

# BLACK INK

THE ART OF EXTRAORDINARY LIVING • FALL/WINTER 2011



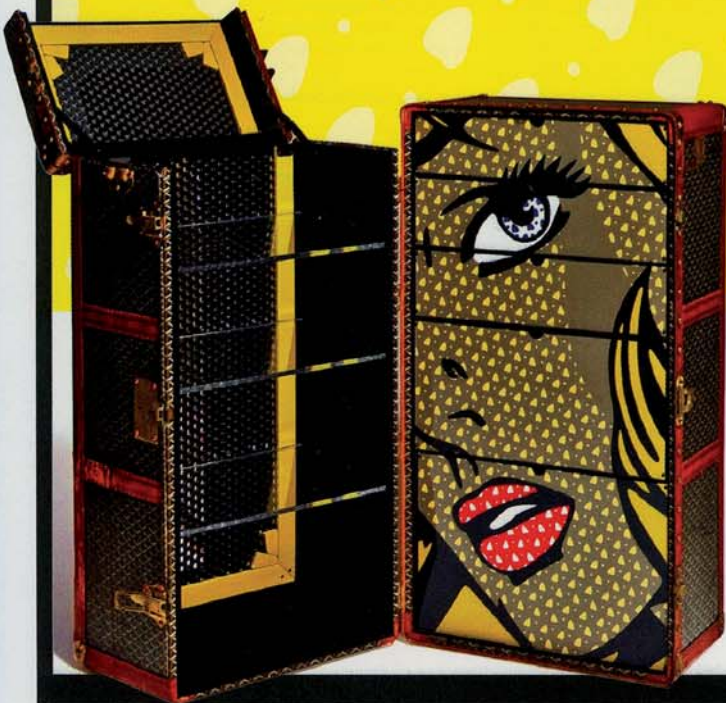
THE *Art* ISSUE

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# POP!

## GOES THE TRUNK

**HOW AN ANTIQUE FROM PARIS MET A MAN IN MILAN AND A WOMAN FROM BRAZIL...AND BECAME A POP ART ICON.**



**I**T SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE THAT steamer trunks are built to travel well. Especially the sort of sterling-quality handmade ones Max Bernardini has at his boutique, Bernardini Luxury Vintage, on Milan's Via Caradosso. The suave 42-year-old scion of a famed antiques-dealing family, Bernardini started by collecting vintage Patek Philippe and eventually made a business as the pre-eminent dealer of all things luxurious and vintage,

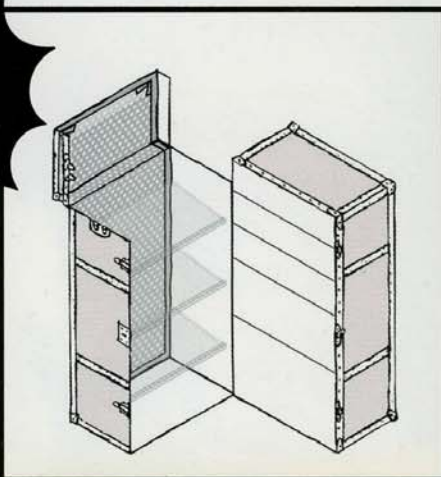
from timepieces to trunks. "I'm the guardian of a lifestyle that doesn't exist anymore," says Bernardini with a near-perfect American accent, "a time when the wealthy could travel at leisure since they did not have to work for their money." The men would circle the world, their trunks packed into carriages, trains and ship cargo holds. Nevertheless, the long voyage of one 1930s Goyard trunk is more surprising than most.

