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Hugo McCloud Is On a Journey



McCloud at work. Image courtesy of the artist.

The artist discusses his first solo show in New York

Two weeks before his first New York solo show at Vladimir Restoin Roitfeld's gallery, the artist Hugo McCloud shipped a 15-foot table to a winery in Napa. "The crate weighs 1,000 pounds," said McCloud. "It's a nightmare." The piece was McCloud's very last industrial design commission. Due in part to the success of his first solo exhibition at Luce Gallery in Turin, Italy, earlier this year, the former proprietor of McCloud Design is now exclusively an artist.

But industrial design still plays a major role in his practice, and not just because his studio is tucked behind a minimalist café in Bushwick, Brooklyn, that he designed himself. McCloud's latest paintings are fashioned from common roofing metal. "I needed to find a material I was familiar with and that I could relate to," said the artist. "Canvas wasn't my thing."

Rather than simply repurposing building materials, McCloud transforms them. He created his own printing blocks based on kitschy floral prints you find on discarded furniture in the streets of Brooklyn. After applying paint to the blocks, he heats them with a torch, before stamping them repeatedly onto his metal canvases. "My work, whether it's art or design, is about perfection within imperfection," he said.

Despite the rising interest in McCloud's art—he also has pieces in a group show at New York's Sean Kelly gallery this summer, and at Luce Gallery's booth at the current NADA art fair—do not expect to see him adopting the factory model anytime soon. For McCloud, seeing his own hand in the work—rather than those of an assistant—is non-negotiable. "How hot the block gets, how much paint you put on it, and my mood or energy—all of that shows in each piece," he explained. He would rather expand his horizons than his production. Following the exhibition, McCloud plans to spend two months in Mexico, carving

blocks from wood in a fashion inspired by the local culture. After that, he will move on to an artist residency in Indonesia. "I'm searching," McCloud said. "And my work is a part of that journey."

"Hugo McCloud: Put In Place" will be on view from May 11th to June 5th at Vladimir Restoin Roitfeld gallery, 5A E. 78th St. in New York.



Hugo McCloud, 2014. Image courtesy of the artist.



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