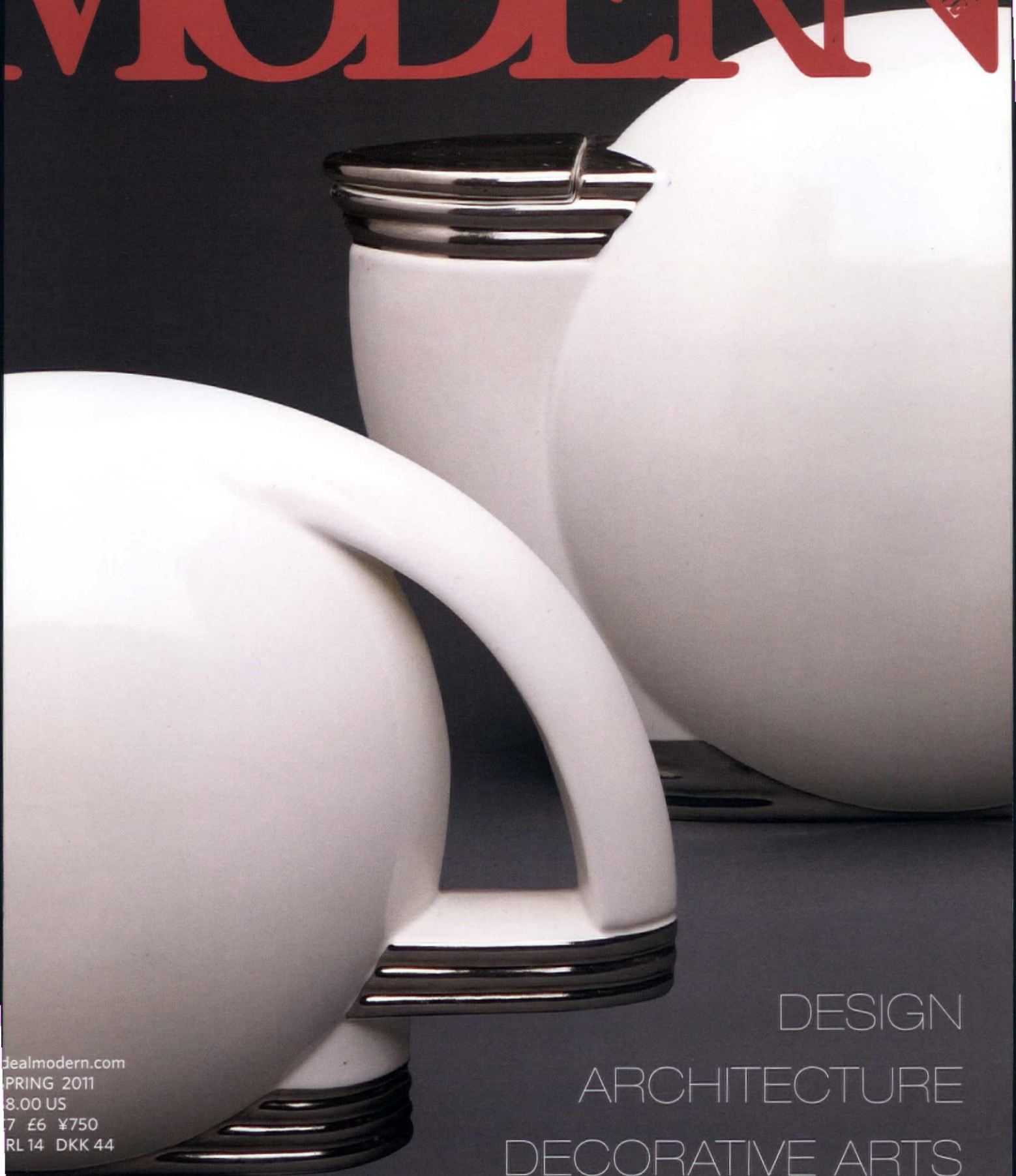



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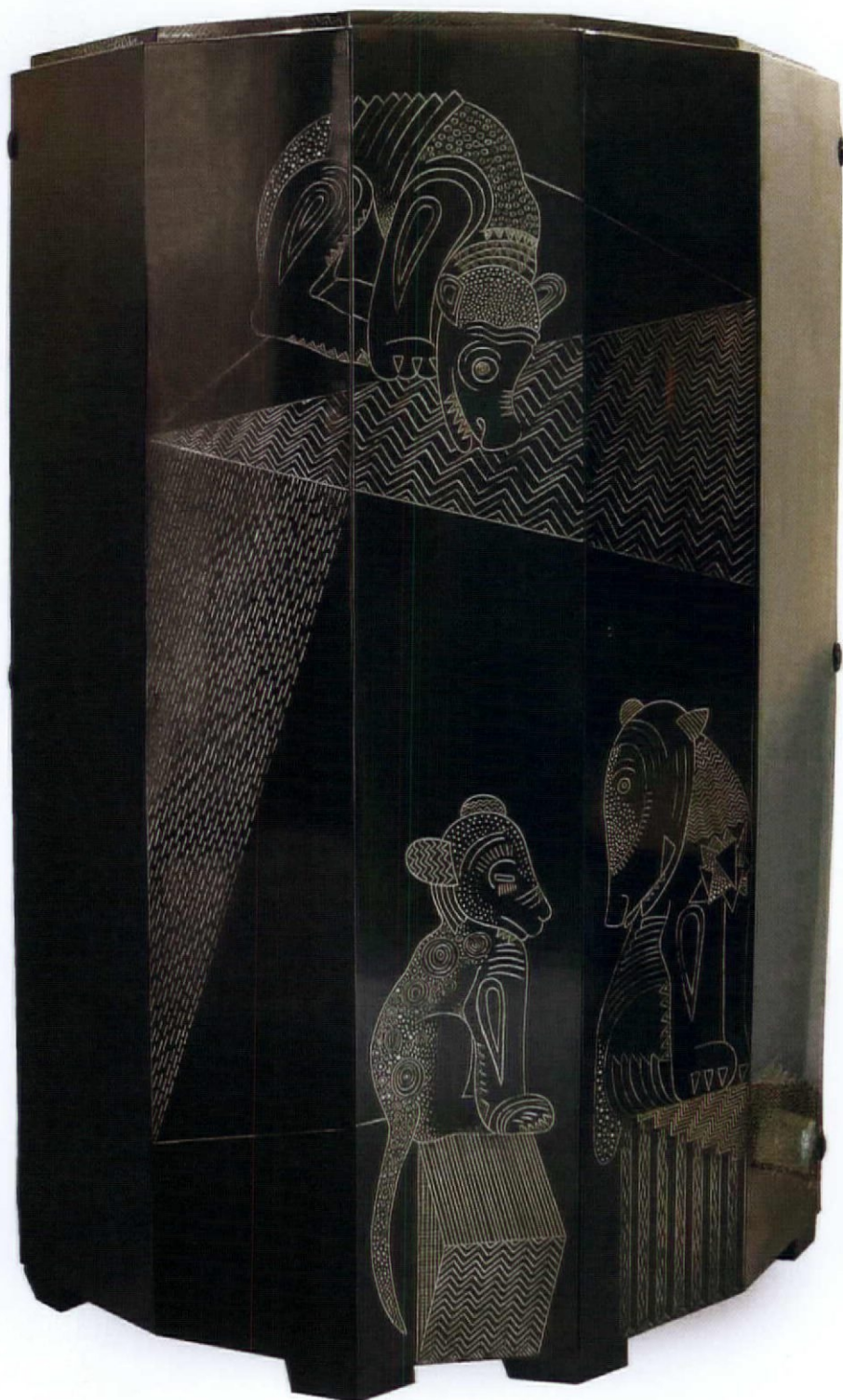
Jan Yoors
1968

"Jungle", a Monumental Tapestry by Jan Yoors, 1968, 229 x 366 cm
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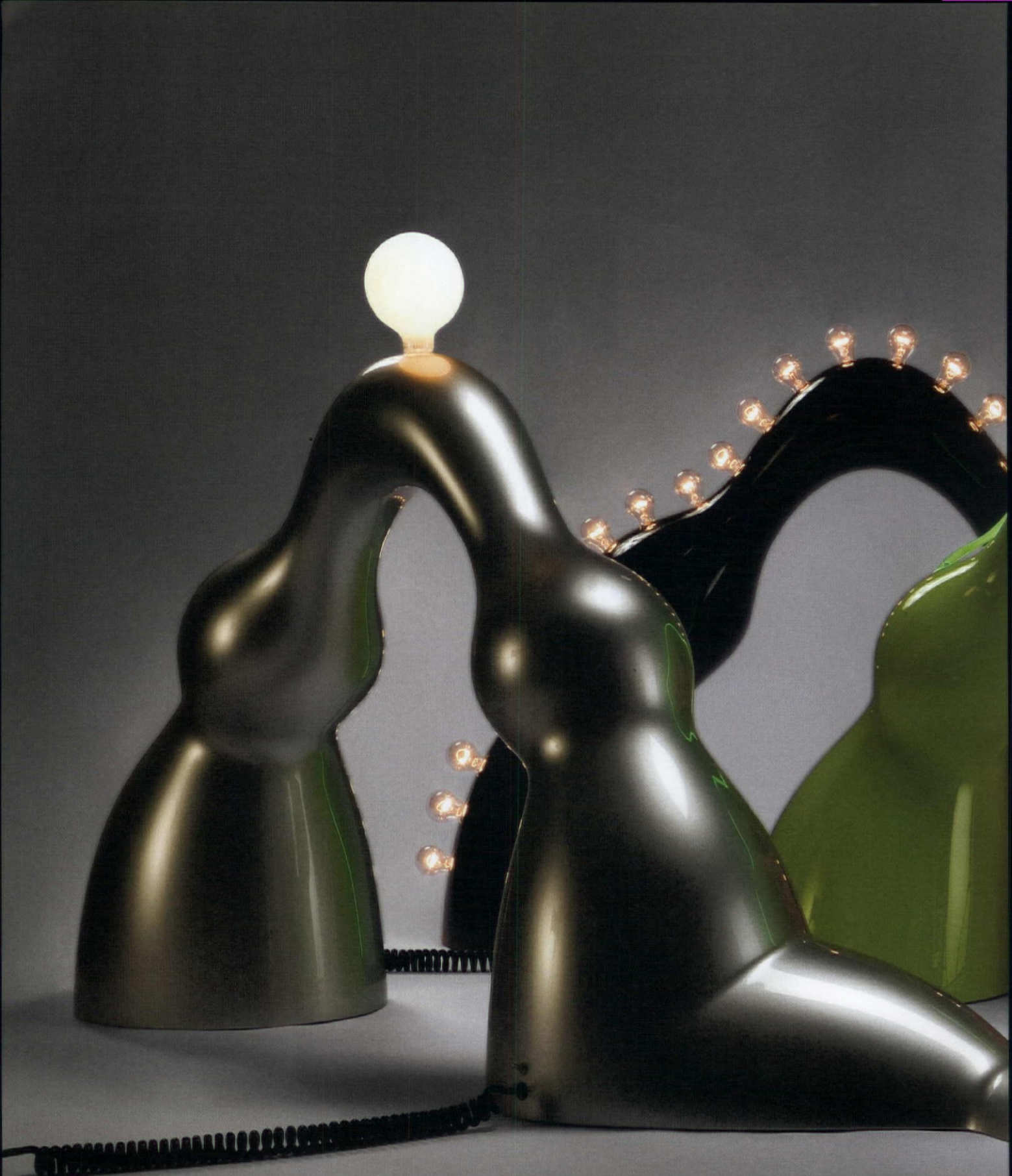
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MODERN

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FEATURES

MR. MODERNISM BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE 92

Dealer Mark McDonald's house in the Hudson River valley is filled with an array of twentieth-century and contemporary designs, as wide-ranging as his knowledge of the field

GREGORY CERIO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTOINE BOOTZ

THE WHITE ALBUM 100

Famed architect Richard Meier muses on the use of the color white in design and architecture

LINDA OKEFFE

MODERNISM ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS 106

A tribute to the restored art deco fixtures and furnishings designed by René Prou, René Lalique, and other greats of the era for the legendary train

BELLA NEYMAN

BEAT BOX 114

The erudite collector and designer contributes an essay comparing the furniture of the early 20th-century Dutch designer and architect Gerrit Rietveld to that of American artist and designer Donald Judd

MICHAEL BOYD

SELF-TAUGHT CHIC 122

The nifty, sybaritic home of Paris interior decorator à la mode, Pierre Yovanovitch

JEAN BOND RAFFERTY

INDUSTRIAL ARTWORKS 128

A sampling of the works of industrial design given to Tulsa's Philbrook Museum by the entrepreneur George R. Kravis II

DANIELLE DEVINE

DEPARTMENTS

30 BEHIND THE NUMBERS

Why a c. 1950 Alvar Aalto lamp sold at Pierre Bergé brought twenty times its estimated price

36 DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT

A profile of Japanese designer nendo, a prolific product designer whose specialty is environments—from exhibition spaces, to Issey Miyake stores, to a "Moss House" in Tokyo

44 GRADING SYSTEM

Evan Snyderman of R 20TH Century in New York City evaluates pieces by Danish designer Poul Kjaerholm

50 TALES FROM THE FRONT

New York-based writer and lecturer Frances Brent discusses the house designed and furnished for her grandparents by the great Chicago architect Samuel Marx, and the connection she formed with the pieces he created for them

62 WORKS ON PAPER

Reviews of recent books for lovers of design

66 NEW SENSATIONS

Tastemakers and design gurus weigh in with commentary on their latest enthusiasms

74 GOING FORWARD

Three new materials that are furnishing designers with novel ways to express their ideas

80 CURATOR'S EYE

Museum specialists discuss favorite holdings—vintage and contemporary—in their institutions

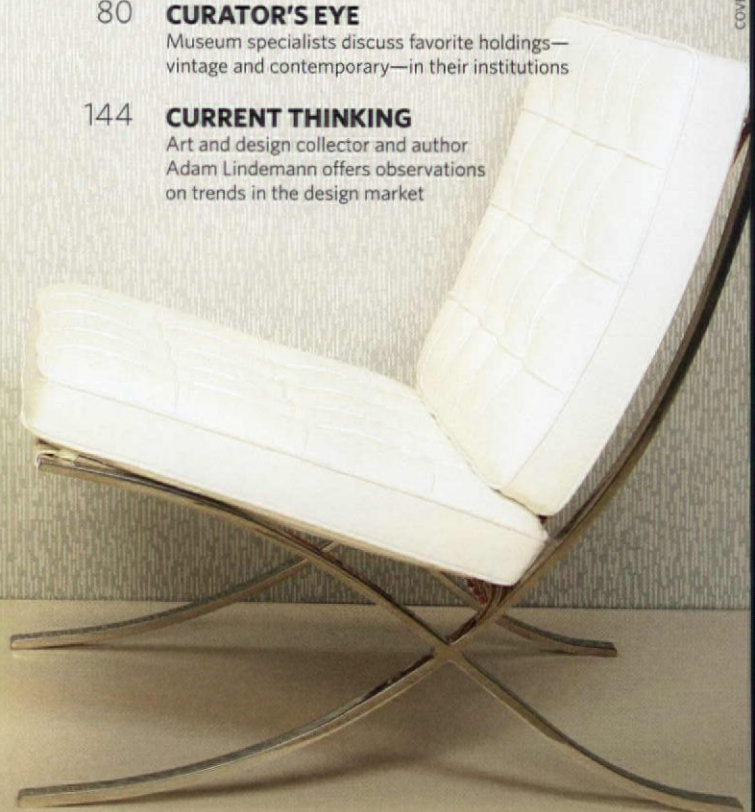
144 CURRENT THINKING

Art and design collector and author Adam Lindemann offers observations on trends in the design market



ON THE COVER

A glazed earthenware teapot designed by Paul Schreckengost, c. 1938

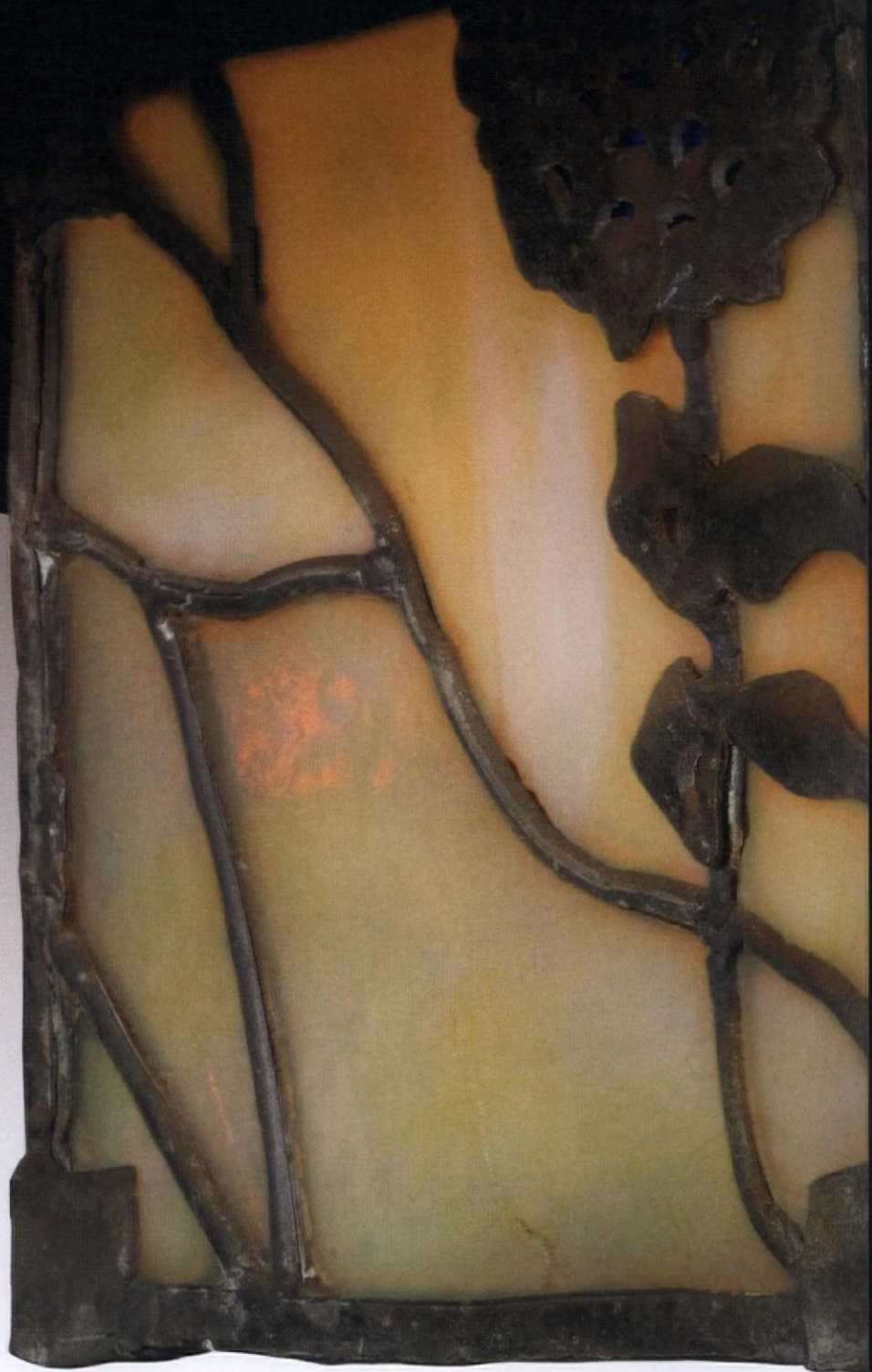


THIS PAGE

"Barcelona" chair and stool designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 1929

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STAND 63



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Back to the Future

WHEN IT COMES TO FORECASTING the trends in the modern design market, I'll admit that quite often my deductions are wild. (And since I'm in a confessional mode: I stole that joke from an episode of the television show *M*A*S*H*. Thanks and R.I.P. producer Larry Gelbart.) But I digress. (Another confession: I like to digress.)

By now, dear reader, you are wondering when I am going to get to my point. It is this: I have a sense—a sense, mind you—that contemporary design, for all the wonderful furnishings and objects that are being conceived and produced these days, has lost some of its luster, and that serious collectors of design have

begun to refocus on the works of “blue chip” designers and other prominent *objets* of the twentieth century.

The tea leaves I read come mainly from auction results, including the record-breaking prices set at the Yves Saint-Laurent sale in Paris two years ago, and the recent success of the sale of works owned by the renowned dealer Anthony DeLorenzo (even though some choice items were “bought in,” in the auctioneer’s parlance for “not sold.”) But I also note the electric anticipation surrounding upcoming sales such as the Christie’s auction of the collection from the art deco treasure house, the Château de Gourdon, near Grasse, France, and the Sotheby’s auction, on March 10, of furniture, jewelry, ceramics, glassware, and other gems from the holdings of the much esteemed modern design dealer Mark McDonald.

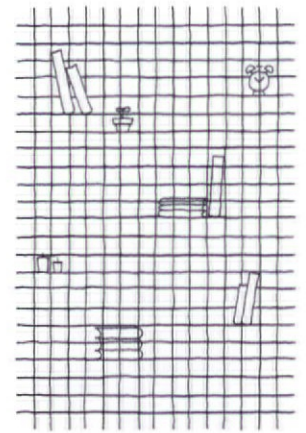
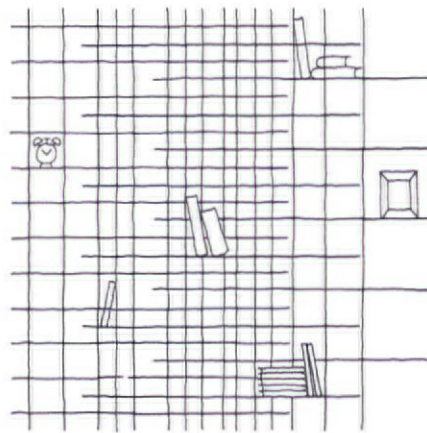
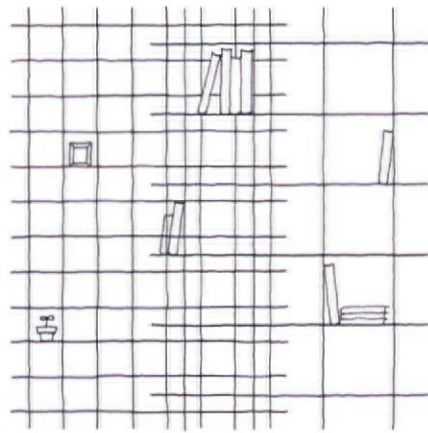
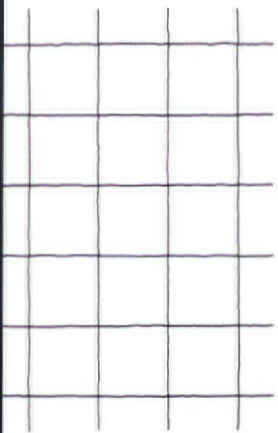
Plus, I read with much interest the comments of collectors and tastemakers interviewed for collector Adam Lindemann’s new book, *Collecting Design*. I found it noteworthy that most of these eminences said they were targeting vintage modernist designs for their collections. And Lindemann himself has some tart words to say about the contemporary design market in an essay he contributed to this issue of MODERN (see p. 144).

All this leads me to believe that, if I were a betting man—and I wish I were paid well enough to be one—I would, for the moment at least, bank on designs from before the millennium. I’ve been invited to moderate a panel discussion at the Sculpture Objects & Functional Art Fair [SOFA] in New York City on April 14. The colloquy is entitled “Contemporary Design Viewpoints: Where Do We Go From Here?” and the panelists are interior designers Amy Lau and Juan Montoya, and the architect Alexander Gorlin. All have wiser heads than mine, and I look forward to hearing how they answer that question.



Rosewood vanity and stool by Pierre Chareau, c. 1926, in the Chateau de Gourdon Sale.

GREGORY CERIO EDITOR



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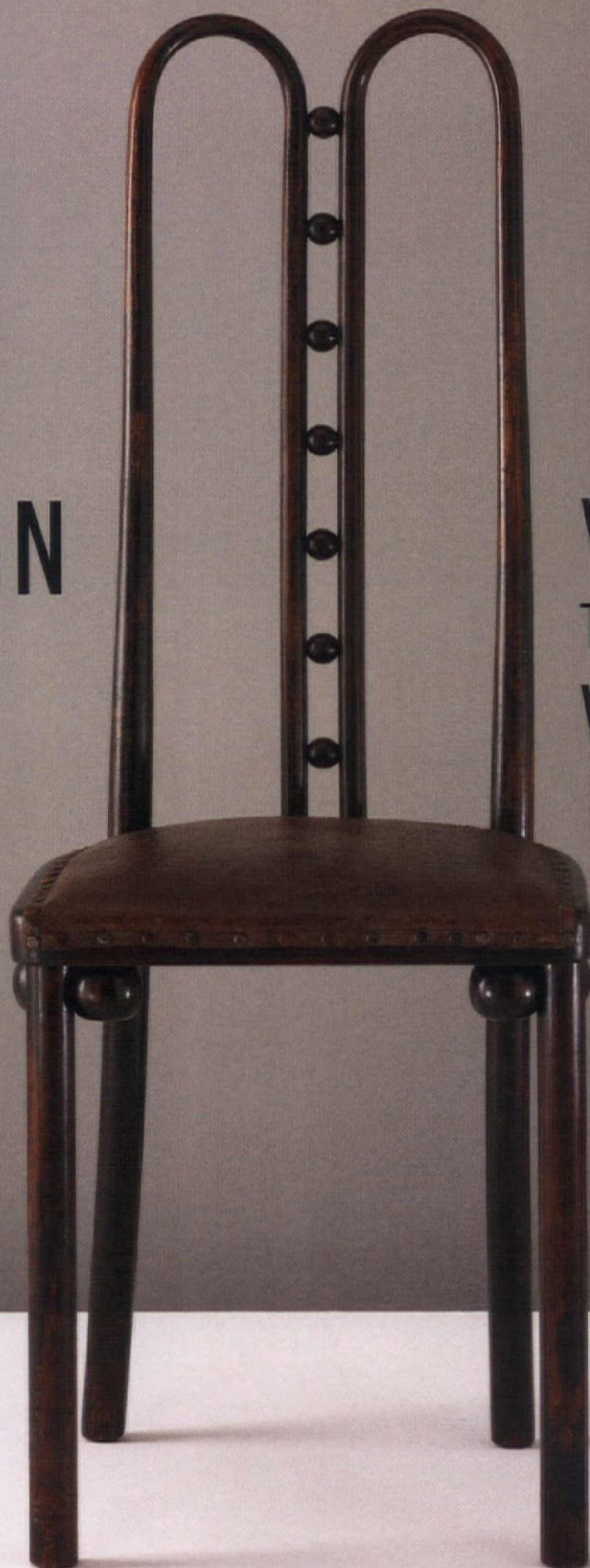
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FRANCES BRENT A writer and a lecturer, Brent ("The Mix-Minded Marxist," p. 50) co-edited the literary magazine *Formations* from 1984 until 1991, and co-translated *Beyond the Limit, Poems by Irina Ratushinskaya* (1987). Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Notre Dame Review*, and *Yale Review*, and she was awarded the May Swenson Poetry Award for her book *The*

Beautiful Lesson of the I (2005). Brent also wrote *The Lost Cellos of Lev Aronson* (2009) and has taught at Yale University, Loyola University in Chicago, and Northwestern University. She lives in New York City with her family, her dog, Skippy, and her cat, Matilda.