**S**INCE IT WAS HANDCRAFTED ON RUE St.-Honoré, where all Goyard trunks begin, this particular one traveled the globe with a noble French family before Bernardini bought it at an estate sale in Paris. It was ripe for customization. "I put trunks into three categories," says Bernardini. "Collector trunks are very rare, in pristine condi-

tion and usually made for famous characters. Then there are those for interior decorators: good-looking pieces that work anywhere, from hypermodern to Deco. Finally, you have customizable trunks, often ones that have some damage." Using a team of craftsmen, including a violin maker—"They're the only people who know how to work with wood, string and leather," Bernardini says—he repaired the damage on this trunk and in early 2011 handed it over to his creative director, the Brazilian designer Mellina Makowiecky, for a makeover. "I wanted to embark on a project that combined art, fashion and vintage," says Makowiecky, 28, who also handles the intensely collaborative customizations for Bernardini's clients—a recent example includes a suitcase made to carry a Texas hold 'em set. She looked

# RE-MAKING THE TRUNK

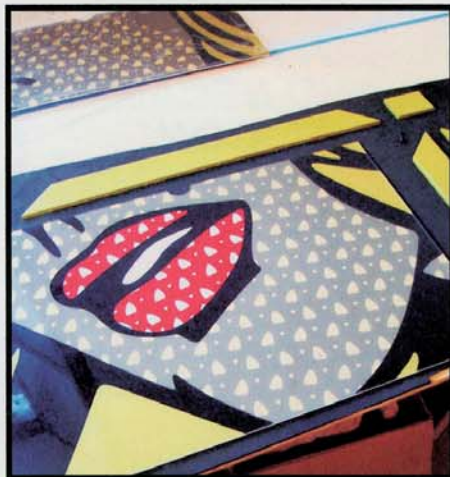
**MELLINA MAKOWIECKY, THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THE TRANSFORMATION, THOUGHT OUTSIDE THE BOX TO TURN A TRUNK INTO A TREASURE. HERE, SHE WALKS US THROUGH THE STEPS.**



**1. SOME ARTISTS START WITH A BLANK CANVAS. I STARTED WITH AN EMPTY TRUNK.**



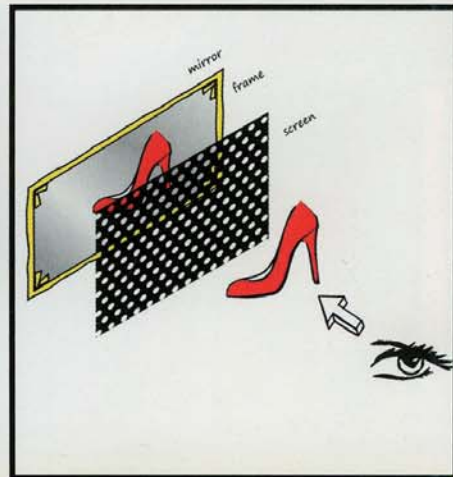
**2. LICHTENSTEIN USED A TOOTHBRUSH TO CREATE PATTERNS. I USED MY PUMPS.**



**4. ...I PRINTED THE IMAGE DIRECTLY ONTO THE DRAWERS.**



**5. THE JUXTAPOSITION OF THE SHOEPRINT AND THE PIXELS GAVE ME ANOTHER IDEA.**



**6. I INSTALLED A SCREEN AND MIRROR INTO THE BACK OF THE TRUNK.**

for inspiration and found it in the work of Roy Lichtenstein, whose portrait by Andy Warhol hangs in Bernardini's seaside apartment. "I love Pop art," says Bernardini. "Even though it was never meant to be chic, you make it chic by the environment with which you surround it."

Makowiecky began to research Lichtenstein and his cohort. "When I saw that he had printed with a toothbrush, I thought, Ah ha, I've found it!" she says. Soon Makowiecky was traipsing around her own apartment in her pajamas and high heels, dipping her shoes in red paint, experimenting with making prints of her own. She enlisted a team of artisans to turn the trunk from a hollow vessel into a hybrid shoe-cabinet sculpture. She incorporated Goyard's color palette for the dots. Using her shoe-printing

pattern, she drew a Lichtensteinian blonde that peers out across five drawers. The interior of each drawer is done bright colors. But perhaps the most ingenious detail is on the facing half, where a mirror behind a patterned screen gives each shoe reflected in it the trademark Pop pixilation. "We've done dog carriers with animal prints," says Makowiecky, "but this is our first high-concept. It's like heaven for me." Asked whether there will be any more, Makowiecky says, laughing, "Well, I'd love to do a Warhol trunk for men's shoes. They could be a couple!" —J.D.S.

