

MODERN

MAGAZINE



**A Polished
Design in
Plywood**

**A New Look
at Nakashima**

**Brilliant Glass
from Anzolo
Fuga**

**Vincent Scully
on Louis Kahn**

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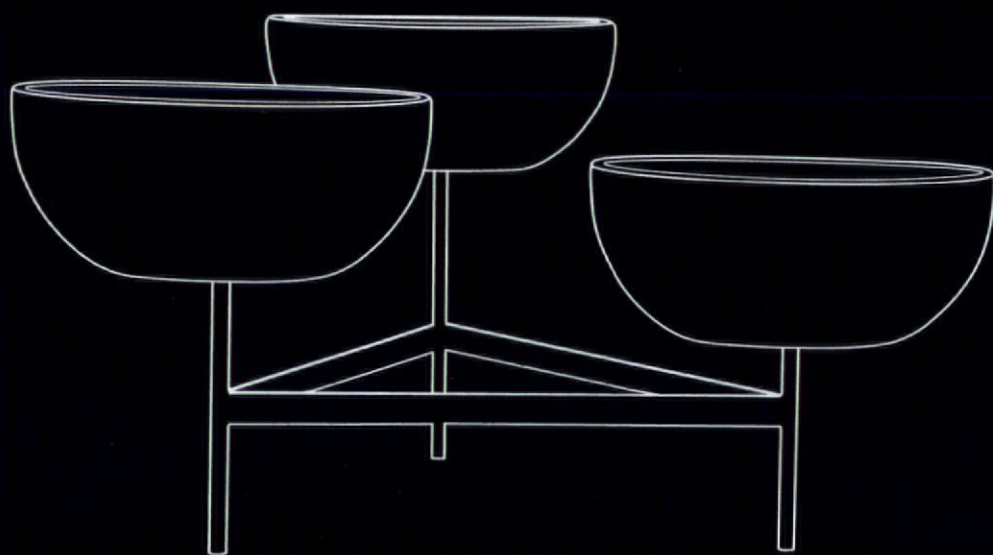
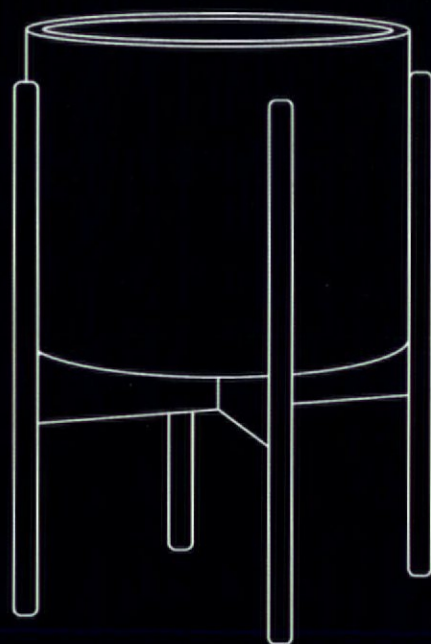


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SPRING 2015

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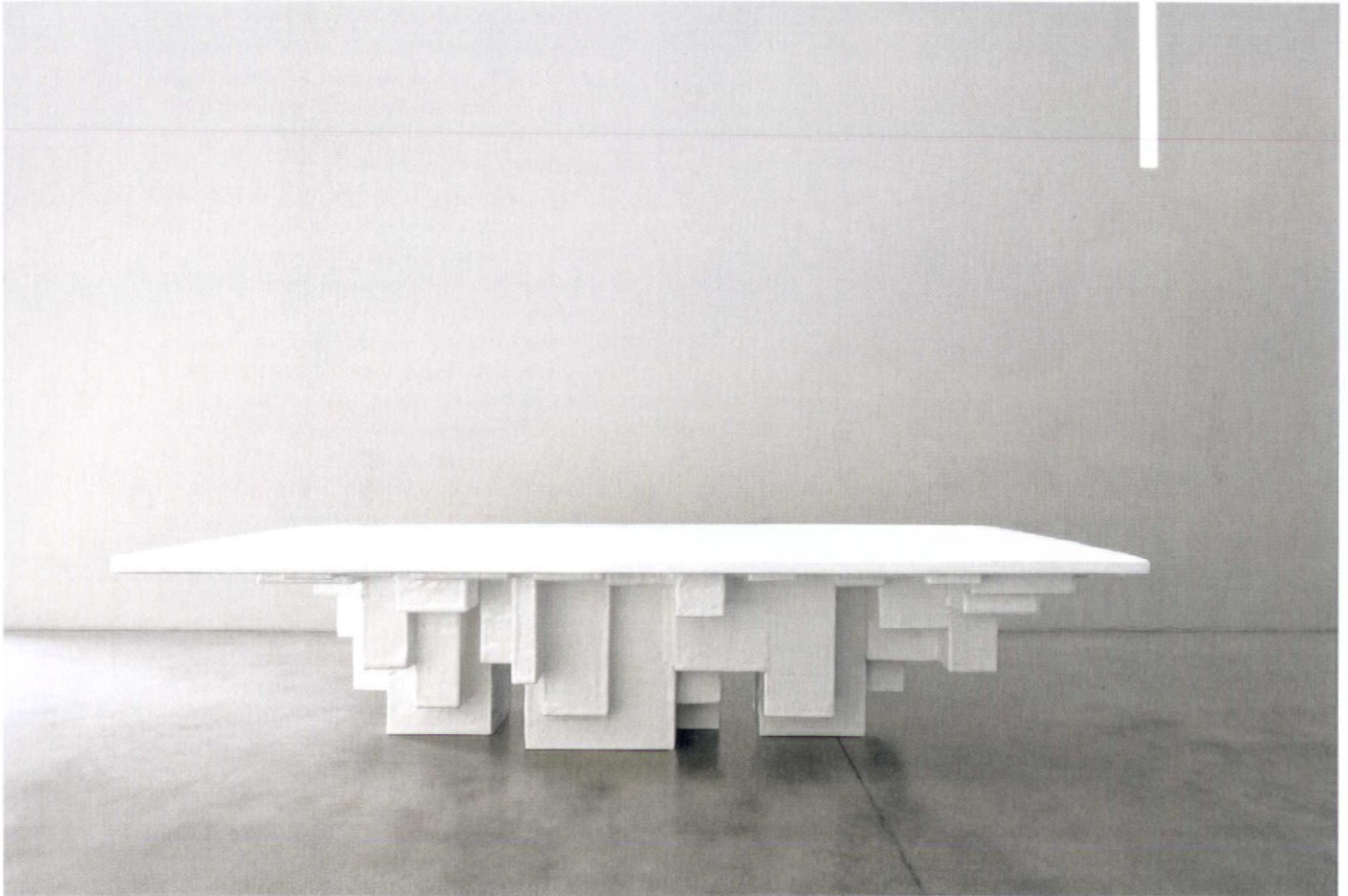
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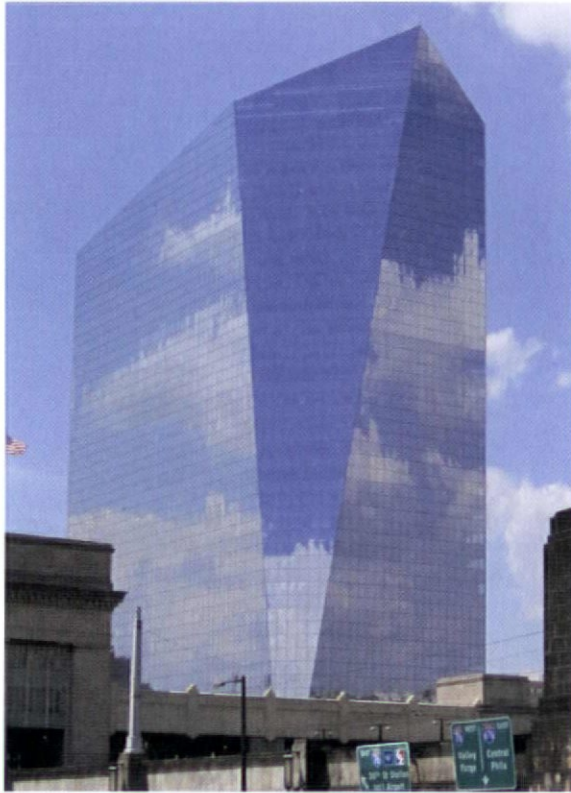
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For the Birds

NOT LONG AGO I READ a slim volume that changed the way I look at the world, at least the built world. It was not a philosophical treatise, nor was it a novel. It was a study entitled *Bird-friendly Building Design*, first published by the New York Audubon Society and then revised by the American Bird Conservancy, which is based outside of Washington, D.C. I had seen recent news reports on the threat glass buildings hold for migratory birds, which sent me to the conservancy to learn more.

The situation is scary, and really rather dire; birds not only glorify and enhance our world (and fill it with music), but they also perform vital environmental tasks. I doubt that, even in this era of such widespread naysaying and denial, there are many (if any) people who would say that birds are not worth it. But the fact is that every year, in the United States alone, up to one billion migratory birds (mostly songbirds) are killed in collisions with glass in buildings. Others are trapped in urban light wells where brightly illuminated skyscrapers create a kind of invisible net that lures them into spaces that once in, they cannot leave. There are indeed many other threats

to our world bird population (loss of habitat to sprawl, wind turbines, disease, and more), but these two stand out because they are leading causes of death.

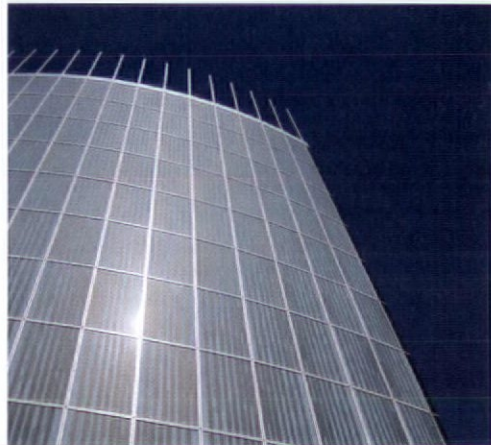
There is no going back from glass, but since the 1980s (basically) we have been using glass in ever-more gratuitous ways, not just for windows but as a reflective cladding, as a way to make shiny monuments, and too often they are monuments to developer or architect egos. True, green building standards would tell us that reflective glass keeps heat out in the summer, thus reducing cooling needs, but at what cost?

The American Bird Conservancy tells us that there are alternatives. Some governmental bodies—such cities as San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago, and Toronto, as well as the state of Minnesota—have enacted building standards to insist on bird-friendly buildings. There are admirable examples of projects designed with the safety of birds in mind, among them FXFOWLE Architects' New York Times Building and Jeanne Gang's Aqua in Chicago. At a smaller scale (right down to the windows on a single family house) there are remedial products available (tape, screening) that resolve the dilemma.

I can already hear the outcry that we need to keep sacred the role of the architect as artist, as auteur, as innovator. I love good architecture. I've spent my professional life advocating for good architecture. But when you get down to it, I'd rather wake up many a morning to warbles and song than look at another daring and sculptural all-glass tower. I'd rather have some of those billion songbirds back.

Beth Dunlop

BETH DUNLOP EDITOR



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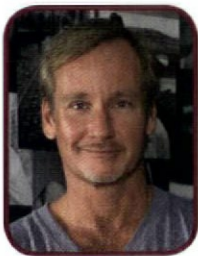
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Doug Meyer began his obsessive compulsive behaviors sometime around 1969 when he discovered Nancy Sinatra's song "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'" (which he played incessantly on a daily basis for months) and Walt

Disney's *Mary Poppins* (which he somehow convinced his mother to take him to see more than ten times). In 1970 he created an art studio in his parents' basement and has ever since been preoccupied with materiality and color. As his first job out of Parsons School of Design, Doug worked with the legendary art dealer Holly Solomon, who taught him that interiors could become livable works of art. His widely published color-saturated interiors have earned him a reputation as a master colorist. Doug classifies himself as an artist/designer and has worked across a wide range of disciplines, creating everything from site-specific spaces and interiors to rugs, fabrics, wallpapers, tiles, lighting, furniture, and a soon-to-be-released limited edition of art objects. In 2004 he and his brother opened the Doug and Gene Meyer Studio, where they design products for the home.



It was in 1985, shortly after **Robert Aibel** opened Moderne Gallery in Philadelphia, that he got a call to buy some "used furniture," which turned out to be by George Nakashima. It sold almost immediately and so, he says, "I dived in with both feet and bought all the Nakashima I could find

but it kept selling so quickly that I couldn't accumulate enough to do a show at the gallery to promote it." Finally, in 1989, he mounted the first of eight subsequent Nakashima exhibitions. Bob holds three degrees (BA, MA, and PhD) from the University of Pennsylvania and from 1977 until 1992 was a professor at both Penn and Drexel University. His scholarly approach and continued interest in antiques and art as a form of communication has established him as an authority in French art deco, Wharton Esherick, the craft and studio movement, and of course, Nakashima. He was fortunate enough to visit the Nakashima compound several times before George's death in 1990. Bob is a lecturer and author, and he has been the producer/director of award-winning documentary films including *A Country Auction* and *Can I Get a Quarter?* And it all runs in the family: Bob's wife Christine is a holocaust scholar; daughter Sarah curates a private contemporary art collection; and son Josh is co-director of Moderne.



Jenny Florence is a design, architecture, and art historian, writer, editor, and curator with broad interests. She has taken on topics as varied as 1960s paper architecture, temporary playgrounds for New

York's vacant lots, the birth of environmental design, representations of domestic space in contemporary art, and postmodern furniture. Jenny has worked on several art, architecture and design exhibitions and publications, including *Century of the Child: Growing by Design, 1900-2000* and *Le Corbusier: An Atlas of Modern Landscapes* at the Museum of Modern Art, and *Color Moves: Art & Fashion by Sonia Delaunay* at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. She has a BA in Art and Architectural History and Theory and an MA in Design History. Jenny was raised in Winnipeg and Toronto, and currently lives in Brooklyn, where she begrudgingly drops the "u" from "neighbor" but consistently chooses CBC over NPR.

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Delving Deeper

A PAINTERLY ABSTRACT RUG FROM SWEDEN'S MASTERFUL **BARBRO NILSSON**

By MATTHEW KENNEDY

LOT 110 Phillips London's Nordic Design sale, September 24,

2014: "Paula röd" rug designed by Barbro Nilsson, 1964. Estimated at £40,000–£60,000 (approximately \$60,500–\$90,700), the piece sold for £74,500 (approximately \$112,700). Some reasons for the unexpectedly high price:

INITIAL THREADS

Barbro Nilsson's penchant for the textile arts manifested itself in nearly every stage of her professional life. Educated at the famed Johanna Brunsson Värskola (weaving school) in Stockholm, she developed a technical proficiency that would propel her career and magnify her impact on Swedish textile design.

Nilsson's first high-profile project came in the form of a competition for decoration at the Gothenburg Concert Hall, a competition she lost. Lest defeat deter, the winner, artist Sven Erixson, recruited Nilsson to manufacture the textiles he had designed, which she completed with a team of weavers between 1936 and 1939. Afterwards, Nilsson's commissions and creations blossomed. She became a bit of a "tapestry whisperer," aptly translating artists' paintings into woven language. She frequently collaborated on ecclesiastical tapestries with her husband, sculptor Robert Nilsson, on such projects as the Passion series at St. Mark's Church in Bjorkhagen in 1961, and with her brother, architect Erik Lundberg. Their work together included decoration for the Stockholm Cathedral and the Gustaf Adolph Church in Helsingborg, where the textiles contributed to improved acoustics.

WEAVING A LEGACY

Though somewhat of a quiet presence in the history of Swedish textile design, Nilsson's legacy resides in her roles as instructor and leader. She taught at the Technical School of the Konstfack (University College

of Arts, Crafts and Design) from 1934 to 1947 and then headed the school's textiles department until 1957. In addition, after the death of iconic Swedish textile artist Marta Måås-Fjetterström in 1941, Nilsson was selected to incorporate the Måås-Fjetterström's weaving business and manage the company creatively, which she would do for almost three decades until 1970, fostering the talents of designers such as Ann-Mari Forsberg and Marianne Richter. In 1967 the Nationalmuseum hosted an exhibition on the Marta Måås-Fjetterström Workshop, crystallizing Nilsson's achievements as its artistic director.



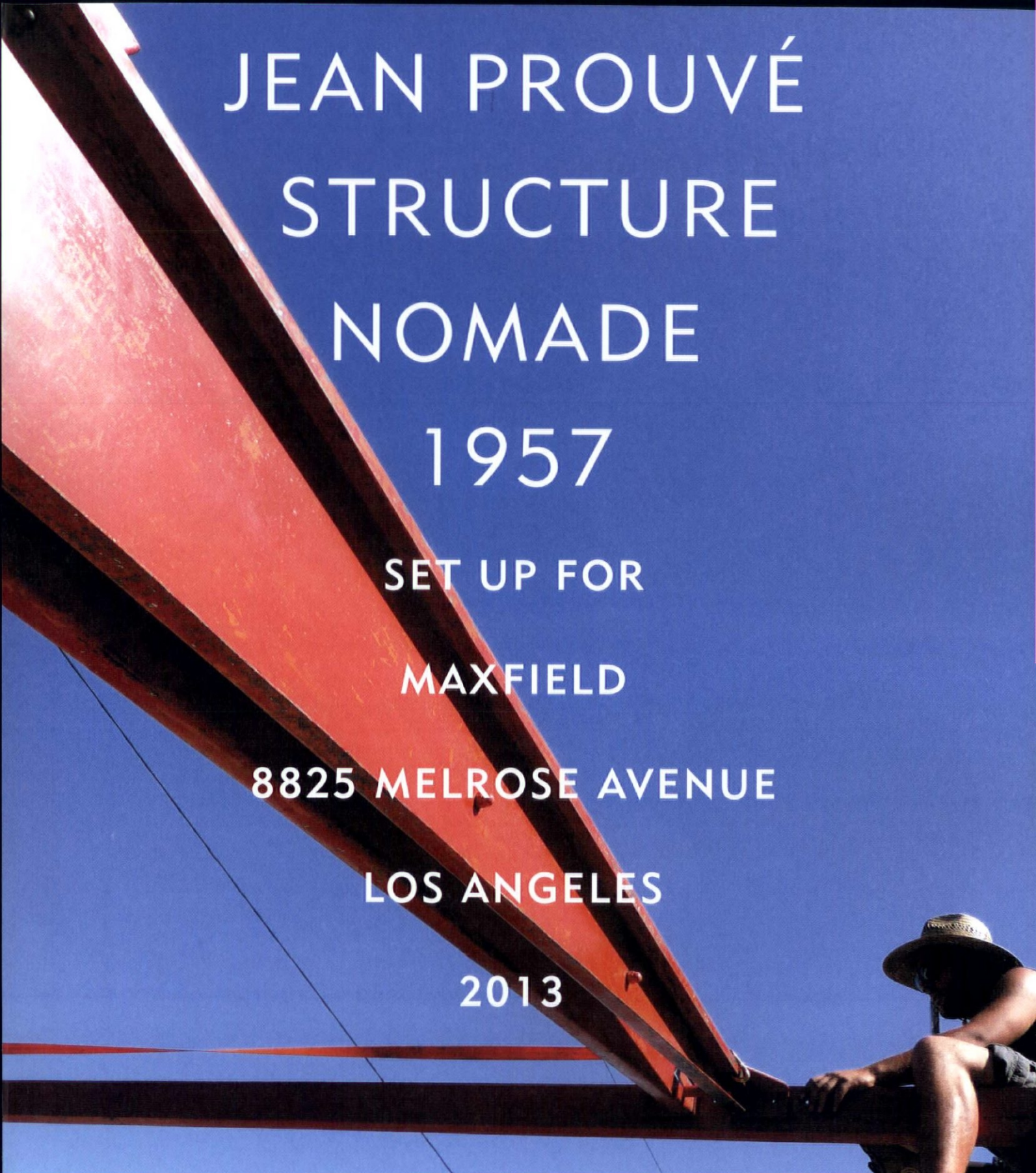
FOLK MODERNISM

Noted early curator of textile arts Emelie von Walterstorff once wrote that these arts seem to have been "instinctive to the Swedish woman and inseparable from the appointments of the Swedish home." Since the start

of her workshop in 1919, Måås-Fjetterström had outsourced the weaving of her designs to the homes of various women, a model that Nilsson transposed into centralized workshop production. Even as the textile arts evolved into a global industry, it is no wives' tale that domestic origins shaped this brand of Swedish folk modernism. On the same thread as traditional Swedish textile design, Nilsson drew thematic inspiration from nature, particularly the Skåne countryside and her seaside village of Lerberget in southern Sweden, to create broadly relatable and cherished pieces. Nilsson's individuality shines through in her bright color palettes and softer, more abstract patterns that almost read as watercolor paintings—an effect made possible by her exacting technical knowledge. According to Phillips London specialist Ben Williams, her "designs are very popular partly because they are quite universal, they fit well into many different environments. I wouldn't say there was one type of interior that worked best." In this piece, kaleidoscopic layers of contrasting hues contribute to a complex but harmonious design that both creates an abstract suggestion of nature and shows Nilsson to have been a dedicated colorist.

WARP AND WEFT OF WORTH

Nilsson once described her approach to her work as "without considering that others wanted to buy it, without pretension that it would be considered an art." This modest attitude yields a steep price today, as auction listings for Nilsson's work have performed quite successfully over the past few years all over the world. "A lot of these get sold to buyers of Nordic furniture and decorative arts, but often it's a much broader group of clients looking to acquire them," Williams says. Of this lot he comments, "Two people really wanted it because it was a strong design, rare type, and a good scale." The winning bid was from a private collector of international scope, and Williams hinted that the rug would go into one of the buyer's houses. Measuring nearly ten by sixteen feet (112 ¾ by 187 ¾ inches), it has a lot of impressively valuable ground to cover.



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Earl Pardon's Portable Art at the High Museum



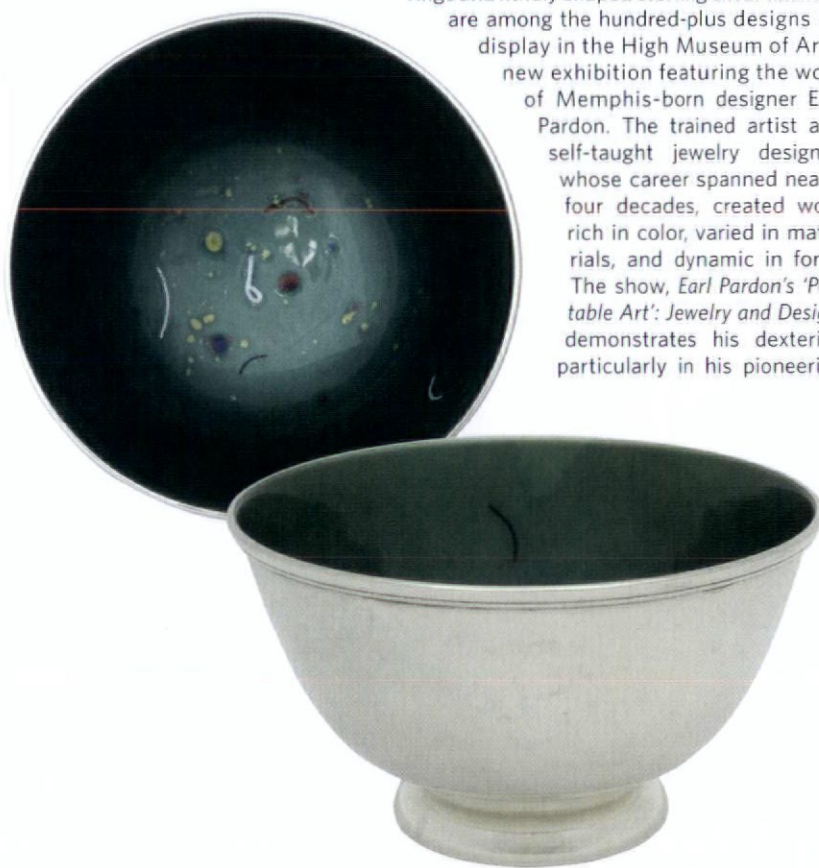
A PAIR OF INTRICATE MOSAIC-LIKE enamel earrings and lithely shaped sterling silver flatware are among the hundred-plus designs on display in the High Museum of Art's new exhibition featuring the work of Memphis-born designer Earl Pardon. The trained artist and self-taught jewelry designer, whose career spanned nearly four decades, created work rich in color, varied in materials, and dynamic in form. The show, *Earl Pardon's 'Portable Art': Jewelry and Design*, demonstrates his dexterity, particularly in his pioneering

use of enamel, along with his unique artist's sensibility in both his housewares and jewelry.

Pardon found his way to design through fine art. After serving in World War II, he earned his undergraduate degree in painting from the Memphis Academy of Art where he also, through the G.I. Bill, received training in metalsmithing. His background in painting (he also later received an MFA from Syracuse University) informed his designs. In her essay in the exhibition catalogue, Sarah Schleuning, curator of decorative arts and design at the High Museum, and the exhibition's curator, quotes Pardon explaining his approach: "My search has always been, and will remain, exploratory in nature, an unending quest for a multitude of new aspects of the visual phenomena."

While spending the bulk of his career as an art professor at Skidmore College and creating his own designs, Pardon took a respite in the 1950s to design silver objects for Towle Silversmiths in Newburyport, Massachusetts, where he was given the opportunity to present his aesthetic to a larger market. Schleuning explains that during his tenure there, Pardon helped "introduce enameling techniques into high-end production silver." This mastery of and experimentation with enameling continued to distinguish Pardon from his peers, allowing him to cultivate a distinct style.

But first and foremost he created works of art and treated his designs as such. "Strange as it seemed to me at the time, very few of my good designs had any mass appeal," he once said. "Of

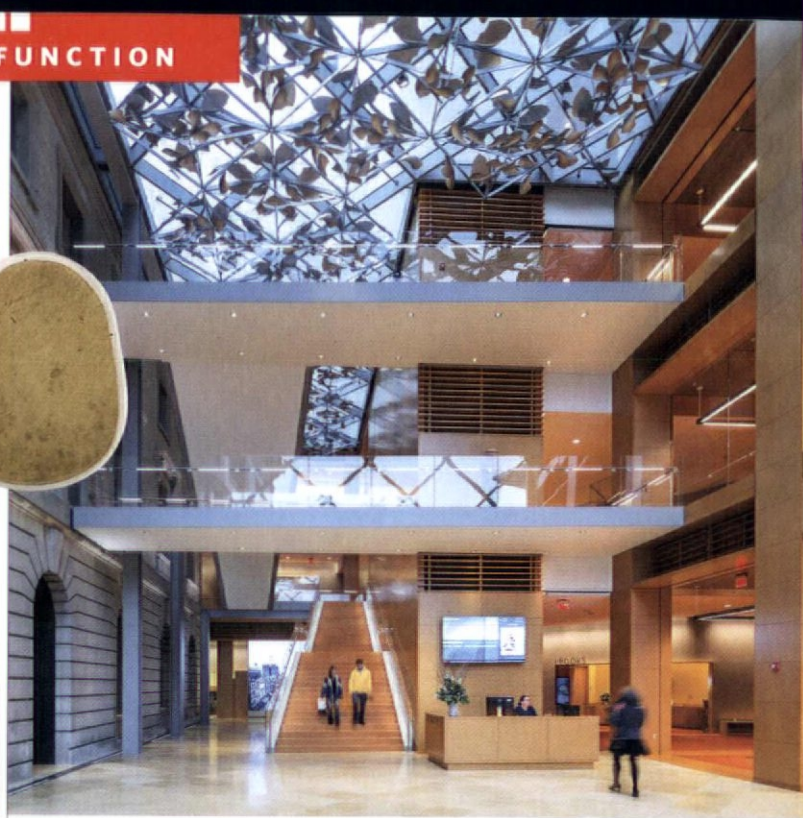




course, I was attempting to turn a simple knife, fork, and spoon into a vision of beauty—a real work of art; it really didn't matter to me if you couldn't eat with them."

