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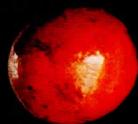
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## Ars Longa

A LITTLE MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS ago I was asked to take the artist

Christo and his wife, Jeanne-Claude, around Miami, where they were just starting a project. Nobody knew what it would be, but the assumption was that they would wrap a building, because somehow—even though by then they had executed *Valley Curtain* in Colorado and *Running Fence* in California—Christo and Jeanne-Claude were known for wrapping things.

We set out early one morning. Immediately they asked me to take them across Biscayne Bay on the low-lying Venetian Causeway. We got to the other side, and they asked

about my thought that though his projects stay up only a short time, they forever transform the landscape in the eyes of the viewer. He cut me short. I knew he would, because for him it is about the process, about the doing, and I accept, understand, and appreciate that. To me, however, Biscayne Bay is forever enhanced by my image of those spoil islands surrounded in hot pink, and I often think about the brilliant orange gates when I walk through Central Park.

In Brescia, Italy (one of the two cities closest to Lake Iseo), I met the highly regarded dealer Massimo Minini, who spoke of his theory that Christo and the others in the land

art movement are the rightful inheritors of the great landscape painting tradition of centuries past—a fascinating thought. Once you've seen a Turner, you see his skies in real life; those particular luminous skies are always partly about art.

Compared to art, design often (not always) seems quite finite—a chair and you sit in it, a teapot and you use it; it has a life span. Christo poses a kind of conundrum because the actual project is short while the art about it is long.

The thirty-eight-year-old Dutch designer Maarten Baas debuted two projects collectively titled *New! Newer! Newest!* at an exhibition in Milan this spring. Each will take two hundred years to come to fruition. The first is a plan to create a gigantic armchair out of a tree trunk by casting a mold and pressing it into a sapling. The second involves spelling out the word *NEW!* in particular species of trees as part of a planting project on the Netherlands island of Flevoland; the trees will change color by the season from light to dark green to the reds, yellows, and oranges of autumn, like, in Baas's words, "a very slow neon sign."

So you wonder, why would an artist (Christo) do a project that lasts mere days, or a designer (Baas) work on something that will not come to fruition in his lifetime? The truth is both obvious and elusive. These projects make us see differently, but they also transform the way we think, which in the end, fills me with awe.



Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *Surrounded Islands*, Biscayne Bay, Miami, Florida, 1983.

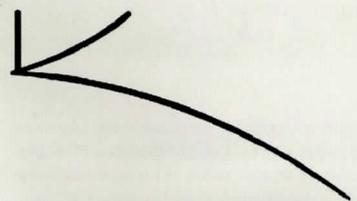
me to go back again, and again. Then we traversed another causeway, and yet another. They were full of enthusiasm but entirely circumspect about what they were thinking. We probably crossed Biscayne Bay a dozen times—with me still clueless. Then we went to lunch at Joe's Stone Crab, where Christo and Jeanne-Claude ordered up a feast.

These memories flooded back recently as I talked with Christo about his latest project, *The Floating Piers* on Lake Iseo in northern Italy. I spent two much-too-short afternoons with Christo listening to him talk, with his usual passion and gusto, about this and his other upcoming projects—*Over the River* in Colorado and *The Mastaba* in Abu Dhabi.

I always want to find the deeper meaning in architecture, art, design, literature, life. So at one point I asked Christo

Beth Dunlop

BETH DUNLOP EDITOR



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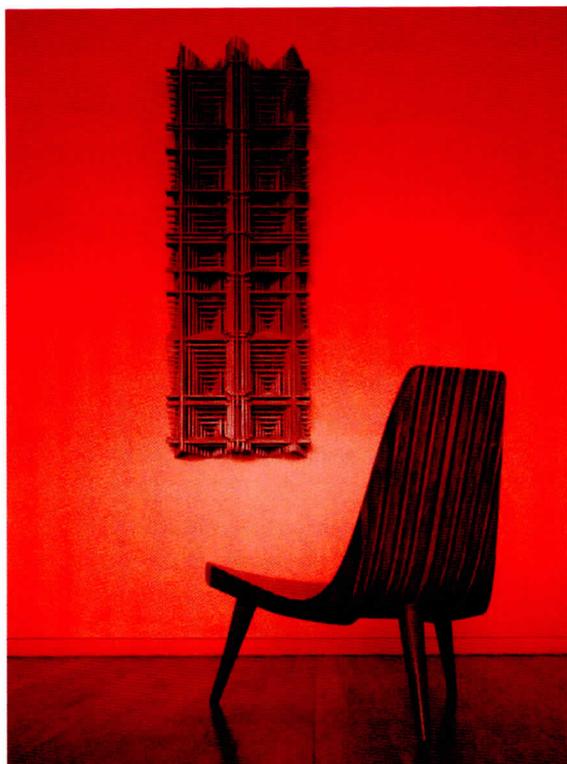
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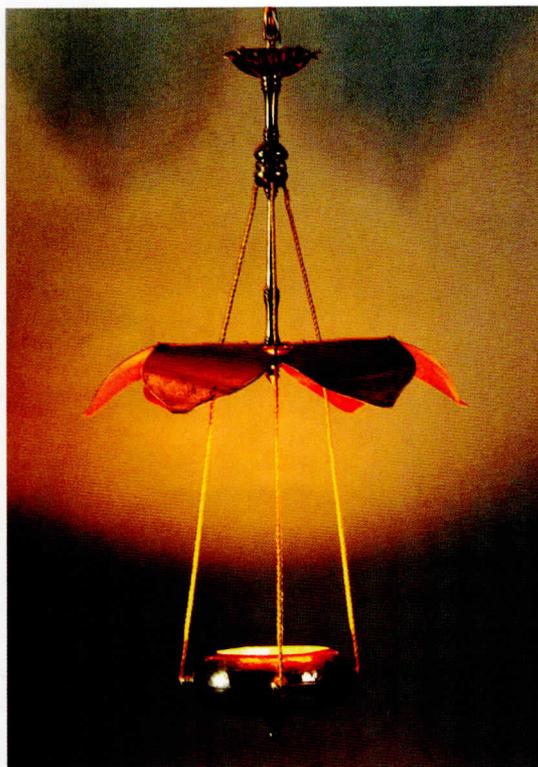
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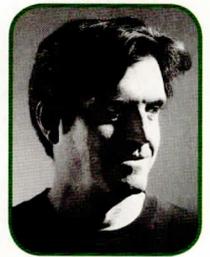
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**Claudia Barbieri** writes on art and design, dividing her time between Britain, France, and Italy. After graduating from University College London with an honors degree in philosophy and aesthetics, she lived for five years in Southeast Asia before moving to Rome and then Paris. While in Asia she studied Chinese and Chinese brush painting, which she still practices. In Paris she studied art and the art market at Christie's Education and developed an eye for the finer (not to mention odder) products of French craftsmanship in the Drouot auction rooms, village jumble sales, and the flea markets of St. Ouen and Vanves. When she's not writing, painting, or rediscovering minor masterpieces, she networks and knits.

**Paul Clemence** is an award-winning photographer and artist exploring the intersections of design, art, and architecture. He is widely published in arts, architecture, and lifestyle magazines, having photographed and interviewed the likes of Jorge Pardo, the Campana Brothers, Renzo Piano, Lord Norman Foster, Daniel Libeskind, Dame Zaha Hadid, Kazuyo Sejima, Dror Benshetrit, and many others. Originally from Rio de Janeiro, Paul now lives and works in Brooklyn. Next for him is a photo installation in the *Time-Space-Existence* exhibition at the Palazzo Bembo, a collateral event at this year's Venice Architecture Biennale.



**Julie Lasky** has been writing about design and popular culture for more than twenty years. A former deputy editor of the Home section of the *New York Times*, she currently contributes to the *Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Departures*, and many other publications. She lives in New York with her husband and daughter, and is an enthusiastic, if bumbling, gardener and ukulele player.

**Laura Raskin**, a freelance design and architecture writer and editor, is also the website editor for the Rockwell Group. Previously, she was the news editor and an assistant editor at *Architectural Record*, to which she continues to contribute. Her writing has appeared in *Architectural Review*, *Surface*, *Curbed*, *Metals in Construction*, and the *Wall Street Journal*, among other publications, and she was the project editor for Robert McCarter's comprehensive monograph *Steven Holl* (Phaidon, 2015). Laura grew up in western Massachusetts and has degrees in journalism from George Washington University and Columbia University. She and her dog Tina live in Brooklyn, where she is putting in her training miles for the New York City Triathlon and the New York City Marathon.



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# Belle jar

By KATRINE AMES



"When is a door not a door?"  
"When it's ajar."

I FIRST HEARD THIS RIDDLE when I was eight, and it has been my favorite ever since. It's wonderful wordplay, both simple and clever—a description that could apply equally well to a jar.

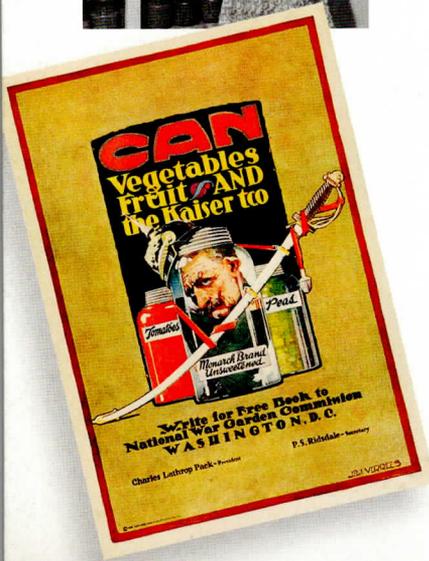
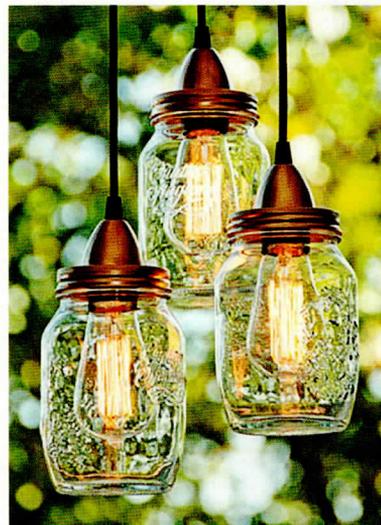
The jar's antecedent is the pot, which has been around for millennia, visible in cave paintings and the art of virtually every ancient civilization. It has been immortalized in literature, the memorable birthday present of A. A. Milne's Eeyore, who liked it because he could put things in it, and take things out. The jar, the smaller, humbler, relatively recent descendant of the pot, will never be as celebrated, but it should be. It's a marvel.

Early jars, from two centuries ago, had unreliable wax seals and flat lids, which all but eliminated two of the greatest assets of the jar as we now know it: safe food storage and portability. But in 1858 a young American tinsmith, John Landis Mason, started a far-reaching revolution: his invention, the Mason jar, had a threaded neck and a screw-top lid. With those two features and one stroke of the United States patent officer's pen, the little vessel was transformed and elevated. Now that was—and still is—a jar.

The design has not changed dramatically since then, which is a large and important part of its appeal, but the use of the jar has. Originally a kitchen staple for millions of families who canned fruits and vegetables, the Mason jar is now also a necessity for do-it-yourselfers, tinkerers, and even only slightly imaginative organizers. It's easy to clean, readily available, inexpensive, and preferable to a pot because it's transparent or at least translucent, making its contents visible.

I've come across Mason jars that have been converted into piggy banks, candlesticks, ceiling lamps, ribbon dispensers, lemonade glasses, terrariums, and containers for everything from wet paint to dried sage. One of the most beautiful things I've ever seen was 150 Mason jars, filled with wildflowers, on the tables at a wedding dinner in a barn. Every place setting had one; every guest got to take it home. I still have mine, now filled with pebbles and propping open my bedroom door.

When is a jar not a jar?  
When it's a doorstop.



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# Delving Deeper

A GLASS MOBILE WITH A BRIGHT POP PALETTE BY **FRANCES AND MICHAEL HIGGINS** TELLS A STORY OF LOVE AND LIFE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By MATTHEW KENNEDY

**LOT 617 Treadway Toomey Auctions 20th Century Art & Design sale, March 5, 2016:**

Mobile by Frances and Michael Higgins, 1960s. Estimated at \$1,200-\$1,500, the piece sold for \$1,900. Some reasons for the high price:

## BOY MEETS GIRL AND GLASS

Frances Stewart was a professor of art at the University of Georgia when, after World War II, she pursued master's studies at the Chicago Institute of Design. Stewart had been experimenting with such techniques as "bending" glass since 1942, and Michael Higgins, the head of visual design at the school, had taken a keen interest in the art of glass fusing. The two forged a professional and personal relationship over the medium and married in 1948, settling in Riverside, Illinois. Like most newlyweds, they established a home; unlike most newlyweds, their living room furniture featured three kilns frequently fired to up to 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit. Their collaboration in glass fusing in their unconventional setting fueled an inventive approach to everyday objects.

## SAGGING AND SLUMPING

Frances and Michael Higgins—or "higgins," as they collectively signed their work—revitalized the studio practice of glass fusing, a technique that had been supplanted by the popularity of glass blowing. Clear sheets of glass were coated in enamels of forty basic colors or decorated with colored pieces of glass, with the resulting designs matched or contrasted with other colors to produce hundreds of secondary colors when fused in glass "sandwiches." The Higginses embraced



a matter-of-fact vocabulary to describe their processes: glass heated at high temperatures could "slump" over a mold or be allowed to "sag." The Higginses' work began to glisten and gleam in retail in the 1950s, appearing in department stores such as Marshall Field's and Bloomingdale's. In 1957 the pair began collaborating with the Dearborn Glass Company to develop "Higginsware," an array of domestic products in which color and decoration were infused into the very material of vases, ashtrays, and their famous rondelays (circular discs or square tiles fastened together to create decorative hangings, room dividers, and

the like). Though Higginsware garnered the couple national acclaim, they returned to private studio work in 1966, favoring the artistic independence that had been sacrificed in adapting to mass production.

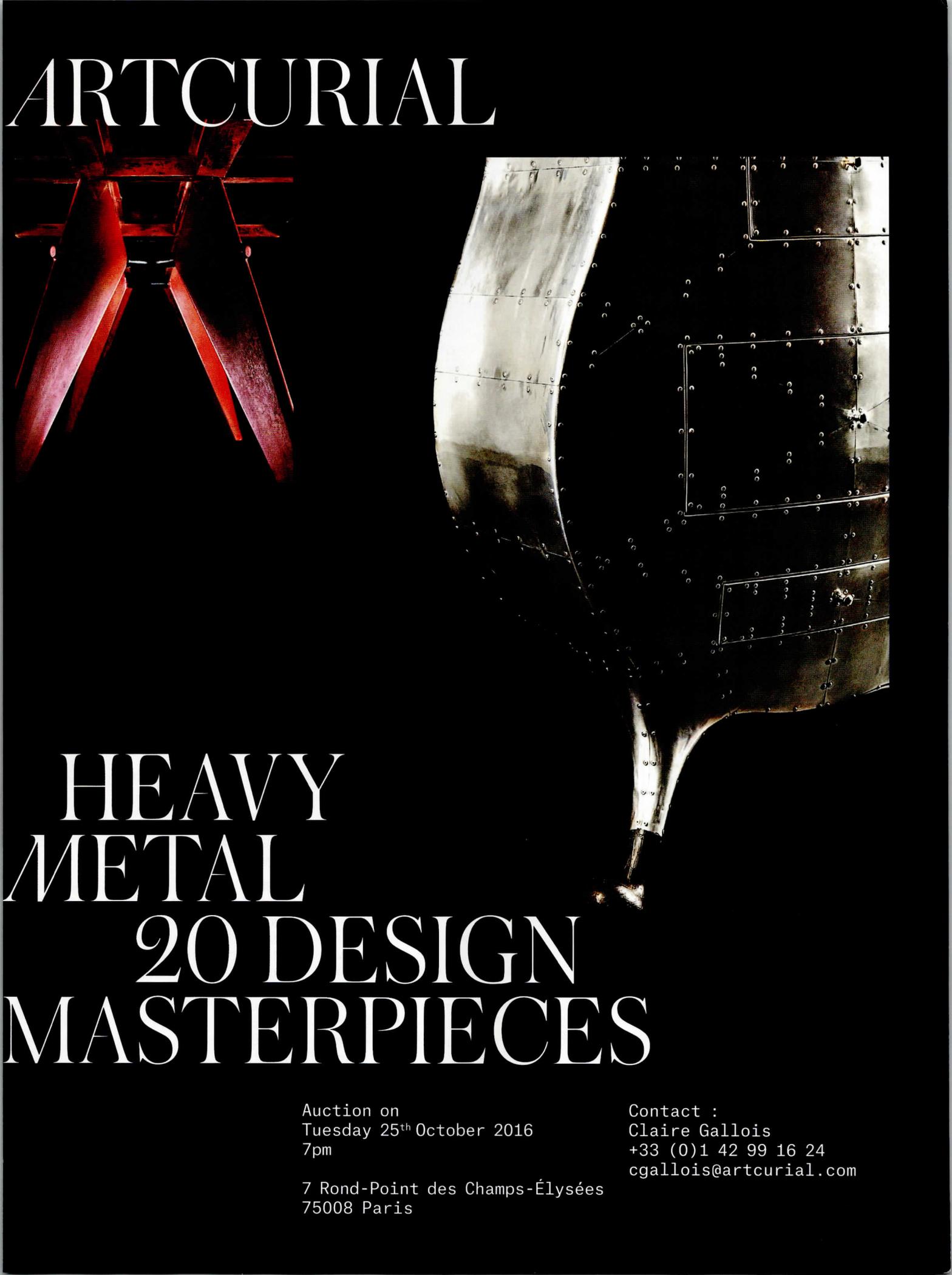
## GEOMETRY SUSPENDED

Rondelays are perhaps the Higginses' most iconic and enduring pieces, particularly at auction, having sustained a healthy market presence seemingly contradictory to their do-it-yourself ethos. (Still sold by the Higgins Studio today, the parts must be manually linked by the purchaser.) Lisanne Dickson of the Modern Design Department at Treadway Toomey attributes this success to the rondelays' versatility. "They mark status with no comparable in terms of style," she says, citing the Higginses' use of color and form. While the rondelays may be notable for their service to spatial functionality, a playful spirit effervesces from the Higginses' glass mobiles, also regular contestants at auction. With their pop palette of primary and secondary colors and congregation of humble shapes, an anthropomorphic personality emerges from the suspended pieces. The lot from the Treadway Toomey sale offers a particular vitality and intrigue.

## CONNECTING COLLECTORS

This Higgins mobile came from an established Chicago-based collector of modern design. "Collectors like pieces from other collectors," Dickson says. "There's an emotional aspect rather than just 'stuff' from a vendor." Mid-range prices, she also reports, attract a variety of buyers. Dickson priced the piece conservatively, both to manage and drive expectations about its value. Two absentee bids and two telephone bidders were outdone by a LiveAuctioneers buyer, and the piece went to a Los Angeles-based private collector, bringing in a high price for this type of Higgins glass. With a piece of such vibrancy and artistry, it is no mystery that a willing buyer would succumb.

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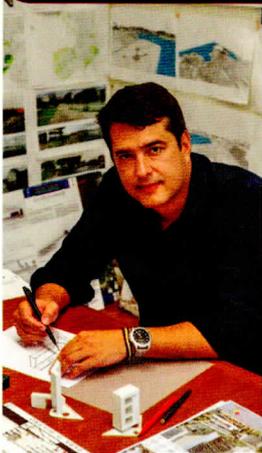


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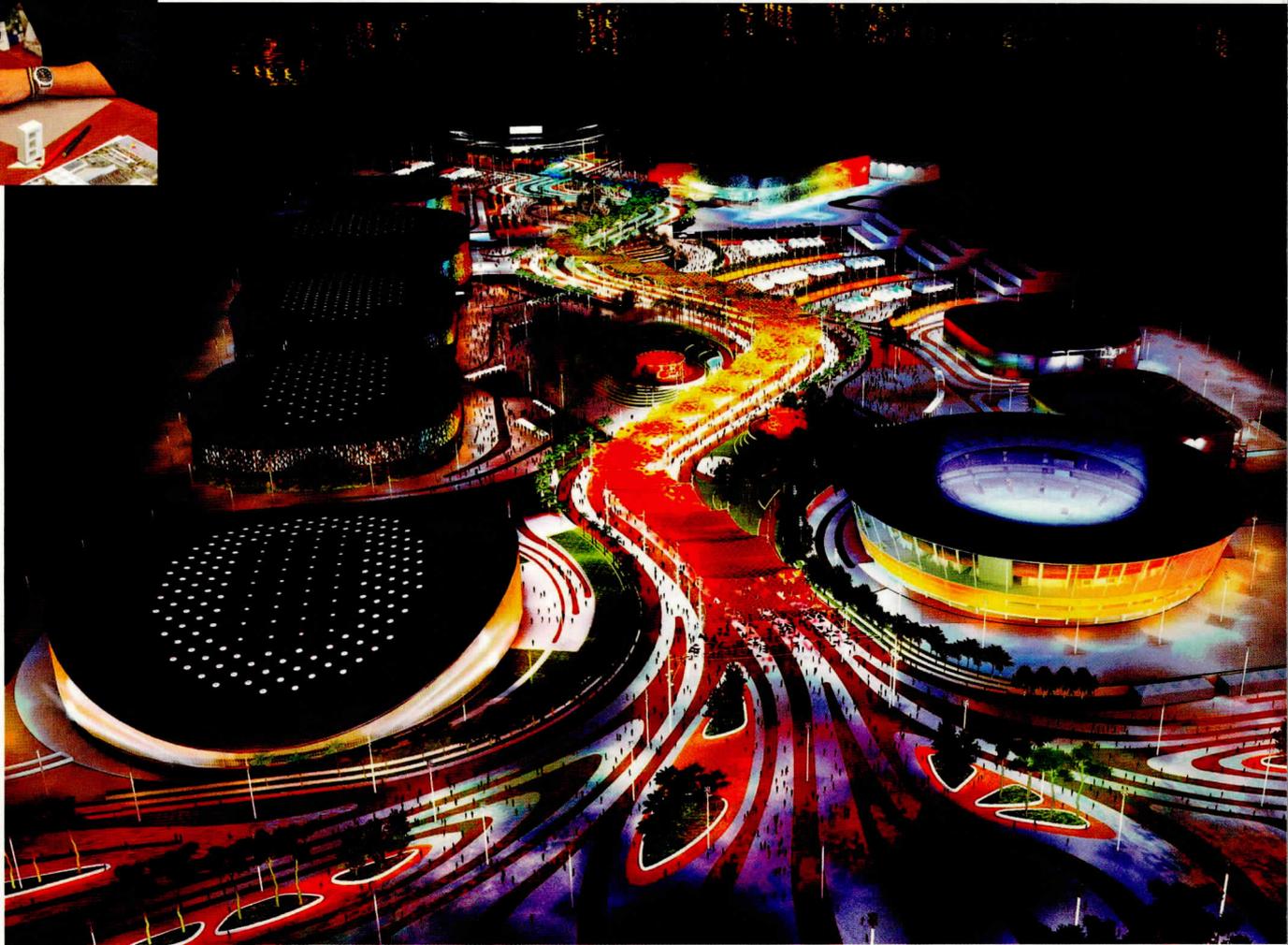
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## Brazil's Daniel Gusmão Forges Ahead

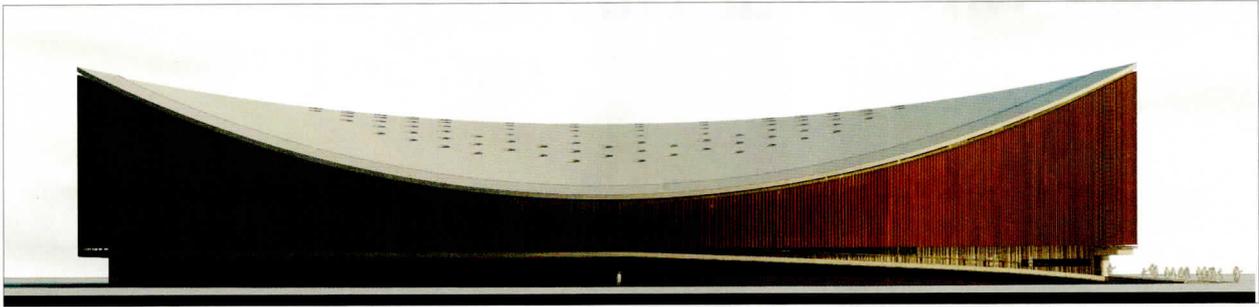


ARCHITECTURE IS A CHALLENGING profession no matter where you practice it. Brazil offers a particular set of challenges, from standing out from the shadows of the towering global reputation of Oscar Niemeyer and the renowned legacy of Brazilian modernism to surviving the ups and downs of the country's political and economic environment. But a good fight is exactly what gets architect Daniel Gusmão going. "You can't be in it for the money. You have to be moved by the challenge, by the love for design," he says. "That is probably true for most professions, but for architecture and in Brazil even more so. You have to be inspired by the obstacles, without a doubt." Then, he adds, smiling, "once you decide to face off the challenges, you harness the rush of adrenaline into a creativity stimulant."

The strategy seems to be working for Gusmão. His eight-year-old office is responsible for new projects in Brazil that are getting a lot of attention and collecting awards along the way. One of these projects will reach a global audience in August: in partner-

ship with the British firm AECOM, Daniel Gusmão Arquitetos Associados designed the master plan for Rio de Janeiro's Olympic Park for the 2016 Summer Games. The project places the sports venues along a sinuous promenade (inspired in part by the famous Copacabana sidewalk motif) that aims to create a layered experience for the public flowing in and out of the sporting events. For the Olympic site Gusmão also designed the Velodrome stadium (with an oblong roofline inspired by the movement of a wobbling coin), the international media center, and the media hotel.

Another high-profile project, the annex to BNDES, the Brazilian Development Bank, promises to be a landmark in downtown Rio. The project brought a complex challenge, for as an annex to the monolithic glass tower of the bank headquarters, the new building will occupy a site adjoining an early seventeenth-century Franciscan monastery that partly owns the lot. In hopes of bringing more visitors to its programs, the monastery

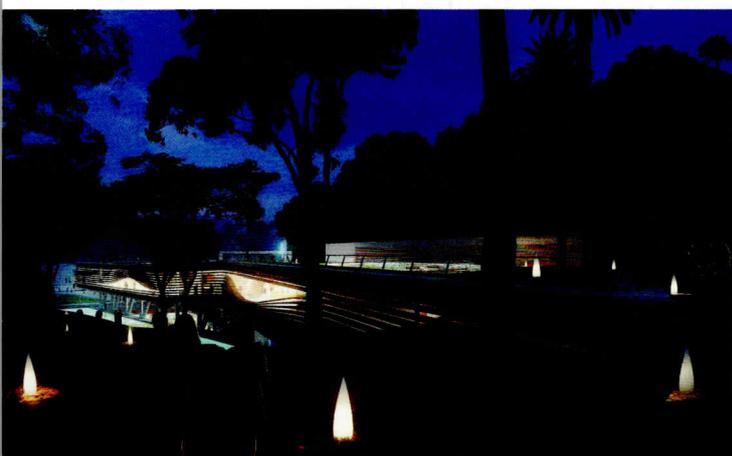


administration stipulated that the project allow access to its historic property. Drawing inspiration from Louis Kahn (whose work he got to know while studying for his master's at the University of Pennsylvania), Gusmão proposed a solution that negotiates the transition from a twenty-first-century setting to the much earlier, much more sober one. "I discovered in Kahn's work the poetics of space, that poetic power of an empty space as light filters in," he says admiringly. He designed a daring access ramp that cuts through the main facade of the BNDES annex and leads to an elevated interior garden that connects to the monastery grounds. The garden, an open concrete shell that is at once austere and inviting, serves as a gateway to the historic building. The project is scheduled to start construction in 2018.

What may turn out to be one of Gusmão's most important commissions arrived quite unexpectedly at his doorstep (literally) about a year ago. Carlos Barroso, an artist and collector who had seen an exhibition on Gusmão's Annex project, knocked on the office door, unannounced, and asked the architect if he would be interested in designing a museum to hold his collection. For more than twenty years Barroso had been amassing a comprehensive collection of modern Brazilian architecture items and memorabilia—a historical archive of more than eight thousand pieces relevant not just to Brazilian culture but to the world at large, considering the impact Brazilian modernism has had on architecture. As if that were not enough motivation, the site Barroso found for the future Museu de Arquitetura Modernista Brasileira (MAMB, or Museum of Brazilian Modernist Architecture), twenty-four acres a couple of hours northeast of Rio, contained the Casa de Mendes, a relatively unknown country house Oscar Niemeyer

had designed for his own use in the 1940s and many thought had been demolished. It will be restored by Gusmão's office to become the centerpiece of the museum.

For the museum itself, the architect has designed a building that has the flavor of 1950s Brazilian modernism, but infused with a contemporary feel. Present is the openness to the outside, the connection with nature, that is such a staple of Brazilian modernism; but here that quintessential modern element, the brise-soleil, is more integral to the architecture, made into a horizontal pattern that envelops most of the building with occasional larger openings to more generously frame the view. With



the preliminary design concept completed, the project has now moved into the fundraising phase, searching for supporters worldwide who are interested in helping turn the ambitious project into reality.

Originally from Niterói (across the bay from Rio de Janeiro), Gusmão spent formative professional years working at KMD Architects, a giant firm with offices around the world, where he got a taste of working in a global manner. That experience will come in handy, since he is expanding his practice beyond Brazil, flexing his design muscles in a series of partnerships with foreign offices that will take him to San Francisco, California, and to Tijuana and Guadalajara, Mexico. And through a series of speaking engagements abroad, he will show the world that in spite of the challenges his country faces, Brazilian architecture is thriving and as relevant as ever. [danielgusmaoarq.com](http://danielgusmaoarq.com)

— Paul Clemence

# Turning Craft Inside Out in Milan

THE EXHIBITION CALLED *NEW CRAFT* is housed in a vast old building known, appropriately, as the *Fabbrica del Vapore*, a relic of Milan's past brought into the present. The complex was once home to a tram and rail-vehicle manufacturer and is more commonly called the "Steam Factory." It is a perfect setting for a groundbreaking exhibition that sets up—and then disputes—the dichotomy between man and machine.

Curated by Stefano Micelli, a professor at Venice International University, *New Craft* takes an unexpected look at the transformative role of technology in the creative realm and challenges any number of preconceptions about past, present, and future. The exhibition runs the gamut from pure design (lighting, furniture) to fashion to jewelry to bicycles, and even to pasta produced by 3-D technology.

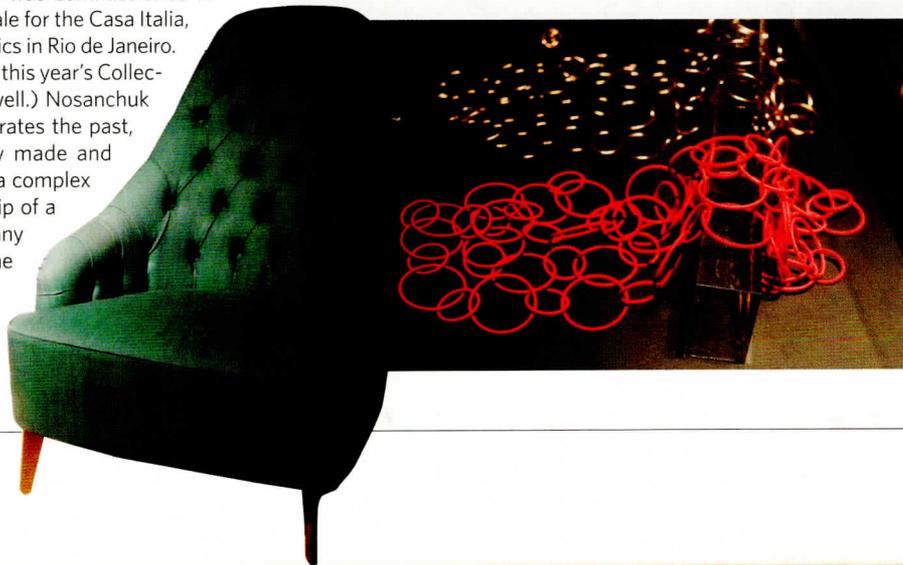
"Technology is really expanding the idea of creativity," Micelli says. In curating this exhibition, he says he sought to show the way that new methods of production could draw on the strong heritage of design, recasting it in new materials and using new methodologies. "From a European point of view, there is plenty of existing material that can be the element of reinventing and rebuilding."

Launched in April just before Milan Design Week (Salone del Mobile), *New Craft* is a part of Milan's twenty-first Triennale (ongoing through September 12), which was re-launched after a twenty-year hiatus. With the umbrella title "21st Century. Design after Design," the Triennale encompasses twenty-two different exhibitions that range from an invigorating look at women in Italian design to a conceptual examination of the evolution of design from "Neo Prehistory" forward. The exhibitions are on view in a number of venues across the city.

The curators of *New Craft* put out a call for work from designers under thirty-five, which means lots of entries from new and unknown names, but there are also installations from established Italian brands, such as Barilla (pasta) and Foscarini (lighting). An objective of the exhibition was to show the ways in which technology can open new paths of creativity without compromising the feeling of the hand—as evidenced in designer Monica Castiglioni's side-by-side examples of her jewelry, with one cast by hand and the other 3-D printed.

Another 3-D-scanned and -printed piece, the Big Louie chandelier by New York designer David Nosanchuk, gained immediate fame during Milan Design Week when it was recognized for being the most-Instagrammed object on view at *New Craft*. The design is an extrapolation of ornament on New York City's only Louis Sullivan building—at 65 Bleecker Street—and was commissioned in an edition of twelve by Claudia Pignatale for the Casa Italia, the Italian pavilion at this year's Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. (Two Louies hung over the entrance to this year's Collective Design fair in New York City as well.) Nosanchuk points out that while this piece celebrates the past, "the pendant still must be carefully made and assembled from fourteen pieces and a complex set of wiring, relying on the artisanship of a twenty-year-old 3-D printing company to become a reality, a product of the new craft." [triennale.org](http://triennale.org)

—Beth Dunlop



# A Nordic State of Mind

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# Gallery ALL Opens Doors to New Ideas



WITH SHOWROOMS IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES and Beijing's 751 Design Park, Gallery ALL occupies design niches on both sides of the Pacific. The gallery was founded in 2013 by Yu Wang and Qinqyun Ma after the two men were introduced by Wang's wife, Xiao Lu, who also joined the endeavor to serve as the gallery director. The following year Gallery ALL opened its doors on the first floor of L.A.'s historic Bradbury Building to introduce Chinese design works to Western patrons. While Chinese visual arts had progressed to the forefront of contemporary art, the country's design culture had remained relatively anonymous in American and European circles. The Chinese-born Wang, who studied architecture and design in the United States, and Ma, a prominent Chinese architect and dean of the University of Southern California School of Architecture, both viewed this not only as a shortcoming of the marketplace but as a unique circumstance. "We had the opportunity to work with the best designers in China," Wang says.

Gallery ALL's first L.A. exhibition featured the work of Naihan Li and Zhoujie Zhang, two designers the gallery continues to represent. Li, a protégé and close friend of the artist Ai Weiwei, is perhaps China's best-known figure in contemporary design. In her Crates collection, which ranges from bookshelves and chests to a foosball table, she uses plywood and stainless steel to create objects that move via wheels and kinetic hinges. While current design trends may prefer precious resources and static placement, Li's work offers not only a contrast but also a commentary on the life of artists in Beijing, who often find themselves packing up their belongings and moving to new residences at a moment's notice. "If Naihan Li's work is not always very functional, that is only because it does not have to be," Wang says. Zhang's pieces, on the other hand, present a more scientific ap-

proach to design. The unique contours of his trademark metallic chair with pointed legs (Wang calls it "the famous chair") are formed through applied mathematics and three-dimensional modeling. The seamless welding technique Zhang utilizes to achieve the effect required three years of intensive research to master.

After a positive reception in L.A., Gallery ALL's founders turned their sights to Beijing. If Chinese designers had resonated with American and European clients, they reasoned, the reverse might also be true; Western designers were equally unknown to the insulated culture within China. The gallery's five-thousand-plus-square-foot Beijing site debuted with a solo show of pieces by Aranda\Lasch, the New York- and Tucson-based architecture and design firm founded by Benjamin Aranda and Chris Lasch, with whom Wang had worked previously. Their Primitives and Quasi series explore diverse combinations of crystallographic structures. "Aranda and Lasch are unique in their fabrication process, which is truly cutting edge," Wang remarks. Based on the response of the Beijing clientele, Gallery ALL has also introduced pieces by Janne Kytanen, the Finnish designer known for his inventive work in 3-D printing.

Yet despite its success in bridging the primarily geographic space between separate design communities, Wang believes there is more than an "East and West" theme to Gallery ALL. The gallerist refers to what he calls a "philosophy of now," which he describes as collaboration with designers who eschew cultural exclusivity in favor of innovative techniques and processes that demonstrate their openness to all ideas—Eastern, Western, or other.

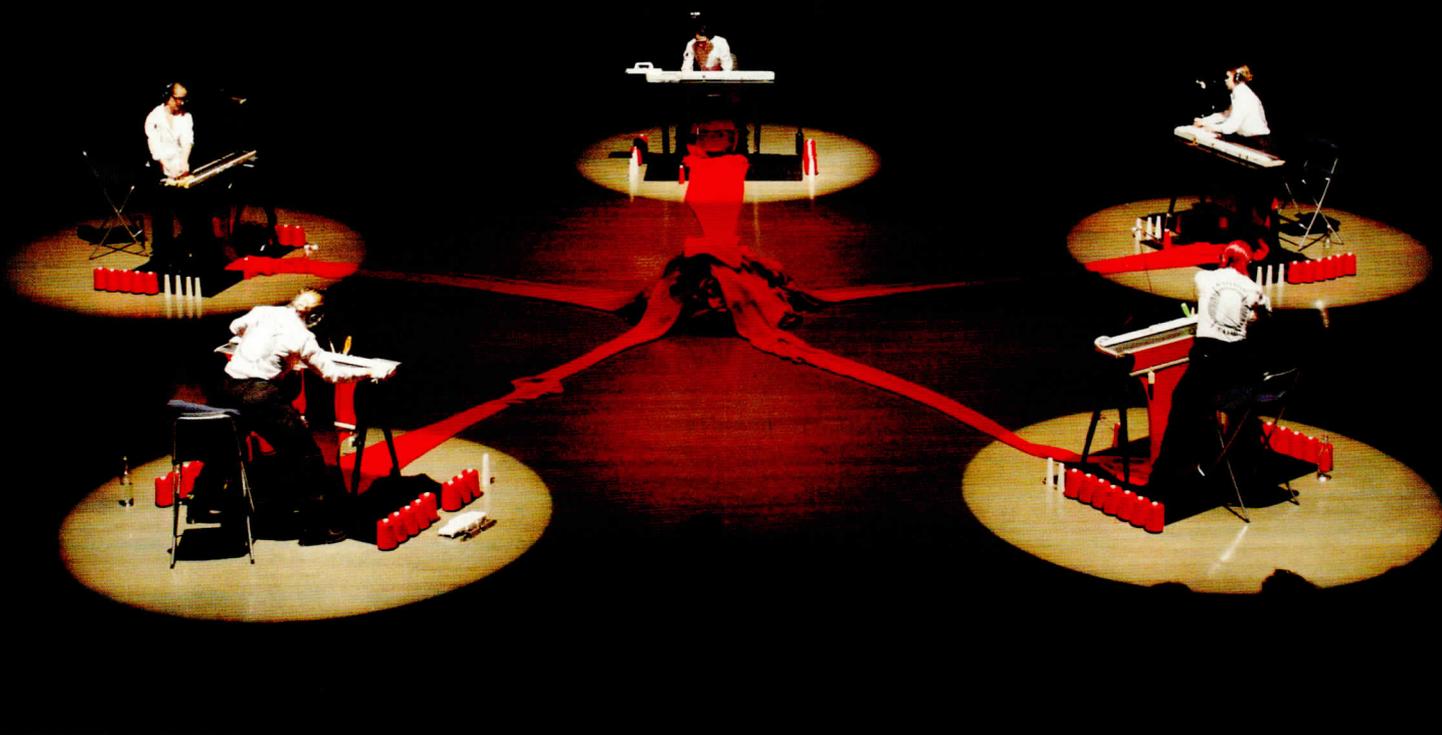
[gallery-all.com](http://gallery-all.com)

— Adam Dunlop-Farkas





# The Quiet Riot of Liz Collins



KNITTING IS OFTEN THOUGHT of as quiet and contemplative. For textile artist and designer Liz Collins, it is anything but. Bustling, bright, and even loud, Collins's work connects fabric with architecture, performance, and installation. With her punky blue hair and a vibe that's equal parts freewheeling and meticulous, she says, "It's rewarding for me to be able to be both an artist and a designer. The work can coexist and be in dialogue."

