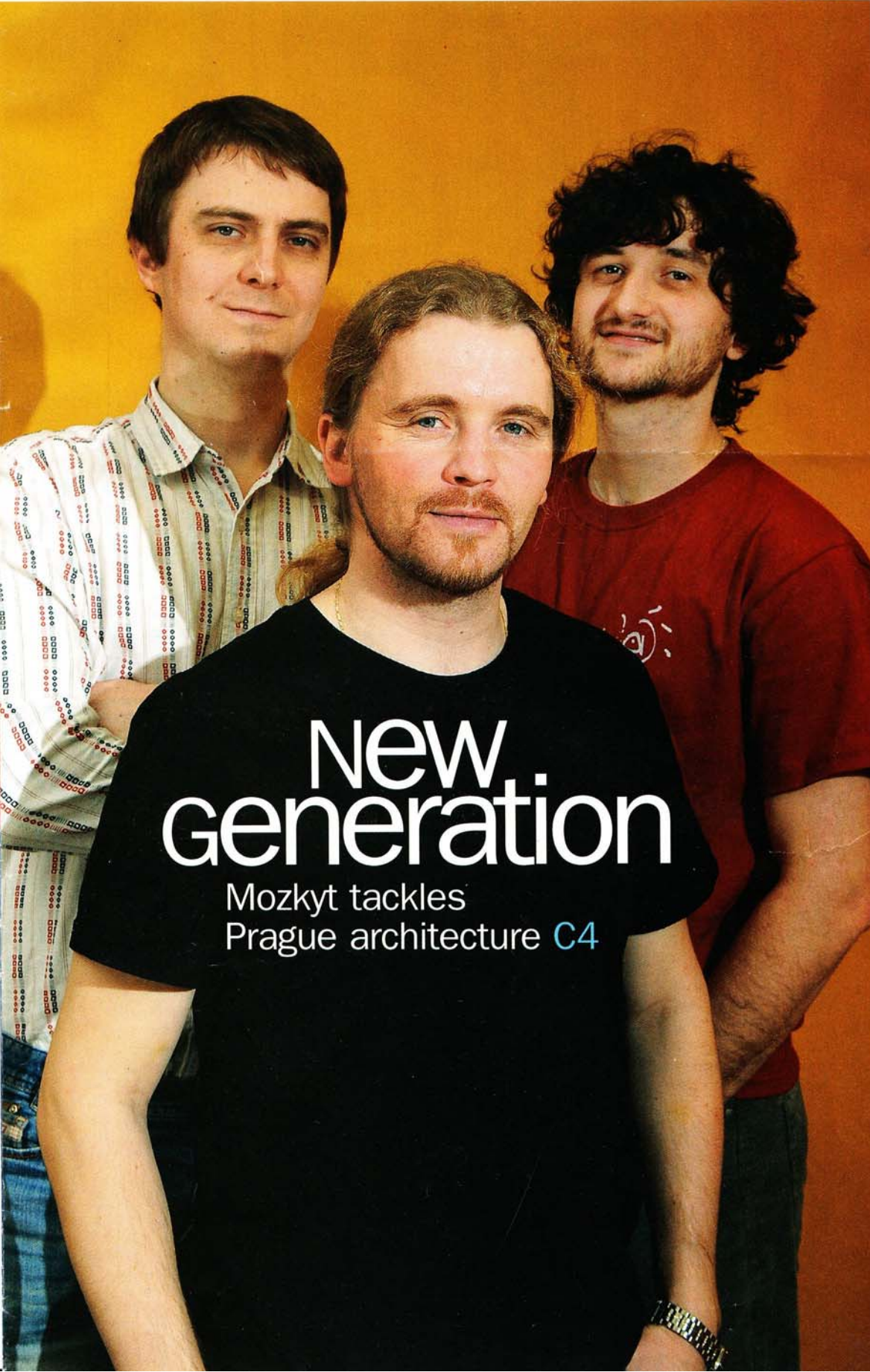


# THE PRAGUE POST REAL ESTATE

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## New Generation

Mozkyt tackles  
Prague architecture C4

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University friends Lukáš Janeč, Jiří Dostál and Rudolf Grimm opened their own Prague architecture firm, Ateliér Mozkyt, two years ago.

