



# DesignLA


Los Angeles Times

SUMMER 2019

MIRAMAR BEACH RESORT / JEAN DE MERRY / h CLUB  
OYLER WU / THE MANUFACTORY / TRACY FEITH / SPENCER FUNG  
OUTDOOR FURNITURE / ELYSIAN LANDSCAPES

ARTIST LAUREN HALSEY (RIGHT) WITH  
MONIQUE MCWILLIAMS AND EMMANUEL CARTER





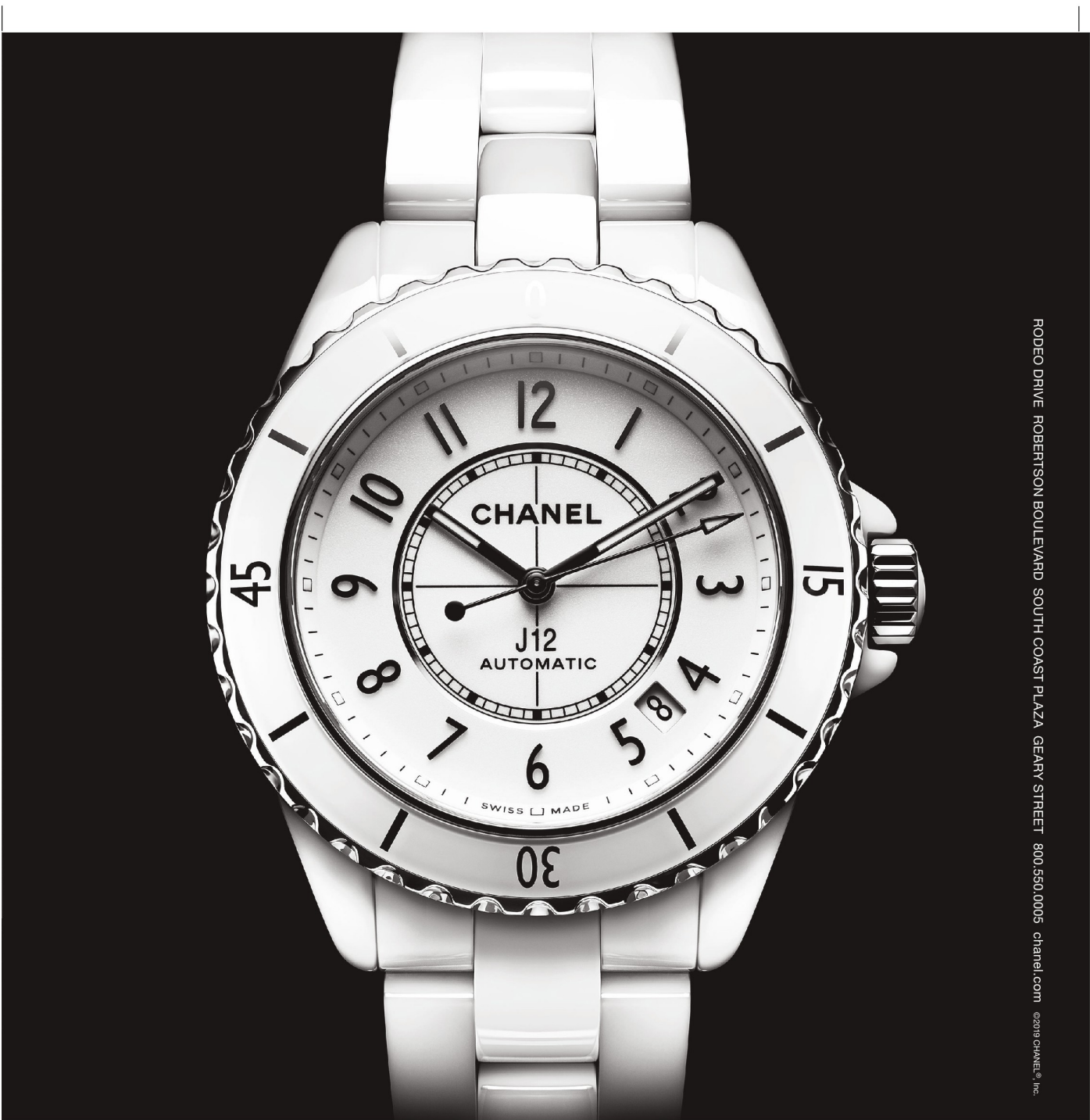
An irresistible attraction inhabits every detail of the *Levoir™ Bath Collection* by Brizo. The new *Brilliance® Luxe Steel™* finish brings to life the interplay of darkness and light, while optional *Black Crystal* accents add an alluring glint that fascinates and intrigues.

Available exclusively in showrooms. [brizo.com](http://brizo.com)

CAPTIVATED *By* BRIZO®



# CHANEL



## THE NEW J12

IT'S ALL ABOUT SECONDS

NEW SELF-WINDING MANUFACTURE MOVEMENT  
HIGHLY RESISTANT CERAMIC WATCH. SWISS MADE. 5-YEAR WARRANTY.



*70 years of innovation.  
Always be first with what's next.*

**1949  
2019**

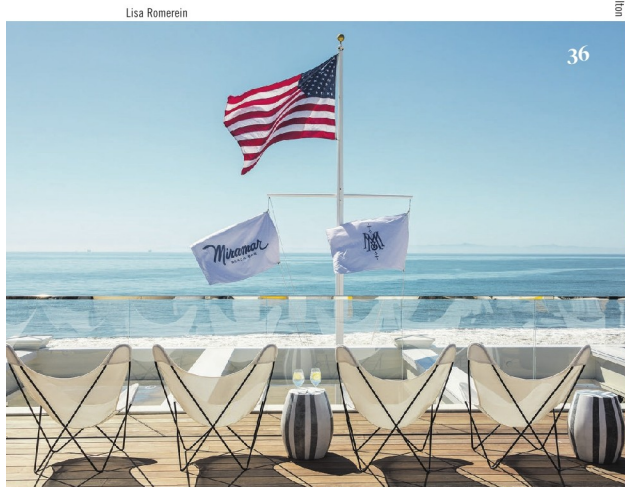
**SNYDER DIAMOND** 

Santa Monica. Pasadena. North Hollywood. [SnyderDiamond.com](http://SnyderDiamond.com)





The Gaggenau full surface induction cooktop with one large cooking surface, allows for free positioning of cookware of any shape and size. Think of it as 36 inches of pure potential. With Gaggenau, every piece is distinctively designed, crafted from exceptional materials, and offers the highest level of performance, since 1683.



Lisa Romerein

36



Russell Hamilton

60



52



Tim Street-Porter

74



Sam Frost

50

Tessa Feith

# DesignLA

Los Angeles Times

SUMMER 2019

**FEATURES**

- 36 MIRAMAR MIRACLE**  
Rick Caruso's legendary Montecito property reopens as a world-class resort
- 50 FEITH CLUB**  
A fashion veteran reinvents himself for the Instagram age
- 52 CHARACTER STUDY**  
Jean de Merry and Christian Darnaud-Maroselli's house of memories
- 60 LAUREN HALSEY'S LIQUID BLACK DREAMS**  
The L.A. artist is funkating the international art world
- 68 ELYSIAN FIELDS**  
Judy Kameon and Dana Bauer's remarkable public and private landscapes
- 74 h CLUB RISING**  
The splashy social hub offers new perspectives on Hollywood
- 82 THE LAST WILDERNESS**  
Artist and architect Spencer Fung meditates on the fragility of nature
- 86 WOVEN ARCHITECTURE**  
Oyler Wu Collaborative celebrates linear complexity
- 92 CULINARY MECCA**  
The Manufactory is Tartine Bakery's new outpost at the ROW in DTLA



2019 COLLECTION furniture | lighting | accessories

**ddc**

New York 212.685.0800  
Los Angeles 310.273.5050  
[www.ddcnyc.com](http://www.ddcnyc.com)



20



24



24



17

# DesignLA

Los Angeles Times

SUMMER 2019

## DEPARTMENTS

12 CONTRIBUTORS

15 EDITOR'S NOTE

17 InLA

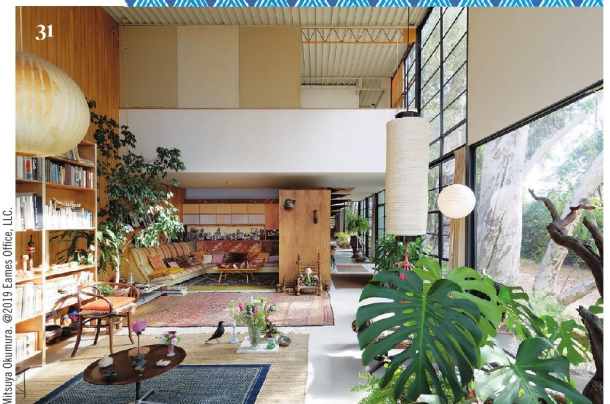
Latest outdoor style; CW Stockwell reborn; Ben Soleimani's new venture; Fenix Sportier plays tennis; Klein Agency goes auburn

31 FIRST THINGS: CONSERVING MODERNISM

The Getty Conservation Institute takes on two Southern California landmarks

98 NEXT: SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Livia Corona Benjamin rethinks the meaning of architectural photography



31

Mitsyara Oumura. ©2019 Eames Office, LLC

Above, from top:  
A Minotti outdoor sofa;  
a Fenix Sportier leather  
tennis bag; a dish from  
auburn restaurant; CW  
Stockwell wallpaper;  
the Eames house.

# NATIV

design Raphael Navot

Raphael Navot identifies himself as a non-industrial designer; he likes to combine artisanal know-how with contemporary methods. With Nativ, he presents a dialog between mastery of geometry and organic shapes and offers a collection which feels surprisingly familiar.

Photo Michel Gheret for advertising purposes only. Special licenses: TASCHEN. Conditions apply, ask your store for more details. Program available on selected items and subject to availability.



**Patchwork**, dining table.  
**Identities**, chairs. **Axle**, sideboard.  
**Pebble**, table lamp.  
**Manufactured in Europe.**

*French Art de Vivre*

**rochebobo**  
 PARIS

• Complimentary 3D Interior Design Service<sup>1</sup> • Quick Ship program available<sup>2</sup>

[11 of 100](http://www. Roche-bobo</a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

## CONTRIBUTORS



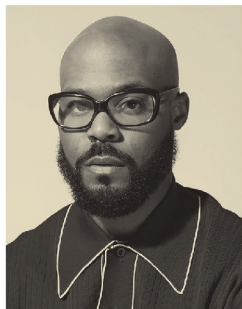
ALLISON BERG is a Los Angeles- and New York-based journalist and a contributor to a variety of publications, including *C Magazine*, *Gotham Magazine* and *Hamptons Magazine*.



KARYN MILLET lives in Los Angeles and has photographed four books, including *The Well-Dressed House*. She shoots for *House Beautiful*, *Travel & Leisure* and *Milieu*, among other magazines.



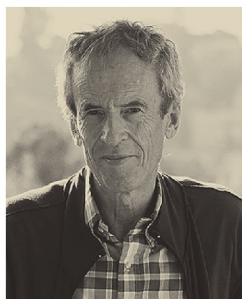
MICHAEL SLENSKE has written profiles for *DesignLA* about art-world figures Ai Weiwei, Laura Owens and Patrick Painter, among others. In June 2018 he founded the project space Desert Center Los Angeles, and last December he launched the artist-run The Street & The Shop.



RUSSELL HAMILTON is a Jamaican-American artist known for his work in photography and film highlighting urban and diasporic communities. He is working on his first book as well as various exhibitions.



LISA ROMEREIN is a Los Angeles-based photographer who specializes in architecture, interiors, gardens, portraits and lifestyle. She was principal photographer for Diane Keaton's *The House That Pinterest Built* and Scott Shrader's *The Art of Outdoor Living*.



TIM STREET-PORTER's books include *Palm Springs: A Modernist Paradise*, *The Los Angeles House* and *L.A. Modern*, among many others. He is currently working on a book about pools for Rizzoli.

# DesignLA

Los Angeles Times

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Michael Wollaeger

## ART DIRECTION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Sergie Lookkoff

## CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

John Ellis, Chris Fortuna, Sam Frost, Russell Hamilton, Laura Hull, Karyn Millet, Lisa Romerein, Tim Street-Porter, Dominique Vorillon

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Allison Berg, Christina Binkley, Steffie Nelson, Jessica Ritz, Kelly Vencill Sanchez, Stacie Stukin, Michael Slenske, Abigail Stone, Michael Webb

## ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Law Chambers

For advertising inquiries:  
[law.chambers@latimes.com](mailto:law.chambers@latimes.com)

## Los Angeles Times

## EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Norman Pearlstine

## SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

Christopher Argentieri

## ADVERTISING VICE PRESIDENT

Lee Fentress

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Helen Chang  
Max Enciso  
Dave Novotney  
Lois Shonebarger  
Maureen White

© 2019 Los Angeles Times Communications LLC. All rights reserved

AD Beatrice Rossetti - Photo Federico Cedrone



FLEXFORM | MADE IN ITALY



**GROUNDPIECE SECTIONAL SOFA**  
Antonio Citterio Design

[www.flexform.it](http://www.flexform.it)

**FLEXFORM LOS ANGELES**  
Tel. 310 424 5460

**FLEXFORM SAN FRANCISCO**  
Tel. 415 800 6576

**AGENT FOR USA**  
Antonella Cremonesi  
Tel. 312 265 1181  
[antonella@alphaonestudio.com](mailto:antonella@alphaonestudio.com)

# RALPHUCCI



**JOHN KOGA** AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH RALPH PUCI INTERNATIONAL  
1025 N. McCADDEN PLACE LOS ANGELES  
WWW.RALHPUCI.NET



EDITOR'S NOTE

It's summer—time to go out! Out to the beach, to a new restaurant, to a rooftop deck. Out to a park, a museum, a concert at the Bowl or the Greek. Out to a different neighborhood to see what's going on. Or maybe just out to the back yard to read the paper. There have never been more options to enjoy summer in the city.

This year, the world may be beating a path to the Miramar Beach resort (*page 36*), which opened in Montecito in February. Rick Caruso and Rosewood Hotels teamed up to create something pretty special—a world-class Southern California destination that already feels like a classic. Closer to home, perhaps, is the new h Club in Hollywood (*page 74*), whose roof deck and bar offer members a spectacular outdoor perch above the heart of Hollywood. And in DTLA, The Manufactory (*page 92*)—the much-anticipated Los Angeles branch of San Francisco's Tartine Bakery—is a new culinary mecca.

Elysian Landscapes (*page 68*), led by Judy Kameon and Dana Bauer, has been greening Los Angeles with a variety of public and private gardens, adding an important dimension to the city as it continues to evolve. And Oyler Wu Collaborative (*page 86*) is working on the L.A. River Bikeway and other civic infrastructures that will further enhance our urban experience for years to come.

Finally, here's a suggestion: Take this issue of *DesignLA* outside to a leafy, comfortable spot and read Michael Slenske's article about Los Angeles artist Lauren Halsey (*page 60*) and her ascendant career in the international art world. It's simply a great, inspiring L.A. story. Then head out to see what this summer has in store for you.

**MICHAEL WOLLAEGER**

Editor-in-Chief

[michaelwollaeger@latimes.com](mailto:michaelwollaeger@latimes.com)

#designlamag



# CALIFORNIA CLOSETS®

Custom solutions for better living

800.274.6754 [californiaclosets.com](http://californiaclosets.com)

CORONA DEL MAR HUNTINGTON BEACH PALM DESERT PASADENA SANTA MONICA  
STUDIO CITY WEST HOLLYWOOD WESTLAKE VILLAGE

# inLA

Photography by John Ellis



*Above:*  
Katy Polsby with  
CW Stockwell's  
Martinique pattern.

