

| **BOOKS** |

Landscape Architect Raymond Jungles Publishes Latest Photo Book, *Beyond Wild*

CAROLINA DEL BUSTO | **OCTOBER 28, 2021** | **8:00AM**

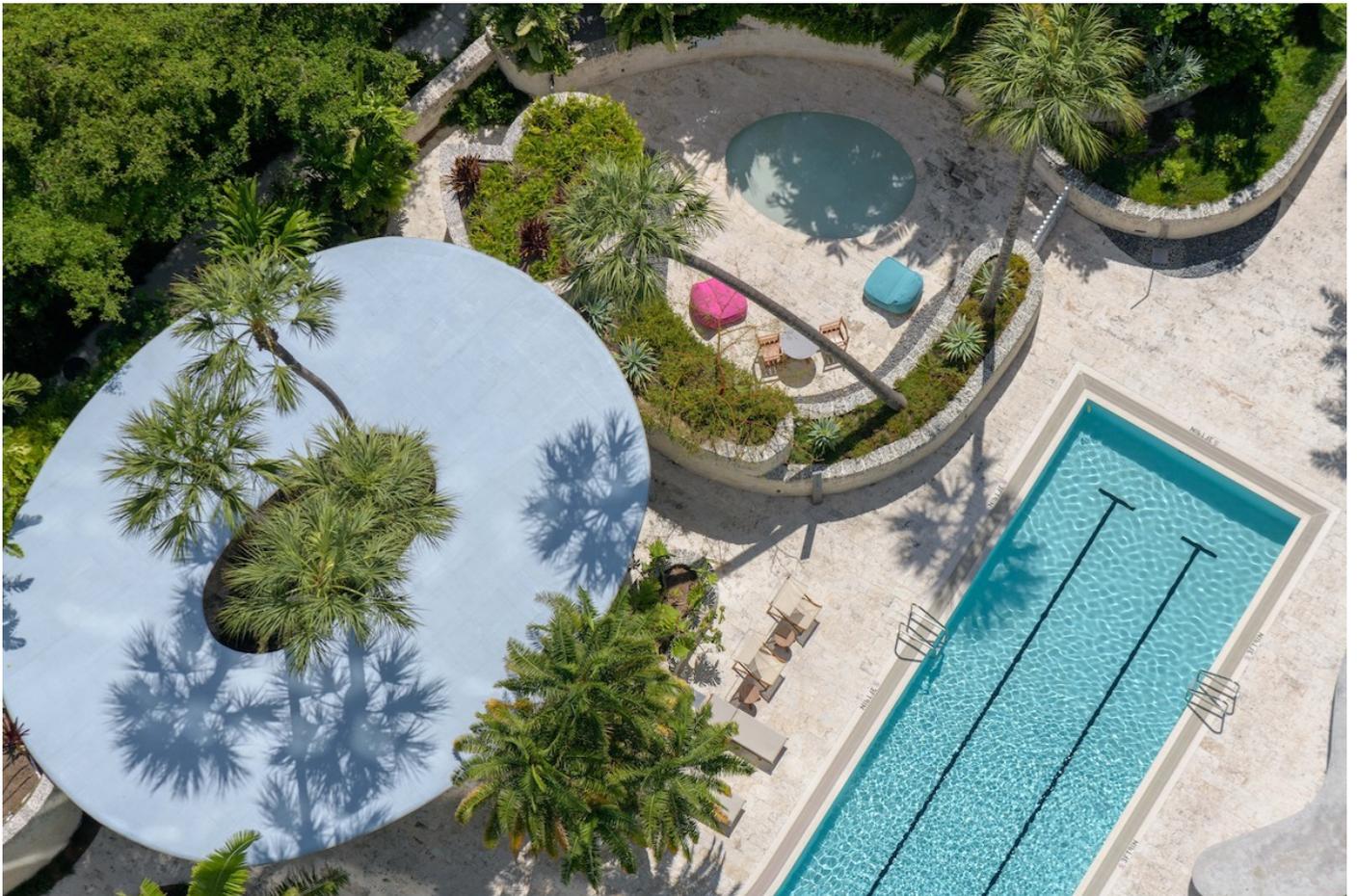


Photo by Stephen Dunn Grove at Grand Bay Garden in Coconut Grove

Landscape architect **Raymond Jungles** sits in his office surrounded by crisp white furniture. Large floor-to-ceiling windows reveal winding tree branches in the background. Jungles wears a simple black T-shirt, reminiscent of the late Steve Jobs, that causes him to stand out from the space.

