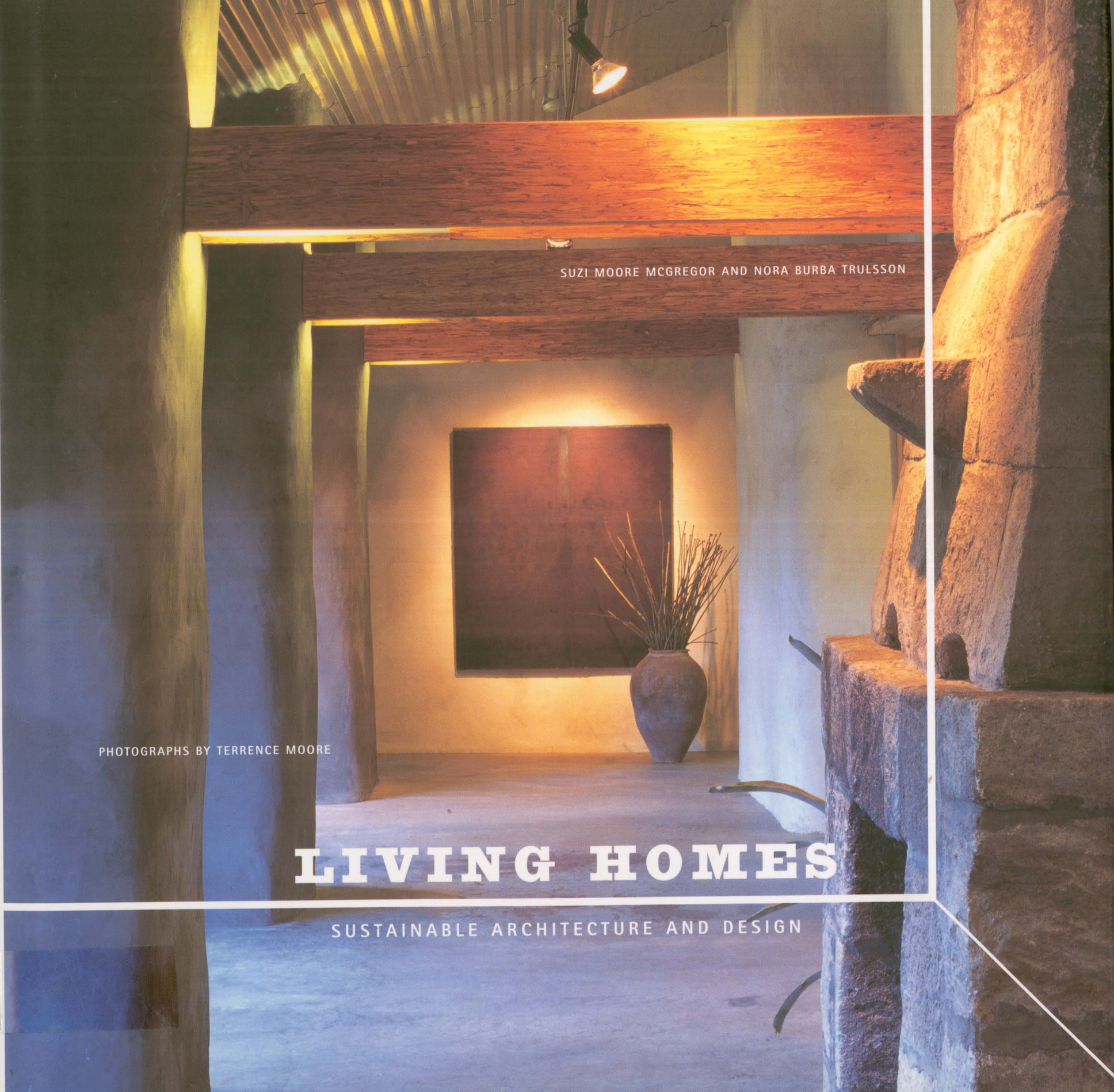

SUZI MOORE MCGREGOR AND NORA BURBA TRULSSON

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LIVING HOMES

SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

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SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

CHRONICLE BOOKS
SAN FRANCISCO

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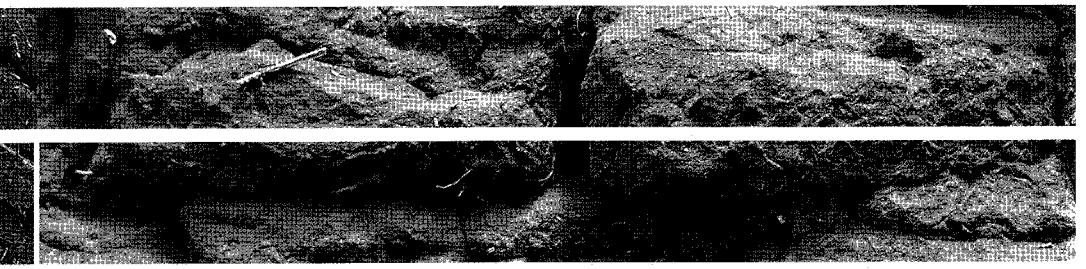