LINDA OKEEFFE ("The White Album," p. 100) is a writer, journalist, freelance creative director, and lecturer. As creative director of the now-shuttered *Metropolitan Home* magazine for more than 16 years, Okeeffe oversaw the completion of features that highlighted unique approaches to modern living. One of her most memorable articles was "Seven Deadly Sins of Decorating,"

which offered valuable insight on design don'ts and a guide to how to "repent with modern grace." Okeeffe has published *Shoes: A Celebration of Pumps, Sandals, Slippers and More* (1996) and has an upcoming book, *Brilliant: White on Design*, due for release this fall from Monacelli. Okeeffe divides her time between New York City and upstate New York, and loves to practice yoga in her spare time.



ANTOINE BOOTZ ("Mr. Modernism Builds His Dream House" p. 92) is widely admired as one of the very finest photographers in the field of interior design and architecture. Born in Paris, Bootz moved to New York in 1981 to pursue a career in fine art and commercial photography. He has enjoyed many solo and group shows of his photography across the United States and in his native

Paris. As a contributing photographer, Bootz's work has been featured in such major publications as *House & Garden*, *Elle Décor*, *Martha Stewart Living*, the *New York Times*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Vogue Decoration*, as well as other international magazines. Bootz's commercial photography clients include Air France, Calvin Klein Home, Pottery Barn, Williams-Sonoma, and Herman Miller.



MICHAEL BOYD ("Beat Box," p. 114) is the principal of BoydDesign, a consultancy for the restoration and preservation of modernist architecture, and collecting modern art and design. His most notable restorations are the Paul Rudolph Townhouse (built 1975) in New York City and the Oscar Niemeyer Strick House (1964) in Santa Monica. Recent projects include restoring

the Craig Ellwood Steinman House (1956), and designing landscapes for John Lautner's Chemosphere (1960) and Harvey House (1950). He curated and designed the installation for the design section of the exhibition "Birth of the Cool: California Art, Design, and Culture at Midcentury," and he has contributed numerous essays to modernism publications. He lives with his wife and two sons in Santa Monica.

Edited by MABEL FRIAS Illustrations by HANNAH LAYDEN

Correction: Due to an editing error, three photographs used to illustrate the feature "The Mannered Modernist" (MODERN, Winter 2011) should have carried the additional credit "© 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/Man Ray Trust." We regret the omission.

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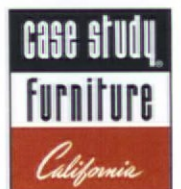
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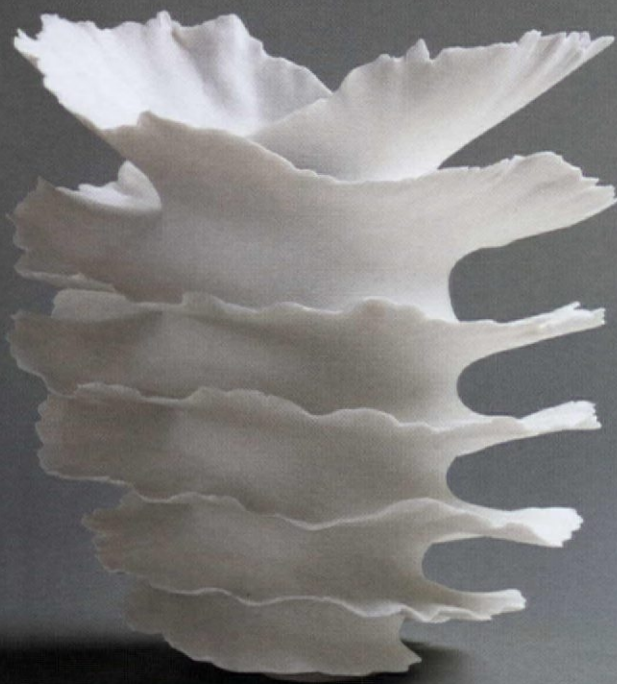
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What Sold, for How Much, & Why?

By BEATRICE V. THORNTON

LOT 243, Pierre Bergé et Associés "Philippe Denys, Le design historique" sale in Brussels, Belgium, December 15, 2010:

A leather and metal desk lamp (model A 704, known as the "Valaistustyö" in Finnish) designed by ALVAR AALTO, circa 1950. The piece sold for € 22,500 (approximately \$30,000) off a pre-auction estimate of €1,000 to €1,500 (approximately \$1,350 to \$2,000). Some reasons for the unexpectedly high price:

In Memoriam

The auction was certain to draw the attention of dedicated collectors. It was organized by Pierre Bergé et Associés (PBA) as a tribute to the late Philippe Denys—who died last July—a globally respected Belgian dealer, based in Brussels for the past thirty years, who was regarded by many collectors as having the best eye for twentieth-century postwar design. Bergé was a close friend of Denys, as was Sandor Gutermann, design specialist at PBA, who notes, "I learned a lot from Philippe Denys. Pierre Bergé's vice president Frédéric Chambre, who was the auctioneer at the sale, was also close to him, his wife, Carmen, and his daughter, Sterenn." Recently, PBA has held two auctions a year specializing in Scandinavian design—a speciality of Denys'—so the sale could not have been more appropriate. "Time and again Pierre Bergé presented the finest quality lots, which Mr. Denys would personally vet," says Philippe Van Pradelles de Palmaërt of Galerie Philippe Denys.

Aalto Notes

The sale included many pieces by Alvar Aalto (1898-1976). The Finnish architect and designer created some of the most revered pieces of modernist furniture, such as

the "Paimio" chair of 1931-1932, and many of his works are still produced by the firm Artek. His lighting designs, however, are both lesser known and harder to come by. A first edition "Valaistustyö" (which translates as "illuminated night") is included in the collection of the highly influential Swiss dealer Bruno Bischofberger, who owns a prestigious group of Alvar Aalto works.

Sloppy Seconds

Examples of the first edition lamp, it is believed, have only appeared a total of four times at auction: twice in New York, once in Sweden, and finally at the PBA auction. The doubt, Gutermann explains, results from the fact that "we do not know how many of these four lamps were first edi-

tion "Valaistustyö," because the catalogue descriptions unfortunately do not always indicate this information, which is essential to the value of the lamp. There is a second edition of the lamp, called "Valaisinpaja" (translation: the somewhat pedestrian "workplace lamp") out there. To tell the difference, one must look at the white lacquered metal reflector under the lamp shade to find the mark of the edition: "Valaistustyö" has an engraved stamp, while the second edition "Valaisinpaja" only bears an adhesive label, which can be removed, so it is important to pay attention."

Rare design and materials

The majority of Aalto's designs are made using birch or metal, however he chose to cover this piece with leather, which gives the lamp a more luxurious quality. The asymmetrical shape of the feet is also atypical of Aalto. "I trust this black-shade A 704 desk lamp with its magical boomerang-shaped stand which has not appeared on the market since 2003, surprised more than one of the connoisseurs at the sale," remarks de Palmaërt.

Duking It Out

Considering the rarity of this model, it is no surprise that the competition became fierce, with four bidders in the room and five on the phone. After €9,000 it came down to one bidder in the room against one phone bidder. In the end, victory went to the phone bidder, a private American collector. Though the final price is impressive, as Gutermann says, "The market for first generation Aalto pieces is still growing, so the auction prices at the moment are not yet at their peak for this architect of genius who revolutionized twentieth-century architecture and design."





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Making Conversations

THE BOUNDLESSLY INVENTIVE JAPANESE DESIGN GROUP *nendo*, LED BY OKI SATO, SPECIALIZES IN PRODUCTS AND PLACES THAT ARE INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL, RELEVANT—AND FUN

By JENNIFER OLSHIN



IN 2008, *nendo*—the *nom-de-design* of the Japanese architect Oki Sato and his studio—created the “Cabbage” chair. Made from a roll of pleated paper normally discarded in couturier Issey Miyake’s textile-making process, it was created by peeling away layers of the paper roll until a seating piece was formed. With this gesture, *nendo*—the word means “clay” in Japanese—gave the roll of material new life, and demonstrated not only an allegiance to the unique handmade object and a commitment to re-use of materials, but also made a strong statement for the preservation of the poetic in the everyday.

The “Cabbage” chair was first shown in the exhibition “XXIst Century Man,” curated and staged by Miyake at the 21_21 Design Sight in Roppongi, Tokyo. Miyake’s idea was to show work that would characterize the spiritual and material values of the twenty-first century. The chair became an instant icon, and has already been collected by half a dozen major museums in Europe, the United States, and the Middle East.

As a design group, however, *nendo* had been garnering attention since its founding in 2002, and celebrated for its innovative use of materials and theatrical presentations. The company motto is: “To be free-formed, flexible, adaptable in the

Above: “Cabbage” chairs in the 2008 exhibition “XXIst Century Man” in Tokyo, 2008. Left: A “Cabbage” chair being made and the finished product

design scene.” Indeed, intuitive and interactive design is a hallmark of the *nendo* studio. The “Rakuyo” bench of 2003, for example, is fitted with lights beneath the seat. When a person sits on the bench, leaf-shaped

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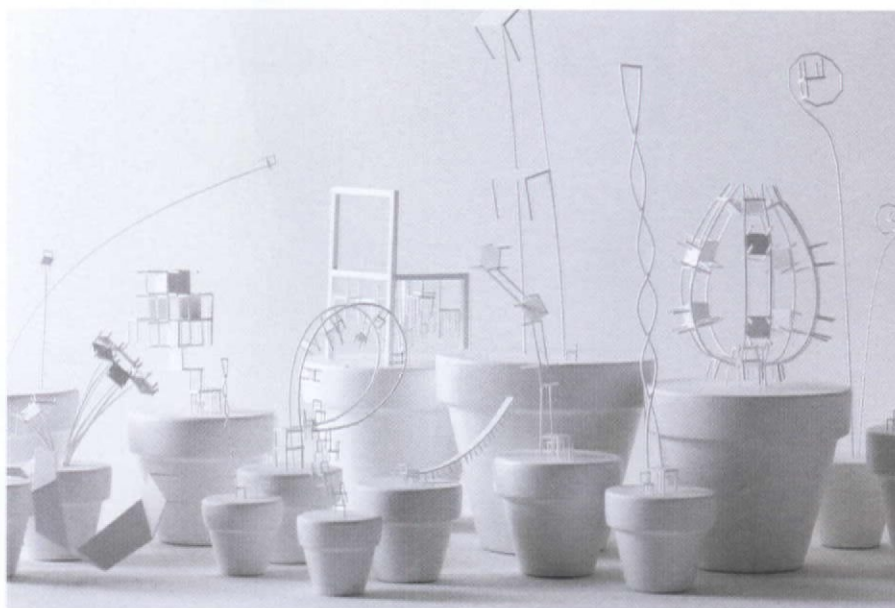
illuminations appear, from green to russet, and then they fade away when the sitter departs. Or take the "Karaoke Tub" of 2005, in which a pristine tiled room is built to house a sunken sofa rather than an actual bathtub. Sitting in the sofa, one can take advantage of the ideal acoustics and sing without inhibition—another nod to the whims of the human spirit.

Oki Sato came of age at a sober time, earning his architectural degree during the decade-plus-long recession in Japan. The previous generation had thrived under Japan's "economic miracle" of


the 1980s. Designers such as Miyake, Shiro Kuramata, Arata Isozaki, Yohji Yamamoto—each of whom has since been codified in the history of twentieth-century avant-garde design—made their names by deconstructing traditional design codes and embracing monumentality.

Sato's group, while influenced by their predecessors, are more focused on responsibility and restraint, and are at the forefront of a generation building new global design paradigms. The work of nendo is minimal, recyclable, practical, imbued with the aesthetic and philosophy of tradition, but predicated on new ideas. As with a number of other contemporary Japanese architectural and design firms, nendo has turned toward a radical, but quieter, individualism that celebrates creativity, experimentation, and places a premium on the integrity of the natural world.

While the firm has dozens of industrial products to its credit, nendo and his team have become masters of sculpted space and evocative mise-en-scènes. The "Moss House," a Tokyo residence renovated in 2008, has interior walls and room dividers covered in arabesques of dried vegetation. The 2005 "Book House" has a windowless, paneled primary exterior wall. Slide these panels to the side, and a secondary exterior wall of stocked bookshelves is revealed. In 2005 the firm also built the "Fireworks House," which has massive glass panels on one side of the A-line roof to give the elderly resident a perfect vantage point for watching annual fireworks displays. All are surprising—but all materially and philosophically expand boundaries of the traditional house in fresh and delightful ways.



Above: MD.net Clinic, Tokyo, 2010.
Bottom: nendo's "Chair Garden" at Antonia Jannore gallery, Milan, 2010, detail.



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In public spaces as well, nendo's environments offer visual play and social messages. At the MD.net Clinic—an outpatient mental health consultancy—nendo created false doors and installed windows in unlikely places. To enter a room, a person might have to slide aside a bookcase, or open a whole section of a wall. The idea is to promote new avenues of thought for patients who have trouble seeing new options and possibilities in their lives. At the Issey Miyake 24 store in Tokyo's Shibuya shopping complex, consumption becomes a cultural experience as clothing and accessories appear to defy gravity by floating atop translucent vertical rods. Other nendo installations have been conceived solely as places that provoke contemplation and inspiration, such as the "Chair Garden" created for the Milan furniture fair of 2010.

Ultimately, nendo is elemental and cutting edge, and often both at once. And Oki Sato is more than an architect and designer. He is a philosopher, craftsman, storyteller, and, perhaps, a kind of magician.

Above: **"Moss House," Tokyo, 2008**
 Right: **"Alice's Tea Party" of 2006 at the Ozone Living Design Center, Shinjuku, Tokyo, celebrated the 100th anniversary of the English tea brand Lipton's presence in Japan.**



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How to Play Poulsen

WE ASK EXPERTS TO WEIGH IN ON THE MERITS OF THE WORK OF A PARTICULAR ICONIC MODERNIST DESIGNER. HERE, **EVAN SNYDERMAN**, CO-PRINCIPAL OF THE NEW YORK CITY GALLERY R 20TH CENTURY, DISCUSSES THE SUBTLE DIFFERENCES THAT DETERMINE THE QUALITY OF PIECES BY THE DANISH DESIGNER POUL KJAERHOLM.

WHEN I WAS INVITED TO WRITE THIS ARTICLE, my initial response was to question how we as a gallery could rate a piece of design that we represent. However, after some thought, I realized this could be a great opportunity to share some of the more intimate details about a work and to focus on what goes into determining what makes a piece of design exceptional, important, or rare. I love the small details, and this is what inspires us at R 20th Century to dig deeper into our investigations when preparing an exhibition or book on a designer. Also, rather than grade a specific category of design—such as coffee tables or chairs—I figured that what suits a collector's interests best would be to rate a designer's broader body of work. From my experience, people collect designers, not designs. For instance, I don't know of any clients building a collection of credenzas. The objects selected for this piece were chosen to show the different levels of collecting Poul Kjaerholm—the perfect example of a designer whose work is collected worldwide on all levels. Kjaerholm was by nature a purist, and his work represents some of the most highly sophisticated yet

minimal designs to emerge from Denmark at a time when the use of teak was so rampant that his material choices must have seemed severe. Kjaerholm typically preferred steel, leather, and stone over wood. He managed, through the use of natural colors and texture, to achieve a warmth not normally associated with those particular materials. His body of work represents a full spectrum of design production—from rare pieces produced only a handful of times, to regular production pieces, and to mass produced pieces, many of which are still being made today. Here we focus only on the top tier of vintage designs. Each of these works is worthy of any design collection, but even the best of the best can be broken down into categories.

*(For an exhaustive study of Kjaerholm's entire oeuvre, images of all the works, as well as images of manufacturer's stamps and markings, I highly recommend Michael Sheridan's book *The Furniture of Poul Kjaerholm: Catalogue Raisonné*, published by Gregory R. Miller & Co. in 2007, in collaboration with my gallery and the Sean Kelly Gallery.)*



I consider examples of the "PK 22" lounge chair as entry level pieces to a Kjaerholm collection. Both versions (one with leather and the other with a rattan seat and back) are very famous and are still in production today. When looking for a vintage "PK 22" lounge chair, you want to keep an eye out for one produced by E. Kold Christensen. The earliest chairs were unmarked, but around 1960 Christensen began stamping the steel frame with "DENMARK" and a double K logo designed by Kjaerholm in 1956. You will want to find one in good original condition with no major loss or pitting to the frame. The chairs are chrome-plated, not made in stainless steel, as is commonly misstated. The leather should be original and in good shape—and showing wear is not a bad thing. The chair is one of his most successful designs in terms of its simple beauty and functionality.

"PK 22" lounge chair in spring steel and black leather, designed 1956. General price: \$5,000–\$10,000.

GRADE

C



When looking for an original "PK 80" daybed, many of the same rules apply as with the "PK 22." You want to find the stamp, or look for wear consistent with age, and definitely look for one with original leather. The rubber O-rings that hold the top to the base may be rotten or dried out and should be checked. The current production of this model is very much the same except that the height of the daybed has been raised slightly, and the quality of the leather has changed. The original Danish leather was very supple, and the leather color makes a big difference in pricing. The most coveted colors are "oxblood" red, and even more uncommon, ivory leather.

"PK 80" daybed with steel frame and original leather cushion, designed c. 1957. General price: \$30,000–\$50,000.

GRADE

C+



The "PK 13" chair and the "PK 62" side table represent the next level of collecting Kjaerholm. They were produced in much smaller numbers than those chosen for the entry level, and can be very difficult to find. They represent the more whimsical side of Kjaerholm's work, which is very often overlooked.

Many people do not know the PK 13 "Free Swinger" at all. The chair proved to be unstable for people over a certain weight when they leaned back, and it was in production only from 1975 to 1978. The versions with leather armrests are the rarest. This particular example is in another of Kjaerholm's coveted leather colors, referred to as "cognac."

PK 13 "Free Swinger" cantilevered armchair with chrome-plated spring steel frame, leather cushion and armrests, designed c. 1974. General price: \$25,000–\$45,000.

GRADE
B



The "PK 62" side table was made specifically for use next to what is likely Kjaerholm's most renowned design, the low slung wicker and steel chaise longue known as the "PK 24." The chaise was so low that a standard side table would not do, so the "PK 62" was made. This table was rather unusual due to its scale—it stands less than 7 inches high. This example retains the original marble. You can usually date a stone-topped Kjaerholm piece by the variety of marble used, which changed in various editions.

"PK 62" side table with chromed steel legs and Porsgrunn marble top, designed c. 1968. General price: \$20,000–\$30,000.

GRADE
B+



These last pieces represent some of the rarest and most desired designs in the Kjaerholm canon. They were produced in such limited editions that actual numbers can be accounted for—highly unusual for a designer who worked in an era when mass production was the norm.

Only about twenty examples of the "Steel Tube" chair—also known as the "Holscher" chair, after the blacksmith who produced the frames—were made. Svend Holscher, the father of a classmate of Kjaerholm's wife, Hanne, fabricated the frames, and the Kjaerholms, working in their apartment, hand-wrapped each one in halyard rope and sold them to friends.

"Holscher" or "Steel Tube" chair with welded steel tube frame and natural halyard seat and back, designed 1952. General price: \$75,000–\$100,000.

GRADE
A



One of the few case goods ever designed by Kjaerholm is the "Academy" cabinet—or "Flat File"—made for the School of Architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. About sixty examples were built, and the majority remain in use at the school. Versions made for professors were of solid Oregon pine attached to black-oxidized steel frames; student versions were constructed of pine plywood and stained black on nickel-plated frames. The piece exemplifies Kjaerholm's minimalist and functionalist principles, but does so in wood—a rare departure for the designer. This particular example is even more exceptional in that it comes directly from the Kjaerholm estate and bears a letter of authenticity.

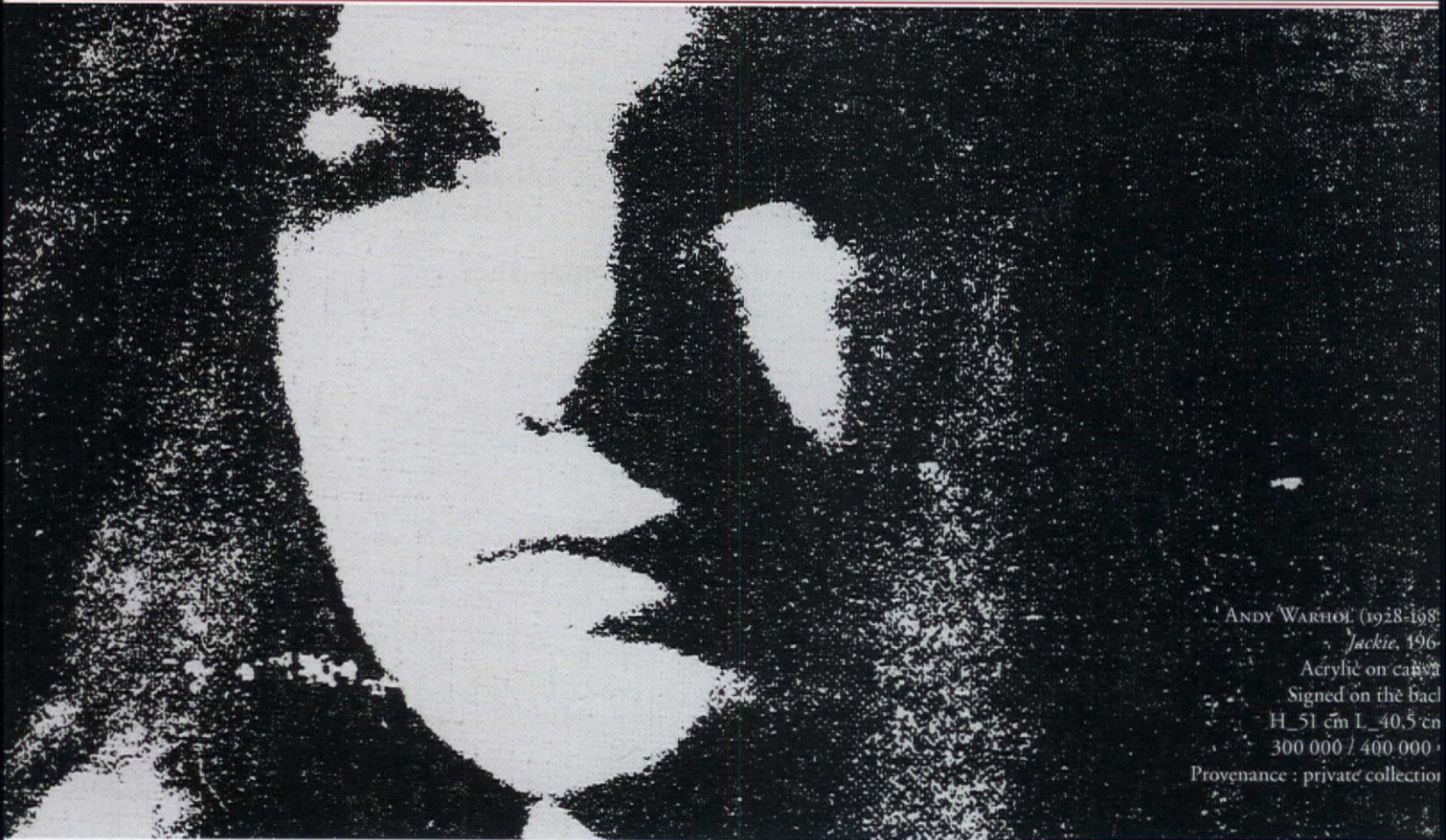
"Academy" cabinet designed 1955. This example, in steel and Oregon pine, was made by Kjaerholm's son Thomas in 1980. General price: \$100,000–\$150,000.

GRADE
A+

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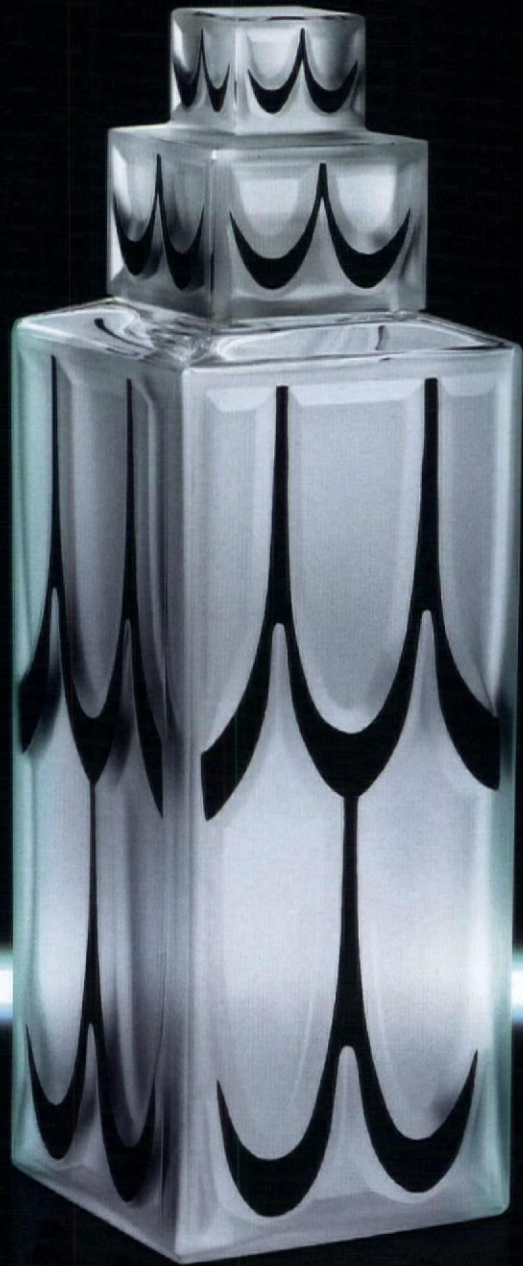
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The Mix-Minded Marxist THE AUTHOR RECALLS A CHILDHOOD AND ADULTHOOD SPENT WITH AMBIVALENT, YET ULTIMATELY WARM AND ADMIRING, FEELINGS FOR THE DESIGNS OF SAMUEL MARX

BY FRANCES BRENT

Photography by
Nowell Ward



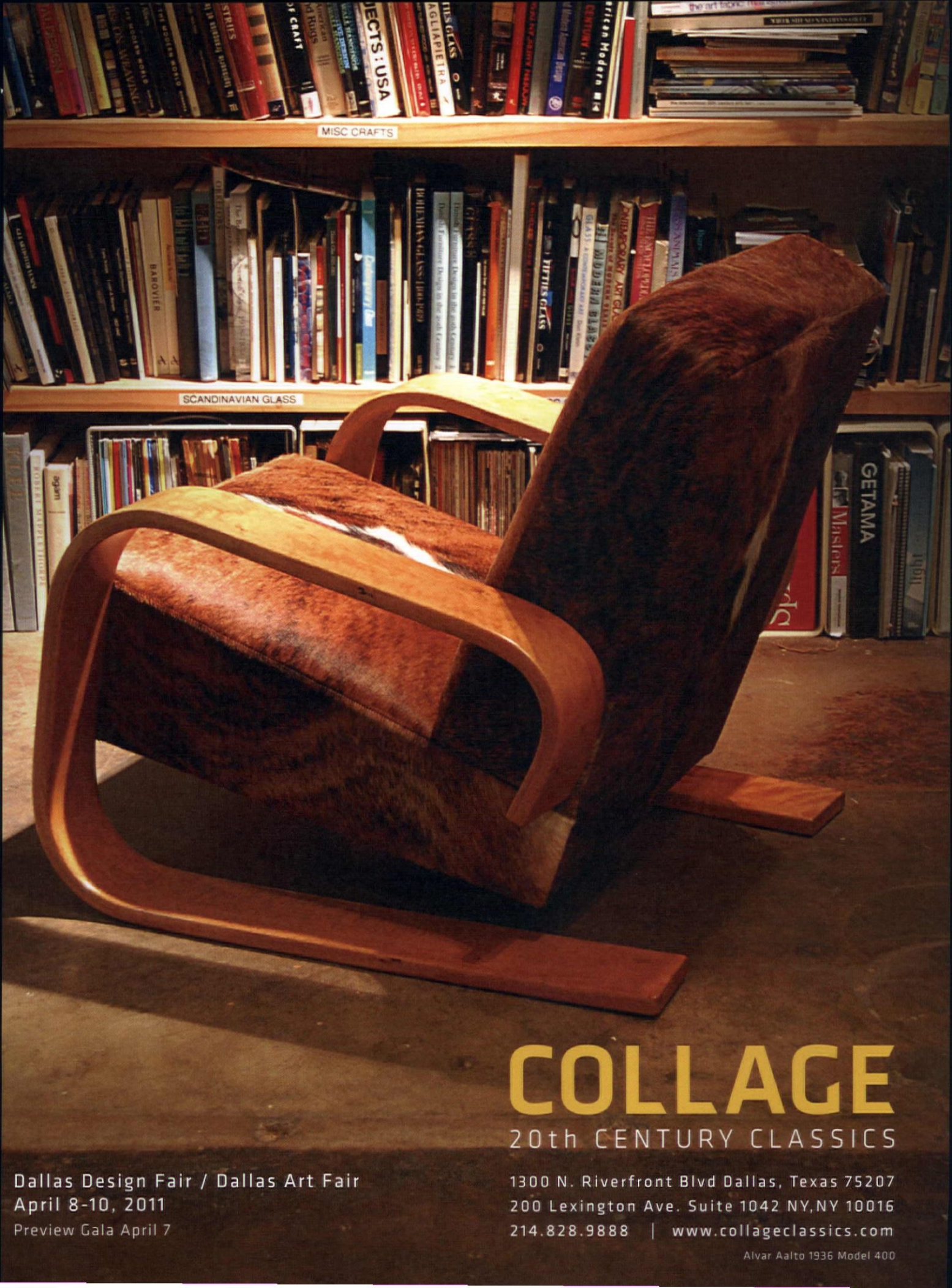
The front façade of the George and Sarah Ehrlich house in Highland Park, Illinois, designed for the couple in 1951 by Samuel A. Marx.

