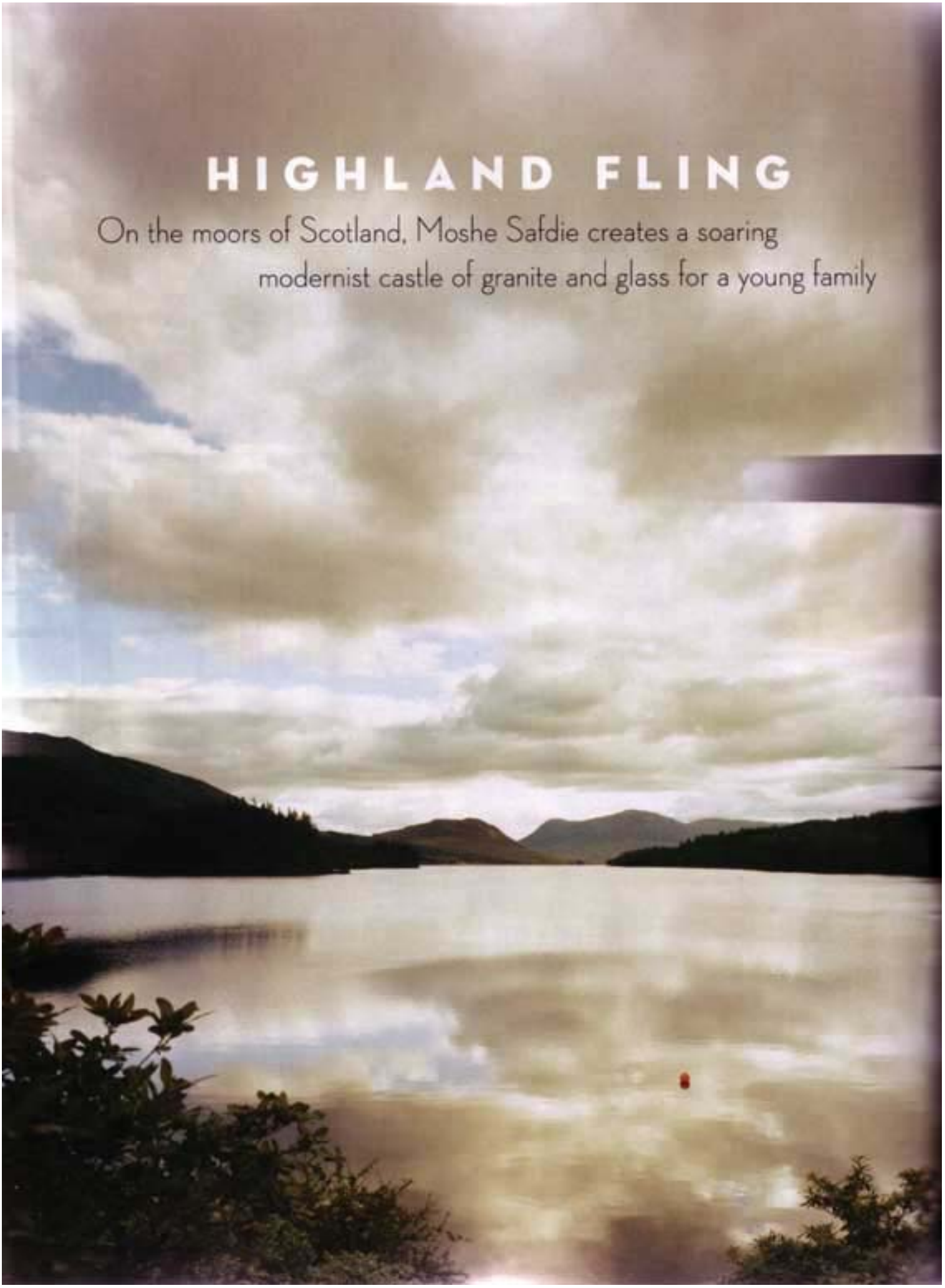
