

# surface

A black and white portrait of Kenya Hara, an older man with short, light-colored hair, wearing glasses and a dark jacket. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

## KENYA HARA

*Brings His Design Pedigree to the Doghouse*

PLUS: *The 2012 Portfolio of*  
**AMERICAN INFLUENCE**

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# THE 2012 PORTFOLIO OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE

Artists and designers don't deserve all the credit. In our first annual index of American curators, entrepreneurs, educators, editors, critics, and taste-makers, we searched coast to coast for those who are defying conventions, taking risks, and experimenting with new models of creativity.

From writers and editors who are redefining architecture media to curators who are exploring the outer limits of their practice, the 20 subjects and groups in the following pages—32 talents in all—are set to change the way we think about the worlds of art and design in 2013 and beyond.



# ARCHITECTURE MEDIA

Architizer, Clog, The Architect's Newspaper, Superscript, and Manifest

"There are so many design blogs out there," says Jenna McKnight, editor-in-chief of the website Architizer. "It's mind-boggling." McKnight, 35, who in August left *Architectural Record* after five years to begin her new position, sees Architizer on much different terms. "We have a really strong community aspect," she says of the three-year-old site, which supports a network of more than 44,000 projects by roughly 12,000 firms, half a million Facebook fans, and 43,000 Twitter followers, plus daily news coverage and an accompanying newsletter. "It's rich, multifaceted, and isn't just about finding eye candy all day long."

McKnight is among a handful of talented young editors and journalists in the New York City area, most of them primarily working in print, who are seeking new ways to stand out in the difficult, ever-shifting terrain of today's architecture-media landscape. Their goal, broadly speaking: to push past the PR-driven noise of so much journalism by packaging compelling, approachable, intelligent content about buildings—and the ideas surrounding them. "Architecture is a very insular profession," McKnight says. "We want to break out of that echo chamber and show people that architecture is essential to life."

Julia van den Hout, 27, and Kyle May, 28, who last year launched the self-published quarterly magazine *Clog*, have in a relatively short time done just that, creating, as van den Hout puts it, "a middle ground of certain modes of communication that haven't existed before and that are needed and clearly wanted." Issues of *Clog* are currently printed in runs of 1,500, and each revolves around a single theme: The first, released about a year ago, was an in-depth look at the Danish rising-star architect Bjarke Ingels' firm, BIG; this past summer's, which has sold roughly 4,500 copies to date, delved into the architecture and design of Apple. The current issue considers the state of renderings today, and future themes include the National Mall and Brutalism. "We try to keep our texts succinct, make a point that my mom can understand, and then move on," May says.

Alan Brake, 34, who took over as executive editor of *The Architect's Newspaper* in September, agrees with McKnight that architecture media today is too crowded, too disorganized. "I think the general conversation is hard to maintain or find," he says. Brake plans to make his mark at the paper by focusing on what he believes few

others can or have the resources to do: showcase sophisticated visual and written narratives and publish op-eds and critical pieces written by an array of voices, to "let people know that though we break news and have a gossip column, some humor, and some edge, we're also a place for serious thinking."

Molly Heintz, 39, a contributing editor at *The Architect's Newspaper*, has found another somewhat untapped niche to fill: book readings. Last year, together with three former classmates from the School of Visual Arts' Design Criticism M.F.A. program, she founded the consultancy Superscript and with it the Architecture and Design Book Club (ADBC). "We're really interested in finding ways to develop content around design and look at how to communicate it," she says. The ADBC has held three events so far, the most recent of which was led by design writer Mark Lamster and analyzed W.G. Sebald's novel *Austerlitz*.

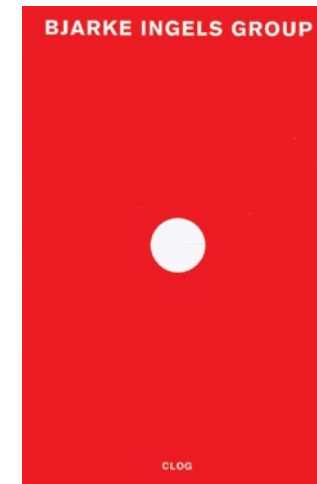
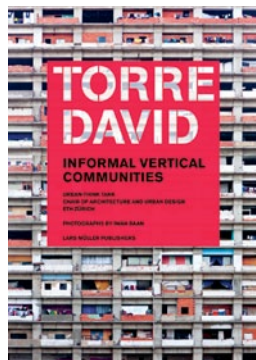
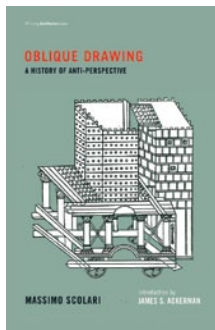
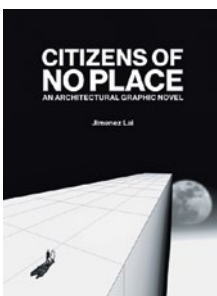
Another newcomer to the scene is *Manifest*, a small, currently little-known publication that's in the works and quietly generating buzz for its first issue due out next summer. (It won a 2012 Graham Foundation grant.) The journal will fall somewhere within "the huge gap between the super-academic trade publications and the lifestyle market," says Anthony Acciavatti, 31, who started the project with fellow Princeton Ph.D. student Justin Fowler, 28, and Dan Handel, 34, a Ph.D. candidate at Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. "We see it as our way of trying to form a space, a forum where things can be debated, not something that just evaporates," Acciavatti says. "We want something to hold on to—something that in many ways, like architecture, casts a shadow. We still think there's something to be said for reflecting on something, writing about it, and then sharing it with people." Just as an architect may seek to create a memorable building, these editors strive for the content they produce to spur readers' imaginations. —SPENCER BAILEY

(OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) Left to right, Julia van den Hout and Kyle May of *Clog*, Alan Brake of *The Architect's Newspaper*, Molly Heintz of Superscript, Jenna McKnight of Architizer, and Justin Fowler and Anthony Acciavatti of *Manifest* in the library room at The NoMad Hotel in Manhattan. The cover of *Clog's* fall 2011 issue about architect Bjarke Ingels' firm, BIG. A spread from *Clog's* BIG issue. Group portrait: Emiliano Granado. (PREVIOUS SPREAD) An installation at the Art Institute of Chicago's "Building: Inside Studio Gang Architects" exhibit. Photo: Tim Klein.