Marx also designed the furnishings for the Ehrlichs. The beveled door in the entrance hall is a typical Marx touch, as is the Ming-style lacquered-wood-topped console.

WHEN I TOLD MY SON Jesse I had sold the Sam Marx furniture last summer, his response was: "Where are my friends going to sleep?"

I hadn't thought of that. He had a point. This story begins in 1951, after my grandfather George Ehrlich retired from business. He and my grandmother, Sarah, commissioned Samuel A. Marx—the eminent Chicago-based architect and designer, whose work reflected an elegant aspect of modernism—to devise and furnish a spacious and up-to-date house overlooking the ravines in the Chicago suburb of Highland Park. My son's question referred to the ninety-three-inch-long sofa and matching club chairs—custom made by William T. Quigley, Inc. Over the years, an inordinate number of teenagers had slept on these pieces, something neither Marx nor my grandparents could have envisioned.

As the oldest grandchild I spent a lot of time in the house, designed as a series of low flat planes extending out from the living room, the architectural core. The furniture was crafted with exotic materials: crackled lacquer, burl wood, ebony, smoked mirror, cork, and parchment. For a child, it was a struggle to sit on the puffy and scratchy surfaces and puzzling to look across the remote distances. Many of the objects—the three-tiered bookshelf or kidney-shaped table, for instance—existed on a different scale and in a purer form than things in houses I was familiar with. The only Yiddish word I remember my grandmother using was *haimish*, meaning "homey"—once, at the end of her life. The house was not haimish. The palette—ivory, wheat, walnut,



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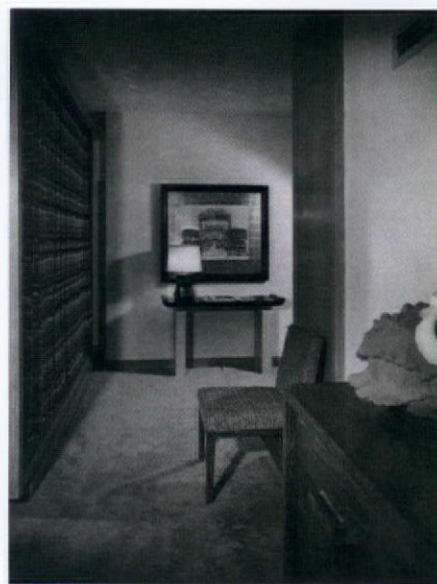
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turquoise, eggshell—was glamorous, sophisticated, and sumptuous. There was a sense of edgy wellbeing, but it was not grandparenty. A few years after the house was built my grandparents engaged a professional photographer, Nowell Ward, to create a bound portfolio of images of the house, some of which you see on these pages.

What could you do there? I could run down the hall of wardrobe closets, make faces in the kaleidoscopic mirrors, sort poker chips, plink out show tunes on the piano, memorize the names of books on the floating bookshelves—*East of Eden*, *The Last Hurrah*, *Kon-Tiki*—all classic 1950s titles, since my grandparents had gotten rid of virtually everything they owned before moving in. My grandmother hated clutter. With my grandfather, I could go outside. The walls of glass and banks of windows invited you into layers of landscape. Inside someone was always changing linen or slipcovers. The kitchen linoleum squeaked when you walked across. A crumb didn't fall on the black Formica counters that wasn't swept up immediately.

My grandparents gave luncheons and card parties, listened to symphonies and show tunes on their record changer, read two newspapers a day, never missed *Meet the Press*. Gradually their health declined and it took a toll on the house. On his way to the dining room, my grandfather began making a shortcut, using his cane to poke aside the Dorothy Liebes hanging textile screen and step around it. The weave unraveled. There was wear on the sleeves of his armchair. Someone repaired the cork table with scotch tape. Medicine stained the rug. My

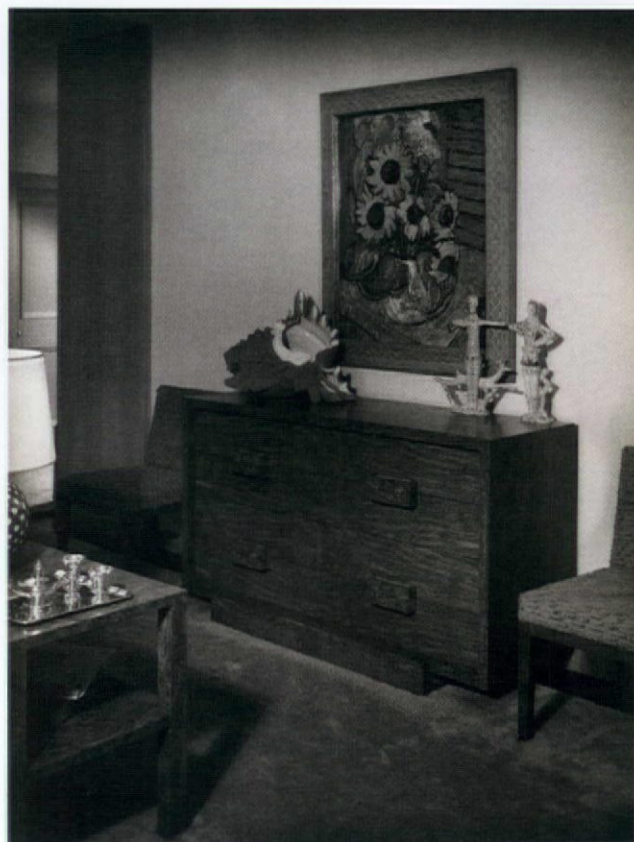


MANY OBJECTS EXISTED ON A DIFFERENT SCALE AND IN A PURER FORM THAN THINGS I WAS FAMILIAR WITH

A view of the hallway from the foyer to the living room illustrates another Marx signature: use of nubby, highly textured fabrics, as seen on the side chair. The Dorothy Liebes textile curtain at left closes off the passage to the dining room.

Above the console hangs a Raoul Dufy print.

Marx was not only an eminent art collector—his holdings included works by Picasso, Modigliani, and Braque—he was also an artist. He painted the still life of sunflowers that hangs, above a block-handled cabinet of his design. A seashell and a pair of 1951 Italian ceramic figures flank the painting.



MICHAEL DUNBAR



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“THERE WAS A SENSE OF EDGY WELLBEING TO THE HOUSE, BUT IT WAS NOT GRANDPARENTY

grandmother wandered across fraying carpets, lost and agitated, looking for keys.

After my grandparents died, we divided the furniture. I got some lamps, side tables, a bookcase, upholstered pieces, a set of ceramic figures, and the kidney-shaped table (literally on its last leg). I liked the way the furniture connected to my grandparents and my past but it didn't look right in our Wilmette, Illinois, farmhouse. In the ample space of my grandparents' house, the



The living room is highlighted by beveled wood wall panels (most likely limed oak), a massive 93-inch-long sofa, and a fireplace with a simple stone mantel and brushed nickel andirons. (Marx, quixotically, had a particularly creative mind for the latter design element.) The sofa is bracketed by a glazed cork coffee table and, behind, a three-tiered bookshelf with a craquelure finish.

parchment covered cylinder lamps were part of a group of streamlined forms, harmonious and balanced. Now they were out of place and out of proportion. When my husband took a new job, the furniture came with us to New Haven, but the club chairs rolled without constraint across the wood floors of our box-shaped colonial. I had the chairs recovered, removed the casters, added a few inches to the legs. We tried them in

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different spots of the box-shaped room. Fish out of water.

Last year we moved to New York City, squeezing the furniture into, in the parlance of Manhattan real estate, a “classic six.” That’s when the sofa got its

workout, sometimes accommodating four, or even five, kids who had fallen asleep while watching a DVD. When we realized we needed to move again, we decided it was time to give the Marx furniture a better home and purchase some things that would be in keeping with the scale of our own city space. Though I know it was the right thing to do, I was sad to give up those objects I had lived with for over half a century. I look at the photos of my grandparents’ house and see how beautifully conceived it was as an architectural framework, and I miss the things that were in it. I also understand that the experience of living with the house and its furniture educated my eye. But give Samuel Marx due credit: he designed a house and furnishings that were meant to complement one another. The latter would never have been entirely at home anywhere else.

“LOOKING BACK I SEE HOW BEAUTIFULLY CONCEIVED THE HOUSE WAS AS AN ARCHITECTURAL FRAMEWORK

The dining room, above, in two views, looked out onto one of Highland Park’s many ravines. Note the handles atop the dining chairs, which made the heavy pieces easier to move. The serving cabinet front is finished in smoked glass. Above it is another Marx painting.

The patio surface of the Ehrlich house, bottom, was made of wood blocks.



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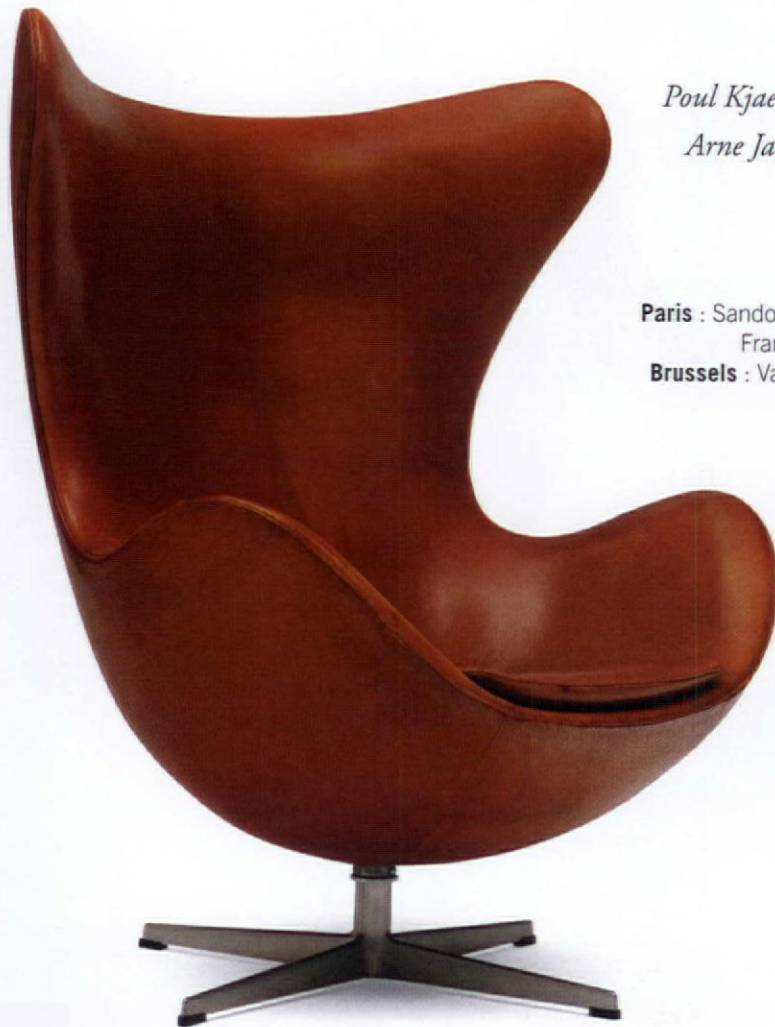
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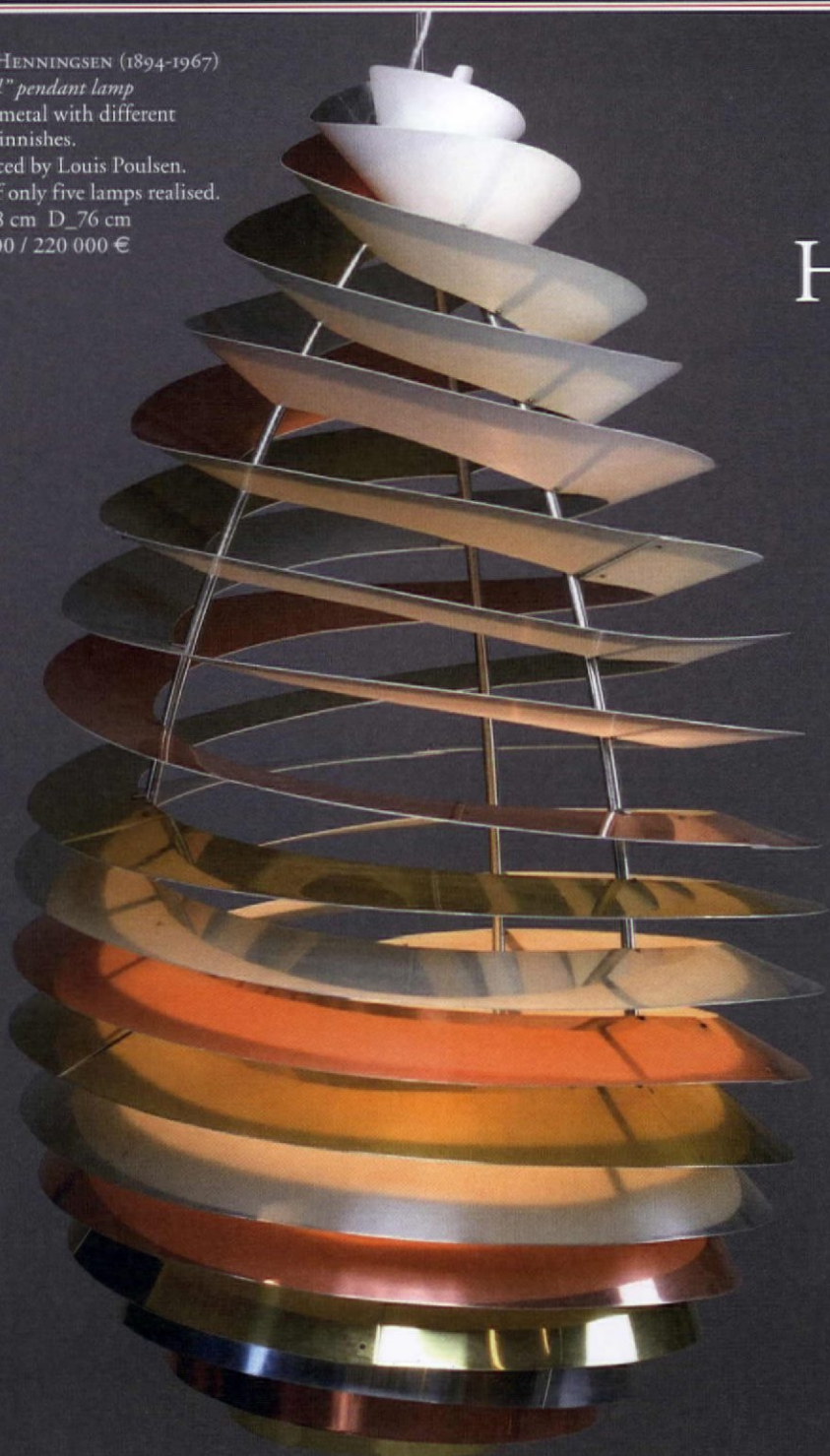
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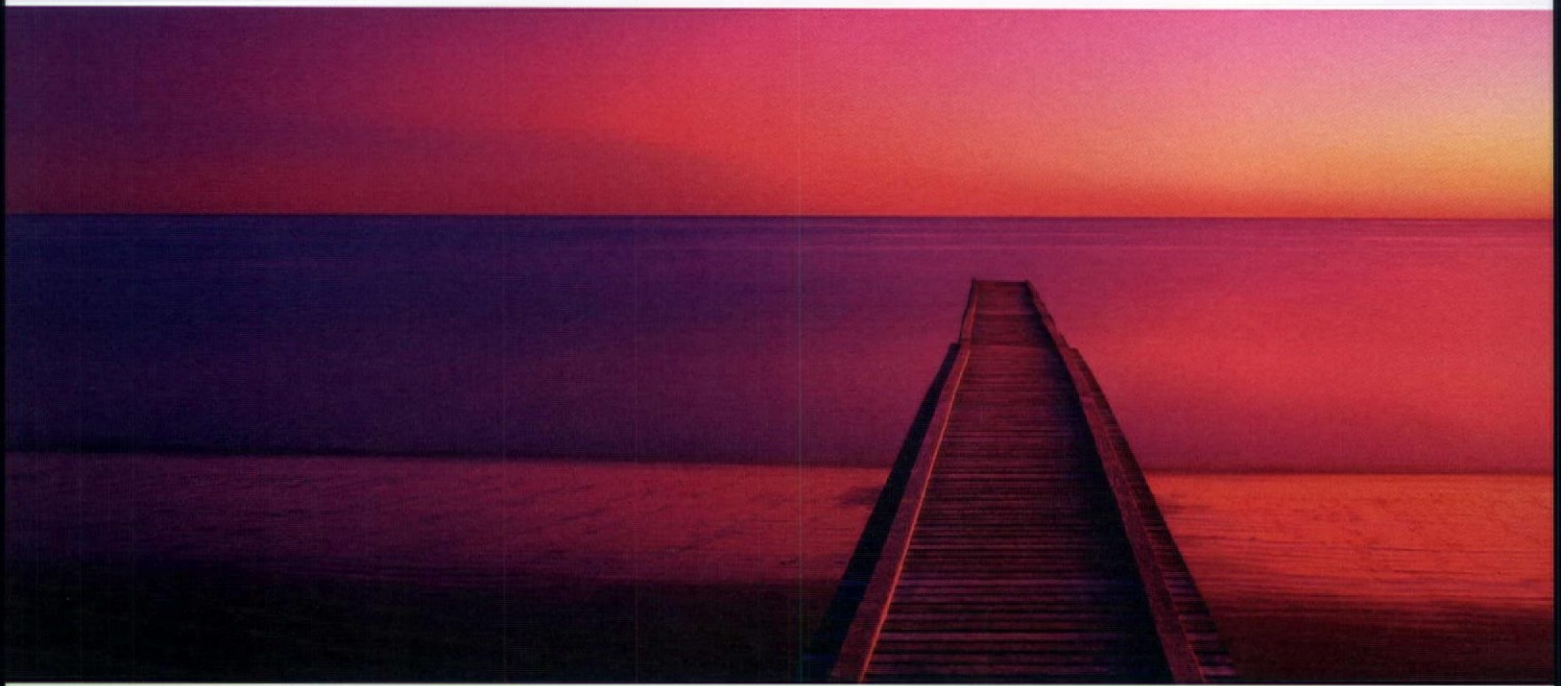
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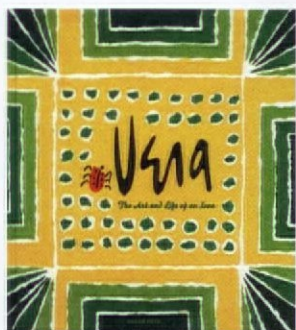
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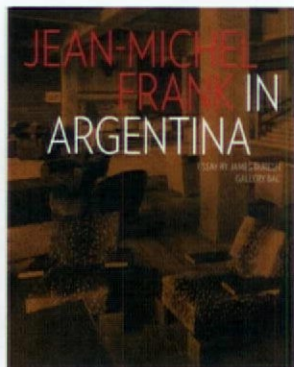
REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS ON MOVIE SETS, FASHIONABLE VINTAGE FABRICS, A DESIGN ICON'S FORAY IN SOUTH AMERICA, AND INSIDERS' ADVICE ON COLLECTING MODERN DESIGN



TO FASHION-MINDED women of a certain age, the name "Vera" conjures memories of a chic and snazzy era in the world of couture and houseware designs. In her heyday in the 1960s, textile designer and pattern maker Vera Neumann's signature diaphanous scarves were a part of every elegant daywear ensemble, while thousands of homes were adorned with her products, ranging from placemats to curtains. Trained in art at New York's Cooper Union, Neumann excelled at floral designs, patterns based on cityscapes, and abstract compositions that included both geometric and organic influences. **Vera: The Art and Life of an Icon**, with an introduction by Susan Seid—now head of the Vera Company—and main text by the lucid New York design journalist Jen Renzi, tells the engaging story of Neumann's "up-by-the-bootstraps" career. Aided by her husband, George Neumann, a businessman with knowledge of both marketing and textiles, Vera built a firm that began with a dining tabletop-sized silk screen into a company that employed hundreds and produced a prodigious number of designs. She was friends with Alexander Calder, whose sculptures inspired several of Vera's designs. This book is a delightful paean to a designer, and a design era, full of verve, color, and panache.

VERA: THE ART AND LIFE OF AN ICON

By SUSAN SEID and JEN RENZI
Abrams, 208 pages, \$35



AN EXHIBITION catalogue from New York City's Gallery BAC, **Jean-Michel Frank in Argentina**—available only via Amazon.com—deserves a place in any modern design devotee's library, both for the incisive essay by design historian James Buresh and for the book's period photographs. As Buresh details, Frank was one of the most complex and tragic figures in the modern design era. His work defies easy categorization: his best designs combined simple, even severe, lines with lush, textured upholstery. Yet he could also deliver pieces modeled on classic forms like the klismos chair. As Buresh explains, Argentina between the world wars had become an economic powerhouse, and many of the country's elites divided their time between Paris and Buenos Aires. In the former city, they became familiar with the work of Frank, scion of a wealthy yet ill-starred banking family, and eagerly bought his pieces. In the 1930s the Argentine design firm Comte began to import his works and later to produce them. At the outbreak of World War II, Frank moved to Argentina, where he executed a number of important commissions. In early 1941 he traveled to New York, evidently in hopes of rekindling a romantic tie he'd forged in Paris. He met with disappointment and committed suicide. As Cecil Beaton said: "If Frank had lived, he would perhaps have been the great decorator of the future."

JEAN-MICHEL FRANK IN ARGENTINA

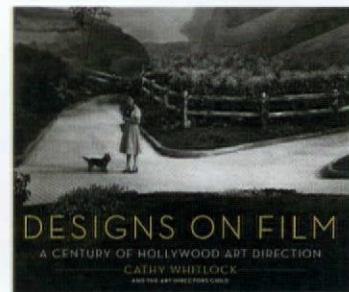
By JAMES BURESH
Gallery BAC, 120 pages, \$40



A THOUSAND BLESSINGS on Benedikt Taschen: in the history of book publishing, the maverick German polymath likely has no peer. His firm has produced lushly illustrated titles ranging from the goofy—such as *The Big Book of Breasts*—to massively-scaled tomes like *GOAT—Greatest of All Time*, a tribute to Muhammad Ali that weighs in at seventy-five pounds—as well as dozens of monographs on both famed architects and designers and great, yet semi-obscure ones like Erich Mendelsohn. One of Taschen's newest releases will help readers hone their design acumen: **Collecting Design** by the investor and noted art and design collector Adam Lindemann. The format is almost journalistic, composed as it is of lengthy interviews with thirty-two players from all areas of the modern design collecting sphere. They range from tastemakers such as couturier Marc Jacobs and collectors like Switzerland's Bruno Bischofberger to dealers such as Ulrich Fiedler of Berlin and auction house experts like Chicago's Richard Wright. All wax freely on such topics as specific designers and design movements, ways to judge the quality of a piece, and buying strategies. A primer this is not, but the collective wisdom dispensed is invaluable to veteran and budding collectors alike.

COLLECTING DESIGN

By ADAM LINDEMANN
Taschen, 300 pages, \$39.99



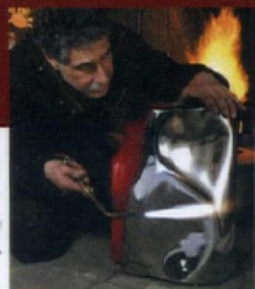
SOME OF THE greatest modern interiors and works of architecture have actually never existed—except briefly, as stage sets and maquettes, in Hollywood films. Covering all stylistic genres used in the movies, Cathy Whitlock's visually engaging and thoroughly researched **Designs on Film: A Century of Hollywood Art Direction** (written with the help of the Art Directors Guild) is a treat for those of us who love both movies and modernism. Whitlock tells the story behind set designs like the classic futuristic city in *Metropolis* (1927) and the moderne-meets-neo-baroque sets in *Top Hat* (1935), and traces the careers of art directors such as Cedric Gibbons, the master behind the art deco interiors of *Grand Hotel* (1932) and *Dinner at Eight* (1933). There are pleasant reminders: dig the amazing Himalayan lamasery Shangri-La from *Lost Horizon* (1937), which could have been co-designed by Rudolph Schindler and Richard Meier. While this reviewer is no fan of Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (1949), based on her novel, offers a stirring defense of International Style architecture. That film and the "Vandamm House" in *North by Northwest* (1959) give a celluloid shout-out to Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater. This volume will make an excellent gift for those who appreciate Hitchcock and Hans Wegner in equal measure.