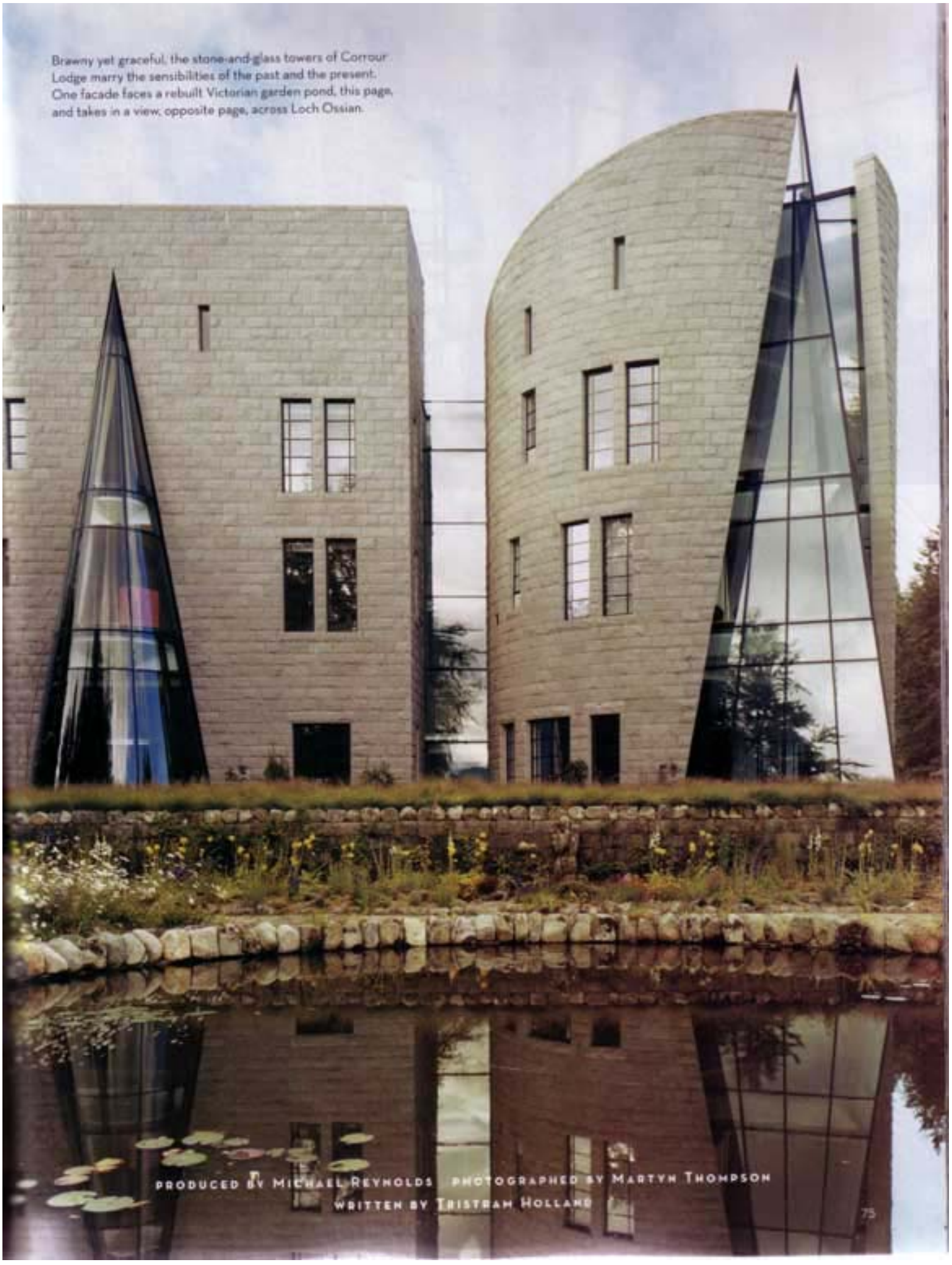


