

THE WORLD

<https://www.freemag.ir>

INTERIORS

SEPTEMBER 2026

The Body
Issue







Dior

JEWELLERY

My Dior





NORDIC KNOTS

RUGS, CURTAINS
BEDDING & DECOR

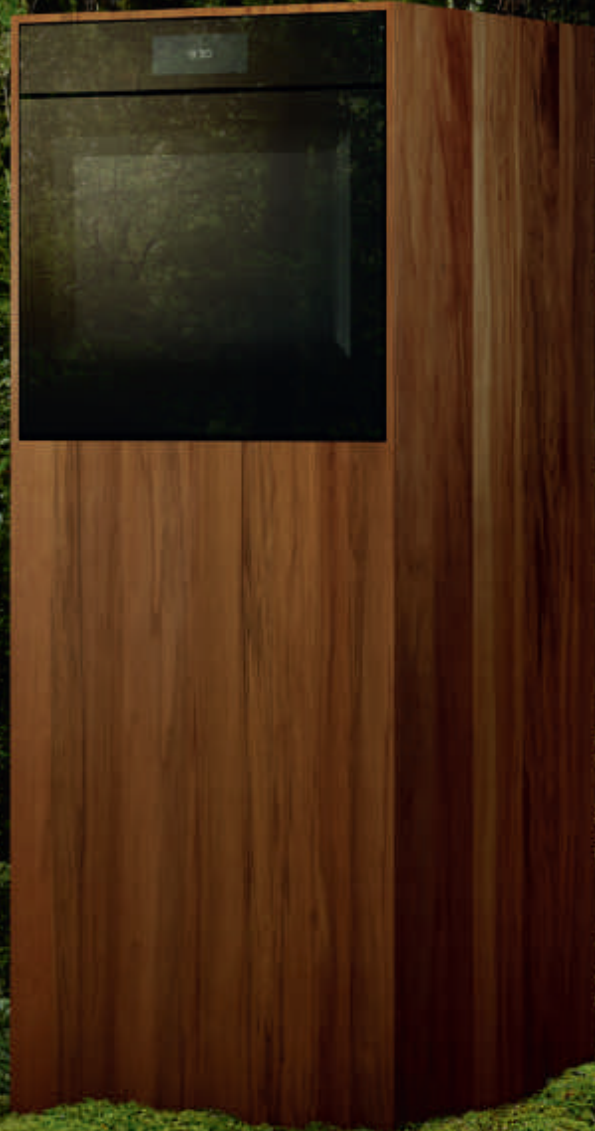
6 GREENE STREET
NEW YORK

130 MOUNT STREET
LONDON

BIRGER JARLSGATAN 58
STOCKHOLM



EST. 1934
DESIGNED IN NEW ZEALAND



FISHER & PAYKEL

EXPERIENCE CENTRES | AUCKLAND | MELBOURNE | SYDNEY | TORONTO | COSTA MESA | NEW YORK | LONDON

Contents



Cover: a talent to a muse – once a model of Picasso's, now, as her 400-year-old Provençal farmhouse attests, Lydia Corbett is an artist herself. Get knockin' on heaven's door from page 64. Photograph: Steph Wilson

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES

Receive 12 issues delivered direct to your home address. Call 01858 438815 or visit us at worldofinteriors.com

PERIODICALS

Postage paid at Rahway, NJ. Postmaster: Send address corrections to 'The World of Interiors' c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd Inc, 2323 Randolph Avenue, Avenel NJ 07001, 'The World of Interiors' (ISSN 0264-083X) is published monthly. Vol 46 no 9, total 527

10

Contributors

17

Editor's letter

ANTENNAE

22

News

What's new in style, decoration and design, by David Lipton

25

Roundup

Whether an ear-shaped lamp, a foot paperweight or a chair with buttocks, David Lipton serves up an anatomy of home wares

30

Door Belles

Thought ironmongery, from knobs to escutcheons, could never be fused with the human body? You don't have a leg to stand on, says Rose Eaglesfield

36

Flow and Repeat!

High-energy patterns make you want to move. That's the mantra of guru Ruth Sleightholme, as she realigns your chakras with zingy ikats, florals and checks

42

Romancing the Stone

On fountains, ships and bridges, Audrey Munson was the model of choice for Beaux-Arts sculptors in the USA. But scandal ended it all, finds Rosalind Jana

48

Room for Debate

Why are blackamoors and other racist ornaments still available to buy, wonders Adrienne Childs

49

Wellsprings

To the Scots, reckons maker Monty Lewis, sporrans are like cherished pets. Kilty pleasures indeed, agrees Hugo Macdonald

52

Hamishsphere

As a guest of Dries van Noten, Mr Bowles enjoys Guardis, Guggenheim's palazzo and Museo Fortuny in Venice

54

Books

Reading on art and architecture, design and decoration

56

Exhibitions

Queer clans of Uganda, the lost sisters of Futurism

58

Network

Merchandise and events from around the world



COLUMN 4: LORENA LOHR (SEE PAGE 47)

Hermès, ride on!



VISITOR'S BOOK

64

Holy Wit

Angels painted on old wallpaper add an ethereal air to the *mas* in Provence owned by one-time Picasso model and now artist Lydia Corbett. Are they her guardians, wonders Zing Tsjeng

76

Clothed for Business

A bookbinder in a skirt made of hardbacks, a locksmith with a sporran of keys... this madcap set of Baroque etchings shows tradesmen in their trappings. Work it! says Stephen Patience

82

Gowd Give Me Strength

Champions move to the beat of a drum in this *zurkhaneh* in Tehran, where dance, ritual and exercise fuse. Donna Salek compares the Iranian institution with gym culture in the West



90

Clasp Reunion

In the 1980s Issey Miyake caused a stir with his plastic bustiers. Now, in homage, the brand's lacquered shells bring craft skills as old as samurai armour to high fashion. Text: Dal Chodha

96

Go Figure

Cement mixer in tow, Croatian outsider artist Emilan Grgurić spent decades creating his own mythological world on an island in the Adriatic. Will it crumble into the sea, asks Jelena Dunato



104

Esprit de Copse

Forest air and the sun's healing power underlay Aino and Alvar Aalto's 1920s TB sanatorium in Finland. Architecture so deeply informed by users' needs offered a ray of hope, says Jane Withers

116

Bone Idyll

What are the secret stories thrown up by this underground ossuary, recently restored, in the Czech Republic? Michael Huey unlocks them with his skeleton key. First published: July 1992

AFTERWORD

125

Address Book

Suppliers in this issue

126

Inspiration

Recreate some of the design effects in this issue, by Leyla Spratley and Rose Eaglesfield

136

Object Lesson

Frida Kahlo's self-portrait in butterfly form is an emblem of pre-Hispanic mythology. It's a talisman, says Lottie Jackson



PORTA ROMANA | GERGEI ERDEI



Contributors



Adrienne Childs

A teenage visit to the Louvre's Red Rooms set Adrienne on the path to becoming an art historian; that spark culminated in her teaching the very paintings that first captivated her. In her Room for Debate essay (page 48), she turns her attention to Venice, where, as she writes, 'the juxtaposition between the joyous presence of Black artists from around the globe [at the Biennale] and the pervasive celebration of subservient blackness' prompted musings on the politics of ornament.



Elettra Giunta

With little mapped out, Elettra has embraced the uncertainty of forging her own career, finding, as she puts it, 'something special in carving out that path for yourself'. On page 36, she brought movement to a Swatch shoot inspired by diaphanous textiles, relishing the chance to treat the body 'like another material, something to drape, fold and shape alongside the fabrics and designs themselves'.



Zing Tsjeng

Zing's first foray into journalism came as a child when she made mock newspaper front pages complete with fictional exclusives and bylines. On page 64, she visits the Provençal *mas* of artist Lydia Corbett to witness how generations of family history are woven together with a lifetime of making. What stayed with Zing was the owner's reminder that 'it's never too late to pursue your creative passions'.



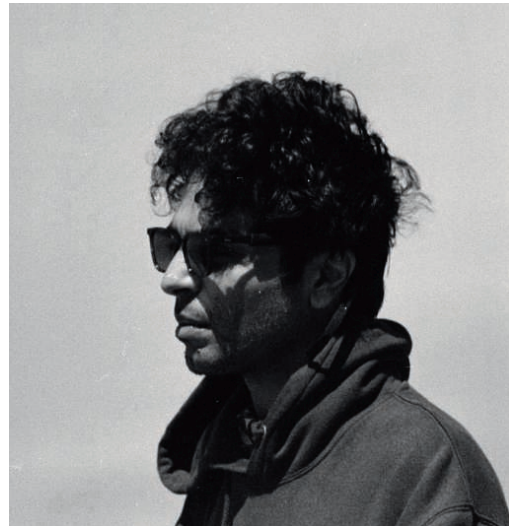
Sara Sahores

Moving from Argentina to London to study photography at the Royal College of Art marked a turning point for Sara. For this issue, she found herself shooting an unlikely cast of characters: knobs, hinges, escutcheons and cabinet pulls, turning everyday hardware into something playful, offbeat and slightly surreal (page 30). 'I like when things are a bit ambiguous and confusing,' she says.



Jelena Dunato

For this issue, writing in her second language, English, novelist Jelena travelled to a sculpture garden on a Croatian island, where outsider artist Emilan Grgurić spent years building a world of his own (page 96). It is, she says, a story about 'the perseverance, the stubbornness, of the owner working for decades outside every artistic circle, never ceasing to believe in his vision'.



Amirhossein Khoshbin

Curiosity has taken Amirhossein in many directions, from wildlife film-making and documentary cinematography to the rituals and myths that shape cultural traditions. That same instinct brought him to one of Iran's historic *zurkhanehs* (page 82). While photographing the space, he found himself drawn to the century of portraits on its walls, which, he says, amounts to 'an act of resistance against forgetting', preserving the memory of all who have passed through the site's doors.

TRECA

PARIS

The French artisan of signature beds since 1935



Carat Brut headboard designed by Anette Lang – Chroma Auburn India Madhavi fabric by Pierre Frey

London Marylebone Store
7-9 Wigmore St, London, W1U 1PB
+44 20 4599 8022

London Chelsea Store
82, Fulham Road, SW3 6HR London
+44 20 4599 8023



Make an appointment

treca-paris.com

[@treca-paris](https://www.instagram.com/treca-paris)

The World of Interiors

Editor
Emily Tobin

Art Director
Ben Weaver

Style Director
Ruth Sleightolme

Managing Editor
Tom Reynolds

Digital Director
Elly Parsons

Features Editor
Alice Kemp-Habib

Visuals Editor
Ivan Shaw

Associate Editor, Paris
Marie-France Boyer

Chief Sub-Editor
Damian Thompson

Digital Editor
Alice Inngs

Style Editor
David Lipton

Deputy Chief Sub-Editor
Gareth Wyn Davies

Senior Designer
Michaela Nilsson

Associate Features Editor
Ariadne Fletcher

Deputy Digital Editor
Donna Salek

Senior Creative Video Producer
Valérie Messersi

Junior Sub-Editor
Leyla Spratley

Designer
Manon Veyssière

Junior Stylist
Rose Eaglesfield

Audience Development Co-ordinator
Mary Guy

PA to Editor
Maggie Gledhill

Founding Editor
Min Hogg

Creative Director at Large
Hamish Bowles

Contributing Editor at Large
Patrick Kinmonth

Contributing Editor, Italy
Marella Caracciolo Chia

Contributing Editor, Architecture
Jane Withers

Contributing Style Editor
Miranda Sinclair

Contributing Arts Editor
Holly EJ Black

Contributing Editors

Cosmo Brockway, Miranda Brooks, Laura Burlington, Florian Daguét-Bresson, Amy Fine Collins (New York), Allegra Hicks, Carolina Irving, Priyanka Khanna, Augusta Pownall, Rodman Primack (Latin America), Amy Sherlock, Tree Sherriff, Plum Sykes

THE ADELPHI, 1-11 JOHN ADAM STREET, LONDON WC2N 6HT, T 020 7499 9080

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS (ISSN 0264-083X) is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Ltd, The Adelphi, 1-11 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. Telephone 020 7499 9080. © 2025. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited. Printed in the UK by Walstead Roche. Colour origination by Rhapsody. Distributed by Frontline, Midgate House, Peterborough, Cambs PE1 1TN, United Kingdom (tel: 01733 555161). 'The World of Interiors' is a registered trademark belonging to The Condé Nast Publications Ltd. Subscription rates include delivery and digital editions. Full rates are £83.88 for one year in the UK, £119 for the rest of the world. To place your order call +44 (0)1858 438819. Special offers and exclusive promotions are published in this issue or online at www.worldofinteriors.com/info/about-worldofinteriors. To manage your subscription log onto account.condenast.co.uk. Check your records, change your address, suspend the delivery or renew your subscription at account.condenast.co.uk. Other subscription queries can be directed to condenast@subscription.co.uk. US DISTRIBUTION: The World of Interiors, ISSN 0264-083X (USPS 104) is published monthly by Condé Nast, The Adelphi, 1-11 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT, UK. US distribution: The us annual subscription price is \$137. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named World Container Inc, 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256. US POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The World of Interiors, World Container Inc, 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Subscription records are maintained at Condé Nast Britain, Subscriptions Department, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Market Harborough, LE16 9EF, UK. The paper used for this publication is based on renewable wood fibre. The wood these fibres are derived from is sourced from sustainably managed forests and controlled sources. The producing mills are EMAS registered and operate according to highest environmental and health and safety standards. This magazine is fully recyclable – please log on to www.recyclenow.com for your local recycling options for paper and board. 

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (which regulates the UK's magazine and newspaper industry). We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice [www.ipso.co.uk/editors-code-of-practice] and are committed to upholding the

highest standards of journalism. If you think that we have not met those standards and want to make a complaint please see our Editorial Complaints Policy on the Contact Us page of our website, or contact us at complaints@condenast.co.uk, or by post to Complaints, Editorial Business Department, Condé Nast Publications Ltd, The Adelphi, 1-11 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT, UK. If we are unable to resolve your complaint, or if you would like more information about IPSO or the Editors' Code, ring IPSO on 0300 123 2220, or visit www.ipso.co.uk 

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS IS PUBLISHED BY CONDÉ NAST

Chief Executive Officer Roger Lynch; Chairman of the Board Jonathan Newhouse; Chief Revenue Officer Elizabeth Herbst-Brady; Chief Content Officer Anna Wintour; Chief Financial Officer Nick Hotchkin; Chief People Officer Stan Duncan; Chief Corporate Affairs and Communications Officer Danielle Carrig; Chief Product and Technology Officer Vasanth Williams; Chief Content Operations Officer Christiane Mack

WORLDWIDE EDITIONS: France AD, GQ, Vanity Fair, Vogue; Germany AD, Condé Nast Traveller, Glamour, GQ, Vogue; India: AD, Condé Nast Traveller, GQ, Vogue; Italy AD, Condé Nast Traveller, GQ, La Cucina Italiana, Vanity Fair, Vogue, Wired; Japan GQ, Vogue, Wired; Mexico and Latin America AD, Glamour GQ, Vogue, Wired; Middle East AD, Condé Nast Traveller, GQ, Vogue, Wired; Spain AD, Condé Nast Traveller, Glamour, GQ, Vanity Fair, Vogue; Taiwan GQ, Vogue; United Kingdom Condé Nast Johansens, Condé Nast Traveller, Glamour, GQ, House & Garden, Tatler, The World of Interiors, Vanity Fair, Vogue, Vogue Business, Wired; United States AD, Allure, Ars Technica, Bon Appétit, Condé Nast Traveler, epicurious, Glamour, GQ, Pitchfork, Self, Teen Vogue, Them, The New Yorker, Vanity Fair, Vogue, Wired. PUBLISHED UNDER JOINT VENTURE: Brasil Glamour, GQ, Vogue; PUBLISHED UNDER LICENSE OR COPYRIGHT COOPERATION: Adria Vogue; Australia GQ, Vogue; Bulgaria Glamour; China AD, Condé Nast Traveler, GQ, Vogue; Czech Republic and Slovakia Vogue, Wired; Greece Vogue; Hong Kong GQ, Vogue; Hungary Glamour; Korea Allure, GQ, Vogue; Philippines Allure, Vogue; Poland AD, Glamour, GQ, Vogue; Portugal GQ, Vogue; Scandinavia Vogue; Singapore Vogue; South Africa Glamour, GQ, House & Garden; Thailand GQ, Vogue; The Netherlands Vogue; Turkey GQ, Vogue; Ukraine Vogue.

design centre
LONDON

PRESENTS

FOCUS/26
ON DESIGN
THE POWERHOUSE
OF CREATIVITY

14 – 18 SEPTEMBER

140 SHOWROOMS | OVER 30 HOUSE GUESTS |
120+ INCREDIBLE EVENTS | ONLY ONE ADDRESS

**AN EVENT NOT
TO BE MISSED!**

FREE REGISTRATION
DCCH.CO.UK

Design Centre
Chelsea Harbour
London SW10 0XE
+44 (0)20 7225 9166

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

Western Europe Head of Industry, Publishing Director Travel, Home, Food & Drink
Simon Leadsford

Home

Lead Commercial Director Jane White
Commercial Director Trade & Design
Christopher Daunt
Commercial Director, Home & Retail Sayna Blackshaw
Senior Account Directors Georgina Hutton, Nichole Mika
Acting Senior Account Director Elizabeth Tonge
Senior Account Managers Fiona Mckee, Freya Hill
Group Property Director Fiona Forsyth
Events & Executive Assistant Clare Holley

Travel

Commercial Director, Travel Natalie Moss-Blundell
Senior Account Directors Emma Heuser, Keiran Coyne
Account Director, GCP, Travel & Home Clare Casey
Sales Account Manager Shannon Seaton
Account Manager, GCP, Travel & Home Charlotte Bamsey

Food & Drink

Commercial Director, Food & Drink Natasha Callin
Account Director, Food & Drink Hannah Waring

Directories

Commercial Director Elizabeth Gray
Acting Associate Commercial Director Camilla Longman
Account Manager Clara Petrillo

Fashion

Commercial Director, Fashion & Technology Otilie Chichester
Associate Commercial Directors, Fashion
Roya Farrokhi, Charlotte Pennington
Senior Account Director, Fashion Amelia Morley
Account Director, Fashion Suzanne Holland
Senior Account Manager Meg Shine

Luxury

Associate Commercial Director, Luxury Elizabeth White
Senior Account Director, Luxury Emily Goodwin
Account Director, Luxury Alec Ward

Beauty

Commercial Director, Beauty Caroline Hooley
Associate Commercial Director, Beauty Jess Purdue
Senior Account Director, Beauty Lili Cavaliere
Account Manager, Fashion & Beauty
Teresa Gonzalez Jaranay de Benavides

BizFiTech, Automotive, Media & Entertainment

UK Head of Industry, BizFiTech, Media & Entertainment and
Automotive Christopher Warren
Commercial Director, Automotive Melanie Keyte
Commercial Director, Biz/Fi/Tech Lucie Burton-Salahuddin
Account Manager, B2B Sales, BizFiTech Isaac Thomas
Account Manager, GCP Lordana Cortese
Account Manager Molly Spink

Events

Events Lead Saffron Altmeyer-Ennis
Senior Events Manager Charlotte Jukes
Events Manager Thalia Mettalinou
Celebrity Producer Eamon Holley

Operations

Director, Commercial Operations, UK Ellen Garlick
Commercial Operations Strategy Managers Charlotte Taylor,
Marie-Sophie De Felice
Acting Commercial Operations Strategy Manager
Yasmin Mahal
Commercial Team Assistant Tiana Ware

Revenue Marketing

Executive Director, Revenue Marketing, Advertising
Mark Russell
Executive Creative Director, Revenue Marketing
Georgina Bacchus
Senior Director, Production & Delivery Gareth Hogan
Director, Brand Marketing Theodora Silver
Senior Director, Marketing & Advertising, Veronica Valdes

Classified

Classified Director Shelagh Crofts
Senior Classified Advertisement Manager
Lucy Hryniewicz-Sudnik
Classified Sales Executive Molly Wraith

Data & Insight

Head of Data Intelligence & ARM Tim Westcott
Senior Insight Executive Holly Harland
Insight Executive Yana Filippova

Press

Vice resident, communications UK Nina Joyce
Senior Communications Manager Cat Timoney

Italian Office Mia Srl

Consumer Revenue

Executive Director, Consumer Joanna Burton
Senior Consumer Revenue Director Richard Kingerlee
Consumer Revenue Manager Olivia Streatfield
Marketing Managers Caitlin Mills, Rachel Horrocks
Assistant Marketing & Promotions Claudia Long

Production

Senior Production Manager Repro & Print Helen Crouch
Senior Production Manager Paper Martin MacMillan
Senior Production Coordinator Lucy Zini
Commercial Senior Production Controller Louise Lawson

VP, Head of Revenue Strategy, Western Europe Malcolm Attwells
VP Consumer Revenue, Europe, Middle East,
Mexico & Latin America Russell Cleeve
VP People, London Rosamund Bradley
Finance Director Danny Sherwood

Chief Business Officer, UK Andrea Latten
Executive Assistant To Chief Business Officer, UK Ellis Middleton



KALLISTA®

JW ANDERSON

jwanderson.com

105-107 Pimlico Road

Editor's Letter

September 2026

When we come up with a theme for an issue of *The World of Interiors*, we draw our perimeter and turn our attention to as much of what falls within that line as is possible. This month that boundary takes the shape of a human body (less crime-scene chalk outline, more Cerne Abbas Giant).

Months ago, our indomitable style director Ruth Sleightholme posited the idea of a 'body issue': an exploration of how the human form is depicted on and within interiors; the multitude of ways in which a space can be about bodies and how our anatomies can relate to space. At a moment when conversations around artificial intelligence boil over with rage and confusion, it feels all the more important to return focus to the blood and guts of it all.

Alongside the magazine you hold in your hands, we have also created a limited-edition publication entitled *Top Shelf*, in which we lift the curtain on the history of sex and erotica within interiors and design. This is a beautiful object, filled with wild stories and some eye-popping images; titillating, tantalising, strange and moving, these visuals provide a pictorial account of humans and our relationship with eroticism across time. They butt up against essays on, among other things, the role of women's bodies in 20th-century design and Catherine the Great's X-rated furniture collection. You can buy *Top Shelf* via worldofinteriors.com and at a select group of stockists.

But for now, let's return to this, our September issue, where each story explores a different facet of the human body. There's the tale of Audrey Marie Munson, an aspiring actress turned artist's model who posed for dozens of statues across New York; whose 'sculpted form graced bridges and ballrooms alike'. Munson lived an exceptional life, and it is chronicled beautifully by Rosalind Jana on page 42. In this month's Room for Debate (page 48), Adrienne Childs writes about the phenomenon of 'ornamental blackness' – 'the transformation of the Black body into a decorative motif in luxury arts'. She writes: 'Beauty can obfuscate, and it seems heightened cultural awareness has not reckoned with the manner in which design can normalise racist tropes.'

Heading down to the south of France, we call on painter and ceramicist Lydia Corbett – once known as Sylvette David, 'the girl with the ponytail' who modelled for Picasso in 1954. Her house, shown on page 64, doubles down on her artistic talents: in 'a testament to her own freewheeling creative eye,' as Zing Tsjeng reports, 'she has covered it with luminous murals of angels, saints,



flowers, animals and pilgrims'. From page 76, we've gathered a series of engravings by Baroque printer Martin Engelbrecht that depict men and women clad in the tools of their trade – including a butcher's wife got up, as Stephen Patience brilliantly puts it, in 'a "meat dress" some three centuries before Lady Gaga'.

Next up, *Wol*'s own Donna Salek writes of the relationship between exercise, ritual and community that has existed in the Iranian *zurkhaneh*, which literally translates to 'house of strength', for hundreds of years (page 82). Dal Chodha, meanwhile, examines Japanese craftsmanship through the eyes of designer Issey Miyake (page 90). 'Oftentimes

people from outside Japan view lacquerware as a craft object, something that you would put on a shelf to look at. But it is something held in our hands, connected to our bodies,' says Satoshi Kondo, who leads the brand's women's collections today.

The handmade villa on page 96 – covered with concrete people and more than a few severed heads – is 'a *Gesamtkunstwerk* dreamed up by Emil Milan Grgurić, a Croatian outsider artist who dedicated his life to making it real', in Jelena Dunato's words. Another labour of love is Paimio, a tuberculosis sanatorium built on the edge of a Finnish forest by the pioneering design duo Alvar and Aino Aalto. The building is innately humane; designed to care for its occupants, it is, as Jane Withers writes, 'an eloquent reminder of architecture's power to heal' (page 104).

