



Centina Totem by Oeuffice, Living Space III by Karen Chekerdjian, Carving Time Vases by Nada Debs.

# Carwan Gallery

Contemporary Beirut.

Writer **Shonquis Moreno**

In November, Beirut's four-year-old contemporary design gallery **Carwan** took up residence in a 19th-century Lebanese mansion, Villa Paradiso. Under triple-arched windows and excavated frescoes, the first exhibition was *0,91 Cubic Meter*, with modern wood and brass furniture designed by studio 200Gr. The contrast struck by new and old was artful. "It was not easy to find an interesting frame to contemporary design while also giving an idea of the local culture, but the villa's restoration definitely contextualizes the exhibited objects," says Carwan co-founder and curator Nicolas Bellavance-Lecompte. Architect Vincenzo De Cotiis will let loose his *Déchainements* collection at Carwan this June.





# Valextra Boutique

Milanese magnetism.

Writer **Shonquis Moreno**

A first for Italian handbag house **Valextra**, the company tasked an outside designer—**London**-based Martino Gamper—with redesigning its **Milan** shop, and also emblazoning new graphic patterns upon one of the brand's bag collections. The project inaugurated a new series of international design collaborations for the brand with subdued brilliance. Gamper repurposed an undersung element of the accessories design kit: the magnet. He upholstered one room in floor-to-ceiling grey Kvadrat fabrics, hiding large magnetic sheets behind them. By placing small, powerful magnets in each bag or wallet, clerks will be able to arrange bags along the shelfless walls.





## Feit Footwear Boutique

Material constructs.

Writer **Shonquis Moreno**

Intersecting planes of unfinished plywood, fluorescent fixtures, and unsheetrocked walls define the new Feit footwear boutique. In November, this structural interior—with a gallery-ready title *Raw Elements of Construction*—announced its opening in Manhattan’s Nolita district. Here, the shoes sold are all handmade and craft is an art. The installation “reflects the way we design, develop, and build our products,” says designer-owner Tull Price, who co-founded Feit with his brother, Josh, and envisioned the space with architect Jordana Maisie. “The construction and materials dictate the design of the shoe, so we wanted to create a space that would bring the raw elements of construction to the forefront.”

*Photos by N. Kubota.*



# Atelier Courbet in New York

Collect and gather.

Writer Shonquis Moreno



*Photo by Robert August. ©Atelier Courbet*

In the landmarked Brewster Carriage House, a 19th-century coach makers' building in Manhattan, the hush of exclusivity surrounds tabletop and art objects, furniture, textiles, carpets, and lighting culled from workshops the world over, some with pedigrees reaching back to the 17th century. Welcome to **Atelier Courbet**, open since October 2013, the “master craftsman’s shop” where you’ll find textiles by Hosoo, founded in Kyoto in 1688; ceramics by 400-year-old Asahiyaki; “couture” saddling and upholstery by Domeau & Pérès; crystal by Saint-Louis, which, in 1767, was Louis XV’s glassworks; and glass vases by contemporary British designer Hanne Enemark.

Owner Melanie Courbet, a former curator and consultant, also commissions collections, for sale and exhibition, based on collaborations between her master craftsmen and cherry-picked contemporary creatives, such as venerated silversmith Puiforcat and Dutch designer Aldo Bakker. She wants customers to invest in the quality of craftsmanship rather than considering it an acquisition based on speculative values and trends.

“There has been a global shift of priorities in response to an era when mass-produced, socially irresponsible goods have flooded the markets,” Courbet says. “We prefer to know that the food on our plates comes from local farmers, that the hands behind our clothing were able to weave or sew in respectable conditions; to be able to relate to a story and to the craftsmen behind the objects. This is the ethos we promote at Atelier Courbet: to consume less so we leave space for the appreciation of what we acquire.”

So: don’t collect just because craftsmanship is collectible. But it is.