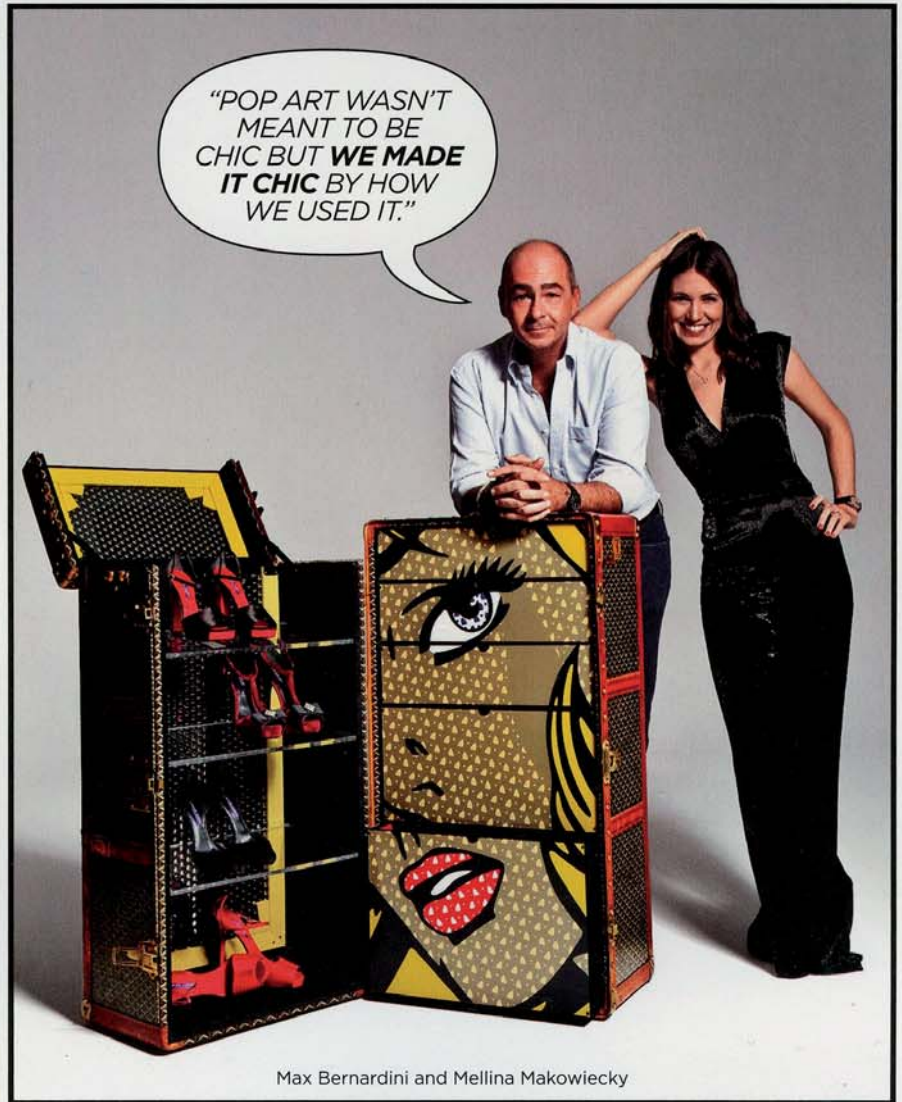
*Alas, the Lichtenstein trunk has already been spoken for by a serious collector. For a conversation about other customization projects, contact Max Bernardini directly at 39-02/481-8697 or go to [myluxuryvintage.com](http://myluxuryvintage.com).*



3. WITH LICHTENSTEIN'S GIRL WITH HAIR RIBBON (1965) AS MY INSPIRATION...



7. THE FINAL PIECE CHANNELS '30° PARIS AND '60° AMERICA AND HOLDS 18 PAIRS OF SHOES.



Max Bernardini and Mellina Makowiecky