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BEHIND THE NUMBERS
Matthew Kennedy looks at the sale of an Ole Wanscher cabinet made of Cuban mahogany.

FORM AND FUNCTION
The Philadelphia Museum of Art puts the prodigious design world of Vitra on view; the Irish designer Eileen Gray finally begins to get her due. We look at sculpture in parks and gardens and look forward to Design Miami and several new galleries.

UP CLOSE
Peter M. Brant travels to Paris to sit down with the legendary dealers Robert and Cheska Vallois.

GRADING SYSTEM
Troy Seidman looks at the life of T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings and offers insight into his work.

GALLERY WALK
Patricia Lombard visits with the Los Angeles design dealer, curator, and tastemaker Joel Chen.

PRESERVATION PULPIT
As Robert Atkins explains, the Ai Weiwei exhibition now on view at Alcatraz points up the importance of a too-long-neglected building there.

STUDIO TOUR
The designer Jonathan Muecke, whose work is reductive and conceptual, talks to Mason Riddle.

BOOK SHELF
Danielle Devine reviews books on Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman, Ettore Sottsass, Christian Dior, Frank Lloyd Wright, and more.

CURATOR'S EYE
Museum specialists describe favourite objects under their care.

PARTING SHOT
Architect, landscape architect, and designer Mark Rios tells us why he loves the Hollywood sign.

UNFETTERED IMAGINATION: JEWELRY BY ARTISTS
Ranging from Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque to Anish Kapoor and Niki de Saint Phalle, jewelry designed by artists is more than wearable sculpture, it is also a new frontier in the collecting of art.

ENGAGING DESIGN
Caroline Baumann, now at the helm of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum talks to MODERN Magazine about her aspirations for the newly renovated and expanded museum and explains the new technologies that will guide visitors through it.

INTERVIEW BY AL EIBER

MAGIC REALISM
Two museum exhibitions—at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles—show us the remarkable range and imagination of design, art, and craft in contemporary Latin America.

ANDRÉS RAMÍREZ

GRID IRON: THE ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF VIVIAN MAIER
The nanny whose brilliance as a photographer was undiscovered in her lifetime left behind a body of amazing work, including a vivid chronicle of Chicago’s architecture.

FRANCES BRENT

FOUR IN 3-D
New technology has begun to come into its own, offering designers opportunities to go down heretofore unexplored paths. Of particular interest are works that play on historical material or offer new forms of adornment.

SARAH ARCHER

UNDER THE BRIDGE
George Sánchez-Calderón, who once built a scaled replica of Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoye under a Miami expressway, also lived and worked in that incongruous location. Then the state highway department decided to seize his home and studio, giving him one more opportunity to make a public statement with his art.

HUNTER BRAITHWAITE
For Americans, that was a good joke, because already our plastic wares were, for the most part, going more toward Kmart than Kartell, that is to say, the material and its products were being dumbed down for a perceived mass market with no aesthetic sensibilities. This was happening at almost the exact same time that the Italians were seeing, in the same manmade material, wide-ranging opportunities to create objects of enormous originality.

Looking at the stories in this issue, I am buoyed by the idea that in the past half century Americans have come to take design seriously, I say this even though I believe that American companies (and institutions, including civic and public institutions) still have a long way to go to match their European counterparts in incubating young designers and inculcating the importance of good design in the minds of the public at large.

The reopening (and rebranding) of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum will go a long way toward advancing all of this, as you will read in our interview by collector (and MODERN contributor) Al Eiber with the remarkable Caroline Baumann about the museum’s re-emergence after its renovation and expansion. The Cooper Hewitt is a linchpin in the effort to create a design-aware populace. You will also read about the Philadelphia Museum of Art’s exhibition bringing the work of the redoubtable Swiss company Vitra to center stage and honoring its longtime visionary head Rolf Fehlbaum.

Last summer I had the breathtaking experience (my heart pounds just thinking about it) of visiting Fehlbaum’s archival collection of chairs and lighting fixtures, mostly lamps, currently housed in a rather cramped basement with shelves lining almost every available space. The collection is encyclopedic but fascinating, not only because it showcases the work of so many remarkable designers but because it does so by celebrating two of the most basic household necessities—a place to sit and a light to see by.

I think that too often we find ourselves starstruck, seeking out the elusive—the rarest design, the most famous architect, or (dare I say it) the most expensive object—when in fact, there’s extraordinarily good design close at hand. Think about this the next time you need a new toothbrush or colander or car, even. Because in the end, the above mentioned Mr. McGuire probably wasn’t that far off base after all.

THE PHOTO ON THIS PAGE is a true period piece, culled from the archives of the Achille Castiglioni Foundation in Milan. You can’t look at it without calling up a host of images, ranging from James Bond to Mad Men. It shows the great Italian designer Achille Castiglioni, looking dapper and handsome with just a hint of graying hair at his temples and his tie just slightly askew. He is sitting next to a stool he and his brother Pier Giacomo designed in 1969 for the Italian company Kartell. You can’t buy that stool (it is known as the Rocchetto stool, and sometimes considered to be a small side table) any more, except at auction, where, when it comes up, it can command a serviceably high price. And it’s plastic.

I was reading the recently published comprehensive four hundred-page history of Kartell recently, and though Kartell is very much with us still, continuing to innovate and delight us with its products, I found myself feeling a little nostalgic. I am sure I am not the only person who somehow conflates Kartell with that memorable scene in Mike Nichols’s 1967 film The Graduate, where Dustin Hoffman (as Benjamin Braddock) is confronted by a family friend:

Mr. McGuire: I just want to say one word to you.
Just one word.
Benjamin Braddock: Yes, sir.
Mr. McGuire: Are you listening?
Benjamin: Yes, I am.
Mr. McGuire: Plastics.
Benjamin: Exactly how do you mean?
Mr. McGuire: There’s a great future in plastics.

Mr. McGuire: Just one word to you.
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Images © Sid Avery //images
OSCAR NILSSON (SWEDEN) Credenza. Oak and brass. J.Wickman Cabinetmaker. Circa 1940. H_80 cm (31.5 in) L_203 cm (80 in) P_60 cm (19.7 in). 40 000 / 60 000 €

AXEL JOHANN SALTO (DENMARK, 1686-1961) - Unique piece. Colossal Stoneware vase with sung glaze. Royal Copenhagen manufacturer, signed and stamped. Before 1947. H_54.5 cm (21.5 in). 70 000 / 90 000 €

KAARE KLINT (DENMARK, 1886-1954) - Special order. Architect's Cabinet from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Pine. Stamped. 1942. 15 exemplar made, only model available on sale, the others are still on display at the academy. H_138 cm (54.5 in) L_101 cm (39.8 in) P_72 cm (28.3 in). 50 000 / 70 000 €
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*Woven Bed* by Franaje Killaars
CONTRIBUTORS

HUNTER BRAITHWAITE's mother was an intelligence officer in the Air Force, so he was born in the Philippines and had a nomadic childhood, though he considers Tidewater Virginia to be his home. During a hiatus from school, he began writing for National Geographic's travel books, moved to Shanghai, and then to Miami—where he became editor of the quarterly arts publication Miami Rail and covered the city's burgeoning art scene for an array of publications ranging from Ocean Drive Magazine to the Paris Review. He curates the occasional exhibition—including one forthcoming at the Miami Dade College Museum of Art and Design, even though he's just moved again, this time to Memphis, where his fiancé works for the Army Corps of Engineers. Although he studied English literature, Hunter is a self-professed sucker for the less literary stuff—"sci-fi, crime novels, etc.," and when not writing can be found out on his bicycle, scouring Asian markets, or contemplating the purchase of a motorcycle.

CECILY MOTLEY is an associate director at the Louisa Guinness Gallery in London. After graduating with a degree in history from Balliol College, Oxford, she joined the valuation department at Christie's London in 2009. Despite being Titian-haired and having been marched around innumerable Gothic churches as a child, Cecily is interested in all things modern. In 2012 she was lured by the siren song of twentieth-century and contemporary wearable art to Louisa Guinness Gallery, which specializes in jewelry made by artists. There she has been responsible, amongst other things, for the gallery's research and writing. Cecily lives in East London. Hobbies include amateur interior design and cooking. She would claim reading among her life skills, but was recently conquered by The Count of Monte Cristo.

SARAH ARCHER is a writer and independent curator based in Philadelphia. Her articles and reviews have appeared in numerous publications including Journal of Modern Craft, American Craft Magazine, Ceramics: Art and Perception, Hand/Eye, and MODERN. As the senior curator at the Philadelphia Art Alliance, she organized many exhibitions, including a site-specific installation by Beijing-based artists Song Dong and Yin Xiuzhen. Prior to that, she was the director of Greenwich House Pottery in New York City and a curatorial assistant at the Museum of Arts and Design there. Growing up, she says she was a "auction house/museum brat" whose grandmother always had a "concept" Christmas tree—entirely in one color or theme—that sparked her appreciation for design. She has an irrational love of small, dignified dogs and likes to cook and to travel to places where both the coffee and the architecture are really good.

ROBERT ATKINS is a University of California, Berkeley-trained art historian who has written for more than one hundred publications throughout the world. A former staff columnist for the Village Voice, his most recent book is Censoring Culture: Contemporary Threats to Free Expression. After Rupert Murdoch axed his job at the Voice, he began producing digital media. His pioneering online resources include the City University of New York’s TalkBack! A Forum for Critical Discourse; Artery: The AIDS-Arts Forum; and such startups as Media Channel, the Arts Technology Entertainment Network, and ArtSpeak China, inspired by his book series of the same name and the only bilingual wiki devoted to contemporary Chinese art. He splits his time between San Francisco and ever-so-modernist Palm Springs.
Axel Johannes Salto (1889-1961)
Vase, 1945
Sold September 17, 2014 | $272,000

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Delving Deeper
OLE WANSCHER’S FINE CRAFTSMANSHIP PROVES ITS WORTH
By MATTHEW KENNEDY

LOT 850/1149 Bruun Rasmussen
Auctioneers’ Modern Furniture
sale, Copenhagen, September 29, 2014: A Cuban mahogany cabinet
designed by Ole Wanscher and made
by A. J. Iversen, 1940s. Estimated at
kr 20,000 to 30,000 (approximately
$3,400-$5,100), the piece sold for
kr 50,000 (approximately $8,550).
Some reasons for the unexpectedly
high price:

Academia and Praxis
Ole Wanscher’s nearly lifelong career in
design was framed by his time at the
Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, first
as a student and ultimately as a teacher.
After studying under Kaare Klint—an icon
of Danish design—from 1924 to 1927, he
graduated from the institution with a de-
gree in architecture focusing on furniture.
Almost thirty years later in 1955, Wan-
scher returned to the school to take over
Klint’s position, which he would maintain

In the interim, Wanscher honed his
eye through his design practice. One of
his most procreative activities was help-
ing inaugurate the Copenhagen Cabinetmak-
ers’ Guild Exhibitions in 1927, annual events
that gave him a forum to display his work and
precipitated his long collaboration with A. J.
Iversen. A designer and cabinetmaker in
his own right, Iversen realized some of Wanscher’s
most notable designs, including this cabinet. In
these collaborations, Wanscher catered largely
to wealthy clients, seeking to conjure exclusive
pieces made of expensive materials, such as
rosewood and, with this cabinet, Cuban ma-
hogany. Wanscher also utilized less costly ma-
terials such as oak and Oregon pine for some
mass-produced furniture, but, according to
Peter Kjelgaard, specialist at Bruun Rasmus-
sen Auctioneers, these cheaper specimens
are exceptions.

The Modern Past
Wanscher’s father, Vilhelm, was an ac-
claimed art historian who traveled extensively,
often bringing his son as a travel companion.
These tours proved immensely influential in
Ole’s practice, as he saw the lush landscape
of historic design, particularly that of England,
Greece, and Egypt. Later in his career, these
experiences and his teaching would coalesce
into The Art of Furniture: Five Thousand Years of
simplified form and purity of taste. On the oc-
casion of the first exhibition of his work in New
York in 2003, held nearly twenty years after his
death, Roberta Smith of the New
York Times eloquently observed: “His sensitivity to the luster
and living delicacy of wood enabled him to
bring organic life and a rich sense of the past to
the indelibly modern spareness of the Interna-
tional Style.” Though at times contrasting with
his contemporaries for his adherence to past
forms, Wanscher received much appreciation
for his nuanced and elegant blend of classicism
and modernism. History reverberates through
the majestic paneling of this cabinet with its
symmetry and stacked geometry suggesting
the lines of Egyptian furniture.

Points for Craftsmanship
“Good craftsmanship will still find a buy-
er,” said Wanscher in a 1932 discussion of
materials. Good words for a craftsman to
live by, and even better when the future
proves them true. Kjelgaard was drawn to
Wanscher’s cabinet because of the virtuos-
ity of its craft and the rarity of this type of
object at auction. The piece was consigned
by a private collector in Denmark, unaware
of its potential. A number of Wanscher
pieces have been presented at auction as
of late, most recently at Phillips, and most
often selling comfortably within estimate.
Kjelgaard had confidence in the reputation
of Wanscher and his work with Iversen, but
knew that a cabinet of this size tends to
be too cumbersome for buyers at
auction, and thus estimated it
somewhat conservatively.
Fortunately, the all-seeing connoisseurial eye of the
market fixed its gaze on
the cabinet and it en-
tranced a number of
bidders. As a poetic un-
derscoring to Wanscher’s
international and historical
influence, the cabinet went
to a Chinese art collector
who is venturing into the Nor-
dic design market. “You could say,”
proposes Kjelgaard, “that it shows there still
exist pockets of twentieth-century design where
great buys are still possible.”

Furniture and Interiors, still
a prominent book on the
history of furniture.
This extracurricular edu-
cation manifests itself
subtly and profoundly in
Wanscher’s designs. The eyes
of past civilizations, dynasties,
and eras guide the slender lines of
his pieces, creating an austerity not of
somber tone but steeped in reverence for
history. The smooth modernist hand levels
ornamentation and excess, leaving behind a
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RUHLMANN, JAQUES-EMILE
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Made in France  Circa: 1925  Ref: 4310-180

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JEAN DESPRES
Honoring Vitra and its Decades of Good Design

Rolf Fehlbaum was just sixteen years old and already a fan of American jazz and the works of Mark Twain when he accompanied his father on a trip to America in 1957. There he met George Nelson and Charles and Ray Eames because his father was sealing a deal to become the European manufacturer for Herman Miller, to wit: some of the most important furniture designs of a generation. Young Rolf had gone along in part as a translator, but the experience ended up transforming him, and eventually his family’s company, Vitra. “I had never met a designer before, but I quickly learned that they were very special beings: cool and sovereign,” he says today, almost six decades later. “They designed products, but also a world.”