## JULIA VAN DEN HOUT & KYLE MAY

Their favorite new books:

*Citizens of No Place* (Princeton Architectural Press) **May:** "Funny, insightful, and refreshing." *Oblique Drawings* (MIT Press) **May:** "In an era of representation defined by an abundance of diagrams and photo-realistic perspectival renderings, Massimo Scolari takes us back to our roots." *Informal Vertical Communities* (Lars Müller Publishers) **Van den Hout:** "Urban-Think Tank's examination of the improvised vertical slum urges the architectural community to learn from the innovation and experimentation of this livable and self-sustaining environment."







## DARRIN ALFRED

*Curator, Denver Art Museum*

Darrin Alfred, associate curator of architecture, design, and graphics at the Denver Art Museum, may not be based in a major design hub like San Francisco—where he worked from 2000 to 2007 in SFMOMA's curatorial department—but he's proving Colorado can carry its own design clout. Earlier this year, Alfred, 41, put up two shows touting top-notch design happening in the region: "Now Boarding," which explored six airports designed by renowned local firm Fentress Architects, and "Design Lab: Three Studios," which showcased the work of three Denver-based design firms. Next up: a major show on the Czech-born postwar textile designer Jacqueline Groag, to open in summer 2013.

What have been the major objectives during your tenure at the museum so far?

I've spent less effort trying to acquire objects and more effort into getting the ones that we have out on view for the public to see and engage with. I'm also very interested in what's happening locally in the professional community. A lot of that has to do with my time at SFMOMA and engagement with the design community there. The professional community of Denver—not only graphic designers but also the many other designers who work and practice here—were some of my biggest supporters when I came. Those relationships are something that I've continued to build on.

What's the current state of the city's design community?

I think for the scale of Denver it's pretty thriving. But I'd walk out my door in San Francisco, and you'd just swing a bat and hit a bunch of really interesting designers. Here, it takes so long to find them. You've got to know the right person. What I've found, too, is they aren't the best at promoting themselves. It's a very underground scene.

You're planning an upcoming show on Jacqueline Groag. What about her work do you find so compelling?

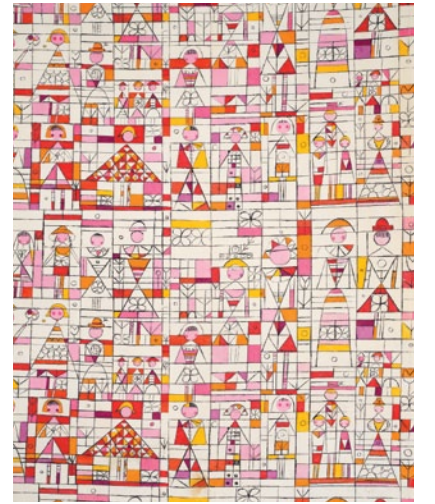
Groag really reminds me of Alexander Girard in many ways. It's sort of this ability to hold on to viewing life through the eyes of a child. It's interesting because, as we grow older, there's this idea that we're not supposed to act like children. I think too often people let go of that way of viewing the world, because they're supposed to become "adults." I think people like Girard and Groag have really been able to retain that childlike quality. Groag's work was, like Girard's, a counterpoint to the streamlined minimalist forms that were the accepted standard for midcentury design. She really embraced this period in which there was a huge appetite for color and pattern and combined that with childlike visions of toys and dolls and nature.

Denver is home to new buildings by David Adjaye and Allied Works. Then there's the museum—its first wing by Giò Ponti, its new one by Daniel Libeskind. What do you think about architecture in the city generally?

I think it's playing a bigger role these days than it ever has as far as how it's shaping the city, especially

culturally speaking. One of the things that really attracted me to this position—and to moving to a city like Denver from San Francisco—was this idea that Denver felt, from a development point of view, from a cultural point of view, from so many other, different points of view, as though it was on the cusp, that it was really shifting and changing. It slowed down with the economy right after I moved here, but I think it's still happening. The city understands the potential for architecture to act as a force for development—not in the Bilbao way, but in a lot of other different, interesting ways.

*Interview by Spencer Bailey*



## ALEXANDER GILKES

*Cofounder, Paddle 8*

One year after launching Paddle 8, a platform that allows registered members to view and buy art online, cofounder Alexander Gilkes, 33, is convinced more than ever of the competitive advantage of a rigorous, selective process—"curating the curators," as he puts it. "When there's an immediate understanding of the perception of value, there's that willingness to buy even with huge prices over a trusted platform," he says. Earlier this year, Paddle 8 began partnering with the likes of the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Public Art Fund to democratize the auction process, a move that has already raised millions of dollars. The site has 20,000 members—a number that's expected to grow this month when Gilkes and cofounder Aditya Julka begin to open up the membership to more aspiring collectors. Meanwhile, page views are up to 300,000 a day, with local gallery partners such as the Gagosian alongside international ones in Tokyo, Athens, Dubai, and Buenos Aires.—JAMES GADDY

## MICHAEL GRAHAM

*Director, Balloon Contemporary*

As the head of Balloon Contemporary, Michael Graham, 45, is working at the boundaries of design, which he says "are much further than anyone imagines." A self-described "curator by default," Graham uses his home base of Chicago to address design that handles regional questions with global appeal. His mission is flexible: The Collectors' Xchange at EXPO Chicago in September was a four-day panel discussion, but he has also partnered on shows that explore attitudes and practices toward death via a cabinet of curiosities and paired thrift-store items with pieces from the Converso Warehouse. Next year at ICFE, Graham will curate ChicagoLands, a show of young designers who produce all their objects using resources local to the Chicago area.—JULIE BAUMGARDNER

"Paper Dolls" (1969), a screen-printed cotton textile by Jacqueline Groag that's part of the Denver collection of H. Kirk Brown III and Jill A. Wiltse. (OPPOSITE) Darrin Alfred at the Denver Art Museum. Portrait: Benjamin Rasmussen.



