



Andy Horn

CAPE TOWN'S GREEN ARCHITECT REVEALS HIS PASSION FOR SUSTAINABLE AND ECO-FRIENDLY DESIGN

Where in the world do you most like to be? Cape Town.

Describe your perfect house A planted roof, stone and clay walls, exposed timber beams juxtaposed against walls of super-insulated glass, integrated solar panelling and skylights. It would provide its own energy and water, have a living pantry (an attached greenhouse) and outside shower.

What makes a house a home? A place where the owners express themselves in the way they occupy and furnish it.

What's your favourite building technique and why? I enjoy a varied palette of stone, clay, timber and straw bale as it creates a variety of texture and feeling within the building. There is something very special about walking onto a building site free of harmful toxin.

What inspires you? Travel, attending green building conferences and discovering beautiful buildings.

Is there a process by which you design or is every project approached differently? Every project is unique so I tend to keep my design preconceptions at bay before I have properly understood the full context of the site.

What do you consider taboo when designing, eco wise? Materials such as: chipboard, vinyl flooring, solvent-based paints and glues, standard timber preservatives, artificial heating or air-conditioning. Also, the use of most hardwoods.

With sustainability a hot topic globally, who or what has most inspired you on an international level? The International Sustainable Building Conference in Oslo last year. There were over 1 000 delegates, from more than 50 countries.

And locally? The works of Ray Burman, an artist and self-taught architect working in Swaziland.

Is it difficult and more expensive to design and build this way? It's difficult in that you need more specialist expertise and technology which costs more. But basic materials can often be inexpensive. It really depends on the process and how much high-tech vs low-tech eco-technology one uses.

Where are you planning on travelling to this year for inspiration? Greece.

Which architect's work do you most admire? Frank Lloyd Wright.

What building or product do you wish you had designed? BedZed – a cutting-edge eco-housing estate in South London by Bill Dunster Architects.

Describe your style of design? Symbiotic. ■