Collins is inspired by geometry, optics, and interconnectedness. "It's about energy—the energy that emanates from us, that is all around us in abstract ways but also very literal ways, like electricity," she says. This approach has led to a long list of projects that include bespoke rugs, museum exhibitions, and a recently completed residency at the Museum of Arts and Design, where she also staged her fifteenth and final *Knitting Nation*, a performance- and installation-based series for which she is well known.

Collins has crisscrossed art, craft, and design for more than two decades. She has played many roles: fashion and textile designer, indie-craft pioneer, and professor at her alma mater, RISD, where she received her BFA and MFA in textiles. These days she can be found busy at work in her Brooklyn studio. Located in the newly revitalized Industry City, a mecca for creative start-ups, Collins's gray studio door opens to a wild ride of neon drawings, pattern-on-pattern fabrics, and showers of thread that hang from the ceiling.

The overall result is an immersive environment not unlike *Energy Field*, her current installation at the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College. The inhabitable artwork, on view until August 2017, is meant as a lounge for both visitors and students; it is a pop fantasy filled with opposing forces. As Collins explains, "I wanted to make a room that is both comforted and agitated... a place to hang out,



connect, nap, be transported. A place where you feel a pull to stay and be mesmerized.”

The artist’s work is also included in *CounterCraft: Voices of the Indie Craft Community* at the Fuller Craft Museum. Curator and longtime admirer Faythe Levine, who has seen Collins’s evolution over many years, has commissioned a site-specific woven wall for the exhibition, on view until July 10. Noting Collins’s influence—especially her *Knitting Nation* series—Levine explains, “she was a big inspiration with work that was crossing both worlds of craft-activism and fine craft.”

Over eleven years, Collins’s uniformed *Knitting Nation* team wielded knitting machines to create fabric interventions—engaging passersby with the act of creation and transforming the surrounding spaces—from Occidental College in California to the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. The series was a potent reminder of the unseen labor that goes into making cloth and its impressive possibilities when paired with architecture.



Collins’s Potholder rugs, today made bespoke for clients, were originally a way to use up surplus cloth from *Knitting Nation*. They began as a sort of happy accident when Collins started to weave the fabric on a gigantic scale. At first she was disappointed when testing out the woven rug—it looked like a pot holder. But soon Collins realized that a blown-up version of the summer-camp craft staple wasn’t a downside. “It really resonates for people. They see it and right away they call it a pot holder. I don’t even have to say it.”

Excited by a host of new possibilities—from thread-inspired geometric drawings to lighting with frequent collaborator, industrial designer Harry Allen—Collins is interlacing her past and her future.

[lizcollins.com](http://lizcollins.com) [tang.skidmore.edu](http://tang.skidmore.edu) [fullercraft.org](http://fullercraft.org)

— Elizabeth Essner



# Bruce Campbell: Making Sculpture Kinetic



ONE OF BRUCE CAMPBELL'S FAVORITE POETS is E. E. Cummings, and the last line of Cummings's poem "[anyone lived in a pretty how town]" reads: "sun moon stars rain." This one line held particular appeal for Campbell and made him start thinking about how he could depict these things and conditions in his wirework, which until this time had primarily depicted animals and, through them, the concept of movement. He was not trying for scientific accuracy but wanted to portray these ideas through the mechanics, the movement, and the materials used in the work. Says Campbell: "How could I depict an eclipse, a meteor shower, or the orbit of the planets in a way that would engage the viewer?"

Campbell (born in Huntington, New York, in 1946) was the son of an electrical engineer who liked to build and fix things in his small garage workshop. He enjoyed working there with his father. He also says that he loved being outdoors, and "I loved working with my hands, spending time carving and chiseling wood, molding clay, and making small implements out of coat hanger wire, experimenting with the properties of metal when heated and hammered."

As a child, Campbell says, he was always curious to know how

things were made and was constantly taking things apart to see how they functioned. He worked with old tools and found objects, salvaged from the past. "I had some old license plates from the 1920s and found that the metal was heavier than that used today," he says. "When the rust is removed and they are heated flat, the patina is quite beautiful. I also loved the fact that these plates had a former life and identity." He feels the same way about his sculpture bases, preferring old wood to new.

Campbell does not use motors, allowing observers to crank his kinetic pieces at a speed that allows them to engage them personally, rather than watching a motorized piece move at a predetermined, repetitive pace. "When I have a show I get particular pleasure watching people turn the crank of my kinetic sculptures," he says. "Everyone does it differently and it is fun seeing them try to figure out why a certain piece is moving. This is why I do not want motors to power the works."

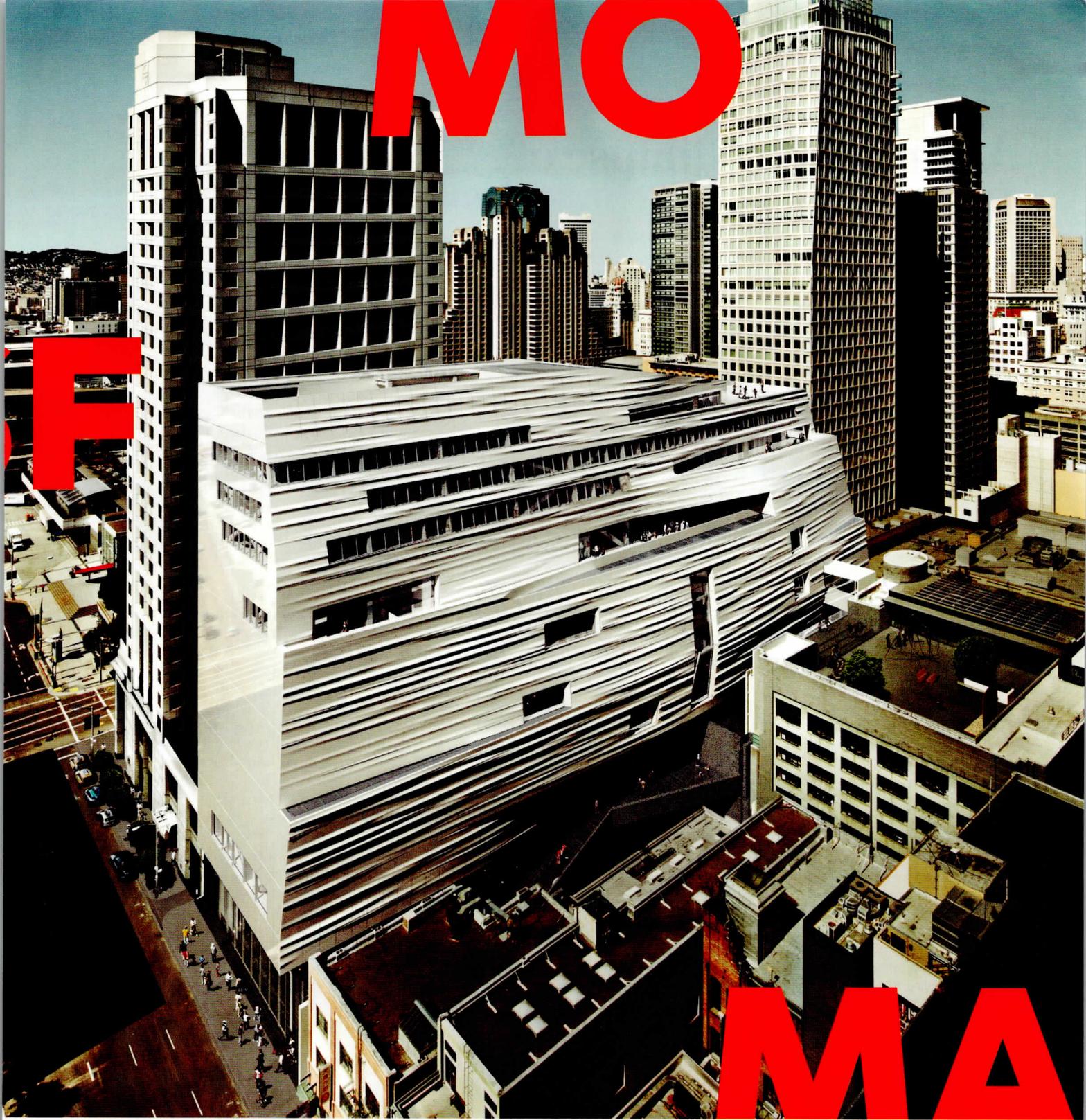
"There is an inherent beauty in everything. Look what Joseph Cornell did with discarded items he found along the road." This attitude was encouraged at Blair Academy, the private boys school he went to in rural New Jersey and in a project to restore an old house there. He went on to receive a BA in advertising design from Syracuse University, and after two years in the Army, received an MFA in graphic design from Indiana University.

Campbell became a graphic designer of renown, and although his home has long been in Vermont, he took weekly train trips to meet with design clients in New York City. He had first started working on wire sculpture in the early 1990s, and he carried his tools with him on the train. Soon they outweighed his other luggage, especially when his work became more complex around 2001, after introducing the concept of movement to his sculptures. The parts are made by hand without lathing or milling machines. Says Campbell, "I do not want the perfection of highly machined parts but instead prefer to have the hand of the maker evident." Both objects and concepts animate Campbell's work: with salvaged wood for a base, cotter pins, nuts, and coat hanger wire become butterflies and falling rain. The title of one work, *Portable Universe*, reflects his early studio mobility.

Campbell was named design director for the Library of America in 1981. He has designed books for the Metropolitan Museum of Art for thirty years, as well as for the Whitney Museum, the National Gallery of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Art Institute of Chicago, among many others. His work has won numerous awards. His sculpture is currently shown at David Walter Master Craft Gallery in Brattleboro, Vermont, the River Gallery in Essex, Connecticut, and the Cate Charles Gallery in Providence, Rhode Island.

— Joan R. Brownstein





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# An Intimate Glimpse of Richard Prince



ARTIST RICHARD PRINCE IS NO STRANGER to controversy. An early pioneer of appropriation art, Prince spent the 1970s and '80s undermining the necessity of authorship in art, re-photographing existing images and modifying them only minimally to make them his own. A constant target of copyright infringement and intellectual property law allegations, his creative strategy was, and still is, reliant on the subtle manipulation of content excised from popular culture, the media, commercial advertising, and the like. With an uncanny ability to transform the context and meaning of an image with a simple gesture or a minimal material intervention, Prince established himself as an expert in confiscation and concision.

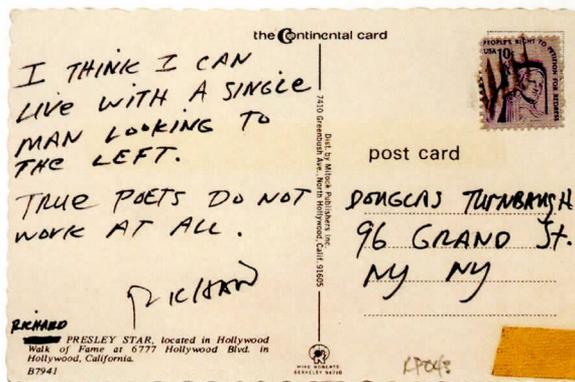
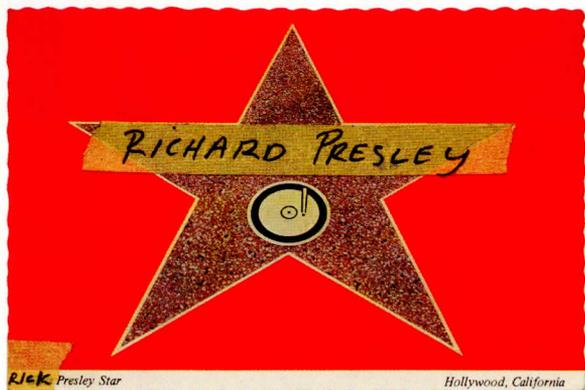
On view at Edward Cella Art and Architecture in Los Angeles from June 11 to July 16 is an intriguing exhibition that provides a rare and personal glimpse into Prince's years as an emerging artist. *Richard Prince: The Douglas Blair Turnbaugh Collection (1977-1988)* showcases an archive of never-before-seen works, personal correspondence, and ephemera amassed by his long-time friend and patron, Douglas Blair Turnbaugh. The two met as neighbors in New York City in the late '70s while Prince was pulling tear sheets at Time Inc. to make ends meet. This night job spent removing pages from magazines is where he honed

his obsessive penchant for reinterpreting advertisements. The most famous were to appear early on in the *Cowboy* series, begun in 1980 and based on the Marlboro Man cigarette campaign—a visual media myth, launched by Marlboro in 1955, that would inculcate a powerful and enduring cultural fiction of masculinity and Americana.

Turnbaugh, a New York-based writer and producer, shared Prince's affinity for the sybaritic excesses of popular visual culture and penchant for the erotic and abject in art. They sustained a prolonged flirtation—and mutual admiration—evident in the two hundred-plus pieces of personally inscribed material in Turnbaugh's collection. Notable highlights include candid personal letters from Prince to Turnbaugh expressing early apprehensions and insecurities over evolving work and first exhibitions. The collection also includes artist proofs from the iconic *Entertainers* series, photographic portraits and self-portraits, a leather jacket customized for Turnbaugh by the artist, and a book of playfully ribald drawings and sketches.

In short, the show provides us with a fascinating personal glimpse into this hugely influential artist's impressive beginnings. [edwardcella.com](http://edwardcella.com)

— Marieke Treilhard



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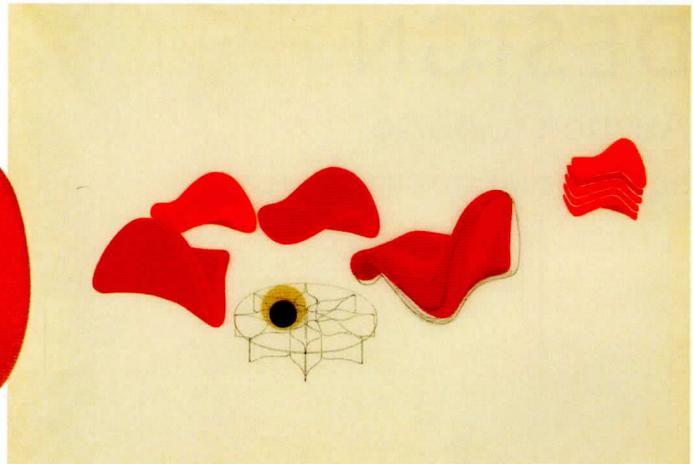
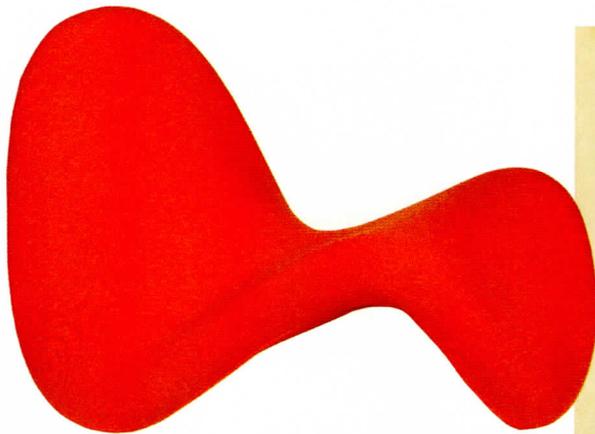
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# Museum Summer: Sexy, Silly, Sublime



## A PIERRE PAULIN RETROSPECTIVE IN PARIS

IN THE 1960S AND 1970S PIERRE PAULIN enjoyed a global reputation as the best known of a new wave of postwar French designers and interior architects. Among his many furniture designs, his Mushroom, Tongue, and Ribbon chairs achieved cult status. In 1968 the Museum of Modern Art in New York acquired his F300 lounge chair and F577 Tongue chair for its permanent collection, and in 1969 he received the Design Award of the American Institute of Interior Designers, Chicago. The full fifty-year arc of his career, spanning the second half of the twentieth century, is the subject of a major retrospective on view at the Centre Pompidou in Paris until August 22.

Eclectic and experimental, Paulin's style reflects multiple influences—the functionality and human scale of Le Corbusier; the pragmatism of Charles Eames; the plain, almost severe, purity of Alvar Aalto; and Scandinavian and Japanese architecture and design. A common thread is the coupling of opposites— austerity and sensuality, plain materials and playful colors, hard surfaces with softened edges and curvaceous forms. He pushed the boundaries with new materials, pioneering the use of slip-on stretch jersey fabrics, polyurethane foams, and molded plastic as upholstery over light tubular steel frames.

Born in 1927, he trained as a ceramist at the famous Vallauris pottery near Cannes and as a stonemason before entering the Camondo design school in Paris and then linking up with Marcel Gascoïn and the avant-garde Union of Modern Artists grouped around Robert Mallet-Stevens. He first came to public view in 1953 with a metamorphosing daybed and a suite of affordable living room furniture that won acclaim at the Salon des Arts Ménagers, the Paris equivalent of the Ideal Home show. Taken on by the Galeries Lafayette department store as an in-house designer, he later worked with a series of design studios and manufacturers and also won prestigious private and public commissions, including the refurbishment of the private residence in the Élysée Palace for

President Georges Pompidou in 1971 and the Élysée offices of President François Mitterrand in 1984. When Paulin died in 2009, President Nicolas Sarkozy issued a communiqué in his honor, calling him the “man who made design an art.”

The Pompidou show's curator, Cloé Pitiot, has brought together more than a hundred pieces of furniture, drawings, maquettes, and archival material, much of it drawn from an exceptional donation of Paulin's work and documents made by his heirs to the museum in 2015. Iconic pieces are mixed with others that have rarely, if ever, been shown to the public, including some early examples from the 1950s, prototypes for designs such as the Carpet chair, and projects that never made it into production. “Paulin researched the use of stretch fabrics that could be slipped on like a swimming costume. It was a revolutionary idea,” Pitiot says. “In the '60s, with models like the Tongue and Carpet chairs, he got rid of chair legs, he pioneered low-level living, the idea of sitting on the floor, living on the floor. It was a new way of life. In the '70s he worked on all these elements to develop a total look. Everything was thought out, from door knobs to furniture to lighting. It was a really novel approach.”

Organized chronologically, the show illustrates Paulin's successive collaborations with innovative European furniture and lighting manufacturers such as Thonet, Disderot, and Artifort. Also on display are more classically inspired pieces created in the 1980s for the Mobilier National—the French state agency charged with furnishing government offices and official residences; and a recreation of the living room at La Calmette, the retirement villa Paulin built for himself in the Cévennes mountains of south-central France in the 1990s.

In a user-friendly nod to his focus on bodily comfort, a selection of recent editions of his furniture is installed in a rest area/video room halfway through the show, where visitors can pause and enjoy the practical application of the designer's maxim: “Design is a collective practice at the service of the public.” [centrepompidou.com](http://centrepompidou.com)

—Claudia Barbieri





Ant Farm, Chrysalis, John E. Lautner, Charles Willard Moore, and Moshe Safdie. With its massive readership—at its peak in 1972, seven million copies were sold—the magazine did more to promote architecture than institutions like the Museum of Modern Art in New York or any professional architectural publication.”

To help complete the perfect “bachelor pad,” there were interviews with designers such as Saarinen, Eames, Nelson, Colombo, and Superstudio, as well as guides on what to buy to furnish it—not to mention what to wear, what to drink, what to read, what car to drive, what music to listen to. As Colomina observes, “*Playboy* was more than an education, it was a whole lifestyle.” The exhibition, entitled *Playboy Architecture: 1953–1979*, is fittingly installed in the Elmhurst Art Museum’s Mies van der Rohe–designed McCormick House (1952). [elmhurstartmuseum.org](http://elmhurstartmuseum.org)

— Eleanor Gustafson

## AT HOME IN THE PAGES OF PLAYBOY

SEX SELLS. And modernism sold sex. Or, at least from its founding in 1953 to the end of the 1970s, *Playboy* magazine promoted modern architecture and design as the ideal environment in which to perfect the art of seduction. An exhibition on view at the Elmhurst Art Museum in Illinois until August 28 explores this theme with photographs, films, architectural models, and more, illustrating the dream apartments with their seductive chairs, round beds, futuristic lamps, and sophisticated hi-fi equipment that were intended to shape a new sexual and consumer identity for the American male.

Based in Chicago, *Playboy* championed such innovative Chicago architects as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright, and, indeed, says the architectural historian and the show’s lead curator, Beatriz Colomina, “*Playboy* could not exist without architecture. But architecture is not just the setting for sex. From the very first issues, there were features on Wright and Mies van der Rohe up to the most radical architects of the 1960s and ‘70s, like





## HELLO FROM HAVANA AT THE WOLFSONIAN

THE WOLFSONIAN-FIU'S current exhibition *Promising Paradise: Cuban Allure, American Seduction* is timely indeed. With normalized relations, Cuba will become an attraction for all red-blooded American modernism voyeurs—and there's no telling what tourism will build or destroy. The show is comprised of ephemera from the collection of Vicki Gold Levi, my coauthor of *Cuba Style: Graphics from the Golden Age of Design* (2002).

Havana today is a city frozen in time. Or, shall we say, *times*: art deco and streamline as well as mid-century modern buildings, signs, and decor survive, though often in disrepair. Levi's extensive collection of rare visual treasures, including photographs, posters, and graphic design (a lot that does not appear in the book), shows vintage pre-Castro, Americano-influenced Cuba with all the material and sensual indulgences that were matter-of-fact in the day.

Graphic design from the period starting in the 1930s was closely tied to European art deco and American commercial modern styles. It celebrated luxury, wealth, and material pleasure through illustrations, photographs, and typography. It seduced through the

promise of good food, exotic dance, unbridled music, and relentless nighttime fun. Cuba's bounty of tourist offerings, from casinos to beaches, ran the same aesthetic gamut—glitz to kitsch—as is still the case in Las Vegas and Times Square. Tourism was aimed at every middle- to upper-class visitor. So every taste was exploited.

*Promising Paradise* returns visitors to Havana, the cosmopolitan city with its architectural jewels built on huge profits from surging sugar exports to the United States. Not surprisingly, the graphic imagery often suggested the Gomorrah of the Caribbean. Meanwhile there were pockets of extreme poverty across the country, which triggered the revolution.

Levi's artifacts, which were mostly buried after the revolution, are a portent of what may lie ahead, as developers are poised for the next economic boom. The Wolfsonian/Levi collection exhibition is an important historical signpost for a swath of Cuban history that speaks to the nation's past, present, and future—and how it just may seduce Americans once again. [wolfsonian.org](http://wolfsonian.org)

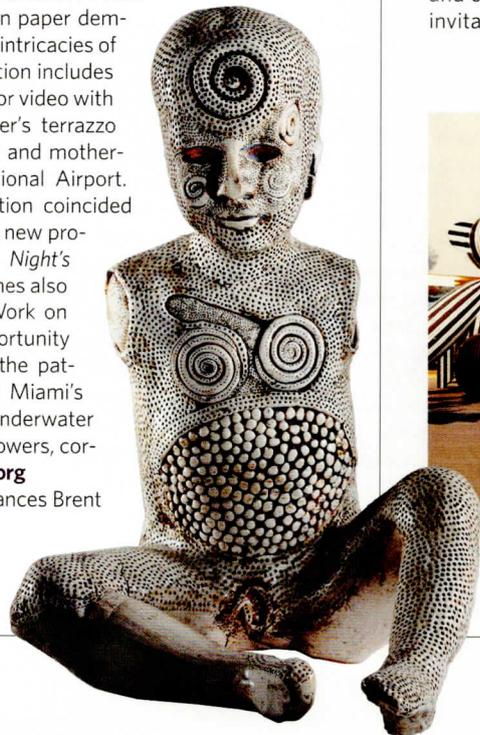
— Steven Heller



### MICHELE OKA DONER CATCHES A SWALLOW

YOU CAN SEE THE GLITTERING elegance of mid-century Miami fused to a reverence for natural materials in almost every object in Michele Oka Doner's radiant new exhibition at the Pérez Art Museum Miami. The title, *How I Caught a Swallow in Midair*, comes from the artist's 1990 cyanotype print in which the ghostly photograph of a stone accidentally produced what looked like the image of a bird—or a shadow of a bird—in flight. Oka Doner delights in the way both art and nature are graced with the ability to produce metaphors: a tree branch with a tangle of crisscrossing twigs transforms into a magical scepter given a touch of bronze and silver wash, and an eight-foot-tall "totem" of wax and organic material can resemble a caryatid. The show incorporates work from the 1960s, such as the haunting porcelain and iron oxide *Tattooed Doll (coiled forehead)*, as well as signature objects cast in bronze, like her Burning Bush candelabra and her almost-pocket-sized spiky chair that appears to be constructed from thorny sticks. A new series of figurative works on paper demonstrates constellation-like intricacies of line and texture. The exhibition includes *A Walk on the Beach*, the color video with sound based on Oka Doner's terrazzo walkway with inlaid bronze and mother-of-pearl at Miami International Airport. The opening of the exhibition coincided with the Miami City Ballet's new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with sets and costumes also designed by Oka Doner. Work on the ballet gave her an opportunity to respond once again to the patterns of what she's called Miami's floating and shimmering underwater forest with its stalked sea flowers, coral, and turtle grass. [pamm.org](http://pamm.org)

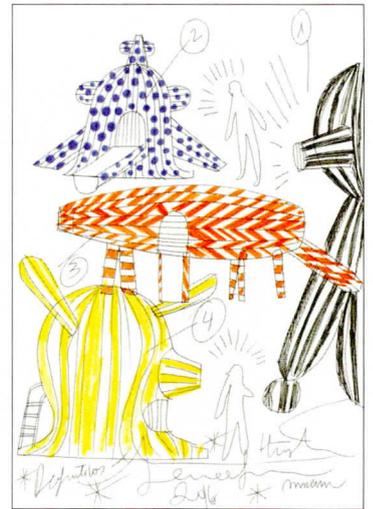
— Frances Brent



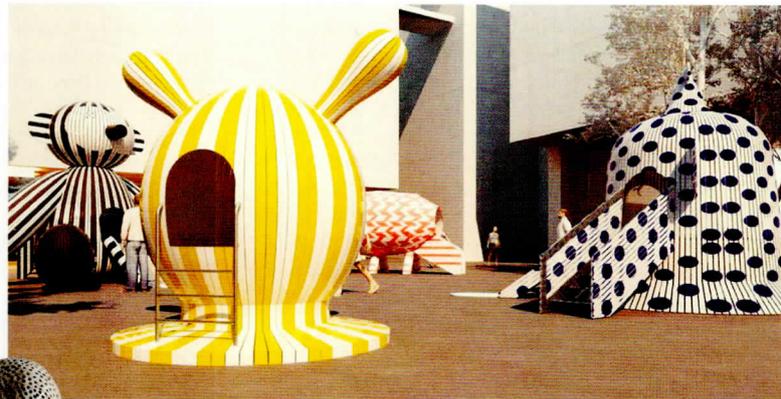
### JAIME HAYON'S HIJINKS AT THE HIGH

WHILE THE LINES BETWEEN ART, design, and decoration have been steadily blurring, Jaime Hayon loves to cloud them even further by bringing play into the mix, and he's doing so this summer with *Tiovivo: Whimsical Sculptures by Jaime Hayon* at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. For the installation in the Woodruff Arts Center's Carroll Slater Sifly Piazza, the Spanish-born artist-designer known for his whimsical oversized creations is drawing on the general theme of the carousel (*tiovivo* in Spanish) with four enormous figures that suggest ones that might be found on a merry-go-round.

For the project he's using marine-grade plywood for the first time, molding it in the tradition of boat-building to form his structures, then painting them with bright eye-popping patterns of polka dots, chevrons, and stripes. "The dramatically proportioned shapes offer a scale shift that transforms the 'toys' into beautifully crafted architecture," Sarah Schleuning, curator of decorative arts and design at the High, says. "Complete with slides, stairs, and charming interiors to match the fanciful exteriors of the structures, *Tiovivo* is designed for all ages—to linger, play, and imagine that anything is possible, especially at a museum." That's the whole point of the High's three-year-old outdoor initiative—to encourage visitors to engage with art and design beyond the museum's walls (*Tiovivo* will also be a stage for performances, art-making programs, and other events). Jaime Hayon's fantastical figures are the perfect invitation to join in the fun. [high.org](http://high.org)



— Eleanor Gustafson



# The Enigma of Aldo Tura

**TROY SEIDMAN** EXPLORES THE IDIOSYNCRATIC WORK OF THE ITALIAN DESIGNER KNOWN FOR HIS SUMPTUOUS FINISHES

ON A RECENT PANEL in New York City hosted by MODERN Magazine and sponsored by the Piasa auction house, I was asked one of my favorite questions: “Which twentieth-century designers are under the radar?” “Under the radar,” of course, is open to interpretation—does it mean a designer who is unknown (or underappreciated) or is this simply a euphemism for “currently inexpensive”?

Aldo Tura (1909-1963) satisfies both interpretations. While pieces created during his lifetime or in later years by his atelier are readily available, he is typically omitted from discussions of mid-century Italian or Milanese design, and as a result many works are surprisingly affordable. It is not uncommon to find small tables, bar carts, and, certainly, accessories under \$1,000. On the opposite end of the price spectrum, important case pieces can easily be priced in the \$10,000 to \$25,000 range and beyond.

Tura is one of those twentieth-century designers known for their dedication to a specific material—think Alexandre Noll and Sam Maloof (wood), Gabriella Crespi and Paul Evans (metal), or Sheila Hicks (textiles). Tura focused almost exclusively on lacquered goatskin, applying it to an array of glamorous (sometimes kitschy, sometimes elegant) products for the home. Chocolate brown (which at times resembles tortoiseshell) is unquestionably the most common color in Tura’s oeuvre, followed by a dense emerald green. Far less common are creations in red or natural (or partially dyed) hides, while the rarest colors are dark blue and purple. Some of his earlier pieces, particularly from the 1950s and ’60s, include figural panels, though the figural scenes are not always original and include replicas of famous paintings from the Middle Ages to Monet.

The Tura client clearly liked to have a good time. Bars of various sizes and functionality, from delicate rolling carts to large tiered cabinets, seem to have been the studio’s main

focus. They were complemented by related accessories—ice buckets, carafes, humidors, ashtrays, and cocktail shakers—all covered in lacquered goatskin. A notable feature of the work, particularly in the ’50s and ’60s, is its brass hardware, which ranges in look from vaguely medieval to baroque.

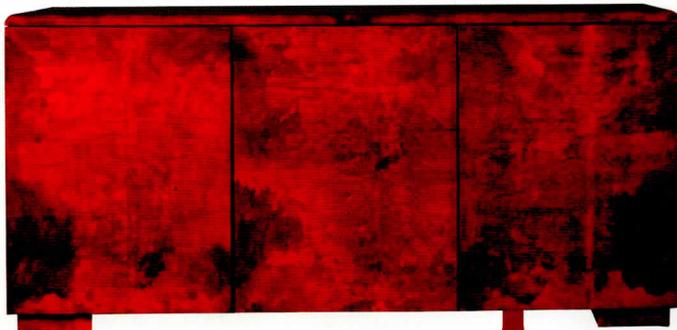
Perhaps one of the reasons there is scant scholarship about Tura is the difficulty of positioning him in relation to modernism. His work is simply too luxe and decorative, too labor intensive, and too interested in historical ornament. Like Piero Fornasetti, he does not fit comfortably within the parameters of Italian modernism; he can be better positioned in relation to the American mid-century designer Tommi Parzinger, who similarly created glamorous (often bespoke) furniture notable for sumptuous finishes and elaborate historical hardware. Gerti Draxler, the esteemed twentieth-century design expert at Dorotheum, the Viennese auction house, suggests that the lack of coverage can also be explained by the fact that, unlike some of his Milanese contemporaries, Tura was not an architect or an interior designer and did not have complete projects documented, published, and evaluated.

Happily, different forces are championing Tura’s work today. Blackman Cruz, an influential and adventurous design dealer in Los Angeles, consistently shows his work. Draxler, who has long been interested in Tura’s work and is credited with developing his secondary market, is working with the Tura company to release vintage pieces to market. If we look at Tura’s auction record, the top ten lots have primarily been achieved in the past two years, most of them hammered down in Vienna. Interestingly, Draxler notes that the majority of Dorotheum’s Tura sales are exported to the United States. Certainly, that the Tura firm is still in operation and maintains an archive of sketchbooks, inventory lists, and vintage pieces will help the designer’s ascending profile and encourage both scholarship and connoisseurship.



**“Peanut-Brittle” bar cabinet • Circa 1960**

BASED ON THE HANDFUL of variations that have appeared on the market in the past few years, this impressive and somewhat idiosyncratic bar cabinet was one of the most successful designs the studio produced, yet, curiously, no examples are known with lacquered goatskin. While executed in different combinations of wood (including mahogany, cherry, and rosewood), the scale and the remarkable “peanut brittle”-like wood panels that cover the front are almost always the same. (Dorotheum offered a spectacular variation that came directly from the Tura estate on which the facade had an eggshell surface—a technique that Tura used during the 1940s, though examples are exceedingly rare.) The cabinet could easily be misattributed to another Milanese furniture maker, but the luxe materials, exceptional level of craftsmanship, and spirit of glamorous hospitality are unequivocally Aldo Tura.



**Large red lacquered-goatskin console**  
• Circa 1970s



SOME OF TURA'S LEAST successful (early) bars comprise a large shaped case piece, often with an elaborate genre scene painted on the doors, resting on a balustrade-like pedestal. Another (questionable) model is of a giant book, with a figurative cover, that appears to rest on a second book, which rests on ebonized legs. Oversize and excessive, these bars are simply overwhelming, presenting too many ideas simultaneously. In one Wright catalogue, the auction house suggests that Tura's bars foreshadowed Memphis. It is not clear whether this is praise or shade. Regardless, Tura's studio is commendable for the experimentation it embraced over the years. The trompe l'oeil experiments remind one of Piero Fornasetti, who similarly played with perception. Draxler confirms that Tura knew Fornasetti, but the extent of their relationship warrants further study. This column bar balances Tura's interest in historical decorative elements with his signature chocolate lacquered goatskin. Its interior has the expected bells and whistles of a high-end case piece of the era: an illuminated mirrored interior, frosted and clear glass, and brass. The overall scale of the column is almost realistic, measuring more than two feet wide (and over four feet tall). The exact date of this bar has not been confirmed but it is a visual bridge between some of the extravagant creations from the 1950s and the sleek, almost boxy pieces from the 1970s—while maintaining Tura's sense of humor and playfulness.



**Column bar • Circa 1960s**

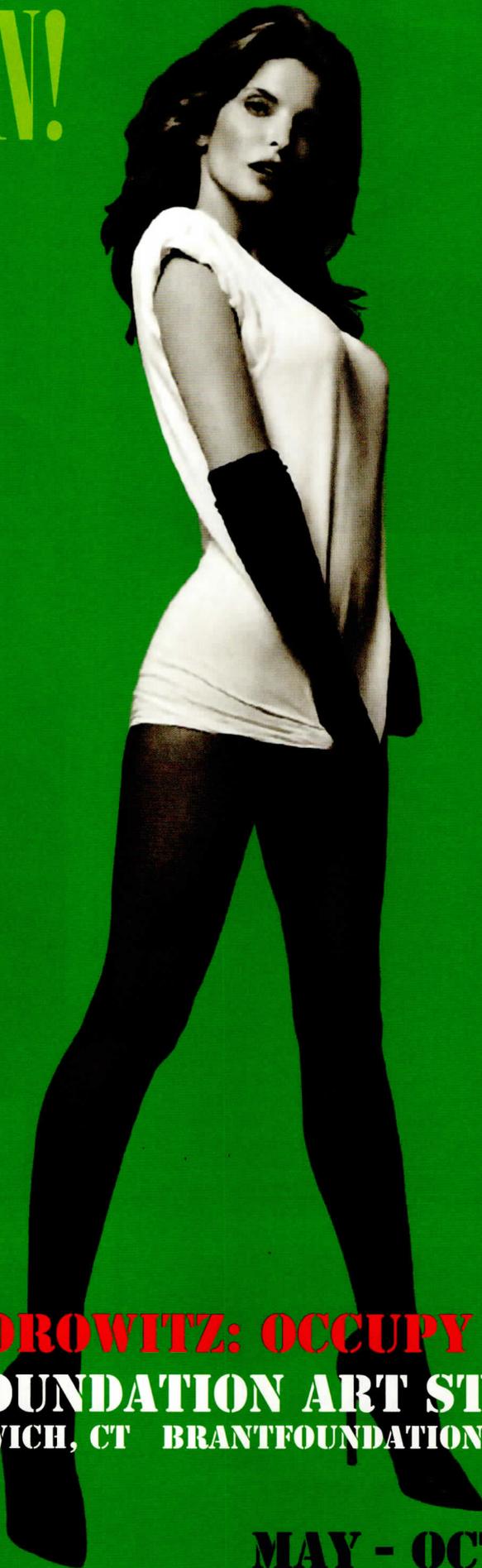
WHEN ASSESSING A TURA PIECE there are two factors to consider: the aesthetics of the overall form and the merit of the surface covering. The exceptionality of this striking piece (which has been deservedly popular on Instagram) comes from its dramatic color. Red was not an easy color to realize—Tura's results frequently being too dark, muddied, or maroon. This luminous console, in a shade reminiscent of an exceptional red wine, possesses a vitality that eclipses the simplicity (or ordinariness) of the form. We can deduce that it was likely made by his studio after Tura's death, as its minimal shape is similar to that of other clean-lined pieces from the 1970s and beyond. Earlier case pieces, particularly from the 1950s and '60s, are characterized by brass hardware, figural panels, or other decorative flourishes. Adam Blackman and David Cruz explain that this console, like most Tura pieces, has held up exceptionally well, its patina becoming richer with time.



**"Medieval Chest" bar • Circa 1960**

THIS BAR, which I've nicknamed the "Medieval Chest" bar, is one of the most recognizable Tura designs and perfectly exemplifies his work from the 1960s. Notice the thick geometric legs, which are completely contrary to the tapering ebonized leg favored by other Italian designers of the era (though the ever-versatile Tura did use such legs). Notice, too, the blinged-out handle, which appears to be borrowed from some rapper's gilded palace circa 1994. While some may dismiss this era of Aldo Tura as kitsch, what is undeniable is the quality, craftsmanship, and uniqueness of his lacquered goatskin. This is what earns him top marks.

