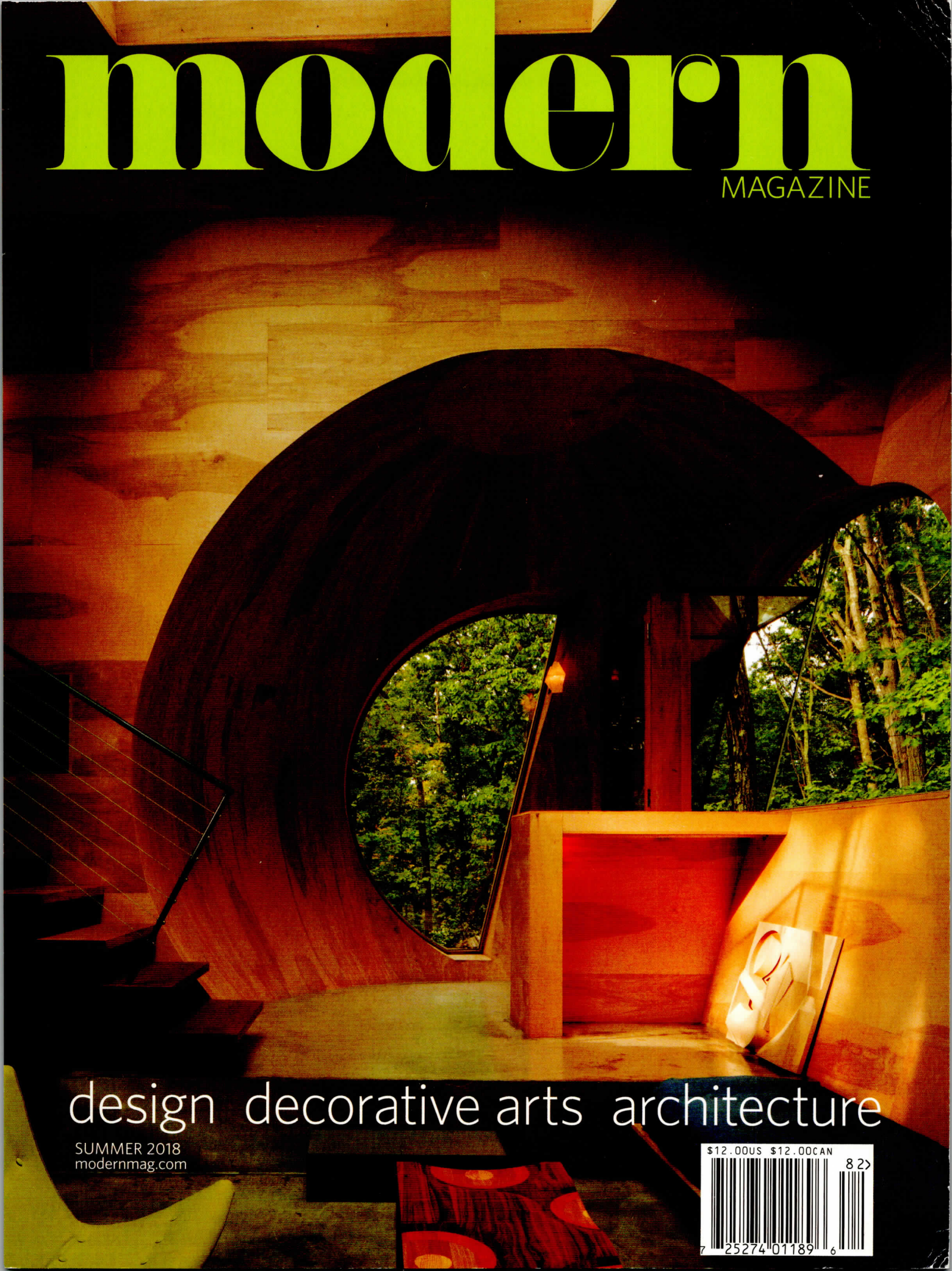


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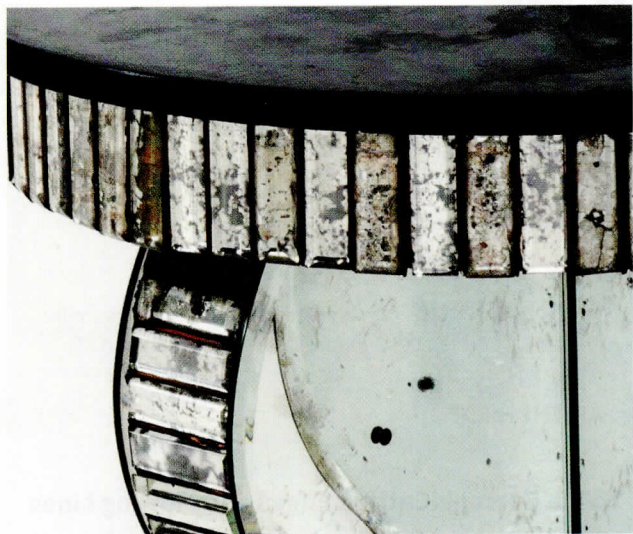
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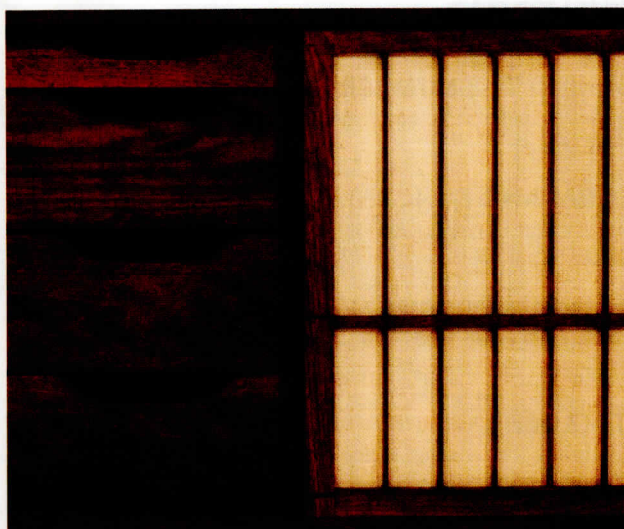
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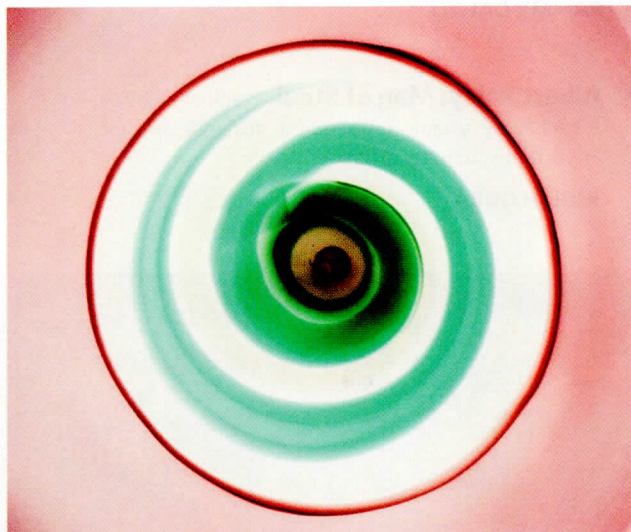
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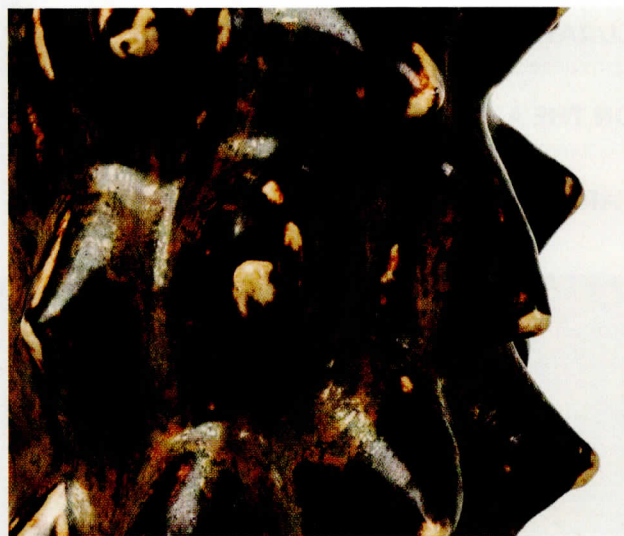
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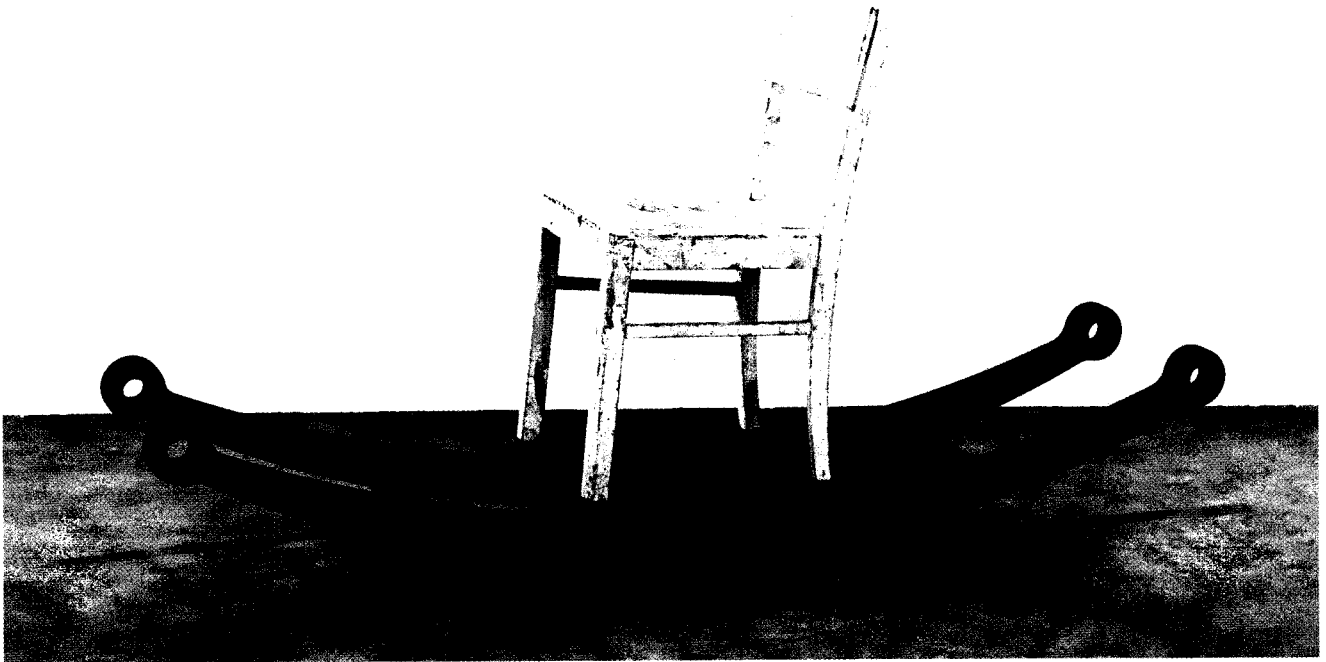
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GEORGE NAKASHIMA, 1958

VERY RARE PAIR OF AMERICAN BLACK WALNUT CHESTS,  
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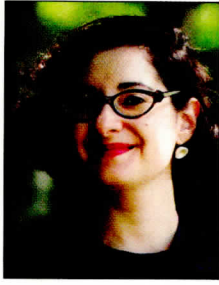


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**Bella Neyman** is an independent curator and journalist specializing in contemporary art jewelry and design. Since receiving a master's degree in decorative arts and design history from the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and Parsons School of Design at The New School in 2008, she has worked for some of New York City's leading design galleries. For the last three years, she was the director of New York's only contemporary jewelry gallery. She is also the co-founder of NYC Jewelry Week, a citywide celebration of jewelry, to be held November 12-18, 2018. Her articles have appeared in numerous publications; she cultivated her love of writing by starting a blog in 2009 called "Objects Not Paintings," which exists to this day. When she is not preaching the gospel of jewelry throughout the world, she resides with her husband and daughter in Brooklyn.



**Brian Kish** is an internationally recognized authority on twentieth-century Italian design, with a particular emphasis on the work of Luigi Caccia Dominioni, Osvaldo Borsani, Ico and Luisa Parisi, Gio Ponti, BBPR, Carlo Mollino, and Carlo Scarpa. He graduated from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London in 1982. In 2001 Kish curated *Gio Ponti: A Metaphysical World* at the Queens Museum of Art, among the first exhibitions on Ponti in the United States, and he serves as an associate member and representative of the Gio Ponti Archives in Milan. In addition to handling private sales in his field, Kish is an advisor to the design departments at Christie's and Phillips. In 2017 he contributed to *Entryways of Milan*, and, most recently, in 2018, he was design curator for *Aldo Rossi: The Architecture and Art of the Analogous City* at the Princeton University School of Architecture.



**Judith Gura** left a career in marketing and public relations to focus on teaching and writing about design. Over the past fifteen years she has written eight books on a range of subjects related to architecture and design history, interior design, and furniture, including *Postmodern Design Complete* (chosen by *New York Times* art critic Roberta Smith as one of the ten best art books of 2017), *Design After Modernism*, *New York Interior Design, 1945-1985*, and two guides to period styles. A graduate of Cornell University, she has a master's in history of design and the decorative arts from the Bard Graduate Center. She is on the faculty of the New York School of Interior Design and lectures frequently on contemporary design subjects. Her next book, already in the works, will focus on furniture . . . but she's not giving away details.



**Jen Renzi** is a Brooklyn-based writer and a special projects editor at *Interior Design* magazine. She has contributed to various publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, *DuJour*, and *Departures*, and has produced a number of books—among them the just-launched residential how-to *New York School of Interior Design: Home*. Jen's favorite "design" activity is prototyping with her seven-year-old daughter and creative muse, Soledad, an avid crafter. Recent collaborative projects include stuffed foods sewn from felt, fully furnished paper dollhouses, homemade lipstick, and "art" videos—activities she likes to think put her academic background in art history and cinema studies to good use. Her family recently expanded to include a Chinese dwarf hamster, ButterBiscuit, and a fire-bellied toad, Matteo.

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YVES BOUCARD  
"Ra" chair, 2008

# Delving Deeper

WHY AN ITALIAN MOTOR SCOOTER FROM THE SEVENTIES SOLD FOR A SURPRISINGLY REVVED-UP PRICE

By MATTHEW KENNEDY

**Lot 85 V Dorotheum's Vienna-Vösendorf Motor Vehicle Centre Scootermania sale, April 6, 2018:**

Lambretta DL 200 Electronic scooter, 1971. With an opening price of €500, the vehicle sold for €11,500. Some reasons for the high price:

## TURN SIGNAL

As with much twentieth-century design, the story of the scooter pivots around World War II. Scooters were first produced after the first World War, but the use of motorcycles by Allied forces in Europe during World War II proved appealing for navigating cities to a postwar European working class, including an increasingly mobile population of women. Ferdinando Innocenti, a manufacturer whose factory had been bombed during the war, saw the scooter as a vehicle for capitalizing on Italy's reinvigorated economy. He rebuilt his factory in Milan to return to his bread and butter of producing steel tubing—and also established the brand Lambretta as a low-cost scooter for mass consumption. Famed aeronautical designer Corradino D'Ascanio devised the original, but, after disputes with Innocenti, instead contributed his design to Piaggio & C. S.p.A. to create the Vespa. Engineers Cesare Pallavicino and Pier Luigi Torre finally realized the Lambretta scooter for Innocenti in steel tubing in 1947.

## BLACK RUBBER AND BRIGHT COLORS

But the scooter's market life was short. "During the '60s, when almost everybody could afford a car, scooter manufacturers got into trouble," explains Wolfgang Humer, head of the Classic Car and Motorcycle Department at Dorotheum. In 1967 Lambretta hired Nuccio Bertone, whose designs for Lamborghini had reinvigorated the automobile industry, to refresh the scooter, leading to the DL/GP and Luna lines. The DL boasted slimmer leg shields and narrower handlebars than previous models, a rectangular headlight, and plastic features such as the glovebox and grilles; as a nod to popular mod aesthetics, it came in bold colors, such as red, yellow, and blue, with contrasting black rubber tires. As a notable technical innovation, an electronic model—the one in Dorotheum's auction—was introduced in June 1970. The DL's twin, called the GP (short for "Grand Prix" and marketed to racing enthusiasts), was described in English-language advertisements as "for virile men who know how to handle the fast things in life." Designed to convey sport and sophistication, it was Lambretta's sleekest and technically best performing scooter to date. It was also its last. "Lambretta was always very innovative, but also expensive," Humer says. Facing financial and labor difficulties, Innocenti's son Luigi sold Lambretta to the British Leyland Motor Corporation, which faced additional strife and closed the shop in 1972.

## VIRILITY WITH VALUE

Dorotheum's Scootermania sale included about a hundred scooters, as well as dozens of mechanical parts—encapsulating a veritable history of the scooter itself. This massive inventory was acquired from the holdings of one collector: a Vienna-based enthusiast who had planned a future museum, even erecting a building to house the scooters. But the collector died before the vision came to fruition, and the scooters rolled to the auction block. Even at auctions of automobiles, scooters do not make consistent appearances, making this a notable sale as well as one that was difficult to price. "We wanted the market to decide [the price] and therefore went for these low starting prices, depending on what it was, what condition it was in, and how much of it was there," Humer says. And the market responded with mania: "The auction day was crazy," he reports, citing three thousand absentee bids even before auction day and a shortage of bidding paddles the day of. From the same starting price as other top-tier scooters, the Lambretta DL 200 emerged as the top seller. "It was the very last top-of-the-line Lambretta model before production ceased," Humer observes. "It had some patina, but that only added to its charm." With an already global story, the Lambretta scooter has left its European roots, sold to a private collector in New Zealand.





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## At Full Stretch

THE UPHOLSTERED  
FURNITURE OF  
PIERRE PAULIN



HERE'S A LITTLE-KNOWN BUT FUN FACT: Peter Shire's Bel Air chair (1982), a postmodern icon first produced for the Memphis group, was originally covered in umbrella fabrics. That was the only material available at the time with the requisite flexibility and intense color range. It's just one example in the long, strange history of modern upholstery, which remains relatively unknown even to design connoisseurs. Masters of the discipline receive little credit compared to their peers who developed tubular steel and plywood furniture, though their influence was arguably far more pervasive.

Now, one figure in the pantheon is getting his due: Pierre Paulin (1927–2009). The subject of an installation at Ralph Pucci's showroom in Los Angeles, Paulin was not only a technical innovator, but also a consummate form-giver. His sense of

sculptural volume was unrivaled by any other figure of his era, with the sole exception of his near exact contemporary, the Danish pop designer Verner Panton (1926–1998). Both men exploited modern technology—not only in coverings, but also in foundation materials like foam rubber and polyester resin—to achieve dramatic rounded shapes unthinkable in traditional hand-sewn upholstery.

Unsurprisingly, Paulin drew his early inspiration from outside the furniture world. His uncle Georges was a celebrated automotive designer, who made spectacular streamlined creations for Peugeot. Pierre's own creative breakthrough came, improbably enough, at a swimwear fashion show in Maastricht. Noticing the way that stretch jersey wrapped round the irregular shapes of the body, he had the idea of using a similar modern fabric over a tubular steel armature, padded with foam. It was a direct translation from the human body: bones, muscle, and skin.

On the strength of his first designs, which were fabricated by hand in very limited numbers, Paulin was hired by the storied Viennese-born brand Thonet. (The firm's name is virtually synonymous with bentwood, of course, but his work for them featured tubular metal legs.) He also produced work for the French company Meubles TV in the 1950s. But it was with the Dutch manufacturer Artifort that he made his most enduring classics: the Orange Slice and



**The Pierre Paulin installation at Ralph Pucci's LA showroom. From left: Rosace table, 1968; léna armchair, designed for the Palais d'léna in Paris, 1983-1985; Banquette Face à Face, 1968; Table HY, c. 1960; Dune modular sofa, 1966-1970; F050 chair, 1959; Alpha couch, 1972.**

Tongue chairs (1960 and 1967, respectively), which look pretty much as their names suggest, and the drape-like Model 300 (1965-1966), an example of which is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

Pointing to that early recognition of his father's work—earlier than that at any French institution—Paulin's son Benjamin notes that America has had a long love affair with Pierre's work, also exemplified by a classic Swinging Sixties collaboration with the great fabric designer Jack Lenor Larsen. In this sense, Pucci's exhibition is just the latest chapter of a transatlantic story. But the show does look back to a quintessentially French moment, when the nation's ultra-fashionable president, Georges Pompidou, decided to redecorate the private apartments and reception rooms of the Élysée Palace entirely *au style moderne*. While many Paulin classics remain in production today with Artifort, as well as Ligne Roset, the palace commission never went into extended production.