HIGHLAND FLING

On the moors of Scotland, Moshe Safdie creates a soaring modernist castle of granite and glass for a young family



Brawny yet graceful, the stone-and-glass towers of Corrour Lodge marry the sensibilities of the past and the present. One facade faces a rebuilt Victorian garden pond, this page, and takes in a view, opposite page, across Loch Ossian.

PRODUCED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARTYN THOMPSON
WRITTEN BY TRISTRAM HOLLAND

A lodge at the heart of a deer-stalking estate in the Scottish highlands, you'd expect, would be as traditional as Sherlock Holmes's tweed cap. A 12-mile private drive, though, leads not to a Victorian array of slate, turrets, and dormer windows, but to a dazzling modernist structure of granite, steel, and glass. Soon the shock of the new is subsumed by admiration for the peerless quality of the architecture and the spacious, restrained interiors, which combine to make a most exquisite piece of classic twentieth-century design.

Set on 50,000 acres of remote moorland, surrounded by majestic mountains, and overlooking a secluded loch, Corrour Lodge is in its third incarnation. When deer stalking became fashionable around the mid-nineteenth century, the first lodge appeared. Sir John Stirling Maxwell, the owner, built a second, substantial one in the late 1890s, but fire destroyed it in 1942. It took more than half a century and a new owner with daring and discernment—as well as a large measure of gritty determination—to start again.

Moshe Safdie, one of the world's leading architects, was approached. Although he had designed few domestic buildings, the owner's family knew him personally and persuaded him to undertake the design, in the late 1990s. Philip Flockhart of Morris and Steedman Associates, the firm appointed executive architects in Scotland, sees Corrour as "an interpretation of a Victorian shooting lodge based on Scotland's tradition of tower houses." Though additions were made to Safdie's design, the strongest architectural elements are his verticals, expressed in his signature geometric shapes—a stone rectangle penetrated by a glass cone; a cylinder pierced by a pyramid. Granite was used so remnants of Maxwell's house, which had been built of estate-quarried stone, could be incorporated, but since the owner was loath to gouge more out of the land, matching granite was imported from Portugal.

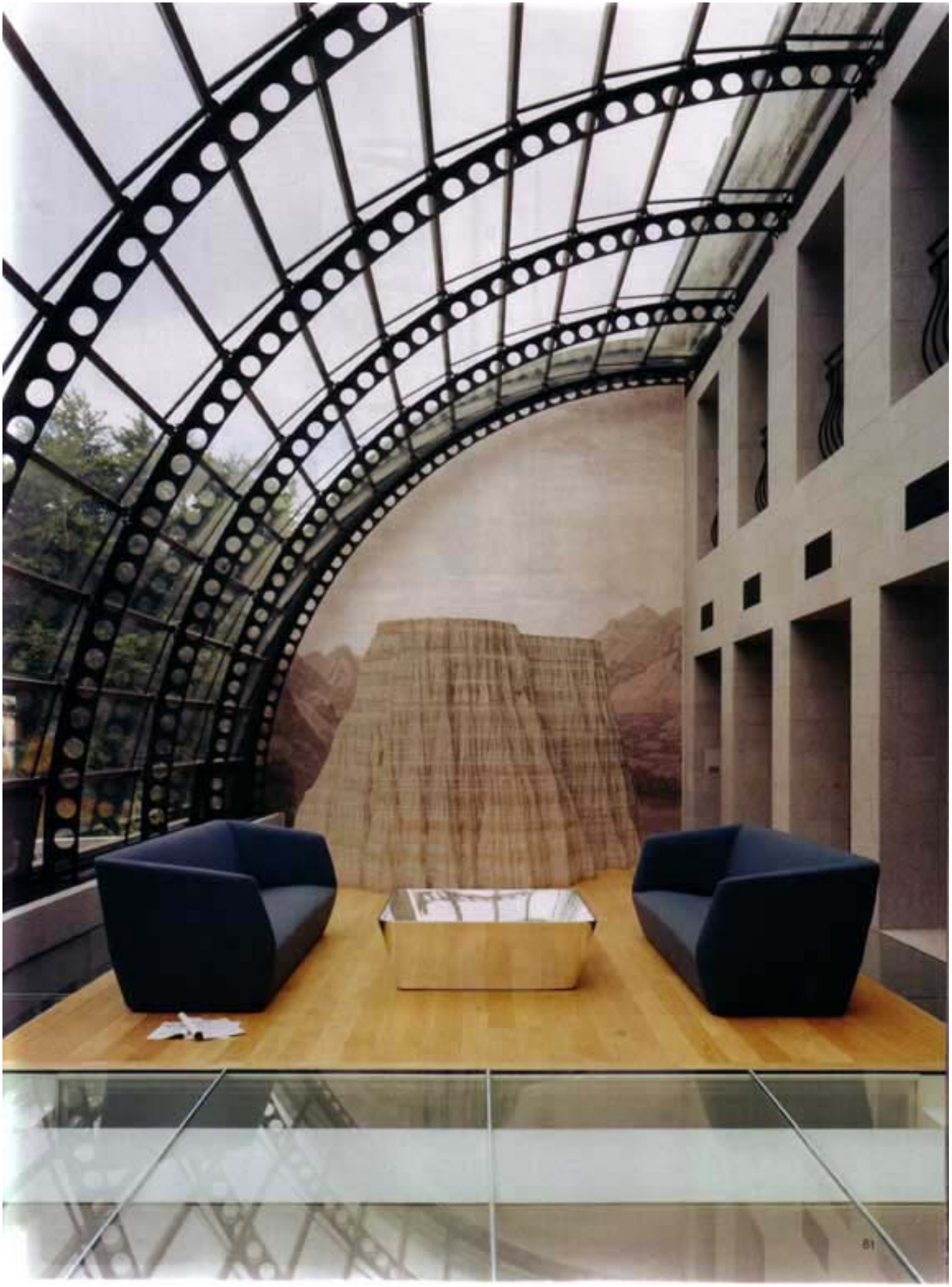
For the interior and the landscape design, the owner put her trust in two women whose tastes are in tune with hers, and whose talents she instinctively recognized. She turned first to landscape architect Jinny Blom, having discovered through reading articles about her work that they shared a passion for plants, conservation, and ecology. The task of "repairing landscape that had been traumatized by overgrazing and commercial forestry," Blom says, "was a huge challenge." She began by clearing enough to reveal, and to allow to thrive, native trees such as birch, rowan, and aspen. Miles of fencing were erected so that "deer didn't come and eat everything."

