

People

Across the Atlantic: We talk to emerging US practices about American design and making their mark

Places

Designing a members' club comes with its own challenges - we speak to creatives who made it a success

Products

The latest ideas in accessible bathroom design are far away from the institutional aesthetic of the past

Projects

MSMR Architects created a modern home, retaining only the façade of a West London mews house

Professional

Not all projects run smoothly - but there are more ways to resolve disputes than taking legal action

Issue 20 / 11.2018 / £4.95

ISSN 2050-425X



Studio.

studio-news.com

People



Products



Places



for residential design professionals

Transatlantic talent

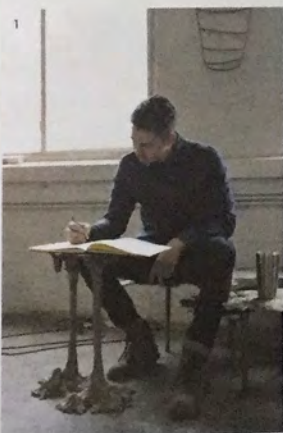
by Elizabeth Choppin

Rather than following European design, a new generation of ambitious American creatives is making its presence felt - not just in the US, but worldwide

TEN YEARS AGO, the American design scene was polarised, generally veering into two camps: highly commercial, middle-of-the-road output or offbeat, niche brands that spoke to a small group of devotees. Much the same is true today - except that, with the rise of social media and the speed with which designers can connect with an audience, the steady groundswell in the American design scene has reached peak strength in the last four to five years. Some of the most celebrated collections to be shown recently in Milan, London, Paris, and New York are from independent US talent leading the conversation in material innovation and modern styling across lighting, furniture, and objects.

Arguably, the current infatuation with warm metals, smoky glass, and elemental silhouettes can be linked to the work of Lindsey Adelman[2], Bec Brittain, Roll & Hill[5], Ladies & Gentlemen Studio, and Apparatus[3]. These New York-based studios have shaped the contemporary lighting scene - although that is not to downplay the impression American designers are making in disciplines across the board. Newcomer Ery Lee Parker[4], based in Brooklyn, sent

ripples across ICF and Instagram last year with her inaugural furniture collection, a beautifully resolved series of pieces with desert tones and rich, sumptuous materiality. Her follow-up collection in 2018 includes lighting, furniture, and accessories incorporating tactile ceramics, with standout decorative mirrors draped in delicate ceramic chainmail. It borders on the realm of design art. There are dozens more young practices - Elyse Graham, and Steven Haulenbeek[1], to name just two - who are infusing American design with an air of experimentation and producing work that is at once poetic and fresh. Clearly, it has taken some time for the contemporary American design scene to find its place on the world stage. "We're still a pretty young country," says lighting designer Lindsey Adelman. Along with experimental wallpaper brand Calico, she staged one of the most talked about installations at Milan Design Week this year. "We had to find our own voice. Design that was coming out of the US ten or fifteen years ago had to look Scandi, Dutch, or Italian to succeed. It couldn't look American and get noticed for being design," says ▶



Studio.



2	3
4	5



Studio.

People



Adelman: "We had to develop our own language, and the audience had to come along with it and invest in what Americans who are alive are making. Not to downplay the design heritage of the Nelson and Eames era - that was a really important time. But a lot of things are aligning right now. Finally, we have people buying design and it encourages a lot of independent thinking."

This freedom, combined with an entrepreneurial spirit, is perhaps why the American design movement feels so momentous. Unlike many well-known European creatives who made their start collaborating with brands or institutions, the majority of prominent US studios have pulled together resources - following a debilitating financial crisis, no less - and taken control of the production and distribution of their own work. "Our political climate is such a mess - we're like, why wait? We don't know what happens tomorrow," says Adelman. "The designers I know - they were going to make it happen no matter what. You don't wait for it to happen to you. If you go to a welder to build a chair and he says, 'I only do kitchens, you can either teach him or go find the next person. You figure it out, and that's also very American. That's the common spirit. We wanted to be independent and not answer to anybody, but still make our work relevant.'"

That is not to say there are no American designers taking a more traditional route to market, or at least combining it with the self-starter approach. Jason Miller, founder of Jason Miller Studio and high-end lighting brand Roll & Hill, has been steadily producing interesting work with US and European brands for over a decade. His latest pieces for De La Espada - a dining table and chair, sideboard, chest of drawers, and sofa - combine a distinctly American aesthetic with Portuguese woodworking and craftsmanship. "I was thinking about Brooklyn townhouses - locally they're called ▶



Studio.

People



Top left: Gabriel Hendifar and Jeremy Anderson of Apparatus with their Portal coffee table.


Bottom left: Lindsey Adelman (left) with two of her designers and the Drop System DS 79 01.

Above: Eny Lee Parker with her first furniture collection, which debuted at Sight Unseen OFFSITE last year.

Right: Jason Miller, who founded his eponymous studio as well as lighting brand Roll & Hill, with his Elliott dining table and chair.

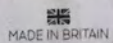


11



IMPERIAL
CLASSICAL BRITISH BATHROOMS

Imperial Bathrooms Limited
Tel +44 (0) 1922 763074
contacts@imperial-bathrooms.co.uk
www.imperial-bathrooms.co.uk



Contact us for your next design project or to receive a luxury Imperial design guide


Studio.



Top and left: Steven Haulenbeek with his RBS wall shelf and the Ice-Cast Bronze Lace vessel.



Brownstones," says Miller. "The vast majority of them were built at the beginning of the 20th century. After 100 years of various uses, many are now being converted back to single family homes. There is a very interesting juxtaposition of the century-old architectural details and contemporary styles. I like the tension between old and new."

Miller is one of those US designers who are considered by some to straddle the line between art and design. One of his first pieces in 2004 was a conceptual chair held together by a material which appears similar to duct tape. Conceivably, the road between then and now has been a long and winding one - though very much on his own terms. This story is echoed across countless American studios, some of whom are creating bold work that has positioned the US as a leader in design thinking rather than a follower of European style. Miller sums it up: "I think America - especially New York - is experiencing one of those special moments when a critical mass is reached and creativity explodes exponentially." 

Contacts Apparatus apparatusstudio.com / Bec Brittain becbrittain.com / Calico calicowallpaper.com / Charles Hollis Jones harleshollisjones.com / Elyse Graham elysegraham.com / Eny Lee Parker enyleeparker.com / Jason Miller Studio jasonmiller.us / Ladies & Gentlemen Studio ladiesandgentlemenstudio.com / Lindsey Adelman lindseyadelman.com / Roll & Hill rollandhill.com / Steven Haulenbeek stevenhaulenbeek.com