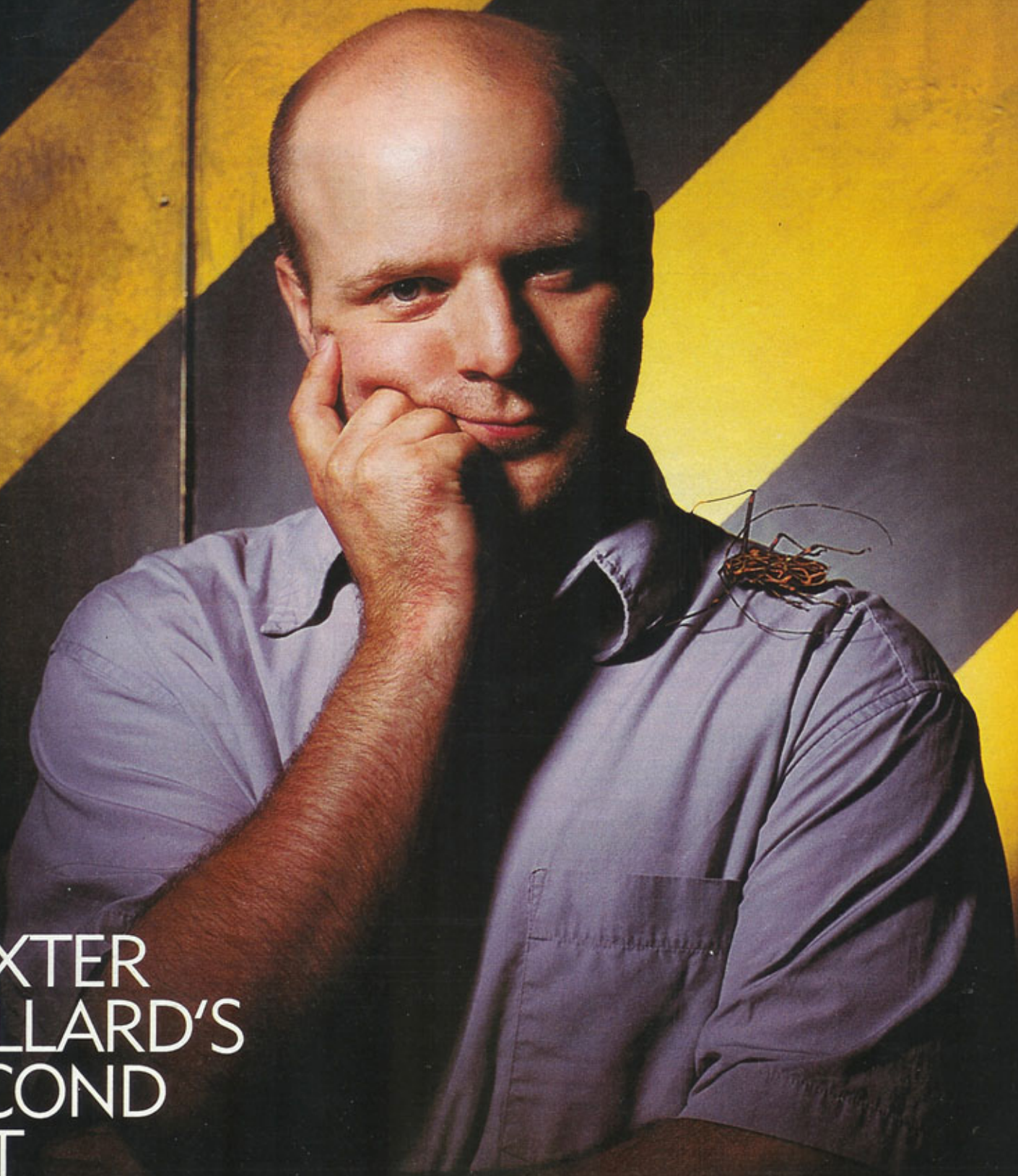


SISTERS SPIN LOGS INTO GOLD | 3 CHIC SHOPS FOR THE HOME

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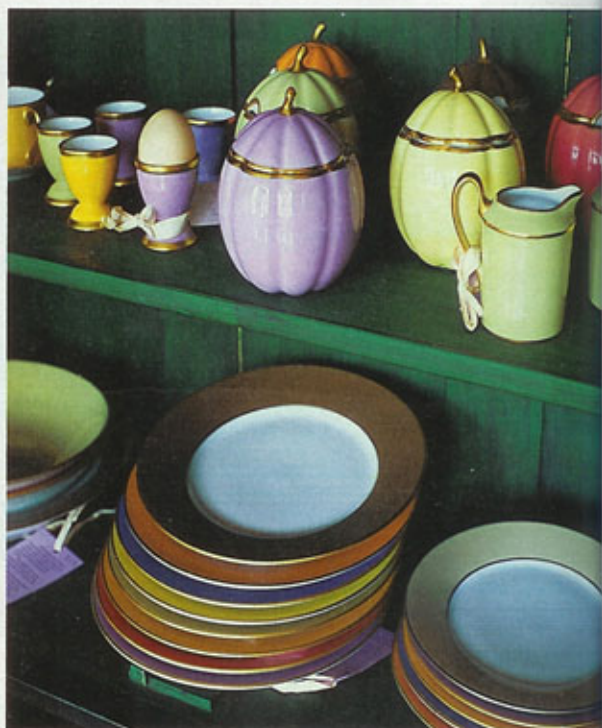


DEXTER BULLARD'S SECOND ACT

WITH THE OFF-BROADWAY
SUCCESS OF 'BUG,' CAN
CHICAGO'S SMALL-THEATER
GENIUS MAKE IT ON A BIGGER
STAGE? DOES HE WANT TO?

Frou-free

THREE NEWCOMERS ON THE CHICAGO SCENE SET THEMSELVES APART FROM THE CROWDED HOME-FURNISHINGS FIELD WITH CLEAN-LINED, STYLISH FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES



At Abode, Jason Ballew (left photo, left) and Darrick Draper (right) work the front desk. Right: A line of colorful Limoges porcelain at Le Magasin.

ABODE

1904 W. North Ave., 773-227-6400, www.abodechicago.com

Everyone has their own notions of "home," but this Bucktown boutique, which is also a design atelier for co-owners Jason Ballew and Darrick Draper, stocks the kind of clean-lined, utilitarian furniture that can be hardworking basics in any abode. These livable offerings are also likably stylish—and at times, even cheeky—which enables them to transform a room. Many of their pieces are multi-functional. From Brazil there are tables with round wood tops on jointed legs that expand scissors-like to become coffee, cocktail or dining tables; rotating wood bookcase cubes with slat or solid sides to stack low (think coffee table) or high to house an entire library in a few square feet; and a shelving unit made of stacking modules suited to storage, display, barware or audiovisual equipment. And from Canada, a harvest table has a laminate top that flips from a walnut veneer for dining to pristine cream for work, and a four-piece

modular table breaks apart to become bedstaple occasional tables. Then there are witty exclusives that add verve to the mix, like the arching Dragon Chair by Chicago designer Michael Jansen or the Spank chair, a white patent and wire-mesh creation that pays homage to a Louis XV fauteuil. You know the ropes when you visit Abode: Only a fraction of the stock is on the floor, and individualized design consultations are \$150, which is applied to purchases of \$1000 or more. **BEST BUY:** Espasso furniture from Brazil, which is exclusive here.

SVENSKA MÖBLER

516 N. Wells St., 312-595-9320, www.svenskamobler.com

Chicagoans have long been enamored of re-created post-1800 European period styles, such as Biedermeier and Jugendstil from Austria; Arts and Crafts and Regency from England; and Empire, Directoire, Nouveau and Deco from France. And there has always been plenty of antique stores in the city.