Maxwell had been an ambitious gardener and plant collector, and vestiges of his Victorian garden remained, either hidden or derelict. The large ornamental pond was restored—the stones were taken apart one by one and numbered so they could be put back successfully. Blom and the owner worked out an ethos for the planting, which was to achieve a balance between natives and nineteenth-century introductions. For example, the "meadow" that comes right up to the house consists of native Scottish moorland grasses threaded with exotics such as tiger lilies, blue poppies, and giant Himalayan cowslips.

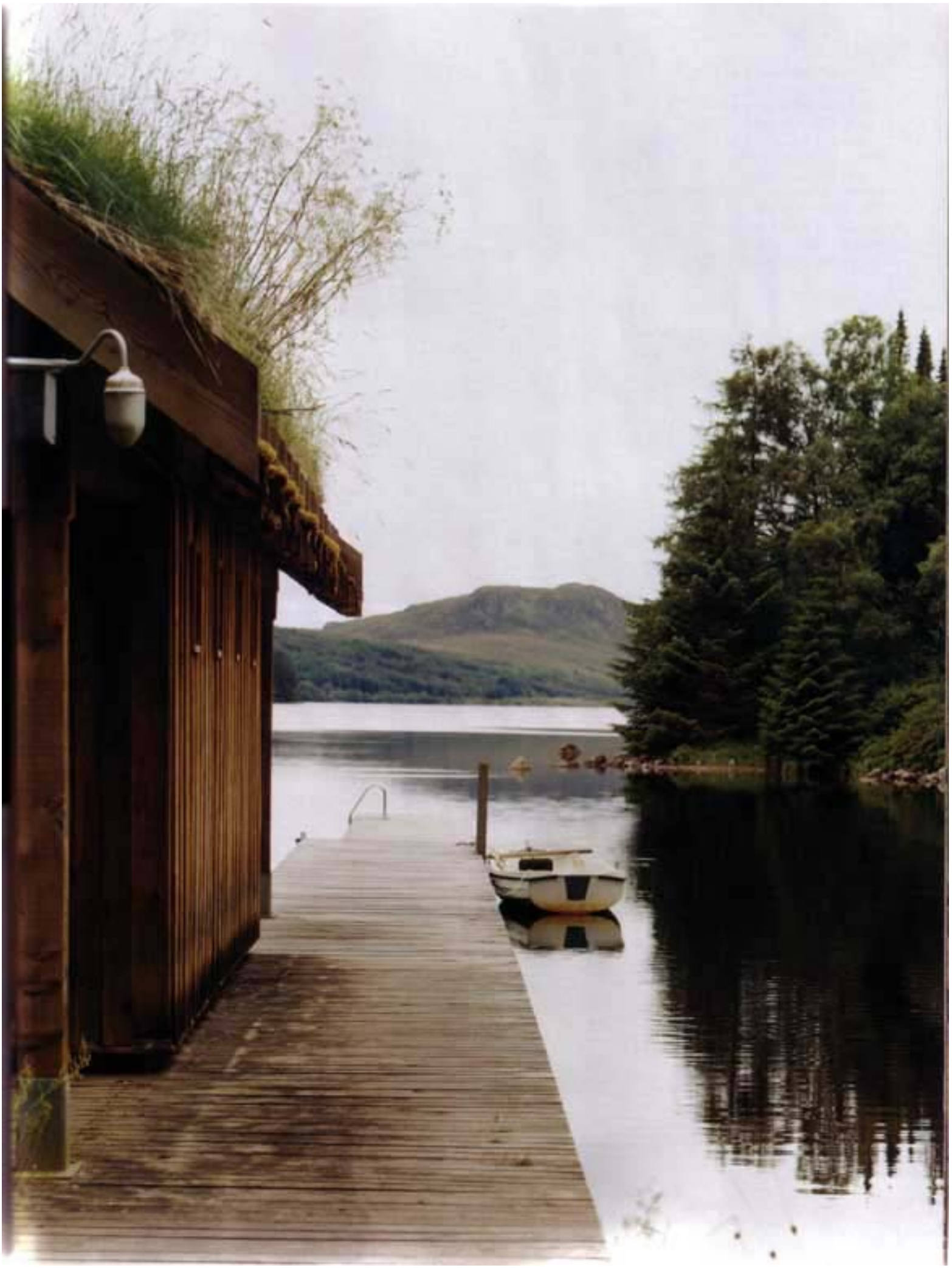
Designer Suzy Hoodless, who had worked with the owner before, took on the *(Cont. on page 114)*

