

With the increased relevance of the sharing economy, collaborative efforts are gaining more importance, as exemplified in the project »Granby Four Streets Community Housing« in Liverpool (2013–17) initiated by the multi-disciplinary collective Assemble. Here, in close collaboration with the prospective inhabitants, Assemble saved a Victorian terrace of houses from urban decay,

gutted and redesigned the interiors for contemporary needs and helped establish a workshop that reuses building materials to create furnishings for the new spaces. Both the appropriation and redesign of existing building structures and the recycling of materials are examples of a circular economy.

Furthermore, in today's digital world the boundaries between public and private spheres are becoming increasingly blurred, with the rise of internet platforms such as Airbnb allowing for further display and commodification of the interior. Next to these socio-political developments, atmosphere remains a key topic with regard to interior design. This can be seen in an image selection by Jasper Morrison exclusively commissioned for the exhibition, which explores how the arrangement of objects contributes to, and fundamentally changes our perception of space.



1 Marie Jactotey, Granby N48, drawing of the project 10 Houses on Cairns Street (2013–17) by Assemble, 2016. 2 Yojigen Poketto apartment by architecture studio elii [oficina de arquitectura], Madrid, 2017. 3 Brandlhuber+ Emde, Burlon, Antivilla, Kramnitz, Germany, 2010–15. Courtesy of Brandlhuber+ Emde, Burlon, photo: Erica Overmeer / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2020 4 Objects designed and arranged by Jasper Morrison, 2018



Interior Disruption

1960 – 1980



»It was the perfect time to think silver, silver was the future, it was spacy – the astronauts wore silver suits [...] and their equipment was silver , too. [...] And maybe more than anything, silver was narcissism – mirrors were backed with silver.«

Andy Warhol

The domestic interior underwent major transformations over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, reflecting the era's general social upheaval. In collaboration with philosopher Paul Virilio, architect Claude Parent introduced the concept of »the oblique« to interiors to counter the predominant neutral, cube-like spaces prevalent at the time. Parent furnished his own apartment in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France (1973) with built-in, multi-functional inclined planes that could serve interchangeably as seating, dining or workspace, or a daybed. In the same spirit, Verner Panton rejected traditional furnishing patterns to break with established notions of dwelling. Andy Warhol's New York Silver Factory

evolved as a prime example of early loft living and became an almost mythical symbol of the artist's studio as an ideal combination of living and work space.

At the same time, furniture manufacturer and retail company Ikea was set to revolutionize the industry with its agenda of providing modern furniture to the masses. Ikea's rise to becoming the world's largest furniture manufacturer and retailer, which began in the 1970s, is reflected in and has contributed to the groundbreaking shift in how we perceive furniture now – from an object that is passed on from generation to generation, to the short-lived, disposable, and rapidly superseded consumer product it is today.

Nature and Technology

1940 – 1960

»Before I leave this world, if I manage to fill a house I've designed with furniture, rugs, curtains, fixtures, tableware, glass, silver, etc. designed by me, I will have achieved a real goal.«

Finn Juhl, 1951



During the Cold War, the political competition between East and West crystallized around the question of living standards, culminating in the famous »kitchen debate« between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev that took place in an American prefabricated house, furnished by the department store Macy's with designer Andrew Geller, and displayed in Moscow in 1959. Leading up to this, the mid-twentieth century saw the language of the modern interior become more refined, and approaches to interior design emerged that are still relevant today. Private Housing and its interior were on the agenda of many forward looking designers and architects. Peter and Alison Smithson explored the art of inhabitation, using their own homes to probe their »select and arrange« method for household objects. By combining modern forms and materials with a feeling of »homeliness«, Scandinavian interiors became increasingly influential around the world, as exemplified by the private residences of architects

such as Finn Juhl and his house in Ordrup, Denmark (1942). Juhl also used his own home to test the furniture he designed, to explore how it would work as part of an interior.

