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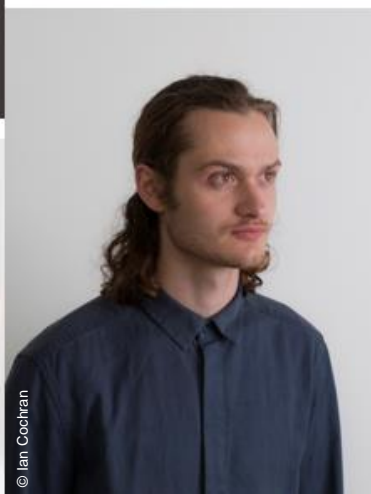
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## 2019 RISING TALENT AWARDS: USA

A lighting designer who fills rooms with blossoms and bubbles, a product designer energized by his industrial Midwestern roots, and a pair of artistic cousins who make sculptural metal furnishings. These are a few of the innovative Americans selected in the 2019 Rising Talent Awards. Organized by MAISON&OBJET, the Paris-based international trade fair for design, decoration and lifestyle, the Rising Talent Awards shine a spotlight on emerging design excellence in specific parts of the world. Previous editions honored creativity in the United Kingdom, Italy, Lebanon and China. And now a distinguished jury has surveyed American design and selected six individual practitioners or firms with exceptional skills and promise.

The work of this cohort will be prominently displayed at the next edition of MAISON&OBJET, which takes place Sept. 6-10, 2019, in the exhibition center at Paris Nord Villepinte.

“After concentrating on Europe, the Middle East and Asia these last few years, we wanted to turn to another great nation of design,” says Philippe Brocart, Managing Director of SAFI, the company that organizes MAISON&OBJET. “The size and cultural diversity of the United States give rise to impressive design achievements, and we are excited to welcome the next generation of designers and their influences to Paris next September.”

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## THE AMERICAN WAY

←

Odile Hainaut and  
Claire Pijoulat of  
WantedDesign



Immense and diverse, the United States has no single national design character. Rather its many cultural strands are woven into objects that tell a variety of stories.

Yet across this broad country, we find recurring themes. “The young generation of American designers we meet are generally interested in the handmade,” said Odile Hainaut, who with Claire Pijoulat is the founder of WantedDesign, an annual trade fair in Manhattan and Brooklyn that has championed many emerging talents. “They are entrepreneurs turning out their own small series rather than designers working behind their computers and sending their drawings to manufacturers to be developed and produced. Their work is tactile; it’s about material.”

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## THE JURY

Seven eminent design professionals based in the United States applied their far-reaching perspectives in choosing these Rising Talents. **Rafael de Cárdenas** heads the New York-based multidisciplinary practice Architecture at Large, whose clients include Baccarat, Cartier, Christie's, Dornbracht and the Swatch Group. **Odile Hainaut and Claire Pijoulat** gave a welcome jolt to the New York design scene eight years ago with the first edition of WantedDesign, their annual trade show that brings international products, exhibitions and presentations to sites in Manhattan and Brooklyn. **Jerry Helling** is the president and creative director of Bernhardt Design in North Carolina and the force behind ICFF Studio, an annual showcase of furniture by emerging American designers.

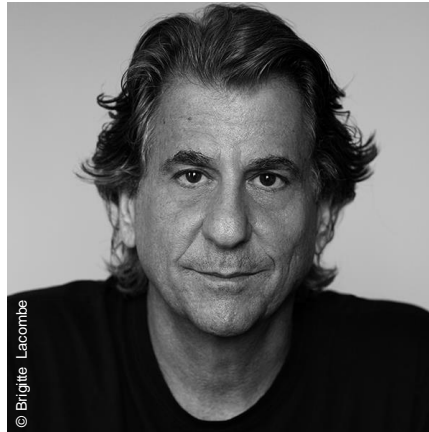
→  
Jerry Helling



Raphael de ↓  
Cardenas



Nasir and Nargis ↓  
Kassamali



←  
David Rockwell

**Nasir Kassamali** shaped American tastes with his modern design store, Luminaire, which he and his wife, Nargis, started in South Florida in 1974 and later expanded to Chicago. In November, Luminaire opened its latest showroom in Los Angeles. **David Rockwell**, the leader of Rockwell Group in New York, has been honored repeatedly for his lively designs of offices, residences, hotels, restaurants and Broadway stage sets, for which he has been nominated for six Tony Awards, winning one. **Rosanne Somerson**, a renowned furniture designer who became president of Rhode Island School of Design in 2015. Through her leadership and in her writings she has emphasized critical making, or the use of hands-on craft as a tool for reflection and problem solving in our technology-dominated culture.