A number of the objects included in the exhibition are recent acquisitions and gifts from gallerists Martha and Pat Connell's personal collection. The show will run through June 6. highmuseum.org

— Nicole Anderson



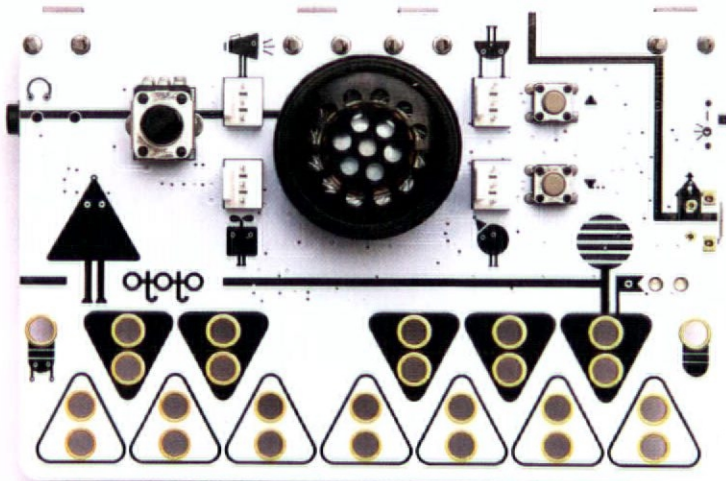
A Library That Links Past and Present

Combining art and architecture, innovative space design, and the best of contemporary library resources and services, the new Slover Library in Norfolk, Virginia, stunningly redefines the public library for this century. "The twenty-first-century public library has to adapt to the age of e-books and online content. No longer is it defined as a repository of books, but more as a community anchor to encourage civic engagement," says lead architect Herbert S. Newman of New Haven-based Newman Architects. "An inspiration for our design was Marcel Duchamp's cubist painting *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which creates a three dimensional experience of movement when seen by the viewer. Our three dimensional design attempts to accomplish the same thing, but in reverse, in which the building has a sense of movement that activates the surrounding neighborhood" and invites the public to step inside.

The project included the restoration of the 115-year-old Seaboard building (formerly a customs house before becoming home to Norfolk's main library in 2009) and the new glass-walled addition, joined by a three-story atrium entranceway. From the beginning, Newman Architects worked with New Haven-based sculptor Kent Bloomer to develop a system of ornament that is an integral, organic part of the architectural whole. On the atrium entrance facade Bloomer's sculptural forms, while abstract, are reminiscent of sails, creating a wave action that connects the Seaboard to the new structure. Overhead, once inside, Bloomer's leafy aluminum canopy reinforces the main entry and lobby as a place of connection. The abstract leafage is picked up again on the loggia, which serves as an accessible outdoor porch for the public. Altogether it suggests a modern day "village green," says Harry Lester, president of the Slover Library Foundation—a place that "encourages community, a place to convene thoughtful conversations on issues important to our region and beyond." What more can be asked of any building? sloverlibrary.com

— Eleanor Gustafson

Looking Ahead with Optimism and Caution



MOMA'S MOSTLY HOPEFUL FUTURE

Technology, which often provides unprecedented access and ease at the expense of privacy, individuality, and health, has been glorified and vilified in equal measure. More than a year into *Design and Violence*, a web project that considers design “an act of creative destruction and a double-edged sword,” Paola Antonelli, senior curator at the Museum of Modern Art, knows this better than anyone. With that in mind, the title of her latest exhibition, *This Is for Everyone: Design Experiments for the Common Good* (on view to January 31, 2016), can be read with optimism or irony. Those wishing to emphasize a positive attitude can look to Yuri Suzuki’s playful and surely incorruptible *Colour Chaser*, a small white box that follows a black line, trilling, beeping and changing tone as it crosses scribbled patches of color. Other designs are empowering. The Arduino Diecimila microcontroller and MaKey MaKey are the kind of user-friendly electronic components that, combined with open-source software, are foundational to the maker movement. Even more inspiring is EyeWriter, a pair of glasses that tracks eye movements and enables a young artist suffering from paralysis to write digital graffiti.

The Medusa 2 helmet suggests the more sinister potential of design. It may be 3D printed in inorganic materials, but the undulating dome of rigid and precise folds and wrinkles evokes cartilage and bone, and implies nightmarish possibilities. moma.org

— Jenny Florence

IN LA: PHOTOS OF OUR RISING SEAS

The coastal regions of planet Earth have been hit by a series of natural disasters ranging from the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami to Hurricane Sandy slamming into the northeastern United States in 2012. *Sink or Swim: Designing for a Sea Change* tells the story through photographs of how people are responding to changes in their landscapes due to rising sea levels around the world. It is a timely examination of resiliency strategies in both architecture and design. *Sink or Swim* is on view at the Annenberg Space for Photography in Los Angeles through May 3.

Images featured include views of the extensive Delta Works sea defenses in the Netherlands by Dutch photographer Iwan Baan; newly built houses intended to withstand flooding in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans by fine art photographer Stephen Wilkes; the immense sea walls now being built on the tsunami-hit coast of Japan shot by photojournalist Paula Bronstein; and documentation of innovative low-tech structures and farming communities in Bangladesh photographed by Norwegian Jonas Bendiksen. Los Angeles-based photographer Monica Nouwens has focused her lens closer to home, capturing a local example of wetlands restoration as well as an image of human denial with her photograph of a California woman walking her dog, oblivious to a sign warning of tsunamis. annenbergphotospace.org

— Cynthia Drayton



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A Reprise: Modernism in Latin America



TWO NEW SHOWS EXAMINE A PRODIGIOUS PAST

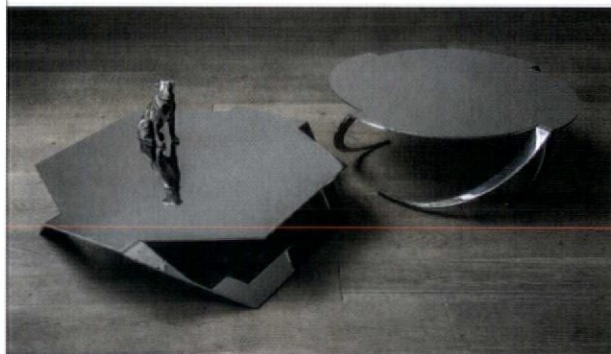
In October 1954 the Museum of Modern Art deployed a two-person team—architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock and photographer Rosalie Thorn McKenna—to document modernism in Latin America. The culmination of their six-week, eleven-country tour was *Latin American Architecture since 1945*, an exhibition that glossed over regional and cultural differences and promoted modern design as a cohesive international movement. Some sixty years later two exhibitions celebrate the diversity and ingenuity of modern design in Latin America by assembling a range of material, much of which has rarely or never been exhibited. *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980* (March 29–July 19) at MoMA uses architectural models and drawings, vintage photographs and film clips, and a suite of photographs and models commissioned for the show, to consider the network of forces that stimulated an unprecedented period of creative and economic development in the region and led to the emergence of unique architectural expressions.

A few blocks uptown from MoMA, the Americas Society pres-



ents *Moderno: Design for Living in Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela, 1940–1978* (on view to May 16). Where *Latin America in Construction* concentrates on large-scale public works—hospitals, museums, housing projects, entire cities, even—*Moderno* focuses on the design objects—both hand-crafted and mass-produced—that furnished Latin America's rapidly modernizing domestic interiors. "[D]esigners in the region were producing a modern interior that was at the same time local and global," says the exhibition's co-curator, Jorge Rivas Pérez. Pieces such as Sérgio Rodrigues's Mole chair—its ample leather seat and protruding stiles giving it the aspect of a lolling bull—and Geraldo de Barros's 1960s telephone bench—which pairs plywood and plastic—broadcast the ease and comfort familiar from American mid-century design, but reveal an unmistakably distinct approach. moma.org as-coa.org

— Jenny Florence



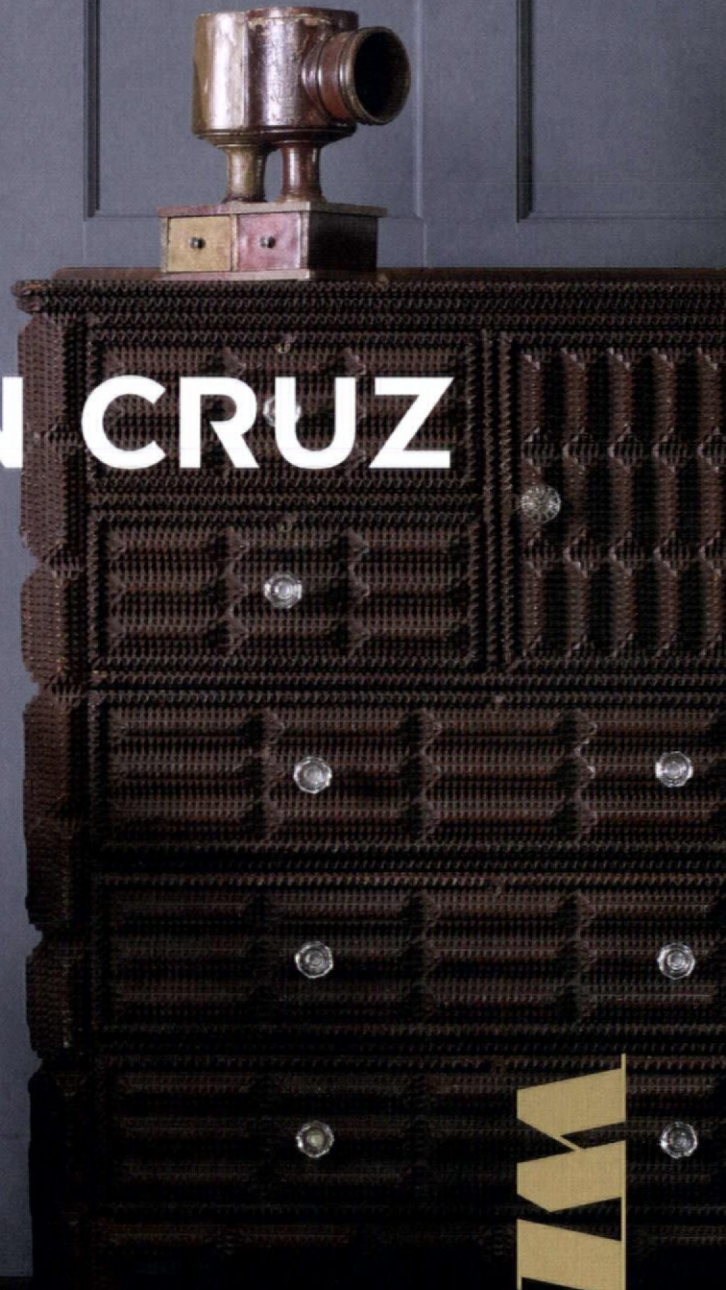
MADE IN MEXICO: LUTECA DEBUTS NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN FURNITURE

Luteca, a new furniture brand whose first line focuses on Latin American design, launched with its own small show at the Hotel Americano in New York in February. For its inaugural collection, Luteca realized previously unproduced designs by important Mexican architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez. The pieces, including a series of coffee tables made from single sheets of metal that are laser-cut and bent into various shapes, are produced in Mexico City. luteca.com

— Jenny Florence

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Three Museum Exhibitions to Study and Savor



A GLOBAL VIEW OF POP ART AT THE WALKER

Today Pop art is mostly associated with the work of early 1960s New York City-based artists such as Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, and Andy Warhol. The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis broadens the viewpoint of this postwar art movement with the exhibition *International Pop*, which opens on April 9 and runs through September 9 before traveling to the Dallas Museum of Art and then to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

While Pop art is associated with Britain and the United States, artists from Japan, Latin America, and both Western and Eastern Europe seized images from mass media, advertising, and everyday objects to create their own art. *International Pop* features some 125 artworks by more than one hundred artists drawn from more than thirteen countries and four continents. The show is organized into broad thematic sections as well as contextual sections of specific places or institutions. Artists featured include Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Jim Dine, Marisol, Yayoi Kusama, Martial Raysse, Mimmo Rotella, Jean Tinguely, Cildo Meireles, David Hockney, Thomas Bayrle, Richard Hamilton, Peter Blake, and Yoko Ono. A key ambition of *International Pop* is to show artists in the specific contexts from which they emerged as well as to reveal relationships between works across time and place. walkerart.org

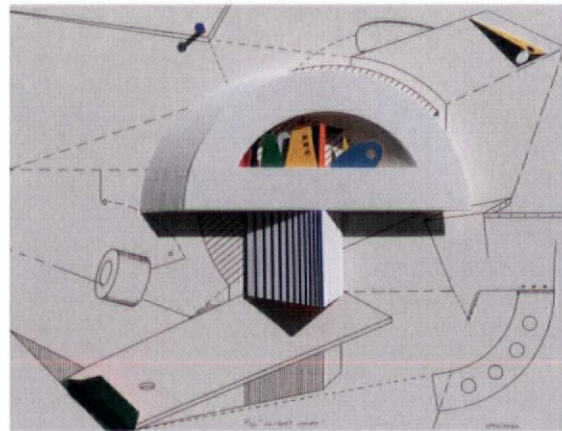
— Cynthia Drayton

IN TOLEDO, WORKS ON OR ABOUT PAPER

Werner Pfeiffer has understood the power of books since he was a child in postwar Germany, where “there was no paper, there were no books. Censorship was everywhere.” In recognition of Pfeiffer’s sixty-plus years of commitment to paper, the Toledo Museum of Art has organized nearly two hundred of his one-of-a-kind and limited edition books, prints, collages, and experimental works on paper in the exhibition *Drawn, Cut & Layered: The Art of Werner Pfeiffer* through May 3.

Pfeiffer who is known worldwide as a creator of artist’s books and book-objects, uses paper as both a canvas and a structural material. His fascination with machines and machine-like construction coupled with his attraction to puzzles, metaphors, and word play has inspired works that are thought provoking in themselves. Among the works exhibited are *Hocus Pocus*, an homage to Dada; *Zig Zag*, a book created as a double accordion fold to show that “paper is not only a surface but has architectural structure”; *The Banana Drawings*, a series of drawings with seven basic images that reoccur in different configurations; and *Liber Mobile*, in which the alphabet becomes a visual element. In a touch of digital irony, the exhibition catalogue is a multimedia e-book. toledomuseum.org

— Cynthia Drayton



THE KATONAH MUSEUM OF ART PAYS TRIBUTE TO ITS ARCHITECT, EDWARD LARRABEE BARNES

The late Edward Larrabee Barnes designed spare and elegant museums that accommodated both art and museumgoers with grace and ease. In a fast-changing, ever-more-corporate, and increasingly cutthroat world, he remained a gentleman architect, running his practice with high standards and a small staff.

Barnes fervently believed that architecture should be about the building, and not the architect who designed it. The conviction of his beliefs can be seen in the diverse body of work he produced, ranging from cultural, educational, and commercial buildings to private houses. But ultimately his vision is best seen in museums across America—in Dallas, Fort Lauderdale, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, and Katonah, New York, where he designed a genteel, light-filled building that feels almost domestic in its landscaped suburban setting.

Barnes and his architect wife Mary lived in the neighboring Westchester County town of Mount Kisco for many years. He designed the Katonah Museum of Art’s building twenty-five years ago when he was seventy-four. Mary Barnes was a longtime trustee and advisor to the museum.

A Home for Art: Edward Larrabee Barnes and the KMA, which opens March 29 and runs through June 28, will look at the architect’s career with a special focus not just on the KMA, but also on the elegant modernist houses he designed in neighboring Westchester communities. At the time he designed the KMA, Barnes was widely quoted as saying “within the museum, the architect must not upstage the art.” This time, however, turnabout might well be fair play. katonahmuseum.org

— Beth Dunlop

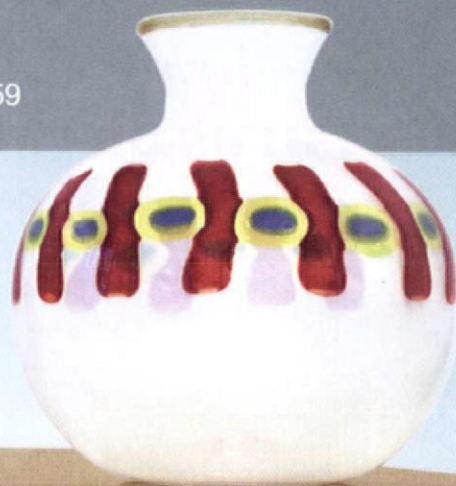


LOBELMODERN

"Z Desk" in Brass by Gabriella Crespi, 1970's

"Murrine Incatenate" Hand-Blown Glass Vase by Anzolo Fuga, 1959

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lobelmodern.com



Hermès Turns on the Lights



The Hermès en lumière collection is the latest addition to the French luxury brand's home décor line, Hermès Maison. The collection is comprised of three new lamps: the Nomade, the Pantographe, and the Harnais. Each lamp has LED technology and is sheathed in Hermès's famously elegant leather enhanced by saddle stitching, tacks, and clasps. The source for the leather covering came from the lamps that equipped the company's workshops in the 1930s. The leather protected the lamp bases, provided durability, and ensured that the lamps would be handed down to the next generation of craftsmen. These goals continue to be achieved with the introduction of Hermès's three new lamps.

The French lighting artist Yann Kersalé, who is known for his large-scale installations, found inspiration in the iconic shape and steady beam of light emitted from lighthouses for the Nomade. The Nomade is a modular light that can be separated into four individual lanterns; it is equipped with a rechargeable battery, which permits it to be used indoors or on covered porches in warmer weather.

The Pantographe and the Harnais lamps are designed by Italian architect and theorist Michele de Lucchi. He was a member of Ettore Sottsass's team of designers in the 1980s and learned from the Memphis leader that "in order not to throw away an object you have to fall in love with it...to keep it as long as possible." Lucchi's admiration for finely crafted, durable objects is demonstrated by his designs of the Pantographe and the Harnais lamps. The Pantographe, its shape and name derived from an architect's drawing tool, comes as a desk lamp and in two variations of standing lamps. The Harnais is based on Hermès's renowned equestrian equipment of harnesses and crops and is available as a floor lamp and a large or small table lamp. The Hermès en lumière collection reflects the brand's graceful design, harmonious proportions, and intelligent function. hermes.com

— Cynthia Drayton





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New Work Inspired by History and Culture



ROBERT STADLER'S EVOCATIVE AND PROVOCATIVE FURNITURE

Robert Stadler's designs often begin with a strong concept, but their material qualities can hardly be called secondary. For his latest show, *Airspace*, a solo exhibition at Carpenters Workshop Gallery in Paris (on through April 4), the designer presents two series of furniture—PdT and cut_paste—inspired by the effects of time and the elements on architecture. PdT consists of three pieces that resemble fragments of ruined buildings: slabs of pale ashlar, their surfaces and edges are polished and rounded as if by erosion, and scored here and there with lines that suggest mortar. A bench looks like a column tipped on its side and left to weather, the remains of an ancient Greek temple or a neoclassical French façade. Indeed, "PdT" refers to *Pierre de taille*, the white stone masonry favored in Baron Haussmann's Paris.

Stadler implies contemporary construction in the cut_paste series with works that are reminiscent of building—or perhaps demolition—sites. Each piece is a seemingly haphazard composition of planes in varying shades of marble. Stadler emphasizes the industrial quality of the work by sandwiching sheets of aluminum honeycomb between marble veneer. carpentersworkshopgallery.com

— Jenny Florence

FASHIONING THE '70S

The luxe, louche, and languid looks that have come to define fashion of the 1970s can largely be credited to two designers, Yves Saint Laurent and Halston. An exhibition at the Museum at FIT, *Yves Saint Laurent + Halston: Fashioning the '70s* (on view through April 18), explores the array of sources that inspired the two men and considers the period as a moment of profound change in the fashion industry, when the couture atelier gave way to the ready-to-wear corporation. Through approximately a hundred pieces drawn from the museum's collection, the exhibition compares ensembles by each designer—Saint Laurent's rakish interpretations of menswear and striking saturated colors against Halston's neutral-toned minimalist glamour—to highlight the designers' distinctive styles while teasing out common themes. fitnyc.edu/museum.asp

— Jenny Florence



GRAINS OF PARADISE: NEW DESIGN FROM AFRICA AT R & COMPANY

Only in recent years have we come to notice the work being done by contemporary African designers, and much of our awareness is owed to Trevyn and Julian McGowan of Southern Guild Gallery in Cape Town. Starting March 24 and running through the month of April, the New York gallery R & Company will mount an exhibition focusing on work from designers in South Africa and Senegal.

The exhibition is entitled *Grains of Paradise*, a translation of "Aframomu-melegueta," a member of the ginger family that is used for both cooking and medicinal purposes, as well as divination and voodoo. The name was chosen for its metaphorical role in spreading African culture; it was taken by caravan through the Sahara to Italy and eventually the rest of the world—a more arduous journey no doubt than the shipping of furniture and objects today.

On view at R & Company will be works by Porky Hefer, the husband-and-wife team known as Dokter and Misses, and the design collective Ardmore—all of South Africa. Also featured is the Senegalese designer Babacar Niang. Altogether the show suggests the wide scope of work coming from South and West Africa and is, to R & Company principal Zesty Meyers, "creatively stimulating for us in incredible new ways."

r-and-company.com

— Beth Dunlop

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Design's Incubator

MILAN'S ANNUAL
SHOWCASE OF
YOUNG DESIGNERS
SPOTLIGHTS
EMERGING TALENT
FROM AROUND
THE GLOBE

By BETH DUNLOP

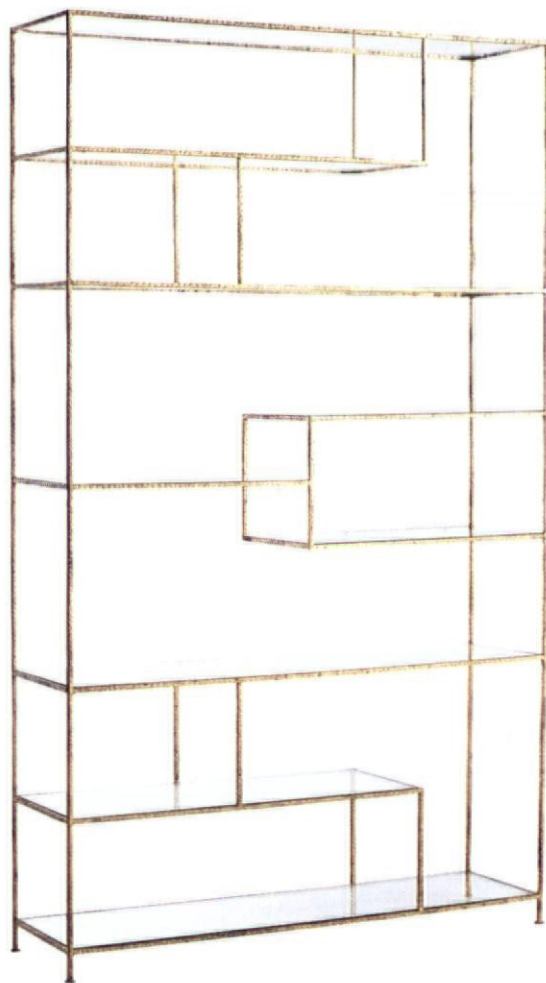


PATRICK JOUIN

IN MANY WAYS, Marva Griffin Wilshire is the patron saint of young designers. Over the course of her many years in Milan—first as a journalist and later as part of the vast operation of Salone del Mobile—she observed that it was almost impossible for up-and-coming designers to connect with the producers of furniture, even (perhaps especially) during the furniture fair (this year's runs from April 14 to 19). She wanted to "make a difference," she says. The result was SaloneSatellite, a showcase for young designers now in its eighteenth year that has turned out to be the incubator of some amazing talent. To look at the list of names of Satellite discoveries is to see a who's who not just of emerging talent, but of designers who are by now quite renowned.

Among them is the wildly successful Parisian designer Patrick Jouin. When Satellite was launched in 1998, he was working for Philippe Starck along with Matali Crasset, who "gave me the tip about this new show taking place in Milan." Jouin jumped at the opportunity. "I did not have second thoughts," he says. "In a minute I invested in the last booth available, and stacked into my little FIAT my FACTO Chair [now produced by Fermob], a rug, two lamps, and a coffee table. There was barely space enough for me in the car. I designed a huge sign with my name printed on it, and there I was."

Likewise, it is almost legendary in design circles that Nendo was discovered at Satellite in 2003, just a year after the Canadian-born but Japanese-educated Oki Sato founded the firm. Oki Sato got a special mention at Satellite that year for the wildly innovative (yet always subtle and beautiful, if creatively named) work he showed—projects such as Streeterior, and Manhole-mat. That recognition led to further recognition, and almost immediately to other awards. Soon he had his first contract with such powerhouses as Giulio Cappellini and Maddelena De Padova. Since then, Nendo



Three chairs from Patrick Jouin's 2013 Ester series in leather or fabric with bronze or black nickel legs.

Sebastian Herkner's Bell coffee table features a brass top resting on a hand-blown glass base, upending notions of materiality.

Jerri Hobby's gold-leafed iron and glass Elegant Etagere for Wisteria will be released this spring.





has enjoyed extraordinary recognition, including some three hundred commissions from some of the world's top manufacturers. His limited edition work is sought after by collectors and enjoys success at auction, as well.

For the Indian-born, Dutch-based designer Satyendra Pakhalé, Satellite was not so much a beginning as an affirmation. "I think it was a continuation of the work that I was doing, making prototypes after prototypes and testing and trying ideas. Satellite has developed as an important international reference point, and Marva Griffin's conception of giving a platform to young talents became an amazing success," he says.

Griffin Wilshire says she had "no dream, no ambition, just a desire to help young designers" when she launched Satellite. "In my almost eighteen years I have been in touch with almost ten thousand young designers and graduates-to-be from all over the world—more than forty countries. Quite a lot of them have made it, they are well known and pretty successful in the industry. For me it has been more than rewarding."

Each year a distinguished jury looks at the participating designers' work (last year there were almost seven hundred entrants, all under the age of thirty-five) to select winners in several categories, including what has become the prestigious Design Report Award. The first year the jury included Ross Lovegrove, Konstantin Grcic, and Crasset as well as Nasir Kassamali, founder of the Miami-based design showroom Luminaire. Kassamali says Satellite is "a great communications vehicle to transfer knowledge, collaborate and promote good design." He points to such designers as Jan Plecháč, who exhibited at SalonSatellite in 2011 and since then has "catapulted to great heights," designing for Cappellini and other great manufacturers."

The Design Report honor has gone to such rising stars as the Brooklyn-based Nao Tamura (whose 2010 submission, called the Seasons plate, was subsequently produced by Covo, presaging her growing reputation) and Daniel Rybakken, a Norwegian lighting designer. Rybakken first showed at Satellite as a recent graduate and then returned three more times, the last of these—in 2011—with a special commission in honor of Salone's fiftieth anniversary. The design team of Hanshi Chen and Shikai Tseng from Poetic Lab won the Design Report Award in 2013 for their Glass Ripple lamp, now produced by J. and L. Lobmeyr. "Their work continues to surprise me with its elegant simplicity and practicality," says Kassamali.

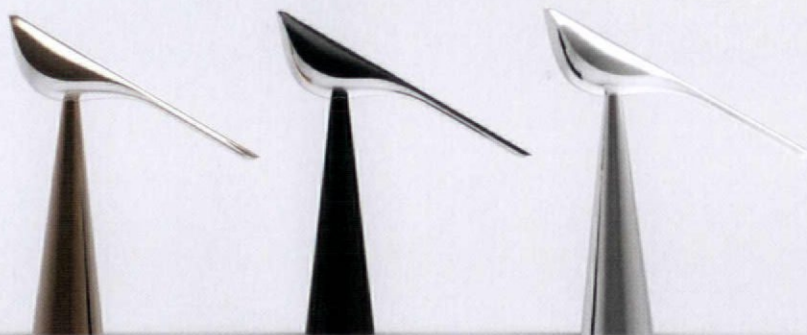
The German industrial designer Sebastian Herkner participated in Satellite in 2009, 2010, and 2011, each time offering a sampling of his work in

The seats of Herkner's Banjooli chairs (2013/2014) for Moroso are hand-woven from the same thread used for fishing nets.

