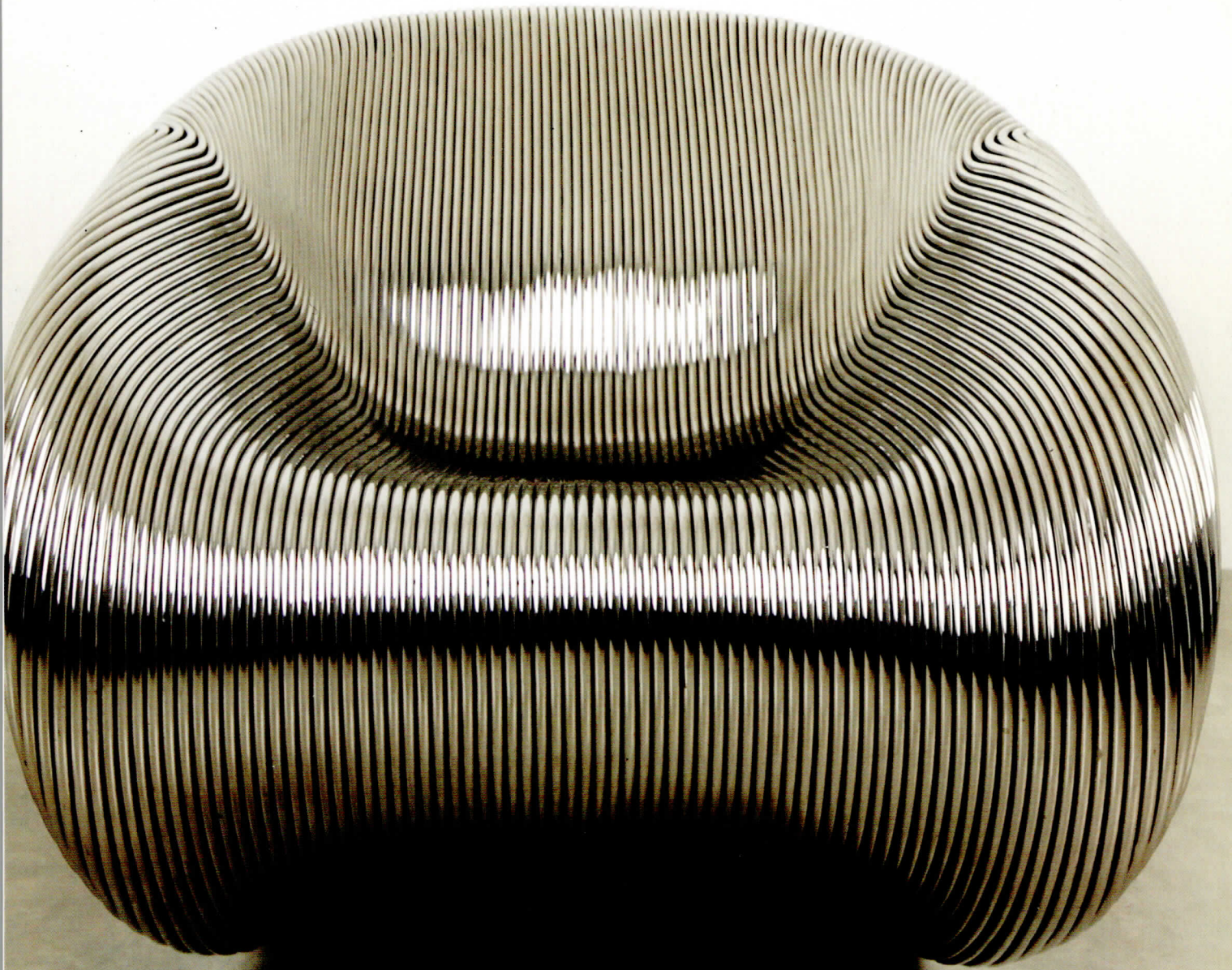


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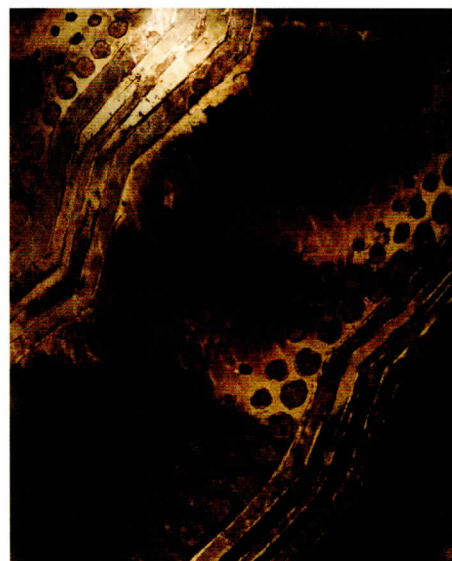
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## DEPARTMENTS

- 14 BEHIND THE NUMBERS** Why did a model of Sputnik 1 bring an out-of-this-world price at auction? Matthew Kennedy explains the enduring appeal of the Soviet satellite
- 16 FORM AND FUNCTION** We visit exhibitions in Palm Springs and New York City that highlight design innovations of past and present, and take a closer look at the abstract expressionist enamels of artist Paul Hultberg
- 24 BOOKSHELF** New books on Bauhaus master Richard Filipowski and celebrated designer and architect Jean Prouvé, plus an encyclopedic guide to postmodernism
- 32 GUEST/HOST** Anna Fixsen takes us to an idyllic alpine haven in Japan completely fitted out with the furniture of legendary Danish designer Finn Juhl
- 38 DESIGNER PROFILE** Arlene Hirst examines the fine and artful line in Niamh Barry's sculptural lighting
- 42 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE** Four tastemakers share their recommendations for your holiday shopping
- 44 DEALER SPOTLIGHT** Glenn Adamson profiles the audacious and elegant New York ceramics dealer Jason Jacques, who's been collecting for thirty years
- 48 DESIGN DESTINATION** Miami advice: Curbed Miami founding editor Sean McCaughan gives us the inside scoop on sights, shops, dining, and where to stay in South Florida
- 54 LIVING WITH ART** Alina Cohen talks with painter Judith Seligson about her geometric abstractions and new design experiments
- 58 CURATOR'S EYE** Museum professionals choose favorite pieces under their care and tell us why
- 104 PARTING SHOT** A glimpse into the mod home that potter Jonathan Adler shares with fashion commentator Simon Doonan and their dog, FoxyLady

## FEATURES

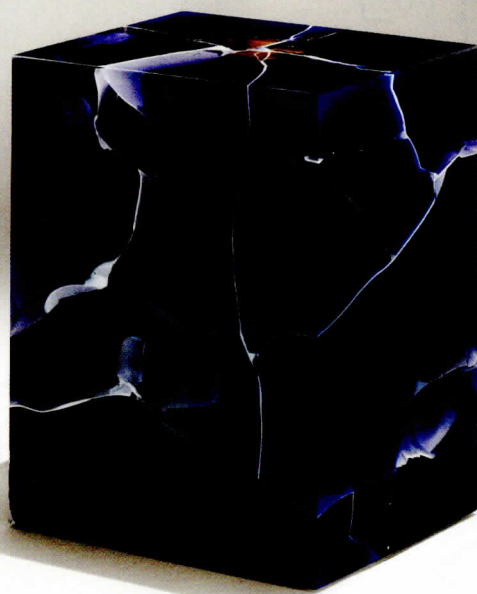
- 64 Elective affinities** The decor in the Brooklyn home of Stefano Basilico and Janet Kraynak was born of a deft union of art curation and interior design  
**GLENN ADAMSON**
- 74 Fashion forward** MoMA design and architecture curator Paola Antonelli discusses the museum's expansive new exhibition on clothing design—a survey of the most iconic garments and accessories of the last century  
**NICOLE ANDERSON**
- 80 Boundless curiosity** On a visit to his London design studio, we hear about Ron Arad's lack of restraint, his newest commissions, and his latest crush  
**PRIYA KHANCHANDANI**
- 88 Edifice treks** A sampling from the new book *Destination Architecture*—a catalogue of contemporary buildings that are not only worth seeing, they're worth going to see
- 98 Stairways to heaven** A lovingly maintained Los Angeles triplex designed in the mid-1970s by architect Charles Moore is astounding on every level  
**KEVIN KEIM**

ON THE COVER: MT Rocker by Ron Arad, 2005, in polished stainless steel.

THIS PAGE: Dalian International Conference Center by Wolf D Prix, 2012, in Dalian, China.



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### Paola Antonelli

joined the Museum of Modern Art in 1994 and is senior curator in the department of architecture and design, as well as MoMA's founding director of research and development. She lectures worldwide and has taught at the

University of California, Los Angeles; the Harvard Graduate School of Design; and the MFA programs of the School of Visual Arts in New York. She earned the Smithsonian Institution "Design Mind" National Design Award in October 2006, and in 2007 she was named one of the twenty-two most incisive design visionaries by *Time* magazine. In 2011 she was inducted into the Art Directors Club Hall of Fame, and in 2015 received the AIGA Medal. Antonelli is the author of several books, including *Humble Masterpieces: Everyday Marvels of Design* (2005), *Talk to Me: Design and the Communication between People and Objects* (2011), and *Design and Violence* (2015), among others. Her goal is to insistently promote understanding of design, until its positive influence on the world is universally acknowledged.

**Priya Khanchandani** is a curator and writer based in London. She has written dozens of articles for publications ranging from *Disegno* to *The Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Design*, and spoken at festivals, conferences, and on BBC Radio 4. She also co-runs Museum Detox, a pro-diversity collective. Khanchandani was previously head of the arts programs for India at the British Council and leader of the design fund for contemporary object acquisitions at the V&A. A graduate of Cambridge University, she was an international lawyer at the "magic circle" firm Clifford Chance, before obtaining an MA with distinction in the history of design from the Royal College of Art. Khanchandani can often be found lurking in a museum or gallery, or developing her creative writing as part of Faber Academy's poetry salon.



**Bernard N. Jazzar** and **Harold B. Nelson**, who founded the nonprofit Enamel Arts Foundation in 2007, are authorities on the history of enameling in this country in the twentieth century. Jazzar is curator of the Lynda and Stewart Resnick Collection in Los Angeles, and Nelson recently retired as curator of American decorative arts at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California. In 2015 they co-authored *Little Dreams in Glass and Metal: Enameling in America, 1920 to the Present*, and they recently curated *June Schwarcz: Invention and Variation* for the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. They are currently working on a monograph on June Schwarcz.

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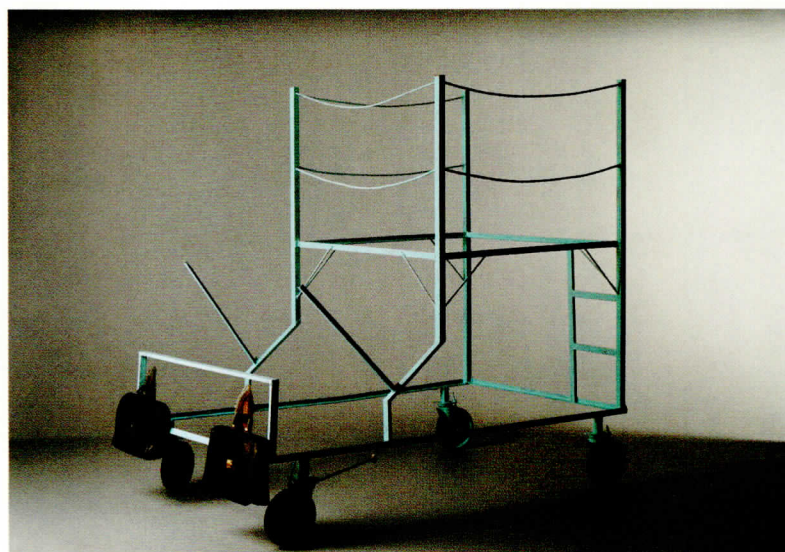


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Martin Kippenberger, *Worktimer*  
(Peter sculpture), 1987. Courtesy  
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# Delving deeper

A MODEL OF **SPUTNIK 1** CONTINUES TO INSPIRE WONDER AS A SYMBOL OF GALACTIC EXPLORATION AND CUTTING-EDGE DESIGN

By MATTHEW KENNEDY

**Lot 42 Sotheby's Space Exploration sale, July 20, 2017:** Full-scale custom Sputnik 1 model made by Retro Rocket, about 1994. Estimated at \$8,000–\$12,000, the piece sold for \$18,750. Some reasons for the high price:

## OPTICS OF ORBIT

Not long after midnight local time on October 5, 1957, a small sphere—almost two feet in diameter and propelled by a large rocket—burst out of what is now the Baikonur Cosmodrome in southern Kazakhstan. About ninety minutes later, it had circled the globe and made history. Sputnik 1, launched by the Soviet Union, was the first artificial satellite in space. A simple device—basically a disco ball with four antennae, a radio transmitter, and ambition—it circled the globe continuously for three months before burning up while re-entering the earth's atmosphere on January 4, 1958. Even though it left behind only a few scraps of metal, Sputnik's launch spurred the international space race, and with it, a revolution in design aesthetics.

Sputnik was intended to be flashy and unencrypted (“sputnik” is Russian for “satellite”), launching before far more technologically advanced and ambitious designs. “Space programs had one concern: get things out there,” notes Cassandra Hatton, vice president and senior specialist in Books & Manuscripts at Sotheby's, New York. Built in just a month, Sputnik was not intended to collect or transmit any substantial information back to earth, like other satellites being developed for celestial pursuit. Instead, the designers meticulously polished its silvery surface so that it could be watched and tracked visually from earth—as well as inspire envy around the globe. A generally aerodynamic form, the spherical shape was also rich in symbolism, aligned with that of the celestial bodies in space. Sergei Korolev, chief designer of the

Soviet's space program, foresaw the design's impact: “It would forever remain in the consciousness of people as a symbol of the dawn of the space age,” he said.

## RETRO REENTRY

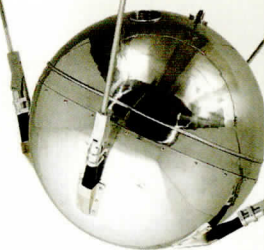
Design inspired by the space race—such as tail fins on cars and elliptical, atomic shapes—captured people's interest in the developing technologies of science and sparked consumers' desire to participate in the phenomenon. “There is a universal fascination with space,” Hatton says. “Anyone can get excited about it”—whether in memories of looking up at Sputnik 1 or gazing through special glasses to see the solar eclipse last summer. The full-scale model of the satellite reconnects with that excitement, but also embodies the startling dichotomy of the original Sputnik's size in relation to its accomplishment. At the relatively unassuming diameter of roughly two basketballs and the weight of an adult man, it was a man-made object that was able to go where no man-made object had gone before.

Built in the mid-1990s, nearly four decades after the launch of Sputnik 1, this replica demonstrates the continued interest in humankind's interaction with outer space. The model was custom hand-built by Retro Rocket, a company known for its high fidelity, limited-edition replications. A companion model is housed at the Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Wapakoneta, Ohio. A number of other replicas exist around the world, particularly in museums, including models by the Russian space program used for test flights before Sputnik's official launch. “These are materials many people didn't realize you could buy,” says Hatton. “A lot of people dreamed of being an astronaut, so it's a special type of material.”

## NOT-SO-HIDDEN FIGURES

The lots in the auction were assembled from a wide range of collections. According to Hatton, artifacts related to the space program often emerge from individuals or the family of individuals who worked for NASA, with

no broader collections to boast of, as was the case with this model. But buyers derive from a global clientele—from Europe, Asia, and the United States—with American buyers interested particularly in American lots, but all often enchanted by Sputnik. Coming from attics and basements, materials in this category rarely have any precedent for pricing, prompting Hatton to price conservatively, letting the market establish value. Hatton noted participation from a cross section of people, including art and design collectors. While many pieces boast historical and scientific merit, collectors cannot deny their beauty as objects. The Sputnik 1 model was displayed hanging from the gallery ceiling, evoking the view many people would have had—albeit quite a bit closer—when seeing the object actually in flight. “The sale did what I was hoping it would do,” Hatton reports, highlighting the fusion of science, art, and design, and opening this category to new, perhaps unexpected collectors. This model went to a private collection based in the United States.







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Paul Evans, Skyline Coffee Table, to be offered 06/04/18



## Elegant experiments at Joris Laarman Lab

"EXPERIMENTS" ARE WHAT JORIS LAARMAN calls the designs of his eponymous "lab," and a compendium of those experiments—from his graduate project at Design Academy Eindhoven in 2003 to his 2017 work—is on view at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. On until January 14, *Joris Laarman Lab: Design in the Digital Age* is the first major solo survey and the first US museum exhibition for the Dutch designer/artist/inventor; it's an expansion of the 2015-2016 iteration at the Groninger Museum in the Netherlands.

The star of the show is high tech. Wall texts and videos throughout the third-floor gallery explain the science behind what's on view, such as the biomorphic Bone furniture—seating optimized by software that was originally developed to apply the way bones and tree limbs respond to stress (by adding/subtracting material) to the design of car parts. Also on display are a curtain of bubbly steel—Gradient Screen—extruded by a 3-D-printing robotic arm like one currently employed in building a footbridge across the Oudezijds Achterburgwal canal in Amsterdam; and a trio of Digital

Matter tables made from magnetized nickel and neodymium voxels (3-D pixels), each less pixelated than the one before as smaller and smaller voxels are used (along the wall, vinyl posters chart the analogous evolution of video-game plumber Mario from low- to high-res between 1985 and 2015).

But Laarman isn't interested only in cutting-edge fabrication methods, something the grace of the lab's creations testify to. "The appreciation for exuberant curved lines is in my genes," he writes in the monograph that accompanies the show. That appreciation is paired with an attention to historical design. His Makerchairs—a series of puzzle-like chairs pieced from digitally-fabricated wood, resin, plastic, or magnesium parts—riff on the furniture of Gerrit Rietveld; the Digital Matter tables evoke rococo; the Bone chairs, art nouveau. "If you make the perfect chair, it's boring, you're not going to look at it again. It's about the layers," he says. [cooperhewitt.org](http://cooperhewitt.org)

—Sammy Dalati



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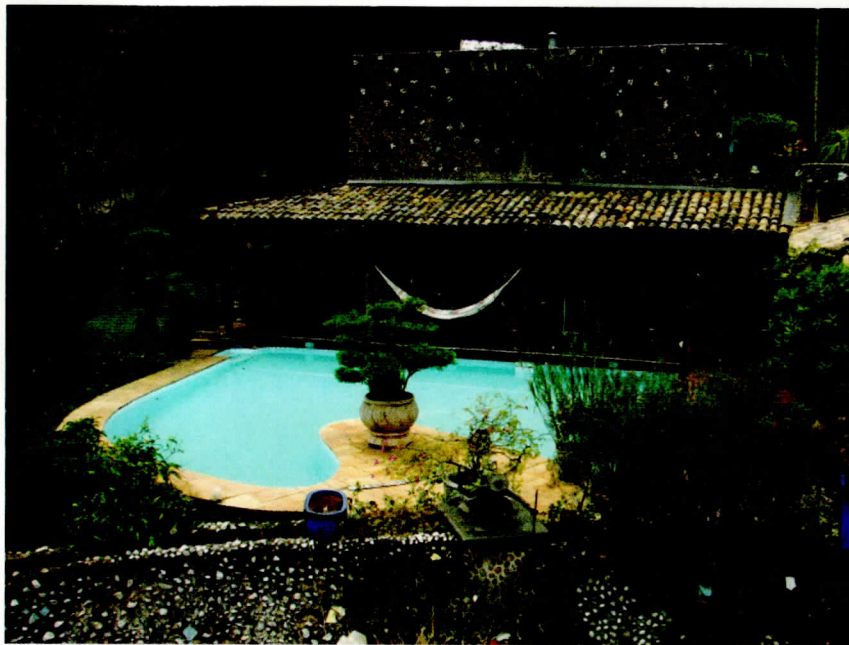
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# Design in step

ALBERT FREY AND LINA BO BARDI AT THE PALM SPRINGS ART MUSEUM

HISTORY IS FULL OF DUOS KNOWN for the fruits of their collaborative efforts: companions in work and life, such as the Eameses, the Days, the Vignellis, the Knolls; or close colleagues such as Philip Johnson and Alfred Barr, whose productive alliance set the course for American modernism. But on what grounds could you explore a pas de deux whose partners never met? Why, if they danced the same steps.

*Albert Frey and Lina Bo Bardi: A Search for Living Architecture*, on view at the Palm Springs Art Museum through January 7, 2018, pairs these two mid-century architects and draws important commonalities across, and despite, the continents that separated them. Both emigrated from Europe—Frey left his native Switzerland for the United States in 1930, Bo Bardi left Italy for Brazil in 1946—and became known for the work they realized in their adoptive countries. More significantly, they shared a belief that architecture should harmoniously integrate its environmental and cultural contexts. This conviction was elucidated as it developed in the architects' own publications (beginning with Frey's 1939 *In Search of a Living Architecture*, which Bo Bardi, as an editor at *Domus*, later translated for the magazine), and the exhibition probes it by focusing primar-



ily on two of each of their residential designs: Frey's in Palm Springs, California, and Long Island, New York, and Bo Bardi's in São Paulo, Brazil.