On page 116, we revisit a story first published in *Wol* in 1992: an underground ossuary created in Czechia in the 19th century. Michael Huey, who wrote about this strange place then, returns to its 'grotesque beauty' and raises the ethical questions that surround its restoration. Finally, Lottie Jackson writes this month's Object Lesson about a tiny self-portrait by Frida Kahlo, an artist who, due in part to an accident at 18, throughout her life 'experienced cycles of physical trauma and reconstruction' (page 136).

It has been such a pleasure putting together this issue, in all its fleshy glory. Nothing shown on these pages has much of a life without a body to interact with: an empty bed, an unread book, a disused table, an idle spoon. We can, if we choose, outsource our thinking and our imagination to machines, or we can stay put within our brilliant, complicated, flawed bodies and use them as instruments to reimagine the world around us. I hope this edition of *The World of Interiors* tempts you to do just that

✉ Emily Tobin, editor

PERENNIALS
SUTHERLAND
x
KEN FULK



PERENNIALSANDSUTHERLAND.COM

ANTENNAE



Revealed in a 1915 exposition celebrating the newly completed Panama Canal, Alexander Stirling Calder's dolphin-riding spirit of the Atlantic Ocean was modelled on Audrey Marie Munson. See page 42



Investment pieces.

WATERWORKS

What's in the air this month

by David Lipton



Nick of Time

Collapsing millennia into a single moment, Manet gave his contemporary courtesan *Olympia* the haughty gaze of an ancient deity. Infinity held, to adapt Blake, in a glance. For wallpaper designer Nicholas Hughes, the Greek distinction between *chronos*, the ticking clock, and *kairos*, qualitative, 'opportune' time – the latter, he says, facilitates 'real' looking – proved inspirational. For this new design, his very own 'Olympia' (from £270 per m; shown above), he looked to the art of Magna Graecia and filled a sketchbook with poses while

watching the cult film of New York's ballroom scene, *Paris Is Burning*. At once Classical and exultantly modern, the design, with its motifs of tip-toes and balancing balls, puts one in mind of (actual) Paris and the dangling circus legs of the Folies Bergère – whose bar was captured by Manet in another transhistorical triumph. Much like its repeats, here is a wallpaper wherein a thousand moments can unfold forever. Visit diddletron.com

Helical Belles

Beloved of Solomon and sugar fiends alike, the corkscrew form has a hypnotic history. Just think of the spinning barber pole. Apart from the disconcertingly onomatopoeic marshmallow Flump – and, perhaps, the mythical First Temple – the barley-sugar column (named after another sweet) has never been more exquisitely employed than on Bernini's bronze baldachin. Placed at the heart of St Peter's Basilica, it is a virtuoso testament to the power of the spiral. No wonder the American master of luxury interiors RH Estates pounced on its transfixing twists for its new range. Named after the Italian

sculptor's canopy, the range sees the shape transformed into a bed, sideboard, bench and table, balancing its dynamism with heavy brass feet and marble tops. If it should ever come down to a Solomonic toss-up between two tables, you won't need a king's ruling to know which to plump for. Shown below: 'Baldacchino' table, £5,850. Visit rh.com

Digital Footprint

Good looks are famously galvanising. Need one mention Helen of Troy, the face that launched a thousand ships? Triggering the manufacture of infinitely more plates, however, Lina Cavalieri is less well known. But you know her face. Super-cincher, cosmetics mogul, mistress of a Romanov prince... as imaginary muse to Piero Fornasetti her visage was reiterated in 350 different formats, ending up on trays, tables, vases, clock faces and, eventually, rugs. Collaborating with carpet manufacturer CC Tapis, Fornasetti (the brand) has now transformed its most recognisable symbols into a collection of first-rate flooring.

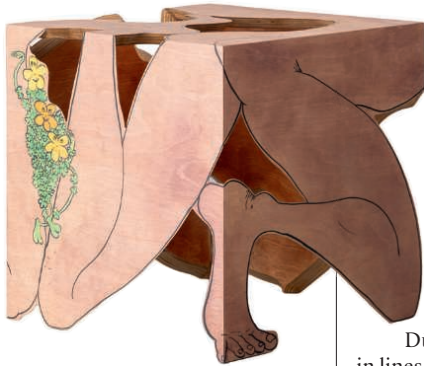


The house's mysterious disembodied hand looms large: stacked, clairvoyant-style, with rings or, in this instance, bare, a single ancient coin in palm. It might not be Lina's rousing likeness, but, confronted with a monetary token, we are content to pay the difference, and render unto Fornasetti what is Fornasetti's. Shown above: 'Mano con Moneta' rug, £7,230 approx. Visit cc-tapis.com

Ahead of the Curves

The naked truth is that, in design, relevance is mostly aspirational. Often it's not much more than gut instinct (or whatever body part you care to heed). Where Jean Paul Gaultier crashed into pop culture, transforming cones into breast adornments, Anissa Kermiche turned bottoms into urns – to similar effect. Around 2018 the ceramic 'Love Handle', aka 'the bum vase', by the French/Algerian jewellery designer went viral, spawning myriad imitators. Sincerest form of flattery aside, adulation butters no (forgive me) buns. And, lest we forget the





second part of the adage often attributed to Wilde: flattery is the compliment mediocrity pays to greatness. Yet contrary to that very notion, Kermiche is shoring up her own design credentials by remodelling those posterior pots into seating. Not just one, but five. She continues to celebrate the female form by winking at waists, hips, breasts and bums in swirls of wrought iron. One even makes a subtle nod to Madonna's conical undergarments; if not a Blonde Ambition, Kermiche's is clearly a bold one. Shown below: 'Iron Lady' chair, £2,600. Visit anissakermiche.com



Girl Crush

Artists in the Renaissance – all men, confident in their ability to be the measure of all things – attempted to reduce the human body to geometrical formulae. Leonardo inscribed man in a circle;

Dürer imprisoned him in lines and boxes. Of course, life isn't this tidy. While her corpus explores such expansive and knotty issues as pollution, housing and gender, however, the work of Spanish artist Saelia Aparicio is equally marked by boundaries. Inspired by the functional feminist art of the 1960s and 70s, she constructs chairs, stools and screens from compressed female figures. How to square that (Vitruvian) circle? Less load-bearing caryatid than questioning sphinx, lugubriously hunched or languidly sprawling, each of her sculptures demands individual engagement as well as use. Thus, beyond allegories for female oppression, Aparicio's work displays hope through confidence: her bodies retain the power to unfold the full breadth of human experience. Shown top left: 'Oxalis' stool, from £8,000. Visit galleryfumi.com

Charm Offensive

Humans are instinctive code crackers. We read signs in tea leaves, constellations, entrails; even jots, tittles and digits are deciphered into significance. Earrings too have had their time as sources of encrypted knowledge. 'Left is right,



right is wrong' ran the offensive saying for assessing the pierced-lobe owner's sexual preference – who knew it was so simple? No Nostradamus, Bletchley Park or even playground bully is needed to work out the meaning of this pendant-parading glassware: style has its own logic. Designed by Milan-based Agustina Bottoni, these 'Sospesa' borosilicate glasses (£310 approx for a set of three; shown above) take on anthropomorphic form through the most minimal of embellishments. Inspired by the appendages on 16th-century ceremonial vessels, they are set apart by Bottoni's asymmetric accents. From Francis Drake to Vermeer's pearl-toting lady, a single adornment has always been unquestionably chic. Visit agustinabottoni.com

Block Party

Taking refinement to its logical conclusion, Austrian artist Heimo Zobernig has long explored what the bare

minimum that still constitutes a work of art might be. After all, art, according to Andy Warhol, 'is what you can get away with'. Limits, however, do exist, especially in figuration. So it's no surprise that Zobernig has turned to the body (irksomely complex if you've ever tried life drawing) for his foray into furniture. A couple of cubes, it turns out, is all you need. Transformed into man-sized beanbags by Italian furniture manufacturer Moroso, these designs question even the limits of what seating can be. While opera might not be the natural arena of minimalism – they're entitled 'Dammi i Colori' (Give Me the Colours) after a Puccini aria – the collection's simple palette points to the dramatic intensity reduction can bring. Reminiscent of blocky Minecraft men, these 'armchairs' are clearly bare necessities.

Shown below: 'Dammi i Colori' sculptures, from £2,358 approx each. Visit moroso.it ®





deVOL

Simple Things, Beautifully Made

Carnal Desirables

Bodily form always follows function for some designers. Full of esprit de corps, David Lipton eyes up the physical features they've objectified – in a good way – as home wares



- 1 'Ear' pillow, by Charlap Hyman & Herrero, \$1,180, *The Future Perfect*. 2 'On the Nose' lamp, by Niki Marvin, \$230, *House of Ass*. 3 'Eye' teapot, by Astier de Villatte, £335, *Liberty*. 4 'Miniatures Bocca' scale model, by Studio 65, £275, *Vitra*. 5 'Hand and Bamboo' wall light, £3,000, *Soane Britain*. 6 'Giant Hand' bolster cushion, from £670 approx, *Wiener Times*. 7 'Curious Foot-shaped Pedestal', by David Shrigley, £45, *Third Drawer Down*. 8 'Ventura' cabinet, by Joy Valdez, £6,904 approx, *Lo Contemporary*. 9 'Foot' paperweight, by Carl Auböck, £225, *Abask*

ROUNDUP



1 'Nalgon' chair, by Chris Wolston, \$22,000, *The Future Perfect*. 2 'Butt' stool, \$2,800, Kelly Wearstler. 3 'Leda' chair, by Salvador Dalí, \$52,975, *Studiotwentyseven*. 4 'Watcher' chair, by Barbora Zilinskaitė, \$15,000, *Friedman Benda*. 5 'Folks' bench, by Ryan Belli, \$12,000, *Marta*. 6 'Elle and Lui' armchair, by Mattia Bonetti, £71,500, *David Gill Gallery*. 7 'Bouloum' lounge chair, by Olivier Mourgue for Arconas, £2,189, *Spot!*. 8 'Skeleton' chair, by Michael Aram, \$2,500, *D. Rose Mod*. 9 'Up 50' armchair, by Gaetano Pesce, £5,125 approx, *B&B Italia*. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see *Address Book* ®

THE HEVENINGHAM COLLECTION

STYLISH, ELEGANT IRON FURNITURE
CUSTOM MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN



The Magnificent Seven

Edra's new 'Anywhere' sofa comprises a septet of independent elements that can be separated and combined in countless ways. Fully mobile with adjustable backrests, it's the culmination of Francesco Binfaré's life's work: turning furniture into living architecture



For Francesco Binfaré, comfort has never been an afterthought in furniture design; it's where any project always starts. In the course of his long-standing collaboration with Edra, the Italian 'author', as the company terms its visionaries, has tackled the sofa not as a static object but as a kind of living architecture shaped by the body – responsive to movement and alive to the rhythms of everyday life. That's why the 'Anywhere' sofa, paraded by the brand at this year's Salone del Mobile, is not merely a product launch but the continuation of a lifelong quest to fully harmonise form and function. Indeed, when Monica Mazzei, Edra's vice-president, was asked

how long the piece took to develop, her answer was simple: '87 years'. That's how old Binfaré is; Edra has been in business for less than half that time.

Some of the defining works of contemporary Italian design have sprung from his extensive body of research. Binfaré's 'Standard' sofa, for instance, introduced the brand's Smart Cushion technology, which meant that backrests could move intuitively along with the sitter. The 'On the Rocks' model was even more radical, separating backrest entirely from seat. Those functional 'leaps forward' were bolstered by biomedical-derived Gellyfoam, Edra's closely guarded 'secret

ingredient', which miraculously offers great softness but also firm support.

In this latest chapter, the 'Anywhere' sofa has seven independent elements that are 'composable' rather than simply modular, allowing a room to be continually reshaped. Pivoting backrests permit the adjustment of depth and incline, transforming posture and perspective in an instant. Seen from behind, the sinuous movement of these components offers a shifting landscape of solids and voids, letting sightlines pass through. The result is less a seating system than a domestic terrain that's deeply architectural. *For more information, visit edra.com*

Above: the endlessly adaptable 'Anywhere', here in light gold. Opposite: the 'Standard' sofa, displayed alongside a cluster of Jacopo Foggini 'Cicliadi' tables at Edra Palazzo Durini in Milan, is just one landmark example of Binfaré's radical design ethos

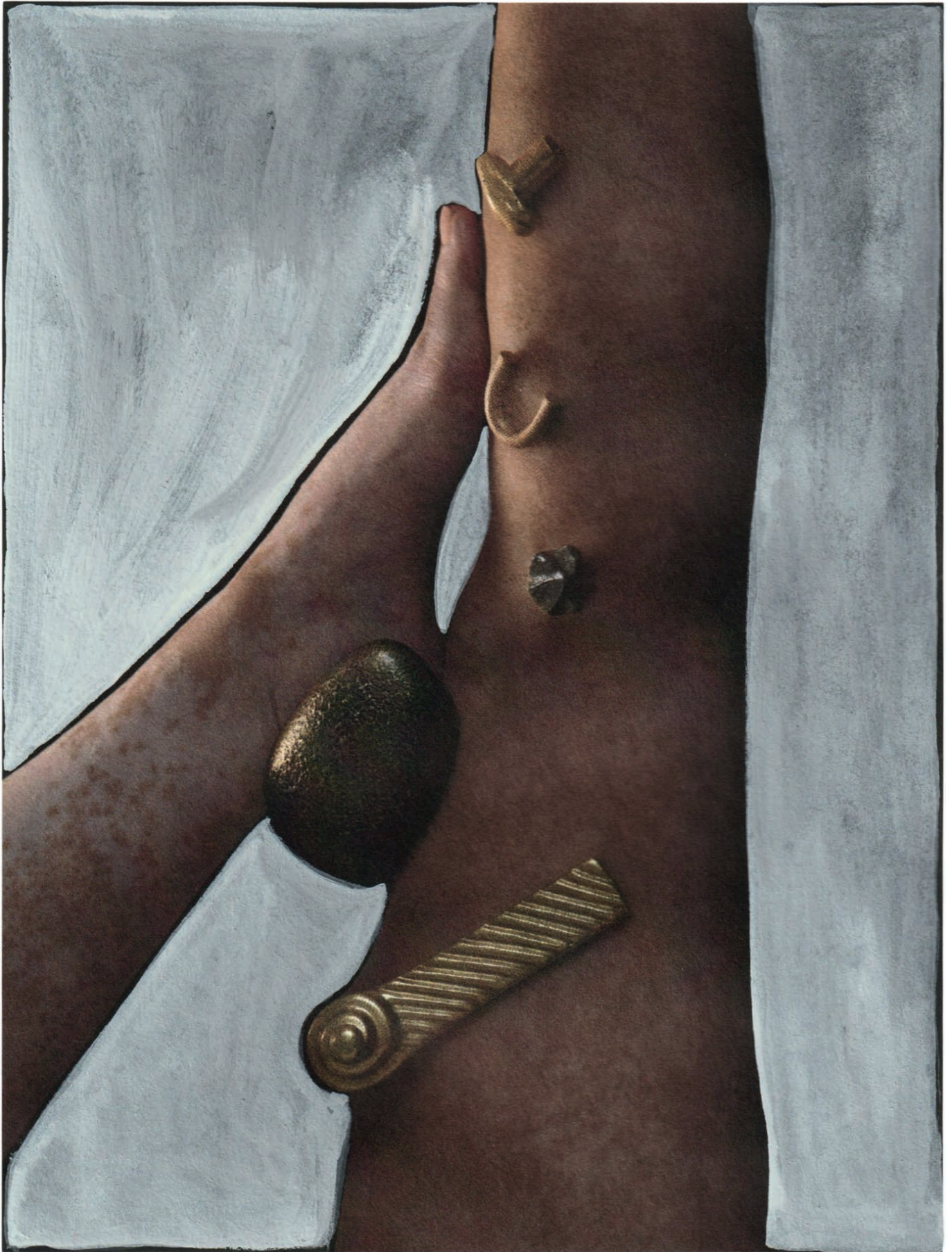


Door Belles

Could your hardware stand to look a little more alluring? Never fear: Rose Eaglesfield has gone out on a limb to help, with knobs on. Be it lavish levers or cabinet pulls, butt hinges or escutcheons, arm yourself with metalwork that leaves you feeling bold as brass. Photography: Sara Sahores



Above: from top: 'HF1600' pull handle, from £280.25, Turnstyle Designs. 'Seashell' cabinet handle, £225, Beardmore. Background: 'Velvet 466780-079', by Knoll, £620 per m, Maharam. Opposite: from top: 'Darwin' cabinet knob, from £85.78, Henry Blake. 'Sketch' finger pull, from £72, Armac Martin. 'Floral No. 3' drawer knob, £78 approx, Série Rare. 'Cove' cabinet-door handle, £188, Joseph Giles. 'Byzantine' door handle, £268 approx, Série Rare







Opposite: from top: 'Sketch' cabinet handle, from £87.36, Armac Martin. 'NCCBH1037' handle, £354, Beardmore. 'Digby' bolt lock, £125 for a pair, Corston. 'BHE5189' butt hinge, £137.40, Pemberton & Sons. Background: 'Mohair 333435', £348 per m, Zoffany. Above: left leg, from top: 'ESC1069' escutcheon, £270, Beardmore. 'Empire 72450' keyplate, £156, PE Guerin. Right leg, clockwise from top: 'ESC1016' escutcheon, £234, Beardmore. 'Metro Deco 78209' keyplate, £98, PE Guerin. 'Stepped Art Deco' escutcheon, £90, Joseph Giles

SHORTLIST



Above: from top: 'Devonshire' door knob, £356.30, Pemberton & Sons. 'UTB-054561' T-bar handle, £55, Buster and Punch. 'Oceane Ovale No. 4' drawer knob, £70.60, Série Rare. 'Poplar' sprung door knob, £100, Corston. Background: 'Velvet 466780-079', by Knoll, £620 per m, Maharam. Opposite: top leg: 'Ray' cup handle, £38, MG&Co. Middle leg, from left: 'Kilburn' cabinet handle, £21, Corston. 'Louis XVI 70710' keyplate, £103, PE Guerin. Bottom leg: 'Ray' cup handle, as before. Background: 'Mohair 333442', £348 per m, Zoffany. Prices throughout include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ®



Flow and Repeat!

Some colourful, high-energy patterned fabric could be the huge flex your pad needs right now, whether it's draped as curtains, covering cushions or even, as here, turned into a bespoke yoga mat. Just hold that thought – and breath – as Ruth Sleightholme pays salutation to om furnishings with their very own life force. Namaste. Photography: Ruby Pluhar



Above: model's top: ochre 'Brera Lino', £85, Designers Guild. Bolster: smeraldo 'Lebak', by Etro Home, £260, Turnell & Gigon; trimmed with ochre 'Brera Lino', as before. Block: smeraldo 'Merak', by Etro Home, £260, Turnell & Gigon. Background: smeraldo 'Ikat', by Etro Home, £260, Turnell & Gigon. Opposite: blouse: duck egg/larch 'Kaleidoscope', by Sarah Campbell for Pukka Print, £212, Tissus d'Hélène. Shorts: smor 'Insjöns', £150, Beata Heuman. Pool noodle, from left: pink multi-stripe 'Cimarron', by Oakley Moore, £261.48, John Boyd Textiles; trimmed with snow 'La Terre Cut Fringe', £100, Samuel & Sons. 'Leopard Spot', by The Warner Textile Archive, £170, Claremont; trimmed with 'Asara Raffia Braid 60mm', £29.40, Houlès. 'Checker Checker' (just seen, top right), £314, Vanderhurd. Background: 'Pieni Unikko 074310', by Maija Isola, £44, Marimekko. Movement director: Elettra Giunta







Opposite: left-hand model: shorts: chestnut 'Floriane', by Alice Sergeant, £348, Tissus d'Hélène; trimmed with rose water 'Sophie Bullion Fringe', £146, Samuel & Sons. Top: lemon jam 'Unwind', by Kirkby Design, £67, Romo. Right-hand model: top: chestnut 'Floriane', as before. Trousers: bay 'Linen', £108, Beata Heuman; trimmed with lemon jam 'Unwind', as before. Striped yoga mat and block: flick 'Shake', by Bertjan Pot, £288, Maharam. Windowpane-check yoga mat and block: hallon 'Insjöns', £150, Beata Heuman. Background: spring 'Rosa', by Raoul Textiles, £523, Turnell & Gigon. Above, from left: top and shorts: khaki/red 'Polka', by Décors Barbares for Namay Samay, £340, Tissus d'Hélène. Shorts (right): daisy 'Misa Moiré Plain', £183.50, Marvic. Bandeau top: apple green/Ethel pink 'Suffolk Corn', by Beki Bright, £190, Line Up. Background: 'Paradiso', by Raoul Textiles, £520, Turnell & Gigon



T-shirt: fuchsia/blue 'Bosphorus Handblock', by Drusus Tabor, £156, Schumacher. Scrunchie: petunia 'Linara', £51, Romo. Top yoga mat: sulphur 'Cyril', by Raoul Textiles, £340, Turnell & Gigon. Bottom yoga mat: petunia 'Linara', as before. Background: 'California', by Josef Frank, £260 approx, Svenskt Tenn. Socks, tights and leggings throughout: Falke. Fabric and trimming prices throughout are per m and include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ©

Condé Nast
Traveller PRESENTS THE LUXURY
TRAVEL FAIR
OLYMPIA LONDON | 5-8 NOVEMBER 2026

Celebrating 20 years

Shake up your senses

Discover unmissable destinations, unique experiences and engaging live talks at **The Luxury Travel Fair (5-8 November 2026)**.

Celebrating 20 years at the iconic Olympia London, now transformed into a world-class destination, we invite you to explore rare escapes tailored by 70 of the UK's most prestigious travel specialists. Plus, meet the *Condé Nast Traveller* team, grab the latest issue of the magazine and be inspired by our programme of one-off editor talks.

Your exclusive
invitation awaits



COMPLIMENTARY EXCLUSIVE READER TICKETS*

5-8 NOVEMBER 2026, OLYMPIA LONDON

luxurytravelfair.com

Romancing the Stone

Audrey Marie Munson was the face, and figure, of early 20th-century New York. At a time when architects were keen to lend the metropolis a monumentality akin to ancient Greece, her sculpted form graced bridges and ballrooms alike. Prior to 1919, when scandal curdled her success, was she the first supermodel of the modern age, wonders Rosalind Jana. Colour photography: Lorena Lohr



Above: the going rate for a model in early 20th-century New York – nude or otherwise – was 50 cents an hour. ‘It was just enough to pay our rent, grocery bills and buy a few clothes once in a while,’ Munson wrote in 1921. She was, by that point, the most reproduced female figure in the country. Opposite: Frederick MacMonnies used Munson’s legs for his work ‘Beauty’, which enhances the New York Public Library – but another model’s face and torso. Such piecemeal statues were common: a series of body parts jigsawed into an ‘ideal’ whole



Carl A. Heber's 'Spirit of Commerce', installed on the Manhattan Bridge, earned Munson a sobriquet from the 'New York Sun'. 'It seems funny to be called Miss Manhattan,' she told the paper with characteristic dryness. 'Nevertheless, I suppose I must get used to it'



In the early 20th century, Audrey Marie Munson possessed the most recognisable face in New York. It wasn't just her face that was so widely known either. The city's inhabitants might have been familiar with her shoulders, her legs, the two dimples set deep in the small of her back. Dubbed the American Venus, Munson, an aspiring actress turned artist's model, posed for dozens of statues and artworks across New York and further afield between 1909 and 1922. She towered over the skyline, gilded copper features catching the sun, as *Civic Fame*, the second largest statue in New York after the Statue of Liberty; greeted commuters in the form of *Miss Brooklyn* and *Miss Manhattan*, flanking the Manhattan Bridge; and personified all Three Graces in the grand ballroom at the Hotel Astor.

Munson was discovered while window-shopping with her mother, Kittie, on Fifth

Avenue. She was approached by the photographer Felix Benedict Herzog, who asked her to sit for him. This was her gateway into the thriving Beaux-Arts world of New York, which brimmed with artists, architects and sculptors who were busy designing and decorating the city, envisaging it as a place of civic monumentality akin to ancient Greece or Rome. Among them was Isidore Konti, the Vienna-born sculptor who became Munson's first major collaborator after convincing her to pose in the nude. He was responsible for the *Three Graces* statue, transfixed by Munson's striking features and easy sensuality. She acclimatised quickly to the demands of the job, which required a curious mix of physical strength and psychological resilience. She described it thus: 'In position, holding a pose while a sculptor or painter worked, I thought of myself only as a model – a mere piece of human flesh. The moment

the artist dropped his brush or mallet... I became the human young woman again.'

