

# dwell

AT HOME IN THE MODERN WORLD

FEBRUARY 2001

## 2001 Come Home to the Future

Low Tech  
Post Jetsons  
High Style

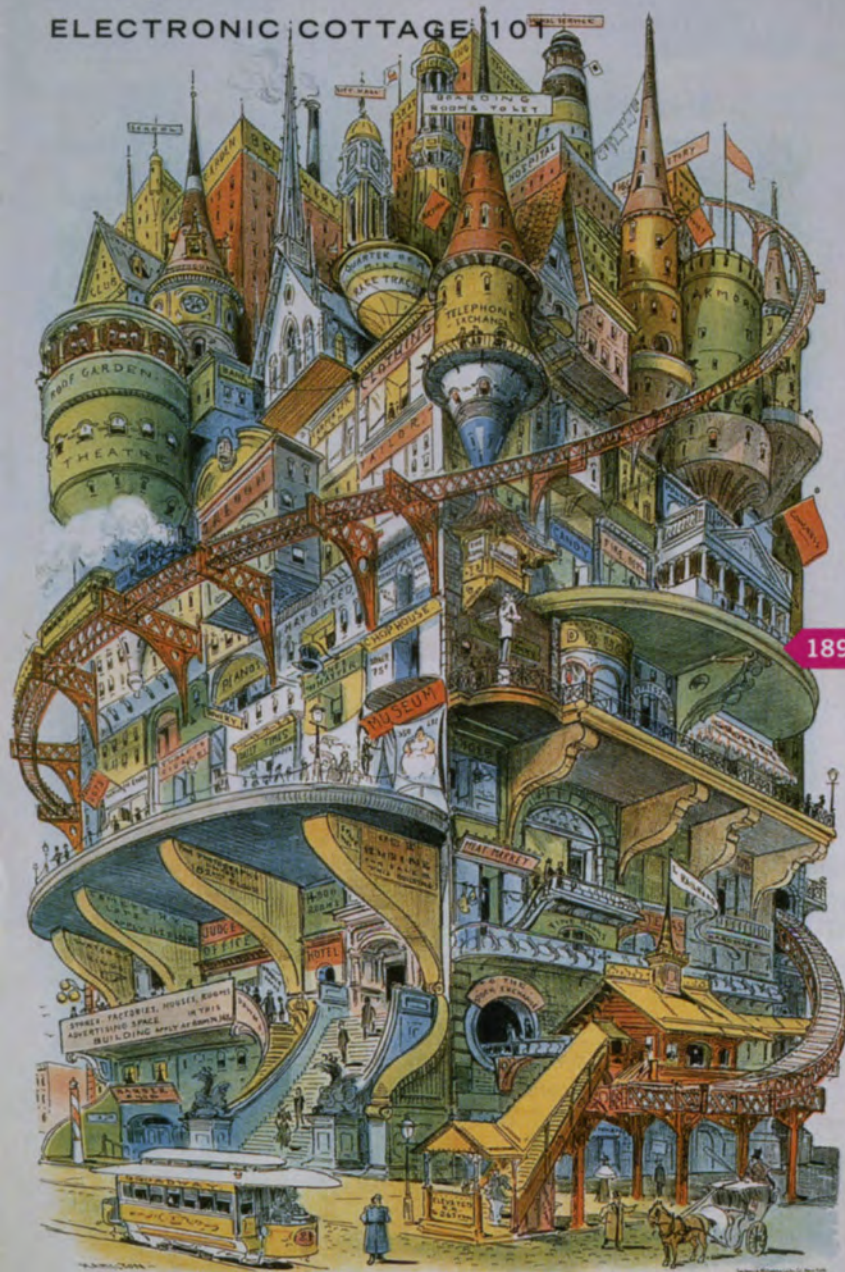
The Electronic Cottage Revisited  
Chef Bourdain and the Monster Fridge  
Architects Invade Mall of America

\$4.95 U.S. / \$5.95 CANADA





ELECTRONIC COTTAGE 101



WHAT WE ARE COMING TO. JUDGE'S COMBINATION APARTMENT-HOUSE OF THE FUTURE.