Moreover, »living with nature« and the »fluid boundaries« between indoors and outdoors became key topics for architects like Lina Bo Bardi and her Casa de Vidro in São Paulo, Brazil (1950/51). Bo Bardi also founded the magazine »Habitat« to discuss issues of housing, the role of architecture and the arts in society, and other topical subjects of the day. Bernard Rudofsky, another architect to contemplate the relationship between the private dwelling and its natural surroundings, took inspiration from vernacular building traditions to promote houses with outdoor rooms. Together with the artist Costantino Nivola he created an outdoor living space known as »Nivola Garden-House« in Long Island, New York (1950).



1 Finn Juhl in his house designed by himself, Ordrup, Denmark, 1953. 2 Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, center left, talks with U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon during their famous »Kitchen Debate« at the United States exhibit at Moscow's Sokolniki Park, July 24, 1959. 3 Garden Solarium by Bernard Rudofsky at Nivola House, Amagansett (NY), c. 1951.



The Birth of the Modern Interior

1920 – 1940

»One can't get on at all if one doesn't have a little glamour about one's home.«

Cecil Beaton

In the 1920s and 1930s, the private interior stood at the centre of architectural debate, including questions of sanitation, hygiene, efficiency, and standardization, as exemplified by the public housing programme of »Das Neue Frankfurt« (1925–30), led by architect Ernst May. The programme included not only the famous Frankfurt kitchen by Margarete Schütte Lihotzky (1926) but also affordable furniture designed by Ferdinand Kramer and Adolf Schuster.

Around this time, new concepts of architectural space set the framework for innovative interior design to unfold. In his Villa Tugendhat in Brno, Czech Republic (1928–30), Mies van der Rohe presented a striking early example of the open-plan concept, with fluid spaces in which carefully placed furnishings and textiles created islands for different uses. Adolf Loos advocated the »Raumplan«, a concept of spatial planning that could not be understood in two dimensions because of its three-dimensional complexity. His Villa Müller in Prague (1929–30) features a carefully choreographed sequence of spaces at different levels and of different heights, which exceed the

standard notion of single-plane floors. While Loos regarded ornamentation as a crime, another contemporary interior decorator offered a different perspective, Austrian-born, Sweden-based architect and product designer Josef Frank introduced the concept of »accidentism«, whereby interiors would grow organically over time and look as if composed by chance. In contrast to these modernist positions, another contemporary embraced ornamentation as a means of expression. Many regard Elsie de Wolfe, who published her guidebook »The House in Good Taste« in 1914, as one of the first modern interior decorators who claimed to have »opened the doors and windows of America, and let the air and sunshine in«. De Wolfe advocated for the notion of the interior as a representation of the identity of the person living in it. This was also true for the interiors created by photographer and interior designer Cecil Beaton who used his domestic setting as an extension of his self-image, for example in Ashcombe House, for which he drew inspiration from the arts, theatre, and even the circus.



Previous page: Lina Bo Bardi, Casa de Vidro, 1950/51. Above: 1 Living Room of Villa Müller by Adolf Loos, Prague, 1929–30. 2 Frankfurter Register 10, insert of producer Thonet for the magazine »Das Neue Frankfurt«, 3rd Issue, 1929, Edition 1.3 Dining area (c. 1930) of Villa Tugendhat by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Brno, Czech Republic, 1928–30. 4 Cover of »Ashcombe. The story of a fifteen-year lease« by Cecil Beaton, published by Batsford 1949

Facts

Exhibition tour

»Home Stories: 100 Years, 20 Visionary Interiors« is available to international venues until approximately 2025. The exhibition travels including all exhibits, contextual films and images, exhibition architecture and all media equipment.

Exhibition floor space

600 – 1,200 m² / 6,000 – 12,000 sq ft

Exhibits

Design and art objects, architectural models and plans, installations, magazines, books, drawings, prints, photographs, films, etc.

