

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



R & Company Presents

Difficult

An exhibition curated by Jim Walrod

September 8 – October 29, 2015

Opening Reception:
Tuesday, September 8, 6-8 pm



works that have since become icons of 20th century design. The exhibition opens on September 8th from 6-8 pm. Mr. Walrod will be present for the opening.

R & Company announces the 2015 installment of their annual guest curator exhibition: *Difficult*, curated by Jim Walrod. The exhibition is the first to explore some of the less-than-laudatory initial responses—ranging from bemusement to confusion to mockery to outright scandal and disgust—to

According to mid-century lore, Verner Panton's "Cone" chair had to be removed from a New York shop window when it debuted because its form was so shockingly futuristic and gravity-defying that it caused traffic accidents from rubber-necking passersby. Ed Frank, one of the owners of the Frank Bros. store in Los Angeles where chairs by Charles and Ray Eames first appeared on the retail market (hung from the ceiling no less) recounts that, "My brother and I used to go by the store at night just to watch people's reaction. Most were incredulous, some amused and some people were just laughing. But, also, there were architects and particularly professionals who were very happy about the fact that they could buy the kind of furniture they only saw in magazines. And that was all in 1947."

As early as 1944, T.H. Robsjohn-Gibblings' book *Goodbye, Mr. Chippendale* offered a mocking view of modern furniture and, as the modernist movement gained momentum and influence throughout the next few decades, a secondary narrative was built alongside it, reflecting the reactions of those who found it overly uptight, futuristic, strange, uncomfortable and downright difficult.

With a balance of humor and gravitas, and the benefit of hindsight, *Difficult* will explore these reactions through text, video clips, archival images and advertisements and, of course, the works themselves. The exhibition will also explore the idea of 'trends,' and how they



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affect the market and the access new collectors have to iconic works. Statements about the theme, appearing in the exhibition as wall text, will be contributed by Peter Halley, Beatrice Galilee, Will Cotton, Leo Fitzpatrick, and Omar Sosa, among others.

About the exhibition, Mr. Walrod says, “As with art, architecture or anything else of beauty, time is the only real critic that matters. I wish I had a dime for every time I showed a client a piece of design and had them look at me as if I was crazy only to have them ask me if I could find them the same piece a few years later. The exhibition is hopefully about how time judges design not critics.” R & Company principal Evan Snyderman echoes the sentiment, “Throughout history, objects of design, like art, have been scorned by the established style mongers of their day. What Jim Walrod shows in this exhibition is that there is no definition of good taste or bad taste. We only have our opinions and, luckily, opinions are susceptible to change.”

Difficult will remain on view through October 29th, 2015.

About Jim Walrod

Jim Walrod is a self-trained interior designer. He began his creative career at Fiorucci in the mid-80s, and moved on to open a series of influential furniture stores, including Form and Function, with partners Jack Feldman and Fred Schneider of the B-52s. From there, Walrod has made a career of applying his appreciation and knowledge of furniture and design into the creation of unique commercial and residential spaces. He is considered an expert in the field of 20th and 21st century design and architecture.

Jim has worked on a wide array of commercial, residential, and hospitality projects. Some of his work includes Gild Hall in NYC, The Thompson LES, The Downtown Standard in Los Angeles, The Libertine Restaurant, The Steven Alan Annex on Elizabeth Street, and recently, the Interior Designer of New York's most expensive rental property at 11 Greene Street in Soho, a 200 million dollar project. He has served as the creative director for Thompson and Commune Hotels at large, currently acts as the Creative Director for NYLO Hotels and has provided design services on countless celebrated interiors and consulted on numerous influential built, printed, and film projects throughout the world.

Jim has been featured in countless publications including *The New York Times*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Architectural Digest*, *Rolling Stone*, *INDEX*, and *Apartamento* and recently released the widely acclaimed book, *I Knew Jim Knew* from Powerhouse Books.

About R & Company

R & Company is a gallery committed to historic and contemporary design exhibition and education. Founded by Zesty Meyers and Evan Snyderman in 1997, it presents groundbreaking exhibitions and publications of both historic significance and emerging talent. R & Company represents a diverse program of international design from North America, South America, Europe, and Asia, produced between 1945 and today. R & Company has an extensive archive, library, and collection that chronicle the rapid ascent of



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the design market. In addition to the exhibition program, gallery, and publications, Meyers and Snyderman contribute widely to publications and lecture frequently about design.

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IMAGES:

Top: "Molar Group" cobalt blue settee in gel-coated fiberglass-reinforced plastic. Designed and made by Wendell Castle, Rochester, New York, circa 1969. Distributed by Beylerian. 52" L x 32.5" W x 25" H / 132.1cm L x 82.6cm W x 63.5cm H. Photo: Joe Kramm/R & Company.

Bottom: "Marilyn" sofa in red stretched upholstery over foam. Designed by Studio 65 for Gufram, Italy, 1986. 83" L x 32" W x 36" H / 210.8cm L x 81.3cm W x 91.4cm H. Photo: Joe Kramm/R & Company.

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