The master bedroom contains colorful surprises, such as a Piero Fornasetti butterfly desk and Swedish textile designer Märta Måås-Fjetterström's Yellow Tree rug, opposite page. The room's scale and crisp lines are echoed by, respectively, Hans Wegner's Poppa chairs, at left, this page, and Gio Ponti's Superleggera chair, center. Pillows and a throw, also by Märta Måås-Fjetterström, bring more warmth and texture to the space.

Less is indeed more with design elements as dramatic as the elk antlers, neoclassical marble console, and glassware (including a ca. 1957 Ingeborg Lundin Apple vase) in the front hall, this page. The vaulted conservatory, opposite page, features sofas and a Zero-In coffee table by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby. The Adam Ellis wallpaper that serves as a backdrop to Anish Kapoor's *Mountain* (1995) reproduces a drawing by Joseph Farrington.



The intimate library, this page, features a chair and ottoman by Fritz Henningsen, from Jacksons Contemporary Design, Sweden, plus a 1960s desk by Ole Wanscher and A. J. Iversen and an office chair by Ray and Charles Eames. The custom mohair carpet is from the Rug Company, NYC. A jetty extends into Loch Ossian past a sauna with a planted rooftop, opposite page.



The rugged grounds of the estate are home to the owner's Icelandic ponies, this page. A guest bedroom, opposite page, is playfully but practically outfitted with a tiled stove from Wiklunds Kakelugnsmakeri, Stockholm. A ca. 1950 cabinet by Josef Frank stands nearby. The carpet is by Märta Måås-Fjetterström.

