

MONUMENT⁶⁸

GLOBAL WARMING: 2005's HOT YOUNG DESIGNERS

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN



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01

WELL KNOWN FOR the Superpatata, Playboy, and Waterproof lamps, Héctor Serrano is not just a lighting designer. "It's important not to be classified," he says. "What interests me is the thinking that's behind these projects, because the thinking can be applied to any project: architecture, installations, objects, new technologies."

Serrano's multidisciplinary work often takes a process or form and puts it into a different context, translating the mundane into immaculate objects with a clear functionality and also a playful familiarity. "If I was trying to create humour on purpose it wouldn't work at all. It's not like you do it intentionally, it comes naturally."

Interested in concepts, the idea always comes first and his objects evolve gradually,

"My work has nothing to do with style, but you know what you are looking for - what effect - you don't know it's going to be a light or another object, so you leave it open," Serrano explains. "I am trying to find new typologies of objects, to create something new in the market... and it's difficult to predict what will happen." Personalisation and improvisation are also "part of the game", and Serrano prefers his pieces to allow the influence of the owner - "So you can personalise my objects with your own feeling".

Originally from Valencia, Spain, Serrano moved to London to study at the RCA. Since graduating he has exhibited in Milan, Frankfurt, Munich, New York, collaborated with Droog Design (among others), won

several awards, and completed a number of installations. Serrano is also interested in affordability, so prefers to work with commercial companies as opposed to executing private one-off commissions. "It's got to be cheap - to be affordable. I'm not interested in expensive things. I'm trying to add that value." Based in a converted warehouse in Hackney, which he shares with two photographers, Serrano is increasingly working alongside production companies to assist in the realisation of his ideas. Current projects include a second installation in Valencia "Miles of Possibilities" to mark Environment Day in June 2006, and ("top-secret") products for a bathroom manufacturer due to be completed early 2006.



Spain & UK

Héctor Serrano



02

Innovation and the communication of familiar ideas beyond functionality ensure his work neatly avoids a sell-by date. Serrano concludes: "What I do with lots of products is tell stories. I just like ideas that are easy to catch."

Cat Martin
www.hectorserrano.com

01 La Casa Encendida installation, 2004
02 Superpatata lamp, 2000



01



Melbourne

Patio Landscape Design

WITH A FAMILY tradition in architecture, Harriette Rowe wanted to extend her knowledge into landscape design. "I wasn't the sort of architect that puts an object in the landscape and to me Australia's climate is all about that integration between the inside and the outside. It seemed crazy not to have an understanding of both."

As Patio's senior designer since its inception in 1998, Rowe has worked on a broad range of jobs, from a master plan for a multimillion dollar resort in the Canary Islands to inner city, residential courtyards in Sydney. Rowe opened the Patio Melbourne office in May this year.

What makes each job identifiable as a Patio project is a rigorous attention to detail while combining plants and materials in innovative ways. For an exhibition in Hamamatsu in Japan, Patio employed boat-building technology to make a sensuous, undulating surface that pushes the properties of timber

decking to the extreme. Patio uses an eclectic plant palette that usually includes Australian natives in some way. For the resort in the Canary Islands, Rowe used an amalgamation of plants, some indigenous to the area, along with other species from the swamplands of Louisiana and the top end of Queensland.

The diverse range of people Patio founder Jamie Durie has brought together - architects, landscape designers and environmental scientists - ensure that each project has a specific design approach depending on client desires and environmental context.

Patio has won numerous awards for exhibition gardens both locally and internationally. Rowe sees these exhibition gardens as laboratories to test concepts and materials that can then be applied in actual projects. On being commissioned to renovate a section of the succulent garden in the Sydney Botanic Gardens, Patio made use of a corten sculpture that they had built for an exhibition the previous year.

While Patio has a solid international profile with projects at different stages of completion in Thailand, Japan and Dubai, they are also actively engaging in local projects. They are working on plans for an intimate outdoor entertainment space in the Melbourne Town Hall and have built a public park for the Crown Casino.

Ben Akerman
www.patio.com.au

01 Contemporary Australian Courtyard, "Pacific Flora 2004", Hamamatsu, Japan