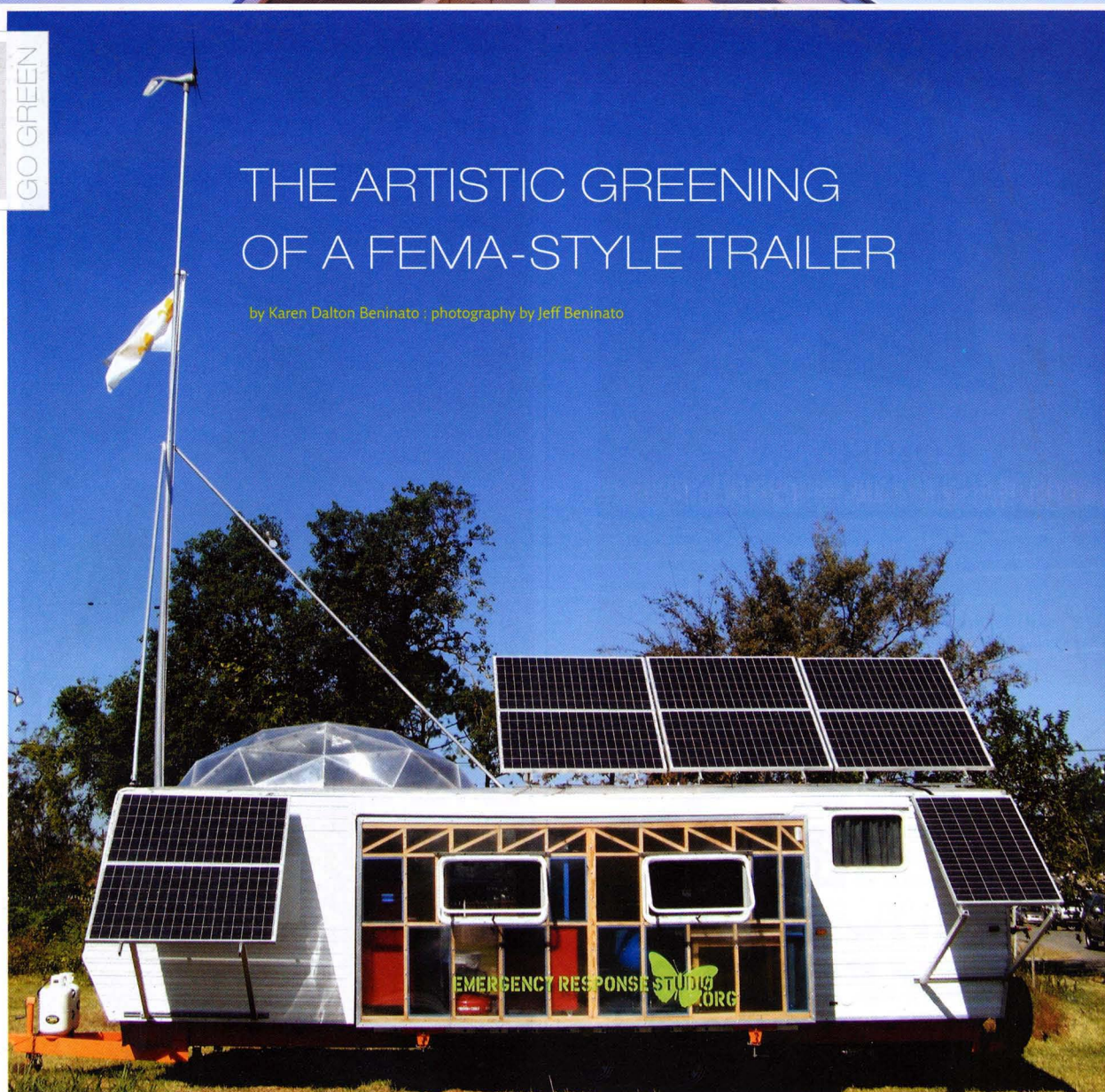


## THE ARTISTIC GREENING OF A FEMA-STYLE TRAILER

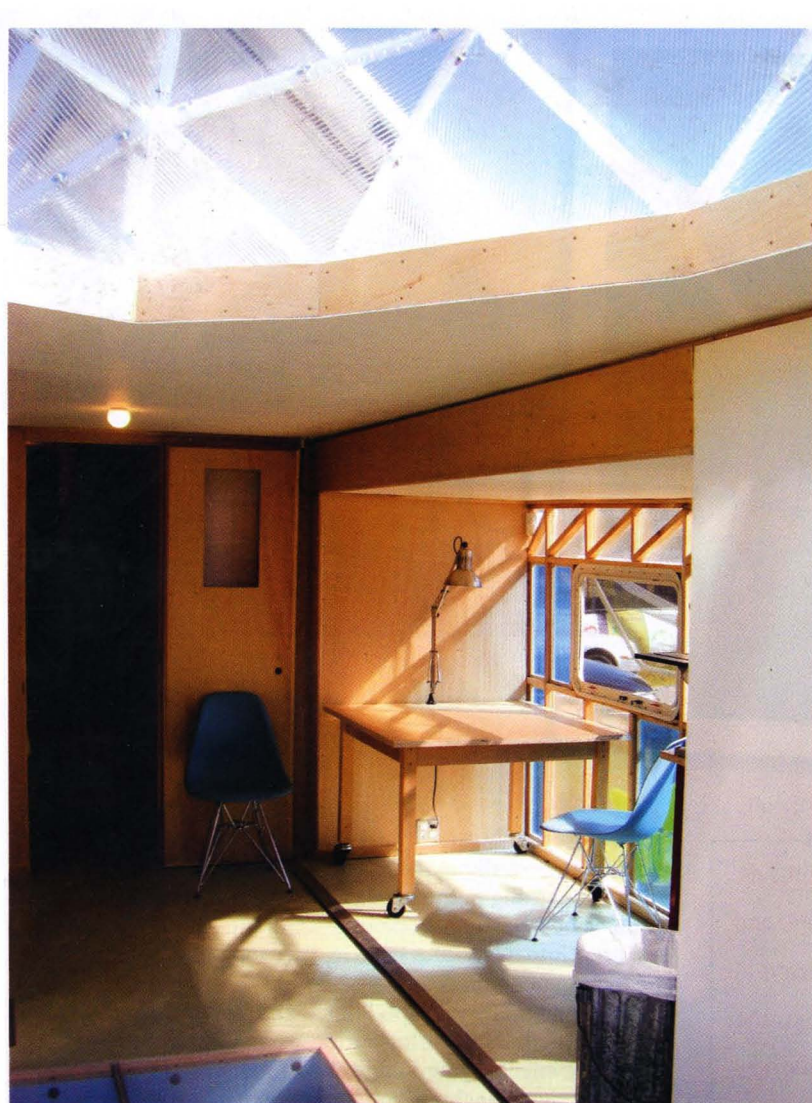
by Karen Dalton Beninato : photography by Jeff Beninato



Artist Paul Villinski's Emergency Response Studio started out with a conversation between New Orleans arts community legend Jonathan Ferrara and Beth Galante, New Orleans Director of Global Green, in an example of cultural and environmental worlds meshing to great advantage.

Global Green's New Orleans office is located in Jonathan Ferrara's old gallery, and Ferrara and Galante were discussing sustainable art exhibits for Prospect 1. "He's not just a gallery owner but an artist, and has been wonderful about trying to rebuild the art community here since the storm," she says. "And he knew that we support sustainable art as an amazing opportunity ... and he connected us with Paul." Villinski needed sponsors; Global Green came on board along with others, and the project took flight ending up next to the Holy Cross visitor's center. "Given our mission, we could not have asked for a more appropriate neighbor. This is a trailer like nobody's business," Galante says.





Sealed gel cell batteries provide all the power to the unit and powered the table saw and power tools that were used to create the self-contained studio. Villinski notes that construction workers in the neighborhood connect to his trailer's grid when they need to power their tools, "So it's really a little power plant." Its solar panels retail at about \$900 apiece and are dropping lower as availability increases. All the fixtures were donated, and Villinski took the project on in New York's Socrates Park. The finished Emergency Response Studio features chemical-free cabinetry, solar power for off the grid living, and exists as a response to post Katrina devastation and the possibilities to respond in a creative manner.

Leaving the Holy Cross home for the trailer feels like walking from a house into a summer home, with soft ocean blues throughout the décor and blonde walls and cabinetry, giving it the clean aura of a Swedish cabin.

So many artists want to feel like they can be useful in some way, so to be invited to come to a project here to try to be part of this courageous event to bring people in and raise awareness is really wonderful," Villinski explains.

"It's like an exercise in possibility." ♦

*Opposite Page: Paul Villinski's Emergency Response Studio boasts a flag, a windmill and solar panels for self-sustaining energy.*

*Above: Sunlight streams in through a geodesic dome in the renovated FEMA-style trailer's expanded workspace.*

*Below Left: The studio's kitchen nook leads through to a space for reading and relaxation.*

*Below Right: The toolchest Villinski used to create his studio are still an integral part of the workspace, and battery cells charged with solar energy can be viewed under the floor's plexiglass covering.*

