The uptick of interest in the Memphis design movement of the ’80s has returned Ettore Sottsass, its instigator, to the spotlight. But Memphis was only a slice—albeit a colorful one—of the Milanese architect’s multilayered career, which encompassed the design of everything from jewelry to mainframe computers until his death in 2007. This month, New York’s Friedman Benda gallery introduces Ettore Sottsass: 1955–1969, featuring the rare furniture, ceramics and objects (some never before seen in the United States) produced when the designer was still refining his radical point of view. “Many of the works I chased down for years,” says Marc Benda, the organizer of the exhibition, which is on view until October 17. “They are early examples by a man who was about to shape design history.”