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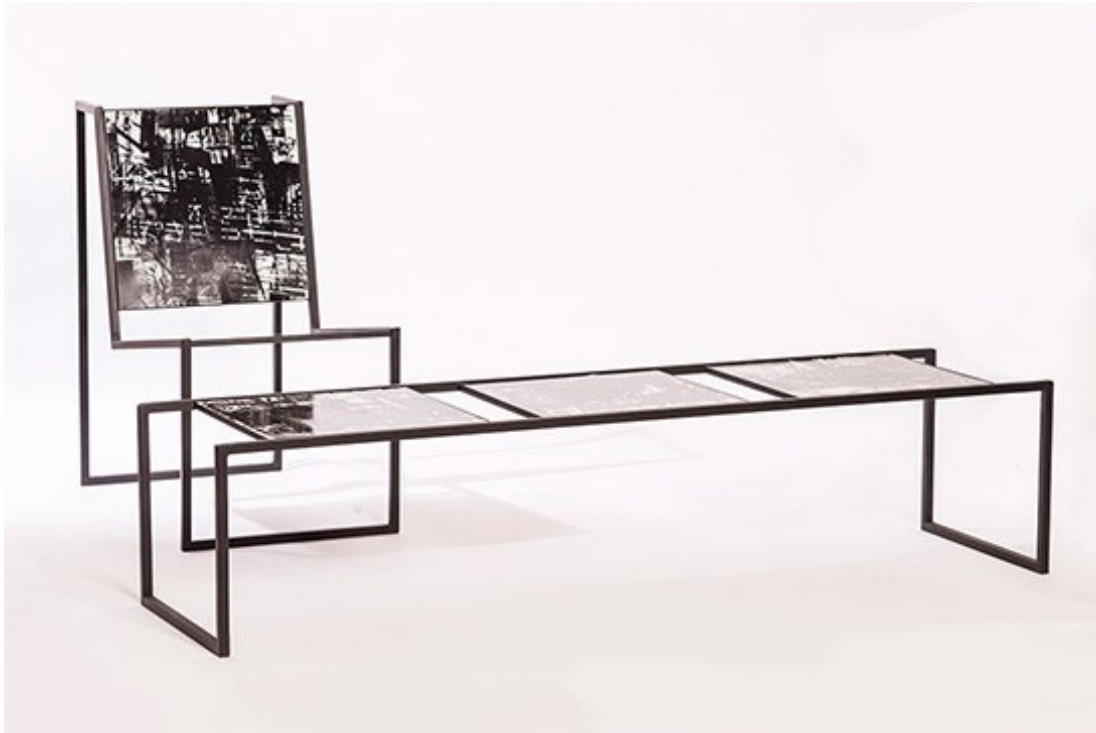
ARCHITECT PEDRO BARRAIL CREATES FURNITURE WITH THE IMAGERY OF PARAGUAY

Text by Tim McKeough | Photography courtesy of Cristina Grajales Gallery | November 6, 2014



Levantate y Anda bar stools and foot rests, wood burned with hot tool, 2014.

When architect Pedro Barrail began designing furniture with the Pai Tavytera tribe in his native Paraguay, the role of each collaborator was clear: Barrail would design the wood pieces, and the indigenous craftspeople would “tattoo” the items by burning geometric representations of forests and animals into the surface. “I wanted to produce pieces that had a dialogue between traditional methods and contemporary design,” says Barrail, who is currently enjoying his first solo U.S. exhibition, “Welcome to the Jungle,” at Cristina Grajales Gallery in New York. As Barrail’s partnership with the craftspeople deepened, the blending of their cultural backgrounds yielded increasingly surprising results. Some of his latest stools, for instance, which have bent legs that make them look like animals ready to pounce, feature far more fanciful patterns, depicting everything from brains to Manhattan skyscrapers the architect has shown his collaborators in photos.



Chiaroscuro coffee table and chair, steel tubes and porcelain tiles with photo-collage impressions, 2014.

For his new Chiaroscuro series, Barrail turned to a different source of inspiration: the scaffolding found at construction sites in Paraguay. “In South America we have very beautiful handcrafted scaffolding in wood—sometimes it’s more interesting than the final building,” he says. “So I’ve been photographing construction sites for years.” To present those images on furniture, he burned collages of them onto porcelain tiles that serve as the surface of steel-framed cabinets, tables, and chairs. “It’s a continuation of what I started with Tattoo,” says Barrail, because the patterns could only have been produced in his home country. “That series was more rural; with this one, it’s urban.”



El Castor Tattoo stools, wood burned with hot tool, 2014.

Through December 19, Cristina Grajales Gallery, New York; cristinagrajalesinc.com

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