*Right:*  
The relaunch of the  
brand revives historic  
patterns and adds  
new variations.



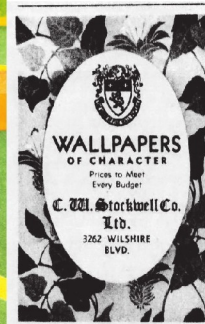
## LEGENDS OF THE WALL

In the 1940s, when renowned architect Paul Williams commissioned the Hollywood costumer-turned-interior-designer Don Loper to help renovate the Beverly Hills Hotel, Loper installed Martinique wallpaper—the iconic banana-leaf pattern that's synonymous with Los Angeles and one of the most recognizable wallpaper patterns ever produced. Today Martinique is still a touchstone of the Los Angeles-based company CW Stockwell, which has been around since 1905, when Clifton W. Stockwell, a pharmacist from Ohio, moved to Pasadena and started a wallpaper business. Yet Martinique is just one of many designs CW Stockwell produced that appeared frequently in ads in *Architectural Digest* in the 1940s and in the homes of movie moguls like David O. Selznick and actors like Gregory Peck and were used by architects and designers like Roland Coates and Arthur Elrod.

Lucille and Remy Chastain (Lucille was Stockwell's daughter) took over the company in the 1930s, and CW Stockwell was eventually passed on to the Chastains' son, Remy Jr., who had joined the family business in 1950. Over the last few decades the company quietly streamlined its production, and when Remy Jr. died in 2013 without children (he never married), the future of the company looked precarious. That's when Chastain's dear friend Jill Polsby purchased the company to keep his legacy alive. "I knew it was crazy, but I also knew I had to do it," she says. "I didn't realize it at the time, but I think Remy had always been grooming me. He was a sneaky devil."

Polsby's daughter, Katy Polsby, has recently taken the reins of CW Stockwell as CEO. Her goal: revitalize the brand and capitalize on its vast library, which includes gems like a collection of Japanese textile designs the Chastains acquired in 1930s and patterns hand-drawn by Remy. Her journey has been part detective work (scouring the haphazardly organized company archives and Remy's collection of old magazines and photographs) as well as art directing the brand relaunch to shepherd it into a new era.

inLA



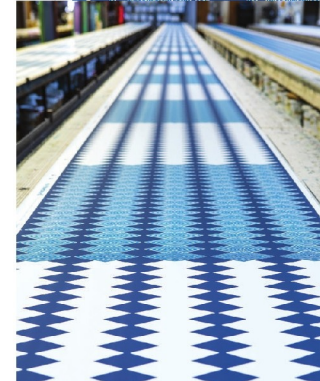
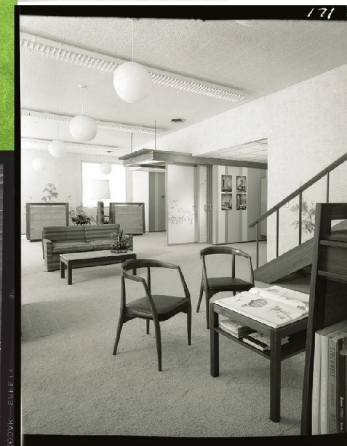
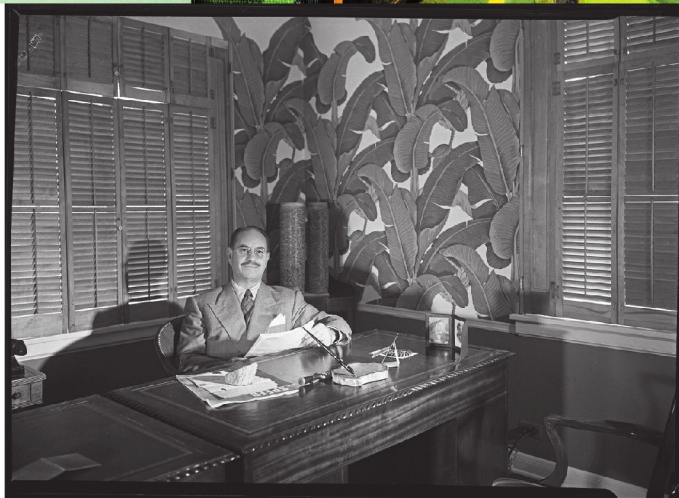
Top and top right: Original drawings and ephemera from the CW Stockwell archives.

Right: Remy Chastain, Sr., took over from founder Clifton Stockwell in the 1930s.

Far right, middle: The CW Stockwell showroom on Wilshire Blvd. in the 1960s.

Far right and bottom right: Polsby oversees the printing process in Los Angeles.

Archival images: Maynard L. Parker. Courtesy of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California



Polsby, a veteran of West Elm and Serena and Lily, is well equipped for the challenge. The current revival of wallpaper coupled with the brand DNA makes her job a little easier. “The Chastains never had the feeling that anything was too precious,” she says. “They were selling an elegant handmade product, but they were never haughty about it. There was a spirit of innovation and just having fun with design.”

The Chastains’ emphasis on risk-taking—an irreverence in color combinations and patterns—has given Polsby license to play. She’s still producing the line in Los Angeles using a hand-printing process, and her first collection offers 14 new wallpaper and textile designs that include both large-scale patterns and smaller

geometrics intended to be used together to create layered, colorful palettes. Martinique is still in production, of course, but Polsby has introduced new colorways. The collection is available through the Harbinger showroom in Los Angeles.

“It’s a delicate balance to relaunch such an iconic brand,” Polsby observes. “You need to make sure you honor its heritage but not be too beholden to it.” But what would Remy think? “I think this was his plan all along,” says Jill Polsby. “He would be beside himself with joy that what he and his family created over the past one hundred years lives on.” —*Stacie Stukin*

[cwstockwell.com](http://cwstockwell.com), [harbinger.com](http://harbinger.com)

# S. Harris



MAIN BASICS

available exclusively to the trade sharris.com 800.999.5600

INLA



Janus et Cie's Bob Vivant poufs (above) and Pivot swivel sofa (below).  
janusetcie.com



Above: Flexform's Vulcano sectional sofa.  
33sixty.com, flexform.it

# OUTDOOR STYLE

NEW LUXURY FOR LIVING OUTSIDE



Gandiablasco's Cocoon chair (above right) and Solana lounge chair (above left).  
gandiablasco.com, massbeverly.com



B & B Italia's Bay chaise (left) and Fat-Fat tables (below).  
bebitalia.com, divafurniture.com



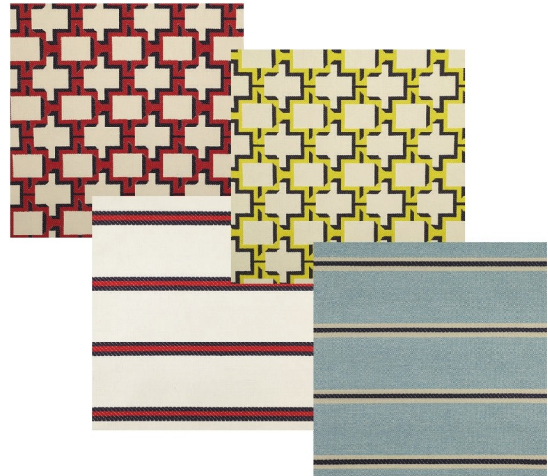
inLA



Restoration Hardware's Havana chair (above) and Sebastian teak lounge chair (below). [restorationhardware.com](http://restorationhardware.com)



The Mah Jong sofa (above) and Traveler chair (right) from Roche Bobois. [roche-bobois.com](http://roche-bobois.com)



Above: Dedar's colorful new outdoor fabrics. [dedar.com](http://dedar.com), [kneederfauchere.com](http://kneederfauchere.com)



Minotti's Tape Cord settee (above) and Quadrado sofa (right). [minotti-la.com](http://minotti-la.com)



inLA



## REVOLUTIONARY ROAD

"Attainable luxury is finally coming to the design industry," says Ben Soleimani (*above*) of his eponymous online design venture. "I've never worked harder or been more excited in my life." While online design resources are nothing new, Soleimani is coming at the business model from a different perspective. "Rugs and furniture are major purchases to buy online," he notes. "We want our clients to feel confident in what they're buying. We've rethought the purchase process by hiring design consultants to work with you over the phone. They will look at photos of your home and help you make a decision about what's best for your space. In Los Angeles, we're also piloting a program that will allow you to test five rugs in your space. Our in-house designers and white-glove delivery experts will bring you the rugs that you're considering so you can actually see the piece in the room where it will live."

Soleimani moved to Los Angeles when he was 16 and opened a branch of his family business (a major player in the rug world). He also became the rug partner for Restoration Hardware until last year, when he decided to go out on his own. "I've worked on both ends of the design industry, from high-end designer showrooms to big consumer brands," he says. "I see a hole in the market. With my company, I'll be the first to bring designer-level quality and service to homeowners, starting first with rugs and then disrupting the entire home when we expand broadly into furniture later this year."

But Soleimani isn't cutting designers out of the equation. "We've worked with many of the top designers over the years, and we value those relationships," he says. "We are launched nationwide, with free shipping, and we can work

with our clients to ship Internationally. We also offer a discount to the trade on top of our already unprecedented pricing—it's revolutionary for designers to have access to this level of quality at our price point."

After years working with different partners, Soleimani is clearly enjoying this new chapter in his business life. "This is my own venture," he says, "and I'm proud to have complete control over the look and feel and the customer relationships. Our customers travel the world, have sophisticated taste and want to buy something that they can use for a lifetime. By bringing this kind of quality direct to the consumer, we're going to change the way people shop for the home."

*BenSoleimani.com*



THOMAS LAVIN

Newly renovated and expanded  
at Pacific Design Center

Now 19,000 square feet  
of luxury home furnishings

310 278 2456 • [thomaslavin.com](http://thomaslavin.com)

inLA



## FENIX SPORTIER

So you love tennis but your nylon racket case clashes with your Louis Vuitton Neverfull bag. This is roughly where Lauren Bruksch (*above right*) found herself three years ago as she mourned a failed shoe-brand start-up and soothed herself on the tennis courts of Los Angeles. “A lot of women were stuffing their rackets in carryalls by Goyard,” says Bruksch. “I realized I could bring a more designed bag to tennis.” So she did.

Fenix Sportier—a brand named for the mythic regenerating bird and a play on *sport + couturier*—was launched last July as a California-luxe take on sport style. Its leather racket cases and roomy carryalls for women and men are designed by Bruksch and handmade in Los Angeles by Juan Arenas—who formerly made accessories for Louis Vuitton and other luxury brands—and four artisans who work with him at his Southgate studio.

The materials are Italian, designed by Bruksch with a hint of her eighties youth. “I think it’s really fun to wear a little black leather on the tennis court,” she says. Designs are unisex—there is gun-metal, navy and black leather in addition to soft pink. Carryalls have a laptop compartment because, of course.

When the U.S. women’s national tennis team asked Bruksch to make their 2018 Fed Cup traveling bags, Arenas adjusted his production schedule and made the bags—white perforated leather, blue trim and thread, red suede interiors—on time.

Fenix Sportier is sold direct-to-consumer, with prices made possible by cutting out the middle man. The \$1,000 Billie bag racket case, made with perforated nappa leather lined with suede, offers a zippered pocket for keys or sunglasses and can carry two rackets—separated by a suede partition—via a handle or shoulder strap —*Christina Binkley*

[FenixSportier.com](http://FenixSportier.com)



## DEEP AUBURN



Photography by Nicole Franzen

The building that houses the new auburn restaurant is a repository of sorts for contemporary L.A. restaurant history. What began in 1986 with architect Bernard Zimmerman’s design for Citrus, legendary chef Michel Richard’s then-flagship on Melrose Avenue, subsequently went through various iterations as other high-profile eateries. Then, about two years ago, chef Eric Bost (*left*) enlisted Klein Agency to transform the property. The classically trained Bost—an alum of Alain Ducasse and Guy Savoy and former executive chef at République—needed a vehicle to serve elevated tasting menus in an approachable environment.

“The first conversation we had about materials and ingredients spoke exactly to the way we perceive materiality and the way we wanted to handle the design,” says Maša Kleinhample of Klein Agency. She and Jon Kleinhample, her husband and the firm’s cofounder, approached all aspects of the project holistically, from the interior architecture to the tableware, linens and furnishings. Most items were custom designed and fabricated in their studio.

“We’re trying to move away from the stricter rules of fine dining,” Bost notes. “Supporting an interior/exterior tie-in was a fundamental factor.” He explains that Klein Agency’s comprehensive design has parallels with his own creative process in the kitchen. “It gives people something they can connect to and feel comfortable with, and it provides multiple ways to experience the restaurant. It’s the same way we develop the menu.” —*Jessica Ritz*

**auburn**, 6703 Melrose Avenue, [auburnla.com](http://auburnla.com)



# TEAK WAREHOUSE

*Suppliers of high-end outdoor furniture at wholesale prices to private residences and commercial clients for over 25 years.*

310.536.8325 / 2653 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach / Open Daily 10:00 to 6:00

[www.teakwarehouse.com](http://www.teakwarehouse.com)



The best place to go in Southern California for luxury outdoor furniture at wholesale prices to the public & trade. Everything is in stock, fully assembled and ready to take home. Visit our showroom or request a quote online today!  
Premium outdoor cushions are included with deep seating purchases as shown on our website.





You had me at 18' ceilings

# THE MANSFIELD

Now Leasing Studio, 1, 2 and 3 Bedroom Residences  
and Penthouses | Priced from \$2,500

5100 WILSHIRE BLVD NEAR LABREA  
(Corner of Wilshire Blvd and S Mansfield Ave)

Tel. 323.634.0290 | [TheMansfieldApartments.com](http://TheMansfieldApartments.com)

Restrictions may apply. Prices and availability subject to change. See leasing gallery for details. 🏠

EVENTS

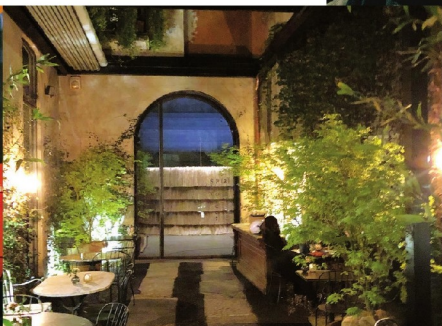


Top left: Snyder Diamond and DesignLA hosted designers for dinner in Milan. Top middle: Mies and Marwan Al Sayed, Michael Wollaeger, Russ Diamond. Top right: Michele Trout, Heidi Bonesteel. Above left: Shirry Dolgin, Ginna Christensen. Above middle: Dana Joy Altman, Tracy Heiner. Above right: Caren Rideau, Mariann Claggett, Clint Nicholas. Right: Stephen Kenn, Beks Opperman, Ginna Christensen, Michael Wollaeger, Tracy Heiner.

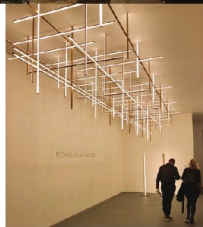


### SALONE DEL MOBILE IN MILAN

The Salone del Mobile show in Milan is an essential international design marketplace, and in recent years an increasing number of West Coast designers have been making the trip to see the latest creations from the world's top brands. DesignLA hosted two special designer dinners during the show in April, partnering with Snyder Diamond and Flexform.