## ZOE RYAN & KAREN KICE

Curators, Art Institute of Chicago

Curator Zoë Ryan, the chair of the Art Institute of Chicago's architecture and design department, believes that each show she puts together "must sit within a global spectrum." It's a disposition that comes naturally for Ryan, 35, who hails from London and has held roles at the V&A Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Van Alen Institute. To further her ambitious, broad-minded mission, this past spring she hired Karen Kice, 33, who had worked with Ryan at the Van Alen, as the department's assistant curator. Their debut exhibition together, "Building: Inside Studio Gang Architects" (through Feb. 24, 2013), is the first-ever solo show of the lauded Chicago-based firm's work.

Much of your work as curators is very specialized. How important to you is it to relate these complex issues to the wider public?

**ZOE RYAN:** It's No. 1 on my list. I can live and breathe this stuff. I don't think we do ourselves any favors or any justice when we're taught new things that could be perceived as insider language. Making something accessible doesn't mean dumbing it down; it just means bringing more and more people into the dialogue. **KAREN KICE:** Architecture is something everyone's influenced by, whether or not they know that. Architecture is something that shapes our everyday lives—how we move through a city, how we feel—and I think that's a really powerful thing. Doing an exhibition that can raise or highlight some of those ideas to the public so that they walk out of the gallery, into the city, and see something differently—I think that's exciting. **ZR:** It goes back to raising architecture and design to art. When you work in a museum, especially one like the Art Institute, the most amazing thing is that you're seeing art from all around the world—and just amazing quality, the highest level. The pieces are textbook materials. We want our work to be that inspiring.

What, exactly, is the focus of the Studio Gang show, and how did you come to it?

**KK:** The exhibition is framed around issues of contemporary architecture. There are four themes: Building Nature, Building Community, Building Performance, and Building Density. We've taken projects that we've placed into these themes to help discuss it, and then there's a more open environment in the back that's reflective of a studio environment, showing hands-on model-making of large-scale models, redline drawings, things that you would see when you walk into Jeanne Gang's firm. There's this energy and excitement that you get when you go into her studio. **ZR:** We've gotten a bit geeky about the fact that we never wanted to do a



retrospective on Studio Gang. This is a major survey of her work, although we're only focusing on 13 projects. We don't want to feel her career or her legacy. She's a very young architect.

What is it about Studio Gang that's so fascinating?

**KK:** Variety defines them. It's not like every project has the same rendering style, the same format. Every project is represented so differently, and I think that's unique in an architecture firm. **ZR:** What's interesting to me about Studio Gang is that they're very much driven by wanting to challenge the brief they get from a client, to think differently. They might be asked to do something specific, but they don't start off with the standard tools.

How do you view Studio Gang in a regional context, and what does it mean to you as a Chicago institution to host the work of a prominent local architect?

**KK:** I think the exciting thing is that as much as Chicago is a center for architecture, there's not as much contemporary architecture. Jeanne is one of these contemporary architects who's really building a lot in Chicago, and that's something that's shown in the exhibition. And she's someone who's building outside of Chicago. **ZR:** I think Jeanne has very much been able to leverage being in Chicago and the Midwest to really make her mark. Still, I feel there are a lot of challenges with that, because Chicago is historically grounded. It's known for its contributions to Modernism, and she's had to pay deference to that. Her Aqua Tower pays homage to Mies, Bertrand Goldberg, and all the others high on the skyline, but at the same time she's carving out her own path. She's very conscious of that, and she's working strategically to make sure that her work fits on a global scale, not just on a local level. And Chicagoans just adore Jeanne. This show is going to be like a rock concert.

Which Chicago architects do you have your eyes on?

**KK:** Jeanne Gang is one. [Laughs] My eyes have been on her. **ZR:** Someone I've worked with before is John Ronan, who just designed the beautiful Poetry Foundation building here. He's definitely someone we're interested in. Obviously, Iker Gil—we're big fans of his—and Clare

Lyster at UIC. **KK:** Jimenez Lai is another. And Marshall Brown. Since I've started here, though, it's very much been Studio Gang all the way. *Interview by Spencer Bailey*

## ALI SUBOTNICK

Curator, The Hammer Museum

After finishing art school and moving to New York, Ali Subotnick called *Artforum* to update her subscription. While on the line, she asked about openings at the magazine. Before she knew it she was working as the receptionist. A year later she went on to help edit *ARTnews*, then to *Parkett*. In 2002, she launched her own magazine, *Charley*, with Maurizio Cattelan and Massimiliano Gioni; next, the three created The Wrong Gallery in Manhattan. Since 2006, Subotnick has been a curator at the Hammer. This past summer, as part of the museum's "Made in L.A." exhibit, she founded the Venice Beach Biennial, bringing the fine-art world to the street artists along the boardwalk, a project she calls "the most exhilarating and rewarding experience of my curatorial career." In February, she will unveil a Lynn Foulkes retrospective at the museum. —MATT PASCARELLA



PHOTO (OPPOSITE, BOTTOMRIGHT): JOSEPH DE LEO.

