

Sight Unseen

AMERICAN DESIGN HOT LIST 2023 Carmen D'Apollonio

January 23, 2023



Los Angeles, carmendapollonio.com

We first met D'Apollonio in 2010, when she was running the Zurich fashion line Ikou Tschuss and assisting artist Urs Fischer in New York. But after moving to L.A. in 2014 and diving into her ceramics practice, she's now known for her ongoing series of sculptural lamps that have a charming, creature-like feel, shown through Friedman Benda gallery.

What is American design to you, and what excites you about it?

Being that I'm originally from Switzerland, with an Italian background, American design is a little new to me. In the past I've worked mostly in the fine art and fashion worlds. Coming to L.A. about 9 years ago, I really began to be aware of the design culture here. There's such a diversity of approaches; I really think it's all about blurring the barriers between craft and art and design. It's a completely open field in terms of mediums and methods. I've always had a hands-on, DIY way of making things — whether it's with clay or fiber — so the recent inclusion and appreciation for more craft-based work in the design field is inspiring to me.



What are your plans and highlights for the upcoming year?

I started the year with a show here in L.A., at Friedman Benda, which is open until February 4th. I have another show in September at Tobias Mueller Modern Art in Zurich, so I'm back in the studio now working on some new pieces.

What inspires or informs your work in general?

I draw a lot from art history, from Greek and Roman statuary to Modernist painters to English potters from the '80s and '90s. But also song lyrics, architecture, and the body. Regardless of what I'm thinking about, I try to integrate it into my own sensibility — to bring a kind playfulness to the work and not take it so seriously.





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