Fehlbaum went on to get a doctorate in the social sciences, but eventually took over the helm at Vitra. And in his long tenure there (he came into the company in 1977 and is now chairman emeritus), he has made it possible for us all to experience some of the joy he’s found in design. At Vitra he has commissioned work from an astounding roster of designers, who have produced furniture, objects, and buildings that challenge, please, provoke, delight, and charm us.

The list of architects and designers (Fehlbaum often refers to them as “authors”) is long and star-studded—Frank Gehry, Herzog and de Meuron, Zaha Hadid, Hella Jongerius, Marc Newson, Ron Arad, Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Maarten Van Severen, Jasper Morrison, Antonio Citterio, and Alberto Meda (to name just some), not to mention the Eameses, Miller, Verner Panton, and Jean Prouvé. The work ranges from objects you can hold in your hand up to factory-sized buildings.

At Vitra’s core, says Fehlbaum, is “respect for the designer and the belief that good design can change the world—admittedly in some hard to describe way.”

This winter the Philadelphia Museum of Art is honoring both Fehlbaum and Vitra with a wide-ranging exhibition (it includes furniture and other objects, drawings, photographs, books, and more). Fehlbaum himself curated the show, aptly titled Vitra—Design, Architecture, Communication. In addition, in November Fehlbaum received the annual award given by the museum’s influential design support group, Collab. Collector and author Lisa Roberts says Collab sought to honor Vitra’s innovative approach to furniture design and Fehlbaum’s visionary leadership. “His creative collaborations with leading international architects and designers made Vitra one of the most design-forward furniture companies in the world,” Roberts says.

The company’s official home is in Switzerland, but the more widely visited Vitra Campus is just over the Swiss-German border in Weil am Rhein. In addition to structures by Gehry, Herzog and de Meuron, Hadid, Nicholas Grimshaw, SANAA, Tadao Ando, and Álvaro Siza, the campus features two important (transplanted) small mid-century buildings, one by Prouvé, the other by Buckminster Fuller. Fehlbaum “is really a collector of buildings,” says Kathryn.
Hiesinger, the Philadelphia Museum’s senior curator of decorative arts. On the campus he also added a major sculpture by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen and, most recently, a large-scale participatory artwork from Belgian artist Carsten Höller in the form of a giant slide.

The Vitra Design Museum, one of Gehry’s buildings on the campus, mounts important exhibitions on both historic and contemporary designers; on view through December is Alvar Aalto: Second Nature, but previous notable shows have covered topics ranging from Czech cubism to Gerrit Rietveld. VitraHaus, where there are also a shop and a café, features a multistory installation that tells the story of the company’s long-enduring product lines.

“All product sends messages, good or bad, confusing, boring or encouraging,” he says. “The designer is the creator of these messages and if she or he is a real author there is consistency between the different manifestations of the work. I guess that independently of a specific style preference we are attracted by objects that are both familiar and new. And the classics though we have seen so many times remain eternally new because they are still full of the experimental spirit of their beginnings.”

Fehlbaum himself is an avid collector, with a focus on (and an encyclopedic assemblage of) modern chairs and lighting devices; that collection, currently archived in a cavernous basement space at one corner of the campus, will eventually go on public view in an additional museum structure (designed, as was VitraHaus, by Herzog and de Meuron). All this puts Vitra squarely into the books for those interested in the history of modern and contemporary design. And Fehlbaum has been quietly shepherding this, guiding Vitra with a philosophy that took root in 1957 when he first met the Eameses and Nelson.

philamuseum.org vitra.com

-Beth Dunlop

All Things (Eileen) Gray

Eileen Gray is finally getting her due. The Irish-born architect and designer has enjoyed a certain amount of fame, not least because of the sale of her Dragon chair at the Yves Saint Laurent-Pierre Bergé sale in 2009. But the enormous range of her talents has long been obscured, in large part because of the jealousy of her “friend” the Swiss architect Le Corbusier. The tale of his efforts to deface and erase Gray’s reputation is the subject of The Price of Desire, a feature length film to be released early next year. Starring Orla Brady as Gray, Swiss actor Vincent Perez as Le Corbusier, and Francesco Scianna (seen with Orla Brady in the still above) and Alanis Morissette as Gray’s lovers the Romanian architect Jean Badovici and French chanteuse Marisa Damia, the movie explores the tale of insidious chauvinism experienced by this remarkable bisexual Irish artist, architect, and designer.

But, says the film’s director Mary McGuckian, there is now “more than a movie, more of a movement” to reassert Gray’s primacy as one of the most forceful and influential inspirations in modern architecture and design. A pre-release screening of Marco Orsini’s revisionary documentary Gray Matters opened last October’s Architecture and Design Film Festival in New York (it will be broadcast in France in December and released internationally in early 2015); and in January Eileen Gray: Her Work and Her World by Gray scholar Jennifer Goff will be published by the Irish Academic Press. In May 2015 Gray’s E.1027 villa in southern France will finally open to the public, and the following year will see a major exhibition of Gray’s work organized by the Centre Pompidou and the Bard Graduate Center in New York. Add the soundtrack from The Price of Desire featuring Morissette singing Damia’s standard “On Danse à La Villette” and Julian Lennon’s photographs of the film in production, and it seems safe to say Gray will never disappear again. thepriceofdesiremovie.com
Outdoor Sculpture

A DIFFERENT KIND OF LOBSTER ROLL IN OKLAHOMA CITY

The Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center is on the move after spending a quarter century at the state fairgrounds in Oklahoma City. The architectural firm of Elliott and Associates has been tapped to design a new campus on four-and-a-half acres in Automobile Alley just north of OKC's downtown. Even before that, however, Oklahoma Contemporary is making a colorful statement in its new neighborhood with artist, weaver, and "rope wrangler" Orly Genger's latest massive, brightly hued sculpture, Terra, unveiled this past fall and on view through October 2015.

Incorporating 1.4 million feet of recycled lobster-fishing rope (her preferred medium) and 350 gallons of deep orange paint. Genger's neat stacks of crocheted ropes snake across the ground, curving around trees, and creating undulating hills in the flat park. The work encourages visitors to experience the park differently as they move through and around the sculpture. "When visiting Oklahoma I was taken by the vastness of the open landscape and envisioned a line that would travel in continual motion winding through the patch of land," Genger says. She goes on to explain that the term "red dirt" inspired her color choice, which, she says, "relates both to the clay-like nature of the earth, and to the bricks with which we build walls." Indeed an appropriate motif to presage the creation of the new arts center. oklahomacontemporary.org

ART AND NATURE AT A MUSEUM OF TREES

Four new sculptures by the Vermont sculptor Richard Erdman were recently installed by the landscape architect Enzo Enea at his Tree Museum in Zurich. Erdman's works join a group of sculptures by other contemporary artists that are permanently installed amidst the more than two thousand trees collected by Enea in the bucolic, eighteen-acre site near Lake Zurich.

A copse of lush green frames Erdman's Brazilian blue granite Sentinel, which spills out and upward from its pedestal, its fluid energy providing a perfect complement to the scene. Rising up from the museum's pond is Spira, two-and-a-half tons of Italian Bardiglio marble that form the largest Erdman sculpture ever placed on water (see above). Elsewhere on the grounds, Fiora in Italian Siena travertine opens its petals to the air, while Volante in Italian Bardiglio marble occupies a more intimate space on the museum grounds, its asymmetrical arcs evoking a dolphin at play or curled asleep.

"Passion creates wishes out of dreams and wishes motivate us to strive to make those dreams reality," says Enea. Together Erdman's sculptures and Enea's Tree Museum form a perfect blending of landscape, design, and dreams. After a brief winter closure, the Tree Museum with Erdman's sculptures reopens in February. enea.ch

A HOT-HUED "FISH" CHAIR LANDS IN A GARDEN

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables, Florida, is home to some three thousand horticultural species—palms, cycads, tropical fruits, and many other rare and unusual plants and trees. In recent years the eighty-three-acre garden has also hosted major outdoor exhibitions of both art and design—works that play off the extraordinary array of plants and trees.

This year, designer Satyendra Pakhalé was named for the job; a self-proclaimed "cultural nomad" who was born and educated in India, studied in Switzerland, and then moved to Holland to work and teach, Pakhalé is represented by Gabrielle Ammann in Cologne, Germany, and was selected for this project by the New York-based design gallerist Cristina Grajales.

Pakhalé says that he was particularly inspired by the "vividly colorful" butterflies he saw in the garden's Wings of the Tropics exhibition. Thus, he reconfigured his molded thermoplastic Fish Chair, first produced by Cappellini in 2005, in a new vivid color that Pakhalé terms "viola." He regards the Fish Chair as both seat and sculpture and says that it "is an object that suggests something instead of representing anything." Though the limited edition of this chair will total ninety-nine, some forty of them will dot the Fairchild grounds through May. fairchildgarden.org

26 MODERN WINTER 2015
Important Pair of Philip Lloyd Powell, Silver and Gold Giltwood Cabinets, with Asian handles, custom designed in 1960 in collaboration with Paul Evans, USA

GARY RUBINSTEIN ANTIQUES

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Converging on Miami:
A Short Week with a Long Afterlife...

UNDER THE BIG TOP
Housed in a vast and highly architectonic tent with an adjoining open-air pavilion designed by Jonathan Muecke (see p. 54), Design Miami is just across a parking lot from the Miami Beach Convention Center and the Art Basel art fair. It opens on a Tuesday (this year, December 2) and by the following Sunday, the collectors are heading home and the dealers are packing their unclaimed wares. Yet there is an afterlife, and in many cases, a long one. Design Miami itself is larger than ever this year and features new dealers (among them Miami’s own Gallery Diet and Casati Gallery from Chicago) and, in its programming, a long and learned look at the show’s first ten years. Some of the initial innovations from new director Rodman Primack will be apparent, including the new Design Visionary award, which is being bestowed on designer and collector Peter Marino. The show itself is remarkable, of course, a mecca for collectors and connoisseurs and lovers of design, but almost as important are the commissions that then go on to longer lives and the projects that are launched during this short week.

Inside the tent that houses Design Miami are the annual installations from Perrier-Jouët (which also flows freely as the official imbibe-ment of the fair) and Swarovski. In its third year of supporting the work of young designers, Perrier-Jouët will unveil a work entitled Ephemera (that was, at press time, still super-secret) by the Austrian design team of Katharina Mischer and Thomas Traxler and which launches a year-long artistic residency for the duo underwritten by Perrier-Jouët.

Swarovski’s Design Miami commissions over the past eleven years have often carried potent and topical messages that speak to the human condition or the state of the environment. This year’s work—which will debut in Miami and then travel to other venues around the world—is no exception. It is a collaboration between the Chicago architect Jeanne Gang, who is also a MacArthur fellow, and the photographer and filmmaker James Balog. Using “frozen” Swarovski crystals and glacier-like forms, their installation focuses attention on the critical issue of the melting polar ice cap by imparting the idea of thinning ice in a space for both contemplation and conversation.

designmiami.com

DIGGING INTO THE FUTURE
The multifaceted artist, architect, and designer Daniel Arsham delves into the world that one might call future archaeology in Welcome to the Future, his exhibition at Locust Projects in Miami’s Wynwood arts district. This site-specific installation explores the idea of an architectural dig some one thousand years from now, offering a narrative in which the discoveries include an array of ephemera (boat oars, plastic alligators) and electronic devices (iPhones, Blackberries, cameras, boom boxes, VHS tapes, Walkmans, portable televisions, electric guitars, and more), all made in crystal and volcanic ash, and other materials, and placed in a trench as if they were petrified objects. It runs through January. In 2012 the Brooklyn-based Arsham’s multidisciplinary design studio Snarkitecture, which he operates along with Alex Mustonen, created the Design Miami entrance pavilion—a project called Drift.

locustprojects.org  danielarsham.com
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BROTHERS-IN-LAW AND IN DESIGN

Gabriel Scott, the Montreal design team of brothers-in-law Gabriel Kakon and Scott Richler, has launched its first showroom, opening its doors on the first floor of the historic Brewster Carriage House at 372 Broome Street in Manhattan (a vintage carriage on the showroom floor recalls the building’s early role as home to one of the most famous coach makers of the day). The high ceilings, enormous windows, and original maple floor make the 1,200-square-foot space perfect for displaying the pair’s sculptural furniture and lighting devices, primarily in steel and glass and available in a limited palette of finishes that gives the collection an appealingly coherent aesthetic.

Both trained architects (and with additional backgrounds in industrial design and fashion), Kakon and Richler started designing custom pieces for their own projects about 2004 and in 2012 began to offer their work to architects and interior designers. The range of furniture forms now more widely available through the new showroom includes a variety of tables and seating. The newest line of lighting, called Harlow, comprises geometric bursts of glass and metal in a variety of sizes. Most popular is the Welles lighting series, which can be had as single units or in multiples welded together (above). It’s really lighting as sculpture—especially since each individual unit weighs five pounds. gabriel-scott.com

DREAMY DRAWINGS FROM A GOLDEN AGE OF AUTOS

Curator, editor, writer, historian, scholar, and appraiser Christopher W. Mount is wearing yet another hat these days, having opened a gallery specializing in architecture and design at the Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles. Lamenting the digital world’s infringement on what he calls the “wonderful expressive form of the design sketch or study,” his current exhibition, Looking into the Future: Automotive Design and Concepts, 1959-1973, includes thirty-nine drawings for America’s “Big Three”—General Motors, Ford and Chrysler—during a halcyon period for the American auto industry, when there was little foreign competition, regulation, or worries about oil shortages. Thorny issues of practicality often take a back seat in the drawings, which are divided between those by “advanced stylists” who created futuristic concepts, and those by more traditional stylists creating new versions of existing or new models. All are a joy to look at. Keep tuned; Mount, who deals privately in New York, hopes to open a gallery there in the near future. christopherwmountgallery.com

A CHAMBER OF CURIOSITIES (AND OBJECTS TO FASCINATE)

The new New York design gallery Chamber is aptly named. It is clean and pristine, a long and narrow space on the ground floor of the HL23 building, just where the High Line crosses West Twenty-third Street, and in many ways it resembles a cabinet of curiosities, or better, a chamber of curiosities. When Juan Garcia Mosqueda, formerly part of the Murray Moss team, set out to create Chamber, he opted for an unusual approach: a retail space that would be curated every two years or so and offer some of the most interesting, unusual, and even arcane objects—some specially made for Chamber and others either contemporary or vintage design.

The opening offerings were curated by Studio Job and range from a minimalist glass table by the Japanese designer nendo to vintage Dutch children’s toys, from rugs by the French designer Matali Crasset to works from a host of interesting makers including Maarten Baas and Aldo Bakker. “It is an ensemble,” says Chamber’s director Michael Vince Snyder, also a Moss alumnus. “This is much more of an exhibition approach.”

