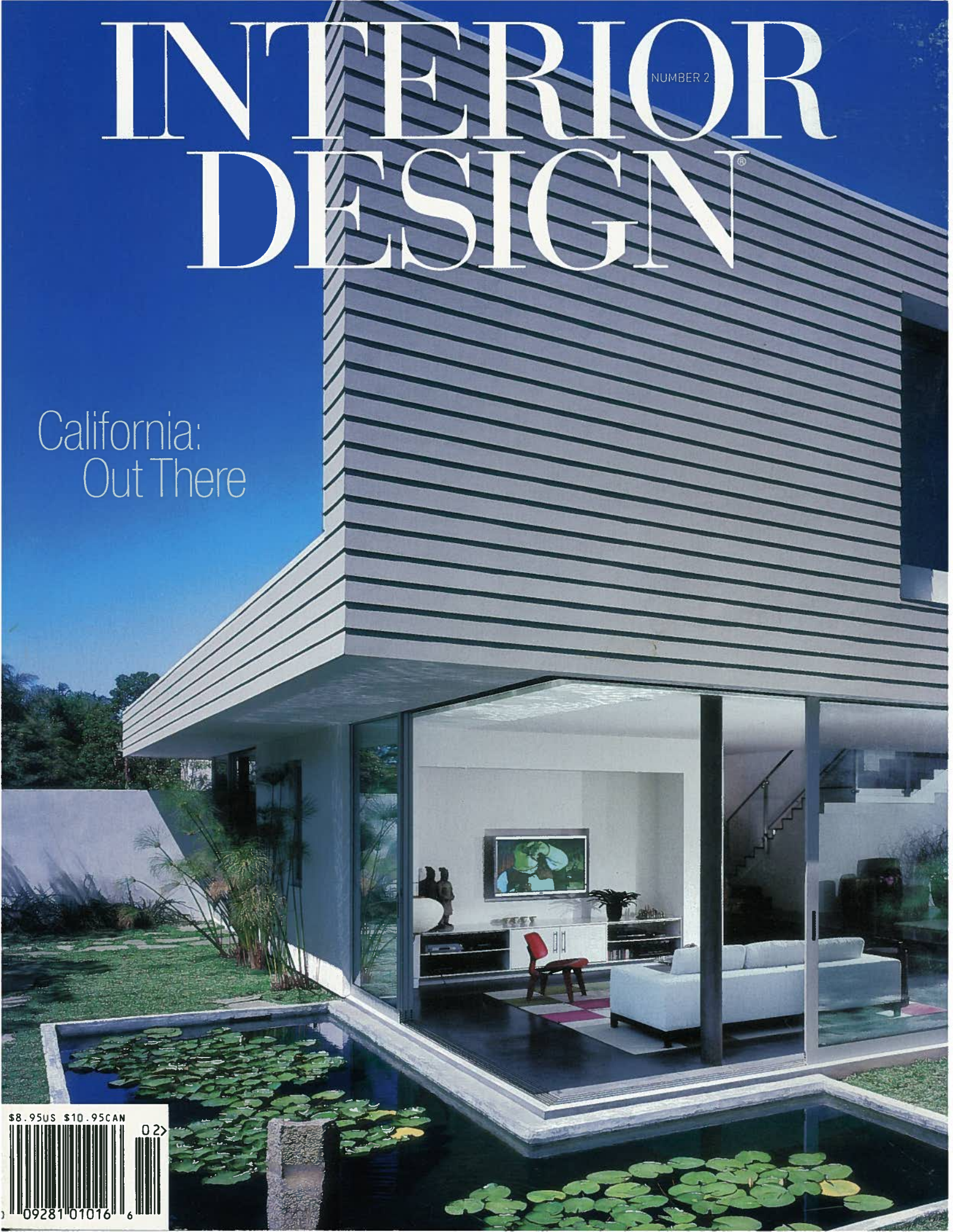


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FOR MANY BOOMERS, MEMORIES OF the orthodontist involve painful metal-mouthed dorkiness dispensed in unremittingly bland surroundings. But just as “designer” braces have made straightening teeth less torturous—even cool—Jill Bruno’s office in Chevy Chase, Maryland, makes an appointment feel like a trip to the spa.

