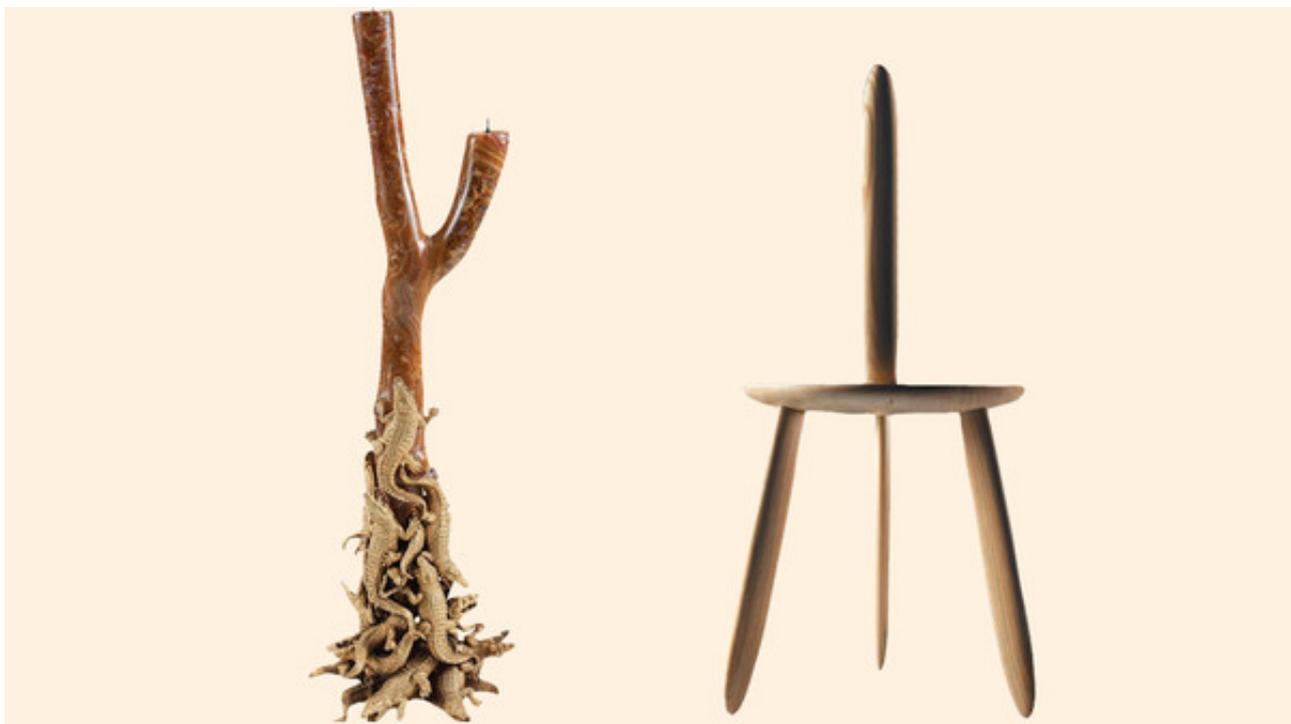


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The Design Market: O brothers, where art thee? Milan, New York and Dubai

By Gareth Harris

Sibling duos, growth in mid-century modern design and who to watch at the Milan Furniture Fair



'Candelabro Coccodrilli' by the Campana brothers

There is always a high level of craftsmanship at arguably the most important week in the design calendar: the Milan Furniture Fair (April 9-14). Someone to watch is Dutch designer Aldo Bakker, who makes products from ceramics, glassware and urushi (Japanese lacquer) using traditional craft techniques. "His products are characterised by a thoughtfulness and complexity that emerges from his rethinking of everyday functions and rituals," says the London-based design consultant Jane Withers. Bakker will unveil prototypes for new pieces such as a volcanic stone stool (€13,459, edition of seven) made for the Particles Gallery collection in Amsterdam.

