

**MoMA PRESENTS THE FIRST MAJOR U.S. RETROSPECTIVE OF INFLUENTIAL DESIGNER
RON ARAD**

**Industrial Design, Studio Pieces, and Architecture Displayed in a Monumental Structure
Designed by the Artist**

Ron Arad: No Discipline

August 2—October 19, 2009

The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art Gallery, sixth floor

Press Preview: Tuesday, July 28, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Remarks at 11:00 a.m.
RSVP: pressoffice@moma.org

NEW YORK, July 24, 2009—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***Ron Arad: No Discipline***, the first major U.S. retrospective of Arad's work, from August 2 to October 19, 2009. Among the most influential designers of our time, Arad (British, b. Israel 1951) stands out for his adventurous approach to form, structure, technology, and materials in work that spans the disciplines of industrial design, sculpture, architecture, and mixed-medium installation. Arad's relentless experimentation with materials of all kinds—from steel, aluminum, and bronze to thermoplastics, crystals, fiberoptics, and LEDs—and his radical reinterpretation of some of the most established archetypes in furniture—from armchairs and rocking chairs to desk lamps and chandeliers—have put him at the forefront of contemporary design.

The exhibition features approximately 140 works, including design objects and architectural models, and 60 videos. Most of the objects featured in the exhibition are displayed in a monumental Corten-and-stainless-steel structure specially designed by the artist called *Cage sans Frontières* (*Cage without Borders*). The structure measures 126.5 feet (38.5 meters) long, spanning the entire length of the Museum's International Council gallery, and over 16 feet (5 meters) tall. The exhibition is organized by Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, and Patricia Juncosa Vecchierini, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art.

Ms. Antonelli states: "Arad is well known for his iconoclastic disregard for disciplines—and, at least apparently, for discipline. He has defined much of the current panorama of design, inspiring a generation of practitioners who disregard established modes of practice in favor of mutant design careers that are flexible enough to encompass the range of contemporary design applications, from interactions and interfaces to furniture and shoes."

Arad's accomplishments over the past three decades have stirred up the design world by repeatedly updating the concept of the architect/designer/artist and repositioning design side by side with art, both in discourse and in the market—all while keeping one foot firmly in industrial production and large-scale distribution. Idiosyncratic and surprising, Arad's designs communicate

the joy of invention, pleasure, humor, and pride in the display of their technical and constructive skills.

This exhibition celebrates Arad's spirit by combining industrial design, studio pieces, and architecture. It features Arad's most celebrated historical pieces, including the Rover Chair (1981), the Concrete Stereo (1983), and the Bookworm bookshelves (1993), along with more recent products such as the PizzaKobra lamp (2008) and the latest reincarnation of his Volumes series (1998), the armchair duo titled Even the Odd Balls? (2009).

Cage sans Frontières was specially designed by Arad, developed with Michael Castellana from Ron Arad Associates, and manufactured and installed by Marzorati Ronchetti, Italy, under the direction of Roberto Travaglia. The structure is in the shape of a twisted loop and consists of 240 square cut-outs lined with stainless steel that act as shelves for the objects in the exhibition. The dramatic installation relies on the scale of the structure and on the reflectivity of the inner walls of the cut-outs which creates a ricocheting effect. One side of the structure is continually covered with grey gauze fabric that acts as a translucent, elastic membrane. The fabric was donated by the textile company Maharam and was cut and stitched by the jeans manufacturer Notify, which is also a sponsor of the exhibition. The structure was commissioned and lent to the exhibition by Singapore FreePort Pte Ltd, an arts storage facility.

Monitors installed in the structure and on the walls feature animations of the design and production process of some of the objects on view; animated renderings of architectural projects represented in the exhibition by models; and a video showing time-lapse footage of the construction of *Cage sans Frontières*. Other objects—including the Bookworm and This Mortal Coil bookshelves (both 1993) and the Shadow of Time clock (1986)—are installed along the perimeter of the gallery. Two of Arad's sofas, Do-Lo-Res (2008) and Misfits (1993), are installed outside the exhibition entrance, and visitors are invited to sit on them.

Ever since he founded his studio, together with long-time business partner Caroline Thorman, in 1981 (first called One Off, and then reestablished in 1989 as Ron Arad Associates), Arad has produced an outstanding array of innovative objects, from limited editions to unlimited series, from carbon fiber armchairs to polyurethane bottle racks. A designer and an architect, trained at the Bezalel Academy of Art in Jerusalem and at London's Architectural Association School of Architecture, he has also designed memorable spaces—some plastic and tactile, others digital and ethereal—such as the lobby of the Tel Aviv Opera House (1994–98), Yohji Yamamoto's showroom in Tokyo (2003), and the Holon Design Museum, Israel (nearing completion), all of which will be represented in the exhibition with models and videos. In his influential role as Head of the Design Products Masters' Degree course at the Royal College of Art in London from 1997 until this year, he has nurtured several innovative designers, including Julia Lohmann, Paul Cockledge, and Martino Gamper.

