

BY CRISTIN FENZEL

GREEN HOUSE EFFECTS



Architect: Eddie Jones

Builder: Construction Zone

Landscape architect: Bill Tonnesen, Inc.



PHOTOGRAPHY THIS PAGE BY TONY HERNANDEZ, OPPOSITE: TIMOTHY HURSELEY

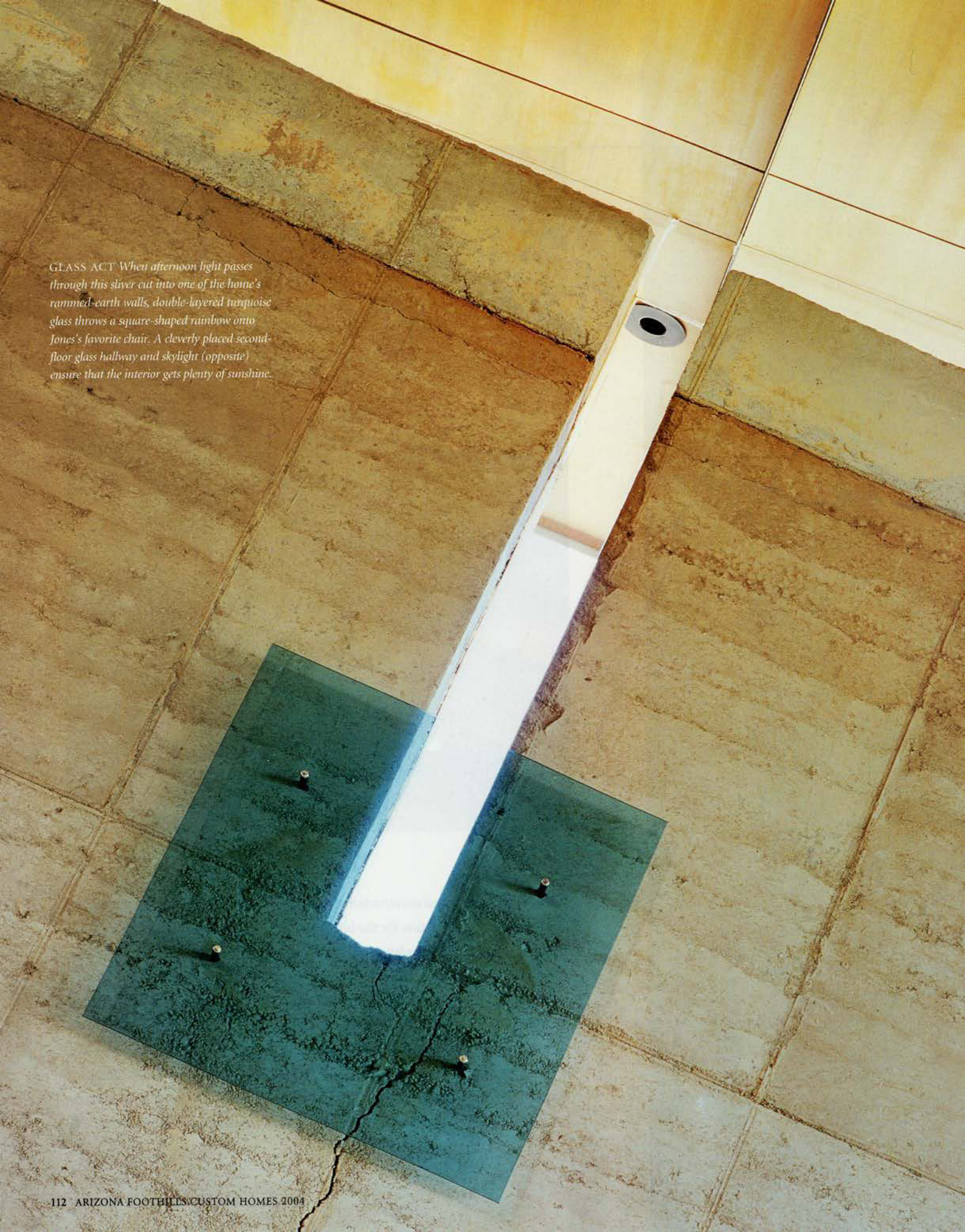
SUSTAINABLE, EARTH-FRIENDLY HOME DESIGN (OFTEN CALLED GREEN ARCHITECTURE) MAY BE THE ULTIMATE MANIFESTATION OF THE BUMPER-STICKER MANTRA "THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY"—BUT BUILDING RESPONSIBLY ISN'T JUST FOR ACTIVISTS. IT CAN ALSO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF EVERYDAY HOMEOWNERS IN UNEXPECTED WAYS. AS THE STORIES OF THESE TWO ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND HOMES PROVE, THE BENEFITS OF GREEN-HOME LIVING CAN BE AS PROFOUND AS FREEING YOUR MIND, OR AS SIMPLE AS A CHIPMUNK PEERING IN THE FAMILY ROOM WINDOW.