Above and above right: Flexform and DesignLA welcomed designers to Six Gallery, an architects' atelier with the Sixième restaurant attached. Clockwise from top right: The Minotti installation at Salone del Mobile; a limited-edition PH Artichoke pendant from Louis Poulsen; Roche Bobois curved shelving; Michael Anastassiades lighting at Flos.





TURN  
YOUR  
*patio*  
INTO A  
DESTINATION



shop in-store or online

[AshleyHomeStore.com](https://www.AshleyHomeStore.com)



L U X U R Y  
P E R F O R M A N C E  
P A S S I O N

Custom Outdoor Kitchens by Kalamazoo  
Crafted without compromise

888 424 4150  
kalamazoogourmet.com



SNYDER DIAMOND Santa Monica & Pasadena | MONARK Costa Mesa  
THOUSAND OAKS FIRESIDE & DESIGN Thousand Oaks | PIRCH Glendale

Mitsuya Okumura ©2019 Eames Office, LLC.



*Left and below:*

The Charles and Ray Eames house in Pacific Palisades is being restored by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI).

*Inset below:* The GCI's Susan Macdonald, head of buildings and sites, and Tim Whalen, John E. and Louise Bryson director.



FIRST THINGS

# CONSERVING MODERNISM

THE GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE TAKES ON TWO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LANDMARKS

*Text by* Michael Webb

**T**he house that Charles and Ray Eames built for themselves on a meadow overlooking the ocean in Pacific Palisades is coming up on its seventieth anniversary. A hundred miles south on a coastal bluff in La Jolla is the Salk Institute, designed by Louis Kahn and completed in 1965. These two icons of modernism, pilgrimage sites for architects from around world, were in need of repair. For expert advice, their custodians reached out to the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), which adopted them as field-study projects.

Susan Macdonald, who helped launch the GCI's Modern Architecture Conservation Initiative eight years ago, explains that the compact steel-and-glass house and the expansive concrete-and-wood research facility offered complementary challenges. "Can a light touch



preserve the life of a building?" she asked. "Can we retain the original materials and the intangible spirit of place? And can we use these two buildings as models for research into materials and conservation techniques and apply the lessons learned to other structures?"

Restoring the fabric of an old building requires skill, but the materials and techniques

are centuries old. Over the past hundred years progressive architects have been constantly experimenting, often employing novel materials that are no longer available. Their enthusiasm for sheer walls, flat roofs and innovative structures sometimes outran available technologies. Today's owners tend to treat these buildings as though they were cars rather than useful works of art, replacing worn-out parts with new ones and putting expediency ahead of authenticity.

In contrast, the GCI investigates every aspect of a building before taking any action, just as it did when restoring the mural that Jackson Pollock painted for Peggy Guggenheim. Scientists, technicians, electricians and materials specialists examined the Eames house, an arborist evaluated the eucalyptus trees that flank it, and a soil engineer probed the hill-



Images courtesy of Joe Balconsen for the Salk Institute of Biological Studies.

The Salk Institute in La Jolla, designed by Louis Kahn and completed in 1965, presents a variety of conservation challenges.



side behind. Every risk was considered, every option weighed, for the goal is to preserve the house in near perfect condition for another 300 years. "Conservation practice dictates that you should do as little as possible and be able to reverse it," says Macdonald.

The Eames house is a model of prefabrication that has inspired successive generations: a light steel frame infilled with large panels of glass and a colorful mosaic of solid panels. Every component was ordered off the shelf from a

builder's catalog. Insulation was of little concern to the owners: When it got cold Charles would put a sweater on, and he would draw a curtain to shield the interior from direct sun. California's building codes have become far too exacting for such a house to be built today, but since nobody lives there, it has become a precious memorial to two brilliant designers and the world they created for themselves.

The GCI and supervising architect Frank Escher of Escher Gunewardena seized the op-

portunity of replacing the cracked and shrunken floor tiles when LACMA borrowed the furniture and decorative objects to display in the 2011 exhibition *Living in a Modern Way*. A few of the exterior panels had decomposed and had to be replaced. Both contain asbestos and are no longer made. But nearly everything else was subtly refurbished. "The house has retained almost all its original glass," MacDonald explains. "Only a few bits had to be replaced after the 1994 earthquake. One of the beautiful things is the quality of the light through the glass and its reflectivity, which cannot be reproduced. There are no massive variations in temperature, so all it needs is ultraviolet film on the existing glass and a steward who is on site to draw curtains and protect the contents."

At the Salk Institute Louis Kahn employed teak for the frames and facades of angled bays that face out to the ocean, pulling natural light into offices and laboratories. He left it uncoated, intending that it would weather to the same gray tone as the concrete walls. But when the budget was cut during construction, flashings and other protective devices were omitted, allowing water to settle on the timber. Within a year it acquired a disfiguring black fungus growth and began to leak. Jonas Salk ordered it be cleaned, but the use of chloride and steel brushes turned it bright red. Worse, the builders had economized by using a soft wood that was vulnerable to white ants as a lining between the teak and the interior oak paneling.

"Western Window Systems had an option for every opening we wanted to create, from large fixed windows to stack and bi-folding doors to small awning windows."

- Cavin Costello, principal architect, The Ranch Mine



Design Better  
westernwindowssystems.com

## FIRST THINGS

The GCI's Modern Architecture Conservation Initiative has an international outreach, working on structure like the Salk Institute (*below left*), the 1973 Sydney Opera House (*bottom left*) and Pierre Jeanneret's 1956 Gandhi Bhawan auditorium in India. (*below*)

Vanicka Arora, Associate Architect, DROHAH



Photo by Jack Atley, courtesy of Sydney Opera House Trust.



The GCI team did a lot of scientific analysis and talked to other custodians of Kahn buildings to see what their experience had been. “We looked at the drawings and disassembled a couple of units to discover the root of the problem,” Macdonald recalls. “Then we discovered that the fungus came from the seeds of eucalyptus trees, so we were never going to avert the threat without cutting down all the eucalyptus trees in La Jolla. It was disfiguring but not destructive and happened only in combination with water. What could we do? Kahn had used old-growth teak from Burma, which was far harder and more durable than any plantation wood, but it was no longer available. The best material you could get was sitting on the building—so it made

sense to keep as much as possible and re-engineer it to keep water off. In the end we added a coating that wears off naturally and the flashings Kahn had specified. A few frames were falling apart and had to be replaced, but in the end seventy percent of the teak was retained.” Now attention has shifted to the impact of salt air on the concrete.

The Modernism Initiative is an ideal complement to other Getty programs. Its Research Institute has acquired the archives of leading Los Angeles modernists and architectural photographer Julius Shulman. And the Getty Foundation has just completed the sixth annual round of grants that aid the restoration of modern landmarks from the Gateway Arch

in St. Louis to Oscar Niemeyer’s Museum of Lebanon and the Cuban Art Schools.

“There’s a perception that modern architecture is too hard to deal with and we don’t know what to do or how to do it,” says Macdonald. “If we can show the way and let people see how marvelous these places are after they’ve been conserved, it demonstrates that these buildings are viable, exciting and infinitely usable. We should keep what we can without throwing it away before we understand its significance.” ●

[getty.edu/conservation](http://getty.edu/conservation)

LIKE THE MOST GRATIFYING MEALS, THE SUB-ZERO, WOLF,  
AND COVE SHOWROOM APPEALS TO ALL OF THE SENSES.



Taste, touch, and see the true potential for your kitchen. From appliance test-drives to chef-led demos, we invite you to explore our products with all of your senses engaged.



SHOWROOM

**Sub-Zero, Wolf, and Cove Showroom - Costa Mesa**

subzero.com/southerncalifornia • 657-269-5874 • 655 Anton Blvd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Select Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.





Text by Christina Binkley / Photography by Lisa Romerein

# MIRAMAR MIRACLE

*Opposite and above:*  
The Rosewood Miramar Beach resort, which opened in February, occupies 16 acres of oceanfront property in Montecito.

## RICK CARUSO'S LEGENDARY MONTECITO PROPERTY REOPENS AS A WORLD-CLASS CALIFORNIA RESORT

# R

ick Caruso has a story to share. It begins in the 1930s, with a New England family summering in a beachside Montecito manor for which they commissioned the renowned architect Paul Williams. Over the years the stately stone home expanded, with two wood clapboard wings and cottages for vis-

itors. The family loved to entertain and equipped their home accordingly, with a Founder's Suite and seven adjoining bedrooms. They played shuffleboard by the beach and bocce ball on the lawn. "This was a fun family that loved having a lot of people over in the manor bar and on the veranda," says Caruso.



*Above:*  
The Miramar's signature pink coach awaits guests at the front entrance.

*Opposite, clockwise from top left:*  
A seating area in the living room; the foyer staircase is an original Paul Williams design; Malibu Farms café; a classically detailed hallway.

This is pure fantasy, of course—an elaborate backstory that Caruso imagined, using his own family as a model, as he created the 161-room Miramar Beach resort, which welcomed its first guests in February. It is the renowned retail developer's first hotel property but not, he says, his last.

The Miramar occupies a beloved place in Montecito memory. The rustic former hotel, which began in 1889 when a local resident built a cottage for visitors (the original Miramar was shuttered in 2000 and is now demolished), had a beach club with grandfathered lifetime memberships for some locals. Hoteliers Ian Schrager and Ty Warner tried and failed to obtain approvals to rebuild the resort, but Caruso wended his way through the environmental and architectural reviews and postponements that delayed the opening until now. He has preserved those beach club memberships and lifted the resort's aspirations to world class.

Water in the two swimming pools is salted and treat-

ed with ozone and ultraviolet light. Retail shops include Goop and James Perse. Luxe Art Deco-style light fixtures—and a great number of other details—are nickel plated. There's a Caruso's fine dining restaurant by the beach (the chef is Massimo Falsini) and a café by Malibu Farms. Closet drawers in the guest rooms are lined in cedar. Every room, public and private, has a terrace, balcony or garden space.

The hand-painted chinoiserie avian wallpaper in the private dining room and the manor's ladies' room is from renowned de Gournay (two valuable rolls went missing during construction, never to be found). Even the spark arrestors atop the chimneys were custom designed by Caruso's longtime in-house architect, Dave Williams, who also designed a custom wrought-iron loading-dock door—a detail few guests are likely to see. A 24-hour guard escorts patrons across a railroad track that traverses the 16-acre property—an old-school way to solve the tricky problem of trains slicing between the beach and the hotel.





“We’re breaking every rule,” says Caruso.  
“I don’t want to do what everyone else does.”

*Above:*  
The Miramar’s rear façade is set off against the mountains of Montecito.

*Opposite top:*  
The scallop-edged pool was inspired by a Paul Williams design at the Arrowhead Springs Hotel in San Bernardino.  
*Opposite bottom, left and right:*  
Cabanas at the Miramar’s two pools.

Caruso made his name building Southern California shopping malls—notably the Grove in Los Angeles and most recently Palisades Village in Pacific Palisades—with a Disney-esque devotion to creating happiness. On the side, Caruso is a civic leader, contemplating a run for mayor of Los Angeles (that could still happen) and currently serving in the hot seat as chairman of the University of Southern California board of trustees as the school responds to a series of administrative scandals.

Caruso dives with relish into nitty details like the texture of tile grout, and that attention shows in the Miramar’s finishes, which exude grandeur but hide any sense of newness. “This really is the home that I’ve always wanted to build,” he says, seated in the manor’s ballroom beneath eight lavish Baccarat chandeliers.

Caruso says he has always wanted a home designed by Paul Williams, and he has achieved bits of that at the Miramar. A scallop-edged pool was inspired by a Paul Williams design at the long-forgotten Arrowhead Springs Hotel in San Bernardino. And from Williams’s granddaughter Caruso obtained penciled plans—hand drawn and signed by Williams—for the grand staircase and intricate wrought-iron balustrade that rises by the Miramar’s entrance. “That staircase, he designed,” Caruso says. “That railing!”







Caruso hired the Otto Ehmg Painting Co. to age the ironwork with varnishes and wax in keeping with the manor's backstory. "Rick says he wants something aged but not worn and torn and abused," says Phil Becker, one of the Otto Ehmg painters. Even details that guests are unlikely to see—such as the loading-dock door—were custom designed for maximum effect.

Interior designer Diane Johnson created custom furnishings based on the deep-comfort furnishings she has delivered in the past for Caruso's west-side Los Angeles home as well as his 65.5-meter yacht, the *Invictus*. She is responsible for some of the manor's key moments, including the starkly grand foyer's black-and-white checkerboard stone tile and a quiet concierge and reception area where guests can get their keys without check-in lines. Plush chairs in an eclectic variety of colors—gold, turquoise, prints and leather—are placed in nooks and corners throughout the spaces in a variety of styles—low backs, high backs and loungers with deep pillows, selected in accordance with Caruso's wish to create the feel of a home whose furnishings were added over time, with an English-Georgian backdrop of wood paneling, marble flooring and a scattering of antiques. "Then we brought the décor into the vibe of today," the designer adds.

Johnson commissioned custom furnishings, adding Nancy Corzine side tables and lamps in the living room. She furnished a sweeping veranda with Janus et Cie

*Above and opposite top:*  
A seaside guest room offers a balcony overlooking the Pacific.

*Opposite below:*  
A sitting area in one of the Miramar's cottage suites.





outdoor furniture and made the vast ballroom grand with dramatic Baccarat chandeliers. She also designed the Founder's Suite, one of three signature suites in the manor house where resort executives say they hope a royal family could be equally at home as the Caruso family.

Seeking a residential feel, Caruso ignored the practical rules of hotel décor, opting for white and pale-blue furnishings in several rooms, which will require constant cleaning and replacement. "We're breaking every rule, because I'm not a hotel," Caruso says. "I'm welcoming people to my home. I don't want to do what everyone else does."

In point of fact, though, it is Rosewood Hotels & Resorts that will be welcoming people to the Miramar as its manager. The hotel group is known for properties such as the recently renovated Hôtel de Crillon in Paris, the Carlyle in New York and the Mansion at Turtle Creek in Dallas. (After a recent stay at the Crillon, Caruso says he recruited the head butler to move to the Miramar.)

*Above and opposite:*  
Bocce courts are placed near the one-story cottage suites, which are accented with outdoor lounge areas and fire pits.





*Bottom left:*  
The outdoor deck at Caruso's restaurant.

*Above:* Caruso's blue-leather booths and lacquered walls set the tone for chef Massimo Falsini's cuisine.



*Top left and right:*  
The maître d' and the bartender at Caruso's.

*Bottom left and right:*  
The Manor Bar and the library room.





*This page and left.*  
The Miramar Beach Bar evokes the deck of a luxury yacht.



Caruso has also hired Ali Kasicki, the legendary former director of the Peninsula Beverly Hills and other area luxury hotels. Kasicki's knowledge of the personal druthers of social and business elites is possibly without equal. He knows when to keep a secret and what they like for breakfast. "Rick is building the Taj Mahal," Kasicki says, with typical hyperbole. "Other people cut corners. Not Rick."

The level of Caruso-family detail embedded at the Miramar could make for a scavenger hunt. There is the Caruso family crest in a leaded-glass window—a crest that Rick Caruso had created. "The family history was a very poor family in a very poor town in Italy," he says, noting that his grandfather emigrated from Reggio Calabria in the toe of Italy's boot and became a Pennsylvania coal miner before heading for California. His grandfather's later landscaping career inspired the Miramar's gardens. There's a laughing Buddha statue with four Caruso children climbing on it, a wind vane with the kids' initials, and a favorite quote from each child inlaid in brass on the stone veranda.

