

# BOHEMIAN BOYM

*Circumventing the idea of furniture as art,  
Constantin Boym is literally turning  
art into furniture.*

words / lori fredrickson



Boym Design Studio has long been about reinvention. Led by husband-and-wife team Constantin and Laurene Boym, the company's most distinctive work revolves around the ebb and flow of history on a deeply layered level. Their "Buildings of Disaster" series features bonded nickel miniature replicas of structures that are connected only through their historical notoriety for great tragedy while Constantin's most recent series, "The Ultimate Art Furniture," gets down to the basics of beauty. Circumventing the idea of furniture as art, "Ultimate Art" has turned art into furniture by stretching large-scale paintings of historical classics over basic furnishing frames, thus transforming reproductions of 16th- and 18th-century works into the surfaces we sit on.

you have to touch it, and it's exciting. The varnishes are actually very the surfaces are very forgiving, more than even a mahogany table.

**Ultimate Art isn't just about the object itself. There are a lot of is exploring, using paintings as a material.**

Historical art or art imagery is something that I find very interesting. Art is on two levels. One is about the margins between art and design and addresses that directly. These are old replicas from the 1950s, so you have a real painting. Now it's stretched, taken off an art frame and put on a table, so what is it? Is it still art, or is it not anymore? And if it's not art, what

*"Some people say it's elitist, you know, but I don't think I believe that. I believe that when you do cultural projects, it's ultimately for humanity."*



The project isn't confined to the pieces you've already sold through Moss in New York. You can work on these collection of replicas you started from has run out. Have you commissioning artists to do replicas?

It's more interesting to find something that already exists. millions of projects where you make a chair and somebody paid just something painted on a chair. It has to be something that has to be its own entity.

It adds an extra layer of history. There's the fact that the centuries old, and then it was replicated in the 1950s.

Exactly. It's how it was presented that interested me. The anonymous guy who made the replica, and now me, and now. Maybe in a hundred years something else will happen with it historical continuity.

This series touches upon the age-old concept of what's beautiful to history.

I truly do find these very beautiful, and a lot of people said so. I like the religion of our times. Because even people who don't like this feeling that it's very important.

Art is often said to be a universal language, but religion goes. Most of the paintings during the period that these were reproduced

one of a kind. There's such a saturation of things in our society in our first-world complex. People want everything, so they put a special value on unique things. Not just rich people; it penetrates. Even kids want one-of-a-kind toys. That's the idea of collecting - we remain kids the rest of our life. We can afford to be excited about all these little things.