



Shoko César, Owner, Shoko

Every Edmonton home contains something IKEA, says Shoko César. But that Leksvik won't last forever, and as designers start thinking locally, they'll be recognized locally. Case in point: César's Hoodoo series, created with Greg Ball. They camped in the Drumheller badlands and devised a hoodoo-themed coat rack, floor lamp, bottle opener and, more recently, self-adhesive vinyl wallpaper. (The lamp won a *Canadian Interiors* Best of Canada product award this year.) "It's an on-going series," says César, "to find out what we're all about in Alberta. Not necessarily to define an aesthetic, but to search for it and to present a challenge to other designers—to see what they can find."

Left: Shoko César. Above left: Hoodoo lamp. Above right: Hoodoo coat rack.



Greg Ball, who designed the Dog Haus (for your pooch) and the Subsonic chair (for your teenager, right), has gone down the road to Calgary. Now with the Advanta Design Group, he counters the separation anxiety of leaving Edmonton by collaborating with people like Shoko César. He wants to start an IDEA- and MADE-style association in Calgary. Meanwhile he's exploring the "cowboy aesthetic" by going to chuckwagon races. "It was fascinating," he says. **wl**



Surprising Alberta

Patricia Lake, near Jasper, offers one of the world's most bizarre military sites. There, among the evergreens, Winston Churchill convinced the Allies to build a prototype aircraft carrier made of ice and wood pulp, a substance dubbed "pykrete" after British inventor Geoffrey Pyke. Dense and unyielding, pykrete floats, melts more slowly than ice, acts like masonry when fired upon and eludes magnetic mines. The prototype impressed the top brass but was quietly abandoned in 1944 for more ambitious experiments with atom splitting. The pykrete craft melted later that year and with it Pyke's dream of celebrity. But the legend bubbles on. The refrigeration system and other ice-bound gadgets sank to the lake bottom and formed a playground for divers.—*Lisa Gregoire*