## BETTINA KOREK

Founder, For Your Art

In 2006, Bettina Korek got the idea to start a weekly e-mail called For Your Art that delivered insider intelligence about cultural events across Los Angeles. Since then, her work has reflected a new definition of what it means to be a curator. "We're in this moment where the word *curator* has completely left the art world," she says. This new definition is a type of engagement that especially suits Korek's native L.A. "The city has always been described as this open Wild West," she says. "There are so many layers to the creative activity here." But even though Angelenos don't have the street-level engagement of a New Yorker, the city's openness allows for other kinds of possibilities. In October, For Your Art launched Arts Matter, which wraps 12 buses and 85 billboards with the text-driven work of artist Barbara Kruger. "Ten years ago I saw this Public Art Fund project that she did in New York," Korek says. "What better way to do that in L.A. than to make the art move?" —CHRIS KAYE

## CLAIRE PIJOUAT & ODILE HAINAUT

Founders, Wanted

"It's once in a lifetime that you meet someone and feel you totally match," Odile Hainaut says of her fortuitous creative partnership with Claire Pijoulat. The French-born, New York-based pair were introduced through friends of friends just over two years ago and immediately bonded over what they saw as the lackluster state of New York Design Week. "We felt like in the last few, there were more cocktails than content," Hainaut says. By leveraging their respective backgrounds—Hainaut at Gallery R'Pure, Pijoulat with Roche Bobois—and deep roots in the scene, within five months they managed to pull together Wanted Design, a robust four-day event (entering its third year next May) that's all at once a speaker series, a workshop, a student exhibition, a trade show, and a social space.

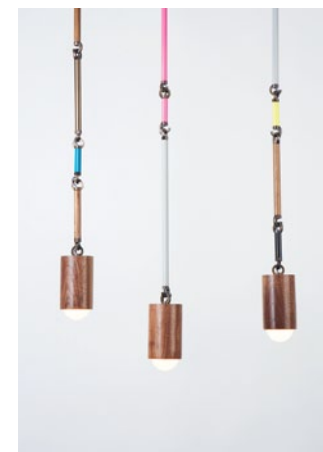
One of the most important aspects of Wanted is that it creates a comfortable environment to encourage engagement with people, not just products. "It's a place to connect," Pijoulat says. Next year's program is already in motion, with plans to bring the spirit of South America to the renovated Railroad Tunnel venue in West Chelsea. "We are not just following trends," Hainaut says. "Wanted is really personal." —JORDAN KUSHINS

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) An installation at the Studio Gang show. Lindsey Adelman's Woodchuck Pendant (2012). Pentti Monkkonen's "Chinatown by the Sea" (2012) at the Venice Beach Biennale. (OPPOSITE) Karen Kice (left) and Zoë Ryan. Portrait: Tim Klein.

## CLAIRE PIJOUAT & ODILE HAINAUT

Their favorite new design objects:

"We love the elegant simplicity and generosity of the shapes of David Weeks' new lighting collection and fiberglass furniture for Ralph Pucci. We discovered Raleigh Denim through the Bernhardt America Made Me exhibit last May. They're a great American story of a self-entrepreneur. Each lighting design by Lindsey Adelman, such as the Woodchuck pendant (below), is like a piece of jewelry. The simplicity of the Lift bowl by Frederick McSwain highlights the sense of movement and vibrations coming from its texture and finish. Shinola is the essence of a modern American design company. They are about craft and passion, and they tell a story for every product that they make. Our favorite is the bike."





## JEREMY LEWIS

Editor, *Garmento*

Jeremy Lewis, a 26-year-old trend reporter, concept developer, and fashion editor, decided two years ago to bring his interests together in magazine form. His semi-annual *Garmento*, based in New York City, explores topics in fashion that he feels haven't been given proper consideration. Inspired by his former mentor, the late fashion designer Charles Kleibacker, the first issue, published in February, examines what it means to be an American designer; the second one, published this fall, takes on futurism. Each issue approaches a theme from different angles, drawing from contemporary and vintage fashion, with broad-minded content presented with "a certain kind of minimalism," he says.

—LYDIA EPP SCHMIDT



## JOHN CARY

Writer, Curator, TED Prize Advisor

"Public-interest design is what keeps me up at night and gets me out of bed in the morning," says John Cary, the many-hatted Brooklyn-based speaker, writer, curator, advisor to the TED Prize, and founder of the first annual Public Interest Design Week, to debut in March 2013. The six-day symposium at the University of Minnesota College of Design—where the 35-year-old Cary is also a research fellow—will pull in students and practitioners from around the world to build skills, share contacts, and encourage greater peer accountability.

A current show at San Francisco's Autodesk Gallery, where he and his wife, Courtney Martin, are the gallery's first guest curators-in-residence, hints at what the event will seek to spark. "We look at products, places, and processes: systems and services either designed or redesigned for the public good," Cary says. By presenting a social need, followed by the product or approach used to successfully address it, the exhibit tells the stories behind standard-setting work as diverse as the low-cost Embrace infant warmer and the parklets of San Francisco that morph parking spaces into public plazas. "People have been really afraid of, or told not to criticize, work being done for good," Cary says. "That might have been appropriate at some point, but we need to move beyond that to hold it to higher standards." —JULIA COOKE

## PREM KRISHNAMURTHY

Cofounder, P! Gallery

Prem Krishnamurthy's new gallery in New York's Chinatown is named simply P!, as in the first initial of the graphic designer and curator's first name and that of his alliteratively titled studio practice, Project Projects, begun in 2004. Krishnamurthy, 34, has done work for museums and art institutions, including the Cooper-Hewitt's recent "Graphic Design: Now in Production" show, but P!, designed by architecture studio Leong Leong, is Krishnamurthy's first proprietorship. His debut show, which opened in September, featured rare works by graphic designer Karel Martens, conceptual artist Christine Hill, and photographer Chauncey Hare, three disparate artists connected by Krishnamurthy's particular vision.

What were some of your experiences with curating prior to opening P!?

When I lived in Berlin—that was in the late '90s, supercheap—I used to have events and exhibitions in my kitchen. In school [at Yale] I was working as editor of a lot of things, but Berlin was probably where I became most interested in curating spaces. And then I started Project Projects, and for the first several years we were just trying to get our footing as a graphic-design studio in New York, but I would always try to insert some sort of curatorial thing into other projects that were going on.

Is it true that the logo will be redesigned for each show?

It might be ironic, but there's a German phrase that means "The shoemaker has the worst shoes." It's not that it's the worst ... I wanted the design of this institution to go as far as I could envision pushing it.

If the logo changes with each exhibition, does that mean a graphic designer will be part of every show?