The building itself was designed by the Los Angeles architect Neil Denari (who is represented in the collection by a neon sculpture). The Chamber space, by Michael Meredith and Hilary Sample of MOS Architects of New York, is aimed at showing off the objects and not competing with them. And to good effect: Chamber is a hybrid, neither gallery nor showroom nor shop precisely, but rather a bit of each. A casual visitor might pop in off the High Line for a brief tour; a design connoisseur could while away a good hour there, maybe even more. chambernyc.com
Nordic design

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Cheska and Robert Vallois Look Back: “The Taste Sharpens Itself”
Interview by PETER M. BRANT

THE LEGENDARY FRENCH DESIGN DEALERS DISCUSS THEIR RICH CAREERS, THE PEOPLE THEY’VE ENCOUNTERED, AND THEIR CONTINUED LOVE FOR ART DECO

PETER BRANT: Maybe we can start at the very beginning. When did you start? Were you married when you started collecting and dealing?

CHESKA VALLOIS: It was 1970...1971

ROBERT VALLOIS: It was at the beginning of art deco, you know. We had what we found. We were very young dealers, and we had just started discovering and learning. We learned little by little. We sold [Emile-Jacques] Ruhlmann because that’s what you could find most easily because there were a lot of pieces. We specialized very quickly because we opened our first gallery only for art deco.

CV: And no one else was looking at it. But of course there was the beauty of the things. In 1971 we bought twenty pieces by Eileen Gray. We bought them from a small dealer in the countryside—they had belonged to Suzanne Talbot, the fashion designer, who was also known as Madame Mathieu-Levy and who
had a house designed entirely by Eileen Gray. I didn’t even know the name of Eileen Gray. It was by instinct that I knew it was something, very important. But I had no name, and nobody knew her. We knew about [Jean] Dunand and Ruhlmann, but we didn’t know who Eileen Gray was. Really, nobody knew who Eileen Gray was.

I found out where she lived, and after that I would meet her every week and have tea in the afternoon. I had tea with her and she would show me all the pictures and the [work]—what she still had. It was delicious, both the tea and her. We started with that and it was absolutely fabulous for us because we were in front of a genius, really a genius. She showed me pictures and archives, and it was fantastic for me. I was very, very young, and it was the beginning. At the time, I didn’t understand the importance of the encounter.

PB: It is interesting to me that, basically thirty, forty years after furniture is made, sometimes it is totally out of style, then becomes precious. The Louvre and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs were starting to be interested in art deco at that time. Was Karl Lagerfeld collecting then?

RV: Yes, Karl Lagerfeld, Hélène Rochas, Yves Saint Laurent.

CV: And Pierre Bergé—that was all, at the beginning. In the 1970s it was the fashion designers—Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent, Hélène Rochas and Kim de d’Estainville—who were collecting. D’Estainville’s family had been big collectors of Ruhlmann in the 1930s. They bought a lot of very good pieces. People from fashion, from la couture, were really interested in this furniture at this time.

RV: Also, Andy Warhol bought from us at the time.

PB: Who are the designers of the period that you like the most now, who you also liked then? Or did your taste change over the years?

RV: At the beginning it was Dunand and Ruhlmann, who were easiest to find.
PB: But you have always stayed with art deco, you never branched out into the ‘50s?

CV: No. I am devoted to art deco. Working for forty years on the same period is really a choice. It has made me think very deeply about it. The more you work in the same area, the more you see small differences, small distinctions, which are really important. The taste sharpens itself.

PB: Do you find now that it’s harder and harder to find things?

RV: It’s very hard. Very, very hard. But we find them...from time to time we find one or two pieces.

CV: Sometimes we work for ten years or more with a collector who originally doesn’t want to sell. But then there are family reasons—a death, an inheritance—and they will remember us.

PB: What about Jean-Michel Frank?

CV: We have found some very important collections of Frank’s work in Paris. And we bought a fantastic collection in America—what was the name?

RV: Ah, oui, oui, oui...the Rosses, Steven and Courtney Ross.

CV: We bought a lot of pieces from Mrs. Ross. They were both amazing collectors.

PB: What happened to the collection of the Viscount and Viscountess de Noailles...what happened to that great collection?

RV: Ah, the Vicomte and Vicomtesse Charles de Noailles. There is one son and I know him—they still have some pieces, but there are very few left. Even now. From time to time we find one piece, two pieces, you know, but it’s more and more difficult. The most prolific was Ruhlmann. He had a factory, you know—a big factory—there were a lot of pieces around.

CV: And Dunand had, at one point, 180 employees.

RV: But Frank, you know—he had a very small production, a very short period, and then the war finished him in France. We did do a show on him at the Biennale five or six years ago [2006].

PB: Do you find that having a place in New York has introduced new collectors to you?

CV: Our collectors are very, very loyal, but every year there are some new collectors. The Internet makes it easy to show an object.
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Image: Maurice Busset, Les projecteurs (detail), from Paris bombardé, 1918
Design Galleries/

Going Greek
TROY SEIDMAN LOOKS AT T.H. ROBSJOHN-GIBBINGS

for prototyping such signature works as his klismos chair. Key pieces from Casa Encantada are highly sought today. However, other pieces from the commission are considered kitsch or dated hybrids of neoclassicism and modernism and have stumbled at auction on several occasions.

In the years leading up to World War II Robsjohn-Gibbings solidified his position as an arbiter of taste and was featured in House Beautiful, Harper's Bazaar, and Vogue. In 1944 he published Good-Bye Mr. Chippendale, an illustrated treatise on interior styling in which he advocated a rejection of European antiques and furniture reproductions in favor of a more individual “American” style.

If Robsjohn-Gibbings’s first decades were “couture,” the 1950s were “ready-to-wear.” His furniture collections for the Michigan manufacturer Widdicomb were sold in department stores and intended to be versatile—a headboard from one year would coordinate with bedside tables from earlier or later collections. These designs occasionally assimilated some neoclassical influences, but overall the Widdicomb pieces were paradigms of sober suburban modernism. However, Robsjohn-Gibbings was adamant in his rejection of “fashionable plastic, plywood and metal,” and his designs were realized with a high level of quality and craftsmanship in such woods as saffron-finished walnut.

In the early 1960s Robsjohn-Gibbings moved to Athens to focus on re-creating ancient furniture. Using the visual documentation of the furniture and textiles of antiquity that he had amassed over his lifetime, he worked with Saridis of Athens, a top-drawer cabinetmaker, to create/reproduce a collection of twenty-two ancient Greek pieces. The collection was exhibited in both Greece and New York and was accompanied by a book with handsome photographs of the furniture complemented by images of Robsjohn-Gibbings’s source materials. It is hard to think of another twentieth-century designer (or artist) who created something so exceptional while simultaneously educating the public through multiple channels.

For this issue’s Grading System we assess four examples of his work from various periods in his career.

"PERIOD REPRODUCTION" TYPICALLY has negative connotations, but for T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings (1905-1976) it was both a rallying cry and a swan song. Born, raised, and educated in England, he became one of the most erudite and independent members of the American decorative arts canon of the twentieth century. Among his greatest contributions was the collection of faithful “period reproductions” of ancient Greek furniture and textiles he created in the early 1960s. Although receptive to the rise of modernism and technology, Robsjohn-Gibbings did not embrace the era’s aesthetic ideologies—Machine Age, Bauhaus, International style—uncritically. His oeuvre was more influenced by the blossoming study of archaeology and its discoveries.

In 1929 Robsjohn-Gibbings was sent to New York from London to launch a branch of a tony English antiques gallery, and despite the economic hardships of the 1930s, he flourished, advising the upper echelons of New York society. By 1936 he had opened his own design studio/showroom on Madison Avenue, where he banished any reference to English period furniture and articulated his nascent aesthetic. His debut bespoke collection, called Sans Epoque, was informed by the ancient Greek artifacts that had fascinated him since his youth. The legs of his tables and stools, for instance, resembled sleek stylized animal limbs, a feature he had observed on furniture painted on ancient pottery fragments. The centerpiece of the showroom was a meticulously re-created ancient mosaic.

Robsjohn-Gibbings’s personal charm, elegance and unusual aesthetic seduced a discerning (and brave!) group of wealthy patrons including cosmetics entrepreneur Elizabeth Arden and publisher Alfred A. Knopf. He was also, at the time, completing his most ambitious and prestigious commission, Casa Encantada in Bel Air, California. In addition to the overall interior (preserved in 1939 photographs, including those shown here, now at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens), he designed more than two hundred pieces of furniture for the project, which can be seen as both his masterpiece and as a playground

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GRADING SYSTEM

**Griffin console**

Thanks to its provenance, level of craftsmanship, and sculptural presence, the Griffin console from Casa Encantada’s dining room, remains Robsjohn-Gibbings’s most successful piece at auction, selling for $96,000 at Wright in 2006. Over the past decade images of the table have appeared in numerous publications as testament both to its individual impact and as a symbol of Robsjohn-Gibbings’s work from the bespoke era. The expertly carved bleached limewood table was placed in the dining room beside a dramatic marble fireplace, with a complementary console supported by a winged lion on the opposite side. While some pieces from Casa Encantada approach neoclassical kitsch, the Griffin table is confident and timeless—an icon for his oeuvre and his reverence for ancient decorative arts.

**Kilini chaise**

The chaise (or daybed) is the most elegant and extravagant klismos form, one that frequently appeared on ancient vessels. Robsjohn-Gibbings created several precursors to his iconic klismos chair during his bespoke era, but it is the versions crafted by Saridis in Athens after 1961 that most faithfully re-create the ancients. In addition to striving to reproduce the proportions and construction details, Robsjohn-Gibbings also insisted on re-creating the upholstery fabrics with their simple patterns supported by leather-cord webbing.

**Mesa table**

Despite Robsjohn-Gibbings’s passion for antiquity and his mixed emotions about modernism, the Mesa table is the “greatest hit” of his 1950s/Widdicomb era. It reveals that he was not oblivious to the motifs of the time—here embracing the generation’s love of biomorphic forms. With the large version of this table measuring over six feet wide, Robsjohn-Gibbings boldly supersized an amoeba-like shape to a scale infrequently encountered in domestic design. It’s as if he were trying to compete with Jean (Hans) Arp and Henry Moore. In the context of Robsjohn-Gibbings’s oeuvre, the Mesa table is almost an anomaly—too sculptural, too pared down—and without an ancient precedent. Yet for many, this table is a fabulous introduction to Robsjohn-Gibbings and a reminder that he was not a one-trick pony.

**Klismos dining chair for Widdicomb**

What is so admirable about Widdicomb and its contemporaries, such as Baker and Dunbar, is that they perfected the proportions, forms, and function of American furniture. The vast majority of the pieces they made are not only in good condition sixty years later, but still successfully cooperate and contribute in a twenty-first-century interior. However, many of the forms created by these great American mid-century manufacturers have been knocked-off or imitated at all echelons of the contemporary furniture market, so that their aesthetic impact has been diluted. Robsjohn-Gibbings’s Widdicomb klismos dining chair (and its armless sibling) remain delightful because the turned wood supports, rounded back, and tapered and flayed legs are likely too labor-intensive to reproduce. For this chair Robsjohn-Gibbings extrapolated the essence of the klismos form and realized it in an elegant, understated fashion. In a sense, it manifests a purity of design his ancient Greek reissues could not. Today this distinguished design remains innovative, elegant, and the perfect summation of the accessible American luxe furniture Robsjohn-Gibbings strove to create.
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A VISIT TO JOEL CHEN'S GALLERIES IS A BIT LIKE A TRIP TO WONDERLAND

Joel Chen leans on Mogens Voltelen's 1930s Copenhagen chair in his cavernous Los Angeles gallery/showroom—a favorite haunt of prominent designers and architects.

JOEL CHEN'S NEWEST SPACE on Highland Avenue in Los Angeles doesn't have a sign, a building number, or even a clear portal, yet there's a steady stream of prominent designers, architects, and production designers inside, perusing the ever-changing and exquisite array of antiques and twentieth-century furniture carefully curated by Chen.

You can't help being more than a little intimidated by the sheer volume, not to mention the incredible coolness, of what's on view. The huge space is organized into small vignettes designed by Chen to enhance your appreciation of each piece. An antique Chinese screen is placed near a stunning settee inspired by Armand Rateau intricately crafted of bronze fish and shells. An exquisite red leather and oak Frits Henningsen High Back easy chair invites you to sit and study the weirdly cool Spider table by Michael Wilson. But you can't because there is so much more to see.

Ever patient, Chen lets you ogle your way around his shrine to modernism and beyond; and, in my case, ask questions that you know he's answered a thousand times over the span of his thirty-eight-year career. Chen has an encyclopedic visual vocabulary that, he explains, has been acquired by traveling, reading, and meeting hundreds of artists and designers all over the world. His background in cultural anthropology accounts for his intense interest in people and the objects they create for artistic expression as well as function.

When Chen was in his twenties, a Melrose Avenue antiques dealer refused to let him into the store (perhaps, he speculates, because the owner didn't think a young Asian man could afford anything), so he decided he would open his own shop to show how business should be done. Now he is regarded as one of the most important tastemakers in the city and is actively engaged in the global design community. In all, he has 34,000 square feet—there are actually two showrooms along Highland, just where the Hancock Park neighborhood meets West Hollywood, and a warehouse in Culver City.

Chen chooses things that interest him, though he admits that he's always finding things that interest him, even though he really ought to stop acquiring. "The next thing to do is not to do," he says.
Chen credits his pragmatic wife for keeping him from going bankrupt over the years. These days it takes a bit more to get him excited, but he continues to embrace new materials and new designs. Each item is chosen for its quality, fine craftsmanship, and, most importantly, great design.

Fortunately, designers representing Hollywood’s A-list happily purchase huge containers full of furnishings on a regular basis, allowing Chen space to edit and continually rearrange the showroom vignettes to provide interest and context for all the pieces on view. Chen doesn’t like to name-drop, but every now and then he’ll share an anecdote (but we won’t, since we promised to honor his discretion).

Chen also periodically assembles individual and group shows for the artists he represents. In 2013 he presented Rapt, featuring the work of Clare Graham, a Los Angeles artist who creates art from recycled items and who now has a solo exhibition that has attracted national attention at the city’s Craft and Folk Art Museum (through January 2015). Chen had first hired Graham, an art director at Disney for twenty-five years, and his partner, former television art director Bob Breen, to create the installation for Collecting Eames, Chen’s 450-piece show of Eames furniture for Pacific Standard Time, the series of thematically linked exhibitions examining Southern California’s pivotal role in the history of art and architecture that opened in 2011. More recently, Chen presented White in White: Angles and Curvatures, featuring exquisitely intricate contemporary ceramics by ten Korean artists, graduates of the Visual Art Institute at the College of Fine Arts, Seoul National University.