DESIGNS ON FILM: A CENTURY OF HOLLYWOOD ART DIRECTION

By CATHY WHITLOCK with the ART DIRECTORS GUILD
It Books/HarperCollins, 400 pages, \$75

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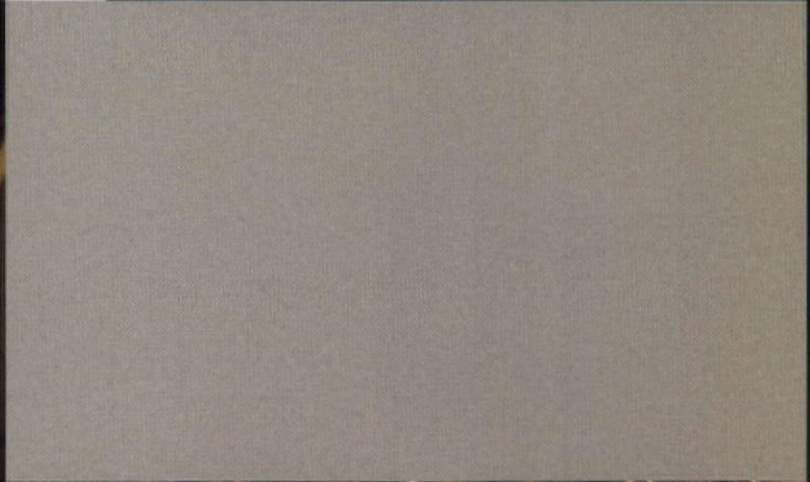
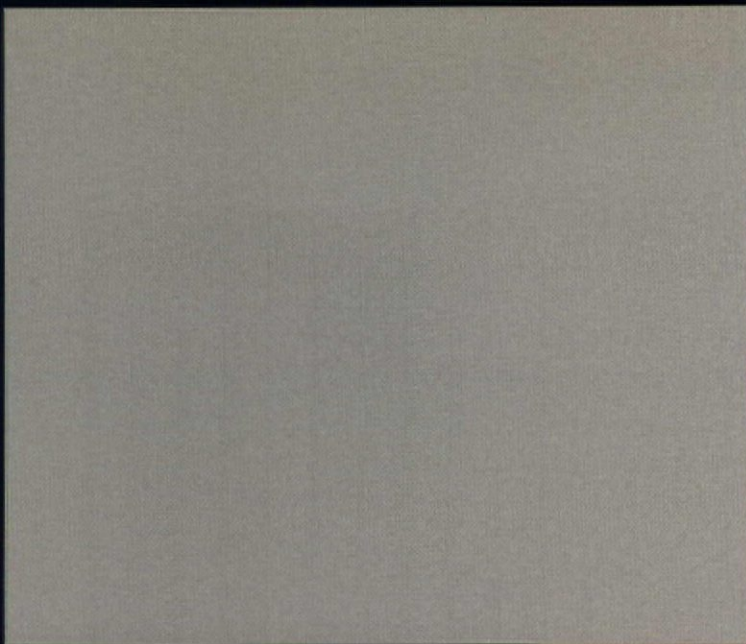
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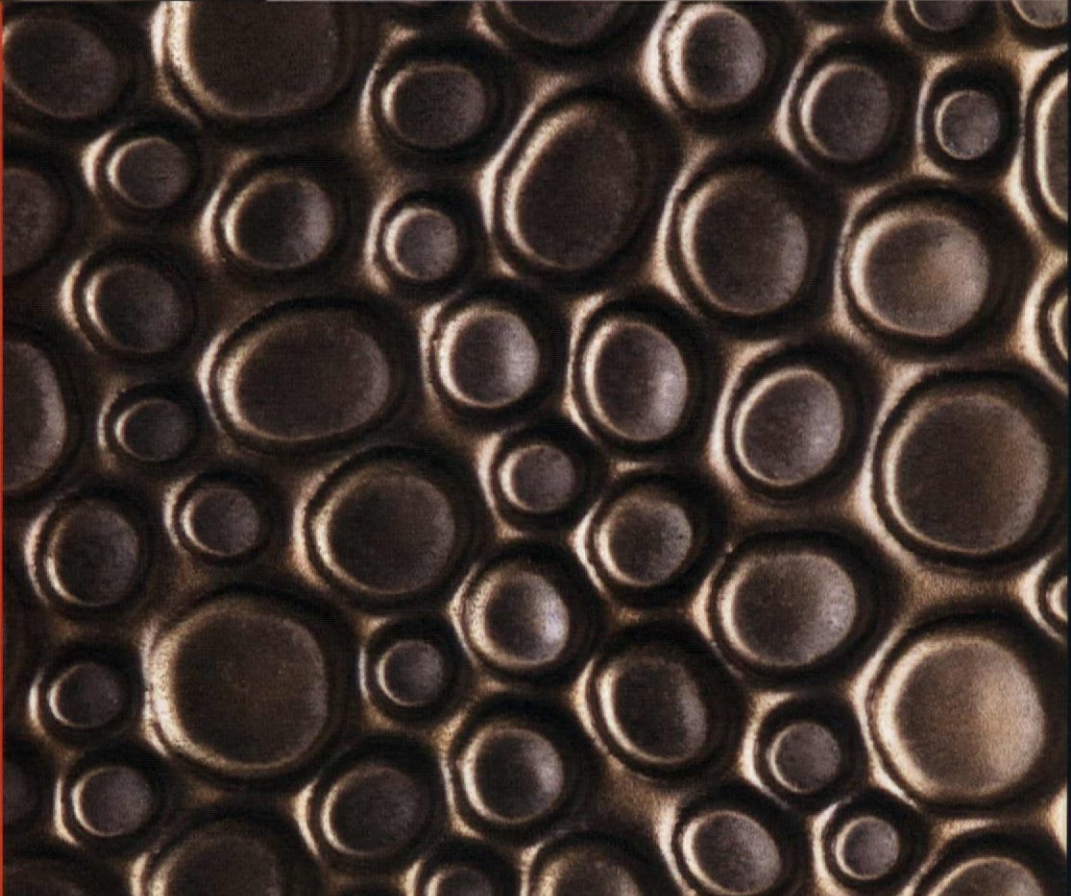
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Tastemakers and leading figures in the design world discuss new finds and fresh enthusiasms

Edited by Allison Krier and Beatrice V. Thornton



▲ PARIS IN SPRINGTIME

"Four museum shows on view this spring in the French capital will be of great interest to modern design aficionados of all stripes. An upcoming exhibit at the Petit Palais sheds new light on the work of the seminal designer **Charlotte Perriand**, revealing the role of photography in her creative process. From her beginnings in the atelier of Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret in 1928, she used the medium [her photo

of a tole fragment is shown at left] to help when drawing and designing furniture, as well as a way to find inspiration in natural forms. The exhibition features 380 photos and 70 furniture pieces, and runs from April 7 through September 18.

Glass in Venice: Three Artists, Three Visions at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, an exhibit organized in collaboration with New York's Barry Friedman Gallery, features more than 150 pieces by Cristiano Bianchin, Yoichi Ohira, and Laura de Santillana, the granddaughter of famous glassmaker Paolo Venini. Each has an original approach: Bianchin uses dark opaque glass, Ohira prefers transparent and monumental forms [examples above], and Santillana, abstract works. The show runs from March 24 through September 4. The Musée Bourdelle will mount the first Parisian retrospective devoted to the work of **Madame Grès**, grande dame of haute couture, who worked from the 1930s through the 1980s. The museum will present more than 80 of her original designs [an example above, right]. Among them are asymmetrical, draped dresses reminiscent of antiquity, and evening gowns made of jersey, the apparent simplicity of which conceals the extreme complexity of their structure. From March 25 through July 24. Lastly, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the maiden voyage of the legendary ocean liner the **S.S. France**, the Musée national de la Marine has organized an exhibition about the now-scrapped ship. Some 48 mid-century designers and design firms—including the Leleu studio, Max Ingrand, Dominique, and Anne Carlu Subes—worked on the interiors of the liner, and a highlight of the show will be examples of the fixtures and furniture, as well as reconstructions of the spaces, they created. The show is on view through October 23."

GUY BLOCH-CHAMFORT,
writer

▼ PASTA PERFECT

"There is almost always a discernible difference between a piece of furniture designed by an architect rather than by a furniture designer. Architects' furniture tends to be highly conceptual, and rarely comfortable, or even functional. Few architects avoid that flaw, but Greg Lynn is one of them. His 'Ravioli' chair, with a fiberglass-reinforced polyester shell, polyurethane foam seat with integrated belt upholstery, and knitted fabric cover, is one of the most comfortable chairs of its kind. It was manufactured by Vitra and launched in 2005. Unfortunately the chair is no longer in production, so you will be lucky to get your hands on one!"

AMMAR ELOUEINI,
architect



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◀ DRAMATIC CERAMICS

"I fell in love with Michael Eden's work about two years ago when I saw his pieces in one of London dealer Adrian Sassoon's catalogues, and subsequently at a SOFA [Sculpture Objects & Function Art] expo in New York. Eden's work is based on classical inspirations, but created with state-of-the-art technology. His 'Wedgwoodn't' series is an ode to the polite delicacy of eighteenth-century ceramics, yet rendered in a Goth, macabre way: the pieces have the brittle texture of bone, and their surfaces seem decayed and eroded. Rendered in colors from the classic—black or Wedgwood blue—to the outrageous—shocking pink, chartreuse—they

are unique. I'm looking forward to seeing Eden's work at the SOFA New York show in April.

JAMIE DRAKE,
interior designer

▼ PLEATED LIGHT

"The 'Eclipse' lamp by Mauricio Klabin is a mix of sophistication and simplicity. It is serious design that makes you smile. The way it can be folded open or closed down makes me think of a gentle giant snail that can appear and disappear as in a fairy tale. I love the lamp's originality, which makes you realize there are still many new forms to discover in design. It is carried by the New York store Espasso, a place that celebrates the beauty of Brazilian design from today and the near past."

DIANE VIÑOLY,
interior designer



▲ CACHAÇA AND CACHET

"The beauty of the city of São Paulo is unconventional. At first, all seems chaotic, but when you get past this impression, the city reveals itself to be interesting, vibrant, and even poetic. We are looking forward to the first Design São Paulo exposition, which runs from June 8 to 12. An event like this is timely and calls attention to the recent efforts of the city to foster emerging talent. The market for design in Brazil is still unstructured, and we hope that the show creates an interest and helps spread the word about the new and emerging culture of Brazilian design."

HUMBERTO AND FERNANDO CAMPANA,
designers (their "Multidão" stool, designed in 2008,
is shown above)



◀ MODERN PRIMITIVES

"Paraguayan architect and designer Pedro Barrail has a fascination with the native peoples of the Amazon basin. His new collection of one-of-a-kind chairs and tables combines simple modern lines with the primitive 'tattoo' designs of one of the most remote tribes of the region. The wood-burned motifs are based on what these people see around them in the jungle, from insects and mammals to vegetation, and provides an amazing window into their day-to-day existence. I love the honesty and creativity of these pieces, which are at once both functional and an art form."

PHILIP GORRIVAN,
interior designer

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◀ DECO TREASURES

"I am very excited about the Christie's three-day auction of the collection from the Château de Gourdon that will be held in Paris beginning on March 29. The collection is full of wonderful surprises from the art deco era [such as the Pierre Chareau standing lamp, left]. So many of the works boast unimpeachable provenances and historic importance; but these are also, over and above any academic significance, works of art of enormous visual allure—French craft and sophistication at its most seductive."

ROBERT COUTURIER,
architect and interior designer

▼ NEW OLD ENGLISH

"The work of the English architect and designer Nigel Coates speaks of a world both old and new, reaching back and moving forward, shockingly new while always familiar. This is particularly true of his recently issued 'Baroccabilly' collection, which will be shown at the Cristina Grajales Gallery in New York. The 'Baroccabilly' pieces [such as the table below] reference the curves and intricacy of baroque era design, but reflect a twenty-first-century sensibility."

JAMES CRESPO,
President, Georg Jensen USA



▶ KEEP IT SIMPLE

"Bent plywood furniture made by Gerald Summers in the 1930s is the most recent and exciting addition to my collection. I am well acquainted with the work of Scandinavian architect-designers of the time such as Alvar Aalto, but I believe that Summers's unique and very British approach to modernist design is exceptional. His designs [such as the rare bar stool, right, offered by the London dealer Peter Petrou] perfectly enunciate the core values of the Design and Industries Association (which grew out of the arts and crafts movement), of which he was a member: simplicity and truth to materials. The founding purpose of the DIA was to improve all the things we live with and use by applying sound design. But whereas most members believed that industrialization was the means to achieve this, Summers took a more individual viewpoint and was happier to craft his pieces in the small workshop of his company Makers of Simple Furniture, which enabled him to offer a more personal service."

MICHAEL ROSENFELD,
collector



◀ TROMPE L'OIL

"Artisans in South Africa are creating furniture from discarded oil drums. Their chairs and tables have a sleek, modern aesthetic, and by reusing waste material, the pieces make a design statement that is both social and political. Prices for the furniture—sold at the New York gallery Peoria Emporium—top out at \$280, so the pieces are affordable as well as environmentally responsible."

MARIA THORNBURG,
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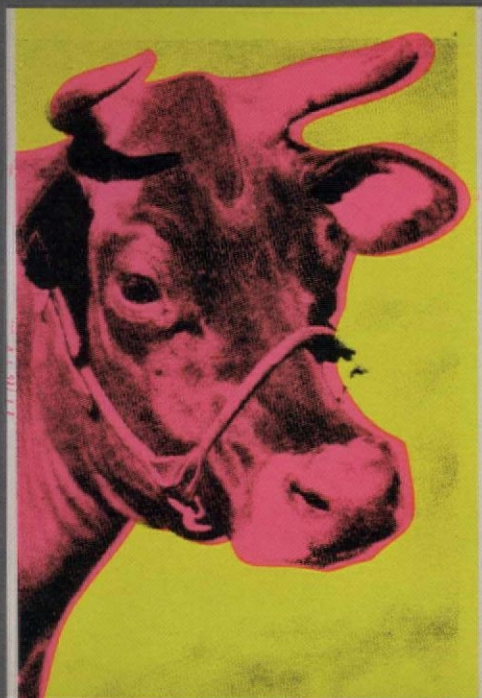
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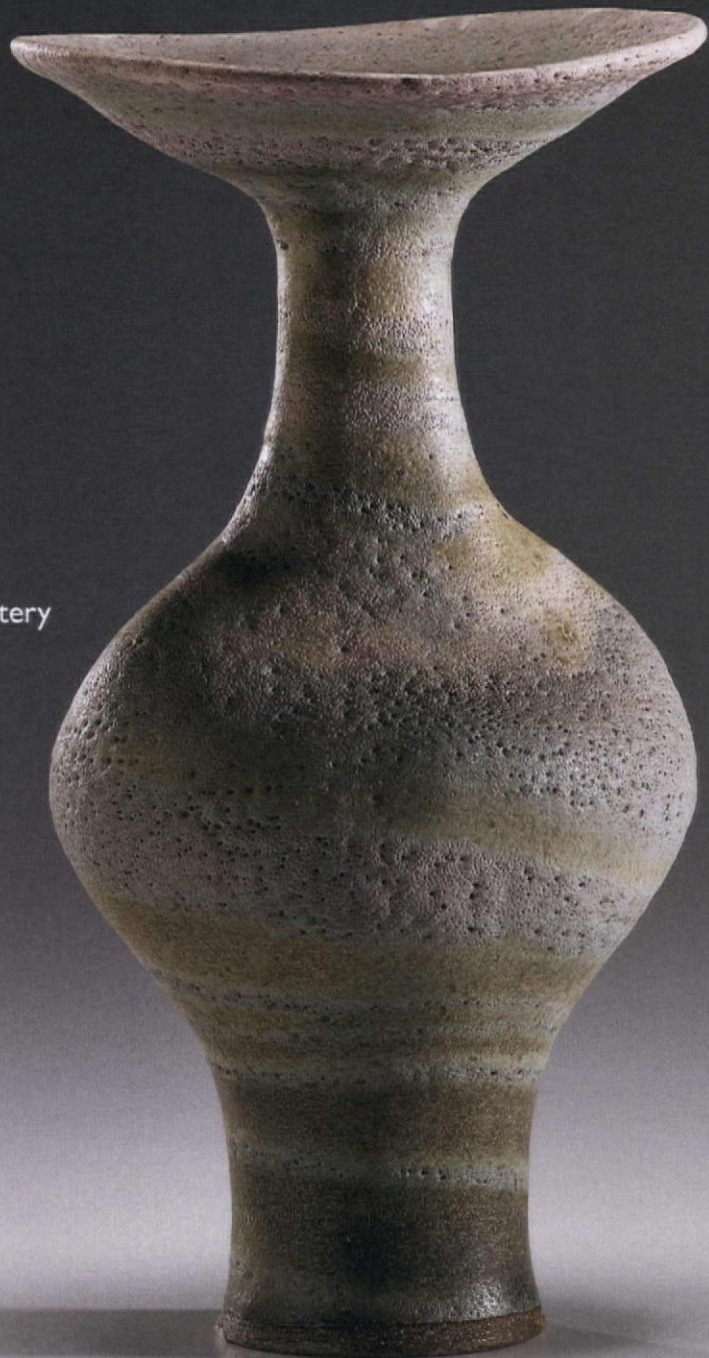
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Surf and Turf

THREE NEWLY-EMPLOYED NATURAL MATERIALS ENTER THE RANKS OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

By Stephen Milne

TEMPERING MODERNISM'S AUSTERITY with a sensuous and tactile materiality has a long and storied history. Jean-Michel Frank's use of vellum and parchment on furniture in the 1930s, Florence Knoll's rosewood-and-marble office furniture in the 1950s, and, in the 1970s, Karl Springer's shagreen-clad end tables instantly come to mind. While still in their infancy, three manufacturers from the United States, Chile, and Thailand, are keeping the trend for a tactile modernism alive. All of these products, while they vary in their aesthetic merits, are remarkable for their inventively repurposed materials, derived from unexpected sources.

Lance Cheney, president of the New York-based firm **Braun Brush** and a fourth-generation manufacturer of specialty brushes for such high-technology uses as NASA's Mars Rover, saw the potential for modifying his company's expertise to create walls, ceilings, and even furniture with textural brush panels. Brush Tile is comprised of bristles of horsehair—obtained from tails and manes of Argentine equines, none of which are hurt during the process—Tampico (a plant fiber), and a colorful synthetic fiber that are tufted in a substrate of either Baltic birch plywood or translucent acrylic. The horsehair can be surprisingly soft, and the

tiles will soon be offered in a range of colors. The surface of these tiles may be carved to achieve different aesthetic effects, and has the added benefit of muffling sound. Cheney's innovative product was introduced by the New York marketing firm Robin Reigi, Inc. at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) in 2007.

Traditionally, skins of harvested salmon are discarded, or ground into fertilizer. Stiven Kerestegian, a former industrial designer for Microsoft and Kodak, who founded **Es Diseño** in



Above: Braun Brush's tile of tufted horsehair can be surprisingly soft and will soon be offered in a range of colors.

Left: Brush Tile sculpted horsehair panel on lobby reception desk at Aecom's Boston offices. It reads like a topographical survey map and its form has the modern appeal of a Jean Arp.

2006, saw the potential to repurpose the skins. "About ten years ago," he says, "soon after the commercial salmon industry took off in the south of Chile, local artisans began using this resilient exotic leather to craft souvenirs, wallets, and other products. On a trip to Patagonia, I saw the leather for the first time and immediately identified it as a new and more sustainable alternative to other premium and exotic leathers." The challenge he confronted, and needed to solve, before bringing to market the product he eventually named Es Salmon Leather, was to create a patented method of seaming the small skins—which average about six inches in width and twenty-four inches in length—to maximize surface area and create a uniformly elastic surface. Salmon skin has a natural three-dimensional texture pattern that is virtually impossible to replicate synthetically. This texture has been compared to that of python skin. Today, Es Diseño touts its salmon skin as a stronger and more flexible material, and more sustainable choice, than cowhide, or rarer leathers. Not widely known, Es Diseño's leather has been used in museum exhibitions, and for wine labels, clothing, accessories, book covers, and place mats, as well as interior and furniture applications.

Above: Es Diseño's salmon leather-covered tiles are used for wall treatments and can be mounted with magnets and reused.

Below: Es Diseño recently introduced these salmon leather and wool felt iPad cases. They foresee huge opportunities in the electronics and fashion accessories markets for their sustainable material.

Right: Es Salmon Leather's texture has been compared to that of python skin.





The least aesthetically pleasing of these products is Garmento Board, which I discovered, like Es Salmon Leather, at the global materials consultancy and resource archive, Material Connexion, at their New York headquarters. (Garmento Board did, nonetheless, receive the 2010 ICFF Editor's Award for Best Material.) Developed by Thailand's **Triple Pim Company, Ltd.**, these solid panels, both rigid and lightweight, are made from recycled cotton denim. The denim, typically from jeans, is cut into recognizable jean pieces—pockets and all—or shredded, and joined with a binder, before being compressed into panels. The fabric panels are water-resistant, flame-retardant, and much like particle board. Colors and textures can be specified and the blue jean patchwork can be appealing. It is still relatively new to the market and suggested applications include obvious uses such as wall paneling, furniture, and in-store displays.

The merit of all these products is underscored by an observation offered by one of its creators: Es Salmon Leather, notes Kerestegian, "adds value not only at the sensorial level but also from a more meaningful ecological and ethical perspective." Along with Brush Tile's use of horsehair and the recycled denim composition of Garmento Board, Es Salmon Leather's fish-skin product is in line with the sustainability movement. In keeping with the tradition of earlier designers, all three successfully repurpose materials while emphasizing their tactility within a wholly modern aesthetic.

Left: **Garmento Board panels are made from recycled denim, typically from jeans, which are clearly identifiable in these sections.**

JOHN BALDESSARI

A PRINT RETROSPECTIVE FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF JORDAN D. SCHNITZER AND HIS FAMILY FOUNDATION

February 26 - June 26, 2011

John Baldessari: A Print Retrospective from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and his family foundation is organized by the Palm Springs Art Museum and the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

Support for the exhibition and related educational and promotional programs has been made possible by a grant from the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

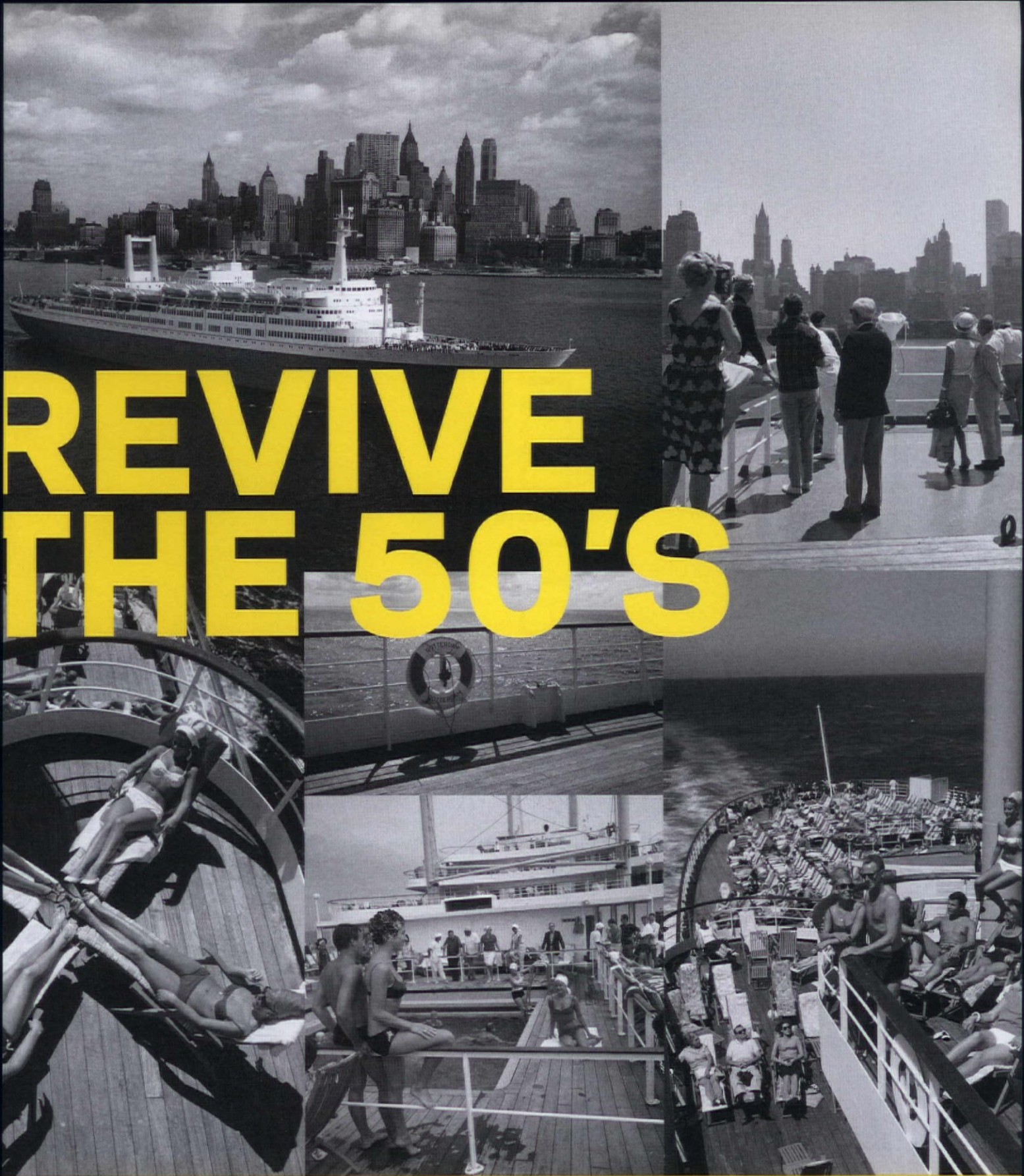
Additional funding is provided by the museum's Contemporary Art Council, Gladys Rubinstein, the Faye and Herman Sarkowsky Exhibition Fund, Bonhams & Butterfields, and Thelma and Gilbert Schnitzer.

John Baldessari, *Raised Eyebrows / Furrowed Foreheads: Two Foreheads (One Green)*, 2009, Offset lithograph and screenprint, Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer, © John Baldessari



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Preview
April 15-17

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A pair of Sam Maloof walnut horn-back
spindle open armchairs, 1990
Estimate: \$7,000 - 10,000

Curator's Eye

WE ASKED CUSTODIANS OF LEADING TWENTIETH-CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY DESIGN COLLECTIONS TO DISCUSS ONE OBJECT THAT THEY FEEL IS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY. HERE IS A GALLERY OF THEIR CHOICES. Edited by Allison Krier and Beatrice V. Thornton

“The tea service rejects ornamentation for simple geometric forms like cylinders, spheres, and hemispheres”

DESIGNED BY MARIANNE BRANDT, this exceptionally rare silver and ebony tea service exemplifies the best of the German Bauhaus's modernist aesthetics and functionalist ideals. The tea service rejects ornamentation for simple geometric forms like cylinders, spheres, and hemispheres. It also reveals the famed school's emphasis on function: the push-on lid of the teapot, placed away from the spout, does not drip, and the wood knobs provide heat-resistant grips. Nonetheless, early Bauhaus silver pieces like these often remained more symbolic models than practical industrial prototypes. Created by hand in the school's workshops, the service is firmly set in the tradition of costly craft-based metalworking and was likely intended for a well-heeled clientele receptive to progressive interior design—a point that underscores the limitations of the Bauhaus's social agenda of mass-produced and affordable domestic items of good design.