←  
Rosanne  
Somerson

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## THE RISING TALENTS

It is typical of young American designers to flock to geographical centers like Los Angeles, Chicago or Seattle, where they establish creative communities, share resources and trade influences. But if any one place can be declared the design capital of the United States, it is Brooklyn, New York. Among the six Rising American Talents, five are based there. (The sixth, Alex Brokamp, currently lives in Southern California.)

This concentration reflects the individuality of jury choices - the jurors recommended award winners based on excellence, not location, and there was no point at which they conferred as a group.

But the tilt toward Brooklyn is also an outgrowth of the borough's 21<sup>st</sup>-century creative explosion, with real estate development surging in the downtown business district, artists and galleries transforming the Williamsburg and Bushwick neighborhoods and industrial complexes flourishing in Sunset Park and the Brooklyn Navy Yards. Industry City, a 6 million-square-foot development in Sunset Park populated by studios, workshops and vendors is a model environment for today's independent American designer.





© Christopher Stoltz

←  
Handle With Care  
Table



© Alex Brokamp



© Alex Brokamp

←  
Tsukiji Light

## ALEX BROKAMP

[www.alexbrokamp.com](http://www.alexbrokamp.com)

"I think there's a blue collar aesthetic to my design," said Alex Brokamp, 27, currently in a master's degree program in environmental design at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California.

Raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, he looked up to his grandfather, who worked as a pipefitter. Today, many of his products relate to workday functional objects that fade into the landscape: speed bumps, shipping palettes, a laundry line draped in garments, food delivery truck graphics. Brokamp snatches these inspirations from the jaws of banality and reinterprets them with charm. His Bump mirror encourages users to slow down and examine their reflections before setting off for work or social events. His Handle With Care table is composed of glass boxes arranged like parcels on a mirror-finish aluminum palette base.



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ALEX BROKAMP

→  
Collate  
Coffee Table

If one design sums up Brokamp's direction, however, it is his Collate coffee table, selected for the ICFF Studio showcase at the 2019 NYCxDDesign festival. He used a CNC router to gouge concentric swirls into the aluminum top, "letting the production process create the piece," he explained.

"He is a very positive example of young American designers who bridge technical knowledge with simple forms and a sense of lightheartedness in their work," said Jerry Helling, who nominated Brokamp. "He could almost be the love child of Jaime Hayon and Jasper Morrison."

« *I think there's a blue collar aesthetic to my design* »



*« He is a very positive example of young American designers who bridge technical knowledge with simple forms and a sense of lightheartedness in their work. He could almost be the love child of Jaime Hayon and Jasper Morrison. »*

—  
JERRY HELLING

© Alex Brakamp

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## BAILEY FONTAINE

[www.baileyfontaine.com](http://www.baileyfontaine.com)

When Bailey Fontaine arrived in New York after studying product design at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, he soon discovered straight lines creeping into his work. "I'm probably the one hundred thousandth designer to say I'm inspired by natural formations," the 23-year-old, who grew up in small-town Connecticut explained. But he is also the millionth to be influenced by the world that surrounds him, including the rigorous geometries of his adopted megapolis.

→  
Plane  
Dining Table



→  
Wrap Lamp





© Ian Cochran

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BAILEY FONTAINE

Fontaine specializes in sculptural furniture. His day job is as chief caster for Fernando Mastrangelo, a leader in that rarefied world, who builds functional objects out of sand, salt, coal and candy. On his own time, Fontaine explores the materiality of concrete, rusted steel and paper clay in works like a floor lamp with the gnawed, attenuated appearance of a Giacometti sculpture, or a dining table with thin cement layers stacked and curved like sheets of rolled dough. “I’ve been working a lot with cement and burnt wood,” he said. “I’m really interested in this heavy, Brutalist sort of design language but also accentuating that sharp language with some circular cutouts you might not expect to see.”

Odile Hainaut, who with Claire Pijoulat nominated Fontaine, described him as “a really passionate, ambitious and talented young designer,” who “allows himself lots of freedom when imagining new series of products.” “His simultaneous embrace of the roles of designer, fabricator and entrepreneur,” Hainaut added, “is almost unique to young Americans.”



Pillar Floor Lamp



*« I'm really interested in this heavy, Brutalist sort of design language but also accentuating that sharp language with some circular cutouts you might not expect to see. »*

BAILEY FONTAINE



© Ian Cochran





←  
One  
Pine-Board Chair



←  
Rail Car Laminate  
Loveseat, 2018

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## GREEN RIVER PROJECT

[www.greenriverprojectllc.com](http://www.greenriverprojectllc.com)

After founding an ad hoc art gallery five years ago near the Green River in the upstate New York town of Hillsdale, Ben Bloomstein, 31, who grew up in the town, and Aaron Aujla, 32, originally from Victoria, British Columbia, shifted locations to Brooklyn but kept the name for their new art space and design gallery: Green River Project. Trained as artists, the men do custom furnishings and fittings for the interiors of private clients. They also design their own products - an ambitious four collections per year - which they sell out of a gallery in Manhattan's East Village.