She deployed this reverse Pygmalion trick with a bevy of the era's most celebrated artists, among them Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, Attilio Piccirilli, Karl Bitter and Daniel Chester French, who would later create the Lincoln Memorial. She was a resourceful operator, not only establishing a reputation as a reliable model, but constantly seeking out opportunities, turning up at studios to offer her services. In the febrile atmosphere of bohemian Greenwich Village and the West Side, she was uniquely well placed: willing to bare all but shrewd enough to keep her relationships with artists strictly professional (a move that set her apart in a milieu where the line between muse and mistress was routinely blurred).

Soon she came to embody a new kind of American mythology. Alexander

Stirling Calder, father of the mobile pioneer, cast her as the *Star Maiden* at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, where she posed for three-fifths of the sculptures. Her likeness featured in a mural aboard a passenger steamer that crossed the Great Lakes. Transitioning from immobile statue to human in motion, she also appeared in a series of early silent films including *Inspiration* (1915) and *Purity* (1916), where her nudity broke boundaries for what was possible – and permissible – on screen.

Already, though, the cultural moment that had made her was ebbing. ‘She was lucky to embody the classical ideal at

precisely the moment when New York was filling itself with statues of [that] ideal,’ says James Bone, whose 2016 biography *The Curse of Beauty* argues for Munson as the first contemporary supermodel. ‘But she was also just on the cusp of Modernism, which is one of the main reasons she was forgotten. There was an enormous cultural rupture, and everything she represented suddenly became antiquated.’ When the French avant-garde artist Francis Picabia travelled to New York and painted Munson, she found the experience disconcerting. Rather than the static stances she was used to, Picabia encouraged her to move around so that he

might capture her from multiple angles; the resulting painting was a collection, as she relayed it, of ‘colour areas, cubes, angles and blank spaces on the canvas’.

Modelling is an inherently precarious job because it is tethered to the fashions of the day. As much as those Beaux-Arts sculptors claimed to be tapping into something timeless, they too were subject to the whims and fluctuations of progress. Munson had no savings, no rights to her image and nowhere obvious to turn when the work dried up. In 1919 her name became embroiled in lurid tabloid stories after Walter Wilkins was accused of murdering his wife, with Munson cast,



Alexander Stirling Calder’s ‘The Eastern Hemisphere’, created for the Fountain of Energy at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915, saw Munson draped, quite literally, across the world. It was a fitting image for a woman whose likeness had, by this point, spread far beyond New York: to state capitols, university campuses, memorial fountains and the decks of Great Lakes steamers#

perhaps unfairly, as the other woman. The studios dropped her, and the artists moved on. Having suffered with precarious mental health for years, she attempted suicide and, at the age of 40, was committed to St Lawrence State Hospital for the Insane in upstate New York. She remained there until she died, aged 104, in 1996, at which point *Civic Fame* had looked down over the ever-restless, ever-moving metropolis for 83 years. 'There's a time travel quality to it,' Bone says. 'Imagine finding Ozymandias in a care home somewhere.'

The artist Andrea Geyer began to look for Munson in 2004, mapping her presence in the city's statuary, tracking down mentions in newspaper archives, and eventually making the journey to St Lawrence. Her multi-stage project sought to understand Munson the woman as much as Munson the symbol. 'She was very willing to get naked,' Geyer says. 'She had no shame around her body. She was body-positive long before that was a

term.' And yet that body, so freely given to art, generated little lasting security for the woman who possessed it.

Geyer remains equally interested in complicating the rise-and-fall narrative that has clung to Munson's name, positioning her as one of the first female victims of modern celebrity. 'With women – especially successful women – the speculation often lands them in tragedy somewhere along the way,' Geyer says. The reality, she argues, was more complex. At St Lawrence, Munson spent her days in the library, tended stray cats and crafted her own skin lotions to maintain her appearance. A local resident remembered her roller-skating on country roads. In her eighties, she was slipping out each evening to cross a highway and drink at the local bar, trading stories until the facility sent someone to bring her back.

Today, models are encouraged to capitalise on their names and personalities as much as their faces; a form of

branding in which nothing is off-limits, and everything is for sale. Munson is part of a much wider chorus of women whose faces defined the 20th century and whose stories have either been lost or had to undergo a conscious process of reclamation. Still, there is a certain pact one makes with history when they step into the role of cultural figurehead (or, rather, have it bestowed upon them). Visibility offers a type of longevity separate to reputation, a form of immortality that exists independently from biography. Most of us walk around cities with little idea of who contributed to the buildings and artworks surrounding us. In that sense, Munson is not so much an exception as an extreme example of an everyday phenomenon: someone whose contribution to municipal life has been so thoroughly absorbed into the fabric of the place that they become crucial to its essence. A stone girl may come to life, but a girl rendered in stone can outlive us all ☼



Above left: Alexander Stirling Calder sculpted a series of Star Maidens destined for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. Munson was selected as its official model, and the finished figures, with breasts bared, were installed across the site in their scores. 'I detest false modesty,' she wrote. 'For my part I see nothing shocking in our unclothed bodies.' Above right: two of the monumental, draped figures adorning the exposition's buildings. Opposite: Robert Ingersoll Aitken's bronze doors for the Greenhut Mausoleum in Brooklyn's Salem Fields Cemetery, 1913. Munson had sought out the sculptor directly, turning up to his studio uninvited



On a recent trip to Venice, I found myself in a shop near the Piazza San Marco selling blackamoor jewellery – earrings and brooches featuring the turbaned, bejewelled, dark-skinned head that has been a fixture of decorative ornament in the city for centuries. A few streets away, a workshop offered hand-carved blackamoor figures, furnishings destined to enact Black labour in a sumptuous interior. These were not antiques. They were being made now for contemporary buyers. Venice has always had a particular relationship to this figure – it is often considered the birthplace of the decorative Moor. But while browsing in that shop with a proprietor whose family had been making these objects for generations, it occurred to me how seamlessly, if silently, the demand for them has endured from the 17th century right through to the 21st.

I have spent the better part of my career as an art historian and curator tracing a phenomenon I call ‘ornamental blackness’ – the transformation of the Black body into a decorative motif in luxury arts. The objects in question span nearly three centuries: furniture and torchères, silver candlesticks and porcelain figurines, jewelled treasury luxuries, clocks and more. Commissioned by the likes of Louis XIV and Augustus the Strong, they became popular in courts across Europe beginning in the 17th century. With that kind of pedigree, they were status symbols of the highest order, and they almost universally depicted Black bodies in states of servitude, subjugation or exotic performance. They were not the only bodies that doubled as ornament, but their blackness and servile positioning spoke of the exploitation of Africans that helped to fuel the European wealth these very objects embodied.

The blackamoor – a silver or wooden figure typically posed to hold a tray, a candle or suchlike – is the most visible and persistent of these forms. In stately homes from the 17th century onwards, these inanimate bodies stood in for the Black servants who were themselves emblems of wealth in court culture and among the aristocracy. This fraught furniture translated the spectacle of human hierarchy into objects of desire. One did not need to own an enslaved person to possess its avatar, rendered in wood, porcelain or silver, in service on a tabletop or obligingly flanking a doorway. The imagery of labour was aestheticised into charming excess and quietly normalised the idea that Black servitude was natural, even picturesque.

Moor's the Pity

If you thought ‘ornamental blackness’ died out with the slavery and servitude it glorified you couldn’t be more wrong. To our collective shame, jewellery and furniture perpetuating deplorable racist tropes are still being made in some of Europe’s finest luxury ateliers. It behoves all of us, says Adrienne Childs, to clamour for their abolition



They did not make slavery invisible. They made it decorative and pleasurable, a kind of anaesthesia that dulls the instinct to engage with them critically.

This diversionary aestheticisation has proven remarkably durable, despite the fact that recently public consciousness about

the insidious impact of racist imagery – how it affirms racial hierarchies with real-world implications – has risen markedly. These objects can still slip past layers of editorial approval, landing on the pages of glossy design magazines (as recently as 2020, *House Beautiful* had to apologise for just this). When large historic collections are dispersed, luxury objects featuring exotic Black figures that previously existed behind closed doors come out into the open – and continue to find buyers.

Beauty can obfuscate, and it seems heightened cultural awareness has not reckoned with the manner in which design can normalise racist tropes. Blackamoor furnishings such as American mammy cookie jars or Black-minstrel salt-and-pepper shakers render harmful typologies inert through the alibi of the decorative, which has long eluded examination precisely because it has been considered apolitical. It is not.

I was in Venice to see the Biennale exhibition *In Minor Keys*, organised by the late Cameroonian/Swiss curator Koyo Kouoh, the first Black woman to hold that position. On display across the city were artists from across the diaspora whose work evidenced the richness of global Black histories. Yet only steps from these revelatory images, I encountered a disturbing lapse of consciousness when I visited the Ca' Rezzonico. The museum is home to an extraordinary suite of furnishings by the pre-eminent sculptor and furniture-maker Andrea Brustolon, dated to around 1700 – a shocking display of ornamental blackness featuring nine ebony pot-holder tables held aloft by nude men chained at their bases. They are both striking as objects and freighted with signification, and I wondered how visitors were meant to understand them. There was no interpretive text in the gallery materials. I quietly followed a tour group of English-speaking visitors that included an African-American family. I watched them observing the chained Black men. The guide made no mention of them – no interpretation, no reference. In spite of the powerful voices of artists raised in chorus nearby, these fossilised bodies of the diaspora languished in perpetual servitude. Their silence was deafening. *Adrienne Childs is the author of 'Ornamental Blackness: The Black Figure in European Decorative Arts' (Yale). Got an opinion on the issues raised in this article? Write a letter to the editor (no more than 200 words), and it might be published online: roomfordebate@worldofinteriors.co.uk*

The Compleat Dangler

In a 200-year-old barn near the River Derwent in Cumbria, keen fisherman Monty Lewis has parlayed his childhood obsession with traditional Scottish dress into a full-time calling – the contemplative creation of clan-tastic sporrans. Now these really are pouches to pose in, says occasional kilt-wearer Hugo Macdonald. Photography: Xanthe Hutchinson



I grew up on the Isle of Skye and was dispatched at a shockingly young age to a spartan Scottish boarding school where on Sundays boys would dress in their family tartan to trot to church. It must have been a sight. Nobody's kilt fitted them. The teens' were like Westwood miniskirts. The 'weans' looked like the late Queen going for a walk around Balmoral. We cherished our sporrans like pets. Mine was a stuffed otter's head, which had a large

hole in one ear. Family lore said it was a casualty from a great-uncle in World War II. I suspect it may have been moths.

Historically, the sporran was a purse for holding objects of value in pre-pocket times. For any Scot, wearing a kilt without one is like eating soup with a fork: odd, mad, wrong. Our connection to them is visceral. Animal, even. Old sporrans are excellent repositories for stories as well as insects. 'The Scottish boys at my school in

Kent were allowed to wear their kilts on Sundays too,' the sporran maker Monty Lewis tells me. Despite growing up in London, he was 'adamant that I was Scottish' and so a Stewart kilt was duly dug out from family friends; a small jacket completed the get-up. 'There was something mysterious in the inside pocket,' he recalls. 'It turned out to be a mouse carcass.'

Undeterred, Monty became hooked on Caledonian dress. 'There's something

genetic about the romantic obsession with Scotland in my family,' Monty says. 'My great-grandmother claimed to be a chieftain of the MacIntyre clan, but I'm not certain this was true as my research revealed she was born in America.' He is the son of Annabel Lewis, founder of the London trimmings shop VV Rouleaux, and he recalls the joy of leaping into a paddling-pool-sized basket of ribbons wearing his Royal Stewart kilt – though 'it's hard to know whether I remember the memory or just the excellent photo,' he confesses.

Today, Monty makes exquisite sporrans in the Lake District, close to the River Derwent on the border of the Medieval kingdoms of Strathclyde and Rheged. It might not be Scotland, but it is a land steeped in Celtic lore, and his creations are imbued with something weirder and wilder than the Victorian Balmorality one tends to associate with dress sporrans of polite pipe bands. They are beasts; beautiful creatures with luscious fur, be-decked with intriguing accoutrements. Leather, goat- and horsehair, silver, brass, horn, mother-of-pearl – the panoply of

materials and skills that might go into one is riotous, and there is a Caractacus Potts energy to Monty's world.

He studied design at Northumbria University – he is also a silversmith – and says he is 'always trying to understand how something is made'. Home is a Cumbrian barn built in 1823, and his workshop is in a cobbled arch near where the carts would have been kept. 'It's where I have my workbench, my soldering hearth, my wax kettle and sanding and polishing stations,' he says. 'The dirty stuff. It's open to the elements, so it can be cold in winter, but I wear lots of layers.' The more delicate work of assembly and finishing takes place in his living room, where 'there's no danger of the hens trying to find somewhere to nest when your back's turned'.

The landscape feeds Monty's imagination, and his environment becomes his objects. He describes feeling connected to the Galloway cattle on the fells, whose hides form his sporrans pouches. The wind rippling across pools of water while he is out fishing is an effect he has captured in a hammered-silver cantle. He has his eye

on the burr of an old riverside oak: 'When there's a storm, I'll try and get there first if it falls,' he says.

He has inherited his mother's penchant for historic ephemera. In his hands everything is an open mine for ideas about technique and effect. How was it made? What could it become? He picks out a rope from an old ship, which has inspired the weaving of silver wire destined to become a sporrans belt in place of the standard leather. Ledgers from his grandfather's wool mill aren't just sentimental heirlooms; their engineered spines fascinate him more than the contents. 'My eyes are always seeking,' he says. 'My mind is always archiving interesting stitching details that might come in handy.'

I seize the opportunity to ask whether a sporrans value is derived from the body part covered. What does one need to measure? A well-worn laugh suggests this may be a familiar question. 'Well, the broader the man, the bigger the sporrans has to be in order to look right,' Monty says. 'But I don't take measurements' © Monty Lewis. Visit montylewis.uk



Previous pages: mounted on a wall are sporrans made from the hair and undercoat of goats, horsehair and cowhide, with silver, shell, embroidery and nacre cantles. Above: Monty Lewis – and disobedient hens – outside his barn. Opposite: a client's crest was first hand-carved in wax before being cast in silver, while the passementerie was woven from gold thread and is based on a historic pattern



Noten Bene

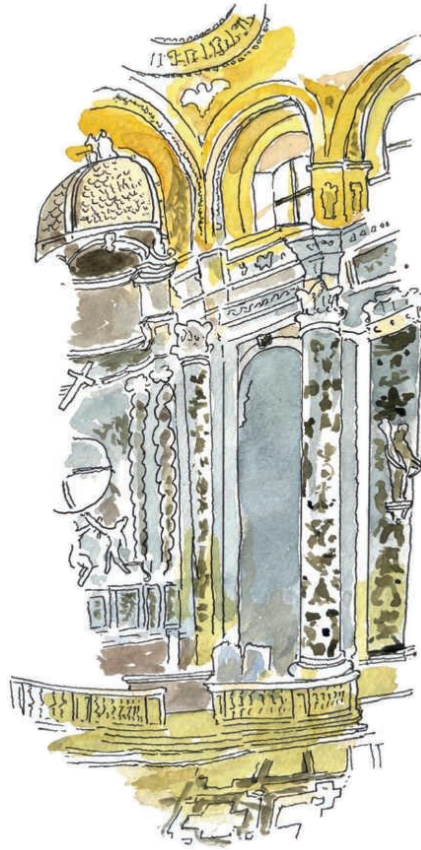
A guest of Dries van Noten and Patrick Vangheluwe in their palazzo apartment on the Grand Canal, Hamish Bowles explores a few of Venice's cultural highlights

I arrived in Venice as the guest of Dries van Noten and Patrick Vangheluwe (*Wol* July 2026), who have claimed this magical place as their own. First, they took an apartment in a palazzo on the Grand Canal that had belonged to the late designer and aesthete Victoria Press (*Wol* Dec 2015). She created such beauty in London, at home on Cheyne Walk, and, unbeknownst to me, an astonishing country house in South Africa built by Marco Zanuso. Victoria's floor of the palazzo was preserved by her daughter, the environmentalist Jane da Mosto, and my friend the costume jeweller Vicki Sarge told Dries and Patrick about it. They saw it, and they took it. (And I stayed there.)

We were welcomed on the first night by Diane von Fürstenberg in her own glamorous pile, and on the morrow, Vicki, writer Cathy St Germans and I set out to meet Dries and Patrick at the Palazzo Pisani Moretta, their primary base, now home to the designer's foundation and its inaugural exhibition, *The Only True Protest is Beauty*. It is a revelation: craftsmanship, fashion and applied art united in a dynamic and inspirational way.

We bought notebooks and handsome albums from Paolo Olbi, before heading to Peggy Guggenheim's fantastic (albeit unfinished) one-storeyed Palazzo Venier dei Leoni. It had previously been occupied from 1910 to 1924 by the eccentric, extravagant Marchesa Luisa Casati, who had loudly declared: 'I want to be a living work of art!' (Doris Castlerosse, the notorious courtesan, was the next incumbent. It was bought for her by the American socialite Margot Hoffman, with whom she fled to New York when World War II was declared. Two years later, after a failed reconciliation with her former husband, the sixth earl of Kenmare, and full of shame about her swift departure from war-torn Britain, she took her own life.)

A revelatory exhibition, *Peggy Guggenheim in London: The Making of a*



Collector, is on show here (and is coming to the Royal Academy in November). The heiress (*Wol* Dec 2019) spent 18 months in Mayfair before the war, staging a staggering 20 shows in her gallery, Guggenheim Jeune, during that period. That night we had dinner at Dries and Patrick's dazzling apartment at the top of their palazzo.

The day after, we explored the weekend flea market, full of delectable goodies, as well as the sumptuous velvety leopard, tiger and zebra cushions jostling with Art Deco-motif ones and 17th-century examples at the nearby Bevilacqua textile house on Fondamenta Narisi.

I suggested we visit the Church of San Pantalon, which looks modest from the outside, with a rusticated brick façade. Once inside, however, one is greeted or, I should say, confronted by an astounding ceiling. It was painted on canvas, rather than directly on to the plaster, by Giovanni Antonio Fumiani. *The Martyrdom and Apotheosis of Saint Pantalon* took

him 24 years to paint, and is considered the largest oil painting in the world, being made up of 40 canvases stitched together. John Ruskin, whose preference was for the lumpen Pre-Raphaelites, described it as being composed of 'miracles of frantic mistake... the most curious example in Europe of the vulgar dramatic effects of painting'. I beg to differ. I find it a triumph of art and artistry. One sits utterly spellbound.

We went to Murano, island of glass, in a boat driven by Jane da Mosto, for a delicious lunch and on the way back stopped at the Church of Santa Maria Assunta ai Gesuiti, newly gleaming white. Inside it looked at first as though every surface had been wrapped in blue-and-white damask. Incredibly, it was painstakingly incised from marble – including the 'drapes' on a celestial pulpit. A painting here by Titian, *The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, in dramatic chiaroscuro, took my breath away.

Then I went off with Cathy to the Ca'Rezzonico, a magnificent palazzo dedicated to 18th-century Venice. On the first floor was mounted an exhibition of Calouste Gulbenkian's impressive gathering of Guardis (although the exhibition is now over, one can nonetheless still see these works among a treasury of the Armenian businessman's art objects in his own astonishing museum in Lisbon). On the second floor is displayed a collection of Pietro Longhi's 18th-century scenes of contemporary Venetian life – including his study of Clara the rhinoceros, 1751.

I went to the Museo Fortuny, filled with the treasures that Mariano Fortuny and his wife, Henriette Negrin, created. It was better, dare I say it, in its prior incarnation, when Axel Vervoordt was curator, bringing its rich history to life.

I didn't have time to do the Biennale, so I will return in September, when the crowds will hopefully have died down, and the weather is less oppressive, to take in all the glory at my leisure ☺

Rude Awakening

Get the heart racing with our limited-edition, one-off publication dedicated to sex in the interiors world. Timed to coincide with our body-themed September issue (though sold separately), *Top Shelf* sizzles with essays on Catherine the Great's obscene furniture and the erotics of home renovation, among others, and an eye-popping parade of saucy images, from priapic Roman wind chimes to Allen Jones's fetishised females. Slip under the covers!



Jung at Heart



The Landscape of Man: Shaping the Environment from Prehistory to the Present Day (by Geoffrey and Susan Jellicoe; ed. Tim Richardson; Thames & Hudson, rrp £65)

In 1977 the landowner and conservationist Sir Ralph Verney affirmed that *The Landscape of Man* 'is not a coffee-table glossy, parboiled with a hasty album of uncoordinated photographs to meet a publisher's flair for the current cosmopolitan inquisitiveness. It is rather a distillation of the deep thinking and professional integrity of two very distinguished landscape architects.' Comparing it with two recent TV blockbusters, Verney went on to say that their survey, which documents how humans had shaped their habitats in 28 different cultures, was 'more humble' than Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation* (1969), and 'less dogmatic' than Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man* (1973). It was, in short, 'a scintillating Baedeker guide to the triumphs and disasters of man's manipulation of the landscape from the garden of Eden to Sydney Opera House'.

It's certainly unconventional. As Tim Richardson declares in his introduction to

this handsome, revised and updated edition, 'there is nothing else like it', a 'great and singular work' by two practising landscape architects who were neither professional historians nor academics.

If, at a glance, *The Landscape of Man* appears to be, as Richardson describes it, a book of 'illustrated examples strung together as double-page spreads, with quite minimal texts – almost extended captions – attached', it is, he reassures us, a compendium with intellectual ambition. Geoffrey Jellicoe had a longstanding interest in Jungian and phenomenological concerns, and possessed the conviction, in his own words, that 'the designed landscape has always been a projection of the human psyche into its natural environment'. Curiously, however, he eschewed much theorising here so as to release 'imaginative spontaneity and authenticity', allowing landscape forms – from ancient Chinese gardens to New World public landscapes – to speak for themselves, and to speak to us directly as human beings.

Although over the past five decades the format and contents of the couple's magnum opus have been praised and damned in equal measure, what is undeniable is

that it has an enduring popular appeal. In 1975 it was among the first books to promote the study of landscape history as a serious scholarly endeavour. Much of its allure may stem from the fact that it was lucidly presented, written for a broad audience, and that it ranges over subjects as diverse as urbanism, town planning, earthworks and agricultural practices.

Richardson has added a chapter to the new edition to bring it up to date, tackling recent themes in landscape design that either received scant attention in the original or which have evolved over time, including the post-industrial context, ecology, the garden as a work of art and community gardening. Many of Susan Jellicoe's photographs have also been updated, and where newly sourced images have been inserted they are in colour.

As a former acquaintance of the late Sir Geoffrey, I wholeheartedly agree with Richardson that *The Landscape of Man*, in all its extraordinary scope and variety, is above all testament to the author's boundless energy and sense of wonderment at the world. *Todd Longstaffe-Gowan is a landscape gardener. His latest book is 'Lost Gardens of London' (Modern Art Press)*

In discussing the ideals of classical space composition, the Jellicoes compare Perugino's painting of 'Christ Giving the Keys to St Peter' (1481–82) with Vignola's 1566 design of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia. Both real and imagined buildings seem to spring from the landscape

The Joy of Jellyfish

The Art and Science of Ernst Haeckel
(by Julia Voss and Rainer Willmann;
Taschen, rrp £150)

One of the best loved and most hated men of his age, Ernst Haeckel was lauded for his scientific discoveries and the illuminating way he illustrated them. But he was also derided for his anti-religious stance and controversial views on race. There's no question that his enquiring mind and artistic skill opened up a new world to many. It all began when he read Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* just months after it was published. The aspiring German biologist seized on this new world and *really* ran with it.

Who better to explain his achievements than the book's two editors, who meld science and art in a similar style to their subject? Rainer Willmann, director of the Zoological Museum at Göttingen University and Julia Voss – one of Germany's most admired art critics – know their stuff. Starting with the science, we learn about Haeckel's meticulous approach and pioneering search for new organisms. When first published, his drawings revealed species that people had never heard of, let alone seen. His plates transcend the frigid severity of ordinary scientific illustration. The almost painterly quality of

his slightly stylised, albeit accurate, interpretations adds a new dimension. They are *beautiful* – even when the creatures themselves are colourless. By studying life at a molecular level, and translating this to the page, Haeckel was pushing forward the frontiers of science and art.