Now Benjamin has taken on the job of re-creating furniture from the presidential suite, as well as other "utopic" creations by his father that never saw extended manufacture. In this effort he has been immeasurably helped by Michel Chalard, who was his father's prime technical assistant for more than forty years. Many of the artisanal workshops that collaborated with Paulin are still extant too. The depth of their craftsmanship is evident in the works at Pucci—

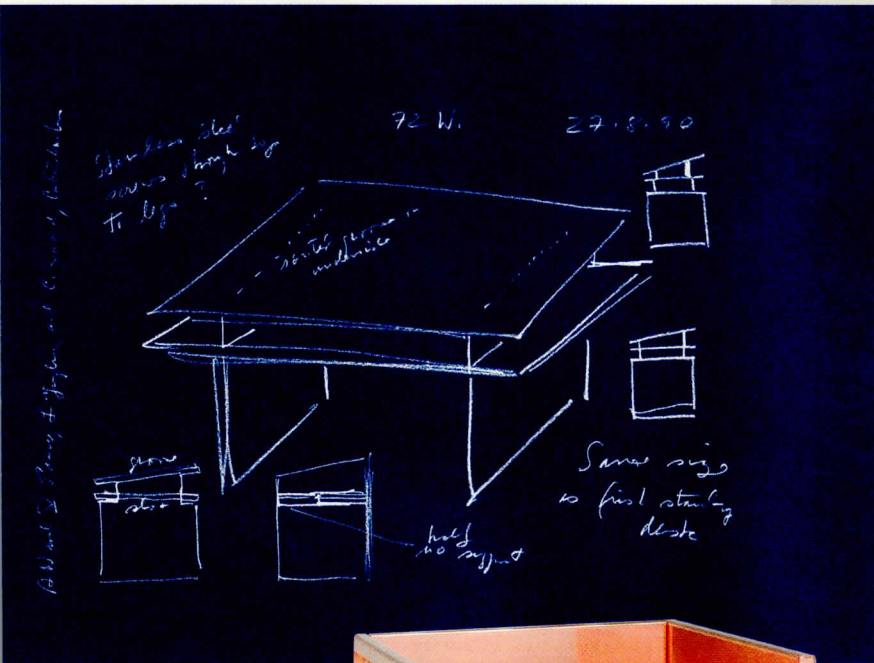
exuberant conceptions executed with remarkable precision and grace. The Élysée Alpha chairs are like poufs all grown-up, with lobed forms plunging into a comfy central seating well. A table inspired by the Cathedral of Milan, designed by Paulin in 1981, manages to find a happy middle ground between two seemingly antithetical styles: pop and Gothic.

There is no doubt, though, that the pièce de résistance is Dune, mocked up by Paulin in 1970 but never fully realized in his lifetime. This extraordinary ensemble reimagines upholstered furniture as a modular indoor landscape, a rolling terrain of rounded polygonal forms. If a Donald Judd sculpture could take an acid trip, this is how it might feel. It is the perfect metaphor for Pierre Paulin's work, which somehow managed to be wildly ambitious and completely relaxed at the same time. *Vive le pouf.*  
[ralphpucci.net](http://ralphpucci.net)

—Glenn Adamson

# Domesticity by Design

SFMOMA THROWS A SPOTLIGHT ON DONALD JUDD'S FURNITURE DESIGN



IT COULD BE SAID THAT TWO EPISODES WERE CRITICAL in shaping artist Donald Judd's approach to furniture design. The first was a false start: in 1968, having been asked to make a coffee table, Judd, by then well known for his iterative, minimal, and rigorous rectangular volumes, retrofitted an artwork, an experiment that corrupted the work and yielded a bad table. "Due to the inability of art to become furniture," he wrote, "I didn't try again for several years."

Judd's next significant attempt came after he'd de-camped with his kids and some art but little else from New York to Marfa, a small town in remote West Texas. When he set about cultivating "the necessary domesticity" in their new home, a two-story former quartermasters' office, he found in Marfa's few stores only bogus antiques and kitsch. Out of what he saw as necessity, Judd created his own furniture, beginning with a bed for his children. Made of pine one-by-twelves direct from the lumberyard and consisting of a large platform with a bisecting wall, it resembled a refined shipping pallet. "I liked the bed a great deal," Judd wrote, and over some twenty years he produced a genus of desks and chairs, beds and benches, shelves, tables, and stools, in plywood, wood, and metal, that illustrated how little form is truly essential to function.

An upcoming exhibition at SFMOMA, *Donald Judd: Specific Furniture* (July 14–November 4), considers Judd's furniture design as a practice independent of his artistic production and, through sketches, photographs, and some thirty pieces spanning the 1970s to the early 1990s, it also affirms a distinct philosophy and guiding values. Punctuating the exhibition are examples of historical designs by Gustav Stickley, Alvar Aalto, Rudolph Schindler, Gerrit Rietveld, and Mies van der Rohe (whom Judd called "the last architect capable of elegance in a traditional sense") that Judd admired and collected. "My interpretation is that he was surrounding himself with objects that he felt satisfied a certain set of criteria," says curator Joseph Becker, "the same set of criteria that he held his own work against."

— Jenny Florence

Donald Judd in 1990 at his former residence Eichholterren, a Swiss inn he remodeled.

Sketch for a birch plywood standing writing desk, August 27, 1990.

Copper armchair designed by Judd in 1984, fabricated in 1998.



Ico Parisi coffee table  
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**FULLCIRCLE**  
M O D E R N

# Meet Georg Jensen

THE CELEBRATED DANISH SILVER COMPANY RETURNS TO ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



THE SPLENDID WORK OF GEORG JENSEN RETURNS TO THE Art Institute of Chicago this summer, nearly one hundred years after the Danish company's first American exhibition was held there in 1921. The booklet accompanying that show, subtitled "An Artist's Biography," praised Jensen's unity of beauty and usefulness in his handcrafted work and spoke of the "joy of beholding a beautiful thing."

First in Denmark and then elsewhere in Europe and America, Jensen's silverware was particularly admired for what has been called its "moonlight shine," a satiny texture that resembles milky glass in certain lights. Among the pieces on view, Jensen's Grape compote, sculptural sauce spoons, and Blossom coffee and tea service with not-quite-open magnolia finials fit the art nouveau aesthetic of the time, which esteemed simple sinuous lines and asymmetrical composition. The more forward-looking, pared-down forms of his designer Johan Rohde coincided with those of the modern buildings that had just begun soaring skyward, demonstrating how form followed function. For example, Rohde's 1919 sauceboat can be seen as a miniature architectural object, unadorned except for hammer marks left by the silversmith and a scrolled silver handle that is perfectly balanced by what has been referred to as a schilling-shaped ornament. Together, Jensen and Rohde established a new style that favored simplicity and natural forms, often leaving large expanses of silver exposed in order to focus attention on the material itself; the work is always finished inside and out, as well as all the way around.

Many of the pieces in the current exhibition, titled *Georg Jensen: Scandinavian Design for Living* (June 22 to September 9), were pictured in the early booklet, offering insight into an era when daily meals entailed ceremony, even for middle-class households. A "tablescape" would include serving platters, candle holders (in Denmark, candles were used at lunch and dinner), a sugar caster, butter bowls, a chocolate pot, and a toast rack. The show highlights the firm's long list of accomplishments in silver design well into the twentieth century, including Harald Nielsen's purely geometric spherical pitcher; Sigvard Bernadotte's virtuosic cock-

tail shaker; and Verner Panton's famous Crash plate, inspired by the indiscriminate patterns of crumpled paper. One of the surprises is the degree to which the Jensen firm experimented with copper and stainless steel—and with plastic and wood. After the political and social upheaval brought about by World War II, daily life changed around the globe, and families required new and less formal objects for modern houses. The long history of Jensen's organic forms and its reputation for fine craftsmanship put the company in the forefront of the Danish modern movement and allowed a great deal of cross-pollination with other manufacturers. Examples of furniture and home design pieces showing this collaboration are included in the show. It's delightful to see how Henning Koppel translated the Jensen aesthetic into his bright yellow 1960s plastic salad serving set for Ørskov & Co.—executed with a graceful clarity that was evident from the start. [artic.edu](http://artic.edu)

—Frances Brent



Salad serving set by Henning Koppel for Ørskov & Co., c. 1965.

Pitcher, model 606 by Harald Nielsen, designed in 1930, produced 1930–1932.





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## Glass Compositions

PHILIPP WEBER EXPERIMENTS WITH TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES TO CREATE CONTEMPORARY WORKS OF ART

Two pieces from Philipp Weber's *On Colours* project, 2014, utilizing a new tool he created: a trumpet-inspired glass-blowing pipe.

Glassblower Christophe Genard and his assistant working on *On Colours*.

By ADRIAN MADLENER



FOR BERLIN-BASED DESIGNER PHILIPP WEBER, it's all about the human story. His cumulative projects stem from in-depth investigations into family history, lost craft traditions, heavy industry, and performance—earning him the “Newcomer” German Design Award for 2018. Placing material development at the core of his practice, he draws holistic connections between narratives. His results reinterpret, mirror, and extract elements from age-old techniques as a means of reflecting on the disconnection of our digital age. “Only through machines or computers do we now access things,” he claims. “We’re no longer connected to the physical.”

Weber is also not one to adhere to the culture of “newness”—churning out new work to meet the demands of an increasingly hurried international design fair circuit. “I like to allow time for projects to evolve naturally,” he explains. This approach is exemplified in *A Strange Symphony* and *From Below*, two projects that were on view this past spring at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin, where they were embedded in the museum’s historic glass and silverware collections, respectively.

EXCEPT AS NOTED, ALL IMAGES PHILIPP WEBER PHOTOS

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Lounge Chair Vollee Blanche / Pierre Guariche, 1962 / Courtesy of Galerie Pascal Cuisinier

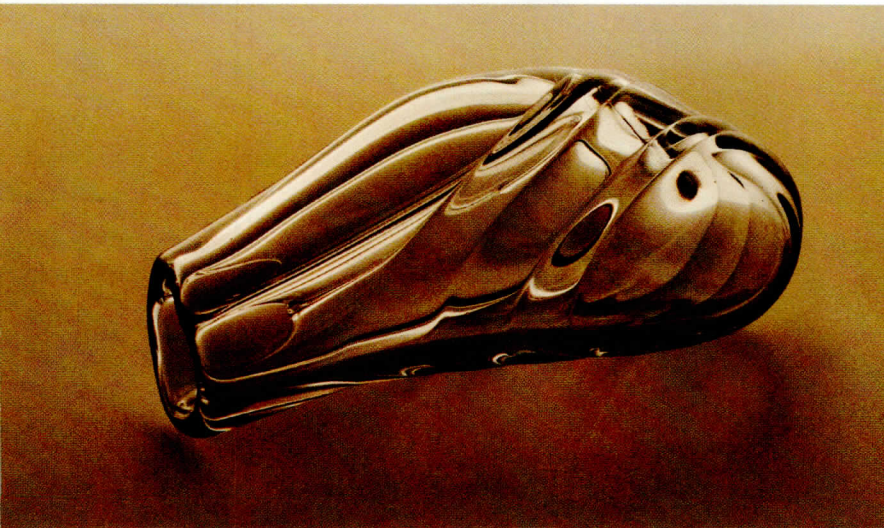
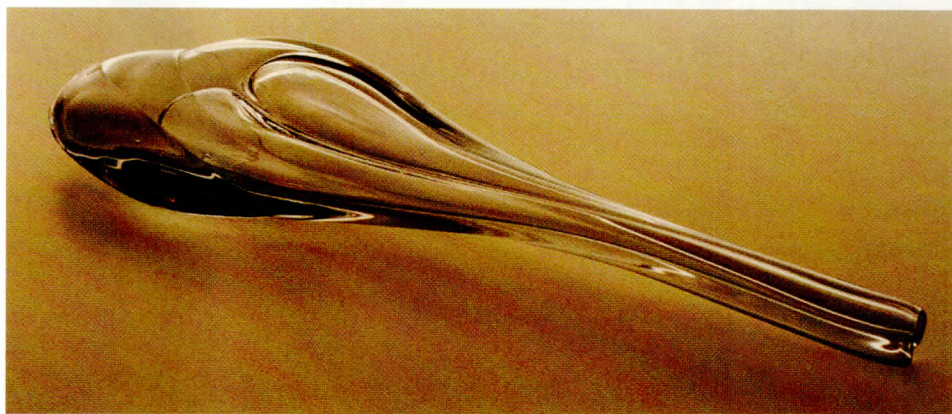


A Strange Symphony is a multi-faceted project that began in 2013 as Weber's graduation project at the Design Academy Eindhoven. Observing Belgian glassblower Christophe Genard in action, Weber became intrigued by the blowpipe Genard used. Relatively unchanged for almost two thousand years, this traditional device employs a single air tube that can produce glass vessels with a single chamber, or cavity.

Weber was also struck by the similarities between the glassblower's intense movements and those of a musical instrument player. For him, the blowpipe began to resemble a trumpet. He wanted to see what would happen if additional air tubes and valve mechanisms were added to the device. Working closely with an engineer, he developed a new blowpipe, which was introduced into Genard's practice. Genard, inspired by the innovations, began to improvise; the surprising outcome was a series of glass vessels with multiple chambers.

Weber then created a film to capture the whole process. Over the next few years, he also produced a series of live performances, held at heritage glassworks throughout Europe. At the National Glass Museum in Leerdam in the Netherlands, for example, he asked a cello player to perform while Genard created forms using the new blowpipe.

Three pieces designed in 2015 during a live performance of *A Strange Symphony*, directed by Weber. Artists Christophe Genard and Emil Kovac improvised their glassblowing design while cellist Ernst Reijseger performed live.



"The concept behind *A Strange Symphony* was to give new meaning or value to an almost forgotten craft," Weber explains. "Part of this was to show that glassblowing is a human process; a dance that reveals one's relationship with material." Weber and Genard have continued to experiment, and, in 2014, he produced a collection called *On Colours*, applying different colors to each cavity of a given vessel to create a slew of variations.

More recently Weber embarked on *From Below*, his thesis project for his master's degree at Universität der Künste Berlin, which derived from research into his family's history in the coal mining industry that once thrived in Germany's Ruhr region. Analyzing the industrial procedure in which coal is used to forge steel, he chose to home in on the stage in which coal becomes coke—a form of nearly pure carbon that is used to forge iron sinter, one component in a multi-step process that eventually produces steel. Intrigued by the plasticity of coke, he began to experiment with how it could be used to make different types of sculptural objects. Weber spent two years testing

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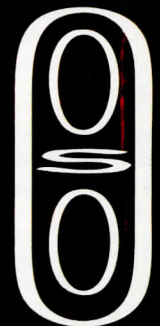
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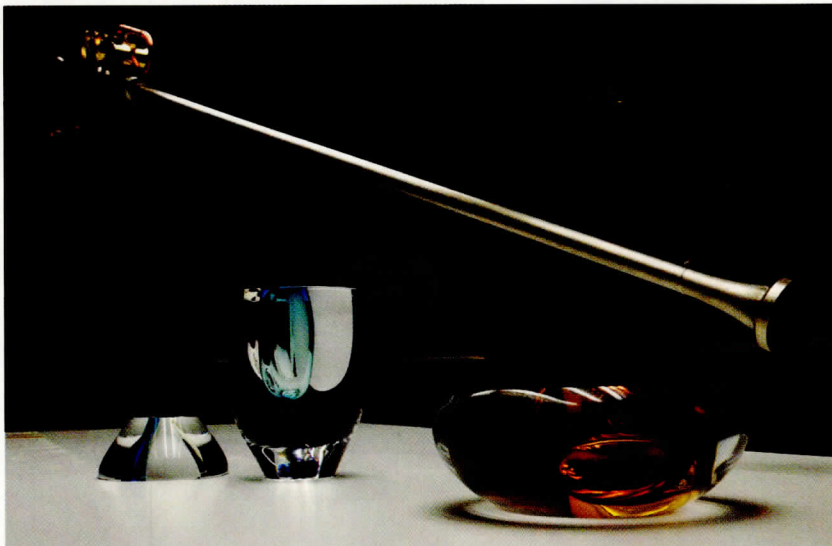
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out this concept—employing various molds and a bespoke oven. “The challenge was to tame this temperamental material,” he says. After many unsuccessful attempts, he was finally able to calibrate the right formula of temperature, time, and shape to achieve different vessel forms. The results have an almost porcelain-like character.

“After taking a bit of distance from these two projects, I realized that A Strange Symphony gave new life to a craft tradition, while From Below dissected an industrial process using a craft focus,” he reflects. “In my next project, I’m returning to glass, but hope to bridge these two elements.”



Weber's glassblowing trumpet and some pieces from his projects A Strange Symphony and On Colours as displayed earlier this year at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin.

Two of five geometrical shapes Weber created in his From Below project, 2017.

A look inside Weber's sketchbook, with ideas for From Below.







# THE SALON ART + DESIGN

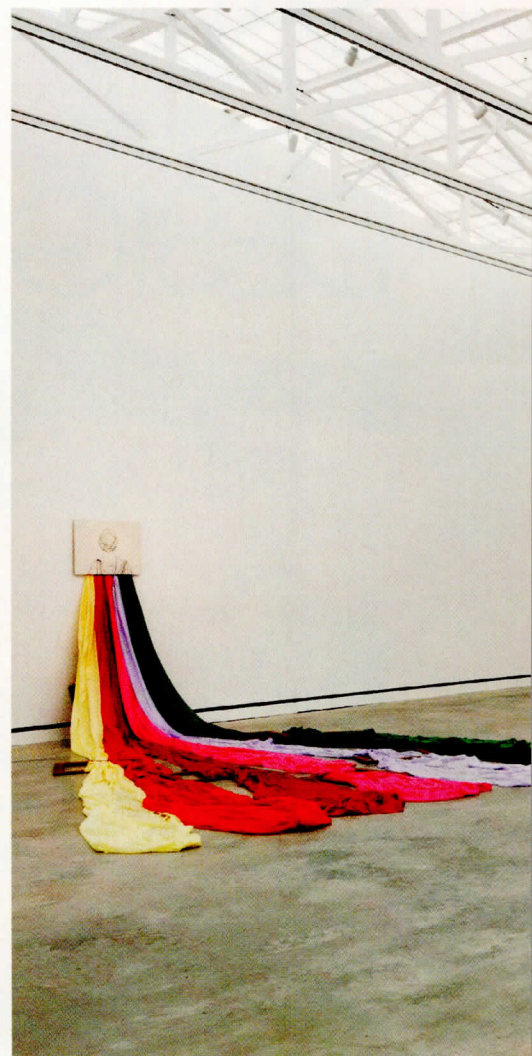
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# Farm to tableau

A NEW SPACE FOR ITALIAN  
ART ON THE HUDSON

BY BELLA NEYMAN



Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu, the founders of Magazzino Italian Art.

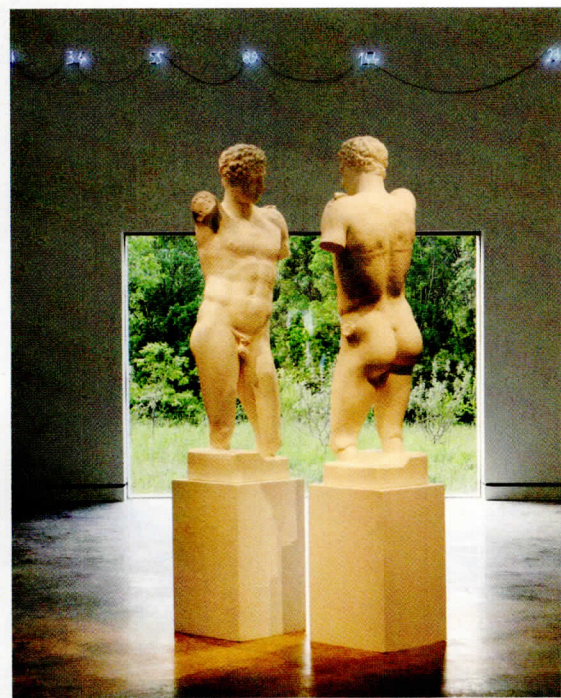
An exterior view of Magazzino Italian Art in Cold Spring, New York.