SECOND NATURE

When Eddie Jones began construction on his Ahwatukee home, passers-by thought he was building a pump station for the big, ugly water chlorination tank that marred the back of the site. Three years later, the unconventional house still draws stares from the street—and Jones wouldn't have it any other way.

"I'm not a suburban kind of guy," the architect says, gesturing at the traditional houses that surround his striking, circular creation. "I never thought I would be in suburbia. It drives me nuts." Jones felt more comfortable living in Cave Creek ("old cowboys, old hippies—it's my kind of town"), but then he met his wife, Lisa Johnson, who lived in Ahwatukee with her children. He didn't want them to have to move, so he improvised. He bought the formerly snubbed site, which borders on South

A photograph showing a close-up of a rammed-earth wall. A vertical glass sliver is embedded in the wall, and a turquoise glass panel is attached to the wall below it. The wall has a textured, layered appearance with various shades of brown and tan. The glass sliver is white and has a circular opening at the top. The turquoise glass panel is rectangular and has a crack running through it. The panel is held in place by several small metal pins.

GLASS ACT When afternoon light passes through this sliver cut into one of the home's rammed-earth walls, double-layered turquoise glass throws a square-shaped rainbow onto Jones's favorite chair. A cleverly placed second-floor glass hallway and skylight (opposite) ensure that the interior gets plenty of sunshine.

"IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO DESIGN
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Mountain Park, at a discounted price and began a major recycling project. Circular masonry walls now surround the tank so it blends into the distance, and the home's exterior walls mimic its rounded shape. They're made of two-foot-thick rammed earth—dirt excavated from the site that has been compacted into plywood forms with an air gun. Even the mailbox is made of it. The uncommon design and materials meant a drawn-out legal battle with the local homeowners' association, but Jones won—a victory he describes with the maverick's grin he often flashes when referencing authority.

Past the mailbox, up a series of concrete lily pads and through a large wooden gate, the entrance to the house proves to be equally innovative. It's dominated by a moist microclimate filled with lush plants and a gurgling fish pond, both maintained with the help of the house's rainwater collection system: a pitched roof supported by X-bracing that feeds water to a giant scupper, which then drops it into a circular cistern. Adding to the coolness of the space is what looks like glittery turquoise stone but is actually broken tempered glass from an abandoned plate-glass factory. It surrounds the massive, yellow front door, which is from Jones's first commercial project (he saved it for more than a decade before putting it on this house). Every feature of the entry is somehow connected to nature. The door's scalloped glass overhang is designed as such because it would be the perfect place for a spider to shack up; a natural control joint in the front

NORTHERN EXPOSURE *The back of Jones's house is a giant, north-facing window situated to avoid direct sun—an energy-saving choice. It also delivers a stunning view.*



wall is filled with what Jones calls a “lightning bolt” of pebbles from Sedona’s Oak Creek.

Inside, it’s like a cave collided with an ultramodern skyscraper. The subtle levels of compaction in the rammed earth walls make them look ancient, almost like travertine. They regulate the house’s temperature simply and efficiently—their thickness, combined with the rate at which heat travels through the material, means summer heat never penetrates all the way through before nighttime cooling begins. The north side of the house is actually a window the size of a four-car garage, a design element that would be “very irresponsible,”



**PUTS YOUR CUBICLE
TO SHAME** When he
needs space to think, Jones
heads to his home studio.

Jones says, if it faced any other direction. But by concealing the chlorination tank, he got a wow-worthy northern view that runs smack into a purple mountain. All of this makes for an energy-efficient home that's 100 percent immersed in its surroundings, though Jones didn't seek these things out deliberately. To him, they're just corollaries of good design. "It's second nature," he says. "I don't say, you know, I'm going to design an environmentally friendly home. I'm reluctant to categorize it as environmental architecture. All architecture is environmental. Everything else is just a building."

