

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

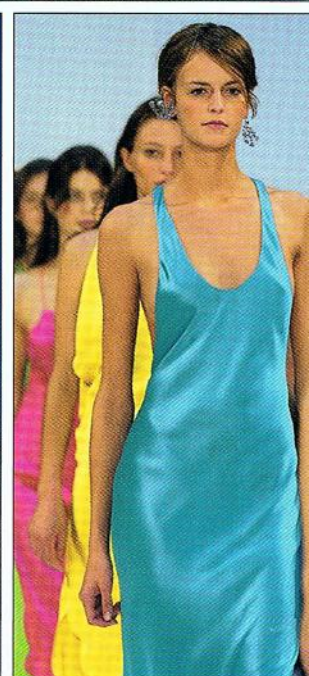
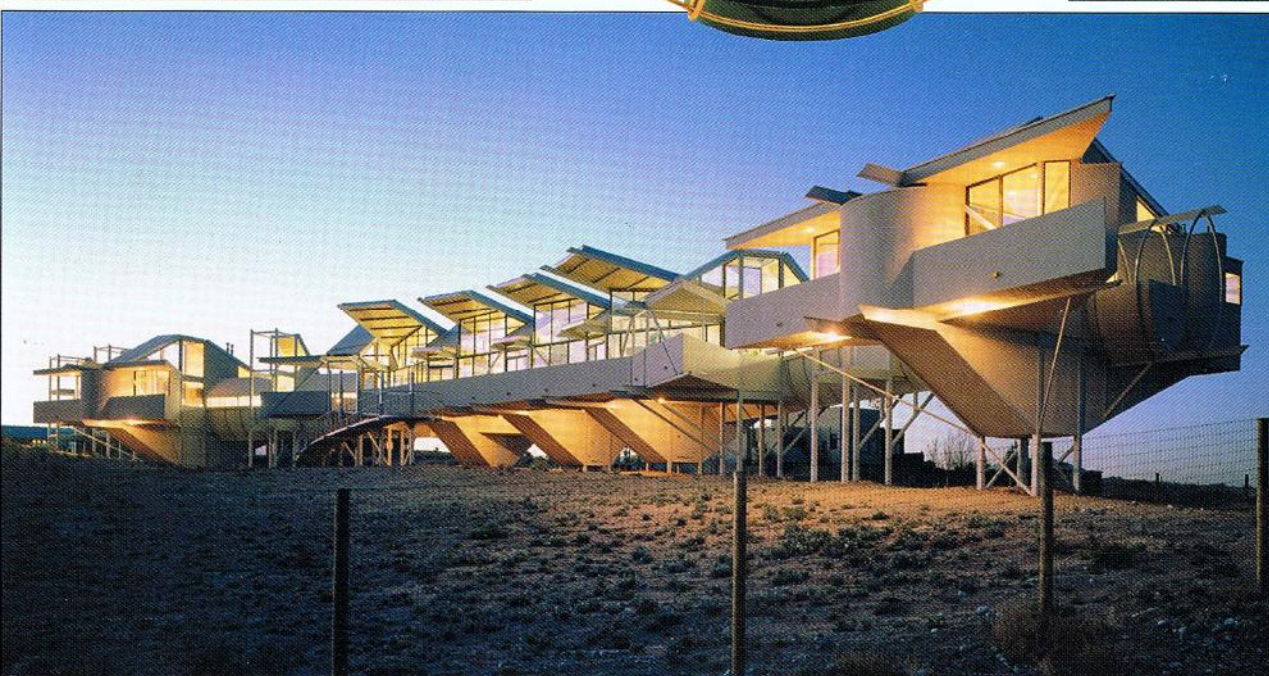
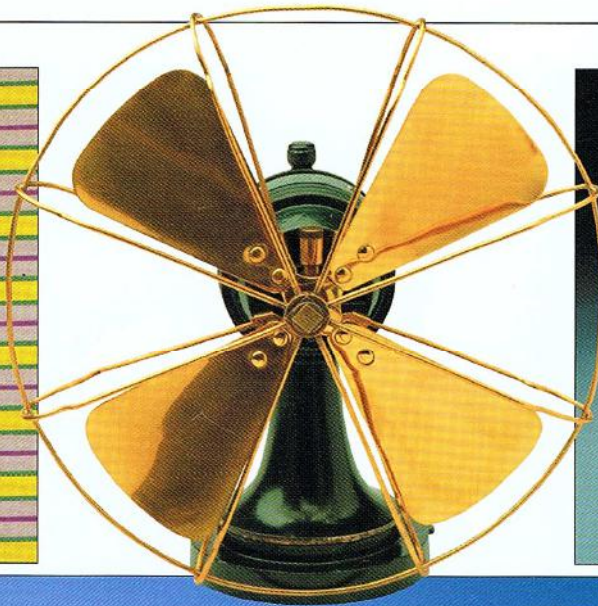
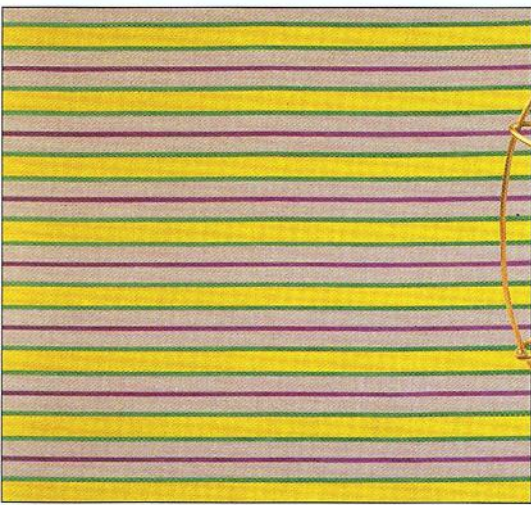
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THE GREAT DESIGN ISSUE



