



Sculpted by the light in Studio CDMX, an installation of different sized clay spheres by Bosco Sodi. The building in Atlampa, Mexico City designed by Alberto Kalach, houses a vast exhibition space and the artist's studio.

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CONNECTED BY RAW MATERIALITY AND PRIMORDIAL FORMS
BOSCO SODI'S HOME AND STUDIOS
IN MEXICO SHOW THE NATURAL AFFINITY BETWEEN
HIS ART AND ARCHITECTURE.

SCULPTING SPACE





Stacked clay cubes and *Bronze Stalagmite* emphasise the verticality of the Kalach-designed complex.



S T U D I O
C D M X



ARCHITECTURE IS MATERIAL.
IT IS NOT AN EPHEMERAL ART. IT'S A REAL ART.



The parotta wood benches in the chapel-like upper floor were designed by Sodi's wife, Lucia Corredor. On the concrete wall, a mixed-media painting hangs above *Re-flexion*, made of gold-glazed clay.





ON THE FACE of it, Bosco Sodi's life is a contradiction. An artist who works with plainly earthbound materials – clay, wood, gold dust, mineral pigments, volcanic rock – Sodi lives a breathtakingly airborne life, traveling from his home in Red Hook, Brooklyn, on New York City's waterfront, to the places where his work is on view. Sodi's paintings and sculpture fly separately, bolted into handmade wooden crates that can weigh as much as a tonne. For an exhibition at China's He Art Museum, in Foshan, Guangdong Province, Sodi's galleries sent 127 works, including gold-glazed spheres of Mexican clay and *Pangaea*, a ruby-red, six-panel painting measuring some 48 square metres, made from Brooklyn sawdust, vermilion pigment, latex and glue. Four cubes, each approaching the size of an EV, were assembled onsite from some 5,500 clay bricks made in Foshan by local artisans; Sodi worked alongside them and the results were air-dried, fired in an historic dragon kiln and stacked in time for the opening.

Where Sodi's pieces are made, and of what, become as essential to their identities as their elemental forms and often ravaged surfaces. Themes of place, belonging and the anxiety of cultural influence permeate his practice, and his simple geometric language sets up a dialectic between the present and something approaching eternity. His works have found an eager international audience.