Caruso, who is not an art collector, has nonetheless scattered art pieces throughout the Miramar. "I did want a Botero in the bar," he says. "It's a little bit irreverent—like me." ●

**Rosewood Miramar Beach**  
1759 South Jameson Lane, Montecito  
[rosewoodhotels.com](http://rosewoodhotels.com)





*Above:*  
Fashion designer  
Tracy Feith's  
Instagram  
self-portrait.

*Right and opposite:*  
Feith's Instagram  
feed highlights  
his new designs.



*Text by* Christina Binkley

# FEITH CLUB

A FASHION VETERAN REINVENTS HIMSELF WITH  
SUMMERY DRESSES—AND A BUZZY INSTAGRAM FEED



A coquettish dress has been making its way around Southern California—a floral print with a neckline that flatters the collarbones more than the cleavage, a slim waist and full puffs of sleeves that underscore the trends of 2019. This maximal sweet dress is a head-turner on actresses such as Olivia Wilde and Mandy Moore. Its designer shouldn't be a surprise, but he is: Thirty years after he launched his career in New York, Tracy Feith has upended his work and turned it into a passion project. His new brand is called Feith Club, and it's supposed to be a badly kept secret. As its Instagram headline warns, "The first rule of Feith Club...don't talk about Feith Club." But people will talk.

Tracy Feith's new venture takes every seasonless, direct-to-consumer, limited-edition-drop trend and distills it to its purest form of art. The venture started when he sewed a dress—yes, Feith is the unusual fashion designer who actually can sew—and posted it on Instagram. The BonBon dress bore a large bow at the neck to accent its wearer as a gift. A willing follower direct-messaged him to buy it. Soon Feith was designing dresses at a table in his Los Feliz Craftsman home studio, manufacturing them at a factory in L.A., selling them via Instagram and accepting payment via Venmo. "It was the simplest," says Feith. "Really, all I can do on a computer is look up email."

Feith formerly owned a handful of stores, showed on New York runways and worked so hard in the nineties that he remembers hallucinating after going a week without sleep. Burn-out was followed by a move to L.A., where he designed for Toms. He became disenchanted with the fashion system.

"The machine that's been going for so long is really breaking down," Feith notes. "You show the clothes six months early. By the time you can actually wear the clothes, they're on sale." He watched his former clients turn to vintage shops to avoid the quantities of identical clothes being produced by fashion brands. "It's made vintage important because they're not going to see themselves coming and going," says Feith.

As his brand began to take off Feith hired photographers, then shot extra photos on his iPhone for himself. "Eventually, to be honest, I liked a lot

of my photos better," he says. There is a touching organic quality to the images Feith uploads to his @FeithClub Instagram feed. Some of the faces may look familiar, but he likely won't mention that the model is an actress, like Wilde, or the singer Allie Crow Buckley. You can figure that out for yourself. Or not. The model could also be a stranger from Minneapolis. "I welcome people to send me pictures," says Feith. "I love posting them. I don't care who they are."

Feith Club is already growing up a bit. In April Feith launched a website built around the naiveté of his Instagram images. He has a minuscule retail footprint (Capitol's outpost in Brentwood and Tenet in Southampton, New York, sell his goods). "It's lean and mean for me," Feith says. "I'm not interested in having a lot of stuff around. I don't aspire to be the next Calvin Klein or even Ralph Lauren. I kind of prefer to be James Galanos. He had a great following and was well respected."

Galanos or not, Feith is fully modern and once again full of ideas. "I should start making men's shirts again," he says. "I started with men's shirts and people loved them. I can do pajamas. I've always wanted to do that without a big campaign!"

Oh, by the way, Feith is also gearing up to offer bridesmaids and second-wedding dresses—versions of his coquette styles in off-white but, well, chic. Just DM him @FeithClub. Or for the old-school method, there's now [www.FeithClub.com](http://www.FeithClub.com). ●





Text by Kelly Vencill Sanchez / Photography by Sam Frost



# CHARACTER STUDY

JEAN DE MERRY AND  
CHRISTIAN DARNAUD-MAROSELLI'S  
HOUSE OF MEMORIES

*Above:*  
Jean de Merry (left) and Christian Darnaud-Maroselli,  
who founded the design brand Jean de Merry.

*Left:*  
The living room features a leather sofa and club  
chairs by Jean de Merry and a Lindström rug;  
bronze vessel by Patricia Roach.





*Opposite, clockwise from top left:* A Heijden Hume Metro table and Jean de Merry Brinco light fixture in the hallway; a sculpture by Lester Weise and a small artwork by Marco Lorenzetto in the living room; the remodeled kitchen; pieces by Rafael Buñuel above a custom sofa and 1960s lamp by Rougier in the study.

*Above:* Paintings by Jeffrey Long in the dining room. The Sitz chairs were designed by Jean de Merry; the ceiling fixture is one of the brand's signature pieces. Hubert Le Gall wall sconce, at left; 1920s sculpture by Katumo.

The poolside studio at the Los Angeles home of Jean de Merry and Christian Darnaud-Maroselli is a telling portrait of their work and passions. Filled with books, art, bespoke furnishings and flea-market finds, the lofty space is at once inviting and fascinating, not least because of the mural that stretches across one wall, whimsically chronicling the couple's lives and travels over their 22 years together.

"It's not a house for display," says de Merry, as a black-and-white cat wanders in, demanding attention. He picks up a turn-of-the-century carved chicha cup that he bought in Peru and runs his fingers around the jagged rim. "One of the dogs chewed it." He shrugs. "This is a house of love, not a house of value. What is here are memories."

Those memories are seamlessly connected to the couple's fine furnishings firm, Jean de Merry, which they launched in Los Angeles in 2001 after living in France and England. At first they specialized in French antiques but soon began turning out their own Deco-inflected designs, including a line of hand-dyed and aged-leather seating inspired by the tanning business de Merry's family operated for four centuries in France. The company has expanded to encompass luxury case goods, lighting and decorative arts as well as furniture, textile and carpet lines by Natasha Baradaran, Jean-Louis Deniot, Kimberly Denman, Philip Nimmo, Peggy Platner, Erik Lindström and others.

Tucked behind a tall hedge on a quiet street, the house is an easy drive from both the Jean de Merry



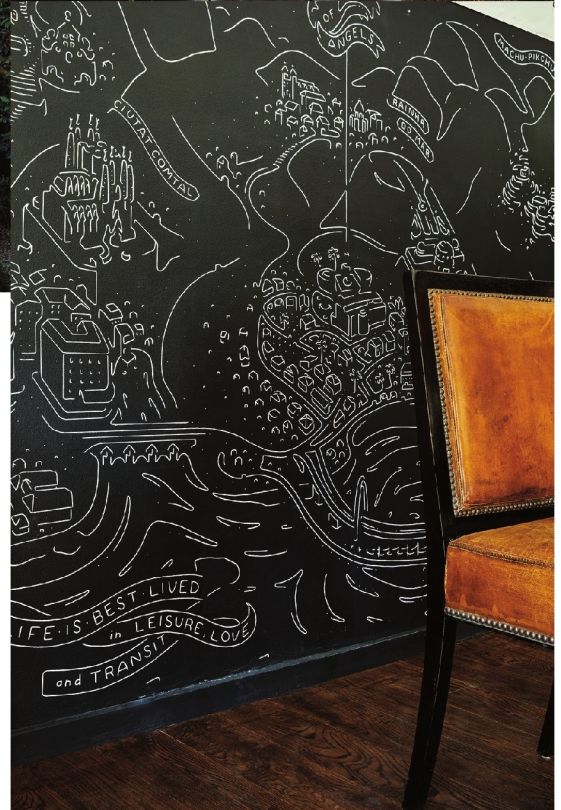
showroom at the Pacific Design Center (there are also Jean de Merry showrooms in New York, Chicago and Dallas) and the firm's Los Angeles factory. They found it 18 years ago, when they unexpectedly had to move from their apartment in Marina del Rey and Darnaud-Maroselli announced he'd found a Koreatown rental. Unsure about the neighborhood, de Merry was skeptical until he learned the house had a pool. They set out for a look, and after peering through the 1927 Dutch Colonial's windows, they contacted the landlord.

They rented the place for four years before convincing the owner to sell it to them. "The day after we bought it we started to realize it needed a lot of work," de Merry says wryly. Their first order of business was redoing the pool and transforming the large rear garden—planting orange, lemon and olive trees along with clusters of fragrant lavender. "I wanted it to be a haven since we spend so much time at home working," says Darnaud-Maroselli.



*Opposite and these pages:*

A former garage now serves as an office and studio, with French doors that open to the pool area. The mobile is by Karl Zahn; a mural by Aidan Sakarya details significant places and events in the couple's lives.



The studio, formerly a garage that briefly served as the Jean de Merry atelier, was opened to the rafters and outfitted with French doors on two sides. When the weather is nice, they're left open while the couple works at the long library table, which holds sculptures, stacks of magazines and paperwork for the business as well as boxes of research for de Merry's latest novel (his previous works were published in France under the name Jean-Claude Libourel). Designing, he observes, is much like writing. "You design a chandelier and you start square and it ends up oblong and you don't know why—something in the design brought you to a certain shape. Writing a character is the same."

They went on to redo the kitchen and bathrooms, install oak floors and turn a porch upstairs into a feline rec room. French doors at the back of the house open to a covered terrace, where at any given moment you'll find one or more of the couple's beloved rescues—the current total is three dogs and 10 cats.

*Bottom:*  
A bedroom features an artwork by Clamdigin; the shelving was designed by Oliver Furth for Jean de Merry. *Below:* A bathroom with a Jean de Merry light fixture.

*Right:*  
The couple refurbished the pool and planted orange, lemon and olive trees. The Schindler sling chair is from Marmol Radziner. "I wanted it to be a haven since we spend so much time at home working," says Darnaud-Maroselli.

The house continues to evolve. Last year Darnaud-Maroselli commissioned French artist Aidan Sakarya to paint the studio's mural, which details everything from the couple's astrological signs to places they've lived, including Corsica, where Darnaud-Maroselli was born, and Paris, where he and de Merry met. And a few months ago, Darnaud-Maroselli oversaw a refresh of the interiors. "For years we lived with dark gray walls, and everything was very masculine," he explains. "I wanted to change the energy and make the rooms less cluttered and brighter."

There's a casually collected quality to the rooms, where everything is used, from the worn Jean de Merry leather sofa in the living room—a favorite perch for the dogs—to the dining room table that de Merry fashioned from an industrial metal base. Displayed throughout are sculptures and artworks, like the Rafael Buñuel prints in the TV room and the tribal-themed paintings by Jeffrey Long in the dining room.

"It's like being in a Parisian apartment, but with a private oasis in the middle of Los Angeles," says Darnaud-Maroselli. De Merry agrees. "Every time we've thought about moving someplace bigger, we come back and say, Why would we want to start again somewhere else? Our soul is here." ●





An installation view of *Lauren Halsey: we still here, there, 2018*.  
Photo by Zak Kelley.  
Courtesy of The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.



Text by Michael Slenske / Photography by Russell Hamilton

# LAUREN HALSEY'S LIQUID BLACK DREAMS

THE L.A. ARTIST IS FUNKATIZING THE INTERNATIONAL ART WORLD

In her first year at the Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies (LACES) in Faircrest Heights, Lauren Halsey distinctly remembers driving back home to South Central L.A. one afternoon in 1999 with her father, an accountant and avowed Funkateer, as he cued up Parliament Funkadelic's "Aqua Boogie (A Psychoalphadiscobetabioaquadoloop)" and, as Halsey recalls, "It just changed everything."

"It was a million shortcuts, my father does not take any main boulevards or avenues, he prides himself on being the *Thomas Guide* for Los Angeles—the human map—so driving from LACES or wherever back to South Central was always residential streets my entire life, the grand tour," says Halsey, who had heard the seven-minute hit single on P-Funk's seminal 1978 album *Motor Booty Affair* on more than one occasion. But on that day, despite the car sickness,

the song offered some strange epiphanic salve. "Maybe I was quiet and we weren't talking or I was just open to what he was playing—he always played the same music—but for whatever reason, that day I was ready for 'Aqua Boogie.' It was a cartoon. This dream, liquid, black world, and it was just beautiful...dancing underwater and not getting your hair wet."

As a dappled smear of March sunshine bleeds through a mountain of storm clouds for the first day in weeks, Halsey sifts through the "archive" she's assembled over the past decade inside a makeshift studio carved out of a detached garage behind her Grandma Ida's home in South Central. Halsey, now 32, lived in a tiny bedroom built in the back of this cramped L-shaped workspace as a college student. And it was from this garage that she propelled her distinctively liquid Afro-futurist dreamscape into some of the top art schools (CalArts, Yale),

galleries (David Kordansky, Charlie James, Jeffrey Deitch), institutions (The Studio Museum in Harlem, L.A.'s Museum of Contemporary Art and Hammer Museum, Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris) and collections in the international art world.

The success of her funky operatic oeuvre is as much about form as it is content, perhaps because the inscrutability of Halsey's work is matched only by its universality and desirability. Her architectonic sculptural objects and environments merge hieroglyphs and rap lyrics, Home Depot materials and modernist (even fabulist) architecture, black space and museum space, with a seamless hand-built aesthetic that feels like P-Funk's sonic cosmology carved itself into the Temple of Dendur by way of South Central.

"It's a profound and inspiring experience, the way she's physicalizing relationships to her

family and her community in sculptural and architectural form,” says David Kordansky, who met Halsey when she was still an undergrad at CalArts and signed her to his blue-chip roster after seeing her solo show at MOCA and *The Crenshaw District Hieroglyph Project (Prototype Architecture)*, which was awarded the \$100,000 Mohn Award as the standout work of the Hammer Museum’s *Made In L.A.* biennial last year.

Hewn from more than 600 bas-relief gypsum panels carved with street tags, bodybuilder silhouettes, Air Jordan logos, motherships, signage for black-and brown-owned business, pharaonic and vernacular black architecture, P-Funk and G-Funk icons, the names of gun (and/or police) violence victims and moments of black excellence, the epic installation is meant to serve as a temple-sized template for a forthcoming permanent 3,000-plus panel monument in South Central. Complete with rain features and an oculus, the structure memorializes, historicizes and ultimately familiarizes the idiosyncrasies of the neighborhood and does so by incorporating these tropes into hand-carved panels that form the building blocks of an Egypto-modernist structure that may run in tandem with *Destination Crenshaw*, a historic 1.3-mile “public art and streetscape design” project scheduled to open in 2020. Though projects like this take years, once it’s finally complete, Halsey’s structure may very well set her on a career path on par with other international architecturally curious art stars Ai Weiwei, Theaster Gates or Christo. That is if she’s not on that path already.

“For me she’s like her generation’s Rachel Harrison, and Rachel Harrison was my generation’s Bruce Nauman, and that’s literally the lineage I see her in—Nauman, Harrison, Halsey,” says Helen Molesworth, who was chief curator at MOCA when she commissioned Halsey’s epic plaster grotto installation *we still here, there*, which took up an entire gallery at the museum’s Grand Avenue building last spring. The funkified Gesamtkunstwerk, which *Times* critic Christopher Knight compared to signature works by Mike Kelley and Mark Bradford—“Halsey’s deft installation blends delightful improv with eloquent formal rigor”—was made in modular sections in her grandmother’s backyard with the help of 20 friends and family members, who clipped CDs to create pearlescent grottoes with working waterfalls that were embellished with



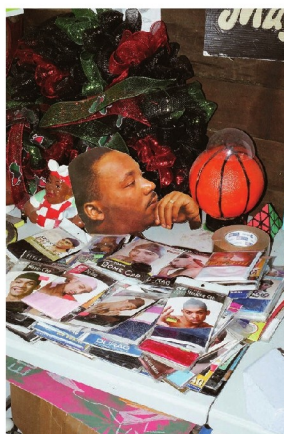
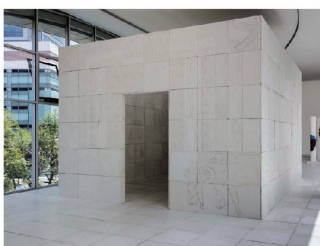
Lauren Halsey amid her archive of images, objects and materials in South Central Los Angeles.