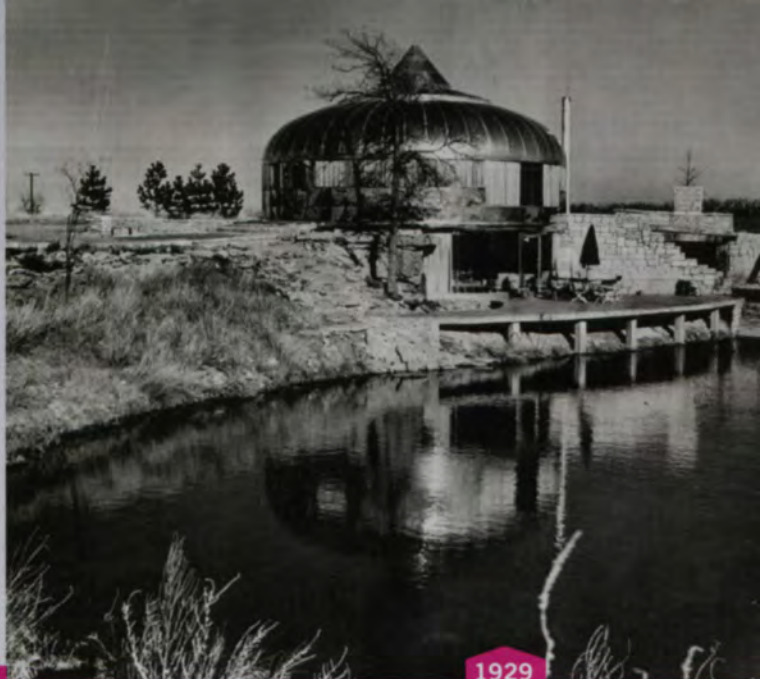
1895

BEFORE THE WIRED COTTAGE CAME ...

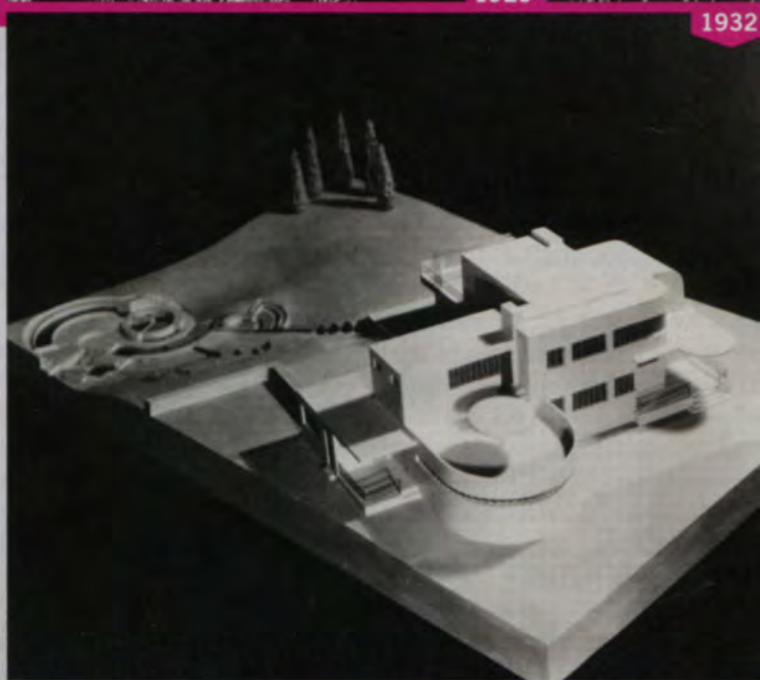
1895 "What We Are Coming To: Judge Magazine's Combination Apartment-House of the Future" Grant E. Hamilton

At the turn of the century, Americans expected enough immigrants to stuff cities with massive apartment complexes. Who would want a house on an acre lot when they could have chaos, cacophony, pastel colors, and crenellations?

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



1929



1932

1929 The Dymaxion House Buckminster Fuller

Fuller peddled this house nationally and internationally, hoping someone would mass-produce it for a more sustainable future. The Dymaxion was energy efficient, fully collapsible, and transportable (via Zeppelin delivery). It was never mass-produced. But this Wichita prototype (1945) was home to entrepreneur William I. Graham until 1972.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BUCKMINSTER FULLER ESTATE

1932 House of Tomorrow Norman Bel Geddes

Industrial designers like Raymond Loewy, Henry Dreyfuss, and Norman Bel Geddes originated the "streamlined" look, which was much more practical for high-speed machines like locomotives and cars than houses, but had "futuristic" appeal—they looked resilient, high-tech, and refreshingly strange.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ESTATE OF NORMAN BEL GEDDES, EDITH LUTYENS BEL GEDDES, EXECUTRIX





1933



1947

# The Town of Tomorrow

1939

## DEMONSTRATION HOME No. 4



1950

1933

### House of Tomorrow George Fred Keck

At Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition in 1933, three-quarters of a million people paid a dime to enter the steel-frame, glass-walled dodecagon prism. Most who entered witnessed climate control and dishwashers for the first time in their lives. The media hailed Keck's creation as "America's first Glass House."

PHOTO BY HEDRICH-BLESSING/CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1939

### The Pittsburgh House of Glass, World's Fair, New York

The Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company and the Pittsburgh Corning Corporation sponsored Demo Home No. 4 for the "Town of Tomorrow." The house was not the first to show that glass can make rooms more like indoor/outdoor spaces, and mirrors can brighten them. But its fresh look still attracts imitators.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1947

### Levittown, designed and marketed by William Levitt, starting in 1947

After World War II and into the Cold War, single-family suburban homes with the best appliances were patriotic symbols of capitalism, and, thanks to prefabrication, everyone could have them. Levittown's idealism was iffy from the start, with racial covenants, the necessity of cars, and boring picket fences.

PHOTO BY BETTMANN/CORBIS

1950

### Atomville USA Paul Laszlo

The advent of nuclear weapons made designers imagine a future home that was streamlined, encapsulated, or even underground. Laszlo's Atomville attempted to make the underground "happy" with an outdoor "roofdeck" and a bright interior. But really, who but an apocalyptic cult or fugitive mafioso would want to live in a bunker?

