



## HUNKY DORY Objects of Common Interest

Comprising 21 commercially sourced acrylic LED ring lights and a stepped stainless-steel structure, this lamp by New York- and Athens-based practice Objects of Common Interest plays with the formal possibilities of ready-made industrial materials.



## BENT HALF TUBE BRONZE CHAIR Voukenas Petrides

Created using cast and patinated bronze, furniture designer Andreas Voukenas and architect Steven Petrides's amorphous chair has an anthropomorphic quality. The effect can be attributed to the practice's tireless tinkering. "The pair work in a tiny studio producing sculptures all day long," Michael says. "What's special about their approach is that they're able to find function in these pieces."



## HOLY YOGHURT Greece Is for Lovers

"Like a lot of young designers living and working in Athens these days, Greece Is for Lovers likes to play with irony," Michael says. These wooden yogurt containers are inspired by the corrugated cow shed roofs at The Holy Monastery of St. John the Forerunner near Anatoli, Greece.



## TRASHFORMERS Savvas Laz

Trashformers is an ongoing sculptural project by designer Savvas Laz that addresses the seemingly insurmountable global waste crisis. The foam amalgams riff on furniture typologies by combining various bits of upcycled packaging. The works stand as totems for our consumer society.

"There's a patchwork of architectural styles in Athens due to the high-development years. It gives you a lot of freedom as a designer because you're like, 'Okay, I can do whatever I want.'"

STAMOS MICHAEL, GRACE

## MOMMSENSTRASSE Ilias Lefas

Athens cabinetmaker Ilias Lefas has made a name for himself creating unique furnishings for interiors throughout Europe. The blue lacquered Mommсенstrasse table was produced as a DJ stand and features a faceted cast bronze top with hidden compartments.



## Stamos Michael

Athens is perhaps best known for its ruins—from the dilapidated remnants of ancient Greek civilizations to buildings left empty by the 2009 economic collapse. But new life is taking hold as the next generation of artists and designers transforms once derelict spaces into cafes, bars, art galleries, and, maybe most important, studios.

Stamos Michael—an interior architect, furniture designer, and cofounder of Athens's artist-run Grace gallery—explains that the city's low rents have attracted emerging creatives from within Greece and abroad.

"There are many empty spaces that can easily be transformed into studios," Michael says.

"Students are coming from European universities to practice their craft. The ability to have an affordable studio is crucial for young artists and designers, and it's very easy to do here."

The designer points to Rodeo Gallery and Carwan Gallery as two international exhibition spaces that have solidified the city's growing design scene in recent years. Both galleries occupy formerly abandoned warehouses in the Port of Piraeus. Founded in Istanbul, Rodeo Gallery opened in 2018 in an old tobacco factory, while Carwan Gallery relocated from Beirut last September to a 19th-century factory.

Michael—who recently turned a wrecked 1930s residence in the

Philopappou Hill area into the guesthouse-cum-exhibition space Esperinos—is one of many up-and-coming Athens designers focused on discarded and repurposed objects. "Kostas Lambridis's work uses a mix of raw materials that relate to the Athenian industrialized landscape," says Michael, who also calls out Savvas Laz, a Greek designer creating nontraditional furnishings from everyday products and found items.

In October, the first-ever Athens Design Week will be held in the millennia-old capital. "It'll be the first time the city's design community will officially come together," Michael says. "It's going to be spectacular."

PHOTOS: COURTESY THE RESPECTIVE COMPANIES



In recent years, formerly abandoned buildings in Athens have become hotbeds for local creativity as young designers from Greece and abroad transform the unused spaces into affordable galleries and studios.

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