Pointing to one piece with perfect thin lines of color, Chen explains, “the color is not applied, it is created by painstakingly layering in.” Employing the technique of sanggam, which means “inlay work,” the artist Jung Hong Park inserts the color using a diamond blade coated with thick layers of pigment.

When he hosts dinners for the contemporary art and design crowd, both in his showrooms and in his nearby Hancock Park house, which is itself a compendium of his wide-ranging interests in art and design, Chen arranges and coordinates people as he does art. Recently he hosted a dinner for DA2, the acquisitions committee for the Los Angeles County Art Museum’s prestigious Decorative Arts Council and another for Jeffrey Deitch shortly after he announced his departure from LA’s Museum of Contemporary Art. Chen has hosted the past three DubLab fundraisers (he sits on the board of this nonprofit web radio collective devoted to positive music, arts, and culture). He even curates the music at his events.

At the moment Chen is developing an exhibition of Michael Boyd’s Plane and Plank furniture for March 2015. A landscape, furniture, and architectural designer based in Los Angeles and San Francisco, Boyd is also a noted preservationist of modern architecture and lives in the late Oscar Niemeyer’s 1964 Strick House in Santa Monica. Boyd’s designs appeal to Chen’s aesthetic, like so much of what one sees in a tour of his showrooms. It is all elegant, functional, and a bit unexpected.

Last year Chen presented White in White: Angles and Curvatures, an exhibition of exquisitely intricate contemporary ceramics by ten Korean artists.

Chen met Wimberley, Texas, furniture maker Michael Wilson while visiting in Austin. He’s shown here with Wilson’s weirdly cool Spider table.

Chen’s daughter’s Chihuahuas Cashew and Chestnut share one of a set of Poul Kjaerholm PK 27 chairs around Kjaerholm’s PK 66 table.
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THE AI WEIWEI EXHIBITION AT ALCATRAZ POINTS UP THE ARCHITECTURE OF A TOO-LITTLE-APPRECIATED BUILDING

By ROBERT ATKINS

The stabilized (partially restored) main floor of the New Industries Building on Alcatraz is the site of two installations by Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei. Trace, shown above, confronts the visitor with a field of colorful portraits of 176 people from around the world who have been imprisoned or exiled because of their beliefs or affiliations, with each likeness painstakingly constructed from LEGO bricks. The exhibition is organized by FOR-SITE Foundation and on view until April 26, 2015.

Today, the prisoners are long gone and Alcatraz is now a national park that hosts 1.3 million visitors annually and—occasionally—helps produce exhibitions, such as Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz, on view until April 26, 2015. Featuring seven site-specific installations created by the Chinese dissident artist, the widely publicized show also marks the regular opening of the newly stabilized (that is, partly restored) main floor of the New Industries Building. It is the rediscovery of this architectural treasure for which Ai’s exhibition may ultimately be best remembered.

Just four years after California was granted statehood in 1850, the federal government constructed the first West Coast lighthouse on Alcatraz and quickly moved to protect strategic positions around San Francisco Bay with impressive ramparts such as the Civil War-era fortifications at Fort Point on the Golden Gate and a garrison and stockade on Alcatraz. A decade later the stockade was used to hold Confederate prisoners and slowly grew into a federal prison whose security needs were mostly met by its remote location and the bay’s chilly waters. In 1933 the prison became a federal penitentiary to house the “worst of the worst.” So many facilities to accommodate prison administrators and guards went up that most of the structures weren’t named, just numbered. Among the exceptions was the large so-called New Industries Building, designed by the little-known architect Lewis C. Dunn, and built in 1939 and 1940 for $186,000.

Constructed in the all-purpose, deco-inflected WPA style of the 1930s, the stucco exterior is nondescript, succumbing to both budgetary limitations and the difficulties of its hillside location. But the New Industries Building’s luminous interior is one of the largest single spaces constructed in California between the World Wars—and one of the most beautiful. Few
SAM MALOOF
Rocker (No. 43), 1989
Walnut, ebony
Estimate: $30,000-$40,000

DAVID HOCKNEY
Cat, circa 1955
Glazed earthenware
Estimate: $20,000-$30,000

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public buildings of that era and size in the U.S. (it is 306 feet long) remain intact, save for former factories turned museums, such as Mass MOCA in western Massachusetts and the DIA Foundation's branch in Beacon, New York. Like them, the New Industries Building's shabby chic industrial aesthetic has enabled its conversion into a space amenable to the vast scale of so much contemporary art.

Divided lengthwise by two rows of columns, the building's grandeur also evokes European cathedrals or millennia-old Egyptian temples supported by columns modeled on bundled reeds. And perhaps it is the sublime bay views that bring to mind the New Industries Building's kinship with the subaqueous effect of the interiors of Frank Lloyd Wright's S.C. Johnson Building in Racine, Wisconsin.

Both buildings embody at least a vestige of the Victorian belief in the beneficial—even redemptive—nature of work. Yet, while Wright's dreamy office building optimistically evoked the desirability of white-collar office work, the value of labor in prison was regarded differently. At Alcatraz, work was mandatory and only privileged prisoners were entitled to earn a pittance from performing tasks that ranged from fabricating furniture and army uniforms to manning huge dry cleaning and laundry operations. The Alcatraz enterprises were also intended to help defray the high cost of incarcerating prisoners on an island where everything—even fresh water—had to be shipped in. This makes it doubly ironic that the New Industries Building was also home to the largest laundry facility in the Bay Area, servicing nearly the entire military population of Northern California. It was the expense of operating this American Devil's island that ultimately led Attorney General Robert Kennedy to oversee its closure and the transfer of its prisoners to a newly constructed, high-security prison facility in Marion, Illinois, in 1963.

Why has this gem slipped through the cracks of time, especially in San Francisco, which pioneered the reuse of outmoded industrial buildings such as the Ghiradelli Chocolate Factory? Reasonable explanations abound: the building's characterless exterior, its longtime inaccessibility, and the seventy-five years it spent marinating in salt water, ensuring its dilapidation. And then there's the matter of Dunn, its non-celebrity architect who made little impression on the historical record.

But I think this myopia goes deeper. In 1972, following the Native American occupation of Alcatraz and prior to its rebirth as a National Park, the National Park Service published a 650-page inventory of the island. It devoted scant attention to the New Industries Building, proclaiming that it possessed "no historical significance." Surely our understanding of the intertwined architectural and human records has expanded beyond such one-dimensional judgments. The penitentiary's stark dehumanization is embodied in both the crumbling setting of Ai's chronicle of human-rights violations and by the restoration of a building whose soaring beauty was intended only to house something as mundane as a laundry. Such architectural artifacts are emblems of a highly charged and complex past that requires our remembering, but perhaps not always our reverence.
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Twilight Zone: The Engaging and Almost Inexplicable Jonathan Muecke

By MASON RIDDLE

GIVEN THE EXCESSES OF THE CONTEMPORARY design world, Jonathan Muecke’s practice is at once spare and complex. His elegant but idiosyncratic objects reside respectfully at the edge of, if not beyond, the accustomed bandwidth of contemporary design. Although functional, they inhabit an independent realm of design thinking that holds modernist traditions at bay. In fact, Muecke’s cerebral and experimental practice seems more aligned with that of a fine artist than an industrial designer, calling to mind the conceptual practices of such twentieth-century luminaries as Yves Klein, Ellsworth Kelly, and Donald Judd.

True, most of Muecke’s objects fit into typologies such as chair, stool, or table, yet they challenge received notions of how such objects should look and function. They are fabricated variously from stainless steel, aluminum, wood, fiberglass, carbon fiber, or composite materials (a favorite), and sometimes polychromed in saturated hues of blue and green. By eliminating all unessential detail, his objects question our perceptual acumen, about spatial relationships, dynamic edge, and surface plane.

Ironically, Muecke does not view his reductive objects, which have names like Painted Shape (PS) or Coiled Stool (CS), as minimalist, but rather as “maximums.” He states, “My objects must have their own potential to be other things—relational to the environment and to other objects, away and outside of me. He defines his work as “Open Objects,” meaning they are to be perceived as new or unknown even when seen repeatedly. “There should be a way to let the unknown remain in the object,” he explains. “You recognize this in objects, or in moments like standing on the edge of the shore and looking into the sea. It’s about not knowing what you are looking at. It’s that, and also knowing what you are looking at. You are knowledgeable and ignorant at the same time.” For example, Low Wooden Shape (LWS) is a long bench-like form with ten legs and a center element resembling the keel of a sailboat. Made from white oak, LWS is potentially multifunctional—wide enough to be a bench in an art museum, a bed, or a place to stack books. Or a sculpture.

Particularly intriguing is Mezzanine. An oval-shaped table fabricated from aluminum, its five regularly spaced legs are not on any type of axis. Moreover, the pattern within the table’s edge shifts five times, but not in correspondence with the legs. Why Mezzanine? “A mezzanine is a free architectural space; it floats in between,” Muecke says. “Above the ceiling is a floor and below the floor is a ceiling.”

Muecke’s recently completed Blue Cabinet (BC), a high-walled isosceles triangle painted a near Yves Klein blue, is equally confounding. Each
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Andy Warhol's "John Wayne," a trial proof in a unique combination of colors, from the portfolio Cowboys and Indians. Sold for a world record of $96,000 at Auctionata's Modern & Contemporary Auction.

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Among the works seen in this view of Muecke's old studio are Field, 2010, in carbon fiber and epoxy (leaning against the wall); and stacks of Woven Chair (WC) prototypes, also of 2010 in carbon fiber and epoxy. Muecke wouldn't reveal what's under the foil.

Muecke recently completed Blue Cabinet (BC), each side of which slides open, though the piece doesn't really function as a cabinet at all. However BC has no top, floor, or internal shelving and, when closed, suggests a 1970s minimalist sculpture more than a storage container. "A cabinet defines two separate things—interior and exterior. With BC I want to push the notions, the limits of what a cabinet needs to be or have," he says.

Muecke clarifies that his practice is not "about design to make something." Rather, his objects suggest a range of functions. "I am interested in making something into something else—the in between spaces," he says. "I want them free of fixed relationships with regard to color, size, material, or texture, or with the things around them." Significantly he wants all elements emphasized equally. "I am successful when these traits become equalized and you can't distinguish between them. When the shape is the color, or the scale is the material."

This singular aesthetic informs his labor-intensive process, self-described as a field of electrons moving around all at the same time. "Everything is in play all at once. You are thinking through all options and possibilities simultaneously—color, shape, typology, texture, scale, materials. Where does this 'belong' is a false question; rather, I want to make an object that can be everywhere."

Increasingly, Muecke's objects are garnering acclaim. His work has been collected by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Recently he was tapped by Design Miami to create the fair's 2014 entrance pavilion, a project usually awarded to an architectural office.

Although scale has long been critical to Muecke's practice, the Design Miami project has allowed him to scale up for the first time. "It has always been my ambition to work at this scale, so this project has
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his goal, again, has been to hold in balance—to equalize—material, color, and scale.

At thirty-one, Muecke is tall, lean, and understated, without superfluous detail in either his manner or dress. His speech is restrained but alert, and he is exceedingly articulate. That the listener does not always follow his thinking—whether about his unorthodox forms, composite materials, or strenuous process—seems not to annoy him. Rather, he is patient enough to retrace his complex ideas, drawing on a tablet for clarification.

Muecke, who was born in Cody, Wyoming, resides in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where he maintains a small storefront studio for conceptualizing projects and meetings. He graduated in 2006 with a degree in architecture from Iowa State University in Ames. In 2007 he worked for a year for Herzog and de Meuron in Basel, Switzerland. Why didn't he stay when offered the opportunity? “The experience was so good, I thought I should carry it on to something else,” he answers. In 2010 he graduated from the Cranbrook Academy of Art with an MFA in design and moved to the Twin Cities. He is a member of Fourth Street Guild Furniture Makers in Minneapolis, where he has a dedicated workspace to test materials and transmute his ideas into full-scale prototypes or fully realized objects.

In the end, Muecke’s Open Objects suggest the reification of Japanese haiku in their juxtaposition of elements, their spare presentation, and their deep knowledge of form and perception. To contemplate one of Muecke’s objects is to comprehend the act of seeing. Perhaps most revealing, Muecke mentions a 1963 declaration by composer and conceptual artist George Brecht titled “Exercise”:

Determine the limits of an object or event.
Determine the limits more precisely.
Repeat, until further precision is impossible.
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BOOKS THAT EXPLORE THE WIDE WORLD OF DESIGN

By DANIELLE DEVINE

Hand-in-Hand: Ceramics, Mosaics, Tapestries, and Woodcarvings by the California Mid-Century Designers Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman
By Dan Chavkin and Lisa Thackaberry
Pointed Leaf Press, 240 pages, $55

HAND-IN-HAND is the first monograph about the California mid-century design team of Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman. In his preface designer Jonathan Adler describes the couple’s work as the “perfect marriage of gorgeous design, impeccable craftsmanship, emotional sincerity, and unfiltered childlike wonder.”

Jerome (Jerry) Ackerman met his future wife in the winter of 1948 in his hometown of Detroit. On the advice of a friend, the twenty-eight-year-old World War II vet decided to pay a visit to the girl he’d met once and walked into the interior design studio where she worked, armed with only his charm and two candy bars in his pocket. They were married that fall. As children of the Great Depression they knew the value of frugality, self-reliance, and education; newlyweds, they both earned degrees in the arts from Wayne State University with GI supplements, and they built the furniture and decor for their first apartment.

In 1952 they moved to Los Angeles seeking new opportunities and sunshine. They believed in the intersection of art, design, and mass production espoused by the Bauhaus movement, and “hand-in-hand” mastered ceramics, mosaics, textiles, woodcarving, and metalwork. Their inventive and whimsical style set them apart, as did their commitment to the idea that great design should be affordable and accessible. Though their oeuvre is now seen as the epitome of California mid-century modernism, when Jerry (who retired four years ago) was asked which project gave him the most pride in his long career, he responded, “marrying my wife.” Hand-in-Hand features many never-before-seen preparatory drawings and color guides, and tells the heartwarming story of a partnership in design and life.

Midcentury Houses Today
By Jeffrey Matz, Lorenzo Ottaviani, and Cristina A. Ross
Photography by Michael Biondo
Monacelli Press, 240 pages, $65

A GRAPHIC DESIGNER, two architects, and a photographer present an in-depth look at sixteen of the more than one hundred modern houses built by the so-called Harvard Five in New Canaan, Connecticut, between 1950 and 1978. A suburb just forty-five miles from Grand Central—and more New England than New York—New Canaan became an affordable reprieve in the 1940s and 1950s for executives working in the city. There—following the teachings of their Harvard professor, Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius—John Johansen, Marcel Breuer, Landis Gores, Philip Johnson, and Eliot Noyes built houses for themselves and their clients that expressed the simplicity, openness, sensitivity to site and nature, and use of natural materials that formed the core principles of modernism as the ideal of twentieth-century domesticity.