Included here is a facsimile of the 35 plates in his monograph on Radiolaria (tiny monocellular marine organisms) and *Kunstformen der Natur* (Art Forms in Nature), a collection of 100 prints originally published between 1899 and 1904. Also shown are five other bodies of work, replete with mesmerising illustrations. The initial monograph caused the anatomist

Max Schultze to write: 'I find myself undecided as to whether to feel more astonished by nature itself... or by the hand of the draughtsman in his ability to capture such magnificence on paper.' And that's the crux of it. From tiny microbes to giant octopuses, Haeckel delighted in sharing the detail that would later be captured by microscopic photography. His richly coloured, flowing illustrations provoke wonder, and his chiaroscuro renditions of sponges and corals are hugely decorative. One black and gold illustration of Discomedusae (jellyfish) wouldn't look out of place on a Versace fabric. Every page provokes incredulity – are these beings real? And, if so, what are they?

Haeckel's motifs were to have a profound effect on the art world, Voss explains. Klimt, Ernst, Gaudí and Tiffany were all deeply influenced by Haeckel's illustrations and the Art Nouveau movement benefited from his depictions of the flowing lines of marine life. Even the now-familiar device of presenting works on a black background was another of the scientist's firsts. As a celebration of the staggering opulence of nature – from its humblest forms upwards – this is a glorious publication and a monumental work of art. *Kathryn Reilly is a freelance writer and artist*



This image of Ascidiae, the sea squirts, is one of a 100 plates from 'Art Forms in Nature', made with the help of Jena artist/lithographer Adolf Glitsch. Haeckel wanted to show that the incessant Darwinian struggle for survival produced an endless beauty and variety

Ugandan Discursions

Leilah Babirye: Embaga ya Naki ne Naki
(*Wedding of Naki and Naki*)

Until 18 January 2027

ICA Boston, 25 Harbor Shore Drive,
Boston, MA 02210

Through sculpture, Leilah Babirye constructs the communities she wants to inhabit. The artist uses ceramics, wood, metal and found materials to create towering figures and busts that aesthetically recall ancient African masks. For each work, she fabricates an origin story. These composite beings hail from imagined queer clans set in traditional Ugandan kingdoms. Together, they symbolise her chosen lineage. She carves a legacy of queer ancestors, elders and familiars into the canon of the continent's visual culture.

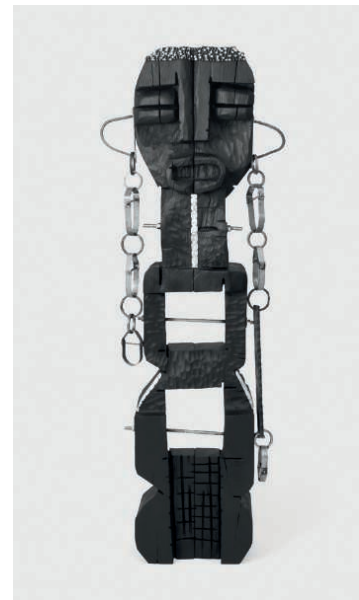
Babirye was born into a large family in Uganda in 1985. In 2015, after being outed as a lesbian, she was disowned by her parents and fled the country, where

gay people are pejoratively referred to as *abasiyazi*, a term that describes a part of the sugar-cane husk that 'not even insects feed upon'. 'It's garbage,' explains Babirye, who sets out to challenge notions of trash, transforming objects that she collects off the streets of New York City into regal crowns and dangling earrings that adorn her stoic figures. Bicycle chains and tangled wires become coiling tresses on chiselled busts with fuzzy gender presentations. With closed eyelids and pursed lips, their profound facial expressions recall those of omnipotent and immovable gods, ancient spirits whose existence is never to be questioned.

Babirye continues to embed queer and trans identities within her latest exhibition. *Leilah Babirye: Embaga ya Naki ne Naki* (*Wedding of Naki and Naki*), at the ICA Boston, is an intimate staging of a same-sex wedding. The artist composes a striking installation of ceramic-and-wood sculptures that each embodies a ceremonial role: a ring-bearer, a flower girl, a bridesmaid, a bride and a groom gather around in festive celebration. Others represent guests, including *Tuli Mukwano* (*We Are in Love*) III (2025), which shows a pair of lovers who greet each other by

brushing cheeks. Babirye ornaments these busts drenched in earthy brown and green glazes with bicycle inner tubes. Atop the left-hand figure she arranges the tubes into a snaking bun; meanwhile, a coarse braid falls from the head of the figure on the right, whose puckering lips motion towards their lover.

In an era where marriage equality is under threat and anti-trans healthcare bills are passed, Babirye sanctifies the rituals of LGBTQ+ people. This show is a jubilant ode to queer gathering, a crystallisation of the joy, pleasure and love that colour such kinship. The artist herself has never attended such a wedding in real life, but this exhibition reveals her present-day freedom. Through her rousing works, she finds home. 'I am creating my own family, reaching my own people, and honouring my community,' she says. *Daniella Brito is a Dominican/American writer, curator and artist from New York City*



Clockwise from top: 'Nalumaasi from the Kuchu Mbogo Clan', 2023, ceramic, wire, bicycle inner tubes, rubber and found objects; 'Nakaazi Ow'e Mamba II from the Kuchu Lungfish Clan', 2021, wood, nails, bolts, washers, screws, metal, bicycle chains, vinyl paint and found objects; 'Nakawaddwa from the Kuchu Ngabi (Antelope) Clan', 2021, ceramic, wood, wax, wire, bicycle chains and found objects

Wulz from the Vaults

Wanda and Marion Wulz: Avant-garde Photography in 20th-century Italy

16 September–20 December

Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, 39a Canonbury Square, London N1

Schooled in the studio, playing in the darkroom, Wanda and Marion Wulz, born in Trieste in 1903 and 1905 respectively, grew up steeped in the stuff of photography. Studio Wulz – established by their grandfather Giuseppe around 1875, and continued by their father, Carlo – was also the family home, and the girls, as the latter's favourite subjects, were from a young age deeply involved on both sides of the camera. The striking, often playful, body of work that they created together places women at its heart.

The sisters are now the subject of an exhibition at the Estorick Collection in London, bringing together their studio portraits, commercial commissions and avant-garde experiments. Although she remains little known, Wanda has the distinction of being the only female photographer of the Futurist movement, remembered chiefly for *Io + Gatto (Me + Cat)*, in which she laid a negative of the family pet over her own face.

Yet the two sisters' work was more or less forgotten until the Studio Wulz archive – including a 5,000-strong collection of negatives – was acquired by the Florence-based Fondazione Alinari per la Fotografia. The

show is the result of a long process of archival restoration, cataloguing and digitising, initiated by the foundation's director, Claudia Baroncini. 'One of the first things I decided when I became director was to discover the heritage of women in our archives – we know the men's names but there are many, many women.'

And Wanda and Marion – who took over the studio on their father's death out of financial necessity, giving up their respective passions of music and painting – were a fascinating pair. Giuseppe and Carlo had often ventured out of the studio, photographing the city, its bridges and harbour, factories and fish market, but, says Baroncini, the sisters kept their world small. 'If you check all their negatives, there are far fewer photos outside. [Most] are in the studio, inside the house where they were born, where they lived and worked.' Even Marion's extraordinary images of Trieste during its wartime

bombardment and subsequent liberation are taken from their third-floor terrace, the same vantage point from which Carlo had shot the funeral procession of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, in July 1914.

They limited their subjects, too, photographing almost exclusively women, whether they were from their home city or actresses, writers, dancers, painters (Surrealist Leonor Fini was one subject, as was Olympic fencer Irene Camber). Their sitters look comfortable, spirited, free from the male gaze. The Wulzes created a sort of feminine universe within their studio walls, living and collaborating with the fashion and textile designer Anita Pittoni, who was a friend, and using the clothes she created for fantastical photoshoots and performances as Gypsies and Egyptians, all captured by their camera.

A very few portraits of the notorious misogynist Filippo Marinetti and other male Futurists do exist in the archive, but it's perhaps unsurprising that Wanda's already loose association with the movement didn't last long. Neither she nor Marion married – and there's no evidence of lovers infiltrating their carefully constructed cocoon of sisterhood. Instead they seem to have turned an economic imperative into a lifelong expression of their identities as modern, emancipated women. Right on @ Nancy Durrant is a culture writer and broadcaster



Wanda Wulz, portrait of the Bulgarian dancer Olga Reich, c1932, gelatin silver print, 11.2 × 15.2cm

Network

Clare Holley chooses the best merchandise and events worldwide



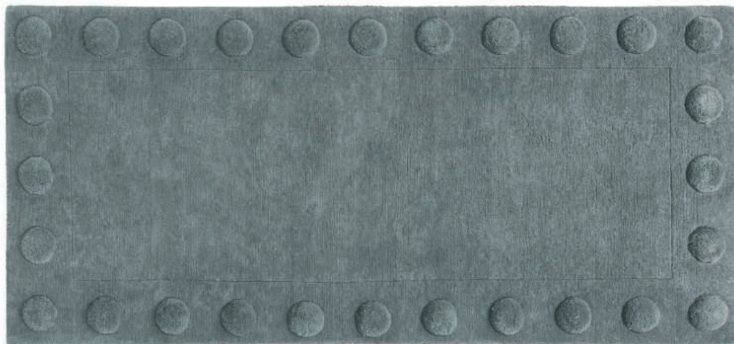
1



2



3



4

1 The 'Series 7' chair from Fritz Hansen, devised by Arne Jacobsen in 1955, has earned its place in modern furniture history. Curvaceous in shape but slender in form, this piece has been reissued for 2026 in four warm tones, a palette first created in the 1970s by Danish design visionary Verner Panton, the centenary of whose birth is this year. It now comes in 'Panton 100' orange, brown, red and yellow. Visit fritzhanzen.com

2 With flagship stores now in Shanghai, London and Marbella, Baxter has recently announced its presence in SoHo, New York. Housed over two levels in a 350-square-metre former industrial loft, the space has been transformed into a cultural hub for designers and architects. Part gallery, part studio and part design collective, this is a destination where inspiration, imagination and collaboration converge. Visit baxter.it

3 Now in its 25th year, the 'Groundpiece' seating system from Flexform has endured as an exemplary modular design. Generous in proportions and low to the ground, this is a sofa concept that recognises the way we live now. The armrest, for example, can be upholstered or clad with cowhide, and its exterior shelves always give you somewhere to tuck your favourite interiors magazine. Visit flexform.it

4 Featuring a series of shallow raised discs bordering its edges, the classic 'Rondel' runner rug by Jennifer Manners was created in collaboration with celebrated British interior designer Henry Prideaux. Finished by hand, the outer margins are bound in a contrasting colour for an immaculate result. The 'Rondel' can be custom-made in different colours and shapes, including a circular version. Visit jennifermanners.co.uk ®



RTD

RICHARD TAYLOR DESIGNS
LONDON

Timeless design.
Generations of craft.

richardtaylor designs.co.uk
+44 (0) 20 7351 2567



Explore our collection

FORBES
&
LOMAX



THE MATTE BRASS COLLECTION
forbesandlomax.com



DF

Donkeywell Forge

MASTER IRONWORKERS



donkeywellforge.co.uk

VISITOR'S BOOK

“It’s full of art – it’s a bit messy!” the 92-year-old artist says over a cup of tea and pastries. She has long since swapped the high ponytail that features so prominently in Picasso’s portraits for two shoulder-length braids’

Painter (and former model) Lydia Corbett’s Provençal farmhouse (page 64)

‘The butcher sports an extravagant coat of cowhide, including the entire horned head; his wife, similarly, is draped in carcasses – a “meat dress” some three centuries before Lady Gaga’

The curious career-as-costume engravings of Baroque printer Martin Engelbrecht (page 76)

‘Spectators sit on platforms looking into the octagonal stage below, where *pahlevans* (warriors or champions) move in circles to the beat of a drum’

Inside the Iranian *zurkhaneh*, which straddles gym, theatre and place of worship (page 82)

“Oftentimes people from outside Japan view lacquerware as a craft object, something that you would put on a shelf to look at. But it is something held in our hands, connected to our bodies”

Issey Miyake’s artistic director, Satoshi Kondo, on the material of his new ready-to-wear collection (page 90)

‘The visual turmoil is hard to comprehend at first: Brutalist in execution, but Medieval in composition, with an all-too-evident *horror vacui*’

A crucified Christ and Slavic spirits collide in Croatian artist Emilan Grgurić’s concrete bas-reliefs (page 96)

‘Floors the colour of sunshine are a subtle reminder of just how central heliotherapy was to the treatment of tuberculosis – and also to Alvar and Aino Aalto’s ethos of architecture as care’

One of many kindnesses at the Modernist duo’s Paimio Sanatorium in Finland (page 104)

‘Plump angels perch atop towers merrily cradling crania in their laps. The pink paint of their skin is the only reference to flesh in the bone house, and it makes them stick out like overdressed guests at a party’

The macabre decoration of an underground ossuary in the Czech Republic (page 116)



The words 'Jednak među jednakima' – equal among equals – suggest the sympathies of Croatian artist Emilijan Grgurić, whose concrete bas-reliefs often exalt the downtrodden. See page 96. Photograph: Beth Evans



ART UNDERFOOT

WoodworksByTedTodd.com



HOLY WIT

Lydia Corbett, once known as ‘the girl with the ponytail’ after modelling for Pablo Picasso in the coastal town of Vallauris in 1954, has long used her family’s Provençal farmhouse as a canvas on which to express her playful vision and deep spirituality. Every flea-market object, picture and piece of ancestral furniture adds another anecdote to the story of the house, which has seen the full tumult of French history, from monks hidden from persecution during the Revolution to German soldiers billeted in World War II. Zing Tsjeng is on the side of the angels. Photography: Steph Wilson

Lydia Corbett poses in the painting studio wearing a second-hand tunic dress. Above her hang prints of black-and-white portraits of her by Picasso: ‘He never flirted with me. I wouldn’t have had it – I already had a boyfriend.’ Sitings editor: Calum Knight

idia Corbett
Sylvette David



exposition du 7 juillet au 30 septembre 2000

INS
ICIPAL







For 400 years, every generation of Lydia Corbett's family has lived, dined, played and slept at Maison Latour, a spacious seven-bedroom Provençal *mas* in the south of France. The French painter and ceramicist – better known as Sylvette David, or ‘the girl with the ponytail’, who modelled for Picasso in 1954 (WoI Nov 2016) – has left her own indelible touch on the house.

‘It’s full of art – it’s a bit messy!’ the 92-year-old artist says over a cup of tea and pastries. She has long since swapped the high ponytail that features so prominently in Picasso’s portraits for two shoulder-length braids. As ever, the self-effacing Corbett is being too modest – the farmhouse, which retains many of its original features, is a testament to her own free-wheeling creative eye and to the generations of artists in her family. Over the years, she has covered it with luminous murals of angels, saints, flowers, animals and pilgrims. ‘I loved Charleston,’ she says of a visit to the farmhouse where Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant lived. ‘It inspired me to paint on the walls. Actually, I tried

Corbett painted the cupboards below the bookshelves of the ground-floor library herself with crosses, hearts, vases of flowers and bowls of fruit. The room is dominated by her chicken-wire-and-papier-mâché sculpture of a woman. The bird on the figure’s head represents the Holy Spirit, says the owner. Among the leather-bound books on the shelves are legal textbooks that belonged to a lawyer ancestor who was guillotined during the French Revolution. The artist’s granddaughter acquired the small rattan chair from a French flea market, while the bust of Beethoven was passed down through the family. The doors allow access to a garden ideal for sunbathing





to take the wallpaper off and couldn't – so what I did is paint people on it.'

Corbett's French father was a solicitor who became an art dealer, and her English mother was a painter. Their collection, including their own works and several canvases by Dany Lartigue, who lived in Saint-Tropez, adorns the walls alongside Lydia's own pieces. One nude by her mother depicting Corbett's godmother hangs in what was her grandmother's bedroom above an antique metal cot.

The three-storey stone house perched near an old silkworm farm has weathered the upheavals of French history. During the Revolution, the third floor was used to hide monks from religious persecution, and in the neighbouring city of Orange, Corbett's great-grandfather was guillotined. When Hitler invaded France in World War II, the house was seized and used by German soldiers. (Mamiche, Corbett's grandmother, was living there at the time and was forced to take care of them. Apparently they treated her surprisingly well.) Now it plays host to the clan every summer and an ever-expanding cast of

The ground-floor studio is where the artist gets ready for the day, prays and paints. Her depiction of a mother and child surrounded by white lilies hangs beside the door. Sitting on the marble fireplace is an 18th-century gilt mirror, one of many dotted around the house

In the formal sitting room on the ground floor, family paintings in Indian ink and oil hang behind an antique chair upholstered in tapestry. The plaster bust was acquired by Corbett's father, and the crucifix was a flea-market find. On the wall hangs the artist's portrait of her daughter Isabel against a blue background, displayed in an old frame. Before the advent of television, the family used to play the harmonium, now serving as a sideboard, for evening entertainment







Opposite: Corbett's bedroom on the first floor has hand-painted red floral wallpaper, which a relative partially painted over with more floral motifs at the beginning of the 20th century. The drawing of a woman beside the door frame was added by the artist. A commode chair that belonged to her father sits next to a marble-topped dresser. Below: in the attic bedroom is an 18th-century chair used by life models during the art retreats that the family hosts. A folding screen painted by Corbett partly hides the boiler behind it



friends, many of whom work in the creative arts. Both of Corbett's adult daughters are painters, and the family continues the cultural heritage of Maison Latour by hosting artists' retreats at the house.

When her parents divorced, the teenage Lydia followed her mother to Vallauris, a seaside town on the French Riviera that had become a sanctuary for artists. Here she met Picasso, who was 'very amusing', she recalls. 'He tried to make me laugh but I was shy – very serious, I was! He never flirted with me. I wouldn't have had it – I already had a boyfriend.' She started her artistic career in Vallauris, but put it to one side when she started a family and only picked it up again at 45 when her children had flown the nest. 'I

was able to just paint,' she says. 'I like staying at home. I'm not an adventurer!'

The house overlooks a garden shaded by a huge plane tree, planted when the family first moved in. Buttercream-yellow shutters – a style traditional to Provence – are often flung open to let the dappled light in through the windows, still with their original glass. Corbett has channelled her energy into remaking the house in a vision that is inimitably hers – a blend of female-centred spirituality, Christian iconography and nature. It is evident from the moment you push open the heavy teal front doors to reveal a mural of Saint Francis and his follower Saint Clare, each with a cat curled up at their feet. 'I love all religions,' the painter says with a smile.

The *mas* extends from that central corridor on both sides, with a kitchen, formal and informal dining rooms on the right side and a studio, a library and the sitting room on the other. Adorning every shelf and surface are makeshift shrines and objects d'art passed down through the family or collected by the owner and her children from flea markets and *vide-greniers* (the French equivalent of a car-boot sale). In the formal sitting room, a plaster bust bought by the artist's father sits next to a crucifix she found at an antiques market, surrounded by a work by Corbett depicting her daughter and oil landscapes by her mother – three generations of her family represented in a single corner. Some of the vivid geometric tiling in the ground

floor rooms is as old as the house itself, and much of the walnut furniture dates back to the 18th century. Corbett's grandmother was offered a Cézanne painting as a wedding present but turned it down: 'She said: "No, I don't want a Cézanne, I want a bedroom suite!";' she laughs. A winding staircase leads up to the second and third floors, where the bedrooms are located; many of them still have their original hand-decorated wallpaper. A first-floor bedroom known as the Jesus Room features the owner's mural of pilgrims visited by an angel, the child-like figures set against the faded floral walls. The maze of rooms is a child's dream come true, and it is sprinkled throughout with

Corbett's cheerful irreverence, like the trompe-l'oeil window she painted in a dark recess of the Jesus Room.

'I remember being little, lying up here for hours,' says Alice, Corbett's daughter. From a vantage point of the second-floor bedroom, she would watch the family assemble for meals at the long table or play boules in the garden. 'There would be 21 of us here for breakfast – one uncle had seven children.' Humour radiates from even the most everyday of trinkets and souvenirs: a bowl in the sitting room contains pebbles from the nearby river, daubed by Corbett's father with amusing little faces. Even the lights have personality, with a lampshade in the bedroom

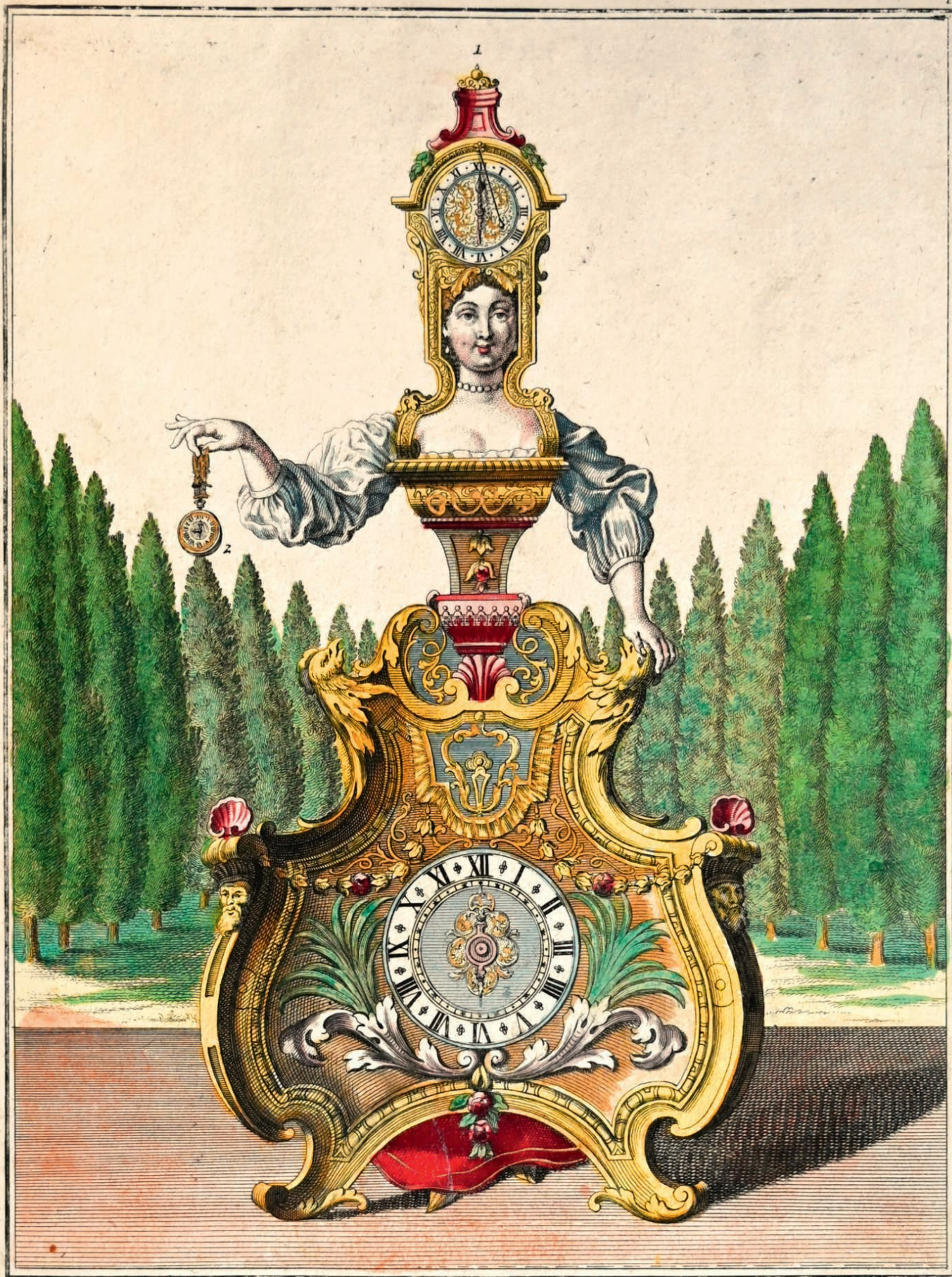
collaged by Corbett with reclining nudes amid sunflowers and owls taking flight.

