

Matteo Thun

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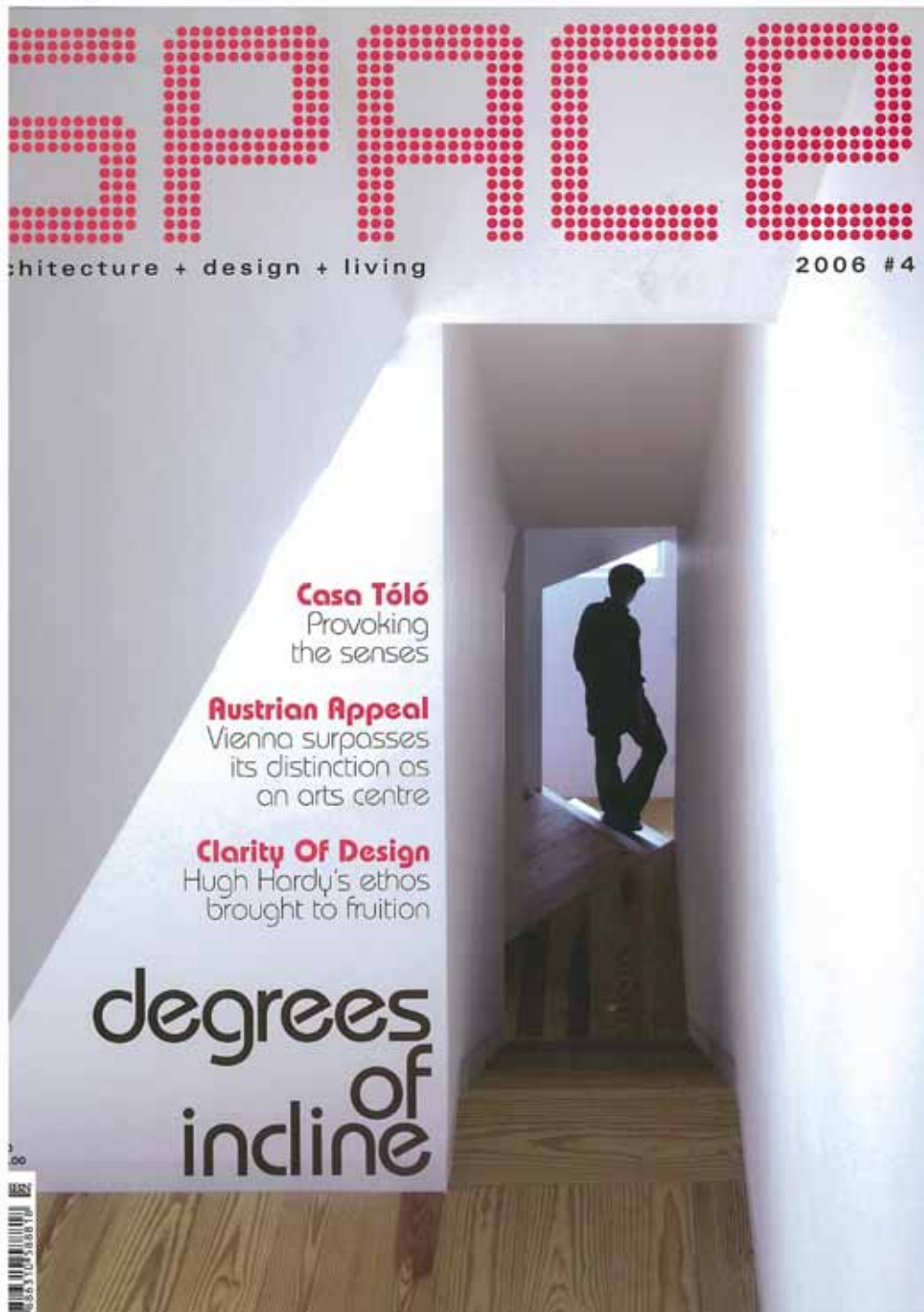
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SOUL CLEANSING

If you thought Italy's mountainous South Tyrol region couldn't get any more attractive, it just did.

by farhad heydari

Located along the south bank of the River Passer in the heart of the Dolomites — a region so breathtaking the French architect Le Corbusier described it as the most beautiful architecture in the world — is the newly opened and equally attractive Merano Thermal Baths (www.termemerano.it).

Designed by homegrown architect Matteo Thun, the expansive, steel-and-glass complex is a modernist showpiece located in the heart of tiny Merano. It sprawls across 25 indoor and outdoor sulfur-infused pools, saunas and steam rooms all fed from a depth of 2,350 meters by 33°C thermal waters, which were originally discovered in 1836.

All-natural therapies, including apple-bud baths, radon water massages and grape mudpacks complement medical treatments for rheumatism and hypertension, among others.



They will be offered in two-dozen rooms overlooking a park dotted with whimsical lily ponds, wisteria, Bonsai perfect palm and rose gardens in the foreground, and the serrated snowcapped Alpine peaks just beyond.

It's not all thermal cures however. The more active can enrol in Qi Gong, Tai Chi, yoga, hit the state-of-the-art fitness centre or just head for the restaurant or café for some heart wise fare.

As he did with his other two nearby and critically-acclaimed projects, Vigilius Mountain Resort, located along a couloir high above Lana and Pergola Residence on the vine striated hillsides across town, Thun has created a minimally-invasive eco-friendly hotel for those who wish to exhale, overnight and, of course, relax.

photography by arnaldo dal bosco & therme meran