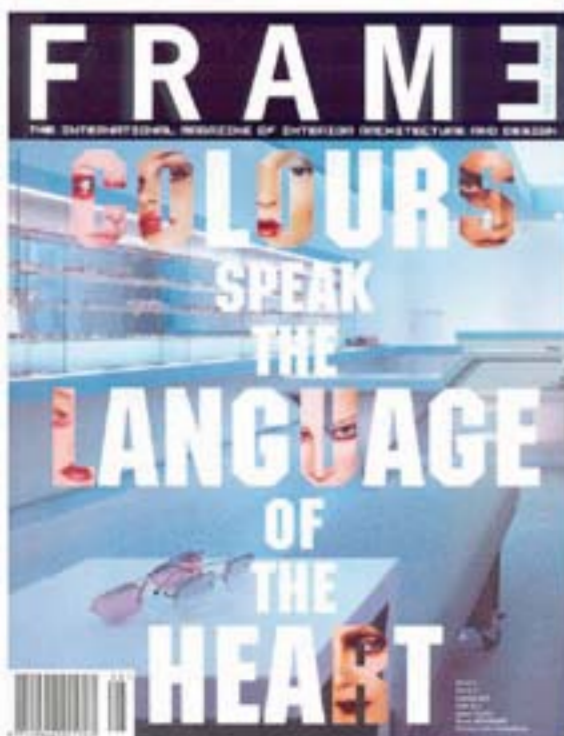


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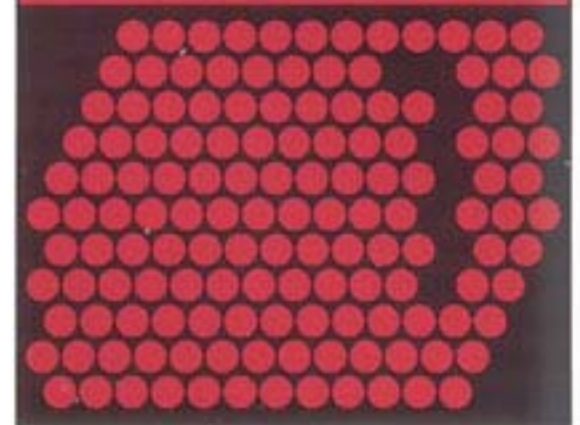


Downtown LA is currently undergoing something of a revival. Apartment blocks are shooting up, not to mention a Raphael Moneo cathedral and the impossible-to-overlook Walt Disney Concert Hall by Frank Gehry. Another newcomer is the boutique hotel that recently moved into the old Superior Oil office tower. Standard Hotel, the brainchild of hotelier André Balazs and designer Shawn Hausman, is anything but standard. They wisely decided to preserve plenty of the building's splendid features, such as the steel 15-time-zone clock, the Carrara marble in the lobby and a frieze above the entrance depicting the oil industry. Quirky additions include a table-football game at the valet-parking drop off, furniture by Gaetano Pesce in the guest rooms and, in the lobby, a pink Omnibus couch by Vladimir Kagan. The most spectacular intervention, however, is a rooftop

play-and-party zone with great views for those who dig a panorama of skyscraped scenery. A rooftop pool equipped with toys, a lawn of artificial grass, vibrating waterbed pods, canary-yellow Pantone chairs, waitresses decked out as cheerleaders – what more could the good-time crowd ask for? It all seems to be working, because even on an ordinary Monday afternoon the pool teems with scantily clad boys and girls apparently without a care in the world. The cheap-chic Standard has to be LA's most laid-back hotel. In terms of design, of course, we've seen it all before. But this attractive mix of old and new is all about having fun, even for guests who claim to be there strictly on business. It's an attitude that can't miss in the entertainment capital of the world.

JAN-WILLEM POELS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MONICA NOUWENS

details



High Standard

