

SEP 21 2023

**SURFACE**

# DESIGN DISPATCH

Magazzino charts a future for Italian art, an ode to mom-and-pop-shops, and ChatGPT reviews a ChatGPT-curated show.

FIRST THIS

“What we do very much taps into a New York energy.”

Lazaro Hernandez

HERE'S THE LATEST





# From Upstate New York, Magazzino Charts a Future for Italian Art

**What's Happening:** Last week, the museum and research center entered its next chapter with the unveiling of the Robert Olnick Pavilion: a 13,000-square-foot education and exhibition space designed by architects Alberto Campo Baeza and Miguel Quismondo.

**The Download:** Over the past seven years, Magazzino Italian Art and its co-founders, Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu, have transformed the upstate New York village of Cold Spring into a national destination for post-war and contemporary Italian art. As life partners with a considerable art collection, the duo laid the groundwork more than a decade before Magazzino opened its Miguel Quismondo–designed building in 2017.

From 2005 to 2015, the Olnick Spanu Art Program and its residency invited Italian artists to find inspiration in the grounds of the couple's upstate residence designed by Baeza and overlooking the Hudson River. The only caveat? That the work embody the spirit of Arte Povera, a radical art movement that swept across Italy in the 1960s on the basis of using rocks, twigs, and scrap textiles instead of canvas, paint, and marble. Every September, the works were unveiled and celebrated on the property.



Under director Vittorio Calabrese, the institution has hewed closely to the precedent established by the Olnick Spanu Art Program: It retains the country's largest public collection of Arte Povera. City-dwellers, locals, and notables like the Italian Ambassador to the U.S. turn out in droves for its late-summer soirées. Its founders continue to work with Baeza and Quismondo to fashion a campus worthy of its legacy as America's sole museum dedicated to contemporary Italian art.

The new pavilion, named after Olnick's father, hosts three of the museum's six current shows: paintings by Mario Schifano, Murano glass by Carlo Scarpa, and paintings and sculpture by Ettore Spalletti. Café Silvia, helmed by Lodigiani chef Luca Galli, adds a culinary garden to the five acres of bucolic grounds. The space afforded by the additional 13,000 square feet of infrastructure stands to make all the difference as the museum expands its audience beyond the art world. On that note, soaring ceilings and scant windows create a rare experience of feeling alone with art. The convenience of sitting down for a hot meal eases the logistical hurdles of those trekking up from the city. Crucially, the extra space can expand the institutions' purview beyond its founders' art trove with works on loan from outside collections.



**In Their Own Words:** “We built the Robert Olnick Pavilion like a poem: a white cube traversed by light,” Baeza says. “The main space will embody the beauty of the artwork it exhibits, and with an isotropic design that carves an opening into every corner, each detail will be touched by magnificent sunlight. Not unlike the excitement of birth, it is with great anticipation that we deliver this second building to the museum.”

**Surface Says:** Consider the newly expanded campus a *Surface*-approved destination for getting out of the city and taking in the art.

## What Else Is Happening?



**Frank Lloyd Wright's** landmark **Imperial Hotel Tokyo** will be expanded.



**Steve McQueen** will bring his “most abstract work to date” to **Dia Beacon** in the spring.



A museum, library, and piano bar honoring **Serge Gainsbourg** has opened in Paris.



**Alejandro Aravena** will build a design-focused facility at **Tecnológico de Monterrey**.



After a 23-year uphill battle, **Fontainebleau Las Vegas** is preparing to open on the Strip.

Have a news story our readers need to see?  
**Submit it here.**

PARTNER WITH US

Reach the design world every morning. **Find out more** about advertising in the Design Dispatch.

BOOK



## A Visual Ode to New York's Vanishing Mom-and-Pop Shops

While strolling around Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, in the late 1990s, **James and Karla Murray** noticed that Katie's Candy Store, a beloved local institution and their favorite haunt for sugary confections, abruptly closed after its rent tripled. The closure was a tipping point for the husband-and-wife photography team, who were recognizing a shift in the landscape as more of New York's

independent storefronts are imperiled by rising rents. Though many mom-and-pop shops are cornerstones in their community and serve as a compass with their distinct character, friendly patrons, and dazzling signage, they're disappearing at a breakneck pace. Data is scarce, but the Chamber of Commerce estimates that 65 percent of small businesses fail by their tenth year.

Shortly after Katie's closed, the Murrays decided to document the city's vast swaths of independent storefronts, unsure of how long they'd be around. Since publishing their first book in 2008, more than 80 percent of the shops have closed; half have vanished since their follow-up, in 2015. In their latest volume, "Store Front NYC," they encourage New Yorkers to visit these vanishing businesses and keep them afloat. When these boutiques, butchers, and bakeries are replaced by bland chain stores with uniform branding, the Murrays write in the intro, "the entire neighborhood is affected" and we all lose. "These shops are lifelines for their communities, vital to the residents who depend on them for a multitude of needs."

