


TIME

Style & Design

THE DESIGN 100



THE PEOPLE AND IDEAS BEHIND
TODAY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL DESIGN

Multitaskers

Six ambidextrous designers who are transforming everything from household first-aid kits to far-flung hotels



INTERIOR DESIGNER
Thomas O'Brien

GROWING UP AS THE son of an IBM executive in upstate New York must have given classic American designer O'Brien, 46, a head for business. Following a stint as a creative director at Polo Ralph Lauren, he set up shop in 1992 in New York City's SoHo, where he combined his design atelier with his furniture shop, Aero. The shop quickly became a destination for design aficionados, and soon O'Brien was creating interiors for tastemakers like Giorgio Armani as well as luxury hotels like 60 Thompson. But it was his 2005 Vintage Modern line for Target that lent mass appeal to his name. These days, with tableware for Reed & Barton and lighting for Visual Comfort, there's little in the home market that this retro-modernist doesn't have a hand in. —By Deirdre van Dyk



INTERIOR DESIGNER
India Mahdavi

PERHAPS CREATING a home away from home in places like Mexico City's boutique hotel Condesa DF is Mahdavi's way of making the home she never had during her childhood, which she spent following her Iranian father and Egyptian-Scottish mother to 11 countries around the world. Or perhaps the richly detailed interiors she created for the New York City club APT, which evoke a French professor's pad, are her way of channeling her original dream of working in film. Whatever her inspiration, the Paris-based Mahdavi, 46, whose work has been described as "sexy chic," is flying high, crafting airplane interiors for Netjets and giving the same attention to detail and love of sensuous lines to her collection of sofas, chairs and lamps.



ARCHITECT
Greg Lynn

A MASTER OF THE biomorphic form, California-based Lynn coined the phrase "blob architecture." His use of organic shapes in buildings like the Korean Presbyterian Church in New York City or his Blob Wall is derived from his use of computers instead of drawings to design three-dimensional spaces. Though much of his work looks as if it belongs in a museum, Lynn, 43, is wary of design as art. "I want to make sure anything I do, you can use," he has said. Not that Lynn doesn't embrace art—his work is in MOMA's collection, and he consulted on the futuristic architecture in *Minority Report*—it's just that Lynn would prefer to see his creations, like his Alessi Supple coffee cup and his upcoming resin Kraken light for Materialise, in people's homes.



INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER
Harry Allen

HE STARTED HIS CAREER creating counter displays for Estée Lauder's Prescriptives line. But it wasn't until Allen, 43, began designing furniture that he worried about being pigeonholed. "When you do one thing well, they tend to just hire you to do that," says the New York City-based designer. "But I can bring a fresh eye to a project if I haven't done it before." Retailer Murray Moss thought so too and hired Allen to design his first SoHo shop. From his work at Moss, Allen picked up clients like Steuben Glass, Ikea, Target, Magis and Areaware, for which he brought his quirky sensibility to a line of housewares, including hooks cast from his own hands. His latest project, a first-aid kit for Johnson & Johnson, is sure to become a household icon.



Reed & Barton crystal stemware



Walnut-and-ceramic Table Diagonale



The upholstered Ravioli chair for Vitra



Johnson & Johnson's first-aid kit