

# METROPOLIS

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## OBSERVED

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EXHIBITION  
**New Territories:  
Laboratories for  
Design, Craft, and Art  
in Latin America**  
November 4, 2014, to  
February 22, 2015

LOCATION  
Museum of Arts and  
Design, New York City

## Latin American Experiments

An upcoming exhibition explores contemporary design from the region and the young minds behind it.

After its global survey of African design in 2012, the Museum of Arts and Design in New York is ready to take on another culture for a comprehensive exhibition. *New Territories: Laboratories for Design, Craft, and Art in Latin America* will take a look at the innovative design collaborations in the region since 2000.

"In terms of chronology, Latin America has a very strong theoretical and conceptual idea of design—it's a curricular component in schools—that goes back to the twenties," says Lowery Stokes Sims, the curator of the exhibition. She organized the exhibition around cities, each of which serves as an opportunity to deal with a particular design concern, such as recycling, collaborating with artisans, or developing new markets. But the work is all from "very young designers, with new work," Sims says. "We felt we could make a real contribution to the field by introducing a new generation of designers from Latin America to the public." Here she talks about five emerging talents who are showcased in the exhibition. ■



**Design Da Gema (David Elia), Monaco, b. Brazil, 1982**  
Stray Bullet Chair, 2011

"We realized there was a very interesting phenomenon of designers accommodating the troubled, violent aspects of contemporary life in Latin American cities, whether it be drugs or drive-by shootings. David Elia's Stray Bullet Chairs are genius and macabre at the same time. Now he's also done a side table, which has empty bullet cases, that we're going to include in the exhibition." [designdagema.com](http://designdagema.com)

**Studio Swine (Azusa Murakami, Japan, b. 1984, and Alexander Groves, United Kingdom, b. 1983)**  
Cesta Stool, 2012

"Designers from other cultures—in this case one designer is British and the other is Japanese, both from the Royal College of Art—are sort of attracted to Latin America because of the energy and resources that they can find. The fabrication of the seats is based on recycling or upcycling soup cans—collecting the cans, creating the furnace, and fueling the furnace with recycled oil from restaurants. This was so much about post-studio production, making do—I thought it was irresistible." [studioswine.com](http://studioswine.com)



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**Estudio Guto Requena, Brazil**  
**Nóize St. Ifigénia (from the Nóize**  
**Collection), 2012**

"With digital fabrication, shapes are possible through digital transfers of forms, colors, and sounds. The form of the chair that we have from Guto Requena, the peaks and valleys, are taken from sounds that he has recorded in neighborhoods in São Paulo. But also, it's a kind of riff on the well-known Giraffe Chair that was designed by Lina Bo Bardi. This is also the theme that we are following with the exhibition—of young designers paying homage to design icons."  
[gutorequena.com.br](http://gutorequena.com.br)

**Vladimir García Bonilla, United States,**  
**b. Puerto Rico, 1976**  
**Meteoro (hanging), 2013**

"It was clear from my conversations with designers from El Salvador and Puerto Rico that they face a challenge that designers in Latin America often have, which is to develop local markets and grapple with local production. With Vladimir García Bonilla, there was an interest in lifestyle. An outdoor lifestyle was an important part of his design, but there was also an evocation of vernacular forms."



**Carla Fernández, Mexico, b. 1973,**  
**in collaboration with Taller Flora**  
**and Pascuala Sánchez**  
**Square Charmula Coat (from the**  
**Estridentistas collection), 2014**

"What really impressed me about Carla was this idea of adapting the geometry of traditional apparel, which came from the looms of traditional communities in Mexico. In her collaborations with these women in different villages, she is thinking about how to give them financial recompense, sharing copyright and licensing for the designs. That's really a new model for these kinds of collaborations."  
[carlafernandez.com](http://carlafernandez.com)