An installation view of *Arte Povera*: From the Olnick Spanu Collection: On the left is Giulio Paolini's *Amore e Psiche*, 1981, and on the right, Luciano Fabro's *Ogni ordine è contemporaneo ad ogni altro ordine. Quattro modi di esaminare la facciata dell'SS. Redentore a Venezia (Palladio)*, 1972–1973.

“ART IS LIFE.” THESE THREE WORDS WERE SPOKEN by the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto the day he rolled a version of his newsprint-clad sculpture *Sfera di giornali* along the main street of Cold Spring, New York, last November. The original iteration of the *Sfera*—its title translates as *Newspaper sphere*—was trundled through the avenues of Turin in 1966 as a commentary on turbulent Italian events of the day. This appearance of the ambulatory artwork was staged in honor of Magazzino Italian Art, a new, self-funded art space established by collector-impresarios Nancy Olnick and her husband, Giorgio Spanu. “Magazzino” means “warehouse” in Italian, though to call this space just that does it discredit. “Art is life” is also a sentiment that Olnick, scion of a New York real estate fortune, repeats on several occasions throughout the tour she gives of the 20,000-square-foot light-filled venue. It is rare to have the founder act as a docent, but Olnick will tell you that she spends a lot of time here and relishes speaking about the art on view. For both her and the Sardinia-born Spanu, their discovery of *Arte Povera* was a life-altering experience.

*Arte Povera*—or “impoverished art,” so named for the elementary, commonplace materials the artists used—was a highly influential avant-garde movement in the 1960s and 1970s, a period in Italy marked by political and social unrest in a country that was emerging from the *dolce vita* haze of the “economic miracle” of the 1950s and ‘60s. The artists of *Arte Povera*, Olnick says, “explored the most pertinent existential questions in the most contemporary way.” “Art is life” was their *raison d’être*; they strove to “eradicate the boundaries between media as well as between nature and art.”

In 1992, on a trip to Italy, Olnick and Spanu were advised to visit the Castello di Rivoli, a contemporary art museum in Turin; it was there that they encountered *Arte Povera* for the first time. Olnick says that she and Spanu—who have also amassed one of the most important collections of Murano glass in private hands—began collecting *Arte Povera* by “getting to know the artists and making human connections.” It becomes apparent quite quickly that this is personal for Olnick. She draws connections between the



work and the artists featured, understanding both on a meaningful level.

The building that houses Magazzino Italian Art is artful itself. What began as a farm building was recently repurposed as a computer factory. The New York-based, Spanish-born architect Miguel Quismondo and his staff at MQ Architecture and Design transformed the structure by stripping away the dropped acoustic tile ceiling (under which they discovered the original beautiful concrete, which they maintained), putting down new floors, and constructing glass-lined corridors to a new administrative building. They created a space that is “silent but is very strong and present,” says Olnick. “The light is crucial to the building, and to the art, along with the open space.”

The inaugural Magazzino exhibition, *Margherita Stein: Rebel with a Cause*, was a celebration of another leading figure: the groundbreaking Italian art dealer Margherita Stein, who opened Christian Stein Gallery in Turin in 1966. (She named the space after her husband because she be-

lieved that a man’s name would earn the gallery more respect.) The business eventually relocated to Milan, and Stein became one of the most influential art dealers the country has ever produced. It was not an easy beginning; her admirers will tell you that Stein had to purchase all her artists’ work when no one else would support them. Although Olnick and Spanu never met Stein, some of the key works in their four hundred-plus collection were originally sold through her gallery. Today, they believe they are fulfilling her mission.

Magazzino Italian Art was ten years in the making but now that it’s open, Olnick and Spanu are just getting started. Olnick and Spanu will continue supporting young Italian and American artists, as they have in the past, by presenting their work alongside pieces from their own collection. At the same time, they are sponsoring artists’ exhibitions across New York and in Italy, as they recently did for the American artist Melissa McGill at the Venice Biennale. When art is life, there is always much more to do.

*Mimesi (Mimesis)* by Paolini, 1976-1988, made of plaster casts with wooden bases. Partially visible above is Mario Merz’s *Untitled*, 1982, which consists of a taxidermied reindeer head and neon Fibonacci numbers.



Agnes Pelton, 1881 - 1961  
*Bell Ginger - Honolulu*, 1925  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 30 inches



Yasuo Kuniyoshi, 1889-1953  
*Spring Plants*, 1924  
Sumi ink and watercolor on paper  
19 x 13 inches

# Quaker Hautes

TOP-FLIGHT GALLERIES IN THE NEWLY MINTED PHILADELPHIA DESIGN DISTRICT BECKON MODERN DESIGN ENTHUSIASTS

THE LIBERTY BELL, INDEPENDENCE HALL, ELFRETH'S Alley, cheesesteaks, sports fans who boo Santa Claus—whatever your mental associations with Philadelphia are, it's unlikely that “modern design shopping destination” is one of them. A group of premier dealers in the Old City section of town aims to change that perception.

Ten galleries and art and design studios, all on or just off the spine of North 3rd Street, have formed the Philadelphia Design District—a kind of mutually supportive commercial coalition. “Philadelphia is changing and growing. There are so many new residential projects,” says Eugenie Perret, owner of the contemporary design showcase Minima, and a prime mover behind the PDD. “We have everything here: from furniture, lighting, carpets, shades, and art to flowers.” Through the PDD, the merchants can offer each other referrals, and coordinate exhibitions, special events, and sales. “We share the same vision for the neighborhood,” Perret says, “but we really didn't know each other before.”

Collectors will be familiar with two PDD members from their participation in major East Coast design and art fairs. **Moderne Gallery** is a leading dealer of work from the American studio furniture movement, representing classic artist-artisans such as George Nakashima and Wharton Esher-

ick, as well as contemporary makers like David Ebner and John Cederquist. The gallery's founder, Robert Aibel, has recently added pieces by mid-century artists such as Peter Voulkos and Paul Hultberg, who brought abstract expressionism to ceramics and enamels, respectively. Just up the road, **Wexler Gallery** represents the work of both studio designers such as Wendell Castle and Judy McKie and that of a mix of avant-garde makers of sculptural furniture, ceramics, and glass. Two eyecatchers: Gregory Nangle's leather sling lounge chair with a frame made of individually cast silicon bronze leaves, and ceramist Roberto Lugo's porcelain Hip Hop Bowl III—a witty reiteration of Viktor Schreckengost's famed “Jazz Bowl” of 1931.

**Minima** makes a striking counterpoint to the above. Perret's business operates in two locations. One is an airy space featuring sleek contemporary furniture, lighting, and storage systems. The emphasis is on Italian design—from firms such as Minotti, Porro, and Living Divani—but companies producing modern design classics, like Vitra and Artek, are represented as well. The focus in Minima's smaller, second storefront is on accessories like mirrors, tableware, and offbeat icons such as Ettore Sottsass ceramics.



A view of the Wexler Gallery, featuring the Mass chairs #1 and #2, 2016, and the Mass bench, 2015, all by Moon Imm.



Other PDD member stores of particular interest to design lovers include **Parisa Rugs & Décor**, which features both antique Persian carpets and contemporary rugs—including a group designed by proprietor Parisa Abdollahi—along with quirky housewares, like lamps in the shapes of mice and monkeys. **Mode Moderne** is a great place for browsing among pieces by classic mid-century American designers such as George Nelson, Paul McCobb, and Milo Baughman, while at **Kellijane**, the specialty is high-end bedding and other textiles. Owners Claudia and Vincent Roux operate the garden store **Petit Jardin en Ville** in two locations: one offers stylish new outdoor furniture, and at the other you can get a bouquet of peonies—just right for that vase you bought up the street.

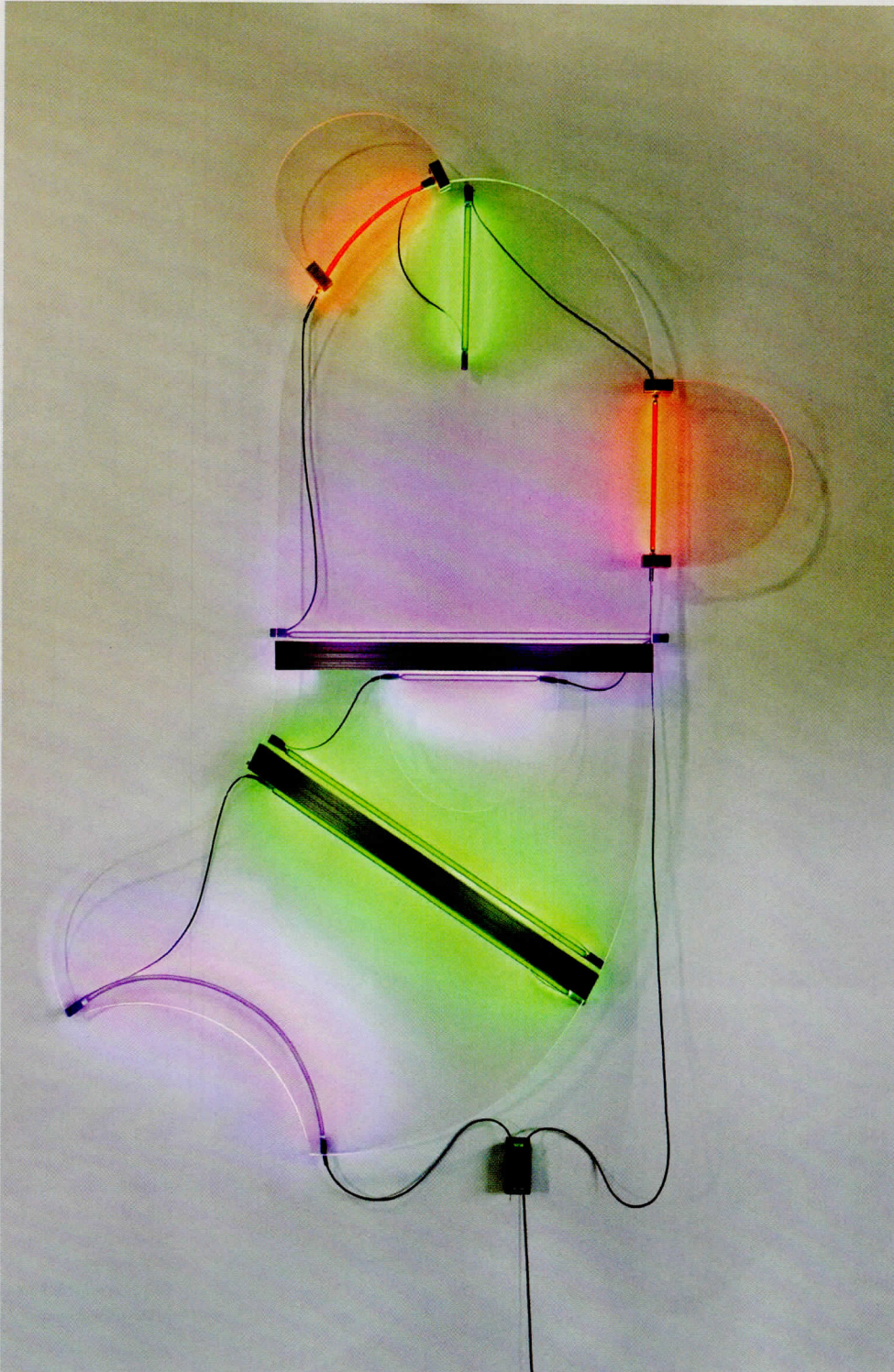


The interior of Minima, showcasing the Yang sectional, 2015, and Leslie armchair, 2015, by Rodolfo Dordoni for Minotti, with the System Interparete shelving, 1995, by Piero Lissoni for Porro in the background.

A rare David Ebner low chest of drawers, 1982, from Moderne Gallery.

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Keith Sonnier (American, born 1941), *Shmoo - O.G.V.*, 2013. Neon, acrylic, aluminum, electrical wire, transformer, 131 x 92 1/2 x 4 inches. Courtesy of artist and Pace Gallery, New York. Photograph by Caterina Verde.



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Mel Douglas, courtesy of Traver Gallery

# Neglected Nordics

NORWAY'S UNSUNG CONTRIBUTIONS TO MID-CENTURY MODERN DESIGN MERIT GREATER ATTENTION

By TOM STOELKER



Scandia Prince chair designed by Hans Bratrud, 1960, made by Fjordfiesta, in lacquered, laminated American oak.

Krobo 150 bench and cabinet designed by Torbjørn Afdal and made by Mellemstrands Trevarerindustri for Bruksbo, c. 1962, of teak, rosewood, and enameled steel.

NAMES SUCH AS ALVAR AALTO OF FINLAND, Hans Wegner of Denmark, and Stig Lindberg of Sweden roll off the tongue of even a modestly informed admirer of Scandinavian modernism. True aficionados can readily identify three, four, or as many as five star designers of the mid-twentieth century from each country in the region—except, very likely, for one: Norway.

Though their country has a long tradition of craftsmanship, for numerous reasons mid-century Norwegian designers never gained the same international renown as their peers in neighboring nations. Modernism came somewhat late to Norway. The country did not win full independence from Sweden until 1905, and designers seeking to project a new sense of national identity in their work turned to their Viking ancestors for inspiration, creating pieces heavy in ornamental motifs such as knots and dragons.

Modernist influences eventually crept in, but a university-level school of design did not open in Norway until 1939. Shortly after, the nation was invaded by Nazi Germany and endured a brutal wartime occupation, during which German forces destroyed much of the nation's infrastructure. Tasked with re-furnishing Norway's households, designers in the postwar period focused on simple, well-made pieces

of homegrown woods such as walnut and pine (in contrast to the Danes' use of imported hardwoods such as teak). Design historian Judith Gura (whose profile of sculptor-designer Albert Paley appears on page 90) notes in her *Sourcebook of Scandinavian Furniture* that the "emphasis on quality and practicality rather than on distinctive design may explain Norway's failure to produce 'name' designers."

Finally, as Richard Wright of the eponymous Chicago auction house points out, Norwegians took a "quieter" approach to design, and, sadly, had the same attitude toward marketing. Norway's industry



Stripes bowl designed by Grete Prytz Kittelsen, c. 1950–1960, as part of the Stripes collection made in collaboration with Catherineholm enamel works.

and government did not pursue the same aggressive promotional strategy as their neighbors, one that would make “Danish modern” a staple of the interior design lexicon in the 1950s and 1960s.

So let’s redress that inattention. Here are several key mid-century Norwegian design talents whose names you should know:

The one Norwegian designer whose work did gain some traction internationally was **Hans Bratrud**, whose Scandia chairs have a striking—and often imitated—profile: an array of curved, vertically oriented laminated wood slats set atop a wire frame. First introduced in 1960, Scandia chairs have been manufactured since 2010 by the cutely named Norwegian firm Fjordfiesta.

Had he not died painfully young in 1968 at the age of forty-four, **Fredrik A. Kayser** might have become an icon of modern design. His furniture has the same dynamic visual appeal as that of Vladimir Kagan. Kayser was one of the few Norwegians to employ tropical hardwoods such as rosewood, pairing them with humbler artisanal materials like cane. One archetypal Kayser design is the Kryss lounge chair, which combines a leather panel back stitched into a rakish X-shaped teak frame.

At the other end of the aesthetic spectrum lies the work of **Torbjørn Afdal**, which has the spare geometry of furniture produced by Bauhaus designers. A classic example of his work is the Krobo 150 bench: offering a spot to sit and remove your boots when coming home, it’s a sliver of rosewood set on



Kryss (Cross) lounge chair designed by Fredrik A. Kayser and made by Gustav Bahu, 1955, of teak, leather, and upholstery.



trestle-shaped legs, equipped (as a practical addition) with a pair of drawers for gloves and scarves and such.

Trained in industrial design at the Royal College of Art in London in the 1950s, **Sven Ivar Dysthe** produced furniture with solid and elegant minimalist lines. He worked in luxury materials such as rosewood, but also created the affordable plywood Laminette chair, a 1965 design that is touted as the all-time best-selling seating piece in Norway. Dysthe also had a playful side, as evidenced by his stackable Popcorn



Popcorn chairs designed by Sven Ivar Dysthe and produced by Møre Lenestolfabrikk, 1968.

Spiral vase designed by Willy Johansson and made by Hadeland Glassworks, c. 1952, in black and champagne-color glass.

Armchair prototype from Edvin Helseth's Trybo series, 1965, in pine.

chair of 1968: a padded plastic shell on a metal frame that resembles a skier headed downhill.

Though overshadowed by its counterparts in Sweden and Finland, Norway developed a thriving glassware industry in the twentieth century. The star of the field in the postwar years was **Willy Johansson**, a winner of multiple awards at the Milan Triennale. Known for his brilliant, offbeat sense of color, Johansson is represented in several prominent international art glass collections, most notably that of the Corning Museum of Glass.

Danes are generally disdainful of designers from other nations, but even they bow their heads to **Grete Prytz Kittelsen**. Peter Kjelgaard, of Copenhagen's Bruun Rasmussen Auctioneers, calls her work "poetic," and adds that she and her husband, architect Arne

Korsmo, "were like the Norwegian Ray and Charles Eames." Prytz Kittelsen's specialty was enamels. An egalitarian designer, she produced both affordable work such as the colorful kitchen and tableware sets made by the manufacturer Cathrineholm as well as lavish enameled silver and gold jewelry. She also collaborated with the Venetian glassmaker Paolo Venini on a striking group of necklaces.

Those who appreciate a rational—as opposed to intuitive—approach to design will be interested in the work of **Edvin Helseth**, who, unusually, began his career as an interior decorator. He specialized in furnishings systems made of pine components that could be shipped in flat packs, and easily assembled in multiple configurations. As much as it evinces a straightforward theory-put-in-practice sensibility, a design like Helseth's Trybo adjustable lounge chair of 1965 has an attractively spare grace. His work "was for simple homes and simple cabins," says an admirer, Oslo architect Richard Øiestad. "It's one of the reasons he's forgotten."

As with that of other Norwegian designers of earlier decades, it is past time to remember his work.





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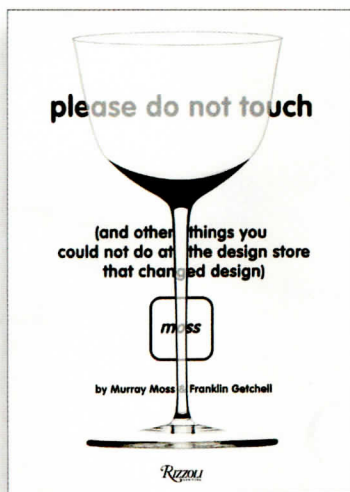
# All Sales Final

A MEMOIR OF MOSS, THE MUCH-MISSED  
NEW YORK DESIGN MECCA



By JEN RENZI MOSS, THE BOOK, IS A LOT LIKE MOSS, the store, which is to say entertaining, titillating, genre-bending, and subversive—beginning with the cheeky title, *Please Do Not Touch (and other things you could not do at the design store that changed design)*. For those who never had a chance to visit the dearly departed SoHo emporium during its eighteen-year run (1994–2012), or one of its two shorter-lived Los Angeles satellites, it's true that manhandling the merch was verboten—nay, impossible, unless you asked a monochromatically attired salesperson to unlock one of the museumlike glass-and-steel vitrines in which visionary proprietor Murray Moss obsessively

arranged arch tableaux of avant-garde fruit bowls, Meissen polychrome porcelain, postwar Italian vessels, Dieter Rams calculators, Lobmeyr stemware, Gaetano Pesce melting-ish resin tables, Studio Job marquetry, and other high-concept bibelots in a manner that uncovered their common logic. No: you couldn't touch. But you could look and you could covet and, most important, you could think... and thus rethink everything you understood to be true about modern design. Moss was in the business



***Please Do Not Touch  
(and other things you  
could not do at the  
design store that  
changed design)***

By Murray Moss and  
Franklin Getchell  
(Rizzoli, \$55)



of blowing minds, shifting paradigms, dismantling boundaries, and building a market and audience for capital-D design.

