



# WORKS IN PROGRESS

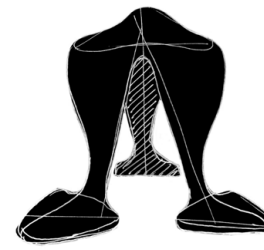
Archive, celebration, and dialogue are necessary pillars for a thriving design community. Rarely do we get to come together and showcase the diversity of craft, personalities, and backgrounds that the San Francisco design community holds. Yet, ours is home to a prolific scene of designers who share a love of physical creation and object-making. As the Bay Area creative scene evolves in real time, there are boundless possibilities for how it might bloom. For now, we are here to acknowledge its depth and say: it's a work in progress.

[Works In Progress] brings together the contemporary furniture design community in the San Francisco Bay Area: a group of studios, artists, and designers crafting tangible companions for living. Across a range of materials, forms, and functions, the participants have found a groove in the original, the introspective, and the off-center.

[Works in Progress] is comprised of 12 contemporary furniture pieces collected together under one roof. By placing works of similar scale in adjacency, a dialogue unfolds. It weaves through subjects of material, form, approach, and attitude, while elucidating the distinct personality and ethos of each design practice. We invite you to take part in the conversation.

Curated & produced by Kate Greenberg, Kelley Perumbeti, and Sahra Jajarmikhayat

Caleb Ferris



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Kate Greenberg  
& Sahra Jajarmikhayat



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Office of Tangible Space



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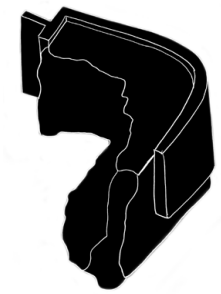
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The Long Confidence



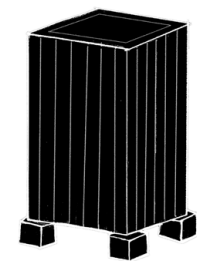
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## Caleb Ferris

*I really enjoy the sense of humor in your work. How do you go about bringing this into your practice? What would you say is the importance or promise of this levity in the design world and your studio?*

— Duncan Oja of Oja Design



Three Directions at Once  
Poplar, Paint, Silver Leaf  
16" x 16" x 17.5"

Creating a sense of humor in my work is an integral part of my artistic practice, and it stems from a genuine desire to inject joy and lightness into the world. I didn't choose to become a furniture artist for fame or fortune; I pursued this path because it brings me happiness, and I genuinely love what I do. Humor, for me, is a powerful tool to keep the creative process lighthearted and enjoyable. In my pieces, I draw inspiration from life's overlooked and underestimated details – whether it's the succulent contours of fusilli noodles, the dark beauty of a fishing lure, or the uncanny charm of a corny old sci-fi movie. By incorporating these nonsensical elements into my work, I aim to remind people not to take themselves too seriously and to find amusement in the ordinary.

The importance of levity in the design world, and particularly in my studio, lies in its ability to break free from the pressure of conforming to trends or popular expectations. Creative professionals often feel compelled to create work that aligns with what's trendy or popular, losing touch with their authentic artistic voice. I want to challenge this notion and encourage artists to freely express themselves, embracing the joy in the creative process.

For me, art and design don't have to be perfect, serious, or burdened with a profound message. I believe that as long as my work brings a chuckle or a smile, I've fulfilled my purpose. In a world filled with challenges, my furniture designs serve as a reminder to appreciate the atypical beauty around us, to be present, and to find delight in the simple act of creation. Ultimately, I hope my work sparks joy and inspires others to embrace the joyous side of art and design.

— Caleb Ferris

## Fyrn

*Fyrn has built a remarkable brand using the distinct connecting detail of the Stemn system. As you explore innovative approaches and potential evolutions, how do you navigate the delicate balance between the desire for innovation and preserving the core identity that has been integral to Fyrn's success?*

— Caleb Ferris



The Shorty  
North American Hardwood stained Charcoal  
Black, Matte Silver anodized aluminum brackets,  
Signature Natural Coal Leather  
17.75" x 16.5" x 17.5"

As our foundational system of hardware, Stemn is both our calling card, and our key to innovation. A toolkit of proprietary designed and produced pieces, it's what enables us to address challenges and extend into new territory. The system's core purpose is to provide strength and stability where furniture fails most, so our ability to engage this hardware to solve problems is not only our core identity, but what informs our design process from the start. We begin with problems we'd like to solve, as well as a point of view on aesthetics, but the resulting design is deeply informed by how we can utilize existing hardware, and/or develop new hardware. Fyrn's craft is in the process of finding the best, most essential, ways to make strong connections, and if they don't exist, creating them ourselves. We can only hope that process continues to be fruitful in giving us elegant and resilient designs that people can live with and love for generations.