SEBASTIAN HERKNER



George Nakashima Custom "Sanso" Table
and Set of Ten "Conoid" Lounge Chairs.



Nao Tamura's graceful Tiki desk lamp (2014) for Established & Sons is available in plexiglass, ceramic, or metal.

Satyendra Pakhalé's lustrous green ceramic Flower Offering chair (2001), issued by BOSA in 2009.

The Manhole-mat (2003) earned Oki Sato and his design studio, Nendo, special recognition at the 2003 SaloneSatellite.

furniture and lighting. Herkner typically melds traditional craft with new technology. From the start his work attracted the eye of major producers including ClassiCon, Gervasoni, and more recently, Moroso, which carries his Basks series. "On the last day of SaloneSatellite 2011, I met Patrizia Moroso," he says, noting that she was attracted to a group of paper yarn baskets he had presented. "This was the starting point of our collaborations."

The Brazilian designer Pedro Paulo Franco also showed at Satellite three times—in 2010 with his collection *Artesania*, in 2011 with a collection called *Carnevale*, and again in 2012 with two new chairs. Though, like others, his designs were acquired for production, after participating in Satellite he says that he "chose to develop my own brand with the collaboration of the most important designers in the world, such as Alessandro Mendini, Fabio Novembre, Nika Zupanc, Pininfarina, Campana Brothers. And my products also, of course." As a result, his company, *A Lot of Brasil*, is now part of the main Salone.

Jouin also speaks of the contacts he made: "In a day I met Achille Castiglioni, Alessandro Mendini, Vico Magistretti, and Enzo Mari: all the greatest Italian designers," he says. "It's the first time I felt I was part of a community. It all began there."

And for many aspiring designers, it is still a beginning. "It was truly a humbling and glorious experience," says Jerri Hobdy, who last year was the youngest American represented at SaloneSatellite as part of a team from the Savannah College of Art and Design. "SaloneSatellite is the best thing that has happened to me as a young designer. Not only has a majority of my press come from my attendance and participation in the show, but I grew my network exponentially in the week I was there," she says. "I still keep in touch with some of the most brilliant young designers that I met at that show that live all over the world. As a young, emerging designer, what is lovelier than connecting and building meaningful relationships with people that share a passion for fresh, original design?"





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The Singular Designs of Shiro Kuramata

TROY SEIDMAN DISCUSSES THE JAPANESE DESIGNER WHO BRIDGED EARLY MODERNISM, 1970S MINIMALISM, AND LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY DESIGN

IF YOU FLIP THROUGH a twentieth-century design catalogue from any of the major auction houses you will find that offerings can be easily categorized according to consistent factions. There are the French modernists, the millennial bad boys, some Tiffany or even art nouveau, and the imaginative Italians to mention a reliable few. Blue chip design is typically easy to classify. And then there is Shiro Kuramata (1934–1991). Despite his association with Memphis Milano, which can be stretched to barely cover a decade of his career, Kuramata is quite removed from stylistic or national circles. Of course, individual works and certain repeated motifs within the larger body of his work share common ground with post-modern expression from a variety of disciplines, as well as Japanese design of the late twentieth century, but Kuramata's oeuvre evolved from his preoccupations (and commissions) rather than from collective forces, schools, or any "ism." This has secured his place in both the twentieth-century design canon and the marketplace—to the point that Wright auctions gave him top billing in its January sale.

The major and most intriguing theme of his work is a consistent paradox between the whimsical and austere or the extravagant and the understated. Kuramata is an important bridge between early modernists, 1970s minimalism, and late twentieth-century design. Several of the millennial bad boys (such as Philippe Starck, Marc Newson, and Maarten Baas) are indebted to his ingenuity and eagerness to imbue retail or product design with a sense of humor. To paraphrase the design scholar and curator Deyan Sudjic, while Memphis added elements to subvert modernism, Kuramata accomplished the same by subtraction. In this edition of *Grading System* we'll highlight and assess four of his greatest hits.



Miss Blanche chair, 1998 “Miss Blanche” is unquestionably the design market’s favorite Kuramata work, with four examples selling for more than \$100,000 since 2007, including, most recently, one going for just under \$400,000 at Phillips in London in September 2012. Such prices underscore the market’s preference for the designer’s last decade of creation, despite the fact that most works from the period were either manufactured or realized in editions (Miss Blanche was done in an edition of fifty-six). Kuramata first started exploring acrylic in 1968 and produced several different designs in the material during the late 1980s. While I find this chair to be awkward and gimmicky, it is nevertheless rich in allusion—to Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, and Marcel Duchamp. While many nuanced references to these creators can be found across Kuramata’s oeuvre, Miss Blanche is most likely an homage to Duchamp—who used the name “Rose Sélavy” as his female alter-ego. In his catalogue raisonné of Kuramata’s work Deyan Sudjic cites the film *A Streetcar Named Desire* as the main inspiration for the chair: the film’s heroine Blanche DuBois is as fake as the plastic petals and acrylic (which Kuramata called “fake glass”). While the chair is instantly recognizable, I would argue that Kuramata’s other acrylic works from this period, such as the Acrylic stool and the complementary tabletop sculptures with their suspended floating feathers, are more refined, consistent with his oeuvre, and simply prettier.

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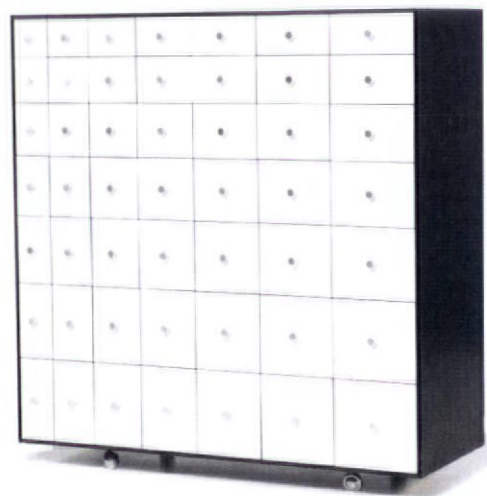
Nara table, 1983 Kuramata designed two tables made from his innovative “Star Piece Terrazzo” for the fourth Memphis Milano exhibition in 1983. Invented by Kuramata, Star Piece Terrazzo was made by randomly mixing small shards of candy-colored glass into white concrete. On first glance, the tables do not appear to be obviously related to their Memphis cousins; while the confetti-like glass recalls some of Nathalie du Pasquier’s exuberant patterns, the overall effect is more accent than a dominant aesthetic. The Star Piece Terrazzo pieces are further distinguished from most Memphis furniture, which while innovative in form, pattern, and color combinations, was generally made of existing materials

GRADE
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that were intended for (or appeared to be intended for) mass-market or commercial applications. The simplicity, almost banality, of the table’s shape combined with the subtlety of the color resulted in a Memphis creation that is clearly filtered through the lens of Japanese restraint. If the Italian Memphis pieces are laughing unabashedly, Kuramata’s tables are trying to conceal a giggle. Indeed, the Star Piece Terrazzo tables have aged better than many of their Memphis cousins, most of which need to be justified today by the reminder that they are good design from the 1980s rather than simply good design.

Furniture With Drawers, Vol. 2

#6, 1967 Experimental and evocative, this work is among Kuramata’s early furniture designs and was created to satisfy his vision rather than any commercial responsibility. The tone is understated and almost austere, but the message is playful and subversive. While it seems absurd or impossible, each of the forty-nine drawers is of a different size. Kuramata began creating furniture with drawers as a defining aesthetic rather than for function. His first works not only explored this obsession but established a consistent theme in his practice: how can a piece of furniture adhere to its functional responsibilities yet simultaneously eschew them? What would you imagine storing in the bottom row of drawers here? Deyan Sudjic describes this example as the “most idiosyncratic and well-known of the pieces in the series.”



Apple Honey chair, 1985 The Apple Honey chair is certainly not as well known as Kuramata’s Glass chair (1976) or his How High the Moon armchair (1986), which both appear with such frequency in important twentieth-century design surveys that their impact has become somewhat diminished. Kuramata began creating furniture using chromed steel tubing in 1970 and would employ it several times over the course of the following decade. Apple Honey is arguably the best example and repeats his motif of floating or absence also seen in Miss Blanche. It is a grandchild of Le Corbusier’s LC furniture and evinces Kuramata’s reverence for both Thonet and Marcel Breuer. Apple Honey manifests the trifecta of the best elements of Kuramata’s work: Japanese restraint, postmodern whimsy, and the poetry of repositioning a modest construction material for decorative or sculptural purposes. It’s uncertain (and really irrelevant) if the tubing pierces the seat’s edge and connects with the back legs for stability, but the result is a beautiful minimalist form. It recalls a giant paperclip turned into functional sculpture. This is a creation that satisfies the tenets of the Bauhaus yet subtly allows decorative elements. Unlike Kuramata’s best-known chairs, it is easy to envision Apple Honey being used in a domestic or professional setting. Ultimately it is a stool with arms-backrest or simply an elaborate handle. I include Apple Honey here both for its functionality and for its accessibility today; it was manufactured first in Japan and shortly thereafter by UMS Pastoe in the Netherlands in greater numbers. For young collectors, this chair is an important entry point as it is possible to acquire a pair from the Dutch production for as little as \$1,500.

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The Palm Springs Art Museum's New Architecture and Design Center

By ROBERT ATKINS



Photographed by Julius Shulman in 1962, the Santa Fe Federal Savings and Loan branch in Palm Springs, California, was designed by E. Stewart Williams. It has recently been renovated and opened as the Architecture and Design Center (A+D Center) of the Palm Springs Art Museum.

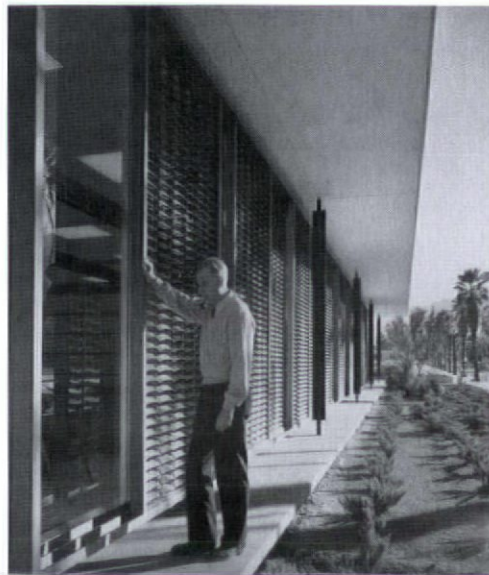
Williams outside the bank building in a 1962 photograph by Shulman.

WHAT FLORENCE IS TO RENAISSANCE architecture, Palm Springs is to mid-century modern. It boasts the world's highest concentration of the ever-hip postwar buildings and now has an innovative museum facility specializing in their study and display. Housed in a repurposed mid-century bank building, the Palm Springs Art Museum's new Architecture and Design Center (A+D Center) offers the sort of harmony between art and exhibition space unseen since the opening a quarter century ago of Bruce Goff's Pavilion for Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The A+D Center is located in the Edward Harris Pavilion, a thirteen thousand-square-foot, former Santa Fe Federal Savings and Loan branch designed by E. Stewart Williams in 1961. With its cruciform columns, glass walls, and elevated setting on a plinth, the building tips its hat to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion of 1929.

Williams had designed the Palm Springs Art Museum's first purpose-built venue—a ten thousand-square-foot building—in 1958 and would, in 1974, be commissioned to design the 150,000-square-foot flagship building. Given this shared history it comes as no surprise that the A+D Center dedicated its first exhibition to him. Titled *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, the show provided a satisfying overview of the career of this gifted and prolific architect and a key to mid-century modern architecture in Palm Springs.

In 1947, a decade after earning degrees from Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania, Williams joined his father and brother in the thriving firm of Harry J. Williams. "Stu" Williams's first, serendipitous, commission was a residence for Frank Sinatra—who walked into the Williams office intending to commission a Georgian colonial redolent of Beverly Hills, but quickly agreed to the mid-century modern design that he would live in for decades. (It is unclear what Williams thought of Sinatra's piano-shaped pool.)



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This photo by Shulman shows the bank interior in 1962.

The first exhibition at the A+D Center was devoted to Williams.

Williams's 1954 house for Marjorie and William Edris is now the residence of architect J. R. Roberts, the A+D Center's managing director, who restored it with Williams's input.

Among Williams's many designs for Palm Springs is the mountaintop station of the Aerial Tramway, built in 1961, pictured here in a rendering by Ken Nichols.

Williams became a central figure in the growth of the desert city one hundred miles east of Los Angeles. In addition to the original museum (and later additions), he designed numerous banks and hospitals, dozens of residences and schools, Palm Springs' City Hall, Temple Isaiah, Crafton Hills College, and the mountaintop station of the Aerial Tramway. He was one of a small group of architects—John Porter Clark, William F. Cody, Albert Frey, John Lautner, Richard Neutra, and Donald Wexler among them—who helped transform Palm Springs from a provincial village into a hub of mid-century architecture. There were various reasons for this achievement: the invention of air conditioning and the postwar demand for housing, the continuing interest of Hollywood in well-publicized weekend getaways, and the glamorizing photographs of Southern California architecture taken by Julius Shulman. But it was its suitability to the desert climate and lifestyle that ensured the success of mid-century modern architecture there. Its integration of indoors and outdoors derived from Frank Lloyd Wright and its straightforward Bauhaus-derived building techniques and use of sustainable materials help explain its continuing influence.



the elimination of a crumbling exterior wall that had enclosed an area for "nude sunbathing," as originally specified by the Edris family and seen in a deftly drawn plan that hung in the show. Roberts hired the Los Angeles firm Marmol Radziner to assist with the restoration of the house, and then they went on to direct the bank's meticulous renovation and transformation into the museum.

Interestingly, in separate conversations about the creation of the A+D Center both Roberts and Sidney Williams cited the landmarking of the former bank as the most essential step in the process. (Williams is the former chair of the Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board and sat on the board of Modernism Week, while Roberts is a city planning commissioner and vice president of PS ModCom, a preservation group.) The initial task, Williams explains, was "getting Class 1 historical designation for the bank in 2009. [Developer] John Wessman owned the building and was going to wrap four-story condos around it, destroying views

In addition to what was built, the exhibition provided fascinating glimpses of what might have been. The museum, for instance, was originally intended to have an additional story, as shown in one of the drawings on view. But the zoning variance that would have transformed its sprawling horizontality into a more welcoming, centralized composition was denied.

Ties between Williams, who died in 2005, and the Palm Springs Art Museum transcend the architectural realm: his daughter-in-law Sidney Williams is the museum's longtime curator of architecture and one of the initial proponents of the A+D Center; architect J. R. Roberts, the A+D Center's managing director, owns Stu Williams's iconic Edris house (1954) and restored it with input from him—including

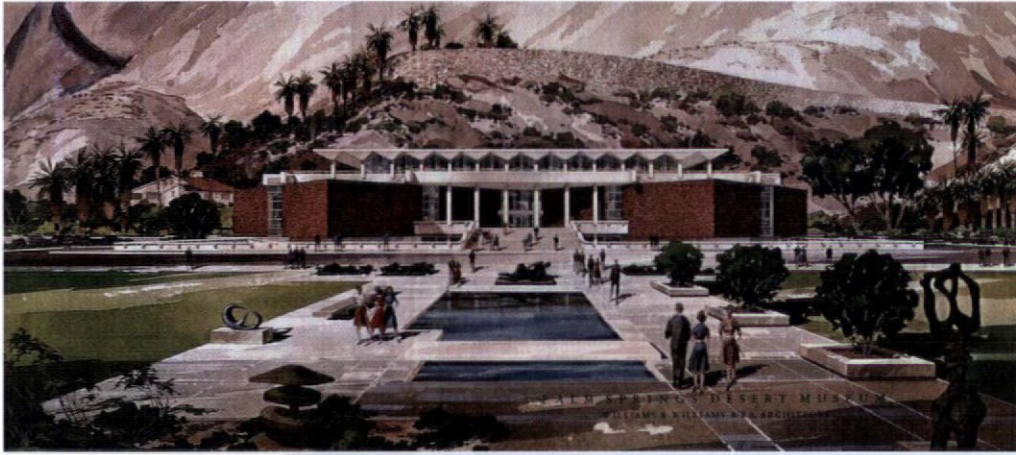




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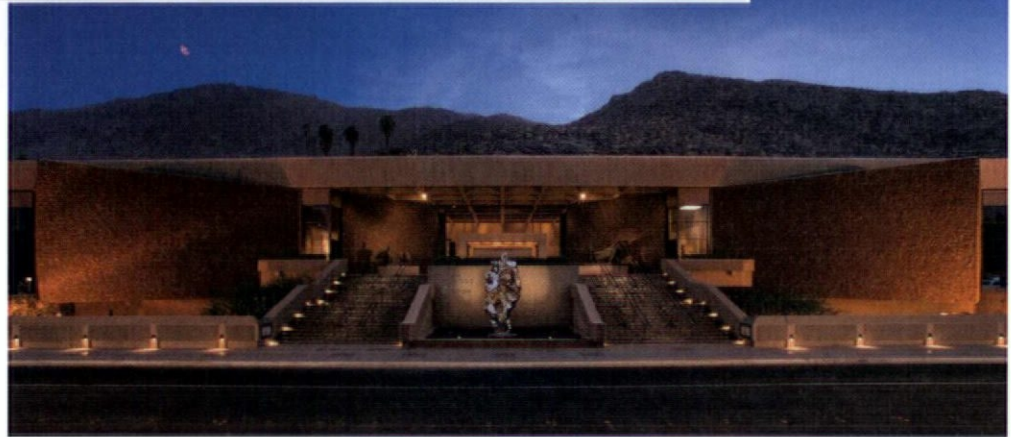
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Rendering of the Palm Springs Art Museum as designed by Williams in 1970. Below is the museum as built in accordance with zoning restrictions without the upper story shown in the rendering. Founded in 1938 as the Palm Springs Desert Museum, the museum initially specialized in Native American artifacts and the natural sciences of the Coachella Valley and began to exhibit art only in 1958. Seventeen years later, it changed its name to the Palm Springs Art Museum and in 2013, it celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary.

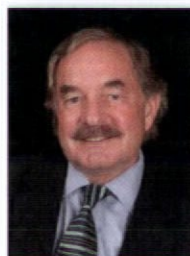
Sidney Williams, Stewart Williams's daughter-in-law, is the museum's longtime curator of architecture.

Steven A. Nash recently retired as director of the Palm Springs Art Museum.



of it from two sides. We had to get him on board... and he ultimately became an enthusiastic supporter of the project." (Wessman's controversial role in the revitalization of Palm Springs' downtown resembles that of developer Larry Silverstein's in the halting rebuilding of the World Trade Center.)

The bottom line, Roberts notes, is that the renovation "succeeds in solving the problem of showing prints and drawings in a building with glass walls." Upcoming exhibitions will test these limits by featuring three-dimensional, sometimes hybrid, objects in keeping with the A+D Center's expansive vision of architecture and design in an era when the boundaries separating disciplines are melting away. They include a traveling show called *Killer Heels*, about high-heel shoe design, and *Eye on Design: Andrea Zittel's Aggregated Stacks*, organized by the museum's chief curator Daniell Cornell and devoted to the conceptual art/design of an artist who fashions shelves and storage for throwaway packing boxes, augmented by design objects from the museum collection.



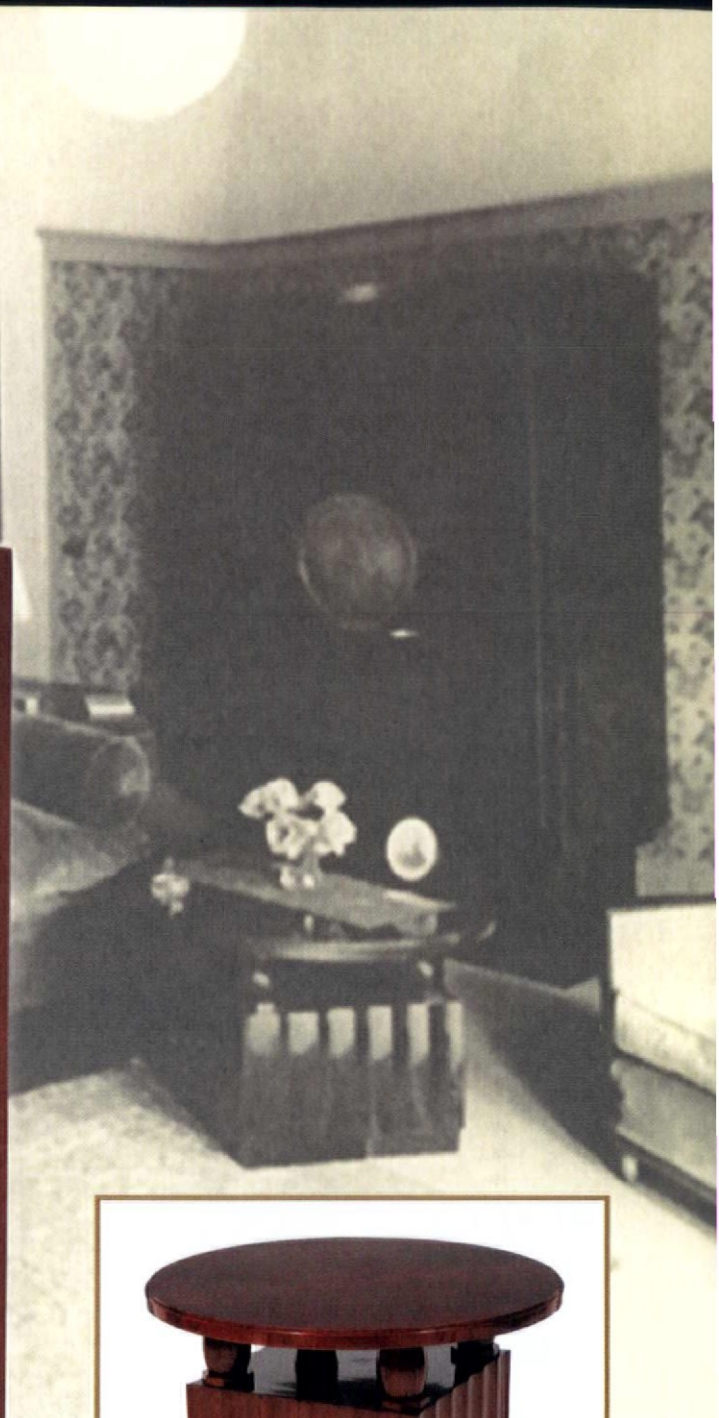
The center's opening also marks the culmination of a period of expansion for the museum unprecedented since the 1970s. During the leadership of Steven Nash, the former JoAnn McGrath Executive Director, attendance at the Palm Spring Art Museum rose 70 percent and endowments by 30 percent; the permanent collections increased by 25 percent, and two new campuses were added—The Galen and the Faye Sarkowsky Sculpture Garden in Palm Desert and the Architecture and Design Center in Palm Springs.

Nash officially retired on January 1, and has been succeeded by Elizabeth Armstrong, a well-regarded curator who's worked at major institutions in Minneapolis and Southern California.) Discussing his tenure at the museum, Nash notes the difficulty of singling out his most satisfying accomplishment there. When pressed he says, "I would have to say that I'm proudest of the overall, institution-wide leap in quality. That is, the big picture, the museum's emergence—if you allow me a little bragging—as one of the best middle-size museums in the country."

More than a little bragging seems entirely in order, Dr. Nash.

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The Importance of Anzolo Fuga

By EVAN LOBEL

ANZOLO FUGA, BORN IN 1914, came from one of Murano's oldest and most distinguished glassblowing lineages, dating back to the Middle Ages. His father, Emilio Fuga, was director of the *Cristalleria di Venezia e Murano*, which made French-style crystals that were ground or decorated with acid. His mother, Adelaide Barovier, was the daughter of Giuseppe Barovier, an important and talented glass master who worked on Murano in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Anzolo, his name the Muranese version of Angelo, was named after his paternal grandfather, who had revived the art of copper-wheel engraving and the making of decorated mirrors in the second half of the nineteenth century.

A talented young artist specializing in illustration, lithography, and watercolors, Anzolo attended the *Istituto d'Arte di Venezia*, a prestigious high school for the arts where the teachers were artists themselves and often experts in glassmaking. There he developed a serious interest in stained glass, which at the time was typically made using large sheets of homogenous glass. Fuga, however, was fascinated with the subtleties and artistic qualities he could achieve by incorporating the fragments of hand-blown glass that were routinely discarded at glass-houses. In 1938 he started a new stained-glass department

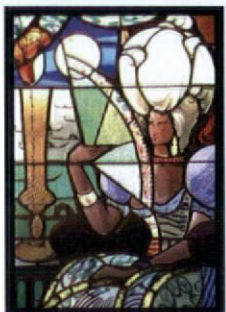
within the *Istituto* and went on to dedicate much of his life to the creation of stained-glass panels, each a work of art.

Anzolo Fuga (1914–1998) on the occasion of an award from the Venetian Chamber of Commerce in 1987.

Details of stained-glass windows by Fuga in the chapel at Scalabrini Village, a retirement center catering in particular to the Italian community in southwestern Australia. The chapel appears to have been built in the 1960s or 1970s.

Details of two of the many stained-glass windows of c. 1986 by Fuga in the Hotel Danieli in Venice.

Vase, 1955–1968, incorporating glass fragments, murrhines, and rods—all elements Fuga also used in his stained-glass windows.



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'Miss Blanche,' designed 1988 (detail)

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He used glass fragments, murrhines, and glass rods fused with lead, all worked hot, and sometimes engraved the panels with acid for added effect. His panels were often exhibited at biennales and other exhibitions and can be seen today in numerous Catholic churches in Venice, a chapel in Australia, a synagogue in Jerusalem, and in the Palazzo Barbarigo and the Hotel Danieli in Venice. It was at this last where I first became enthralled by his work.

Fuga was also a talented designer of glass vases and other objects. He and his brother Giuseppe collaborated on pieces decorated with enamel and gold that were extremely sophisticated and emblematic of the 1950s.

Incorporating complex abstract designs that required a high degree of technical skill, these pieces were routinely exhibited at the Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, a prestigious applied arts exhibition in Venice, and are highly sought after today.

From 1955 through 1968 Fuga designed glass for one of the most important glass houses on Murano, Arte Vetraria Muranese (or A.V.E.M.), which was owned by Ada Ferro, the only female owner and manager of a glass house in the 1950s and 1960s. Normally, a glasshouse designer created a limited number of pieces. Clients would see the model in the showroom and buy it.

Then the glasshouse would make another and it would be available to the next buyer. Fuga had a different arrangement: a true artist, he wanted to be able to experiment with different models at all times, so he would show up at A.V.E.M. with drawings and ideas on a daily basis. He and Ferro's younger brother Luciano (and sometimes other blowers) would figure out the best way to carry out the designs, almost all of which were executed by Luciano. There were rarely two identical pieces; instead there were many variations on a theme, some pieces very delicate and others extremely bold.

After these pieces were completed, Ada Ferro would whisk them into storage rooms at A.V.E.M., considering them valuable avant-

garde art objects that she wanted to keep. According to her widower, Gianfranco Zabet, Ferro was a private and protective woman who felt that if people saw Fuga's work they would copy it, as was common on Murano. There are stories from the glassblowers at A.V.E.M. of her kicking people out of the glasshouse because she was convinced they were spying on Fuga's designs. Moreover, she was extremely close to Luciano, who died at forty-seven, and was reluctant to sell the pieces he blew. This created a unique situation: a large body of work by an important glass designer was hidden from view. A.V.E.M. kept most of Fuga's designs locked away for decades.

Indeed, when I first started researching Fuga's designs and found that he had worked at A.V.E.M. over a

Fuga's signature as it appears on his glass panels.

Left: This is a rare example of what Fuga called a "Radici" (Roots) vase on a drawing for the series, 1960-1961.