Now in her tenth decade, Corbett calls Devon home and is still showing her art, with a retrospective scheduled for November. 'I want to do lamps in clay,' she says. But she still credits the Bloomsberries of Charleston for inspiring her family home: 'I was moved by their will in decorating the whole house.' Maison Latour, so alive with its bohemian blend of art and family, will surely inspire many more artists in years to come. *My Life, My Dance with Picasso* runs at The Redfern Gallery, 11–12 Pall Mall, London SW1 (020 7734 1732; redfern-gallery.com, 3–28 Nov. For artists' retreats, visit isabelcoulton.com



Above: the bedroom where Corbett's grandmother formerly slept retains its original toile-de-jouy wallpaper, and a painting of a woman mending a fishing net by the artist Dany Lartigue, son of photographer Jacques Henri Lartigue, hangs above an 18th-century armchair. Opposite: pilgrims and angels adorn the walls of the first-floor bedroom known as the Jesus Room after the murals that Corbett painted here. The artist says she got the idea from a visit to Charleston in East Sussex, once home to Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant: 'It inspired me to paint on the walls. Actually, I tried to take the wallpaper off and couldn't – so what I did is paint people on it'





l'Horlogere.

Die Uhrmacherin.



CLOTHED FOR BUSINESS

You are what you wear – apparently. In 1730 the German printer Martin Engelbrecht took this dubious dictum to its absurd conclusion by depicting tradesmen clad head to toe in the tools and materials of their labours. From a Chandler wearing a candle tabard to a fishwife in an eel scarf, these Baroque engravings present a workforce full of role models, says Stephen Patience

Previous pages, left: corsetry is external for the poor clockmaker, pressed as she is into an especially restrictive outfit, one with all the characteristic ornate symmetry of a contemporary rocaille timepiece. Right: looking vaguely like a member of a 1980s synth duo, the organ-maker's wife not only has her keyboard – a clavichord – in easy reach, but a skirt assembled from metal pipes. Her 'tiara', too, is made from tiny high-pitched ones activated by the piccolo stop. These pages, opposite: the upholsterer's costume is very similar to an earlier version by Larmessin – Martin Engelbrecht, however, appears to imply the ladder is an encumbrance around his neck

The apparel oft proclaims the man,' Polonius told us – although since he was a foolish, prating knave it is perhaps best not to set too much store by his comments. Nevertheless, in centuries gone by, it was comparatively straightforward to identify someone's profession purely from how they were dressed. Partly this came from simple practicalities that congealed into convention – bakers, for example, wore white to emphasise hygiene – partly from visible signs of allegiance to various guilds, and partly from the sumptuary laws, legislation passed with the express aim of keeping people in their place by dictating exactly what kinds of garments, cuts and fabrics were permitted to be worn within the various echelons of society. Nowadays the notion is somewhat in abeyance; familiar trappings such as teachers wearing mortarboards or butchers sporting straw boaters exist primarily as a kind of archetypal shorthand for cartoonists. But the idea persists that jobs are defined by their workwear; and, in a sense, that by putting on those outfits you somehow *become* that person.

The imagery on these pages posits a society in which that idea is taken to extremes. The pictures are part of a set of 84 Baroque hand-coloured engravings, depicting men and women in extravagant allegorical costumes that embody their occupations. The mood is absurdist and satirical, showing figures who do not simply dress *for* work but *as* their work, with garments shaped like the tools of their trade and various accoutrements hanging from every available surface. The female bookbinder, for example, has a full hoop skirt constructed from a patchwork of bookcovers, with the lowest tier acting as a mobile library shelf; meanwhile, her husband, if we are to assume the engravings represent a sort of proto-*Happy Families*, wears a painful-looking screw-top hat based on a book press. The butcher sports an extravagant coat of cowhide, including the entire horned head, cloven hooves and tail; his wife, similarly, is draped in carcasses, at which a hungry dog

gnaws – a 'meat dress' some three centuries before Lady Gaga. Equally pungent to encounter, presumably, would be the fishwife, shown with an eel draped round her neck like a scarf, a lobster basque and net sleeves with a gaggle of pilchards hanging like epaulettes.

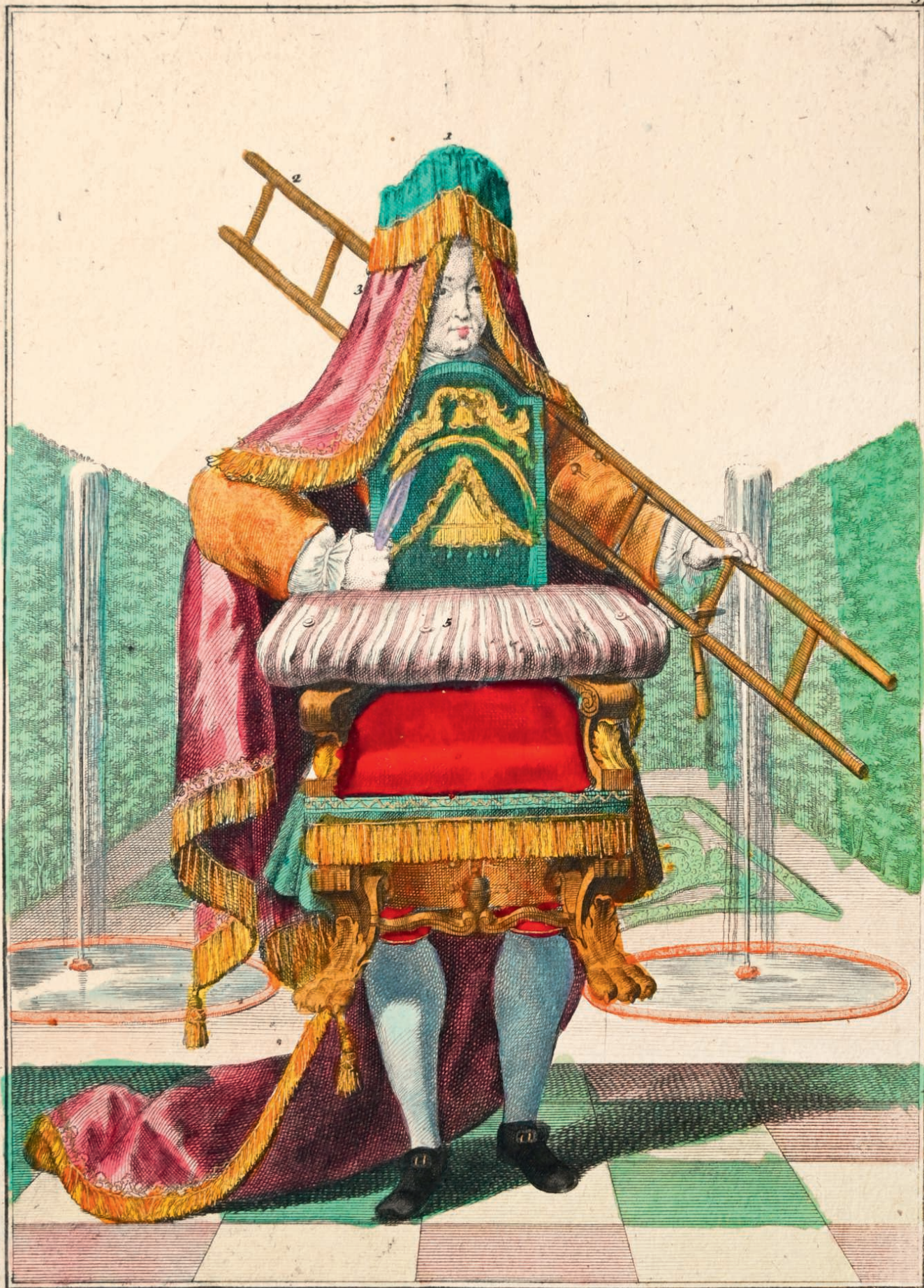
The sequence was engraved in about 1730 by Martin Engelbrecht, one of the leading printmakers in the city of Augsburg, whose publishing house sold portraits of crowned heads, views of Venice and illustrations for Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, inter alia. It is clearly inspired by the work of the French engraver Nicolas de Larmessin, who produced his *Costumes Grotesques* in the 1680s, a set of similar allegorical artisans, most of whom resemble periwigged versions of the Tin Woodman from *The Wizard of Oz*. 'While the principle remains the same, Engelbrecht's figures are more elaborate and decorative, reflecting the exuberant Rococo taste of the 18th century,' says Fantine Bellanger of the Librairie Camille Sourget in Paris, which has just acquired a complete set of the engravings. 'If Larmessin invents the genre, Engelbrecht expands it into something closer to a theatrical spectacle.'

Engelbrecht was no stranger to such things, being celebrated for his pioneering work with miniature theatres, a field in which he was without peer. These evolved from larger-scale landscape prints he engraved to be viewed through an arcane 18th-century device that rejoiced in the name of the zograscope: a sort of camera obscura apparatus with a large biconvex lens that gave flat images an illusion of depth. Unlike later models, Engelbrecht's theatres did not include little cut-out people on sticks who could be slid back and forth by excitable children; rather, they were miniature boxes in which eight or so flat layers of scenery were mounted to create a sense of perspective, used to depict biblical scenes or allegories of the seasons. (A fine example with six compartments is in the collection of the V&A.)

The *Assemblage Nouveau des Manouvriers Habillés*, as the set is known, is

theatrical in a different way; ostensibly it was intended as a set of costume designs for a ballet, although it is highly dubious that such an oeuvre ever existed, not least because as dancewear they are highly impractical. The *horlogère*, to take just one example, is clad in a huge clock casement, with a second gilt timepiece balanced upon her head, and an almost architectural wasp waist that is no wider than her neck. Such outlandish – and rigid – costumes might perhaps have found favour 200 years on, in a production put on by the Bauhaus avant-gardist Oskar Schlemmer or a performance piece at the Cabaret Voltaire by Hugo Ball; it seems likely, however, that any 18th-century ballerina compelled to perform while weighed down by such encumbrances would have had a very bad *attitude*.

It is unlikely, then, that Engelbrecht's pictures served as actual blueprints for a theatrical costumier (who, presumably, would have worn a giant pair of scissors on her head and a skirt shaped like a proscenium arch); much more convincing is the idea that they were sold as straightforward collectable prints, both individually and as a group. 'It is extremely unusual to come across a full set,' says Bellanger. 'Individual sheets were frequently removed from albums and framed separately. As a result, complete sets have become increasingly scarce.' That's understandable; it's easy to imagine someone working as, say, a lute manufacturer wanting the relevant print without the rest of the series. But there is something slightly unsatisfying about it too, like having Mr Bun the Baker without the rest of the deck. Perhaps the most fitting method to keep the full run of prints together might be to follow the example of the *vendeur des images*, the picture-seller (who, it is tempting to imagine, might be a self-portrait of Engelbrecht himself); somewhat inevitably, he wears them, with loose engravings draped all over his arms and torso. Not advisable with prints of such rarity, particularly in wet weather, but it's one way to, er, take a leaf out of his book ☹



Un Tapisier.

Un Capeſtier.



This page, clockwise from top left: the 'faiseuse de soufflet', or bellows-maker, exemplifies Engelbrecht's conceit – both her bodice and skirt are shaped like her wares, with tools dangling about them; the 'cordonnière', or shoemaker, is one of a number of tradeswomen in the 84-strong series. Those of his French precursor, Nicolas de Larmessin, are all men; with files at his hips, a sporran of skeleton keys and escutcheons wrapped round his upper arms, the locksmith stands with hammer cocked; seen beneath a wall-calendar 'apron', the bookbinder's skirt of hardbacks showcases the rich hand-colouring of the engravings, with the original 'coloris d'époque' applied in the 1730s. Opposite: the Chandler, at risk of waxen droplets from his headgear, holds a cotton peloton with a length of wick wound around it



Un Faiseur de chandelles.

Ein Lichtzieher.



GOWD GIVE ME STRENGTH

It is no exaggeration to say that Iranians show a religious devotion to the business of endurance and exercise. For proof you need only visit one of the country's many *zurkhanehs*, where, in the central *gowd* or pit, keep fit is a wholly reverential pastime. Text: Donna Salek. Photography: Amirhossein Khoshbin



The first thing visitors do on entering a *zurkhaneh* is step down. You descend a flight of stairs, before bowing your head to duck under a low doorway as a sign of humility. Inside, eyes are drawn towards the *gowd*, a sunken pit one metre below ground level. Around its edges, spectators sit on raised platforms looking into the octagonal stage below, where *pahlevans* (warriors or champions) move in circles to the beat of a drum. In this house of strength – the literal translation of *zurkhaneh* – the strongest bodies occupy the lowest point in the room.

For centuries these spaces have been a long-standing feature in cities and neighbourhoods across Iran, serving as places of exercise, ritual and community. Although it is difficult to pin down their exact origins, elements of pre-Islamic warrior culture, Sufi practice and later Shi'a traditions have all left their mark on the institutions that exist today.

A *zurkhaneh* is not quite a gymnasium, though bodies are trained there. Nor is it a place of worship, though reverence hangs over its rituals. It's not a theatre either, despite the audience that congregates around its perimeter, or the highly choreographed nature of the routines performed within the *gowd*. Collectively known as *varzesh-e bastani*, or 'ancient sport', these exercises occupy an unusual position somewhere between athletics and performance. Participants move around one another, following techniques, rhythms and sequences that have changed little across generations. Contemporary gym culture fragments bodies into isolated acts of self-improvement: one person lifts, another fights for their life on a Stair Master, someone else pedals through a virtual forest on a stationary

Previous pages: the eyes of 'pahlevans' past stare down from a crush of portraits on the walls of this 'zurkhaneh' in Tehran, where Iranian men have been competing in the octagonal 'gowd', or sunken pit, since 1941. The very act of descending steps to enter, and having to duck one's head to pass through the green curtain, is a symbol of humility. Right: a calligraphic 'Ya Ali' exalting the first imam is surrounded by photographs and ceremonial or athletic objects – a reminder that physical strength, virtue and reverence are ever entwined here





Below: the empty 'gowd' is seen here from the platform where the 'morshed', or guide, sets the rhythm of the physical movement down below with the beat of the 'zarb' drum and recital of poetry, religious passages and extracts from Persian literature. Opposite: hanging below a wall of 'pahlevans' are the 'pishbands', or sarong/exercise cloths, that athletes wear tightly around their waist for core support. According to Javānmardi principles, sporting one signifies a warrior's readiness to be stripped of ego and focus solely on training



bike. The *zurkhaneh*, by contrast, gathers bodies together (usually male bodies, though this has shifted in recent decades, with some welcoming female visitors or holding dedicated women's sessions).

Above the arena sits the *morshed*, or guide, who typically presides from an elevated platform known as the *sardam*, often the most decorated area of the room, positioned to overlook both the athletes and spectators. When an important person or athlete enters, the *morshed* rings a bell. Working with the *miyander*, a senior *pahlevan* who leads exercises from the centre, he recites poetry, prayers and passages from Persian literature while striking a *zarb*, a goblet-shaped drum. The recitations do more than keep time; they reinforce the ethical principles of *javānmardi*, a philosophical concept loosely linked to

chivalry, which emphasises humility, generosity, self-discipline and service to one's community, reminding participants that strength is measured as much by character as physical ability. Movements follow the pace of the drumbeats, relying less on counting sets than the rhythm of the *morshed*'s recitations. *Zurkhanehs* often occupy domed or vaulted interiors, the centre aligned precisely with that of the *gowd*, amplifying the percussion and prayers so that they resound around the room.

Resting against walls or stacked around the edge of the central pit are the tools for which these places are best known. *Meels*, huge wooden clubs carved from elm or pear wood, evoke ancient maces and are swung behind each shoulder, one after the other. Wooden boards, called *sang* – meaning 'stone' and referring to the

original material used to create shields – are used for a type of push-up manoeuvre. The *kabadeh*, an iron frame supporting a series of chain-linked metal rings, echoes the shape of a warrior's bow, rattling as the participant brandishes it above his head. The movements hark back to battles, epics and ideals of heroism that belong as much to mythology as to history.

Persian rugs soften the perimeter of the *gowd*, while sofas and coffee tables occupy corners of the room alongside trophies and exercise equipment. This arrangement might seem unusual in a gym, though less so in Iran, where the gravitational pull of a handwoven carpet and somewhere to sit for a chinwag is always strong.

Few figures appear more frequently in the visual culture of the *zurkhaneh* than Rostam, the mythological hero of Abu



al-Qasim Ferdowsi's epic, the *Shahnameh*: his feats of strength have shaped Persian ideals of courage and masculinity for centuries. His image shares space with references to Imam Ali, regarded as an embodiment of both physical power and virtue, and portraits of celebrated *pahlevans*, particularly those specific to places they trained. Furnished too with trophies and decorative objects, the room is an informal archive of the communities that sustain it, ensuring that no-one trains alone.

In the West, modern fitness is introspective (god forbid you forget to bring your headphones to a workout). It centres on self-optimisation and personal transformation, with floor-to-ceiling mirrors that are impossible to escape, multiplying the body back to itself. Mirrors can be found in *zurkhanehs*, of course, ensuring postures are correct and to create the illusion of space. Yet unlike contemporary gyms, attention is directed towards the collective rather than the self. Participants move in unison, following the rhythm set by the *morshed* and the *miyander*. *Pahl-evans* remain constantly aware of those around them, and the audience too forms part of the overall choreography. Exercise is never entirely private – the body exists in relation to the surrounding community. Older generations return to watch from the raised seating that surrounds the *gowd*, while children observe the routines they might one day adopt.

This symbiotic relationship is reflected in the architecture itself: the lowered arena, the elevated *sardam* and the seating levels that ensure everyone in the room occupies a clearly defined role. Even after centuries, the first lesson of the *zurkhaneh* remains architectural in character: before strength comes humility ☺

Spectator seating quite unlike any you would find in a Western gym is arrayed around a patchwork of carpets covering the floor of the 'zurkhaneh'. Gathered on the edge of the 'gowd' in the foreground are the wooden 'meels' that are used in endurance training, while a shield-like 'sang' is mounted on the marble wall





CLASP REUNION

In a nod to its founder's groundbreaking plastic bustiers of the early 1980s, Issey Miyake's current artistic director, Satoshi Kondo, has dreamed up a new collection, one in which two kinds of rigid shell hold fabric in position round the figure. Made from hand-torn *washi* paper and finished with lacquer, the pieces merge digital modelling with venerable Japanese craftsmanship – and, as Dal Chodha reports, deepen the house's fixation with the relationship between body and cloth



Above: the 'Urushi Body' collection was unveiled during Paris Fashion Week. Opposite: most such items have a wooden body called 'mokutai', yet due to the nature of 'washi' paper, Satoshi Kondo's 'obi' sash and bustier offer more flexibility. Featherweight at under 240 grams, the pieces clasp fabric against the torso with remarkably little fuss and are finished with a hand-painted Issey Miyake logo



To make the base, sheets of handmade 'washi' are torn into smaller pieces and layered with glue on to a 3D-printed mould. 'They were not reluctant,' Kondo says of the introduction of digital modelling to the ancient process of lacquerware. 'The craftsmen acted as mentors and were really open to the idea[...]. The construction method is basically the same as that used for samurai armour. It goes way back'



By 1985, when *Issey Miyake Body Works: Fashion Without Taboo* opened at the V&A in London, the designer had firmly engraved his radical vocabulary for dressing into the collective consciousness: flowing forms inspired by the study of sacred garments from antiquity, made – as was famously Miyake’s initial dream – using a single piece of cloth.

In one large gallery room, athletic silicone mannequins stood within the folds of a black polyurethane beach, their arms outstretched as if taking off. Miyake’s landmark ‘Plastic Body’ bustiers, moulded

from glass fibres infused with polyester resin, lined the far wall in jewel tones. A sci-fi Xanadu, *Body Works* proposed a new way of thinking about the sartorial. As Miyake, who died in 2022, said at the time: ‘There are no boundaries for what can be fabric, for what clothes can be made from. Anything can be clothing.’

That very concept nourishes his namesake label some 40 years later. ‘I’ve always wanted to create something that truly symbolises the body. Not just the physical body itself, but different bodily expressions,’ says Satoshi Kondo, who leads

the Issey Miyake women’s collection today. ‘When you look back at Miyake-san’s work, there is something rooted deeply in everyday living or in traditional craftsmanship, yet despite that, there is always something new that speaks to me.’ Importantly, he adds: ‘The body is always at the core.’ These ideas found form in the opening look of Kondo’s autumn/winter 2026 collection, for which model Kayako Higuchi stepped on to a carpet of shimmering dust, a single sheet of white paper-cotton cloth held to her body by means of a matt eggshell bustier. Sitting somewhere

The pieces were then sent to Kyoto to be finished with multiple layers of lacquer, resulting in a deep, distinctive sheen. The foundation for these items is a real human body, refined into an abstract shape. 'I place a huge amount of importance on physicality in everything I do. Of course, I use a computer, I have a smartphone, but when it comes to design and making, everything is still hands-on'



between a corset and an *obi* sash, it is part of the forthcoming 'Urushi Body' collection, comprising two styles – a waist piece and a bustier – in four colourways. While crafted using ancient practices, they frame the body in distinctly modern terms. Although part of the same lineage, Miyake's sexy plastic corset and Kondo's earthy clasps say different things about the moments in which they were engineered; one is a futuristic fancy, the other more ambiguous and less time-bound.

Since its inception, the Issey Miyake label has deliberated on the relationship

between body and cloth. Writing in the *Body Works* exhibition catalogue in 1983, trumpeter and composer Jon Hassell embraced the designer's thinking as part of a musical movement that he called the Fourth World, which staged the meeting of African and futurist influences. Miyake, equally, spent much of his early career pairing the latest in textile innovation with global styles, chiefly the *djellaba* and *boubou* robes (from North and West Africa respectively), resulting in a universal wardrobe that could be worn regardless of gender, age or body shape. In this sense,

as Hassell wrote, Miyake looked 'straight ahead into an era in which sensuality and beauty regain their rightful places alongside structure and function'.

For the 'Urushi Body' line, the physical poetry of the making process is vital to the results. Crafted by artisans in the Echizen region of Fukui prefecture, the pieces emerge through a ritual of hand-tearing large sheets of *washi* paper, which are then layered on 3D-printed moulds using five blankets of natural glue. They are finished with multiple coats of lacquer harvested from the sap of the urushi tree in Kyoto,

transforming the delicate *washi* into solid forms with a supple lustre.

The resinous material is ubiquitous in Japan; Kondo's earliest memories are of pushing a lacquer bowl of miso soup up to his face. After childhood he recalls it in the small *ochoko* cups used for sipping sake. 'Oftentimes people from outside Japan view lacquerware as a craft object, something that you would put on a shelf to look at. But it is something held in our hands, connected to our bodies,' he says.

The polished fibreglass and resin bodices that closed Miyake's autumn/winter 1980 show subverted many norms of fashion. Part objet d'arts and part trompes l'oeil, they sensually held fabric to the body from the hips, giving the appearance of nudity with the protection of a covering and requiring no needles or thread. At that time, the media was dominated by a craze for aerobic fitness, while the lithe body typified by the era's supermodels coincided with the mainstreaming of

fat removal, breast enhancement and injectables. Miyake's pieces, which adorned the body like jewellery, expressed the non-sensicality of a singular ideal, exposing any such thing as a shield. Today, they sit within major museum collections, displayed as artworks independent of the human form, yet still representative of our shifting perceptions about it.

Where Miyake embodied a fantasy defined by toned waists and perfectly rounded breasts, Kondo's waist piece and bustier take their lead from something more innate. Wearing these objects feels more like an embrace than armour – they hold the wearer, rather than obscuring or 'optimising' their natural form. 'There was an intention that you could read it as being part of the torso, or breast, but they are also not too realistic. The concept was to create something in between. It's simple. All you need is this and a piece of fabric and you have a garment,' he says. The pieces have a muscularity too, which is

emphasised when they are used to clasp fabric up against the body. Yet when you handle them, a softness is revealed. 'There is this "Aha!" moment when you realise they're made of paper,' Kondo adds. 'The beautiful matt texture deceives you.'

