

FLORIDA InsideOut

gift
guide

November/December 2007

architecture design art

The Art Issue

Navigating Art Basel

Gift Guide for the Style-Obsessed

Auction Results

Tokujin Yoshioka



At home with
Michelle Rubell

\$4.99US \$5.99CAN



BRIGHT LIGHT
Untitled, a hand-painted
lamp, by Karen Ryan at
Designersblock

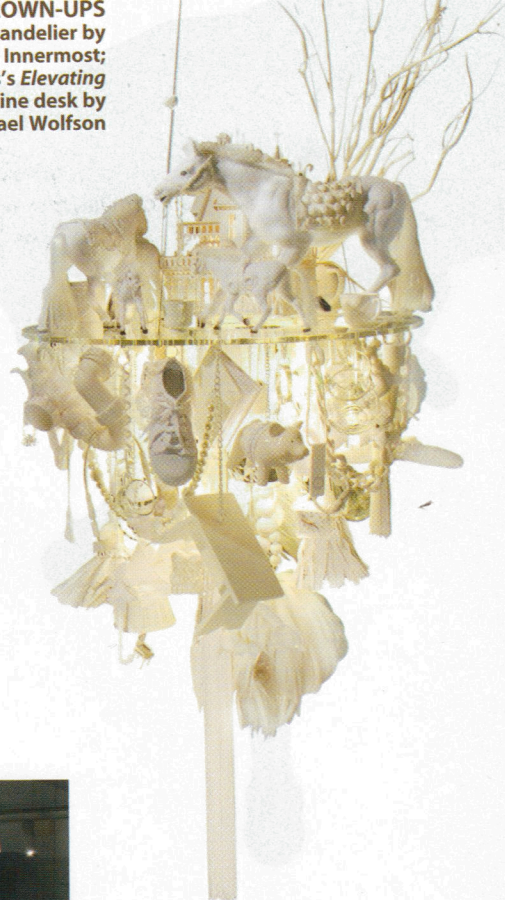


London Design Festival

From luxury limited editions to perfect pieces of trash

BY ABBY KELLETT

TOYS FOR GROWN-UPS
From top, White chandelier by
Winnie Lui for Innermost;
Established & Sons's *Elevating
Design* and the Line desk by
Philip Michael Wolfson



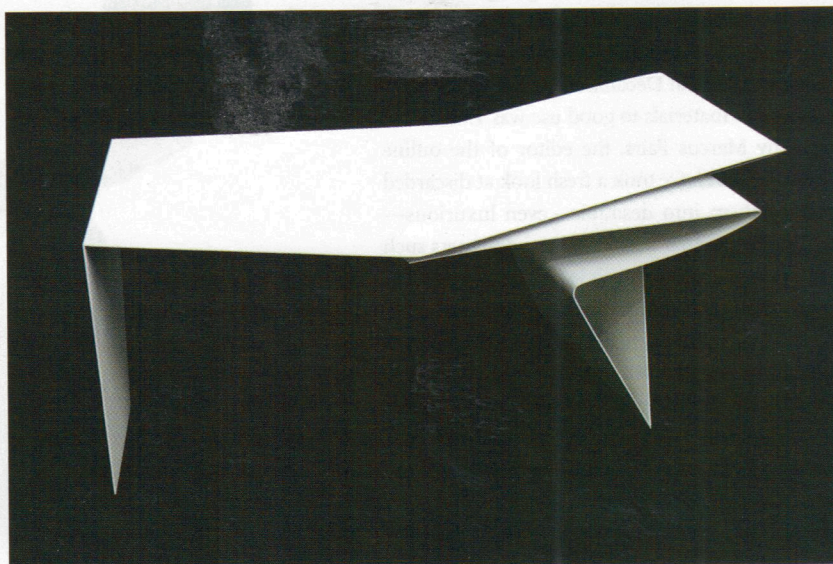
T

wo themes prevailed at this year's London Design Festival held in September. At one extreme were expensive pieces, produced in limited numbers, that followed the design-as-art trend (made popular by the Design Miami/ fair) consuming the worlds of art and design at the moment. At the other extreme

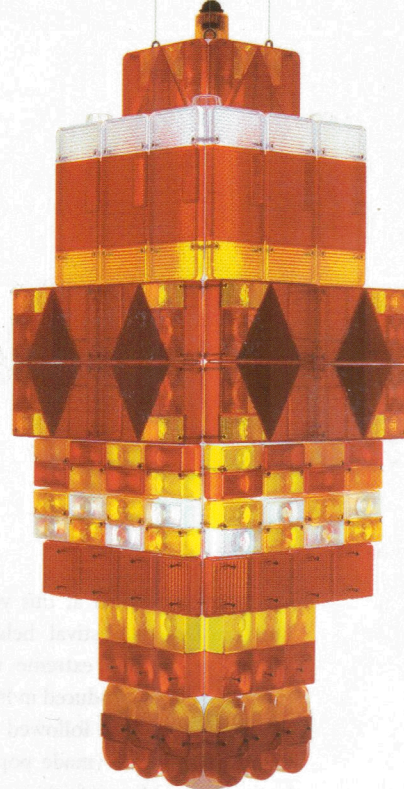
were pieces with an air of imperfection: some misshapen and unfinished, others made from materials that would typically be discarded. At this design fair, however, these two extremes came together to create rubbish-inspired, sophisticated pieces, some of which were limited-edition.

