

Hawai'i in Design

March 17, 2016–March 12, 2017

John and Patches Damon Holt Gallery

Hawai'i in Design features 10 designers who all reference Hawai'i's environment—built and natural—and are at the confluence of deeply rooted aesthetic principals mingled with global impulses. Scholar John Charlot describes the Hawaiian aesthetic as a synthesis of the natural world into philosophy, form, function, and pattern. Today, designers are responding to urban and rural environments; the high rises, synthetic materials, and virtual shopping that are naturalized into our lived experience. These designers are responding to the world around them, yet are simultaneously, actively shaping Hawai'i as a place where local and global trends intersect.

In some cases, the designers are not re-conceptualizing the format of the given medium through which they convey their designs, but are recalibrating the relationship between producer and consumer through their work by prefacing local idioms and cultural practices over stereotypical depictions of iconic landmarks to make Hawai'i-specific associations. In other cases, objects and materials are modified to function in conditions unique to the islands. Regardless of their chosen materials or methodology, every designer in the exhibition prompts the viewer to consider how design has evolved in Hawai'i, and how Hawai'i has evolved in design.

The designers: Iliahi Anthony, Mark Chai, Koa Johnson, CJ Kanuha, Joseph Pa'ahana, Salvage Public, Keith Tallett, Matthew Tapia, Eric Walden, Sig Zane

—Healoha Johnston, Curator, Arts of Hawai'i

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