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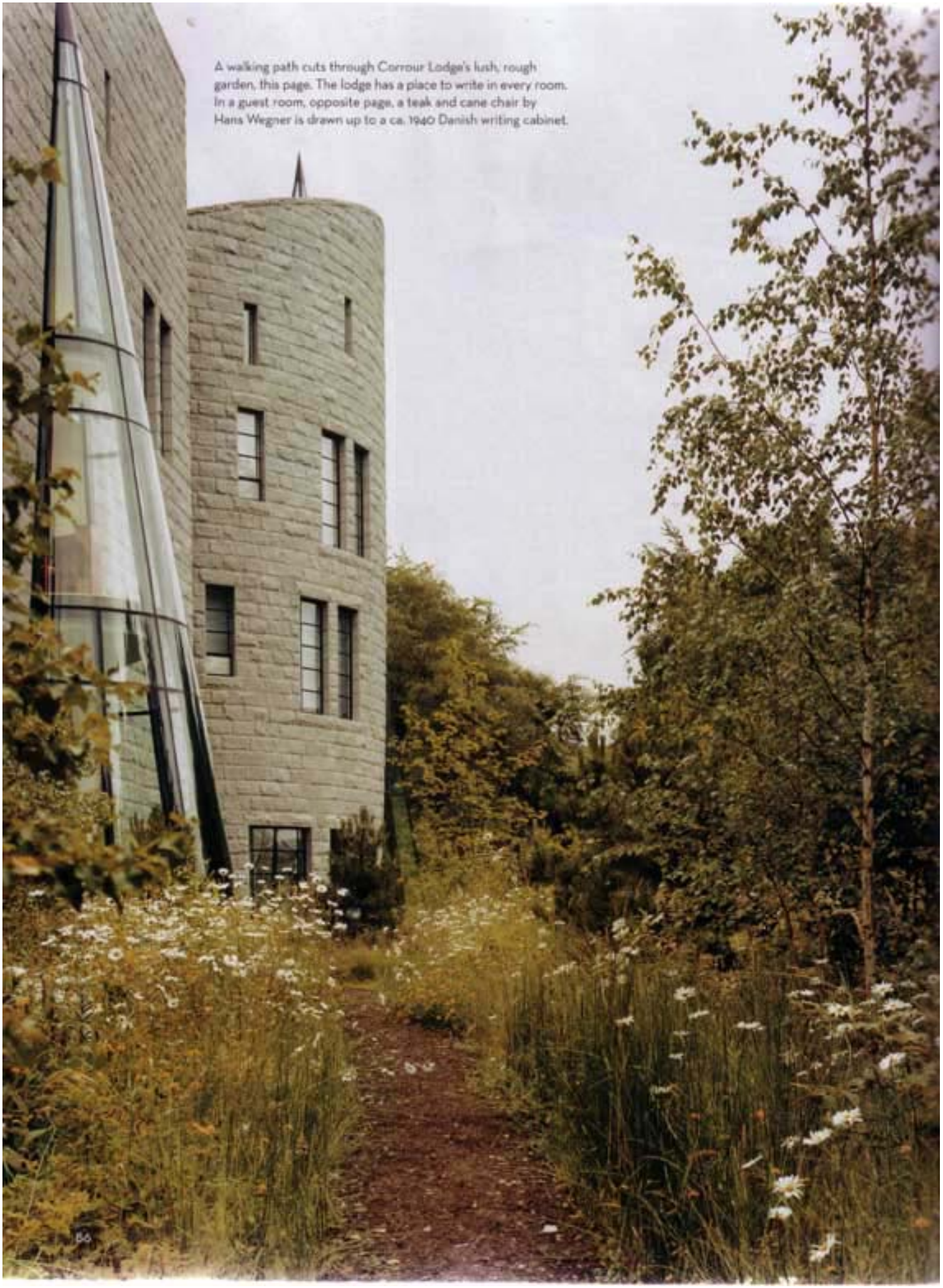