The constant sense of being outside that is achieved in the house is a perfect example of this architectural philosophy. Thanks to an upstairs glass-floored hallway positioned under a skylight, the house "just breathes in and out light," Jones says. "Sometimes I get really sharp chevron shadows. It's like walking through a zebra. It's just beautiful." Those afraid of heights, however, are well advised to take in the beauty from the ground floor—standing on top of it makes you feel like you're floating in mid-air, and has been known to freak out the occasional visitor. As I grasp for some form of railing, Jones, smiling, tells me that he had them removed as soon as the inspectors left.

He never gets tired of the suspended feeling. When he really needs to think, Jones heads to his home studio, which overlooks the hallway. Sitting there on this bright afternoon, he pauses to muse about the

impact a home can have on your imagination. Faced with the prospect of living in "just a building," Jones declares he would rather live in a cardboard box. "At least I can make the box my own," he says. "It's not enough to design a building that functions. It needs to be uplifting. It needs to enrich your life." Just as he finishes, a cloud meanders by the midday sun, and the house exhales light.

EASY BEING GREEN

The Jones-Johnson house is an exceptional example of what an environmentally sound home can mean to an individual. But helping the environment through responsible housing entails a communal effort, and Jones concedes that if everyone just drives by his house, gawks and never thinks to build one, green architecture will never get off the ground.

Scottsdale's Green Building Program aims to help it along. Begun in 1998, its building certification process gives a certain number of points for responsible site use and landscaping, energy and water conservation, and the use of natural, recycled materials instead of those containing toxic chemicals. A house with enough points is certified as a green building, and to encourage use of the guidelines, the city tries to give green buildings expedited plan reviews. If everything goes well, says program director Anthony Floyd, this can cut the time it takes to get a building permit in half.

DESERT SAFARI *Shadowed by a cactus, the home's stone bridge extends over a natural wash. A cutout window is the ideal spot to glimpse wildlife.*



PHOTOGRAPHY THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE BY JERRY PORTELLI

Architect George Christensen designed one of the first residences built under the program's guidelines for a couple that wanted a big change. Twenty years earlier, Christensen had designed their traditional home to include a giant pool, a giant lawn and a giant circular drive. When their kids left for college, they asked him to make their new "empty nest" house strikingly different. The resulting North Scottsdale home won a Valley Forward Award for environmentally friendly design. Christensen says more and more clients are asking him for energy-efficient plans. "It's good finance for them," he says, "and they feel good about it—that they're not being absurd, being an energy hog."



SO LONG The home's elongated "spaghetti plan" design helps it blend into the surrounding mountains.






"IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL HERE THAT
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WE DIDN'T WANT TO SPOIL IT."

For the couple, however, having a home that honors its surroundings just makes sense. They are horse lovers, and the wife first saw the site from above while flying home from a horse show. They were so enchanted by the area that they bought the lot across the street so the view can never be obstructed. "It's so beautiful here that we wanted to enjoy it, but we didn't want to spoil it," the wife says.

To accomplish this, Christensen drew up what he calls a "spaghetti plan," an elongated design that "nudges" into the site. Materials also helped—the house is covered in manufactured stone, a natural, locally produced material that could easily be mistaken for the real rocks surrounding the house—and the rough exterior surface scatters light, increasing energy efficiency. A bridge over a natural wash separates the house into zones, with the master bedroom and office on one end and the family room, home theater, kitchen and more on the other. It's also a spectacular spot for viewing the surrounding desert. The couple took photos of the wash before building began so they could put it back exactly as it was. Their backyard is entirely hardscape and natural vegetation, producing an unexpected benefit: No grass and no pool means they can travel on a whim without worrying about maintenance.

The house does blend in, but that doesn't mean it lacks personality. In fact, Christensen says, the "spaghetti plan" creates wall space that can be used for interior innovation. To wit, the couple filled their foyer with a collection of antique carousel horses and the rest of the house with family heirlooms and art collected from their travels. A bright, lyrical bird sculpture by local artist Pam Castano gives the patio as much visual interest as any fountain would.

The couple spends most of their time in the family room, where a giant window turns the space into a sort of "desert aquarium"—for animal lovers, a welcome reward for building a nonintrusive home. Chipmunks, cactus wrens, armadillos, even mule deer visit frequently. There are some drawbacks (their dogs neurotically chase rabbits back and forth across the room, a neighbor recently found a Gila monster in his house), but watching the animals, they say, is still "better than TV." With these kinds of uplifting results, Christensen is optimistic about the future of green architecture. "Any sensible person will see that it's for your good and for the public good," he says. "I think it's gonna beat out feng shui." 

