

## MAKEKA DESIGN LAB

MOKENA MAKEKA, THE PRINCIPAL OF MAKEKA DESIGN LAB, IS ONE OF ONLY TWO AFRICAN ARCHITECTS AMONG THE 100 RECOMMENDED BY HERZOG & DE MEURON FOR THE ORDOS 100 PROJECT\* IN CHINA.

**THE ORDOS 100 PROJECT** is a career-changing opportunity and a humbling acknowledgement of my design approach. I was lucky to get an incredible corner site with a strong relationship to a public park that cuts through the whole project. My design unfolds different spatial experiences in and outside the building, a hybrid solution that incorporates a semi-public courtyard and a powerful elevated portion with great visibility within the dense urban layout. It deliberately creates the conditions for accidental encounters and is a spatial speculation that blurs between public and private boundaries.

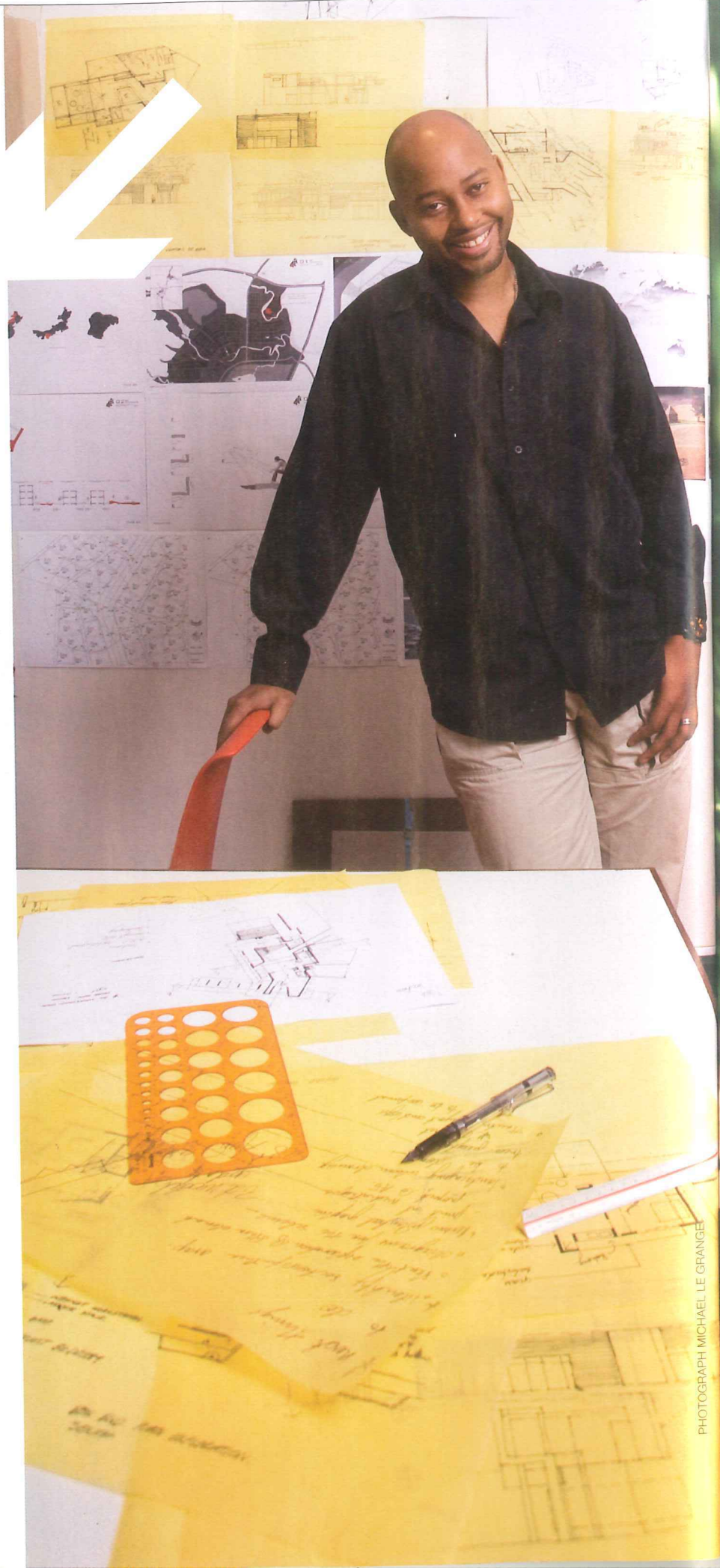
**I DON'T BELIEVE** that this country has found an architectural expression that is unique enough for it to be termed "South African", unless one describes the eclectic misappropriation of motifs (Tuscan, etc.) as being South African. I would suggest that the language and expression of architectural form remains conservative in pure design terms, with sporadic moments of brilliance. These moments inspire me to contribute to a richer design fabric, one where the architecture is competent on a world stage, but equally responsive to local conditions on a cultural, social and spatial level.

**MOVIES OF ALL SORTS** and persuasions are inspiring me right now. For me, they represent the second art, the first one being architecture. Movies are both spatial and auditory explorations of human relations in space, and the director employs the same tools as the architect to make life a spectacle: light, shadow, mass and colour. Architecture, however, is burdened with its presence, while film is ethereal in nature and geared towards instant gratification.

**I AM CURRENTLY WORKING** on two projects that integrate sustainability at both an urban and architectural level: a mixed-use urban node at Lynedoch Eco-village and the redevelopment of Oude Molen Eco-village, Conradie Hospital.

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\* See the information box on page 38



PHOTOGRAPH MICHAEL LE GRANGE