**GO VEGAN!**



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**MAY - OCTOBER, 2016**

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New York

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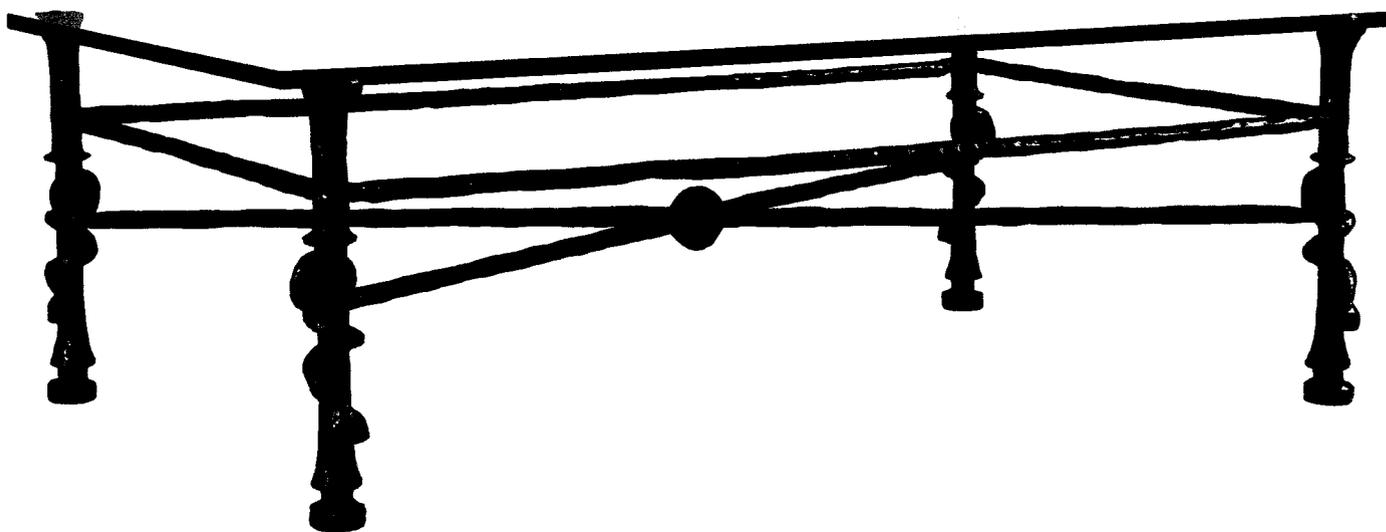
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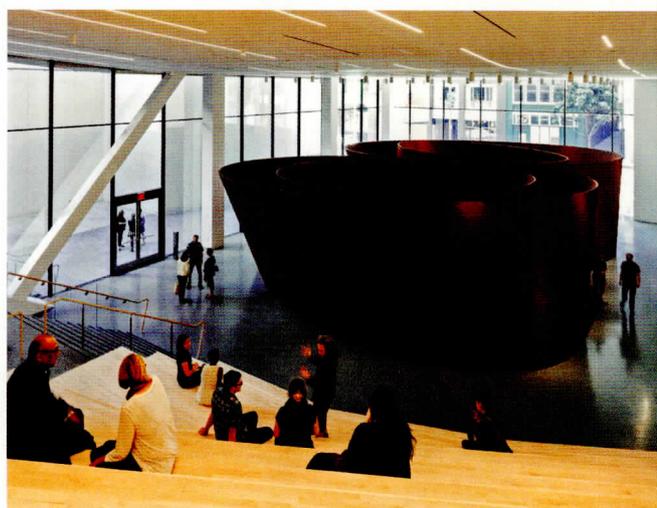
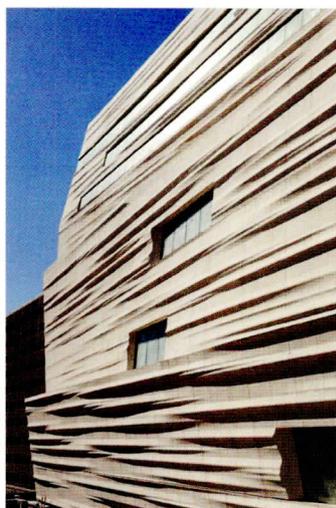
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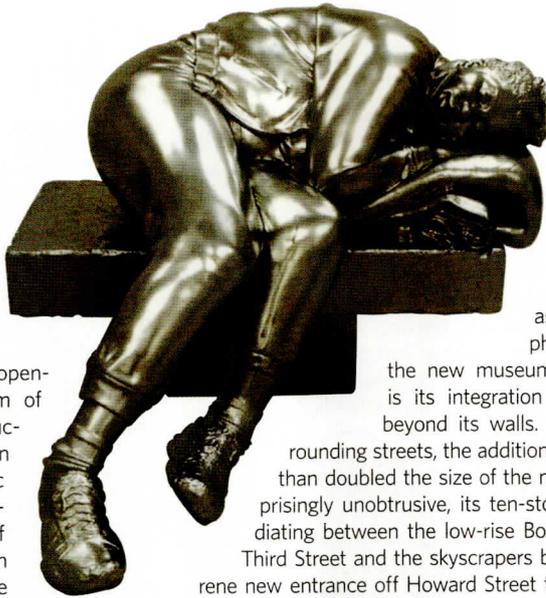
# A New Focus on Design in San Francisco

THE JUST-REOPENED SFMOMA ENHANCES THE GLOW OF THE GOLDEN CITY

By ROBERT ATKINS



DORIS AND DONALD FISHER COLLECTION AT THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART © ESTATE OF ROY LICHTENSTEIN  
 DORIS AND DONALD FISHER COLLECTION AT THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART © STEPHEN FLAVIN/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK/DON ROSS AND KATHERINE DU  
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GEOGRAPHY IS DESTINY, as Napoleon is rumored to have said just before invading Russia. The reopening of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art—three years in construction and now the largest American museum of its kind—is emblematic of a dramatic shift in the city's center of gravity from north to south of Market Street. SFMOMA's bet on its South of Market location more than a quarter century ago has paid off. Thanks to greatly enhanced collections, a restaurant helmed by three-Michelin-star chef Corey Lee, and Snøhetta's suave architecture, the reopened museum's destiny seems predictable: expect record growth echoing that of the two decades since the museum moved into its distinctive building designed by Mario Botta in 1995, which is now incorporated within its expanded 460,000-square-foot quarters.

The harmonious marriage of the old and new buildings' interiors helps account for the success of the design by Snøhetta, the firm founded by Norwegian architect Kjetil Trædal Thorsen and American architect Craig Dykers. The new building takes its decorative scheme of highly polished wood and stone, richly textured brick, and a high-contrast palette of black and white from the 1995 building, and retains the original lobby entrance with its dramatic oculus and grand staircase, albeit a staircase now reduced in size.

Not surprisingly, there are also major differences between the old and new buildings. The former was a jewel-box—iconic, monumental, and as inward-looking

as the Hagia Sophia. The key to the new museum, by contrast, is its integration with the city beyond its walls. From the surrounding streets, the addition that has more than doubled the size of the museum is surprisingly unobtrusive, its ten-story height mediating between the low-rise Botta building on Third Street and the skyscrapers behind it. A serene new entrance off Howard Street takes the pressure off the museum's former single entrance on bustling Third. Eschewing a signature silhouette, Snøhetta focused primarily on the needs of the exhibited art, designing flexible, elegantly proportioned galleries, and on the needs of its visitors to orient themselves within a ten-story structure that houses not just seven floors of galleries but an education center, conservation lab, auditorium, sculpture garden, terrace, restaurants, museum stores, and staff offices. Three points of orientation provide bearings: the two entrances and a multi-story "living wall," a lush vertical garden designed by David Brenner and visible through windows and glass walls on the building's north side.

It is axiomatic among museum professionals that nothing is more attractive to potential donor-collectors than a new building. The success of SFMOMA's Campaign for Art, designed to mark its seventy-fifth anniversary in 2010 and its imminent expansion, surprised even the museum's administrators. This success is apparent in the more than six hundred gifts in many of the initial installations occupying the museum's 170,000 square feet of gallery space. More

Snøhetta's expansion of the new SFMOMA, which reopened in May.

Detail of the Snøhetta expansion's facade.

The Pat and Bill Wilson Sculpture Terrace features an Alexander Calder sculpture and the living wall, designed by David Brenner of Habitat Horticulture.

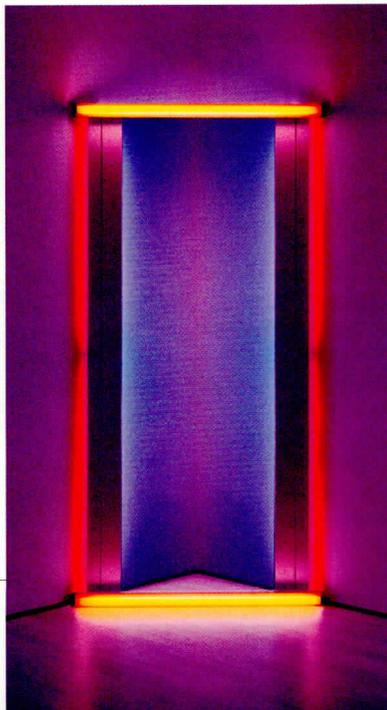
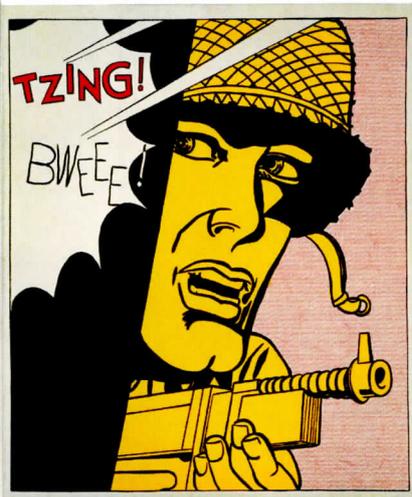
Richard Serra's *Sequence* (2006) in the Roberts Family Gallery.

Charles Ray's *Sleeping woman*, 2012, in solid stainless steel.

*Live Ammo (Tzing)* by Roy Lichtenstein, 1962.

Dan Flavin's *untitled (to Barnett Newman) two*, 1971.

Still from Takeshi Murata's single-channel video *Monster Movie*, 2005.



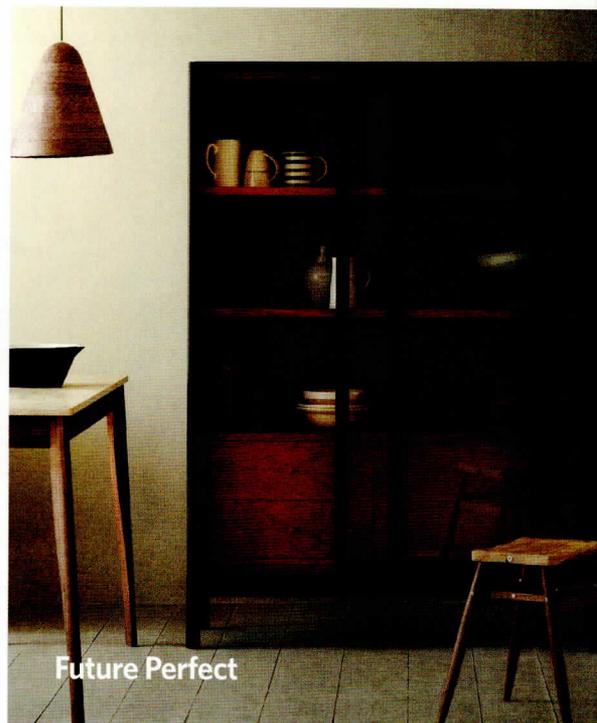
than three floors are currently devoted to two hundred additional, thematically arranged artworks from the Doris and Donald Fisher Collection, on long-term loan to the museum.

The Department of Design and Architecture's dedicated galleries currently feature several exhibitions: *Model Behavior* presents Snøhetta's first ideas for the new museum. *Carve, Cast, Mold, Print* showcases recent gifts in clever arrangements, as with a group of a dozen chairs by the diverse likes of Donald Judd, Ryuji Nakamura, Studio Drift, and Charles and Ray Eames. The department's largest initial effort is *Typeface to Interface: Graphic Design from the Collection*, a celebration of designer Aaron Marcus's gift to the museum and a primer for tracing the analog-to-digital course of vi-

sual communication since 1950. (Don't miss the psychedelic graphics from San Francisco's Summer of Love!) Dutch designer Claudy Jongstra was commissioned to create the department's first site-specific installation in the new building. She's fashioned the paradoxically earthy and ethereal abstraction *Aarde* (meaning planet in Dutch) from the hand-dyed wool of heritage sheep she raised, subtly evoking notions of sustainability and self-sufficiency. The museum has also commissioned specially designed objects to commemorate its reopening, including jewelry from Marion Cage, Andrea Panico, Alice Roche, and Diana Schimmel—four far-flung architects turned designers.

ONE UNINTENDED EFFECT of the museum's reopening is a renaissance for new art galleries nearby. Although astronomical, rents around the museum remain lower than those of the retail-oriented blocks surrounding Union Square, formerly ground zero for galleries. Two high-profile dealers, **John Berggruen**, the dean of San Francisco art dealers, and **Larry Gagosian**, the art world kingpin whose gallery empire stretches from Hong Kong to Geneva, opened spaces in adjacent buildings on Hawthorne Street, across Howard Street from the museum.

Like their art counterparts, galleries specializing in design are in geographic upheaval. The Design District at the base of Potrero Hill paved the way for the transformation of South of Market and remains the epicenter of modern and contemporary design in the city. For a classic modern sofa or chair, visit **Almond and Company**; for mid-century modern design and furniture, reliable purveyors include **Robollo Home** and **De Angelis** (formerly Monument, located in the nearby Mission District). The always intriguing **Coup D'Etat** not only shows its own furniture line and those of another dozen designers—some of whose output verges on conceptual art—but its staff periodically reinstalls the gallery's entire showroom.



Following the trend south, the Museum of Craft and Design has moved to Dogpatch, San Francisco's newest and most southerly arts neighborhood, already home to numerous galleries and studio buildings. The first permanent location for the twelve-year-old nonprofit is intended to diversify a program currently focused on thoughtful monographic exhibitions devoted to artists using craft material and found objects.

While many furniture and art galleries long ago departed for Design District digs south of Market, two of the most consistently satisfying remain in San Francisco's original gallery district in the Jackson Square area—**Hedge** and **Gallery Japon-  
esque**. Hedge is Steven Volpe and Roth Martin's



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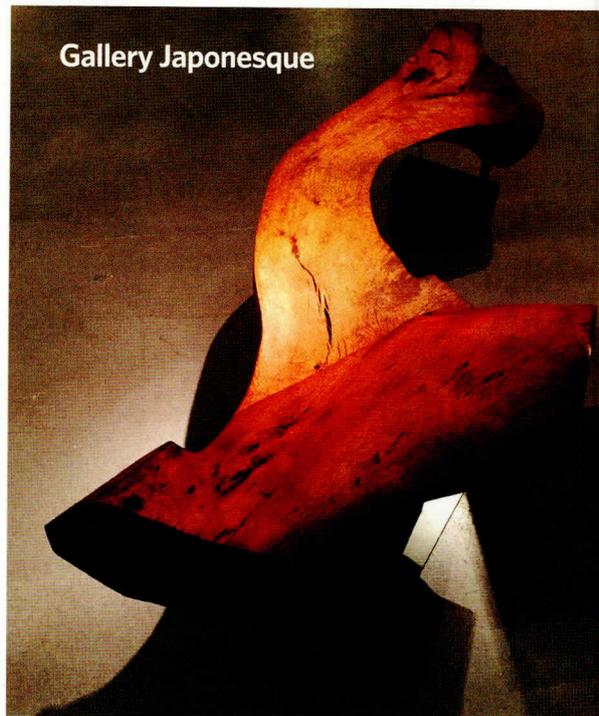
trendsetting gallery that has exhibited both little-known historical styles, such as French furniture of the 1940s, and museum-quality examples of long-established avant-garde furniture. Japonesque, a frequent participant in New York and London fairs, has shown both art and functional works—including Koichi Hara's stunning cabinets embellished with gold leaf, glass, and copper—for thirty-five years.

Bucking the trend southward, a group of galleries has congregated since 2013 along Sacramento Street in the posh Presidio Heights/Pacific Heights area. Two standouts are **Future Perfect**, the partner of the vital New York gallery featuring its own furniture line as well as those of too-little-known designers including Piet Hein Eek and Pinch; and **March**, specializing in exquisite designer goods and art for the kitchen, pantry, and table.

Defying any recognizable real estate trends, two of the city's premier galleries—**Propeller** and **Velvet da Vinci**—remain settled in homes off the beaten path. Propeller in Hayes Valley specializes in neo-modern designs ranging from Arktura's Pac table, fabricated from a single sheet of white powder-coated steel, to Moooi's Oase Tent sofa, a sleek modern design whose "naked" sofa can be dressed with twenty different tents. Velvet da Vinci, the city's premier jewelry gallery, located in a former industrial loft on Polk Street near Broadway, specializes in singular offerings that are as much art as craft and design. It recently organized *La Frontera*, an exhibition of jewelry on the theme of politics, with the Museo Franz Mayer in Mexico City.

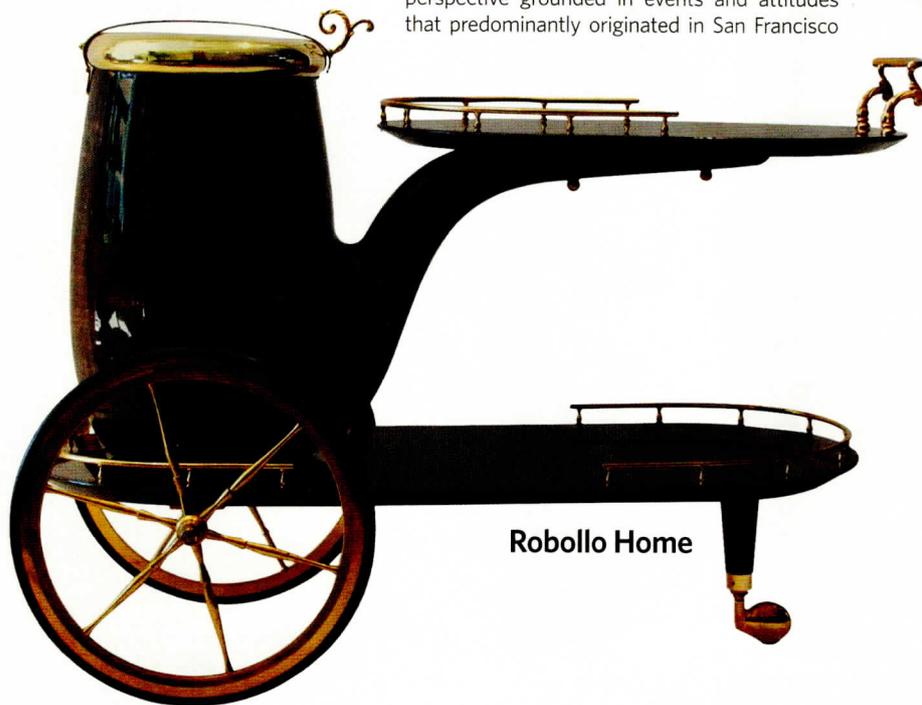
This blurring of art and design practices reflects a significant loosening in today's design outlook, a perspective grounded in events and attitudes that predominantly originated in San Francisco

Gallery Japonesque



Gagosian

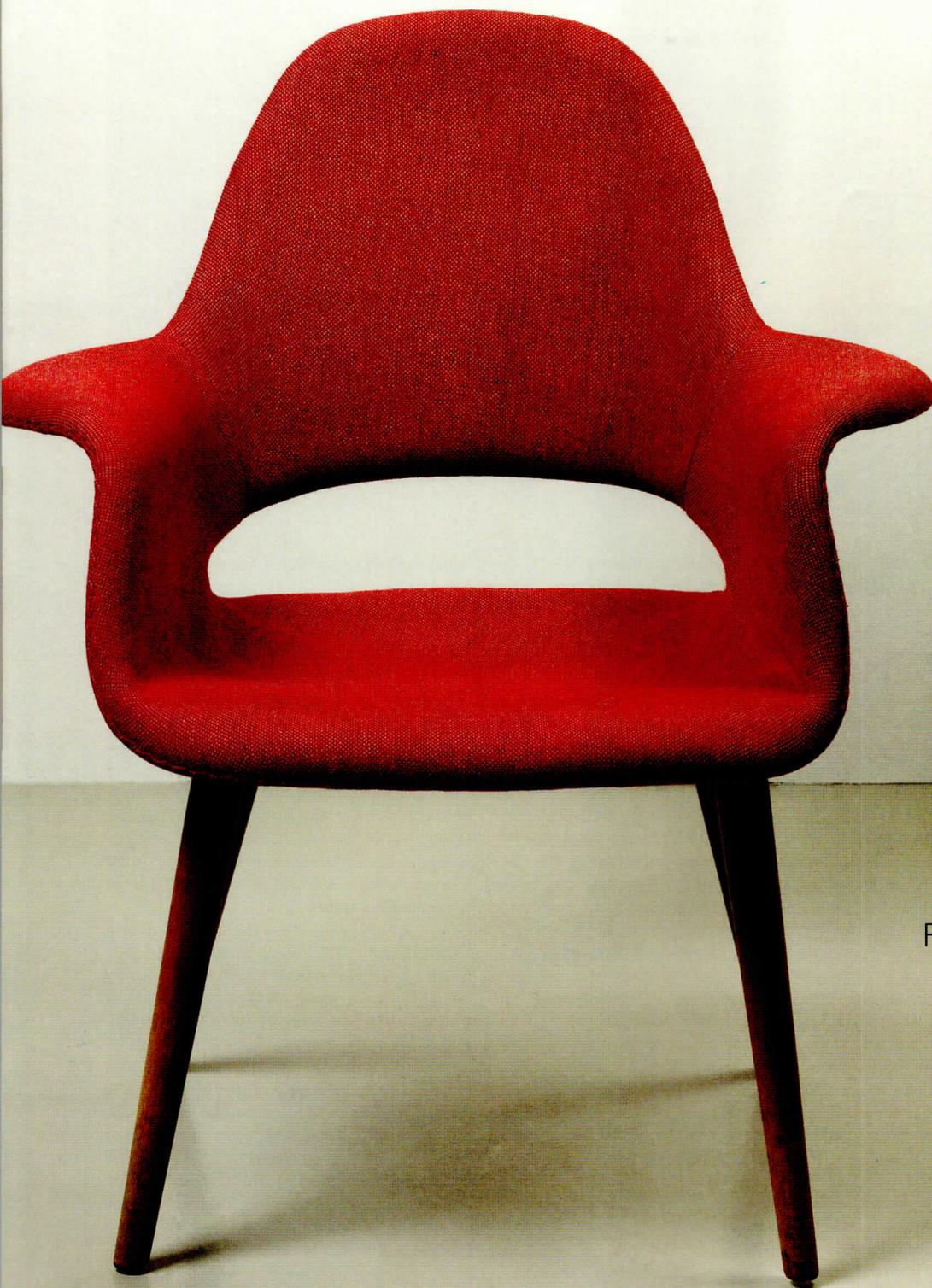
decades ago and subsequently reshaped American culture. These include the popularity of affordable, high-quality design attributable to pioneering retailers such as Chuck Williams; the revolutionary elevation of clay from the material of functional craft to that of ceramic sculpture in the hands of the influential Berkeley artist and teacher Peter Voulkos; and the creative reuse of historic architecture pioneered in Ghirardelli Square. One current emblem of this re-imagining of the past is the recent move by **Heath Ceramics**, the masters of mid-century ceramic tile and tableware, from the outskirts of Sausalito to a trendy SOMA/Mission District location. Closer to the firm's retail customer base, its welcoming design and handsome wares epitomize today's casually comfortable lifestyle—and its coffee bar serves up a first-rate cappuccino.



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*Eero Saarinen & Charles Eames, "Organic Chair",  
Mod. A3501, 1940, 85.8 x 73.5 x 65.5 cm, € 35,000 – 50,000*

# Re-Designing Design

THE MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM'S CURATOR DISCUSSES HER PROGRESSIVE APPROACH TO SHOWCASING A GROWING COLLECTION OF TWENTIETH- AND TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY DESIGN



By MONICA OBNISKI

The "Architecture, Materials, and Modernity" installation—also known as the "chair wall"—incorporates the concrete surface of David Kahler's building as another way to mediate modernity, by experiencing the materials of production. At the far right is Joris Laarman's 3-D-printed Soft Gradient chair, and in the center is Hans Wegner's Round chair.

"Old rose"-colored Nocturne radio (model #1196) made of mirrored glass, satin chrome-plated steel, and painted wood, designed by Walter Dorwin Teague c. 1935, and manufactured by the Sparton Corporation c. 1936.

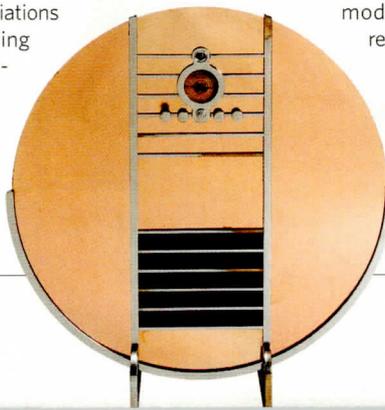
THE MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM reopened late last year after a \$34 million renovation that wonderfully integrates its collections with its buildings—by Eero Saarinen, David Kahler, Santiago Calatrava, and the Milwaukee branch of HGA, which designed the new East End addition. One particularly happy result is that, for the first time, there are now galleries devoted to the museum's expanding twentieth- and twenty-first-century design collection. These galleries don't present a chronological master narrative of design—materially and intellectually impossible given design's global reach. Instead, channeling network theory, they are set up as vignettes that suggest webs of influence and the ways objects relate to one another across time, mediums, and place.

For example, Mathias Bengtsson's aluminum Slice chair (1999) stands not far from Hans J. Wegner's 1949 Round chair, representing the legacy of mid-century Danish furniture, and a little ways away is Joris Laarman's 2015 Soft Gradient chair (from his *Microstructures* series). Laarman's studio made this chair by exploring 3-D printing technology—a digital process that was unavailable to Bengtsson in the late 1990s. The relationships between these works speak to my interest in the associations visitors make when encountering objects and that move them between pieces.

There are, as well, more traditional displays that combine objects from the museum's areas of strength, with generous

loans from local private collectors. For example, as the repository for the George Mann Niedecken Archives, the museum embraces Prairie school material, including several works from Rockledge, the house for Ernest L. King designed by George Washington Maher. A pioneering Prairie school architect, Maher applied what he called his "Motif-Rhythm theory" to the creation of his architectural Gesamtkunstwerks, or total works of art. Each commission, he felt, called for a geometric shape and a natural element to form a motif that would bring harmony to the whole; for the 1912 Rockledge commission he incorporated the tiger lily and a flat arch. A dining chair and a chest anchor the museum's display of furniture from Rockledge, supplemented by a mantel clock, a set of flatware, and andirons, all on long-term loan from generous private collectors.

The museum also possesses the archive of, and a large collection devoted to, Milwaukeean Brooks Stevens, who, along with many of the nation's leading designers at the time, was a charter member of the Society of Industrial Designers in 1944. This material allowed an installation that examines the process of design—from drawings and maquettes to realized products. The display sits near several areas dedicated to a major focus of the collection—American modern design. A highlight here is a recently acquired cocktail set (c. 1928) designed by German immigrant Elsa Tennhardt, and consisting of a cocktail shaker, whose shape alludes to skyscrapers, six cocktail glasses with undulating stems sprouting from triangular





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Cocktail set designed by Elsa Tennhardt and manufactured in silver-plated brass and Vitrolite glass by E. and J. Bass Company, c. 1928.



bases, and a diamond-shaped, black Vitrolite-topped tray with decorative triangular corners. Tea sets styled by Virginia Hamill and works by other female industrial designers from the period, including Hungarian-born illustrator and industrial designer Ilonka Karasz, surround Tennhardt's set.

Another key recent acquisition is the only (to my knowledge) extant "old rose"-colored Nocturne radio with original elements. It is one of a collection of radios designed in 1935 by Walter Dorwin Teague for the Sparton Corporation of Jackson, Michigan (another, the Bluebird, is also on view in the design galleries). Unveiled in September 1935 at the National Electrical and Radio Exposition for the 1936 retail year, the Nocturne was available in cobalt or peach ("old rose") glass and cost the princely sum of \$350. It was

a luxurious and expensive object likely used in public spaces such as hotel lobbies, rather than domestic settings.

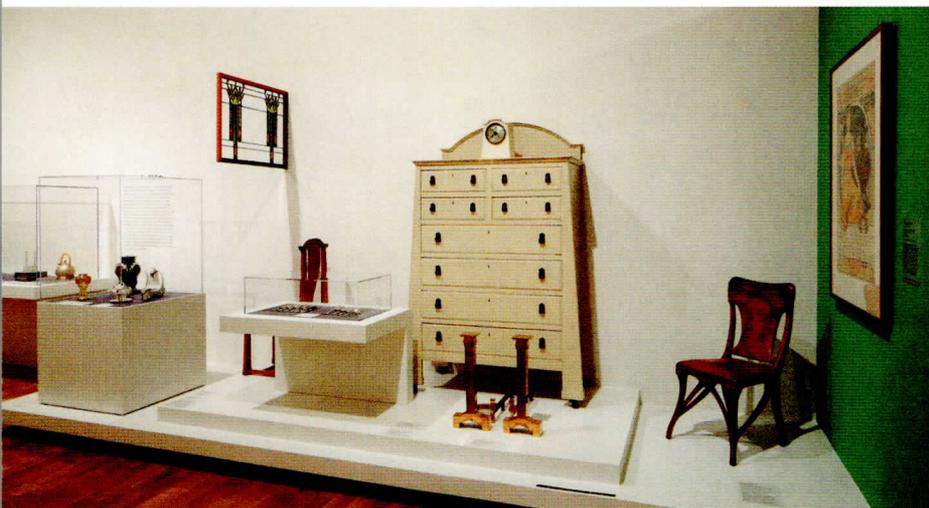
The growing collection of modern American design is supplemented by generous loans, among them a gear table designed for the lobby of Milwaukee's A. O. Smith Research and Engineering Building in 1929-1930. Constructed of stone, aluminum, and glass, the art deco building designed by Holabird and Root of Chicago, one of America's largest architectural firms at the time, was considered both modern and efficient, its completely sealed interior maximizing light and space. The table, in aluminum and glass, was emblematic of America's "Machine Age."

Visitors to the Milwaukee Art Museum's design galleries will experience a view of design far beyond the conventional decorative arts—through jewelry, wallpaper, textiles, graphic design, and more, organized in a manner that invites exploration of a range of relationships. To allow visitors to experience the diversity of the museum's design holdings, I plan to rotate several areas within the galleries on a regular basis—so please visit Milwaukee often!

**The "Brooks Stevens Process of Design" installation features works on paper and photographs from the Milwaukee-born industrial designer's archive as well as objects by his firm.**

**The diversity of materials and styles across Europe and the United States in the early twentieth century—arts and crafts, Jugendstil, art nouveau, and Wiener Werkstätte—are seen in the "Equality for All Arts" installation.**

MONICA OBNISKI is the Demmer Curator of 20th- and 21st-Century Design at the Milwaukee Art Museum.



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# Random Acts of Artistry

NICK PARKER  
GIVES NEW  
MEANING TO  
THE IDEA OF  
UPCYCLING

By LAURA RASKIN



IT SEEMS ALMOST TOO FITTING that Nick Parker lives and works next to a junk shop so thick and dark with other people's castoffs that it's hard to see how one would make a path inside. Detritus is Parker's medium. At his studio in his apartment in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood, the artist takes almost any and all scraps—dried paint peeled off of cans, brass and acrylic shavings, leftovers from the fabrication shop where he works—and combines them in layers with pigment and cement. When the mixture is dry, he sands it down until the desired composition of swirling colors is completed to his liking. It's as though he could, and probably does, sweep the floor of his studio and then mine the pile for material. "I try not to buy any art supplies," he says.

Parker, who graduated in 2008 from the Cooper Union School of Art, has used wood boards, chip bags, and beer cans as his canvases, but lately he's been concentrating on small vases that he forms with pieces of foam. Once the cement dries, he sands the containers with very fine sandpaper and polishes them with oil, wax, or other finishing compounds and attempts to make them waterproof. The process takes time; in four months, he can create about eight vases.

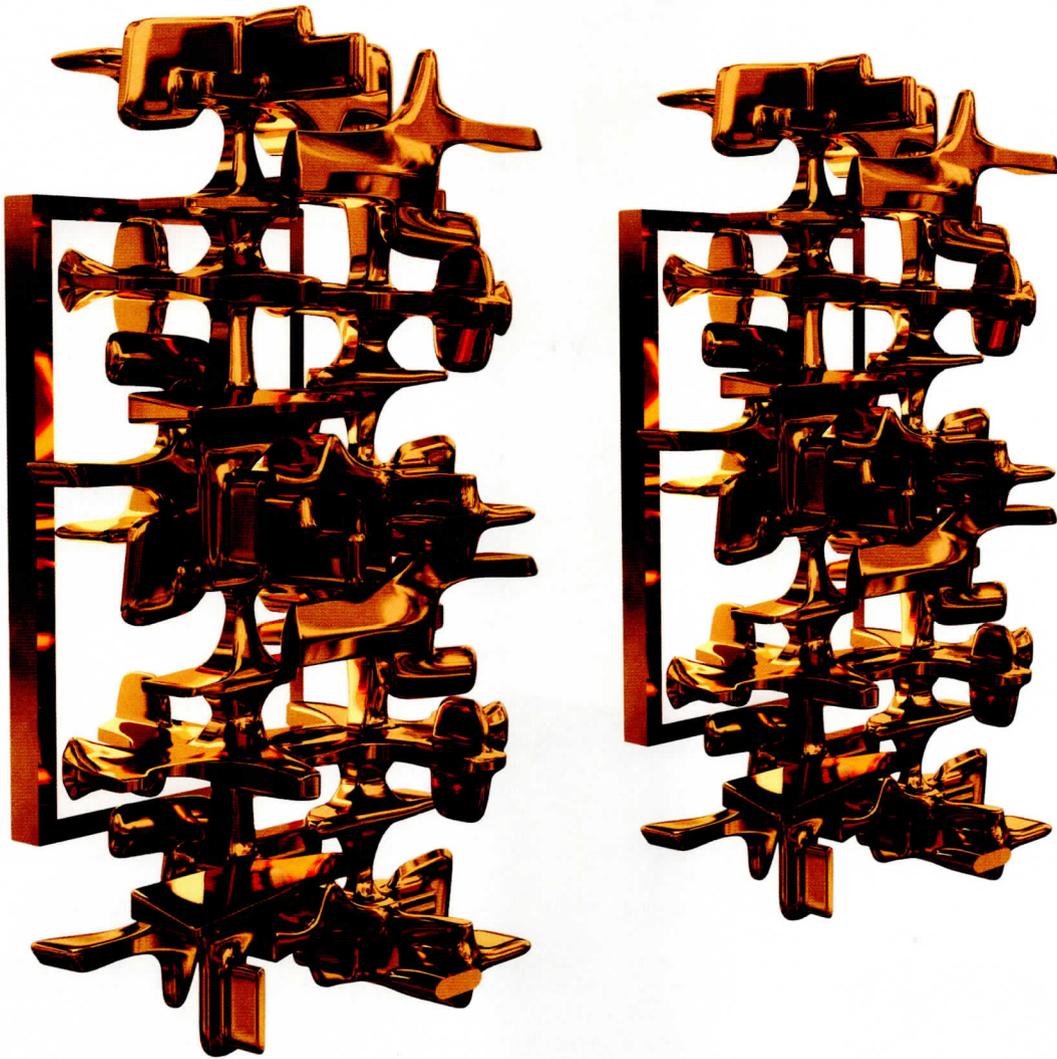
Parker's comments about himself come at an equally measured, quiet drip; he appreciates the slowness of his work and laments that

In Parker's Bushwick studio, his brightly colored paintings and vessels line the wall while pieces in various stages of completion, and the materials used to create them, are spread out across the floor, revealing his creative process.

*Like Living Inside of a Great Glass Grand Piano*, 2015, is part of Nick Parker's Lacarazzo series, and is made from dyed and pigmented cement, embedded with brass and other found materials and scraps, and then polished with a wax finish.



CRAIG VAN DEN BRULLE



ROEN SCENCES BY CRAIG VAN DEN BRULLE

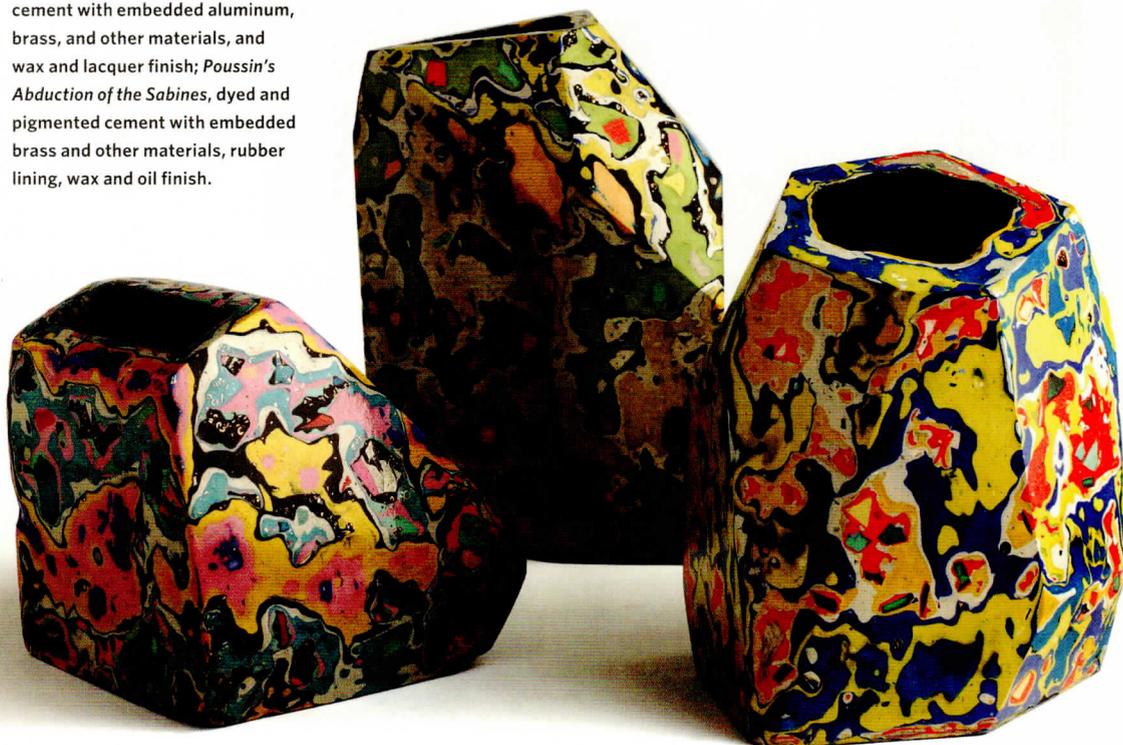
POLISHED BRONZE / EDITION OF 20 PAIRS

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Parker's painting *Pizza*, 2013, is oil-based paint compound with additional embedded materials and scraps.

Three vessels from the Lacarazzo series, 2015: *The Dustbuster Turns 30*, dyed and pigmented cement with embedded brass and other materials, and resin, wax, and lacquer finish; *"The House You Live In": B-Side to Gordon Lightfoot's "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald,"* dyed and pigmented cement with embedded aluminum, brass, and other materials, and wax and lacquer finish; *Poussin's Abduction of the Sabines*, dyed and pigmented cement with embedded brass and other materials, rubber lining, wax and oil finish.



he doesn't slow down even more. "It gives me a lot of time to think about what I would want to do differently. There's a lot to explore." The repetitive rules and parameters around his work, from the building up to the sanding down, give him freedom. "There's always something else that is going to happen by making something in a similar way," he says. "There's a schedule to follow and it gives me time to know what to change."