He describes his surroundings as an adult version of a treehouse, where the large windows allow him to feel as if he's outdoors while he spends time designing indoors.

"I get to see the squirrels running around the trees and all the birds and that sort of thing," he tells *New Times* over Zoom with a smile.

He leans back, crossing his arms as he recounts what led him to become a landscape architect.

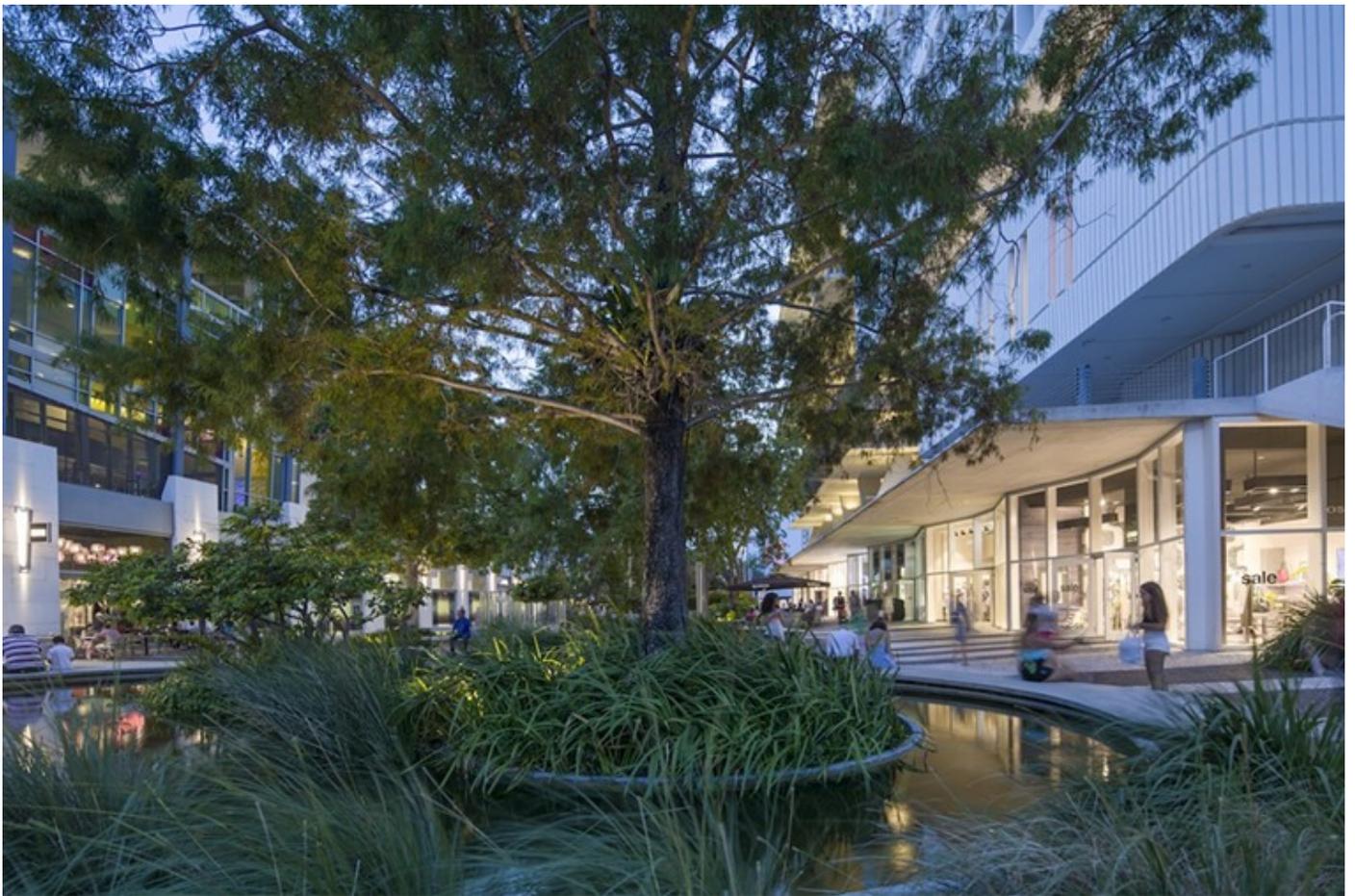
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"I wanted a profession where I could be outside most of the time," he says.

