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DESIGN CENTER

DEFINITIVE DESIGN + DECOR

## THE ART of LIVING

A cult of beauty:  
The Aesthetic Movement  
returns to San Francisco

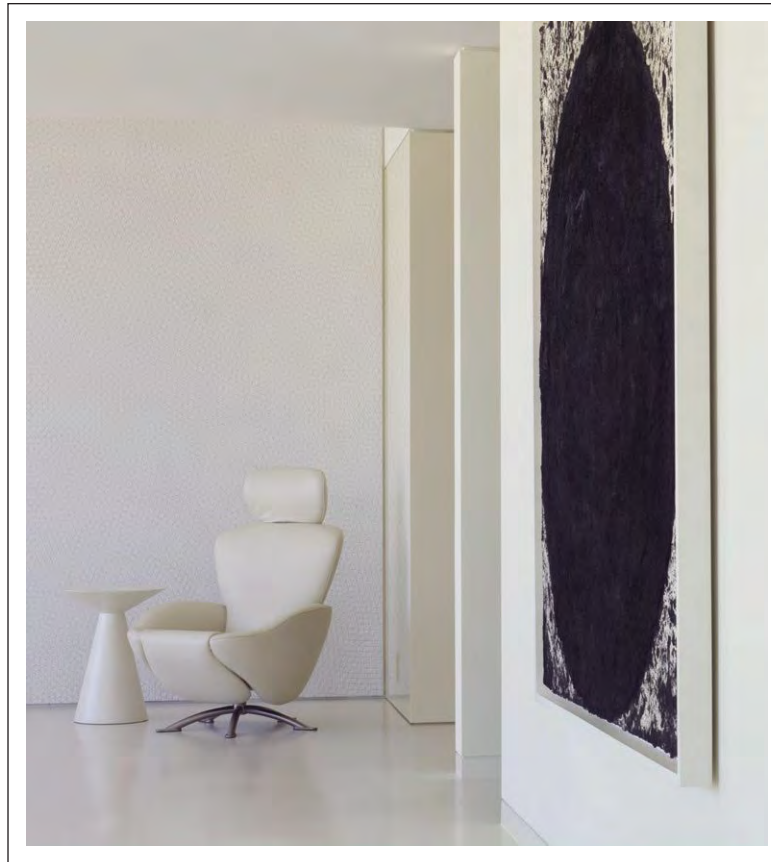
The artful collaboration  
of Gary Hutton and  
Chara Schreyer

Meet your makers:  
The Bay Area's  
handcraft innovators

The new secessionists:  
Global designers stake  
out fresh territory

First look: Our sneak  
peek at the new John  
Dickinson collection





# THE ART of LIVING

The 2012 edition of *3D-Definitive Design + Decor* is all about cultivating beauty.

In *The Collective*, we're given a privileged look at the creative collaboration of interior designer Gary Hutton and collector Chara Schreyer. We explore the origins of the interior design profession in *The Cult of Beauty*. You're invited to meet four leaders of San Francisco's booming handcrafted movement in *Meet Your Makers* and, in *The New Secessionists*, we take a look at how global designers are staking out fresh territory.

In the pages that follow, we hope you'll find inspiration for your own artful vision of home.





**IN THE GUEST ROOM**  
of Schreyer's Four Seasons residence, Richard Prince's  
*Untitled (Girlfriend)* casts her gaze over  
vintage Paul McCobb tables.



# THE COLLECTIVE

The 30-year creative partnership of collector Chara Schreyer and interior designer Gary Hutton is a testament to the art of collaboration.

By ALISA CARROLL

Photographs by MATTHEW MILLMAN

ALFRED STIEGLITZ WROTE to Georgia O’Keeffe of a “great white stillness” between them—a transcendent state found in mutual inspiration. And although she will explain that it’s a range of shades beyond white, in collector Chara Schreyer’s Four Seasons residence, that sentiment takes shape. A temple to art and design, the space has the lucidity of a perfectly realized interior vision. It is the pinnacle of a 30-year collaboration between Schreyer and interior designer Gary Hutton; together they have designed five of her homes, establishing a shared visual language that evolves with each new project.