Through photographs, drawings, models, and objects, the exhibition illustrates the extraordinary results: on its perch high in the San Jacinto Mountains stands Frey's second house in Palm Springs (known as Frey House II and today owned and stewarded by PSAM), a pavilion of glass, corrugated metal, and poured concrete the color of the rocky hillside. A massive boulder penetrates the building and anchors it to the slope, and expansive curtain walls overlook Palm Springs and, beyond it, the Colorado Desert. About six thousand miles southeast, on the edge of an evergreen forest in the Morumbi subdivision of São Paulo, sits Bo Bardi's Cirell House. Here, an open, double-height interior is enclosed by masonry walls encrusted with pebbles, clusters of tile fragments glazed in soft blue, yellow, and pink, and sprouting plants. A veranda with rough-hewn wood columns and a Spanish-style tile roof encircles the building, which is decidedly modern, but dissolves into its verdant surroundings like an ancient dwelling reclaimed by the jungle. [psmuseum.org](http://psmuseum.org)

—Jenny Florence

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# DELLA ROCCA

Design



*Franco Albini*  
'Stadera' desk, model SC27  
Poggi, circa 1960

AUCTION  
19 December 2018



## DEPARTMENTS

- 16 BEHIND THE NUMBERS** Matthew Kennedy investigates why its collection of Paul Rand Christmas drawings sold for more than six times their estimate
- 18 FORM AND FUNCTION** Frank Gehry's new restaurant at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 10 Corso Como's first United States location, the V&A Dundee opens in Scotland, and more
- 30 SPOTLIGHT** Design Miami's 2018 Visionary Award winners, Pedro Reyes and Carla Fernández, are actual visionaries
- 32 BOOK SHELF** Anna Talley on Massimo Vignelli's revamped monograph, and Alan G. Brake on Glenn Adamson's new book, *Fewer, Better Things*
- 36 DESIGNER PROFILE** Anna Talley speaks with designer Marc Fish about the inspiration behind his designs
- 38 ON THE BLOCK** David Sokol introduces a new column on modern homes in America
- 42 DESIGN DESTINATION** Nicole Anderson leads a tour of modern design and architecture hotspots in and around Palm Springs
- 48 CURATOR'S EYE** Museum specialists tell us about some favorite items in their care
- 96 PARTING SHOT** A small fishing island turned artist community thrives in Newfoundland

## FEATURES

- 54 Cultural Confluence** Melding art, architecture, and landscape, the Glenstone Foundation's expansion creates a new kind of visitor experience  
JUDITH GURA
- 62 Pop and Practicality** A new book examines the sensational yet sensible work of the Danish designer Verner Panton  
IDA ENGHOLM AND ANDERS MICHELSEN
- 70 At Home with Design** The São Paulo residence of Lissa Carmona mixes minimalism, craft, and art—all with a quintessentially Brazilian design sensibility  
PAUL CLEMENCE
- 76 Lords of Design** In the ateliers of New Zealand, Kiwi artisans hold their own  
SAMMY DALATI
- 88 Lessons from the Land** In an excerpt from his new book, an architect describes his sense of the poetry of places  
RICK JOY

ON THE COVER: An installation of Verner Panton's Spion or Spy lamps in highly polished metal and plastic, 1971, with an aluminum Ball lamp, 1970, and System 1-2-3 chairs, 1973-1974.

THIS PAGE: Richard Clarkson's Cloud, 2014, comes in different sizes, mimicking the variety of clouds to be found in a stormy sky.



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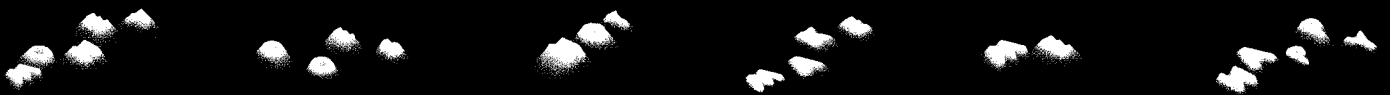


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*Stefan Sagmeister, Money Does Not Make Me Happy, 2001*



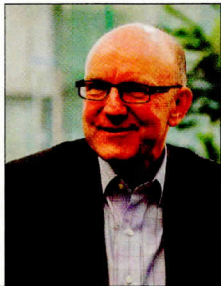


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## CONTRIBUTORS



**Kenny Kemp** is a writer and journalist based in the UK. He has an honors degree in economic history and worked on Fleet Street in London before returning to his hometown of Edinburgh. He is the author of several books, including *Flight of the Titans*, about the battle between Boeing and Airbus, having observed firsthand the production lines in Seattle, Toulouse, and Bristol. One of his achievements was securing an unexpected exclusive interview with Burt Rutan, the winner of the Ansari XPRIZE space challenge, in Mojave, California. At one *Wired* event in New York, he interviewed Buzz Aldrin, Richard Branson, and Philippe Starck all before midday. He went on to work with Branson on his best-selling book *Business Stripped Bare* and is an associate of the University of Edinburgh Business School.



**Ruy Teixeira** is a São Paulo-based photographer whose work has been exhibited on two continents and in eight publications. His first contact with photography was at the age of six in his grandfather's darkroom, where he was enchanted by the way red light projected onto the photo paper revealed hidden images. Teixeira graduated with a degree in engineering but changed his career to photography after living with two other photographers. He started as a photojournalist, working his way from music to fashion after moving to Italy, finally falling in love with architecture and design photography. Since then, he has worked with many brands including Tom Dixon, Hermès, Paul Smith, Dolce & Gabbana, and Etel.



**Katherine Lanza** is the editorial manager for MODERN Magazine and its sister publication *The Magazine ANTIQUES*. While attending Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, she focused on social justice as part of the Critical and Visual Studies program, and spent a year in Berlin, where she worked for *Emerge*, a magazine dedicated to showcasing the work of young photojournalists. Born in Brooklyn, she's privileged to call many places home, including New York City, Cape Cod, New Jersey, and Washington, DC. She comes from a family of carpenters and historic renovation experts, who sparked her interest in furniture, architecture, and design.





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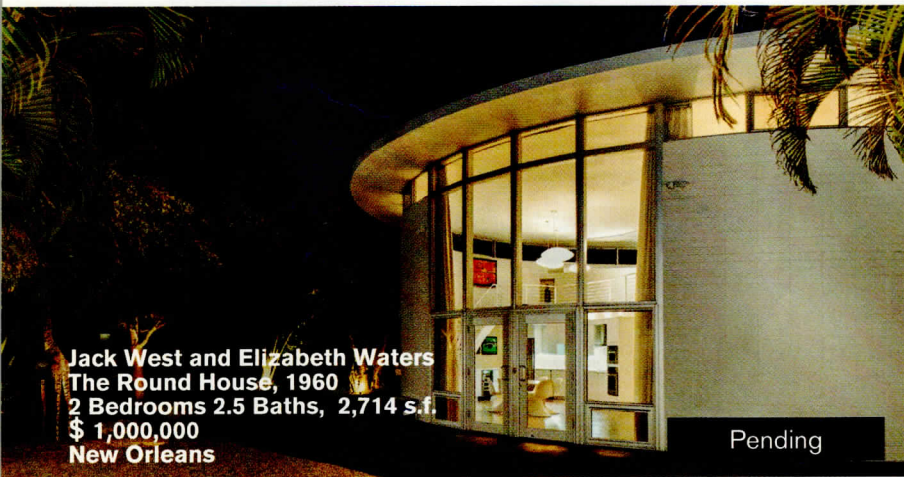
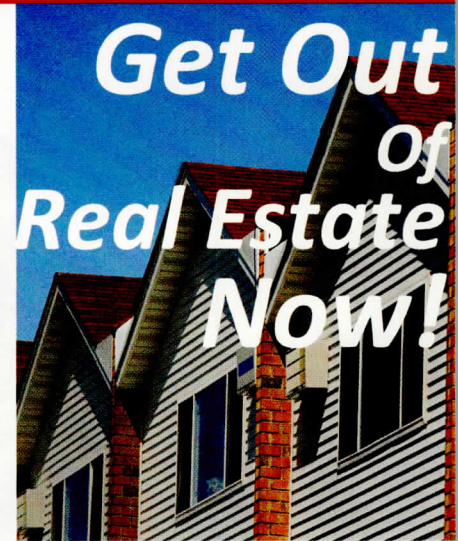
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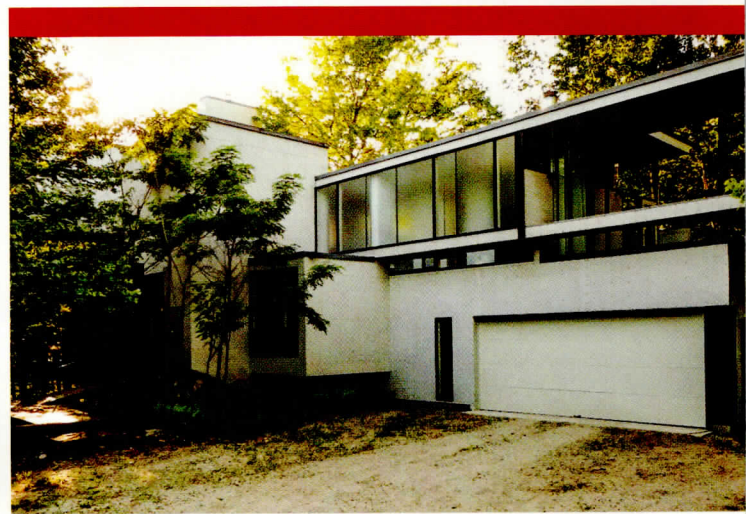
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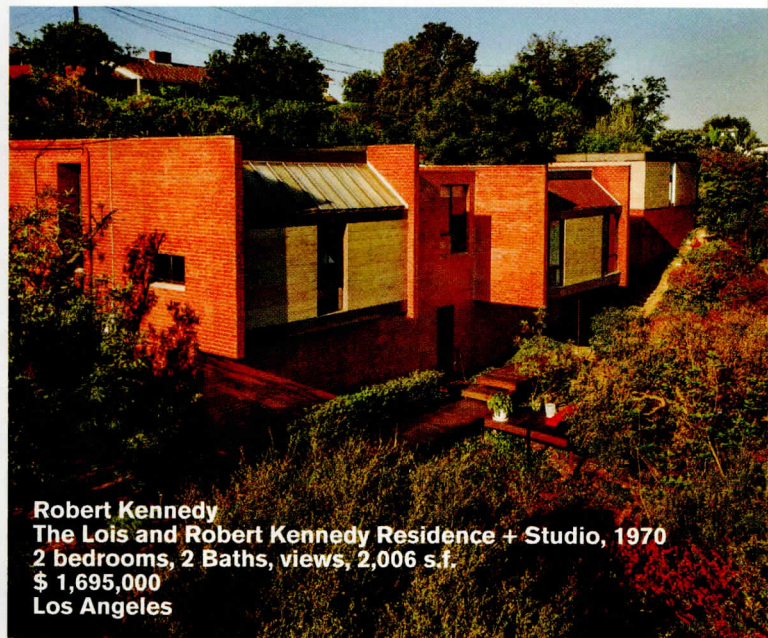




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# Delving Deeper

WHY THE BIDDING FLEW HIGHER THAN REINDEER ON A GROUP OF CHRISTMAS DRAWINGS BY DESIGN ICON PAUL RAND

By MATTHEW KENNEDY



## Lot 255 Wright's Paul Rand: The Art of Design sale, September 13, 2018:

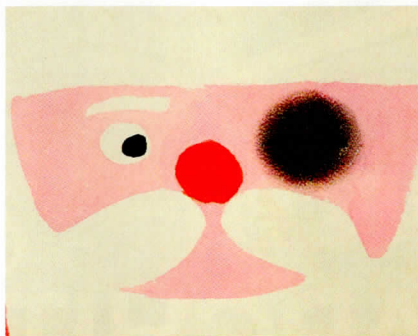
Collection of twenty-eight Christmas drawings. With an estimate of \$2,000–\$3,000, the group sold for \$16,250.

Some reasons for the high price:

### THE POET AND THE BUSINESSMAN

Paul Rand never completed any formalized graphic design education, yet he created some of the most recognizable graphics of the twentieth century. From his early days—beginning in the mid-1930s designing for *Esquire* among other well-known magazines—he applied a modernist aesthetic composed of simple, geometric shapes and effective contrasts to the editorial and commercial realms. In 1955 he launched his freelance career, a perspicacious move, as in 1956 he was hired by both Eliot Noyes, to design the new corporate branding for IBM, and Yale University, to a teaching position he held for almost forty years.

Even in a design-novice crowd, it's difficult to find someone who hasn't seen Rand's work. IBM, ABC, UPS—numerous combinations of letters conjure images of his iconic brandings that still radiate throughout the mediascape. Rand mastered the semiotics behind branding, understanding meaning and morphing the uto-



pian ideal of the “universal” into the recognizable, marketable, and mainstream. As great a contribution as he made to the visual identity of corporate America, he also dedicated his efforts to academia, teaching at Cooper Union and Pratt Institute before going to Yale. László Moholy-Nagy, legendary modernist of Bauhaus fame, synthesized these commercial and pedagogical strands, describing Rand as “an idealist and a realist using the language of the poet and the businessman.” While indoctrinated in the rigid modernism of the movement's European pioneers, Rand's creativity and sense of humor relaxed the discipline for a mass audience. As Richard Wright, president of Wright, observes, “He had the talent and the courage to make modernism human.”

### EYE-BEE-M & HO HO HO

While a sense of whimsy winks from behind much of Rand's corporate work, that sensibility reveals itself in full festive force in this collection of Christmas drawings—a mix of prints and original drawings in acrylic on paper and wallpaper samples. Lacking the refinement of a corporate branding system, for sure, the drawings are a study in Rand's spontaneous creativity, while still utilizing many of the visual principles employed in his broader work, such as reduced, recognizable shapes packed with meaning. A series of colorful dots on a green background suggests a Christmas tree, and red lines on a pink-and-white-striped background emerge as a candy cane in an abstraction that is both sophisticated and cheerful. The set offers twenty-one depictions of Santa Claus in which he takes various forms, including bowling pins, balloons, and a stand-in for Lady Liberty. As an ad man, Rand grasped the popular importance



Three from a collection of vintage Paul Rand Christmas drawings, c. 1955.

of Christmas and its crowd-pleasing character. Wright speculates that these drawings were intended to be given away rather than formally produced.

### HOLIDAY SALE

Rand's work is rarely on the market, primarily because the ubiquity of mass-produced American modernist graphic design seldom produces high sales margins. Further, after Rand's death in 1996, his archive was deposited at Yale with select pieces entering museum collections. “Graphic design isn't an active market, per se, for design,” Wright notes. “The success of this sale begins and ends with Paul's reputation in the community.” Consisting of almost four hundred items, including pieces from his own collection of fine art and design—all acquired directly from Rand's estate—the sale comprised an alluring capsule of his inspiration and the work of his contemporaries. The fact that the pieces came directly from Rand's collection appealed to bidders, and the sale attracted a broader market than expected. While the iconic branding designs sold for high prices, the market also demonstrated appreciation for Rand's lesser-known, more intimate work. These Christmas drawings drew multiple phone bidders and online interest, but were won by the Letterform Archive in San Francisco, California, which took home a number of other lots as well.

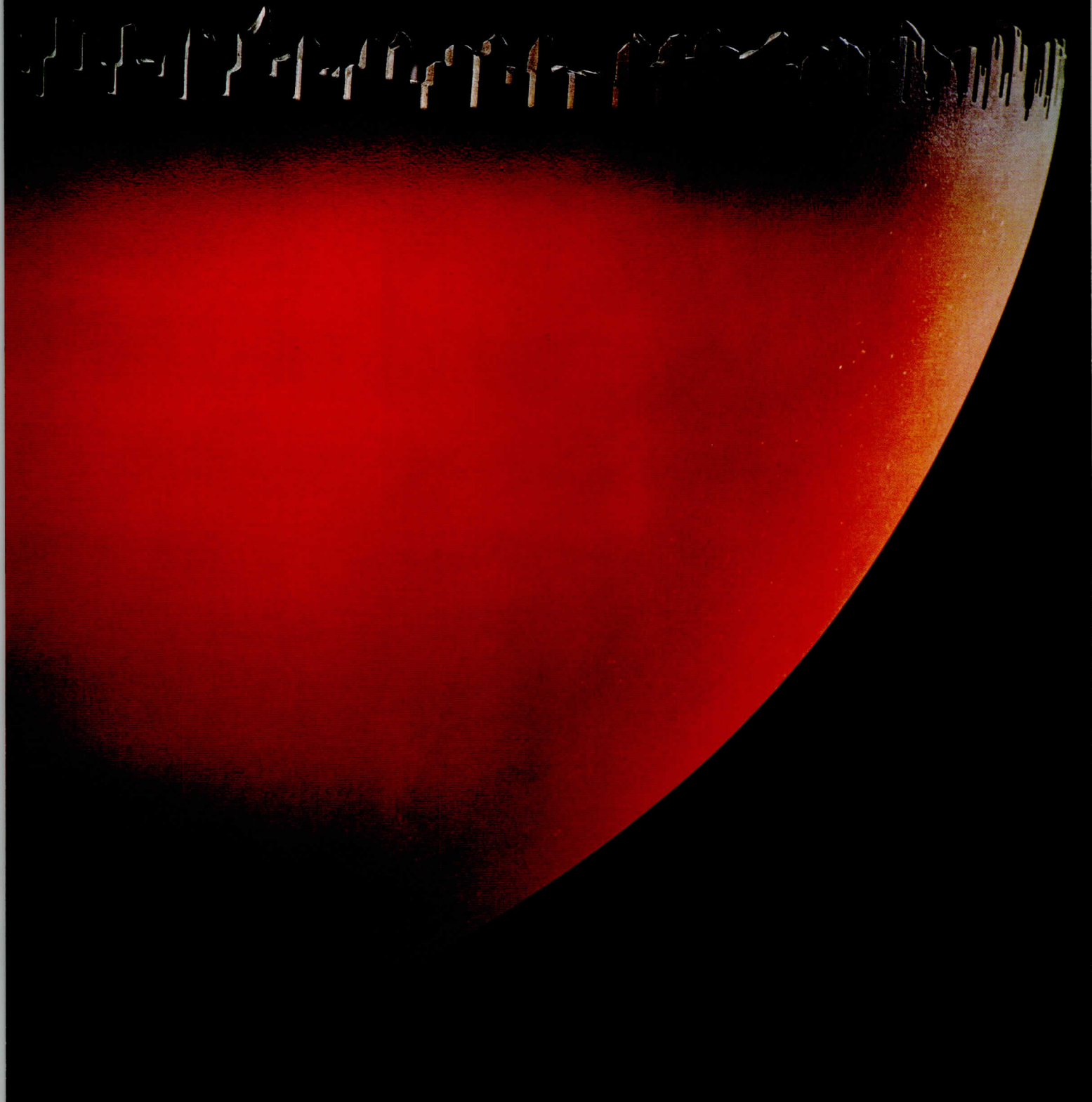


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JAY MUSLER  
*City Scape, USA, 1985*



## Homage to Paul Hultberg, maker of abstract expressionist enamels



PAUL HULTBERG, ONE OF THE MOST audacious voices in mid-twentieth-century enameling, turns ninety-two in January. Celebrated for his unorthodox approach to this venerable medium, he created evocative compositions in glass and metal with vibrant immediacy and raw, protean power.

Hultberg was born in Oakland, California, in 1926. After taking classes in the mid-1940s at the University of Southern California and subsequently at Fresno State College (now California State University, Fresno), he moved to Mexico City to study with the muralist José Gutierrez. Inspired to create work at a monumental scale, he returned to Los Angeles in the late 1940s and started to paint murals. In the early 1950s he moved to New York, where he was hired by the Brooklyn Museum to teach painting and drawing. While there, he met Walter Rogalski (1923-1996), a printmaker, and together they undertook a yearlong experiment, using painting and printmaking techniques in combination with enamels.

Five of Hultberg's large abstract panels were included in the 1959 exhibition *Enamels* at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the Museum of Arts and Design) in New York, and a decade later he was featured in the seminal exhibition *OBJECTS: USA*. He was subsequently awarded numerous architectural commissions, including one for the Pan Am Building in New York (now MetLife).

Although relatively small, *Lepidopteral Pyrotechnics*, 1965, shown left, has much of the power and spontaneity of Hultberg's largest compositions. He produced this work using an outside-the-kiln, torch-firing process. Splashing vibrant color across the surface of a copper panel and firing it, he created images that suggest the bodies of moths or butterflies, wings spread wide in flight, while also evoking the awe-inspiring vision of fireworks in a night sky.

—Bernard N. Jazzar and Harold B. Nelson





Ted Noten, Miss America, 2017, courtesy: Ornamantum Gallery

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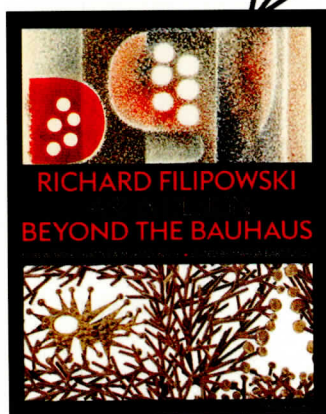
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## A spotlight on the last Bauhaus master



### **Richard Filipowski: Art & Design Beyond the Bauhaus**

Edited by Marisa Bartolucci and foreword by Hattula Moholy-Nagy • Monacelli Press, \$60

AMONG THE MOST STRIKING OBJECTS on view at the Guggenheim Museum's 2016 retrospective of the work of the Hungarian-born designer, artist, and Bauhaus theorist László Moholy-Nagy was an acrylic chess set. Simple, spare, the game pieces reduced to their essential forms—the set was the epitome of modernist purity. Many visitors were surprised, however, to learn that the chessmen were not the work of Moholy-Nagy himself but of one of his students: Richard Filipowski.