This did not always translate to runaway sales, as it turned out.

*Please Do Not Touch* is ostensibly a memoir documenting the store's rise from an 1,800-square-foot Greene Street storefront to its early aughts apex as Establishment Institution to its eventual denouement, told from the alternating viewpoints of Moss and his partner in life and business, Franklin Getchell—a fun conceit that neatly mirrors their interdependent but parallel roles as creative innovator and “enabler/facilitator.” Rather than write in tandem, they penned their manuscripts separately, and didn't read each other's take on things until the galley stage, which led to some humorous he-said, he-said moments. The narrative structure is a sort of Eisensteinian montage, interweaving the authors' ruminations on topics like holiday gift wrapping and their killer Tupperware party with assorted source materials: reproductions of the employee handbook, articles Moss penned for *Pin-Up*

and *Interior Design*, a master's thesis excerpt, exhibition catalogue texts, wall signage. Also interspersed are visual essays—product still lifes by longtime collaborator Chalkie Davies—and less-slick snapshots of the various store interiors over the years.

Moss, the person, likens Moss, the store, to a form of theater, one in which the scenography was both setting and protagonist. It is thus satisfying and riveting to hear all the behind-the-curtains craziness the production entailed. The gentlemen dish on the mechanics of bridal registries, the complex geopolitics of global design fairs, the emotional tenor of the designer-retailer relationship, the devastating financial impact of the 2008 recession, and the death-defying logistics of such an ambitious exhibition program. Also: how much elbow grease, miles of Bounty paper towels, and truckloads of white paint were necessary to uphold the pristine aesthetic.

The store's do-not-touch shtick was a canny psychological device to instill *must-have-that!* desire and spur sales, but it could feel overly museumlike, which occasionally undermined the mission of the whole enterprise: to make high design accessible. The authors avoid falling into that trap here. This is Murray—and Franklin—unfiltered and unmediated, as they divulge the thinking, questioning, agonizing, and philosophizing behind their decision making. You feel right there with them as they navigate the period before design became a full-blown cultural force—and before e-commerce disrupted traditional retail. It's insightful, it's funny, it's devastating, it's... well... touching.

COURTESY OF MOSS (2) CHALKIE DAVIES PHOTO



A view through the Moss storefront window on Greene Street in SoHo, New York. This holiday display featured the Campana Brothers' Favela Tree and Teddy Bear chairs.

At Moss, goods were presented as if they were rarities in a museum: placed in vitrines and on raised platforms labeled with the admonition “Please do not touch.”

Offered at Moss: the Flower Ball by Takashi Murakami for Molten, 2002.

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.



**Art Smith  
(1923-1982)**  
NECKPIECE  
Brass  
1948

THERE ARE FEW JEWELERS WHO HAVE USED THE HUMAN body as effectively in creating three-dimensional wearable forms as Art Smith. When the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the Museum of Arts and Design) gave him a one-man show in 1969, he said in the catalogue: “[the question is] not how do bracelets go, but what can be done with an arm?” “A piece of jewelry,” he wrote, “is in a sense an object that is not complete in itself. Jewelry is a ‘what is it?’ until you relate it to the body. The body is a component in design just as air and space are. Like line, form, and color, the body is a material to work with. It is one of the basic inspirations in creating form.”

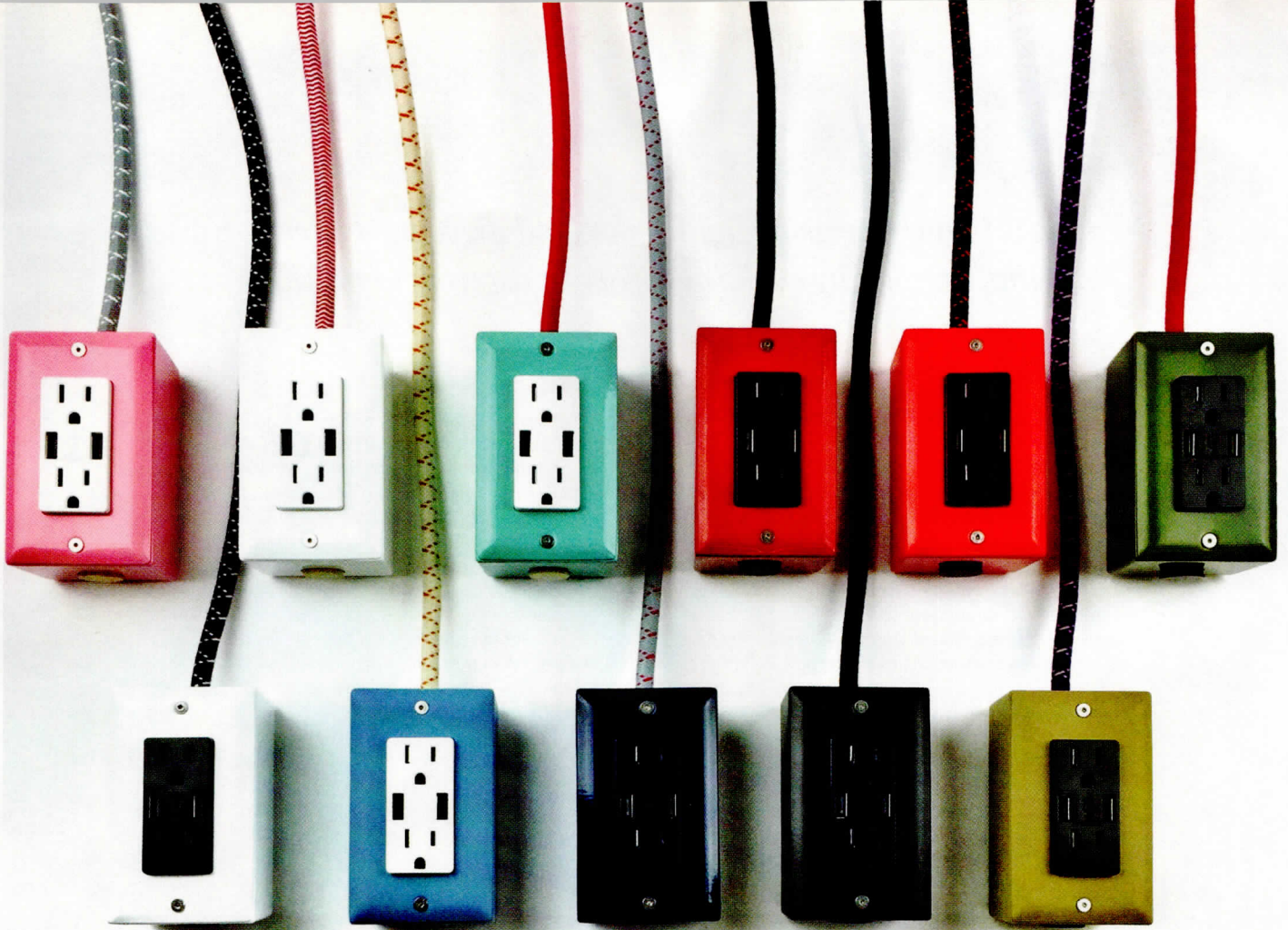
Smith grew up in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, at a time when it was even more challenging than it is today for African Americans aspiring to be artists. After graduating from the Cooper Union in 1940, Smith eventually opened his own jew-

elry store on West 4th Street and built a strong and loyal clientele among other artists and also performers, such as Duke Ellington and dancers and choreographers Talley Beatty, Claude Marchant, and Pearl Primus.

This piece typifies the elements often observed in Smith’s work. Made of brass, a beautiful yet democratic material, the design makes use of positive and negative space with wide solid forms as well as thin sinuous lines. The irregularity of the shape suggests its place on the body, while also conveying the elegant movements of dance.

**Barbara Paris Gifford**  
Assistant curator  
Museum of Arts and Design  
New York





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*Eliasson is known for using light, color, and movement to create works that artificially evoke natural atmospheric conditions*

COMPOSED OF HAND-BLOWN GLASS, polished metal tubes, and a light source, Olafur Eliasson's *Your oceanic feeling* is at once a functional pendant and a sculpture that casts light through triangles of colored glass. As viewers move around the piece, the colors and shapes of the sphere appear to change constantly, simulating the feeling of being inside a kaleidoscope, and inviting audiences to become more aware of their own perceptions and movements through space. Eliasson's artwork is an integral component of Japanese artist Hiroshi Sugimoto's recent redesign of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden lobby, a re-envisioning of the space that drew inspiration from the building's iconic circular shape. The new design highlights the unique architecture while creating an environment that functions simultaneously as sculpture, furniture, and conceptual art.

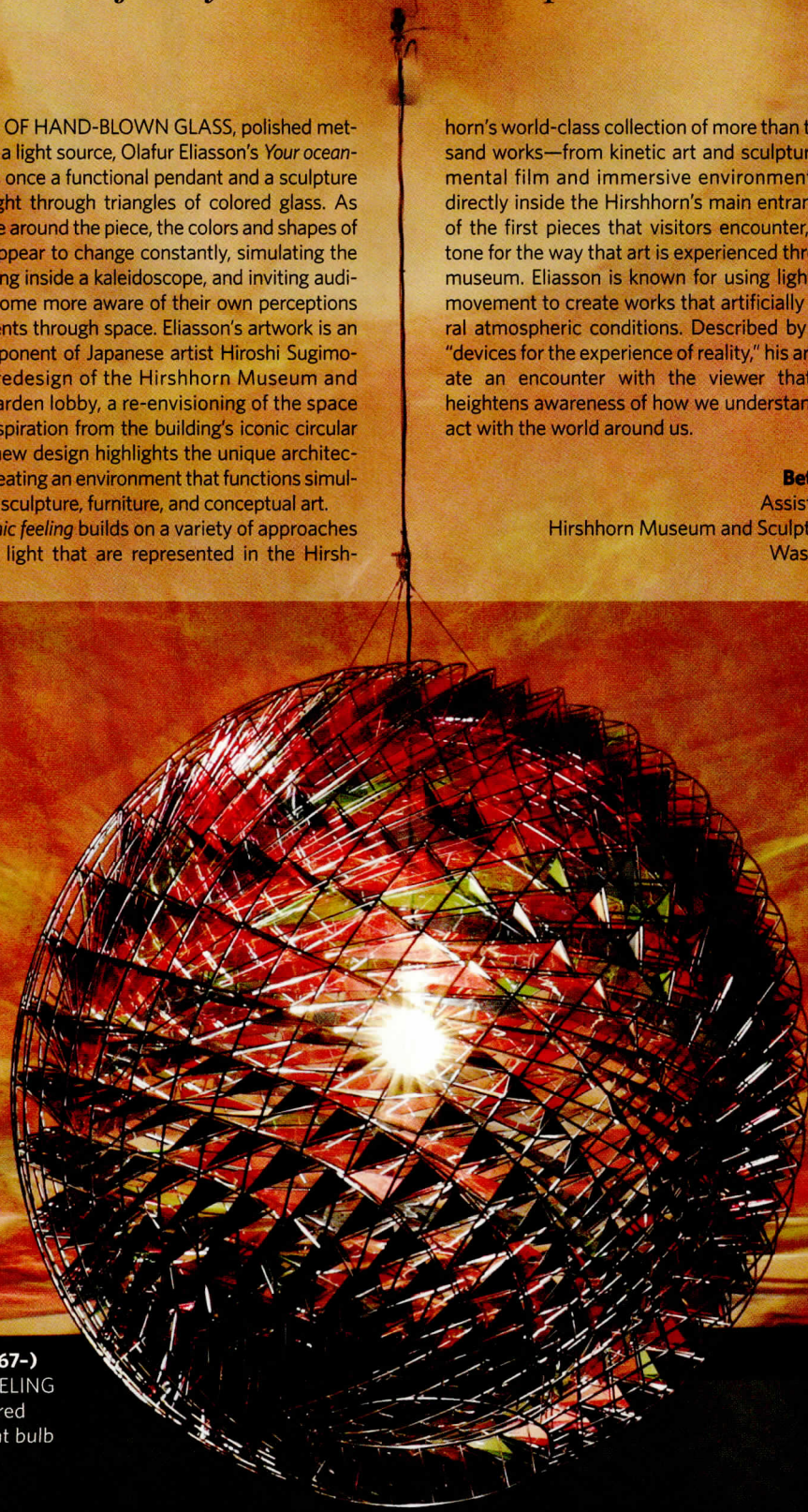
*Your oceanic feeling* builds on a variety of approaches to exploring light that are represented in the Hirsh-

horn's world-class collection of more than twelve thousand works—from kinetic art and sculpture to experimental film and immersive environments. Hanging directly inside the Hirshhorn's main entrance, it is one of the first pieces that visitors encounter, setting the tone for the way that art is experienced throughout the museum. Eliasson is known for using light, color, and movement to create works that artificially evoke natural atmospheric conditions. Described by Eliasson as "devices for the experience of reality," his artworks initiate an encounter with the viewer that ultimately heightens awareness of how we understand and interact with the world around us.

**Betsy Johnson**

Assistant Curator

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,  
Washington, DC



**Olafur Eliasson (1967-)**  
YOUR OCEANIC FEELING  
Stainless steel, colored  
glass, paint, and light bulb  
2015

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*Fauteuil 300 is now regarded as the archetype  
of the universal cheap white plastic chair*



**Henry Massonnet (1922–2005)**  
FAUTEUIL 300  
Polypropylene  
1972

THE IDEA OF MAKING A CHAIR out of a single piece of material has fascinated designers for a long time. Early examples included the bent-plywood chairs by Gerald Summers and Charlotte Perriand. In the 1950s, new plastic-molding technologies made it possible to manufacture a chair in a single production step. Among the first mass-produced models were classics of design history, such as the Panton chair by Verner Panton and the Selene by Vico Magistretti. In 1972 Frenchman Henry Massonnet took these predecessors as a starting point for the design of Fauteuil 300, now regarded as the archetype of the universal cheap white plastic chairs known collectively as “monoblocs.”

By applying injection molding of polypropylene at STAMP (Société de Transformation des Matières Plastiques), his factory in Nurieux-Volognat, Massonnet reduced production time to less than two minutes per piece and created a chair that was at once weatherproof, stackable, and affordable. In spite of his initial attempts to brand the chair as a lifestyle product with a touch of glamour, Fauteuil 300 soon became a turning point, when high design transformed into a mass-consumer product spreading across the globe.

Monobloc chairs embody many questions and contradictions posed by today’s consumer society. On the one hand, it is the epitome of an affordable—and thus democratic—piece of furniture. On the other, it is criticized for falling short of sustainability targets. The same monobloc that is associated with cheap mass-produced merchandise in industrialized countries is considered a valuable object in some developing nations—and is mended or reused if it breaks. Precisely due to its multifaceted nature, the monobloc chair symbolizes a pluralistic approach to design history and demonstrates the complexity of material culture in the present day.

**Heng Zhi**  
Curator of the Collection  
Vitra Design Museum,  
Weil am Rhein, Germany

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# On the Agenda

## EUROPE

### GERMANY

#### VITRA DESIGN MUSEUM

Weil am Rhein  
Night Fever. Designing Club Culture  
1960–Today  
To September 9  
design-museum.de

### NORWAY

#### OSLO DESIGN FAIR

Oslo  
August 29 to September 1  
oslodesignfair.no  
Norway's largest trade fair and an important meeting place for the design and interior industries.

### SPAIN

#### BARCELONA DESIGN WEEK

Barcelona  
June 5 to 14  
barcelonadesignweek.com  
One of the leading events for promoting and debating design and an important function on the international design calendar.

### SWITZERLAND

#### DESIGN MIAMI/

Basel  
June 12 to 17  
basel2018.designmiami.com  
The global forum for design. Each fair brings together the most influential collectors, gallerists, designers, curators, and critics from around the world in celebration of design, culture, and commerce.

#### VOLTA14

Basel  
June 11 to 16  
voltashow.com  
Seventy five galleries from across five continents gather in Basel with a focus on collaboration between dealers and friends.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### EDINBURGH ART FESTIVAL

Edinburgh  
July 26 to August 26  
edinburghartfestival.com  
A showcase of the Scottish capital's



Tactile headset designed by Alessandro Perini, 2014, executed by Rossella Siani/VAHA.

leading galleries, museums, and artist-run spaces in a city-wide celebration. Each year the festival features leading international and UK artists alongside the best emerging talent.

#### LONDON FESTIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE

London  
June 1 to 30  
londonfestivalofarchitecture.org  
Celebrating London as a global hub of architectural experimentation, practice, and debate.

#### VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

London  
Printing a New World: Commercial Graphics in the 1930s  
To August 19  
vam.ac.uk

## NORTH AMERICA

### CALIFORNIA

#### MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SAN DIEGO

San Diego  
Yve Laris Cohen: Meeting Ground  
To September 2  
mcsd.org

#### NORTON SIMON MUSEUM

Pasadena  
Line & Color: The Nature of Ellsworth Kelly  
To October 29  
nortonsimon.org

#### OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

Oakland  
J. B. Blunk: Nature, Art & Everyday Life  
To September 9  
museumca.org

#### SAN FRANCISCO DESIGN WEEK

San Francisco  
June 7 to 15  
2018.sfdesignweek.org  
Showcasing the unique intersection of ideas, design, business, and entrepreneurship that makes the Bay Area the birthplace of the future.

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#### NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

Fun House  
July 4 to September 3  
nbm.org

#### SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM

Diane Arbus: A box of ten photographs  
To January 27, 2019  
americanart.si.edu

### FLORIDA

#### THE WOLFSONIAN—FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami Beach  
Constructing Revolution: Soviet Propaganda Posters from Between the World Wars  
To August 12  
wolfsonian.org

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## ILLINOIS

### ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

Elmhurst  
Mies's McCormick House Revealed:  
New Views  
June 10 to August 26  
elmhurstartmuseum.org

### NEOCON

Chicago  
June 11 to 13  
neocon.com  
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launchpad for innovation, offering  
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the built environment of today and  
the future.

## INDIANA

### LUBEZNIK CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Michigan City  
Andy Warhol: Icon & Influence  
June 9 to October 13  
lubeznikcenter.org

## MICHIGAN

### GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM

Grand Rapids  
Anila Quayyum Agha: Intersections  
To August 26  
artmuseumgr.org

## MISSOURI

### NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART

Kansas City  
Wendell Castle: Shifting Vocabularies  
June 23 to January 20, 2019  
nelson-atkins.org

## NEW YORK

### AIA CONFERENCE ON ARCHITECTURE

New York City  
June 21 to 23  
conferenceonarchitecture.com  
Some of the most creative architects,  
designers, and firms share how they are  
making a difference in cities all over the  
world.