Damon Crain, an art consultant and expert in mid-twentieth-century glass, discovered Parker's work on Instagram and now sells the vessels through his gallery, Culture Object. Crain was initially drawn to their similarity to terrazzo and Japanese lacquer work. They also have something in common with the dusty, intricate cement tiles that have lined walls, floors, and walkways in Cuba from as early as the late nineteenth century. As in Parker's work, each square inch contains a miniature world of texture and depth.

Parker has always been attracted to bright colors. "They've been in my paintings for a long time," he says. Detritus has been a similar longtime interest. He describes a business plan he and his friends at Cooper Union devised in which they would make objects out of garbage and sell them, "recycling what would be trash."

Parker grew up in Newtown, Pennsylvania, thirty miles northeast of Philadelphia. He knew he wanted to be an artist in high school, but only after he grew tired of being in a metal band. There weren't any professional artists in his family, but his father is a musician and his grandmother paints, and his mouth curls into a smile when he talks about chatting with her about her paintings. Despite his work's visual connection to specialized processes, he didn't get any formal training in ceramics or sculpture at Cooper Union—which isn't a place where technical precision is emphasized, anyway. Though Parker's process may be routinized, the outcome is not. "The way that it's put together makes it so that the way it comes together is totally random," he says. "A lot of chance is involved."

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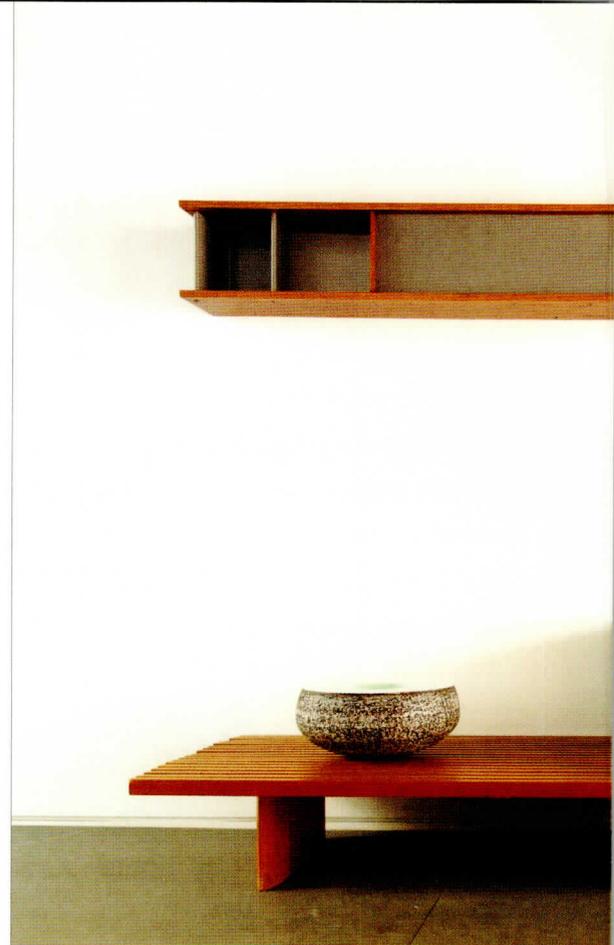
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THE LEGENDARY  
PARISIAN GALLERIST  
FOUND MODERNISM  
IN THE CITY'S  
FLEA MARKETS



PHILIPPE JOUSSE, FOUNDER of Jousse Entreprise, one of the leading design galleries in Paris, is not one to blow his own horn. While the French governing and cultural elite habitually defines itself by its schooling, Jousse claims a workaday alma mater. "I was trained at the école de Vanves" he said in a recent interview: No Grande École, Vanves, just a small weekend street market for junk and bric-a-brac in a working class neighborhood on the southern fringe of Paris.

Born in 1952 in Le Mans, a provincial city best known for its twenty-four-hour car race, Jousse arrived in Paris at sixteen to seek a living as a photographer. Ten years later he found the French modernists. "One day in 1978 I bought a table by Jean Prouvé and with it was a ten-page article by Jacques Adnet on the global work of Prouvé—his architecture, furniture and structures," Jousse says. The monograph by Adnet, one of the leading French



## Philippe Jousse Looks Back and Forward

By CLAUDIA BARBIERI

exponents of art deco and modernist design, had a profound impact. "I was smitten. Within a few months I became passionate about this designer. My encounter with the work of Jean Prouvé changed my life."

This was a vibrant time in the Parisian art world. The Centre Pompidou had been inaugurated just a year earlier, in 1977. Now, work was beginning on converting the disused Gare d'Orsay into the Musée d'Orsay; meanwhile, the famed Drouot auction rooms were temporarily lodged in the grand salons of the former Orsay station hotel while their new premises were being built across the river.

Art deco was in. Jousse loved the buzz of the art market. But with no money of his own, no financial backers, and no contacts, the work of the likes of Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann was way beyond his financial reach. Still, he was determined to start somewhere; given his limited circumstances, the obvious place to start was the flea market. "I learned the trade on the job. I had no art history training so I was inclined to be more radical in my approach," he explains.

It was in the Paris flea markets that he found the modernists—Prouvé and Charlotte Perriand, Jean Royère and Pierre Jeanneret, friends, associates and disciples of Charles Édouard Jeanneret, aka Le Corbusier. In the 1970s they were totally out of fashion, and correspondingly affordable. What Jousse liked was the globality of their vision—that it encompassed furniture, architecture, and structure, and that there was a relationship between these different domains. What he also liked was the concept of flat-pack, modular, moveable





nomadism that was inherent in their ideas. "It's the kind of furniture that is very easy to live with," Jousse says.

He started buying Prouvé and Perriand furniture, initially just for himself. There were no collectors to sell to, but equally there were few dealers competing for stock. The same year that Jousse bought his first table, François Laffanour—now the owner of Downtown Gallery, Jousse's next-door neighbor in the Rue de Seine but then just another flea marketer—bought his first Prouvé chair.

By the mid-1980s Jousse had built a collection large enough to support the start of what became a series of groundbreaking solo designer shows. In 1985, a year after Prouvé's death, came the first Prouvé show, a relatively modest no-catalogue affair in Jousse's flea market booth; in 1987 the first solo retrospective devoted to Charlotte Perriand, followed by another in 1990; in 1994 Prouvé again, a grander show with a carefully researched catalogue; in 1995 the ceramist Georges Jouve; in 2000 the furniture maker Jean Royère.

At the same time Jousse started to expand his market, opening to an international clientele through Sanford Smith's Modernism shows in New York. "There was a novelty effect. Between 1985 and 1988 the style caught on in New York, when people like Brant bought Jean Royère and Prouvé," Jousse

says, referring to the collector Peter Brant: "People would meet at our stand and chat."

In 1989 a young Patrick Seguin spotted a Prouvé Standard chair at Jousse's stall—then in Marché Paul Bert, part of the St. Ouen flea market behind Montmartre—and, like Jousse himself, was instantly wowed. The two went into business together, opening a gallery in the up-and-coming Bastille district of eastern Paris, a few blocks from the newly built Bastille Opera house. For roughly a decade they worked together, widening and deepening the French modernist market through major shows and meticulously prepared monograph-catalogues—perhaps most notably their joint show of Prouvé at the 2000 Venice Architecture Biennial.

But the Venice show was something of a swansong. Around the same time, the partnership ended and the two gallerists went separate ways. Galerie Jousse-Seguine split into Galerie Patrick Seguin and Jousse Entreprise.

For Emmanuel Berard, design specialist at the French auction house Artcurial, the split reflected a widening divergence of interests. Seguin, he said, was increasingly concentrating on the architectural aspects of modernist design while Jousse was ranging wider. "The great thing about Jousse is that he does a lot of trail-blazing," Berard said in a phone interview. "He's full of curiosity. He was the first to look at Prouvé. He and Seguin were pioneers; but while Seguin and others, like Laffanour, have concentrated on the 1950s, Jousse has a much wider angle of vision, a wider curiosity. He's still faithful to the furniture, he still shows Perriand, Prouvé, Jouve, but he's also moved into ceramics and contemporary art. He was one of the first to show Pierre Paulin, to promote Roger



Far left: An exhibition view of a group show at Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris, 2012, featuring the work of Jean Prouvé.

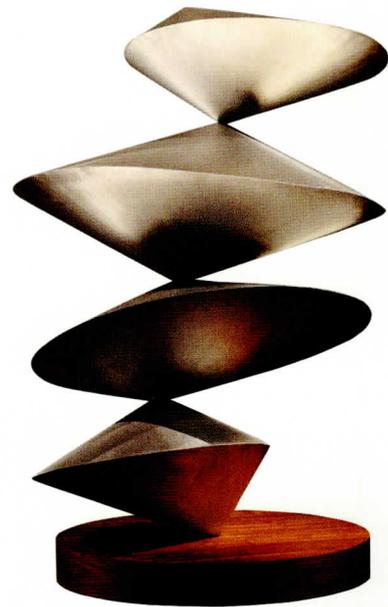
Above: Architect and designer Charlotte Perriand's Banquette Tokyo, c. 1960.

Polyester resin Toad armchair, 1968, by François-Xavier Lalanne, Édition Résine d'Art O. Haligon.

Tallon, Mathieu Matégot, the Lalannes, designers of the 1960s, '70s and '80s. He's more eclectic."

Reflecting that eclecticism, Jousse now has two galleries—18 Rue de Seine for architect furniture and design, and 6 Rue Saint-Claude, across the river in the Marais district, for contemporary art. The art gallery presents the work of more than a dozen artists, including the American Richard Kern, the Japanese Kishin Shinoyama, and the Danish collective Superflex. "I like working with living artists, accompanying their development—and over time Prouvé and his circle have died," Jousse says.

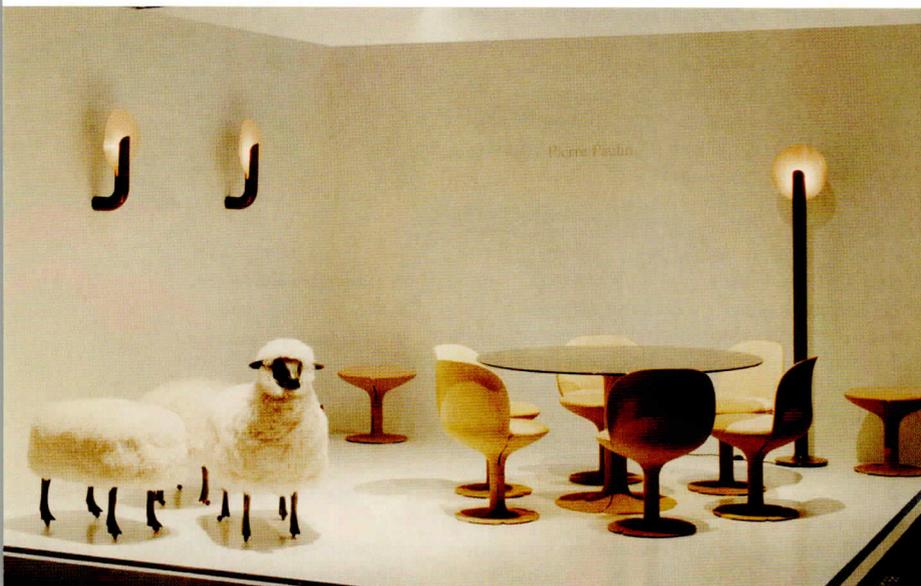
"One thing that's certain is that furniture is not art," he adds. "Function defines the form. I adore Prouvé, but I have to do other things. Art is my second passion—related but not related."



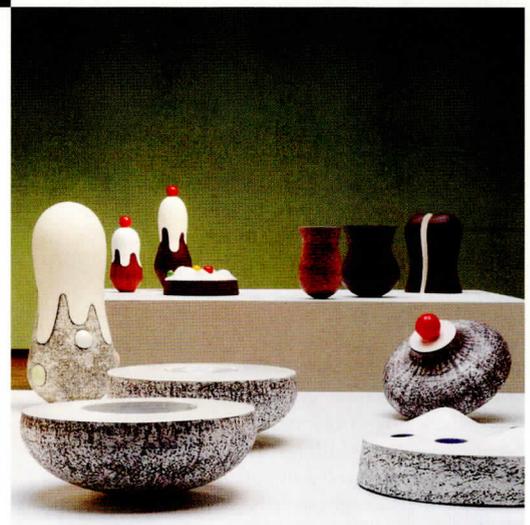
*Pickpocket* by Julien Prévieux, 2015, made of aluminium and wood.

Galerie Jousse Entreprise's display at Design Miami, 2013, including Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne's *Wool sheep*, 1969, and ottomans, 1968.

Exhibition of Kristin McKirdy's ceramic works at Galerie Jousse Entreprise, 2013, Paris.



To run the galleries (plus, inevitably in the modern market, international art fair stands and pop-up shows for global collectors) Jousse works with a team of ten. He also works with his son Matthias, who abandoned a career in theater to join the business in 2002. "I was an assistant director but from the age of twenty I was already buying a few pieces at the Paul Bert market," Matthias Jousse told me. "Then my father proposed to me to come to the gallery and show '60s and '70s design. So I'm extending the gallery, following the same track but twenty years later. My father knew Prouvé and Paulin toward the end of their lives. Over the years, they've passed on. We need contemporary artists for new inspiration. We need them, to breathe."



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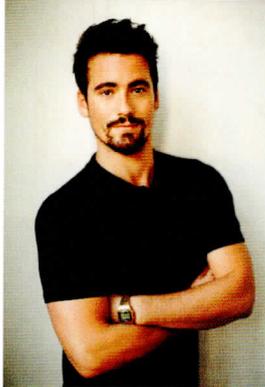
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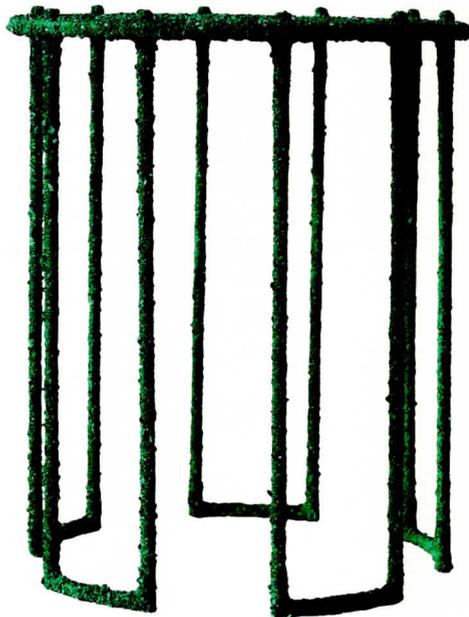
DESIGNER SAMUEL AMOIA CRAFTS A GLITTERING NEW COLLECTION FOR DELORENZO GALLERY

## The Crystal Method

By ANNA FIXSEN

ON A RECENT AFTERNOON the scene inside designer Samuel Amoia's bright Long Island City studio was one of orderly commotion. Two assistants, donning respirators, pressed dusty bits of lapis lazuli onto the underside of a round coffee table, taking breaks to pulverize larger chunks into particles the size of fish-tank gravel. Amoia, dressed in Nike sneakers, tapered sweats, and a snug white T-shirt, grabbed a handful of the crushed stones and ran them underneath a faucet to demonstrate the desired visual effect: "The color explodes," he says admiringly of the resulting spectrum of china and cerulean blues.

The mineral-encrusted coffee table is part of a ten-piece collection Amoia has designed for DeLorenzo Gallery, a dealer known for its impeccable holdings of twentieth-century decorative arts that include works by Eileen Gray, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Alexandre Noll. Amoia will be the first living designer



Side table of crushed malachite from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Drum of black tourmaline from India.

from whom the gallery has commissioned work, marking a new chapter for both the burgeoning interior designer and the Manhattan gallery. "He is adventurous," gallery director Adriana Friedman says of Amoia. "His work spoke to me like Jean-Michel Frank's did—things that could be timeless."

While Amoia knew he wanted to pursue design, his career path meandered. After a stint modeling, he turned to hospitality, serving as a manager at various André Balazs properties, including the Mercer and the Standard in New York. A serendipitous run-in with celebrated interior designer Stephen Sills changed all that. To Amoia's surprise, Sills offered him a job. "I was really the luckiest person in the world," he says. Under Sills's tutelage, Amoia flourished. And eventually, with his mentor's blessing, he established his eponymous firm, Samuel Amoia Associates, in 2012. He went on to design high-end residential and commercial interiors throughout the United States and Central America, including a

ALL IMAGES ARE EILEEN CHANG PHOTOS



chic gym for Stephen Cheuk's S10 Training in TriBeCa; an eco-inspired penthouse for 1 Hotel & Homes in Miami Beach; and a series of lagoon cottages for the Itz'ana Resort and Residences in Belize. During such projects, he began his first forays into custom furnishings.

"Jean-Michel Frank, Les Lalanne, Jean Royère, Eileen Gray—they are the masters of design because the work shows so much restraint," Amoia says. "I was interested in doing work like that, but using materials that were not necessarily luxurious." He started investigating materials that were perhaps better suited to a garage than a gallery: cement, gypsum, plaster, and rock salt. With sculptor Fernando Mastrangelo, he established AMMA Studio, where he created objects caked in pink Himalayan salt and black silica. The work gained a cult following of elite clientele, including Stella McCartney and Jenna Lyons. The AMMA partnership dissolved, but Amoia continued to pursue object making. For the Itz'ana project (named after the Mayan deity of day and night), he unveiled a rustic home collection

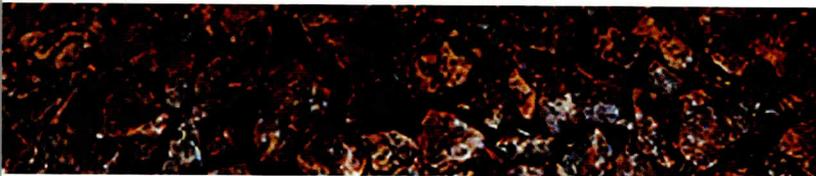
inspired by French art deco and Central American craft, made from locally sourced palo blanco wood. His latest endeavor, Amoia Studio, which he founded with his brother Dominic last fall, is a furniture-focused offshoot of his interior design practice. In a recent capsule collection for Dover Street Market, the purveyor of high-end avant-garde fashions, they developed a set of ten plaster drums embedded with semi-precious stones; the resulting material is a sort of shamanic terrazzo.

Last year Amoia was tapped by Friedman to design DeLorenzo's new interiors on Madison Avenue. Unbeknownst to Amoia, Friedman was also looking to commission a collection from a contemporary artist and had an assistant cull images from a variety of emerging designers. During a meeting with Amoia, Friedman recalls, "He said 'Let me show you what I also do,' and he pulls out the only table I had pulled out from the stack!" She laughs: "It was meant to be."

Together with gallery founder Anthony DeLorenzo, they began envisioning the collection. Friedman



Console and coffee table with brass shavings and white Italian onyx tops.



In a collaboration with Dover Street Market, Samuel Amoia created the Mineral Terrazzo series, a collection of ten drums made of fifteen different mineral rocks from Brazil mixed with cream plaster.

Side table of black tourmaline from India and black cement plaster.

Seven-leg Picasso coffee table made of white plaster and Picasso jasper from India.

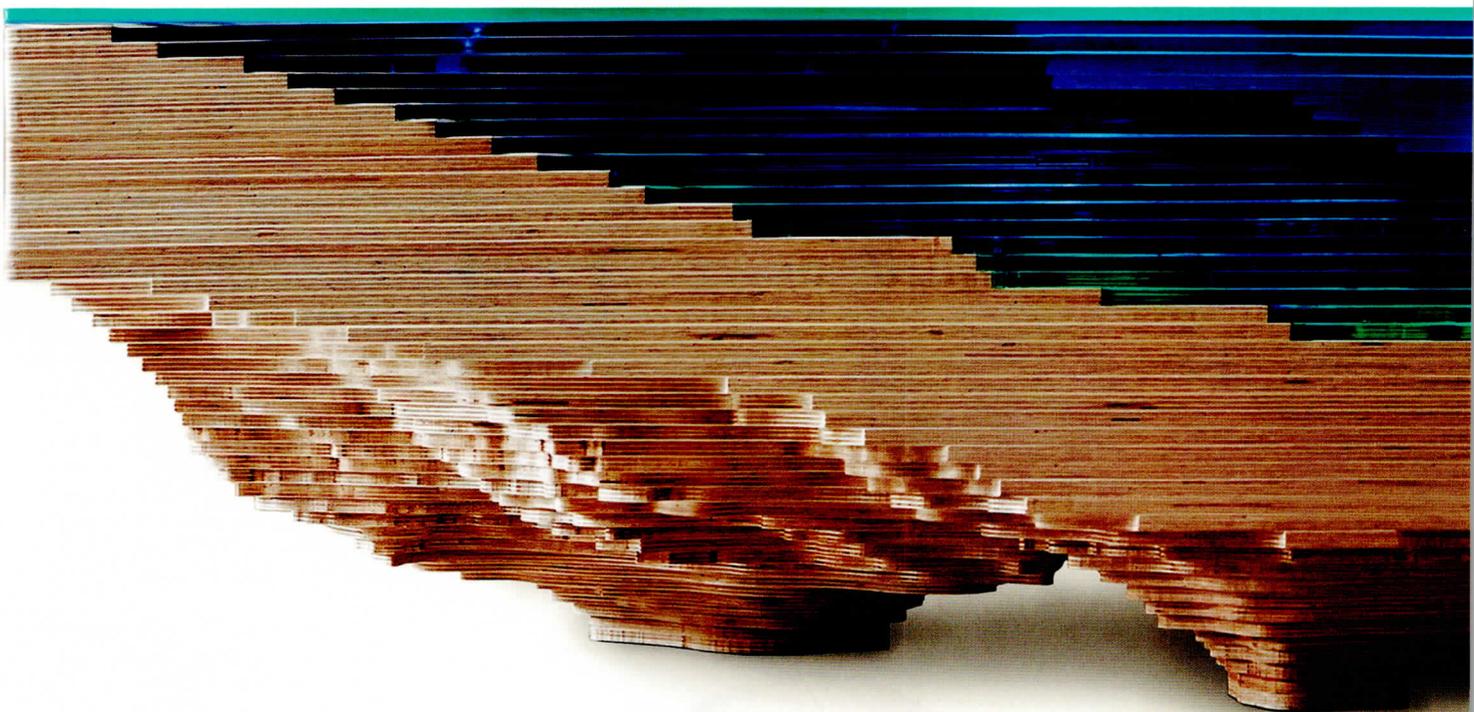


says, "I wanted a storyline that was very much in the spirit of what he had been making." Back in Amoia's Long Island City studio (he is using it part-time to fabricate this collection; his main studio is in Greenpoint, Brooklyn) the collection was nearly complete. Downstairs, a photographer shot the latest gleaming additions—a curvaceous red-jasper table, legs as delicate as croquet wickets, and a bean-shaped coffee table and matching console, both topped with milky slabs of white onyx. "A lot of my stuff is masculine and bold," Amoia explains as he observes the shoot. "This is more feminine and fluid." But the pieces still maintain an edge; the reed-thin legs of the console and coffee table are coated in needle-sharp brass shavings. Nearby, a drum prototype—covered in an abstract pattern of clay—sat ready to be cast in heavy brass.

Amoia considers this recent work to be his best. The industry agrees: this year, Maison & Objet awarded Amoia with a Rising American Talent award. The pace is only picking up: in addition to this series, Amoia is working on a collection of the drums for retailer AHAlife, pursuing a lighting and accessories line, and is in talks to do an interior design television show. In the studio a pyrite-covered console table commissioned by Peter Marino was en route to a Dior boutique in London. To boot, Amoia is now working on a new set of villas for the Itz'ana Resort and a to-be-announced residential project in Berlin. Fortunately, he says, "I do my best work on an airplane."



# THE SALON ART+ DESIGN



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## The Evolution and Revolution of Stephen Burks

THE LINE BETWEEN ART AND DESIGN IS SO BLURRED NOW THAT IT'S NOT EVEN WORTH ASKING WHICH IS WHICH

By BETH STEBNER

DESCRIBING STEPHEN BURKS'S work can be quite difficult, if for no other reason than that it changes dramatically with each new project or collaboration. Over the past decade, the designer behind the eponymous Stephen Burks Man Made studio has joined forces with basket weavers in Senegal and artisans in Peru and India, earning him a Cooper Hewitt National Design Award last year, along with growing recognition around the globe. And he's kept the momentum up, most recently debuting his Noir pendant lights at Armory Design Projects in March. The lamps embody his analog-meets-digital approach—Burks designed each of the three sizes digitally, but had artisans hand-rub them with graphite to achieve a



deep sheen. "Those touches for me allow the viewer to imagine that the object comes from a place of artistic impression," he says. In other words? The line between art and design is so blurred now that it's not even worth asking the question of which is which.

He also designed the central lounge at the Armory Show this past spring by bringing back an old collaboration—his Dala for Dedon collection of ottomans, side tables, and stools. The furniture is comprised of fibers created from recycled food and drink packaging and expertly woven by Philippine artisans—all, of course, in Burks's signature bright colors of turquoise, ocher, and burnt orange.

One thing's for certain: the Brooklyn-based designer is always looking to forge new pathways and new partnerships, as evidenced by his collaborations with such brands as Harry Winston, Swarovski, and Missoni. Most recently he's paired with the famed French furniture brand Roche Bobois—coincidentally, the company's first collaboration with an American designer in its storied forty-year history. Burks traveled to Indonesia with Nicolas Roche himself to garner inspiration for the Traveler collection of outdoor chairs.

We caught up with Burks at the Roche Bobois Madison Avenue flagship store to talk about the Traveler collection, craft, color, and the process of creation, as well as the seismic shift happening in the design world.

Stephen Burks's new Noir pendant lights are hand-rubbed with graphite to achieve their deep luster.

Burks's Traveler collection for Roche Bobois includes the covered armchair at right and the round table and chairs on the opposite page, among other forms.

Above is a detail of the collection's signature intricately wrapped cording.



**Beth Stebner/MODERN Magazine:** Tell me about the Traveler collection—it's so colorful!

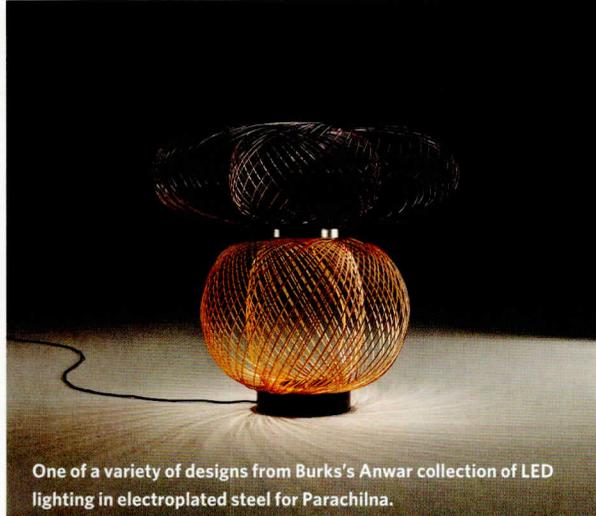
**Stephen Burks:** I love color, I love pattern, I love texture. For me, the Traveler line takes the iconic Roche Bobois brand and transforms it, taking inspiration from the desire to bring a little piece of paradise home with you after your travels. To me, color communicates a kind of humanity, a dynamic sense of place coming from real culture and real people, and not necessarily something that could be pumped out by a machine. There's also a cultural legibility at work when we exhibit how things are made. Cord going around and around a tube catches the imagination and makes you wonder, "Where did this come from?" What luxury is for me today is how something is made. You can trace this production back to a people and a culture and a way of making that is timeless.

**MM:** You've collaborated with such nonprofits as Aid to Artisans and the Clinton Global Initiative—among others—and that, in turn, has led you to work with artisans from Peru to Indonesia. But you've been very clear that it's not charity.

**SB:** We believe in trade, not aid. We're not interested in donating to communities, we're interested in collaborating with makers who have strong contributions to make and in helping them see how design can extend craft traditions into the future. We make no distinction between a European artisan and an African artisan. Plugging into the brands we work with is our way of making the connections to those in the diaspora. I want to engage different points of view and different communities and different cultures.

**MM:** What kinds of challenges do you encounter as a minority designer?

**SB:** It's fantastic that I was able to break through, but it's sad how closed and monocultural the design world is. When any industry lacks diversity, it tends to close doors. Design needs to be more inclusive. I've always believed everyone is capable of design. Rather than saying "Euro-styling," we need to say things like "pluralistic" and "multicultural" because probably 99.9% of the



One of a variety of designs from Burks's Anwar collection of LED lighting in electroplated steel for Parachilna.

world lives without the luxury of having "design." Although everything around them is designed, it may lack a kind of consciousness. Where and when will we see the next wave of design revolution? Africa, Asia, South America? This is what I hope to participate in.

**MM:** Walk me through your creative process, from idea to implementation.

**SB:** I like starting from zero. I don't have a signature style, I'm not a formalist, per se. I'm really interested in finding the right balance between my own point of view and that of the collaborators we work with. Sometimes it's a sketch, sometimes it's a collage, a photograph. Innovation for me comes through greater proximity with the making—the closer we can get to the act of making, the greater potential we have for innovation.

**MM:** Can you talk about your use of color in your designs?

**SB:** As I said, I love color and pattern and texture. But when people say [my] design is always colorful, they miss the point. It's reductive. It's not always going to be colorful, or a woven texture. This isn't a trend for me, this is a revolutionary and evolutionary process, and really about returning the hand to industry.

**MM:** What's your favorite piece of furniture in your apartment?

**SB:** I tend to surround myself with other people's work at home. It's a toss-up between my Vitsœ 606 shelving system because it really works and it's so functional, and my Jean Prouvé dining table. Of my own designs I'm partial to the Anwar floor lamp, because it's such a sculptural object and it really is a thing before it's a lamp. Anwar's also the name of my son, and it means "luminous" in Arabic.



Center: In 2004 Burks created a limited edition of two hundred Patchwork vases, recycling Missoni fabrics to cover existing glass or ceramic vases.

# The Silent Partner



THE LITTLE-KNOWN JAN RUHTENBERG HELPED PHILIP JOHNSON SHAPE HIS EARLY CAREER

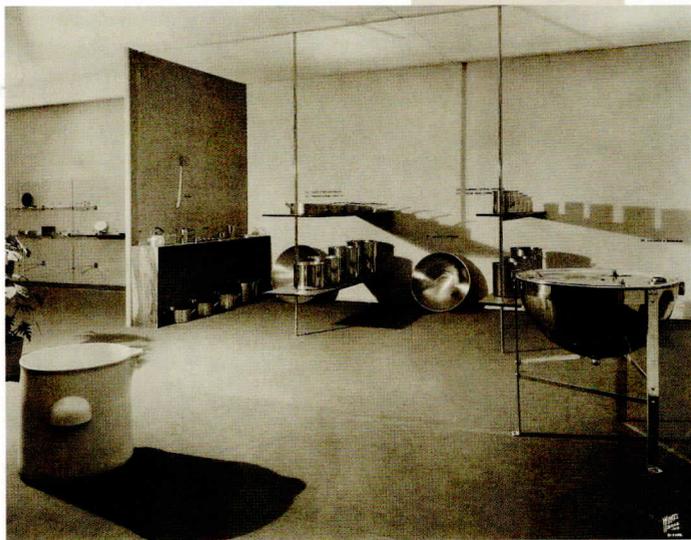
By DAVID A. HANKS

LONG BEFORE HE ACTUALLY COMPLETED his architecture degree in 1943, Philip Johnson was the first curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art. His early important exhibitions there—*Modern Architecture: International Exhibition* in 1932 and *Machine Art* in 1934—typified his lifelong practice of achieving success through collaborations with other talented individuals. He worked with Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Alfred H. Barr Jr. on *Modern Architecture* and with Jan Ruhtenberg on *Machine Art*. Although the Hitchcock-Johnson connection is well known, little information has been available until recently about Johnson's partnership with Ruhtenberg, even though the success of *Machine Art* was due in large part to it. Not only has Ruhtenberg's important role in the exhibition been overlooked, so has his later architecture.

Born in Riga, Latvia, Ruhtenberg attended the University of Leipzig and worked for a furniture manufacturer until 1928, when, at age thirty-two, he received a full scholarship to study architecture at the Berliner Technische Hochschule and moved to Berlin with his wife and three children. He met Johnson the following year, and a personal relationship between the two began to develop. Johnson visited Europe frequently, for months at a time, and he and Ruhtenberg traveled together, visiting the Bauhaus in 1930, and shared an apartment, designed by Ruhtenberg, at 22 Achenbachstrasse in Berlin. Johnson wrote to his mother—on new letterhead designed by Ruhtenberg—that it was his “permanent address in Europe from now on,” though in the end they probably only shared it in 1930, and perhaps in the summer of 1931.

As his relationship with Ruhtenberg deepened so did Johnson's friendship with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. On September 17, 1930, Johnson wrote about Mies van der Rohe to the Dutch architect J. J. P. Oud: “It was curious how I got to know him so well. You know how impersonal and impassive he is. After seeing some of the rooms that he had decorated here in Berlin, I got the idea of getting him to do my room in New York for me. I went to call on him with my best friend, a German, Jan Ruhtenberg, who is beginning to study architecture. Mies was most polite and distant, but we were lucky to be going to Dessau the same day he was going, so we took him with us in the car and then he opened up and talked all the way. . . . By the time we were back in Berlin he had agreed to take my friend Jan as the first voluntary assistant that he has ever had.”

Ruhtenberg was working in Mies van der Rohe's office when Johnson commissioned the design of his New York apartment in July 1930, and he worked on the project



Jan Ruhtenberg, Berlin, c. 1930.

Installation view of *Machine Art* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1934. The shining aluminum pots and pans were part of the kitchenwares section, one of the exhibition's six themes.

Philip Johnson and Alfred H. Barr Jr. at Lake Maggiore, Switzerland, April 1933.



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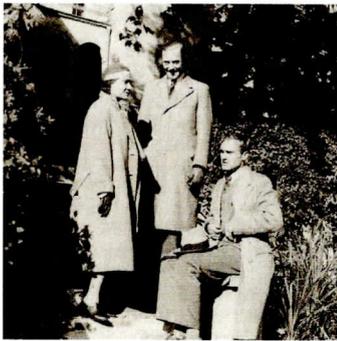
Panel from The Birth of Aphrodite Mural  
It was part of the Grand Salon on the  
Oceanliner Normandie  
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Theodate Johnson (Philip's sister), Ruhtenberg, and Johnson in Potsdam, Germany, 1932.



Apartment designed by Ruhtenberg and shared with Johnson at 22 Achenbachstrasse, Berlin, 1930, illustrated in Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Johnson's *The International Style* (1932). The wooden chest and table were of Ruhtenberg's own design. The tubular steel MR chair and stool were designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

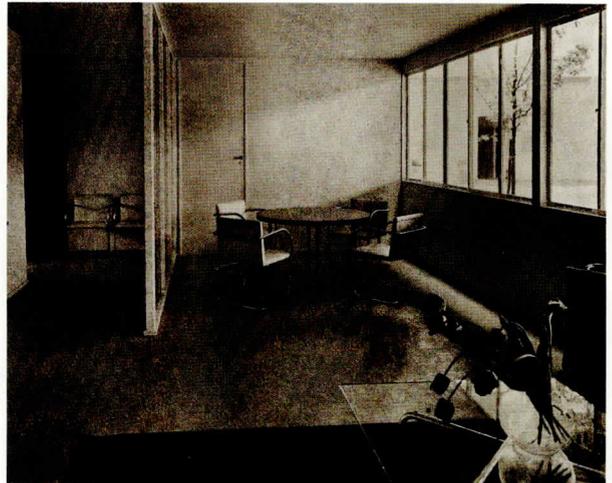
"House for a young married couple" designed by Carl Otto and Ruhtenberg for the German Building Exposition, Berlin, 1931, from *Arts & Decoration*, July 1934. Pictured is the dining corner as seen from the living-room area, with a table by Ruhtenberg surrounded by Brno armchairs by Mies van der Rohe. Ruhtenberg and Otto were awarded a gold medal for the design.

with the architect's partner Lilly Reich. Johnson deposited funds in Ruhtenberg's Berlin bank account so that he could pay German manufacturers for the furnishings for the apartment as well as Mies van der Rohe's fees on his behalf.

Though Johnson had no formal training in design at the time, he and Ruhtenberg had sketched ideas for Johnson's apartment during their travels in Europe. They also collaborated on designs for Johnson's mother's house in Pinehurst, North Carolina. Ruhtenberg would soon take on more major projects, both in his own right—designing a "house for a childless couple" in collaboration with Carl Otto for the German Building Exhibition in 1931, for example—and in partnership with Johnson.

In July 1933 Johnson wrote to Barr, "I have Eddie's [Edward M. M. Warburg] apartment to do and Dr. Morrissey's office in addition so I cabled Jan to come right over." Ruhtenberg, who had divorced his wife and moved to Sweden

Ruhtenberg's c. 1937 remodel of this New York town house incorporated furniture by Mies van der Rohe as well as his own furniture designs. Floor-to-ceiling curtains, hung across window walls, were characteristic of Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich's interiors and were used repeatedly by both Johnson and Ruhtenberg. The photograph is from *Architectural Forum*, July 1937.



two years earlier, arrived in New York on November 4, 1933. According to the manifest of the S.S. *Frederik VIII* he was a thirty-seven-year-old architect on his first visit to the United States and intended to stay with his "Friend: Philip Johnson/Museum of Modern Art."

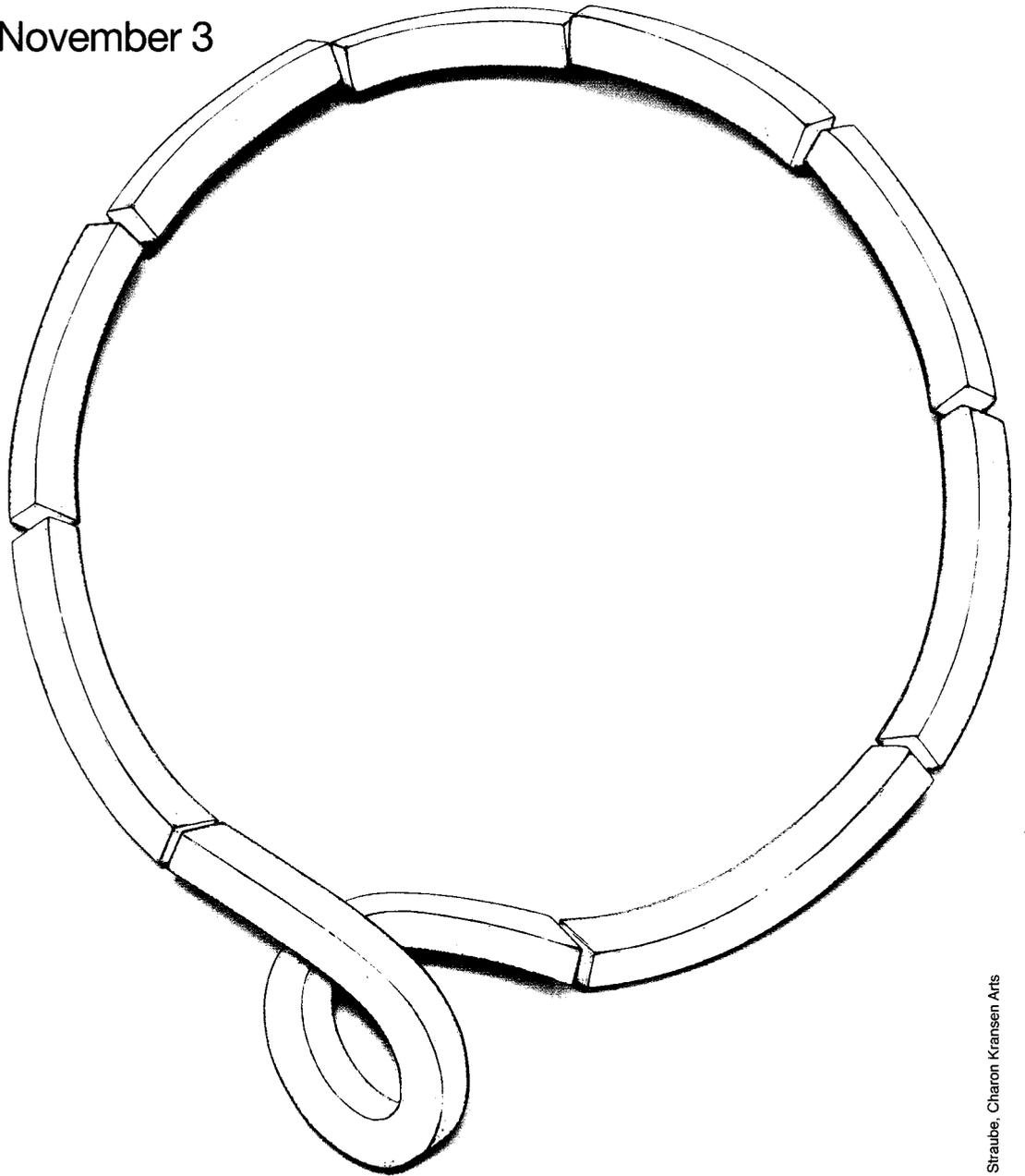
While a photograph of the Achenbachstrasse apartment was included in Johnson and Hitchcock's 1932 book *The International Style*, and Ruhtenberg is thanked there for "reading and criticizing" the text, it was in the *Machine Art* exhibition that his influence can most clearly be seen. Reviewing the show, Henry McBride wrote in the *New York Sun* on March 10, 1934, that Johnson had "such a genius for grouping things together and finding just the right background and the right light." But letters and other documents and photographs unearthed much later reveal that much of the credit should be shared with Ruhtenberg—far beyond his "assistance in designing the installation" noted in the exhibition catalogue.