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GREEN RIVER PROJECT

→  
Chrysler  
Building, 2018

The collections are created from diverse materials, each eloquent in its own way. They include African mahogany (the partners wanted a wood that looked like raw tobacco), aluminum (inspired by the Chrysler Building) and bamboo (a tribute to Aujla's South Asian ancestry).

The latest collection - the first of 2019 - consists of stools made of coffee-stained Douglas fir upholstered in patterned corduroy by the fashion artist Emily Bode, a frequent collaborator. There are also fir, oak and mahogany cabinets filled with objects by artist-friends. The gallery environment recreates the atmosphere of a 1970s club in the Sixth Arrondissement of Paris.

"We try our best to treat each material as democratically as possible and see it not for its value or rarity but more for its visual quality and where we're drawing inspiration from," Bloomstein said.





*« We try our best to treat each material as democratically as possible and see it not for its value or rarity but more for its visual quality and where we're drawing inspiration from »*



GREEN RIVER PROJECT

RISING TALENT AWARDS  
USA  
M&O PARIS / SEPT. 2019

© Green River Project



MAISON&OBJET  
06-10 SEPT. 2019

f t p i #MO19

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# HAROLD

[www.haroldharold.com](http://www.haroldharold.com)

The Brooklyn design studio called Harold is something of a throwback, and not just because its name evokes a midcentury, pipe-smoking man in a cardigan. Founded in 2015 by Reed Hansuld and Joel Seigle, who each had a Grandfather Harold, the company turns out racks for holding record albums, ceramic planters for low-tech greenery and many wood objects, including rolling filters made from maple shavings. Seigle's Harold founded a lumber business that is still in the family.

→  
Loop Mirror



→  
Tray



←  
Planter

© Light + Ladder



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HAROLD

“Reed and I were roommates when we started this company, and we started by making things that we needed personally,” he said. “We’re part of that generation that knew life before computers, which is weird to think about.” (Seigle, who is 29, grew up in suburban Chicago and studied industrial design at Pratt Institute; Hansuld, 31, is an artisanal furniture maker from Ontario.) “It’s so hard to keep up with tech,” Seigle added. The impulse was to “fall back on the old school way of making.”

Three years ago, the men started Liberty Labs Foundation, a nonprofit that gives young designers, artists and furniture makers affordable studio space in the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn. Everyone has use of a workshop modeled on an old-fashioned woodshop. “It’s the same technology that’s been around for 100 years,” Seigle said. But yes, they also have a 3D printer.

« *We're part of that generation that knew life before computers, which is weird to think about* »

JOEL SEIGLE



© Joel Seigle

## KIN & COMPANY

[www.kinandcompany.com](http://www.kinandcompany.com)

"I highly recommend the cousin relationship as business partners," said Kira de Paola, who in 2017 launched the design studio Kin & Company with her first cousin Joseph Vidich. "There's no husband-and-wife baggage, no sibling baggage. It's the perfect amount of closeness."

De Paola, 38, grew up in California and Vidich, 41, in Manhattan, but the cousins saw each other regularly at family events. After De Paola moved to New York for college, their social circles overlapped, and a professional bond was sealed with a common interest in furniture design and fabrication. Vidich came to it through graduate school in architecture, De Paola through a job in high-end custom furniture.

Opening a metalwork shop several years ago, they began producing tectonic pieces. Then, for a 2017 exhibition at WantedDesign, they folded a single piece of industrial sheet metal in two different directions to create a chair that props against a wall or, with the metal bent the other way, forms a side table.



© Clemens Kois

←  
Crescent  
Table



© Kin & Company



© Alexandra Rowley

←  
Cascade  
Mobile



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KIN & COMPANY

Lately the cousins have returned to their painterly, art-school roots, experimenting with patina to produce various shades of rust and verdigris, and combining steel and stone, as in their Crescent table, where the two materials interlock. They have also moved into the curatorial realm, organizing an exhibition of outdoor furniture for the 2019 NYCxDesign festival.

Now that De Paola's parents have joined them in New York, there are more opportunities for family gatherings in and out of the studio. Her mother works as their bookkeeper, and they keep younger cousins busy as interns.

"I don't think I could do this with someone who wasn't family," Vidich said.