— Fyrn



Ido Yoshimoto

*Do you have any practices within your process that force you out of your own comfort zone? Your pieces within your work are all so unique in form that we imagine you must be constantly reinventing your process.*

— Lauryn Menard & Bailie Davis of Prowl Studio



Untitled  
Old Growth Redwood  
22" x 25.5" x 15"

The most important part of my process is my relationship with the material. Ideally it steers the way.

I believe the uniqueness of form is dictated by the trees. It's the practice of doing my best to honor them that creates this diversity of work.

Often, I select a piece of wood which seems to offer a balance of potential and beautiful natural character. It is my job to meet it in that limbo state and ask what it wants to be. Through careful editing, the piece reveals itself.

Cut-pause-reflect-respond-repeat.

...and know when to stop!

Sometimes there are outside influences that give direction, like how a piece will be used or that it must fit through a door. I'm happy to use those as starting points in the discussion with potential material.

There are times when I find beautiful material but have a hard time finding balance. The hand may be heavier in certain cases. And then there are times when a salvaged piece is so beautiful it would be sacrilege to touch it with a tool. There is a huge spectrum. I like to play in that whole zone.

All to say, it's the practice of working closely with material that pushes and pulls and keeps me on my toes. I wouldn't have it any other way.

— Ido Yoshimoto

Kate Greenberg  
& Sahra Jajarmikhayat

*Sahra, your practice seems to revolve around a dialogue with the natural world and Kate, your work seems to pull literal motifs from its immediate surroundings. Given the collaboration between you both on this project, could you elaborate on your approach to creating a piece that encapsulates the phenomenon of dwelling across both manufactured and natural landscapes?*

— NJ Roseti



Hidden Earth  
Glass  
12" x 12" x 17.5"

We are both in awe of the wildness and vastness of the natural world and we often incorporate various elements of our observations in our practice based on different criteria and approaches. In this collaboration we were looking into phenomena of interaction between heat and ice, and how the sharp edges of ice shards often round up and soften when they meet with molten matter. During the short period of designing this side table, we learned so much from each other and from our chosen material, glass. The reaction we got from the material continuously fed into the original thought and gave us more information from which to build upon.

As designers, we both derive concept from studying natural landscapes, or at least are inspired by them. The manufactured part really comes into play with form. Our built world regurgitates a history on how humans have interpreted raw material as useful, translated them to our scale, and applied them to our sensory needs. Why not continue to elaborate on that history, and chop and screw those structures that now contain so much meaning and memory, so that we can understand ourselves a little better and how we got here?

By condensing the moment when elements from the inner earth collide, erode, bubble up to the surface, and crystallize into shape, we discover a history, as told by us.

— Sahra Jajarmikhayat & Kate Greenberg

## Medium Small

*We share an approach that marries modern methodologies with traditional craft techniques — how does the method of making inform your design process?*

— Fyrn



Moto Chair  
Ash, blackened  
17.5" x 23.5" x 34"

The method of making informs our design process at every step along the way - it's integral to the way that we work. An understanding of the way things are physically made is considered from the first sketch to the finished piece. As we are designing a new piece, we have in mind the tools and skills at our disposal, while also dreaming up ways we can stretch what we have to try something new. When we want to do something outside our wheelhouse, we love collaborating with other artists and craftspeople who bring their own perspectives and possibilities to the table.

We believe that an object always bears the mark of its making, and we try to employ the appropriate tool for each task along the way. Understanding the tolerances, advantages, and weaknesses of each tool allows us to move fluidly through a project. Though not traditional in style, our furniture is furniture, and falls squarely into a typology that has a rich history of craft and joinery techniques. We always have that legacy in mind, but we aren't traditional woodworkers, even though we often work with wood as a medium. The design process is informed by all these factors, and the depth of all that context contributes to the overall success of the project.