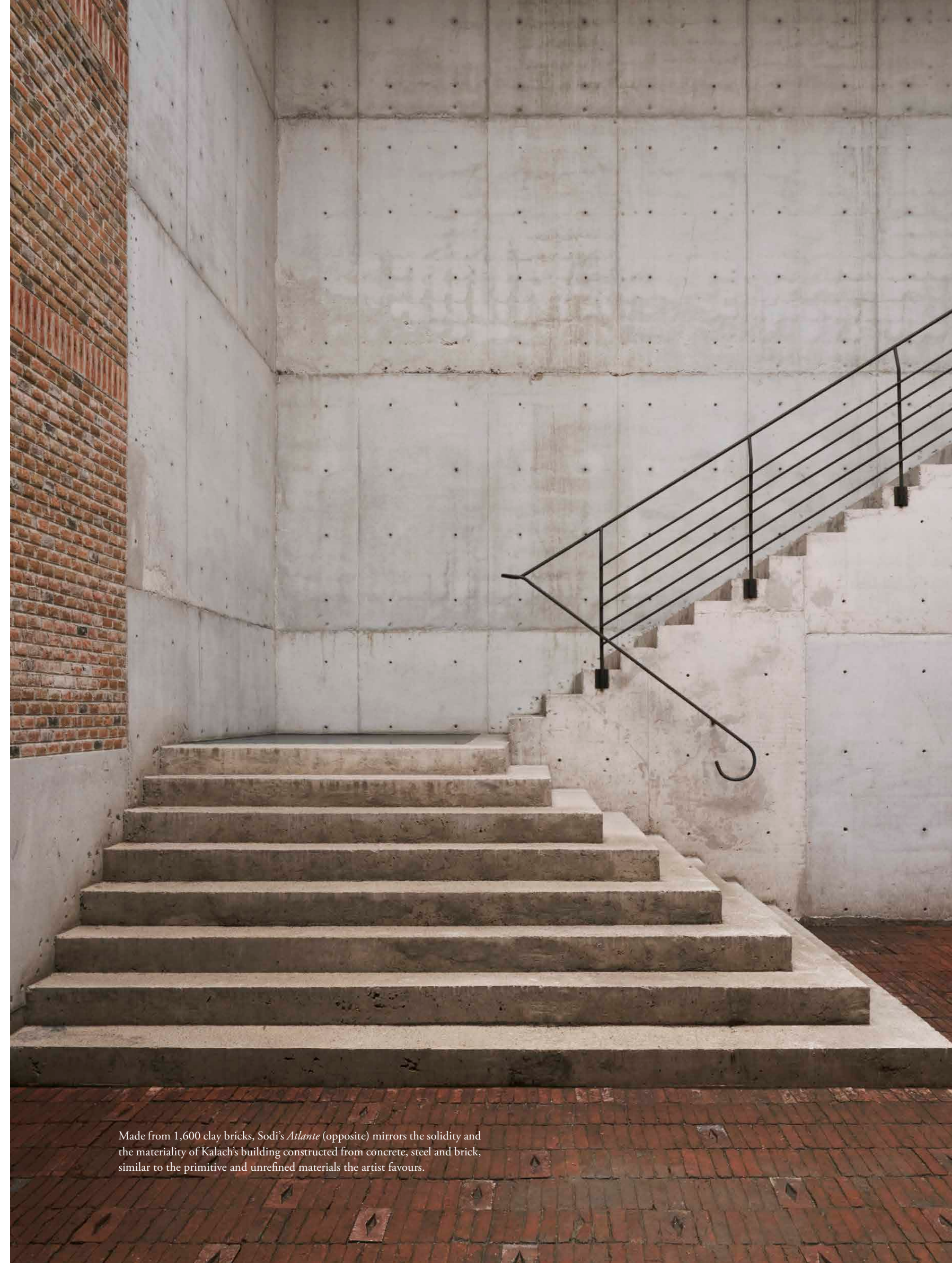
Like other successful members of his rootless artistic tribe, Sodi maintains multiple studios worldwide. His are in Greece, Spain and Japan in addition to Brooklyn, and there are two more in his home country Mexico. Sodi works with clay at Casa Wabi, the Tadao Ando-designed cultural centre he founded a decade ago in Puerto Escondido. He paints and glazes in a complex of Mexico City buildings, designed in 2021 by Alberto Kalach, which also serves as office and exhibition space for his work.

And Sodi now has a house in the city as well, Casa Siza. Its creator, Álvaro Siza, took on the project after an impromptu chat that unfolded when Sodi stopped by the 92-year-old Pritzker prize-winner's office in Porto, in Portugal. The two men first met when Sodi had approached Siza about contributing to the Casa Wabi campus. The esteemed architect went on to design an open-air ceramics studio there, inscribed by a curving brick wall. Now Sodi wondered if a Mexico City project might be a fitting follow-up. When Siza let it drop that he'd visited Mexico City and been deeply moved by the work of local eminence Luis Barragán, a new residential project unfolded from there.

For Sodi, the result echoes his earliest memories of architecture as a shaper of space. "My mother showed us a lot when we were young," he says, recalling family outings around Mexico City. "I fell in love with the capacity of architecture to sculpt the surroundings, in a way. That is the architecture I love." Equally important, he adds, are the materials used. He favours the primitive, the unrefined. "That's why I'm so close to Siza or Alberto Kalach or Tadao Ando, because they use these kinds of materials," Sodi says. "It's simple. It's not flashy. Also, the way they age, it's really good."

