



# XTREME HOUSES

COURTENAY SMITH + SEAN TOPHAM

PRESTEL

# KOEPPEL & MARTINEZ

*schlafhaus* (House for sleeping),  
Asturias, Navia, Spain, 1998–2002

**OPPOSITE** KOEPPPEL & MARTINEZ COMBINED THE NEW TECHNOLOGY OF WOOD PLOTTERS, WHICH CUT THE CURVED BEAMS OF THE SCHLAFHAUS DIRECTLY FROM CAD FILES, WITH THE OLD TECHNOLOGY OF FABRIC COVERING TO CREATE A COMPLICATED FORM WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN TIME CONSUMING AND COSTLY.

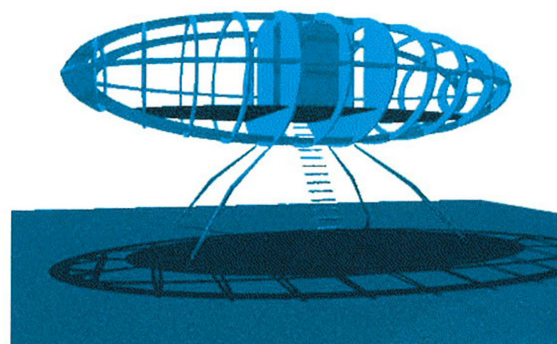
Aerodynamic is the adjective that springs to mind when describing Koeppel & Martinez's *schlafhaus*, a home expansion project that employs zeppelin technology, is constructed like a model airplane, and looks like a UFO.

Modeled on its airborne cousin, the dirigible, *schlafhaus* is a cigar-shaped pod consisting of a lightweight wooden skeleton wrapped with a flexible skin (in this case, cotton). Whereas the blimp was designed to be kept aloft, *schlafhaus* is decidedly grounded by four steel legs and a hard outer shell. As with toy planes, the illusion of flight is maintained by several coats of translucent lacquer, which harden and stabilize the otherwise easily damaged membrane. A final coat of aluminum varnish blocks damaging UV rays and gives the house a

streamlined, alien appearance.

Designed for a pair of Spanish artists who live and work in an old rural mill, *schlafhaus* is an of-the-moment, as-permanent-as-you-want-it extension of their personal living space. True to its name, it is used principally for sleeping and contains only two bedrooms, a bath, and an entryway.

Separate sleeping quarters are nothing new, especially in warm regions where screened-in porches or pitched tents provide relief on steamy summer nights. In this instance, Koeppel & Martinez have updated the options with artistic imagination and affordable structural invention.



Koeppel & Martinez, Switzerland



