

America and Norway are surprisingly similar when it comes to design. Both countries have far more skilled young talents than they do manufacturers, and like American designers — who have shifted, in the past 10 years, away from a reliance on brands and more toward self-initiated production and distribution — Norwegian designers are also beginning to embrace their independence. To highlight their shared entrepreneurship, Sight Unseen’s editors created a cross-cultural exchange called Norway x New York, pairing 5 American studios with 5 Norwegian studios, who spent six months working together long-distance on objects that utilize an American workshop for fabrication and can be independently manufactured for future sales. After a successful debut at Sight Unseen OFFSITE in 2016, Norway x New York is returning this year with an all-new collection of collaborative furniture, lighting, and accessories.

VONNEGUT KRAFT X KNEIP

<http://vonnegutkraft.com/>

<http://www.kneip.no/>

At the start of their collaboration, Vonnegut/Kraft and Kneip discussed an interest in developing sculptural forms using materials that had been re-appropriated from their originally intended use. Taking cues from building elements and natural materials common to their respective cityscapes, they first settled on bricks as the central medium of their project, and then developed functional shapes based on the effects of weather and erosion. With brick cut by M&B Waterjet in New Jersey, and wood tops shaped by a Brooklyn woodworker, the resulting group of tables and vessels allude to the organic, naturally occurring forms that inspired them.

Vonnegut/Kraft is a New York design studio founded by Katrina Vonnegut and Brian Kraft. Coming from different backgrounds in fabrication and design, they each bring a high level of detail and sensitivity to composition in their work. The duo designs functional objects, furniture, and spaces, employing innovative sculptural forms, materials, and color palettes.

Kneip is a craft, design, and art studio founded by Jørgen Platou Willumsen and Stian Korntved Ruud. Nature and craftsmanship are important sources of inspiration. They are interested in telling stories through their objects, with a focus on quality. All of their objects are handmade by Jørgen and Stian, and are either unique or made in small series.

JAMIE WOLFOND X SIGVE KNUTSON

<http://jamiewolfond.com/>

<http://www.sigveknutson.com/>

Jamie and Sigve both share an experimental approach to designing and making objects, be it using tape to affix a clock to the wall, or digging out a mold for casting ceramics. Both had previously worked with shaping a flat sheet of metal into a three-dimensional object, but while Sigve’s method was visceral — employing the force of a hammer punch to create volumes — Jamie’s was more mathematical, using specific perforations and bends to transform a flat sheet into something functional. It felt natural for them to

continue the work in a direction that would merge the two into a shared formal language. The resulting is the Split Bench, a heavyweight indoor/outdoor steel structure that marries Sigve's love of unusual forms with Jamie's approach to sheet-metal bending. The Split bench also draws attention to the inherent beauty of galvanization, a finishing method most commonly found on highway guardrails and lamp posts. Its patchy iridescent pattern, or 'spangle,' adds a bit of variety to an otherwise strictly geometric object.

Jamie Wolfond is a Toronto-born, New York-based designer. Jamie's work explores the ways in which manufacturing can influence the design process. Often centered around one material, the objects Jamie designs expose new applications for pre-existing production methods. Jamie is also the founder of the design brand Good Thing.

Sigve Knutson is a Norwegian designer who recently graduated from the Design Academy Eindhoven. His practice explores how a designer might work if the properties of drawing were applied to crafts. He makes all of his pieces by himself in his studio, and as a result, they are primarily one-of-a-kind. In general he is looking for a more raw and unfiltered way of designing furniture and objects than a more traditional design practice might allow.

VISIBILITY X NOIDOI

<http://vsby.co/>

<http://noidoi.no/>

After discovering that they share a common interest in the idea of mindful living, Noidoi and Visibility set out to design an object that would inspire a more thoughtful approach to everyday life. They landed on BUE, a stool initially inspired by a 1940s Swiss prayer knee-rest, an object solely characterized by its emphasis on mindfulness. Through a continuous dialogue, the stool's form was refined into a linear wooden frame with a channeled upholstered seat, which take a great deal of effort to produce but in the end emanate a familiar simplicity. In addition, to highlight the process of two distinct design studios creating a common ground where new ideas could evolve, the stool intentionally incorporates two primary materials: American Oak and Norwegian wool.