At 55, Sodi has lived exactly half his life outside Mexico City, including a decade in Europe and 15 years in New York, where he and his wife, Lucía Corredor, have raised their three children. While the Sodis have been globetrotting, Mexico City has been exploding. Foreign travellers, enticed by a new generation of creatives riffing on the artisanal roots of the country's heritage, have descended on the fashionable quarters of Condesa and Roma Norte to eat, drink and soak up the sights.

The couple's decision to build here began with the desire to be near their aging parents. In the Colonia Santa Maria de la Ribera,



Made from 1,600 clay bricks, Sodi's *Atlante* (opposite) mirrors the solidity and the materiality of Kalach's building constructed from concrete, steel and brick, similar to the primitive and unrefined materials the artist favours.



where Sodi's father had grown up, they found a rare corner lot and snapped it up, despite the neighbourhood's spotty charms. Hoping to contribute to the streetscape, they decided to build a rentable public gallery on the ground floor.

The realities of the street fade away amid Siza's sculpted white volumes and sunlight flickering in through the trees. The mature ash and eucalyptus that rise from the broken pavement below are almost enfolded by the horseshoe-shaped structure of the house, which ascends three levels and pushes outward onto deep terraces. Inside, Siza's design of the central staircase directs the eye upward toward the light in an unavoidable Barragánian moment.

The rooms are arrayed with paintings and sculpture by Sodi and many artist friends – Jose Dávila, Michael Joo, Torsten Ruehle and others, often acquired through exchange. Corredor, who co-owns a nearby design shop called Decada, sourced the vintage Mexican modernist furnishings, including pieces by Michael van Beuren and Don Shoemaker. It's a big mix, she explains: in the couple's bedroom, a rustic chair is pulled up to a table where a framed letter from Diego Rivera to Frida Kahlo leans casually against the wall, a gift from Sodi's sister. Then there are mementos from family travels – Japanese textiles and ceramics, Italian lighting – and practical necessities from the local flea market. What Corredor couldn't source she had built – bookshelves, bedside tables, the mammoth dining table that seats 14. The Sodis are well-matched in grit and gameness. "We always work as a team," says Corredor, who has designed the interiors of Casa Wabi and every house or apartment they've owned.

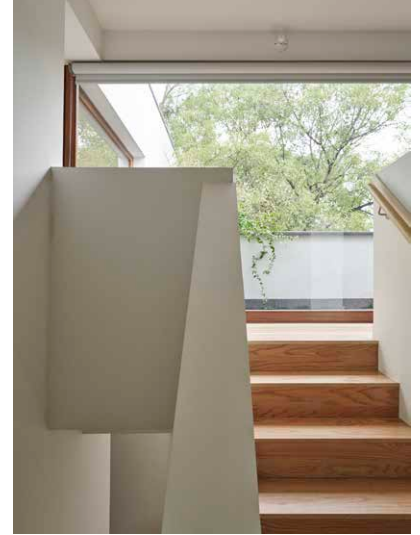
Sodi's studio is in the Atlampa district, whose claim to fame is its Coca Cola plant. "My parents are from Mexico City, and they are like, 'Where is that?'" Corredor says with a laugh. Inside the Sabino 336

space, Sodi scales a catwalk to the top floor, where Kalach has composed a veritable chapel for the artist's oeuvre. If the work is dazzling, from early wood assemblages to recent adventures in stacked clay cubes, the setting of raw, unfinished concrete only makes it appear more so. Sodi believes there is a natural affinity between his art and the realm of architecture.

"They're very connected, because architecture is material," he says, heading back down the catwalk. "It is not an ephemeral art, it's a real art. My approach is very similar. My work's very real. It has a material presence that's energetic, in a way. I think that's where they cross each other. And also, my work sculpts the space. It dialogues with negative space, and architecture does the same."

