



Transformed
DELIGHTS//

2x4

Blu Dot

B9

Joeseph Holtzman


Huntergatherer

Loyandford

Mike Mills

Christoph Niemann

David Weeks Lighting



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DELIGHTS//

Essays by Donald Albrecht, Ellen Lupton, Mitchell Owens, and Susan Yelavich

Edited and designed by Sara Martin

[Featuring]

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Prada Wallpaper [Detail]
Environmental Graphics, 2002
Digital print on coated fabric
Designers: Karen Hsu and Michael Rock. 2x4.
[with OMA/AMO Architects: Rem Koolhaas, Ole Scheren,
Eric Chang, Tim Archibault].
Client: Prada
Photography: Courtest Prada

2x4

MICHAEL ROCK B. 1959
SUSAN SELTERS B. 1967
GEORGIE STOUT B. 1967

NEW YORK CITY

The graphic design firm 2x4 was founded in 1993 by Michael Rock, Susan Sellers, and Georgie Stout. The group is known for its research-based approach to graphic design, which critically explores the languages and conventions of mass media. 2x4 has collaborated on several projects with Rem Koolhaas's OMA Architects, including McCormick Tribune Center, a new student center on the campus of Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. 2x4's "hypercon system" is a standard set of pictorial icons that are humorously recombined to create inventive graphic images, used on wallcoverings, clocks, signs, maps, and other surfaces throughout the building. A 20-foot-tall portrait of architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, who designed the campus after he emigrated to the United States, is constructed from thousands of human-shaped "pixels" and overlooks the campus. Another recent collaboration between 2x4 and OMA is Prada's flagship store in New York City, where 2x4 created a 200-foot stretch of custom wallpaper that provides a changing visual commentary on media and fashion. **EL**

Minneapolis-based Blu Dot confounds the cultural prejudices that favor America's coasts as the seedbeds of all things cool. Their affordable furniture is as elegantly designed and easy-to-assemble as their products' names are light-hearted.

Founded in 1996 by Maurice Blanks, John Christakos, and Charlie Lazor, friends schooled in architecture and art at Williams College, Blu Dot has produced about forty furniture pieces. "What makes our furniture different and affordable," Christakos says, "is that we approach design from the inside out, with production, packaging, and shipping in mind. The forms of our furniture bubble up from these issues." Blu Dot's partners enjoy working within technical and economic constraints. Created recently for Herman Miller's Red line, Blu-Dot's Plug and Play is an erector set of filing units, shelves, and other components "plugged" into freestanding pegboard screens. Although this project didn't reach the marketplace, Blu Dot still pursues the holy grail of good design—design that is, Lazor says, "useful and delightful to ordinary people, everyday." **DA**

BLU DOT

MAURICE BLANKS B. 1964
JOHN CHRISTAKOS B. 1964
CHARLIE LAZOR B. 1964

MINNEAPOLIS

Plug and Play Screen
Prototype, 2001
Polyethylene, powder-coated steel, rubber
Designers: Charlie Lazor, John Christakos, and Maurice Blanks
Client: Herman Miller, Zeekand, Michigan



B9

CRITZ CAMPBELL B. 1967
CHICAGO

Critz Campbell's Eudora chair, named after his fellow Mississippian, author Eudora Welty, is the design equivalent of a steel magnolia. Seemingly the archetypal 1930s armchair in grandmother's living room, Eudora is upholstered in charming vintage fabrics. Emanating coziness, the chair glows from within. These nostalgic associations draw people toward Eudora, only to discover that the chair is made of fiberglass, its fabric is encased in resin, and its source of light is fluorescent tubes. Some people thrill to its novel materials. Some make the connection to such design icons as Shiro Kuramata's Miss Blanche chair (1988), in which flowers are suspended in clear acrylic resin. Still others are disappointed, even disquieted, as their sentimental memories are turned on end.

