



STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR

## ANDRE D'ELIA & MEG GRAHAM ARCHITECTS

**CHRISTOPHER HUME**  
URBAN AFFAIRS COLUMNIST

In the age of the instantly recognizable, architects Andre D'Elia and Meg Graham take pride in the fact that none of their projects is identifiably theirs.

The pair, partners in life and work, launched an architectural practice seven years ago. And so far, the flow of clients hasn't let up. The name alone, Superkül, is guaranteed to attract a certain amount of attention but more important, they are gaining an international reputation for their clean, crisp, efficient and always elegant designs.

D'Elia and Graham are children of the suburbs (North York and Mississauga respectively) who both studied in Ontario (Carleton and Waterloo). And as often seems the case in Toronto these days, before striking out on their own both worked at Kwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg

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Architects, experiencing an architectural culture that values innovation and integrity above all.

“Our work is known for not having a signature style,” says Graham, 38. “That’s on purpose. Each project is different; we work from first principles each time.”

According to D’Elia, 40, architecture “is a collaborative process. We really listen to our clients and make sure we understand their ends.”

Though they have designed cottages and wineries, they seem most at home in an urban context. Their own live/work house on Dundas St. W. at Roncesvalles is a brilliant example of

their uncanny ability to transform a tired and ordinary downtown building into something as practical as it is

striking. The ground floor and basement are given over to the business; Superkül’s staff of six works there. The couple and their 4-month-old daughter, Cate, live on two floors above. The rooms are simple, yet never mean, and connected effortlessly. A two-storey garage at the back of the narrow lot provides extra space and creates a small courtyard.

“We think that in five to 10 years a lot of people will be living like this,” Graham says. “Densifying Toronto is

one of our passions. We used to have a separate home and office, but we wanted a location like this on a main street.”

Upcoming projects include an indoor and outdoor renovation of the Newmarket Cultural and Conference Centre as well as “a number of” houses and cottages.

“We try to pare things down,” D’Elia explains. “We like simple forms.”

Others seem to like them, too. Just last month, Superkül was lauded by *Wallpaper* magazine for “working wonders in every field, but especially in residential design.”

How cool is that?