→  
Thin  
Tête-à-tête



© Kin & Company



KIRA DE PAOLA

*« I would describe what we do as contemporary work that's a little more avant-garde than what's generally available in showrooms aimed at decorators. »*



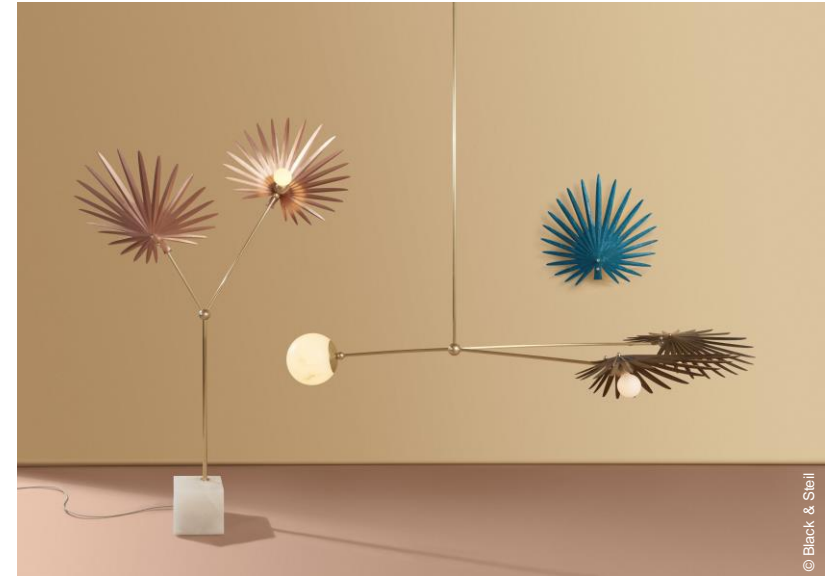
## ROSIE LI

[www.rosieli.com](http://www.rosieli.com)

In 2011, Rosie Li, then a senior at Rhode Island School of Design, or RISD, presented her thesis project to a group of faculty and guest critics. The work was a triangular sconce inspired by the artist Frank Stella, and one of the critics, the lighting designer Lindsey Adelman, was so impressed that she snapped a photograph and sent it to Jason Miller, a designer and producer in New York.

“That launched my career in lighting,” Li, 30, who grew up in Palo Alto, Calif., recently recalled. Miller not only produced the lamp, called Stella, through his company, Roll & Hill, but put Li on his staff. Today, she works independently in Brooklyn designing and producing decorative light fixtures, many with botanical themes like palm fronds, ginkgo blossoms or laurel leaves. Her latest collection, Bubbly, which is made in collaboration with glass blowers, consists of giddy clusters of solid and illuminated spheres.

→  
Inez, 2018



→  
Stella  
Hexagon



←  
Bubbly

ROSIE LI

Li's ornamental style looks spontaneous but has its roots in a rigorous analytical process. "With the proliferation of Instagram and other social media and being able to see anything, everything out there, it gets to be a little much," she said. "Your mind just goes off into a million directions. But I find the role of the designer is to be almost like a sieve to filter out these coulda-shoulda-maybes in an effort to distill your idea into its purest form. At the end of the day I always ask myself: "What are you trying to do here? What is the clear vision?"

Rosanne Somerson, who was on the RISD faculty before becoming the school's president, pointed out that "an interest in lighting in general appeals to people who like the idea of sculpture, technology and engineering coming together." As for Li, her former student, she said proudly, "It's been fun to watch her direction."

© Eric Zhou

« *I find the role of the designer is to distill an idea  
into its purest form.* »

ROSIE LI



RISEING TALENT AWARDS  
USA  
M&O PARIS / SEPT. 2019

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## ABOUT MAISON&OBJET PARIS

Since 1995, MAISON&OBJET has been the world's foremost event for professionals in the lifestyle, interior design and design industries. Each edition brings together some 3,000 exhibitors and more than 85 000 unique visitors, half from outside France. Promoting new contacts and emerging talents, the twice-yearly fair presents the latest sources of inspiration. By shedding light on current and future trends, MAISON&OBJET has become a catalyst for brand development and business growth.

Launched in September 2016, the digital platform MOM (MAISON&OBJET AND MORE) offers a comprehensive overview of up-to-date news and products from the manufacturers, artisans and designers who exhibit at the fair. A bottomless source of inspiration, it also provides a tool for visitors to communicate directly with thousands of brands throughout the year.

**1 250 000**   **3 000**  
SQ. FT   BRANDS

**85 000** / edition  
VISITORS

*Press material available on:*  
[www.maison-objet.com/en/paris/press](http://www.maison-objet.com/en/paris/press)

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**MOPRESS2019**

*Press kits from exhibitors available on:*

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