## BROOKLYN MUSEUM

New York City  
David Bowie is  
To July 15  
brooklynmuseum.org

### COOPER HEWITT

New York City  
The Senses: Design Beyond Vision  
To October 28  
cooperhewitt.org

### JEWISH MUSEUM

New York City  
Marc Camille Chaimowicz: Your Place  
or Mine . . .  
To August 5  
thejewishmuseum.org

### MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

New York City  
Elegance in the Sky: The Architecture  
of Rosario Candela  
To October 28  
mcny.org

### PARK AVENUE ARMORY

New York City  
The Let Go: Nick Cave  
June 7 to July 1  
armoryonpark.org

## OHIO

### CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Cleveland  
Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors  
July 7 to September 30  
clevelandart.org

## TEXAS

### MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

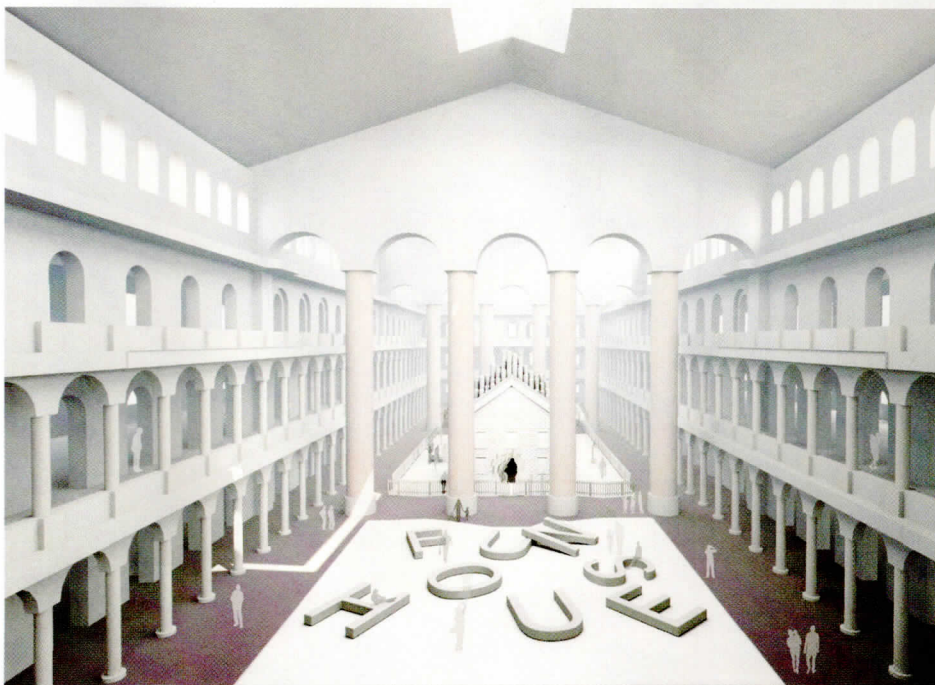
Houston  
Joris Laarman Lab: Design in the  
Digital Age  
June 24 to September 16  
mfah.org

## SOUTH AMERICA

## BRAZIL

### DWI: SÃO PAULO DESIGN WEEKEND

São Paulo  
August 29 to September 2  
designweekend.com.br  
The largest Latin American event  
on the international design  
festival circuit.

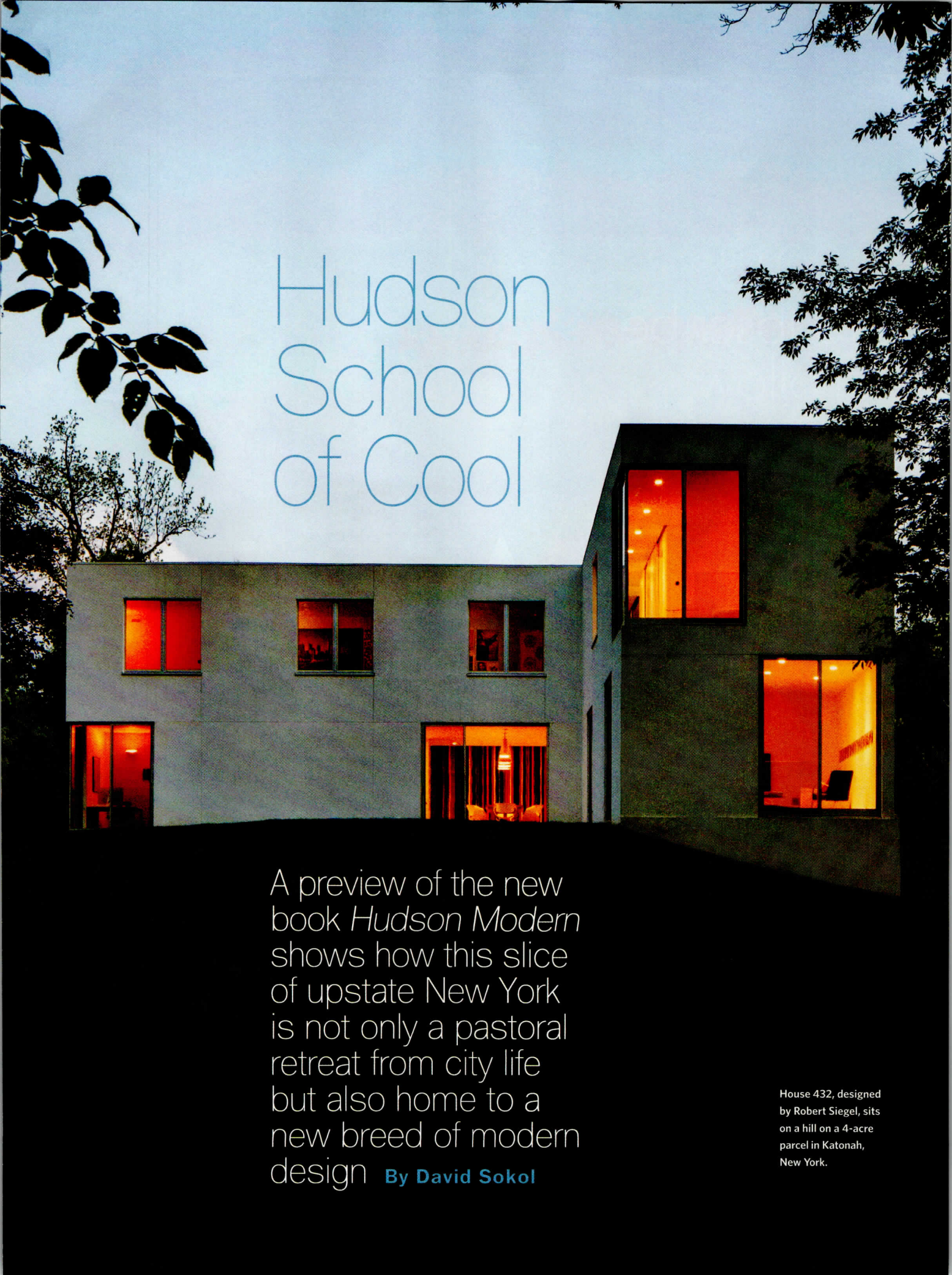


Fun House rendering by Snarkitecture, 2018.



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# Hudson School of Cool

A preview of the new book *Hudson Modern* shows how this slice of upstate New York is not only a pastoral retreat from city life but also home to a new breed of modern design **By David Sokol**

House 432, designed by Robert Siegel, sits on a hill on a 4-acre parcel in Katonah, New York.

**A RECENT WAVE OF ENERGY HAS** transformed the historically vaunted Hudson River valley of New York into something approaching a model post industrial economy. Where towns like Beacon and Hudson were once centers of brickmaking and whaling, today their downtowns are a bustle of galleries and tech companies and artisans. Their outskirts are dotted romantically with triumphs of architectural preservation and locavore-driven farming. In a word, the Hudson valley is hip.

Modernism aficionados know the region as a crucible of progressive twentieth-century architecture. That experimentation dates to at least 1942, when designer Russel Wright and his wife, Mary, purchased the seventy-five acres in Garrison, New York, that would become Manitoga (featured in our Spring 2018 issue). Two years later, a collective of young New Yorkers invited Frank Lloyd Wright to plan a community in Pleasantville—what is today known as the Usonia Historic District. And in 1951 business executive Peter McComb asked Marcel Breuer (who had been designing Ferry House at nearby Vassar College) to create a residence for his family in Poughkeepsie, for which the architect would adapt his famous binocular plan to include second-floor living space.

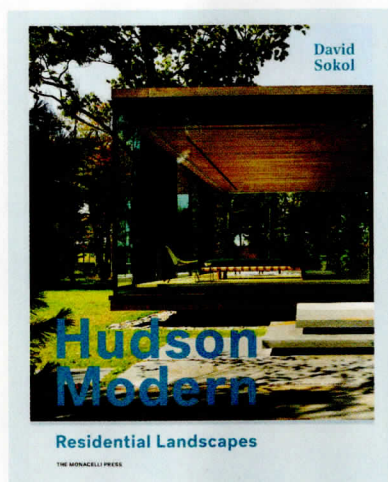
Yet the Hudson valley is rarely spoken of in the same breath as, say, New Canaan, Connecticut,

which the Harvard Five transformed from country seat into cosmopolitan suburb beginning in the late 1940s. Nor has it been compared to farther flung oases of site-specific modernism, such as Fire Island, Sarasota, or Palm Springs.

That perception is likely to change for those who go on a weekend jaunt to the region. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the Hudson valley has come further into its own as a hotspot for high design.

The forces of hipness that are energizing main streets have also boosted patronage of visionary architecture. And, not unlike the movements that gelled in Columbus, Indiana, or on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, these projects interpret modernist principles in a uniquely local, cohesive way—pairing Cartesian geometry with romantic landscape, embodying awareness of historic and vernacular

buildings, and conveying a sense of humility that's not entirely dependent on size alone. The following houses and studio buildings, featured in my new book *Hudson Modern*, published by Monacelli Press, exemplify the architectural Hudson River school of thought that's taking shape after decades of gestation. More important, these loosely excerpted chapters should inspire you to hit the road, witness the incredible transformation of a region, and consider taking part in its cultural renaissance.





#### WHEN YOUNG PARENTS APPROACHED

Desai Chia Architecture to realize a sustainable guesthouse on a 360-acre working farm in Dutchess County, they cited Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House among their inspirations. And at first glance, the New York-based studio's response, called LM Guest House, appears to have more in common with the Mies masterpiece than not. Both rectilinear buildings approximate two thousand square feet, perch

PAUL WARCHOL PHOTOS



### LM Guest House

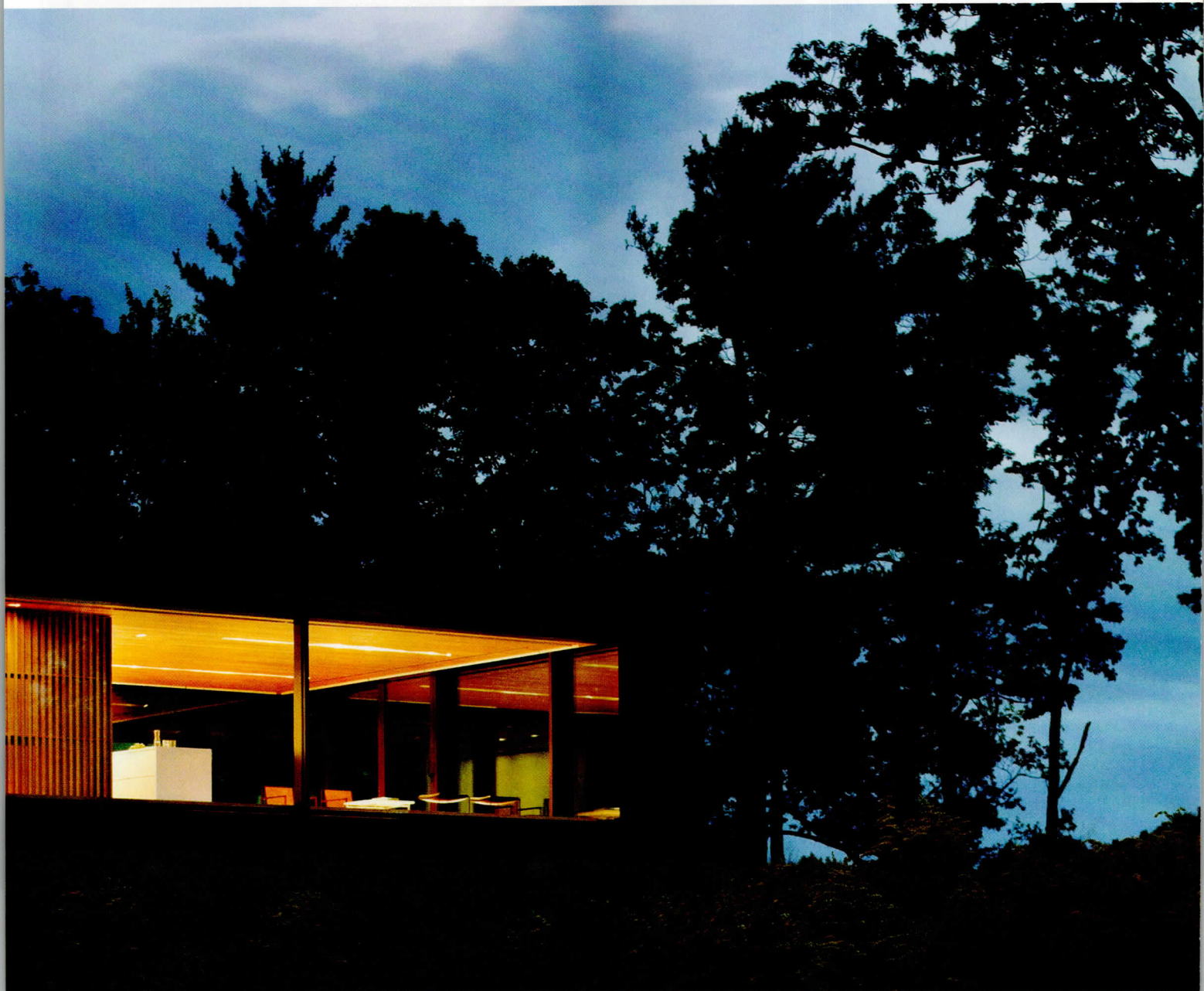
daintily on their lots, overlook bodies of water, and contain asymmetrically arranged spaces that support kitchens and bathrooms.

Yet scrutiny reveals that Desai Chia adapted precedent, particularly by enlarging the core to accommodate a family of four plus two guests. LM Guest House contains two sleeping areas filled with bunk beds, a pair of storage spaces, and a mechanical room alongside bathing functions. Desai and Chia collaborat-

ed with engineers at Arup to embed four steel columns within the core that support a cantilevered roof, too. The facade comprises triple-pane glass units to withstand the sun's rays as well as extreme hot and cold, though breezes flow through operable windows. The results commune with nature so comfortably that the homeowners have deferred renovating a salvaged barn on the property as their main residence.

An exterior view into the living room of the LM Guest House in Dutchess County.

Architect Desai Chia's LM Guest house emits a lantern-like glow after dark.



## Natori Residence



At the Natori Residence in Pound Ridge, designed by Calvin Tsao and Zack McKown, the garden's water element forms a threshold to the formal entry.

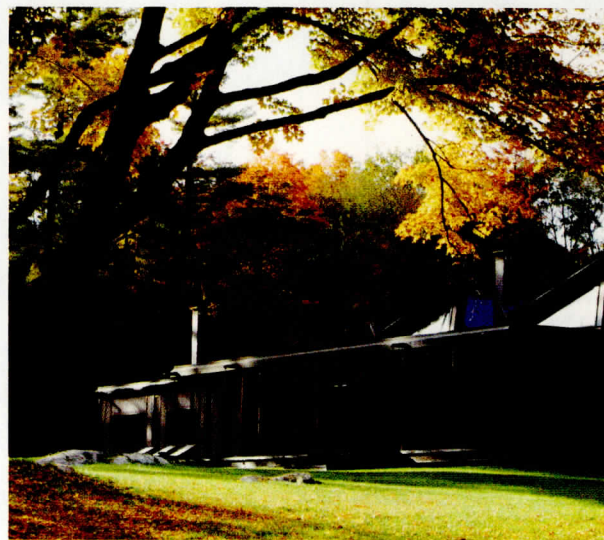
Skylights impart a memorable roofscape to the project and shape the experience within.

The architecture subtly demarcates different spaces within the living area.

### THE NATORI RESIDENCE IS JUST

one of several commissions that Brooklyn-based Tsao & McKown Architects has completed for fashion designer Josie Natori and her husband, Ken, over more than two decades. "We have come to know their habits and their aspirations," says Calvin Tsao. For this latest home in Pound Ridge, "We got a sense they wanted to spend more time together even as they were doing different things."

The single-story volume is constructed of visibly joined timber measuring five bays long by two bays wide, which minimizes walls within the 2,900-square-foot interior. The resulting space is modulated into zones, most notably in the living and





SIMON UFTON PHOTO (3)



dining areas, by two large standing-seam copper skylights. A custom bronze chimney and granite hearth further distinguish the living area without visually separating occupants from one another.

These and other gestures also preserve views through expanses of glass to the thirty-acre site. To foster a relationship with the landscape, the architects ran a timber-columned veranda along the east side of the living and dining areas, created a terrace off the master suite, and wrapped a traditional Japanese garden around the west elevation. Tsao explains that these gestures “start conversations about the built environment and the natural environment.”

House 432



PAUL WARCHOL PHOTO (3)





### THE SOUTHEASTERN EDGE OF THE

Hudson valley defies clear definition. Where New York and Connecticut meet, the terrain varies between ridges and bowls, and is covered alternately in woods and meadows. One town's primary intersection resembles a New England square while another's is marked only by the crisscrossing of stone walls. Revolutionary-era shingled and clapboard houses huddle along the roads; bedroom communities loom over them from once-unbuildable prospects.

Robert Siegel revels in these juxtapositions. House 432, a 3,600-square-foot Katonah residence that he designed for himself, his wife Lynn, and their three children, assimilates local knottiness into a deceptively simple diagram. Or as the architect puts it, "How do you design a home that looks unique, but not out of place—how do you understand context without being a slave to it?"

The hilltop building maximizes distance from the road, prioritizing site over intervention. Building plan and section privilege the landscape as well: Siegel gave the house a slight boomerang shape to keep it from visually dominating the hill, and used few, albeit very large, windows to make the building mass seem smaller. Meanwhile, the crisply geometric house is clad in locally sourced fieldstone—it is both a naturalistic cloak and a fun nod to the region's historical farm boundaries. The overall effect of the design is seclusion without parochialism.

In House 432 the living room and dining room are connected, allowing for an integrated lounging and dining experience.

Architect Robert Siegel employed a variety of secondary structures to guide occupants and visitors toward the entry.

Hidden enclaves such as a rooftop courtyard encourage family interaction.



PAUL WARCHOL PHOTOS

**RENOWNED ARCHITECT STEVEN HOLL**

had not intended to erect Ex of In House. But when the longtime weekend resident of Rhinebeck, New York, heard that a neighbor was advertising his twenty-eight-acre property as a subdivision, the prospect of suburbanization rankled him. He bought the property and determined to turn some ongoing research into a built form.

Holl had been figuring how intersecting spheres would look and feel as habitable space, and for Ex of In House he arranged slanted volumes and circular and wedge-shaped windows to ingratiate the built environment with the sun. Glazing on the south elevation is proportioned to heat the interior by thermal gain in winter, and glass flooring meets a dramatic window on the southwest corner so that sunsets are experienced without interruption. A geothermal heating system, super-insulated envelope, thin-film photovoltaics, and other active sustainability efforts reduce the house to almost net-zero consumption. Perhaps the boundary-pushing interior evidences an environmental ethic most of all. Holl's shifting planes and kissing orbs create an interior landscape that contains only one door, and feels much larger than 918 square feet. The compactness is an inherently ecological gesture, and something of a political statement: The wide-open layout also expresses faith that guests can tolerate or even thrive in a world that lacks borders.