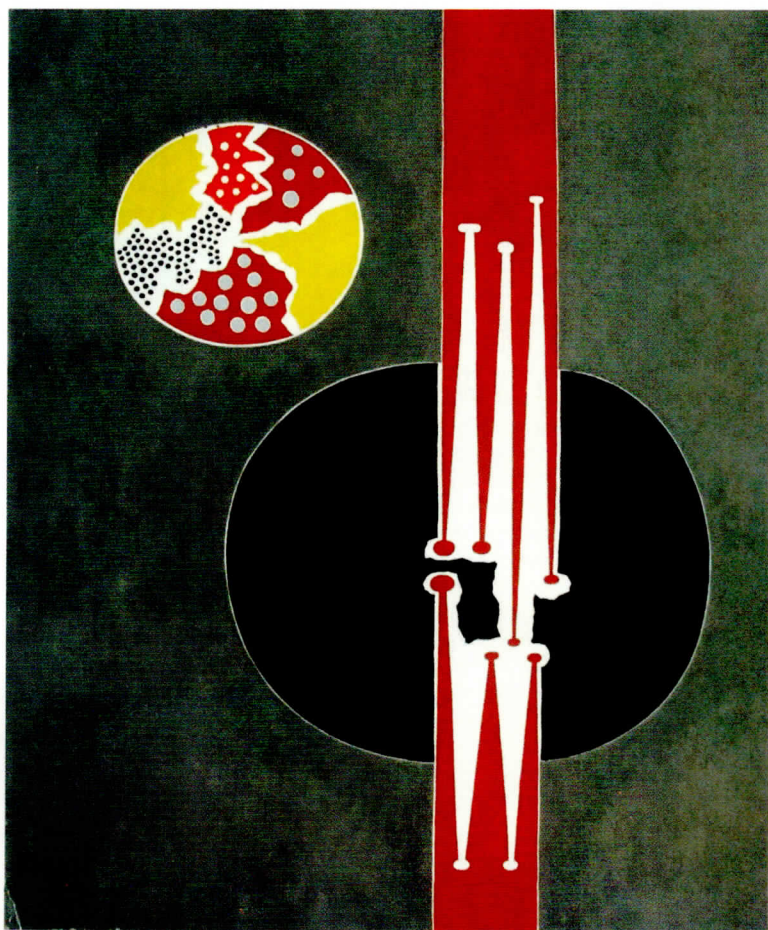
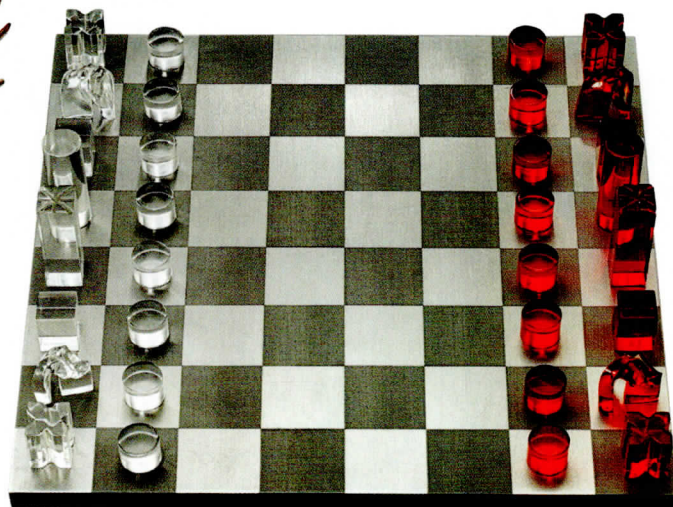
He may still not yet be a household name, but more and more of Filipowski's work in painting, sculpture, jewelry, and furniture is coming out of private collections and into public exhibitions. It should not take long for this mid-century artist and designer to take his place in the American modernist canon, and a new book will only hasten the

process. *Richard Filipowski: Art & Design Beyond the Bauhaus* (due out in February 2018), a handsome volume edited by Marisa Bartolucci, tells Filipowski's story through scholarly essays and hundreds of photographs of his work.

In 1942 the Polish-born Filipowski moved from Toronto to Chicago to study under Moholy-Nagy at the School of Design (founded in 1937 as the New Bauhaus, it is today a part of the Illinois Institute of Technology). Recognizing Filipowski's talent,







Moholy-Nagy recruited him to join the faculty upon graduation. (On Moholy-Nagy's recommendation, Filipowski designed the chess set for a 1944 exhibition *The Imagery of Chess*, which included sets by Max Ernst, Man Ray, and Isamu Noguchi.) Later, working under Walter Gropius at Harvard, Filipowski developed a design basics course that serves as a foundation of international design pedagogy to this day. He then went on to teach at MIT for more than three decades until his retirement.

During this time, Filipowski developed an enormous body of work, clearly influenced by the Bauhaus but also singular in its rich, organic abstraction. Relentlessly curious and agile in numerous materials, he created works that will be eye-opening to those who thought they knew everything there was to know about mid-century modernism.

—Gregory Cerio



# A comprehensive monograph shines a light on the furniture of Jean Prouvé



**Jean Prouvé**  
published by Galerie Patrick Seguin • distributed by Interart & D.A.P., \$225

JEAN PROUVÉ CALLED HIMSELF A “WORKER,” not an architect or designer. This may reflect the Marxist language of the first half of the twentieth century, but it also shows how his love of metalwork, industrial processes, and standardization drove his identity as a designer. Equal parts pragmatist and poet, Prouvé made work that was informed by his fusion of form and function, his strength as a colorist, and his belief in the power of design to improve everyday life.

A new double-volume, 750-page monograph on his furniture, published by Galerie Patrick Seguin, reveals that Prouvé emerged almost fully formed as a designer. After creating a pair of folding chairs—signaling an early interest in portability and flexibility—and the wooden Cité chair, Prouvé arrived at his Chair No. 4 in 1934, a metal-framed chair with a wooden back and seat with tapered rear legs. Chair No. 4 would become the foundation for a large series now grouped together as the Standard chairs. Arguably his best known and now most widely produced works, Standard chairs (reissued by Vitra) feel as familiar as school cafeteria seating, but are elevated by Prouvé’s stark, yet elegant forms. The tapered rear legs are designed to carry more weight, because Prouvé liked to lean back in his chairs, balancing only on the rear legs—precisely the kind of detail he would translate into his furniture.

Featuring a brief essay by Jean Nouvel and a lengthy interview with Renzo Piano, *Jean Prouvé* serves as a catalogue raisonné of the designer’s furniture, lighting,



and storage pieces. Generously illustrated with photographs, drawings, and other archival material, the book is satisfying and informative, especially for American readers who may be less familiar with his oeuvre. Nouvel calls him the “Anti-esthete.” Perhaps. But then, why do so many find his work so utterly beautiful?

For a time, Prouvé owned his own factory, and therefore his own means and profits of production, but he lacked the marketing prowess of such American designers as Charles and Ray Eames or George Nelson. If these designers were emblematic of American postwar optimism, Prouvé’s vision was more akin to neorealist filmmaking: blunt, direct, and—above all—modern.

While Prouvé achieved success and some renown—primarily in Europe—for his own work, he also helped usher in a sea change in design. Like Eero Saarinen spotting the genius of Jørn Utzon’s design for the Sydney Opera House, Prouvé chaired the jury for the design competition for the Centre Georges Pompidou, and was instrumental in selecting the proposal by Richard Rogers, Renzo Piano, and Gianfranco Franchini. The building launched the careers of Rogers and Piano and changed architecture forever. Prouvé, the son of a leading art nouveau artist, was a living bridge from the design thinking of the nineteenth century straight to the twenty-first.

One hopes the gallery will also bring out a volume on Prouvé’s remarkable prefabricated architecture. These portable buildings hold lessons for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

—Alan G. Brake





# JASON RHOADES

November 2017 – March 2018



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# Memphis et al. explained

A COMPREHENSIVE  
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**Postmodern Design Complete: Design, Furniture, Graphics, Architecture, Interiors**  
by Judith Gura • Thames & Hudson, \$95

THEY'RE BACK. The searing hot colors, the jarring patterns, and over-scaled motifs—all the signature features of postmodernism, the radical design movement that burst into prominence in the 1980s, have reappeared in fashion, architecture, and the decorative arts, again bringing excitement and enervation in equal measure. Now, to lend some sense and context to the discussion, comes design historian Judith Gura with a new compendium, *Postmodern Design Complete: Design, Furniture, Graphics, Architecture, Interiors*. We asked her a few questions about postmodernism, then and now:

**MODERN MAGAZINE: Is there a concise and comprehensive definition of postmodernism?**

**Judith Gura:** Charles Jencks, the man most responsible for articulating its theory, took a book to define postmodernism, but I'll try. In terms of what it was: postmodern (in design) was the period that followed mid-century modernism and the International style, and it was a reaction to modernism's failures. Modernism had lost touch with the public in failing to communicate, it hadn't kept its promise of making life better, and it had abandoned history. In terms of what it looked like: postmodern



architecture is characterized by classical motifs and elements of vernacular styles, and often introduces color. Postmodern furniture and objects use jazzy colors, clashing patterns, and an eclectic mix of materials in quirky pieces that often prioritized form over function.

**For the uninitiated, describe the reaction when postmodern design first appeared in the early '80s at venues like the Milan Furniture Fair.**

Shock and awe, to say the least. People didn't know whether to love it or laugh at it, and they did both. Everybody talked about it, but for the most part, nobody took it seriously—though the designers were absolutely serious in what they were trying to do and say.

**Why does it continue to disturb some and delight others?**

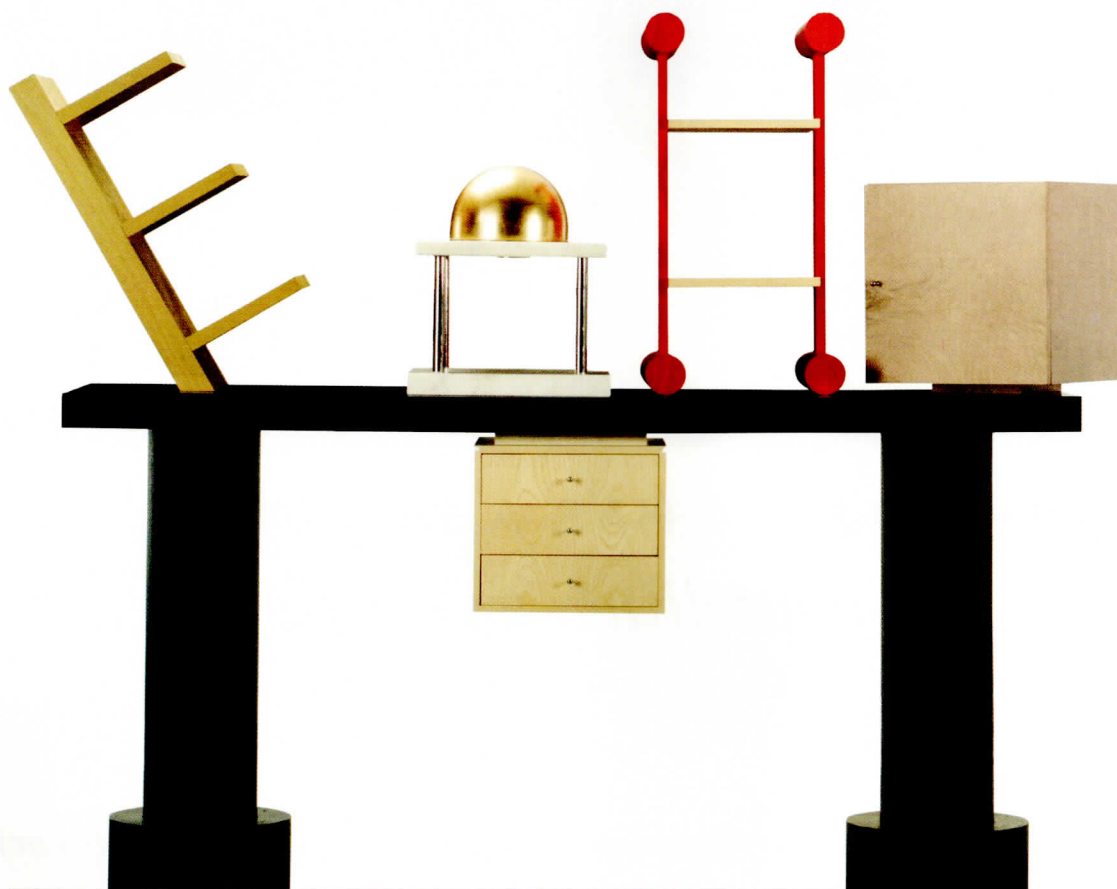
Postmodern design isn't a shrinking violet. Furniture is generally expected to sit quietly in the background, but this almost shouts for attention. It's very much in-your-face, which makes some people uncomfortable. And to be practical, it's not easy to integrate into a room. Postmodern pieces don't really play well with others.

**Can you point to any causes for the recent resurgence in interest in postmodernism?**

There's a general rule of thumb that style revivals come after about thirty years. It happens most visibly in clothing styles. It began to happen with postmodernism over the past decade, and even earlier. There was a 2001 exhibition at London's Design Museum, and a few others, but a major exhibition opened in 2011 at the Victoria and Albert and really put the revival into high gear. There's a whole generation of consumers who weren't born when postmodernism came around the first time, and they're seeing it with fresh eyes. Next to lively postmodern pieces, conventional designs can look a little dull. And those who remember the original are now viewing it with the perspective of distance, and can appreciate how much it changed the climate of design.

**How is postmodernism evolving? If it becomes accepted or "normal," is it dead?**

Not at all. I think it's being absorbed into a broader vocabulary of design, which is a healthy sign. Its most important influence, I believe, was in freeing up designers to try doing things differently, to break with tradition, to find their own style—and not to be afraid if it doesn't follow established norms, or anyone else's definition of good taste.





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Jennifer McCurdy, Gilded Torch Vessel, 2016. Courtesy of Michele Beiny, Inc.

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# Getting away from it all with Finn Juhl



THE COMPANY BEHIND THE DANISH DESIGNER'S LEGENDARY FURNITURE HAS CRAFTED AN IDYLIC ALPINE HAVEN IN JAPAN, COMPLETELY FITTED OUT WITH HIS WORK

By ANNA FIXSEN



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOUSE OF FINN JUHL





**HYGGE**—THE OFT-BUTCHERED DANISH TERM for all things cozy—took a surprising place in the zeitgeist last year, sparking innumerable books, explanatory guides, and Pinterest boards. The word (pronounced “hoo-gah”) even scored a place on Oxford Dictionaries’ short list for the top words of 2016.

Lovers of Danish design, of course, have long been aware of the *hygge*-esque qualities ingrained in the region’s furnishings, a careful balance of comfort and rationality. The mid-century designer Finn Juhl mastered these forces with pieces that combined ease, functionality, and a touch of humor. Last winter, seeking to create an immersive, real-world manifestation of Juhl’s design ethos, the manufacturers of his furniture opened a retreat nestled in the mountains of Japan, outfitted entirely in the designer’s iconic work.

“You can experience Finn Juhl’s furniture not just by coming to a showroom, but by having a chance to live with it,” explains Hans Henrik Sørensen, co-owner of Onecollection, the furniture company that has the exclusive right to Juhl’s work.

This isn’t the company’s first foray into the Asian market: the brand already has a showroom and gallery in Seoul, inspired by Juhl’s residence in Denmark. So why establish a hospitality venue, in particular, five thousand miles from Juhl’s home country? According to Sørensen, Japan has always maintained a keen interest in Juhl’s designs, even as it waned elsewhere during the 1970s and ‘80s. Juhl is not known to have visited the

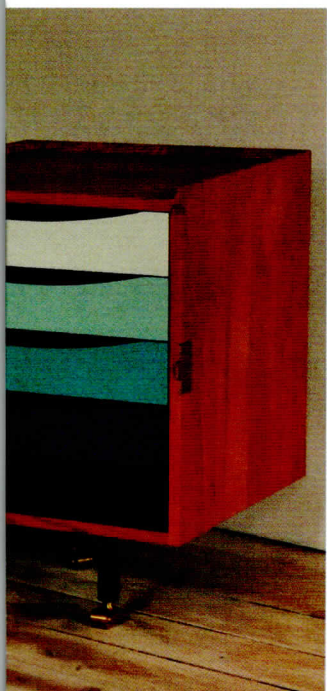
The House of Finn Juhl Hakuba is located in a small town in the Japanese Alps.

A showroom and lounge located in the hotel’s lower level features a selection of Juhl’s furniture, including a Baker sofa, 1951; Pelican chairs, 1940; and a Cocktail table, 1951. Except as noted, the lighting throughout the hotel was designed by Vilhelm Lauritzen, under whom Juhl worked when he was studying architecture.

The Poet Room is outfitted with a Poet sofa, 1941; Eye table, 1948; Nyhavn desk, 1945; and 109 chair, 1946.

A Glove cabinet, 1961, nestled in a corner of the hotel living room.

A pair of France chairs, 1956, with a 108 chair, 1946, tucked into a Nyhavn desk in the France Room.











country himself, but was visited by Noritsugu Oda, a scholar and noted collector of Danish design. "In Japan people were collecting Finn Juhl's furniture and they were writing about him," says Sørensen. "He seems to have had a great impact on the Japanese people."

For the hotel, Onecollection wanted to marry the Juhl spirit with traditional Japanese aesthetics. Located in the idyllic alpine village of Hakuba, the hotel is housed within a quaint gable-roofed '70s-era lodge. Sørensen, with the aid of Danish interiors firm Design Solutions, converted the building (a former inn) from ten guest rooms to six. Each room, named for and furnished in Juhl masterworks such as the Japan or Chieftain chairs, is spare yet elegant, featuring a contrasting palette of blond wood floors and brawny black timber beams.

Visitors seeking outdoorsy thrills can enjoy skiing, hiking, and rafting. Travelers in need of some R&R can luxuriate in the area's famed hot springs, or enjoy complimentary wine in the warm embrace of a Juhl Pelican chair or Poet sofa (the one complaint from guests, Sørensen notes, is hangovers).

"We really want people to feel good," he explains. "And that's how you feel when you are seated in Finn Juhl's furniture."



A Card table, 1955, Reading chairs, 1953, Chieftain chair and ottoman, 1949, and Poet sofa complete the *hygge* living room. Beside the sofa is a lamp by the Swedish brand Konsthantverk.

A view of the lower-level showroom and lounge, displaying a 44 chair, 1944; Butterfly table, 1949; and Chieftain sofa, 1949.

A row of 109 chairs lined up at the hotel's bar.





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# The fine and artful line

NIAMH BARRY'S  
SCULPTURAL LIGHTING

By ARLENE HIRST

Clockwise from above:  
**Unfolded by Niamh Barry, 2015, in bronze, opal glass, and LEDs.**

**Niamh Barry next to her Walking lamp, 2015, in bronze, opal glass, and LEDs.**

**Black Poise, 2016, in patinated bronze, neodymium magnets, and LEDs.**

**Apparent Magnitude II, 2014, in patinated bronze, opal glass, and LEDs.**

NIAMH BARRY TURNS LIGHT INTO ART. Her hand-welded bronze sculptures illuminated with strips of LEDs have been the talk of the design world since 2012. That year, Todd Merrill, the Manhattan dealer in twentieth-century design, presented her one-of-a-kind sculptures at Art Basel in Switzerland, where she was immediately embraced. Merrill had been introduced to Barry's portfolio the previous year. "I loved it so much I did something that I've never done before; I signed her up without seeing the pieces in person," he says. "She made LED lighting, which until then had been ugly, gorgeous! The reaction was overwhelming." From that first show, her work, which had previously been sold only in the United Kingdom, went international. Her client list now includes top interior designers and architects, including Peter Marino, Nate Berkus, Miles Redd, and David Easton. "She's become a world-class artist," Merrill says, adding, "with her level of perfection, you might not think her work is handmade."

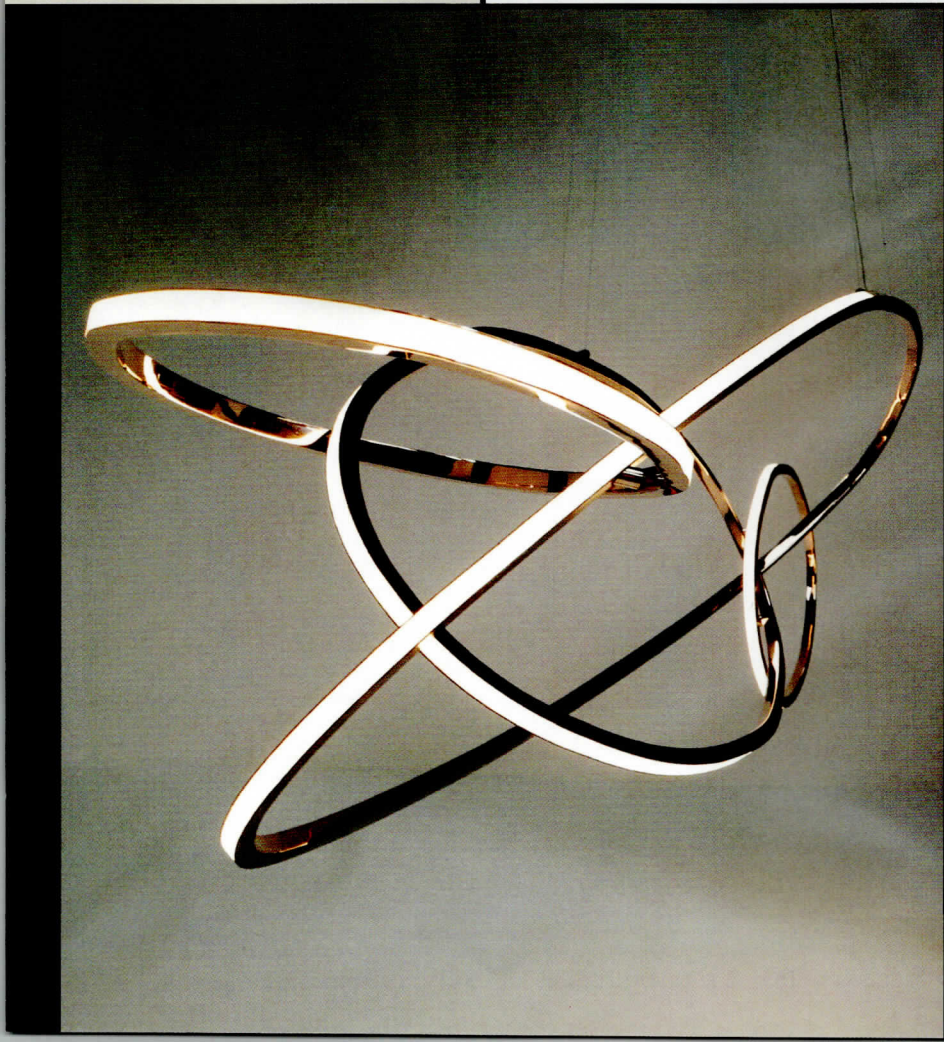
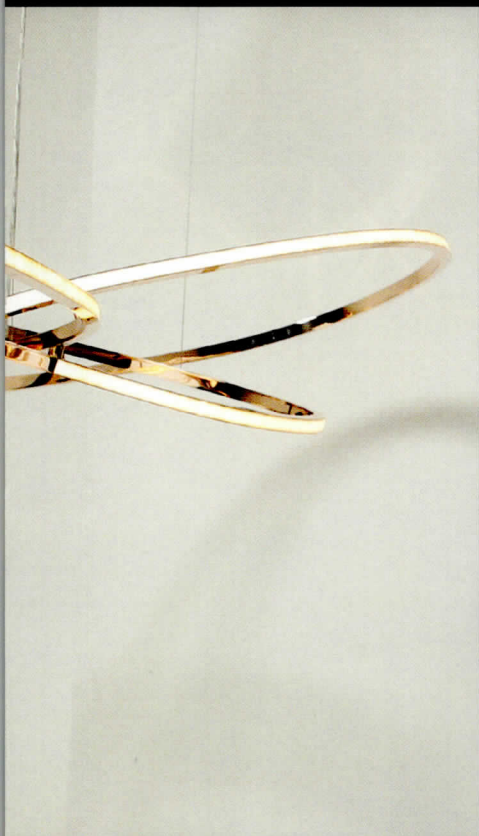
Barry, like most overnight sensations, doesn't consider herself to be one, but describes her career as a life journey. Born in Dublin in 1968—where she still lives and works—she attended the National College of Art and Design, and soon after graduation in 1991 set up her studio, making both handcrafted furniture and

lighting. She taught herself welding. "I'm very, very careful," she says. "With bronze I needed to learn how to jig weld. I locked myself away for three months to learn it. Then, in one moment it all fell into place."

