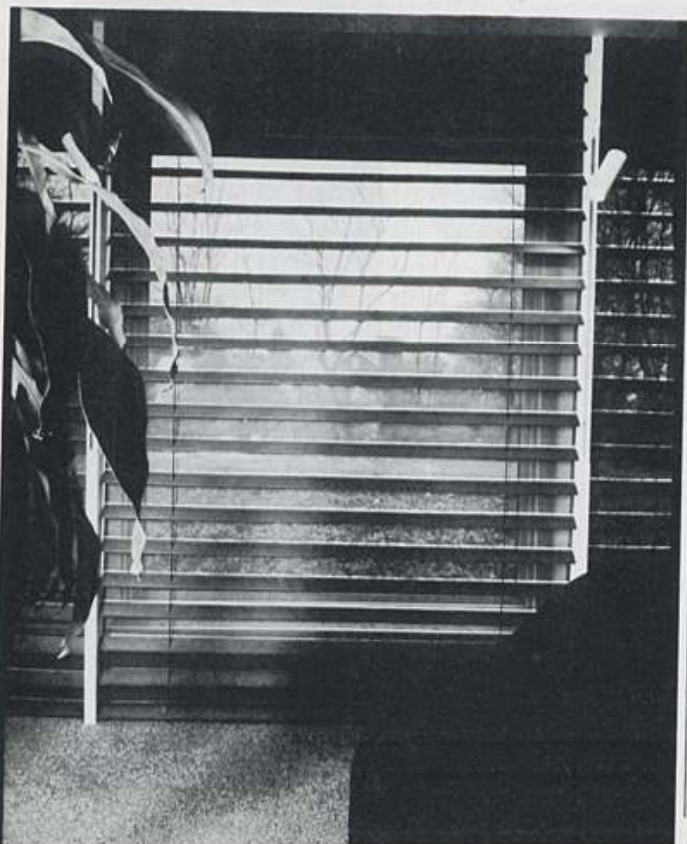


Through the glass, clearly

Susan S. Szenasy

As a new eclecticism invades interior spaces, window treatments take on a minimal look. Unencumbered apertures work to expand small rooms, cut down lighting costs, bring in the outdoors.



"One of the first things we do on a job is let the sun in . . . remove all curtains and take advantage of the natural light and the view," says David Corley of Minton-Corley, a Fort Worth-based design firm. His words are echoed by designers from all regions. Many would frankly prefer to use nothing on windows. But climates with strong sunlight and howling winds, demands for privacy, requests for variety and pattern, all make such purism impractical. The most sought-after solution is one that presents an undressed window which can be covered when needed. Coverings, however, should glide or pull out of the way, leaving clear views through sparkling glass.

Making the light play interesting games by filtering it to produce patterns, cutting down the glare, blocking out heat and cold, maximizing the view, expanding the space through natural light are what designers talk about in 1978. In highly congested areas like South Florida and New York City, where multi-family dwellings are the construction norm, designers are fighting a constant battle against confinement. James Merrick Smith of Coconut Grove, Florida notes: "The fantastic escalation in construction costs has cut down the size of interior spaces. These new constraints are forcing designers to visually expand interior spaces into the greater outdoors.

"Miles and miles of fabric on windows is like having an unnecessary blanket," adds functionalist James Merrick Smith. Nevertheless, drapery workrooms report doing a great deal of traditional window dressing with its well-established opulence. Treatments, however, have become more simple, admits New York's Jules Edlin whose clients "couldn't care less what it costs." He explains: "The dressed window in years gone by had a glass curtain, a night curtain, a decorative overdrap, festoons, and fringes. We have eliminated the night curtain and are often asked to do simple treatments. We also see a lot of easy-care materials like sheer Dacrons."