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY PORTELLI

The Double-Duty Office

You can't always work, and (hopefully) you don't always have houseguests. What you need is a spare room with a split personality. When businesswoman Susie Alofs applied some inventive thinking to the design of her home office, she got a space that seamlessly converts into a guest bedroom—and looks great while doing so. Follow her lead to create a room that will house your inlaws as easily as your invoices.

Tips From Susie

Interior design isn't Susie Alofs's first job, but she multitasks, too—she's bought (and then tweaked the design of) a number of residential and commercial properties. A few gems from her wealth of knowledge:

- A room like this may benefit your bank account. Having a dual-purpose space in your house will **increase your resale chances**, Alofs says, because you can appeal to two markets—people who want an office and people who want a spare bedroom.
- Don't be afraid to get crafty. Alofs bought her desk chair at Costco, and then made the run-of-the-mill black leather behemoth look custom by sewing swatches of lime-green and butter-yellow leather onto sections of it. The same applies to the overall design of the room. **"It doesn't have to be custom,"** Alofs says of the cabinetry that makes the space multipurpose. "You could do this at Home Depot. You can take it to the extent you want to."
- When you decorate with bold colors, matching the same shade throughout your home can be tough. So **be on the lookout for ways to stretch the materials you already have.** To bring some of the colors of her office/bedroom into her kitchen, for example, Alofs used the leftover chartreuse paint to cover the mats for a series of pictures of her children that hangs near her kitchen table. Alofs also says to keep color swatches close at hand (i.e. in your purse or wallet) during the design process—you never know when you'll find something that matches perfectly.

Solved in 8 steps

1. The original plans for this part of the house had the room slated to be just a home office, with double doors opening out to the entry room in the traditional fashion. To put her own stamp on the room, Alofs reduced them to one and **RELOCATED THE REMAINING DOOR** to a back hallway.
2. Light maple wood **CUSTOM CABINETRY** was installed to cleverly conceal both office supplies and guest necessities: Files, a computer, a TV, CD's and a sound system can all be instantly produced from their respective hiding places, lending the room a sort of giant-pop-up-book whimsy. A closet you might swear holds reams of copy paper turns out to contain a shoe rack for visitors. Cabinets by THF Custom Fine Woodworking, 1818 E. Madison St., Phoenix, 602.437.1660.
3. The *pièce de résistance* of this hide-and-seek design: Proving that **MURPHY BEDS** aren't just for motel rooms anymore, THF installed a queen-size one that folds out from the wall. It looks like a series of file cabinets when put away. The Sico Eurobed, www.sico-wallbeds.com.
4. Must a wall color that will please guests and workers alike be neutral? Hardly. "Everyone's house is beige," Alofs says. "It drives me out of my mind." **CHARTREUSE PAINT** is the perfect stimulating-yet-soothing fence-straddler.
5. The doors on the closet and other vertical cabinets were cut down the middle in a **SLEEK CURVE**. Alofs says this is only slightly more expensive than having a straight line cut, and gives the whole room a distinctive feel.
6. Keeping with the innovative theme, Alofs added **JUST-WILD-ENOUGH DETAILS**: a zebra-print carpet and oversized, cheetah-print chairs that are tamed slightly by a sleek, stainless steel ceiling fan and matching desk accessories.
7. Anyone who's been held hostage by a runaway rolling office chair or a supercharged vacuum knows those things can scuff up a wall something awful. Alofs's simple solution: She **COVERED HER BASEBOARDS WITH CARPET**. It saved her painting them *blasé* white, and saves them some scarring.
8. When there is both work and guest-hosting to be done, a **WIRELESS INTERNET CONNECTION** allows Alofs to access her office computer on her laptop from virtually anywhere in the house.

BY: CRISTIN FENZEL PHOTOGRAPHY: JERRY PORTELLI



dish

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE REGAN

Pop Art You've stocked up on accessories in all the season's pretty brights, but you still feel like your look is missing something. And then it hits you—your *snack food* doesn't match your new, spring outfits. Enter **PASS THE POPCORN**, a Phoenix shop that sells 45 handmade varieties of the fluffy, crunchy stuff. Flavors run the gamut from standard movie-butter to cheese-and-caramel to cinnamon, and the fruity ones (think blue raspberry, grape, green apple, strawberry and orange) are coated in colors sure to complement any candy-hued Mac. 3232 E. Shea Boulevard, Phoenix; **602.569.6624**, WWW.PASSPOPCORN.COM.

