

In the Galleries: Crossing Boundaries from

PEDRO BARRAIL: NOT THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

There's a streak of fearlessness in designer and architect Pedro Barrail's work. He doesn't shrink from unorthodox juxtapositions; in fact, he welcomes them. His handcrafted furniture comfortably marries contemporary forms with the traditional craftsmanship of his native Paraguay. For more than a decade Barrail has been working with an artisan from a village outside his hometown of Asuncion, designing wooden tables, benches, and chairs, among other objects, bearing the intricate woodcarvings of the Pai Tavytera tribe. Brought to life by pyrography, or "writing with fire," these ancestral tattoos play off the contours of his furniture and foster what Barrail describes as a "dialogue between modern and traditional design."

A number of these pieces will be on display in his upcoming solo exhibition, *Welcome to the Jungle*, opening at the Cristina Grajales Gallery in New York on October 30. In addition to his tattoo-etched furniture, he will also be showing a very different body of work, one that draws inspiration from the construction sites of his "day job" as an architect. Barrail has been capturing this landscape in photographs since college, homing in on the structural elements of industrial processes, such as handcrafted wooden scaffolding, cranes, and iron rebars. The pictures emphasize the amorphous shapes, angles, and light that emerge from these forms. For this show, he has printed the images onto chairs, tables, and other objects: "I find in architecture and construction, that the process is often more interesting than the finished product," Barrail says. "I find the chaos fascinating." The result is an abstract, almost graffiti-like pattern cast on the surface of his furniture. And while the industrial images are far from the elaborate tribal carvings found in his other work, both are rooted in a rich visual language composed of symbolic gestures. cristinagrajalesinc.com

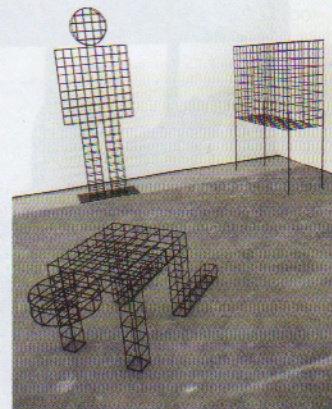
—Nicole Anderson

MONDO CANE, NOW CALLED PATRICK PARRISH, HITTING THE GROUND AND RUNNING

This summer saw a subtle but important shift in the New York design scene as Mondo Cane decamped from its Duane Street location to 50 Lispenard, a few blocks away. Perhaps the bigger story, though, is the new name and the shifting focus it connotes: the design outpost is now named for its owner, Patrick Parrish, and includes everything from vintage furniture to contemporary art in a smaller space with a more edited assortment of objects than at Mondo Cane.

The inaugural exhibition, *Surfaces on Which Your Setting and Sitting Will Be Uncertain*, opened in early September and brings the Minneapolis/St. Paul-based studio RO/LU together with Various Projects, the multidisciplinary design collaboration between Elizabeth Beer and Brian Janusiak. The exhibition includes sculptural furniture made of welded-wire grids created by RO/LU and clothing by Various Projects in a matching grid pattern. The objects are meant to explore the changing "life of things" and transform as the viewer moves around them. The show runs through October 4 and will be followed by *Heavy Vessel*, an exhibition of work by Brooklyn-based Cody Hoyt, November 6 to 29. patrickparrish.com

—Katy Kiick



NEW WORK FROM PERRIN AND PERRIN EXPLORES A WEIGHTY SUBJECT

The paperweight evolved during the industrial revolution with a well-defined function, to keep correspondence in place with the ever-present gusts of winds in breezy households and offices. In the mid-1800s, a new industry emerged in France that transformed these simple glass or metal objects into glorious works of art. In a paperless, technology-driven society, the paperweight might seem like a relic of the past, but Saint-Louis, the crystal company owned by Hermès, has teamed up with Perrin and Perrin to create funky modern riffs on this traditional staple. Martine and Jacki Perrin spent months observing the company's master glassmakers at work in the paperweights workshop, the jewel in the Saint-Louis crown.

The Perrins are confirmed autodidacts, and for forty-five years they have pursued a joint quest to discover a variety of writing styles in several mediums. In the 1980s they explored the calligraphy of the Far East, taught by a master who uttered not a word, and in the mid-1990s they turned their attention to glass. The function of the object and personal encounters with the Saint-Louis craftsmen inspired the duo to create black and white designs meant to evoke the art of writing. The three models of paperweights: Rift, Mesa, and Lapilli, reveal perfectly orchestrated chaos encased in crystal. Each weight is numbered and limited to seventeen examples. After this fall, the lost art of letter writing might not be lost for long. saint-louis.com

—Danielle Devine