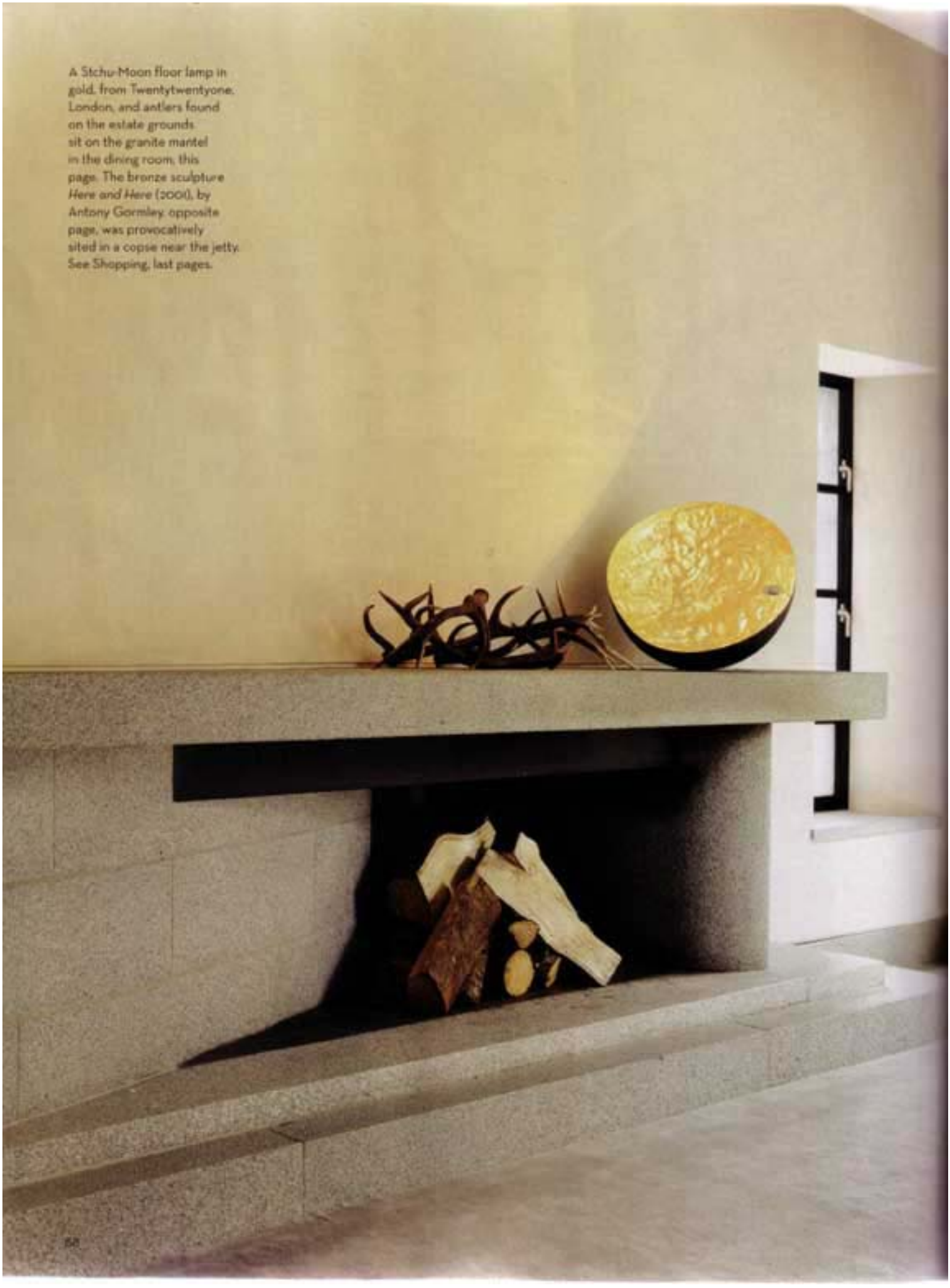
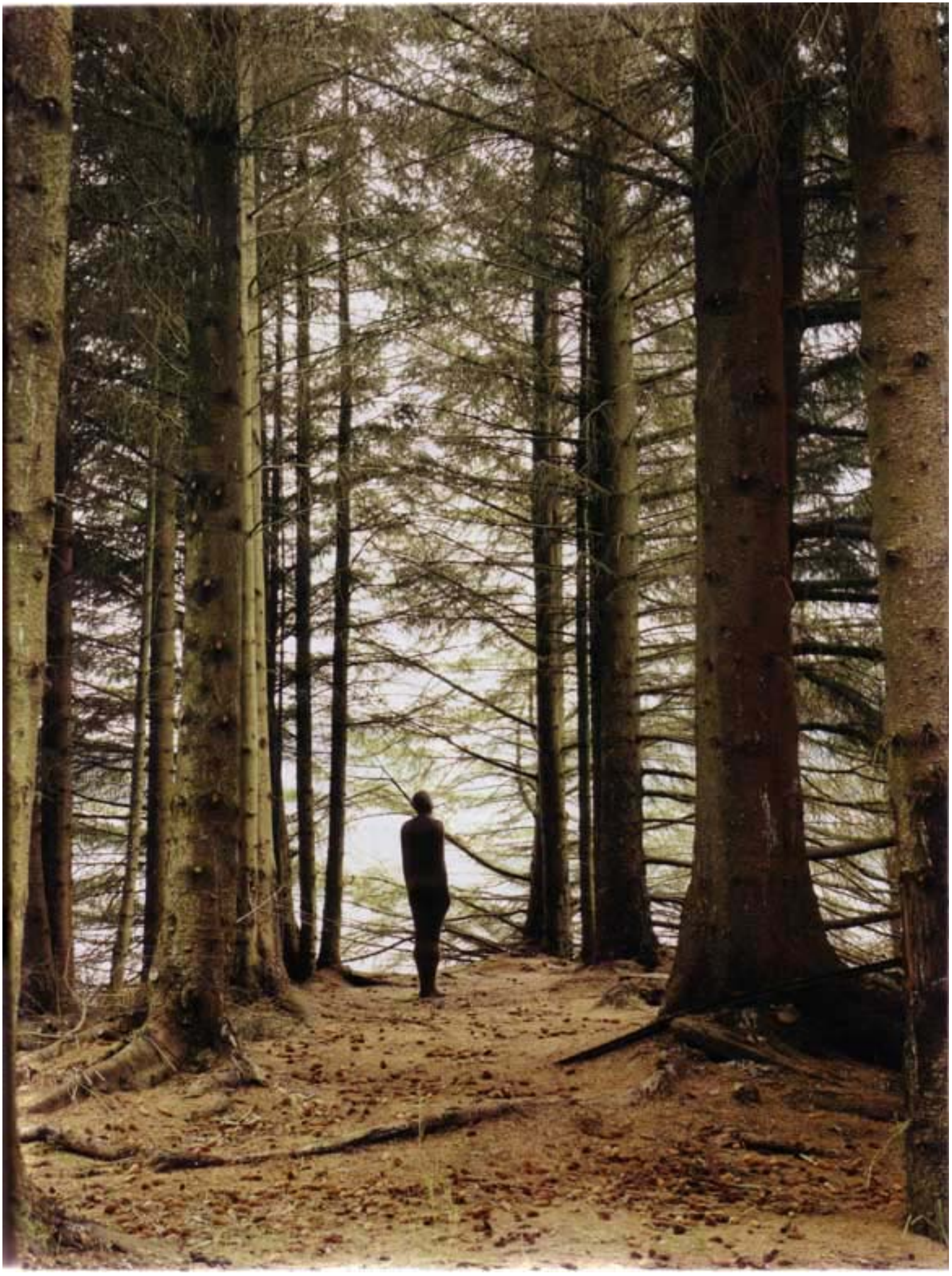