Curator

Jochen Eisenbrand

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Dates

Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein
8 February 2020 – 28 February 2021

Design Museum Gent
27 March 2021 – 12 September 2021

Vienna Furniture Museum
20 October 2021 – 29 May 2022

Hyundai Motorstudio Busan
February – July 2023

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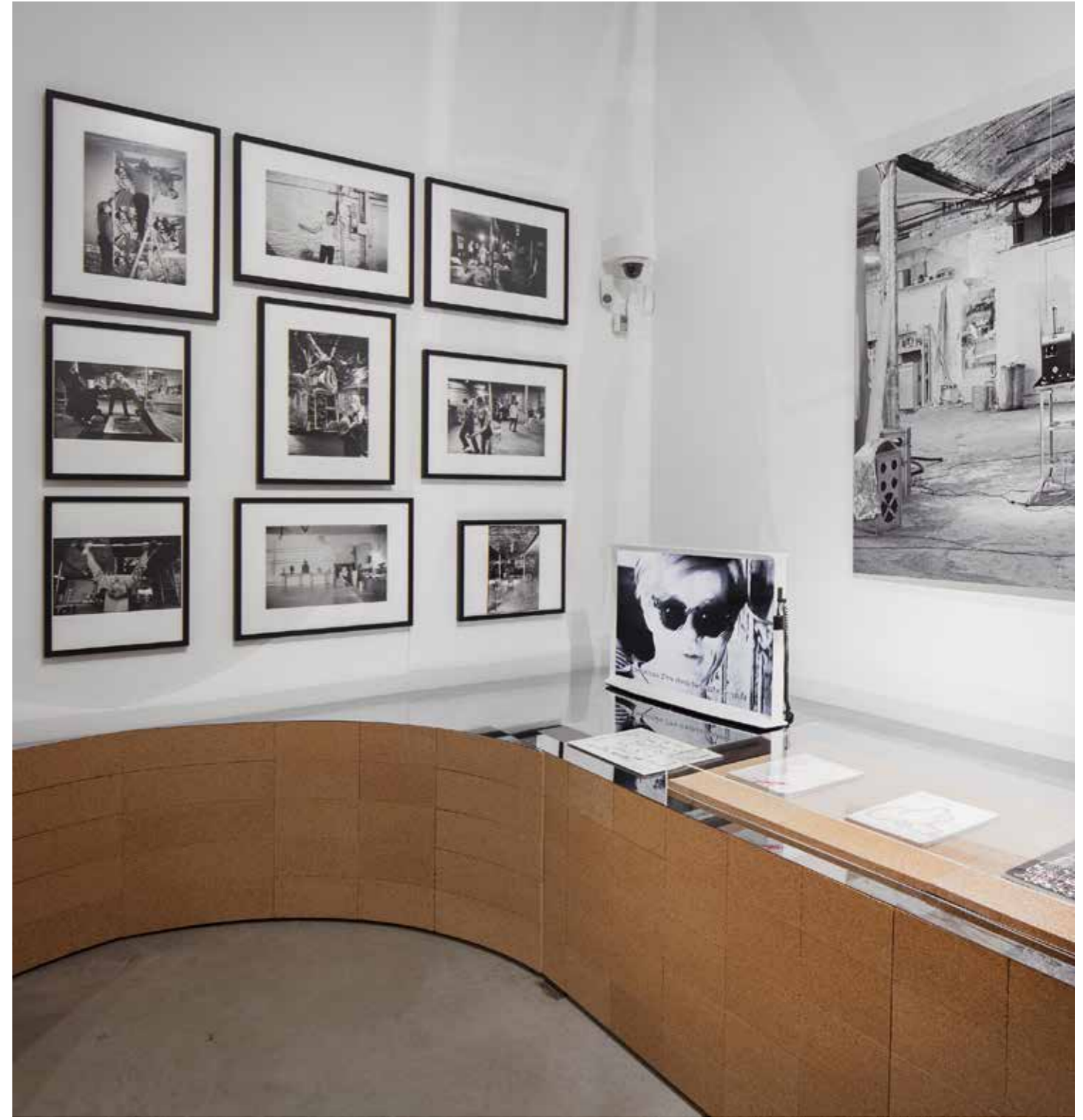
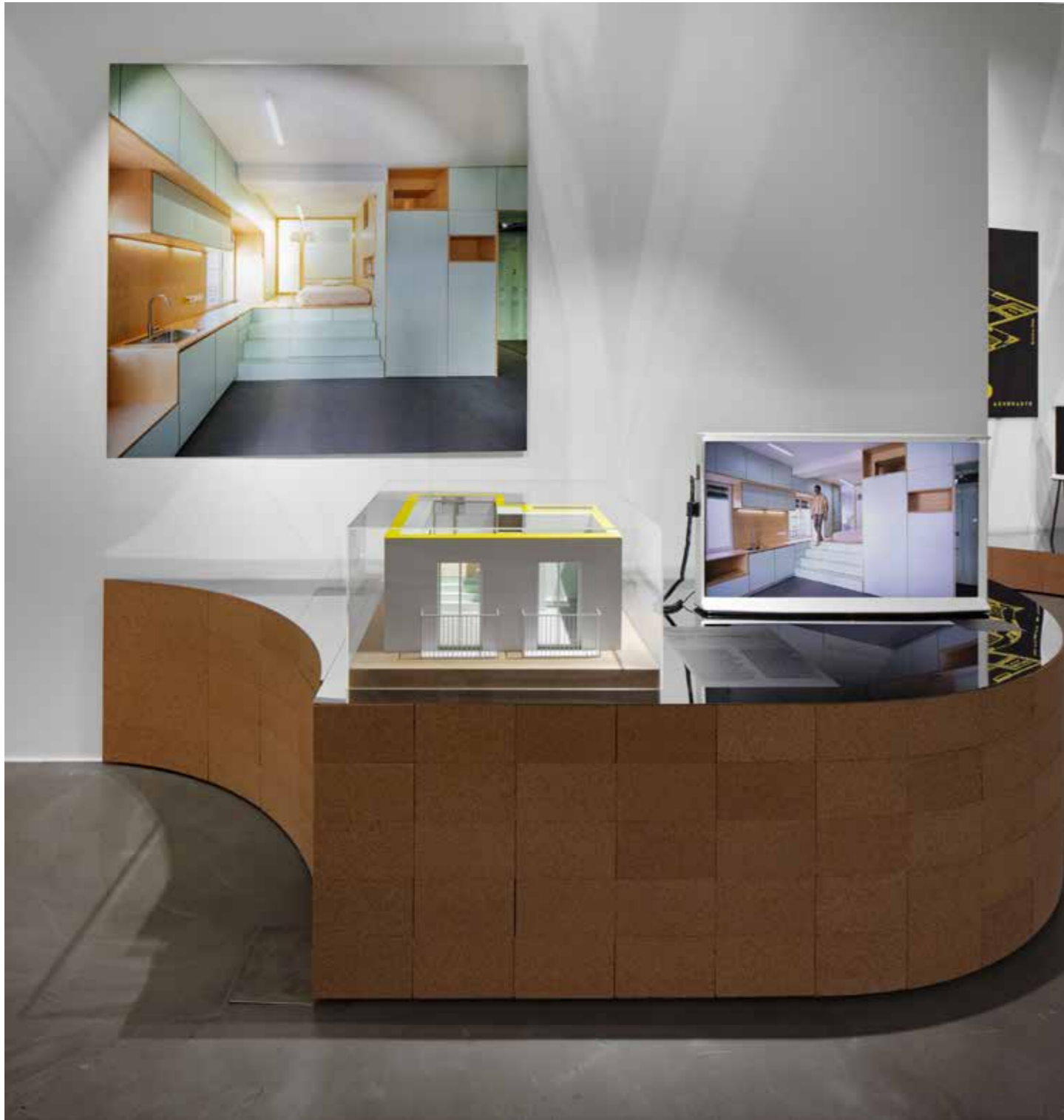
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Installation Shots