Every year design enthusiasts make the pilgrimage to this longstanding shrine of mid-century architecture, where ninety-one of the 118 modernist houses originally built still survive. This book looks at sixteen of them in detail to study the range of approaches that have led to their preservation and adaptation to contemporary life; each house has a chapter of its own, with floor plans, archival shots of initial construction, and new photography of additions made by significant contemporary architects, such as Toshiko Mori, Roger Ferris, and Joeb Moore. Included, too, is a comprehensive timeline of the most famous projects, not only by the Harvard Five but also by Victor Christ-Janer, Edward Durell Stone, and Alan Goldberg. The book took five years to complete, with commentary from the architects and builders, the original owners and current occupants, that reveals how these houses are enjoyed and lived in today, and how the modernist residence is more than a philosophy of design and construction, but also a philosophy of living.
ETTORE SOTTSASS is best known as the founder of the 1980s Italian design collective Memphis, which produced colorful, symbolic, and playful office equipment, furniture, glass, lighting, and jewelry. He was also a non-conformist architect and writer as well as an avid photographer who shot portraits of Hemingway, Picasso, Ernst, and Chet Baker. Divided chronologically, with multicolored tabs separating sections, this massive and beautiful volume traces Sottsass’s prolific career and explores his methodology. The reader literally unfolds eight hundred illustrations that have been cleverly tucked inside, including drawings and sketches and never-before-published photographs from the Sottsass archive. In addition, there are five short essays by experts that explore Sottsass’s work in architecture, graphic design, photography, industrial design, and collector’s editions.

A prisoner of war during World War II, Sottsass set out to create design that would help people become aware of their existence, the spaces they live in, and their own presence in them. He cared little about functionality and was more intent on creating design with meaning and addressing the hopes and dreams of his generation. The author reserves three full pages for images of one of Sottsass’s most famous pieces, the bright red plastic Valentine portable typewriter for Olivetti that hit stores on February 14, 1968. Sottsass deemed it the “anti-machine machine,” meaning that it functioned as a typewriter but also had a human quality lacking in most office equipment at the time. “Red is the color of the Communist flag, the color that makes a surgeon move faster and the color of passion,” he proclaimed. This book is itself a piece of art, with a Tiffany-blue bifold cover and a dapper black-and-white striped lining worthy of Sottsass.

MONSIEUR DIOR: ONCE UPON A TIME by the Paris-based fashion journalist Natasha Fraser-Cavassoni, offers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the ten years during which Christian Dior ran his esteemed house. The book begins with his February 1947 show that took the fashion world by storm with his “New Look.” At a time when women were craving beauty and glamour following the war, Dior’s New Look brought femininity back to fashion with a bold use of fabric, silhouetted lines, and shorter hemlines. In the short time that Dior ran his house he expanded his empire to include perfumes, jewelry, and hosiery while opening boutiques all over the world. Fraser-Cavassoni interviews dozens of people who knew Dior personally, including fellow designer Pierre Cardin, who worked in the Dior ateliers at the time of the 1947 show, as well as Lauren Bacall just months before her death. “When Dior made the change of how women should look, you couldn’t ignore it,” Bacall said, “because his New Look made everything else look old-fashioned.” Marlene Dietrich’s daughter recounts how her mother famously proclaimed in a telegram to Alfred Hitchcock regarding her role in his upcoming Stage Fright, “no Dior, and no Dietrich.”

There have been numerous scholarly books written about the genius of Dior, but Monsieur Dior: Once Upon A Time is a refreshing departure, humanizing this design icon, and told in the words of his friends, favorite models, and employees. Photography by legends such as Cecil Beaton, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lord Snowdon, and Willy Maywald, as well as never-before-seen materials from the Dior Archives, contribute to this delightful look into the House of Dior’s brilliant founder.
idealistic iconoclast who believed in creating democratic architecture and thought individuals deserved spaces that would encourage them to develop their full potential. Thus, he broke up boxlike Victorian rooms to create free-flowing interior spaces. A proponent of the Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art) in architecture, he also designed the furniture for his houses—tables, bookcases, easy chairs, sofas, cabinets, rugs, murals, and stained glass. One chapter is dedicated to Wright's greatest inspiration and muse, nature. "He believed nature was the materialization of spirit," Stipe writes, and designed "structures that belonged to the site, that did not destroy the life of the site, but improved on it." Wright's career changed and evolved with each decade, and he was still building actively when he died at ninety in 1959. This volume provides a clear view of his organic blend of architecture and ornament and highlights a number of his masterpieces—from the Prairie period to the 1950s—including the Frederick C. Robie House, the Susan Lawrence Dana House, and, of course, Fallingwater, designed for Edgar and Liliane Kaufmann.
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GEORGE NAKASHIMA and FLORENCE SCHUST KNOLL

TABLE
Walnut, East Indian rosewood, and aluminum
Knoll Associates, Inc., manufacturer
c. 1959

THIS ELEGANT TABLE is an extraordinary collaboration between George Nakashima and Knoll Associates for the landmark Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) headquarters building, erected in downtown Pittsburgh in 1953. The classic base, designed by Florence Knoll and typically made of chromed steel, was executed in aluminum exclusively for Alcoa. The beautifully figured walnut top is joined with ten of Nakashima’s signature inset butterfly joints in rosewood. Although Knoll and Nakashima objects were frequently intermingled in interiors, actual collaborations in a single work are quite rare.

Designed by Harrison and Abramovitz, the thirty-story Alcoa headquarters at 425 Sixth Avenue in Pittsburgh was the first skyscraper with an all-aluminum facade, which made it radically lighter and more efficient than buildings of comparable size in conventional materials. Its curtain wall was created from prefabricated aluminum sheets that could be quickly hoisted with minimal construction equipment and bolted directly to the structural steel frame. The same spirit of innovation carried through to the interior with the use of aluminum wherever possible: aluminum furniture, aluminum piping and wiring, and aluminum air-conditioning ducts. Alcoa commissioned Knoll Associates to design 250 offices, conference rooms, and reception areas. The resulting aesthetic was a stylish mélange of sophistication and warmth, as exemplified in this table.

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Curatorial Assistant
Decorative Arts and Design
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Dan Flavin has generally rejected the appellation “minimalist” and even the term “sculpture” as too confining.

DAN FLAVIN'S FLUORESCENT LIGHT works synthesize two major themes that run through twentieth-century art: the employment of the found, commercial object as a “ready-made” sculpture; and the exploration of the space that surrounds both a sculpture and its viewer. Although Flavin is invariably described as one of the patriarchs of minimalist sculpture—along with Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre, and Robert Morris—he has generally rejected the appellation “minimalist” and even the term “sculpture” as too confining, often pointing out that his works are ephemeral, temporary, and installed in relation to given architectural conditions. He began making his signature works of industrially prefabricated fluorescent tubes and fixtures in 1963. In his 1965 essay “...in daylight or cool white,” an autobiographical sketch,” he referred to Diagonal of May 25, 1963 as a “diagonal of personal ecstasy,” describing its “forty-five degrees above horizontal” position as one of “dynamic equilibrium.”

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Eileen Gray understood that the average human has a tendency to lean slightly to the side when seated comfortably.

The underlying theme of the Non Conformist chair designed by Irishwoman Eileen Gray is that of comfort. Gray understood that the average human has a tendency to lean slightly to the side when seated comfortably, so the curved armrest on one side was upholstered, whereas the other side simply incorporated a slanted chrome steel bar. The Non Conformist chair (the title is very much in keeping with her personality) was initially created by Gray for E.1027, the house in southern France she designed with Jean Badovici. On this example, which Gray made for herself, the armrest was only partially upholstered, as she tended to lean on her elbow when seated. On the version made for Badovici, who was inclined to rest his entire arm on it, the full length of the armrest was upholstered. Gray’s own chair remained in her apartment on the rue Bonaparte in Paris until the end of her life.

Jennifer Goff
Curator of Furniture, Silver, Metalware, Music, Science, and the Eileen Gray Collection
National Museum of Ireland, Dublin

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TAMARA RAFKIN, SUB-CONTINENT III, 2000, ANALOG C-PRINT, WWW.TAMARARAFFIN.COM
"Just extraordinary—unfettered imagination, wild exuberance ... and great names" More than fifty years after this ringing endorsement by scholar Graham Hughes in 1961, artist-made jewelry remains a relatively unknown corner of the art world. While the list of sculptors and painters who made jewelry reads like a curator's wish list—Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Salvador Dalí, Lucio Fontana, Max Ernst, Jean (Hans) Arp, Alexander Calder, Louise Bourgeois, Anish Kapoor, Niki de Saint Phalle, Claude American Jeff Koons (1955-) worked as a Wall Street commodities broker before embarking on his career as an artist. Following the example of pop artists of the 1960s, he uses his work to reflect the commercial systems of the modern world. His Rabbit necklace of 2005-2009, in platinum, was made in an edition of fifty. Height 2 inches.

Alexander Calder (1898-1976) made this untitled brooch in the form of a spiral—a recurring motif in his work—in 1940 from a single length of brass wire hammered and twisted into shape. Length 6 ¼ inches.
Jewelry by Artists

imagination
Lalanne, Alberto Giacometti—for many, their jewelry remains a revelation. And this despite the fact that in the past half-century major museums have held exhibitions of this work, starting with the International Exhibition of Modern Jewelry 1890–1961 at Goldsmith's Hall in London in 1961, which included the most comprehensive collection of artist-made jewels ever assembled to that time. Numerous artists were invited to create work for the show, which included examples by Dalí, Emil Nolde, Calder, and Giacometti as well as by such contemporary British artists as Elizabeth Frink and Kenneth Armitage. A decade later, in 1973, the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston showed a selection of artists' jewels in Jewelry as Sculpture as Jewelry, followed in 1984 by Modern Artists' Jewels at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Most recently, in 2011 Diane Venet organized Picasso to Koons: Artist as Jeweler with the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, and it has since traveled to Europe and Asia.

A decade ago, when Louisa Guinness opened her London gallery specializing in artists' jewelry, dealers were few and far between. Pieces were rarely seen on the secondary market, and those that were could be picked up for a song—an Alexander Calder necklace for a few thousand dollars, a Picasso pendant for the price of its weight in gold. Apart from those whom Guinness invited to participate in her inaugural exhibition, Past and Present: Jewellery by Artists in 2003, few contemporary artists were making jewelry.

Skip forward a decade, and the market tells a different story. Wearable sculpture has become a new and accessible way of collecting and enjoying art. At Sotheby's New York in November 2013 eighteen pieces of Calder jewelry in the Hope Makler collection—pieces for the most part made of brass or silver, occasionally including found ceramic or glass—brought $8,046,500. One necklace alone reached nearly $2 million.

Prices for examples by other artists, such as Picasso, Man Ray, Ernst, Fontana, and Lalanne, are likewise steadily rising. Still, while "Artists Jewels" now have their own section in design auctions and contemporary art or...
Anish Kapoor (1954–), one of the most influential sculptors of his generation, creates work that ranges vastly in scale, from huge to small pieces of jewelry, such as Water pendant, Form 1, Large, designed in 2013 and produced in 22-karat gold and cold enamel in an edition of five plus two artist’s proofs. Diameter 2 1/2 inches.

German-born Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985) was a surrealist artist whose Tête de Poète (Head of the Poet) necklace, 1977, was made in an edition of nine in 18-karat gold and enamel after her 1967 design. Each is signed and numbered on the reverse. Face: 3 3/8 by 3 3/8 inches.

Jewelry sales, the price tags for these works in precious metals by the harbingers of modernism are but a fraction of those attached to their canvases or bronzes.

Jewelry is a deeply personal manifestation of an artist’s work. Diane Venet’s collection (which formed the basis of Picasso to Koons) began with a wedding ring her husband, sculptor Bernar Venet, spontaneously fashioned for her from a length of silver. Amidst the Picasso paintings and sculptures at the sale of Dora Maar’s estate in 1997 nestled painted pebble pendants and lockets enclosing tiny paintings the artist had crafted for his lover. Yves Tanguy painted a pair of earrings for his inamorata Peggy Guggenheim. Alexander Calder made jewelry for his wife, Louisa, throughout his career. Indeed, his first gift to her was a bracelet he hammered from a continuous brass wire spelling out the word “Medusa,” a reference to her wild hair when they first met.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the hierarchy that placed “decorative arts”...
low in the “serious art” pile, and “craft” lower still, began to erode. Calder rejected such hierarchies. In a 1929 exhibition at the Fifty-Sixth Street Galleries in New York, his toys and jewelry were presented as equal to his sculpture and painting. As a metalworker he created some eighteen hundred pieces of jewelry in his lifetime, each one unique. He would hammer and twist silver or brass wire into pieces that, unlike other jewelry of the time, were valued for their artistic rather than their material content. Working some years later, French artist Claude Lalanne, who likewise made jewelry throughout her career, took a similar attitude to hierarchy in the arts. Her first exhibition at Galerie J in Paris in 1964 included wearable sculpture alongside surreal and whimsical large-scale works. Displayed next to a life-size rhino that metamorphosed into a fully functional desk (Rhinocéraire) by her husband were her golden belts made from vine shoots and grapes and necklaces featuring metallic human lips. Lalanne perfected the arts of electroplating and molding for both her jewelry and her sculpture. Using this method, she would transform flora and fauna into delicate copper fossils that she would weave and solder into remarkable copper necklaces, bracelets, and earrings.

Lalanne and Calder aside, when it came to making wearable sculpture, most artists of the twentieth century lacked technical know-how. Instead, they worked in collaboration with goldsmiths, who were tasked with translating their visions into precious metals. For the most part, this was achieved through exhaustive sketches and prototypes, the resulting jewels not only showing imaginative solutions to problems of scale and function, but also being instantly recognizable additions to each artist’s oeuvre.

The French goldsmith François Hugo began making jewelry with artists in the 1950s, collaborating with many great names of the time—Picasso, Ernst, Dorothea Tanning, and Arp among them. Perhaps his most extensive collaboration was with Picasso, for whom he created medallions, in addition to a series of platters and dishes. Working in Italy a decade later, jeweler GianCarlo Montebello, who was married to the sister of sculptors Arnaldo and Gio Pomodoro, also invited artists to design jewelry, which he produced in limited editions at GEM Montebello, the firm he started in Milan in 1967. Sadly, the venture was closed only a decade later when the workshop was burgled in 1978. Montebello was responsible for some of the most imaginative examples of the genre, and the list of artists he worked with is impressive: Lucio Fontana, Man Ray, and Niki de Saint Phalle, to name a few. The famous photographer Ugo Mulas was so taken with Montebello’s creations that he offered to photograph them in exchange for a few pieces for his wife.