A walking path cuts through Corrour Lodge's lush, rough garden, this page. The lodge has a place to write in every room. In a guest room, opposite page, a teak and cane chair by Hans Wegner is drawn up to a ca. 1940 Danish writing cabinet.



A Stchu-Moon floor lamp in gold, from Twentytwentyone, London, and antlers found on the estate grounds sit on the granite mantel in the dining room, this page. The bronze sculpture *Here and Here* (2001), by Antony Gormley, opposite page, was provocatively sited in a copse near the jetty. See Shopping, last pages.



HIGHLAND FLING

(Cont. from page 76) interior. The client gave her almost free rein, but the space presented challenges. "The sitting room is round, but with a huge pyramidal window, for example," says Hoodless, and the dining room is rectangular with a conical window. While the brief was that the house should be furnished with pieces of value, it is used as a family home every holiday and so had to be comfortable, too. Each room has a desk and places for the family or guests to read, write, and converse. (Televisions have no place in the house.) A glass-vaulted, granite-floored great hall with a sweeping stone staircase forms the center of the lodge, but even here there is congenial seating. Two curve-backed Josef Frank sofas hold the floor; elsewhere are more intimate enclaves for reading. The main rooms lead off the great hall. While each has its own distinctive character, similar traits run through them. Hoodless used tapestries to soften the walls (a specialist painter from Denmark had already been employed to work with the plasterer to achieve the muted, lightly textured effects), and commissioned thick carpets, handmade in Tibet with New Zealand wool, "to provide a neutral, soft base." (The rugs had to be cut to fit so that they wouldn't obscure the rim of granite that runs along the perimeter of each room. Seven Iranian workers spent a week restitching the edges.) Hoodless mixed antiques and vintage twentieth-century pieces with custom-made and contemporary furniture. Accessories—mostly glassware—and lights are either classic designs or bang up-to-date. In all cases, says Hoodless, "pieces have been kept simple and sculptural."

The presiding zeitgeist of the house is most apparent in the two semicircular study/libraries. Crammed with books, both have beautiful views and a gentle austerity emphasized by ample desk space, sublime works by such mid-twentieth-century masters as Fritz Henningsen, Borge Mogensen, and Stig Lindberg, and new, immaculately upholstered sofas. The rooms epitomize Corrour Lodge: a place that celebrates nature and the life of the mind amid subtle yet sybaritic splendor. □

Tristram Holland is a London-based writer and editor.