She found lots of work making custom designs for commercial installations for hotels and restaurants. "I spent fifteen years doing this and was very successful, but it was not what I wanted to do creatively," she says. "But it was hard to step off the treadmill." When she finally did, she decided to contact Merrill, whom she had met years before on a trip to New York with her husband, Killian McNulty, who is also a dealer. Having discovered that Merrill had begun to represent contemporary work, she dispatched her portfolio to him. The rest, as they say. . .

Barry says that her art is intuitive, explaining that the story is about "the line" and its journey from inception to finished piece. Taking inspiration from cloud formations, bare branches, and the low winter sun, she begins with hand-drawn sketches, that are then shaped into bronze maquettes. Barry added lighting to her bronze sculptures because "light brings a piece to life. I've always been a person in love with fire. It draws people. Light is the same way." And draw people to her work it certainly has.







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# Give and Take

DESIGNERS AND ARCHITECTS SHARE THEIR TOP PICKS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Out of ideas for presents? We asked four leading tastemakers in the design field to tell us what they'll be giving this season—and what's on their personal wish lists.



**Richard Meier,**  
Richard Meier &  
Partners Architects



"My wish for the holidays is to be able to travel to see places that I have not been before—I've never been to Machu Picchu, and would love to see it."

"One of the things I will be giving are jars of pickles we made in East Hampton over the summer, packed in different sizes: small, medium, and large."



**Lindsey Adelman,**  
Lindsey Adelman  
Studio



On Lindsey Adelman's wish list are the ceramic sculptures by Maria Moyer, available from the New York- and Milan-based furnishings company BDDW. And for the holidays, she will be giving the handmade leather accessories by New York artisan Mary Savel







Topping Lau's wish list this year are a moonstone ring by Monica Castiglioni, a Brooklyn- and Milan-based jewelry designer, and a trip to Brussels to see the remarkable art nouveau buildings, particularly the townhouses by Victor Horta.



**Amy Lau,**  
Amy Lau Design

Each year Lau commissions an artist to create a bespoke gift for her clients. This year, Jim Schatz and Peter Souza of the J Schatz ceramics studio, in Providence, Rhode Island, are creating a platter set much like those in their One of a Kind collection (shown right).

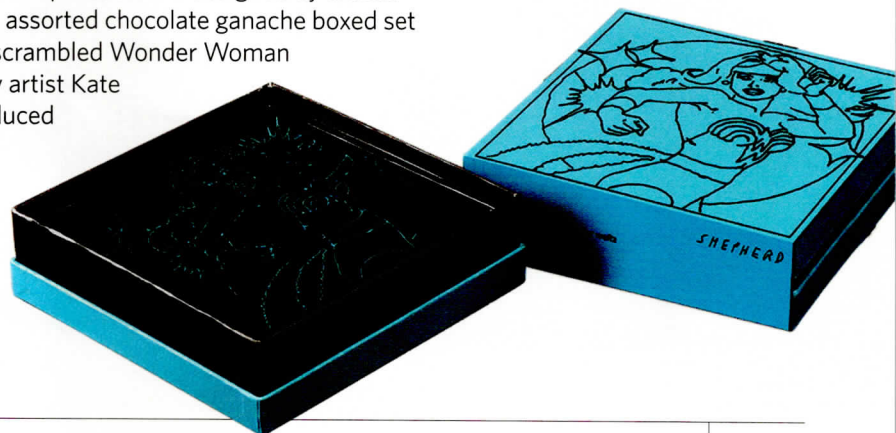


"The stars on my personal wish list are a couple of gorgeous ceramic works by Jose Sierra and Peter Pincus (the piece by the latter shown at left). They are two artists whose work I have long enjoyed for their architectural shapes and exquisite use of color and texture. I love to use them in clients' homes, as they are wonderful centerpieces and I would be delighted to have them. I found both artists through the amazing Abel Contemporary Gallery, near Madison, Wisconsin."



**Suchi Reddy,**  
Reddymade  
Architecture  
& Design

"I'm giving my friends and clients the new Wonder Woman chocolates by weR2, the product line I run with gallerist Sara Meltzer. All of our products are designed by artists. This sixteen-piece, assorted chocolate ganache boxed set is in the form of a scrambled Wonder Woman puzzle designed by artist Kate Shepherd and produced by MarieBelle New York."



COURTESY OF WERZ  
COURTESY OF ABEL CONTEMPORARY GALLERY  
COURTESY OF AMY LAU  
COURTESY OF J. SCHATZ  
COURTESY OF CONTEMPORARY



# Agent provocateur

YOUR EYES  
WILL NEVER  
GLAZE OVER  
AT THE ART  
POTTERY  
GALLERY OF  
JASON JACQUES

By GLENN ADAMSON

WHEN JASON JACQUES WAS TWENTY-EIGHT years old, he showed up at the Triple Pier Expo in New York with a U-Haul trailer full of pots. He had not previously arranged for a booth; he had just moved back to the United States after five years in Europe. It was all rather last-minute. But he talked his way into a little stretch of wall by the bathrooms, and set up two display cases of art nouveau ceramics. Then he walked around the show, buying up every other pot of that era he could find. He wanted, he says, to “empty the floor.” Anyone interested in buying art pottery would have to come to him. His total initial outlay was more than \$50,000, money he didn’t really have to spend, but by the end of the fair he had made that back, and more.

It’s a good yarn, and suggests why Jacques has become an object of bemused admiration among American antiques dealers. In a field populated by the courteous and courtly, he is something of an enfant terrible, a risk-taker. And that remains true, even now that he has been collecting for thirty years. Arrive at his gallery on East 73rd Street, with its extraordinary sci-fi gothic interior (more on that below), and he’ll greet you with the air of a grizzled rock star and some tales to tell.

By the time of the U-Haul incident, Jacques was already well traveled, a habitué of the Paris flea markets. He was also extraordinarily well informed about fin de siècle art pottery, the field that still forms the anchor of his gallery today. He started young, working for a man named Thomas Tomc, who ran the Fly by Nite Gallery (yes, that was its real name) in Chicago. According to Jacques, Tomc “championed underdogs, by which I mean he liked profit more than expenditure.” He had a decent collection of French art nouveau, Teco, Grueby, and other pottery of the era. Young Jason’s first 150 hours of work at the gallery earned him enough money to buy a single miniature vase he’d fallen for, by the French potter Clément Massier. It is still a prized possession today.

*Spaceman* by Kim Simonsson, 2017, stoneware and nylon fiber.

*Cones and Disks* by Beate Kuhn, 1970, glazed stoneware.



He then spent a few years as a picker in Europe. He fell in love with secessionist painters like Klimt, with the proto-modernist designs of the Wiener Werkstätte, and with Amphora Pottery (established in 1892 in Turn-Teplitz, in the present-day Czech Republic). Periodically he would fly back to the States with a trunk full of ceramics. A turning point was a chance encounter with William Ehrlich, the prominent polymath—architect, real estate developer, jewelry designer, and collector—who became a steady client. The trust between the two men was such that Ehrlich eventually began wiring him funds to buy pots for him sight unseen.

Jacques opened his first permanent gallery, on Elizabeth Street in New York, in 1996. He has been in his current space on the Upper East Side since 2005, and from the beginning, it was lavishly appointed. The first decor had a bright color scheme devised by designer (and founding editor of *Nest*) Joe Holtzman, with a dis-







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*Magical Mushroom vase*  
by Clément Massier,  
c. 1900, earthenware.

Installation shot of the  
Jason Jacques booth at  
Frieze New York 2017.

tinctive blue and white “crackle” ceiling nodding to Delftware. Today, the front hall features a mural portraying historic pots, executed by Trenton Duerksen. The main display area has been refitted with a spectacular all-black interior articulated in steel, by the fabricators Digifabshop, of Hudson, New York. The look is half Peter Behrens, half Batman. A particularly memorable installation shortly after the redesign, in 2016, featured thickly encrusted ceramics by the Danish potter Morten Løbner Espersen, paired with gelatin silver NASA photographs from the 1966–1967 Lunar Orbiter missions.

Espersen is one of eleven contemporary artists who show with the gallery, many of them potters with a clear affinity for turn-of-the-century ceramics. Jacques also shows the furniture of fashion designer Rick Owens and lime-green flocked figures by the Finnish sculptor Kim Simonsson. Jacques’ contemporary program began in 2010, after he discovered the work of British artist Gareth Mason in a show in Zurich. Everything else in the gallery, as Jacques remembers it, was “very Swiss in its precision.” Mason’s pots, by contrast, surge with nearly uncontrolled, alchemical energy—lumpen and asymmetrical and streaming with wildly combined colors. They are reminiscent of great works by Taxile Doat, Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat, Ernest Chaplet, Georges Hoentschel—the historic art potters Jacques prizes most.

Jacques has expanded his presence at art fairs, where his booths, again executed in partnership with Digifabshop, make the typical white-walled art fair presentation look fainthearted. The first of these I saw in

person, at Design Miami in 2013, consisted of a series of curved ramps propped up on scaffolding; the pots seemed to be bobsledding. Subsequent displays in Miami included a “treehouse space” featuring the trompe-l’oeil sculptural ceramics of Eric Serritella, and, in 2016, a series of monumental timber towers with jagged-edged metal corners. At Frieze New York 2017 he displayed his wares underneath a set of crisscrossing segmented black arches, evoking a Louise Bourgeois spider or an attack robot from *The War of the Worlds*.

Jason T. Busch, who joined the gallery as director in spring 2017, has proposed mounting a show to mark Jacques’ thirty years of collecting. Busch is a supremely elegant and knowledgeable curator, whose track record includes stints at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh and the Saint Louis Art Museum. His decision to team up with Jacques makes a fascinating pairing of opposite personality types—Dionysius and Apollo joining forces—and is further evidence of the increasing porosity between the museum and commercial sectors.

Given the increasingly straitened circumstances of many public institutions and the seemingly infinite expansion of the art market, it is not surprising that curators as talented as Busch are turning to the market for some of the most engaging action. The decorative arts scene has many fine people in it, but all too often, runs low on raw energy. Whether or not one shares Jacques’ taste for the immaculately overwrought (I myself happen to love it), the gallery is certainly never going to be boring. He may have left his U-Haul days behind, but you still never know quite what to expect.



# March 9-11 2018

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photo: Wexler Gallery at Collective Design 2017

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## Miami advice

A poolside view of the Vagabond Hotel (originally Motel) in Miami's MiMo district.

The front facade of the Institute of Contemporary Art's new building in the Miami Design District.



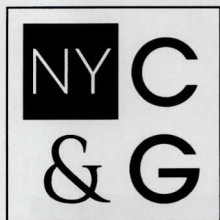
*WHEN TRAVELING, ALWAYS LOOK TO LOCALS for guidance. Ahead of our trip to South Florida for Design Miami/ and Art Basel in Miami Beach, as well as other art fairs, we asked **Sean McCaughan**, the former founding editor in *curbed.com*'s Miami bureau, for some tips on where to stay and what to see.*

### Lodging

If you're looking for some luxury while in town, the new Four Seasons at the Surf Club is a nice choice. A historic private beach club with a fresh new Four Seasons Hotel designed by Richard Meier attached, the property melds much that is beautiful about old and new Miami into a grand whole. Plus, if you're in town for the fairs, it won't be too far at all from the hubbub, and yet just far enough for a little serenity and quiet on the beach. Its restaurant, Le Sirenuse Miami, is quite the choice for power diners among the billionaire set.

Then of course there's the Vagabond, in Miami's MiMo (short for Miami Modern) District, which is particularly popular with the locals. This fabulous 1953 motel cut no corners on design in its renovation a few years back, and yet remains wonderfully casual, and rather affordable as well. It's a place easy to fall in love with, or maybe it's just the mosaic mermaid at the bottom of the swimming pool seducing us.





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20

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18

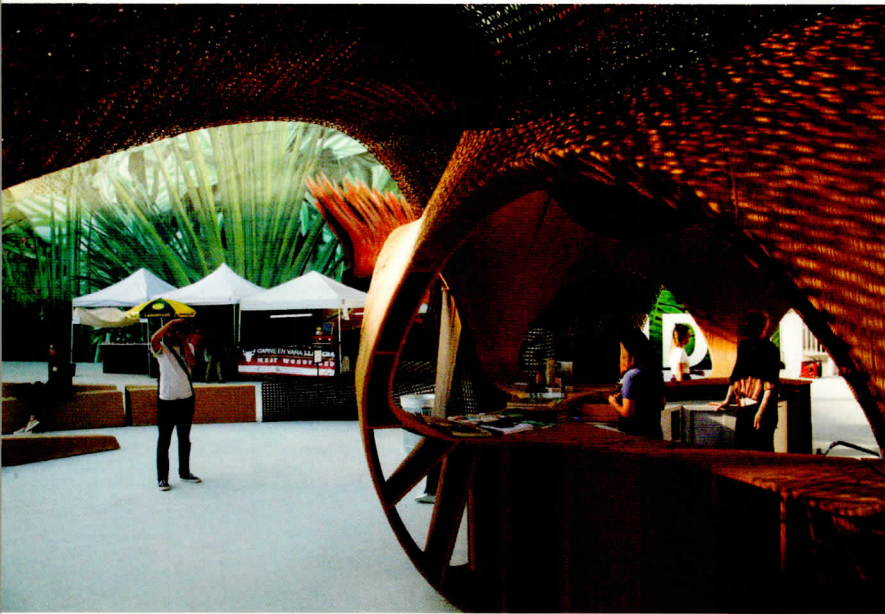
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Cliff Lee/Gallery & Studios





SHoP Architects' 3-D-printed Flotsam & Jetsam pavilion in Jungle Plaza.

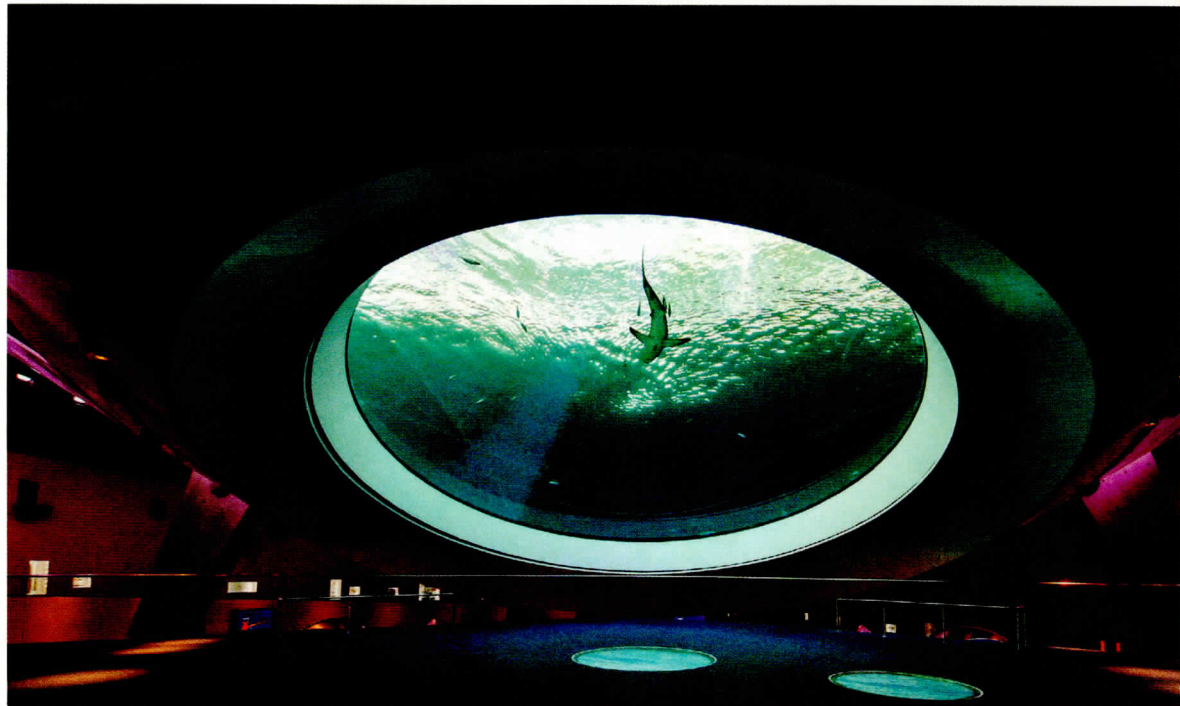
The oculus of the Gulf Stream Aquarium in the Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science's new building.

### Sightseeing

This is a year of new museums in Miami. The Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science recently opened the doors of its brand-new high-tech building, designed by Grimshaw Architects, joining the Pérez Art Museum Miami in Museum Park. The Bass Museum is reopening in Miami Beach, following a major expansion by a team of architects and designers including Arata Isozaki & Associates, David Gauld, and Jonathan Caplan of Project-Space.

You'll be just in time for the December opening of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, newly built in the Miami Design District, that neighborhood of high luxury and high design. The building was designed by the Spanish firm Aranguren & Gallegos Arquitectos. Its glowing facade will stand out by its sheer size among the jambalaya of retail buildings designed by a variety of architects from around the globe that are proliferating in the neighborhood. In a plaza a few blocks away, relocated from the front entrance of last year's Design Miami/ tent, you'll find SHoP Architects' 3-D-printed, carbon-fiber-reinforced ABS plastic Flotsam & Jetsam pavilion and outdoor seating court. Glad that didn't go to waste.

While you're in the Design District, check out OTL, an airy lunch spot co-owned by the neighborhood's developer, founder of Design Miami, and fellow design obsessive, Craig Robins. It's right on Paseo Ponti, the District's main shopping drag. And as always when in Miami, keep your eyes peeled for new architectural surprises. The ICA is far from the only new building to pop up in the neighborhood lately.





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Set of 4 "S34" chairs / Pierre Chapo, ca. 1960 / Courtesy of Magen H Gallery





Two views of Zaha Hadid's One Thousand Museum building, to be completed in December 2018: above, the rooftop pool; below, the building from across Biscayne Bay.

Racks lining the walls of Neushop in downtown Miami.

### Shopping

In Miami, three boutiques are particularly worthy of note. Heading south from the Design District, check out BASE Wynwood, since January the newest incarnation of Miami's venerable BASE, which has been selling independent and cult labels and interesting media since 1984. Downtown, Neushop, in the historic Ingraham Building, sells beautiful basics from T-shirts and jeans to wastepaper baskets and toys, and has a regular series of engaging design talks. Godfather to both stores, however, is the esteemed Arango Design Store, on Sunset Drive in South Miami, which sells everything from cutlery to personal accessories and office supplies, all with a modernist sensibility and an astonishing eye for detail.

### Inside information

Finally, this is a year to pay attention to one of Miami's most prominent architectural typologies: the condo tower. Buildings you've heard about by the biggest architecture names in the world are either finished or significantly underway: Danish architect Bjarke Ingels's Grove at Grand Bay, the late Zaha Hadid's One Thousand Museum, OMA's Park Grove, Herzog & de Meuron's Jade Signature, and Piero Lissoni's Ritz-Carlton Residences, Miami Beach, among others. Although none of these buildings is typically open to the public, for the crafty design-o-phile it's easy enough to buddy up to a developer or make friends with a new resident for your own private ticket inside.



COURTESY OF ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS (2)  
COURTESY OF NEUSHOP/DAZACHEN PHOTO



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Josh Kline, *Thank you for your years of service (Ocean Lawyer)*, 2016



# Shape-shifting

JUDITH SELIGSON  
INFUSES ART INTO  
DESIGN IN HER  
NEW WORK

By ALINA COHEN



IN NEW DESIGN EXPERIMENTS, painter Judith Seligson is translating her aesthetic ideas into reproducible quotidian objects. Since the mid-1970s, Seligson has created hard-edged geometric abstractions that delicately and precisely play with color and space. In her paintings, shapes emerge, recede, and interact according to their meticulously selected hues. She's described the shapes in her panels and canvases as "visual melodies," likening their individual forms to musical notes. Recently, Seligson began commissioning rugs that transfer her unique vision from wall to floor.

Seligson made her first rug in 1980 in India, a "dhurrie" style, known for its thick, flat weave, often with graphic patterns, typical of the region. While she remained interested in the form, she lacked opportunities for production. This past March, she exhibited her paintings at Manhattan's Architectural Digest Design Show, and there connected with Barbara Barran, owner of the city's Classic Rug Collection Inc. "When you collaborate with somebody, you really are relying on their expertise," Seligson says. "And I feel I lucked out." Together, the pair determined how to best translate Seligson's brushstrokes into wool and silk, carefully choosing a representative palette. They decided to hand carve grooves into the material to approximate the texture of Seligson's paintings. She doesn't mind that people will literally walk all over her new work—"that's part of the fun of it. It's useful," she says.

Four finished rugs now lie in Seligson's East 59th Street apartment, which she shares with her husband, architect Allan Greenberg (they divide their time between Manhattan and Alexandria, Virginia). "This has always been an exhibition space," she says of the light-filled, wood-floored living area, which overlooks the Queensboro Bridge. Greenberg designed the scallop-edged kitchen counter and a cylindrical bookshelf, which infuse the space with a playful contrast to the sleek edges in Seligson's paintings on the walls. The pair recently redecorated, purchasing furniture by some of the most prominent designers of the past century. First, they bought six blue velvet Brno chairs (which provided seating at the famed Four Seasons restaurant) by architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. "You had me at blue velvet," Seligson says. She fit four of

Overlooking the Queensboro Bridge, the living area in Judith Seligson and Allan Greenberg's apartment features a structural column wrapped with a reproduction of a drawing from Seligson's Visual Intertextuality series, and several of her paintings, including *Aim to Please*, *Port*, and *Sets*, which hang between the windows, above a Gaetano Pesce UP2 armchair.