Surveys indicate that the silent majority is accepting the challenge of the energy crisis. Designers respond to requests for window treatments that maximize natural light and minimize heat build-up and loss this way:

David Corley votes for Levolor blinds with one inch louvers that can be adjusted from no-light to lots of it. He warns, however, that these metal shades tend to be a little harsh, thus not suited for some areas. . . . Tom Boccia builds blinds from stiff slats and fabrics that filter the light and play with it, but not block it out completely. . . . True to California tradition, Adele Faulkner prefers hand-crafted materials to filter strong western lights. . . . While New Yorkers Bray and Schabile block the sun with conventional roll-up shades and let it in through wooden grilles. . . .

(Left) Sheer fabric, laminated at designated intervals to the front and back of stiff slats, creates a restful pattern of filtered light. The sheer fabric acts as a hinge between the slats. Designer Thomas J. Boccia says that slats can be made of plastic, cardboard, masonite. The transparent sunscreen material is Isabel Scott's "Templar."

(1) Large expanses of floor to ceiling glass—a favorite architectural element in sun-rich climates—are kept clean and simple by Adele Faulkner, ASID, of Los Angeles. She frames the view with a wood trim. Light is controlled by roller shades which glide up and down in vertical channels that allow the shades to remain at one, straight-line level. Faulkner likes the look of Webb-Woven Wood's blinds and channels.

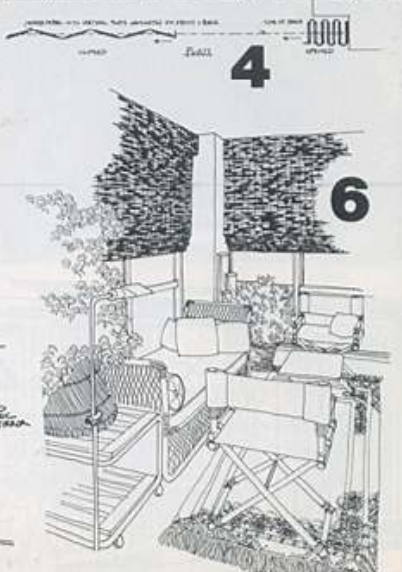
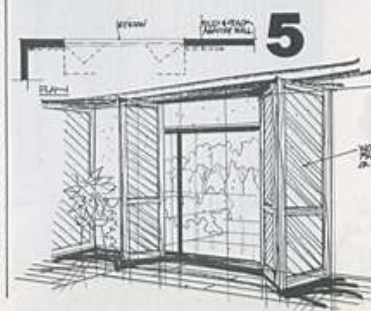
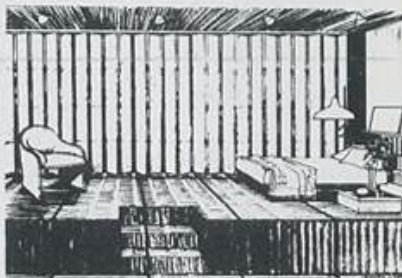
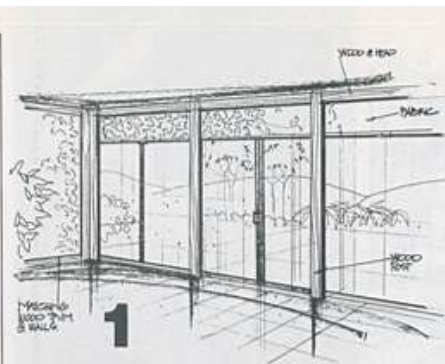
(2) A structural element that keeps the heat out, shutters are very much favored in warm climates. Mobile louvers adjust to filter the sun or block it entirely. Houston designer Kelly Gale Arner, ASID, favors a pickled cypress finish or lacquer that matches the color of the wall.