Compared to Johnson's banal installations for *Modern Architecture* in 1932 and *Objects: 1900 and Today* in 1933, *Machine Art* was remarkable for its visual impact. The more than six hundred industrial objects included took up all three floors of the former Rockefeller town house that served as the museum building at the time. Influenced by German trade shows with innovative designs by Mies van der Rohe and Reich, Johnson and Ruhtenberg grouped industrial designs (WearEver aluminum

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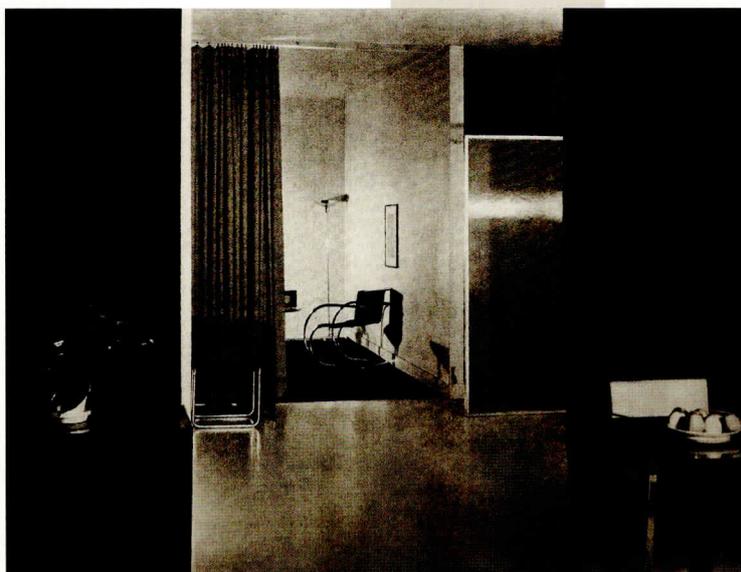
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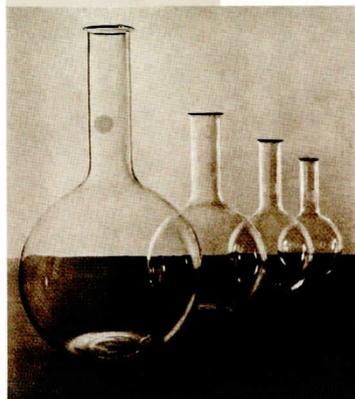
Christoph Straube, Charon Kransen Arts



Johnson (left) and Ruhtenberg (in hat), directing the installation of *Machine Art*, 1934.

As seen in this photograph from *Arts & Decoration*, January 1935, Johnson used furniture by Mies van der Rohe in his own New York apartments, here the living area of the apartment at 216 East 49th Street, c. 1934.

Photograph of Corning Pyrex chemical flasks by Ruth Bernhard from the *Machine Art* exhibition catalogue, 1934.



cooking utensils and Crusader hotel saucepans by Lalance and Grosjean) like sculpture in simple settings, emphasizing the aesthetic rather than the functional through dramatic lighting. Muslin concealed architectural details such as cornices and fixtures; black velvet table coverings provided drama in the third-floor "jewel room" where laboratory glass was shown.

The catalogue included equally dramatic photography by the then little-known Ruth Bernhard, also a German immigrant. Although the publication gives no design credit other than the cover by Josef Albers, Bernhard later recalled the circumstances: "In the early 1930s I was living on the corner of 34th Street and Lexington Avenue. . . . Jan von Ruhtenberg, who lived upstairs, was in charge of the design of the catalogue for the 1934 *Machine Art* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. He probably had never seen a photograph of mine, but, perhaps out of convenience, he suggested that if I'd like to do the illustrations, he'd start sending things over. . . . I arranged jars and glass bottles. I just loved the way they looked. I saw beauty in the light on objects." Though Bernhard went on to become a famous photographer of female nudes, she regarded this commission as her first big break.

The Johnson-Ruhtenberg working partnership lasted until Johnson left MoMA at the end of 1934 to pursue extreme right wing politics. Ruhtenberg remained in New York, working as an architect and teaching at Columbia University from 1934 to 1936 before moving to Colorado in 1940. Although Ruhtenberg remained comparatively unknown throughout his life, he was among the German émigrés instrumental in the spread of Bauhaus ideas and modern European architecture in North America. In 2013 his grandson Vessel Ruhtenberg organized an exhibition for the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, *Jan Ruhtenberg: Come Here Architekt*, an important first step in the process of making this talented architect better known.

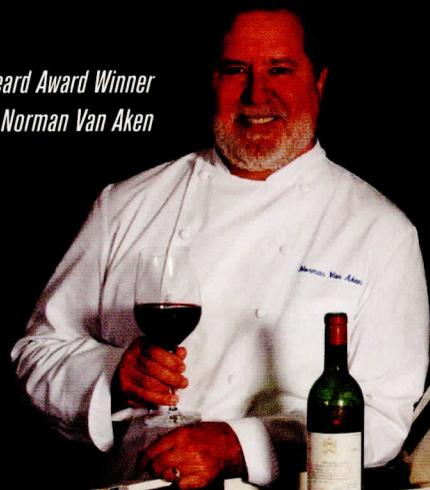
We are grateful to Vessel Ruhtenberg for providing information used in this article. Quotations in this article come from documents in the Philip Johnson Papers and the Alfred H. Barr Jr. Papers in the Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York, as well as the Philip C. Johnson Papers, 1927-1944, in the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

*Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson* is on view at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts to August 21.

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WE ASKED CURATORS OF LEADING TWENTIETH-CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY DESIGN COLLECTIONS TO DISCUSS ONE OBJECT THAT THEY FEEL IS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY. HERE IS A GALLERY OF THEIR CHOICES.



**Edward William Godwin  
(1833-1886)**  
TEA TABLE  
Mahogany  
c. 1880

THIS TABLE WAS DESIGNED about 1872 by the pre-eminent architect and aesthetic movement designer Edward William Godwin, an early adopter of Japonism. Godwin was part of a circle of British architects, artists, and writers, among them James McNeil Whistler and Oscar Wilde, who promoted Japonism in the arts in the latter part of the nineteenth-century. The table's asymmetrical shelves, fretwork stretchers, and proportions are characteristic of Japanese design, though the folding top owes its heritage to historical English models as well as to Godwin's own earlier furniture designs. It was probably made by Collinson and Lock, one of the renowned English cabinetmaking firms of the late nineteenth century and a frequent Godwin collaborator. The

table is often illustrated in discussions of Anglo-Japonism and the aesthetic period, alongside a drawing for it in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. That familiarity mistakenly gives the impression that the model was common. However, only seven, including the museum's, are known today in public and private collections. Godwin produced the table in mahogany, walnut, and ebonized versions, some of which feature other decorative features such as brass fittings or boxwood inlay.

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Sara and Bill Morgan Curator of  
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*Though the stool is probably the smartest unsexy form in furniture, it is at the heart of Kaufman's complex process*

IN HONOR OF DESIGN MUSEUM HOLON'S fifth anniversary, I invited visitors to experience the birth of a design idea—a stool by Yaacov Kaufman. A senior designer and former lecturer at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, as well as a known and appreciated international product designer, Kaufman is probably the most creative designer working in Israel today. The immense importance of his work springs from an extraordinary ability to expand the boundaries of formal design research.

The Tribe of Stools is his latest research project—475 1:1 scale stools created in his studio in Jaffa over eight years. All of them are shown here in the center of the gallery, a huge circle of stool evolution. At first glance they seem like duplicates or mutations—a fast-scrolling animation. A second look reveals slow and intricate systems of checks and hierarchy. No beginning or ending, no edges or margins—they are evolving endlessly. They offer the viewer a firsthand design lesson without any editing—a kind of three-dimensional exemplification of automatic

writing. Though the stool is probably the smartest unsexy form in furniture, it is at the heart of Kaufman's complex process: dismantling, processing and reasoning, questioning and expanding the results as they develop. At any given time he could have stopped. But he decided to continue to take apart, test, assemble, stretch, shrink, cut, paste, insert, sand, round, bend, connect, bind, perforate, and fill.

The visual and conceptual pleasure of experiencing this design process is usually reserved for professionals. Kaufman's series offers an experience that does not require being versed in the language of design or trade. The Tribe of Stools is like a large extended family: they share a family name exactly like we do, and are likewise similar yet unique.

**Galit Gaon**

Chief curator  
Design Museum Holon  
Holon, Israel

**Yaacov Kaufman**  
THE TRIBE OF STOOLS  
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*Wood devoted her practice to luster-glazing techniques and developed a signature style featuring shades of green, pink, purple, silver, copper, and gold*



**BEATRICE WOOD  
(1893-1998)**

*UNTITLED*  
Earthenware with  
gold luster glaze  
1987

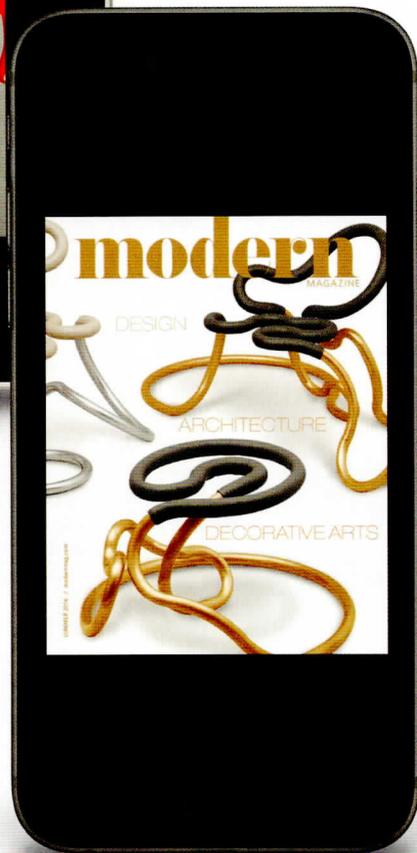
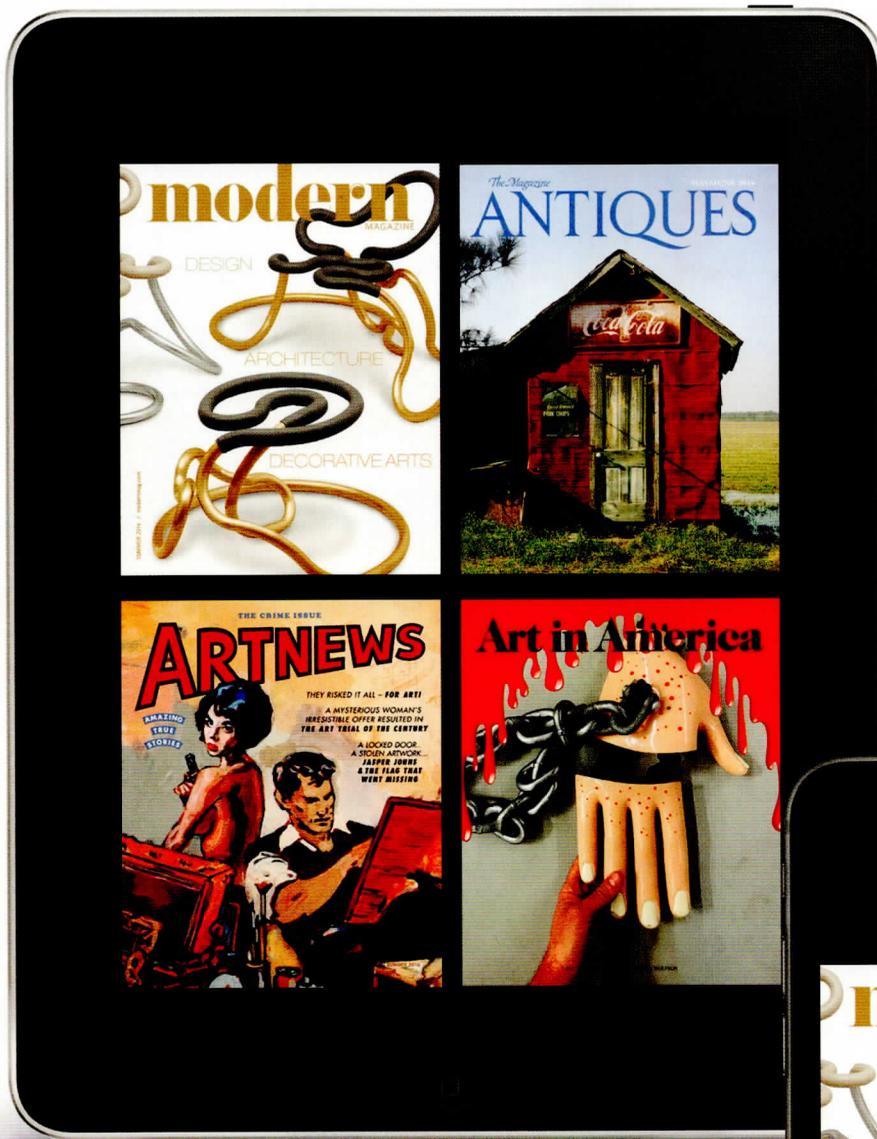
*UNTITLED* IS AN INTRIGUING double vessel by Beatrice Wood, a consummate experimenter and explorer in ceramic arts. Wood began her career painting, drawing, writing, and acting before turning to clay at age forty. After failing to find a teapot to match lusterware plates she had purchased at an antiques shop, she enrolled in pottery classes in the Adult Education Department of Hollywood High School. Fascinated by the process of creating the glasslike, iridescent luster glaze, she studied further under ceramists Glen Lukens and Gertrud and Otto Natzler, and then established her own studio in Ojai in 1948. She devoted her practice to luster-glazing techniques and developed a signature style featuring shades of green, pink, purple, silver, copper, and gold.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Wood experienced commercial and critical success for her conventional table settings and figurines. *Untitled* is indicative of her late period when she abandoned functional pottery and concentrated on ambitious decorative vessels featuring sculptural additions, such as nude figures, textured surfaces, and exaggerated handles and spouts. Active until her death at 105, Wood was one of America's most acclaimed ceramic artists and her works are in museum collections around the world.

**Rebecca A. Dunham**

Curator of Collections and Exhibitions  
Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art  
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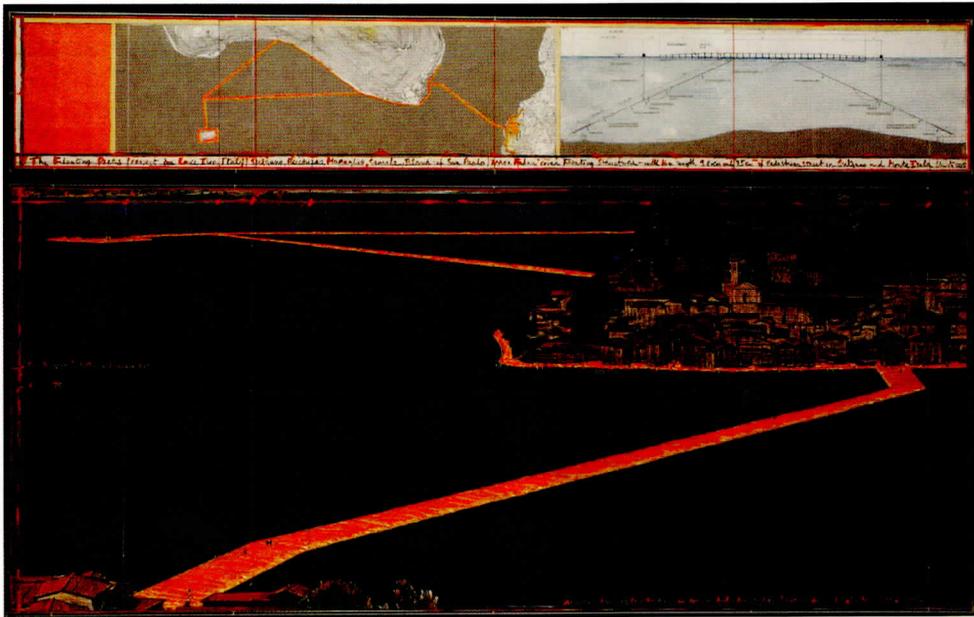


# Christo's Next Chapter



By BETH DUNLOP





ON A DRIZZLY AFTERNOON SOMEWHERE between winter and spring, Christo is thinking about summer. He is at his home in SoHo, in the cast-iron building he and his late wife, Jeanne-Claude, moved into in 1964. “Phil Glass installed our bidet,” he says, “and Gordon Matta-Clark put in the closet.” Much has happened since then: Christo and Jeanne-Claude completed twenty-two projects, all in the public eye and at an extraordinary scale. Over the years they have stacked, wrapped, covered, shrouded, and surrounded buildings, monuments, Roman walls, beaches, bridges, islands, trees, barrels, even bales of hay—and more. But today, Christo is looking forward as much as he is looking back.

For the last two years, he’s been hard at work on the twenty-third project, to be open for a mere sixteen days, June 18 through July 3—a luminous, golden-

hued floating walkway connecting the shore of the Alpine Italian Lago d’Iseo to the mountainous island that sits in the middle of it. The setting is stunning—a long, deep, narrow lake with dark blue-gray-green waters, ancient towns, and a landscape that is simultaneously lush and rugged. The project has—as is always the case with Christo—a simple, straightforward name that tells the basic story: *The Floating Piers*.

Jeanne-Claude died of a brain aneurysm in November 2009. She and Christo, both born on June 13, 1935, sometimes referred to themselves as “lunar twins,” almost as an explanation for the seamless connection between them. The couple—he Bulgarian by birth (his full name is Christo Vladimirov Javacheff) and she, French—met in Paris

Christo and Jeanne-Claude on-site at *The Gates*, Central Park, New York City, 2005. It was their last project together before Jeanne-Claude’s death in 2009.

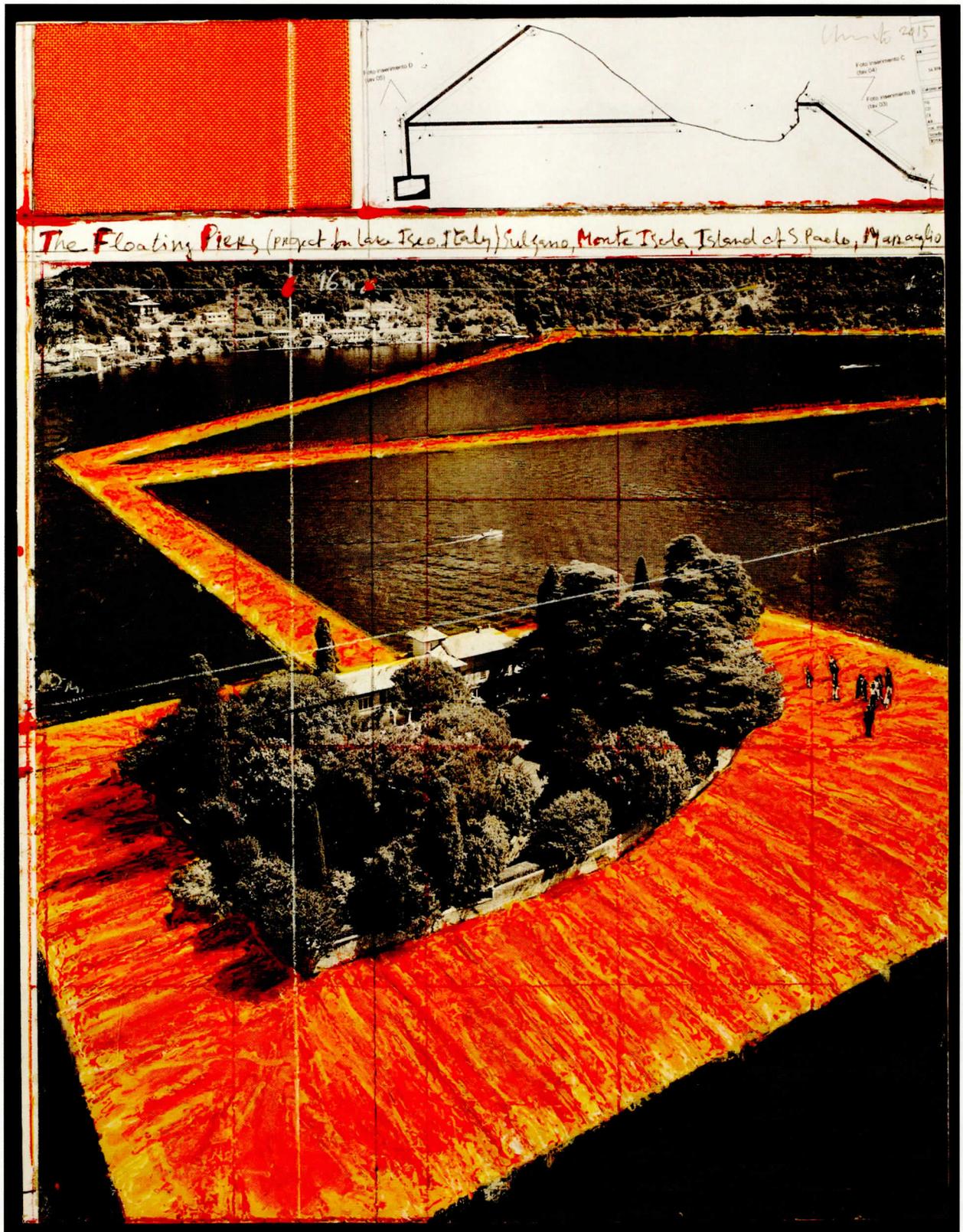
Left: Though this two-part drawing for *The Floating Piers, Project for Lake Iseo, Italy* dates from 2015, Christo and Jeanne-Claude long considered the relationship between land and water in designing their projects.

Top right: Another two-part Christo drawing for *Floating Piers*, 2015. Visitors will be able to walk more than a mile on the modular floating dock system.

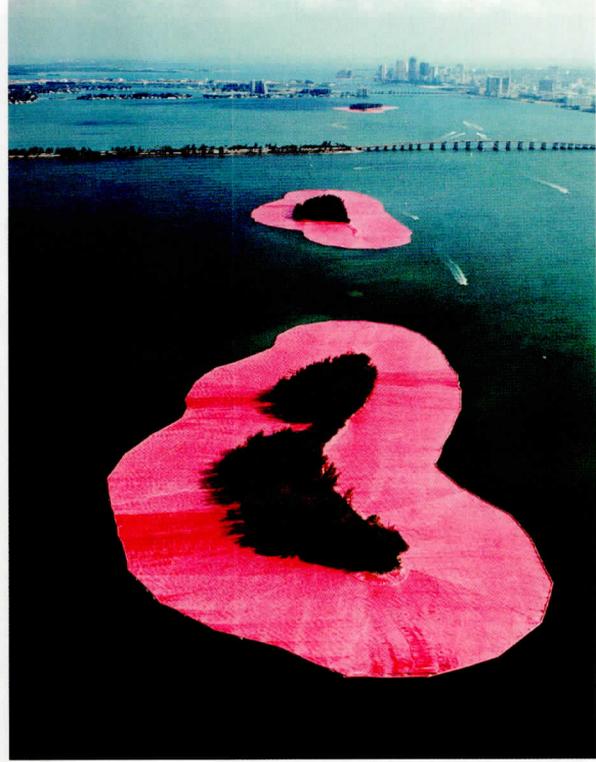
Two-part collage for *The Gates*, 2003, indicating the circuit of walkways in Central Park.



WOLFGANG VOLZ PHOTO PRIVATE COLLECTION/ ANDRE GROSSMANN PHOTOS (2) WOLFGANG VOLZ PHOTO



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST/ ANDRÉ GROSSMANN PHOTO (#317)



Like many projects by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, this one has deep roots, going back to 1970

in 1958 and almost immediately began producing the work that would define them. Jeanne-Claude's death came four years after the last project they would see to completion together, *The Gates*: a total of 7,503 saffron-orange free-flowing banners affixed at both sides to stanchions that marked a twenty-three-mile-long journey along the walkways of New York's Central Park in the deep of winter, brilliant against a landscape that in the course of sixteen days went from bleak and dreary to sunny and crisp. "Jeanne-Claude always said 'I'd love to have snow,' and snow we got, some rain, but snow," Christo says, almost as if in epitaph.

Some years passed. "By 2014 I said, 'Look, I will be eighty years old soon, I need to see things happen.'" That is when *Floating Piers* was resurrected. Like many projects by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, this one has deep roots, going back to 1970 when they envisioned a two

thousand-meter inflated pier in the gulf-like Río de la Plata in Buenos Aires, Argentina. That was never realized, but Christo and Jeanne-Claude loved the idea of a walkway in the water. Much later, in 1996, they sought to build fabric-covered piers leading from two artificial islands in Tokyo Bay to Odaiba Park. By then they had wrapped the Pont Neuf and a coastline in Sydney, Australia; covered a portion of the Newport, Rhode Island, oceanfront; and surrounded eleven small islands in Biscayne Bay with bright pink polypropylene, making them look like so many outsized water lilies. Still, one could only look at and not walk on *Surrounded Islands*. "But this was still one project that was nourished in our hearts," Christo says.

Images of the lakes of northern Italy lingered in his mind. He gathered a crew that included Wolfgang Volz, the photographer who has documented a significant share of his and

Facing page: **Two-part collage, 2015, showing San Paolo island, the walkway's destination in the *Floating Piers* project.**

**Eight miles of rope secured nearly fifty thousand square yards of fabric for *The Pont Neuf Wrapped*, Paris, 1985.**

**Christo referred to *Surrounded Islands* in Florida's Biscayne Bay as "my Monet water lilies," 1983.**



*Wrapped Reichstag* in Berlin, 1995, was the result of a twenty-four-year effort by the artists, ninety professional climbers, and 120 installation workers.

Facing page:

Starting north of San Francisco and continuing to the Pacific Ocean at Bodega Bay, *Running Fence* spanned more than twenty-four miles through Sonoma and Marin Counties in California, 1976.

Silvery, luminous panels are to float high above the Arkansas River in Colorado for the *Over the River, Project for Arkansas River*, as envisioned in this two-part collage, 2010.

Jeanne-Claude's work and who also functions as project manager for the *Piers*, his nephew and operations manager Vladimir Yavachev, and his registrar and curator Josy Kraft, and began to visit the lakes, systematically: Como, Garda, Maggiore. It was Iseo that captured their attention and became the site of *Floating Piers*.

Iseo is a deep lake, shaped like a scythe and nestled into its mountain setting, its dark water one of those colors that no one ever seems to put a name to. The lake, Christo says, was a principal departure point for the Roman army, and sketch maps dating to 1510 have been attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. As northern Italian lakes go, it is less famous and less glamorous, but it is set apart from the others by its 1,969-foot-tall mountain-island, Monte Isola.

Ordinarily, this island is only accessible by private boat or ferry. The fabric-covered walkways of *Floating Piers* are a color Christo selected—he calls it dahlia yellow—that changes throughout the day, chameleon-like. “In the morn-

ing it looks deep red, very beautiful,” Christo says. “When it’s wet, it’s reddish-orangish, but at midday, it’s a brilliant gold, almost pure gold.”

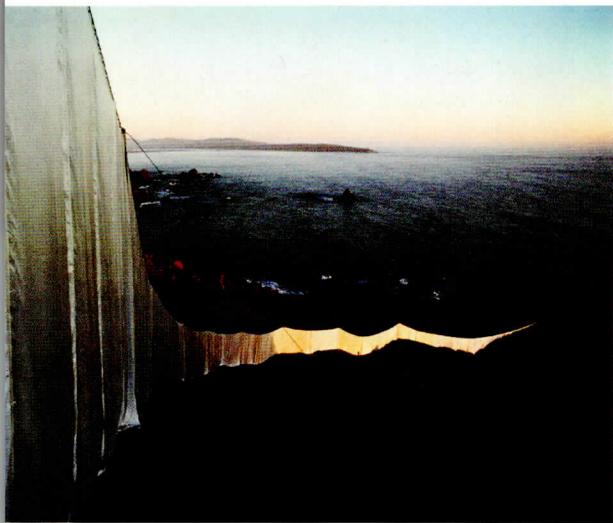
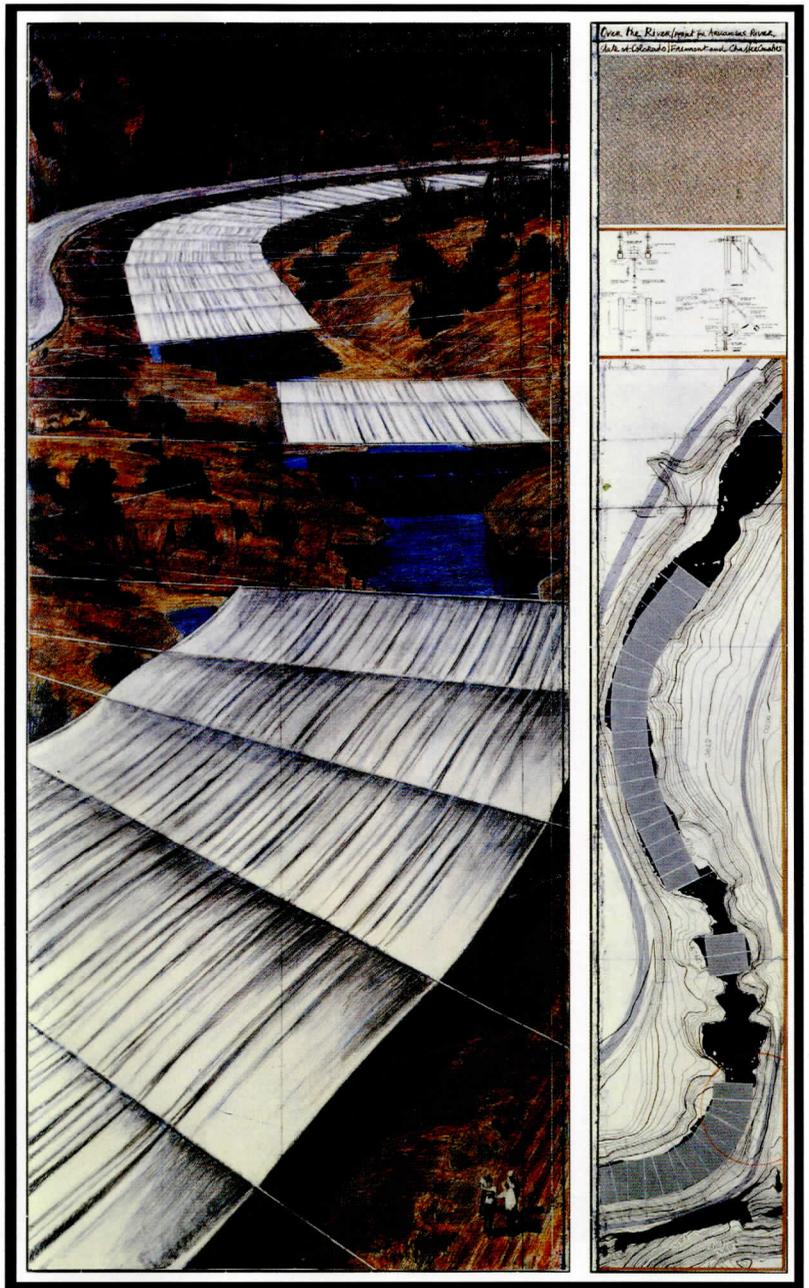
Technically speaking, the project involves two hundred thousand high-density polyethylene cubes (manufactured in a round-the-clock marathon in the nearby city of Brescia) pushed into place by tugboats, then connected to each other by some two hundred thousand screws, and secured by 140 cement anchors that weigh five tons each and were dropped into place by giant industrial balloons—an act that Christo calls “so poetic.” Beyond the engineering and manufacturing, every project also has life-size tests, “for aesthetic purposes,” Christo says. In the case of *Floating Piers*, a full-scale mock-up was floated into the Black Sea near Bulgaria.

All of this, put together with the more than seven hundred thousand square feet of fabric, will saturate (with color at least) the towns on either side of the floating walkway and

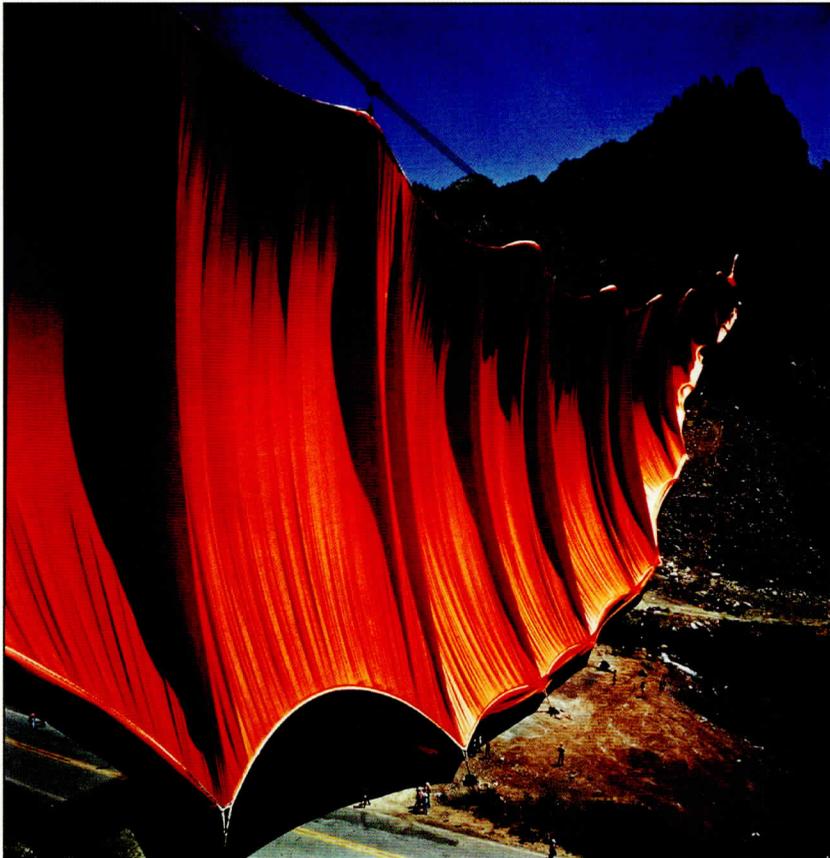
connect them, allowing pedestrians to “literally walk on water,” Christo says, adding, “when you walk, you feel the water beneath you. It’s very sexy.” The fabric will start in Sulzano, cross to Monte Isola, wrap partway around the island, then cross the water again to a tiny privately owned island called San Paolo, touching down, and then crossing back again to Monte Isola.

Through September 18, the Museo di Santa Giulia in Brescia is showing an exhibition entitled *Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Water Projects*. Curated by Germano Celant, the show is at once dramatic and didactic (in the good sense of the word): using preparatory drawings, plans, collages, photos, film, and scale models, it clearly traces the trajectory of Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s work—starting with the stacked oil barrels that closed the Rue Visconti in Paris for eight hours in 1962—and explores in detail the artists’ water-based projects.

The exhibition tells the fuller story of a Christo and Jeanne-Claude project—from the search for a site, to the detailed engineering drawings, to the political and environmental wrangling that leads to approval. Plans for *The Gates* started in 1979, and the still-to-be-realized *Over the River* (in Colorado) began its path to approval in 1992. *Wrapped Reichstag* took from 1971 to 1995. (By contrast, with an application from the British engineering



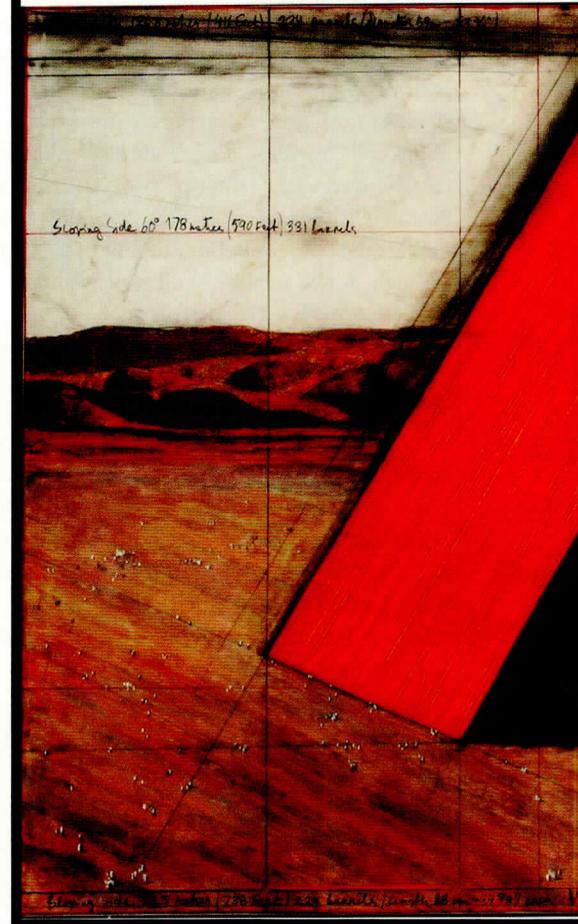
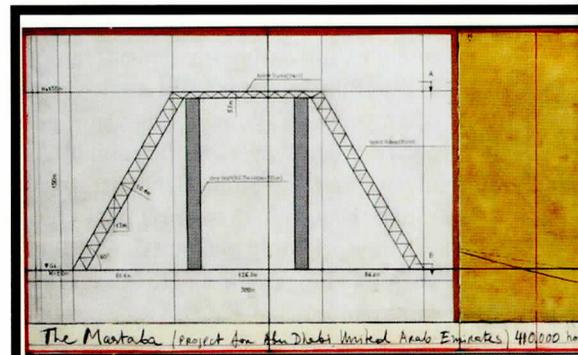
The floating walkway allows pedestrians to “literally walk on water,” Christo says, adding, “when you walk, you feel the water beneath you. It’s very sexy”



Just twenty-eight hours after completion of *Valley Curtain* in Rifle, Colorado, 1972, a sixty-mile-per-hour wind made it necessary to begin removal.

firm—it contained just a single phrase saying “designed by the artist Christo”—*The Floating Piers* had a comparatively easy path.)

