



Allison Spear uses bright walls and metal sculptures for her room.

It's just like home

Designers place spectacular Modern furniture in room vignettes

Bridget Wingert ernism."

The 20th-century Modern Auction coming up April 12 and 13 at the Rago Auction Center has a different twist, an extra touch to highlight the sale.

Rago has partnered with designers Alexander Gorlin, Amy Lau, Juan Montoya, Steven Sclaroff, Matthew Patrick Smyth and Alison Spear to create "Modern Masters," six room vignettes using the furniture and decorative accessories from the sale.

The vignettes and auction property will be exhibited at the Sollo Rago Modern Auction Annex, 204 N. Union St. in Lambertville, N.J., April 5 to 13.

Each of the designers has transformed a 200-square-foot space into a room of Modern furniture.

"My philosophy is curate to decorate, because I approach interiors as a connoisseur," said Lau, who has spent many years advising collectors on 20th-century decorative arts. "By referencing the past, but with an eye towards the future, I hope to show connections between today's avant-garde and the work now considered to be the very best historical mod-

ernism." For Spear, it's a chance to create a fantasy. "Having just moved back North from Miami, this arena is very exciting for me," she said. "Sollo Rago has great depth, exactly what makes us, as designers, very inspired. I am especially excited to be among a talented group of friends and colleagues."

And here's another twist. Members of the Phillips' Mill Community Association will join David Rago and John Sollo for a private tour of "Modern Masters" Designer Vignettes from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 8.

The designers made their selections from more than a thousand lots from the top names in the field of 20th-century design — Dale Chihuly, Andre Dubreuil, Paul Evans, Tommi Parzinger, Marc Newson-Idee, Jean Dunand, Wharton Esherick, Ettore Sottsass-Memphis, George Nakashima and Phillip Lloyd Powell.

"It's wonderful to have the opportunity to create a space with such superb quality objects and furniture," said Alexander Gorlin, whose clients include architect Daniel Libeskind, the owner of the Stairway to Heaven beach

homes in Seagrove, Fla., and the Gorlin Building on Miami Beach's Millionaires Row. "I just wish I could keep them, so maybe I'll bid on them myself."

For the 23 years Dorsey Reading worked with the great artist-designer Paul Evans, and in the 11 years since Evans' death, he has collected with an insider's perspective: the visionary pieces, the one-offs, the classics.

More than 40 of Reading's collection will be auctioned in "Sculpted by Paul Evans: the Dorsey Reading Collection." Among the highlights: a sculpture-front vertical cabinet with gold edging; a Pinwheel Argente sculpture; a Wavy-front cabinet (the first ever made).

The collection includes small objects produced from 1955-1958 with fellow artist Powell. Reading will also be selling three masterworks by Powell: a 6-foot walnut cabinet with carved bi-fold doors; a one-of-a-kind fireplace wall; and a set of six custom-made dining chairs.

"This is a spectacular encapsulation of Evans work," says Sollo, who directs the sale. "To have modern design of this quality with incomparable provenance



Amy Lau in the room she arranged.

explode onto the market is exceedingly rare. Can you imagine the contents of the Wharton Esherick Museum or the Nakashima's private home and studio up for sale? It's impossible, yet this is easily the equivalent. There will never be a more important collection of Evans at auction."

Sollo Rago is at 333 N. Main St., a few blocks from the annex, where the vignettes are installed.

Contact 609-397-9374 or visit sollorago.com for details of the auction and catalog information.

Table will be sold to benefit museum

A redwood root burl coffee table created by Mira Nakashima of Nakashima Studio will be sold in support of the James A. Michener Art Museum on April 12 by Sollo Rago Modern Auctions.

The value of the table, with its free edge top and sled base in American black walnut, is estimated at \$15,000-\$25,000. The table is accompanied by Ms. Nakashima's original drawing.

Mira Nakashima, born in Seattle, spent much of her childhood in the New Hope workshop of her father, George Nakashima. She returned to his studio in 1970, having graduated from Harvard University and Waseda University in Tokyo with a master's degree in architecture.

She worked by her father's side as his assistant designer until his death in 1990. Since then, she has been the creative director of the Nakashima Studio, where she continues to produce her father's classic furniture designs and her own work as well.

Ms. Nakashima is the author of "Nature Form & Spirit: The Life and Legacy of George Nakashima." A longtime supporter and board member of the Michener Museum, she designed its Nakashima Reading Room.



Cassidy Enoch-Rex hangs a painting in the room created by Matthew Smyth.



Steven Sclaroff checks a sofa for his room.



Mannequins adorn the room called "The Mayflower Hotel" by Alexander Gorlin.

Photographs by Rick Gould