Schreyer’s quest over those three decades has been to cultivate a world-class collection of modern and contemporary art. Together, she and Hutton create spaces with their eyes on the horizon, environments that nimbly accommodate her ever-evolving collection. The daughter of Holocaust survivors, Schreyer is driven by the philosophy that life may take a turn at any moment. In Hutton, she found a willing partner in risk and beauty.

“It was one of those ‘aha’ moments in life,” Schreyer says, recalling the day in 1978 when she walked into Today’s, a new restaurant in Union Square designed by a 28-year-old Hutton. Patronized by design intelligentsia like Orlando Diaz-Azcuy, Charles Pfister, and John Dickinson, it had become the smart spot for lunch. “I was just blown away by how well it was done, and I asked the main chef who the interior designer was.”

The collector and her husband were building a home in Marin County at the time, and she knew she had found her designer.

“I said to myself, ‘This is my guy,’ and I looked no further. When I met him, I remember opening the front door, and he was such a lovely man, and so easy, not judgmental.”

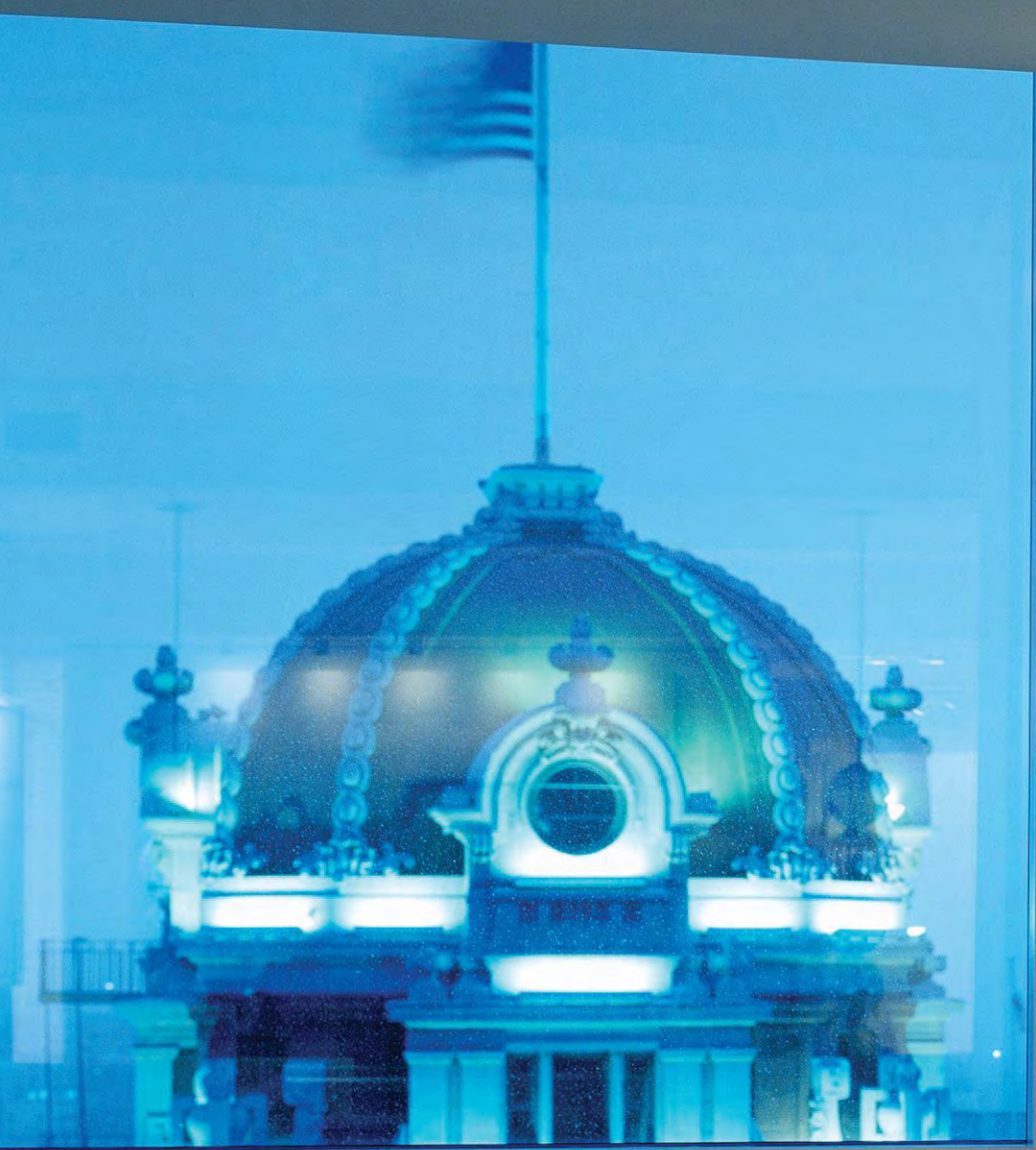
Hutton recalls of their initial meeting, “I was really intimidated on that first visit. I grew up in Watsonville on a farm—I was still picking hay out of my ears.” In fact, Hutton had graduated with a degree in fine arts from UC Davis, where he had studied under Wayne Thiebaud, Robert Arneson, and Manuel Neri, and had also received an honors degree in environmental design from CCA, then called California College of Arts and Crafts. The Schreyer project would be his first major residential commission.

