

SCENE

WRITTEN BY ADRIAN MADLENER

ONES TO WATCH

ASTRAEUS CLARKE



From their origins out West, Chelsie and Jacob Starley (far left) bring a fresh sensibility and exuberance to the New York design scene. Defined by sizable, geometric and boldly textured compositions, their lighting studio, Astraeus Clarke is debuting with a range of luminaires blending



interaction with materiality. “We started our practice based on a desire to connect humans with design,” Chelsie explains. Each of the duo’s distinct pieces are fully customizable and handcrafted in-house by a close-knit team of artisans. The Tinge table lamp’s (left) light-diffusing glass disc serves as its control, and the multidimensional Roebbling sconce derives from the experience of witnessing the Brooklyn Bridge through a basement window. Architectural references are also evident in the industrial-inspired, modular Lapel pendant system. And the monumental Alpine table and floor fixtures (far left) allude to the contours of mountainous peaks seen in the Starleys’ native Utah. The pair cleverly matches function with play as they harness noble materials and specific assembly techniques to create succinct statement pieces. astraeusclarke.com

ONES TO WATCH PHOTOS: COURTESY ASTRAEUS CLARKE.
OPEN HOUSE PHOTO: COURTESY OKA.

OPEN HOUSE

OKA WESTPORT

Celebrated British purveyor of luxury furniture and home accessories Oka has opened its latest storefront in Westport, Connecticut. Situated along the storied suburban village’s main commercial street, the brand’s third U.S. location showcases its eclectic array of classic and modern wares. “We are very excited to bring Oka to the East Coast, and especially to Westport,” cofounder and creative director Sue Jones says. “Its rich cultural history and artistic bent make it a perfect match for us.” Indeed, located just an hour from the New York metropolitan area, Westport strikes a balance between small-town charm and the hustle and bustle of the city. The new outpost will cater to a discerning clientele seeking out well-crafted and sophisticated accents that can bring a sense of English charm into their homes—many of which were constructed in an architectural style that references back to the European country. oka.com





TRANSFORMATION

THE HISPANIC SOCIETY MUSEUM & LIBRARY



There are hidden gems throughout New York City and not in the least along the northern reaches of Harlem. The recently revamped Hispanic Society Museum & Library in Hamilton Heights is the only institution of its kind in the United States to preserve and exhibit art from Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries. It houses the most extensive collection of works and artifacts outside the Iberian peninsula and Latin America—and has now reopened its doors to the public.

Housed in a stunning 1904 Beaux Arts building, it has undergone various phases of renovations over the years. Stemming from its most ambitious capital project to date, the platform's Audubon Terrace, Main Court and Sorolla galleries have been completely updated thanks to the combined efforts of Selldorf Architects, Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners, and landscape architecture firm Reed Hilderbrand. hispanicsociety.org

ON VIEW

“EVERYTHING HERE IS VOLCANIC”

Organized by noted curator and consultant Mario Ballesteros, the “Everything Here is Volcanic” exhibition at Friedman Benda gallery presents a survey of Mexican talents from different regions of the vast country. The group show, on view from January 9 to February 18, reveals a diversity of practices, preoccupations and applications, as the exhibited designers mix ancient culture with new approaches (on themes like branding or even farming) to make statements about ecology and identity. “The exhibition wants to transport the chaotic, multifarious, supersaturated and superimposed nature of design as practiced now in Mexico,” Ballesteros says. “Objects can sometimes be better vessels for incommunicable or untranslatable ideas, values and conditions.” friedmanbenda.com



SHELF LIFE

Wangechi Mutu

Phaidon's newly released, in-depth monograph on the multidisciplinary practice of New York-based Kenyan artist Wangechi Mutu is full of thought-provoking visuals and critique. Throughout a prolific career defined as both an African Futurist and Afrofuturist artist, Mutu's use of collage, painting, immersive installation, live and video performance has allowed her to subvert recognizable imagery in critical transfigurations that address gender, race and colonialization. A fixture of the New York art scene since the 1990s, Mutu notably gained acclaim for the 2006 installation entitled *Exhuming Gluttony: A Lover's Requiem*. Developed with architect David Adjaye, the piece consisted of transforming the Upper East Side townhouse of gallery Salon 94 into a subterranean dinner party. Her work has since been featured at London's Victoria Miro Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and at the 56th Venice Biennale, among many other prominent institutions and events. phaidon.com



INSPIRING MIND

KICKIE CHUDIKOVA

With projects like the Spiral of Life bench, which took center stage in NYCxDesign's latest ImpactxDesign program, or her 3D-printed Ether Vase (top right), New York-based product designer Kickie Chudikova (above) is all about color, playful forms and new production methods. Since 2020, she's developed her own lines of furnishings and objets, as well as accessories for the MoMA Design Store and a recent lighting collection with Gantri. Here, she talks to *Luxe* about creating holistic and responsible—yet aesthetically rich—pieces. kickiechudikova.com

In what ways does the idea of creating innovative solutions influence your style? Using on-demand manufacturing processes such as 3D printing allows you to quickly iterate ideas without producing extra waste. We can create more challenging shapes without using expensive molds, which ultimately leads to more freedom in creation.

How does your goal to have a positive effect on people and the environment translate into your practice? Creating a unique object that uplifts people's spirits and has a minimal impact on our environment is crucial to the future of design. I like to use color in my work to trigger an emotional connection, but also soft, playful shapes that please the eye.

CHECK IN

THE PEACOCK INN

WRITTEN BY ANN PERES

For a true throwback, and a charming one at that, book a weekend at the iconic Peacock Inn in the heart of downtown Princeton, New Jersey. This quaint boutique hotel is as refreshing as the *Domaine Vocoret & Fils* served at the chic lobby bar. Originally built in the 1700s, the residence was considered one of the town's first demi-mansions and was home to Continental Congress member Jonathan Deare. Its guest list over the years has included Albert Einstein and F. Scott Fitzgerald, to name a few. While the historical aura and architecture remain intact, the structure and vibe have been revitalized with a modern take. Its 16 stylish rooms read bright and airy, while public areas, like the spacious front porch, patio and lushly landscaped backyard, make lovely spots for a relaxing afternoon tea service. Additional temptations include *The Perch*, the property's fine dining restaurant featuring creative American cuisine and locally sourced ingredients. peacockinn.com