Both vases on the right demonstrate the colorful "windows" Fuga incorporated into his pieces, one window created with rods and the other with murrhines, 1955-1956.



long period, I was surprised that I could not find many pieces for sale. Occasionally, but infrequently, a vase or bowl would show up at auction. Around 2001 I came to know a glass dealer in Venice who told me about the hundreds of pieces by Fuga, Giulio Radi, and others in storage at A.V.E.M. He arranged for me to meet Zabet and to see the collection. Zabet explained that since the pieces had been highly prized by his wife he did not want to sell them. As we talked over the course of that week, however, I gained his trust, and he agreed to sell me a large part of the collection on the condition that I would do my best to get a noteworthy book published about it. I gave him my word that I would do so.

Every serious glass collector and museum curator of decorative arts knows that the most respected Italian glass historian in the world today is Rosa Barovier Men-

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tasti, who has spent her life in Venice and on Murano studying the history of glass and glassmaking and has written many essential books on the subject. What most people do not know is that Anzolo Fuga was her teacher at the Scuola del Vetro Abate Zanetti (Abate Zanetti Glassmaker's School), where he was also director from 1951 to 1972. Mentasti had visited A.V.E.M. in the 1970s and Ferro had shown her the works she had by Fuga and Radi; at that

Top: These two extremely complex vases incorporating "windows" date from c. 1960.

Bottom left: Vase with enamel decoration by Anzolo Fuga and his brother Giuseppe, 1947-1948.

Bottom right: This unusual vase of 1956-1960 incorporates two internal threads, obviating its use as a vase.

point Mentasti expressed interest in doing a book on them, but Ferro would not consent. When I approached her in 2002 about a monograph on Fuga and this particular cache of works, I was thrilled that she agreed. Aware that her most valuable asset was her reputation as an independent researcher and historian, Mentasti insisted on full control over the contents of the book—though she allowed me to write the foreword and be involved in the photography and layout. Zabot granted her full access to the A.V.E.M. archives and she interviewed all the glassblowers who had worked there in the 1950s and 1960s and afterwards to authenticate each piece as Fuga's design and to make sure that none had been made after he left in 1968. She would not accept payment for the book, believing that Fuga was so important that it was her obligation to educate the world about him.

After two years of research Mentasti's *Anzolo Fuga: Murano Glass Artist, Designs for A.V.E.M., 1955-1968* was published by Acanthus Press in 2005. Most of the works included had never been seen before, and almost all the information it contains was groundbreaking. As she wrote in the book, Fuga's pieces were extraordinarily modern for his time and "possess a chromatic and decorative impact that still appear exceptional today. His works speak the language of the 1950's and 60's with such freshness that they do not look out-of-date in the most contemporary of environments." Some of his pieces have "windows" as part of their design. One of his better-known designs, the *Bandiere* (Flag) series was so-named because of the way the colorful rods were laid out when the pieces were constructed, as the glass masters explained to Mentasti. At least one vase was unlike anything anyone had seen before, with a thin thread-like element that extended from one wall of the vase to the other; Rosa had to consult the blowers to find out how it was made. Ironically, such pieces can't be used as vases since the most complicated design elements, the glass threads, would break. Another series incorporates glass fragments, murrhines, and rods as Fuga was doing in his stained-glass windows.

Anzolo Fuga died in 1998 and Murano lost one of the most creative and artistic minds of the twentieth century. Thankfully, we have Rosa Barovier Mentasti's extraordinary tome documenting his achievements at A.V.E.M. Just a hint at what he created is presented here.



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Claire Falkenstein: Small Sculpture/ Large Jewelry

By AL EIBER

IN HER LIFETIME AND AFTER, Claire Falkenstein (1908-1997) was known as a sculptor, painter, and teacher as well as a ceramist and glass designer. Less is known about her stunning and dramatic jewelry, which has been exhibited only rarely, and not in many years. I became interested in her work about fifteen years ago when I bought one of her small "fusion" sculptures from a Chicago auction house. As I learned more about Falkenstein, I was astounded by her talent and facility with a range of materials. Each piece was distinctive, from her large sculptures in metal to her stained-glass windows to her jewelry—which I found particularly intriguing.

I am always interested in artists and industrial designers who "push the envelope." Falkenstein explored new territory in both her jewelry and her sculpture. Each piece was unique, made by her own hands, and each more beautiful than the last. Falkenstein's most famous work, *The New Gates of Paradise*, is a set of doors commissioned in 1960 by Peggy Guggenheim for her private palazzo (now the Guggenheim Museum Venice) on the Grand Canal. Each measuring nine by three feet, the doors are made of metal webbing into which Falkenstein placed large chunks of colored Venetian glass.

Born in Coos Bay, Oregon, Falkenstein received her B.A. in fine arts in 1930 from the University of California, Berkeley. She had her first gallery exhibition prior to graduating from college. Over the summer of 1933 she was exposed to some of the most avant-garde theories of the day by meeting László

Moholy-Nagy and Gyorgy Kepes and through her studies at Mills College with sculptor Alexander Archipenko. She taught at a variety of schools and universities, honing her skills and developing her unique style through interactions with fellow teachers, particularly at the innovative California School of Fine Arts, where she taught alongside abstract expressionists such as Clyfford Still, who would become a close friend and artistic influence, and Richard Diebenkorn. During this period, Falkenstein frequently worked with carved wood and molded clay.

In 1950, believing that she needed new avenues of stimulation, Falkenstein decided to move to Europe. (She asked her husband to accompany her and when he refused, she divorced him.) From 1950 through about 1963, she lived in Paris, maintaining a studio on the Left Bank, where she met such artists as Jean (Hans) Arp, Alberto Giacometti, Sam Francis, and Paul Jenkins, as well as the art connoisseur Michael Tapié, who acted as a sort of mentor and promoter for the American expatriate community. Falkenstein found that her experience in Paris greatly advanced her artistic vocabulary and strengthened her foundation as a sculptor.

During this period her work was shown frequently at the Galleria Spazio in Rome and Galerie Stadler in Paris.

In 1963 Falkenstein returned to Venice, California, where her work consisted primarily of large-scale commissions, such as the fifteen towering stained-glass windows that she created for Saint Basil Catholic Church in Los Angeles (1969), and *Accelerating Point*, a 1974 commission for the entrance of the San Diego Museum of Art.

Falkenstein started making jewelry in the mid- to late 1940s for numerous reasons, among them economy of scale and as a way to learn how to work with different metals. With jewelry, she was able to stretch her limited budget while taking risks and experimenting with different techniques. She practiced bending, welding, soldering, and casting metals—techniques she continued to use in her later sculpture and jewelry. In the 1950s, she used both glass and metal together, creating her "fusions." At first she placed the glass chunks within her sculptures and jewelry, then later she melted the glass over the metal.



Clare Falkenstein with her kinetic sculpture *Big Apple* of 1948 in aluminum and Hydrocal.

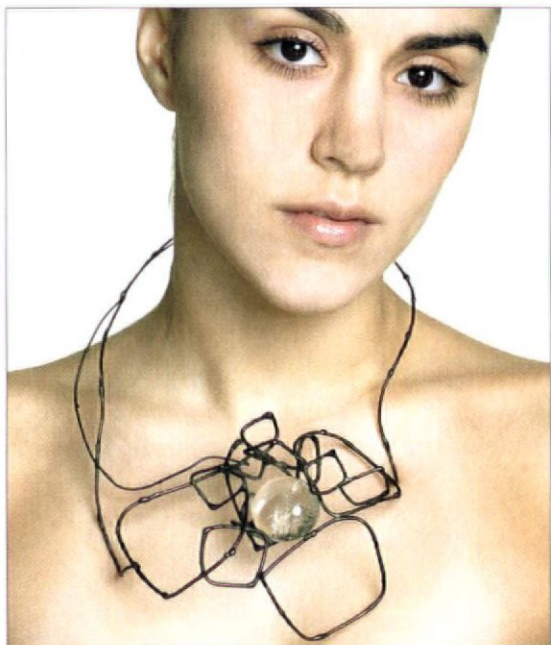
Brooch by Falkenstein in silver.

Falkenstein's model for the gates she designed for the Venetian palazzo of Peggy Guggenheim, 1961, is made of painted copper wire and glass.



Brooch in copper by Falkenstein.





The rings, brooches, bracelets, and extraordinary necklaces Falkenstein fashioned were not maquettes for her sculpture. Instead, they were intended to be small wearable works of art. Her jewelry was shown at various prestigious exhibitions during her lifetime, including the second annual Exhibition of Contemporary Jewelry at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 1948 and the International Exhibition of Modern Jewelry in London in 1961. In 1962 the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris held a one-person exhibition of both her sculpture and jewelry.

From 1962 to 2004 her jewelry went relatively unrecognized. Not until 2004, seven years after her death, did the Long Beach Museum of Art in California have the insight and courage to mount *The Modernist Jewelry of Claire Falkenstein*, the most comprehensive exhibition of her jewelry to date. Maren Henderson, a co-curator of the exhibition, wrote in the accompanying catalogue: "Falkenstein cared very much about fit and comfort, and her works are a joy to wear. A piece of jewelry by Falkenstein however was

never just an accessory. Falkenstein's jewelry is not about costuming or fashion so much as formal ideas involving line, space, surface, materials, and color. Wearability and formal experiment become one and the same. The artist never pandered to the marketplace or fashion trends. Falkenstein looked more to the future, convinced that her work would find its time and place in history."

Now, more than ten years since the Long Beach exhibition, I think it's time that Claire Falkenstein's jewelry be re-examined and enjoyed by a new generation. Her jewelry pieces are miniature sculptures, each unique and exciting, showcasing her talent and the numerous techniques she used.

Note: After Falkenstein's death in 1997, a group of her friends established the Falkenstein Foundation to expose and educate people about her work. Recently, the foundation became associated with the Michael Rosenfeld Gallery in New York to further promote her oeuvre.

Clockwise from top left: Falkenstein fashioned this ring of brass and amethyst.

A Venetian glass bead is incorporated into this gold-plated brass necklace of c. 1955.

The 1970s pendant is fashioned of glass melted over copper.

Wearable sculpture like all Falkenstein's jewelry, this necklace is created of bent brass and glass.



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Design Galleries in the Middle East Capturing Attention

By BROOK S. MASON



The mosaic surface of India Mahdavi's 2013 ceramic and brass Landscape table is inspired by traditional Iznik tiles.

Nada Debs's Carving Time vases in hand-carved maple and brass, 2014.

Studio mischer'traxler's Gradient Mashrabiya sideboard, 2012, is made from more than 650 lathed oak pieces, assembled by hand.

THE MIDDLE EAST HAS AN AGE-OLD LEGACY of ceramics, metal, glass, and carved wood, and today a host of contemporary designers is drawing on that heritage for inspiration. "With the region's rich design traditions going back thousands of years, collectors are drawn to new renditions based on historical artistry, materials, and processes like hand-hammered bronze," says Cyril Zammit, director of the four-year-old Design Days Dubai. Many designers are fusing ancient craft traditions with the contemporary sensibilities of the West, and with the emergence of new designers has come new galleries to show their work. In turn, a number of those new galleries take part in prestigious international design and art fairs, thus attracting the attention of both seasoned and novice collectors.

Design Days Dubai was launched in 2012. "Our show was the first design fair in the Middle East and South Asia," Zammit says. The first show featured a total of twenty-two design dealers. Last year thirty-four gallerists were on hand. Attendance swelled from 8,500 to 12,150. "Last year, we saw the number of dealers from the Middle East triple in number from the original five,"

Zammit notes. This year the fair runs from March 16 through March 20.

Zammit says the fair is making a decided effort to reach out to designers to create work that has its origins in the area. In 2013 Design Days Dubai commissioned a table made out of shredded paper from the Dubai-based *Harper's Bazaar Interiors Arabia* by designer Jens Praet, who is represented by Industry Gallery. "It was a live performance during the fair," says Zammit. Design Days Dubai donated the table to the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Although Design Days Dubai offers an annual showcase, throughout the Middle East new design and art galleries are offering major historic art deco and mid-century work and cultivating indigenous design that expresses the special aesthetic sensibilities of the Middle East. Among them are dealers in Doha, Amman, and Sharjah.

But it is two cities, Beirut and Dubai, that offer a starting point to begin to explore this new frontier in design. Beirut in particular has come into the spotlight, aided by the annual Beirut Design Week held each June, and enhanced by the growing reputations





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Georges Mohasseb's Marguerite des sables table, designed 2014, is comprised of 241 hand-wrought brass daisies welded together.

Danielle Moudaber's brass Spiderella Kosmica, 2013.

Carlo Massoud's Aladdin 1 light in copper, stainless steel, walnut, polyamide 3D print, 2013.

Karim Chaya's Oblique lamps in marble and brass, 2013.



of such internationally appreciated designers as Nada Debs, Karina Sukar, and the two-woman team of Bojka, all at work there. Among the pacesetter dealers in Beirut are Carwan Gallery, Smogallery, and Art Factum Gallery.

Founded in 2010 by two architects, Lebanese Pascale Wakim and Montreal-born Nicolas Bellavance-Lecompte, **Carwan** was the first contemporary design gallery in the region and brings a distinctive approach by not only featuring the work of local designers (from the little known to the more recognized, such as Debs) but also by recruiting designers from Europe to tap into ancient craft traditions



and establish a cross-cultural dialogue. "We wanted to create a platform of exchange and discovery, like a bridge between the region and the rest of the world," Wakim says.

Among the designers Carwan recruited is the Paris-based architect and designer India Mahdavi, who was born in Iran, reared in Germany, France, and the United States, and educated in Paris and New York. Her work runs the gamut from jewelry and furniture to such high profile projects as the Coburg Bar and Hélène Darroze restaurant in London's Connaught Hotel. "Her 2013 brass and ceramic Landscape series is inspired by Ottoman Iznik tiles and created by Turkish craftsmen," says Wakim of Mahdavi's tables topped by tiles in shades of turquoise, orange, and yellow. "The combination of cultures appeals to a range of collectors," she adds.

Carwan made a splash at the inaugural Design Days Dubai with the Viennese design duo of Katharina Mischer and Thomas Traxler, whom he had

met the year before at Design Miami Basel. On site in Dubai, the design team assembled a work based on the Middle Eastern traditions of craftsmanship; the resulting attention-grabbing Gradient Mashrabiya sideboard was composed of more than 650 intricate pieces of oak.

Other Carwan designers include the Beirut-born, Milan-based Karen Chekerdjian, who designed a set of three chunky geometric brass side tables, and Tehran-born Taher Asad Bakhtiari, who divides his time between Tehran, Dubai, and New York. His latest efforts are wool rugs with triangular designs against striped backgrounds, which are woven in Iran. "Each Kilim takes four to five months to produce," Wakim notes. The gallery has plans to open an outpost in Dubai and participates in Design Miami and the Collective Design Fair in New York as well as in Design Days Dubai.

Smogallery Art and Design was founded by Lebanese architect and interior designer Gregory Gatserelia and opened in 2011. On his schedule are PAD London and Paris along with the Beirut Art Fair. "My collectors are looking for design that is contemporary in spirit," Gatserelia says. His client





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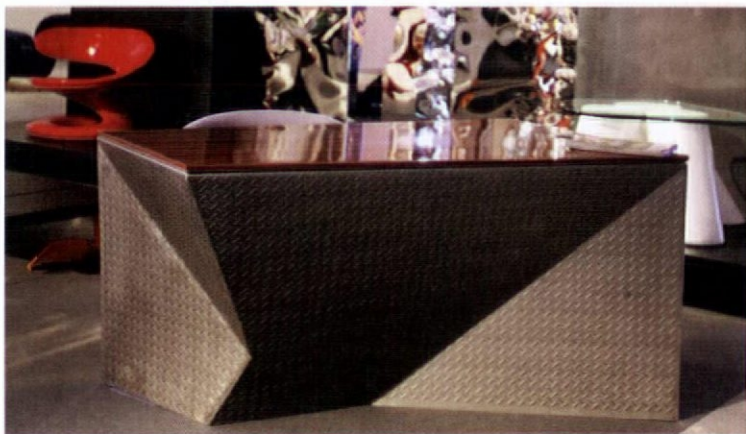
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Wendell Castle, Vermillion Desk & Chair, 1965
Courtesy of Lost City Arts



Fadi Sarieddine's *Origami desk*, 2013, combines an industrial stainless steel base with a polished palisander top.

Latifa Saeed's *Braided series* employs cotton cushion tubes upholstered on a wooden frame, 2013.

base includes collectors from Lebanon, Russia, France, Britain, and Brazil—even Singapore. Among the designers Gatsereia showcases (many of them Lebanese as well) is Danielle Moudaber, who turns out riffs on small Middle Eastern brass round tables. Her *Spiderella Kosmica* coffee table, 2014, is edged with six round disks intended to invoke the cosmos and comes in an edition of five with one artist's proof. Designer Georges Mohasseb also turns to the traditional round brass table. His 2014 *Marguerite des sables* is composed of 241 elongated daisy-like forms. Gatsereia's own *Multiestrata* table in white marble and brass is also part of Smogallery's collection.

Another gallery of note in Beirut is **Art Factum**. Launched in 2011 by Joy Mardini, who had worked in Christie's Paris twentieth-century decorative arts department, the gallery focuses on both art and design. Featured is Carlo Massoud, who worked with Umberto and Fernando Campana. His lighting in bronze and stainless steel draws on sculpture for inspiration. Carlo's sister Mary-Lynn Massoud, who trained in ceramics at Sèvres, works with the Beirut-educated Rasha Nawam to create functional vessels, frequently in amorphous shapes, with some slip-glazed in brilliant hues of yellow and red. Also at the gallery is the lighting of Beirut-born, Rhode Island School of Design graduate Karim Chaya.

Dubai, of course, is host to the annual Design Days Dubai, but it is also home to a growing number of design galleries, among them Tashkeel and La Galerie Nationale. An artist and photographer, Lateefa bint Maktoum opened **Tashkeel** in 2008 and now participates in Design Days Dubai. "We support, encourage and promote the work of both artists and designers living and working in the Emirates by providing studio facilities, artists' residencies, international fellowships, and a program of exhibitions and events as well as recreational workshops," says Jill Hoyle, Tashkeel's manager. One local designer represented is Latifa Saeed, whose 2014 *Braided* group consists of chairs, sofas, and an ottoman made up of braided cushioned cotton tubes on wooden frames. Also of note at Tashkeel are the floor and wall coverings called *San'ams*, comprised of joined hexagonal shapes of camel leather, by Emirati designer Zeinab Alhashemi.

La Galerie Nationale is headed by Guillaume Cuiry, who was originally based in Paris, where he noted a steady stream of clients from throughout the Middle East, including collectors from Kuwait and Qatar. Cuiry specializes in both modern and contemporary design. Showcased at his gallery is work by such well-known figures as Serge Mouille, Willy Rizzo, and Joe Colombo, along with that of such contemporary designers as the Beirut-born Fadi Sarieddine. An architect based in Dubai, Sarieddine frequently works in stainless steel; his 2012 *Origami* desk has a stainless steel base in a checkerboard pattern and a palisander top. Also on view at Galerie Nationale is the work of Iraqi artist and ceramist Sarmad Al-Mussawi, who creates objects that are influenced by Islamic calligraphy.

Dealers exhibiting at the 2014 Design Days Dubai were from around the globe—Europe, Africa, North and South America, and Asia. There were four from Dubai, two from Beirut, and one each from Doha and Amman. Collectors, too, came from around the world. "The fact that collectors from beyond the Middle East, from the States and Europe as well as Russia, come to our fair demonstrates that this area is now a magnet for design collectors," Zammit says.



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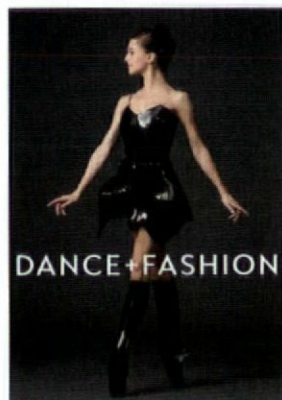


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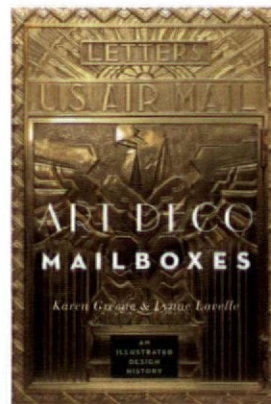
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Gabriel A. Maher, *DE___SIGN* (video), 2014
Photo courtesy of the artist



Dance and Fashion

Edited by
Valerie Steele
Yale University
Press, \$50



Art Deco Mailboxes

By Karen Greene
and Lynne Lavelle
W.W. Norton, \$26.95

BOOKS THAT EXPLORE THE WIDE WORLD OF DESIGN

By DANIELLE DEVINE

DANCE AND FASHION have been intertwined for hundreds of years. The synergy between them is explored in *Dance and Fashion*, a lavishly illustrated book that accompanies a recent exhibition at the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology organized by the museum's director and chief curator, Valerie Steele. The book features both contemporary and historical photography to illustrate essays by ten fashion experts documenting the important role dress has played in the visual allure of dance. The gauzy tulle skirts and satin ballet slippers worn by Maria Taglioni in the early 1800s to dance *La Sylphide* has influenced designers from Christian Dior to Christian Louboutin. "It is one of the dreams of a designer to design costumes for a ballet," says Givenchy designer Riccardo Tisci, who created the mythical skeleton costumes for *Boléro* in 2013.

The influence of dance costume on runway fashion is an important theme throughout the book. For example, in the early twentieth century the orientalist style in fashion grew out of Russian designer Léon Bakst's costumes for the Ballets Russes, which favored flowing harem skirts in vivid colors rather than pastel shades and eliminated restricting corsets. Although he often tried to take sole credit for the exotic style, French couturier Paul Poiret's celebrated designs were inspired by Bakst's costumes. Yves Saint Laurent reintroduced orientalism in 1976 with his Ballets Russes couture collection, which was influential both then and later, and has periodically inspired other designers including Karl Lagerfeld at Chanel and John Galliano at Christian Dior.

"National dances" played an important role in twentieth-century ballets—such as *Cuadro Flamenco* and the Spanish-themed *Le Tricorne* (costumes and sets designed by Picasso)—with stunning effects on fashion. The traditional costumes of Spanish flamenco dancers, both male and female, led to important designs by Spanish couturier Cristóbal Balenciaga that, in turn, directly influenced Carolina Herrera, Ralph Lauren, and Oscar de la Renta.

Fashion designers today continue to collaborate with choreographers; some of the most acclaimed designs include Rei Kawakubo's "bump" dresses for Merce Cunningham and Valentino's "Bal de Couture" designs for the New York City Ballet.

IT MIGHT BE SMALL in size, but *Art Deco Mailboxes* is filled with insightful historical tidbits and a full-color photographic survey of the often magnificent mailboxes from the art deco period that appeared across the country thanks to architect James Goold Cutler. In 1879, at a time when cities were expanding vertically due to increasing land values and the low cost of mass-produced steel, Cutler designed the Elwood Building, a seven-story law office in Rochester, New York. The height of the building soon became a challenge; workers spent a great deal of time running up and down the stairs to deliver letters to the lobby where the mail was picked up.

Four years later Cutler devised a metal chute for the office that linked the upper floors to the first-floor mailbox. He was granted a patent, and in 1884 the first Cutler-designed mailbox was installed in the Elwood Building. It was an instant success. Cutler went on to manufacture a number of models in different sizes, designs, and finishes, but all were emblazoned with the company's trademark, the American bald eagle. It wasn't long before mailboxes and chutes were considered as essential as the front door to any major commercial or residential building.

Cutler's lobby receptacles quickly evolved from simple utilitarian objects to works of art, their designs directly correlating with the sweeping trends of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century architecture. Classical motifs quickly changed to art deco, with block lettering and geometrically shaped eagle's wings. Cutler's designs influenced other architects to design unique mailboxes in the deco style as focal points in lobbies and public spaces. The book's photo gallery features their work as well as Cutler's, including stunning boxes by Sloan and Robertson and Cross and Cross of New York.

In 1997 the installation of mail chutes in new buildings was banned because they functioned as chimneys carrying fire from floor to floor. Although many of the early mailboxes have been removed, destroyed, or repurposed, numerous examples still exist; in New York City there are three in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, three in Grand Central Terminal, and four in the Empire State Building. Readers will learn how Cutler's invention outlasted function to become objects of beauty that can still be found in buildings across the country.



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More than a Mug Shot

LEWIS KREVOLIN: A CAREER AND A LIFE'S JOURNEY

By BENJAMIN KREVOLIN

AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN reached new heights in postwar America, fueled by the carnival barker energy of Madison Avenue. Russel Wright, having become a household name in the late 1930s, was a Brahmin of American design by the 1950s. His designs had been on American wedding registries for decades. His spun aluminum housewares were even mentioned as fashionable and thrifty wedding presents in *The Group*, Mary McCarthy's controversial novel about Vassar alumnae making it in the real world. Wright's popularity and success made him a role model for ambitious art school grads seeking a path to a respectable career and a middle class life. My dad was one such art school grad.

Lewis Krevolin graduated from Alfred University a few years after ceramist Betty Woodman, designer Michael Lax, and other now notable folks. His first professional gig as a potter in 1954 was in Santa's Workshop at the North Pole, a humble affair just south and east of Rochester, New York. Dad happily left Santa when Michael Lax extended an offer to work in a much more interesting workshop. Trading out trinkets for trivets, at Lax's my father experienced firsthand a deep appreciation of craft and design mixed with business savvy. The Great Depression still cast a long shadow over the futures of college graduates—with Lax my father saw the opportunity to convince his father, a plumber, that he could support his young family with an art school degree.

Dad got his next break when Laurel Lamp hired him as an in-house designer. Under the close supervision of the owners, he developed a line of lamps that combined wood and brass in elegant sculptural forms.

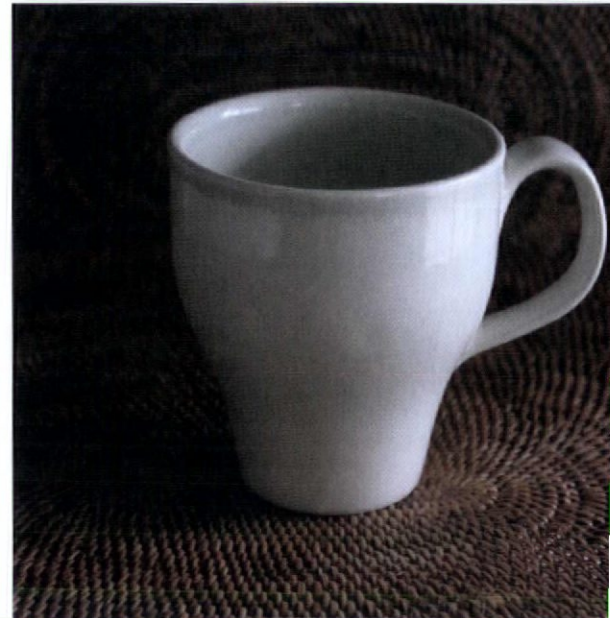
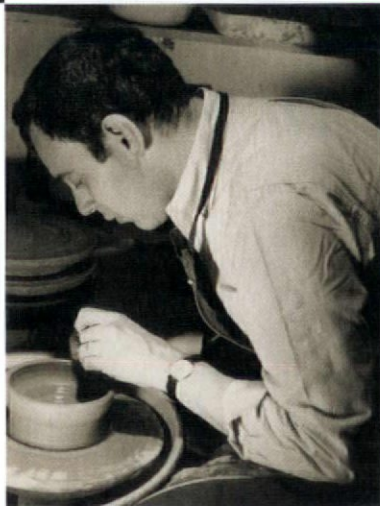
Sadly, even as an in-house designer at a reputable company he couldn't make more than \$7,500 a year—barely enough to pay rent for a basement apartment on 207th Street.

About 1958 my father saw that the Russel Wright Studio was looking for a design associate with ceramic skills. He was conflicted about applying for the job: he would have preferred to work with a great artist/designer such as Paul McCobb or Eva Zeisel, but Wright was a better businessman and working with him could open more doors for my dad in the future. In the end practicality trumped artistic aspirations. Dad applied for the job with Wright and after a series of unmemorable interviews was hired.