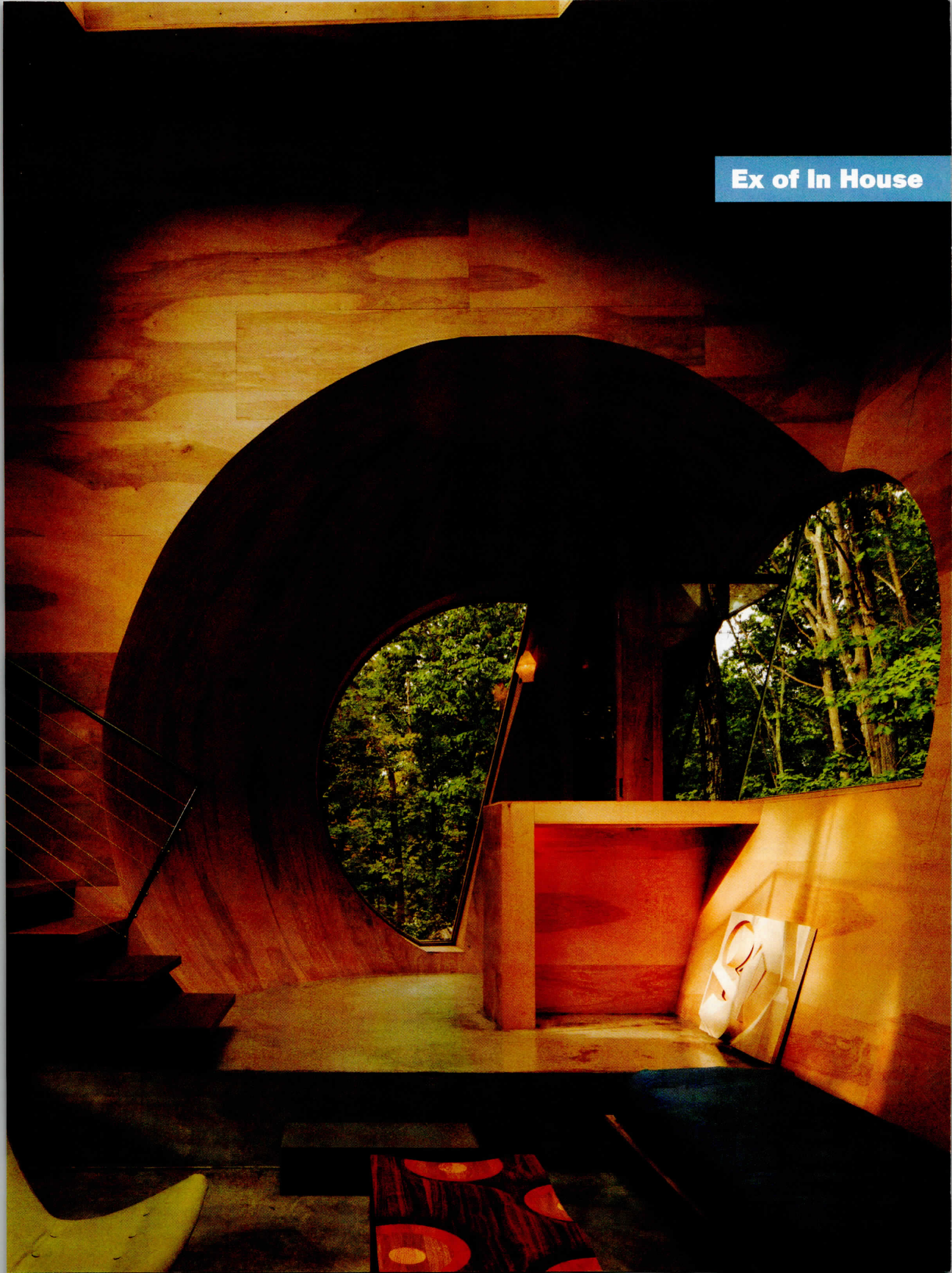


Architect Steven Holl initiated Ex of In House in Rhinebeck, New York, to prevent the underlying acreage from becoming a subdivision.

Sleeping areas are hidden out of direct sight on the second floor.

A view toward the entrance from the adjacent sitting area.

**Ex of In House**

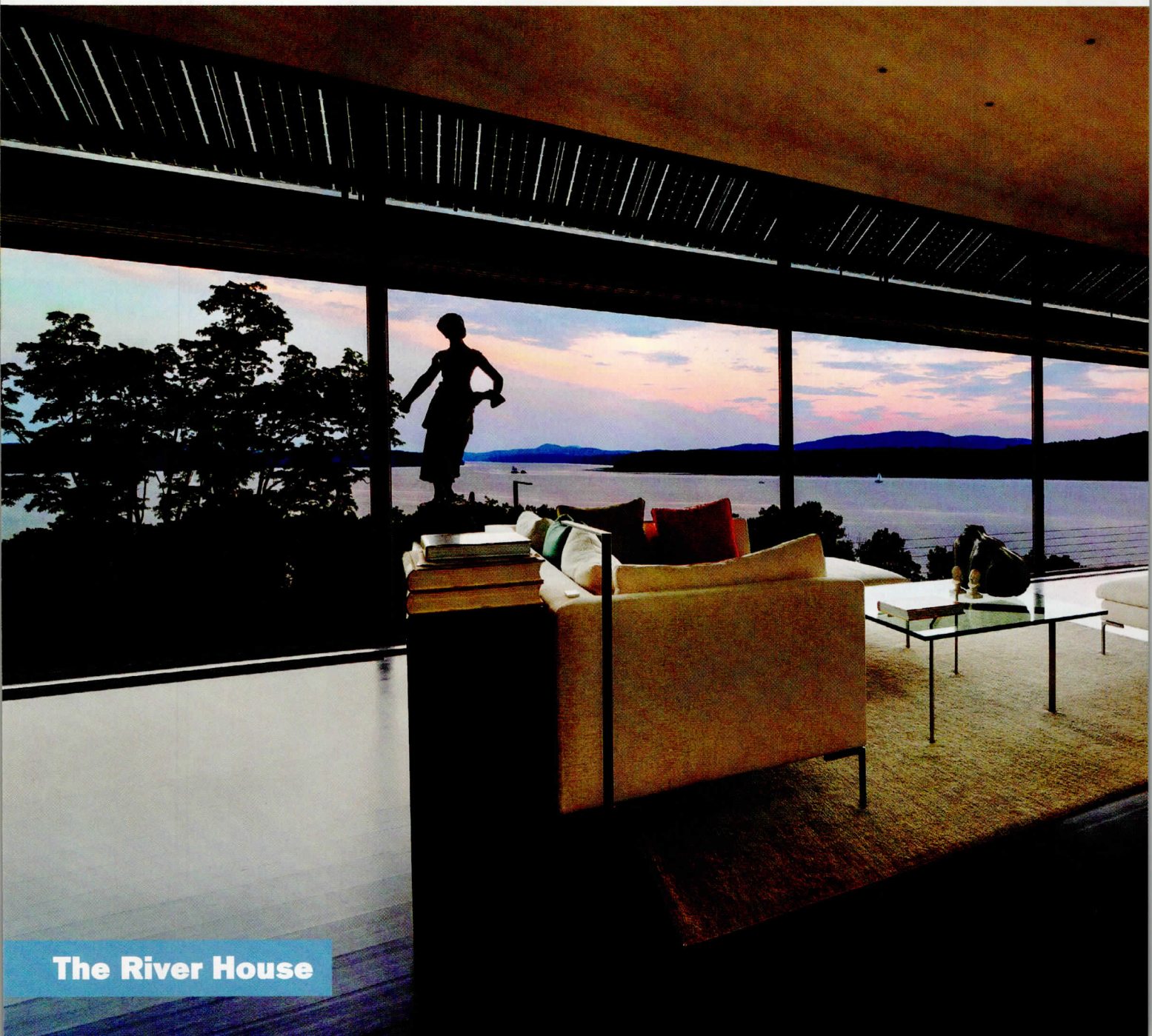


**THE CONCEPT OF “KEEPING UP WITH the Joneses”** may have been born in the Rhinebeck vicinity when, in 1853, Elizabeth Schermerhorn Jones’s soaring estate Wyndclyffe prompted a spate of mansion building and rebuilding all along the Hudson River. The home created by architect Steve Mensch for himself and Greg Patnaude now occupies the former great lawn of Wyndclyffe, which was abandoned in 1950

and today stands in ruins. Known as the River House, the five-thousand-square-foot building embodies present-day values in much the same way as the original Wyndclyffe captured its own time. The new house is horizontal, in contrast to the old building’s verticality. And Mensch’s design substitutes status with authenticity.

Mensch envisioned the approach to the house as a slow, even mysterious, procession.

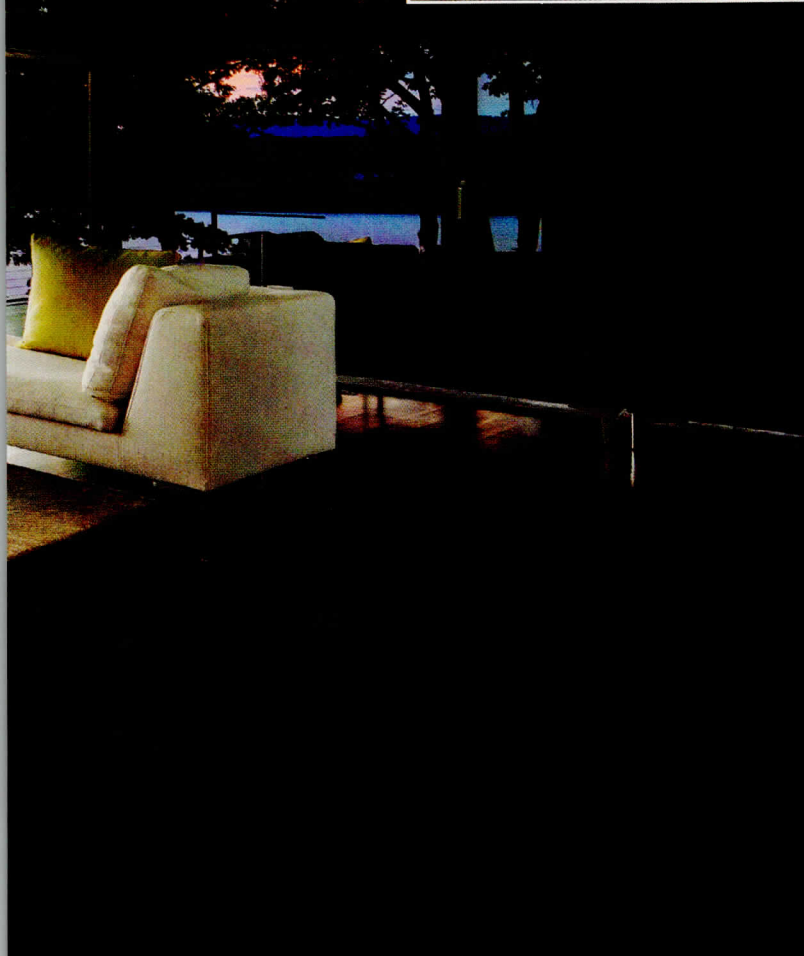
JOHN HALPERN PHOTOS



## The River House

The aerie quality of architect Steve Mensch's River House in Rhinebeck becomes palpable upon entering the living room, the glass walls of which are retractable.

The living room also overlooks a dramatic hillside to the south.



The curved driveway is enclosed by high hedges and mature trees, creating a passage to a circular motor court encircled by woods, newly planted spruce trees, and the board-formed concrete walls of the house itself. These massive, windowless walls could very well be mistaken for ruins were it not for the delicate rooftop photovoltaic array signaling life and optimism.

A covered walkway steers guests to the lone door and the petite, low-ceilinged foyer, where a jog to the left leads to a fully glazed living room. Over the course of just a few steps, the hint of a bird's-eye Hudson River view transforms into flight itself, and sunlight filters through the photovoltaics to produce dappled shadows. "Invariably, when newcomers come through that opening, they gasp, or exclaim, or sometimes just laugh," Mensch says. **M**



# French Eclectic



By Arlene Hirst



**MATHIEU LEHANNEUR** is not your typical design-world superstar. The forty-three-year-old Frenchman can't be found on the streets of Milan during the annual global furniture extravaganza, surrounded by a flock of admiring fans. His interests are much broader: art, craft, interiors, science, and product design are all part of his portfolio. "I'm not a specialist in

it into the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, and set the tone for his later design work.

He also made his first appearance on the international stage at MoMA, with *Bel-Air*, a prototype for *Andrea*, an air purifier that's essentially a miniature mobile greenhouse that continuously cleanses air by circulating it through

## From high-tech products to dreamlike interiors, Mathieu Lehanneur proves himself a man of many talents

anything," he says. "The only thing to be a specialist in is to be a human being. I focus on who we are and what we need." Lehanneur graduated from Ensci (École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle), where his diploma project, "Therapeutic Objects"—a new way of packaging and labeling prescriptions to ensure that people take their medications properly—made

a plant's leaves and roots and a humid bath, designed in collaboration with Harvard professor David Edwards, and included in the *Design and the Elastic Mind* exhibition in 2008. *Popular Science* named it one of the inventions of the year.

He has a long list of high-tech products to his credit, including energy monitoring devices, an innovative Bluetooth speaker, and intriguing

*Andrea* air purifier, 2009, made of acrylic and electronic air components.

*Ocean Memories Bowl* low table in bronze, 2017.

Mathieu Lehanneur.







In 2017 Lehanneur created a bedroom inside the Hôtel Marcel Dassault in Paris for *AD Intérieurs*. The room features his Ocean Memories low table in black marble, 2017, Spring lamp, 2016, and S.M.O.K.E. Onyx light, 2015.

prototypes for objects like an oxygen generator and an infrared heater. He has also worked in the public realm, devising Wi-Fi charging stations and street lighting (created for the Paris climate conference) that employ both LED lights and photovoltaic panels. In 2015 he became the chief designer for Huawei, the Chinese company that's the world's largest manufacturer of telecommunications equipment and a major supplier of smart phones. A seemingly full-time job for many, but for Lehanneur it will take up, he has said, only half of his brain.

These accomplishments alone would satisfy most designers. But Lehanneur's resume in the world of interiors is equally impressive. He has designed poetic settings for St. Hilaire church in Melle, France, and interiors for the Groupe Hospitalier Diaconesses Croix Saint, Simon in Paris, as well as a temporary museum for Audemars Piguet in Shanghai. In Paris he has created many restaurants, including Café Mollien for the Louvre; Noglu, a gluten-free bistro; and Flood, a restaurant with algae-filled aquariums that help keep the air clean. He teamed up again with David Edwards, founder of Le Laboratoire, a cultural center and think tank in Paris and the United States, to design the ArtScience: Culture Lab & Café in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which not only serves food, but also acts as a meeting place for scientists, students, and startup executives to brainstorm ideas. His impressive client list includes Kenzo, Veuve Clicquot, Issey Miyake, Cartier, Christofle, Poltrona Frau, Kiton, and Nike. In 2014 he won the competition to design all the interiors for the Grand Palais—a 750,000-square-foot series of buildings on the Champs Élysées that will open in 2023.

An example of his interior design work will be on public view this September at *AD Intérieurs*, an exhibition, similar to American showhouses, that the French edition of *Architectural Digest* stages annually. In 2017 he created a dreamlike bedroom for the project that revealed his fascination with marble and minerals. Even the books on the shelves were made of stone. The Navona travertine wall, the Versailles parquet floor, and the titanium-plated ceiling had touches of pink onyx and green marble, with iridescent metallic reflections. All the furniture and lighting were created in Lehanneur's studio, and many are available directly from him.

His fascination with the sea and abiding interest in minerals and marble also drew him



An interior view of Café Mollien, located in the Louvre in Paris.

S.M.O.K.E. Onyx in pink with blown glass, 2015.

Three plates from Lehanneur's 50 Seas series.

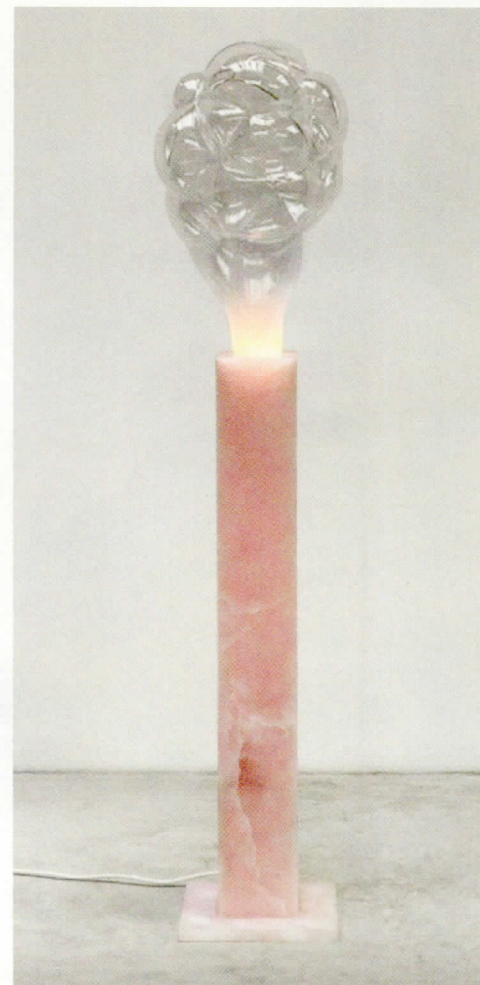
A view of an installation Lehanneur designed, made of white marble, alabaster, and concrete, in the choir of the St. Hilaire church in Melle, France.

to the world of design art. His first show in the United States, *Ocean Memories*, held at Carpenters Workshop in 2017, continued this fascination, expanding on an idea that he began in 2013 with *Liquid Marble*, a show in Milan and at various other venues. For the 2017 exhibition he produced eight monolithic furniture forms (seven in black marble, one in polished bronze) that evoke ocean waves: "Nature is not always gentle or sweet. It can be raw and violent. I love the double point of view," he says. For the marble elements he used special-effects software to capture the multifaceted surface of rippling water, then programmed a machine to cut the blocks to the 3-D renderings, before hand-polishing the material to lustrous effect.

This year he presented *50 Seas* at Christie's in Paris, a display of fifty enameled ceramic plates inspired by the actual colors of fifty different bodies of water—from the Gulf of Guinea to the Bay of Bengal—choosing those he felt would give

a good overview of the entire spectrum. He captured the exact hues with photographic drones supplied by French satellite company Planet Observateur. Each plate represents a specific place on earth, and faithfully replicates the color of the water there. Lehanneur color-matched the enamel paint by making close to two thousand paint samples before he was satisfied. "It takes a lot of learning and mixing," he explains, "because the colors change enormously during the firing process, so they look wildly different between start and finish." His wife, Isabela Renó Braga, a former fashion designer, was an invaluable help in fine-tuning the hues.

Lehanneur's schedule is always filled. He has an electric bike soon to hit the market, and just finished the interiors for Air France's business-class lounge in Paris. "I never wanted to choose between being an artist or designer," he says. And certainly he hasn't: he's the twenty-first century's version of the Renaissance man. **M**







An artful mix of stylistic influences shapes Osvaldo Borsani's architectural masterpiece near Milan **By Brian Kish**

## **ARCHITECT AND FURNITURE DESIGNER AND MANUFACTURER**

Oswaldo Borsani (1911–1985) is being celebrated at the Milan Triennale design museum in a retrospective that runs to early September, co-curated by the British architect Norman Foster and architect Tommaso Fantoni, Borsani's grandson. As a foretaste of that exhibition, during April's Salone del Mobile furniture fair, the Borsani archive welcomed visitors to the family home he designed and built in the town of Varedo, nine miles north of central Milan. In tact but uninhabited since 2008—design impresario Ambra Medda freshened up the place for the open house—the building perfectly encapsulates the richly layered work of Borsani and his brilliant talent for absorbing and integrating the aesthetic, artistic, and technological developments of his day.

Borsani's father, Gaetano, started the family furniture-making business, Atelier di Varedo, in 1923. The company won a reputation for both craftsmanship and its fluency with many styles, from the flourishes of the late

Wiener Werkstätte and the geometries of futurism to the Novecento aesthetic, a sleek neoclassicism with decorative touches that made reference to Roman antiquity and was Italy's answer to French art deco.

Oswaldo would add more to the firm's stylistic vocabulary.

He began studies in

Villa Borsani: Cutting  
Edges and Flowing Lines

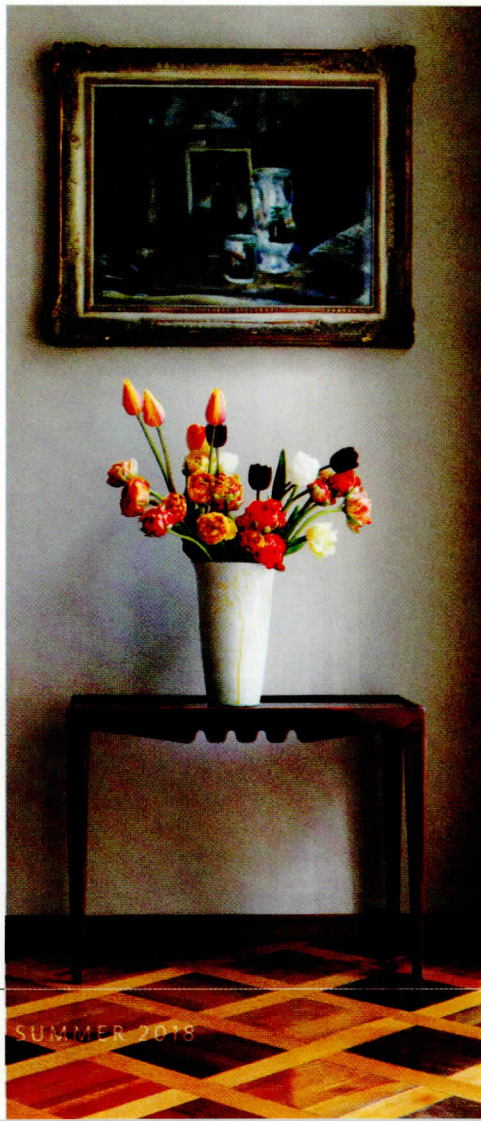
In the entry hall, Oswaldo Borsani created a striking contrast between the angular staircase and the marble floor, laid in a rounded nebulé pattern—a motif adapted from heraldry.