In Puerto Escondido, Ando's 312-metre wall of poured-in-place concrete becomes the organising spine of Casa Wabi, paralleling the ocean waves and increasingly becoming one with the landscape. This is where Sodi the rootless artist comes closest to feeling at home, not that he rests there. The cultural centre has become a hub of opportunity for the surrounding communities, with year-round programming and a constant scroll of new ventures. By its 10th anniversary in 2024, Casa Wabi had hosted 500 artists-in-residence, each one carrying out a cultural project with local families during their stay. Every summer, Sodi and his family spend the month of August there. He puts away his passport and finds his rhythm in the studio. But a routine only takes you so far, he says, even when you're weighing out clay or loading a kiln.

"You can make it a formula," he allows, "But then you'll know what's going to happen – or you will have a bigger hint of what's going to happen. I always don't measure. I don't do anything like that. I prefer to be reluctant to that, and to always find a surprise."



C A S A
S I Z A

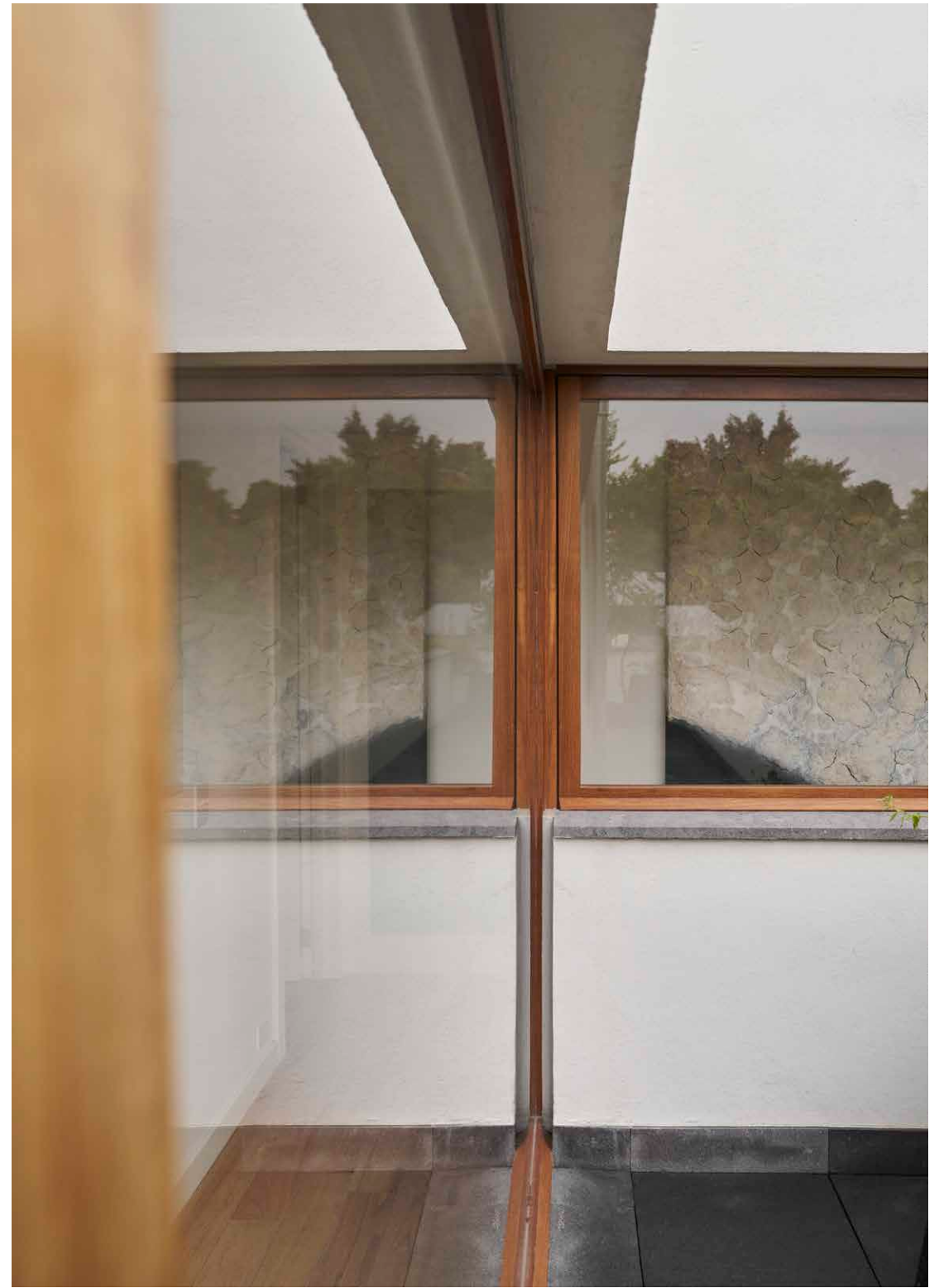
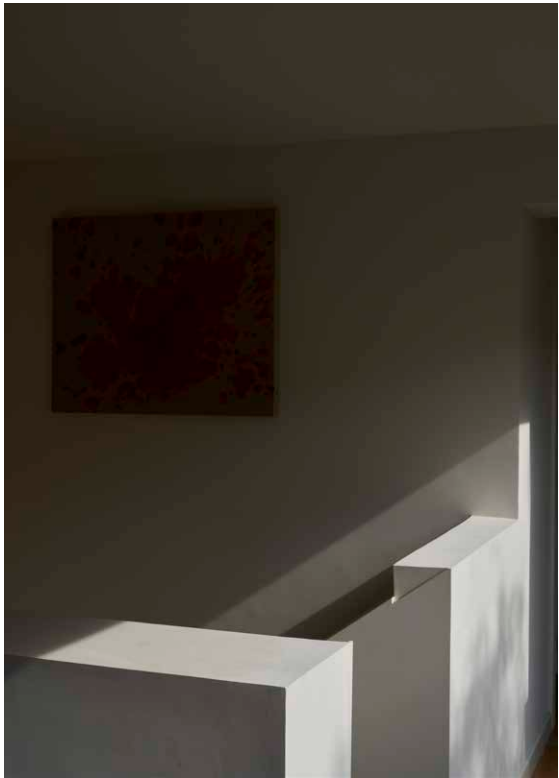


