2013 is the Year of Italian Culture in America, meaning that over 100 events are happening in the most important cities in the United States, to narrate and promote Italy, engaging and entertaining Americans while reinforcing the ties between the two countries. We have taken this initiative as a stimulus to create our May issue of Interni, presented in New York during ICFF, as a special issue in English that retraces the relationship of exchange Italian design culture has established with that of the United States, Two profoundly different ways of observing and understanding design, whose diversities lead to mutual attraction, contamination and completion. On the one hand, there are the Italian designers and companies, many individual identities without a specific school of thought, but sharing a great ability: that of observing and coming to grips with other languages and other ideas to launch new projects and developments. On the other, there is the American design industry, focused more on an overall vision of consumption than on single products, marked by very high levels of specialization, relying on technological prowess. The interviews with Italian designers who now work in the States, and with the American designers who collaborate with Italian furniture manufacturers, shed light on this creative confrontation that leads to projects of great interest, in a process of hybridization and métissage (to evoke the concept of the exhibition-event produced by Interni in April). As Andrea Branzi writes in his contribution to this issue, "the bridge that spans the two sides of the Atlantic seems to grow rapidly." So it will be easier than ever to visit both sides, and to find the best of each, in the awareness that it is not through standardization, but through the encounter of cultures, that the best responses to the unknowns and the problems of the contemporary world can be discovered.

Gilda Bojardl
THE TOWER HOUSE

IN THE FORESTS OF UPSTATE NEW YORK, A VACATION HOME SEEN AS A SUM OF SPACES STACKED TO REACH THE SURROUNDING TREE TOPS. A SUSTAINABLE PROJECT FOR HIGH ENERGY PERFORMANCE THAT ESTABLISHES A DIALOGUE OF COMPOSITIONAL COUNTERPOINT WITH THE LANDSCAPE.
In the forests of upstate New York, this vacation home seen as a sum of spaces stacked to reach the surrounding heights. A sustainable project for high energy performance that establishes dialogue of compositional counterpoint with the landscape.
I have already said that we spent hours and hours in the trees not for utilitarian motives, as so many youths are prone to do, who climb trees to look for fruit or birds' nests, but for the pleasure of negotiating the troublesome bulges and forks, to get as high up as possible, to find the best spots in which to rest and gaze at the world below us. To play pranks and to shout to those passing underneath.” This is how the young Cosimo Piovacco di Rondò of the “Baron in the Trees” by Italo Calvino speaks of his choice of going to live in the treetops, after a futile argument with his father. First on the live oak in the garden of his house, and then in the taller trees of the nearby woods, Cosimo develops new ways of living and (literally above all) new vantage points from which to observe the landscape and, by extension, the whole world. This literary invention seems to have a connection with the design of this tower-house that establishes a relationship with the trees not only due to its direct surroundings, reflected in the green facade panels, but also in the idea of translating into architecture the form of the trunk and the foliage, making them into perfectly interlocking geometric volumes in which to organize, respectively, the stacked rooms and a panoramic living area with a terrace above it from which to observe the natural skyline and the horizon, from the framed height of a continuous horizontal ribbon window.
The design path is marked by precise choices that are assembled in a program of necessary spaces, organizing a central block of services flanked on one side by a glazed universe that emphasizes the ascending movement, and on the other by carefully calibrated rooms, with their own bathrooms and closets, to form an essential nighttime area on three levels. The resulting trunk supports a fourth level at the top, for the living area, obtained by interlocking an overhanging horizontal parallelepiped in the vertical volume of reference, resting on the most extended side on two forked metal pillars that blend in with the slender trunks of the nearby trees. The large open space poured at the top, with a terrace on its roof, is placed next to the kitchen, perfectly stacked on the central services block.
the living area, obtained by interlocking repeating horizontal parallelepipeds in the central volume of reference, resting on the most elevated side on two forked metal pillars that stand in with the slender trunks of the nearby trees. The large open space, perched at the top, with a terrace on its roof, is placed next to the park, perfectly matched on the central services.

VIEWS OF THE LIVING AREA ON THE UPPER LEVEL OF THE HOUSE, WITH THE CONTINUOUS RIBBON WINDOW THAT FRAMES THE VIEW OF THE LANDSCAPE.

TABLE-BENCH OR VITRA (DESIGN GEORGE NELSON, 1946).
The living area looks out on all sides at the foliage of the surrounding trees, with a ribbon window that opens in pre-set points to create a rhythm in the regular forms that repeats, rotated by 90°, on the continuous glazing of the bedrooms on the levels below, framing the entire 360° panorama like a film that follows the shadings of the daylight. The white of the internal surfaces forms a contrast with the bright yellow of the unosphere that underlines its role of ascent, displayed from the outside as a domestic cutaway, open to the natural setting. From the standpoint of energy use, the insulated concrete service block guarantees a high level of efficiency of consumption, also due to the possibility offered by the layout to heat only certain zones of the house. In the summer months, cool air is brought into the volume of the unisphere facing south, creating a chimney effect and distributing the air to all the spaces in a natural way, while 96% of the utilized water is returned to the earth, after having been purified by a central septic system.
From the standpoint of energy use, the central service block guarantees a high efficiency of consumption, also due to the layout offered by the layout to heat only those rooms of the house. In the staircase, water is brought into the volume of the staircase, north, creating a chimney effect and using the air to cool the spaces in a natural way. 96% of the utilized water is returned to the system, after having been purified by a central system.