The pun behind the name of Campbell's studio—b9—suggests his work's double edge. Like Campbell himself, his designs initially appear sweetly "benign." But closer inspection reveals a serious core, one that layers technical innovation, fine craftsmanship, design history, and an understanding of the meaning of objects in contemporary culture. **DA**

Eudora Chair
Fiberglass, cotton fabric, polyester resin, fluorescent
lights, 2001
Designer: Critz Campbell
Fabrics: "Norfolk Rose" by Waverly Fabrics



JOSEPH HOLTzman

B. 1957

NEW YORK CITY



Marijuana Leaf Chintz Fabric
2001

Designers: Joseph Holtzman, Kazumi Yoshida
Photography: Courtesy nest

In the pages of nest, Joseph Holtzman, as publisher, has become a collector of other people's rooms. A quarterly of interiors, nest is a lavishly decorated object in and of itself. Its pages are pierced, scalloped, notched, beribboned, and otherwise altered, issue to issue. Nest has given a whole new meaning to the term "shelter magazine," taking its readers inside submarines, palaces, ice huts, crematoria, and country houses. Nest is nothing if not eclectic.

For the exhibition, Joseph Holtzman, as interior decorator, has created a complete room. Wholly conceived and strictly proportioned, Holtzman's room is the antithesis of eclectic, though it may be the definition of eccentric. Holtzman has designed every aspect of the room's decor himself: its furnishings and fabrics, even its floor and ceiling. Striped jacquard wallcoverings hang from a molding of "buttons" that double as a hanging system for contemporary art. Chairs are upholstered in his marijuana-leaf chintz. The room's intelligence goes beyond the carefully calibrated relationships of color and form, material and light. It is redolent with historical references, yet it is consummately personal. No one will mistake this "period room" as dating from any but our own. **SY**



Green Lady
Silk Screened Sweatshirt, 2000
Designers: Todd St. John and Gary Benzel, Green Lady

HUNTERGATHERER

TODD ST. JOHN B. 1969
GARY BENZEL B. 1970

NEW YORK CITY AND SAN DIEGO

Todd St. John and Gary Benzel launched their design business, Green Lady, with a t-shirt. Their practice now includes furniture, objects, films, and other media. On one shirt, simulated masking tape spells the name "GRN LDY." Another depicts the evolution of the human species in reverse—from man back to ape. A star map traces consumerist constellations. A foldable magazine rack covered with an enlarged woodgrain pattern refers both to paneled basements and portable camping gear—the factory-made equipment of the modern hunter/gatherer. The urban primitivism of such objects is set in motion in St. John's deliberately low-tech videos and animations. Green Lady, founded in 1995, is the duo's fashion company, and it has attracted an international following. Huntergatherer (HuGa) is a separate firm established by St. John in Brooklyn in 2000. **EL**

Shards of men's gray flannel suiting meet flowered silk and pleated chiffon. Old jackets are turned inside out, transforming once-hidden seams into decorative details. Take the power suits and glamorous evening gowns from the 1980s television series *Dynasty*, cut and reassemble them into inventive fashion collages, and an image of LoyandFord's fall 2001 couture collection emerges. Fashion references are genetically recombined: Yves Saint Laurent's masculine glamour fuses with Gianni Versace's hypersexuality, Vivienne Westwood's punk with Martin Margiela's deconstructionism. Surprisingly, all this ripping and reassembling yields clothing that is expertly constructed into strong, asymmetrical silhouettes. The mood is conceptual and sensual, streetwise and salon-suave.

"Mostly," Loy says, "it starts with the fabric. We are trying to find new ways of defining a new shape or a new color.... We'll like pieces that are wrong in a way. The concept is to rework how clothes were made in the past. It's about craftsmanship." In addition to buying fabric, they purchase ready-made clothes. Loy and Ford then deconstruct the clothes, and before reassembling them, dye, print, and sometimes embroider the fabrics by hand. While Loy and Ford say fashion is not an art, the process they follow is as inspired and thoughtful as a painter's or sculptor's. **DA**

LOYANDFORD

STEFAN LOY B. 1965
FRANK FORD B. 1966

LOS ANGELES



Half Jacket And Made Out Of Two Skirt
Garments, 2001
Gabardine, wool
Designers: Stefan Loy and Frank Ford
Manufacturer: LoyandFord



Paperboys
Film stills, 2001
Director: Mike Mills
Producers: Ned Brown,
Katherine Kennedy, Julia Leach
Client: Jack Spade

MIKE MILLS

B. 1966

THE DIRECTOR'S BUREAU
LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK CITY

The films and graphics of Mike Mills are populated with unlikely heroes. His acclaimed documentary film *Paperboys* examines the lives of teenagers in a Minnesota suburb. Like an anthropologist, Mills carefully observes the boys' homes, hobbies, and family lives, allowing each subject to appear both as an individual and as a representative of his group. The portraits in a group of digital prints called *Every Face Is Exactly the Same* have matching features; only their hairstyles and eyelashes change.