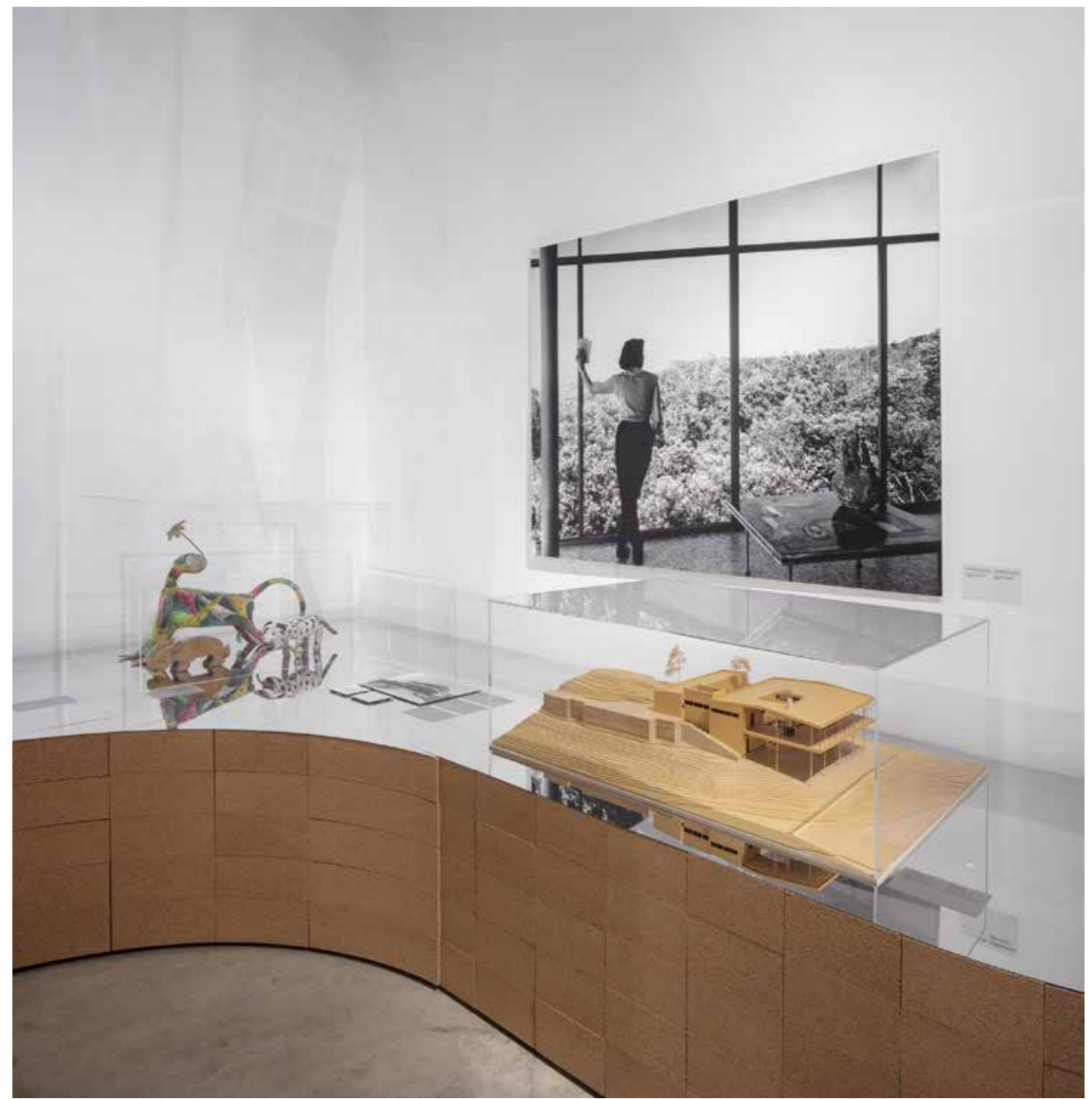






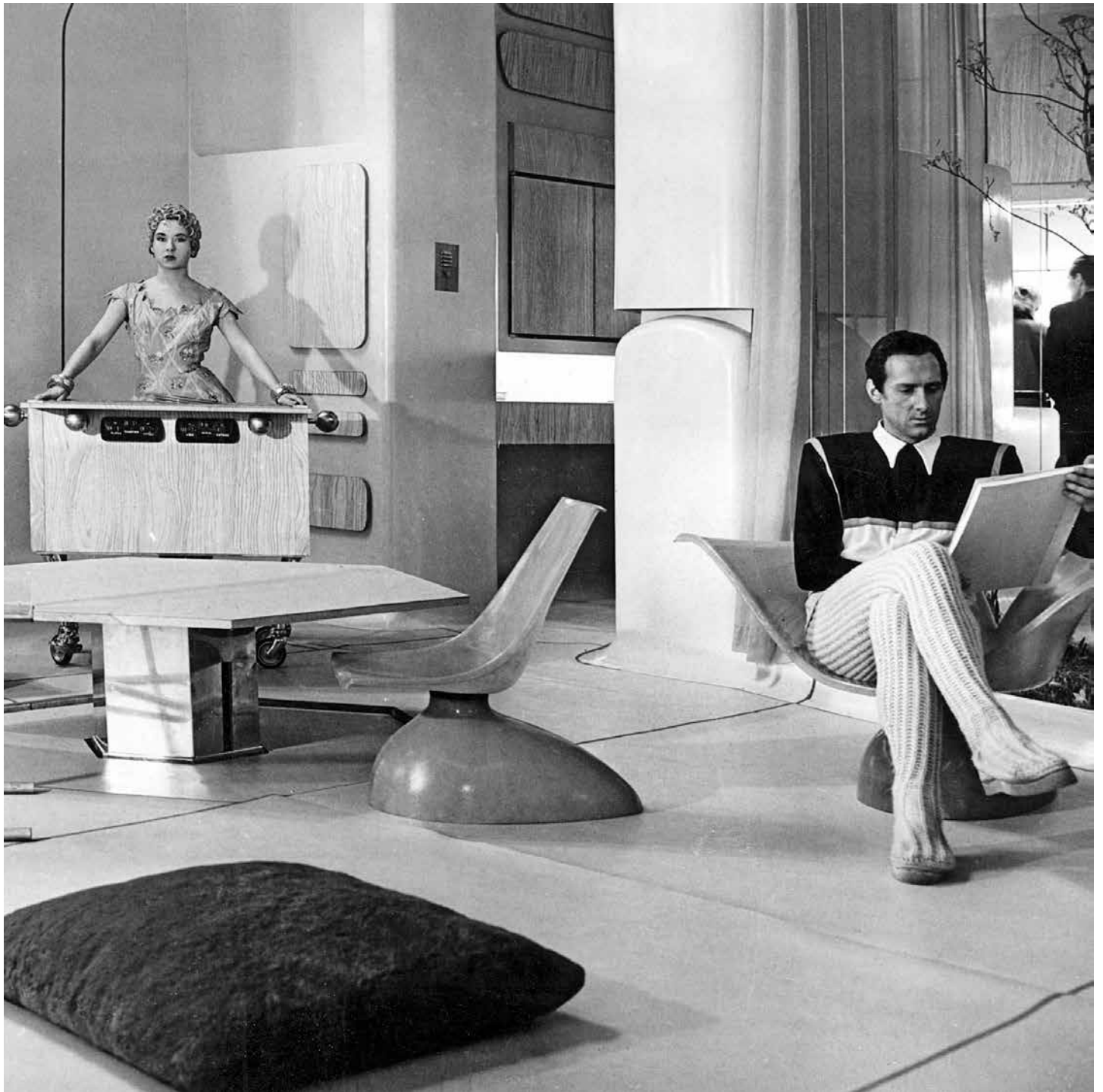












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