— Brandt Hewitt & Megan McGuinn of Medium Small

## NJ Roseti

*Your work stems from ideas about culture and technology and translates to a physical piece. We'd love to know how you think about material composition and the holistic process in which it unfolds.*

—Kelley Perumbeti of Office of Tangible Space



All Over Again #3  
Baltic Plywood, Maple Veneer, Mahogany Veneer, Maple, Acrylic Paint  
13" x 13" x 24"

The essence of my work is rooted in a fusion of historic techniques and the future of technology, manifesting itself into tangible forms through a meticulous process. When contemplating material composition, I find myself drawn to the juxtaposition of classical marquetry techniques and traditional wood species against the backdrop of synthesized distortions and electric colors.

In my workshop, every piece undergoes a unique process, where the marriage of computer precision and traditional hand tools brings forth creations that resonate with both technologic and orthodox undertones. The irony lies in my choice of marquetry, a technique steeped in history and tradition, now repurposed to comment on the classical role of wood in the face of the prevailing trends of the digital age.

The continuous and broken lines within my pieces symbolize the continuum of time – an unbroken line representing the seamless flow from the past and broken lines signifying the unknown journey into the future, while wavering lines represent the breaking of the confines of time and space as we know it.

While my palette isn't limited to blue, I find it to be a powerful symbol. It encapsulates the essence of the contemporary age, reminiscent of the ubiquitous blue light emanating from technology and screens that permeate our daily lives. This intentional selection of materials and colors allows each piece to become a vessel, carrying not only physical form but also layers of meaning that invite viewers to explore the intersections of history, technology, and philosophy.

— NJ Roseti





**WORKS IN PROGRESS**

Look here for the latest in design. The works in progress are the most recent pieces of furniture that have been designed and are currently in production. The works in progress are the most recent pieces of furniture that have been designed and are currently in production. The works in progress are the most recent pieces of furniture that have been designed and are currently in production.



## Office of Tangible Space

*In your work, I notice material softness and distinct human-ness to the forms, with what appear to be fairly precise, crisp, and machine cut shapes. What do you think is the balance you hope to achieve with these two aspects of the things you make?*

— Rafi Ajl of *The Long Confidence*



Abigail Chair for Thirdkind  
Plywood, Solid Oak, Laminate, Aluminum,  
Hardware  
18" x 19" x 26.5"

As a studio, we focus much of our time activating spaces and aiming to engage people with our work. Although we work on many scales, we've found that doing this through objects has proven impactful time and time again. The process of developing furniture that people want to engage with, touch, live with, work with, and that makes you think twice is an endeavor that keeps us challenged and has yielded surprising results.

Because we work on the scale of architecture with much of our work, we have had access and experience in interfacing with and designing for manufacturing processes typically used in large scale industry. With a lot of our object-scale work we like to leverage industrial processes in ways that feel human - both in feeling and in the production. Sometimes that means challenging a material and method normally used in heavy manufacturing like extruded aluminum to be functional and flexible in a home environment. Other times that might mean digitally programming a jacquard loom to weave an organic texture. Yet other times it may mean 3d modeling forms for cnc production that feel like they were made by a human hand. The main goal of our work at both the furniture scale and interiors scale is to create a deeper connection with people. We hope blurring the line of how something may have been made invites further inquiry and connection with a piece.

— Kelley Perumbeti & Michael Yarinsky of Office of Tangible Space

## Oja Design

*When we look at your work, we immediately notice lightness in form, down to the way the tapered legs of stools meet the floor. Even thick slabs of wood do not feel overbearing, and find a quietude in their personality. We surmise that this has something to do with the clear, resolved intention in the way you design, like somehow you uncover how the material wants to exist. Does that feeling of lightness and intention relate to you in any way — for instance, in your life experience, in the manner in which you craft objects, or in your study of the material itself?*

— Kate Greenberg & Sahra Jajarmikhayat



Roughsawn stool  
Charred white oak  
11.5" x 14.5" x 18"

I do think lightness is important to me. There is often a literal lightness or airiness in my pieces, especially in the turned work. I came to furniture making through the lathe and spindle furniture, where there is always more air than wood. Considering "light" in various senses of the word, I think about the Shakers and their furniture. Their work has always been a major source of inspiration and is still my measure of beauty in simplicity, succinctness and function. Even large or heavy pieces can still feel light when resolved and balanced. I think I also strive for a lightness of touch, trying to not do too much or overwork the material. Sometimes I think we can design the life out of something.