No, not at all. They will be sometimes, but it's not programmatic in that way. Anybody can make a logo. A logo can be many, many things. I think it will be much more interesting when people who are not typically doing that sort of work are asked. Also, between every show I want to change something architecturally about the space. It might be as small as painting the ceiling or the floor, but it might be as large as ripping out walls or changing out the windows. There's this ongoing transformation that happens within the space.

What else do you envision for the gallery?

If there's an ambition to this space, it's to bring together different [artists and designers] who wouldn't otherwise come in contact with each other. And to have people who would otherwise think, "Oh, this is a gallery, this is not for me," come in and have some sort of experience or reaction.

How does graphic design fit into the art/gallery world?

I've always felt there's a lot of affinity between graphic designers and curators. Both are mediators on some level. The thing graphic designers have always known how to do is the means of production, how to distribute. I think a curator does a similar thing, just with space as opposed to other media, and with artists. *Interview by Sue Apfelbaum*

TO THE  
(S)BOUTIQUE  
ALL BUSINESS  
UTPOST  
'TOWN DIVISION)  
AT P!  
*Serve You Well!*

*Specialize in*  
COLLECTING  
LOCAL  
SMALL BUSINESS  
TALISMANS &  
VERNACULAR SIGNAGE  
TO PRESERVE  
PRESENT.  
*Ask For Details!*



Graphic designer and curator Prem Krishnamurthy in his recently opened Manhattan gallery space, P!. Portrait: Elisabeth Struijk van Bergen. (OPPOSITE) Spreads from *Garmento*.



## ALISON GASS

Curator, MSU's Broad Art Museum

The 36-year-old Boston-bred curator Alison Gass calls getting hired as curator of contemporary art at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." Last December, Gass left her position as assistant curator of painting and sculpture at SFMOMA and packed up with her family to move half-way across the country to East Lansing, Michigan, where she's part of the team opening the museum's new 46,000-square-foot, Zaha Hadid-designed building this month. So far, Gass has spearheaded the Broad Without Walls program, which exhibits art in vacant spaces throughout the city, and curated two shows, including Kristin Cammermeyer's "Resituating" exhibition (left). Gass' next, yet-to-be-titled show—her first in the new museum—will open in February and "defy conditions of the white cube," she says. —MARINA CASHDAN

## SAM AQUILLANO & DEREK CASCIO

Cofounders, Design Museum Boston

There are a few benefits to a museum without a bricks-and-mortar space. "You're at City Hall, or the mall, or Logan Airport, and you can run into one of our exhibitions," says Sam Aquillano, who with Derek Cascio is cofounder and codirector of Design Museum Boston. He's not speaking hypothetically. The two 30-year-old industrial designers opened the museum's metaphorical doors in August 2009 and launched an October 2010 show at Boston's City Hall that spotlighted local designers responsible for well-known work ranging from OXO barware to the urban plan for the city's Innovation District. This month, all travelers to Boston's Logan Airport can take in their latest show, Getting There, on how design changes the experience of travel.

In addition to presenting exhibits, Aquillano and Cascio are striving to unite Boston's strong (yet scattered) design community. The museum hosts quarterly programs connecting local designers with professionals. Locations have included a Knoll showroom, the *Boston Globe* headquarters, and the MassChallenge offices. Further plans for growth are in store, too: Aquillano and Cascio plan to open a small space as the museum's hub within the next five years. "What we're really trying to do is turn the museum inside out," Aquillano says. —JULIA COOKE

## CECILIA ALEMANI

Curator, High Line Art

The Italian-born, New York-based Cecilia Alemani, 35, believes that public art should be personal. The curator, who moved to New York in 2003, organized the X Initiative in 2009 and worked with Performa in 2010 and London's Frieze Art Fair in 2011. This year, she curated Frieze Projects in New York and has completed her first year as the director of High Line Art, a program that commissions work for the park. Her inaugural group show, "Lilliput," on view until April, takes its inspiration from the tiny characters in *Gulliver's Travels*, dotting the park's landscape with a series of sculptures and installations.

When did you know that you wanted to be a curator?

Growing up, I wanted to be an archaeologist. But I went to a summer camp in Italy once and we dug a hole with little brushes for two months and all we found was a piece of plastic. We were supposed to find an amazing mosaic or coins, but we found nothing!

What about the High Line appealed to you as a curator?

Full disclosure: I didn't even realize how much art was happening on the High Line. The biggest challenge was working for an organization that is more than just art. High Line Art is just a tiny fraction of what Friends of the High Line does, so in a way, you readjust your goals and mission. It's a big challenge to speak to a very wide audience—tourists, the community, and of course a few people who are going to the Chelsea galleries.

So how do you integrate the art into the park?

It's really about being part of a larger picture. I've tried to be subtle and show people that public art can also be intimate and human in scale. When you walk section two of the High Line, these new developments are starting to put up art themselves, and it's always big and bombastic. It's not necessary! The High Line is so beautiful by itself.

How do you choose what to show?

When I started this job, people would ask me what would be the first big sculpture that I would put on the High Line, because there's this assumption that public art is monumental. As a way to prove that assumption wrong, I invited artists to create small, intimate sculptures that punctuate the park. You might encounter them if you know where they are.

Do certain types of art work better on the High Line?

In the park, everything is much more extreme. Every time we have a performance, you don't have to explain anything; people just participate. Visitors are not shy.

Can this job influence the dialogue around art today?

I don't know about that. My job is to make the artist's projects possible. I see myself more as a producer, someone who can make the artist's dream come true. Some people see the curator as author, but I don't believe in that at all. I'm happy to brainstorm with the artists, but they are the king or queen of the situation. *Interview by James Gaddy*

PHOTO (OPPOSITE, FAR RIGHT); COURTESY MICHAEL HEIZER, AUSTIN KENNEDY, COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE.