He joined the small team of young men toiling away in the Wright Studio and was thrown into projects headlong: the redesign of the Hunt's Ketchup bottle as a wide-mouthed jar suitable for a spoon; a new concept for paper plates based on Japanese papermaking traditions; and many projects that never made it to production because Wright was too expensive and a bit of a diva when it came to licensing products. Eventually my father was given the assignment he was hoping for: to design a coffee cup. This would not be just any coffee cup, it would set lines and volumes that would be used as a template for a redesign of Wright's wildly popular dinnerware, from cereal bowls to serving platters. He fantasized that his coffee cup, with Wright's signature stamped on the bottom, would come to dominate the American dinner table for decades to come. The cup was going to launch Lewis Krevolin into the pantheon of American designers. It would also be something his parents would understand, something useful, a coffee cup.

Armed with charcoal and a pad of paper, Dad set to sketching idea after idea for Wright's approval. He experimented with newly developed casting tech-

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



nologies that permitted his designs to make deeper volumes and broader rims. He thought through each element of the design and how it could transition from a cup to a platter or another piece in the set.

Shortly after the cup assignment, however, Wright came up with a new project for his studio, a house. He felt that his star was fading and he needed to create a Gesamtkunstwerk like that of his (unrelated) idol and rival Frank Lloyd Wright. It was all hands on deck with every mote of creative energy in the studio now directed toward Manitoga, Wright's soon-to-be show house in Putnam County, New York.

My father sketched cups at night while caring for sleepless babies and spent his days on improbable scavenger hunts to find oak toilet seats (not easy in pre-eBay days) and a single red fox pelt large enough to cover an entire bed (no red fox in all of history was ever that big). He and his fellow assistants worked hard to come up with new techniques to fulfill Wright's



works caught the eye of a few fashionable ladies on New York's Upper East Side, but they never really took off—leaving the goal of \$10,000 per year ever more elusive. My father added teaching to his design work and brought his annual income up over \$12,000. He designed and built a house, supported his family, and in the end won the respect of his father, the plumber.

Fast-forward fifty-five years: Lewis Krevolin holds the cup he designed for Wright in his hands. The cup is elegant and light in the way only a cup bearing the cheery "Russel Wright" stamp on the bottom can be. It couldn't be more different from the heavy, earthy mugs my dad created in his own studio years after he left Wright's employ. My dad hasn't seen the cup for decades. (I found one on eBay.) I expect him to be filled with emotion on being reunited with his design, but he is rather cool about it. This small pale green object was probably the most popular work my dad ever created—thousands were manufactured and sold throughout the country—and it barely warrants a smile. When I try to engage him in talking about Wright and what it was like working for this great American designer, my dad puts the cup down and starts to tell stories about working on Manitoga. These old stories of impossible tasks with terrible outcomes have been a staple of family dinners for decades. A coffee cup can't hold a candle to a house. So despite the fact that my dad really wanted to work for Wright because he was a good business person, it was Wright's big messy gesture of artistic vision—perhaps Wright's biggest failure—that still inspires my father, the art school graduate from 1954 who had hopes of becoming a successful American industrial designer but along the way became a successful father, using his creative talents to feed us, clothe us, educate us, and take us on innumerable improbable scavenger hunts.

Lewis Krevolin, the author's father.

Dad as an elf at Santa's Workshop in a photo of 1954.

Dad working at his wheel in a photo of the late 1960s.

Dad's coffee cup designed for Russel Wright's Iroquois line, 1960.

Dad and Elizabeth (Liz) Constantine, his business partner, in their workshop in the late 1960s. They coauthored a book titled *Ceramics*, published in 1967. One of their mosaic tables is visible at the right.

On a Fulbright Fellowship in 1962 Dad worked with glassmaker Kaj Franck in Finland, where he created the two glass vases at the left in the photo above, which also shows the Wright Iroquois coffee cup as well as some of Dad's own later work. The latter includes the red and grey glazed mug from the mid-1960s, a mirror from the early 1970s, a yellow, green, and blue glazed mug of the mid-'70s, and a white stoneware pitcher from late in the decade.

vision: encasing wildflowers and butterflies in resin panels, sculpting fiberglass around the bedrock outcroppings that ran through the house to create a bathtub, rubbing pine needles into wet plaster walls, and many other tasks of wild experimentation, many of which failed.

Dad eventually designed a cup suitable for Wright's new line of dinnerware, Iroquois. Bowls, platters, and serving dishes followed. New colors too. These were heady times for a young ceramist just six years out of art school, but it wasn't enough to satisfy my father, or perhaps it was too much. Shortly after this new line of dinnerware went into production, Wright helped my father get a Fulbright Fellowship. Wife and children happily in tow, he left New York for Helsinki to work with glass artist Kaj Franck.

He went on to design his own line of ceramics including large planters, mosaic coffee tables, hand-thrown tiles, and bathroom fixtures. Some of these



WE ASKED CURATORS 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.



ZAHA HADID
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door—which like the DeLorean DMC-12's gull wing, swings up to allow passenger access—reflect Hadid's characteristic formal language. The Z-Car's complex curving surfaces were produced by computer-controlled milling machines, the direct-to-production technology that can materialize the architect's nonstandard forms across all the mediums and scales in which she works.

KATHRYN B. HIESINGER
J. Mahlon Buck Jr. Family Senior Curator
European Decorative Arts after 1700
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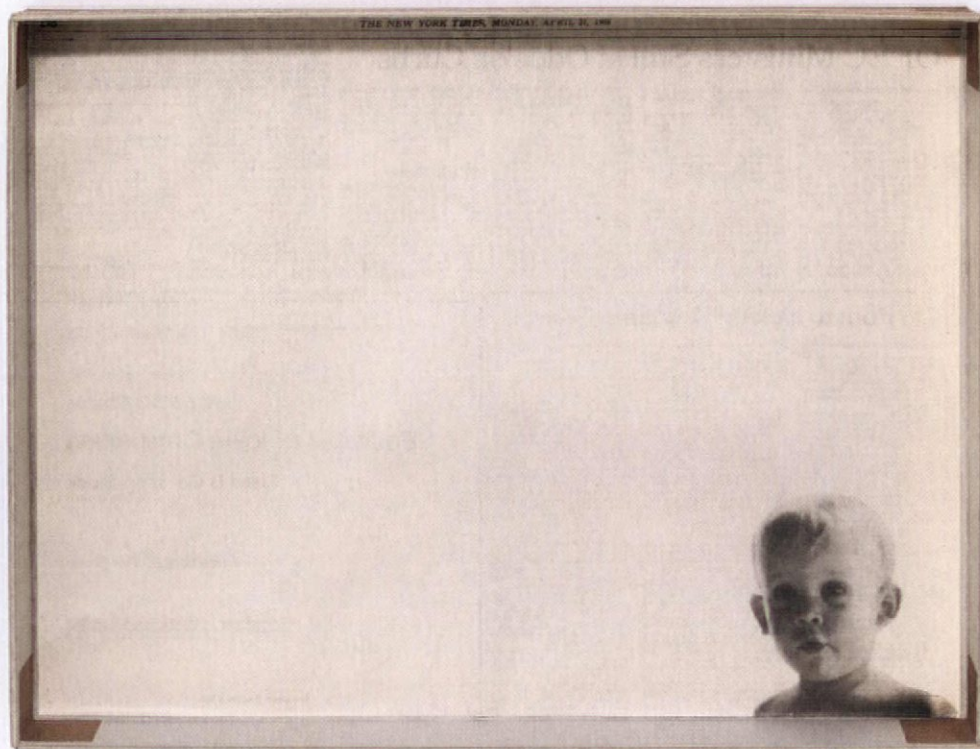
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APR. 21, 1986



On Kawara, *APR. 21, 1986* ("Monday."), New York. From *Today*, 1966–2013. Acrylic on canvas, 10 × 13 inches. Pictured with artist-made cardboard storage box, approx. 10 5/8 × 13 3/4 × 2 inches. Private collection. © On Kawara. Photo: Courtesy David Zwirner, New York/London

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The Leadership Committee for *On Kawara—Silence* is gratefully acknowledged for its support, with special thanks to David Zwirner, New York/London; Glenstone; Leonard and Louise Riggio; and Konrad Fischer Galerie, Düsseldorf and Berlin. This exhibition is also supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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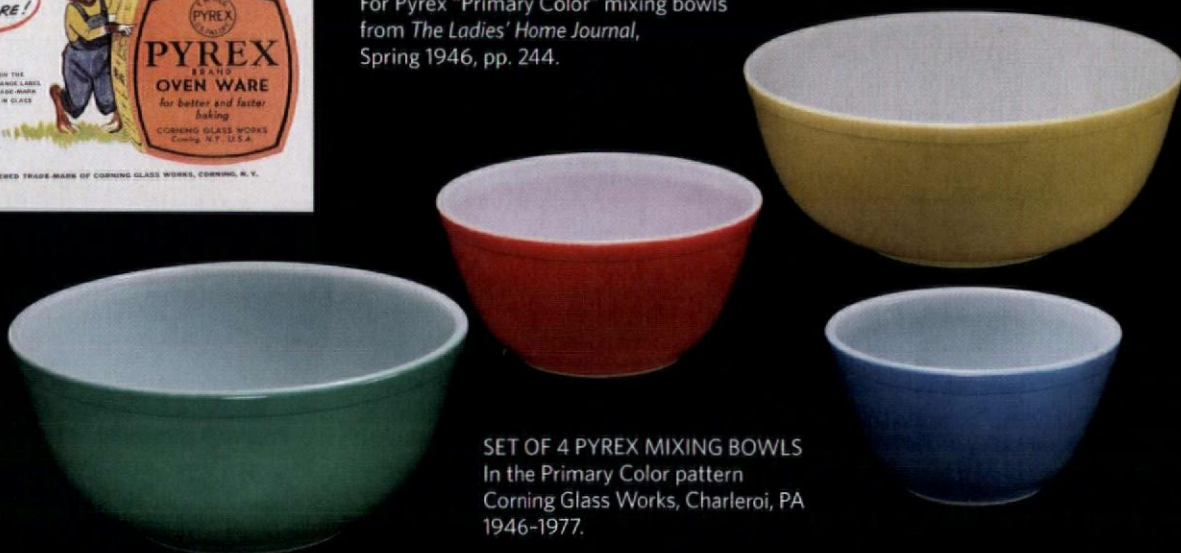
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This desk and its accompanying armchair were commissioned by Dr. Melvin A. Feldstein, a Cleveland physician, after a visit to Wendell Castle's studio in the late 1970s. The doctor, who lived in a virtual treehouse on vast wooded acreage in Ohio's Western Reserve, had discovered that he and Castle shared a love of figured wood and its sensuous beauty. The result of their afternoon together was an idea for a desk that would rise like a tree from the ground, spreading outward in a cantilevered branch. Upon completion, it was placed in Dr. Feldstein's private office, where he met patients across from it for the next thirty-plus years. The unadorned surface of the top (later examples were clad in leather) makes the desk both rare and especially pure in form.

Indeed, the surface is not unlike that of a great eighteenth-century desk-and-bookcase—alive with depth, color, and just a few stains of ink. Donated by Dr. Feldstein's widow, Susan L. Hanna, the desk adds an important work by one of America's most iconic furniture sculptors of the twentieth century to the Cleveland Museum of Art; it is joined there by another recent gift, a prototype of Castle's Calamari bench in molded fiberglass donated by the New York gallery Friedman Benda and Castle himself.

STEPHEN HARRISON

Curator of Decorative Art and Design
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Origami bowl by Ann Van Hoey, 2014.
Courtesy of J. Lohmann Gallery on view
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Featuring 80 contemporary ceramic artists

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Patrick Waterhouse

Through April 26

Artist Rooms: Roy Lichtenstein

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BUKOWSKIS

Stockholm

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Preview: April 14 to 20

Auction: April 20 to 22

Contemporary & Design

Preview: May 5 to 11

Auction: May 12

bukowskis.com

NORTH AMERICA

CALIFORNIA

HAMMER MUSEUM

Los Angeles

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of Heatherwick Studio

Through May 24

hammer.ucla.edu

BONHAMS

Los Angeles

Design

20th Century Decorative Arts

Auction April 29

bonhams.com

FLORIDA

PÉREZ ART MUSEUM MIAMI

Miami

Tâpies: From Within

Through May 3

pamm.org

ILLINOIS

WRIGHT

Chicago

Blackman Cruz

New York preview: April 3 to 21

Los Angeles preview: April 10 to 21

Auction: Chicago April 21

wright20.com

GEORGIA

HIGH MUSEUM OF ART

Atlanta

Earl Pardon's 'Portable Art': Jewelry

and Design

Through June 7

high.org

MASSACHUSETTS

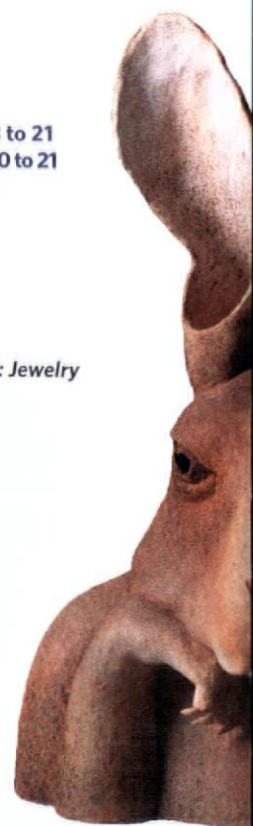
BOSTON DESIGN WEEK

Boston

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More than 60 events throughout the Boston area to increase public awareness and appreciation of all aspects of design



MICHIGAN

CRANBROOK ART MUSEUM
Bloomfield Hills
Bent, Cast, and Forged: The Jewelry of Harry Bertoia
March 14 to November 29
cranbrookartmuseum.org

MINNESOTA

WALKER ART CENTER
Minneapolis
International Pop
April 11 to August 29
walkerart.org

NEW JERSEY

RAGO ARTS AND AUCTION CENTER
Lambertville
20th Century Decorative Arts and Design
June 6 to 7
ragoarts.com

NEW YORK CITY

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Everything is Design: The Work of Paul Rand
Through July 19
mcny.org

R & COMPANY
Grains of Paradise: Contemporary African Design in Collaboration with Southern Guild
March 24 to April 30
r-and-company.com

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
This Is For Everyone: Design Experiments for the Common Good
Through January 31, 2016

Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980
March 29 to July 19
moma.org

BARD GRADUATE CENTER GALLERY
The Interface Experience: Forty Years of Personal Computing
April 3 to July 19
bgc.bard.edu

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
Chamberlain | Prouvé
Through April 4
gagosian.com

Bust of Hare "Lulu" by Catherine Saby Capri. On view
Ceramic Art London.

THE MUSEUM AT FIT
Yves Saint Laurent + Halston: Fashioning the 70s
April 28 to September 27
fitnyc.edu/museum

MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN
Pathmakers: Women in Art, Craft and Design, Midcentury and Today
April 28 to September 27
madmuseum.org

SPRING MASTERS NEW YORK
May 8 to 12
springmastersny.com
Formerly known as *The Spring Show NYC*, an international art and design fair that includes works from antiquity through the 20th Century

COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM
How Posters Work
May 8 to November 2015
cooperhewitt.org

DOYLE NEW YORK
Post-War & Contemporary Art Auction
May 12
doyle.com

COLLECTIVE DESIGN
May 13 to 17
collectivedesignfair.com
Presenting a curated selection of 20th-century and contemporary design from a global roster of emerging and established galleries

DESIGN AT LAUNCH
May 15 to 17
designatlaunch.com
Inaugural edition of this new contemporary design show that will feature selected exhibitors launching products

DISRUPTIVE DESIGN EXHIBITION
May 15 to 17
disruptivedesign.com
Exhibition of contemporary furniture, lighting and decorative arts from and for the design community

WANTEDDESIGN
May 15 to 18
wanteddesignnyc.com
A platform dedicated to promoting design and fostering the international creative community at large throughout the year

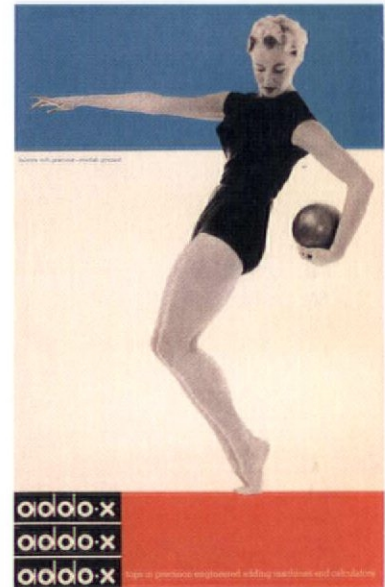
INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE FAIR (ICFF)
May 16 to 19
icff.com
North America's showcase for contemporary design will map the newest frontier of what's best and what's next

OHIO

TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
Drawn, Cut & Layered: The Art of Werner Pfeiffer
Through May 3
toledomuseum.org

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PORTLAND ART MUSEUM
Portland
Italian Style: Fashion Since 1945
Through May 3
portlandartmuseum.org



Poster for AB Addo by Ladislav Sutnar. Courtesy Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.

PENNSYLVANIA

FREEMAN'S Philadelphia
George Nakashima: Featuring the Collection of Leonard B. Sokolove
Auction April 15
freemansauction.com

MODERNE GALLERY Philadelphia
Wharton Esherick
April 17 to September 6
modernegallery.com

MIDDLE EAST

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DESIGN DAYS DUBAI
March 16 to 20
designdaysdubai.ae
Collectible and limited edition furniture and design objects



The Soul of

Conoid bench

The Nakashima compound in New Hope, Pennsylvania, is now a National Historic Landmark. The Conoid Studio, built there in the late 1950s, was named for its curved and cantilevered shape that created an organic yet modern statement. The building process led Nakashima into a series of furniture designs that employed architectonic bases, including a strong reference to cantilevering. The Conoid bench, originally designed in 1960, has turned and carved spindles attached to a highly figured, freeform seat with a significant overhang on the left or right. While not produced in large quantities, the design is so striking and unusual that it has become one of Nakashima's best known.

*A new look at the master
woodworker in advance of
a major exhibition this fall
at the Modernism Museum
Mount Dora in Florida*

By Robert Aibel

Principal photography by JEFF PHILLIPS

Nakashima

GEORGE NAKASHIMA WAS ONE OF THE great innovators of twentieth-century design, offering an approach that was like nothing that had gone before. He brought together at least two incongruous styles, traditional Japanese and American vernacular, and merged them with a modern sensibility. And in so doing, he articulated a design vocabulary that was based on the use of free edges, sapwood, knots, crotch figuring, natural flaws in wood, revealed joinery, and butterfly joints.

The tree was where everything began. Nakashima's inventory of wood was legendary and was the wellspring of all his designs. He "saw" wood in a way that no one before him had been able to. Indeed, many thought he was crazy buying "junk"





Odakyu cabinet and Asa-No-Ha floor lamp (previous page)

Nakashima's first show in Japan was held in 1968 at the Odakyu HALC Department Store in Tokyo, which held seven more shows of his work through 1990 and a memorial exhibition in 1991. This cabinet and floor lamp were originally designed for the 1970 Odakyu show, though the unique double-sided version of the cabinet shown here is from 1974. It is made of American black walnut and Hinoki cypress with pandanus cloth (traditionally made from the leaves of a Southeast Asian palm). The pattern—an abstraction of the hemp leaf—on the doors and on the fiberglass-impregnated paper lamp shade is a mid-nineteenth century Japanese design called Asa-No-Ha. The panels were made in Japan, according to Nakashima's directions. It is a very complex pattern in which twelve pieces of wood must intersect at particular points, and requires complicated and unusual lap joints.

Karuizawa chair

In 1936 Nakashima was employed by the architect Antonin Raymond and was involved in the design of Saint Paul's Church in Karuizawa, Japan. The architectural members of the church were peeled cryptomeria logs, a sacred Japanese wood, and the chairs were made from branches of the tree. They are the earliest documented pieces designed by Nakashima, probably in collaboration with Noemi Raymond, Antonin's wife and partner. The design is clearly the precursor to Nakashima's Grass-Seated chair, first designed and made in 1944 for René d'Harnoncourt, then the director of the Museum of Modern Art.



wood that they would have rejected due to its imperfections. Despite an intense and comprehensive design process, Nakashima would explain his reluctance to sign his work with the statement, "The work is not about me, it's about the tree, it's about nature."

Because his own words emphasize the tree, its second life as a functional object, and the concept that each board has one ideal use, it is tempting and sometimes easy to overlook the design aspect of Nakashima's work. Rather than focus exclusively on the drama and beauty of the wood, we must also consider the heart, mind, and hand of the maker. No board cut itself, jumped on a base and made a beautiful table. Nakashima and those who worked with him toiled hard to make that happen. There was a careful design process, one that grew and developed during his lifetime. To make a piece of furniture that has a sense of simplicity and purity is not the same as making a simple one.

Each piece was carefully shaped through-out: first as a mental image, then on paper, then on the boards themselves in chalk or pencil, and finally as a three-dimensional form. Even the very first decisions about how to cut the tree were design decisions that had to take into account how the grain of the tree would be most interesting and how the piece of wood

might be used. "Each cut requires judgments and decisions on what the log should become," Nakashima wrote in his book *The Soul of a Tree*. "As in cutting a diamond, the judgments must be precise and exact concerning thickness and direction of cut, especially through 'figures,' the complicated designs resulting from the tree's grain."

Nakashima developed his own oil-based finishes that enhanced the grain of the wood and brought out the qualities that made each board special. He would take customers into his wood storage area and together they would select a board. With the board in his mind's eye, Nakashima would go back to his studio, and in five or ten minutes, draw the final piece including the sapwood, the knotholes, the cracks, the butterfly joints, the placement of the legs—all in precise detail. This drawing would then be converted to shop drawings, and the process of construction could begin.

The entire effect was so balanced that the myriad decisions made to achieve it are easy to overlook. Creating furniture that seemed natural was complex and demanded all of Nakashima's design skills; in turn, in-depth study is required to recognize the meticulousness of the design and execution. Nakashima was very detail-oriented and closely supervised every

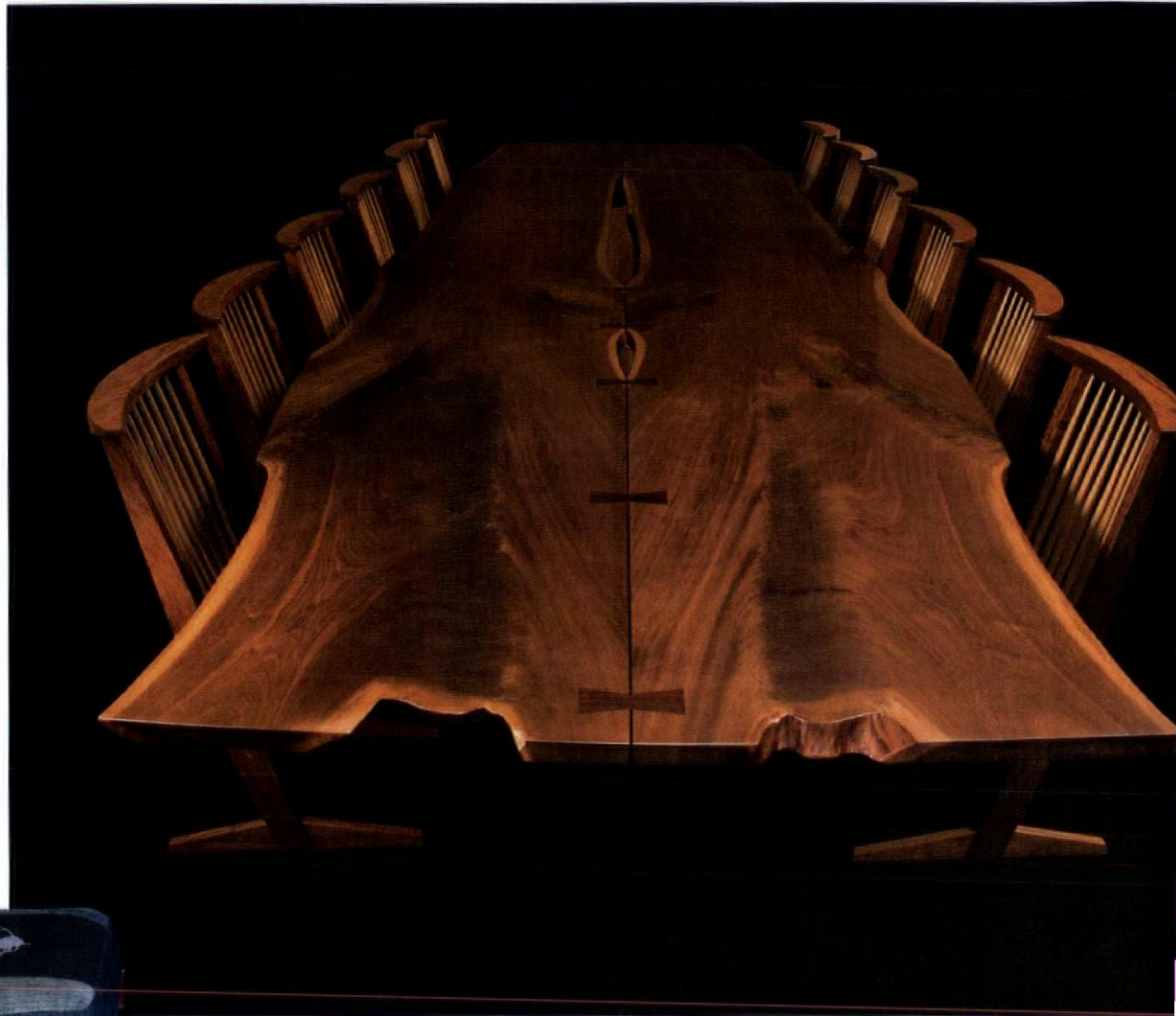


Kent Hall lamps

In the same way that Wharton Esherick used light as a sculptural and artistic element in his Walnut floor lamp, Nakashima provided more atmosphere than illumination with his Kent Hall floor and table lamps, in which light is filtered through fiberglass-impregnated paper shades. The juxtaposition of a highly structured shade with a naturalistic base epitomizes the approach he took in much of his work.

Minguren II table

While there was always a demand for monumental dining tables, Nakashima rarely had boards that were long and wide enough to make them. At sixteen and a half feet long and almost five feet wide, this table made for a close associate of Andy Warhol is possibly the largest Nakashima ever made. Typically, for the top he cut across the crotch to reveal and intensify the figuring the tree held at its core. The table encompasses all the innovative design features in Nakashima's "tool box"—book-matched boards, free sap edges, crotch figuring, naturally occurring openings, and butterfly joints in a contrasting wood. Flanking the table are Conoid chairs, designed 1960.



Greenrock ottomans

In 1973 Nakashima received his largest and most important commission, from New York's Governor and Mrs. Nelson Rockefeller—more than two hundred pieces for Greenrock, their Hudson River valley estate designed by Nakashima's friend Junzo Yoshimura. The furniture included a series of small stools or ottomans that were later added to the Nakashima catalogue. The joinery reflects the traditional through-tenon method, a beautifully designed and durable joint. Nakashima saw "good joinery" as "an investment ... an unseen morality." The stools are covered with indigo dyed cotton, each stenciled with a unique batik design, that Nakashima brought back from Japan.

stage of the construction process. Everything was planned, designed, drawn, and reworked before it was made. As he noted in *The Soul of a Tree*, "The error of a fraction of an inch can make the design fail absolutely."

Nakashima's devotion to design is perhaps best illustrated by using the chair as a case study. "What a personality a chair has! Chairs rest and restore the body, and should evolve from the material selected and the predetermined personal requirements which impose their restrictions on form, rather than the other way around," Nakashima wrote, adding: "Some parts, such as spindles, are used primarily for strength, and aesthetics becomes a secondary consideration. These can be beautiful, however, and the error of just a sixteenth of an inch in the thickness of a spindle can mean the difference between an artistically pleasing chair and a failure. Function, beauty and simplicity of line are the main goals in the construction of a chair."

