Five shows that stretch the boundaries between furniture and art

By Drew Zeiba • February 23, 2018 • Art, Design, National, On View

While the boundaries between art, architecture, and design are already often quite murky, the following artists are troubling the bounds even further, using furniture's familiar forms to examine...
Five shows that stretch the boundaries between furniture and art

exhibitions are sure to provoke a reconsideration of furniture and its relationship to domesticity, technology, and history.

A two-for-one, C-L-E-A-R-I-N-G’s Bushwick, Brooklyn location has on display simultaneous shows of artists reinventing domestic forms.


Hannah Levy: Swamp Salad
C-L-E-A-R-I-N-G
396 Johnson Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
Through March 11

Hannah Levy’s fleshy furnishings in Swamp Salad feature her signature space-age grotesque sculptures in molded steel and flesh-hued silicon. Pearl-accented lounge chairs (derived from French modernist Charlotte Perriand’s iconic designs), coat racks of elongated steel bones, and alabaster bicycle helmets circle around a screen, mounted on an intrusive, curvaceous steel bar descending from the ceiling which a video of long-nailed hands plucking pearls from oysters. Categories like natural and artificial, familiar and strange, pull apart to uncanny effect in Levy’s mixed-up alien universe.

Trending Now
1 A corbelled brick facade makes waves on a Hyderabad apartment complex
2 Why do glassy towers keep killing so many birds?
3 New York’s Governor Hochul wants to link Queens and Brooklyn via the Interborough Express
4 Op-ed: How can architecture firms adjust to the future of hybrid work?
5 Santiago Calatrava’s slippery Venice footbridge will finally get a fix
6 Chicago’s historic Pioneer Bank & Trust will be transformed into affordable housing
7 Venice fines Santiago Calatrava for slippery, inaccessible bridge
Also at C-L-E-A-R-I-N-G, Daniel Dewar and Grégory Gicquel, who have been collaborating since 2003, go on a psychosexual escapade in stone, both reveling in and being irreverent of sculptural tradition. *Rosa Aurora Rosa*, a name derived from the Portuguese pink marble that makes up the central massive sculptures of the show, blends body and bathroom in forms that seem at once ancient and contemporary. Along the walls are “paintings” in stone, also depicting bodies, vessels, and holes.
BLESS, the Berlin and Paris-based creative collective founded by Ines Kaag and Desiree Heiss, has reimagined classic Artek products as “architurniture." Expanding on their 1998 BLESS Nº 7 Livingroom Conquerors, BLESS moved into public space with BLESS Nº60 Lobby Conquerors. Originally commissioned for the 2017 Chicago Architecture Biennial, the Lobby Conquerors have been brought to New York’s Mathew gallery in collaboration with architecture magazine PIN–UP and furniture manufacturer Artek. Taking designer Ilmari Tapiovaara’s iconic 1960 Kiki benches and lounge chairs and 1954 Lukki stools for Artek, BLESS dressed up the modernist seating with fur, fabric, and architectural add-ons that invite a whole new confrontation between people and furniture.
Welcome to the Dollhouse
Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, CA
Through April 8

Welcome to the Dollhouse, at L.A. MOCA’s Pacific Design Center, uses objects from the museum’s permanent collection to come to terms with and trouble notions of domesticity. Featuring art across a range of media, the exhibition plays house with artists including Lynn Aldrich, Julie Becker, Meg Cranston, Ross Bleckner, Moyra Davey, Judy Fiskin, Robert Gober, Jim Isermann, Mike Kelley, Roy McMakin, Rodney McMillian, Bill Owens, Jorge Pardo, Richard Prince, among others.

Jillian Mayer: Slumpies
Tufts University
40 Talbot Avenue, Medford, MA and 230 Fenway, Boston, MA
Through April 15

Artist Jillian Mayer has been designing furniture for the digital age. These amalgamations of fiberglass, epoxy, resin, wood, and paint are designed to be a new ergonomic solution for perhaps our most common activity, looking at our phones. The so-called Slumpies invite new postures of standing, sitting, and lying alone or with friends to stare at your screen endlessly without having to worry about neck strain. By equal measures practical and parody, the Slumpies are currently on view around Tufts University's Boston and Medford campuses in conjunction with the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston's exhibition Art in the Age of the Internet, 1989 to Today.

Ever popular and prescient, the Slumpies are also currently on view at New York's Postmasters gallery.
Jillian Mayer: Post Posture
Postmasters
54 Franklin Street, New York, NY
Through March 31
Five shows that stretch the boundaries between furniture and art

Human Touch
**Miami Art Week 2021 advocated for more inclusion and a better understanding of nature**
December 13, 2021

Big Apple Energy
**Exhibitors at New York Design Week 2021 pulled out all the stops**
December 8, 2021

Back In Action
**New York collectible design fair Salon Art + Design returns for a robust 10th edition**
November 12, 2021