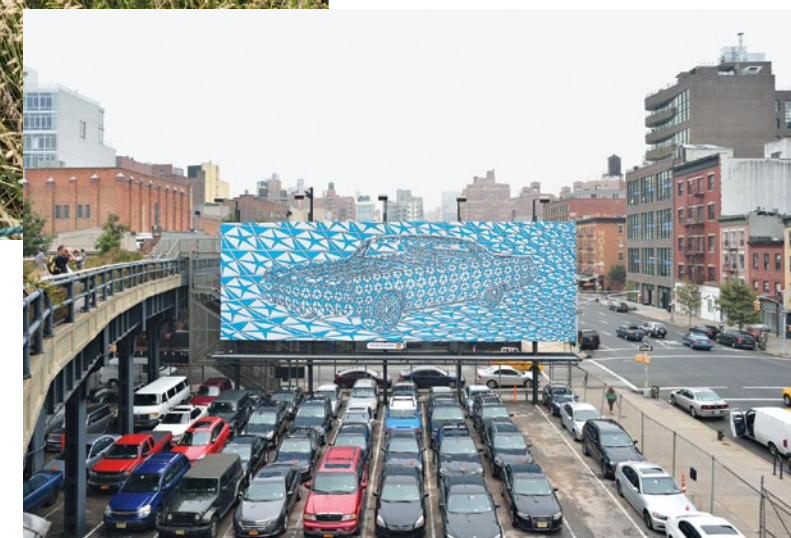
## CECILIA ALEMANI

*Her favorite public-art shows:*

Tatzu Nishi's "Discovering Columbus": "This is how the old and the new can give space to a surprising new public space." Yayoi Kusama's "Yellow Trees": "This shows how New York City can turn a boring slice of real estate into a festive artwork." Michael Heizer's "Levitated Mass" (below): "It's exciting to see a master of Land Art finally realizing one of his most ambitious projects in Los Angeles." Ai Wei Wei's "Zodiac": "This astrological representation was produced in remembrance of international wars; seeing it in D.C., in the capital of American power, makes it even more powerful."



(FROM LEFT) A piece in a Kristin Cammermeyer exhibit last summer, curated by Alison Gass at a Broad Art Museum temporary summer annex. Cecilia Alemani on the High Line with Thomas Houseago's "Lying Figure." Portrait: Elsbeth Struijk van Bergen. Michael Heizer's "Levitated Mass" at LACMA. Thomas Bayle's "American Dream" (1970), a High Line Billboard installation.





## JADE LAI

Founder, Creatures of Comfort

In a world of digitalized interactions, Jade Lai has nurtured the development of a flesh-and-bone creative community since opening the West Hollywood boutique Creatures of Comfort in 2005. (A New York outpost followed in 2010.) Her devotees—including Michelle Williams, Kirsten Dunst, and Vanessa Paradis—rave about her curated selection, which includes European classics such as Isabel Marant and A.P.C., up-and-coming brands like Emmanuelle and Anntian, and her own forward but sensible line of tanks, camisoles, and miniskirts. The Hong Kong native, who studied environmental design at Otis University in Los Angeles, has a dis-

### JADE LAI

Her favorite American designers:

**Emmanuelle:** "The designer Thomas Chen makes really well-crafted and simple clothes with subtle details that are colorful and fun. This brand is a girl's best friend."  
**LD Tuttle (below):** "Tiffany Tuttle is a true originator who makes comfortable, sometimes rugged, mostly directional shoes that you want to wear every day."  
**Araks Lingerie:** "Seeing the collection in person, I really understood that the designer is a very sensitive person with really good taste. Every piece of clothing is perfect—simple and timeless."  
**Apiece Apart:** "I was so happy to hear that Apiece Apart is back in the scene this season after taking a few years off. I always love the choice of colors in its collections."



inctive personal touch that keeps her fans coming back for more. This winter, she's preparing an exclusive spring shoe line with young designer Tiffany Tuttle's brand, LD Tuttle, and she's already weighing how to expand even further.

You collaborate a lot with artists and designers. You organize pop-ups. You have a gallery space in the New York store. Why are these creative projects important?

When I first opened the store, I wanted it to be a lifestyle

store. I was interested in furniture and graphic design—if I just did fashion, I would not be a very happy person. It's inspiring to work with other people and see how they work. You master a craft when you are consistent at it and focus. I love to do many things but will never do it as well as someone who does it by trade, so it's important to have a wide range of friends who are in different creative fields, who are masters of certain crafts you are not. They tell you things you don't know about and inspire you differently.

How did you get into fashion?

My father founded Giordano, a fast-retail clothing chain. My mother was an air stewardess a long time ago and hung out in very fashionable circles. She loved brands like Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, and Jil Sander. I always liked clothes and putting things together, but I didn't think I was going to be a fashion designer. I wanted to be in fine art, then studied architecture and interior design. After school I worked at Esprit in Hong Kong, learning about sourcing and product development. It was not supercreative, but the process was very instructive.

Why did you open the L.A. store?

There wasn't anything like Creatures of Comfort when we first started. California was very mainstream and commercial. It was hard to find European designers at that time. I really loved Peter Jensen, Isabel Marant, and all those brands. I just knew what I liked and went with my gut instinct. Unlike a lot of stores that are dark, Creatures of Comfort appeals to a progressive person who's easygoing and colorful. They don't follow trends; they're a bit off-kilter but also know what's happening.

How would you define Creatures of Comfort's identity?

We offer a sensibility. I'm very easygoing. I like comfort and I like classics, but I'm also very attracted to well-made things. I like things that are a bit weird but not too avant-garde—simple, fresh, and progressive but sensible. I also value tradition, but tweaks are mesmerizing. With stores like mine, you go in and get a sense of who the owner is, so I attract a lot of like-minded people. Also, people are so busy these days. Our store is a place where people can explore new things that they wouldn't find through blogs and the Internet. There's something really tactile about being in a store, the whole aspect of discovery and exploration. *Interview by Shirine Saad*

(TOP TO BOTTOM) Jade Lai in her store in New York. Portrait: Lesley Unruh. LD Tuttle Wheel shoe in soda (S/S 2013). (OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM) Sam Vinz and Claire Warner at Volume Gallery in Chicago. Portrait: Tim Klein. ROLU's Objects for Constructing One's Own Interior Cosmos VI, made of maple, as seen at Volume's Everything is Always Changing All of the Time show.

