

PAPER CITY

A photograph of a room with a distressed wall, a large ornate mirror, a modern glass table, and a modern chair. The room has a vintage, artistic feel with a large, ornate mirror reflecting the interior. A modern glass table with a blue base and a modern chair are in the foreground. The wall is covered in peeling paint and graffiti. A doorway in the background leads to another room with warm lighting.

HOUSTON
JULY/
AUGUST
2023

The
Best
of
Salone
del
Mobile

Road
Tripping:
Art
Pilgrimages

A
wow-packed
house
with a bold
modern
Italian
bent



Benjamin Johnston with his furniture collection for Chaddock

The Explosion of Benjamin Johnston

By Rebecca Sherman

Houston designer Benjamin Johnston is putting his sui generis design stamp everywhere, from London to New York to Beverly Hills, including a project that kicks off in Monaco this fall. He has new collaborations with S. Harris for fabric, wallpaper, and trim; rugs for Madison Lily; and has added fresh designs to his furniture collection for Chaddock, which debuted last year. Johnston is also building his dream house in Houston's Woodland

Heights with Erich Ploog, his partner in life as well as managing partner at the namesake design firm. Architecture is a big inspiration for Johnston, who has a Master of Architecture from The University of Texas at Austin and was the first American selected for a design residency with Cesar Pelli & Associates (now known as Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects) in Tokyo. The couple's new home is one of many projects to be included in his forthcoming book, the details of which are under wraps — for now.

Top of Mind — Benjamin Johnston So many great collaborations.

When working on larger homes with ample

interior space, it can sometimes be difficult to find pieces that fit the room's proportion and scale. Using my architectural background, I wanted to create a collection that combined my love of neoclassical and mid-century architectural elements with Chaddock's custom capabilities, a collection that would serve as a market solution but also have a timeless quality and contemporary aesthetic. Favorites: the Giotto bed, which perhaps might be the world's first eight-poster bed, and the Adriano bar cabinet, which debuted this spring at High Point Market and was a hit. It's inspired by an apothecary bar cabinet and cleverly disguises a combination of two larger doors using 24 square-brushed brass knobs.

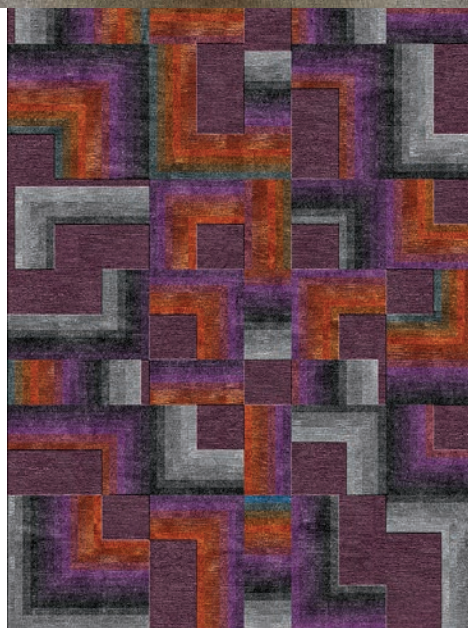
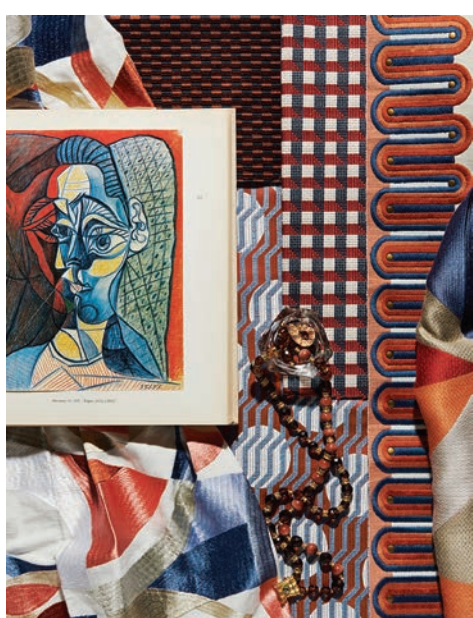
My first Madison Lily collection, Flight, was inspired by a keen interest in mixing unexpected textures with elements of the natural world — exotic plumage was showcased through a sweeping array of feathers rendered in 20 high-definition, saturated colors. My second collection, Geometrica, called to my background in architecture, meshing vibrant hues with bold, graphic patterns. Palazzo was the initial step of what would later bring about Vacanza, my fabric collection for S. Harris, which was born from my travels through Italy. I wanted to create a bold collection of textiles, trim designs, and wallcoverings that reinterpret the Italian art of living and pageantry of contemporary Italian culture.

Cause and effect.

As soon as the pandemic hit and people began spending more time at home, our phones started ringing. The home design and decoration business thrived, leading me to carefully expand my team. This growth coincided perfectly with the launch of our comprehensive total home design practice. In addition to traditional design services, we can now create a client's dream home from the ground up, overseeing every aspect from initial development to final decoration. Our leadership team includes director of interior design Paola Neri and director of home design Greg Roffino. Michael Viviano is our new design director. I've known Michael for years, and when the idea of restructuring arose, he was the first person I reached out to. I hold great respect for his work, and his addition has truly elevated our already talented team.

On the drawing board.

Our office is currently buzzing with incredible projects. We have 25 new home



Benjamin Johnston's furniture collection for Chaddock, along with a rug and fabrics and trims from his collections with Madison Lily and S. Harris.

projects, ranging from 5,000 square feet to 35,000 square feet. It's an exhilarating experience to explore a diverse range of styles, including contemporary, Hollywood Regency, French, and traditional. We also recently completed a 30,000-square-foot law firm project in Houston and are actively involved in the development of two private hospitals, including one in London. We will soon start a project in Monaco for an existing client and are eagerly anticipating site visits.

Home as design laboratory.

Taking inspiration from Hollywood Regency architecture, Erich's and my new house is a design laboratory, where we implement all the features and concepts that we struggled to convince our clients to embrace, allowing us to demonstrate the importance of these elements. Among them is a breathtaking 30-foot atrium with skylight, flooding the house with abundant natural light.