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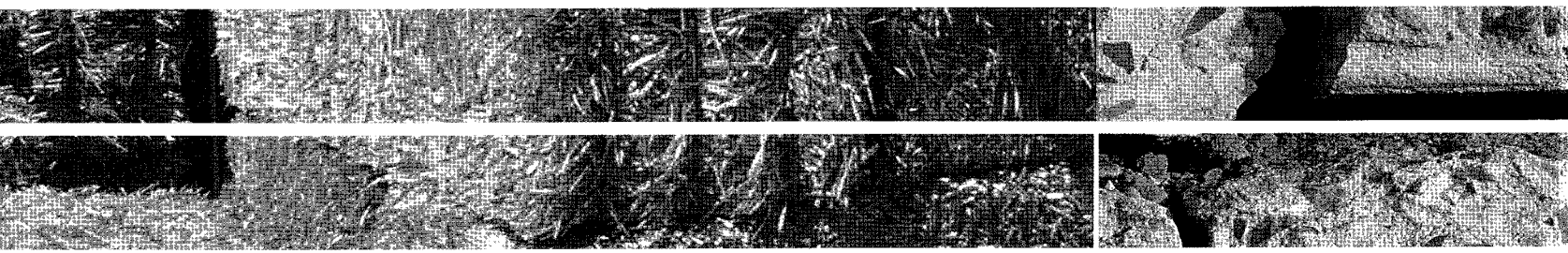

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PREFACE

IT WAS A WORKSHOP ON STRAW BALE AND RAMMED earth construction that first sparked the idea for this book. Certainly, there had been plenty of seminars, talks, and workshops on these subjects prior to this—but this event marked one of the early glimmers of interest in alternative building materials by the mainstream design community.

It was 1992, and architect Richard Hoffmeister, then an apprentice at Taliesin West, the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, had organized a weekend-long workshop at the school's Scottsdale, Arizona, locale. The workshop, which also involved City of Scottsdale building officials and representatives from a local utility company, attracted students, builders, and architects who came to learn more about these two building materials. During the course of the weekend, the workshop participants erected a two-hundred-square-foot, load-bearing straw bale shelter and a rammed earth *banco*, or bench.

The workshop's locale proved to be fruitful. As Taliesin West is a major tourist attraction in metro Phoenix, thousands of visitors come through annually to see Wright's desert buildings and to learn about the 640-acre school, community, and architectural office. Word of the straw bale and rammed earth project circulated, and the site was visited by hundreds from around the world, many of whom were design professionals.

By the mid-1990s, other architects and designers were beginning to move beyond traditional building methods and experiment with straw bale, rammed earth, adobe, and other alternatives, seeking to add to their repertoire.

It occurred to us that two schools of thought, two separate disciplines, were meeting and becoming intertwined. On the one hand, there were the proponents of environmentally and socially conscious building methods, for whom the words *green, sustainable,* and *recycled* had long been in their vocabulary. For them, creating a building out of locally available, energy-efficient materials, often with community-spirited labor, was of utmost importance. The actual design of a structure was of lesser importance. On the other hand, there was the design community—architects, builders, interior designers, landscape architects, and others—for whom the look and lines of a building were paramount.

In recent years, however, the design community has come to embrace alternative building methods and materials, and to become more conscious of energy

strategies and other environmental considerations. And environmental activists have come to realize that an Earth-friendly structure doesn't have to be a spartan box. This fusion of design and environmental concerns, of substance and style, has spawned a new type of home—good-looking, functional, and appropriate to the site.

We have found twenty-two such residences in states across the West for this book. We chose to categorize them by their wall materials, starting with adobe homes and rammed earth homes, which represent a continuum of mankind's oldest building material—mud. These homes run the gamut architecturally, from traditional, Pueblo Revival styles, based on Native American structures found along the Rio Grande in New Mexico, to extremely contemporary homes that juxtapose steel and glass with earthen walls. Homes made of straw bale, another category, range from small cottages hand-built by owners to those with modern angular forms built with the aid of professional contractors. Along the way, we've also discovered homes constructed with other wall materials, including native stone, recycled polystyrene, and recycled concrete rubble and also designed to be environmentally responsive and responsible. These form the fourth chapter of the book.

There's a movement happening in home building, a trend toward using appropriate materials to construct environmentally sensitive, energy-efficient houses that also display the hallmarks of good design. It's a movement that you can see on the pages of this book. Our hope is that this book will inspire more of these well-designed, thoughtful homes.

Nora Burba Trulsson
Suzi Moore McGregor
Terrence Moore