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A custom multilevel rug made in collaboration with Barbara Barran of Classic Rug Collection and based on Seligson's painting *Decisive* lies in front of a lounge chair by Edward Wormley for Dunbar. To the left, a Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Brno chair sits at a glass-topped Nomos table by Norman Foster, and to the right, a white Adrian Pearsall sofa is accented by an Eileen Gray adjustable table with Issey Miyake's Mogura table lamp atop. Seligson's *Somewhere to Hide*, *Self-portrait*, and *Radical IF* hang on the wall, from left to right.

Seligson in Pesce's Black UP3 armchair and Allan Greenberg, in the UP2 armchair, sit in front of digital prints of Seligson's paintings *Candy* and *Interference*.



them around a Norman Foster table with a rectangular glass top and metal legs that bend at the bottom and end in sturdy, shiny discs. A long, elegant, off-white sofa by the iconic American designer of the 1950s and '60s, Adrian Pearsall, faces the kitchen.

Seligson hired a painter to interpret more of her own work onto the four kitchen cabinet panels behind the counter. "They're conceptual pieces in the sense that I gave them a set of instructions, you know, à la Sol LeWitt," she explains, invoking the conceptual artist who famously left directions for future generations to re-create his oeuvre.

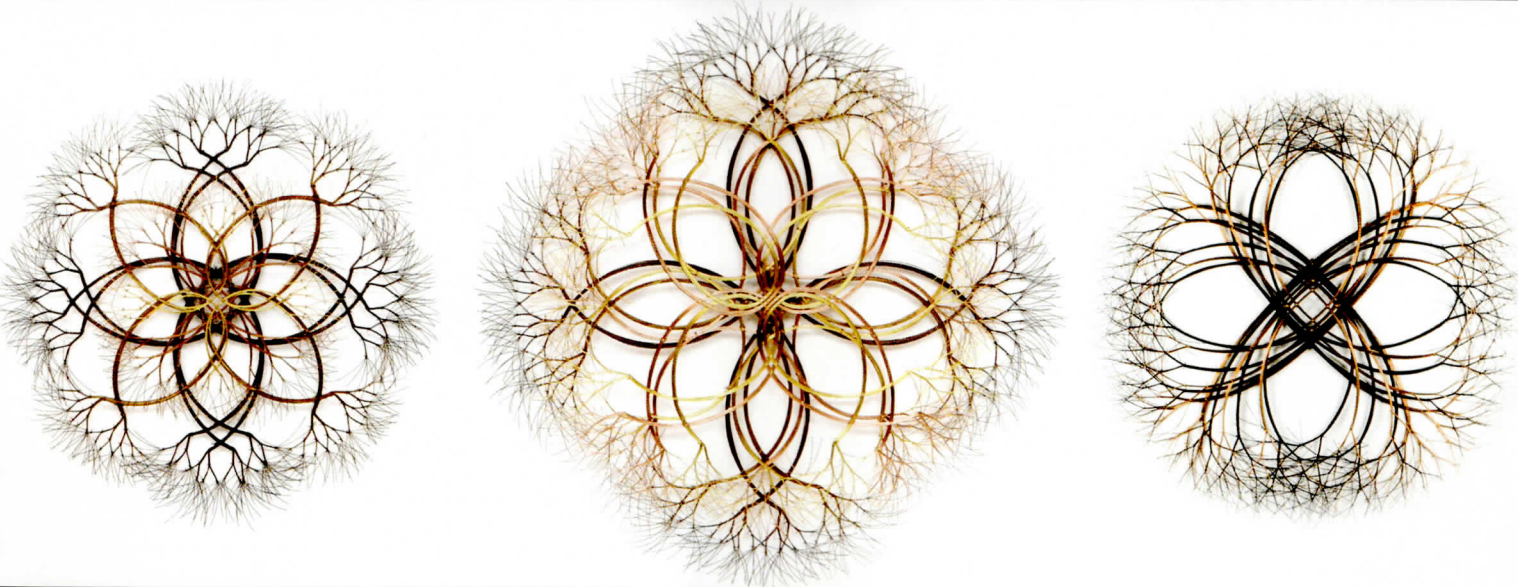
Next up for Seligson: yet another translation, this time into printed matter. Her forthcoming book, *Gap Anxiety*, is a synthesis of the ways in which gaps operate in literature, art, and neuroscience, encouraging readers to rethink ideas of incompleteness and absence. She also hopes to make more rugs and commissioned installations that will render her paintings onto walls and doors. A new gallery—AH Contemporary—that her daughter, writer Hannah Seligson, is opening with her husband, consultant Andrew Eil, will represent her. Seligson will continue to explore and experiment creatively; it'll be up to the couple to convert it all into a business.



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

**Gio Ponti (1891-1979)**  
**Piero Fornasetti (1913-1988)**  
 MADREPORE TABLE AND  
 FOUR CHAIRS  
 Painted and lacquered  
 wood with transfer-printed  
 decoration and modern upholstery  
 c. 1950

A CURATOR ALWAYS HAS A WISH LIST, but some of the greatest acquisitions are those that simply, and quite improbably, materialize. Together, the Italian designers Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti created some of the most wonderfully enigmatic furniture of the twentieth century. Ponti brought an architect's eye for form and construction as well as boomerang angles and dramatic, tapered points. Fornasetti contributed compulsive and ebullient surface decoration, often with whimsical trompe l'oeil that was boldly excessive for the modern era. I never imagined that such a great example of their work would turn up in a residence less than a mile from our museum, but, in 2010, it did.

It began with a request to verify family lore: could a dining suite from the grandparents have come from the *SS Andrea Doria*, which sank off Nantucket in 1956? Ponti and Fornasetti had been engaged on interiors for that ocean liner (and others), but the claim did not hold water. Scholars have yet to pin

down the exact origins of this design; related works offer clues, but not the full story.

Ponti featured a table of this unusual shape—a concave “tide pool” visible through plate glass—in the dining room he created for *Italy at Work: Her Renaissance in Design Today*, an exhibition that opened at the Brooklyn Museum in 1950 and toured to multiple American venues. However, Fornasetti's decoration on the exhibition model consisted of fish, seahorses, and crayfish rather than the coral seen here. The same year, he deployed identical coral transfers on a fireplace for a Milan apartment. Two tables and eight chairs are known to exist today: the Carnegie's set and one auctioned in 2005, 2014, and 2017. Curiously, the eight chairs are marked with roman numerals ranging from XII to XXI, suggesting the existence of a larger set.

**Rachel Delphia**

Alan G. and Jane A. Lehman Curator of  
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*Few objects have useful lives once they enter museum collections.  
This one demands to be touched*

LEGIONS OF BAY AREA SCHOOLCHILDREN begin their visit to the Oakland Museum of California at J. B. Blunk's monumental redwood seating sculpture, *The Planet*. Commissioned in 1969, the piece was set in place even before the windows and doors of the museum were installed in the building, which opened that same year. Carved from a single old-growth burl and measuring roughly thirteen feet in diameter, the sheer scale of the sculpture dominates the surrounding space. The participatory nature of this astounding work of art continues to challenge and inspire us.

In the late 1960s, J. B. (James Blain) Blunk was a maverick artist living off the land in Marin County, making sculptural furniture that disregarded the line between art and craft. Before he arrived in Northern California, he had studied ceramics under Laura Andreson at UCLA. Upon graduation, Blunk had been drafted into the Korean War and he arranged to be discharged in Japan, where a chance encounter with Isamu Noguchi led to apprenticeships with the famed potters Kitaoji Rosanjin and Toyo Kaneshige. These transformational experiences and relationships set the course for his unique approach to art.

Blunk's early commitment to the subtle and unobtrusive aesthetics of the Japanese stoneware tra-

dition are evident in the way he transformed the tree that became *The Planet*. At this time in his practice, his primary tool was a chainsaw aided by chisels and grinders, yet he approached his material with the sensitivity of a potter. The sculpture feels and looks at once alive and complexly crafted. A hollow circle of smooth planed angles transition in and out of the natural curves and craggy ripples of the burl. The undersurface of angles, roots, and crevices rise off the floor as if the piece is levitating.

Each shifting section of *The Planet* encourages sitting around or inside the circle, facing in or out. Every divot and curve has been caressed by countless museum visitors. Very few objects have useful lives once they enter museum collections, but this extraordinary work demands to be touched, interacted with, and otherwise completed by visitors.

The Oakland Museum of California will celebrate *The Planet* and many of Blunk's iconic works in a special exhibition titled *J. B. Blunk: Nature, Art & Everyday Life*, opening April 21, 2018.

**Carin Adams**

Curator of Art  
Oakland Museum of California



**J. B. Blunk (1926-2002)**

THE PLANET  
Redwood  
1969

OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA/MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTO





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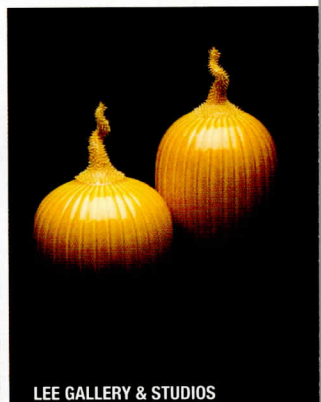
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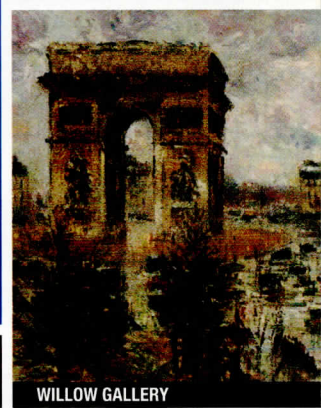
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*Massey represents the landscape of Lake Michigan with a few simple graphic forms that are distilled into a dynamic composition*



**John Massey (1931-)**  
CHICAGO HAS A GREAT LAKE  
Print on cream wove paper  
1966

JOHN MASSEY CREATED the *Chicago Has a Great Lake* poster in 1966 for the Container Corporation of America (CCA) as part of the Chicago Cultural Communication Project. The project's aim was "to provide the city of Chicago with a consistent series of brilliant and unusual posters calling attention to the many cultural and recreational facilities available to its population." In the mid-twentieth century, CCA, with Massey as head of its design department, played an influential role in disseminating modernist graphic design through advertising. This design celebrating Lake Michigan allows us to understand how corporate branding shaped the image of Chicago and also how the qualities of the city itself influenced marketing strategies. The poster is characteristic of Massey's overall approach to design and his use of strong, visual language. Here, he represents the landscape of Lake Michigan with a few simple graphic forms that are distilled into a dynamic composition.

The poster was part of Massey's project to enliven Chicago's streets and encourage its citizens to value their city, which had suffered from the rise of suburbanization, by hiring professional designers to create designs promoting the city's museums, architecture, neighborhoods, and lakefront. A series of the posters was given to the city by CCA and installed for a short while in civic spaces. They are among many posters created under Massey for the city. While head of design at CCA, Massey also continued to maintain an independent design office in Chicago called the Center for Advanced Research in Design, through which he was able to direct design programs for other organizations, including Atlantic Richfield Company, Inland Steel, and the United States Department of Labor. As demonstrated by this poster, much of Massey's work uses graphic design to highlight and celebrate the urban environment.

**Zoë Ryan**  
John H. Bryan Chair and  
Curator of Architecture and Design  
Art Institute of Chicago



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# Elective affinities

By Glenn Adamson

Photography by Sasha Maslov



The decor in the Brooklyn home of Stefano Basilico and Janet Kraynak was born of a deft union of art, curation, and interior design



Above the mantel in the front parlor is Louise Lawler's vinyl drawing *Pollock and Tureen* (traced), 1984–2013. On the wall behind two Poltrona Frau 1919 armchairs hangs *Motif XV*, 2011, a work on paper mounted on laser-cut aluminum by Cheyney Thompson. The sconces are by Gio Ponti, and the chandelier (which was once a gasolier) is original to the house.

In the front parlor, Stefano Basilico sits in one of two Kerstin Horlin-Holmquist so-called Big Adam chairs while his wife, Janet Kraynak, stands behind him.



Terry Winters's pencil drawing *Untitled*, 1994, leans in front of a fireplace in the fourth-floor guest room. On the mantel is Cary Leibowitz's *Get Up You Lazy Bum/I Can't I Don't Feel Well*, 2005. To the right is a vintage Charles and Ray Eames fiberglass side chair with Eiffel Tower base. The wallpaper is Cole and Son's *Chiavi Segrete*, which is based on a pair of motifs by Piero Fornasetti.

The wallpaper in the fifth-floor landing/hallway is *Marble Gum* by Timorous Beasties. Haim Steinbach's *ten second memos #8*, 1991, hangs on the wall, and *Bag of Shit on Fire*, 1995, by Tony Matelli hides on the floor behind the ladder leading to the roof.



#### HOW IS CONTEMPORARY ART SHOWN

to best advantage? Until recently, most people would have had only one answer for that question: against a white wall. Artworks look best when displayed in an otherwise blank space, with plenty of room to breathe.

It is easy to see why people like this uncluttered look. Any space can easily be converted to a gallery simply by throwing up some drywall and a lick of paint. Yet it can also express power,

as in the expansive acreage of a highly capitalized Chelsea gallery. Architecturally speaking, the “white cube” is quite an invention. It is at once simple, authoritative, and supremely flexible.

Despite these advantages, however, we are currently experiencing a change in fashion, toward more complex *mise-en-scènes*. Where art starts and stops is no longer so sharply defined. These days, we often need to speak not of artworks, but of art situations.







As a result, the display of art in domestic spaces—which rarely conform to the white cube formula—has come to seem more significant. It used to be that “decorating” with art was deeply suspect. The thinking was: a serious person doesn’t buy a painting because it goes with the living room sofa. This attitude ignored the fact that art perhaps looks best, and certainly means most, when it is integrated into everyday life. From this perspective, home is the ideal setting. Rather than seeing the domestic fabric as interfering with the autonomous artwork, we can understand it as an opportunity to generate fresh ways of looking, serendipitous adjacencies, and personal meanings that are every bit as relevant as grand art historical narratives.

In effect, this means thinking of the art collector as a kind of curator. Artist, collector, dealer, and curator are no longer fixed roles, but can be adopted as circumstance demands.

With this background in mind, it is most interesting to step into the home of Stefano Basilico, Janet Kraynak, and their son, Giulio, located in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Basilico has been working as an art adviser for the past decade or so, having previously been a museum curator; prior to that he worked in commercial galleries, operating his own space from 1993

to 1999. Kraynak is a prominent art historian who teaches at Columbia University, with particular expertise in the work of Bruce Nauman. (Giulio is thirteen years old and has yet to build a résumé in the arts, but given his parentage, one can expect great things.)

The couple’s long exposure to the art world means that, in addition to having a great deal of expertise, they have also had many opportunities to acquire. They have bought consistently, sometimes when the artists concerned were early in their careers. This approach is in keeping with Basilico’s background as a dealer, which was adventurous and intentionally transient. Roberta Smith, writing in the *New York Times* in 1994, described his gallery as one of a number of smaller concerns that emerged in the wake of a collapse in the art market. These venues, she wrote, sought “low-cost ways to get the relatively inexpensive work of young or unknown artists before the public—if only for a few hours a week,” in the process “helping to redefine the way art is exhibited.”

Basilico and Kraynak’s collection has been built serendipitously, then, primarily via friendships and alliances. Even so, their multistory historic town house is quite a repository. Attached to the pieces are some blue-chip names—Cindy Sherman, Carroll Dunham, Wade Guyton—but

Ordinarily, Jamie Isenstein’s *Magic Lamp*, 2005, frames a hole in the wall, covered by a “will return by” sign. But sometimes the artist comes by for dinner parties to stick her arm through the hole, holding a cordless light bulb.







there are also many fascinating works by lesser-known artists with a particular personal connection. It is also a curatorial exercise par excellence, rather like a permanent collection at a museum installed with unusual verve. One of the most telling features is that there is hardly a white wall anywhere.

The house was built in 1866, just after the cessation of the Civil War. It had been the beneficiary of benign neglect for most of its life, with original plasterwork, built-in cabinetry, and

gasoliers spared from invasive redecoration. The structure had already been immaculately restored by a previous owner, who saw value in this Victorian survival, and the couple have enhanced the period look by selecting intense paint colors and wallpapers throughout. "These houses shouldn't be white," Basilico says. "It's like you're trying to make it look modern, and not in a good way."

The most dramatic vignette, arguably, is all the way at the top of the house. A work by Haim

Bonnie Collura's ink on paper *Inalienable*, 1999, hangs in the front parlor behind a Poltrona Frau Lyra armchair and T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbins biomorphic walnut table.





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Steinbach, the postmodernist sculptor well known for his arrangements of everyday consumer items on Formica-lined shelves, is set against a vibrant wallpaper by Timorous Beasties. The liquid pattern, somewhere between a marbled endpaper and a psychedelic poster from the Summer of Love, is an ideal counter-

point to Steinbach's work, which is about the unstable status of the commodities it displays.

Downstairs is quite theatrical, too. Basilico has a passion for postwar design, a secondary base of connoisseurship that pays off in the lower-level dining room. Chiavari chairs (the vernacular inspiration for Gio Ponti's iconic



A photographic work by Roe Ethridge, *Ceaderhurst Mall Sign*, 2004, is displayed in a wall niche in the sitting room, or back parlor.

A vintage rosewood Thin Edge dresser by George Nelson stands under the painting *Pink Sweep* by Jon Pestoni, 2012, in the master bedroom.



On the far wall in the back parlor are (far left, top to bottom) Jamie Isenstein's watercolor *Untitled*, 2004, and Carroll Dunham's ink-and-pencil on paper *Untitled*, 1990. On the other side of the TV and fireplace are (clockwise from top left) Matthew Antezzo's pencil drawing *Eleven O'Clock News Channel 4, 12/19/96*, 1996; Dunham's pencil drawing *Untitled*, 1993; Jennifer Bornstein's copperplate etching *Man Librarian*, 2003; and Dunham's linocut print *Untitled*, 1994. The Henry pouf (gray) and Frank pouf (green) are by Donna Wilson. Jon Pestoni's oil on canvas *Blue Sweep*, 2011, is visible in the front parlor. A Poltrona Frau Chester One sofa curves out of the right side of the frame.

In the dining room, a chandelier and sconces from the Superordinate Antler collection by Jason Miller illuminate the Danish teak dining table and walnut Chiavari chairs made in Italy by Fratelli Levaggi, along with Brian Tolle's *Views from America's Attic #6*, a hand-colored black-and-white photograph.



Superleggera) are gathered underneath a contemporary chandelier by Jason Miller. Among the artworks in the space is a conceptual installation by Jamie Isenstein. Usually, it is just a framed hole in the wall, covered by one of those “will return at . . .” signs that one occasionally sees hanging in the doors of lightly staffed stores. But by arrangement, the artist occasionally comes by for dinner parties, sticks her arm through the hole, and holds a “magic” light bulb to illuminate the proceedings.

Pride of place in the house, as in Victorian times, goes to the parlor. It is tinted a relatively restrained gray-blue, all the better to set off the brightly colored furniture by Poltrona Frau. The space also leads to an adjoining sitting room, which has the couple's boldest color choice, a green so intense that it prompts thoughts of the Incredible Hulk. It is a startlingly perfect backdrop for art, including a photographic work by Roe Ethridge depicting a strip-mall sign in glory.

Back in the parlor proper is one of the home's cleverest curatorial moments. Above the mantelpiece is a Louise Lawler vinyl drawing depicting a tureen sitting under a Jackson Pollock painting. To the right is a gestural work

by Cheyney Thompson, which itself plays on the legacy of Pollock's drip paintings. Together, these works serve as a cue to the alert visitor that this is a house devoted to art, to living with art, and to thinking about what all that might mean.

Basilico and Kraynak owned most of their artworks before they owned this home, and they have never bought anything with thoughts of where they might hang it. There is a certain flexibility in their approach, even a certain indifference to the relative status of the artists whose works they've acquired. This may seem surprising in an art adviser and an art historian. But maybe if you work in those trades long enough you discover that value is not just where you find it, but what grows with you over time.

Gesturing at one point to a black plastic fan in the window, Basilico said to me, “that fan fits into life in a particular way. If it breaks, that creates a break in routine too.” Owning art is something like that, he seemed to imply. It is a matter of what one gets used to, what one would miss if it weren't around anymore, what feels right as a part of each day. It's as good a metric as any for understanding what it means to live with art. **M**









# Fashion Forward



MoMA's expansive new exhibition on clothing design surveys the most iconic garments and accessories of the last century





**SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 1929** by “the daring ladies”—Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lillie P. Bliss, and Mary Quinn Sullivan—the Museum of Modern Art has been a leading institution in exploring all that is modern, from painting and film to multimedia and architecture. The first in the world to establish a department dedicated to architecture and design, helmed by architect and curator Philip Johnson, the museum elevated the significance of these fields through its vigorous acquisition of important objects and drawings as well as its many exhibitions. However, in spite of the museum’s brave forays into emerging fields, one that has been largely and notably absent from its programming has been fashion. More than seven decades after MoMA’s first and only show on clothing design, *Are Clothes Modern?*, organized by then architect and curator Bernard Rudofsky, the conversation is finally being revisited by another intrepid woman, Paola Antonelli, the senior curator in the de-

partment of architecture and design: The exhibition, *Items: Is Fashion Modern?*, is as detailed as it is comprehensive, as specific as it is universal—a look at fashion through multiple lenses: technology, politics, economics, the body, social status, and self-expression, among others.

Occupying the entire sixth floor, the exhibition presents 111 garments and accessories (referred to as “typologies” by MoMA), and a total of 350 objects, which run the gamut from handmade to mass-produced, from sportswear to luxury, from the quotidian to high fashion. You’ll find Elton John’s boots steps away from a Champion red hoodie, and a Christian Dior black dress in the same room as a sari. Diverse yet wearable, these items bear the same influence as a piece of furniture or graphic art, and certainly represent modern design. We had the chance to catch up with Antonelli to talk about the genesis and process of planning this expansive exhibition, and also, what might lie ahead.

Facing page, clockwise from top left: Red ballet flats by Repetto, 2010.

One Star Perfecto leather motorcycle jacket, late 1950s.