# Generation Xteriors — and interiors

Ateliér Mozkyt, one of Prague's newest architecture firms, starts making a name for itself

## ARCHITECTS

BY BROOKE EDGE  
FOR THE POST

Walking into Ateliér Mozkyt's new offices, it's evident almost immediately that this budding architecture firm is run by a young, creative and enthusiastic bunch. From the just-painted orange walls to the offer of a shot of plum brandy at the beginning of a meeting, this recent addition to the Czech Republic's already-impressive roster of architecture experts comes almost as a breath of fresh air.

Three friends — Rudolf Grimm, 31, Lukáš Janeč, 29, and Jiří Dostál, 31 — founded Mozkyt two years ago. But the path here actually began years before, during the trio's days at the Architectural University of Brno. Grimm and Dostál knew each other from high school, where they bonded in shop class. Talk of founding their own architecture studio didn't fully gel, however, until the pair met Janeč at university. Prior to

that, Grimm says with a grin, "We were more interested in girls and such."

Once the idea of opening an independent studio of their very own took hold, it was always in the back of their minds even during stints with other firms. Janeč and Dostál worked for Prague architect Jíran Kohout, and Grimm spent five years at Atelier A8000.

"We already knew what we would do, but it came with time," Grimm explains.

Mozkyt finally opened two years ago, because, Janeč notes mischievously, "Jiří didn't like working under his boss, so he began his own project. He wanted to be his own boss."

And now, Grimm jokes, "he's our boss." Grimm and Janeč came on with Dostál at Mozkyt slowly, as they could end prior engagements. Once they were finally all in the same atelier, the need for space became imperative, and last month they moved from a tiny space in the center where they crowded around one desk to a suite of offices in Prague 10. Now, the business has room to grow.

Mozkyt is meant to be a reflection of the cre-

ative spirits within each of its founders. The name itself is a pun. It sounds like "mosquito," Janeč notes, and on paper, it looks similar to the Czech word for "brains." Put it together, and you get three buzzing brains.

But as Grimm, Janeč and Dostál have found, three brains with three very different opinions can sometimes be a trying combination.

"It's harder than we hoped," Grimm says, but, he adds, it's certainly more rewarding to be working late for yourself and your friends than for someone else.

When asked what personality traits each brings to the drafting table, they all start laughing and pointing to each other. After a minute of deliberation though, they agree that Dostál is the details guy, Grimm is the artist and Janeč is the manager.

"And we all have opinions," Dostál laughs.

The three friends are still ironing out details of how to work together, and, in true manager style, Janeč estimates it will take a few years to really get settled down and into a routine. Every project, they explain, is a different combination of efforts,



COURTESY IMAGES

The designs coming out of Mozkyt these days are linear and geometric with simple facades and sharp angles.

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depending on who brings it in and whose time is most available, among other things.

It's always collaborative in some way, Grimm says, "but so far, since we are just starting, it's not divided that strictly."

"What's really cool is that we each experienced working for other studios," Janeč points out. "We have all learned different tasks, and we can combine them well."

As for artistic inclinations, the three agree they harmonize in that respect as well. Many Mozkyt

designs to date have been quite linear and geometric, with simple facades and sharp angles created from natural materials.

"We like clear-cut lines, where everything has some meaning or is functional," Dostál says.

This won't necessarily be the definitive Mozkyt style, Grimm is quick to add, as they expect to change with time.

"We are young, we are going to develop. ... Architecture is about creating. It's a constant process, it's a path," and that includes looking back

and learning from mistakes, he says.

In that process of growing — both stylistically and as a business — the members of Mozkyt place a great importance upon working with clients.

"It's important that the client feels that it is also his work, that he created it in some way," Dostál says. This is especially important, he adds, when designing residential homes. Jaroslav Beran, a former classmate of Grimm, is such a client — Mozkyt designed a home and workshop for Beran that is currently under construction. Both the architects and the client agree it was a collaborative effort.

"It was good from the very start because we wanted natural materials and they did too, like wood, brick, glass, etc.," Beran says. "We are satisfied. It all works on the basis of consultations. I go talk to them and tell them what we want, then they have their say, and this is how it works. It is all about talking to each other."

And as with any start-up business, the men behind Mozkyt hope their clients keep talking. Their primary means of finding new clients at the moment, Janeč explains, is word of mouth.

The clients "have to trust you," he says, and, in return, the architects have to trust the clients to spread the word. "The best reward is if they recommend you, and you get five other clients."

— *Nada Černá contributed to this report.*

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