## Chapter 1: Wine Country

Cut to a 60-acre vineyard estate and a property by the iconic architecture firm of Jennings & Stout. “Since I was involved while the floor plans were still evolving, I didn’t realize the project’s import,” says Hutton, “but as it started to happen and the foundation started to go in, I was like, ‘Oh my god, this is huge!’” Though the Schreyers had not yet begun collecting seriously, they had an artful vision for the home. Schreyer—who holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in art history from UC Berkeley—and her husband envisioned an “unapologetically modernist” space. Hutton explains, “They wanted something suitable for the house, which was based on Bauhaus and International Style modernism, so that was where we started.”

“I drew and redrew patterns for the floor for a year and a half based on Kandinsky’s paintings,” he recalls. The floor of the house

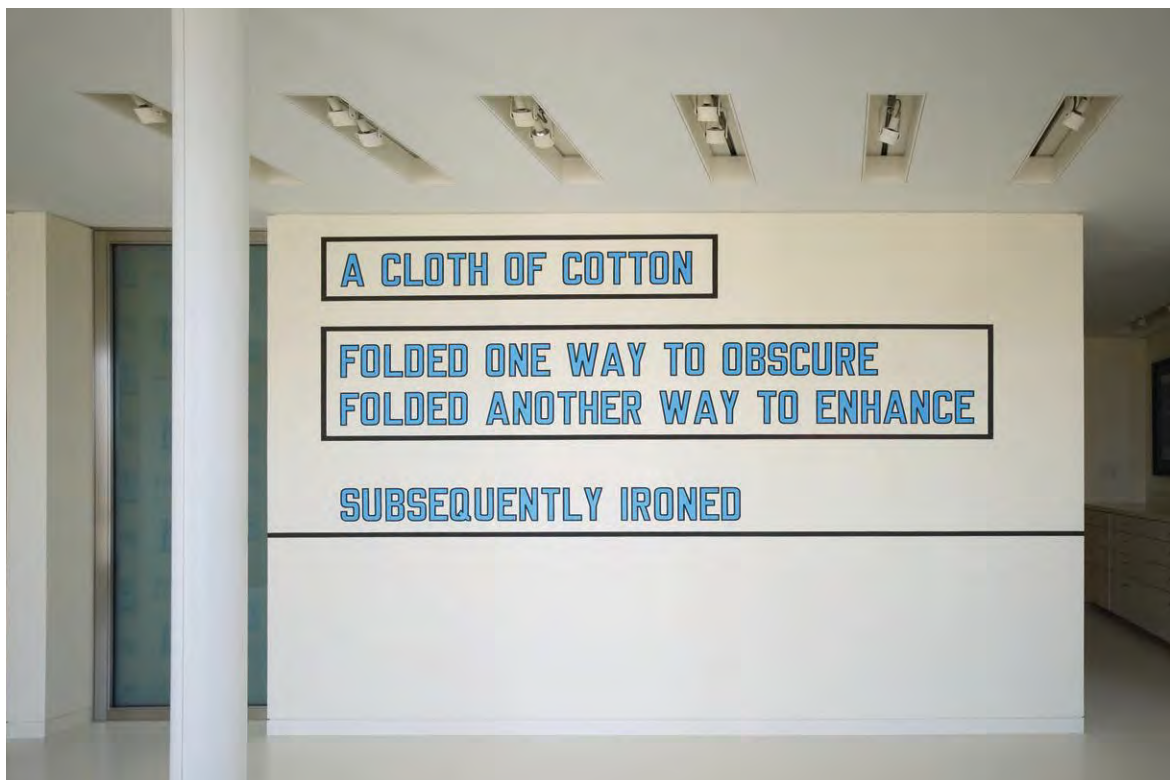








WORKS BY ED RUSCHA, Lawrence Weiner and Richard Artschwager in dialogue with custom furnishings by Gary Hutton's studio and pieces by Minotti and Knoll.





would ultimately be laid in twenty-six different colors of terrazzo-like tile. Hutton's modernist boogie-woogie continued in the bedroom, where he created a Mondrian-inspired lacquered wall.

Construction continued over the next six years. "There was a major drought in Northern California," Hutton recalls. "And the irony was, they put the first coat of stucco on the house, and it started to rain. We had the wettest winter on record. When the next summer came, all the Sheetrock on the inside of the house had to be ripped out and done again because it had all rotted."

The silver lining: "While we were sitting waiting for Healdsburg to dry out, we worked on their Marin home together," says Hutton.

