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MASA: 5 Años Después

Private Press Preview: June 20th by appointment only.

On View: June 21– September 28, 2024

Opening Reception: June 20th, 5-9pm

Joaquín. A. Pérez 6, San Miguel Chapultepec, Mexico City, Mexico

With works by:

Adeline de Monseignat
Alma Allen
Atelier Van Lieshout
Brian Thoreen
Dante Medina
EWE Studio
Héctor Esrawe
Héctor Zamora

Hollie Bowden and Joe
Sweeney
Jose Dávila
Manuel Bañó
Mario García Torres
Miguel Calderón
Milena Muzquiz
Panorammma
Pedro Reyes

Pia Camil
Perla Krauze
Rooms
Rubén Ortiz Torres
Tania Perez Córdova
Tezontle
Theo Micheal
Vissio
Xavier Loránd

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - MASA is delighted to present an exhibition of work by twenty-six artists and designers, all of whom have in profound, reverberating ways been critical to the existence of MASA since the inaugural exhibition in Mexico City in February 2019, when MASA first opened as a nomadic exhibition platform. In this gathering of works is the renewal of investigations of material and use, and new groupings and dynamics among artists. But, perhaps most importantly, the exhibition in MASA's permanent gallery space is also a treasured moment of celebration and deep gratitude — looking forward as we look back on the ongoing dynamism of contemporary design and art in Mexico, of which we have been so inordinately fortunate to play some part.

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Works in “5 Años Después” include new editions of the onyx Acapulco chair by Mario García Torres, first developed for MASA in 2020, and a hammock variation of Pia Camil’s iconic work “Bluejeanando,” installed as part of the exhibition “Elementos Vitales: Ana Mendieta in Oaxaca,” curated by Su Wu; as well as new designs making their MASA debut, including a stone lamp by Pedro Reyes and stacked tables by Jose Dávila. Whether first exhibited in Mexico City or as part of MASA’s off-site and collaborative exhibitions, the works together offer a view of an emerging history — and ongoing explorations of the spaces and vocabularies of overlap between design and art.

“5 Años Después” will open on June 20, 2024, and run until September 28, 2024.



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About MASA:

MASA is a gallery founded in 2019 in Mexico City by Age Salajõe, designers Héctor Esrawe and Brian Thoreen, along with collectors Roberto Diaz Sesma and Isaac Bissu. Challenging the boundaries between art and design through a conceptual lens questioning function and expression, MASA unveiled its first-ever permanent space in 2023 in the heart of Mexico City. What started as a curatorial exploration for the creative founders turned into a pioneering nomadic cosmos for a discourse of the borders of art and design, with the need to curate, to build, to provoke and to learn.

In light of Mexico's cultural renaissance, MASA initiates a dialogue and a bold exploration of shape, form, and utility, resulting in a diverse presentation of functionality and material. Thriving in Mexico's collaborative spirit and uniting a creative community of artists, designers and architects, MASA is a space for the creation of experimental conceptual culture. Through its exploration of new ideas and contemporary concepts, MASA will continue to distill the values of cultural production and with its digital, physical, and conceptual presence challenge conventions and present ideas on a global stage.

Artist Biographies:

Adeline de Monseignat (b. 1987) is a sculptor who lives and works in Mexico City. Her work focuses on the life within inanimate entities, through the study of mythology, symbolism, anthropomorphism and the uncanny. By contrasting natural materials such as marble, fur, sand as well as soil with manufactured ones such as glass, bronze, steel and digital media, she creates a dialogue between the natural and the man-made. Adeline holds a BA in Language and Culture, UCL (2009), a Foundation Diploma, Slade School of Fine Art (2010) and an MA in Fine Arts, City and Guilds of London Art School (2011). She is the recipient of the RBS Bursary Award 2013, The Catlin Art 2012 Visitor's Prize and Arcadia Missa Gallery Prize 2011.

