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This award-winning residence in Venice Beach is signature Gary Hutton, p. 70.



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2010 CH+D AWARD FOR  
RESIDENTIAL  
INTERIOR  
DESIGN  
(LESS THAN 3,000 SQ. FT.)



MATTHEW WILHELMAN



Hutton whitewashed the entire loft, painting the stairs and kitchen and furnishing the rest with a mix of pieces of his own design, including the Sturgis chair (this page) and classics from Herman Miller and Knoll (opposite). The dining room's black pendant (another Hutton creation).



Gary Hutton

**GARY HUTTON**  
GARY HUTTON STUDIO, SAN FRANCISCO  
VENICE LOFT

If designer Gary Hutton's 30-year career could be summed up with a single image, it would be a shot featuring one of the shapely minimalist furnishings of his own design, complemented by a contemporary work of art—imagine a gracefully torqued steel cocktail table paired with a transcendent Rothko, for example. Hutton's most recent project, a loft in Venice that serves as the weekend getaway for a pair of art dealers, is filled with such vignettes.

A California native, Hutton studied fine art at UC Davis under Wayne Thiebaud, Robert Arneson and Manuel Neri before earning a degree in environmental design at CCA. Over the years he's become a fixture in the art and design community,

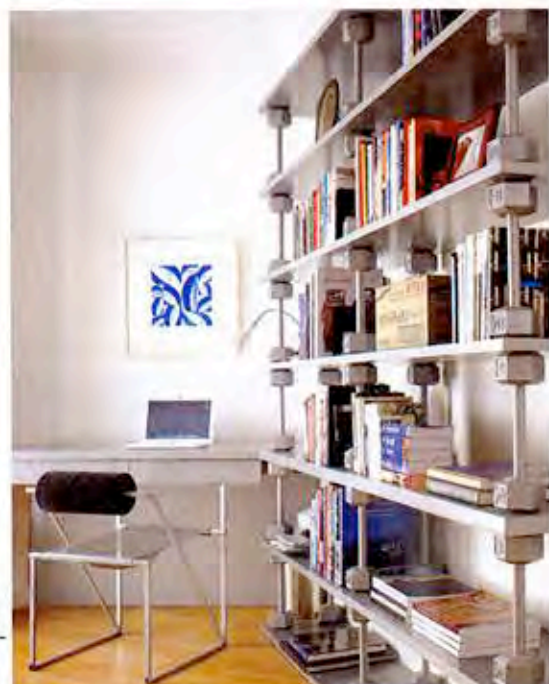
working with prominent collectors and creating furnishings that are as sculptural as they are functional. So it's no surprise that his artistic Reno clients asked Hutton to give their SoCal getaway the same treatment. Working within the confines of a brand-new loft condo near the beach, Hutton brought the generic shell to life with a few striking elements and monochromatic furniture that sets off the owners' rotating art collection.

The main priority was to add interest and a sense of place with interior architectural details. "When I first saw the condo, I knew it needed a more dramatic entrance," says Hutton about the 20-foot blackened steel canopy over the doorway. "Like so many of these new loft spaces, it was vast and vertical."





“These loft projects are really generic ... part of what we were trying to do was imbue it with a sense of place.”



ABOVE: The lounge is furnished in warm beige Italian pieces, accented with a vintage copper lamp and a diptych by Charles Arnoldi. LEFT: The shelves in the office are made with custom-cast dumbbells to honor Venice's famed Muscle Beach.

Hutton and associate Brigitte Wettstein came up with the canopy's pattern on one of their first site visits; lost in Venice's Abbot Kinney neighborhood, they pulled out a street map and marveled at the complexity of the grid.

The other issue was that there was a bathroom immediately to the left of the entrance. “There was practically a toilet in the living room,” says Hutton. “So we reduced the full bath to a half bath and enclosed it with horizontal bands of the same blackened steel that we used for the canopy. In the powder room, Hutton brings the liveliness of Venice's street scene inside with a custom design by a local graffiti artist.

“These loft projects are really generic and my clients are anything but that,” says Hutton. “Part of what we were trying to do was imbue it with a sense of place.” Other witty elements that situate this home distinctly in Venice include a powder-coated steel and leather

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chair, referencing the local motorcycle culture, and a bookshelf made with dumbbells, an homage to nearby Muscle Beach.

But the house isn't all wit and whimsy. The entire space was reconsidered in a sophisticated palette of white accented with black and chrome—an empty canvas on which to display colorful works by artists including Deborah Butterfield and Charles Arnoldi. All of the walls, stair railings, kitchen cabinets and even a Napoleonic-style cabinet in the dining room were given a coat of white paint. Downstairs, the upholstered furnishings are also pure white—including the Sturgis “motorcycle” chair that Hutton designed specifically for this project—accented with black window trim, lighting and accessories. Warmer tones appear in the lounge and upstairs in the master bedroom, but for the most part it's a simple message—black and white with art all over.

“Venice is a unique beach community where urban grit meets beach culture,” says Hutton. “This project is a luxurious getaway for our clients that remains true to that spirit.” —Sarah Lynch

RIGHT: The blackened-steel canopy, with a pattern based on the Venice street map, makes for an arresting entrance to the loft. It starts at the top of the enclosed powder room, which was painted by a local graffiti artist (below).

