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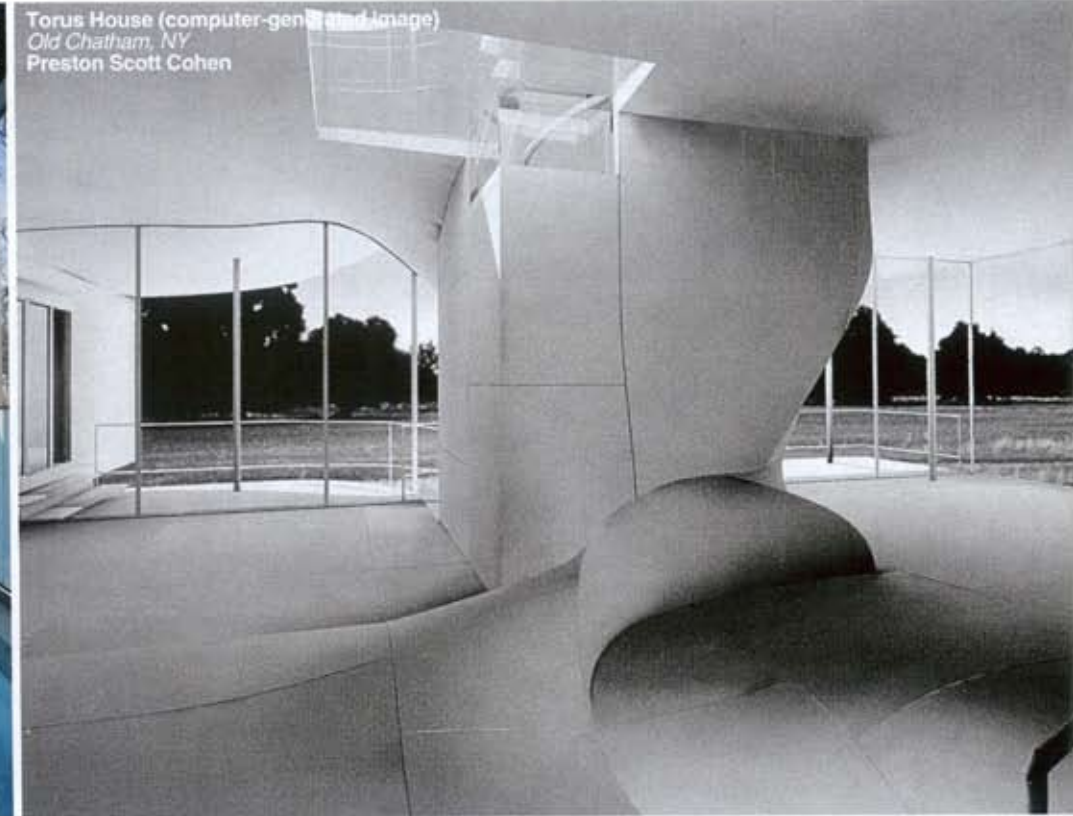
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## home peep show

Is contemporary domestic architecture baring its all in a new exhibition at MoMA? You bet your glass house! BY ANDREA CODRINGTON

The Curtain Wall House in Tokyo by Shigeru Ban (above) plays peekaboo: Its giant drape is outside the glass.

No, Christo has not been wrapping buildings in Tokyo. But the association might pop to mind upon seeing Japanese architect Shigeru Ban's Curtain Wall House for the first time. A two-story residence that strikes an unusual pose in Tokyo's dense cityscape, Ban's creation features an outer skin of clear glass panels and gigantic fabric curtains that, when drawn, cocoon the building from the outside world. Once the megadraperes are pulled back, however, two sides of the house

are completely exposed to the street—an almost unimaginable breach of decorum in a country that is known for its culture of modesty. Of course, peekaboo architecture is not the newest thing on the block. But Ban's Tokyo oddity expands on previous modernist experiments in transparent living. "This is not a glass house like Philip Johnson's on 40 acres of land in Connecticut," points out Terence Riley, chief curator of the Museum of Modern Art's department of architecture and design.

"This is right in the center of town. The family is basically living publicly." In a new exhibit called *The Un-Private House*, which runs July 1 to October 15, Riley presents 26 examples of contemporary architecture that turn conventional domesticity on its head. "It's just beginning to dawn on people that the 'Ozzie and Harriet' traditional house was invented for people who had a specific kind of program," says Riley—a program of behavior and lifestyle that, largely, no longer expresses how most people >

HIROYUKI HIRAI

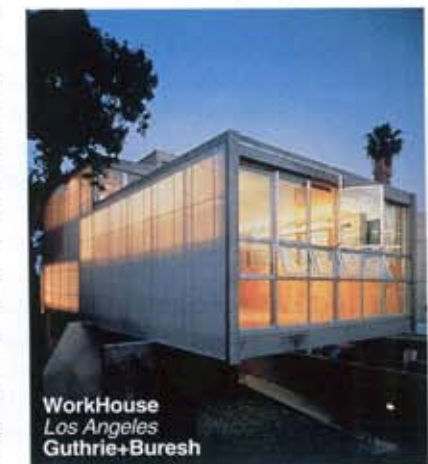
live. (For starters, 42% of the "families" in America consist of married couples without children at home; another 13% of all Americans live alone.)

The decline of the nuclear family, the blurring of home and work spaces and the implications of digital technology, among the most significant signs of our times, can't help but affect the way architects think about domestic space. The ascending domestic architectural form is the loft—not necessarily renovated industrial spaces, but houses with open plans that afford flexibility. The conventional assumption that gathering areas like living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens should be located on ground floors and bedrooms and bathrooms relegated to upper floors is being challenged in houses with little, if no, transition between public and private realms.

The show includes homes that are built or in progress, others that are wishful thinking.

Architects Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam radically altered their own Atlanta bungalow (above) by doing away with

room partitions. They created architectural "situations" rather than actual separations. And Archi-Tectonics's Millbrook, New York, residence, a house planned to accommodate a couple who work from home, boasts a spiral-like passage through various living and working spaces. "We've gotten rid of doors so that as the couple moves about the house, they can pass through



WorkHouse Los Angeles Guthrie+Buresh

rooms without really disturbing each other," explains Archi-Tectonics principal Winka Dubbeldam.

"It used to be that a sense of well-being was very much related to privacy," notes Riley, "but people today don't feel that their well-being is intimately related to this impenetrable perimeter. Sometimes a sense of comfort comes from knowing that there's somebody out there, that there's something going on."

The constant presence of media information has increased the permeability of the contemporary home, at times to a degree that many find uncomfortable. When Frank Lupo and Daniel Rowen created a Manhattan loft for a Wall Street couple, they included a centralized home trading floor that's visible throughout the space.

"There's this fear in late-capitalist culture of working all the time," says Riley. "But one of the promises of loft living has always been the romantic, preindustrial notion of an integrated life." mh

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