Alma Allen's works evoke curiosity about the life of objects and how form and material can transcend the utility of language. Known for distilling diverse organic references, the artist's works simultaneously invite and resist classification. Often realized in stone, wood, or bronze—materials hand-selected from quarries or foraged from landscapes surrounding his studio—Allen's works emit a mysterious

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and ineffable life force. These abstracted, biomorphic shapes feel talismanic not only for their atmospheric qualities but also for their playful essence: bronze sculptures appear impossibly malleable, even liquid, while wood and stone grain patterns are accentuated to reveal their material history. Regardless of the medium Allen chooses, the final forms of his works, with their unique outcrops and eccentricities, seem as though they have emerged from a wordless dialogue between sculptor and object. Allen's hybrid process integrates preindustrial methods of hand-shaping and carving with advanced 21st-century technology. Beginning with finger-scale clay maquettes that are repeatedly reworked, he occasionally employs a self-built robotic device to translate these into large-scale works, achieving a remarkable softness that contrasts with their weight and density. A bronze foundry, established in Allen's studio in Tepoztlán, Mexico, enables him to complete works on-site. Allen's work is included in the permanent collections of prestigious institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Palm Springs Art Museum in California. His first monograph was published by Rizzoli Electa in 2020. He gained significant recognition after participating in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, which brought wider discovery of his work. In 2018, the Palm Springs Art Museum in California hosted the two-person exhibition "In Conversation: Alma Allen & JB Blunk," later traveling to the Nevada Museum of Art in 2019. Allen's first European exhibition was mounted by Mendes Wood DM in 2021, showcased in both Brussels and at the Van Buuren Museum & Gardens, remaining on view through early 2022. In 2022, Allen's work was prominently displayed in the iconic central plaza at Rockefeller Center, New York. Allen's solo exhibition, titled "Nunca Solo," opened in February 2023 at Museo Anahuacalli in Mexico City. Presented in the museum founded by Diego Rivera to house his collection of pre-Columbian art, the exhibition featured new works displayed across the museum's garden and gallery spaces, recently renovated to realize Rivera's vision of establishing a contemporary arts center integrated into its natural surroundings.

Atelier Van Lieshout is the studio founded by sculptor, painter and visionary Joepnittu van Lieshout. After graduating at the Rotterdam Art Academy Van Lieshout quickly rose to fame with projects that travelled between the world of easy-clean design and the non-functional area of art: sculpture and installations, buildings and furniture, utopias and dystopias. In 1995, Van Lieshout founded his studio and has been working solely under the studio's name ever since. The studio moniker exists in Van Lieshout's practice as a methodology toward undermining the myth of the artistic genius. Over the past three decades, Van Lieshout has established a multidisciplinary practice that produces works on the borders between art, design, and architecture. By investigating the thin line between

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manufacturing art and mass-producing functional objects, he seeks to find the boundaries between fantasy and function, between fertility and destruction.

Brian Thoreen is an American designer and artist who lives and works between Mexico City and Paris. Focusing on material, form, and process his works find routes to an unexpected existence. Being mostly self-thought and having grown up working in construction, metal fabrication, and art installation/fabrication his experience in these fields has led him to a place with a diverse view of dimensional space and material interactions. After relocating his primary studio and residence to Mexico City, Thoreen has participated in many collaborations. These connections led to the co-founding of the nomadic gallery MASA and the experimental glass studio Vissio. These partnerships have expanded the capacity for experimentation and discovery within the studio, Mexico, and the fields of art and design.

Dante Medina Born in Mexico City, he studied Linguistics at Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana UAM I and Visual Arts at ENPEG "La Esmeralda". His work mainly consists of painting, sculpture, and masks making, although he has also dabbled in performance and video. His work delves into his own experiences with mental health and everyday life because he believes that the more intimate the images he produces are, the greater the chances of connecting with the viewer's sensitivity. He has worked as painter for the production of "Sexo, pudor y lágrimas 2" and "No son horas de olvidar". He also has a 10 year experience in teaching private painting lessons at all levels.

EWE Studio is a design studio based in Mexico City, devoted to the preservation and advancement of Mexico's rich artisan heritage, while embracing new mediums and languages for the execution of limited-edition sculptural and functional objects. With a desire to reflect tradition as part of the natural flow of design, EWE praises diverse techniques, blends primitive roughness with pristine surfaces, and uses natural empathic materials that appeal to the senses. Mexican history is EWE's inspiration for forging new ideas that have substance and meaning. EWE Studio was founded in 2017 by gallerist and curator Age Salajõe, and designers Manuel Bañó and Héctor Esrawe.