The garden-side facade of the Villa Borsani reveals the lean, rationalist lines of the building's architecture.

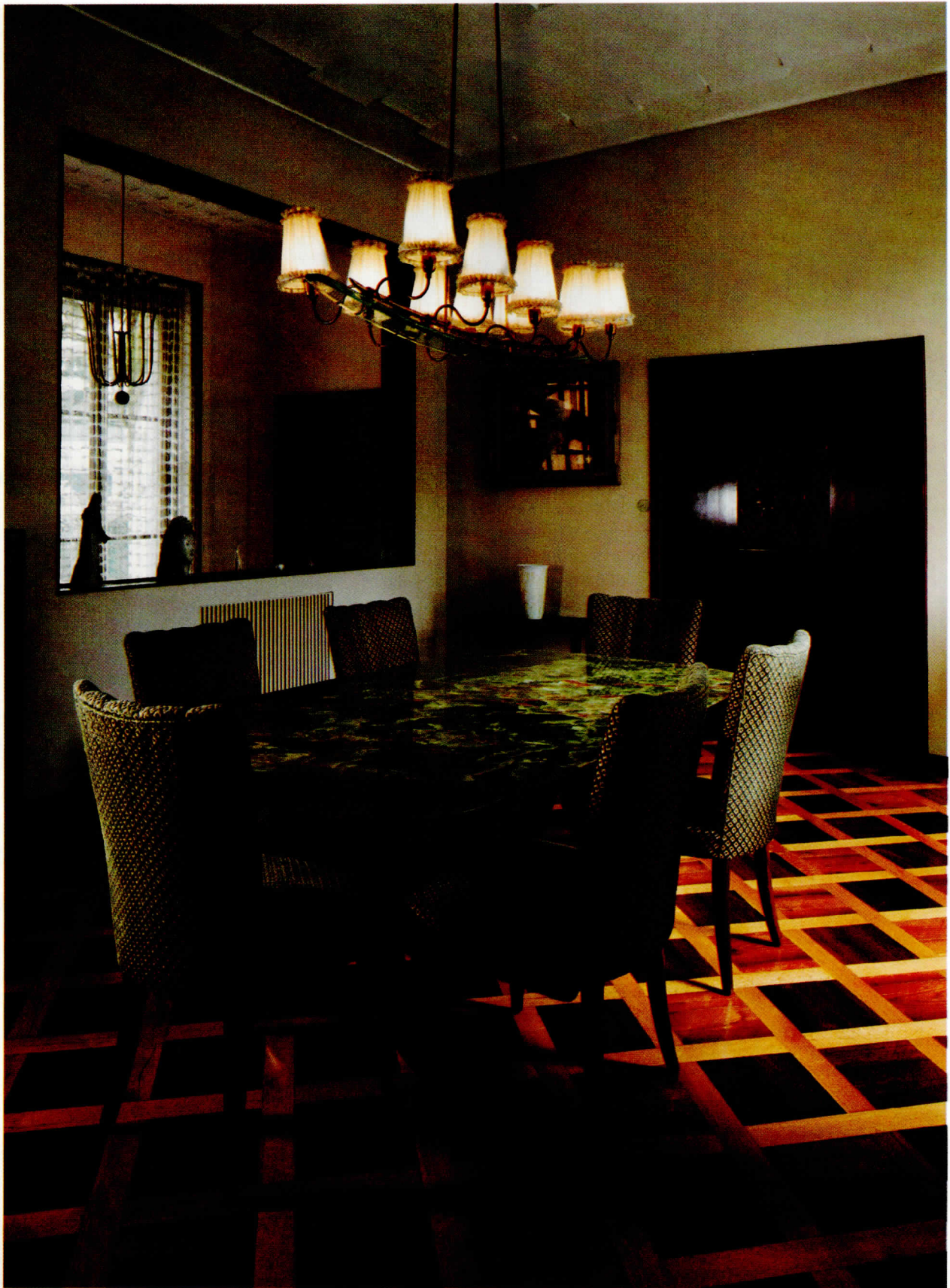
The apron of a side table—one of a pair that flanks the passage between the dining and living rooms—repeats Borsani's oft-used nebulé motif.

The dining room, opposite page, features a Model 6342/14 table with a green onyx top and an early 1940s chandelier. The doorway to the living room, at rear, is inset with a carved panel depicting horses by sculptor Antonio Voltan.



1931 at the Milan Polytechnic, where his teachers included Gio Ponti and Piero Portaluppi. At the time in Italy, the rationalist movement in architecture was ascendant, promoting buildings that were free of ornament and focused on intelligent, efficient interior planning. Invited to participate in the Milan Triennale design exposition of 1933—which required him to design a freestanding, fully furnished house—Borsani responded with an award-winning project he called Casa Minima, in which architectural elements were pared to essentials, and the decor consisted of pieces made of tubular steel, tempered glass, palm wood, and white parchment. The assignment also gave Borsani a method for all his future projects, based on the concept of overall planning for living spaces and the extensive use of modular systems.

All the while, Borsani, and the family company, were growing in cultural sophistication. In 1936 the firm, by then known as ABV, opened a showroom on the Via Monte Napoleone, Milan's most prestigious shopping enclave, to be in closer touch with its cosmopolitan clientele. Gaetano began to employ artists such as Adriano Spilimbergo to create decorative finishes for furnishings, while Osvaldo was cultivating friendships with other members of a young artistic generation, including Roberto Crippa, Agenore Fabbri, Fausto Melotti, Arnaldo Pomodoro, and—most important—Lucio Fontana. Many decorative schemes would be designed with these artists for private residences and completed in the late 1940s and early '50s. However, it was with Fontana that Borsani realized his greatest projects, which defined a totally new vision—one that involved painted forms and patterns as





The ceramic Lucio Fontana fireplace surround, created in 1948, is the focal point of the living room. Here, it is framed by two P110 (Canada) armchairs, designed by Borsani in 1966.

The living room seating pieces come from across the spectrum of Borsani's career, and include the model 6575 armchairs, designed in 1946 (left, rear); The P40 adjustable lounge chair of 1956 (right, rear); the D70 convertible sofa of 1954 (center); and the P110 (Canada) armchairs.

well as sculptural works placed on walls, ceilings, staircases, and doorways.

All the above influences would be brought to bear on the Villa Borsani. Osvaldo graduated from the Polytechnic in 1937 and took over as creative director of ABV. After a long design gestation, construction began in 1943 on the villa in Varedo, nominally being built for Osvaldo's twin brother, Fulgenzio, who handled the family firm's business affairs. The exterior has many similarities with the lean and linear Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan, built between 1932 and '35 and designed by Osvaldo's teacher Portaluppi. (It is now a public museum, and familiar to many as the setting for the 2009 Tilda Swinton movie *I Am Love*.) The organization of the interior owes much to the principles of the Viennese architect Adolf Loos, in particular his notion of *Raumplan*—an orderly floor plan with split levels that provide a variety of perspectives.

The theme of variety—both spatial and aesthetic—is established immediately inside the villa in the wide entrance hall. The space is a perfect distillation of Borsani's talent for bringing seemingly disparate styles together in harmony. To one side is a double-height stairwell set against a tall window with walnut mullions framing frosted glass panels. The zigzagging Candoglia marble staircase appears to levitate into the second floor, an effect amplified by rounded trapezoidal glass balustrades supporting the carved walnut handrail. Bronze caps anchor each glass sheet into the stair treads, which show an irregular pentagonal shape in profile. In striking contrast to the taut angularity, there is the floor: waves of light marble and deep red Rosso di Verona marble laid in a lilting



ALTO PIANO, AGOSTINO OSIO PHOTO; MARY GAUBIN PHOTO







nebulé pattern—a motif from medieval heraldry inspired by cloud formations.

The double-height living room, with its tall windows and parquet flooring in a weave pattern, has an airy grandeur. Lucio Fontana's deeply textured ceramic fireplace surround, made in 1948, is the focal point. Depicting battling wraithlike figures, it is executed in the neo-baroque style in which Fontana worked before moving on to the hermetic *Concetto Spaziale* abstractions for which he is now best known. Flanking the fireplace are gilt-bronze and Murano glass sconces designed by Guglielmo Ulrich, who also created the pendant lights arrayed in a row down the center of the ceiling.

The room's decor, as arranged for the open house, hits several keynotes in Borsani's career as a designer. Four model 6575 chairs with openwork backrests, designed in 1946, form a conversational group in one corner. Elsewhere, the space is furnished with seating pieces made by Tecno, the furniture manufacturing company Osvaldo and Fulgenzio formed in 1953, moving the family business away from custom, handmade work to industrialized pro-



© ALTO PIANO (2) / AGOSTINO OSIO PHOTO



duction. A P40 adjustable lounge chair, an early Tecno success designed in 1956, stands at one end of the room. At the other, a pair of D70 convertible sofas/daybeds from 1954 bracket a smartly functional square coffee table designed in 1971 by Marco Fantoni, husband of Osvaldo's daughter Valeria. Completing the ensemble are two upholstered bent plywood P110 lounge chairs—designed in 1966, and also known as Canada chairs—Osvaldo's last great chair design.

Over almost seven decades of design work, Borsani and his family firm synthesized a mix of stylistic codes in a manner without peer among

twentieth-century Italian companies. Their work stands as testament to a unique sense of freedom and confidence that Osvaldo Borsani acquired in a long-vanished Milanese creative culture. While the doors of the villa are now closed, the Triennale museum exhibition gives us a chance to reflect anew on his protean legacy. **M**

*Osvaldo Borsani is on view at La Triennale di Milano through September 11. A comprehensive new monograph on the designer's life and work, edited by Giampiero Bossoni and produced by the Borsani archive, was published in April. (Skira, \$113)*

Opposite, top: the villa's garden-side porch features a Fontana bas-relief panel depicting a Madonna and Child.

The library is furnished with a pair of P71 armchairs, a 1954 design, flanking a model 5038 table, designed in 1939.

Above, a model 5054 chest of drawers, a 1939 design here customized with decoration by Adriano Spilimbergo, and an AT16 coatrack, designed in 1961, stand in an upstairs hallway.

## TRANSPLANTED FROM THE VAST DESERT

of Nevada to the Second Empire-style edifice known as the “American Louvre” in Washington, DC, Burning Man is taking up temporary residence at the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery. *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man*, on view through January 21, 2019 (the first floor of exhibits closes on September 16), is the first major national exposition for the art of the saturnalia that’s been raging annually on the playa north of Reno since 1990.

Installed throughout the building, and spilling into the surrounding neighborhood, where six public works are on display, *The Art of Burning Man* includes large-scale installations, costumes, jewelry, video, “mutant vehicles,” and photography—most drawn from the archives of the Nevada Museum of Art’s Center for Art + Environment.

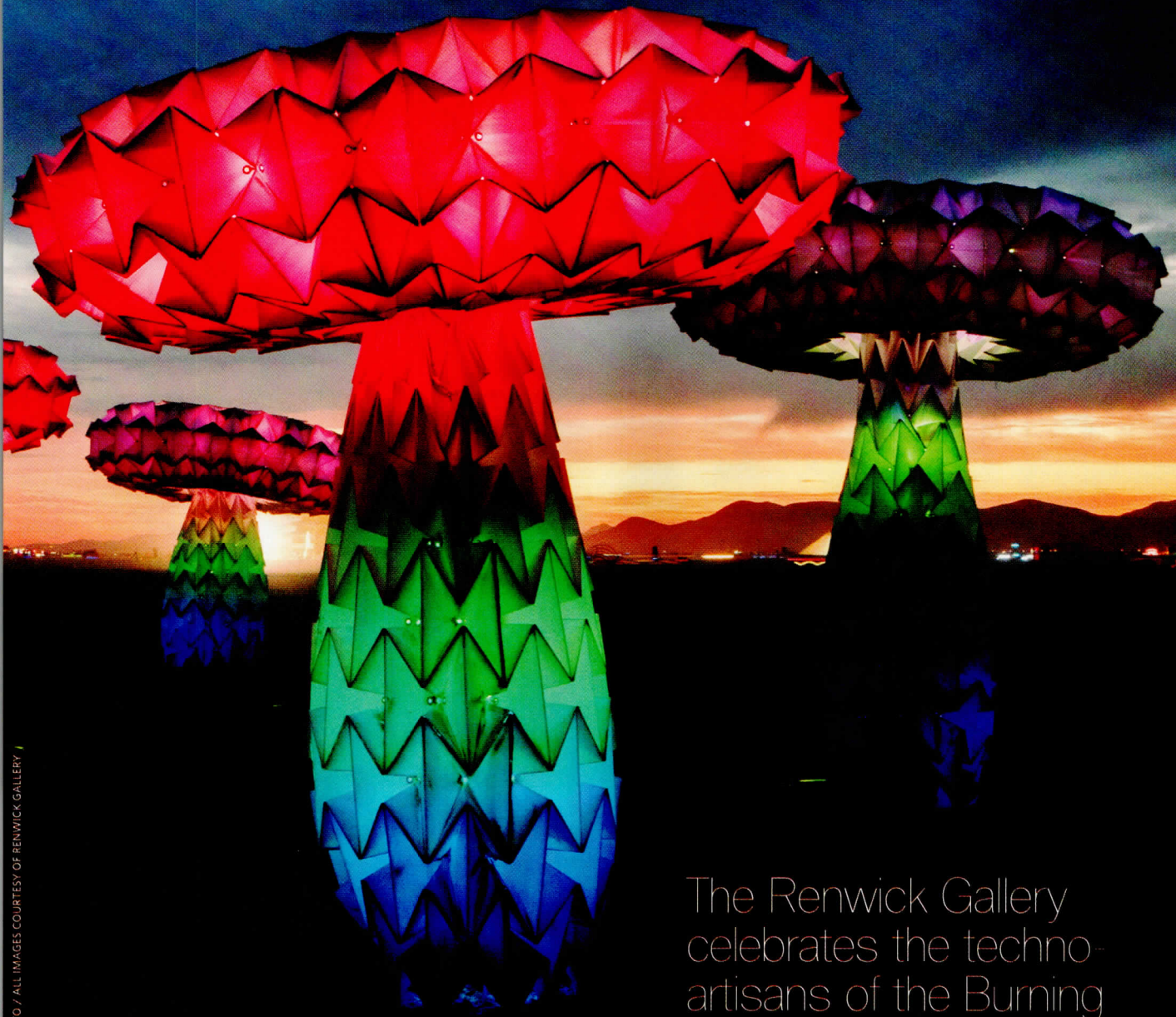
Burning Man has been a ticketed event since the mid-’90s, and a portion of the proceeds each year goes to artist grants. According to Nora Atkinson, curator of craft at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and organizer of the exhibition, this money—along with funding from Silicon Valley, as the *New York Times* reports—has encouraged Burner artists to write a new chapter in craft history, one she considers a Digital-Age analogue to the arts and crafts movement. But unlike William Morris and others who decried the advance of mechanization, the maker-culture devotees at Burning Man embrace and even sanctify technological progress. The new New Age ethos is evident in objects such as FoldHaus Art Collective’s *Shrumen Lumen* and Kate Raudenbush’s *Future’s Past*, a laser cut-steel edifice spun round with an aureola of light—not to mention pseudo-sacral vestments made from modern materials and once worn by Burning Man attendees.

How well will Burning Man transfer to the rarefied air of the museum and to the streets of Pierre Charles L’Enfant’s methodically organized city? “We’re not trying to be Burning Man,” Atkinson stresses, though the Burner community advised the museum on pieces to be included in the exhibition, and some local Burners have even been invited to serve as “ambassadors” of Burning Man for visitors to the show. Sadly, the Renwick will have to dispense with the cathartic burn that puts an exclamation point on the end of each year’s festivities in the desert, but disappointed Burning Man purists (or mourners wishing to toast Larry Harvey, Burning Man’s co-founder, who died in April) should eventually be able to get their fix: anything left by museumgoers at David Best’s bespoke temple will be shipped to the desert and thrown on the pyre.



*Shrumen Lumen* by FoldHaus Art Collective, 2016. FoldHaus is a Bay Area-based group of engineers, designers, and makers dedicated to creating interactive kinetic art. In *Shrumen Lumen*'s case, the mushrooms gently “breathe” as participants step on the footpads beneath each cap. During the day, the sculptures appear white, while at night the LEDs glow in multiple colors.

# Creative Sparks



The Renwick Gallery  
celebrates the techno-  
artisans of the Burning  
Man festival **By Sammy Dalati**



*Evotrope* by Richard Wilks in collaboration with Michael Conn and Victor Rodarte, 2009, is a giant mobile zoetrope made of steel, plywood, and motorcycle and unicycle parts. Participants can animate the piece using a hand crank.

Detail of *Paper Arch*, 2018, by Michael Garlington and Natalia Bertotti.

Garlington and Bertotti's *Paper Arch* inside the exhibition space. Made of plywood, hardboard, bond paper, fabric, and other found objects, the arch stands 15 feet tall and more than 25 feet wide and was commissioned specifically for the exhibition.



RON BLUNT PHOTOS



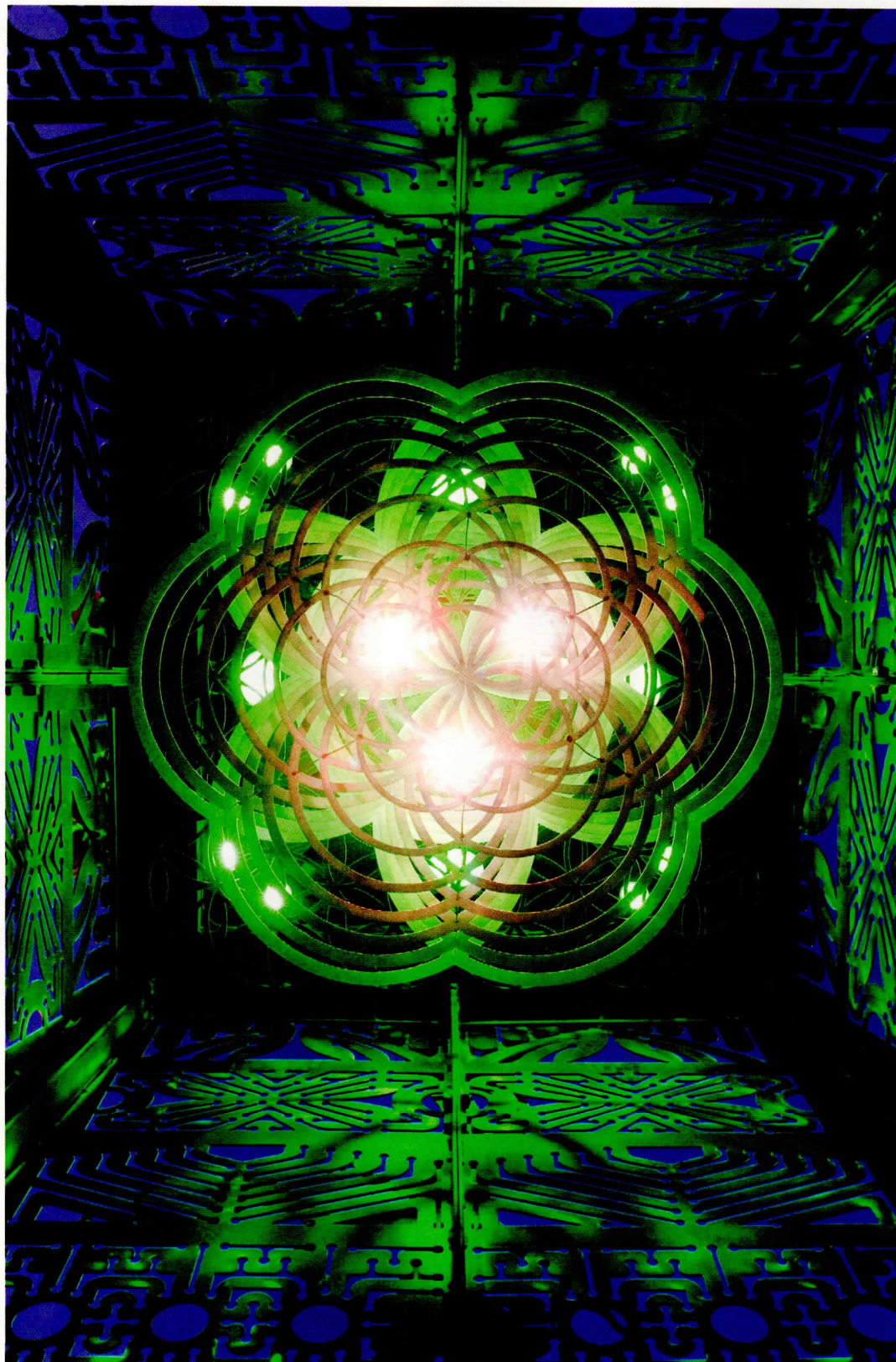
RON BLUNT PHOTO





Christopher Schardt's *Nova* installed in the Renwick Gallery. Schardt creates large installations of programmable LED lights that "dance" to musical accompaniment. *Nova* is one of his smaller pieces, designed to fit in compact spaces.