RICHARD A. BORN
senior curator,
Smart Museum of Art,
University of Chicago

MARIANNE BRANDT
TEA SERVICE: Tea Infuser (Pot),
Creamer, Sugar Bowl, and Tray
Sterling silver and ebony
Designed 1924



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Curator's Eye

“As an homage to Chicago’s well-known windy climate, Heijdens’s project tracks the passing of wind across the museum”



FOR LONDON-BASED, DUTCH-BORN DESIGNER SIMON HEIJDENS, elements drawn from nature provide inspiration and a starting point for a reevaluation of the spaces and places that define daily life. Inspired by the transformative and life-enhancing potential of nature, Heijdens’s work, such as “Shade,” which was commissioned for the Art Institute of Chicago’s permanent collection, is a poetic response meant to challenge the homogeneity of our built environments. As an homage to Chicago’s well-known windy climate, Heijdens’s project tracks the passing of wind across the museum through a live sensor positioned outside the building. This movement physically manifests itself inside the museum in the form of a light projection, using a new application for liquid crystal that is embedded into a film and applied to the windows of the galleries. When an electric current passes through the cells they change in appearance from transparent to opaque. The multimedia work challenges and interrupts the static nature of the interior space, breaking down traditional boundaries between interior and exterior climatic conditions. This project demonstrates the museum’s commitment to collecting a broad spectrum of works from across architecture and design in an effort to illustrate progressive thinking and practice in these fields.

SIMON HEIJDENS

SHADE
Liquid crystal
Commissioned by and designed for the
Art Institute of Chicago 2010

ZOE RYAN

Neville Bryan Curator of Design,
Department of Architecture and Design,
Art Institute of Chicago

CONVERSO

RICHARD MEIER
DINING SET
Knoll International
USA, 1982
lacquered wood



Curator's Eye

"This Hanukkah lamp was one of scores of elegant and influential ritual objects Wolpert created between the 1950s and 1970s"

LUDWIG WOLPERT HAS BEEN CALLED THE JOHNNY APPLESEED of modern Jewish ritual objects in America. Trained as a metalsmith in Germany in the 1920s, he immigrated to Palestine in 1933, and then arrived in New York in 1956 to start a modern Judaica workshop and classroom in the basement of the Jewish Museum. This Hanukkah lamp was one of scores of elegant and influential ritual objects Wolpert created between the 1950s and the 1970s for synagogue and home use. The flowing lines—emerging from the base, weaving across the middle, and flowing gloriously to the top—radiate joyousness and a spiritual feeling. Used for the festival of Hanukkah, which celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 164 BCE after its desecration by the Syrians, the lamp signifies a rededication of the American Jewish community to the ancient rituals through the contemporary language of modernist abstraction in the aftermath of the Holocaust.

DANIEL BELASCO

Henry J. Leir Associate Curator,
Jewish Museum, New York



LUDWIG YEHUDA WOLPERT
HANUKKAH LAMP
Hand-worked copper alloy
1958

Illustration: Vicke Lindstrand, *Sommerso Vase*, 1950
H 19.5 cm / 8.2 inches Courtesy of Jacksons, Stockholm, Sweden



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Curator's Eye

"I like the contrasts that we see in these objects: East vs. West, the representation of fragile materials such as textiles and cardboard in sturdy aluminium"



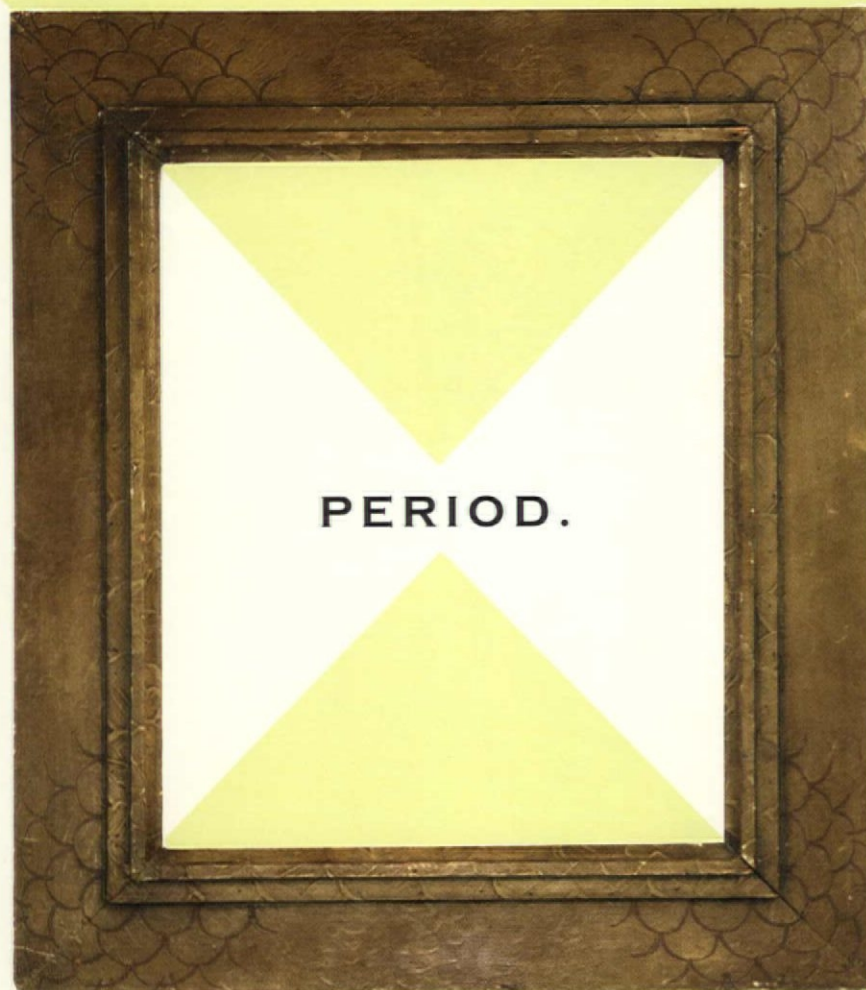
WIEKI SOMERS
CHINESE STOOLS
Coated aluminium
2007

A FEW YEARS AGO DESIGNER WIEKI SOMERS worked in Beijing. As a response to this extremely fast growing metropolis, in which everything seems temporary, she focused on the small things of daily street life. In all kinds of places she found customized seats used by people such as security guards, street vendors, and rickshaw drivers. She was struck by the many charming details that connect the diverse materials and parts of the seats and linked them to their respective makers and their stories. Five of these stools she cast in aluminium. I like the contrasts that we see in these objects: East vs. West, the representation of fragile materials such as textiles and cardboard in sturdy aluminium, durability by endlessly customizing and repairing the pieces vs. the Western wish for perfect designs. Wieki often works with these kinds of contrasts. In her "High Tea Pot" of 2003, a pig's skull is covered by rat's fur, a surreal hunting trophy from which you can actually pour tea.

INGEBORG DE ROODE
Curator of industrial design, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

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Curator's Eye

"it is emblematic of Schreckengost's creativity and humor that he chose to render the flowers in black and gray"



AMONG COGNOSCENTI VIKTOR

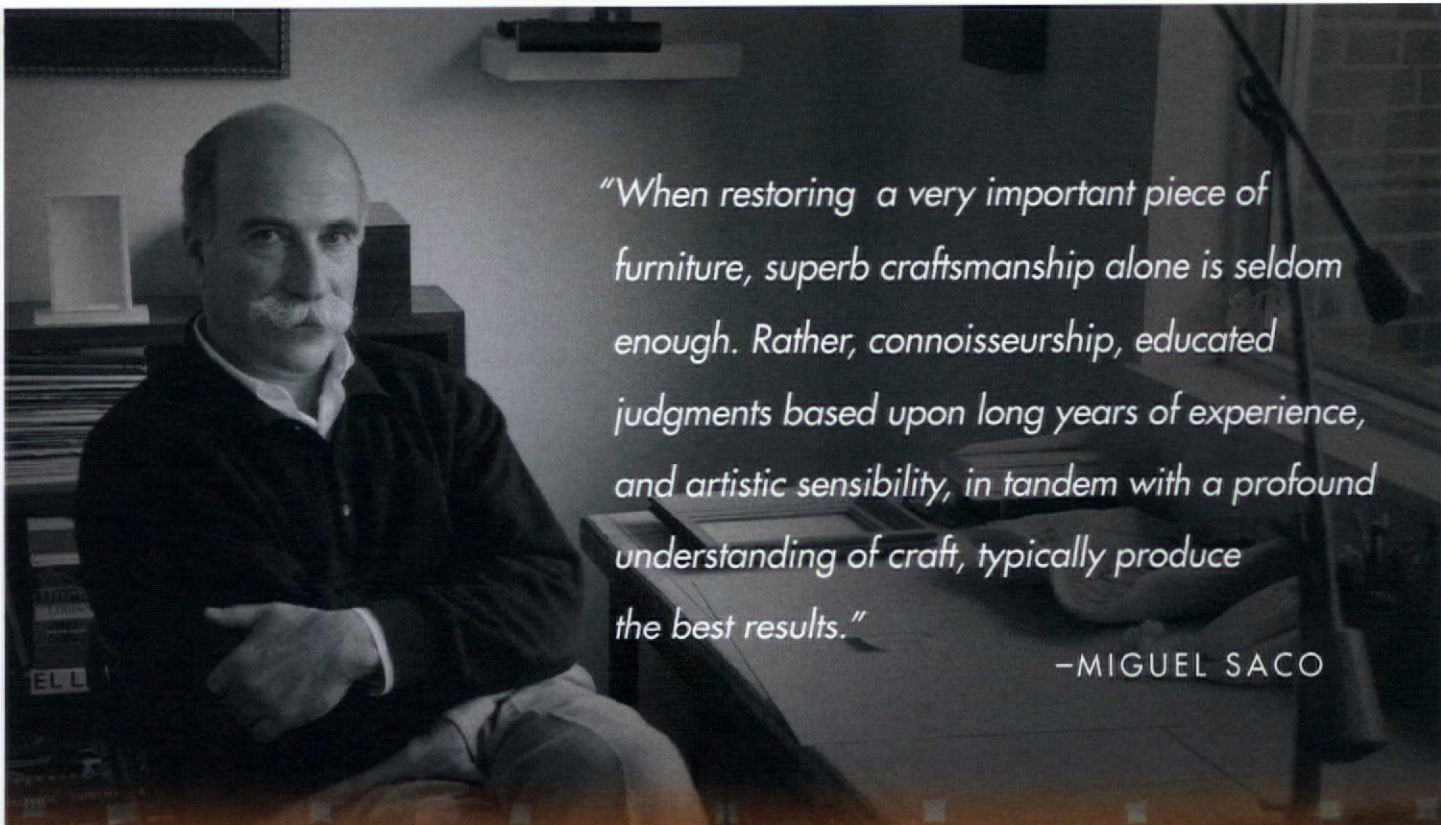
SCHRECKENGOST is known as "the American Da Vinci," a testament to his boundless creativity, insatiable curiosity, and broad intellect. He created a remarkable body of work in multiple artistic media, and his watercolors, sculptures, decorative ceramics, and works of public art are held by numerous cultural institutions. Schreckengost was also a pioneer in the field of industrial design, creating thousands of products as diverse as printing presses, kitchen appliances, furniture, dinnerware, toys, coffins, sleds, and bicycles. One of the first artistic media he mastered was ceramics. In 1930, during his brief year and a half at the Cowan Pottery Studio in Rocky River, Ohio, he produced the American art deco icon, the cobalt blue "Jazz Bowl," as well as other notable pieces. Among these is his 11 ½-inch tall "Floral Vase" of 1931, another moderne masterpiece. Schreckengost created the vase's oil painting-like effect by mixing varnish and turpentine into his glazes to control their flow, and it is emblematic of his creativity and humor that he chose to render the flowers in black and gray. Schreckengost died in 2008 at the age of 101.

CAROL JACOBS

curator, Cowan Pottery Museum at Rocky River Public Library, Rocky River, Ohio

VIKTOR SCHRECKENGOST

FLORAL VASE
Hand painted in 1931



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mr. modernism builds his dream house



SOME are born to greatness, others have greatness thrust upon them. And still others, like design dealer Mark McDonald—a.k.a., Mr. Modernism—attain greatness through the steady accrual of a vast reservoir of knowledge and the development of an acute eye for quality and significance. If “greatness” seems a rather lofty term to bestow on a used-furniture peddler, those who know and have worked with McDonald beg to differ. “As twentieth-century design’s veteran advocate, scholar, and dealer, Mark has led the way, all the way. His love of the material is palpable, as befits the doyen of the field. No one in the modern design collecting arena is more esteemed than Mark,” says the legendary collector John Waddell. “Mark McDonald is a pioneer in the appreciation and understanding of mid-century design in all its various forms—furniture, glass, ceramics, jewelry. His amazing eye, encyclopedic knowledge of the period, and his considerable skill as a businessman have all resulted in elevating a design aesthetic once thought of as ‘kitsch’ to a



By GREGORY CERIO
Photography by Antoine Bootz

Mark McDonald is regarded by many as America's most astute and broadminded modern design dealer. His home in the Hudson River valley supports that judgment.



Facing page, left: In the dining area, a chandelier by Iino Naho hangs above an Ettore Sottsass "Shift" table for Knoll. The photograph, entitled "Meroe, Sudan" is by Lynn Davis; the tall ceramic vessels are by Leza McVey. Above: A view past the fireplace into the living room shows the Harvey Propper sectional sofa that dominates the space, and behind it a three-arm Arredoluce standing lamp. At the left, an anonymous mirror hangs above a Maija Grotell pot and a pair of Dirk Van Erp copper candlesticks.

A 1927 Poul Henningsen table lamp and a trio of ceramic pieces by Geert Lap sit atop an Isamu Noguchi "Rudder," or "Fin," dinette table in one corner of the living room. The "Wishbone" chair was made by Arthur Espenet Carpenter. The paintings are by Karl Benjamin, left, and, Wallace Mitchell, right.

Another angle on the living room takes in an Alexandre Noll bowl on a slate-topped low table designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the firm Heritage-Henredon. Wright also designed the surrounding stools.

Facing page, right: Among the objects below a John McLaughlin oil on masonite painting are an Arredoluce adjustable lamp, a Japanese bronze, a Maija Grotell deco vase, and an Arne Jacobsen lamp.





style now universally perceived as ‘classic,’” says the real-estate development titan Philip Aarons, who was guided by McDonald in the acquisition of a world-class collection of American studio pottery.

A son of Texas—you can hear a hint of the Lone Star State’s rubbery diction in his voice—and a graduate of Southern Methodist University, McDonald came to New York City in 1975. He went to work for the dealer Lillian Nassau, grande dame of art nouveau design, with a particular specialty in the works of Louis Comfort Tiffany and Tiffany Studios. “That was where I learned how to do design research,” McDonald says. “Though I didn’t especially like a lot of the stuff.”

What he did like were the luxe, yet restrained, elegance of furnishings from the art deco period, the sleek and strict geometries of Bauhaus pieces, and the simple yet sensual curves of bent-plywood furniture from the pre- and post-World War II eras. Such works were unfashionable—and

“I hate to restore things,” says McDonald. “A few nicks don’t matter—they show that the piece had a life”

cheap—at the time. Postmodernism and “high tech” were the rage. McDonald took up a sideline as a “picker,” that is, a freelance design treasure hunter, and, as he says, “I became known as the guy about whom they would say, ‘If you have an all-wood Eames chair, he’ll give you two hundred dollars for it.’”

McDonald sold most of his finds to dealers, but kept his choicest items in storage. “My credo was: don’t just sell it, double your money, and move on. Rather, learn why a piece is important and deserves recognition,” he says. In 1982, along with two fellow pickers—Mark Isaacson and Ralph Cutler (the latter was McDonald’s personal partner as well)—he formed the gallery Fifty/50, located on Broadway near Tenth Street, in Manhattan. The trio set the bar high for their inventory. The chief qualifier, then and now in McDonald’s eyes, was, he says, “Condition—the best example of a design in the best shape. I hate to restore things. A few nicks don’t matter—they show that the piece had a life, and we wanted to sell things to people who appreciated that life.”

The gallery soon became a kind of clubhouse for “guilty pleasure” aficionados of modernist design, from interior decorators, to collectors, and the furniture designers themselves. “There was no ‘defining moment’ when we organized Fifty/50. The gallery’s development was the result of a pro-





The living, dining, and kitchen areas pivot around a grand stone fireplace. The furniture at left includes a pair of armchairs by the Dutch designer Hein Stolle, a floor lamp by Philip Johnson and Richard Kelly, and a Noguchi rocking stool. To the right of the fireplace is a planter by Architectural Pottery below a painting by Irene Rice Pereira.

cess that was logical and gradual. We knew that the stuff was interesting and would sell," says McDonald. "We were also able to meet with many of the designers—Isamu Noguchi, Ed Wormley, and Ray Eames, for example—and with the original buyers of their work, to find out why they bought it. So we learned about the attraction of modern design from them, and not some curator. That was a special time."

"They invented the whole thing. Now mid-century is today's Chippendale," the architect Lee Mindel told the *New York Times* in 2002, speaking of the Fifty/50 group. But a shadow was cast on the gallery beginning in 1989, when Cutler died of AIDS. Isaacson was felled by the same disease in

August 1993, and McDonald closed the store within a month. An auction of Fifty/50's inventory was held, but in 1995 McDonald opened Gansevoort Gallery, in the marginal (but now ultra-hip) meat-packing district on Manhattan's lower West Side. The venture lasted seven years, until McDonald upped stakes and moved his operations to the mid-river town of Hudson. McDonald was familiar with the area. He and Cutler had had a weekend house in the nearby village of Germantown for years. McDonald named his store "330," for its address on Hudson's main drag, Warren Street, and the shop became an anchor in the town's transition from a moribund "rust belt" locale to a chic collectors' des-

tination point, where design, fashion, and jewelry emporia stand side-by-side down the length of the high street. He subsequently bought a marvelous nineteenth-century department store building on Warren, the floors of which wrap around an elegant ground-floor-to-sky-lit roof atrium.

This brings us to McDonald's current house, which he shares with his personal and business partner, Dwayne Resnick, and their dog, Stuyvesant, a friendly black Labrador retriever. The residence is located about a dozen miles east of Hudson, stands on a hilltop surrounded by woodlands, overlooking a small pond, and affords views of the distant Berkshires. The place was built in 1967 by local grandees as a summer retreat from their riverside mansion. (The heat and humidity of the Hudson River valley in July and August can often be stifling.) When

The furnishings and other objects in the house offer a perfect manifestation of McDonald's catholic appreciation of all things modern

McDonald bought the house in 2005, he set out on an extensive renovation, winterizing it and installing a new ceiling in the main living, dining, and kitchen space—which pivots around an impressive stone fireplace. The ceiling, which McDonald designed, is composed of a series of upward-tiered planks, based on the ceiling in one of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian projects:

The furnishings and other design objets d'art in the house offer a perfect manifestation of McDonald's catholic appreciation of all things modern. The centerpiece of the living room is a 1970s sectional sofa, upholstered



Above: Two bowls designed by the Finnish art potter Rut Bryk for the firm Arabia bracket a pair of anonymous Danish wooden candlesticks.

Left: In the entryway, vases by Gio Ponti stand atop an anonymous studio side table. Two enamel works by Jackson Woolley hang on the wall.

Below, left: A work in metal by the California assemblage artist John Outterbridge is placed on the mantel next to a 1930s silver-plated box from Germany and beneath a mounted slice of specimen marble.

in orange leather, by the California designer Harvey Propper. In its current configuration—it can be deployed in dozens of ways—it brackets a low table and stools designed by Wright. But as your eyes move around the room, you recognize wonderful pieces from every genre of modern design.

Mass-market: a vintage Noguchi "Fin" or "Rudder" dinette table, originally designed for Herman Miller Inc. in 1949, and a George Nelson and Associates-designed slat bench also for Herman Miller. Studio furniture: a "Wishbone" chair by the Bay Area craftsman Arthur Espenet Carpenter, an ebony Alexandre Noll bowl, as well as anonymous pieces such as a low wooden cabinet with organic-





shaped nooks and drawers, a metal-framed mirror in the form of interlaced ovals, and—standing in the foyer—a side table made of an oval slab of wood with hollowed-out container spaces mounted on slim metal legs. Late twentieth-century Italian design: Ettore Sottsass ceramics as well as the “Shift” dining table the maestro designed for Knoll in the 1980s. Mid-century Scandinavian ceramics: a vitrine in the hallway that leads to the bedrooms holds an enviable collection of pieces by masters such as Willem Kåge, Stig Lingberg, and Berndt Friberg. Classics: a Philip Johnson and Richard Kelly standing lamp, first designed for Johnson’s famed Glass House in 1953. American studio ceramics: wonderful mid-century examples of the work of the genius ceramists Maija

The eclectic furnishings serve as proof of how sympathetically, McDonald says, “things from the 1920s to the present work together”

Grotell and Leza McVey. Contemporary: a sprightly chandelier by the Japanese glassmaker Iino Naho composed of colorful glass “balloons” that the buyer, in accordance to his or her whim, affixes to a stainless-steel armature.

McDonald also has, to this mind, the coolest bathrooms in the world. They include such items as a 1930s Henry Dreyfuss-designed “Neovogue” sink, an enviable assortment of art photographs, including works by Diane Arbus, Larry Clark, and Robert Mapplethorpe, as well as vintage Murano glass and, mounted above one tub, a sampling of—be still my heart—the bubble-shaped enameled metal tiles by artist Stefan Knapp that once graced the facade of the Alexander’s department store in midtown Manhattan, a building demolished in 1999 to make way for the Bloomberg News tower.

As McDonald acknowledges, the eclectic furnishings serve as proof of how sympathetically “things from the 1920s to the present day work together.” At the same time, he adds that the pieces he lives with are not ultra-precious. “I don’t want to be surrounded with furniture that is super rare and needs to be conserved carefully,” he says. “I want my home to be livable.”

This last remark hints at the reason McDonald will divest much of his collection in a March 10 sale at Sotheby’s in New York. “I’m less and less engaged by the day-to-day details of the business. And frank-





ly I'm tired of moving stuff around—things that require a great deal of custodial care," he says. "I'm nearly sixty years old, after all. I want to enjoy my hobbies: travel, tennis, gardening." The auction will include pristine works of design such as an exemplary Eames storage unit from the 1950s, a circa 1934 Kem Weber "Airline" chair, and works from design hall of fame members Noguchi, Wright, Rudolph Schindler, and Tapio Wirkkala, as well as jewelry from Art Smith and Claire Falkenstein. Many are among his dearest holdings. "If I didn't put up things I've held onto longest," he explains, "it would look like I was just dumping inventory."

McDonald says he wants to ratchet back, and focus on a more relaxed career, helping collectors build their holdings of designer jewelry and fine art. Will he then cease to be a major force in the modern design market? McDonald just shrugs. So I shake my Magic 8 Ball, seeking a forecast. The answer: "All Signs Point to No." **M**

Facing page, left: An anonymous American hooked rug runs the length of the hallway from the kitchen to the bedrooms. The bar stools were designed by Philip Johnson for the Four Seasons restaurant in Manhattan, and the triangular metal device above the oven was made by architect Bruce Goff.

Facing page, right: In the master bedroom, the bedspread is a handwoven piece by Marianne Strengell, head of the weaving and textiles department at the Cranbrook Academy of Art from 1942 to 1961. A Sottsass vase stands on a Wright "Usonian" table. The artworks are a John McLaughlin oil, left, and a numbered print by Bridget Riley.

This page: The master bath contains an array of Venetian and Finnish glass pieces, left, and a Robert Willson glass sculpture, foreground right. A group of enameled metal bubbles that once graced the facade of Alexander's department store in Manhattan is reflected in the mirror.



THE WHITE ALBUM

BY LINDA OKEEFFE

Musing on the power of his signature color, architect RICHARD MEIER offers a short roster of favorite products and places that demonstrate the sublime effects of whiteness.

WHITENESS is one of the most memorable characteristics of Richard Meier's buildings. As a result, his architectural heritage is often traced back to high modernists of the 1920s such as Le Corbusier, who proselytized about the aesthetic virtues of all things whitewashed. Paradoxically, Le Corbusier's body of work was predominantly colorful, a fact the period's black-and-white photography disguised.

By comparison, Meier is the real deal. Over the course of four decades, he has consistently sheathed the offices, churches, museums, and houses he designs in his signature color. "I use white to clarify architectural concepts and heighten the power of visual form," he says. "It aids me in my primary preoccupation, which is the molding of space and light."

Meier also differs from devout modernists, who viewed white walls as a redemptive, intellectual triumph over color's almost vulgar, seductive powers. "For me, white is expansive," he says. "It most effectively reflects the passing colors of nature; the green grass, the blue sky, the autumn leaves. Rather than choosing one color, which would remain static, white allows for the full spectrum of colors to manifest itself in a building."

Meier received a Pritzker Prize in 1984, around the time he participated in the housewares firm Swid Powell's famed architect-designed tableware collection and, consequently, launched his first furniture collection with Knoll International. He has since designed everything from champagne cases to menorahs, pens to pianos, watches to tea sets. Whether he works in sterling silver, pewter, crystal, or wood his products are always pure marriages of beauty and function. "They should work perfectly in all environments," he says, "and be useful, yet elegant, and help to create a sense of event."

If the "perfect" customized white shirts he has had on standing order for more than thirty years are an indicator, Meier will never tire of wearing white, using it in his own work, or admiring it in the work of others, with an occasional proviso. "If there's one thing I hate," he says, "it's a Barcelona chair upholstered in white leather. That chair, very simply in my opinion, is meant to be black."

Facing page: **The interior of one of Meier's houses in a complex on Turkey's Bodrum Peninsula**



The seventeen-inch-diameter white marble platter Meier designed for the Belgian company When Objects Work is both elegant and functional. "I see it as a centerpiece, holding everything from vegetables to nuts to fruits to candles," he says. Along with a black walnut tray, crystal tumblers, a glass bonbonnerie, and silver candlesticks, it will debut this year.



Lella and Massimo Vignelli designed their curvy weather-resistant chair for the international design firm Heller in 2006 to be constructed from one piece of injected molded nylon resin. "In my mind, the Vignellis can do no wrong," says Meier, "and this outdoor chair has a simple, strong, and handsome presence."