Throughout his high school and college years, he worked tending landscaping nurseries and designing gardens. As his love of the natural world grew, Jungles learned more and more about plants and native vegetation.

Born in Omaha, Nebraska, Jungles has lived in South Florida since he was 18. He started his firm, Raymond Jungles Inc. (RJI), in Miami in 1985 and has since grown from a staff of two to over two dozen employees in an office in Coconut Grove.



1111 Lincoln Road in Miami Beach **Photo by Robin Hill**

RJI has created striking lush landscape designs for the Faena and Goodtime hotels in Miami Beach, the 1111 Lincoln Road block, and the Miami Beach Botanical Gardens.

"We do a wide range of projects," Jungles explains, "which is one of the reasons why we like to do the photography books."

A 36-year veteran in the industry, Jungles is releasing his fourth photo book and his third with Monacelli Press, *Beyond Wild*. The 240-page tome contains images of 21 completed landscape projects, as well as renderings for works-in-progress.

Jungles says he enjoys putting together a catalog of his work every few years to showcase how much his firm has grown and accomplished.

"Our first book was called *10 Landscapes*, and some of those jobs were barely finished; some had just been through a hurricane," he recalls. "They all still looked good, but if we were to go back and rephotograph those projects now, it'd be a totally different story."

Jungles and his creative team have been working on *Beyond Wild* since before the pandemic, but the architect says the photo book mostly came together over the past year.

He explains how *Beyond Wild* showcases the progression of what he and his firm have accomplished since the last book came out five years go, highlighting more international works and a wider variety of gardens and public projects.



Sky Garden in Miami Beach **Photo by Robin Hill**

When planning the book and selecting projects to feature, Jungles emphasized public works over traditional

residential designs.

"We like to do projects that people can see and enjoy," he says.

Locals can read *Beyond Wild* and then go out and see some of the landscapes in person. In addition to 1111 Lincoln Road and Miami Beach Botanical Garden, public works chronicled in the book include the Sky Garden in Miami Beach and Swan restaurant in the Design District.

The book's introduction was written by prominent landscape architect **Michael Van Valkenburgh**.

"I've been a fan of his work since I was in college," Jungles says of Van Valkenburgh, whose work can be appreciated in public spaces around the globe. "If not the pre-eminent landscape architect in the United States, Michael is certainly in the top five."

Van Valkenburgh writes, "[Raymond Jungles'] gardens are undoubtedly striking, but first and foremost they are comforting to visitors – a mirror of Raymond himself, a person who exudes quiet self-confidence and a sense of serenity."

Beyond Wild: Gardens and Landscapes by Raymond Jungles. By Raymond Jungles. Monacelli Press. 2021. 240 pages. Hardcover, \$60. Monacelli Press. Preorder via monacellipress.com.

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