*Temple*, 2018, by David Best and the Temple Crew, seen here inside the Renwick Gallery. Best has designed and constructed about half of the Burning Man temples since 2000. This particular temple was commissioned specifically for the exhibition.



An installation view of Kate Raudenbush's *Future's Past*, 2010. A meditation on the roles played by technology and the environment in our survival, this piece contains references to both computer circuitry and the roots of trees.

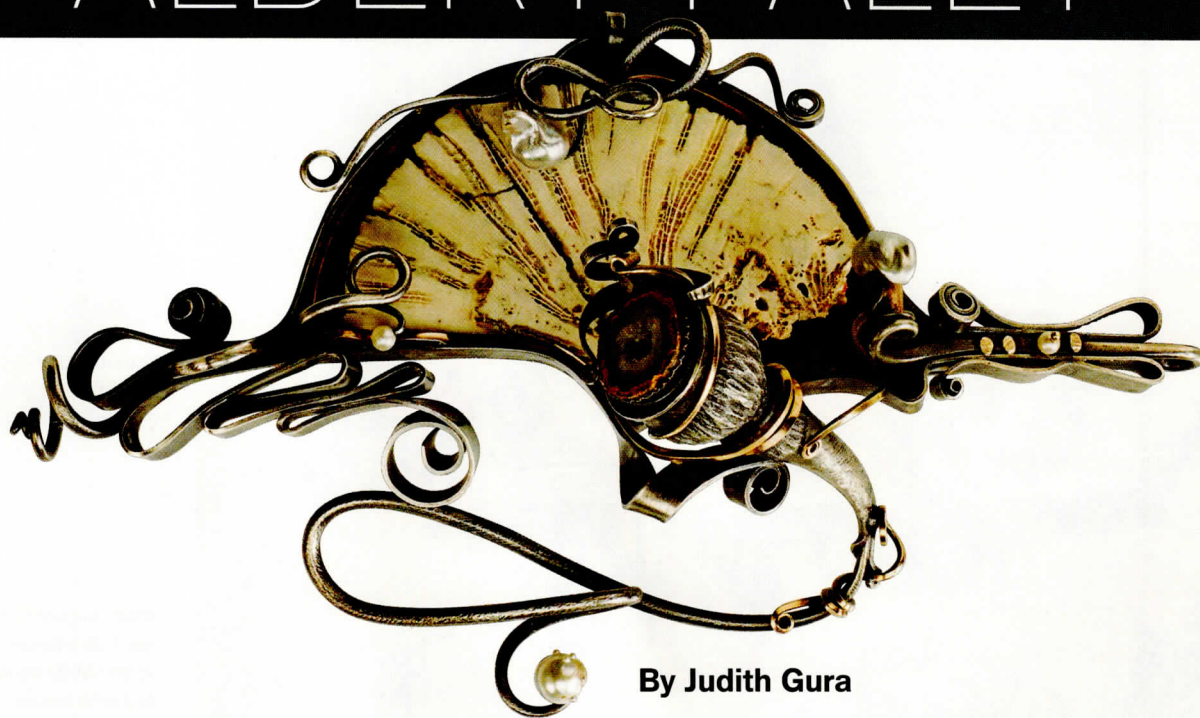


Marco Cochrane's 55-foot-tall *Truth is Beauty*, 2013, as seen at the Burning Man festival in Nevada. The sculpture was re-created at one-third the original size for *The Art of Burning Man*.

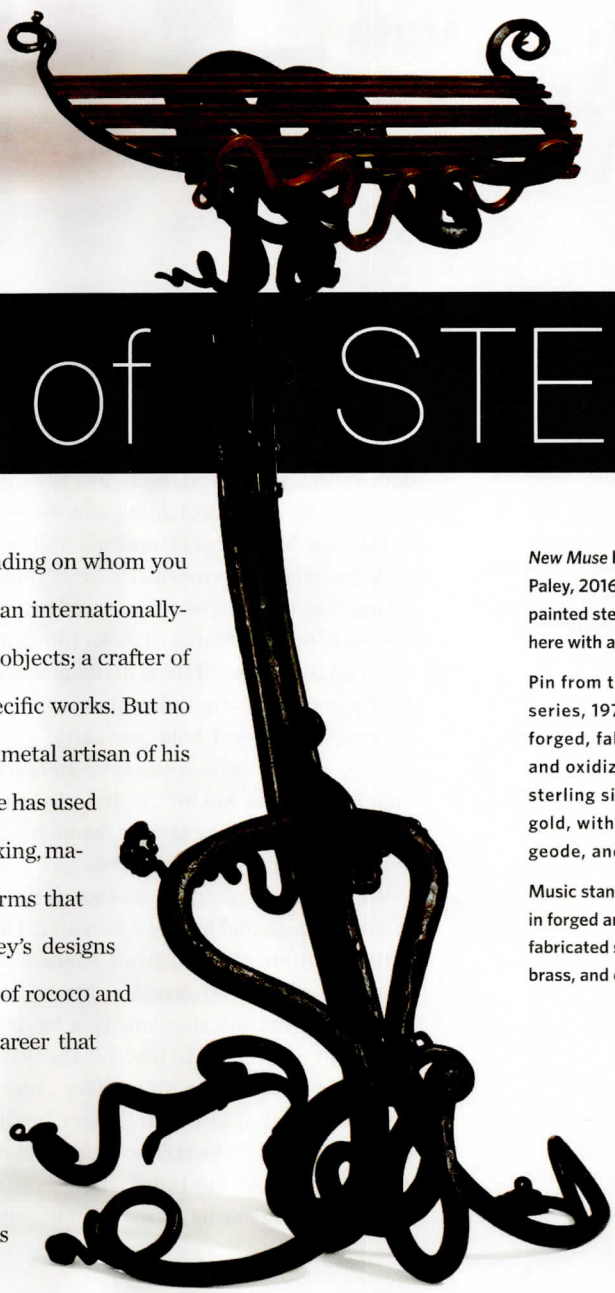
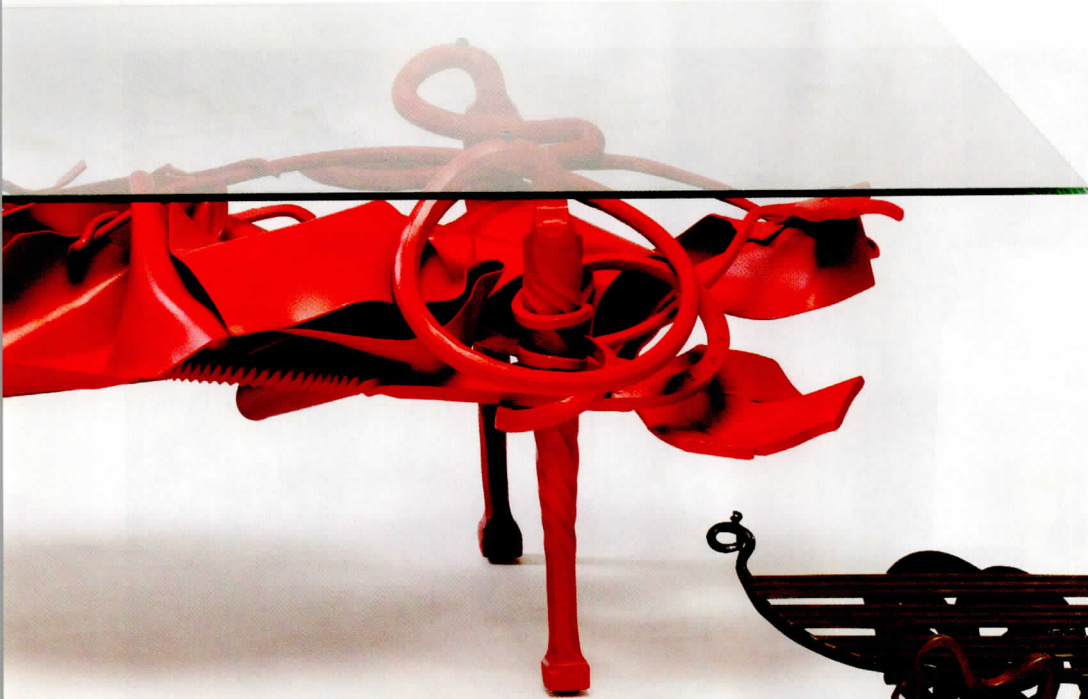
ELEANOR PREGGER PHOTO



# ALBERT PALEY



By Judith Gura



# MAN of STEEL

**ALBERT PALEY IS A MAN OF MANY PARTS.** Depending on whom you ask, he is a celebrated designer of distinctive art jewelry; an internationally-famous designer of forged metal furniture and decorative objects; a crafter of ornamental architecture; or a sculptor of massive site-specific works. But no matter the category, Paley is probably the most important metal artisan of his generation. “Metal is a visual vocabulary,” he claims, and he has used that vocabulary to reinvigorate the ancient craft of ironworking, manipulating its rigid materials into powerfully seductive forms that explode with energy. Though clearly contemporary, Paley’s designs show a deep understanding of design history, and elements of rococo and art nouveau have often informed and enriched his work in a career that has lasted more than fifty years and is still going strong.

The Philadelphia-born artist graduated from Temple University’s Tyler School of Art in 1966 with a BFA in sculpture, but found pure sculpture “too elusive,” and was

*New Muse* by Albert Paley, 2016, in painted steel shown here with a glass top.

Pin from the *Fibula* series, 1971, in forged, fabricated, and oxidized sterling silver and gold, with coral, geode, and pearls.

Music stand, 1971, in forged and fabricated steel, brass, and copper.

COURTESY OF WRIGHT AUCTION



Albert Paley in his studio in Rochester, New York, 2012.

*Progression*, 2012, in fabricated steel with a painted finish, as installed at SUNY Fredonia in 2015 for an exhibition of Paley's work.

drawn to the discipline of metalworking. "It's demanding, structured, more like my own personality," he says, explaining why he went on to take his MFA in goldsmithing and began to make jewelry. "I approached goldsmithing as an art process, thinking of what I could bring to the history of ornamentation. I never thought of designing a collection." Taking his inspiration from the form of the body rather than from current fashion, he devised bold geometric pendants, brooches, and rings in gold, silver, and such alloy metals as bronze. Not for the timid, the assertive pieces found a select clientele through word-of-mouth and private commissions.

While still a student, he was submitting work to exhibitions—and having it accepted. He came to the attention of Helen Drutt, a pioneer dealer in studio crafts, who gave him his first professional show in 1969, the same year he moved to Rochester, New York, to teach at the School for American Craftsmen (now the School for American Crafts) at the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he still holds a distinguished professorship. At the time, studio crafts were largely overlooked by most art museums, but



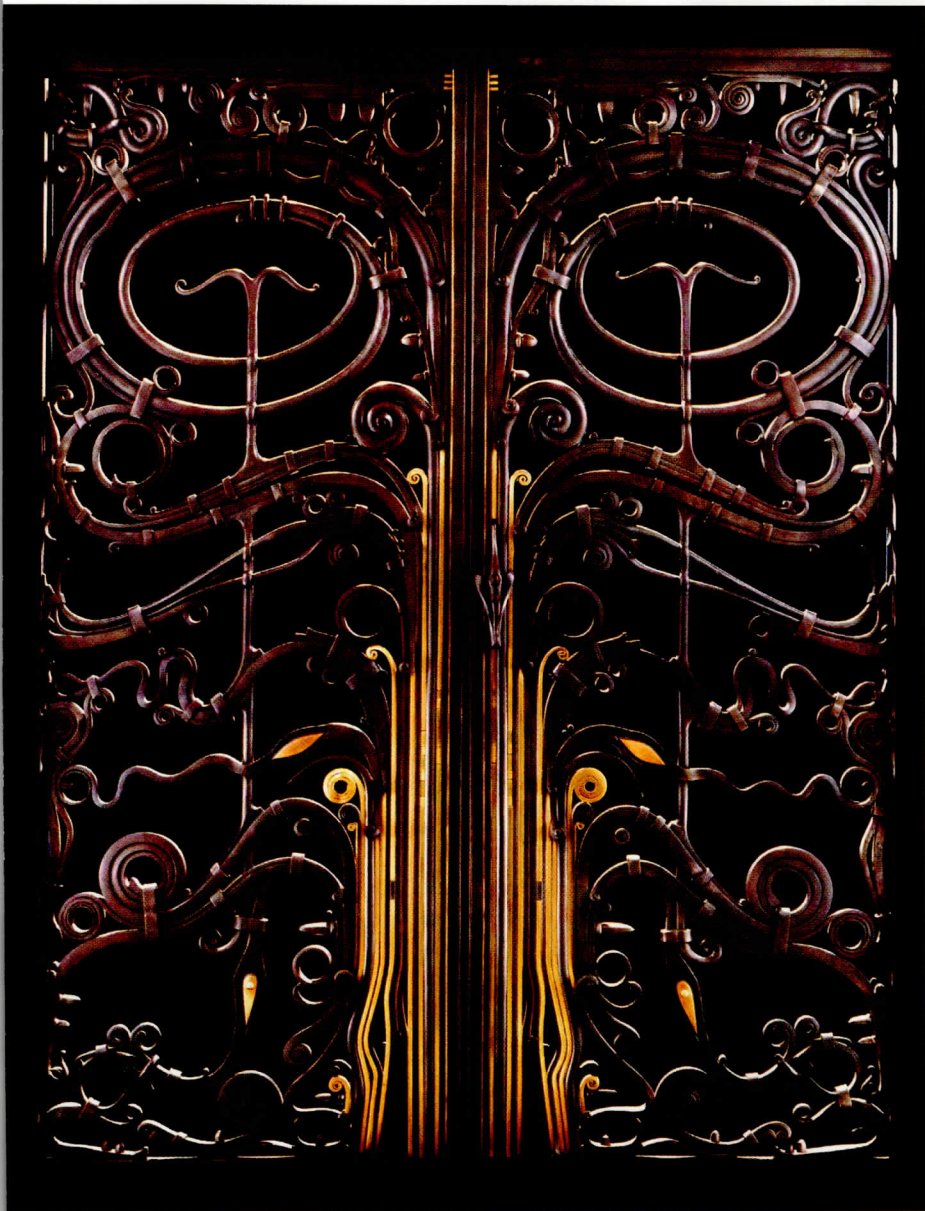


Small demilune table, 1992, in forged and fabricated steel with mahogany top. The composition stresses the integration of wood and metal, interlacing structural forms with gestural elements.

Paley and his contemporaries—he mentions Dale Chihuly, Peter Voulkos, and Wendell Castle—gained recognition through exhibitions in university galleries, at symposia, and in the many publications reporting on the burgeoning movement.

Having worked with iron to create jewelry-making tools, Paley began exploring its aesthetic possibilities on a larger scale, forging objects such as candlesticks and mirrors, and, later, tables. As one of relatively few craftsmen working in iron, he was invited to enter a 1972 Smithsonian Institution competition to design entrance gates for the Renwick Gallery in Washington, DC. His design, developed from forms that he had explored in jewelry, won the commission, and the resulting attention quickly led to other commissions for site-specific architectural projects, jump-starting a new phase of his career. (By this time, his studio and staff had expanded sufficiently to handle very large projects.) Interestingly, Paley sees a parallel between jewelry and architectural work: “As jewelry should bring a sense of personality to the wearer, so should pieces like the gates give personality to the architecture.” After the success of the gates, the Renwick staged an exhibition of Paley’s work, and that presentation of forged-iron





*Portal Gates*, 1974, in forged steel, brass, copper, and bronze, for the Renwick Gallery in Washington, DC.

*Wave Mirror*, 1992, in formed and fabricated steel, with glass and bleached mahogany.

pieces was the first public exposure of his furniture, the category for which he is best known in the design world.

Paley moved away from jewelry in 1977, leaving the work of studio craft for a larger and more public arena. As he explains it, “jewelry might be worn once or twice a year, but architectural pieces are seen every day.” Controverting the image of the reclusive artist, he has embraced being part of a community, interacting with architects and corporate clients. He has received commissions for gates and ar-

chitectural ornaments, and, beginning in 1982 with a piece for Rochester’s Strong Museum, site-specific sculpture. With sixteen employees, the studio now completes two to three major sculptures each year—some more than a hundred feet tall—in steel, bronze, or aluminum (iron cannot be forged on that scale). Despite the introduction of technology for the largest pieces—CAD software, cutting machines, and hydraulic presses are called into play—most metal fabrication is handwork, and his own. “Everybody thinks I just design and others do the work . . . but every day I’m hands on.”

Notwithstanding the large projects, he has continued to make furniture and decorative objects, the majority on commission and the rest for the prestigious galleries that represent him and show his work. After a 1998 residency at the Pilchuck Glass School, he has also worked with glass, creating forms at various glassworks and bringing them back to the studio to fuse with metal, in what he calls “a dialogue of opposites.” He balks at the idea of a definable style, but admits that “my sense of design, of composition, is identifiable.” Certainly, pieces like the thirteen dynamic curved and twisted steel forms, as much as twenty feet tall, that lined the medians of Park Avenue for several months in 2013 were identifiably Paley.





In the secondary market Paley pieces come up regularly in sales at Rago, Wright, and Phillips. In 2015 Wright sold a 1971 music stand, the first piece of furniture Paley made, for \$56,250, and current prices for his celebrated tables tend to five figures. They range from small side tables and consoles to coffee tables and large dining tables, with tops made most often of glass, but sometimes of wood or marble.

As museums now recognize studio crafts as art, Paley designs have entered the collections of more than two dozen museums, including such major institutions as the Renwick, Victoria and Albert, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and more than a dozen books, two documentary films, and several videos have documented his career. His work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions and group shows. He's also garnered

honorary doctorates and numerous awards . . . though he's especially proud of AIA's Institute Honors (now the Collaborative Achievement) award, the first given to a metal sculptor.

Now seventy-four, with no thought of retiring, Paley has begun to look back on his career, which explains why he agreed to consign material from his archives for a special sale at Rago Auctions last January. He feels that the sale, and its catalogue, will help give his work historical context, so that people can better understand the objects and the materials. He hopes to place much of his archive in an institution that will encourage scholarship in metalwork. As for the breadth of his career and the complex operation that grew out of a one-man studio, Paley says, "I never expected all that to happen. All I ever wanted to do was make something." **M**

*Envious Composure*, 2012, in formed and fabricated steel with a painted finish, as installed on Park Avenue at 67th Street in Manhattan in 2013, one of thirteen works that comprised *Paley on Park Avenue*.



## A Light Touch

By KATHERINE LANZA

THE JAPANESE term *akari* translates as “light” which also suggests an idea of weightlessness. Small wonder that artist-designer Isamu Noguchi chose it as the name for his series of abstract lighting sculptures, first made in 1951 and now the focus of two exhibitions at the Noguchi Museum in Long Island City, New York. With shades constructed using traditional methods and materials—mulberry bark paper and bamboo—the lamps are models of simplicity with surprising aesthetic power. The show *Akari: Sculpture by Other Means*—and *Akari Unfolded*, a tandem exhibition by French design studio YMER&MALTA that presents a selection of twenty-six lamps created in collaboration with six international designers—is organized to convey the way Akari lamps can transform space. As Noguchi said: “All that you require to start a home are a room, a tatami, and Akari.”