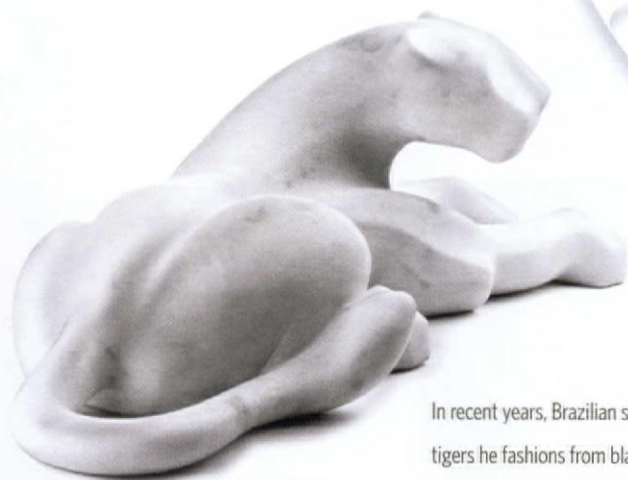


A tablewares collection Meier conceived in the late 1980s for the Bavarian porcelain firm Hutchenreuther remained at the prototype stage for several years. Between the crystal bowls and vases and the porcelain place settings, tureens, and gravy boats, the coffeepot particularly exemplifies Meier's preference for strict, geometric shapes. "Everything I design derives from a consideration of function," he says. "In this case, can you grip the handle easily? Does it pour well?"



Meier, who has designed sheets and “bed wares” for Cannon Mills and textiles for the German firm Pausa, sees New York textile designer Jack Lenor Larsen’s drapery and upholstery fabrics as unparalleled. “He is unbelievably creative, unique and innovative,” says Meier, as he visualizes the soft folds that will fall in white Larsen linen once it is draped over a white sofa.

Boutique hotelier Ian Schrager commissioned Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron to design an enclave of apartments, including house-sized triplex units, in Manhattan’s Noho district that incorporate all the luxurious amenities of a five-star hotel, a concept Meier finds ingenious. “What can be bad about this room?” he says. “I mean, it’s all white! I’m drawn to the abstract quality of the light and the experience of height. And the way the stair is hidden but actively directs the energy through the space.”



In recent years, Brazilian sculptor Leopoldo Martins has become known for the walking and reclining tigers he fashions from blackened bronze, white resin, or marble. “This sculpture is about to be delivered to my house at the beach and I’ll place it somewhere in my garden. Maybe by the swimming pool but more likely under a tree where people can discover it,” says Meier. “Either way, it will be grounded. Sculptures should never just float in space.”

Royal palms flank the approach to the Neugebauer house, which Meier completed in Naples, Florida, in 1998. The property fans out to a lap pool and Doubloon Bay beyond, and the all-white interiors are "open, transparent and filled with light," says Meier. "They call for you to sit, read, talk to your friends, have a drink."



Attention to detail is prime in the inaugural furniture collection of Ana Meier—the architect's daughter—and Charlie Ferrer, who are based in Los Angeles. Case in point is the cashmere drawer liner in their walnut, whitewashed ash, and stainless steel "Katherine" desk. "All the pieces are contemporary, useful, comfortable, and beautifully designed," says Meier. "and, even more to the point, I haven't seen anything remotely like them before."



Meier finds the sleek design, technological innovation, and precise functionality of a Bulthaup kitchen particularly pleasing. Just as Bulthaup champions a reductive aesthetic by eschewing superfluous detailing on its cabinetry, Meier is firmly against cluttered countertops. "Get rid of it all!" he says. "A good kitchen provides more than enough storage space for the things you are not actually using."



Meier envisioned the village of thirty houses he designed on the Bodrum Peninsula in Turkey as a contemporary tribute to the classical age's white architecture. The project, an amalgam of five different house designs each attached to a generously sized garden with views of the Aegean, is due for completion this summer.



Italian architect Cini Boeri's "Bebop" couch for the Italian-based furnishings company Poltrona Frau's 2010 collection has solid beech construction and buttery leather upholstery. "A sofa is a very difficult thing to purchase and Poltrona Frau's craftsmanship and quality are superb," says Meier. "This sofa looks eminently comfortable, which is important because it invites people to sit down. And the non-uniformity of its cushions means that no one is both sitting and leaning back into a crevice."

Thanks to its size and rounded corners, the dining table at Meier's Upper East Side Manhattan apartment comfortably seats twelve. Like the oversized desk in his midtown office, it is constructed from a thick slab of white lacquer, a material he finds pleasing because of its reflective and tactile qualities.





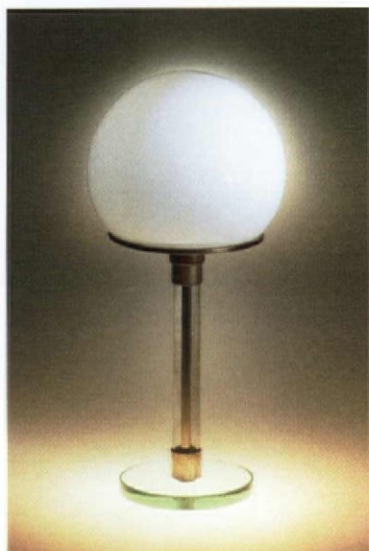
Meier's preoccupation with white and light are highly evident in the design of his most recent wristwatch for the Markuse Corporation. It is called the High Museum watch because its partially opaque glass face, steel bezel, and white leather band reference the white porcelain-enameled steel panels that clad the white, light-filled galleries in Meier's award-winning High Museum of Art in Atlanta.

13

Along with purity of form, whiteness, whether from stucco, exposed concrete, or stone, is an attribute common to the built work of Spanish architect and teacher Alberto Campo Baeza. "Alberto is a perfectionist," says Meier. "I love the relationship between the podium and the stone wall in this house. And I love the way the house so clearly relates to nature and is so obviously manmade."



14



Meier considers the 1924 design of the "Bauhaus" lamp by Carl Jucker and Wilhelm Wagenfeld to be timeless. "I have one of these in my bedroom and it's solid and classic," he says.

15

MODERNISM

A photograph of a train carriage interior, likely a first-class or luxury carriage. The walls are covered in dark, polished wood paneling with Art Deco motifs. On the left, there is a small table with a glass of water and a bottle. In the center, a chair with a patterned seat cushion is visible. To the right, a bunk bed is partially visible, with a ladder leading up to the top bunk. The overall atmosphere is one of classic elegance and luxury.

on the Orient-Express

The mystique surrounding the world's most famous train often ignores the splendor of its period art deco interiors

by Bella Neyman



For a modernist architect, a commission for a *Gesamtkunstwerk*—German for a “total work of art,” one that gives the designer control over the structure, the interior finishes, and the furnishings—is the Holy Grail of opportunities. For design enthusiasts the notion of spending time in such an environment is also a dream: a “to do” on their bucket list. Because the roster of such places open to the public is small, and

Facing page: A René Prou-designed cabin suite, with a view into the sleeping compartment, on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express. The lacquered panels and doors are decorated with a plaster-of-Paris inlay in a motif known as “Sapelli Pearl.”

This page, left: René Lalique’s glass panel is part of a triptych mounted in the dining car. Right: The trademark blue exterior

of the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express cars are emblazoned with the brass crest of the train line’s founding company.



Nagelmackers was inspired to build the first ever international luxury train after witnessing how advanced and comfortable train travel was in the United States

visits often require long-term reservations and travel to off-the-beaten-path spots (Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater may be the best-known example), the closest one normally gets to such an interior is a museum installation. But an egalitarian (if expensive) opportunity to enjoy a modernist *Gesamtkunstwerk* does exist today. All one has to do is buy a ticket and step on board the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express.

The name Orient-Express is synonymous with elegance, opulence, and (thanks to Agatha Christie) intrigue. It conjures up images of a bygone era: elegant women in fur stoles and cloche hats, men in tuxedos smoking cigars, all enjoying cocktails in the bar car of the train with the distinctive blue carriages emblazoned with a brass crest of lions rampant. While the Orient-Express first began to operate in 1883, the 1920s were the most glamorous period of luxury train travel, and the Orient-Express was the world's most glamorous train.

The Orient-Express was the brainchild of Georges Nagelmackers, the son of a Belgian banker with ties to the rail-

way industry. Nagelmackers was inspired to build the first ever international luxury train, which would carry passengers from Paris to Constantinople, after witnessing how advanced and comfortable train travel was in the United States (the sleeping cars he admired were designed by the American George Mortimer Pullman). On his return home Nagelmackers secured financial assistance from a family acquaintance, King Leopold II of Belgium (who, it cannot go without mention, was perhaps the most ruthless European colonialist of record, securing a personal fortune from the ivory and rubber trade of the Congo while torturing, mutilating, and treating the native populace as serfs).

Nagelmackers established his Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits et des Grand Express Européens (International Sleeping Car and Grand European Express Company) in 1876. The company's train cars, which included Pullmans (day cars) as well as sleeping cars, were built by the best manufacturers in Europe and no expense was spared, ensuring that the Compagnie Wagons-Lits would always be associated with luxury travel. The initial route was from Paris to Giurgiu, a Romanian city on the Danube, where travelers transferred to two ferries and another train, before arriving in Constantinople. In 1888 a direct railway from Paris to Constantinople was completed. When the first bore of the twelve-mile-long Simplon rail tunnel between Switzerland and Italy opened in 1906, the company was able to add more routes, and still more after the second bore was completed in 1921, at which point the train was renamed the Simplon Orient-Express.

By the early 1920s the art deco style had become the *dernier cri* in fashionable design, and the Compagnie Wagons-Lits built its most lavish coaches. The most important names in French decorative arts were hired to give the Orient-Express a makeover.



Facing page, top: Another Prou-designed cabin suite features twin beds and large stylized floral inlays along with the "Sapelli Pearl" motif.

Facing page, bottom: This Simplon-Orient-Express poster by Jacques Daviel de la Nézière appeared in 1927. It is in the collection of Mark J. Weinbaum, of New York City.

This page, above: The upper berth in a double cabin is lowered by day and swings back against the wall, turning the two berths into a sofa.

Left: This spacious lavatory designed by Prou in 1929 was part of sleeping car 3544 on an earlier iteration of the Orient-Express, and remains on the train today. Lalique "Tulip" light fixtures are mounted above the marble countertop.



René Prou—considered one of the earliest proponents of deco modernism—was responsible for the design of four hundred compartments between 1926 and 1929, the most luxurious being for the Luxe sleeping cars, with ten compartments each. In 1912, only four years after graduating from the prestigious École Bernard Palissy, Prou had been praised as the “first decorator of the modern taste.” By 1928, when he was named artistic director of Pomone, the decorating division of the Parisian department store Au Bon Marché, he was recognized as one of the leading architect-designers of the period. The Luxe compartments included a seating area with a divan with cream-colored upholstery in geometric patterns, a sleeping area with a pull-down bed bunk and mahogany night table, and a washbasin

hidden behind bowed lacquered doors. One sleeping car had a commodious lavatory with a large sink and a marble countertop. (Rumor has it that during World War II this lavatory was used as a brothel in Limoges.)

The compartments were decorated

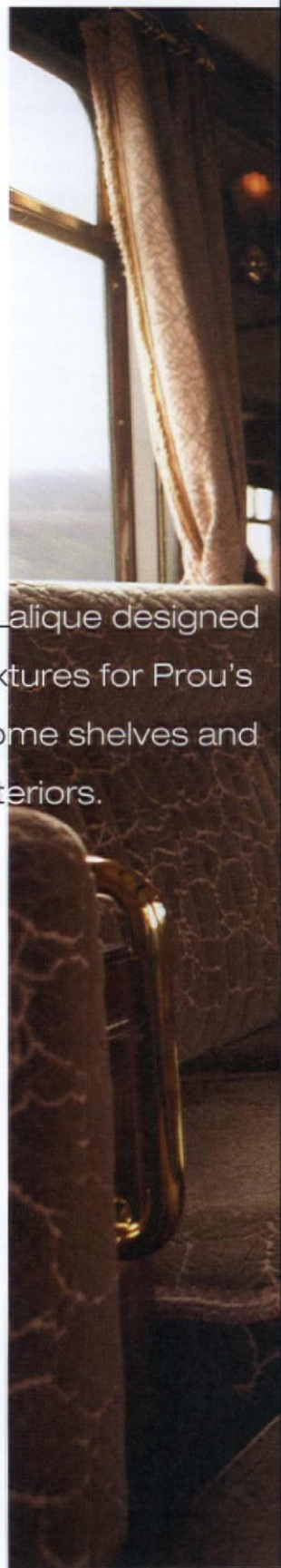
The glass master René Lalique designed the elegant “Tulip” light fixtures for Prou’s compartments, and chrome shelves and fittings completed the interiors.

with opulent restraint. The lacquered doors and wall panels were ornamented with stylized floral motifs—not unlike what one would expect to see on a Raoul Dufy textile or an Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann cabinet. While ivory was usually used in such parquetry, Prou’s floral motif, called the “Sapelli Pearl,” is inlaid in plaster of Paris—possibly because ivory was considered too fragile. The glass master René Lalique designed the elegant “Tulip” light fixtures for Prou’s compartments, and chrome shelves and fittings completed the interiors.

Prou’s compartments for the Compagnie Wagons-Lits were not his only large transportation-related commission. He was also responsible for interiors on fifteen ocean liners (including the grandest of them all, the *Normandie* in 1935). By the time Prou’s train cars hit the tracks in 1929 he had stylistically moved on too. According to specialist Gary Calderwood, owner of Philadelphia’s Calderwood Gallery, which has an important collection of Prou furniture, “René Prou’s designs for the Orient-Express trains hark back more to the aesthetic of his work for the Exposition Internationale des Arts



This trio of molded and acid-decorated glass panels mounted in Cuban mahogany, was designed by Lalique in 1928 and executed in 1929. They were originally part of the Lalique Pullman—dining car 4141—and are installed in the dining car of the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express today.





The Bar Car, originally built in 1931 for the Simplon-Orient-Express, is known today as the Piano Bar Car, and was re-imagined in 1981 by the late French designer Gérard Gallet.

Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, held in Paris in 1925, than to his more modernist work of the early 1930s.”

Lalique’s contribution to the Orient-Express went beyond the small “Tulip” light fixtures. His pièces de résistance were the magnificent molded-glass panels that grace dining car 4141, also known as the Lalique Pullman. Depicting “Bacchanalian maidens”—nude neoclassical figures holding grapes—and a flute player, they are complemented by smaller panels of grapes and vines, all set into the mahogany walls. Lalique designed the panels in 1928 and they were installed a year later, and the car was immediately put into service on the Côte d’Azur-Pullman train to the French Riviera and other highly desirable routes, such as the Sud Express to Spain, the Etoile du Nord to Amsterdam, and the Deauville Express (which acquired a somewhat louche reputation as the only train with sleeping cars that left Paris in the afternoon). This was not Lalique’s first project for the Compagnie Wagons-Lits. In 1923 he decorated the sleeping car of French president Alexandre Millerand.

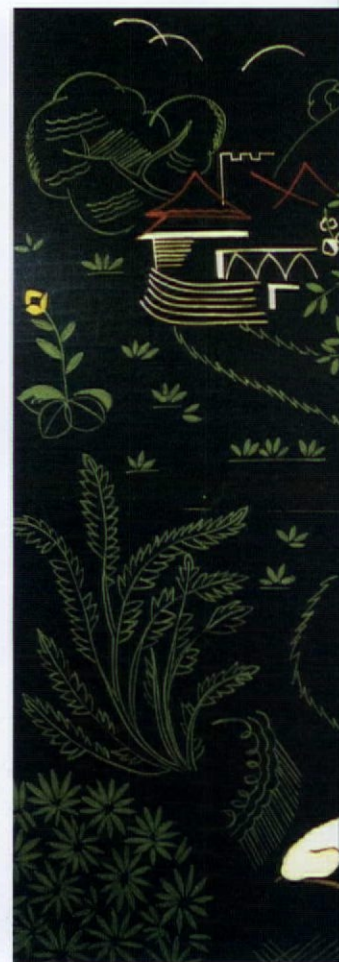
A number of equally handsome Pullman cars on the Simplon Orient-Express were built by leading British firms such as Morison and Company and Maple and Company. Their decoration is in the somewhat subtle British art deco style, with marquetry panels of more naturalistic floral bouquets

Prou was also responsible for interiors on fifteen ocean liners including the grandest of them all, the *Normandie*

or landscapes, and metalwork with matching floral motifs. The marquetry work was carried out by Albert Dunn, whose family business closed just within the last decade. At the time Maple and Company was the largest furniture store in the world and had established itself as a leading furniture manufacturer and retailer in England. The most interesting British car was certainly the Ibis, a kitchen car built in Birmingham in 1925 that ran on the Milan to Venice route and was also part of the aforementioned Deauville Express (whose blue cars inspired Serge Diaghilev to commission the ballet *Le Train Bleu*). The Ibis was decorated with marquetry medallions of Greek dancing girls.


Today it is possible to travel like it is 1929 because a number of original Orient-Express train cars have been refurbished, after having been taken off the track in May 1977. At a Sotheby’s Monte Carlo auction in October of that year, James Sherwood, president of Sea Containers Group, purchased two of the five cars offered, and then, with a specialized team of engineers, designers, and railway connoisseurs, set about locating other original cars, with the aim of putting them back in service by May 1982. Thus the Orient-Express was reborn as the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express—com-

posed of original Pullmans as well as Compagnie Wagons-Lits sleeping cars (including some of Prou’s) and the Lalique Pullman. The cars were entirely dismantled and reassembled, and all the original materials were meticulously restored. Before the family firm went out of business Albert Dunn’s son, Bob, worked on the restoration of the marquetry panels created by his father, having discovered the latter’s original notes and drawings. One notable beauty is the Voiture Chinoise, a dining car of about 1927 with black lacquer panels decorated with primitive drawings of colorful animals.



Perhaps travel on the Orient-Express will inspire one to collect objects of design, as it did Calouste Gulbenkian, whose unparalleled decorative arts holdings include prized works by Lalique. And if one is not fortunate enough to live this dream, then the Chanel No. 5 commercial, starring the French actress Audrey Tatou who wanders the train searching for her lost love, will have to suffice. ■

Bella Neyman is a design historian based in New York who had the opportunity to tour the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express while on her honeymoon



Four examples of the decorative detailing on the Orient-Express, counterclockwise from top left: **Floral marquetrie designed by René Prou** for sleeping car 3309, built in Belgium in 1926. A marquetrie medallion of a Greek dancing girl, located in the Ibis car, built in Birmingham, England, in 1925 (one of the oldest cars that make up the train today). Black lacquer panel from the Voiture Chinoise, a dining car built in Britain, c. 1927. Flower basket marquetrie by Albert Dunn is mounted above a table in the Etoile du Nord dining car, built in Birmingham in 1927.

Except as noted, images are courtesy of Orient-Express Trains and Cruises. Several originally appeared in Shirley Sherwood's *Venice Simplon Orient-Express: The Return of the World's Most Celebrated Train* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1983).



RHYTHM AND FORM
IN THE WORK OF
GERRIT RIETVELD
AND DONALD JUDD

BEAT



BY MICHAEL BOYD



he language of music and the language of visual design are interchangeable at times.

When speaking about interval, rhythm, ratio, counterpoint, scale, phrasing, cadence, harmony, and so on, one could easily be speaking of either Debussy or Brancusi.

Both Gerrit Rietveld, the Dutch architect and designer, who lived from 1888 to 1964, and the American artist Donald Judd, who was born in 1928 and died in 1994, explored

form in sculpture, architecture, and design using the vehicle of the “box.” Contrary to popular impressions, both were intuitive creators within a reductive language. They were not systematic or overly mathematical. Sol

LeWitt’s works could be called exhaustive explorations—bordering on scientific. The work of Josef Albers, although occasionally sublime, was overly mathematical at times. Op Art, the 1960s movement that was preoccupied with the science of seeing, attempted to make mathematics visible. The entire movement was ill conceived.

Rietveld and Judd, however, created without descending into banal formulas. Mariachi music, for example, is structured in such a way that one can stop anywhere in a composition and

know what the next chord will be. This kind of predictability does not surprise or delight. It merely reinforces stability and conveys a rambling heaviness. All delicacy is lost. It is difficult to avoid being too simple on the one hand, or too complex on the other, within the constructivist idiom. Both Rietveld and Judd made what I think of as “musical” choices with their miters and welds. There are solids and voids—or, in musical terms, beats and rests—in their design

work that create rhythm. The iconic Judd stack (made of boxes—or beats, if you will) depends on the silent passages (or spaces, or rests) for its enduring success. Rietveld’s 1924 Schröder House



Facing page: “Elling” buffet table designed by Gerrit Rietveld in 1919. Beechwood and paint. This page, left: Chair by Donald Judd, 1993. Mahogany plywood. This page, right: “Red-Blue” chair designed by Rietveld, 1918. Painted wood.

utilizes corner windows that can completely disappear, creating a similar balance between what's there and what isn't.

Both Judd and Rietveld repeatedly riff within their projects, and the effect is, to my mind, quite musical. Clearly there was a sense of correctness that pervaded their artistic goals, present in every detail—but intuition and experimentation were the leading forces. For all of the discussion of the detach-



Inset: An interior of the Judd Foundation, 101 Spring Street, New York, shows Rietveld "Zig-Zag" chairs surrounding a Judd table. **Background:** View of Group 12 of "15 Untitled Works in Concrete" by Donald Judd, at the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas, 1980-1984.

ment and analytics of these two artists' works, a simple and humble truth shines forth: the physical and the mental cannot be separated. There is no mind/body problem. In fact, the work is only considered done when there is no problem of this kind remaining. The finished Rietveld or Judd piece arises from the working out of these very kinks. A "oneness," an "all-overness," is the desired effect. The works are certainly meant to yield further discovery over time and space. Walking around a Judd work or a Rietveld house is essential for discovering additional layers of meaning,

but there is a sense that what you first see is not only primary, but immediate and total.

Though Rietveld worked mostly as a cabinet-maker and architect in the Netherlands early in the twentieth century, and Judd worked mostly as a sculptor in the United States from the 1960s into the 1990s, there is a shared point-of-view: a minimalist perspective using a right-angled, constructivist, planar vocabulary. The work of Rietveld and Judd is guided by a desire to create anti-illusionist space and objects. But at the same time, the voids in the works act atmospherically, much like the trumpet solos of Miles Davis. There are strong structural underpinnings, yet the work is full of adventurous experimentation and improvisational flights of lucidity, even within extremely limited parameters.

I am mixing metaphors between visual and musical arts, I know, but what I am getting at is this: many people are put off, or threatened by, the apparent lack of "feeling" in the work of Rietveld and Judd. The same cliché has been used when referring to Mondrian's paintings. Super-graphic reproductions in books do not do justice to the paintings themselves and are no indication of what it's like to stand in front of one. Anyone who has studied the surface and texture of Mondrian's canvases in person knows that they are creaky, haunting, and highly idiosyncratic. In fact, Mondrian's paintings, like Rietveld's and Judd's offerings, have an enormous dose of human frailty encoded in them. In Judd's own words, recently cited



by the art critic Roberta Smith at a symposium on Judd's writings: "There is a certain very nice quality in some art and literature that is calm and friendly, even light, and absolutely realistic about the nature of humanity and of life. It's not cold at all or very somber and certainly not nostalgic; it's very much about being alive."

Not everyone sees the works of Rietveld and Judd as friendly, but the starkness and reduction of the works can act as a *tabula rasa*. A new understanding stems from starting with nothing and adding as little as possible. Although Judd denounced the term "minimal art," it is easy to see why the moniker was used: What is the least that can be added to nothing to capture and sustain interest?

Curiously, in the work of Gerrit Rietveld and Donald Judd one sees that what was progressive in 1918 was also progressive in 1965. And most relevantly, the idea of tasteful, intelligent reduction is still progressive today. It is still running against the art current to pare down and edit, to find tranquility and transportation and transcendence in inanimate boxes and planes, and the relationships between them. Factoring out the social and cultural dimensions, and reducing things to a pure, luminous beauty, appears to be a perpetually new phenomenon.

In the 1960s Sol LeWitt, an inveterate collector, and a friend of Judd, mentioned to him that Rietveld's furniture was still being produced by the assistant who had been with Rietveld since 1918, Gerard van der Groenekan. Judd and LeWitt sought out Van der Groenekan in Utrecht, and Judd ordered a "Berlin" chair (designed 1923),

a "Red-Blue" chair (designed 1918), a series of "Zig-Zag" chairs (designed 1934)—the latter still in situ at the Judd Foundation in New York City. Judd also subsequently collected some vintage "Beugelstoels" (designed 1927).


Judd's private life was mostly a mystery to the public. Since his death much has been written and said about his compound in Marfa, Texas, about the Spring Street cast-iron building he owned in the Soho neighborhood of New York, about Eichholteren, the 1940s Swiss hotel on the shore of Lake Lucerne he renovated beginning in 1989. But when his book *Raume Spaces* was released in 1994, the world saw a behind-the-scenes portrait of Judd's vision directly for the first time. Rietveld obviously occupied an important place in the Juddian universe.

Possessions appeared to be few, mostly hidden. Judd's own artworks and furniture designs were dominant, but room (both physically and psychologically) was made in his permanent installations to accommodate the Rietveld masterpieces. There was a dialogue that Judd want-

The Schröder House in Utrecht was designed by Rietveld in 1924.

■ **WHAT IS THE LEAST
THAT CAN BE ADDED
TO NOTHING TO
CAPTURE AND
SUSTAIN INTEREST** ■





This page: "Hoge Stoel"
designed by Rietveld,
1919. Stained and painted
panga-panga wood.
Facing page: Slant chair by
Judd, 1989. Pine.

■ **IF ONE CAN TRULY
EXTEND THE EXIST-
ING LANGUAGE OF AN
ALREADY WORKING,
ELEGANT SYSTEM,
ONE SHOULD JUMP AT
THE CHANCE** ■

ed to engage in with Rietveld and the world. There is a powerful conceptual dimension to these related pieces. Just as with contemporary designers such as the Campana Brothers and Franz West, who theoretically ask questions of their audiences, and have ideas hovering above the material objects, Judd was making a statement and a choice. He wanted to echo Rietveld (the outer dimensions of his most often used chair form are almost identical to that of Rietveld's Zig-Zag chair)—but he also wanted to extrapolate. The idea is that seeking novelty for its own sake is a waste of time and potentially sends one in the wrong direction. It is difficult enough to create something good, or better yet, of lasting quality. If one can truly extend the existing language of an already working, elegant system, one should jump at the chance.

Judd started as an outspoken critic. He was a writer and artist whose total production was founded on resolute rejection: the rejection of illusionist space, the rejection of narrative, the rejection of the pedestal, the rejection of the museum exhibition space—in short, the rejection of arbitrary subjectivism. From his omissions and avoidances, a picture emerges.