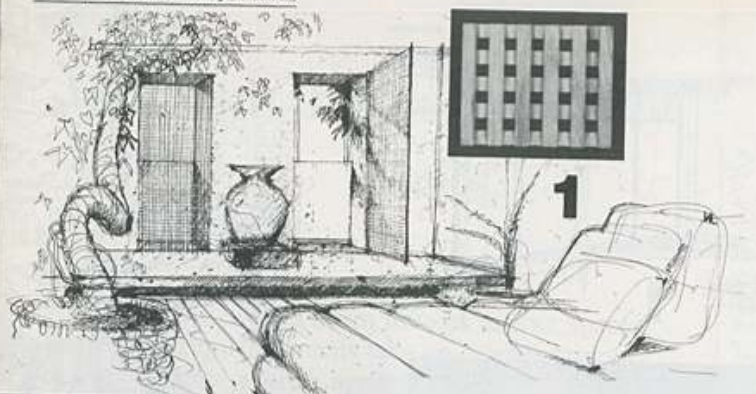
(3) Patricia Placco, ASID, has carried slim-slat venetian blinds all the way up to the ceiling, thus emphasizing the verticality of the wall. The stripes—luxurious Gucci green and red—are continued, in paint, across the ceiling. Ball blinds by Marathon Caney-McFak.

(4) A pattern of clean-edged pleats results where these vertical blinds are closed. Open, the treatment allows maximum exposure to the view. Opaque or transparent fabric laminated to slatwork (horizontal application on opposite page) glides in Kirach's Archifold track placed on top of the wall. New York designer Thomas J. Boccia reports that the system is being patented.

(5) For security conscious clients, designer Adele Faulkner, ASID, likes to use folding doors to cover windows or sliding doors. These hollow-core doors—faced in wood, fabric, mirror, etc.—serve as buffers against burglars and bright sunshine.

(6) The floor-to-ceiling corner windows of this high rise condominium in Miami face the ocean to the South and East. The structural bronze glass provides some protection against the sun. To that was added a layer of Levolor blinds and a layer of tortoise shell bamboo Roman shades. Both of these "can be easily raised to take advantage of fabulous daytime water views and evening light panoramas," says James Merrick Smith, FASID who with partner Hal F. B. Seichfield, ASID submitted this drawing.





1



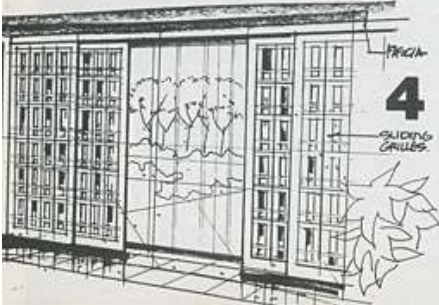
2



3



5



4

SLIDING GRILLES

(1) Wooden grille doors on pivot hinges, kept closed by magnetic latches, allow a filtered sunlight to enter the rooms. The light can be controlled—from black-out, to sparkle-bright—by adjusting the pull-up shades and keeping the grille doors closed or open. Natural or painted, Forms & Surfaces grille (inset) suits the minimal, yet practical solutions sought by Bray-Schallie Design Inc.

(2) Matchstick blinds cut down the glare and provide a feeling of privacy. But you have to be careful where you put them, says David Corley of Minton-Corley. Matchsticks are great for a clean, uninterrupted feeling when lacquered the same color as the wall, plus they function to block out the black night where there is no view. But you can see into a lighted room through them; not a pleasant thought where seclusion is sought. On this window, Minton-Corley also placed fabric panels that can be released from brass door knobs which anchor the shirred tie-backs.

(3) Natural color, matchstick roll-up blinds allow plenty of light to come through and provide a view of the tropical foliage outside, says James Merrick Smith, FASID, designer of this corridor to the second level of a Miami house. The simple solution was chosen to off-set the finely detailed cypress ceiling and hand-made floor tiles of this glazed-in sunporch. Co-designer: Hal F. B. Birchfield, ASID.

(4) Grille screens that hang from channels on top and bottom can be used to create ethnic as well as architectural windows. From East Indian to Moorish to Japanese looks can be achieved by specifying custom or standard panels. Designer Adele Faulkner, ASID, sometimes frames inexpensive lattices found in garden shops for budget jobs.

