

THIJS DEMEULEMEESTER

ATHOS BUREZ

EROTIQUE CHIC

INTERIORS
OF SEDUCTION

 LANNOO

FOREWORD

Erotique Chic is a sexy book on interiors. An architectural peepshow full of suggestive film stills. The sixties and seventies saw modernism committing some glamorous excesses. Architects in Los Angeles, Hollywood, Palm Springs, but also in Europe designed homes that sparked the erotic imagination. Conversation pits, indoor pools, groovy fitted carpet, satin wall covering, dance stages... you usually only see these décors in films. Yet, they still exist in real life. You cannot visit them, however, as you can John Lautner or Bruce Goff's classic glamour architecture in the USA. This book is vintage architectural porn: sneaking peeks into private pearls, for your eyes only.

Why do bad guys always get the best houses? This film quote could have been the subtitle of this book. Because you would sooner imagine people having wild nights in these homes than cosy Easter breakfasts. These houses are more like film sets than homes. Who lives there doesn't matter; who held decadent parties there, now that certainly fires the imagination! In these homes you are not a resident but a character in your own screenplay. You become an extra in the film you could shoot there yourself.

That is exactly what we did with *Erotique Chic*: photographer Athos Burez unleashed his cinematic imagination on the sexy architecture. He did not obtain cold pictures like Julius Shulman's, but titillating film stills. Stills that suggest all the things that went on privately behind these doors. *Erotique Chic* is *James Bond* meets *Serge Gainsbourg*. *2001: A Space Odyssey* meets *Bilitis*. *Bad Guy* meets *Bad Taste*. Or simply call it architectural lingerie: just subtle enough to still be seductive and just spicy enough to get you in the mood. Your place or mine?

THIJS DEMEULEMEESTER & ATHOS BUREZ

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ESTATE OF THE UNION

WHAT?	FULL-OPTION LUXURY MANSION
WHO?	ARCHITECT RENÉ STAPELS
FOR?	A PROPERTY MAGNATE WITH AN ART AND CAR COLLECTION
CONSTRUCTION YEAR?	1971
STYLE?	PRESIDENTIAL GLAMITECTURE

Six hundred kilos. That is how much the bronze door of Arnaldo Pomodoro weighs, the world-famous Italian maker of this monumental sculpture. Whoever manages to open it steps into a decadent villa on a property covering almost 3 hectares. The mythical private house was built for a fabulously rich property magnate who was active in the construction of high-rises and car parks in Brussels. With 7 bathrooms, 10 bedrooms, a private cinema, a heliport and an over-the-top indoor swimming pool, the house's proportions are quite simply presidential. And that is not much of an exaggeration: US President Jimmy Carter visited personally in 1982. As did so many influential politicians, businessmen, and artists from the entourage of the jet-setting couple that initially lived here. The huge art and car collection of the original inhabitants has vanished. The walls have now gone forever silent, but the architecture and the interiors tickle the imagination. They suggest epic scenes which you could film just like that.

To begin at the black-lacquered bar downstairs. Eero Aarnio's Bubble Chair dangles invitingly from the ceiling, right beside the round dancefloor. We can only imagine who danced there. This villa was not built for private family get-togethers. This is a mansion, designed to impress friend and foe. Architect René Stapels understood this all too well. He pulled out all the stops to turn this house into a flashy show-off villa, the perfect setting in which to shoot a James Bond film. Or to screen one, in the private cinema, complete with velvet seats and ashtrays.

From an architectural perspective, the villa is no longer all that refined: some contemporary interventions have somewhat obscured the original features. But the luxury materials—mirrors, lacquer, onyx, bronze, stone carpet—still radiate that old-world glam aimed at entertaining and flattering the ego. It is especially noticeable in the evenings and at night: it is only then that this house really comes to life as a film

set. Perhaps this holds most for the indoor swimming pool cum billiards room. A diamond-shaped skylight, a cage for tropical birds, a bar with wall paintings by Walasse Ting, Tiki-style lounge chairs, a dance floor with a mirrorball: you do not need much imagination to make a tempting journey through time here.













BARBARELLA: [STANDING NAKED IN FRONT OF THE VIDEOPHONE, TALKING WITH THE PRESIDENT] JUST A MINUTE, I'LL SLIP SOMETHING ON.
PRESIDENT: DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF. THIS IS AN AFFAIR OF STATE.

BARBARELLA, ROGER VADIM
1968







