

A central, glass-walled atrium allows light to flow throughout the apartment. A sculpture by artist John Henry serves as a focal point. **Opposite:** The Foxes on the roof of their South Loop loft, enjoying the green space with their border collies

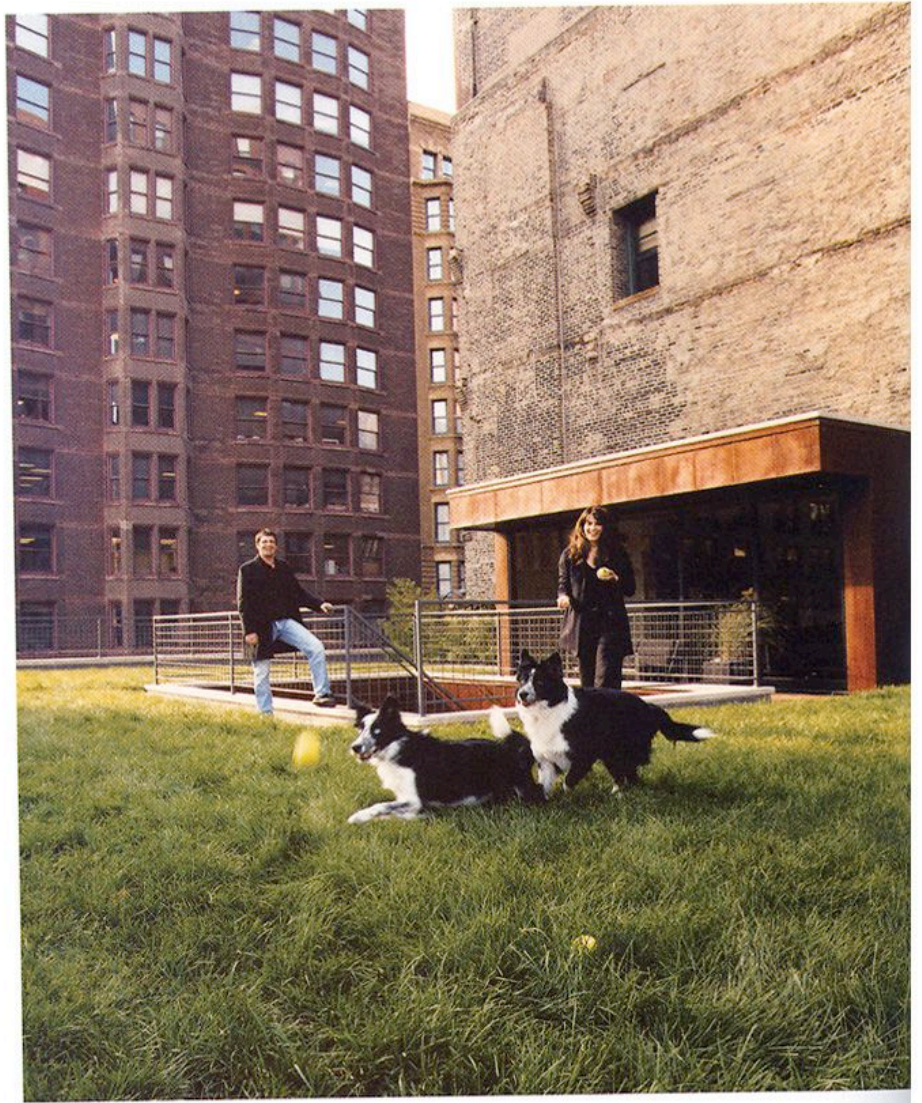


Right: The atrium of this Printer's Row loft is open to the sky. **Opposite:** From the street, passersby could never imagine the green oasis atop this home.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

A Chicago architect designs an urban apartment that makes the most of its environment thanks to a green roof, clever design, and plenty of open space



It's a classic city-boy-meets-country-girl story.

Architect Kevin Fox, who grew up in River Forest and his wife, Dawn, who spent her childhood in Peoria, were searching for the perfect home for their growing family, one that would balance his desire for a sleek urban abode with her longing for a back yard and green space.

The ideal solution presented itself in the South Loop: a two-story building with commercial tenants on the first floor, above which Kevin could carve out a three-bedroom loft with an interior atrium and a green roof complete with lush grass and trees. "I knew my wife would love the space if I could create a yard on our roof," he says. Kevin, who holds a master's degree in architecture from the Illinois Institute of Technology and has his own firm, Box Design Studio, was familiar with the city's initiatives encouraging the use of green roofs, and jumped at the chance to take advantage.

Such a highly visible rooftop yard in a dense urban area tends to attract attention. The Foxes like to play with their young son on their neat lawn, which is bordered on all sides by a waist-high fence, and which they tame with an eco-friendly battery-powered mower. The couple's two border collies are also big fans of the space. "I'll mow the lawn, or the dogs will chase each other around the roof, and it's not unusual for people in the surrounding offices to come to the windows and watch in amazement," Kevin says.