Although the prints were presented in an art gallery, Mills calls them graphic design, asserting his roots in a discipline he has been able to both master and more or less walk away from. After studying art and design at the Cooper Union in New York City in the mid-1980s, Mills created album covers, posters, logos, and t-shirts for bands, skateboard companies, and streetwear labels. In 1998 he cofounded The Directors Bureau (TDB) with filmmaker Roman Coppola in Los Angeles. At TDB, a company whose low-key, low-gloss persona has made it fashionably at odds with Hollywood's dominant slickness, Mills has directed music videos for Air, Moby, and other bands, and commercials for Adidas, Nike, The Gap, and Volkswagen, while also directing his own independent films.

Mike Mills has fueled his own ride to independence with the energy of pop culture. **EL**

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

B. 1970
NEW YORK CITY

The editorial illustrations of Christoph Niemann use images as poetic language packed with double meaning. An x-ray view of skeleton hand holding a skeleton gun represents gun culture in America. A cover design for The New Yorker's 2002 fashion issue presents a serene Japanese courtesan clothed in Asian exports: a cellphone fan, an earphone hair ornament, and a Pokémon kimono with a circuit board sash. Another New Yorker cover shows a darkened war room where a team of trigger-happy hawks leap to action as Fourth of July fireworks flash on a small screen. Niemann, a German born illustrator and designer, pursued summer internships with Paul Davis and Paula Scher which he was a student in Stuttgart. He returned to New York after graduating in 1997 and quickly found a place working with the city's most important venues for editorial illustration, from The New York Times and The New Yorker and Rolling Stone. **EL**

Pret-A-Porter
Cover Illustration (detail), 2002
Illustrator: Christoph Niemann
Art Director: Françoise Mouly
Publisher: The New Yorker



David Weeks has figured out how to have his cake and eat it—with Butter. Weeks functions both as an independent studio designer under David Weeks Lighting (DWL) and as Lindsey Adelman’s partner in Butter, which specializes in affordable, mass-produced lighting. Between the two, he has managed to achieve an elusive balance between the rawness of the specific and the smoothness of the general.

The lamps, wall sconces, and chandeliers that have their provenance with DWL are essentially limited editions produced by hand in a system that medieval guilds would recognize. Lamp shades are variously made of hand-finished steel and aluminum, fiberglass, plastic, paper, and wood veneer with an exactitude not possible with high volume. Armatures are soldered in the studio.

Such obsessions are not for Lindsey Adelman. After working together at DWL, she and David decided to take the opposite tack: selling designs not lamps. With bare bulbs, wire, sockets, cords, and paper, they design the simplest (and most satisfying) of lighting fixtures and hand them off to commercial producers. Butter produces the disarmingly direct Dumpling pendant lamp, the Daisy Chain, and the Tong wall sconce.

Weeks’s practice may be bifurcated, but that’s because he doesn’t see access to aesthetics as a choice. He’s an equal opportunity designer. **SY**

DAVID WEEKS LIGHTING and BUTTER

STEFAN LOY B. 1965
FRANK FORD B. 1966

LOS ANGELES



Daisy Chain Pendant [detail]
Lighting, 2001
Steel wire, electrical parts
Designers: Lindsey Adelman and David Weeks, Butter
Photography: Courtesy Butter

COLOPHON

[Futura, Light Condensed] This sans-serif typeface was designed in 1927 by Paul Renner. Futura is well known for its geometric qualities, and comes in a variety of different weights and styles.

[Filosofia, Unicase] Based off of the typeface Bodoni, Filosofia Unicase combines the lower and uppercase into one typeface. Filosofia Unicase was created by Zuzana Licko in 1996.

Printed with Xerox Phaser 6250N Color, on 25 lb paper.

Created for Typography at RISD, Wintersession 2006