Top right and bottom middle:  
Lauren Halsey sifts  
through her archives  
of black ephemera.

Below right and top middle:  
Lauren Halsey,  
*The Crenshaw District  
Hieroglyph Project  
(Prototype Architecture)*,  
2018;

gypsum, wood, tape and acrylic.  
Photography by Brian Forrest. Courtesy  
of the Hammer Museum and David  
Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles.

Far right, top and bottom:  
Lauren Halsey,  
*that fuss wuz us*, 2018;  
white cement, carpet, foam, wood and  
mixed media; 110 x 49 x 49 inches.  
Photography by Jeff McLane and Lee  
Thompson (detail). Courtesy of David  
Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles.



Colby posters found by Halsey touting black-owned businesses and dream-concert lineups, Black Panther rugs, braids of hair, Ghanaian kente cloth and African American figurines (of basketballers, ballerinas and jazz musicians) in a tropical dreamscape that Halsey says she “wanted to feel like what my [childhood] bedroom was like, this beautiful dream world.”

The title was sampled from Jerry’s Flying Fox, which posted a sign during the restaurant’s renovation that boldly declared: *We Are Still Here*. “I just loved that as a statement, just to underline our resistance,” says Halsey. “No matter how much we’re shuffled around or deleted from neighborhoods, we’re always here in this space. No matter where the *there* is.”

On the heels of her 2018 domination of the L.A. art scene, Halsey has been in constant demand at panel talks, artist dinners and the gala circuit—sometimes as the guest of honor, sometimes as the star DJ—but she tries to limit her circulation as much as possible these days. “I kind of just stay out the way,” says Halsey in her somnambular sotto voce, which never boasts

of any personal achievements, though they are growing by the week. “I’m with my friends every day, or I try to be. I’m not on Instagram, which makes me feel good. I’m not consuming anything. I was before, when no one knew my work existed, now it just feels weird a little bit.”

Despite the social-media blackout, Halsey’s signature style—with her gold-trim glasses and black baseball caps—has set her apart from her contemporaries: she’s instantly recognizable, instantly likeable and yet totally sphynx-like. On the March morning I visit her in South Central she’s wearing a white T-shirt, lug-soled work boots and multi-pocketed motorcycle pants. Her forearms are covered in black bracelets, her ears, nose and bottom lip adorned with golden jewelry. On rare occasions she’ll sport a disco-ready afro, but on most days, including this one, Halsey keeps her locks braided and tucked under one of her black caps embroidered with *Los Angeles*, which she buys by the half dozen at local swap meets or bodegas.

While there’s an armature quality to these decidedly Angeleno ensembles, which often include

L.A.-themed jerseys, they also incorporate what her friend Hammer curator Erin Christovale would call “the shine factor”—via reflective silver jackets or black patent-leather pants. The veneer pays homage to P-Funk while lending credence to this notion that Halsey is a once-in-a-generation artist in need of protection, as so many people interviewed for this article suggested. If she is in need of protection, it’s likely a result of how visibly exhausted she seems of late: 18-to-20-hour work days have become the norm for the past couple years to keep up with the commercial, curatorial and critical demands on her work.

Whereas Lauren Halsey may have circulated as a well-kept secret in years past—a 2017 Kickstarter project allowed collectors to grab massive works relatively inexpensively to support the *Hieroglyph* project—now her name is on the radar of top curators, collectors and other artists across the globe, ones who breathlessly toss out exalted terms like *special*, *pure*, *genius*, even *messiah*, when describing her vision—monuments enshrining the harsh realities and beautiful fantasies of black life as it’s lived and experienced every day from South Central to

South Africa—which seems perfectly suited to this fraught moment in our history.

That history is collated like a living taxonomy throughout every layer of the Lauren Halsey archive. Tacked to the walls are flags (of the Black Business School and the Pan-American version of Old Glory, both of which are red, black and green) and posters for beauty salons, church services and the Venus & Serena Williams Tennis Academy. On the tables are stacks of packaged wigs and hair nets; carved and painted gypsum tiles (of golden boom boxes and teal Afro-futurist femme fatales from her first art classes at LACES); a handmade soul-food cookbook from a recently deceased neighbor; rows of mold-formed resin pyramid sculptures filled with clippings from the George Clinton-inspired hairdos that she rocked years ago; and various architectural models, including one of a tiny house wrapped in Louis Vuitton-patterned print beside a vernacular cottage from the neighborhood.

gives them a larger voice and a necessary, enduring presence. In some ways she's the unexpected heir to Mike Kelley."

Such rarefied air is not a place where terms like *beautiful*, *funky* and *gorgeous*—words Halsey repeatedly uses to describe various breakthrough moments in her stratospheric trajectory—are used by young emerging artists poised to be the new avant-gardists of the new establishment. Then again, most artists in that position aren't born and raised (and still living and working and seeking out moments of transcendence) in South Central Los Angeles. Most artists in that position aren't constantly worrying about the "architecture of oppression"; the looming threat of displacement, disempowerment and gentrification; friends and family members being murdered by gang—or random acts of—violence; or their own art being used as a tool, prop or worse to accelerate such displacement and disempowerment. Most artists in that position are less concerned about *selling out* than *getting out of* a precarious home environment. And most art-

holographic jewelry. "I remember thinking, This person is so dope," she says. "She had all these neon bracelets that said *Parliament* all over them up her arm, and she was really into the holograms and bought a few. We hung out a few times after that, then I didn't see her for a few years until a mutual friend exhibited her incense collection as an artwork. It was about the names of these incenses, like Obama Magic or Oprah's Money, and for her, part of her practice is about showing the brilliance of the black community in L.A. I was totally struck by it: this conceptual gesture hinting at a collective brilliance."

For Halsey, the raw material of any such collective brilliance was triggered in many ways by her formative years, especially in her bedroom (aka "the kick-it spot for everyone on my street") or riding in cars with her father, cousins or grandmother. "Always being a passenger my entire life," says Halsey, raised her awareness of the material and structural disparities between her school environment—from the Montessori grade school she

## Her environments merge hieroglyphs and rap lyrics, Home Depot materials and modernist architecture.

"I see everything that I make as models for things looking forward," says Halsey, picking up the tiny logo-stamped home, which riffs on an IV-wrapped Buick that can often be seen cruising the streets of downtown L.A. "When I made that I imagined I would make this Louis Vuitton home next to this regular home and that would be some kind of cosmology I would create."

More cosmologies unfold across the floor, where porcelain cheetahs from her grandmother's collection stand watch over Halsey's foil-and-foam-core sculptural panels that echo the set designs from P-Funk concerts. The shelves are lined with bottles of exotic incenses and oils (think Royal Chill and Nose Candy), with gradient posters of Halsey's design asking: *Why Don't WE Own Businesses in the Hood?*

"The materiality of this practice, at once archaeological and otherworldly, is evocative and refreshing and pertinent," adds Kordansky. "I'm also drawn to way she takes the provincial, a very specific set of cultural references, and

ists in that position—especially those ascendant thirtysomethings—aren't typically burdened by the responsibility of their work speaking for and about their communities to a global audience. Then again, most artists aren't Lauren Halsey.

"The stakes in Lauren's work are high, and she's not using art to get out of the hood, it's real," says Molesworth. "Lauren has never asked for approval, and that's the power of her work," adds Erin Christovale, who co-curated last year's *Made in L.A.* biennial at the Hammer. "She's this pure person who has stuck to the aesthetics and ideals that her work is about, and I think that's super rare."

Long before Christovale was a curator at the Hammer she was working on a fashion project called the Coven, and it was during that period that she first met Halsey, who was studying art and architecture at El Camino College. Their paths crossed at a fashion pop-up where Christovale was selling her

attended in Westchester to her days at CalArts in Valencia—and that of her own neighborhood.

"I always knew what it meant to be driving back home to South Central and entering the neighborhood and what those visual cues were, what the materials started to look like, what the signs started to look like, what cladding on buildings looked like as opposed to the buildings in Santa Monica or Studio City or the hills," says Halsey, fidgeting with the two gold Nefertiti studs facing off against each other in her right earlobe. "It was very aggressive stuff—the handmade signage, the rules for going into a mini market that criminalize me and I'm not even a criminal. *No Drugs. No Drug Dealing. No Washing Your Car on the Premises.* All these threats just to go buy a piece of candy. Never would I see that on Melrose or at the Grove, where I would go every Friday after school to hang out. So I always felt shitty and disempowered. But hanging out with my friends and the way we took up space in our neighborhood—we were always on the bike, always on the street—I would find all these moments of beauty, and those would butt up

against all the other aggressive architectural stuff. It wasn't ever, *I hate being here, I hate living here*. It was more like, *Who is making these decisions?*"

One day soon the answer to that question may well be Lauren Halsey, but art-world stardom was probably the furthest thing from her mind growing up in South Central. With a preschool teacher for a mother, Halsey and her brother had all kinds of art materials as kids, but her childhood dream, she says, "was to get recruited by Pat Summitt," referring to the legendary coach of the University of Tennessee Lady Vols basketball team. (Her cousin, Arron Afflalo, is the journeyman NBA player for teams like the New York Knicks and Sacramento Kings.) Throughout high school, she adds, "I was put in an amazing situation when I was playing elite-level basketball."

A scandal involving the basketball coach and a player in a club league caused the team to be disbanded, however, and Halsey was left searching for "something expressive, because basketball had been my art for my entire life," she says of her decision to enroll in art classes. "I got really lucky because I had this amazing teacher, Louie Bruce, and he was just a magnet for me, so much so that I would spend my lunch hanging out with him listening to his Eddie Murphy impressions." The second assignment was carving the same gypsum panels she uses today.

"I just liked the intensity of committing to a line," says Halsey, tracing the grooves of an early carving atop a table in the garage. "And then I grew up with my father riffing off of ancient Egypt all the time, stuff about bloodline and fantasies of origin like Afro-futurist stuff I didn't even know yet."

What she did know was that by the time she graduated from LACES, the prep academy once attended by Leonardo DiCaprio, she didn't want to try to figure out the direction of her life while paying university tuition, so she decided to take a wide range of classes—in sculpture, printmaking, bronze casting and digital photography—at El Camino community college. "I just wanted to continue to follow this feeling I would get in my heart when I was carving," says Halsey. "I didn't

know I would use the ethics and codes of P-funk into art and-space-making, I just knew it was in my heart, I'm a Funkateer. I had no idea it would turn into a whole art practice where I was trying to funkitize L.A., as George says, 'To save a dying world from its funklessness.'"

At the time Halsey was still living at her parents' house, where she transformed her room into an early prototype of one of her environmental installations. "Everything was a vibe," says Emmanuel Carter, a friend of Halsey's for more than two decades, about those early artistic collaborations in the artist's grotto-esque bedroom. These days Carter is the lead assistant on all Lauren Halsey projects, and this afternoon he and the artist's longtime girlfriend Monique McWilliams, a fashion stylist who doubles as Halsey's project manager, are in the process of helping her transfer the archive to her first proper studio in a former beauty supply shop in South Central.

Halsey argues that because her parents let her have free reign as a child and because she was the first person on her block to have an iMac, friends like Carter were always in her room writing rap lyrics and recording them over beats while she made collages. One wall was filled with cut-outs from old issues of *Vibe* magazine, while another—coated with chalkboard paint—was constantly being tagged. The space was illuminated with party lights in all different hues. "I remember when I put the foil on the walls my dad was like, 'What's wrong with you?'" recalls Halsey. "But it was Parliament Funkadelic, it was shiny, it was from outer space. I remember at one point I had a park bench in there."

"I remember that park bench," says Carter with a laugh. In many ways Halsey's group-fueled practice—one that enlists friends and family like Carter, McWilliams and her cousins or grandmother as collaborators/fabricators—started in that bedroom.

Halsey also got some early encouragement from her aunt, the former *Times* staff writer Jocelyn Y. Stewart, who enlisted her niece to

make sets for the plays she penned for a church Grandma Ida helped build. Stewart introduced Halsey to Angeleno artist Dominique Moody, who suggested she study architecture. What began with elevations and blueprints at El Camino graduated into complicated computer renderings during a year-long odyssey at the California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

"What I loved was drafting by hand, it was the best thing ever, and then once I transferred to CCA it was the total opposite," says Halsey, who took early inspiration from Archigram and *The Continuous Monument*. Superstudio's speculative drawings of a white gridded utopian monolith intended to bring "cosmic order on earth." Though she got a chance to create her own "wonder worlds" in "crazy wild rendering programs," it became very obvious very quickly that these proposals could never exist in a place like South Central because they "would just be about form, never about class and race or the way cities and neighborhoods work for real people," she says, adding: "The experience was beautiful, but I didn't feel full."

After transferring back to El Camino, her community college mentor Paul Gellman prodded Halsey to apply to CalArts, which she did. To her own surprise, she was accepted. "When I got there it was just culture shock," says Halsey, who would beg her cousin to pick her up so she could go home—45 miles from Valencia to South Central—as much as possible throughout the week. "I had never been in a space like that. It was too much freedom. The first day I was there with my dad and my brother—and this is relative and not radical, but at the moment it felt crazy—the Gamelan Band was walking around naked. My dad was like, 'This is the school you signed up for?' I didn't even know what an art school was, but after a while it became really beautiful."

Despite this new offering of beautiful moments, Halsey was back home every weekend. On Mondays her aunt or grandmother would drive her to McDonald's for coffee and hash browns at 6:30 AM, then make the trek to Valencia in time for Michael Ned Holte's art history class at 9:30. "I was supposed to stay there all week, but

"I think blackness is universal, so I'm interested in making connections with Los Angeles to Harlem to Miami to Paris."

I couldn't, I just couldn't, so I would come home and then take the bus back and make these drawings," says Halsey, who set about archiving the neighborhood over the ensuing two years. "All the nuances would just get marked in the drawing—there's a new gang tag; oh, they painted over it; oh, they got a new sign or new vendors. I would stop once it wasn't South Central anymore because it wasn't interesting to me."

In addition to the drawings, which were layered on newsprint and might now be considered two-dimensional studies for the carved panels, Halsey began remapping the neighborhood with fictional blueprints for blocks that didn't exist: think the South Central Sphinx, which she recently acquired, next door to her favorite swap meet next door to her favorite vendor, with gang tags in the color of her choosing.

At CalArts Halsey also began incorporating her friends and family into her work. She would take her cousin's digital camera after she went out to parties—"I don't think she even knows this now," laughs Halsey—and upload all of the photos of her cousin's friends into her archives. Later she staged photos with Carter and others acting as if they were jumping into cars, walking up a pyramid or dribbling a basketball, "just to get the motion," she says.

An early fan of her work was Naima J. Keith, the newly appointed vice president of education and public programs at LACMA, who first met Halsey on a tour of her studio at CalArts while doing research for a survey show at the Studio Museum of Harlem. "We went to meet with the graduate students, but Charles Gaines said we should also meet with Lauren," says Keith. "She was super cool, calm and collected and nervous on the inside, which she told us later. But the clarity about what she wanted to do and how she wanted her practice to function was apparent even back then, how she wanted to integrate the eclectic parts and characters of the community into her work. She was just gathering all these stories."