Visibility is an internationally recognized industrial design studio based in New York and founded by Joseph Guerra and Sina Sohrab in 2012. The studio focuses on the purity of an idea, as well as its material and formal actualities. Its constant ambition is to move forward while looking back, drawing on observation and innovation as instruments of development. Visibility aims to distill ideas to what they want to be, retaining what appeals to our human sensibilities.

Noidoi was founded in 2013 by Kathrine Lønstad and Cosmin Cioroiu, who met while studying at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. Inspired by the differing cultural and professional backgrounds of its founders (Lønstad is Norwegian; Cioroiu is Romanian), Noidoi works across a broad spectrum of product design, placing an emphasis on usability, materiality, and craftsmanship. One of the studio's core aims is

to increase the longevity of objects by inspiring a sense of personal attachment in the user.

SLASH OBJECTS X THOMAS JENKINS

<http://www.slashobjects.com/>

<http://www.thomasjenkins.co/>

Slash Objects and Thomas Jenkins initially set out to explore the idea of creating an experience within a space — introducing an element into the room that would offer users a sense of discovery. With a shared interest in bold structures and forms that have an element of interaction, the two studios began imagining what type of object would create the desired impact. After thinking about how a viewer would move around the object, or how light would move across it, they developed a cylinder and a pivoting brass disc — in a muted material palette of concrete and brass — as an elegant way to capture and reflect light within a space. Using the production capabilities of Slash Object's Brooklyn studio to test materials and textures, the base of the lamp was cast in-house, while its brass parts were milled and fabricated by a local Brooklyn metalsmith.

Slash Objects is an investigation of material and form by Brooklyn design firm Slash Projects. Inspired by the juxtaposition of textures, the studio's work explores new methods of making and combining as a way to impact experiences in space. Founded by Arielle Assouline-Lichten, Slash Projects is a multidisciplinary firm whose work bridges physical and virtual design.

Thomas Jenkins is a British industrial designer now living in Oslo, Norway. After gaining experience in industry as a designer, he began his own studio in 2010. Jenkins has a particular interest in material usage, in craft skills, and in industrial methods of production. He creates designs that are focused on interaction and daily use.

MOVING MOUNTAINS X RUNA KLOCK

<http://www.mvngmntns.com/>

<http://runaklock.com/>

Moving Mountains and Runa Klock began their collaboration with a mutual interest in working with an unfamiliar material that highlighted a skilled craft. They chose glassmaking because it has remained unmechanized since ancient times, and because its process has a mystique they sought to unlock. They also discovered a shared love of flowers early on, and decided to make a series of vases that would consider oppositional relationships like transparent vs. opaque, smooth vs. textured, and loose vs. rigid — all within a single object. Working with glassblower Andrew O. Hughes at the Brooklyn studio and incubator UrbanGlass, they achieved that through a long process of experimentation with blending glass colors and creating shapes within shapes.

Moving Mountains is a Brooklyn design studio founded by Syrette Lew in 2014. Interested in the intersection of design, art, and fashion, the studio works with regional craftsmen and fabricators to produce furniture and accessories that aim to achieve an

artful functionality and are able to withstand the test of time. In addition to its own furniture and jewelry collections, the studio also collaborates with select clients to produce unique and one-off commissions for special projects.

The work of Oslo-based designer Runa Klock is often inspired by nature, and is influenced by a strong interest in materials and crafts. Runa's practice is characterized by an openness to cooperate with people in a variety of disciplines — it extends beyond product design to encompass food, exhibitions, and entrepreneurship. Several of her projects also have a strong social profile.