

AERO INTERIORS IDENTITY



Dear Valued Customer

We are glad to hear of your interested in our business. Included is a catalogue with all of the designers that we currently represent. If there is any additional information that you would require please call us or visit out website and we will be happy to provide you with whatever you need.

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We are looking forward to your business.

Best Wishes,

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volume 3 • issue 5

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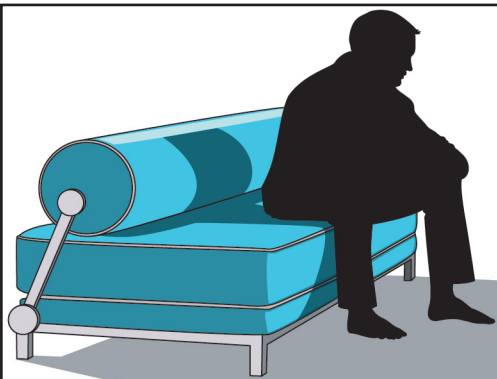
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blu dot

artistic, yet affordable furniture

"Unfortunately, it seems that design and architecture are almost always tilted toward the highly privileged."
Charles Lazor, Blu Dot

Mark and Paul Wadsworth have a graphic and environmental design business to support them; Forbe makes architectural sculpture and environmental elements for commercial interiors. For Guthrie, Russell Banks, and Jeff Bone of Knothead, designing custom furnishings has become a seamless facet to their interior architecture work. The three have ventured individually into small-scale manufacturing, but so far they lack the time, funding, or marketing expertise necessary to take their work to the next level of production. Good and Molennan are exceptional in having turned their custom and small-batch manufacturing into flourishing enterprises.

Making contemporary furniture design into a successful business is such a challenge that it makes Blu Dot a truly extraordinary story. The company's principals—John Christakos, Charles Lazor, Maurice Blanks—have been friends since their artsy student days at Williams College. Soon after graduation, while traveling in Asia, they began talking about starting a furniture company when they realized there wasn't any contemporary design in the market they could afford. Although they went on with their own individual pursuits—Lazor and Blanks becoming architects, Christakos obtaining an MBA and beginning a career in business—they actively incubated their idea. By fax and on weekend charettes, they conceived a furniture line from the inside out, letting the goal of inexpensive production drive the design.

Simple and stylish, with an aura of mid-century modern, the furnishings were an instant hit when they debuted in 1997 at New York's International Contemporary Furniture Fair. The infant company immediately began receiving orders, an unheard-of event at that particular show. Today, Blu Dot is sold not just in stores throughout the country, but in Europe and Japan. And the company is making furniture for the house brands of Crate & Barrel, Target, and Hold Everything, bringing if not cutting-edge, then at least progressive design to mass-market retailers. With the financial security of these high-volume lines, the principals intend to experiment more with their own Blu Dot label, seeing how innovative they can be at a reasonable price and for a mass market.

Shrewd as their original concept was, and brilliantly orchestrated, Christakos is the first to admit it wouldn't have been possible without good credit and some MBA know-how, which few furniture designers have. But what makes this company so critically important is that, in three short years, it has debunked three widely held notions about American contemporary furniture: first, that there's no mass market for it; second, that nothing interesting is happening in the Midwest; and third, that it won't sell overseas.

With the inventive, can-do spirit that characterized the work of the Eameses, Blu Dot has resurrected the values of the Good Design movement.

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Exhibitions



A first-of-its-kind exhibition will be unveiled at this year's International Contemporary Furniture Fair (May 15-18), in New York. ICFF Raw: The Next Generation will highlight 15 to 20 of the compelling designs and radical ideas entered in Metropolis's first "Next Generation Design Competition." A joint production of the ICFF and Metropolis, the show will be curated by Marco Pasanella, whose design career was launched at the ICFF in 1990 with the immediate success of his sideways rocking chair.

Our recent competition called on emerging designers to submit a "Big Design Idea" that would benefit people and the environment. Though only one firm received the grand prize—\$10,000 seed money to invest in their idea—the call for entries attracted an array of innovative proposals.



images by kdf.com

GOOD OLE BOY FROM KENTUCKY SCHOOLS US



Trey Jones attended the Savannah College of Art and Design's Furniture Design program prior to receiving his B.S. in industrial design from University of Louisville, where he now teaches. He worked with Orange22 with Sami Hayek in 1999. The company is currently designing furniture for Palliser, a restaurant in San Diego, and two more products that will debut at the ICFF later this year.

"The hands on approach gives me a much more intimate relationship with the work." - Trey Jones

When Dario Antonioni and Sami Hayek founded Orange22, an L.A.-based multidisciplinary design laboratory, they hired on Jones in order to add a new down to earth feel to their already wide range. Because they found that a lot of the manufacturers weren't willing to experiment, they formed Orange22 so they could test new ground, and show the public and other manufacturers what they are capable of doing. This month Antonioni talks about the design of his Luna chair, which made its debut at last year's International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF), in New York.

The Luna chair was inspired by living with all these digital gadgets. It comes with an unobtrusive swinging pedestal for wireless gadgets that rotates 220 degrees. Jones was fortunate enough to work very closely with the company founders on this project and it humbled him a bit to be amongst two of the most influential powerhouses in the industry.

TREY JONES

Everybody was saying that Luna looks like a lunar lander. One idea was to call it the Endeavor Collection and label each product after different missions, like 007. There's the Luna chair and the Luna 2, a sofa that is twice the size of the chair.

The backrest is not attached to the back of the upholstered piece. One of the biggest challenges was engineering how to attach this piece of wraparound wood to the frame and have it be integrated structurally with the upholstered seat. It basically sits on this metal frame, so that you don't rely on either for back support.

The built-in backrest and nightstands (or end tables) allow you to sit and work. The chair is multifunctional—a place to sit and chill out or work; you can pull out your laptop, throw it on the tray, and view a DVD movie. Since everything is wireless now, you can surf the Web anywhere in your house.

They start out sketching initial concepts on paper. From that point on they build a small scale model out of plastic and foam, then photograph it from different angles to see what the piece looks like. If they're happy with it we make a 3-D computer rendering. At that point they can use the imagery to get price quotes for the fabrication costs.

They built the initial prototypes in Mexico and fantasized that would make everything there, but it was incredibly difficult to rely on: one day the entire block was out of power. So they brought everything to Los Angeles. It only makes sense to go overseas or somewhere else if you have much higher volume.

Because they were dealing with three different materials—upholstery, metal, and wood—just managing the different vendors was a challenge. A lot of times you'll notice that when a young company produces their own objects they tend to stick to one or two materials, like bent plywood, metal, or glass. Making sure the quality and size of the wood was going to come out right, that it matched the steel framework, and that the upholstery matched the size of the metal was a bit of a chore.

Along with the duo's work, Jones had designed a table using bent plywood in order to give it a curvilinear feel to the whole piece. After seeing such a piece, the CEOs of Aero Interiors immediately requested Jones to meet with them at the main office in Savannah. Jones was quoted mentioning how nostalgic it was to be back in Savannah and took us on a tour of the facilities where he once worked.

In order to give his pieces that special feel that Aero prides itself on, Jones said, "The hands on approach gives me a much more intimate relationship with the work." We agree completely and are proud to see Jones on the Aero Interiors team.