As she neared graduation, a professor suggested she apply to Yale's MFA program, and she surprised herself again by getting accepted with her blueprints and drawings. In New Haven she turned her studio into a precursor to her plaster and burlap grotto forms, which



later materialized in a residency project, *Kingdom Splurge*, at Recess in New York, catching the eye of Molesworth. "She was building the piece in the space, and even though the space was small, the ambition for the work was enormous," recalls Molesworth. "I was drawn to a lot of the formal elements and the labor involved in making handmade architecture out of these impoverished materials. It seemed interesting to me that this young black lesbian was making a fantasmatic space where you could tell secrets, steal a kiss."

The *Kingdom Splurge* series began at Yale and continued after Halsey completed her MFA and earned a spot in the Studio Museum's

2015 residency program, an early incubator for art stars like Njideka Akunyili Crosby and Kehinde Wiley. In many ways *Kingdom Splurge* served as a formalized proof-of-concept test for Halsey's earliest artistic ventures—from her bedroom installations and her LACES carving to her neighborhood archiving at CalArts.

"So much of what is at the core of the hieroglyphs and *Kingdom Splurge* is archiving and creating a space that projects our fantasies alongside history and our everyday," says painter Andy Robert, who was a classmate of Halsey's at CalArts and took part in the 2016 residency program at the Studio Museum. It was in Har-

Above: Halsey (right) with collaborators Monique McWilliams and Emmanuel Carter.

lem where Halsey returned to her first material obsession, the gypsum panel, after watching T-shirt vendors—or as she describes them, “legit pyramid builders/designers/makers in various black alternative theological groups”—out of her studio window as they built human-scale pyramids with Home Depot materials on 125th Street next to their sales tables. “All of these people were engaging their fantasies of Egypt in a way that my father wasn’t,” says Halsey. “His is a headspace, a heart space. They were doing that on top of a very physical response.”

During that period Halsey was also spending a lot of time at the Metropolitan Museum of Art while listening to Sun Ra and P-Funk inside the Temple of Dendur. “That would free me up where it wasn’t about the weight of anything, it was about infinity. So when I’d walk into the Met I’d first listen to *Mothership Connection* and George singing we’ve returned to reclaim the pyramids and it just was like, Okay, now I’m in my fantasy place,” says Halsey. After returning home from New York, Halsey built a float

for the Los Angeles Kingdom Day Parade, the country’s largest MLK parade, which began her team-based process in earnest. She enlisted her grandmother and 20 other friends and family members to recreate signs, businesses and landmarks from the neighborhood for an installation on a 50-foot flatbed. Christovale and Robert helped build (and ride) on the float down Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

Halsey argues that energy is “impossible to replicate with small stand-alone works,” which is why she’d much rather concern herself with building “a park that included temporary showers and housing” rather than the discrete sculptural objects and immersive environments that have turned her into a darling of the international art market. Despite that revelation, Kordansky argues, “The gallery will be instrumental in helping Lauren amplify her vision, connecting her ideas—and her objects—with global audiences. It’s about distribution and building networks, infrastructure and support. It’s also about

contextualizing her work within art history and social history. We want to be a catalyst. The possibilities are limitless.”

That limitlessness will likely be tested once Halsey returns from Paris, where she spent “three intense weeks” this spring installing her first international solo show at Fondation Louis Vuitton. To start the “sampling process,” a Parisian friend took Halsey on a tour of all the shops and neighborhoods of black Paris, where she spent a few days buying things and talking to folks, to accumulate an archive from the French version of the swap meet and 99 Cent stores. Halsey was eager to appropriate those items and juxtapose them with one of her “funk mounds,” smaller versions of the MOCA installation, which debuted last December to great fanfare at Art Basel Miami Beach.

“I truly believe, as all black people do or should, that blackness is universal and homogeneous, so I’m interested in my practice existing in the scale of the diaspora and making connections with Los Angeles to Harlem to Miami to Paris,” says Halsey. “I don’t know what the results will be, but if I can sustain this practice for the rest of my life, I’ll have all of these living archives.”

*Après Paris*, Halsey will also have the opportunity, at least for the next six years of her new lease, to build that archive in her first dedicated studio. The artist spent the better part of March with Carter and McWilliams moving her archive from her grandmother’s garage—in the past year she’s also worked out of makeshift studios at the downtown art-handling facility Art Movement Los Angeles and the penthouse of the Los Angeles Athletic Club—to this new 6,000-square-foot beauty supply shop space in South Central, which she plans to equip with an outdoor garden, basketball court, ping pong table and bonfire pit for her friends.

“Now that we have a place that will be our place, there’s room for experimentation, so I’m super excited to be able to commit to new materials, new ideas, new processes, without having to move out in a month, find the next space and rebuild this energy,” says Halsey. “There will be room for other beautiful moments that we haven’t experienced yet.”

“I’m a Funkateer,” says Halsey. “I had no idea it would turn into a whole art practice where I was trying to funkateize L.A.”



One of those moments may be the opportunity to design a stage for Dr. Funkenstein himself, George Clinton, who came to the Hammer with Red Hot Chili Peppers bassist Flea during the *Made in L.A.* show. After touring him through the installation—"I was just pointing out things like, 'Check that out, it's the cro-nasal sapien.' And he was just like, 'Shit! What?'"—Clinton invited Halsey to watch him play a gig last spring and agreed to collaborate with her on a "funkatized" stage, perhaps for his final concert, which may well go down in the history books as "another vessel in the cosmology."

"I think she's so pure to the point that I think her head is big steps ahead of her skills, and I don't mean skills in the sense of drawing or sculpting or painting but in the ability to execute," says L.A.-based architect Kulapat Yantrasast, who has consulted with Halsey about how she might best manage the workflow and ma-

now excited to invite members of the South Central community to carve parts of GFRC (glass fiber reinforced concrete) panels, the same used on the facade of the Broad museum.

"What's important about the project is that for the first time I'm not the only one authoring the messaging, and so it will be a collaboration with the neighborhood," says Halsey. "There are very vulnerable business practices in the neighborhood, and I have dreams of programming it in a way that's transcendent, but all this stuff costs money."

The grim reality is that while Halsey's project, just like Destination Crenshaw, are community-facing celebrations of the black community, for the black community and by the black community, they may well serve as memorials to a neighborhood—which is constantly fighting back against gentrification—that is

late Grammy-nominated rapper, producer and community activist Nipsey Hussle, the founding creator of Destination Crenshaw, who feverishly worked to "buy back the hood" to prevent against the creep of gentrification. Hussle was shot to death outside his clothing boutique, Marathon Clothing, two days after he and Halsey completed an interview for the Hammer Museum catalogue about her *Made in L.A.* project. After Hussle's death, councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson released a statement that said: "Hussle had a vision of a neighborhood built for and by the sons and daughters of South L.A. During his life, he moved from shadows into the bright hope of freedom and community revitalization."

That may as well be a statement about Lauren Halsey, who like Hussle also intends to stay in South Central and help evolve the grimmer realities of the neighborhood into funkcatized fantasies. In a short but poignant email from



teriality of the South Central monument from an artistic and architectural perspective. "She needs a team who can bring her ideas to fruition," adds Yantrasast. "Because it's impossible for her to have her hands in everything."

Before she met with Yantrasast, Halsey was convinced she alone could carve the thousands of tiles that would go into the Hieroglyph Project, which may take on a new title upon completion, but after doing the calculations based on the Hammer installation timeline, she realized the carving alone would have taken years. That is to say nothing of construction and the extra time it would take to carve into a material that was resistant to the elements and approved for public art and architecture. Halsey, for her part, has (sort of) resigned herself to this reality. She's

no longer inhabited by that community. "It's my nightmare," says Halsey. "I think about it every day and about making projects that somehow aren't the seed or accelerator for displacement. The train is coming, stadiums are here, the destiny is written. I think Destination Crenshaw can only be successful if it transcends being a beautification project. In my dream world the project would allow local business owners to use these city-owned buildings that are vacant so it's about sustaining new and old economy and not just about a new mural and a new structure. It's about dollars in a very tangible way."

Another artist who shared this goal, who remained in South Central—despite his ability to leave for a "better life" somewhere else—was the

Paris, Halsey noted that Hussle—to whom she dedicated a pair of carved columns she made for her Frieze Award exhibition display at the New York art fair in May—was one of her biggest inspirations in terms of black wealth building, black labor, neighborhood pride and "being a true participant in the hood," she wrote. "I can go on 'n on. I framed my entire proposal for The *Crenshaw District Hieroglyph Project* around collaborating with him and his strip mall as a metaphor for designing and building black space/fubu architecture just like he did. I feel robbed. South Central feels robbed. No words can ever explain what we lost and folks outside of South Central will never really understand the weight of who/what we lost. I don't know though. He'd say: 'The marathon continues.'" ●

Above:  
Halsey with collaborators McWilliams,  
Carter and Louis Taylor.



Elysian Landscapes

Text by Steffie Nelson / Portrait by Dominique Vorillon

# ELYSIAN FIELDS

## JUDY KAMEON AND DANA BAUER BALANCE CIVIC, COMMERCIAL AND PRIVATE INTERESTS IN THEIR REMARKABLE LOS ANGELES LANDSCAPES

**F**or Judy Kameon the most important role a garden can fulfill is to create community, so there is a poetic synergy in the fact that her career as a garden designer began almost by chance, in 1996, when she was hosting a pop-up restaurant in her Elysian Park backyard. Hotelier Sean MacPherson was one of her guests, and he was so taken with the terraced oasis she had created from an

empty lot beside her 1920s bungalow that he hired her on the spot to design the landscape for his home. Kameon, who studied fine art at UCLA and is a self-taught landscape designer, founded Elysian Landscapes out of her garage later that year. Her artist's eye for color, texture and shape—and her focus on native and sustainable plants at a time when clipped hedges and expansive lawns were more common—soon attracted a young, creative clientele that included

Sofia Coppola and Mike D. of the Beastie Boys.

From the start, the Santa Monica native (whose late father is the modernist architect Herbert Kameon) was looking at the bigger picture. As a design/build firm, Elysian Landscapes could envision and execute dramatic overhauls of outdoor spaces, creating multi-level environments, built-in seating areas and fire and water features. And when



*Opposite:*  
Elysian Landscapes  
designed the grounds of the  
Parker Palm Springs hotel.

*Right:*  
Judy Kameon (right) and  
Dana Bauer at the Spring  
Street campus they  
landscaped in DTLA.

Kameon realized there was a need for the sorts of elegant, durable, midcentury-modern-inspired furnishings that suited her plantings, she launched the outdoor-furniture company Plain Air with her husband, photographer Erik Otsea, in 1999. “We’d been to the Eames show at LAMCA,” she recalls, “and I was like, I think we should be like Ray and Charles!”

Elysian Landscapes’ current client roster includes major fashion brands, architects and urban developers, yet Kameon’s perfect balance of formality and wildness is maintained at every scale. “There’s this wonderful dialogue that happens between projects,” she observes. “What it boils down to is we’re all people, and that scale doesn’t change whether it’s public or private. How we inhabit a space is still at the scale of a human.”

In 2004, when it came time to grow beyond the secluded backyard dreamscapes Elysian was known for, The Parker Palm Springs, a ten-acre playground (to use Kameon’s word), allowed the firm to make an impact on a grander scale.

Among the bidders for the job, Elysian was the underdog, but the firm’s vision of a variety of linked gardens with different moods and uses was ultimately chosen. Strolling the grounds today, one might come across a date-palm grove with hammocks; cozy seating around fire pits; or a private path lined with fluffy pampas grass and perfumed with lavender and citrus. A central fountain made of bright Moroccan tile was in keeping with the playful spirit of the Parker’s interior designer, Jonathan Adler. At the time Kameon was still new enough to the business that she physically placed all the plants herself. There were thousands of them, and it took her months. “I didn’t know any better,” she says with a laugh, noting that while she still takes a very hands-on approach, nowadays a crew will place the plants and she will make adjustments.

Marc Jacobs came calling in 2005, and that kicked off Elysian’s near-takeover of Melrose Place. The graphic chartreuse-and-orange composition created for the Marc Jacobs store’s courtyard led to a daring design for Balenciaga,

which took inspiration from the space’s “lunar landscape” interior design scheme and a random mention of the film *Blade Runner*—“one of my absolute favorite films of all times,” says Kameon. “I was off and running.” Constructing a sculptural, otherworldly topography with oversize black lava stone, Kameon limited the plant palette to cool, black and metallic varieties such as silver torch cactus, a bronze velvet elephant ear and a pale-green ground cover. Planter shapes mimicked the store’s display cases, with succulents inside instead of handbags.

Down the block, but light years away conceptually, was the California home created for the boho-chic Parisian designer Isabel Marant, who opened her L.A. flagship in 2013. The property was unique—a carriage house with a deep front yard that Kameon had had her sights on for 20 years. “They told me about the project and gave me the address, and I said, I’ll be right there!” she remembers. An existing Chinese elm and an old olive tree were kept, and spiky variegated agave and columnar Mexican fence-

*Right and far right:*  
Plantings at the Platform  
development and Bird  
boutique in Culver City.

*Below:*  
A garden courtyard for the  
Isabel Marant boutique on  
Melrose Place.

*Opposite:*  
An Elysian Landscapes  
garden proposal for the  
City of London.



post cactus added dramatic silhouettes. Riffing on a “California dreaming” vibe, Kameon came up with the idea to create a golden patch in the center of the garden to make it feel dappled with light, with progressively darker, leafier greens toward the perimeter.

In 2012, somewhere between the Balenciaga and Marant projects and shortly after moving into their current Westlake offices—a midcentury Harwell Hamilton Harris building whose proximity to Langer’s delicatessen proved irresistible—architect Dana Bauer joined the firm. Bauer brought a love of the arts, a rigorous intellect and a dedication to ground-level urban engagement that aligned with the direction in which Elysian Landscapes was expanding. Both Bauer and Kameon see the present moment as a golden age for Los Angeles, buoyed by a global awareness of what the city and its environs offer. And that coincides with a growing interest in landscape as it relates directly to architecture. “You can transform your environment completely with vegetation,” Bauer notes. “It feels like a lighter touch. And it’s in sync with our collective consciousness as a society—this longing for nature and the well-being of our planet and our city.”

A Buff, Straub + Hensmen residence in San Marino presented Elysian with the opportunity to draw from the region’s native environment as well as its creative culture. Indigenous plants were incorporated into the flowing design, which reflected the midcentury ethos of indoor/outdoor living, and a garage visible from the main house was used as a canvas for a graphic green roof inspired by the 1960s paintings of Helen Frankenthaler and Morris Louis.



Elysian Landscapes

Completed in 2016, Platform—a high-end shopping and dining destination on the site of a former used-car lot in Culver City—was Elysian Landscapes' first urban-development venture. The Brooklyn-based women's boutique Bird took over a former bindery next to the lot, and since owner Jen Mankins and Kameon are lovers of pattern, the two went to town, reveling in unusual combinations of plants and colors. "I was actually a little bit terrified it was going to look like the crazy clown garden," Kameon admits. "There's fuchsia and stripes, things with polka dots, hard color contrasts. But it totally hangs together, and it definitely pops when you drive down the street."

