

Friedman Benda exhibits 35 years of Estúdio Campana in Los Angeles

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BRAZILIAN DESIGN AT FRIEDMAN BENDA'S WEST HOLLYWOOD GALLERY

An exhibition at Friedman Benda, titled 'Cine São José: 35 years of Estúdio Campana' is being held in honor of the great work of [Fernando Campana](#) and his impact on the design community in the 21st century. This show will include a broad selection of pieces that demonstrate the legacy of the studio throughout the past fifteen years, as well as a few new works that embody the core values of the studio while also celebrating this moment.

'Cine São José' displays a timeline of iconic works that are informed by not only local, social, artistic, and personal contexts, but also demonstrate Deyan Sudjic's notion of 'recalibration' of objects of modern design. The show is a special tribute to the cinema in the Campana brothers' hometown of Brotas, where they spent much of their childhood, seeing the silver screen as their window to the world.



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THE LEGACY OF ESTÚDIO CAMPANA

The rare Yanomani Chair is the earliest piece on display at Friedman Benda's 'Cine São José: 35 Years of Estúdio Campana.' It was created as part of the Desconfortáveis ('Uncomfortable') Collection, a seminal series of around twenty chairs created in 1989. The chairs were constructed of iron, with blowtorch-cutouts that allowed for personal expression and the exploration of everyday materials.

This body of work led to further experimentation, like the utilization of off-the-shelf and industrial components and the reinterpretation of traditional furniture making. An example of this is the Plástico Bolha Chair from 1995, which is composed of sheets of bubble wrap bolted to a metal frame, where air and transparency are the main features.



Noah Mirror (2017), Pirarucu Armchair (2015), Ofidia Side Table (2015) | image © designboom

CARTOON AND SUSHI CHAIRS

The early 2000s saw the Sushi Series come to fruition as a result of Estúdio Campana's yearning to make something which symbolized their environment, while embracing less traditional materials and a commitment to sustainability. The Wave buffet and Sushi mirror, characterized by their concentric rolls of leftover fabrics, exemplify the language crafted to pay homage to the interlocking fabric patterns observed in the households of São Paulo.

In 2009 the Cartoon Chair with its stuffed-animal upholstery took the concept of comfort to a new level and reinterpreted mundane materials in a way that was absurd and humorous, in turn referencing the densely-populated Brazilian cities and towns that are brimming with Baroque magnificence.



Galactica Sofa, 2020 (front) | image © designboom

EXPLORING TRADITIONAL WICKER

As seen in Friedman Benda's exhibition, Estúdio Campana consistently investigated the use of local materials and craft, both handmade and manufactured, as a form of exploration. Wicker and natural fibers are materials that the studio often revisits, seen in the Detonado series (since 2013) which incorporates reclaimed Thonet wicker seats, and the new Jalapão Chair (2022) which brings a revived sophistication and complexity of design, showing the studio's constant search for potentials of greatness from a singular raw material.

In the late 2010s, the brothers' journey continued, featuring the collection and reinforcement of signature motifs alongside the broadening of their studio's scope. Very personal topics made their way into the artwork, including the brothers' bond to nature. The Noah series arose as a response to an individual and societal unease due to the ongoing climate change and demolition of natural habitats.



Left: Disney Sofa, 2009 | image © designboom; Right: Bubble Wrap Chair (1995), Noah Vase (2017). image by Julian Calero, courtesy of Albertz Benda and Friedman Benda, LA and artists

LEATHER SHAPED AROUND STYROFOAM

In addition to the Jalapão chair, their newest designs include the Galactica sofa (2020). This piece is crafted using traditional leather that is shaped around Styrofoam, which is usually used as a packaging material for electronics and other consumer products. By joining these forms together, a commentary is created on reality, while also creating a light, innovative design. The use of materials, colors, and accumulation make it a unique design.