

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AUTHORITY

MARCH 2017



**TOMMY  
HILFIGER**  
LORD OF  
THE MANOR

**STAR  
POWER**

**FRANCA SOZZANI** REMEMBERING HER PASSION FOR DESIGN  
**PIERRE YOVANOVITCH** FRANCE'S TOP TASTEMAKER  
**JOHN PAWSON**'S MANHATTAN MASTERWORK  
**MIKE D** A BEASTIE BOY'S MALIBU BEACH HOUSE



Martin, Hannah. "In Her Element," *Architectural Digest*, March 2017.

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# DISCOVERIES *debut*



## In Her Element

At Friedman Benda, British designer *Faye Toogood* premieres an esoteric line of furniture and objects inspired by earth, moon, and water

1. FOR 2012'S LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL, FAYE TOOGOOD CREATED ART OUT OF 49 WORK COATS, REPRESENTING EVERYONE FROM STONEMASONS TO SILVERSMITHS.  
2. A SPOON CHAIR FROM TOOGOOD'S SERIES ASSEMBLAGE 5, CAST IN A UNIQUE MIXTURE OF EARTH AND AGGREGATES.  
3. THE PATINATED UNDERSIDE OF HER BRONZE SPADE CHAIR.



**F**aye Toogood is holding her breath. Somewhere in the Czech Republic, her short and squat Roly-Poly chair (or the “dumpy elephant,” as she fondly calls it) is being cast in solid glass. “It’s a real gamble,” she says of the curing process, which takes five months. “None of us knows whether it will survive when they remove the mold.” The precarious piece is just one of 23 that make up Toogood’s new furnishings series, *Assemblage 5: Earth, Moon, and Water*, which will make its debut at Manhattan’s Friedman Benda gallery in late February. Perhaps it’s fitting then that the fate of the show’s *pièce de résistance* be left in the hands of shape-shifting elements.

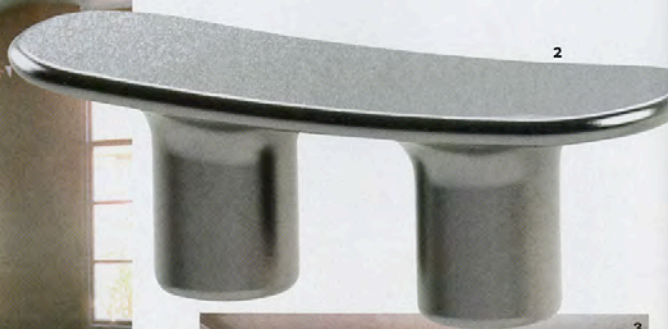
Toogood, who spent her childhood in rural England assembling stones, mushrooms, and glass into compositions on her bedroom table, and who later cut her teeth arranging still lifes under editor Min Hogg at *The World of Interiors*, has always marveled at the wonders of nature. “For this collection, I wanted to get back to something primal and human,” she says.

Each piece is realized in one of three materials devised by Toogood and her team in their new laboratory, a house in London’s hip Shoreditch neighborhood. “I wanted to make my own elemental materials,” she offers. Ancient adobe architecture inspired earth, a complex mixture of dirt and aggregates. “We were endlessly cooking,” she says of concocting it. “We baked almost 30 samples, like loaves of bread.” For moon, she went with nitrate-covered bronze,

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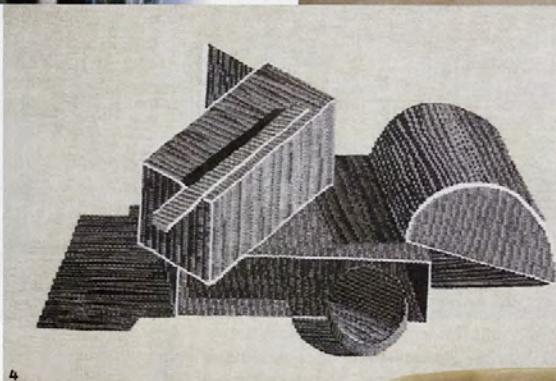


“I hope the forms have an almost human quality,” *Toogood* says. “I hope they feel full of personality.”

the color of dull, deep lead. And for water, she found Czech artisans who would realize her pieces in clear glass.

After a hiatus from the furniture wing of her studio (Toogood also does clothing and interiors), the designer delivers a much-anticipated group of new shapes with this collection. The Spoon chair (“Now Roly-Poly has a friend!” she exclaims) nods to African fertility chairs. And a batch of tables, benches, tapestries, and chalice-shaped stools took inspiration from a visit to Henri Matisse’s chapel on the French Riviera. In fact, the show kicks off a year of introductions: Toogood is creating light fixtures with New York City design shop Matter, producing a wall covering with Brooklyn-based Calico, and fashioning piled wool rugs with CC-Tapis.

In keeping with the multidisciplinary nature of Toogood’s practice, the new furniture designs have already set other ideas in motion: She hopes to rethink her tapestries as coats and is hatching plans for earth, moon, and water suits. “Maybe I’ll wear one to the opening,” she says with a laugh. —HANNAH MARTIN



1. A VICTORIAN APARTMENT DESIGNED BY TOOGOOD IN LONDON’S MAYFAIR NEIGHBORHOOD. 2. THE NITRATE-COATED BRONZE PEW BENCH FROM ASSEMBLAGE 5. 3. HUMAN-SCALE SCULPTURES IN TOOGOOD’S 2015 AGENDER POP-UP SHOP AT LONDON DEPARTMENT STORE SELFRIDGES.



4. THE PLAY TAPESTRY, WHICH IS BASED ON CHILDREN’S BUILDING BLOCKS. 5. THE SQUAT ROLY-POLY CHAIR—SHOWN HERE IN FIBERGLASS—WILL BE CAST IN SOLID GLASS FOR ASSEMBLAGE 5.

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