Of course Mondrian and Rietveld had come to these same conclusions half a century before, but Judd broke away from the push-pull asymmetry in composition that had almost become synonymous with modern art. Hans Hofmann, who solidified this tenet, disseminated the notion to Ray Eames and many other designers and artists. It was everywhere. From Calder to Neutra to Prouvé, asymmetry was the way. Therefore, Judd's introduction of symmetry into the planar, constructivist lan-



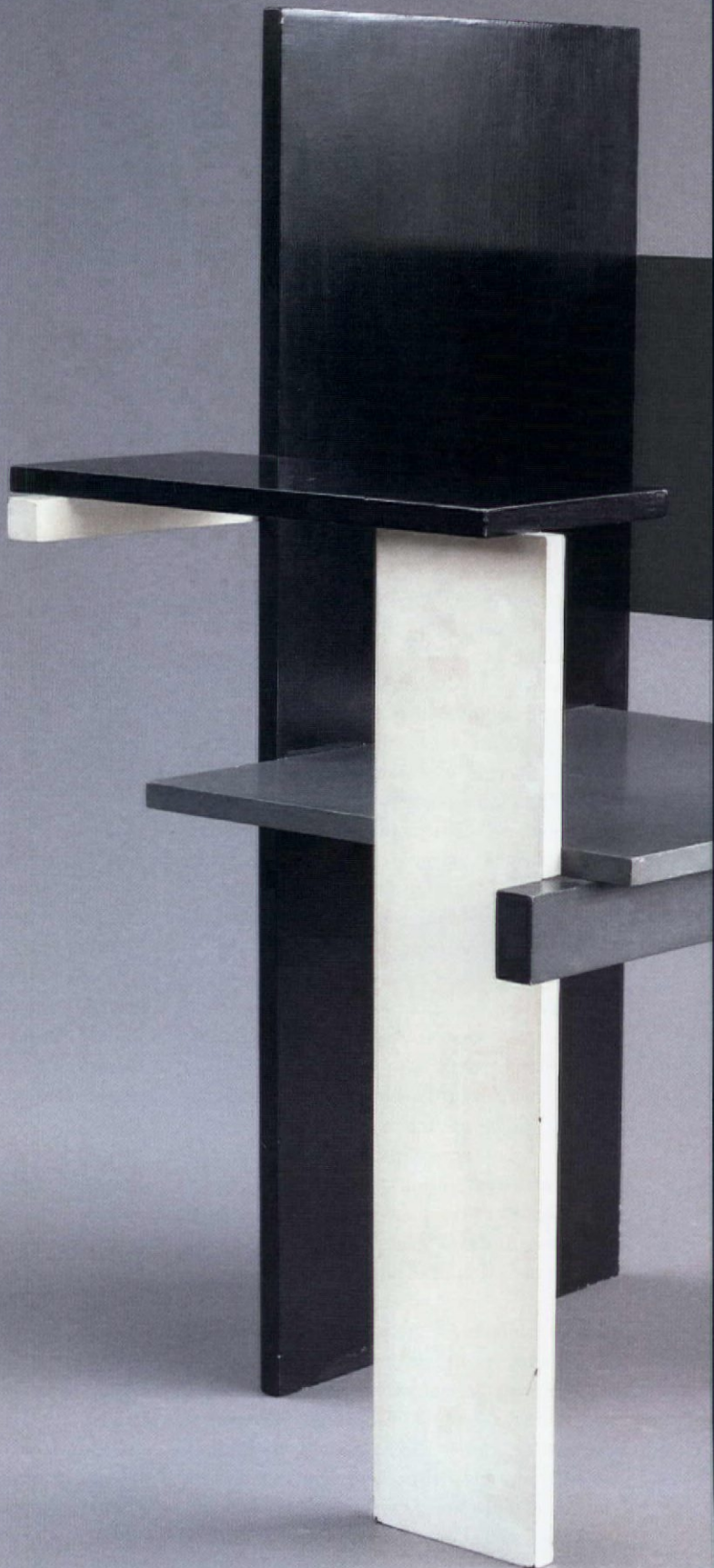
guage was seminal. His work must have looked so strange at the time, just as Rietveld's "Red-Blue" chair must have astonished, dazzled, and shocked everyone in 1918—there simply was no precedent for it. The radicalism of embracing symmetry—such a simple gesture—is a testament to Judd's doing the most with the least.

Judd also loved the work of Rudolph Schindler, and even had some of his furniture designs fabricated. In the Whyte building in Judd's Marfa complex the interior scheme is entirely furnished with Schindler pieces. Low-slung and modern—they could have been Judd's. The Schindler idea that the pursuit of plain planes was worthy, even noble, appealed to Judd. There is a core philosophy shared here with Rietveld—it's all about ideas, not monuments. Schindler, Rietveld, and Judd all practiced a kind of intelligent and unpretentious empiricism. Egotism is left out of the equation so that universal solutions may be sought without the typical crosstalk. When compared to the fleeting irony of today's contemporary design climate, this mastery seems positively eternal.

Although Judd designed chairs that extended the groundwork already laid out by Riet-

veld, he went on to introduce a sort of contemporary art sensibility. The “art chair” or the “sitting sculpture” is *not* the premise. The premise is that if you follow a path of purist abbreviation in your practice, physically you end up with the minimal number of components—but, more importantly, spiritually you end up with the clearest and most honest expression. There is also a conceptual art undercurrent: in some sense the *idea* of a chair, the *idea* of space, is just as important to the work as its overt physicality. In fact, like his friend LeWitt, Judd, in the beginning, tried to adapt his sculpture to furniture and found that it both de-based the art and produced awkward furniture. He abandoned this approach at once, and followed Rietveld’s cue for his furniture designs. Judd also developed architecture with a similar bent. He rehabbed many structures and buildings in Marfa by accepting things already in place and doing the minimum—with transformational effects.

■ **THE COURAGEOUS
ACT OF CHARGING AT
TRUTH WITH THE
SIMPLEST OF MEANS
CAN CREATE RADICAL
ARTWORKS ■**



Like Rietveld, Judd went on to influence architecture in important ways. Judd's architecture of default, where intervention is minimal for maximum effect, pioneered at his Marfa compound and his Eichholteren project in Switzerland, remains central to the philosophies of architects working today. Peter Zumthor, Herzog and de Meuron, and John Pawson, among others, have taken much from Judd. And Rietveld's Schröder House has had a lasting impact on architects and artists alike. It is a 3-D poem that moves and breathes, and, for all of its outward rigidity, is fully adaptable and acquiescent. Judd and Rietveld sought out the simplest solutions. The experience is taken in all at once: color, texture, form, space—all are operating simultaneously. When subject matter has been removed, and incident has been reduced, these elements are even more powerful and concentrated.

It is counterintuitive to think that Rietveld and Judd's fearless, yet sober, programs, built on rationalism and pragmatism, could produce artifacts of such exquisite delicacy and refined beauty. If one sees the universe as ultimately breaking down to a planar one, as these artists did, then I would suggest that the true visionary of the first half of the twentieth century is Gerrit Rietveld; of the second half, Donald Judd. With the cacophony of artistic entries of the last hundred years, it is calming to think of their provocative and enduring efforts. Musical analogies, in the end, do not call to mind Debussy, whom I mentioned at the beginning, but more likely, John Cage and his "empty" scores. Now if we can imagine it performed by a beat-box maestro on the street, tagging big block letters along a train overpass at perfect intervals intuitively, we can hear and see the vitality and urgency we are missing in today's art, architecture, and landscape design. Endless irony, inside jokes, and historical quotations are all-pervasive today. This is how I know that the reflection of troubled times and misguided values does not make for uplifting art and design. The courageous act of charging at truth with the simplest of means can create radical artworks. Time passes and the right radical works can become timeless. Together Rietveld and Judd created a highly charged, silent century. **M**

Vintage and newly-made Judd furniture is available via juddfoundation.org

Facing page, left: **Armchair by Judd, 1993. Galvanized steel.** Center: **"Berlin" chair designed by Rietveld, 1923. Painted wood.** This page: **A classic Judd "stack" assemblage, mounted in a studio at the Chinati Foundation.**





Self-taught chic

Though he never envisioned himself as such, Pierre Yovanovitch has become the Paris modernist decorator *à la mode*

BY JEAN BOND RAFFERTY
Photography by Jean-François Jaussaud

In the living area of his luminous loft-like apartment, designer Pierre Yovanovitch blends two American mid-century designs—a daybed by James Mont and a wood and cork table by Paul Frankl—with a 1930s armchair by Danish designer Flemming Lassen and his own custom sofa and rug. Inset: A view over the seventeenth-century cobbled courtyard to neighboring *hôtels particuliers* and the greenery of the Faubourg St. Germain.

While they aren't always as earth-shaking as the discovery of penicillin, happy accidents are often the stimulus of great design work. Ten years ago Pierre Yovanovitch was designing ready-to-wear garments for the Pierre Cardin fashion label. Today, at age forty-four, he is being tapped—by magazines such as *Architectural Digest*—as one of France's most exciting young interior design talents. "I had started doing my own places, then friends asked me to do theirs, and it snowballed," the Niçois native, born of a Yugoslav industrialist father and a French mother, says. "I realized that I loved doing it and opened my own design office, at first working from my kitchen. Then, jobs began to arrive from real clients and the press jumped in."



It's been pretty smooth sailing ever since, as the increasingly clean and graphic spaces he created for himself and others began regularly popping up in both French and international shelter glossies, attracting a high-flying clientele. He is currently working on sixteen commissions, including a new five-star Paris hotel. A design autodidact, he now directs an office of ten collaborators, who include five trained architects.

Tracking his personal living spaces—in the more than two decades that Yovanovitch has lived in Paris, he has moved four times—demonstrates the progression of his taste. At first he deployed eighteenth-century flavored decors that embraced Directoire furniture boldly spiced up with surrealist mirrors and art deco sculptures. Then, he turned his attention to interior architecture. With a new emphasis on volumes and materials, his style segued into sophisticated modernist plans of white walls and neutral tones, featuring striking treatments of entry halls, staircases, ceilings, and floors in totally restructured spaces.

When the designer discovered his current 2,150-square-foot abode on the top floor of a landmarked 1672 *hôtel particulier* in the Faubourg Saint Germain, no architectural reconstruc-



tion was necessary. The space's white walls had sculpted window embrasures that might have come from his own imagination, and the dramatic criss-cross of ceiling beams provided an aesthetic contrast of wood, a material that plays a major part in Yovanovitch's design schemes. Indeed, the transformation from a simple attic apartment into a luminous loft-like space took only three

The space's white walls had sculpted embrasures that might have come from his own imagination



to six months of Yovanovitch's decorative intervention. "I rehabilitated and modernized it, put in bookshelves, a new kitchen, painted the walls cream to blend with the oak beams and lightened the dark brown parquet of planks that had been rescued from railway freight cars," he explains. "This is my interpretation of *rustique chic*."

He cites the work of art deco masters Pierre Chareau and Paul Dupré-Lafon as one influence, and the geometry of Cardin's architectural approach to clothes as another. An oft-expressed admiration for seventeenth-century monastic simplicity and the designs of minimalist architect John Pawson has led to pared down interiors.

But the atmosphere might be the very definition of the warm, convivial, livable—and clean—decor Yovanovitch says he aims for in his projects. Yes, it's zen; there is certainly "no sur-abundance of objects" (which are banned from his schemes), but if it's



Facing page, bottom: When friends come to dine, Swedish 1930s sofas by Axel Einar Hjorth, left, and Otto Schultz, right, are pulled up to the table along with pair of 1950s James Mont oak side chairs. The large format photo is by American photographer Sam Samore. Facing page, top: Belgian designer Jules Wabbes's 1950 marble and bronze round table doubles as a library and dining table. Floors made of recuperated oak planks from railroad freight cars add a touch of rustic chic. This page: In the library corner, books on art, architecture, and design and a collection of rare bindings fill the shelves next to a photograph by John Coplans and a James Mont standing lamp. Two 1960s Danish pieces—a Hans Wegner desk and a Brazilian rosewood and leather chair by Tove and Edvard Kindt-Larsen—offer a chromatic counterpoint to the centuries-old oak beams.



Pictures he can't live without

In the master bedroom, contemporary art by Cameroon artist Barthélémy Toguo dominates a 1930s Danish sofa and a 1970s cork standing lamp by American designer Karl Springer. At the right, one of a pair of brushed-metal adjustable reading lights designed by Yovanovitch descends from the beams above the bed. Facing page, top: In the kitchen, spartan breakfast dining takes place on a table and chairs designed by Robert Wilson for the set of his production *Hamlet: A Monologue*. The painting is by Swiss artist-photographer Christoph Draeger. Facing page, bottom: A pale palette of white, beige, and tan emphasizes the peace and tranquility of the bedroom whose windows overlook a large garden. A small table made by Frank Lloyd Wright's son John in the 1950s, supports a lamp by Paul Laszlo of the same period. Yovanovitch designed the bamboo fiber rug, made by Ateliers Pinton. "It's fragile, but incredibly soft, and I love going barefoot," he says.

hyper-neat, it's also hyper-comfortable with sofas and armchairs bought or designed especially for this apartment and covered in luxurious textured textiles of cashmere, wool, mohair, and sheepskin.

The vast main room is seamlessly streamed into inviting living, dining, and library areas that are defined by orchestrations of exceptional Scandinavian art deco and American mid-century architect-designed furniture. His own works—a white sofa and white rug—complement the sleek oak and beige linen 1940s daybed by the American designer James Mont that stands in front of the fireplace, and a flamboyantly curvy wing chair by 1930s Danish designer Flemming Lassen, which altogether mark out the serene living space. At center stage stands a Paul Frankl 1950s cork and wood table—an example of the organic forms Yovanovitch chooses to contrast with the straight lines and strict geometry of his style.

Bookshelves are filled with tomes on art, architecture, and interior design and reveal another aesthetic pleasure, an array of works by the renowned artist bookbinders Paul Bonet and

Wabbes's 1950 hybrid that stands mid-height between a coffee and dining table. "When I have friends to dinner, I bring the sofas forward and add some chairs. We can be eight and it's very relaxed." The star piece on this side of the room is Swedish designer Axel Einar Hjorth's superb 1931 sofa whose scalloped curves on a high, sanded oak back caught every eye at French gallerist Eric Philippe's stand at the European Fine Arts Fair in Maastricht, Holland. "I love wood, the warmth it brings as a counterbalance to the cool of a white decor," Yovanovitch says. These beguiling pieces are more than furnishings. Like his collections, they are sources of inspiration for future projects.

At one point in our meeting, he opens a window onto some privileged greenery: a large garden with a not so small pond, adjacent to other verdant spaces in one of the greenest neighborhoods in town. "There are two ducks who come back to this pond to have their babies each year," Yovanovitch says. "It's so quiet, here. Peace, tranquility and greenery. That is luxury." ■



are casually stacked on the floor against the few walls there are

Mario Prassinis. Colorful and intricately decorated covers were designed for each volume of a collection of French and foreign literature that encompasses writers from Proust to Hemingway, some illustrated with watercolors by Kees Van Dongen. Aligned along the sofas, Yovanovitch's basketball-sized spherical cushions echo the French contemporary artist Frank Scurti's suspended sculpture of a newspaper-covered ball nestled in a Harry Bertioia wire fragment.

Contemporary art and photography play important roles in his interiors and he's an avid collector of both, but only a smattering is on show. "I have zero walls," he complains. Pictures he can't live without are casually stacked on the floor against the few walls there are. Yovanovitch admits to some dismay at the absence of a proper entry hall, but a wavy screen by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban stands by the front door as a substitute. Bohemian attitude prevailed when it came to the choice of a dining table. "I didn't want a typical version with rigidly placed chairs around it," he says. He found the solution in Belgian designer Jules

Jean Bond Rafferty is a Paris-based journalist whose work appears in numerous publications



A sampling of the sleek and snazzy vintage products and appliances given to Tulsa's Philbrook Museum of Art by George R. Kravis II

Where does a person discover the passion and dedication to become a serious collector? Well, for George R. Kravis II, it all started when he was just a kid in Tulsa. Fascinated by mechanical and electrical devices, he was constantly taking objects apart and putting them back together. "I've always been especially interested in anything that has a cord, a plug, a battery, a light, a motor—it just sort of grew from there," Kravis says, adding, "Back then you could build some good audio equip-

ment from kits by Dynaco and Heath."

As Wordsworth wrote, "The Child is Father of the Man." Kravis went on to carve a dazzling entrepreneurial career in the fields of communications and broadcasting. And along the way he built an exemplary collection of early and mid-twentieth-century

consumer products—many, naturally, are radios—in the streamlined, American take on art deco design that has come to be known as "Machine Age" style.

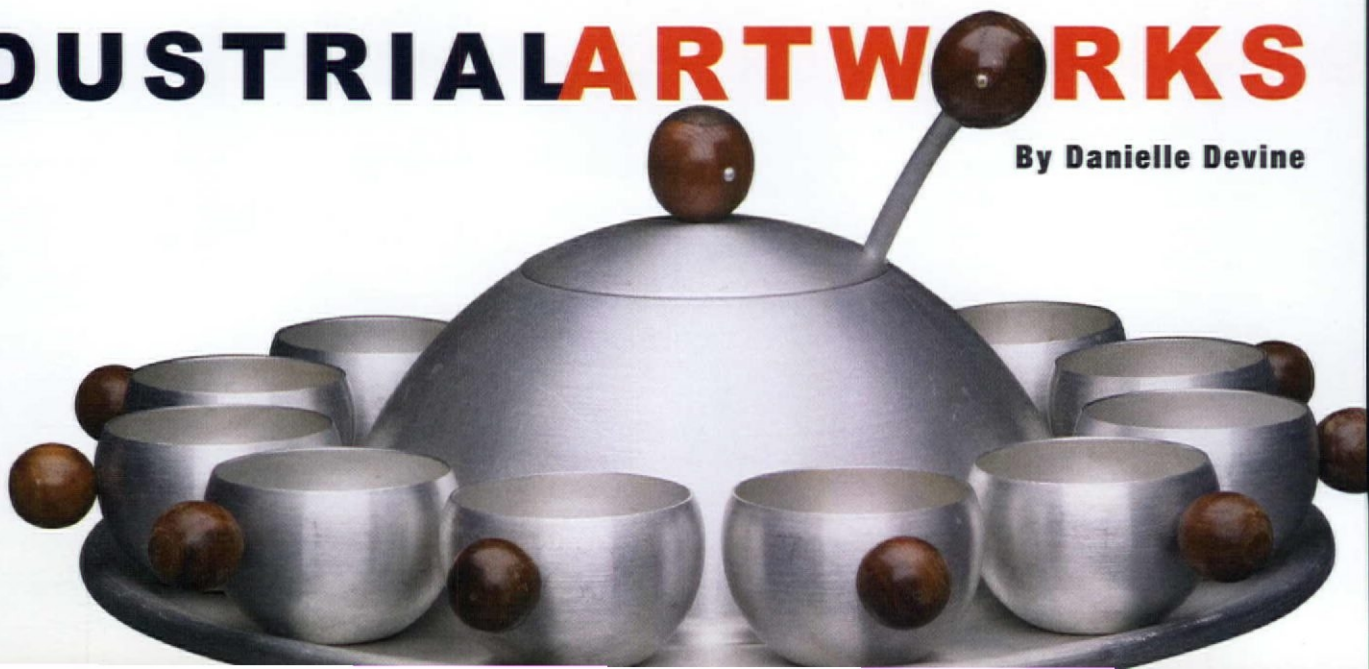
In 2008 Kravis gave Tulsa's Philbrook Museum of Art 250 objects of modern and contemporary design from his collection. The forward-looking American household objects, in the main designed in the 1930s, manifest the "world of tomorrow" look—suggestive of progress,

speed, and a better life to come. Many are made of then-new materials such as Bakelite, aluminum, Lucite, and chromium, which were used not only because they were affordable and kept production costs down, but also because the aerodynamic housings often were employed to both hide and lend a kind of glamour to the inner workings of the product.

Kravis is not only a generous donor but also a rigorous researcher who knows the history behind each of his acquisitions. Some of these are currently on view in the exhibition "Better Living by Design: Selections from the George R. Kravis II Collection" at the Philbrook. David A. Hanks, the exhibition curator, says, "The collection is unique in the sense that it really focuses on industrial design, beginning with an electric kettle designed by Peter Behrens," who many consider the first industrial designer. All the objects—with the exception of a few limited edition pieces—were mass-produced and marketed to middle-class households. The Kravis gift will be shown in its entirety in the Philbrook's new 30,000-square-foot satellite facility, designed by the New York architectural firm Gluckman Mayner Architects, set to open in 2012. What follows is a brief examination of selected items in the Kravis donation.

INDUSTRIAL ARTWORKS

By Danielle Devine





Paul T. Frank
(1887-1958)

CLOCK

Designed c. 1928
Bakelite, brushed burnished silver, chromium-plated and enameled metal
Produced by Warren Telechron Company, Ashland, Massachusetts

The Warren Telechron Company, a leading maker of electric clocks in its day, commissioned Frankl to create a "modern" clock. He responded with a scaled down version of his "Skyscraper" furnishings—a mantel clock with a stylized art deco sunburst that was made from novel materials, including Bakelite, chrome, and steel. The clock, introduced in 1929, did not sell well, in part because it required a good deal of time to manufacture—and so was very expensive. "They sold for about fifty dollars each," says Kravis, "and became known as the fifty dollar clock."



Wells Coates
(1895-1958)

RADIO MODEL NO. AD65

Designed 1932-34
Bakelite, chromium-plated metal
Produced by E. K. Cole and Company (Ekco), Southend-on-Sea, England

The black AD65 is one of Kravis's favorite radios in his collection. "I have a lot of radios, partly because of the business I was in," he says, "but also because I'm attracted to the materials being used during this time." In the 1930s American and European manufacturers sought designers who could create appropriate modern forms for radios. One of Britain's largest radio manufacturers, E. K. Cole & Co., asked architect Wells Coates to challenge the usual "wooden box" approach and design a case that could be molded and easily mass-produced on their new Bakelite presses. The radio was a huge success for the company. At the time, the brown version, simulating burl walnut, was the most popular, but today's collectors are more interested in the black plastic case with chrome knobs.



Norman Bel Geddes
(1893-1958)

"PATRIOT" RADIO

Designed 1940
Catalin plastic
Produced by Emerson Radio and Phonograph Corporation, New York, New York

"I like that Bel Geddes's radio was attainable by the masses. It only cost around \$10 or less new, and came in three different colors," says Kravis. Bel Geddes, who has been called the father of streamlining, designed cars, trains, and radios, as well as exhibition spaces for both the 1934 Century of Progress exhibition in Chicago and the 1939 World's Fair in New York. He helped promote American technology and bolster national pride during the turbulent years of the Great Depression. With its unabashedly patriotic brightly colored stars-and-stripes case, the "Patriot" radio was a symbol of American advancement in technology and industry.



Peter Behrens (1868-1940)

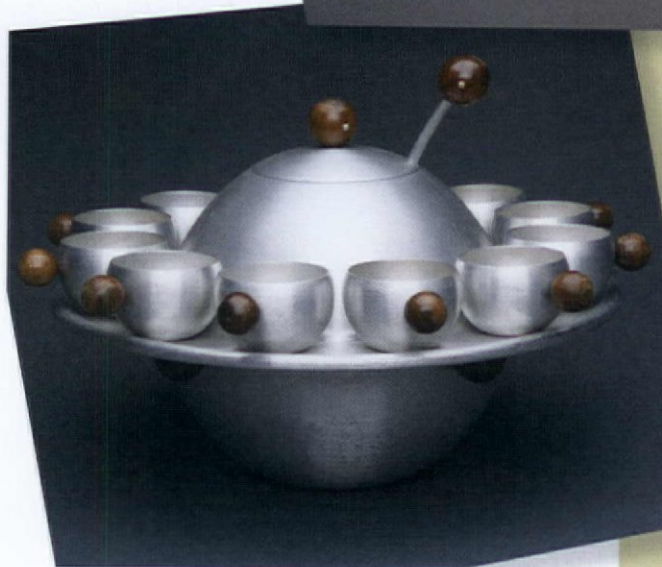
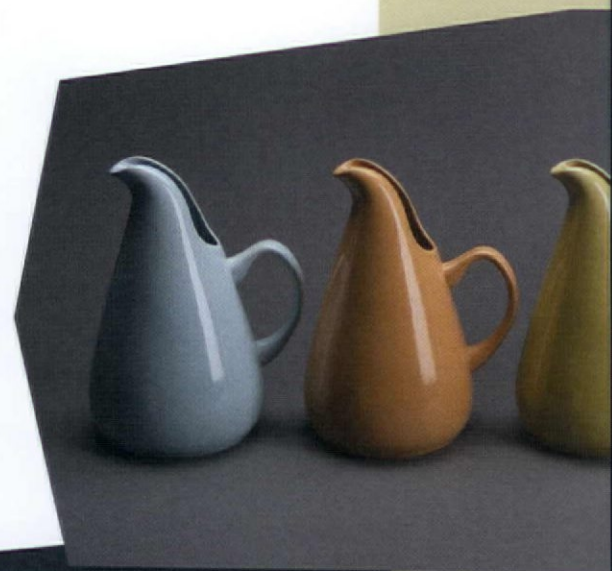
ELECTRIC KETTLE

Designed 1909

Nickel-plated brass, rattan

Produced by Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft (AEG), Berlin, Germany

"I have a lot of things by Peter Behrens. He was a wonderful designer and architect. He did everything for AEG—which would be like designing for General Electric in our country," Kravis says. The first electric kettle appeared on the market in the 1890s, but Behrens's kettle was different in that it was designed specifically for mass production, and offered consumers a wide range of choices in form and finish. It was available in three different shapes (round, oval, and octagonal), in three materials (brass, nickel-plated brass, and copper-plated brass), and three finishes (smooth, hammered, and grooved), totaling some thirty different variations. The gas-stovetop kettles of the period were faster to heat and less expensive, but these advantages were overshadowed by the effective marketing of the 1909 kettle.



Russel Wright (1904-1976)

"SATURN" PUNCH BOWL WITH 12 CUPS AND CUP TRAY

Designed c. 1935

Aluminum, walnut

Produced by Wright Accessories/Raymor, New York, New York

"I was excited when I found this punch bowl," Kravis says. "I was determined to win the auction and I did." Russel Wright's spun aluminum serving wares consisted mostly of spherical shapes with contrasting accents in such materials as cork, rattan, or wood. This punch bowl is perfect for entertaining. Once the punch has been ladled into the cups, the host can easily lift off the Saturn-shaped ring and serve the guests. In one of Wright's publicity statements he assured consumers that with "aluminum, a durable but featherweight material, even the frailest hostess finds no difficulty in handling the larger pieces." They were particularly suited to the middle class couple of the 1930s that liked to entertain but lacked household help.



Russel Wright

"AMERICAN MODERN" PITCHERS

Designed c. 1937

Glazed earthenware

Produced by Wright Accessories/Raymor,
New York, New York

The product most synonymous with Wright's name is his "American Modern" dinnerware. This mass-produced ceramic line, described by Wright as "humanizing functional design," grossed over \$150 million in sales over two decades. Kravis's mother chose it as the family's casual dinnerware in the chartreuse color, which blended with the rest of the kitchen decor. "We had dark green metal cabinets and chartreuse counter tops, so with the dinnerware it all worked together," says Kravis. "People had some really nice things then, which you could buy for not a lot of money." The water pitcher cost just a couple dollars in 1937. The organic shape of the pitcher made it comfortable in the consumer's hand, unlike the harsh geometric handles created by some modernists at the time.



Kem Weber (1889–1963)

LOUNGE CHAIR

Designed c. 1934

Chromium-plated steel, wood, leather upholstery

Produced by Lloyd Manufacturing Company, Menominee, Michigan

The optimistic streamlined style appealed to the public during and after the Great Depression, and beginning in the late 1920s was applied to a wide range of designs, from aircraft and trains to common home furnishings and appliances. Kem Weber's low-slung chair embodies speed with its aerodynamic teardrop-shaped chromium-plated steel supports, ready to launch the sitter at any moment into space. This chair is one of a pair from Kravis's collection and complements his large collection of Weber clocks.