The 1981 Rover Chairs, which launched Arad's design career even though at the time he was not seeking any particular professional label, are emblematic of his early readymade

creations. The chairs are made of discarded leather seats from the Rover V8 2L, a British car, anchored in tubular-steel frames using Kee Klamps, an inexpensive scaffolding system. Arad stopped making them once he realized that the overwhelming demand for the chairs was transforming his atelier into a dedicated Rover Chair manufacturer. The Italian company Moroso is about to produce an industrial version of the chair under the name Moreover.

The Concrete Stereo (1983) is another milestone in Arad's work with readymades. It is very simply a hi-fi system—with turntable, amplifier, and speakers—cast in concrete. The concrete was then partially chipped away, exposing the steel armature, the electronic components, and the pebbles in the cement.

Objects in the exhibition are grouped as families whose common thread is the exploration, sometimes over years, of a form, a material, a technique, or a structural idea. An example is the investigation of elasticity and surprise that began with the Well Tempered Chair (1986)—a chair made of four sprung sheets of steel held together by wing nuts that come together to suggest the archetypical shape of an armchair. Another example is the Volumes series (1988), which comprises, among others, his renowned Big Easy (1988) and its various iterations, among them the Soft Big Easy (1990) and the painted-fiberglass New Orleans (1999).

Not Made by Hand, Not Made in China, another important family and a milestone in Arad's career and in the history of design, is a series of limited-edition objects—vases, sculptures, lamps, and bowls—that Arad presented in 2000 at the annual Milan Furniture Fair. All the objects in the series were made using 3-D printing, which at that time was almost exclusively used to create one-off models for objects that would later be produced in series using traditional manufacturing processes. Treating rapid prototypes as final products rather than templates, Arad turned the new process into an advanced production method, a path that was subsequently followed by several designers.

A more recent family is the Bodyguards (2008), in which the same initial shape in blown aluminum is differently intersected by imaginary planes and cut to reveal ever-changing "personalities," from a rocking chair to a stern bodyguard-like sculpture.

To give life to his ideas, Arad relies on the latitude provided by computers as much as on his own exquisite drafting skills, and he uses both the most advanced automated manufacturing techniques and the simple welding apparatuses in his collaborators' metal workshops. Often, his work is a combination of high and low technologies, such as his Lolita chandelier (2004) for Swarovski. Made with 2,100 crystals and 1,050 white LEDs, the Lolita takes the shape of a flat ribbon wound into a corkscrew shape. The ribbon contains 31 processors that enable the display of text messages sent to the Lolita's mobile phone number. For this exhibition, visitors can send texts to (917) 774-6264. The messages appear at the top of the chandelier and slowly wind down the ribbon's curves, creating the impression that the chandelier is spinning ever so slightly.

SPONSORSHIP:

Ron Arad: No Discipline is organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in collaboration with the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne/Centre de création industrielle, and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

The exhibition is supported by Notify.

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The accompanying publication is made possible by The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

PUBLICATION:

The exhibition catalogue showcases Arad's work with full-color illustrations and brief descriptions of over 150 works. Essays include one by Paola Antonelli about Arad's role as an educator; an essay by Ingeborg de Roode that details Arad's use of innovative materials and technology; an interview with the designer by Marie-Laure Jousset; and a whimsical reflection on Arad and the idea of definitions by Jonathan Safran Foer. *Ron Arad: No Discipline* is published by The Museum of Modern Art and will be available at MoMA Stores and online at www.momastore.org in August. It is distributed to the trade through Distributed Art Publishers (D.A.P) in the United States and Canada, and through Thames + Hudson outside North America. Paperback, 8 x 10.5 in.; 216 pp.; 300 color ill. Price: \$45.00.

WEBSITE:

An extensive website, www.moma.org/ronarad, designed by the Berlin-based firm Basics09, accompanies the exhibition. The site includes text, images, and video of the works in the exhibition. The site launches on August 2, but will be up for preview starting on July 28, 2009.

MoMA VIDEO:

Clips of the installation of the exhibition and an interview with Ron Arad will be posted to MoMA's YouTube Channel and on MoMA.org. Please visit:

YouTube: www.youtube.com/MoMAvideos

MoMA.org Exhibition page: <http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/301>

MoMA.org Multimedia page: www.moma.org/multimedia

MoMA AUDIO:

An audio program featuring commentaries by Paola Antonelli and Ron Arad is available at the Museum free of charge, courtesy of Bloomberg; on MoMAWiFi at www.moma.org/momawifi; and as a podcast on www.moma.org/audio and iTunes. MoMA Audio is a collaboration between The Museum of Modern Art and Acoustiguide, Inc. Available in English only.

PROGRAM:**No Discipline**

Wednesday, September 16, 6:30 p.m.

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2

This program explores the creative approaches of those whose work defies the easy categorization of disciplines and encompasses countless styles of production. Participants: **Ron Arad, Tom Friedman,** and **Cornelia Parker,** and **Paola Antonelli** as moderator. Tickets (\$10; members, corporate members \$8; students, seniors, and staff of other museums \$5) can be purchased online, or at the Museum at the lobby information desk and the film desk.

No. 62

Press Contact: Daniela Stigh, 212-708-9747 or daniela_stigh@moma.org

For downloadable high-resolution images, register at www.moma.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members.
Admission includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs.
Free admission during Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us on the Web at www.moma.org.