## SAM VINZ & CLAIRE WARNER

Founders, Volume Gallery

In 2010, Claire Warner and Sam Vinz, two Chicago-based talents who had crossed paths at the auction house Wright, started Volume Gallery, a traveling gallery of contemporary design. In the short time since, Warner, 33, and Vinz, 35, have made impressive inroads into the U.S. design scene, helping launch the careers of Jonathan Muecke, Jonathan Nesci, ROLU, and others. Now, as another one of its rising talents, Snarkitecture, has been commissioned to design the entrance to this December's Design Miami, and the gallery moves into its first permanent space, Volume is ready to capture international attention.

What sets you apart from other design galleries?

**SAM VINZ:** The fact that we're working with contemporary American designers is first and foremost what sets us apart. I don't think anybody else is really focusing that narrowly on an area. **CLAIRE WARNER:** We also operate like an atelier. Although we work with designers to sometimes create studio production pieces, we actually collaborate with them to get things fabricated here in Chicago. We're working hand-in-hand with problem solving and collection development.

Why did you choose to incorporate the atelier element?

**CW:** It's something we provide because we work with emerging designers. When you're producing your first collection, especially of limited-edition design, it's no small feat. That's the level of guidance we can offer as far as working with the designer on material choices and trying to figure out how to actually get things produced.

Are there any common misconceptions young designers have when you first take them in?

**CW:** Each one of our working relationships is actually very organic and completely dependent on the designer we're working with. Some of the people we work with are studio producers. We have a different working relationship with those talents versus somebody we would actually be producing the collection for here in Chicago. **SV:** Also, there's a big difference between finishing your grad school show, which may be anywhere from one to three or four different pieces, and doing a larger collection. The designers just need help, so we add extra manpower.

What do you look for in a designer when you take one on?

**SV:** We're always looking for progressive, contemporary thinkers, and sometimes that's played out in many different scenarios, whether it's material choice or design language. It could be very traditional methods of construction but done in a new way, thought out in a new way. I think we're more interested in contemporary thinkers and how they convey those thoughts through shapes and forms.

Is there a recent example of that thinking?

**CW:** I think that as far as contemporary thinkers, I would say that's a common thread with all designers, with architecture, and with Jonathan Nesci as well. He definitely brings a new thought to materials and

functionality, but also using more typical typologies, like a chair, but in very contemporary materials. Also, with the last exhibition we did with ROLU, they have a really different thought when it comes to functionality. A lot of the pieces in that exhibition, their functionality is sometimes just to produce joy, which is an interesting conversation to have with a designer.

What does the work that you've shown and produced say about American design at this moment?

**CW:** When we first started and we told people we would be working exclusively with American designers, the general attitude was, "What are you going to do next year?" I don't think Sam and I have ever seen a lack of talent. In fact, as far as people to work with, there's no shortage. I feel like we could work tirelessly for years and years and years and keep having shows. But we don't necessarily have the venues to show them.



What does the work that you've shown and produced say about American design at this moment?

Getting everybody else to understand what we're up to besides your typical gallery-goer. In the neighborhood we're in, the people who walk in are expecting to be challenged. We want to challenge the people who are perhaps less inclined to consider contemporary design as something for their home. It's hard to get them to understand that these are pieces to take off the pedestal. *Interview by Dan Rubinstein*



# 17



Thom Collins at the Miami Art Museum. Portrait: Prescott McDonald. (OPPOSITE) A rendering of the south elevation view of the new Pérez Art Museum Miami, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, in Museum Park.

PHOTO (OPPOSITE) BOTTOM (RIGHT): COURTESY, HERZOG & DE MEURON

## THOM COLLINS

Director, Miami Art Museum

One of Miami's most dynamic recent imports is Thom Collins, who as director of the Miami Art Museum since 2010 is overseeing the institution's new construction, scheduled to open next year. The canopied building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron and named for local real estate impresario Jorge Pérez, who donated \$35 million to help build it, will contain 200,000 square feet of programmable space right on Biscayne Bay. Collins is actively heralding the cultural significance of the city—a mission consistent with his tenures at institutions such as the Neuberger Museum at SUNY Purchase, the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. He believes his current hometown is an especially apt place for realizing his industrious theories. "Miami is the future," he says.

How is the building's construction going?

We're about a year away from opening—on schedule and on budget, which is insane. In Miami, that's unusual. We're working with a great contractor. I think they've taken special care of this project because they actually value the fact that it's a cultural institution.

What challenges do you need to address?

When I arrived, the building wasn't fully designed. It was a challenge at first to hear repeatedly, "Why do you need a new museum building?" I had to keep reminding people that there's a difference between an extraordinary private collection that's made public and a collection that's built in trusts as a public institution. The principle mission is public service.

But the building is funded by Jorge Pérez?

A lot of the funding is public, from the county, and we have tens of millions of dollars from private funding. But Mr. Pérez's gift was the largest.

How would you define your vision for the institution?

We see our unique opportunity as offering not just exhibitions and educational programs but social programs that are uniquely attuned to the concerns of our diverse beneficiaries. By doing so, we'll be modeling a museum practice that's truly progressive and increasingly relevant for other cities in this hemisphere.

Why does that particular model matter for Miami?

We're in a unique and special position. We're in a community with a lot of strength and resources, and the diversity of the community is a big part of its strength. And money is coming from all over the place. We aspire to be a key force behind

Miami's evolution as a cultural port so that it's meaningful to the largest number of people. We want to showcase work that weds novel, important ideas to compelling forms. How do you change the way people think and behave? You have to shock them out of their complacency.

Do you think your own career mimics that?

I hope so! To the extent that I gravitate toward artists who engage the world by giving them a platform, then in some ways I, too, am engaging the world in complex ways, or at least I'm encouraging the museum to do that.

Is that what gets you out of bed in the morning?

No, fear that I'm paying for my trainer does.

Did that happen when you moved to Miami, with the pressure of having a beach body?