Henry Dreyfuss
(1904-1972)

CARAFE AND TRAY

Designed 1935
Enameled steel, aluminum, glass
Produced by the American Thermos
Bottle Company, Norwich, Connecticut

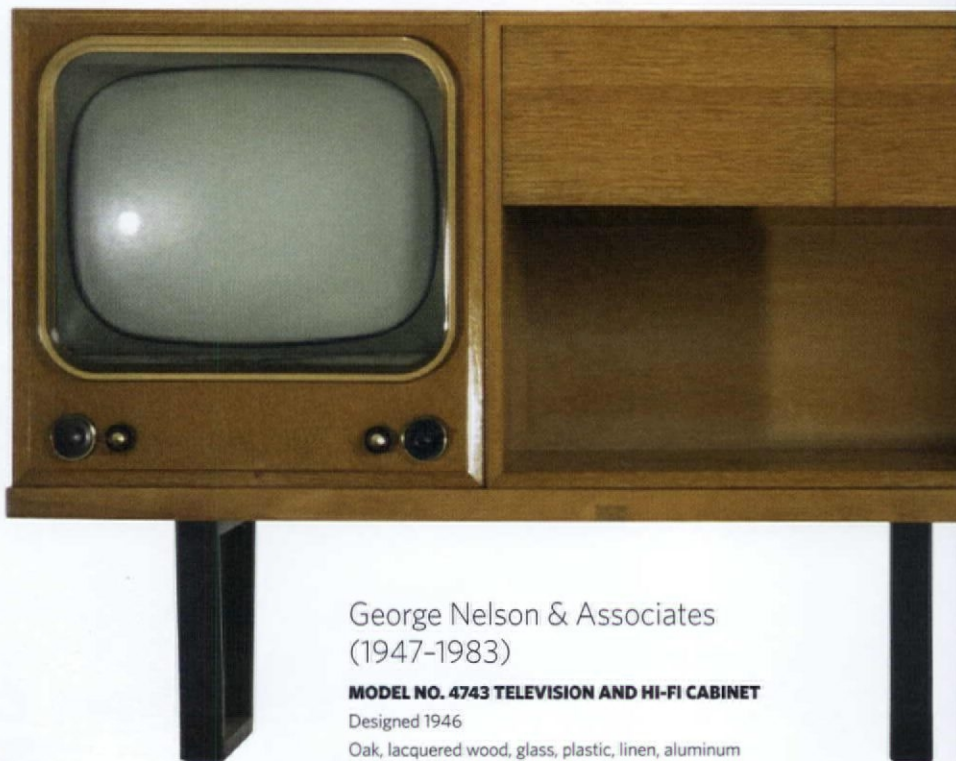
In the 1930s the American Thermos Bottle Company, looking to broaden its sales, created jugs that could be used in either the office or at home. The company made vessels that kept beverages either hot or cold, and its products were most often associated with camping and picnics. They commissioned Henry Dreyfuss, who had already produced a wide range of best-selling designs and was known for using principles of aesthetics and ergonomics, to create sleek minimalistic forms. This carafe is simplified to a number of rounded parts made from a combination of aluminum, steel, and glass. Kravis has a few of these jugs in various colors and sizes. When asked why, he exclaimed, "I absolutely love it." It is also interesting, he said, that some of his jugs have a metal top rather than a glass one and that perhaps production was continued in metal due to breakage issues with the glass. On the underside, in addition to all the usual patent and manufacture information, are the words "Designed by Henry Dreyfuss" in facsimile script—like a signed piece of art, there to assure buyers of their good taste and reinforce the growing status of the industrial designer.

Designer unknown

"SILVER STREAK" IRON

Designed 1946
Pyrex glass, chromium-plated cast iron,
aluminum, plastic
Produced by Corning Glass Works,
Corning, New York, and Saunders Machine
& Tool Corporation, Yonkers, New York

Due to the shortage of metals during World War II, the "Silver Streak" iron was made primarily of Pyrex glass, which also provided color. "The first one of these irons I ever saw was at the Cooper-Hewitt museum in New York and it was a non-color so you could see the silvery components inside," says Kravis. "I started looking online and bought them in various colors, but this green one is absolutely pristine."



George Nelson & Associates
(1947-1983)

MODEL NO. 4743 TELEVISION AND HI-FI CABINET

Designed 1946
Oak, lacquered wood, glass, plastic, linen, aluminum
Produced by Herman Miller Inc., Zeeland, Michigan

George Nelson believed design must respond to social change and felt that properly designed modern furniture should be able to function anywhere. It was this tenet that influenced his modular storage line, available from Herman Miller from 1947 to 1958. "Everything is in one place. I think it's very representative of what people wanted in the late '40s and early '50s," Kravis says. "I try to find objects that tell a story about how people lived, that shows how they incorporated their new technology, like hi-fi and TV, with their furniture in their home."



Paul Schreckengost
(1908–1983)

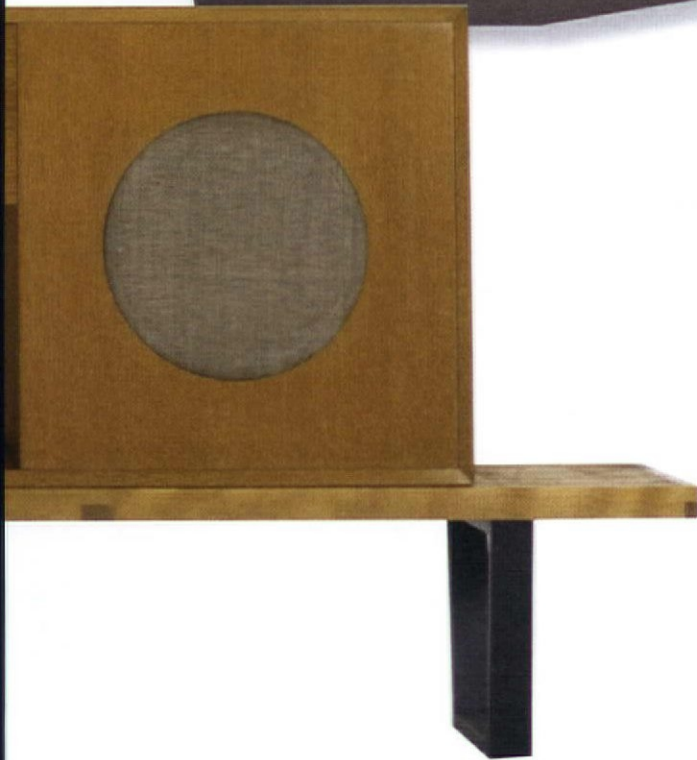
TEAPOT

Designed c. 1938

Glazed earthenware

Produced by Gem Clay Forming Company, Sebring, Ohio

“Paul Schreckengost designed this ceramic teapot for the Gem Clay Forming Company to present to its better clients, so they weren’t sold to the public,” says Kravis. The shape manifests the visual language of streamlining: the smooth sphere of the body, spout, and handle are accented by speed lines, which mimic the lines found in comic books as shorthand for motion.



Designer unknown

“TV-22” TELEVISION

Designed 1948

Bakelite, glass

Produced by Bush, United Kingdom



“One of the things I’ve been looking for and finally found was the Bakelite TV set. It is a very early television set that only picked up one channel,” Kravis says. “Soon they came up with one that picked up two channels and two different frequencies in the UK. I was lucky I ended up getting a second one, so one will go to Philbrook and the other I’m not sure—it’s in my house now. I love looking at it, it doesn’t work but it’s a beautiful object.”

Fairs, Exhibitions & Events

MARCH

VAN DE WEGHE FINE ART
New York, NY
Donald Judd exhibition
Current to March 31
www.vdwyny.com

CRISTINA GRAJALES GALLERY
New York, NY
Nigel Coates: Baroccabilly
Current to April 1
www.cristinagrajalesinc.com
A collection of ten limited edition furniture and lighting pieces that are connected through the spirit of "Baroccabilly." This spirit is physically realized in the mixture of forms, textures, and shapes that define the Baroccabilly collection.

PALM SPRINGS ART MUSEUM
Palm Springs, CA
John Baldessari exhibition
Current to June 26
www.psmuseum.org
John Baldessari is a mainstay of the Southern California art scene and a key contributor to national and international explorations of conceptual art in its many idioms, whether linguistic, performance-based, or photo and object based.

THE ARMORY SHOW
New York, NY
March 3 to 6
www.thearmoryshow.com
The Armory Show is devoted to the most important art of the 20th and 21st centuries.

PHILLIPS DE PURY & COMPANY AUCTIONS
Design, New York, March 3
Design, London, April 7
Design, New York, May 25
www.phillipsdepurys.com

MOSS GALLERY
New York, NY
Arthur exhibition
March 3 to April 16
www.mossonline.com
Creative works conceived through human endeavor, including the process of deliberately arranging elements in a way that affects the senses or emotions.

ART NAPLES
Naples, FL
March 18 to 21
www.artfairnaples.com
Event featuring international galleries presenting contemporary art, photography, video, installation art, sculpture, and design.

TEFAF MAASTRICHT
Maastricht, The Netherlands
March 18 to 27
www.tefaf.com
The fair features paintings from Bruegel to Bacon as well as objects reflecting 6,000 years of excellence in the applied arts from 260 art and antiques dealers in 16 countries.

PAVILLON DES ARTS & DU DESIGN PARIS
Paris, France
March 30 to April 3
www.padparis.net
Fair is devoted to furniture, drawings, paintings, and sculpture from the Renaissance to the 21st century, along with photography, design, primitive arts, Asian art, contemporary glass, jewelry, silver, carpets and tapestries.

WRIGHT AUCTION
Chicago, IL
Modern Design, March 31
Living Contemporary New York, April 28
Scandinavian Design, May 12
www.wright20.com

APRIL

PIERRE BERGÉ & ASSOCIÉS
Brussels, Belgium
Auctions in Brussels
Scandinavian Design, April 3
Private Collection: From Archaeology to Contemporary Art, May 3
www.pba-auctions.com

ZONA MÉXICO ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO
Mexico City, Mexico
April 6 to 10
www.zonamaco.com
This year's fair will include more than 90 galleries from around the world, representing more than 900 artists in over 10,000 square meters of exhibition space.

AD 20/21 & THE BOSTON PRINT FAIR
Boston, MA
April 7 to 10
www.ad2021.com
50 select exhibitors from the U.S. & Europe offering fine art, jewelry, furniture, glass, ceramics, sculpture, photography, fine prints, drawings, and more.

DALLAS DESIGN FAIR
Dallas, TX
Preview Gala, April 7
April 8 to 10
www.dallasdesignfair.com
Prominent decorative arts dealers from around the country will exhibit at the first annual Dallas Design Fair located at the Fashion Industry Gallery in the revitalized downtown Dallas Arts District.

ART COLOGNE
Cologne, Germany
April 13 to 17
www.artcologne.com
The event hosts 200 international galleries showcasing classic modern, postwar and contemporary art.

LOS ANGELES ANTIQUES SHOW
Los Angeles, CA
April 13 to 17
www.psartsantiques.com

SCULPTURE, OBJECTS & FUNCTIONAL ART FAIR
New York, NY
Opening Night Preview, April 13
April 14 to 17
www.sofaexpo.com
This year SOFA NEW YORK welcomes a number of new international exhibitors. Making their debut are contemporary Asian specialists Korean Craft and Design Foundation (Seoul) and Ippodo Gallery (New York). Gallery S O (London), Sarah Myerscough Fine Art (London), and Litvak Gallery (Tel Aviv) round out the fifty-five dealer roster.

BONHAMS & BUTTERFIELDS
Auctioneers & Appraisers
Los Angeles, CA
20th Century Decorative Arts
Preview, April 15 to 17
Auction, April 18
www.bonhams.com/usa

APPRAISERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
New York, NY
Annual Award Luncheon 2011
April 27
www.appraisersassoc.org
Honoring Arne Glimcher, Founder and Director of the Pace Gallery, with the Appraisers Association of America Award for Excellence in the Arts.

THE MERCHANDISE MART INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUES SPRING FAIR
Chicago, IL
Preview night, April 28
April 29 to May 2
www.merchandisemartantiques.com
Featuring an extraordinary collection of work—from rare antiquities to modern design, the Fair will host more than 100 of the world's top dealers of antiques and fine art.

LOS ANGELES MODERNISM SHOW & SALE
Santa Monica, CA
Preview Party Gala, April 29
April 30 to May 1
www.lamodernism.com
Featuring over 65 exhibitors of 20th-century furniture, decorative and fine arts from across the U.S. and Europe.

MAY

DOROTHEUM AUCTION WEEK
Vienna, Austria
May 2011
www.dorotheum.com
Contemporary art, modern art, design, art nouveau, silver, jewelry, and watches.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE FAIR
New York, NY
May 14 to 17
www.icff.com
More than 550 exhibitors will display contemporary furniture, seating, carpet and flooring, lighting, outdoor furniture, materials, wall coverings, accessories, textiles, and kitchen and bath for residential and commercial interiors.

101/EXHIBIT
Miami, FL
Lepo exhibition
May 14 to June 9
www.101exhibit.com

FREEMAN'S AUCTIONEERS & APPRAISERS
Philadelphia, PA
Modern & Contemporary Art
May 15
www.freemansauction.com

SKINNER AUCTIONEERS & APPRAISERS
Boston, MA
American & European Paintings and Prints, Boston, May 20
20th Century Design, Boston, June 25
www.skinnerinc.com

ARTCURIAL
Paris, France
Design auction, Paris, May 23
Art Deco auction, Paris, May 24
www.artcurial.com

JUNE

FRIEDMAN BENDA
New York, NY
nendo exhibition
June to July
www.friedmanbenda.com

COWANS + CLARK + DEL VECCHIO
Cincinnati, OH
The Potter's Market: 20th Century Studio Pottery and Ceramic Design Auction, Cincinnati, June 4
www.cowans.com
Following the fall 2010 auction of the Peter Voulkos ceramic *Gash*, the partnership between Wes Cowan, Garth Clark, and Mark Del Vecchio announces their second auction of modern and contemporary ceramics to be held in the spring of 2011.

DESIGN MIAMI/BASEL
Basel, Switzerland
The Global Forum for Design VIP Opening, June 13
June 14 to 18
www.designmiami.com
Design Miami/Basel brings together dealers, collectors, designers, curators, and critics from around the world in celebration of design culture and commerce.

DESIGN SÃO PAULO
São Paulo, Brazil: June 14 to 18
www.designsaopaulo.com.br
Design São Paulo will be the first high end design fair in Brazil, enabling an exchange of ideas and concepts.



2011 LA Antiques Show exhibitor Dragonette Ltd. of Los Angeles is showing a custom Ledgeback Seniah chair, one of a pair by William Haines c. 1955.



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GABRIEL KURI *Sin título / Untitled ("A 84")*, 2007, Turn stubs on vintage magazine page, 13 x 10.5 in, 33 x 26.7 cm courtesy of the artist & Sadie Coles HQ, London - Galeria Kurimanzutto, Mexico City - Franco Noero, Turin - Esther Schipper, Berlin



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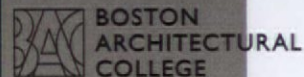
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ALEXANDER OCHS

CZECH REPUBLIC

JIRI SVESTKA

DENMARK

MIKAEL ANDERSEN
BO BJERGGAARD
MODERNE

FINLAND

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LAHUMIÈRE
LELONG
MARION MEYER
GUY PIETERS
JOCELYN WOLFF

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KLEMM'S
BERND KLÜSER
SABINE KNUST
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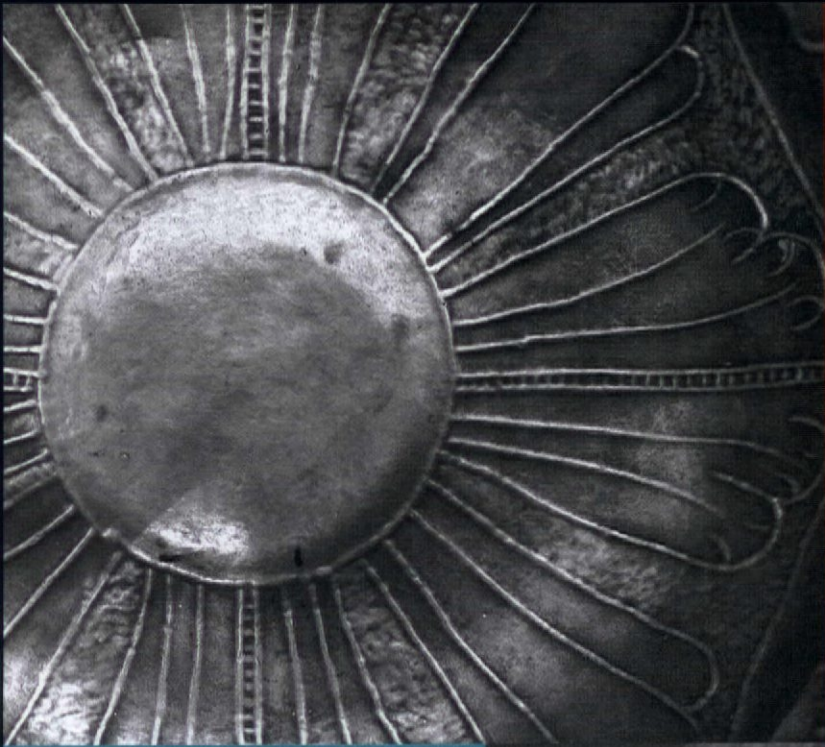
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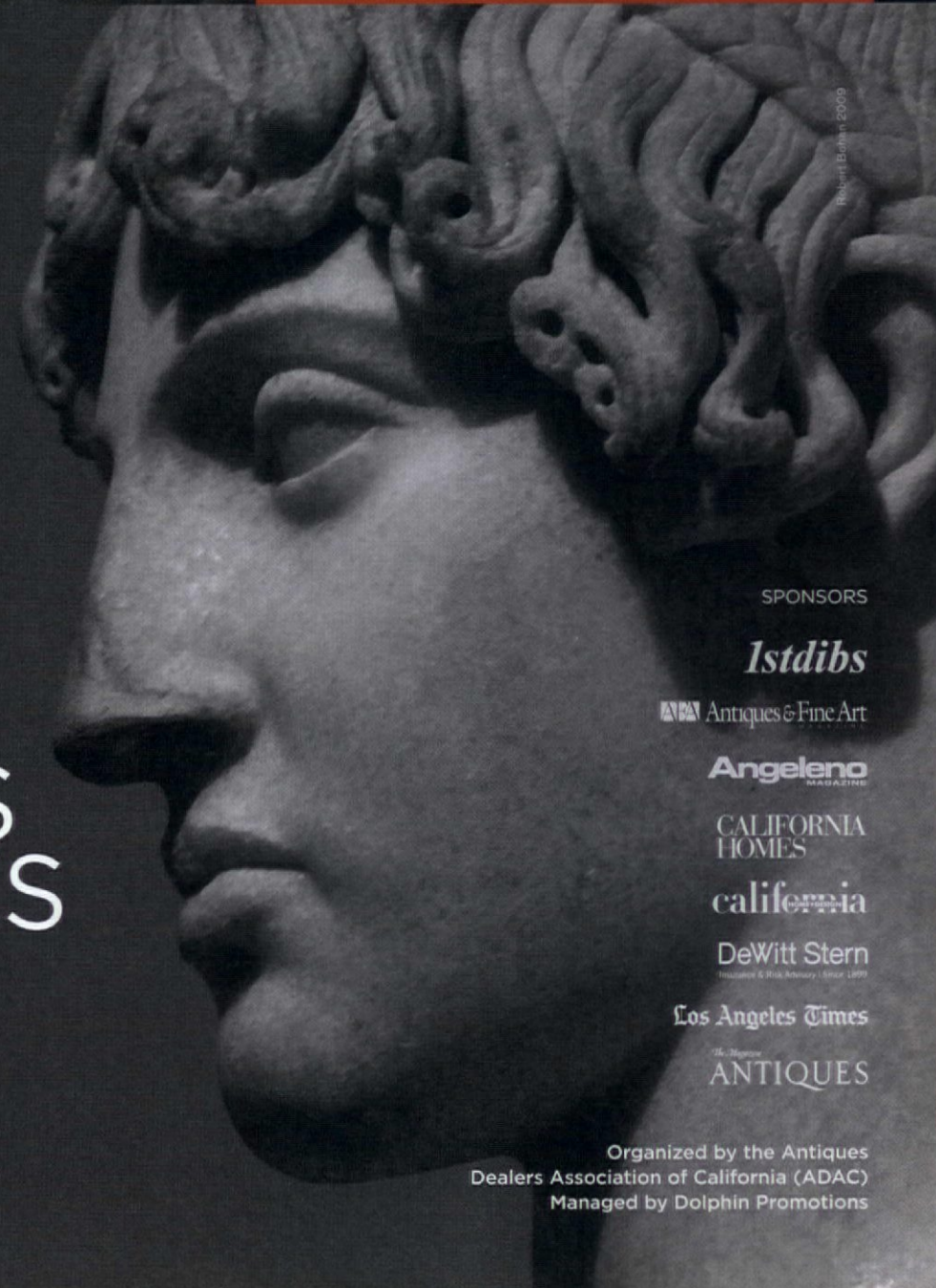
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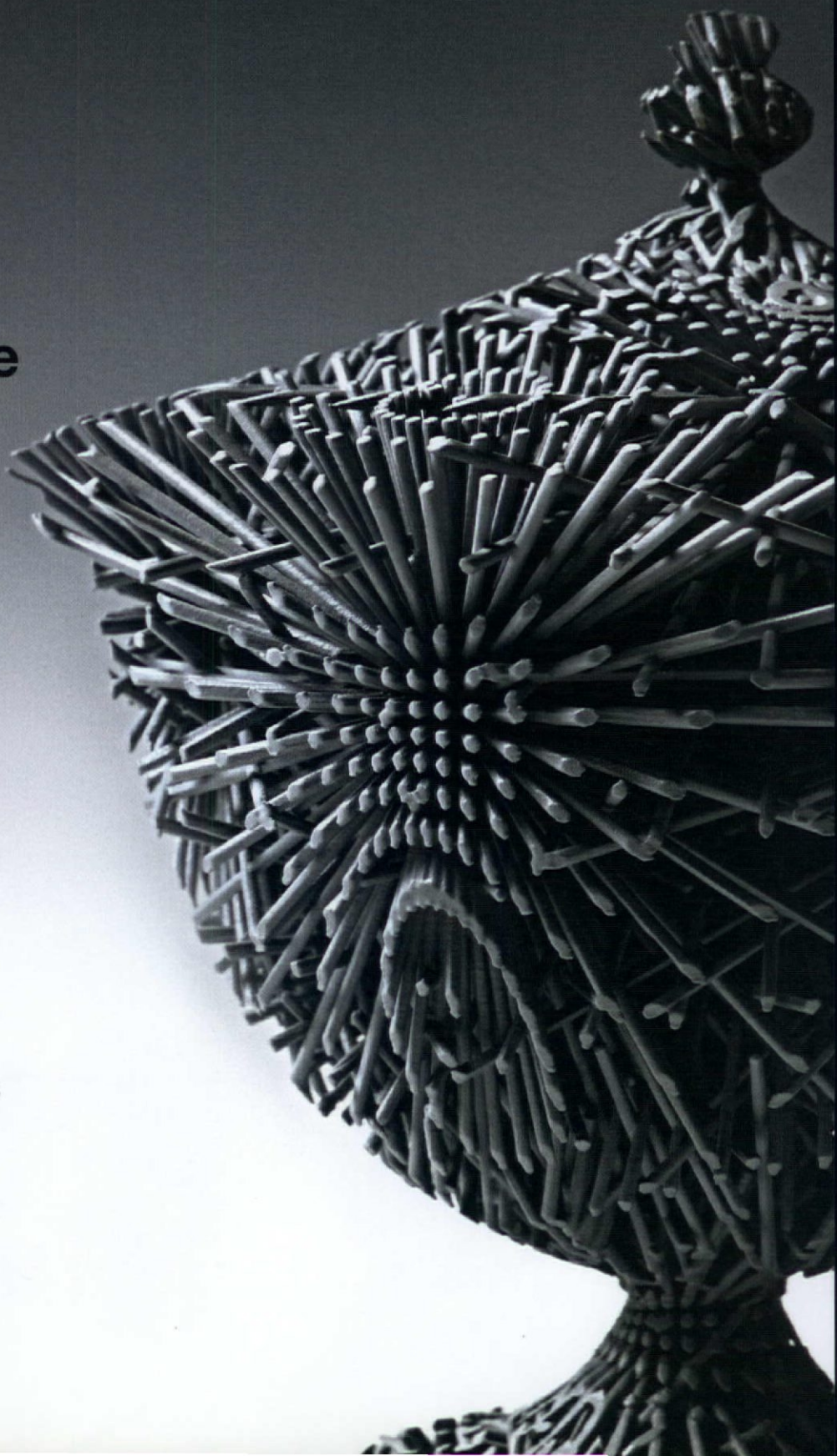
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DESCRIBES HIS
FORAY INTO
DESIGN, AND
COMMENTS ON
THE STATE OF
THE MARKET

I BUMPED INTO COLLECTING DESIGN in a rather unglamorous way. I was shopping in the vintage furnishings section of the Manhattan store ABC Carpet & Home about eight years ago when I came across mirror-fronted furniture by the 1970s designer Paul Evans. It was really crazy stuff that reminded me of a cross between the sets in the film *A Clockwork Orange* and a Klingon spaceship in my favorite TV show, *Star Trek*. My fiancée hated every bit of it, but indulged my enthusiasm as I asked the young man in the booth, Paul Johnson, to sell me a houseful of Evans's work. This he did. The trove included a massive sculpted-front buffet, as well as pieces in Evans's perforated, faceted, and "Argente" styles. I literally bought everything. A short time later, when Evans works began to appear in major auctions and were bought by European dealers and collectors, I felt like I had hit a small jackpot. That only led me to buy more design, both vintage and contemporary. But I hadn't really understood what I had gotten myself into.

Before my Evans moment, I focused on contemporary art. But after spending a few hundred hours with dealers, collectors, interior designers, and auction house experts, I developed a new way of looking at and living with furniture, and gained an understanding of how art differs from design. The art world likes to think it has ownership of the things of the highest intellectual content as well as economic value. Yet design has shaped our world in a much more tangible way, and an understanding of objects and what they mean is still developing. As a category, design is still undervalued, and

perhaps always will be. The "decorative arts" are, vexingly, second-class citizens compared to the "fine arts." One thing I learned is how much senseless confusion has been created around the question of what is art and what is design. Art is art, and furniture is furniture. Designers are not artists, and artists are not designers. The very concept of limited edition "design/art" is merely a marketing tactic to get hefty art-level prices for works of design. The ploy seemed to work for a while, but has now, I think, run its course.

The recent release of my book *Collecting Design* came at the end of a global financial crisis—a sensitive time for the design collecting field. Art prices rebounded strongly on reduced volumes, but can we say the same about the design market? Examples of contemporary design that were bid up to five or ten times their original value at auction are now struggling to find bidders. But if value is set aside for a moment, the stretch from 2000 to 2010 did change the furniture market forever. Names like Carlo Mollino, Eileen Gray, Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Paul Dupré-Lafon, and Jean-Michel Frank now provoke excitement. These are early days, and many fields are yet to be re-discovered. There's percolating interest in Italian radical design; I'm partial to French design of the 1960s. Design collecting has a real future, but when most people still think "design" means mass-produced plastic stacking chairs, we still have a long way to go.

A sculpted-front Paul Evans buffet in the author's collection.



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