As it turned out, the landscape had not been taken into consideration when concrete was poured for the walkways and plazas of the rest of the 128,000-square-foot Platform development. But that led to a creative solution: Kameon and her team walked around chalking out shapes on the concrete that were then

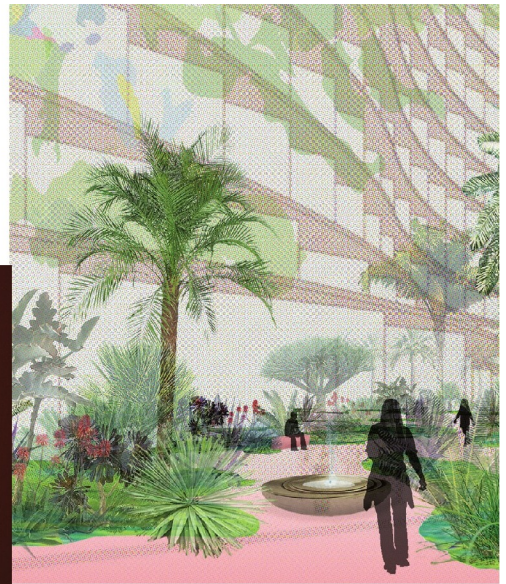
cut with a saw, a process that was "more of an excavation or deconstruction," she says.

For Platform's main planted area there were California live oaks already on site, and these were incorporated into the landscape with a variety of blue yuccas, native succulents and cacti. In another spot they planted a "bamboo alley" to create a lush, leafy arcade. The colorful and exuberant plantings in the cut-outs leading to the parking garage—including rock purslane, which has vibrant fuchsia flowers on thin stems—formed a relationship to Jen Stark's *Technicolor Drip* mural. "Just as they didn't treat the site with one brushstroke, we thought it would be interesting for the landscape to reflect the same idea, changing and evolving as you move into the space," says Kameon.

The Spring Street campus in DTLA—anchored by David Chang's Majordomo restaurant at one corner and mixology mecca Apotheke at another, with creative companies inhabiting the

former warehouses by day—would seem geared toward a similar population: young, sophisticated and creative. Its needs, however, were very different. Given Spring Street's proximity to the L.A. River and the Los Angeles State Historic Park, taking the native ecosystem as a starting point was Elysian's first inclination. But the poor quality of the soil caused by decades of industrial activity at the site made it more pressing to simply determine what would grow there.

"Maybe the soil will become rehabilitated over time as part of the habitat, but our concern was managing the poor condition," says Bauer. Brilliantly colored and resilient palo verde trees now dot the Spring Street campus, while a variety of ground covers and wildflowers add vibrancy. A combination of native fescue grasses was planted along the central thoroughfare, and a stepped concrete platform flanked by paperbark trees offers a casual spot to gather. The planters ringing Majordomo explode with blooming aloe and asparagus fern.



*Left and below left:*  
Elysian Landscapes created an urban garden for the Spring Street campus.

*Above:*  
A design proposal for a new mixed-use tower and hotel in Chinatown.

*Opposite, top and bottom:*  
For a private garden in San Marino, Elysian used native plants and created a green roof over the garage.



As more of L.A.'s urban areas get developed, technology plays a progressively more important role in the landscape, helping to monitor water usage and providing solutions for planting on top of a structure without adding excessive weight. "You're very rarely planting into the ground anymore," says Bauer. "You're planting into a podium. So then you're in this world of, What's the lightest-weight soil? What will grow in twelve inches of soil? What will grow in six inches?"

While each Elysian project has its unique identity, there are also through-lines linking them, and in some cases—as the firm's gardens spread across the city block by block—physical connectivity. Bauer notes that Spring Street is one of several projects within walking distance of a new Chinatown development whose mission includes amenities for the public instead of just for tenants and patrons.

Spanning almost an entire city block, the Chinatown project will include a hotel and a residential tower, designed by Studio Gang, and 45,000 square

feet of open exterior space, thanks to the owner's commitment to providing balanced amounts of indoor and outdoor space. For the towers, Elysian decided to turn the modernist ideal of indoor/outdoor living on its side, quite literally, and create balcony gardens that cascade down the edifices—working in concert with nature and gravity. For the vivid plantings in a massive central courtyard they took inspiration from the sculptures of Ken Price, with their striated, almost geological layers of glaze, creating a topography that will respond to light conditions. As part of the developers' commitment to the community, there will also be a marketplace, and they are looking into building a tai-chi plaza for local seniors. "Usually it's the city pushing up against developers who want to do the minimum, but lots of our collaborators are making substantial civic contributions," Bauer says with a smile. "They already drank the Kool-Aid."

Other notable future projects include the Gehry Partners-designed Children's Institute in Watts, whose mission is to support kids and encourage



Elysian Landscapes

connections between fathers and their families. Surprisingly, they learned that one of the garden's main purposes would be to give the therapists themselves a place to take a break. The landscape will offer intimate enclosed spaces as well a leafy open courtyard with sculptural plants that are hardy and fun for children to touch. Golden foliage will echo the building's proposed gold brick. As Kameon points out, "The concept is never some kind of generic idea about, We need some trees here so there's shade. It's, How do we reinforce the vision for the project?"

Elysian Landscapes is also behind the bold black-and-white terrazzo plaza and the plantings at the new Kelly Wearstler-designed Santa Monica Proper hotel, opening this summer, and they have just begun the early design phases for the final three acres of the Parker Palm Springs in collaboration with Adler. When they first worked on the hotel, in 2004, the owner said he planned to address these three acres about six months down the line. Apparently things took a little longer than expected.

If there is one thing landscape design teaches, however, it is patience. "A garden is a relationship," Kameon notes. "People make a commitment to caring for it, and it can take years to achieve the intended design." Her hope is that clients learn to recalibrate their expectations so they can find satisfaction in the slow, steady growth of every plant. That's no small feat in a 24/7 culture. "We're so used to the pace of life where everything is available at all times," Kameon adds. "But gardens don't exist on that timetable."

[elysianlandscapes.com](http://elysianlandscapes.com)



Mark Mahoney



Mark Mahoney



# h CLUB RISING

THE SPLASHY NEW SOCIAL HUB  
FOR CREATIVES OFFERS A  
STRIKING NEW PERSPECTIVE  
ON HOLLYWOOD

**T**he London-based h Club has touched down in Los Angeles, the latest in a wave of social clubs kicked off by the debut of Soho House here in 2010. HKS Architects, led by architect Luciano Mazzo and interior designer Russell Sage, have transformed the former Redbury Hotel on Hollywood and Vine into a five-story destination that includes a rooftop garden and restaurant. Hidden behind a sleek blue facade, the renovation suggests that this new incarnation will write a future every bit as compelling as its rock-and-roll past.

*Above left and above:  
The rooftop lounge  
at the h Club is  
perched high  
above the iconic  
corner of Holly-  
wood and Vine.*

*Text by Abigail Stone / Photography by Tim Street-Porter*



Certainly that was the intention of the club's founders—the late Paul Allen, global philanthropist and co-founder of Microsoft, and musician Dave Stewart—when they opened the London outpost in 2004 in a converted Victorian hospital in Covent Garden. With its unique resources, including a television studio and an art gallery, it quickly proved a magnet for the city's creative class. The Los Angeles branch seems poised to repeat that success.

The h Club clearly offers all the expected luxuries of a high-end private club—open-air pool deck, beauty salon, gym, plush bedrooms and numerous lounges and bars offering chef Kris Morningstar's richly laye-

red food. But it's the h Club's out-of-the-box thinking that sets it apart. That starts with its arts foundation, which has not only curated work for sale by artists such as Anja Neimi, Gina Osterloh and Freize star Lisa Anne Auerbach but has also invited them to become members. The club's partnership with neighbor Capitol Records manifests in a collection of rare photos from the Capitol archives displayed throughout the property. An app encourages members to share projects, and a state-of-the-art recording studio welcomes singers, musicians and podcasters. An Artists' Lounge can morph to host a band, a comedy show or a screening. This cornucopia of amenities is set against a dynamic backdrop that Luciano Mazzo characterizes as "British, but with a twist."



Left: The club's tea room features a mix of Chinoiserie wallpapers. Below: A lounge area is defined by colorful Fromental wallpaper. Bottom: One of the h Club's guest suites. Below right: The open-air swimming pool.



It's the h Club's out-of-the-box thinking that sets it apart.



“We wanted to create something that would become almost an icon in Hollywood,” says the Italian-born, U.K.-based architect. That began with his reimagining of the formerly blood-red Redbury Hotel as something bright and welcoming. Light-filled open-plan rooms partner with small, cozy spaces, nodding to the varied sensibilities of Los Angeles and London as well as to the different phases of the creative process. “There are moments that, as creatives, we want to communicate, and there are moments that we want to be alone,” Mazzo explains.

Mazzo’s classical framework contrasts with Russell Sage’s whimsical visuals. That translates into a potpourri of joyful, provocative details that delight the eye with rich colors, vibrant wallpapers and exuberant patterns dancing throughout the rooms. An Asian tea room intertwines a half-dozen hand-painted Chinoiserie wallcoverings; upon close inspection, a bedroom’s wallpaper pattern is revealed to be made up of frolicking naked bodies; a gantry over the bar packed with colorful liquor bottles provides a glittering rainbow of color. (“I’m always

*Below:*  
A whimsical rooftop landscape was inspired by British filmmaker Derek Jarman, whose cottage in Dungeness, Kent, was legendary.





looking for a free sparkle, the ability to turn something into a chandelier.” Sage admits.) This exuberant whirlwind is kept in check with a strong foundation of clear blues, deep greens and polished woods.

But it is the h Club’s rooftop that may be its crowning glory, blending fantasy and refinement in equal measure. Jarman’s restaurant, in one corner, is the club’s most elegant dining space, accented by lampshades created from Hermès scarves and palm-frond fans spinning languidly overhead. This high polish is in madcap contrast to the rustic wooden

*Above:*  
Jarman’s restaurant, helmed by chef Kris Morningstar, opens to the roof deck and garden. Hermès fabric accents the pendant lights over the bar.



shed and desert garden (complete with an old ruined speedboat) just outside its door. Nodding to British filmmaker and political activist Derek Jarman's legendary oasis in Dungeness, Kent, inspiration for it struck Sage like a bolt of lightning.

"I suddenly thought, Everyone in L.A. wants a rooftop garden," he explains. "But there's the sheer impossibility of it—water restrictions, the baking sun. This captures that spirit of total inventiveness. It's stupid and crazy and fun, but it just works." The spirit of h Club Los Angeles in a nutshell. ●

**h Club Los Angeles**  
[hclub.com](http://hclub.com)

*Above:*  
 Jarman's outdoor patio.

*Right:*  
 The h Club's rooftop bar offers views of the Capitol Records building and the Hollywood Hills. An outdoor movie screen is at right.







## *The Last* WILDERNESS

Text by Michael Stenske / Photography by Chris Fortuna

### ARTIST AND ARCHITECT **SPENCER FUNG'S** MEDITATION ON THE FRAGILITY OF NATURE

**A**s an architect, Spencer Fung has always enjoyed working with natural materials like the Oolitic limestone and silver Cotswold ash trunks he carves into dazzling Op-art wall treatments in commercial and hospitality projects from the British countryside to Tokyo. So when the London-based polymath was thinking about *The Last Wilderness*, his painting exhibition at Ralph Pucci Los Angeles (through October 1), he first thought to bring landscapes inspired by a trip to Rannoch Moor in the Scottish Highlands. On the heels of scouting the L.A. showroom last December, however, he took a day trip to see General Sherman, the world's largest tree, at the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park.

*Above:*  
Spencer Fung with his drawings  
of scorched trees at the  
Ralph Pucci showroom.



*This page:*  
Fung uses organic materials such as Jurassic clay, soil, lichen and Chinese ink to create his drawings.



SPENCER FUNG



*Above left and right:*  
Fung's drawings, studies  
and notebooks are on  
display at the showroom.

*Left and opposite:*  
Inspired by the majestic  
trees in Sequoia and  
Kings Canyon National  
Park, Fung envisioned a  
fire-ravaged forest land-  
scape that suggests the  
perils facing nature today.

"It was after all the wildfires and there was a blanket of pure snow and I was in awe of all the natural beauty, so I painted the trunks and branches," says Fung, who mixed the freshly fallen snow with Chinese ink to paint studies—using moss and needle brushes—on paper at the Wuksachi Lodge. When Fung traveled back to his London studio—with samples of pine cones or scorched soil in hand—he couldn't shake the im-

age of the 275-foot-tall, 36-foot-wide Sequoia or the John Muir passages he'd read before his Sierra Nevada odyssey. He began creating a body of work about the charred forest landscape. Though he wasn't able to export California minerals to London, Fung used Scottish lichen and 75-million-year-old Jurassic clay—in his spare time he goes fossil hunting with his wife and son—to render these natural icons in soft grays and



sooty blacks that crackle like scorched earth and phosphorescent greens that seem to hover above the gessoed canvases like breathing Rorschachs. By literally using landscape to paint landscape—needles painting needles, moss rendering moss—the artist-architect forces us to examine not only the beauty but also the fragility of our environment. A pair of murals on the northern and southern walls of the Pucci showroom are delightful meditations on the splendor of destruction.

“John Muir wrote with such simplicity,” says Fung. “I remember so vividly him saying that the best music

to him was climbing up to the Ponderosa pines and waiting for the gale to play each needle. We depend on nature, and that’s what the whole exhibition is about—sharing the beauty but also raising awareness that at the same time General Sherman and all this landscape may soon be lost.”

Spencer Fung, *The Last Wilderness*  
Ralph Pucci Los Angeles, 1025 N. McCadden Place  
[ralphpucci.net](http://ralphpucci.net)

“It was after the wildfires and there was a blanket of snow and I was in awe of all the natural beauty.”





Text by Allison Berg / Portrait by Laura Hull

Scott Meyers



# WOVEN ARCHITECTURE

OYLER WU COLLABORATIVE'S LINEAR  
COMPLEXITY INFORMS EVERYTHING FROM  
JEWELRY TO THE FABRIC OF THE CITY

*Opposite:*  
Architects Jenny Wu and  
Dwayne Oyler with a  
sculptural piece that will  
be in their Taipei museum  
show this summer.

*Above:*  
Oyler Wu Collaborative's live/  
work space in Silver Lake

A myriad of steel tubes blankets Dwayne Oyler and Jenny Wu's entire back patio workspace. Components of a hanging stair-like chandelier, the pieces will ultimately form a suspended installation at the entrance to the architects' upcoming solo survey, *Dialogues: Oyler Wu Collaborative*, which opens at Taipei's Jut Art Museum in mid-July. Arguably the quintessential element in the show—a dynamic design in which movement, tactility, shape and space intersect—it seems an apt leaping-off point for understanding Oyler Wu's oeuvre.





The Taipei exhibit signifies a major transition for the Los Angeles-based firm. “We’re at the end of our beginning,” posits Oyler. Committed to line, surface and volume, the couple are now applying their mastery to prominent high-rise buildings, massive civic pursuits and even a fine jewelry line. All the while the two cerebral-yet-warm creatives weave together professional, academic and family life in a way that is as seamless as their interlaced installations.

“Inspiration is for amateurs,” proclaims Oyler, quoting artist Chuck Close. “The rest of us just show up and get to work. We rarely say, Oh, this is a line-based project. We just start working in the way that we know how and look to our devices for organizational strategy.” Their intuitive and audacious approach has resulted in a rich problem-solving vocabulary and growing recognition. With a unifying thread of woven, line-based geometry incorporating metal and wood, Oyler Wu’s opus represents a singular command of spatial and material issues. Wu’s specialty is communicating and combining technology with beauty, while Oyler’s is drawing and thinking ten steps ahead. “The drawing is he, the jewelry is me, and the architecture is we,” Wu submits.