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM, UCSB





1957



1969



1967



1970

1957

**Disneyland House of the Future  
Sponsored by Monsanto Corp.**

Excitement over new, laboratory-developed building materials—like Monsanto's polyester reinforced with fibrous glass—commonly influenced post-war designs. In the '70s (the house was then out of date) the house resisted the wrecking ball (it bounced off) and the Disney workers had to take it down by hand.

PHOTO BY CORBIS

1967

**Habitat 67  
Moshe Safdie**

At Montréal's Expo '67, the Israel-born architect Moshe Safdie presented an apartment complex made of pre-cast concrete blocks. The setup, made to fit almost any site (the blocks stack in any way you want), was designed to solve urban housing problems during population explosions.

PHOTO BY BETTMANN/CORBIS

1969

**Villa Spies  
Staffan Berglund**

Berglund's vacation house was built the same year Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. It is circular, dome-roofed, made entirely of plastic, and contains movable translucent walls and a dining area that pops up at the push of a button. It can adapt to *any* site but remains on waterfront boulders at Toro, in the southern part of the Stockholm archipelago.

PHOTOS FROM THE BOOK *VILLA SPIES*,  
ERIKSSON & RONNEFALK PUBLISHING HOUSE

1970

**Futuro**

Attributed to a Finnish designer named Matti Suuronen, the Futuro was a mass-produced holiday home—a 1970 *L'Architecture D'Aujourd'hui* told us "segments of an elliptic envelope are assembled on site, on a metal footing." This Futuro hovers at the edge of the Philadelphia International Airport; others are in Pensacola, Tampa, and rural Quebec.

PHOTO BY BETTMANN/CORBIS

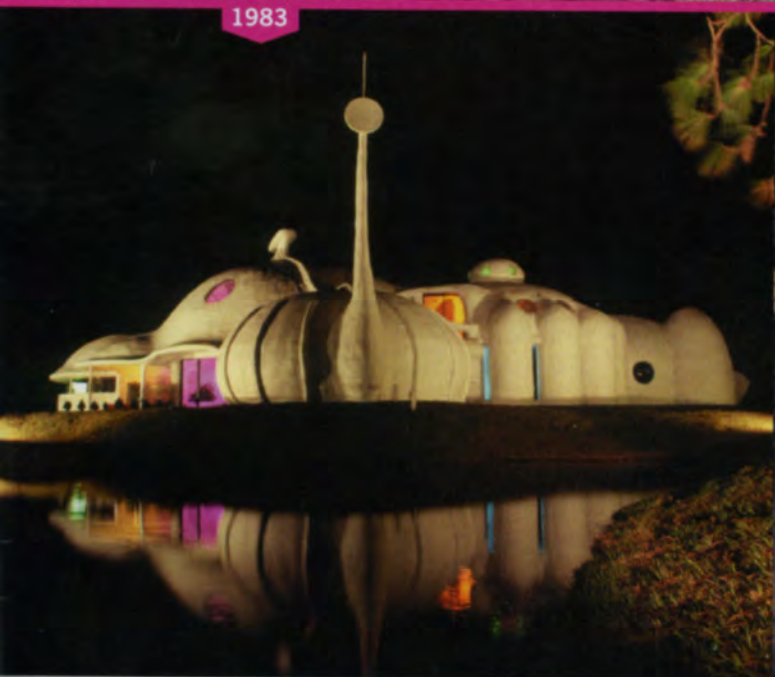




1980



1994



1983



1998

**1980**  
**The House of the Future at Ahwatukee**

In 1980, the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation designed a house with Motorola whose utilities were controlled by a quarter-inch-square Motorola MC6800 microprocessor. The first microprocessor-controlled house opened and closed windows, adjusted blinds, and stored tax records, shopping lists, and video games.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOTOROLA ARCHIVES

**1983**  
**Xanadu, the Foam House of Tomorrow**

Bob Masters and Roy Mason designed these kitschy pleasure domes to be environmentally sound, too—the foam shells are great insulators and inexpensive. Polyurethane foam is sprayed into inflated forms, and hollowed out when it hardens. The process sounds like an environmental disaster, but maybe in the '80s they didn't know that yet.

PHOTO BY KEVIN FLEMING/CORBIS

**1994**  
**House in Wales by Future Systems**

You might walk right over this grassy seaside hill without knowing it's a roof. The Wales house is invisible except on the oceanside, where its huge elliptical glass wall reveals a panoramic view and ventilates the rooms through 14 port-holes. The bathrooms were prefabricated and delivered as finished pods.

PHOTO BY RICHARD DAVIES

**1998**  
**The Slinky House by AlsoCAN Pty. Ltd. & Multiplicity**

The Slinky House was the winning entry for the Home of the Future Competition at the Museum Victoria in Australia. The house—including its bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen modules—compresses, Slinky-style, to fit on a truck's flatbed, then suspends over the middle of the street to make use of dead space. It does not go down stairs. ■

RENDERING BY ALSOCAN & ISOLATED ENTERPRISE