Nowhere are artwork and viewer more closely entwined than in artists’ jewelry. Happily, a growing number of dealers and the inclusion of these works in art fairs and auctions and in exhibitions such as Diane Venet’s Picasso to Koons are heightening awareness of these expressions of artistic imagination and of the infinite possibilities of functional sculpture.

Louisa Guinness Gallery’s By the Hand of the Maker at Design Miami (December 3–7) focuses on the work of Claude Lalanne and Alexander Calder.

Facing page, clockwise from top left:

Fifty-Sixth Street Galleries in New York, his toys and jewelry were presented as equal to his sculpture and painting. As a metalworker he created some eighteen hundred pieces of jewelry in his lifetime, each one unique. He would hammer and twist silver or brass wire into pieces that, unlike other jewelry of the time, were valued for their artistic rather than their material content. Working some years later, French artist Claude Lalanne, who likewise made jewelry throughout her career, took a similar attitude to hierarchy in the arts. Her first exhibition at Galerie J in Paris in 1964 included wearable sculpture alongside surreal and whimsical large-scale works. Displayed next to a life-size rhino that metamorphosed into a fully functional desk (Rhinocéraire) by her husband were her golden belts made from vine shoots and grapes and necklaces featuring metallic human lips. Lalanne perfected the arts of electroplating and molding for both her jewelry and her sculpture. Using this method, she would transform flora and fauna into delicate copper fossils that she would weave and solder into remarkable copper necklaces, bracelets, and earrings.

Lalanne and Calder aside, when it came to making wearable sculpture, most artists of the twentieth century lacked technical know-how. Instead, they worked in collaboration with goldsmiths, who were tasked with translating their visions into precious metals. For the most part, this was achieved through exhaustive sketches and prototypes, the resulting jewels not only showing imaginative solutions to problems of scale and function, but also being instantly recognizable additions to each artist’s oeuvre.

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Caroline Baumann takes the helm at the newly expanded Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

ENGAGING DESIGN
SWISS-BORN, CAROLINE BAUMANN graduated from Bates College in Maine and has an MFA from New York University. Before coming to the Cooper Hewitt in 2001, where she has served in many capacities, including acting director on several occasions, she had been at the Museum of Modern Art from 1995. Following the death of Bill Moggridge, she was named director of Cooper Hewitt in June 2013.

As a collector and now as a trustee of the museum, I have gained enormous respect for Baumann's intelligence, dedication, and enthusiasm—a perfect combination to lead the newly renamed Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum to the next level. For this wide-ranging interview for MODERN Magazine she took time from her hectic schedule to discuss the plans for the future and convey the excitement surrounding the reopening of the museum on December 12—the 112th anniversary of Andrew Carnegie moving into the Fifth Avenue mansion that has housed Cooper Hewitt since 1970.

You're about to re-open the museum after a three-year renovation. What are we going to be surprised to see?

Everything! You're in for a completely new Cooper Hewitt experience. Inside and out, every aspect of the museum has been renovated and reimagined. From a physical standpoint, our home in the historic Andrew Carnegie Mansion now has an incredible 60 percent more gallery space—16,000 square feet in which to showcase items from our permanent collection as well as temporary exhibitions. We've also completely reinvigorated the visitor experience by incorporating a number of interactive elements. Chief among these are a breakthrough Pen device, ultra-high-resolution digital tables, and dynamic spaces that encourage engagement.

After a three-year closure, the renovated, restored, and renamed Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum reopens on December 12. * Caroline Baumann. * Designed by Local Projects, the Immersion Room is an interactive space that provides access to the Cooper Hewitt's hundreds of wallcoverings (or visitors can design their own), which can then be projected onto the walls for an immersive effect. * The innovative Cooper Hewitt Pen will allow visitors to collect and create designs as they move through the galleries. * Like all the other rooms in the Andrew Carnegie Mansion, which houses the Cooper Hewitt, the original dining room was restored during the renovation.
The Pen is really key to the whole experience. All Cooper Hewitt visitors will be encouraged to take one as they enter the museum, and to collect and create with it as they move through the various spaces. One of the ways they can do this is by using the Pen in conjunction with the interactive tables; they'll be located throughout the building and will allow visitors to play designer and explore the collection like never before. This will be particularly evident in the Immersion Room, an interactive space that will provide access to hundreds of our wallcoverings. Visitors can project them onto the walls for a truly immersive effect, or create their own designs and display them in the same fashion. And then there's our Process Lab, another new, interactive space that encourages engagement by giving visitors the opportunity to experience the design process firsthand.

What do you like best about Diller Scofidio and Renfro's renovation?

Such a hard question to answer...DS and R contributed a great deal to the renovation, and everything they've done has been nothing short of amazing. From the revitalized museum entrance on East Ninetieth Street—complete with illuminated piers on the corners of Fifth Avenue and Nineti-eth and Ninety-First Streets—to the new first- and second-floor gallery layouts, to the exquisite cases they designed with the Cooper Hewitt team to showcase objects from the permanent collection, to a reinvigorated shop experience, they've really helped us execute our vision for a completely refreshed and reimagined museum experience.

What do you see as your role as the National Design Museum?

As part of our reinvention, we actually dropped the word "National" from our name, replacing it with "Smithsonian." Many people don't realize that Cooper Hewitt is part of the Smithsonian Institution's network of nineteen museums and galleries, the largest such complex in the world. By emphasizing our connection with this venerable institution, we want to extend our reach, both nationally and internationally. In fact, one of our opening exhibitions, Tools: Extending Our Reach, actually features objects from ten Smithsonian museums.

The Smithsonian was established in 1846 "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." Today, we're holding true to that vision, offering a stellar permanent collection and unique temporary exhibitions. And, with our new emphasis on access, people will have an opportunity to explore our offerings like
never before, fulfilling Cooper Hewitt's mission to educate, inspire, and empower people through design. Ultimately, that's our role, nationally and internationally: it's helping people to grasp the omnipresence of design and the impact it has on every aspect of our lives.

**What impact do you want your exhibitions to make? And what are your inaugural exhibitions?**

We have a great lineup of inaugural exhibitions, starting with Designing the New Cooper Hewitt. The nine design firms that were instrumental in transforming Cooper Hewitt into a twenty-first-century design destination are featured, and each recounts its role, process, and the challenges it faced in executing its particular contribution(s).

On the first floor, Beautiful Users focuses on user-centered design. The exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Bill Moggridge, a pioneer of human-centered design who designed the first laptop computer (the Grid Compass, which is included in the exhibition), and who was the director of Cooper Hewitt from 2010 to 2012. Also on the first floor is Maira Kalman Selects, part of an ongoing series in which the museum invites guest curators to create installations drawn from the astonishing Cooper Hewitt collection. The exhibition features pieces from Kalman's personal collection, as well as objects from Cooper Hewitt and other Smithsonian museums, to suggest the journey of a life story, from birth through death.

The second-floor galleries will showcase gems from the permanent collection, and we'll open with exhibitions that showcase important elements of design as well as the history of the collection: Making Design; The Hewitt Sisters Collect; Passion for the Exotic: Lockwood de Forest, Frederic Church; and an installation of exceptional eighteenth- and nineteenth-century models of staircases in the new Models and Prototypes Room. Finally, the third-floor now boasts 6,000 square feet of gallery space, and it will be inaugurated by the Tools exhibition I mentioned earlier.

In terms of impact, we want our exhibitions to make visitors look at the familiar in unexpected ways, to learn something new or interact with something in a way they haven't before. Our job is to provide the context and the experience, and let the design speak for itself. That's what's so exciting about the new Cooper Hewitt experience. We’re asking people to engage with our collection and exhibitions in a new way, actively participating rather than passively observing. We are confident that it will make for a much more gratifying and multidimensional visit and, we hope, a more memorable one as well.

**How are you going to engage the community?**

New York City has a vibrant design community. To really give you an idea of the scope, a study published this past May by the Center for an Urban Future...
noted that, as of 2013, New York was home to 40,340 full-time designers—that's 65 percent more designers than any other metro region in the U.S. (and a 74 percent jump since 2000).

What's more, New York leads the nation in the number of design firms—3,884—encompassing fields such as fashion, graphic, interior, industrial, and landscape design as well as architecture.

The public here also has a great appetite for design, and there's a demand and anticipation for what we'll be offering: unprecedented interactive and immersive technologies paired with significantly expanded presentations of our rich collection and distinctive design exhibitions.

We're committed to providing design education to our community at large and will continue to grow our stellar educational programming in that pursuit. Two years ago we opened the Cooper Hewitt Design Center in Harlem, and since then over thirty-five thousand students, families, and educators have walked through its doors. We also have a fantastic initiative called Design in the Classroom that has helped bring design awareness to over sixty thousand underserved New York City school children.

But our educational programs aren't just for students. We're inspiring and educating nearly two thousand adults through over thirty annual programs, public lectures, conversations, and hands-on workshops that provide access to some of the greatest minds in the design field. What's more, all of our public programs are streamed live and archived on our YouTube channel, making them widely accessible.

We have very solid relationships here in New York, and through our ongoing outreach efforts we will continue to engage the community. We're also opening the Arthur Ross Terrace and Garden to the public, free of charge, in yet another gesture of accessibility; we want to invite the community to experience design in all its shapes and forms, and we want the community to feel welcome.

I wonder how you are going to reach the public outside of New York.

We're already reaching communities nationwide with our Design in the Classroom program. Having had such success with it right here at home, we expanded the program's reach to classrooms in Washington D.C., New Orleans, San Antonio, Minneapolis, and Cleveland.

We've also taken our exhibitions around the globe during the renovation. For example, House Proud: Nineteenth-Century Watercolor Interiors from the Thaw Collection traveled to Paris, and then we forged new territory by sharing the exhibition at the Beijing World Art Museum in China. Showcasing our offerings worldwide is an important and exciting initiative, and we're expanding it when our doors open.

And we've got a strong social media presence that reaches across the country and across the
example of interaction design and interactive data visualization and, by acquiring its source code, we’re also able to reveal the underlying design decisions made through its creation and evolution. The acquisition highlights our own evolution, and is something we will continue to build on.

**The Cooper Hewitt store will be much expanded. Can you tell us more about it?**

Yes, our shop will be completely redesigned and we’ll have a greater range of merchandise than ever before. From the historic to the contemporary, our shop offerings will be more reflective of Cooper Hewitt’s design philosophy, mission, and collection. There’s also going to be more emphasis on products related to our exhibitions, programs, and permanent collection. Plus the shop will serve as a specialist destination for design and architecture publications. We’ll also continue to carry our exclusive “Museum Souvenir” items—souvenirs commissioned by contemporary artists and designers. With such a wide variety of high design offerings, the shop will be a great complement to the visitor experience, as well as a destination for design-savvy customers. All of this is also available in our online shop at shop.cooperhewitt.org, which has remained open during the renovation.  

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**How big is your exhibition space?**

Big! 16,000 square feet, spread over three floors, including our new 6,000-square-foot third-floor gallery. All this new space means that the seven newly renovated galleries on the second floor can now be used to display objects from our permanent collection, and we’re excited to finally share them with our public.

**How big is the collection? What are its strengths and weaknesses?**

Our permanent collection is expansive: more than 217,000 objects spanning thirty centuries. Started by the Hewitt sisters in 1897, it was intended as a working collection, one to be carefully studied, and whose objects would serve as a “visual library” to inspire students and designers alike.

One of the greatest strengths of the Cooper Hewitt collection is that it’s user-centered. The core collection was based on the principles of participation and outreach, which fit perfectly with our redefined goals for an interactive museum experience, and we’ve continued to build on this foundation in our subsequent collecting efforts.

The collection is also tremendously rich and diverse, but what makes it unique is the range of design processes and manufacturing techniques that it exhibits across our four curatorial departments. Our focus now is on continuing to build our twentieth- and twenty-first-century collections, and providing new ways to display and discuss our evolving collection in keeping with our desire to promote greater accessibility.

Here are just a few examples of the exquisite objects that will be on view when we open: a glass vase designed by Gaetano Pesce while he worked at the French glass center, CIRVA; a 3-D printed urn designed by Michael Eden (profiled on p. 102); and a late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century birdcage from Italy, modeled after the Rialto Bridge, that was donated by the Hewitt sisters.

We’re also working on expanding our collection through the addition of born-digital design objects. To that end, we recently acquired Planetary, an iPad music application. It’s an important...
MAGIC REALISM

By Andrés Ramírez
Contemporary Latin-American Design Acquires a Global Perspective

IN HIS ESSAY "Against Latin American Art," Cuban critic Gerardo Mosquera discusses the risk of categorizing Latin American artists with absolute labels and superficial stereotypes such as indigenous or colorful. In an enormous and heterogeneous territory, art has often been dismissed with little regard for the historical and cultural distinctions between countries with hugely dissimilar cultures—Cuba and Argentina, for example—that cannot be put into the same mold.

Over the last decade, however, this limited viewpoint— one constructed by the Anglo-American world— has evolved dramatically. And two new exhibitions—New Territories: Laboratories for Design, Craft and Art in Latin America, presented by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, and Grandes Maestros: Great Masters of Iberoamerican Folk Art, Collection of Fomento Cultural Banamex, at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles—constitute an important effort in the exploration of the complex nature of contemporary art and design in Latin America.

Recent political and economic improvements in Colombia, Mexico, and Brazil, especially, have witnessed the rise of a new generation of creators, curators, and collectors who are transforming the ways in which art and design are produced in Latin America, and how they are perceived and transacted—the evolution from a domestic practice to a global perspective. Demographic shifts, social improvements, and political stability have fostered the rise of a new middle class (with higher education and purchasing standards) whose members are entering their local markets as collectors for the first time.

At the same time a wide range of emerging artists is embracing new ways of expression, going beyond the modernist focus on conceptualism and political commentary. Artists and designers are repurposing traditional craft and design techniques and reinterpreting the work of native communities through a contemporary lens. That is why ceramics, jewelry, wood, natural fibers, and metal merge together to create a particular aesthetic that reflects the reality of a region larger than a continent that is expanding and connecting with the global society, but at the same time is struggling to keep some of its most valuable traditions alive.