New Era 59FIFTY-style New York Yankees scarlet fitted cap, 1996.

Dress by Thierry Mugler, 1981.

Above: A photograph in the exhibition catalogue shows A-POC Le Feu by Issey Miyake and Dai Fujiwara from the Issey Miyake spring/summer 1999 collection, a garment similar to their A-POC Queen textile (1997), featured in the MoMA show.





**Nicole Anderson/MODERN MAGAZINE:** In 1995 you asked Philip Johnson why fashion had been overlooked by MoMA. Can you tell me more about his response? Did it prompt an interest in or plant the seed for *Items: Is Fashion Modern?*

**Paola Antonelli:** Philip Johnson simply said it really wasn't in the purview of the collection as he saw it at that time, and as he was the chief and I was very new at MoMA, that was that. Of course, when you are told no, you always want to rebel against that somehow, or at least I do! As I write in the catalogue, when such an eminent scholar who had dipped his toe into styles and movements—which are themselves constructs—declined to investigate similar constructs in another medium, it piqued my interest. It just took a long while for the stars to align.

Photograph of a woman wearing a dashiki, door-knocker earrings, and a Dutch wax scarf on her head, as part of a photo essay by Monika Mogi for the exhibition catalogue.

A row of platform shoes marches through the exhibition.



**MM:** You wrote that the idea for *Items* was first conceived in 2011, so why did you decide to stage the exhibition now?

**PA:** The idea was percolating even earlier, perhaps as far back as 2004 with the exhibition *Humble Masterpieces*, but things in museums often move at quite a glacial, elegant pace. We have been working on the research for this exhibition in earnest since 2014, and with real slogging gusto for the last eighteen months. It takes a really long time to bring together something of this size. So it has been a slow and deliberate process.

**MM:** How did Rudofsky lay the groundwork for *Items*?

**PA:** Well, in many ways his show *didn't*—because there was no other exhibition on fashion design between 1945 and 2017. And, in many ways, of course he did—because his project was a design-centered exploration of what we wear and why we wear it, and *Items* embraces that, too. He is part of MoMA's DNA in terms of its exhibition history, and our exhibition could not help but be inflected by his work, even though we, in the end, have a more ambiguous relationship with the term “modern” than he did. He was very oppositional within his own exhibition, very critically suggesting that clothing of his day was absolutely not fit for modern purposes. We see modernity as much messier, and indistinct in its causes and effects.

**MM:** Fashion is often dismissed as inferior to other forms of design. Why do you think this is the case, and how do you try to upend this perspective in the exhibition?

**PA:** Design itself is often sidelined, and so it has been my life's work to help people understand how central design is to everyday life, to give them a tool kit to better engage with it and be curious about it and give it the respect that it



deserves. I hope with this exhibition that fashion is firmly understood as within the design pantheon, and worth the same time, curiosity, and respect. And, of course, like all forms of design, fashion should be critically appreciated because it affects our environment, our economies, and our well-being.

**MM:** What was the first item that made it onto the list and why?

**PA:** I think the first item on there was the simple white T-shirt, because MoMA had it in our collection already from the *Humble Masterpieces* exhibition in 2004.



*Jumpsuit Specimen 2017* by Richard Malone, 2017, strikes a pose beside a classic 1980s Champion hoodie.

An evening dress by Paul Poiret, c. 1933-1935, at left, is one of the exhibition's 350 items.









**MM:** Are there any items you considered but ultimately did not include, and, if so, what were the reasons?

**PA:** Plenty! We originally had a list of more than five hundred items, and we whittled it down to a more manageable number, 111. One day, we may indeed do an exhibition where we pick some of the ones on the list that didn't make it! But one example of many is the sock, which has such an intriguing history that crisscrosses hygiene, knitting techniques, memory, nostalgia, wartime gifts, you name it! But we had to pick a number, otherwise we never would have finished the exhibition.

**MM:** How is fashion distinct from other forms of design such as architecture or furniture?

**PA:** Fashion is quite literally inescapable. In that way, I believe it's very much like architecture in that it is something we engage with every day, often without ever really, truly considering its impact on us in depth. Where fashion is distinct is in the fact that we carry it on our bodies. It literally touches our skin on a continuous basis, and thus we have an incredibly haptic and immediate relationship to it, which brings with it a whole new set of design considerations that are quite distinct from those of architecture, products, furniture, or many other types of design.

**MM:** As you delved into the acquisitions and planning for the show, what were the challenges? And any particularly surprising discoveries?

**PA:** One of the challenges that I have talked about a lot was finding mannequins for the exhibition, something that we've never done before at MoMA. We are really blessed to have Tae Smith, who was our master dresser, helping us. We did not acquire works for this exhibition; we borrowed the majority of them from other collections.

**MM:** Moving forward, is MoMA going to expand the acquisition of items under the rubric of "fashion"?

**PA:** A large part of my time at MoMA has been spent expanding the definition of design to truly bring it into the contemporary moment, so thinking about the digital, synthetic biology, and the like. I hope that I'm able to continue to expand this, and that fashion can be part of this conversation.

**MM:** It took nearly three-quarters of a century for MoMA to hold an exhibition on fashion again. Is this an anomaly or the jumping-off point for future exhibitions on the subject? And, if yes, what might be on the horizon?

**PA:** We are just catching our breath after this exhibition has opened, and so I can't say for sure what is on the horizon, but I am very hopeful that this is absolutely not an anomaly but an experiment that will engender further exhibitions of this type. It would be remiss for us not to understand fashion as firmly part of the history of modern and contemporary design. Watch this space! **M**

Facing page, clockwise from top left:

A model wears a Mohiniattam sari drape with peplum pleats, a style from Kerala, India, by Taanbaan, part of *The Sari Series: An Anthology of Drape*, a digital anthology of sari styles, 2017.

Levi Strauss & Co. waist overalls, 1890.

Kinematics dress by Nervous System (Jessica Rosenkrantz and Jesse Louis-Rosenberg), 2014. Laser-sintered nylon.

The very first item that made it onto MoMA's list: the white T-shirt.

Below: Photograph of Salwar kameez and sari as part of a photo essay by Bobby Doherty for the catalogue.






# Boundless curiosity

By Priya Khanchandani





On a visit to his London design studio, we hear about Ron Arad's lack of restraint, his newest commissions, and his latest crush

Ron Arad's studio in North London is filled with his iconic pieces and works in progress, reflecting the breadth of his design projects and his active creative process.

Ron Arad.







The Big Easy, 1988, in mirror-polished stainless steel.

Rendering of the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre designed by Adjaye Associates and Ron Arad Architects as it will appear next to the Houses of Parliament in London.

**RON ARAD ISN'T AT EASE** when asked to define the boundaries of his work. "What boundaries?" is his rhetorical response, having comprehensively shown me his studio in North London, a characterful space with a swooping roof and a floor that swells into a wavelike curl. Hidden from the main road and set back from its busy Camden environs by a courtyard, it is approached up a set of narrow stairs and through an unassuming door that might befit a garden shed, only to give way to the elaborate interior.

"A lot of people want to discuss breaking boundaries," Arad continues. "I think the more you discuss breaking boundaries, the stronger you make them." He is seated on a sofa made of three soft cylinders, wearing one of his signature hats, though what he is saying is intensely serious. His work, like his manner, strikes a fine balance between maverick and measured. The

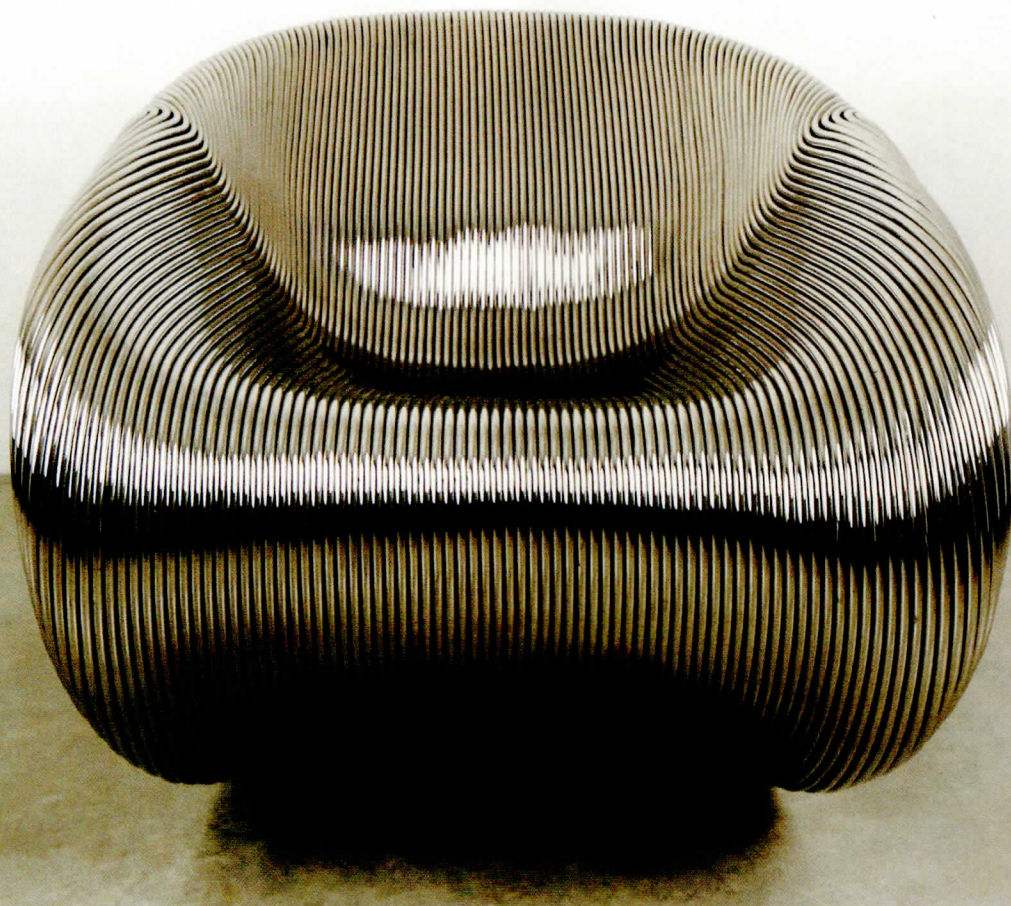
London-based designer, who was born in Tel Aviv and works internationally, is busy with an assortment of projects that resist any notion of set parameters, ranging from studio work such as public sculpture to designs for industrially produced furniture by Kartell and Vitra. Ron Arad Architects is also developing a number of projects including a high-profile Holocaust Memorial adjacent to the Houses of Parliament in London, in partnership with Adjaye Associates. In other words, the studio might look relatively modest, but its reach clearly outdoes its size.

Arad is known for combining industrial design with a more artistic practice. The latter currently includes work for numerous forthcoming exhibitions. One opens this November at Grob Gallery in Geneva and will showcase ten one-off pieces. Another at Gordon Gallery in Tel Aviv, opening in March 2018, will









MT Rocker, 2005, in polished stainless steel.

A two-story fireplace in stainless steel designed for a private residence in Aspen, Colorado, 2009.

Useful, Beautiful, Love, 2016, in cedar and steel.

comprise an installation of curved tables with reflective surfaces like puddles, reminiscent of *L'Esprit du Nomade*, a series first shown at the Cartier Foundation in Paris. A third, titled *Fishes and Crows*, will open in June 2018 at Friedman Benda in New York, and will consist of a series of works made between 1988 and 1992. And a fourth, which is planned for LA next year, stems from a past project that involved squashing Fiat 500s into artworks and may involve crushing another vehicle, but the details are still under cover. "I'm not destroying them," was all the designer would give away, "I'm immortalizing them like pressed flowers."

Displayed in his basement gallery is a chair carved into a tree trunk, a version of which is to be the centerpiece of the Geneva exhibition, inscribed with the phrase: "Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful, or love." These are the slightly altered words of William Morris, a figure closely associated with the arts and crafts movement in the UK in the second half of the nineteenth century, which advocated traditional craftsmanship over industrialization. It is an

intriguing tribute given that Arad says he is not, and never wished to be, a craftsman, but hints that he shares Morris's fascination for both utility and art.

Despite being a hefty chunk of wood, when you sit in the seat carved out of it you find, rather unexpectedly, that it glides back and forth smoothly, like a rocking chair. The piece exhibits a playfulness that permeates every corner of the studio—every shelf, ledge, and other available surface—from a crushed steel champagne bucket and several sets of spectacles to a 3-D-printed polyamide spiral, which manages to allure without suggesting an obvious purpose.

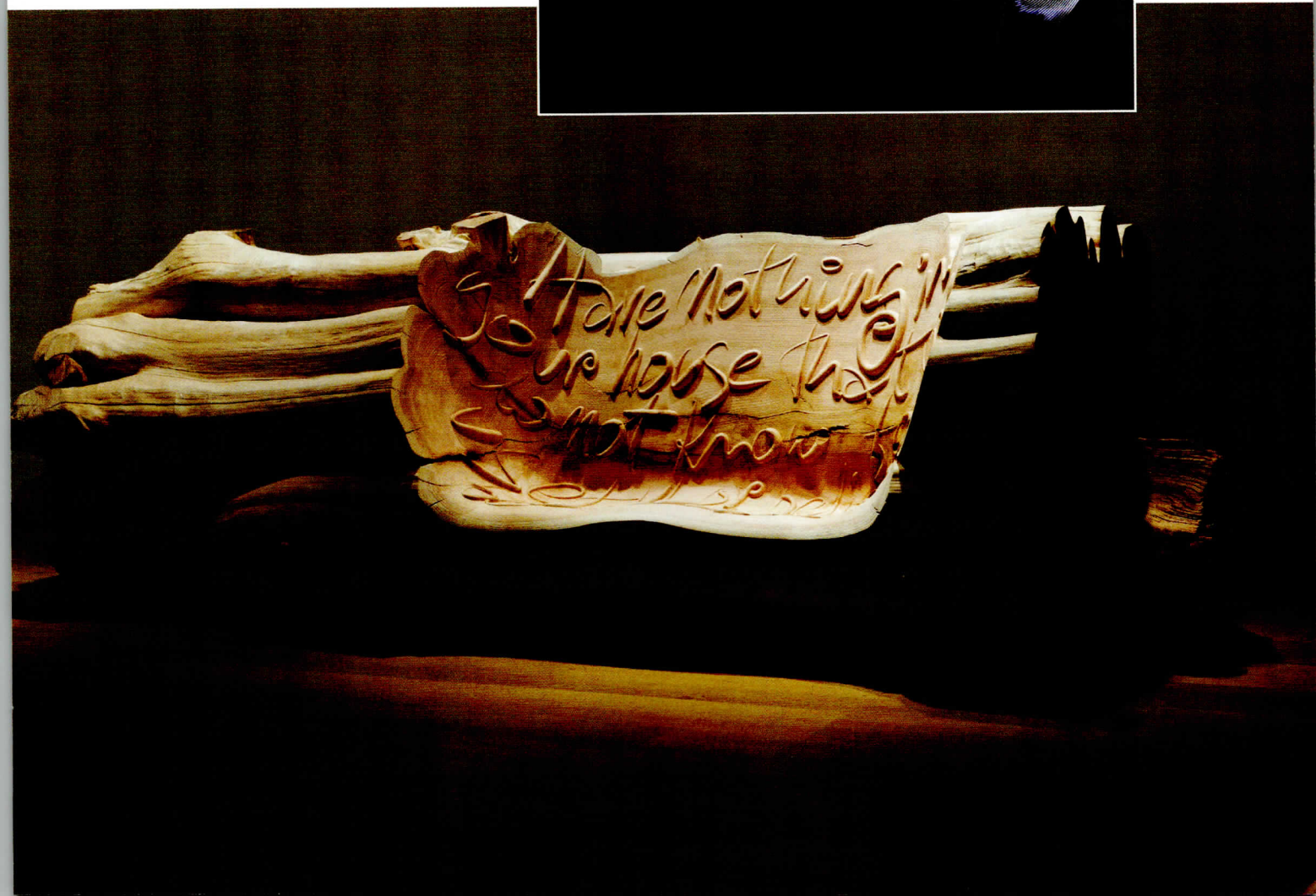
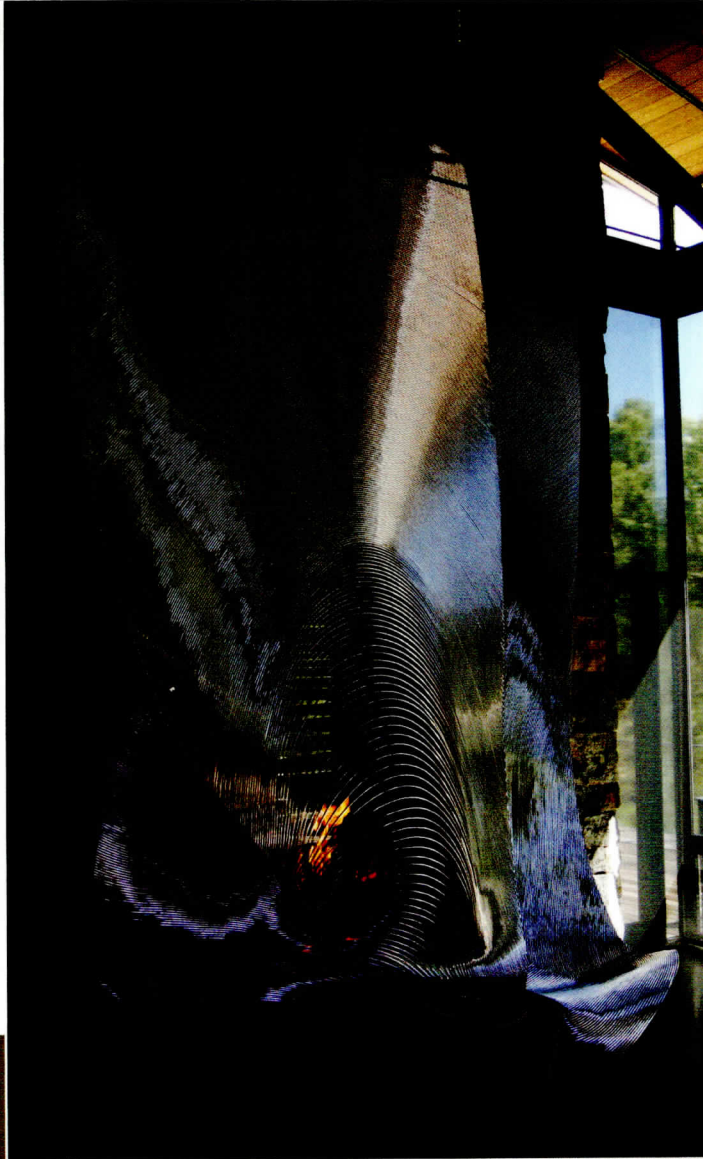
The variety of steel chairs Arad has designed over the years, many of which are also kept here, is astonishing. Some invite you to sit on their curved forms, while others are made for you to lie down on at a variety of angles, depending on how they have been shaped. "At the beginning, my pieces were primitive and rough and badly made, so that became a post-rationalized way of discussing it: Why should everything be polished and finished?" he explains; "and then, when we got better and better at polishing and



finishing, like you can see in the Big Easy, it's like, ah, it's finished! Like a big piece of jewelry."

Arad's use of metal has moved on since the Big Easy, a metal armchair designed in 1988 and made from three curved sheets of steel; but he is still as playful as ever, as shown by his new work, which is preoccupied with crushing. "It's a dialogue between your will and what the material will agree to do for you," he says, "and when you crush, the whole thing has a time element; you can see things happening in front of you."

Flattening Fiat 500s with a hydraulic press has evolved into a more subtle use of steel, which is pushed into delicate folds in stunning two-story metal fireplaces. He has since moved on to the unapologetic crushing of three ninety-seven-foot-high heavy-duty metal columns, each four feet in diameter, for a new large-scale public commission that will be unveiled in downtown Toronto next spring. *Safe Hands*, as it is ironically titled, is designed to look as though it is about to topple over, thanks to the crushed lower sections and the fact that it will stand precariously close to the polished-mirror facade of a new building.



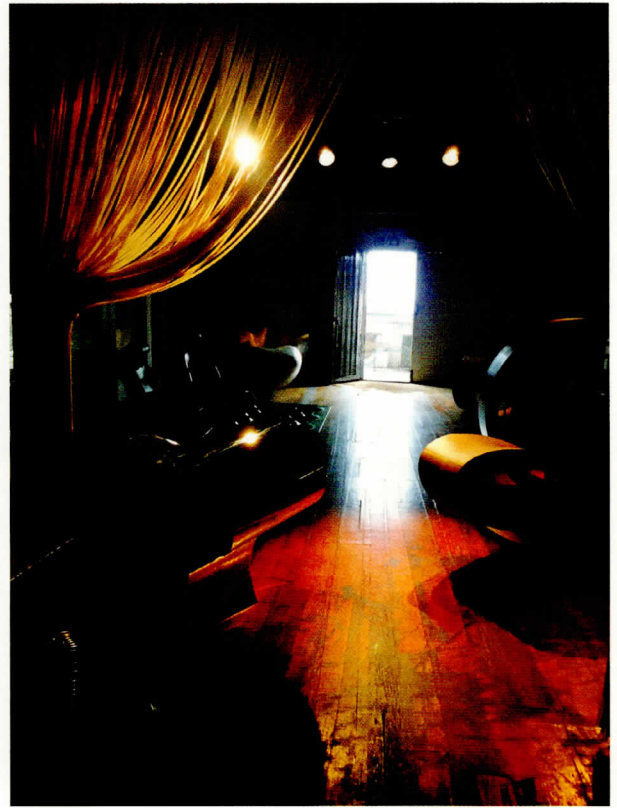


The studio also has several daring architecture projects underway that are no less artistically ambitious. A cancer hospital that will serve communities in both Israel and Palestine—the first such facility for residents of the West Bank—will be nestled into the sloping terrain and is designed so that patient waiting areas enjoy natural light. And a complex consisting of two towers, one of which will be the tallest in Tel Aviv, called ToHA, was inspired by the shape of an iceberg.

