



## THE BASIC ELEMENT AS THE PREMISE

They have reduced the interior to its basics. Use in many of their designs standard materials and second-hand furniture to obtain the desired effect. Olga Mihailovich and Nevena Krilic of the Elements Group of Toronto.

text and photos: Hans Fonk

Their interior design studio in the centre of Toronto is a statement of their new approach. It is modest in size, but they have succeeded in creating a sense of space. Chairs purchased in a second-hand store stand at the entrance. The bust of Elvis Presley was thrown in for free. The wooden floor is decorated with a portrait of Marilyn Monroe, for which they made the print block themselves. The visually detached wall unit and the counter have been made from plain wooden planks, painted green. A partition in transparent corrugated sheeting from Home Depot separates off an area containing a conference table in steel tubing and glass, surrounded by Plexiglas chairs designed by Philippe Starck for Kartell. They had originally been used for the auditorium at Toronto's Design Show and were sold off after the show. The big chandelier above the table was put together from lots of lamp fittings. The walls are hung with 'sidewalk art': a variant of graffiti. Simple and effective.

Olga Mihailovich is an interior designer and originated from the former Yugoslavia. Nevena is an architect, originally from Bosnia. They have both been living and working in Toronto for many years.

Olga: "We make efficient interiors from elements you can buy ready-made, to suit everybody's purse. Many young people who are setting up a company and want to give the interior a special look are lacking in funds. That's where we can help out".

Nevena added: "Interiors have undergone the same kind of development as skiing, for example. First skiing was a way of getting from A to B, now it's an expensive kind of sport. The same goes for interiors: from a functional basic provision to an accumulation of what are usually expensive items. We have gone back to basics, but with considerable creativity. We actually think that the more restricted we are, for instance by the budget, the more creative we are".

Incidentally, they are not only involved in budget projects. When OBJEKT©International interviewed them in their studio, they were working on a Spanish consulate and several branches of Curves, a chain of fitness clubs that is burgeoning throughout North America.