Established & Sons decided to tackle the design-as-art debate head-on in London with its exhibition *Elevating Design*. The company reproduced 12 pieces from its furniture collection in luxurious Carrara marble and displayed them on pedestals that towered 20 feet above visitors' heads. The exhibition was meant to raise questions about the credibility of design in the art world and certainly created a lot of buzz. While the pieces shown at *Elevating Design* were not for sale during the exhibition, they later went on sale (and sold out) at Established & Sons's new gallery, which opened during the Frieze art fair in October.

Another example of the force of the design-as-art trend, talked about but unfortunately not open during the London Design Festival, is Covent Garden Super Design, an exhibition by three London-based galleries—Kenny Schachter Rove Projects, Greenwich Village and The Apartment. The exhibition, which took place during Frieze, showcased limited-edition pieces from designers such as Fernando and Humberto Campana, Studio Job and part-time Miami resident Philip Michael Wolfson.



{ At this design fair these two extremes came together to create luxurious, and even limited-edition pieces. }



IMPERFECTION DONE RIGHT

Clockwise from top left, *Drunken table* by Andrew Oliver; *Tail Light* by Stuart Haygarth; *Touchcrete lamp* by Luke Bowers and *Now Isn't That Lovely, #6* by Stephen Johnson.

Opting to straddle the Design Festival and Frieze was the Gallery Libby Sellers. A one-time curator at the Design Museum in London, Sellers opened her pop-up gallery with an exhibition called *Grandmateria*. For it she commissioned a group of designers to create limited-edition pieces from commonplace objects, like bars of soap and plastic taillights. Sellers will be bringing *Grandmateria* to Design Miami/ in December.

Also putting reclaimed materials to good use was *Trash Luxe*, an exhibition curated by Marcus Fairs, the editor of the online design magazine *Dezeen*. *Trash Luxe* took a fresh look at discarded objects by transforming them into desirable—even luxurious—pieces. Finding beauty in unwanted materials were designers such as Heath Nash, whose pendant lights are made from plastic bottles, and Greetje van Helmond, whose necklaces are crafted from lumps of sugar. In a similar vein Karen Ryan reappropriated scalloped lampshades as canvases for her untitled lights at Designersblock, and Innermost showed a chandelier by Winnie Lui made from discarded toys at 100% Design (the main hub of the Design Festival).

Unusual materials and imperfect forms were prevalent elsewhere at the London Design Festival, especially in the work of many young designers. Mint, a boutique design store in the city's West End, showed roughly hewn concrete lamps from Luke Bowers. At Tent, East London's new design super show, Stephen Johnson exhibited his collection *Now Isn't That Lovely* (pieces made from reclaimed animal ornaments) and Andrew Oliver showed his *Drunken* furniture with wobbly-looking legs. This recent graduate showed that, in the case of these quirky pieces, having "one too many" can have a positive effect. ■



LONDON'S NEW DESIGN HOTSPOTS

A COOL POOL AND MORE
At right, the swimming pool and light installation at the Haymarket Hotel; below right, the sitting room at Shoreditch House; bottom left, the conservatory at the Haymarket Hotel.



The Haymarket's swimming pool comes complete with spectacular lighting effects.



A couple of venues with eclectic decor and swimming pools (yes, swimming pools) in common caught our eye this year after the design festival exhibitions had closed. *The* place to get a drink, after East London's new show Tent, was Shoreditch House and *the* place to sleep, central to all of the exhibitions, was the Haymarket Hotel.

Shoreditch House is the newest branch of the group of Soho "houses" (there are five in London, one in New York and Soho Beach House due to open in Miami Beach in 2009) situated in the up-and-coming trendy area of east London after which it is named. Shoreditch is a private club so unless you have a membership card to flash at reception you'll need to find a member to tag along with to enter. The interiors were designed by Tom Dixon and retain the eclectic feel that is a signature of the Soho House style. A fascinating mix of classic and modern furniture (much of it designed by Dixon) is housed on three

floors and in its several bars and dining rooms. Not to mention the spa, bowling alley and rooftop swimming pool.

Also with a swimming pool (this time in the basement) is the new Haymarket Hotel, just off Trafalgar Square in the heart of central London. The Haymarket's swimming pool comes complete with a bar for poolside events and a spectacular lighting installation by Martin Richman. Like Shoreditch House, the Haymarket's design is eclectic, giving the historic landmark building (dating back to the 1820s) a modern point of view. Design highlights at the hotel include its extensive collection of original artwork (hanging in the common areas and in the rooms) and the stunning array of fabrics and wallpaper that cover many of the hotel's vast walls.

Shoreditch House, Ebor Street, London, E1, +1144 20 7739-5040
shoreditchhouse.com

Haymarket Hotel, 1 Suffolk Place, London, SW1, +1144 20 7470-4004
haymarkethotel.com