As a consequence of this internationalization, contemporary Latin American art is attracting a broader audience, which has encouraged American museums to expand their collections and exhibitions of this material. In the summer of 2014 in New York City alone, for instance, we saw Lygia Clark: The Abandonment of Art, 1948 to 1988 at the Museum of Modern Art; Waterweavers: The River in Contemporary Colombian Visual and Material Culture at the Bard Graduate Center Gallery; and Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

MAD's New Territories exhibition examines several trends in contemporary Latin-American art including artists who work in traditional handicrafts, among them Venezuela's María Antonia Godigna and Angélica Georgi of Máxima Duda, whose woven Moriche palm Miss Delta Amacuro chair dates from 2006. Grandes Maestros: Great Masters of Iberoamerican Folk Art, Collection of Fomento Cultural Banamex at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles includes Feline, 2001, by Manuel Jiménez Ramirez, who was a Mexican wood carver, painter, and sculptor credited as the originator of the wooden Oaxacan version of oblejies, or animal creatures.
NOW COMES MAD’S New Territories: Laboratories for Design, Craft and Art in Latin America, which explores the complexities of contemporary visual expressions in Central and South America. The curatorial program divides the region into urban hubs designated as highly relevant contemporary laboratories for design, craft, and art—Mexico City and Oaxaca in Mexico; Caracas in Venezuela; São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil; Santiago in Chile; Buenos Aires in Argentina; San Salvador in El Salvador; San Juan in Puerto Rico; and Havana in Cuba. “The intersection of design, craft and art that can be observed in these hubs represents what the Italian designer Gaetano Pesce has described as a ‘new territory’ in contemporary creativity,” writes MAD’s chief curator Lowery Stokes Sims in the exhibition catalogue.

Each hub is analyzed in terms of a particular topic, from urban space to.

 Argentine artists Leo Chiachio and Daniel Giannone want to resuscitate the traditionally female art of hand-embroidery; an example is their wall-hanging Ciudad Frondosa, 2011-2012.

 Fabián Bercic of Buenos Aires works in polyester resin, lending his art what he calls an “industrial and impersonal aspect, although...! personally model the figures, make the molds, transform them into polyester resin, and polish them.” His Convertidos Dios, el nacimiento de Eva dates from 2013.

 Caracas, Venezuela, artist Rolando Peña’s chosen theme is oil, represented in his Double Seat Barrel made from an oil drum, 2013-2014. “As an artist, I’m committed to creating awareness, denouncing the ecological disasters caused by oil’s misuse,” he says.
Carla Fernández of Mexico collaborated with Taller Flora and Pascuala Sánchez to hand-weave the 2008 wool Square Chamula coat. Traveling all over Mexico in her youth, Fernández says, "I spent hours looking at the clothes worn by the local people...Their geometric designs connected my two areas of study—fashion design and art history, especially the work of artists from Constructivist and Futurist avant-garde movements."

Typical of her work, this untitled piece of 2010 by Brazilian Maria Nepomuceno incorporates synthetic plastic rope, sisal rope, colored plastic beads, and terracotta beads, among other materials. "To connect these different materials, I developed my own handmade sewing technique, thereby connecting my work with my indigenous and African ancestry," she says.
repurposing materials to political displacement. More than seventy-five contemporary artists and designers who transcend traditional barriers and have demonstrated how local practices can be incorporated into a global sphere are represented. The show also looks at how collaborations among small manufacturing operations and craftspeople, artists, and designers have addressed issues not only of commodification and production, but also of urbanization, displacement, and sustainability. Among its key themes, says Sims, are the “dialogue between contemporary trends and artistic legacies in Latin American art; the use of repurposed materials in strategies of upcycling; the blending of digital and traditional skills; and the reclamation of personal and public space.”
IN LOS ANGELES, Grandes Maestros: Great Masters of Iberoamerican Folk Art, Collection of Fomento Cultural Banamex, signifies an enormous effort to display the intricate reality of contemporary art and design in Latin America, showcasing more than eight hundred works made by six hundred artists from twenty-two countries. "These contemporary artworks stem from long and rich traditions reaching back to the pre-Columbian era and also illustrate European influences," says Jane Pisano, president and director of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles. "The creativity of regional contemporary artisans is highlighted in their reinterpretation of longstanding traditions, as well as in creating new ones."

The exhibition comprises works made by living artists; some are well known, while others are getting their
first recognition. Artworks included represent a broad range of mediums, such as clay, wood, plant fibers, paper, leather, textiles, silver, shell, glass, and stones. "What's exciting about Grandes Maestros is twofold," Pisano says. "These are contemporary objects that paradoxically represent complex cultural traditions hand-crafted by leading artists from countries that are important to L.A.—countries we visit, do business with, and to which, in many cases, we trace our ancestry."

In her 2001 book Twentieth-Century Art of Latin America, Jacqueline...
Barnitz discussed some of the conceptual contradictions in the practice of art in Latin America. For instance, "identity" and "appropriation" are both embraced and sometimes used simultaneously by artists throughout the continent, for example Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, a pioneer of the "identity" theory who worked with his wife Frida Kahlo, an enthusiastic promoter of European expressionism and surrealism. It is this level of complexity and contradiction that characterizes the art produced in Latin America. And that is why exhibitions such as New Territories and Grandes Maestros represent an important contribution to understanding the ways in which artists there are expressing the beauty and reality of a heterogeneous region inhabited by more than 600 million people. □

Andrés Ramírez is a Colombian architect and journalist who recently received an MA in art business at the Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York.
Grid Iron
The architectural photographs of Vivian Maier
SINCE SHE DIDN'T DRIVE A CAR, the bicycle wheel signified independence for Vivian Maier during the years she lived in the suburbs of Chicago as a nanny and got around town on her bike. It also represented structural grace. You see this in what might be considered a self-portrait, *Vivian's Shadow on Bicycle Tire*, where her lens studies the design of spokes threading out from the axle and attaching onto a metal hoop. The pattern of the spokes plays above their shadow (as well as above Maier's own shadow) like an image from the constructivists Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner. Similarly, when she came upon a barrier fence battered down by a storm at the beach, she focused her camera on the splintered wood slats radiating around a hanger-like loop. From Maier's viewpoint, the accidental structure looked like the air-filled configuration of a miniature architectural model.

She instinctively used the angles of the streets, sidewalks, and massive buildings—old and new—to affix her compositions in space.
the city; she had come from New York in 1956 when she was thirty years old. Like her mother and her grandmother before her, she did household work to earn a living. As she put it, she was sometimes a difficult person, private, closed off to strangers. When she went downtown, she suddenly merged into the powerful and constantly moving vitality of the city with its architecture in transition. The force of traffic, el trains, backhoes, jackhammers, and wrecking balls could be unbalancing, but shielded by the Rolleiflex strapped around her neck—actually looking down into its viewfinder—Maier was able to slow things down so the chaos was tolerable. She instinctively used the grid of the physical city, the angles of the streets, sidewalks, and massive buildings, old and new, to affix her compositions in space.

In the same way that some artists have a genius for rendering figures in the off-kilter but truthful midway of movement, Maier repeatedly documented the transitory quality of the city as she found it. The Wrigley Building, Tribune Tower, the original Stone Container Building, the Old Water Tower, the Michigan Avenue Bridge, the sidewalks between Marshall Field's and the elaborately ornamented curved entrance to the Carson's Building, the Art Institute and Grant Park behind it, the movie palaces—State-Lake, Chicago, Woods, United Artists, Clark—these were her touchstones, and they delineated a province she shared with sailors on leave, women with scarves tied under their chins or wearing corsages on fur coats, men in straw hats, men in trench coats, many of them impassive faces that had survived the years of depression and war.

From her contact sheets, one can infer a method of working as she moved photographically through sometimes large and random blocks of space, documenting Chicagoans in their architectural domain. Shooting what she saw as she roamed, she often caught the way the design and mass of Chicago's eclectic buildings were echoed by the shapes and configurations of the city's inhabitants. An elderly woman's egg- or dome-shaped hat, for instance, lines up humorously against the backdrop of the similarly shaped Tribune Tower and Wrigley's clock tower.

Some of the sites that interested her, such as the city's dark viaducts and building canyons, presented technical challenges for her Rolleiflex, but given the right lighting, a bright morn-
Chicago's dark viaducts and building canyons presented technical challenges that Maier often overcame, as in this 1965 view of the intersection of Clark and Madison Streets.

An elderly woman's egg- or dome-shaped hat lines up humorously against the backdrop of the similarly shaped Tribune Tower and Wrigley Building clock tower (photographed 1970).

The limestone and glass facade of the Prudential Building is seen in the distance in this shot from behind the tail of one of the lion in front of the Art Institute of Chicago (photographed 1973).

A signature composition is Maier's 1960 view of the intersection of Washington and South Wells Streets, anchored by the el station.

geometry, the design of a city corner, and then pounced at the moment when four pedestrians reinforced the structure, lining up imperfectly in the luminescent slush on the street.

Over the years, Maier seemed to take a proprietary interest in the development of downtown spaces and she made it a habit to photograph the new skyscrapers, sometimes surrounded by cranes and sidewalk sheds, as they went up. Her images of the Chase Tower, the Brunswick Building, the Sears Tower, and the John Hancock Center look something like personal souvenirs and demonstrate the difficulties of finding a vantage point and dealing with the physical limitations of her camera and its fixed lens plane and parallel plane. Unless the film plane can be kept parallel with the face of the building the sides of the building (any vertical lines) will converge as the building rises above the camera. The cereal-box shaped Prudential Building, forty-one stories high and representing the most modern technologies of its time, was new when Maier arrived in Chicago. In a playful photograph, several years later, she caught its limestone and glass facade low of center in her viewfinder while shooting from behind the tail of one of the Art Institute's lions.

During the 1960s the clean lines of new construction contrasted starkly with those of the old neoclassical and Beaux Arts buildings. After years of neglect, many of the landmark structures were covered with soot and had damaged masonry. Just as Maier documented the stoic and walled-off faces she noticed on the streets, she captured the architectural decay, destruction, and dismantling, an essential component of a modern city. Her photograph of the old Federal Building in the early stages of demolition is a study of a building's anatomy. With Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's new Dirksen Federal Building in the background, she took a long steady look where the edifice was skinned away, exposing opened up chambers that looked like a honeycomb.

Maier took many photographs at two of Chicago's most important 1960s building projects—the Daley Center and Marina City. The design of the Daley Center (originally the Civic Center) was intended as an architectural homage to Mies van der Rohe and his International style that had so deeply influenced his adopted city. Simultaneously, city planners hoped to configure a European-style square by creating a large and open space north of the building site. The concept caught Maier's fancy and she shot a whole roll of film, sometime around 1970, looking at a matrix of city experience charted on coordinates of the plaza. In one corner she caught two hard-nosed attorneys exchanging views about a dispute spilling over from the courtroom; in another, pedestrians approaching a sidewalk shed in an urban parade. Maier then angled her camera back to photograph the monumental Picasso sculpture and the unfinished construction of an adjacent building. When she stepped even farther away, she caught a group of office workers and tourists.
Clockwise from top left:

The difficulties of finding a vantage point and dealing with the physical limitations of Maier’s camera are evident in this 1969 photo, in which the facade of the Chase Tower (previously the First National Bank of Chicago) appears to curve inward.

Taken in 1971, this view down State Street shows the Chicago Theater on the right and Marina City in the distance.

Shot on June 27, 1964, this compelling composition shows the then Stone Container (now London Guarantee) Building, Marina City, and the Sun-Times Building (demolished in 2005).

Maier’s photograph of the old Chicago Federal Building in the early stages of demolition is a study of a building’s anatomy.

playing a game with coins, rolling them across the granite tiles, bracketed by the heroic glass base of the Daley Center. Her photograph highlights the prismatic quality of the building, transparent enough to see right through to the long, low Greyhound sign on the other side.

The construction of Marina City with its two sixty-story apartment towers—corn cob towers, as Chicagoleans refer to them—signaled an audacious breakthrough in architectural imagination. Solid but spatially fluid, the cylindrical towers were a corporeal reminder of the laws and language of three-dimensional geometry. Like the bicycle wheel, the structure was per-
In this shot from a roll of film of the Daley Center, Maier captures a group of people playing a game with coins on the granite tiles of the building plaza (photographed c. 1970).

feet, kinetic, and complex. When you look at the photographs Maier took during different stages of construction and from various vantage points, you can sense the impatience she must have felt, navigating the multiple levels of the city with its unwieldy bridges and buildings. The towers were pure anomaly: built from concrete but organically shaped, vertically masculine but cerebral, wind resistant but serrated like leaves, mysterious as primeval standing stones while displaying brightly painted automobiles on cantilevering garage floors. One particularly compelling composition shows what was then the Stone Container Building, the Marina City towers, and the Sun-Times Building standing in a row like stepping stones. The image gets at the growing pains of proportionality, an awkwardly beautiful moment in Chicago's metamorphosis. While there was a sense of loneliness and isolation settling on the surface of the buildings that day—something the photographer could contemplate knowingly—the photographic lens showed Marina City bathed in a kind of smoky light that enhanced its abstract qualities. On the street, pedestrians, cars, a trailer, a trashcan, and a mailbox appeared becalmed and miniature in a space that they shared with a cluster of the city's monumental and sculptural structures.
Extreme Serpent shoes designed by Michaella Janse van Vuuren, 2014, for her Garden of Eden collection. The shoes were customized for the model wearing them by Uformia 3D in Norway and printed by Stratasys Connex3 in Israel.

The Wedgwoodn’t tureen was made by Michael Eden in 2008 using a plaster and gypsum material with a unique non-fired ceramic coating.
JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, terms such as "digital fabrication," "3-D printing," and "CAD" began appearing in the news, piquing readers' interest with visions of Jetsons-style consumer gadgets. Auto enthusiasts began fabricating obscure discontinued car parts with the help of the MakerBot, while Americans concerned about gun control sounded the alarm about the advent of something the writers of the second amendment could never have predicted: 3-D-printed firearms. If computer-aided design (CAD) and 3-D printing
Eden created Voxel Vessel I in 2013 through the process of additive layer manufacturing, creating it from a nylon material with a mineral soft coating and 24-karat gold leaf on the inside.

 haven't quite transformed the average household into a hotbed of automated convenience, they certainly have altered the studio landscape for artists and designers all over the world. We are witnessing the emergence of a new set of aesthetics and new ways of working for makers engaged with nearly every material. Because these technologies allow designers to scan and manipulate objects, to "copy, paste, and edit" in three dimensions, two major categories have emerged as the source material of choice: historical decorative arts and the human body.

The four designers presented here are creating new works that draw inspiration from the curves and contours of vases, chairs, and the human form.

**MICHAEL EDEN** is an English ceramist who was inspired to undertake an MPhil at the Royal College of Art in 2008, and became intrigued with the possibilities of rapid prototyping. While a student at the RCA, he delved into a sustained exploration of the qualities of the container, using drawing, 3-D software, and traditional forming techniques, resulting in the witty Wedgwood's tureen. "A different part of my brain came alive," Eden says, reflecting on the parallel tracks of working physically, throwing clay on the potter's wheel, and working digitally in a realm unaffected by gravity or centrifugal force.

