



Architect [Porky Hefer—Vernacular Architecture and Design](#)  
 Project [The Nest @Sossus](#)  
 Location [Namib Tsaris Conservancy/Namibia](#)

## Weaver’s Nest Inspires a Social Habitat

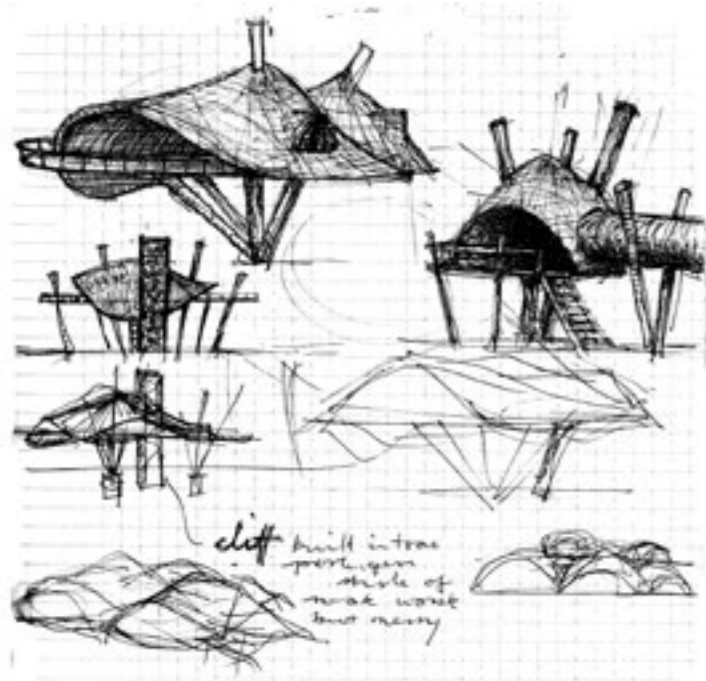
Former creative director Porky Hefer has been challenging perceptions of everyday objects ever since he left the advertising world to focus on product design. The South African’s first foray into architecture continues the visual language he’s become synonymous with—nesting environments in human scale—and is a progression of his handcrafted seating pods.

Porky Hefer—Vernacular Architecture and Design is named to highlight the designer’s commitment to utilizing indigenous knowledge and local materials. The Nest, a residential and hospitality property in the Namib Tsaris Conservancy of Namibia, adheres to this ethos and reflects its desert location.

“It is tucked away in a lush valley against the great escarpment in the Namib Desert, in a true desert oasis boasting natural pools and waterfalls,” says Hefer of the site that lies 155 miles (250 kilometers) from any notable town, and is only accessible by dirt road. “Materials and labor were very difficult to source,” he admits, as was finding a builder prepared to work under such peculiar conditions. But Hefer insisted on “employing local people with local skills” to create this dwelling based on the form of the sociable weaver’s nest—a bird abundant in the region. “It was all built by local artisans, with steel, stone, sustainable wood, thatch that was sustainably harvested in Namibia by Namibians, and bricks handmade on-site,” he says.

The domed villa was sketched entirely by hand. It features four en suite bedrooms, living spaces with indoor and outdoor lounges, dining areas, an open-plan kitchen, and a study.

“The building carries the lowest possible environmental footprint,” explains Hefer of the self-reliant system used to harvest solar energy. Water is drawn from a natural underground well, securing its off-grid existence.



From the earliest sketches to the realization of the final structure (page 21), all drawings for the dwelling were created by hand as they were concept developed from one stage to the next.

