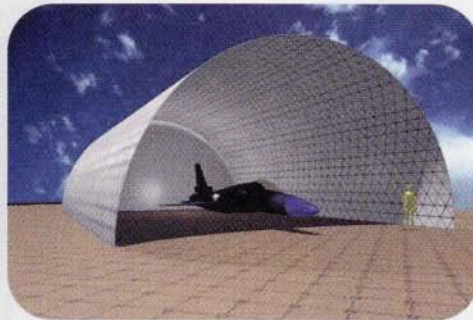




Construcel

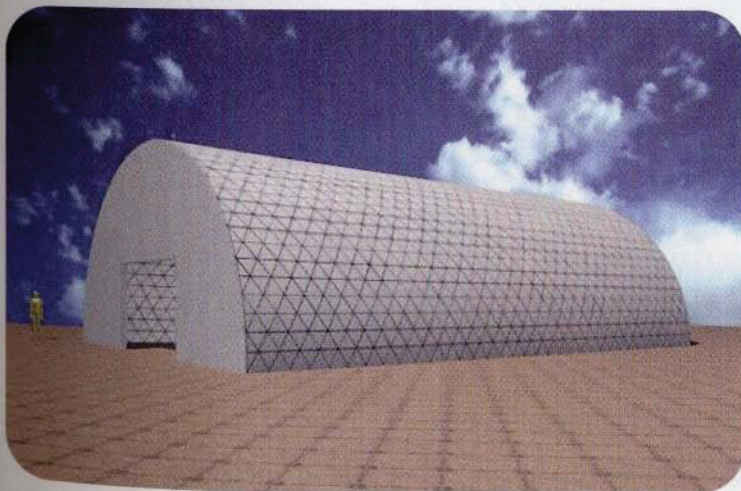
For millennia bricks for the construction of buildings have been designed around variations on a basic solid or hollow rectangular form. While it is possible to apply rectangular bricks to some spectacular architectural structures, vaulted ceilings being a classic example, the overriding tendency is to construct rectilinear structures. Marinho's triangular prism of polycarbonate, Construcel, offers an opportunity to reconsider the humble role of bricks in buildings. Each Construcel is an open-sided triangular box, which can be bolted to the next one and so on to create a variety of built forms. Rectilinear structures are easily constructed but this plastic brick is especially suited to large curved spans, such as those required for open-span buildings for sport, exhibitions and similar uses, as it does not require any supporting steelwork or concrete. It is quick to



assemble and disassemble structures, so each Construcel is readily reusable and offers possibilities for temporary buildings for disaster relief work. Photovoltaics are

easily incorporated in the external face of the 'brick'. Although further work is required to develop this innovation it appears to offer considerable potential.

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Venetian blinds

Imagine an entire room composed of windows where the incoming flow and mood of light can be controlled using wooden Venetian blinds. Matteo Thun has created a 'Quiet Room' in which the wall and ceiling panels are fully adjustable, manually or automatically, using elliptical cross-section slats with a light and dark side. Light-coloured wood, such as basswood, is bonded to dark wood, such as black walnut, negating the need to introduce coloured surface finishes but relying on the natural reflectivity, absorption and colour range of the raw materials.

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