

Architect Andre Kikoski created this edgy candleholder for Swarovski.

DESIGN REPORT

DISPATCH FROM

MILAN

THE BEST OF SALONE DEL MOBILE

By STACIE STUKIN

SALONE del Mobile is a frenzied tradition where the worlds of art and design collaborate, collide and reveal their latest buzzy creations each spring. Alexa hopped to Milan last week to take in the celebration of decorative arts, innovation and eye candy (not to mention plenty of late nights).

This year, the fashion world joined the party in even fuller force, as evidenced by elaborate exhibitions from luxury brands like Cartier, Louis Vuitton and Marni. But Swedish clothing brand COS may have captured the spirit of the festivities best when it enlisted London-based design firm Studio Swine (helmed by architect Azusa Murakami and artist Alexander Groves) to create a playful installation in a 1930s theater. Beneath a 20-foot tall aluminum sculpture — a modern interpretation of Italian glassmaker Murano's chandeliers — mist-filled bubbles rained down on visitors, who juggled, popped and ran after the orbs in playful revelry.

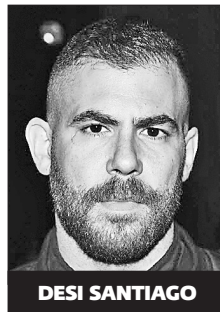
New York designers also made a splash on the scene. Apparatus Studio, which hosted a party at its Milan showroom in the 5Vie design district, introduced a new collection inspired by creative director and co-founder Gabriel Hendifar's obsession with 1920s modernism. Clean curves, craftsmanship and luxe materials made for stunning sculptural work (all manufactured at the brand's New York atelier).

The 1970s dominated at Cartier, which launched its new nut-and-bolt-embellished Ecrou

de Cartier line — a spinoff of the house's *Juste un Clou* nail bracelet from that era. For the fête, New York artist Desi Santiago created a bold, golden garage workshop — replete with a gilded car dangling from the ceiling — a slick and shiny reference to his industrial, East Coast childhood.

Architect Andre Kikoski, meanwhile, collaborated with Swarovski's year-old home line by creating candleholders and keepsake boxes that resemble geometric, faceted sculptures. They glimmered in situ at the iconic Milanese Palazzo Crespi, where Canaletto paintings grace the wall. It was certainly a new medium for Kikoski, who usually works on grand-scale projects, like handling the interiors of a 32-story residential tower at NYC's Hudson Yards for Related properties.

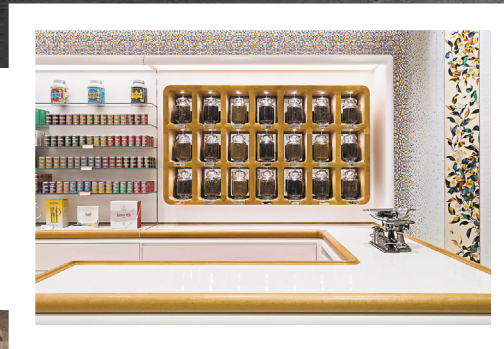
And Christopher Jenner, who designed Paris' Kusmi Tea (which recently opened inside the Westfield World Trade Center in New York), launched a new ceramic home line called *Yixing*. "It's really a labor of love, a way for me to bring this Asian luxury back to the west," he tells Alexa. Using purple *zisha* clay, once favored by the emperors of China, Jenner contemporized this old-world style with beauty and flair.



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Above: Fashion brand COS and Studio Swine presented a chandelier-style installation that rained mist-filled orbs on Milan revelers. **Left:** Kusmi Tea's colorful new shop, designed by Christopher Jenner, in NYC's World Trade Center. **Below:** Apparatus Studio's Milan showroom, where the brand introduced a new collection of lighting and objects last week.



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