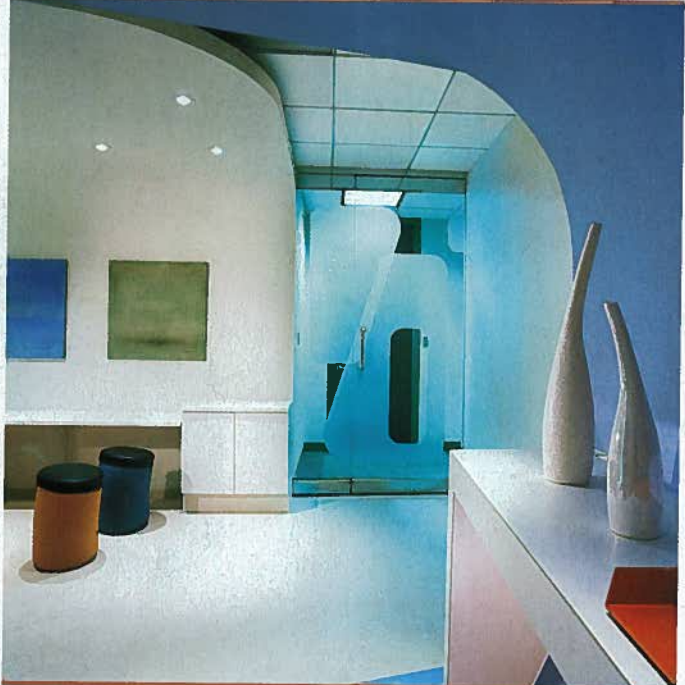
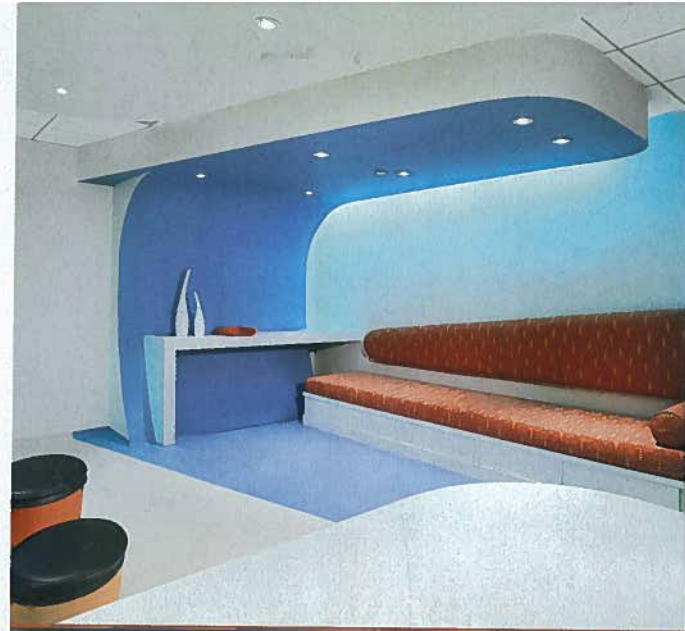
The 1,700-square-foot practice is small by conventional standards. To maximize the space, **Forma Design** principal Andreas Charalambous created a communal examination room that

holds four treatment stations. Each sits on a blue inset of rubber flooring that’s echoed overhead by a blue-painted drywall soffit fitted with recessed and retractable dental lights.

Aside from the blue accents, the room is a soothing pearly white—white rubber for most of the floor, white plastic laminate for cabinets, white vinyl on the →

From top: Rubber flooring extends through the reception area at orthodontist Jill Bruno’s office in Chevy Chase, Maryland. The custom desk-top and integral checkout counter are Corian.





chairs, white paint on walls. Daylight enters from windows facing south and west. "It's like you're up in the clouds," the architect says, gesturing toward the 12th-floor view of Tysons Corner, Virginia. "But I was also thinking of this area as a gas station, where you get tuned up and go."

Efficiency was a top consideration. Each treatment station has a mirrored alcove with a built-in counter and drawers, so every dental supply is in arm's reach. "An assistant or myself should not have to get up even once to reach for a wire or a plier," Bruno says. "Studies have shown how much time that wastes."

Another time saver, albeit a splurge, is the digital-imaging area where an Orthopantomograph takes pictures of patients' teeth, eliminating the need for X-ray film and paper files. Gone, too, is that gruesome decorative touch in orthodontist offices of yore: display cabinets filled with snaggle-toothed plaster casts. Instead, Bruno's walls feature Mark

Rothko-esque color-field canvases and, tucked away by the imaging machine, photos from her horse-jumping days—a brilliant ice-breaker with preteen girls.

Given that almost half Bruno's clientele is adults, however, Charalambous consciously avoided a juvenile look in favor of a space that would resonate with the iPod generation. To put new patients at ease, she examines them first in a glassed-in room that offers views of both the open treatment stations and the reception area. Vinyl film on the glass provides some privacy in addition to tying in with the curves that Charalambous used everywhere to set a tranquil mood.

Indeed, as one enters the reception area through an arched doorway, there seem to be virtually no hard edges. The monolithic desktop, molded from white solid surfacing, wraps around a corner of the white rubber floor. Meanwhile, another blue soffit, this one backlit with fluorescents,

From top: Reception's banquette is upholstered in a rayon-cotton blend. Nearby, vinyl-topped stools and ceramic vases add to the curve theme. Vinyl film provides some privacy in the glassed-in room where new-patient consultations take place.