When we look at Nakashima's chairs, it is immediately apparent that most of them are influenced by American vernacular designs, most obviously the Windsor chair and the so-called captain's chair. The Windsor influence is most notable in the Straight Back chair, the



Music stand

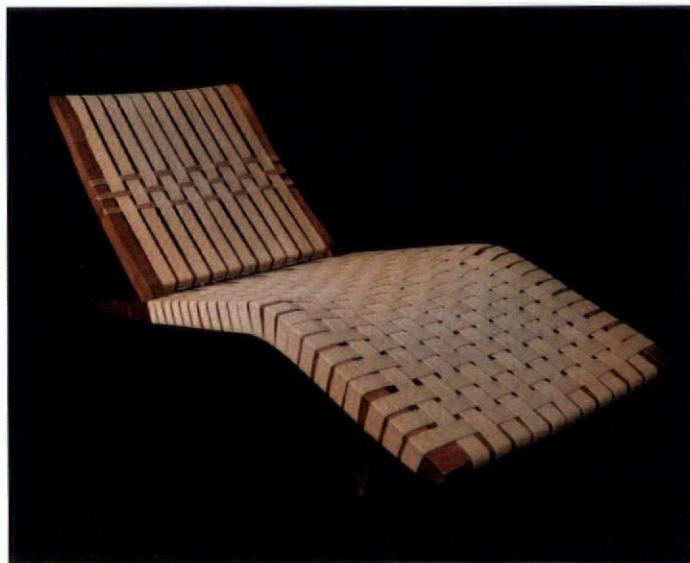
While Nakashima only produced a handful of music stands, they all share the compact, yet powerful juxtaposition of a highly organic, almost preternatural, top and a highly structured and architectural base. This is a basic building block of many of his most striking designs, even when the organic component is simply a small bitterbrush or burl pull.

This stand was made for a professional violinist who never used it. Nakashima signed and dated it 1978 on the top. Nakashima rarely signed his work until the mid-1980s as his spiritual journey with Sri Aurobindo had taught him to "surrender your ego to the Divine," according to his daughter, Mira. However, after others began to copy his designs, he began to sign and date most pieces.



Greenrock drop-leaf table

Only a few Rockefeller items have ever come to market, the most notable of which is this East Indian laurel drop-leaf table. As with many of the Rockefeller pieces, it is a perfect combination of quiet yet modern lines combined with a highly figured, sap-streaked top made of a rare wood.



New chair, the Mira chair, the Four-Legged chair, and to a lesser extent the Conoid chair. The armchairs are a streamlined form of what we usually refer to as a captain's chair. These traditional American designs were basic building blocks that Nakashima combined with elements of Asian vernacular design and a modernist aesthetic. For example, the New and Conoid chairs have a modernized Asian yoke back crest rail, while they still maintain a close affinity to the Windsor. The Conoid chair, now a modernist icon, also owes a debt to the 1924 and 1927 cantilevered chair designs by Heinz and Bodo Rasch. This unusual and complex combination of Eastern, Western, and modernist influences led each chair to evolve into a unique George Nakashima design.

What is especially impressive about Nakashima's work is this quality that each piece is unique. While there are some structural and design similarities between his work and that of others working at the same time in the Unit-

Chigaidana chest

This unique chest was designed in 1988 and finished in March 1990, shortly before Nakashima's death. It is a virtual compendium of his design career. He reconfigured his 1950s high chest of drawers and added the 1970s modernist base from the Bahut; the opening above the drawers references the traditional Japanese *chigaidana* (staggered shelves), which he first used in 1960 for a shelving unit in the line he created for the Widdicomb furniture company. The peeled stick can be seen as a conscious reference to his very first design in 1936, the peeled cryptomeria Karuizawa chair.

Long chair

Nakashima's designs are typically given descriptive names, as is the case with the Long chair. An exact translation of the French "chaise longue," it is a form that is thought to have emerged in ancient Egypt. Surprisingly modern and innovative when he designed it in 1947, this 1951 version is distinguished by the horizontal bands of sea grass that are woven through the cotton webbing. Shortly thereafter, he eliminated the sea grass and began to offer the chair with a long freeform arm.

CHEST: JOSHUA AIBEL PHOTO





International Paper room divider screen and Sanso table

In 1980 Nakashima was commissioned to provide furniture for the president's office and conference room of the headquarters of the International Paper Corporation, giving him a rare chance to design on a grand scale. The two screens were works of art that also served a purpose, namely to separate the large space into multiple areas. In each screen, four large American black walnut book-matched boards are joined with contrasting rosewood butterflies that are further foregrounded by being raised above the surface. Nakashima drew the eye to natural flaws in the boards by filling them with small mirrors that he had brought back from India in the early 1970s.

For the conference room Nakashima used his Sanso table, originally designed in the 1970s and constructed of two large book-matched boards that create a shape that is not easily described, neither rectangular nor round. Designed to facilitate interaction, the Sanso design was the precursor to Nakashima's first Altar for Peace, installed in the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine in New York in 1986. Around the table are New chairs and Host New chairs, both designed 1995.



Tea cart and headboard

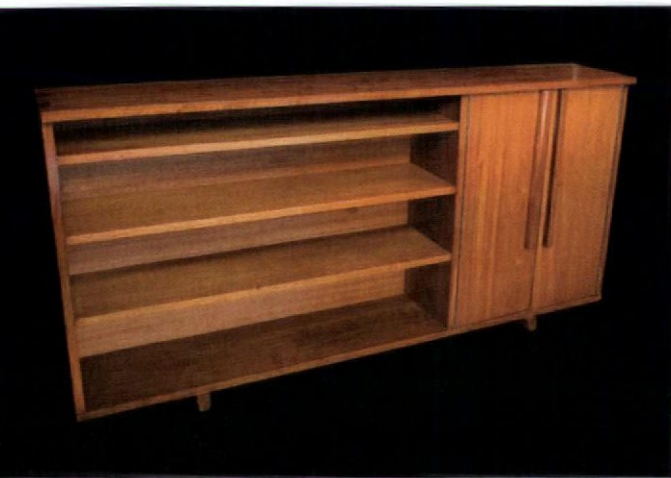
The use of fragile burl wood for furniture is a part of the legacy and genius of Nakashima. Burls are diseased parts of the tree, thus their growth history makes them flamboyant, yet potentially unusable: until the burl is in the process of being cut, there is no way to know whether the resulting boards will crumble or reveal a unique and spectacular figuring, as in this English oak burl tea cart and Carpathian elm burl headboard. Nakashima's uncanny ability to "see" the wood made it possible for him to supervise the cutting of the burls so that, unimaginable to most people, they could become functional pieces of furniture.

ed States and Europe, what is overwhelmingly clear is that Nakashima's furniture in no way depended on or was derivative of what was going on around him. In fact, while he spent two years (1928 and 1931) in Paris at the height of the art deco period and then worked under Antonin Raymond in Japan and India from 1934 to 1939, his furniture has little to do with art deco or the majority of Raymond's modernist furniture designs. If he took anything from Raymond, he extracted what he wanted and let the rest go. This is not to say that he lived in a vacuum, but with all that was happening around him in France, India, and Japan, he found his own way—and his way was about the tree.

Ligné desk and bookcase

After he returned to Seattle in 1941, Nakashima's first private commission came from cosmetic executive André Ligné. While formally similar to art deco and international style pieces to which he had been exposed in France, India, and Japan, the restrained and rectilinear designs of the bookcase and desk for Ligné took full advantage of the wood grain to make their statements. The bookcase has one, almost hidden, free edge—a harbinger of things to come.

A comprehensive exhibition to open in the fall at the Modernism Museum Mount Dora, presented by Main Street Leasing, will provide a wonderful opportunity to look at a large body of Nakashima designs publicly shown together for the first time. The exhibition will place Nakashima in further context by comparing and contrasting his furniture to selected pieces by Wharton Esherick and Wendell Castle. Here I discuss a number of pieces to be included, each of which reveals important elements of Nakashima's body of work. **M**



Hi-fi cabinet

Nakashima's early works were primarily custom designs, most notably in the case of hi-fi cabinets, each one of which had to accommodate the chosen components. This particular 1947 cabinet is highly structured, except for the very organic bitterbrush pull. Bitterbrush is a hearty wood that Nakashima collected in the deserts of Idaho when he and his family were interned in what he referred to as a "concentration camp." He brought a collection of bitterbrush to New Hope and used it as pulls on some of his earliest pieces. As most of these designs tended to be rectilinear, the bitterbrush (and later his burl handles), infused a naturalistic, freeform element in the work. And, of course, it formed a lasting reminder of the bitter time he and his family spent in the Minidoka internment camp.



Bahut

Originally designed in 1986, this was one of Nakashima's high modernist forms, eschewing his organic naturalism (with the exception of the pull) and featuring a newly designed architectonic base. This particular example was completed just days before Nakashima's death on June 15, 1990. It was the last piece he completed for Arthur and Evelyn Krosnick of Princeton, New Jersey, one of his largest and most renowned commissions. As is the case with the small handful of other Bahuts, the doors are book-matched Claro walnut with an American black walnut case and a Manzanita burl handle.



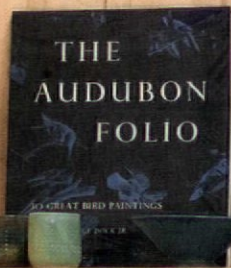
GEORGE NAKASHIMA was born in Spokane, Washington, in 1905 to Japanese parents who had immigrated to the United States. Educated and trained as an architect at the University of Washington, Nakashima received a master's degree in architecture from M.I.T. in 1930. After working briefly in the United States he left for Paris, seeking the creative energy of one of the great art centers of the day. From there he traveled extensively, ending up at the home of his grandmother on a farm on the outskirts of Tokyo. In 1934 Nakashima went to work in Tokyo for the architect Antonin Raymond. He volunteered to go to Pondicherry, India, to design and direct the construction of an ashram for the spiritual leader Sri Aurobindo, whose teachings were to shape his philosophy for the rest of his career.

Nakashima returned to Japan where he met Marion Okajima, who was also born in the United States. They married and settled in Seattle, where Nakashima opened his first furniture business in 1941. His first important furniture commission, for André Ligné, brought him recognition when the Ligné interior was published in *California Arts and Architecture* in 1941.

However, after the Pearl Harbor bombing, Nakashima and his family, like many other Americans of Japanese descent, were placed in an internment camp in Idaho. Here he met a Nisei woodworker, Gentauro Hikogawa, and learned the art of Japanese woodworking. Thanks to the sponsorship in 1943 of Antonin Raymond, Nakashima and his family were able to leave the camp and move to Raymond's farm in Pennsylvania. The next year, he set up a workshop on what became the Nakashima homestead in New Hope, Pennsylvania. He maintained and expanded his facilities in New Hope until his death in 1990, at which point he had a staff of about twelve and had produced what is estimated to be thirty-five thousand pieces.

Nakashima's earliest designs were all custom-made to suit the particular needs of the client. In 1945 he produced a small catalogue with three chair and five table designs—so that not everything had to be custom work—followed by a larger catalogue of fourteen pieces and then another with twenty-three. In 1955 he issued his first major catalogue, presenting a standardized set of designs that could be customized, when necessary.

While innovative, this early work was relatively straightforward, for the most part lacking the free edges and other details for which he became famous. In the late 1950s, when he began to build the Conoid Studio on his property, he developed the Conoid line, adding a significant architectural component to his furniture. This series was a major leap in that the modernist structures of his furniture designs became of much greater significance. In the 1960s, while building the Minguren Museum on his property, he developed another architecturally inspired line—the Minguren series—that again shifted the basic approach of the studio. The hiring of his daughter Mira in 1970, commissions from the Nelson Rockefellers in 1973 and the International Paper Company in 1980, and his ability to source better and better woods led to some of Nakashima's most mature and exciting work in this period.



THE
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FOR THE LOVE OF PLYWOOD

A studied metamorphosis

By DOUG MEYER

TWO YEARS AGO I BEGAN A CALIFORNIA DESIGN ODYSSEY.

What started out as a relatively small project (the design of administrative offices for an eighty-plus-year-old California art institution, Palos Verdes Art Center—PVAC) turned out to be an all-encompassing dream project that included not only the reconfiguration and design of the administrative offices, but also of the lobby, galleries, gift shop, logo, banners, and invitations; developing a cafe; researching and establishing a permanent collection; curating ten exhibitions; creating the scenography and design for fourteen exhibitions; creating three seventy-page catalogues; and developing pop-up shops, project space, and site-specific works within the center.

The director, Joe Baker, pulled me into this project bit by bit. I had previously worked with him in New Orleans where he was director

What started out as a relatively small project turned into an all-consuming redesign of the Palos Verdes Art Center

of Longue Vue House and Garden; he had given the house over to my brother Gene and me for what he called an “intervention”—in which we designed and incorporated

thirty years of our work into the house and its outbuildings.

By the end of the run of the Longue Vue show, Joe announced that he was taking a new position in California as the director of PVAC. He flew me from New York, where I live and work, to Los Angeles (Palos Verdes is south of L.A. proper but within the metro area)



Designed with plywood floors and walls the new director's office at the Palos Verdes Art Center is a riff on California modernism. On the custom-designed plywood wall-hung cabinet is a collection of Shearwater pottery; above hangs *Tower and Surf Boards*, 1952, by Davis Miller (1917–2012), PVAC's 1952 “Purchase Prize” winner.

When hanging the original, 1982, wood and copper doors by Eugene Sturman in the director's office I did not want them to read as a set of doors, so I hung them on their sides. The rug is a Doug and Gene Meyer design titled *Abstract Art*.

Some of the treasures

I found in the storage

space set the tone

for the entire project

in March 2013 to “have a look.” Initially, he asked me just to design the administrative offices, but I quickly realized that more things (many, many more things) were needed in order to make the spaces and center function properly. (I have a tendency to overload my plate—fortunately I love being too busy, it makes me more creative.)

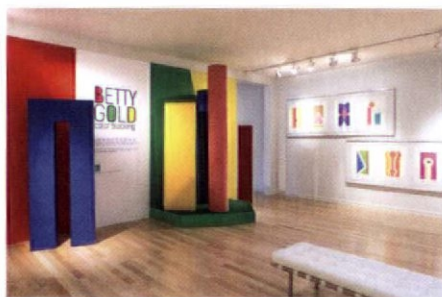
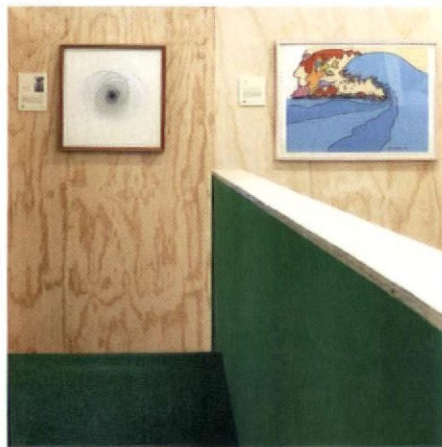
My first trip was really a discovery mission: I got a great rush rummaging through storage spaces that had accumulated decades and decades worth of the life of an arts institution that was not, for the most part, intended to be a collecting institution. Some of the treasures I found influenced and set the tone for the entire project. The first was the forgotten set of Eugene Sturman doors—the original doors to the center’s current building, which dates to 1982. (Around the same time Sturman created a monumental hanging sculpture, *White Dwarf/Cellular Vortex*, that was installed at the Otis Art Institute’s main entrance, part of the MacArthur Park Public Art Program.) The next find was an Eames Compact sofa (purchased by PVAC in 1959), though its original black leather upholstery and foam filling had deteriorated. Another storage area began to reveal fifty years of “Purchase Prizes”—works by California artists that PVAC had acquired, one work every year, from a juried invitational beginning in 1942. Highlights included pieces by Sturman, John Altoon, Betty Gold, Davis Miller, Paul Darrow, Herman L. Renger, Peter Max, John Sloan, and Rufino Tamayo.

On each trip to Palos Verdes I ferreted out more and more gems. Although PVAC is still not a collecting institution, I felt it important to put these works on permanent view in the administrative offices with detailed wall labels explaining the history of the artist and the work. My early years in the art world (specifically at Holly Solomon and Metro Pictures) had taught me a love of exhibition presentations, from hanging to labeling—a whole art in itself. And because the core of the collection was California artists it seemed only natural to do a riff on California modernism and incorporate plywood as a key element in the design.

The work of Ray and Charles Eames in the 1940s and the California Case Study houses—specifically numbers 1, 11, and 20—all used plywood in revolutionary ways. They became the starting point for the administrative and director’s offices. I had always wanted to create a space with plywood, but for whatever reasons it was never the right space/place/time until now. I find plywood to be what I refer to as a comfort material: it is something my generation had grown up with and so was recognizable and accessible (and besides all that I love the organic patterns of the grain). Likewise, I’ve always liked spaces and objects to have a purpose; it’s not

A fiberglass Charles and Ray Eames low rod Shell armchair from Modernica in Los Angeles stands near an Eames Compact sofa that was rediscovered after decades in storage and reupholstered in a Knoll fabric. A suite of 3-D paper reliefs dated 1968 by Herman L. Renger hangs above the sofa.

This view includes a yellow Doug and Gene Meyer Positano drink stand, 2005, an H-base Eames Shell side chair from Modernica, and another 1968 Renger suite of 3-D paper reliefs.



Left:
 For the new staff office I designed a freestanding angled wall covered on four sides with teal mirrored plexiglass, which conceals a storage area for office supplies. The Coral Pendant hanging light by David Trubridge is made of bamboo plywood. H-base Eames side chairs from Modernica, each in a different color, surround the conference and work table by Restoration Hardware. On the table is a collection of pochoirs from *Derrière le Miroir* #221 by Alexander Calder, 1976. The oil painting above the desk is *Southwest Mountains* by Paul Gardner Darrow, the 1956 PVAC "Purchase Prize" winner.

The workspace in the Education Center was created using 3/4-inch thick plywood and 1 1/2-inch-diameter dowels.
 Right:
 On the other side of the plywood wall at the left is the ramp connecting the offices to the galleries.

Green artificial turf covers a new ramp that connects the offices to the main galleries. On the left is a 3-D paper relief dated 1968 by Renger; on the right is *Great Waves of Atlantis*, a 1970 serigraph by Peter Max.

Betty Gold: Color Blocking (on view April 4-May 25, 2014) was one of the shows I curated and designed while at PVAC.

One of my favorite exhibitions was *Floating Man: The Sketchbook Drawings of David Rinehart* (July 25-September 7, 2014); the display of Rinehart's architectural models was created out of two-by-fours and plywood.

FAR RIGHT, BOTTOM: MONICA OROZCO PHOTOS (2)
 HENRY PHOTOS (4)



My *Drip #124* painting in the Stripe Cafe measures forty-two feet long in total (this view shows a fourteen-foot section). The fiberglass Eames Shell chairs with Eiffel bases are from Modernica.

Detail of the back wall of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Bar."

This is one of my three skylight sculptures titled *Color Wave* in heavy gauge vinyl, 2014.

Back entrance to the Stripe Cafe with the hand-painted logo I designed on the particleboard wall.

In the waiting area for the cafe I created a rectangular site-specific box supported by galvanized pipe to encase a diorama of Andy Warhol's "Silver Factory."

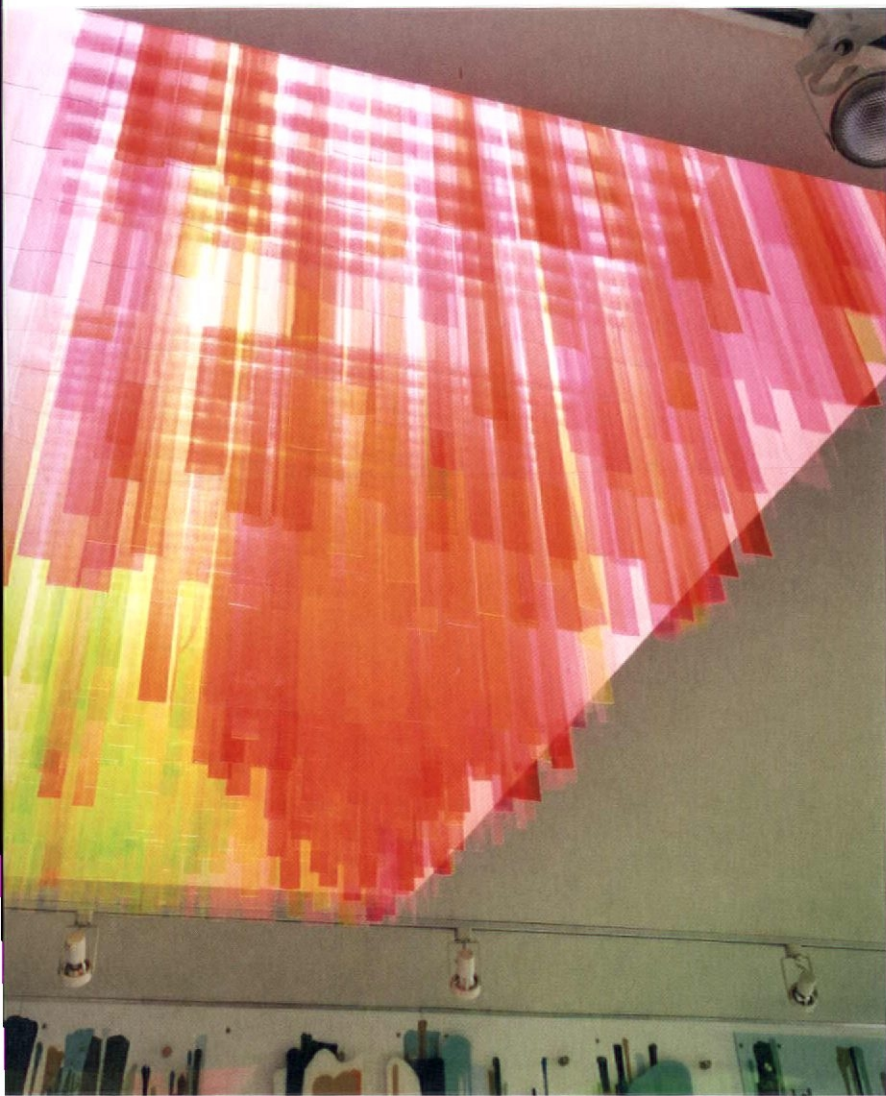


about pretty—it's about a concept, and in this case design follows concept. I also love things that actually look utilitarian; I find in our current time that looking useful is actually the new way to adorn a space.

The PVAC staff had been working for several decades in cubicles that looked like the Eastern Airlines corporate offices in 1970. We moved the staff offices from the north building basement into what had

been the printmaking studios, which were centrally located in the main building, and created new access into the galleries from them. Key staff was moved to a new front office and redesigned lobby. An oversized upper gallery was divided in half. An artists cooperative/gift shop that has been at PVAC for more than twenty-five years was relocated into the back half of the upper gallery, placed there not just because it flowed with the space but because it truly fulfills the phrase "exit through the gift shop."

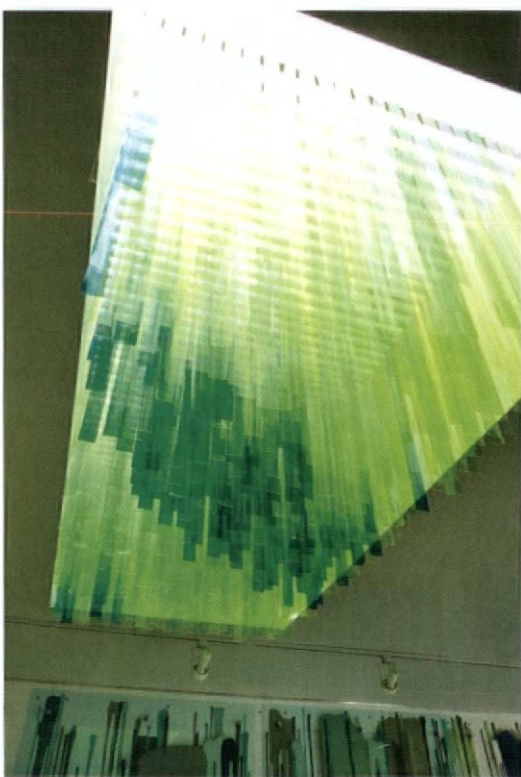
MARK ROSKAMIS PHOTOS



As I was creating the new spaces at PVAC, I got drawn into the planning of exhibitions as well. Joe Baker confided that part of his strategy for reinventing the center was an aggressive exhibition schedule. Shows would be changed out every six to eight weeks, with a three-week installation period. I love working and creating in short time frames—and since I can wear many hats this idea intrigued me: the concept and development of an exhibition, the schematics and design development, final designs, construction documents, fabrication, and the installation. Tight budgets are the mother of invention. Further, I saw this as a way to craft a singular message, using utilitarian materials throughout the exhibitions (and echoing the “plywood palace” I was already creating). The head preparator Aaron Shepard, an artist himself, is a genius at installation and the fabricating of the designs.

One of my favorite exhibitions was *Floating Man: The Sketchbook Drawings of David Rinehart*. A student under the renowned Louis I. Kahn at the University of Pennsylvania, Rinehart worked for several years in Kahn’s office. His most notable building is the east wing of the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California. Rinehart completed the sketchbooks exhibited dur-





The idea of a permanent
drip painting became the
motif for the Stripe Cafe

ing the first eleven months after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Having had both my parents and grandmother afflicted with Alzheimer's I wanted to create a fitting tribute. I designed many layers into the exhibition—for the catalogue I walked a tightrope conveying his career, life, the effects of the disease, and his forty-plus-year relationship with his partner Tony Rasmussen. I created all the displays out of regular building materials—mainly two-by-fours and plywood—the largest and central element being a twenty-six-foot-long display case that housed the four sketchbooks that made up the bulk of the exhibition. The case appeared almost like a bridge and was angled from the center of the gallery into a corner. As you walked down each side to view the pages you ran into the corner wall—forcing you to take a few moments to get reoriented to walking back and around to see the rest—not unlike moments of Alzheimer's.

My final tribute was to create a site-specific dining room for the opening night dinner. I spent five days building the silver sheathed room—then three days painting one of my “drip paintings” (my largest to date at eighty-nine feet long). I used twenty gallons of paint, 6,850 Legos, twenty-five four-by-eight foot sheets of insulation, and 815 feet of silver insulation tape to complete the space. (I began doing what I refer to as “drip paintings” my junior year as a fine arts major at Parsons School of Design. I am fascinated with the spontaneity and lyrical gestures created when I pour/drip paint—strips of color that sometimes bleed into one another or flow down the surface to create complex and beautiful details.)

Construction on the cafe began in August. The Rinehart dining space was the inspiration for the final design. I have always loved museum restaurants (my favorite being Terrace 5 at New York's MoMA—I try and have lunch there twice a week); for me there is an energy level and a quiet respect that surrounds museum cafes. I had originally named the PVAC cafe Stripe based on an early design concept, but even though I abandoned that idea, I thought the space still had to visually say “stripe” somehow. So the idea of a permanent drip painting on the main wall (forty-two feet long) became the new motif. However, I wanted to do something new so I created three layers of drips—the first was the entire wall, which I covered in opaque white plexi and then dripped; next I dripped ten four-by-eight-foot sheets of one-quarter-inch plexi panels on both sides. Using floaters, the panels were then attached one and a half inches off the white plexi wall. The three levels of drips created a beautiful veiled effect. The main dining room was all white: walls (all sheathed in white plexi and attached with screws and washers and trimmed out in metal millwork—Tommi Parzinger's iconic silver stud-adorned cabinets of the 1950s were the inspiration); floors (1960s-style speckled Armstrong tiles); ceil-

ing; and tables and chairs (once again pulling in the California modernist theme with white Eames fiberglass chairs custom ordered from Modernica in Los Angeles). The front and back entrances and service areas (which sandwich the white space) are sheathed in particleboard with a matching speckled floor. The space has three large skylights, which, with the California light, actually made it too bright: it needed to be diffused. I designed hanging light sculptures created out of hundreds and hundreds of sheets of clear heavy-gauge vinyl in five different colors. For the bar area I once again used mirrored plexi. I found an old “Bar” sign at the Chelsea Flea Market one Sunday in New York, and the odd colors against the blue mirror were kind of perfect—a Jack Pierson moment. Plus, I have a fascination with constellations, so all twelve zodiacal constellations are subtly created with screws and washers of various sizes screwed into the mirror (I love to make a simple and edited element and create an odd imperfection within it). I titled the bar “Twinkle Twinkle Little Bar.”