Héctor Esrawe — born in 1968 in Mexico — is a prolific furniture and interior designer, architect, academic and entrepreneur, living and working in Mexico City. His work reflects of clear knowledge and understanding of materials, processes,

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techniques and artisanal skills. Esrawe has a magnificent ability to — simply but abstractly — transform the shape and expression of natural materials, while being nurtured by Mexico's rich artisan heritage, aiming for a timeless and honest creation. Héctor Esrawe's works have been shown with Objective Gallery in China and New York, with Collectional Gallery in United Arab Emirates, and with MASA Galería in Mexico. The work of Esrawe is part of numerous private collections, as well as permanent collections at the High Museum of Atlanta. He has co-founded the nomadic gallery MASA, the experimental glass making collective VISSIO, the evocative EWE Studio, the unique experience of Xinu perfumes and his original design and architecture practice Esrawe Studio, founded in 2003.

Héctor Zamora's work transcends the conventional exhibition space; he reinvents, redefines, and generates friction between common roles such as public and private, exterior and interior, organic and geometric, wild and methodical, real and imaginary. Drawing on his technical expertise and knowledge of lightweight architectural structures, and with meticulous emphasis on the conceptualization and construction process of each piece, Zamora questions the everyday uses of materials and the potential functions of space through his work. Through deliberate and often repetitive actions, the artist provokes unexpected and surprising situations. His work actively involves the viewer, inviting reflection through interaction with each intervention. As part of his recent projects, this year he performed "Chimera" for the 2023 edition of Desert X in Coachella Valley, California, aiming to bring visibility to issues related to migration and the American dream. He orchestrated "Delirio," a performance and exhibition at Labor gallery focusing on the informal market of water lilies in Mexico City. He created "Strangler" (2021) for the Bruges Triennial: a monumental scaffold structure rising around a large Aleppo pine, reminiscent of strangler fig trees in tropical forests. His intervention "Lattice Detour" (2020), a curved wall of adobe bricks commissioned for the Met terrace in New York, alters the cityscape and imposes a new circulation pattern in the space. "Uma Boa Ordem" (2006-2019), installed in the gardens of Casa Wabi in Mexico, consists of five winding walls integrated into the surrounding flora, operating as communication devices connecting people rather than separating them.

Hollie Bowden is a multi-disciplinary design studio based in London, UK. The studio works in various mediums and across a range of design projects both at home in Europe and internationally. Hollie Bowden's artworks are deeply connected to their environment and have a solid command on integrating indigenous mediums with contemporary comfort. Each of her projects is not ultimately taste-driven, they evolve from a strategic

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point of view to a practical way to see it, and apply a perceptive approach to each of her pieces.

Joe Sweeney is an artist who explores how people feel isolated and communicate in today's world. His art is based on his own struggles and what he sees around him and also challenges the idea that Britain is stuck in the past by using humor and art to talk about time, memories, and what lasts forever. He represents all of this feeling through sculptures, prints, videos, and installations. Also he is invested in finding big ideas in ordinary things, like trash or strange moments in life. His art makes us think about how fast things change and what's really important in life. By looking closely at British quirks, he wants us, the public, to stop and to think about the small moments we usually ignore through our day to day.

Jose Dávila's work originates from the symbolic languages that function within art history and Western visual culture. A series of translations and editing procedures are employed in order to modify the normal procedure of identification; materials are modified, elements are highlighted or concealed, and the languages of art movements are reproduced with local resources and within a contemporary context. Influenced by his education in architecture, Dávila arranges objects as if they were basic elements of drawing for creating systems that exemplify notions of equilibrium, stability and permanence. With these sculptures Dávila intends to provide visibility to the physical processes that are required in order for things to maintain their shape and occupy space in a specific manner. He considers himself a self-taught artist, with an intuitive training. The artist lives and works in Guadalajara, MX.

