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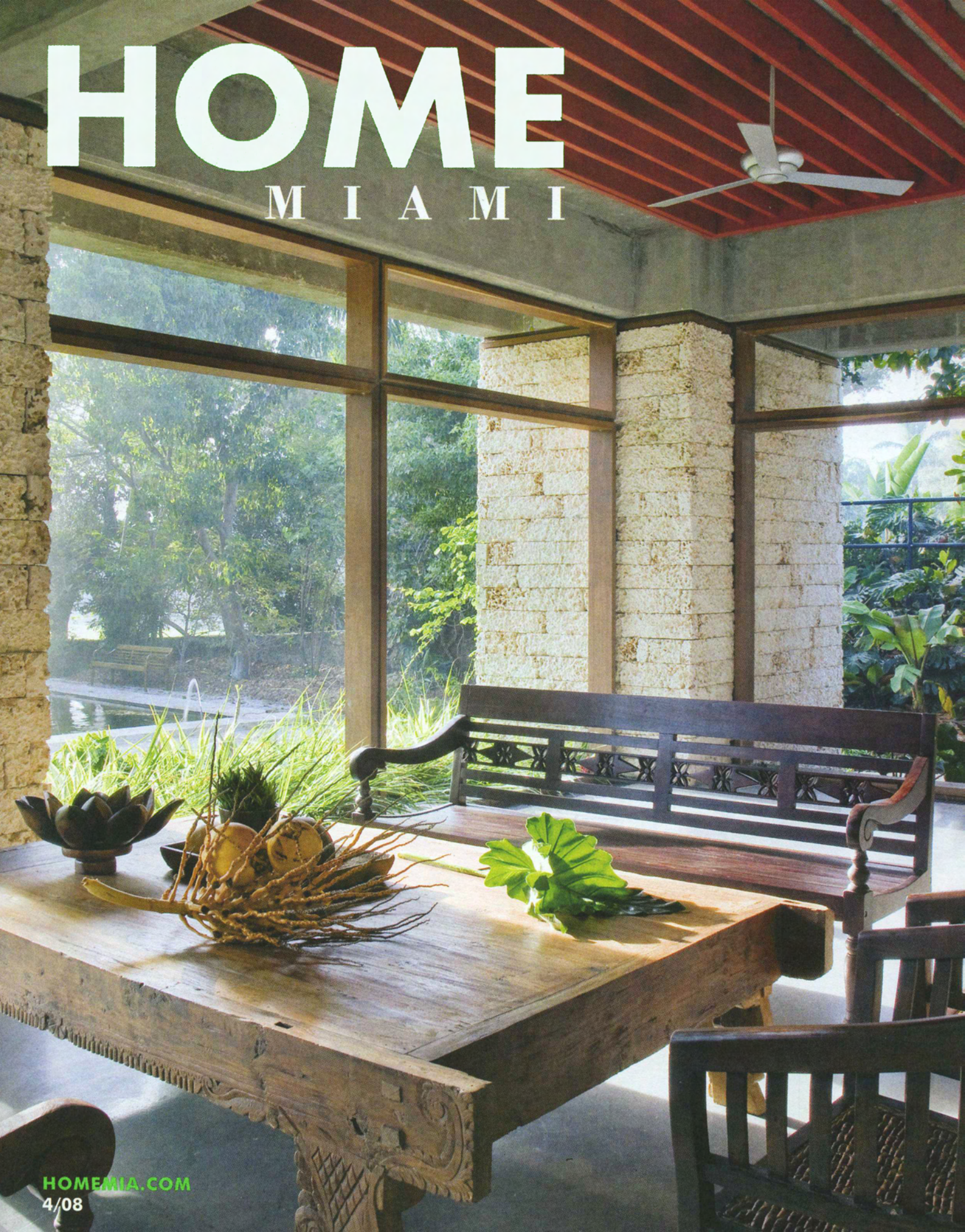

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A **WINDOW** TO THE WORLD

The Kampong's New Pavilion Embraces Architecture, Nature

Text Beth Dunlop **Photography** Claudia Uribe Touri

THE ARCHITECT MAX STRANG'S NEW PAVILION for The Kampong speaks of faraway places and yet it is clearly of this place, clearly close to home. As a work of architecture, it offers a profound example of how we can build in concert with the environment and with an eye to sustainability.

The Kampong was long the home of the esteemed horticulturist and plant explorer, David Fairchild, and his wife, Marian, who bought this pristine piece of bay-front land in Coconut Grove in 1916. Twelve years later, they hired the architect Clarence Dean to design a compound that recalled their years of travel and exploration and that reflected their love of adventure. The Kampong – both house and land, the lushly vegetated 11 acres with its sloping lawn, mangroves, rare plants and trees – is now part of the National Tropical Botanical Garden.

The new pavilion (officially the Schokman Education Center, so named after The Kampong's longtime director, Larry Schokman, who retired in the last year) is intended as a center for both scholarly gatherings and social events. In designing it, Strang sought to use both local and durable materials, thus columns of Miami oolitic stone and Ipe wood, floors of painted concrete. A wall of cut keystone forms a backdrop for the stage.

The grandest environmental gesture came with the decision not to enclose the pavilion, and thus not to heat or cool it. There is also a rainwater catchment system that runs along the roof and will send 20,000 gallons of water into two enormous tanks now buried in the ground; the collected water can replace approximately a month's worth of irrigation. The gestures are both grand and subtle, reflecting Strang's philosophy that architecture can be both green and beautiful, or in a word, exemplar. H

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