

CANADIAN

# INTERIORS

## Best in show

Bulthaup's T.O. showroom  
Habitat Valencia  
Interior Design Show

Plus: Fab new flooring

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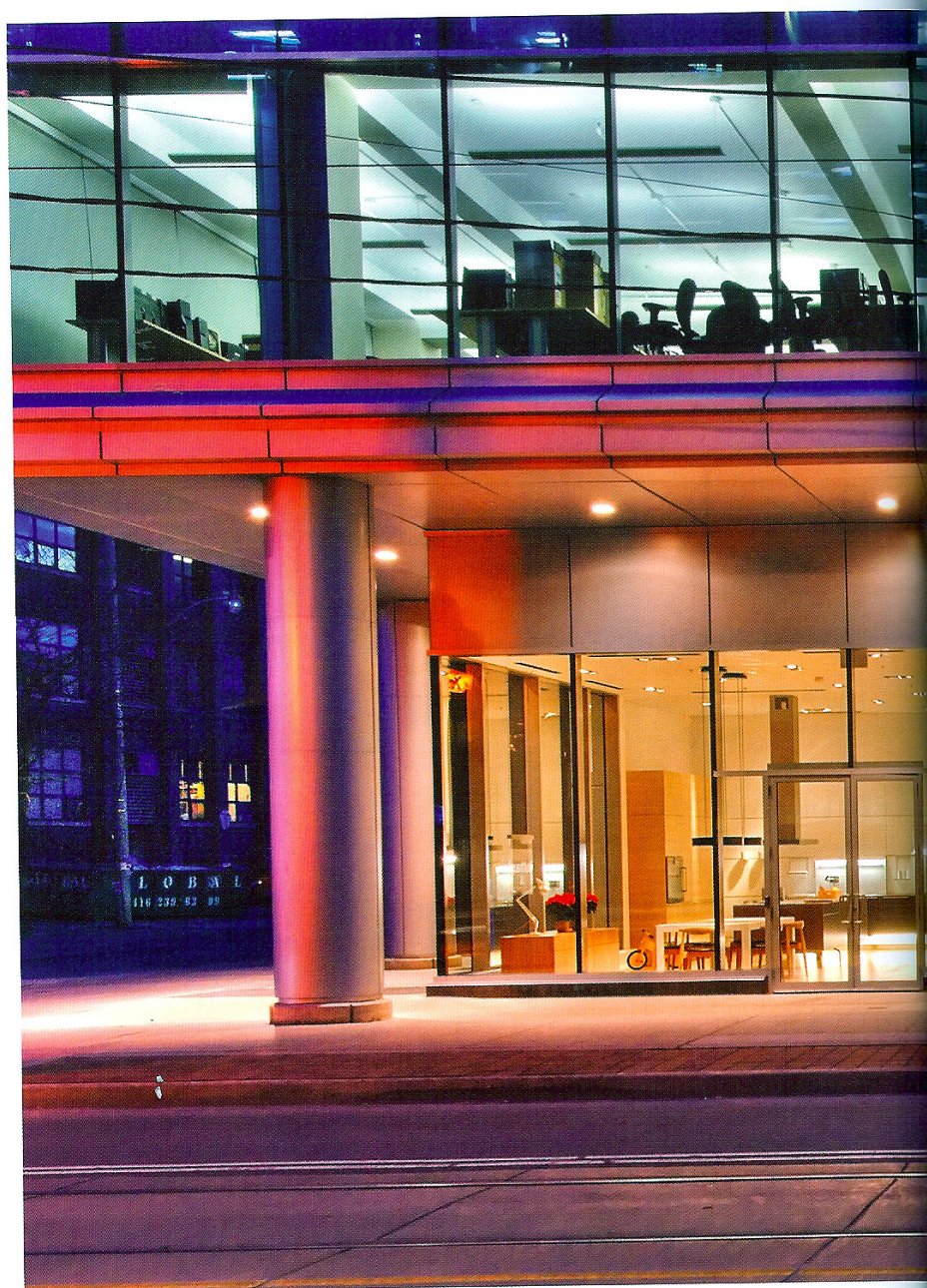
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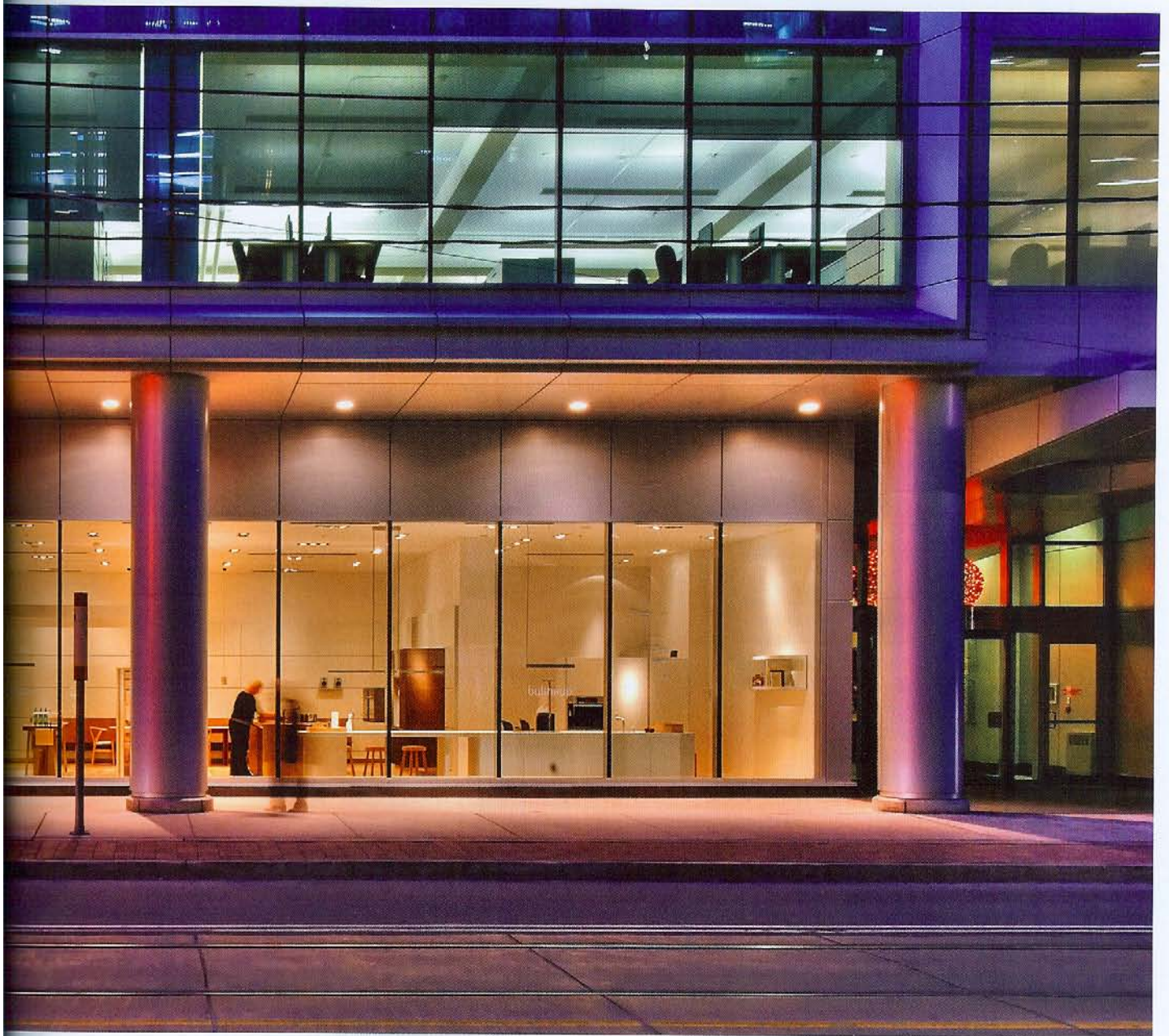
## Room to spare