Manuel Bañó was born in Valencia, Spain in 1990. After studying industrial design at UCH CEU University in Valencia and a master's degree in furniture and lighting, he joined Magnus Long Studio in London and collaborated in projects for Central Saint Martins University. Then he moved to Mexico City in 2013 where he currently lives and works. His work has been exhibited in design fairs such as Design Miami/Basel, Salone Satellite in Milan, Maison&Objet in Paris, and Zona Maco in Mexico, and has also been honored with awards such as Best of Year by Interior Design Magazine, a Design Award, and IF Design Award. Son of a designer and an artist, Manu grew up in a creative and experimental environment, awakening from an early age his interest in materials, craft techniques, and the nature of objects.

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Mario García Torres (b. 1975, Monclova, Mexico) is an artist currently living between Mexico City and Los Angeles. Through personal and intimate research-based practice, his work has been investigating the structures and politics that make art possible, mainly using blind spots in recent art history and employing gestures normally related to the immaterial legacy of conceptual art. Interested in uncertainty and counter-narratives, he has blurred the notions of fact and fiction through a wide range of mediums, including film, slide shows, performance, sound and painting. Some of the most important solo exhibitions of his work have been held at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2007), Kunsthalle Zürich (2008), Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley (2009), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2010); Museo MADRE, Naples (2013), Perez Art Museum, Miami (2015), TBA21, Vienna (2016), Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2016), Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2018) and Wiels Art Centre, Brussels (2019) MARCO, Monterrey (2021).

Miguel Calderón is considered a seminal figure in Mexico's independent art scene. His pieces often combine a dark sense of humor that is reconfigured into works exploring deep social and personal territories, leveraging what is at hand to create films and videos on a low budget. His multidisciplinary practice focuses on exploring power relationships, both in interpersonal relationships (often familial) and among different societal groups. He draws satirical portraits—always with respectful consideration towards marginalized figures—that depict Mexico's class society, defined by rigid hierarchies. His work is often united by a sense of ever-present theatricality, questioning the fine line separating reality from fiction. Often, from the perspective of an outsider, he highlights the macabre complexity of our position as human beings in the universe, skillfully intertwining mockery, social critique, and direct emotions. Calderón creates works from a blend of vernacular references, employing various mediums such as video, photography, sculpture, and painting. Miguel Calderón lives and works in Mexico City.

Milena Muzquiz's sculptures are predicated on the poetics of living things, without references to artists or art movements. Starting out from conventional crafts and ceramics, Muzquiz produces defiantly contemporary objects. Her interest is rooted in the idea of how everyday objects like vases and pottery can be represented as theatrical narratives with a symbolic intent. Milena Muzquiz has built a career by contaminating high with low, earnestness with irony, intelligence with irreverent play. As part of the genre defying music, performance, and installation art duo Los Super Elegantes, she has fashioned a unique role for herself in the contemporary art world. Having originally trained in fine arts at the California College of Arts and

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Crafts, Muzquiz now returns to ceramics, a medium that she approaches with characteristic wit and exuberance. Her multicolored vases are bedecked with pendants, badges, and jutting lumps. These relational objects are meant to be handled and used, and are designed to confound categorization.

Panoramamma, Maika Palazuelos (Monterrey, 1994) started the project Panoramamma during confinement with the intention of creating a permeable and open platform for design exploration. With a background in arts, Maika initially conceived her designs as an extension of her artistic practice; identifying in expressive domestic objects a possibility for them to compete with and expand our everyday narrative. Maika completed her undergraduate studies in art at UDEM (Monterrey, Mexico) while coursing part of her studies in RISD (Rhode Island, USA). After graduation she was awarded the FONCA national stipend for young artists. In 2021 she continued her postgraduate studies at ETSAB (Barcelona, Spain) studying contemporary design, where she also took part in el Bulli Foundation residency program. In 2022 she was awarded the Mexico Design Prize for Best New Talent. Recently she was recognized by Dwell Magazine as part of the Best New Designers of 2023.