A fun factoid: In the two years I've been here, I've never been to the beach. Maybe the weekend after the new building opens, I'll go. *Interview by Julie Baumgardner*

## ANTHONY & AURORA MAZZEI

Cofounders, Fair Folks & a Goat

Following stints on the Upper East Side and in New Orleans, former Phillips de Pury store manager Aurora Stokowski, 29, recently opened the third edition of Fair Folks & a Goat on the ground floor of a Greenwich Village townhouse. Stokowski conceived the subscription-based hybrid café-gallery-showroom in 2009 with Anthony Mazzei, who's now her husband, to provide a social space for the design-minded; for a \$25 monthly fee, members get unlimited coffee, discounts on products, and invitations to weekly events, from trunk shows to panel discussions. "It provides the backdrop for telling a story and creates an environment that feels really aspirational," Stokowski says. "That's always been a big part of what our brand's really about: exploring beautiful things in a casual setting." Members can also buy pieces from the space's revolving art collection, such as a silkscreen print by Portland-based Mark Warren Jacques, or the chair they're sitting in, like a pine bench by Brooklynite Caleb Zipperer, or whatever else strikes them in the space.—JANELLE ZARA





## 10 ARIC CHEN

*Creative Director, Beijing Design Week*

"A lack of talent and imagination is not going to be a problem in China," says writer-curator-critic of art, architecture, and design Aric Chen. (He's also a *Surface* contributing editor.) After directing the 2011 Beijing Design Week relaunch, he learned that the bigger obstacle is "whether the system will allow for that talent and imagination to flourish." For the Chicago native and New Yorker of 12 years—and now resident of China for four years—BDW serves as not only a vehicle to bring groundbreaking Chinese designers into the Western spotlight but also to introduce very American notions of creative independence, rather than reliance on government support, to Chinese designers. Chen, 39, says this "openness, pragmatism, and straightforwardness deeply embedded in the U.S." will play an important part in his newly tapped curatorial role at M+, a visual-culture museum opening in Hong Kong in 2017.

*"The way architecture has changed here in many ways mirrors the bigger story of China's grappling with modernity."*



Congratulations on your recent appointment at M+. What can you do in the next five years, before it opens, to prepare?

At first it was a running joke: "What are we going to do in that period?" But the deeper I got into it, the more I

realized how much there really is to do in the next five years. The museum is for visual culture, so it's going to be multidisciplinary from the start, focusing on art, design, architecture, and the moving image. The first question is, how do you combine all these disciplines and create a compelling interaction among them? And how do you do that from an Asian perspective? We have a chance to really tell some new stories and some old stories in new ways. We'll be building a permanent collection and putting a lot of time into figuring out what that collection will be and what it's really about.

You mentioned presenting narratives from an "Asian perspective." Can you explain how it differs from that of the West?

The way in which architecture has changed here in many ways mirrors the bigger story of China's grappling with modernity. After the Communist revolution, architecture became an implement of expressing state power. Now that China has changed, architecture is being explored in other ways—ways that are very much part of the international mainstream, but in a way they're also searching for both an expression and a formulation that's relevant to China itself. The question of what Chinese architecture is—or better yet, architecture itself—is in China is still a very relevant one. There are a lot of designers who are very actively exploring it. The most notable example, of course, is Wang Shu, who just won the Pritzker Prize this year.

Has living in China changed your own perspectives on art and design?

Of course. When I was in New York, I thought New York was the center of the universe. If we had to choose one center of the universe, honestly, we'd have to pick New York, but let's face it: There are many more centers of the universe, and living here has opened my mind enormously.

Do you consider your work at BDW and M+ an opportunity to put certain designers on the map?

Really, a lot is happening over here, and it just needs people to help communicate that. That's a big part of my job. *Interview by Janelle Zara*

## 20 TROY THERRIEN & CHRISTOPHER BARLEY

*Partners, Therrien-Barley*

In 2007, while students in the master's program at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP), Troy Therrien and Christopher Barley collaborated on their first project together. Immediately, they bonded, in large part over the fact that they both happened to be fascinated with a rarely considered topic in architecture: youth. Shortly after they graduated in 2009, the MoMA curator Barry Bergdoll, who had taught them at GSAPP, tapped the two to organize "YAP 10th Anniversary Review," a show chronicling the first 10 years of the MoMA PS1 Young Architects Program. For them, it was the ideal opportunity to look at "how youth and architecture is codified, the interbreeding of it, and what it means to be youthful," says Therrien, 31.

After that, Therrien left for London to study at the Architectural Association for a year, then took a position

in New York at Bruce Mau Design and later as chief architect for cloud communication software at GSAPP; Barley remained in the city, where he worked on OMA/AMO's Hermitage master plan and then took a position at SOM. Last year, Barley left his job to launch with Therrien a sort of curatorial firm, Therrien-Barley, and from there they took on their first client, Experiments in Motion, a partnership between GSAPP and Audi of America that's part of Audi's Urban Future Initiative. The project started with a three-month think tank and continued last spring with three research-based studios led by Jürgen Mayer H., Jeffrey Inaba, Geoff Manaugh, Nicola Twilley, and Marc Kushner. (GSAPP dean Mark Wigley framed the program's academic portion.) In September, the duo helped organize a Lower East Side exhibit—which included a suspended, 50-foot-long, 1:1500-scale model of Manhattan made

of aluminum and Plexiglas—compiling research from the project's first year. Of Experiments in Motion, the 30-year-old Barley says, "A lot of it is taking the hyper-theoretical product of Columbia and bringing that down into chunks that anyone can understand." Adds Therrien: "It's kind of like operating at a managerial level, but through the entrepreneurial idea of bringing different institutions together and making them slightly uncomfortable." And, well, youthful. —SPENCER BAILEY

An exhibition on Manhattan's Lower East Side in September, as seen at a fundraiser for the proposed Lowline underground park, organized as part of GSAPP and Audi of America's Experiments in Motion partnership and curated by Therrien-Barley. (OPPOSITE) Aric Chen in Beijing. Portrait: Eric Gregory Powell.



PHOTO: COLLIN ERICSON