'Urushi Body' abstracts the many depictions of the female form in visual culture – from the Classical stone figures that fill our museums to the unattainable ideals that populate our digital feeds. But the pieces are neither facsimiles nor echoes. 'I think what's more important is to see and present clothes as the means through which you can impart a new perspective of looking at other things,' says Kondo. Designers often face the impossible challenge of creating something utterly novel. In response, Kondo offers a flat paper surface that rises into a timeless bodily form using a process that is both ancient and avant-garde. 'Just by shifting the way you think of the body, you present it as a vessel for a new idea' ☺



Above: in pieces such as 'Plastic Body' (1980) Issey Miyake ushered aside the ethnography of East meets West for which he had become known in favour of experimentation. Satoshi Kondo continues to explore how materials typical to other disciplines of design like plastic, wire, paper and resin can become clothing. Opposite: the 'Urushi Body' pieces are a serious proposition for those with the sensibility to wear them. 'I feel like you could basically call anything "clothing" as long as it can be worn on the body,' says Kondo





GO FIGURE

For someone so deeply ambivalent about religion, Emilan Grgurić was surprisingly obsessed with characters from the Bible, scattering them all around his hand-built property on a Croatian island in the form of concrete bas-reliefs and statues. But then again, that fact is no more anomalous than Villa Katarina itself, the outsider artist's crumbling Medieval-meets-Brutalist magnum opus just a stone's throw from the Adriatic Sea. What does it all mean? Now that, says Jelena Dunato, is a real poser – rather like Eve, as depicted by him. Step forward Grgurić's elderly daughter to unravel the enigma before it is lost to posterity. Photography: Beth Evans

Top: after he retired, Emilan Grgurić spent summers in Kukljica working on his projects. In fact, the sound of him chiselling was as constant as the chirp of crickets. Opposite: in the corridor of Villa Katarina, the artist spelled out his beliefs about life and the universe against a red-ochre wall, while Noah's Ark has dropped anchor on another – a reflection of his love of animals rather than piety per se

ZNANJA

SILA

LA

JE SILA

AVRSENIJE

TIJELO

PROLAZNO

NESTAJE

TIJELO

EOCAJI U

DETANKA





Opposite: in a scene inspired by the 'Book of Revelation', the Woman of the Apocalypse – who is interpreted as the Virgin Mary in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches – appears to surf on a crescent moon as she defies the devil. Below: decorating the kitchen/dining room, the Last Supper is reimagined as a local village feast, with the Apostles identifiable by the names inscribed on their belts



Anyone stumbling upon the Garden of Eden on Ugljan, a touristy island off the Dalmatian coast, wouldn't be entirely wrong if they thought they had somehow walked into a strange dream. The lush sculpture park and the villa at its heart are a startling anomaly among the crystal-blue waters, pebbled coves and quaint villages: a *Gesamtkunstwerk* dreamed up by Emil Milan Grgurić, a Croatian outsider artist who dedicated his life to making it real.

Emilan, as he called himself, was born in 1919 in Januševac, near Zagreb. He was an economist by trade and a creative at heart, though growing up poor with a

strict father didn't allow him to nurture his artistic talent. One summer in the late 1950s, looking to escape the oppressive heat in the capital, he and his wife, Melita, and their young daughters, Dunja and Jasminka, visited Kukljica, a small fishing village on the island. They were smitten and returned the next year, and the next, lodging in the old school. Then, in the early 1960s, Emilan found an untouched plot of land nearby, which could only be reached by boat. This, he thought, would make the perfect sanctuary, an isolated paradise for his family and the many stray animals they adopted, as well as a place where he would finally be able to create art.

The first thing he tackled was the house itself. Villa Katarina, named after the artist's mother, has a strange organic quality to it. From the ground plan in the shape of a four-leaf clover, it rises like a mound of concrete and stone, evoking a massive beehive. Its highest gable is topped by a concrete bust of Katarina, watching over it like a patron saint. Her face is young, serious and idealised: this is the most gentle of Emilan's concrete portraits. Dunja explains that the whole project stemmed from her father's grief over losing his mother at the age of 12. That sense of loss never left him: Emilan hid a lock of her hair in the concrete head, as if it were a

holy relic. It's no surprise, perhaps, that some locals think the house is haunted.

The real wonders, however, are hidden inside, where colourful chaos awaits the visitor. The walls – and sometimes ceilings – are covered in concrete reliefs on monochromatic red, green or blue backgrounds. This visual turmoil is hard to comprehend at first: Brutalist in execution, but Medieval in composition, with hierarchical proportions and an all-too-evident *horror vacui*. The iconography is just as varied. At a glance, one can make out Noah's Ark, Moses with his tablets, the Last Supper and scenes from the Apocalypse. However, Dunja explains that her father wasn't even particularly religious: it was his vision of God, incorporated in a larger philosophy of life, its beginning and its end.

Emilan claimed that the main theme of his art was the exploitation of the

common people through time. Most of the non-biblical scenes depict either the glorious past of the Croatian people or historical injustices they felt. On two walls we find a line-up of princes and kings as mythical Medieval figures with crowns and swords, standing on roots inscribed with their names. On another, we find the 16th-century national hero Nikola Subić Zrinski, who died fighting the Ottomans. He is depicted standing inside a fortress, holding a chequer shield, surrounded by severed heads. But perhaps the most imaginative is 'the wall of Old Slavic spirits', as Dunja calls it. On the right side of the composition, we see Christ on the cross and a bishop with a sword and an aspergillum, while on the left a chaotic tangle of human and animal bodies represents the pagan, Slavic deities and monsters.

Emilan's wife often participated in the execution of his ideas. Dunja remembers her helping build the house: there was no-one else around to lend a hand. Together they worked 'without electricity or running water, with nothing but lime, sand, cement, water and a sifter'. But Melita's greatest contribution to her husband's magnum opus was the landscape: it was she who planted all the trees and shrubs that surround his statues. The park – the so-called Garden of Eden – amplifies the ideas of past glories and injustices that Emilan depicted in the house. There are 35 sculptures in all, each one cast in reinforced concrete and hand-finished by chisel. The earliest work is the group *Return of the Islanders from the Field* depicting a man, a woman and a donkey, inscribed with Aleksa Santić's poem 'Stay Here'. Dunja recalls that



Above: Emilan's empathy for the downtrodden is best illustrated here, where the Croatian/Slovene peasant revolt of 1573 is re-enacted in concrete. Matija Gubec, the soon-to-be-executed leader of the uprising, wears a tricolour sash. Opposite: a more macabre bas-relief shows Nikola Subić Zrinski surrounded by severed heads. The nobleman was killed in 1566 while defending Siget from the Ottomans





her father empathised with the local fishermen and peasants, who endured real hardship before the arrival of mass tourism and would often emigrate to America. 'He loved Kukljica and its inhabitants, and he felt sorry for them.'

The sculptures outside are monumental, larger than life and heroic in their Brutalist simplicity. The Medieval kings Tomislav and Petar Krešimir IV share the garden with the Croatian writers Marija Jurić-Zagorka, August Senoa and Miroslav Krleža, as well as Saint Thomas Aquinas and the 'Apostles to the Slavs', Cyril

and Methodius. This illustrious gathering also comprises sculptural groups such as *The Well of Life*, featuring a couple with two children standing atop a high pedestal adorned with signs of the zodiac, dancing animals and the solar system. 'He believed that everything stems from love,' Dunja explains, 'the whole world, the universe.'

Despite dedicating half his life to it, working in the summer and researching and planning while in Zagreb, Emilan likened his 'sculpting of ideas' to straw, echoing the words of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

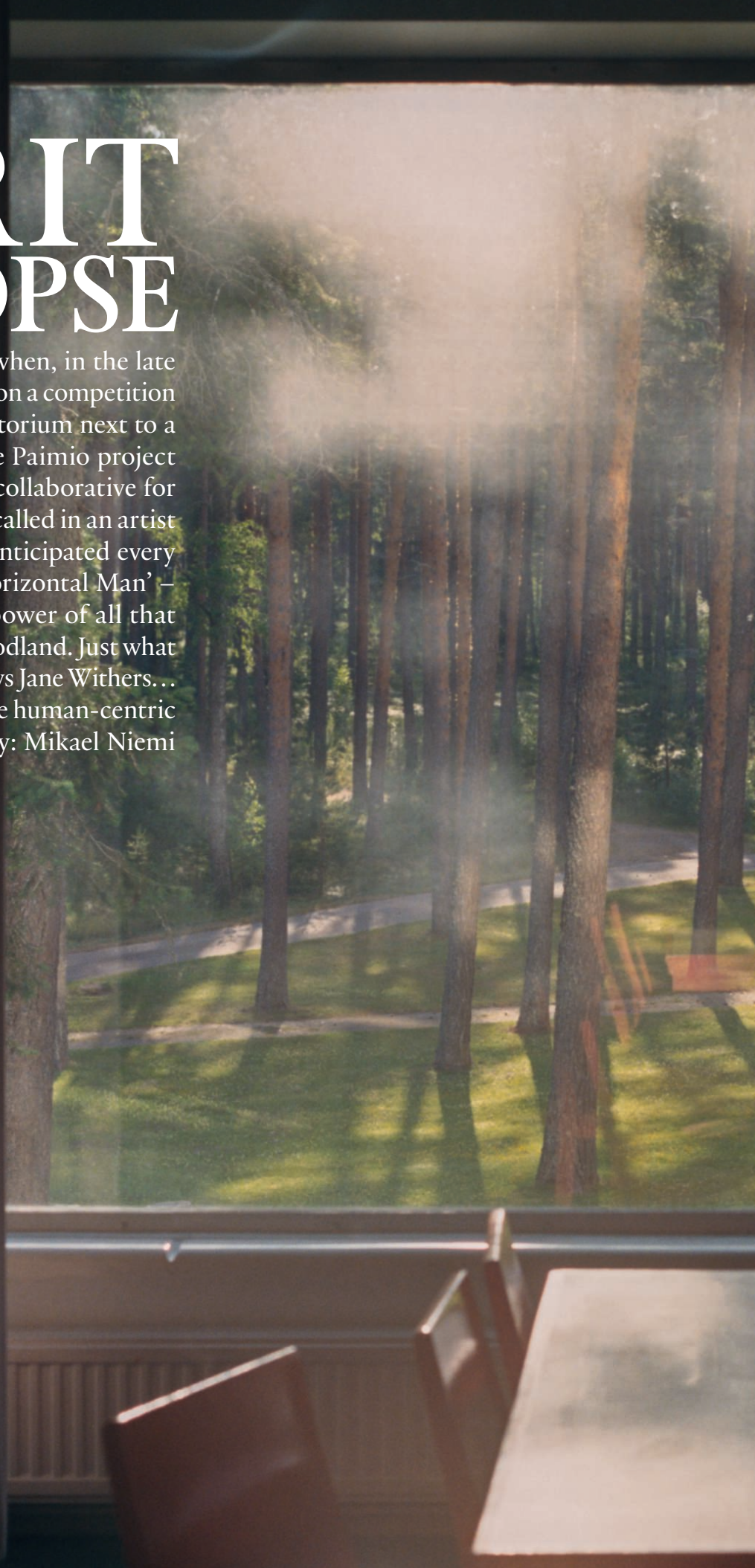
He was aware of its transience, though he didn't know that the lifespan of reinforced concrete is further curtailed by exposure to rain and salty winds. The house and the garden are closed to visitors. Dunja, who admits that she was too busy leading her own life to pay much attention to her father's art when she was younger, is now trying to preserve his legacy and repair the damage, though she is in her seventies and lives far away. This strange project of total art in the wilderness, the testimony of one man's 30-year-long artistic dream, is slowly returning to nature ☺



Opposite: in one of the villa's bedrooms, Medieval princes gather on a blue wall, among them Višeslav, Branimir, Trpimir and Domagoj. They are joined on the red wall by King Tomislav, who was crowned in 925, and his descendants. Above: Eve, looking especially ebullient, appears on a small area of ceiling, forbidden fruit in her left hand, fig leaf doing its thing where it matters, the deadly sins depicted on the walls below. While the rectangular object under her head might be a pillow, suggesting she is lying down, everything else about her implies movement – indeed, Dunja remembers her father saying that his figures were 'always dancing'

ESPRIT DE COPSE

It was a typical team effort when, in the late 1920s, Alvar and Aino Aalto won a competition to design a tuberculosis sanatorium next to a Finnish forest. But the whole Paimio project turned out to be even more collaborative for Mr and Mrs Modernist, who called in an artist friend to prescribe colours, anticipated every last need of convalescent 'Horizontal Man' – and harnessed the healing power of all that sunlight and pine-scented woodland. Just what the pulmonologist ordered, says Jane Withers... So what's the prognosis for the human-centric landmark itself? Photography: Mikael Niemi







Previous pages: the forest surrounding Paimio Sanatorium was intrinsic to its architecture, with everything positioned to 'bring the outside in', long before that became a thing. Interestingly, simultaneous to this project, Alvar Aalto was also working on the equally amply fenestrated library at Viipuri, in what is now Russian territory, which boasted a similar outlook in certain directions. Opposite: the Bauhaus's influence on the architects can clearly be seen in the rounded corners and balconies, on to which tuberculosis patients would be wheeled in their beds for a daily dose of fresh air. Below: the awnings shading their private wards are original



When night falls, the staircases at Paimio Sanatorium in Finland glow an eerie yellow amid the dark stripes of the surrounding pine trees. Inside, meanwhile, floors the colour of sunshine are a subtle reminder of just how central heliotherapy was to the treatment of tuberculosis – and also, along with other examples, to Alvar and Aino Aalto's ethos of architecture as care.

At the beginning of the 20th century, TB still caused more deaths in industrialised countries than any other disease. The cold climate, rapid urbanisation and cramped living conditions made northern European cities catastrophically vulnerable to its spread. And so, at the end of the

1920s, the Finnish government launched an architectural competition for a sanatorium among the forests at Paimio, a town 30 kilometres east of Turku, as part of its drive to build such facilities in remote locations. In the absence of a pharmacological cure, rest in nature was considered the best treatment, and the resinous scent of the pine trees was thought to be particularly beneficial to the lungs. Partners in architecture as well as life, the Aaltos entered the competition, aged 31 and 35 respectively, and beat off 13 rivals to win.

Although Paimio has historically been credited to Alvar, Aino's influence is evident everywhere. What set their submission apart was a vision for an architecture

shaped by empathy for the patient; a hospital, in Alvar's words, as 'a medical instrument' not just a building. This is manifest in the extraordinary attention the couple paid to every last detail: door handles rounded so that sleeves wouldn't catch; washbasins angled to muffle the sound of splashing; wardrobes that floated above the floor for easy mopping and had gently curved fronts that countered the rigid geometry of institutional design; window-sills deep enough to accommodate plants. In fact, the very architecture of the wards was determined, wrote Aalto, 'by the depleted strength of the patient, reclining in his bed', a radical concept that he nicknamed 'the Horizontal Man' and was



Above: the sanatorium's communal spaces are gently curved, softening the geometry with the same careful consideration so evident in the patients' rooms. Opposite: echoing those lines are the orb-like light fittings in the dining room, designed to eliminate unforgiving glare for the convalescent. These were reputedly manufactured by the Helsinki firm Oy Taito, which was co-founded by the industrial designer Paavo Tynell – known affectionately as 'the man who illuminated Finland'





Opposite: all the communal spaces are generously proportioned, and so Paimio felt more like a small, self-sufficient community than the sort of hospital the world would have commonly known. Below: with windows on three sides, the reading room is bathed in softly diffuse light throughout the year. The colours, columns and lighting are exactly as the Aaltos and the artist Eino Kauria – who worked with them on the paint scheme here – left them. Hovering above in neat formation are Alvar's 'A337' or 'Flying Saucer' fittings



unprecedented in prioritising the end user's perspective and needs. It is no coincidence that the 'Paimio' chair, which is still produced by Artek, is the shape it is, the angle of the back precisely calibrated to open the chest and facilitate breathing.

Jan Duiker and Bernard Bijvoet's sanatorium in Hilversum in the Netherlands, a pioneering concrete-and-glass pavilion that the Aaltos had visited, was another key influence. Its name – Zonnestraal, or Sunbeam – says everything about the ethos of the building, which appears to unfold towards the skies. Alvar and Aino adopted a similar heliotherapeutic approach and expansive plan but pushed it further still. The large Paimio complex

– it could house 286 patients – was situated to maximise sunlight. The patients' wing faced south and had a curved roof terrace spanning its width in accordance with the prescribed regimen: five hours alfresco every day, even in the midst of Finnish winters, unless the temperature happened to dip below about -15 degrees. Balconies on each floor meant patients could be wheeled outside in their beds.

The forest also played its part in healing. Winding promenade paths were laid through the pines, and the whole site was oriented to bring patients up close to the landscape ('Humans belong to nature as much as pines and birches do,' wrote Alvar.) A triple-aspect reading room feels

almost as if it's been suspended among the trees, so near to them is it. 'At that time, the large window would have been an incredible luxury for a hospital,' says Mirkku Kullberg, chair of the board of the Paimio Sanatorium Foundation. 'Aalto really understood the methodology of reading rooms and how important they are as a place where you can go to focus your mind. Reading is very healing.'

The Aaltos devised the interior paint scheme together with artist Eino Kauria. The wards were colour-coded to assist wayfinding; staircases (their steps deliberately low in the interests of gentle exercise) had brilliant-yellow risers and treads; red was used to denote the heating



Above: patients and visitors were greeted by a cheery yellow reception desk and sunbeam floor in the entrance, which signalled Paimio's heliotherapeutic intent. Opposite: corridors, meanwhile, were colour-coded to help the confined find their way



Below: when designing wards, Alvar Aalto always invoked 'Horizontal Man', the end user he imagined reclining in bed and having to stare at the ceiling. Even the exact fall of light should be carefully considered, he maintained. Opposite: stairs were sufficiently shallow to make climbing them a form of gentle, restorative exercise – and bright enough underfoot that patients felt uplifted as they did so



elements; and the ceilings in the patients' rooms were a muted green to reduce glare and create a more peaceful environment for the incumbent occupants. Not even the morgue (placed well out of sight) escaped Kauria's attention: here three wing-like shapes, oriented towards the light of the skylight above, suggest ascension or release – an artwork reserved for the dead.

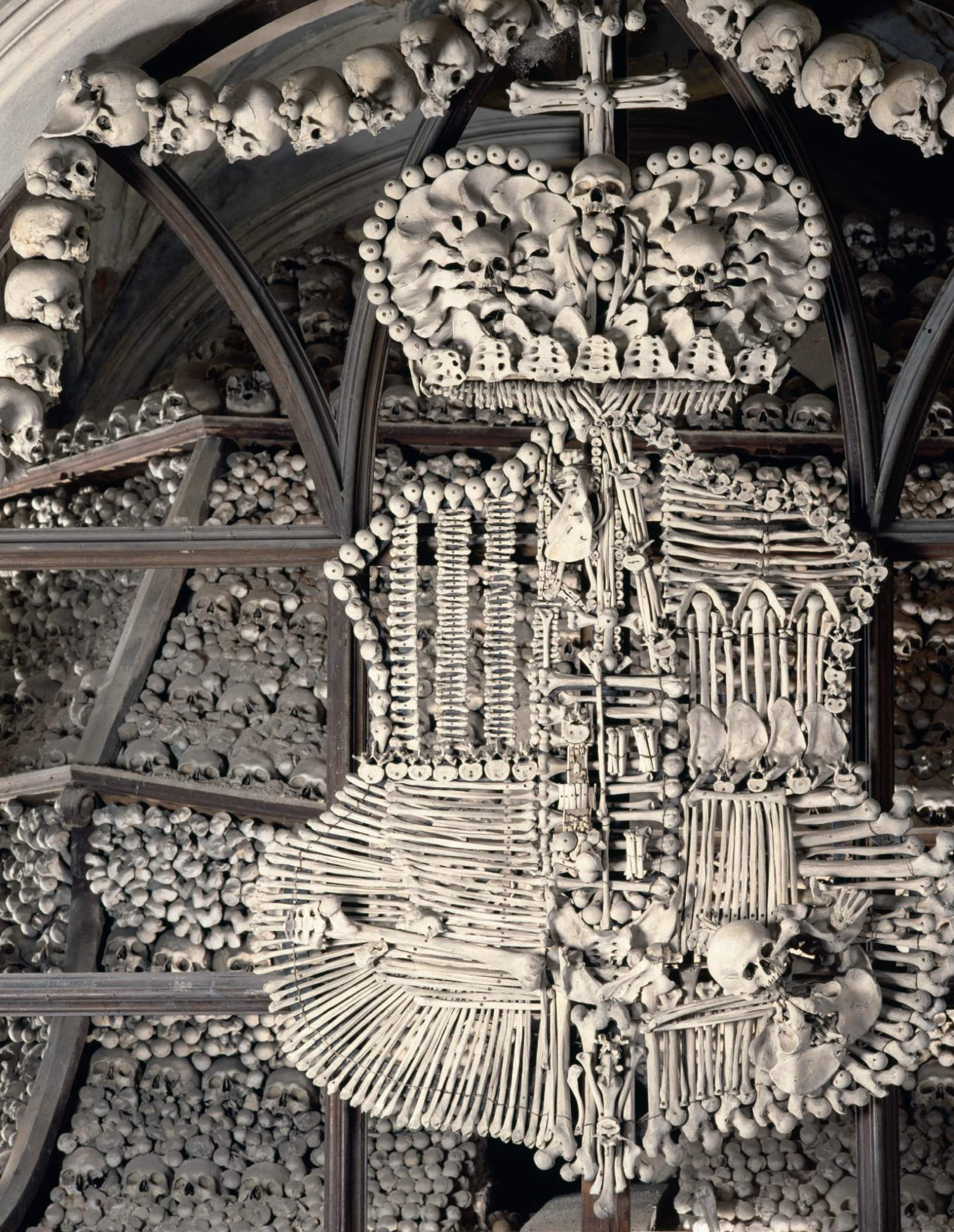
By the late 1950s, streptomycin and other antibiotics had made tuberculosis curable, and Paimio's population of long-term patients dwindled. The building was converted into a general hospital in the 1960s (operating as such until clinical functions ceased altogether in the mid-2010s). In addition to a new surgery wing

added to the main building a decade before, new staff accommodation was built during that time, including a serpentine terrace of flats nicknamed by residents the 'Hall of Vipers', and original features were adapted or, in the case of the balconies, sealed off. From 2014 to 2021 part of the building was occupied by Mannerheim League for Child Welfare's rehabilitation centre, but with entire floors left unoccupied it was at risk of dereliction.

The Paimio Sanatorium Foundation was formed in 2020 with the aim of finding a future for this Modernist landmark, the legacy of which, says Joseph Grima, its curator, is 'a manifesto for an architecture of empathy, care and human dignity'. A

government grant of ten million euros has enabled the Norwegian architecture studio Snøhetta to begin transforming it into a wellness hotel and cultural destination. 'We don't have TB today, but we do need to learn to breathe again. Paimio should be a place to breathe not only physically but also mentally,' says Mirkku. The plan is to turn former wards into bedrooms, and the surgery into an auditorium clad – a nod to the Aaltos' material language – in birch. The balconies will be reopened, and the building's relation to the forest restored. At a time when so much architecture seems to neglect rather than nurture the user, this is an eloquent reminder of its power to heal ☺







BONE IDYLL

Thanks to war and rampant disease, the skeletal remains of some 40,000 monks, soldiers and nobles were stored at this underground ossuary in the Czech Republic for centuries – and at the end of the 19th, a mighty prince had many of them made into a macabre *mise-en-scène*. A recent resurrection of its dreadful *décor* saw us seek out Michael Huey, who wrote about the site over 30 years ago. He argues that the Catholic central European conception of death must feed in to the ethical questions inevitably raised by such a display. Photography:

Fritz von der Schulenburg. First published: July 1992

The day we first visited Sedlec long ago – back when the Czech Republic was still half of Czechoslovakia – it seemed the whole town was out watching the ‘Colorádo Varieté Risky Snake Matche’, a travelling act billed curiously as a ‘sports programme’. Because of it, we couldn’t get into the Cistercian monastery our guidebook had been so eager for us to see, but the monks’ graveyard across the way was open, so after a bite of fried dough at a carnival stand we chanced on something creepier than the python. Having toured the cemetery, we descended into the town’s subterranean *kostnice*, or ossuary.

The originally Gothic, then Baroque (by Jan Santini Aichel) interior of the crypt was done up, if that is the right phrase, during the 1860s by one František Rint, a Bohemian sculptor who expertly fashioned the skeletal remains of some 10,000 former monks, soldiers and nobles into festoons of skulls, femur draperies, urns, religious symbols and a voluminous chandelier said to contain nearly all the bones of the human body. (His bone work elaborated on an initial but more modest scheme by Santini Aichel.) Faith converged here with pure theatre.

‘The ossuary *might* have been a gift,’ said the Prince of Schwarzenberg’s archivist hopefully when I asked him about it later. ‘But it surely was *not* a commission.’ His parsing reflected, perhaps, a pious wish for a certain remove from the oversize Schwarzenberg coat of arms there, made up entirely of human bones. (And by ‘oversize’ I mean considerably larger than a person is tall.) In fact, however, the family invited Rint to Sedlec and paid for his work on the crypt.

Sedlec had been a desirable burial site since the early 13th century, when a Cistercian abbot sowed the tiny plot with a pocketful of holy earth he had carried back from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This turned out to be an excellent promotional idea, and demand for space quickly exhausted all possibilities. By the end of the 15th century nearly 40,000 complete skeletal sets had accumulated there. Death had found rich pickings during the plague and the Hussite Wars (1419–36), and its grim harvests required much stacking in the bone house, which had existed, little used, since the founding of the graveyard. (The bones’ relegation to the interior was fuelled, in part, by a fear of contagion.)