Also look out for a meticulously structured armchair fashioned from rattan palms by Italian architect Benedetta Tagliabue. The prototype for the “Tina” chair will be available in Milan through the Spanish furniture manufacturer Expormim (retail price €1,250).

Meanwhile, the “Losanges II” rug is a new product from the Bouroullec brothers, a French design duo. It is made using the ancient kilim technique of hand-weaving with Afghan wool (a labour-intensive process whereby warp and weft looms are interlaced). The rugs range in price (depending on size) from €3,225 to €9,576 (through the Spanish company Nanimarquina).

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Siblings are certainly making their presence felt at the moment. Fernando and Humberto Campana – a powerhouse Brazilian contemporary design duo known for their irreverent, absurd and gothic style – have two new shows launching in London and New York which could prove a fillip for their market (which remains moderately healthy: nine works by the brothers consigned to a sale late February at Pierre Bergé & Associés auction house in Paris hit their low estimate). The brothers’ first solo US show opens on June 5 at the Friedman Benda gallery, marking their new partnership with the New York dealer. You can count on the Campanas to make a splash with new works in cowhide, including a wall-mounted bookshelf, table, and standing shelf, as well as multiple pieces made up of recycled parts taken from discarded Thonet chairs. Prices will be within the current “levels for the Campanas: \$20,000-\$100,000”, says a gallery spokesman.

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David Gill Galleries in London will show a series of highly ornate coffee tables, chairs and candelabra from the “Brazilian Baroque” series (May 1-June 15) which featured in an exhibition of the Campanas’ work last year at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. “Each piece is made by craftsmen in a Roman workshop, specialising in bronze work, demonstrating magnificent skill in welding together a jumble of decorative motifs: keys, leaves, cupids and crocodiles,” says the gallery.

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More brothers (twins this time) made an



‘Candelabro Coccodrilli’ by the Campana brothers

impact at the second edition of the Design Days Dubai fair in mid-March. A brass hex stool (2012) by Los Angeles-based Nikolai and Simon Haas, available with New York gallery R 20th Century, looked shiny and new, an aesthetic that appealed to the numerous expatriates and interior designers who attended the Emirati event. This was not a fair for connoisseurs of vintage design, with almost everything on show dating from the 21st century. But what it lacked in classic blue-chip modern design, it arguably made up for in fresh thinking. The Melbourne gallery Broached Commissions sold a lamp by Lucy McRae for \$14,000 to a local buyer. The piece, which looked like an outsize tarantula, was made from 80,000 toothpicks.



Lamp by Lucy McRae

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There are many meaningful nuggets on the modern and contemporary design market in the latest collectable design annual report produced by the online think tank DeTnk. “The area with the largest growth [in 2012] is mid-century modern [1945-70], which grew 56 per cent in value and 35 per cent in volume since 2011,” says the report’s editor Ben Faga, who collated results from five auction houses including Sotheby’s and Phillips. Significantly, the research indicates that the market for 20th-century work (rather than post-2000 design) by Rotterdam-based designer Hella Jongerius is holding up (“Giant Prince” vase, 2000, fetched \$86,500 at auction last year); Jongeriu recently revamped KLM’s World Business Class cabin interiors.

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Patrick Perrin, co-founder of the Pavilion of Art+Design fairs in Paris and London, has confirmed plans to launch a third version of the fair in Los Angeles at the Barker Hangar in Santa Monica (April 23-27, 2014). French auction house Piasa plans to open a saleroom in April in a former 17th-century chapel on Paris’s Left Bank. Piasa Rive Gauche will be primarily devoted to design and decorative arts sales, launching on April 8 with a smorgasbord of postwar Italian design. Works are available by the late Neapolitan sculptor Annibale Oste including a striking 1977 floor lamp in bronze and wood, with a high estimate of €30,000-€50,000.



The '3dwn1up Chair' by Aldo Bakker