Pedro Reyes was born in Mexico City in 1972. He designs ongoing projects that propose playful solutions to social problems. From turning guns into musical instruments, to hosting a People's United Nations to address pressing concerns, to offering ecologically-friendly grasshopper burgers from a food cart, Reyes transforms existing problems into ideas for a better world. In the artist's hands, complex subjects like political and economic philosophies are reframed in ways that are easy to understand, such as a puppet play featuring Karl Marx and Adam Smith fighting over how to share cookies. When encountering a project by the artist, viewers are often enlisted as participants, whether through one-on-one conversations, therapeutic acts, or as creators of objects in collaborative workshops.

Perla Krauze (b. Mexico City, 1953) is a plastic artist, sculptor, and painter. She studied graphic design at the National School of Visual Arts (ENAP) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). In 1977 she traveled to London and obtained a diploma in textiles at Goldsmiths College, and in 1992 she returned to the city as an MFA student at the Chelsea College of Arts. She has received acknowledgments from institutions such as the UNAM and the British Council, and she has taken part in various artists' residency programs: the Red Gate Gallery in

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China; the Echigo-Tsumari Triennial in Japan; the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada; and the MacDowell Colony, the Santa Fe Art Institute and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in the United States. Her work forms part of important public and private collections at the Museo Amparo, Museo de Arte Moderno, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, MUAC-UNAM, Museo Nacional de la Estampa, Museo de la Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, Museo de la Cancillería, and Colección Manuel Felguérez, all in Mexico; and the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Sprint Art Collection, Freedman Gallery-Albright College, MOLAA, CA, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC and the Bank of America, all in the US. Since 1994, she has been a member of the FONCA: Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte and has received several grants from this program.

Pia Camil (b. 1980) lives and works between Acapulco, Oaxaca, Mexico and Mexico City. She has a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London. Her work has been exhibited internationally with recent solo-exhibitions including: Fuego Amigo, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, CDMX, Mexico (2024); Organismo Multi Orgásmico, Sultana Galerie, Paris, FR (2023); Nidos y Nudos, Blum & Poe Gallery, LA (2021), Three Works, Moca Tucson (2020), Laugh Now, Cry Later at OMR Gallery, Mexico City (2020); Here Comes The Sun, performance at Guggenheim Museum, New York (2019); Fade into Black: Sit, chill, look, talk, roll, play, listen, give, take, dance, share, Queens Museum, New York (2019); Bara, Bara, Bara, Tramway Art Space, Glasgow (2019); Telón de Boca, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City (2018); Split Wall, Nottingham Contemporary (2018); They, Galerie Sultana, Paris (2018); Bara, Bara, Bara, Dallas Contemporary (2017); Slats, Skins & Shopfittings, Blum & Poe, New York (2016); A Pot for a Latch, New Museum, New York (2016); Skins, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2015); The Little Dog Laughed, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2014); Espectacular Telón, Galerie Sultana, Paris (2013); Cuadrado Negro, Basque Museum Centre for Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain (2013). Camil's work is often done in a climate where kinship and the affective are proposed as a radical way of working in contrast to the highly individualized world. The subject matter of her work focuses on the rural / urban contexts with a formal yet critical dialogue with modernism.

ROOMS Studio, founded by Artists, Nata Janberidze and Ketiv Toloraia in 2007 in Tbilisi, Georgia. Rooms Studio focuses on creating distinct spaces and collectible design pieces. Their vision is characterized by a fondness for storytelling, exploring different directions, and mental acuity. The influence of their Soviet childhood in

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which they experienced tremendous cultural change and a mix of Asian and European traditions greatly impact Keti & Nata's ideas and objects. Distinguished by a human-made feel and symbolic shapes, the Duo continues to explore and experiment with unique techniques and materials. By unfolding hidden treasures of their historic roots and following their instincts, Rooms Studio conveys Georgian Arts and Crafts language into their work. Pushing the boundaries of limited-edition handcrafted pieces and driven by a love of simplicity, Rooms Studio reflects its attitude of capturing the simple bliss of life.

