

SPECIAL | MODERN LUXURY™

SPECIAL SECTION
TUXES GET EDGY
OR GLAM—WHICH
DO YOU?
MOONS FOR
COUPLES
HOT, HOT, HOT LIST

ES

THE REBEL INSIDE

ACTOR PETER SARSGAARD

NOT SO HUMBLE ABODE

What was Dorothy rambling on about anyway at the end of *The Wizard of Oz*? We love our homes, yes, but can also think of lovelier places with much nicer things inside. Fortunately, we've got our own wizards of décor to turn to: Jason Ballew and Darrick Draper, the owners of Abode, the city's newest modern home furnishings and accessories hotspot.

Hailing from interior design backgrounds (Ballew worked at Space Chicago, Draper at Graystone Home), the partners share an affection for clean-lined, edgy, modern furniture that doesn't sacrifice function or livability for austere aesthetics. Indeed, when we sit on the 'Stanley' sofa, one of three original designs by the partners, and exclaim that it is "surprisingly comfortable," Ballew laughs that all of his customers say that. Featuring a walnut base, wrapped in three layers of foam and covered in a stippled chenille fabric, the high-armed and -backed chair is all style and comfort. But if you happen to disagree, Ballew and Draper will happily change the dimensions, type of wood or fabric.

Abode is filled with original creations ready to be customized. From Michael Ruh vases made to order in all shapes and colors to a one-of-a-kind Hugo Franca chaise lounge carved from a Brazilian tree trunk, the shop offers choices found nowhere else in Chicago. "We have exclusivity to most of our vendor lines," Ballew says. And if you want to transform your home from drab black and white into Technicolor, they'll customize a yellow leather chair to your liking. Click your high heels together and repeat after us: "There's no place like Abode, there's no place like Abode..."
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