The white volumes of Casa Siza, the Álvaro Siza designed house in Mexico City, have deep terraces shaded by street trees. In the living room, one of Bosco Sodi's clay cube stacks stands next to a mixed media on canvas, while a Robert Janitz painting hangs above a neon piece by Jose Dávila. The vintage modernist cocobolo wood Descanso sofa and ottomans are by Don Shoemaker.





C A S A
S I Z A



Reflection from the top terrace of the house in Colonia Santa Maria de la Ribera with an untitled mixed media on canvas by Sodi. OPPOSITE: A framed letter from Diego Rivera to Frida Kahlo sits under one of Sodi's paintings on a chilli sack, and another one hangs above a vintage Italian desk. A stack of gold-glazed bricks by Sodi. Siza's staircase is a nod to Luis Barragán.

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TO SCULPT THE SURROUNDINGS.
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The oblique seaside light of Oaxaca stripes Sodi's studio in the main house at Casa Wabi Puerto Escondido designed by Tadao Ando. *Atlante*, a stacked work of 1,600 clay bricks is sited solidly among a scattering of clay pieces, while a stacked cube stands sentinel outside.



Bosco Sodi creates monumental sculptures from humble earthbound materials, their raw materiality in contrast to the strictness of Tadao Ando's architecture.



Pritzker Prize winner Álvaro Siza designed the palapa-style Clay Pavilion at the Casa Wabi Foundation along with the table and stools, the monumental basin and faucets for the clay artists.





Graduated spheres in front of the Artists in Residence Studios at Casa Wabi by a visiting artist. Art is everywhere at the Casa Wabi Foundation: a piece from a Jose Dávila exhibition in the main gallery. **OPPOSITE:** A 312-metre long concrete wall provides the framework for the house and art centre. The bench at the entrance area is a collaboration by Lucia Corredor and Sodi's brother Claudio.