Oyler hails from Kansas, and Wu is from Arcadia; they met as students when they landed in the same studio at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2001. “I tried to keep up with her,” says Oyler. Soon afterward they entered the Palos Verdes Art Center competition together. “I remember thinking, There is no way I can work with this person,” laughs Wu. Among 250 entries, they placed third. “Design and architecture are profoundly creative,” explains Oyler. “It takes humility to admit that someone is as good as or better than you. I ultimately realized that things come out better when I can be quiet and listen.”

Oyler was determined to relocate to New York after graduation, but Wu convinced him that L.A. would be a better choice. “I fell in love with the energy, culture and can-do attitude the moment I arrived here,” says Oyler. They began their L.A. story at the American Cement Building in McArthur Park, where they renovated their loft into a live/work space on a \$2,500 budget. In 2009 they relocated their growing firm to Silver Lake, not far from the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), where both have been faculty members for more than 13 years. “Teaching helps us see the bigger picture,” says Wu. “It also forces us to step back and criticize our work.”



*Opposite, clockwise from top left:*

Oyler Wu's pavilion at Indiana's The Exchange venue; the Monarch Tower in Taipei; the 3DS Culinary space in Los Angeles; the Live Wire installation at Sci-Arc.

(Photo credits: Monarch Tower: Po Yao Shih; 3DS Culinary: Scott Mayoral)

*Left and above:*

Oyler Wu Collaborative's schematic designs for the L.A. River Bikeway. "Why shouldn't the city's infrastructure be given the same design attention as the city's buildings?" says Wu.

Hunting for a live/work situation limited them to four appropriately zoned streets. They eventually found their haven on Hyperion Avenue in Silver Lake—a 1920s duplex neighbored by a Smog Test Center and Body Builders Gym. "It was a slow process of getting a really bad building and turning it into our paradise," says Oyler. Retaining the original stucco structure, they re-clad the exterior with fiber-reinforced board and recessed aluminum windows. Aluminum and 100-percent-recycled composite-board fencing with fluctuating horizontal louvers and vertical slats greets visitors and raises the curiosity of passersby. In the rear, a 15-foot-high rope-and-steel ceiling hovers above the outdoor gathering space and work area while an undulating bent-aluminum tube canopy runs from the second floor to the front doorway, creating shade and a striking entrance. The modern architectural jewel box provides a perfect abode for the young family of four upstairs and the efficient collaborative of seven downstairs.

"It's our effort toward balance," says Wu. "When we can figure out how to work, live and bundle it all together, we're more productive and also enjoy every aspect of it." They involve their three- and five-year-old boys in the practice and integrate architecture into their lives. Indeed,

the boys can often be found building forts in the basement or playing outdoors with their father's handcrafted riding toys.

Oyler Wu has completed various projects and installations, including in public spaces and institutions like Indiana's The Exchange event venue and New York's Guggenheim Museum. They designed and fabricated the 2013 Beijing Biennale winning entry, did 3DS Culinary Lab's interior showroom and collaborated on meditation pods with Headspace. The design strategies they perfect on moderately scaled projects translate to the more sizeable ones. "It's a chicken-and-egg thing," says Wu. "If you've never built a big building, no one will give you one."

About 10 years ago, during an annual family pilgrimage to Taipei, Wu's father suggested they do some work there. With serious apprehension, Wu cold called developers around the cookie-cutter city. One day she stumbled upon one who envisioned making Taipei's urban landscape less generic. He commissioned a ground-floor installation with the collaborative, and when that turned out well, he gave them the big building they had been longing for. In 2017 Monarch Tower, a 16-story residential building, emerged against the Taipei skyline. Composed of aluminum

mesh, fritted glass, solid panel and steel, it reflects the city's diverse materiality and has launched a string of prodigious projects for the firm.

Oyler Wu is now experiencing an exciting shift in their contributions to the local civic landscape. "Los Angeles is a city that's profoundly shaped by its infrastructure, namely its roads, freeways, the L.A. River and the retaining walls that reshape its topography," Wu observes. "So little of those elements have been seen as design assets to the city, but we see them as opportunities to project the incredible design culture of L.A. This infrastructure is a constant presence in our urban lives, so why shouldn't it be given the same design attention as the city's buildings?"

With the goal of widening and beautifying pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle paths, Oyler Wu is currently renovating the Soto Street bridge and retaining wall near USC's Keck Hospital, designing a greenery-adorned woven-metal wall with cantilevered overhangs for shade. Repeating geometric patterns will mimic the area's exposed rock formations when it is completed in three years. They are also serving as design architects on a segment of the L.A. River project, the public biking and walking path that could eventually run from Long Beach



Above: Active inlay models elaborate Oyler Wu's formal concepts.

Below left: The outdoor work space at the rear of the Silver Lake studio and residence. Below: Architectural models in the office space.



Laura Hill



Laura Hill



*Left:*  
Wu's jewelry line, LACE by Jenny Wu,  
employs 3D-printing technology.

*Below:*  
The Allegro Cuff.

*Bottom:*  
The Tangens Necklace.



to the San Fernando Valley. Oyler Wu has been tasked with giving a 19-mile stretch in the valley (seven miles of which have been completed by others) a more consistent overall complexion.

Launched in 2014, Wu's innovative 3D-printed jewelry line, LACE by Jenny Wu, represents another facet of the firm's practice (The Los Angeles County Museum of Art acquired her Catena necklace in 2017). "I think about placing jewels on the body the same way I place architecture on a site," says Wu. "How are people going to live with it? How do I drape a ring over the hand and still have it work?" Wu does extensive prototyping and testing to find new ways of manipulating traditional materials and foresees eventually dropping the "3D-printed" verbiage. "The point was never the novelty of the 3D printing," Oyler adds. "It's about the uniqueness the technology provides and how it feels."

Making jewelry helps Wu communicate with a broader audience—instead of being caught up in conversation about the perfect line, she is thinking more about why people fall in love with it. "At the end of the day, you can't gloss over a problem with architect language," says Oyler. "People don't want to hear about line, surface and volume. They want their problems solved and they care about the spirit of the work. What does it do for my city? What does it do for my life? As architects, we're obtaining a particular expertise and working on it over and over again. That's the magic." •

*Dialogues: Oyler Wu Collaborative*  
Jut Art Museum, Taipei, July 20—November 3  
[jam.jutfoundation.org.tw](http://jam.jutfoundation.org.tw); [oylerwu.com](http://oylerwu.com)



# CULINARY MECCA

THE MANUFACTORY—TARTINE BAKERY'S NEW OUTPOST  
AT THE ROW DTLA—CELEBRATES ARTISANAL FOODS

# M

*Text by Jessica Ritz / Photography by Karyn Millet*

Maximum functional and aesthetic coherence is crucial at The Manufactory, which opened this spring at the Row DTLA. That's because a first visit to the long-awaited partnership of San Francisco's Tartine Bakery founders Elisabeth Prueitt and Chad Robertson, Phoenix chef and master *pizzaiolo* Chris Bianco, and Los Angeles power restaurateur Bill Chait can be overwhelming.

*Above: The Manufactory contains two restaurants—Tartine Bianco and the Alameda Supper Club—a market and a bakery.*



Top: A salumi bar and market anchor one end of the vast space. SR Ranger Stools by Scout Regalia. Above: Tartine Bianco offers casual dining. Right: A selection of goods from the bakery.



“This was a passion project between food people who were interested in collaborating with each other in efficient ways,” says Anand Sheth, lead design architect and associate at Studio BBA. The San Francisco-based architecture firm, founded by principal Bonnie Bridges in 1992, was selected to transform a sprawling, approximately 40,000-square-foot industrial space into this culinary mecca.

“Once I was able to shift perspective to scale, the opportunity to create something unique started to take shape,” Robertson says, noting that The Manufactory is ten times the size of Tartine’s previous endeavors. “Building a showcase for artisanal food manufacturing in an urban park in downtown L.A. was a compelling prospect.” Sheth took that brief to heart. “The program was really our biggest inspiration,” he says.

The ground floor showcases the gleaming market—filled with high-end pantry staples and lifestyle goods from the Prueitt/Robertson/Bianco crew’s various maker friends—along with pastries and breads (naturally), wine, cheese and various treats to-go. The market leads into a Carrara-marble-topped salumi bar area that flows into Tartine Bianco, The Manufactory’s all-day casual restaurant.

Outside, on the canopied loading dock next to the market and Tartine Bianco entrances, a walk-up window is dedicated to

servicing coffee and ice cream. An intimate dinner-only venue called the Alameda Supper Club is tucked into the complex east of The Manufactory, along with the Alameda Cocktail Club outdoor bar, run by mixologists Julian Cox, Nick Meyer and CJ Catalano.

In 2016 Sheth and his colleagues first toured the raw building, which is one of three with a similar massing and size that made up the historic L.A. Terminal Market, now the Row DTLA. Then came the task of designing how best to honor the consumption and production of delicious things in equal measure. “The Manufactory is about creating a variety of spaces that have continuity within them so that users and patrons understand the languages,” explains Sheth, himself a Los Angeles-area native who moved to the Bay Area to study architecture at the California College of Arts and Crafts.

Plans required kitchen consultants and engineering expertise to smoothly facilitate what happens both in public view and behind the scenes. In the basement areas, elaborate preparations take place. Flour is milled, coffee is roasted and raw foods are prepped for their beautiful presentation upstairs, among other processes. It’s part of what Sheth calls an “entire ecosystem” devised to support this scale of collaboration. So how best to orchestrate joy in the work à la the exuberant chefs in Maurice Sendak’s *In the Night Kitchen*, but without the surreal chaos?

Top left: A salad dish at Tartine Bianco.  
Top right: A server with a salmon flatbread.



*This page:* In the Manufactory's light-filled bakery, the staff produces more than 4,000 loaves of bread and 6,000 bakery items every day.





*Left:*  
Architect Anand Sheth, of San Francisco's Studio BBA, oversaw the design of the Manufactory's ROW project.

*Opposite top:*  
The Alameda Supper Club is chef Chris Bianco's more formal dining venue.

*Opposite bottom:* A private dining room features paintings by Bianco's father and lighting by ANDlight.

site and distribution to other locations. (Tartine already has L.A. expansion plans underway.) Customers peek through the windows to notice the formidable nine-deck thermal-oil oven manufactured by Kornfeil in the Czech Republic, the custom proofer and retarder tunnels from Swedish company Revent, and the bakery professionals at work.

As for creating a destination that's essentially the anchor of the Row DTLA development, "We really took it to heart to honor what this building was," Sheth says, noting that his team, including designer Megan McGuinn, worked closely with House & Robertson, the architects of record.

The site's past led to choices such as using Heath Ceramics tile and white farmhouse brick from Clé Tile that slyly alludes to the cinder-block and hollow-clay tile infill that previously chopped up the structure. The triangular Fireclay Tile shape, also in white, is "one of our more continuous swaths" that connects the market on the north all the way through the bakery facilities at the southern end, Sheth says. Torrance Steel fabricated the storefront scheme he designed after finding inspiration when visiting the 1909 AEG turbine factory in Berlin by architect Peter Behrens. Other local makers include AFM, which crafted many of the furniture pieces based on Studio BBA's designs.

In the Alameda Supper Club, which has its own sealed-down, foyer-like entrance, Sheth took a different tack compared to the public, humming energy of The Manufactory. A tour of Bianco's restaurants in Phoenix helped set the tone. "Chris is an eclectic vintage furniture collector," Sheth says, which in part accounts for the mix-and-match method of seating and tables (mostly custom), as well as contrasting tiles, such as the matte-gray hexagonal floor tiles that are juxtaposed with a glossy Heath Ceramics caramel-colored tile behind the bar. The supper club's private dining room houses a collection of oil paintings by Bianco's father, a long vintage dining table and wainscoting that together evoke a personal refuge more than a slick restaurant helmed by James Beard Award-winning chefs. "We built the framework, and this was a bit of a playground for him," Sheth says about Bianco's involvement. Pendants from Vancouver-based ANDlight complement mellow lavender walls.

"We have a saying for all our hospitality projects," Sheth states. "The back of house is as important as the front of house." This philosophy informs Studio BBA's approach to hospitality and raises important questions. "How do we create big places that have sustainability and longevity, that don't diminish the quality of the product?" the architect posits. The care that goes into designing what diners *don't* see also makes for a much better workplace for those putting in long hours of physically demanding labor.

The bakery itself is a radical departure from what is often a hidden and purely utilitarian facility. Storefront windows that are painted cobalt blue differentiate these areas from their dusty-rose-colored counterparts in the restaurants and market, where customers can enter. ("It's a little bit of a color-story navigation, kind of like a hidden tip," Sheth notes.) The facility has the capacity to bake approximately 4,250 loaves of bread and well over 6,000 pastry items daily, both for sale on-



On the pedestrian street between two of the ROW buildings dubbed The Narrows, a trellis and landscaping elements selected by Mia Lehrer's Studio MLA screens in a semi-discrete alfresco dining zone next to the outdoor Alameda Cocktail Club. Other Studio MLA landscape features on the property tie into the overall site planning at the ROW by Rios Clementi Hale Studios.

In addition to the satisfaction of seeing The Manufactory completed—and more important, used and enjoyed—Sheth gleans broader lessons from this design challenge. (Tartine will open additional locations in L.A., too.) This was yet another hospitality project that didn't easily hew to building codes and public-approval rubrics. "Bureaucrats aren't as quick as we creatives are developing these ideas," Sheth observes, "but they're catching up and they're learning. It takes everyone being on board and not losing steam. In the end we were supported, and it's kind of an amazing feat of will." ●



**The Manufactory**  
757 S. Alameda St.  
[themanufactoryla.com](http://themanufactoryla.com)

NEXT



### SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Livia Corona Benjamin, winner of the 2019 Julius Schulman Institute Excellence in Photography Award, will show a selection of her work at the Woodbury University Hollywood Gallery June 28 through July 14. In her photography Corona Benjamin, who is based in New York and Mexico City, examines the social impact of architecture and the role that government plays in urban and rural planning. Her work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art and at the Pacific Standard Time exhibition *HOME—So Different, So Appealing* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. [wuho.architecture.woodbury.edu](http://wuho.architecture.woodbury.edu), [liviacorona.com](http://liviacorona.com)

Livia Corona Benjamin,  
47,547 Homes,  
Ixtapaluca, Mexico, 2000.

# RICHARD MILLE



CALIBER RM 037

**RICHARD MILLE BOUTIQUE**  
RODEO DRIVE, BEVERLY HILLS  
(310) 285-9898  
[www.richardmille.com](http://www.richardmille.com)

© Didier Goussier



## CALIFORNIA LIVING DEFINED

Hermès  
 Brunello Cucinelli  
 Frette  
 LIULI Crystal Art  
 Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams  
 Monark Premium Appliance Co.  
 Williams Sonoma  
 Gucci  
 West Elm  
 Z Gallerie  
 Casper  
 RH  
 CB2  
 Baccarat  
 Sur La Table  
 Versace  
 Anthropologie  
 Jo Malone London  
 Crate and Barrel Home Store  
 Bloomingdale's Home  
 Diptyque  
 Kate Spade New York  
 Macy's Home Furniture Store  
 Martin Lawrence Galleries  
 Lovesac  
 Microsoft  
 PBteen  
 Apple Store  
 Pottery Barn  
 Pottery Barn Kids  
 partial listing

Quality is

SOUTH  
COAST  
PLAZA

®

International Destination

San Diego FWY (405) at Bristol St., Costa Mesa, CA  
 southcoastplaza.com 800.782.8888  
 @SouthCoastPlaza #SCPStyle