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Monumental Exhibition In New York



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By Brittany Good



Robert Kuo's gallery.

There's nowhere quite like Los Angeles. Long known as the entertainment capital of the world, the sprawling and diverse metropolis has recently garnered attention for its rapidly growing design scene. While the cost of living continues to soar on the East Coast, an increasing number of artists are heading west, taking advantage of Los Angeles' abundance of spacious (and relatively affordable) studios, as well as the city's unique atmosphere—a result of its rich cultural past.

In addition to the artists and designers driving this creative

renaissance, there are the galleries who champion them. Four of these galleries—[JF Chen](#), Blackman Cruz, Dana John, and Robert Kuo—are coming together this fall to mount an unprecedented exhibition—not in LA, but in New York. Held at Robert Kuo’s Manhattan outpost, *Robert Kuo Selects: Studio and Found Collections and Represented Artists*, aims to shine a light on the work being produced in Los Angeles while introducing the featured designers and galleries to New York audiences.



Herkimer Table Lamp. Patinated steel and brass, silk shade, H. 16 x W. 23 x D. 10 inches. Courtesy of Blackman Cruz.

While all of the gallerists have known one another for years, according to Bianca Chen of JF Chen, “We’re a close-knit group, but this is the first time we’ve all done a collaboration. We’re all different in so many ways and it’s very exciting to be coming together to showcase some of our artists from Los Angeles.” Adds Robert Kuo, “This was truly a wish

list of all of the galleries in LA that I respect and admire. This collaboration was actually very easy and natural.”



Larry Frazier, Two Cut Bronze, 2009. Courtesy of Dana John.

Robert Kuo Selects: Studio and Found Collections and Represented Artists is being curated by Kuo and Judith Lance—a celebrated Los Angeles-based interior designer who established the inimitable firm Studio Sofield West alongside partner William Sofield before striking out on her own. Each gallery sent objects for consideration in the show and Kuo and Lance took it from there. Kuo says, “Of course there were tweaks and additions but, for the most part, Judith and I picked the pieces because they were beautiful, unique, varied and representative of the gallery's brand. Each piece can stand alone based on its design integrity, but together they complement each other and take the exhibit to another level. There are a lot of amazing pieces and we hope to showcase them in an inspiring way to the New

York audience. We want to highlight that this Los Angeles aesthetic is specific, unique, and substantial.” Lance adds, “It would not be an understatement to say that Robert and I had a lovely time through the curating process as we felt quite spoiled for choice. We initially reacted to each piece without thought to any of the other pieces or to the final mix. From there, we were able to fluidly and confidently assemble the presentation, which we are thrilled to be able to bring to New York.”



Cheryl Ekstrom, artist's proof of a Frits Henningsen high-back wing chair in stainless steel. Courtesy of JF Chen.

Visitors to the show can browse a selection of contemporary works as well as older pieces. Adam Blackman of Blackman Cruz says, “We have eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century works in our gallery as well as our own line of furniture, so we decided to send some vintage pieces to New York as well as objects that we produce.” JF Chen will be exhibiting works by the furniture/accessories designer

Tanya Aguiñiga as well as Jae Won Cho, who crafts geometric, clean-lined tables and desks, and the late sculptor Cheryl Ekstrom, who is best known for her stainless steel casts of chairs. “There are only five versions of the piece we’re sending,” says Chen. “It’s the artist’s edition. After each series Cheryl made was complete, she would break the mold so that it could never be made again.”

Dana John will present works from his own line of furniture, including an angular wing back chair and a cylindrical table clad in hand-sheared, overlapping twenty-gauge steel plates with patina and matte lacquer, as well as sculptures by Mary Brogger and Larry Frazier. Robert Kuo will also be exhibiting a number of his own designs, including a beautifully minimal six-panel screen in cream lacquer and a smoked crystal and brass side table.



Cream lacquer 6-panel screen. W. 22 x H. 120 x 2 ½ inches thick (each

panel). *Courtesy of Robert Kuo.*

Robert Kuo Selects: Studio and Found Collections and Represented Artists will provide a window into the innovative and rapidly growing design scene in Los Angeles and, according to Adam Blackman, will give the participating galleries “a nice entrée to New York.” Bianca Chen says, “A lot of clients from New York do come to us when they’re in LA, but I want to showcase the artists that they might not have time to see in our showroom. I hope that we can broaden their minds and hopefully this show provides something new for them.” Adding to that sentiment, Robert Kuo remarks, “We hope that our guests will take away a better understanding of the creativity and substantial works of design and art coming out of LA. We hope they enjoy our exhibit and the experience.”

Robert Kuo Selects: Studio and Found Collections and Represented Artists will run October 5 to November 21, 2016, at Robert Kuo Gallery, 303 Spring Street, New York, NY. For more information, visit www.robertkuo.com.

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