I definitely do think in terms of uncovering how the material wants to exist. More and more, I am trying to stay close to the wood itself. My favorite work to make right now, like the stool in this show, starts with the material and finds its way into the final object. I am drawn to organic, "found" pieces of wood, which often come from scrap piles and are undesirable for lumber. With these unique pieces, I like challenging myself to do less, to make fewer changes and specific design choices. This feels more satisfying to me than what is often a typical design process where the material sometimes comes last. The closer I stay to the material, the more I enjoy the work and the more I learn from it.

— Duncan Oja of Oja Design



## Prowl Studio



Exposure Therapy stool  
Stainless steel and 3D knit (wool and recycled polyester mix)

*I remember going to an event that Prowl produced in Dogpatch, very casual, honestly no clue what I was getting into because I was invited by another friend. What in the world! I was in shock, I felt I had been transported to the future. I felt I was in a laboratory with scientist diligently working to solve the crisis that is humanity on planet earth! Algae, corn husk, mushroom all as material to create functional everyday objects.*

*I love Prowl's ethos of reorienting industrial design to achieve a regenerative future. I think what I experienced at the event and through deeper diving into your world of materiality is that you've added in industrial design not only function and beauty but science.*

*Do you see yourselves as scientists or engaging the science community more and if so how?*

— Homan Rajaj & Elena Dendiberia of Studio Ahead

Ah, yes. The Beacon event. We are so glad that's the experience you had! That was the goal exactly.

We would absolutely not consider ourselves scientists, but collaborators with the scientific world. We have to know enough to understand how basic scientific mechanisms work, but really the main scientific expertise that is required in what we do is an understanding of material feedstocks (what ingredients make up a material) and how the growth or extraction of those feedstocks' effect the planet. We work with a lot of smart engineers, researchers, and scientists who help us expand our knowledge and help us understand if our ideas for how we want to apply materials are even possible or not.

We also spend a lot of our time researching new material, meeting with their teams to understand everything we can about them, assess if we think the material is truly a responsible option (this part is probably the hardest), and then we find projects to fold them into along the way.

— Lauryn Menard & Bailie Davis of Prowl Studio

## Studio Ahead



Sheep Stool  
Merino wool felt from Northern California sheep  
14" x 12.25" x 18.25"

*I'm inspired by the nature of your studio, which is rich with layers of contrasts and collaborations. I'd love to peel back to your core collaboration and learn what first drew you, Elena and Homan, to work together? Can you recall your early dreams of ideal projects? How have they evolved over time, and looking ahead, what new visions are on the horizon?*

— Yvonne Mouser

We met working at a design firm focused on 17th to 20th century European antiques. We were totally fish out of water, an eccentric Iranian and a modelesque Russian, peddling antiques in our 20's to clients that were three times our age. The more we got to know each other, the more we realized that we were dreaming a similar dream... We gravitated toward raw organic wood forms of JB Blunk and Ido Yoshimoto, more than the marquetry of a Louis XVI commode, choosing the warm glow of Noguchi's paper lanterns, rather than the imperialist energy of gold leafed chandeliers, more interested in sitting on a Persian divan with pillows thrown around or a 70's style sectional than a stiff settee.

Our hopes for our first projects were clients that would be open to our process of exploring with them before designing and rethinking some of these eurocentric ideals of luxury. We've been lucky to have clients who are excited to deep dive on our questionnaires that ask questions from what seems mundane like how do you like to sit, where do you like to eat to the more personal questions such as what moments in history and philosophies resonate with you. All the answers to these questions affect how we design..

We've been so lucky to find success in our process with our clients and deeper exploration. That has evolved into developing our line of sheep furniture which often started us custom commissions and curating exhibitions with artists that we've done studio visits with for our projects. Looking ahead we would love to marry our design practice, furniture collection and art curation into a permanent space that more people can regularly interact with and be affected by.