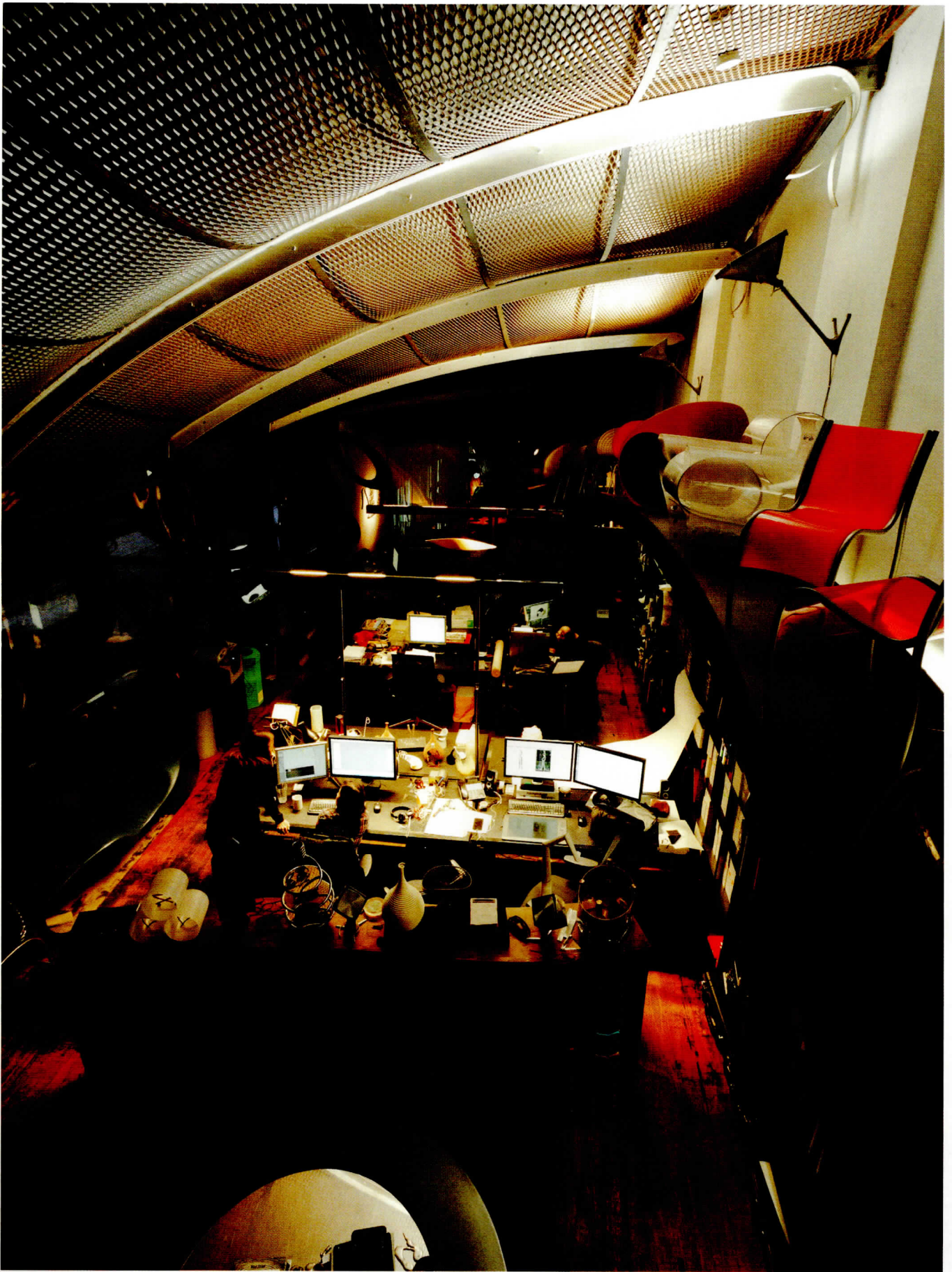
Although his work has defied set boundaries ever since he set up shop in the 1980s, there is something that makes Arad's practice whole. "For each project, the objectives are different. The destination is different. The problems are different. The number of people involved is different," he reflects, "but when I sketch for a building or when I sketch for a bench, it is the same pencil or the same tablet and the same history, the same likes and dislikes, the same curiosity that is at the base of everything." **M**

*Pressed Flower, Red,*  
2013.

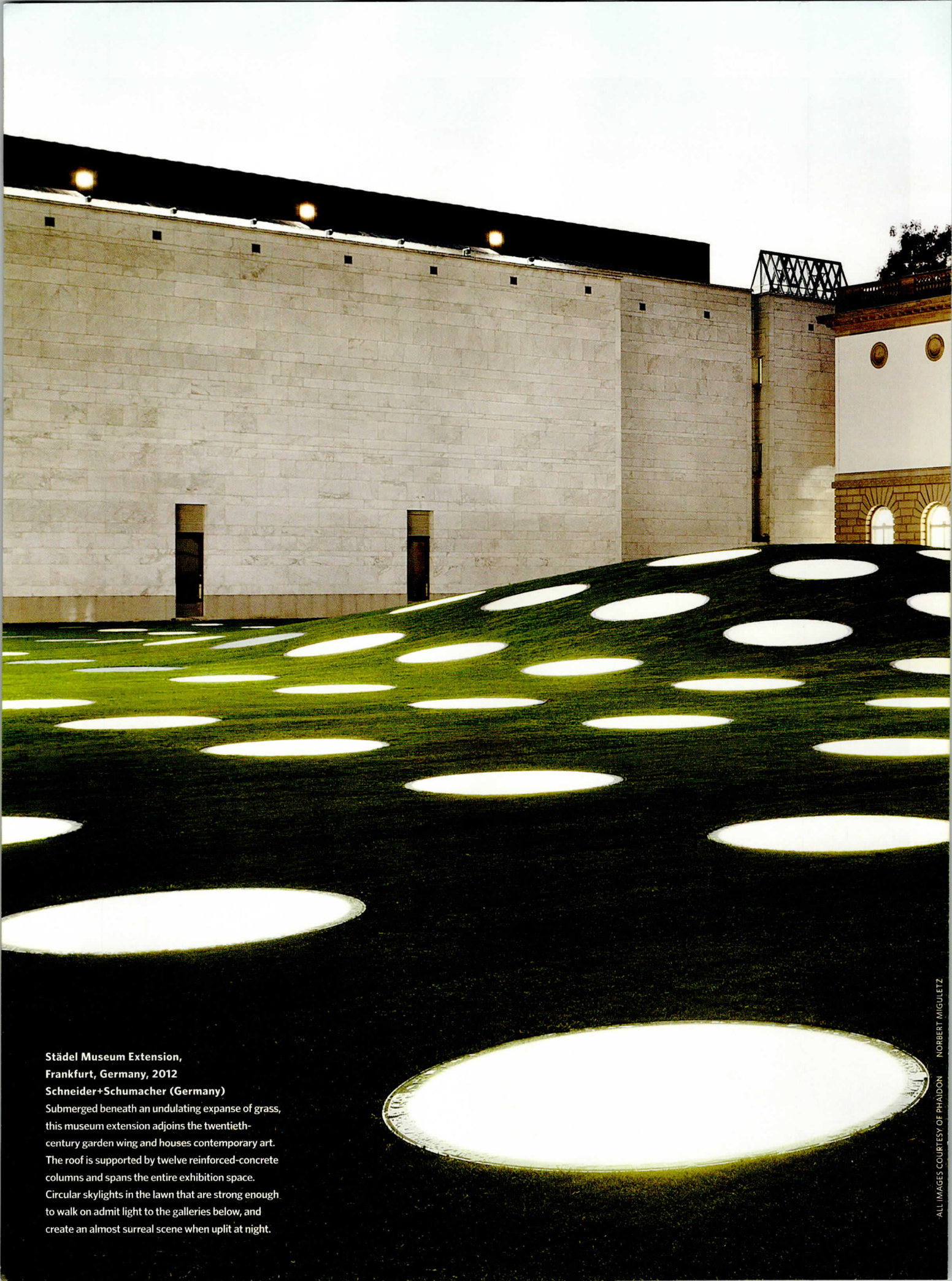
Two more views of  
Arad's studio.







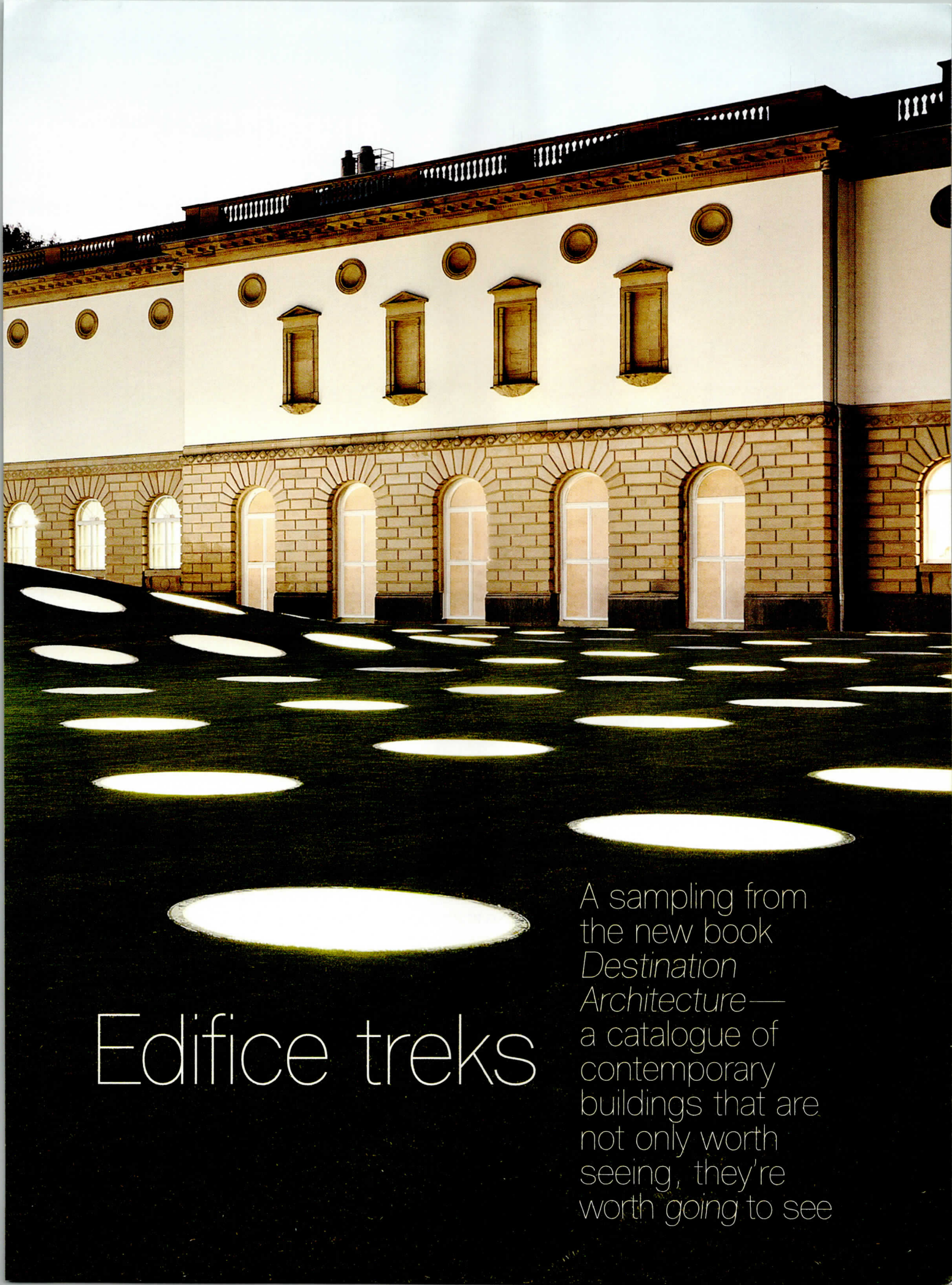




**Städel Museum Extension,  
Frankfurt, Germany, 2012  
Schneider+Schumacher (Germany)**

Submerged beneath an undulating expanse of grass, this museum extension adjoins the twentieth-century garden wing and houses contemporary art. The roof is supported by twelve reinforced-concrete columns and spans the entire exhibition space. Circular skylights in the lawn that are strong enough to walk on admit light to the galleries below, and create an almost surreal scene when uplit at night.





# Edifice treks

A sampling from  
the new book  
*Destination  
Architecture*—  
a catalogue of  
contemporary  
buildings that are  
not only worth  
seeing, they're  
worth going to see





**Fondation Louis Vuitton,  
Paris, France, 2014  
Frank Gehry (USA)**

This contemporary art museum houses the collection of Louis Vuitton chairman Bernard Arnault. The building comprises an assemblage of white blocks (which Gehry dubbed the icebergs), clad in panels of fiber-reinforced concrete, as well as twelve enormous glass-paneled sails supported by wooden beams. The structure seems almost poised to float away over the surrounding Bois de Boulogne.

**ARCHITECTURE HAS LONG BEEN** a part of travel plans. On a first trip to Paris, who wouldn't include a visit to the Eiffel Tower? But in 1997 a new type of tourism was born, when a museum opened in a congenial city of modest repute in northern Spain. The Guggenheim Bilbao was a stunner, a building like none ever seen before. Soon, visitors were flocking to marvel at its rolling, sweeping titanium-clad facade. The Frank

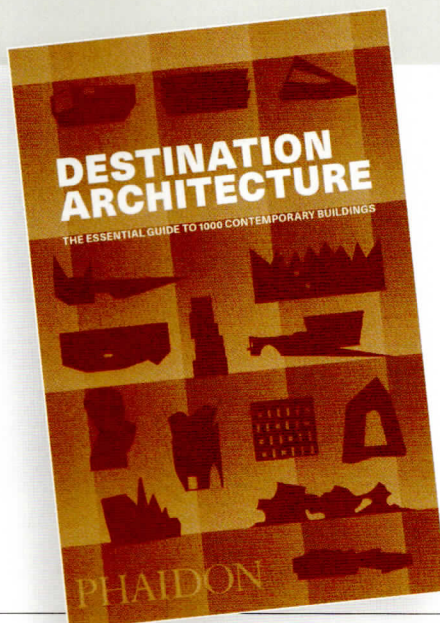
Gehry-designed building itself—not the art inside, nor the city around it—was the object of their journey.

Since then, to instill awe has been the goal of every ambitious architect, and hundreds of municipalities the world over have seen the rise of dramatic new buildings that hope to command the attention of a growing class of architectural tourist. *Destination Architecture: The Essential*





*Guide to 1000 Contemporary Buildings* (Phaidon, 2017) styles itself a comprehensive global travel guide to the contemporary built environment. The book includes sites from countries as culturally and geographically diverse as Argentina, Senegal, Denmark, the Philippines, Israel, Egypt, Lithuania, and the United States. The building types represented range from super-scale towers and tiny places of worship to high-tech cultural centers and regional rest stops. **M**



**Two Moon, Goyang, South Korea, 2015**

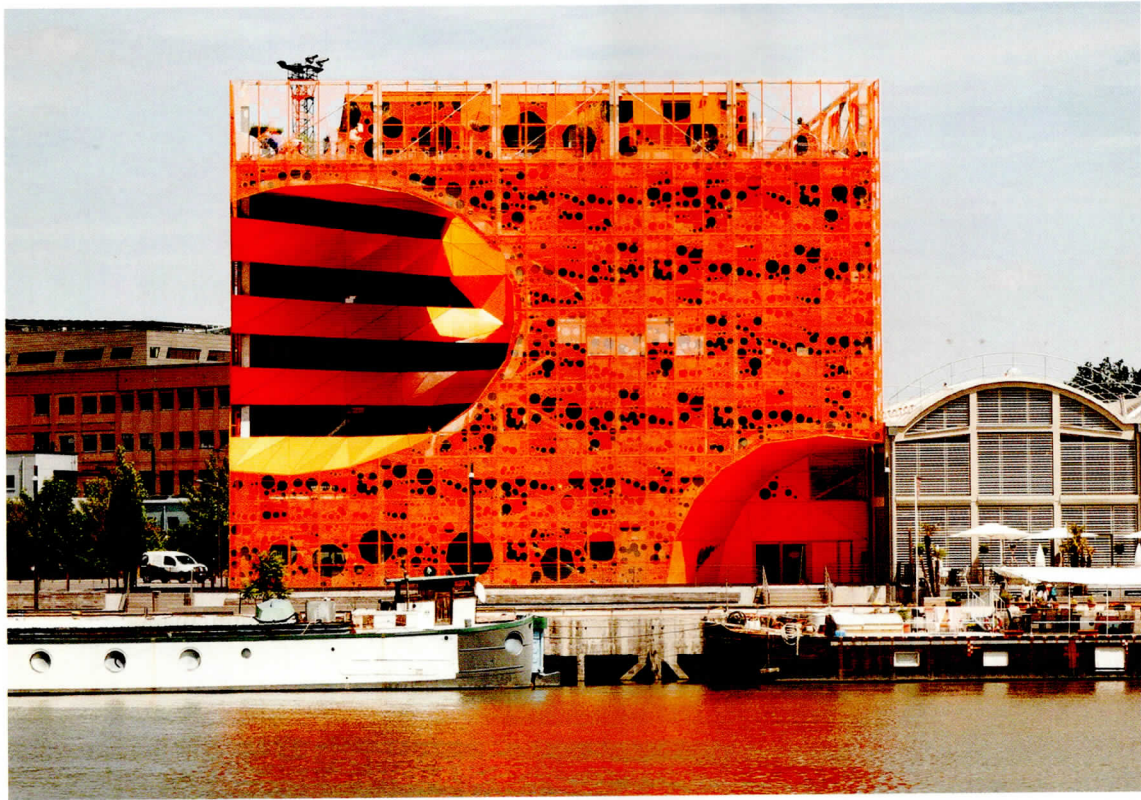
**Moon Hoon (South Korea)**

In response to the client's commission for two structures—one for him, and the other for his brother—these buildings were conceived as a pair. Their cast-concrete facades feature a huge carved-out hemisphere, creating two crescent-moon shapes. One structure contains a gallery and office space, while its twin includes a café.









**Nanjing Wanjing Garden Chapel, Nanjing, China, 2014**

**AZL Architect (China)**  
 A butterfly roofline tops this riverside chapel, creating a pleasingly simple silhouette. The exterior, formed by thin pillars of wood, is semi-transparent, allowing light to flood inside. Every single element of the interior, from the pews to the ceiling, is a luminous white.

**The Orange Cube, Lyon, France, 2011**

**Jakob + Macfarlane (France)**  
 On the riverfront in the city of Lyon, this five-story cultural center cuts a striking form—an orange cube punctured by an enormous conical hole. The resulting space is an atrium that rises through the heart of the volume. The opening is echoed at smaller and smaller scale by the perforations in the metal facade.

**Philharmonic Hall, Szczecin, Poland, 2014**

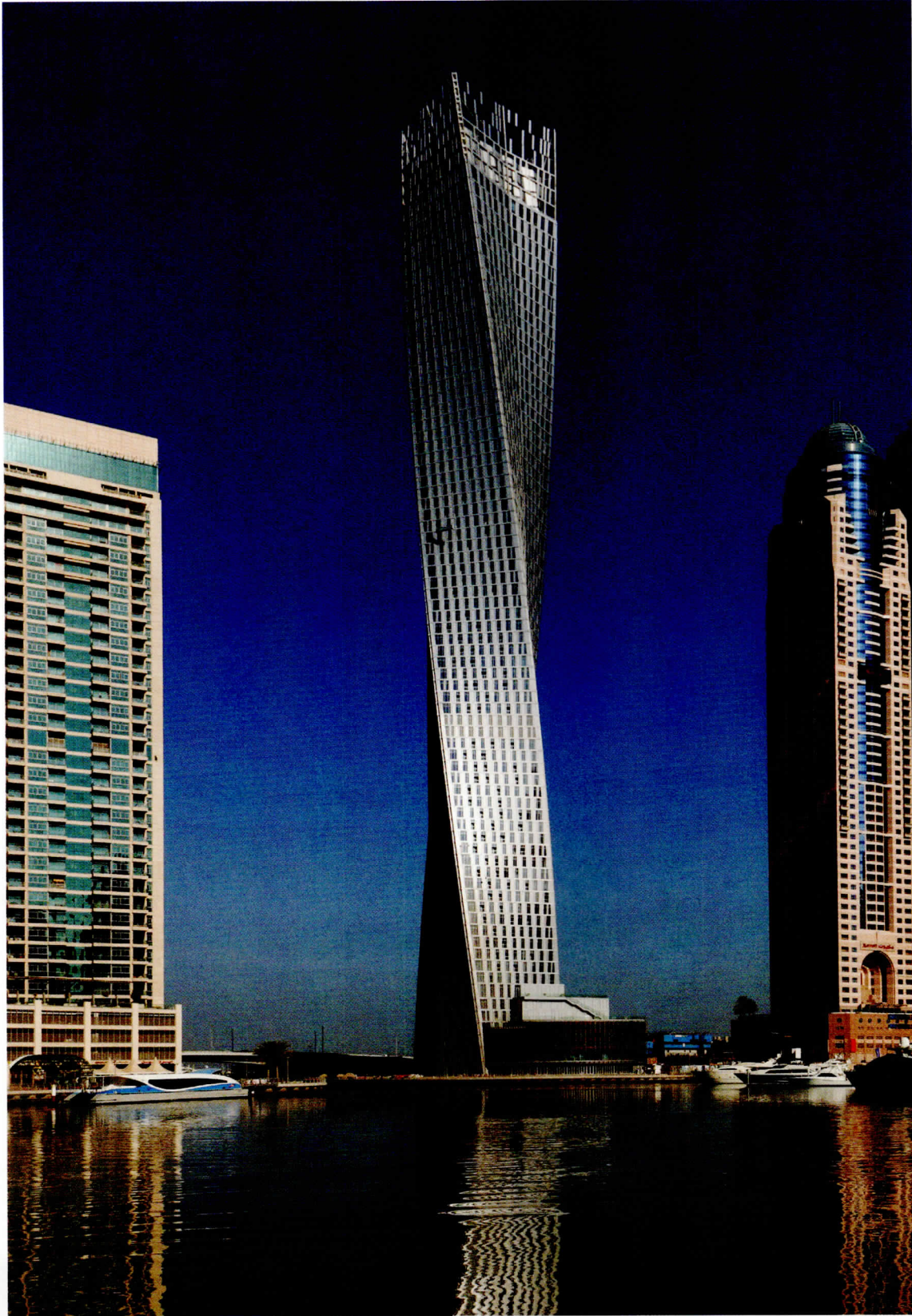
**Barozzi Veiga (Spain)**  
 The translucent ribbed-glass cladding of this concert hall contrasts dramatically with the brick and stone structures in the surrounding cityscape. The hall's most prominent feature is its zigzagging roofline, made up of a series of sharply pitched gables. It comprises a 1,000-seat symphony space and a smaller venue for chamber music.