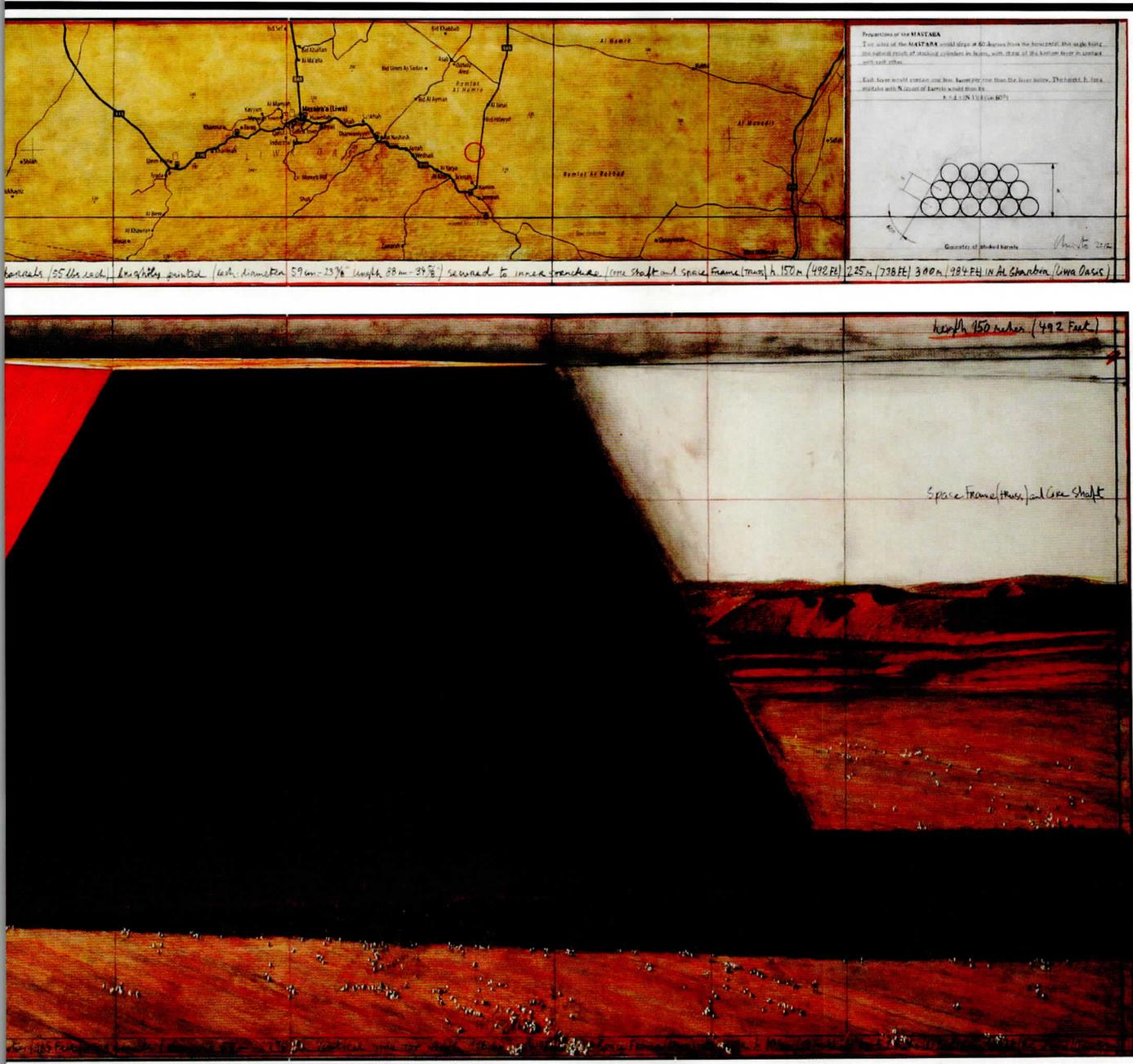
Each project yields as many as five hundred drawings, photographs, engineering plans, and other documents, along with, for a number of the bigger projects, a documentary film. From start to finish, the process is part of the art. As is the artist: “I love the physicality of the real thing,” Christo says. “I don’t know



how to drive. I don’t like to talk on the phone. I don’t have the slightest idea about computers. I don’t even have a stool in my studio. Also I like to work with people, with humans.”

Still to come are *Over the River*, for which a shimmering pale permeable fabric will be hung over a forty-two-mile stretch of the Arkansas River, and *The Mastaba* in Abu Dhabi, in

HARRY SHUNK PHOTO



which Christo will stack 410,000 multi-colored oil barrels into a flat-topped, sloped-sided permanent sculpture (the artists' only one). Christo and Jeanne-Claude first visited Abu Dhabi in 1979, but the stacked barrels go back to the Rue Visconti installation in 1962. Through November, an exhibition at the Maeght Foundation near Saint-Paul de Vence,

France, features a three-thousand-barrel sculpture in the museum courtyard along with paintings, sculpture, photography, and scale models.

"Every project is a slice of our lives, an adventure," Christo says. "Still today, alone and without her, I'm enjoying the journey because every project is so unique on every level." **M**

In process since 1977, *The Mastaba, Project for Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates*, would be Christo and Jeanne-Claude's only permanent large-scale work. This two-part collage dates from 2012.

ANDRÉ GROSSMANN PHOTO

# Beyond Baroque



SIPPING TEA AT ROBERT, the rooftop restaurant at the Museum of Arts and Design, Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel, the duo behind Studio Job, appear poised and relaxed in spite of barely having a moment to rest since arriving in New York. But, then again, they are accustomed to this busy pace. The trip kicked off with the press preview and then the opening of *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*, the designers' first solo museum exhibition in America, which has transformed two floors of the building into an imagined "crazy collector's

home," Tynagel says, that shakes off the prototypical sterile "museum feeling." And there is certainly nothing cookie-cutter or muted or conventional about the work created by Smeets and Tynagel's Netherlands- and Belgium-based atelier.

Downstairs, dreamlike lighting, furniture, sculpture, and other objects created over the past sixteen years populate galleries covered in custom Studio Job wallpaper and floor coverings resembling, respectively, bricks and white-hued parquetry. Wandering through the space,

## The World



Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel of Studio Job.

For its solo exhibition at MAD, Studio Job transformed the galleries by creating custom-designed parquet wood floorboards and brick wallpaper. This installation view shows three works (left to right): *Bavaria Screen*, 2008; *Horse Bust (Chess Piece)*, 2014; *Robber Baron Safe*, 2007.

BUTCHER WALSH PHOTO; COURTESY MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

RENE VAN DER HULST PHOTO FOR LIVING MAGAZINE ITALIA

BARBARA AND ERIC DOBKIN GALLERY

# of Studio Job

By NICOLE ANDERSON



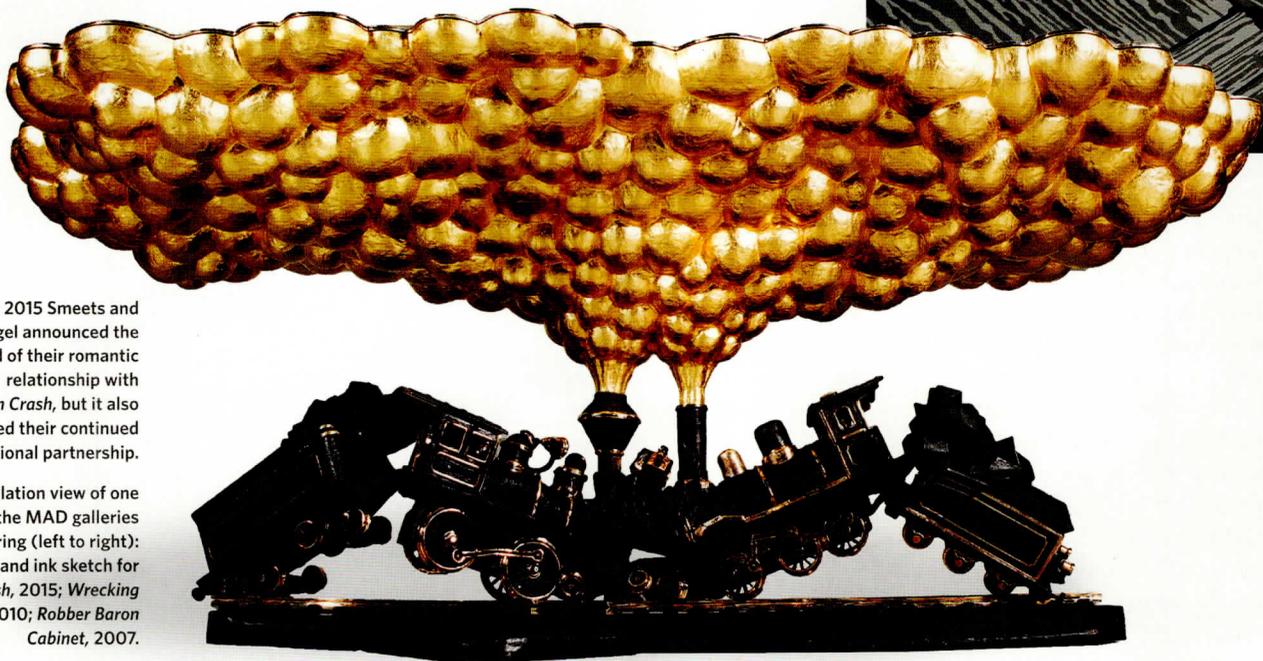
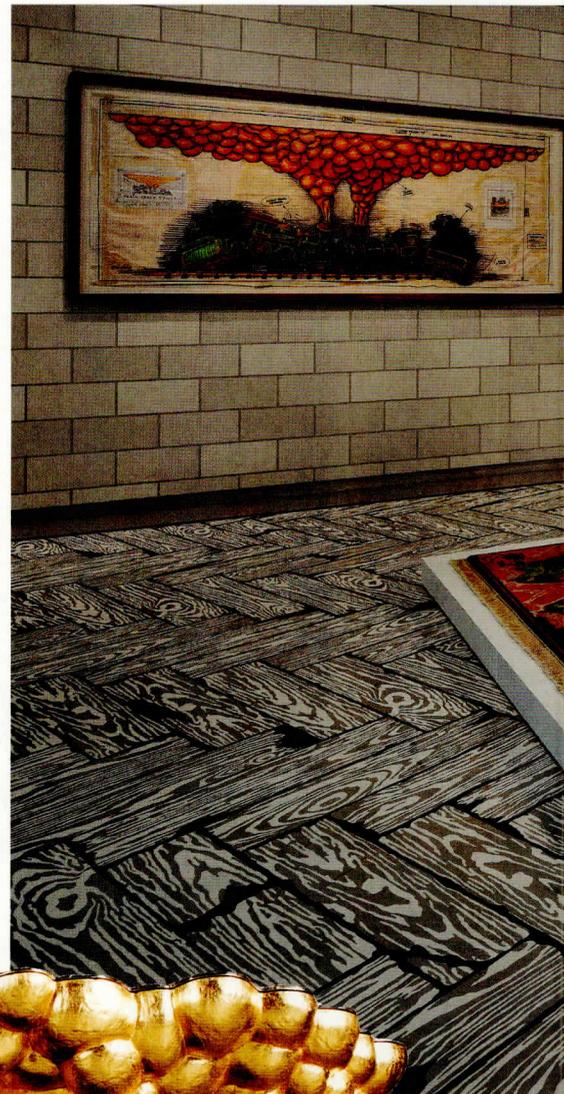
you feel as if you've slipped down the rabbit hole and found yourself in Alice's Wonderland, where each piece—an amalgam of sculpture and object, art and design—tells a story or could even come alive. And some do: the polished bronze and gilded *Horse Bust (Chess Piece)* doubles as a vacuum cleaner. Playful and allegorical, the pieces on display also demonstrate Studio Job's focus on superlative craftsmanship: whether it is a lamp from its Industry series (2010) in the form of a wrecking ball—made of patinated bronze, hand-blown glass, and LED light fittings—or the polished and patinated bronze, aluminum, and gilded *Train Crash*, representing the dissolution of Tynagel and Smeets's romantic relationship.

Studio Job is ubiquitous these days. The atelier's ornate, meticulously designed, and often irreverent work can be found in countless galleries, museums, showrooms, and stores around the world, from New York City to Milan to Wuzhen, China, taking the form of one-of-a-kind

sculptural pieces, product design, corporate identity materials, fashion, and more.

Smeets and Tynagel first met at the Design Academy Eindhoven in the Netherlands. Toward the end of her studies, Tynagel began an internship at Smeets's studio, and the two of them, who were already in a romantic relationship, discovered they were also compatible partners in design, and so upon her graduation in 2000 they officially joined forces. Like so many successful partnerships, theirs is defined by a balance of different skill sets and tastes that, when fused together, produce work that is congruent yet eclectic, polished yet rabble-rousing. "We are two different characters and we have different talents, so we complement each other well in the work and in life," Tynagel explains.

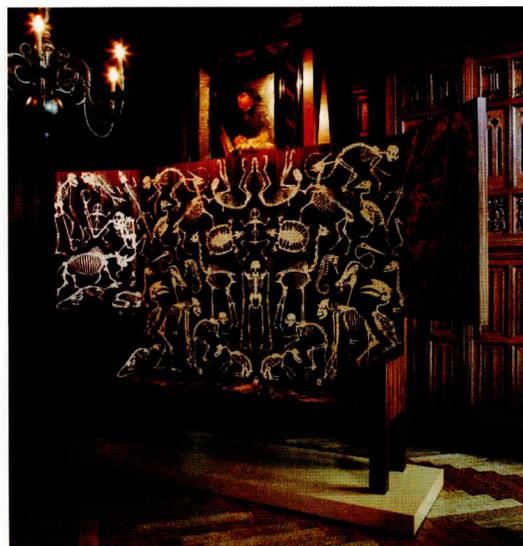
"Her background is more graphical, and my background is more conceptual or three-dimensional or whatever," Smeets says. "I am more like an art director and she is more a



In 2015 Smeets and Tynagel announced the end of their romantic relationship with *Train Crash*, but it also confirmed their continued professional partnership.

Installation view of one of the MAD galleries featuring (left to right): paper and ink sketch for *Train Crash*, 2015; *Wrecking Ball*, 2010; *Robber Baron Cabinet*, 2007.

ADRIEN MILLOT PHOTO/ COURTESY CARPENTERS WORKSHOP GALLERY  
MILLOT PHOTO/ COURTESY MUSEUM OF ART, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN



designer. I am a really bad art director and she is a really good designer.”

Eschewing the dominant pull of modernism and embracing a more opulent and baroque aesthetic, Studio Job at first encountered its fair share of resistance and criticism from the design world. People were uncertain how to categorize their work: is it art or design? “When we started no one wanted to work with us because they hated our work,” Smeets recalls. “At the design academy, what we got taught was modernism—I don’t know how but we kind of got liberated from that frame. And it

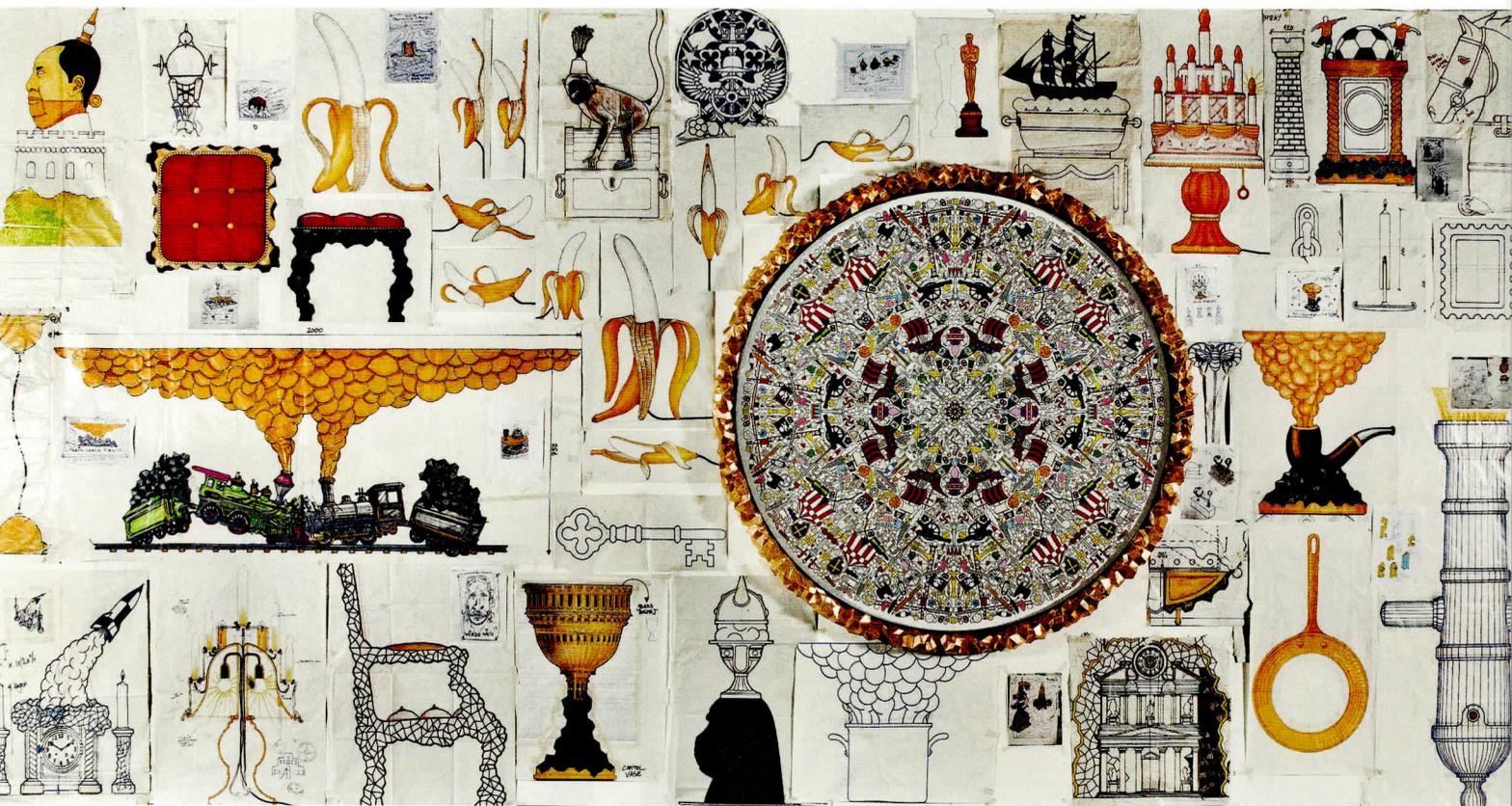
took a lot of time, but now we are at the stage where the producers trust us, which is a perfect situation.”

While Tynagel and Smeets recognize modernism’s place in the landscape of design and the need for functional objects, they always adhered to their own sensibilities and interests. “Normally a young designer

*Taj Mahal II*, 2014, from the Landmark series.

Depicting animal skeletons, *Perish Bench*, 2006, made of Indian rosewood, bird’s-eye maple, and brass, demonstrates Studio Job’s exacting craftsmanship.

Stained glass *Heart*, 2012-2013, by Studio Job.



goes to a production house, gets his design produced, and then it is distributed to the market—totally following the identity and the design possibilities or skills or production methods of the producer,” Smeets says. “The modernist always says that he likes to work within the limited possibilities that a producer can produce. We never took that as the truth. We always found that we wanted to work within the limitations of our brain—it is much more interesting.”

The roughly twenty-person studio is a lean and industrious operation

Sketch wall in the Studio Job atelier in Tilburg, Netherlands, 2015, from the new monograph, *Monkey Business*, published by Rizzoli.

Bearing the shape of the Gothic French cathedral on its backside, *Chartres* is made of polished and patinated bronze and 24-karat-gold gilding, 2009–2012, from the *Aftermath* series.

that employs a range of talented artisans and craftsmen to create the work—from stained glass and marquetry to bronze casting and gilding. This multifarious approach is also reflected in the types of projects they choose to take on. “We have kind of a renaissance attitude. We are a very multidisciplinary company—there are really not any boundaries” Smeets says. “We have done corporate identity work for Godiva but then we do public sculptures. The diversity makes it exciting, and the diversity also makes it maybe innovative.”

And Smeets and Tynagel plan on keeping their studio small to maintain the high quality of design and the intimacy of their team. “It is quite a good little machine. All different guys and girls. The team is the core of our business. A good team is everything,” Smeets says.

Coinciding with the MAD exhibition, Studio Job's second monograph, *Studio Job: Monkey Business*, with contributions by Carpenters Workshop Gallery, was published by Rizzoli in March. The book is a capsule of the last five years of the atelier's work, featuring two hundred sketches, concept renderings, and photographs.

New York is just one stop on Studio Job's packed travel itinerary. Next up, they'll land in Milan, where a number of collaborative projects with renowned design brands are being launched, including a decorative mosaic for Bisazza, the Comtoise clock for Alessi (the first of a new series), and an installation titled *Howling Wolf* in association with Colombostile, among several others.

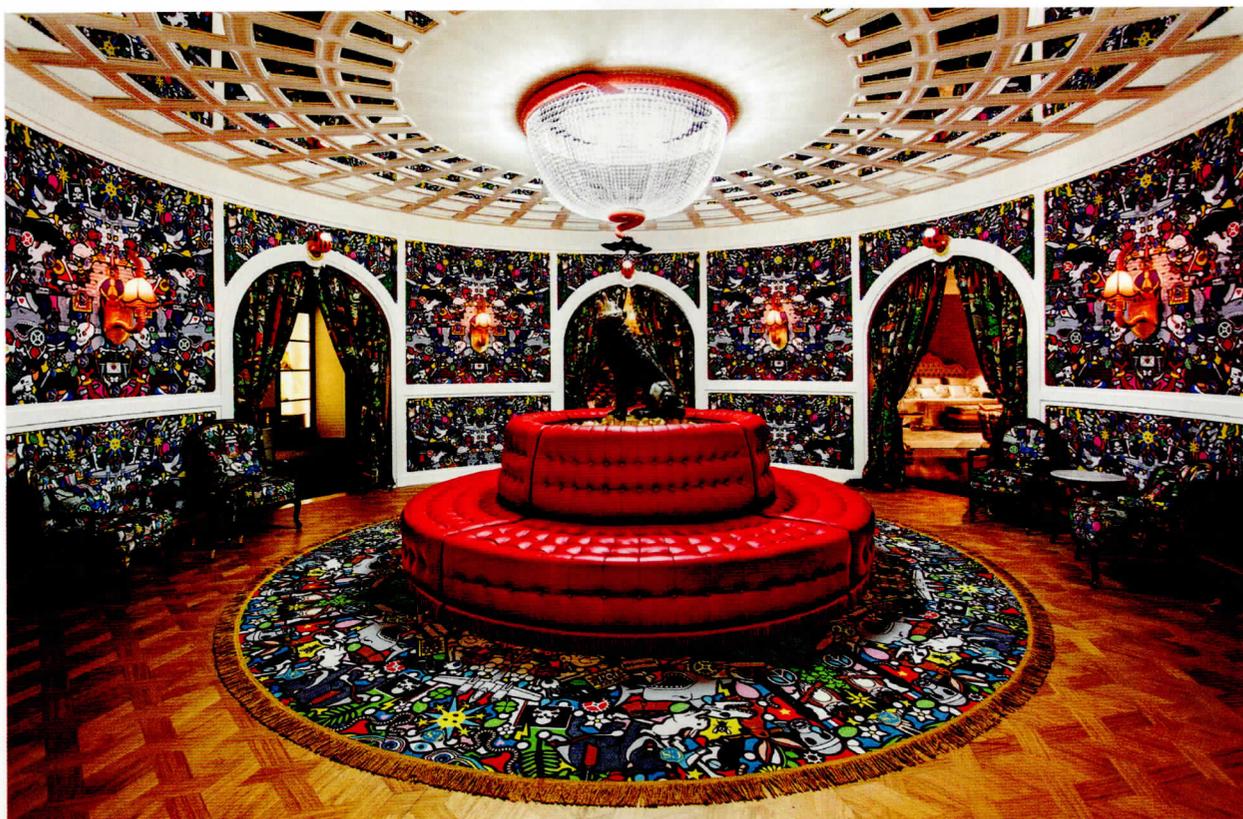
Once an industry outsider, Studio Job is now a darling of the design world, its moxie and roguish humor

much sought after to bring levity, nuance, and verve to any project, from one-of-a-kind furnishings to corporate packaging to private commissions.

Even with all this attention, Smeets and Tynagel remain self-deprecating. As we finished our tea at Robert and headed downstairs, a woman entered the elevator with us and asked what floor the *MAD House* exhibition was on. Smeets smiled and said, "Don't go there. It's crap." The woman laughed, and having a hunch she was being played with and enjoying it, said, "Let me guess, is one of you the designer?" **M**

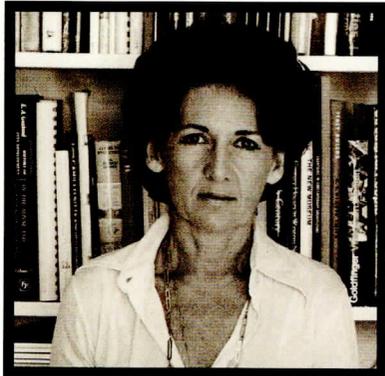
For *Salon del Mobile* this past spring, Studio Job collaborated with the Italian furnishing company Colombostile to create the immersive installation titled *Howling Wolf*. They culled the company's furniture archive for armchair frames and then reimagined them with their own designs, while also adding their touch to everything from the curtains to the lights.

Alessi tapped Studio Job, along with four other designers and architects, to come up with a new design for the company's All Around the Clock series. Studio Job's result was Comtoise, a reinterpretation of the late seventeenth-century French *horloge comtoise*.

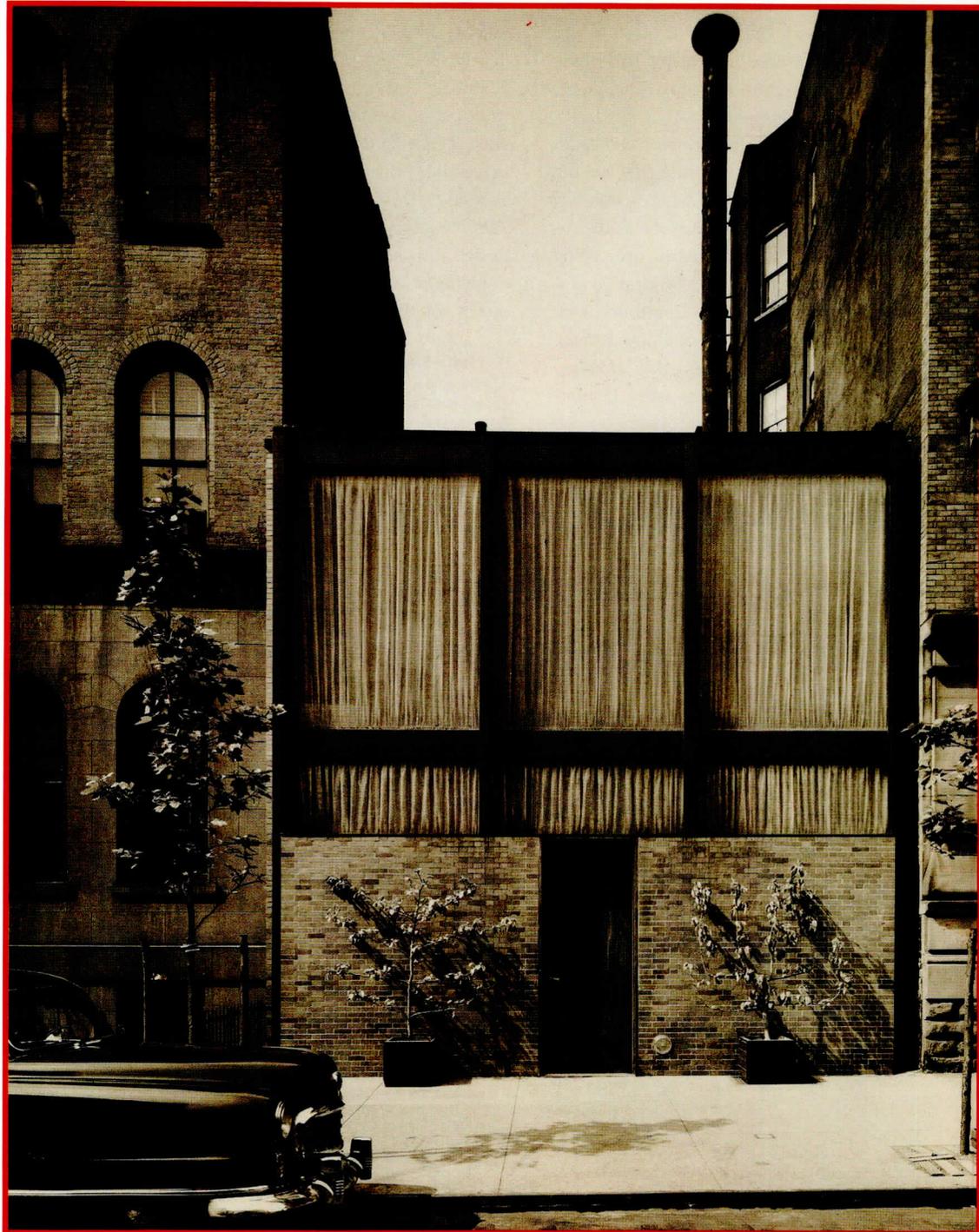


COURTESY COLOMBOSTILE ALESSANDRO MILANI PHOTO/COURTESY ALESSI

# streetwise



A rare copy of the critic Ada Louise Huxtable's *Walking Tours* underscores her firm belief of architecture as social art



By Susan Morgan

"Now to answer the question I am most frequently (do I sense, hopefully?) asked: Do I think I was ever 'wrong?' Sorry to disappoint, but my opinions have not really changed: I called the buildings as I saw them, and I feel pretty much the same way now. My judgments have all been made in the immediate context of their time, measured against some pretty timeless standards—something hindsight, with its re-writing of history, often prefers to ignore. Simply put, I was there; I know what happened."

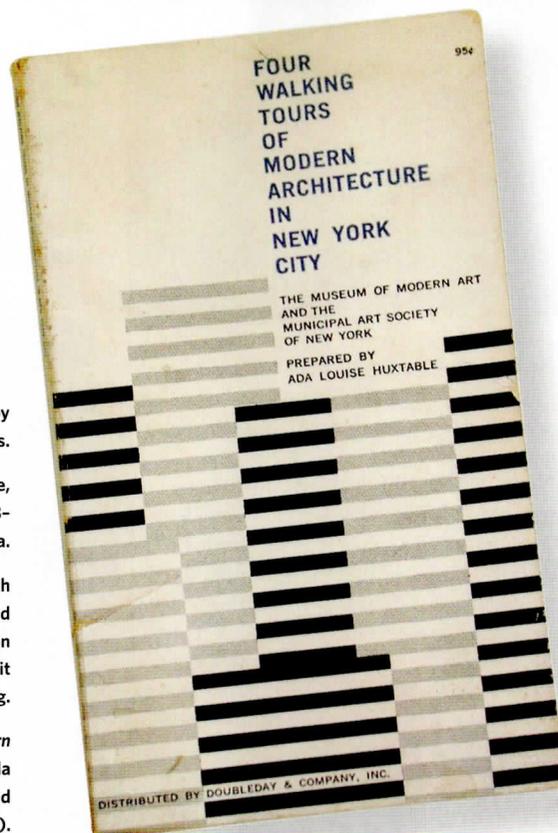
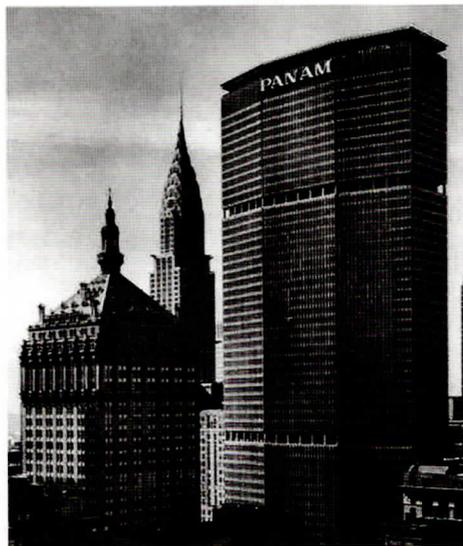
**Ada Louise Huxtable**, 2008

Ada Louise Huxtable in a photograph taken by her husband, L. Garth Huxtable, 1970s.

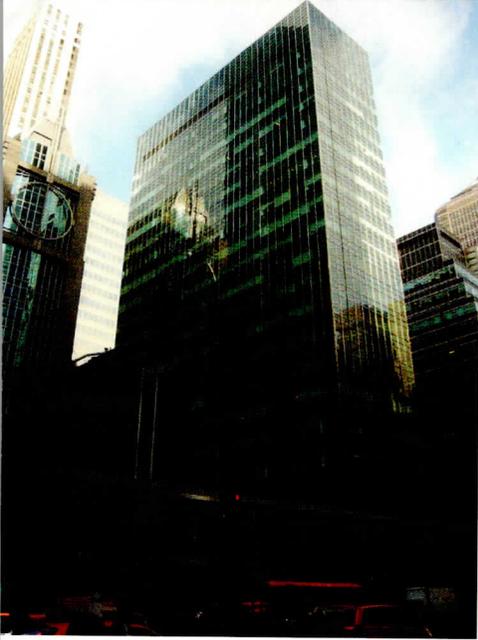
The exterior of the Rockefeller Guest House, designed by Philip Johnson, New York, 1948–1950, in a photograph by Robert Damora.

The Pan Am Building, designed by Emery Roth & Sons, with the help of Pietro Belluschi and Walter Gropius, was completed in 1963 on Park Avenue above Grand Central Terminal; it is now the MetLife Building.

Cover of *Four Walking Tours of Modern Architecture in New York City* prepared by Ada Louise Huxtable (Museum of Modern Art and the Municipal Art Society, 1961).



IN 1961 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART and the Municipal Art Society of New York published *Four Walking Tours of Modern Architecture in New York City* "prepared by Ada Louise Huxtable," a crisp selection of alert observations and distilled history slipped into an elegant billfold-size book. Focused primarily on the postwar transformation of midtown Manhattan, Huxtable (née Landman) is, of course, an erudite native guide: born in 1921, raised on Central Park West in the gracious St. Urban (Robert T. Lyons, 1906) as recalled in her memorable 1975 essay "Growing Up in a Beaux Arts World," she came of age during the World of Tomorrow. After graduating from Hunter College, she studied architectural history and found a sales job and her future husband at Bloomingdale's. In a 1941 business collaboration with MoMA's *Organic Design in Home Furnishings* exhibition and design competition, twelve American department stores—including Bloomingdale's—had been contracted to sell the



Huxtable's fifty-five-year-old guidebook offers a welcome alternative, a sort of sophisticated treasure map that can lead you to indomitable monuments and forgotten riches



on mimeographed notes she'd produced for volunteer guides at the Municipal Art Society and incorporating maps, updated information, and a few small black-and-white photographs. Although the sites featured in the guide reveal her frank appreciation for pioneering mid-century innovation and design (has anyone else composed such succinct but marvelous odes to a skyscraper's glittering skin and the miraculous qualities of glass curtain walls?), this little book is not all modern love. In "Tour No. 1: Park Avenue (43rd to 59th)," she is quick to reprimand the Pan Am Building (Emery Roth & Sons; Pietro Belluschi and Walter Gropius-TAC, consultants, 1960–1963), a behemoth tower then still under construction that aggressively straddled Grand Central Terminal—the splendid Gilded Age focal point of Park Avenue—and overwhelmed the neighborhood. "It [the Pan Am Building] will also add an extraordinary burden to existing pedestrian and transportation facilities," she sharply warns. "And in these aspects its anti-social character directly contradicts the teachings of Walter Gropius, who has collaborated in its design."

As always, Huxtable recognizes architecture as a genuinely social art and considers everything from the skyline down to the crowded sidewalks. Appraising the 1950s building boom of high-rise office towers along stately Park Avenue, she admires the rational, austere beauty of Lever House (Gordon Bunshaft and Natalie de Blois of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1950–1952) and the Seagram Building (Ludwig Mies

prize-winning furniture. The man Landman would marry, an industrial designer named L. Garth Huxtable, was perusing the Eames and Saarinen molded plywood chairs when they met.

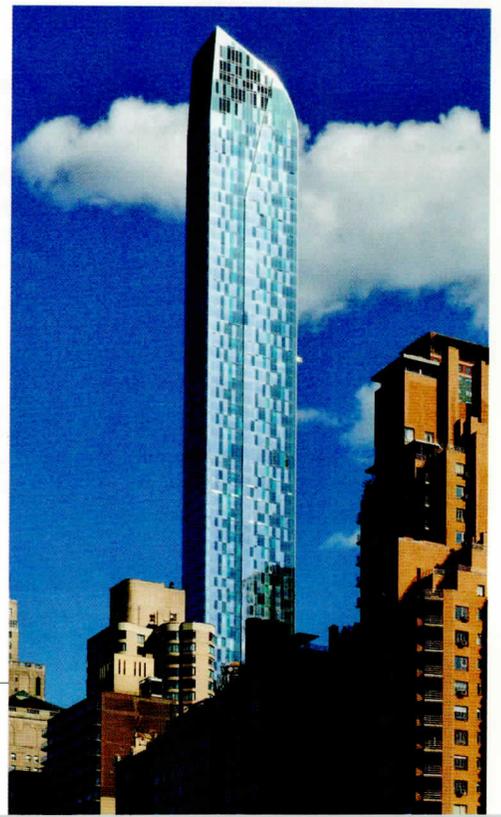
In 1963 Ada Louise Huxtable, who'd spent a Fulbright year in Italy and served as an assistant curator at MoMA, became the architecture critic for the *New York Times* and the first full-time architecture critic at any American newspaper. Over the next fifty years her ardent, self-assured prose was recognized by the Pulitzer Prize and the MacArthur Foundation and reached a wide readership, creating a public dialogue about the built environment and everything that can make a city a better place.

Huxtable developed *Four Walking Tours*, a seventy-six-page paperback with an original cover price of ninety-five cents, over a five-year period, expanding

Lever House on Park Avenue was designed by Gordon Bunshaft and Natalie de Blois of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and completed in 1952.

The Seagram Building on Park Avenue was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, and completed in 1958.

One57 on Fifty-Seventh Street was designed by Christian de Portzamparc and completed in 2014.



MICHAEL TYZNIK PHOTO/FLICR  
TOM RAVENSCRODT PHOTO/FLICR  
GODSFRIEND/CHUCK PHOTO/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



van der Rohe and Philip C. Johnson; Kahn & Jacobs Associates, 1956–1958), and regrets the characterless and shoddy commercial imitations they spawned.