— Homan Rajaj & Elena Dendiberia of Studio Ahead



## The Long Confidence

*We are really interested in the way that you design processes and then allow things to happen organically within that framework. Do you have an expectation for the result of the process, and is there a threshold for success or failure? How important is touch in the production process in achieving a desired outcome?*

— Brandt Hewitt & Megan McGuinn of Medium Small

When I start to play and investigate something - a material, a process - I really don't have any expectations. Of course I hope it will yield something interesting, but the most fun for me is setting things up and letting them go. I think of it as a multi-step process. In the beginning, it's super free. Things are wild and chaotic and I just mess with lots of different variables. When something seems like a good track to take, I go further - learning how to control or harness aspects of the process, directing in, learning the boundaries and the edges of the system. As things get refined, I start to think about how it might live in the world - as a product or art piece, how it could be applied to something I already do. I call this whole sequence domestication. For success and failure, I think its more about asking the questions of "Is this beautiful, does it have poetry," two words that I have my own meanings for, which are conjoined. The beauty I'm looking for is if the thing - the process, the output - expresses itself in some kind of authentic way. Not aesthetic value, per se, but the energetic expression. The poetry is in resonance of the thing. Does it have that innate vibration. And touch is essential. Mostly everything I do in the studio is brutally handmade, as I like to say. The initiative decisions made by following the hands, and the uncertainties and idiosyncrasies of the organic are essential characteristics to everything I do.

— Rafi Ajl of The Long Confidence



Pin Chair  
White Oak, sheep fleece, suede, brass  
17" x 15.5" x 26.5"

## Yvonne Mouser

*If you could spend a month in studio, making something for yourself, what would that be and why?*

— Ido Yoshimoto



Archways Armchair  
Ash  
22" x 24" x 23"

When I first read the question I immediately thought of this body of work that I've been wanting to build since I first started brainstorming it in back in 2015. At that time, I was an artist in residence at San Diego State University, and among other projects I worked on there, I became excited about light and sound as a means to play in that intangible realm of emotions. The pieces are objects and tools of collection and translation. Because these pieces and experiments I've imagined involve some technology and skills just outside of my wheelhouse, it hasn't been something I've been able to casually develop alongside regular business. I need to devote a good chunk of time and space to play, learn, and evolve the ideas. I'm still just as excited by the concept as I was in the beginning, so I'll take this as a reminder it's time to coordinate the next residency.

The second time I read your question I thought, oh, FOR me. In which case, I'd probably design and build myself a bed frame. I've lived with my mattress on the floor for so many years! This is one of those items I won't buy because it will be a fun to develop for myself and I occasionally sketch something out. Unfortunately, that list of projects endlessly grows and I just haven't prioritized it yet. The design would probably involve some integrated storage along the floor, because I need more places where things can be put away.

— Yvonne Mouser



## CALEB FERRIS

Caleb Ferris is a furniture artist who creates tongue-in-cheek designs that remind us not to take ourselves too seriously. Finding inspiration in life's overlooked and underappreciated details—such as the ruffled curves of noodles, the tempting glint of fishing lures, or the bounce of inflated cartoons—Caleb draws attention to the things we often take for granted. His creative process borrows motifs from his personal library of objects, which he abstracts and recontextualizes until each piece is infused with its own distinct personality. He also incorporates spontaneous finishing techniques that celebrate materiality and the fabrication process behind the finished product. Through his work, Caleb invites viewers to appreciate the atypical beauty surrounding us and encourages us to be present and receptive to it.

calebferris.com  
@calebferris

## FYRN

Founded in the Mission District of San Francisco, Fyrn is a design and build company that combines classic principles of woodworking with modern manufacturing techniques to create elegant and resilient furniture. Co-founded in 2012 by Ros Broughton – a fourth generation woodworker with ties to the iconic Hitchcock Chair Company – Fyrn believes good design considers future circumstances. With commitment to research & development, Fyrn developed their proprietary design system – Stemm – to create products rooted in craftsmanship and circularity. The system enables Fyrn's chairs and stools to be built with replaceable legs, joints, and seats to at once customize their products, and extend their lifetime. Made in the USA by their own team, Fyrn prioritizes quality across design and manufacturing to produce high-quality craftsmanship at scale.

fyrn.com  
@fyrnstudio

## IDO YOSHIMOTO

Yoshimoto's (b. 1978) work is deeply rooted in the land and the forest where he grew up and currently lives. After over 40 years in West Marin and 20 years working as an arborist, his appreciation for the trees and thorough understanding of them has naturally led to his current practice. It is with reverence for the story of and within these trees that care is taken in selecting material and slowly peeling back the layers.