Rubén Ortiz Torres learned his BFA from Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and his MFA from California Institute of the Arts, Venice, CA. His work explores the social and aesthetic transformations related to cross-culture and globalization. Different strategies spring out from the media he explores. Including his interest in adaptation processes, among several contexts, and their transformations, are signs and objects which simultaneously change their shape and meaning. The work of Ortiz Torres includes painting, photograph, video, collages, multimedia, and commercial products that go from baseball caps to pick-up trucks, that question the art object and the tainted curiosity of folk. His work has been exhibited in La Tallera, Cuernavaca, Mexico; The San Diego Museum of Art, CA, USA; Centro de las Artes de San Luis Potosí, Mexico; The Glassell School of Arts, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Brotfabrik, Berlin, Germany; Centro de la Imagen, Mexico City, Mexico; Graz Kunsteverein, Graz, Austria; among many others.

Tania Pérez Córdova (b. 1979, Mexico) creates contemplative works that explore temporality and the lifecycle of objects. Her installations have often been compared to film sets, using language to position each work within a broader narrative framework, emphasizing the interconnectedness rather than the autonomy of objects. Her practice encompasses various media, including sculpture, photography, found objects, and activations or performances. Objects in Córdova's installations function as characters, guided by her direction and care, undergoing narrative arcs and intrinsic transformations. Verbal cues in her artwork titles prompt viewers to contemplate not only the lifespan of the object but also the processes and actions involved in its creation. She interprets media abstractly, embedding actions and situations into the materiality of objects themselves. By referencing the world outside the gallery, her works evoke a vivid sense of time and space, extending beyond the sculpture itself. Córdova strategically expands the nuanced relationship between artwork and viewer to encompass external places, people, and actions.

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Tezontle, founded by Carlos H. Matos and Lucas Cantú in 2014. Tezontle identifies with Mexico's Prehispanic heritage and the abstract work of the Mexican modernists of the mid-20th Century. The artists works by curating found objects with self made ones in a process of generating innovative, formal, and material narratives. This working method is independent of scale. When scale becomes irrelevant, the sculptural becomes the architectural and vice versa. Tezontle's recent projects have been exhibited internationally, including "Rise and Fall" at Richard Neutra's VDL House in Los Angeles, California; "Almost Solid Light" at Paul Kasmin Gallery in New York; "Prima Materia" an off-site exhibition of PEANA in New York curated by Viridiana Mayagoitia; Residence "Experimental Cycles" in the Wilfredo Prieto Studio in Havana; and "Piedras Vivas" at PEANA in Monterrey. Among other projects, Carlos and Lucas also teach and are co-founders of the Architectural Association's experimental concrete workshop 'AAVS Las Pozas' that takes place every summer in the Huasteca Jungle and serves as a research platform that aims to forge links between craft and culture in the town of Xilitla.

Theo Michael is a generalist with a compulsion for vandalized seascapes and polyurethane foam. He has lived extensively in 5 different countries and has taken in the respective clashing cultures. The resulting identity is akin to a flexible vessel that contains and manages contradictions. Michael believes that in order to understand the present condition one has to abandon it. "Fully appreciating life in Mexico will require the trip to Mars." "The more you know about archaeology and dinosaurs the better you can understand Brexit."

VISSIO, formerly known as Nouvel Limited, VISSIO is a platform for unlimited experimentation. VISSIO is a collaboration between designers, artists, and architects with Nouvel Studio artisans to realize unique and limited-edition pieces that shatter boundaries between art and design. VISSIO pieces reinterpret glass to challenge and ignite the relationship between concept, form, and utility — beautifully.

Xavier Loránd was born in Veracruz, Mexico, in 1988. In 2007, he moved to London, where he discovered his passion for design after becoming one of the finalists in the "Inspiring Creations" competition by Bombay Sapphire in the United Kingdom. Due to his interest in the field, he relocated to Madrid in 2010 to study Product Design at the Instituto Europeo di Design (IED).

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In 2016, now based in Mexico City, Loránd founded LORÁND with the intention of exploring processes and concepts from a playful perspective, aiming to generate new discourses on the sublime as an aesthetic characteristic and creating a design language focused on the user and their emotional connection to each work. He is also a recipient of the Young Creators grant from the National Fund for Culture and the Arts in the specialty of utilitarian objects.