(5) Copper mylar is laminated to aluminum vertical blinds by Window Modes/Weavers Domain. Designer Marc Klein emphasized existing architectural details by painting the window frame and moldings. Wide-slat verticals are excellent where a variety of lighting—from bright to dark—is sought. Carpet: Edward Fields. Table: Bruton.

(1) Natural pine, diagonal pattern screens on tracks at top of the window filter the sunlight, giving the room a mellow, ochre tint. The latticework treatment is excellent for places where visual warmth and temperature control is needed, says designer Robert Shaw.

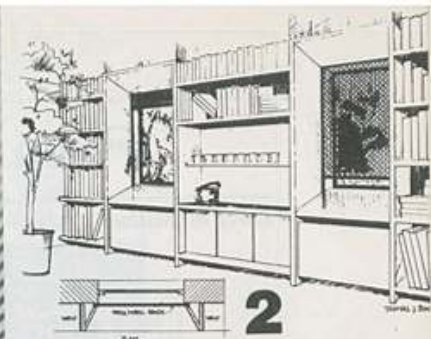
(2) Angled panels frame windows and function to reflect the light, as well as hide shallow protrusions like radiators. Built into the frame are vertical channels which accept roll-up shades of sunscreen material. Designer: Thomas J. Boccia.

(3) Houston designer Kelly Gale Amen, ASID, puts shirred balloon blinds on windows with strong architectural definition. The hard building details are softened by the fabric which gathers at ten inch intervals when pulled up by a chord. A black-out lining adds insulation to light-weight fabrics which may be gauze, linen, silk.

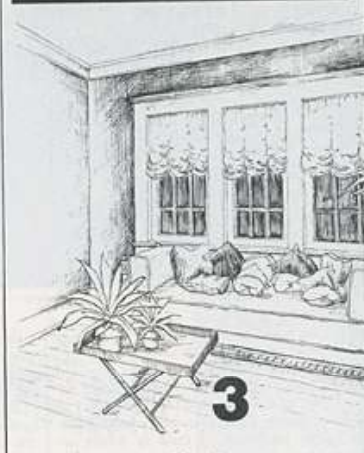
(4) A delightful view of island wildlife and changing light patterns is disclosed from a living room window which faces a garden path that leads to Jupiter Island beach in Florida. "Some old, black lacquer and gold leaf filigree panels were reworked to frame the view," says designer Donald M. Peterson, ASID. The serene environment, with its lacquered table and low benches, is often used for intimate luncheons and afternoon teas.

(5) Quilted panels provide economies. The flat fabric panels are applied to a wood strip at the top, tacked to the corners at the bottom of the window. Because it takes minimal yardage, very expensive and unique fabrics can be used without costing a fortune. The heavily quilted treatment blocks out heat and cold. Designer: Kelly Gale Amen.

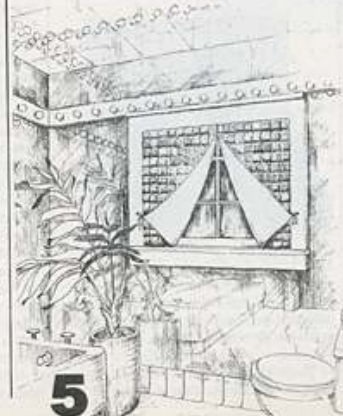
(6) Adele Faulkner softens architectural panels by covering them in fabric. The panels glide on tracks (Kirsch) and stack neatly at the corners.



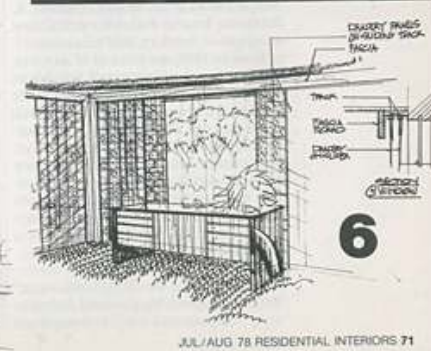
2



3



5



6