

ARCHITECTURE

Grand ideas to use in your grand design

DIARY DATE

Get advice from a RIBA architect through housing charity Shelter's Architect in the House scheme, which is taking bookings from 18 April. The scheme matches you with an architect in your local area, who will come to your house for an hour-long session. No fee is charged, but there is a suggested donation of £40 to Shelter. Visit architectinthehouse.org.uk.

THROUGH THE VOID

Everyone loves an open-plan space, but this home and studio take it to a new level, or three. All the walls and floors of this building in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, were stripped out, leaving behind just the three-storey shell. Designer Studio Rolf.fr (rolf.fr) in collaboration with ZECC Architects (+31 30 273 1289; zecc.nl) rebuilt the internal structure, leaving voids in the floors to create connections up and down the house. The facade is equally striking; the old building is painted completely black, with the traditional windows blocked up and replaced with irregular metal-framed, glazed squares.

Words Sarah Baldwin

RELIC AT RISK

We usually imagine castles to have been built hundreds of years ago, but not Castle Drogo in Dartmoor – the work of architect Edwin Lutyens – which was built in the early twentieth century. In spite of Drogo's comparatively short lifespan, terrible water damage means it's soon to become a ruin. Owned by the National Trust, it needs to raise £1.5million in donations. If it does raise enough to begin work, the public will be invited to join in on parts of the build. (01647 433 306; nationaltrust.org.uk)



Frank Hanswijk; Niall Jacobson; NTPU/Charlie Waite

Branching out

If only all plots could be as idyllic as the one enjoyed by this tree house in the Glen Nevis forest in the Scottish Highlands. It was designed by Malcolm Fraser Architects (0131 225 2585; malcolmfraser.co.uk) as an artist's studio, with the clear brief that the structure must be strongly linked to the surrounding land. The simple box cantilevers out from a 45° slope, with a large window that offers incredible views across to Ben Nevis. It's partly built from timber cleared from the local area, further binding it to its site. Total cost to build: £17,000.