His recent works, part of his new Voxel series—a "voxel" is a single data point on a regularly spaced 3-D grid—consider the three-dimensional context of objects in their natural surroundings. Eden took a virtual tour of the Château de Fontainebleau via the Google Art Project. He then digitally “wrapped” the voxel cube structure around eighteenth-century porcelain vase shapes, resulting in entirely new objects with silhouettes that are at once distinctly rococo and twenty-first century. The
vessels are printed over many hours using the latest selective laser sintering technology. Each Voxel vessel is unique, that is, printed once, made by additive layer manufacturing, in high quality nylon with a mineral soft coating. The interiors are finished in gold or silver leaf, Eden's nod to the aesthetics of beauty and skilled craftsmanship of the original objects from which he drew inspiration for this project. Eden is represented by Adrian Sassoon Gallery in London.

**JULIAN MAYOR** shares Eden's love of historical decorative arts and design. His limited edition Clone chair from 2005, inspired by a Queen Anne chair in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, was recently featured in the exhibition *Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital* at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York. Like Eden, Mayor is intrigued by the sculptural potential of combining digital and handcrafting methods. He graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2000 and worked for a time in California as a designer for IDEO, a design consulting firm. On returning to London in 2002, he had stints at Pentagram and other design studios before starting to teach 3-D modeling at the London College of Communication.

The Clone chair, which was first shown in the *Telling Tales: Fantasy and Fear in Contemporary Design* exhibition at the Victoria and Albert in 2009, is the product of Mayor's idiosyncratic woodworking method. He began by scanning an eighteenth-century side chair in the Met, manipulated the data digitally, and modeled the form using CAD software. The resulting design was then fabricated from sheets of plywood that Mayor cut using a numerical, or CNC, router, which enables woodworkers to make ultra-precise cuts. The layers of plywood correspond to the curves and carving of the “source” chair, but the finished piece is constructed in a way that is totally different from the hand-carved original. Its overall shape may be eighteenth century, but the Clone chair is very much a digital descendant. “Although the piece keeps an appreciation of the form and formality of the original,” Mayor says, “it has been transformed into something that is more about the idea of possibility. It requires some kind of relationship with the viewer to make it work, and seems to create a question mark rather than a full stop.”
One of the ways in which new technologies have revolutionized design is that makers can now easily scan the human body—a notion that may horrify those who dread bathing-suit season—yielding a three-dimensional, real-life model that previously would have required a full body cast. This means that for fashion and jewelry in particular, the curves and contours of the flesh are meeting their high tech matches like never before.

**EMILY COBB** is captivated by the shapes and motion of animals. Her work often takes the forms of various creatures, ranging from snakes to stallions, and she finds beauty, energy, and at times pathos in animals' life cycles. Her recent series of neckpieces, Become Undone, includes doves that drape elegantly around the neck and shoulder. The dove's tail and wings appear to "unravel," an effect Philadelphia-based Cobb says would be impossible without the aid of new technologies. "CAD enables me to create the animal first as accurately as possible, and then to crack/unravel/tear it apart." She can also explore the ways a piece will sit on the body using a 3-D scan, and make design decisions before she prints a finished piece. Cobb prefers working with some of the more unusual materials available to jewelers today, such as Nylon 12, which is a flexible, white synthetic that can be painted and dyed. It's affordable and very wearable, making it possible for her to produce works for a range of price points. Cobb's work has been shown at the Philadelphia Art Alliance and the Tyler School of Art, where she is currently teaching in the jewelry program, as well as at the Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts and the Racine Museum of Art in Wisconsin.

**MICHAELLA JANSE VAN VUUREN** is a kindred spirit: like Cobb, she draws inspiration from animals, but she is producing pieces of clothing and shoes in addition to jewelry. Working with colleagues from Israel and Norway, she has created the first multi-material multicolor fashion ensemble in the world. With a PhD in electrical engineering, she comes to clothing design with a problem-solver's point of view. Her Garden of Eden fashion collection was created using the Objet500 Connex3 3-D printer from the Israeli firm Stratasys, a technology that allows designers to print with more than one material simultaneously and in different colors, yielding the closest thing to a finished product currently available that is printed entirely in one shot. Van Vuuren's interpretation of the biblical creation story has a feminist twist: instead of bringing about the fall of paradise and suffering to all of her descendants, this version has Eve as the master of the serpent. Her Extreme Serpent shoes feature a stylized snake's head as part of the stacked high heel, and a reptile-inspired surface design. The wearer literally "walks" on the serpent with each step. The collection is customizable in shape and size, not merely sized up in the way ready-to-wear clothing is usually scaled for the mass market.

Based just outside of Pretoria, South Africa, van Vuuren is represented by the Southern Guild, which after operating for six years as a collective, has opened a permanent gallery space in Cape Town. Van Vuuren's dual identity as an artist and engineer has led her to exhibit internationally in venues ranging from the London Science Museum to Design Miami/Basel. For the Garden of Eden series, she worked closely for nearly six months with Daniel Dikovsky and Tal Ely of Stratasys's materials research and development team to develop the printed prototypes, and she collaborated with the Norwegian firm Uformia to customize the finished garments using body-scan data. Her hope is that this way of creating clothing can accommodate a multitude of body types.

Like Eden, Mayor, and Cobb, van Vuuren is charting new territory in the digital realm, where forms are unaffected by the physical world. This world has its own aesthetics, quite distinct from the traditional fields of jewelry design, furniture, ceramics, and fashion. Their pixelated splendor is a fresh way of thinking about form. It is a new industrial revolution that puts the individual consumer back at the center of the picture, body-scan data and all.
Under the Bridge

The seizure of George Sánchez-Calderón's Miami home by the state of Florida played perfectly into the artist's life's work
ON SEPTEMBER 30, the last day the movers came to George Sánchez-Calderón's home, the sky was smoky and hot and smelled like skin, like the inside of a Chinese acupuncture cup. The artist paced and smoked while a man with a clipboard and a photographer from the *Miami Herald* documented every inch of the space. After all, this was news. For thirteen years Sánchez-Calderón has made art out of his home (out of referring both to material and location), but now that home, which happened to be in a warehouse underneath an Interstate-395 overpass in downtown Miami, was going away, taken by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) as collateral.

*Pax Americana*, a two-part project from 2012, included the Americana sign, which was installed in front of the St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort and references the site's previous tenant—the glamorous (or notorious) Americana Hotel designed by Morris Lapidus.
the father of one thing: his kids were not going to have trades. George went to school. In 1995 he received an MFA in painting and printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design.

He is also trained as an architect, and is preoccupied not only with urbanism, but with the real estate market and the concrete poetry of permits and blueprints. In February 2001 he spent $105,000 on a 2,600-square-foot warehouse at 75 Northwest Twelfth Street. Once he cleared out the briar patch of rusty hypodermics (it had been a shooting gallery) and christened it the Bakery after his father’s place of work, Sánchez-Calderón set to work transforming the back crescent of the building into a living space replete with a wall-size built-in bookcase, and the front into a studio and entertaining space. From the warehouse’s triangular patio—which includes potted plants, bamboo fencing, and a barbeque pit used mainly

damage in a neighborhood-wide war against urban slump. This day had been coming for several years, with the artist fighting the government every step of the way. Yet while nobody wants to lose a home, this seizure played perfectly into the life’s work of downtown Miami’s most important artist.

Throughout his career, Sánchez-Calderón has appropriated found imagery and objects in response to twentieth-century America. His work manifests “what one naturalized American finds to see in the United States that signifies the kind of civilization born here and spreading elsewhere,” as Robert Frank put it in his Guggenheim Fellowship application. Sánchez-Calderón’s art has always been idealistic in its hope to elevate the condition of the everyman, but it’s not naive enough to believe that is actually possible.

Sánchez-Calderón was born in 1967 in New York City to Cuban immigrant parents. Like many of the exiles from Castro, his family ended up in Miami. There he was raised in the city’s southwestern cookie-cutter suburbs, while his father ran a kosher bakery in South Beach for years. A career of predawn kneading convinced
Sánchez-Calderón transformed the back crescent of the warehouse into a living space that included a wall-size built-in bookcase.

The front of the building was his studio and entertaining space.

Sánchez-Calderón’s 2011 Antichrist, a reproduction of Gerard Seghers’s 1625 Christ and the Penitents rendered in six layers of cardboard, led to the room with the bookcase and Americana sign.

Living within sight of both Miamis—those of wealth and of poverty—the artist had a unique perspective on the shortcomings of modern urban planning.

for paella—there is a particularly Miami vista. Out of the underbelly of the I-395 overpass, clumps of tropical plants have taken root and grow downward. Just beyond, four luxury condos leap an average of sixty stories into the gigantic Florida sky.

They were built sometime after his renovation. Living within sight of both Miamis—those of wealth and of poverty—the artist had a unique perspective on the shortcomings of modern urban planning. His responses were critical, sure, but neither damning nor hermetic. The first major work he completed in the warehouse was La Bendición (2002), a replica of Villa Savoye, Le Corbusier’s singular (and single-minded) machine for living completed in 1931 outside Paris. Sánchez-Calderón installed it in the sodden dark underneath the overpass. With this choice of placement, the artist inverted the architect’s faith that modern principles of design could somehow elevate the condition of the normal citizen. Le Corbusier, who wanted to bulldoze wide swaths of Paris, would have seen nothing wrong with the I-395 overpass, even as it displaced ten thousand people from the historic black district of Over-town. So, although seeing an illuminated temple of modernism placed in the muck under a Florida highway seemed unexpected, it was in keeping with much of that period’s ideology.

Another anomalous yet historically sound relationship between sculpture and site occurred in the fall of 2012 when Sánchez-Calderón was commissioned to create a project for the village of Bal Harbour. Reflecting on that affluent neighborhood’s middle-class origins, the artist created two monumental sculptures. The first was a polished sign reading “Americana” that was placed outside of the
St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort, a hotel built on the rubble of the Morris Lapidus–designed Americana Hotel, Sánchez-Calderón then built a scale replica of a house in the country’s first postwar planned community, Levittown on Long Island, which was placed in the center of the traffic circle across the way from the Bal Harbour Shops, one of the most expensive malls in the country. It was a simple hollow structure made of plywood, covered with a vinyl black-and-white photograph of a Levittown house. The Ben-Day dots (blown up into digital pixels) seemed as big as Oreo cookies. The effect was both comforting and startling; the trompe-l’oeil image read as history flattened into nostalgia.

Both pieces were commissioned as short-term public works, so when they were removed several months later, Sánchez-Calderón decided to burn the house in downtown Miami’s Bicentennial Park, making it at once a sort of Viking funeral for affordable housing in the city and part and parcel of the Spanish tradition of the Las Fallas, a ritualized burning occurring around St. Joseph’s Day. Dating back several hundred years, the ritual began as a way for carpenters to get rid of old scraps and projects. As such, the inferno is both pragmatic and cathartic, celebratory and bittersweet. It took a minute to catch, but when it did, flames shot tens of feet into the air. The crowd that had gathered took a collective step back and then another.

Against the artist’s will, another artwork is now slated for destruction. This is no canny play on model unit architecture or Duchampian objet trouvé. His actual house—where he slept, sketched out ideas, and hosted dinner parties...
for local museums—had been claimed under eminent domain by FDOT. They plan to put an exit ramp through his living room.

On this last day, the back room is empty except for a few boxes filled with odds and ends: a handgun cast in rubber by Sánchez-Calderón’s close friend, the artist Shelter Serra (the nephew of the better-known Richard); a machete; and My Family and My Community, an old social studies textbook that Sánchez-Calderón keeps because his family was photographed to represent the Latin American community. “It’s not just about the objects, it’s about your life,” he said, digging to the bottom of one box. There were two panoramic photos, taken when the artist first moved in. The ivy-covered warehouse looks war-torn. But after a bit of work, it was a thriving live/work space in a rundown corner of Miami where most people did neither.

For much of his career, Sánchez-Calderón has examined the connections between the ideals of art and the grease and dust of the day to day. As the movers carted out the last of his belongings, something became obvious. The warehouse was

The warehouse was not just his studio and living space. It was also Sánchez-Calderón’s ultimate sculpture in Miami

not just his studio and living space. It was also his ultimate sculpture in Miami. When art is destroyed, the ideas and the aura remain. But when a home is demolished? Well, aura doesn’t keep the rain out. Sánchez-Calderón combined the domestic and artistic worlds into one. But in doing so, he exposed each to the logic of the other, and became both temporarily out of work and out of a home. As the legal battle stretched on, the destruction of the Bakery moved from absurdity to possibility to a series of No Trespassing signs bolted to the perimeter fence. The artist considered his next move. He painted two murals. One, Not For Sale, on the Bakery’s exterior wall and the other, Adios, on a nearby building. And then he caught a flight to Spain. 

I LOVE THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN. It was built in 1923 as a real estate marketing tool to promote a new neighborhood, then called Hollywoodland, and has since become the image of Los Angeles. It represents our city of dreams and dreamers, the magic of our imagination, and the optimism of our future. But the best part is the experience and viewpoint you have of it as a local.

Starting at Lake Hollywood, or Griffith Park, or Beachwood Canyon, hiking along the trails and ridges of our local Hollywood Hills, you get the most amazing views of Los Angeles, the surrounding mountains, and out to the ocean. It's Southern California at its best and most mythic. Griffith Park is our Central Park—an enormous, natural, rough environment in the heart of an urban metropolis. It is truly nature in the city. As you hike the hills, feel the breezes, and smell the flora, your views and perspectives are always changing and never ending.

Finally, you end up behind the Hollywood sign. Peering through the industrial framework that holds the giant white letters, you behold the city in all its sprawling glory. It all comes together at this moment: the memory of the glamour of Hollywood, the future potential of this creative community, the intersection of nature and city. It is peaceful, quiet, and vast—like standing at the rim of the Grand Canyon—Los Angeles at its best. Being alone and connected at the same time is my escape, my favorite iconic L.A. moment.

—Mark Rios

MARK RIOS is a much-honored architect, landscape architect, and product designer who lives and works in Los Angeles. His firm, Rios Clementi Hale, recently designed all new furnishings for the picnic areas at the Hollywood Bowl and Grand Park in downtown Los Angeles along with numerous other projects. NotNeutral, his product design firm, offers rugs and furniture but is best known for its graphic dinnerware line called City Plates.
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery now represents Barbara Chase-Riboud.

Untitled (Pushkin), 1985, polished bronze and silk, 77 x 27 x 19 inches
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