Previous pages: the princely coat of 'arms' takes on a macabre 'double entendre' given it's pieced together from human bones. In the lower right is a raven attacking a Turk, added in 1598 after Adolf von Schwarzenberg's victory at Raab. Below: a skull-and-crossbone-bordered niche with an urn. Opposite: Bohemian sculptor František Rint, who built on Jan Santini Aichel's more modest scheme, set four faux-marble obelisks in the middle



Chilly and damp though it is, the crypt is also strangely intimate, like an apartment full of macabre tchotchkes. Four faux-marble obelisks mark its centre, their edges trimmed with skulls and reminiscent of crowded vitrines. In each skull's mouth is a thigh bone, prompting the observation that the Latin word *os* (see: ossuary) means both mouth and bone. Plump angels perch atop these towers, merrily cradling crania in their laps. The pink paint of their skin is the only reference to flesh in the bone house, and it makes them stick out like overdressed guests at a party.

The grotesque beauty of the Sedlec ossuary owes to Rint's superior feel for the skeletal material as a medium. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Schwarzenberg coat of arms. Tiny hand bones make up what would be the silver-and-blue bands in the crest's upper-left field; the three red peaks in the upper right are jawbones, their silver backdrop

arm bones. The lower-right-hand corner is as gruesome as the medium itself, showing a raven (made of a shoulder blade) scratching out the eye of a Turk. This was added to the crest after 1598 when Count Adolf von Schwarzenberg defeated the Turks at Raab (today Győr, Hungary) – in German, *Raab* or *Rabe* means raven.

Since 2014 extensive renovations to the site have been ongoing, initiated by the parish and led by engineer Vít Mlázovský and restorer Tomáš Král, whose staggered plan is still being implemented. To date, costs exceed \$6.5 million. The work is more than just cosmetic: the building had begun to lean dangerously from its vertical axis, and the damp needed to be addressed. Complex restorations of the various bone installations have also taken place (including reconditioning the bones themselves using Rint's own method of immersion in lime solution, as no new bones were to be added to the ensemble).





Below: behind wooden tracery lies one of four massive ‘skeleton pyramids’ in the side vaults of the crypt. Since these photos were taken, several have been restored – including the bones themselves (using a lime-solution bath). Opposite: Sedlec’s 150kg chandelier is intricate and imaginative, with skulls balancing candleholders, bones becoming pendants and jaws as supports. It’s said to be composed of nearly all the bones in the body



Seeing images of workers in hazmat suits dismantling one of the (four) massive ‘skeleton pyramids’ encouraged me to consider some of the risk factors – both health-wise and ethical – involved in working with bones, and I asked Radka Krejčí from the parish office how she felt about these hazards and dilemmas. ‘As custodians of the church,’ she wrote, ‘it was essential for us to find a conservator who would handle the human remains with dignity, respect and humility.’ The greatest challenge faced by the restorers, she says, is the necessity of keeping the crypt open to the public during restorations; admission revenue is the principal source of income for the project.

The primary challenge for some visitors may be something of a different order altogether. My own enchantment with Sedlec stems, in part, from the fact that where I come from this sort of thing would never be permitted. For us Protestants,

death nearly always has a negative ring; we regard it as the opposite of life, shroud it with superstition and exile it from our conversations. Not so in parts of Catholic central Europe, where death is disarmed by being taken as a part of life. (A telling inscription on one of the altars at Saint Stephen’s in Vienna, incidentally, reads: ‘*Optima philosophia et sapientia est meditatio mortis*’ – the highest philosophy and wisdom is in the contemplation of death. The church, of course, has a long-standing preoccupation with bones as religious relics.) Empress Elisabeth of Austria once kept a human skeleton in her bedroom at Hermesvilla as a memento mori. Illuminated from within the ribcage, it doubled as a night light. Not to be outshone, the Sedlec chandelier expands on that impulse and elevates it to a new height ⊗ *Sedlec Ossuary*, 279 *Zámecká*, 284 03 *Kutná Hora*, *Czech Republic* (00 420 326 551049; sedlecossuary.com)





One year of print and digital editions
for only £28, saving 80%*

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

SEPTEMBER 2026 £6.99



Opposite: in a scene inspired by the 'Book of Revelation', the Woman of the Apocalypse – who is interpreted as the Virgin Mary in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches – appears to surf on a crescent moon as she defies the devil. Below: decorating the kitchen/dining room, the Last Supper is reimagined as a local village feast, with the Apostles identifiable by the names inscribed on their belts



Anyone stumbling upon the Garden of Eden on Ugljan, a touristic island off the Dalmatian coast, wouldn't be entirely wrong if they thought they had somehow walked into a strange dream. The lush sculpture park and the villa at its heart are a startling anomaly among the crystal-blue waters, pebbled coves and quaint villages: a Gesamtkunstwerk dreamed up by Emil Milan Grgurić, a Croatian outsider artist who dedicated his life to making it real.

Emilan, as he called himself, was born in 1939 in Jamnjevica, near Zagreb. He was an economist by trade and a creative at heart, though growing up poor with a

strict father didn't allow him to nurture his artistic talent. One summer in the late 1950s, looking to escape the oppressive heat in the capital, he and his wife, Melita, and their young daughters, Dunja and Jasminka, visited Kakljevo, a small fishing village on the island. They were smitten and returned the next year, and the next, lodging in the old school. Then, in the early 1960s, Emilan found an untouched plot of land nearby, which could only be reached by boat. This, he thought, would make the perfect sanctuary, an isolated paradise for his family and the many stray animals they adopted, as well as a place where he would finally be able to create art.

The first thing he tackled was the house itself. Villa Katarina, named after the artist's mother, has a strange organic quality to it. From the ground plan in the shape of a four-leaf clover, it rises like a mound of concrete and stone, evoking a massive beehive. Its highest gable is topped by a concrete bust of Katarina, watching over it like a patron saint. Her face is young, serious and idealised: this is the most gentle of Emilan's concrete portraits. Dunja explains that the whole project stemmed from her father's grief over losing his mother at the age of 12. That sense of loss never left him: Emilan hid a lock of her hair in the concrete head, as if it were a



Call 01858 438819 (ref: CW124517)

Register at checkout.magazineboutique.co.uk/item/WOI/CW124517

Or scan the QR code

*Offer is subject to terms and availability, limited to new subscribers at UK addresses until 02/09/2026. Customers can cancel a subscription at any time and receive a full refund on any issues yet to be mailed. Savings are calculated against a one-off print & digital cover purchase price, totalling £143.76 over a 12 month period. After the initial period, the subscription renews every 12 months for £28. For privacy notice and permission details and preferences, please visit condenast.com/privacy-policy.

AFTERWORD



In a Baroque engraving by Martin Engelbrecht, a butcher's cowhide serves up the rest of the beast too, complete with legs, tail and whole horned head. See page 76

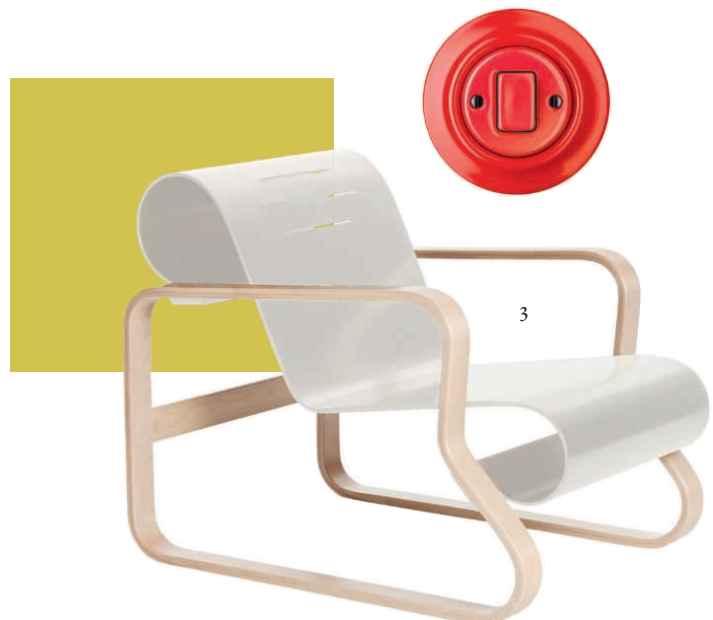
Address Book

Suppliers featured in this issue

Abask. Visit abask.com. **Armac Martin**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (armacmartin.co.uk). **B&B Italia**, 250 Brompton Rd, London SW3 (020 7591 8111; beitalia.com). **Beardmore**, 321–323 Fulham Rd, London SW10 (020 7351 5444; beardmore.co.uk). **Beata Heuman**. Ring 020 8741 0102, or visit beataheuman.com. **Buster and Punch**. Ring 020 7407 0888, or visit busterandpunch.com. **Claremont**, 35 Elystan St, London SW3 (020 7581 9575; claremontfurnishing.com). **Corston**, 65 Pimlico Rd, London SW1 (01249 549332; corston.com). **David Gill Gallery**, 2–4 King St, London SW1 (020 3195 6600; davidgillgallery.com). **Designers Guild**. Ring 020 7893 7400, or visit designersguild.com. **D. Rose Mod**, 244 N. Lincoln Ave, Lebanon, PA 17046, USA (drosemod.com). **Elettra Giunta**. Visit elettragiunta.com. **Falke**. Visit falke.com. **The Future Perfect**. Ring 001 212 473 2500, or visit thefutureperfect.com. **Friedman Benda**. Ring 001 212 239 8700, or visit friedmanbenda.com. **Henry Blake**. Ring 01386 48326, or visit henryblakehardware.co.uk. **Houlès**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020 7352 0117; houles.com). **House of Ass**. Ring 001 425 495 3047, or visit houseofass.com. **John Boyd Textiles**. Ring 01963 350451, or visit johnboydtextiles.co.uk. **Joseph Giles**. Ring 020 8680 2602, or visit josephgiles.com. **Kelly Wearstler**. Visit kellywearstler.com. **Liberty**, Regent St, London W1 (020 3893 3062; libertylondon.com). **Line Up**, Worlds End Studio, 134 Lots Rd, London SW10 (020 7349 7137; lineup.network). **Lo Contemporary**. Visit locontemporary.com. **Maharam**, 20 St John's Square, London EC1 (020 4526 6101; maharam.com). **Marimekko**. Visit marimekko.com. **Marta**, 3021 Rowena Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90039 (001 323 775 6811; marta.la). **Marvic**. Ring 020 7352 3119, or visit marvictextiles.co.uk. **MG&Co**, 194 Ebury St, London SW1 (mgco.com). **PE Guerin**. Ring 001 212 243 5270, or visit peguerin.com. **Pemberton & Sons**. Ring 020 7635 4111, or visit pembertonandsons.co.uk. **Romo**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (01623 750005; romo.com). **Samuel & Sons**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020 7351 5153; samuelandsons.com). **Schumacher**. Visit schumacher.co.uk. **Série Rare**, 6 Rue de l'Odéon, 75006 Paris (00 33 1 55 42 92 10; serierare.com). **Soane Britain**. Ring 020 7730 6400, or visit soane.com. **Spot!** Visit spotexclamationpoint.com. **Studiosixtyseven**. Ring 001 917 225 4901, or visit studiosixtyseven.com. **Svenskt Tenn**, 5 Strandvägen, 114 51 Stockholm (00 46 8 670 1600; svenskttenn.com). **Third Drawer Down**. Visit thirddrawerdown.co.uk. **Tissus d'Hélène**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020 7352 9977; tissusdhelene.co.uk). **Turnell & Gigon**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020 7259 7280; turnellandgigon.com). **Turnstyle Designs**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (01271 325325; turnstyledesigns.com). **Vanderhurd**. Visit vanderhurd.com. **Vitra**. Visit vitra.com. **Wiener Times**. Visit wienertimes.com. **Zoffany**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020 3903 3700; zoffany.design) ®

Inspiration

Some of the design effects in this issue,
recreated by Leyla Spratley and Rose Eaglesfield



1 Engraver Martin Engelbrecht's pimped-out ware-peddlers – looking sweet as hell in wasp-waisted clock corsets and matchstick pantaloons – are very much putting the 'rad' in trade. Should you want to suit up your suites in similarly industrious style – taking particular note of the bellows-maker's super-cinched Swiss-army bustier on page 80 – Mind the Gap's 'Old Tools' wallpaper, which nods to period printmaking, will be quite instrumental to your success (£249 for three 52 × 300cm rolls; mindthegap.co.uk). But if you're keen to profess your profession *en marche* – and without needing any ribs removed – we do have

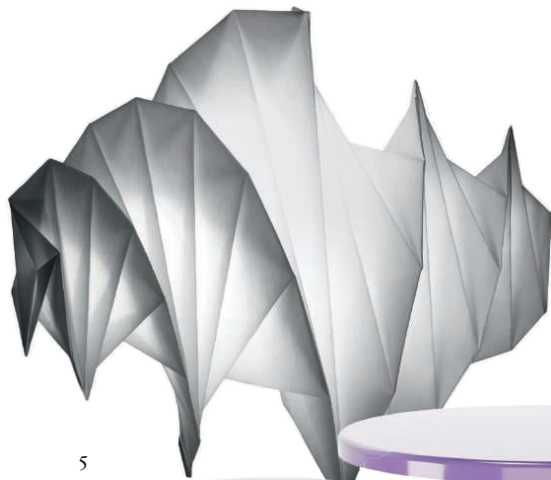
a more modern solution for you: Malena's Patches, which render wearable a wide range of métiers – in our case, styling and wordsmithery ('Sewing Machine 1' and 'Ctrl Alt Del', £4.99 each; malenaspatches.com) – from microbiology to fishmongery. A good deal less aromatic than Marty's anguilliform scarf... 2 From eels to *meels* now and Iran, where gym-goers swing around those warrior-grade clubs at their local house of strength (page 82). You won't need to pick up any gauntlet to secure your own: Pahlavani creates custom ones from \$50 per pair – plus a plethora of other Persian iron-pumping

alternatives. Visit pahlavani.org. Not to crimp your crabwalk, but it's possible, equally, that the *zurkhaneh* flooring situation has left your yoga mat looking a bit sad. In which case, Robert Stephenson – packing this c1900 Malayer rug (£4,850) – may end up doing some heavy lifting. Visit robertstephenson.co.uk. 3 TB or no TB, as Hamlet didn't say, we'd feel a healthy satisfaction reclining on the seat designed for sufferers by Aino and Alvar Aalto at Paimio Sanatorium (page 104); the lung-expanding Artek 'Armchair 41', which you can get at Aram in hygienic white lacquer, is breathtaking in more ways than

one. Visit aram.co.uk. Of course, doctor's-coat hues never reigned supreme here: joyful colour-coding in reds, pinks and greens helped woozy convalescents find their way around. You'd have to be pretty peaky to miss this Dyke & Dean light switch (from £95), available as it is in eye-delighting candy red. Visit dykeanddean.com. That spoonful-of-sugar philosophy sits at the very foundations of Paimio – or at least its floor, which radiates restorative sunshine from the ground up (page 111). Happily, Sarlon's saffron vinyl – £22.95 per sq m at Remland Carpets; remlandcarpets.co.uk – promises a holistic home remedy.



4



5



6



4 Home is where the Ark is for Emilan Grgurić, whose handmade villa housed a boatload of animal charges – real as much as bas-relief (page 97), in the form of the many strays he took in. We suppose that's why his furnishings are so commonly covered up (page 99) – perhaps, for all the apocalypse stuff, fur and brimstone was more the daily onslaught? Practicalities aside, his heavenly yarns – which M&S's linen tablecloth (£40; marksandspencer.com) evokes – are a great foil for all the battle-backdrop colour blocking. To put on your own war paint, look no further than Farrow & Ball's 'Romesco' and 'Blue Maize', both

£79 for 2.5 litres of concrete-matt Dead Flat. Visit farrow-ball.com. But you can roll down those sleeves when it comes to copying the artist's carvings: his Brutalist lettering (page 102), at least, has been hand-cast for you by the chaps at An Artful Life (£5 each; anartfullife.co.uk). A bit more bite than 'Live Laugh Love'... 5 Into the fold: since becoming artistic director, Satoshi Kondo has shown he's cut from the same cloth as Issey Miyake himself – which is to say he takes a firm line on any cloth cuts at all (page 90). It's an ethos that extends to the decorative domain – as the maestro's origami-inspired 'Mendori' light, yours for £920

from Artemide, attests. Visit artemide.com. You can also lock in the brand's figure-hugging lacquer look without jettisoning your joggers (page 94): Studio X's sensuous 'Gemini' tables, £1,080 for the pair at Artemest, are in danger of out-glossing your glossies. Visit artemest.com. 6 Like the painted angels that spring from her peeling walls, Lydia Corbett's arty ancestors continue to enchant Maison Latour. Not least since the footsteps she's following – like those of Nazis and absconding monks – all would've resounded on the same peppy Provençal tiles in situ today. In 'Octagon Dot 100', London Mosaic offers

an equally lively surface for the long march of time (from £166 per sq m; londonmosaic.com). Of course, Lydia has since followed her feet, past Picasso, on to the world stage, as page 65's posters testify. To dip a toe ahead of the artist's November show (where you can buy her works), vintage flyers – like this for £50 – are up for grabs on her website. Visit iwassylvette.com. But our cover displays the most direct way to reach her: press the flesh (or, rather, its door-knocker likeness). There we can lend a hand: one trip to Ark Cambridge and you can proffer a brassy paw Ms C-wards, wherever you are (£43; arkcambridge.co.uk). High five ®

ELEMENTAL ROOTS STUDIO



Artist Loreto Lloréns creates one-of-a-kind ceramic lighting from her Dubai studio. Working at the intersection of sculpture and functional design, each piece is individually handcrafted through an intuitive process, exploring materiality through organic forms, experimentation and the beauty of imperfection.

Follow

@elementalrootsstudio on Instagram or email hello@elementalrootsstudio.com

BUOYANT NYC



Combining organic and geometric design, Buoyant NYC's Heirloom pendant features a cast glass diffuser highlighting inclusions from the ancient casting process. Hand-worked leather adds

warmth and complements this fixture's soft, radiant sparkle. This line voltage, limited-edition piece can be assembled using various leather and metal finishes, granting interior designers project-specific pieces that enhance the project's space. Visit buoyantnyc.com and follow @buoyantnyc on Instagram.

NADER GAMMAS



'Vessels'- Inspired by Nader Gammas's hikes in the Blue Hills Reserve in Massachusetts, he would occasionally come across fallen trees in various states of decomposition. Even though the tree itself is dead, life still persists in a continuous cycle. Among it's

harbours sprout fungi and mushroom. Observing this 'wild' growth struck curiosity about the different types of fungus, specifically of the Sarcoscypha genus that grow on dead wood. The apothecium, or 'cups', act as vessels for illumination. They are playfully arranged in various compositions. Visit nadergammass.com

DANIEL BODDAM



Daniel Boddam designs furniture and lighting that finds the poetic in the functional, pieces that are refined in form and sculptural in presence. Each collection draws inspiration from architecture, craft and the natural world. The result is a body of work that is cohesive, calm and quietly considered. All

pieces are sustainably made to order in a range of materials, finishes and sizes, available in Australia, the United States and Europe. Explore the collections at danielboddam.com or follow @danielboddam on Instagram.

KISTA DESIGN



In homes designed with care, the dog bed is often the one detail that feels out of place. Kista offers a considered alternative, creating handmade oak beds, built as fine furniture in Lancashire and paired with natural wool cushions. Elegant, durable and distinctive, they bring dogs comfort without asking interiors to compromise. Visit kista.co.uk or email hello@kista.co.uk

THE DOUGLAS WATSON STUDIO



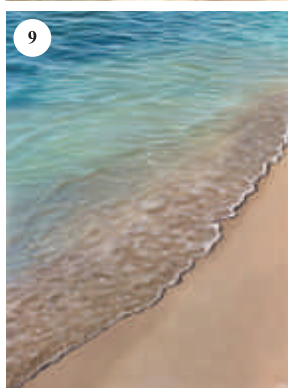
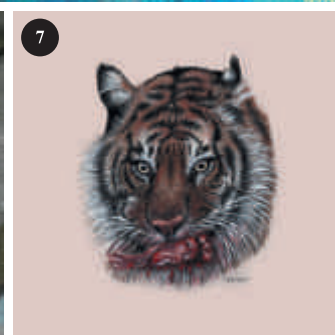
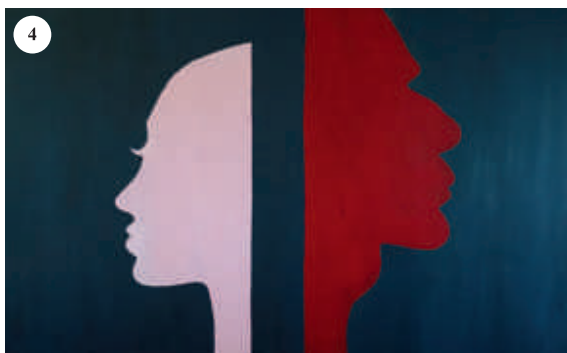
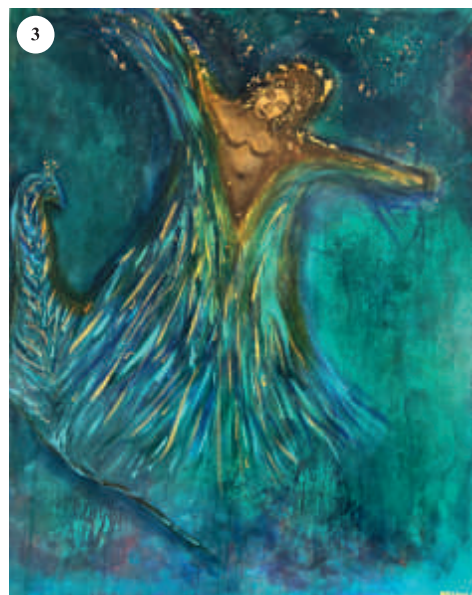
The Douglas Watson Studio offers high quality handmade and hand painted tiles using traditional techniques and a wide range of glazes, colours and styles. For more information, call 01491 629960 or visit www.douglaswatsonstudio.co.uk

JULIA B. CASA.



Julia B. Casa designs and produces some of the world's finest and most exclusive handcrafted products, all carefully made to their customers' personal specifications. The Julia B. Casa collections include linens for the bedroom, dining room and bathroom as well as accessories and furniture for both indoor and outdoor spaces. Trade accounts welcome. Visit JuliaBCasa.com and follow @juliabhandmade for life on Instagram.





1. HUGH ROGOVY follows a neomodern approach - reinterpreting the enduring traditions of still life, floral painting, and Provençal landscapes while shunning postmodern relativism. His approach philosophically values craftsmanship, composition and sublimity. His oil paintings argue that mastery matters, beauty carries meaning, and that the painted surface remains one of the most demanding arenas in contemporary art. Explore the collection at www.Rogovy.Art and follow @hughrogovy on Instagram.

2. Quickly becoming known for her signature silhouettes, TABBY BOOTH's work treads a captivating parallel between illustration and

traditional folk art painting. With a passion for interiors, each piece is designed with this in mind, threaded with themes of beasts, folklore and the sea. Visit www.tabbybooth.com and follow @tabby.booth.artist on Instagram.

3. KATHY STANLEY is an ecopsychology educator and award-winning visionary artist based on the US West Coast. Her acrylic paintings and mixed media artworks reflect exploratory journeys with the ecological self, celebrating Earth, the rising feminine spirit, invoking wholeness, joy and aliveness. Shown is 'Emergence.' See SacredArtJourneys.com and follow @kstanleyart on Instagram.

4. Sally Bailey Hu's ISLA STUDIO ART offers a delightful array of portraits and large-scale paintings that explore the beauty, strength, and complexity of women. These vibrant, expressive works blend realism with abstraction. Each piece celebrates femininity, capturing both the intimate and universal aspects of womanhood, and illuminating inner worlds while honouring outer beauty. Find out more at www.islstudioart.com and follow @islstudioart on Instagram.

