

## EXHIBITIONS

**Ettore Sottsass Exhibition to Open at The Met Breuer**

The radical designs are juxtaposed with objects that inspired the artist as well as works created by his contemporaries.

By SELIN ASHABOGLU



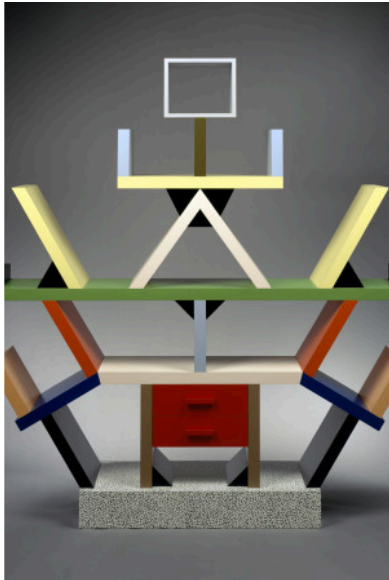
Courtesy of Friedman Benda/Photo by Christopher Burke Studio

Best known for his pivotal role in the creation of the Memphis Group—a famously bold furniture and product design collective in Milan whose daring shapes and colors arguably defined the 80s aesthetic—Ettore Sottsass is the subject of the upcoming Met Breuer exhibit "Ettore Sottsass: Design Radical" in New York. The 20th-century Italian architect and designer's unconventional geometric pieces will be displayed alongside objects that influenced him, objects that were inspired by him, and objects by his design contemporaries, from July 21 to Oct. 8.

Ashaboglu, Selin. "Ettore Sottsass Exhibition to Open at The Met Breuer," *Architect Magazine*, July 6, 2017.

**FRIEDMAN BENDA** 515 W 26TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10001

**FRIEDMANBENDA.COM** TELEPHONE 212 239 8700 FAX 212 239 8760



Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art

*Ettore Sottsass (Italian, 1917–2007)*  
*"Carlton" Room Divider 1981 Wood, plastic laminate 76 3/4 x 74 3/4 x 15 3/4 in. (194.9 x 189.9 x 40 cm)*  
*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, John C. Waddell Collection, Gift of John C. Waddell, 1997*

Now primarily known for his Memphis Group days, Sottsass began his career with modernist designs that contributed to practical furniture systems and even computer design in the 1950s. However, he soon stepped away from functional forms in the 1960s and eventually founded the Memphis Group comprised of 20-year-old international artists in 1981. Its name a reference to the Bob Dylan song "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again," the collective created pieces with materials, colors, and shapes that seemingly clashed to create loud and, at times, unsettling designs. Sottsass' contemporary, English furniture designer Jasper Morrison was once quoted as saying, "It was the weirdest feeling, you were in one sense repulsed by the objects... but also immediately freed by the sort of total rule-breaking."



Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art

*Ettore Sottsass (Italian, 1917–2007)*  
*Executed Design, May 1988: South Perspective (under construction), Daniel Wolf Residence, Ridgeway, Colorado 1986 Graphite, colored pencil, and wax crayon on paper*  
*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Daniel Wolf, 2017*

Ashaboglu, Selin. "Ettore Sottsass Exhibition to Open at The Met Breuer," *Architect Magazine*, July 6, 2017.

**FRIEDMAN BENDA** 515 W 26TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10001

**FRIEDMANBENDA.COM** TELEPHONE 212 239 8700 FAX 212 239 8760

The exhibition will cover a wide variety of Sottsass' work including architectural drawings, machines, furniture, ceramics, jewelry, textiles, paintings, and photography. It will also incorporate ancient and coeval objects that inspired Sottsass' pieces, as well as objects he began designing before the collective, such as the *Menhir*, *Ziggurat*, *Stupas*, *Hydrants*, and *Gas Pumps* (1965–1966) project, and a system of modular cabinets called the *Environment* (1970).



Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Ettore Sottsass (Italian, 1917-2007)  
"Murmansk" Fruit Dish 1982 Silver 12 x 13-7/8 in.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Ronald S. Kane, 1992



Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Ettore Sottsass (Italian, 1917-2007)  
"Mizar" Vase 1982 Glass H. 13-1/4 x W. 11-1/2 x D. 11-1/2 in.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Daniel Wolf, 2017

Some of the artist's later work will also be displayed in conjunction with work by four influential 20th century artists: French interior designer Jean Michel Frank, Dutch painter Piet Mondrian, Italian architect and designer Gio Ponti, and Japanese designer Shiro Kuramata.

The contrast between what inspired Sottsass, who he inspired, and how he differed from other designers of his age is meant to illustrate just how radical of an artist he was and remains.

*For more information on the "Ettore Sottsass: Design Radical" exhibition, visit The Met's website.*

Ashaboglu, Selin. "Ettore Sottsass Exhibition to Open at The Met Breuer," *Architect Magazine*, July 6, 2017.

**FRIEDMAN BENDA** 515 W 26TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10001  
FRIEDMANBENDA.COM TELEPHONE 212 239 8700 FAX 212 239 8760