

# california

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## ARCHITECTURE

A NEW OUTLOOK ON EVERYDAY LIVING

A renovation in Noe Valley  
by Yama Mar Design  
captures the view, p. 118.

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# TEN TO WATCH

Andrew Dunbar and  
Zoe Astrakhan, see p. 98

Introducing the 10 firms selected for *CH+D's* annual spotlight of what's new and noteworthy in California architecture. BY LYDIA LEE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER HALE AND BRIDGER NIELSEN





## ARCHITECT OF DRAMA

**DANIEL MONTI**  
MODAL DESIGN, LOS ANGELES

Even in the crazy architectural stew that is Venice, California, Daniel Monti's latest project, scheduled to be completed in October, should make some waves. The house he is designing for his parents will be clad with Cor-Ten panels, bent and intricately patterned, so that inside, the light will appear as if it's filtered through trees. "Even with great architecture, you can get so accustomed to a space that you forget about it, so I wanted to use light to heighten the experience on the inside," says Monti.

The architect got his start at Marmol Radziner, where he worked for six years on standout projects like Ron Radziner's own impossibly narrow home. In 2005, he set out on his own, showing a flair for the dramatic

when the developer of a three-story spec house in Venice asked him to "make it as crazy as you can, on a budget." Monti came up with an energetically pixelated pattern that gave the developer pause, but he was able to make a compelling case for the design. "With a big building like that, I explained that we'd bring down the scale by painting it the colors of three different Craftsman homes in the neighborhood," he says. "We'd create an optical illusion to make it appear smaller, while showing how the building relates to everything around it."

Monti's hope for his practice is to avoid falling into the trap of repeating the same look: "We want the process to be about discovery, where the final idea isn't realized until construction is done."

BRIDGER NIELSEN