Q&A

With Judy Rodgers

When JUDY RODGERS spent her senior year of high school in France, she had no idea her experience would lead her down the path to culinary fame. Her host family just happened to own Les Frères Troisgros, a three-star restaurant located in Roanne, and she spent most of her time in the kitchen jotting down recipes. Get ready to take some notes of your own: the James Beard award-winning chef and co-owner of San Francisco's Zuni Cafe will be in town on April 13 for the SCOTTSDALE CULINARY FESTIVAL'S "FEASTING WITH THE AUTHORS," where she'll present her prize-winning "Zuni Cafe Cookbook." We picked her brain to give you a glimpse of what to expect.



You went to Stanford after you returned from France.

What did you study?

My degree, finally, was in art history. People try to get me to make comparisons between art and cooking, but I really don't think of cooking as an art at all. I think cooking is more artisanal, like gardening. It's like making a good pair of shoes—I mean, you *need* them. You need shoes. And the craft is making it better than it needs to be.

A large part of your philosophy is choosing foods responsibly. How do you implement that at Zuni Cafe?

I make an effort to know where all the food we use comes from.

Virtually all the produce we use is organic, and we're pretty darn rigorous. My belief is: Why not find out what is grown locally in your region? To have the pleasure of eating a pepper at dinner, and to have it be a pepper you chose not because it was the cheapest, is a lot richer. The pleasure of doing a recipe might start with being at a market and seeing a pepper, and you smell it. And with the recipe you might try to preserve some of the wondrousness of that thing.

What's your favorite quick, easy meal to prepare after a long day?

Eggs. There's a recipe in the book for fried eggs and breadcrumbs. I'm not a breakfast

person so I don't like eggs in the morning, but I really like eggs for dinner. Even if I don't have breadcrumbs, I'll just trickle some vinegar over the eggs and have them with toast and salad, and it makes me really happy.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

The epigraph at the front of my book says, in French, "Beware of food for show." My French grandfather—he was kind of the patriarch of the restaurant—would constantly be issuing edicts. He was really keen on propounding the virtues of simple food. Stick with honest food. Don't get sucked in by spun-sugar windmills.

What's your advice for novice chefs?

Start by getting really simple, excellent ingredients. Then try to find preparations that don't do very much to them, that allow the ingredients to sing and don't put a lot of pressure on you. Don't worry about impressing other people. Hope to have something tasty. And if it's not tasty, don't give up. Pick something simple and make it frequently.

Tickets are \$75 per person, which includes food samples and wine pairings.

480.945.7193, www.scottsdale-culinaryfestival.org.

performance

picks

The performing arts word of the day is

labanotation: generally, a system of recording bodily movement on paper; in dance, the notation is put on a staff that can be aligned with the music. It's traditionally used to preserve choreography for future generations. And now, courtesy of Gould Evans, Phoenix, it's also part of the new **STE-VIE ELLER DANCE THEATRE** at the University of Arizona. ✱ To create the plans for the building (which includes a 300-seat theater and multi-purpose teaching facilities), the firm's design team learned to read the labanotation for "Serenade," the first ballet George Balanchine choreographed for

his students at the School of American Ballet. They then used the plans for the dancers' starting and ending positions in each movement to create a design matrix for the 12 "dancing columns" that support a glass-encased studio on the second floor of the building. Even the theater's bathrooms—already declared "cool" by the UA student newspaper—channel kinetic energy. Collections of small mirrors, which rapidly change the color of the rooms as people whisk in and out, are set up according to the labanotation of someone looking in the main mirror, gesturing and then doing a double take. ✱ The theater will be the primary venue for performances by the university's top-

ranked dance program, and is a far cry from its previous home—one it shared with the psychology and physics departments, where concertgoers had to sit on bleachers. The George Balanchine Foundation has granted the program permission to perform "Serenade" in April, but you can check out the ultrahip building long before that. In conjunction with Phoenix's Center Dance Ensemble, UA dancers will perform "The Attic," a modern-dance retelling of the story of Anne Frank, from Feb. 6 to 8. Call the university fine arts box office at **520.621.1162** for tickets. And to learn beginning labanotation for yourself, visit **WWW.DANCENOTATION.ORG**. —Cristin Fenzel