

DISCIPLES OF DESIGN + ART: AND A FRENCH ARCHITECT REDISCOVERED

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Design's pollination of art is always an intriguing subject. Now, McClain Gallery presents an exhibition that spans generations of artists, spun around a central figure from French architecture: Marcel Gascoïn (1907-1986). A seminal architect and designer in post-war France, Gascoïn is little known in America. This show marks his first exhibit in the U.S.; it's also the first time McClain has mounted a show emphasizing furniture. A native Houstonian living in NYC, designer Malcolm James Kutner, worked with Gascoïn's estate to realize "re:construction." Kutner contextualizes the importance of Gascoïn: "He was student of Robert Mallet-Stevens; a colleague and collaborator of Jean Prouvé, Le Corbusier, and Pierre Jeanneret; and a mentor to Pierre Paulin. The director of the Union des Artistes Moderne and head of the Reconstruction commission under Charles de Gaulle, his furniture was not as prolific as others,

and it is a pleasure to showcase this rare collection." Eleven other talents add texture to the exhibition, which is co-curated by McClain director Erin Dorn and NY-based Simone Joseph of SGJ Fine Art. Joseph's husband, Bo Joseph (who's in the McClain Gallery stable), contributes a pair of loosely figurative bronzes, both done in the 1990s, that metaphorically allude to Tibet. Despite diverse materials (paintings, ceramics, furniture, works on paper, and glass vessels) and different epochs and continents of creation, one aesthetic unifies "re:construction": an emphasis on quiet beauty and reverence for the handmade. Credit goes to the curators for featuring notable women artists including Ruth Asawa (represented by an obsessive drawing for a sculpture) and Claire Falkenstein and Sheila Hicks, both recently rediscovered. Falkenstein's intricate abstract painting mirrors the delicate Asawa pen and ink. Hicks contributes a five-by-five-foot creamy fiber piece from 2017, which wittily dialogues with the 20th construct of white-on-white painting. "re:construction," at McClain Gallery, through March 31; mcclaingallery.com.

Left: Marcel Gascoïn's *Chaise CB C Chair*, 1951, encircle his *Guéridon Ronde (Round Table)*, circa 1950. Above, Julian Stanczak's *Almost Can Be Peppers*, 1958, at McClain Gallery.

Right: Donna Green's ceramics (2014–2015) with canvases by Nicolas Carone (left, *Untitled (P-2824-S)*, 1961) and André Lansky (right, *Untitled*, 1950), at McClain Gallery.