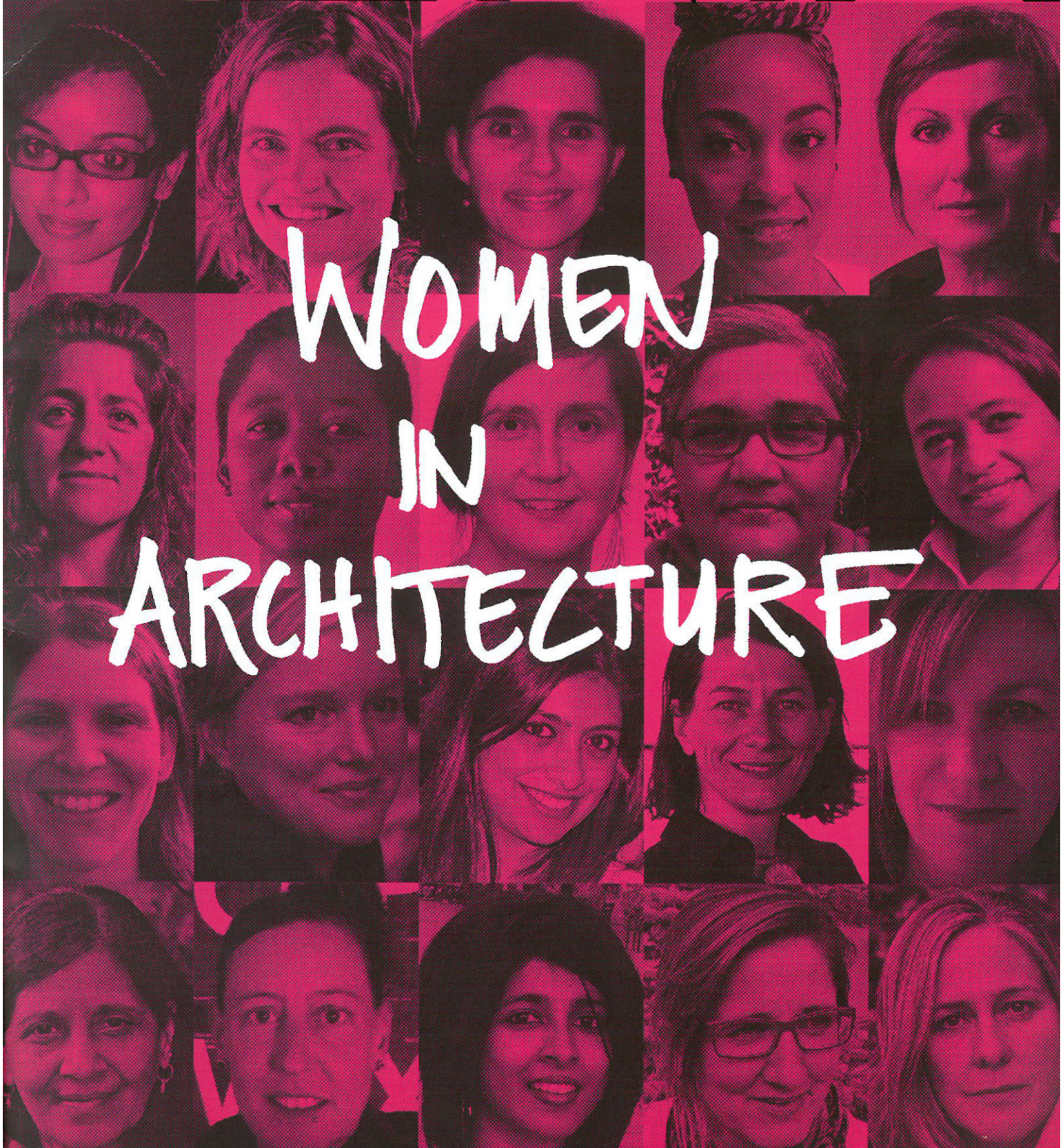


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KZNIA

WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE



Cindy Walters and Michal Cohen

Walters & Cohen Architects
London



American School, London

Cindy Walters

Truth is having a partner who is a woman and who also has to balance work and family has been irreplaceable. I've always had a terrifically supportive husband who has been there for our kids when I was not; couldn't have done any of it without them.

When we set up Walters and Cohen in London in 1994, well-meaning friends told us we were too young, too foreign and too female and that failure was inevitable. More than 20 years later Michal and I run a successful practice, as well known for its ethos as for its consistently high quality of work. Walters and Cohen has always been at least 70% female, thus bucking national trends. We are often asked whether our work is different because the practice is led by women: of course not. We currently employ two people who have moved out of London due to escalating house prices and in pursuit of a better quality of life. At the time of winning the Woman Architect of the Year award we employed two people who worked a short week in order to balance the demands of work and child care. Both happened to be men. We are proud of the small part we are playing in the changing culture of architectural practice.



Towers Junior School

Michal Cohen

It's been more than 30 years since Cindy and I met at the University of Natal, and 22 years since we set up Walters & Cohen in London. We are proud to have won several design awards for our buildings. High quality architecture lasts, and it is a pleasure to see that the KZNSA Gallery, one of our very first projects, continues to be a popular venue in the community after 20 years. Our studio currently comprises 32 people from around the world, 21 of whom are female. Our employees work incredibly hard so we aim to provide a good work/life balance: a little flexibility allows people to deal with what life throws at them. Both Cindy and I are mothers and know how important time off is for new parents and those with young children. Enhanced maternity leave is offered to long-term members of staff, but they are also encouraged to return to us when they're ready.

In 2012 we were surprised and delighted to win the Architects' Journal's inaugural Woman Architect of the Year Award.



St Paul's School



Vajrasana Buddhist Retreat Centre, Suffolk



Lairdland Primary School



Vajrasana Buddhist Retreat Centre, Suffolk