## Chapter 2: Marin

At the end of a winding drive, past expansive views of the Bay, sits Schreyer's Marin home. Chara had originally collaborated on its design with interior designer Anthony Machado, with whom she had also partnered professionally for a short time. She and Hutton set to work redecorating the 9,000-square-foot residence.

When the paint dried, both went back to their lives. "We hadn't talked for a year or two," says Hutton, when his phone rang. Schreyer was calling with an invite to lunch. "Basically she said, 'I'm getting a divorce,'" Hutton recalls. The home would be her canvas for a fresh start.

Duchamp's seminal *Boîte en Valise* and Joseph Beuys's *Vitrine* began Schreyer's journey as a serious collector. The new interior design model for Marin was to provide an adaptive backdrop for these works. "We all understood that nothing was ever going to stay in the place where it was; the art was always going to shift," says Hutton. "So it was not the kind of thing where you put that Goya over the sofa and you decorate the room around it."

From fabulous shag blinds to a white silk carpet—the upkeep of which involves regular raking—the home abounds with evidence of hand. Hutton continues, "We've developed a vocabulary that's about textural changes and richness, a kind of materiality that is maybe a little different. In art school I was a sculpture major; I was doing metal casting, work with plastics and clay. So that gave me an understanding of and a lust for materiality."

Seeking vintage and mid-century furniture, and not finding 1980s San Francisco to be a mecca of modernist design, the duo would jet down to Schreyer's native L.A. to furniture shop. During forays to J. Robert Scott, Waldo's and other design destinations—with interludes for lunch at the Ivy—Hutton and Schreyer amassed pieces including a pair of iconic 1961 Gio Ponti chairs, originally designed for the Parco dei Principe Hotel in Rome. They became the inspiration for the color palette and still command a central place in the living room.