Working with large chunks of raw material, Yoshimoto explores form, creating both functional and sculptural pieces. Each is also a conversation. The tree tells the story of its life through the grain, the annual rings, the scars. Then there is the response and the questions, the influence and inspiration that sees possibility in the story. Hopefully the outcome is a sum greater than the two. A record of a meeting in which each was heightened by the other

idoyoshimoto.com  
@ido\_yoshimoto

## KATE GREENBERG

Kate Greenberg is an Oakland-based designer and artist specializing in furniture, objects, and lighting. Her work centers around the origins of the home, the emotional impact of space, and the subliminal influence of our built world. Metal, light, wood, and glass find new ways of expression, often through reference to phenomena in nature and visual forms in architecture. In opposition to historical, standardized ideas of furniture, she presents an alternative approach to what makes a space intimate and comfortable.

Greenberg has exhibited in galleries in the San Francisco Bay Area, New York, and Milan, including a multi-sensory solo exhibition around the Earth's tempo during Alcova 2023.

kategreenberg.studio  
@kate.hands.co

## MEDIUM SMALL

Medium Small is a San Francisco-based furniture and lighting design practice founded by two architects-turned makers, Brandt Hewitt & Megan McGuinn. The practice is design-driven, informed by materials and critical exploration through sketching, physical model making, and prototyping. Focusing on high-quality small-batch production, we realize our work using modern methodologies, employing a combination of handcrafted techniques, industrial tooling, and CAD and CAM softwares. All our designs are produced in our Tenderloin studio and in collaboration with a community of fabricators in and around San Francisco. Paired with our project management expertise and design savvy, this model allows us to keep our studio compact and our work versatile - all while ensuring high standards of quality control.

medium-small.com  
@medium\_\_small

## NJ ROSETI

With its nostalgic futurism, NJ Roseti's work carries technologic and religious undertones through its use of classical marquetry techniques and traditional wood species applied onto synthesized distortions and color, yet also readily exhibits features on theoretical physics such as hidden dimensions, the construct of time, and parallel universes through its use of pattern. He personally makes each piece in his workshop, utilizing a blend of computer and traditional hand tools.

njroseti.com  
@njroseti

## OFFICE OF TANGIBLE SPACE

Office of Tangible Space is an interdisciplinary design studio founded by Michael Yarinsky and Kelley Perumbeti specializing in architecture, interiors, furniture and curation, with projects ranging from the object-scale to the urban. Their work is grounded in a human-centric approach that is achieved through warmth and materiality - the creation of space that feels lived in and strengthens a feeling of comfort and contentment. Much of the work attempts to bring in play and engagement through form, texture, through the use of new and unexpected materials, details and color. Tangible Space likes to create texture by challenging the program of the space/design to create unexpected moments of interaction. Their designs seek to be aesthetically appealing, yes, but hope to make you feel something and contribute to an ethically-designed future.

Regardless of project scale, the intentionality in each detail of their work allows for moments of thoughtful engagement and opportunities for social gathering. It evokes a desire to stay and to notice - to have a dialogue with the immediate environment.

tangible.space  
@tangible.space

## OJA DESIGN

Duncan Oja is a woodworker from and based in the Bay Area. He was trained in more traditional furniture making while living in upstate New York and, after moving back home to California, began working at a small lumber mill. Still largely influenced by classic American furniture tradition, he also draws inspiration from different stages of the process itself- found organic forms: offcuts from the milling of trees, tool marks and textures, and byproducts of the production process.

@oja.design



## PROWL STUDIO

“We begin with the end.”

PROWL is an industrial design and research studio creating new solutions for people and the planet by employing materials, processes, and technology more responsibly. They are reorienting industrial design to achieve a regenerative future.

Regenerative design is PROWL's practice - it gives new life to Earth's depleted resources as it benefits humankind.

prowlstud.io  
@prowl\_\_

## SAHRA JAJARMIKHAYAT

Sahra Jajarmikhayat is a designer and photographer based in San Francisco. She recently graduated from the MFA Design program in California College of the Arts with a focus on industrial design and material research. Exploratory and experimental nature of Sahra's work leads into projects that are research-based, concept-driven and process-focused with an emphasis on multi-disciplinary collaboration. Deploying design as an investigative tool, she experiments with materials, processes and methodologies to create systems and strategies that become avenues for innovative form making.