The completion of the Stripe Cafe was the final piece in my two-year design odyssey in California. Maybe now I can get some sleep—my biggest regret after more than sixteen round-trip flights from New York to Los Angeles (approximately seventy-six thousand miles) is that I have still not earned Mosaic status on JetBlue. **M**

On the particleboard walls of the front entrance to the cafe I hung works by artists who had worked on creating the space.

Another of my Color Wave skylight sculptures in heavy gauge vinyl, 2014.

This photo shows me in the site-specific dining room I created for the David Rinehart dinner.





FROZEN MUSIC

The powerful photography of H el ene Binet

WHEN H EL ENE BINET TALKS about photography, she speaks reverently and a bit gently. "I often compare myself to a musician with a score," she says. "I can do my own interpretation, but I have to respect the notes and the score, respect the music." In Binet's case, the music would most likely be Gustav Mahler—achingly beautiful and soaringly powerful. Her photographs can be like that, too; they are full of dimension, depth, and contrast—using light and shadow and solid and void to draw us into a space, and then somehow they delve even deeper. "In my photography," Binet says, "I ask what is the meaning, where is the soul?"

Often she uses details or fragments to tell a larger story. Her work is multilayered and profound. "She is not just photographing architectural subjects, she is exploring three dimensional volumes through light, shadow and texture," says the gallerist Gabrielle Am-

mann, who has shown Binet's work for the past eight years.

Binet began photographing the work of some of the world's most interesting and

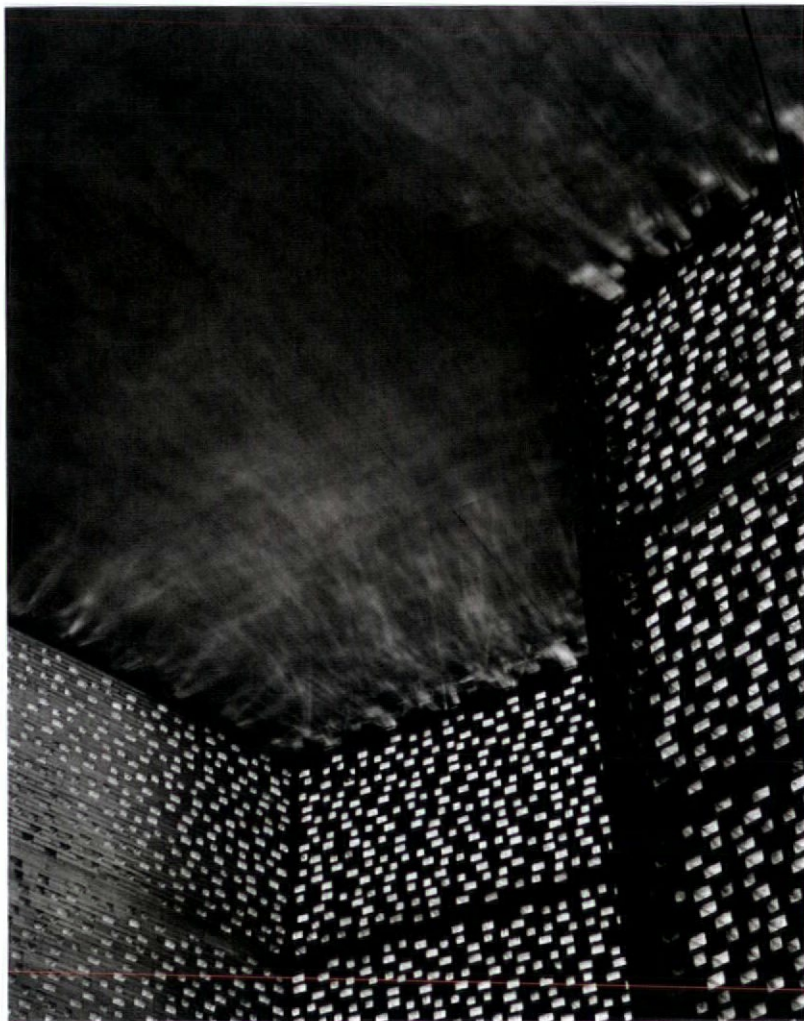


innovative contemporary architects a quarter of a century ago. She has shot Zaha Hadid's buildings since the beginning, starting with the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein,

Firminy - C
(architecture by
Le Corbusier), 2007.
Silver gelatin print.

*Chappellius 01, Vals
Valley, 2008. Silver
gelatin print.*

By Beth Dunlop



Kolumba 01 (architecture by Peter Zumthor), 2007. Silver gelatin print.

Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art (architecture by Zaha Hadid), 2003. Silver gelatin print.

Facing page: *La Tourette - skylights* (architecture by Le Corbusier), 2007. Digital c-print.

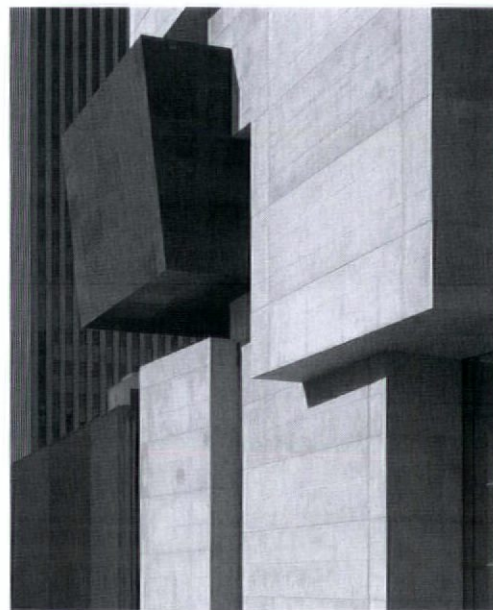
Germany and most recently the Dongdaemun Design Plaza in Seoul, South Korea. Her collaboration with the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor has been commemorated in books and exhibitions. The list of living architects whose work she's explored includes Daniel Libeskind, David Chipperfield, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Studio Mumbai, Raoul Bunschoten, and Peter Eisenman. Often she follows a project from the start of construction until completion in order to dig into the process in what she calls "an intense and powerful" investigation.

She has also documented important historic architecture, ranging from a photographic essay on the churches of Nicholas Hawksmoor, who worked in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to studies of Alvar Aalto and

Le Corbusier, whom she terms "the great master." Photography of historic buildings is what propelled her career at the start, and she continues with historic subjects today. "For me," Binet says, "it is very important, that stepping back and looking at why a building is what it is. There's a physical patina of time that allows the camera to play at many levels."

In the last decade or so Binet also has begun to photograph the natural landscape, producing work that exults in the wonder of a tangle of tree branches or probes the mystery of a geological formation. Her approach to nature is much as it is to architecture. Though the images show us concrete (sometimes literally, as well as figuratively) buildings and real places, there is always a level of inscrutability to them. "I hope my photographs, which are quite abstract, allow the person who is viewing them to have his or her own thoughts," she says.

Ammann, who both trained and practiced interior architecture early in her career, first encountered Binet's work in 2007 while mounting an exhibition devoted to Hadid at her eponymous Cologne gallery. Looking at the photos Hadid had supplied, Ammann found herself transfixed by their power. Two years later she mounted her first Hélène Binet exhibition, showing the work of Zumthor,





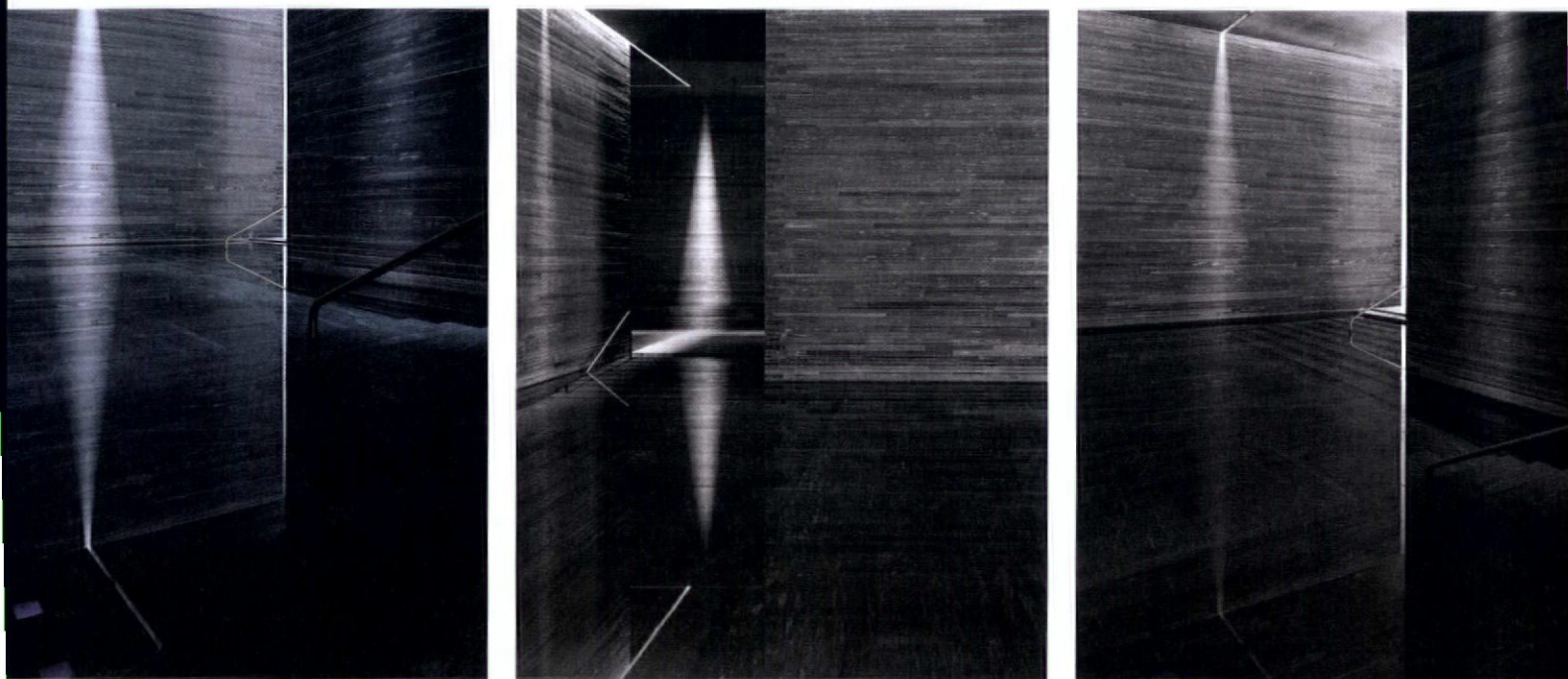


and she has represented Binet ever since. “She transcends representation and captures the essence of the experience of the space and the spirit of her subjects—whether it is an eighteenth century church by Hawksmoor or a museum by Hadid or a spa by Zumthor,” Ammann says.

Binet’s work has been exhibited around the world, including at the 2012 Venice Biennale

ture, to the opportunity to ask larger questions: What is space? How do you feel space? How do you perceive it? “I wanted to show that photography can be very emotional, not hard,” she says. “I wanted to bring dimension into something that is flat.”

She moved to London about thirty years ago at a time when architecture was just starting to change. She began working with Alvin



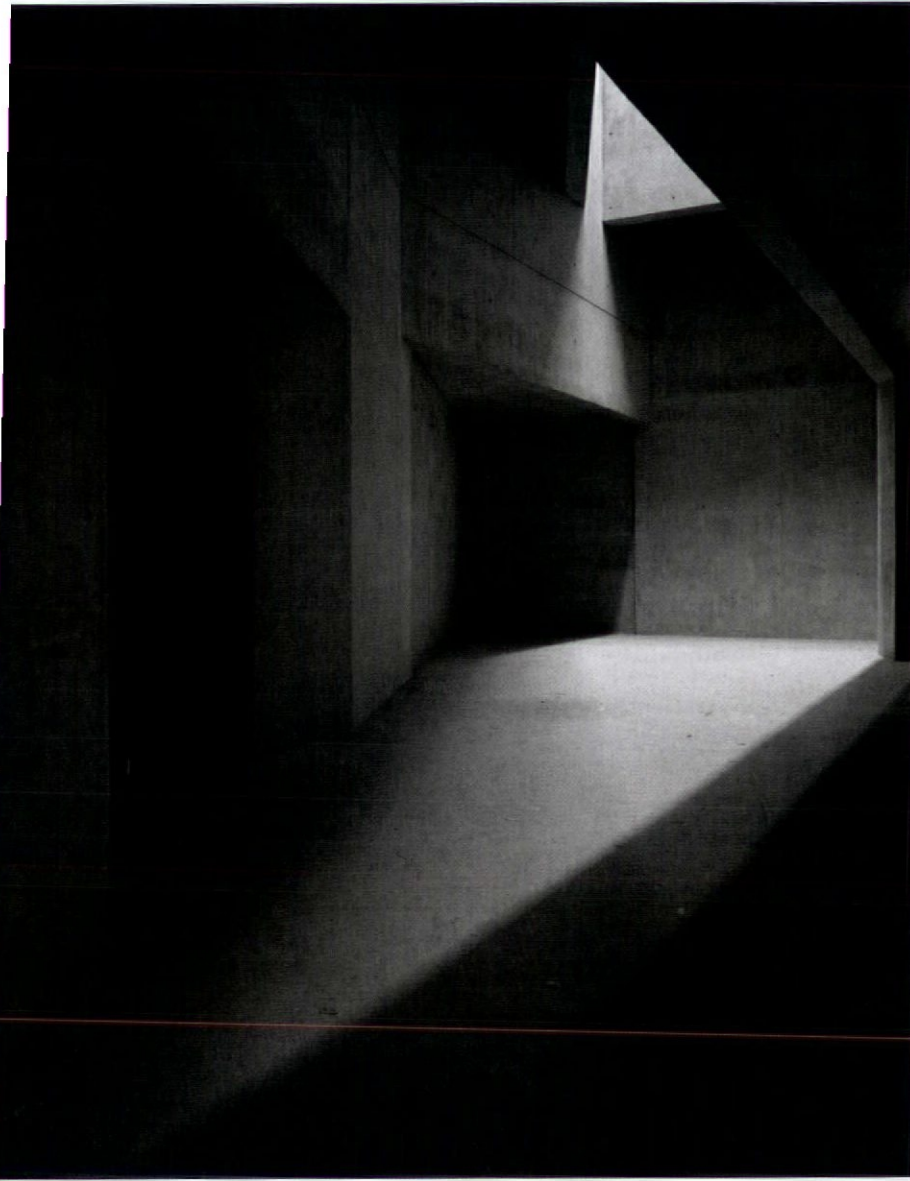
and most recently in Los Angeles, where in February she received the prestigious Julius Shulman Prize for photography from Woodbury University. An exhibition of her work at the university’s WUHO Gallery in Hollywood runs through March.

The daughter of musicians, Binet grew up in Rome, and when she opted to study photography, she thought her path would lead her to the great opera houses and theaters of Europe. Instead, she found herself drawn to architec-

Boyarsky, then director of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, to produce books, largely on historical architectural subjects. At the Architectural Association she also met such then unknown architects as Hadid and Libeskind, both in the early years of their careers. She has followed both over the years, and she says that such relationships have allowed her to “collaborate in an inspiring and beautiful way, enhanced by an intense understanding of the process.”

Facing page: *Bruder Klaus Field Chapel* (architecture by Zumthor), 2007. Silver gelatin print.

Therme Vals Triptych (architecture by Zumthor), 2006. Digital c-print and silver gelatin prints.



Jewish Museum (architecture by Daniel Libeskind), 1998. Silver gelatin print.

Christ Church in Spitalfields 01 (architecture by Nicholas Hawksmoor), 2012. Silver gelatin print.

Facing page: *MAXXI Diptych* (architecture by Hadid) 2009, silver gelatin prints.

Phaeno Science Center Diptych (architecture by Hadid), 2005. Digital c-print and silver gelatin prints.

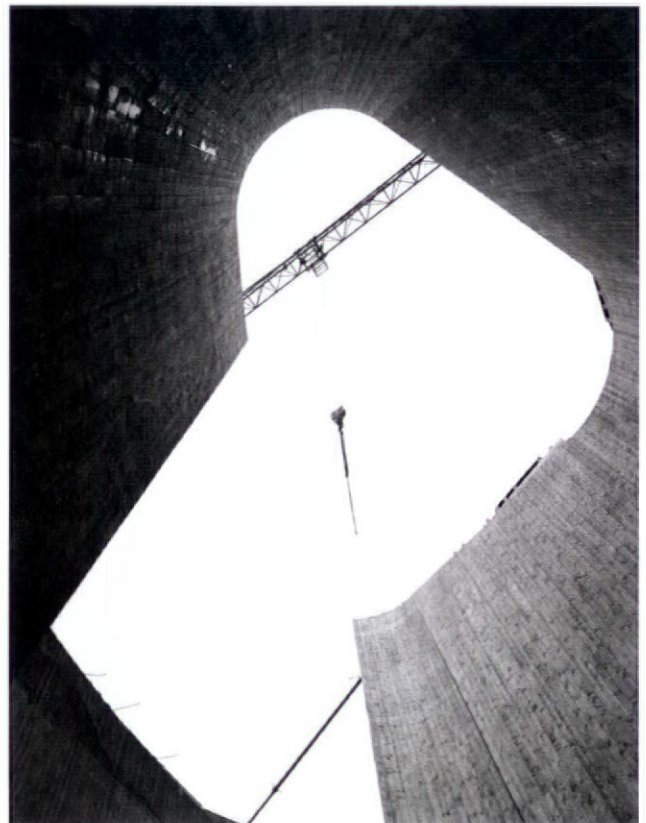
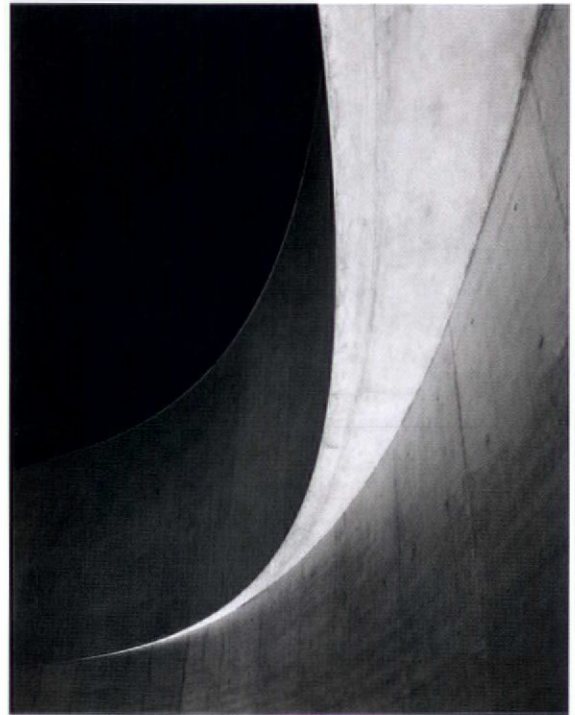
Hadid admires Binet's work for its "striking balance between light and shadow, matter and void, rawness and strength" and singles out the photographs Binet shoots during the building process. "I very much like the photos H el ene takes of my buildings during construction; she is always able to capture the essence of any project, translating it into sharp, abstract, powerful images."

A few years into her career, Binet encountered the work of Zumthor and was immediately captivated. Both Hadid and Zumthor are winners of the Pritzker Prize in Architecture.

Importantly, Binet prefers to work in black and white and often uses film rather than a digital camera. "For me," she says, "limitation is more interesting. If you work with a digital camera, there is always the thought in the back of your mind that you can change the image. You lose that moment of frozen concentration."

Likewise, she still develops and prints her black-and-white photos. "I like to work with my hands," she says. "I like the feel of film. I like to pick the paper." The eye and the hand show: if the subjects are monumental, her photographs nonetheless have an intimacy to them, an immediacy. "One can see and feel her deep understanding of the characteristics of each single building or detail she is portraying and that makes her and her works so unique and precious," Ammann says. **M**





Paul Rand: **Graphic Impact**



Direction magazine cover, March 1939.

Westinghouse magazine advertisement, 1961.

Things we know about tomorrow:

Man is like a Goldfish in a Bowl of Ink...his view of the "ultraviolet universe" is shut off by the blanket of air which surrounds him. The earth's atmosphere is like the ink in a goldfish bowl. It absorbs so much of the ultraviolet light from outer space that little gets through to show us what lies out there.

But now, an electronic imaging tube, sensitive to this ultraviolet light has been developed by Westinghouse Research scientists. Westinghouse is working with the Smithsonian Institution and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to mount these tubes in satellites so that they can "see" in outer space and radio their findings back to earth.

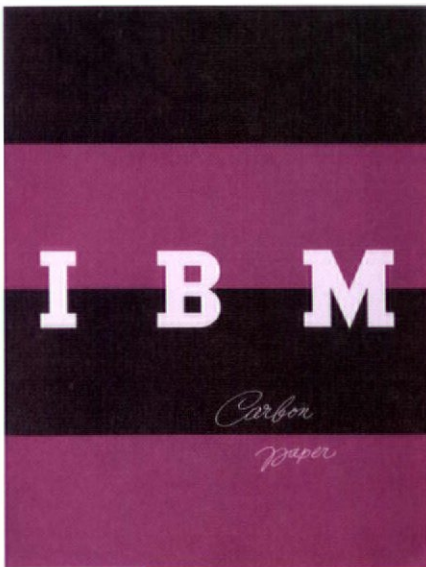
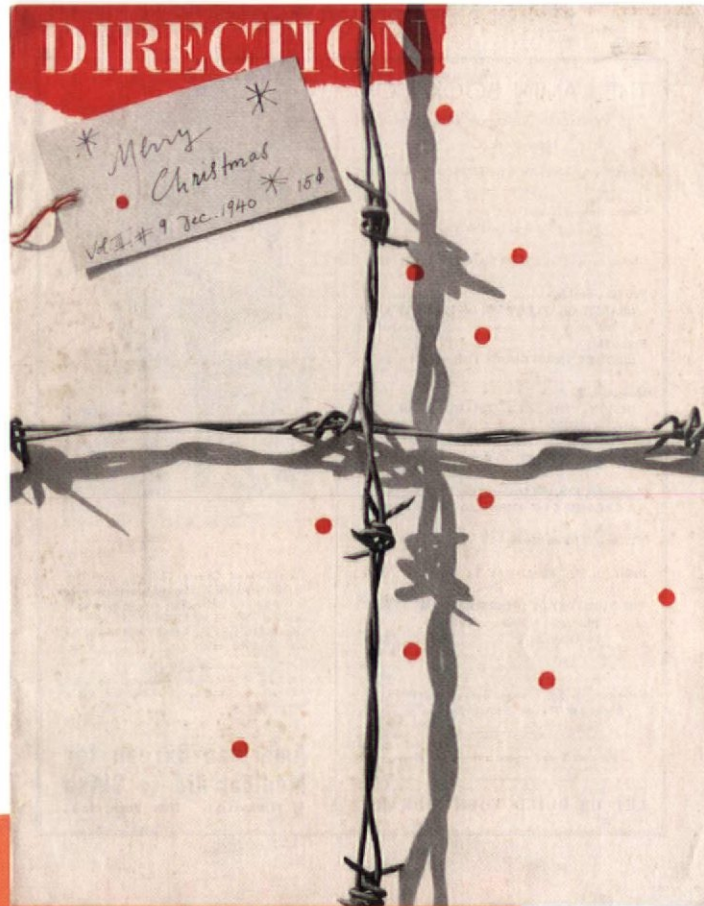
Every time mankind removes the limitations on human sight... with the telescope, the microscope, the fluoroscope and electronic imaging tubes...we find things which have a profound effect upon our lives.

Paul Rand

You can be sure...if it's Westinghouse

EXCEPT AS NOTED, ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF DANIEL LEWANDOWSKI / PAUL-RAND.COM

By
Steven
Heller



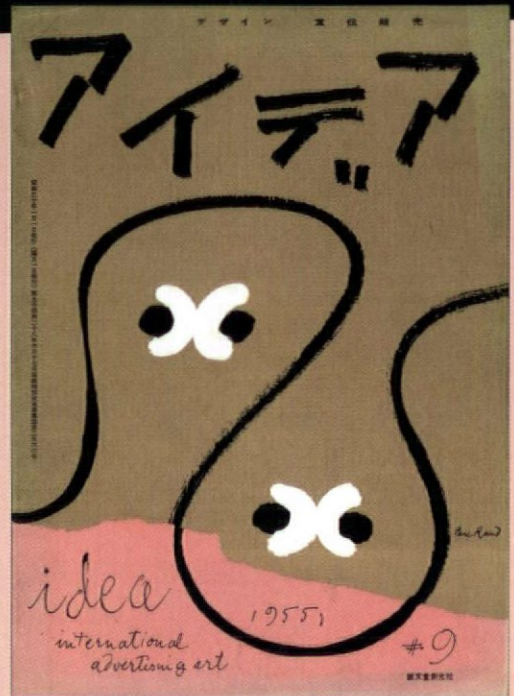
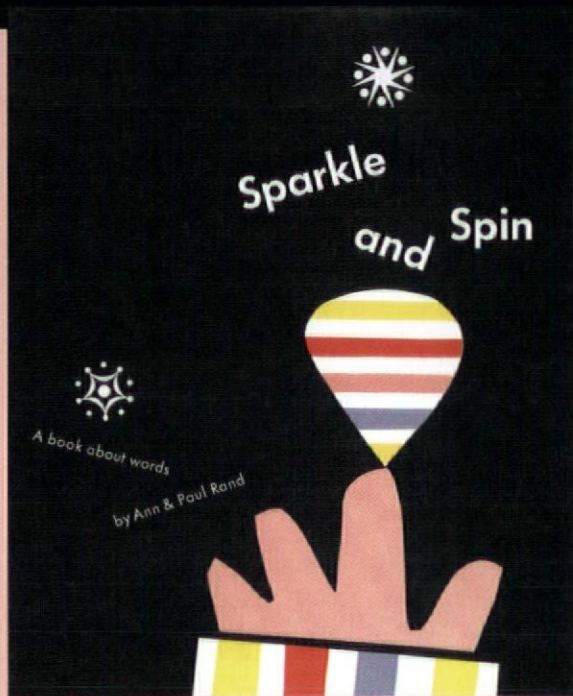
When Paul Rand died on November 26, 1996, at eighty-two, his career had spanned six decades, three generations, and numerous chapters of design history. In the late 1930s he began to transform commercial art from craft to profession. By the early 1940s he had influenced the look of advertising, books, and magazine cover design. By the late 1940s he was proffering a graphic design vocabulary based on pure form where once only style and technique prevailed. By the mid-1950s he was altering the ways that major corporations used graphic identity. And by the mid-1960s he had created some of the world's most enduring corporate logos, including IBM, UPS, ABC, and

Brochure for IBM
carbon paper.

Direction magazine
cover, December 1940.

“It is in symbolic, visual terms that the designer ultimately realizes his perceptions and experiences; and it is in a world of symbols that man lives.”

—Paul Rand



This page:
Sparkle and Spin:
A Book About Words,
book designed by
Paul Rand and written by
Ann Rand, 1957.

*Idea: International
Advertising Art*
magazine, 1955.