Huxtable, who died in 2013 at the age of ninety-one, admitted she'd never envisioned an era she dubbed "Skyscrapers Gone Wild" and the twenty-first-century race to "claim the slippery title of world's highest and most ostentatiously vulgar building." Her walking tours traverse the canyon-like streets of midtown—north from Forty-Second to Sixty-Sixth Street and east from Fifth to Second Avenue—an area now punctuated by wild vertiginous towers: to the west, One57, the "Billionaire Building" more than a thousand feet tall and notorious for its perilous crane collapse during Hurricane Sandy; and to the east, 432 Park Avenue, billed as "the tallest residential tower in the Western Hemisphere," a monolith by architect

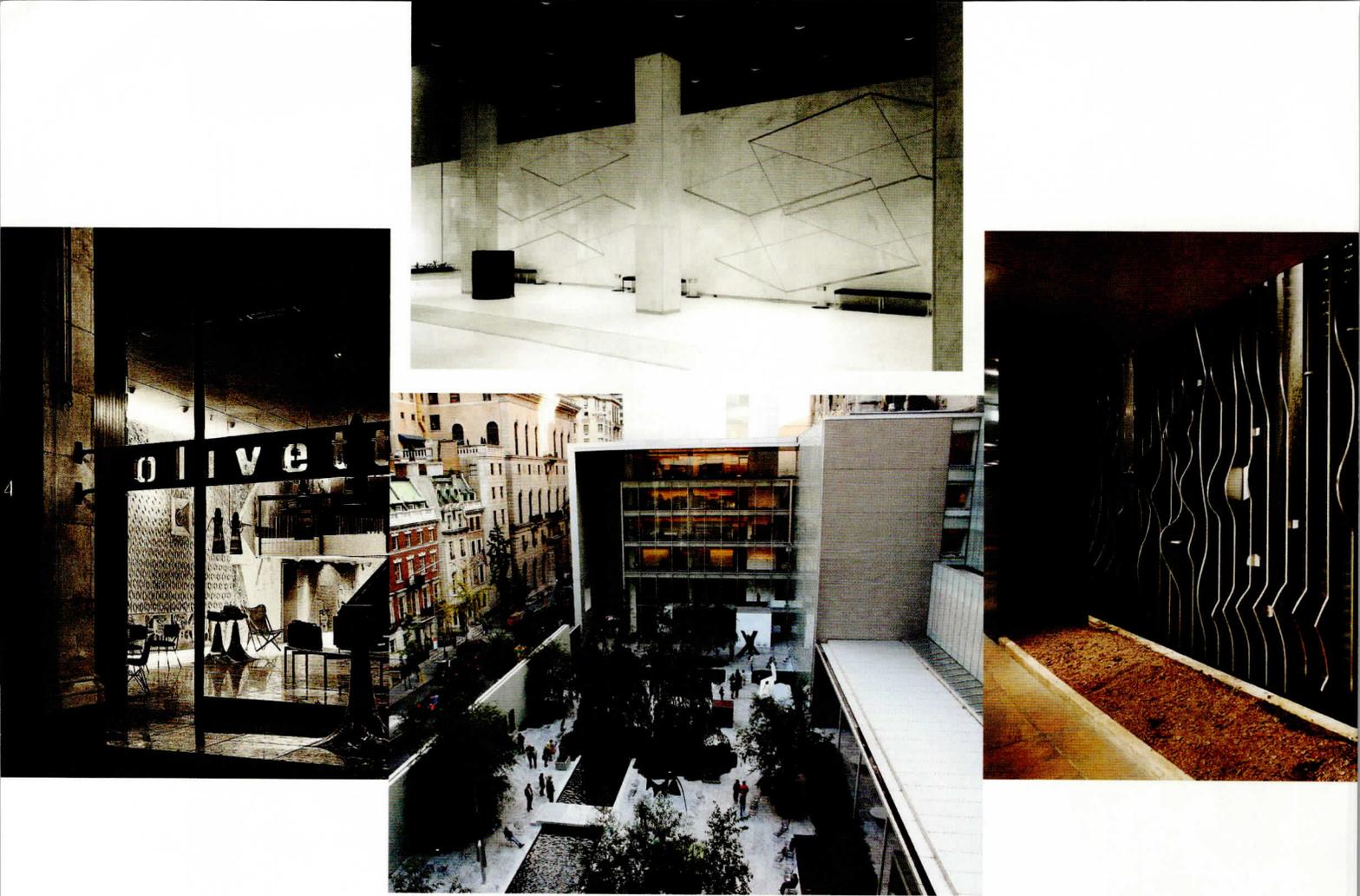


Rafael Viñoly, supposedly modeled on a 1905 trash can designed by Josef Hoffmann. Looking upward at these buildings is dizzying; they are like a nihilistic sci-fi vision of some inhuman metropolis. Huxtable's fifty-five-year-old guidebook, however, offers a welcome alternative, a sort of sophisticated treasure map that can lead you to indomitable monuments and forgotten riches, while also disclosing plundered sites and ruthless destruction.

I've followed Huxtable's walking tours into the sheltering terrazzo-paved plazas of corporate headquarters and down the avenues in search of extinct businesses—Bonnier's Inc., purveyors of understated Scandinavian design; the Olivetti showroom, a luxe outpost for the visionary Italian manufacturer, publisher, design entrepreneur, and social reformer; and the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed automobile showroom, where new sedans were displayed on a spiraling ramp. Traversing midtown Manhattan, you experience a Rockefeller world: from Rockefeller Center, a city within a city, to the Museum of Modern Art (founded in 1929 by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and two friends, all progressive and influential patrons of the arts). On Fifty-Fourth Street,

432 Park Avenue, designed by Rafael Viñoly, was completed in 2015 and is the tallest residential building in New York City.

Isamu Noguchi's stainless-steel bas-relief mural *News* hangs over the doors of 50 Rockefeller Center, a fitting tribute to the building's former tenant, the Associated Press.



The Olivetti showroom in New York in a photograph by Hans Namuth.

*Two Structural Constellations* by Josef Albers, 1959, located in the former Corning Glass Building at 717 Fifth Avenue.

The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden at the Museum of Modern Art, designed by Philip Johnson and completed in 1953.

Isamu Noguchi's wood and metal *Waterfall*, 1956–1958, is installed inside 666 Fifth Avenue.

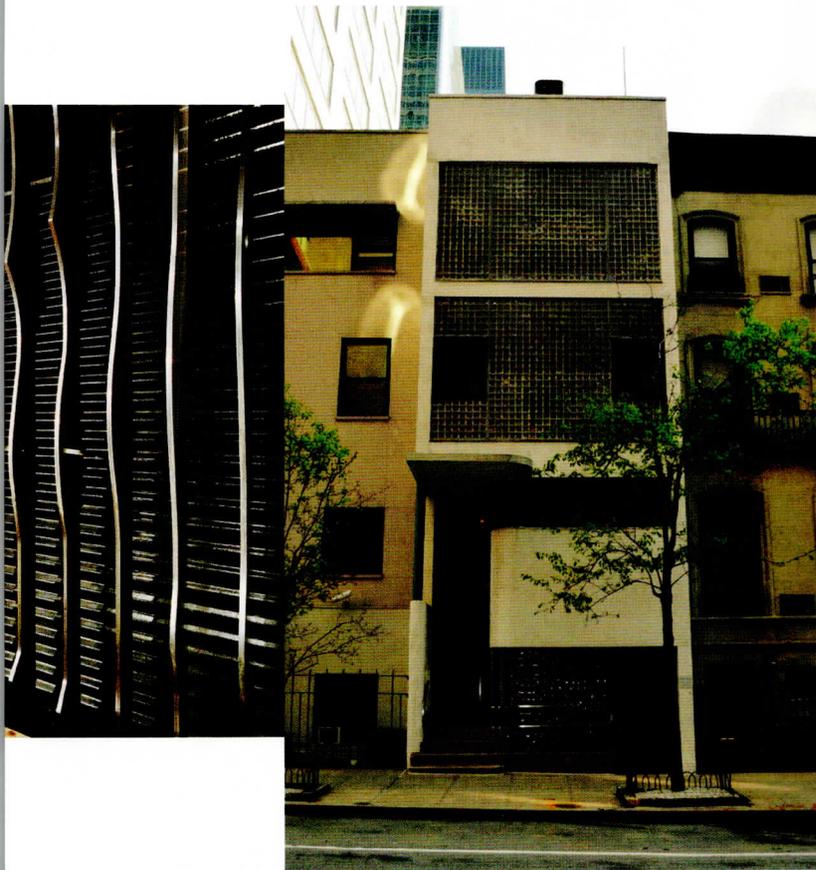
directly behind MoMA, Huxtable points out the handsome Rockefeller Apartments (Harrison & Foulhoux, 1936) featuring an undulating facade, floor-to-ceiling windows, and a central garden court. Further east at 242 East Fifty-Second there's a serene little brick, glass, and steel town house, a former stable remodeled in 1950 by Philip Johnson for Blanchette Rockefeller as a guest house. Huxtable also commends the bright and spacious Park Avenue branch of Chase Manhattan Bank (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1959); in 1959 Chase president David Rockefeller founded the bank's ambitious art program, commissioning a Sam Francis mural for the Park Avenue building's informal board room on the fourth floor and installing a twenty-foot Alexander Calder mobile on the second floor.

Unexpected art in public and semi-public spaces—the Calder mobile is visible from the street, for example—is among the many site-specific treasures to be discovered via this book. In the lobby of the Tishman Building (Carson and Lundin, 1958), Isamu Noguchi designed the aluminum-banded ceiling and a waterfall sculpture dismissed by Huxtable as “less-than-successful.” There's an exuberant mosaic

by Hans Hofmann wrapped around the elevator bank at 711 Third Avenue (entry currently not allowed); on Fifty-Sixth Street near Fifth Avenue, you can glimpse the lobby wall of the former Corning Glass Building paneled with Josef Albers's *Two Structural Constellations*—floating parallelograms, gold lines inscribed in white marble. When the Manufacturers Trust Company Building opened on Fifth Avenue and Forty-Third Street in 1954, it boasted the “largest glass panes installed in a building in this country” and *Golden Arbor*, a nearly six-ton sculpted metal screen by Harry Bertioia; in 2012, when the property was renovated and adapted for retail space, the spectacular Bertioia screen was restored.

In 1930s Manhattan, modern domestic architecture was a rarity. Huxtable's guide includes the notable exceptions: two narrow nineteenth-century town houses radically remodeled by architect homeowners (Morris Sanders, 219 East 49th Street, 1935; William Lescaze, 211 East 48th Street, 1934), and Edward Durrell Stone's brownstone featuring a glass facade shaded by a pierced terrazzo screen (130 East 64th Street, 1957). Although residential use of glass block walls and sleek industrial finishes quickly became

IRENE A. BANKS PHOTO JENNIFER CALAIS SMITH PHOTO/COURTESY WRIGHT © EZRA STOLLER/ESTO, CHASE MANHATTAN BANK, NEW YORK NY



commonplace, these houses—along with Russel and Mary Wright’s nearby home and office, modernized in the 1940s—still convey an exhilarating originality.

My search for the Olivetti showroom (Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peresutti, Ernesto N. Rogers, 1954) was bewildering, haplessly teetering toward the mythological. When the showroom closed in 1970, everything—Venetian glass lamps, the Italian walnut main door, designer-sculptor Costantino Nivola’s fifteen-by-seventy-foot sculptured sand-cast wall—scattered. (When Nivola offered his displaced mural to Josep Lluís Sert, the architect incorporated it into his design for the 1973 Harvard Science Center.) A lone green marble pedestal, one of the original nine, sold last year at auction. Now, the original storefront facing Fifth Avenue has been divided and the street entrances renumbered. All that remains from the past is the malachite-green marble floor that once appeared like a surrealistic sea swirling around the interior and spilling out the door. A portico-like display window contained one of the green marble pedestals—a tapered cone that appeared to have grown out of the pavement. Perched atop it was a colorful Olivetti Lettera 25 portable typewriter and

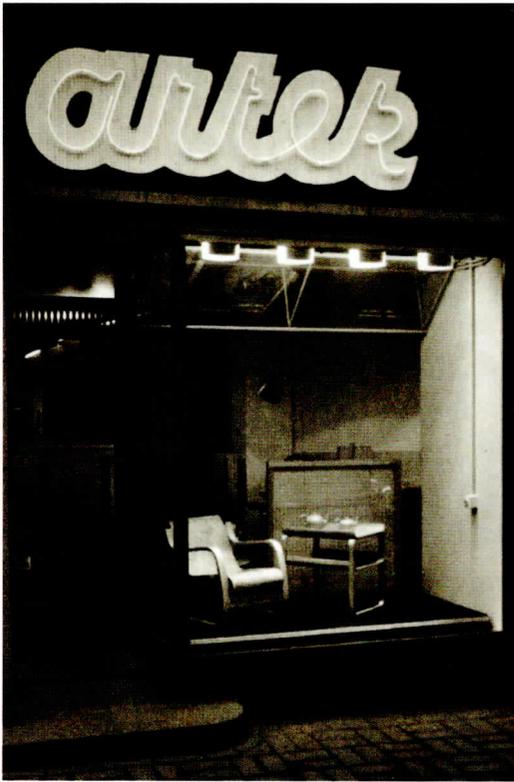
passersby were encouraged to stop and type: according to a charming but apocryphal wisecrack, writer and MoMA curator Frank O’Hara stopped by while composing his *Lunch Poems*.

The Seagram Building, “unquestionably one of the finest structures of this century,” is really at the center of Huxtable’s guidebook. Her admiration encompasses every detail, from the generous pink granite plaza to Richard Lippold’s brass rod sculptures shimmering in the luxurious Four Seasons Restaurant. Huxtable’s deep engagement with the building was both personal and professional: with her husband, she collaborated on a 1959 design commission, creating 140 tabletop and kitchen items for the Four Seasons (the remaining pieces soon to be sold with the closing of the restaurant). Embarking on Huxtable’s walking tours, one begins to see the city as she did—vigorous, fascinating, exasperating, and invaluable. This little book is not so easy to find, but like the city portrayed within its pages, it is absolutely worth looking for. **M**

The town house at 211 East 48th Street was designed by homeowner and architect William Lescaze, and completed in 1934.

The Pool Room at the Four Seasons Restaurant inside the Seagram Building. Recently, the auction house Wright announced that it would sell the legendary restaurant’s furniture and designed tableware on-site at the restaurant on July 26.

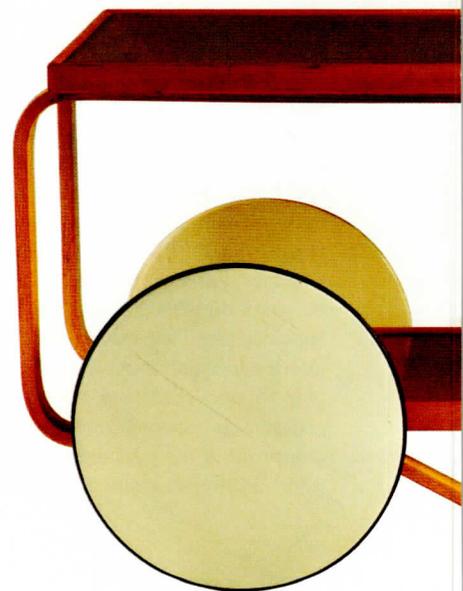
An Alexander Calder mobile hangs on the second floor of the Chase Manhattan Bank branch on Park Avenue, designed by Skidmore Owings & Merrill, 1959.



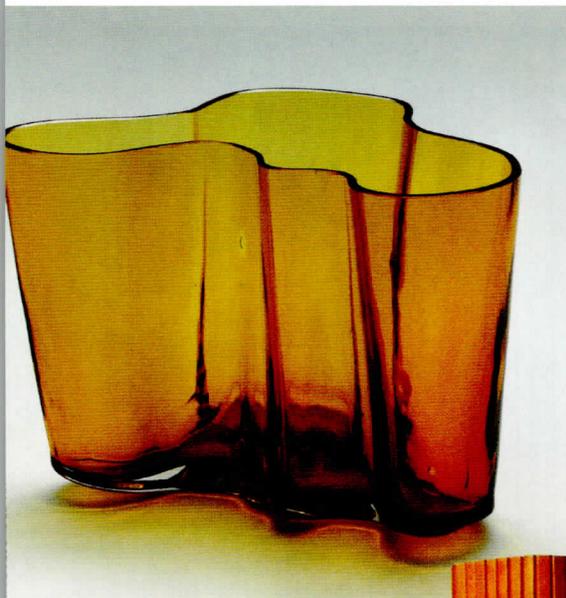
## IMAGINE HOW IT MUST HAVE STRUCK HELSINKI'S RESIDENTS

in the late 1930s when they had their first sight of the shop called Artek in the center of town. They would have seen cantilevered blond wood chairs with seats and backs that were a continuous flowing scroll. There would have been a teacart, maybe, with playful oversized wheels, and stacks of stools whose rounded L-shape legs rotated in a spiral. On the checkerboard tiled floor would be thick, abstractly patterned carpets. Against the walls, shelves of ribbed glasses and rippling freeform vases. Venturing into the space, they might have met, face to face, for the first time, artwork by Léger, Picasso, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Calder.

# Artek, the Aaltos, and the



COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ALVAR AALTO MUSEUM, JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND, ARTEK COLLECTION AALTO FAMILY COLLECTION  
PRIVATE COLLECTION/ BRUCE WHITE PHOTO SCREEN- PRIVATE COLLECTION/ARMCHAIR: AALTO DESIGN-COLLECTION, PERTTI MÄNNISTÖ/  
WHITE PHOTO ALVAR AALTO MUSEUM MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, GIFT OF ARTEK-PASCOE, INC./DIGITAL IMAGE © THE MUSEUM OF



Counterclockwise from top left:

The Artek store in Helsinki, 1939, showcased the Aaltos' design philosophy.

Design partners Aino Marsio-Aalto and Alvar Aalto in New York City, 1940.

Oversized wheels on Aino's tea trolley (model 98) show her spirited design sense.

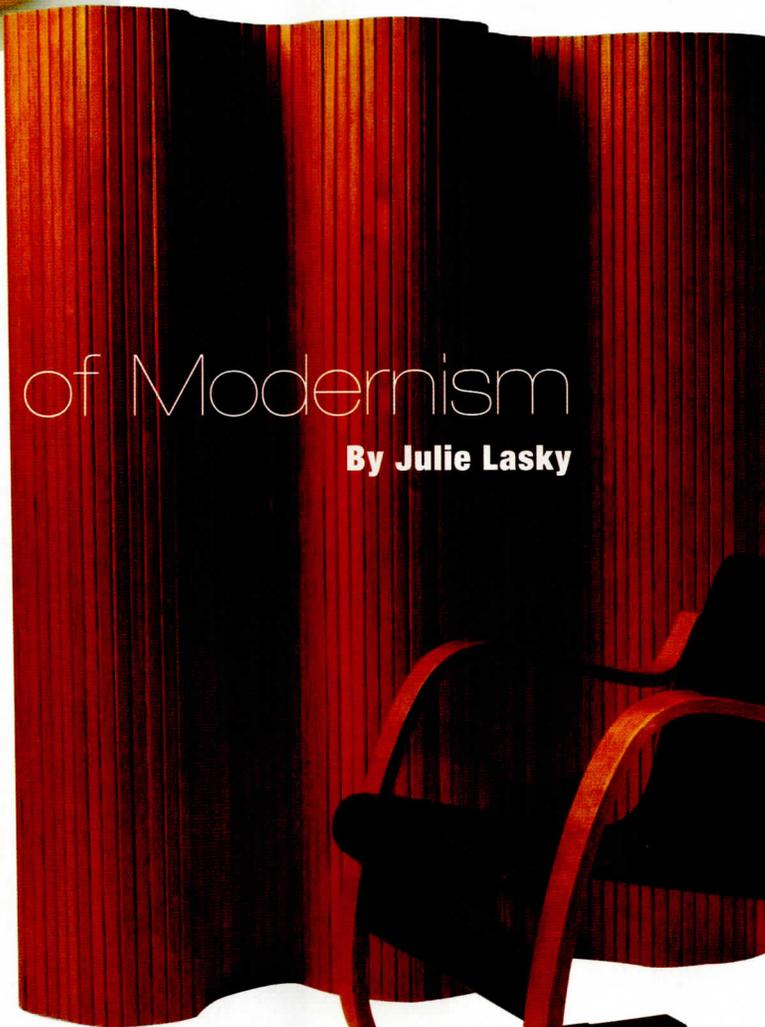
Alvar's distinctive free-flowing curves inform a birch screen (model 100) and stepped-leg armchair (model 31).

A selection of Artek furniture in the Finnish Pavilion at the 1937 Paris World's Fair in a photograph by Henry Sarian.

Alvar's iconic Savoy vase (1936-1937), manufactured by Karhula-littala Glassworks, utilized a mold-blown glass technique.

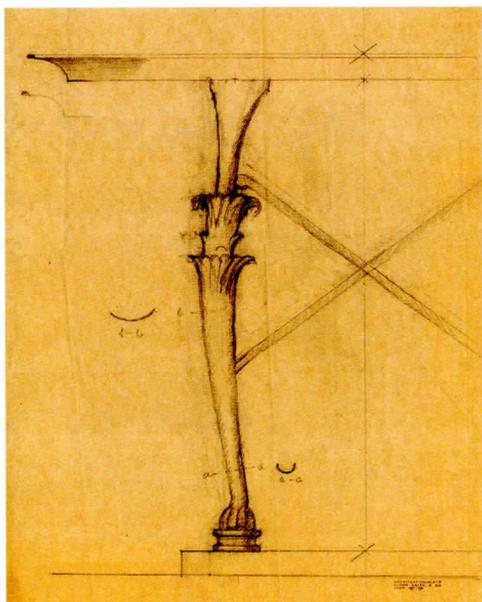
# Advocacy of Modernism

By Julie Lasky



Founded in 1935 to market Aalto products, Artek survived the volcanic disruptions of twentieth-century geopolitics and endures to this day





Artek was a business, brand, and emissary of the modern design philosophy practiced by the Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto and his first wife and creative partner, Aino Marsio-Aalto. Founded in 1935 to market Aalto products, the company survived the volcanic disruptions of twentieth-century geopolitics and endures to this day. Its history and contributions to interior design are the subject of *Artek and the Aaltos: Creating a Modern World*, a lovingly detailed exhibition on view through September 25 at the Bard Graduate Center Gallery in New York.

Organized primarily by Nina Stritzler-Levine, the gallery's director, and Juhani Uolevi Pallasmaa, a Finnish architect and writer, *Artek and the Aaltos* makes the point that selling Aalto furniture internationally was only the most pragmatic of the company's missions. The exhibition, which is supported by Artek, also raises Marsio-Aalto's status from enlightened professional spouse to formidable colleague by highlighting her creative and management roles at the company, including leadership of its interior design division, called the "drawing office."

Much of the exhibition focuses on the period from the 1920s, when the Aaltos attended the same architecture school in Helsinki and later married, to 1949, when Aino died of breast cancer at the age of fifty-four. Though we see later

Artek products and projects, a couple of which were undertaken with Aalto's second wife, Elissa, Marsio-Aalto is clearly the star of the show. This is apparent from the first display—digitized pages from her travel diary, in which she sketched inspirations from her European sojourns and noted the settings where Aalto furniture had migrated—to the drawings her husband made of her on her deathbed. In between, her design sensibility is showcased in colorful, straight-lined children's furniture; a circa 1935 homey birch dressing table; the 1932 pressed glassware collection for Iittala called Bølgeblik; and the flamboyant zebra-striped upholstery for Aalto's cantilevered 1936 Tank chair. (Visitors will find a physical example of the chair next to its photographic twin in a wall mural of the original Artek store interior.)

Among the show's eye openers are examples of the Nordic classicism Aalto practiced in his youth, including an iron table leg he drew in 1924 with carved ruffles like the paper frills on a crown roast. Much later, his idea of a fancy appendage would be the 1954 X- (or fan-) leg that evolved from his bentwood technology in an organic blossoming of form.

Artek was started by a gang of four. Along with the Aaltos, there were Maire Gullichsen, a patron of the couple who was connected by birth and marriage to the Finnish corporation A. Ahlström, and Nils-Gustav Hahl, an art historian and critic. The company name is a portmanteau word combining "art" and "technology" and is believed to



A spiral column of Alvar's brightly colored Stacking Stools (1932-1933).

The Artek Gallery in Helsinki hosted a 1937 exhibition of Fernand Léger and Alexander Calder.

Art and technology on display in the Artek store on Fabianinkatu, Helsinki, photographed by Saurén in 1939.

Artek represented Finland at the 1939 New York World's Fair.

Alvar's early, 1924, leg design for an iron table in the Hämäläis-Osakunta Students Club assembly hall has a more decorative sensibility than his later work.

Alvar was inspired by Thonet's bentwood curves, as seen in the bent-plywood, laminated and solid birch armchair (1931-1932) for the Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Paimio, Finland.

Aino's influence is evident in the zebra-striped upholstery of Alvar's Tank chair (1936).

Aino's sleek design for a mirrored birch dressing table (model 190), 1935.

have been inspired by a lecture given by Walter Gropius at the opening of the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar, Germany, titled "Art and Technology: A New Unity." (The Aaltos, who traveled frequently in Europe, visited the Bauhaus in Dessau in 1930, five years before Artek was launched, and were close friends of László Moholy-Nagy, the Hungarian-born designer and artist who taught at the school from 1923 to 1928.)

A manifesto written at the time of the founding outlined Artek's chief purposes: to organize modern art shows in a variety of mediums, to bring modernism into interior design, and to create publications—no, that word was too weak and was crossed out—*propaganda* for a modernist agenda. (The curators rendered the word as "advocacy" in an English translation displayed at the show, which doesn't go quite as far in suggesting revolutionary zeal.) Hahl assumed the role of managing director, Marsio-Aalto became creative director, and Gullichsen organized the modern art gallery that was installed in the Artek store in Helsinki a year after it opened in 1936. A section of the Bard show hints at the experience with a handful of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century paintings, prints, and sculptures customers would have seen, along with glass vases by Gunnel Nyman and a textile by Dora Jung.

Hahl was killed in 1941, volunteering in the Continuation War between Finland and the Soviet Union, and Marsio-Aalto added his management job to her creative duties. But though the curators allude to the difficulty of running a European business



A manifesto written at the time of the founding outlined Artek's chief purposes: to organize modern art shows in a variety of mediums, to bring modernism into interior design, and to create publications—*propaganda*—for a modernist agenda

on the brink of World War II, with Finland in constant battle with the Soviets and making an alliance with Germany, politics (and business ethics) are left in the background. Wall texts make only brief mentions of wartime dangers and privations. Nor do they refer to Aalto's reluctant trip to Berlin in 1943 at the invitation of the Germans to meet Albert Speer and learn more about industrial standardization, a method dear to his heart. These subjects will be addressed in the exhibition catalogue due out in July from Yale University Press.

Instead, the show concentrates in an absorbing way on how Artek cultivated international product licensees and distributors, building strong markets, especially in the United States. (Sales figures suggest that the company was a leader in "progressive" furniture in America from 1947 to 1949.) The



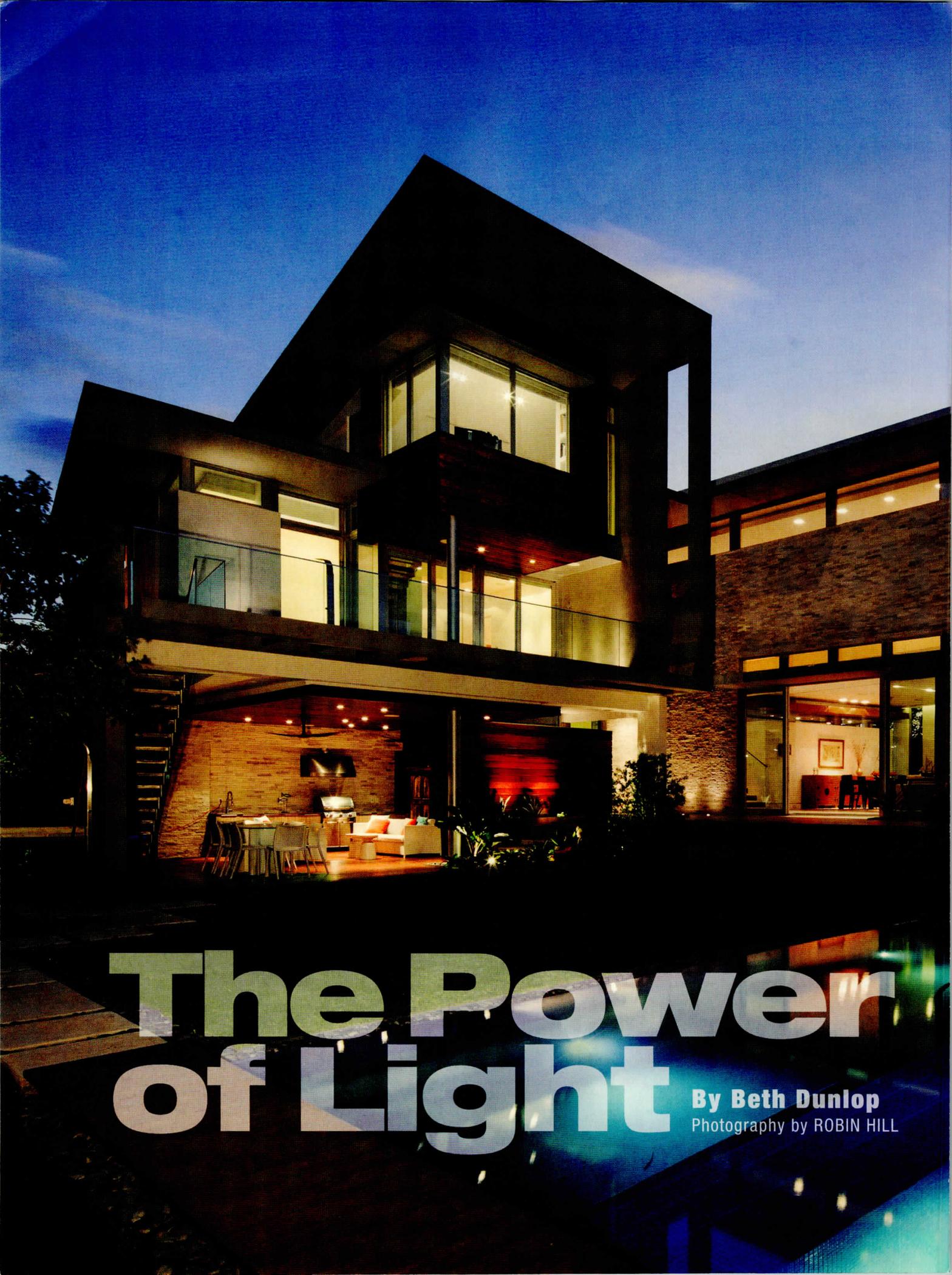
show also emphasizes the Artek drawing office's collaboration on buildings designed both by Aalto (such as the 1946 Baker House dormitory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where much of the original furniture is said to still be in use) and by others (including work in 1947 for the Helsinki-Malmi Airport and the 1948 staff housing for the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki). Documents found in Artek's archives, as well as those supplied by Aalto's descendants, include logo treatments, purchase orders, and photographs of Artek pieces arrayed in homes and offices throughout the world.

Then there's the actual furniture—both familiar and rarely exhibited specimens and sometimes a combination of both; for instance, the Paimio armchair originally designed in 1931–1932 for tubercular patients, is displayed next to a mold for contorting its looped bentwood frame. We learn that, despite Aalto's innovations, it was still a hell of a process to shape the wood. The

mold bears the scars of repeated efforts.

The Paimio chair was one of the works that gave rise to Artek. The three-legged stool no. 60 that Aalto designed a year later for his Municipal Library building in Viipuri, Finland, was another. "It's amazing what he did in that short period of time—all that experimentation that served him for decades," notes Cara McCarty, the curatorial director of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. She was referring to the Aaltos' deliberately simple kit of forms and materials, which was the foundation of their product vocabulary, a language that found variety not in the number of components but in the way they were sized, colored, and arranged. *Artek and the Aaltos* is a proof-in-the-pudding demonstration of how right that thinking was. Eighty years later, the company (which is now owned by Vitra) is still around and the design looks relevant. If those achievements aren't worthy of advocacy, I don't know what is. **M**

A collection of children's furniture designed by Aino, from the Aalto family apartment in Turku, Finland. The hanging cabinet, table, chair, and cabinet were manufactured by Huonekalu-ja Rakennustyötehdas, 1929.



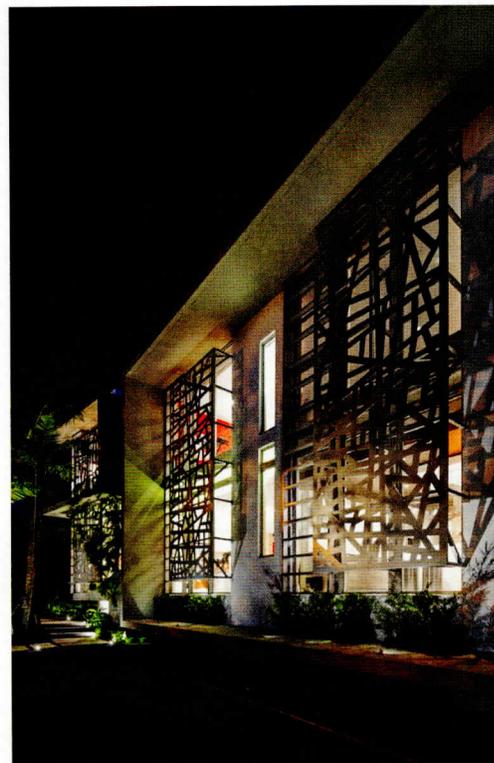
# The Power of Light

By Beth Dunlop  
Photography by ROBIN HILL

The architect Jaya Kader designed this Key Biscayne house to celebrate the South Florida climate, connecting inside and out.

Aluminum grilles designed by the artist Andrés Ferrandis screen the house from both the street and the powerful setting sun.

Broad steps lead into the living room.



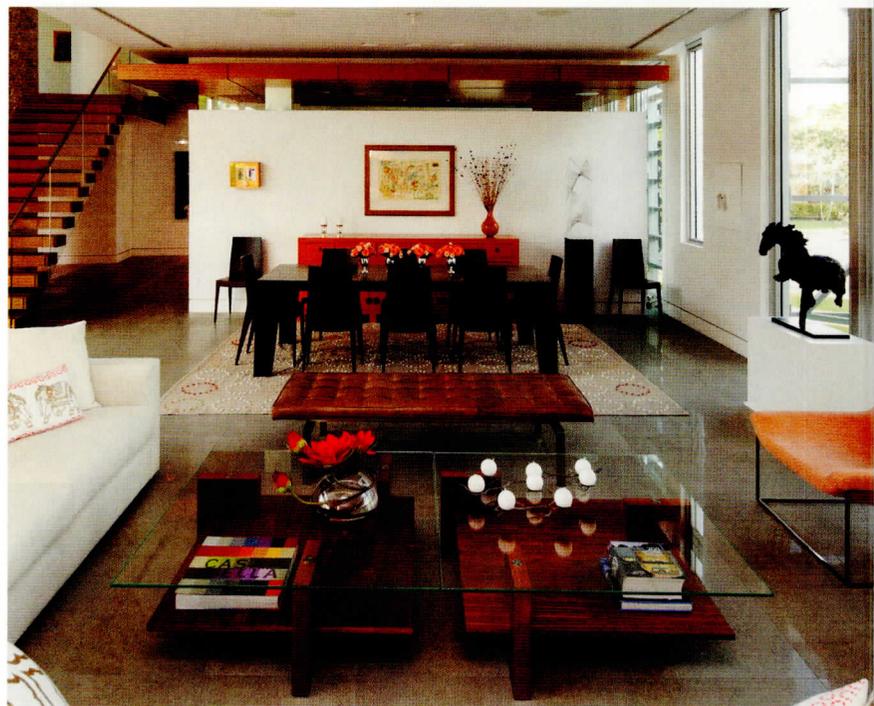
**“I’m** obsessed with light,” says Jaya Kader as she looks at the sun-dappled facade of the house she recently designed on Key Biscayne. Although it is indeed a house designed to do exactly what houses do—provide enclosure, shelter, and protection from the elements—it has a deeper conception as well. Kader sought



Hanging copper lights by Tom Dixon give dimension to the stairwell.

The living room, with its Antonello Italia Zen coffee tables and American Leather Rex bench, opens onto the dining room, where Delta dining chairs from Calligaris surround a Pianca Cartagena dining table.

In the living room, the Dreamer armchairs are from Désirée and the Rocco sofas are by Nathan Anthony. The paintings are by María Elena Álvarez of Venezuela and Lina Binkele of Colombia.



to use light to transform the experience of life in this house as if it were the central metaphor. Thus the profuse, bright Florida light is filtered from the west and south (where, at Miami's latitude, the sun lingers longest for a good part of the year) and welcomed from the north and east.

Kader's clients—Jose Piedrahita and Carolina Mazuera, both engineers who now work in finance and consulting—were attracted to and settled on the island when they moved to Florida from their native Colombia. And as their family grew (they now have two young sons), they began to envision a more permanent home; they wanted to build their own. They were lucky to find a site within walking distance of the key's well-regarded elementary school; then they began the search for an architect. They scoured magazines and websites looking for inspiration and information.

"We both agreed on the style that we wanted for it—tropical modern, which would go perfectly with the climate and the emerging architecture in Miami," Mazuera says. "We

especially wanted to have a house with ample spaces, high ceilings, and lots of windows, which balanced light, ventilation, humidity, and air temperature. Also, we wanted to own a house whose design was somewhat out of the ordinary."

That search led them to the Costa Rica-born Kader, who was educated first at Brandeis University and then at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. After stints working for Graham Gund, Moshe Safdie, and Robert A. M. Stern, she moved to Miami and ultimately set up her own practice, KZ Architecture. Piedrahita and Mazuera were drawn to her portfolio—her work has largely focused on private houses that are fully considerate of climate and the need for sustainability, and inspired by Florida's modernist legacy with its strong connection between architecture and landscape.

The house is L-shaped on its corner lot—a tight site that is long and narrow. The main street facade is the long side of the L—"to let you take in the house in its fullness," the architect says. Kader collaborated



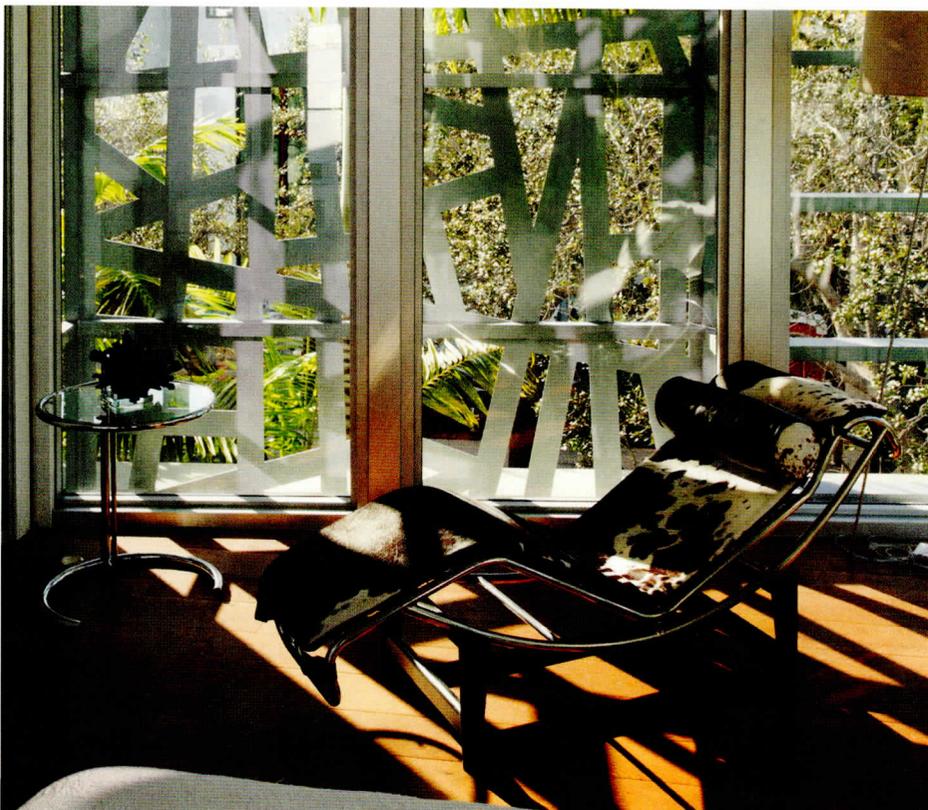
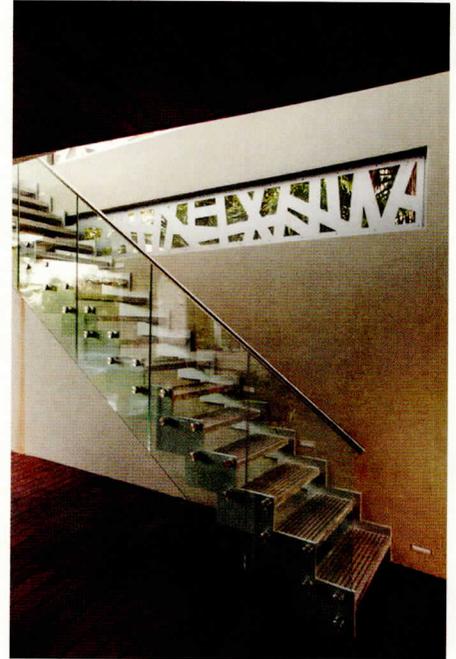
**“We especially wanted to have a house with ample spaces, high ceilings, and lots of windows”**

with the Spanish artist Andrés Ferrandis to create fractal-patterned, abstract aluminum grilles that cover the house’s large windows, becoming both practical—offering shade and privacy—and poetic elements of the design.

