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COLLECTIVE DESIGN LAUNCHES ITS THIRD EDITION – INTERVIEW WITH FOUNDER, STEVEN LEARNER

The third edition of Collective Design was held at Skylight Clarkson Sq in the West SoHo area of New York City.

The annual fair is a commercial and educational platform featuring expertly selected works from galleries around the world. Avid patrons as well as those new to design were presented with the best in 20th-century and contemporary collectable design.

Dedicated to exploring the significance of design across creative disciplines and everyday life, Collective Design highlights both the design process and the diversity of today's material culture, originating a robust series of education programs and conversations to foster dialogue, encourage the exchange of ideas and build a growing audience for collectible design.

Architect and interior designer, **STEVEN LEARNER** is the Founder and Creative Director of Collective Design...

brandnewdaydesigns: What's your goal for Collective Design?

Steven Learner: We started out in 2013 with twenty-three exhibitors. We've grown and now have over thirty exhibitors from around the world. We have Oslo, Paris, Mexico City, Cologne, New York, Madrid, Milan and its all vintage and contemporary design geared primarily to the architecture and design community. I've worked hard to make this event accessible. It's good for someone who is a collector or curator, but it's also geared for anyone who has an interest in design or may be new to design.

L. ADN Galeria / Photo: Clemens Kois **R. Canada chair, 1965.** Designed by Osvaldo Borsani for Tecno, Italy. Rosewood panels, vintage Italian upholstery fabric. / **Courtesy:** Donzella

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May, 2015.

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bndd: Tell me about that ‘spark’ when people realize, “Wait a minute, design has a big impact on my life”...

SL: If you think about New York, we’re surrounded by great design and we take it for granted. One example is the New York City subway map was designed by *Massimo Vignelli*. People don’t recognize that this tool — used everyday — was designed by one of the greatest graphic designers in the world. So [at Collective Design] we’re trying to open your eyes and show you all the things that are available in our homes such as a rug, chair, a table — which goes back to the *Bauhaus Movement* — all of those objects can be beautifully designed. We have emerging designers as well as established galleries at higher price points. There really is something for everyone in every style. From art deco to the latest in pop design to Scandinavian design from the turn of the century. **L.** Mini Beasts in furs with bronze feet and carved ebony horns. Designed and made by the Haas Brothers, Los Angeles, CA, 2014. / **Photo:** Joe Kramm / **Courtesy:** R & Company. **R.** kinder MODERN / **Photo:** Scott Rudd



Know your design history: The Bauhaus Movement.

bndd: What do emerging designers bring to the scene?

SL: I think there’s a very interesting overlap with emerging design right now because the young designers are in a place where they can choose to work with

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conventional methods and techniques [plus] they can work with new technology. There are designers designing things within computer software then making a prototype by hand. It's not a linear process as you would imagine. It's not someone making everything by hand or someone doing everything by computer. Artists are doing things in a different way. Designer *Wendell Castle* has designs at Friedman Benda Gallery. He started out working with a chainsaw. Now he's working with 3D printing to actually model the spaces within a piece of wood to make a piece of furniture. It really is an evolution. Wendell is 84 years old and he's still working with the latest in technology.

L. Nicholas Kilner / **Photo:** Clemens Kois **R.** Sculptural forms in bronze. Designed and made by Rogan Gregory, USA, 2014. / **Courtesy:** R & Company.

bndd: So new technology is embraced within the design world?

SL: Design is about being current. Even if there's something vintage here, there's always a sense of modernity. There's always a sense of what's happening now because that's how people live.

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