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A Panorama of Design

A look at design-world events, products and people.

By The New York Times

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This article is part of our Design special section about making the environment a creative partner in the design of beautiful homes.



A sociable focal point of the ICFE show this year will be “The Crossroads,” an exhibition seating space featuring American furniture by 17 different design studios. via the Rockwell Group

For an International Furniture Fair, an All-American Nucleus

The International Contemporary Furniture Fair, a trade show of stylish household goods from more than 25 countries, is returning May 21-23 to the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York. This year, however, the centerpiece of the fair known as ICFE won’t be international at all; a 2,000-square-foot exhibition called “The Crossroads” will feature American design.

According to Odile Hainaut, who conceived “The Crossroads” with Claire Pijoulat (both women are ICFF’s brand directors, as well as founders of a concurrent show called “WantedDesign” at the convention center), special attention will be lavished on the home team to help overseas brands that are looking to gain purchase in the United States.

To understand the American design market, “It’s important to examine the diversity of the designers and studios, products, materials, design languages and processes they use,” said Ms. Hainaut. (Both she and Ms. Pijoulat are French-born New Yorkers with wide-angle lenses on international business.)

“The Crossroads” will do away with standard-issue booths and warrens, and offer gallery-like displays by 17 design studios and a sociable seating area. Rockwell Group, a New York-based company that has made its mark at Rockefeller Center and the JetBlue terminal at Kennedy International Airport, designed the exhibition space.

ICFF and WantedDesign anchor an annual citywide festival called NYCxDDesign, which runs May 18-25 this year. Additional events over the week are listed here. Javits Convention Center, 429 11th Avenue, icff.com — *JULIE LASKY*



J.C. Leyendecker's "Men with Golf Clubs" (1909), an oil painting for an Arrow Collar advertisement. National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, R.I.

The Male Gaze of J.C. Leyendecker

The German-born illustrator Joseph Christian Leyendecker (known professionally as J.C.), who prolifically illustrated magazine covers and clothing ads in the early 20th century, lived with his longtime lover, muse and business partner, Charles A. Beach, in a mansion near New York City. Mr. Leyendecker's portraits of Mr. Beach and similarly handsome men unmistakably express admiration for the male physique. For their part, the couple managed to keep their relationship largely secret.

For "Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity," an exhibition through Aug. 13 at the New-York Historical Society, the guest curator Donald Albrecht gathered paintings and ephemera, borrowing extensively from the National Museum of American Illustration in Newport, R.I. The show documents the lives and careers of Mr. Leyendecker, Mr. Beach and other queer and gender-fluid celebrities of their era, such as the writer Langston Hughes and the cross-dressing performer Gladys Bentley.

In Mr. Leyendecker's tableaux, men gaze at each other, or at their own lithe limbs, with unsubtle props — oars, golf clubs, missiles, canes, pipes and megaphones. "Coded: The Hidden Love of J.C. Leyendecker," a short documentary, is now streaming on Paramount+.

One of the film's interviewees, Jennifer Greenhill, a professor at the University of Arkansas, is devoting a chapter to Mr. Leyendecker's work in a forthcoming book, "Commercial Imagination: Psychotechnics of American Advertising, c. 1900." Among his innovations, Dr. Greenhill said, was maximizing the sense of texture in his immersive advertisements. [nyhistory.org](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/04/arts/design/products-events-people.html?searchResultPosition=1) — *EVE M. KAHN*



Pieces from the Donald Judd silver tableware collection, produced by the French silversmith company Puiforcat. Eric Poitevin

Setting Silver at the Table

The artist Donald Judd, who died in 1994, was known for his minimalist works in iron, aluminum and concrete, many tethered to the desert landscape of Marfa, Texas. Perfectly polished silver plates, bowls and cups? Those are not your typical Judd offerings, but they are the newest: the fruits of a collaboration between the artist's foundation and the French silver manufacturer Puiforcat.

It sprang from an unusual commission. In 1989, Mr. Judd was approached to create a tableware set in porcelain. He responded with designs for dozens of pieces, from coffee cups and saucers to cheese plates and serving bowls. But when the prototypes arrived,

rendered in enamel, they didn't meet his specifications. "He wanted flat surfaces and right angles," said his son, Flavin Judd, the artistic director of Judd Foundation, "and those turn out to be very difficult to do in porcelain."

Almost three decades later, the family found a solution in a new material. Upon visiting Puiforcat's centuries-old factory, the younger Mr. Judd realized, "They can do pretty much anything in metal."

Over 17 months, the company's artisans teamed up with the foundation's staff to realize the designs, working through renderings and brass prototypes and eventually creating the final eight-piece series: Donald Judd Dinner Service by Puiforcat.

Flavin Judd said he was confident that his father would be thrilled with the pieces. Any artist or designer would "want to see this stuff in real life," he said. "I mean, that's what you live for, is to see it."

The series, with prices ranging from \$6,000 for a small bread plate to \$22,000 for a round, deep platter, will debut in a trunk show at Hermès Maison Madison May 18-31. It is also available through [puiforcat.com](https://www.puiforcat.com). — *MEGAN McCREA*



Colorful patterns from Cold Picnic's Sweetie collection stretch from walls to floors to furniture. Clement Pascal

When Colorful Interiors Repeat Themselves

The new Sweetie collection from the New York-based design studio Cold Picnic challenges the notion that less is more when it comes to decorating. Phoebe Sung, who runs the company with her husband, Peter Buer, was inspired by Louis Armstrong's home in Queens, particularly a guest room that features a peach-colored leaf pattern across its wallpaper, pillows, curtains and couch.

When designing the collection, Ms. Sung intentionally moved away from creating standout signature pieces, instead embracing repeating colorful motifs in the new line of rugs, wallpaper and, in a first for the company, fabrics for curtains and upholstery.

“We thought it would be overstimulating,” she said from her home in upstate New York, “but it was almost the opposite.”

The Sweetie collection features a number of powdery floral patterns, as well as abstract geometric designs — inspired by national parks, children’s paint sets and even specific movie scenes — that can be splashed across nearly every surface of a room. Dressing an entire room in one pattern may seem daunting to minimalists, but Ms. Sung said having the option “somehow takes the pressure down from decorating.”

Prices for wallpaper start at \$45 per yard; fabric starts at \$100 per yard; and rugs start at \$380. coldpicnic.com — *LAUREN MESSMAN*

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