

FUMI



PACIFIC

NEW WORKS BY JESSE SCHLESINGER

GALLERY FUMI, LONDON
9 October – 29 November 2025

This Autumn Gallery FUMI is thrilled to present *Pacific*, the first-ever gallery exhibition to showcase design pieces by San Francisco-based artist Jesse Schlesinger. Marking a pivotal moment in his career, this show will be the first in the UK dedicated to Schlesinger who recently joined FUMI's roster of acclaimed international makers. To celebrate this new representation, the gallery will also present one of his works at PAD London.

For this landmark exhibition, Jesse Schlesinger has conceived a brand-new series of sculptures and furniture, reflecting the broad spectrum of his two-pronged art and design practice over the past 15 years. The exhibition encapsulates the very essence of Schlesinger's multi-disciplinary approach which ties together nature, philosophy, politics, and personal practice.

Primarily using locally salvaged wood, he creates designs that are fundamentally linked to his deep reverence for local materials, craftsmanship, and his surrounding environment. A second-generation carpenter, Schlesinger favours a hands-on approach rooted in his intricate knowledge of ceramics, bronze, glass, and wood which he enriches by closely collaborating with makers working in other media. Constantly learning new techniques from all over the world, Schlesinger delves into his extensive expertise to conceive timeless creations that are simultaneously sculptural and functional. Immersed in the Bay Area community, many of Schlesinger's striking furniture and interiors were commissioned by some of the most renowned restaurants in the region, with whom he forged life-long connections whilst working on a small farm.

The exhibition's title, *Pacific*, encapsulates various influences that are fundamental to the new works, from the ocean itself to the definition of the word and its related concepts. Powerful and awe-inspiring, the Pacific Ocean is a constant presence in Jesse Schlesinger's oeuvre, directly impacting his materials such as the redwood trees that absorb moisture from its fog. Used as quasi-autobiographical material, redwood can be found in the remarkable freestanding sculpture *c.o.//* and wall sculpture *M.06*. Their circular shapes are carved then progressively smoothed before being charred with a torch. Schlesinger then uses a unique brush from Kyoto to reveal the raised grain. This final step in the process harks to the Pacific Ocean connecting the Bay Area to Japan, a country which the artist has profound ties to. The shimmering and alluring rich hues of the automotive paint transform the pieces into other-worldly objects, existing between land and sea.

Schlesinger's works also embody a quixotic call for peace in these turbulent times. They emanate a subtle, resilient primordial strength inspired by both the etymology of the word Pacific, meaning "peace-making", and Zen Buddhist philosophy. The recurring use of circular shapes acts as a red thread throughout the exhibition, representing both an archetypal pre-"art" symbol as well as a cycle of decay and renewal. Testament to this, Schlesinger preserved the shape of a discarded monumental block of deodar cedar to craft a spectacular coffee table. This sensorial object invites meditation and contemplation through the variation of its surfaces and the fragrance of the wood. Its very presence appeases and encourages viewers to slow down. Meanwhile, the man-made components pay homage to the legacy of critical cultural insights by California's most eminent 20th century thinkers, including Joan Didion, Rachel Kushner, and Robert Irwin. The powder-coat steel covers the areas where the sawyer begun his cut to fell the tree before discarding this block. These interventions are simultaneously a form of healing and a critique of the environmental disregard and capitalist individualism that are exacerbated by current political climates. These long-lasting designs do not simply bring comfort into our lives, they also offer a new mode of living in harmony with our natural and social environment.

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT FUMI

Established in 2008 by Sam Pratt and Valerio Capo, the gallery focuses on high-level, conceptually, and aesthetically audacious designers and artists; each encompassing the value of craftsmanship, traditional techniques, and innovative technologies. Objects are usually handmade by the designer in a small workshop. Many use traditional techniques such as carving, glassblowing, cabinetry, lacquering, and meticulous hand assemblage.

Pratt and Capo have built enduring creative relationships with institutions, interior designers, and collectors alike, and have gained a reputation for applying a very personal and original touch in their selection and curation. They marry a close understanding of the potential of their designers with a keen knowledge of the market to commission exclusive, low-volume, limited-edition works.

The gallery runs an ambitious programme of exhibitions alongside a presence at international design fairs including PAD London, Nomad, Salon Art + Design, Design Miami and FOG Design.

galleryfumi.com

ABOUT JESSE SCHLESINGER

Jesse Schlesinger (b. 1979, Kentucky) is a multidisciplinary artist who lives and works in San Francisco. He has exhibited widely both domestically and internationally including exhibitions at 6018 North, Chicago, IL; Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, CA; Curator's Cube, Tokyo, Japan; Gallery Hiroo Tokyo, Japan; Governor's Mansion, Sacramento, CA; Kadist, San Francisco, CA; Museum of Craft & Design, San Francisco, CA. His recent commissions include "Pacific Transit" (2025), 10 monumental carved beach stone sculptures on Judah Street and 43rd Avenue in San Francisco, sponsored by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

He has also had numerous residencies both nationally and abroad, including Think Green Produce, Tokyo, Japan, 2013; 6018 North, Chicago, IL, 2012 and Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA, 2012. Amongst his recent awards are the US-Japan Artists Exchange Fellowship, NEA and JUSFC (both in 2019-21 and 2018-19).

<https://www.jesseschlesinger.com/>

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