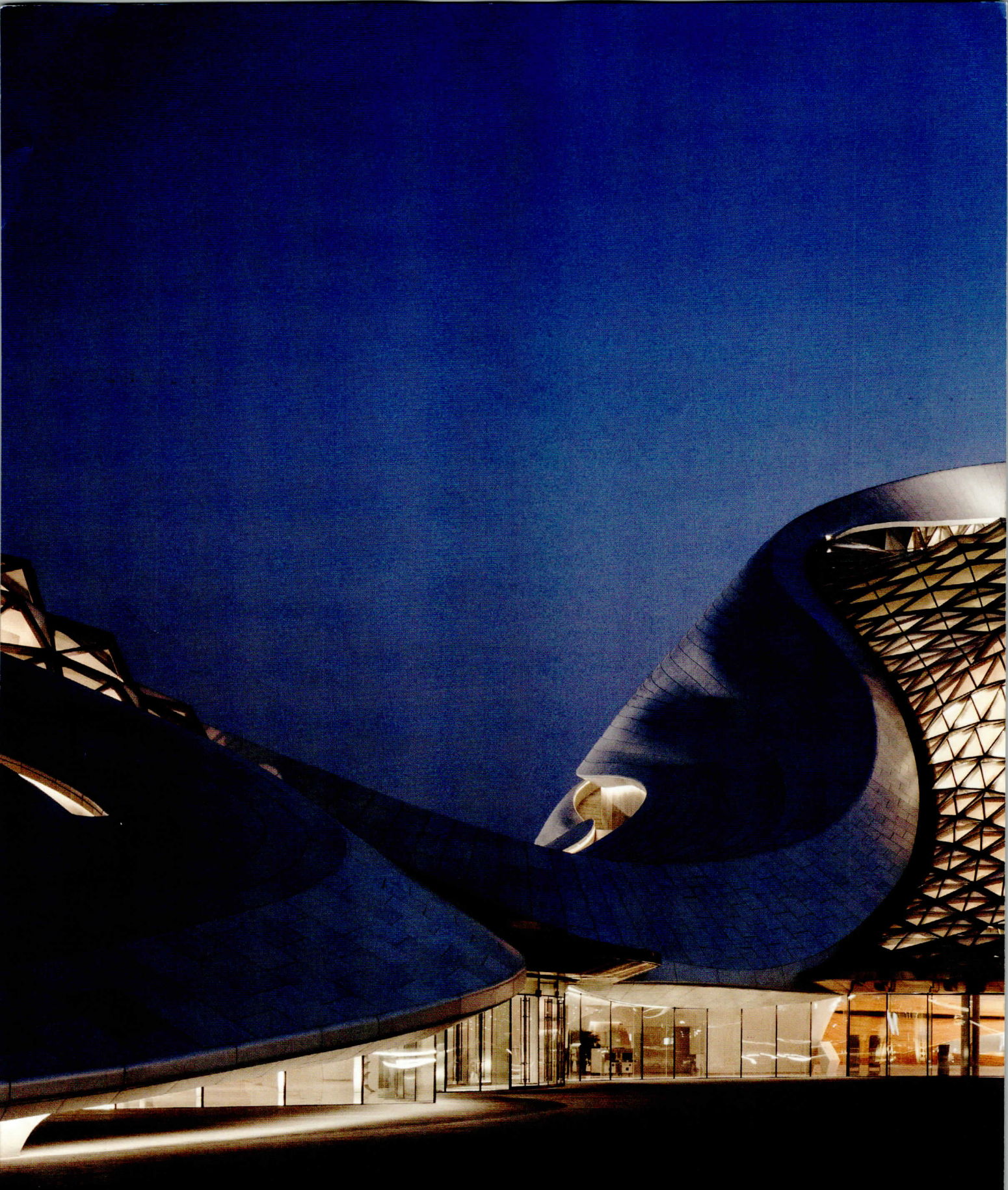


**Learning Hub, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 2015**  
**Heatherwick Studio (UK)**  
Nicknamed the “Dim Sum” for its likeness to a stack of steamer baskets, this structure features twelve towers, each with eight stories, comprising fifty-six rough-hewn cast-concrete pods. There are almost no straight edges—from the rippling walls, cast with pictographic motifs, to the slanted load-bearing pillars that resemble tree trunks.

**World Trade Center Transportation Hub, New York City, 2016**  
**Santiago Calatrava (Switzerland)**  
This \$4 billion transit center, nicknamed the “Oculus,” resembles a dove taking flight. The arched, elliptical structure features steel ribs that extend outward and upward. Its one hundred-meter-long skylight retracts once a year on September 11 for 102 minutes—the length of time the attacks lasted.

**Cayan Tower, Dubai, 2013**  
**SOM (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill) (USA)**  
Each of this skyscraper’s seventy-five floor plates is rotated slightly from the one below, resulting in a ninety-degree twist from bottom to top. This helps combat wind load and solar gain, but the benefit for the observer is the way it captures and reflects sunlight at different times of day, adding tremendous aesthetic appeal.



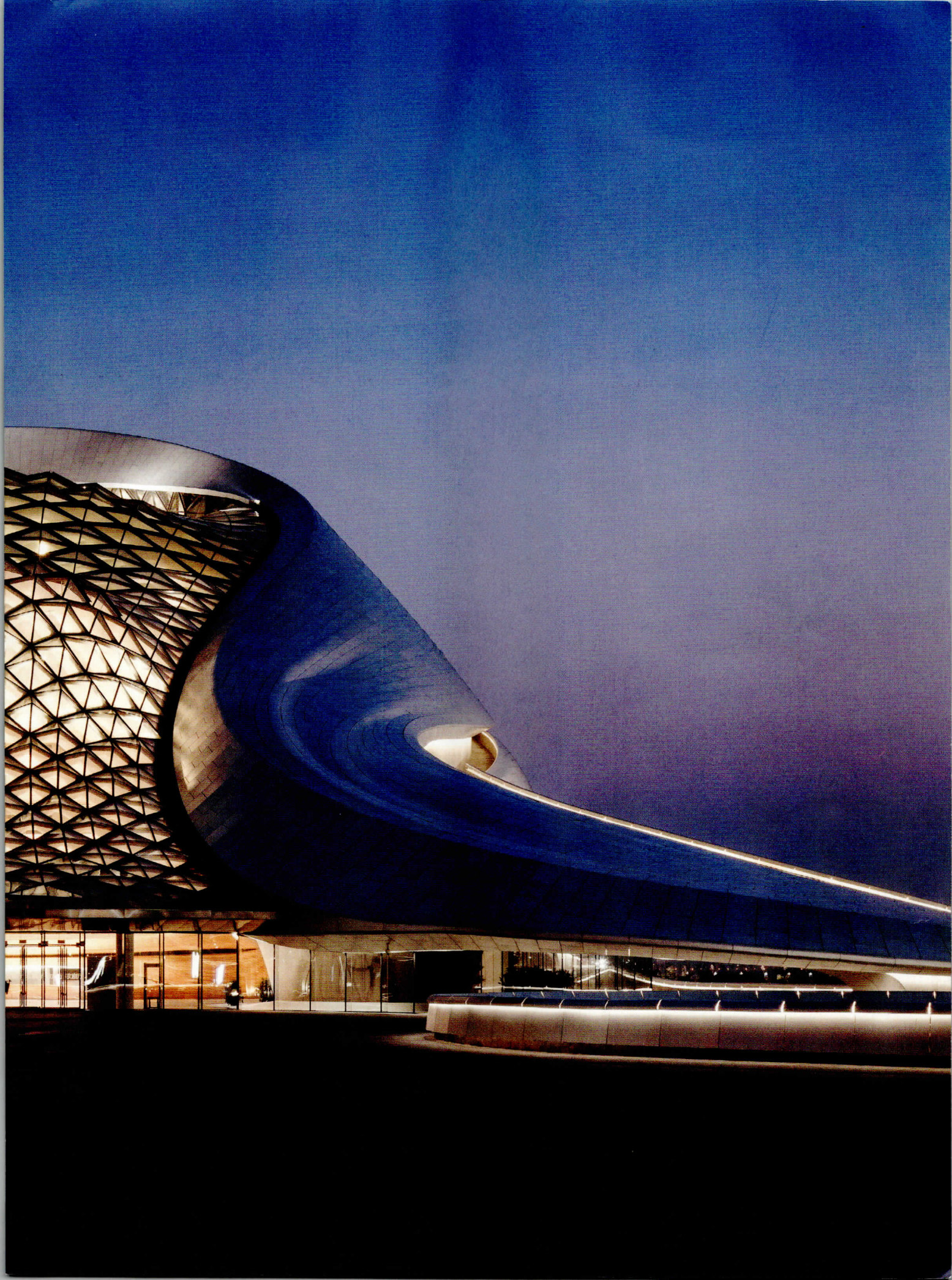


**Harbin Cultural Center, Harbin, China, 2014**


**MAD Architects (China)**

Referencing the region's wintry landscape of snow dunes, this cultural center is cloaked in curvaceous aluminum panels. Situated across a three-part floorplan, the main spaces include a 400-seat theater, a large public plaza for outdoor performances, and the grand theater, which is clad in sinuous bands of Manchurian ash.







A photograph of a modern, multi-level interior space. In the foreground, a round wooden dining table is set with several vases of colorful flowers. A wooden chair is visible. To the right, a staircase with wooden steps and a metal handrail leads upwards. A large, colorful sculpture of a figure in traditional attire stands on a grey pedestal. Another smaller sculpture of a figure is on a lower step. A red bull sculpture is perched on a ledge above. A framed abstract artwork is on the wall. The ceiling features a large, ornate chandelier and skylights. The floor is light-colored with dark square tiles.

A Los Angeles triplex designed in 1974 by Charles Moore is astounding on every level





# STAIRWAYS TO HEAVEN

Written and photographed by Kevin Keim

**NOT LONG AGO MARISTELLA CASCIATO**, a senior curator at the Getty Research Institute, came for lunch at the Los Angeles condominium architect Charles Moore designed for himself in 1975. When she arrived, she instinctively climbed all the way to the top of its highest staircase. “Charles Moore,” she said, looking back down through the layers of spaces, “really knew how to make you feel like you *inhabit* an architectural section! Le Corbusier and Moore shared this ability.”

The entire condo is really one gigantic staircase that just happens to have living spaces ingeniously twisted around and under the steps. Knowing that Maristella has long lived in Rome, I recalled to her that when Robert A. M. Stern first visited the condo, he said to Moore, “You’re trying to squeeze the Spanish Steps into 1,200 square feet!” If only. Had there been more square footage Moore might have gotten closer, but he could squeeze in only forty-five stair risers, exactly one-third of the Spanish Steps’ 135. And just as the Spanish Steps seem so much grander after one emerges from a narrow Roman street into the Piazza di Spagna, here the sense of monumentality is intensified by being stuffed into an improbably small stucco shell.

The condominium project originated in 1974, when Moore left Yale University, where he had served as a professor and dean of the School of Architecture, to join the faculty at UCLA. He would live in the condo for about ten years, until he moved to Austin, Texas, where he would live until his death in 1993. (Moore was famously incapable of staying in one place, sprinting continentally through academic posts and a series of eight homes he designed for himself.)

Several important items from Charles Moore’s collection have been repatriated to the apartment he designed for himself in Los Angeles, including a Gothic aedicula, a small shrine. Margie Shackelford, who with her late husband, Alex Caragone, amassed an epic folk art collection, contributed special pieces for the restoration, such as the Mexican ceramic figures and carved wooden statue of the Hindu god Hayagriva seen here. Tina Beebe invented the wallpaper by collaging foil squares that are traditionally burned on Chinese New Year’s for good fortune.





What you see from the street is a vivid example of how Moore plays with our perception of facade, section, and profile. Cuts and slices suggest—but do not give away—the spatial wonders within.

An archway salvaged from a San Francisco convent crowns the living space. Seen here are an example of the chaise Charles and Ray Eames designed for Billy Wilder in 1968; and a Kurve chair, designed by Karim Rashid in 2000. The earthenware jars at the base of the narrow staircase up the library wall were made in Hidalgo, Mexico.

Katharine Welsh purchased the condo from Moore in 1984. To her great credit, she lovingly maintained the place, changing practically nothing about it over her thirty-two-year occupancy. When she moved to Texas this past year, many were concerned that the condo's availability on the charged Los Angeles real estate market would result in its swift purchase and severe alteration, probably radically and irrevocably.

Architectural preservation lucked out. Perfect timing, combined with their love of design, inspired the architectural and landscape writer and publisher James Trulove and his partner Mallory Duncan to rescue the residence, even as potential buyers were lining up on the sidewalk. They would freshen up the interior and use it while visiting family and friends in the city, if the Charles Moore Foundation would help organize academic residencies in their absences, just as the foundation does with Moore's home and studio in Austin. (Trulove and Duncan also own a unit in the Sea Ranch Condominium, completed by Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker in 1965 as the first building in Sea Ranch in Sonoma County, a community planned to respect the area's natural beauty.)

When Moore relocated to Los Angeles, it was a kind of homecoming as he had spent many childhood winters there—his progressive parents anything but fond of Michigan snow. He knew volumes about the city and environs: its history, its quirks and peculiarities, its constant reinvention. He would eventually write one of its greatest, most astute, guidebooks: *The City Observed, Los Angeles: A Guide to Its Architecture and Landscapes*, (1984).

Just after Moore arrived to begin teaching in LA, two other professors and their wives approached him, familiar

with a remarkable house he was designing for yet another UCLA professor, Lee Burns, on a steep, narrow, wedge of land in Santa Monica. "We can see you are good with tight sites. We own a small property in Westwood, where we want to build a duplex," they told him.

Moore took a look. The Selby Avenue property, roughly 50 by 130 feet, was hemmed in on three sides by houses and apartment buildings. For months Moore had also been searching in vain for an affordable place for himself to live in West Los Angeles, clinging by the fingernails to financial solvency amid a miserable 1970s economy that was mercilessly cruel to architects. Maybe this was an opportunity to acquire a client *and* a place to live. "I'm so good with tight sites," he reported back. "I can get a *triplex* on it." The others welcomed him in, and they formed a tiny condominium association.

Moore enlisted Richard Chylinski in the effort. Chylinski had helped with projects such as wind studies for the Sea Ranch Condominium's courtyard. For the condo project, Chylinski would be draftsman and construction contractor. Over meals at a nearby Greek diner, Moore began sketching his ideas.

Moore adored Southern California's Spanish colonial heritage and its subsequent revival, and the condo would be a perfect opportunity to abstract and layer some of these themes. Since his future neighbors insisted on views of the Pacific (all the way across Santa Monica), Moore would devote the site's western end to their side-by-side units, which would each be roughly twice the size of his own bachelor pad. He would claim the site's eastern end along the street for his unit. The units had to stack vertically to gain the necessary square footage. Building codes would require an independent fire stair, shared as a secondary means of egress. He planned a sunny courtyard, with room for cars, a fountain, and pots of bougainvillea.

Eugene Johnson, a Williams College art historian, once observed that Moore's architecture "is always a procession, sometimes horizontal, sometimes vertical, sometimes both." This is a case of the vertical, made puzzle-like. Frank Gehry once recalled having dinner there, and then at his own breakfast table the next morning being unable to draw it, to figure it out.

First one enters the motor court, paved with concentric brick rings. Then there is a smaller private walled garden, where glass doors provide entry into the Moore condo. Just inside, the first flight of stairs rockets straight up, with a glimpse of a distant arch thirty-five feet above. Underneath the stair, Moore had just enough space to wedge in a hot tub and spacious shower room of galvanized, corrugated tin. A freestanding wall conceals a tiny bunkroom, accommodations for an unceasing parade of

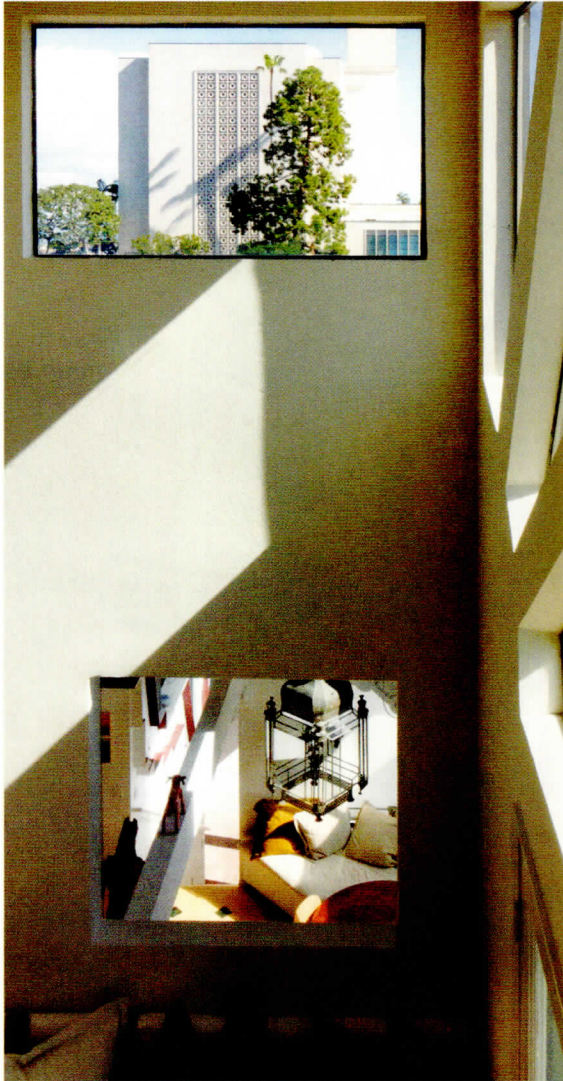






At the very top of the condo, a window frames the Los Angeles Mormon Temple, while below, an interior opening provides vertiginous views all the way back down to the entrance, from zenith to nadir, a deft visual feat making the temple float weightlessly above Moore's dining table.

The Slat-Back chair Moore designed in 1989 requires only one 4-by-8 sheet of birch plywood to construct. The pressed- and perforated-tin chandelier (which never left the apartment and which Moore outfitted with ordinary plastic hardware-store sockets) is from Morelia, Mexico.



guests, collaborators, and coauthors streaming back and forth from LAX.

As the stairs ascend to the second floor each step brings more and more layers above into focus. The steps have particleboard treads and glazed tile risers that flash green if sunlight happens to strike them just so. Otherwise they are graphic black stripes that exaggerate the extreme spatial compression and recession.

After scaling this flight of steps, one arrives, somewhat out of breath, on the piano nobile, where the straitlaced staircase suddenly takes on baroque pretensions, spilling and splaying into a tiny dining area that Moore fit in by clamping a "saddlebag" alcove onto the side of the building. The kitchen curls into what floor space remains. Around the stair's backside, a small terrace leads into the bedroom. But on those infrequent cold or stormy Los Angeles nights, one can also enter

the bedroom through a galvanized cabinet, a secret passage *under* the stair and *through* a closet, whose unfinished two-by-four walls give a "behind the scenes" impression, where one might bump into the rigger responsible for hoisting up all the architectural scenery on the other side.

At the summit of the stucco mountain, there is a living room and library, with views through cascading windows out over the neighboring houses, the sky often awash in technicolor Hollywood sunsets. During construction, Thomas Gordon Smith, who would later transform Notre Dame's architecture curriculum, alerted Moore that a San Francisco convent, St. Anne's Home, was headed for demolition. Its impressive arches were up for grabs for \$100 each. He felt Charles should have one. Moore concurred and immediately dispatched one of his architectural collaborators, Stephen Harby, up





north. Harby then had to maneuver the arch, far too big to fit in his sedan, back down the 101 freeway with half of it curling out of the open trunk of Moore's Pontiac Astra, like a mastodon bone being returned to the La Brea Tar Pits.

Winched up to the very pinnacle of the space, the arch caps it all off, the prize for huffing and puffing all the way up. But since the library wall, whose shelves accommodated folk art mixed in with the books, is the equivalent of two stories, yet another staircase was necessary, only inches wider than a standard set of shoulders. Now at the very, very, very top of the scene, one can gingerly turn around, mountain-goat-like, flip down a hinged plank, and sidestep behind the arch to get to the books and folk art on the opposite side.

Moore arranged his abundant folk art and childhood toys everywhere—on every square inch of horizontal



Along the staircase, maroon shelves are carved into the wall to form a niche, covered with Beebe's wallpaper. The door at the left leads into the narrow study where Moore organized his massive collection of architectural lecture slides. The Walnut stool is an Eames design of 1960. The ceramic sculpture of four mermaids is signed by Purepecha artist Antonio Felipe Cadelanio, Pátzcuaro, Mexico.

A wall of galvanized metal separates the entry from the bunkroom. The lacquer chest from Olinálá, Mexico, and the retablo filled with hundreds of tiny figures, from Ayacucho, Peru, are from the Shackelford and Caragonne collection.

surface: on pedestals, floors, windowsills, countertops, nightstands, tables, steps, the mantel, atop the crisscrossing beams. Never was this to be misinterpreted as clutter. Like Charles and Ray Eames, Moore understood that these miniatures and monuments offered enchantments of scale, worlds within worlds.

Peering down from the summit, one sees that the entire condo is one volume in which Moore has ingeniously knit plan and section together, so the two are really indistinguishable. The section cannot be understood without the plan; the plan makes no sense without the section. We are made constantly aware that we inhabit *space*. It is a reminder that to be modern is not to limit ourselves to a "style." True modernity is a set of ideas about the relationship between space and form, time and perception. To be modern is to be present. **M**



## Mutt as muse

Just look at that face! This photo from the new book *At Home with Dogs and Their Designers: Sharing a Stylish Life*, by Susanna Salk (Rizzoli), shows FoxyLady—a mixed breed owned by potter and designer Jonathan Adler and writer Simon Doonan—lounging atop a Pierre Paulin Ribbon ottoman in their Greenwich Village home.

Photograph by Stacey Bewkes