Fidelity Meets Style

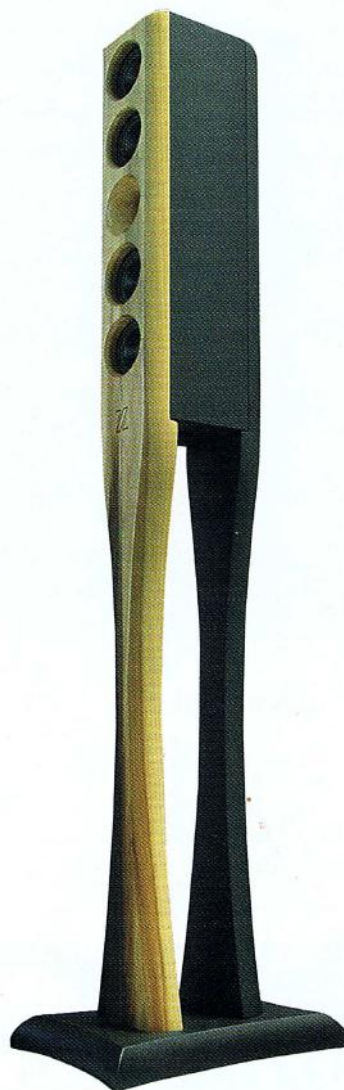
A New Generation of Loudspeakers Goes Way Beyond the Box

By Fred Kaplan

NO NEED TO HIDE YOUR speakers in the wall anymore. Designers of sonically top-notch loudspeakers are starting to make stunning visual statements too. The popularity of home theater and surround sound has been a galvanizing influence. In the days of mere stereo, a family might tolerate two ugly boxes in a corner. But five eyesores, scattered across a room, is too much. Audiophiles, notoriously, don't care much about appearances; videophiles value sight as well as sound.

The Genesis 6.1 was conceived by an engineer, an architect, an interior designer and a photographer. Built in Seattle, the speaker is subtly curved—for elegance and to avoid the vibrations rectangular boxes can produce. Each speaker holds tweeters made with a thin membrane of Kapton and cones of titanium and aluminum, ensuring that a sound track's subtlest nuances and loudest explosions come through with fine fidelity.

The Kaya Reference speaker, from Colorado-based Innersound, is an electrostatic marvel. A featherlight Mylar diaphragm is suspended between two electrically conductive grids. High-voltage



FAR LEFT: With a finish that uses automotive-paint formulations, the Genesis 6.1 is five feet high and costs \$11,200 a pair. **LEFT:** Part of a home-theater system, Zingali's Colosseum Cinema L speaker sells for \$1,610 a pair.

charges move the diaphragm back and forth. The resulting sound is stunningly clear and crisp. With its wood finish and brushed-aluminum trim, the Kaya is warm and inviting.

From Italy, the Zingali Colosseum Cinema L has a com-

pact, exotic look, more like an African sculpture than a speaker. The yellow-poplar finish is beguiling, and so is the sound.

From California come Anthony Gallo Acoustics' colorful Nucleus Micro Satellites, steel speakers the size of a softball. The sphere is nature's most rigid form, so the Micros don't rattle like many light speakers; they sound remarkably open and dynamic. Here, then, is a different approach to melding design and high-end sound—speakers that virtually vanish into their surroundings. □



LEFT: Just four inches in diameter, Anthony Gallo Acoustics' Nucleus Micro Satellites cost \$175 apiece and come in eight colors.

BELOW: Standing six feet high and costing \$17,500, Innersound's Kaya Reference has an electrostatic panel for transparent sound.