The house, still Schreyer's primary residence, continues to be part home, part lab and part installation. "There's always a little something going on there," says Hutton. "It's never really finished."

## Chapter 3: Marin 2.0

"It's my respite," says Schreyer of the Joseph Eichler house she bought in 1999. At the time, her expanding collection had begun to demand more wall space than their first home could offer, and the Eichler was a perfect venue for displaying '60s- and '70s-era art. While she was contemplating buying the property, Schreyer had lunch with a woman who turned out to be a previous owner. The serendipitous meeting sealed the deal. In another cosmic twist, Hutton had firsthand knowledge of Eichler's oeuvre, having designed several San Francisco homes for the architect's son.

Hutton calls the project a creative restoration, faithful to the architecture spiritually if not literally. The renovation incorporated new versions of mid-century materials that perform better: Corian instead of plastic laminate for the countertops, double-paned windows, improved insulation. Schreyer and Hutton also wanted the furnishings to be a nod to the period: Raymond Loewy rugs are underfoot, and a George Nelson Marshmallow sofa, customized in multicolored Spinneybeck leather in ivory, green, and brown, adds pop. In a playful allusion to *Vitrine*, a Warhol portrait of Joseph Beuys overlooks the living room.

## Chapter 4: The Four Seasons

"I remember riding up the construction elevator on the outside of the building, when it was just steel," recalls Hutton. "Chara gets tremendous vertigo. So Hiram Banks and I—the lighting designer that's been involved in all our projects—stood and surrounded her so she couldn't see anything. We get up to the 24th floor, and there's the dome, and she's like, 'I think that this is the place.'"

Starting with the raw space, they, along with architect Tim Gimmel, would design everything from the infrastructure to the finishes. Appropriate for a space devoted to work by the likes of Sol LeWitt and Larry Bell, the environment embodies the pair's conceptual thinking.

"We knew that it was going to be a gallery. It had to have bathrooms and a kitchen, but it was going to be very minimal in terms of its domestic requirements," says Hutton.

"We were trying to explore new materials. In her teenage years Chara was a championship ice-skater. So one of the initial things we put out there was to do the entire floor of the apartment in synthetic ice. She could ice-skate to the door and give her art tours on a pair of ice skates. Peggy Guggenheim never did that."

Continues Hutton, "We went through all of this stuff and then did the epoxy. It was a relatively new thing and was being used in biotech labs. It wasn't easy to find people to do it—the floors had to be redone three times. But when you're trying to do something that people haven't done in exactly that way before, you always have those issues. Chara was willing to take the risk."

## Chapter 5: Los Angeles

Returning to her home city, in 2008 Schreyer purchased a house in Los Angeles to be closer to her eldest daughter and grandchildren. Hutton and Schreyer's fifth collaboration, the 7,000-square-foot residence will be a synthesis of their partnership thus far. A major remodel of new construction, the ground under their feet will recall their very first collaboration, in Healdsburg—it will feature poured-in-place terrazzo, this time entirely white. Schreyer's office cabinetry will be clad in white Corian sheets à la her Marin retreat. The wood ceilings will add warmth, and the furniture will be primarily Italian, including pieces by B&B, Casina, and Living Divani.

"It will have a little more forgiving materiality than the Four Seasons," says Hutton. "Chara's adamant that everything be comfortable." The collection will, of course, take center stage, and will include pieces by Warhol and Basquiat. The home's selling point for Schreyer, in fact, was a wall that would fully accommodate her 1970 Donald Judd stack.

Completion is scheduled for next September, but Schreyer already knows where every single piece of art is going.

And, says Hutton, "after that I'm sure there will be something else."



FELIX GONZALEZ-TORRES,  
(top row), *Untitled (Tim Hotel)*; Gilbert & George,  
*Black Stare*; Donald Judd, *Untitled (Stack)*.  
*Sparrows Point* by Richard Serra, (bottom row).