The primary entrance is reached along what the architect terms “a ritual path” of concrete pavers and river rock that leads from the sidewalk. Though the house itself is clad in split-faced limestone with ipe wood trim, all the doors are red—reflecting Piedrahita and Mazuera’s desire for a moment of color. Ma-

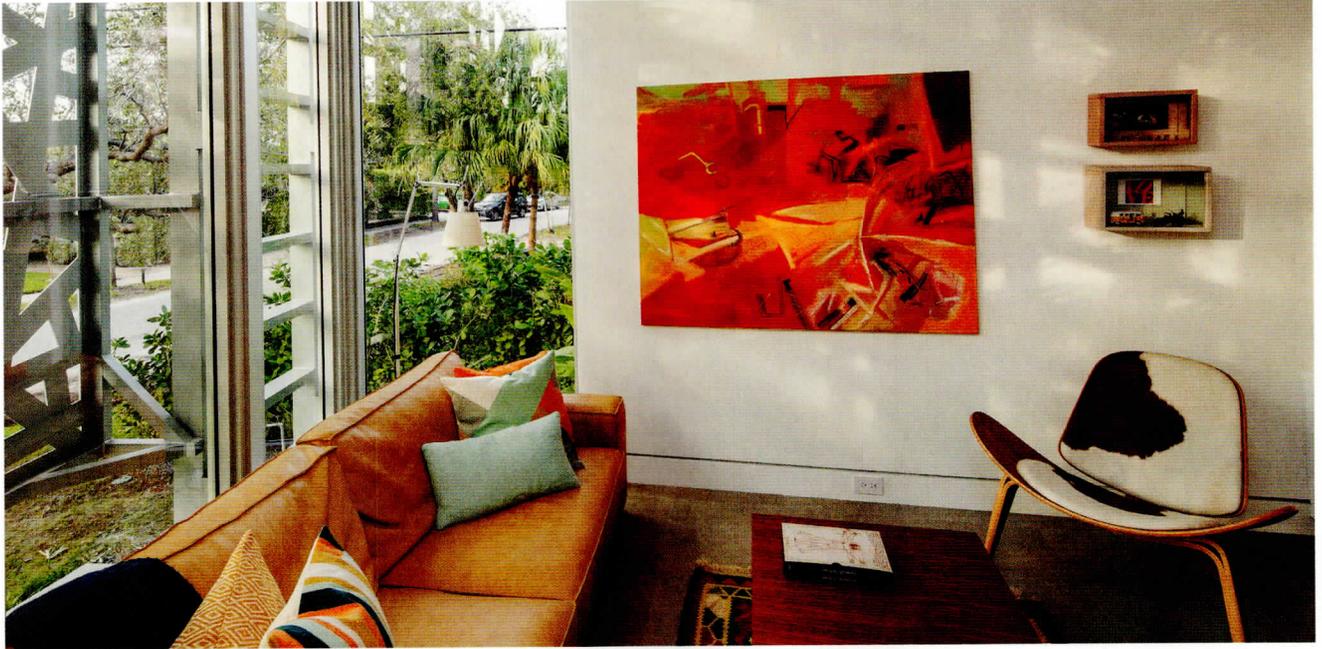
zuera says that the selection of furniture, too, was intended to embrace the house’s neutral palette and at the same time add selective pops of color. Her choices range from the classics—Hans J. Wegner cowhide Shell chairs, an Eileen Gray table, an Eero Saarinen oval dining table, and a chaise longue by Le Corbusier, Charlotte Perriand, and Pierre Jeanneret—to an American Leather Rex bench and California-made sofas from Nathan Anthony as well as light fixtures from Foscarini, Artemide, and Tom Dixon.

The careful manipulation of light



in the house is essential to both shading and showcasing the couple’s art collection, which revolves, primarily, around both established and emerging Latin American artists. The collection includes pieces by Roberto Matta, Cundo Bermúdez, and Edgar Negret as well as by young artists from Colombia, Venezuela, and Argentina.

The house wraps around its outdoor space—a pool and a covered loggia. A Spanish porcelain tile that looks like concrete covers the floors inside and out; inside, it is polished, and on the terrace, it is rough-finished. To keep the design simple, Kader opted to use as few materials as possible—limestone, stucco, wood (oak as well as ipe), glass,



metal, and tile. “And I only use non-toxic materials,” she adds. There is natural light in every room, and she selectively inserted solar-tube skylights on the upper floor, where four bedrooms accommodate parents, children, and guests. In keeping with the goal of bringing the outside in, the master and guest suites have balconies overlooking the pool.

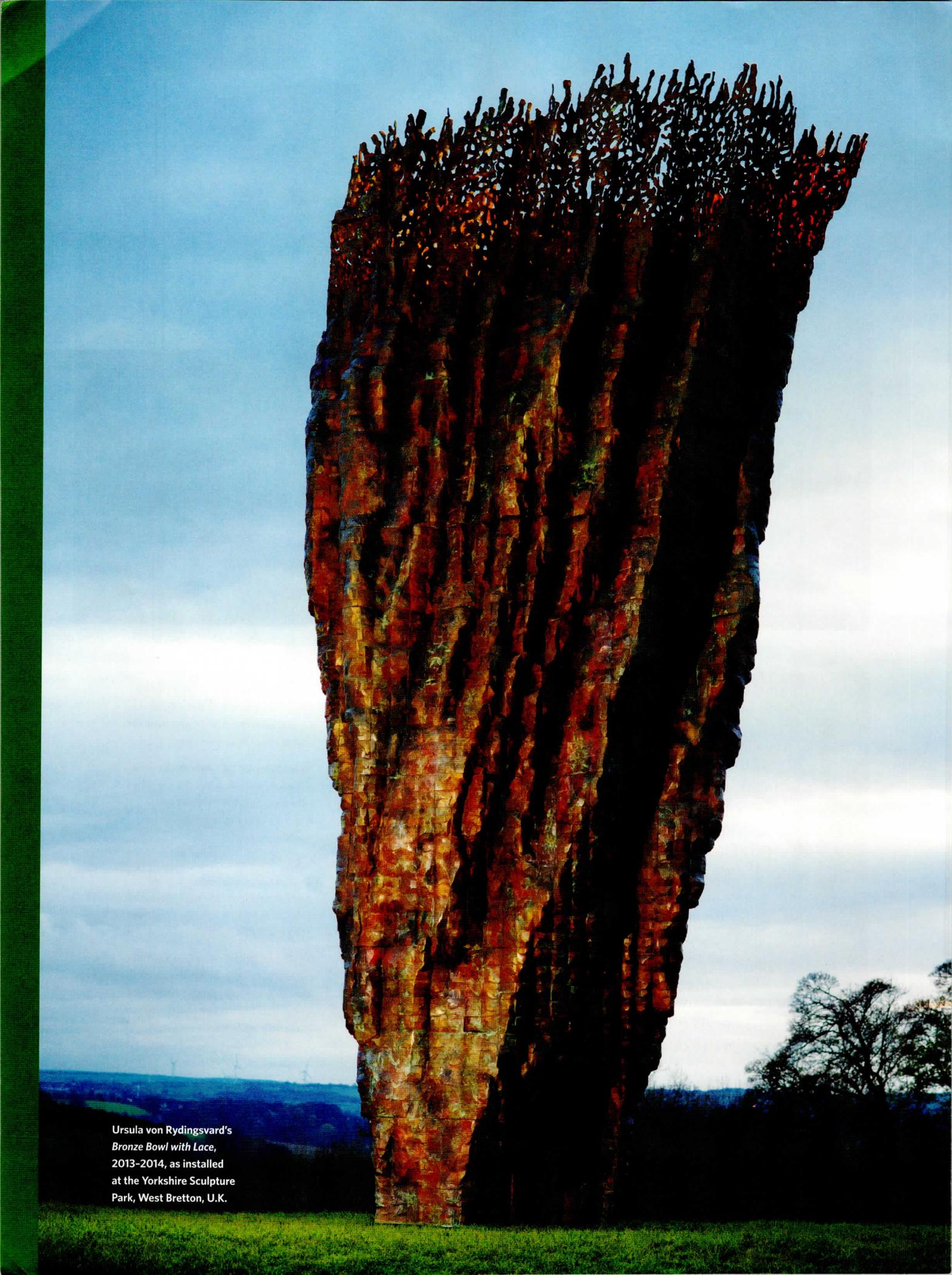
The connections between inside and out are all-important here. “My philosophy,” Kader says, “is one of purpose and context. Design is a dialogue.” And in this case, the dialogue is a fluid and fulfilling one, or as Kader terms it, “a wonderful journey. I love it when my homes have the soul of the client.” **M**

In the guest bedroom, sun filters through the aluminum grille, casting a pattern across a chaise longue by Le Corbusier, Charlotte Perriand, and Pierre Jeanneret, and an Eileen Gray side table.

Kader designed this staircase to seem almost as if it is floating. The clerestory window behind it is shaded by a fragment of one of the grilles on the west-facing wall.

In the library, one of two Hans J. Wegner Shell chairs stands beside Gamma Arredamenti International's Mokambo sofa. On the wall is a painting by Diego Mazuera of Colombia.

The breakfast table—an Eero Saarinen oval pedestal table by Knoll—stands in a sunny corner, surrounded by Gamma chairs from Pianca. The pendant light is Foscarini's Big Bang.

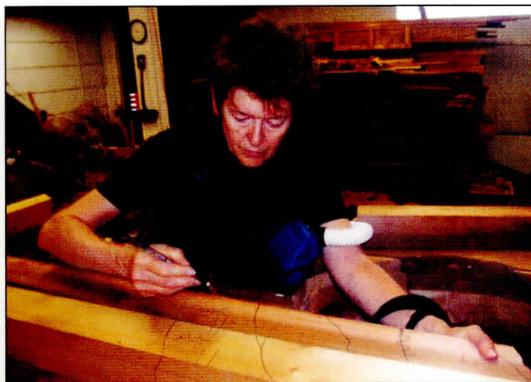


Ursula von Rydingsvard's  
*Bronze Bowl with Lace*,  
2013-2014, as installed  
at the Yorkshire Sculpture  
Park, West Bretton, U.K.

A Visit with

Ursula  
von

Rydingsvard



By Frances Brent

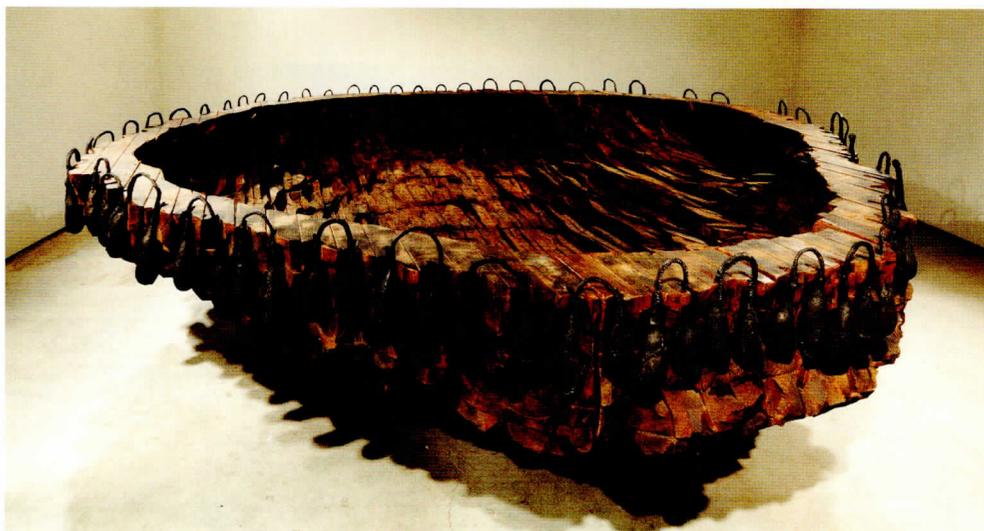
I'M TALKING TO THE SCULPTOR Ursula von Rydingsvard in her enormous, bright, and meticulously organized studio in Bushwick, Brooklyn. We walk through a portion of the second-story space where a lace template for lost-wax casting stretches across the floorboards. We pass a long wall where several hundred neatly hung objects demonstrate the range of her inspiration and experimentation: photographs, sketches, feathery and almost diaphanous works on handmade paper, tangles of hemp, beads, skeins of wool, netted sleeves, a pair of buoy-like sacs made out of cow intestines—like the ones that encircle the broad lip of her large bowl *Ocean Floor*.

Von Rydingsvard is a force of nature, a cyclone of energy and painstaking, hard work. Open, generous, plainspoken, graciously informal, she's been making art since the late sixties, and her pieces and

Everything's an object, you know, and the bowls are bowls. I even call them bowls, say, *Bronze Bowl with Lace*, but it's an excuse, the bowl's an excuse to reach out to other things. The bowl gets a surface that's oriented toward something other than a bowl, that hopes to unfurl other things, other than to say "it's a bowl" and then you say "good-bye"

installations often have the blurred beauty of worn-away statuary or objects salvaged from the bottom of the sea. She's best known for her layered, craggy, scarified constructions built from cut planks of milled cedar four-by-fours, sawed, stacked, and glued—cones, reverse cones, talismanic objects that convey dignity and gravity as well as familiarity.

Over a long career she's experimented with many sculptural ideas and materials. One of her most stunning nature-based pieces is *Land Rollers*, made of seventeen giant and furrowed cedar cylinders rubbed with graphite, which was installed at the Storm King Art Center between 1992 and 1994. Much different, and hinting at her range, is *katul katul*, made from co-polyethylene and aluminum, a gangling, transparent bonnet-like structure suspended from the skylight of the atrium in the Queens Family Courthouse.



Her many huge bowls provide a context where she can explore endless sculptural implications without being too descriptive. As she says, they unfurl things: fertility, nourishment, emptiness, intimacy, fullness, openness. Like a Japanese potter, but using the medium of sawed and glued wooden blocks, von Rydingsvard explores the essence of the bowl and the pull of its gravity, while considering its curves and hollows, surface texture, coloration, weight, balance, the mysterious relationship between inside and out, its analogies to the human body or landscape—until it's deconstructed. You can see this in documentary photographs of the splayed-out *Can't Eat Black*, an installation at the Neuberger Museum of Art at Purchase College in 2002. *Can't Eat Black* shows the anatomy of a von Rydingsvard bowl, each board cut on all sides, each ring of boards forming a profile that serves as a platform for the next tier, though in this case the bowl has been cut apart,

sliced up, and bonded back. The raggedly feathered exterior surfaces encircle an interior that looks like a buckling cobbled street—whole sections threatening to fracture and fly out in hundreds of directions.

Even though her work can be massive (*Ona*, made in 2013 and cast in bronze, weighs nearly twelve thousand pounds), both sensuality and fragility hover over von Rydingsvard's objects. One of her more recent works, the heroically scaled *Bronze Bowl with Lace*, stands nearly twenty feet tall, crowned with intricate folds of metallic fretwork. On one hand, the sculptural surface is cragged like the stone cliffs of a sea cave or the bark of an ancient tree, but from a distance the body looks like a bouquet, and the patterned band of bronze lace at the top mimics the intricacies of billowing and delicate needlework with its pattern of positive and negative space filtering light.

When I ask von Rydingsvard about the play of hard and soft, the magic of

making her solid materials—cedar, bronze, and more recently copper—allude to fabric, she nods and says slowly, "I've thought about cloth for decades." She shows me a gift she relishes: bags and bags of collected lace brought to her studio by a friend. "Do you see how rich I am?" she asks teasingly as we examine the multitude of patterns made with bobbin and needle.

On the weekends and when she travels, von Rydingsvard likes to roam the flea markets. In China she found finely sewn silks, "very old things that are so intricate you can't believe anyone would have the endurance to see it through," and in Japan there were tie-dyed fabrics and kimonos: "They make the smallest little knots that they tie with a string, the smallest little knots by the thousand, by the millions, and dip them into their dyes. It's just something that feels almost holy to me . . . I went to Kyoto and there was this mountain of kimonos . . . and, oh, what it takes to make a kimono, the

The rim of *Ocean Floor*, 1996, is encircled by pairs of sewn cow's intestines. Describing stitching the organic material, von Rydingsvard says, "It's soft while I'm sewing it, so it's fresh, and then it dries, becoming something else entirely."



JERRY L. THOMPSON PHOTO

The trunk and arm of *Luba*, 2010, at the Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York, are made with cedar and graphite, but the trailing appendages are cast in bronze.



care and even learning to fold and unfold them. I would do it over and over again.”

Work—time-consuming, repetitive work using her hands and her body—has been a mainstay throughout von Rydingsvard’s life. “It’s good for me mentally, it’s good for me physically,” she says. In the downstairs rooms of her studio, where many sculptural pieces are in various stages of completion, you get a sense of the artist’s grueling regimen. The space resembles a lumberyard with scaffolding, forklifts, ladders, hand trucks, shelves supporting tons of wooden beams, rope, pipe clamps, drill bits, discarded gloves; and yet she says everything begins with pencil marks on the floor, the foundational shape for a new base. With a

Above: *Land Rollers*, 1992, as installed at Storm King, 1992–1994, was secured on a set of tracks at the crest of a hill, demonstrating a rapport with the surroundings as well as kinetic tension.

small group of assistants (two for the cutting process, one for gluing), she works silently, penciling a shorthand of instructions on all sides of every cedar beam, and then building layer by layer,

cutting each piece of wood with a circular saw and gouging with chisel and mallet, screwing planks into place, assembling thousands of coded pieces, and then disassembling the entire construction, gluing, reassembling, brushing graphite into the crevices and onto surfaces, polishing, and vacuuming.

Reflecting on craftsmanship, von Rydingsvard says, “I think, to be too aware, to see too clearly the craftsmanship of a piece is often a turnoff for me... just being well-made, that’s in the realm of not being very interesting.” You recognize this aesthetic in her sculpture, never over-determined even when it’s the product of months or years of physical labor. She likes to talk about her materials seeming to misbehave. Her work often looks like ancient, half-forgotten remnants of statuary that have survived by chance. This is especially apparent in her artifactual



Von Rydingsvard's drawing studio.

forms—spoons, shovels, collars, plates, combs—somber and dreamlike, simple objects freighted with personal meaning: “There’s something in me that I would have been had that war not happened,” she says, explaining how her objects bridge two worlds, broken apart by World War II.

Von Rydingsvard was born in Deensen, Germany, in 1942, the fifth of seven children in a family that had been peasant farmers for generations. Her mother’s family was Polish, from the region near Zakopane. Her father was a Polish-speaking Ukrainian. The family was deported to Germany during the war and her father worked as an agricultural forced laborer under brutal conditions. Afterward, not wanting to return to Communist Poland, they were transferred through eight displaced-persons camps, living in unheated barracks, the children dressed in pants made from Army blankets and playing with bricks and sticks. Finally, in 1950 they were resettled in Plainville, Connecticut. To support the large family, her father took on two factory jobs, a day and a night shift, and worked as a gardener on weekends. Her mother went to work in a restaurant and the children had to take care of one another, trying their best to make sense of the indignities and brutality of immigrant life in a small American factory town.

History uprooted her family from Polish farmland and folk culture, but it also positioned her—through untir-

ing work, discipline, and imagination—to get a B.A. and an M.A. from the University of Miami, to become an artist with an M.F.A. from Columbia University, and to break into the international art scene.

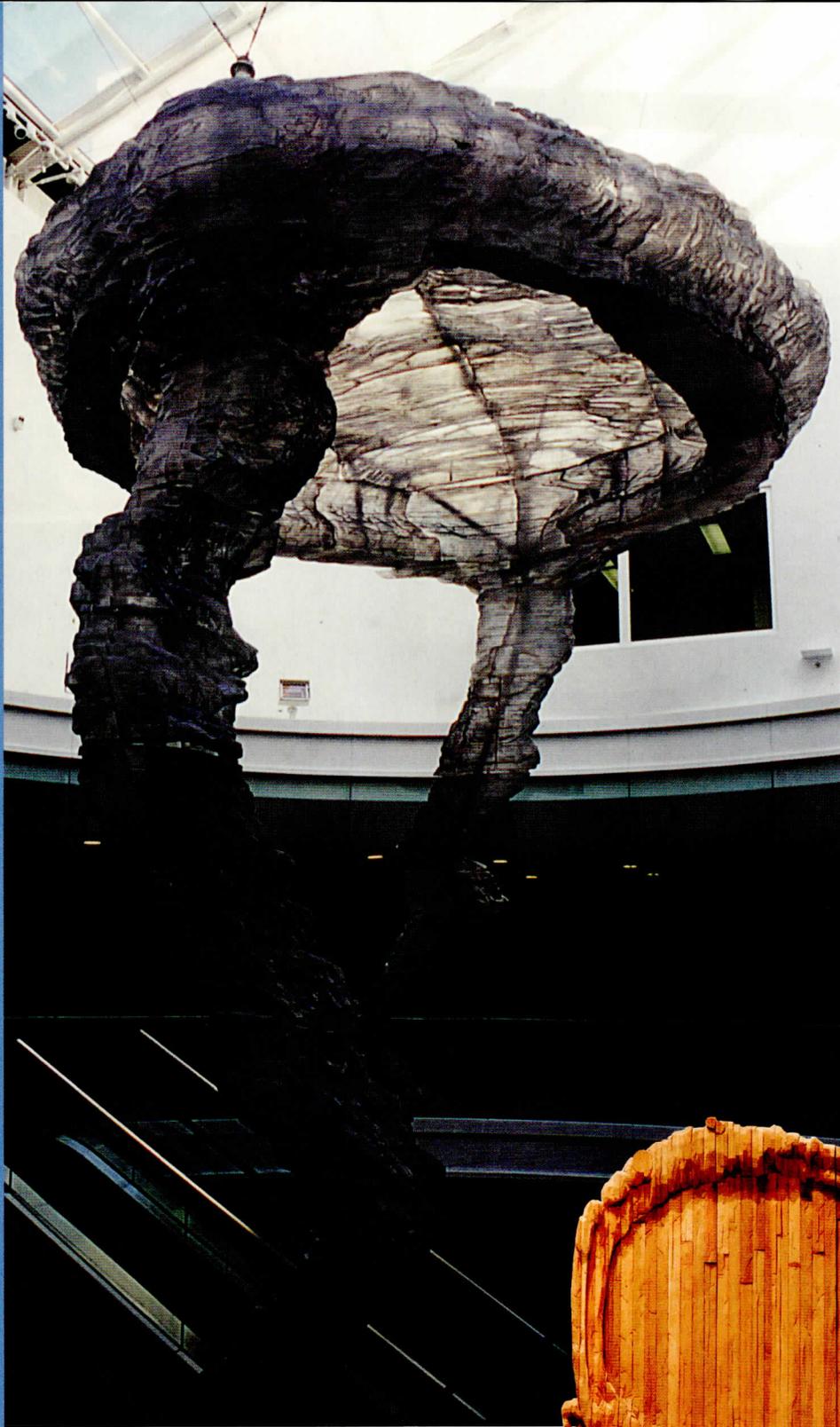
With their rough-hewn quality, scarred and pocked, von Rydingsvard’s



domestic objects and tools are reminders of both the disruption of the war and an idealization of what existed in a vanished place: “I think it’s something unconscious because I never grew up in Poland, I never grew up in the Ukraine . . . . You know, I don’t really want to make another bowl but it keeps surfacing—and you mentioned the spoons

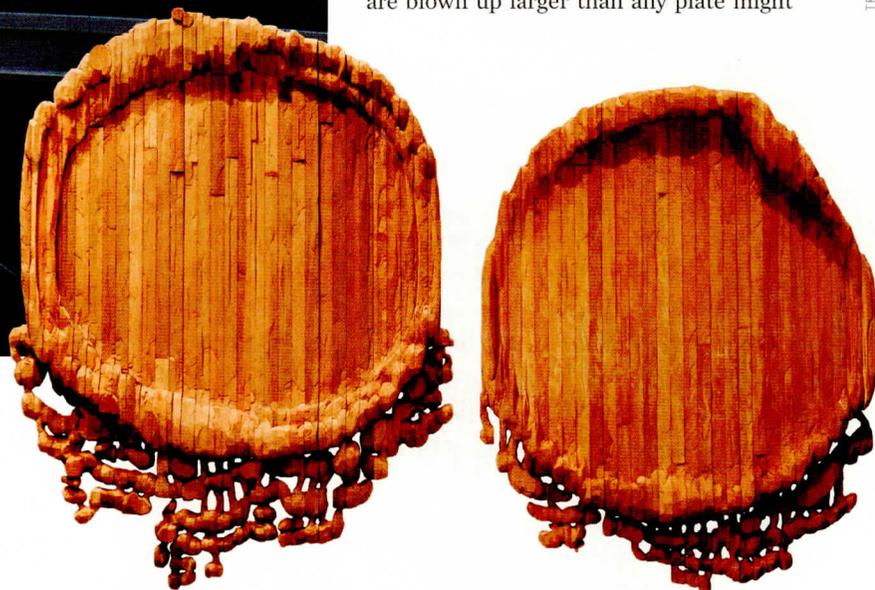
The uppermost portion of *Bronze Bowl with Lace* was made from wax molds that von Rydingsvard cut by hand at the Polich Tallix Foundry in Rock Tavern, New York, before casting.





The dome-shaped top of *katul, katul*, 1999–2002, drinks in light from the surrounding windows in the Queens Family Courthouse.

The cedar *Weeping Plates* date from 2005.



and the shovels, . . . so there's this bowl that needs to be filled. I never fill it, right, it never gets filled and I can't even say it's more filled than it was thirty-five years ago, before I even started making art, but it fuels a will that doesn't want to stop."

*Paul's Shovel* is the essence of a shovel or its approximation, not one meant for digging; almost seven feet tall and made from milled cedar, it's intended to hang in the air, suspended on a wall as an abstraction. This shovel looks as though it's been forgotten in the damp corner of an old shed until it's become worn away into an indeterminate form. Pared down in this way, it stands as an amalgam of a farmer's tool and the not-quite-defined body of a man, an emblem for work and excavation, and a reference to her husband, Paul Greengard (possibly to his life of hard work; he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2000), and perhaps a wistful allusion to the life her father might have led had he not been displaced by the war.

Like *Paul's Shovel*, the *Weeping Plates* are blown up larger than any plate might

be and then flattened and stretched so they become irregular circles shaped like the loops in a de Kooning painting, biomorphic forms with their edges roughly rolled over. The bottoms are fringed; as von Rydingsvard has said, “they feel almost like an unraveling of something.” Because they’re magnified they’ve become symbolic, bringing to mind hunger, fullness, sanctification of food, or bread itself. It’s not unlikely that they carry trace memories of the large serving plates families ate from in the displaced-persons camps, and since they’re shield-like they fuse the concept of a mother’s protection with her role as food provider. “Everything fell apart when our mother wasn’t home. It was our mother we were in love with,” von Rydingsvard says.

Though von Rydingsvard thinks of her work sculpturally rather than architecturally, the rough plank construction of the wooden barracks and the bricks and sticks she played with as a girl have been seminal to her artistic imagination. She talks about how she

used to fantasize about the architecture and landscape of Poland. In 1985, when she was on the faculty at Yale, she received a Griswold Grant that allowed her to travel there, and in the early 1990s she went back again. “I went to Zakopane, not far from where my mother was born,” she says, adding: “In Zakopane all the houses are made out of wood and they also have a kind of lace over their doors, and wood for their roofs, and under the bottoms of their roofs, and so on. Wood is extremely important to them.” She tells me how an older woman took her to hear a singing group practicing in the mountains near Zakopane, “singing from one mountain top to another, and it would echo . . . they were answering one another, back and forth.” She began to weep while they were singing, she recalls. “I couldn’t stop my tears . . . something

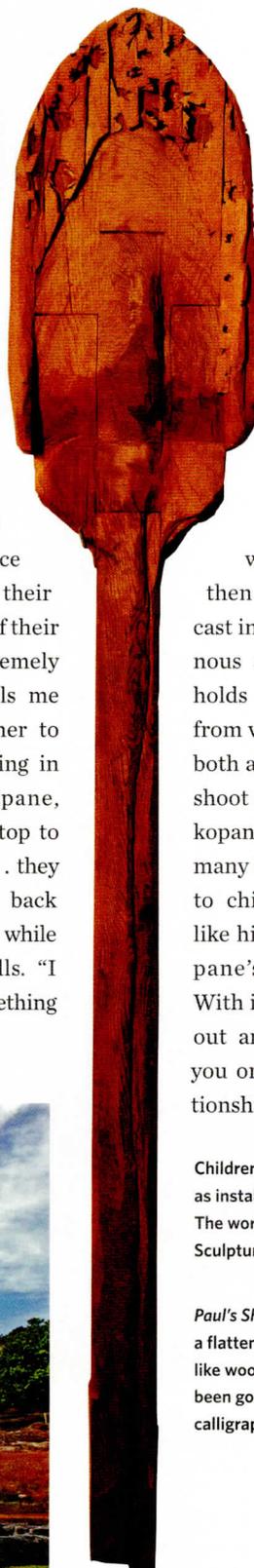
like that has only happened, maybe you can count on one hand.”

In 2006 von Rydingsvard completed *Damski Czepek* (Old Woman’s Bonnet), a dwelling-like structure shaped like a bonnet with curving ribbons but large enough for viewers to walk right under its frilled brim, or “porch” as the artist calls it. The bonnet was made first in cedar and

then cut into sections so it could be cast in polyurethane resin. It’s luminous and welcoming, yet its shell holds the impression of the blocks from which it was molded. It is thus both a translucent space and an offshoot of the wooden cottages of Zakopane. Like her bowls, it unfurls many things: an affectionate gesture to childhood, to childhood games like hide-and-go-seek, and to Zakopane’s ornamental architecture. With its brimmed opening, it carves out an intimate space and invites you once again to explore the relationship between inside and out. **M**

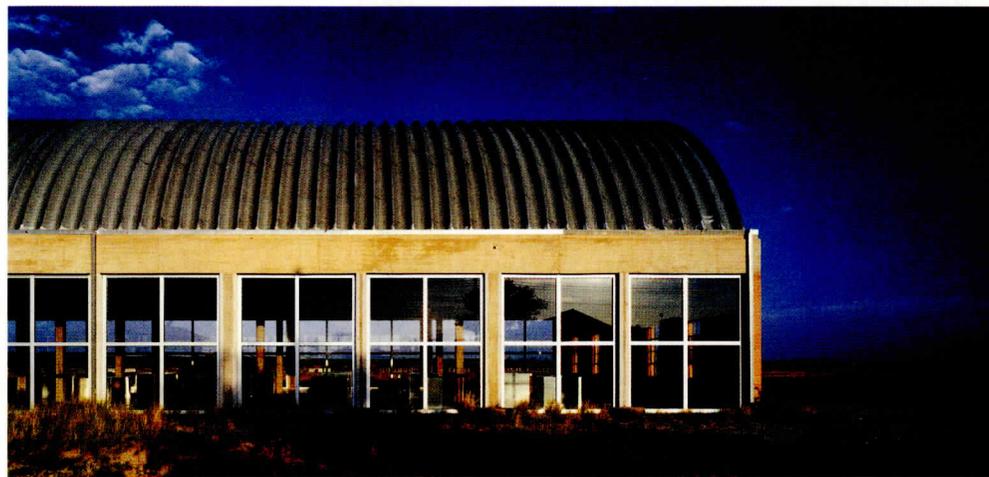
Children playing in *Damski Czepek*, 2006, as installed at Pilane in Sweden in 2009. The work is now installed at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

*Paul’s Shovel*, in cedar, 1987. Consisting of a flattened pole for a handle and a paddle-like wooden blade, the leveled scoop has been gouged around the edges in an almost calligraphic way.



# An Experience in Control and Perception

By SUZANNE LOVELL

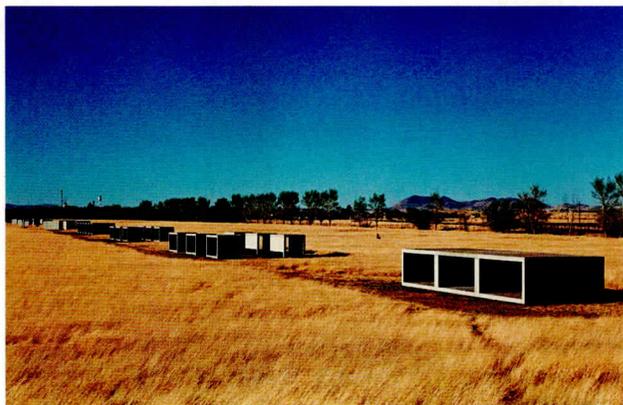


IN MY CAREER AS AN ARCHITECT and designer, little has affected me more than the “Three-Dimensional Experience” at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. Chinati is an internationally recognized museum created by Donald Judd (1928–1994)—his most ambitious project—which opened to the public in 1986. He intended it to be a place where art was shown according to the criteria and intentions of the artist, to embody every aspect of his powerful belief that installation, within any space, is a part of the art itself. Judd wanted large spaces and high ceilings, and the permanent placement of his own art and the art of his friends, especially that of John Chamberlain (1927–2011) and Dan Flavin (1933–1996). He developed this most sophisticated “ideal place for art” in direct response to the group shows that museums were staging in the late 1960s and early ‘70s in New York City. At Chinati, he created a focused experi-

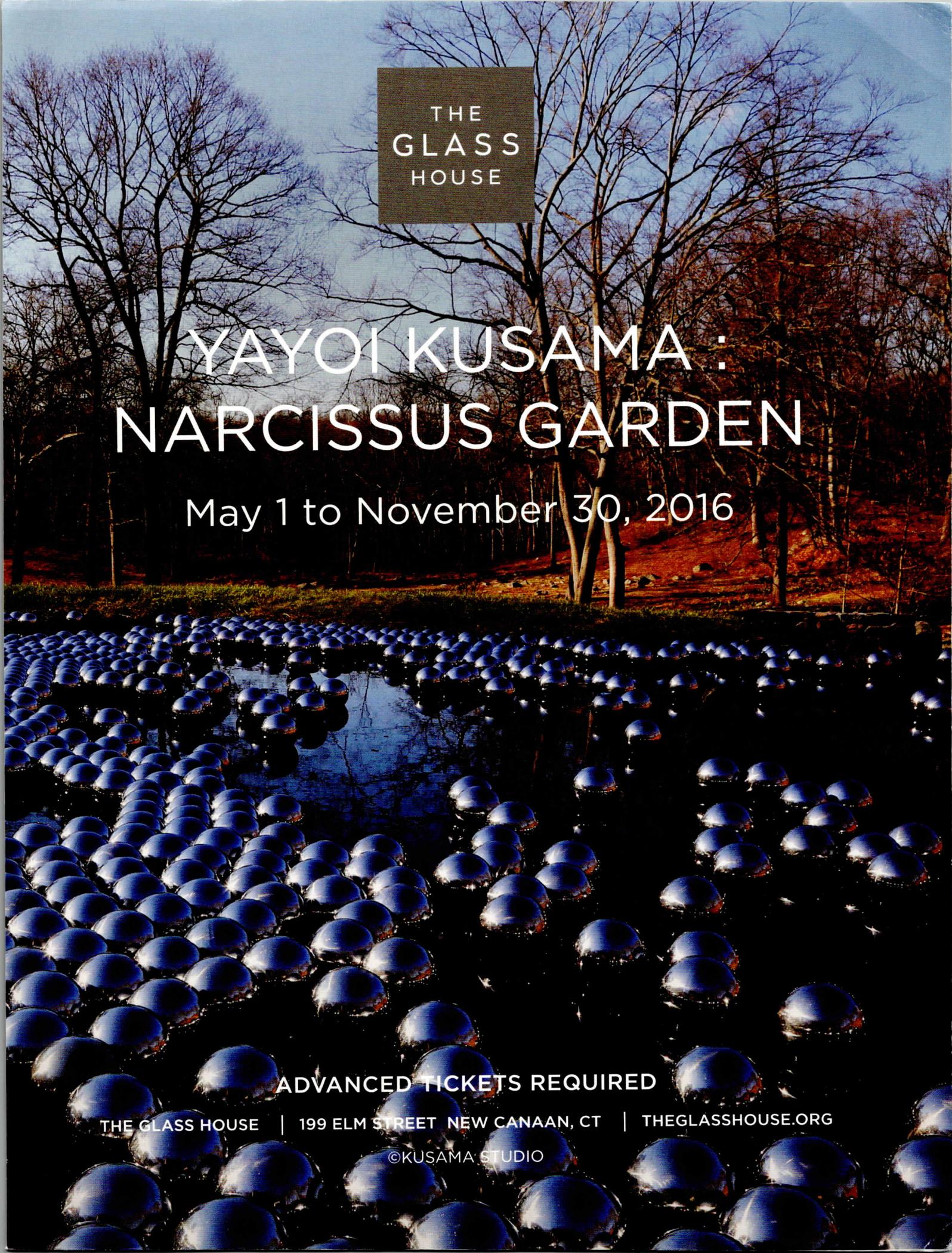
ence of extraordinary scale—unique objects installed in harmony with architecture and the landscape of West Texas.

Judd created his remarkable installation of one hundred precise, mill aluminum boxes—each 41 by 51 by 72 inches—inside two former artillery sheds whose outer walls he transformed into transparent facades. He then placed fifteen massive concrete boxes—each just over 8 by 8 by 16 ½ feet—in the landscape. The distance between Judd’s forms portrays scale in opposites: while one views the repetition of the light-strewn metal boxes as endless, one is also conscious of a massiveness that feels intimate in the concrete boxes in the landscape. Judd’s message is amplified when the installation is experienced from the inside looking out, and enhanced further when viewed in the landscape at sunrise.

The Chinati Foundation, Judd’s Gesamtkunstwerk, is an expression of control and a remarkable experience of perception, wherein surfaces that appear to be solid are actually voids. The serial experience of the metal boxes leads to a discovery—each interior is unique, as the aluminum is never in the same place, and the views, both reflective and actual, are never repeated. To experience the work with this additional element of light shining through the planes, interacting and reflecting, has a lasting impact. The “museum space” melts away as the experience of the whole emerges, and this affects the viewer’s understanding of Judd from then on. Installation is, in fact, an omnipresent element of fine art and object. So, too, is the experience of Flavin’s installations in a series of six U-shaped barracks; he is painting with light in architecture, and the all-encompassing experience of this work can’t be replicated.



*As founder and CEO of her eponymous firm, Suzanne Lovell has been creating curated environments for thirty years. Through the integration of architecture, sophisticated materials, custom furniture and textiles, antiques, and fine art, Suzanne explores the “Three-Dimensional Experience” in residential interior design. As a lecturer and keynote speaker, she frequently addresses her passion for collecting fine art and objects. Suzanne Lovell Inc. has received numerous national and international design awards; its projects are the featured in her book *Artistic Interiors: Designing with Fine Art Collections* (Abrams, 2011).*



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