SEE THE HIGHLIGHTS

---

#### DESIGNER OF THE DAY



A former navy man who found his calling in industrial design, Gabriel Tan started out by founding Outofstock Design with his three best friends before launching his namesake

studio and relocating from Singapore to Porto. He works tirelessly to redefine existing archetypes and hone a sensitivity to details while honoring craftsmanship, an approach that has beckoned prestigious brands like B&B Italia, Design Within Reach, and Audo Copenhagen for collaborations. His latest, the first furnishings Herman Miller has presented with a living designer in some time, is his biggest milestone: Pangaea-inspired tables and plush sofas mimicking the shapes of boxing gloves and Japanese “Shikibuton” futons.

[READ THE INTERVIEW](#)

---

CULTURE CLUB



## Art21's First-Ever Film Festival Kicks Off at Metrograph

Last week, artists and filmmakers gathered at Metrograph to celebrate the opening night of Art21's first-ever film festival, Art21 at the Movies. The event kicked off the two-day festival with the premiere screening of “Friends & Strangers,” a never-before-seen episode of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* starring Linda Goode Bryant, Miranda July, Christine Sun Kim, and Cannupa Hanska Luger. Attendees mingled and posed for



photos before the screening, which was punctuated with remarks from the featured artists. Afterward, guests enjoyed “Friends & Strangers”-themed cocktails and music by DJ Jennifly.

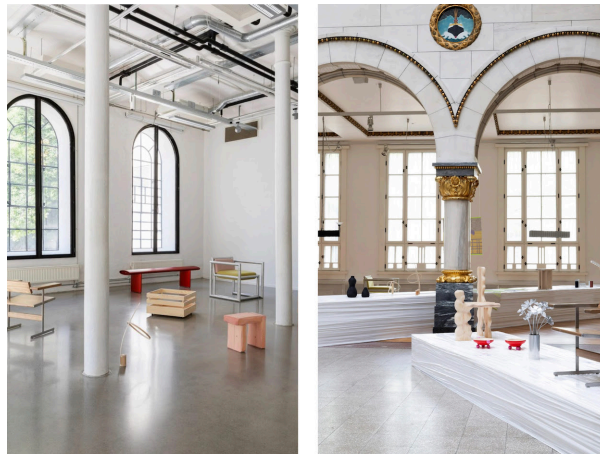
**When was it?** Sept. 13

**Where was it?** Metrograph, New York

**Who was there?** Oliver Herring, James Cohan, Maren Hassinger, Max Heiges, Ali Liebegott, Erica Samuels, Randy Shull, Ursula von Rydingsvard.

SEE THE HIGHLIGHTS

#### DESIGN



## A Design Auction of Sculptural Norwegian One-Offs

Looking to add Scandi flair to a room with pieces off the beaten path? Blomqvist’s new “Unika” auction, which features a range of furniture, lighting, and homewares from more than 30 Norwegian designers, might be the ticket. Initially showcased in Oslo at an exhibition curated by Fold Oslo, the pieces are currently available for viewing at Blomqvist’s Fornebu showroom until the auction ends on September 24. Up for grabs: Ida Hagen’s



wall hangings made from bed sheets and fabric scraps that “embrace the beauty of imperfections,” Poppy Lawman’s window-ledge mobiles that bring dazzling light play inside, and Kim Thomé’s bright, PoMo-influenced wooden bowls.

---

BY THE NUMBERS



## Emissions Cut by Remote Workers

Companies might be bullish on coaxing workers back into the office with gimmicky perks and even charitable incentives, but is it the most sound environmental choice? According to a new study, remote employees in the United States reduced their own greenhouse gas emissions by around 54 percent compared to full-time office workers. The primary factors involve less office energy use and fewer emissions from a daily commute, but there’s a catch. Remote employees’ non-work travel tends to increase, meaning more driving and flying, as does the use of less energy-efficient home appliances.

---

THE LIST



## Member Spotlight: Art of Tea

Art of Tea is an award-winning tea importer and wholesaler based in Los Angeles that hand-blends and custom crafts fine organic teas and botanicals. Founder and master tea blender Steve Schwartz selects and sources rare and distinct teas directly from growers around the world based on deep, long-lasting relationships and his travels.

**Surface Says:** Informed by craft, quality, and the relationships forged on the far-flung travels of its founder, it's easy to see why Art of Tea is the purveyor of choice for the pros behind Vera Wang, the St. Regis, and more.

[LEARN MORE](#)

AND FINALLY

## Today's Attractive Distractions

ChatGPT reviews a Nasher Museum art show that was curated by ChatGPT.

A lucky thrifter finds a rare N.C. Wyeth illustration that she sells for \$191,000.

This illustrated edition of *The Hobbit* features exclusive artwork by Tolkien.

# The new podcast Crypto Kingpins charts the downfall of Sam Bankman-Fried.



[View in Browser](#)

Copyright © 2023, All rights reserved.

Surface Media  
Surface Media 151 NE 41st Street Suite 119 Miami, FL 33137 USA

[Unsubscribe from all future emails](#)