Researching through design, she embarks on each project from an abstract ground and often ends up in a space tied to the real world through physical realization, problem solving and thought provocation. Sahra's design and photography work has been included as part of numerous group exhibitions in San Francisco in the past few years. In June 2022, her project “Mosquitoes and Lemons” was presented at the Biodesign Challenge (New York) and won the Runner Up prize. Sahra was also a selected participant in the Biomimicry Institute's Innovation Launchpad in May 2023.

sahrajajarmikhayat.com  
@sahrajajarmikhayat

## STUDIO AHEAD

Studio AHEAD is a San Francisco-based art and design collective founded by Homan Rajai and Elena Dendiberia. From their office in Mission District, Studio AHEAD's team charts out a new Silk Road traversing their Eastern and Western sensibilities and their clients' cultural heritages. The studio's borderless approach to design creates evocative spaces where contrasts have room to grow: raw and refined, foreign and familiar, a contemporary take on a Persian divan paired with a primitive Northern California wooden sculpture.

The studio reflects modern-day local culture as a coming-together of diverse perspectives grounded in a deep artistic tradition. By listening to how clients conceive of ideas like “family” or “home,” AHEAD builds spatial narratives that tell each person's unique story. The studio believes strongly in there being no universal idea of functionality that fits all cultures and people. What remains constant is AHEAD's appreciation of cultural traditions and craftsmanship.

To further the dialog between local and global, Studio AHEAD launched its production arm in 2019. Collaborators have included regional artists and artisans. The studio's line of wool felt furniture, sourced locally from Sonoma sheep, has received wide attention and praise. In 2020, Studio AHEAD began publishing California: A Journal, which highlights Northern California's vibrant history, as a way to give back to a community that continues to inspire.

Homan Rajai is the driving force behind Studio AHEAD. He works intimately with clients to understand the narrative they want to create for their home, life, and brand. Blending his Middle Eastern heritage with his nomad experience living and working in Africa and Central America, Homan brings an eclectic multicultural view to all Studio projects. He uses his background in landscape architecture, fashion apparel, and high-end residential design to navigate between diverse media in design practice.

Elena Dendiberia is the creative center focusing on custom details at Studio AHEAD. She is an internationally exhibited artist with a sensual approach to art and design. Elena brings together the tactile experience of her art practice with a design narrative that evolves through close collaboration with artists, craftsmen, and fabricators.

studioahead.com  
@studioahead

## THE LONG CONFIDENCE

Rafi Ajl (b.1983) is a Berkeley, California-based artist who is obsessed with form and process. He is driven by the possibilities of materiality, an insatiable curiosity, and an undisputed reverence for the pressures of the creative process. Working in a variety of mediums and practices, Ajl is known for work under his longtime moniker, The Long Confidence. Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, he grew up in a deeply artistic home where making things was a way of life. He can hardly remember a time when he wasn't taking things apart and putting them back together. Ajl holds an MFA in Design from the California College of the Arts.

thelongconfidence.com  
@thelongconfidence

## YVONNE MOUSER

Yvonne Mouser is an Oakland based artist and designer. Working both independently and with a diverse group of collaborators, Mouser's work exists between the practical and conceptual. Her own design studio, established in 2009, creates one of a kind objects and small run production pieces. She co-founded Thought for Food, where she focused on the artifacts and experiences of eating, and currently YMSE, an ongoing collaboration with the fashion and textile company Stella Fluorescent. Yvonne received a BFA from California College of the Arts in 2006. Her work is included in private collections, and has been exhibited internationally including the SFMOMA; the Salone del Mobile in Milan, Italy; the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia; the San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design; the Museum of Craft and Folk Art in San Francisco; COPIA in Napa, CA; the Maloof Foundation for Arts and Crafts in Alta Loma, CA; and the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, CA. Mouser was a Wornick Distinguished Visiting Professor of Wood Arts at the California College of the Arts. She has been awarded artist-in-residence at Autodesk's Pier 9; the Workshop Residence in San Francisco; the Windgate Artist-in-Residence at the School of Art + Design at San Diego State University; Anderson Ranch Arts Center; and was recipient of the Ron and Anita Wornick Award at CCA.

yvonnemouser.com  
@ymouser



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