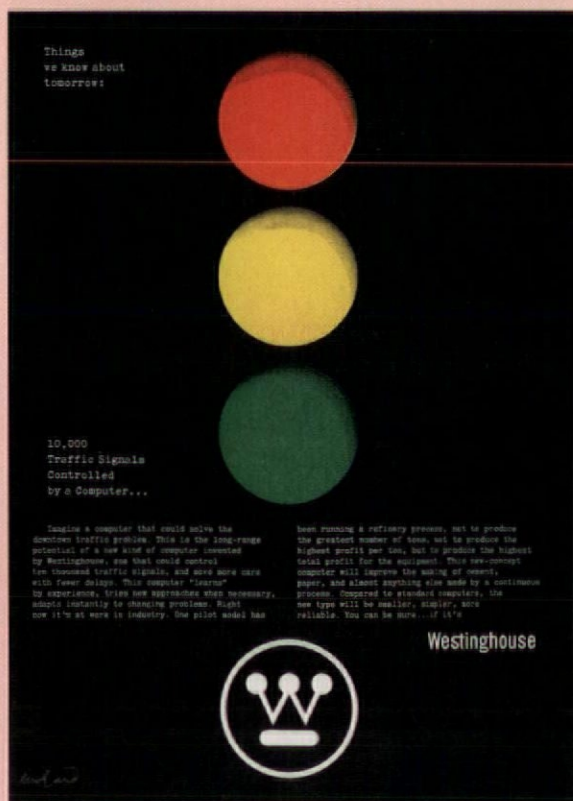
Westinghouse magazine
advertisement, 1961.

Facing page:
Direction magazine,
March 1941.

Westinghouse magazine
advertisement, 1961.

Perspectives USA 3
magazine, Spring 1953

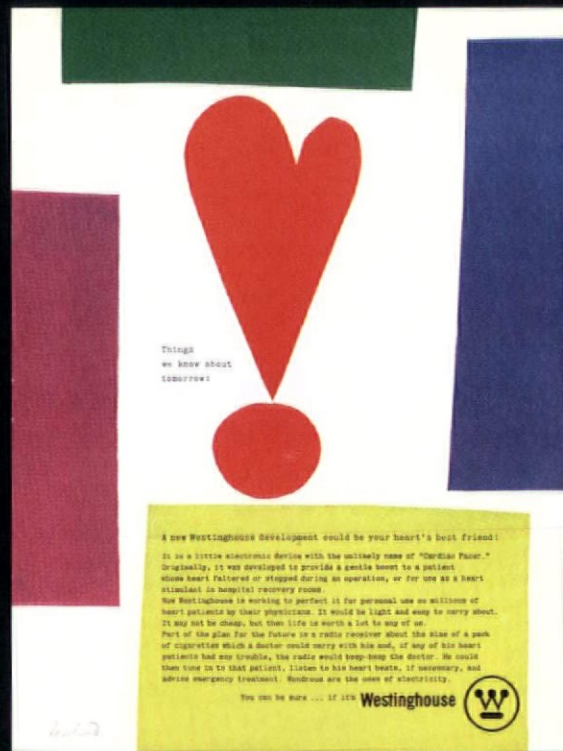
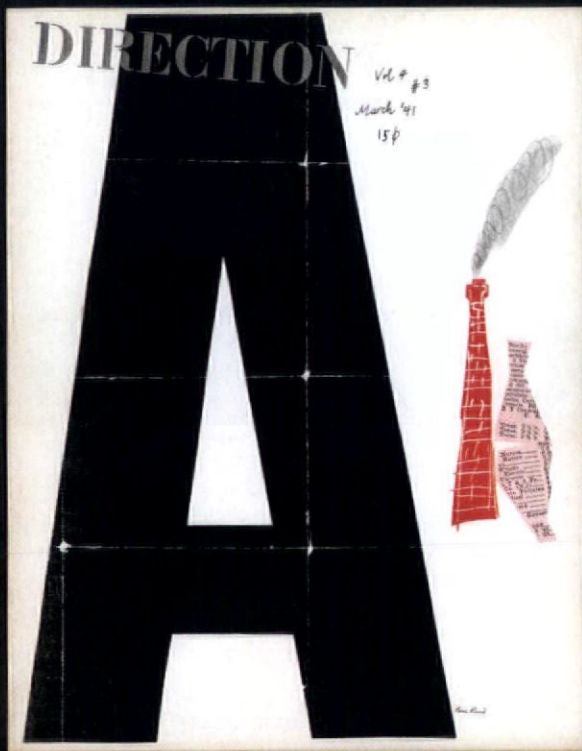
Apparel Arts magazine,
Summer 1936.



Westinghouse. He was the channel through which European modern art and design—Russian constructivism, Dutch De Stijl, and the German Bauhaus—were introduced to American commercial art. His first of four books, *Thoughts on Design*, published in 1947 when he was thirty-two, was a bible of modernism. In his later years he was a teacher, theorist, and philosopher of design.

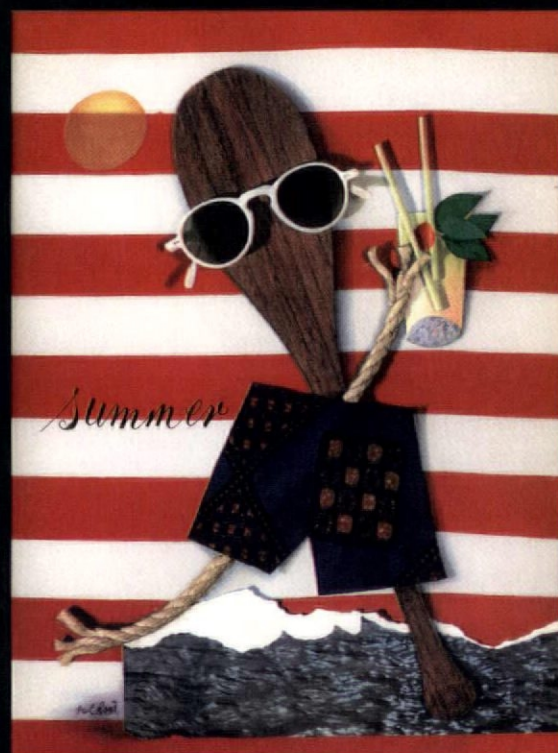
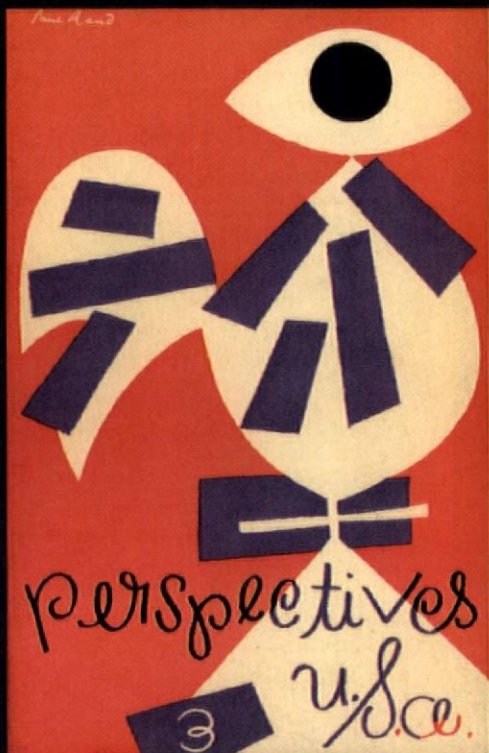
2014 marked Rand's one hundredth birthday, and on February 25, 2015, the Museum of the City of New York opened the first major museum exhibition of his contributions to New York design. Curated by Donald Albrecht (I am a co-chair of the show), the exhibition takes off from an earlier solo retrospective at the Museum of Design Atlanta (MODA) organized by Daniel Lewandowski, who runs the Paul Rand website (paul-rand.com).

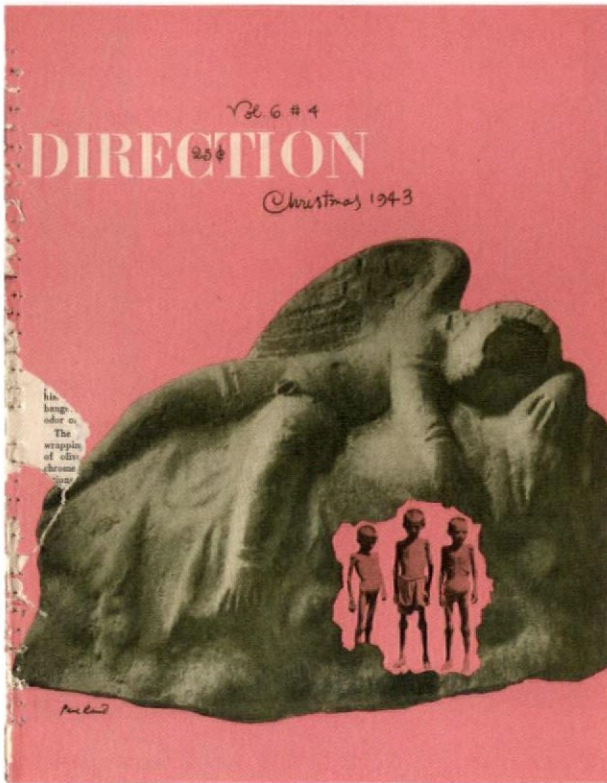
Trained in the commercial art bullpens of New York's publishing and advertising industries, Paul Rand (born Peretz Rosenbaum but Paul Rand was more balanced) was critical of the poor aesthetic standards that prevailed. He



“Graphic design—which fulfills aesthetic needs, complies with the laws of form and the exigencies of two-dimensional space; which speaks in semiotics, sans-serifs, and geometrics; which abstracts, transforms, translates, rotates, dilates, repeats, mirrors, groups, and regroup—*is not good design if it is irrelevant.*”

—P. R.

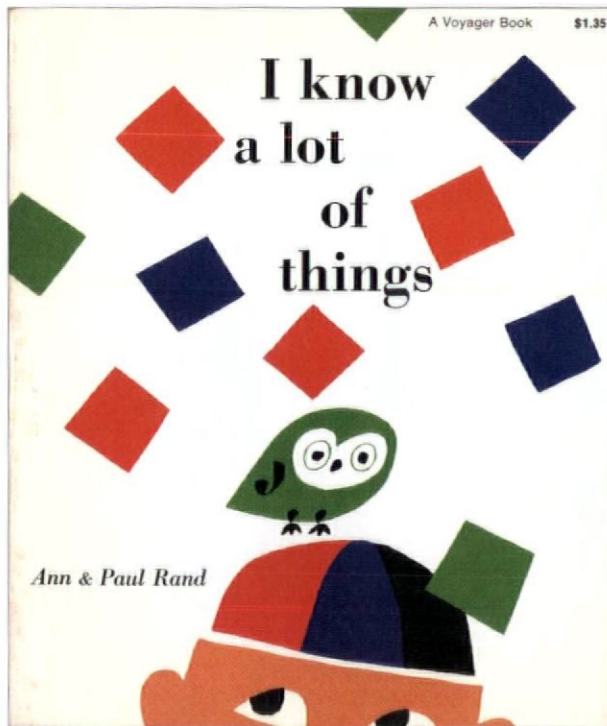




Direction magazine, Christmas 1943.



Explore with Books, poster for Book Week, Every Child a Reader (ECAR), 1958.



I Know a Lot of Things, book designed by Paul Rand and written by Ann and Paul Rand, 1956



Jazzways magazine, 1946.

BOTTOM: PRIVATE COLLECTION/COURTESY OF MCNY (2)

“The Coronet Brandy advertisements are based on a common object—the brandy snifter—in animated form. The dot pattern of the soda bottle was designed to suggest effervescence; the dotted background, in turn, is a visual extension of the bottle; the waiter is a variation of the snifter glass; the oval tray individualizes for Coronet the silver tray we used to see in liquor advertisements.”

—P. R.

modeled himself on such avant-garde artists as painter Paul Klee, designer El Lissitzky, and architect Le Corbusier, each of whom advocated a timeless spirit in design. Adhering to Le Corbusier's dictum that “to be modern is not a fashion, it is a state,” Rand devoted his life to making what he modestly called “good work.”

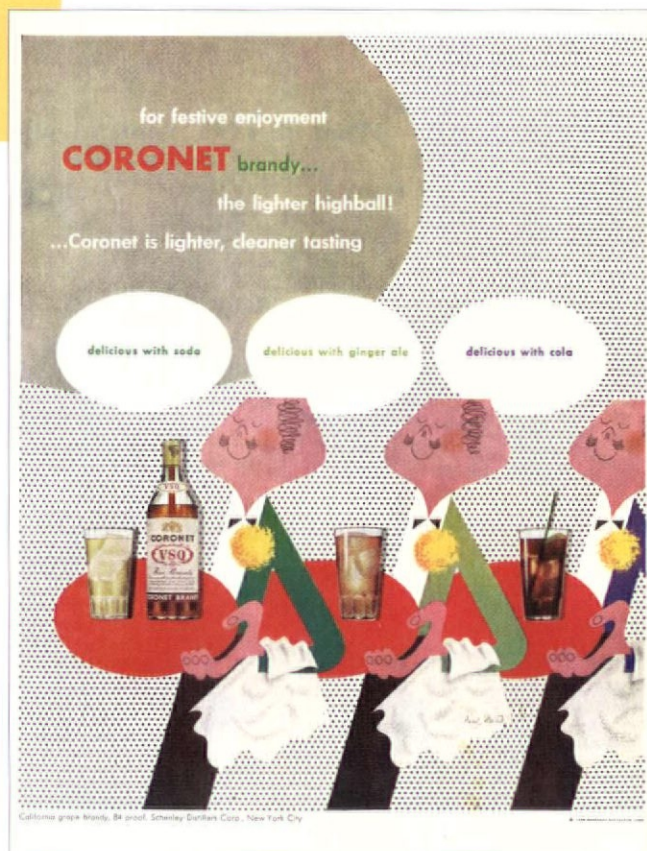
Looking to the European moderns for inspiration, he developed a fresh and individual approach to visual communications. His magazine and advertising layouts wed functional simplicity to abstract complexity. Void of ornament, each detail was planned to attract the eye and convey a message. Yet nothing was formulaic.

The page was a stage on which Rand performed feats of artistic virtuosity. His work was so distinct from that of both his traditional and faddish contemporaries—so radically counter to the accepted norms yet progressive in ways that tested the limits of print design—that his admirers called him the “Picasso of Graphic Design.”

For the rest of his career, he lived up to that distinction. His work covered a broad range from advertising to book covers, from children's books to corporate identity. He was not the first designer to create modern logos, but he was the most invested in making the logo more than a mere trademark. Much of his work, and especially his logos and marks, are as fresh now as they were then. Most of them are still used (IBM, Westinghouse, ABC, Morningstar)—UPS has altered theirs for the worse.

Even more significant are the words that Rand lived by—the writing he did in later life in books and articles—that defined modern design and the modernist designer. Paul Rand the writer, however, is another story. Here we look at the enduring designs that first made him famous. **M**

Steven Heller has taught at the School of Visual Arts in New York for more than twenty-five years and is co-founder of two of the school's MFA programs, Design Criticism and Designer as Author. He is the author/co-author of 170 books, including Paul Rand (Phaidon Press).



Coronet Brandy magazine advertisement, 1943.

Modern
Japanese
Tea Bowls



"...the whole of
Combray and of its
surroundings, taking
their proper shapes
and growing
solid, sprang into
being, town and
gardens alike, from
my cup of tea"

—Marcel Proust

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, when Marcel Proust famously wrote about a cup of tea, he was introducing a modern idea, the phenomenon of involuntary memory that can recapture the essence of the past because of the masterful design of recollection. If you read carefully you'll see that his fictional teacup hardly had a material essence. What did it look like? Did it resemble the well-designed teacups in still lifes rendered by Henri Fantin-Latour, whom he writes about in *The Guermantes Way*? More likely, if Proust was imagining a teacup from his past, it was less tasteful, wide brimmed, stretched low, painted with prim flowers like the plates



This *Sekisoh* (accumulated layers) tea bowl by Izumita Yukiya, displays his technique of creating layers by painting clay onto paper.

Tsujimura Shiro's *Big Ocean* tea bowl is in the Oribé style, which is known for its shining black color (achieved with a dark green copper glaze), and a coating of white slip enlivened with drips and flows, and the radiant yellow of *kintsugi*, a material often used for repair work.

By Frances Brent



Tsujimura Shiro carving a tea bowl.

Tsujimura leaves his pots and bowls in the woods and paths surrounding the house he built in the hills of Mima-cho, Nara. Exposed to the elements and knocking against one another, the surfaces become roughened and cracked in time.

Two views of one of Tsujimura's shallow tea bowls in the Oribe style. Here the decoration falls over the rim and into the bowl's interior.



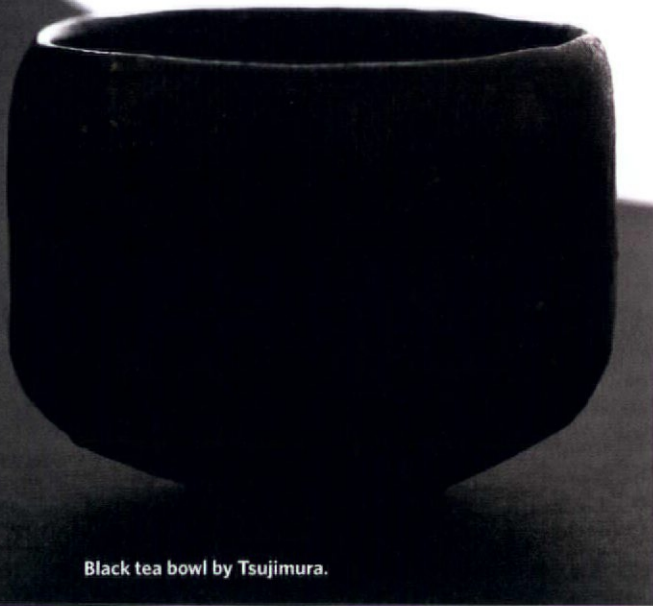
on the wall in his aunt's house in Illiers-Combray. Never described as an object, Proust's teacup served his purposes only as a container for the perfume of warm tea and cake crumbs, the accidental and fragrant concoction that surprisingly called up lost memories. If it existed as a repository for an obliterated and long-forgotten past, the cup was also a holder of ideas of French *Japonisme*, experienced primarily through taste and smell, imagination and consciousness, rather than through the eyes.

I thought about Proust's teacup recently when I was visiting the Ippodo Gallery in New York, where there was an exhibition of contemporary Japanese *chawan*, modern tea bowls constructed in the traditional Japanese forms and associated with the ritualized tea ceremony. The tea bowl and tea utensils continue to be central to the Japanese pottery tradition, even to contemporary potters oriented within the avant-garde, who work to create a perfect tea bowl within their lifetime. Like Proust's teacup, these bowls are holders of memory, or rather, his-



toricized memory encoded by those who know the tea ceremony. And, like his teacup, they are meant to be experienced by all the senses: by the eye, which perceives them from every direction; by the hands, which pick them up, touch their clay walls, bear their weight, feel the heat conducted through their skin; even by the lips touched to the irregular surfaces of the rim. Within the tea ceremony, they also have a conceptual purpose, linking host to guest and human imagination to nature and spirituality.

There was a great variety among the bowls in the Ippodo exhibition, representing all the styles employed today: Raku, Ido Hagi, Karatsu, Oribe, and Shino. Some were intended for use and others were clearly non-functional. Some shimmered with metallic slip and others were rugged, scratched, or "clog-shaped." As objects, they had a



Black tea bowl by Tsujimura.

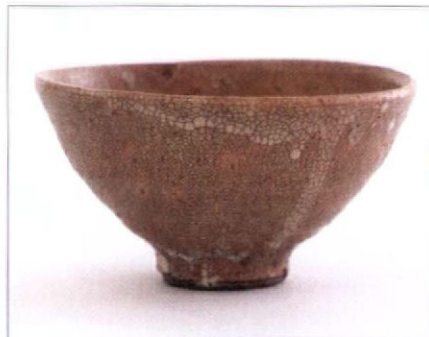
totemic quality, standing together like Cycladic figures, and I felt the temptation to think of them sculpturally. Like snuffboxes, antique pipes, or bells (and some of the bowls turned upside down would resemble monastery bells in shape and size), they can be appreciated for their beauty as art or craft, but within Japanese culture their value is more than the sum of their parts.

Among the sixteen artists represented in the show, two are outstanding representatives of the different directions taken by contemporary Japanese potters. Tsujimura Shiro is a master of traditional Japanese forms, and his tea bowls are owned today by major institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. The story of his life resembles a Japanese fairy tale: born in 1947, in the poverty of the postwar period, he moved as a teenager from the Nara Prefecture to Tokyo with the intention of becoming a painter. After seeing a famous Ido bowl he decided to dedicate his life to pottery. Tsujimura never trained with a master but started his career making one bowl at a time, which his young wife would sell on the street. A Buddhist monk known as a connoisseur of pottery bought one of Tsujimura's bowls, and with that stroke of luck he began to build a reputation and moved back to Mima-cho, Nara, where he built his own house and several kilns. He lives there today, working in the wooded area by the mountain-side and continues to make up to five hundred pots in a morning, then selects two or three to be salvaged, fired, and glazed in the afternoon. After his pots are completed he sets them outside, along the path to his garden



Tsujimura's *katsuwa* (warped or clog-shaped) tea bowl gleams with a black enamel-like finish. The technique of *Hikidashiguro*, in which the iron-glazed pot was high-fired, then removed from the kiln and plunged into water, created subtle variations and shades of black to wash across the bowl's skin.

Drawing on traditional Japanese *Shino* ware, in which the surface was covered with a white glaze made from feldspar and a painted or poured-over layer of glaze mixed with iron pigmentation, the glaze flows like icing over the rocky surface of this tea bowl by Tsujimura. The work is prized for its irregularities at the lip and the markings, cracks, and flaws along the walls.



The flaring shape of the Ido tea bowl was borrowed from the early Korean potters. In old Japan the kilns that produced Ido ware used a porous clay that often broke and chipped and was mended with lacquer. Tsujimura's modern bowl with its especially fine proportions and balance is covered with cracks and drizzles of glaze.

Tsujimura's cylindrical *Oribe* tea bowl has an indented rim, making it especially suitable for drinking *matcha* (powdered green tea) in small sips.

Tsujimura's craggy red tea bowl balances on an elegant and simple foot, or *kodai*.





Izumita Yukiya shaping sheets of clay.

The rough and pitted, razor-thin surface of Izumita's *Trench* seems to pull the abstracted shape of a vase into a ceramic vortex.

The textured outer skin of the two tea bowls below by Izumita has been achieved through the use of white slip and a caramel glaze, producing a gritty quality that resembles petrified wood or the weathered surface of rock. You can see the seams where he excised clay and fitted it back together on the tea bowl at the far right.



or in the woods so they will absorb the elements and achieve the weathered appearance, marks, and stains so highly prized in the famous bowls that have preceded his. Photographs of Tsujimura's home show his pots covering the hills and grounds and trenches, strewn randomly and everywhere in heaps and stacks as if they were part of nature.

Tsujimura's bowls display profound technical mastery as well as the vitality and depth of character demonstrated by the great innovators of the tradition. He works in many of the classical styles and does not care about the region that his clay comes from. "I have never cared about a few scratches or marks on my pots if I could achieve the effects I want," he has said. "My interest is in the less than perfect shape, in the less than perfect kiln." You see this in the nicked matte of a black tea bowl with tiny dents in the rim or in the surface of the foot untouched by glaze. An Ido-style bowl is crackled all over in intricate spiderweb patterns and the remains of white slip cling in droplets surrounding the foot and base. I've been told that the test for a master's bowl is that the weight matches how it feels—you never say, "Oh, it's heavier than I thought." When I pick up this bowl, it's something like the weight of half a honeydew but fits absolutely naturally in my hands.

Perhaps Tsujimura's most beautiful series was done in 1993, a particularly inventive period when he lived in Devon, England, and created his Oribe-style *Big Ocean* bowl using a rich, lathered black glaze, white slip, and *kintsugi*, the gold repair material made from gold powder and lacquer. Rising to the challenge of capturing the wild sea on the surface of a pot, he splashed the surface in broad calligraphic strokes and puddles like an action painter.

Izumita Yukiya (b. 1966) represents a younger generation and demonstrates a virtuosity that mixes a deep

knowledge of the traditional with many contemporary trends in earth art and sculpture. As a young potter, Izumita became fascinated with the many uses of paper—for writing letters, bearing sacred texts, or making paintings, wrapping, padding, preserving, shredding, even representing money—and he began to find ways to combine it with the clay he was working with. He developed a technique that uses paper as an armature that allows him to make fine ceramic strips, or accumulated layers, *Sekisoh*, that he can shape into waves and rolls and angles, sometimes reminiscent of origami. In his boxes, vases, and tea bowls he achieves something like the appearance of the folds of a fan or a series of waves or even reptilian zigzags. His style is both rugged and fragile, hard and soft; the surfaces sometimes achieve the abrasive texture of Giacometti's bronzes.

Izumita's *Sekisoh* tea bowl at the Ippodo Gallery was built from a clay mixed with grog to achieve an earthy, gritty, coarse texture, but the interior is finished with a contrasting copper-metallic glaze. Cutting away a portion of the clay wall, he transferred the piece to strips of paper that could be stretched and bent before being patched back in like the drooping folds of an old gown or withered skin. In a way the bowl looks like an ancient object, a relic, or the remains of petrified wood. The surfaces of Izumita's objects sometimes have the organic quality of bark and sometimes the quality of marked and roughed concrete. The openings of his vases and boxes, pitted or rutted, once again reflect the classic Japanese aesthetic, valuing the markings of imperfection. More recently, his work, still virtuosic, has incorporated sculptural, abstract, and even heroic values. You can see this in the surfaces of the folded clay band titled *Trench*, as he breaks away from the functionality of a vase and dynamically folds and twists his shape into a ceramic vortex, all the while adhering to the principles of balance and sensuality intrinsic to the values he mastered in the tea bowl.

Both Tsujimura and Izumita have made alterations while working in a tradition that has crossed centuries and geographic boundaries before plunging into our time. Proust saw his teacup as a memory vessel that could contain the debris of the past. The bruised and fractured surfaces of twenty-first-century tea bowls powerfully incorporate a modern sense of the erosion of time and the challenges of holding together nature and human history as they are constantly decomposing and being reconstituted within the small universes of these modest objects. **M**



Izumita's newest work expands the limits of the ceramic tradition. The piece at the left is stretched and folded like a fantastical bellows; its distressed surface suggests the texture of rusted metal.

Izumita's bold *Sekisoh* flower vase (seen here in an overall and a detail image) is built of accumulated layers of clay that has been shaped on paper.



Louis Kahn's Sublime Geometry of Terror

By VINCENT SCULLY



IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY at Dhaka, in Bangladesh, Louis I. Kahn embodied his love for the ruins of Rome, especially as they had been drawn by the Italian architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi in the middle of the eighteenth century. In those drawings Piranesi had begun to create a new and appropriate aesthetic for the modern centuries to come, that of the sublime, rather than the beautiful. It was an architecture of fear. In it, classical forms, the enduring images of western civilization, could turn dangerous, creatures of darkness and threat. That, at least, is what Kahn perceived and took for his own as he wandered, lonely and baffled, through the ruins: the geometry of terror.

Dhaka shows it best. The big meeting hall in the center is wrapped round by a peripheral circulation area created by concrete boxes that are pierced by pure circles at enormous scale, laced by heavy diagonal ramps. Deep spaces lie behind them, mounting in pools of light and darkness. The circles assault us, and we are very small before them, scattered around as insubstantial, disoriented little creatures. (Piranesi's people looked much the same.) In contrast, Le Corbusier's government buildings of almost the same time and in the same part of the world use their enormous sculptural power to lead human beings along to grand emotional releases and a new heroic stance of their own. Not Kahn's, where there are no humane gestures of hope and heroic action. One implacable geometric structure rules—obeying its own eternal laws, immutable, terrible, sublime. A galaxy, a vast silence.

There has been nothing quite like it since.



VINCENT SCULLY, *Sterling Professor Emeritus of the History of Art at Yale University*, is one of the country's leading architectural historians and critics. His scholarly work covers both ancient and modern architecture, and his teaching of undergraduates and architectural students during sixty-one years has broadly influenced the profession. Two chaired professorships bear his name at Yale, and the National Building Museum annually awards a Vincent Scully Prize. He was a friend of Louis I. Kahn from 1947 on and wrote the first book about him, *Louis I. Kahn*, published by George Braziller in 1962.