5. Landscape painter and senior golf magazine columnist XIAOJIAN LI is a reputed watercolourist since 2000s. His views of golf courses explore landscape as a space for contemplation and reflection of emotional tension. By removing the human figure, he heightens the emotional presence of the place itself. His latest solo exhibition opens at Fitzrovia Gallery, London, July 2026. Follow @golf.artist on Instagram or email li.xiaojianart@gmail.com

6. PERCY LIZZARD, tutored by some of the leading contemporary artists of the time at the Royal College of Art, creates brightly-coloured paintings influenced by the natural world. His work can be found in many private collections at home and abroad, including the guest cottages at Restormel Manor, the Prince of Wales residence in the Duchy of Cornwall. Visit www.percylizzard.art and follow @percylizzard on Instagram.

7. With an instinct for character and detail, GEORGIA GRACE ART creates deeply personal wildlife and pet portraits that capture their personality, expression, and uniqueness. Each commission is approached as a bespoke study in personality, expression, and individuality - transforming beloved family companions into timeless, one-of-a-kind works of art. Explore her collection at www.georgia-graceart.co.uk and search Georgia Grace Art on Etsy.

8. British-American artist RODNEY BEECHER ROBERTS, based in Herefordshire, creates abstract, non-figurative works blending vibrant colour and texture through layered mixed media. Painting since the 1960s, his dynamic compositions captivate with energy and depth. Rodney is represented exclusively by www.BeechersGallery.com. Discover more at @art_by_beecher on Instagram.

9. NICOLE HAMMER is a contemporary landscape painter whose coastal oil paintings celebrate the beauty of summer through luminous colour, shifting light, and nostalgic detail. Her work captures fleeting moments of warmth, stillness, and escape. See the collection at www.nicolehammerart.com or follow @nicolehammerart on Instagram.



1



2



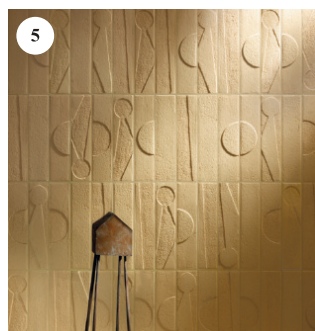
3

1. FORMA COMPTUS creates hand-blown pieces and scented objects. Each identity can begin as a candle and remains as a permanent design object for the home. Glass, pure silver leaf and coloured enamel are shaped by master glassblowers in Venice. No two pieces are alike. Visit formacomptus.com and follow @formacomptus on Instagram.

2. Founded on the belief that the finest interiors evolve rather than emerge fully formed, **CADENCEA** creates handmade silk velvet mirrors whose changing colour, depth and tactile texture reward attention over time. They are conceived not as accessories, but as enduring expressions of thoughtfully curated interiors. Explore the collection at www.cadencea.com and follow @cadencea.eu on Instagram.



4



5

3. FRIENDSHEEP is a women-owned brand creating unique handmade dryer balls, home goods, and pet toys. Crafted in Nepal by women and disabled artisans earning fair wages, each plastic-free piece is reusable and compostable, supporting animal rescue, ocean conservation and reforestation. Visit friendsheepwool.com and follow @friendsheepwool on Instagram.

4. LAPICIDA RECLAIMED FLOORING - genuine antique reclaimed stone, marble and terracotta in stock. What is more environmentally friendly than repurposing an antique floor, maintaining historic integrity and patina, for 21st-century living? Ideal in new build or restoration projects. Inspirational showrooms in Belgravia and Harrogate. Visit www.lapicida.com/reclaimed or follow @lapicidastone on Instagram.



6

5. VIA ARKADIA, situated in the Chelsea Harbour Design Centre, is a distinguished, family-run business specialising in unique and handcrafted Italian and Spanish tiles. Their products not only surpass all European standards for quality and durability but are specifically crafted to be resistant to frost and chemicals in both interior and exterior applications. View their collection at www.via-arkadia.co.uk and follow @via_arkadia on Instagram.



7



8

6. ALISON PINK's ceramic creatures incorporate the imaginative use of her signature imprinted texture. Each unique piece evokes its own personality, celebrating the animal's natural form while introducing playful contrasts that will always invite at least a second look. Discover more at www.alisonpink.co.uk and follow @alisonpinkcreatures on Instagram.

7. Defined by its sculptural simplicity, the **Ciro** daybed by **AGUIRRE** features a seamless, fully upholstered silhouette that elegantly curves into integrated bolsters for a clean, modern repose. The piece is anchored by four cast bronze legs in a satin nickel finish, perfectly balancing industrial strength with a refined, muted glow. To

complement any interior, the legs are also available in an antique, brown, or black patina, as well as a striking polished bronze finish. Available in COM. Discover the collection at aguirredesign.co email info@aguirredesign.co and follow @aguirredesign on Instagram.

8. Perched atop a papered pediment, a speckled hen surveys **MARESCA TEXTILES**. **Prairie Style Plaid** in dark olive lends architectural order, while **Madras Floral** in sage and **Madras Geo** in citron soften the scene with chintz motifs. Crafted for modern living, these type II wallpapers bring heritage and quiet wit indoors. Photograph by Andrew Stewart. Visit marescatextiles.com and follow @marescatextiles on Instagram.

9. For interiors with soul - **ART OF COSY**. The Aura Steel side table invites the richness of Rosso Levanto marble into your home. Handcrafted from natural Italian stone and stainless steel, each piece reveals unique patterns, textures, and character. A timeless accent designed to bring quiet elegance and lasting beauty to the spaces you cherish. Discover more at www.artofcosy.com and follow @aochome on Instagram.

10. **LEMON APPEAL**, founded by mother-daughter duo Anik and Sophie, is a London based brand working with Southern Italy's most talented artisans. They work to bring their exceptional art pieces and interior designs to British homes, all unique to Southern Italian culture. Their newest collaboration is with the well known Amalfi Coast artist Lucio Liguori. His limited edition donkeys showcase the Costiera lemon story made specifically for Lemon Appeal. These are limited hand crafted pieces made in his studio located in the Vietri Sul Mare hills, overlooking the Amalfi Coast. Discover more at lemonappeal.com and follow @lemonappeal on Instagram.

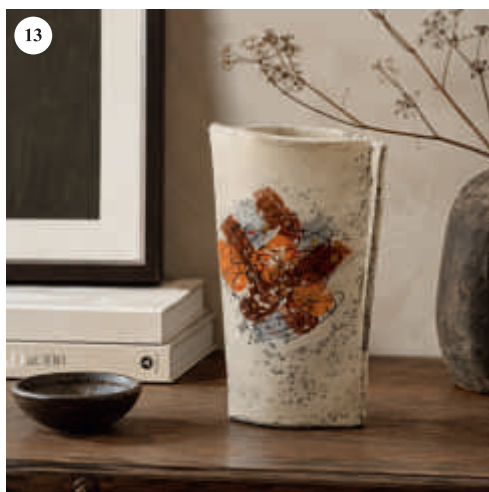
11. **HONNING**, named after the Danish term for 'honey', is a Chicago-based furniture manufacturing company inspired by the industriousness and mystique of the honeybee. An homage to how the hive is conducted, resourcefully, with all parts working together toward a greater whole, Honning designs and manufactures products that are refined, beautiful, and crafted to endure beyond our lifetime. Explore their collection at honning.us and follow @honning.us on Instagram.

12. In Switzerland, **ATELIER LILY** unveils the refined artistry of Atelier Doortje Ijpelaar's hand-painted glass vases. Created as collectible objects, each piece is meticulously adorned, produced in limited editions and available for bespoke personalisation - a unique expression of craftsmanship, poetry and timeless beauty. Visit www.atelierlily.ch and follow @atelierlily on Instagram.

13. **VILLAGE CERAMICS & CRAFTS** creates distinctive raku-fired ceramics from a Lincolnshire studio. Drawing on traditional firing techniques and a contemporary design aesthetic, each piece is individually crafted, producing rich surface textures, metallic lustres and unique crackle patterns that celebrate the unpredictable beauty of the handmade. Visit www.artisanpotter.co.uk and follow @villageceramicsandcrafts on Instagram.

14. Traditional in substance, innovative in form, **HOUSE OF CAPRICORN** reimagines Portugal's artisanal heritage through contemporary furniture, lighting, tableware and décor. The Coruche dining chair showcases handwoven wild reed in a striking geometric design, celebrating traditional craftsmanship with a modern aesthetic. Discover more at houseofcapricorn.pt and follow @house.of.capricorn on Instagram.

15. **ARCH PLUS ULTRA**, a Milan-based studio, creates unique, Italian-made lighting. Merging artisanal savoir-faire with cutting-edge innovation, their lamps feature clean lines and precious materials like macassar wood and cast bronze. The result is a timeless aesthetics, perfect for both classic and modern spaces. Visit www.archplusultra.com or contact info@archplusultra.com





16



17



18

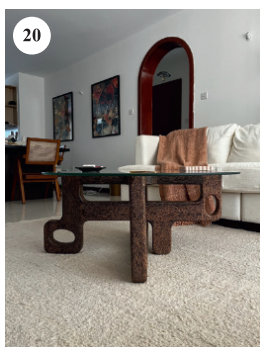
16. Founded in 1947, **LAURENCE MCINTOSH** is renowned for main contracting, architectural joinery and interior design across the UK and beyond. The image shows the shop at Aldourie Castle Estate Steadings, one of several projects delivered for Wildland Scotland. Visit www.laurencemcintosh.co.uk and follow @laurencemcintosh1947 on Instagram.

17. The Lana armchair by **MUNNA** reflects a timeless aesthetic inspired by vintage Hollywood references, reinterpreted through contemporary lines and refined proportions. Defined by its graceful curves, cotton velvet upholstery and delicate tassel details, the piece reveals a continuous silhouette that conveys understated sophistication and reinforces the brand's international design identity. Explore the collection at www.munnadesign.com and follow @munnadesign on Instagram.



19

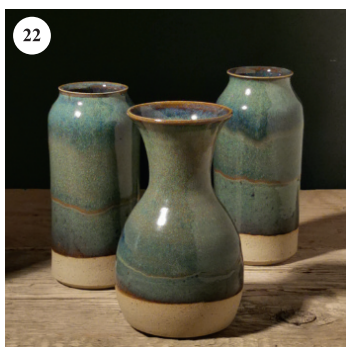
18. **INSLEE FARISS** is a Raleigh, North Carolina based artist known for her whimsical and playful style. She creates original works that celebrate the natural world with a light and expressive touch. She has translated that same spirit into a growing collection of prints and products, which can be purchased online and in person at Inslee's flagship studio in Raleigh. Visit shopinslee.com and follow @inslee and @shopinslee on Instagram.



20



21



22

19. To showcase contrast in colour, texture, and form, **TOWNLEY CERAMICS** (by Lancashire-based artist Connor Townley) uses traditional ceramic techniques, such as, wheel-throwing, carving, and glaze chemistry. For more information, follow @townley_ceramics on Instagram and visit townleyceramics.wixsite.com/ceramics

20. **SAVANNAH SPACE** is a Nairobi-based design studio crafting African luxury through finely made, unique and eclectic furniture and home decor. Working with skilled artisans, the studio creates timeless pieces rooted in African heritage, celebrating material excellence, cultural narrative, and modern living. Visit www.savannahspace.com email hello@savannahspace.com or follow @savannahspacekenya on Instagram.



23



24

21. Merging over a century of craftsmanship with bold innovation, **TONI COPENHAGEN** introduces the DÉCA Collection. Designed with Bjarke Ingels Group for their Copenhagen HQ, DÉCA features a series of modular faucets with a clean, precise and monolithic expression. Visit www.tonicopenhagen.com and follow @tonicopenhagen on Instagram.

22. Rooted in exceptional craftsmanship and sustainability, **LONN LANDIS CERAMICS** represents the antithesis of 'fast fashion' in ceramics. Each beautiful piece is hand-thrown and thoughtfully crafted using locally foraged clay. The rich and vibrant glazes are handcrafted as well and also feature locally foraged ingredients such as granite, quartz, slate and mussel shells. Visit

www.LLCeramics.co.uk or follow @LonnLandis on Instagram.

23. This entrance hall in a new country house by **RBDS** is an essay in the proportion 2:1. The hall length and height to the dome are both twice the width. The elegant staircase steps are twice as deep as the rise. Subtly interlocking proportions permeate the whole house. Visit www.rodneyblackdesignstudios.co.uk and follow @rbds.designstudios on Instagram.

24. **HUDSON STONEHOUSE** crafts unique marble and stone furniture designed and handmade in Hudson County, New Jersey. From plinths and tables to consoles, each piece balances natural beauty with modern refinement. The brand also creates translucent pieces brought to life with light, offering luminous, one-of-a-kind designs. Visit hudsonstonehouse.com or follow @hudsonstonehouse on Instagram for the full collection.

25. MUST HAVE BINS present a stunning collection of hard to find essential home accessories – bins, tissues and jardinières, all beautifully handmade, they are just too good to hide! Visit musthavebins.co.uk or contact 020 3744 2384 to find out more or email info@musthavebins.co.uk

25



26. Inside the private London home of **SELHAYA's** founder, where luxury silk couture meets interiors designed by Aisha Hossain. Layered greens, natural textures, and refined silhouettes reflect the house's quiet codes of intentional elegance. Discover more at selhaya.com and follow @selhaya.official on Instagram.

26



27



27. Ottawa, Canada's **DT HOME** brings an uncompromising eye to contemporary design. Their striking new book, *The Architecture of Intention*, is a masterclass in quiet luxury, exploring the delicate balance of raw, tactile textures and precise minimalist form. It is an essential volume for the true design purist. Visit dwtwnhome.com and follow @dwtwnhome on Instagram.

28. CHUFFED HOME curates a mix of antiques, vintage, and modern furnishings for those who reject mass-produced, trend-driven furniture. Based in Toledo, Ohio, founder Mo Sheahan skillfully and purposefully connects pieces from a range of eras and styles. Collections are highlighted weekly on Instagram (@Chuffed_Home), and offered on the Chuffed Home website at www.chuffedhome.com. Shipping is available in the United States.

28



29



29. Set the scene for elegant dining with **GLAZEBROOK & CO's** classic "Fiddle" collection – mirror finish Stainless Steel with dishwasher safe cream "square handle" knives. Special offer price £530 for a set for 6 people, that's a 6x7 piece place setting (pictured) and 2 tablespoons, including UK delivery. To see this design and more, visit www.glazebrook.com and click "Special Offer", or to order, call 020 7731 7135.

30. THE THINKER AND THE SINNER offers a cultural manifesto expressed through creation. They work exclusively with textile up-cycling, transforming discarded materials into signature pieces through the patchwork technique - elevating waste to the category of art. The Deco collection offers one-of-a-kind pieces born from rescued textiles and shaped by a distinctly Portuguese creative sensibility. Explore the collection at www.zerodesperdicio.pt and follow @thethinkandthesinnerbyzd on Instagram.

30



31. A 3100-square-ft, two-story penthouse in Chicago's West Loop was reimaged by **KUCHAR** for a vibrant family intent on inhabiting a colourful, transportation space that blends their global background with the comfort and hospitality of home. Pictured here is the family's living room. Visit www.kucharstudio.com and follow @kuchar_studio on Instagram.

31



32. JEANEIT KNIPSCHILDT hand-weaves sustainable merino wool with varied patterns and colour harmonies on recycled metal rods. These contemporary wall pieces enhance a room's acoustics. Pictured is their solo exhibition in Galeri 'Ville Verde', Cape Town, SA. Explore the collection at www.jknipschildt.com and follow @J_Knipschildt on Instagram.

32



33. MATLIGHT MILANO blends Italian craftsmanship and high design to create timeless luminaires in brass and different marbles. Satin nickel and Rosso Levanto marble enrich the Grand Stick wall sconce timeless silhouette, transforming light into atmosphere and material into emotion. Discover more at www.matlight-milano.com and follow @matlight_milano on Instagram.

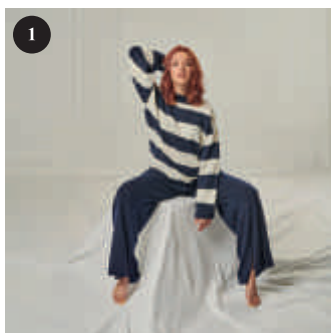
34



34. MANOS is a ceramic studio in Stockholm, Sweden, specialising in making unique, handmade ceramics. Here you'll find everything from large flowerpots and vases to exquisite small espresso cups, bowls in all sizes mixed up with our favourite things. Explore www.manos.se or @manosshopandworkshop.se on Instagram.

33





1



2

1. YOU LOOK PERFECT redefines loungewear through timeless design and effortless elegance. Sustainably crafted in Europe from ultra-soft Merino wool, each piece blends refined comfort, fluid silhouettes and quiet luxury. Created for women who appreciate exceptional quality, natural materials and sophisticated simplicity. Visit www.youlookperfect.com and follow @youlookperfect.fashion on Instagram.

2. FLARE STREET flares hold a distinct magic in their garments that carry a sense of time and place. This Australian-made label revives vintage-inspired style and captures the spirit of the 60's & 70's through their sustainably crafted flares. Made for the modern wearer who values ethical production and slow fashion, Flare Street utilises eco-conscious textiles exclusively designed by local artists to create timeless designs. Discover them at www.flarestreet.com and follow @flarestreet on Instagram.



3



4

3. SIENA WOLF creates handcrafted Italian leather goods distinguished by refined design, exceptional craftsmanship, and a thoughtful approach to production. Produced in small batches by skilled artisans just outside Florence, each piece is designed to bring beauty, function, and quiet sophistication to everyday life. Visit www.sienawolf.com and follow @siena__wolf on Instagram.

4. Large yet lightweight, these beautifully striped and stylish **OTTOMANIA**



hammam towels dry quickly and are easy to fold, making them perfect to pack in any bag or suitcase. Whether you are at the beach, swimming pool, sports club or on a boat, make sure you take one with you. For more information, see www.ottomania.nl or call +31 237 370426. Also available wholesale.



6



7

5. ANGELCASTS specialise in creating exquisitely detailed hand cast sculptures in a variety of chrome, bronze and precious metals. From torsos to bumps and bottoms. Bookings available in your home or in London and Manchester. Visit www.angelcasts.co.uk and follow @angelcasts on Instagram or call Ami on 07402 882542.

6. CARRIER COMPANY use the finest natural fibres to

make hard working designs led by gardening and coastal life in North Norfolk. A family company making sustainably in the UK since 1995. To see more, visit carriercompany.co.uk and follow @carriercompany.uk on Instagram.



8

7. GOODS FOR THE STUDY is New York's most thoughtful stationery store. They recently launched Paperback Writers, a line of blank journals for the autobiographically inclined, inspired by vintage mass market paperbacks. Visit goodsforthestudy.com and follow @goodsforthestudy on Instagram.

8. JOYASOL is a California based women's footwear brand where European craftsmanship meets Californian ease. Handcrafted in Portugal, the brand's timeless silhouettes blend modern luxury and comfort, creating versatile styles for effortless everyday wear. Visit joyasolshoes.com and follow @joyasol on Instagram.



NAHSAL INTERIORS

nahSal are a London-based architectural interior design practice devoted to turning their clients' aspirations to life through a creative, thoughtful and honest approach to interiors.

nahsal.co.uk
@nahsalinteriors



MARGARIDA BUGARIM INTERIORES

Award-winning Margarida Bugarim Interiores creates bespoke contemporary interiors defined by timeless elegance, exceptional craftsmanship and a deeply personalised approach. From private residences to hospitality projects, each space is designed around the client's lifestyle.

www.margaridabugarim.com/en
@margaridabugarim_interiores



MONTREAL HOME DESIGN
Montreal Home Design creates curated interiors where colour, texture, and Feng Shui come together to craft refined and deeply personal spaces. From luxury homes to commercial projects, the studio delivers bold, functional projects worldwide.

www.montrealhomedesign.com
@montrealhomedesignstudio



AUDREY FRANCES DESIGN

With over two decades' experience in luxury interiors, Audrey Frances Doty harmonises colour and scale with classic and contemporary designs, delivering interiors that embody elegance and timeless modernity.

www.audreyfrancesdesign.com
@audreyfrancesdesign



CS DESIGN STUDIO

Based in London, CS Design Studio specialises in bespoke residential interiors, delivering full-service design from concept to completion. By blending historic soul with contemporary innovation, they create homes defined by artisanal textures, hand-cast finishes, and an immediate sense of belonging.

csdesignstudio.co.uk
@cs.design.studio.london



META COLEMAN

Meta Coleman is an interior architecture firm which focuses on the human experience. Utilising the architecture of the home, the client's needs, and nostalgic memories, they create spaces that function most efficiently for the home owners, tell their story and spark joy in the everyday. Explore their designs online.

metacoleman.com
@metacoleman_



SHADES & SHAPES STUDIO

The Storeys, a premium interiors project, is a luxurious duplex residence in Adani Shantigram, Ahmedabad, India. Overlooking a golf course, the home blends timeless elegance with modern functionality through refined interiors, thoughtful planning, and beautifully crafted spaces that create a harmonious and sophisticated home.

www.snss.design
@shades.n.shapes.studio



MOZ INTERIORS

MOZ Interiors thoughtfully balances vintage vibes with modern modality. Le Juice, an organic juice bar and cafe in Rochester, Michigan, features everything the design firm embodies which includes a hand-painted mural by artist Anthony Brass.

mozinteriors.com
@moz_interiors

Super Pupa

Frida Kahlo's butterfly-based self-portrait is not the dainty trinket it may seem. As Lottie Jackson argues, this talisman invokes the power of mythic warriors in metamorphosis



'A ribbon around a bomb' was how André Breton, the founder of Surrealism, described the deeply contrasting art of Frida Kahlo during his 1938 jaunt to Mexico. At once seductive and cataclysmic – ribbon and bomb – the painter's oeuvre is defined by this duality. Her explosive meditations on bodily trauma and political dissent come wrapped in a magical aesthetic... the proverbial bow.

Nowhere is this dichotomy so evident as in *Self-Portrait (Dedicated to Jacqueline Lamba)*, currently on display at Tate Modern. At first glimpse the steel butterfly frame, with its portrait cocooned within, appears charming and decorative – almost trinket-like. To me, it recalls the sentimental aesthetics of girlhood: a cut-out picture of a best friend, a treasured keepsake, or even a curio plucked from the Sofia Coppola archive of unruly, intimate bedroomscapes.

In this vein, the work's dedication to a fellow female artist and close friend feels fitting; timeless even. Like many of Kahlo's self-portraits, which often function as visual letters, this piece draws on a lexicon of female friendship and sororal love. Intimate in scale, it's a 'forget me not' of sorts – a token of remembrance for Lamba as she returned home to Paris, following her time among the artists and intellectuals who mingled inside the cobalt walls of Kahlo's home, Casa Azul. Their kinship is also palpable in the object's material form. The steel frame, which borrows from the Mexican folk tradition of *milagros*, is intended as a talisman, bringing protection or good luck to its holder.

Yet this sweet shell masks something more complex. The butterfly – a leitmotif that flutters across Kahlo's artistic biosphere – is neither ornamental nor coincidental. It's the symbolic hinge that opens a deeper, more existential, understanding of

the object. Far from fragile or ephemeral, the insect suggests metamorphosis and rebirth, turning the portrait into a meditation on the body itself.

In pre-Hispanic mythology, these winged creatures were closely associated with the souls of fallen warriors – figures of strength who had passed through death and been transformed, returning as butterflies. It stands as a reminder that, through devastation, there lies a

path to other forms of existence. For Kahlo, whose body was a site of much suffering, this motif must have felt particularly resonant – consoling perhaps. Throughout her life, she experienced cycles of physical trauma and reconstruction: the devastating bus accident at 18, the surgeries, chronic pain and periods of immobilisation. By inserting her image into the butterfly's core, she becomes the warrior, reframing her story as one of courage.

Kahlo's project is underscored by the portrait itself: she meets us with an assured, enigmatic gaze while red, vein-like branches encircle her neck. These earthly threads bind her to the natural world – where she exists beyond the body, flourishing and flowing into a state of transcendence. In keeping with Mexico's *ex-voto* tradition, whereby devotional images were painted on small sheets of tin to express gratitude, oil paint has been applied directly on to the metal frame. The portrait comes, then, to resemble a sacred offering. A shrine to a transformative period in Kahlo's life, capturing the outward confidence of an artist on the cusp of international recognition, while exposing the inner world of a woman remaking herself through love and self-possession @ Lottie Jackson is a writer, disability activist and author of 'See Me Rolling'. 'Frida: The Making of an Icon', runs at Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 (020 7887 8888; tate.org.uk), until 3 Jan

Frida Kahlo, 'Self-Portrait (Dedicated to Jacqueline Lamba)', c1938, oil paint on metal

WESTLAND

LONDON



Prestigious Chimneypieces & Fine Antiques
Est 1969

Tel: +44 (0)20 7739 8094 westlandlondon.com