A careful tweaking of Bulthaup's Toronto showroom puts the focus firmly on the kitchen manufacturer's incomparable offerings.

—By John Bentley Mays







In Bulthaup's new layout, four kitchen configurations (up from three) are distributed in an open plan behind expansive windows framing the ground-floor site on two sides. The introduction of short walls perpendicular to the street helps to concentrate the viewing experience.





Remaining unchanged are the solid oak floor and nearly 13-foot-high ceiling. The cladding of the rear wall in steel-framed translucent glass has enhanced the lightness and brightness of the shop. Bulthaup's b3 series – here fronted in grey aluminum – is the company's flagship line.





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choice." (You'll pay roughly the price of a new mid-sized car for b1.) The simplicity of this model, with its long, unfussy lines, smooth corners and ergonomic ease, makes it particularly appropriate for the restricted spaces many of Toronto's downtown condominium-dwellers inhabit.

Bulthaup's b2 is the most exciting and unusual of the firm's three lines. Designed by the Viennese studio EOOS, this series has been inspired by the craftsman's workbench and workshop, and it seeks to recall the kitchen's ancient identity as a zone of hard creative work. The two core items in the set are displayed in the middle of the showroom: a modular stainless steel bench with everything one needs for preparation, cooking and washing up; and a tool cabinet for neatly stowing basic cookware and tableware, appliances and utensils. Gone are the traditional cupboards hanging over counter and stove; b2 is rather a kitchen for postmodern living: minimal in style, maximal in efficiency and sheer urban attitude.

Two kitchens in Bulthaup's flagship b3 line – the Mercedes-Benz option, in terms of price – are featured here. Both are large and both honour the Canadian kitchen as the place where the family cooks and eats most of the time, and where guests are entertained on all but the most ceremonial

The south-facing showroom is often flooded with light. Every quarter, the work of a different artist will be featured; inaugurating the space is "The Philadelphia Experiment," a vivid photo-based piece by Bob Gundu. Bulthaup's b2 (opposite, at left) comprises a modular stainless steel bench with everything anyone needs for preparation, cooking and washing up, and a tool cabinet for neatly storing basic cookware and tableware.

occasions. Bulthaup's massive "monoblock," an island of seamless stainless steel and aluminum drawers fronted in smoked oak and lined with linoleum, commands the centre of one kitchen here, positioned toward the east end of the showroom. Both kitchens on display are furnished with a panoply of convenient, ergonomically designed cabinets, drawers and shelves.

The new space, however, is not just about kitchens: Bulthaup Toronto will feature a work by a different artist every quarter of the year. To inaugurate the renovated shop, the owners chose Bob Gundu's large, vivid photo-based piece entitled "The Philadelphia Experiment."



Bulthaup kitchens are "really for people who are conscious about themselves, how they want to live," Antje says. For such people, the showroom is key. "They don't buy only a product. They buy the atmosphere in the place." ❧



