DESIGN

WINTER 2020

- **HOME** Artist Sue Webster's weird, wonderful house
- **AWAY** Design delights to discover around the world
- **STUFF** Mushroom houses and jelly sculpture
- **PLUS** Yinka Shonibare, Daniel Libeskind

The Observer

(Above) The Pavilion Le Corbusier on Lake Zurich. (Right) the 26-metre Freitag Tower

ZURICH SWITZERLAND

Cutting-edge and cool precision

The birthplace of dadaism and the Helvetica typeface, Zurich is no stranger to innovative art and design. In the early 20th century, the Old Town (Altstadt) and its infamous Cabaret Voltaire nightclub were at the heart of the Swiss avant-garde movement. A century later, the neighbourhood has rediscovered its creative mojo with a flurry of new gallery openings and an attention-grabbing new extension to the Kunsthaus art museum on Heimplatz. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, it won't open until February 2021, but is already creating a buzz with talk of a new "art quarter" for the city and new galleries vying for prime spots on the narrow medieval lanes around the museum.

"In the 20th century, the Old Town was a gathering place for artists and writers and I think there is a now a revival going on," says Fabian Lang, who returned home to Zurich last year to open his own gallery after eight years working in London and Venice. "Zurich has changed in the 10 years since I went away," says Lang. "There is a sense of it opening up and becoming more international. It's still a small city but now it has more of a big-city feel."

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Zurich-West, the once-gritty, now-gentrified industrial neighbourhood that became the city's epicentre of cool in the mid-1990s and is now home to the Migros Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as countless cool bars and retail outlets, such as the 26-metre Freitag Tower.

For a crash course in Swiss design, the Museum für Gestaltung, in a restored modernist building on Ausstellungsstrasse, is a must-visit. Last spring, the museum reopened the Pavilion Le Corbusier on the shores of Lake Zurich after extensive renovations. The glass and steel building was the final project by the celebrated architect. Combining Swiss precision with boundary-pushing design, it is the perfect landmark for Zurich. **JO'C**