

DOME SWEET DOME

POOL 09's environs have a new look: special geodesic dome pavilions for a futuristic forward feel. Here's what it's like to live inside one.

People are probably more familiar with geodesic domes from the Spruce Goose pavilion at Long Beach, California, and Walt Disney World's Epcot than as actual homes. In the 1940s, Buckminster Fuller, an American, invented the geodesic dome as a cost-effective shelter using fewer resources that could be assembled easily. Fuller's domes are energy efficient as heating and cooling occur naturally. He also advocated using renewable energy resources – solar, wind – as alternatives to fossil fuels. Sounds like a good idea, right?

Fritz Haeg is a 36-year-old architect who lives in a geodesic dome in the hills above Downtown Los Angeles. Haeg hosts Sundown Salons in his home that bring together artists, fashion designers and musicians in theme events. Haeg gave POOL a tour of his home and talked about his current projects.

Tell us about yourself.

I grew in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and went to the school of architecture at Carnegie Mellon in Pennsylvania and in Venice, Italy. After graduation, I went to work for a big architect in New Haven, Connecticut — Cesar Pelli — for a year after college and worked like 80 hours a week. And then I ran away from that and moved to Italy for a year and lived in a farmhouse — I kind of escaped. I've lived in LA six years now. I have my architecture practice up here, teaching and doing events.

What projects have you been working on?

The projects in the design studio are residential projects. I just redesigned the Peres Projects gallery (in Downtown LA); houses in Silver Lake, Costa Rica, Joshua Tree and Altadena; a lot of residential work dealing with landscape and sustainable building materials — stuff like that. I started this program called Gardenlab, which deals with ecology.

I'm going to Salina, Kansas, to do a project called Edible Estates that is about taking out those endless suburban laws that we don't use — that we put pesticides on, that we dump water on. They have no real function. In different cities, we have one volunteer family who is

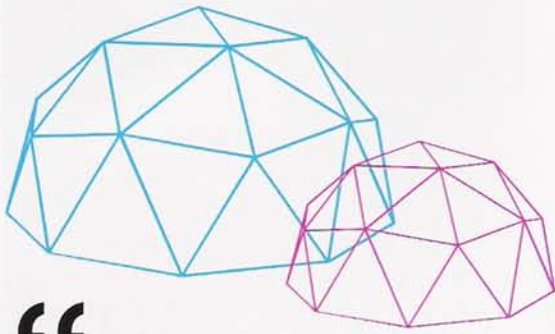


Buckminster Fuller in Manhattan, 1929.



willing to remove their entire front lawn and replace it with an edible landscape but not necessarily conventional vegetable garden.

Then there's the Sundown Salons that happen every couple months here. The Sundown Salon started when I moved into this house five years ago. The house is so unconventional — there's no real rooms — there's different spaces on top of each other. The Sundown Salon grew out of using the house for more than just living.



“ Once in a while, I get a call from someone who wants to buy a dome and they're like, 'what bank did you use, because we can't get financing.' ”

What's the next Sundown Salon?

The next one is called Salon Salon. The idea came from a friend who wanted to do haircuts and makeup and it extended beyond that and now I'm inviting a lot of different LA clothing designers. It's now a whole day of 50 participants being made over and making over each other so everybody will be wearing clothes by designers like Jasmin Shokrian and Ujein. There will be photographers running around and taking picture of the whole process. There's a store called South Willard that will be here.

Tell me about your interest in fashion?

I'm very specifically interested in fashion as an extension of the body.

Who designed your house?

The woman, who built it for herself in the mid '80s, was very involved in the actual design, engineering and construction. I want to find out more about her.

Did you learn about Buckminster Fuller's domes in architecture school?

I knew about him, using the least amount of materials to enclose the most space. And a dome is more efficient to heat or cool.

This dome isn't the best example, it gets very hot up here, because it's not properly ventilated. I wasn't very interested in Buckminster Fuller until I moved into the house. Then I became very very interested in his work.

He has a cult following.

Definitely, A lot of his principles inspired my own work.

Do you think you're instrumental in promoting LA designers?

I'm really interested in Los Angeles, what it means to live and work here. I want LA to be the best possible environment to work in. LA is in a really amazing moment right now. Things can be over-reported in New York, because that's where most of the media is and I think LA suffers from a lack of exposure and coverage.

Have you met many people who live in geodesic domes?

I don't know many people. Once in a while, I get a call from someone who wants to buy a dome and they're like, 'what bank did you use, because we can't get financing.' ●

